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The Teaching of the Armor Array

Varmavyūhanirdeśa

འཕགས་པ་གོ་ཚའི་བཀོད་པ་བསྟན་པ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་མདོ་

'phags pa go cha'i bkod pa bstan pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo

The Noble Great Vehicle Sūtra “The Teaching of the Armor Array”

Āryavarmavyūhanirdeśanāmamahāyānasūtra



Toh 51

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SUMMARY

- s.1 *The Teaching of the Armor Array* describes a dialog between the Buddha Śākyamuni and the bodhisattva Anantamati. The sūtra is primarily concerned with *the great armor*, a quality related to the perfection of insight. As such, it is no conventional sort of armor. Rather, donning it involves giving up all grasping at phenomena, and engaging diligently on the path, with insight into the nature of phenomena. The Buddha and Anantamati also discuss the nature of the Great Vehicle and the *great path*, all the while emphasizing their emptiness and lack of marks.

ac.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ac.1 This text was translated by the Dharmachakra Translation Committee under the supervision of Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche. Timothy Hinkle translated the text from Tibetan into English and wrote the introduction. Andreas Doctor compared the draft translation with the original Tibetan and edited the text. Felin Chung compared the work against the Chinese and compiled the Chinese glossary. Lastly, Josh Capitanio likewise compared the translation against the Chinese and made further edits and revisions to the translation.

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

ac.2 The generous sponsorship of Qing Dao Zheng Jian Group, which helped make the work on this translation possible, is most gratefully acknowledged.

i.

INTRODUCTION

i.1

The Teaching of the Armor Array takes place in Veṇuvana, the famous “Bamboo Grove” monastery on the outskirts of the ancient city of Rājagṛha, where the Buddha Śākyamuni and his community of monks took up residence during several rainy season retreats. This grove was offered to the Buddha by Bimbisāra, the king of Magadha, and it is a location where the Buddha is said to have taught numerous discourses. As is customary in sūtra literature, the Buddha delivers his Dharma teaching at the request of someone who poses a particular question. In this sūtra, the questioner is a bodhisattva named Anantamati, who asks the Buddha numerous questions about the Great Vehicle path, most notably about a type of metaphorical armor called *the great armor*. In his reply, the Buddha explains that donning the great armor has two dimensions: (1) a constant diligence in bodhisattva conduct in service to beings over countless eons, and (2) the relinquishment of any forms of objective fixation upon or apprehension of phenomena. As such, the great armor has both relative and ultimate aspects, a fact that various Tibetan commentators have also highlighted. Still, the great armor is primarily described as signless, formless, nonconceptual, and indescribable. It is precisely by virtue of not apprehending phenomena, the Buddha explains, that the great armor is able to shield its bearer. Given that it lies outside the limitations of conditioned existence, it offers protection from all conditioned forms of harm. Nevertheless, to describe its protective power, the Buddha draws significantly on various military analogies.

i.2

Apart from the great armor, the sūtra also discusses the Great Vehicle and what it terms the *great path*. The Buddha emphasizes that the Great Vehicle can accommodate all beings easily due to its absolute nature, which accords with the realm of phenomena. As for the great path, it is likewise due to the absence of any apprehension of phenomena that it can be traversed. Thus, as with the great armor, the ultimate nature of the Great Vehicle and the great path is emphasized. It is precisely because of their relationship to the

ultimate truth, namely that they rely and depend on nothing, that they can accommodate and transport all beings on the relative plane. To illustrate the value of the great armor, the Great Vehicle, and the great path, the Buddha recalls a past eon in which a universal monarch named Sarvārthasiddha renounced his kingdom to receive and accomplish these teachings. The sūtra concludes with the Buddha describing in detail how bodhisattvas should be free from conceptual activity to carry out unlimited conduct. He explains that only by observing nothing and relying on nothing will bodhisattvas be in accord with the realm of phenomena, and thus don the great armor.

i.3 *The Teaching of the Armor Array* is the seventh sūtra among the forty-nine titles included in the *Heap of Jewels* (Skt. *Ratnakūṭa*) collection in the Degé Kangyur. Only a few of the texts contained in the *Heap of Jewels* are extant in Sanskrit, and this scripture is not one of them. The Tibetan translation, which we have rendered into English here, was completed in the early translation period and is listed in the early ninth-century Denkarma (Tib. *ldan dkar ma*) catalog.¹ However, unlike most of the sūtras translated at the time, this text was translated from Chinese rather than Sanskrit. While the Degé edition of the Kangyur does not specify a translator, the Narthang edition states that it was translated from the Chinese by Gö Chödrup (ca. 755–849), who was a prolific Sino-Tibetan translator active in the Dunhuang region during the ninth century. Besides rendering *The Armor Array* into Tibetan, he also translated many other sūtras and *dhāraṇīs* from Chinese. The Chinese canon contains only one translation of *The Armor Array* (*Bei jia zhuangyan hui*, 被甲莊嚴會, Taishō 310 [7]), constituting the seventh text in the full Chinese translation of the *Heap of Jewels*, which was produced during the early eighth century CE by Bodhiruci (d. 727), a renowned translator from South India (who is not to be confused with another famous Indian translator of the same name who was active in China two centuries earlier). This Bodhiruci is responsible for translating much of the *Heap of Jewels* collection, among other texts, into Chinese.²

i.4 In Tibet, *The Armor Array* has been cited by several Tibetan masters in their presentations of the six perfections. For example, Longchen Rabjam (1308–64) refers to *The Armor Array* as scriptural evidence that liberation comes swiftly when skillful means is merged with insight into the nature of phenomena.³ Pawo Tsuklak Trengwa (1504–66) cites the sūtra in his renowned commentary on the *Bodhicaryāvatāra* as part of his explanation of armor-like discipline.⁴ The text was also cited by Dakpo Tashi Namgyal (1511–87) as an Indic source of Mahāmudrā teachings.⁵ Although the sūtra has been cited by Tibetan scholars of many traditions, to our knowledge the text has not previously received any attention in modern scholarship.

i.5

This English translation has been produced based on the Degé block print with reference to the Comparative Edition (Tib. *dpe bsdur ma*). Subsequently, the translation and the Tibetan sources were compared with the Chinese translation and the English translation was edited in light of this comparison.⁶

The Noble Great Vehicle Sūtra

The Teaching of the Armor Array

1.

The Translation

[B1] [F.70.b]

1.1 Homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas!

Thus did I hear at one time. The Blessed One was residing in Veṇuvana, at the Kalandakanivāpa, near Rājagṛha, together with his great community of monks and bodhisattva great beings, all of whom had gathered from myriad buddha fields. This immeasurably large assembly had gathered around the Blessed One and was respectfully serving and honoring him. Among those included in the assembly at that time was a bodhisattva great being named Anantamati. He rose from his seat, bared his right shoulder, and knelt on his right knee. With his palms together, he bowed toward the Blessed One and said, “Blessed One, I have a few doubts. If I were to ask the Thus-Gone One some questions, would he be so kind as to teach me?”

1.2 The bodhisattva great being Anantamati then spoke the following verses:

“O Great Heroic Being,
You are unequalled in the universe!
For the sake of beings,
I would like to ask a few questions.

1.3 “Without rising from your lion seat,
Your body pervades the ten directions.
No teachers of divergent doctrines
Are able to move you.

1.4 “The treasure of your knowledge has no limits.
Your strengths as well are immeasurable.
Each of the Blessed One’s strengths
Liberates the entire world.

1.5 “You abide well in omniscience,

- And in the ten powers.
O great and fearless Lion,
You are the incomparable head of the victors. [F.71.a]
- 1.6 “Because the Thus-Gone One
Masters eighteen unique qualities,
You illuminate the universe
And defeat non-Buddhists.
- 1.7 “Because you comprehend all phenomena,
You are therefore unexcelled.
Of you, the unimpaired guide,
I would like to pose some questions.
- 1.8 “Your immaculate knowledge is endless.
Your knowledge is like an unmoving ocean.
Your knowledge is unimpeded by objects.
Of you I wish to ask some questions.
- 1.9 “O Blessed One, given your excellent practice,
You have no doubt about the path.
You are the great guide who abides in bliss.
Of you I wish to ask some questions.
- 1.10 “You have crossed over the turbulent currents,
Severed all fetters,
And removed the poisonous arrows.
Of you I wish to ask some questions.
- 1.11 “You have cracked the eggshell of ignorance, and
Quelled the heat of the afflictions;
And you abide in the cool state.
Of you I wish to ask some questions.
- 1.12 “The unsurpassed wisdom of fearlessness,
The unimpeded and boundless wisdom,
And the knowledge of the ocean of Dharma—
All this the Thus-Gone One has realized.
- 1.13 “O Buddha, with your immeasurable qualities
You have perfected your direct knowledge,
Eliminated all defilements,
And defeated afflictions and views.
- 1.14 “O Blessed One, you have accumulated

- Many immeasurable qualities,
And you are the boundless Dharma Lord.
Of you I wish to ask some questions.
- 1.15 “O Blessed One, with your supreme knowledge,
You illuminate the entire universe.
As you reveal the light of Dharma,
The ocean of your qualities knows no bounds.
- 1.16 “You illuminate the entire universe
With the light of the Guide’s teachings.
Thus, the universe is illuminated by
The light of the Dharma of the Buddha.
- 1.17 “O Knower of the entire ocean of Dharma,
Your eloquence is unsurpassed,
Your diligence is boundless,
And you are pure, having abandoned views.
- 1.18 “Because your buddha eyes are boundless,
There is no end to their objects of knowledge.
You are the incomparable lord of the universe.
Of you I wish to ask some questions.
- 1.19 “O Dharma King, Great Sage,
You dispel the doubts of beings.
If I inquire of you, our Guide,
Please answer according to my intentions. [F.71.b]
- 1.20 “As I investigate everywhere,
In the heavens above and among humanity,
There are none who can equal the Thus-Gone One’s
All-pervading brilliance.
- 1.21 “You are a great being, fully adorned
And stable in all good qualities.
You are boundless—the King of Dharma,
The most brilliant among the sages.
- 1.22 “Just as Mount Kailash
Is a place arrayed with all kinds of jewels,
So the Blessed One, sitting upon the Dharma seat,
Is likewise arrayed.
- 1.23 “With the finest voice⁷ and extraordinary diligence,

- You teach in pleasing tones.
When beings hear your teaching,
Their roots of virtue are purified.
- 1.24 “O Blessed One, most superior among humanity,⁸
You shine the light of Dharma,
And so the minds of all beings
Are awakened according to their wishes.
- 1.25 “O Guide, you know the time and assembly,
And you also understand people.
Thus, as you reveal the light of Dharma,
You are wise in your understanding of time.
- 1.26 “Brahmā Voice with extraordinary diligence,
Please grace us with your pure speech.
Fill us with the moisture of Dharma,
Like a great rain falling upon the earth.
- 1.27 “O Blessed One abiding amidst this assembly,
Once the rain of Dharma falls,
It will satisfy all beings
Who put their hopes in this Dharma.
- 1.28 “As you dwell in supreme happiness,
You are like a king dwelling on Mount Meru.
You make gifts to all beings,
And you delight many of them.
- 1.29 “O Great Hero, Chief of Humans,
Because your domain is boundless,
No being whatsoever
Can understand it.
- 1.30 “O unfathomable Great Being,
This harmoniously gathered assembly
Relies upon the Great Sage
To pursue the domain of buddhahood.
- 1.31 “In order to proceed to the domain of buddhahood,
I have come to this gathering.
O Guide, with your unimpeded knowledge,
How can we become awakened quickly?
- 1.32 “Following that intention,

- Gazing on your face, I wish to ask—
O Blessed One, please be compassionate,
And settle all my doubts.
- 1.33 “When one hears the unsurpassed Dharma,
It absolutely delights the mind, [F.72.a]
Filling the body with bliss,
And rending all the nets of various doubts.
- 1.34 “O Dharma King, unsurpassed leader,
Omniscient One who has no fear,
Knower and seer of all,
Of you I wish to ask some questions.
- 1.35 “Buddha, with regard to all phenomena,
You do not possess the slightest bit of doubt.
You are a great and diligent guide.
Of you I wish to ask some questions.
- 1.36 “You are an unsurpassed destroyer of doubts,
Who has no doubt regarding the Dharma.
You are a boundless ocean of qualities.⁹
Of you I wish to ask some questions.
- 1.37 “You radiate a boundless light,
And you have boundless qualities
And boundless pure knowledge.
Of you I wish to ask some questions.
- 1.38 “You have boundless diligence and knowledge,
Knowledge that is boundless in scope,
And knowledge that brings boundless benefits.
Of you I wish to ask some questions.
- 1.39 “O Blessed One, your knowledge knows no bounds,
It is beyond both limits and limitlessness.
It can dispel all doubts.
Of you I wish to ask some questions.
- 1.40 “O boundless Lord of Dharma,
Please listen compassionately to my request.
If I ask with your consent,
Great Sage, please answer.
- 1.41 “Omniscient One, chieftain of the Śākya,

Renowned Being, I make this request to you.
Please give your compassionate consent
And cut through the web of doubt.”

1.42 The Blessed One then addressed the bodhisattva great being Anantamati, saying, “Anantamati, since you have now asked me so fervently, how many questions do you intend to ask the Thus-Gone One? If you have any questions, I will answer them.”

1.43 The Blessed One then spoke the following verses:

“Anantamati, what sort of questions
Would you like to ask me?
You should ask them all,
And I will explain well.

1.44 “Once you have clearly described
Each of the questions you ask,
I will swiftly answer them,
According to your hopes and wishes.

1.45 “I will explain to you
Everything, without any doubt.
Just as you wish, [F.72.b]
I will appropriately answer your requests.

1.46 “Today you are asking timely questions,
For my answers accord with time and purpose.
Because you have asked at the right time,
I will certainly answer.

1.47 “So, ask your questions
As you have intended,
And I will answer
All of them appropriately.

1.48 “Today, ask your timely questions,
And I will give you timely answers.
Since they cut through the web of doubt,
You will become free from doubt.

1.49 “Because I have become the Lord of Dharma,
I have realized the ultimate meaning.
I have reached the end of doubt
Regarding all phenomena.

- 1.50 “As I have fully awakened to all phenomena,
This is difficult to conceptualize.
I now teach based on the issues
That accord with beings’ wishes.
- 1.51 “For me, there are no impediments
With regard to any phenomenon.
Thus, when there is a timely question,
I am one to swiftly answer it.
- 1.52 “Because I answer in a timely fashion,
And because I have no doubts,
In accordance with someone’s wishes,
I can eliminate their doubts.
- 1.53 “I always know the different times,
The intentions of those gathered in the assembly,
And the diverse intentions
Of all beings.
- 1.54 “I also continuously investigate
All beings,
What they desire and do not desire—
These I all see clearly.
- 1.55 “Whenever the wise
Are going to accomplish something positive,
I give them the authentic Dharma,
Which is timely and creates understanding.
- 1.56 “The foolish, however,
Deluded and disturbed by their ignorance,
Lack the illumination of insight,
And so do not respect the authentic teaching.
- 1.57 “Whenever one lacks respect,
One will not pursue the authentic teaching.
And even if one hears this teaching,
It will not produce any great insight.
- 1.58 “If those who are skilled in the Dharma
Are inspired by it, and pursue it,
And come to hear this teaching,
They will achieve the wisdom of the highest illumination.

- 1.59 “Those who are interested in the Great Vehicle,
Seek out the most honored of humans,
And listen to this Dharma
Will obtain great, luminous wisdom.
- 1.60 “Those who proceed toward
The unsurpassed wisdom of buddhahood
And inconceivable wisdom [F.73.a]
Will perfect them through hearing.
- 1.61 Those who delight in unobstructed wisdom,
And who seek out the Supremely Exalted One,
Will obtain great benefit
When they hear this Dharma.¹⁰
- 1.62 “When those who trust in boundless wisdom,
Who seek the inconceivable,
Hear this teaching,
They will achieve unsurpassed wisdom.
- 1.63 “Those beings
Who seek the Buddha’s site of awakening,
And who desire to turn the unsurpassed wheel,
Will be delighted to hear this teaching.
- 1.64 “When those who delight in diligence
And who venerate and esteem the Dharma
Hear this Dharma teaching free from contamination,
They will become elated and joyful.
- 1.65 “If there are beings
Who delight in excellent practice,
Then by means of the illumination of Dharma,
I will teach them the unsurpassed Dharma.
- 1.66 “When those who shoulder a heavy burden
And unrestrictedly spur themselves to practice
Hear this Dharma teaching,
They will be filled with happiness.
- 1.67 “When those who are inspired
Contemplate virtuous qualities,
I will teach them elaborately,
Absorbed in thoughts of love for them.

- 1.68 “Because of my love for all of you,
I will certainly
Destroy your doubts,
In accordance with your request.
- 1.69 “As I myself cultivated skillful means
Over thousands of years
And dispelled my doubts,
I fully know your wishes.
- 1.70 “If you have any doubts,
Ask whatever you wish.
By answering you,
I will cut through your doubts.
- 1.71 “If you have any doubts,
Ask whatever you wish.
I will answer you fully,
According to your inclination.
- 1.72 “If you have any doubts,
Ask whatever you wish.
For I have attained stillness,
Through stability in the Dharma.”
- 1.73 The bodhisattva great being Anantamati then said to the Blessed One, “I would like to ask the blessed, thus-gone, worthy, and perfect Buddha about a few doubts I have concerning the Bodhisattva Vehicle. How is it that virtuous beings, having distanced themselves from fear, with single-pointed, correct mindfulness, don the great armor for the sake of all sentient beings [F.73.b], adorn themselves with the great armor, generate great love and act respectfully, and carefully mount the Great Vehicle, taking the level and straight road of great purity—free from bumps, tiles, stones, thorns, the miscellaneous rubbish of the various evils, and the thickets of the various views, free from poisonous thorns and the pitfalls of the afflictions, free from bondage, attachment, fear, and hardship—proceeding straight ahead with no deviations on the level road of suchness, the unobstructed road, cutting down the thickets of the various views, tearing all snares, driving away darkness and obscurity, dispelling attachment, and abandoning involvement, and thus proceeding toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening? These are the points that I would like to ask the blessed, thus-gone, worthy, and perfect Buddha. What kind of great beings must don what sort of armor, so that, by donning this armor, they mount the Great Vehicle

and set out upon this great path? Blessed One, you should explain the bodhisattva great beings' array of armor, how they abide stably on the path, abide stably in the principle of phenomena, and are skilled in the principle of phenomena; and how, due to abiding in this skill, they are capable of skillfully illuminating the principle of various phenomena. Having illuminated phenomena, without abandoning the armor, they mount the Great Vehicle, and with the power of irreversible diligence, mindfulness free from forgetfulness, and the power of continuous insight, they swiftly accomplish skilled insight into the principle of the realm of phenomena, go to the site of awakening, [F.74.a] turn the wheel of Dharma, and preach Dharma to various sentient beings, so that all sentient beings are liberated from birth and death according to their wishes and inclinations.

1.74 "Blessed One, it is for the sake of benefitting beings and bringing them happiness through the Great Vehicle that I am asking the blessed, thus-gone, worthy, and perfect Buddha about this. Blessed One, given that the Thus-Gone One knows and sees all, please reveal to us the teaching through which bodhisattva great beings accomplish the absorption of the *oceanic seal of all phenomena* and, by the power of attaining that absorption, remain irreversible until they fully awaken to buddhahood. Blessed One, the knowledge and vision of the Thus-Gone One possess amazing and marvelous qualities of a perfect nature. They are medicinal insight for the knowledge of all beings. Therefore, it is for that reason that I am making this request."

1.75 The bodhisattva great being Anantamati then spoke the following verses:

"For the sake of the bodhisattvas,
I ask the Chief of Humans,
The all-knowing and all-seeing one,
The profound meaning of the buddha qualities.

1.76 "In which absorption
Do practitioners of the Great Vehicle endeavor?
It is to heal all beings
That I am asking these questions.

1.77 "In what way do sublime beings
Don the boundless armor?
And having donned that armor,
How do they endeavor?

1.78 "How do they arouse interest?
How do they come to relish it?
How do they become greatly diligent?

- How do they become conscientious?
- 1.79 “How do bodhisattvas [F.74.b]
Mount the Great Vehicle?
Once they have realized this, what do they do?
Please explain these points.
- 1.80 “How do they mount the Great Vehicle
And proceed upon the bodhisattva path?
O Guide of the World, out of your compassion,
Please swiftly answer me!
- 1.81 “How, on the path of evenness,
Do they proceed toward impartiality?
Within the thicket of the various views,
How do they persevere in cutting them down without becoming weary?
- 1.82 “How do they act to pass beyond
All sense objects?
How do they rend the web of desire
Through the means of impartiality?
- 1.83 “How do they dispel all darkness
And attain the illumination of great knowledge?
How do bodhisattvas
Proceed toward this?
- 1.84 “How do they abandon many fetters
Through discrimination?
How do bodhisattvas
Abide well, free from bonds?
- 1.85 “How do bodhisattvas
Escape from the great fears?
And becoming learned in the meaning of the Dharma,
How do they proceed toward the unsurpassed?
- 1.86 “What type of boundless armor
Do bodhisattvas wear,
Such that, by donning such armor,
They mount this Great Vehicle?
- 1.87 “How do bodhisattvas
Proceed upon the path of evenness?
Please, Blessed One,

Answer these questions I have asked today!

- 1.88 “How do bodhisattvas
Obtain the armor array
And adorn the unsurpassed vehicle?
O Blessed One, please explain!
- 1.89 “Abiding on this path,
And the adornments of the path,
As well as skill in all phenomena—
O Blessed One, please explain these!
- 1.90 “How can one realize
The principle of the realm of phenomena
And the illumination of skill in phenomena—
O Blessed One, please explain this!
- 1.91 “How do bodhisattvas
Obtain this illumination of Dharma [F.75.a]
And exhaust all phenomena?
O Blessed One, please explain this!
- 1.92 “How do bodhisattvas,
Having obtained the illumination of Dharma,
Proceed accordingly,
Without abandoning the great armor?
- 1.93 “How do bodhisattvas
Mount the Great Vehicle
And proceed accordingly,
Without regressing in their diligence?
- 1.94 “How do bodhisattvas
Gain stability in their intent,
And through the power of insight,
Become highly trained?
- 1.95 “How do they gain attainment
Through skill in the principle of the realm of phenomena?
O inconceivable King of Dharma,
Blessed One, please explain!
- 1.96 “How do they, with great haste,
Progress to the site of awakening
And turn the great wheel of Brahmā,

Which none in the world are capable of turning?

- 1.97 “How is it that, without wavering,
They give teachings on all phenomena,
For the sake of all beings,
In accordance with their past aspirations?
- 1.98 “And with these teachings on all phenomena,
How do they liberate beings from birth and death,
And cause all beings
To ultimately obtain happiness?
- 1.99 “For the sake of benefiting beings,
I beseech the Guide of the World,
May the all-knowing and all-seeing one
Compassionately explain these things to me.
- 1.100 “Through what sort of Dharma
Do you bring bodhisattvas to the accomplishment
Of the absorption that seals
The great ocean of all phenomena?
- 1.101 “Whoever is interested the seeking the buddha qualities,
And yearns for great awakening,
When they hear this Dharma teaching,
Their entire body will be filled with happiness.”
- 1.102 The Blessed One responded to the bodhisattva great being Anantamati,
“Excellent, excellent! Anantamati, you have venerated and served an
immeasurable number of buddhas in the past. Because you have produced
roots of virtue and accumulated countless qualities, you now yearn for this
profound Dharma. [F.75.b] Now, with the great resolve and desire to bring all
beings to accomplishment, you have aroused great compassion and asked
these questions of the Thus-Gone One. Listen well and bear what I say in
mind. I will now genuinely explain to you how bodhisattva great beings
accomplish their qualities and how they proceed toward unsurpassed,
perfect, and complete awakening.”
“Blessed One, I shall listen in that manner.”
- 1.103 The Blessed One then addressed the bodhisattva great being Anantamati,
“Anantamati, bodhisattva great beings who don the great armor for the sake
of unsurpassed and perfect awakening must don the great armor to gather
beings. They must don the great armor to establish beings in pure
generosity. They must don the great armor to establish beings in pure
discipline. They must don the great armor to establish beings in pure

patience. They must don the great armor to establish beings in pure diligence. They must don the great armor to establish beings in pure concentration. They must don the great armor to establish beings in pure insight. They must don the great armor for beings to achieve happiness. They must don the great armor to develop the mind that engages in benefitting sentient beings. They must don the great armor to remedy the sicknesses of attachment, aggression, and ignorance in beings. They must don the great armor to skillfully accomplish great qualities. They must don the great armor to perfect unsurpassed wisdom. They must don the great armor to protect beings from the dangers of saṃsāra. [F.76.a] They must don the great armor out of the desire to manifest the perfection of unequalled wisdom. They must don the great armor to oppose all māras and their retinues, messengers, and henchmen, as well as all those who have adopted the non-Buddhist teachings and are lost in the thicket of views and on terrifying paths, as well as all lokāyatās and others who agree with the non-Buddhist traditions throughout the great trichilocosm.

1.104 “When bodhisattva great beings have donned the great armor in this fashion, then, by not abandoning the armor, they develop great diligence and are capable of entering into all the realms of sentient beings. Abiding stably in patience, they abandon fear; and without fear, anxiety, wavering, or disturbance, they again don the boundless armor. This armor is an armor that protects all beings, an armor that cuts through the thicket of all views, an armor that defeats the forces of Māra, an armor that embraces insight, an armor that is a boundless bridge, an armor that liberates from heavy burdens, an armor that develops pure faith, an armor that observes discipline, an armor that purifies the storehouse of action, an armor that is a powerful treasury that purifies everything, an armor that is a treasury of skillful means, an armor that eliminates all clinging, and an armor of irreversible, irreproachable insight. Bodhisattva great beings who have donned such great armor, and who do not abandon it until the end of saṃsāra has been reached, will never waver from the stability of their strong diligence as they proceed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening.”

1.105 The Blessed One then spoke the following verses:

“Bodhisattvas must don the armor
In order to gather beings.
The armor they don is limitless,
Because beings are limitless. [F.76.b]

1.106 “In order to purify generosity,
They delight everyone.
In order to benefit beings,

- They must don the armor.
- 1.107 “In order to purify discipline,
They must don the armor, which benefits the world.¹¹
In order to benefit beings,
They must don the armor.
- 1.108 “In order to purify patience,
They are heroic and abide in virtue.¹²
In order to benefit beings,
They don the armor.
- 1.109 “In order to purify diligence,
They accomplish irreversibility.
In order to benefit beings,
They don the armor.
- 1.110 “In order to purify concentration,
The scope of their activities must also be pure.
In order to benefit beings,
They don the armor.
- 1.111 “In order to purify insight,
It is unsurpassed and undefiled.
In order to benefit beings,
They must don this armor.
- 1.112 “To all sentient beings,
They must give pleasing things;
Because they understand this point well,
They don this armor.
- 1.113 “Because it is necessary for bodhisattvas
To supply beings with beneficial things,
They enter all worlds
With the four pure means of gathering.
- 1.114 “In order for them to utilize the antidotes
For the diseases of attachment, aggression, and ignorance,
They give beings medicine
That heals their sicknesses.
- 1.115 “Therefore, bodhisattvas
Will don well the armor.
Through the accumulation of merit,

- They achieve boundless skill.
- 1.116 “Because the miserable suffering of saṃsāra
Makes beings unhappy,
Bodhisattvas must don the boundless armor,
Thinking, ‘I will protect them.’
- 1.117 “Thinking, ‘I will liberate them
From the immeasurable suffering of saṃsāra,’
They will completely cut free
All those trapped by the webs of attachment and views.¹³
- 1.118 “Those who are capable of rending
This entire web of affliction
Wear the armor of heroes,
With the strength of stable diligence.
- 1.119 “They must establish all beings
On the path of happiness,
And in the pursuit of nirvāṇa, [F.77.a]
As well as in unsurpassed happiness.
- 1.120 “Those who wear this armor
With the strength of great diligence
Will be able to oppose all māras
Without becoming exhausted.
- 1.121 “As for those materialists, and so forth,
Who are dwelling in views,
And who have become immersed in that thicket—
For them they must don the armor and be of help.
- 1.122 “Moreover, they must don the armor
In order to benefit anyone
In their immeasurable assembly
Who has strayed from the path.
- 1.123 “Having donned such great armor,
Without ever abandoning it,
If they arouse the strength of great diligence,
Then by donning the armor they attain supreme stability.¹⁴
- 1.124 “Entering into the realms of beings,
And abiding there with patience,
They accomplish stable patience.

- Donning the armor, they are unsurpassed.
- 1.125 “Totally abandoning fears,
And also eliminating anxieties,
Those who don the boundless armor
Must practice with the highest diligence.
- 1.126 “Since those who possess this armor
Will always gain authentic understanding,
And never waver from quiescence,
They cannot be perturbed or reversed.
- 1.127 “Having donned such armor,
Those who are intelligent must further don
The armor that protects beings,
And the armor that destroys the māras.
- 1.128 “They must don the complete armor
That is a boundless bridge.
Those who are heroic and possesses superior wisdom
Who wear that armor will find happiness.
- 1.129 “Having donned the unsurpassed armor
In order to discard the heavy burden,
They must turn toward all beings
And liberate them from the burden of suffering.
- 1.130 “Those who increase pure faith,
Restrain the six sense faculties,
And possess discipline
Are unsurpassed in donning this armor.
- 1.131 “Accomplishing heroic wisdom,
Bodhisattvas are capable of abiding
In the deportment that accords with discipline,
Unmoving in donning this armor.
- 1.132 “Within the assemblies of the Victors of the past,
They engaged in the pure practice of various activities.
Thus donning the armor,
They are constantly fearless.
- 1.133 “Due to their fondness for beings
And because they benefit the world, [F.77.b]
They have realized skillful means,

And thus they abide well in donning this armor.

- 1.134 “Bodhisattvas realize
The knowledge of skillful means.
Therefore, they don the armor
And cut all bonds.
- 1.135 “They discard all clinging,
And with correct faith, they never turn their backs.
These intelligent, armored ones
Will proceed to unsurpassed awakening.
- 1.136 “Bodhisattvas are able to ascertain
What is beneficial to themselves and beneficial to others.
Well-endowed with diligent effort,
They are stable and irreversible. [B2]
- 1.137 “Anantamati, moreover, the armor of these bodhisattva great beings—who for immeasurable eons shoulder the great burden and don the great armor—is invisible to māras, their assemblies, and messengers, and to those wicked beings who live in the thickets and harsh deserts of wrong views. Why is this? This is because it is formless and indescribable; because it has no counterpart and no marks; and because—its marks having been discarded—it is free from marks, names, and words.
- 1.138 “Anantamati, if arrows the size of Mount Meru were shot at it, none would be able to strike it. Even if all the beings in the worlds of the great trichiliocosm were to become māra kings with legions of māra forces at their command, and they all simultaneously shot pointed arrows the size of Mount Meru at it, they could never break through the armor donned by the bodhisattva great beings. They would not be able to harm even a single hair on the bodies of its wearers. If they lack the power to cause even a change of mind in bodhisattva great beings, need we say anything about their ability to harm them in actuality? Any bodhisattva great being who one-pointedly tames them will scatter and eliminate many māras. [F.78.a] Because they are capable of abiding unwaveringly in such armor, all beings are unable to harm them. Why is this? Because this armor has no marks, it is not an object that can be perceived with the vision of sentient beings, and therefore all beings are incapable of seeing or comprehending it. Because bodhisattva great beings have understood all phenomena, they can truly see and comprehend the donning of the great armor. In order to protect all beings, they do not cling to any phenomenon. In order to benefit beings, they do not apprehend any phenomenon. Therefore, no beings can see or comprehend this armor.

1.139 “Because there are no formal characteristics, nor anything describable, nor any identifying words that can be used to describe the armor that they wear, it is not associated with form. Nor is it associated with feeling, perception, formation, or consciousness. It is associated with neither the inner nor the outer. Furthermore, it is associated neither with both inner and outer, nor with neither inner nor outer. It is not associated with the elements. It is not associated with the sense fields. It is not associated with the earth element, or with the elements of water, fire, wind, space, or consciousness. It is not associated with the desire realm. It is also not associated with the form or formless realms. It is not associated with conditioned phenomena. It is not associated with unconditioned phenomena. It is not associated with either conditioned or unconditioned phenomena. [F.78.b] It is not associated with phenomena that are not conditioned or unconditioned. It is not associated with the level of hearers. It is not associated with the level of solitary buddhas. It is not associated with the level of buddhas. It is not associated with verbal expressions. It is not associated with the causes of form. It is not associated with the characteristics of form. It is also not associated with the causes of feeling, perception, formation, or consciousness. It is also not associated with the characteristics of feeling, perception, formation, or consciousness. It is also not associated with characteristics or noncharacteristics. It is not associated with all phenomena, nor is it dissociated from them. It has no bondage. It has no liberation. It cannot be known through enumeration or analogy, because all phenomena are beyond enumeration.

1.140 “Such an armor does not apprehend the view of all phenomena. It does not apprehend the view of form. It does not apprehend the view of feeling, perception, formation, or consciousness. It does not apprehend the view of even the smallest phenomenon. It is not associated with form, nor is it dissociated from it. It is not associated with feeling, perception, formation, or consciousness, nor is it dissociated from them. It has entirely abandoned any association with or dissociation from any phenomenon.

1.141 “Likewise, such an armor is not created, because it has no creator. [F.79.a] It is also without marks, because marks are nonexistent. It has no marks of dwelling in a place, no marks of being conditioned, no conceptualization, no movement, no contact with objects, and no nature that can be observed. Moreover, no one who dons the armor can be apprehended. Why is this? When bodhisattva great beings truly don this armor, they do not see that there is someone who dons armor, that armor is donned in some place, or that armor is donned from somewhere. They do not see that there is a self capable of donning armor, nor do they see an armor that is donned by a self. They also do not see that armor is donned in this place, or that armor is

donned in that place. They also do not see any sentient beings for whose sake such armor is donned, because they do not course in or see¹⁵ any phenomenon. When the bodhisattva great beings don such armor, they don the armor that has been donned by the thus-gone ones, so they do not apprehend a body, they do not apprehend speech, and they do not apprehend a mind. Therefore, since they do not apprehend, they have abandoned all concepts. If any bodhisattva great being were to dwell on even the smallest phenomenon or apprehend even the smallest phenomenon, they could not be said to have donned the armor, to don the armor, or to be donning the armor. However, once they transcend those mind states, it can be said that they have donned the great and inconceivable armor.

1.142 “Bodhisattva great beings do not don the great armor merely for a few beings. They do not don the great armor merely for the beings of one eon. They do not don the great armor merely for the beings of hundreds of thousands of eons, millions of eons, or billions of eons. [F.79.b] They don the great armor for the beings of immeasurable, countless eons. Therefore, it is said that they *don an immeasurably great armor*.

1.143 “When bodhisattva great beings truly don the armor, they are donning armor that does not abide in any perception of beings. They are donning armor that does not create any perception of beings, that abandons any perception of beings, that eliminates any perception of self, that understands beings’ nature, that understands the nature of self, and that transcends perception and feeling. It is an armor that knows all phenomena to be marked as uncreated, an armor of the mark of emptiness, an armor of the mark of marklessness, and an armor of the mark of wishlessness. It is an armor that understands all phenomena to be marked as unborn, and an armor of the mark of noncessation. It is an armor that understands all phenomena to be marked as possessing different natures, and an armor of the mark of the absence of different natures. It is an armor that understands all phenomena to be marked as entities, and an armor of the mark of the absence of entities.

1.144 “Anantamati, if armor is donned while dwelling on entities, this cannot ultimately be said to be *donning the great armor*. In this fashion, bodhisattva great beings pursue great wisdom without dwelling upon entities. Therefore, it is called *donning the great armor*.”

1.145 The Blessed One then expressed this in verse:

“After donning the great, boundless armor
For countless thousands of eons,
They will liberate all beings,
Without exception, from suffering.

- 1.146 “One who wears such great armor
Will be invisible to
Māras, their forces,
And their henchmen.
- 1.147 “To other beings
Who are lost in the thicket of views,
This inconceivable armor
Is also invisible.
- 1.148 “Formless, colorless, [F.80.a]
Indescribable, and without any counterpart—
This armor is inconceivable.
Therefore, it cannot be seen with the eyes.
- 1.149 “Without names or marks,
All marks have been abandoned.
This armor has no bounds;
Therefore, there are no one who can perceive it through marks.
- 1.150 “Even if a razor-sharp arrow
The size of Mount Meru were shot at it,
The arrow itself would shatter upon contact
With this inconceivable armor they wear.
- 1.151 “Even if all māras in the universe
Were to hurl arrows the size of Mount Meru
At this great armor they wear,
And they landed all at once,
- 1.152 “This great armor would not be damaged—
Nor would even a single bodily hair.
This inconceivable armor they wear
Cannot be destroyed by anything.
- 1.153 “Thus, the bodhisattvas
Are unchanging both physically and mentally.
Who could shake or move
Those who don this inconceivable armor?
- 1.154 “With merely a single thought,
They defeat many māras.
Thus, these inconceivable bodhisattvas
Can turn back hordes of māras.

- 1.155 “This sort of great armor
Will never be shaken.
Thus, there are no beings whatsoever
Who are able to perceive it.
- 1.156 “There are no beings at all
Who can fathom the characteristics of this armor.
Thus, there are no beings whatsoever
Who can perceive it with their eyes.
- 1.157 “Bodhisattvas provide support,
They are able to know all phenomena,
And they are like indestructible vajras—
Thus, they don the armor well.
- 1.158 “They do not have contact with any phenomenon,
They protect beings,
And they accord with the Dharma teachings of the buddhas—
Thus do they don the armor well.
- 1.159 “In this armor there is nothing that can be grasped.
According with all phenomena,
This armor is inconceivable—
Thus do they don the armor well.
- 1.160 “In this armor there is nothing that can be described;
It purifies all phenomena.
As all phenomena are beyond words and speech,
There are none who can describe it.
- 1.161 “It is associated neither with form
Nor with feeling.
It is not associated or combined with
Perception, formation, or consciousness. [F.80.b]
- 1.162 “It is not associated with the inner;
It is not associated with the outer.
It is not associated or combined with
Either inner or outer.
- 1.163 “It is not associated with the elements,
Nor with the sense sources.
It also is not combined with
The elements or the sense sources.

- 1.164 “It is not associated with the earth element,
Nor with the water element.
It is not associated or combined with
The elements of fire, wind, space, or consciousness.
- 1.165 “It is not associated with the desire realm,
Nor with the form realm.
It is not associated or combined with
The formless realm either.
- 1.166 “It apprehends nothing,
And is not associated or combined with
Conditioned phenomena
Or unconditioned phenomena.
- 1.167 “This inconceivable armor they don
Has no abiding and no combining, and
No bondage and no liberation;
And there is nothing with which it is not associated.
- 1.168 “Because the scope of this armor is boundless,
It is not associated or combined with
The level of the hearers
Or the level of the solitary buddhas.
- 1.169 “It entirely does not associate with
And entirely does not combine with
Even the level of buddhahood,
Or any other phenomenon.
- 1.170 “No type of verbal expression
Could capture it whatsoever.
This boundless armor
Has no essence and is difficult to conceive of.
- 1.171 “It is not associated with nor dissociated from
Any phenomenon at all.¹⁶
This inconceivable armor
Transcends all enumeration.
- 1.172 “Because this armor is unsurpassed,
It has no bondage or liberation.
It has none of the marks of form, feeling, perception,
Formation, or consciousness.

- 1.173 “It is not associated or combined with
Any of those marks.
It is neither associated with nor dissociated from
The marks of any phenomenon.
It also is not associated or combined with
The absence of marks.
- 1.174 “Because this armor is unsurpassed,
It has no bondage and no liberation. [F.81.a]
Among all phenomena,
It does not fall into any enumerations of phenomena.
- 1.175 “This armor cannot be apprehended
Among any phenomena.
Thus, it is said to be unsurpassed
And inconceivable.
- 1.176 “This armor has no form,
Nor any feeling or perception;
It has no formation and no consciousness—
It is not included among the aggregates.
- 1.177 “Any heroic beings
Who don such armor
Will apprehend nothing in either body or mind,
And will behold not even the slightest phenomenon.
- 1.178 “Because they have gone beyond critical analysis,
They abide stably with pure minds,
And they are constantly undaunted,
They are called inconceivable.
- 1.179 “They are totally stable in this armor,
And their minds are unshakable.
Because they do not count the number of eons,¹⁷
They are called inconceivable.
- 1.180 “Because this armor is without measure
And does not appropriate phenomena or nonphenomena,
There is no measure to its duration;
Thus, it is called immeasurable.
- 1.181 “It neither arouses the perception of beings,
Nor does it entertain the perception of a self.

Because it understands this perception,
No perception will arise.

1.182 “It also understands all phenomena,
And the complete lack of marks of phenomena.
Thus, anyone who wears this armor
Is called inconceivable.

1.183 “Moreover, Anantamati, because it is invincible, this limitless great armor is also called *the arrayed adornments of the exalted Dharma*. It is also called *the supreme*. Because it cannot be divided into even the smallest phenomenon, it is called *the indivisibility of all phenomena*. Any bodhisattva great being who wears this great armor will take hold of the strength of great insight and will mount the Great Vehicle, the supreme vehicle, the unequalled vehicle, the great and all-encompassing vehicle, the boundlessly encompassing vehicle. All sentient beings could mount this vehicle [F.81.b], and there would be none who would not fit in this vehicle, even as this vehicle neither expands nor shrinks. It can lead sentient beings to abide happily, and it can lead sentient beings happily to liberation. Any beings who mount this vehicle that leads to happiness shall be at rest in body and mind, and shall not become afflicted. Anantamati, this vehicle outshines all other vehicles to liberation, including those of the worldly gods, humans, and asuras, as well the vehicles of the hearers and solitary buddhas and other vehicles. For this vehicle, there is no coming, no going, no abiding, no seeing, and no knowing. It cannot be apprehended in the past, it cannot be apprehended in the future, and it cannot be apprehended in the present. It is equal throughout the three times, just like space. It is uncontaminated by the dust of the afflictions. It has no dependencies,¹⁸ no obstructions, and no clinging. Therefore, with this vehicle one can obtain liberation. This vehicle is measureless, because it is immeasurable. It is also naturally devoid of obstructing marks, because it does not abide in marks. It is supreme. Whoever mounts this vehicle will be undaunted as they proceed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening.

1.184 “Anantamati, this vehicle is like a lamp, and like the orbs of the sun and moon, which produce great illumination for all beings. Likewise, the light of this Great Vehicle illuminates the worlds of this great trichiliocosm and cannot be outshone or obstructed by anything. With its boundless ocean of great qualities, it can proceed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening. Anantamati, this vehicle eliminates darkness and dispels all the diseases of the world. It transcends all worldly phenomena and attracts great beings. Therefore, it cannot be mounted by lesser beings, but only those who don the great armor. As I have previously said, ‘It can be mounted only by those

who have protected many beings for countless eons, [F.82.a] venerated and served many buddhas, and produced roots of virtue, and who have pure accumulations. If hearers, solitary buddhas, and other lesser beings—who are bound to the world and associated with the world—are manifestly proud, put their trust in non-Buddhists, and do not desire to hear even the name of this vehicle, need we mention that they will not be able to mount it? However, if beings who sport in the inconceivable domain mount this vehicle, they will proceed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening, according to their incredibly noble aspiration.

1.185 “Anantamati, this vehicle is limitless, for a limit to its beginning, interim, and end cannot be realized. This vehicle’s limits are eliminated, for its limits cannot be apprehended. A boundless limit is this vehicle’s limit. An immeasurable limit is this vehicle’s limit. Anantamati, this vehicle has no outer limit and no inner limit. It has not even the slightest limit that can be eliminated. When I say that its *limits are eliminated*, it is the absence of even the slightest limit that is described as *limits are eliminated*. When limits are not conceptualized, this is what is described as *limits are eliminated*. Thus, I make the designation that *this vehicle’s limits are eliminated*. The absence of a limit is said to be its *inner limit*. The absence of a limit is said to be its *outer limit*. The absence of a limit is described as a *limit*. Within that limit, no inner limit can be apprehended. Because they cannot be apprehended, the outer limit and the inner limit—which are without limits and without elimination—enter the gateway of limits. Because it enters the gateway of limits, this vehicle goes beyond; but in that going beyond, there is also nothing that can be apprehended.

1.186 “Anantamati, what are the limits? [F.82.b] They are the limits of nihilism and eternalism. Because they engage with language, limits are actually not limits. Those limits of nihilism and eternalism are themselves without limits, because the mark of those limits is boundlessness. What I am calling a *limit* here involves no concepts. Because conceptualization is eliminated, limits are transcended, and nihilism and eternalism are abandoned.

1.187 “Anantamati, those who maintain the belief in a truly existing self take the gateway of limits as a support, while those who do not maintain the belief in a truly existing self do not cling to the gateway of limits. Because they do not cling to it, they transcend the limits of nihilism and eternalism. Anantamati, the limits of nihilism and eternalism have no true existence—they are merely deceptive terms. These two limits are conceptualized within the context of the three realms of existence; but if one does not accept these two limits, and does not accord with these two limits, then they can be transcended. Because they have eliminated the view of a truly existing self, they will have no clinging to the gateway of the two limits. Anantamati, bodhisattva great

beings who have not yet discarded the belief in a truly existing self cannot be said to have donned the great armor and mounted the Great Vehicle, for they cling to this limit-gateway. Thus, even if they desire to abandon such limits, by arousing the notion of abandoning limits they are still conceptualizing the former and latter limits. It is therefore only bodhisattva great beings who have discarded the belief in a truly existing self who can be said to have donned the great armor and mounted the Great Vehicle, for they have no clinging to these limits. As such, they transcend these two limits, and so they proceed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening within a highly comfortable vehicle.

1.188 “Anantamati, those bodhisattva great beings who, with the power of their great intelligence, are capable of not abandoning and not refuting all those phenomena that abide in limits. [F.83.a] By applying skillful means to gather tranquility and special insight and train in their lack of marks, they will attain the realization of marklessness. When the absence of marks is experienced, the buddhas bestow the illumination of Dharma. Through the illumination of Dharma, all limits are eliminated, and there will also be no clinging to the limits that were eliminated, so that there is not even the slightest limit. Thus, regarding the gateway of limits, there will be no association or dissociation, and no mental engagement or disengagement. With skillful means concerning all phenomena, they will abide stably in tranquility and special insight, and will thus obtain the boundless, great illumination of Dharma. Due to the illumination of Dharma, they will abandon all darkness and hair-raising fears. Thereby, raising the great victory banner of the Dharma, resounding the great voice of Brahmā, and roaring the great lion’s roar, they will announce to all beings, ‘All of you, come quickly to this Great Vehicle, the comfortable vehicle, the Great Leader’s vehicle, the vehicle of great procession, and proceed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening!’ They will reveal the illumination of Dharma to all beings, and with this illumination of Dharma, they will be able to lead beings to don the great armor and mount the Great Vehicle.

1.189 “Anantamati, without being stingy with the Great Vehicle or the great armor, bodhisattva great beings should form the aspiration that ‘We will arouse the mind of awakening for beings, don the great armor, and mount the Great Vehicle.’ They must not be stingy with the Great Vehicle or the great armor, but must be able to gradually introduce them to sentient beings. They must form the aspiration, ‘May beings become liberated by donning the great armor and mounting the Great Vehicle.’ When bodhisattva great beings abide in this type of conduct, [F.83.b] they will gather buddha fields

and purify buddha fields. They will also gather all the qualities of hearers and bodhisattvas. Thereby, they will proceed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening with this boundless ocean of qualities.

1.190 “Anantamati, since this Great Vehicle is commensurate with the realm of phenomena, there is neither a near shore nor a far shore for it to reach, and yet it is capable of transporting all beings from here to the realm of phenomena. Thus, it accords with no place, it accords with the realm of phenomena, and it accords with the armor. Anyone who earnestly practices this Great Vehicle, which is commensurate with the realm of phenomena, will proceed toward unsurpassed, perfect, and complete awakening.

1.191 “Anantamati, to draw an analogy, the realm of phenomena has no impurities or stains, and therefore nobody can destroy or stain it. Likewise, this Great Vehicle also is indestructible and unstainable. Because it is indestructible and unstainable, it proceeds toward omniscient wisdom, which is why this vehicle is called the Great Vehicle. Since this vehicle is unimpeded, all worldly gods, humans, and asuras are unable to turn it back. Because it is without clinging, it proceeds toward omniscient wisdom, which is why this vehicle is called the Great Vehicle. That which is called the Great Vehicle is the great array. There is no array anywhere that is not included in this Great Vehicle.”

1.192 Then the bodhisattva great being Anantamati asked the Blessed One, “Blessed One, how could there be conditioned arrays within this vehicle?” [F.84.a]

The Blessed One answered the bodhisattva great being Anantamati, “Anantamati, thus it is, thus it is. In accord with worldly conventions, I have fully taught all conditioned arrays within this vehicle. Anantamati, whether we are talking about a universal monarch, Śakra, who is lord of the gods, or the king of the Brahmā heavens, all of them also have arisen, presently arise, and will arise from this Great Vehicle. Though they remain, respectively, at the levels of enjoying universal dominion, the state of Śakra, and the state of Brahmā, they do not become stained by the faults of the afflictions of saṃsāra. They are able to evaluate each of their desires, and with such evaluation, they become weary of them and are thereby able to realize the path of liberation.

1.193 “Anantamati, even though bodhisattva great beings who mount this vehicle accept saṃsāra, they do not become stained by flaws in any of its abodes. They see its faults and fully understand liberation. Thereby, when it comes to all the phenomena and all the arrays that I have not already taught, according to the characteristic marks of this vehicle, they will be able to understand those phenomena and those arrays, and so they will proceed toward unsurpassed, perfect, and complete awakening.”

- 1.194 The Blessed One then expressed this in verse:
“The Great Vehicle is the unsurpassed vehicle.
This vehicle is inconceivable.
Anyone who mounts this vehicle
Will become liberated.
- 1.195 “Because it is a great support and abode,
This vehicle is inconceivable.
Its limit is immeasurable and boundless;
Thus it is called the Great Vehicle.
- 1.196 “Even if all beings together
Mounted this vehicle,
This vehicle would not shrink,
Nor would it grow.
- 1.197 “If all beings
Mount this vehicle,
They will proceed toward happiness,
With no suffering therein. [F.84.b]
- 1.198 “If there are bodhisattvas
Who proceed upon this vehicle,
They will advance directly, taking no other course,
And will not be physically or mentally fatigued.
- 1.199 “Because it illuminates all worlds,
With their gods, humans, and asuras,
They will all take this vehicle
To proceed toward the unsurpassed.
- 1.200 “Because it outshines the vehicles
Of the hearers and solitary buddhas,
They will also take this vehicle
To proceed toward the unsurpassed.
- 1.201 “It has no coming or going,
No abiding, no limit of the past,
No limit of the future or limit of the interim,
No apprehension, and nothing to be seen.
- 1.202 “Entirely equal throughout the three times,
Just like pure space—
This vehicle is also like that,

- Abandoning all the afflictions.
- 1.203 “This vehicle has no dependencies,
No obstructions, and no impediments.
It can fully save everyone,
With no clinging to its endeavors.
- 1.204 “Because this vehicle is immeasurable,
It is free from all marks.
Its intrinsic nature cannot be apprehended.
It is without fear and inconceivable.
- 1.205 “Anyone who mounts this vehicle
And achieves fearlessness
Will have no obstacles or impediments
To buddha qualities.
- 1.206 “Anyone who proceeds on this vehicle
Will illuminate the universe,
Like the light of a hundred thousand suns,
Which never fail to shine.
- 1.207 “This vehicle cannot be destroyed,¹⁹
And cannot be outshone.
Thus, with its boundless accumulation of qualities,
It proceeds toward the unsurpassed.
- 1.208 “This vehicle transcends the world.
It is beyond the three realms.
It eliminates all darkness,
And proceeds toward the absence of defilement.
- 1.209 “This vehicle only accepts
All the bodhisattvas.
No other beings besides them
Are allowed within it.
- 1.210 “An intelligent person
Who earnestly practices skillful means
For countless thousands of eons
Will be able to mount this vehicle.²⁰
- 1.211 “The assemblies of hearers,
The assemblies of solitary buddhas, [F.85.a]
And all non-Buddhists

- Are unable to mount this vehicle.
- 1.212 “If there are beings
Who pursue non-Buddhist teachings,
Such people, possessing little merit,
Are not able to hear about this vehicle.²¹
- 1.213 “It is those beings
With skillful means
Who sport in the inconceivable Dharma
Who shall abide in this vehicle.
- 1.214 “It is in accordance with one’s prior establishment
Of especially superior aspirations²²
That one abides on the authentic path
And proceeds toward the unsurpassed.
- 1.215 “This vehicle has no outer limit,
Nor does it have a middle limit.
Neither an outer limit nor a middle limit
Can be apprehended at all.
- 1.216 “Because its limits cannot be apprehended,
This vehicle has no limits.
Because all limits are eliminated,
It proceeds toward happiness.
- 1.217 “This vehicle has no limits.
The limitless is this vehicle’s limit.
The limit of this vehicle is immeasurable.
Thus, the immeasurable is this vehicle’s limit.
- 1.218 “This vehicle has no limits to eliminate.
The absence of limits is the elimination of limits.
If no limits are conceptualized,
Their elimination cannot be grasped.
- 1.219 “Because this vehicle’s limit has no outer limit,
And also no middle limit,
And no limit to its limitlessness,
It has nothing that possesses the nature of limits.
- 1.220 “Limits do not possess the mark of limits;
What are marked as limits are actually not limits.
Within all those limits,

- The mark of limits is nonexistent.
- 1.221 “The gateway of limits is described according to what are not actually limits,
Which this vehicle has already transcended.
The extent of this transcendence
Is such that no accordance can be apprehended.
- 1.222 “I have taught that the limits of nihilism and eternalism,
Bounded and boundless limits,²³
And all such limits whatsoever
Are all not actually limits.
- 1.223 “Because all limits are boundless,
They do not possess the marks of limits.
The nature of all limits
Cannot be discerned within them.
- 1.224 “Any concepts that can be abandoned
About all these limits,
Such as there being or not being limits,
Will all be abandoned.
- 1.225 “Those who have the belief in a truly existing self,²⁴
And thus teach about the gateway of limits,
Becoming attached to these limits, [F.85.b]
Are those with nothing upon which to rely.
- 1.226 “Those who do not hold the belief in a truly existing self,
Who are unattached to the gateway of limits,
And are not attached to any limits
Are capable of bringing forth illumination.
- 1.227 “Since all limits are not limits,
Limits do not really exist.
The marks and natures of all limits
Do not exist either.
- 1.228 “Those who do not accept limits,
Who pass beyond limits,
Who do not become attached to the gateway of limits,
Will eliminate the belief in a truly existing self.
- 1.229 “Those who do not eliminate or abandon
Their belief in a truly existing self
Will not don the great armor

- And will not mount the Great Vehicle.
- 1.230 “To accept limits,
And thereby conceptualize the marks of limits,
The limit of the past, or the limit of the future—
This is all conceptualization.
- 1.231 “One who totally eliminates
The belief in a truly existing self
Shall don the boundless armor
And mount the unsurpassed vehicle.
- 1.232 “Because they are not attached to the gateway of limits,
Those who are knowledgeable about the world
Completely transcend all sorts of limits.
They proceed happily within the buddha qualities.
- 1.233 “When bodhisattvas investigate,
They use the strength of great insight,
Apprehending not even the slightest phenomenon
That could be eliminated or dispelled.
- 1.234 “Through their constant skillful means,
They gather tranquility and special insight.
By realizing a single mark,
They realize all marks.
- 1.235 “Because they dwell in the genuine Dharma
And have obtained the great illumination of Dharma,
They definitively resolve all limits
Through the illumination of Dharma.
- 1.236 “They do not see that the slightest limit exists,
Whether as a limit or a nonlimit.
In accordance with that,
They have no attachment to anything.
- 1.237 “When they see beings suffering,
They will encourage them, saying,
‘Come to this vehicle,
And you will be liberated and happy!’²⁵ [F.86.a]
- 1.238 “Wherever they are born,
They will produce the illumination of Dharma,
Don the armor, mount the Great Vehicle, and give teachings on these.

They shall not be stingy with either their armor or their vehicle.

- 1.239 “They shall enable all beings
To don the armor and mount the Great Vehicle.
Mounting this comfortable vehicle,
They will proceed toward the unsurpassed.
- 1.240 “Such bodhisattvas
Who abide in this practice
Will swiftly proceed
Within the buddha qualities.
- 1.241 “They will purify buddha fields, [B3]
Gather hearer disciples,
As well as bodhisattvas, and so forth,
And adorn the world with their meritorious qualities.
- 1.242 “Moreover, Anantamati, I recall that when I was engaged in bodhisattva conduct, I donned such armor and mounted this kind of vehicle. Thus, I transcended limits, dispelled darkness, and offered protection from fear. Through my great diligence, I joyfully heard this Teaching of the Armor array of bodhisattva great beings and the array of the Great Vehicle from countless billions of buddhas, which caused me great joy. When cultivating this Dharma, I served and venerated those blessed buddhas, and I did not produce such thoughts as, ‘I am donning such an armor. I possess such an armor. I have obtained such a Dharma. I possess such a Dharma. I possess a Dharma of such-and-such a category.’
- 1.243 “At that time, I had no sense of self, I had abandoned the view of a truly existing self, and I had abandoned the conceit of a self. My mind contained no sense of high or low, and no concepts. Out of my desire to gather all beings, I upheld the Dharma treasury of all the buddhas and thus-gone ones and ripened countless billions of beings, without ever having a single thought of fatigue in my mind. [F.86.b] During this period I never abandoned the armor, and I always rode in the boundless vehicle. Therefore, in all my lifetimes I overcame and defeated the forces, retinues, and armies of Māra. I tamed all those who were distracted on the paths of the carakas, lokāyatas, and parivrājakas, as well as other non-Buddhists who accorded with them, and established them in happiness. I defeated all opposing teachers. I tamed all the non-Buddhists. I caused those beings who had gone astray to abide in this vehicle, restrained by virtue. I explained and taught beings about the armor and the armor array. By teaching beings such facets of the comfortable Great Vehicle, all those who abided in this vehicle achieved all comforts. In this way they attained all conditioned comforts, the universal monarch’s

comforts, the royal comforts of Śakra and Brahmā, and all unconditioned comforts. When I taught this Dharma to beings, they took it up, and they were thus able to be born into the noble family, raise the great victory banner, roar the lion's roar, and proceed toward unsurpassed, perfect, and complete awakening.

1.244 “Anantamati, for those bodhisattva great beings who are already fit to don such great armor, having accurately investigated and decided upon it, by means of what phenomena should they proceed toward it? Since they completely understand and see all phenomena, they have no conceptualization of them. Why is this? Because those bodhisattva great beings abide stably on the correct path, they understand accurately. [F.87.a] Because they proceed on the correct path, they see accurately. Purifying themselves correctly, they do not conceptualize, nor do they not conceptualize, seeing and understanding the sameness of conceptualization and nonconceptualization. Those who see phenomena to pursue and strive for do not comprehend sameness. Therefore, they do not abide in accurate and pure understanding and seeing. Those who have neither conceptuality nor nonconceptuality do not fixate upon or cling to conceptuality or nonconceptuality. Because they are without fixation or clinging, they abandon conceptuality and nonconceptuality. On this path, there is no pity, no conditioned activity, no imputation, and no acceptance or rejection. Those who abide on the path of evenness do not conceptualize the past, present, or future. Because of this, they understand all concepts and latent tendencies without exception. Since they abide in the unmistakable truth of the sameness of all phenomena, it is said that they *abide on the correct path*.

1.245 “Anantamati, what are the path and the pure path? They are what is known as the eightfold path of the noble ones: correct view, correct intention, correct speech, correct action, correct livelihood, correct effort, correct mindfulness, and correct absorption. Through the correct view, the belief in a truly existing self is abandoned, and one transcends all domains involving views. Thus, all views, in all times and places, are entirely purified. By fully comprehending conceptualization, distinguishing conceptualization, and pervasive conceptualization, [F.87.b] one becomes free from conceptualization, distinguishing conceptualization, and pervasive conceptualization. By not abiding in mistaken thinking and by eliminating mistaken thinking, one will be able to see correct livelihood and also the notion of correct livelihood. By seeing what is pure livelihood and abiding in pure livelihood, one will observe pure physical, verbal, and mental actions, and one will observe correct action. With the correct view of verbal action, one will be able to see and understand both words and those who speak them. Thus, by abiding in correct speech, any discordant factors are purified.

Through the view of correct effort, one is able to gather diligence and abide in proper diligence. With the correct view of mindfulness, one remains without recollection, speculation, or appropriation. With mindfulness thus purified, one abides in correct mindfulness. With the correct view of absorption, one relies on no support while engaged in absorption. Having purified the view of absorption, one abides in correct absorption.

1.246 “Anantamati, when bodhisattva great beings see in this manner, they attain the correct view of universal purity, and thus abide on the pure path. This pure path is that which holy beings cultivate, the wise respect, the noble ones cherish, and the thus-gone ones praise. Thus, it is not a territory traveled by māras, their retinues, their messengers, or any gods allied with them. It is not the domain traversed by those who crave and cling to non-Buddhist paths, those who engage in disputes, those who are immersed in the thicket of views, those who have lost the path, or the lokāyatas. [F.88.a] Nor is it the domain traversed by anyone who desires nirvāṇa. Why is this? Those who dwell in the unconditioned conceptualize nirvāṇa. As they conceptualize nirvāṇa, so then do they conceptualize all conditioned phenomena. Why is this? Since the realm of nirvāṇa²⁶ transcends all movements of conceptual thought, even the unconditioned has no existence there. That being the case, what need is there to mention the conditioned not having any existence there either? Because this path purifies all concepts, there are not even the subtlest concepts about the unconditioned. That being the case, how could there be any concepts about the conditioned? As long as one conceptualizes the path of the noble ones, one cannot be said to be *abiding on the path of the noble ones*. Someone who abandons all movements of conceptual thought can be said to be *abiding on the path of the noble ones, abiding on the path of fearlessness, abiding on the path of utter peace, and abiding on the path of happiness*. This path leads to a place devoid of aging, sickness, death, anguish, and suffering. This path leads to the absence of essential nature; it leads beyond any locus of essential nature. This path leads to the place where both essential nature and nonessential nature are abandoned. This path leads to the place that possesses no demonstrable marks and that cannot be characterized by form. Since this path pervades everything like space, it brings one to the unsurpassed great palace. All who make this journey will not reverse course. Thus, they will achieve myriad pleasures. This great palace is furthermore indemonstrable and lacks the marks of entities. [F.88.b] Thus, it involves neither the slightest conditioned thing, nor the slightest unconditioned thing. Because it has already extinguished conditioned things and abandoned unconditioned things, it does not provide beings with either conditioned or unconditioned happiness whatsoever.

1.247 “Anantamati, many beings desire a conditioned nirvāṇa; they do not even seek conditioned happiness, so how could they be able to enter this great palace? Because this great palace is unconditioned, cool, and quiescent, it is called *nirvāṇa—the transcendence of suffering*. Because it stops attachment, aggression, and ignorance, removes latent tendencies, rends the web of worldly views, dries up the river of ignorance, extracts the poisoned arrows of the afflictions, and exhausts nonvirtuous phenomena, it is called *nirvāṇa—the transcendence of suffering*. Since it is far removed from the disease of pride and all the afflictions caused by much suffering, it is called *nirvāṇa—the transcendence of suffering*. Because it is not of the domain of the mind, the intellect, consciousness, or mental functions, it is called *nirvāṇa—the transcendence of suffering*. Since it pacifies all debates and all ties to existence, all the way up to the perception of Dharma, it is called *nirvāṇa—the transcendence of suffering*. Since it cuts through mental inclinations and the striving they engender, and because it is free from the marks of conceptualization and its objects, it is called *nirvāṇa—the transcendence of suffering*.

1.248 “Anantamati, this is the very essence of great nirvāṇa, the supreme transcendence. Since nirvāṇa is boundless, it cannot be described. If it entailed any destination, it could not be this path, since this path is beyond words and thus also indescribable. Given that bodhisattva great beings travel on this path toward the great palace of nirvāṇa, they can establish countless beings on it. [F.89.a] Anantamati, when bodhisattva great beings proceed on this path, they do not become tired, and they do not become distressed. According to what they wish to seek, they manifest at will. According to where they intend to manifest, they manifest in each place, and each manifestation accordingly attracts beings and teaches them the Dharma, causing all beings to attain great joy. Why is this? Because this path is unequalled, it purifies all discordant factors and brings all activities to completion. Thus, all the blessed buddhas, hearers, and solitary buddhas all proceed on this path and do not contravene it. As long as they have not reached that ground, and as long as they have not fulfilled their aspirations, they never depart from it. What is that ground? It is the ground of nirvāṇa, the ground of the great palace. To draw an analogy, since nothing can illustrate space, there is no other example besides space itself to illustrate space. Thus, to this vast, great, empty void, we apply the label *space*. The palace of nirvāṇa is similar. It is a great, empty void, in which there is no autonomous self and nothing pertaining to self. Therefore, even if all beings enter it, there is not even a single hair’s worth of anything to grasp on to. It is an open and vast emptiness, an utter void that is immeasurably vast. Therefore, it is called *great nirvāṇa* and *the great palace*.

1.249 “Anantamati, this extraordinarily noble path of all the bodhisattva great beings is not something that the hearers and solitary buddhas can attain. Those who abide on this path accomplish all the accumulations of merit and obtain irreversibility. Thereby, they enact great benefit for beings. Manifesting a great array of extraordinarily noble conduct, [F.89.b] they proceed by means of this path. Such an array is also not something that the hearers and solitary buddhas can possess. While bodhisattva great beings are abiding on this path, even if they act as universal monarchs, they will have no ownership of anything. With great power, they will perform miracles and gain realization of both the world and what is beyond the world. Even if they act as divine rulers such as Śakra and Brahmā, they will be free from attachment and clinging. As such, they will abandon pride and aspire to encounter buddhas, delight in hearing the true Dharma, ripen countless thousands of gods, and endeavor toward unsurpassed, perfect, and complete awakening.”

1.250 The Blessed One then expressed this in verse:

“The unique path of the bodhisattvas
Is supreme throughout the world.
All noble ones and those on the two vehicles
Will enter this path.

1.251 “All bodhisattvas
Who wish to proceed to great awakening
And attain the array of the path
Must reveal this path.

1.252 “Anyone who travels or will travel
Such paths
Must adopt the correct view
To stay on the path.

1.253 “All bodhisattvas
Who abide in the view of sameness
Traverse this path,
Proceeding with happiness.

1.254 “This path is supreme, extraordinarily noble,
And unsurpassed.
It is truly capable of leading to advancement,
Yet there is nothing to be apprehended upon it.

1.255 “The minds of all intelligent people
Who abide on this path

- Or who have genuinely entered it
Are unshakable.
- 1.256 “I do not teach that on this path
There can be even the slightest bit of wavering.
Because there is nothing to be moved,
They always abandon any wavering.
- 1.257 “I teach that this path
Is without movement and action, [F.90.a]
And without superimposition;
Therefore, this path is unsurpassed.
- 1.258 “Even though all bodhisattvas
Abide well on this path,
They have no craving for it,
Nor any aversion, either.
- 1.259 “This path is not in the past,
Nor is this path in the future.
Without conceptualizing those limits,
They must cultivate it accordingly.
- 1.260 “There are no afflictions on this path.
There are no concepts on this path.
One must abide on it
Without contradicting these points.
- 1.261 “Anyone who abides on this supreme path
Abides without abiding.
Anyone who abides on this path
Will attain the nature of purity.
- 1.262 “I have taught that it is the eightfold path
That the noble ones traverse.
For those who abide on this path,
Awakening is not difficult to achieve.
- 1.263 “Bodhisattvas are supported,
Abiding thus on this path.
Once they have achieved this pure path,
They must proceed on it individually.
- 1.264 “As this supreme path is what
Sublime beings practice

- And the thus-gone ones extol,
Its wisdom is unsurpassed.
- 1.265 “It is not the path traveled by
Māras, their armies,
Anyone included among the māras,
Or any non-Buddhists.
- 1.266 “Anyone who conceptualizes nirvāṇa
Does not abide on the supreme path.
Childish beings who are harmed by concepts
Do not turn toward nirvāṇa.
- 1.267 “Whoever goes beyond concepts
And is free from notions and concepts
Will thereby proceed
On this great path.
- 1.268 “This supreme path of the noble ones
Is tossed aside by childish beings.
Yet for one who practices this Dharma,
This path is unsurpassed.
- 1.269 “This supreme and most noble path
Brings one to the unsurpassed abode.
It entails no harm or anguish,
And no fear or hardship.
- 1.270 “This unsurpassed path
Has no marks of color or shape.
It cannot even be demonstrated
Through the marks of form. [F.90.b]
- 1.271 “Because this most comfortable vehicle
Is authentic, it entails no fear.
In the end, anyone who proceeds on this path
Shall reach nirvāṇa.
- 1.272 “Because this supremely pure path
Is empty like space,
It is unimpeded in all respects,
And constantly leads toward nirvāṇa.
- 1.273 “If one reaches nirvāṇa,
One shall become irreversible.²⁷

- This great nirvāṇa
Is supreme and unsurpassed bliss.
- 1.274 “The great palace of nirvāṇa
Is an immeasurable, empty void.
Therefore, it is great nirvāṇa,
Which is also called *the great palace*.
- 1.275 “The afflictions of the three poisons
Are pacified in this great nirvāṇa.
When one arrives there,
One will have no regress and no rebirth.
- 1.276 “This empty, void, great nirvāṇa
Is just like space.
Because it is a vast, empty void,
It has no impediments.
- 1.277 “Because the great palace of nirvāṇa
Is eternally free from suffering and anguish,
And its domain is boundless,
It is called *nirvāṇa*.
- 1.278 “Because nirvāṇa cannot be enumerated,
A numerical limit cannot be apprehended.
It is this most calm and cool nature
That is called *nirvāṇa*.
- 1.279 “Because in nirvāṇa there is nothing to be done,
The path that leads to it is also unsurpassed.
Because it is immeasurable and nonconceptual,
There are no concepts to apprehend.
- 1.280 “For the sake of the bodhisattvas,
I have revealed this path.
Anyone who abides on this path
Draws nearer to nirvāṇa.
- 1.281 “Because those abiding on this path
Will achieve all forms
Of supreme and worldly pleasure,
They are called *fearless*.
- 1.282 “When they abide well on this path,
Their minds will be uncontaminated.

- Having thus purified this path,
They are called *fearless*.
- 1.283 “By seeing this path of evenness,
Everything can subsequently be understood.
They will not be attached
To any requisites of life.
- 1.284 “Bodhisattvas are supported
By the true and most noble path.
To benefit all beings,
They proceed on it heroically. [F.91.a]
- 1.285 “When they achieve the unsurpassed path,
And manifest the supreme path,
They will cause all worldly beings to delight in
And proceed on this path.
- 1.286 “This supreme and most noble path
Purifies the mind.
Pursuing it according to their intents,
All will proceed upon it.
- 1.287 “Even if they become universal monarchs,
Turning the wheel with their great armies,
They will give up their great royal positions,
Take ordination, and train on this path.
- 1.288 “Even if they should obtain
The kingdom of Śakra or Brahmā,
They will be unattached to it
And will follow the path well.
- 1.289 “They also will fully understand
Even the worldly topics of knowledge.
Those who abide on this path
Will be called *proclaimers of truth*.”
- 1.290 “Furthermore, Anantamati, when bodhisattva great beings genuinely endeavor on this path, out of their desire to gather the genuine eightfold path, they will practice a single Dharma teaching—which is to not engage in any unwholesome phenomenon.
- 1.291

- “Additionally, to gather the genuine eightfold path they will practice two Dharma teachings, which are (1) to properly contemplate inner virtuous phenomena, and (2) to properly inquire into the nature of external virtuous phenomena.
- 1.292 “Moreover, to gather the genuine eightfold path, they will practice two additional Dharma teachings, which are (1) to understand the various phenomena as entities, and (2) to understand the absence of entities, the absence of abiding, and the absence of anything that can be conceptualized.
- 1.293 “Moreover, to gather the genuine eightfold path, they will practice two additional Dharma teachings, which are (1) to rely on realization inwardly, and (2) to not cling to anything external.
- 1.294 “Moreover, to gather the genuine eightfold path, they will practice two additional Dharma teachings, [F.91.b] which are (1) to trust in themselves without conceptualizing anything, and (2) to think, ‘I will establish all those who still lack faith on this path.’
- 1.295 “Moreover, to gather the genuine eightfold path, they will practice two additional Dharma teachings, which are (1) to correctly see and understand what needs to be done, and (2) to not cling to what needs to be done.
- 1.296 “Moreover, to gather the genuine eightfold path, they will practice three additional Dharma teachings, which are (1) to understand each of the appropriated aggregates that perpetuate suffering, (2) to earnestly pursue and take interest in the appropriated aggregates that do not involve suffering, and (3) to strive to abandon conditioned phenomena.
- 1.297 “Moreover, to gather the genuine eightfold path, they will practice three additional Dharma teachings, which are that when teaching the supreme Dharma, (1) they will teach the meaning correctly, without any verbal contradiction or mental dispute, (2) they will not fixate upon syllables and words, and (3) they will summarize all the Dharma.
- 1.298 “Moreover, to gather the genuine eightfold path, they will practice four additional Dharma teachings, which are (1) to correctly apply themselves to entities according to reality, (2) to correctly apply themselves to entities in a manner that accords with reality, (3) to correctly apply themselves to entities by investigating in accordance with the Dharma, and (4) to correctly apply themselves to entities without producing any attachment.²⁸
- 1.299 “Moreover, to gather the genuine eightfold path, they will practice four additional Dharma teachings, which are [F.92.a] (1) to guard themselves with very firm pledges and practice what they preach, (2) to use the six faculties skillfully to proceed on the path, (3) to purify their intentions, and (4) to abide in vigilant conduct.
- 1.300

“Anantamati, these bodhisattva great beings are called *followers of the path* because they gather the path through these Dharma practices. Because they see that the essential nature of phenomena is empty, nameless, markless, wishless, unborn, unconditioned, and characterized by disenchantment, abandonment, cessation, and liberation, therefore they achieve the illumination of Dharma. Even when they contemplate the termination of births, they do not arouse any notion of birth with regard to birthlessness. Thus, at that time they transcend all births, and so they pass beyond all that is contrary to the Dharma. As they achieve the pure path, they gain the acceptance that phenomena are unborn. Because they have purified the path, they transcend all perception, and subsequently they do not abide in nonperception either. Stopping the perception of the path, they abandon the perception of phenomena and escape from the web of unknowing. By cultivating knowing, they obtain those phenomena that are to be achieved.

1.301 “What phenomena do they achieve by cultivating knowing? By cultivating knowing, they achieve the cessation of perception and feeling, they achieve definitive skill in all phenomena, and they are able to comport themselves with the nature of reality by following the secret teachings. When bodhisattva great beings follow this path, they do not dwell on objects, and marks do not obscure them. Thereby understanding that all phenomena are the same as space, that their arising is the same as the arising of space, and that their essential nature is the same as the essential nature of space, they are not obstructed even slightly by marks. [F.92.b] Because this path is pure, they have no fear of being harmed. Because they don the great armor, they are not bound by grasping. Because they mount the Great Vehicle, they are not deluded. Because they abandon obscurations, they become like space. Proceeding on this path, they will become great lights for beings. Anantamati, this is the extraordinarily noble path of the bodhisattva great beings, which is not the domain of hearers or solitary buddhas.”

1.302 The Blessed One then expressed this in verse:

“Because they have gathered the genuine eightfold path,
They teach Dharma practices.
Those who abide on this path
Have great diligence.

1.303 “Those who practice virtuous phenomena
Are capable, at all times,
Of never engaging in nonvirtuous phenomena.
Through this conduct, they gather the path.

1.304 “Bodhisattva practitioners

- Correctly contemplate internally,
And inquire externally;
Through this conduct, they gather the path.
- 1.305 “Bodhisattvas investigate
And understand entities accurately,
Thus abiding correctly according to the Dharma.
Through this conduct, they gather the path.
- 1.306 “Bodhisattvas provide protection;
And so they rely on realization internally,
And are free from attachment externally.
Through this conduct, they gather the path.
- 1.307 “Bodhisattvas are fearless;
And so their personal confidence is nonconceptual,
And they cause others to abide in pure faith.
Through this conduct, they gather the path.
- 1.308 “Bodhisattvas contemplate,
Thus purifying their deeds,
And not becoming attached to their actions.
Through this conduct, they gather the path.
- 1.309 “Bodhisattvas are unbound;
They are constantly aware of the suffering of appropriated aggregates,
And seek to end the suffering of appropriated aggregates.
Through this conduct, they gather the path.
- 1.310 “Bodhisattvas have excellent knowledge;
Thus they cultivate practices that are free from compounding,
And are able to abandon what is conditioned. [F.93.a]
Through this conduct, they gather the path.
- 1.311 “Bodhisattvas contemplate the truth;
Thus they attain realization that accords with the truth,
And teach in indisputable ways.
Through this conduct, they gather the path.
- 1.312 “Bodhisattvas are intelligent;
Thus they take hold of all phenomena,
Without fixating on syllables or words.
Through this conduct, they gather the path.
- 1.313 “Bodhisattvas practice the Dharma;

- Thus they act in accord with the Dharma
And in accord with the truth.
Through this conduct, they gather the path.
- 1.314 “Bodhisattvas follow the path;
Thus they abide by their firm pledges,
And practice what they preach.
Through this conduct, they gather the path.
- 1.315 “Bodhisattvas purify the path;
Thus they are skilled at purifying their intentions and
Abiding in the Dharma with vigilance.
Through this conduct, they gather the path.
- 1.316 “Bodhisattvas are always
Sincerely cultivating these practices,
To achieve physical and mental well-being.
Through this conduct, they gather the path.
- 1.317 “Bodhisattvas have correct mindfulness
And abide on the pure path.
They fully realize
All phenomena to be empty and free of marks.
- 1.318 “Bodhisattvas investigate;
They purify their aspirations,
And they are wishless and non-abiding.
Thereby they abandon all marks.
- 1.319 “Bodhisattvas accurately investigate
The principle that is universally the same;
They have no doubt whatsoever
That all phenomena are unborn.
- 1.320 “Bodhisattvas have sublime intelligence,
Capable of investigating all phenomena.
Due to their disenchantment, abandonment, and quiescence,
They proceed with clear vision.
- 1.321 “Bodhisattvas investigate phenomena;
They see accurately how phenomena arise,
Yet they do not see birth in that birth,
And they do not see exhaustion in exhaustion.
- 1.322 “Bodhisattvas are diligent;

- When they investigate in this way,
They abandon what is contrary to the Dharma,
And ascend to the authentic state.
- 1.323 “Bodhisattvas have sublime intelligence;
Purifying this path, [F.93.b]
They swiftly come to rest in a state of bliss,
And gain unsurpassed acceptance.
- 1.324 “Bodhisattvas have sublime intelligence,
And accordingly, they contemplate phenomena.
They transcend all perception,
And constantly abide in the absence of perception.
- 1.325 “Bodhisattvas have sublime intelligence
And can completely purify this path.
Abandoning any perception of the path,
They also do not abide in the perception of the Dharma.
- 1.326 “Bodhisattvas have sublime intelligence;
Because they have purified this path,
They escape from the web of unknowing,
And achieve the great illumination of Dharma.
- 1.327 “Bodhisattvas have sublime intelligence;
They are able to cultivate knowledge
And teach all beings.
This is how they proceed.
- 1.328 “Bodhisattvas cultivate knowledge
In order to apprehend all phenomena,
Obtain certainty in the profound truth,
And achieve great skillful means.
- 1.329 “Bodhisattvas cultivate knowledge,
Abandoning all perception through skillful means.
They follow the secret Dharma,
And realize the definitive meaning.
- 1.330 “Bodhisattvas have sublime intelligence;
And with the great illumination of Dharma,
They are able to cease perception and feeling.
This is how they proceed.
- 1.331 “Bodhisattvas have sublime intelligence.

- They do not abide on this path.
Because they do not abide on this path,
They proceed on this path.²⁹
- 1.332 “Bodhisattvas are fearless.
They are able to understand all phenomena
To be pure like space.
They are not obscured by any marks.
- 1.333 “Bodhisattvas understand all phenomena
To have a nature that is equal to space.
Because phenomena are like space,
They are understood to be pure and immaculate.
- 1.334 “Bodhisattvas abide in this fashion,
And are not obscured by marks.
Swiftly they provide
Teachings and instructions to beings.
- 1.335 “Bodhisattvas have sublime intelligence,
And purify all paths.
Thus there are no obstacles on the path,
And they can pursue it without impediment.
- 1.336 “This pure path
Leads swiftly to great awakening.
It actualizes the unconditioned, [F.94.a]
And proceeds to sameness.
- 1.337 “Bodhisattvas’ great armor,
Great Vehicle, and great path
Are unobstructed, like space,
As they proceed purely.
- 1.338 “To travel on this vehicle and path
Is like traveling through the void of space.
Going far beyond all marks,
They proceed in the absence of marks.
- 1.339 “The Great Vehicle, the vehicle of sameness,
Is vast like space.
Therefore, this vehicle must proceed
On such a pure path.
- 1.340 “All bodhisattvas

Respect this Dharma.
For the sake of all beings,
They proceed heroically.

- 1.341 “Anyone who wishes to reach great awakening,
Must abide on this extraordinarily noble path.
It is not in the capacity of the other two vehicles
To proceed toward this destination.
- 1.342 “Bodhisattvas have correct mindfulness.
They are able to purify this path,
And on this pure path,
They proceed to the supreme and unsurpassed state.
- 1.343 “Moreover, Anantamati, when bodhisattva great beings correctly engage and endeavor in this fashion, they come to genuinely master all the applications of mindfulness, correct eliminations, faculties, strengths, branches of awakening, freedoms, absorptions, equipoises, bases of supernatural power, tranquility, and special insight. In this way, they become adorned with countless exalted qualities. Then, in order to tame all worldly beings, they don the great armor. In order to escape from the three realms, they mount the Great Vehicle. In order to gather all gods, humans, and asuras, they abide on this path and proceed toward unsurpassed, perfect, complete awakening.
- 1.344 “Anantamati, when bodhisattva great beings don the great armor, mount the Great Vehicle, and abide on this path, [F.94.b] if they fail to universally radiate love, compassion, joy, and equanimity toward all sentient beings, or if they fail to cherish all beings like themselves, then this great armor, great path, and Great Vehicle would not even be supported by the great earth, nor would all beings be able to rely upon³⁰ it. Thus, it must be out of love and an altruistic mind for others that they don the great armor, mount the Great Vehicle, and abide on the path. All worldly gods, humans, and asuras are unable to course in such an armor, such a Great Vehicle, and such a great path, which also cannot be seen by any ordinary, childish beings who cling to the world and abide in worldliness.
- 1.345 “Moreover, because the bodhisattva great beings don the great armor out of love for all beings, they consecrate the elements of earth, water, fire, and wind through the armor’s power, such that the earth element does not tremble or quake, and no beings grow afraid of it. They also have similar effects on the water, fire, and wind elements.
- 1.346 “Moreover, having first developed the mind of awakening and the aspiration to don the armor, bodhisattva great beings now don the great armor; and having mounted the Great Vehicle, they proceed along the pure

path until they have only one birth remaining, when they proceed to the tree of awakening and take their seat at the site of awakening. If in this period they fail to consecrate the great trichiliocosm—this firm ground that is made of vajra—it will tremble and quake, for even though it is fashioned of vajra, it will not be able to withstand this great armor, this great path, or this Great Vehicle. [F.95.a]

1.347 Moreover, through their past aspirations, bodhisattva great beings have aroused great love and compassion for beings, and have expressed their praise for the buddhas and bodhisattvas of the ten directions. Thus, if they should fail to consecrate the great vajra base, as well as Mount Meru, the jewel mountains, and the other majestic mountains, they would be unable to support this great armor, this great path, or this Great Vehicle.

1.348 “Moreover, due to the power of their past aspirations and the transformative power of the past aspirations of the thus-gone ones, bodhisattva great beings do not injure beings, nor do they harm them, impair them, scare them, hold grudges against them, torment them, or oppress them. In order to cause beings to find happiness, they don the great armor, mount the Great Vehicle, and abide on this path, proceeding toward unsurpassed, perfect, and complete awakening.

1.349 “Anantamati, when bodhisattva great beings don the great armor, they don the armor of insight, brandish the weapons of insight, and perform the dedication of great insight. Mounting the vehicle of dedication, they shine the illumination of insight. Abiding on this path of illumination, they investigate phenomena with the eye of bright insight, endeavoring toward omniscient wisdom. To gather the wisdom of omniscience, for the sake of all beings, the bodhisattvas cultivate the perfections of insight, discipline, patience, diligence, and concentration. [F.95.b] Each of these are guided by insight, accomplished by insight, gathered by insight, and completely dedicated toward unsurpassed, perfect, and complete awakening.”

1.350 The bodhisattva great being Anantamati then remarked to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, it is amazing how the various forms of insight possessed by the bodhisattva great beings pervade everywhere and are capable of gathering and accomplishing the Dharma of immeasurably many buddhas.”

1.351 The Blessed One responded to the bodhisattva great being Anantamati, “Anantamati, that is true, that is true! What you have said is correct. The various forms of insight possessed by bodhisattva great beings pervade everywhere and encompass all Dharma. Donning the great armor, they mount the Great Vehicle and abide on the great path. Then, guided by insight, they proceed upon it. Anantamati, even if one has insight, if one is not guided by such insight, one will not proceed properly on this path. If one possesses insight and is guided by insight, then one will engage with and

follow this insight, as it pervades everywhere. One will gather through insight, and will exercise restraint through insight. From that point onward, one can be said to have donned the great armor, to have mounted the Great Vehicle, and to abide on the great path. With the delightful Dharma, one will then benefit worldly beings and open the eye of insight. As one investigates with the eye of insight, one's insight body will shine forth, emitting a great illumination, and one will proceed toward unsurpassed, perfect, and complete awakening.

1.352 "Anantamati, such is the great armor and the array of armor that bodhisattva great beings must don. [F.96.a] Such is the Great Vehicle and the array of the Great Vehicle that they must mount. Such is the great path and the array of the great path that they must traverse, in order to proceed toward unsurpassed, perfect, and complete awakening. Anantamati, even if I spoke for countless eons about the sublime beings who possess the armor array, the Great Vehicle array, the great path array, and the various arrays of all good qualities, that would not be long enough. However, so that all of you may realize it, and so that sublime beings of the future may achieve the armor array, the Great Vehicle array, the great path array, and the array of the boundless assembly of qualities, I have briefly described it on this occasion. If such sublime beings hear the Dharma I have taught here, they will don the great armor, mount the Great Vehicle, abide on the great path, adorn themselves with good qualities, and proceed in this way."

1.353 The Blessed One then expressed this in verse:

"I have described the correct eliminations,
The four bases of mindfulness,
And all other skillful means.
These come from vigilance.

1.354 "With perfect mindfulness,
Paired with skill in the Dharma,
One diligently proceeds toward liberation.
These come from vigilance.

1.355 "The faculties, strengths, factors of awakening,
Donning of the armor, and mounting of the Great Vehicle—
With these as their guardians,
Bodhisattvas should proceed.

1.356 "Concentrations, excellences, freedoms,
Absorptions, and equipoises—
With these as their guardians,
Bodhisattvas should proceed.

- 1.357 “Compassion, love, joy, equanimity,
Donning the armor, and mounting the Great Vehicle— [F.96.b]
With these as their guardians,
Bodhisattvas should proceed.
- 1.358 “The accomplishments of tranquility, special insight,
The bases of supernatural power, and miracles—
With these as their guardians,
Bodhisattvas should proceed.
- 1.359 “Through countless qualities,
And by donning the armor and mounting the Great Vehicle,
Without becoming weary on the path,
Bodhisattvas should proceed.
- 1.360 “Through diligence, carefulness,
Donning the armor, mounting the Great Vehicle,
And understanding the bases of mindfulness,³¹
Bodhisattvas should proceed.
- 1.361 “The luminous great armor
Tames all worldly beings.
One who has donned this armor
Should be called *intelligent*.
- 1.362 “Anyone who mounts the Great Vehicle
In order to correctly turn toward omniscience
And escape from the three realms
Should be called *intelligent*.
- 1.363 “The great path, the pure path,
Outshines the world
With its gods, humans, and asuras.
Thus it is called *universally renowned*.
- 1.364 “Such bodhisattvas
Don the armor of diligence
At all times
For the sake of beings.
- 1.365 “If bodhisattvas do not cultivate
Great love, compassion, joy,
And equanimity,
This great earth will not support them.

- 1.366 “If bodhisattvas do not cultivate
The knowledge of what is timely and beneficial
For all beings,
This great earth will not support them.
- 1.367 “If bodhisattvas do not cultivate
Love for all beings,
Cherishing them as they cherish themselves,
This great earth will not support them.³²
- 1.368 “If bodhisattvas do not cultivate
Mounting this Great Vehicle compassionately,
Then the mountains, oceans,
And this great earth will not support them.
- 1.369 “If bodhisattvas do not cultivate
Loving consideration for all beings
While mounting this Great Vehicle,
No beings will rely on them.
- 1.370 “Having donned this armor,
If they do not shine the radiance of love,
No beings will be able to rely
Upon this great armor.
- 1.371 “Having donned this armor,
They consecrate the four great elements
With their boundless ocean of qualities,
So that those elements will support them. [F.97.a]
- 1.372 “In order to gather beings,
They pervade the universe with the light of compassion,
And consecrate the four great elements,
So that the elements will support them.
- 1.373 “In order to gather beings,
They actualize great awakening,
And consecrate the four great elements,
So that the elements will support them.
- 1.374 “They do not belittle or harm others.
Donning the great armor,
They escape upon the Great Vehicle.
Such beings are called *intelligent*.

- 1.375 “Through their great skillful means,
They are able to consecrate everything,
And thus escape toward the unsurpassed.
Such beings are called *intelligent*.
- 1.376 “Thus, this great earth
Will not sink or shake.
The elements of water, fire, and wind
Will perform their functions.
- 1.377 “Great bodhisattvas
Don the boundless armor,
Mount the Great Vehicle,
And proceed on the path.
- 1.378 “Accomplishing the state of a once-returner,
They achieve their final body,
And proceed to the majestic tree of awakening,
Where they sit upon the firm seat.
- 1.379 “At the seat of awakening,
They abide like a vajra.
Without becoming weary in body or mind,
They actualize omniscience.
- 1.380 “If these fearless bodhisattvas
Do not consecrate it,
The great earth will quake;
And, once destroyed, will never appear again.
- 1.381 “As for the realm of this great earth,
Though it is made from vajra,
If it is not consecrated by them,
It will shake and tremble.
- 1.382 “Bodhisattvas, in past times,
Adorned themselves with great aspirations;
And thus, when among all beings,
They regard them with great love.
- 1.383 “Present throughout the worlds of the ten directions,
Within all the various buddha fields,
These omniscient chiefs among humans
Protect and consider all.

- 1.384 “If all the mountains,
Such as Mount Meru, the jewel mountains,
And the encircling Cakravāḍa mountains, made from vajra,
Which stand firmly and imposingly,
- 1.385 “Are not consecrated
By intelligent bodhisattvas, [F.97.b]
Then, as they don the great armor,
These mountains will be unable to support them.
- 1.386 “It is only when the buddhas and bodhisattvas
Consecrate them through their miraculous power,
That beings and the great earth
Become firm and capable of providing support.
- 1.387 “Those who don the great armor
Do not injure others.
With the unsurpassed armor,
They proceed on the vehicle.
- 1.388 “Those who don the great armor
Do not harm others.
With the inconceivable armor,
They proceed on the vehicle.
- 1.389 “Those who don the great armor
Do not resent others.
Thus, to dispel the diseases of beings,
They proceed on the vehicle.
- 1.390 “By practicing in a perfect manner
The supreme, perfect, and unsurpassed path,
Without injuring or resenting others,
They abide correctly in nonviolence.
- 1.391 “Donning the armor of great insight,
They mount the vehicle that is dedicated to insight.
This armor cannot be destroyed;³³
Thus it is dedicated to the unsurpassed.
- 1.392 “Bodhisattvas are supported,
Abiding on the path with illuminating insight.
By investigating phenomena with insight,
They proceed toward the unsurpassed.

- 1.393 “The bodhisattvas’ supreme path,
Their armor, and the Great Vehicle
All arise from the light of insight.
Therefore, their minds are pure.
- 1.394 “Climbing aboard the perfections,
They travel toward great awakening.
They attain insight, purify insight,
And are guided by insight.
- 1.395 “All the perfections
Are guided by this insight.
They attain insight, purify insight,
And gain unsurpassed wisdom.
- 1.396 “Bodhisattvas are inconceivable.
They shine the light of insight,
And light the great lamp of insight;
Thus they proceed toward happiness.
- 1.397 “Having aroused the light of insight,
Their eyes of insight are open.
The unsurpassed wisdom of the buddhas
They clearly see and proceed toward.
- 1.398 “Bodhisattvas are heroic,
Possessing the boundless armor, [F.98.a]
With which they are boundlessly adorned.
Thus it is said that *they don the armor*.
- 1.399 “Bodhisattvas are intelligent,
Greatly adorning the Great Vehicle.
They proceed toward the omniscient wisdom of buddhahood,
Without ever becoming stained.
- 1.400 “Bodhisattvas are intelligent,
Greatly adorning the great path.
They proceed toward the supreme, inconceivable state,
In the purest manner. [B4]
- 1.401 “Moreover, Anantamati, bodhisattva great beings shall proceed toward the
boundless domain of the armor, the boundless domain of the Great Vehicle,
and the boundless domain of the great path. Why is this? Because they
conform with everything. Bodhisattva great beings don the armor because

they wish to conform with all phenomena. They mount the Great Vehicle because they wish to conform with all phenomena. They abide on the great path because they wish to conform with all phenomena. They proceed on it in order to attain the sameness of all phenomena. However, this armor does not truly apprehend even the slightest phenomenon as internal, external, coarse, subtle, distant, near, past, present, future, conditioned, unconditioned, abiding, or non-abiding. If this armor were unable to discern, resolve, completely understand, conform with, make evident, or transcend all phenomena, it could not rightfully be called *donning the great armor*. Since it discerns all phenomena—and resolves, completely understands, [F.98.b] conforms with, actualizes, and transcends them—it can be called *donning the great armor*.

1.402 “The Great Vehicle as well does not truly apprehend any phenomenon as being *internal, external* and so forth up to *dedicated to the wisdom of omniscience*, and yet it completely understands, conforms with, makes evident, and transcends all phenomena. Therefore, this vehicle is called the Great Vehicle, the vehicle of skill in phenomena, the vehicle that reaches nirvāṇa, the unsurpassed vehicle, and the unequalled vehicle. Likewise, the great path does not truly apprehend any phenomenon as being *internal, external* and so forth up to *proceeding upon the great path of the sameness of all phenomena*, and yet this path of sameness does not lack understanding of even the slightest phenomenon. Therefore, this path is called the unsurpassed path, the incalculable and immeasurable path, and the unequalled path.

1.403 “Anantamati, bodhisattva great beings who don the great armor conform with all beings’ minds and mental activities. They remove and purify all beings’ afflicted emotions. Mounting the Great Vehicle, they increase the roots of virtue of all beings. Abiding on this great path, they inspire beings to accomplish all virtuous phenomena. Anantamati, bodhisattva great beings remain in saṃsāra for a long time—until the end of saṃsāra—for the sake of each being and each mental activity, pursuing the medicine of insight and not relinquishing the armor.

1.404

“Thus, they are able to gain stability in donning the great armor, the immeasurable armor, the armor that is difficult to comprehend, [F.99.a] the pure armor, the boundless armor, the armor that is without appropriation, the armor that knows the perceptions of beings, the armor that knows there are no beings, the armor that knows there is no self, the armor that knows the nature of beings, the armor that realizes the nature of beings, the armor that knows the nature of the self, the armor that realizes the nature of the self,³⁴ the armor that knows the nature of the interior, the armor that realizes the nature of the interior, the armor that knows the nature of the exterior, the armor that realizes the nature of the exterior, the armor that knows the nature of both the interior and the exterior, the armor that realizes the nature of both the interior and the exterior, the armor that knows the nature of all phenomena, the armor that realizes the nature of all phenomena, the armor that knows that in all phenomena there is nothing to be apprehended, the armor that knows that in the nature of all phenomena there is nothing to be apprehended, the armor that masters the realization of phenomena, the boundless armor, the armor without center, the armor without center or boundary, the armor that is not past, the armor that is not future, the armor that is not present, the armor that is free from any action, and the armor that is free from any actor.

1.405 “Anantamati, with regard to this armor, the bodhisattva great beings do not don it, realize it, resolve it, attain liberation through it, or actualize it. Because there is no armor, the armor is donned. Because they do not realize it, it is realized. Because they do not resolve it, it is resolved. Because they do not attain liberation through it, they are liberated. Because they do not actualize it, it is actualized. They mount the Great Vehicle because there is nothing to be mounted. [F.99.b] They do not designate the Great Vehicle, which is designated by the absence of designation, for the Great Vehicle cannot be designated in even the slightest. If designations are made, this is nondesignation, because such designations cannot be apprehended and cannot be seen. There is also no vehicle that can be mounted and dwelt upon; it is through nonapprehension that one abides on the Great Vehicle. Because it abandons proceeding toward a destination, does not reach the ultimate goal, does not arrive at nirvāṇa, and cannot be apprehended, what is not a path is taken as a path. Because one proceeds on the path through sameness, this path of sameness has no designations, for who would make such designations? What would be designated? From where would designations be made? In it there is also no action and no actor. It is not combined, and it is not uncombined. It renounces everything and does not seek anything. Why is this? Because this true path of sameness is not the same as all phenomena, nor is it different from them, nor concurrent with

them. It does not produce notions of phenomena—indeed, it abandons phenomena. Therefore, it is neither pure nor impure. The nature of phenomena is also this way—neither pure nor impure. Thus, for this reason this path is called *the path without affliction*. Because it cannot be traversed, it is traversed. Because it cannot be taken hold of, it is taken up. This path is deeply profound, and therefore it is unborn, unarisen, unemerged, uncreated, unattained, unconditioned, nondwelling, non-abiding, unobscured, and without entity. It can completely reveal all entities, and is indivisible from all entities, yet it does not conform to entities. Because it has no entity, it leads to the unsurpassed abode.

1.406 “Anantamati, bodhisattva great beings should understand this armor, this vehicle, and this path in this fashion. [F.100.a] However, this armor, this vehicle, and this path cannot be seen, understood, or apprehended. Thus, who could don this armor, mount this vehicle, or follow this path? Such a one also cannot be seen, understood, or apprehended. Anantamati, when bodhisattva great beings hear this Dharma teaching, they will not be scared or frightened of it. Thus, they will read, recite, and teach it. They will not contradict the principle of this Dharma teaching, but will practice in accord with it and thereby develop joyful resolve, endeavoring diligently for the sake of this Dharma teaching. If there are those who are capable of developing certainty in the principle of this Dharma teaching and becoming skilled in means, they will don this armor, mount this vehicle, and practice this path. By pursuing this profound Dharma teaching in which there is nothing to be apprehended, they will put an end to the limit of saṃsāra, fully awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood, and appear in the world adorned with boundless qualities.

1.407 “Anantamati, bodhisattva great beings who are enthusiastic about this Dharma teaching should arouse their diligence and accomplish it carefully. If there are beings who become delighted upon merely hearing this profound teaching, I have explained that those beings will obtain great benefit. How much more is this the case for those who are able to pursue it diligently, vigilantly, and with pure discipline and conduct? Anantamati, consider how this teaching has myriad aspects that are vast, deep, exalted, and pure. I have enthusiastically praised this teaching so that others may be inspired by it and thereby achieve lasting benefit and happiness, and so that they will become disenchanted and quiescent, [F.100.b] and will gain pervasive understanding.

1.408 “Anantamati, furthermore, consider how this teaching is capable of bestowing abundant happiness, both worldly and transcendent. However, because they have regressed from this profound teaching, beings in the different states of existence who experience various forms of poverty are cut

off from both worldly and transcendent abundance, riches, and happiness. Anantamati, considering how easy it is to discover the riches of this profound and precious teaching while you are sitting in the presence of the Thus-Gone One, you should earnestly apply yourself to accomplishing it. If ordinary, childish beings do not desire to even hear this precious Dharma that I have taught, what need is there to mention taking it up and upholding it? If there is no inspiration to listen, or interest to inquire—even when the Thus-Gone One is present and the precious Dharma is available—how will anyone be inspired to listen or inquire during the final period of five hundred years, when the genuine Dharma is disappearing, and the Buddha, the precious Dharma, and those who uphold the Dharma are no longer present? However, Anantamati, if the Thus-Gone One gives his blessing, this profound and precious teaching will be discovered in the future.

1.409 “Anantamati, in those terrifying times, this profound and precious teaching will not be diminished or destroyed. However, there will be no one to listen to or uphold this teaching. Only those who were inspired in my presence to listen attentively and don the armor will, at that time, be able to joyfully listen to and take up this teaching. At that time, sentient beings who merely hear this teaching will generate pure faith in it, and I declare that those people will accomplish this vast teaching— [F.101.a] how much more is this the case for those who presently generate pure faith in this teaching and diligently put it into practice?

1.410 “Anantamati, when bodhisattva great beings truly don the unsurpassed armor, the great and immeasurable armor, they should think, ‘For the sake of all sentient beings who are impoverished—that is to say, impoverished in discipline, impoverished in learning, impoverished in insight, impoverished in liberation, and impoverished in the knowledge and view of liberation—I will enrich them with this great teaching. I will eliminate all their forms of weakness, and enrich them with the wealth of discipline, learning, insight, liberation, and the knowledge and view of liberation. I will douse the flames of attachment, aggression, and ignorance. I will heal all sicknesses. I will dispense excellent and unsurpassed medicine. I will ensure that they attain great happiness once their various sicknesses are dispelled with this medicine. I will permanently eliminate all their remaining faults, such that once they have actualized the cooling nature of unsurpassed nirvāṇa, no thoughts or concepts shall remain in their minds. Thus, I shall establish them in the state beyond the pursuit of either conditioned or unconditioned things.’ Why is this? It is because this nirvāṇa is supremely pleasant, with nothing left to pursue, and because all pursuits have been permanently pacified and eliminated.

1.411

“Anantamati, having donned this great armor, bodhisattva great beings will mount this Great Vehicle to gather all beings, out of love for them. Having mounted the Great Vehicle, they will think, “All buddhas of the past rode it toward liberation. [F.101.b] All buddhas of the future will ride it toward liberation. All buddhas of the present ride it toward liberation. Yet, there is no going, no riding, and no liberation.” Why is this? Because of emptiness, marklessness, wishlessness, birthlessness, and the absence of any actor, there has been no liberation, there will be no liberation, and there is no liberation. Anyone who gains liberation by mounting this vehicle will emerge well, with no clinging. Therefore, they will not come together with any phenomena, nor will they not come together with them, and so there will be neither coming nor going. When liberation is attained through this vehicle and this path, it also involves no combining, and hence no coming or going. When liberation is attained with this great armor, this vehicle, and this path, there is no combining or not combining, and hence no coming or going, because these cannot be apprehended. Anantamati, this is how bodhisattva great beings proceed via this armor, vehicle, and path. Furthermore, when they proceed with this armor, vehicle, and path, they do not think, ‘I am this near to, or this far from, the qualities of ordinary beings, the qualities of hearers, the qualities of solitary buddhas, or the qualities of the buddhas.’ They do not think, ‘I am this near to, or this far from, the qualities of emptiness, marklessness, wishlessness, birthlessness, or the absence of action.’ They also do not think, ‘I am this near to, or this far from, the qualities of disenchantment,³⁵ abandonment, cessation, [F.102.a] and so forth, up to great nirvāṇa.’ Anantamati, because no bodhisattva, hearer, solitary buddha, or being can weaken this great armor, vehicle, or path, they lead to unsurpassed, perfect, and complete awakening.

1.412 “Anantamati, because the blessed buddhas have attained the state that never moves from this armor, vehicle, and path, they have fully passed beyond suffering. Why is this? Because all phenomena are immovable, because the essential nature of phenomena and the characteristic of reality are without any discrepancy, because marks are pure, and because all is pure. There can be no analysis, further analysis, or comprehensive analysis conducted through marks. The marks of all phenomena and the essence of these marks cannot be analyzed, further analyzed, or comprehensively analyzed in terms of their nature. All phenomena are without nature and without marks. They cannot be illustrated, and they cannot be described. This is called *the mark of the true nature of all phenomena*.

1.413 “Anantamati, the true marks of this armor, this vehicle, and this path also, in similar fashion, cannot be illustrated or expressed. It is to cause beings to understand, and to increase their knowledge of all phenomena, that this

armor, this vehicle, and this path are simply taught as mere designations. If now you wish to engage with and practice according to the true meaning of this armor, then you must not designate, illustrate, or express it as you practice according to the true meaning. [F.102.b] For those who practice according to the true meaning, there is not the slightest thing to engage with or follow. They do not follow what is untrue, but rather follow what is true. When following what is true, one does not follow sound, does not follow words, and does not follow speech. By not following these, one does not engage with them.

1.414 “In this regard, what is truth? It is the secret teaching. Therefore, once such secret teachings have been understood, they should be practiced with complete trust. Those who practice with complete trust do not conceptualize anything with respect to the truth, and they practice in accord with what is nonconceptual. Those who practice in accord with this do so by not practicing and not following. Why is this? There is not even the slightest thing to practice in such truths, nor is there even the slightest thing to follow or pursue. Because actions are abandoned, one does not follow anything. One does not practice anything that accords with awakening; nor does one practice anything that accords with saṃsāra. In fact, whether one is in accord with something or not, this is not proper mental engagement or correct mindfulness. Because thoughts are pure, thoughts should not be followed.

1.415 “Anantamati, you should practice in accord with this truth, and you should not have any other practices. If you practice in accord with something else, you will become lost in error, and so you will end up following after sounds, syllables, words, and speech, without ever abandoning such linguistic expressions. When you thoroughly comprehend sounds, transcend syllables and words, and attain realization of linguistic expressions, then you will not follow them, and you will not enter saṃsāra. [F.103.a] In order to practice this way and engage according to this truth, there is not the slightest thing to practice, because all practice has been pacified.

1.416

“Anantamati, when practicing the truth, do not practice the truth by engaging in practice. If you practice the truth by not practicing, then this is called *neither coming nor turning back*. To neither come nor turn back is to pursue unsurpassed and perfect awakening in accord with this armor, vehicle, and path, and thereby one will benefit others greatly. Anantamati, those who in this way teach the Dharma, follow the truth, and engage with it will accomplish the great resolve that is free from mental error and doubt. Those who have not yet gathered this armor, this vehicle, and this path will be able to gather them and thus swiftly proceed. Those who have not yet donned the armor will swiftly don it. Those who have not yet mounted this vehicle will swiftly mount it. Those who have not yet begun to abide on this path will swiftly abide on it. Anantamati, such beings will collect vast accumulations of merit. The blessed buddhas will protect them and consider them. Thus, they will not contradict the Dharma, and they will practice in accord with the Saṅgha. Anantamati, because you have collected immeasurable roots of virtue, you must gather beings in the future with this teaching, and bear a great burden on behalf of beings. The extent of the merit you will achieve thereby defies all description.”

1.417 The Blessed One then expressed this in verse: [F.103.b]

“When fearless bodhisattvas
Don armor like this,
They don the boundless armor
In order to benefit beings.

1.418 “When beings are mired in poverty,
Or suffering for lacking the wealth of Dharma,
Lacking discipline, learning,
Insight, and liberation,

1.419 “These bodhisattvas will don this boundless armor
To enrich them with the Dharma.
Because they are rich in the Dharma,
All will attain happiness.

1.420 “In order to eliminate the suffering of poverty,
They shall teach the unsurpassed Dharma.
Those who hear it will all abandon defilements,
And abide on this path to happiness.

1.421 “Having completely amassed the aggregate of discipline,
And learning like the great ocean,
They will achieve supreme insight,

- And will be able to sever all bonds.
- 1.422 “The universal radiance of liberation,
And the correct view of liberation—
Those who are capable of manifesting them
Will achieve all forms of happiness.
- 1.423 “The flames of attachment, aggression, and ignorance
Constantly burn and torment.
Since beings suffer in this way,
I must extinguish these flames.
- 1.424 “By giving beings medicine,
All their sicknesses shall be eradicated;
If their sicknesses are pacified,
They will travel to the realm of nirvāṇa.
- 1.425 “When all remainders are permanently discarded,
They will be bound for the blissful abode.
From that state of blissful abiding,
There will be no regression.
- 1.426 “They shall no longer pursue
Conditioned pleasures;
Great and unsurpassed bliss
Shall manifest for them all.
- 1.427 “By ripening beings
With the teachings free from conceptual elaboration,
They will all achieve
Consummate bliss.
- 1.428 “For those who pursue in this way,
Having once gone, they shall never regress.
They will transcend all pursuits
And constantly find supreme happiness.
- 1.429 “Within this great happiness,
Exertion and nonexertion, and
Pursuit and nonpursuit,
Are all abandoned.
- 1.430 “By donning armor in this fashion, [F.104.a]
They will mount this vehicle
And gather all beings,

- Out of their love for them.
- 1.431 “The omniscient ones of the past
Escaped via this vehicle.
The omniscient ones of the future, too,
Shall escape by means of this vehicle.
- 1.432 “The blessed buddhas of the present
Are also escaping by means of this vehicle.
Therefore, there are no buddhas at all
Who do not ride on this vehicle.
- 1.433 “All the victorious ones
Who protect worldly beings
Escape via this vehicle,
Yet develop no notions of it.
- 1.434 “Taking what is not a vehicle as a vehicle,
And what is not a path as a path,
Escaping through not escaping,
They thus escape to the unsurpassed.
- 1.435 “When this vehicle brings escape,
There is not the slightest thing that escapes,
Because it is empty, signless,
Wishless, and free from action.
- 1.436 “Because it is not a vehicle, and it does not escape,
It is called *the Great Vehicle*.
By equalizing everything,
It proceeds correctly.
- 1.437 “This vehicle combines with nothing,
Yet there is nothing with which it does not combine.
By pursuing this unsurpassed path,
One will manifest great bliss.
- 1.438 “This vehicle is associated with nothing,
Yet there is nothing with which it is not associated.
Without abode or support,
It thus proceeds forth.
- 1.439 “This path has no coming;
This path has no going.
Anyone who traverses this genuine path

- Proceeds with quiescence.
- 1.440 “I declare that this path, this vehicle,
And this great armor
Do not rely upon phenomena,
And so they are supremely quiescent.
- 1.441 “None of the qualities of ordinary beings,
The qualities of the hearers,
Or the qualities of the solitary buddhas
Can be apprehended.
- 1.442 “None of the qualities of buddhahood—
The immaculate and unsurpassed qualities—
Are near or far, [F.104.b]
And so they cannot be apprehended either.
- 1.443 “All phenomena are empty and signless,
And devoid of wishes and actions.
Being neither near nor far,
They cannot be apprehended.
- 1.444 “The qualities of disenchantment, abandonment, and cessation,
Along with the qualities of quiescent nirvāṇa,
Are neither near nor far,
And so they cannot be apprehended.
- 1.445 “This vehicle, this armor, and this path
Are beyond grasping.
They are unsurpassed and unmovable;
Thus, ultimately, they cannot be apprehended.
- 1.446 “Onto the nature of all phenomena
And the wondrous mark of suchness,
Nothing can be superimposed,
Because their nature is empty.
- 1.447 “This vehicle, armor, and path
Cannot be illustrated.
Their nature is exactly the same
As the nature of all phenomena.
- 1.448 “Among all phenomena,
There are no marks or nature that can be apprehended.
Thus I have succinctly stated

That all phenomena have no marks or nature.³⁶

- 1.449 “Among all phenomena,
Their nature and their marks
Are just as I have explained them to be.
Ultimately, they will not be found to exist.
- 1.450 “Concerning the nature and marks
Of this vehicle, path, and armor,
If one seeks³⁷ verbal explanations,
Ultimately, they cannot be apprehended.
- 1.451 “Because verbal explanations do not exist,
They are marked as wondrous.
Within verbal explanations themselves,
The marks of speech are absent.
- 1.452 “The Dharma is immeasurable,
Unexcelled, boundless,
And completely unfathomable.
Therefore, the Dharma is unsurpassed.
- 1.453 “This vehicle, this armor,
And this path are also thus.
One should engage with them
According to their lack of marks.
- 1.454 “In order to cause all beings
To understand thoroughly and practice diligently,
Swiftly arriving at the illumination of Dharma,
I have taught in this fashion.
- 1.455 “Since all the Dharma is beyond words,
It is thoroughly inexpressible.
Yet all the Dharma teachings
Should be followed.
- 1.456 “Since the Dharma is beyond words,
It should be engaged accordingly.
Yet in practicing it, there is not the slightest thing to be practiced—
In all Dharma teachings, there is nothing to practice.
- 1.457 “Without seeking, without striving,
And without practicing—thus it should be followed.
Anyone who follows it in this manner

Will not conceptualize the truth. [F.105.a]

- 1.458 “You should follow
The actual, true meaning.
Do not engage with
Speech and words.
- 1.459 “One who can follow the truth,
While disengaged from
Speech and words,
Is called a *seeker of truth*.
- 1.460 “What is this truth?
Understand it to be the secret teaching.
By trusting the nonconceptual,
You will be a follower of such truth.
- 1.461 “If you clearly realize this truth,
You will not grasp, cling to,
Practice, or engage with
Such secret teachings.
- 1.462 “If you follow it,
You will become attached to it.
If you do not follow it,
You will not engage anything.
- 1.463 “Due to correct mindfulness,
You will abandon engagement.
You will not become associated at all
With either awakening or *saṃsāra*.
- 1.464 “You should also not be mindful of it.
Nonmindfulness is correct mindfulness.
It is because mindfulness is purified
That you are said to be pure.
- 1.465 “If you try to accomplish anything but this,
You discard the unsurpassed Dharma.
You should accomplish this meaning
Exactly as I have taught it.
- 1.466 “If you follow words,
You become a follower of sounds.
As such, you will not transcend concepts,

- And you will be practicing a mundane teaching.
- 1.467 “Sounds, words, and syllables
Should not be engaged.
You should realize that the genuine truth
Is practiced by not practicing.
- 1.468 “The genuine truth is beyond sound;
It involves no words or syllables.
Because it transcends all speech,
It is called *the genuine truth*.
- 1.469 “You should practice this truth,
In which there is nothing at all to be practiced.
When all practice has been pacified,
This is called *the genuine truth*.
- 1.470 “With regard to the genuine truth,
It is practiced by not practicing.
You will neither turn back,
Nor lose your armor.
- 1.471 “Those who follow the great armor, [F.105.b]
The Great Vehicle, and the great path
Journey to the abode of happiness
And benefit others.
- 1.472 “I have taught you these teachings,
Which bring great joy.
If you practice according to their truth,
You will sever all doubts.
- 1.473 “Those who mount this vehicle and,
Having mounted, proceed upon it,
Will swiftly arrive at great awakening and
Actualize unsurpassed buddhahood.
- 1.474 “As for this supreme vehicle,
Those who have not mounted it will swiftly mount it.
As for the path and the great armor,
The meaning is the same.
- 1.475 “Those who earnestly accomplish
This unsurpassed teaching—
All such beings

Will be protected and considered by the buddhas.

- 1.476 “In the terrifying times to come,³⁸
You must disclose these teachings,
And so bring vast benefit
To all beings.
- 1.477 “In the terrifying times to come,
If you disclose these teachings,
You will create unsurpassed merit,
The likes of which cannot be measured.
- 1.478 “Anantamati, the armor donned by bodhisattva great beings is called *the great conqueror*. It is called *the boundless conqueror*. It is also called *the great array*. The vehicle that they mount is called *the great captain*. It is called *the boundless light*. It is also called *the wondrous array*. The path that they traverse is called *the accumulation of the immeasurable array*. It is on this path that all the virtuous sublime beings proceed to unsurpassed, perfect, and complete awakening.
- 1.479 “Moreover, Anantamati, long ago in the past—so immeasurably long ago that it was more than an uncountable and limitless number of eons ago—there appeared in the world a buddha named Cloud of Sandalwood Incense. He was a thus-gone one, a worthy one, a perfect buddha, learned and virtuous, a well-gone one, a knower of the world, an unsurpassed being, a charioteer who guides beings, [F.106.a] a teacher of gods and humans, a blessed buddha. The eon in which he appeared was called Flash of Lightning, and his realm was called Totally Illuminated. At that time, the ground in that realm was flat like the palm of one’s hand and lacking any forms of filth, gravel, pebbles, thorns, or logs. The sand scattered on the ground was made of gold and silver. Thus, this world delighted anyone who beheld it. It was encircled by four vast and wide continents, each of which was two hundred thousand leagues in dimension. In each continent there were forty-eight thousand cities that each measured ten leagues in width and twenty leagues in length. Their outer walls were high and fortified. Each city had eighty million denizens. The cities were each surrounded by ten thousand villages and adorned with a thousand parks in their peripheries. Also in this buddha field were many groves of trees with various flowers, fruits, scents, foliage, and tastes, and there were even vajra trees, all set with various adornments. There were lakes, ponds, springs, and waterfalls, and rivers with straight and beautiful banks. They were filled with water of the eight qualities and covered with blue, pink, red, and white lotuses³⁹ that shone in bright colors.

1.480

“The lifespan of the Thus-Gone One Cloud of Sandalwood Incense was sixty-eight trillion years. His assembly of hearers was sixty trillion strong. The faces of the people at that time were beautiful and attractive. They were happy, [F.106.b] with little attachment, aggression, or ignorance, and were therefore easy to guide. With just a little encouragement and instruction, they were able to completely understand the nature and marks of all phenomena.

1.481 “Anantamati, at that time there was also a universal monarch named Sarvārthasiddha. He had the seven precious possessions, and he was the refuge for the four continents. On the Jambudvīpa continent, there was a city forty leagues square. It was filled with people who were happy and prosperous. Within the city, there was an area five leagues square where the ground had been covered with the seven precious substances. There were the finest palm trees, which had been covered with small bells and nets of pure gold. The king’s palace was composed completely of beryl, and it was a league in circumference. On each of its four sides were a thousand columns. Atop this palace were a thousand towers, high and imposing, all beautifully adorned with precious substances. In front, the palace was surrounded by a large moat filled with fragrant and pristine water. Around it were sixteen smaller pools constructed of the seven precious substances, which likewise emitted aromatic scents. From each pool, pure waters streamed, thus creating pleasing sounds that resembled the playing of many instruments. There were eight steps leading into each of the smaller pools, and thirty-two steps leading into the larger, fragrant moat. All the steps were composed entirely of gold. The precious trees were covered with garlands and jeweled nets. Since the scent of the finest incense permeated the entire city from these pools, they were called *brilliant fragrance*.

1.482 “Anantamati, that universal monarch had four queens, [F.107.a] whose names were Boundless Voice, Excellent Voice, Sublime Voice, and Voice Like the King of Swans. Each queen had two sons. Their names were Unerring Supremacy, Excellent Supremacy, Nāga Supremacy, Supreme Voice, Sublime Voice, Brahmā Voice, Supreme Cloud, and Cloud Voice. He also had a retinue of six hundred thousand concubines, who had ten thousand children.

1.483 “At that time, in the royal palace, that universal monarch was engaged in pleasurable pursuits with his retinue when, during their frolicking, he saw the exquisite form of the Thus-Gone One appearing in the sky. The Thus-Gone One addressed the king, ‘Your Majesty, you must don the unsurpassed armor and mount the unsurpassed vehicle to proceed toward unsurpassed and perfect awakening and dispense the medicine of insight to beings! Do not cling to the five sense pleasures of gods and humans. This

great armor will gather unsurpassed happiness. This unsurpassed vehicle will lead many beings to the unsurpassed grove, from which no one will turn back. The myriad pleasures of gods and humans are impermanent. They are subject to destruction and change. Their power does not last long. They are subject to sudden cessation.'

1.484 "Anantamati, when the great king Sarvārthasiddha heard this message, he asked the Thus-Gone One, 'Who is it that can reveal a great armor, which can be donned just like that great armor? Who is it that can reveal a Great Vehicle, which can be mounted just like that Great Vehicle? [F.107.b] Who is it that can reveal a great path, which proceeds just like that great path?'

1.485 "The Thus-Gone One then answered the great king, 'Your Majesty, here is what you must know: there is a thus-gone one known as Cloud of Sandalwood Incense. Your Majesty, go before him. He will give you the Dharma teachings by which one dons the great armor, mounts the Great Vehicle, and pursues the great path.' Upon proclaiming this, the Thus-Gone One disappeared.

1.486 "Anantamati, when the great king Sarvārthasiddha witnessed this, he was so amazed and astonished that all his hair stood on end. He then became fearful, such that he lost all interest in the myriad pleasures of humans and gods, and he became disenchanted with all conditioned things. Then, in order to obtain the great armor, the Great Vehicle, and the great path, he set out to meet the Thus-Gone One Cloud of Sandalwood Incense accompanied by his eight princes, four queens, his other children, his concubines, and his servants. Once he and his retinue had arrived, they respectfully touched their heads to the feet of that blessed one. When they had bowed to him, they tossed many hundreds of thousands of flowers made of the seven precious substances toward that thus-gone, worthy, and perfect buddha. Additionally, they brought along vast amounts of clothing, which they offered to that thus-gone one and his communities of hearers. Additionally, they served, honored, and venerated them with all manner of pleasing implements, enough to last for ten thousand years. [F.108.a] After this, he abdicated his throne and, along with his retinue, took ordination in the teachings of the Thus-Gone One Cloud of Sandalwood Incense.

1.487 "Anantamati, since the Thus-Gone One Cloud of Sandalwood Incense understood the utmost desires of the monk Sarvārthasiddha and his retinue, he taught them by revealing the armor array and the array of the Great Vehicle. They listened and gave rise to the resolute intention that for the sake of this profound Dharma, they would exhaust their lives sitting upright in contemplation, earnestly practicing without any movement, constantly relying on that thus-gone one, and thus attaining the resolve to remain unmoved by any worldly desires.

- 1.488 “Anantamati, that thus-gone one spoke to the monk Sarvārthasiddha, saying, ‘Noble child, have you now donned the great armor, mounted the Great Vehicle, and set out on the path? Due to this path, you will accomplish omniscient insight and unparalleled insight. You should cultivate it correctly by means of earnest diligence.’
- 1.489 “The monk Sarvārthasiddha then said to the Thus-Gone One Cloud of Sandalwood Incense, ‘Blessed One, now I do not truly see any phenomenon called armor. I do not truly see that there is anyone who dons armor. I do not see that there is a donning of armor that can be pursued, nor do I see any place upon which armor could be donned. Blessed One, at this moment I do not truly see any phenomenon called a *vehicle*. [F.108.b] I do not see that there is anyone who mounts a Great Vehicle. I do not see that there is a vehicle that can be pursued, nor do I see that there is any location where the Great Vehicle can be mounted. Blessed One, I do not truly see any phenomenon called a *path*. I do not see that there is anyone who has proceeded or currently proceeds on this path. I do not see that there is a path that can be pursued, nor do I see any location⁴⁰ of the path. Blessed One, I do not see or apprehend that I am far from or near to unsurpassed, perfect, and complete awakening, or that it exists in the past, present, or future. When I look in this way, I do not truly see even the slightest phenomenon that can be relied upon or realized. If I do not realize any such thing, then why does the Blessed One ask me, “Have you donned the great armor, mounted the Great Vehicle, and set out on the path?” The Blessed One is omniscient and all-seeing. Therefore, it is only the Thus-Gone One who understands what people like me are supposed to accomplish concerning the Dharma. This is not within the domain of the hearers or the solitary buddhas.’
- 1.490 “Anantamati, when the monk Sarvārthasiddha said this to that thus-gone one, he and his entire retinue gained the bodhisattvas’ acceptance that phenomena are unborn. [F.109.a] Because they gained acceptance of phenomena, they all attained the irreversible state.
- 1.491 “The Thus-Gone One Cloud of Sandalwood Incense then proclaimed, ‘After five hundred countless eons, you will fully awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood.’ When they heard this prophecy, they were overjoyed and rose to the height of seven palm trees into the air. They praised that thus-gone one with the following verses:
- 1.492 “ ‘O you of infinite renown,
You are lofty like Mount Meru.
O Blessed Omniscient One,
You display positive qualities.
- 1.493 “ ‘Seeing everything clearly with your buddha eyes,

- You illuminate like the sun, and are
Revered amongst this great assembly.
We bow at the feet of the Thus-Gone One
- 1.494 “ ‘Your collection of qualities is immeasurable.
You have perfected the knowledge of buddhahood.
We, too, will also obtain
The unsurpassed wisdom of the Blessed One.
- 1.495 “ ‘By illuminating all gods and men without exception
With your incredible and unsurpassed light,
You open the Dharma treasury,
Revealing a boundless ocean of qualities.
- 1.496 “ ‘Your insight never wanes.
As a genuine buddha, you have abandoned the afflictions.
We bow to your deep qualities
Of luminous insight and extraordinary diligence.
- 1.497 “ ‘Here, within this large assembly of great elephants,⁴¹
With your body adorned with many marks,
You abide, like Mount Meru,
Peerlessly leading your followers.
- 1.498 “ ‘By acting as a guide for the world,
You outshine any assembly of gods and men,
Fearlessly teaching the Dharma.
We bow to you, supreme being.
- 1.499 “ ‘O Blessed One, Great Sage,
With your boundless ocean of qualities,
Please open for us the Dharma eye,
And lead us to don the armor.
- 1.500 “ ‘Then, at all times,
We will mount the Great Vehicle,
And continuously proceed [F.109.b]
On this supreme path—and no other.
- 1.501 “ ‘O Great Sage, leader of the heroes,
You have awakened to the knowledge of all phenomena.
In the world, you are unsurpassed.
We take refuge in you, and entrust you with our lives.’
- 1.502

“Anantamati, countless, immeasurable beings were ripened when the thus-gone, worthy, and perfect Buddha Cloud of Sandalwood Incense taught this Dharma. Following this, the monk Sarvārthasiddha and his retinue served and venerated countless, immeasurable blessed buddhas, such that after five hundred countless eons, he fully awakened to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood, at which point his name became the Thus-Gone One King Who Transcends His Boundless Domain. The qualities of his buddha field, including its dimensions, were no different from the buddha field of the thus-gone, worthy, and perfect Buddha Cloud of Sandalwood Incense. His hearers were immeasurable in number. After five hundred countless eons, the king’s queens, princes, and retinue also fully awakened to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood.

1.503 “Anantamati, bodhisattva great beings don the great armor and mount the Great Vehicle. They take hold of the great Dharma lamp on this path. Thus, they shine the light of Dharma, radiate the brilliance of the Dharma, raise high the great Dharma banner, beat the great Dharma drum, and board the great ship of Dharma, proceeding upon it in order to gather the great Dharma. Frolicking in the play of sublime beings, they satisfy beings by showering down the rain of Dharma. [F.110.a] Thereby, they joyfully and diligently proceed toward unsurpassed, perfect, and complete awakening.

1.504 “Anantamati, when bodhisattva great beings abide on this path, they will attain the illumination of Dharma. Because of this illumination, they will be able to see that all phenomena are dependently originated, and that by nature they are primordially empty, markless, and unoriginated. They will not see form as form—and likewise with feeling, perception, formation, and consciousness. As they do not see consciousness as consciousness, they realize that consciousness arises due to extraneous conditions, and that consciousness has the mark of being by nature primordially empty, markless, and unoriginated—a simple assembly of many causes and conditions. Given that they see it as a collection of causes and conditions, they understand that these causes and conditions themselves are also empty, markless, and unoriginated. When they see in this fashion, they do not see the eye as being an eye—and likewise with the ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind. As they do not see the mind as mind, they realize that the mind arises due to extraneous conditions, and that the mind has the mark of being by nature primordially empty, markless, and unoriginated. Even so far as the earth element, the water element, the fire element, the wind element, the space element, the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realm, they understand them to be devoid of any actor or any subjective experiencer. [F.110.b] They do not see even the slightest phenomenon as a phenomenon—phenomena arise from extraneous conditions due to a

coming together of various causes and conditions, and are by nature markless and unoriginated. The nature of dependent origination is itself empty, markless, and unoriginated.

1.505 “Anantamati, this is how bodhisattvas who abide on this path examine dependent origination. By analyzing in this fashion, they use insight to directly realize the limit of the truth of dependent origination. With this illumination of all phenomena, they will swiftly perfect the ten powers of the thus-gone ones, the four fearlessnesses, the eighteen unique qualities of the buddhas, great love, great compassion, great joy, and great equanimity, up to and including all the qualities of buddhahood.”

1.506 The Blessed One then expressed this in verse:

“Bodhisattvas who are fearless
Are able to abide stably in this fashion,
Increasing the illumination of Dharma
And proceeding with sublime wisdom.

1.507 “They plant the banner of the great Dharma,
The unsurpassed banner.
Observing all the Dharma teachings of the buddhas,
They proceed with correct mindfulness.

1.508 “Sporting in excellent insight,
They offer beings the gift of Dharma.
Bringing down a shower of great Dharma rain,
They proceed fearlessly.

1.509 “Irrigating beings with the Dharma,
They lead them all to happiness.
In this fashion, the bodhisattvas
Proceed excellently.⁴²

1.510 “Bodhisattvas such as these
Achieve the illumination of the great Dharma,
And they are able to abide heroically
In the genuine Dharma.

1.511 “Due to the illumination of Dharma,
They realize that all phenomena
Arise from a multitude of conditions,
And are devoid of true substance. [F.111.a]

1.512 “Phenomena are empty by nature,
Markless by nature,

- Unborn by nature,
And essenceless by nature.
- 1.513 “All phenomena arise from the coming together
Of many conditions.
Because they are a combination of conditions,
They lack any nature.
- 1.514 “Bodhisattvas who are capable of investigating
Realize that conditions are also empty.
Conditions are empty by nature,
And markless by nature.
- 1.515 “They are also without any arising,
And they do not perform any functions.
Those who investigate in this manner
Will diligently accomplish the Dharma.
- 1.516 “Because all that is dependently arisen has no essential nature,
Conditions also are not conditions.
Anyone who analyzes this correctly
Will understand all phenomena.
- 1.517 “In the same way, they will also analyze
Form, feeling, perception, formation, and consciousness,
For it is entirely due to many causes and conditions
That the aggregates arise.
- 1.518 “Because the aggregates do not truly exist,
Their nature is fundamentally empty.
Empty by nature, they are markless,
And entirely unoriginated.
- 1.519 “Aggregates are free of all marks;
And without marks, they are unborn.
Being unborn, they are unceasing.
Such are the characteristics of the aggregates.
- 1.520 “That which is markless is mistakenly seen as possessing marks.
Whence do such marks come into being?
Because phenomena lack any essence,
These aggregates also have no nature.
- 1.521 “Likewise, the elements and sense sources, too,
All arise from conditions, and

- Are fundamentally empty by nature,
Without marks, and without essence.
- 1.522 “Among all phenomena,
There is no essence of phenomena that can be apprehended.
Those who understand all phenomena
Are said to contemplate the truth.
- 1.523 “The desire, form, and formless realms
All arise from conditions, and
Are fundamentally empty by nature,
Without marks, and without essence.
- 1.524 “As for the wisdom that understands this, [F.111.b]
How does it know those objects?
It does so by always abandoning any nature
Of both wisdom and objects.
- 1.525 “That which arises and its various conditions
Are both entirely without action.
For those who can produce such an understanding,
This is the true characteristic.
- 1.526 “The absence of marks is taught through marks,
So that bodhisattvas can thereby engage with it;
Nevertheless, they do not conceptualize
Either marks or marklessness.
- 1.527 “Those who can understand well in this fashion
Are capable of seeing the true mark;
And within the entire realm of phenomena,
They will not impute even the slightest mark of phenomena.
- 1.528 “Neither phenomena nor the realm of phenomena
Have any marks.
All phenomena are free from marks—
This is said to be the realm of phenomena.
- 1.529 “What is described as the realm of phenomena
Is not a realm, nor is it a nonrealm.
Though it is taught using the term *realm of phenomena*,
In reality, it cannot be apprehended.
- 1.530 “When contemplating this truth,
Do not contemplate it—for it cannot be apprehended.

- For it is when concepts are abandoned
That one attains the great illumination of Dharma.
- 1.531 “Because all phenomena are without nature,
This illumination as well is without nature.
Because it is analyzed as such,
One attains the illumination of Dharma.
- 1.532 “The wisdom capable of knowing this cannot be seen;
Even this seeing is not seen.
Because phenomena are seen to be unreal,
This is described as *analysis*.
- 1.533 “The illumination of Dharma is inconceivable,
Limitless, and immeasurable.
Seeing that all phenomena are entirely empty
Is described as *nonconceptuality*.
- 1.534 “If phenomena possessed marks,
No one could ever engage with or realize them.
Those who hear these pure Dharma tones
Should be greatly delighted.
- 1.535 “Since phenomena are unborn,
They can never be conceptualized.
Those who hear these pure Dharma tones
Will attain the bliss of quiescence.
- 1.536 “If, in the future,
Beings hear this unsurpassed Dharma teaching,
It should be explained that those beings
Have accumulated merit for a long time.
- 1.537 “If, in the future,
They hear this unsurpassed Dharma teaching,
They will swiftly pursue
This genuine teaching, and nothing else. [B5] [F.112.a]
- 1.538 “Furthermore, Anantamati, when bodhisattva great beings investigate all
phenomena in this fashion, they shine the illumination of Dharma upon all
phenomena, whereby they regard emptiness neither as emptiness nor as
something other than emptiness. They do not consider even the slightest
phenomenon as associated with emptiness or not associated with emptiness.
They do not regard emptiness as empty of emptiness or not. They do not

regard phenomena according to any view. When they regard things in this way, they regard the absence of marks neither as the absence of marks, nor as something other than the absence of marks. They do not consider even the slightest phenomenon as associated with either marks or marklessness. They do not see the absence of marks as an absence of marks. They do not see the existence of marks as the existence of marks. They do not form a view of the existence of marks, nor do they form a view of the absence of marks. The same is true for the absence of birth and the absence of action. As for exhaustion, they do not regard it as exhaustion, nor as something other than exhaustion. They do not consider even the slightest phenomenon as associated with exhaustion or not associated with exhaustion. They do not regard exhaustion as exhaustion. They do not regard exhaustion as an absence of exhaustion. They do not form a view of exhaustion, nor do they form a view of the absence of exhaustion. When bodhisattva great beings regard things in this way, they do not apprehend even the slightest phenomenon as observable, unobservable, demonstrable, indemonstrable, engageable, not engageable, understandable, or not understandable. Anantamati, this is what is referred to as the illumination of the great Dharma for bodhisattva great beings who abide on this path. [F.112.b] Because they have achieved the illumination of Dharma, they see all phenomena, without any limits whatsoever, and they do not cling to either center or edge. Because they are free from clinging, they proceed within the buddha qualities.”

1.539 The Blessed One then expressed this in verse:

“Emptiness is not seen as emptiness,
Nor is it seen as something other than emptiness.
Those who see in this way
Are said to *see emptiness*.”

1.540 “They do not dwell on any phenomenon,
And they do not see even the slightest phenomenon
As associated with emptiness,
Or not associated with it.

1.541 “Emptiness is by nature empty,
So they do not cling to emptiness.
Since they do not cling,
They come to understand all things.

1.542 “They do not cling to views
Or grasp at analysis.
By understanding views and analysis,

- They do not appropriate either of them.
- 1.543 “Views are totally pure,
And analysis cannot be apprehended—
Anyone who analyzes phenomena in this fashion
Will, in the end, grasp at nothing at all.
- 1.544 “They do not see things as devoid of marks
Or analyze their absence of marks.
They also do not engage in analyzing the absence of marks
As being an absence of marks.
- 1.545 “Devoid of marks, indescribable,
Wishless, and unable to be apprehended—
There is not even the slightest essence of phenomena
That can be cultivated.
- 1.546 “They do not think of the absence of marks,
And they do not think of the absence of wishes.
Through such nonconceptuality,
They demonstrate both marks and the absence of marks.
- 1.547 “They do not pursue the absence of marks, and
Do not engage with the absence of marks.
Since they do not pursue or engage,
They demonstrate abiding in sameness.
- 1.548 “The wise do not see any marks—
Even the absence of marks they do not see.
Without seeing or contemplating,
Nothing at all is demonstrated.
- 1.549 “If one can constantly contemplate
Without contemplation or demonstration,
Then one will equalize and abide in sameness
Of contemplation and demonstration.
- 1.550 “As it is with the absence of marks,
So it is also with the absence of action.
Although demonstrated, there is nothing to be demonstrated—
Therefore, it is realized through contemplation. [F.113.a]
- 1.551 “The same is true for birthlessness—
Not even the slightest phenomenon is born, and
Phenomena lack any kind of nature.

- Therefore, they are demonstrated to be devoid of essence.
- 1.552 “With birth, birthlessness,
Action, and nonaction,
There is not even the slightest thing that can be grasped,
And so the wise do not conceptualize.
- 1.553 “With unwavering mindfulness and insight,
They demonstrate this without analysis.
Thereby, the existence and absence of any substantial essence
Are equalized in sameness, which is beyond diverse natures.
- 1.554 “They do not view exhaustion as exhaustion.
Nor do they view it as an absence of exhaustion.
Demonstrating that there is nothing to be seen,
The insight of exhaustion is unsurpassed.
- 1.555 “They do not conceptualize
Either exhaustion or nonexhaustion.
Because they are without concepts,
They abide in sameness without thoughts.
- 1.556 “Without viewing exhaustion as exhaustion,
Or having views about nonexhaustion either,
They exhaust all views,
And do not grasp at either exhaustion or nonexhaustion.
- 1.557 “If one does not grasp in any way
At exhaustion or nonexhaustion,
One will be freed from all grasping
And will demonstrate the knowledge of exhaustion.
- 1.558 “Thus, one will fearlessly attain
The domain of the knowledge of exhaustion.
It is by demonstrating this Dharma
That bodhisattvas abide joyfully.”
- 1.559 At that time, within the assembly there was a bodhisattva great being named Noble Intellect. He rose from his seat, draped his shawl over one shoulder, and knelt on his right knee. With his palms together, he bowed toward the Blessed One and said, “Blessed One, it is when bodhisattva great beings undertake to practice out of their desire to gather the knowledge of all phenomena that they are able to obtain the great illumination of Dharma. Although there is not the slightest thing that can be perceived in this

illumination of Dharma, due to the illumination of Dharma they understand all phenomena, whether conditioned, unconditioned, mundane, supramundane, concordant, discordant, elaborate, or unelaborate. Blessed One, how can the bodhisattva great beings obtain this illumination of Dharma without engaging in practice?" [F.113.b]

1.560 The Blessed One replied to the bodhisattva great being Noble Intellect, "Noble Intellect, bodhisattva great beings are without either the slightest form of practice or the most superior practice; they do not pursue practice, and they do not engage in pervasive practice, and thus they are able to obtain the boundless great illumination of Dharma. If bodhisattva great beings themselves cannot be apprehended or seen, there is no need to mention that no bodhisattva conduct can be apprehended or seen. How would it be possible to see the many eons of practice through which the boundless great illumination of Dharma is attained? Because bodhisattva great beings pacify all conduct and purify their conduct, they achieve the illumination of Dharma. The conduct of the illumination of Dharma is not a conduct that can be reckoned, nor is it a conduct that follows after marks. From where could any designation of all forms of conduct be made? Thus, that which is practiced is not a conduct that can be designated, nor is it free from designations. Noble Intellect, when bodhisattva great beings abide in this conduct, they abandon all forms of conduct, and thereby do not grasp at anything. Those who fully possess this conduct do not engage in conduct that can be reckoned, or conduct that follows after marks. It is with no marks and no conduct that they are able to obtain this great illumination of Dharma."

1.561 The Blessed One then expressed this in verse:

"There is nothing that bodhisattvas practice;
They have no forms of conduct at all.
Those who attain freedom from conduct
Proceed fearlessly.

1.562 "They have never engaged in superior practice,
Nor do they engage in pervasive practice.
With no practice and no superior practice,
They proceed by way of sameness.

1.563 "In this conduct there is nothing demonstrable;
It demonstrates the absence of marks.
No marks and no conduct— [F.114.a]
Such is the mark of conduct.

1.564 "Bodhisattvas' conduct without marks

- Does not abide in any entities.
No conduct and no abiding—
This is how intelligent ones gain accomplishment.
- 1.565 “Without conduct, they are unmoving.
This is the unsurpassed conduct.
By engaging in unmoving conduct,
One will diligently proceed.
- 1.566 “Bodhisattvas cannot be apprehended;
Their conduct also cannot be seen.
Their physical appearances cannot be seen either.
Such is the proper engagement.
- 1.567 “With no form, no shape, and no marks,
All conduct is thus nonexistent.
When there is no clinging to views,
That is the unsurpassed conduct.
- 1.568 “The unsurpassed conduct of bodhisattvas
Does not fall into designations.
Because it is also without change,
In it there is nothing to be grasped.
- 1.569 “Since this conduct is without designation,
It is called *the unsurpassed conduct*.
If one achieves such conduct,
One will achieve the great illumination of Dharma.
- 1.570 “The conduct of bodhisattvas
Is wordless and not measured by eons.
Yet, throughout immeasurable eons,
They are capable of demonstrating all various forms of conduct.
- 1.571 “Bodhisattvas’ conduct is pure;
Thus they abide in purity.
Because they abandon all forms of conduct,
There has never been anything at all for them to grasp.
- 1.572 “Bodhisattvas abide constantly in equanimity,
While guarding their conduct.
Because they abandon all forms of conduct,
They abide in equanimity.
- 1.573 “Bodhisattvas’ conduct is boundless.

- It abandons both limits and limitlessness.
As this conduct is unmoving,
It is called *unsurpassed conduct*.
- 1.574 “Bodhisattvas’ conduct is without marks,
And such conduct is unsurpassed.
When practicing this conduct,
One escapes the reach of Māra.
- 1.575 “Bodhisattvas’ conduct is without marks;
And by lucidly understanding the absence of marks,
One relies neither on marks,
Nor on their absence.
- 1.576 “Bodhisattvas abide in this knowledge
And perfectly accomplish this conduct.
Since they are without even the slightest form of conduct,
They are described as *free from conduct*.
- 1.577 “Bodhisattvas are always pure,
And fearless in their conduct.
Since they proceed with correct mindfulness, [F.114.b]
They are firmly grounded in this.”
- 1.578 The bodhisattva great being Noble Intellect then remarked to the Blessed One, “How wondrous, Blessed One! The various practices of sublime beings are extremely profound. They cannot be engaged in, even in the slightest, by those ordinary, childish beings who engage in conditioned practices that possess marks. Blessed One, no phenomenon at all can be included within this conduct. It is for this reason that this conduct is the sublime beings’ conduct of sameness. Blessed One, the conduct of sublime beings cannot be measured.”
- 1.579 At this point, the bodhisattva great being Noble Intellect praised the Thus-Gone One with the following verses:
- “O Great Hero, perfect Buddha,
You are unsurpassed, the Chief of Humans.
By displaying profound conduct,
You benefit the bodhisattvas.
- 1.580 “Blessed One, it would be difficult to fathom
The depths of your exalted eloquence.
Because your eloquence is limitless,
You are the supreme great being.

- 1.581 “O Dharma Lord, you settle all objections,
And with your genuine omniscience,
You teach the unsurpassed conduct
To the bodhisattvas.
- 1.582 “O Blessed One, you are able to explain
The skillful means of ceasing all conduct.
Transcending all forms of conduct
Is how intelligent people should proceed.
- 1.583 “O inconceivable Great Elephant,
The domain of your insight is limitless.
You are the Chief of Humans, O Omniscient One
Who reveals this sublime conduct.
- 1.584 “O Blessed Sage, you reveal
The unmoving conduct of a sage.
Since this conduct is unmoving,
It is called *unsurpassed conduct*.
- 1.585 “Great Hero, Great Sage,
Your accomplishments in past practice, [F.115.a]
Could not be equaled by anyone,
Even if they practiced for many eons.
- 1.586 “Bodhisattvas who hear this Dharma,
Even though they live in the world,
Will still not take long to obtain
The knowledge of all things.
- 1.587 “Because of our love for beings,
We will protect and uphold
This unsurpassed teaching
During the final age in the future.
- 1.588 “Having heard this teaching,
We will act and teach
For the sake of others
During the final age in the future.
- 1.589 “With this illumination of Dharma,
During the final age in the future,
We will immensely benefit
Those who search for the Dharma.

- 1.590 “We all make the pledge
That during the final age in the future,
We will provide protection and support
For all beings.
- 1.591 “We will constantly bear in mind,
During the final age in the future,
To venerate the oceanic buddha qualities,
And aspire to uphold the unsurpassed Dharma.
- 1.592 “Having become supreme beings
Steeped in the Dharma collection,
We aspire to uphold this Dharma gateway,
And guard it so that it long endures.
- 1.593 “We will make a commitment
To drink all the waters of the Dharma.
We shall then protect
This Dharma gateway.
- 1.594 “Having heard this teaching,
During the final age in the future,
May we become great beings
And uphold the genuine Dharma of the buddhas.
- 1.595 “Even at the cost of our lives,
We shall not abandon this unsurpassed teaching.
May we become upholders
Of this teaching of the genuine Dharma.
- 1.596 “As we uphold this Dharma,⁴³
May we never feel satiated
In our thirst to hear these profound
And definitive discourses.
- 1.597 “In future times,
We will teach this genuine Dharma
To all those who seek the teachings,
And thereby bring them joy.
- 1.598 “O inconceivable Master of Dharma,
You provide the greatest refuge.
Please compassionately grant your blessings,
So that we may come to uphold the Dharma.” [F.115.b]

- 1.599 The Blessed One responded to the bodhisattva great being Noble Intellect,
“Noble Intellect, excellent! It is excellent that, during the final age in the
future, you wish to don the great armor in order to protect and uphold this
Dharma teaching. In doing so, you will become no different from all the
bodhisattva great beings of the past, who, in superior locations, performed
veneration and service, cultivated roots of virtue, practiced pure conduct for
long periods, donned the great armor, and protected and upheld the Dharma
of all the blessed buddhas.”
- 1.600 The Blessed One then expressed this in verse:

“In the terrifying times of the future,
You should uphold this teaching.
You must reveal this teaching
In order to benefit beings.
- 1.601 “You must uphold this most exalted teaching
During the final age in the future;
For if beings hear this teaching,
They will be overjoyed.
- 1.602 “Since you will uphold this teaching
During the final age in the future,
I will explain this profound teaching.
It will be up to you to uphold it accordingly.
- 1.603 “When you hear the discourses that express the secret teachings,
Commit them to memory.
You will be free of all doubt
Concerning their meaning.
- 1.604 “When you hear the profound and definitive truth,
Commit it to memory.
You must uphold this Dharma treasury
In order to benefit beings.
- 1.605 “Offering the gift of Dharma,
You will universally benefit beings.
When they hear it,
Their bodies and minds will be filled with joy.
- 1.606 “You must perfectly uphold
Those discourses that concern
The principles of practicing
On the various bodhisattva paths.

- 1.607 “Thereby you will vastly liberate
An immeasurable number of beings.
There will be none within all the worlds
That you will be incapable of liberating.
- 1.608 “Because you will uphold this teaching,
You will benefit all worlds. [F.116.a]
Thus you will attain a great mass of merit.
For this reason, you must proceed.
- 1.609 “You must uphold the entirety of
The Dharma that I have taught here,
So that during the final age in the future,
You can explain it to wise people.
- 1.610 “Those who now or in the future
Uphold this teaching
Will be upholding the genuine Dharma
Of thousands of buddhas.
- 1.611 “You must protect this Dharma gateway
In order to benefit beings.
Then, during the final age in the future,
You will be of massive benefit.
- 1.612 “Those who uphold this teaching
During future times
Will not have attended and served
Only a single buddha.
- 1.613 “If, in the future,
Someone protects this teaching,
And then teaches it well,
They will have served many buddhas indeed.
- 1.614 “Those who do not doubt
This Dharma teaching in any way,
But protect it in the future,
Are indeed wise people.
- 1.615 “Those who don the boundless armor
And are victorious over opposing enemies
Will uphold this genuine Dharma
During the final age in the future.

- 1.616 “Those who rend the net of doubt
Concerning this genuine Dharma of the buddhas
Will be fearless when hearing the Dharma,
And will uphold this genuine Dharma.
- 1.617 “This being so, Noble Intellect, those noble sons or daughters who earnestly
seek the most exalted merit should, for the sake of the profound Dharma
during the final age in the future, don the armor and then uphold this
teaching, read it, recite it, and teach its meaning correctly to others.
- 1.618 “Moreover, Noble Intellect, I recall that at one time in the past, countless and
incalculable eons ago, a buddha called All-Illuminating appeared in the
world. He was a thus-gone one, a worthy one, a perfect buddha, learned and
virtuous, a well-gone one, a knower of the world, an unsurpassed being, a
charioteer who guides beings, a teacher of gods and humans, a blessed
buddha. [F.116.b] The eon was called Surpassing Excellence, and the world
was known as Immaculate. The earth was vast and beautiful, fashioned of
the seven precious substances. At that time, the four continents were equal
in size, each seventy thousand leagues square. There were sixty thousand
cities on each continent, and the size of each city was sixty leagues square.
Each city was surrounded by a perimeter fence, which was adorned with
turrets. Their gateways were beautiful and lovely to behold. They were
surrounded by a ring of the finest palm trees and adorned with many
hundreds of thousands of parks. Platforms and seats were situated
throughout the parks. They were filled with lakes, ponds, and waterfalls. The
paths between them and the steps leading into them were set with various
gems. The outlying areas were safe to traverse, and the surrounding moats
were lined by rows of various fragrant trees such as sandalwood and *tamāla*.
In each city lived a hundred billion people, all of whom were happy because
they had perfected the ten virtuous courses of action.
- 1.619 “The eon was called Surpassing Excellence because the Thus-Gone One
had appeared there for a period surpassing two hundred eons. Five hundred
thus-gone ones appeared sequentially in that eon, and each of their fields
was composed solely of the seven precious substances. After each of those
buddhas passed into *parinirvāṇa*, the genuine Dharma remained in that world
for ten thousand years each time. Each of the thus-gone ones that appeared
in that world had many assemblies of hearers and bodhisattvas. Within each
assembly, countless billions of bodhisattvas, [F.117.a] who had all entered
the path of the single vehicle, achieved the acceptance that phenomena are
unborn.
- 1.620

“During that eon, there was a universal monarch named Vīrasena, who had the seven precious possessions and ruled over the four continents. In Jambudvīpa at that time, there was a great city sixteen leagues in circumference, within which lived eight hundred billion people. They were happy, joyful, and wealthy, and had extensive resources. This great city was surrounded and adorned by seven rings of moats, seven types of trees aligned in rows, seven thoroughfares, seven flag-bearing towers, seven nets with bells, and one thousand parks, each of which was twenty leagues in size on each side. Each park had seven layers of fences and lattices, and they were beautified with various exquisite decorations and jewels. As such, they resembled the parks of the gods. Each park contained a hundred pools, whose embankments were made of beryl, with steps tiled with emerald and various gems. There were jeweled trees draped with hundreds of garlands of myriad flowers. Within the city was the royal palace, which measured seven leagues in circumference. It was constructed of pure gold and jewels. Its surface was adorned with jewels and draped with nets of beryl and wish-fulfilling gems. It was beautified by palm trees and surrounded by twenty pools. Its grounds were paved with pure gold and covered with gold latticework. Its bridges were studded with beryl and various gems. The paths and stairways were made solely of the finest gold. The pools were filled with blue, red, and white lotuses in bloom.

1.621 “This universal monarch had two thousand concubines and sixty thousand children. [F.117.b] One day, as the king was in one of his parks, frolicking and enjoying the five sense pleasures with his retinue, he thought to himself, ‘Sense pleasures are impermanent and quickly decay. Thus, I should surely search for the buddha qualities without any distraction. If I hear the Dharma and practice the teachings correctly, it will bring me lasting benefit and happiness.’ Immediately upon thinking this, a god suddenly appeared in the sky and addressed the king, saying, ‘Sir, this is excellent, excellent! At present, a thus-gone one called All-Illuminating has appeared in the world. He is teaching the Dharma that is virtuous in the beginning, middle, and end. Your Majesty, go swiftly before this thus-gone one and request the genuine Dharma. Thus, Your Majesty, you will receive lasting benefit and happiness. You will also actualize and perfect the buddha qualities.’

1.622 “The king heard what the god said and was overjoyed. So he went before the Thus-Gone One All-Illuminating, surrounded by his retinue and servants. There, he touched his head to his feet, prostrated, and said to that blessed one, ‘Blessed One, through what teaching can I gather skillful means concerning all phenomena and swiftly perfect pure conduct? I wish to engage in such practice.’

- 1.623 “When he had asked this question, that thus-gone one explained and taught extensively. Having heard these teachings, the king and his retinue abandoned all their enjoyments and luxuries, and they venerated and served that thus-gone one and his great assembly for twenty thousand years. They took ordination in the teachings of the Thus-Gone One All-Illuminating and practiced the genuine Dharma. [F.118.a] Due to hearing the Dharma, they were able to obtain the virtuous roots of taking up the Dharma, the virtuous roots of upholding the Dharma, and the virtuous roots of teaching the Dharma. Whatever teachings they had heard, they completely remembered without forgetting, and with immeasurable qualities they persevered diligently in cultivation, vowing that ‘We aspire to uphold the genuine Dharma teachings of the thus-gone ones of the three times, and to teach them variously to all beings.’
- 1.624 “Having made such an aspiration, they served and venerated every thus-gone one who appeared in the Surpassing Excellence eon, and they upheld the genuine Dharma teachings that those thus-gone ones taught in the beginning, middle, and end. Thus, they converted and ripened four hundred trillion beings and set them on course for unsurpassed, perfect, and complete awakening. They tamed countless beings with skillful means and established them in the vehicles of the hearers and solitary buddhas. The final buddha to appear in that eon was called Flash of Lightning. The monk Vīrasena heard the genuine Dharma from the Thus-Gone One Flash of Lightning and attained the acceptance that phenomena are unborn.
- 1.625 “The Thus-Gone One Flash of Lightning prophesied, ‘Vīrasena, in the future, you will serve and venerate countless thousands of blessed buddhas and uphold the genuine Dharma teachings that they give throughout the three times. You will benefit countless beings, establishing trillions of beings in unsurpassed and perfect awakening, [F.118.b] and countless beings in the vehicle of the hearers. After a countless eon, you will fully awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood and be called the Thus-Gone One Victorious King of the Qualities of Boundless Luminous Diligence. Your buddha field will manifest from the countless pure qualities that you will have accumulated. Therefore, it will be filled with people, who will be joyful and prosperous. You will have a large assembly of hearers and bodhisattvas. The lifespan of that thus-gone one will be five lesser eons. Following your *parinirvāṇa*, your genuine Dharma teachings will remain for one lesser eon,⁴⁴ and they will be upheld by gods and humans. The *stūpas* containing your relics will be placed throughout the entire buddha field.’
- 1.626 “Therefore, Noble Intellect, bodhisattva great beings should respectfully uphold and cultivate such pure and profound teachings and adorn their bodies with the jewelry of the Dharma. If they are adorned with the Dharma,

they will achieve the sturdy and powerful body of a thus-gone one, which is made of vajra. Even if all the beings in the great trichiliocosm were to fight with all their strength to destroy such an extremely sturdy body, they would be unsuccessful. Among all the worlds of gods, humans, and asuras, there will be none who can oppose or contradict their display of the illumination of Dharma. Any being who takes up, reads, recites, or diligently accomplishes this profound teaching will be able to take birth in the high caste of their choice, and so forth, all the way up to taking their seat beneath the tree of awakening. [F.119.a] At that point, they will even reach the level of buddhahood and obtain sublime renown. They will not associate with other paths and, since not even the names of brahmins or non-Buddhists will exist, what need we say about others with negative views and deviant pursuits? Since not even the words *nonvirtuous phenomena* will exist, how could anyone create roots of nonvirtue? From their fingers and toes, light will stream forth, illuminating immeasurable worlds. Every being whose body it touches will achieve happiness and actualize unsurpassed, perfect, and complete awakening.

1.627 “Therefore, Noble Intellect, those bodhisattva great beings who diligently practice my teachings will achieve such noble qualities. If I attempted to describe them completely, I would never reach the end of it.”

1.628 The Blessed One then said to the bodhisattva great being Anantamati, “Anantamati, those who abide on this bodhisattva path will practice this pure and profound teaching. Then, as they come to accord with emptiness and quiescence, they will attain the illumination of Dharma. Through the power of the illumination of Dharma, they will see the essence of all phenomena to be without difference. Because they have seen that the essence of phenomena is without difference, their view will be pure. Because their view is pure, they will not have views in terms of phenomena, nor will they have views that phenomena are without essential nature. Having purified views about phenomena, there will be no purity, no one who is purified, and no time of purification; and therefore, they will be able to attain the domain of pure wisdom. They will see that the realm of all phenomena is not a realm, nor is it a nonrealm. [F.119.b] Having purified the view of a realm, they will abandon notions of the various natures of different realms. Because they have abandoned notions of any nature, they will be able to realize the secret statements concerning the principle of realms, and will completely understand that various phenomena are not realms. Because in this way they see the realm of phenomena to be indivisible, indestructible, and unchanging, they will become skilled in the principle of the realm of all phenomena. Through such skill, they will be able to completely realize the principle of the realm of phenomena. Through the strength of absorption,

they will be able to engage various aspects of the realm of phenomena. When observing such conduct, through their skill regarding all phenomena, they will not abide in or cling to any phenomenon. Because they are without clinging, they will give various teachings that accord with the principle of the realm of all phenomena. Through the power of absorption, they will be able to produce all the forms of concentration, liberation, absorption, and equipoise. They will sport in the supernatural powers, be able to change one into many and many into one, fly freely, and pass through mountains and walls without impediment. They will become skilled in understanding the combinations of the four elements, without abiding in the elements. They will realize that all elements combine with the space element, but will have no clinging or attachment to the element of space. Because they are knowledgeable and skilled in the combination of the elements, they will cultivate all the elements with skillful means. Having cultivated them, they will be able to completely resolve the water element, such that they could cause smoke to rise from the water element, or cause it to burst into flames, or cause smoke [F.120.a] and flames to blaze up within it. Through the process of displaying myriad such things, they will be of great benefit to beings. As they are stable in the skillful means of the principle of the realm of phenomena without any wavering, they will be capable of taking birth within any buddha field, according to their wishes. Thus, they have blocked birth into the womb in all their existences. Rather, assuming an emanated body, they will constantly behold all the thus-gone ones in all the worlds throughout the ten directions. They will know the unique features of those thus-gone ones and be able to identify their name, caste, retinue, and Dharma teachings.”

1.629 At that time, there was another bodhisattva great being within the assembly named Boundless Victor, who came forth and asked the Blessed One, “Blessed One, in what sort of phenomenon must a bodhisattva great being abide in order to attain these supreme qualities of which the Blessed One has spoken?”

1.630 The Blessed One answered the bodhisattva great being Boundless Victor, saying, “A bodhisattva great being who does not abide in any phenomenon at all will attain these supreme qualities of which I have spoken. Boundless Victor, if bodhisattva great beings abide in form, feeling, perception, formation, or consciousness; or if they abide in the earth, water, fire, wind, or space elements; or if they abide in the desire, form, or formless realms, [F.120.b] then I do not declare that they will gain such qualities as are taught in this discourse. If bodhisattva great beings do not abide in any phenomenon, neither engaging with nor disengaging from it, I declare that they will attain a boundless ocean of such qualities. Why is this? Because for

bodhisattva great beings there are no phenomena at all to apprehend or abide in. Thus, without any engagement with or disengagement from even the slightest phenomenon, they abide in the principle of phenomena without moving. Why is this? It is because, for bodhisattva great beings, there is no abiding and no movement. Since they do not move, for them there is neither high nor low. Because they are without high or low, they abandon the high and do not abide in the low. Because they do not abide, it is said that they dwell in the virtuous abode. Those who dwell in the virtuous abode abide nowhere whatsoever. Abiding nowhere whatsoever, they do not dwell in any abode. Bodhisattva great beings do not establish or accumulate any phenomena. For them there are no abodes, no abiding, no origination, and no action. Why is this? Abodes cannot be apprehended. With no abodes, there is no conceptualization. With no conceptualization, they abide in the realm of phenomena, the unmoving abode. With no abodes, there can be no abiding. Because they have no dwelling in or grasping toward abodes, this is called *abiding excellently*.

1.631 “Boundless Victor, regarding how bodhisattva great beings abide in the principle of phenomena, having determined non-abiding in this way, [F.121.a] they abide in the absence of abodes. Thereby they see all phenomena without conceptualization and abide in nonconceptual conduct. Through such conduct, they see all phenomena to be without movement, and so they are in accord with proper abiding, nonmoving, and nongrasping.”

1.632 The Blessed One then expressed this in verse:

“Bodhisattvas with genuine mindfulness
Excellently contemplate the truth
And do not abide in phenomena.
Thus, they are called wise.

1.633 “There are no phenomena whatsoever
That can be established.
Because they establish nothing,
They proceed fearlessly.

1.634 “They do not establish various forms,
Nor do they establish various feelings.
The same is true for perception,
Formation, and consciousness.

1.635 “They do not abide in the aggregates,
Elements, or sense sources.
Whether in abodes or non-abodes,

- They never abide anywhere.
- 1.636 “They do not abide in the earth element,
Nor do they abide in the water element.
Nor do they ever abide in
The fire or wind elements.
- 1.637 “They do not abide in the desire realm,
The form realm, or the formless realm.
Because they have attained the absence of establishment,
They do not abide in the three realms.
- 1.638 “Furthermore, in the space element
They do not abide at all.
Because they have nowhere to abide,
They proceed according to sameness.
- 1.639 “Thus, there are no phenomena at all
In which to abide.
Those who have nowhere to abide
Have sublime intelligence.
- 1.640 “Sublime intelligence has nowhere to abide,
Abiding excellently by non-abiding.
Those who attain such abiding
Abide in the realm of phenomena.
- 1.641 “Because they accord with non-abiding,
They always abide excellently.
Without abiding or relying, [F.121.b]
They will abide in the Dharma.
- 1.642 “If nonreliance is achieved,
One is always unmoving.
Without engagement or disengagement,
One abides in sameness.
- 1.643 “Those who abide in the Dharma in this way
Are called heroes.
There is no *higher* among all phenomena.
There is no *lower* among all phenomena.
- 1.644 “By not moving in this fashion,
They abide excellently in the realm of phenomena.
Because they abide without moving,

- They attain the unsurpassed form of abiding.
- 1.645 “Those who accord with non-abiding abiding
Are called heroes.
They do not abide in abodes,
Yet they do not move from their abodes.
- 1.646 “By accomplishing the absence of abodes,
They attain the state of excellent abiding.
They do not move at all
From either abodes or non-abodes.
- 1.647 “Because they abide in the unmoving abode,
They are called unmoving.
If one abides in the unmoving abode,
One will abide in nothing at all.
- 1.648 “By not thinking in terms of abodes and non-abodes,
They abide constantly without conceptualization.
Because they do not abide in abodes,
There is no movement whatsoever.
- 1.649 “Unmoved from their abodes, they are entirely without abiding.
If they attain this non-abiding abode,
They do not move from either abodes or non-abodes.
Not moving from their abodes, they abide excellently in their abodes.
- 1.650 “Abiding in the excellent abodes,
They abide without anywhere to abide.
They are able to see all phenomena
And abide in the abode that accords with the Dharma.
- 1.651 “By thus seeing all phenomena,
They do not abide in their multiplicity.
Without abiding in non-abiding,
They skillfully abide in phenomena.
- 1.652 “When one abides constantly in phenomena,
One will have no concepts whatsoever.
One who abandons concepts
Is thus to be called unmoving.
- 1.653 “If one can abide without moving,
Without conceptualizing any conduct, and
Abandoning both abodes and non-abodes,

One can be known as one who investigates.

- 1.654 “If one can investigate without moving⁴⁵
The absence of all movement
And the eternal sameness of all phenomena,
One should proceed in this fashion. [F.122.a]
- 1.655 “According with proper abiding,
And remaining properly unmoving,
Those who attain the unmoving abode,
Will constantly abide in no abode.”
- 1.656 Then the bodhisattva great being Anantamati said to the Blessed One,
“Blessed One, it is truly amazing how you are able to establish all the
bodhisattva great beings in the principle of Dharma, in which there is no
bondage and no liberation. Blessed One, for those bodhisattva great beings
who have been skillfully established in the principle of Dharma, with regard
to even the slightest phenomenon, they neither accord nor do not accord
with it. They are neither involved nor uninvolved with it. They neither grasp
nor do not grasp at it. They neither rely nor do not rely upon it. They neither
crave nor abandon craving for it. They neither are angry nor abandon anger
at it. Blessed One, even when others respectfully venerate bodhisattva great
beings who are skilled in the principle of Dharma, they will not develop
attached craving. If others slander or harm them, they will not develop
aggression. Since they do not have a variety of notions, and because they
have abandoned all views regarding phenomena, they do not apprehend
any phenomenon as either associated with or dissociated from any other
phenomenon. Thus, because they transcend association and dissociation,
they abandon notions of association and dissociation, and they completely
understand all notions of association and dissociation. As they transcend
such understanding, they do not engage in associating with even the
slightest phenomenon, whether advancing, retreating, proceeding
somewhere, or proceeding nowhere. [F.122.b] Since they have no deluded
ideas concerning the principle of all phenomena, and do not grasp
anywhere, they employ skillful means so as not to contradict the nature of
phenomena. Blessed One, when bodhisattva great beings observe all
phenomena in this fashion, they skillfully reveal the principle of the realm of
phenomena, and thus swiftly perfect all the buddha qualities.”
- 1.657 Then the Blessed One addressed the bodhisattva great being Anantamati,
saying, “Anantamati, when bodhisattva great beings do not establish or
abide in the buddha qualities, they see that in the buddha qualities there is
no establishment and no place to abide, and they are also without superior
abiding or pervasive abiding. Because they see the buddha qualities as

abiding without movement, without entering into saṃsāra, and without changing, they abide in accordance with the realm of phenomena. Thus, they are said to be skilled in establishing the principle of the realm of phenomena. Anantamati, with regard to the buddha qualities, bodhisattva great beings do not abide or non-abide in them. They are without superior abiding or pervasive abiding, or abodes or non-abodes. They have no movement, no conceptualization, no superior conceptualization, and no pervasive conceptualization, and thus it is said that they skillfully establish the principle of the realm of all phenomena.

1.658 “Anantamati, [F.123.a] bodhisattva great beings do not see any phenomenon that can be established. Nor do they see any abode of all phenomena to supremely establish. They are without any conceptualization, superior conceptualization, or pervasive conceptualization, and thus they are said to be skilled in establishing the principle of the realm of all phenomena. Anantamati, bodhisattva great beings do not see any phenomenon to label as *abiding* or *going*. They are without any such conceptualization, superior conceptualization, or pervasive conceptualization. They see all phenomena as being pure like space, luminously apparent, and free from afflictions. Because they thus illuminate all phenomena, they are said to have attained the skill in the principle of the realm of all phenomena to observe the realm of phenomena without engaging in establishment. Why is this? Because they do not establish anything whatsoever concerning the realm of phenomena. For example, the elements of space and wind have no abodes; they cannot be seen and cannot be established anywhere. They are not supported anywhere and cannot be pointed out. Likewise, the realm of phenomena has no place of entry, no place that can be seen, no place that can be established, no place that can provide support, nothing that can be understood, and nothing that can be shown. Because bodhisattva great beings have nothing that can be described, they abide in accord with the realm of suchness.

1.659 “Anantamati, the realm of all phenomena is a realm that is without birth, without life-force, without aging, without death, without agitation, without dullness, and without description. Therefore, it is called the realm of phenomena. Because it is an unchanging realm, it is called the realm of phenomena. [F.123.b] The realm of phenomena pervades all abodes. Anantamati, in the realm of phenomena, there is no going and no destination. Lacking any destination, one is said to abide in accord with the realm of phenomena. There are no abodes in the suchness of the realm of phenomena, nor are there any non-abodes. Why is this? Because the suchness of the realm of phenomena and the nature of suchness are nonexistent.

1.660

“Anantamati, when bodhisattva great beings hear this teaching of mine, they will attain the boundless illumination of the great Dharma that sees the principle of the realm of all phenomena. With the illumination of Dharma, they will attain the acceptance that phenomena are unborn, and they will quickly be able to perfect the ten powers and eighteen unique qualities of a thus-gone one, along with all the buddha qualities. In order to ripen vast roots of virtue and distinctive accumulations for all beings, and in order to ensure the continuity of the lineage of the Thus-Gone One, they will swiftly proceed to the site of awakening, turn the wheel of Dharma, overpower the abodes of Māra, defeat contrarian teachers, roar the great lion’s roar of sublime beings, teach the sublime Dharma to all beings, correctly liberate them according to their hopes, aspirations, and intentions, and thus cause them all to proceed toward unsurpassed, perfect, and complete awakening.”

1.661 The Blessed One then expressed this in verse:

“Because all bodhisattvas
Do not abide in any phenomenon,
They establish nothing
Within the buddha qualities.

1.662 “Because all bodhisattvas
Establish nothing,
They proceed fearlessly
Within the buddha qualities. [F.124.a]

1.663 “Because all bodhisattvas
See that all the buddha qualities
Have no abiding and no abodes,
They establish them well.

1.664 “Because all bodhisattvas
See phenomena
Without abiding in any abodes,
They neither abide nor disengage.

1.665 “Because all bodhisattvas
See phenomena as non-abiding,
They neither waver from
Nor seek the buddha qualities.

1.666 “Because all bodhisattvas
See phenomena as undifferentiated,
They neither stray from the buddha qualities,
Nor do they seek them out.

- 1.667 “Because all bodhisattvas
See phenomena in this way,
They develop skill in phenomena,
Abiding in skillful means.
- 1.668 “Because all bodhisattvas always see sameness,
They do not abide in the buddha qualities, nor do they not abide.
They are constantly without any abode,
Yet they do not lack abodes.
- 1.669 “They never conceptualize,
Yet it is not the case that they do not conceptualize.
All myriad concepts
Are eternally nonexistent.
- 1.670 “Because all bodhisattvas
Are in accord with non-abiding,
They are unmoved
In all times and abodes.
- 1.671 “When all bodhisattvas
Abide in sameness
In the principle of phenomena,
This is called *excellently abiding*.
- 1.672 “When all bodhisattvas
Avoid seeing any phenomenon
In the principle of phenomena,
This is abiding in sameness.
- 1.673 “All bodhisattvas can see that all phenomena
Have no abodes, yet are also not separate from abodes.
They attain the unmoving state,
And are without any reliances.⁴⁶ [F.124.b]
- 1.674 “Because all bodhisattvas are deeply learned in
The principle of all phenomena, they abide in skillful means.
Because they abide in non-abiding,
They are called *bodhisattvas*.
- 1.675 “All bodhisattvas avoid abiding in the conceptualization
That phenomena can be said to come or go, even in the slightest.
At that time, they dwell perfectly
In the principle of phenomena.

- 1.676 “Because all bodhisattvas abide in myriad ways
In the principle of phenomena,
They are able to produce the boundless
Illumination of the great Dharma.
- 1.677 “With this illumination of Dharma they abide in the view of sameness,
And so they perceive all phenomena and the principle of all phenomena
To be pure like space, and like a shadow or a reflection—
Equal and undefiled.
- 1.678 “Even though all bodhisattvas
Realize views,
They are also without realization,
And so they abandon thoughts of any inherent nature.
- 1.679 “Because all bodhisattvas
Investigate in this manner,
They fully abide
In the principle of all phenomena.
- 1.680 “Thus, they diligently cultivate stability
In the realm of phenomena,
And this is called skillful means
In the principle of the realm of phenomena.
- 1.681 “Because all bodhisattvas
Avoid abiding in the realm of phenomena,
They view the realm of all phenomena
As ultimately nonexistent.
- 1.682 “Because all bodhisattvas definitively ascertain the realm of phenomena,
They see all phenomena as like the elements of space and wind—
Unestablished and all-pervasive.
The realm of phenomena likewise pervades everything.
- 1.683 “The realm of phenomena is hard to comprehend,
And so it cannot be described.
All intelligent beings [F.125.a] do not rely upon it.
The indescribable realm is known as the realm of phenomena.
- 1.684 “To have no abode is itself called abiding.
In the realm of phenomena, there is no birth,
No life-force, no aging,
No death, no dullness, and no escape.

- 1.685 “The realm of phenomena is hard to comprehend;
It neither comes nor goes.
The realm of phenomena is not the aggregates,
Not the elements, and not the sense sources.
- 1.686 “It is also not separate from abodes,
And is without any movement.
The reality of the realm of phenomena
Lacks all inherent existence.
- 1.687 “Since all bodhisattvas
Fully understand in this way
The realm of phenomena, which is so hard to comprehend,
They attain the illumination of Dharma.
- 1.688 “Due to that, they will proceed
To the site of awakening,
Where they will end all doubts
About the buddha qualities.
- 1.689 “Then, without being moved,
With this illumination of the great Dharma,
They will lead all sentient beings
To achieve great happiness.
- 1.690 “Anantamati, when bodhisattva great beings diligently practice such a profound Dharma, they will attain such a great illumination of Dharma; and through that insight, they will proceed toward unsurpassed, perfect, and complete awakening. [B6]
- 1.691 “Moreover, Anantamati, I remember that two countless eons ago, a buddha called King of the Lunar Lamp appeared in the world. He was a thus-gone one, a worthy one, a perfect buddha, learned and virtuous, a well-gone one, a knower of the world, an unsurpassed being, a charioteer who guides beings, a teacher of gods and humans, a blessed buddha. The eon was called Ambrosia, and the world was called Purifying. [F.125.b] The field of that buddha was made of crystal, which constantly radiated light that illuminated the entire world. Any being who was touched by this light became beautiful and lovely in appearance, which is why the world was called Purifying. Apart from this, there were no other names for towns or villages. The intersections were wondrously decorated with golden ropes around the perimeters, and the distance between each intersection was half a league. Between all the roads were rows of eighty-four shining jeweled columns and palm trees. Additionally, there were four pools surrounded by embankments.

The people there lived like gods, in mansions made of the seven precious substances, which were draped with nets, hung with silken tassels, and beautified with flowers. The beings of this world were tranquil and happy, having already perfected the path of the ten virtuous actions. They had gorgeous appearances and long lives, with minimal attachment, aggression, and ignorance. They were easy to awaken, and they broadly understood phenomena, with little need for skillful means. This thus-gone one's lifespan reached a hundred billion years. After his *parinirvāṇa*, his genuine Dharma teachings remained in the world for ten million years. He taught his assembly the Dharma on ten occasions. In each assembly were twenty trillion hearers on the level of training. The assembly of bodhisattvas was countless, and all engaged in the single vehicle.

1.692 “Anantamati, the Thus-Gone One King of the Lunar Lamp's precious tree of awakening was fifty leagues in circumference, and its height was a hundred leagues. Its roots were made of coral, its trunk of beryl, its branches of gold, and its leaves of emerald. [F.126.a] The site of his awakening was a hundred leagues square. Its base was surrounded by a fence and encircled by a ring of beautiful palm trees, which were draped and adorned with nets of golden bells and jewels. His seat of great awakening was three leagues in height, and upon it soft and fine cushions were laid. It was draped beautifully with hundreds of thousands of the finest fabrics and lined around the perimeter with a row of twenty hanging banners.

1.693 “At the time when the Thus-Gone One King of the Lunar Lamp sat on this seat and fully awakened to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood, that world was devoid of the three lower realms, and even the words *three lower realms* did not exist. There were no unfree states, and even the words *unfree states* did not exist. The Thus-Gone One King of the Lunar Lamp continuously displayed emanated bodies in all the worlds, and thus turned the wheel of Dharma.

1.694 “Anantamati, the Thus-Gone One King of the Lunar Lamp was attended by two bodhisattvas. One was named Cloud Voice. The other was named Boundless Voice. The two bodhisattvas asked that thus-gone one, ‘Blessed One, how do bodhisattva great beings attain the skillful means of establishing the principle of all phenomena?’

1.695 “At that moment, that thus-gone one wished to cause all the bodhisattva great beings to obtain the skillful means of establishing the principle of all phenomena, so he extensively explained these teachings to the two bodhisattvas. When the bodhisattva great beings heard this teaching, they achieved the skillful means of establishing the principle of all phenomena. [F.126.b] For twenty thousand years following this, the two bodhisattvas did not sleep; they had no thoughts of desire, anger, or ill will; they had no

thoughts of food or rest; they had no conditions of illness, and no thoughts of seeking medicine and so on; and they took no delight in worldly spectacles, chatter, or amusements. Instead, they listened one-pointedly to the teachings of that thus-gone one and, without rising from their seats, they attained the acceptance that phenomena are unborn.

1.696 “That thus-gone one then asked, ‘Noble sons, this is the way to skillfully establish the principle of all phenomena. Is this what you now seek?’

1.697 “The two bodhisattvas responded, ‘Blessed One, we do not see that there exists even the phrase *skillfully establishing the principle of all phenomena*, nor do we see that there exists a Dharma teaching on skillfully establishing the principle of all phenomena, much less the actual skillful establishment of the principle of all phenomena. Blessed One, we also do not apprehend any phenomenon, nor do we apprehend the establishment of any phenomenon, as there is no abiding or non-abiding within all phenomena. Blessed One, as we see it, it would have been better to ask, ‘This is the way to skillfully establish the principle of all phenomena. Do you seek it, or do you not seek it?’ Blessed One, we do not see anyone who seeks such skillful means for establishing the principle of all phenomena. We also do not see anyone who skillfully establishes the principle of phenomena or the principle of all phenomena, whether internally, externally, or in between. [F.127.a] We also do not see any principle of phenomena, or of all phenomena, that can be skillfully established, whether internally, externally, or in between. Blessed One, we do not even in the slightest see any skillful establishment of a principle of phenomena whether internal, external, or in between, that could be pursued or relied upon. Blessed One, if there are no phenomena that can be pursued or relied upon, how could we establish them? Blessed One, we do not see any basis for establishment, whether in the past, present, or future. Blessed One, if there is not any basis for establishment, where could we establish anything? Blessed One, since nothing is established, one accords with neither abiding nor non-abiding, and thus one accords with the unceasing and unborn. Blessed One, given that we do not see our minds, intellects, or consciousnesses to be born or to cease from anything, by anything, in any place, or at any time, how can there be talk of skillfully establishing the principle of all phenomena with the mind, intellect, or consciousness?’

1.698 “Anantamati, when these two bodhisattvas said this in the presence of that thus-gone one, one thousand bodhisattvas gained the acceptance that phenomena are unborn. [F.127.b] Ten billion bodhisattvas developed the mind directed toward unsurpassed, perfect, and complete awakening.

1.699

“Then the Thus-Gone One King of the Lunar Lamp said, ‘Noble sons, by abiding nowhere, due to the absence of abiding, you abide in the skillful establishment of the principle of all phenomena. Noble sons, all phenomena are just like this. Because the Thus-Gone One conforms with the conventional ways of the world, he displays himself fully realizing unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood. If the Thus-Gone One did not conform with the conventional ways of the world, he would not make a display of fully awakening to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood. Noble sons, phenomena have no abode, yet they are not without any abode. All terms such as *abiding* and *non-abiding* follow worldly customs. However, in worldly customs there are no phenomena that can be born or understood. Therefore, noble sons, you should be even more diligent in swiftly attaining freedom from all phenomena.’

1.700 “When the two bodhisattvas heard this from that thus-gone one, they rose up into the sky and praised that thus-gone one with the following verses:

“ ‘The Dharma King is inconceivable,
And has discovered the unprecedented Dharma.
O Omniscient Chief of Humans,
Your buddha qualities are unsurpassed.

1.701 “ ‘Because the Dharma is unsurpassed,
There is no equal to the Thus-Gone One.
Today we have obtained the acceptance
That all phenomena are unborn.

1.702 “ ‘We never conceptualize
Either birth or nonbirth.
Similarly, we do not think
That all is without conceptualization.

1.703 “ ‘O Dharma King, Great Sage,
Your qualities are beyond expression or thought.
Please teach the pure Dharma, [F.128.a]
Which brings joy to your assemblies.

1.704 “ ‘Desiring to know the extent
Of the supreme qualities of the buddha,
One could investigate for immeasurable eons,
And still be unable to see their limit.

1.705 “ ‘Because such qualities are boundless,
They are extraordinary and unsurpassed.
As phenomena are unborn,

- We do not conceptualize them.
- 1.706 “ ‘Since we have never committed downfalls
Related to the buddha qualities,
We do not wonder how to achieve
Many roots of virtue.
- 1.707 “ ‘Because phenomena are indescribable,
Unborn, and markless,
We also now all realize
The acceptance of marklessness.
- 1.708 “ ‘Since the acceptance we have gained today
Will never be reversed,
We feel great delight
In omniscience.
- 1.709 “ ‘Since we do not doubt at all
The Dharma of the Thus-Gone One,
We have abandoned our many doubts
Concerning all phenomena.
- 1.710 “ ‘Though we have today gained acceptance
Within the unsurpassed buddha qualities,
We do not conceptualize it;
Yet neither are we without concepts.’
- 1.711 “Anantamati, once the two bodhisattvas spoke these verses of praise, they circumambulated the Thus-Gone One King of the Lunar Lamp three times to the right, tossing divine flowers and sandalwood powder toward that thus-gone one. That thus-gone one then prophesied, ‘After twenty thousand eons, you will fully awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood.’ The two bodhisattvas were overjoyed upon hearing that thus-gone one’s prophecy. They directed their minds one-pointedly toward that thus-gone one and entered into states of concentration whereby they achieved mastery over the play of miracles, such as appearing and disappearing freely, and emitting smoke, flames, and light. Moreover, they revealed the genuine Dharma and taught it to beings, [F.128.b] such that two hundred forty million gods and humans began pursuing unsurpassed, perfect, and complete awakening. The two bodhisattvas diligently practiced pure conduct for the rest of their lives, and they maintained and upheld the genuine Dharma taught during the period of that thus-gone one’s teaching and in the final period of the genuine Dharma. Moreover, during that period they pursued unsurpassed and perfect awakening until they had guided forty million

beings. The two bodhisattvas successively served and venerated thousands of buddhas, upholding every absorption and genuine Dharma of those thus-gone ones without exception. After twenty thousand eons, they encountered the turning of the wheel of Dharma by the Thus-Gone One Ratnaketu, whereupon they guided immeasurable beings and ripened them, setting them on the path to pursue unsurpassed, perfect, and complete awakening.

1.712 “The Thus-Gone One Ratnaketu’s buddha field was extraordinarily pure. Not even the name of hearers was known; thus, it was filled exclusively with bodhisattvas held back by a single birth. When the Thus-Gone One Ratnaketu was passing into *parinirvāṇa*, he prophesied, ‘After I pass into parinirvāṇa, the bodhisattva Cloud Voice will fully awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood. He will be known as the Thus-Gone One King of the Solar Lamp. His buddha field will be completely adorned, a gathering of immeasurable, boundless qualities. It will be filled with abundant assemblies of bodhisattvas and hearers. After the Thus-Gone One King of the Solar Lamp passes into parinirvāṇa, [F.129.a] the bodhisattva Boundless Voice will fully awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood.’

1.713 “Anantamati, because in this Dharma teaching there is nothing to be apprehended or expressed, it is indescribable, unborn, and unceasing. Thus, bodhisattva great beings should practice it correctly with diligence. If there are bodhisattvas who abide in the skillful means of establishing the principle of all phenomena, then through the absence of anything to be apprehended, they will obtain the acceptance that phenomena are unborn. Therefore, they will perfect the buddha qualities, become adorned with limitless qualities, and proceed toward unsurpassed, perfect, and complete awakening. Anantamati, I have never taught the bodhisattva great beings that, apart from this Dharma, there exists any other Dharma by which they can swiftly accomplish omniscient insight. Should anyone diligently practice this unborn, unceasing, and profound teaching of emptiness, they will swiftly attain skill in the principle of the realm of phenomena of bodhisattvas, as well as *dhāraṇī*, abundant eloquence, and unsurpassed skill in gathering and transforming beings. They will be praised by the blessed ones and adorned with the ornaments of Dharma. They will practice perfect generosity, pure discipline, pure patience, unsurpassed diligence, nonobjective concentration, and great insight, and so they will proceed toward unsurpassed, perfect, and complete awakening. They will become the greatest of the great and swiftly gain the name *Omniscient One*. Coming to sit at the site of awakening, they will be requested to turn the wheel of Dharma by the Four Great Kings [F.129.b] bearing parasols, whereupon they will bring great insight to gods and humans, and set them on the path to unsurpassed, perfect, and complete awakening.

1.714 “Moreover, Anantamati, those bodhisattva great beings who diligently practice the absorption of the *oceanic seal of all phenomena* will see all phenomena as equivalent to the realm of phenomena. When they see in this way, they will diligently practice without seeing all phenomena as the realm of phenomena, and without seeing the realm of phenomena as phenomena. With skill in seeing all phenomena as compounds of various elements, they have no grasping toward, and are unmoved by, phenomena as compounds of various elements; nor do they grasp at or conceptualize this skill in seeing all phenomena as compounds of various elements. Within the compounding of a single phenomenon, they can see the compounding of all phenomena. Within the compounding of all phenomena, they can see the compounding of a single phenomenon. Yet they do not approach the compounding of all phenomena as the compounding of a single phenomenon, nor do they approach the compounding of a single phenomenon as the compounding of all phenomena.

1.715 “Because they fully understand a single phenomenon, they will also fully understand all phenomena; because they understand all phenomena, they will also understand the abodes of each individual phenomenon that can be cognized. However, they do not approach individual phenomena through multiple phenomena. By fully understanding the compounding of the appropriated aggregates, they will not cling to the essential characteristics of the various appropriated aggregates as being either conditioned or unconditioned. When bodhisattva great beings practice in this way, they will fully understand those phenomena that arise from the compounding of many causes and conditions and that are created from the compounding of many causes and conditions. [F.130.a] They will also fully understand and be free from grasping toward phenomena compounded from causes and conditions that arise in accord with various diverse natures. As they accordingly understand the characteristics by which all phenomena are designated, they will also be able to understand them, whether through marks or their lack of marks. They understand the divisions of the elements, as well as the divisions of the essential marks of the various elements. They understand how to identify causes, and they do not utilize afflictive states to approach or pursue the various phenomena that arise via dependent origination. They understand how supramundane and mundane phenomena are not mutually contradictory. They also understand all supramundane and mundane phenomena, as well as the seal of worldly marks. Through a single Dharma gateway, they will master all Dharma gateways; and through many Dharma gateways, they will master a single Dharma gateway. They will not approach a single Dharma gateway through

all Dharma gateways, nor will they approach all Dharma gateways through a single Dharma gateway. In this manner, they will be able to purify all Dharma gateways.

1.716 “Anantamati, those bodhisattva great beings who diligently practice this teaching will understand the single taste of the nature of all phenomena through a single instruction that teaches a single statement related to the single principle. Thereby, they will undeniably, and in the correct manner, have no contention regarding any phenomenon and so they will proceed to complete disengagement. Not engaging in contradiction, they will be able to extol this Dharma and teach it correctly within a large assembly. As they diligently practice the teachings, they will achieve the absorption of the *oceanic seal of all phenomena*. By practicing thus, [F.130.b] whether there is dispute or not, they will pacify everyone, and abide correctly. Accordingly, they will eliminate all pride and carelessness. They will flawlessly retain definitive explanations. They will understand various names and words. They will diligently and skillfully practice the principle of the realm of phenomena. They will contemplate the various Dharma gateways from a state of perfect tranquility. By knowing how certain phenomena accord with, or do not accord with, other phenomena, they will be able to employ skillful means to definitively ascertain the truth and dwell in pure thought.

1.717 “Anantamati, those bodhisattva great beings who thus abide in this Dharma gateway will obtain the absorption of the *oceanic seal of all phenomena* with little practice. Then, due to the immeasurable absorption of the *oceanic seal of all phenomena*, they will proceed to unsurpassed, perfect, and complete awakening.”

1.718 The Blessed One then expressed this in verse:

“See how all phenomena
Pervade the realm of phenomena.
Since phenomena and the realm of phenomena are the same,
Their principles are identical as well.

1.719 “See also how the realm of phenomena
Pervades phenomena.
Since the realm of phenomena and phenomena are the same,
Their principles are identical as well.

1.720 “Do not investigate all phenomena
As belonging to the realm of phenomena.
Yet do not regard phenomena
As separate from the realm of phenomena.

1.721 “Do not investigate the realm of phenomena

- As being within all phenomena.
Yet do not consider the realm of phenomena
Separate from phenomena themselves.
- 1.722 “By understanding the various elements
And the various natures of the realm of phenomena
And the compounding of all phenomena,
You skillfully abide nowhere.
- 1.723 “At all times and places,
Various natures combine and compound,
With no abiding, no basis,
And nothing to be appropriated. [F.131.a]
- 1.724 “The compounding of different natures
Is neither conceptualized nor not conceptualized.
When both of these are completely absent,
Intelligent ones adopt the view of sameness.
- 1.725 “When you understand one compound,
You will understand many compounds.
When you understand many compounds,
You will also understand one compound.
- 1.726 “Compounds, noncompounds,
A single nature, and different natures—
Do not grasp or conceptualize them;
Be without grasping or attachment.
- 1.727 “Realizing all phenomena,
And that there is no compounding in these phenomena,
You should not think of compounding;
Be without grasping or attachment.
- 1.728 “Realizing all the varieties
Of marks by which phenomena are designated,
You will not think of or approach them;
Be without grasping or attachment.
- 1.729 “When you understand actions and their fruition
In full and without exception,
And then avoid contradicting that,
You are a diligent person.
- 1.730 “Actions and actors

Both have the characteristic of being conditioned.
Whosoever understands their marks and their marklessness
Is a diligent person.

- 1.731 “The one who understands the eternal sameness
Of compounds of various elements,
And the different natures of various elements,
Is a diligent person.
- 1.732 “By completely understanding in full
The mutual relations between cause and effect,
You don the armor and abide properly
Among all conditioned phenomena.
- 1.733 “Understanding that supramundane phenomena
Do not in the slightest way contradict
Mundane phenomena,
You abide thereby in sameness.
- 1.734 “Also, understanding that mundane phenomena
Do not in the slightest way contradict
Supramundane phenomena,
You abide thereby in sameness.⁴⁷
- 1.735 “Accordingly, you will be able to investigate
All mundane activities,
And all diverse marks and seals,
And abide in the pervasive knowledge of their sameness.
- 1.736 “Through a single Dharma gateway,
You can understand all Dharma gateways.
Likewise, through many Dharma gateways,
You can understand a single Dharma gateway. [F.131.b]
- 1.737 “Do not approach many Dharma gateways
Through a single Dharma gateway.
Do not approach a single Dharma gateway
Through many Dharma gateways.
- 1.738 “Within all the Dharma gateways,
They are equally and pervasively pure.
To take the Dharma as lacking any differentiating marks
Is called investigation.
- 1.739 “To be able to explain equally

- The oral instructions on the various Dharma teachings,
Constantly abiding in the nature of sameness,
Is called investigation.
- 1.740 “One who can properly understand and see
The oral instructions on the various Dharma teachings,
And thus is able to accord well with them,
Is called skillful means.
- 1.741 “Not engaging in debate,
Not initiating the causes and conditions of debate, and
Lacking disagreement with anyone
Is called being in accord.
- 1.742 “Never getting involved in debates,
Always avoiding debates,
And being agreeable and not disagreeable,
Is called being wise.
- 1.743 “One who forever pacifies all debate
Concerning the principle of all phenomena,
Who dons the armor and practices correctly,
Is called a hero.
- 1.744 “One who investigates broadly in this way
And is simple and free from contention,
Shall extol the unsurpassed Dharma
Within many gathered assemblies.
- 1.745 “In this way, bodhisattvas
Who actualize the absorption
Of the *oceanic seal of all phenomena*
Are endowed with correct mindfulness.
- 1.746 “One who is simple and free from contention,
But diligently practices,
And pacifies disagreements,
Will perfect this absorption.
- 1.747 “When one abides correctly
By understanding the secret teachings,
And thus understands the self and the nature of pride,
One eliminates pride and cuts off arrogance.
- 1.748 “One who accomplishes excellent skillful means

In the definitive oral teachings,
And understands their different terms,
Is called intelligent. [F.132.a]

- 1.749 “As one practices correctly and diligently
In the principle of all phenomena,
And comes to see all the various Dharma gateways,
It is said that one sees the Dharma.
- 1.750 “One who diligently practices in this way
Shall come to understand all phenomena,
Which other phenomena they accord with,
And which other phenomena they do not accord with.
- 1.751 “One who is mindful of maintaining pure action
While among all phenomena
Shall achieve skill regarding
The meaning of the definitive advice.
- 1.752 “One who diligently contemplates
While among all phenomena
Will come to know all phenomena
And thus achieve this absorption.
- 1.753 “Moreover, Anantamati, if bodhisattva great beings diligently practice this
Dharma, they will also gather the qualities of absorption. Thus, listen well,
listen well! Bear what I say in mind, and I will explain it to you.”
“Blessed One, I will listen as you have asked.”
- 1.754 The Blessed One then said to the bodhisattva great being Anantamati,
“Anantamati, there is a teaching called the illumination of Dharma for all the
bodhisattva great beings, with which they are capable of developing skill in
the principle of all phenomena. They are also capable of actualizing the seal
of all phenomena, and of entering the gateway of the seal of all phenomena.
They will be able to understand and engage in all that need be done
regarding all phenomena. They will be able to obtain and explain the
illumination of Dharma; and with this illumination of Dharma, they will
accordingly be able to penetrate all statements concerning the Dharma.
- 1.755 “What is meant by the illumination of Dharma that can engender the
illumination of skillful means? [F.132.b] It means to be able to fully
understand the gateways of the different terms used in teaching, the
gateways of the secret teachings, the gateways of the different names for
things, the gateways of gathering things, and the gateways of the various
distinctions. How will obtaining an understanding of these produce the

gateway of absorption, the gateway of the principle of the realm of all phenomena, and an engagement with the single truth by which one is able to fully understand the illumination of all phenomena?

1.756 “Anantamati, whether bodhisattva great beings are currently practicing, will practice, are currently pursuing, or will pursue this skill in the profound principle of phenomena, when they hear this Dharma teaching, with just a little effort they will obtain the great illumination and enter myriad Dharma gateways, and from these Dharma gateways they will again produce further illumination. With this illumination, they will be able to engage with and practice any Dharma gateway or practice, according to the principles. With the power of absorption, they will contemplate the various Dharma gateways, and with the insight that is produced by the gateway of absorption, they will be able to fully understand the principle of truth. Due to the power of absorption, the contemplation of the Dharma gateways, and the production of insight, they will fully understand the realm of phenomena through the gateway of absorption. Abiding in skillful means, they will be able to produce the illumination of all phenomena and attain the absorption of the *oceanic seal of all phenomena*.

1.757 “Anantamati, what are these so-called Dharma gateways? For instance, by the sealing of all phenomena with the seal of the syllable *a*, all formations created from ignorance [Skt. *avidyā*] are perfected. With the syllable *a* [F.133.a] at their head, ignorance is pacified, and there is no activity. Therefore, bodhisattva great beings accordingly enter the gateway of the seal of marklessness. By the sealing of all phenomena with the seal of the syllable *i*, the fruits of different karmic ripening, that which is caused by the function of action, and the combination of actions and their fruit are understood. In this way, bodhisattva great beings accordingly enter the gateway of the seal of no actions, no results, no combining, and no conditions. In this fashion, by the sealing of all phenomena with the seal of formation, bodhisattva great beings produce the illumination of Dharma insight from different forms of karmic actions and functions. Therefore, they accordingly enter the gateway of the seal of skill in all formation. By the sealing of all phenomena with the seal of the syllable *nā* and supplementing with the syllable *ma*, one causes nominal designations [Skt. *nāma*] to accord with various phenomena. Because they understand how *nā* and *ma* support each other, bodhisattva great beings accordingly enter the gateway of the seal of no joining, no supporting, and no names. By the sealing of all phenomena with the seal of boundlessness, they apprehend no distinctions between them.⁴⁸ Because they are free from conceptualization, bodhisattva great beings accordingly enter the gateway of the seal of nonconceptualization. [F.133.b] By the sealing of all phenomena with the seal of limitlessness, limits do not form.

Because they have eliminated limits, bodhisattva great beings accordingly enter the gateway of the seal of nondiscursiveness, nonanalysis, and nonexpression. By the sealing of all phenomena with the seal of the absence of various diverse natures, the characteristic of being produced from a single nature dispels the notion of various different natures. Therefore, bodhisattvas accordingly enter the gateway of the seal of various different natures. By the sealing of all phenomena with the seal of compounding that results from desire, all manifest conditioned formations are brought to finality. Thus abiding in uncompounded quiescence free from desire, bodhisattva great beings accordingly enter into the gateway of the seal of the knowledge of the exhaustion of desire that perceives the absence of compounding.⁴⁹ Anantamati, these are the gateways of the seals by which bodhisattva great beings seal all phenomena. Through these seal-gateways, they accordingly engage with all phenomena.

1.758 “Anantamati, there are also the gateways of nonobstruction and noncompounding, which bodhisattva great beings should realize and enter. What are the gateways of nonobstruction and noncompounding? By the sealing of all phenomena with the seal of space, bodhisattva great beings accordingly enter the gateway of the seal of nonattachment. By the sealing of all phenomena with the seal of disengagement, [F.134.a] bodhisattva great beings accordingly enter the gateway of the seal of nonduality. By the sealing of all phenomena with the seal of quiescence, bodhisattva great beings accordingly enter the gateway of the seal of pacification. By the sealing of all phenomena with the seal of the absence of gateways, bodhisattva great beings accordingly enter the gateway of the seal of immobility. By the sealing of all phenomena with the seal of the absence of abodes, bodhisattva great beings accordingly enter the gateway of the seal of noncontamination. By the sealing of all phenomena with the seal of the empty nature, bodhisattva great beings accordingly enter the gateway of the seal of nonapprehension. By the sealing of all phenomena with the seal of marklessness, bodhisattva great beings accordingly enter the gateway of the seal of the expert practice of skillful means. By the sealing of all phenomena with the seal of wishlessness, bodhisattva great beings accordingly enter the gateway of the seal of the illumination of the excellent wish for tranquility. By the sealing of all phenomena with the seal of the absence of craving, bodhisattva great beings accordingly enter the gateway of the seal of the thorough comprehension of the nature of concepts. By the sealing of all phenomena with the seal of the absence of birth, bodhisattva great beings accordingly enter the gateway of the seal of producing correct understanding and seeing the absence of birth. By the sealing of all phenomena with the seal of tranquility, bodhisattva great beings

accordingly enter the gateway of the seal of abandoning the aggregates. [F.134.b] By the sealing of all phenomena with the seal of the characteristic of exhaustion, bodhisattva great beings accordingly enter the gateway of the seal of the exhaustion of births. By the sealing of all phenomena with the seal of the realm of phenomena, bodhisattva great beings accordingly enter the gateway of the seal of skill in manifesting the realm of phenomena. By the sealing of all phenomena with the seal of the absence of thought, bodhisattva great beings accordingly enter the gateway of the seal of the equanimity of the actual lack of concepts. By the sealing of all phenomena with the seal of freedom from essential natures, bodhisattva great beings accordingly enter the gateway of the seal of pervasive knowledge of all natures. By the sealing of all phenomena with the seal of nirvāṇa, bodhisattva great beings accordingly enter the gateway of the seal of the cessation that follows genuine tranquility.

1.759 “Anantamati, for the bodhisattva great beings, these are the gateway of being unobstructed by any phenomena, the gateway of noncombination, the gateway of transcending all views of nihilism and permanence, the gateway of the absence of boundaries and limits, and the gateway of past and future limits. Through weariness, cessation, tranquility, and coolness, bodhisattva great beings should study and enter this gateway of the seal of all phenomena. By practicing well these various Dharma gateways, they will obtain the absorption of the *oceanic seal of all phenomena*. When they accord with this absorption in actuality, they will be able to wield the knowledge of skillful means with regard to all phenomena. [F.135.a] Therefore, bodhisattva great beings should practice well this seal-gateway and, observing all phenomena while abiding in the absorption of the *oceanic seal of all phenomena*, they will be able to produce the immeasurable, boundless illumination of the great Dharma.

1.760 “Anantamati, to draw an analogy, because the water in the great ocean is immeasurable, nobody can fathom its limits. Likewise, because phenomena are immeasurable, nobody can ultimately fathom their limits. To draw another analogy, all rivers flow to and enter the ocean. Likewise, because all phenomena enter the seal of phenomena, it is called the oceanic seal. As all phenomena are sealed by and included within the oceanic seal of phenomena, all phenomena within this seal can be seen as equivalent to the seal of phenomena itself. To draw another analogy, it is like the great nāgas and the various assemblies of nāgas who, with their great bodies, are able to possess the great ocean, enter the great ocean, and make the great ocean their abode. Bodhisattva great beings are also like this—as they engage in practicing well their various activities over countless thousands of eons, they are able to enter the seal-gateway of this absorption and make this seal-

gateway their abode. They accomplish this gateway of the seal of phenomena in order to realize the buddha qualities and skillfully perfect omniscience. When bodhisattva great beings earnestly practice and study this Dharma gateway, they practice and study all Dharma gateways. Because they see all Dharma gateways within this gateway, they can arouse the illumination of all phenomena and enter the ocean of all phenomena. Therefore, this Dharma teaching is called *the absorption of the oceanic seal of all phenomena*. To draw another analogy, just as the great ocean is the place where precious gems amass, so too this absorption is the place where all dharmas and skill in dharmas are amassed. [F.135.b]

1.761 “Anantamati, anyone who has sought, is seeking, or will seek this absorption, in order to attain the unsurpassed knowing and seeing of the Buddha, will seek the perfected insight of the ocean of all phenomena. Thus, for this purpose, I am entrusting this Dharma seal to you. During the final five hundred years of the final period, when the genuine Dharma is disappearing, you must seal beings with this Dharma seal. Those who are sealed with it will become irreversible from unsurpassed and perfect awakening and will perfect the buddha qualities. Therefore, they will swiftly head to the site of awakening, turn the unsurpassed wheel of Dharma, perpetuate the Buddha’s lineage, reach and abide on the level of omniscience, pass into unsurpassed great *parinirvāṇa*, and ensure that gods and humans, too, uphold the genuine Dharma. Anantamati, any bodhisattva great beings who wish to realize such extraordinary and noble qualities must joyfully exert themselves in this profound Dharma and be attentive.

1.762 “Moreover, Anantamati, I recall that at a time in the past, even longer ago and more countless than a countless eon ago, the blessed Buddha King Who Transcends the Light of Mount Meru appeared in the world. He was a thus-gone one, a worthy one, a perfect buddha, learned and virtuous, a well-gone one, a knower of the world, an unsurpassed being, a charioteer who guides beings, a teacher of gods and humans, a blessed buddha. [F.136.a] The eon was called Virtuous Abiding, and the world was called Delighting the Mind. The beings of that eon had unlimited lifespans. They were happy and prosperous and abided virtuously, and thus the eon was called Virtuous Abiding. The buddha field was wide, expansive, and very beautiful. Thus, anyone who saw it was pleased and delighted. It was replete with the scent of incense. Thus, the world was called Delighting the Mind.

1.763 “At that time, three of the four continents were alike in size: each was eighty thousand leagues square. There were twenty thousand cities on each continent, and the size of each city was ten leagues square. Jambudvīpa alone was ten million leagues across. It had eighty thousand cities, each of which was twenty leagues square in size. They were surrounded by walls

with flag-bearing towers and adorned with trees that produced various garments, trees that produced various tastes, a variety of flowering trees, and jeweled palm trees. The land was happy and full of people. The largest city, the capital, was a hundred leagues in circumference and surrounded by twenty thousand parks. The parks contained clear pools that flowed everywhere and irrigated flower bushes and sweet fruits, all in full bloom. They were pervaded with the scent of fine incense, which delighted all who smelled it, and rang with the elegant sounds of harmonious birdsong. At that time, that blessed one dwelled in one of those parks, teaching his assemblies the Dharma.

1.764 “Anantamati, the lifespan of King Who Transcends the Light of Mount Meru [F.136.b] reached ten lesser eons. After his *parinirvāṇa*, his genuine Dharma teachings remained in the world for a lesser eon. That thus-gone one taught his gathered assembly the Dharma on four occasions. In each gathering of the assembly, five billion hearers on the level of training were present. His assembly of worthy ones and bodhisattvas numbered fifty billion. At that time, that thus-gone one had as followers two bodhisattvas, one of whom was named Vīrasena, and the other, Heroic Strength. Both bodhisattvas possessed miraculous powers and had gained the acceptance that phenomena are unborn. They addressed that blessed one, asking, ‘Blessed One, through what sort of Dharma teaching does one accomplish the bodhisattva great beings’ absorption of the *oceanic seal of all phenomena*?’

1.765 “That thus-gone one then gave extensive explanations of this phrase. As he taught this, ten thousand bodhisattvas gained the acceptance that phenomena are unborn. The two bodhisattvas realized the absorption of the *oceanic seal of all phenomena*, in addition to realizing all the absorptions of bodhisattvas. Because they realized the absorption of the *oceanic seal of phenomena* and the bodhisattva absorptions, they displayed miracles throughout all buddha fields, sent forth a great light, resounded the extraordinary voice of Brahmā, taught the genuine Dharma to beings, [F.137.a] and were able to ripen eighty million beings, so that they set out for unsurpassed, complete awakening.

1.766 “That thus-gone one then prophesied, ‘After one hundred eons, you will fully awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood. In each of those one hundred eons, you will venerate and serve five hundred thus-gone ones. Retaining all the teachings spoken by them in the middle and end without exception, you will bring great benefit to beings. In each eon, your minds will be focused and without distraction. In each birthplace, you will take a miraculous birth. In no life will you fall out of absorption. You will liberate sentient beings with your supernatural transformations and Dharma teachings. After one hundred eons, you will again encounter a thus-gone

one called Boundless Qualities, whom you will venerate and serve, and you will be supremely capable of sporting in immeasurable absorptions, supernatural transformations, and liberations.

1.767 “ ‘When you two bodhisattvas meet that thus-gone one, one of you will be named Aśoka, and the other, Supraṭiṣṭha. Following that thus-gone one, you will turn the wheel of Dharma, guiding a countless and immeasurable number of beings, and you establish them in the three vehicles. At that time, that thus-gone one will prophesy, “After I enter *parinirvāṇa*, Aśoka will fully awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood, whereupon he will be called the Thus-Gone One Boundless Eloquence. After this thus-gone one enters *parinirvāṇa*, [F.137.b] Supraṭiṣṭha will fully awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood, whereupon he will be called the Thus-Gone One Extraordinary Light. The lifespans of each of these thus-gone ones will reach an eon. Their buddha fields will be formed from the immeasurable qualities they have accumulated.” Having received your prophecies from that thus-gone one, you two bodhisattvas will sequentially fully awaken to unsurpassed and perfect buddhahood.’

1.768 “Anantamati, if bodhisattva great beings wish to undertake the absorption of the *oceanic seal of all phenomena*, they should arouse enthusiasm and great diligence, and practice it vigilantly, without concern for life or limb.”

1.769 At that time, there was another bodhisattva great being within the assembly named True Intellect. He rose from his seat and said to the Blessed One, “Blessed One, it is truly wonderful that you have taught this absorption of the *oceanic seal of all phenomena*, so that bodhisattva great beings can gain skill in the knowledge of all phenomena and obtain the omniscience of the thus-gone ones! Blessed One, should one attain the absorption of the *oceanic seal of phenomena*, one will surely also attain skill in the principle of phenomena and swiftly travel to the site of awakening. Through such a boundless ocean of qualities, one will proceed to unsurpassed, perfect, and complete awakening, constantly behold the buddhas, and diligently practice the Dharma. With conduct appropriate to the Saṅgha, one will exceed the utmost veneration of the thus-gone ones and transcend the level of the hearers and solitary buddhas.” [F.138.a]

1.770 The Blessed One then replied to the bodhisattva great being True Intellect, “That is correct. That is how it is. As you have said, True Intellect, when bodhisattva great beings attain the absorption of the *oceanic seal of all phenomena*, they will attain immeasurable extraordinary qualities. When they abide in the absorption of the *oceanic seal of phenomena*, they can use their skill in the absorption of the *oceanic seal of phenomena* to definitively proceed toward unsurpassed, perfect, and complete awakening. True Intellect, to draw an analogy, Mount Meru is made from a variety of jewels; and

emerging from the great ocean to stand eighty-four thousand leagues tall, it abides majestically and shines with the most brilliant light. Bodhisattva great beings are also like this—having set out well by means of this absorption, they emerge from the ocean of the storehouse of all phenomena, outshine the entire world of gods and humans, and abide peerlessly, shining with the most brilliant light. Again, just as the full moon is surrounded by stars, so too do bodhisattva great beings stand out amidst all the large worldly assemblies of humans and gods.

1.771 “True Intellect, do you see who it is that is not delighted with these teachings, and becomes negligent instead of arousing diligence? It is only those inferior beings with little merit. Any being who has great insight [F.138.b] will be able to accomplish this vast teaching. This vast teaching is replete with all the qualities that sublime beings must gather. As I have taught, those who can gather this vast wealth of Dharma will be guarded by gods and humans, and cared for by the buddhas and bodhisattva great beings of the ten directions.”

1.772 Then the Blessed One said to the bodhisattva great being Anantamati, “Anantamati, those bodhisattva great beings who earnestly practice and train in this Dharma teaching will greatly benefit others, sever all doubts, release all ties, discard all habitual tendencies, sever all latent tendencies, transcend all desirous craving, cross the ocean of all realms of existence, dispel all darkness, eliminate all fear and anxiety, and swiftly understand the minds of all beings with skillful means.”

1.773 Once the Blessed One had said this, he emitted a great light that illuminated countless worlds and eclipsed all the light of the sun and moon. After emitting this light, he again addressed the bodhisattva great being Anantamati, “Anantamati, those bodhisattva great beings who earnestly accomplish this absorption of the *oceanic seal* will display great miracles and emit great light just like this, and will properly deliver this Dharma teaching by roaring the great lion’s roar. [F.139.a] In this way, they will transcend the three realms and produce great illumination. It will be no different from what I have done today.”

1.774 Then the bodhisattva great being Anantamati supplicated the Blessed One, saying, “Blessed One, may the Thus-Gone One please bless this Dharma teaching, so that in latter times, merely hearing the name of this Dharma teaching will be sufficient for beings to achieve boundless qualities.”

1.775 The Blessed One then emitted a great flash of light to bless this Dharma teaching. Additionally, with a single finger he stirred all the worlds of the great trichiliocosm, whereby beings achieved great bliss. At that moment, all the gathered assemblies of gods, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, asuras,

garuḍas, kiṃnaras, and mahoragas tossed sublime, divine flowers and fine garments and played their divine instruments at the same time. Countless gods holding divine garments shook them by their edges, so that their fanning and fluttering filled the sky. With one voice they declared, “Amazing, amazing! The domain of the buddhas is inconceivable. Know that anyone who retains this profound teaching is worthy of respectful veneration and honor by all beings.”

1.776 The Blessed One then said to the bodhisattva great being Anantamati, “Anantamati, in the future, beings who have little merit will not hear about this array of armor and this array of absorptions. However, in the future, beings who are skillful and have gathered great accumulations will hear this teaching. [F.139.b] Those who earnestly practice this teaching will be accepted by the blessed buddhas of the three times. Anantamati, for future times, when great terrors emerge, I entrust this Dharma teaching of mine to all of you. You have now attained the abundant qualities and boundless happiness that I attained by amassing the unsurpassed treasury of Dharma over countless billions of eons. You have now abandoned all the aggregates of suffering. With a boundless ocean of qualities, you will swiftly proceed toward unsurpassed, perfect, and complete awakening.”

1.777 Then the bodhisattva great being Anantamati prostrated at the Blessed One’s feet, together with five hundred bodhisattva great beings and all the householders headed by the merchant Bhadrāpāla, and said, “Blessed One, we will uphold the Thus-Gone One’s Dharma of great awakening according to our abilities, so that in the final period we can bring great benefit to beings.”

1.778 The bodhisattva great beings then rose from their seats, scattered myriad flowers toward the Thus-Gone One, and removed their finer upper garments and offered them. They said, “Blessed One, we dedicate this root of virtue to all beings, praying that beings will attain all the factors of awakening and actualize the Thus-Gone One’s omniscient insight, and that in the future, the roots of virtue of all beings will be perfected.” [F.140.a]

1.779 Then, to delight the bodhisattva great beings, the Blessed One spoke the following verses:

“In order to bring great benefit
To all beings,
You should uphold the Dharma of my awakening,
And roar the lion’s roar of the Dharma King.

1.780 “In the final period in the future,
Anyone seeking the Dharma
Who hears this vast teaching

- Will achieve happiness.
- 1.781 “Just as I have taught,
Anyone who sees this vehicle
And hears the Dharma taught in this discourse
Will achieve the happiness they aim for.
- 1.782 “When wise persons,
Who have cultivated skillful means,
Hear this supreme teaching,
They will find physical and mental happiness.
- 1.783 “Those gathered in this assembly,
Who have seen me teach in person
And heard this Dharma,
Will become tremendously inspired by this.
- 1.784 “During the final period in the future,
You will produce a great mass of merit
That is incalculable, immeasurable,
Vast, and boundless.
- 1.785 “In the final age of the future,
Those who retain this teaching,
Spoken by the Dharma Lord,
Will be cared for by the buddhas.
- 1.786 “Those who retain my Dharma of awakening
During the final age of the future
Will be the final recipients of the Dharma
Of immeasurable buddhas.”
- 1.787 When the Blessed One taught this Dharma, countless bodhisattvas gained the acceptance that phenomena are unborn. Countless beings ripened their roots of virtue. When the Blessed One had taught this, the bodhisattva great being Anantamati, along with the other bodhisattva great beings and the world with its gods, humans, and asuras rejoiced and praised what the Blessed One had said.
- 1.788 *This completes The Teaching of the Armor Array. It is the seventh chapter within the one hundred thousand sections of the Dharma discourse known as The Noble Great Heap of Jewels.*

c.

Colophon

c.1 This was translated from the Chinese by the translator Gö Chödrup.⁵⁰

NOTES

n.

- n.1 Denkarma, folio 295.b.6. See also Herrmann-Pfandt 2008, 20–21, no. 31.
- n.2 Buswell and Lopez 2013, 133.
- n.3 Longchen Rabjam, 438.
- n.4 Pawo Tsuglag Trengwa, 176
- n.5 Dakpo Tashi Namgyal, 97.
- n.6 This latter stage in our work made it clear that the Tibetan text is indeed a translation that follows the Chinese very closely. Thus, comparison with the Chinese text made it possible to identify several scribal errors and translation inaccuracies in the Tibetan translation, which we then revised in the translation according to the Chinese.
- n.7 Tib. *yangs* read as *dbyangs* according to the Yunglo and Narthang variants of the Kangyur. Comparative Edition, page 191, note 6.
- n.8 Ch. 世尊人中勝 supports the variant reading of *bcom ldan mi yi mchog lags pas*.
- n.9 Here and throughout, the Tib. uses the term *yon tan*, generally translated as “qualities” (i.e., Skt. *guṇa*) to translate Ch. 功德, rendering Skt. *punya*, which is commonly translated as “merit.” The six occurrences of Tib. *bsod nams* in this text correspond with Ch. 福, which has been explicitly translated here as “merit.” See Stein, 54–56.
- n.10 This verse is missing in the Tibetan.
- n.11 In the Tibetan, this line is presented in two lines. We have joined them here to keep the four-line structure of the verses.
- n.12

- Ch. 勇猛善安住 supports the variant Tib. reading of *dpa' zhing bde bar gnas par byed* over *dar zhing*
- n.13 Ch. 愛見 suggests that Tib. *srid lta* may be a misspelling of *sred lta*.
- n.14 Ch. 勝堅固 suggests that Tib. *rab brtags* may be a misspelling of *rab brtan*.
- n.15 Following the Ch. variant 無所見, “nothing to be seen,” which makes more sense in context.
- n.16 Ch. 不與一切法 suggests that Tib. *chos thams cad bdag dang ni* is a misspelling for *chos thams cad dag dang ni*.
- n.17 Ch. 不計諸劫量 supports the reading of *bskal pa'i tshad ni mi 'dzin pas* over the variant *skal ba'i tshad ni mi 'dzin pas*. This reading also agrees with the relevant prose passage that is summarized here.
- n.18 Ch. 無有相待 supports the variant Tib. reading of *ltos pa med pa* over *bltas pa med pa*.
- n.19 Ch. 不可壞 supports the variant reading of *theg pa 'di ni mi 'jig* over *mi 'jigs*.
- n.20 Ch. 乃乘於此乘 supports the variant reading of *des 'dod theg pa 'di bzhon 'gyur* (“such a one will be permitted to mount this vehicle”) over *des gdod theg pa 'di bzhon 'gyur*.
- n.21 This verse is missing in the Tibetan and has been translated from the Chinese.
- n.22 Ch. 殊勝之誓願 supports the variant reading of *khyad par smon lam* over *khyab pa'i smon lam*.
- n.23 This line does not appear in the Tibetan but has been translated from the Chinese.
- n.24 Ch. 若有有身見 suggests that *'jig rten lta* here is an error for *jig tshogs lta*, as in the corresponding prose passage above.
- n.25 Ch. 安樂而出離 suggests that Tib. *gyes shes* [var. *gyis shig*] in *nges par 'byung bar gyis shes smros* may be an error for *dgyes shog*.
- n.26 Tib. *su* read as *ni* according to the Yongle, Narthang, and Lhasa (Zhol) editions of the Kangyur. Comparative Edition, page 231, note 17.
- n.27 Tib. *phyir mi ldog par mi 'gyur bas* read as *phyir ldog par ni mi 'gyur bas* according to the Lhasa (Zhol) edition of the Kangyur. Comparative Edition,

page 237, notes 17, 18.

- [n.28](#) Tib. *mngon par zhon pa* read as *mngon par zhen pa* according to the Yongle, Lithang, Peking, Narthang, Cone, and Lhasa (Zhol) editions of the Kangyur. Comparative Edition, page 241, note 9.
- [n.29](#) This verse only has three lines in the Tibetan. The final line has been added based on the Chinese.
- [n.30](#) Tib. *ston* read as *sten* according to the Lithang and Cone editions of the Kangyur. Comparative Edition, page 247, note 10.
- [n.31](#) Ch. 彼念處 suggests that Tib. *dran nas de dag* may be a misspelling of *dran gnas de dag*.
- [n.32](#) This verse is absent in the Tibetan and has been translated from the Chinese.
- [n.33](#) Ch. 不可壞 suggests that Tib. *'dzin par mi 'gyur* may be a misspelling of *'jig par mi 'gyur*.
- [n.34](#) This clause is missing in the Tibetan and has been translated from the Chinese.
- [n.35](#) Ch. 若厭 supports the variant reading of *skyo ba* instead of *skye ba*.
- [n.36](#) This verse only has three lines in the Tibetan. The fourth line has been translated from the Chinese.
- [n.37](#) Ch. 求 supports the variant reading of *btsal* over *bsal*.
- [n.38](#) Ch. 怖畏時 supports the variant reading of *'jigs pa'i 'dus* over *'jig pa'i 'dus*.
- [n.39](#) The Chinese gives Skt. *utpala*, *padma*, *kumuda*, and *puṇḍarīka*.
- [n.40](#) Tib. *gyis* read as *gyi* following the Yongle, Kangxi (Peking), Narthang, and Lhasa (Zhol) editions of the Kangyur. Comparative Edition, page 281, note 6.
- [n.41](#) “Great elephant” (Tib. *klu chen*; Skt. *mahānaga*) is a common epithet of the hearers. It is the name of one of the mythical elephants that support the earth. It can also be translated as “Great Serpent.” In either case, the name refers to strength and power.
- [n.42](#) This verse is missing in the Tibetan and has been translated from the Chinese.
- [n.43](#) Tib. *chos sems* read as *chog sems* following the Narthang and Lhasa (Zhol) editions of the Kangyur. Comparative Edition, page 297, note 9.

- n.44 Ch. 一小劫 supports the variant reading Tib. *bskal pa chung ngu'i bar* over *bskal pa chung ngu lnga'i bar*.
- n.45 Ch. 不動 suggests that Tib. *mig yor* is a misspelling for *mi g.yo*.
- n.46 Ch. 無親近 suggests that Tib. *bstan par bya ba ci yang med* should be read as *bsten par bya ba . . .*
- n.47 This verse is missing in the Tibetan and has been translated from the Chinese.
- n.48 Here we follow the Chinese, which reads 以無邊印印一切法，一切分別而不可得，離分別故。This is easier to understand than the somewhat perplexing Tibetan translation of this line, which reads *'di ltar phyag rgya dpag tu med pas chos thams cad phyag rgyas btab pas rnam par rtog pa thams cad mi dmigs*. If rendered literally, the Tibetan would translate as "By the sealing of all phenomena with the boundless seal, they do not apprehend all conceptualization." The basic sense, made clearer in the Chinese, is that when phenomena are understood to lack any concrete boundaries, there is no basis for differentiating them.
- n.49 In these two lines, the Tibetan translation renders the same Chinese term 欲 "desire" as the more positive-sounding *'dun pa* in the first case and as the more negative *'dod pa* in the second case, which does not make much sense as a reading of the Chinese. We have chosen to follow the Chinese and translate these two consistently. Additionally, we translate the "seal of compounding that results from desire" from the Chinese 欲相應和合之印. The Tibetan reads *'dun pa dang / mtshungs par ldan pa'i phyag rgya*, which would translate as "the seal that is congruent with desire." This does not account for the Chinese 和合, which we here render as "compounding."
- n.50 The translator is only identified in the Narthang and Lhasa (Zhol) editions of the Kangyur. Additionally, only the Narthang edition specifies that it was translated from the Chinese. Pedurma page 356, notes 13–14.

b.

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GLOSSARY

g.

g.1 Absence of marks

mtshan ma med pa

མཚན་མ་མེད་པ།

animitta

空相

The ultimate absence of marks and signs in perceived objects; one of the three gateways of liberation.

g.2 Absorption

ting nge 'dzin

ཉིང་ངེ་འཛིན།

samādhi

三昧

A state of meditative concentration or absorption.

g.3 Acceptance that phenomena are unborn

mi skye ba'i chos la bzod pa

མི་སྐྱེ་བའི་ཚོས་ལ་བཟོད་པ།

anutpattikadharmakṣānti

無生忍

An attainment characteristic of the effortless and spontaneous wakefulness of the eighth ground of the bodhisattvas.

g.4 Afflictions

nyon mongs

ཉོན་མོངས།

kleśa

煩惱

Mental and emotional traits that bind one to saṃsāra; the fundamental three are ignorance, desire, and anger.

g.5 All-Illuminating

kun tu snang mdzad

ཀུན་ཏུ་སྒྲུང་མཛད།

—

遍照

A buddha from the past.

g.6 Anantamati

blo gros mtha' yas

བློ་གྲོས་མཐའ་ཡས།

Anantamati

無邊慧

The primary interlocutor of the sūtra, lit. “Infinite Intelligence.”

g.7 Aśoka

mya ngan med pa

མྱ་ངན་མེད་པ།

Aśoka

離憂

Name of the bodhisattva Vīrasena in a later life.

g.8 Belief in a truly existing self

'jig tshogs la lta ba

འདིག་ཚོགས་ལ་ལྟ་བ།

satkāyadrṣṭi

身見

The Sanskrit term means “the view that the body is real,” the Tibetan term can be translated as “the view of the perishing collection,” and the Chinese translates as “the view of the body.” It refers to viewing the “perishing” collection of momentary, transitory aggregates—the body—as a self.

g.9 Bhadrapāla

bzang skyong

བཟང་སྐྱོང་།

Bhadrapāla

賢護

A merchant.

g.10 Bodhisattva

byang chub sems dpa'

བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་དཔལ།

bodhisattva

菩薩

One who practices according to the Vehicle of the Bodhisattvas, aiming at complete buddhahood; “awakening hero,” “one who has a wish for awakening,” “one who awakens sentient beings.”

g.11 Boundless Eloquence

spobs pa dpag tu med pa

སྐྱོབས་པ་དཔག་ཏུ་མེད་པ།

—

無邊辯才

Name of Virasena when he becomes a buddha.

g.12 Boundless Qualities

yon tan dpag tu med pa

ཡོན་ཏན་དཔག་ཏུ་མེད་པ།

—

無邊功德

A buddha from the past.

g.13 Boundless Victor

dpag tu med pa'i rgyal ba

དཔག་ཏུ་མེད་པའི་རྒྱལ་བ།

—

無邊勝

A bodhisattva in the Buddha's assembly.

g.14 Boundless Voice

dpag med spos · dpag med dbyangs

དཔག་མེད་སྒྲོས། . དཔག་མེད་དབྱངས།

—

無邊音

(1) A queen of King Sarvārthasiddha. (*dpag med spos*) (2) A bodhisattva disciple of King of the Lunar Lamp. (*dpag med dbyangs*)

g.15 Brahmā

tshangs pa

ཚངས་པ།

Brahmā

梵

A high-ranking god, presiding over a divine world where other beings consider him the creator; he is also considered to be the “Lord of the Saha World” (our universe).

g.16 Brahmā Voice

tshangs pa'i dbyangs

ཚངས་པའི་དབྱངས།

—

梵音

A son of King Sarvārthasiddha.

g.17 Branches of awakening

byang chub kyi yan lag

བྱང་ཚུབ་ཀྱི་ཡན་ལག།

bodhyaṅga

覺分

Mindfulness, discrimination, diligence, joy, pliability, absorption, and equanimity.

g.18 Buddha

sangs rgyas

སངས་རྒྱས།

buddha

佛

A fully awakened being; when spelled with a capital letter it refers to the Buddha Śākyamuni, one of the Three Jewels, unless another buddha is specified.

- g.19 Cakravāḍa
khor yug
 ཁོར་ཡུག
Cakravāḍa
 Means “Periphery.” Name of mountain range that surrounds the world according to Buddhist cosmology.
- g.20 Caraka
tša ra ka
 ཅ་ར་ཀ
caraka
 遮羅迦
 In Buddhist usage, a general term for non-Buddhist religious mendicants, often occurring paired with Skt. *parivrājaka* in stock lists of followers of non-Buddhist traditions.
- g.21 Cloud of Sandalwood Incense
tsan dan spos kyi 'od
 ཅན་དན་སྒོས་ཀྱི་འོད།
 —
 梅檀香光明
 A buddha from the past.
- g.22 Cloud Voice
sprin gyi dbyangs
 སྒྲིན་གྱི་དབྱངས།
 —
 雲音
 Two different individuals in this sūtra: (1) a son of King Sarvārthasiddha and (2) a bodhisattva disciple of King of the Lunar Lamp.
- g.23 Correct eliminations
yang dag par spong ba
 ཡང་དག་པར་སྒོར་བ།
samyakprahāṇa
 正斷・斷
 Relinquishing negative acts in the present and the future and enhancing positive acts in the present and the future.

g.24 Delighting the Mind

yid dga' bar byed pa

ཡིད་དགའ་བར་བྱེད་པ།

—

悅意

The buddha field of the Buddha King Who Transcends the Light of Mount Meru.

g.25 Diligence

brtson 'grus

བརྩོན་འགྲུས།

vīrya

精進

A state of mind characterized by joyful persistence when engaging in virtuous activity.

g.26 Discipline

tshul khrims

ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས།

śīla

持戒

Controlled behavior in accordance with an ethical code of conduct.

g.27 Eighteen unique qualities

sangs rgyas kyi chos ma 'dres pa bco brgyad

སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་ཚོས་མ་འདྲེས་པ་བཅོ་བརྒྱད།

aṣṭādaśāveṇikabuddhadharma

十八不共法

Eighteen special features of a buddha's physical state, realization, activity, and insight that are not shared by ordinary beings.

g.28 Eightfold path

lam yan lag brgyad pa

ལམ་ཡན་ལག་བརྒྱད་པ།

aṣṭāṅgamārga

八支聖道

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

g.29 Emanated body

sprul pa'i sku

སྤྱུལ་པའི་སྐུ།

nirmāṇakāya

化現其身 · 化生身

The body of a buddha visible to ordinary sentient beings.

g.30 Emptiness

stong pa nyid

སྤོང་པ་ཉིད།

śūnyatā

空寂

The absence of independent, singular, and permanent existence; one of the three gateways of liberation.

g.31 Excellent Supremacy

bzang po'i mchog

བཟང་པོའི་མཚོག།

—

賢勝

A son of King Sarvārthasiddha.

g.32 Excellent Voice

legs pa'i dbyangs

ལེགས་པའི་དབྱངས།

—

賢善音

A queen of King Sarvārthasiddha.

g.33 Extraordinary Light

'od zer khyad par du 'phags pa

འོད་ཟེར་ཁྱེད་པར་དུ་འཕགས་པ།

—

最勝光明

Name of Heroic Strength when he becomes a buddha.

g.34 Factors of awakening

byang chub kyi phyogs kyi chos

བྱང་ཆུབ་ཀྱི་ཕྱོགས་ཀྱི་ཚེས།

bodhipakṣadharmā

菩提分法

Thirty-seven practices that lead the practitioner to the awakened state: the four applications of mindfulness, the four thorough relinquishments, the four bases of supernatural power, the five powers, the five strengths, the eightfold path, and the seven branches of awakening.

g.35 Flash of Lightning

glog gi 'od

གློག་གི་འོད།

—

電光

A buddha from the past.

g.36 Four bases of mindfulness

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

ཡང་དག་པའི་དྲན་པ་ཉེ་བར་བཞག་པ་བཞི།

catvāri samyaksmṛtyupasthānāni

四念住

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

g.37 Four bases of supernatural power

rdzu 'phrul gyi rkang pa bzhi

རྩུ་འཕྲུལ་གྱི་རྐང་པ་བཞི།

caturṛddhipāda

神足

One-pointed intention, one-pointed thought, one-pointed diligence, and one-pointed investigation.

g.38 Four Great Kings

rgyal po chen po bzhi

རྒྱལ་པོ་ཚེན་པོ་བཞི།

caturmahārāja

The Four Great Kings—Virūḍhaka, Virūpākṣa, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, and Vaiśravaṇa. They are gods of the first god realm of the desire realm and known as powerful guardians of the four quarters who rule, respectively, over kumbhāṇḍas in the south, nāgas in the west, gandharvas in the east, and yakṣas in the north.

g.39 Gö Chödrup

gos chos grub

གོས་ཚོས་གུབ།

—

A Sino-Tibetan translator during the ninth century; the translator of *The Armor Array*.

g.40 Great Vehicle

theg pa chen po

ཐེག་པ་ཚེན་པོ།

mahāyāna

大乘

The same as the Bodhisattva Vehicle, whose practitioners aim at complete buddhahood.

g.41 Hearer

nyan thos

ཉན་ཐོས།

śrāvaka

聲聞

A disciple of the Buddha; in the sūtras, this term refers to the followers of the Hīnayāna, or the Lesser Vehicle.

g.42 Heroic Strength

dpa' bo'i stobs

དཔའ་བོའི་སྟོབས།

—

勇猛力

A bodhisattva disciple of King Who Transcends the Light of Mount Meru.

g.43 Immaculate

dri ma med pa

དྲིམ་མེད་པ།

—

離垢

The buddha field of the Buddha All-Illuminating.

g.44 Jambudvīpa

'dzam bu'i gling

འཛམ་བུའི་གླིང་།

Jambudvīpa

閻浮洲

The continent to the south of Mount Meru, according to Abhidharma cosmology.

g.45 Kalandakanivāpa

bya ka lan da ka'i gnas

བྱ་ཀ་ལན་དཀའི་གནས།

Kalandakanivāpa

迦蘭陀

Literally, the “Squirrel Feeding Ground.” A location within the Veṇuvana where the Buddha stayed. The place received its name from the many squirrels living there, being fed by humans. It should be noted that Tibetan translations misunderstand the Sanskrit term *kalandaka* to be a kind of bird (Tib. *bya*).

g.46 King of the Lunar Lamp

zla ba'i sgron ma'i rgyal po

ཟླ་བའི་སྒྲོན་མའི་རྒྱལ་པོ།

—

月燈王

A buddha from the past.

g.47 King of the Solar Lamp

ny'i ma'i sgron ma'i rgyal po

ཉིམའི་སྒྲོན་མའི་རྒྱལ་པོ།

—

日燈王

The name of bodhisattva Cloud Voice when he becomes a buddha.

g.48 King Who Transcends His Boundless Domain

spyod yul dpag tu med pa las yang dag par 'das pa'i rgyal po

སྐྱོད་ཡུལ་དཔག་ཏུ་མེད་པ་ལས་ཡང་དག་པར་འདས་པའི་རྒྱལ་པོ།

—

超無邊境界王

A buddha from the past.

g.49 King Who Transcends the Light of Mount Meru

ri rab kyi 'od las yang dag par 'das pa'i rgyal po

རི་རབ་ཀྱི་འོད་ལས་ཡང་དག་པར་འདས་པའི་རྒྱལ་པོ།

—

超過須彌光王

A buddha from the past.

g.50 Lokāyata

'jig rten rgyang phan pa · 'jig rten rgyang pan pa

འཇིག་རྟེན་རྒྱང་ཕན་པ། . འཇིག་རྟེན་རྒྱང་ཕན་པ།

lokāyata

遮羅迦

While this term is used as a name for the ancient materialist Skt. *lokacārvāka* school, it can also refer to non-Buddhist extremists in general.

g.51 Māra

bdud

བདུད།

Māra

魔

A class of beings related to the demon Māra or a term for the demon Māra himself. Māra and the māras are portrayed as the primary adversaries and tempters of people who vow to take up the religious life, and can be understood as a class of demonic beings responsible for perpetuating the illusion that keeps beings bound to the world and worldly attachments and the mental states those beings elicit.

g.52 Mark

mtshan ma · mtshan nyid

མཚན་མ། . མཚན་ཉིད།

nimitta

相

Can refer both to a physical mark or trait as well as to the data of perception.

g.53 Marklessness

mtshan ma med pa

མཚན་མ་མེད་པ།

animitta

空相

See glossary entry for “absence of marks.”

g.54 Mount Meru

ri rab

རི་རབ།

Meru

須彌

In Buddhist cosmology, the great mountain at the center of the universe.

g.55 Nāga Supremacy

klu'i mchog

ལྷ་འཇོན་པ།

—

龍勝

A son of King Sarvārthasiddha.

g.56 Noble Intellect

blo gros 'phags pa

བློ་གྲོས་འཕགས་པ།

—

勝慧

A bodhisattva in the Buddha's assembly.

g.57 Non-Buddhist

mu stegs can

མུ་སྟེགས་ཅན།

tīrthika

外道

A follower of one of the non-Buddhist religious systems in India.

- g.58 Parivrājakas
pa ri pa ra tsa ka
 པ་རི་པ་ར་ཙ་ཀ་
parivrājaka
 波利婆羅遮伽
 A generic designation for the group of non-Buddhist mendicants of various religious outlooks, who lived as wandering spiritual seekers in India during the time of the Buddha.
- g.59 Purifying
yongs su dag par byed pa
 ཡོངས་སུ་དག་པར་བྱེད་པ།
 —
 清淨
 The buddha field of the Buddha King of the Lunar Lamp.
- g.60 Rājagrha
rgyal po'i khab
 རྒྱལ་པོའི་ཁབ།
Rājagrha
 王舍城
 The ancient capital of Magadha; the site where many Great Vehicle sūtras take place.
- g.61 Ratnaketu
rin po che'i tog
 རིན་པོ་ཆེའི་རྟོག།
Ratnaketu
 寶幢
 A buddha from the past.
- g.62 Realm of phenomena
chos kyi dbyings
 ཆོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས།
dharmadhātu
 法界
 The “sphere of dharmas,” a synonym for the nature of phenomena.

- g.63 Śakra
brgya byin
 བརྒྱ་བྱིན།
 Śakra
 帝釋
- Common epithet of the god Indra, in Skt. meaning “Mighty One,” and in Tib., “Hundred Gifts” (because he is said to have attained his state by performing one hundred pūjās). This epithet often appears together with the title “Lord of the Gods.” He is ruler of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three.
- g.64 Sameness
mnyam pa nyid
 མཉམ་པ་ཉིད།
samatā
 平正
- The equality of all phenomena in their nature of emptiness.
- g.65 Saṅgha
dge 'dun
 དགེ་འདུན།
saṅgha
 眾
- A congregation in a general sense; when spelled with a capital letter it refers to the Buddha’s congregation, one of the Three Jewels.
- g.66 Sarvārthasiddha
don thams cad grub pa
 དོན་མཁས་ཅད་གྲུབ་པ།
Sarvārthasiddha
 一切義成
- A universal monarch of the past, lit. “Accomplisher of All Aims.”
- g.67 Solitary buddha
rang sangs rgyas
 རང་སངས་རྒྱས།
pratyekabuddha
 獨覺
- A being who attains nirvāṇa without the help of a buddha.

g.68 Special insight

lhag mthong

ལྷག་མཐོང་།

vipaśyanā

觀

An important form of Buddhist meditation focusing on developing insight into the nature of phenomena. Often presented as part of a pair of meditation techniques, the other being *tranquility*.

g.69 Sublime Voice

dam pa sna tshogs kyi dbyangs · dam pa'i dbyangs

དམ་པ་སྣ་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་དབྱངས། . དམ་པའི་དབྱངས།

—

眾妙音 · 妙音

(1) A queen of King Sarvārthasiddha. (*dam pa sna tshogs kyi dbyangs*; 眾妙音)

(2) A son of King Sarvārthasiddha. (*dam pa'i dbyangs*; 妙音)

g.70 Supraṭiṣṭha

rab tu gnas pa

རབ་ཏུ་གནས་པ།

Supraṭiṣṭha

善住

Name of the bodhisattva Heroic Strength in a later life.

g.71 Supreme Cloud

mchog gi sprin

མཚོག་གི་སྤྲིན།

—

勝雲

A son of King Sarvārthasiddha.

g.72 Supreme Voice

mchog gi dbyangs

མཚོག་གི་དབྱངས།

—

勝音

A son of King Sarvārthasiddha.

g.73 Ten powers

stobs bcu

སྟོབས་བརྒྱ

daśabala

十力

The classical list of the Buddha's ten powers, which appears frequently throughout both Pāli and Sanskrit sources, refers to the following powers of knowing (Skt. *jñānabala*): (1) Knowing what is possible and what is impossible (Skt. *sthānāsthāna*). (2) Knowing the ripening of karma (Skt. *karmavipāka*). (3) Knowing the various inclinations (Skt. *nānādhimukti*). (4) Knowing the various elements (Skt. *nānādhātu*). (5) Knowing the supreme and lesser faculties (Skt. *indriyaparāpara*). (6) Knowing the paths that lead to all destinations (Skt. *sarvatragāminīpratipad*). (7) Knowing the concentrations, liberations, absorptions, and attainments (Skt. *dhyānavimokṣasamādhisamāpatti*). (8) Knowing the recollection of past existences (Skt. *pūrvanivāsānusmṛti*). (9) Knowing death and rebirth (Skt. *cyutyupapatti*). (10) Knowing the exhaustion of the defilements (Skt. *āsravakṣaya*).

g.74 Three gateways of liberation

rnam par thar pa'i sgo gsum

རྣམ་པར་ཐར་པའི་སློབ་གསུམ།

trivimokṣamukha

Emptiness, absence of marks, and wishlessness.

g.75 Three realms

khams gsum

ཁམས་གསུམ།

tribhuvana

三世

The formless realm, the form realm, and the desire realm comprise the thirty-one planes of existence in Buddhist cosmology.

g.76 Thus-gone one

de bzhin gshegs pa

དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ།

tathāgata

如來

A buddha; when spelled with a capital letter it refers to the Buddha Śākyamuni, unless otherwise specified.

g.77 Totally Illuminated

rab tu snang ba

རབ་ཏུ་སྒྲོང་བ།

—

光明

The buddha field of the Buddha Light of Sandalwood Incense.

g.78 Tranquility

zhi gnas

ཞི་གནས།

śamatha

止

One of the basic forms of Buddhist meditation, which focuses on calming the mind. Often presented as part of a pair of meditation techniques, with the other technique being *special insight*.

g.79 True Intellect

don gyi blo gros

དོན་གྱི་བློ་གྲོས།

—

慧義

A bodhisattva disciple of the Buddha.

g.80 Unerring Supremacy

gdon mi za ba'i mchog

གདོན་མི་བཟའི་མཚོག།

—

不空勝

A son of King Sarvārthasiddha.

g.81 Veṇuvana

'od ma'i tshal

འོད་མའི་ཚལ།

Veṇuvana

竹林

The famous bamboo grove near Rājagṛha where the Buddha regularly stayed and gave teachings. It was situated on land donated by King Bimbisāra of Magadha and, as such, was the first of several landholdings donated to the Buddhist community during the time of the Buddha.

g.82 Victorious King of the Qualities of Boundless Luminous Diligence

brtson 'grus dpag tu med pa'i 'od zer yon tan rnam par rgyal ba'i rgyal po

བརྩོན་འགྲུས་དཔག་ཏུ་མེད་པའི་འོད་ཟེར་ཡོན་ཏན་རྣམ་པར་རྒྱལ་བའི་རྒྱལ་པོ།

—
無邊精進光明功德超勝王

A future buddha.

g.83 Vīrasena

dpa' bo'i sde

དཔའ་བོའི་སྡེ།

Vīrasena

勇猛軍

“Heroic Rank”; two different individuals in this sūtra: (1) a universal monarch of the past and (2) a bodhisattva disciple of King Who Transcends the Light of Mount Meru.

g.84 Voice like the King of Swans

ngang pa'i rgyal po lta bu'i dbyangs

ངང་པའི་རྒྱལ་པོ་ལྷ་བྱུའི་དབྱངས།

—
鵝王音

A queen of King Sarvārthasiddha.

g.85 Well-gone one

bde bar gshegs pa

བདེ་བར་གཤེགས་པ།

sugata

善逝

Synonym for a buddha.

g.86 Wishlessness

smon pa med pa

སྣོན་པ་མེད་པ།

apraṇihita

無願

The absence of conceptual modes of mind; one of the three gateways of liberation.

g.87 Worthy one

dgra bcom pa

དགེ་བཅོམ་པ།

arhat

應·應供

One who has attained the highest accomplishment of the Hīnayāna; also used as a title when referring to a *tathāgata*.