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From Nagarjuna's Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom

Note about the text from which the following selections are drawn: Nagarjuna's Treatise on The Great Perfection of Wisdom (Mahaapraj~naapaaramitaa Upadesha) is an immense exegesis to the Mahaapraj~naapaaramitaa Sutra in 25,000 lines. Classically, it is preserved only in a 100-fascicle Chinese edition translated from Sanskrit in 405c.e. by Kumarajiva, the brilliant and prolific translator-monk who was the premier transmitter to the Chinese of the Maadhyamika teachings of Nagarjuna. Although presented in the form of an exegesis, it is actually a compendium of Dharma jewels as interpreted by one of the most illustrious Indian masters of the Middle Way. All material is rendered directly from the Chinese (Taisho).

Fascicle 001 Selections:

Life of the Buddha, Segment F001.1 (S,V,D)

(T58a.11-29 [fasc.1])

Moreover, when the Bodhisattva was first born, he radiated a great brilliance which extended universally throughout the ten directions. He walked seven steps, surveyed the four quarters, roared the lion's roar and then uttered a verse, proclaiming:

"Birth from the womb for me is now ended.

This is the very last physical form.

Already I have achieved liberation

And shall moreover bring deliverance to beings."

After pronouncing this pledge, in the course of time he grew to adulthood. He sought to relinquish his relatives and retinue, to leave behind the homelife, and to cultivate the unsurpassed Way . He arose in the night and, surveying the sleeping forms of his female entertainers and attendants, his wife and his consorts, beheld them as resembling decaying corpses.

He instructed Chan.daka to saddle his white steed. At midnight they traversed the city wall, rode for twelve yojanas, and arrived at the forest inhabited by Bhaargava, the rishi. He then took up a knife, cut off his hair, and exchanged his wonderfully bejewelled raiments for a coarsely-woven Sa'nghaa.tii [cloak].

On the banks of the Naira~njanaa River he cultivated bitterly ascetic practices for six years, eating only a sesame seed or a grain of rice each day. He thought to himself, "This method contradicts the Way."

At that time, the Bodhisattva left behind the place where he had cultivated such ascetic practices and went and sat at the adamantine place beneath the bodhi tree. The demon king brought a throng of his minions numbering eighteen myriads of ko.tiis in an attempt to devastate the Bodhisattva. Because of the power of his wisdom and merit, the Bodhisattva overcame the demon hoardes and afterwards achieved anuttarasamyaksa.mbodhi (the utmost, right and perfect enlightenment).

At that time, the ruler of the trichiliocosm , the Brahma Heaven king named "Sikhin, the gods of the form realm, "Sakradevendra, and the gods of the desire realm as well as the four Heavenly Kings, all came to pay their respects to the Buddha and to encourage and request the World Honored One to commence the turning of the wheel of Dharma.

Because of this, because the Bodhisattva recalled his original vow , and also because of his great kindness and great compassion, he acceded to the request and proclaimed the Dharma.

Life of the Buddha, Segment F001.2 (S,D)

(T59a4-29 [fasc.1])

Furthermore, when the Buddha was first born, he dropped to the ground, strode seven steps, and spontaneously uttered words. After speaking, he then fell silent and, like other infants, neither walked nor talked. He was nursed to the age of three. His [step]mothers raised him and he gradually grew to maturity.

Now, although the bodies of the Buddha are countless and exceed in number the sum of all the worlds, for the sake of beings, he manifested like an ordinary person. Because the faculties of the body as well as the intellectual consciousness of ordinary people are not yet completely developed when they are born, the four types of deportment : sitting , lying down, walking and standing, as well as speaking, silence, and all manner of other human qualities--all of these are not yet perfected. As the days, months and years pass, one gradually practices, studies and then is able to refine the various aspects of being a person.

Now how was the Buddha, upon birth, immediately able to speak and walk whereas afterwards he was then not able to do so? One finds this astonishing. One should know that it is solely by dint of the power of skillful means that the Buddha manifests

involvement in human endeavors, and comports himself as people do, thus influencing beings to believe in the profound Dharma.

If when the Bodhisattva was born, he was then from that point on able to walk and was able to talk, ordinary people of the world would think, "Now we behold this man such as has never existed in the world before. Certainly he is a god, a dragon, a ghost or a spirit. That dharma which he studies is certainly not such that people like us might accomplish it. Why is that? Our fleshly bodies, bound to birth and death, are dragged about by the karma of the fetters. We are unable to gain freedom. Who would be able to approach such a profound dharma as this?" In this manner they would cut themselves off so that they could not become receptacles for the Dharma of the worthies and holy ones . For the sake of these people, he was born in the Lumbini gardens.

Although he was capable of proceeding immediately to the bodhi tree and achieving buddhahood, because of the power of skillful means he then manifested as an infant, as a youth, as a young man, and as a grown man, and in each phase sequentially took on [the corresponding activities of] playing, becoming skilled in the arts, utilizing the objects of the five desires, and consummately perfecting human endeavors, afterwards gradually perceiving the suffering of senescence , disease, and death and [finally] generating thoughts of aversion and distress [which led to his] traversing the city wall in the middle of the night, leaving behind the homelife, and going to the location of the hermits Udraka and Aaraa.da. He gave the appearance of becoming a disciple, but did not practice their dharmas.

Although on account of constant use of his superknowledges he recalled his previous lives wherein at the time of Kaa"syapa Buddha he upheld the prohibitions and

cultivated the way, still, he now manifested [in the role of] cultivating ascetic practices for six years in search of the way

. Although the Bodhisattva was [already] the sovereign of the great trichiliocosm, nonetheless he demonstrated [the capacity of] demolishing the demon armies and realizing the unsurpassed way. In order to go along with the dharmas of the World, he displayed these various transformations. Because in the Praj~naapaaramitaa he now demonstrates the great power of superknowledges and wisdom, people ought to know that the Buddha's bodies are innumerable and surpass the sum of all the worlds.

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The Four Siddhaantas (L,T,D,A,V)

(T25.59b17-61b18 [fasc.1])

Additionally, it was because the Buddha wished to set forth the characteristics of the supreme meaning siddhaantas that he spoke this Mahaapraj~naapaaramitaa Sutra. There are four kinds of siddhaantas (teaching modes). The first is the worldly siddhaanta. The second is the individually-adapted siddhaanta. The third is the counteractive siddhaanta. The fourth is the supreme meaning siddhaanta.

All twelve classifications of sutra text are generally subsumed within the four siddhaantas. Every dharma among the 84,000 dharmas of the Dharma treasury is actual and mutually non -contradictory. The

existence [of these dharmas] within the Buddha Dharma is an actual existence on account of the worldly siddhaanta, is an actual existence on account of the individually-adapted siddhaanta, is an actual existence on account of the counteractive siddhaanta, and is an actual existence on account of the supreme-meaning siddhaanta.

[The WorldlySiddhaanta (T,D,A)]

[Cart Simile (A)]

What is meant by the "worldly siddhaanta"? Existent dharmas exist on account of the coming together of conditions. Aside from this, they have no other nature. This is like a cart which exists on account of the coming together of shafts, axles, spokes, rims and so forth. Aside from this, there is no other "cart." People are also like this. They exist on account of the coming together of the five aggregates. Aside from this, there is no other "person."

If it was the case that there was no worldly siddhaanta, why would the Buddha who is a man of true speech, say, "With the pure heavenly eye I see beings passing away here and being born there in accordance with good and bad actions, undergoing resultant retribution. Those whose actions have been good are born among the gods and men. Those whose actions have been bad fall into the three bad paths"?

Additionally, a sutra states, "With the coming into the world of

one single person many people are given occasion for celebration and gain the benefit of blessings and bliss. He is the Buddha, the World Honored One."

As the Dharma Sentences [Scripture] (Dharmapada) states, "It is the spirit itself which is able to deliver the spirit. How could some other person deliver [one's] spirit? It is one's own cultivation of wholesome wisdom which is most able to bring about one's own deliverance."

And as the Buddha said in The Sutra on the Encounter with King Bimbasaara, "The common person does not hear the Dharma. The common person is attached to a self."

Again, in The Sutra on the Two Nights the Buddha said, "From the night in which the Buddha realized the way to the night of the parinirvaana: The sutra teachings which have been spoken between these two nights are all actual and not in error."

If in actual fact there is no "person," why did the Buddha say, "With my heavenly eye I see living beings..."? One ought to know from this that [where the scriptures speak of] the existence of persons, it is on account of the worldly siddhaanta. It is not the case that it represents the supreme-meaning siddhaanta.

Question: The supreme-meaning siddhaanta is true. It is because it is true that it is referred to as "supreme." The others should not be [regarded as] true.

Reply: Not so. Truth exists in each of these four siddhaantas.

From the worldly siddhaanta standpoint, true suchness, the nature of dharmas and the reality limit do not exist. From the supreme-meaning siddhaanta standpoint, they do exist. This is also the case for "persons" and so forth. From the standpoint of the worldly siddhaanta, they exist. From the standpoint of the supreme-meaning siddhaanta, they do not exist. Why is this? It is on account of the existence of the causes and conditions of the five aggregates that "persons" and so forth exist.

[Milk Simile (A)]

This is like milk which exists on account of the existence of the causes and conditions of color, odor, flavor and tangibility . If milk was actually nonexistent, then the causes and conditions of milk should also be nonexistent. Now, because the causes and conditions of milk actually do exist, milk should [be admitted as] existing also. It is not as if [we were speaking of] a person's second head or third hand, in which case there would be no corresponding causes and conditions, but only the existence of false names. [Teachings with] characteristics such as these fall within the scope of the "worldly siddhaanta."

[The Individually-adapted Siddhaanta (T,D)]

What is meant by the "individually-adapted siddhaanta" ? One contemplates the way a person's mind works and then speaks Dharma for him [accordingly]. With regard to a given matter, perhaps he will take heed or perhaps he won't [depending upon one's skillfulness].

For instance, as stated in a sutra, "On account of various retributions for actions, one takes up various rebirths in the world, experiencing various types of contact and various feelings." [But], in addition to this, we have what is said in the Phaalguna Sutra: "There is no person who experiences contact. There is no person who experiences feeling."

Question: How can these two sutras be reconciled?

Reply: It was on account of there being a person who doubted future existences, who did not believe in offenses or blessings , who engaged in unwholesome conduct and who had fallen into the annihilationist view, that, out of a desire to cut off his doubts and cause him to foresake his unwholesome conduct and out of a desire to extricate him from his annihilationist view, it was therefore said, "One takes up various rebirths in the world, experiencing various types of contact and various feelings ."

[However], this Phaalguna believed in the existence of a self and in the existence of a spirit and [thus] had fallen into an eternalist belief. Phaalguna asked the Buddha, "Venerable one , who is

it that experiences feelings?" If the Buddha had replied that it was such-and-such or so-and-so who experiences feelings, then [Phaalguna] would have fallen [even further] into eternalist beliefs and his views [which clung to the concepts] of a "person" and a "self" would have become doubly solidified and impossible to reverse. On account of this [the Buddha] did not say that there was anyone who experiences feelings or who experiences contact. [Teachings with] characteristics such as these fall within the scope of the "individually-adapted siddhaanta."

[The CounteractiveSiddhaanta (T,D,A,V)]

[Dharma as Medicine (A,D)]

As for the "Counteractive siddhaanta," where there is counteraction in the sphere of existent dharmas, it exists. As for its actual nature, it does not exist. For example, intensely hot , greasy, sour, or salty herbs, drinks or foods are good medicine in the case of wind diseases but are nonmedicinal in other diseases. Mildly cold, sweet, bitter, or acrid herbs, drinks or foods are medicine in the case of hot diseases but are nonmedicinal in other diseases. Mildly pungent, bitter, acrid or hot herbs, drinks or foods are medicine in cold diseases but are nonmedicinal in other diseases. In the Dharma of the Buddha, treatment of diseases of the mind is undertaken accordingly.

Deliberation based upon the contemplation of impurity is a good

counteractive dharma with respect to the disease of desire , but with regard to the disease of hatefulness, it is not good and it is a non-counteractive dharma. Why is this? This is because the contemplation of the faults and deficits of the body is what is intended by "contemplation of impurity." If a hateful person contemplates faults and deficits, then this shall increase the fire of hatefulness.

Deliberation on kindheartedness is a good counteractive dharma with respect to the disease of hatefulness, but with regard to the disease of desire it is not good and it is a non-counteractive dharma. Why is this? Because kindheartedness with regard to beings seeks out choice features and contemplates meritorious qualities. If a desire-laden person seeks out choice features and contemplates meritorious qualities, then this increases desire.

The dharma of the contemplation of causes and conditions is a good counteractive dharma with respect to the disease of delusion, but with regard to the diseases of desire and hatefulness it is not good and it is a non- counteractive dharma. Why is this? It is due to prior falsely- based contemplation that one generates false views. False views are just [the product of] delusion.

Question: In the Buddhadharma it is said that the twelve causes and conditions are extremely profound. For instance, the Buddha told Ananda, "This dharma of causes and conditions is extremely profound, difficult to perceive, difficult to understand , difficult to awaken to,

and difficult to contemplate . [Only] a person [equipped with the faculties] of subtle thought and ingenious sagacity would be able to understand." Deluded individuals find it difficult to understand even shallow and proximate dharmas, how much the more so is this the case with the extremely profound [dharma of] causes and conditions. In this present discourse why do you say that deluded individuals should contemplate the dharma of causes and conditions?

Reply: "Deluded person" is not a reference to delusion on a par with that of oxen or sheep. Such a person desires to seek out the actual Way. [But] because of contemplation undertaken with a mind affected by false premises, he generates all manner of false views. Deluded people like these ought to engage in the contemplation of causes and conditions. This is a good counteractive dharma.

Because one who acts out of hatefulness or one who acts out of sensual desire wishes to seek [in the one case] after pleasure or wishes [in the other case] to torment others, [causes- and- conditions contemplation] is not good for these people and it is a non-counteractive dharma. For these two types of people, deliberation upon impurity [for the one] and upon kindheartedness [for the other] constitute good and counteractive dharmas. Why? Because these two contemplations are able to pull out the poisonous thorns of hatefulness and desire.

[Non-ultimacy of "Impermanence" Teachings (D,V)]

Moreover, those beings who possess the cognitive inversion of being attached to [the illusion of] permanence are not aware that dharmas [only] appear to be continuous. For individuals such as these, the contemplation of impermanence is the [appropriate] counteractive siddhaanta dharma. It is not, however, the [siddhaanta] of the supreme meaning. Why [not]? Because all dharmas are devoid of a self-existent nature. This is as stated in a verse:

To see permanence amidst what is impermanent,--

This is what is known as cognitive inversion.

Since there is no impermanence in emptiness,

Where could one perceive permanence?

Question: All conditioned dharmas are characterized by impermanence. It should be the case that this is the supreme meaning. Why? All conditioned dharmas are characterized by production, dwelling and extinction. [This is the case] because initially they are produced, then they dwell, and later they become extinct. Why then do you say that impermanence is not actual?

Reply: It should not be the case that conditioned dharmas possess the three characteristics. Why [not]? Because the three characteristics are not real. For instance, all instances of

production, dwelling and extinction of dharmas are characteristics of that which is conditioned. Now, production [itself] should also be possessed of the three characteristics because production is [also] a conditioned dharma. In like fashion, at all points [during production] there should exist [all] three characteristics. If this were the case, then this would be endless [and hence absurd]. This would also be the case with regard to dwelling and extinction.

If it were the case that all instances of production, dwelling and extinction did not each possess production, dwelling and extinction, then they should not be referred to as conditioned dharmas. Why [not]? Because they would not possess the characteristics of conditioned dharmas. On account of this, the [teaching that] "all dharmas are impermanent" does not represent the supreme meaning siddhaanta.

Furthermore, if all things [on the level of their] actual nature were impermanent, then there would be no carrying forth of karmic retribution. Why [not]? Because impermanence refers to disappearance due to [the process of] production and extinction. This is analagous to a rotten seed which does not [have the ability to] produce a fruit. If this were the case, then there could be no carrying forth of karma. If there were no carrying forth of karma, how could there be resultant retribution?

Now, in the Dharma of all of the worthies and sages there is [the teaching of] resultant retribution. This is something which can be

believed in and accepted by those possessed of wholesome wisdom. One should not say that it is nonexistent. For this reason, dharmas are of a non-impermanent nature. On account of innumerable reasons such as these, [I] say that one cannot maintain that all dharmas are of an impermanent nature. [The teachings] that all conditioned dharmas are impermanent, that they are suffering, and that they are not-self are all similar in this regard. [The teachings which set forth] characteristics such as these fall within the scope of the counteractive siddhaanta.

[The Supreme-meaning Siddhaanta (T,D,V)]

As for the "supreme-meaning siddhaanta ," the nature of all dharmas, all dialectical discourse, all categorizations of "correct Dharma" and "non-Dharma",-- all of them can be refuted and disintegrated through discrimination. The true and actual Dharma practiced by the Buddhas, Pratyekabuddhas, and Arhats cannot be refuted and cannot be disintegrated. Whatever is not reconciled within the three siddhaantas treated above is all reconciled herein.

Question: How then are they reconciled?

Reply: That which reconciles transcends all defects , cannot be changed and cannot be vanquished. How is this so? Because aside from the supreme-meaning siddhaanta, all other dialectical positions and all other siddhaantas can be refuted. This is as referred to in verses

spoken in the Multitude of Meanings Sutra:

Everyone relies on his own view.

Futile discoursing generates disputes.

If one is able to be aware of another's errors,

This constitutes awareness of the correct view.

If one cannot bear to accept another's dharma,

Such a one is a foolish person.

Whosoever engages in these debates

Is truly a foolish person.

If one relies on one's own view of what is right

And thus begets futile discoursing,--

If this constitutes pure wisdom,

Then there is no one of impure wisdom.

In these three verses the Buddha describes the characteristics of the supreme-meaning siddhaanta. The so-called "beings of the world" each rely on their own views, each rely on their own dharma and each rely on their own dialectical positions, thus generating disputation. Futile discoursing) constitutes the basis of disputation. The arising of futile discoursing is based upon all manner of views. This is as noted

in a spoken verse:

It is on account of accepting dharmas that there is debate.

If there were no [such] acceptance, what would be debated?

Accepting, not accepting and other such views,--

This man has gotten rid of them all.

The practitioner who, according with reality, is able to be aware of this, does not tender acceptance nor become attached to any dharma or to any futile discoursing. Neither does he hold the view, "This is real," or involve himself in disputes with others. He is able to know the sweet dew flavor of the Buddha Dharma. If one is not this way, he slanders the Dharma thereby.

If one refuses to accept any other dharma, does not have knowledge of it, and does not take it up, he is a person devoid of wisdom. If all dialecticians behaved like this then it would follow that they are all devoid of wisdom. How is this so? Because none of them accept anyone else's dharma. This is the so-called case of every person maintaining that his own dharma is the foremost in purity while holding that the dharmas of others are but false discourse and impure.

Take for instance the worldly methods of correction . The ancient methods of correction involve corporeal punishments , execution and all manner of impurity. The people of the world have faith in them,

accept them, carry them out, and are of the opinion that they are truly pure [practices]. But from the standpoint of others, wholesome and sagely people among the renunciates, these [practices] are the most impure.

It is the dharma of [certain] non-buddhist renunciates to stand on one foot in five kinds of hot [substances], to pull out one's hair, and so forth. The followers of Nirgranthaputra are of the opinion that this constitutes refined wisdom. Other people say that this is deluded dharma. All manner of other such dharmas of the non-buddhist renunciates, laypeople, and brahmans are each regarded by themselves as good while other [dharmas] are considered to be false discourse.

Within this Dharma of the Buddha there are also the Vaatsiiputriya bhik.sus who say, "Just as the four great elements unite to constitute the dharma of the eye, so too the five aggregates unite to constitute the dharma of the person." In the Vaatsiiputriya abhidharma, it states, "The five aggregates are not separate from the person. The person is not separate from the five aggregates. One cannot say that the five aggregates are the person or that apart from the five aggregates there is a person. `Persons' belong to a fifth `ineffable' repository of Dharma."

The cultivators of the Way who are followers of the Sarvaastivaada [lineage] say, "The spiritual `person' cannot be found in any category, at any time, or via any dharmic method. It is like the

horns of a hare or the fur of a turtle which are eternally nonexistent. Moreover, [although] the eighteen realms (), the twelve sense bases and the five aggregates possess an actual existence, no person exists herein."

Then again, within the Dharma of the Buddha, the cultivators of the Way who belong to the Vaipulya lineage declare, "All dharmas are neither produced nor destroyed. They are empty and devoid of that which exists. They are like the horns of a hare or the fur of a turtle which are eternally nonexistent."

All of the dialectical masters such as these each defend their own dharma and refuse to accept other dharmas, [maintaining], "This is true and everything else is false discourse." If one accepts [only] one's own dharma, honors [only] one's own dharma, and cultivates [only] one's own dharma, while refusing to accept or honor another's dharma, and while maintaining that [other's dharmas] are faulty,-- if one maintains that this is pure and has attained the benefit of the supreme meaning, then among all of them, there are none which are impure. How is this so? Because they all [exclusively] love their own dharma.

Question: If all views possess faults, then what is [the status of] the supreme-meaning siddhaanta?

Reply: It goes beyond the path of all discourse. The locus of thought activity is extinct in it. Nowhere is there anything upon which it relies. It does not proclaim any dharma . The actual characteristic

of all dharmas has no beginning, has no middle and has no end. It is
inexhaustible and indestructible . This is what is meant by the
"supreme-meaning siddhaanta." This is as described in the Verse on the
Meaning of the Mahayana:

Discourse is entirely ended.

Activity of thought also ceases.

Neither produced nor destroyed,

The dharmas are like nirvana.

Every place where speaking functions

Is known as worldly dharma.

The place where speaking does not function

Is known as the supreme meaning.

"Everything is actual," "everything is non-actual,"

As well as "Everything is both actual and non-actual,"

And "Everything is neither actual nor non-actual"--

These refer to the actual characteristic of all dharmas.

[Explanations] such as these are spoken forth in many places in
the Sutra. The meaning of the supreme-meaning siddhaanta is extremely
deep, difficult to perceive and difficult to understand. It was because

the Buddha wished to set forth this meaning that he spoke the
Mahaapraj~naapaaramitaa Sutra.

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The Four Siddhaantas (L,T,D,A,V)

(T25.59b17-61b18 [fasc.1])

Additionally, it was because the Buddha wished to set forth the characteristics of the supreme meaning siddhaantas that he spoke this Mahaapraj~naapaaramitaa Sutra. There are four kinds of siddhaantas (teaching modes). The first is the worldly siddhaanta. The second is the individually-adapted siddhaanta. The third is the counteractive siddhaanta. The fourth is the supreme meaning siddhaanta.

All twelve classifications of sutra text are generally subsumed within the four siddhaantas. Every dharma among the 84,000 dharmas of the Dharma treasury is actual and mutually non -contradictory. The existence [of these dharmas] within the Buddha Dharma is an actual

existence on account of the worldly siddhaanta, is an actual existence on account of the individually-adapted siddhaanta, is an actual existence on account of the counteractive siddhaanta, and is an actual existence on account of the supreme-meaning siddhaanta.

[The WorldlySiddhaanta (T,D,A)]

[Cart Simile (A)]

What is meant by the "worldly siddhaanta"? Existent dharmas exist on account of the coming together of conditions. Aside from this, they have no other nature. This is like a cart which exists on account of the coming together of shafts, axles, spokes, rims and so forth. Aside from this, there is no other "cart." People are also like this. They exist on account of the coming together of the five aggregates. Aside from this, there is no other "person."

If it was the case that there was no worldly siddhaanta, why would the Buddha who is a man of true speech, say, "With the pure heavenly eye I see beings passing away here and being born there in accordance with good and bad actions, undergoing resultant retribution. Those whose actions have been good are born among the gods and men. Those whose actions have been bad fall into the three bad paths"?

Additionally, a sutra states, "With the coming into the world of one single person many people are given occasion for celebration and

gain the benefit of blessings and bliss. He is the Buddha, the World Honored One."

As the Dharma Sentences [Scripture] (Dharmapada) states, "It is the spirit itself which is able to deliver the spirit. How could some other person deliver [one's] spirit? It is one's own cultivation of wholesome wisdom which is most able to bring about one's own deliverance."

And as the Buddha said in The Sutra on the Encounter with King Bimbasaara, "The common person does not hear the Dharma. The common person is attached to a self."

Again, in The Sutra on the Two Nights the Buddha said, "From the night in which the Buddha realized the way to the night of the parinirvaana: The sutra teachings which have been spoken between these two nights are all actual and not in error."

If in actual fact there is no "person," why did the Buddha say, "With my heavenly eye I see living beings..."? One ought to know from this that [where the scriptures speak of] the existence of persons, it is on account of the worldly siddhaanta. It is not the case that it represents the supreme-meaning siddhaanta.

Question: The supreme-meaning siddhaanta is true. It is because it is true that it is referred to as "supreme." The others should not be [regarded as] true.

Reply: Not so. Truth exists in each of these four siddhaantas.

From the worldly siddhaanta standpoint, true suchness, the nature of dharmas and the reality limit do not exist. From the supreme-meaning siddhaanta standpoint, they do exist. This is also the case for "persons" and so forth. From the standpoint of the worldly siddhaanta, they exist. From the standpoint of the supreme-meaning siddhaanta, they do not exist. Why is this? It is on account of the existence of the causes and conditions of the five aggregates that "persons" and so forth exist.

[Milk Simile (A)]

This is like milk which exists on account of the existence of the causes and conditions of color, odor, flavor and tangibility . If milk was actually nonexistent, then the causes and conditions of milk should also be nonexistent. Now, because the causes and conditions of milk actually do exist, milk should [be admitted as] existing also. It is not as if [we were speaking of] a person's second head or third hand, in which case there would be no corresponding causes and conditions, but only the existence of false names. [Teachings with] characteristics such as these fall within the scope of the "worldly siddhaanta."

[The Individually-adapted Siddhaanta (T,D)]

What is meant by the "individually-adapted siddhaanta" ? One contemplates the way a person's mind works and then speaks Dharma for him [accordingly]. With regard to a given matter, perhaps he will take heed or perhaps he won't [depending upon one's skillfulness].

For instance, as stated in a sutra, "On account of various retributions for actions, one takes up various rebirths in the world, experiencing various types of contact and various feelings." [But], in addition to this, we have what is said in the Phaalguna Sutra: "There is no person who experiences contact. There is no person who experiences feeling."

Question: How can these two sutras be reconciled?

Reply: It was on account of there being a person who doubted future existences, who did not believe in offenses or blessings , who engaged in unwholesome conduct and who had fallen into the annihilationist view, that, out of a desire to cut off his doubts and cause him to foresake his unwholesome conduct and out of a desire to extricate him from his annihilationist view, it was therefore said, "One takes up various rebirths in the world, experiencing various types of contact and various feelings ."

[However], this Phaalguna believed in the existence of a self and in the existence of a spirit and [thus] had fallen into an eternalist belief. Phaalguna asked the Buddha, "Venerable one , who is it that experiences feelings?" If the Buddha had replied that it was

such-and-such or so-and-so who experiences feelings, then [Phaalguna] would have fallen [even further] into eternalist beliefs and his views [which clung to the concepts] of a "person" and a "self" would have become doubly solidified and impossible to reverse. On account of this [the Buddha] did not say that there was anyone who experiences feelings or who experiences contact. [Teachings with] characteristics such as these fall within the scope of the "individually-adapted siddhaanta."

[The Counteractive Siddhaanta (T,D,A,V)]

[Dharma as Medicine (A,D)]

As for the "Counteractive siddhaanta," where there is counteraction in the sphere of existent dharmas, it exists. As for its actual nature, it does not exist. For example, intensely hot , greasy, sour, or salty herbs, drinks or foods are good medicine in the case of wind diseases but are nonmedicinal in other diseases. Mildly cold, sweet, bitter, or acrid herbs, drinks or foods are medicine in the case of hot diseases but are nonmedicinal in other diseases. Mildly pungent, bitter, acrid or hot herbs, drinks or foods are medicine in cold diseases but are nonmedicinal in other diseases. In the Dharma of the Buddha, treatment of diseases of the mind is undertaken accordingly.

Deliberation based upon the contemplation of impurity is a good counteractive dharma with respect to the disease of desire , but with

regard to the disease of hatefulness, it is not good and it is a non-counteractive dharma. Why is this? This is because the contemplation of the faults and deficits of the body is what is intended by "contemplation of impurity." If a hateful person contemplates faults and deficits, then this shall increase the fire of hatefulness.

Deliberation on kindheartedness is a good counteractive dharma with respect to the disease of hatefulness, but with regard to the disease of desire it is not good and it is a non-counteractive dharma. Why is this? Because kindheartedness with regard to beings seeks out choice features and contemplates meritorious qualities. If a desire-laden person seeks out choice features and contemplates meritorious qualities, then this increases desire.

The dharma of the contemplation of causes and conditions is a good counteractive dharma with respect to the disease of delusion, but with regard to the diseases of desire and hatefulness it is not good and it is a non-counteractive dharma. Why is this? It is due to prior falsely-based contemplation that one generates false views. False views are just [the product of] delusion.

Question: In the Buddhadharmas it is said that the twelve causes and conditions are extremely profound. For instance, the Buddha told Ananda, "This dharma of causes and conditions is extremely profound, difficult to perceive, difficult to understand, difficult to awaken to, and difficult to contemplate. [Only] a person [equipped with the

faculties] of subtle thought and ingenious sagacity would be able to understand." Deluded individuals find it difficult to understand even shallow and proximate dharmas, how much the more so is this the case with the extremely profound [dharma of] causes and conditions. In this present discourse why do you say that deluded individuals should contemplate the dharma of causes and conditions?

Reply: "Deluded person" is not a reference to delusion on a par with that of oxen or sheep. Such a person desires to seek out the actual Way. [But] because of contemplation undertaken with a mind affected by false premises, he generates all manner of false views. Deluded people like these ought to engage in the contemplation of causes and conditions. This is a good counteractive dharma.

Because one who acts out of hatefulness or one who acts out of sensual desire wishes to seek [in the one case] after pleasure or wishes [in the other case] to torment others, [causes- and- conditions contemplation] is not good for these people and it is a non-counteractive dharma. For these two types of people, deliberation upon impurity [for the one] and upon kindheartedness [for the other] constitute good and counteractive dharmas. Why? Because these two contemplations are able to pull out the poisonous thorns of hatefulness and desire.

[Non-ultimacy of "Impermanence" Teachings (D,V)]

Moreover, those beings who possess the cognitive inversion of being attached to [the illusion of] permanence are not aware that dharmas [only] appear to be continuous. For individuals such as these, the contemplation of impermanence is the [appropriate] counteractive siddhaanta dharma. It is not, however, the [siddhaanta] of the supreme meaning. Why [not]? Because all dharmas are devoid of a self-existent nature. This is as stated in a verse:

To see permanence amidst what is impermanent,--

This is what is known as cognitive inversion.

Since there is no impermanence in emptiness,

Where could one perceive permanence?

Question: All conditioned dharmas are characterized by impermanence. It should be the case that this is the supreme meaning. Why? All conditioned dharmas are characterized by production, dwelling and extinction. [This is the case] because initially they are produced, then they dwell, and later they become extinct. Why then do you say that impermanence is not actual?

Reply: It should not be the case that conditioned dharmas possess the three characteristics. Why [not]? Because the three characteristics are not real. For instance, all instances of production, dwelling and extinction of dharmas are characteristics of

that which is conditioned. Now, production [itself] should also be possessed of the three characteristics because production is [also] a conditioned dharma. In like fashion, at all points [during production] there should exist [all] three characteristics. If this were the case, then this would be endless [and hence absurd]. This would also be the case with regard to dwelling and extinction.

If it were the case that all instances of production, dwelling and extinction did not each possess production, dwelling and extinction, then they should not be referred to as conditioned dharmas. Why [not]? Because they would not possess the characteristics of conditioned dharmas. On account of this, the [teaching that] "all dharmas are impermanent" does not represent the supreme meaning siddhaanta.

Furthermore, if all things [on the level of their] actual nature were impermanent, then there would be no carrying forth of karmic retribution. Why [not]? Because impermanence refers to disappearance due to [the process of] production and extinction. This is analagous to a rotten seed which does not [have the ability to] produce a fruit. If this were the case, then there could be no carrying forth of karma. If there were no carrying forth of karma, how could there be resultant retribution?

Now, in the Dharma of all of the worthies and sages there is [the teaching of] resultant retribution. This is something which can be believed in and accepted by those possessed of wholesome wisdom. One

should not say that it is nonexistent. For this reason, dharmas are of a non-impermanent nature. On account of innumerable reasons such as these, [I] say that one cannot maintain that all dharmas are of an impermanent nature. [The teachings] that all conditioned dharmas are impermanent, that they are suffering, and that they are not-self are all similar in this regard. [The teachings which set forth] characteristics such as these fall within the scope of the counteractive siddhaanta.

[The Supreme-meaning Siddhaanta (T,D,V)]

As for the "supreme-meaning siddhaanta ," the nature of all dharmas, all dialectical discourse, all categorizations of "correct Dharma" and "non-Dharma",-- all of them can be refuted and disintegrated through discrimination. The true and actual Dharma practiced by the Buddhas, Pratyekabuddhas, and Arhats cannot be refuted and cannot be disintegrated. Whatever is not reconciled within the three siddhaantas treated above is all reconciled herein.

Question: How then are they reconciled?

Reply: That which reconciles transcends all defects , cannot be changed and cannot be vanquished. How is this so? Because aside from the supreme-meaning siddhaanta, all other dialectical positions and all other siddhaantas can be refuted. This is as referred to in verses spoken in the Multitude of Meanings Sutra:

Everyone relies on his own view.

Futile discoursing generates disputes.

If one is able to be aware of another's errors,

This constitutes awareness of the correct view.

If one cannot bear to accept another's dharma,

Such a one is a foolish person.

Whosoever engages in these debates

Is truly a foolish person.

If one relies on one's own view of what is right

And thus begets futile discoursing,--

If this constitutes pure wisdom,

Then there is no one of impure wisdom.

In these three verses the Buddha describes the characteristics of the supreme-meaning siddhaanta. The so-called "beings of the world" each rely on their own views, each rely on their own dharma and each rely on their own dialectical positions, thus generating disputation. Futile discoursing) constitutes the basis of disputation. The arising of futile discoursing is based upon all manner of views. This is as noted in a spoken verse:

It is on account of accepting dharmas that there is debate.

If there were no [such] acceptance, what would be debated?

Accepting, not accepting and other such views,--

This man has gotten rid of them all.

The practitioner who, according with reality, is able to be aware of this, does not tender acceptance nor become attached to any dharma or to any futile discoursing. Neither does he hold the view, "This is real," or involve himself in disputes with others. He is able to know the sweet dew flavor of the Buddha Dharma. If one is not this way, he slanders the Dharma thereby.

If one refuses to accept any other dharma, does not have knowledge of it, and does not take it up, he is a person devoid of wisdom. If all dialectitions behaved like this then it would follow that they are all devoid of wisdom. How is this so? Because none of them accept anyone else's dharma. This is the so-called case of every person maintaining that his own dharma is the foremost in purity while holding that the dharmas of others are but false discourse and impure.

Take for instance the worldly methods of correction . The ancient methods of correction involve corporeal punishments , execution and all manner of impurity. The people of the world have faith in them, accept them, carry them out, and are of the opinion that they are truly

pure [practices]. But from the standpoint of others, wholesome and sagely people among the renunciates, these [practices] are the most impure.

It is the dharma of [certain] non-buddhist renunciates to stand on one foot in five kinds of hot [substances], to pull out one's hair, and so forth. The followers of Nirgranthaputra are of the opinion that this constitutes refined wisdom. Other people say that this is deluded dharma. All manner of other such dharmas of the non-buddhist renunciates, laypeople, and brahmans are each regarded by themselves as good while other [dharmas] are considered to be false discourse.

Within this Dharma of the Buddha there are also the Vaatsiiputriya bhikshus who say, "Just as the four great elements unite to constitute the dharma of the eye, so too the five aggregates unite to constitute the dharma of the person." In the Vaatsiiputriya abhidharma, it states, "The five aggregates are not separate from the person. The person is not separate from the five aggregates. One cannot say that the five aggregates are the person or that apart from the five aggregates there is a person. `Persons' belong to a fifth `ineffable' repository of Dharma."

The cultivators of the Way who are followers of the Sarvaastivaada [lineage] say, "The spiritual `person' cannot be found in any category, at any time, or via any dharmic method. It is like the horns of a hare or the fur of a turtle which are eternally nonexistent.

Moreover, [although] the eighteen realms (), the twelve sense bases and the five aggregates possess an actual existence, no person exists herein."

Then again, within the Dharma of the Buddha, the cultivators of the Way who belong to the Vaipulya lineage declare, "All dharmas are neither produced nor destroyed. They are empty and devoid of that which exists. They are like the horns of a hare or the fur of a turtle which are eternally nonexistent."

All of the dialectical masters such as these each defend their own dharma and refuse to accept other dharmas, [maintaining], "This is true and everything else is false discourse." If one accepts [only] one's own dharma, honors [only] one's own dharma, and cultivates [only] one's own dharma, while refusing to accept or honor another's dharma, and while maintaining that [other's dharmas] are faulty,-- if one maintains that this is pure and has attained the benefit of the supreme meaning, then among all of them, there are none which are impure. How is this so? Because they all [exclusively] love their own dharma.

Question: If all views possess faults, then what is [the status of] the supreme-meaning siddhaanta?

Reply: It goes beyond the path of all discourse. The locus of thought activity is extinct in it. Nowhere is there anything upon which it relies. It does not proclaim any dharma . The actual characteristic of all dharmas has no beginning, has no middle and has no end. It is

inexhaustible and indestructible . This is what is meant by the
"supreme-meaning siddhaanta." This is as described in the Verse on the

Meaning of the Mahayana:

Discourse is entirely ended.

Activity of thought also ceases.

Neither produced nor destroyed,

The dharmas are like nirvana.

Every place where speaking functions

Is known as worldly dharma.

The place where speaking does not function

Is known as the supreme meaning.

"Everything is actual," "everything is non-actual,"

As well as "Everything is both actual and non-actual,"

And "Everything is neither actual nor non-actual"--

These refer to the actual characteristic of all dharmas.

[Explanations] such as these are spoken forth in many places in
the Sutra. The meaning of the supreme-meaning siddhaanta is extremely
deep, difficult to perceive and difficult to understand. It was because
the Buddha wished to set forth this meaning that he spoke the

Mahaapraj~naapaaramitaa Sutra.

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Faith (D,A,V,S)

(T25.62c17-63b17 [fasc.1])

Question: Why do all of the Buddha's sutras begin with "Thus... "?

Reply: It is by virtue of faith that one is able to enter the great sea of the Buddha's Dharma. It is by virtue of wisdom that one is able to cross over. "Thus..." connotes believability. If there exists pure faith within a person's mind, this person is able to enter the Dharma of the Buddha. If there is no faith, this person is unable to enter the Dharma of the Buddha. One who does not believe says, "This

matter is not `thus'." This is the mark of not believing. One who believes says, "This matter is `thus'."

[Faith-Cowhide Simile]

One who has no faith is just like a cowhide which, prior to being softened [by being tanned] can be neither curled nor folded. A person who has faith is like a cowhide which, having already been softened, may be put to any use.

[Faith-Hands Simile]

Then again, in the Sutras it says that faith is like one's hands. If a person has hands, upon entering the bejewelled mountain, he is able to freely pick up jewels. The possession of faith is just like this. Upon entering the bejeweled mountain of the Buddha's Dharma which contains the no-outflow faculties, the powers, the branches of bodhi, the [eight - fold] path, and the dhyana (meditative) absorptions, one is freely able to take whatever one desires.

Having no faith is like having no hands. When a person who has no hands enters the bejewelled mountain, he is unable to take anything at all. Having no faith is also like this. When one enters the bejewelled mountain of the Buddha's Dharma, nothing whatsoever is

gained.

[Lack of Faith-Withered Tree Simile]

The Buddha said, "If a person has faith, this person is able to enter the sea of my great Dharma, is able to obtain the fruit of the shraama.na, and has not in vain shaven his head and [donned] the dyed ka.saaya [robe]. If one has no faith, this person is unable to enter the sea of my Dharma and is like a withered tree which produces neither flowers nor fruit. He will not obtain the fruit of the shraama.na. Although he [may have] shaved his head, donned the dyed robe, studied all manner of scriptures, and be able to pose and respond to difficult questions [on Dharma], [still], with respect to the Buddha's Dharma, [his efforts are] in vain, and he gains nothing whatsoever.

It is on account of this that the purport of "It is thus..." is situated at the beginning of the dharmas set forth by the Buddha. It signifies [that this teaching is worthy of] wholesome faith.

Moreover, the Dharma of the Buddha is profound and far-reaching. Only another Buddha would be able to fathom it. If a person has faith, even though he has not yet realized buddhahood, he is nonetheless still able, by virtue of the power of faith, to gain entry into the Dharma of the Buddha.

[The Gods Request Dharma (S,V,A)]

[This point was alluded to] when the King of the Brahma Gods requested the Buddha to begin the turning of the wheel of Dharma . He used a verse to entreat the Buddha:

There first have appeared in Jambudviipa
The many and varied impure dharmas.
I pray you will open the sweet dew gateway
Proclaiming [for beings] the Way that is pure.

The Buddha replied with a verse:

My Dharma's profoundly difficult to master.
[But] able to sunder the bonds of the fetters.
In three realms of being, their minds are all love-bound.

Such people [I venture] cannot fathom [the Way].

[Lotuses & Sunlight Simile]

The King of the Brahma heaven gods addressed the Buddha,
"Venerable One, the wisdom encountered in the world may be superior,

middling or inferior. Those good people possessed of pliant and straightforward minds may easily obtain deliverance. If these people do not hear the Dharma, they shall retreat and fall away into dreadful adversity.

They are like lotuses in the water of which some are undeveloped and others more mature. If those in the water which have not yet come forth do not encounter the radiance of the sun, then they shall be unable to blossom. The Buddha is just like this [sunlight]. [Pray, may] the Buddha, out of great loving - kindness and compassion have pity for beings and proclaim the Dharma for their sakes."

The Buddha brought to mind the Dharma of all the Buddhas of the three ages, past, future and present: "They all delivered beings and proclaimed the Dharma for their sakes. I ought to do so as well." After reflecting thus, he accepted the entreaties of the King of the Brahma heaven gods and of the other gods that he speak forth the Dharma. At that time, the World Honored One responded in verse:

I'll open now the gates to the flavor of sweet dew.
If there be believers, then delight shall be theirs.
Among all the people I'll speak wondrous Dharma.
To stay thus their torment, I speak for their sakes.

The Buddha did not speak in this verse of those who practice

giving as being those who would gain delight, nor did he refer to those who are learned, who uphold the moral precepts, who practice patience , who are vigorous, who cultivate dhyana absorption, or who are wise as being those who would gain delight. He spoke only of those people who have faith. The Buddha's intent was this: "Unless one is omniscient, one will not be able to fathom my dharmas which are supremely profound , subtle and wondrous, immeasurable and innumerable, inconceivable and ineffable, unmoving and nondependent, unattached and devoid of anything gained."

Therefore, the power of faith is primary in the Dharma of the Buddha. It is by virtue of faith that one is able to gain entrance to it. It is not on account of giving, morality, dhyana absorption, wisdom, and so forth that one gains initial entrance into the Buddha Dharma. This is as noted in a verse:

The minds of people of the world all move
From love for blessings gained as an effect.
And yet they are not fond of blessings' causes.
They seek existence and favor not extinction.

At first they hear the dharmas of false views.
Their minds attach and then they enter deeply.
As for my Dharma which is most profound:

If one lacks faith how can one understand?

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"I" in "Thus I Have Heard..."

(T25.64a14-b18 [fasc.1])

Question: If within the Buddha's Dharma it is said that all dharmas are empty and nowhere is there a "self", why then is it declared at the very beginning of the Buddha's scriptures, "Thus `I have heard ...?"

[No-self & "I" Like Gold & Coins]

Reply: Although the Buddha's disciples are aware that there is no self, they accord with common practice in speaking. The "I" thus used is not an actually-existent "I". This is just as when one uses gold coins to purchase copper coins. Nobody laughs at this. Why not? Because the protocols of commerce dictate this way of doing things.

Saying "I" is just the same as this. Within the Dharma of no-self, one nonetheless says "I" in conformance with worldly convention. Therefore one need not call this practice into question. This is as referred to in a verse from The Questions of the Gods Sutra:

If there be an arhat bhikshu
Who has forever ended outflows
And who dwells in his very last body,
May he speak of an "I" or not?

The Buddha replied:

If there be an arhat bhikshu
Who has forever ended outflows
And who dwells in his very last body,
He may speak as if there were an "I."

When in accordance with worldly convention one speaks of a self, it is not spoken from the standpoint of the supreme and actual meaning. For this reason, although dharmas are empty and devoid of a self, there is no fault in speaking of an "I" [simply] to take into account [the dictates of] worldly convention.

[Three Bases of Worldly Discourse]

Moreover, worldly discourse has three bases: first, false views; second, conceit; and third, names. Of these, two are impure and one is pure. The discourse of all common people is characterized by three types: false views, conceit and names. The discourse of those with more to study on the path of seeing is characterized by two types: conceit and names.

The discourse of the sages is characterized by one type: names. Although in their minds they do not contradict the actual Dharma,

Speaking of "Time" Like Bowing Before an Icon (A)

(T25.64c12-16 [fasc.1])

Question: Within the Buddha's Dharma, "numbers", "time", and other such dharmas are held to be not actually existent as they are not subsumed under the [five] aggregates, the [twelve sense] bases, or the [eighteen sense] realms. Why do you say, "at one time"?

Reply: It is on account of according with common worldly convention that we say "at one time." There is no fault in this. This is just as when one resorts to painting, clay, or wood to create an

image of a diety. Because one bears in mind the diety, there is no fault in offering ritual obeisance [before it]. To say, "at one time..." is just like this. Even though there is actually not any [inherently existent] time, because one is merely acquiescing in common convention there is no fault in saying, "at one time..."

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Ananda's Final Questions of the Buddha

(T25.66b.21-67a.3 [fasc.2])

Moreover, "Thus I have heard" is a phrase spoken by Ananda and other of the Buddha's great disciples. Because it is a mark of entry into the Buddha's Dharma [a sutra] is known thereby as Buddhadharma. This is as [ordained] at the time of the Buddha's Parinirvana. He was in the state of Ku"sinigara, lying down between a pair of saala trees with his head to the North and was about to enter nirvana.

At that time because Ananda had not yet transcended [the realm of] desire, he had not yet gotten rid of the affection felt for one's

relatives. His mind was emmersed in a sea of grief and he was powerless to pull himself out. Then the "senior and elder" Aniruddha said to Ananda, "You are the one responsible for guarding the treasury of the Buddha's Dharma. You should not be emmersed in a sea of grief like an ordinary person. All composite dharmas are characterized by impermanence. Don't be sorrowful.

Furthermore, the Buddha, with his own hand, has entrusted the Dharma to you. By now being so overcome with grief you are neglecting the responsibility you have undertaken. You should ask the Buddha, "After the Buddha's Parinirvana, how shall we cultivate the Way? Who shall serve as our teacher? How shall we dwell together with the foul-mouthed Chandaka? What phrases shall be placed at the beginning of the Buddha's scriptures? You should inquire of the Buddha on all manner of topics such as these which deal with the future."

When Ananda heard about these matters, his troubled mind revived somewhat, he regained the power of being mindful of the Way, and assisted alongside the Buddha's final resting place. He asked the Buddha about these matters and the Buddha told Ananda, "Whether right here and now or whether after I am gone, one should take refuge in oneself and take refuge in the Dharma and should not take refuge in anything else. How should a bhikshu take refuge in himself, take refuge in the Dharma and not take refuge in anything else? In this regard, a bhikshu should undertake the contemplation of his own body. He should

constantly employ singlemindedness, wisdom, diligent cultivation and vigor in getting rid of the woe of worldly desire.

The contemplation of other's bodies and then of both his own and other's bodies should be taken up in like manner. The stations of mindfulness with regard to feelings, with regard to thoughts, and with regard to dharmas should each be taken up in this manner as well. This is what is meant by, `a bhikshu should take refuge in himself, take refuge in the Dharma, and should not take refuge in anything else.'"

"From this very day, The Scripture on the Liberating Precepts is your great Master. In one's physical actions and verbal actions, one should conduct oneself in accord with the declarations of The Scripture on the Liberating Precepts.

"As for the bhikshu Chandaka, after my nirvana, treat him according to the brahman (silent treatment) method. If his mind becomes pliant and submissive, he should be taught the Sa.mthakaatyayana Sutra. Then he may be able to attain the Way.

"As for the treasury of Dharma jewels which I have accumulated throughout the course of three asa.mkhyeya kalpas, one should place this phrase at the beginning of [the scriptures in] this treasury: `Thus I have heard, at one time the Buddha was at such-and-such a country in such-and-such a direction, in the forest at such-and-such a location...'
Why? This phrase has been spoken at the beginning of the scriptures of all of the Buddhas of the past. This phrase shall also be spoken at the

beginning of the scriptures of all of the buddhas of the future. All of the Buddhas of the present, at the very end, at the time of their Parinirvana,-- they too instruct that this phrase should be spoken. Now, after my Parinirvana, at the beginning of the scriptures, one should also declare, "Thus I have heard at one time..."

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The Buddha's Parinirvana

(T25.67a12-b2 [fasc.2])

As extensively described in The Compilation of the Dharma Sutra, when the Buddha entered Nirvana, the earth pitched about in six different ways, the rivers flowed backwards, a fierce tempest struck violently, black clouds boiled up in the four directions, fearsome [volleys of] thunder [boomed], lightning bolts crashed, and suddenly [a storm of] hail and [torrents of] rain came [pounding] down. Everywhere

meteors [shot out of the sky]. Ferocious beasts bellowed and roared, yowled and shrieked.

The deities and worldlings howled loudly. The gods all cried out, "Oh, why has the Buddha chosen nirvana so swiftly?! The eyes of the World have perished!"

Then, all at the same time, the grasses and woods, herbs and trees, flowers and leaves, all split apart and burst open. The Sumerus, kings among mountains, tilted askew as they shook. The waters of the oceans roiled and heaved up billows. The earth shuddered and jolted mightily. The mountains and crags shattered and collapsed. The trees all splintered and split. From the four quarters smoke surged up [into the sky]. [These cataclysmic occurrences] were enormously horrifying. The [waters of the] marshes and ponds, rivers and streams all began to churn and turned turbid. Comets appeared in the daytime.

The people wailed and wept. The gods were overcome with sorrow. The heavenly maidens were all [immersed in] grief, choking and sobbing, with intertwining streams of tears flowing down. Those still at the stage of study were all silent and unhappy. Those at the stage beyond study remained mindful that all composite dharmas are impermanent. And so, in this manner, the gods, men, yak.sas, raak.sasas, gandharvas, ki.mnaras, mahoragas and dragons were all overcome with great grief.

The arhats had been delivered from the sea of senescence, disease and death and thought to themselves:

We've crossed already the river of the common man's affection and passion.

The coil of aging, sickness and death has been split apart and broken.

We've seen the four great serpents within the bodily basket,
And now we shall enter nirvana, the remainderless decease.

In the mountains, forests, and valleys, among flowing springs and streams, all of the great arhats, each according to his will, shed his body and entered parinirvana. Additionally there were arhats who flew straight up into the air and in leaving, like the great king of the geese, displayed all manner of spiritual powers, influenced the masses of people to develop purity of faith, and then finally entered parinirvana.

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Gods Distressed at Dharma's Decline

(T25.67b2-22 [fasc.2])

The gods, from the Six Desire Heavens on up to the Heaven of Universal Purity, observed all of the arhats opting for extinction, and each of them thought to himself, "Since the Buddha sun has set, the light of those disciples possessing all manner dhyana absorptions, liberations, and wisdom has gone out as well.. All of these beings have all kinds of diseases of desire, enmity and ignorance. Now that this generation of Dharma physicians has swiftly crossed into extinction, who shall treat them? Now those lotus blossom disciples, grown up within the great sea of immeasurable wisdom, have withered and dried up. The tree of Dharma has been smashed and split apart. The cloud of Dharma has scattered and vanished. Since the great and wise king of the elephants has passed on, the offspring of the elephant have gone away as well. The merchant of Dharma has moved on, from whom shall we seek jewels of Dharma?" As a verse says:

The Buddha's become eternally extinct; he's entered [now] nirvana.

That company which has destroyed all bonds has also passed away.

With this the World's grown empty and devoid [now] of wisdom.

The dark of ignorance has increased; the wisdom lamp's gone out.

At that point the gods made obeisance at the feet of
Mahaakaa.syapa and uttered a verse:

This elder's already gotten rid of passion, anger and arrogance.

His figure [stands and shines] like it was a purple golden
pillar.

Above, below, erect and decorous, wondrous without peer.

The brightness of his eyes is pure and like unto the lotus.

After having praised him in this manner they addressed
Mahaakaa.syapa, saying, "Venerable Mahaakaa"syapa, is the Humane One
aware or is he not, that the ship of Dharma is about to break up, the
city wall of Dharma is about to collapse, the sea of Dharma is about to
dry up, the banner of Dharma is about to fall, the lamp of dharma is
about to die down, the proclaimers of Dharma are about to depart, the
practitioners of Dharma are becoming fewer, and the power of the
depraved is now waxing full? One ought to bring forth the great
kindheartedness and establish the Dharma of the Buddha."

At that time, the mind of Mahaakaa"syapa was like a great sea,
limpid, silent and tranquil. After a goodly while he responded, "You
have spoken well. Truly, it is as you describe. Before long, the world

shall be devoid of wisdom, blind, and plunged in darkness." With this, Mahaakaa"syapa silently acceded to the plea (of the gods). At that point the gods made obeisance at the feet of Mahaakaa"syapa and suddenly disappeared, each returning whence he had come.

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Mahakasyapa Convenes a Dharma Council

(T25.67b22-c17 [fasc.2])

At this time, Mahakasyapa pondered, "How can I now cause this Buddha Dharma, obtained through [such great] difficulty across the course of three asa.mkhyeya kalpas, to be preserved for a long time? After pondering like this, [he said], "I know that this Dharma can be caused to remain a long time. We should collect together and compile the Sutras, the Abhidharma, and the Vinaya and make a three-fold repository of Dharma. In this manner the Buddha Dharma may be able to remain a long time. People of future generations may be able to receive it and cultivate it. Why is it [that we should do this]? Because in

life after life, out of compassion and pity for beings, the Buddha was diligent and endured suffering to study and obtain this Dharma [so that he could] expound it for mankind. We too should undertake to put the Buddha's teaching to use, propagating and converting."

At this point, after Mahakasyapa had formulated this discourse, he went to the summit of Mount Sumeru and, striking a bronze gong (gong), uttered this verse:

All [of you] disciples of the Buddha,
If the Buddha [now] you do recall,
[You] should all repay the Buddha's kindness.
Do not enter [yet] into nirvana.

The sound of the gong accompanied by the voice of Mahakasyapa reached everywhere throughout the great trichilocosm such that everyone heard and was aware of it. Of all of the disciples throughout the realms of existence, those who had gained spiritual powers all came and assembled at the place of Mahakasyapa. At that time, Mahakasyapa told all of those assembled there, "The Buddha Dharma is about to become extinct. Out of compassion and pity for beings, the Buddha, for three asamkhyeya kalpas, was diligent and endured all manner of suffering in studying and obtaining this Dharma. After the Buddha's parinirvana, all of those disciples who knew the Dharma, upheld

the Dharma, and recited the Dharma followed the Buddha and also crossed into extinction. Now the Dharma is about to become extinct. The beings of the future are extremely pitiable [for] they will have lost the eye of wisdom and shall [be lost in] the blindness and darkness of ignorance. With great kindness and compassion the Buddha felt pity for beings. We also ought to undertake [the work of] putting the Buddha's teaching to use. We must wait until we have collected and compiled the repository of scriptures. Then we may cross into extinction whenever we wish.

All of those who had assembled there accepted the instruction to remain. At that time, Mahakasyapa selected a thousand men. All of them except for Ananda were arhats who had attained the six superknowledges, who had attained the complete liberation, and who had attained the liberation devoid of doubt. They had all attained the three knowledges and coursed freely in dhyana samadhi. They were able to practice all of the samadhis [in both] ascending and descending [order], and in all cases without hindrance. They could recite and had studied the three repositories [of Dharma] and had knowledge of all the esoteric and exoteric scriptures. They had completely studied and known the eighteen kinds of immense scriptures of the non-buddhist schools [of thought] and were all able to debate and defeat [the adherents of] heterodox [realms of] learning.

Why Mahakasyapa chose 1000 Arhats

(T25.67c21-29 [fasc.2])

Question: At this time there were innumerable arhats such as these. Why did he select only a thousand men and no more?

Answer: When King Bimbasaara gained the Way, 84,000 other officials and subordinates also gained the Way. At that time the King instructed those in the palace to always prepare enough food to make offerings to a thousand people. King Bimbasaara did not suspend this practice. At that time Mahakasyapa thought, "If we are always having to [go forth and] beg for food, there will be non-buddhists who insist on aggressively imposing themselves [on us] with objections and queries, [causing] inefficiency and lapses in [our] Dharmic endeavors. Now, in the city of Raajag.rha, [they] always prepare food to donate to a thousand people. We shall be able to dwell here to collect and compile the repository of scriptures. Because of this he selected 1000 people and was unable to choose more.

Ananda's Banishment from the Dharma-Compilation Council

(T25.67c25-68b17 [fasc.2])

At that time Mahakasyapa arrived with a thousand men at the city of Raajag.rha on Mount G.rdhraaku.ta. He informed King Ajaata"satru, "In providing food for us, have it brought to us each day. We are now in the process of compiling and collecting the repositories of scriptures and cannot be distracted by other activities." They dwelt therein for the three months of the summer retreat. During the initial fifteen days, at the time of the recitation of the prohibitions, they assembled the harmonious Sa"ngha together.

Mahakasyapa entered dhyana absorption and, using the heavenly eye, surveyed the Assembly to see who still had afflictions which had not been brought to an end and thus who should be expelled therefrom. There was but one person, Ananda, who had not put them to an end. The other nine hundred and ninety-nine had ended all outflows, were pure, and were devoid of defilements.

Mahakasyapa arose from dhyana absorption and, from the midst of the Assembly, pulled Ananda out by the hand, saying, "We are now engaged in collecting and compiling the repository of scriptures in the midst of the pure Assembly. Because your fetters have not yet been brought to an end, you should not remain here."

At this time Ananda was ashamed, wept sorrowfully, and thought to himself, "For twenty-five years I have followed along with and served the World Honored One, providing him with assistance. Never before have I been so bitterly distressed! The Buddha was truly greatly virtuous, kind, compassionate and patient. After he had this thought, he addressed Mahakasyapa, saying "The strength of my abilities is such that I could have gained the Way long ago. It's just that the arhats in the Buddha's Dharma wouldn't provide assistance or carry out directives. It is only because of this that I retain residual fetters which haven't yet been entirely cut off."

Mahakasyapa said, "You still have offenses. The Buddha's intention was such that he did not wish to allow women to leave the home life. Because you so persistently petitioned, the Buddha allowed that they could take up the Way [outside the home]. On account of this, after only five hundred years, the orthodox Dharma of the Buddha shall decline and diminish. In this you committed a du.sk.rta offense."

Ananda said, "I felt pity for Gautami. Moreover, the Dharma of all Buddhas of the three ages has had a fourfold community. Why then

should only our Shakyamuni Buddha be without it?"

Mahakasyapa replied, "When the Buddha was about to enter nirvana and was approaching the town of Kusinagara, his back began to hurt. He spread out the uttaraasana, folded it in four layers, lay down, and said to you, 'I need water.' You did not provide it for him. In this you committed a dukkha offense."

Ananda responded, "At that time five hundred carts were passing through the current and their fording caused the water to become turbid and dirty. It was because of this that I did not get any."

Mahakasyapa replied, "Even given that they had caused the water to become dirty, the Buddha has great spiritual power by which he is able to cause even a great ocean of polluted water to become pure. Why didn't you give it to him?. In this there was an offense committed by you. Go and perform the dukkha repentance."

"Moreover," Mahakasyapa said, "The Buddha, by way of prompting you, said, 'If there were a person who had well cultivated the four bases of psychic power, his lifetime could continue for a kalpa or somewhat less than a kalpa.' The Buddha had well cultivated the four bases of psychic power. He wished for his lifetime to continue for a kalpa or somewhat less than a kalpa. But you remained silent and made no reply. He placed this question before you three times, but you deliberately remained silent. If only you had replied to Buddha, 'The Buddha has well cultivated the four bases of psychic power. He should

remain for a kalpa or perhaps somewhat less than a kalpa.' It was because of you that the Buddha, the World Honored One, was caused to make an early entry into nirvana. In this you committed a du"sk.rta offense."

Ananda said, "Mara obscured my mind. It was because of this that I didn't say anything. It is not the case that I failed to reply to the Buddha on account of evil thoughts."

Mahakasyapa responded, saying, "In your performing of the folding of the sa"nghaa.tii robe for the Buddha, you stepped on it. In this you committed a du"sk.rta offense."

Ananda said, "At that time there was a big gust of wind which came up and nobody was assisting. When I picked up the robe, the wind blew it such that it came to fall under my foot. It is not the case that I was disrespectful and deliberately trod upon the Buddha's robe."

Mahakasyapa replied, saying, "After the Buddha had entered parinirvaa.na, you revealed the Buddha's physical characteristic of genital ensheathement to women. How shameful this is! In this you committed a du"sk.rta offense."

Ananda said, "At the time I thought, 'If women notice the Buddha's physical characteristic of genital ensheathement, then they might naturally come to feel chagrin regarding the female form and wish to gain [rebirth in] a male body whereby they might [more easily] cultivate the characteristics of a Buddha and plant the roots of merit.'

It was because of this that I revealed this characteristic to women. It was not a deliberate breaking of the prohibitions arising from shamelessness."

Mahakasyapa said, "You have committed six kinds of du"sk.rta offenses. For all of them you should repent your transgressions in the presence of the Sa"ngha."

Ananda said, "Alright, I shall accord with the instructions of the Venerable Mahakasyapa and the Sa"ngha." At this time Ananda knelt, pressed his palms together, arranged his robe with the right shoulder bared, took off his leather sandals, and repented of six types of du"sk.rta offenses. From within the midst of the Assembly, Mahakasyapa led Ananda out by the hand and then said to Ananda, "Completely cut off your outflows and then afterwards you may come back in. As long as your residual fetters have not been brought to an end, you cannot come in."

After he had said this he secured the door.

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Gavampati After the Buddha's Nirvana

(T25.68b17- 69a7 [fasc.2])

At that time, the Arhats began their discussions and asked, "Who is able to collect and compile the repository of the Vinaya Dharma?" The Venerable Aniruddha said, "Sariputra, that "second Buddha" has a good disciple named Gavampati. He is supple, harmonious, and refined. He always stays in a quiet place and abides in a feast of stillness of the mind. He is able to know the repository of the Vinaya Dharma. Now he is up in the heavens in the "Sirii.sa Tree Gardens. Send a messenger requesting him to come."

Mahakasyapa said to a subordinate bhikshu, "You are next in sequence to carry out the orders of the Sangha."

The subordinate bhikshu replied, "What order does the Sa"ngha have?" Mahakasyapa said, "The Sangha directs you to go to the "Sirii.sa Tree Gardens up in the Heavens to the place therein where Gavampati, the Arhat, dwells."

This bhikshu leaped up with delight, accepted the Sangha's command, and addressed Mahakasyapa asking, "When I reach the dwelling place of Gavampati, the Arhat, what matter should I set forth?"

Mahakasyapa said, "After you arrive, tell Gavampati, 'Mahakasyapa and the other arhats who have ended outflows have all assembled in Jambudviipa. The Sangha has taken up a great matter of Dharma. You may come immediately.'"

The subordinate bhikshu made full reverential prostrations before the Sangha, circumambulated them three times and then, like the great golden-winged bird, flew straight up into space, went to the dwelling place of Gavampati, made full reverential prostrations, and said to Gavampati, "Oh, supple, good and greatly virtuous one who has few desires, knows sufficiency, and constantly dwells in dhyana absorption, Mahakasyapa pays his respects and sends this message: 'Now the Sangha has taken up a great matter of Dharma. You may descend immediately to survey the congregation of a multitude of jewels.'"

At this time, doubts arose in Gavampati's mind and he said to this bhikshu, "The generals of Dharma don't have any matters in dispute wherefore they summon me to come, do they? There isn't anyone causing a schism in the Sangha, is there? Has the Buddha, the Sun, crossed into extinction?"

This bhikshu said, "It is truly as you say. The Great Master, the Buddha, has already crossed into extinction."

Gavampati said, "The Buddha has passed into extinction too swiftly. The eye of the world has perished. That Dharma-Wheel-turning general capable of continuing on after the Buddha, my Upaadhyaya, Sariputra,-- where is he now?"

He replied, "He has already entered nirvana."

Gavampati said, "The Dharma generals of the Great Master have each taken their leave. That could be a problem. Mahamaudgalyayana?"

Where is he now?"

The bhikshu said, "This one too has crossed into extinction."

Gavampati said, "The Dharma of the Buddha is about to become scattered. The great men have passed on. Those beings [who remain] are to be pitied." He asked, "The Venerable Ananda. What is he doing now?"

This bhikshu said, "After the Buddha crossed into extinction, the Venerable nanda was so overcome with sorrow, whimpered so, wept so, and became so confused and desolate, that there is no way I can describe it."

Gavampati said, "Ananda is so grief-stricken because he still possesses the fetters of affection and experiences the [consequent] suffering of separation. Rahula? How was he?"

[The bhikshu] replied, "Because Rahula attained arhatship, he was neither sorrowful nor melancholy. He simply meditated upon [the topic of] all dharmas being characterized by impermanence."

Gavampati said, "When the affection which is difficult to cut off has been cut off, there is no sorrow or melancholy." Gavampati continued, "I have lost the Great Master who transcended desire. Dwelling here in the "Sirii"sa Tree Gardens,- what point is there in that? My Upaadhyaya and the Great Master,-- they have all crossed into extinction. Now I can never again return to Jambudviipa. I shall abide in this parinirvana."

When he finished speaking these words, he entered dhyana

absorption and leapt up into space. His body radiated brilliant light and also shot forth water and fire. He touched the sun and moon with his hands and displayed all manner of spiritual transformations. From his mind he put forth fire which burned up his body. From his body he gushed forth water which descended in four streams to the place of Mahakasyapa. From within the water there came a voice which uttered this verse:

"Gavampati in reverence bows down [before you here],

The foremost wondrous assembly, the greatly virtuous Sangha.

I hear the Buddha's extinct [now] and so follow and depart.

As when the great elephant moves on, the young elephants follow too."

At that time, the subordinate bhikshu took up the robe and bowl and returned to the Sangha.

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Ananda's Return

(T25.69a7- 23 [fasc.2])

During this time Ananda had been contemplating all dharmas and was seeking to bring his residual outflows to an end. That night he sat in dhyana contemplation and walked, working diligently in his quest of the Way. This nanda was one whose wisdom was abundant but whose meditative power was scant. It was because of this that he did not immediately gain the Way. One whose absorptions and wisdom exist in equal measure may rapidly attain it.

When the final watch of the night was nearly over, his weariness was extreme and he was on the point of laying down to rest. In lying down, he took up the pillow. But, before his head reached the pillow, suddenly and expansively, he gained enlightenment. It was like when a flash of lightning appears: those in darkness see the road. In this manner, Ananda entered the Adamantine Absorption and shattered the mountain of all afflictions. He attained the three types of gnosis, the six superknowledges and the complete liberation. He became an arhat possessed of great power. Then he went in the night to the door of the Sagha hall, knocked upon the door and called out. Mahakasyapa asked, "Who's knocking at the door?"

The reply: "I'm Ananda."

Mahakasyapa queried, "Why have you come?"

Ananda announced, "This very night I gained the ending of all outflows."

Mahakasyapa informed him, "We will not open the door for you. You come in through the keyhole."

Ananda agreed, "It can be done that way." Then, using spiritual powers, he went in through the keyhole, prostrated himself in reverence at the feet of the Sangha, repented and declared, "Mahakasyapa, you need not censure me any more."

Mahakasyapa rubbed the top of Ananda's head with his hand and explained, "I deliberately and for your sake influenced you to attain the Way. You have no enmity. I too am thus and hereby recognize your spontaneous realization. This is like painting with the hand in empty space. There is no staining or adhering. The mind of the arhat is also like this. In the midst of all dharmas, one becomes such that there is nothing to which one clings. You may return to your original seat."

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The First Dharma Council

(T25.69a23- 70a5 [fasc.2])

At this time, the Sangha returned to its deliberations, whereupon a question arose: "Gavampati has already opted to cross into extinction. Who else is there who is able to collect and compile the treasury of scriptures?" The Venerable Aniruddha said, "Among the Buddha's disciples, this Venerable Ananda constantly assisted and was near to the Buddha. He heard the scriptures and is able to retain them. The Buddha always praised him, saying, 'This Ananda is able to collect and compile the treasury of scriptures.'"

Then the Venerable Mahakasyapa rubbed the top of Ananda's head, saying, "The Buddha bequeathed this responsibility to you, ordering you to uphold the treasury of Dharma. You should repay the Buddha's kindness. Where did the Buddha speak Dharma the very first time? All of the Buddha's great disciples who have the ability to maintain and guard the treasury of Dharma have crossed into extinction. There is only you, one person, remaining. Now you ought to accord with the mind of the Buddha and, out of sympathy for beings, collect together the treasury of the Buddha's Dharma."

At this time Ananda, after paying reverence to the Sangha, sat atop the lion's seat. At that time, Mahakasyapa uttered this verse:

The Buddha is the sovereign of all the holy lions.

The [Venerable] Ananda is a son unto the Buddha.

He now sits in the place there upon the lion's throne.

Surveying this Assembly that is now without the Buddha.

This legion of great virtue which here appears just so,

In absence of the Buddha has lost its awesome spirit.

It now appears like night when lacking brightness of the moon.

Replete with constellations, it still is not enhanced.

And now, you greatly wise one, it's time for you to speak.

You, scion of the Buddha, you ought now set it forth.

Just where did first the Buddha expound [the holy Dharma]?

Now this you should array for us and and show.

At this time, in a state of single- mindedness, the Venerable
Ananda pressed his palms together, faced the direction of the Buddha's
nirvana and spoke thus:

When first the Buddha spoke the Dharma,

T'was at a time I didn't see.

Like this I heard it roundabout that

The Buddha was at Varanasi.

The Buddha for five bhikshus spoke it,
First opened there the sweet dew gate.
The Four Truths Dharma then he spoke.
Of suffering, cumulation, extinction and Way.

[It was an ascetic], Ajnata Kaundinya,
Was very first then to gain seeing the Way.
A host too of gods, eighty- thousand in number
All entered as well there the track of the Way.

After these one thousand arhats heard these words, they rose
into the air to height of seven tala trees and all said, "Alas! The
power of impermanence is extreme. It is like when we saw the Buddha
speaking Dharma. But now he says, 'I have heard!'" Then they uttered a
verse:

We saw here once the marks of Buddha's body
T'was just like seeing a purple, golden mountain.
The wondrous marks and many virtues perish.
So now there's but a name alone remaining.

Hence therefore one should find a skillful method

To seek the exit from the Triple World.

Good faculties with diligence collect now.

Nirvana is the highest form of bliss.

At that time, the Venerable Aniruddha also set forth a verse:

Alas! The World, there's nothing in it constant.

It's like the moon in water or plantain.

And though one's merits fill the Triple World,

They'll be destroyed by the winds of change.

At that time, Mahakasyapa spoke another verse:

Impermanence, its power's very great.

The dull, the wise, the poor, the rich and noble,

Those who've gained the Way and those who've not,

Avoid it, none among them ever can.

Not with clever words or wondrous treasures,

Nor artifice, deception, strength, dispute.

It's like a fire which burns the myriad objects.

Dharmas marked by impermanence are just thus.

Mahakasyapa said to Ananda, "From The Turning the Dharma Wheel Scripture up to The Great Parinirvana, we have collected and compiled The Four Agamas: The Item- Added Agama, The Middle- Length Agama, The Long Agama, and The Connected Agama. These constitute the treasury of Sutra Dharma."

The Arhats also asked, "Who is able to clearly understand and collect the treasury of the Vinaya Dharma?" They all agreed, "Among the five hundred Arhats, the Venerable Upali is the foremost in upholding the precepts. Let us now request his assistance." They then summoned him, saying, "Arise. Go and sit upon the lion's seat and explain where the Buddha first spoke the Vinaya and formulated prohibitions."

Upali accepted the instruction of the Sangha, sat in the lion's seat and said, "Thus I have heard at one time, the Buddha was at Vaisali. At that time, Sudinna, son of Kalanda, first indulged in concupiscence. For this reason, the Buddha formulated the first major transgression. The explication of the meaning of the two hundred and fifty prohibitions constitutes three sections. Additionally there are the Seven Dharmas, the Eight Dharmas, the Bhikshuni Vinaya, the 'Item- Added Section,' 'The Inquiries of Upali on Various Topics Section,' the 'Miscellaneous Section,' and the 'Goodness Section.' Topics such as these in eight categories and ten sections constitute the treasury of

the Vinaya."

Again, the Arhats pondered further, "Who is able to clearly compile the treasury of the Abhidharma?" They thought, "Among the five hundred Arhats, the Venerable Ananda is foremost in the comprehension of the meaning of the Sutras. Let us now request his assistance." They then summoned him, saying, "Arise. Go and sit upon the the lion's seat. Where did the Buddha first set forth the Abhidharma?"

Ananda accepted the instruction of the Sangha. He sat in the lion's seat and declared, "Thus I have heard, at one time, the Buddha was at the town of Sravasti. At that time the Buddha told the Bhikshus, 'If throughout one's existences, five dreadables, five violations and five despicables are not expelled and are not destroyed,- then on account of these causes and conditions, during this very life, one's body and mind undergo immeasurable suffering. Moreover, in subsequent incarnations, one falls into the bad paths.

'If throughout one's existences, one does not have these five dreadables, five violations, five despicables,- on account of these causes and conditions, during the present life, in body and in mind, one undergoes all manner of bliss. In subsequent incarnations, one is born in the blissful places in the heavens.

'What are the five dreadables from which one ought to distance oneself? The first is killing, the second is stealing, the third is sexual misconduct, the fourth is false speech, and the fifth is the

drinking of liquor.' Discourses such as these constitute the treasury of the Abhidharma."

When the treasuries of the three classes of Dharma were brought to completion, the gods, ghosts, spirits, dragons, and heavenly maidens presented all manner of offerings. There rained down heavenly flowers, incense, banners, canopies and heavenly raiments as offerings to the Dharma. At that time those beings uttered a verse:

Acting here from pity for the beings of the World.

Now you have compiled all three treasuries of Dharma.

Issued from the ten- fold powers and the knowledge of all modes,

This spoken wisdom's a beacon midst ignorance's darkness.

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Buddha Compared to the Wheel-turning Kings and Others

(T25.70b19-70c1 [fasc.2])

Among the Noble Wheel- turning Kings, Indra, Brahma, and the World Guardians, there are none who are the equal of the Buddha, how much the less would this be the case with common people. How is this so? The Noble Wheel- turning Kings are linked to the bonds. The Buddha has already escaped the bonds. The Noble Wheel- turning Kings are sunken in the quagmire of birth, aging, disease, and death. The Buddha has already succeeded in fording it. The Noble Wheel- turning Kings are the slaves of affection and desire. The Buddha has already eternally transcended them. The Noble Wheel- turning Kings reside in the disastrous arena of the vast wilderness of worldly existence. The Buddha has already gone beyond it. The Noble Wheel- turning Kings dwell in the darkness of ignorance. The Buddha dwells in supreme brightness. The Noble Wheel- turning Kings at the very most preside over a realm consisting of four continents. The Buddha presides over all worlds. The Noble Wheel- turning Kings possess the sovereignty of wealth. The Buddha possesses sovereignty of the mind. The Noble Wheel- turning Kings covet and crave the bliss of the heavens. The Buddha does not covet or become attached to any bliss whatsoever, not even that which characterizes the summit of existence. The Noble Wheel- turning Kings seek bliss from others. As for the Buddha, internally, his mind is naturally blissful. For these reasons, the Buddha is superior to the Noble Wheel- turning Kings. And this is also the case with respect to all the others: Indra, Brahma, and the World Guardians. For their part

they are only slightly superior to the Noble Wheel- turning Kings.

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Buddha Versus the Arhats and Pratyekabuddhas

[From Nagarjuna's explanation of "Bhagavat"]

(T25.70c1- 11 [fasc.2])

Furthermore, Bhaga means "to destroy". "Vat" signifies "ability." Because a person such as this is able to destroy desire, aversion and delusion he is called "Bhagavat."

Question: Beings such as arhats and pratyekabuddhas have also destroyed desire, aversion, and delusion. How is this any different from what the Buddha has done?

Response: Although arhats and pratyekabuddhas have destroyed

the three poisons, the subtle traces have not been completely eliminated. This is like perfume in a bottle. Although the perfume may be removed, the residual fragrance stubbornly remains.

Again, this circumstance is analogous to burning fuel consisting of grass and wood: although the fire burns and smoke comes forth, the cinders and ashes are not completely consumed. This is because the intensity of the fire is slight.

In the case of the Buddha, the three poisons have been eternally eliminated without any remaining vestiges. This is just like when, at the end of the kalpa, the fire burns Mount Sumeru and the entire earth: the fire consumes everything and leaves no remaining smoke or cinders.

Examples of this are evident in the residual traces of Riputra's enmity, the residual traces of Nanda's concupiscence, and the residual traces of Pilindavatsa's arrogance. Such instances are analogous to the gait of people confined in shackles when first they are set free: they still cannot saunter about with agility.

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Sariputra's Unyielding Resolve

(T25.70c11- 71a17 [fasc.2])

Once the Buddha arose from dhyana and proceeded to walk along. Rahula followed, walking with the Buddha. The Buddha asked Rahula, "Why are you so gaunt?" Rahula replied to the Buddha by uttering a verse:

"If one partakes of foods with oils, then in strength he gains.

And if one partakes of curds as food, then in color he gains.

But eating leftover sesame vegetables, one has no strength or color.

This the Venerable World Honored One ought to naturally know."

The Buddha asked Rahula, "Who sits at the head of this assembly?"

Rahula replied, "The upadhyaya, Sariputra."

The Buddha said, "Sariputra has consumed impure fare."

Sariputra overheard this pronouncement, immediately vomited up his meal and made a vow to himself, saying, "From this very day I shall never again accept [food proffered through] people's invitations."

At this time King Prasenajit, Sudatta the Elder, and others came to pay a visit to Sariputra and said to Sariputra, "It is not without

reason that the Buddha accepts people's invitations. If the greatly virtuous riputra no longer accepts invitations, how shall laypeople such as us be able to obtain the purification of great faith?"

Sariputra said, "My great master, the Buddha, has said, 'Sariputra consumes impure fare.' Now I cannot bear to accept people's invitations."

At this, Prasenajit and the others went to the Buddha and addressed the Buddha, saying, "The Buddha does not often accept people's invitations. riputra no longer accepts invitations. How shall the minds of people such as us develop great faith? Pray, may the Buddha direct Sariputra to continue to accept invitations."

The Buddha said, "This man's resolve is solid and it cannot be moved or deflected." Then the Buddha proceeded to recount the causes and conditions of a previous life:

"Formerly, there was a king who had been bitten by a poisonous snake. As the King was on the verge of succumbing, he summoned the expert physicians and ordered them to treat the snake poisoning. Then the physicians said, 'We must cause the snake to draw it out again. Then the poisonous effects shall cease.'

"At this time the physicians each performed incantational rituals. The snake which had bitten the King then came to the King's quarters. The physicians stacked up firewood, set it ablaze and then commanded the snake, 'Draw your poison back out again. If you don't,

then you shall have to go into this fire.'

The poisonous snake then thought, 'Since I have already injected the poison, how can I draw it out again? This matter shall lead to my violent death.' Having reflected thus his mind became fixed and he then immediately slithered forward into the midst of the flames.

That poisonous snake was Sariputra. In life after life his mind has been solid and immovable."

NOTES:

Sariputra, by invitation, had led the monks to a prominent household where the senior monks were served sumptuously while new ordines and novices such as Rahula were served only a two-week-old mixture of rice, sesame and vegetables. Hence the Buddha's declaration that the (blatantly discriminatory) meal constituted impure fare. See Lamotte, 118-21.

Pilindavatsa and the Ganges River Spirit

(T25.71a17-29 [fasc.2])

The venerable Pilindavatsa was constantly afflicted with eye pain. In the course of his regular rounds begging for food, this personage always forded the River Ganges. Upon reaching the shore of the Ganges he would snap his fingers and call out, "Little slave! Stop! Don't flow!" The waters would then part and he would be free to cross and beg for food. This Ganges River spirit went to where the Buddha dwelt and addressed the Buddha, complaining, "The Buddha's disciple, Pilindavatsa, is forever insulting me, saying, 'Little slave! Stop! Don't flow!'"

The Buddha instructed Pilindavatsa to apologize to the Ganges spirit. Pilindavatsa immediately pressed his palms together and said to the Ganges spirit, "Little slave, don't be angry. I now apologize to you." At this moment, the Great Assembly laughed at this, exclaiming, "How can you apologize to her, and yet proceed to insult her once again even while doing so?!"

The Buddha said to the Ganges spirit, "As you look at

Pilindavatsa, is he pressing his palms together and apologizing or not?
He is apologizing without any arrogance and yet he still speaks this way. You should understand that this is not deliberate insolence. For the last five hundred lifetimes this man has repeatedly been reborn into brahman households and thus has always been haughty and esteemed himself while slighting and demeaning others. This is just the manner of speaking which he originally practiced, that's all. In his mind there is no haughtiness."

In just this way, although the arhats have cut off the fetters , they still retain residual traces of them.

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Buddha's Absolute Equanimity

(T25.71a29-71b13 [fasc.2])

In the case of one like the Buddha, the World Honored One, were someone to take up a knife and cut off one arm while someone else were

to anoint the other arm with sandalwood fragrance, in his mind there would be no hatred towards the one nor affection towards the other in just the same way as there would be no particular enmity towards his own left eye nor a favoring affection towards his own right eye. This is because he has become eternally without residual traces [of the fetters].

In the midst of the Great Assembly, Ci~ncaa, the Brahman woman, wearing a bowl [beneath her clothes], slandered the Buddha, declaring, "You got me pregnant! Why do you show no concern? You should provide me with clothing and food!" She acted that way, shamelessly attempting to deceive and delude others. Then five hundred Brahman leaders all raised up their arms, yelling, "It is so! It is so! We are all aware of this affair!"

At that time the Buddha had no change in countenance, nor did he have an appearance of humiliation. This matter was immediately exposed [as fraudulent], for the earth quaked mightily, the gods made offerings, scattering a profusion of rare blossoms and praising the virtues of the Buddha. And in that the Buddha made no expression of delight.

Moreover, when the Buddha was once compelled to eat the feed grain of horses, he was not disheartened by that. And when the King of the Gods offered up delicacies replete with the hundred flavors, he was not moved to pleasure on account of that. He was of a single mind which

was nondual.

Amidst offerings of all kinds of food and drink, clothing and bedding, and amidst all manner of praise, blame, slighting, and displays of reverence, his mind did not change: it is like real gold, which can be smelted, forged, wrought, and polished, all without either increase or decrease. On account of [qualitative differences such as] these, although the Arhats have cut off the fetters, they still retain residual traces of them and thus are not deserving of the appellation, "Bhagavat."

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* Buddha and the Six Perfections

(T25.71b22-25 [fasc.2])

The Buddha takes up patience as his coat of mail

And vigor as his suit of rigid armor.

The upholding of precepts is his stately steed.

And dhyana absorption is his excellent bow.

Out of his wisdom he makes up fine arrows.

Outside, he crushes the demon king's armies.

Inside, he destroys the thieves of affliction.

On account of this he is known as an arihat.

EndNotes:

"Dhyana", "Ch'an", "Zen". These are all precisely the same Sanskrit word (the latter two are but abbreviated transliterations of the first). Dhyaana generally refers to the cultivation of the various levels of meditative absorption, from the very lowest (access concentration) up to the highest (the state of neither perception nor non-perception). But the etymological identity of these three terms should not lead us to the blind assumption that the practices associated with each are similarly identical.

Edward Conze once aptly noted that "Ch'an" represents the Chinese cultural response to Indian meditative traditions and that "Zen" represents the Japanese cultural response to Chinese Ch'an practice. What then can we say of American "Zen"? Certainly, it does serve to more or less accurately preserve a sub-species of post-monastic

meditative traditions as they have recently developed in Japan. But can it justifiably claim to preserve the potent dhyana traditions of its Buddhist cultural antecedents? Helpful readings for perspective on this topic:

Traditions of Meditation in Chinese Buddhism. Edited by Peter N. Gregory. Studies in East Asian Buddhism no.4. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1986.

The Great Calming and Contemplation. Neal Donner and Daniel B. Stevenson. Classics in East Asian Buddhism. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1993. (This is a translation and discussion of one chapter out of a very important classic work by the great T'ien T'ai Mountain monk Chih Yi [538-597 C.E.]).

Meditating with Koans. Jonathan Christopher Cleary tr. Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press, 1992. (This is a translation of a collection of brief writings by real Ch'an practitioners put together and commented upon by Chu-hung [1535-1615 C.E.], an immensely famous Ming Dynasty Ch'an Master [a.k.a. "Lotus Pool" who also strongly advocated Pure Land practice as not antithetical to but rather supportive of Ch'an practice.) [Back to text]

"Arihat" here means "slayer of the thieves", the thieves in this case being those internal and external obstacles obstructing the conquest of enlightenment. [Back to text]

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The Cowherds Test the Buddha's Omniscience

(T25.73b20-74b17 [fasc.2])

Bimbisara, king of the state of Magadha, invited the Buddha and five hundred disciples to stay for three months. Because the King required fresh milk and yoghurt with which to make offerings to the Buddha and the bhikshu sangha he told the cowherds to come and dwell at a place close by. Every day they delivered fresh milk and yoghurt. At the end of the three month period, the King, out of kindness for the cowherds, told them, "You may go to see the Buddha and then afterwards you may come back and look after the cows." All of the cowherds then set out to pay a visit to the Buddha. While on the road they had a discussion among themselves, saying, "We have heard people say that the Buddha is omniscient. We are all lesser fellows of inferior station. How would we be able to determine that an omniscient man actually exists?"

Because all of the Brahmans are fond of yoghurt, they were always coming and going at the cowherds' place and thus came to be quite friendly with them. On account of this the cowherds had come to hear the names of all of the various Brahmanical scriptures.

They continued, "As for all the difficult questions about the teachings in the four Vedas on techniques of healing, fighting,

astrology, sacrifices to the gods, singing, dancing, debating, and all of the other sixty- four kinds of worldly arts like these: because this son of the Pure Rice King has studied broadly and is very learned, if he were to know about all of these matters, it would not qualify as remarkably difficult. But he has never been a cowherd. We'll ask him about the secret methods involved in raising cows. If he is able to understand them, then he actually is an omniscient man."

After they had finished their discussion, they entered the bamboo gardens from the front and saw the light of the Buddha illuminating the forest. They moved forward, peeked at the Buddha, and saw him sitting beneath a tree, his shape like a mountain of gold. It was as when butter is thrown on the fire and its flames are intensely bright. It was as if molten gold had been showered all over the bamboo grove. They gazed insatiably upon his form radiating purple golden light. Their minds were greatly delighted and they said to themselves:

Now this lion of the Shakyān clan,
As to whether or not he possesses omniscience,
On seeing him no one fails to be delighted.
This matter alone would be sufficient as proof.

His light is the foremost illumination.

His countenance is extremely rare and precious.

The physical characteristics abound in awesome virtue.

They all measure up to the name of "Buddha."

Every characteristic is distinctly clear.

In awesome spirituality he is utterly replete.

He is cloaked in meritorious qualities.

Of those who see him, none fail to adore him.

His body dwells amidst an orb of light.

Whoever looks upon him can never see enough.

If there is someone who possesses omniscience,

Certainly he would possess these meritorious qualities.

All of the paintings portrayed in various hues

And the images embellished with jeweled adornments

Might try to compare with this exquisite figure,

But could never succeed if even only by simile.

He is able to satisfy all who gaze upon him,

Causing them to develop the most supreme bliss.

Whoever looks upon him gains pure faith.

Certainly he is a man who's omniscient.

After having thought in this way, they paid reverence before the Buddha, sat down, and then asked, "What methods does a cowherd perfect that he is able to cause the herd to flourish and what methods might he fail to perfect that the herd thereby fails to grow and become peaceful and secure?"

The Buddha replied, "There are eleven methods by which the cowherd is able to cause the herd to flourish. What are these eleven? They are: knowing the color; knowing the characteristics; knowing how to groom; knowing how to properly dress sores; knowing how to make smoke; knowing the good road; knowing the proper place for cattle; knowing the good place to ford; knowing the peaceful and secure place; knowing how to preserve the flow of milk; and knowing how to care for the lead bull.

"If the cowherd knows these eleven methods, he will be able to cause the herd to multiply. The bhikshu is also like this. If he knows eleven methods, he is able bring about increase and growth of wholesome dharmas. "What is meant by 'knowing the color'? One is knowledgeable about the relative value of cattle which are black, white and various other colors. The bhikshu is also like this. He knows all forms are the four great elements or are composed of the four great elements.

"What is meant by 'knowing the characteristics'? One knows the characteristics of cattle which indicate auspiciousness and

inauspiciousness. Whether or not a cow will be harmonious with another herd is known on the basis of its characteristics. The bhikshu is also like this. On seeing the characteristics of wholesome karma, he knows one is a wise person. On seeing the characteristics of bad karma, he knows one is a stupid person.

"What is meant by 'grooming'? When the blood of cattle is being sucked by insects, then there is an increase in sores. By grooming, one gets rid of this harm and then the cow is happy and its hair is glossy. The bhikshu is also like this. When the insects of unwholesome and deviant initial and discursive thought drink the blood of one's wholesome faculties, this increases the sores of the mind. When they are gotten rid of one abides in peacefulness and security.

"What is meant by 'dressing sores'? This refers to employing dressings made from grasses and leaves in order to prevent the noxious bites of mosquitoes and biting flies. The bhikshu is also like this. He employs the dharmas of proper contemplation to cover up the sores of the six sense organs and thus does not allow himself to be harmed by the stings of the noxious insects of afflictions such as lust and anger.

"What is meant by knowing how to create smoke in order to get rid of mosquitoes and biting flies? When from a distance, the cow sees smoke, then it will come towards the dwellings. The bhikshu is also like this. He speaks in strict accord with what he has heard and gets rid of all of the mosquitoes and biting flies of the fetters. He

employs the [signal- fire] smoke of speaking Dharma in order to lead beings forth that they might enter into the dwelling of no- self, the reality mark and emptiness.

"What is meant by knowing the road? This refers to knowing the good and bad roads for having the cattle come and go. The bhikshu is also this way. He knows that the eight- fold holy path is able to take one to nirvana and distances himself from the bad paths of annihilationism and impermanence.

"What is meant by knowing the appropriate location for cattle? When one knows the appropriate location for cows, one is able to cause the cattle to multiply and have but little disease. The bhikshu is also like this. When the Dharma of the Buddha is spoken, he gains a pure Dharma bliss and all of his wholesome faculties increase to repletion.

"What is meant by knowing where to ford? One knows the place where it is easy to enter, where it is easy to cross, where there are no waves or noxious pests. The bhikshu is also like this. He is able to go to the abode of a learned bhikshu and inquire about Dharma. The one who speaks Dharma is aware of the relative sharpness of mind and relative weight of afflictions possessed by the person before him. Thus he influences him to choose a good fording place and to succeed in making a safe crossing(from samsara to nirvana).

What is meant by knowing a peaceful and secure place? One knows of a place to dwell which has no tigers, wolves, lions, noxious insects

or venomous animal life. The bhikshu is also like this. He knows the peacefulness and security of the four stations of mindfulness where there are none of the noxious demons and venomous beasts of the afflictions. The bhikshu enters into these and thus is peaceful, secure and without calamity.

What is meant by preserving the flow of milk? The cow produces milk out of affection for the calf. By leaving whatever milk is in excess of the need, the cow is happy and there continues to be an unexhausted supply. The lead bull as well as the cowherds benefit from this every day. The bhikshu is also like this. The laypeople donate clothing and food. One must know how to be conservative in the amount one accepts and thus one is able to prevent this resource from being exhausted. If this is the case, then the donors are happy and their faith is not cut short and yet the recipients have no shortage of essentials.

"What is meant by knowing how to care for the lead bull? If one protects the big bull, he will be able to guard the herd. Therefore one ought to care for it and protect it and not allow it to become gaunt. It should be given sesame oil to drink, provided with the adornment of a necklace and given the distinction of metal- covered horns. It should be kneaded and brushed and effusively praised. The bhikshu is also like this. When among the multitude of Sangha members, there is a great man possessed of awesome virtue who is able to protect and benefit the

Buddha Dharma, is able to utterly defeat in debate externalists and is able to influence the eight- fold assembly to succeed in planting roots of goodness, one should afford him respect and make offerings to him according to whatever he needs."

When the cowherds had heard these words, they thought to themselves, "What we cowherds know doesn't go beyond three or four of these subjects and the master cowherders at the very most aren't familiar with more than five or six subjects." Now that they had heard this discourse, they exclaimed over hearing what none of them had heard before and agreed, "If he is aware of these matters, then he must know all the rest as well. Truly, he is an omniscient man." They then had no further doubts.

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The City of the Kings' Abode

(T25.76a8-c12 [fasc.3])

Question: Cities such as Sravasti, Kapilavastu and Varanasi each contain the domiciles of kings. Why then is this city alone referred to as "City of the Kings' Abode (Rajagrha)?"

Reply: There are people who say that the king of Magadha had a son who was born with a single head, but two faces and four arms. Because the people of the time took this to be inauspicious, the king sliced off the head from the body and then cast them aside in the wilderness. A female rakshasa ghost named Liilaa put the boy's body back together again and then suckled and raised him.

Later he grew into a great man whose power rivaled that of all of the kings of the neighboring states. He established sovereignty throughout the country, and sent all of the former kings, eighteen thousand in all, to dwell together in the area surrounded by these five mountains. He used his great power to rule over all of Jambudvipa. Because of this, the people of Jambudvipa named this mountain "City of the Kings' Abode."

Again, there are some people who say that the city where the king of Magadha formerly dwelt was subject to runaway fires. Each time the city burned, it was rebuilt. It happened like this seven times, after which the people were worn out from conscription and the king was greatly distressed and terrorized. He then assembled all of the sages and solicited their opinions on the best course of action. There were

those who came down in favor of the idea that the city should be moved to another place. The king then began to search for a new place to dwell. He saw these five mountains arranged in a circle like a city wall, built a palace in the area surrounded by them and then settled there. Because of this it came to be named "City of the Kings' Abode."

And then again, long ago in ancient times, this country had a king who was named Vasu. His mind became weary with worldly dharmas and as a result he left behind the home life and became a hermit. At this time the home-dwelling brahmans were involved in a doctrinal debate with the hermits who had left the home life. The home-dwelling brahmans insisted that the scriptures require that ritual offerings to the gods require slaughtering animals and eating their flesh. The hermits who had left the home life insisted that one should not slaughter animals and eat their flesh in the course of making ritual offerings to the gods. They argued back and forth until finally the brahmans who had left the home life said, "Here we have a king who has left the home life and become a hermit. Do you all trust him or not?"

The home-dwelling brahmans all said, "We trust in him."

The brahmans who had left the home life said, "We will use this man as an arbiter. Tomorrow we shall pose the question to him." Then, that very evening, the home-dwelling brahmans were first to pay a visit to the abode of Vasu the hermit. After having asked all manner of questions, they said to Vasu, the hermit, "In tomorrow's debate you must

help us." The next morning at the appointed time for the discussion, the hermits who had left the home life asked Vasu the hermit, "In the course of performing ritual offerings to the gods, should one slaughter animals and eat their flesh or not?"

Vasu the hermit said, "According to the dharma of the Brahmins, during the course of performing ritual offerings to the gods, one should slaughter animals and eat their flesh."

The hermits who had left the home life said, "But what do you yourself actually think? Should one slaughter animals and eat their flesh?"

Vasu the hermit replied, "Because it is a sacrifice to the gods, one ought to slaughter animals and eat their flesh. Because these animals die in the course of a sacrifice made to the gods, they are able to be reborn in the heavens."

The hermits who had left the home life exclaimed, "You are utterly wrong! You have told a great lie!" Then they spat upon him and said, "Disappear, you malefactor!" At this time Vasu the hermit sank into the ground up to the level of his ankles. Because he had only just opened for the first time the door to extreme offenses, the hermits who had left the home life said, "You ought to speak true words. If you deliberately lie, your body will sink into the earth."

Vasu the hermit said, "I know that because one slaughters the sheep and eats its flesh on behalf of the gods, there is no offense,"

whereupon he immediately sank farther into the earth up to the level of his knees. In this manner he gradually sank up to his waist and then up to his neck.

The hermits who had left the home life said to him, "You are now undergoing present and immediate retribution for your lying. However, if you change your ways and speak the truth, although you have sunken into the earth, we will still be able to get you out again and bring it about that your offense will be pardoned."

At that time, Vasu the hermit thought to himself, "I am a noble and eminent personage and thus should not make contradictory statements. Moreover, it is the dharma of the four Brahmanical Vedas to praise, for all manner of reasons, the methods for making of offerings to the gods. If I, one single person, die on account of this, how is that even worth reckoning? Then he singlemindedly stated, "It should be that there is no offense in slaughtering animals and eating them during the course of making offerings to the gods."

The hermits who had left the home life said, "You are a man with heavy offenses. May you be forced away. It's useless to even lay eyes on you." At this time his entire body sank into the earth. From that point on even until the present day, they have always used the method prescribed by Vasu, the hermit king, of slaughtering sheep in the course of making offerings to the gods. Just as the knife is about to fall, they say, "It is Vasu who kills you."

The son of Vasu, named "Wide Chariot," assumed the throne. Later, he too grew weary of worldly dharmas, but was not also able to leave the home life. He thought to himself, "My father, the former king, left the home life, but even while still alive was swallowed up by the earth. However, to continue to rule the nation is to create more great offenses. How then should I now conduct myself?"

When he was thinking like this, he heard a voice from space, saying, "If when travelling, you see a place which is seldom seen and rare, you ought to build a home and live there." After it had made this statement, he no longer heard the voice.

It was not long after that the King ventured into the country to go hunting. He saw a deer that was running as fast as the wind. The King then chased after it but could not catch up to it. He pursued it without stopping. None of the multitude of officials and retainers could keep up. As he travelled on farther ahead he saw a ridge of five mountains which ran in a steep and solid circle. The ground was flat and even. Delicate grasses which were fine and soft together with fine flowers covered the soil. All kinds of trees and flowers and fruits flourished there. The land was enhanced by pure- watered warm springs and bathing pools. Heavenly flowers and heavenly incense floated down everywhere and everywhere there was the sound of heavenly music. At that time the gandharva music- makers retreated on seeing the king approach. This place was rare and such as never had been seen before.

"Now I ought to build a home right in center of this area and live here," he thought. Just as he had finished this thought, the multitude of ministers and the numerous officials, following his tracks, arrived at the spot. The king told the ministers, "Formerly, the voice which I heard from empty space said, 'If when travelling, you see a place which is seldom seen and rare, you ought to build a home and live there.' Now I have seen this rare place. I ought to build a home and live here." He then abandoned the original city and came to dwell amidst these mountains. This king was the first to dwell there. After that the succeeding kings each dwelt there as well. Because formerly this king established his palace there, the place was named "City of the Kings' Abode."

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Mahakasyapa and Mt. Grdhrakuta

(T25.78b26-79b2 [fasc.3])

Again, Mahakasyapa, the elder, oversaw the compilation of the threefold treasury of Dharma on Mt. Grdhrakuta. When all the beings which he was able to cross over had been crossed over, he wished to follow the Buddha by entering nirvana. After he had risen in the early morning and had gone into The City of the Kings' Abode to make his alms rounds, he ascended Mt. Grdhrakuta and told all of his disciples, "Today I shall enter the nirvana without residue." After he had said this he went into his dwelling and sat in full lotus whereupon non- outflow dhyana absorption permeated his being.

The disciples of Mahakasyapa went into the city of Kings' Abode and told all of the gentry, "Are you aware or are you not that the venerable Mahakasyapa is this very day going to enter the nirvana without residue?" When the various gentry folk heard these words, they became greatly saddened and distressed, saying, "The Buddha has already crossed into extinction. Mahakasyapa maintains and protects the Dharma of the Buddha. Now, today, he too is about to enter the nirvana without residue." In the late afternoon, the various gentry folk and the bhikshus all assembled on Mt. Grdhrakuta. In the late afternoon Mahakasyapa, the elder, arose from dhyana, joined the assemblage and sat down.

Then he spoke in praise of the teaching of impermanence, saying, "Because all composite dharmas are a product of causes and conditions,

they are therefore impermanent. Because, formerly nonexistent, they now exist, and then pass again into nonexistence, they are therefore, impermanent. Because they are impermanent they do therefore conduce to suffering. Because they conduce to suffering, they are therefore not self. Because they are not self, he who is possessed of wisdom should not become attached to the concepts of 'I' and 'mine.' If one becomes attached to 'I' and 'mine,' then one becomes subject to an immeasurable amount of worry, distress, suffering and affliction. In all worldly spheres, one should abhor and seek liberation from desires." He spoke like this in many ways about the suffering inherent in the World, leading forth his mind to cause it to enter upon nirvana.

After he had delivered this discourse, he donned the sa.mghaatii robe obtained from the Buddha, and, taking hold of the bowl and robe and grasping his staff, just like the golden-winged garuda bird, he rose up into space, appearing in the four different physical postures of sitting, lying down, walking and standing. His one body then manifest an immeasurable number of bodies which filled up the world to the east. Then these immeasurable number of bodies became one body again. From the top of his body he threw forth flames while from below he gushed forth water. Then, from the top of his body he gushed forth water while from below he threw forth flames. In the south, in the west, and in the north as well, it was also like this.

After the minds of those assembled had felt aversion to the

world and had then been brought to delight, on the top of Mt.

Grdhrakuta, with bowl and robe, he uttered an oath, "May my body be caused to not decay, so that when Maitreya becomes a Buddha, this skeleton of mine will appear once again, and on account of these causes and conditions beings will obtain deliverance." After he had contemplated in this manner, he entered directly into the rock on the top of the mountain, just as if he were sinking into soft mud. After he had entered, the mountain closed shut behind him.

Later on, when the normal lifespan of people reaches 84,000 years and their normal height reaches eighty feet, Maitreya Buddha will appear. The Buddha's body will be one hundred and sixty feet tall and the Buddha's face will itself extend twenty- four feet while his nimbus will span ten meters. At this time, when beings hear that Maitreya Buddha has appeared, an immeasurable number of people will follow the Buddha in leaving the home life. When the Buddha is in the midst of the great assembly and first speaks Dharma, ninety- nine ko.tis of people will gain the way of arhatship and will be replete with the six superknowledges. On the second day, ninety- six ko.tis of people will gain the way of arhatship. On the third day ninety- three ko.tis of people will gain the way of arhatship. From this time onward he will bring an innumerable number of people to deliverance. Then, after a long time, the people will become lazy and reluctant to cultivate.

When Maitreya sees that the people in the assembly are like

this, he will use his toe to split open Mt. Grdhrakuta. At that time, Mahakasyapa's skeleton, dressed in the sa.mghaatii robe will come forth and pay reverence at the feet of Maitreya. He will ascend into space and manifest again the various transformations described before. Then in the midst of space, he will make his body disappear as he enters parinirvana.

At that time the disciples of Maitreya Buddha will be astonished and will ask, "Who was that man who looked so like a person, but yet was so small? His body was wearing the Dharma robes and he was able to display such transformations."

Maitreya Buddha will say, "That was a disciple of the former Buddha, Shakyamuni. His name was Mahakasyapa. He cultivated dwelling in an ara.nya where he had but few desires and was easily contented. Among the bhikshus who cultivated the dhuutaguu.na practices he was foremost. He was a great arhat who had obtained the six superknowledges and the complete liberation. At that time, the lifespan of people was a hundred years, with a few exceeding it but most not reaching it. If he, with such a small body, was able to succeed at such a great matter, why do not all of you, with such sizable physiques and sharp faculties, engage in merit such as this?"

At that time, all of his disciples will be repentant and will develop a great aversion[to worldly dharmas]. Maitreya Buddha, according with the minds of those beings, will speak all manner of

dharmas for their sakes. There will be those who gain arhatship, the stage of the anaagaamin, the stage of the sak.rdaagaamin, and the stage of the srotaaapanna. There will be those who plant the roots of goodness of the pratyekabuddha. There will be those who gain the patience arising from the realization of the non- production of dharmas and the stage of the non- retreating bodhisattva. There will be those who obtain rebirth in the heavens where they shall experience all manner of blessings and bliss. On account of this one should know that Mt. Grdhrakuta is an auspicious place replete with meritorious qualities and is a place where holy men like to dwell and where the Buddha, for the sake of holy men, dwelt himself. For this reason the Buddha mostly dwelt at Mt. Grdhrakuta.

End Notes

A ko.ti is a very large number which, if taken literally, is equal to 10,000,000. [back to text]

An ara.nya is a secluded and quiet hermitage. [back to text]

The dhuutaguu.na practices are a set of twelve austere, but beneficial, practices specifically recommended by the Buddha. They include such

practices as: eating only a single meal each day, that meal being completed prior to solar noon; eating only a limited and fixed amount of food at one's single meal each day; dwelling in an ara.nya; dwelling in a charnel field (the better to contemplate the impermanence and impurity of the body); and sleeping only in a sitting posture and never lying down. Not to be confused with the nonbeneficial ascetic practices which the Buddha specifically discouraged. [back to text]

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Shaariputra Explains Pure Sustenance to Shucimukhii

(T25.79c2-80a1 [fasc.3])

Shaariputra went into the city to make his alms rounds and having obtained his food sat down against a wall to eat. At this time, a Brahmacari.nii named "Pure Eyes" (Shucimukhii) came along and, seeing

Shaariputra, asked him, "Shrama.na, are you eating?"

He replied, "Yes, I'm eating."

Pure Eyes asked, "Do you shrama.nas eat with your attention directed downwards?"

He replied, "No, Sister."

"Do you eat with your attention directed upwards?"

"No."

"With your attention directed to the [four] directions?"

"No."

"With your attention directed to the four midpoints?"

"No."

Pure Eyes said, "There are four approaches to gaining one's sustenance. I asked you about them and you said 'no' in every case. I don't understand. You ought to explain."

Shaariputra said, "There are those who, having left the home life, blend herbs, sow grains, plant trees, or engage in other such forms of impure means of sustaining one's life. These methods are referred to as eating with one's attention directed downwards.

"There are those who, having left the home life, carry out observations of the stars, the constellations, the sun, the moon, the wind, the rain, thunder and lightning, and thunderbolts, carrying on this impure means of sustaining one's life. These methods are referred to as eating with one's attention directed upwards.

"There are those who have left the home life who manipulate and flatter the noble and powerful, who deliver messages for them in all four directions, or who employ clever words and covetousness, these impure means of sustaining one's life. These methods are referred to as eating with one's attention directed in all directions.

"There are those who, having left the home life, study all manner of incantational techniques, or who practice divination and calculation of auspiciousness and inauspiciousness and all manner of impure means such as these for sustaining their lives. These methods are referred to as eating with one's attention focused on the midpoints. Sister, I do not fall into any of these four types of impure means of sustaining one's life. I employ the pure alms round to sustain this life."

At this time, when Pure Eyes had heard the explanation of the dharma of pure eating, she was delighted and developed faith and understanding. Shaariputra, because he had spoken Dharma for her, gained the way of the Srota- aapanna.

End Notes:

Reaching an accurate Buddhist understanding of this idea may require a cultural and conceptual leap for some. Many of us are hard

pressed not to wince and look askance at apparently able-bodied people who prefer alms to the wage-earner's nine-to-five, cash-on-the-barrelhead mode of existence. A few clues which may be helpful:

a) The Buddha stated repeatedly and in no uncertain terms that due to the great power of the karmic law of cause-and-effect, the layperson who willingly and happily provides assistance to the renunciate monastic (not to be confused with non-celibate lay priests) gains an incredible reward of merit whereby blessings and bliss ensue in this and future lives. This being the case, the earnestly rigorous and renunciate monastic constitutes what is referred to as a "field of blessings" whose availability to accept such assistance is a particularly potent resource to the layperson desirous of accumulating merit for future worldly and spiritual benefit;

b) Involvement in the exigencies of pursuing a livelihood in the normal sense of the term was forbidden for monastics by the Buddha. It was held to be a great abyss which jeopardizes the monastic's ability to retain fulltime focus on the Path;

c) Were the monastic to dilute his spiritual cultivation with involvement in a "livelihood," his potency as a "field of merit" would diminish commensurately while his clarity, perspective and effectiveness as a source of spiritual guidance to the laity would be seriously compromised;

d) A closer examination of orthodox monastic life reveals that

it constitutes the most extremely challenging and unremittingly demanding of jobs. When one drops the rather mean and narrow criteria of the fiscal yardstick it becomes much more difficult to maintain the opinion that the monastic life doesn't constitute real and honest work.

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Subhadra, the Brahmacharin

(T25.80c4-81a11 [fasc.3])

Subhadra, the brahmacharin was one hundred and twenty years old and had obtained the five superknowledges. He dwelt on the shore of Lake Anavatapta. One night, in a dream, he saw everyone blinded and standing naked in the dark. The sun fell from the sky, the earth was shattered, and the great oceans had all dried up. A great wind arose and blew away Mt. Sumeru. When he woke up he was frightened and thought, "Why was it like this? Is my life about to end or is the lord of heaven and earth about to fall? He was bewildered and unable to

understand it. Because he had had this terrible dream, a god who had been his spiritual guide in a former life descended from above and said to Subhadra, "Don't be frightened. There is a man possessed of omniscience known as the Buddha, who, tomorrow, in the middle of the night, will enter the nirvana without residue. Therefore your dream was not to do with you."

Then, the next day Subhadra went to the forest in the state of Ku"sinagara and saw Ananda walking along and said to Ananda, "I have heard that your master describes a new path to nirvana, and that this very day, in the middle of the night, he will choose to enter extinction. My mind is afflicted with doubts. Please, I wish to see the Buddha that he might resolve the cause of my doubts."

Ananda replied, "The World Honored One's body is exhausted. If you approach with difficult questions it will weary and trouble the World Honored One."

Subhadra repeated his request until he had asked three times. Each time Ananda replied as before. The Buddha overheard this from a distance and ordered Ananda, "Allow Subhadra the brahmacaarin to come forward and freely pose difficult questions. This will be my very last conversation and my very last disciple to gain the Way."

At this time Subhadra was able to have an audience with the Buddha. After he had greeted the World Honored One, he sat down to one side and thought, "Although the followers of all of the externalist

traditions renounce the ties of love and affection, of wealth and treasure, nonetheless they do not gain the Way. Only the "Srama.na Gautama has found the Way." After he had finished this thought, he asked the Buddha, "Here in this land of Jambudviipa, all of the six masters say of themselves, "I am possessed of all-knowledge. Is this talk true or not?"

At this time, the World Honored One replied with a verse, saying:

From the time I was nineteen years of age,
I left the home life and studied the way of the Buddha.
From the time I left home until now,
It has already been more than fifty years.

Of the pure precepts, dhyaana and wisdom
The externalists possess not even a fraction.
If they do not possess even a minor fraction,
How much the less do they possess all-knowledge.

"If one does not possess the eight-fold correct path, then one does not possess the first fruit, the second, the third, nor the fourth fruit. If one possesses the eight-fold correct path, then one possesses the first fruit, the second, the third, and the fourth fruit. Subhadra,

here in my Dharma, there exists the eight-fold correct path. Herein there exists the first fruit of the Way, the second, the third, and the fourth fruit of the Way. The dharmas of the others, the externalists, are all empty. They have no way, no fruit, no "Sramanas, and no Brahmins. In this manner, in the midst of the great Assembly, I truly roar the lion's roar."

When Subhadra the brahmacharin heard this Dharma, he gained the way of the arhat. He thought to himself, "I should not enter parinirvana after the Buddha." When he had finished this thought, he assumed the full lotus posture before the Buddha and, employing his spiritual power, sent forth fire from within his body which incinerated it completely, whereby he [then and there] chose to cross into extinction.

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On the Futility of Vicarious Purification

(T25.82b16-25 [fasc.3])

The disciples of Maakandika, the brahmacarin, placed his corpse in a litter, and holding it aloft, carried it through the city, with many of them calling out, "Whosoever views the body of Maakandika will gain the way of purity. How much the more so if they pay reverence to it or make offerings." Many people believed what they said. The bhikshus heard this and asked the Buddha, "World Honored One. What about this matter?"

The Buddha replied in verse:

Petty people seek purity through what their eyes see.

People like these have no wisdom or actual path.

The afflictions of all the fetters fill up their minds.

How could they by viewing gain the way of purity?

If it were by the eye's seeing that one gained purity,

What use then wisdom or the treasury of meritorious qualities?

It is through wisdom and meritorious qualities that one attains purity.

As for obtaining purity through viewing, there is no such thing.

Why Aananda was So Called

(T25.83b11-84a21 [fasc.3])

Question: What are the causes and conditions for the Venerable Aananda receiving such a name? Was it as a result of causes and conditions from former lives? Was it a name given to him by his father and mother? Or was it as a result of [present life] causes and conditions that he was given this name?

Response: It was as a result of causes and conditions from former lives. It was also a name given to him by his father and mother. And it was also a name stemming from [present life] causes and conditions.

Question: What were the causes and conditions from former lives?

Response: In a former life, Shaakyamuni Buddha was a potter named "Great Brilliance" (Prabhaasa). At that time there was another

Buddha also known as Shaakyamuni who also had disciples named Shaariputra, Maudgalyaayana, and Aananda. The Buddha stopped with his disciples and spent a night at the abode of the potter.

At that time, the potter made gifts of three things: grass sitting mats, lamps for light and rock honey chutney. He presented them as offerings to the Buddha and the bhikshu sa'ngha and then made a vow, saying, "In the future, May I become a buddha in a world afflicted with ageing, sickness, death, and the five evils. May I too have the name Shaakyamuni and may my disciples' names also be the same as these." Because of this vow of the Buddha, Aananda is now so- named.

Additionally, in life after life Aananda made a vow, "May I be foremost in learning among the learned disciples of Shaakyamuni Buddha and may my name be Aananda."

Furthermore, in life after life, Aananda cultivated patience and ridding himself of enmity. For this reason he was particularly handsome from birth. Because those who saw him were delighted on account of his handsomeness, his father and mother named him Aananda. These are the past life reasons for his name.

Why did his father and mother give him this name? In the past, there was a king of the Solar clan named "Lion Jaws". The king had four sons. The first was named "Pure Rice". The second was named "White Rice" . The third was named "Bushel of Rice". The fourth was named "Sweet Dew Rice". There was a daughter named "Sweet Dew Flavor". The

Pure Rice King had two sons, the Buddha and Nanda. The White Rice king had two sons, Badhrika and Ti.sya. The "Bushel- of- Rice King" had two sons, Devadatta and Aananda. The Sweet Dew Rice King had two sons, , Mahaanaaman and Aniruddha. The daughter, "Sweet Dew" had a son named Daanapaala.

Siddhaarta Bodhisattva gradually grew up among these people and rejected the station of the sagely wheel- turning king. In the middle of the night he left behind the homelife and went to the banks of the Nairañjanaa River in the state of Uruvilvaa. For six hears he cultivated ascetic practices.

At this time , because the pure Rice King lovingly remembered his son he constantly sent messengers to ask after him. He desired to know the news: "Has my son gained the way or not? Has he become ill or has he died?"

The messengers came and addressed the king, "The Bodhisattva only has skin and bones and ligaments holding them together. That's all. His life force has become very fragile and weak. Whether it's today or whether it's tomorrow is uncertain, but he will not have much longer."

When the king heard their words, he was greatly distressed and his thoughts were sunken in the sea of worry and affliction: "My son not only failed to become the wheel- turning king, he was also unable to gain buddhahood. What utterly tragic suffering that he should gain

nothing whatsoever and then die!" Thus he was afflicted with anguish, lost in desolation and paralyzed with bewilderment.

At this time the bodhisattva abandoned the site of his ascetic practices and partook of the many- flavored rice gruel with milk whereupon his body was sustained. After bathing in the waters of the Nairāñjanaa he proceeded to the bodhi tree and sat beneath it on the adamantine seat , vowing to himself, "Without breaking away from this full- lotus posture I must succeed in realizing omniscience. If I do not realize omniscience, I shall never get up."

At this time the king of the Maaras led a multitude followers, eighteen ko.tis in number, to the site where the bodhisattva sat, daring to test his attainment. On account of the power of the bodhisattva's wisdom he utterly vanquished the demon armies. Maara was no match for him and in making his retreat, thought to himself, "As I can't overcome the bodhisattva, I'll go afflict his father."

He then went to the place of the Pure Rice King and intending to deceive him, announced, "This very night, in the very last watch, your son was finally finished." When the king heard these words, he collapsed onto his bed, agonizing like a fish stranded on hot sand. The king wept pitifully and then uttered a verse:

Those spurious words pronounced by Ajita,--

A propitious omen with no validation.

An auspicious entitlement assuring achievements,--
But nothing whatsoever was finally gained.

At this time the tree- spirit of the bodhi tree was in a state
of great joy and, taking heavenly mandaara flowers, went to the place of
the Pure Rice King and spoke forth a verse:

Your son has already gained the Way.
The hordes of demons have been broken and scattered.
His brilliant light is like the rising sun
Everywhere illumining the ten direction lands.

The King said, "Earlier, there was a diety who came and said,
'You're son is already finished.' Now you come and say that he has
destroyed the demons and gained the Way. These two pronouncements are
contradictory. Whose can be believed?"

The tree spirit continued, "These are true, not false words.
That diety who came earlier and who attempted to deceive you by saying,
'He's finished.' was a demon who, because he was overcome with jealousy,
came to afflict you. Today, the gods, dragons and spirits make
offerings with flowers and incense and suspend celebratory banners in
the sky. Your son's body is issueing light which illumines heaven and

earth."

When the king heard these words his mind gained liberation from all anguish and affliction. The King declared, "Although my son forsook the wheel- turning kingship, as he has now attained the Dharma- wheel- turning kingship, he has certainly gained great benefit and nothing has been lost." The King was greatly delighted.

At this time a messenger arrived from the abode of the Bushel- of- Rice King and addressed the Pure Rice King, saying, "Your Highness's younger brother has fathered a son."

The King was greatly delighted and said, "Today is greatly auspicious. It is a day of rejoicing." He said to the messenger who had come, "This boy should be named Aananda ("Rejoicing")." This is how the name was given by the parents.

How was the giving of the name reliant upon causes and conditions? Aananda's physique was as elegant and pure as a fine bright mirror. One's age, one's beauty, and the appearance of one's countenance are all reflected in the body. His body was bright and pure. When women looked upon him they were moved to thoughts of desire. Because of this the buddha permitted Aananda to wear his robe with the shoulder covered. Because Aananda was able to bring delight to the minds and eyes of those who gazed upon him he was named Aananda ("Rejoicing"). And so here the commentator offers his own words of praise:

His face was like the pure full moon
His eyes like the blue lotus blossom
The waters of the great sea of the Buddhadharma
Flowed into the mind of Aananda.

He was able to bring to the mind and the eyes
Of those who beheld him a feeling of great joy.
All who came seeking to see the Buddha,-
He introduced with unfailing decorum.

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ANAND.WPD

The Advantage of Leaving the Home Life

(T25.84b5-9 [f.3])

Because the upasaka and the upasika still carry on the life of the householder, their thoughts are not pure and they are unable to put an end to outflows. They can only take up the four noble truths and cultivate at the stage of those with more to study. This situation is as described in a verse:

Though the peacock's body is adorned with colors,
It can't match the wild goose which can fly afar.
Though laypeople have the power of blessings and status,
They can't match the monastic whose qualities are supreme.

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ADVAN.WPD

Shaakyamuni Bodhisattva Encounters Pu.sya Buddha

(T25.87b24-c14 [fasc.4])

Question: How long does it take for the bodhisattva to be able to plant [the karmic causes which result in] the thirty- two marks?

Answer: The very slowest is one hundred kalpas. The most rapid is ninety- one kalpas. As a bodhisattva, Shaakyamuni cultivated the thirty- two marks to completion over the course of ninety- one great kalpas. This is as described in a sutra:

Long ago, far back in the past, there was a buddha named Puya. There lived at that time two bodhisattvas, one of whom was named Shaakyamuni and the other of whom was named Maitreya. Pu.sya Buddha wished to observe whether or not the mind of Shaakyamuni Bodhisattva had reached a state of complete refinement. He then contemplated and observed that although [Shaakyamuni's] mind was not yet completely refined, the minds of his disciples were all thoroughly refined. On the other hand, although the mind of Maitreya Bodhisattva was entirely refined, still, the minds of his disciples had not yet reached complete refinement.

At that time Pu.sya Buddha deliberated thus: "The mind of one single person may be easily and rapidly transformed whereas it is difficult to swiftly heal the minds of a multitude of people." After he

had deliberated in this fashion, Pu.sya Buddha wished to influence Shaakyamuni Bodhisattva to rapidly realize buddhahood. He travelled up onto Snow Mountain and, inside of a bejewelled cave, entered the fire samaadhi.

At that time Shaakyamuni Bodhisattva was a non- buddhist r.si. He climbed up the mountain to gather herbs and discovered Pu.sya Buddha sitting in the jewelled cave absorbed in the fire samaadhi and radiating brilliant light. When he saw [that buddha], he became delighted in mind and, out of faith and reverence, stood on one foot, placed his palms together and singlemindedly contemplated him. For seven days and seven nights [he stood and contemplated like this] without blinking his eyes and then uttered a verse in praise of the Buddha:

Up in the heavens and down below there's no one like the Buddha.

Throughout the ten directions' worlds, there are none who could compare.

For I have seen all that there is existing in the world.

And nowhere is there anyone who ranks as peer with Buddha.

For seven days and seven nights, without blinking his eyes, he unwaveringly contemplated the World Honored One. He was [thereby able] to skip over nine kalpas so that after ninety- one kalpas he realized anuttarasamyaksa.mbodhi.

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The King Shibi Jataka (S,V)

(T25.87c27-88c27 [f.4])

Question: How does one fulfill daanapaaramitaa (the perfection of giving)?

Reply: One is able to give everything without reservation even to the point that when one gives of one's body one's mind has no regrets. It is like the case of King Shibi who gave his body for the sake of pigeon. In a former life, Shakyamuni Buddhi was a king who was named Shibi. This king had gotten the dhaara.nii of dedicating his life to rescuing and protection. He possessed a mind of kindness and compassion which he invested with great vigor. He looked upon all beings as a mother loves her child.

At that time the world had no Buddha. The life of Shakra devendra was coming to an end and he was about to fall. He thought to himself, "Where is there a Buddha, an omniscient man?" He posed difficult questions everywhere and was unable to cut off his doubts. Realizing that none of them were buddhas he returned to the heavens and sat down in a state of worry and distress. The god Vishvakarman who was a master of clever transformations asked him, "Why is the Lord of Heaven worried and distressed?"

He replied, "I have been seeking after an omniscient man and have been unable to find one. It is because of this that I am worried and distressed."

Vishvakarman said, "There is a great bodhisattva who is perfect in giving, upholding the precepts, dhyanasamadhi, and wisdom. It will not be long..He will become a Buddha."

Shakra replied in verse:

Bodhisattvas who have brought forth the great thought,
Eggs of fish, and blossoms of the mango,-
These three things are initially numerous,
[But] at the time of fruition are especially rare.

Vishvakarman responded, "King Shibi of the Yu- shih- na clan upholds the precepts, is vigorous, is greatly kind, greatly compassionate, [and is possessed of] dhyaana samaadhi and wisdom and shall before long become a buddha."

Shakradevendra said to Vishvakarman, "We ought to go and test him. We shall know then whether or not he has the characteristics of a bodhisattva. You should change into a pigeon and I shall change into a falcon. Then you pretend to be frightened and fly into the armpit of the king. I'm going to pursue you."

Vishvakarman said, "Why should we aggravate this great bodhisattva with this matter?"

Shakradevendra uttered a verse:

For my part I'm not of evil mind.

Just as with true gold, one ought to test it..

By this we shall test the bodhisattva

And know if his mind is resolute or not.

After he spoke this verse Vishvakarman then changed his body

into that of a red- eyed, red- footed pigeon. Shakradevendra changed his body into that of a falcon which flew swiftly in pursuit of the pigeon. The pigeon straightaway came and flew into the armpit of the king. His entire body quivered in fright, his eyes moved about [anxiously] and let out cries of distress.

At this time many people
Gathered together and said,
"This king is greatly kind and humane.
Everyone rightfully testifies to his believability.

Just as this pigeon, a little bird
Takes refuge in him as if entering his [own] abode
The characteristics of the bodhisattva are just like this
It will certainly not be long before he becomes a buddha.

At this time the falcon was in a nearby tree. It said to King Shibi, "Give me back my pigeon. It belongs to me."

The King said to the falcon, "I took it in first. It's not the case that it belongs to you. When I first brought forth the resolve [to realize buddhahood], I [vowed to] take in all of these beings and wish

to deliver them all."

The falcon said, "The king desires to bring deliverance to all beings. Isn't it the case that I'm included in all? How is it that I alone do not experience your pity so that you then take away my meal for today?"

The king replied, "What food do you require? I have made a vow that whatsoever being comes and takes refuge with me, I shall certainly rescue and protect it. Whatever food you require shall also be provided to you."

The falcon said, "I require freshly- killed warm flesh."

The king thought to himself, "It's difficult to obtain something like this. Unless one kills a being oneself there is no source from which to obtain it. How could I kill one and give it to another? After thinking like this his mind became fixed and he then spoke a verse to himself:

This, the flesh of this body of mine

Ever belongs to ageing, sickness and death.

Before long it shall grow foul and rot.

He requires it. [Therefore] I shall give it.

After he had thought like this he called a person to bring a knife and then he cut flesh from his own thigh and gave it to the falcon. The falcon said to the king, "Although the king has given me warm flesh, he should be principled in doing so, thereby making sure that the weight of the flesh is equal to that of the pigeon. Don't countenance cheating!"

The king said, "Bring some scales and balance this flesh against the pigeon. The pigeon became heavier and the king's flesh became lighter. The king ordered someone to carve the flesh from the other thigh but it was still too light and [hence] not sufficient. Then they successively carved the flesh [extending down to] his two feet, up to his his two hips, from both sides of his chest, from his neck and from along his spine. All of the flesh from his entire body was gone. The body of the pigeon was still heavier. Just as before the flesh of the king was lighter.

At this time the close officials and near relatives set up a curtain and sent away everyone who was watching, [saying], "With the King in his present state, no one could bear to look upon him. King Shibi said, "Don't block off the people. Allow them to enter and see."

He then spoke a verse:

The gods, men and asuras

All [may] come and look at me.

[With] the great mind and unsurpassed determination

Thereby one seeks the realization of the buddha Way.

If one seeks the way of the buddha

He should endure this great suffering.

If one is unable to make his mind solid

Then he will lose his determination.

At this time the bodhisattva with blood smeared hands grasped at the scales, wishing to climb upon it. He fixed his mind upon using his entire body to balance against the pigeon.

The falcon said, "Great king, this matter is going to be difficult to manage. What's the use [in going about it] like this. Give the pigeon back to me."

The king said, "The pigeon came and sought refuge with me. I'll never give it to you. I've lost an innumerable number of bodies without providing any benefit to beings. Now I wish to employ my body in

seeking to ease the way to buddhahood." He grasped at the scales with his hands. At that time the bodhisattva's flesh was gone and his sinews were cut and he was unable to control his movement. He wished to rise up but fell back, thinking to himself self-critically, "You should make yourself strong. Don't allow yourself to become confused and depressed. All beings have fallen into the great seas of of distress and anguish. You, one man, have made a vow, whereby you desire to cross over them all. How can you allow yourself to lazily indulge in depression? This suffering is very slight. The suffering of the hells is greater.. If you compare this to it, this still doesn't equal that of even one of the sixteen divisions [of hell]. I now have wisdom, vigor, the upholding of precepts, and dhyaanasamaadhi, [and yet] I still am beset with this suffering. How much the more so is it the case with people in hell who have no wisdom."

At this time the bodhisattva singlemindedly desired to rise up and again grasped at the scales. He asked people, "Support me." At this time the bodhisattva mind was fixed and devoid of regret. All of the gods, dragon kings, asuras, ghosts, spirits, and the ordinary people greatly praised him, saying, "For the sake of a single small bird he is like this. This matter is rare. At that time the great earth quaked in six ways. The waves of the great sea churned up and withered trees brought forth flowers. The heavens let fall scented rain and then

scattered rare blossoms. The heavenly maidens sang praises, "He will certainly achieve the realization of buddhahood."

At this time the spirits and r.sis from the four directions all came and praised him saying, "He is a true bodhisattva. He will certainly soon realize buddhahood."

The falcon said to the pigeon, "Finally, when tested [even] like this he has not spared his body or life. He is a true bodhisattva. He then spoke forth a verse:

Produced from the soil of kindness and compassion

[He is] a sprout of the tree of omniscience.

We should make offerings to him

And should not give him distress and affliction.

Vishvakarman said to Shakradevendra, "Lord of Heaven, you have the spiritual power. You can cause the body of this king to return to normal."

Shakradevendra said, "He has no need of me. This king has made a vow to himself with the joyfulness of the great mind that he will not spare his body or life in inspiring everyone and causing them to seek

the buddha way."

Shakra said to the people's king, "With the bitter suffering of having your flesh carved away, didn't your mind become afflicted and sink into [discouragement]?"

The king said, "My mind was joyful. It was neither afflicted nor sunken."

Shakra said, "Who could believe that your mind did not sink [into discouragement]?"

At this time the bodhisattva made a "vow of truth", saying, "If while my flesh was carved away and my blood flowed forth I was neither angry nor afflicted, and if I was singleminded and undiscouraged in seeking the buddha way, my body ought to immediately return to normal just as before." Immediately upon his having uttered these words his body became again just as it had been originally.

When the men and gods witnessed this they all experienced a great compassionate joy and exclaimed at [the occurrence] of what had never been before, declaring, "This great bodhisattva shall certainly become a buddha. We should make contribute support to him with all our hearts

and pray that he will soon be caused to realize the buddha way and that he will remember us [in the future]." At this time Shakradevendra and Vishvakarman each returned to the heavens. All manner of characteristics such as these exemplify fulfillment of the daanapaaramitaa.

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Sutasoma's Dedication to Truth

(T25.88c27-89b11 [fasc.4])

Question: What is meant by the fulfillment of shiilapaaramitaa (The perfection of moral virtue)?

Response: It consists in not even sparing one's own life in guarding and upholding the precepts of purity. A case in point is that of King Sutasoma who, on account of the Great King Kalmaa.sapaada, went so far

as to give up his life to avoid transgressing the prohibitions.

In the past there was a king named Sutasoma. This king was assiduous in his upholding of the precepts and so always resorted to truth in speech.

One morning he got into his carriage and, taking along his courtesans, set out to the gardens to roam about and enjoy himself. As he was leaving the city gates he came upon a brahman who having come to request alms, said to the King, "The King is a great man endowed with many blessings whereas I am but a pauper. May it be that I receive compassionate consideration and a measure of offering in response to this entreaty."

The King replied, "I'll consent to this. I respect the dictates of the Tathaagata that one should engage in giving. But it must wait until I return from this excursion."

Having said this he went on into the gardens where he bathed and enjoyed himself. Then, a two-winged king named Kalmaa.sapaada [*] flew down from the sky, plucked up the King from amidst his courtesans and flew off with him. It was just like when the golden-winged [garu.da] bird scoops up dragons from the sea. All of the women wept and wailed. Everyone in the gardens was in shock and everywhere inside and outside the city walls the people were in a commotion of grief and agitation.

Kalmaa.sapaada carried off the King, soared high up into the sky and then flew away to the mountain where he dwelt.[**] There he kept the King together with ninety-nine other kings.

The tears of Sutasoma flowed down like raindrops. King Kalmaa.sapaada inquired of him, "Oh great King of K.satriyan lineage,- Why is it that you cry like an infant? When a man is born he is bound to die. Whosoever comes together must eventually separate."

King Sutasoma replied, "I do not fear dying. I only regret the breach of trust. Even from the time I was born I have never uttered a falsehood. But when I was going out the gates this morning there was a brahman who had come to request alms from me. At that time I consented and told him that on my return I would bestow some benefaction on him. I never considered the fact of impermanence. If I fail in my obligation to him I shall naturally become guilty of deception. It is solely for this reason that I weep."

King Kalmaa.apaada said, "If in your mind you are so fearful of having uttered this falsehood, I will allow you to return. Having then made offerings to the brahman, you must then return within seven days. If

after seven days you have still not returned, then, as I still possess the power of these two wings, it won't be difficult to seize you."

King Sutasoma was able to return to his native state where he was able to freely make offerings. He established the Prince as the King. At a great assembly of the citizenry he apologetically took leave of them, saying, "As my wisdom does not extend to all things, there are ways in which my rule has not accorded with Dharma. May we [nonetheless] enjoy your loyalty and forgiveness. Now, in accordance with the fact that my person is no longer my own, it is only right that I return straightaway."

All of the citizens of the country and the relatives of the King bowed down and beseeched him to remain, pleading, "We pray that we may remain in the King's thoughts and that he will continue to offer this country the shade of his loving kindness. Don't make that Kalmaa.sapaada, a king among ghosts, the basis of your considerations. We will raise up an iron fortress and mount a surprise attack. Although Kalmaa.sapaada may have supernatural powers, we need not fear him."

The King replied, "We cannot proceed in such a fashion." And then he uttered a verse, saying:

Truth in speech is the first among the precepts.

Truth in speech is the ladder to the heavens.

Truth in speech is minor yet major.[***]

False speech is the means for entering the hells.

Now I in maintaining truth in speech.

Would rather cast aside my body and life.

In my thoughts there are no regrets at all.

Having pondered the matter in this fashion the King immediately set out to the abode of King Kalmaa.sapaada. When Kalmaa.sapaada saw him in the distance he was delighted and said, "You are a man of true words. You do not fail in the essential of trustworthiness. Everyone cherishes his own life. Although you had been liberated from certain death you have come back again to attend to the matter of trustworthiness. You are a great man.

At that time King Sutasoma spoke in praise of truth in speech, saying, "Truth in speech. This is what makes a man. As for one who utters words which are untrue, he is not a man." In this fashion, he spoke all manner of praises of truth and criticisms of falsehood.

As Kalmaa.sapaada listened to this, thoughts of faithfulness became purified in him, whereupon he said to King Sutasoma, "You have spoken

well about this. I am now releasing you and since you have gained your freedom, I am releasing the other ninety-nine kings as a gift to you. If you wish, they may each go back to their home country." After he had said this, all one hundred kings were able to return. All manner of characteristics such as these which are described in the Jaataka describe what constitutes the paaramitaa of Shiila (The perfection of moral virtue).

End Notes:

[*] The Chinese frequently renders Kalma.sapaada as "Deer Foot", which, for consistency, I have reconstructed throughout. [Text]

[**] An alternate reading shared by six other versions. "...flew away to his abode where they stopped" was set aside as a probable scribal error mistaking a very similar character. [Text]

[***] An alternate reading of this line shared by four versions reads, "Truth in speech makes the great man." [Text]

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The Ten Similes

From Nagarjuna Bodhisattva's Treatise on the Great Perfection
of Wisdom

(T25.101c6-105c18 [fasc.6])

Sutra: They understood all dharmas as being like a [magically-
conjured] illusion, like a mirage, like the moon reflected in water,
like empty space, like an echo, like the city of the Gandharvas, like a
dream, like a shadow, like an image in a mirror, and like a
[supernatural] transformation.

Upadesha: These ten similes are set forth for the sake of
explaining [the nature of] empty dharmas.

[Like a Magically- conjured Illusion]

Question: If all dharmas are like a magically- conjured illusion, why is it then that dharmas have that by which they can be viewed, heard, smelled, tasted, touched, and that by which they can be objects of awareness? If it were actually the case that nothing whatsoever existed, it should not be the case that [dharmas] have "that by which they can be viewed" and so forth until we come to "that by which they can be objects of awareness." Furthermore, if they are nonexistent and we thus only see them as a function of erroneous perception, why then don't we see sounds and hear [visual] forms? If [dharmas] are all equally empty and nonexistent, why is it that there are those which can be perceived and those which cannot be perceived? If it were the case that "all dharmas are empty" [as you claim], then it should be that for any given finger, an extra fingernail would be nonexistent in just the same manner as the original fingernail is "nonexistent." Why then don't we see a second fingernail [on any of our fingers]? [In fact], we only see the original fingernail. Because of this fact, we know that it is because the original fingernail actually is existent that it can be seen, whereas it is because an extra fingernail is actually nonexistent that it can not be seen.

Reply: Although the characteristics of dharmas are empty, still, there is discrimination [which distinguishes] that which may be

perceived and that which cannot be perceived. For example, although one may know that magically- conjured illusions of elephants, horses and other such phenomena are unreal, still, their forms may be seen, their sounds may be heard, and they may manifest in corresponding opposition to the six sense faculties without there being any error or confusion in that regard. This situation is the same with respect to dharmas. This is as referred to in The Virtuous Woman Scripture (Theriisuutra):

Virtuous Woman addressed the Buddha, inquiring, "World Honored One, does ignorance exist internally or not?"

The Buddha replied, "No."

"Does it exist externally or not?"

The Buddha replied, "No."

"Does it exist [both] internally and externally, or not?"

The Buddha replied, "No."

"World Honored One, does this ignorance come forth [into the present] from the past, or not?"

The Buddha replied, "No."

"Does it proceed from the present on to the future or not?"

The Buddha replied, "No."

"Does this ignorance have that which is produced and that which is destroyed or not?"

The Buddha replied, "No."

"Is there or is there not a dharma with a fixed and actual nature [of which we may say], 'This is ignorance?'"

The Buddha replied, "No."

At that time Virtuous Woman again addressed the Buddha, asking, "If it is the case that ignorance does not exist internally, does not exist externally, also does not exist both internally and externally, does not come into the present from the past, does not proceed into the future from the present, and is devoid of a true and actual nature, how can it be that there is a conditioning of 'action' arising from 'ignorance,' and so forth until we come to the accumulation of a multitude of sufferings? World Honored One, it is as if there were a tree. If it were the case that it had no roots, how could it succeed in putting forth a trunk, limbs, branches, leaves, flowers and fruit?"

The Buddha replied, "Although the marks of all dharmas are empty, because the foolish common person has not learned this and because he has no wisdom, he thereby, in the midst of [empty dharmas], generates all manner of afflictions. Afflictions causally condition the creation of physical, verbal and mental karmic deeds. Karmic activity causally conditions the creation of a later bodily incarnation. The [possession of a] body causally conditions the undergoing of suffering and the experiencing of pleasure. [However], there is not herein any actual creation of afflictions. Also, there are no physical, verbal or mental deeds. Additionally, there is no one who undergoes suffering or

bliss. This is analogous to a magician producing magically- conjured illusions of all manner of phenomena. What do you think? As for that which is created through magically- conjured illusions, is it internally existent, or not?"

She replied, "It is not."

"Is it externally existent?"

She replied, "It is not."

"Is it both internally and externally existent?"

She replied, "It is not."

"Does it or does it not come from the past into the present or proceed from the present on into the future?"

She replied, "It does not."

"Within that magically- conjured illusion, is there or is there not anything which is produced or which is destroyed?"

She replied, "There is not."

"Is there or is there not actually any single dharma which is created by this magically- conjured illusion?"

She replied, "There is not."

The Buddha asked, "In a magically- conjured illusion of a musical performance, do you or do you not see anything or hear anything?"

She replied, "I both hear things and see things."

The Buddha asked Virtuous Woman, "If a magically- conjured

illusion is empty, deceptive and devoid of reality, how is it that there is able to be the creation of a musical performance from within the magically- conjured illusion?"

Virtuous Woman addressed the Buddha, saying, "World Honored One, "The characteristics of magically- conjured illusions are just this way. Although they are devoid of any basis, still they can be heard and seen."

The Buddha said, "Ignorance is just the same as this. Although it is not internally existent, is not externally existent, is not both internally and externally existent, does not come into the present from the past, does not proceed forth from the present on into the future, is devoid of an actual nature, and is devoid of that which is produced and that which is destroyed, still, ignorance causally conditions the creation of actions and so forth until we come to [causally conditions] the accumulation of a multitude of sufferings. And just as when a magically- conjured illusion ceases, that which is summoned forth by that magically- conjured illusion also ceases, so too it is in the case of ignorance. When ignorance is brought to an end, actions are also brought to an end and so forth until we come to the accumulation of a multitude of sufferings is also brought to an end."

Additionally, this simile of a magically- conjured illusion serves to demonstrate to beings that all conditioned dharmas are insubstantial. It is as if to say that all actions are like a

magically- conjured illusion which deceives little children. They belong to the sphere of causes and conditions. They are not inherently existent and they do not endure for long. Therefore it states here that all the bodhisattvas are aware of all dharmas as being like a magically- conjured illusion.

[Like a Mirage]

As for [the simile] "like a mirage...", a mirage appears on account of sunlight and the moving about of the dust by the wind. In the midst of a vast wilderness, this phenomenon may resemble "wild horses." On first observing it, an unknowledgable person may think that it is water.

The features characteristic of manhood or womanhood are also like this. The sunlight of the fetters and afflictions heats up the dusts of karmic formations. The wind of improper reflective thought blows about in the vast wilderness of transmigration. One who is devoid of wisdom looks upon a given set of characteristics as constituting manhood or womanhood. It is [phenomena such as] these which are referred to as being like a mirage.

Furthermore, if one sees a mirage from a distance one may think that it is water. However, if one draws closer, there is no perception of water. [The situation of] a person lacking in wisdom is also like this. If he is distant from the Dharma of the sages, he is not aware of the nonexistence of self, is not aware of the emptiness of dharmas, and, in the midst of the intrinsically empty dharmas of the aggregates, sense realms and sense fields, he engenders [in his thoughts] characteristics of personhood, characteristics of manhood, and characteristics of womanhood. But, if he draws near to the Dharma of the sages, then he becomes aware of the actual mark of all dharmas. At this time all of the various kinds of false and deceptive erroneous thought are entirely eliminated. It is on account of this that it states here that the bodhisattvas are aware of all dharmas as being like a mirage.

[Like the Moon {reflected} in the Water]

As for [the simile] "Like the moon [reflected] in the water", the moon actually resides in space whereas its reflection appears in the water. The moon of the mark of actual Dharma resides in the empty space of the reality limit and the nature of the dharma of suchness, however

in the water of the minds of the common gods and men, there appears the mark of a self and that which belongs to a self. Because of this, they are referred to as being like the moon [reflected in] the water.

Then again, this situation is like that of a small child who sees the moon in the water, is delighted thereby, and then desires to seize hold of it. Adults observe this and then laugh. People who are lacking in wisdom are just like this. On account of entertaining the view of the body [as the basis of individuality], they [erroneously] discern the existence of a self. Because they are lacking in actual wisdom, they perceive all manner of dharmas and having perceived them, they take delight in them and desire to grasp at the various characteristics: the characteristics of manhood, the characteristics of womanhood, and so forth. But the sages who have gained the Way laugh at this. This is as described in a verse:

Just like the moon in water or the waters of a mirage,
Obtaining wealth within a dream, seeking life in the midst of
death.

So there are men who truly do aspire herein for gains.

Delusions of such people do bring forth the sage's smile.

Furthermore, just as when one sees the reflection of the moon in still water, but, when that water is roiled, one no longer sees it, so

too, though one may view the reflection of a self, arrogance and the fetters in the stagnant water of ignorance- laden thought, if one roils those mental waters with the staff of actual wisdom, one no longer sees reflections of a self and other such fetters. It is on account of this that it states here that the bodhisattvas are aware of all dharmas as being like the moon reflected in the water.

[Like Space]

As for [the simile] "like space," this refers to merely possessing a name while being devoid of any actual dharma. Space, is not a visible dharma. On account of being observed from a great distance, the visible light alters [its appearance] so that one sees a light blue color. All dharmas are just like this. They are empty and devoid of anything which exists. On account of being distant from the actual wisdom of the non- outflow state, one foresakes the actual mark [of dharmas] and perceives the existence of others, a self, men, women, houses, cities, suburbs and all manner of other various phenomena. The mind attaches to them just a a small child in looking up at a clear sky thinks that there is an actual form there. There have been people who

have flown to extremely high altitudes and yet have not observed anything whatsoever there. It is on account of observing from a great distance that one is of the opinion that [space] is blue in color. All dharmas are just like this. It is because of this that it is stated that they are like space.

Alternatively, [one might say that] they are like space in the sense of being eternally pure. People are of the opinion that a murky cover of clouds is impure. The situation with regard to dharmas is just like this. Although they are always pure in nature, on account of the dark haze of sensual desire, aversion, and so forth, people come to regard them as impure. This circumstance is described in a verse:

As when the summer skies are thundrous, flashing and
torrential,

The dark clouds and engulfing mists are fouled with the
impure,

The common man devoid of wisdom is also just like this:

All manner of afflictions always cover up his mind.

As in the days of winter when the sun comes forth at times,

But usually is obscured by the clouds of turbid vapors,

Although one's gained the first fruition or has reached the
second path,

He still is covered over by defilement of desires.

As in the springtime when the sun attempts its brilliant

shining,

But still it is obscured at times, enveiled by shadowy clouds,

Though at the third fruition one has left desire's

defilement,

Still, ignorance and arrogance, mere traces, veil the mind.

As on an autumn day no clouds encroach and hide the sun,

And as the great sea's waters when beheld are seen as clear,

His mind has done the [sages'] work and reached no

outflows' realm.

The arhat has attained a state of purity like this.

Additionally, space has no beginning, nothing in between and no end. Dharmas are the same in this respect. Moreover, this is just as the Buddha declared to Subhuuti in The Mahaayaana, "Space has no past time, no intervening time, and no future time. Dharmas are also this way." That scripture will be discussed extensively herein. For these reasons, it is said that dharmas are like space.

Question: Space is an actually existent dharma. How is this so?

If it were the case that space is devoid of any actual dharma, then,

whether [we speak of] raising or lowering, coming forth or going away, retracting or extending, going out or coming in, or any other circumstance wherein something is done, there ought to be nothing [which could be done at all] as there would be no place in which to move.

Reply: If space were an actually- existent dharma, space ought to have a location in which it resides. How so? If there were no place in which it resided, then there would be no dharma. If it were the case that space resided in openings, then this would be a case of space residing in the midst of space. On account of this, it should not be the case that space resides in openings.

If one holds that [space] resides in that which is solid, because this solid entity is non- space, [space] cannot reside in it, as [that which is solid] can't take anything in.

Moreover, you say that the place in which [space] resides is just space [itself]. But [space] is analogous to a rock cliff which, within its solidity, has no place for anything to reside. If it has no place in which it resides, then there is no space. Because space has no place in which it resides, there is no space.

Then again, because there is no characteristic, there is no space. Each and every dharma has characteristics. It is on account of the existence of characteristics that we know there exists a given a dharma. For example, earth is characterized by solidity, water is characterized by moisture, fire is characterized by heat, wind is

characterized by movement, consciousness is characterized by awareness, wisdom is characterized by understanding, the world is characterized by production and extinction [i.e. birth and death], and nirva is characterized by eternal extinction. Because this space is devoid of characteristics, it is nonexistent.

Question: Space does possess characteristics. Because you are unaware of this you claim that it is nonexistent. Absence of form is the characteristic of space.

Reply: This is not so. Absence of form indicates only separateness among forms and there is no other [additional] dharma indicated thereby. This is analogous to [the situation which obtains] when a lamp goes out. There is no additional dharma [in that case either]. Because of this, there is no characteristic [indicative] of space.

Moreover, [there is another reason that one can say that] this dharma of space is nonexistent. How so? It is because of form that you hold that the absence of form is the characteristic of space. If that were the case, then prior to the production of form, there is no characteristic of space.

Additionally, you maintain that form is an impermanent dharma whereas space is a permanent dharma. [If this were the case], then it ought to be that prior to the existence of form there was a previously-existent dharma of space since it is [supposedly] a permanent dharma.

But if form was not yet existent, then there would not have been [at that time] any such [contrasting and defining] "absence of form." If there were no "absence of form," then there would have been no characteristic [indicating the supposed existence] of space. If there is no characteristic, then there is no dharma. Because of this, [one should know that] space only possesses a name and is devoid of any reality. As it is with space, so too it is with dharmas. They only possess a false name but are devoid of reality. It is on account of this that the bodhisattvas are aware of all dharmas as being like space.

[Like an Echo]

As for [the simile] "like an echo," it is just as when one is in a narrow valley in the deep mountains, or as when one is in a deep and precipitous ravine, or as when one is in a large, empty building. Whether it be one's voice or the sound of striking something, there is [another] sound which arises from the given sound which we then refer to as an "echo." A person who is unknowledgeable about this will be of the opinion that [the echo] is [some other] person's voice. However, one who is wise will think, "This sound was not created by anyone. It was

merely on account of the sounds contacting [a barrier] that there then arose another sound which we refer to as an 'echo.'" The phenomenon of echoes is "empty" but is able to deceive the faculty of hearing. This is analogous to the [process which occurs] when a person is about to speak. The air in the oral cavity which we refer to as udna goes back [down the windpipe] and when it reaches the diaphragm, having contacted the diaphragm, an echoing sound then comes forth. When the echoing sound comes forth, it may encounter and return from seven different locations. It is this which is referred to as the voice. This is as stated in a verse:

Udaana is the name of breath.

It strikes the diaphragm, then ascends.

This breath contacts in seven places:

The neck, the gums, the teeth and lips,

The tongue, the throat, the chest as well.

Herein it is that voice is born.

The fool he fails to understand this,

Deludedly attached, he's angry and stupid.

The Middle person, having wisdom,

Isn't angry or attached,

And doesn't take up stupid actions,

But just accords with dharmas' marks.

In bending, straightening, flexing, extending,

In going, coming, issuing speech.

In all of this, there's no one acting.

Is it magical conjuration?

Or mechanical wooden people?

Or the stuff that's born of dreams?

Is "self" but warmth of energy pent up?

Does it exist or does it not*?

Just who is it that comprehends this?

This bony frame that's bound with tendons

Is able to utter sounds of speech

Like molten iron thrown in water.

It is for these reasons [discussed above] that it is said that
the bodhisattvas are aware of all dharmas as being like an echo.

[Like the City of the Gandharvas]

As for [the simile] "like the city of the Gandharvas," when the sun first rises, one sees the city gates, the buildings, the watchtowers, the palaces, and travellers leaving and entering. As the sun rises higher, [the city] gradually disappears. One is only able to perceive this city with the eyes and thus it is devoid of any reality. This is what is meant by the city of the Gandharvas.

There once was a man who was at first unable to see the city of the Gandharvas, but who, at dawn, looked towards the east and saw it. He thought that there would actually be music there and thus set out swiftly in search of it. As he grew progressively closer, it gradually faded until, when the sun was high in the sky, it vanished altogether. As he became hungry, thirsty and extremely discouraged, he gazed into the distance and, seeing the heat waves as a mirage, thought that they were a body of water, and then ran quickly to reach it. But as he grew closer, it gradually disappeared. Exhausted and distressed, he reached a narrow valley deep in the mountains and, yelling out and wailing, he heard an echo and thought that there were people who lived there, sought to find them and, utterly exhausted, still did not see anyone at all. Then he thought it over and understood, whereupon his thoughts of craving and yearning ceased.

People who are lacking in wisdom are just like this. Amidst the empty aggregates, sense realms, and sense fields, they perceive the

existence of a self and the existence of dharmas. Through thoughts of sensual desire and aversion they become attached and crazily run off in the four directions, pursuing pleasure and becoming self-obsessed. Through inverted views, they are deceived and deluded and bring themselves to the most extreme degree of anguish. But if one employs wisdom and thereby becomes aware of the nonexistence of a self and of the nonexistence of actual dharmas, then at this time the yearning arising from cognitive inversion ceases.

Moreover, the city of the Gandharvas is a non-city, but in their thoughts, people imagine it to be a city. The common person is also just like this. In that which is not a body, he imagines the existence of a body. In that which is not a mind, he imagines the existence of a mind.

Question: A single example would be sufficient for one to understand [the concept]. Why employ more comparisons?

Reply: I have responded to this question earlier [in the text]. This Mahayana is like the waters of a great ocean. All dharmas are entirely contained within it. Because of the many causes and conditions associated with the Mahayana, there is no fault in employing many comparisons. Additionally, because the bodhisattvas are possessed of extremely profound and keen wisdom, all manner of dharmic methods, all manner of causes and conditions, and all manner of comparisons are employed to demolish all dharmas. It is for the sake of facilitating a

person's understanding that it is appropriate to draw extensively upon comparisons.

Additionally, nowhere in the Dharma of the Hearers is there found this "city of the Gandharvas" comparison. They do possess all manner of other comparisons illustrative of impermanence: Form is like a mass of foam; feelings are like bubbles; perceptions are like a mirage; karmic formations are like the banana [tree trunk]; consciousness is like a magical conjuration or like a magically-conjured "net." In [this] sutra, comparisons are employed [to demonstrate] emptiness. This "city of the Gandharvas" comparison is used herein because it is different.

Question: In the Dharma of the Hearers, a city is employed as a simile for the body. Why then is this "city of the Gandharvas" simile used here?

Reply: In the Dharma of the Hearers, that simile of the city [leaves intact] the multitude of conditions as actually existent. [In that simile], only the "city" itself is [intended to be shown as] a false appellation. [However, in this simile here of] the city of the Gandharvas, the multitude of conditions themselves are also [intended to be shown as] nonexistent. They are like a "wheel" created by a whirling firebrand which only [seems to exist by] deceiving a man's eyes. In the Dharma of the Hearers, the city is employed as a simile for the sake of demolishing [the concept of] a "self." Herein, it is because the sharp

faculties of the bodhisattvas have [allowed them] to enter deeply into the emptiness of all dharmas that the city of the Gandharvas is employed as a simile.

For these reasons, it states that [all dharmas are] like the city of the Gandharvas.

[Like a Dream]

As for [the simile] "like a dream," it is just as in a dream wherein there is nothing whatsoever which is real and yet we believe that there is something which is real. Upon awakening we realize that there was nothing at all and then, ironically, laugh at ourselves. So too it is with people. In the slumber of the fetters, although reality is nonexistent, still, they become attached. When they gain the Way they then become aware that there is nothing which is real and then laugh at themselves. It is because of this that it says "like a dream."

Then again, as for dreams, it is on account of the power of sleep that even though there are no dharmas, one nonetheless perceives them. People are just like this. It is on account of the power of the sleep of ignorance that, [in the midst of] all manner of [phenomena

which] do not exist, we nonetheless perceive them to exist: the so-called "self", "that which belongs to the self," "manhood," "womanhood," and so forth.

Moreover, just as in a dream, wherein although there is nothing to be joyful about and yet one is joyful, there is nothing to be hateful about and yet one is hateful, and there is nothing to be frightened about and yet one is frightened, so too it is with the beings who inhabit the three realms. On account of the slumber of ignorance, even though they ought not to be hateful, still they are hateful, even though they ought not to be joyful, still they are joyful, and even though they ought not to be frightened, still they are frightened.

Additionally, there are five kinds of dreams: Where one's physical health is out of balance, if heat energy is excessive then one tends more often to dream of seeing fire or seeing yellow or seeing red. If cold energy is excessive then one tends more often to see water or to see whiteness. If wind energy is excessive then one tends more often to see flying [phenomena] or to see blackness. Also, on account of more often thinking about and remembering that which one has heard or seen, one then sees [those very same matters] in dreams. Or perhaps a deva bestows a dream wishing to cause one to become aware of a forthcoming event. In all of these five kinds of dreams, there is nothing which is real and yet we erroneously view [such phenomena].

People are just the same as this. On account of the causes and

conditions deriving from the power of "the [false] view of individuality", the beings of the five paths of rebirth may perceive the existence of four types of "self": "The form aggregate is my self"; "form is the location of my self"; "form is contained within my self"; or "my self is contained within form." Just as this is the case with form, so too it may be with feelings, perceptions, karmic formations, or consciousness, so that [when these] four [subsidiary views are correlated with each of these] five [aggregates], twenty [possible subsidiary views may result]. But when one gains the Way and experiences the awakening of actual wisdom, one becomes aware that there is nothing [in that dream] which is actual.

Question: One should not say that dreams are devoid of reality. Why [not]? When the thought [arising from] consciousness encounters [the appropriate] causes and conditions it then gives rise to consciousness in the midst of a dream. There are all manner of conditions. In the absence of these conditions, how would consciousness be produced?

Reply: As for that which is nonexistent, although one should not see it, one nonetheless sees it. In a dream one may see a person who has horns on his head. Or perhaps, in a dream, one may see the body flying through space. But in actuality, people have no horns, nor does the body fly. Therefore [these dream experiences] are devoid of reality.

Question: It is a fact that there are such things as human heads and it is also a matter of fact that elsewhere there are horns. It is on account of a mental deception that one sees a person with horns on his head. It is a fact that space exists and it is also a fact that there is such a thing as flying. It is on account of a mental deception that one sees the body flying. It is not [therefore] the case that [these dream experiences] are devoid of reality.

Reply: Although there actually do exist human heads and although there actually do exist horns, nonetheless, [seeing] men's heads which have grown horns is a case of erroneous perception.

Question: The world is immense and the causes and conditions [originating in] previous lifetimes are of all manner of different types. It may be that there are other countries wherein there are people whose heads have grown horns. Perhaps there are those who have but one hand and one foot, or those who are only one foot tall, or those who have nine heads. Why then should we consider it so strange for a person to have horns?

Reply: Although it could be that there are people in another country who have horns, still, when a person native to this country whom one personally recognizes appears in a dream with horns on his head, that [appearance] cannot be [explained through resort to such a hypothesis]. Furthermore, when one sees in a dream a boundary to space, an end to one of the directions, or a final point in time, how could

such a circumstance be possessed of any reality? Wherein is there a place devoid of space, devoid of direction or devoid of time? It is on account of these [points that we explain that phenomena seen] in dreams are nonexistent and yet we still perceive them as existent.

You previously asked how it could be that, in the absence of [actual] conditions, consciousness nonetheless arises. Although there are no conditions corresponding to the five sense objects, still, because of a process of transformation wrought by the power of one's own contemplation and remembrance, the condition of a dharma [as an object of mind] may nonetheless arise. [For instance]: if a person [merely] speaks of the existence of [someone with] two heads, one may, with that statement as a cause, generate a [corresponding] thought. The fact that, even though things in dreams are nonexistent, we nonetheless see them as existent is just the same as this. So too it is with all dharmas. Although all dharmas are nonexistent, still we are able to see them, are able to hear them, and are able to be aware of them. This is as described in a verse:

Like dreams, like magical conjurations,
Like [towns in which] gandharvas [dwell],
Just so with every single dharma:
They all are just the same as these.

It is for these reasons [discussed above] that it says that the bodhisattvas are aware of all dharmas as being like a dream.

[Like a Shadow]

As for [the simile] "like a shadow", a shadow is something which can only be seen but which cannot be grasped. All dharmas are also just like this. The eye and the other faculties are able to see, hear, be aware of and cognize them, but they still cannot actually be gotten at. This is as explained in a verse:

This wisdom which is actual,
It cannot from four sides be grasped.
It's like an enormous conflagration
Which itself cannot be touched.
The dharmas cannot be accepted
And neither should they be accepted.

Moreover, just as with a shadow where when one shines a light it manifests, but when one does not shine it it is nonexistent, when the

fetters and afflictions block the light of correct views there manifests
the shadow of the mark of a self and of the mark of dharmas.

Additionally, just as with a shadow where when a person goes,
[the shadow] goes, when a person moves, the [shadow] moves, and when a
person stops, the [shadow] stops, so to it is with the shadows of
wholesome and unwholesome karmic actions: when one moves on to a future
life, [the karmic shadows] also move along and when one abides in the
present life, [the karmic shadows] abide as well. Because the
retribution is not cut off, when offenses or merit ripen, then they come
forth. This is as explained in a verse:

Even in space it will chase along after.

And deep into mountains 'midst boulders pursues.

To the depths of the earth it will follow behind us.

And will plunge into ocean's [deep] waters as well.

It everywhere constantly follows, pursuing.

The shadow of actions will not go away.

It is on account of this that it says that all dharmas are like
a shadow. Furthermore, just as a shadow is empty and nonexistent such
that if one seeks for something actual in it one cannot succeed, so too
it is with all dharmas for they are empty and devoid of anything which

is actual.

Question: This matter of a shadow being empty and devoid of anything which exists is not the case. How so? In the Abhidharma, it says, "What is meant by the sense field of form? [It refers to] blue, yellow, red, white, black, azure, purple, light, shadows, and so forth, as well as the three kinds of created form associated with physical actions."

This is what is meant by the sense field of visible form.

How then can you say that [shadows] are nonexistent?

Moreover, it is the case that shadows actually exist because they are possessed of causes and conditions. [For example], the cause may be a tree and the condition may be brightness. When these two factors come together there is the creation of a shadow. How can you say that they are nonexistent? If there are no shadows then it ought to be the case that all other dharmas possessed of [corresponding] causes and conditions are nonexistent as well.

Additionally, the form of these shadows can be seen. [This is true of] their length, their size, their relative coarseness, and their contours. When the shape itself moves, the shadow also moves. These matters can all be seen. For these reasons, it should be that they are [admitted as being] existent.

Reply: Shadows are truly empty and nonexistent. As for your citation of explanations from the Abhidharma, these exegeses of the meaning of the Abhidharma are explanations created by people. There are

particular dharmic access methods the intent of which people misapprehend and thus become attached to as being actual.

Take for instance the explanation of the Vibhaasaa which holds that infinitesimally minute fine particles cannot be broken up and cannot be burned up. If this were the case then they would be eternally existent. Additionally, with regard to dharmas of the three periods of time, [it claims that] they reside in the future and come forth into the present and that they move on from the present and go on into the past and that in doing so nothing whatsoever is lost. If this were the case then that would be a case of eternalism. Moreover, it says that all conditioned dharmas undergo a [constant] process of [instantaneous] reproduction and re-extinction and do not abide at all. If this were the case then it would be a sign of annihilationism. How so? Because they previously existed and now do not exist. All manner of unorthodox explanations such as these contradict the Buddha's words. One may not employ this as corroboration for [the view that] shadows [actually exist].

Now these [shadows] are different from form dharmas. When form dharmas are produced they must possess fragrance or flavor or tangibility or some other [such characteristic]. Shadows then are not like this and on this account are nonexistent. For instance, a vase is cognizable through two of the faculties, namely the eye's [visual] faculty and the body's [tactile] faculty. If a shadow is existent then

it too should be cognized by two faculties. But there is no such case. For these reasons, it is not the case that there exists any actual phenomenon in shadows. They are only a dharma which deceives the eye. They are unreal in just the same way as the "wheel" which one produces by picking up a firebrand and whirling it rapidly around in a circle. Shadows are nonexistent entities. If shadows were existent entities, it ought to be that they could be broken or destroyed. [However], as long as the form [which casts the shadow] remains undestroyed, the shadow is never damaged. For this reason, [shadows] are empty. Additionally, because shadows are directly associated with their forms they are not inherently existent. They are therefore empty. Although they are empty, the mind nonetheless generates an [associated] visual perception. For these reasons, it says that all dharmas are like shadows.

[Like Images in a Mirror]

As for [the simile] "like images in a mirror," [all dharmas] are like images in a mirror [in the sense that] the images in a mirror are not created by the mirror, are not created by the visage [which gazes

into it], are not created by the person who holds the mirror, are not spontaneously produced, and are not [created] in the absence of [corresponding] causes and conditions.

How is it that they are not created by the mirror? As long as the visage has not yet presented itself before the mirror, there is no [such] image. For this reason, it is not the case that the image is created by the mirror.

How is it that they are not created by the countenance? In the absence of a mirror there are no images.

How is it that it is not the case that the holder of the mirror creates them? In the absence of a mirror and in the absence of a countenance, there are no images.

How is it that it is not the case that [the image] is spontaneously created? If there does not yet exist a mirror and if there does not yet exist a countenance, then there is no image. The image must await the mirror and must await the countenance, and only afterward may it then come into existence.

How is it that it is not the case that [the image is created] in the absence of causes and conditions? If there were no [corresponding] causes and conditions, then it should be that [the image] exists eternally. If it existed eternally, then even were one to dispense with the mirror and dispense with the countenance, it should still be the case that it would come forth of its own accord. For this reason, it is

not the case that [the image is created] in the absence of causes and conditions.

All dharmas are also just this way. It is not the case that they are self- created, that they are created by another, that they are created by both, or that they are created in the absence of causes and conditions.

How is it that it is not the case that they are self- created?

It is because a self cannot be gotten at, because all causally- produced dharmas are not inherently existent, and because all dharmas are associated with causes and conditions. Therefore it is not the case that they are self- created.

As for it not being the case that [dharmas] are created by an "other," because they themselves are nonexistent, "others" are nonexistent as well. If they were created by something "other," then the power of offenses and merit would be lost. Creation by an "other" would be one of two cases: good or bad. If it were a case of good [creation by an "other"], then it ought to be the case that it bestowed complete blissfulness. If it were a case of bad [creation by an "other"], then it ought to be the case that it bestowed total suffering. If [on the other hand, the resultant situation] is a mixture of suffering and bliss, then what would be the causes and conditions behind bestowing bliss? And what would be the causes and conditions behind bestowing suffering?

If [one posits creation] by "both" [a self and an other], then [that thesis is possessed of] two faults, namely [the just- discussed] fault of [positing] self- [creation] as well as the fault of [positing creation by] an other.

If it were the case that there were no causes and conditions behind the arising of suffering and bliss, then people ought to be able to be eternally blissful and entirely free of suffering. If there were no [associated] causes or conditions, then people ought not to [bother with] engaging in causes conducing to bliss and avoiding causes conducing to suffering. [However], it most certainly is the case that each and every dharma has [associated] causes and conditions. It is on account of stupidity that people are unaware of this. [The situation] is analogous to looking to wood when seeking to have a fire, looking to the ground when seeking a source of water, and looking to a fan when desirous of a breeze. There are all manner of [examples] such as these and they each have [their associated] causes and conditions.

As for these combined causes and conditions of suffering and bliss, one has generated karmic causes from previous incarnations. In the present life, in accordance with the conditions presented by one's acting either wholesomely or improperly, one reaps from this [a corresponding] suffering or bliss. As regards these multifarious causes and conditions of suffering and bliss, if in looking into the matter one does so in accordance with reality, [one finds that] there is no person

who creates them and no person who undergoes them. The five empty aggregates create them and the five empty aggregates undergo them.

When a person who is devoid of wisdom experiences pleasure, under the influence of lustful thought, he becomes attached. When such a person experiences suffering, then he becomes angry. When this bliss dies away, he once more seeks after and craves to experience it yet again. [Such people] are like a little toddler gazing at particular reflections in a mirror who is pleased thereby and becomes affectionately attached to them, such that when they disappear, he breaks the mirror in seeking to find them [again]. A knowledgeable adult laughs at this. When a person loses bliss and then proceeds to seek after it again, he is just the same as this, and just so, his actions are amusing to a sage who has gained the Way. It is for this reason that it says that dharmas are like images in a mirror.

Moreover, just as the images in a mirror are actually empty, are not produced and not destroyed, and are [a mere] deception and delusion of the visual faculties of the common person, so too it is with all dharmas. They are empty, devoid of actuality, are neither produced nor destroyed, and they deceive and delude the visual faculties of the common person.

Question: The images in a mirror arise from causes and conditions. There is a countenance. There is a mirror. There is a person who holds the mirror. There is brightness. Because these

factors come together an image is produced. Because this image may give rise to either worry or delight, it is at the same time both a cause and an effect. How can one say that it is actually empty and neither produced nor destroyed?

Reply: That which is produced from causes and conditions is not itself inherently existent and is therefore empty. If a given dharma were actually [inherently] existent, it should not be [that it is] a product of causes and conditions. How is this so? If within those [antecedent] causes and conditions there already existed [predisposing] causes and conditions, then [those antecedent causes and conditions] would be useless. If within those [antecedent] causes and conditions there did not already exist [predisposing] causes and conditions, then in that case too they would be useless.

By way of analogy, if within milk there already existed yoghurt, then this milk does not constitute a cause for [the production of] yoghurt. This is because the yoghurt already exists. If it previously contained no yoghurt, then that would be the same case as with water which contains no yoghurt. The milk does not constitute a cause in this case either. If it is the case that there is no cause [therein] and yet yoghurt exists, why is yoghurt not produced from within water?

[Even] if it were [actually] the case that milk constituted the cause and condition for [the production of] yoghurt, milk itself is not inherently existent [for] milk itself arises from causes and conditions.

Milk comes from a cow. A cow is produced from water and grass. In this manner, one may [trace back] endlessly and [find that] in every case there are causes and conditions. For this reason, within the causes and conditions, one cannot say that the result exists. One cannot say that they do not exist. One cannot say that they both exist and do not exist. And one cannot say that they neither exist nor do not exist. All dharmas arise from causes and conditions and are devoid of an inherent nature, just like the images in a mirror. This is as explained in a verse:

If a dharma from cause and condition arises,

This dharma in nature is actually empty.

[For] if it's the case that this dharma's not empty,

It does not exist based on cause and conditions.

It's just like the images found in a mirror,

Not [made by] the mirror, not [made by] the visage,

Nor [made by] the person who holds up the mirror.

It's not self- [created] nor barren of cause.

It is not existent, nor is it not existent,

Nor is it both existent and devoid of existence.

Not even these words here are granted acceptance.

When according with this, then it's the Middle Way.

It is for these reasons that it says that all dharmas are like images in a mirror.

[Like {Supernatural} Transformations]

As for [the simile] "like a [supernatural] transformation," [it refers to] the fourteen transformational mind- [states]. In the first dhyana, there are two: one associated with the desire realm and one associated with the first dhyana. In the second dhyana, there are three: one associated with the desire realm, one associated with the first dhyana, and one associated with the second dhyana. In the third dhyana there are four: one associated with the desire realm, one associated with the first dhyana, one associated with the second dhyana, and one associated with the third dhyana. In the fourth dhyana, there are five: one associated with the desire realm, one associated with the first dhyana, one associated with the second dhyana, one associated with the third dhyana, and one associated with the fourth dhyana.

[From within] these fourteen transformational mind- [states] one is capable of performing eight kinds of transformations: The first is that one is able to shrink [phenomena] down even to the size of a dustmote. The second is that one is able to expand [phenomena] up even to the extent that they fill up empty space. The third is that one is able to lighten [phenomena] even to the point that they weigh only as much as swan's down. The fourth is that one is freely able to perform all manner of transformations such as changing the large into the small and the long into the short. The fifth is that one is able to be possessed of the power of the sovereign (One is possessed of great power such that among people, there are none to which one must submit. Therefore it says, "one is possessed of the power of the sovereign."). The sixth is that one is able to [instantaneously] traverse long distances. The seventh is that one is able to cause the earth to move. The eighth is that one is able to obtain whatever one wishes. One is able to multiply [his] one body into many bodies, is able to make many bodies become one body, is able to pass even through walls of stone, is able to walk on water, is able to stride through space, is able to touch the sun and the moon, and is able to transform the four great elements, changing earth into water, water into earth, fire into wind, wind into fire, stone into gold, and gold into stone.

Alternately, [it may be said that] there are four classes of transformations: Within the desire realm, through resort to herbs or

precious objects or conjuration, one is able to transform any phenomenon. People with superknowledges are able on account of the power of their psychic power to transform all manner of phenomena. The beings which comprise that class which includes devas, dragons, ghosts and spirits, on account of the power which comes as part of the retribution associated with those modes of rebirth, are able to transform all manner of phenomena. In the form realm, on account of the retribution associated with that realm of rebirth and on account of the cultivation of the power of the absorptions, [those beings] are able to transform all manner of phenomena.

Just as a transformationally- produced person, as distinct from an incarnate human, has no birth, aging, sickness or death, has neither suffering nor bliss, and is on this account empty and devoid of reality, so too it is for all dharmas. In every case they are devoid of production, abiding and extinction. For this reason it says that all dharmas are like [supernatural] transformations.

Additionally, that which is transformationally- produced is devoid of anything [which would qualify as] a fixed entity. It is solely based upon the arising of thought that there is anything which is created and in every case, [that which is created] is devoid of actuality. The human body is also just like this, for it is fundamentally devoid of anything constituting a cause. It is solely on the basis of the thought [generated in] previous incarnations that the

body of this incarnation is produced. In every case there is nothing whatsoever [therein] which is real. It is for this reason [too] that it is said that all dharmas are like a [supernatural] transformation.

[Moreover], just as it is the case that when the thought which produces a [supernatural] transformation ceases, that [corresponding] transformationally- produced [entity] perishes, so too it is with all dharmas: When the causes and conditions [underlying any given dharma] perish, their [corresponding] effects also perish. They are not inherently existent [and in that respect] are just the same way as transformationally- produced phenomena, which although actually empty, are able nonetheless to influence beings to experience the anguish of worry, anger, joy, and delusion. All dharmas are just like this: Although they are empty and devoid of any reality, they are able nonetheless to influence beings to give rise to delight, anger, worry and so forth. It is for this reason [too] that it is said that all dharmas are like [supernatural] transformations.

Furthermore, just as transformationally- produced dharmas are devoid of anything in the beginning, devoid of anything in the middle and devoid of anything afterwards, so too it is with all dharmas. And just as when transformationally- generated entities are produced, there is nowhere from which they come and just as when they perish there is no place to which they go, so too it is with all dharmas.

Additionally, just as the characteristics of transformationally-

produced entities are pure, like space, devoid of anything to which defilement could adhere, and are not sullied by either offenses or merit, so too it is with all dharmas. Just so, the nature of dharmas is suchness. The ultimate reality of suchness is naturally and eternally pure. This [situation] is analogous to that of the four great rivers of Jambudvpa which, each holding the waters of five hundred subsidiary rivers containing all manner of impurities, flow into the waters of the great ocean and thereupon become entirely pure.

Question: One should not say that transformationally- produced entities are empty. How is this so? The mind [which produces] transformations is gained through the cultivation of the absorptions. It is from this mind that all manner of transformations are created. Whether these [transformational entities] are people or whether they are dharmas, still, these transformations are possessed of causes and are possessed of effects. How then can they be empty?

Reply: This concern was already addressed in [the section on] the "like a shadow" [simile]. We shall now address it further. Although the causes and conditions exist, the transformationally- produced effects are empty. This is comparable to the nonexistence of the topics of speech. Although a thought arises and the mouth speaks forth words, still, one may not, merely through thought and words, bring something into existence. That of which one speaks is not thereby existent. Even if it existed [in some sense], it would be like speaking

of the existence of a second head or of a third hand. Although they are produced [in a sense] from one's thought and one's mouth, still, one may not claim that there [actually] exists thereby any [real] head or any [real] hand.

This is just as set forth by the Buddha, "One contemplates the unproduced and thereby gains liberation from that which is produced. One relies on the unconditioned and thereby gains liberation from that which is conditioned." Although one contemplates unproduced dharmas as being nonexistent, still they are operative in the realm of causes and conditions. This is also the case with the unconditioned. Although transformations are empty, still they are able to bring about mental causes and conditions. Although the other nine similes, "like a magically- conjured illusion," "like a mirage," and so forth are empty, they are nonetheless able to bring about the arising of all manner of thought.

Moreover, though one may seek among the six classes of causation and the four classes of conditions for these [supernatural] transformations, still, one is unable to find them therein. Because the six classes of causation and four classes of conditions do not correspond with these [transformations], [such transformations] are, therefore, empty.

Furthermore, emptiness is not [judged] on the basis of invisibility. It is on account of their being devoid of any actual

function that [phenomena] are [judged] to be empty. It is for this reason that it is said that all dharmas are like [supernatural] transformations.

Question: If all dharmas and the subjects of the ten similes are all identically empty, why are only these ten matters employed as similes? Why not use mountains, rivers, stone walls and so forth as similes?

Reply: Although all dharmas are empty, still, there are distinctions among them: There are those the emptiness of which is difficult to understand and there are those the emptiness of which is easy to understand. Now, those for which emptiness is readily comprehended are employed herein as similes for those the emptiness of which is only understood with difficulty.

Moreover, there are two kinds of dharmas: those which constitute a locus for attachment of the mind and those which do not constitute a locus for attachment of the mind. [Herein], those points to which the mind does not attach are employed to release the mind from those points to which it does attach.

Question: How is it that the [topics] of these ten similes constitute places to which the mind does not attach?

Reply: These ten phenomena do not dwell for long. It is because they arise readily and perish readily. For this reason they constitute points to which the mind does not attach.

Moreover, there are those who are aware that the [topics of] the ten similes constitute dharmas which deceive and delude the ears and the eyes. Because [those same individuals] are unaware that all dharmas are empty, these [subjects] are used as similes for all dharmas. If there are people who become mentally attached to these ten similes, who do not understand them and who raise all manner of arguments in order to establish that they do [in fact] exist, then these ten similes are not useful for them. One should [instead] set forth alternate dharmic access methods for their benefit.

Question: As for all dharmas being empty, not produced and not destroyed, I was already entirely knowledgable as regards the emptiness referred to through the various comparisons and various causes and conditions set forth within this discussion of the ten similes. If all dharmas are empty, one ought not to set forth these similes. If one sets forth these similes, then this is contrary to emptiness.

Reply: My explanation of emptiness is for the sake of refuting the existence of all dharmas. Now, as for what has been said here, if it is a setting forth of existence, that has already been refuted. If it is a setting forth of nonexistence, then one ought not to challenge it. This is analogous to [the actions of] the bhikshu charged with maintaining order when he, with loud voice and upraised hand, calls out, "Silence in the Assembly!" This is done for the purpose of employing speech to cut off all speech and is not done for the purpose of

soliciting further speech. For this reason [it should be understood that], although one engages in an explanation demonstrating that all dharmas are empty and neither produced nor destroyed, one does so [solely] out of compassionate regard for beings. Although there is a discussion, it is not a case of [establishing anything as] existent. It is for these reasons [discussed above] that it is said that all dharmas are like a [supernatural] transformation.

End Notes:

"They," refers to the great bodhisattvas, those "mahaasattvas" who constitute the Sutra's current topic. [Return to text.]

Gandharvas are a class of heavenly musicians. They gain their sustenance from fine fragrances (incense, etc.). [Return to text.]

Lamotte apparently failed to understand the passage, mistranslated it, and then mentioned in a note that the point of the comparison evades

him. [Return to text.]

She refers here to the twelfefold chain of causation. [Return to text.]

Literally: "flames," or by derivation, "heat waves." But the context and the Sanskrit both indicate that "mirage" is intended. [Return to text.]

In fact, "wild horses" was a classical term for "mirage." [Return to text.]

This is typical summer weather in a monsoon climate such as India's. [Return to text.]

This line refers to first and second stage arhatship. [Return to text.]

This refers to Third stage arhatship. [Return to text.]

The syntax and terseness of this statement may seem to veil the concept: Nothing more can reside inside of space (not even space itself) anymore than something more can reside inside of an already solid rock. Because there is "no vacancy" in either case, the fallacy in maintaining that the place in which space resides is space itself (i.e. "openings," or

"spaces.") is analogous to the more obvious fallacy of maintaining that there is room to fit something more inside of an already solid mass of rock. (Lamotte repeatedly failed to note the two different meanings for the character "shih" [actual/solid] which occur here in close proximity and was thus forced to be rather "creative" with his translation.)

[Return to text.]

A "Middle person" hews to the Middle Way or, more specifically exemplifies the Maadhyamika doctrine of Nagarjuna. [Return to text.]

The four lines ending here are missing in Lamotte (p.368- 9). [Return to text.]

This is a reference to the four inverted views: seeing purity in the impure (in the body), seeing bliss where there is no enduring pleasure (in the feelings), seeing permanence amidst the impermanent (in one's thoughts), and seeing a "self" where none can be found (in the "dharmas," i.e. in those elemental components of existence to which the illusion of a self is readily reduced.) [Return to text.]

The translation of the last clause in this sentence is still tentative.

See Leo M. Pruden's English rendering of the Abhidharmakosha. [Return to text.]

Eternalism and annihilationism were shown by the Buddha to be extreme and erroneous views which do not accord with reality and which fail to embody the truth of the Middle Way. [Return to text.]

Lest the highly theoretical language disguise the practical application of this argument, it would do us well to note that Nagarjuna is referring here to a commonly-held belief (with which we are amply familiar) that the world and the beings who populate it were somehow created by some exogenous force like "God," hence the direction of the argument which points directly to the inherent irrationalities of such a view. [Return to text.]

The five "aggregates" or skandhas are: forms (such as the body), feelings, perceptions, karmic formations or formative forces, and consciousness. The tendency to personalize things finds beings viewing one or more of these aggregates as constituting an enduring and independent individuality or "self." We have been encouraged by the Buddha to understand that such views are not only erroneous but also conducive to "self"-inflicted suffering. [Return to text.]

This parenthetical note is actually part of the Chinese text and most likely was added during the translation process. [Return to text.]

In his translation of the Abhidharmakosha, Pruden renders the six classes of cause as: cause or reason for existence; coexistent cause; parallel cause; associated cause; universal cause; and retributive cause, and renders the four conditions as: causes as a condition; an equal and immediately antecedent condition; an object as condition; and a predominating influence as condition. [Return to text.]

Beginning at this point, the rest of the ten similes discussion is missing in Lamotte. [Return to text.]

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On the Nature of Dharmas

(T25.107a11-14 [fasc.6])

Those dharmas arising from cause and conditions,
'Tis these which we know as but mere empty marks.
They also are known as just false appellations,
But also reveal the Way of the Middle.

Now if there's a dharma that's actually existent,
It shouldn't revert then to be nonexistent.
If now nonexistent having previously existed,
It then would just be but an annihilation.

They're neither eternal nor annihilated.
Nor are they existent or devoid of existence.
The place of mind's consciousness is wholly
 extinguished,
The power of words is exhausted as well.

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The Bodhisattva's Reality-Based Skillfulness

(T25.107a17-108a18 [fasc.6])

Sutra: They were skillful in bringing about deliverance in accordance with reality.

Upadesha: There are dharmas propounded by followers of other paths which, although they are able to bring about "deliverance" of beings, do so in a way which does not accord with reality. How is this so? It is because of the deficits inherent in the multifarious erroneous views and fetters [which they promote].

Although the adherents of the Two Vehicles teachings do have those whom they bring to deliverance, they effect deliverance through inappropriate methods. How is this so? This is on account of the fact that, because they do not possess omniscience, their skillful means-based thought is scant. Only the bodhisattvas are able to effect deliverance in accordance with reality. The difference here is analogous to that between two ferrymen on a river, one of whom relies on a raft fashioned of reeds and floats, and the other of whom employs a ship. There is an obvious difference in the relative merits of the two

approaches to ferrying people across. The bodhisattva's skillful deliverance of beings is just like this.

Then again, one might say that this is comparable to methods of healing disease. Bitter herbs, needles and cauterization induce pain in the process of effecting a cure. On the other hand, one may use a method of healing such as the miraculous medicine known as Shuddhashaantaa, which the patient needs only lay eyes upon to effect the complete cure of a multitude of maladies. Although the two methods are the same in the sense that they both bring about the alleviation of disease, still, there is a difference as regards relative superiority of technique. The respective approaches employed by the Hearers and the Bodhisattvas in the teaching and deliverance of people correspond to this analogy.

The teaching of the Hearers consists in gaining the Way through the rigorous implementation of the dhuutaa'nga practices, and through sitting in dhyaana meditation, applying oneself with diligent mind in the beginning, middle and final periods of the night. The teaching of the bodhisattvas consists in achieving purification of the mind through contemplating the mark of all dharmas as being devoid of either that which binds or that which liberates. This is as illustrated in the The Life of Ma~njushrii:

[The Story of Prasannendriya and Agramati]

Mañjuśrī addressed the Buddha, saying, "Greatly Virtuous One, in the past, during the course of my previous lifetimes, innumerable asamkhyeya kalpas ago, there was at that time a Buddha named "King of the Lion's Roar" (Siṃhānādaśā). The lifespan of that Buddha and the beings in that world was a hundred thousand koṭis of nayutas of years. That Buddha employed the teaching of the Three Vehicles in delivering beings.

The name of that country was Thousand Rays of Light. The trees in that country were made of the seven kinds of jewels. Those trees emitted sounds extolling the innumerable pure dharmas as well as sounds proclaiming emptiness, marklessness, wishlessness, nonproduction, nonextinction, and the nonexistence of anything whatsoever. When beings heard these sounds their minds were liberated and they gained the Way.

At that time when the Buddha King of the Lion's Roar proclaimed the Dharma, during the first assembly, ninety- nine koṭis of people gained the way of arhatship. Within the assembly of bodhisattvas, it was the same. All of these bodhisattvas gained the patience arising from realization of the nonproduction of dharmas. They took up all manner of Dharma methods and saw innumerable buddhas. They paid their respects to them, made offerings to them and were able to bring an innumerable and incalculable multitude of beings to deliverance. They

gained innumerable dhaara.ni accesses and were able to realize innumerable samaadhis of all different kinds. Those bodhisattvas who had but recently established their resolve and who had newly entered the gate of the Way were inexpressably numerous. The innumerable adornments of this buddhaland exhausted the descriptive power of words.

At that time, when that buddha had completed his teaching and conversion of beings, he entered upon the nirvana without residue. His Dharma dwelt in the world for sixty thousand years. [Eventually], the Dharma sound of those trees ceased to come forth. At that time there were two bodhisattva bhikshus, one of whom was named Prasannendriya (lit. "Joyous Faculty"), and the second of whom was named Agramati (lit. "Superior Intellect"). As for this Dharma Master Prasannendriya, in his comportment he was virtuous and in his character he was direct. However, he did not repudiate worldly dharmas, nor did he indulge in making discriminations as to what was good and what was bad. The disciples of Prasannendriya were intelligent, were pleased by Dharma and delighted in listening to the most abstruse levels of meaning. Their master did not devote himself to praising the virtues of having but few desires and knowing when enough is enough, nor did he extol the merits of the prohibitions or cultivate the [ascetic] dhuutaa'nga practices. He simply proclaimed that the true mark of all dharmas is pure. He told his disciples, "All dharmas, even if they are characterized by sensual desire, characterized by anger, or characterized by delusion,- the marks

of all of these dharmas are identical to the true mark of all dharmas. There is nothing therein by which to be hung up or obstructed." He employed this skillful means to instruct his disciples and afford them entry into the "single- mark" wisdom. At that time, his disciples had no more hatred or resentment with respect to other people. Because their thoughts were free of resentment, they gained the patience with regard to beings. Because they gained the patience with regard to beings, they were then able to realize the patience with regard to dharmas. Abiding in actual Dharma they were unmoving like mountains.

The Dharma Master Agramati was pure in his observance of the prohibitions. He cultivated the twelve dhuutaa'nga practices, achieved the four dhyana and four formless samaadhis. The disciples of Agramati were of dull faculties and were much inclined to make discriminations as to this being pure and that being impure and thus their minds moved and were turned.

There was one time when Agramati went into the town and, having arrived at the house of one of Prasannendriya's disciples, sat down in the appointed seat and proceeded to extol the observance of the prohibitions, limitation of desires, knowing when enough was enough, cultivating the dhuutaa'nga practices, and extolling also the taking up of dhyana meditation and the cultivation of stillness in a quiet place. Additionally, he proceeded to disparage Prasannendriya, saying, "When this man speaks Dharma, he instructs people in a way which influences

them to enter into erroneous views. He speaks of lust, hatred, and delusion as being devoid of any characteristics which should constitute an impediment. He is a man whose conduct is rather mixed. He is not entirely pure."

This disciple was one possessed of sharp faculties and who had achieved the patience with regard to dharmas. He asked Agramati, "Greatly Virtuous One, by what characteristic does one know this dharma of sensual desire?"

He replied, "Sensual desire is characterized by afflictions."

[The layperson] asked, "Do these desire- associated afflictions reside externally or do they reside internally?"

[Agramati] replied, "These desire- associated afflictions do not reside internally nor do they reside externally. If they resided internally, then it shouldn't be the case that they rely on external causes and conditions for their arising. If they resided externally, then they should have nothing to do with me and should not therefore be able to afflict me."

The layperson then declared, "If it's the case that sensual desire does not come from inside or from outside or from the east or from the west or from the south or from the north or from any of the four midpoints or from above or below, and if it is the case that one can search everywhere and be entirely unable to find any actual characteristic, this dharma then is neither produced nor destroyed. If

it is devoid of any mark of production or extinction, it is empty and entirely devoid of anything whatsoever which exists. How then can it be that it is able to be afflictive?"

After Agramati had listened to this declaration, he was not pleased and was unable to offer a reply. He got up from his seat and said words to this effect, "Prasannendriya has engaged in an extensive deception of many people and has influenced them to take up an improper path."

This Agramati Bodhisattva had not yet studied the dhaara.ni of sound. When he heard words which had been spoken by the Buddha, he was delighted. When he heard the doctrines of other paths, he was filled with aversion. When he heard of the three roots of unwholesomeness then he would be displeased. When he heard of the three roots of wholesomeness then he would be greatly delighted. When he heard of birth and death then he would become worried. When he heard of nirvana then he would be happy. He departed from that layperson's house, went to the forest, entered the monastery, and announced to the bhikshus, "You should all be aware that this Prasannendriya bodhisattva has engaged in deceptions whereby he has extensively influenced people to engage in the unwholesome and the improper. How is this so? He has said, 'As for the characteristics of lust, anger and delusion as well as those of all other dharmas,-- they are all characterized by mutual nonobstruction.'"

At this time Prasannendriya thought, "This man is extremely hateful, is covered over by unwholesome karma, and is going to fall into committing a grave offense. I should now speak the most profound Dharma. Although he will gain nothing from it now, it will constitute for him a cause and condition for the path of Buddhahood in a future age. Then Prasannendriya called an assembly of the Sa.mgha and singlemindedly uttered a verse:

One's sensual desire's identical with the Way.

And so it is with hate and delusion.

In just this way amidst these three,

One finds the Way of innumerable buddhas.

So if a man discriminates

'Twixt lust and hate, delusion and Way,

This man strays far away from Buddha

Just as heaven's far from earth.

The Way, lust, hatred and delusion

Are all one dharma, all the same.

Should one who hears this cringe in fear,

He's far away from Buddha's path.

The dharma of lust's not born or destroyed,
And cannot cause the mind affliction,
But if one has a view of self,
This lust leads forth to states of woe.

Seeing dharmas of existence and nonexistence as
different,
One can't leave existence or nonexistence.
But knowing existence and nonexistence as same,
Transcending supremely, one achieves Buddha's
Way.

He spoke more than seventy verses of this sort. At that time, 30,000 devas gained the patience arising from awareness of the nonproduction of dharmas. Eighteen thousand Hearers, because they did not cling to any dharmas, achieved liberation. At that time Agramati bodhisattva fell into the hells where he underwent sufferings for an immeasurable period of ten million ko.tis of years. When he emerged again and was born among men, for 740,000 existences, he was always slandered. He did not even hear the word "buddha" for an innumerable number of kalpas. When these offenses gradually became lighter he was able to hear the Buddha's Dharma. He left home as a monk for the sake of the Way, but he [eventually] gave up the precepts. In this manner,

for 63,000 existences, he always foresook the precepts. Then, for an innumerable number of existences he became a shrama.na but, although he no longer set aside the precepts, his faculties were [still] dark and dull.

This Prasannendriya bodhisattva is now a buddha far away to the east, 100,000 ko.tis of buddhalands away. His land is known as "Jeweled Adornment" and his buddha name is "Sun- Surpassing Brilliance King".

Ma~njushrii said, "At that time, the bhikshu Agramati was myself. I observe that for such a period of time I endured this immeasurable amount of suffering."

Ma~njushrii again addressed the Buddha, saying, "If there be a man who seeks the way of the Three Vehicles and who doesn't wish to undergo all manner of suffering, he should not [employ the discriminating mind to] break up the mark of all dharmas and then cherish hatefulness based thereon."

The Buddha asked Ma~njushrii, "What benefits did you gain from listening to these verses?"

He replied, "When I heard these verses, I achieved the ending of the multitude of sufferings and in life after life developed sharp faculties and wisdom. I became able to understand the profound Dharma and able to expound the profound meaning. I became foremost among the bodhisattvas in this regard."

Examples such as these illustrate skillful explanation of the

mark of all dharmas. This is what is meant by "They were skillful in bringing about deliverance in accordance with reality."

End Notes:

"They were skillful..." The Sutra refers here to the bodhisattvas in attendance upon the Buddha when he delivered these teachings on the perfection of wisdom. [Return to text.]

Shuddhashaantaa. We borrow Lamotte's educated guess as to the proper Sanskrit reconstruction of the Chinese "su t'uo shan t'uo." [Return to text.]

Dhuutaa'nga practices. This refers to twelve beneficial ascetic practices specifically recommended by the Buddha. [Return to text.]

Asa.mkhyeya kalpas. A kalpa is a cosmic cycle of time commensurate with the lifespan of a world system. Asa.mkhyeya means "innumerable" and here refers to an immeasurably long period of cosmic time comprised of

an innumerable number of births and deaths of world systems. [Return to text.]

"...hung up or obstructed." Please note: This teaching does not constitute an endorsement of desire, aversion and delusion. Its intention is to diminish attachments, not multiply them, and thus it does not in the least negate or diminish the importance of the traditional and standard moral and ethical proscriptions. Though useful for countering a tendency to make polarizing discriminations which may constitute one of the most recalcitrant obstacles to liberation, still, it does presume a pre-existing awareness of the need to eliminate the above-mentioned three poisons from one's thoughts, words and actions. [Return to text.]

"States of woe" is not a Buddhist euphemism for the short-term psychic pain which may follow in the aftermath of a libidinous excursion. Rather, it is a technical term referring specifically to repeated reincarnation in the lower realms, realms characterized by intense and unremitting pain as well as by such complete psychic submersion that the prospects of regaining human incarnation in the foreseeable future are quite scant. It may serve us well to note that this line constitutes Prasannendriya's warning label. In essence, it tells us, "Unless we are

entirely free of a view of self (and no one is free of such an affliction who has not already realized arhatship) the three poisons of desire, aversion and delusion still conduce to karmic misery." [Back to text.]

"...gave up the precepts." This character which I have translated variously as "forsaking," "giving up," or "setting aside" of the precepts does not necessarily imply transgression but does at least signify a formal retreat from monastic status to the typically less rigorous preceptual standards of lay life. [Back to text.]

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Three Brothers Suddenly Awaken

(T25.110b8-21 [f.7])

The Bodhisattva is able to employ all manner of skillful means to personally cut off all of these kinds of afflictions* and is also able to employ clever skillful means to bring about the cutting off of other people's afflictions. For example, when the Buddha was in the world, there were three men, an elder brother, second brother and youngest brother who had heard that there was a courtesan in Vaishaalii named Aamrapaalii, a courtesan in Shraavastii named Sumanaa, and a courtesan in Raajag.rha named Utpalavar.naa. Each of the three men had heard people extol these three women as being incomparably lovely, so much so that, day and night, they were obsessed, could not put those women out of their thoughts, and then, in their dreams, dreamt that they had an affair with them. Upon awakening, they thought, "These women did not come to us, nor did we go to see them, and yet a sexual encounter was consummated." Because of this they experienced an awakening and wondered, "Could it be that all dharmas are like this?" At this time they went to see the Bodhisattva Bhadrapaala to inquire about this matter.

Bhadrapaala replied, "Actually, all dharmas are precisely like this. In every case they arise from thought." He continued to bring forth many instances like this and, for the benefit of these three men, employed skillful means whereby he cleverly explained the emptiness of all dharmas. At this time these three men straightaway achieved the

stage of the avaiivartika (irreversability).

All of these bodhisattvas are like this. In all manner of ways they cleverly explain dharma for the benefit of beings, influencing them to cut off all manner of views, entanglements and afflictions. This is what is meant when it is said, "They were able to cut off all views and entanglements as well as all afflictions."

End Notes:

This story occurs as commentary on the line from the Sutra which reads, "They (the bodhisattvas) were able to cut off all kinds of views and entanglements as well as all afflictions."

The Buddha's Smile

(T25.112b8-113a8 [fasc. 7])

Sutra: At that time, the World Honored one tranquilly arose from samaadhi and, employing the heavenly eye, contemplated the worlds, whereupon his entire body subtly smiled.

Upadesha: Question: How is it that the World Honored One who had been immersed in the "Samaadhi King" samaadhi wherein there was nothing whatsoever which is being carried out, arose from that absorption and then contemplated the worlds?

Reply: The Buddha had entered the "Samaadhi King" samaadhi wherein the treasury of the Dharma jewels of all buddhas was entirely exposed and entirely open to his view. As he was engaged in contemplation within this "Samaadhi King" samaadhi, he thought, "This Dharma treasury of mine is immeasurable, beyond calculation, inconceivable and ineffable." Afterwards, he tranquilly arose from samaadhi and, employing the heavenly eye, contemplated beings and was aware that beings are poverty stricken and beset by suffering. This

treasury of Dharma is something which may be gained through causes and conditions. All beings have the capacity to gain access to it. But they only sit there in the darkness of delusion and thus do not seek it and do not search after it. It is on account of this that his entire body subtly smiled.

[The Five Eyes]

Question: The Buddha possesses the Buddha eye, the wisdom eye and the Dharma eye, all of which are superior to the heavenly eye. Why then is it that he employs the heavenly eye to contemplate the worlds?

Reply: This is because that which is observed by the fleshly eye is not all-inclusive. As for the wisdom eye, it is aware of the reality mark of all dharmas. The Dharma eye sees, "This person... employing which skillful means and practicing which dharma shall he [be able to] gain the Way?" The Buddha eye is that by which all dharmas are manifestly and completely known. Now, as for the heavenly eye...it conditions the world as well as the beings [in it] and does so without being impeded or obstructed. This is not the case for the other eyes. Although the wisdom eye, the dharma eye and the Buddha eye are superior, it is not the case that they are employed for observing the dharmas of beings. When one desires to observe beings, there are but two types of

eyes [employed for this purpose], namely the fleshly eye and the heavenly eye. Because the fleshly eye is not all-inclusive and has that which is blocked off from it, [the Buddha] employs the heavenly eye in [this] contemplation.

[Why the Heavenly Eye is So Called]

Question: Now, as for this eye,...it resides with the Buddha.

How is it that it is called the "heavenly" eye?

Reply: For the most part, this eye is found among the gods.

That which is seen by the heavenly eye is not obstructed by mountains, walls or trees. If a human is energetic, it may be gained through the power of cultivating the upholding of the precepts and the practice of dhyana absorptions. It is not the case that it is a [natural] attribute gained [solely] through birth. It is for this reason that it is referred to as the "heavenly" eye.

Furthermore, for the most part, people exalt the gods and regard them as preeminent. The Buddha accords with the minds of people and so, on this account, refers to it as the "heavenly" eye.

Moreover, there are three categories of "gods," namely: those who are gods in name; those who are gods by birth; and those who are gods by virtue of their purity. As for those who are gods in name, this

refers to "the heavenly king" and the "sons of heaven." As for those who are gods by birth, this refers to all such gods as Indra and Brahmaa. Those who are "gods" by virtue of their purity are the buddhas, the pratyekabuddhas and the arhats. Among those who are gods by virtue of their purity, the Buddha is the most revered. And so there is nothing blameworthy in referring here to the "heavenly" eye.

[What the Buddha Sees]

As for "...employing the heavenly eye he contemplated the worlds..." [the Buddha thereby observed]: that the beings of the world constantly seek after bliss and yet reap even more suffering; that their minds are attached to a "self," [even though] there is actually no self to be found herein; that beings are forever fearful of suffering and yet forever engage in the activities [which conduce to the experience] of suffering; and that they are like blind men seeking after a good road, but who paradoxically fall into a deep abyss. After concluding all manner of contemplations such as these, his entire body subtly smiled.

[How it is That His Entire Body Smiles]

Question: A smile arises from the mouth. At times, perhaps the eyes smile. Why now does it say that his entire body smiled?

Reply: The Buddha is the most highly honored being in the world. Because he has gained a degree of sovereign independence whereby he is able to cause his entire body to [act] like his mouth or like his eyes, his entire body is capable of smiling. Moreover, it is because all of his hair pores open [at such times] that [his entire body] is referred to as smiling. It is on account of the happiness accompanying the smiling of the mouth that all of the hair pores [simultaneously] open.

[Why the Buddha Smiles]

Question: The Buddha is the most awesomely solemn [of beings]. Why then does he smile?

Reply: It is just as with the great earth which does not move on account of inconsequential matters or minor causes and conditions. The Buddha, for his part, is just like this. If there is no matter of consequence or if the causes and conditions are only minor, then he does not smile. Now, because of the existence of great causes and conditions, his entire body smiles. How is it that they are great? The Buddha is about to speak the Mahaapraj~naaparamitaa. An incalculable number of beings shall thereby carry on the lineage of the buddhas. It

is this which constitutes a great cause and condition.

Moreover, the Buddha has said, "In life after life I have existed even as a small insect or as an evil person, but nonetheless gradually accumulated the foundation of goodness and realized the great wisdom such that I have now been caused thereby to achieve buddhahood and gain the power of superknowledges which is the most supreme and the most magnificent. All beings can achieve this as well. Why is it that they needlessly undergo such severe sufferings and fall into such inferior circumstances?" It is for this reason that he smiled.

Moreover, there exist small causes with great effects and minor conditions with major consequences. For instance, in seeking the Buddha Way, if one but utters a single verse of praise or if one but one time proclaims, "Namo Buddha," or if one lights only a single stick of incense, still, one shall definitely become a Buddha. How much the more so is this the case where one hears of and understands that in actuality all dharmas are not produced and not destroyed, are not unproduced and not undestroyed and [understands also that] even so, the karma of activity in the realm of causes and conditions is still not lost. It is on account of this matter that he smiles.

Furthermore, the characteristic of the praj~naapaaramitaa is that it is pure and like unto space. It cannot be bestowed and it cannot be grasped. The Buddha is possessed of all manner of skillful means, radiance and supernatural qualities. He desires to teach and

transform all beings, causing their minds to become tamed and made supple so that afterwards they will be able to believe in and accept the praj~naapaaramitaa. For this reason, he smiled and then radiated light.

There are all manner of causes and conditions whereby one may smile. There are those who are delighted and therefore smile. There are those who are afflicted with anger and therefore smile. One may feel contempt for others and therefore smile. One may witness strange events and therefore smile. One may observe embarrassing situations and therefore smile. It may happen that one sees strange customs from other lands and therefore smile. It may also happen that one witnesses rare and difficult undertakings and thus is caused to smile. Now, this is the most rare and difficult of all undertakings. The mark of all dharmas is not produced and not destroyed. True emptiness is devoid of appellations, is devoid of names, is devoid of words and is devoid of speech. And yet [the Buddha] is about to create names and set up appellations whereby he will discourse for the sake of beings, thereby causing them to gain liberation. This is the most supremely difficult of undertakings.

[The Straw Clothes & Conflagration Simile]

This is analogous to there being a great conflagration a hundred

yojanas in breadth and there being a man who, dressed in dry grass, plunges into that conflagration and passes all the way through without burning so much as a single leaf. This is extremely difficult. The Buddha is just like this. He takes up the grass of the myriad names of the eighty-four thousand dharmas and enters into the reality mark of all dharmas, and yet is not burned by the fire of defiling attachment. He passes straight on through without any obstruction. This is extremely difficult. It is on account of this difficult undertaking that he therefore smiles. It is on account of all manner of rare and difficult matters such as these that his entire body smiles.

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A Brahman Tests the Buddha's Omniscience

(T25.114b1-11 [fasc.7])

Question: How many grains of sand are there in the Ganges River? [*]

Response: Their number is so great that it is unknowable by any numerary categories. Only the buddhas and Dharma- body bodhisattvas are capable of knowing their number. Buddhas and Dharma- body bodhisattvas are even able to calculate how many atoms are arising and perishing throughout all of Jambudvipa, how much the more so are they able to know the number of sands in the Ganges.

For example, once, when the Buddha was sitting beneath a tree in the forest beyond the Jetavana grove, a brahman arrived where the Buddha was and asked of the Buddha, "How many leaves are there on the trees of this forest?"

The Buddha immediately replied, stating a particular number of leaves. The Brahman thought doubtfully to himself, "Who would be able to corroborate this?" Then the Brahman went over to a tree and, removing a number of leaves, stashed them away and then returned to the Buddha, asking, "Precisely how many leaves are there in the forest, now?"

The Buddha then immediately replied that now the number of leaves had been reduced by a certain number, noting precisely the number of leaves which had been removed. When the Brahman realized this his mind was filled with reverence and faith. He requested that the Buddha

allow him to become a monk, after which he gained the way of the Arhat.

We can know from this that the Buddha can know the number of sands in the Ganges.

End Note:

[*] The number of sands in the Ganges was commonly used by the Buddha in representing inconceivably large numbers, hence the question. [Text]

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Why the Buddha Shows His Tongue

(T25.115a4-c2 [fasc.8])

Sutra:

At that time, the World Honored One put forth his characteristically broad and long tongue, extending it so that it entirely covered the great trichiliocosm and then he smiled happily. From the root of his tongue he sent forth innumerable tens of millions of ko.tis of light rays. Each of these light rays transformed into a thousand- petalled golden- colored lotus blossom. Atop each of these flowers, there sat a transformation buddha who had assumed the full- lotus posture and who was proclaiming the six paaramitaas. Those beings who heard this became certain thereby to realize anuttarasamyaksa.mbodhi. Likewise, this [supernatural transformation] extended in the same manner to reach a Ganges' sands number of buddhalands throughout the ten directions.

Upade'sa:

Question: How is it that one of such great virtue, venerability and solemnity as the Buddha, the World Honored One, would stick out his broad, long tongue? It seems rather like a mark of contemptuousness.

Reply: In the above three instances of emitting light, the

illumination reached to beings throughout the ten directions and caused them to gain liberation. Now, [the Buddha] wishes to speak the Mahaapraj~naapaaramitaa. The Mahaapraj~naapaaramitaa is extremely profound, difficult to understand, difficult to comprehend, and difficult to believe in and accept. For this reason, [the Buddha] extends his broad and long tongue as a form of certification [of believability]. Where one possesses a tongue with characteristics such as this, one's words are necessarily veracious.

[Buddha, the Servant & the Doubting Brahman]

As an example, once, some time ago, when the Buddha had concluded the rains retreat in 'Sraavastii, Aananda followed the Buddha in travelling about from state to state. They were about to arrive at a particular brahman city. [It happened that] the king of that city was well aware of the Buddha's spiritual virtues, and that he was able to convert multitudes of people and influence the minds of the masses. [That king thought], "If now [the Buddha] comes here, who would find any further satisfaction with me?" Then he issued a restrictive decree: "Whoever donates food to the Buddha or listens to the words of the Buddha is thereby bound to pay a levy of five hundred gold pieces."

Having arrived in that [king's] state after the restrictive

decree had been laid down, the Buddha led Aananda, with almsbowls in hand, into the city to collect alms. The people of the city had all shut their doors and did not respond, whereupon the Buddha left with his bowl empty.

At that time, one household's old servant came out the door carrying a cracked clay bowl brimming with spoiled gruel, intending to dispose of it. She noticed the Buddha, the World Honored One, coming with an empty bowl. The old servant saw the Buddha's major features and minor characteristics, his golden color, the white hair mark [between his eyebrows], the cowl [on the crown of his head], his ten foot halo, his empty bowl, and saw that he had no food. When she had seen this she thought, "A person of such spiritual stature as this deserves to dine on the fare of the heavenly kitchens. That he now voluntarily condescends to [allow] his body [to appear] carrying an almsbowl and walking along on alms rounds is certainly on account of his great lovingkindness and compassion for everyone." Her thoughts of faith were pure and although she desired to present a fine offering to him, she had no means to accord with her wish. Feeling much abashed, she addressed the Buddha, "Although I wish I could provide a [suitable] offering, I am unable to obtain anything more than this. If the Buddha has need of this lowly fare, he may take it."

The Buddha was aware that her thoughts were imbued with a pure faith and reverence and so extended his hand and accepted with his

almsbowl the food which she had given. The Buddha thereupon smiled and emitted five-colored rays of light which everywhere illumined heaven and earth and then returned, entering through that characteristic feature on his brow.

nanda placed his palms together, knelt, and addressed the Buddha, "Pray, may the World Honored consent [to explain] the causes and conditions whereby he now smiles. I wish to hear his reasons."

The Buddha asked nanda, "Did you or did you not notice that this elderly woman, with a mind imbued with faith, made an offering of food to the Buddha?"

Aananda said, "I did see that."

The Buddha said, "Because this elderly woman made an offering of food to the Buddha, she shall enjoy a period of fifteen kalpas in the heavens and among people, wherein she shall be the recipient of blessings and bliss and shall not fall into the states of woe. Thereafter, she shall be reborn as a man, shall leave behind the homelife, shall study the Way, shall realize pratyekabuddhahood, and shall enter the nirvaana without residue.

At that time, there was a brahman standing alongside the Buddha who uttered a verse, saying:

You Sir are [a scion] of the K.satriyan Solar clan

And a prince of the house of the Pure Rice king,

And yet, to gain food, you now tell a great lie.

As reward for what crime do you reap such rank

fare?

At that time, the Buddha extended his broad and long tongue until it covered his face up to his hairline. He then asked the brahman, "In your perusal of The Classics have you or have you not found any indication that a person could have a tongue like this and yet still tell a lie?"

The brahman replied, "If a person's tongue is capable of covering the nose alone, then there will be no falseness in his words, how much the less [could there be any false speech] where it can reach up to the hairline. Although, I [now] believe that the Buddha definitely does not speak falsely, still, I do not understand how such a small offering could have a retribution so great as this."

[The Nyagrodha Tree Simile]

The Buddha asked the brahman, "Have you or have you not ever seen anything in this world which only rarely occurs and which is only seldom seen?"

The brahman replied, "I have indeed seen such a thing. I once

was travelling on the road with other brahmans when I saw a single nyagrodha tree the shadow of which was still not used up even when shading a caravan of five hundred merchant wagons. This was a phenomenon which occurs but rarely and which is but rarely encountered."

The Buddha asked, "Is the seed of that tree large or is it small?"

He replied, "It is but one third the size of a mustard seed."

The Buddha asked, "But who could believe you when you say that there is a tree of such great size but which has a seed so extremely small?"

The brahman replied, "It is actually so, World Honored One. I have seen it with my own eyes. This is not a falsehood."

The Buddha said, "So too it is that I have seen that this elderly woman by making a faithful offering thereby gains such a grand resultant retribution. It is just like the tree where the cause is minor but the effect is great and is [a result] brought about by the Thus Come One's magnificent field of merit.

The brahman's mind awakened (lit. "opened") and he understood. He made a full reverential prostration (lit. "threw his five extremities to the ground") and repented of his error before the Buddha, saying, "My thoughts have been uncivil and thus I have stupidly failed to believe in the Buddha."

The Buddha spoke Dharma for him in various ways whereupon he

gained the initial resultant stage of the Way. He immediately raised his arm into the air and cried out loudly, "Everyone! The gate of sweet dew has been opened! Why don't you all come out?!"

Each of the brahmins in the city then remitted five hundred gold pieces to the king. They welcomed the Buddha and made offerings to him. They all exclaimed, "We have gained the flavor of sweet dew. Who would want to be sparing of five hundred gold pieces?" Then everyone came out whereupon the restrictive decree became entirely unenforceable. This brahmin king himself together with his ministers and subjects took refuge in the Buddha and the Dharma. All of the people of the city developed a pure faith. In just this fashion, the Buddha extended his characteristically broad and long tongue for the sake of those who did not yet believe

End Notes:

A ko.ti is a very large number which, if taken literally, is equal to 10,000,000. [Back to text.]

The six paaramitaas or "perfections" are: giving, patience, moral ethics, vigor, dhyana (meditative absorption), and praj~naa (transcendental wisdom). They constitute the essence of the bodhisattva path and are universally extolled in Mahaayaana Buddhism. [Back to text.]

Anuttarasamyaksa.mbodhi is the utmost, right and perfect enlightenment of the Buddha [Back to text.].

There were two other instances of the Buddha emitting light in the section of Sutra text just prior to that quoted above [Back to text.].

The Mahaapraj~naapaaramitaa is "the great perfection of transcendental wisdom," and is the name of this Sutra which Nagarjuna explains herein [Back to text.].

"The initial resultant stage" refers here to the stage of the srotaapanna, otherwise known as the "stream winner," "stream- enterer," or "first- stage arhat." [Back to text.]

Birth and Death and the Unmoving Mind

(T25.117c18-118a7 [fasc. 8])

(In the Sutra proper, it has just been described how the Buddha's manifestation of various supernatural phenomena caused certain beings in the lower realms to gain rebirth in the heavens.)

Question:

The five aggregates are impermanent, empty and devoid of a self. Why [were these beings] led to gain rebirth in the heavens? So just who is it that dies and who is it that is born?

Reply:

This matter has already been extensively treated in the chapter "In Praise of the Bodhisattvas." Now, we shall [merely] offer a summary reply. As for your claim that the five aggregates are "empty,

impermanent, and devoid of a self," in this Praj~naapaaramitaa, the five aggregates are devoid of permanence, impermanence, emptiness, non - emptiness, self and non - self. If, like the non - buddhist, one seeks to find an actual self, this cannot be found. It is only on account of false names and the coming together of all manner of causes and conditions that it is [perceived as] existent. There are these names.

This is analogous to [a pair of] magically - conjured men who proceed to kill each other. And so people see them die. By the power of the magical conjuration they are caused to rise up again. And so people see them come to life. Although the names "birth" and "death" do exist, they are devoid of any reality. In the realm of worldly dharmas, there truly do exist birth and death. But in the dharma of the reality mark, there is no birth and there is no death.

Then again, one may say that those people who are subject to birth and death [are the ones who] do have birth and death whereas those people who are not subject to birth and death [are the ones who] have no birth and death. How is this so? The person who is not born and does not die, by employing the great wisdom, is able to put to an end the feature of being subject to birth. This is as described in a verse which says:

In the Dharma of the Buddha, though marks are empty,
Still, they're not cut off and annihilated.

Although there is production, still, this is not eternalism.

Actions and their karma are not lost.

All dharmas are like [the stalk of] the plantain.

Everything arises from the mind.

If one is aware that dharmas are devoid of reality,

This mind itself is also [seen as] empty.

If there is a man who [is fixed on] mindfulness of emptiness,

This then is a practice contrary to the Way,

Dharmas are neither produced nor destroyed.

Because of the existence of thought one mistakes their [actual]
features.

If one is possessed of thought one falls into the demon's net.

Through the absence of thought one makes his escape.

Through movement of the mind one contravenes the Way.

Not moving,- this is the imprint of Dharma.

The Causality Underlying Unfortunate Circumstances

(T25.118b18-119a12 [fasc. 8])

Sutra: At that time, throughout the great trichiliocosm, that multitude of beings who had been born blind gained the power of sight, those who were deaf became able to hear, those who were mute became able to speak, those who were insane became normal, those who were mentally scattered gained mental stabilization, those who were naked gained clothing, those who were suffering from hunger and thirst became full, those who were sick became cured and those whose bodies were deformed became whole again.

Upadesha:

Question: The types of suffering and distress encountered by beings are of a hundred thousand varieties. If [aided by] the Buddhas supernatural power, why were they not all caused to gain liberation?

Reply: They were all able to be saved. Now, we merely describe in summary fashion the major categories. This is just as when, in describing

the many kinds of fetters, we summarily describe them as consisting in the three poisons.

Question: If one merely spoke of those who are blind gaining sight, that would be adequate. Why does it specifically refer here to those who are born blind?

Reply: Those who are born blind are so born by virtue of serious offenses committed in previous lives. Even those who had committed serious offenses were able to gain the power of sight, how much the more so was this the case with those whose offenses were but slight.

Question: How is it that serious offenses committed in previous lives result in one's being caused to be born blind?

Reply: [This can be the result] if one destroys the eyes of beings, if one pulls out the eyes of beings, or if one destroys [another's] correct views by claiming that there is no such thing as either [karmic] offense or merit. When such a person dies, he falls into the hells. When [existence in the lower realms deriving from] these offenses has come to an end, in one's subsequent lifetimes, one is blind from birth.

If, moreover, one has stolen the brilliant pearl from a buddha

stupa or has deprived it of the illumination of lamps, or if [one has taken] the pearl or lamplight from a stupa commemorating an arhat or pratyekabuddha, or if one has stolen [sources of] illumination from other "fields of merit," on account of all manner of causes and conditions from former lives such as these, one [is bound to] lose one's sight (lit. "lose one's light"). In the present life, whether it is due to sickness or whether it is on account of being beaten, one then loses one's sight. These constitute the [corresponding] causes and conditions in the present incarnation.

Moreover, in the case of the ninety- six varieties of eye diseases, as for those which cannot be cured even by the physician king J~naanaakara, only the Buddha, the World Honored One is able to cause the victims to regain their sight. Moreover, he is able to first cause them to gain sight and is then afterwards able to cause them to gain the wisdom eye. As for those who are deaf, their gaining the power of hearing is the same as this.

Question: If we have those who are born blind, why does it not also refer here to those who are born deaf?

Reply: It is because there are more cases of being born blind and relatively fewer cases of being born deaf. Therefore this case is not

mentioned.

Question: What are the causes and conditions for being born deaf?

Reply: Deafness is a result of causes and conditions from previous lives. If one fails to accept or carry out the instructions of one's teachers, but, on the contrary, becomes angry, on account of this offense one becomes deaf. Then again, one may incur this offense if one has cut off the ears of beings, if one has destroyed the ears of beings, or if one has stolen ga.n.diis (gongs), bells, or drums from a buddha stupa, from a stupa dedicated to the Sangha, from virtuous people, or from other [persons] who constitute "fields of merit." There are all kinds of karmic causes and conditions such as these [which originate] from previous existences. In the present existence the causes and conditions may be sickness or they may be being struck. Circumstances such as these constitute the corresponding causes and conditions in the present existence whereby one becomes deaf.

Question: Those who are mute are unable to speak. What types of offenses does one commit that one is mute as a result?

Reply: If in a previous existence one has cut out someone's tongue or has plugged up someone's mouth or has given them some toxic drug that has caused them to be unable to speak or if perhaps, on hearing the

instruction and remonstrance of one's Master, or of one's father or mother, one has cut them off and repudiated their instruction, or perhaps if one has been an evil and perverse person who has not believed in either offenses or merit and has refuted correct explanations [of these concepts], one undergoes [retribution for] these offenses in the hells. When one emerges into the world as a person one is unable to speak. It is on account of all manner of causes and conditions such as these that one becomes deaf.

Question: It says, "Those who were insane became normal." Why does one become insane?

Reply: If one has disrupted someone's practice of sitting in dhyana [meditation], if one has destroyed buildings reserved for sitting in dhyana [meditation], if one has employed incantational techniques to cast a spell on others whereby they have been influenced to become hateful, disputatious or afflicted with sexual desire, then in the present lifetime one's fetters will be abundant and severe. Take for example the brahman who lost his fields, whose wife then died, and who suddenly went crazy and went running off naked. Another example was the bhikshuni K.rshakaa Gautamii who originally, when she was still a laywoman, experienced the death of all seven of her children and who, because she became so distraught and mournful, lost her mind and went crazy.

There are people who become so extremely hateful that they cannot control themselves and so become extremely delusional and insane. There are also stupid people who, on account of baseness and depravity, smear their bodies with ashes, yank out their hair, go about naked, and crazily and stupidly consume feces. There are people who may be afflicted with wind- based pathology or heat- based pathology who, when the disorder becomes severe, go insane. There are people who become possessed by pernicious ghosts. It may be that there are people who under the influence of delusion make a practice of drinking rainwater and who thus become insane. People lose their minds in these sorts of ways. All manner of afflictions such as these are examples of insanity. On account of being able to see the Buddha, those who are insane are able to become normal again.

Question: [As for the passage:] "Those who were mentally scattered gained mental stabilization," insanity is simply mental scatteredness. On what account does one make a distinction?

Reply: There are people who are not insane but whose minds are mostly scattered and confused. Where one's mental resolve resembles that of a monkey such that one is unable to focus on anything, this is what is meant by having a scattered mind. Additionally, there are cases where,

being intensely engaged with responsibilities, one carries on in a hurried fashion and becomes attached to the various superficialities. In such a case one may lose one's mental stamina and be unable to undertake [the practice of] the Way.

Question: What are the causes and conditions corresponding to a scattered mind?

Reply: When the wholesome mind grows scant and one follows along and chases after that which is unwholesome, this is what is meant by the mind being scattered. Moreover, this person fails to contemplate impermanence, fails to contemplate the signs of dying, and fails to contemplate the emptiness of the world. He becomes lovingly attached to a "life," makes calculations with regard to and is [ever] mindful of phenomenal responsibilities and in all manner of ways [his mind] runs off and disperses. It is on these accounts that his mind becomes scattered. Furthermore, he does not obtain the internal bliss of the Buddha Dharma. He seeks outwardly for blissful phenomena and so correspondingly follows along with and chases after the causes of bliss. For this reason his mind becomes scattered. On account of being able to see the Buddha, the scattered minds of people like this are able to gain stabilization.

Question: Earlier, it said, "Those who were insane became normal."

Now it says, "Those who were naked gained clothing." Except in the case where someone is insane, how else would someone be naked?

Reply: Insanity is of two types: As for the first type, everyone knows that they are insane. As for the second type, people may not know that those individuals who go about naked on account of baseness and depravity are [in fact] insane. (See "The Monk, the King & the Naked Ascetics" story which follows.)

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[The Monk, the King & the Naked Ascetics]

(T25.119a12-b5 [fasc.8])

Once, in South India, there was a Dharma Master who was holding

forth from the high seat on the meaning of the five precepts. Within the Assembly, there were many followers of other paths who had come to listen. It happened that at this time the King himself challenged [the monk] with a difficult question, saying, "If it's really as you claim, then those who serve liquor to others as well as those who drink it themselves bring down upon themselves the retribution of being 'crazy' and dull- minded. [If that were so], then it ought to be the case that in this present age those who are crazy are in the majority whereas those who are normal are in the minority. However, those who are now crazy are very few, whereas those who are not crazy are the more numerous. Why is this the case?"

At this time, those followers of other paths [who had come to listen] chorused their approval, "Ah, good indeed! This difficulty is quite a profound one. On account of the King's incisive wisdom, this bald pate fellow in the high seat will definitely be unable to reply."

At that time, the Dharma Master responded by simply raising his arm and pointing to those followers of other paths, whereupon he proceeded to discourse on an entirely different topic. Then the King immediately understood. But those followers of other paths reacted by exclaiming to the King, "The King's difficult question was extremely profound and this fellow didn't know any way to respond to it. He was embarrassed by knowing no answer and so just stuck up his finger and then changed the subject."

The King said to those followers of other paths, "The Dharma Master on the high seat gave his answer by pointing. Because he wished to spare all of you the embarrassment, he chose not to reply with words. He was pointing in your direction and indicating thereby that all of you are crazy, and that therefore the crazy ones are not in the minority.

"You all smear your bodies with ashes, go around naked and shameless, fill skulls with excrement which you then eat, pull out your hair, lie down on thorns, suspend your bodies upside down, subject your noses to smoke, plunge into the water in the winter and then roast yourselves before a fire in the summer. All of these things like this which you practice are contrary to the Way and are indications of mental derangement.

"Moreover, the practice which you all engage in of peddling meat and salt constitutes a direct miscarriage of brahmanical dharma. During the ceremonial offerings to the heavens, you receive cattle as donations and then immediately turn around and sell them off and yet say of yourselves that you are in accord with the Dharma. These cattle are [sold to be consumed as] meat. How could deceiving people in this way be anything but a transgression?

"What's more, you say that when one goes into the auspicious river, the filth of one's offenses is all gotten rid of. This amounts to claiming that there are no causes and conditions inherent in offenses or merit. What a crime it is to deal in beef and profiteer in salt! As

for claiming that by going into the auspicious river one can get rid of one's offenses,--if one is able to get rid of one's offenses that way then one is also able to get rid of one's merit that way. Wherein does this auspiciousness lie?

"All of these [supposedly efficacious] behaviors are devoid of [valid] causes and [valid] conditions and yet by forced interpretation you claim that these represent [effectual] causes and conditions. This all amounts to mental derangement. All such different indications of mental derangement apply to you. Because the Dharma Master wished to spare you embarrassment, he simply pointed and did not speak."

End Notes:

The five precepts are the standard minimum ethical guidelines for the laity. They include proscriptions against lying, killing, stealing, sexual misconduct and intoxicants. The Buddha indicated that, all other things being equal, adherence to them guarantees that one will at least

avoid rebirth in the states of woe. As rebirth in the human realm is considered essential to the ability to continue one's progress on the Path, one cannot over-emphasize the pivotal importance of taking these proscriptions seriously. [Back to text.]

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The Arhat, the Elephant and the Causality of Hunger

(T25.119b7-c4 [fasc.8])

Question: As for [the Sutra's statement], "The hungry became satisfied and the thirsty were able to drink," what causal factors bring about hunger and thirst?

Response: They arise on account of a scarcity of merit . There is an absence of causes originating in previous lives and an absence of conditions in this present life. It is on account of this that one is afflicted with hunger and thirst. Then again, it may be that in previous lives this individual stole the food of buddhas, arhats or pratyekabuddhas or stole food which was reserved for the personal

consumption by one's parents. Now, although one may take birth in an era where one might encounter the Buddha, still, on account of the gravity of one's offenses, he will continue to be afflicted by hunger and thirst.

Question: Nowadays we have people who, although they have taken birth in an evil age, they are still able to enjoy fine food and drink. There have also been individuals who have taken birth in an era where they could encounter the Buddha, but who have nonetheless been especially afflicted with hunger and thirst. If one is a person who has committed offenses it should not be that one can take birth in an era where he might encounter the Buddha. If one is a person possessed of blessings it should not be that he could be born into an evil age. How is it that this could occur?

Response: The causes and conditions of each person's karmic retribution are different. Some people possess the causes and conditions for being able to see the Buddha but lack the causes and conditions requisite to adequacy in food and drink. Others possess the causes and conditions requisite to adequacy in food and drink but lack the causes and conditions for being able to see the Buddha. The situation of these latter individuals is analogous to that of a black snake who lies curled up around a manipearl. [*] There are even cases

of people who , although they have realized arhatship, are nonetheless unable to be successful in searching for almsfood.

Additionally, by way of illustration, we have the case of two brothers who, at the time of Kaashyapa Buddha, left home in search of the Way. One of them upheld the precepts, recited the sutras and sat in dhyana meditation. The other brother sought extensive contacts with the daanapatis[**] while also cultivating all manner of merit-generating karma.

When it came to the time when Shaakyamuni Buddha appeared in the World one of the brothers was reborn into the household of an elder while the other brother was reborn as a great white [war] elephant whose strength was such that he was able to smash the ranks of rebels.

The son of the elder left home to study the Way, gaining the six superknowledges and arhatship. However, on account of only scant merit, whenever he sought alms food it was difficult for him to come by any. One day he took up his bowl and entered the city to seek alms food, but but was unable to get any anywhere. He happened upon the stable of the white elephant and witnessed the King's providing to the elephant all manner of sustenance in great abundance. He then said to this elephant, "In comparing myself to you, [I see that] we both have committed

offenses." The elephant was so moved by this comment that he became choked up and could not eat for three days.

The elephant keeper panicked and sought out this man of the Way. On finding him he asked, "What spell did you cast that it caused the King's white elephant to become so ill that he can't eat?"

[The arhat] replied, "In a previous life this elephant was my younger brother. At the time of Kaashyapa Buddha we left home together to study the Way. I dedicated myself exclusively to upholding the precepts, reciting sutras and sitting in dhyana meditation while neglecting entirely the practice of giving. My younger brother busied himself exclusively with extensively seeking contacts with daanapatis and all manner of giving, neglecting all the while to uphold the precepts or pursue his studies. Because he did not uphold the precepts, recite sutras or sit in dhyana meditation he has now been reborn as this elephant. However, because he extensively cultivated the practice of giving, his food and drink are replete and marked by all manner of abundance. Because I only cultivated the Way and did not cultivate the practice of giving, although I have now gained the Way, whenever I beg for food, I am unable to come by any.

On account of these circumstances we can see that causes and conditions differ from case to case. Although one may take birth at a time when he might be able to see the Buddha, still, he might continue to be afflicted by hunger and thirst.

End Notes:[*] A mani pearl is a miraculous wish- fulfilling gem. [Text]

[**] A daanapati is a lay supporter of the Sangha (the renunciate monastic order). [Text]

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The Origins of Illness

(T25.119c7-16 [fasc.8])

[Nagarjuna comments here on the line of Sutra text which reads, "...those who were afflicted with illness were cured..."]:

There are [basically] two categories of illness: One may become afflicted with all manner of sickness as retribution for karmic activities in former lives. Then too, one may become afflicted with all manner of sickness in the present incarnation due to the influence of [such pathogenic factors as] coldness, heat, and wind. Among the disorders originating in the present incarnation, there are two categories: The first consists of internal disorders wherein non-regulation of the five organs precipitates the arising of firmly-entrenched pathologies originating from former lives. The second consists of all manner of externally- arising disorders involving such phenomena as vehicular accidents, bolting horses, being crushed, falling down from a height, or [being afflicted with] a soldier's sword, a knife, or a club.

Question: What are the causes and conditions for becoming afflicted with physical maladies?

Upadesha: If in one's previous lives one took pleasure in inflicting all manner of cruelties involving lashing with a whip, beating with a club, imprisonment, and tying up, then in one's present life one becomes afflicted with illness. [Then again,] if in this present life one is unaware of how to take care of one's body and so

does not observe proper measure in eating and drinking or is irregular in one's sleeping habits, one may develop all manner of illnesses on account of this. And so there are four hundred and four categories of illness like these. On account of the Buddha's spiritual powers those afflicted with illness were able to become cured.

The Buddha Cares for a Sick Bhikshu {119c16-120a5}

An exemplary case is told of the Buddha when he was in the state of Shraavastii. There was a layman who had invited the Buddha and the Sangha to take their meal in his home. The Buddha had five reasons whereby he might choose to accept his meal while continuing to abide in the monastic dwelling: First, out of a wish to enter samadhi; second, out of a wish to speak Dharma for the gods; third, out of a desire to stroll about and inspect the dwellings of the bhikshus; fourth, to look in on the bhikshus who were ill; and fifth, in instances where no prohibitions had been instituted, to formulate prohibitions for the benefit of the bhikshus.

At this time the Buddha went in order from one door to the next and entered the rooms of the bhikshus. He observed a bhikshu who

suffered from illness, but whom no one was looking after. He was lying there in his excrement and urine and was unable to rise from that position. The Buddha asked the bhikshu, "How is it that you are so afflicted with suffering and yet no one is looking after you?"

The Bhikshu replied, "Bhagavat, I am, by nature, lazy. When others have fallen ill I have never looked after them. Therefore, when I am taken ill, others do not look after me either."

The Buddha said, "Son of good family, I shall look after you. At that time [the god] Shakra Devaanaam Indra bathed him with water and the Buddha rubbed his hands along the [Bhikshu's] body. When he rubbed his body, all of the suffering and pain immediately disappeared and was cured. His body and mind became peaceful and restored. At this time the World Honored One gently and slowly supported this sick bhikshu as he got up, took him outside of the dwelling, saw to his getting cleaned up, and to his dressing in [fresh] robes. Then he gently and slowly assisted him in going back in whereupon he provided him with a fresh sitting mat and allowed him and allowed him to sit.

The Buddha then said to the sick bhikshu, "For a long time now you have not been earnest in striving to bring it about that those matters not yet gained might be gained, that this time of not having yet

arrived might be a time of arrival, and that those matters not yet known might be known. Consequently you now undergo suffering and distress like this, but it may yet be that you are bound to undergo even greater suffering yet."

When the Bhikshu heard this he thought to himself, "The kindness of the Buddha is immeasurable and his spiritual powers are countless. When he used his hand to rub me, the anguish and pain immediately disappeared such that in body and mind I became filled with bliss."

On account of this [we can know that] the Buddha employs his spiritual power to cause those who are sick to be cured and to cause those who are disfigured to become whole again.

[The Origins of Disfigurement {120a5-12}]

What is meant by being "disfigured"? If there is a person who in a former life mangled someone's body or cut off someone's head or sliced off someone's hands or feet or mangled parts of someone's body or who perhaps destroyed images of the Buddha or broke the nose of a Buddha image or did these things to images of worthies or sages, or who perhaps destroyed images of his father or mother,- on account of these offenses

he takes on a form which in many ways is not complete.

Moreover, it is a retribution for unwholesome dharmas to take on a body that is ugly. If in this present life one is victimized by thieves or if one is subjected to capital punishment or if one encounters all manner of causes and conditions whereby one is caused to be disfigured, or if perhaps one becomes afflicted with wind- type, cold- type or heat- type diseases whereby one's body develops horrible sores or where parts of the body start to decay,-- this is what is meant by "disfigured."

[The Story of Gandaka {120a13-29}]

[And so it indicates in the Sutra passage that] they received the great kindness of the Buddha and were all made whole again. An exemplary case in point is that of a servant in Jetavana named Ga.n.daka. (Text notes here: "Ga.n.daka" means "put together" in the language of Ch'in.) He was a nephew of King Prasenajit who was handsome, brave, strong and whose mind was was harmonious and wholesome in nature. When the King's most senior consort saw him she became attached to him and called to him softly, desiring thereby to influence him to go along with her [intention]. But Ga.n.daka did not go along

with her and so the consort became greatly enraged, and slandered him maliciously by accusing him of being guilty of what had been her own offense.

When the King heard this [accusation] he had him sliced apart, joint after joint, and then had his body cast upon the charnel ground. That evening, at the moment just before his life was about to ebb away, the tigers, wolves and raak.sasas came around desiring to eat him. At that moment the Buddha arrived at his side and let his light shine upon him. His body suddenly became as before and he became overjoyed. The Buddha then spoke the Dharma for his benefit whereupon he immediately realized the third stage of the Way. The Buddha then led him by the hand to Jetavana whereupon this man exclaimed, "My body had already been broken and had already been cast off. The Buddha put my body back together! Now I shall devote the rest of my life to serving with this body the Buddha and the Bhikshu Sangha.

The next day, when King Prasenejit heard of this matter he came to Jetavana and said to Ga.n.daka, "I wish to apologize to you for my transgression. In truth you were blameless, but on false grounds, were subjected to punitive injury. I am now going to present to you by dividing up the country half of it in reparation.

Ga.n.daka replied, "I have already developed a revulsion [for worldly possessions]. As for the King, he is blameless. Disastrous mistakes from my former lives have made this event appropriate retribution for my offenses. I am now going to put my body to work in service to the Buddha and the Sangha and so will not be coming back again."

[Instances] like this [illustrate what is meant when the Sutra records that] if there is a being who is disfigured and imperfect, when he is illumined by the Buddha's light he is immediately restored to normalcy. And so it says, "Even all of those who were disfigured became whole. When illumined by the Buddha's light they were immediately restored to normalcy."

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The Origins of Illness

(T25.119c7-16 [fasc.8])

[Nagarjuna comments here on the line of Sutra text which reads, "...those who were afflicted with illness were cured..."]:

There are [basically] two categories of illness: One may become afflicted with all manner of sickness as retribution for karmic activities in former lives. Then too, one may become afflicted with all manner of sickness in the present incarnation due to the influence of [such pathogenic factors as] coldness, heat, and wind. Among the disorders originating in the present incarnation, there are two categories: The first consists of internal disorders wherein non-regulation of the five organs precipitates the arising of firmly-entrenched pathologies originating from former lives. The second consists of all manner of externally- arising disorders involving such phenomena as vehicular accidents, bolting horses, being crushed, falling down from a height, or [being afflicted with] a soldier's sword, a knife, or a club.

Question: What are the causes and conditions for becoming afflicted with physical maladies?

Upadesha: If in one's previous lives one took pleasure in inflicting all manner of cruelties involving lashing with a whip, beating with a club, imprisonment, and tying up, then in one's present

life one becomes afflicted with illness. [Then again,] if in this present life one is unaware of how to take care of one's body and so does not observe proper measure in eating and drinking or is irregular in one's sleeping habits, one may develop all manner of illnesses on account of this. And so there are four hundred and four categories of illness like these. On account of the Buddha's spiritual powers those afflicted with illness were able to become cured.

The Buddha Cares for a Sick Bhikshu {119c16-120a5}

An exemplary case is told of the Buddha when he was in the state of Shraavastii. There was a layman who had invited the Buddha and the Sangha to take their meal in his home. The Buddha had five reasons whereby he might choose to accept his meal while continuing to abide in the monastic dwelling: First, out of a wish to enter samadhi; second, out of a wish to speak Dharma for the gods; third, out of a desire to stroll about and inspect the dwellings of the bhikshus; fourth, to look in on the bhikshus who were ill; and fifth, in instances where no prohibitions had been instituted, to formulate prohibitions for the benefit of the bhikshus.

At this time the Buddha went in order from one door to the next and entered the rooms of the bhikshus. He observed a bhikshu who suffered from illness, but whom no one was looking after. He was lying there in his excrement and urine and was unable to rise from that position. The Buddha asked the bhikshu, "How is it that you are so afflicted with suffering and yet no one is looking after you?"

The Bhikshu replied, "Bhagavat, I am, by nature, lazy. When others have fallen ill I have never looked after them. Therefore, when I am taken ill, others do not look after me either."

The Buddha said, "Son of good family, I shall look after you. At that time [the god] Shakra Devaanaam Indra bathed him with water and the Buddha rubbed his hands along the [Bhikshu's] body. When he rubbed his body, all of the suffering and pain immediately disappeared and was cured. His body and mind became peaceful and restored. At this time the World Honored One gently and slowly supported this sick bhikshu as he got up, took him outside of the dwelling, saw to his getting cleaned up, and to his dressing in [fresh] robes. Then he gently and slowly assisted him in going back in whereupon he provided him with a fresh sitting mat and allowed him and allowed him to sit.

The Buddha then said to the sick bhikshu, "For a long time now

you have not been earnest in striving to bring it about that those matters not yet gained might be gained, that this time of not having yet arrived might be a time of arrival, and that those matters not yet known might be known. Consequently you now undergo suffering and distress like this, but it may yet be that you are bound to undergo even greater suffering yet."

When the Bhikshu heard this he thought to himself, "The kindness of the Buddha is immeasurable and his spiritual powers are countless. When he used his hand to rub me, the anguish and pain immediately disappeared such that in body and mind I became filled with bliss."

On account of this [we can know that] the Buddha employs his spiritual power to cause those who are sick to be cured and to cause those who are disfigured to become whole again.

[The Origins of Disfigurement {120a5-12}]

What is meant by being "disfigured"? If there is a person who in a former life mangled someone's body or cut off someone's head or sliced off someone's hands or feet or mangled parts of someone's body or who perhaps destroyed images of the Buddha or broke the nose of a Buddha

image or did these things to images of worthies or sages, or who perhaps destroyed images of his father or mother,- on account of these offenses he takes on a form which in many ways is not complete.

Moreover, it is a retribution for unwholesome dharmas to take on a body that is ugly. If in this present life one is victimized by thieves or if one is subjected to capital punishment or if one encounters all manner of causes and conditions whereby one is caused to be disfigured, or if perhaps one becomes afflicted with wind- type, cold- type or heat- type diseases whereby one's body develops horrible sores or where parts of the body start to decay,-- this is what is meant by "disfigured."

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Nagarjuna Bodhisattva on the Perfection of Giving

[T25.139a24-153a23 {fasc. 11,12}]

Sanskrit - Chinese Translation: Kumarajiva

Chinese - English Translation: Dharmamitra

The Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom

Section Seventeen: An explanation of the meaning of the first chapter's dana paramita.

Sutra:

The Buddha told Sariputra, "It is by resort to the dharma of non-abiding that the bodhisattva, mahasattva abides in the prajna paramita. It is by means of the dharma of having nothing whatsoever which is relinquished that he perfects dana paramita. This is because neither giver, recipient nor material object can be gotten at."

Treatise:

Question: What sort of dharma is the prajna paramita?

Response: There are those who explain that the faculty of non-outflow wisdom (anaasravapraj~naa) constitutes the mark of prajna paramita. Why is this?

Among all the types of wisdom the foremost type of wisdom is the prajna paramita. The faculty (muula) of non-outflow wisdom is foremost. It is for this reason that the faculty of non-outflow wisdom is known as the prajna paramita.

Question: If the bodhisattva has not yet cut off the fetters (sa.myojana), how can he succeed in practicing non-outflow wisdom?

Response: Although the bodhisattva has not yet cut off the fetters he is still able to practice a semblance of non-outflow prajna paramita. It is for this reason that it can be referred to as practicing the non-outflow prajna paramita. This is just as with the Hearers (shraavaka) who in their cultivation of the dharma of heat, the dharma of summits, the dharma of patience and the foremost worldly dharma, first practice a semblance of non-outflow dharma and then later easily generate the patience of dharma wisdom with respect to suffering (du.hkhe dharmaj~naanaka.saanti).(1)

Then again there are others who state that bodhisattvas are of two kinds, those who are pure by virtue of having cut off the fetters and those who are not pure on

account of not yet having cut off the fetters. Those bodhisattvas who are pure by virtue of having cut off the fetters are able to practice non-outflow prajna paramita.

Question: If it is the case that the bodhisattva is pure by virtue of having cut off the fetters why does he then still practice the prajna paramita?

Response: Although he may have cut off the fetters, he has still not fulfilled the ten grounds (da'sabhumi), he has not yet adorned the buddhalands (buddhak.setra) and has not yet taught and transformed beings. It is for these reasons that he practices the prajna paramita.

Furthermore, "cutting off the fetters" is of two types. In the case of the first, one cuts off the three poisons. One's mind does not attach to the objects of the five desires among men and gods. In the case of the second, although one does not attach to the objects of the five desires among men and gods one has still not yet been able to transcend the objects of the five desires which manifest as a consequence of the bodhisattva's merit. A bodhisattva of this sort should practice the prajna paramita.

This was exemplified by the venerable Aniruddha. When he was dwelling in the forest sitting in dhyana meditation the heavenly maiden "Pure Love" and others

manifest in their pure and marvelous bodies and came to test Aniruddha. Aniruddha said, "Sisters, make yourselves blue when you come. Don't use a variety of colors. I wish to contemplate impurity and am not otherwise able to carry out the contemplation." They then turned yellow, then red, and then white. At that time Aniruddha closed his eyes and would not look, saying, "Sisters, go away from here." At that time the heavenly maidens disappeared. If even the physical forms gained as meritorious reward by the gods are so [marvelous] as this, how much the more so are the objects of the five desires which manifest as a consequence of the bodhisattva's immeasurable merit.

This is also illustrated by the instance when the kinnara king came together with eighty-four thousand other kinnaras to where the Buddha dwelt. They strummed their lutes and sang verses as an offering to the Buddha. At that time, Sumeru, the king of the mountains, as well as the trees on the mountains, the people, the birds and the beasts all danced. The members of the great assembly which surrounded the Buddha, even including Mahakasyapa, were all unable to make themselves remain still. At that time the Bodhisattva Heavenly Imperative asked the venerable Mahakasyapa, "You are of senior years and have long abided as foremost in the cultivation of the dharma of twelve dhuta (ascetic) practices. How is it that you are unable to remain still in your seat?"

Mahakasyapa replied, "The five desires within the sphere of three realms are unable to move me. It is on account of the power of this bodhisattva's

superknowledges manifesting as a consequence of his merit that I am caused to be in this state. It is not that I have any thoughts whereby I can't remain still."

This is just as with Mount Sumeru which when the four directions' winds arise cannot be shaken but which, when the Vairambha winds arise at the end of a great kalpa, is blown flat like a blade of dead grass. We can know from these cases that one of the two kinds of fetters has not yet been cut off. A bodhisattva of this sort should practice the prajna paramita. The Abhidharma explains the matter in this fashion.

Then again there are those who explain that the prajna paramita is a type of wisdom characterized by outflows. Why? Because it is only when the bodhisattva reaches the tree where the Way is realized that he finally cuts off the fetters. Prior to that, although he possesses great wisdom and possesses immeasurable merit, still the afflictions have not all been cut off. Therefore it is explained that the prajna paramita of the bodhisattva is "outflow" wisdom.

Then again, there are also those who explain that, from the point of first generating the aspiration [to attain buddhahood] on up to reaching the tree where the Way is realized, all wisdom employed during that time is referred to as prajna paramita. When one achieves buddhahood, "prajna paramita" changes in name to "sarvaj~naa" (omniscience).

There are also those who say that the bodhisattva's outflow and non-outflow wisdoms [both] generally qualify as constituting prajna paramita. How is this so?

The bodhisattva contemplates nirvana and practices the Buddha Way. On this account the bodhisattva's wisdom is appropriately referred to as "non-outflow."

When on account of not yet having severed the fetters he has not yet brought the task to completion, that [wisdom] is appropriately referred to as "outflow" [in nature].

There are also those who explain that the prajna paramita of the bodhisattva is non-outflow, unconditioned, not perceivable and beyond opposites.

There are also those who say that no matter whether [one would posit] existence, nonexistence, permanence, impermanence, emptiness or substantiality, this prajna paramita is characterized by unattainability. This prajna paramita is not subsumable within the sphere of the aggregates, [sense] realms or [sense] bases.

It is neither conditioned nor unconditioned, neither dharma nor non-dharma. It is neither graspable nor relinquishable, neither produced nor destroyed. It transcends the tetralemma's treatment of existence and nonexistence. It corresponds to an absence of [any] object of attachment. This is analogous to flames which cannot be touched from any of the four directions because they burn the hands. It is the characteristic of the prajna paramita that it too is like this. One cannot touch it because erroneous views are burned up by it.

Question: Of the various people's explanations of prajna paramita offered above, which of them reflects reality?

Response: There are those who say that each of them are principled. They all reflect reality. This is as stated in a sutra which says, "Five hundred Mahakasyapas each explained the two extremes and the meaning of the middle Way. The Buddha said, 'Each possesses a principle of the Way.'"

There are those who say that the last answer is the one which corresponds to reality. Why? Because it cannot be refuted and cannot be destroyed. If one posits a dharma acknowledging even the smallest degree of "existence," in every case such a dharma possesses faults and can be refuted. If one claims "nonexistence," that too can be refuted. Within this prajna, existence is nonexistent, nonexistence is nonexistent and neither existence nor nonexistence is nonexistent. And discussion of this sort is nonexistent as well. This is a dharma of still extinction which is immeasurable and devoid of frivolous doctrinal discussion. Therefore it cannot be refuted and cannot be destroyed. This is what is known as the true and actual prajna paramita. It is the most supreme and unsurpassed.

Just as when the wheel-turning sage king defeats his adversaries but still does not elevate himself above them, so too it is with the prajna paramita. It is able to refute any assertion or frivolous doctrinal discussion and yet it still maintains nothing itself which is the object of refutation. Finally, from this point onward,

many sorts of entryways to the meaning are employed in each chapter in the setting forth of the prajna pÀramita. They are all characterized by reality. It is by resort to the dharma of non-abiding that one abides in the prajnaparamita and is able to completely fulfill the six paramitas.

Question: What is meant by "Resorting to the dharma of non-abiding one abides in the prajnaparamita and is able to completely perfect the six paramitas"?

Response: In this manner the bodhisattva contemplates all dharmas as being neither eternal nor non-eternal, as characterized neither by suffering nor by bliss, as being neither empty nor substantial, as being neither possessed of selfhood nor devoid of selfhood and as being neither produced and destroyed nor unproduced and undestroyed. It is in this manner that one abides within the extremely profound prajnaÀparamita and yet still does not seize upon a mark of the prajnaparamita. This is an abiding which is characterized by the dharma of non-abiding. If one were to seize upon a mark of the prajnaparamita that would be a case of an abiding which is characterized by the dharma of abiding.

Question: If one does not seize upon a mark of the prajnaparamita the mind has nothing to which it may attach. As the Buddha said, "Desire is the origin of all dharmas." If it is the case that one does not grasp [at anything], how can one succeed in completely perfecting the six paramitas?

Response: Because the bodhisattva takes pity on beings he first makes a vow: "I must certainly bring all beings to liberation." On account of the power of the paramita of vigor, although he knows that all dharmas are not produced and not destroyed and characterized by being like nirvana, he still cultivates all manner of merit and completely perfects the six paramitas. Why? Because he employs the dharma of non-abiding as he abides in the prajnaparamita.

The Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom Sutra

Section Eighteen: An explanation of the meaning of the first chapter's praise of dana paramita.

Question: What benefits does dana bestow that the bodhisattva abiding in the prajnaparamita therefore fully perfects it?

Response: Dana brings all manner of benefits. Dana serves as a treasury which constantly follows along with a person. Dana destroys suffering and bestows bliss upon people. Dana is a good guide which shows the way to the heavens. Dana is a storehouse of goodness for it draws in good people. (Giving draws in good people as a result of one's setting up causes and conditions {i.e. karmic affinities} with them. Hence the text reads "draws in.")⁽²⁾ Dana constitutes [a

source of] peace and security. When one reaches the end of one's life one's mind is without fear. Dana is a mark of loving kindness. It is able to rescue everyone. Dana is able to gather together blisses and is able to rout the invaders of suffering. Dana is a great general which is able to defeat the enemy of miserliness. Dana is a marvelous fruit which is loved by gods and men. Dana is a path of purity travelled by the worthies and aryas. Dana is the entryway for the accumulation of goodness and meritorious qualities. Dana is a condition for the accomplishment of works and for the gathering together of a multitude. Dana is the seed of the treasured fruit of good actions. Dana is the mark of the good person endowed with meritorious karma. Dana destroys poverty and cuts one off from the three wretched destinies. Dana is able to preserve and protect the fruit of blessings and bliss. Dana is the primary condition for the realization of nirvana. It is the essential dharma for entry into the multitude of good people. It is the vast repository of good repute and praiseful commendation. It provides the quality of being free of difficulties in the midst of the multitudes. It is the cavernous mansion of the mind's freedom from regret. It is the origin of good dharmas and of one's cultivation of the Way. It is the dense forest of every manner of delight and bliss. It is the field of blessings for the reaping of wealth, nobility and peaceful security. It is the bridge across to the realization of the Way and entry into nirvana. It is traversed by the aryas, the great masters, and those possessed of wisdom. It is that which everyone else, those of minor virtue and lesser intelligence, should emulate.

Then again, it can be compared to [appropriate actions] when a house has caught fire. An intelligent person would clearly recognize the gravity of the situation and would hastily extricate his valuables before the fire reached them. Then, although the house might be burned to the ground, still, his valuables would be preserved so that he might rebuild his residence. A person who enjoys giving is just like this. Because he is aware of the fragility of the body and of the impermanence of material wealth he takes advantage of the opportunity to cultivate blessings. This is like removing one's possessions from the path of a fire. In a later life one is still able to experience bliss. This is like that person's work of rebuilding his house. One experiences comfort as a result of those blessings.

The stupid and deluded person is concerned only with cherishing his house and so rushes about trying to save it. He proceeds madly and foolishly and, losing touch with common sense, fails to recognize the intensity of the blaze. In the fierce wind and towering flames even the earth and rocks are scorched. In a brief interval everything is utterly destroyed. Not only is the house not saved, but the wealth and valuables are all lost as well. To the end of his life he is tormented by hunger, cold, anguish and suffering.

Miserly people are just like this. They do not realize that one's physical existence is impermanent, that one cannot guarantee even another moment of life.

Nonetheless they dedicate themselves to amassing an accumulation [of possessions] which they protect and treasure. Death arrives unexpectedly and they suddenly

pass away. One's physical form is of the same class with earth and wood. One's wealth, the same as withered goods, is entirely cast aside. They are also like a foolish man who experiences anguish and suffering as a result of errors in judgment.

Then again, if one is a person of great wisdom or a gentleman of fine mind, one will be able to awaken and realize that the body is like an illusion, that wealth can never be secure, that the myriad things are all impermanent, and that one can rely only upon one's merit. It has the capacity to pull a person forth from the river of suffering and open up the great Way.

Additionally, the great man of great mind is able to give greatly. He is able thereby to benefit himself. The petty man of petty mind is not only unable to benefit others but is also unable even to bestow liberal generosity upon himself.

Then again, just as when a brave soldier spies an enemy he boldly and immediately vanquishes him utterly, so too, when an intelligent man of wise mind gains a deep realization of this principle, even though the thieves of miserliness may be powerful, he is nonetheless able to fell them and resolutely fulfill his determination. When he meets up with a good field of blessings, encounters the right time ("Time" here refers to the time when one ought to give. If one encounters it and yet does not give, this is referred to as "missing the time."),⁽³⁾ and realizes that the situation corresponds to his intentions, he is able to give greatly.

Again, a person who takes pleasure in giving is respected by others. This is just as when the moon first emerges. There are none who do not cherish it. His fine name and good reputation are heard throughout the world. He is one who is relied upon and looked up to by others. Everyone trusts him. A person who delights in giving is borne in mind by those who are noble and respected by those of humble station. As his life draws to an end his mind is without any fearfulness.

Such fruits gained in reward are obtained in this very life. An analogy can be made with fruit trees where, when the production of blossoms is great, countless fruits are produced. This describes the blessings received in future lives.

As one turns about in the wheel of birth and death, going and coming in the five destinies, there are no relatives upon whom one can rely. There is only giving.

Whether one is born in the heavens or among men, whenever one gains a pure result, it comes forth as a result of giving. Even among elephants, horses and other animals, their being given fine shelter and nourishment is also something they gain as a result of giving.

The qualities gained on account of giving are wealth, nobility and bliss. Those who uphold the moral precepts succeed in being reborn in the heavens. Through dhyana and wisdom one's mind becomes pure and devoid of defiled attachment. Thus one gains the way of nirvana. The blessings gained as a result of giving

constitute the provisions on that road to nirvana.

When one brings giving to mind he experiences delight. On account of delight one develops unity of mind. With unity of mind one contemplates birth and death and impermanence. Because one contemplates birth, death and impermanence one is able to realize the Way.

This is comparable to when a person plants trees because he seeks to have shade or perhaps plants trees because he seeks blossoms or seeks fruit. The aspiration for a reward in the practice of giving is just like this. The bliss acquired in this and future lives is comparable to the shade which is sought. The way of the hearers and pratyekabuddhas is analogous to the blossoms. The realization of buddhahood is analogous to the fruit. These are the various sorts of meritorious qualities associated with dana.

The Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom

Section Nineteen: An explanation of the meaning of the first chapter's characteristics of dana.

Question: What is meant by dana?

Response: Dana refers to a thought of giving associated with an instance of wholesome consideration. This is what is meant by dana. There are those who say that the arising of physical and verbal actions following from that instance of wholesome consideration may also be referred to as dana.

There are others who say that dana refers to the coming together of three factors: faith, a field of blessings, and a material object while the mind simultaneously gives rise to a dharma of relinquishing capable of destroying miserliness. Just as with the dharma of loving-kindness (maitrĒ) wherein one contemplates that which affords happiness to beings and the mind then generates loving-kindness, so too it is with dāna, a dharma associated with the mind. The three factors come together and the mind gives rise to a dharma of relinquishing capable of destroying miserliness.

Dana is of three kinds: that attached to the desire realm; that attached to the form realm; and that which is not attached at all. (The red textual notes state, "This refers to giving as practiced by aryas. Hence it is referred to as 'not attached.'")(4)

It is a dharma associated with the mind (cittasaṃprayuktadharmā) which accords with the action of the mind and arises together with the mind. It is not the case that a form dharma is able to serve as a condition. It is neither an action nor associated with action nor following along with the process of action nor arising

together with action. It does not arise as a result of karma from previous lives. There are two categories of cultivation, the cultivation of practice and the cultivation of achievement. There are two kinds of realization, physical realization and the realization of wisdom. Severance may occur through consideration or perhaps there may be no severance. There are two categories of the cutting off of views, that in the desire realm and the entire cutting off in the form realm. The dharmas of initial and secondary thought are present. It may be practiced by both the common person and the arya. Considerations such as these are extensively distinguished and explained in the abhidharma literature.(5)

Additionally, giving is of two types. There is that which is pure and that which is not pure. As for impure giving, it may involve a kind of superficial giving in which one takes no interest. Or perhaps it may be done for the sake of obtaining wealth. Perhaps one gives because of shame or perhaps one gives as a means of reproof or perhaps one gives out of terror or perhaps one gives out of a desire to draw favorable attention or perhaps one gives out of a fear of death, or perhaps one gives with the intention of manipulating someone into feeling pleased, or perhaps one gives out of a feeling of obligation because one is rich and noble, or perhaps one gives as a means of struggling for dominance, or perhaps one gives out of jealousy or hatred, or perhaps one gives out of arrogance or a desire to elevate oneself above others, or perhaps one gives for the sake of fame or reputation, or perhaps one gives out of an attempt to lend efficacy to

incantations and prayers, or perhaps one gives in an attempt to do away with misfortune and gain good fortune, or perhaps one gives in order to gain a following, or perhaps one gives in a disrespectful fashion in order to slight someone and make them feel lowly. All of the various sorts of giving such as these are classified as impure giving.

As for pure giving, any giving which stands in opposition to the above examples constitutes pure giving. Then again, giving for the sake of the Way is pure giving. When a pure mind arises which is devoid of any of the fetters and when one is not seeking for any reward in this or future lives, and when one does so out of reverence or sympathy, this qualifies as pure giving. Pure giving creates the provisions for moving on along the path to nirvana. Hence the reference to "giving for the sake of the Way."

If one performs acts of giving at a time prior to the time when one might realize nirvana, it creates a cause for blissful retribution among gods and men. Pure giving is like a floral wreath when first made and not yet withered which is fragrant, pure, fresh and radiant. When one performs acts of pure giving for the sake of nirvana, one's [also] being able to experience the fragrance of karmic rewards occurs in this way.

As the Buddha said, "There are two types of people who are rarely encountered in the world: The first, among those who have left the homelife, is a bhikshu who

eats at the improper time and yet succeeds in gaining liberation. The second, among the white-robed householders, is one who is able to perform an act of pure giving." In life after life, the mark of this pure giving is never lost even after countless lifetimes. It is like a title deed which never loses its validity even to the very end.

This fruit of giving comes into being when the causes and conditions all come together. This is analogous to the fruit tree which when it encounters the right season then has flowers, leaves, fruit and seeds. If the season has not yet arrived, the cause still exists but there is not yet any fruit.

As for this dharma of giving, if it is done in order to seek the Way, one is able [to gain it even] in the path of humans. How is this so? The destruction of the fetters is what is referred to as nirvana. Because when one is giving one's afflictions are slight, one is able to assist [one's progress towards] nirvana. Because one does not cling to the object which is given one gets rid of stinginess. On account of being respectfully mindful of the recipient one gets rid of jealousy. On account of giving with a straight mind, one gets rid of flattery and deviousness. On account of giving with a unified mind one gets rid of agitation. On account of giving with deep thoughts one gets rid of regretfulness. On account of contemplating the meritorious qualities of the recipient one gets rid of irreverence. On account of focusing one's own mind, one gets rid of a lack of a sense of shame. On account of becoming aware of another's fine meritorious qualities one gets rid

of a lack of a sense of blame. On account of not being attached to objects of material wealth one gets rid of cherishing [such things]. On account of feeling loving-kindness and sympathy for the recipient one gets rid of hatefulness. On account of being respectful to the recipient one gets rid of arrogance. On account of learning to cultivate a wholesome dharma one gets rid of ignorance. On account of believing that there are resultant rewards one gets rid of erroneous views. On account of knowing that there will definitely be a retribution one gets rid of doubtfulness.

All sorts of unwholesome afflictions such as these become scant when one cultivates the practice of giving. [At the same time] all manner of good dharmas are gained. When one gives, the six faculties(6) (indriya) are pure and a thought characterized by wholesome zeal arises. On account of the arising of a thought characterized by wholesome zeal, internally, one's mind is pure. On account of contemplating the meritorious qualities of the resultant retribution, thoughts of faith arise. On account of pliancy [developing] in the body and mind, delight arises. Because delight arises one achieves single-mindedness. Because one achieves single-mindedness, actual wisdom develops. All sorts of good dharmas such as these are gained.

Moreover, when one gives, the mind develops a semblance of the eight-fold right path. Because one believes in the effects of giving, one gains right views.

Because when one maintains right views one's thoughts are not confused, one gains right thought. Because one's speech is pure one gains right speech. Because one purifies one's physical actions one gains right action. Because one does not seek a reward, one gains right livelihood. Because one gives with a diligent mind, one gains right skillful means. Because one does not neglect being mindful of giving, one gains right mindfulness. Because one's mind dwells [in one place] and is not scattered, one gains right meditative absorption. In this same manner a semblance of the good dharmas of the thirty-seven wings [of enlightenment] develops within the mind.

Moreover, there are those who say that giving generates the causes and conditions for the development of the thirty-two marks. How is this so?

- 1) Because when one gives one is solid in one's mind one gains the mark of the feet being solidly planted on the ground.
- 2) Because when one gives five factors come to surround the recipient(7) and because giving constitutes the karmic causes and conditions for a having a retinue, one gains the mark of the wheel on the bottom of the foot.
- 3) On account of the power of being greatly intrepid in one's giving, one gains the mark of having the heels broad and flat.

4) Because giving attracts others, one gains the mark of webbed fingers and toes.

5-6) Because one gives marvelously flavored drink and food one gains the mark of softness of the hands and feet together with that of fullness in seven places.

7-8) Because one's giving lengthens life, one gains the mark of long fingers together with that of the body's being markedly erect and not stooped over.

9-10) When one gives, one says, "It is only fitting that I should offer this." Because one's mind of giving thereby increases in its strength one gains as a result the mark of having heels which are tall as well as the mark of having bodily hair which grows in a superior direction.

11) Because when giving, one listens well and single-mindedly to the recipient's requests and then diligently accords with such instructions by certainly and hastily getting [what is requested], one gains the mark of having legs like the ai.neya antelope.

12) Because one does not express anger or slighting behavior towards the person making the request, one gains the mark of having long arms which extend beyond the knees.

13) Because one gives in accordance with the mind of the solicitor, not waiting for him to ask, one gains the mark of well-retracted genitals.

14-15) Because one gives fine clothing, bedding, gold, silver and precious jewels one gains the mark of having a gold-colored body as well as the mark of having fine skin.

16-17) On account of giving in a fashion that the recipient is able to gain exclusive and independent use [of the gift] one gains the mark of having a single hair in each and every pore as well as the mark of having the white hair mark between the brows.

18-19) On account of responding to the request of the solicitor by saying, "It is only fitting that I perform this act of giving," one gains the mark of having the upper body similar to that of a lion as well as the mark of having round shoulders.

20-21) On account of giving medication to the sick and giving drink and food to those who are hungry and thirsty one gains the mark of having the area beneath the two armpits full as well as the mark of experiencing the most superior of all flavors.

22-23) By providing comfort to others through encouraging them to practice giving while one is oneself engaged in giving, one opens up the way to giving. On

account of this, one gains the mark of the flesh cowl on the crown of one's head as well as the mark of having the body be as round as a nyagrodha tree.

24-25) When someone makes a request and one forms the intention to present a gift, because one employs gentle and true words which confirm the definite intention to give and which contain no falsehood, one gains the mark of the broad and long tongue and gains the mark of a voice like Brahma which is as pleasant as the call of the kalavinka bird.

26) On account of speaking the truth and employing beneficial speech as one gives, one gains the mark of having jaws like a lion.

27) On account of respecting the recipient and maintaining a pure mind as one gives, one gains the mark of having white and straight teeth.

28-29) On account of speaking true words and using harmonious speech as one gives, one gains the mark of having tightly fitting teeth and also gains the mark of having forty teeth.

30-31) Because as one gives one is not hateful, not attached and maintains a mind which views all equally, one gains the mark of having blue eyes and gains the mark of having eyelashes like the king of the bulls.(8)

This constitutes the manner in which one plants the causes and conditions for the thirty-two marks.

Furthermore, on account of making gifts of the seven precious things, workers, carriages, gold, silver, lamps, buildings, incense and flowers, one is able to become a wheel-turning monarch who possesses an abundance of the seven precious things. Additionally, on account of making gifts with timely appropriateness, one's karmic reward is increased. This is as stated by the Buddha, "If one gives to a person who is about to travel far, to a person who has come from far away, to a person who is sick, to a person who is treating the sick, or when there are manifold difficulties arising on account of winds or cold, this is what is meant by timely giving."

Again, if when one gives in a way which accords with what is most needed in a particular place, one reaps from that an increased karmic reward.

Also, if one performs an act of giving on the road in a wilderness area, one gains from that giving an increased measure of merit.

If one continues giving constantly and without neglecting that practice, one gains an increased karmic reward thereby.

If one gives a gift which accords with that which the solicitor desires, one gains from that an increased measure of merit.

If one gives gifts which are valuable, one gains an increased measure of merit.

If one gives monastic dwellings, parks, forests, bathing ponds and so forth, and if one gives them to good people, then, on account of that, one gains an increased karmic reward.

If one gives to the Saṅgha, one gains on account of that an increased karmic reward.

If both the giver and the recipient are possessed of virtue, an increased karmic reward is gained as a result of that. (The notes in red read, "For example, bodhisattvas and buddhas who give with a mind of compassion. This is what is intended by 'the giver.' Giving for example to buddhas, bodhisattvas, arhats or pratyekabuddhas is what is intended by 'the recipient.'")⁽⁹⁾

When one extends all manner of welcoming courtesies out of respect for the recipient, one gains from this an increased measure of merit.

If one gives that which was difficult to come by one gains an increased amount of merit.

If one is able to give all that one has one gains thereby an increased amount of merit. This is illustrated by the case of a painter by the name of Kar.na from the city of Pu.skaraavatii in the state of Greater Tokharestan. He had travelled to the east to the state of Tak.sa'silaa where he served as a painter to that court for a period of twelve years. He received payment of thirty double-ounces of gold for his work and took it back with him when he returned to the city of Pu.skaraavatii in his home state. [When he arrived there] he heard the sound of a drum beating to convene a great assembly. He went there and saw an assembly of the Sangha. With a mind of pure faith he asked the karmadana, "How much would be required to provide a day's food for this assembly?"

The karmadana replied, "Thirty double-ounces of gold would be adequate to supply food for one day." He then immediately took the entire thirty double-ounces of gold and entrusted it to the karmadana saying, "Prepare on my behalf a day's food [for this assembly]. I will return here tomorrow." He then went back to his home empty-handed.

His wife asked him, "What did you earn for your twelve years of work?"

He replied, "I earned thirty double-ounces of gold."

She immediately asked, "Where is the thirty double-ounces of gold now?"

He replied, "It has already been planted in the field of merit."

The wife asked, "What field of merit?"

He replied, "I gave it to the assembly of the Sangha."

His wife then had him bound and sent before a judge that his crime could be dealt with and the matter properly adjudicated. The grand judge asked, "On account of what matter [have you brought him here]?"

The wife replied, "My husband has become crazy and deluded. He worked in royal service in a foreign country for twelve years and earned thirty double-ounces of gold. He had no compassionate regard for his wife or child and so gave it all away to other people. Thus I have relied on his being dealt through judicial decree. Hence I moved to have him swiftly bound and brought forth."

The grand judge then asked her husband, "Why did you not share with your wife and child, preferring instead to give it away to others?"

He replied, "In previous lives I did not cultivate merit. In the present life I am poor and so have undergone all manner of bitter suffering. Now, in this life I have encountered the field of merit. If I do not plant merit, in later lives I will still be poor and so poverty will follow upon poverty continuously and there will be no

time when I am able to escape it. I now wish to immediately relinquish this state of poverty. It is for this reason that I took all of the gold and gave it to the assembly of Sanghans."

The grand judge was an upasaka who maintained a pure faith in the Buddha. When he heard these words he praised them, saying, "This is an extremely difficult thing to do. You applied yourself diligently and underwent suffering in order to obtain such a small material reward and then were able to take it all and give it to the Sangha. You are a good man." He then took off the string of pearls around his neck and then gave it to the poor man along with his horse and the income which he received from the taxes on an entire village. He then declared to him, "At the beginning when you had made the gift to the assembly of the Sangha but that assembly of sanghans had still not partaken of that food it was a case of the seed still not really having been planted. But now a sprout has already come forth from it. The great fruit [of your good deed] will come forth in the next life."

It is for reasons such as this that it is said that one gains the most merit if one is able to give entirely of that which has been hard to come by.

Moreover, there is worldly dana and there is supramundane dana. There is dana which is praised by the aryas and there is dana which is not praised by the aryas. There is the dana of the buddhas and bodhisattvas and there is the dana of the hearers.

What is meant by "worldly dana"? Worldly dana refers to giving carried out by common people and also refers to giving carried out by aryas when done with a mind subject to outflows. Then again, there are those who say that worldly dana refers to giving carried out by common people whereas, although an arya may give with a mind subject to outflows, because his fetters have been cut off, this [giving] is referred to as supramundane dana. How is this the case?

Because this arya has realized the samadhi of wishlessness (apra.nihitasamadhi).

Then again, worldly dana is impure. Supramundane dana is pure. There are two categories of fetters. One is subsumed under the category of craving and the other under the category of views. When one is under the influence of these two kinds of fetters this is worldly dana. When these two kinds of fetters are absent this is supramundane dana. When the three obstructions tie up the mind, this is worldly dana. How is this so? Dharmas which are the products of causes and conditions are actually devoid of a self. Thus if one says, "I give. He receives," that is therefore worldly dana.

Additionally, "self" has no fixed location. That which I take to be "other," another person takes to be not so. That which another person takes to be "self" I take to be not so. On account of it's being unfixed, there is no actual self. That valuable object which is given exists through the coming together of causes and

conditions. There is no single dharma which can by itself be gotten at. This is as exemplified by silk cloth or by [other] fabric. They are made through the coming together of manifold conditions. Apart from the silk filaments [on the one hand] and aside from the fibers [on the other], there is neither silk cloth or other fabrics. All dharmas are the same in this respect. Any single characteristic is devoid of any [individual] characteristic. Characteristics are eternally and inherently empty. That which people conceptualize and reckon to be existent is [a product of] inverted [views] and is not actual. [Giving based on such conceptions] is worldly dana.

Where the mind is devoid of the three obstacles, where one actually knows the mark of dharmas and where one's mind is devoid of inverted [views], this is supramundane dana. Supramundane dana is that which is praised by the aryas. Worldly dana is that which is not praised by the aryas.

Moreover, pure dana involves no intermixing with the defilement of the fetters. It is like the actual mark of all dharmas. It is that which is praised by the aryas. That which is not pure is intermixed with the fetters. It involves attachment by the inverted mind. It is that which is not praised by the aryas.

Additionally, giving which occurs in conjunction with the wisdom which knows the reality mark is that which is praised by the aryas. If it is not of this sort, it is not praised by the aryas.

Moreover, if it is not done for the sake of beings, if it is not done for the sake of realizing the reality mark of all dharmas, and if it is done solely for the sake of gaining liberation from birth, old age, sickness and death, this is the dana of the hearers. If one gives for the sake of all beings and if one does so for the sake of realizing the reality mark of all dharmas, this is the dana of the buddhas and bodhisattvas. If one is unable to make one's giving replete with every manner of meritorious quality, but rather desires only to gain a minor measure thereof, this is the dana of the hearers. If one wishes to make it entirely replete with every manner of meritorious quality, this is the dana of the buddhas and bodhisattvas. If one gives out of a fear of old age, sickness and death, this is the dana of the hearers. If it is done to assist [the realization of] the buddha way, if it is done for the sake of transforming beings, and if it is not done out of fear of old age, sickness and death, this is the dana of the buddhas and bodhisattvas.

In this connection one ought to draw upon The Sutra of the Past Lives of the Bodhisattva. As discussed in The Avadana Sutra, in the past, in Jambudvipa, there was a king named Vaasava. At that time there was a brahman bodhisattva named Velaama who served as the teacher of the king. He taught the king the method for becoming a wheel-turning sage king. Velaama's own wealth was immeasurable. He possessed an abundance of precious jewels. He had these thoughts: "People look upon me as a noble man possessed of immeasurable wealth. If I am to be of benefit to beings, now is precisely the right time. I should perform a great act of

giving. Although being wealthy and noble is blissful, everything is impermanent. The tribute offered by the five houses causes a man's mind to be so scattered, agitated and unfocussed as to make it like a monkey which is unable to remain still. A person's life passes more quickly than the disappearance of a bolt of lightning. A person's body is impermanent and is a thicket of the manifold sufferings. On account of these things, one ought to practice giving."

After having these thoughts he wrote out a personal declaration in which he announced to all of the brahmins and monastics throughout Jambudvīpa, "We pray that each shall condescend to come and gather at our estate as we desire to present a great offering lasting for a period of twelve years during which boats will cruise on ponds of rice consomme banked with curds. There will be mountains made of rice and noodles and canals created of perilla oil. There will be robes, food, drink, bedding and medicines. Everything will be of the most supremely marvelous quality for over a dozen years during which we desire to make offerings in this way."

There were eighty-four thousand white elephants girded in gold-adorned rhinoceros hide armor. Rare gems were strung together to create a huge gold pavilion ornamented with four kinds of precious things. There were eighty-four thousand horses also clad in gold-adorned rhinoceros hide armor and caparisoned with strands of the four kinds of precious things.

There were eighty-four thousand carriages, each adorned with gold, silver, beryl and crystal, shaded with the skins of lions, tigers and leopards, draped with curtains of paa.ndukambala gems and ornamented with various embellishments.

There were eighty-four thousand precious thrones fitted and adorned with multicolored cushions which were soft and smooth. Arranged at each end of the throne were crimson pillows and embroidered blankets. Marvelous garments and flowing robes were supplied in abundance.

There were eighty-four thousand gold bowls filled with silver nuggets, silver bowls filled with gold nuggets, beryl bowls filled with crystals, and crystal bowls filled with beryl gems.

There were eighty-four thousand dairy cattle. The cows each produced an abundant measure of milk. The horns of the bulls were adorned with gold. They were each dressed in white blankets.

There were eighty-four thousand beautiful women of refined appearance endowed with merit and possessed of virtue. Their bodies were draped in strands of white pearls and precious gems.

This represents only a summary recital of the main features. There were all manner of other arrangements which one could never succeed in detailing.

At that time, King Vaasava and eighty-four thousand kings of lesser states together with their ministers, national heroes and those who served as elders each offered a contribution in encouragement and support which consisted of ten thousand pieces of gold.

After this dharma offering had been arranged and completely set forth, [the god] Shakra Devaanaam Indra came forth and addressed the bodhisattva Velaama by uttering this verse, in which he said:

"The most rarely encountered things in heaven and on earth

Which are able to delight everyone, --

You have now already obtained them

And made gifts of them for the sake of the buddha way."

At that time the gods of the Pure Dwelling Heaven showed themselves and offered praises through the utterance of this verse:

"You have thrown open the gates of the greatest giving.

That for which you have done this is

On account of having pity for [all] beings

And out of seeking for their sake the buddha way."

At this time the gods all had this thought, "We should stop up his gold vase so as to prevent the water from flowing forth. Why? Because there is a benefactor but there is no one to serve as a field of merit."

At that time the demon king said to the god of the Pure Dwelling Heaven, "All of these brahmans have left behind the home life. They uphold the moral precepts purely and have entered upon the Way. Why is it that you now say that there is no one to serve as a field of merit?"

The gods of the Pure Dwelling Heaven said, "This bodhisattva is giving for the sake of the buddha way. All of these people who are now here are possessed of erroneous views. It is for this reason that we say that there is no one to serve as a field of merit."

The demon king said to the gods, "How do you know that this man is giving for the sake of the buddha way?"

At this time one of the Pure Dwelling gods manifest in the body of a brahman. Holding a gold vase and a branch made of gold, he went up to where the Bodhisattva Velaama was and said to him, "In this act of great giving where you are relinquishing what is hard to give up, what is it that you seek? Is it that you desire to become a wheel-turning sage king who has the seven precious things, a thousand sons and dominion over the entire world?"

The Bodhisattva replied by saying, "I do not seek this situation."

"Is it that you seek to become Shakra Devaanaam Indra that you might be lord to eight thousand nayutas of heavenly nymphs?"

He replied, "No."

"Are you seeking to become the lord of the Six Desire Heavens?"

He replied, "No."

Are you seeking to become the Brahma Heaven god who serves as lord over the great trichiliocosm and who is looked on as the patriarchal father of all beings?"

He replied, "No."

"What is it that you seek?"

At this time the Bodhisattva spoke forth a verse, saying:

"I seek that place which is without desire

And which transcends birth, aging, sickness and death.

I desire to bring deliverance to all beings.

I seek the buddha way which is just like this."

The transformationally-produced brahman said, "Benefactor, the buddha way is difficult to achieve. It is beset with great bitterness and suffering. Your mind is soft and accustomed to pleasures. It is certainly the case that you will be unable to seek out and accomplish realization of this way. As I suggested before: to become a wheel-turning sage king or Shakra Devaanaam Indra or King of the Six Desire Heavens or the King of the Brahma Heaven gods, -- these would be easily achievable. There would be nothing so good as to seek these."

The Bodhisattva replied, saying, "Listen to my single minded vow:

Even if one were to cause a wheel of hot steel

To spin around atop my head,

I shall single-mindedly seek the buddha way

And never cherish any regrets.

Were I to be subjected to the three wretched destinies

And to the countless sufferings of the human realm,

I would single-mindedly seek the buddha way

And would never be turned aside by this."

The transformationally-produced brahman said, "Oh Benefactor, it is good indeed, good indeed that you seek buddhahood in this manner." He then uttered a praise, saying,

"Your power of vigor is great.

You show loving-kindness and pity for everyone.

Your wisdom is detached and unobstructed.

Your realization of buddhahood is not far off."

At this time the gods rained down a profusion of blossoms as an offering to the Bodhisattva. The gods of the Pure Dwelling Heaven who had stopped up the water from the vase then disappeared from sight.

At this time the Bodhisattva went before the most senior ranked among the brahmans and attempted to pour forth the water from the gold vase. The water was stopped up and would not flow out. The members of the assembly became overcome with doubt and consternation and wondered, "All of these various kinds of great giving are replete in every way and the benefactor's meritorious qualities are also great. Why now does the water fail to flow forth from the vase?"

The Bodhisattva thought to himself, "This could be due to nothing other than these factors: Have I brought my mind to a state devoid of impurity? Have I achieved a situation where there are no deficiencies in the gifts? What has brought this about?" He personally contemplated the sixteen parts of The Classic on Giving and found that all preparations were pure and free of defects.

At this time the gods spoke to the Bodhisattva, saying, "Do not become overcome by doubt and regret. There is nothing which you have failed to accomplish. It is

because these brahmans are characterized by unwholesomeness, error and impurity."

They then uttered a verse, saying,

"These men are caught in the net of erroneous views.

Afflictions have destroyed right wisdom.

They have departed from purity in the observation of precepts.

They've indulged in useless asceticism and fallen into unorthodox paths.

It is for these reasons that the water is stopped up and will not pour forth."

After they had said this they suddenly disappeared. At that time the gods of the six desire heavens emitted many different kinds of light which illuminated the entire assembly and then spoke to the Bodhisattva, saying in a verse:

"Practices from within the sea of erroneousness and unwholesomeness

Do not accord with your orthodox way.

Among the recipients of your giving

There are none who compare to you."

After they had spoken these words they suddenly disappeared. At this time, after the Bodhisattva had listened to this verse, he thought to himself, "If it were actually the case that there was no one in the assembly who can serve as my equal, the water would be stopped up and would not flow forth. Could it be that it is on account of this?" He then uttered a verse, saying:

"If there are any in ten directions, either in the heavens or on earth

Who are good and pure people,

I now take refuge in them and in reverence make obeisance,

Holding the vase in the right hand, pouring an ablution on the right hand.

And so now swear that I, this one person

May accept [on their behalf] such a great offering as this."

At that time the water from the vase gushed forth into the air, descended from above and came down as an ablution upon his left hand.

Then, when King Vaasava had witnessed this [miraculous] response, his mind became filled with reverence and he uttered a verse, saying:

"Great lord of the brahmans,

This clear beryl-hued water

Has flowed on down from above

And, falling, has come to rest in your hand."

At that time, there arose thoughts of reverence in the minds of those brahmans in the great assembly. They placed their palms together, made obeisance and took refuge in the Bodhisattva. At this time the Bodhisattva uttered this verse, saying:

"That which I have now given

Is not in quest of any blessings in the sphere of the three realms.

It is for the sake of all beings

And is to be employed in seeking the way of the Buddhas."

After he had spoken this verse, the entire earth with its mountains, rivers and trees quaked and moved in six ways. Velaama had originally been of the opinion that this assembly should be the recipient of the offering and so gave it. Even though he realized that there were none in the assembly who were worthy enough to accept it, he now, out of pity, gave to them [all] those things which he had himself accepted.

It would be appropriate to discuss more extensively at this point all sorts of past-life causes and conditions of dana such as this. This is an example of external giving.

What is meant by "internal" giving? [It refers] to not stinting in the giving to beings of [even] one's own physical life. It is as discussed in the past-life causes and conditions when Shakyamuni Buddha as a bodhisattva was serving as the king of a great country. The world was without a buddha, without the Dharma and without the bhikshu Sangha. This king searched in the four directions for the Dharma of the Buddha but was finally unable to find it. At that time there was a brahman who said, "I know a verse uttered by the Buddha. If an offering is made to me I will give it to you."

The King then asked, "What sort of offering are you seeking."

He replied, "If you are able to break open your flesh and turn it into a torch as an offering to me, then I shall give it to you."

The King then thought to himself, "This body of mine is fragile and impure. The amount of suffering which I have undergone on its behalf in life after life is incalculable. It has never been for the sake of Dharma. Only now does it begin to be truly useful. This body is truly not to be cherished now."

After having these thoughts, he called a ca.n.daalaa, and ordered him to scrape the surface of his entire body so that it might serve as a torch. Then he wrapped the King's flesh in white cloth, drenched it in ghee, and set fire to his entire body. The fire blazed up and only then did the brahman give that single verse.

Additionally, in a previous life, Shakyamuni Buddha was a pigeon in the snowy mountains. One time there was a great blizzard. There was a man who had lost his way. He was poor and in miserable straits, undergoing bitterness and suffering. Hunger and cold were both upon him and at that moment his life hung in the balance. The pigeon saw this man and immediately flew in search of fire, piling up twigs and then lighting them. He then additionally cast his body upon the fire as a gift to this starving man. In a manner such as this he gave his head, eyes, marrow and brains to beings. It would be appropriate at this point to draw upon all sorts of cases from the Sutra on the Causes and Conditions of Previous Lives. All sorts of instances such as this illustrate what is meant by "internal" giving.

There are innumerable cases such as this of internal and external giving. This is what constitutes the characteristics of dana.

The Treatise on The Great Perfection of Wisdom

Section Twenty: The explanation of "Dharma giving" in the first chapter's treatment of dana paramita.

Question: What is meant by the giving of Dharma?

Response: There are those who say that the giving of Dharma consists in being of benefit through the constant use of fine words. Then again there are those people who say that the giving of Dharma consists in proclaiming for people the marvelously good dharmas from the discourses of the Buddhas.

Yet again, there are those people who say that the giving of Dharma consists in using three kinds of Dharma to teach people: 1) sutra; 2) vinaya; and 3) abhidharma.

Then again, there are those people who say that the giving of Dharma consists in employing four kinds of Dharma treasuries to teach people: First, the sutra

treasury; second, the vinaya treasury; third, the abhidharma treasury; and fourth, the "various topics" treasury.

Additionally, there are people who say that, generally speaking, the giving of Dharma consists in employing two kinds of Dharma to teach people: 1) the Dharma of the Hearers; and 2) the Dharma of the Mahayana.

Question: Individuals such as Devadatta, Hatthaka and others also employed the three treasuries, the four treasuries, the Dharma of the hearers, and the Dharma of the Mahayana to teach people and yet they themselves [fell] into the hells. Why did this situation develop?

Response: Devadatta was possessed of many offenses arising from erroneous views. Hatthaka was possessed of many offenses arising from false speech. It is not the case that this was pure giving done for the sake of the Way. It was done solely for the sake of seeking fame, self-benefit, reverence and offerings. On account of the offenses created by his unwholesome mind Devadatta entered the hells while still alive. When Hatthaka died he fell into the wretched destinies.

Moreover, the giving of Dharma does not consist solely in words and speech. The giving of Dharma consists in constantly employing a pure mind and wholesome thoughts in the offering of instruction to everyone. Just as it is with the giving of material gifts where there is no measure of blessings or virtue associated with it

if one fails to maintain a wholesome mind, so too it is with the giving of Dharma. If one fails to maintain a pure mind and wholesome thoughts, then it is not the case that this constitutes the giving of Dharma.

Then again, if the speaker of Dharma is able to maintain a pure mind and wholesome thought as he praises the Three Jewels, opens the door to understanding offenses and blessings, explains the four truths, and so goes about teaching and transforming beings so that they are caused to enter the buddha way, this constitutes true and pure Dharma giving.

Looked at another way, generally speaking, Dharma is of two kinds. The first consists in not tormenting beings while also maintaining a wholesome mind, loving-kindness and sympathy. This constitutes the causal basis for the buddha way. The second consists in contemplating and realizing that all dharmas are truly empty. This constitutes the causal basis for the way of nirvana. If, in the midst of the great assembly one lets flourish a deeply compassionate mind as one sets forth these two types of Dharma, and if in doing so it is not for the sake of garnering fame, offerings or expressions of reverence, this constitutes pure Dharma giving rooted in the buddha way.

This concept is illustrated in a story told in connection with King Ashoka who in a single day was responsible for the creation of eighty-thousand Buddha images.

Although he had not yet achieved the stage of "seeing the Way", still, he did maintain a minor degree of faith and bliss in the Dharma of the Buddha. Every day he invited bhikshus to enter the palace to receive offerings. Every day he retained one Dharma Master in order of seniority to speak the Dharma.

One day there was a young Dharma Master, a master of the Tripitaka, who was intelligent and handsome and next in order to speak the Dharma. He sat down next to the King. His mouth exuded an exotic fragrance. The King was filled with extreme doubt and suspicion. He was of the opinion that this constituted a deliberate impropriety arising from a desire to employ a fragrant scent to influence the retinue in the royal palace.

The King asked the bhikshu, "What do you have in your mouth? Open your mouth so I can see into it." [The bhikshu] then opened his mouth for [the King] and it turned out that there was nothing whatsoever therein. He was ordered to rinse out his mouth with water after which the fragrance remained just as before. The King asked, "Venerable One, is this fragrance newly manifest or has it abided with you for a long time?"

The bhikshu replied, saying, "It has been like this for a long time. It is not the case that it is just manifesting now."

[The King] continued to inquire, "How long has it been this way?"

The bhikshu replied in verse, saying:

It was at the time of Kaashyapa Buddha

That I gathered the Dharma underlying this fragrance.

It has remained so like this for a very long time,

And has always been fresh as if newly arisen.

The King said, "Venerable One, I do not yet understand this brief explanation. Pray, expound on it more extensively for me."

He replied by saying, "The King should listen well and single-mindedly to my explanation. In the past, during the time of Kaashyapa Buddha's Dharma I was a Dharma-proclaiming bhikshu who, in the midst of the great assembly, constantly took pleasure in expounding on the immeasurable qualities of Kaashyapa, the World Honored One, on the reality mark of all dharmas, and on an incalculable number of methods to access Dharma. I conscientiously and earnestly set forth praises and offered instruction to everyone. From this time on forward to the present I have always had a marvelous fragrance coming forth from my mouth.

This has been the case in life after life without cease. It has constantly been just as it is this very day." He then spoke forth a verse:

The fragrance from the flowers on the shrubs and the trees

Is utterly surpassed by this incense-like fragrance.

It's able to pleasure the minds of all people.

In life after life it abides without ceasing.

At this time the King was filled with a mixture of shame and delight. He said to the bhikshu, "This is such as has never been before. The merit of speaking the Dharma brings such a great fruition as this."

The bhikshu said, "This may be thought of as the blossom. It is not yet the fruit."

The King asked, "What then is its fruit? Pray, expound upon this for my sake."

He replied, "Briefly speaking, the fruits are tenfold. May the King listen earnestly." He then set forth a verse for his sake:

There's a grand reputation and finely-formed features.

One experiences bliss and is the object of reverence.

There shines awesome brilliance like the sun and the moon.

So thus one becomes a man loved by all people.

There's eloquence and also there's prodigious wisdom.

One's able to end then the grip of the fetters.

One destroys all suffering and reaches nirvana.

And so in this manner the count reaches to ten.

The King said, "Venerable One, How is it that one gains such a reward as a result of praising the qualities of the Buddha?"

At that time the bhikshu replied in verse, saying:

If one praises the qualities possessed by the Buddha

And causes this to be heard everywhere by all people,

On account of results which come forth as reward,

One comes to be known by a grand reputation.

If one praises the actual qualities of Buddha

And causes all people to experience delight,

On account of the [force] which is born from this merit,

In life after life features always are fine.

If one explains for people offenses and blessings,

Allowing them to reach a place of peace and delight,

On account of the merit which is thus produced,

One experiences bliss and is always content.

The power of praising the merits of Buddha

Causes everyone hearing to have minds which are humbled.

On account of the power produced by this merit,

One eternally garners men's reverence as reward.

When one displays forth the torch of the speaking of Dharma

And illumines and awakens then all of the people,

On account of the power produced by this merit

One's awesome bright brilliance shines forth like the sun.

If in many a fashion one praises Buddha's merits

And delights thus the hearts of all [by those words],

On account of the power produced by this merit,

One is ever the object of people's affection.

If with clever discourse one praises Buddha's merits

Which cannot be measured and can't be exhausted,

On account of the power produced by this merit,

One's eloquent speech is never brought to an end.

If one praises the marvelous dharmas of Buddha

Which are such as no one can ever surpass,

On account of the power produced by this merit,

One possesses great wisdom which is pure in its nature.

When one praises the qualities possessed by the Buddha,

One causes afflictions of men to be scant.

On account of the power produced by this merit,

Fetters are cut off and defilements destroyed.

Because both kinds of fetters are brought to an end,

Nirvana in this body has already been achieved,

As when torrents of rain pour down from the sky

All fires are extinguished and no embers remain.

Once again he addressed the King, saying, "If there still remains anything to which you've not awakened, now is the time to bring questions forth. The arrows of wisdom should be used to smash your armor of doubts."

The King replied to the Dharma master, "My mind has been both delighted and awakened such that now there remain no more objects of doubt. The Venerable One is a blessed man well able to speak forth the praises of Buddha."

When one speaks forth the Dharma in accord with the various causes and conditions discussed above and so brings about the deliverance of beings, this qualifies then as the giving of Dharma.

Question: Which is supreme, the giving of material wealth or the giving of Dharma?

Response: According to the words of the Buddha, among the two kinds of giving, the giving of Dharma is supreme. Why is that? The reward resulting from the giving of material wealth is experienced within the desire realm. The reward resulting from the giving of Dharma may be experienced within the three realms or beyond the three realms.

Moreover, if one's discourse is pure, if it reaches deeply into its principles, and if one's mind also realizes it, then, on that account one reaches beyond the three realms.

Again, whereas the giving of material wealth is measurable, the giving of Dharma is measureless. Material giving is such as can be exhausted. The giving of Dharma is inexhaustible. It is analogous to throwing fuel onto a fire: its brightness becomes even greater.

Then again, in the reward gained from the giving of material wealth there is less purity and more defilement. In the reward gained from the giving of Dharma, there is less defilement and more purity.

Also, if one engages in the giving of material wealth, one depends on the power of many others. The giving of Dharma comes forth from the mind. It does not depend upon others.

Additionally, the giving of material wealth is able to cause enhancement of the faculties associated with the four-element [body]. The giving of Dharma is able to bring about perfection of non-outflows in the [five] faculties, the [five] powers, the [seven limbs of] enlightenment and the [eight-fold] path.

Also, as for the methods of giving material wealth, they remain in the world constantly, whether or not there is a buddha. As for the giving of Dharma, it can only exist in an era when there has been a buddha. Therefore one ought to realize that the giving of Dharma is extremely difficult. How is it that it is difficult?

Even one who is a pratyekabuddha possessed of the marks [of a great man] is still unable to speak Dharma. It is only when he proceeds along on his alms round and flies up into the sky performing transformations, that he is able thereby to convert people.

Then again, from the giving of Dharma, one is able to generate the giving of material wealth as well as reach to the position of a hearer, a pratyekabuddha, a bodhisattva and finally, to reach buddhahood.

Moreover, in carrying out the giving of Dharma, one is able to distinguish all dharmas: outflow and non-outflow dharmas, form dharmas and formless dharmas, conditioned and unconditioned dharmas, wholesome, unwholesome and neutral dharmas, eternal dharmas and non-eternal dharmas, existent and non-existent

dharmas, [recognizing that] all dharmas whatsoever, [from the standpoint of] the reality mark, are pure, irrefutable, and indestructible. All dharmas such as these, if one speaks in brief, constitute a treasury of eighty-four thousand dharmas. If one speaks of them extensively, they are countless. Distinguishing and completely understanding all of the different categories such as these comes from engaging in the giving of Dharma.

These two kinds of giving together constitute what is known as dana. If one carries on these two kinds of giving as one seeks to become a buddha, then one will be able to cause people to succeed in reaching the buddha way. How much the more so will it be able to bring about any other result.

Question: The four kinds of relinquishing constitute what is known as dana. These are the so-called relinquishing of wealth, relinquishing of Dharma, relinquishing which leads to fearlessness, and the relinquishing of afflictions. Why have you not spoken herein of two of the kinds of relinquishment?

Response: Because the relinquishing which leads to fearlessness is no different from sila, it is not discussed. Because of the presence of prajna as a separate topic, we do not discuss the relinquishing of afflictions. If we did not speak of the six paramitas it would be appropriate here to completely discuss the four kinds of relinquishing.

The Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom

[End of] fascicle number eleven.

The Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom

The Explanation of the First Chapter's Dana Paramita.

The Remainder of the Section on the Giving of Dharma

Fascicle Number Twelve

Question: What is meant by the fulfillment of dana paramita?

Response: The meaning of dana is as discussed above. As for "paara-" (In the language of Ch'in, this means "the other shore.") "-mitaa" (In the language of Ch'in, this means "to reach."), this means to cross the river of giving and to succeed in reaching the other shore.(10)

Question: What is meant by failing to reach the other shore?

Response: It is analogous to crossing over a river but returning before having arrived.

This is what is meant by failing to reach the other shore. For example, Sariputra cultivated the bodhisattva way for a period of sixty kalpas, desiring to cross over the river of giving. At that time there was a beggar who came along and demanded that he give him one of his eyes. Sariputra said, "The eye would then be useless. What do you want it for? If you need to put my body to use or if you want any valuables I own, then I'll give those to you."

The beggar replied, "I've got no use for your body and I don't want any valuables you might own. I just want an eye, that's all. If you were truly a cultivator of the practice of giving, then I'd receive an eye from you."

At that time Sariputra pulled out one of his eyes and gave it to him. The beggar got the eye and then right there in front of Sariputra he sniffed it, cursed, "It stinks," spat, and then threw it down on the ground. Then, in addition, he smashed it beneath his foot.

Sariputra thought to himself, "It's a difficult task to cross over such base people as this. He actually had no use for the eye and yet he forcefully demanded it. Having gotten it he not only threw it away, he even smashed it with his foot. How extremely base! People of this sort cannot be crossed over to liberation. Far

better that I just concentrate on disciplining myself so as to gain an early liberation from the cycle of birth and death." Having thought this to himself he then turned from the bodhisattva way and directed himself to the lesser vehicle. This is what is meant by failing to reach the other shore. If one is able to advance directly and not retreat and thus complete the buddha way, this constitutes reaching to the other shore.

Then again, to succeed in completing any endeavor is also referred to as "reaching to the other shore." (In the common parlance of India, whenever one takes up a task and then completes it, it is referred to as "reaching the other shore.")⁽¹¹⁾

Additionally, [one may say that] "this shore" refers to being miserly, dana refers to being in the midst of the river, and "the other shore" refers to the buddha way.

Also, [one may say that] holding a view which insists on "existence" or "nonexistence" is what is meant by "this shore." The wisdom which refutes views insisting on "existence" or "nonexistence" constitutes "the other shore" whereas the diligent cultivation of giving corresponds to being in the middle of the river.

Then again, [one may also say that] there are two kinds of dana, the first being the dana of demons and the second being the dana of the buddhas. If [in the

practice of giving] one is being robbed by the thieves of the fetters such that one is afflicted by worries and abides in fearfulness, this constitutes the dana of the demons and exemplifies what is meant by "this shore."

Where there is pure giving in which there is an absence of the thieves of the fetters and in which there is nothing of which one is fearful, one succeeds thereby in arriving at the buddha way. This constitutes the dana of the buddhas and exemplifies what is meant by "reaching to the other shore." This is "paramita."

By way of illustration, in *The Buddha Speaks the Analogy of the Poisonous Snakes Sutra*, there once was a man who had offended the King. The King ordered that he be required to carry around a basket and look after it. Inside the basket there were four poisonous snakes. The King ordered the criminal to look after them and raise them. This man thought to himself, "It's a difficult thing to have to draw close to four snakes. If one grows close to them they bring harm to a person. I could not raise even one of them, how much the less could I do that for four of them." And so he cast aside the basket and ran away.

The King ordered five men carrying knives to chase after him. There was yet another man who tried to persuade him to obey. [This other man] had it in mind to bring him harm and so said to him, "Just raise them in a sensible fashion. There will be no suffering in that."

But the man became wise to this and so ran off, fleeing for his life. When he came to an empty village there was a good man who assisted him by telling him, "Although this village is empty, it is a place that is frequented by thieves. If you now take up residence here you will certainly be harmed by the thieves. Be careful. Don't dwell here." At this point he took off again and next arrived at a great river. On the other side of the river there was a different country. That country was a peaceful, blissful and easeful place. It was a pure place devoid of any form of calamity or adversity. Then he gathered together a mass of reeds and branches and bound them into the form of a raft. He moved it along with his hands and feet. He exerted all of his strength in seeking to make a crossing. When he had reached the other shore he was at peace, happy and free of distress.

The King represents the demon king. The basket represents the human body. The four poisonous snakes represent the four great elements. The five knife-wielding thieves represent the five aggregates. The man of fine speech but evil mind represents defiled attachment. The empty village represents the six sense faculties. The thieves represent the six sense objects. The one man who took pity on him and instructed him represents the good [spiritual] teacher. The great river represents love. The raft represents the eightfold right path. The hands and feet earnestly applied to making a crossing represent vigor. This shore represents this world. The other shore represents nirvana. The man who crossed over represents the arhat who has put an end to outflows. This is just the same in the dharma of the bodhisattva.

If in giving there exist the three obstructions of an "I" who gives, an "other" who receives and a valuable object which is given, then one falls into a demonic mental state wherein one has not yet left behind multiple difficulties. In the case of giving as performed by the bodhisattva, it is characterized by three kinds of purity in which there is an absence of these three obstructions and in which one has succeeded in reaching to the other shore. It is such as is praised by the buddhas. This is what is meant by dana paramita. On account of this it is referred to as having reached the other shore. These six paramitas are able to cause a person to cross over the great sea of miserliness, over the other afflictions and beyond defiled attachment so that one reaches to the other shore. It is for this reason that they are referred to as "paramitas."

Question: The arhat and the pratyekabuddha are also able to reach to the other shore.

Why is that not referred to as paramita?

Response: The crossing over to the other shore achieved by the arhat and pratyekabuddha when compared to the crossing over to the other shore of the Buddha constitutes a case of the designation being the same whereas the reality is different. They take birth and death to constitute "this shore" and nirvana to constitute "the other shore", but are still unable to cross over to the other shore of dana. How is this the case? They are unable to perform giving of every thing at every

time and in every way. In the event that they are able to engage in giving, they still lack the great mind in doing so. Perhaps they may employ a neutral mind in their giving, or perhaps a wholesome mind still abiding in the realm of outflows, or perhaps even a non-outflow mind. However, they still lack the mind of great compassion. They are unable to engage in giving which is done for the sake of all beings.

As for that giving which is performed by the bodhisattva, it is done with the realization that the act of giving is neither produced nor destroyed. It is conducted in a state beyond outflows, is unconditioned and is characterized by being like nirvana. That giving is performed for the sake of all beings. This is what is referred to as dana paramita.

Then again, there are those who say that when one performs giving of every thing of every sort, giving exhaustively of all internal and external resources without seeking any reward as a result, then this kind of giving is referred to as dana paramita.

Moreover, it is because it is inexhaustible that it is referred to as dana paramita. How is this so? One knows that the thing which is given is ultimately empty and characterized by being like nirvana. Because one employs this kind of mind in giving to beings, the retribution accruing from it is inexhaustible and it is therefore referred to as dana paramita. This is analogous to a rishi possessed of the five superknowledges secreting a marvelous jewel in the midst of stone and

then, desiring to protect this jewel, grinding up adamant and coating it therewith, thus causing it to be indestructible. The giving performed by the bodhisattva is just like this. He employs a kind of giving which is coated with nirvanic reality-mark wisdom and so causes it to be inexhaustible.

Moreover, the bodhisattva gives for the sake of all beings. Because the number of beings is inexhaustible that giving too is inexhaustible.

Then again the bodhisattva gives for the sake of the Buddha's Dharma. The Dharma of the Buddha is immeasurable and boundless. So too then is that giving immeasurable and boundless. It is for these reasons that, although the arhat and the pratyekabuddha reach to the other shore, it is not referred to as paramita.

Question: What is meant by "complete fulfillment" [of dana paramita].

Response: It is as explained before. The bodhisattva is able to give everything: the internal, the external, that which is major, that which is minor, that which is of greater quantity, that which is of lesser quantity, that which is coarse, that which is refined, that to which one is attached, that to which one is not attached, that which is to be utilized and that which is not to be utilized. He is able to relinquish every manner of object such as these.

His mind has nothing to which it clings with fondness. He gives equally to all beings. He does not engage in such contemplations as this: "One should only give to great people and one should not give to lesser people. One should only give to those who have left the home life and one should not give to anyone who has not left the home life. One should only give to humans and one should not give to birds or beasts." In his giving he maintains an evenhanded and equitable mind towards all beings. When he gives he does not seek to gain any reward as a result. Moreover, he realizes the reality mark of giving. This is what is meant by "complete fulfillment."

Additionally, he is not constrained by a regard for the time being right. For him there is no waiting till morning, till evening, till winter or till summer. There is no time which is auspicious or inauspicious. At all times he constantly engages in equitable giving employing a mind devoid of regrets or clinging fondness. He does so even to the point of sacrificing without stint his head, his eyes, his marrow and his brain. This is what is meant by "complete fulfillment" [of dana paramita].

Then again, there are those who say that "complete fulfillment" of giving takes place as the bodhisattva progresses through the thirty-four mental stages between the initial resolve [to attain bodhi] and his finally sitting beneath the bodhi tree.

Also, when the bodhisattva at the level of the seventh dwelling gains the wisdom [cognizing] the reality mark of all dharmas he adorns buddha lands and engages in the teaching and transformation of beings. He makes offerings to the buddhas and gains great superknowledges such that he is able to divide his one body so that he creates innumerable bodies. Each of those bodies rains down the seven jewels, flower blossoms, incenses, banners and canopies and transformationally creates a great lamp like Mount Sumeru. He makes offerings to the buddhas of the ten directions as well as to the bodhisattva sangha.

Additionally, he employs a marvelous voice to make praises and verses about the virtue of the buddhas. He pays homage and makes offerings to them, takes care of their needs and welcomes them. Moreover, this bodhisattva rains down all sorts of drink, food, clothing and bedding in the immeasurable number of hungry ghost realms throughout the ten directions, thereby causing them to become full and satisfied. After they have gained complete satisfaction they all bring forth the resolve to gain anuttarasamyaksa.mbodhi.

He also goes into the path of the animals, causing them to spontaneously become good and have no intentions of mutual harm, causing them to get rid of their fearfulness and, according to whatever they need, causing them each to be completely full and satisfied. After they have become full they all bring forth the resolve to gain anuttarasamyaksa.mbodhi.

Within the immeasurable suffering of the hells he is able to cause the fires of the hells to go out, the soup [in the cauldrons] to grow cold, the offenses to be put to rest, and their minds to become good. He gets rid of their hunger and thirst and allows them to be reborn in the heavens and among humans. On account of these causes and conditions they all bring forth the resolve to gain anuttarasamyaksa.mbodhi.

Where there are poverty-stricken people throughout the ten directions he supplies them with wealth. As for those who are wealthy and noble, he gives them exotic flavors and exotic forms which cause them to be delighted. On account of these causes and conditions they all bring forth the resolve to gain anuttarasamyaksa.mbodhi.

If he goes among the desire realm gods he causes them to dispense with the desire-based pleasures of the heavens, gives them the marvelous jewel of Dharma bliss, and so causes them to be delighted. On account of these causes and conditions they all bring forth the resolve to gain anuttarasamyaksa.mbodhi.

If he goes among the gods of the form realm he [causes them to] get rid of their blissful attachment and delights them with the dhyana dharma of the bodhisattva.

On account of these causes and conditions they all bring forth the resolve to gain anuttarasamyaksa.mbodhi.

It is like this on up to the tenth dwelling. This is what is meant by complete fulfillment of dana paramita.

Additionally, the bodhisattva possesses two kinds of bodies. The first is the body produced from the karma of the fetters. The second is the Dharma body.

Fulfillment of dana paramita in both of these bodies is what is intended by completely fulfilling dana paramita.

Question: What is meant by fulfillment of dana paramita within the body produced from the karma of the fetters?

Response: This refers to when one has not yet gained the Dharma body and the fetters have not yet been brought to an end. One becomes able to give completely of all that one possesses, both internally and externally, including all manner of precious objects, one's head, eyes, marrow, brain, country, wealth, wives, and sons, and does so without one's mind moving or turning away. For instance, Prince Sudana⁽¹²⁾ (In the language of Ch'in, this means "fine fondness.")⁽¹³⁾ who made a gift of his two sons to a brahman. Next, he relinquished his wife and yet his mind [still] did not turn away from it.

This is also exemplified by King Sarvada (In the language of Ch'in, this means "giving everything.")⁽¹⁴⁾ who was vanquished by an enemy country and who then

fled and hid in the furthest reaches of the forests. He encountered a brahman from a faraway country who sought to receive alms from him. As for himself, his country had been crushed, his family had been wiped out and he had been forced to flee alone and go into hiding. Because he felt pity for [the brahman's] hardship in having come from afar and yet having gotten nothing, he said to the brahman, "I am King Sarvada. The new king has sent men out who are trying very hard to find me." He then immediately tied himself up and gave himself to [the brahman] who then gave him over to the new king and received great wealth and valuables [in reward].

This is also illustrated by [the story of] Prince Candraprabha who had gone out sightseeing when a leper noticed him, presented himself at the carriage and addressed him, saying, "My body has come down with a serious disease which causes intense suffering and causes me to be grievously tormented. The prince is traveling about for pleasure. Will he only bring happiness to himself? May he bring forth great loving-kindness and bring pity to mind. Pray, may I receive a cure that will rescue me?" When the Prince heard him, he asked the physicians about this matter. The physician replied, "It would be necessary to obtain the blood and marrow of a man who from the time of birth had grown up without any hatred. It would be topically applied and also drunk. If one proceeded in this fashion, then he could be cured."

The Prince thought to himself, "If there is such a person, he is desirous of living and cherishes his own life. How could such a person be obtained? Aside from myself, there is no place where he could be found." He then issued an order for a ca.n.daala to come and instructed him to strip away flesh from his body, break his bones, extract his marrow, smear it on the body of the sick man, and then take his blood and provide it as a drink for him.

In ways such as this, and in all sorts of physical bodies, one gives even one's own wives and sons and yet does not stint at all, treating it as if it were only setting aside grass or trees. One contemplates those things which are given and realizes that they exist on the basis of conditions. When one pursues this and seeks to find their reality, it can never be found. Everything is characterized by being pure and like nirvana. And so this proceeds until one realizes the patience resulting from seeing dharmas as unproduced. This is what is meant by fulfillment of dana paramita while abiding in a body produced from the karma of the fetters.

How does the Dharma body bodhisattva cultivate to fulfillment dana paramita? In his very last fleshly body the bodhisattva achieves the patience resulting from seeing dharmas as unproduced.(15) He relinquishes the fleshly body and gains the Dharma body. In the six paths and throughout the ten directions he transformationally creates bodies in response to what is appropriate, and thereby goes about transforming beings. He provides all sorts of precious jewels,

clothing, drink and food as gifts to everyone and additionally gives exhaustively of everything he personally or objectively possesses including his head, his eyes, his marrow, his brain, his country, wealth, wives and sons.

A case in point is that of Shakyamuni Buddha who once was a six-tusked white elephant. A hunter had ambushed him and shot him with poison arrows. The herd of elephants stampeded towards him with the intention of trampling the hunter to death. The white elephant used his own body to defend him, protecting that man and having pity upon him just the same as if he was his own son. He ordered the herd of elephants away and then calmly asked the hunter, "Why did you shoot me?"

He replied, "I need your tusks." Immediately then, blood and flesh spontaneously pushed forth all six tusks from their sockets. He then used his trunk to pick up the tusks and give them to the hunter. Although it is described as the body of an elephant, in a case where the mind is used in this manner one should know that this elephant did not exist on account of retribution for the actions of an animal. Nowhere in the Dharma of the arhat is there a mind of this sort. One should realize that this is a Dharma body bodhisattva.

There once was a time when people in Jambudvīpa did not know enough to render proper reverence and respect to those who are older and those who are

virtuous. At that time the use of words alone as a method for teaching them had not yet been able to succeed in converting them [to this understanding]. At that time a bodhisattva transformed himself into a kapi~njala bird. This bird had two close friends. The first was a great elephant and the second was a monkey.

They all lived together around the base of a pippala tree. They were inquiring of one another, wondering, "We don't know who among us ought to be accorded the status of 'elder.'"

The elephant said, "In the past I viewed this tree when it was shorter than the height of my belly. Now it is so huge. From this we can deduce that I ought to be known as the eldest."

The monkey said, "In the past I've squatted down and plucked with my hand at the top of the tree. From this we can deduce that I should be recognized as the eldest."

The bird said, "In the past I fed on the fruit of such trees in the pippala forest. The seed then passed out with my feces and as a result this tree was born. It can be deduced from this that I ought to be recognized as the eldest." The bird continued, saying, "As a matter of propriety, the first born, being the eldest, ought to be the recipient of offerings."

The great elephant immediately took the monkey on his back and the bird then rode on the back of the monkey. They traveled all around in this fashion. When all of the birds and beasts observed this they asked them, "Why are you going about like this?"

They replied, "We mean by this an expression of reverence and offerings to the one who is the eldest." The birds and the beasts all accepted this teaching and all practiced such reverence. They no longer invaded the fields of the people and no longer brought harm to the lives of other animals. The people were all amazed that all of the birds and beasts no longer engaged in harmful activities.

The hunters went into the forest and observed that the elephant bore the monkey on his back, that the monkey carried along the bird, and that they cultivated respectfulness and so transformed the creatures that the creatures all cultivated goodness. They passed this on to the people of the country. The people all celebrated this and remarked, "The times are growing peaceful. Though they are but birds and beasts, still they are possessed of humanity." And so the people too modeled themselves on this. They all cultivated propriety and respectfulness. From ancient times until the present this transformative teaching has flowed down through a myriad generations. One should know that this was a Dharma body bodhisattva.

Additionally, the Dharma-body bodhisattva, in a single moment, can transformationally produce countless bodies with which he makes offerings to the buddhas of the ten directions. He is able in a single moment to transformationally create an immeasurable number of valuable jewels with which he supplies in abundance to beings. He is able in a single moment, in accordance with all of the different superior, middling and inferior voices, to universally speak Dharma for them. And so forth until we come to [being able also] to sit beneath the Buddha's tree. All sorts of examples such as these constitute what is meant by the Dharma-body bodhisattva's fulfillment of the practice of dana paramita.

Then again, dana is of three varieties: The first is the giving of material objects. The second is giving which consists of offerings of reverence. The third is the giving of Dharma.

What is meant by the giving of material objects? It refers to jewels, precious things, robes, food, one's head, eyes, marrow and brain. One gives exhaustively of such things as these, giving all that one owns whether internally or externally. This is what is meant by the giving of material objects.

As for the giving of reverence, it refers to having a mind of faith which is pure as one reverently performs acts of obeisance. It refers to offerings which consist of looking after, seeing off, welcoming, making expressions of praise, and circumambulating. All sorts of actions such as these constitute what is referred to as

the giving of reverence.

As for the giving of Dharma, [it refers to actions performed] for the sake of virtue associated with the Way such as speaking, dialectical discussion, reciting, reading, lecturing, dispelling doubts, answering questions, transmitting the five precepts to people and all sorts of other acts of giving such as these which are performed for the sake of the buddha way. This is what is meant by the giving of Dharma. When these three kinds of giving are fulfilled this is what is meant by fulfilling dana paramita.

Moreover, the causes and conditions associated with three factors are what produce dana: The first is a believing mind which is pure. The second is a valuable object. The third is a field of merit.

As for the mind [associated with giving], there are three types: that which is characterized by sympathy; that which is characterized by reverence; and that which is characterized by both sympathy and reverence. If one gives to those who are poverty-stricken, those of low social station or those who inhabit the animal world, this is sympathetic giving. If one gives to buddhas, Dharma-body bodhisattvas or others of this sort, this is reverential giving. If one gives to elderly, sick, or destitute arhats or pratyekabuddhas, this constitutes both reverential and sympathetic giving.

The object which is given is to be pure. It has neither been stolen nor seized by force. It is given at the right time. It is not given because one seeks to gain a reputation from it or because one seeks profit or sustenance.

One may at times gain great merit which arises on account of the quality of the mind. Perhaps one may gain great merit which arises on account of the quality of the field of merit. Or perhaps one may gain great merit which arises on account of having given a marvelous object.

As for the first, where it arises on account of the quality of the mind, it is exemplified by the four equally-directed minds,(16) by the mindfulness of the Buddha samadhi, and by [the Buddha's] having given his body to the tigress. Examples such as these indicate what is meant by gaining great merit on account of the quality of the mind.

As for the field of merit, it is of two types: The first is the field of merit associated with sympathy. The second is the field of merit associated with reverence.

The field of merit associated with sympathy is such that it is able to inspire the arising of a sympathetic mind. The field of merit associated with reverence is such that it is able to inspire the arising of a reverential mind. This is illustrated by the case of King Ashoka (In the language of Ch'in this means "devoid of worry.")(17) who [as a child in an earlier life] had made an offering to the Buddha fashioned from mud.

Moreover, regarding the giving of material objects, it is illustrated by the case of the woman who, on account of her mind's being immersed in alcohol-induced inebriation, spontaneously made a gift to the stupa of Kaashyapa Buddha of a necklace made of the seven precious things. On account of that merit she was reborn in the Heaven of the Thirty-three. All sorts of cases such as this indicate what is meant by the giving of material objects.

Question: Dana refers to the relinquishing of valuable things. Why does it state [in the text] that one perfects the dharma of having nothing which is relinquished?

Response: Dana is of two types: The first is that which transcends the world. The second is that which does not transcend the world. We are now discussing dana which transcends the world and which is devoid of characteristics. Because it is devoid of characteristics there is nothing which is relinquished. Hence it speaks of perfecting the dharma of having nothing whatsoever which is relinquished.

Moreover, because valuable things cannot be gotten at it is referred to as having nothing which is relinquished. In both the future and the past these things are empty. When they are analyzed in the present there is not a single dharma which is fixed. For this reason it is said that there is nothing which is relinquished.

Additionally, when the practitioner relinquishes valuable things, he is apt to think to himself, "This act of giving is greatly meritorious" and then, relying on this, may bring forth such fetters as pridefulness and [self] love. For this reason, it states that there is nothing which is relinquished. Because there is nothing which is relinquished, there is no pridefulness. Because there is no pridefulness, other fetters such as craving, [self] love and so forth are not brought forth.

Additionally, there are two types of people who give: The first is the worldly person. The second is the person who has transcended the world. The worldly person is able to relinquish valuable things but is not able to relinquish his giving. The person who has transcended the world is able to relinquish valuable things and is also able to relinquish his giving. Why? Because neither valuable things nor the mind which gives can be gotten at. It is for this reason that it speaks of perfecting the dharma of having nothing which is relinquished. What's more, in the dana paramita, it explains that the three factors of valuables, giver and recipient cannot be gotten at.

Question: It is the conjunction of the three factors which constitutes dana. Now, it is said that the three factors cannot be gotten at. How then can one refer to fulfillment of dana paramita? We do now have something which is valuable, the act of giving and someone who receives. How is it that the three factors cannot be gotten at? For example, the cloth which is given actually exists. How is this so? If the cloth has a name then there is the dharma of cloth. If there were no

dharma of cloth then there would not be the name "cloth," either. Because there is the name then it ought to be the case that cloth actually does exist.

Furthermore, pieces of cloth may be long, short, coarse, fine, white, black, yellow or red.

There are causes, there are conditions, there is a creation, there is a destruction, and there is a result in the realm of effects whereby a thought is produced which corresponds to the given dharma. A piece which is ten feet in length is long and one which is five feet in length is short. When the thread is large, it is coarse. When the thread is small it is fine. In accordance with the dye it has a color.

The existence of thread constitutes the cause. The loom constitutes the condition. Because of the conjunction of this cause and condition it becomes cloth. A person's effort brings about its creation. A person's damaging of it brings about its destruction. Its management of cold and heat and its covering up of the body is the reward in the realm of [causal] effects. When a person gains it there is great delight and when he loses it there is great distress. Because one uses it as a gift one gains blessings which assist the way. If one steals it from someone or takes it by force he undergoes public punishment and then, on dying, enters the hells.

On account of all sorts of reasons such as these one knows that this cloth does exist. This is what is meant by the dharma of cloth. How can one claim that the thing which is given cannot be gotten at?

Response: You say that because there is a name this entity exists. This is not the case.

How does one know this? Names are of two kinds: those which are real and those which are not real. As for those names which are not real, they are like a type of grass known as caurii. (In the language of Ch'in, this means "thief.")(18)

For its part the grass does not steal. It does not take things by force. In truth, it is not the case that it is a thief and yet it is referred to as "thief." This is just like the case of the hare which has horns and the turtle which has fur. In those cases as well they possess only a name with no corresponding reality. Although cloth is not nonexistent in the same fashion as the horns of the hare or the fur of the turtle, still, it is on account of the coming together of causes and conditions that it exists and on account of the scattering of causes and conditions that it becomes nonexistent. It is like a forest and like an army. These each possess a name but are devoid of any reality.

This is like a wooden man. Although it possesses the name "man," one ought not to seek there for its dharma of humanity. Although cloth possesses a name, still, one ought not to seek for a cloth's true actuality.

Cloth is able to bring about causes and conditions associated with people's thoughts.

When they obtain it they are delighted. When they lose it they become distressed. These constitute causes and conditions associated with thought. When thoughts arise there are two types of causes and conditions. It may be that they arise from that which is real. It may be that they arise from what is not real.

This is just like that which is seen in a dream, like the moon reflected in water, and like seeing a bare tree trunk at night and being of the opinion that it is a person. Names such as these are cases of the mind being caused to arise on account of what is not real. These conditions are not fixed. One should not say that because thought arises it therefore exists. If it were the case that something exists because of the arising of thought, then one should not seek for any valid existence beyond that. Take for instance when the eye sees the moon reflected in the water and a thought arises which takes it to be the moon. If it were the case that the cause of the mind's arising was the moon, then there would be no actual moon aside from that.

Moreover, existence is of three types. The first is interdependent existence. The second is existence based on false names. The third is existence based on dharmas.

As for that which is interdependent, it refers to long and short, that and this and so forth. In reality there is no long or short nor is there that or this. It is on account of interdependency that there exists a designation. Long exists because of short and short exists because of long. That exists because of this and this exists because of that. If one is to the east of something then one takes it to be westerly. If one is to the west of it then one takes it to be easterly. It is a single entity which has not changed and yet it possesses distinctions of east and west. These are all cases of possessing a name but being devoid of reality. Cases such as these

are referred to as being interdependently existent. There is no actual dharma herein. It is not as with forms, smells, tastes, touchables and so forth.

As for existence based on false names, it refers for example to such things as yoghurt which does possess the four factors of forms, smells, tastes and touchables.

It is on account of the coming together of causes and conditions that it is given the false name of yoghurt. Although it does exist, its existence is one which consists in different causal and conditional dharmas. Although it is nonexistent, still it is not nonexistent in the same way that the horns of the hare and the fur of the turtle are nonexistent. It is only on account of the coming together of causes and conditions that there is this existence which relies on false names. Yoghurt and cloth are both the same in this respect.

Moreover, it is on account of the most minute elements of forms, smells, tastes and touchables that there exist the components of a hair. It is on account of the causes and conditions inherent in the components of a hair that a hair exists. It is on account of the causes and conditions of hairs that there exists a mass of hairs.

It is on account of the causes and conditions of a mass of hairs that there exists thread. It is on account of the causes and conditions of threads that there exists cloth. It is on account of the causes and conditions of cloth that there exists a robe.

If it is the case that the causes and conditions of the extremely subtle elements of forms, smells, tastes and touchables do not exist, then the components of a hair

do not exist either. Because the components of a hair do not exist, then a hair does not exist either. Because a hair does not exist then a mass of hairs does not exist either. Because a mass of hairs does not exist then thread does not exist either. Because thread does not exist, then cloth does not exist either. Because cloth does not exist, then a robe does not exist either.

Question: Still, it's not necessarily the case that everything exists on account of the coming together of causes and conditions. For instance, because tiny motes of dust are the most extremely minute, they have no constituent components. Because they have no components they have no combining [from which they are produced]. It is because cloth is coarse that it can be broken down [into constituent components]. But there are no components within tiny motes of dust. How then can they be broken down [into constituent components]?

Response: "The most extremely minute" entity has no reality to it. It is a designation which is forced. Why? Because coarse and subtle are interdependent. It is on account of coarseness that there is subtlety. This entity which is subtle should additionally have that which is comparatively more subtle.

Moreover, if this most extremely minute form exists, then it has spatial divisions corresponding to the ten directions. If it has divisions corresponding to the ten directions then this can not be referred to as "the most extremely minute" entity. If it does not have divisions corresponding to the ten directions then it cannot be

referred to as "form."

Moreover, if this most extremely minute entity exists, then it ought to have boundaries which divide it off from empty space. If it has that by which it can be divided then it cannot be referred to as "the most extremely minute" entity.

Moreover, if this most extremely minute entity exists, there exist within it the constituent parts of forms, smells, tastes or touchables. If it possesses constituent parts consisting in forms, smells, tastes or touchables, then it cannot be referred to as "the most extremely minute" entity. If one pursues analysis in this manner as one seeks to find a most extremely minute particle, then one is unable to find it.

This corresponds to a statement in a sutra, "Forms, whether coarse or whether subtle, whether subject-related or whether object-related (lit. "internal," "external.") are all inclusively contemplated as impermanent and devoid of self." It does not state therein that there exists a most extremely minute entity. [The above reductionist method of analysis] constitutes what is known as "emptiness reached by breaking into parts."

In addition to this there is also "emptiness reached through contemplation." This cloth comes into existence in accordance with the mind. In the case of the person who sits in dhyana [absorption], as he contemplates a piece of cloth he may make it into earth or make it into water or make it into fire or make it into wind. Or

he may make it blue or yellow or white or red or entirely empty, entering contemplation thereby in accordance with the ten universals (k.rtsnaayatana).

This is exemplified by one time when the Buddha was at Mount G.rdhrakuu.ta. He went together with the bhikshu sangha into the city of Kings' Abode. They came upon a large pool of water in the road. The Buddha spread out his sitting cloth on the surface of the water and sat down. He told the bhikshus, "When a bhikshu's entry into dhyana reaches the point where his mind gains a state of sovereign independence, he is able to cause a great body of water to turn into earth so that it then immediately becomes solid ground. How is this so? Because within this water there exists a portion which is earth. It is the same for water, fire or wind. In this case the gold, silver and other precious things [within the water] all become solid. How is this so? It is because portions of all of them exist within the water."

This is also exemplified by a particular beautiful form. When a lustful person sees it, he is of the opinion that it is pure and marvelous and so his mind develops a defiled attachment. When a person who practices the contemplation of impurity sees it, he perceives all manner of disgusting discharges and finds that there is not a single part of it that is pure. When one who is the same by virtue of being a woman sees it, she may be jealous and hateful to the point where she is filled with disgust, cannot bear to look upon it, and is of the opinion that it is impure.

The lustful person contemplates this and takes it as pleasurable. The jealous person contemplates this and takes it as a cause of bitterness. The yogin contemplates this and gains the Way. A person with no particular interest contemplates this and finds nothing either attractive or repellant. For him it is the same as if he were looking at earth or trees. If this beautiful form was actually pure, when these four types of people contemplated it, they should all perceive purity. If it was actually impure, when the four kinds of people contemplated it they should all see it as impure. On account of this one knows "fine" and "ugly" abide in the mind. Objectively, there is nothing which is fixed. When one pursues the realization of emptiness through contemplation the situation is much the same.

Moreover, because the characteristics of the eighteen kinds of emptiness exist in this piece of cloth, when one contemplates it, one finds it to be empty. Because it is empty, it cannot be gotten at. On account of all sorts of causal bases such as these, material wealth is empty. It most definitely cannot be gotten at.

How is it that the person who gives cannot be gotten at? It is just as with the piece of cloth which exists on account of the coming together of causes and conditions, and which cannot be gotten at through analysis of constituent parts. It is just the same with one who gives. The four great elements surrounding empty space define the body. This body's consciousness, movements, comings and goings, sitting and rising are artificially designated as a person. When, part by part,

one seeks to locate him, he too cannot be gotten at. Additionally, the self cannot be found among any of the aggregates, sense realms, or sense bases. Because the self cannot be gotten at, the person who gives cannot be gotten at. How is this so? The self has all manner of designations: human, god, male, female, person who gives, person who receives, person who experiences suffering, person who experiences bliss, animal, and so forth. These only possess a designation and thus an actual dharma cannot be found there.

Question: If the person who gives cannot be gotten at, how can there exist a bodhisattva who practices dana paramita?

Response: It is on account of the coming together of causes and conditions that a name exists. It is just as with a building or a cart wherein actual dharmas cannot be found.

Question: How is it that the self cannot be found?

Response: This is as discussed above in the explanation of " Thus I have heard at one time..."(19) Now we shall discuss it further. In the Buddha's discussion of the six consciousnesses, he indicated that the eye consciousness as well as dharmas belonging to eye consciousness together condition form. They do not condition all sorts of names such as "building," "house," "city," and "outlying neighborhood." The consciousnesses of ear, nose tongue and body are the same in this

respect. The mind consciousness and the dharmas associated with the mind consciousness are aware of the eye, aware of form, aware of eye consciousness, and so forth until we come to are aware of the mind, are aware of dharmas and are aware of the mind consciousness. Those dharmas which are conditioned by this consciousness are all empty on account of their being devoid of a self, on account of their being produced and destroyed, and on account of their not being inherently existent. Nor does one reckon the existence of a self among the unconditioned dharmas. This is because there is no experiencing therein of either suffering or bliss. If one insists on the existence of a self herein, it ought to be the case then that there is a seventh consciousness which is conscious of a self. But that is not now the case. For this reason we know that there is no self.

Question: How can one know that there is no self? Everyone gives rise to the idea of a self with respect to their own bodies. They do not give rise to such an idea with respect to the bodies of others. If there is no self associated with one's own body and yet one erroneously perceives that it constitutes a self, one ought to also erroneously perceive the existence of the self in other people's bodies where there is no self either.

Furthermore, if it is the case that subjectively there is no self, given that consciousness of forms is newly produced and destroyed in every thought-moment, how could one distinguish and know that these colors are blue, yellow, red or white?

Moreover, if it were the case that there were no self, since the human consciousnesses are now [constantly] being newly produced and destroyed(20), when the physical lifespan is cut off that would also put an end to the offenses and merits associated with one's actions. Who then would there be to follow along with and undergo [retribution for karmic deeds]? Who then would experience [subsequent] suffering or bliss? Who would obtain liberation? On account of all of these subject-related conditions, one knows that a self does exist.

Response: These ideas all have problems. If it were the case that one reckoned the existence of a self in the body of someone else, then we ought to next ask, "Why is it that one does not then reckon the existence of a self in one's own body?"

Moreover, because the five aggregates are produced from causes and conditions, they are empty and devoid of a self. The twenty views associated with the body are produce from the causes and conditions of ignorance. This view which perceives a self therein naturally arises through the continuity of the five aggregates.

Because it is produced from the conditions associated with these very five aggregates, one straightaway reckons that these five aggregates are what constitute the self. This does not occur with respect to another person's body on account of the specificity of individual habituation.

Furthermore, if there did exist a spiritual soul (lit. "spirit" = atman), it could be that one reckoned the existence of one's self in the body of another. You have

not yet understood about the existence or nonexistence of your own spiritual soul and yet you inquire about reckoning the existence of one's self in the body of another person. This is like being asked by someone about the horns of a hare and then replying to him that they are like the horns of a horse based on the assumption that if the horns of a horse actually do exist, then they may be used as a basis for proving the existence of the horns of a hare. And so one proceeds in this manner, not yet having understood about the existence of the horns of a horse, yet still desiring to take them as proof for the existence of the horns of a hare.

Moreover, as for your idea that it is because one naturally generates the idea of a self with respect to one's own body that one then holds the opinion that a spiritual soul exists, since you claim that the spiritual soul is all-pervading, one ought indeed to reckon the existence of a self in another person's body. For this reason one should not say that one gives rise to the idea of a self with respect to one's own body but does not give rise to it in relation to another person's body and that therefore one knows that a spiritual soul exists.

Then again, there are people who do have the idea of a self arise in relation to other phenomena. For instance, certain non-buddhists who sit in dhyana absorption and who, when they employ the universal pervasion of the earth element to enter a contemplative state, develop the view that, "The earth is me and I am the earth." There are similar cases in relation to water, fire, wind and space. It may also be the case that, on account of inverted views, one reckons that one's

self also inhabits another person's body.

Additionally, there are times where someone generates the idea of one's self inhabiting another person's body. Take for example the case of a man who had been given a mission whereby he was compelled to travel a great distance. He spent the night alone in a vacant dwelling. In the middle of the night a ghost carried in a man's corpse and laid it down in front of him. Then there was another ghost who chased along behind and angrily castigated the first ghost, yelling, "This corpse is mine! Why did you carry it in here?"

The first ghost said, "It belongs to me! I carried it in here myself!"

The second ghost retorted, "The fact of the matter is, I am the one who carried this corpse in here!" Then each of the ghosts grabbed one of the hands of the corpse and tried to pull it away from the other. Thereupon the first ghost said, "There's a man here. We can ask him to settle this."

The ghost who had come in later then asked the traveler, "Well, who was it that carried this corpse in here?"

The traveler thought to himself, "Both of these ghosts are very strong. If I report the facts, I'm bound to die. If I lie, I'm also bound to die. So, since I can't

avoid being killed in either case, what's the point in lying about it?" And so he replied, "It was the first ghost who carried in the corpse."

The second ghost flew into a rage, tore off one of the traveler's hands and then threw it down on the ground. At this, the first ghost pulled off one of the arms from the corpse and attached it as a replacement. They then proceeded in this fashion with both arms, both feet, the head, the two sides, and so forth until the traveler's entire body had been switched. The two ghosts then proceeded to devour the body which they had gotten from the exchange. When they had finished, they wiped off their mouths and departed.

At that point the traveler thought to himself, "With my very own eyes I saw those two ghosts entirely devour the body born of my mother! This body which I now have here is composed entirely of someone else's flesh! Do I really still have a body now? Or is it the case that I have no body at all? If I hold the view that I do indeed have a body,--that body is actually somebody else's entirely. If I hold that I don't have one,--still, there is a body here right now! He continued to ponder like this until his mind became so confused and distressed that he became like a man gone mad.

The next morning, he went off down the road. When he reached the neighboring country he saw that there was a Buddha stupa and a group of monks. He

couldn't talk about anything else. He could only keep asking whether his body was existent or nonexistent. The bhikshus asked him, "Just who are you, anyway?"

The traveler replied, "Well, as for me, I don't know myself whether I'm a person or a non-person." He then described in detail the events which had transpired.

The bhikshus remarked, "This man has a natural understanding of the nonexistence of a self. He could easily gain deliverance." And so they offered an explanation, saying, "From its origin on up until the present, your body has always naturally been devoid of a self. It's not something that just happened now. It is merely on account of an aggregation of the four great elements that one conceives of it as 'my' body. In this respect, your original body and this one you now have are no different." Thus the bhikshus succeeded in bring about the traveler's deliverance to the Way, whereupon he cut off all afflictions and immediately realized arhatship. This is a case of there being times when one reckons the existence of oneself in the body of another person.

One cannot hold the view that a self exists based on its being there or here. Moreover, the actual nature of the "self" most definitely cannot be gotten at. And whether it be the characteristic of permanency, the characteristic of being impermanent, the characteristic of being inherently existent, the characteristic of not being inherently existent, the characteristic of being compounded, the characteristic of not being compounded, the characteristic of being form or the

characteristic of being formless, all such characteristics as these cannot be gotten at.

If a characteristic exists then a dharma exists. If there is no characteristic then there is no dharma. Because it is now the case that this "self" is devoid of any characteristics, one knows consequently that there is no self. If the self were permanent, then there should be no such thing as the offense of killing. Why is this so? The body can be killed because it is impermanent. The self could not be killed on account of its being permanent.

Question: Although one could not kill the self on account of its being permanent, even if one only killed the body one would thereby incur the offense of killing.

Response: As for incurring the offense of killing from the killing of the body, it says in the vinaya that if one commits suicide there is no killing offense per se. Offense on the one hand or merit on the other derives from either afflicting someone else or alternately, from extending someone else's life. It is not the case that if one makes offerings to one's own body or kills one's own body one will have either offense or merit.. It is for this reason that it says in the Vinaya that in the event that one kills one's own body there is no offense of killing per se. However, the faults of stupidity, greed and hatred are present in such a case.(21)

If the spiritual soul were eternal, then one should not be born and should not die. Why is this the case? According to the dharma of those such as yourself, the

spiritual soul is eternal. It pervades everywhere filling up the five paths of rebirth. How could there be death or birth? Death is defined by disappearing from this place. Birth is defined by coming forth in another place. For this reason one cannot say that the spiritual soul is eternal.

If it were the case that the spiritual soul were eternal, it should also be the case that one does not experience either suffering or bliss. How is this the case? If suffering comes, then one is distressed. If bliss comes, then one is delighted. If it is the case that it is changed by distress or delight then it is impermanent. If it were permanent then it should be like empty space which cannot be moistened by rain nor dried by heat.

Nor would there be either present or future lifetimes. If it were the case that the spiritual soul were eternal, then it is manifestly the case that one should not have either birth into a later existence or a dying in the present existence.

If it were the case that the spiritual soul were eternal then one would constantly have a view of a self and one should not then be able to realize nirvana. If the spiritual soul were eternal then there would be no arising and no destruction. There should then be no forgetting and no errors. On account of there being no consciousness on the part of this spiritual soul and on account of its being impermanent, there is forgetting and there is also error. Therefore it is not the case that

the spiritual soul is eternal. On account of all sorts of reasons such as these one can know that the spiritual soul is not characterized by permanence.

If on the other hand the spiritual soul were characterized by impermanence there would be neither offenses nor merits. If the body were impermanent then the spiritual soul too would be impermanent. If the two phenomena were both destroyed then one would fall into the extreme view known as annihilationism. If one falls into this annihilationism, then that carries as a consequence that there would be no arriving at a later lifetime wherein one would undergo retribution for offenses or merits. If annihilation were the case then in gaining nirvana it would not be necessary to cut off the fetters nor would there be any function in later lives for the causes and conditions of offense and merit. On account of all sorts of reasons such as these one can know that it is not the case that the spiritual soul is impermanent either.

If it were the case that the spiritual soul were characterized by being sovereignly independent or characterized by having that which it does, then it ought to be the case that no matter what it desired it would gain it in every case. Now however, there are cases where one desires something but, on the contrary, one does not gain it while in other cases where there is something which one does not desire but, contrary to one's wishes, one gains precisely that. If the spiritual soul were sovereignly independent then it should not be the case either that one has the creation of evil conduct and the falling into the wretched destiny of birth

among the animals. Moreover, it is the case that all beings are displeased by suffering. Who then would take pleasure in bliss and yet, contrary to those inclinations, deliberately procure suffering? On account of these factors one knows that the spiritual soul is not sovereignly independent. Nor does it involve itself in actions.

Again, take for instance when people force themselves to practice goodness out of fear of punishments. If it were the case that [the spiritual soul] is sovereignly independent, why would they force themselves to cultivate merit out of fear of punishments?

Furthermore, beings do not succeed in having things happen in accordance with their intentions. They are constantly dragged about by the bonds of afflictions and affection. For all sorts of reasons such as these one should know that the spiritual soul is not sovereignly independent nor does it involve itself in actions. If it is the case that the spiritual soul is not sovereignly independent and does not involve itself in actions, this constitutes the mark of there being no spiritual soul.

When one speaks of a self, this is just the six consciousness. Beyond that there are no additional factors.

Then again, if [the spiritual soul] does not involve itself in actions, why is it that when King Yama asks the person with [karmic] offenses, "Who ordered you to

commit these offenses?" that the person with the offenses replies by saying, "They were done by me myself."? On account of this one knows that it is not the case [either] that it does not involve itself in actions.

As for the spiritual soul being characterized by form, this case is not so either. Why? Because all forms are impermanent.

Question: Why do people say that the self is characterized by a form?

Response: There are those who say that the spiritual soul resides in the heart, is as tiny as a mustard seed, is pure and is referred to as the pure form body.

There are other people who say that it is the size of a grain of wheat. There are those who say it is in size like a bean. There are those who say that it is a half inch in size. There are those who say it is an inch in size and that in the beginning, when one takes on a body, it is taken on as the very first thing. It is supposed to be [in shape] like the skeleton of an elephant and when one's body matures it becomes like an elephant which has already grown. There are those who say its size corresponds to that of the given person's body and that when one undergoes destruction at death it is the first to go then as well. All cases such as these do not correspond to the truth. Why? All forms are created from the four great elements. On account of their being produced from causes and conditions, they are impermanent. If it were the case that the spiritual soul were form, because form is impermanent, the spiritual soul too would be impermanent. If it is the case that

it is impermanent, then [the inherent fallacies] are such as have already been discussed previously.

Question: There are two kinds of bodies, the gross body and the minute body. The gross body is impermanent. The minute body is the spiritual soul. In life after life it constantly goes along entering into the five paths of rebirth.

Response: This minute body cannot be found. If a minute body does exist then there ought to be a location in which it can be found such as in the five organs or the four limbs. However, one can look for it in every single place but it still cannot be found.

Question: This minute body is extremely minute. When one first dies, it has already gone. When one is alive, one cannot search for and find it. How could you be able to view it? Additionally, this minute body is not such as the five sense faculties would be able to perceive or would be able to be aware of. Only if one were a sage possessed of the superknowledges would one then be able to succeed in seeing it.

Response: If that were the case then it would be no different from being nonexistent. And as for when a person dies, relinquishing the aggregates of this life and entering the intermediary aggregates, at this time, when the body of the present life dies and one receives the body of the intermediary aggregates, this has no

earlier and later. When one dies one is immediately born. This is analogous to using a seal made of wax to stamp an impression in the mud. When the impression is received in the mud the seal is immediately ruined. The creation and destruction occur at a single moment in which there is no prior and later. At this time one takes on the intermediary existence in the intermediary aggregates. When one relinquishes these intermediary aggregates one takes on existence in the aggregates of the next life.

As for your saying that the minute body is just these intermediary aggregates, the body of the intermediary aggregates has no going on forth and it has no entering [the next incarnation]. This process is analogous to the lighting of a lamp. The continuity involved in being born and dying is neither eternal nor cut off.

The Buddha said that every constituent of the form aggregate, whether past, future or present, whether subject-related, whether object-related, whether gross or whether minute,-- all are utterly impermanent. This extremely minute form which this spiritual soul of yours takes ought also to be impermanent and destroyed through being cut off. On account of all sorts of reasons such as these one can know that it is not the case that it has the attribute of form.

Nor is it characterized by being formless. As for that which is formless, it is comprised of the four [non-form] aggregates and the unconditioned. Because those four aggregates in question are impermanent, because they are not inherently existent, and because they are subsumed within causes and conditions, it should not

be the case that they constitute the "spiritual soul." Within the three unconditioned dharmas, there is no reckoning of the existence of a spiritual soul. This is because there is nothing which is experienced. On account of all sorts of reasons such as these, one knows that it is not the case that the spirit is characterized by being formless.

In this manner, one looks for a self throughout heaven and earth and no matter whether one looks among that which is subject-related or that which is object-related, or whether one looks throughout the three periods of time or the ten directions, it cannot be found. There is only a coming together of the twelve sense bases generating the six consciousnesses. Where these three factors come together it is referred to as "contact." "Contact" generates feeling, perception, consideration and other dharmas associated with the mind. In the midst of these dharmas, on account of the power of ignorance, a view of the body as constituting the self (satkaayad.r.s.ti) arises. On account of the arising of the view of a body, one is of the opinion that a spiritual soul exists. As for this "view of a body constituting a self," it is cut off when one experiences the seeing of the truth of suffering (du.hkhasatyadar'sana) and gains the Dharma wisdom associated with suffering (du.hkhe dharmaj~naana) and the comparative wisdom associated with suffering (du.hkhe 'nvayaj~naana). When it is cut off one does not then perceive the existence of a spiritual soul.

As for your earlier question which asked, "If there was no subject-related spiritual soul or related form, since consciousness is newly produced and destroyed in every instant, how could one distinguish and know the colors of blue, yellow, red and white?", if it were the case that you had such a spiritual soul, it too would be unable to be aware [of these colors] on its own. It must rely upon eye consciousness in order to be aware of them. If this is the case then the spiritual soul has no function. The eye consciousness is aware of the production and extinction of [visual] forms [by way of] a facsimile of production and a facsimile of extinction. Afterwards, a dharma arises in the mind known as mindfulness. This mindfulness is a characteristic occurring in relation to conditioned dharmas. Although this [event of a particular] extinction is already in the past, this mindfulness is able to remain aware of it.

This is comparable to the arya who, through the power of wisdom, is able to know matters having to do with future time. He is equally able in each successive thought moment to be aware of past dharmas. When an earlier [instance of] eye consciousness is extinguished one gives rise to a subsequent [instance of] eye consciousness. The later [instances of] eye consciousness transform in their acuity so that they possess a power. Although the [visual] forms exist only temporarily and so do not abide, on account of the acuity of the power of mindfulness one is able to remain aware of them. It is on account of this factor that, although there is impermanence by virtue of the production and extinction which takes place in each successive thought-moment, one is still able to distinguish and be aware of

[visual] forms.

Again, as for your saying that the consciousness of people in the present is continuously being newly produced and destroyed such that when the lifespan is cut off, it too is cut off, and [as for your asking], who then accords with and who experiences [retribution for] offenses and merits, who experiences suffering and bliss and who gains liberation,-- I shall now reply to you. Now, when a person has not yet gained the actual way, afflictions cover over his mind. He engages in karmic actions which serve as the causes and conditions for being born. When he dies, following upon these five aggregates there is a subsequent production of five aggregates.

This is analogous to one lamp then lighting another lamp. It is also like the production of grain. There are three causes and conditions: earth, water and seed. The birth of the body in the later life is just like this: there is the body, there is karmic activity characterized by outflows, and there are the fetters. It is on account of these three factors that the subsequent body is produced. Herein the causes and conditions associated with the karma of the body are such that they cannot be cut off and cannot be destroyed. Only the fetters can be cut off. When the fetters are cut off, although there exists a residual body and residual karma, one is able to succeed in gaining liberation.

Just as when one has a seed, has soil, but because one has no water, it is unable to grow, so too, although one may have the body and have the karma, if there is no moistening by the water of affection-related fetters, one is not reborn. This is how one is still able to gain liberation even though there is no "spirit soul." It is on account of ignorance that one is bound up. It is on account of wisdom that one is released. If this is the case then the "self" serves no function.

Then again, it is the coming together of this "name and form" that is artificially referred to as a "person." This person is tied up by the fetters. When one gains the "claw" of non-outflow wisdom, then one unties all of these fetters. At this time this is a case of a person having gained liberation. It is analogous to the tying up and untying of a rope. The rope is just the fetters. There are no other dharmas involved in this bondage.. In worldly parlance one speaks of the tying up done with a rope and the untying of a rope. Name and form (naamaruupa, i.e. the five aggregates)(22) are just like this. The two dharmas of name and form are together artificially referred to as "a person." These fetters are no different from name and form. They are simply referred to as "name and form" or as "the fetters." The untying of [the knot of] name and form or the undergoing of [retribution for] offenses and merits are just like this. Although there is no single dharma by which a "person" is real, on account of name and form, there is the experiencing of the fruit resulting from offenses or from merit. Thus it is that a "person" becomes so named.

This is analogous to a cart's carrying of goods. If one analyzes according to each and every part, then there is finally no actuality found to the term "cart." But "cart" is the name for that which takes on a load of goods. A person's taking on of offenses and blessings is just the same as this. Name and form take on offenses and blessings and so a "person" receives that name. The taking on of suffering and bliss is just like this. On account of all sorts of causes and conditions such as these, a "spiritual soul" cannot be found. The "spiritual soul" is just the one who performs the giving. The one who is the recipient is just the same. You take it that it is a "spiritual soul" which constitutes a "person." [But], for all of these reasons a person who performs the giving cannot be found. A person who receives [the gift] cannot be found either. It is on account of all sorts of causes and conditions such as these that it is said that the valuable object, the person who gives, and the person who receives [all] cannot be found.

Question: If the giving as well as the other dharmas correspond to the reality mark whereby there is nothing which is demolished through reductive analysis, nothing which is extinguished, nothing which is produced and nothing which is created, why is it said that, when subjected to reductive analysis, the three factors cannot be gotten at?

Response: Those who are like the common man do perceive [the existence of] a donor, a recipient and a valuable object. This constitutes an inverted and false

view. When one is born into the world one [may] experience bliss. When the merit is exhausted, one then experiences a reversal [of fortunes]. It is on account of this that the Buddha wished to cause the bodhisattva to practice the way of reality and gain the real resultant retribution. The real resultant retribution is just the way of the Buddha. It was in order to demolish false views through reductive analysis that the Buddha said that the three factors cannot be gotten at. In actuality there is nothing which is demolished through reductive analysis. How is this the case? It is because all dharmas from their origin until the present are and always have been ultimately empty. The incalculable number of other such causes and conditions cannot be gotten at either. It is on the basis of this that one speaks of the perfect fulfillment of dana paramita.

Then again, if the bodhisattva practices dana paramita, he is able thereby to give rise to [all of] the six paramitas. It is at this time that it is referred to as complete fulfillment of dana paramita.

How can giving bring forth dana paramita? Dana may be of lesser, middling or superior quality. From the lesser is born the middling. From the middling is born the superior. If one employs drink, food or coarse things and employs therein a lax mind in giving, this is what is known as lesser giving. If one practices giving and it transforms and increases such that one is able to take clothing or precious goods and use them in one's giving, this constitutes bringing forth the

middling from the lesser. When the mind of giving transforms and increases such that there is nothing whatsoever which one cherishes as too dear, so that one is then able to employ one's head, eyes, blood, flesh, country, wealth, wives and sons, exhaustively using them in one's giving, this constitutes bringing forth the superior from the middling.

Take for example when Shakyamuni Buddha first brought forth the aspiration [to achieve buddhahood]. He was the king of a great country who was named "Brilliance." In seeking after the buddha way, he performed a lesser or greater amount of giving. When he transformed and took on his next body he became a potter who was able to make gifts of bathing implements and rock honey condiments to a different Shakyamuni Buddha and his bhikshu sangha. Subsequently, he changed bodies and next became the daughter of a great elder who made offerings of lamps to Kauṣārya Buddha. All sorts of instances such as these constitute what is meant by the bodhisattva's practice of lesser giving.

[Next], take for instance when Shakyamuni Buddha in a former life as the son of an elder made offerings of robes to Great Voice Buddha. After that buddha crossed into extinction, he erected ninety stupas. Afterwards he changed bodies again and became the king of a great country who made an offering to Lion Buddha of a canopy composed of the seven precious things. Afterwards, he then took on a body wherein he became a greater elder who made an offering to

Marvelous Eyes Buddha of supremely fine buildings and marvelous flowers created from the seven precious things. All sorts of instances such as these constitute what is known as the bodhisattva's practice of middling giving.

Take for example when Shakyamuni Buddha in a former life was a rishi. On seeing Kauîàinya Buddha who was handsome, upright, and exceptionally marvelous, he threw himself down off of a mountain in front of that buddha. His body remained unharmed and he then stood off to one side. Again, take for example He Who Beings Delight in Seeing Bodhisattva who used his own body as a lamp in making offerings to Sun and Moonlight Virtue Buddha. All sorts of examples such as these of not cherishing one's own body and life in making offerings to the buddhas constitute the bodhisattva's practice of superior giving.

This is what is meant by the bodhisattva's three kinds of giving. If there is a being who has just brought forth the aspiration to achieve buddhahood who takes up the practice of giving, he too may be just like this. First he may use drink and food in his giving. When the mind of giving transforms so that it increases, he will be able to take even the flesh of his own body and give it. First he may use all manner of fine condiments in his giving. Later, when the mind transforms and increases in its strength, he may be able to give even the blood from his own body. At first he may employ paper, ink and scriptures in his giving while also making offerings to the masters of Dharma of robes, drink, food and the four kinds of offerings. And then finally, when he has gained the Dharma body, for the

sake of an incalculable number of beings, he may speak many varieties of Dharma and so carry forth the giving of Dharma. All sorts of cases such as these illustrate the development of dana paramita from within [the practice of] dana paramita.

How is it that the bodhisattva's practice of giving can generate sila paramita? The bodhisattva reflects, "Beings become poor and destitute in later lives on account of not practicing giving. On account of becoming poor and destitute, the thought of stealing arises in them. On account of engaging in stealing, the harm of killing then arises. On account of being poor and destitute, one may be sexually unsatisfied. On account of being sexually unsatisfied, one may engage in sexual misconduct. Additionally, on account of being poor and destitute one may be treated as of low social station by others. On account of the fearfulness associated with being of low social station one may engage in false speech. On account of causes and conditions such as these which are associated with being poor and destitute one courses along the path of the ten unwholesome deeds. If one practices giving, then when one is born one possesses valuable goods. Because one has valuable goods one does not engage in that which is not Dharma. Why is this the case? It is because the five objects of the senses are abundant and there is nothing which one lacks."

[This principal] is illustrated by the case of Devadatta in a previous life when he was a snake who dwelt together with a frog and a turtle in a pond. They had all

become close friends. Later, the water of the pond dried up. They were hungry, poor, in desperate straits and lacking in any other resources. At that time the snake dispatched the turtle to call forth the frog. The frog then sent back the turtle by uttering a verse:

If one encounters poverty and destitution one loses one's original mind.

One doesn't consider one's original principals for eating has become foremost.

You take what I tell you and so inform the snake

That this frog will never come and arrive at your side.

If, however, one cultivates giving, in later lives one will possess merit and have nothing which one lacks. If this is the case then one will be able to uphold the precepts and will be free of these manifold ills. This is how giving is able to bring forth sila paramita. Additionally, when one gives one is able to bring about a scarcity of all of the fetters associated with the breaking of precepts while also being able to enhance the mind devoted to upholding the precepts, thereby causing it to become solid. This constitutes the causal bases associated with giving bringing about an increase in the cultivation of the precepts.

Moreover, when the bodhisattva practices giving he constantly brings forth thoughts of loving-kindness and compassion for the recipient. He is not attached to valuables and does not cherish his own goods. How much the less would he engage in stealing. When one feels loving-kindness and compassion for the recipient, how could one maintain ideas intent on killing? In ways such as these he is able to block off the breaking of precepts. This constitutes giving bringing forth precepts. If one is able to carry out giving employing a mind which destroys miserliness, then afterwards he will easily succeed in practicing the upholdance of precepts, patience, and so forth.

This [principal] is illustrated by the case of Manjushri when, long ago in the past in a far distant kalpa he was a bhikshu who went into the city to seek alms. He received a bowl full of "hundred-flavored delightful dumplings." In the city there was a small child who followed along after him, begging. He did not immediately give anything to him. When they reached a mural depicting the Buddha he picked up two of the dumplings with his hand and required [of the child], "If you are able to eat only one of the dumplings yourself while taking one of the dumplings and giving it to the Sangha, I will give them to you." [The child] immediately responded with assent and then took one of the delightful dumplings and presented it to the assembled Sangha [in the mural]. Afterwards he obtained Manjushri's consent to receive the precepts and brought forth the aspiration to become a buddha. In this fashion the practice of giving is able to cause one to take

on the precepts and bring forth the aspiration to become a buddha. This constitutes the practice of giving bringing forth sila paramita.

Furthermore, it is as a reward for giving that one receives offerings of the four things, lives in a fine country, finds a good [spiritual] master and nothing in which he is lacking. One is therefore able to uphold the precepts. Additionally, it is as a reward for giving that one's mind is regulated and supple. Because one's mind is regulated and supple one is able from birth to uphold the precepts. Because one is able to uphold the precepts from birth one is able to control one's own mind even from within the midst of unwholesome dharmas. All sorts of causes and conditions such as these constitute the bringing forth of the sila paramita on the basis of the practice of giving.

How is it that giving is able to bring forth ksanti paramita? When the bodhisattva performs an act of giving and the recipient subjects him to verbal abuse or has much which he seeks to obtain or seeks to get it at an inopportune time, or perhaps seeks to obtain what he should not seek, the bodhisattva thinks to himself at this time, "Now, as I am giving, I am desirous of seeking the buddha way. It is not the case that anyone ordered me to do this giving. As I am doing it at my own behest, why should I become angry?" After he has thought to himself in this manner he cultivates patience. This is a case of giving producing ksanti paramita.

Then again, when the bodhisattva gives, if the recipient is hateful and abusive, he then thinks to himself, "As I now cultivate giving both subject-related and object-related things, I am able to relinquish even that which is difficult to relinquish, how much the less should I be unable to have patience with what is merely an empty sound? If I am not patient with it, then that which I am able to give will be impure. It would be just as when a white elephant enters into a pool, bathes, and then having gotten out, returns again and covers himself with dust. To give and yet be impatient would be just like this." Having thought like this he carries on with the practice of patience. All sorts of such causes and conditions associated with giving bring forth ksanti paramita.

How is it that giving brings forth virya paramita? When the bodhisattva engages in the practice of giving he constantly cultivates vigor. Why is this? When the bodhisattva first brings forth the thought [directed towards buddhahood], his merit is not yet vast. At that time he is desirous of cultivating the two kinds of giving in order to fulfill the aspirations of all beings. Because of a shortage of things [to give] he earnestly seeks for valuables and Dharma in order to be able to adequately supply them.

This is illustrated by the case of Shakyamuni Buddha in a previous lifetime when he was a great physician king who worked to cure every manner of disease without any concern for fame or profit. It was done out of pity for all beings. The sick were extremely many. His powers were inadequate to rescue everyone. He

was concerned about and mindful of everyone and yet matters did not correspond [in their outcome] to his mind's aspirations. He became so distressed and agitated that he died.

He was then reborn in the Traayastri.m'sa Heaven. He thought to himself, "Now I've been reborn in the heavens. All I'm doing is consuming my reward of blessings without any sort of long term benefit arising thereby. " He then used a skillful means to put an end to that personal existence. Having relinquished this long life in the heavens he was reborn as a dragon prince in the palace of Saagara, the dragon king. His body grew to full maturity. His parents were extremely attached in their love for him. He desired to die and so went to the king of the golden-winged [garu.da] birds. The bird then immediately seized this young dragon and devoured him in the top of a 'saalmalii tree. The father and mother wailed and cried in grief-stricken distress.

Having died, the young dragon was then reborn in Jambudvipa as a prince in the house of the king of a great country. He was named "Able to Give." From the moment he was born he was able to speak. He asked all of the retainers, "Now, what all does this country contain. Bring it all forth so that it can be used to make gifts. Everyone became amazed and fearful. They all withdrew from him and ran off. His mother felt kindness and love for him and so looked after him by herself. He said to his mother, "I am not a raa.k.sasa [ghost]. Why has everyone run off? In my previous lives I have always taken pleasure in giving. I have been

a donor to everyone."

When his mother heard his words she reported them to everyone else. The other people all returned. The mother took pleasure in raising him. By the time he had grown older he had given away everything he owned. He then went to his father, the king, and requested things to give. His father gave him his share. Again, he gave it all away. He observed that the people of Jambudvipa were all poverty-stricken and ever subject to bitter suffering. He thought to supply them with gifts but the valuables were inadequate. He then began to weep and inquired of everyone, "By what means may I cause everyone to become entirely replete with valuables?"

The wise elders said, "We have heard of the existence of a precious wish-fulfilling pearl. If you were able to obtain this pearl then no matter what your heart desired there would be nothing which would not be obtained with certainty."

When the Bodhisattva had heard this words he spoke to his mother and father, saying, "I desire to go out upon the great sea and seek for the precious wish-fulfilling pearl worn on the head of the dragon king."

His father and mother replied, "We have only you, our one son. If you go out upon the great sea the many difficulties will be difficult to overcome. If there

should come a morning when we have lost you, what use would we have for living? It's not necessary for you to go. We still have things in our treasury which we can supply you with."

The son said, "There is a limit to the contents of the treasury. My intentions are measureless. I wish to bestow enough wealth to satisfy everyone so that they will never be found wanting. I pray that you will give your permission so that I may succeed in according with my original aspiration to cause everyone in Jambudvipa to be completely provided for."

His parents knew that his determination was immense. They did not dare to restrain him and so subsequently relented and allowed him to go. At that time there were five hundred merchants who, because his meritorious qualities were vast, took pleasure in following him wherever he went. They knew the day when he was due to depart and so gathered at the port. The Bodhisattva had previously heard that Saagara, the dragon king, had a precious wish-fulfilling pearl. He inquired of everyone, "Who knows the route across the sea to his dragon palace?" There was a blind man named Daasa who had been to sea seven times and who knew all of the sea routes. The Bodhisattva ordered him to travel with him.

He replied, "As I have grown old both of my eyes have lost their acuity. Although I have been to sea many times, I cannot go this time."

The Bodhisattva said, "In going forth this time I do not do it for my own sake. I seek the precious wish-fulfilling pearl for the universal benefit of everyone. I desire to completely supply all beings so that they are caused to never again be found wanting. Then I wish to instruct them in the causes and conditions of the dharma of the Way. You are a wise man. How can you withdraw? How, in the absence of your powers, could my vow possibly succeed?"

When Daasa had heard his entreaty he happily and with identical aspiration said to the Bodhisattva, "I'll now go out with you onto the great sea. I most certainly will not survive. You should lay my body to rest on the island of gold sands in the midst of the ocean."

When the provisions for the journey had all been loaded they loosened the last of the seven lines. The ship took off like a camel and arrived at the island of numerous gems. The host of merchants all tried to outdo each other in gathering up the seven precious jewels. When they had all satisfied themselves they asked the Bodhisattva, "Why do you not gather them?"

The Bodhisattva replied, "It is the precious wish-fulfilling pearl which I seek. I have no use for these things of finite value. You all should know when enough is enough and should know too what is an appropriate amount so that the ship will not become overloaded and so that you won't fail to avoid disaster."

At this time the group of merchants said to the Bodhisattva, "Venerable, invoke a spell for us to insure our safety." They then withdrew.

At this point Daasa instructed the Bodhisattva, "Hold aside the dinghy. We will want to go off on this other route. When we have been driven by the wind for seven days we will arrive at a treacherous place on the southern shore of the vast sea. There should be a steep cliff with branches from a date tree forest overhanging the water. If a strong wind blows the ship will be overturned and capsized. By reaching up and grabbing hold of the date branches you may be able to save yourself. As I have no sight I will likely die at that point. Beyond this precipitous shoreline there will be the isle of gold sand. You can take my body and lay it to rest in the midst of those sands. Those gold sands are pure. This is my desire.

And so it was just as he had foretold. The wind came and they set off. Having come to the steep cliffs, it was just as Daasa had described. The bodhisattva reached up, grabbed onto the date branches and so avoided disaster. He interred Daasa's body in the ground of gold. From this point he went on alone according to his earlier instructions. He floated in deep water for seven days. He then walked for seven days in water the depth of his throat. Then he moved for seven days through water up to his waist. After that he walked for seven days through water up to his knees. Then he walked through mud for seven days. Then he came upon marvelous lotus flowers which were fresh and pure and soft. He thought to himself, "These blossoms are soft and fragile. I should enter into the empty

space samadhi." And so he made his body light and walked upon the lotus blossoms for another seven days. Then he came upon poisonous snakes and thought to himself, "These poisonous serpents are extremely fearsome." He then entered the samadhi of loving kindness. He then walked upon the heads of the poisonous snakes for seven days. The snakes all extended their heads up to receive the bodhisattva and so allowed him to tread upon them as he passed. After he had passed through this difficulty he saw that there was a jeweled city with seven barriers. There were seven successive moats. Each of the moats was filled with poisonous snakes and had three huge dragons guarding the gate.

The dragons saw that the bodhisattva was possessed of a handsome and fine appearance, that he was a bearer of refined features and solemn deportment, and that he had been able to successfully pass through numerous difficulties in arriving at this place. They thought to themselves, "It is not the case that this is an ordinary man. It is certainly the case that he is a bodhisattva, a man possessed of much merit." They then immediately allowed him to advance directly to enter the palace.

It had not been so long from the time when the mate of the dragon king had lost her son and so she continued as before to grieve and weep. She observed the arrival of the Bodhisattva. The mate of the dragon king possessed superknowledges and so knew that this was her son. [She was so affected by this realization that] milk flowed forth from her two breasts. She gave the order allowing him to sit down and then asked him, "You are my son. After you left me and you died, where were you reborn?"

The Bodhisattva was also able to know his previous lives. He knew that these were his parents and so replied, "I was reborn on the continent of Jambudvīpa as a prince to the king of a great country. On account of feeling pity for the poverty-stricken people afflicted by the intense sufferings of hunger and cold who are therefore unable to enjoy their own freedom I have come here seeking the precious wish-fulfilling pearl."

His mother replied, "Your father wears this precious pearl as a crown. It would be difficult to acquire it. Surely he will take you into the treasury of jewels where he will certainly desire to give you whatever you desire. You should reply by saying, 'I have no need of any of the other various jewels. I only desire the precious pearl atop the head of the Great King. If I may receive such kindness I pray that you will bestow it upon me.' It may be that you can acquire it in this way."

He then went to see his father. His father was overcome with nostalgia and delight and experienced boundless rejoicing. He thought with pity on his son's coming from afar, having to undergo extreme difficulties and now arriving at this place. He showed him his marvelous jewels and said, "I will give you whatever you want. Take whatever you need."

The Bodhisattva said, "I came from afar wishing to see the Great King. I am seeking to obtain the precious wish-fulfilling pearl on the King's head. If I may receive such kindness, may it be that you will bestow it upon me. If I am not given that then I have no need of any other thing."

The Dragon King replied, saying, "I have only this single pearl which I always wear as crown. The people of Jambudvipa possess only scant merit and are of such base character that they should not be allowed to see it."

The Bodhisattva replied, "It is on account of this that I have come from afar undergoing extreme difficulties and risking death. It is for the sake of the people of Jambudvipa who have only scant merit, who are poverty-stricken and possessed of base character. I wish to use the precious wish-fulfilling pearl to provide for them all that they desire so that I may then use the causes and conditions of the buddha way to teach and transform them."

The dragon king gave him the pearl and placed a condition on it by saying, "I will now give you this pearl. But when you are about to depart from the world you must first return it to me."

He replied, "With all respect, it shall be as the King instructs." When the Bodhisattva had acquired the pearl he flew up into space and with the ease of extending and withdrawing his arm, he instantly arrived in Jambudvipa.

When the human royal parents observed his auspicious return they were delighted and danced about with joy. They hugged him and then asked, "Well, what did you acquire?"

He replied, "I have gotten the precious wish-fulfilling pearl."

They asked, "Where is it now?"

He told them, "It's in the corner of my robe."

His parents said, "How could it be so small?"

He explained, "It's [power] resides in its supernatural qualities. It is not a function of its size." He told his parents, "It should be ordered that, both inside and outside of the city, the grounds are to be swept clean and incense is to be burned. Banners should be hung and canopies set up. Everyone should observe the standards of pure diet and take on the moral precepts."

The next morning at dawn he used a tall wooden pole as a monument and attached the pearl on the top of it. At that time the Bodhisattva swore an oath, "If it is the case that I am to be able to complete the Buddha path and bring everyone to deliverance then this pearl should, in accordance with my vow, bring forth all

kinds of precious things so that whatever anyone needs, it will manifest in utter repletion."

At that time dark clouds covered the entire sky and rained down every type of precious thing including clothes, drink, food, bedding, and medicines. Whatever people needed was amply available. This was constantly the case, never ceasing until the end of his life.

Instances such as this illustrate what is meant by a bodhisattva's practice of giving serving to bring forth the paramita of vigor.

How is it that the bodhisattva's practice of giving generates the paramita of dhyana?

When the bodhisattva gives he is able to eliminate stinginess. Having gotten rid of stinginess he is [further] able on account of this giving to devote himself single-mindedly to the gradual elimination of the five coverings (nĀvaraîa). When one is able to eliminate the five coverings this itself is what is meant by dhyana.

Then again, it is on account of giving that the mind enters into the first dhyana on up to the dhyana of the extinction samadhi. How is it that it is "on account of" giving? Perhaps when one gives to a practitioner of dhyana, one reflects, "It is on account of this person's cultivation of dhyana absorption that I make an

offering with a pure mind. Why do I settle for only a vicarious experience of dhyana?"

And so one then looks into the mind and considers taking up the cultivation of dhyana oneself.

Or perhaps on giving to a poverty-stricken person one reflects upon this person's previous lives in which he engaged in all manner of unwholesomeness, did not seek single-mindedness, did not cultivate works which generate blessings and so, as a result, in this life is poverty-stricken. And so on account of this one encourages himself to take up the practice of wholesome single-mindedness and thereby enters into the dhyana absorptions.

This is as described [in the story of] Sudar'sana, the cakravartin king. Eighty-four thousand(23) of the lesser kings came to his court, all bringing marvelous things made of the seven precious things which they had brought as offerings. The King declared, "I do not need them. You may each use them to cultivate blessings."

The [lesser] kings thought to themselves, "Although the great King cannot bring himself to take them, still, it wouldn't be appropriate for us to take them for our own use." And so together they constructed a seven-jeweled pavilion. They planted rows of seven-jeweled trees and created bathing pools made of the seven jewels. Within the great pavilion they built eighty-four thousand multi-storied halls of the seven jewels. Within each of the multi-storied halls there was a

seven-jeweled throne with multi-colored cushions at each end of the throne. Decorated canopies were suspended above and the ground was sprinkled with fragrances. After all of these preparations had been made they addressed the King, saying, "We pray that his majesty will accept this Dharma pavilion with its bejewelled trees and bathing pools."

The King indicated his acceptance by remaining silent and then thought to himself, "I ought not to indulge myself with the pleasure of being the first to dwell within this new pavilion. I should invite good people such as the 'srama.nas and brahmans to first enter here to receive offerings. Afterwards I may dwell in it."

He then gathered together those good personages and had them be the first to enter the jeweled pavilion where they were provided an abundance of all manner of fine and marvelous offerings.

After those people had all left the King entered the jeweled pavilion and ascended into the multi-storied hall of gold and sat down upon the silver throne. There he reflected upon giving, dispensed with the five coverings, withdrew the six sense faculties, did away with the six sense objects, and, experiencing joy and bliss, entered into the first dhyana.

Next he ascended into the multi-storied hall of silver, sat down upon the throne of gold and entered into the second dhyana. Next he ascended into the

multi-storied hall of beryl, sat down upon the crystal throne and entered into the third dhyana. And then, finally, he ascended into the multi-storied jeweled hall of crystal, sat down upon the beryl throne and entered into the fourth dhyana. He sat there alone in contemplation for a total of three months.

The jade ladies, the precious queen and eighty-four thousand female retainers all draped their bodies in strands of pearls and rare jewels and then came to see the King, saying, "As his majesty has for so long now withdrawn from intimate audiences, we have dared to come and offer our greetings."

The King announced to them, "Sisters, each of you should maintain a mind imbued with correctness. You should serve me as friends. Don't act as my adversaries."

The jade ladies and the precious queen began to weep and, as their tears streamed down, they asked, "Why does the Great King now refer to us as 'sisters'? Surely he thinks [of us] differently now. Pray, may we hear his intent? Why do we now receive the remonstrance: 'You should serve me as friends. Don't act as my adversary.'?"

The King instructed them, saying, "If you find delight in seeing me as a worldly object with which to engage in the affairs of desire, this amounts to acting as my

adversary. If, however, you are able to awaken to that which is beyond the ordinary and, realizing that the body is like an illusion, cultivate blessings, practice goodness and cut away desire-laden affections, this amounts to serving me as a friend."

The jade ladies responded, "We shall adhere respectfully to the dictates of the King."
After they had spoken these words they were sent back to their quarters.

After the women had gone the King ascended into the multi-storied hall of gold and sat down upon the silver throne where he immersed himself in the samadhi of loving-kindness. He then ascended into the multi-storied hall of silver and sat down upon the throne of gold and immersed himself in the samadhi of compassion. Next he ascended into the multi-storied hall of beryl and sat down upon the crystal throne where he immersed himself in the samadhi of sympathetic joy. Finally, he ascended into the multi-storied jeweled hall of crystal and sat down upon the throne of beryl where he immersed himself in the samadhi of evenmindedness. This is an instance of the bodhisattva's practice of giving generating the paramita of dhyana.

How does the bodhisattva's giving bring about prajna paramita? When the bodhisattva gives he knows that this giving will definitely have a resulting reward and so he is not beset by the delusions of doubt and he is able to shatter erroneous views and ignorance. This constitutes giving bringing forth prajna paramita.

Furthermore, when the bodhisattva engages in giving he is able to distinguish and know the circumstances of the person who does not uphold the precepts. If someone whips, strikes, beats up, flogs, confines or ties up others, or if he circumvents the law and so obtains valuables and then proceeds to do acts of giving, he is reborn among elephants, horses or cattle. Although he takes on the form of an animal who carries heavy burdens, who is whipped and prodded, who is restrained by halters and fetters, and who is ridden, still he always obtains good living quarters and fine food, is prized by people and is provided for by people.

Additionally he knows about the circumstances of evil people who are much obsessed with hatefulness and anger, whose minds are devious and not upright, and yet who practice giving. He knows that they will fall into [rebirth in] the palaces of the dragons where they will obtain a palace composed of the seven precious things, and will have fine food and marvelous sensual pleasures.

He also knows that people who are arrogant and who engage in giving with a mind beset with conceit and hatefulness will fall into [rebirth] among the golden-winged [garu.da] birds where they will always experience sovereign independence and will have a necklace made of precious "as-you-wish-it" pearls. All sorts of things which they require will all be obtained without need for restraint and there will be nothing which will not be in accordance with their wishes.

They will be able to perform [magical] transformations of a myriad sorts and there will be no matter which they will be unable to bring to completion.

He also knows of the circumstances of high government officials who circumvent the law and indulge in unscrupulous excesses at the expense of the people, and who do not follow along with regulatory laws and so take valuable goods. If they use them to perform acts of giving they fall [into rebirth] among ghosts and spirits where they become kumbhaa.n.da ghosts who are able to perform all sorts of transformations and please themselves with the five objects of the senses.

He also knows of the circumstances of those people who are beset with much hatred, who are tyrannical, who are much obsessed in their fondness for liquor and meat and who then perform acts of giving. They fall [into rebirth] among the earth-coursing yak.sa ghosts where they always obtain all sorts of pleasures, music, drink and food.

He also knows of the existence of those people who are obstinate and stubborn and who are unruly and defiant, and yet who are able to perform acts whereby they make gifts of carriages and horses as substitutes for foot travel. They fall [into rebirth] among the space-coursing yak.sas who are possessed of great strength and who arrive at their destinations [with speed] like the wind.

He also knows of the existence of those people who have jealous minds and who enjoy disputation, but who are able, on account of making gifts of fine dwellings,

bedding, clothing, drink and food, to be reborn among the flying yak.sas who abide in palaces and Taoist temples. They possess all sorts of pleasurable things which provide personal convenience. In all sorts of cases such as these, when they are about to give, he is able to make distinctions and know about them. This constitutes the bodhisattva's practice of giving producing prajna.

Furthermore, when one makes offerings of drink and food one gains strength, physical attractiveness, long life and admiration. If one makes gifts of clothes one gains from birth an awareness of a sense of shame and a sense of blame. One's awesome virtue is upright and correct. In body and mind one enjoys peace and bliss. If one makes gifts of dwellings then one obtains all manner of palaces and towers composed of the seven precious things. One naturally comes to have the five objects of desire with which to bring oneself pleasure. If one makes gifts of the waters of wells, ponds and springs, and of all sorts of fine condiments, then wherever one is born one will succeed in being without hunger or thirst and will possess a complete supply of the five objects of desire. If one gives bridges, boats or shoes, then from birth one will have an abundance of all sorts of carriages and horses. If one gives parks and forests then one will achieve the honor of aristocratic social station and will become one to whom everyone looks in reliance. One will take on a body which is handsome and one's mind will be blissful and devoid of worries. All sorts of causes and conditions such as these within the realm of people constitute what is gained through giving. If a person gives as a

way of cultivating meritorious qualities and does not find the life of conditioned karmic activity to be agreeable, then he succeeds in being reborn in the dwelling place of the four heavenly kings.

If in one's giving a person supplements it by making offerings to his father and mother as well as to his uncles, brothers and sisters, and if he gives without hatefulness and without enmity, and if he does not like to engage in disputation and also does not delight in seeing disputatious people, he then succeeds in being born in the Traayastri.m'sa heaven or in the Yaama, Tu.sita, Nirmaa.narati or Paranirmitava'savartin [heavens]. In all sorts of ways such as this he makes distinctions regarding giving. This constitutes the bodhisattva's practice of giving bringing forth prajna.

If there is no defiled attachment associated with one's mind of giving and if one is disgusted with and distressed by the world and so seeks nirvana, this constitutes the giving of the arhat and pratyekabuddha. If one gives for the sake of beings and for the sake of the buddha way, this constitutes the giving of the bodhisattva.

Within all sorts of giving such as these, he makes distinctions and knows. This constitutes the practice of giving bringing forth the prajna paramita.

Then again, when the bodhisattva gives, he considers the reality mark of the three factors as discussed above. When one is able to know in this way, this constitutes giving bringing forth prajna paramita.

Moreover, the causes and conditions of all wisdom and merit all come from giving, just as with the thousand buddhas who, when they first brought forth the intention [to achieve buddhahood], they used all kinds of valuable things to make gifts to the buddhas. Perhaps they used flowers and incense or perhaps they used clothing. Perhaps they used willow branches as gifts and so brought forth the mind [intent on buddhahood] in that way. All sorts of giving like this constitutes the bodhisattva's practice of giving bringing forth the prajna paramita.

The Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom

[The End of] Fascicle Number Twelve.

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[Return to Top of Page](#)

ENDNOTES

1. See DFB:1566b, 1134a3. [text]
2. This note is part of the Taisho text. [text]
3. This note is part of the Taisho text. [text]
4. This note is part of the Taisho text. [text]
5. These are extremely terse passing references to peripheral abhidharmic issues. As there is no explanatory discussion whatsoever the translation of this paragraph is somewhat tentative. [text]
6. The six faculties refers to eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and intellectual mind. [text]

7. This refers to benefits to the recipient of a donor's gift of food: life, color, strength, bliss and, according to Lamotte, pratibhaana, which he renders as "intelligence," but which Kumarajiva's Chinese renders with a character which most usually means "fine food" (cf. T25.82b and Lamotte, 218). [text]

8. The Chinese text leaves out one of the thirty-two marks: the ten-foot radius circle of light surrounding the Buddha. [text]

9. This note is part of the Taisho text. [text]

10. These parenthetical notes are part of the Taisho text. [text]

11. This parenthetical note is part of the Taisho text. [text]

12. Sanskrit reconstruction from Mochizuki, 2483c. [text]

13. This parenthetical note is part of the Taisho text. [text]

14. This parenthetical note is part of the Taisho text. [text]

15. See DFB 2152a, 1119a15, 66b8. [text]

16. Also known as the four limitless minds. See DFB 789a. [text]

17. This parenthetical note is part of the Taisho text. [text]

18. This parenthetical note is part of the Taisho text. [text]

19. "Thus I have heard, at one time..." is the opening line of each scripture attributed to the Buddha. [text]

20. I have preferred here an alternate reading shared by four versions of the text of "newly" for Taisho's "gradually." [text]

21. This should not be interpreted as an indication that suicide is somehow devoid of seriously negative karmic consequences. I recall hearing Master Hsuan Hua state that, in the case of a suicide, one's spirits are severely depressed and that this almost invariably leads to falling into extremely unfortunate circumstances in the immediately ensuing rebirth. [text]

22. It is because one depends upon nominal description for knowledge of the four non-form aggregates (feeling, perception, karmic process and consciousness) that "name" is used as a shorthand reference for them. See DFB-1045c. [text]

23. "Eighty-four thousand" is like the American English colloquial "millions." Although it may sometimes be taken literally, in most cases it just means "many." [text]

The Traveller and the Ghosts

(T25.148c1-27 [fasc.12])

And furthermore, there are those people who conceive the idea of an "I" as existing in the midst of external phenomena. Take for instance those non- buddhist cultivators of dhyaana absorptions who, when employing the contemplation of the "earth element all- encompassing basis", give rise to the view that, "The earth element constitutes the 'self' and the 'self' is just the earth element." They may develop the same view with regard to water, fire, wind or space. Thus, on account of such cognitive inversions they may impute selfhood to something which exists within another person's body. Additionally, they may even conceive the idea of their "self" as being constituted by someone else's body.

As an example, once there was a man who had been given a mission whereby he was compelled to travel a great distance. He spent the night

alone in a vacant dwelling. In the middle of the night a ghost carried in the corpse of a man and set it down in front of him. Then there was another ghost who chased along behind and angrily castigated the first ghost, yelling, "This corpse is mine! Why did you carry it in here?"

The first ghost said, "It belongs to me! I carried it in here myself!"

The second ghost retorted, "The fact of the matter is, I am the one who carried this corpse in here!" Then each of the ghosts grabbed one of the hands of the corpse and tried to pull it away from the other. Thereupon the first ghost said, "There's a man here. We can ask him to settle this."

The ghost who had come in later then asked the traveller, "Well, who was it that carried this corpse in here?"

The traveller thought to himself, "Both of these ghosts are very strong. If I report the facts, I'm bound to die. If I lie, I'm also bound to die. So, since I can't avoid being killed in either case, what's the point in lying about it?" And so he replied, "It was the first ghost who carried in the corpse."

The second ghost flew into a rage, tore off one of the traveller's hands and then threw it down on the ground. At this, the first ghost pulled off one of the arms from the corpse and attached it as a replacement. They then proceeded in this fashion with both arms, both feet, the head, the two sides, and so forth until the traveller's

entire body had been changed. The two ghosts then proceeded to devour the body which they had gotten from the exchange. When they had finished, they wiped off their mouths and departed.

At that point the traveller thought to himself, "With my very own eyes I saw those two ghosts entirely devour the body born of my mother! This body which I now have here is composed entirely of someone else's flesh! Do I really still have a body now? Or is it the case that I have no body at all? If I hold the view that I do indeed have a body,- that body is actually somebody else's entirely. If I hold that I don't have one,- still, there is a body here right now! He continued to ponder like this until his mind became so confused and distressed that he became like a man gone mad.

The next morning, he went off down the road. When he reached the neighboring country he saw that there was a Buddha stupa and a group of monks. He couldn't talk about anything else:- He could only keep asking whether his body was existent or nonexistent. The bhikshus asked him, "Just who are you, anyway?"

The traveller replied, "Well, as for me, I don't know myself whether I'm a person or a non- person." He then described in detail the events which had transpired.

The bhikshus remarked, "This man has a natural understanding of the nonexistence of a self. He could easily gain deliverance." And so they offered an explanation, saying, "From its origin on up until the

present, your body has always naturally been devoid of a self. It's not something that just happened now. It is merely on account of an aggregation of the four great elements that one conceives of it as 'my' body. In this respect, your original body and this one you now have are no different." Thus the bhikshus succeeded in bring about the traveller's deliverance to the Way, whereupon he cut off all afflictions and immediately realized arhatship.

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Nagarjuna Bodhisattva on the Perfection of Moral Conduct

The Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom

Section Twenty-one: The Explanation of the Meaning of Chapter One's Shiila
Paaramitaa.

Fascicle Thirteen

Sutra: Because committing offenses and not committing offenses cannot be gotten at one should perfect shiila paaramitaa.

Treatise: Shiila (In the language of Ch'in, it means "being good by nature.")(1) refers to being fond of coursing along in the way of goodness and to not allowing oneself to be negligent (pramaada). This is what is meant by shiila. Perhaps one takes on the precepts and practices goodness or perhaps one does not take on the precepts and practices goodness. They are both referred to as "shiila."

As for shiila, generally described, the regulation behaviors specific to the body and mouth are of eight kinds. They include not inflicting physical harm, not stealing, not engaging in sexual misconduct, not lying, not engaging in duplicitous speech, not engaging in abusive speech, not engaging in frivolous speech, and

not drinking intoxicants as well as pure livelihood. These are what are referred to as the "characteristics" of the precepts. If one does not guard them and so lets go and relinquishes them, this is referred to as "breaking" the precepts.

One who breaks these precepts falls into the three wretched destinies. If one upholds the precepts at an inferior level then one is born among humans. If one upholds the precepts at a middling level one is born among the six desire heavens. If one upholds the precepts at a superior level and also cultivates the four dhyaanas and the four emptiness absorptions, one is born in the pure heavens of the form or formless realms.

The superior maintenance of the precepts is of three types: If one adheres to the lesser level of pure maintenance of the precepts, one achieves arhatship. If one adheres to the middle level of pure maintenance of the precepts, one attains pratyekabuddhahood. If one adheres to the superior level of pure maintenance of the precepts, one achieves the buddha way. If one neither attaches to them nor leans upon them and if one neither breaks them nor has deficiencies with respect to them, he is one who is praised and cherished by the aryas. Instances such as these illustrate what is meant by superior purity in the maintenance of the precepts.

If one acts out of loving-kindness and sympathy for beings, if one is motivated by the intention to cross beings over to liberation, and if one also knows the reality mark of the precepts, then one's mind does not lean upon or become attached to them. If one upholds the precepts in this manner, then in the future one will

influence people to arrive at the buddha way. This constitutes having gained the precepts of the unsurpassed way of the Buddha.

If one wishes to obtain great wholesome benefit, then one should solidly uphold the precepts as if one were cherishing a valuable treasure and as if one were guarding one's own physical life. Why? Just as the myriad beings possessed of physical form all rely upon the earth and abide there, so too it is with the precepts.

The precepts are the dwelling place of all wholesome dharmas.

Moreover, it is like wishing to walk without legs, like wishing to fly without wings and like wishing to cross over a body of water without a boat. This cannot be done. If one is lacking in the precepts and one wishes to obtain a fine result, it is just the same. If a person casts off and relinquishes these precepts, although he may abide in the mountains, practicing ascetic practices and eating fruits and taking herbs, he is still no different from the birds or the animals.

There may people who take on the discipline of drinking only water, drinking only milk or consuming only vital energy, of shaving off the hair, of letting the hair grow long, of reserving a only a small patch of hair atop the head, of wearing a ka.saaya robe, of wearing a white robe, of wearing clothes made of grass, of wearing clothes made of tree bark, of plunging into water in winter, of burning themselves with fire in the summer, of throwing themselves off of a high cliff,

of washing themselves in the Ganges River, of taking three baths each day, of repeatedly making offerings to fire, of carrying out all kinds of sacrificial offerings, of resorting to all sorts of spells and prayers, or of taking on the observance of ascetic practices. However, because they do not possess these precepts, those practices are useless and there is nothing gained through them.

Although a person may abide in exalted halls and grand palaces wearing fine clothes and consuming exquisite cuisine, if he is nonetheless able to cultivate these precepts, he will be able to be born into a fine place and eventually will achieve the fruit of the cultivating the Way. No matter whether one is of noble or humble social station and no matter whether one has little status or great status, if one is able to cultivate these precepts of purity he will gain a great benefit. However, if one breaks these precepts, there are no considerations reserved for noble or humble class or greater or lesser status. In every case one will be unable to succeed in being born in a good place which accords with one's aspirations.

Moreover, a person who breaks the precepts is like a clear and cool pool which contains a poisonous snake. One does not bathe in it. He is also like a tree which possesses fine flowers and fruit but which has an abundance of thorns. Although a person may abide in a noble house, may possess a body which is handsome and fine and may have accumulated an abundance of learning, if he finds no pleasure in upholding the precepts and his mind is devoid of loving-kindness and pity, he is just like this. His situation is as described in this verse:

If one is noble but has no wisdom, this is ruination.

If one is wise but arrogant, this too is ruination.

If one is an upholder of precepts but then destroys the precepts,

In this life and later lives, all is ruination.

Although one may be poor and of low social station, still, if one is able to uphold the precepts this is superior to being wealthy or of noble status while yet being a breaker of the precepts.

The fragrance of flowers and the fragrance of the trees is such that one is unable to smell them from afar. The fragrance from upholding the precepts universally pervades throughout the ten directions. The person who upholds the precepts perfects peacefulness and bliss. His name is heard in faraway quarters and he is revered and cherished by both men and gods. In the present life he always achieves all manner of happiness. If he desires wealth, nobility and long life in the heavens or among people it is not difficult for him to obtain it. If one is pure in upholding the precepts, he gains whatever he wishes.

Moreover, a person who upholds the precepts observes the precept breaker's suffering and affliction through undergoing punishment, confinement, beating and flogging, knows himself that he has eternally transcended such situations, and is overjoyed on that account. If a person who upholds the precepts sees a good person gaining a good name, fame and happiness, in his mind, he thinks to himself, "In just the same fashion as he has come by a good reputation, I too have a measure of that." When the life of a person who upholds the precepts comes to an end and the knife-like wind cuts loose the body and the sinews and blood vessels are severed, he knows that he has upheld the precepts purely. His mind is free of fearfulness. This situation is as described in a verse:

Amid the disease of great evil,

The precepts are a fine medicine.

In the midst of great fearfulness,

The precepts are a guardian protector.

Amidst the darkness of death,

The precepts are a bright lamp.

Among the wretched destinies,

The precepts serve as a bridge.

Within the waters of the sea of death,

The precepts are a great ship.

Furthermore, the person who upholds the precepts always succeeds in being revered and supported by people of the present era. His mind is blissful and does not experience regret. He has no shortage of either clothing or food. When he dies he is born in the heavens and later he gains the buddha way. For the person who upholds the precepts there is no matter in which he is not successful. For a person who breaks the precepts everything is lost.

This situation is analogous to that of the man who constantly made offerings to a god. As this man was poverty-stricken, for twelve full years he single-mindedly made offerings seeking to gain wealth and nobility. The god felt pity for this man, manifest himself before him and asks, "What is it that you seek?"

The man replied, "I'm seeking for wealth and nobility. I desire to have it that I get whatever I wish for."

The god then gave him a vessel known as "the vase of virtue" and told the man, "Everything you need will come forth from this vase."

After the man got it there was nothing which he wished for that he did not gain. After he acquired the ability to get anything he wished for he built a fine house with elephants, horses and carriages and came to possess an abundance of the seven kinds of jewels. He gave generously to all of his guests so that they were never wanting in any respect.

One of his guests inquired of him, "You used to be poverty-stricken. How is it that now you have come by such wealth as this?"

The man replied, "I received this celestial vase. The vase is able to put forth all of these different kinds of things. Hence I have gained such wealth."

The guest asked, "Would you show me the vase and something which it has put forth?"

And so he immediately brought out the vase. From within the vase he drew forth all manner of objects. Then, in prideful carelessness he began to dance about on

the top of the vase. The vase was immediately shattered. At the very same time all of the different sorts of things which it had produced simultaneously disappeared.

One who upholds the precepts is just like this. He receives all manner of marvelous bliss and there is no wish which he does not realize. If, however, a person breaks the precepts, if he becomes pridefully careless and gives free reign to willfulness, he will be just like this man who broke the vase and lost everything.

Furthermore, the fragrance of the name of the person who upholds the precepts pervades both the heavens and the human realm in this and later lives.

Additionally, the person who upholds the precepts is one to whom people enjoy making gifts, not cherishing even their valuable possessions. He does not cultivate worldly profit and yet there is nothing in which he is wanting. He succeeds in being born in the heavens. He enters the way of the three vehicles in the presence of the buddhas of the ten directions and so achieves liberation. It is only in a case where all manner of erroneous views figured in one's upholding of precepts that there would be nothing gained later.

Then again, although a person may not have left the home life, if he is able only to cultivate and practice the dharma of the precepts, he too will succeed in being reborn in the heavens. If a person is pure in his upholding of the precepts while also cultivating dhyana and wisdom, and if he seeks thereby to cross himself

over to liberation from the suffering of aging, sickness and death, this wish will certainly be realized. Although a person who upholds the precepts may not have [the protection of] military weapons, the awful events will not befall him. The wealth of upholding precepts is such that none can steal it away. The upholding of precepts is the most intimate of intimates. Although one dies, one is still not separated from it. The adornment furnished by the upholding of precepts is superior to that of the seven precious things. For these reasons one should be protective of the precepts just as one is protective of one's own physical life and just as one cherishes precious things. The person who breaks the precepts undergoes a myriad forms of suffering. He is like that man who used to be poor, [became rich], but then broke the vase and lost everything. For these reasons one should uphold the precepts of purity.

Moreover, when the person who upholds the precepts observes the punishments of those who have broken the precepts he should encourage himself to single-mindedly uphold the precepts. What is meant by "the punishments of those who have broken the precepts"? A person who breaks the precepts is not respected by others. His house is like a tomb. People do not go there. The person who breaks the precepts loses all meritorious qualities. He is like a dead and leafless tree. People take no pleasure in it. A person who breaks the precepts is like a frost-damaged lotus. People take no delight in looking on it.

The person who breaks the precepts possesses an evil and fearsome mind. It is like that of a raak.sasa ghost. A person who breaks the precepts is one in whom people do not take refuge. This is analogous to a thirsty person's not going towards a dried-up well. The mind of the person who breaks the precepts is constantly beset with doubts and regrets. He is like a person who has committed transgressions of the law. He is always fearful that punishment will come his way. The person who breaks the precepts is like farmland which has been struck by a hail storm. One cannot rely on or look to it [for sustenance]. A person who breaks the precepts is like a bitter melon. Although in form it is like the sweet varieties, it cannot be eaten. A person who breaks the precepts is like a village populated by thieves. One cannot remain there. A person who breaks the precepts is like a person afflicted with a serious disease. One does not wish to grow close to him.

The person who breaks the precepts is unable to avoid suffering. It is just as with a wretchedly bad path. It is difficult to travel along it. One cannot remain together with a person who breaks the precepts. It is just as with an evil thief. It is difficult to grow close to him. A person who breaks the precepts is like a great abyss. Those who travel by avoid it. A person who breaks the precepts is difficult to dwell together with, the same as with a poisonous snake. A person who breaks the precepts cannot be approached or touched the same as with a huge conflagration. A person who breaks the precepts is like a wrecked boat. One cannot ride in it to ferry on across. A person who breaks the precepts is like food which has been vomited up. One cannot feast on it again.

When a person who breaks the precepts is present within a group of good people, it is like when a bad horse is present in a herd of good horses. A person who breaks the precepts is different from good people. It is just as when a donkey is present within a herd of cattle. When a person who breaks the precepts is present within the vigorous assembly, it is like when a weakling child is present among strong men. Although a person who breaks the precepts may appear to be like a bhik.su, he is like a corpse in the midst of a group of sleeping men. A person who breaks the precepts is like a counterfeit pearl in the midst of true pearls. A person who breaks the precepts is like an era.n.da tree(2) in the midst of a forest of sandalwood. Although the person who breaks the precepts resembles a good person in appearance he contains no good dharmas within. Although he may shave his head, dye the robes, take up vouchers according to seniority and be referred to as a bhik.su, in reality he is not a bhik.su.

If a person who breaks the precepts dons the Dharma robes he encases his body in hot brass sheet metal. If he takes up the bowl then it is a vessel filled with molten brass. If he consumes food, this amounts to swallowing burning iron pellets and drinking molten brass. If he accepts offerings or support from people they are just the minion ghosts of hell who imprison him. If he enters a monastic dwelling (vihaara) he is entering a great hell. If he sits on a seat belonging to the members of the Sangha he is sitting down on a bed of hot iron.(3)

Additionally, a person who breaks the precepts constantly experiences a feeling of fearfulness. Like a person with a serious illness, he is always afraid that death is about to come. He is also just like a person who has committed the five nefarious offenses. In his mind he always thinks to himself, "I am a thief who steals from the Buddha. He stays in hiding and avoids contact by staying in less-frequented places. He is just like a thief who is fearful of others. As the months and days of the year go by, he constantly feels ill-at-ease and insecure. Although a person who breaks the precepts may gain the benefit and pleasure of offerings, this pleasure is not pure. It is just as when a fool makes offerings to a corpse and adorns it. Whomsoever is wise, on hearing of this, is disgusted and does not wish to observe it. There are all sorts of examples such as these which are innumerable. The punishments endured by those who break the precepts are such as cannot be described. The cultivator should be single-minded in upholding the precepts.

The Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom

Section Twenty-two, Part One: The Explanation of the Characteristics and Meaning of Chapter One's "Precepts"

Question: We are already aware of the many sorts of meritorious qualities and resultant rewards [associated with the precepts]. What are the characteristics of

the precepts?

Response: They are the stopping of evil and the not engaging in it any more. This is the case whether it comes forth from the mind or whether it is spoken by the mouth or whether it is taken on from someone else. It includes the putting to rest of evil on the part of the body and the mouth. These constitute the characteristics of the precepts.

What constitutes evil? [In the case of killing], it is where there actually is a being, one knows it is a being, one brings forth the thought desirous of killing and taking its life. One then does generate the physical action. [It is a case where] there does exist a created form. This constitutes the offense of killing a being. The other [actions]: the tying up, the confining, the whipping, the beating, and so forth,-- These are dharmas which are auxiliary to killing.

Additionally, one incurs the offense of killing when one kills another [being]. In a case where one kills one's own body, if one knows it to be a being and then performs the act of killing it is not the case that this constitutes the offense of killing.

It is not [a killing offense] when one sees a person at night, thinks him to be a leafless tree trunk, and then kills him. When one deliberately kills a being one incurs the killing offense. It is not the case when the act is not intentional. When one kills a being and does so with a pleased mind one incurs the offense of

killing. It is not the case where one is in [a state of] crazed delusion. It is when the root of life is cut off that it constitutes the offense of killing. It is not the case that the physical action of creating a wound [in itself] constitutes the offense of killing. It is not the case that only giving verbal instructions as an order that the verbal instructions [in themselves] constitute the offense of killing. It is not the case that the arising of the thought alone [constitutes the killing offense]. Cases which accord with these criteria constitute the offense of killing. When one does not create these offenses it constitutes [remaining in compliance with] the precepts.

In a case where a person takes the precept, the thought arises and the mouth speaks, saying, "From this day I will not again kill beings." If the body does not move and the mouth does not speak and yet the mind alone arises and one vows to oneself, thinking, "From this day on, I will not again kill beings," this does constitute the non-killing precept.

There are those who say that this "not killing" precept may be categorized as "good" or it may be "neutral."

Question: According to the testimony of the Abhidharma, all moral regulations associated with the precepts are good. Why then do you now say that they may be "neutral"?

Response: According to the abhidharma of Kaatyayaniiputra they are all categorized as "good." According to the statements contained in the other abhidharmas, the precept of not killing may be good or it may be neutral. Why? If it were the case that the not killing precept were always good, then it ought to be the case that those who uphold this precept should never fall into the wretched destinies as is the case with those who have achieved the Way. For this reason there may be times when it should be neutral. Because that which is neutral has no resulting retribution it may be the case that one is not then reborn in the heavens or among men.

Question: It is not the case that one would fall into the hells based solely on the neutrality of a precept. It is because of the additional factor of the production of an evil thought that one falls into the hells.

Response: By not killing beings, one develops an immeasurable quantity of good dharmas. This is because the creating of merit through non-commission [of killing] is accumulating constantly day and night. However, if one is [simultaneously] committing a few karmic offenses, [one's merit] then becomes limited and measurable. How is this so? [One's merit situation] gravitates towards that which is measurable and does not go the way of the immeasurable. For this reason one can know that within the sphere of the not killing precept, there may be instances in which it is "neutral."

Moreover, there are those people who do not receive the precepts from a Master but who only bring forth in their minds a vow to themselves, "From this day on, I shall no longer kill any beings." The not killing of this sort may have times when it is neutral.

Question: To which of the realms is this precept of not killing connected?

Response: According to the statements in the abhidharma of KaatyayanĀputra all moral regulations associated with received precepts are connected to the desire realm. According to statements in the other abhidharmas it may be connected to the desire realm or may not be connected [to any realm] at all. To speak of it in a way which corresponds to reality, there are three ways of classifying it: It may be connected to the desire realm; it may be connected to the form realm, or it may be [connected to] states beyond outflows. Although the dharma of killing beings is specific to the desire realm and thus the desire realm's not-killing precept ought to correspond in its connections to killing's presence in the desire realm, still, because in the form realm and formless realm one is far removed from engaging in killing, those cases constitute the true precept of not killing.

Furthermore, there are those people who do not take the killing precept but who from birth onwards do not take pleasure in killing beings. As for [not killing's] being perhaps good or perhaps neutral [as mentioned above], this case qualifies as neutral. This dharma of not killing is not a mind dharma, it is not a dharma

belonging to the mind and it is not a dharma interactive with the mind either. It may arise in association with the mind or it may be that it does not arise in association with the mind. It is stated in the abhidharma of Kaatyayaniiputra that not killing beings is either body karma or mouth karma. It may involve apparent or nonapparent form. It may be that it conforms with the actions of the mind or it may be that does not conform with the actions of the mind. (The notes in red say, "conforming with the mind" refers to precepts coexisting with absorption. Not conforming with the mind refers to the five precepts.")(4)It is not the case that it constitutes karmic retribution from earlier lives. There are two types of cultivation. This does correspond to cultivation. There are two types of realization. This does correspond to realization. (The notes in red state, "This refers to physical realization and wisdom realization")(5)There is severance through thought. In all desire realms it is the last to be achieved. There is severance through seeing and severance over time. That which is gained by both the common person and the arya is a form dharma. It may be visible or it may be invisible. It may be a dharma which is opposable or it may be a dharma which not opposable. It is a dharma which has a reward. It is a dharma which has a fruition. It is a dharma in the sphere of outflows. It is a conditioned dharma. It is a surpassable dharma. (The notes in read state, "It is 'surpassable' because it is not ultimate.")(6)It is a non-corresponding cause. Analyses such as these refer to the precept proscribing killing.(7)

Question: According to the eightfold direct path's preceptual standard as well, the killing of beings is proscribed. Why do you merely state that the precept of not killing beings has a retribution and is in the realm of outflows?

Response: We discuss herein only the regulatory dharmas associated with taking the precepts. We do not discuss here the regulations associated with being without outflows. Moreover, in other abhidharmas, it is stated that the dharma of not killing does not follow along with the actions of the mind, that it is not the case that it constitutes karma of the body or mouth, that it is not aligned with the karmic activity of the mind, that there may be a retribution or may not be a retribution, that it is not a dharma interactive with the mind, and that it may be in the sphere of outflows or it may be in the sphere of no outflows. These are dharmas which vary [in their analysis from author to author]. The others are all [analyzed] identically.

Moreover, there are those who say that buddhas, worthies and aryas do not engage in frivolous debate about dharmas. (The notes in red state: "Frivolous' refers to all sorts of unorthodox discussions.")(8) Whichever being one confronts, in each and every case, it cherishes its own life. Therefore the Buddha said, "Do not take another's life. If one takes another's life, in life after life one will undergo all manner of bitter pain." The existence or nonexistence of beings shall be discussed later on.

Question: People are able to use their strength to be victorious over others and standing together as a country they are able to demolish enemies. Sometimes the skins and meat hunted in the field provide great rescuing benefits. What is the value of causing one to refrain from killing beings?

Response: One gains a state wherein there is nothing one fears. One becomes peaceful, happy and free of dread. Because there has been no harm on my part towards others, others too harbor no harmfulness towards me. On account of this one is never frightened and has no fear. Although a man who likes to kill may rise to the highest position where he is a king among men, still, he is not at peace with himself. But if one is a man who upholds the precepts, he may travel by himself and roam about alone, having no fearsome difficulties.

Moreover, any being who possesses a life span does not enjoy encountering a person who takes pleasure in killing. If one dislikes killing, all beings happily rely on him. Again, when the life of a person who upholds the precepts is about to come to its end, his mind is peaceful, happy, devoid of doubts and free of regrets.

And whether he is reborn in the heavens or among men, he always gains a long life span. This constitutes a cause and condition for achievement of the Way.

When he finally achieves buddhahood, his life span during which he abides in the world is incalculable.

Additionally, a person who kills beings experiences all kinds of bitterness and pain in body and mind. A person who does not kill does not have these manifold difficulties. This constitutes a great benefit.

Furthermore, the practitioner reflects to himself, "I cherish my own life and am fond of this body. Others are like this as well. How are they any different from me? Therefore I should not kill any beings."

Moreover, if one is a killer of beings, he is denounced by good people and is hated by his enemies. Because he is responsible for taking the lives of others he is constantly afflicted with fearfulness and is detested by them.⁽⁹⁾ When he dies his mind is full of regrets and he is bound to fall into the hells or into the realm of animals. If he emerges from those realms his life span is bound to always be brief.

Then again, even if one were able to cause there to be no punishments in later lives, no denunciation by good people and no detestation by enemies, still one should not deliberately take another's life. Why? This is a thing which should not be done by those who are good. How much the more is this the case where in both worlds⁽¹⁰⁾ one encounters the resulting retribution arising from the baseness and evil of one's offenses.

Furthermore, killing constitutes the most serious of offenses. Why? When a person encounters a life-threatening situation, he will not be sparing of [even the

most] valuable treasures. He takes simply being able to survive as what is primary. This is analogous to the case of the merchant who went to sea to gather jewels.

When he had just about gotten back from the great sea his boat suddenly broke apart and the precious jewels were all lost. And yet, he was overjoyed and exultant, throwing up his hands and exclaiming, "I almost lost a great jewel!"

Everyone thought this strange and said, "You lost all your valuable possessions and escaped without even any clothes on your back. How can you joyfully exclaim, "I almost lost a great jewel!"

He replied by saying, "Among all the jewels, a person's life is foremost. It is for the sake of their lives that people seek wealth. It is not that they seek to live for the sake of wealth."

It is for this reason that the Buddha said that among the ten bad karmic actions, the offense of killing is listed first. It is also the first among the five precepts.

Even if a person cultivates all sorts of merit, if he still fails to uphold the precept against taking life, there is nothing to be gained from it. Why? Although one may be born into a place of blessings and nobility while also being possessed of strength and the power of an aristocratic background, if he still does not have a long life span, who is able to experiences this bliss?

For these reasons one knows that among all of the offenses the offense of killing is the most serious and among all of the meritorious practices, refraining from killing is foremost. In the world preserving one's life is the primary concern. How do we know this? Everyone in the world would agree to undergo the physical cruelty of corporal punishment, including even beating and flogging in order to spare their lives.

Then again, if the thought to take on the precepts arises in a person whereby he thinks, "From this very day on I shall not kill any beings," in doing this he has already contributed a gift to an incalculable number of beings of something which they prize as valuable. The merit which he gains thereby is also incalculable.

According to what the Buddha said, there are five great gifts. What are the five? The first is not killing beings. This is the greatest gift. Not stealing, not engaging in sexual misconduct, not lying and not drinking intoxicants are the others which are the same in this respect.

Additionally, the merit of practicing the samaadhi of loving-kindness is incalculable. Water and fire do not harm one. Knives and military weapons do not injure one. No matter what the evil poison, one is unable to be poisoned by it. These are the sorts of things which one gains from the five great gifts.

Moreover, of all who are honored throughout the three periods of time and ten directions, the Buddha is foremost. As told by the Buddha to the upasaka

Nandika, "There are ten punishments which accrue from killing beings. What are the ten?"

The first is that in life after life and without cease, one's mind always nurtures a poisonous disposition.

The second is that beings detest, regard as evil, and do not find any joy in seeing such a person.

The third is that one constantly cherishes malicious thoughts and constantly contemplates evil endeavors.

The fourth is that beings fear one in the same way as if they had encountered a snake or a tiger.

The fifth is that when sleeping one is frightened and on waking one is not at peace either.

The sixth is that one always has bad dreams.

The seventh is that when one's life comes to an end one experiences madness and fright and horror at death.

The eighth is that one plants the karmic causes and conditions for a short life.

The ninth is that when the body is destroyed and the life comes to an end one falls into niraya (the hells).

The tenth is that if one emerges and becomes a human again, one is bound to always have a short life.

Additionally, the practitioner thinks to himself, "All things possessed of life, including even the insects, cherish their own physical bodies. How could one, for the sake of clothing, drink and food or for the sake of one's own body, proceed to kill beings?"

Moreover, the practitioner should study the Dharma of the great men. Among all of the great men, the Buddha is the greatest. Why? He has perfected every wisdom and has brought the ten powers to complete fulfillment. He is able to cross beings over to liberation and he constantly practices loving-kindness and pity.

It was through upholding the precept against killing that he arrived at the achievement of buddhahood himself. He then also instructed his disciples to practice this loving-kindness and pity. Because the practitioner wishes to study the practices of the great men he too ought to refrain from killing.

[The Relative Value of One's Life and the Precepts]

Question: If it is not a case of my being attacked, then the thought of killing may be put to rest. If, however, one has been attacked, overcome by force, and is then being coerced by imminent peril, what should one do then?

Reply: One should weigh the relative gravity of the alternatives. If someone is about to take one's life, one should first consider whether the benefit from preserving the precept is more important or whether the benefit from preserving one's physical life is more important and whether breaking the precept constitutes a loss or whether physical demise constitutes a loss.

After having reflected in this manner one realizes that maintaining the precept is momentous and that preserving one's physical life is unimportant. If in avoiding peril one is able only to succeed in preserving one's body, then what advantage is gained with the body? This body is the swamp of senescence, disease and death.

It will inevitably deteriorate and decay. If, however, it is for the sake of upholding the precept that one loses one's body, the benefit of it is extremely consequential.

Furthermore, one should consider thus: "From the past on up to the present, I have lost my life an innumerable number of times. At times I have incarnated as a

malevolent brigand, as a bird, or as a beast where I have lived merely for the sake of wealth or profit or have engaged in all manner of unworthy pursuits. Now I have encountered a situation where it might be for the sake of preserving the precepts of purity. To not spare this body and to sacrifice my life to uphold the precepts would be a billion times better than and in fact incomparable to safeguarding my body at the expense of violating the prohibitions." In this manner one decides that one should forsake the body in order to protect the integrity of the pure precepts.

[The Butcher's Son and the Killing Precept]

For example, there once was a man who was a srotaÀpanna born into the family of a butcher. He was on the threshold of adulthood. Although he was expected to pursue his household occupation, he was unable to kill animals. His father and mother gave him a knife and a sheep and shut him up in a room, telling him, "If you do not kill the sheep, we will not allow you to come out and see the sun or the moon or to have the food and drink to survive."

The son thought to himself, "If I kill this sheep, then I will be compelled to pursue this occupation my entire life. How could I commit this great crime simply for

the sake of this body?" Then he took up the knife and killed himself. The father and mother opened the door to look. The sheep was standing to one side whereas the son was laying there, already deceased.

At that time, when he killed himself, he was reborn in the heavens. If one is like this, then this amounts to not sparing [even one's own] life in safeguarding the integrity of the pure precepts. Ideas such as these constitute what is meant by the precept against killing.

[The Precept Against Stealing]

As for taking what is not given, if one knows it is a thing belonging to another, if one brings forth a thought intent on stealing, if one takes the thing away from its original location, and if the thing is then considered to be mine, this constitutes what is meant by stealing. If one does not do this then this constitutes not stealing. The other associated factors from planning the act up to and including grasping it with the hand when it has not yet left the ground,-- these constitute dharmas auxiliary to stealing.

Valuable objects are of two types: those which belong to someone else and those which do not belong to someone else. If one takes a thing which belongs to

someone else, this constitutes the offense of stealing.

Things which belong to someone else are also of two kinds: those which are within the boundaries of a village and those which are on vacant land. If one's taking of things from either of these places is accompanied by a mind intent on stealing, then one incurs the offense of stealing. If the object is on vacant land, then one should consider critically and come to an understanding as to whose kingdom this object might be in close proximity to and as to whether or not it has an owner and thus should not be taken. When one is in accord with the Vinaya discussions of the different situations wherein an action does not constitute stealing, then this is the mark of not stealing.

Question: What are the benefits of not stealing?

Response: There are two parts to a person's life, that which is in relation to oneself (lit. "internal") and that which is in relation to others (lit. "external"). If one steals valuable objects this constitutes the stealing of [the bases] of someone else's life. How is this so? Life depends upon drink, food, clothing, bedding and other things for its survival. If one robs or if one steals, this amounts to the stealing of someone else's life. This is as described in a verse:

Each and every one of all the beings

Depends upon food in order to continue living.

Whether one takes by stealing or by robbing,

This amounts to the robbing or stealing of a life.

On account of this fact a wise person should not rob or steal.

Moreover, one ought to consider to himself, "If one robs or steals and thereby comes by things which he bestows upon himself, even though his body may be liberally provided for, he will still come upon that time when he too will die. On dying, he will enter the hells. Then, although his family will all be experiencing bliss, he will still have to undergo punishment by himself and be ensconced in a situation from which he cannot be rescued." Having contemplated in this fashion, one should then refrain from stealing.

Additionally, this taking what is not given falls into two categories: The first consists of [surreptitious] stealing. The second is [forcible] plunder. They are both collectively referred to as taking what is not given. Within the sphere of taking what is not given, robbery is the most serious. Why? All people use their wealth to keep themselves alive and so if one perhaps bores a hole in a wall and commits robbery, this constitutes the most impure sort of conduct. Why? One has no

power in such a situation to prevent a person's experiencing the terror of being killed.

Because one takes things through robbery, in the sphere of forceful

plunder, robbery constitutes a serious offense. This is as set forth in a verse:

Hungry and starving, one's body emaciated and thin,

One undergoes punishment in great suffering which is intense.

As for the belongings of others, they cannot be touched.

It is just as if they were a great bonfire.

If one seizes through theft the possessions of others,

Their owners weep and are distressed and afflicted.

Even if one were the king of the gods or someone similar,

One would still perceive this as amounting to suffering.

Although anyone who kills does commit a serious offense, still, he is acting as a thief to the victim of the killing. A person who steals is a thief to all men who have material possessions. If one transgresses against other precepts, in other countries there are those who do not take that to constitute an offense. However, if one is person who steals, there is no country which does not take action against the offense.

Question: As for people who steal, there are people in the present era who praise them and see their boldness as admirable. Why not engage in this sort of thievery then?

Response: If one takes something which has not been given, this is the mark of being bad. Although there are lesser infractions within the realm of stealing, they are all bad. This is comparable to mixing poison into fine food or mixing poison into bad food. Although there are distinctions between fine and poor fare, still, in the sense that they have both been mixed with poison, they are no different.

This is also like stepping into fire when it is light out and when it is dark. Although there is the difference of day as opposed to night, they are the same as regards the burning of one's feet. The foolish people of the present age are not aware of the resultant retribution from offenses and merit as it occurs in the two periods of time. Devoid of thoughts of humanity and loving-kindness, they observe that a man is able to use his strength to invade and take another's wealth by

force and then praise it as being a measure of his strength. The buddhas, worthies and aryas maintain loving-kindness and pity for all. They have completely understood that there is no deterioration in the coming of disasters and misfortunes [which manifest as retribution] in the three periods of time. And so this is an activity which they do not praise. For this reason one should know that all offenses involving forceful theft are not good. It is an activity not done by any practitioner who is a good person.

As described by the Buddha, taking what is not given has ten associated punishments.

The first is that owner always hates [the thief].

The second is that [one's character] is repeatedly called into doubt. (The notes in red state: "With repeated offenses, people harbor doubts.")(11)

The third is that when one is not engaged in the act unforeseen events occur.

The fourth is that one befriends and associates with evil men and departs far from those who are worthy and good.

The fifth is that one destroys one's wholesome qualities.

The sixth is that one becomes known as a criminal by the authorities.

The seventh is that one's valuables are confiscated.

The eighth is that one plants the karmic causes and conditions for being poor and destitute.

The ninth is that when one dies he enters the hells.

The tenth is that if one emerges and becomes a person again he undergoes intense bitterness in the quest for wealth. It disappears in five ways: either to the King, to thieves, to fire, to water or to unloving sons. Even if one hides it away or buries it, it is still bound to be lost.

[The Precept Against Sexual Misconduct]

As for the precept against sexual misconduct, if the female is under the protection of the father, the mother, the elder or younger brother, the elder or younger sister, the husband as head of family, a son, the law of the world, or the law of a king, if one violates her, this constitutes sexual misconduct.

Sometimes there are those who, although they are not "under protection" in this sense, are nonetheless under the protection of the Dharma. How is it that one is under the protection of the Dharma? This refers to all women who have left the home life and to those who are householders but who have taken the "one day" precept. This is referred to as being under the protection of the Dharma. If one uses force, or if one uses money, or if one engages in deceptive seduction, or if one has a wife who has taken the precept, who is pregnant or who is nursing an infant, or if one engages in sexual activity involving an inappropriate orifice,-- if one transgresses in such ways, this constitutes sexual misconduct. All sorts of situations like these even extending to the giving of a flower garland to a courtesan as an indication of intent,-- if one transgresses in such ways, this constitutes sexual misconduct. If in all sorts of situations such as this one refrains from taking such actions, this qualifies as not engaging in sexual misconduct.

Question: When [the woman] is under the protection of a man one engenders the man's hatred. When she is under the protection of the Dharma one violates the Dharma. In these cases it should qualify as sexual misconduct. However, when it involves a man's own wife, how can it constitute misconduct?

Response: Since one has given permission for the taking of the one day precept one has fallen into the jurisdiction of the Dharma. Although originally she is the wife, now one is no longer free [to dictate events]. If the time has already passed when that precept was in force, then that case does not qualify as being under the

protection of the Dharma.

There are cases where the wife is pregnant and because the body is heavy, there is aversion for what was originally practiced. Moreover it can be injurious to the pregnancy. If during the time of nursing an infant one engages in sexual relations with its mother, the milk may dry up. Moreover if the mind becomes attached to sexual desire then there may not be continued protective regard for the infant. If one uses a place which is not the appropriate orifice, then that is not the female organ and the mind of the woman is not pleased. If one uses one's power to bring about something contrary to principal that qualifies therefore as sexual misconduct. If one does not engage in such things this constitutes not engaging in sexual misconduct.

Question: If the husband does not know, does not observe it and is not afflicted by it, what offense does the other party incur?

Response: It is on account of one's engaging in misconduct that it is then referred to as misconduct. This is a case of doing what is incorrect. Therefore there exists an offense. Moreover, there are all sorts of transgressions inherent in this. The feelings existing between husband and wife are such that although they are of different bodies they are the same in substance. If one steals the object of another person's love and destroys her original thoughts [of affection for him] one

qualifies thereby as a thief. And so one commits yet another serious offense. One gains a bad name and ugly reputation. One is detested by others and experiences diminished happiness and increased fearfulness. One may live in fear of brutal punishment. Additionally, one is fearful that the husband and other people will find out about it. Hence one is much involved in maintaining lies. It is an activity which is denounced by the Àryas. It involves offenses within offenses. (The notes in red state: "Regarding this offense of lust, because during sexual misconduct one breaks [other] precepts it refers to 'offenses within offenses.'")(12)

Furthermore, the sexually dissolute person ought to consider to himself, "My wife and his wife are both women. In terms of bone and flesh and demeanor, that one and this one are no different. And so why do I perversely bring forth these deluded thoughts and pursue such incorrect intentions?" A person who engages in sexual misconduct destroys and loses [any] happiness in both this life and later lives. (A fine name, a reputation for goodness, and peace and happiness of body and mind are gained in the present lifetime. The benefits of being reborn in the heavens, gaining the Way and reaching nirvana are realized in later lives.)

Then again, one should turn one's situation around and change places as a means of controlling one's mind, considering, "If he were to violate my wife I would be enraged. If I were to violate his, how would he be any different?" Having controlled oneself through such self-sympathy one ought then to be able to refrain from committing such acts.

What's more, as the Buddha said, a person who engages in sexual misconduct later falls into the hell of sword trees where manifold sufferings are experienced in abundance. When one succeeds in emerging and becoming a human, one's family life is not harmonious. One always meets up with a licentious wife who is devious and remote and ruthlessly cruel.

Sexual misconduct is a calamity analogous to a venomous snake or a great fire which, should one fail to immediately avoid it, entails the encroachment of disastrous harm. As stated by the Buddha, sexual misconduct has ten punishments:

The first is that the husband of one's sexual conquest is constantly bent on destroying him.

The second is that the husband and wife are not harmonious and are constantly engaged in mutual strife.

The third is that bad dharmas proliferate with each passing day while good dharmas diminish with each passing day.

The fourth is that one does not see to the protection of one's own body while also widowing and orphaning one's wife and children.

The fifth is that one's wealth and business deteriorate daily.

The sixth is that there are all manner of unfortunate situations and one is constantly doubted by others.

The seventh is that one's relatives and friends do not feel affection or fondness for him.

The eighth is that one plants the karmic causes and conditions for having enemies.

The ninth is that when one's body is destroyed and one's life comes to an end, one dies and enters the hells.

The tenth is that if one emerges and becomes a woman, many men simultaneously engage in the acts of a husband. If one becomes a man, one's wife is not chaste.

If one refrains from all such causes and conditions as these then this qualifies as not engaging in sexual misconduct.

[The Precept Against False Speech]

As for false speech, if there is a thought which is not pure, if one wishes to deceive another, if one hides the truth, and if one speaks forth words which differ from the truth, one generates the karma of the mouth. This constitutes "false speech." The offense of false speech arises from the sound of the words and mutual understanding. If there is no understanding, then although they are untrue words, there is no offense of false speech. As for this false speech, if one does know yet says that one does not know, if one does not know yet says that one does know, if one has seen yet says that one has not seen, has not seen yet says that one has seen, has heard yet says that one has not heard, or has not heard yet says that one has heard, this constitutes false speech. If one has not done this then this qualifies as not committing false speech.

Question: What are the disadvantages (lit. "punishments") associated with false speech.

Response: The person who commits false speech first deceives himself and later deceives others. He takes that which is real as false and that which is false as real. He turns false and real upside down and does not accept good dharmas. He is comparable to an inverted vase into which water cannot flow. The mind of a person who commits false speech is devoid of a sense of shame or a sense of blame. He blocks off the way of heaven and the door to nirvana. One contemplates and realizes the existence of these disadvantages and therefore does not engage in it. Additionally, one contemplates and realizes that the benefits of true speech

are extremely vast. The benefits of true speech naturally come forth from oneself and are extremely easily gained. This is the power of all who have left the home life. Both householders and those who have left the home life possess the benefits of this sort of merit. It is the mark of a good person. Moreover, the mind of a person whose words are true is correct and straight. Because his mind is correct and straight it is easy for him to succeed in avoiding suffering. It is just as when pulling forth logs from a dense forest. The straight ones come forth easily.

Question: If false speech entails disadvantages such as these, why do people engage in false speech?

Response: There are those who are foolish and deficient in wisdom who, when they encounter anguishing difficulties, tell lies seeking to escape them. They do not recognize the manner in which matters unfold. When they commit a transgression in this present life they do not realize that in a later life there will be an immense retribution resulting from that transgression.

Then again, there are people who, although they are aware of the fact that false speech entails a transgression, nonetheless engage in the telling of lies due to an abundance of greed, hatred or delusion.

[Kokaalika's Slanderous Offense]

Additionally, there are people who, although they are not afflicted with greed or hatred, nonetheless falsely testify to another man's transgression because in their own minds they are of the opinion that this is truly the case. When they die they fall into the hells in the same manner as did Kokaalika, a disciple of Devadatta.

He constantly sought to find fault with Shaariputra and Maudgalyaayana. At that time the two men had just come to the end of the summer retreat . They proceeded to travel about and journey to the various states. Having encountered a great rain storm, they arrived at the home of a potter where they spent the night in a building full of pots.

Before they arrived, unbeknownst to these two, a woman had already gone in and fallen asleep in a darkened part of the building. That night this woman had an orgasm in her dreams. In the early morning she went to get water with which to bathe. At this time Kokaalika happened to be walking by and took notice of her.

Kokaalika possessed the ability to know about a person's sex life by observing the countenance. However, he couldn't deduce whether [sexual activity] had taken place in a dream state or while awake.

At this time Kokaalika told a disciple, "This woman had sex with someone last night."

Then he asked the woman, "Where did you spend the night?"

She replied, "I spent the night in the pottery building."

Next, he asked, "Together with whom?"

She replied, "With two bhik.sus." At this time the two men came out from within the building. After Kokaalika had noticed them he examined their countenances and became convinced in his own mind that the two men were definitely not pure. He had formerly nurtured jealousy with respect to them. Since he had observed this situation he then spread it all about in all of the cities, villages and hamlets. Next, he went to the Jeta grove where he loudly proclaimed this evil news.

At this time Brahmaa, the king of the gods, had come desiring to have an audience with the Buddha. The Buddha had entered into a silent room where he was very still, immersed in samaadhi. All of the bhik.sus too had each closed their doors and entered into samaadhi. None of them could be roused. Then he thought to himself, "I originally came to see the Buddha. The Buddha has entered samaadhi." And so he was about to return when he had another thought, "It won't be long before the Buddha arises from absorption. I'll wait here a little while." He then went to the entrance to Kokaalika's room, knocked on the door and called out, "Kokaalika, Kokaalika. The minds of Shaariputra and Maudgalyaayana are pure and pliant. Don't slander them or you will spend the long night [of future lifetimes] undergoing suffering."

Kokaalika asked, "Who are you?"

He replied, "I am Brahmaa, the king of the gods."

He asked, "The Buddha has said that you have realized the way of the anaagaamin.(13)Why then have you come back here?"

Brahmaa, the king of the gods, thought and then uttered a verse, saying:

If one wishes to measure an immeasurable dharma,

One shouldn't seize on appearances.

If one wishes thereby to measure an immeasurable dharma,

Such a boor is bound to capsize and drown.

After he had spoke this verse he went to where the Buddha was and set forth the matter in full. The Buddha said, "Good indeed. Good indeed. Proclaim this verse straightaway." At that time the World Honored One repeated the verse:

If one wishes to measure an immeasurable dharma,

One shouldn't seize on appearances.

If one wishes thereby to measure an immeasurable dharma,

Such a boor is bound to capsize and drown.

After Brahmaa, the king of the gods, had heard the Buddha proclaim this he suddenly disappeared and immediately returned to the heavens.

At that time Kokaalika went to where the Buddha was, prostrated in reverence before the Buddha, and then stood off to one side. The Buddha told Kokaalika, "The minds of Shaariputra and Maudgalyaayana are pure and pliant. Do not slander them or you will spend the long night [of future lifetimes] undergoing suffering."

Kokaalika addressed the Buddha, saying, "I don't dare disbelieve the words of the Buddha. However, I saw this clearly with my own eyes. I know definitely that these two men have actually committed impure acts."

The Buddha rebuked him three times in this way and Kokaalika for his part three times declined to accept it. He then got up from his place and left. He returned

to his room. His entire body broke out in sores. At first they were the size of sesame seeds. Gradually they became as big as beans, as big as dates, as big as mangoes, and finally as big as melons. Then they all simultaneously broke open leaving him looking as if he had been burned by a great fire. He wailed and wept. Then, that night, he died and entered the great lotus blossom hells. A Brahma heaven god came and informed the Buddha, "Kokaalika has already died."

Another Brahma heaven god said, "He has fallen into the great lotus blossom hells." After that night had passed the Buddha ordered the Sangha to assemble and asked, "Do you all wish to hear about the length of life endured in the hell into which Kokaalika has fallen?"

The Bhikshus replied, "We would be pleased to hear of it."

The Buddha said, "It is as if there were sixty bushels of sesame seeds and a man came along every hundred years and took away a single sesame seed. If this went on until all of the sesame seeds were gone the lifespan endured in the arbuda hells would still not have come to an end. Twenty arbuda hell lifespans equal the lifespan in the nirarbuda hells. Twenty nirarbuda hell lifespans equal the lifespan in the a.ta.ta hells. Twenty a.ta.ta hell lifespans equal the lifespan in the hahava hells. Twenty hahava hell lifespans equal the lifespan in the huhuva hells. Twenty huhuva hell lifespans equal the lifespan in the utpala hells.

Twenty utpala hell lifespans equal the lifespan in the puîàarÆka hells. Twenty puîàarÆka hell lifespans equal the lifespan in the mahaapadma hells.

Kokaalika has fallen into these mahaapadma hells. His tongue is drawn forth and nailed down with a hundred nails where it is plowed by five hundred plows."

At that time the World Honored One set forth this verse, saying:

When the person is born here,

Hatchets are buried in one's mouth.

The basis for the body's being chopped

Comes forth from his evil words.

That which should be criticized, one nonetheless praises.

That which should be praised, one nonetheless criticizes.

The mouth assembles all manner of evil.

In the end one does not experience bliss.

The actions of the mind and mouth generate evil.

One falls into the nirarbuda hells.

For fully one hundred thousand lives

One endures all manner of intense suffering pain.

If one is born into the arbuda hells,

One endures fully thirty-six

And an additional five lives.

In them all one experiences all manner of anguished bitterness.

The mind depends upon erroneous views,

and speaks in a way that destroys the worthies and aryas.

This is like the bamboo which in putting forth fruit

Brings its own form to destruction.

In ways such as this the mind generates doubts and slanders. Once they manifest in definite form they constitute false speech. A person who courses in false speech doesn't believe or accept even the words of the Buddha. He undergoes punishment such as this. For these reasons one should not engage in false speech.

[Raahula Learns the Disadvantages of False Speech]

Then again, a case in point is that of the Buddha's son Raahula who, being but a child in years, had not yet understood the importance of taking care with his words. When people would come and ask him, "Is the World Honored One here or not?" he would deceive them by saying, "He's not here." If in fact he was not present, when others would ask Raahula, "Is the World Honored One here or not?" he would deceive them by saying, "The Buddha is here."

Someone told the Buddha of this. The Buddha then told Raahula, "Get a wash basin, fill it with water and wash my feet for me." After his feet had been washed he instructed Raahula, "Cover this wash basin." Then, obeying the command, he immediately covered it." The Buddha then said, "Take water and pour it in." After it had been poured, he asked, "Did the water go in or not?"

He replied, "It did not go in."

The Buddha told Raahula, "The lies of a person who has no sense of shame or blame cover over his mind so that, in just the same manner, the Dharma of the Way does not enter into it."

As stated by the Buddha, false speech has ten retributions. What are the ten?

The first is that the breath always smells bad.

The second is that the good spirits depart far from him while the non-humans get their way with him.

The third is that although he may have instances in which he speaks the truth, people nonetheless do not believe or accept it.

The fourth is that he can never take part in discussions with those who are wise.

The fifth is that he is always slandered and his ugly and foul reputation is heard throughout the land.

The sixth is that he is not respected by others. Although he may issue instructions and orders, people do not accept or follow them.

The seventh is that he is always afflicted with much worry.

The eighth is that he plants the karmic causes and conditions for being slandered.

The ninth is that when his body deteriorates and his life comes to an end he will fall into the hells.

The tenth is that if he emerges and becomes a person, he is always slandered.

If one does not engage in actions as these this qualifies as not committing false speech.

This is what is meant by the moral regulation regarding goodness associated with the mouth.

[The Precept Against Consuming Intoxicants]

As for not drinking alcoholic beverages, alcoholic beverages are of three kinds: the first is alcohol made from grain. The second is alcohol made from fruit. the third is alcohol made from herbs. As for alcohol made from fruit, it includes grapes and the fruit of the ari.s.taka tree. All sorts of others such as these are known as alcohol from fruit. As for alcohol from herbs, this refers to all manner of herbs which, when combined with rice or wheat and sugar cane juice, can turn into alcohol. This includes also alcohol from the milk of hooved animals. One can produce alcohol from any fermented milk. To summarize, whether it is dry or wet or clear or turbid, all such things as these which are able to influence a person's mind to move or backslide are referred to as alcoholic beverages. One should not drink any of them. This is what is meant by not drinking alcoholic beverages.

Question: Alcohol is able to dispel coldness, benefit the body and cause the mind to be delighted. Why should one refrain from drinking it?

Response: The benefits to the body are extremely minor. The harmful aspects are extremely numerous. Therefore, one should not drink it. It is analogous to a marvelous beverage into which one has mixed poison. What kinds of poison? As told by the Buddha to the upaasaka Nandika, alcohol has thirty-five faults.

What are the thirty-five?

- 1) Valuables owned in the present life are exhausted.
- 2) It is the entryway for the manifold diseases.
- 3) It is the basis for strife.
- 4) One's nakedness is shamelessly exposed.
- 5) One has an ugly name and bad reputation and is not respected by others.
- 6) It obscures and submerges one's wisdom.
- 7) Those things which one ought to obtain are nonetheless not obtained whereas that which one has already obtained is nonetheless scattered and lost.
- 8) Matters which should remain secret are told in their entirety to other people.
- 9) All sorts of endeavors deteriorate and are not brought to completion.
- 10) Intoxication is the root of worry. How so? When one is inebriated, much is lost. After one returns to a condition of mental clarity one feels shame and blame and abides in a state of worry.

11) The strength of the body decreases.

12) The appearance of the body deteriorates.

13) One does not know to respect one's father.

14) One does not know to respect one's mother.

15) One does not respect Shramanas.

16) One does not respect brahmins.

17) One does not respect one's uncles or venerable elders. Why is this? One is so stupefied by drunkenness as to fail to make any such distinctions.

18) One does not honor or respect the Buddha.

19) One does not respect the Dharma.

20) One does not respect the Sangha.

21) One befriends and associates with bad people.

22) One remains distant from the worthy and the good.

23) One becomes a breaker of the precepts.

24) One is devoid of a sense of shame or a sense of blame.

25) One does not guard the six sense faculties.

26) One falls away into sexual profligacy.

27) One is detested and abhorred by others. They find no delight in seeing one.

28) One is abandoned and rejected by all of one's highly-valued relatives and friends.

29) One engages in dharmas which are not good.

30) One relinquishes good dharmas.

31) One is not trusted or employed by intelligent people or wise personages. Why?

Because, through intoxication, one has become retrograde.

32) One departs far from nirvana.

33) One plants the causes and conditions for becoming crazy and stupid.

34) When the body deteriorates and the life comes to an end, one falls into the wretched destinies into niraya.(14)

35) If one succeeds in becoming human again, wherever one is reborn one is crazy and stupid.

On account of all sorts of faults such as these one should abstain from drinking. This is exemplified by a verse which states:

Through drinking one loses the quality of awareness.

One's physical appearance becomes murky and detestable.

The mind of wisdom is shaken and confused.

Having been shamed and blamed one is then robbed.

One loses mindfulness and increases hateful thoughts.

One loses happiness and damages the clan.

Being like this, although it is referred to as drinking,

It is actually just drinking deadly poison.

Where one should not be hateful one is nonetheless hateful.

Where one should not laugh, one nonetheless laughs.

Where one should not cry, one nonetheless cries.

Where one should not inflict blows, one nonetheless inflicts blows.

What one should not say, one nonetheless says.

One is no different from a crazy person.

All of one's good qualities are stolen away.

One who knows a sense of shame does not drink.

Abstention in this manner from four categories of offense constitutes accordance with the moral regulations related to goodness associated with the body. When one abstains from false speech, this constitutes accordance with the moral regulation related to goodness associated with the mouth. They are collectively referred to as the moral regulations of the upasaka's five precepts.

Question: If it is the case that eight moral regulations and pure livelihood collectively constitute the precepts, why is there no mention for the upasaka of either the other three moral regulations associated with the mouth or of pure livelihood?

Response: The white-robed householders accept the pleasures of the world while also concurrently cultivating merit. They are unable to fully practice the

Dharma of the precepts. Therefore the Buddha ordered that they uphold the five precepts. Moreover, within the four moral regulations associated with mouth karma, false speech is the most serious. Additionally, with false speech, the thought arises and then one deliberately engages in it. As for the others, perhaps one deliberately engages in them or perhaps one does not deliberately engage in them. Then again, when one only mentions false speech, one already subsumes therein the other three matters. Moreover, within all of the good dharmas, truth is of the greatest. If one speaks true words, the four kinds of right speech are all entirely subsumed and realized. Additionally, the white-robed layperson abides in the world where he assumes the role of overseeing and management. He takes responsibility for the family business and issues orders. Hence it is difficult to uphold the dharma which requires not engaging in harsh speech. False speech is a thing which is intentionally done. Because it is a serious matter one should not engage in it.

There are five degrees of acceptance of the five precepts which determine the five kinds of upaasaka. The first is the single-practice upaasaka. The second is the lesser-practice upaasaka. The third is the greater-practice upaasaka. The fourth is the full-practice upaasaka. The fifth is the celibate upaasaka. As for the first, the single-practice upaasaka, it refers to taking on one precept from among the five precepts while being unable to take on and uphold the other four precepts. As for the lesser-practice upaasaka, it refers to taking on two or three precepts. The greater-practice upaasaka refers to taking on four precepts.

The full-practice upaasaka refers to completely upholding the five precepts. As for the celibate upaasaka, after taking on the five precepts, in the presence of his [spiritual] teacher, he additionally makes a vow for himself, saying, "I will no longer engage in sexual activity even with my own wife. This is what is meant by the five precepts. They are as set forth by the Buddha in verse:

One does not kill and does not steal,

Nor does one engage in sexual misconduct.

One maintains true speech and does not drink alcohol.

One upholds right livelihood and thereby purifies his mind.

If there is one who is able to carry this out,

In the two periods of time, worry and fear will be gotten rid of.

The merit of the precepts will constantly follow along with him.

And he will always be together with gods and men.

In the six-seasoned flower of the worldly existence,

Glory and physical form bloom together.

One can find that this single flower of years,

Is contained in one day in the heavens.(15)

The heavenly trees spontaneously produce

Flower garlands and necklaces.

The red flowers there are luminous like a lamp.

The many colors are interspersed among each other.

The heavenly apparel of incalculable varieties

Possesses hues of so many sorts,

Displays a fresh whiteness reflecting the heavenly sun,

And is light, closely-woven and free of wrinkles.

The golden light is reflected in embroidered patterns.

The graceful patterns of color are like the airy formations of clouds.

The supreme and marvelous apparel like this

All comes forth from heavenly trees.

There are bright jewels and celestial earrings,

And precious bracelets brighten the hands and feet.

Whatever the mind finds delightful

Also comes forth from the heavenly trees.

There are flowers of gold with stems of vai.duurya

With vajra making up the floral stamens and pistils.

They are soft and pliant with a fragrance which pervades.

They all come forth from pools of jewels.

The guitar, bass, harp and lute (16)

Are inlaid with ornaments of the seven precious things.

The instruments are marvelous, the ancient sounds are clear.

All of these also come forth from the trees.

The paarijaataka tree

Is the king of trees in the heavens.

They grow in the gardens of delight.

And are unmatched by any others.

Upholding the precepts is the tilling of the fields.

The heavenly trees come forth therefrom.

The sweet dew flavor of the celestial kitchens:

Its drink and food dispel hunger and thirst.

The heavenly maidens have no interference from guardians,

Nor do they have the difficulty of a body which becomes pregnant.

One can play and relax and indulge without restraint in the pleasures.

Eating is free of the troubles of elimination.

If one upholds the precepts and constantly restrains the mind,

One succeeds in being born in a land where one may indulge.

There are no tasks to be done and there are no difficulties.

And one always fulfils aspirations to enjoy one's pleasures.

All of the gods achieve sovereign independence.

Distress and suffering no longer arise.

Whatever one desires comes in response to one's thoughts.

The light from one's body illuminates any darkness.

All sorts of such pleasures as these

All come from giving and the observance of precepts.

If one wishes to gain this reward,

One ought to be diligent and exhort oneself.

Question: Now we are discussing the shiila paaramitaa. It should be for the purpose of realizing buddhahood. Why is there now this praising of the merits of the heavens?

Response: The Buddha said that there are three things which will certainly be gained and for which the result which comes as a reward is not false: If one gives, one gains great fortune. If one upholds the precepts, one will be reborn in a fine place. If one cultivates the absorptions, one will gain liberation. If one solely practices shiila, one will succeed in being born in a fine place. If one carries forward the combined practice of the absorptions, wisdom, loving-kindness and compassion one gains the way of the Three Vehicles.

Now we are solely praising the upholding of precepts. This brings meritorious qualities, fame, peace and bliss in the present life and in later lives one gains rewards such as were praised in the verse. This is analogous to smearing honey on bitter medicine for a small child so that afterwards he is able to swallow it.

Now we first praise the merit from the precepts so that afterwards a person is able to uphold the precepts. After one has been able to uphold the precepts he makes the great vow to succeed in arriving at the Buddha Way. This amounts to shiila producing shiila paaramitaa.

Also, because all people are attached to bliss and because among all of the world's blisses, those in the heavens are the best, if they hear of all of the various sorts of pleasure and happiness in the heavens, they will then be able to take on the practice of shiila. Later, when they have heard of the impermanence of the heavens, thoughts of aversion and abhorrence will develop and they will be able to seek liberation. When they additionally hear of the incalculable meritorious

qualities of the Buddha, it may be that thoughts of loving-kindness and compassion arise whereby they may rely upon shiila paaramitaa to succeed in arriving at the Buddha Way. On account of this, although we speak of the rewards associated with shiila, there is no fault in it.

Question: Only these five precepts have been mentioned for the white-robed householder. Are there other dharmas in addition to these?

Response: There are also the one-day precepts and the six days of abstinence for which the merit from observance is incalculable. If one is able to observe these precepts from the first through the fifteenth of the twelfth month, his merit will be extremely great.

Question: How does one go about taking the one-day precepts?

Response: The dharma for accepting the one-day precepts entails kneeling in an upright posture with the palms joined, whereupon one should make a statement such as this: "I, so-and-so, now, for one day and one night take refuge in the Buddha, take refuge in the Dharma and take refuge in the Sangha." One proceeds in this manner, proclaiming the taking of refuge for a second and a third time.

[Next, one proclaims], "I, so-and-so, have now taken refuge in the Buddha. I have now taken refuge in the Dharma. I have now taken refuge in the Sangha." One

proceeds in this manner, declaring the completion of the refuges for a second and a third time.

[Next, one proclaims], "I, so-and-so, whether it be bad karma of the body, bad karma of the mouth or bad karma of the mind, whether it be on account of greed, on account of hatred or on account of stupidity, and whether it be that I have offenses such as these in the present life or in former lives, today, with a sincere mind, I repent of them to achieve purity of the body, purity of the mouth and purity of the mind." If one accepts and practices the eight precepts then this is the upavaasa. (In the language of Ch'in, this means "dwelling together.")

[Next, one proclaims], "Just as the buddhas, for the remainder of their entire lives did not kill beings, in the same manner, I, so-and-so, for one day and one night will not kill beings. Just as the buddhas for the remainder of their entire lives did not steal, in the same manner, I, so-and-so, for one day and one night will not steal. Just as the buddhas for the remainder of their entire lives did not engage in sexual activity, in the same manner, I, so-and-so, for one day and one night will not engage in sexual activity. Just as the buddhas for the remainder of their entire lives did commit false speech, in the same manner, I, so-and-so, for one day and one night will not commit false speech. Just as the buddhas for the remainder of their entire lives did not drink intoxicants, in the same manner, I, so-and-so, for one day and one night will not drink intoxicants. Just as the buddhas for the remainder of their entire lives did not sit on a high or grand couch, in the same

manner, I, so-and-so, for one day and one night will not sit on a high or grand couch. Just as the buddhas for the rest of their entire lives did not wear flowers or necklaces and did not perfume their bodies and did not perfume their robes, in the same manner, I, so-and-so, for one day and one night will not wear flowers or necklaces and will not perfume my body or my robes. Just as the buddhas for the remainder of their entire lives did not themselves sing or dance or make music and did not go to watch or listen to it, in the same manner, I, so-and-so, for one day and one night will not myself sing or dance or make music or go and observe or listen to it."

At this point one has already taken the eight precepts. [Then one continues by proclaiming], "Just as the buddhas for the remainder of their entire lives did not eat past midday, in the same manner, I, so-and-so, for one day and one night will not eat past midday. I, so-and-so, accept and practice the eight precepts and pursue the study of the Dharma of the Buddhas. This constitutes the upavaasa. I pray that I will be able to maintain the meritorious retribution of this upavaasa and so pray that in life after life I will not fall into the three wretched destinies or experience the eight difficulties. I do not seek the pleasures of a wheel-turning sage king, of Brahmaa or Shakra devendra, the kings of the gods, or of worldly existence. I pray that I will be able to bring an end to all afflictions and succeed in gaining sarvaj~naana and in perfecting the Buddha Way.

Question: How does one take the five precepts?

Response: The dharma for accepting the five precepts is as follows: One kneels upright, places the palms together and proclaims, "I, so-and-so, take refuge in the Buddha, take refuge in the Dharma, and take refuge in the Sangha." One proceeds in this fashion for a second and a third time. [Next, one proclaims], "I, so-and-so, have now taken refuge in the Buddha. I have now taken refuge in the Dharma. I have now taken refuge in the Sangha." One proceeds in this fashion for a second and a third time [and then states], "I am an upaasaka [disciple] of Shakyamuni Buddha. [Pray], certify and be aware that I, so-and-so, from this day, and proceeding for the remainder of this life, take the refuges."

The precept master then says, "You, upaasaka, hear me: This Tathaagatha, Arhan, Samyaaksambuddha is a man of knowledge and a man of vision. He proclaimed the five precepts for the upaasaka in this same manner. They are to be upheld by you for the rest of your life. What are the five? They are: To not kill beings for the rest of one's life is an upaasaka precept. Herein, for the rest of one's life, one must not deliberately kill beings. If you are able to carry out this matter then you should say, 'I promise.' To not steal for the rest of one's life is an upaasaka precept. Herein, for the rest of one's life, one must not steal. If you are able to carry out this matter then you should say, 'I promise.' To not engage in sexual misconduct for the rest of your life is an upaasaka precept. Herein, for the rest of your life, you must not engage in sexual misconduct. If you are able to carry out this matter then you should say, 'I promise.' To not

engage in false speech for the rest of one's life is an upaasaka precept. Herein, for the rest of one's life, one must not engage in false speech. If you are able to carry out this matter then you should say, 'I promise.' To not drink intoxicants for the rest of one's life is an upaasaka precept. Herein, for the rest of one's life, one must not drink intoxicants. If you are able to carry out this matter then you should say, 'I promise.' These five precepts of the upaasaka are to be accepted and upheld for the remainder of one's life. One should make offerings to the Triple Jewel, the Buddha Jewel, the Dharma Jewel and the Bhik.suSangha Jewel. One should diligently cultivate meritorious karma and thereby come forth into the Buddha Way."

Question: Why is it that on the six days of abstinence one takes the eight precepts and cultivates merit.

Response: On these days evil ghosts pursue people desiring to forcibly take their lives. [They bring] acute illnesses, calamity and ruination and so cause people misfortune. Therefore the sages at the beginning of the kalpa instructed people to observe days of abstinence, cultivate good and do meritorious deeds to thereby avoid calamity and ruination. At this time the abstinence dharma did not involve taking the eight precepts. It only took going one day without food as constituting abstinence. Later, when the Buddha came forth into the world, he instructed people, saying, "In the manner of the Buddha, you should uphold the eight precepts

for one day and one night while also refraining from eating after midday. This merit will take a person forth to nirvana."

According to what the Buddha said in the Sutra of the Four Heavenly Kings, on these six monthly abstinence days the retainers, princes and the four heavenly kings themselves descend, observe and investigate the status of beings' giving, maintenance of the precepts and filial piety towards their fathers and mothers. In an instance where it is deficient, they then ascend to the Traayastri.msha heaven and inform Shakra of this. Shakra and the other gods are all displeased and say, "The clan of the asuras is on the increase and the clan of the gods is diminishing." If it is the case that the giving, maintenance of precepts and filial piety towards fathers and mothers is greater, then the gods and Shakra are all delighted and proclaim, "There is increase in the company of the gods and a decrease among the asuras. At such a time, Shakradevendra observed the delight among the gods and uttered a verse, saying:

If, during the six days and the months of spiritual transformations(17)

One upholds the pure precepts,

After this person's life has come to an end

His merit will certainly be comparable to mine.

The Buddha told the bhik.sus, "Shakradevendra should not have uttered a verse such as this. Why? Shakradevendra has not yet gotten rid of the five marks of deterioration(18)or the three poisons. How could he falsely state, 'If there is one who upholds the one-day precepts he will certainly gain a meritorious reward comparable to mine.'? If one upholds these precepts, he ought to be similar in mind to the Buddha. If he had said this it would have been true speech." Because the great and revered gods are delighted one gains an increased amount of merit.

Additionally, on these six days evil ghosts bring harm to people and [attempt to] visit affliction and confusion upon everyone. If in the open country, village, prefecture, province, country or city-state where one abides there is a person who observes the days of abstinence, takes the precepts and practices goodness, on account of these causes and conditions, the evil ghosts depart far away and the place in which one dwells is peaceful and secure. For this reason, if one observes the abstinences and takes the precepts on these six days one thereby gains increased merit.

Question: Why do the evil ghosts and spirits take advantage of these six days to visit affliction and harm on people?

Response: In The Sutra on the Origins of Heaven and Earth, it says that when the kalpa was first created there was the son of a different god also named

Brahmaa who was the father of the ghosts and spirits. He cultivated a form of brahmacaarin ascetic practice whereby, for a full twelve heavenly years, he cut away his own flesh on these six days, drew off his blood, and then placed them in a fire. On account of this, on these six days, the evil ghosts and spirits suddenly possess strong powers.

Question: Why on these six days did the father of the ghosts and spirits cut away the flesh and blood of his body and place them into a fire?

Response: Among all of the ghosts and spirits, the Maheshvara spirit is the biggest and the most primary in status. All of the spirits have an allotted number of days. Maheshvara has an allotment of four days out of each month: the eighth, the twenty-third, the fourteenth, and the twenty-ninth. The other spirits have an allotment of two days out of each month: their first day out of the month is the sixteenth and their second day out of the month is the seventeenth. The fifteenth and the thirtieth belong collectively to all spirits. Because Maheshvara is the lord of all of the spirits and because he has gotten the most days, his four days are counted as abstinence days. The other two days which are also counted as abstinence days are the days belonging collectively to all of the spirits. Hence, all of the ghosts and spirits suddenly possess strong powers on these six days.

Furthermore, after the father of ghosts and spirits had cut away his flesh, drawn of his blood and placed them in fire for twelve years, the king of the gods

descended and asked his son, "What prayer do you seek to fulfill [by doing this]?"

He replied, "I seek to have sons."

The king of the gods said, "It is the offering method of the rishis to employ the burning of incense, the offering up of sweet fruits and all manner of pure endeavors. Why do you use the placement of flesh and blood into fire in accordance with offensive and evil dharmas? You destroy the dharma of goodness and take pleasure in carrying out evil endeavors. I will cause you to give birth to evil sons who feast on flesh and drink blood. Then, in accordance with his proclamation, eight huge ghosts came forth at that moment from within the fire. Their bodies were as black as ink. Their hair was yellow and their eyes were red and possessed of a great light. Every one of the ghosts and spirits were born from these eight ghosts. It was as a consequence of this that the cutting away of the bodily flesh and blood and their placement into the fire resulted in the gaining of power.

As for the Dharma of the Buddha, the days are devoid of either good or ill. But as an adaptation to the causes and conditions associated with the world's treatment of these as bad days, one is instructed to observe the abstinences and take the eight precepts.

Question: Which is superior, the five precepts or the one-day precepts?

Response: There may be causes and conditions whereby the two precept categories are equal. However, the five precepts are taken for the rest of one's life whereas the eight precepts are upheld for only a single day at a time. But then again, because the five precepts are constantly upheld, the time involved is greater. However, the precepts involved are fewer. With the one-day precepts, the time is less while the number of precepts is greater.

Furthermore, if one is not possessed of a great mind, although one may uphold the precepts for one's entire life, it is not as good as a person with a great mind upholding the precepts for a single day. This is analogous to a weak man serving as a general. Although he may continue to serve as a general of the troops for the rest of his life, because he is inadequate as regards wisdom and bravery, the shock troops will have no reputation for meritorious service. But if a greatly heroic man brings forth high resolve to immediately stabilize a disastrous and chaotic situation, in a single day of devoted service his meritorious reputation spreads throughout the world.

These two categories of precepts constitute dharmas intended for the householder upaasaka. The upholding of precepts on the part of the householder is commonly of four degrees. There are the lesser, the middling, the superior and the superior among the superior. When a lesser person upholds the precepts it is for the sake of pleasures in the present life or perhaps it may be out of fear, out of a desire to be praised, or to be famous. Or it may be that for the sake of

family-related dharmas he will constrain himself to go along with another's ideas. It may also be done out of a desire to avoid a misery-ridden period of conscription or perhaps it is done because one seeks to avoid dangerous situations. All sorts of factors such as these characterize the lesser person's upholding of the precepts.

When the middling person upholds the precepts it is for the sake of wealth and noble status among men and for the sake of [gaining] delights and pleasures which accord with one's aspirations. Or perhaps one will endure self-denial and encourage oneself to undergo suffering out of a hope for good fortune and bliss in later lives. "The number of days are few and that which is gained is extremely great." Through making considerations such as this, one may uphold the precepts solidly. This is comparable to a merchant's traveling far and investing heavily. The profit which is gained will certainly be great. The merit from upholding the precepts causes people to receive good fortune and bliss in later lives in just this fashion.

When the superior person upholds the precepts it is for the sake of nirvana and because he knows that all dharmas are impermanent. It is because he wishes to transcend suffering and gain eternal enjoyment of the unconditioned.

Furthermore, the mind of the person who upholds the precepts has no regrets. Because his mind has no regrets he gains delight and enjoyment. Because he gains

delight and enjoyment from it he achieves single-mindedness. Because he gains single-mindedness he gains real wisdom. Because he gains real wisdom he develops the mind of renunciation. Because he develops the mind of renunciation he succeeds in transcending desire. Because he succeeds in transcending desire he gains liberation. Because he gains liberation he gains nirvana. In this manner, upholding the precepts constitutes the foundation of all of the good dharmas. Moreover, the upholding of precepts constitutes the initial entryway into to the eightfold correct path. This initial entryway onto the path certainly extends all the way to nirvana.

The Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom

Section Twenty-Three: The Explanation of the Meaning of Chapter One's Shiila Paaramitaa

Question: According to the sequence in the eightfold correct path, right speech and right livelihood are in the middle whereas right views and right action are at the beginning. Why then do you now state that the precepts constitute the initial entryway into the eightfold correct path.?

Response: When we speak of numerical priorities, those which are greater are listed first.

Right views is the greatest. Therefore it is placed at the beginning.

Moreover, because one is coursing along a path, one takes seeing [clearly] as what is foremost. However, because all dharmas involve a particular sequence, precepts come first. This is analogous to the construction of a building wherein, although the beams and rafters are huge, one nonetheless takes the ground as what is primary.

In the case of a person who is the most superior among the superior in the upholding of precepts, it is done out of pity for beings and for the sake of the Buddha Way. It is in order to understand all dharmas and it is because of a quest for the reality mark. It is not done on account of fear of the wretched destinies and it is not done because one seeks to gain pleasures. All sorts of motives such as these characterize the practice of one who is the most superior among the superior in the upholding of the precepts. These four categories generally constitute the upasaka's [practice of] the precepts.

The precepts of those who have left the home life involve four categories: The first consists of the precepts of the shraama.nera and shraama.nerikaa, the second of the precepts of the shik.samaa.naa, the third of the precepts of the bhik.su.nii, and the fourth of the precepts of the bhik.susangha.

Question: If by way of the householder's precepts one succeeds in being reborn in the heavens, succeeds in gaining the bodhisattva way and also succeeds in reaching nirvana, of what further use are the precepts of the person who has left the home life?

Response: Although they inherently do conduce to success in deliverance, still, there are ways which are difficult and ways which are easier. The actions involved in the life of a householder involve all manner of endeavors and responsibilities. If one desires to focus one's mind especially on the dharmas of the way then the business of the family deteriorates. If one desires to focus one's mind especially on cultivating the business of the family, then the matters associated with the way deteriorate. If one neither seizes upon anything nor relinquishes anything one then and only then acts in correspondence with the practice of Dharma.

This is renowned for its difficulty. However, if one leaves the home life, separates from the world of the layperson, cuts off all of the complexity and chaos, and then, with singular purpose, focuses the mind, then cultivating the Way becomes easy.

Moreover, the befuddlement and boisterousness of the householder's life involves many endeavors and much responsibility. It is the root of the fetters and the repository of the manifold ills. This is an extremely difficult situation. If one leaves the home life, it is analogous to a person going forth into the empty wilderness to an unpopulated place to then unify his mind. There is then neither consideration nor deliberation. Once the internal thoughts having been gotten rid

of the external matters depart as well. This is as described in a verse:

Leisurely sitting within the forest,

In a state of stillness, one extinguishes the manifold ills.

Calmly and contentedly one gains singularity of mind.

This bliss is not the bliss of the heavens.

People seek after the benefit of wealth and noble status,

For famous clothes and fine furniture.

This sort of pleasure is not peaceful or secure.

One seeks after benefit without satiation.

The one of patchwork robes travels about seeking alms food,

Whether moving or still, his mind is always unified.

He spontaneously employs the eye of wisdom

To contemplate and know the reality of all dharmas.

Among all of the different types of Dharma methods,

All are entered through equanimitous contemplation.

With understanding and wisdom the mind abides in stillness.

Throughout the three realms none are able to equal this.

For this reason one should know that leaving the home life, cultivating the precepts and practicing the way are easy.

Additionally, if one leaves the home life and cultivates the precepts, one achieves the complete perfection of an incalculable number of aspects of good moral conduct. For this reason the white-robed ones and others should leave the home life and take the complete precepts.

Then again, within the Dharma of the Buddha, the dharma of leaving the home life is the one which is the most difficult to cultivate. This is as alluded to in the questions of the brahmacaarin Jambukhaadaka to Shaariputra, wherein he asked, "What is most difficult within the Buddha's Dharma?"

Shaariputra replied, saying, "Leaving behind the home life is difficult."

He also asked, "What are the difficulties involved in leaving the home life?"

He replied, "To leave behind the home life and find bliss in Dharma is difficult."

"If one succeeds in finding bliss in Dharma, then what beyond this is difficult?"

"To cultivate all good dharmas is difficult."

For these reasons, one should leave behind the home life. Moreover, when one leaves behind the home life, the king of the demons is frightened and worried,

saying, "The fetters of this man are about to become scant. He will certainly gain nirvana and fall in with the numbers of the Sangha Jewel.

[The Story of Bhikshu Utpalavari]

Also, although people who have left the home life within the Dharma of the Buddha may break the precepts and fall into offenses, when the punishments have come to an end, they then gain liberation. This is as discussed in The Sutra on the Jataka of the Bhikshu Utpalavari.

When the Buddha was in the World, this bhikshu gained the six superknowledges and arhatship. She made a practice of going into the households of the aristocracy wherein she constantly praised the practice of leaving the home life. She spoke to the wives and daughters of the nobility, saying, "Sisters, you can leave behind the home life."

The aristocratic wives and daughters would reply, "We are young and strong. Our countenances and physical forms are full and beautiful. It would be a difficult think to uphold the precepts. It might happen that we would break the precepts."

The bhik.su.nii replied, "Just go ahead and leave home anyway. If it happens that you end up breaking the precepts then you break them."

They responded, "If we break the precepts we'll fall into the hells. How can you tell us that they can be broken?"

She replied, "If it happens that you end up falling into the hells, then you fall."

The wives and daughters of the nobility all laughed at this, saying, "When one falls into the hells one undergoes punishment. How can you tell us that we can go ahead and fall?"

The bhik.su.nii replied, "I recall that in a previous life I was an actress who put on all sorts of costumes and played traditional parts. There were times when I would put on the robes of a bhik.su.nii in order to amuse the audience. On account of these causes and conditions, at the time of Kaashyapa Buddha I was actually able to become a bhik.su.nii. However, on account of my aristocratic birth and beauty I became arrogant and then broke the restrictive prohibitions. On account of the offenses of breaking the precepts I fell into the hells wherein I underwent all manner of punishment as retribution.

"When I had finished undergoing retribution for those offenses I was able to encounter Shakyamuni Buddha and leave the home life again, whereupon I gained

the six superknowledges and the way of the arhat. For this reason, one should be aware that if one leaves home and takes the precepts, although one may eventually break the precepts, still, on account of the causes and conditions inhering in taking the precepts one gains the way of arhatship. If one merely does evil things but yet does not have the causes and conditions of the precepts, one will not gain the way. Thus, in the past I have fallen into the hells in many lifetimes. Upon coming forth from the hells, I would become an evil person and when this evil person died, I would go right back into the hells again and in every case I gained nothing whatsoever as a result."

Now, on account of this, we can verify and know that if one merely leaves home and takes the precepts, although one may eventually break the precepts, still, on account of these causes and conditions, one becomes able to realize the fruition of the way."

[The Story of the Drunken Brahman Who Became a Bhik.su]

Then again, this is exemplified by that time when the Buddha dwelt in Jetavana and a drunken brahman came to the Buddha and requested to become a bhik.su.

The Buddha ordered Ananda to administer tonsure and outfit the man in Dharma robes.

When [the brahman] awoke from his inebriation he was startled and

amazed that he had suddenly turned into a bhik.su. Then he ran off. Thereupon, the other bhik.sus asked the Buddha, "Why did the Buddha permit this drunken brahman to become a bhik.su?"

The Buddha replied, "Even in innumerable aeons, this brahman has never thought to leave the homelife. Now, on account of his inebriation, he briefly generated a feeble intention to do so. On account of these causes and conditions, he will later be able to leave behind the home life and gain the way."

On account of all sorts of causes and conditions such as these [one can see that] the benefits of leaving the home life involve incalculable merit. For this reason, although the white-robed layperson possesses the five precepts, they are not comparable to leaving the home life.

The moral regulations of those who have left the home life consist of four categories: those of the shraama.nera and shraama.nerikaa, the shik.samaa.naa, the bhik.su.nii, and the bhik.su. What is the dharma for leaving the home life and taking of precepts on the part of the shraama.nera and shraama.nerikaa?

The white-robed layperson who comes seeking to leave the home life should request two masters: one upaadhyaya and one aacaarya. The upaadhyaya is like the father and the aacaarya is like the mother. He thereby puts aside the father and mother of his original life. One should seek thereby a father and mother

among those who have left the home life. One dons the ka.saaya robe and cuts of the hair and beard. He should grasp the feet of the upaadhyaaya with his two hands. Why does he grasp the feet? It is the custom of India that to grasp the feet constitutes the most superior form of reverential offering. The aacaarya should teach the ten precepts according to the dharma for receiving the precepts. For the shraama.nerikaa it is also like this. It is just that she takes a bhik.su.nii for the upaadhyaaya. The shik.samaa.naa takes on six dharmas for a period of two years.

Question: The shraama.nera takes the ten precepts and then takes the complete precepts.

Why, within the dharma of the bhik.su.nii, does there exist the shik.samaa.naa stage, and only afterwards, the receiving of the complete precepts?

Response: When the Buddha was in the world, there was the wife of an elder who, unaware that she was pregnant, left the home life and received the complete precepts. Afterwards her body became larger and her pregnancy began to show. All of the elders ridiculed and criticized the bhik.sus. It was on account of this that it was laid down that there would be a two-year period of studying the precepts and accepting six dharmas after which one would take the complete precepts.

Question: If they had been ridiculed and criticized [in the former circumstance], how is it that a shik.samaa.naa would not bring about ridicule [in similar circumstances]?

***Response: The shik.samaa.naa has not yet taken the complete precepts. That status is analogous to that of a small child or a servant whom people still do not ridicule or criticize even though they may incur the defilement of an offense. This refers to the shik.samaa.naa's taking on of six dharmas. This shik.samaa.naa category is of two types: The first is the eighteen-year-old virgin girl who has taken on six dharmas. The second is a woman who has been with the husband's family for a period of ten years but who is then able to take on the six dharmas. If she wishes to take the complete precepts she should do so in the midst of the two divisions of the Sangha wearing the five-stripe robe and carrying the bowl. Bhik.su.niis serve as the upaadhyaya and as the teacher providing instruction. A bhik.su serves as the precept master. The rest corresponds to the dharma for receiving the precepts.

Generally speaking, this involves five hundred precepts. Extensively speaking there are eighty thousand precepts. At the conclusion of the third karma [precept ceremony] one then gains an incalculable number of moral regulations. In the bringing to completion of the bhik.su.nii and the bhik.su, there are three robes and a bowl. There are three masters and ten Sanghans in accordance with the dharma for receiving the precepts. [For the bhik.su], generally speaking, there are two hundred and fifty precepts. Extensively speaking, there are eighty thousand. At the conclusion of the third karma [precept ceremony], one then gains an

incalculable number of moral regulation dharmas. In general these are what are referred to as the precepts. These are what constitute shiila.

The Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom

[The end of] Fascicle Thirteen

The Treatise on the Great Perfection of Wisdom

The Remainder of the Explanation of the Meaning of Chapter One's ShiilaPaaramitaa

Fascicle Fourteen

Question: We are already aware of the characteristics of shiila. What is it that constitutes shiila paaramitaa?

Response: There are those who say that when the bodhisattva upholds the precepts and would rather lose his physical life than damage minor precepts this

constitutes shiila paaramitaa. As described in the above-cited Sutra of King Sutasoma, one does not spare even one's own physical life in order to preserve the restrictive precepts. For example, in a former life the Bodhisattva was a greatly powerful poisonous dragon. In the event that any being came to stand before him, in the case of those who were physically weak, if he so much as gazed upon them they would die on the spot. As for those who were physically strong, if he breathed on them, they would die.

This dragon had taken the one-day precepts. He left his dwelling seeking quietude and had gone into the forest. He had been sitting in contemplation for a long time, became tired and lax and then had fallen asleep. It is the way of dragons that when they fall asleep their bodies become in appearance like a snake. His body had patterns on it which were composed of the various colors of the seven precious things. Hunters noticed him and, both startled and delighted, said, "Wouldn't it be appropriate to take this skin which is so rare and difficult to come by and then offer it up to the King of our country that he might use it as an adornment for his robes?" They then held its head down with a staff and used a knife to strip away its skin.

The dragon thought to himself, "My strength is such that, were I only to wish it, turning this entire country upside down would be as easy as turning over one's hand. These people are but little things. How could they be able to put me in difficult straits? Because I am now upholding the precepts I shall have no regard for

this body. I should follow along with the words of the Buddha." And so at this time he remained patient, kept his eyes as if asleep, and did not gaze upon them. He held his breath and kept himself from breathing out of pity for these men. For the sake of upholding the precepts he single-mindedly endured the peeling away of his skin and did not develop any thoughts of regret.

Then, having lost his skin, his bare flesh rested directly on the ground. It was in a season where the sun was very hot. He squirmed about in the dirt desiring to make his way to a large body of water. He saw all the little insects coming to eat his body. For the sake of upholding the precepts he did not dare to move any more. He thought to himself, "Now I'll make a gift to the insects of this body. For the sake of the Buddha Way, I will now make a gift of this flesh so as to fill up their bodies. Later, when I have achieved buddhahood, I will employ the giving of Dharma to benefit their minds." After he had made this vow his body dried up and his life was cut off. He was then born in the second of the Traayastri.msha heavens. At that time the poisonous dragon was Shakyamuni Buddha. At this time, the hunters were Devadatta and the six [non-buddhist] masters. The little insects were the eighty thousand gods who gained the Way when Shakyamuni Buddha first turned the wheel of Dharma.

The bodhisattva guards the precepts and does not spare even his own physical life in doing so. He is decisive in this and has no regrets. When his endeavors are of this sort this constitutes shiila paaramitaa.

Then again, when the bodhisattva upholds the precepts, for the sake of the Buddha Way he makes a great vow, "I will certainly cross over beings, will not seek the pleasures of this or later lives, will not do it for the sake of fame or the dharmas of an empty reputation, and will not do it for the sake of seeking an early nirvana for myself. I will do it solely for the sake of beings who are submerged in the long-continuing flow [of the river of suffering], who are cheated by affection and who are deceived by stupidity and delusion. I will cross them over and cause them to reach the other shore." He single-mindedly upholds the precepts and so is reborn in a good place. Because he is reborn in a good place he meets good people. Because he meets good people he develops wisdom. Because he develops wisdom he succeeds in practicing the six paaramitaas. Because he succeeds in practicing the six paaramitaas, he gains the Buddha Way. When one upholds the precepts in the manner this constitutes shiila paaramitaa.

Moreover, when the bodhisattva upholds the precepts, that mind which takes pleasure in goodness is pure. It is not motivated by fear of the wretched destinies nor by a desire to be reborn in the heavens. He seeks only the purity of goodness. He uses the precepts to permeate his mind and cause his mind to take pleasure in goodness. This constitutes shiila paaramitaa.

Moreover, the bodhisattva employs the mind of great compassion in his upholding of the precepts and succeeds in arriving at the Buddha Way. This is what is

known as shiila paaramitaa.

Furthermore, in his upholding of the precepts the bodhisattva is able to give rise to the six paaramitaas. This then is what is known as shiila paaramitaa.

How is it that upholding the precepts is able to give rise to precepts? It is on account of the five precepts that one gets the shraama.nera precepts. It is on account of the shraama.nera precepts that one gains the precepts of moral regulation. It is on account of the precepts of moral regulation that one achieves the precepts of dhyaana absorption. It is on account of the precepts of dhyaana absorption that one gains the non-outflow precepts. This constitutes the precepts giving rise to precepts.

How does upholding the precepts give rise to daana? There are three kinds of daana: the first is the giving of material wealth. The second is the giving of Dharma. The third is the giving of fearlessness. When one upholds the precepts one is economical and does not raid the wealth of any being. This constitutes the giving of wealth. Those beings who observe [the upholder of precepts] admire that which he practices. Additionally, he speaks Dharma for their sakes and cause them to awaken. Also, he considers to oneself, "I should firmly uphold the pure precepts and so become a field of blessings for their offerings, thereby causing beings to gain incalculable blessings. All sorts of instances such as these constitute the giving of Dharma. All beings fear suffering. In upholding the precepts one

does not harm them. This then is the giving of fearlessness.

Moreover, the bodhisattva thinks to himself, "I should uphold the precepts and use the reward from these precepts to become a wheel-turning sage king for the sake of all beings or perhaps should become a king of Jambudviipa. If I become a king of the gods then I will cause all beings to be amply supplied with wealth and to have nothing in which they are wanting. Afterwards I will sit beneath the tree of the buddhas, vanquish the demon king, destroy the demon armies, perfect the unsurpassed Way, speak the pure Dharma for the sake of all beings and cause an incalculable number of beings to cross over the sea of aging, sickness and death." This constitutes the causes and conditions of upholding the precepts bringing forth daana paaramitaa.

How is it that upholding the precepts brings forth patience? A person who upholds the precepts brings to mind the thought, "I now uphold the precepts for the sake of upholding my own mind. If in upholding the precepts I have no patience then I will fall into the hells. Although I will not have broken the precepts, on account of having no patience, I will still not have avoided the wretched destinies. How could I give free rein to anger and thus fail to regulate my own mind? It is solely on account of the mind that one enters into the three wretched destinies. Therefore I ought to enjoy encouraging myself and constraining myself to be diligent in the cultivation of patience."

Moreover, the practitioner who desires the virtue of his precept practice to be solid and strong should cultivate patience. Why? Patience constitutes a great power which is able to strengthen the precepts and cause one to not be moved or shaken.

One further thinks to oneself, "Now that I have left the home life, I have become different in form from the common man. How could I give free rein to the mind in the manner of the dharmas of a worldly person?"

It is appropriate that one encourage oneself and so employ patience to train the mind. It is through patience of body and mouth that the mind also succeeds in gaining patience. If the mind is not patient, the body and mouth are just the same. Therefore, the practitioner should cause his body, mouth and mind to be patient and so cut off all hatred.

Furthermore, as for these precepts, if one speaks of them briefly, there are eighty thousand. If one discusses them extensively then they are incalculable in number. How can I be able to completely uphold this incalculable number of precept dharmas? It is only through taking up patience under insult that the many precepts may naturally be realized. This is analogous to there being a man who has committed an offense before the King. The King places the criminal in a wagon of knives where he is surrounded on all six sides by sharp blades with no space in between. The wagon is then turned loose at a fast gallop, racing along

aimlessly through the streets. If he is able to control his body he is not harmed by the knives. This would be a case of being slain but not dying. A person who upholds the precepts is just like this. The precepts are sharp knives. Patience is the controlling of the body. If the mind of patience is not solid the precepts themselves can harm a person.

This is also analogous to an old person who falls down if he walks along at night without a walking stick. Patience is the walking stick for the precepts . It supports a person in arriving at the Way and insures that causes and conditions associated with the bliss from merit are unable to move or shake one. All sorts of instances such as these constitute the upholding of precepts bringing forth kâAntipÀramitÀ.

How is it that if one upholds the precepts one then produces vigor? The person who upholds the precepts gets rid of negligence (pramaada). Through one's own power one earnestly cultivates the unsurpassed dharma. One relinquishes the pleasures of the world and enters into the path of goodness. One resolves to seek nirvana for the sake of all. One possesses a great mind and is not lazy and so takes seeking buddhahood as what is fundamental. This is how upholding the precepts is able to produce vigor.

Moreover, the person who upholds the precepts becomes weary and abhorrent of the sufferings of the world and the calamities of aging, sickness and death. His

mind brings forth vigor and the resolve that he will certainly seek his own liberation while also bringing about the deliverance of others.

This is analogous to the coyote who lived in the forest and, as a means of surviving, relied on following along after the lions, tigers and leopards, seeking after the meat from their leftover carcasses. There was a period of time when there was a shortage of food for him and so in the middle of the night he slipped into the city and made his way deep into a man's household. He was seeking for meat but did not find any. He fell asleep in a screened-off spot and, unaware that the night had already ended, awoke, startled, frightened and at a loss for what to do. If he tried to run out, he figured he would be unable to save himself, but if he remained he feared he would fall victim to the pain of death. He then fixed his mind on laying there on the ground, pretending to be dead. Many people came to see. There was one man who said, "I have need of the ears of a coyote." He then cut them off and took them away.

The coyote thought to himself, "Although it hurts to have one's ears cut off, still, the body is allowed thereby to remain alive."

Next, there was a man who said, "I have need of the tail of a coyote." He then cut that off as well and then departed.

The coyote next thought, "Although it hurts to have one's tail cut off, still, it's a minor matter."

Next, there was a man who said, "I have need of a coyote's teeth."

The coyote thought, "The scavengers are becoming more numerous. Suppose they were to take my head. If they did, I would have no way to survive." He then jumped up off the ground and, arousing the strength of his intelligence, suddenly sprang for a narrow exit and straightaway succeeded in saving himself.

In seeking liberation from the difficulty of suffering, the mind of the cultivator is just like this. If old age arrives he may still find reason to forgive himself and be unable to be diligent, earnest and lacking in decisive application of vigor. It is the same with sickness. Because there is hope for a cure he is still unable to be decisive in his strategy. But when death is about to come he knows himself that there is no further hope. He is then able to exhort himself and as a result he is able to dare to be diligent and earnest and devote himself mightily to the cultivation of vigor. Then, escaping from the spot where death is upon him he finally succeeds in reaching nirvana.

Moreover, the dharma of upholding the precepts is analogous to archery wherein a person first finds a level spot of ground. Having gotten level ground one then

stabilizes the mind. After the mind has become stable one draws back [the bow] completely. When one has drawn it back completely, [the arrow] then plunges deeply [into the target]. The precepts are level ground. The decisive mind is the bow. Drawing it back completely is vigor. The arrow is wisdom. The rebellious enemy is ignorance.

If one is able to bring forth one's strength and be vigorous in this fashion he will certainly arrive at the great Way and thereby bring beings to deliverance.

Then again, the person who upholds the precepts is able to use vigor to self-regulate the five sense faculties. He does not indulge in the five desires. If his mind has already gone off he is able to draw it back and cause it to return. This constitutes the upholding of precepts being able to guard the sense faculties. If one guards the sense faculties, then one develops dhyana absorption. If one develops dhyana absorption then one develops wisdom. If one develops wisdom then one succeeds in arriving at the Buddha Way. This constitutes the upholding of precepts bringing forth viiṛya paaramitaa.

How is it that upholding the precepts brings forth dhyana? People possess the three karmic actions whereby they may do what is good. If the actions of the body and mouth are good, then the actions of the mind naturally enter into goodness. This is analogous to crooked grasses which grow up amidst sesame. Even without being propped up, they naturally grow straight.

The power of upholding the precepts is able to cause the fetters to waste away. How is it able to cause such wasting away? If one does not uphold the precepts, then when a matter comes along which might provoke rage, the intention to kill immediately arises. If a situation arrives which is conducive to lust, the lustful mind is immediately consummated. In the case of one who upholds the precepts, although there is slight anger, one does not bring forth the intention to kill.

Although there may be lustful thoughts, lustful affairs are not consummated. This constitutes the upholding of precepts being able to cause the fetters to waste away. As the fetters waste away dhyana absorption is easily realized. This is analogous to when one has become aged and sick to the point where he has lost his strength. In such a case death comes easily. So too, in a case where the fetters have wasted away, dhyana absorption is easily gained.

Moreover, when a person's thoughts have not yet been put to rest, one constantly seeks unrestrained indulgence in pleasures. When the practitioner upholds the precepts he casts aside and relinquishes worldly blessings. His mind does not fall into negligence. Therefore it is easy for him to gain dhyana absorption.

Also, the person who upholds the precepts succeeds in being reborn among men. Next he is born in the six desire heavens. Next he arrives in the form realm. If he is able to break through the marks of form he is born in the formless realm. If he is pure in his upholding of the precepts he cuts off the fetters and gains the

way of arhatship. If he upholds the precepts with a great mind and has pity for beings, this is a bodhisattva.

Additionally, the precepts involve being restrained with regard to what is coarse. Dhyana involves focusing that which is subtle. Also, the precepts restrains the body and the mouth. Dhyana brings stills the confused mind. This process is analogous to moving higher in a building. If there were no stairs one would be unable to ascend. If one fails to get the stairs of the precepts, dhyana absorption cannot be established either.

Then again, in a person who breaks the precepts, the wind of the fetters is strong and it scatters and confuses his mind. If his mind is scattered and confused then dhyana cannot be realized. All sorts of other circumstances such as these involve the upholding of precepts bringing forth dhyana paramita.

How is it that upholding the precepts is able to bring forth wisdom? The person who upholds the precepts contemplates from whence the features of these precepts have come to exist. He realizes that they come forth from the many offenses. If it were not for the manifold offenses there would be no precepts either.

The features of the precepts are just like this. It is from causes and conditions that they have come to exist. How then could one become attached to them? They are analogous to lotus flowers which come forth from filthy mud. Although their form is fresh and fine, the place from which they come forth is impure. If one

awakens one's mind in this fashion then one does not allow it to develop attachments.

This is an instance of the upholding of precepts bringing forth praj~naa paaramitaa.

Then again, the person who upholds the precepts contemplates to himself, "Were I to have thoughts such as, 'If I uphold the precepts, I will be considered noble and will enjoy gains whereas if I break the precepts, I will be considered base and will experience loss,' such thoughts would not reflect praj~naa." This is because, within the sphere of wisdom, the calculating and judging mind does not involve itself in attachments. In upholding the precepts there are no considerations of gain or loss. In such a case the upholding of precepts brings forth praj~naa paaramitaa.

What's more, although the person who fails to uphold the precepts may possess keen intelligence, because there are all kinds of endeavors in the course of managing worldly responsibilities which involve pursuing aspirations and generating karma, the faculty of intelligence gradually grows more dull. This is analogous to using a sharp blade to cut mud. It eventually becomes a dull instrument. If one leaves behind the home life, upholds the precepts, desists from engaging in worldly endeavors and constantly contemplates that the reality mark of all dharmas is devoid of any mark, although one may have formerly possessed dull faculties, they gradually become sharp. All sorts of other such circumstances constitute instances of the upholding of precepts bringing forth praj~naa

paaramitaa. Situations such as those cited above are instances of shiila paaramitaa bringing forth the six paaramitaas.

Additionally, the bodhisattva's upholding of the precepts is not done on account of fear nor is it the case that it is done out of stupidity or doubt or delusion or out of a private quest for one's own nirvana. The upholding of precepts is carried out only for the sake of all beings, for the sake of succeeding in the way of the Buddha, and for the sake of realizing the Dharma of all buddhas. Such characteristics as these demonstrate what is meant by shiila paaramitaa.

Then again, if the bodhisattva finds that there is nothing which can be gotten at in either offense or non-offense, it is at this time that his practice constitutes shiila paaramitaa.

Question: If one is able to relinquish evil and practice goodness, it is this which constitutes upholding the precepts. How can it be said that offense and non-offense cannot be gotten at?

Response: This is not referring to the "can't be gotten at" of erroneous views and of course thought and speech. If one enters deeply into the mark of all dharmas and practices the samaadhi of emptiness, because one uses the wisdom eye to contemplate, offenses cannot be gotten at. Because offenses are nonexistent, non-offense cannot be gotten at either.

Moreover, because beings cannot be gotten at the offense of killing cannot be gotten at either. Because the offense cannot be gotten at, the precept cannot be gotten at either. How is this? It is on account of the existence of the offense of killing that the precept exists. If there were no offense of killing then there would be no precept either.

Question: It is manifestly the case that beings do now exist. Why do you say that beings cannot be gotten at?

Response: That which is seen by the fleshly eye constitutes non-seeing. If one contemplates with the wisdom eye then one does not find any being. This is just as explained above in the section on daana paaramitaa wherein it was stated that there is no donor, no recipient and material object offered as a gift.

Additionally, if as you say, a being does exist, is it identical with the five aggregates or does it exist apart from the five aggregates? If it is identical with the five aggregates, the five aggregates are fivefold whereas a being is singular. If that were the case then five could constitute one and one could constitute five. To use the trading of goods in the market as an analogy, one is unable to get something worth five units in exchange for only a single unit. Why? Because one cannot equal five. Therefore one knows that the five aggregates cannot constitute a singular being.

Moreover, the five aggregates are characterized by production and extinction. It is the characteristic dharma of beings that they come forth from a former life and arrive at a later life and undergo punishments and blessings in the three realms. If it were the case that the five aggregates constituted a being, then this would be a case where they would be born naturally and die naturally just like grass or trees. If this were actually the case, then there would be no being bound by offenses nor would there be any liberation. On account of this one knows that it is not the case that the five aggregates constitute a being. If one holds that there exists a being apart from the five aggregates, this is the same as was already refuted in the prior discussion which addressed the fallacy of a spiritual soul (aatman) which is supposedly eternally-existent and universally pervasive.

Furthermore, if one asserts there exists a being apart from the five aggregates then, [apart from the five aggregates], the thought which holds the view of a self cannot arise. If one asserts that a being exists apart from the five aggregates this constitutes a falling into eternalism. If one falls into eternalism this then entails the nonexistence of birth and the nonexistence of death. Why? Birth refers to something having formerly been nonexistent now coming into existence. Death refers to something already born then being extinguished. If it were the case that beings were eternally-existent then it ought to be the case that they exist everywhere filling up the five paths of rebirth. If something already exists eternally, why would it then now come to birth yet again? And if it does not have a

birth then it has no death either.

Question: It is definitely the case that beings exist. Why do you say that they are nonexistent? It is based on the causes and conditions of the five aggregates that the dharma of a being exists. This is analogous to the case of the causes and conditions of the five fingers generating the dharma of a fist.

Response: This statement is not the case. If the dharma of a being exists in the causes and conditions of the five aggregates then aside from the five aggregates there exists a separate dharma of a being. However, it cannot be found. The eye itself sees forms. The ear itself hears sounds. The nose smells fragrances. The tongue knows flavors. The body knows tangibles. The mind knows dharmas. They are empty and devoid of the dharma of a self. Apart from these six phenomena there is no additional "being."

On account of inverted views, the non-buddhists claim that when the eye is able to see forms this is a being and so forth until we come to when the mind is able to know dharmas this is a being. Additionally, they claim that when one remembers and when one is able to undergo suffering and pleasure, this is a being. They simply create this view. They do not know the actual truth associated with this "being."

This is analogous to the case of an old, senior and very venerable bhik.su. People were of the opinion that he was an arhat. They brought many offerings.

Later on he became ill and then died. Because the disciples were alarmed that they would lose the offerings, they surreptitiously removed him during the night and in the place where he had been laying down, they arranged blankets and pillows, causing it to appear as if the master was present but lying down. People came and asked about his illness, inquiring "Where is the Master?"

The disciples replied, "Don't you see the blankets and pillows on the bed?" The stupid ones did not investigate into it. They believed that the master was lying down with illness, gave large offerings and then left. This happened more than once.

Next there was a wise person who came and asked about it. The disciples replied in the same way. The wise person said, "I did not ask about blankets, pillows, beds, or cushions. As for myself, I'm looking for a person." He then threw back the covers looking for the master. In the end there was no person who could be found. Apart from the appearances of the six matters, there is no additional self or person. As for one who knows or one who perceives, they are just the same as this.

Moreover, if it were the case that a being exists in the causes and conditions of the five aggregates, since the five aggregates are impermanent, beings too ought to be impermanent. Why? Because of the similarity in the causes and conditions. If beings were impermanent then there would be no arriving at a later life.

Furthermore, if it is as you say, then beings have existed eternally from their very origin on forward through time. If that were the case then it should be that beings are what produce the five aggregates. It should not be the case that the five aggregates produce beings. Now, the causes and conditions of the five aggregates give rise to the name "being." People who have no wisdom chase after the names in seeking for what is real. For these reasons, beings are in fact nonexistent. If there are no beings then there is no offense of killing either. Because there is no offense of killing there is no upholding of precepts either.

Also, when one deeply enters into the contemplation of these five aggregates, one analyzes and realizes that they are empty, like something seen in a dream, and like images in a mirror. If one kills something seen in a dream or an image in a mirror there is no killing offense committed. One kills the empty marks of the five aggregates. Beings are just the same as this.

Additionally, if a person is displeased by offenses and is greedily attached to being without offenses, if this person sees a person with offenses who has broken the precepts then he slights him and is arrogant. If he sees a good person who upholds the precepts then he is affectionate and respectful. If one's upholding of precepts is carried out in this manner, then this itself gives rise to the causes and conditions of offenses. It is for this reason that it is stated, "Because committing offenses and not committing offenses cannot be gotten at one should perfect shiila paaramitaa."

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1. This parenthetical note is part of the Taisho text. (back)
2. The era.n.da tree has red blossoms which are beautiful in appearance but which stink so horribly that they can be smelled even miles away. (back)
3. These statements refer to the future retributions due for the respective actions.(back)
4. This parenthetical note is part of the Taisho text. (back)
5. This parenthetical note is part of the Taisho text. (back)
6. This parenthetical note is part of the Taisho text. (back)

7. Nagarjuna periodically lapses into this sort of abhidharma-speak. In such cases he rarely discusses the topics but prefers instead to only make cryptic, nearly untranslatable references to these

peripheral topics so as to serve notice that he is entirely conversant with them. The translator's rendering of this passage is necessarily only tentative. Readers interested in this sort of thing should

consult abhidharma source works such as Leo M. Pruden's English Translation of the Abhidharmakosha. (back)

8. This parenthetical note is part of the Taisho text. (back)

9. This may refer to the ghosts of the killer's victims. (back)

10. "Both worlds" refers to both present and future lives. (back)

11. This parenthetical note is part of the Taisho text. (back)

12. This parenthetical note is part of the Taisho text. (back)

13. According to provisional levels of teaching, an anaagaamin, otherwise known as a "never-returner" is not bound to future rebirth. (back)

14. Niraya refers to the hells. (back)

15. In this analogy of an entire human life to the life of a single flower the six seasons most likely refer to the major life-phases such as: birth, youth, the prime of life, old age, sickness and death.

In a story exemplifying the shortness of a human life compared to that in the heavens a heavenly maiden suffered accidental death one morning in the heavens, lived a long life among men where she constantly made offerings to her heavenly lord, and was then reborn in the same heaven even before that single heavenly day had ended. (back)

16. These are approximate correlates for Kumaarajiva's ch'in, ssu, cheng, and k'ung-hou, four ancient Chinese instruments. (back)

17. The "six days" refers to the eighth, fourteenth, fifteenth, twenty-third, twenty-ninth and thirtieth of each lunar month whereas "the months of spiritual transformations" refers generally to the first, fifth and ninth lunar months and more specifically to the first through the fifteenth days of those three months. (back)

18. I have preferred the "five" signs of deterioration which accords with four other editions instead of the "three" appearing through scribal error in Taisho. The most common version of this list

includes dirtiness of the heavenly garments, wilting of the floral chaplet, armpit perspiration, smelliness of the body and unhappiness remaining in one's seat. These indicate imminent death for a god. (back)

The Relative Value of One's Life and the Precepts

(T25.155c26-156a15 [fasc.13])

Question: If it is not a case of my being attacked, then the thought of killing may be put to rest. If, however, one has been attacked, overcome by force, and is then being coerced [by imminent peril], what should one do then?

Reply: One should weigh the relative gravity [of the alternatives]. If someone is about to take one's life, one [should] first consider whether the benefit from preserving the precept is more important or whether the benefit from preserving one's physical life is

more important and whether breaking the precept constitutes a loss or whether physical demise constitutes a loss.

After having reflected in this manner one realizes that maintaining the precept is momentous and that preserving one's physical life is [relatively] unimportant. If in avoiding [such peril] one is only [able to succeed in] preserving one's body, [then] what [advantage] is gained with the body? This body is the swamp of senescence, disease and death. It will inevitably deteriorate and decay. If, [however], for the sake of upholding the precept, one loses one's body, the benefit of it is extremely consequential.

Furthermore, one [should] consider [thus]: "From the past on up to the present, I have lost my life an innumerable number of times. At times I have incarnated as a malevolent brigand, as a bird, or as a beast where I have lived merely for the sake of wealth or profit or all manner of unworthy pursuits. Now I have encountered [a situation where I might perish] on account of preserving the pure precepts. To not spare this body and sacrifice my life to uphold the precepts would be a billion times better than and [in fact] incomparable to safeguarding my body [at the expense of] violating the prohibitions." In this manner one decides that one should forsake the body in order to protect [the integrity] of the pure precepts.

[The Butcher's Son and the Killing Precept]

For example, there once was a man who was a srota- aapanna born into the family of a butcher. He was on the threshold of adulthood. Although he was expected to pursue his household occupation, he was unable to kill animals. His father and mother gave him a knife and a sheep and shut him up in a room, telling him, "If you do not kill the sheep, we will not allow you to come out and see the sun or the moon or to have the food and drink to survive."

The son thought to himself, "If I kill this sheep, then I will [be compelled to] pursue this occupation my entire life. How could I commit this great crime [simply] for the sake of this body?" Then he took up the knife and killed himself. The father and mother opened the door to look. The sheep was standing to one side whereas the son was [laying there], already expired.

At that time, when he killed himself, he was born in the heavens. If one is like this, then this amounts to not sparing [even one's own] life in safeguarding [the integrity of] the pure precepts.

End Notes:

A srota- aapanna is a first- stage arhat, otherwise known as a "stream-winner." [Back to text.]

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Utpalavar.naa Bhikshuni and the Drunken Brahman

(T25.161a27-b23 [fasc.13])

Then again, although among the Buddhadharma's monastics there are those who may break the precepts and fall into offenses, once the corresponding retribution has been undergone they gain liberation. This is as exemplified in The Sutra on the Jaataka of the Bhik.su.nii Utpalavar.naa wherein it states: When the Buddha was in the World, this bhikshuni gained the six superknowledges and arhatship. She made a practice of going into the households of

the aristocracy wherein she constantly praised the practice of leaving the homelife. She spoke to the wives and daughters of the nobility, saying,

"Sisters, you can leave behind the home life." The aristocratic wives and daughters would reply, "We are young and strong. Our countenances and physical forms are full and beautiful. It would be a difficult think to uphold the precepts. It might happen that we would break the precepts." The Bhikshuni replied, "Just go ahead and leave home anyway. If it happens that you [end up] breaking the precepts then you break them." They responded, "If we break the precepts we'll fall into the hells. How can you tell us that they can be broken?" [Utpalavar.naa] replied, "If it happens that you end up falling into the hells, then you fall." The wives and daughters of the nobility all laughed at this, saying, "When one falls into the hells one undergoes punishment. How can you tell us that we can go ahead and fall?" The Bhik.su.nii replied, "I recall that in a previous life I was an actress who put on all sorts of costumes and played traditional parts. There were times when I would put on the robes of a bhikshuni in order to amuse the audience. On account of these causes and conditions, at the time of Kaashyapa Buddha I was actually able to become a bhikshuni. However, on account of my aristocratic birth and beauty I became arrogant and then broke the restrictive prohibitions. On account of the offenses of breaking the precepts I fell into the hells wherein I underwent all manner of punishment as retribution.

When I had finished undergoing retribution for those offenses I was able to encounter Shaakyamuni Buddha and leave home again, whereupon I gained the sixsuperknowledges and the way of the arhat. For this reason, one should be aware that if one leaves home and takes the precepts, although one may eventuallybreak the precepts, still, on account of the causes and conditions inhering in taking the precepts one gains the way of arhatship. If one merely does evilthings but yet does not have the causes and conditions of the precepts, one will not gain the Way. Thus, in the past I have fallen into the hells in manylifetimes. Upon coming forth from the hells, I would become an evil person and when this evil person died, I would go right back into the hells again andin every case I gained nothing whatsoever as a result." Now, on account of this, we can verify and thus know that if one merely leaves home and takes theprecepts, although one may eventually break the precepts, still, on account of these causes and conditions, one becomes able to realize the fruition ofthe Way." Then again, this is exemplified by that time when the Buddha dwelt in Jetavana and a drunken brahman came to the Buddha and requested to become a bhikshu. The Buddha ordered Aananda to administer tonsure and outfit the man in Dharma robes. When [the brahman] awoke from his enebriation he was startled and amazed that he had suddenly turned into a bhikshu. Then he ran off. Thereupon, the other bhikshus asked the Buddha, "Why did the Buddha permit this drunken brahman to become a bhikshu?" The Buddha replied, "Even in innumerable aeons, this brahman has never thought to leave the homelife.Now, on account of his enebriation, he briefly generated a feeble intention to do so. On account of these causes and conditions, he will later be able toleave behind the homelife and gain the Way." From

all sorts of reasons such as these, [we can see that] the benefit of leaving the home life is that it brings about an immeasurable number of fine qualities as a result.

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Dhyana (Ch'an/Zen) Absorption

(T25.180c13-181a11 [fasc.17])

Dhyana absorption refers to the refraining from (lit. "drawing in") disordered thoughts. Disordered thoughts float lightly about even more readily than goose down. They gallop along and scatter ceaselessly, moving faster than a swift wind. Their uncontrollability and unstopability are more extreme than that of monkeys. [The suddenness of] their momentary appearance and disappearance exceeds that

of lightning bolts. It is the characteristic of thought to be unrestrictable and unstoppable in this manner. If one wishes to control it, in the absence of dhyana, one will not achieve absorption. This is as stated in a verse:

Dhyana is the treasury for the retaining of wisdom
And the field of merit for qualities which are worthy.
Dhyana is the water which is clear and which is pure.
It is able to wash away the dust of the desires.

Dhyana is armor which is made of adamant.
Able it is to ward off the arrows of affliction.
Although one's not yet reached [nirvana] "without residue",
A share in nirvana [nonetheless] has been attained.

One acquires then the coursing in adamantine samadhi,
Smashes then and shatters the mountain of the fetters.
One attains the power of six superknowledges
And is able to deliver a number of people beyond count.

Dust raised by tumult may obscure the sky and sun,
[Yet] a heavy rain may soak [and rinse] it all away.
The winds of reflection and deliberation scatter thought,

[But] the absorption of dhyana can extinguish [both of] them.

Furthermore, dhyana absorption is difficult to attain. Only if the practitioner singlemindedly and exclusively strives without stint will he attain it. Even the gods, spiritual recluses are unable to attain it, how much the less the lazy-minded among the ordinary folk.

When the Buddha was sitting in dhyana beneath the nyagrodha tree, the three daughters of the King of Maras set forth a question in verse, saying:

Sitting alone amongst the forest trees,
The sixfold faculties always still and quiet.
It seems as if you've lost a precious jewel,
[But] have no pain of worry or distress.

In all the World your visage has no peer,
And yet you always sit with your eyes closed.
The thoughts of each of us possess a doubt:
What do you seek in dwelling in this place?

Then the World Honored One replied in verse:

As I have found the flavor of nirvana,

I don't find pleasure dwelling in tainted love.
Within, without, the thieves have been expelled.
Your father too: destroyed and sought retreat.

I have discovered the flavor of sweet dew,
In peace and bliss I sit within the forest.
The many beings (entwined in) fondness and love-
For all their sakes I raise compassionate thoughts.

At this time the three daughters felt ashamed and said to
themselves, "This man has transcended desire and cannot be moved." Then
they disappeared and showed themselves no more.

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Dhyana (Ch'an/Zen) Meditation and Desires

(T25.181a.11-24 [fasc.17])

Question: What skillful means does one practice to achieve dhyana paramita?

Reply: Dispense with five matters, namely the five [sense] objects. Get rid of five dharmas, namely the five coverings. Practice five practices, namely the five "branches" of the first dhyana. What is meant by dispensing with five matters? One must renounce the five types of desire. How pitiful beings are! They are constantly afflicted by the five types of desire and yet they still continue to seek after them incessantly.

As for these five types of desire, when one obtains them they

only become even more intense. This is just as if one were to resort to fire to cauterize an itch. [Pursuing] the five desires is without benefit, just as when a dog gnaws away at a bone. [Chasing after] the five desires increases disputation, just as when birds skirmish over carrion. The five desires burn a person just as [surely as one is burned] carrying a torch into the wind. The five desires injure a person, just as if one were to step on a venomous serpent. The five desires are devoid of real substance, like something obtained in a dream. The five desires are not long-lasting, as if borrowed for only an instant. Worldly people foolishly and deludedly lust after and cling to the five desires, not forsaking them until they die. On account of them, in later lives, they undergo immeasurable suffering.

This is analogous to a fool who, greedily attached to a type of fine fruit, climbs the tree and consumes them [with such zeal that] he cannot bring himself to make a timely descent [even when] someone begins to chop down his tree. The tree topples over, he plummets to the ground and, smashing his body and head, dies an agonizing death.

Moreover these five desires, when attained, are blissful [only] for a moment. When lost, there is great suffering. This is like a person licking a honey-smearing blade who out of greed for the sweetness doesn't know he injures his tongue. People indulge the five desires after the same fashion as animals. Those possessed of wisdom are aware of this and are able naturally to distance themselves from those

[objects of desire].

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The Four Immeasurable Minds

From Nagarjuna Bodhisattva's Treatise on the Great Perfection
of Wisdom

(T25.208c9-211c27 [fasc.20])

As for the four immeasurable minds, they are loving - kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity. Loving - kindness refers to being affectionately mindful of [other] beings such that one constantly seeks to benefit them with situations which induce peace, security and bliss. Compassion refers to being sympathetically mindful of beings' undergoing of all manner of physical and mental suffering in the five paths. Sympathetic joy refers to the desire to cause beings to go from the experiencing of pleasure to the realization of joyfulness.

Equanimity (she = upek.saa) refers to the relinquishing (she) of the

three [other immeasurable] minds such that one is simply mindful of beings in such a way that one is not either averse or affectionate towards them.

One cultivates the mind of loving - kindness for the sake of getting rid of initial thoughts (vitarka, as opposed to secondary thought, vicaara) [characterized by] hatred towards beings. One cultivates the mind of compassion for the sake of getting rid of initial thoughts [characterized by] affliction towards beings. One cultivates the mind of sympathetic joy for the sake of getting rid of displeasure towards beings. One cultivates the mind of equanimity for the sake of getting rid of affection and hatred towards beings.

Question: (#1/208c12) The four immeasurable minds and so forth on up to the ten pervasive elements (DFB.137b,180c: yi chye chu / k.rtsnaayatana) were already treated in the [discussion of] the four dhyanas. Why then do you now proceed with a separate discussion?

Reply: Although they were already brought up in the [discussion of] the four dhyanas, if one did not undertake a separate discussion of the names of these dharmas then one would not become aware of their merits. This is analogous to having precious things inside of a bag: If one fails to open it up and bring them out then people will not know of them. If there be one who desires to gain great blessings and merit one explains the four immeasurable minds for their sakes. If there be a person who is distressed by and disgusted with form, [regarding it] as if

imprisoned [by it], one explains for him the four formless absorptions. [If there is one who] is unable to gain independence in the midst of conditions such that he can contemplate freely and at will [anything] which he takes as an [objective] condition, one explains for him the eight realms of dominance (ba sheng chu = abhibhvaayatana). If there is one whose path is blocked off such that he cannot achieve a breakthrough, one explains for him the eight liberations (DFB.136a vimok.sa). If there is one who cannot proceed sequentially from [one level of] dhyana to enter another [level of] dhyana, one explains for his sake the nine sequential absorptions. If there is one who cannot achieve the universal illumination of all conditions such that he can freely and at will gain liberation, one explains for his sake the ten pervasive elements.

If one brings to mind the beings of the ten directions, when one aspires to] cause them to gain happiness, there arises one of the dharmas associated with mind known as loving -kindness. The dharmas within the sphere of the feeling, perception, formative factor and consciousness aggregates which correspond to loving - kindness together with those physical karmas, verbal karmas and formative factor [dharmas] not associated with the mind which are generated by this dharma [of loving - kindness] are all collectively referred to as loving - kindness. Because they [are generated] on account of loving - kindness they take loving - kindness as that which is primary. It is for this reason that [they are all] referred to as loving - kindness.

This is analogous to the case of mind dharmas and dharmas associated with the mind. Although they constitute karmic causes and conditions [arising] in subsequent incarnations, still, they are simply referred to under the rubric of "consideration" (ssu / cetana). This is because it is "consideration" which possesses the most power in the creation of karma. The case is the same with compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity.

Loving - kindness is [operative] in the form realm. It may be [characterized as] either "with outflows" or "without outflows," as "subject to cutting off" or as "not subject to cutting off." It is present in both the basic - level dhyanas* (gen ben chan) as well as within the dhyanas proper. It is associated with three faculties. It is excluded in the faculties of suffering and of worry. The Abhidharma discusses such distinctions as these.

Because there is a seizing on the appearance of a "being" it is [characterized as] "with outflows." Because after having once seized on the appearance of a being one may then [eventually] gain access to the true character of dharmas it may [also] be [characterized as] "without outflows." It is for this reason that it says in The Questions of Inexhaustible Intellect Bodhisattva, "Loving - kindness is of three kinds. The first takes beings as its [objective] condition. The second takes dharmas as its [objective] conditions. The third takes nothing whatsoever as its [objective] condition.

Question: (#2/209a8) How does one go about cultivating these four immeasurable minds?

[Loving-kindness Which Takes Beings as the {Objective} Condition][209a9]

Reply: As the Buddha explains in many places in the Sutras,

"There are bhikshus who, on account of taking up thoughts associated with loving - kindness, are devoid of enmity (hwei), devoid of animosity (hen), devoid of hostility (ywan) and devoid of cruelty (nao). They well cultivate a mind of loving - kindness which is vast, great and immeasurable and so realize an understanding which is universally pervasive. With respect to the beings in the worlds to the east he generates a mind of loving - kindness [through which] he realizes an understanding which is universally pervasive. So too does he [carry out this contemplation] with respect to the beings in the [rest of] the ten directions: to the south, to the west, to the north, to the four midpoints, above and below. And so too does he take up in this very same manner the mind associated with compassion, the mind associated with sympathetic joy and the mind associated with equanimity."

As for the mind associated with loving - kindness, loving - kindness is a dharma belonging to the mind. It has the ability to get rid of befuddlement and turbidity in the mind, namely the so-called afflictions of hatred (chen), animosity (hen), niggardliness (jyan), desire (tan) and so forth. It is analogous to the water - purifying

jewel which when placed in turbid water causes that water to immediately become clear.

As for being devoid of enmity (hui) and animosity (hen), if, with or without reason, one feels hatefulness (chen) towards beings or if one is desirous of cursing, scolding, vilifying, killing, injuring, plundering or pillaging, this is referred to as hatred (chen). If one waits for the opportune time or place when one possesses the requisite power whereupon one will inflict injury, this is referred to as animosity (hen). To employ loving kindness to get rid of these two phenomena is what is meant by being without hatred (chen) or enmity (hen), without hostility (ywan) and without cruelty (nao).

Animosity (hen) is just cruelty (nao). The initial stage of aversion is animosity (hen). When animosity (hen) goes on for a long time then it becomes hostility (ywan). The inflicting of injury through karma of the body or mouth is referred to as cruelty (nao).

Then again [another explanation has it that] the initial generation of the fetter of hatred (chen jye) is what is referred to as hatred (chen), while when that hatred (chen) increases and endures and when it is accompanied by scheming and by a holding on and attaching to it, as long as this has not yet been resolved in the mind this is what is known as animosity (hen). It is also referred to as hostility (ywan). If the mind has already become fixed [in it] and one has no fear or anxiety [about acting on it], then this is what is referred to as cruelty

(nao). If one employs the power of the mind of loving - kindness to get rid of these three matters, this is what is meant by being without hatred (chen), without animosity (hen), without hostility (ywan) and without cruelty (nao).

It was on account of [the virtues of] being without hatred (chen), without animosity (hen), without hostility (ywan) and without cruelty (nao) that the Buddha praised the mind of loving - kindness. All beings fear suffering while being desirous of and attached to pleasure. Hatred (chen) is the cause and condition for suffering. Loving - kindness is the cause and condition for pleasure. When a being hears that this samadhi of loving - kindness is able to get rid of suffering and is able to provide pleasure he [may] single - mindedly, earnestly and vigorously cultivate this samadhi and on account of this may be without hatred (chen), without animosity (hen), without hostility (ywan) and without cruelty (nao).

As for [the mind of loving - kindness] being "vast, great and immeasurable", [this] single great mind, when analyzed, possesses [these] three names. "Vast" refers to a single direction. "Great" refers to being lofty and far - reaching. "Immeasurable" refers to the direction of the nadir as well as the [other] nine directions.

Then again, [it may be explained that] the inferior direction is described as "vast", that which is in between is described as "great" and that which is above is "immeasurable". Yet again, [one may say that] a

mind which takes the beings of the four directions as the [objective] condition may be referred to as "vast", a mind which takes the beings of the four midpoints as the [objective condition may be referred to as "great" and a mind which takes the beings of the superior and inferior directions as the [objective] condition may be referred to as "immeasurable". Then again [one may say that] the mind which destroys hatred and animosity (chen hen) may be described as "vast", the mind which destroys hostility (ywan) may be described as "great", and the mind which destroys cruelty (nao) may be described as "immeasurable". Then again [one may say] that all minds characterized by afflictions may be referred to as petty because they are carried on by petty people and because they produce [only] petty matters. Among these [afflictions], hatred (chen), animosity (hen), hostility (ywan) and cruelty (nao) are even pettier yet. That which destroys these pettiest among the petty is referred to as "vast, great and immeasurable." Why is that? Because great causes and conditions are always able to destroy petty matters.

As for the mind which is "vast," because it fears [creating] offenses and because it fears falling into the hells, it gets rid of the evil dharmas in the mind. As for the mind which is "great," because it has faith in and takes pleasure in the resultant retribution of blessings and merit, it gets rid of the evil mind. As for the mind which is "immeasurable," it gets rid of the evil mind on account of the desire to realize nirvana.

Then again, [one may also say that] because the practitioner is pure in his upholding of the prohibitions, this mind is "vast," because dhyana absorption is perfected, this mind is "great," and because wisdom is brought to completion, this mind is "immeasurable."

One employs this mind of loving - kindness to be mindful of those sages who have realized the Way. This is referred to as the "immeasurable" mind. This is because one employs the immeasurable Dharma(s) to make distinctions among the sages. Because it is mindful of the honorable and noble points of gods and humans, [this mind] is referred to as a "great" mind. Because one is mindful of all of the other inferior and base beings as well as [those abiding in] the three paths of evil, this [mind] is referred to as a "vast" mind.

When it is directed towards those beings for which one holds affection, because the thoughts of loving - kindness are more vast than when one is mindful [only] of oneself, [this mind] is referred to as a "vast" mind. When one employs loving - kindness in being mindful of people who are "in between," this [mind] is referred to as a "great" mind. When one employs loving - kindness to be mindful of people towards whom one feels hostility and whom one detests, because its merits are manifold, [this mind] is referred to as an "immeasurable" mind.

Then again, where it is employed for the sake of a mind which is narrow, it is referred to as "vast," where it is employed for the sake of a mind which is small, it is referred to as "great," and where it is

employed for the sake of a mind which is of limited capacity, it is referred to as "immeasurable." One may make distinctions such as these with regard to the meanings.

As for [the words] "well cultivates," this mind is induring.

When the mind of loving - kindness is [only] first realized it is not described as "cultivated." It is not when directed solely towards beings of whom one is affectionately mindful, not when directed solely towards beings who are good, not when directed solely towards beings who are beneficial to oneself, and not when directed solely towards beings of a single region that it is described as "well cultivated."

When one practices [loving - kindness] for a long time one develops a deep affection and a feeling of pleasure which is correct, equal and undifferentiating in its extending towards the three categories of beings: those towards whom one has felt affection, those whom one has detested and those towards whom one has been neutral. In beholding all of the beings of the ten directions and the five paths of rebirth one employs a singular mind of loving - kindness, [regarding them all] as one's father, as one's mother, as one's brothers, as one's sisters, sons, nephews, [nieces], and friends. One constantly looks for their good aspects, and wishes to bring about their benefit, their peace and their security. In this fashion one's mind [of loving - kindness] universally pervades to all of the beings of the ten directions. [When one employs] the mind of loving - kindness in this fashion this is to take beings as

the [objective] condition. For the most part it is [the level] practiced among common people or perhaps among those with more to study who have not yet brought outflows to an end.

[Loving-kindness Which Takes Dharmas as the {Objective} Condition][209b29]

Those whose practice takes dharmas as the [objective] condition include those arhats who have put an end to outflows, the pratyeka buddhas and the buddhas. Because all of these sages have destroyed the characteristics of a self and have extinguished the characteristics of unity and difference, they simply contemplate that it is from an [apparent] continuity of causes and conditions that all desires are generated. When they take up loving - kindness in their mindfulness of beings, [they observe] that they are produced from an [apparent] continuity on the part of a conjunction of causes and conditions and [observe that] it is only five empty aggregates which constitute beings. In their mindfulness of the five aggregates they take up loving - kindness and [so] are mindful that beings are unaware of this emptiness of dharmas. Thus [beings] constantly and single - mindedly seek after pleasure. The sages have sympathy for them and so cause them to gain pleasure according to their aspirations. Because this [practice is carried out] for the sake of mundane worldly dharmas it is referred to as [practice which takes] dharmas as the [objective] condition.

[Loving-kindness With Nothing Whatsoever as the {Objective} Condition][209c6]

As for [the loving - kindness] which takes nothing whatsoever as the [objective] condition, this loving - kindness is possessed only by the buddhas. Why is that? The mind of the buddha does not abide in either the conditioned or unconditioned nature. It does not rely upon or rest in the past, the future or the present eras and is aware that no conditions are real [as their existence] is a result of the deceptiveness of inverted views. The [Buddha's] mind has nothing whatsoever which it takes as a condition. Because beings are not aware of this true character of all dharmas and so come and go in the five paths [of rebirth], their minds attaching to dharmas and making distinctions whereby they either seize upon or avoid [them], the Buddha employs this wisdom [which perceives] the true character of all dharmas to cause beings to realize it [themselves]. This is what is referred to as [the loving - kindness which takes] nothing whatsoever as the [objective] condition.

[Three Kinds of Loving -kindness Like Three Levels of Giving][209c12]

This is like providing for a person who is poor. Perhaps one gives him money and material things. Perhaps one gives him gold, silver and precious valuables. Or perhaps one gives him an actual "as- you-

wish- it" pearl. [The loving - kindness practice which] takes beings as the [objective] condition, [the loving - kindness practice which] takes dharmas as the [objective] condition and [the loving - kindness practice which takes] nothing whatsoever as the [objective] condition are just like these. This constitutes a summary discussion of the meaning of the mind of loving - kindness.

[The Mind of Compassion][209c14]

The meaning of the mind of compassion is just like this. With a mind of sympathy and pity one universally contemplates the sufferings of the beings of the ten directions and then composes this thought, "Beings are pitiable. Don't allow them to undergo all of these various kinds of suffering." And so in the same way [one takes up] the mind devoid of hatred (chen), [the mind] devoid of animosity (hen), [the mind] devoid of hostility (ywan), and [the mind] devoid of cruelty (nao) and so proceeds forth until [one directs these thoughts] towards [the beings of] the ten directions in like manner.

Question: [#3/209c17] There are three kinds of beings: There are those [beings] such as the gods and a minor fraction of humans who experience pleasure. There are those [beings] such as [the inhabitants of] the three paths of evil and a minor fraction of humans who experience suffering. There are those constituting a minor fraction [of the

inhabitants] of the five paths [of rebirth] who experience neither suffering nor pleasure. Why then is it that the practitioner of loving - kindness contemplates all beings as experiencing pleasure and the practitioner of compassion contemplates all beings as experiencing suffering?

Reply: When the practitioner desires to study this immeasurable mind of loving - kindness, he first formulates an aspiration wherein he wishes that all beings may be able to experience all manner of pleasure. He takes up this image of people experiencing pleasure, focusses his mind and then enters dhyana [meditation]. This image gradually increases in its breadth such that he then perceives all beings as experiencing pleasure.

[Loving-kindness Contemplation Like Lighting a Fire][209c24]

This is analogous to using drilling to ignite a fire. First one fuels it with tender hay and dry cow pies. When the intensity of the blaze grows great it is able to consume even huge wet logs. The samadhi of loving - kindness is just like this. When one first generates the loving - kindness aspiration it extends only to one's relatives, one's clan and one's friends. When the mind of loving - kindness grows vast [in its scope], enemies and friends alike are identically and equally seen as achieving happiness. This is on account of the consummation of

increase and growth in the dhyana absorption of loving - kindness. [The development of] the mind of compassion, the mind of sympathetic joy and the mind of equanimity is just like this.

Question: [#4/209c28] In [cultivating]the mind of compassion one takes up the image of people undergoing suffering and in [cultivating] the mind of sympathetic joy one takes up the image of people experiencing joy. In [cultivating] the mind of equanimity, what sort of image does one take up?

Reply: One takes up the image of people undergoing neither suffering nor pleasure. On account of this mind's gradually increasing and growing more vast the practitioner perceives absolutely everyone as undergoing neither suffering nor pleasure.

Question: [#5/210a2] There ought to be blessings and merit inherent in [the cultivation of] each of these three kinds of mind. What benefit does [cultivation of] this mind of equanimity hold for those beings beset by neither suffering nor pleasure?

Reply: The practitioner formulates this thought: "Whenever any being leaves behind pleasure he experiences suffering. Whenever he is undergoing suffering, that [too] is just suffering. Whenever he gains [the state of] neither suffering nor pleasure then he is peaceful and secure. It is with this [result] that benefit is achieved.

When the practitioner cultivates the mind of loving - kindness or

the mind of sympathetic joy there may be times when the mind of desire and attachment arises* (*see the counteractive siddhaanta's warnings about the sometimes pathogenic effects of loving - kindness practice).

When cultivating the mind of compassion there may be times when the mind of worry and distress arises. On account of this desire or worry the mind may become disturbed. When one accesses this mind of equanimity one gets rid of this desire and worry. It is because desire and worry are gotten rid of that [this mind] is referred to as the mind of equanimity.

Question: [#6/210a9] It is obvious that there are distinctions between the mind of compassion and the mind of equanimity. [However], the mind of loving - kindness [aspires] to cause beings to develop [a state of] pleasure [while] the mind of sympathetic joy [aspires] to cause beings to develop [a state of] joy. What sorts of differences are there between pleasure and joy?

Reply: Physical pleasure (shen le) is referred to as "pleasure" (le), [whereas] mental pleasure (syin le) is referred to as "joy" (syi). Pleasure (le) which corresponds to the five [sensory] consciousnesses is referred to as "pleasure" (le), [whereas] pleasure (le) which corresponds to the intellectual consciousness is referred to as "joy" (syi). Pleasure (le) which arises from among the five [types of sense] objects is referred to as "pleasure" (le), [whereas] pleasure (le) which arises from among the dharmic objects [of mind] is referred to as "joy" (syi).

Initially, one seeks [to bring about] pleasure, wishing to cause

beings to be able to follow up on that pleasure so that because of it they are influenced to realize joy. This is like when a person takes pity on someone who is impoverished, first providing precious things. This corresponds to "pleasure." Afterwards he teaches the person how to go into business [for himself], thus enabling him to gain the pleasures of the five kinds of desire. This corresponds to "joy."

Then again, [one may explain that] "pleasure" refers to that pleasure of the desire realm which one wishes to cause beings to gain, [whereas] "joy" refers to that pleasure of the form realm which one wishes to cause beings to gain.

Then again, [one may explain that] "pleasure" refers to those desire realm pleasures corresponding to the five [sensory] consciousnesses, to those pleasures of three consciousnesses [experienced] in the first dhyana and to all bliss [experienced] in the third dhyana, [whereas] "joy" refers to that pleasure which corresponds to the intellectual consciousness in the desire realm up to the first dhyana and all pleasure experienced in the second dhyana.

[Pleasure & Joy Compared to Phases of Medicinal Action][210a20-23]

[One may also explain that] coarse pleasures constitute "pleasure" whereas subtle pleasures constitute "joy," that in the realm of cause it is referred to as "pleasure" [while] in the realm of effect

it is referred to as "joy," or that when one first gains pleasure, that is referred to as "pleasure," whereas when the delighted mind generates characteristics of pleasure inwardly [while also] outwardly bringing forth singing, dancing and leaping about, that is referred to as "joy." This is analogous to when one first takes medicine. This corresponds to "pleasure." [Then}, when the medicine becomes active and permeates the entire body, that corresponds to "joy."

Question: [#7/210a23] If this is the case why are these two minds not conjoined into a single immeasurable [mind], but rather are instead distinguished into two separate dharmas?

Reply: In the beginning, because the practitioner's mind is not yet focussed he is not yet able to develop a deep affection for beings and so is only [able to aspire to] bestowing pleasure. When his mind becomes focussed, because he then possesses a deep affection for beings he [aspires to] bestow joy. It is on account of this that pleasure is placed first and joy is placed after it.

Question: [#8/210a27] If that is the case, why then are [the mind of] loving - kindness and [the mind of] sympathetic joy not [listed] in sequential order?

Reply: When cultivating the mind of loving - kindness one holds an affection for beings like for [one's own] child. One wishes to bestow pleasure [upon them]. Because when one emerges from the samadhi of loving - kindness one observes beings undergoing all sorts of sufferings

one develops a mind of deep affection which feels pity for beings and which [aspires] to cause them to achieve profound [levels of] pleasure. This is analogous to parents who, although normally feeling affection for a child, find that if he develops an acute illness their mind of affection grows more intense. The bodhisattva is just like this. When he accesses the mind of compassion and contemplates the sufferings of beings a mind of pity arises and he then [aspires to] bestow profound [levels of] pleasure. It is for this reason that the mind of compassion is placed in between [the mind of loving - kindness and the mind of sympathetic joy].

Question: (#9/210b4) If one possesses a deep affection for beings like this, how then does one cultivate the mind of equanimity?

Reply: The cultivator contemplates thus: "I must never [retreat into] equanimity (i.e. "relinquish"* Both the Sanskrit [upek.saa] and Chinese [she] preserve this sense of "disregard," "ignore," "relinquish") as regards beings, but should only establish equanimity with respect to these [other] three kinds of [immeasurable] mind." Why? This is to prevent the deterioration of other dharmas. It is also because although one employs the mind of loving - kindness in aspiring to cause beings to experience pleasure, still, one is unable to cause them to experience pleasure. Although one employs the mind of compassion in aspiring to cause beings to transcend suffering, still, one is unable to cause them to succeed in transcending suffering. Nor when one cultivates the mind

of sympathetic joy is one able to cause beings to achieve great joy. These are only reflective contemplations. They have not yet become actual circumstances. If one desires to cause beings to be able to achieve these as actual circumstances, one must bring forth the mind to become a buddha, cultivate the six paaramitaas, and bring to completion the dharmas of a buddha [whereby one may] cause beings to gain real happiness (le). It is on account of this that one develops equanimity with respect to these [other] three [immeasurable] minds and accesses the mind of equanimity.

Then again, [it may be explained that] when practicing in accord with loving - kindness, compassion and sympathetic joy it is difficult to develop equanimity with respect to beings. [But] because one accesses this mind of equanimity it becomes easy to transcend.

Question: [#10/210b14] Even when the bodhisattva cultivates the six paaramitaas and even when he has gone so far as to realize buddhahood, he is still unable to cause all beings to transcend suffering and gain happiness (le). Why is this the case? Because one only speaks of these three [immeasurable] minds. A mind of reflective contemplation arises. [But] there are no actual [corresponding] circumstances.

Reply: When this bodhisattva becomes a buddha, although he is unable to cause all beings to achieve happiness, still the bodhisattva generates the great vow. From this great vow he gains as retribution the effect of great blessings and merit. Because he gains great retribution

he is able to greatly benefit common people.

When the Hearers cultivate these four immeasurable minds they do so for the sake of self discipline and self benefit. In that case too there is only an empty mindfulness of beings. When the bodhisattva cultivates this mind of loving - kindness, it is out of a desire to cause beings to transcend suffering and gain happiness (le). From the causes and conditions of this mind of loving kindness he not only creates blessings and merit for himself. He also instructs others in the creation of blessings and merit. When one receives the resultant retribution perhaps one becomes a wheel - turning sage king. Or perhaps the bodhisattva leaves behind the home life cultivates dhyana, leads forth and guides beings, instructing them and influencing them to cultivate dhyana [so that they] succeed in being born into pure realms where they experience immeasurable mental happiness (syin le). If when one becomes a buddha one makes offerings to immeasurable asemkyayas of beings and then enters into the nirvana without residue, when one compares this with empty mental altruistic aspirations, this is a great benefit. And it extends on to the point of the shariira and remaining Dharma being of great benefit.

Moreover, if one single buddha completely brought to deliverance all beings, other buddhas would then have no one further to bring to deliverance. In this case then there would be no buddhas of the future and so this would constitute the cutting off of the lineage of the

buddhas. There are faults such as these. For this reason one single buddha does not bring all beings to deliverance.

Moreover, this nature of beinghood exists on account of delusion (chr). It is not actually a fixed dharma. Even if all of the buddhas of the three periods of time and ten directions sought to find some reality in beinghood, still, it could not be found. How then could there be a complete bringing to deliverance of all of them.

Question: [#11/210c3] If it is the case that they are empty and so cannot all be brought to deliverance, then even in the case of a lesser number of them they will all still be entirely empty. How then could one cross over even a lesser number [of beings]?

Reply: I said that because even if all of the buddhas of the ten directions and three periods of time sought [to discover the reality in] all beings, they would be unsuccessful and so therefore there are no [beings] whatsoever who are brought to deliverance. You had posed the difficulty in which you had asked why they are not all brought to deliverance. This amounted to your having fallen into defeat. You were unable to extricate yourself from that situation of defeat, but then posed [another] difficulty in which you asked, "Among those nonexistent beings how could one cross over even a few of them?" This amounts to having fallen into a double defeat.

Moreover, if looked at from the standpoint of the true character of all dharmas and the supreme meaning then there are not only no beings,

but there is no "bringing to deliverance" either. It is solely based on Worldly mundane dharmas that one speaks of there being a bringing to deliverance. You are seeking for the supreme meaning in the sphere of worldly and mundane. This is an impossible endeavor. This is analogous to the impossibility of succeeding in finding precious jewels among tiles and stones.

Moreover, all of the merit which accrues to the buddhas from the time of first bringing forth the mind [intent on bodhi] to the time when their Dharma has come to an end, all of it, because it has a beginning and an end, exists within the sphere of created dharmas which are finite and measurable. And so the number of beings crossed over ought to be measurable. It should not be the case that one employs a measurable dharma in the sphere of causes, conditions, effects and retributions to entirely bring to deliverance an immeasurable number of beings.

[The Falling Arrow Analogy]

This is analogous to [the circumstance of] a great warrior. Although the power of his bow is great, once the arrow has flown far, it is [still] bound to fall [to the ground].

[The Kalpa-ending Fire Analogy]

It is also analogous to the great conflagration at the end of the kalpa which incinerates the trichiliocosm and which possesses brightness which is immeasurable in its illumination. Although it goes on for a long time, still, it is bound to finally be extinguished. The bodhisattva's realization of buddhahood is just like this. From the time he first brings forth the intention, he grasps the bow of vigor, uses the arrow of wisdom [which plunges] deep into the Buddha Dharma [and so] greatly accomplishes the work of the buddhas. But still, this too is bound to finally be extinguished. When the bodhisattva realizes the knowledge of all modes his body puts forth light which illuminates an immeasurable number of worlds. Every single ray of light transforms into an immeasurable [number of] bodies. They bring to deliverance an immeasurable number of beings throughout the ten directions. After the nirvana, the eighty - four thousand fold accumulation of dharmas and the shariira [continue to] transform and bring beings to deliverance. [However], like the illumination from the fire at the end of the kalpa, though it goes on for a long time, still, it is finally extinguished.

Question: [#12/210c22] You yourself stated that the rays of light transform into an immeasurable number of bodies which bring to deliverance an immeasurable number of beings throughout the ten directions. Why then do you now say that because the causes and conditions are measurable, those who are brought to deliverance ought also to be measurable in number.

Reply: There are two types of "immeasurability." The first refers to actual immeasurability. It is such that the sages cannot even measure it. For example, empty space, nirvana, and the nature of beings are all such that one cannot measure them. In the case of the second [type of immeasurability] there do exist methods whereby they can be measured, however, those of lesser power are unable to measure them. For example, the weight of Mount Sumeru and the number of drops in the great ocean. The buddhas and bodhisattvas are able to know them. But they are such that the gods and worldlings cannot know them. A buddha's bringing to deliverance of beings is also like this. The buddhas are able to know. But it is not a thing such as the likes of you might be able to reach up to it. And so therefore we say, "immeasurable."

Then again, because dharmas are the product of the coming together of causes and conditions they are devoid of an inherent nature. Because they are devoid of an inherent nature, they are eternally empty. It is impossible to get at any being in the sphere of eternal emptiness. This is as declared by the Buddha:

When I sat in the place of enlightenment (bodhima.n.da)

It was such as wisdom could not realize.

[As] with an empty fist tricking little children,

It was done to bring all to deliverance.

The true character of all dharmas

Is just [identical to] the characteristic of beinghood.

If one seizes upon the characteristic of being hood,

Then one strays far from the Way of reality.

If one constantly bears in mind the characteristic of eternal
emptiness,

This person contradicts the practice of the Way.

[Though] among the dharmas which are neither produced nor
destroyed,

[He] nonetheless makes discriminations among characteristics.

If one makes discriminations or engages in reflective
intellection,

This then is the net of Mara.

To be unmoving, nondependent and have nothing in which one rests:

This then is the imprint of Dharma.

Question: [#13/211a] If it is the case that [concern with]
"pleasure" (le) has a two - fold division [under the] mind of loving -
kindness and [under the] mind of sympathetic joy, why is not the
contemplation of suffering on the part of the mind of compassion not
[also] divided into two?

Reply: Because pleasure is that which all beings love and esteem as important it is divided into two. Because this suffering is disliked and not born in mind it is not divided into two.

Moreover, when one experiences pleasure, the mind is pliant. When one suffers, the mind is rigid. Take for example Viitashoka, the younger brother of King Ashoka who became the king of Jambudviipa for seven days during which he was able to freely indulge in all of the most marvelous experiences of the five desires. After seven days had passed, King Ashoka asked him, "Did the ruler of Jambudviipa experience flourishing pleasure and delight or not?"

He replied, "I did not see it, I did not hear it and I was not aware of it. Why? Because every day the ca.n.daala rang a bell and sang forth in a loud voice, 'Of the seven days, yeah many days have already gone by. After the seven days have past you will die.' When I heard this voice, even though I was the King of Jambudviipa [and in possession of] the most marvelous [experiences of the] five desires, because the suffering of distress was so profound, I neither heard nor saw."

From this we can know that the power of suffering is greater and the power of pleasure is weak. [Even] if a person experiences pleasure which permeates his entire body, if he experiences one needle prick in one place [on his body], all of the manifold pleasures are lost and he experience only the pain of the puncture. Because the power of pleasure is weak the two - fold division [is employed] making it more potent.

Because the power of suffering is greater [treating it in a single place is adequate for clarifications purposes.

Question: [#14/211a24] What sorts of resultant retributions are gained from the practice of the four immeasurable minds?

Reply: The Buddha stated that if one enters this samadhi of loving - kindness, one gains five types of merit in the present: One can enter fire and not be burned, be poisoned and yet not die, be attached by the blades of the army and not be injured, be immune in the end from violent death, and be guarded by good spirits. On account of benefitting an immeasurable number of beings one gains these immeasurable blessings and qualities. On account of employing this outflow - level immeasurable mind while taking beings as the [objective] condition, one is born into a pure place, the so-called form realm.

Question: [#15/211a29] Why did the Buddha state that it is the retribution for loving - kindness to be reborn in the Brahma heaven?

Reply: This is because the Brahma heaven is revered and prized by beings and because everyone has heard of it and everyone knows of it. The Buddha resided in the country of India. In India, the Brahmans are always numerous. According to the dharma of the Brahmans, all blessings and merit are entirely dedicated to the aspiration to be born in the Brahma heaven. If beings hear that cultivating loving - kindness results in being reborn in the Brahma heaven, then they will have faith in and cultivate the dharma of loving - kindness. It is for this reason that it

is said that cultivating loving - kindness results in being born in the Brahma heaven.

Then again, those heavens in which sexual desire is cut off are all referred to as "brahman." When one speaks of "brahman" it subsumes the entire form realm. It is for this reason that the dharma of cutting of sexual desire is referred to as "brahman conduct" while transcending desire is also referred to as "brahman." If one speaks of "brahman" this subsumes then the four dhyanas and the four formless absorptions.

Then again, because initial and discursive thought are difficult to extinguish, he did not mention the names of higher grounds. This is analogous to the case of the five precepts where in speaking of the regulations regarding verbal conduct one speaks only of one type, "false speech," while actually subsuming therein three [other] matters* (*abusive speech, duplicitous speech, and frivolous speech).

Question: [16/211b10] [The practice of] loving - kindness is possessed of five meritorious qualities. Why is there no discussion of meritorious qualities with respect to compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity?

Reply: It is just as with the above analogy wherein one matter subsumes three others. If one speaks of loving - kindness one has already thereby spoken of compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity. Moreover, loving - kindness is truly immeasurable. Loving - kindness is like a king whereas the other three follow along like [the king's]

subjects. How is this so? One first employs the mind of loving - kindness and so aspires to cause beings to gain pleasure (le). Because one observes that there are those who do not succeed in gaining pleasure one develops the mind of compassion. Because one wishes to cause beings to transcend suffering so that their minds gain Dharma bliss one develops the mind of sympathetic joy. Because with respect to these three matters one [wishes to be] without aversion, without affection, without desire and without worry one develops the mind of equanimity.

Then again, [one may explain that] it is because [the practice of] loving - kindness involves taking that which is pleasurable and bestowing it on beings [that it is singled out as possessing meritorious qualities].

The Item Added Agama does speak of the mind of compassion being possessed of five meritorious qualities. Its meritorious qualities are spoken of in many places in the Mahayana scriptures. For instance, in The Brilliant Net Bodhisattva Sutra it states, "The bodhisattva dwells among beings and carries on the practice of thirty-two kinds of compassion. [This practice] gradually increases, becomes vast and transforms into the great compassion. The great compassion is the root of the meritorious qualities of all buddhas and bodhisattvas. It is the mother of the Praj~naapaaramitaa and the grandmother of the buddhas. It is on account of the mind of great compassion that the bodhisattva realizes the Praj~naapaaramitaa and it is on account of gaining the

Praj~naapaaramitaa that he realizes buddhahood." In all manner of cases such as these praises are proclaimed for the great compassion. In other places the mind of sympathetic joy and the mind of equanimity are also praised. Because the two matters of loving - kindness and compassion are universal and great the Buddha praised their meritorious qualities. This is because the meritorious qualities of loving - kindness are rare and because it is on account of compassion that one perfects the great karma.

Question: (#17/211b26) In discussing the meritorious qualities of the four immeasurables, the Buddha stated, "If one cultivates assiduously and cultivates well the mind of loving - kindness, the blessings [accruing therefrom] culminate in the heaven of universal purity. If one cultivates assiduously and cultivates well the mind of compassion, the blessings [accruing therefrom] culminate in the station of empty space. If one cultivates assiduously and cultivates well the mind of sympathetic joy, the blessings [accruing therefrom] culminate in the station of consciousness. If one cultivates assiduously and cultivates well the mind of equanimity, the blessings [accruing therefrom] culminate in the station of nothing whatsoever." Why then is it said that the resultant retribution of loving - kindness corresponds to birth in the brahma heaven?

Reply: The Dharma of the Buddhas is inconceivable and ineffable. It is explained like this to accord with what is appropriate for bringing [particular] beings to deliverance. Furthermore, it is because when one

arises from the loving - kindness based meditative absorption it is easy to return towards the third dhyana. [It is because] when one arises from the compassion - based meditative absorption one tends towards the station of empty space. [It is because] when one arises from the sympathetic joy based meditative absorption one enters the station of consciousness. [And it is because] when one arises from the equanimity based meditative absorption, it is easy to enter the station of nothing whatsoever.

Then again [it may be explained that when one cultivates] the mind of loving kindness, one aspires to cause beings to gain pleasure (le). The resultant retribution [from such cultivation] ought naturally to be that one experiences pleasure. It is because the [heaven of] universal purity is the most pleasurable place in the [entire] triple world that it was stated, "the blessings culminate in [the heaven of] universal purity.

[When one cultivates] the mind of compassion one contemplates the suffering of old age, sickness, and cruel injury experienced by beings. A mind of pity arises on the part of the practitioner [and he thinks], "How can I cause them to succeed in transcending suffering? If one acts for the sake of getting rid of inner suffering, then the external suffering will come yet again. If one acts for the sake of getting rid of external suffering, then the internal suffering will come yet again." The practitioner ponders, "If one possesses a body it is definite that one

will experience suffering. It is only in the absence of a body that one will then succeed in being without suffering." [The station of] empty space is capable of breaking [the constraints of] form. Therefore [it was stated that] the blessings [of cultivating compassion] culminate in the station of empty space.

[When one cultivates] the mind of sympathetic joy one aspires to provide beings pleasure on the level of the mind and consciousness. As for pleasure on the level of the mind and consciousness, [it corresponds to] the mind succeeding in leaving the body just as a bird escapes from a cage. Although at the station of empty space the mind does succeed in escaping from the body, the mind is still tied to abiding in empty space. The station of consciousness is immeasurable. The mind and consciousness exist in all dharmas [and so] the consciousness gains unlimited independence. It is for this reason that [it was stated that] the blessings of [cultivating] sympathetic joy culminate in station of consciousness.

As for the mind of equanimity, one develops equanimity with respect to the suffering and pleasure among beings. It is on account of developing equanimity with respect to suffering and pleasure that one realizes the dharma of true equanimity, the so-called station of nothing whatsoever. It is for this reason that [it was stated that] the blessings of [cultivating] the mind of equanimity culminate in the station of nothing whatsoever.

Only the sages [are capable of] realizing the four immeasurables in this fashion [described above]. It is not the case that common people [are capable of this].

Additionally, the Buddha was aware that the disciples of future generations, on account of their dull faculties, would make discriminations and become attached to dharmas and [on account of this] they would engage in erroneous explanations of the characteristics of the four immeasurables, [claiming that] these four immeasurable minds are only [in effect on the level of] those with outflows because they take beings as the [objective] condition, [claiming that] because they can only take the desire realm as the [objective] condition they are nonexistent in the form realm. Why? Because in the form realm one does not take the desire realm as [an objective] condition.

In order to cut off erroneous views on the part of people such as these the explained that the four immeasurable minds [are even in effect] in the formless realm. Because in the Buddha's implementation of the four immeasurable minds, he universally takes all beings of the ten directions as [objective] conditions, it ought to be the case that he also takes [beings abiding] in the formless realm as [objective] conditions. This is as in The Questions of Inexhaustible Intellect Bodhisattva wherein it states, "Loving - kindness is of three kinds: That which takes beings as the [objective] condition, that which takes dharmas as the [objective] condition, and that which takes nothing whatsoever as

the [objective] condition."

[In this regard], the author of this commentary declares, "Where beings are taken as the [objective] condition, that is [on the level of] outflows. Where nothing whatsoever is taken as the [objective] condition, that is [on the level of] no outflows. Where dharmas are taken as the [objective] condition, that is sometimes [on the level of] outflows and sometimes [on the level of] no outflows."

And so all kinds [of explanations] such as these [offered above collectively] constitute a summary explanation of the four immeasurable minds.

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[Return to Top of Page](#)

[Dharma World Home Page](#) * [Kalavinka Dharma Notes](#) *

[Dharma Jewels Archive](#) * [Feedback](#)

On Birth into the Family of the Bodhisattvas

(T25.275a6- b18 [f.29])

Sutra: If one wishes to be born into the family of the bodhisattvas, if one wishes to gain the ground of the Kumaara, and if one wishes to never become separated from the buddhas, one should study the Prajnaparamita.

Upadesa: "The family of the bodhisattvas..." If one brings forth a thought of extremely deep compassion for beings, this constitutes birth into the family of the bodhisattvas.

Just as when a person is born into the family of a king, no one dares to slight him and he has no fear of being subjected to hunger or thirst, cold or heat and so forth, so too it is when one enters upon the path of the bodhisattva and is born into the family of the bodhisattvas. Because one is a son of the Buddha, among the gods, dragons, spirits, sages, and so forth, there are none who dare slight him and all regard him with increased respect. He has no fear of the wretched realms of rebirth or of being reborn in inferior status among gods or men. He has no fear that those who follow the way of the Hearers or Pratyekabuddhas or the dialectical masters of externalist paths will come and interfere with his determination.

Moreover, when the bodhisattva first brings forth his resolve, he singlemindedly makes a vow, "From this very day, I shall never again follow any bad thoughts. I wish only to bring about the deliverance and liberation of all beings that they might gain anuttarasamyaksambodhi (the utmost, right and perfect enlightenment)."

Additionally, if the bodhisattva is able to be aware that the actual characteristic of all dharmas is neither produced nor destroyed, he gains the patience arising from the cognition of the nonproduction of dharmas. From this point on he always dwells on the path of the bodhisattva. This is as described by the Buddha in the Vi"se.sacintisuutra:

"When I saw Dipankara Buddha, I gained the patience arising from the cognition of the nonproduction of dharmas and first achieved perfection of the six paramitas. Prior to that time, I did not possess [consummate skillfulness] in giving, morality and so forth."

Furthermore, if the bodhisattva makes this reflection: "If a number of kalpas as numerous as the sands of the Ganges were to constitute one day and one night, and if one used thirty 'days' composed of these days and nights to constitute a month, and twelve of these months to constitute a year, one might pass through ten quadrillion kalpas composed of years like these before encountering a single buddha.

In the place of this buddha one might make offerings, uphold the precepts and accumulate all manner of meritorious qualities, and then subsequently encounter in this fashion a number of buddhas as numerous as the sands of the River Ganges before finally received the prediction of becoming a buddha,"- then the bodhisattva's mind will not lapse into indolence, will not sink into discouragement, will not be overcome with aversion, and will always find pleasure in practice.

Additionally, the bodhisattva develops kindness and compassion for all beings who have become caught up in unorthodox types of meditational absorptions, who have committed the five nefarious deeds, or who have severed their roots of goodness. He then influences them to enter upon the correct way and does not seek for kindness in return.

Also, from the time of first bringing forth the thought on up until the present, the bodhisattva is not occluded or injured by the afflictions.

Moreover, although the bodhisattva contemplates the actual characteristic of all dharmas, he does not develop attachment with respect to any contemplative thought.

Furthermore, the bodhisattva naturally and always speaks true words, even to the point that he does not engage in false speech even in dreams.

Additionally, all forms which the bodhisattva sees, he sees as the forms of the buddha. Because of the power of the samadhi of

mindfulness of the buddha, he does not become attached to any forms.

Also, because the bodhisattva observes all beings continually turning about in the suffering of birth and death, his mind finds no attachment in any pleasure. He focuses solely on the realization of his vow, reflecting, "Oh, when may I and all these beings finally gain deliverance?"

Moreover, the mind of the bodhisattva develops no attachment for any type of precious jewel. He is able to find bliss only in the Three Jewels (triratna: the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Arya Sangha).

Furthermore, the bodhisattva eternally cuts off sensual desire even to the point that the very thought does not even arise in him, how much the less any actual deed.

Additionally, when beings see the bodhisattva, they immediately gain [the benefit of] the loving kindness samadhi.

Also, the bodhisattva is able to cause all dharmas to become dharmas of the buddha, dharmas which are thereby devoid of the multifarious distinctions of those dharmas characteristic of the Hearers, the Pratyekabuddhas and ordinary people.

Moreover, when the bodhisattva does make distinctions among dharmas, amidst all of those dharmas he does not engender any mark of a dharma nor does he engender any mark of a non- dharma. Innumerable causes and conditions such as these correspond to what is meant by "being born into the family of the bodhisattvas."

Question: From the time that one raises the thought on up until the present, one has already gained birth into the family of the bodhisattvas. Why then is it now said, "One who wishes to be born into the family of the bodhisattvas ... should study the Prajnaparamita?"

Reply: There are two classes of bodhisattva families: families wherein there is turning back in retreat and families wherein there is no turning back in retreat, families which are so only in name and actual families, pure families and "diverse" families, families in which there is the possession of solid faith and families wherein faith is not solid. It is for one who wishes to join such bodhisattva families as are characterized by non- retreat and so forth on up to solid faith that it is said, "One who wishes to be born into the family of the bodhisattvas ... should study the Prajnaparamita."

End Notes

The "Aarya Sa"ngha" refers to those most highly realized beings among the monastic Sangha and so is not to be confused either with the traditional use of the term "Sangha" (referring exclusively to anyone who is a renunciate monk or nun) or with the recently acquired American sense of the term (wherein it is used to refer to anyone whatsoever who thinks of him or herself as a Buddhist). [Back to text]

On Never Becoming Separated From the Buddhas

(T25.275a6-7,275c1-276b20 [f.29])

"If one wishes to never become separated from the Buddhas ..."

In life after life, wherever the bodhisattva is born he encounters the buddhas.

Question: The bodhisattva should be engaged in the transforming of beings. Why then does he desire to constantly encounter the buddhas?

Reply: This is because there are bodhisattvas who have not as yet established themselves in the bodhisattva position, who have not yet gained the stage of the avaivartika, and who have not as yet received specific predictions [of eventual buddhahood]. If they depart far from the buddhas, then they shall suffer damage to their previously-developed roots of goodness and shall become submerged in afflictions. If they are unable under such circumstances to deliver themselves, how could they possibly be able to deliver others? They would become like a person who boards a boat which then breaks apart in mid- river.

Although this person may originally have wished to ferry others across

with him, he instead ends up sinking into the water himself.

These bodhisattvas would also be like a small amount of hot water cast onto the surface of a large frozen pond. Although it does cause some melting in a small area, contrary to the intent, it then just changes into ice.

If the bodhisattva who has not yet entered the Dharma position departs far from the buddhas, because his merit is scant and because he lacks the power of skillful means, even though he brings about a small amount of benefit through his desire to transform beings, contrary to his intentions, he falls away. Because of this the bodhisattva who is still new in his study should not depart far from the buddhas.

Question: If that is the case, why then don't you say that those bodhisattvas should not depart far from the Hearers and Pratyekabuddhas? The Hearers and Pratyekabuddhas are also capable of benefitting the bodhisattva.

Reply: The bodhisattva possesses the great thought. Although the Hearers and Pratyekabuddhas have the benefit of nirvana, because they do not possess omniscience, they are unable to instruct and guide the bodhisattva. Because the buddhas possess the knowledge of all modes, they are capable of instructing and guiding the bodhisattva. It is just as when an elephant sinks down into the mud. Without the assistance of another elephant, he will be unable to get out again. The bodhisattva is just like this. If he enters upon an incorrect path,

only a buddha will be able to rescue him. This is because they course along the same great path. It is on account of this that it is said,

"The bodhisattva wishes never to be separated from the buddhas."

Additionally, the bodhisattva reflects thus: "Because I have not yet gained the Buddha eye, I am no different from a blind man. If I do not receive the guidance of the buddhas, then there is nowhere which I can go for I shall accidentally enter upon another path." Even if one were to hear the Buddhadharmā, one who courses along in a another location is unaware of the appropriate time for instruction and of the correct amount of a given dharma to be cultivated.

Moreover, when the bodhisattva sees the Buddha, he gains all manner of benefits. On viewing the Buddha he may gain purity of thought. If he hears what is spoken, his mind delights in Dharma and he gains great wisdom. If he then accords with the Dharma in his cultivation he gains liberation. There are innumerable benefits such as these which are gained from encountering the buddhas. How then could one fail to singlemindedly seek to see the buddhas?

The situation of these bodhisattvas is like that of an infant which should not be separated from its mother. It is also comparable to that of one who travels on the road and who thus takes care not to become separated from his provisions. It is just as during the very hot season one does not stray far from a place with cool breezes and cold water. It is just as during the very cold season one does not wish to

become separated from fire. It is just like when one crosses deep waters one should not become separated from one's boat. And it is analogous to the situation of a sick person who does not become separated from good medicines.

The bodhisattva's rationale in not becoming separated from the buddhas is even more urgent than the examples just set forth. How is this so? One's father and mother, one's relatives, one's advisors, the heavenly monarch and so forth are all unable to compare with the Buddha in terms of the benefit which they can afford one. The Buddha provides to the bodhisattvas the benefit of departure from all places of suffering and subsequent residence on the ground of the World Honored One. For these reasons, the bodhisattvas never become separated from the Buddha.

Question: Conditioned dharmas are deceptive, are not actual and are all unreliable. How can one, in accordance with one's vows, succeed in never separating from the buddhas?

Reply: By virtue of achieving repletion in merit and wisdom one is as a consequence even able to realize buddhahood, how much the more so would one succeed in never separating from the buddhas. But because beings possess the causes and conditions created during an immeasurable number of kalpas during which they have committed offenses, they do not necessarily gain results consistent with their aspirations. Although they may cultivate merit, their wisdom may still be only very thin and

scant. Or although they may cultivate wisdom, their merit may still be only very thin and scant. Therefore beings do not necessarily find success in their aspirations.

Because the bodhisattva seeks the way of the Buddha, he must cultivate two kinds of patience: patience with regard to beings and patience with regard to dharmas. Because he cultivates patience with regard to beings he generates kind and compassionate thoughts towards all beings, extinguishes offenses committed across the course of an immeasurable number of kalpas and gains an immeasurable amount of merit.

On account of cultivating patience with regard to dharmas one destroys ignorance with regard to dharmas and gains an immeasurable amount of wisdom. In the presence of this combination of these two practices, what aspiration could possibly remain unfulfilled? It is on account of this that the bodhisattva, in life after life, is never separated from the buddhas.

Furthermore, because the bodhisattva always loves to engage in mindfulness of the Buddha, whenever he relinquishes one body and takes up another he always succeeds in encountering the buddhas. [The operative principal herein] is analogous to that whereby beings whose thoughts obsessed with lustful activity are particularly heavy reincarnate as lustful birds such as peacocks, ducks and so forth. And it is also analogous to that whereby those who are excessive in behavior characterized by hatefulness reincarnate as poisonous creatures such as

malevolent dragons, rakshasas, centipedes, venomous snakes and so forth.

The thoughts of these bodhisattvas do not prize the blessings and bliss found among the wheel- turning sage kings, among men or among gods. They are solely engaged in mindfulness of the buddhas. Consequently, they too take on a bodily form which accords with the object of their thought's esteem.

Additionally, because of the causes and conditions inhering in the bodhisattva's well- cultivating the mindfulness- of- the- buddha samadhi, wherever he is born he encounters the buddhas. As discussed in the Pratyutpannasamaadhi [Sutra]:

The bodhisattva enters into this samadhi and then sees Amita Buddha and then asks that Buddha on account of what karmic causes and conditions he has obtained rebirth in his

land. The Buddha then replies, "Good son, it is on account of constantly cultivating the mindfulness- of- the- buddha samadhi without faltering in your recollection that you have

gained rebirth in my land."

Question: What is this "mindfulness-of-the-Buddha samadhi" (buddhaanu- sm.rtisamaadhi) on account of which one gains rebirth in that land?"

Reply: "Mindfulness of the Buddha" refers to mindfulness of the Buddha's gold-colored body adorned with the thirty-two marks and eighty subsidiary characteristics. His body radiates light which fills up the ten directions. Its color is brilliant and pure like molten Jambu River gold. It is also like Mount Sumeru, the king of mountains, set in the middle of the great ocean. When the light of the sun illumines it, its color manifests brilliantly. At this time the practitioner has no thoughts of any other forms such as the mountains, earth, trees and so forth. He only sees the appearance of the forms of the buddhas in the midst of empty space, like red-hued gold shining out from within true crystal.

This is also just as when the bhikshu enters into the contemplation of impurity: He sees only the bloated corpse rotting and deteriorating and so forth until we come to only seeing a skeleton. This skeleton has no one which activates it and it also neither comes nor goes. It is on account of recollective thought that he sees it. The bodhisattva, mahasattva's entry into the mindfulness-of-the-buddha samadhi and his subsequent complete viewing of all of the buddhas is also just like this. It is on account of the focusing of one's thought and it is on account of the purity of one's thought.

This circumstance is also analogous to that of a person who, having adorned his body, stands before a pure reflection pool and finds that there is nothing not seen in its entirety. This reflection pool is

also devoid of any forms or appearances. It is by means of that brightness and purity that one then is able to observe his body's appearance in the pool.

All dharmas, from their origin on up to the present, are always inherently pure. It is because the bodhisattva cultivates well this purity of thought that, in accordance with his wishes, he gains a total view of all buddhas and then is able to inquire about his doubts. The buddha replies to whatever he asks. He listens to what the buddhas tell him. His mind becomes suffused with great delight. When he arises from this samdhi, he has this thought: "Where did the buddha come from? My body didn't go anywhere either!" He then immediately knows that the buddhas have nowhere from which they come and that, "I also have nowhere to which I go." Furthermore, he has this thought: "Everything throughout the three realms is made entirely from the mind. How is this so? Whatever the mind reflects upon is seen in its entirety. It is on account of the mind that one views the buddha. It is also on account of the mind that one becomes a buddha. The mind is just the Buddha. The mind is just my person."

The mind does not know itself and it also does not see itself. If one grasps at the marks of the mind then one is entirely lacking in wisdom. Thoughts themselves are false and deceptive and arise based entirely upon ignorance. It is on account of this that the marks of the mind are found to enter into the actual characteristic of all dharmas,

the so- called eternal emptiness.

After one attains samadhi and wisdom like this, because of the power of the two practices and in accordance with the aspirations of one's mind, one does not become separated from the buddhas. One becomes like the great golden- winged king of the birds which, due to the complete development of both of its wings, flies about through empty space going wherever it pleases.

Because the bodhisattva gains the power of this samadhi and wisdom, in this very body and in accordance with his intentions, he is able to make offerings to the buddhas. At the end of his life he is again able to encounter the buddhas. It is for this reason that it is said, "Those bodhisattvas who [wish to] never separate from the buddhas should study the Prajnaparamita."

End Notes:

"Avaivartika" refers to a very advanced stage of spiritual evolution wherein one has gained a kind of "irreversability" guaranteeing that one can never

again fall back into the plight of the foolish common person dragged aimlessly through cyclic existence by the karmic effects of desires, aversions and delusions. [Back to text]

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Losaka- tisyā's Near- Starvation

(T25.278b28- c13 [f.30])

When it is stated that, "[the bodhisattva] who wishes to fulfill the wishes of all beings [should study the Prajnaparamita]," this refers to those beings for whom it is appropriate that they should gain such fulfillment. In fact, the bodhisattva's own mind has no boundaries. The fruits of his meritorious qualities are also beyond measure. It is solely on account of the thick obstacles created by beings' immeasurable

number of asamkhyeya kalpas of offenses that they may be unable to obtain [fulfillment of those wishes].

Take for example Sariputra's disciple, the bhikshu Losakatisya. He was one who upheld the precepts and was vigorous and relied upon almsfood for sustenance. However, he once went six days and yet was not able to receive any alms. When it came to the seventh day he had reached the point where he did not have much longer to live. There was a fellow cultivator of the Way who acquired almsfood and brought it to him. But a bird suddenly stole it away.

After that, Sariputra told Maudgalyayana, "Employ your great spiritual powers to guard some of this almsfood and thus make sure that he is able to get it." Then Maudgalyayana took the food straightaway and gave it to Losakatisya. However, when the food had almost reached his mouth, it changed into mud.

Next, Sariputra acquired some more almsfood and personally took it and gave it to him. But then Losakatisya's mouth spontaneously closed tightly shut. Finally, the Buddha came and, bringing food, gave it to him. On account of the causes and conditions of the Buddha's immeasurable amount of merit he was able to cause him to take nourishment. Then, after this bhikshu had eaten, his mind was suffused with delight and his faith and reverence were redoubled. The Buddha told the bhikshu, "Conditioned dharmas are all characterized by suffering." Then the Buddha explained the four holy truths for his

benefit. The bhikshu immediately achieved the ending of outflows, and having gained comprehension, realized the way of the Arhat. However, there do exist beings possessed of only very scant merit whose offenses are even more extreme than this whom even the Buddha himself is not able to rescue.

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On Hearing the Voice of the Buddha

(T25.284b7-15 [f.30])

The sound of the Buddha is eternally able to reach everywhere throughout the space of the ten directions.

Question: If the sound of the Buddha is eternally able to reach everywhere, why then are beings not now able to hear it?

Reply: Beings are occluded by the negative karma which they have created across the course of an immeasurable number of kalpas.

Therefore they do not hear. It is like the crashing sound of thunder and lightning. The deaf do not hear it, but it is not because the sound of the thunder has diminished. The case of the Buddha is just like this. His eternally speaking Dharma for the sake of beings is comparable to the earthquake- like sound of the dragons' thunder. It is on account of the karmic offenses of beings that they are naturally unable to hear it.

But then again, there are those people of the present age who are vigorous and who uphold the moral precepts. In cultivating the mindfulness- of - the- Buddha samadhi (buddhaanusm.rtisamaadhi), once their minds achieve absorption, the defilement of offenses does not obstruct them and they are immediately able to see the Buddha and hear with utter clarity the sound of the Buddha speaking Dharma.

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On Vows, Their Implementation and Feasibility

(T25.284b20- c28 [f.30])

Sutra: Moreover, Sariputra, the bodhisattva, mahasattva who wishes to prevent the buddha worlds from being cut off should study the Prajnaparamita.

Upadesa: As for "preventing buddha worlds from being cut off...", the bodhisattva wishes to bring it about that each of these lands follows continuously upon the other and that in each of them beings will resolve to become buddhas.

Question: When speaking here of preserving a continuity, does this refer to an unbroken serial succession within a single land or does it refer to an unbroken spatial continuity extending to all of the worlds of the ten directions? If it merely refers to "a serial succession within a single land,"- the great compassion is universal and extends to all beings. Why here does it not include any other lands?

If, however, the reference is to insuring a spatial continuity extending to all of the other worlds of the ten directions, of what use then are all of the other buddhas and bodhisattvas?

Reply: The aspirations of the bodhisattva's mind are such that he wishes to influence everyone in all worlds to become a buddha. This great mind is expansive, extensive and entirely unbounded. Because this

bodhisattva is able to employ this mind to assemble wisdom, innumerable meritorious qualities and the power of the superknowledges, he proceeds thereby to influence those beings who have planted the causes and conditions for buddhahood to succeed in achieving it. If it were the case that everyone in all worlds had planted the causes and conditions whereby he could influence them to achieve buddhahood, none of the other buddhas and bodhisattvas would be of any particular use. But this is not the case.

Additionally, the worlds of the ten directions are innumerable and endless. Therefore, it should not be the case that one single bodhisattva could succeed in reaching every single one of those worlds to insure that the lineage of the buddhas is not cut off. Each of the other bodhisattvas has his own part in this in a way which corresponds to his own particular causes and conditions.

Because their kindness and compassion are so great, their vows are also immeasurable. The mind which endeavors to bring about benefit is limitless. But because the varieties of beings are countless, it is not the case that one single buddha or bodhisattva is able to bring about the deliverance of every one of them.

Question: If the task at hand does not correspond in its feasibility with the magnitude of the mind which vows to undertake it, why make the vow?

Reply: It is on account of a desire to cause the aspirations of

the mind to be expansive and pure. This is comparable to the motivation involved in cultivation of the samadhi of lovingkindness. Although one is not actually able to cause beings to transcend suffering, still, one wishes to cause one's own mind to become expansive and pure and wishes to fulfill altruistic vows.

In the case of the powers possessed by the buddhas and the great bodhisattvas, they are all capable of bringing about the deliverance of all beings, however the meritorious conditions of beings have not yet been adequately assembled and they do not as yet possess wisdom. Because the causes and conditions have not come together they cannot as yet find deliverance.

Take for example the waters of the great oceans. If it were the case that all beings were to take from it and put to use those waters, they would not be used up. But beings are unable to put them to use. This is comparable to the plight of the hungry ghosts. On account of the causes and conditions of their own offenses, they are unable even to gaze upon water. In the event that they are able to gaze upon it then it immediately dries up or else turns into molten bronze or pus and blood.

The situation with the Buddha is just like this. He possesses great lovingkindness, compassion and wisdom which are immeasurable and boundless and which are entirely capable of satisfying the needs of beings. However, on account of the causes and conditions constituted

by the karma of offenses beings do not encounter the Buddha. In the event that they do succeed in encountering the Buddha, then he appears to them to be no different from any other ordinary person, or alternately they feel hatred for him or proceed to slander him. On account of these causes and conditions, they do not perceive the Buddha's awesome characteristics or his spiritual power. Hence, although they encounter the Buddha they gain no benefit from it.

Additionally, it requires fulfillment of two types of causes and two types of conditions in order to bring about the development of correct views. This refers to subject- related causes and object- related conditions. The objective causes and conditions of the Buddha are entirely perfected. He possesses the thirty- two marks, eighty subsidiary characteristics and unlimited radiance which serve to adorn his body. He possesses all manner of spiritual powers and all manner of voices and sounds. He can explicate any dharma he chooses and cut off all doubts . However, the subject- related causes and conditions of beings are not completely developed. They have not previously planted the roots of goodness necessary for being able to see the buddha. Furthermore, they are not faithful and respectful, and do not either exercise vigor or uphold the moral precepts. Their roots of dullness are deep and thick and they are attached to worldly pleasures.

On account of all of this, any absence of actual benefit is not a case of any fault on the part of the Buddha. The types of spiritual

apparatus which the Buddha puts to beneficial use in the instruction and deliverance of beings are entirely replete and sufficient. In this respect he is analogous to the rising sun. If one has eyes, then one sees it. The blind, however, do not see it. They see nothing whatsoever in just the same way as if they had eyes but there was no sun at all. But this is not a case of there being any fault on the part of the sun. The brilliance of the Buddha is just like this.

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The Eighteen Emptinesses

(T25.285b5- 296b2 [f.31- complete])

Sutra: Moreover, Shaariputra, the bodhisattva, mahaasattva who desires to dwell in the emptiness of the subject, the emptiness of the object, the emptiness of both the subject and the object, the emptiness of emptiness, the great emptiness, the emptiness of the supreme meaning, the emptiness of the conditioned, the emptiness of the unconditioned, the

absolute emptiness, the emptiness of beginninglessness*, the emptiness of dispersion, the emptiness of a nature, the emptiness of individual characteristics, the emptiness of all dharmas, the emptiness of the unattainable*, the emptiness of nonexistent dharmas, the emptiness of existent dharmas, and the emptiness of dharmas which are nonexistent and yet existent,-- [this bodhisattva, mahaasattva] should study the Praj~naapaaramitaa.

[1) The Emptiness of the Subject {285b10}]

Upadesha: "The emptiness of the subject" refers to dharmas belonging to the subject. Subject- related dharmas are empty. "Subject- related dharmas" refers to the so- called "six subject- related sense fields": eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and intellectual mind. The eye is empty, devoid of a self, devoid of that which belongs to a self, and devoid of any [self- existent] eye dharma. The ear, nose, tongue, body and intellectual mind are the same in this respect.

[2) The Emptiness of the Object {285b12}]

"The emptiness of the object" refers to object- related dharmas. Object- related dharmas are empty. "Object- related dharmas" refers to the so- called "six object- related sense fields": forms, sounds, smells, tastes, touchables and dharmas [as objects of the intellectual mind]. As

for the emptiness of forms, it refers to the absence of a self, the absence of that which belongs to a self, and the absence of any [self-existent] form dharma. Sounds, smells, tastes, touchables and dharmas [as objects of mind] are the same in this respect.

[3) The Emptiness of Both the Subject and the Object {285b15}]

"The emptiness of both the subject and the object" refers to dharmas which are both subject- related and object- related. Dharmas which are both subject- related and object- related are empty. "Dharmas which are both subject- related and object- related" refers to the so-called "twelve subject- related and object- related sense fields." Among the twelve sense fields there is no self, nothing which belongs to a self and no [self- existent] dharma which is both subject- related and object-related.

Question [#1]: "All dharmas" are innumerable. Because "emptinesses" correspond to dharmas, they too must be innumerable. Why do you only mention eighteen of them? If one is discussing them only briefly, it should be that there is one emptiness, the so- called "emptiness of all dharmas." If one embarks on an extensive discussion corresponding to the emptiness of each and every dharma, namely: the emptiness of the eye, the emptiness of forms, and so forth, they are

quite numerous. Why do you only bring up eighteen kinds of emptiness?

Reply: If one explains only briefly, the topic is not thoroughly treated. If one embarks on an extensive discussion, the topics become too multifarious. This is analogous to taking medicine. If one takes only a small dose, the pathology is not cured. If one takes too large a dose, it increases the intensity of the affliction. However, if one prescribes medication which [precisely] corresponds to the affliction, causing it to be neither greater nor lesser than the appropriate amount, one is able to cure the illness.

Emptiness is the same in this respect. If the Buddha only discussed one kind of emptiness, then it would not be able to demolish all kinds of erroneous views as well as the various afflictions. If one were to discuss emptiness in relation to all the varieties of erroneous views, the number of emptinesses would multiply excessively. People would become attached to the characteristic of emptiness and would fall prey to annihilationist views. To discuss eighteen kinds of emptiness is to arrive precisely at the correct median.

Furthermore, if one were to speak of exactly ten or exactly fifteen, unresolved doubts would still inhere as the presentation would not be precisely apposite.

Moreover, there are a fixed number of good and bad dharmas. Take for example the four stations of mindfulness, the four right efforts, the thirty- seven wings, the ten powers, the four fearlessnesses, the four types of unobstructed wisdom, the eighteen exclusive dharmas, the five aggregates, the twelve sense fields, the eighteen sense realms, the twelve causes and conditions, the three poisons, the three bonds, the four floods, the five coverings and so forth. Each class of dharmas has a set enumeration like this. It is via demolition of attachments among eighteen kinds of dharmas that one speaks of the existence of eighteen kinds of emptiness.

Question [#2]: Is the emptiness of the praj~naapaaramitaa different from or identical to the eighteen kinds of emptiness? If different, what is there to the emptiness of the praj~naapaaramitaa which goes beyond the eighteen emptinesses? Also, the Buddha said, "What is the praj~naapaaramitaa? It is the so- called emptiness of form, the emptiness of feeling, perception, formative factors, and so forth until we come to the emptiness of the knowledge of all modes." If they are no different, then why is it said, "If one desires to dwell in the eighteen kinds of emptiness, one should study the praj~naapaaramitaa?"

Reply: There are reasons for speaking of them as different and

there are reasons for speaking of them as identical.

As for speaking of them as different, the *praj~naapaaramitaa* refers to the true character of all dharmas which annihilates all contemplative modes. The eighteen types of emptiness are eighteen kinds of contemplation which enable one to realize the emptiness of all dharmas. The bodhisattva investigates this true character of all dharmas and is able to develop [awareness of] the eighteen kinds of emptiness. This is what is referred to [when one speaks of them] as different.

As for their being identical, the eighteen kinds of emptiness are characterized by emptiness and the absence of anything whatsoever. The *praj~naapaaramitaa* is also characterized by emptiness and the absence of anything whatsoever. The eighteen kinds of emptiness are characterized by transcendence. The *praj~naapaaramitaa* too, in the midst of all dharmas, transcends characteristics. These eighteen kinds of emptiness exemplify nonattachment to characteristics. The *praj~naapaaramitaa* also exemplifies nonattachment to characteristics. On account of this the investigation of the *praj~naapaaramitaa* is identical to investigation of the eighteen kinds of emptiness as they are no different.

The *praj~naapaaramitaa* includes two levels: the lesser and the greater. One who wishes to realize the greater should first explore a

lesser and provisional entryway. One who desires to develop great wisdom should study the eighteen kinds of emptiness. By abiding in this lesser and provisional entryway to wisdom one becomes able to gain realization of the eighteen kinds of emptiness.

[Entering the Sea / Studying the Sutra Simile]

What is meant by the provisional entryway? It refers to studying, reciting, being correctly mindful of and deliberating upon the Praj~naapaaramitaaSutra while also cultivating in accordance with its teachings. Just as a man who desires to find all manner of fine jewels must enter the great sea to do so, so too should one enter the great sea of the praj~naapaaramitaa if he desires to procure the jewels of samadhi and wisdom bestowed by emptiness of the subject and the other emptinesses.

Question [#3]: How, when the practitioner studies the praj~naapaaramitaa, does he come to abide in emptiness of the subject, emptiness of the object, and emptiness of both the subject and the object?

[The Four Inverted Views {285c25}]

Reply: There are four inverted views [which are operative] in the

world: the inverted view of imagining the existence of purity in the midst of impurity; the inverted view of imagining the existence of bliss in the midst of suffering; the inverted view of imagining permanence in the midst of the impermanent; and the inverted view of imagining the existence of a self where there is no self.

[The Four Foundations of Mindfulness {285c27}]

[Mindfulness of the Impurity of the Body {285c27}]

For the sake of demolishing the four inverted views, the practitioner cultivates the twelve contemplations corresponding to the four stations of mindfulness. This refers to initially contemplating one's own body as filled up with the thirty- six kinds of impurities, as constantly discharging excreta from the nine apertures, and as extremely disgusting. The characteristic of purity cannot be found in it. Because the characteristic of purity cannot be found in it, it is referred to as exemplifying the "emptiness of the subject."

Once the practitioner realizes that his own body is impure, he contemplates those to which he is outwardly attached as being equally so. In fact, they are all impure. Because the foolish common person is deceived by fantasies and because his mind is blanketed in sexual desire

he is of the opinion that [those bodily forms] are pure. [The practitioner] contemplates the forms to which he is attached, observing that, "They are just like my own body. The characteristic of purity cannot be found therein." This is what is meant by "emptiness of the object."

It could occur that while the practitioner regards his own body as impure he nonetheless regards objective physical forms as pure. Or it could happen that although the practitioner regards physical forms in the objective sphere as impure, he is nonetheless of the opinion that his own body is pure. Thus, he now comprehensively contemplates both the subject and the object and observes that, "My body is impure and objective physical forms are identical in this respect. Objective physical forms are impure and so too is my own. They are identical, the same, and not the least bit different in the sense that purity cannot be found in either place." This is what is meant by "the emptiness of both the subject and the object."

The practitioner deliberates upon this and realizes that in fact the physical body of the subject and the physical bodies in the objective sphere are all entirely impure. The deluded, however, are attached on account of desire. The intensity of carnal desires finds its origin in the fact of bodily incarnation. The body is a source of great suffering

and yet such people foolishly regard it as blissful.

Question [#4]: The three types of feelings are all subsumed within the objective sense fields. Why do you speak of contemplating subject- related feeling?

Reply: Pleasure arising from an initial meeting of the six organs with the six objects is referred to as object- related pleasure. Subsequently arising pleasure manifesting from the deep permeation of desirous attachment is referred to as subject- related pleasure.

Then again, another explanation has it that pleasure conditioned by subject- related dharmas is subject- related pleasure whereas pleasure conditioned by object- related dharmas is object- related pleasure.

Another interpretation is that pleasure corresponding to the five sense consciousnesses is object- related pleasure whereas pleasure associated with the intellectual mind consciousness is subject- related pleasure.

Yet another explanation is that coarse pleasure is object- related pleasure whereas subtle pleasure is subject- related pleasure. Distinctions such as these may be made between subject- related and

object- related pleasure. Similar distinctions may be made with regard to painful sensations and with regard to sensations which are neither painful nor pleasurable.

[Mindfulness of the Suffering Inhering in Feelings {286a17}]

Additionally, the practitioner deliberates and contemplates whether or not this subject- related pleasure is actually attainable. By distinguishing clearly he realizes that it is actually unattainable and that it is actually suffering which is only described as pleasure by resort to forced interpretation. How is this so? This pleasure arises from the causes and conditions of suffering and generates a retributive effect characterized by suffering. Pleasure is actually suffering by virtue of not being satisfying.

[Pleasure / Hives / Cauterization Simile]

This is analogous to the situation of a man afflicted by hives. Although he may derive a small degree of [relative] pleasure from scratching or from fire- cauterization the immediately subsequent result is physical injury and intense pain. A foolish person regards it as pleasure. A wise person only sees its suffering.

[Desire / Disease, Abscess, Thorns Simile]

Thus, due to the disease of inverted views with respect to

pleasure, the worldly become attached to pleasures of the five desires and their afflictions increase correspondingly. Because of this the practitioner perceives no pleasure and beholds only suffering, [regarding the five types of desire as] like diseases, like abscesses, like sores and like thorns.

[Pleasure / Salt in the River Simile]

Furthermore, because there is only a little pleasure and a lot of suffering, the small amount of pleasure can't manifest and is described as suffering. This is comparable to throwing a handful of salt into a great river. Because the attributes of salt disappear, the river is not reknowned for its saltiness.

Moreover, it is on account of pleasure not being a fixed value [that the practitioner beholds sensual pleasures as conducive to suffering]. It may happen that what this one person here regards as pleasurable that other person there sees as conducive to suffering, while what that other person there regards as pleasurable, this other person here sees as conducive to suffering. One who is attached [to a given object] may regard it as blissful whereas one who has lost [that same object] may regard it as conducive to suffering. What the fool regards as pleasurable the wise man may regard as suffering. One who perceives the distress attendant upon pleasures regards them as conducive to

suffering, whereas one who fails to see the defects of pleasures regards them as pleasurable. One who fails to see the transitory quality of pleasures regards them as pleasurable, whereas one who perceives the transience of pleasures regards them as conducive to suffering. One who has not yet transcended desires regards them as pleasurable whereas one who has already transcended desires regards them as conducive to suffering.

In this manner one contemplates bliss as being suffering and contemplates suffering as being like an arrow shot into the body. He contemplates the impermanent and changing characteristic of those feelings which are neither painful nor pleasant. In this manner, he contemplates equally all three kinds of feeling and his mind foresakes and transcends them. This is what is meant by contemplating the emptiness of subject- related feelings. In this same manner one also contemplates object- related feelings as well as feelings which are related to both the subject and the object.

[The Contemplation of the Impermanence of Thought {286b7}]

The cultivator makes this contemplation (nyan): "If pleasure is just suffering, who is it that experiences this suffering?" After reflecting (nyan) in this manner he then realizes that it is the thought (syin) which experiences it. Afterwards, he contemplates (gwan) whether

thought (syin) is real or whether it is false. He contemplates a thought's characteristics of impermanence, arising, abiding, and perishing. The thought [which experiences] the feeling of suffering, the thought [which experiences] the feeling of pleasure, and the thought [which experiences] feelings which are neither suffering nor pleasurable are each of them a different instance of ideation (nyan). When the thought (syin) which is aware of pleasure perishes, then the thought which is aware of suffering arises. The thought [which experiences] suffering abides for a time. After it abides then it perishes again and there then arises the thought [which experiences] neither suffering nor pleasure. Because the three feelings are impermanent, [the corresponding] thoughts are also impermanent.

Moreover, one realizes that defiled thoughts (syin), undefiled thoughts, hateful thoughts, thoughts which have no hatred, delusional (chr) thoughts, thoughts which are not delusional, scattered (san) thoughts, concentrated (she) thoughts, bound (fu) thoughts, liberated (jye- two) thoughts, - all manner of thoughts like these are each characterized by change (yi). He realizes that thoughts are therefore impermanent and that there is no fixed thought (ding syin) which abides eternally. Thoughts which experience suffering and [thoughts] which experience pleasure and so forth are the product of the coming together of causes and conditions. When the causes and conditions separate and

scatter, the thought accordingly perishes as well.

In this same manner he equally contemplates the impermanence characteristic of subject- related thoughts, object- related thoughts, and thoughts related to both the subject and the object.

Question [#5]: Thoughts are subsumed under subject- related sense fields. What is meant by "object- related" thoughts?

Reply: Thoughts which are engaged in the contemplation of the body of the subject are known as "subject- related" thoughts. Thoughts which are engaged in the contemplation of the body of the object are known as "object- related" thoughts.

Additionally, thoughts which condition subject- related dharmas are "subject- related" thoughts. Thoughts which condition object- related dharmas are "object- related" thoughts.

Furthermore, because the five [sense] consciousnesses constantly condition object- related dharmas and are not able to make distinctions, their [mental activity] is described as "object- related" thought (syin). Because the intellectual consciousness (yi- shr) is able to condition subject- related dharmas and is also able to make distinctions between

beauty and ugliness (hao- chou), its [mental activity] is described as "subject- related" thought (syin).

Then again, when the intellectual consciousness (yi- shr) first arises it is not yet able to make absolute distinctions (fen- bye jywe- ding). This is "object- related" thought (syin). As [a given case of] intellectual consciousness becomes more incisive [jywan shen] it is able then to make distinctions and sieze upon characteristics. This is described as "subject- related" thought. In a manner such as this, distinctions are made regarding "subject- related" and "object- related" thought.

The practitioner's thoughts and intellect undergo a change whereby he becomes aware that the body is characterized by impurity, realizes that feelings are characterized by suffering, and realizes that thoughts do not abide and are characterized by impermanence.

[Contemplation of the Absence of a Self in Dharmas {286b26}]

Because the fetters have not yet been cut off, perhaps there arises [the idea of] a self. He deliberates in this manner: "If thoughts are impermanent, who is it that is aware of these thoughts and to whom do

these thoughts belong? Who is the master of these thoughts and thus experiences suffering and bliss? To whom do all of these things belong?" He then makes distinctions and realizes that there is no separate "master". It is only on account of siezing upon characteristics among the five aggregates that one reckons that there is the characteristic of a self and thus develops thoughts [which impute the existence] of a self. On account of thoughts [which impute the existence] of a self one generates [the idea of] that which belongs to the self. On account of the generation of thoughts [which impute the existence] of that which belongs to the self, where there is that which benefits the self, one develops acquisitiveness and desire. Where there is that which runs counter to and opposes the self, there is then the development of enmity. These fetters do not arise from wisdom. They arise on account of being deceived by fantasies. This is what is known as delusion (chr).

The three poisons constitute the root of all of the afflictions. It also on account of the [idea of a] self that one deliberately sets about creating blessings and merit so that the self will be able to benefit from it in the future. And it is also [on account of the idea of a self that] one cultivates dharmas which aid one on the Way so that the self will be able to gain liberation in the future.

It is on account of the [intellectual mind's] initial seizing

upon characteristics that [this type of mental activity] is known as the perception (sa.mj~naa) aggregate. The aggregate of formative factors (sa.mskaara) refers to the arising, originating in the [idea of a] self, of the fetters as well as wholesome conduct. It is these two aggregates which constitute the sphere of the station of mindfulness with regard to dharmas.

[Self / Hollow Stalk, Mirage Similes]

One seeks for but cannot find a "self" among the dharmas of the perception and formative factor aggregates. Why is this the case? All of these dharmas arise from causes and conditions. All of them are constituted (sa.msk.rta) dharmas and thus are insubstantial and devoid of the action of dharmas of a real self. This is analogous to seeking among leaf after leaf of the banana tree without being able to find any solidity [at its core]. It is also like distantly viewing a mirage which is entirely lacking in water. The existence of the idea of "water" therein is simply on account of a deceptive illusion beheld by the eye.

In this manner, one equally contemplates subject- related dharmas, object- related dharmas and dharmas related to both the subject and the object.

Question [#6]: "Dharmas" are subsumed under the objective sense fields. What is meant by "subject- related dharmas?"

Reply: "Subject- related dharmas" refers to [dharmas of] the perception aggregate and formative- factor aggregate which are interactive with subject- related thoughts. "Object- related dharmas" refers to perception aggregate dharmas, formative- factor aggregate dharmas, mentally non- correspondent formative- factor (citta- viprayukta- sa.mskara) dharmas, and unconditioned (asa.msk.rta) dharmas which correspond to object- related thoughts. The simultaneous and equal contemplation [of both of these categories of dharmas] is what is meant by [the contemplation of] dharmas which are both subject- related and object- related.

Then again, [another explanation is that] subject- related dharmas refer to the six organs, whereas object- related dharmas refer to the six objects.

Yet another [explanation is that] the comprehensive contemplation of thoughts related to the body and feelings as well as [contemplation] of the perception aggregate and formative factor aggregate constitutes the station of mindfulness with regard to dharmas. How is this so? Since the practitioner seeks for a "self" in the perception aggregate,

the formative factor aggregate and amongst unconditioned dharmas but is unable to find it he turns back and seeks for it within the body, feelings, and thoughts, but is still unable to find it. In this manner, he seeks for a "self" amidst all dharmas, and whether they are form or non- form, visible or invisible, opposable or nonopposable, outflow or non- outflow, conditioned or unconditioned, distant or near, coarse or subtle, he is still unable to find it.

It is only based on the combination of the five aggregates that there is the forced interpretation of the existence of a being. A being is just the self. Because the self cannot be found, then neither does there exist anything belonging to a self. Because nothing belonging to the self can be found, all of the afflictions ebb away and become but scant.

Moreover, the station of mindfulness with regard to the body refers to all form dharmas. The practitioner contemplates subject-related forms as being impermanent, suffering, empty and devoid of a self. His contemplation of object- related forms and his contemplation of forms which are both subject- related and object- related are also taken up in the same manner. Feelings, thoughts and dharmas are also [contemplated] in this same manner.

The emptiness samadhi corresponding to the subject- related contemplation of the four stations of mindfulness is what is intended by "emptiness of the subject." The emptiness samadhi corresponding to the object- related contemplation of the four stations of mindfulness is what is intended by "emptiness of the object." The emptiness samadhi corresponding to the four stations of mindfulness contemplation of both the subject and object is what is intended by "emptiness of both the subject and the object."

Question [#7]: Is this emptiness realized through the power of samadhi or through the inherent emptiness on the part of the dharmas?

Reply: This refers to emptiness deriving from the power of samadhi. As described in the Sutra, in the three samadhis (DFB282c) or three entryways to liberation (DFB339a) of emptiness, absence of characteristics and wishlessness, one directs this emptiness samadhi toward the body, feelings, thoughts and dharmas. Because one is unable to find a self or that which belongs to a self [anywhere therein] they are therefore referred to as "empty."

Question [#8]: In the four stations of mindfulness, all empty dharmas should be contemplated as impermanent, suffering, empty and devoid of a self. Why is it that one contemplates the body as impure,

contemplates feelings as suffering, contemplates thoughts as impermanent, and contemplates dharmas as devoid of a self?

Reply: Although the four dharmas are all contemplated as being impermanent, suffering, empty and devoid of a self, still, as regards the body, beings are usually attached to the inverted view [which imagines] purity therein. As regards feelings, they are usually attached to the inverted view of [which imagines] pleasure therein. As regards thoughts, they are usually attached to the inverted view [which imagines] permanency therein. And as regards dharmas, they are usually attached to the inverted view [which imagines] a self therein. It is on account of this that the practitioner contemplates the body as impure, contemplates feelings as suffering, contemplates thoughts as impermanent, and contemplates dharmas as devoid of a self.

Furthermore, as for the emptiness of that which is subject-related and that which is object-related, there are no fixed dharmas as regards subject and object. This is because [the two concepts] are each dependent upon the other. When we speak of subject and object, that which he considers to be object-related, I [may] consider to be subject-related. That which I consider to be object-related, he [may] consider to be subject-related. It is a question of what one is tied to which determines that a subject-related dharma is subject-related. It is a

question of what one seizes upon which determines that an object- related dharma is object- related. This is analogous to a person's own house being [thought of as] "inside" whereas another man's house is [seen as] "outside." The cultivator contemplates that because subject- related and object- related dharmas are devoid of any set characteristic, they are therefore, empty.

Moreover, these subject- related and object- related dharmas are devoid of a self- existent nature. How is this so? It is because they are the product of [a process of] combination. These subject- related and object- related dharmas do not abide for their own part within the causes and conditions which have been combined. If they are absent among the causes and conditions, they are also absent everywhere else. The causes and conditions of subject- related dharmas and object- related dharmas are also non- existent. Because their causes and conditions are non- existent, the subject- related dharmas and object- related dharmas [themselves] are empty.

Question [#9]: Subject- related and object- related dharmas definitely do exist. How can you say that they are nonexistent? For example, the dharma of a body is produced on account of the combination of hands, feet and so forth. This is what is meant by a "subject- related" dharma. As another example, it is on account of the combination

of beams, rafters, walls and so forth that the dharma of a dwelling is produced. This is what is meant by an "object- related" [dharma]. Although this dharma of a "body" possesses another name, still, it is no different from "feet" and so forth. How is this so? It is because if one departs from "feet" and so forth, a "body" cannot be found. The case of the room is identical.

Reply: If it is the case that "feet" are no different from the body, then the head ought to be a foot. If it were the case that because the foot is no different from the body, the head is therefore the foot, this would be utterly ludicrous!

Question [#10]: If [the view that] the feet are no different from the body is possessed of such a fault, then it ought to be the case that it is on account of the combination of the feet and so forth that there is the production of yet another dharma which is referred to as the body. Although the body is different from the feet and so forth, it ought to be that it abides in dependence upon the feet [and so forth]. This is analogous to combining many fine threads and being able thereby to produce finely- woven cloth. This finely- woven cloth abides in dependence upon the fine threads.

Reply: As for this dharma of the "body," within the various parts

such as the feet and so forth, is it entirely existent or is it partially existent? If it is entirely existent [in the parts], then there ought to be feet in the head. How so? Because the dharma of the body is entirely existent there. If it is partially existent [in its parts], then there is no difference between it and the foot part.

Furthermore, the body is a singular dharma. The causes for its existence are manifold. One is not many and many is not one.

Moreover, if there exists a "body" aside from the parts such as the feet and so forth, its situation exists in total contradiction to the way the whole rest of the world works. On account of all of this one can't say that the body is identical to its parts, nor can one say that it is different from its parts. Because of this there is therefore no body. Because the body doesn't exist the feet and so forth don't exist either. [Analyses] such as these [demonstrate] what we refer to as "emptiness of the subject." Object- related dharmas such as the "room" and so forth are also empty in this same way. That is what is meant by "emptiness of the object."

Question [#11]: [This] refutation of [the concepts of] a "body," a "dwelling," and so forth constitute refutation of identity and refutation of difference. The refutation of identity and the refutation of

difference are [employed in the] refutation of non- buddhist scriptures. Within the scriptures of the Buddha there actually do exist subject-related and object- related dharmas, [for instance] the subject- related six organs and the object- related six objects. How is it that these are non- existent?

Reply: These subject- related and object- related dharmas are names [attached to] falsely- existent conditioned [entities]. They too are just like the "body" and just like the "dwelling." Furthermore, briefly explained, there are two kinds of emptiness: emptiness of beings and emptiness of dharmas.

Because of the [relatively] dull faculties of the disciples of the lesser vehicle, the emptiness of beings was set forth for their sakes. Because of the nonexistence of a self and that which belongs to a self, they do not attach to the other dharmas.

On account of the sharp faculties of the disciples of the Great Vehicle, the emptiness of dharmas was set forth for their sakes. They immediately realized that the world is eternally empty and like nirvana.

In describing the emptiness of the subject, the dialectical masters among the Hearers explain that amidst the subject- related

dharmas there is no self, nothing belonging to the self, no permanence, no one who acts, no one who knows, and no one who experiences, [explaining that] this constitutes the emptiness of the subject and that the emptiness of the object is just the same in these respects. They do not explain that the characteristics of subject- related dharmas and the characteristics of object- related dharmas are [themselves] empty.

The Great Vehicle explains that among subject- related dharmas there are no characteristics of subject- related dharmas and that among object- related dharmas there are no characteristics of object- related dharmas. This is as explained in the Praj~naapaaramitaaSutra:

"[The aggregate of] form is devoid of the characteristics of form. [So too with] feelings, perceptions, and formative factors [on up to] consciousness is devoid of the characteristics of consciousness. The eye is devoid of the characteristics of the eye. [So too with] the ear, nose, tongue, and body [on up to] the intellectual mind is devoid of the characteristics of an intellectual mind. [Objective] form is devoid of the characteristics of form. [So too with] sounds, smells, tastes, and touchables [on up to] dharmas [as objects of mind] are devoid of the characteristics of dharmas. In a manner just like this all dharmas are devoid of [the characteristics of] their respective

dharmas."

Question [#12]: Which of these two ways of explaining the emptiness of the subject and the emptiness of the object is actually [the case]?

[The Prison-Break Simile] Answer:

They are both actually [the case]. It was only for the sake of those of lesser wisdom and dull faculties that the emptiness of beings was first explained. The emptiness of dharmas was explained for the sake of those possessed of great wisdom and sharp faculties. This is analogous to a person who, shut up in prison, shatters his manacles and fetters, slays the prison guards and then goes forth at his pleasure, while there is another [prisoner] who overcome with fear furtively burrows a hole in the prison walls and thereby is also able to get out and avoid [imprisonment].

The Hearers only demolish the afflictions born of the causes and conditions of a self and detach from their affection for dharmas. They are overcome with fear of the suffering of aging, sickness, death and the

unfortunate destinies [of rebirth]. They have no further desire to push on forward, seeking out and utterly demolishing all dharmas from root to branch. They reckon that the only thing that matters is making a successful escape.

The followers of the Great Vehicle demolish the prison of the three realms, conquer and subjugate the demon hoardes, cut off entirely the fetters and extinguish all habitual propensities. They come to know completely all dharmas from their roots to their branches, and without being impeded, break through, demolish, and scatter all dharmas, causing the world to be, like nirvana, entirely still and characterized by extinction. They gain annutara- samyak- sa.mbodhi and influence all beings to go forth from the three realms.

Question [#13]: What skillful means does the Great Vehicle possess for demolishing all dharmas?

[Form / Foam Simile]Reply: The Buddha explained that form is the product of all kinds of causes and conditions and that it has no substantial reality. It is like water [churning up into] waves and forming foam which briefly appears and then disappears. Forms are just like this. It is on account of the coming together of the four great elements of the present world and the causes and conditions of the karma from one's actions in the

previous world that there is the production of forms. On account of the perishing of [those] causes and conditions, the forms also perish entirely. One [may] walk down the path of impermanence and then proceed into the entryway of emptiness. How so? In the arising and perishing of dharmas there is no time when they abide. If they have no time wherein they abide, then there is nothing which can be seized upon.

Furthermore, because they are characterized by being conditioned (sa.msk.rta), at the time of their arising (production) there exists [in them the process of] perishing. At the time of their perishing, there exists [in them the process of] arising. If they have already arisen, then arising is useless. If they have not yet arisen, then arising [can] have no arising [for] a dharma and [its] arising ought not to be any different. Why? If arising has an arising, then a dharma ought to have an arising of its arising. In this same manner, there ought additionally to be another arising. This then would be endless. If the arising of arising had no further arising, then arising ought not to have arising [in the first place]. In this manner, [we see that] arising cannot be gotten at. Perishing is also the same way. On account of this all dharmas are empty and do not either arise or perish. This is what is real.

Furthermore, if it were the case that dharmas exist, then they would finally return to nonexistence. If later on they are nonexistent,

then they should not have initially been nonexistent. This is analogous to a person putting on a pair of shoes. At the very outset they are already growing old. This is subtle and one is unaware of it. If at the very outset there was not already the process of growing old, then they should remain eternally new. If later on they possess the characteristic of aging, then they already possessed [the characteristic of] aging from the outset. Dharmas are identical in this respect. On account of the fact that they later possess nonexistence, then from the very outset they possessed nonexistence. On account of this all dharmas ought to be empty. Because beings are attached via inverted views to the subject-related six organs, the practitioner [applies himself] to the demolition of this inverted view. This is what is meant by the emptiness of the subject. Emptiness of the object as well as emptiness of both the subject and the object are [achieved] in this same manner.

[4) The Emptiness of Emptiness {287c24}]

As for "the emptiness of emptiness," it refers to employing emptiness to demolish emptiness of the subject, emptiness of the object, and emptiness of both the subject and the object. It is on account of the demolition of these three kinds of emptiness that it is referred to as the emptiness of emptiness.

Furthermore, [another explanation is that] one first employs the emptiness of dharmas to demolish subject- related and object- related dharmas. And then one additionally employs this emptiness to demolish these three kinds of emptiness. This is what is meant by the emptiness of emptiness.

Then again, [one may also say that] in the emptiness samadhi one contemplates the the five aggregates as empty, achieves realization of the eightfold path of the Aarya, cuts off all afflictions and gains the nirvana with residue. When the bodily life produced from the karmic causes and conditions of previous lives comes to an end, because one then [finally] desires to relinquish [even] the eightfold path one then brings forth the samadhi of the emptiness of emptiness. This is what is meant by the emptiness of emptiness.

Question [#14]: What is the difference between emptiness and the emptiness of emptiness?

Reply: Emptiness demolishes the five appropriated aggregates. The emptiness of emptiness demolishes [that] emptiness.

Question [#15]: If "emptiness" refers to the emptiness of dharmas, then that was already demolished. If "emptiness" refers to the

emptiness of non- dharmas, then what is it that is demolished?

Reply: Emptiness demolishes all dharmas so that the only thing which abides is emptiness. After emptiness has already demolished all dharmas, emptiness itself should also be relinquished. It is on account of this that we require this emptiness of emptiness.

[Emptiness of Emptiness / "Champion" Simile]

Then again, emptiness conditions all dharmas. The emptiness of emptiness only conditions emptiness. This is analogous to a strong youth's being able to vanquish all invaders, while there is yet another man who is able to [come along and] vanquish [even] this strong fellow. The emptiness of emptiness is just like this.

[Emptiness of Emptiness / Dispensing with Medicine Simile]

It is also analogous to taking medicine. Medicine is able to overcome disease, but once the disease has been overcome, one ought to also get rid of the medicine. If the medicine is not eliminated, then there is yet another pathology. One employs emptiness to extinguish the disease of the afflictions. But it is still to be feared that emptiness itself will develop into yet another disorder. Therefore one employs emptiness as a means to bring about the relinquishing of emptiness. This is what is meant by the emptiness of emptiness.

Finally, because emptiness is used to demolish the seventeen [other] kinds of emptiness, [that emptiness] is referred to [here] as the emptiness of emptiness.

[5) The Great Emptiness {288a11}]

As for "great emptiness," within the Dharma of the Hearers, the emptiness of dharmas represents great emptiness. This is as set forth in the Sa.myuktaagama's Great Emptiness Sutra:

"Birth causally conditions aging and death. If someone were to say that this aging and death is [referring to] the aging and death of a person, [that statement] would be doubly freighted with erroneous views. If a person grows old and dies, then this is [a demonstration of] the emptiness of beings, whereas this 'aging and death' is [a demonstration of] the emptiness of dharmas."

The Mahayana Sutras state that the ten directions are devoid of the characteristics of the ten directions and that this represents "great emptiness."

Question [#16]: How is it that the emptiness of the ten

directions represents great emptiness?

Reply: Because the eastern direction is boundless it is described as "great." Additionally, because it exists everywhere it is described as "great." Because it pervades all forms it is referred to as great. Because it exists eternally it is described as "great." Because it is beneficial to the world, it is described as "great." Because it allows beings to not be confused or overcome by claustrophobia, it is described as "great." Because the directions which are great in these respects can be refuted, [the emptiness which refutes their ultimacy] is referred to as "great emptiness." The other types of emptiness demolish dharmas which are the product of causes and conditions, dharmas which are created and dharmas which are coarse. Because [those dharmas] are easy to demolish, those [emptinesses which refute their ultimacy] are not described as "great." This "directionality" is a dharma which is not the product of causes and conditions, nor is it a dharma [characterized by] creation. Because it is a subtle dharma which is difficult to demolish, [the emptiness which refutes its ultimacy] is referred to as "great emptiness."

Question [#17]: If among the Buddha dharmas there is no such thing as directionality, and if it is not either subsumed within the three unconditioned [dharmas]: space; extinction gained through wisdom;

and extinction not gained through wisdom, how can you say not only that space exists but moreover it is eternal, that it is an unconditioned dharma, that it is a dharma not produced of causes and conditions, that it is not a created dharma and that it is an extremely subtle dharma?

Reply: According to the dialectics of the Hearers, this dharma of "direction" is nonexistent. Within the Dharma of the Mahayana, approached from the perspective of worldly common truth, it exists. [But], within the sphere of the supreme meaning no dharma whatsoever is attainable, how much the less is "direction" [attainable]. Just as a [mere] conjunction of five aggregates is contrivedly (lit. "forcedly") referred to as a "being," so too with "direction." Distinctions made between "here" and "there" and so forth in the sphere of forms created by the four great elements are artificially referred to as "directions." Thus the place where the sun rises is referred to as "east." The place where the sun sets is referred to as "west." [Points of reference] such as these constitute the characteristics of "direction." Because these directions are naturally and eternally existent, because they are not the product of causes and conditions, nor are they previously nonexistent and now existent, or presently existent but later nonexistent, and because they are not dharmas characterized by creation and are not readily and obviously understandable, they are therefore subtle dharmas.

Question [#18]: If "direction" is like this, then how can it be refuted (lit. "demolished")?

Reply: You did not hear me. I already said that approaching it from the perspective of worldly common truth it does exist. [But}, approached from the perspective of the supreme meaning, it is demolished. Because, from the perspective of common conventional truth, it exists, one avoids falling annihilationism. Because, from the perspective of the supreme meaning, it is demolished, one avoids falling into eternalism. This has been a summary explanation of "great emptiness."

Question [#19]: The emptiness of the supreme meaning is also able to demolish dharmas which are devoid of creation, dharmas which are devoid of causes and conditions, and dharmas which are subtle. Why is it not described as "great emptiness?"

Reply: Because the appellation "great" was already taken up, [the emptiness of the supreme meaning] does not carry the designation "great." Now although the name "supreme meaning" is different, its meaning is actually great. From the transcendental point of reference, it is nirvana which is considered to be great. From the common worldly point

of reference, it is "direction" that is considered to be great. On account of this, the emptiness of the supreme meaning is also great emptiness.

Moreover, [another explanation is that] it is because it demolishes greatly erroneous views that it is described as "great" emptiness. For instance, if the cultivator employs compassionate thoughts to create affinities (lit. "conditions") with the beings in the country immediately to the east and then creates affinities with the beings in yet another country [to the east, and so forth], and if as he successively goes about creating affinities he is of the opinion that he will [be able to] create affinities in every one of the countries to the east, then he thereby falls into the view which holds that [directions] are possessed of boundaries. If [on the other hand] he is of the opinion that he will never be able to entirely reach the end, then he thereby falls into the view which holds that [directions] are unbounded. On account of developing either of these two views, his compassionate thoughts will [eventually] perish. If he employs the emptiness of directions to demolish this "eastern direction," then he destroys both the view which holds to the existence of boundedness and also the view which holds to boundlessness. If he does not employ the emptiness of

directions to demolish the [concept of an] eastern direction, then he will pursue the idea of an eastern direction. If he follows it without cease, then his thoughts of compassion will perish and the erroneous thoughts will arise. [His situation then would be] analogous to that which occurs when the tides on the great ocean wax full and then recede. If the fish do not [also] pull back then they are stranded out on the beach and then are afflicted with suffering. If the fish are smart then they go back along with the water and are forever able to be secure. The cultivator is just like this. If he follows up his thoughts, but fails to return, then he is stranded in the realm of erroneous views. If in following his thoughts he then returns he does not lose his thoughts of compassion. Because [this emptiness] demolishes greatly erroneous views in this fashion, it is referred to as "great" emptiness.

[6) The Emptiness of the Supreme Meaning {288b23}]

The supreme meaning refers to the true character (bhuutalak.sa.na) of all dharmas.(Comment**) which constituted their real nature. Because the Buddha wished to cut off these doubts, he simply set forth a clear explanation in which he

declared that the five aggregates, the suchness nature of dharmas and the ultimate reality (shr - ji) are all also empty. This is what is meant by "the emptiness of a nature."

Moreover, that which is conditioned possesses three characteristics: arising, abiding and perishing. That which is unconditioned also possesses three characteristics: nonarising, nonabiding, and nonperishing. If even the nature of that which is conditioned is empty, how much the more so is this the case for conditioned dharmas. If even the nature of that which is unconditioned is empty how much the more so is this the case for unconditioned dharmas. It is on account of all kinds of causes and conditions such as these that a nature cannot be gotten at. This is what is meant by "the emptiness of a nature."

[13) The Emptiness of Individual Characteristics]

As for "the emptiness of individual characteristics," all dharmas possess two kinds of characteristics, general characteristics and specific characteristics. Because these two kinds of characteristics are empty one refers to the emptiness of characteristics.

Question [#43]: What is meant by "general characteristics" and what is meant by "specific characteristics?"

Reply: General characteristics are [characteristics] such as impermanence and so forth. As for specific characteristics, although

dharmas are all empty, each of them possesses specific characteristics.

Take for example earth which is characterized by solidity and fire which characterized by heat.

Question [#44]: You already discussed "nature." Now you discuss "characteristics." What are the differences between "nature" and "characteristics?"

Reply: There are those who say that in actual fact there is no difference. It is the names which are different. When one speaks of a nature then this constitutes speaking about characteristics. When one speaks about characteristics then this constitutes speaking about a nature. For instance when one speaks of the nature of fire this is just the characteristic of heat. When one speaks of the characteristic of heat this is just the nature of fire.

There are [other] people who say that a nature and characteristics possess a small difference. A "nature" describes [a given dharma's] substance [whereas] a "characteristic" describes [an aspect] which can be [perceived] by consciousness.

For instance, a son of the Buddha takes on and upholds the prohibitions. This is his nature. He cuts off his hair, and sections and dyes his robe. These are his characteristics.

A brahmacarin takes on his dharma. That is his nature. He wears a cuda on the top of his head and carries a triple- branched staff. These are his characteristics.

It is also like fire, the nature of which is heat. Smoke is its characteristic.

That which is more closely [connected with a given dharma] is its nature [whereas] that which is more peripheral is its characteristic. It is not definitely the case that a characteristic proceeds from the very substance (lit. "body") [of a given entity]. The nature refers to its real [substance].

Take for example the color yellow which although it constitutes a characteristic of gold, nonetheless the inside is [more] copper-colored. When one melts (lit. "burns") it with fire and grinds it with a stone one realizes that [the characteristic of being yellow] is not the nature of gold.

For [another] example, when a person makes an offering in a respectful manner, his appearing to be a good person constitutes a characteristic. [If later on] he scolds, indulges in abusive speech, denigrates, insults, and acts angrily and hatefully, this then is his nature. Nature and characteristics possess distinctions such as these with regard to inside and outside, peripheral and close in, initial and subsequent, and so forth. All of these characteristics are empty. This is what is meant by the emptiness of characteristics.

[Continuing with "general characteristics, "] take for example the statement that all conditioned dharmas have impermanence as their characteristic. How is this so? [It is so] because, on account of

arisa and perishing, they do not abide. [It is so] because they previously were nonexistent, now exist, and then having already existed, become nonexistent again. [It is so] because they belong to [the sphere of] causes and conditions. [It is so] because they are false, deceptive and not true. [It is so] because they are produced from impermanent causes and conditions. [It is so] because they arise from a multiple combination of causes and conditions. It is so on account of causes and conditions such as these.

On account of the fact that all conditioned dharmas are characterized by impermanence and thus are able to bring about affliction of both the body and mind they are described as [having] suffering [as their characteristic]. [This is so] because, of the body's four postures, there are none which do not generate suffering. [This is so] because of the sage's truth of suffering. [This is so] because the sages, having foresaken them, do not undergo it. [This is so] because there is no time during which they fail to be afflictive. [This is so] because they are impermanent. On account of causes and conditions such as these [conditioned dharmas] are described as having suffering as their characteristic.

Because [conditioned dharmas] fall beyond the purview of a self they are empty. Because they are the product of a combination of causes and conditions they are empty. Because they are impermanent, suffering, empty and devoid of a self they are described as empty. Because from

beginning to end they cannot be gotten at they are empty. Because they deceive the mind they are empty. On account of the absence of characteristic and wishlessness entryways to liberation they are described as empty.

Because the true character of dharmas is immeasurable and beyond the sphere of enumeration [conditioned dharmas] are described as empty. Because it cuts short the path of all discourse, they are described as empty. Because it extinguishes all activity of thought they are empty. Because the pratyekabuddhas and arhats enter into it and do not come out again they are empty. On account of causes and conditions such as these [conditioned dharmas] are described as empty.

On account of impermanence, suffering, and emptiness [conditioned dharmas] are devoid of a self. Because they are not self-existent they are devoid of a self. Because they have no subjective agent [which inheres in them] they are described as being devoid of a self. There are no dharmas which do not arise from causes and conditions. Because they arise from causes and conditions they are devoid of a self. Because they are devoid of characteristics and because there is nothing to be done therein (names of two entryways to liberation. SEE TFB- 282c- 283b MPPU-R20) they are devoid of a self. Because they are false names they are devoid of a self. Because the view which looks upon the body [as constituting a self] is an inverted view they are devoid of a self. Because the Way is realized through cutting off thoughts [which fantasize

the existence] of a self, they are devoid of a self. On account of all manner [of causes and conditions such] as these, [conditioned dharmas] are described as being devoid of a self. [Characteristics] such as these [which have been discussed above] are "general" characteristics.

As for "specific" characteristics, [this refers to such characteristics as] the earth's characteristic of being solid, fire's characteristic of being hot, water's characteristic of being moist and wind's characteristic of being moist. The place upon which eye consciousness relies is the eye characteristic. The [characteristics] of the ear, nose, tongue, and body are also [designated] in this way. Consciousness is characterized by awareness. Wisdom is characterized by knowledge. Knowledge is characterized by wisdom. Relinquishment constitutes the characteristic of giving. Not being remorseful and not being afflicted are the characteristics of upholding the prohibitions. The mind's not changing is the characteristic of patience. The activation of diligence is the characteristic of vigor. Focussing of the mind is the characteristic of dhyana. Having nothing whatsoever to which one is attached is the characteristic of wisdom. The ability to bring endeavors to fulfillment is the characteristic of skillful means. The weaving together of births and deaths is the characteristic of the world. The absence of [this] "weaving" is the characteristic of nirvana*. In a manner such as this dharmas each have their own specific characteristic. One should realize that all of these characteristics are empty. This is

what is meant by "the emptiness of individual characteristics." Because the meanings germane to a "nature" and "characteristics" are [largely] the same, the remainder of the meanings [applicable to this discussion] are as discussed [earlier] in "the emptiness of a nature."

Question [#45]: Why do you not simply speak of "the emptiness of characteristics," but instead speak of "the emptiness of individual characteristics?"

Reply: If one only speaks of "the emptiness of characteristics," this does not speak of the emptiness of a dharma's substance. If one speaks of "the emptiness of individual characteristics," this is just the emptiness of the dharma's substance. Moreover, because they each are comprised of a combination of multiple dharmas, the arising of a single dharma is [just] the emptiness of single dharma. In a manner such as this every single dharma is empty. Now this [fact of] dharmas as a conjunction of causes and conditions extends to [implicate] all [dharmas] as empty. All dharmas, each and every one of them, are empty as regards any individual characteristic. It is on account of this that this is referred to as "the emptiness of individual characteristics."

Question [#46]: If all dharmas, each and every one of them, are empty as regards any individual characteristics, why say anything more?

Reply: On account of the inverted views of beings they take up characteristics of identity, characteristics of difference, general characteristics, specific characteristics and so forth and then become

attached to dharmas. It is for the sake of cutting this off that there is then [subsequent] discussion. Causes and conditions such as these are what is intended by "the emptiness of individual characteristics."

[14) The Emptiness of All Dharmas]

As for "the emptiness of all dharmas," "all dharmas" refers to the five aggregates, the twelve [sense] fields, the [eighteen] sense realms and so forth. All of these dharmas correspond to many different criteria. Specifically, they all possess: the characteristic of being existent, the characteristic of being knowable, the characteristic of [being perceptible by] consciousness, the characteristic of constituting an objective support, the characteristic of constituting a decisive [condition], the characteristic of constituting a cause, the characteristic of constituting an effect, the characteristic of possessing general [characteristics], the characteristic of possessing specific [characteristics], and the characteristic of constituting a basis.

Question [#47]: What is meant by the characteristic of being existent?

Reply: Among all dharmas there are those which are fine, those which are ugly, those which are subject- related, those which are object- related [and so forth]. Because all dharmas correspond to the arising of thought they are described as "existent."

Question [#48]: Why, in the midst of nonexistent dharmas, do you speak of "the characteristic of being existent?"

Reply: If a dharma was nonexistent, it would not be described as a dharma. It is merely in order to counteract [the erroneous conception of] existence that they are referred to as "nonexistent dharmas." If it were actually the case that nonexistent dharmas existed they would be referred to as "existent" [and not as "nonexistent."] For this reason we speak of all dharmas' characteristic of being existent.

As for "the characteristic of being knowable," the knowledge of the dharma of suffering and the subsequent knowledge of suffering are able to know the truth of suffering. The knowledge of the dharma of origination and the subsequent knowledge of origination are able to know the truth of origination. The knowledge of the dharma of extinction and the subsequent knowledge of extinction are able to know the truth of extinction. The knowledge of the dharma of the Way and the subsequent knowledge of the Way are able to know the truth of the Way. And so too common worldly wholesome knowledge is able to know suffering, is able to know origination, is able to know extinction, is able to know the Way, and is also able to know [the station of infinite???] space as well as the extinction not realized with wisdom as a conditioning agent. This is what is meant by the knowability characteristic of all dharmas. Because [all dharmas are] characterized by knowability, [this characteristic of knowability] includes all dharmas.

As for all dharmas' characteristic of being [perceptible by] consciousness, The eye consciousness is able to be aware of forms, the ear consciousness is able to be aware of sounds, the nose consciousness is able to be aware of smells, the tongue consciousness is able to be aware of tastes, the body consciousness is able to be aware of touchables, and the [intellectual] mind consciousness is able to be aware of dharmas [as objects of mind], is able to be aware of the eye, is able to be aware of forms, is able to be aware of eye consciousness, is able to be aware of the ear, is able to be aware of sounds, is able to be aware of ear consciousness, is able to be aware of the nose, is able to be aware of smells, is able to be aware of nose consciousness, is able to be aware of the tongue, is able to be aware of flavors, is able to be aware of tongue consciousness, is able to be aware of the body, is able to be aware of touchables, is able to be aware of body consciousness, is able to be aware of the [intellectual] mind, is able to be aware of dharmas [as objects of mind], and is able to be aware of [intellectual] mind consciousness. This is what is meant by the characteristic of [being perceptible by] consciousness.

As for the characteristic of constituting an objective support, the eye consciousness as well as the dharmas associated with the eye consciousness are able to employ [visual] forms as objective supports. The ear consciousness as well as the dharmas associated with the ear consciousness are able to employ sounds as objective supports. The nose

consciousness as well as the dharmas associated with the nose consciousness are able to employ smells as objective supports. The tongue consciousness as well as the dharmas associated with tongue consciousness are able to employ tastes as objective supports. The body consciousness as well as the dharmas associated with body consciousness are able to employ tangibles as objective supports. The [intellectual] mind consciousness as well as the dharmas associated with [intellectual] mind consciousness are able to employ dharmas [as objects of mind] as objective supports and are also able to employ the eye, [visual] forms, and eye consciousness as objective supports, are able to employ the ear, sounds, and ear consciousness as objective supports, are able to employ the nose, smells, and nose consciousness as objective supports, are able to employ the tongue, tastes, and tongue consciousness as objective supports, are able to employ the body, tangibles, and body consciousness as objective supports, and are able also to employ the [intellectual] mind, dharmas [as objects of mind], and [intellectual] mind consciousness as objective supports. This is what is meant by the characteristic of constituting an objective support.

As for the characteristic of constituting a decisive [condition], all conditioned dharmas are each and every one of them a decisive [condition]. Unconditioned dharmas also possess [the characteristic of constituting] decisive [conditions] with respect to conditioned dharmas. This is what is meant by the characteristic of constituting a decisive

[condition].

As for the characteristic of constituting a cause and the characteristic of constituting an effect, of all dharmas, each and every one of them constitute a cause and each and every one of them constitute and effect. This is what is meant by the characteristic of constituting a cause and the characteristic of constituting an effect.

As for the characteristic of possessing general [characteristics] and the characteristic of possessing specific [characteristics], among all dharmas, each and every one of them possesses general characteristics and specific characteristics. For example, "horse" is a general characteristic whereas "white" is a specific characteristic. As another example, "person" is a general characteristic. If a person has lost an ear, then this is a specific characteristic. In this manner, extending to each and every [dharma], they all possess general characteristics and specific characteristics. This is what is meant by the characteristic of possessing general [characteristics] and the characteristic of possessing specific [characteristics].

As for the characteristic of constituting a basis, all dharmas are based upon each other in a codependent fashion. For example, grasses, trees, mountains and rivers are based upon the land and the land is based upon the waters [of the oceans]. In this manner each and every [dharma] is interdependently based. This is what is meant by the characteristic of constituting a basis. The characteristic of

constituting a basis includes all dharmas. In a manner such as this the characteristic of a single dharmic criterion includes all dharmas.

Moreover, [there are] two- fold dharmic criteria [which] include all dharmas, namely: form and formless dharmas, perceptible and imperceptible dharmas, opposable and nonopposable dharmas, outflow and nonoutflow dharmas, conditioned and unconditioned dharmas, subject-related dharmas and object- related dharmas, [subjective] observer-related dharmas and objective support dharmas, existent dharmas and nonexistent dharmas. There are all manner of twofold characteristic dharmic criteria such as these. [There are three- fold characteristic, four- fold characteristic, five- fold characteristic, six- fold characteristic and so forth until we come to innumerable- fold characteristic dharmic criteria which include all dharmas. These dharmas are all empty as explained above. This is what is meant by "the emptiness of all dharmas."

Question [#49]: If it is the case that they are all empty, why discuss all kinds of names of all dharmas?

Reply: Because the foolish common person, acting under the influence of delusion- based inverted views, siezes upon characteristics in the midst of [inherently] empty dharmas, he develops desire and other such afflictions. Because of afflictions he generates all manner of karmic activity. Because he generates all manner of karmic activity he enters the various paths [of rebirth]. Because he enters the various

paths [of rebirth] he takes up various kinds of bodies. Because he takes up various kinds of bodies he undergoes various kinds of suffering and pleasure. This is analogous to the silkworm which secretes the silk filament. For no [apparent] reason [the silk] naturally comes forth from [within its body] and it then wraps and encases itself and subsequently undergoes the pain of being roasted or boiled.

On account of the power of pure wisdom the sage distinguishes [clearly] all dharmas and [realizes] that they are all empty. Because he wishes to bring deliverance to beings he describes [for them] the points at which they are attached, namely: the five aggregates, the twelve [sense] fields, the eighteen [sense] realms, and so forth, [explaining], "It is simply on account of delusion that you then generate the five aggregates and so forth, creating them yourself and attaching to them yourself."

If the sage merely set forth [the doctrine of] emptiness, [beings] would be unable to gain the Way. This is because, on account of having no [understanding] of the [real] causes, [beings] would have nothing towards which they could [profitably] direct their aversion.

Question [#50]: You say that all dharmas are empty. This is not [really] the case. How so? Of all the dharmas, each and every one of them is included within its own characteristics. Take for instance the earth's characteristic of beings solid, water's characteristic of being moist, fire's characteristic of being hot, wind's characteristic of

moving, thought's characteristic of being conscious, and wisdom's characteristic of being aware. Each [of these dharmas] resides in its characteristics. How can you say that they are empty?

Reply: [This idea] has already been refuted in the [previous sections] on "the emptiness of a nature" and "the emptiness of individual characteristics." I shall now explain it again. Because characteristics are not fixed values they should not be [thought of as real] characteristics. Take for instance butter, honey, resin, wax and so forth. They each possess the earth's characteristic [of being solid]. But when they are brought into the presence of fire they lose that characteristic and change so that they possess the characteristic of moistness. When gold, silver, copper and iron are brought into the presence of fire, they too lose their characteristic [of being solid] and then become characterized by liquidity.

As [another] example, when water becomes cold it turns into ice and is then characterized by earth- [like solidity]. [Other] examples [include] persons who are drunk, asleep or engaged in the no- thought meditative absorption, and also fish who have been frozen in the ice [of winter], all of which are devoid of the consciousness of thought, have lost the characteristics of thought, and have nothing of which they are aware.

As [another] example, wisdom is characterized by awareness, [but] when one gains entry into the true character of dharmas one then has

nothing of which one is aware [and thus] relinquishes that characteristic of being aware. Therefore dharmas possess no fixed characteristics.

Again, [there is another reason why,] if one holds that dharmas possess fixed characteristics, this is not the case. How is this so? As an example, the characteristics of dharmas of the future should not arrive at and come into the present. If they arrived at the present then they would lose the characteristic of futurity. If they entered into the present without having relinquished the characteristic of futurity the future then would be [identical to] the present and there would then be no such thing as resultant retribution [to be experienced later] in the future.

[Furthermore], if [dharmas of] the present entered into the past they would then lose their characteristic of present immediacy. If they did not relinquish their characteristic of present immediacy when entering into the past the past then would be [identical with] the present. On account of [inherent] fallacies such as these one should then know that dharmas have no fixed characteristics.

Furthermore, if one maintains that unconditioned dharmas definitely exist one ought to [be able to] distinguish characteristics which they themselves possess. [They should possess these characteristics] in the same manner that fire itself possesses the characteristic of being hot and does not create the characteristic because of another [dharma]. One should know that because unconditioned

dharmas are devoid of characteristics they therefore actually do not exist.

Additionally, you [would] be of the opinion that a future dharma of extinction not achieved through wisdom is a conditioned dharma and yet it is devoid of any characteristic of being conditioned. If you maintain that extinction not achieved through wisdom constitutes the [conditioned] characteristic of perishing, this is not the case either. How so?

Because it is [only] perishing occurring on account of impermanence which may [properly] be referred to as the characteristic of perishing. It is not the case that one can take the extinction which is not accomplished through wisdom as constituting the characteristic of perishing.

For all manner of reasons such as these [discussed above], there are no fixed characteristics. If there actually could be [a given dharma] possessed of fixed characteristics, it could [theoretically] be judged on that basis to be non- empty. However, it is not the case that [a given dharma], being [entirely] devoid of fixed characteristics, could be judged on that basis to be non- empty, [either in theory or in fact].

Question [#51]: It should be the case that there actually are dharmas which are not empty. How so? That which is known by the foolish common person and by the sage is different for each of them. That which is known by the foolish common person is false. That which is known by the sage is actual. It is in reliance upon the wisdom of the sage that one foresakes false dharmas. One cannot forsake the false by relying

upon the false.

Reply: It is [merely] for the sake of refuting that which is known by the foolish common person that one refers to the wisdom of the sage. If there were no dharmas of the foolish common person then there would be no dharmas of the sage in the same way that if there were no [such thing as] diseases, there would be no [such thing as] medicines. It is for this reason that one of the scriptures [= sutra] declares, "There are no additional dharmas of the sage apart from the dharmas of the foolish common person. The real nature of the dharmas of the foolish common person is just the Dharma of the sage."

Additionally, the sage does not seize upon or become attached to any dharmas. It is for this reason that the dharma of the sage is true and real. The foolish common person both seizes upon and becomes attached to dharmas. Therefore the dharmas of the foolish common person are regarded as false. Although the sage employs [those dharmas] still, he does not seize upon their characteristics. He does not seize upon their characteristics because they are devoid of fixed characteristics.

In view of these [points] one ought not to find a topic of controversy here. On the level (lit. "ground") of the foolish common person one becomes attached to dharmas and discriminates these [dharmas] as the dharmas of the sage and these [others] as the dharmas of the foolish common person. If, [however], one [resides] on the level of the worthies and the sages there is nothing whatsoever which serves as an

object of discrimination. For the sake of putting an end to (lit. "cutting off") the diseases of beings they speak of this as false and this as real. Thus it is said, "The discourse of the Buddha is neither false nor true, neither bound up nor liberated, and not singular or different. For this reason there is nothing discriminated and it is pure like space."

Additionally, if dharmas were not entirely empty one should not declare that refraining from futile discourse is the characteristic of the wise person. Nor should one declare of: not taking on anything, not becoming attached to anything, not relying on anything, or declare of: emptiness, the absence of characteristics and wishlessness that all of these constitute true dharmas.

Question [#52]: If all dharmas are empty, that [fact] itself constitutes a reality. How then can you say that they are devoid of reality?

Reply: As it is the case that all dharmas are empty, if this [dharma of which you speak] is an existent dharma it has already been demolished [earlier] as it is subsumed under "all dharmas." If it is a nonexistent dharma then it shouldn't be a cause for any concern. <<Big disagreement with Lamotte here both in the question and in the reply!>>

Question [#53]: If it is the case that "all dharmas are empty" is true and real, why, as in the Tripitaka, did the Buddha speak mostly of dharmas of impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and non-self? As stated

in a sutra:

The Buddha told the Bhikshus, "I shall explain for you a dharma which is known as the emptiness of the supreme meaning. What is meant by the emptiness of the supreme meaning? When the eye develops (lit. "is produced/is born"), there is nowhere from which it comes and when it perishes there is also nowhere to which it goes. There is only karmic action and the resultant retribution of karmic action and [yet] an agent of the action cannot be found. The same is true of the ear, nose, tongue, body and intellectual mind."

If herein it states, "When it develops (lit. "produced/born") there is nowhere from which it comes and when it perishes there is also nowhere to which it goes," because permanence and permanent dharmas cannot be found here [the status quo] therefore is one of impermanence. [When it states], "There is only karmic action and the resultant retribution of karmic action and yet an agent of the action cannot be found," within the Dharma of the Hearer's this constitutes the emptiness of the supreme meaning. Why then do you [devote your discourse to] speaking about all dharmas being empty?

Reply: The [idea of a]self is the origin of all afflictions. One initially becomes attached to the five aggregates as constituting a self. One subsequently becomes attached to external phenomena as constituting

that which belongs to a self. Because one is then bound to that which belongs to a self, one then develops desire and enmity (tan- hwei). On account of the causes and conditions [arising from] desire and enmity one generates karmic activity. When the Buddha stated that there is no agent of actions it was for the purpose of refuting the idea of self inhering amidst all dharmas. When he said that when the eye develops there is nowhere from which it comes and when it perishes there is nowhere to which it goes, it was to explain that the eye is impermanent. If it is impermanent then it is [a source of] suffering. Suffering is not the self and does not belong to the self. Because [one then understands that] there is no self nor that which belongs to a self, in the midst of all dharmas the mind has nothing to which one is attached. Because the mind has nothing to which it is attached, it does not generate the fetters. If it [already] does not generate the fetters, what would be the point in discussing emptiness? It is on account of this that, in the Tripitaka it mostly discusses impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and the absence of a self and does not mostly discuss all dharmas as empty (bu dwo shwo yi chye fa kung).

Furthermore, although beings heard the Buddha explain impermanence, suffering, emptiness and the absence of a self, nonetheless they still engaged in futile discoursing about dharmas. It is for the sake of these people that one explains that all dharmas are empty.

[Also], if there is no self there is also nothing which belongs

to a self. If there is neither a self nor that which belongs to a self this then constitutes an entry into the meaning of emptiness.

Question [#54]: Why did the Buddha state that there is karmic action and resultant retribution? If there is karmic action and if there is resultant retribution then this is not emptiness.

Reply: The Buddha's speaking of Dharma is of two types: The first is the absence of a self. The second is the absence of dharmas. For the sake of those who were attached by virtue of [erroneously] perceiving a "soul" (shen/spirit), or [the idea of] permanence he spoke of the absence of an agent of actions (i.e. the absence of a self) and for the sake of those who were attached to annihilationistic or eternalistic views he discussed the existence of karmic action and the existence of the resultant retribution of karmic activity. If upon hearing that there is no agent of actions a person fell conversely (jwan dwo) into the view of annihilationism, [the Buddha] spoke to him about the existence of karmic activity and the existence of resultant retribution of karmic activity. These five aggregates are able to generate karmic activity but do not [themselves] proceed to [rebirth in] a later incarnation. The causes and conditions [created] of these five aggregates lead to the production of [another set of] five aggregates. Because the undergoing of the resultant retribution of karmic activity continues on one speaks of receiving the resultant retribution of karmic activity. This is analogous to the a mother and her baby. Although they

inhabit different bodies, still, the causes and conditions proceed on from the one to the other. For instance, if the mother ingests medicine, the illness of the [nursing] infant may be cured. In this same manner, although the five aggregates of this present lifetime and the five aggregates of the subsequent lifetime are in fact different, still, because the causes and conditions of the karmic activity of offenses and blessings continue on, the five aggregates of the subsequent lifetime receive the resultant retribution of karmic activity from the causes and conditions of the five aggregates of the present life. (What a mouthful! It appears to be accurate, however.)

Additionally, there are people who seek out the characteristics of dharmas, become attached to a single dharma, and whether [that dharma] is one of existence, of nonexistence, of permanence, or of impermanence, on account of becoming attached to that dharma they develop affection for their own dharma, enmity for the dharmas of others and then consequently engage in unwholesome karmic activity. For the sake of these people one explains the emptiness of all dharmas. If dharmas are empty then there are no dharmas which [can be clung to as actually] existent. Why is this the case? A dharma which can be the object of affection is able to bring about the production of the fetters (neng sheng jye- shr). If it is able to bring about the production of the fetters it constitutes a cause and condition of ignorance. If it is able to bring about the production of ignorance, how can it be real? This [very circumstance then, ipso facto]

constitutes [a clear demonstration of the inherent] emptiness of dharmas.

Then again, beings are of two types: The first is attached to the world. The second seeks to transcend the world. Of those who seek to transcend the world there are the [three grades of] superior, middling and lesser. Those who are of the superior grade are possessed of sharp faculties and great minds and seek the way of the Buddha. Those who are of the middling grade are possessed of middling faculties and seek the way of the Pratyekabuddha. Those who are of the lesser grade are possessed of lesser faculties and seek the way of the Hearers. For those who seek the way of the Buddha one explains the six paramitas as well as the emptiness of dharmas. For the sake of those who seek the way of the Pratyekabuddha one explains the twelve causes and conditions and the dharma of solitary practice. For the sake of those who seek the way of the Hearer one explains the emptiness of beings as well as the dharma of the four truths.

The Hearer is fearful and abhorrent of [the round of] births and deaths. When he hears of the emptiness of beings as well as the dharmas of the four truths, impermanence, suffering, emptiness, absence of a self, and refraining from futile discoursing, he is like a deer in the park who, having just been shot by a poison arrow, immediately struggles to escape and has no other thought.

Although the [follower of the way of the] Pratyekabuddha [also] feels aversion for aging, sickness and death, he is still able to engage

to a minor degree in the contemplation of the extremely profound [dharma of] causes and conditions and is also able to engage to a minor degree in the deliverance of beings. He is like a rhinoceros in the park who, although he has just been shot by a poison arrow, is still able to feel affection for and see to the safety of his offspring.

Although the bodhisattva feels aversion for aging, sickness and death, he is able to contemplate the true character of all dharmas, is able to enter deeply into [the contemplation of] the twelve causes and conditions, is able to completely realize the emptiness of dharmas, and is able to enter into the nature of the innumerable dharmas. He is like the white, pleasantly- scented king of the elephants who although shot by an arrow while in the game park, still cares about and looks after all who are hunted, and feeling no fear in his heart, then escorts the herd in a calm and orderly withdrawal.

It is for these reasons that the Tripitaka does not speak primarily of the emptiness of dharmas. Perhaps at times there were brahmacarins of sharp faculties who sought [to discover] the true character of all dharmas, who felt no aversion for aging, sickness and death, [but] who had become attached to the characteristics of all manner of dharmas. For the sake of these [the Buddha] spoke of the emptiness of dharmas.

Specifically, there was the Brahmacarin named Srenika for whom [the Buddha] would not declare that the five aggregates were real nor

would he declare that reality was to be found apart from the five aggregates.

Again, there was the Brahmacharin who was strong in debate to whom the Buddha replied, "In my Dharma, we do not accept either existence or nonexistence. No matter what the topic of your dialectic, existence and nonexistence are [both] dharmas of futile discourse and constitute sites for the arising of the fetters."

And also in the Great Emptiness Sutra of the Mixed Agama Collection it speaks of two kinds of emptiness: the emptiness of beings and the emptiness of dharmas. In the Radhasutra [the Buddha] spoke of bringing about [realization that] nothing whatsoever exists through the disintegration and dispersion of the form aggregate. In the Sutra on the Analogy of the Raft [the Buddha] declared, "Even the Dharma itself should be forsaken, how much more so that which is non-dharma. In the Parayanasutra and in The Arthavargiyani Sutra, [the Buddha] said:

One who is wise neither tends acceptance of nor attaches to any dharma. If one accepts any dharma then one generates futile discourse. If one has nothing upon which one depends then there is nothing which is debated. All of the sages who have gained the Way neither cling to nor reject any dharma. If one has neither clinging nor rejecting one is able to transcend all views.

There are many places in the Tripitaka such as these where the emptiness of dharmas is discussed. [Discussions] such as these exemplify what is meant by the emptiness of all dharmas.

[15) The Emptiness of the Unattainability*]

As for the emptiness of unattainability*, there are those who say that it is because dharmas of selfhood and dharmas of permanence are unattainable among the [five] aggregates, [eighteen sense] realms and [twelve sense] fields that it is referred to as the emptiness of unattainability*.

There are those who say that it is referred to as the emptiness of unattainability* because, though one may search for dharmas amidst causes and conditions, they cannot be found just as a fist cannot be found among the five fingers.

There are those who say that it is referred to as the emptiness of unattainability* because all dharmas as well as causes and conditions are all ultimately unattainable.

Question [#55]: Why is it referred to as the emptiness of unattainability*? Is it due to a deficiency in the power of one's wisdom that [a given dharma] cannot be gotten at or is it because it actually does not exist that it cannot be gotten at?

Reply: It is because all dharmas are actually nonexistent that they cannot be gotten at. It is not that there is an inadequacy of

wisdom.

Question [#56] : If that is the case then [the emptiness of unattainability* is no different from ultimate emptiness or the emptiness of individual characteristics. Why then do you now speak redundantly of an emptiness of unattainability*?

Reply: If a person listens to all of the emptinesses [discussed] above and [realizes that in] all of them nothing whatsoever exists his mind may be overcome with fear and he may develop doubts. Now we explain the causes and conditions of why [all dharmas] are empty. It is because one may search for them but will be unable to find them that [the Buddha] spoke of the emptiness of unattainability* for their sakes. It was in order to cut off these doubts and fears that the Buddha spoke of the emptiness of unattainability*. How is this the case? The Buddha said, "From the time I first resolved [to attain bodhi] on up to the time when I was fully enlightened and became a buddha replete with the ten powers, I sought to find reality in the midst of all dharmas but was unable to find it [there]." This is what is meant by the emptiness of unattainability*.

Question [#57]: What thing is it that is not attainable?

Reply: All dharmas [even] including the nirvana without residue are unattainable. It is for this reason that it is referred to as "the emptiness of unattainability*."

Additionally, when the practitioner realizes this emptiness of

the unattainable he does not attain the three poisons, the four floods, the four yokes, the five coverings, the six desires, the seven [unwholesome] tendencies, the eight erroneous modes, the nine fetters, the ten evils or any of the inferior, unwholesome or defiled bonds. Because none of them are attainable it is referred to as the emptiness of unattainability*.

Question [#58]: If this is the case, what dharma's benefits are attained from cultivation of this emptiness of attainability?

Reply: One attains morality, meditative absorption, and wisdom. One attains the Shrama.na's four grades of fruition, the five faculties, the five aggregated aspects of those beyond study, the six types of even-mindedness, the seven branches of enlightenment, the eightfold path of the sages, the nine sequential meditative absorptions and the ten dharmas of those beyond study. The attainment of these is according to the dharma of the Hearers. If one attains the prajnaparamita, then one perfects all of the qualities of the six paramitas as well as of the ten grounds.

Question [#59]: You said above that all dharmas [even] including nirvana are unattainable. How then can you now say that one attains morality, meditative absorption, wisdom and so forth on up to the ten dharmas of those beyond study?

Reply: Although these dharmas are attained, because they all provide assistance in the realization of the emptiness of

unattainability*, they too may be referred to as the [emptiness of] unattainability*. Furthermore, because there is nothing which is accepted and nothing which is attached to, these too may be referred to as the [emptiness of] unattainability*. Because they constitute unconditioned dharmas they may be referred to as the [emptiness of] unattainability*. On account of the truths of the sage they may be referred to as the [emptiness of] unattainability*. Because of the truth of the supreme meaning they may be referred to as the [emptiness of the] supreme meaning.

Although the sage attains all manner of qualities, because he enters into the nirvana without residue he does not take it to constitute attainment. The foolish common person [on the other hand] takes it to be great attainment. This is analogous to the lion who, although he has that which he does accomplish, nonetheless he still doesn't himself consider it to be particularly marvelous. The other beings [on the other hand] observe [the feats of the lion] and take them to be especially rare. Meanings such as those [discussed above] are what is intended by "the emptiness of unattainability*."

[16) The Emptiness of Nonexistent Dharmas;

[17) The Emptiness of Existent Dharmas;

[18) The Emptiness of Dharmas Which Are Nonexistent and Yet Existent.

As for the emptiness of nonexistent dharmas, there are those who say that "nonexistent dharmas" refers to dharmas which have already perished. Because they have become nonexistent by virtue of having perished, this is referred to as the emptiness of nonexistent dharmas.

As for the emptiness of existent dharmas, because all dharmas are produced from a combination of causes and conditions there are no existent dharmas. Because existent dharmas are nonexistent this is referred to as the emptiness of existent dharmas.

As for the emptiness of dharmas which are nonexistent and yet existent, in attempting to seize upon the characteristics of dharmas which are nonexistent and yet existent, they cannot be gotten at. This constitutes the emptiness of dharmas which are nonexistent and yet existent.

Then again, on account of contemplating the emptiness of dharmas which are nonexistent and yet existent that one refers to the emptiness of dharmas which are nonexistent and yet existent.

Then again, the practitioner contemplates the arising and perishing of all dharmas, perhaps from the standpoint of their existence or perhaps from the standpoint of their nonexistence. [When he contemplates] from the standpoint of their arising he becomes delighted. [When he contemplates] from the standpoint of their perishing he becomes distressed. If the practitioner contemplates the emptiness of the dharmas of production he then thereby extinguishes the thoughts of delight. If he contemplates the emptiness of the dharmas of extinction he then thereby extinguishes the

thoughts of distress. Why is this so? Because there is nothing gained in [the process of] production and there is nothing lost in [the process] of extinction. Because one gets rid of [both] worldly desire and worldly distress this is referred to as the emptiness of dharmas which are nonexistent and yet existent.

Furthermore, of the eighteen kinds of emptiness the first three emptinesses demolish all dharmas. The last three emptinesses also demolish all dharmas.

The emptiness of existent dharmas demolishes all dharmas at the time of their arising and at the time of their abiding. The emptiness of nonexistent dharmas demolishes all dharmas at the time of their perishing. The emptiness of dharmas which are nonexistent and yet existent simultaneously demolishes [all dharmas] in both their arising and perishing [phases].

Additionally, there are those who say that the emptiness of dharmas of the past and the emptiness of dharmas of the future are what is intended by the emptiness of nonexistent dharmas, whereas dharmas of the present and unconditioned dharmas are what is intended by the emptiness of existent dharmas. Why? Because the dharmas of the past have become lost through extinction and have returned to nonexistence through [the process of] change whereas the causes and conditions of the dharmas of the future have not as yet come together. Thus because they have not yet been born, have not yet existed, have not yet come forth and have not yet arisen they are therefore

referred to as nonexistent dharmas. One may contemplate and become aware of the immediate existence of dharmas of the present and unconditioned dharmas. This is what is meant by the emptiness of existent dharmas. Because these two are both empty they are referred to as the emptiness of dharmas which are nonexistent and yet existent.

Then again there are those who say that unconditioned dharmas are devoid of arising, abiding and perishing. This is what is meant by nonexistent dharmas. Conditioned dharmas arise, abide and then perish. This is what is meant by existent dharmas. The emptiness of [dharmas] such as those [contained in these two categories] is what is meant by the emptiness of dharmas which are nonexistent and yet existent.

This is what is intended when it says that if the bodhisattva wishes to abide in the emptiness of the subject and so forth until we come to the emptiness of dharmas which are nonexistent and yet existent, he should study the prajnaparamita.

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Two Emptinesses Related to Greater & Lesser Vehicles

(T25.287b13- c6 [fasc.31])

Furthermore, briefly explained, there are two kinds of emptiness: emptiness of beings and emptiness of dharmas. Because of the [relatively] dull faculties of the disciples of the Lesser Vehicle, the emptiness of beings was set forth for their sakes. Because of [understanding] the nonexistence of a self and that which belongs to a self, they do not attach to other dharmas.

Owing to the sharp faculties of the disciples of the Great Vehicle, the emptiness of dharmas was set forth for their sakes. They immediately realized that the world is eternally empty and like nirvaana.

In describing the emptiness of the subject, the dialectical masters among the Hearers explain that amidst the subject- related dharmas there is no self, nothing belonging to the self, no permanence, no one who acts, no one who knows, and no one who experiences, [explaining that] this constitutes the emptiness of the subject and that emptiness of the objective sphere is just the same in these respects. They do not explain that the marks of subject- related dharmas and the

marks of object- related dharmas are just emptiness.

The Great Vehicle explains that among subject- related dharmas there are no marks of subject- related dharmas and that among object- related dharmas there are no marks of object- related dharmas. This is as explained in the Praj~naapaaramitaa:

"[The aggregate of] form is devoid of the mark of form. [So too it is with] feelings, perceptions, formative factors and consciousness, so that consciousness is devoid of the marks of consciousness. The eye is devoid of the characteristics of the eye. [So to it is with] the ear, nose, tongue, and body, and intellectual mind, so that the intellectual mind is devoid of the marks of an intellectual mind. [Objective] form is devoid of the marks of form. [So too it is with] sounds, smells, tastes, touchables and dharmas [as objects of mind], so that dharmas [as objects of mind] are devoid of the marks of dharmas [as objects of mind]. In a manner just like this all dharmas are devoid of [the marks of] their respective dharmas."

Question: Which of these two ways of explaining the emptiness of the subject and the emptiness of the objective sphere is actually [the case]?

Answer: They are both actually [the case]. It is just that, for the sake of those of lesser wisdom and dull faculties, the emptiness of beings was first explained. For the sake of those of great wisdom and sharp faculties, the emptiness of dharmas was [then] explained.

[The Prison Break Analogy]

This is analogous to [a situation wherein] a person who, shut up in prison, shatters his manacles and fetters, slays the prison guards and then goes forth at his pleasure, while there is another [prisoner] who, overcome with fear, furtively burrows a hole in the prison walls and is thereby also able to get out and avoid [imprisonment].

The Hearers only succeed in demolishing the afflictions born of the causes and conditions of a self and in detaching from their affection for dharmas. They are overcome with fear of the suffering of aging, sickness, death and the unfortunate destinies [of rebirth]. They have no further desire to push on forward, seeking out and utterly demolishing all dharmas from root to branch. They reckon that the only thing that matters is making a successful escape.

The followers of the Great Vehicle demolish the prison of the three realms, conquer and subjugate the demon hoardes, cut off entirely the fetters and extinguish all habitual propensities. They come to know completely all dharmas from their roots to their branches, and without being impeded, break through, demolish, and scatter all dharmas, causing the world to be, like nirvaa.na, entirely still and characterized by extinction. They gain anuttaraasamyaksa.mbodhi and influence all beings

to go forth from the three realms.

End Notes:

This is an extract from Nagarjuna's lovely and abstruse "Eighteen Emptinesses," a self-contained and comprehensive discussion which comprises the entirety of fascicle #31. An English version is in preparation as a Kalavi'nka Dharma Press publication.

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The Emptiness of Emptiness

(T25.287c24-288a11 [fasc.31])

As for "the emptiness of emptiness," it refers to employing emptiness to demolish emptiness of the subject, emptiness of the object,

and emptiness of both the subject and the object. It is on account of its demolishing of these three kinds of emptiness that it is referred to as the emptiness of emptiness.

Another way of stating this is that, having first employed the emptiness of dharmas to demolish [all] subject- related and object- related dharmas, one then employs this emptiness to demolish these three [resultant] varieties of emptiness. This is what is meant by the emptiness of emptiness.

Then again, [one may also say that] in the emptiness samdhi one contemplates the five aggregates as being empty and thereby achieves the realization of the eightfold path of the aarya, the cutting off all afflictions and the gaining of the nirvaana with residue. When that bodily life produced from the karmic causes and conditions of previous lives draws to an end, because one then desires to set aside [even] the eightfold path one then brings forth the samaadhi of the emptiness of emptiness. This is what is meant by the emptiness of emptiness.

Question: What are the differences between emptiness and the emptiness of emptiness?

Reply: Emptiness demolishes the five appropriated aggregates. The emptiness of emptiness demolishes emptiness.

Question : If "emptiness" [here] refers to the emptiness of dharmas, they have already been demolished. If it is not the case that "emptiness" refers to the emptiness of dharmas, what is it that it

demolishes?

Reply: Emptiness demolishes all dharmas so that the only thing which abides is emptiness. After emptiness has already demolished all dharmas, emptiness itself should also be set aside. It is on account of this that we require this "emptiness of emptiness."

Then again, whereas emptiness conditions all dharmas, the emptiness of emptiness conditions only emptiness.

["Champion" & "Dispensing With Medicine" Analogies]

This is analogous to a stalwart young fellow being able to drive off all outlaws, and to there being yet another man who is able to come along and defeat even this stalwart young fellow. The emptiness of emptiness is just like this.

This is also analogous to taking medicine. Medicine is able to overcome disease, but once the disease has been overcome, one ought to dispense with the medicine. If the medicine is not dispensed with, then yet another pathology manifests thereby. Although emptiness is able to cure the disease of the afflictions, still, because it is to be feared that emptiness itself may develop into yet another disorder, one employs emptiness to dispense with emptiness. This is what is meant by the

emptiness of emptiness.

Finally, it is because emptiness is employed to demolish the seventeen [other] kinds of emptiness that this is referred to as the emptiness of emptiness.

End Notes:

This is the fourth of the "Eighteen Emptinesses" the discussion of which comprises the whole of fascicle 31. [Back to text.]

Nagarjuna refers here to the first three emptinesses which he just finished discussing at length in the initial section of "Eighteen Emptiness." As you missed the discussion, it is only fair to point out that these three emptinesses refer basically to the emptiness of the "self," the emptiness of all that belongs to the objective sphere (including, obviously, "others"), and the emptiness of everything which relates to both. [Back to text.]

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