

Verses on the Perfection of Wisdom

Prajñāpāramitā-Ratnagūṇasamcayagāthā

Homage to all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas!

Thereupon the Lord,
in order to gladden the four assemblies,
and to further lighten up
this perfection of wisdom,
preached at that time the following verses:

Chapter I

Preliminary Admonition

“Call forth as much as you can of love,
of respect and faith!
Remove the obstructing defilements,
and clear away all your taints!
Listen to the Perfect Wisdom of the gentle Buddhas,
Taught for the weal of the world,
for heroic spirits intended!

The Source of Subhuti’s Authority

The rivers all in this Roseapple Island,
Which cause the flowers to grow,
the fruits, the herbs and trees,
They all derive
from the might of the king of Nagas,
From the Dragon residing in Lake Anopatapta,
his magical power.

Just so,
whatever Dharmas the Jina’s disciples establish,

Whatever they teach,
 whatever adroitly explain
 concerning the work of the holy
 which leads to the fullness of bliss,
 And also the fruit of his work,
 it is the Tathagata's doing.
 For whatever the Jina has taught,
 the Guide to the Dharma,
 His pupils,
 if genuine,
 have well been trained in it.

From direct experience,
 derived from their training,
 they teach it,
 Their teaching stems
 but from the might of the Buddhas,
 and not their own power.

The Basic Teachings

No wisdom can we get hold of,
 no highest perfection,
 No Bodhisattva,
 no thought of enlightenment either.

When told of this,
 if not bewildered and in no way anxious,
 A Bodhisattva courses
 in the Well-Gone's wisdom.

In form,
 in feeling,
 will,

perception and awareness
 Nowhere in them they find
 a place to rest on.

Without a home they wander,
 dharmas never hold them,
 Nor do they grasp at them-
 the Jina's Bodhi they are bound to gain.

The wanderer Srenika
 in his gnosis of truth
 could find no basis,
 though the skandhas had not been undone.

Just so the Bodhisattva,
 when he comprehends the dharmas
 as he should
 does not retire into Blessed Rest.
 In wisdom then he dwells.

What is this wisdom,
 whose and whence, he queries,
 and then he finds that all these dharmas
 are entirely empty.

Uncowed and fearless
 in the face of that discovery
 not far from Bodhi
 is that Bodhi-being then.

To course in the skandhas,
 in form,
 in feeling,
 in perception,

will and so on,
and fail to consider them wisely;

Or to imagine these skandhas
as being empty;
means to course in the sign,
the track of non-production ignored.

But when he does not course in form,
in feeling,
or perception,
in will or consciousness,
but wanders without home,
remaining unaware of coursing firm in wisdom,
his thoughts of non-production,
then the best of all the calming trances
cleaves to him.

Through that
the Bodhisattva now dwells tranquil
in himself,
His future Buddhahood
assured by antecedent Buddhas.

Whether absorbed in trance,
or whether outside it,
he minds not.
For of things as they are
he knows the essential original nature.

Coursing thus
he courses in the wisdom of the Sugatas,
and yet he does not apprehend the dharmas in which he courses.

This coursing he wisely knows
 as a no-coursing,
 that is his practice of wisdom,
 the highest perfection.

What exists not,
 that non-existent the foolish imagine;
 Non-existence as well as existence
 they fashion
 As dharmic facts
 existence and non-existence
 are both not real.

A Bodhisattva goes forth
 when wisely he knows this.

If he knows the five skandhas
 as like an illusion,
 but makes not illusion one thing,
 and the skandhas another;
 If, freed from the notion of multiple things, he courses in peace
 then that is his practice of wisdom,
 the highest perfection.

Those with good teachers
 as well as deep insight,
 cannot be frightened on hearing the Mother's deep tenets.
 But those with bad teachers,
 who can be misled by others,
 are ruined thereby,
 as an unbaked pot
 when in contact with moisture.

Three Key Terms Defined

What is the reason why we speak of 'Bodhisattvas'?

Desirous to extinguish all attachment,
and to cut it off,
true non-attachment,
or the Bodhi of the Jinas
is their future lot.

'Beings who strive for Bodhi'
are they therefore called.

What is the reason why 'Great Beings'
are so called?

They rise to the highest place
above a great number of people;
And of a great number of people
they cut off mistaken views.
That is why we come to speak of them
as 'Great Beings.'

Great as a giver,
as a thinker,
as a power,
He mounts upon the vessel
of the Supreme Jinas.
Armed with the great armour
he'll subdue Mara the artful.
These are the reasons why
'Great Beings' are so called.

This gnosis shows him
all beings as like an illusion,
resembling a great crowd of people,
conjured up at the crossroads,

by a magician,
who then cuts off many thousands of heads;
He knows this whole living world
as a mock show,
and yet remains without fear.

Form,
perception,
feeling,
will and awareness
are ununited,
never bound,
cannot be freed.

Uncowed in his thought
he marches on to his Bodhi,
that for the highest of men
is the best of all armours.

What then again is
'the vessel that leads to the Bodhi'?
Mounted upon it
one guides to Nirvana all beings.

Great is that vessel,
immense,
vast like the vastness of space.
Those who travel upon it
are carried to safety,
delight and ease.

The Transcendental Nature of Bodhisattvas

Thus transcending the world,
he eludes our apprehensions.
'He goes to Nirvana,'
but no one can say where he went to.
A fire's extinguished, but where,
do we ask, has it gone to?
Likewise, how can we find him
who has found the Rest of the Blessed?

The Bodhisattva's past,
his future and his present must elude us,
time's three dimensions nowhere touch him.
Quite pure he is,
free from conditions,
unimpeded.

That is his practical of wisdom,
the highest perfection.

Wise Bodhisattvas,
coursing thus,
reflect on non-production,
and yet,
while doing so,
engender in themselves
the great compassion,
which is, however,
free from any notion of a being.

Thereby they practise wisdom,
the highest perfection.

But when the notion of suffering
 and beings leads him to think:
 'Suffering I shall remove,
 the weal of the world I shall work!'
 Beings are then imagined,
 a self is imagined,
 the practice of wisdom,
 the highest perfection, is lacking.

He wisely knows
 that all that lives
 is unproduced as he himself is;
 He knows that all that is
 no more exists than he or any beings.
 The unproduced and the produced
 are not distinguished,

That is the practice of wisdom,
 the highest perfection.

All words for things in use in this world must be left behind,
 All things produced and made
 must be transcended –
 The deathless,
 the supreme,
 incomparable gnosis is then won.

That is the sense in which
 we speak of perfect wisdom.

When free from doubts
 the Bodhisattva carries on his practice,
 As skilled in wisdom he is known to dwell.

All dharmas are not really there,
their essential original nature is empty.

To comprehend that
is the practice of wisdom,
perfection supreme.

Chapter II

Where Bodhisattvas Stand

He does not stand in form,
 perception or in feeling,
 in will or consciousness,
 in any skandhas whatsoever.
 In Dharma's true nature alone he is standing.

Then that is his practice of wisdom,
 the highest perfection.

Change and no change,
 suffering and ease,
 the self and not-self,
 the lovely and repulsive
 just one Suchness
 in this Emptiness they are.

And so he takes not his stand
 on the fruit which he won,
 which is threefold
 that of an Arhat,
 a Single Buddha,
 a Buddha fully enlightened.

The Leader himself
 was not stationed in the realm
 which is free from conditions,
 nor in the things which are under conditions,
 but freely he wandered without a home.

Just so,
 without a support or basis
 a Bodhisattva is standing.
 A position devoid of a basis
 has that position been called by the Jina.

Wherein Bodhisattvas Train

Those who wish to become
 the Sugata's Disciples,
 or Pratyekabuddhas,
 or likewise, Kings of the Dharma –
 without resort to this Patience
 they cannot reach their respective goals.
 They move across,
 but their eyes are not on the other shore.

Those who teach dharma,
 and those who listen when it is being taught;
 Those who have won the fruit of an Arhat,
 a Single Buddha,
 or a world saviour;

And the Nirvana obtained
 by the wise and the learned –
 mere illusions,
 mere dreams –
 so has the Tathagata taught us.

Four kinds of persons are not alarmed by this teaching:
 Sons of the Jina skilled in the truths;
 Saints unable to turn back,
 Arhats free from defilements and taints,
 and rid of their doubts;

Those whom good teachers mature are reckoned the fourth kind.

Coursing thus,
 the wise and learned Bodhisattva,
 trains not for Arhatship,
 nor on the level of Pratyekabuddhas.
 In the Buddha-dharma alone
 he trains for the sake of all-knowledge.

No training is his training,
 and no one is trained in this training.

Increase or decrease of forms
 is not the aim of this training,
 Nor does he set out
 to acquire various dharmas.
 All-knowledge alone
 he can hope to acquire by this training.

To that he goes forth
 when he trains in this training,
 and delights in its virtues.

The Facts of Existence

Forms are not wisdom,
 nor is wisdom found in form,
 in consciousness,
 perceptions,
 feeling,
 or in will.

They are not wisdom,
 and no wisdom is in them.

Like space it is,
without a break or crack.

Of all objective supports
the essential original nature is boundless;
Of beings likewise the essential original nature is boundless.

As the essential original nature of space
has no limits,
Just so the wisdom of the World-knowers
is boundless.

'Perceptions' –
mere words,
so the Leaders have told us;

Perceptions forsaken and gone,
and the door is open to the Beyond.

Those who succeed
in ridding themselves of perceptions,
They,
having reached the Beyond,
fulfill the Teacher's commandments.

If for aeons
countless as the sands of the Ganges,
The Leader would himself
continue to pronounce the word 'being',
still, pure from the very start,
no being could ever result
from his speaking.

That is the practice of wisdom,
the highest perfection.”

Conclusion

And so the Jina concludes his preaching, and finally tells us:
“When all I said and did
at last agreed with perfect wisdom,
Then this prediction I received from Him who went before me:
‘Fully enlightened,
at a future time thou shalt a Buddha be!’”

Chapter III

The Merit Derived from Perfect Wisdom

“One who will take up this Perfection of Wisdom,
Wherein the Saviours course, and constantly study it;
Fire, poison, sword and water cannot harm him,
And also Mara finds no entrance, nor his host.

Someone may for the Sugata who went to rest build Stupas,
Made of the seven precious things, and worship him;
Until thousands of kotis of fields are filled with these Stupas
Of the Sugata, countless as the sands of the Ganges;

And like him as many beings again as there are in endless kotis of fields,
They all would do worship, without doing anything else,
With heavenly flowers and the best perfumes and unguents,
Let us reckon for aeons in the three periods, and still more than that:

But if someone else had copied the book, the Mother of Sugatas,
From which come forth the Guides with the ten powers,
Would bear it in mind, revere it with flowers and unguents,
An infinitesimal portion of his merit
would have those who had given worship to the Stupas.

Perfect Wisdom a Great Lore

This Perfection of Wisdom of the Jinas is a great lore,
Appeasing dharmas making for sorrow and ill in many a world of beings.
The Saviours of the World in the past, and in the future, and those [now] in
the ten directions,
They have, by training in this lore, become the supreme physicians.

And [also] those who course in the practice of pity and concern for the welfare of others,

They, the wise, by having trained in this lore, will experience enlightenment.

Those who have conditioned happiness, and those who have unconditioned happiness,

All their happiness should be known as having issued from this.

Perfect Wisdom and the Other Five Perfections

Gems exist potentially scattered in the earth,

And, when conditions are favorable, they grown in great variety:

They all grow from the perfection of wisdom.

Wherever, we know, the Universal Monarch may travel,

There is all the army of all the seven precious things:

Wherever there is this perfection of wisdom of the Jinas,

There also all dharmas of good quality are brought along.”

Chapter IV

Relative Value of Relics and Perfect Wisdom

Asked a question by the Jina, Sakra answered:
 “If I could have Buddhafields like the sands of the river Ganges,
 All of them filled to the top with the relics of the Jinas:
 Nevertheless I would still take this wisdom, the foremost of the perfections.

For what reason? It is not that I lack respect for the relics,
 But they are worshipped because they are fostered by wisdom.
 Just as every man who is supported by the king gets worship,
 Just so the Buddha-relics,
 because they are supported by the perfection of wisdom.

Simile of the Wishing Jewel

A precious gem, in possession of all qualities, priceless,
 The basket in which it may be, should be paid homage to;
 Even when it has been taken out, the basket continues to emit its radiance:
 Such are the qualities of that gem.

Just so it is with the qualities of wisdom, the foremost perfection,
 Which gain worship for the relics of the Jina even after he has gone to rest.
 Therefore let him who wants to win the Jina-qualities
 Take up the perfection of wisdom. She is the liberation.”

Perfection of Wisdom and Other Five Perfections

[The Lord then said:] “Wisdom controls who gives gifts,
 And also morality, patience, vigour and concentration.
 She takes hold of the wholesome dharmas so that they may not be lost.
 She alone is also the one who reveals all dharmas.

Simile of the Shadows

There are in Jambudvipa many thousands of kotis of trees,
Of different species, manifold and different in form;
And yet there would not also be a difference between their shadows,
But when one speaks they are all equally reckoned as shadows:
Just so do these five perfections of the Jinas
Have their name from the perfection of wisdom:
When they are being turned over into all-knowledge,
The name of enlightenment provides one single principle for all the six of
them.

Chapter V

The Counterfeit and the True Perfection of Wisdom

When a Bodhisattva [falsely] reveals form, perception, feeling, will,
Or thought as impermanent [claiming that they are destroyed], In
the counterfeit [perfection of wisdom] he courses, considering not wisely;
Because the learned never effect the destruction of a dharma.

Wherein of form, of feeling, or perception,
Or consciousness, or will there is no apprehension:
By the method of emptiness and non-production [he] cognizes all dharmas.
This is the practice of wisdom, the foremost perfection.

Perfect Wisdom Greater Than Any Other Spiritual Gift

If someone would discipline in Arhatship as many beings
As there are in fields equal to the sands of the river Ganges:
And if someone else, having copied this perfection of wisdom,
Would give the book to another being, - his would be the more
distinguished
merit.

For what reason? The supreme Teachers, trained in this,
Make all dharmas intelligible in this emptiness.
When they have learned that the Disciples speedily experience their own
kind of emancipation,
Others experience Pratyekabuddha-enlightenment, others gain the Buddha
enlightenment.

Importance of the Thought of Enlightenment

Where there is no sprout, there can in the world be no tree.
How can therein be the production of branches, leaves, fruits or flowers?

Without aspiration for enlightenment there is no possibility of a Jina in the world.

How then could Sakra, Brahma, fruit and disciples manifest themselves?

When the orb of the sun sends forth a multitude of light,

Then beings exert themselves in doing their work:

So, when the thought of enlightenment has come into being for the sake of knowing the world,

Through its cognition all the dharmas of quality are assembled.

If there were no Chief of the Serpents in his Anavatapta [Lake],

How could there be here in Jambudvipa a flowing along of the rivers?

And if there were no rivers, fruits and flowers could not possibly be,

And there would also be no manifold jewels in the oceans.

So, if there were no thought of enlightenment, how could there be

The flowing along of the cognition of the Tathagata in all these worlds?

And if there is no cognition, there can be no growth of the virtues,

No enlightenment, nor the oceanlike dharmas of the Buddha.

The Sun and the Firefly

If all the light-emitting animals everywhere in this world

Would, for the purpose of illumination, shed light:

One single ray, issued from the orb of the sun, outshines them all,

And infinitesimal would be all the luster of the hosts of light-emitting animals.

Chapter VI

Supreme Merit of Dedication and Jubilation

However much merit the hosts of Disciples may beget,
 Associated with giving, morality, and [meditational] development:
 But if a Bodhisattva rejoices with a single thought,
 There would [by comparison] be no mass of merit in all the hosts of the
 Disciples

The Range of Jubilation

If we take the niyutas of kotis of Buddhas, who have gone by in the past
 period of time,
 And those who just now abide in endlessly many thousands of kotis of
 Buddha-fields;
 And also those Saviours of the world who, having gone to Parinirvana,
 Will demonstrate the jewel of Dharma for the sake of the complete
 extinction
 of suffering;

If we consider the merit of those Jinas during the period
 Beginning with the first production of the thought of the foremost
 enlightenment,
 Until the time of the extinction of the good Dharma of the Guides, And
 the dharmas connected with the perfections, and also the Buddha-
 dharmas;

And also the merit of the offspring of the Buddhas, and of the Disciples,
 Be they in training or adepts, with outflows or without, Having
 heaped it all up, the Bodhisattva rejoices at it,
 And turns it all over to the enlightenment which is linked with the weal of
 the world.

True and False Turning over

When in one who turns over there proceeds the perception of a thought,
Or if the turning over of the perception of enlightenment involves the
perception of a being:

Established in perception, false views, and thought,
it is tied by the triple attachment.

It does not become turned over to those who apprehend it.

But when he thus cognizes: These dharmas are extinct and stopped,

And therein they are turned over, that is also extinct;

Nor is ever anywhere a dharma turned over into a dharma:

Then it does become turned over in one who thus considers wisely.

When he makes a sign, he does not turn over [to enlightenment],

But if [he turns to it as] the signless, [that] becomes turned over into
enlightenment.

Just as though food mixed with poison were good to eat,

So has the taking of pure dharmas as a basis been spoken of by the Jina

Therefore thus should one train in turning over:

As the Jinas wisely know that wholesome [root],Its

class as it is, its origin as they are, its characteristics as they are,Thus

do I rejoice [in that wholesome root], thus do I turn [it] over.

And thus turning merit over into enlightenment,

He does not upset the Buddha, one who preaches what the Jina has taught.

As many as there are in the world Bodhisattvas who lean on a basis

All of them surpasses the hero who turns over in this way.

Chapter VII

Perfect Wisdom Guides the Other Perfections

How can those niyutas of kotis of born-blind, who are without a guide
 Who are not conversant with the way, find an entrance to the city?
 Without wisdom these five perfections are eyeless:
 Those who are without the guide are unable to experience enlightenment.

When they are taken hold of by wisdom,
 Then, having gained the eye, do they get that designation [i.e. 'perfection']
 It is like a [religious] painting [of a deity or a saint] which is complete
 except for the eyes.
 Only after the eyes are painted in does one get one's fee.

The Attitude to Dharmas and to the Self

When one who develops wisdom to the end does not seize on the least
 dharma,
 Conditioned or unconditioned, dark or bright;
 Then one comes to speak in the world of the perfection of wisdom,
 [Which is like] space, wherein nothing real whatsoever is established.

When he thinks, 'I course in the wisdom of the Jinas,
 I will set free niyutas of beings touched by many ills':
 This Bodhisattva is one who imagines the notion of beings,
 And this is not the practice of wisdom, the foremost perfection.

Faith in the Perfection of Wisdom

The Bodhisattva who has observed this foremost perfection,
 When in the past he served [the Buddhas], is learned and does not doubt:
 As soon as he has heard it he will again recognize the Teacher,
 And he will swiftly understand the Peaceful Calm of enlightenment.

Though in the past he has honoured millions of Buddhas, and served them
If without faith in the Jina's perfection of wisdom,
Hearing of it, he will cast it away, one of small intelligence;
After he cast it away, he will go to the Avici Hell, and non one can save him.

Therefore, have faith in this Mother of all the Jinas,
If you wish to experience the utmost Buddha-cognition:
Let him be like a merchant, who has traveled to the treasure island,
And who, having lost his goods would [nevertheless] again return [to it].

Chapter VIII

The Meaning of Purity

The purity of form should be known from the purity of fruit.
 From the purity of form and fruit is the purity of all-knowledge.
 The purity of all-knowledge and of the fruit, and the purity of form:
 As with the sameness of the space-element, they are not broken nor cut
 apart.

Having transcended what belongs to the triple world, the Bodhisattvas,
 [Although their] defilements [are] removed, exhibit [their] rebirth;
 [Although] freed from decay, illness and death, they exhibit decease, This
 is the perfection of wisdom in which course the constantly wise.

This world is attached to the mud of name-and-form.
 The wheel of birth-and-death revolves, similar to a wind-wheel.
 Having cognized the revolving world as like a snare for wild beasts
 The wise roam about similar to the birds in space.

He who, coursing in perfectly pure, does not course in form,
 Nor in consciousness, perception, feeling or will;
 Thus coursing he shuns all attachments.
 Freed from attachments he courses in the wisdom of the Sugatas.

Chapter IX

All-round Purity

Thus coursing, the wise and learned Bodhisattva,
Having cut off his attachments, marches on unattached to the world.
As the sun, released from the planet Rahu, blazes forth,
Or, as fire, let loose, burns up grass, log and forest.

The Bodhisattva sees that all dharma and the Perfection of Wisdom
Are pure, perfectly pure, in their essential original nature.
But he does not seize on one who sees, nor on all dharmas.
This is the practice of wisdom, the foremost perfection."

Chapter X

Qualifications for Perfect Wisdom

Sakra, King of Gods, asks the Jina:

“Coursing in wisdom, how is the Bodhisattva ‘engaged in’ it?”

“Who is ‘joined’ to not the least thing whatsoever,

be it skandhas, or element,

He who is ‘engaged’ thus, the Bodhisattva is ‘joined’ [to wisdom]

As one set out for long in the vehicle should that being be known,
As one who has done his duty under many niyutas of kotis of Buddhas,
Who, when he has heard that these dharmas are fictitious and like an
illusion,

Do not hesitate, but makes efforts to train himself.

The Simile of a Village

If a man [coming out of] a wilderness extending over many miles

Would see cowherds, or boundary lines, or woods:

He [then] regains his breath, and has no [more] fear of thieves:

[For he knows that] these are signs that a village or city is quite near:

Just so the one who searches for enlightenment, when he learns of this
wisdom,

The foremost perfection of the Jinas, and gets hold of it:

He regains his breath, and he has no [more] fear,

Not even that of [falling on] the level of an Arhat or the level of a
Pratyekabuddha.

The Simile of the Ocean

As long as a man who travels to the watery ocean in order to see it,
Still sees the trees and forests of the Himalayas, [he is far from it].

But when he no longer sees these signs, he comes free from doubt,
 [and knows that]
 ‘Quite near is the great ocean, it is not too far away’:

Just so should be known one who has set out for the foremost
 enlightenment,
 And who is learning about this perfection of wisdom of the Jinas.
 Although he is not one who has face to face been predicted by the Leader,
 He knows that ‘before long I will experience the Buddha-enlightenment.’

The Simile of Spring

In beautiful springtime, when the stalks and leaves have come out,
 From the branches will, before long, come forth [more] leaves,
 and fruits and flowers:
 One who has been taken in hand by this perfection of wisdom,
 Before long he will attain the foremost enlightenment of the Leaders.

The Simile of the Pregnant Women

When a pregnant woman is still astir with pains,
 One should know that the time has come for her to give birth:
 Just so will the Bodhisattva, if on hearing of the wisdom of the Jinas
 He beholds her with delight and zest, speedily experience enlightenment.”

How to Dwell in Perfect Wisdom

“When the Yogin is coursing in wisdom, the supreme perfection,
 He does not see the growth of form, nor its diminution.
 If someone does not see dharma, nor no-dharma, nor the Dharma-element
 And if he does not experience the Blessed Rest, then he dwells in wisdom.

When he courses therein, he does not imagine the Buddhadharmas,

Nor the powers, nor the roads to psychic power, nor does he imagine the peaceful calm of enlightenment.

Not discriminating, free from construction, coursing on resolutely,

This is the practice of wisdom, the foremost perfection.”

Chapter XI

The Theme

Subhuti asks the Buddha, the moon of the Doctrine:
 “Will there be any obstacles to the precious qualities?”
 “Many obstacles there will be,” preaches the Teacher.
 “Of them I will proclaim only a few:

Various Obstacles

Diverse and manifold flashes of ideas will arise in him
 When he copies out this wisdom, the perfection of the Jinas.
 Then again they will speedily vanish, like lightning,
 Without benefit to the weal of the world. This is one deed of Mara.

And he may have some doubts when it is being taught:
 ‘My name is not proclaimed by the Leader therein;
 Nor are the circumstances of my birth; nor my birthplace or clan.’
 Because of what they will not listen, and reject it. That also is Mara’s deed.

The Bodhisattva-path and the Disciple-path

Just as, in his ignorance, someone would give up the root,
 And prefer, the deluded, the branches and foliage;
 [Or] as one who, when he had got an elephant,
 would want an elephant’s foot instead;
 Thus would be one who, having heard the Prajnaparamita,
 would wish for the Sutras [of the Disciples instead].

Just as one who had got superior food of a hundred [different] tastes,
 Would, although he has got the best food of all,
 nevertheless seek for inferior food.
 So would be a Bodhisattva who, having got this perfection,

Would seek for enlightenment on the level of an Arhat.

More Obstacles

They will want honour, they will want gain,
 In their hearts longing for them, intent on familiarity with the families
 [of the faithful].
 Having spurned what is right [Dharma], they will do what is wrong;
 Having left the right path, they have gone on to a wrong road. This also is
 Mara's deed.

Even though at first they have produced faith,
 Keen to hear this most excellent dharma;
 When they find that the dharma-preacher is disinclined to do his work,
 They will go away, devoid of joy and very sad.

Mara's Deeds and the Buddha's Help

When these deeds of Mara will take place,
 Together with many other diverse and manifold obstacles,
 Then many monks will be troubled thereby,
 And will not bear in mind this Prajnaparamita.

Where there are jewels which are priceless
 And hard to get, their owners invariably have many foes.
 Just so this wisdom, the foremost perfection of the Jinas,
 Is the Dharma-jewel hard to get, and [connected with] many troubles.
 When a being has newly set out in the vehicle,
 and is limited in his intelligence,
 He does not [at once] obtain this Dharma-jewel, hard to get.
 Mara will then be zealous to cause obstacles.
 But in the Buddhas in the ten directions will be intent on helping.

Chapter XII

Perfect Wisdom the Mother of the Buddhas

If a mother with many sons had fallen ill,
 They all, sad in mind, would busy themselves about her:
 Just so also the Buddhas in the world-systems in the ten directions
 Bring to mind this perfection of wisdom as their mother.

The Saviours of the world who were in the past, and also those that are
 [just now] in the ten directions,
 Have issued from her, and so will the future ones be.
 She is the one who shows the world [for what it is],
 she is the genetrix, the mother of the Jinas,
 And she reveals the thoughts and actions of other beings.

How the Tathagata Knows the World

The Suchness of the world, the Suchness of the Arhats,
 The Suchness of Pratyekabuddhas, and the Suchness of the Jinas,
 As just one single Suchness free from existence, unaltering.
 Has the perfection of wisdom been understood by the Tathagata.

Whether the wise abide in the world, or whether they have gone to final
 Nirvana, Firmly established remains this fixed sequence of Dharmahood:
 'Dharmas are empty.'
 It is that Suchness (tathata) which the Bodhisattva understand.
 Therefore then have the Buddhas been given the name of 'Tathagatas.'

This is the sphere of the Guides, with their own powers,
 Who reside in the delightful forests of the perfection of wisdom.
 Although they fetch suffering beings out of the three places of woe,
 Yet they never have anywhere the notion of being.

Similes about the Buddha

When a lion, residing in his mountain cave,
 Roars fearlessly, the lesser beasts are made to tremble:
 Likewise, when the Lion of Men, depending on the perfection of wisdom,
 Roars fearlessly, the many heretics are made to tremble.
 Just as the rays of the sun, supported by the ether,
 Dry up this earth, and do reveal its form:
 Just so the king of the Dharma, supported by the perfection of wisdom,
 Dries up the river of craving and reveals the dharma.

The Tathagata's Vision of Dharma

Wherein there is no vision of form, no vision of feelings,
 No vision of perception, no vision of will,
 No vision of consciousness, thought or mind,
 This has been expounded as the vision of Dharma by the Tathagata.

A vision in space is a being, so they declare.
 A vision like that of space, so should you consider that object!
 Thus has the vision of Dharma been expounded by the Tathagata.
 But it is not possible to report on that vision by definite statements
 [that differ from it].

Chapter XIII

Simile of the King and his Ministers

Who sees thus, he sees all dharmas.

When the minister does everything, the king is evenminded.

Whatever Buddha-actions there are, whatever dharmas of the Disciples,
It is the perfection of wisdom which effects them all.

A king does not travel to villages or into the countryside;

But in his own home is the meeting-place where he assembles all:

Just so the Bodhisattva does not move away from the dharmic nature of
dharmas,

But he assembles all the qualities in the Buddha-dharmas.

Chapter XIV

The Bodhisattva and Enlightenment

The Bodhisattva who has firm faith in the Sugata,
 Who is resolutely intent on the supreme perfection of wisdom;
 Gone beyond the two levels of the Disciples and Pratyekabuddhas,
 He will swiftly attain, unhindered, the enlightenment of the Jinas.

The Simile of the Ship

When a ship breaks up in the ocean,
 Those who do not get hold of a corpse, a stick or a log,
 Go to their destruction in the midst of the water,
 without having gained the shore;
 But those who hold on to something,
 travel to the other shore and reach it:

Just so those who,
 although endowed with some faith and in possession of some serenity,
 Reject the perfection of wisdom, the mother:
 In the ocean of birth-and-death they must wander about for ever and ever,
 In birth, decay, death, sorrow, turmoil, and the breaking up [of limbs].

But those who have been taken hold of by the supreme wisdom,
 Skilled in seeing the own-being of existence, seers of ultimate reality:
 They are persons worthy of the vehicle who have collected the wealth of
 merit and cognition.
 They will speedily experience the exceedingly wonderful Sugata
 enlightenment.

The Simile of the Jar

It is as if someone would transport water in an unbaked jar;
 One should know that it will break quickly,
 because it does not hold the water well.
 But when water is transported in a fully baked jar, that on the way
 It might break there is no fear, and it gets safely to the house:

Although the Bodhisattva full of faith,
 If deficient in wisdom he swiftly reaches destruction.
 But when taken hold of by both faith and by wisdom,
 Gone beyond the two levels he will attain the supreme enlightenment.

The Simile of the Two Ships

A ship, which is not well got ready, in the ocean
 Goes to destruction, together with its goods and merchants.
 But when a ship is well got ready, and well joined together,
 Then it does not break up, and all the goods get to the [other] shore.

Just so a Bodhisattva, exalted in faith,
 But deficient in wisdom, swiftly comes to a failure in enlightenment.
 But when he is well joined to wisdom, the foremost perfection,
 He experiences, unharmed and uninjured, the enlightenment of the Jinas.

The Simile of the Aged Man

An aged man, ailing, one hundred and twenty years old,
 Although he may have got up, is not capable of walking on his own;
 But when two men, both to his right and left, have taken hold of him
 He does not feel any fear of failing, and he moves along at ease:

Just so a Bodhisattva, who is weak in wisdom,
 Although he sets out, he breaks down midway;

But when he is taken hold of by skilful means and by the best wisdom,
Then he does not break down: he experiences the enlightenment of the
mightiest of men.

Chapter XV

The Beginner and the Good Friends

The Bodhisattvas who stand on the stage of beginners,
 Who with resolute intention have set out for the supreme Enlightenment of
 Buddha,
 They, the discerning, should,
 as good pupils intent on respect for their Gurus,
 Always tend their spiritual teachers [who are their 'good friends'].

For what reason? From that [tending] come the qualities of the learned.
 They [the good friends] [are those who] instructs in the perfection of
 wisdom.

Thus preaches the Jina, the holder of all the best qualities:
 'Dependent on the good friend are the Buddha-dharmas.'

How a Bodhisattva Helps Beings

Giving, morality, also patience and vigour,
 The concentrations and wisdom should be turned over into enlightenment.
 But one should not grab at enlightenment, having considered [it
 as belonging to] the skandhas.
 It is thus that it should be demonstrated to beginners.

Coursing thus, the Oceans of Qualities, the Moons of the doctrine
 Become the shelter of the world, its refuge, and its place of rest;
 The means of salvation [route], the intelligence, the islands,
 leaders who desire its welfare;

The light, the torch, teachers of the foremost Dharma, imperturbable.
 An armour difficult to wear the greatly determined put on;
 But they are not armed with the skandhas, elements or sense-fields;

They are free from the notion of the three vehicles,
 and have not taken hold of it;
 They are irreversible, immovable, and steadfast in their character.
 Being thus endowed with dharma, unimpeded,

Freed from hesitations, perplexity and consternation,
 intent on what is beneficial,
 Having heard the perfection of wisdom, they do not despair.
 They should be know as incapable of being led astray by others,
 as irreversible.

Perfect Wisdom and Its Conflict with the World

Deep is this dharma of the Leaders, hard to see,
 Nor is it obtained by anyone, nor do they reach it.
 For that reason, when he has obtained enlightenment,
 the Benevolent and Compassionate
 Becomes unconcerned, - 'what body of beings will cognize this?'

For beings delight in a place to settle in, they are eager for sense-objects,
 Bent on grasping, unintelligent, and quite blinded.
 The Dharma should be attained as nothing to settle in,
 and as nothing to grasp.
 Its conflict with the world is manifest.

Chapter XVI

On Suchness

The space-element in the eastern direction, and in the southern,
 And so in the western and northern directions is boundless;
 Above and below, in the ten directions, as far as it goes
 There is no multiplicity, and no difference is attained.

Past Suchness, future Suchness,
 Present Suchness, the Suchness of the Arhats,
 The Suchness of all dharmas, the Suchness of the Jinas,
 All that is the Dharma-Suchness, and no difference is attained.

Wisdom and Skill in Means

If a Bodhisattva wishes to reach this
 Enlightenment of the Sugatas, free from differentiated dharmas,
 He should practise the perfection of wisdom, joined to skill in means.
 Without wisdom there is not the attainment of the Leaders of men.

A bird with a frame one hundred and fifty miles large
 Would have little strength if its wings were lost or feeble:
 If it should jump down to Jambudvipa from the abodes of the Gods
 of the Thirty-three,
 It would travel to its destruction.

Even if he would procure these five perfections of the Jinas
 For many niyutas of kotis of aeons,
 And would all the time tend the world with an infinite abundance of vows;
 If he is without skill in means, deficient in wisdom,
 he falls into Discipleship.

The Desirable Attitude to Other Beings

If he wishes to go forth into this Buddha-cognition,
He [should have] an even mind towards the whole world,
the notion of father
and mother [towards all beings];
He should exert himself with a thought of benevolence,
and a friendly mind;
Amenable and straight, he should be soft in his speech."

Chapter XVII

The Theme

The Elder Subhuti questions the Saviour of the World:

“Teach the characteristics of those who are secluded in Peace, of the Oceans of Qualities,

How they become irreversible, and of great might.

Declare, O Jina, their qualities, merely by way of outline!”

Qualities of Irreversible Bodhisattva

“They are free from the perception of multiplicity, they speak suitably;

They do not take refuge with outside Sramanas or Brahmanas.

The wise have avoided for all time the three places of woe,

And they are practiced in the ten wholesome paths of action.

Free from self-interest they instruct the world in Dharma.

They take delight in the Dharma. They always speak gently.

Standing, walking, lying down, sitting, they are fully conscious [of what they are doing].

They walk along looking ahead only one yoke, their thoughts not wandering about.

They wear garments clean and unsoiled. They become pure through the threefold detachment.

Majestic men they want no gain, but always Dharma.

They have passed beyond Mara’s realms. Others cannot lead them astray.

They meditate in the four trances, but they do not use those trances as a support [for a better rebirth].

They do not want fame, their hearts are not overcome by anger.

As householders they remain constantly unattached to their entire property.

They do not seek to earn their livelihood in the wrong way,
Through bewitchment-spells, or the spells which are the work of women.

Nor do they [earn a living by] tell[ing] plausible lies to men and women.
Practised in the quite detached wisdom, the best of perfections,
Free from quarrels and disputes, their thoughts firmly friendly,
They want [to see] the all-knowing,
their thoughts always inclined towards the religion.

They have avoided the barbarous populations of outlying districts,
of the border regions.

They are free from doubts about their own stage,
always fashioned like Meru.

For the sake of Dharma they renounce their very life,
intent on their practice.

These should be wisely known as the characteristics of the irreversible.

Chapter XVIII

Deep Stations

Deep are form, feeling and will,
Consciousness and perception; signless in their essential original nature,
and calm.

Like one who tries to reach the bottom of the ocean with a stalk,
So, when the skandhas have been considered with wisdom,
one does not get to the bottom of them.

When a Bodhisattva thus understands that these dharmas
In the deep vehicle are in the ultimate sense stainless;
Wherein there is neither skandha, nor sense-field, nor element,
How can there be to him the attainment of his own merit anywhere?

The Simile of the Woman

As a man, preoccupied with matters of greed, had made a date
With a woman, and would, not having met her, indulge in many thoughts;
As many preoccupations as he would have [in his mind] during a day,
For so many aeons does a Bodhisattva strive to reach his goal.

Considerations of Merit

If a Bodhisattva would for many thousands of kotis of aeons
Give spotless gifts, and would equally guard his morality.
And if another one were to preach the dharma associated with wisdom,
the foremost perfection,
The merit from giving and morality would [by comparison]
be infinitesimal.

When a Bodhisattva, having meditated on the foremost wisdom,
Emerged therefrom [i.e. that meditation] preaches the stainless Dharma,

And turns over also [the merit from] that to the enlightenment linked to the weal of the world:

There is nothing that is lovely in the triple world that could become equal to him.

And just that merit is declared to be just worthless,
 And likewise empty, insignificant, void and unsubstantial.
 Thus coursing he courses in the wisdom of the Sugatas.
 Coursing [thus] he acquires immeasurable merit.

No Growth or Diminution

As mere talk he cognizes all these dharmas
 Which the Buddha has demonstrated, practised and revealed.
 Though he may teach for many niyutas of kotis of aeons,
 Yet the Dharma-element does not get exhausted nor does it increase.

And as to these five perfections of the Jinas.
 These dharmas also have been proclaimed as mere words.
 The Bodhisattva who turns over, without putting his mind to it,
 Does not fail; but he experiences the supreme Buddha-enlightenment.

Chapter XIX

Conditioned Coproduction and the Simile of the Lamp

The wick of a burning oil lamp, -it is not by the first incidence [of the flame]
That the wick is burned [away]; not is it burned [away] when [that
incidence] is
not, without it.

Nor is the wick burned [away] by the last incidence of the flame,
And also when that last flame is not does the lamp wick not burn away.

By the first thought [of enlightenment] one does not experience the
foremost
enlightenment,

And again, when that is not there, one is not able to experience it;

Nor does the last thought arrive at the Bliss,

Nor again, when it is not there, is one able to reach it.

The Simile of the Seed and the Fruit

From a seed trees, fruits, and flowers come forth;

When it is obstructed, or absent, then there is no tree from it.

Just so the first thought is, of course, the foundation of enlightenment;

But when it is obstructed or absent, there is no enlightenment from it.

Conditioned by seeds grow barley, rice and so on;

Their fruits are in these [seeds], and yet they are not in them.

When this enlightenment of the Jinas arises,

What takes place is an illusion, which in its own-being is without existence.

The Simile of the Water Drops

Water drops fill a water jar drop by drop,

Gradually, from the first incidence to the last one.

Just so the first thought is the [initial] cause of supreme enlightenment;
Gradually are the bright qualities fulfilled in the Buddhas.

The Meaning of Emptiness

He courses in dharmas as empty, signless and wishless;
But he does not experience the Blessed Rest, nor does he course in a sign:
As a skilful ferryman goes from his [shore] to the other shore,
But does not stand at either end, nor does he stand in the great flood.

Thus coursing, the Bodhisattva also does not think:
'Predestined by those who have the ten powers,
may I experience enlightenment!'
Nor is he trembling [because he sees that] enlightenment is here
not anything.
Thus coursing he becomes one who courses in the wisdom of the Sugatas.

The Attitude to Places Which Might Inspire Fear

When they have seen a world which is a wilderness,
full of famine and disease,
They have no fear, and go on putting on the armour.
For the wise are always joined to the limit which is further on.
They do not produce the least fatigue in their minds.

Chapter XX

The Three Doors to Deliverance, and the Buddha-dharmas

Furthermore, the Bodhisattva who courses in the wisdom of the Jinas
 Cognizes these skandhas as unproduced, as empty from the beginning.
 Even during the time that unconcentrated he views in compassion the
 world of beings,
 He does not become destitute of the Buddha-dharmas.

The Simile of the Hero

A skillful man, endowed with all qualities,
 Powerful, unassailable, well-qualified, instructed in many arts,
 Perfect in archery, devoted to many crafts,
 Perfect in knowing the various forms of magical illusion,
 keen on the welfare of the world

He takes his mother and father, together with his sons and daughters
 And enters a wilderness, full of many hostile forces.
 He conjures up many men, heroic champions,
 Gets away safely, and again goes back to his home;

Just so at that time when a wise Bodhisattva
 Extends the great friendliness to all in the world of beings,
 Having passed beyond the four Maras, and the two levels,
 He permanently abides in the best of concentration,
 but he does not experience enlightenment.

The Simile of the Cosmos

Supported by space is air, and [by that] the mass of water;
 By that again is supported this great earth and the [living] world.
 If the foundations of the enjoyment of the deeds of beings

Is thus established in space, how can one think of that object?

Just so the Bodhisattva, who is established in emptiness
 Manifests manifold and various works to beings in the world,
 And his vows and cognitions are a force which sustains beings.
 But he does not experience the Blessed Rest;
 for emptiness is not a place to stand on.

At the time when the wise and learned Bodhisattva
 Courses in this most excellent quietude of the concentration on emptiness,
 During that time no sign should be exalted,
 Nor should he stand in the signless;
 for he is one who course calm and quiet.

The Simile of the Flying Bird

A flying bird has no footing in the intermediate space.
 It does not stand on it, nor does it fall to the ground.
 So the Bodhisattva who courses in the doors to freedom
 Neither experiences the Blessed Rest, nor does he course in the sign.

The Simile of the Archer

As a man trained in archery shoots an arrow upwards,
 And then again other arrows in [quick] succession,
 Without giving [a chance] to the first one to fall to the ground
 Until he wishes the arrow to fall to the ground.
 Just so someone who courses in wisdom, the best of perfections,
 And who accomplishes wisdom, skill in means,
 the powers and the ability to work wonders:
 As long as these wholesome roots remain unfulfilled
 So long he does not obtain that most excellent emptiness.

The Simile of the Twin Miracle

A monk endowed with the most excellent ability to work wonders
 Standing in the sky performs the twin miracle:
 He exhibits the coming and going, the lying down and the sitting;
 But he cannot be made to desist, nor does he feel exhausted however long
 he may be in it.

Just so the wise Bodhisattva, standing in emptiness,
 Perfect in cognition and the ability to work wonders,
 wandering without a home,
 Manifests an endless variety of works to the world,
 But he cannot be worn down, nor does he feel exhausted for kotis of aeons.

The Simile of the Parachutes

It is as with some men who have stood on a high cliff;
 If they held a parachute in each hand and would jump off into space,
 Their bodies, once they had left the high cliffs,
 Would go on falling until they had reached the ground.

Just so the wise Bodhisattva, having stood in compassion,
 Having taken hold of the two parachutes of skill in means and of wisdom,
 Considers dharmas as empty, signless and wishless;
 Though he does not experience the Blessed Rest,
 he nevertheless sees the dharmas.

The Simile of the Merchant and the Jewel Island

Someone, desirous of jewels, has traveled to the treasure island,
 And, having obtained the jewels, he would again return home.
 Although in those circumstances the merchant lives quite happily,
 Yet he bears in mind the hosts of his suffering kinsmen:

Just so the Bodhisattva who has traveled to the treasure isle of Emptiness,
 And has obtained the trances, faculties and powers;
 Although he could experiences the Blessed Rest, wholly delighting in it,
 He would bear in mind all suffering beings.

The Simile of the Merchant and His Journey

As a merchant, interested in business, goes into the cities,
 Markets towns and villages, which he come across on his way,
 so as to get acquainted with them;
 But he neither abides therein, nor in the treasure island;
 But he, the discerning, becomes skillful in the path
 [which leads] to his home.

Just so the wise Bodhisattvas who become skillful everywhere
 In the cognition and emancipation of the Disciples and Pratyekabuddhas,
 They abide not therein, nor in the Buddha-cognition,
 Nor in what is conditioned.
 Wise as to the path becomes the one who knows the method.

The Bodhisattva Undefinable

At the time when he has communed with the world in friendliness,
 And courses in the concentration on emptiness,
 the signless and the wishless:
 It is impossible that he either would [have an inclination
 to] reach the Blessed Rest,
 Or that he could be defined by the conditioned.

As a magically created man, or one who has made his body invisible,
 Cannot be defined by words:
 Just so the Bodhisattva who courses in the doors to freedom
 Can also not be defined by words.

The Doors to Deliverance and the Irreversible Stage

If on being questioned about the practice and the faculties
 A Bodhisattva does not effect the revelation of deep dharmas
 Which are empty and signless,
 if he fails to indicate the dharmas peculiar to the irreversible stage,
 he should not be known as one who has been predicted.

Tokens of Irreversibility

Not the level of an Arhat nor the Pratyekabuddha-level,
 Nor what belongs to the triple world does he long for in his dreams;
 But he sees the Buddhas,
 and himself as one who preaches Dharma to the world:
 Predicted as 'irreversible' should he then be known.

Having seen in this dreams the beings who are in the three places of woe,
 He makes the vow, 'May I that very instant abolish the places of woe!'
 If, through the power of his declaration of the Truth,
 he appeases even a mass of fire:
 Predicted as 'irreversible' should he then be known.

Those possessed by ghosts, with various diseases, in the world of mortals,
 Through the power of his declaration of the Truth he appeases them,
 he who is benevolent and compassionate.
 Nor does there arise to him any self-consciousness or pride:
 Predicted as 'irreversible' should he then be known.

Chapter XXI

Pride and Other Deeds of Mara

But when there arises in him the conceit,
 'I have been predestined
 [Because] by [my] declaration of the Truth,
 manifold things get accomplished,'
 When a Bodhisattva sets himself above other [Bodhisattvas]
 as one who has been predestined,
 One should know that he stands in conceit, and has little intelligence.

Again, as to the power of the name, Mara, having approached,
 Will say [to him]: 'This is your name.'
 The lineage of [your] father and mother
 for seven generations backwards he runs through;
 'When you are a Buddha, this will then be your name!'

If he is one who has behaved in accordance with the ascetic practices,
 a devoted Yogin,
 [Mara will tell him:]
 'Formerly [in your past lives] you have also had these
 very same qualities.'
 The Bodhisattva who, on hearing this, becomes conceited,
 One should know him to be possessed by Mara, of little intelligence.

Faults in Connection with Detachment

Though he might practise quite detached from villages or cities,
 in a mountain cave,
 In a remote forest, or in isolated woods,
 The Bodhisattva who exalts himself, who deprecates others,
 One should know him to be possessed by Mara, of little intelligence.

Although they may constantly dwell in a village, a royal city
 [or] a market town;
 If therein they do not generate longing for the vehicle of the Arhats and
 Pratyekabuddhas,
 But are devoted to enlightenment for the sake of maturing beings:
 Then this has been preached as the detachment of the Sugata's sons.

Though he may reside in mountain caves, five hundred miles wide,
 Infested with wild beasts, for many kotis of years:
 That Bodhisattva does not know this [true] detachment
 If he dwells contaminated by conceit.

When he feels superior to Bodhisattvas who practise
 for the weal of the world.
 And who have attained the concentrations, emancipations,
 faculties, trances, and powers,
 On the ground that they do not course in the detachment
 of the remote forest,
 Of him the Jina has said that 'he is established in Mara's sphere.'

Whether he dwells in the neighbourhood of a village,
 or in the remote forest:
 If he is free from the thought of the twofold vehicle
 and fixed on the supreme enlightenment,
 Then this is the detachment of those
 who have set out for the weal of the world.
 As one whose self is extinct should that Bodhisattva be considered.

Chapter XXII

The Good Friends and the Perfections

Therefore then the learned who has slain pride,
 Who seeks with weighty resolution for the best enlightenment,
 Should, as one attends upon a physician to be cured
 of a multitude of ailments,
 Attend upon the good friend, undaunted.

The Buddhas,
 the Bodhisattvas who have set out for the best enlightenment,
 And [those who have] these perfections have been enumerated
 as 'the good friends.'
 It is they who instruct them [i.e. the Bodhisattvas]
 in these progressive stages,
 For a double reason they [quickly] understand the Buddha-enlightenment.

The past and future Jinas, and those who stand [just now]
 in all the ten directions,
 They all [have] this perfection for their path, and no other.
 As a splendid illumination, as a torch, as a light, as the Teacher
 Have these perfections been described to those who have set out for the
 best enlightenment.

As he cognizes the perfection of wisdom through the mark of emptiness,
 So by the same mark he cognizes all these dharmas;
 When he wisely knows dharmas as empty, as without marks,
 In coursing thus he courses in the wisdom of the Sugatas.

Defilement and Purification

In want of food, indulging in imagination, beings
 Always wander about in birth-and-death, their minds attached.

Both I and Mine as dharmas are unreal and empty.
By his own self has the fool become entangled in space.

As someone who suspects that he has been poisoned
May well be struck down, although no poison has got into his stomach;
Just so the fool who has admitted into himself [the notion of] I and Mine
Is forced by that quite unreal notion of an I to undergo birth and death
again and again.

Where one takes notice, there is defilement, so it has been revealed;
The non-apprehension of I and Mine has been called purification.
But there is herein no one who is defiled or who is cleansed.
Then the Bodhisattva has understood the perfection of wisdom.

The Supreme Merit of Perfect Wisdom

If as many beings as there are here in the entire Jambudvīpa
Would all, having aspired for the foremost enlightenment,
And having given gifts for many thousands of kotis of years
Dedicate it all to the enlightenment linked to the weal of the world;

But if someone else, practiced in wisdom, the foremost perfection,
Would for even a single day comply with it:
And infinitesimal merit would here that heap of giving bring.
Therefore the undaunted should always plunge into wisdom.

Compassion and Perfect Wisdom

When the Yogin courses in wisdom, the best of perfections,
He engenders the great compassion, but no notion of a being.
Then the wise becomes worthy of the offerings of the whole world,
He never fruitlessly consumes the alms of the realm.

The Bodhisattva who wishes to set free the gods and men,
Bound for so long, and the beings in the three places of woe,
And to manifest to the world of beings the broad path to the other shore,
Should be devoted to the perfection of wisdom by day and by night.

The Simile of the Pearl of Great Price

A man who had gained at some time a very fine jewel
Which he had not got before, would be contented.
If, as soon as he had gained it,
he would lose it again through carelessness,
He would be sorry and constantly hankering after the jewel.

Just so the Yogin who has set out for the best enlightenment
Should not get parted from the perfection of wisdom,
which is comparable to a jewel,
Seizing the jewel which he has gained, with growing energy
He moves forward, and swiftly he comes to the [state of] Bliss.

Chapter XXIII

The Superior Position of Bodhisattvas

When the sun rises, free from clouds and one blaze of rays,
 Having dispelled the entire blinding and confusing darkness,
 It outshines all animals such as glowworms,
 And also all the hosts of stars, and the luster of the moon.

Just so the wise Bodhisattva, who courses in wisdom,
 the foremost perfection:
 Having destroyed the jungle of views,
 The Bodhisattva who courses in emptiness and the signless
 Very much surpasses the whole world,
 as well as the Arhats and Pratyekabuddhas.

The Simile of the King and the Crown Prince

Just as the son of a king, a giver of wealth, desiring the welfare [of others],
 Becomes a person of authority among all, much sought after.
 For even now he makes [many] beings happy,
 How much more so when he will be established
 as the resourceful [ruler] of the kingdom!

Just so the wise Bodhisattva, who courses in wisdom,
 A donor of the deathless, dear to gods and men.
 Already now he is interested in the happiness of [many] beings,
 How much more so when he will be established as King of the Dharma!

Chapter XXIV

How Mara is Discomforted and Defeated

But Mara at that time becomes like one who feels a thorn in his flesh,
 Afflicted with sorrow, miserable, displeased, of little stamina.
 [He manifests] a conflagration on the horizon, the hurls a meteor,
 in order to cause fear,
 'How can this Bodhisattva be made to become despondent in his mind!'

When the wise become resolutely intent,
 Day and night beholding the meaning of wisdom, the foremost perfection,
 Then their bodies, thoughts and speech become [free] like a bird in the sky.
 How can the Kinsman of Darkness gain entrance to them?

What Makes Mara Contented

When a Bodhisattva has taken to quarrels and disputes,
 And when the thoughts [of two Bodhisattvas] become mutually conflicting
 and angry,
 Then Mara becomes contented, and supremely elated, [thinking:]
 'Both these remain far distant from the cognition of the Jinas.

Both these remain far distant [from it], comparable to malignant demons;
 Both these will effect for themselves a waning of their pledge.
 Those who are full of hate, deficient in patience, how can they have
 enlightenment?' Then Mara becomes contented, together with his host.

The Bodhisattva's Pride and Repentance

If a Bodhisattva who has not had his prediction
 Should have angry thoughts for one who has had it,
 and should bring about a dispute:

For as many moments as he persists in his obstinate faulty thoughts,
For so many aeons he must again put on the armour.
Then he sets up mindfulness, and [he reflects],
'These are unwholesome thoughts;
By means of the perfection of patience do the Buddhas experience
enlightenment.'
He confess his fault, and afterwards he restrains himself,
Or he desists, and trains himself in this Buddha-dharma.

Chapter XXV

How a Bodhisattva Is Trained

When he trains himself, he does not anywhere approach a training,
 Nor does he get at one who trains,
 nor at the dharma which [constitute] training.
 Who trains himself, without discriminating between both,
 -training and notraining,
 He trains himself in this Buddha-dharma.

The Bodhisattva who thus cognizes this training,
 He does not ever become deficient in training, or immoral.
 Having found pleasure in them,
 he trains himself in these Buddha-dharmas.
 He trains himself, skilful in [the superior] training,
 but without apprehending anything,

When they train thus in wisdom, to the wise shedders of light
 Not even one single thought arises that is unwholesome:
 As when the sun goes through the sky, before the impact of its rays
 No darkness can maintain itself in the intermediate space.

Perfect Wisdom Comprehends All the Perfections

For those who have effected a training in the perfection of wisdom
 All the [other] perfections are comprehended in it.
 As in the false view of individuality all the sixty-two false views
 Are included, so are these perfections
 [included in the perfection of wisdom].

As when the life faculty has been stopped
 Also all the other faculties that may exist are stopped:
 Just so, when the best of the wise course in wisdom,

All these perfections have been said to be therein comprehended.

Bodhisattvas and Disciples

In all the qualities of the Disciples and likewise of the Pratyekabuddhas,

The wise Bodhisattva becomes trained:

But he does not stand in them, nor does he long for them.

'In that [also] should I be trained,' [he thinks].

In that sense he trains himself [in them].

Chapter XXVI

Rejoicing and Perfect Wisdom

If someone resolutely rejoices in the production of thought
[Of a Bodhisattva who] has set out for the best enlightenment
and is irreversible [from it];

One might [measure] the Merus in up to a trichiliocosm
by comparing them [with a tip of straw],
But not that merit derived from rejoicing.

They rejoice at the heap of merit of all beings that there are,
Who desire what is wholesome, [and] who want emancipation.
When for the weal of beings they have reached
and the infinite qualities of a Jina,
They will give the Dharma to the world
for the complete extinction of suffering.

The Bodhisattva who, not discriminating, comprehends
All dharmas as empty, signless and unimpeded,
Without any dualism he seeks in wisdom for enlightenment.
Devoted to the foremost perfection of wisdom is that Yogin.

The Simile of Space and the Firmament

An obstruction of the space-element by the firmament
Cannot be found anywhere by anyone.
Just so the wise Bodhisattva, coursing in wisdom,
It is just like open space, and he courses calmly quiet.

The Simile of the People Created by Magic

As it does not occur to a man whom a magician has conjured up
[when he looks at the audience]:

'I will please those people,' and nevertheless he performs his work;
 They see him exhibiting manifold illusory works,
 Although he has no body, thought, or name.

Just so it never occurs to one who courses in wisdom:
 'Having known enlightenment I will set free the world!'
 In his various rebirths he is associated with manifold works,
 Which he manifests like magical illusions,
 but he does not course in false discrimination.

The Simile of the Buddha's Magical Creations

As a Buddha's magical creation performs a Buddha's work,
 But, when he does so, no thought of self-conceit arises in him:
 Just so the wise Bodhisattva, who courses in wisdom,
 Manifests all works, comparable to a fictitious magical illusion.

The Simile of the Machine

An expert and experienced mason has made a wooden apparatus;
 Comparable to a man or a woman it performs here all its works.
 Just so the wise Bodhisattva, coursing in wisdom,
 Performs all his work by his cognition, but without discrimination.

Chapter XXVII

The Bodhisattva Worthy of Homage

To the wise, who courses thus, many congregations of gods,
Having bent forth their outstretched hands, in respectful salutation,
will pay homage.

The Buddhas also,
as many as there are in the world-systems in the ten directions,
Effect the proclamation of the garland of the praises of his qualities.
Mara is Powerless against Certain Bodhisattvas

If as many beings as there are in the fields countless
like the sands of the Ganges
Would all, let us assume, become Maras;
And if every single hair on their bodies would again
magically create a snare,
They all could not hinder the wise.

For four reasons does the powerful and wise Bodhisattva
Become unassailable by the four Maras, [and] unshakable:
He becomes one who dwells in the empty;
and yet he is not one who abandons beings;
He acts as he speaks; and he is sustained by the Sugatas.

The True Attitude to Suchness

The Bodhisattva who resolutely believes when this perfection of wisdom,
The mother of the Tathagatas, is being taught,
And who practices the progressive path with resolution,
He should be known as having well set out towards all-knowledge.

But he does not come to a standing place in the Suchness of the Dharma
element.

He becomes as one who, like a cloud,
 stands in the sky without anywhere to stand on,
 As a sorcerer who, like a bird,
 rides on the wind which offers him no support,
 Or as one who, by the force of his spells,
 miraculously produces on a tree full-blown flowers out of season.

The Bodhisattva Dwells Supreme

The wise and learned Bodhisattva who courses thus
 Does not get at one who wakes up to enlightenment,
 nor also at the Buddha dharmas,
 Nor at one who demonstrates,
 nor also at one who loves and sees the Dharma.
 This is the dwelling of those who desire calm,
 of those who delight in the precious qualities.

As many as there are the dwellings of Disciples and Pratyekabuddhas,
 Associated with the peace and happiness of calm concentrations:
 With the exception of the Arhat-liberation of the Tathagatas
 This dwelling is among all the foremost and the unsurpassed.

How and Why One Should Dwell in Emptiness

A bird dwells in space, but does not fall down.
 A fish dwells amidst water, but does not die.
 Just so the Bodhisattva who through the trances and powers has gone
 beyond,
 Dwells in the empty, but does not reach the Blessed Rest.

One who wants to get to the summit of the qualities of all beings,
 To experience the best, the exceedingly wonderful, Buddha-cognition,
 To give the best gift of the highest and supreme Dharma,
 He should resort to this best dwelling of those who bring benefit.

Chapter XXVIII

Who Trains in Perfect Wisdom Trains in Buddhahood

Of all the teaching which have been revealed by the Leader,
 This teaching is the best and unsurpassed
 One who, wise in all trainings, wishes to go Beyond,
 He should train in this perfection of wisdom, in the Buddha-training.

Inexhaustibility of Perfect Wisdom

This is the best receptacle, the storehouse of the supreme Dharma,
 The treasury of happiness and ease
 of those people who belong to the clan of the Buddhas.
 The past and future world saviours, [and those who are at present]
 in the ten directions,
 They have come forth from this,
 and yet the Dharma-element does not get exhausted.

As many trees, fruits, flowers and forests trees as there are,
 They all have come out of the earth and originate in it.
 And yet the earth does not undergo exhaustion, or growth,
 It does not get tired, does not dwindle away, making no discrimination.

The Buddha's offspring, the Disciples and Pratyekabuddhas,
 The gods, and the dharmas which lead to the ease and happiness of all the
 world, -as many as there are,
 They all have issued from wisdom, the foremost perfection,
 And yet wisdom does not ever get exhausted, nor does it increase.

As many beings as there are in the low, middle and high
 [regions of the] world,
 They have all, so has the Sugata said, been brought about by ignorance.
 The machinery of ill is kept going by the full complement of the conditions,

And yet the machinery of ignorance does not get exhausted,
nor does it grow.

As many roots of skillful devices as there are,
or doors and methods of cognition,
They all have issued from wisdom, the foremost perfection.
The machinery of cognition is kept going by the full complement of
conditions,
And yet the perfection of wisdom does not increase or become diminished.

Conditioned Coproduction

But the Bodhisattva who understands conditioned coproduction
as non production
And this wisdom as non-extinction:
As the rays of the sun freed from the covering of the clouds,
So he has dispelled the covering of ignorance,
and become one Self-Existent.

Chapter XXIX

The Perfection of Concentration

Those of great might who dwell in the four Trances
 Do not make them into a place to settle down in, nor into a home.
 But these four Trances, with their limbs, will in their turn become
 The basis for the attainment of the supreme and unsurpassed
 enlightenment.

One who is established in the Trances becomes one
 who obtains the foremost wisdom;

And also when he experiences the four most excellent Formless Trances,
 He makes these Trances subservient to the best and foremost
 enlightenment.

But it is not for the extinction of the outflows that the Bodhisattva trains
 himself in these.

Astonishing and wonderful is this accumulation of precious qualities.
 When they have dwelled in Trance and Concentration, there is then no sign
 When the personality of those who have stood therein breaks up,
 They are reborn again the world of sense-desire,
 as [and where] they had intended.

As some man from Jambudvipa who had in the past been a god,
 Would, after reaching again the highest abodes of the gods,
 See the apartments contained in them
 And would then again come back, and not make his home therein;

Just so those Bodhisattvas, bearers of the best qualities,
 Having dwelt in Trance and Concentration,
 Yogins who have exerted themselves,
 Become again established in the sense-world, unstained
 As the lotus in water, independent of the dharmas of the fools.

Except in order to mature beings, to purify the [Buddha-] field,
 To fulfil these perfections, the Great-souled ones
 Do not strive after rebirth in the formless world,
 Lest there be a loss of the perfections and of the qualities of
 enlightenment therein.

It is as if some man, having found deposit of jewels,
 Would not generate longing in his intelligence with regard to it.
 At some other time he may acquire a few of them;
 Having taken hold them, having entered his home,
 he would not be covetous [for any more?].

Just so the wise Bodhisattvas who have gained
 The calm concentrations of the four Trances, which gives joy and ease,
 Having let go the acquisition of the joy and ease of Trance and
 concentration,
 They enter again into the sensuous world, compassionate for all that lives.

When a Bodhisattva dwells in the concentration of the Trances,
 He generates no longing in his intelligence for the vehicle of the Arhats
 and Pratyekabuddhas:

[For then] he becomes unconcentrated,
 in his thought distracted and puffed up,
 He has lost the qualities of a Buddha, a sailor who suffers shipwreck.

Although he applies himself to the five sense-qualities, To
 form and sound, and likewise smell, and taste, and touch,
 When free from the vehicle of the Arhats and Pratyekabuddhas,
 the joyous Bodhisattva, should, a hero,
 be wisely known as being constantly concentrated.

The Perfection of Vigour

They have pure and courageous minds
 and are linked to other beings and persons,
 [When] they are practising the excellent perfection of Vigour.
 As a maid servant is submissive to her master
 who is not subject to anyone else,
 So do the firmly wise submit to subjection by all beings.

The servant does not answer back to her master,
 Even when abused, struck, or beaten.
 Exceedingly trembling in mind, and overcome by fear,
 She thinks, 'He surely will kill me for that!'

Just so the Bodhisattva who has set out for the foremost enlightenment,
 Should behave towards the entire world like a true servant.
 Thereupon he obtain enlightenment,
 and the fulfillment of the qualities takes place.

Fire, which has arisen from grass and sticks, [then] burns them up.
 Having renounced a happy destiny for himself,
 Practising his duty towards other beings, day and night,
 in his thought free from hesitation:

Like a mother, ministering to [her] only child,
 He abides in his resolute intention unexhausted.

Chapter XXX

The Perfection of Vigour (Continued)

The Bodhisattva who intends to wander about in birth-and-death
for [a] long [time],

A Yogin devoted to the purification of the [Buddha-] field
for the welfare of beings,

And who does not produce the least thought of fatigue,

He is endowed with the perfection of vigour, and undaunted.

If the unwise Bodhisattva counts the kotis of aeons,

And has the notion that it is long until the full attainment of enlightenment,
he is bound to suffer,

And for a long time he will be suffering while moving unto Dharma.

Therefore he is inferior in the perfection of vigour, and essentially indolent.

Beginning with the production of the first thought of the foremost
enlightenment,

Until in the end he reaches the unsurpassed Bliss,

If night and day he would persevere single-mindedly,

The wise and learned should be known as one who has put forth vigour.

If someone would say,

‘On condition that you have shattered Mount Sumeru,

You will be one who will attain to the foremost enlightenment.’

And if he [then] effects a thought of fatigue or limitation [to his efforts],

Then that Bodhisattva is affected by indolence.

But when there arises to him the mindful thought,

‘That is nothing difficult.

In a mere moment Sumeru [will] break up into dust,’

Then the wise Bodhisattva becomes one who puts forth vigour.

Before long he will attain the foremost enlightenment of the Leaders.

If he would exert himself with body, thought and speech, [thinking]
 'Having matured [it] I will work the weal of the world,'
 Then, established in the notion of a self, he is affected by indolence.
 He is as far distant from the meditational development of not-self as the
 sky is from the ground.

When one has no notion of either body, or thought, or a being,
 Standing rid of perception, coursing in the non-dual Dharma,
 That has been called by Him who bestows benefits the perfection of vigour
 Of those who desire the blissful, imperishable, foremost enlightenment.

The Perfection of Patience

When he hears someone else speaking to him harshly and offensively
 The wise Bodhisattva remains quite at ease and contented.
 [He thinks:] 'Who speaks? Who hears? How, to whom, by whom?'
 The discerning is [then] devoted to the foremost perfection of patience.

If a Bodhisattva, devoted to the precious Dharma, remains patient,
 And if someone else would give the trichiliocosm
 filled with precious things
 To the Buddhas, Knowers of the world,
 and to the Arhats and Pratyekabuddhas, Infinitesimal
 only will be [by comparison] the merit from that heap of gifts.

The personality of one who is established in patience
 is completely purified,
 Exalted by the thirty-two marks, [it becomes] boundless.
 He preaches the best empty Dharma to beings.
 Dear to the entire world do the patient and discerning become.

If someone had taken a basket containing sandalwood powder,
 And, with respect and affection, strewed it over the Bodhisattva;
 And if a second one were to throw live coals over his head,

He should produce a mind equal to both of them.

Having thus been patient, the wise and learned Bodhisattva
Dedicates that production of thought to the foremost enlightenment.
The hero who remains patient in all the worlds, surpasses
Whatever Arhats and Pratyekabuddhas there may be
in the world of beings.

Again, one who is patient should produce a thought [thus]:
'In the hells, in the world of animals and in the Yama world
there are many ills.
With the sense-pleasures as cause,
one must experience much that causes displeasure.
Better, for the sake of enlightenment, to be patient today!'

'Whip, stick, sword, murder, imprisonment, and blows,
Decapitation, and amputation of ears, hands and feet, and of nose,
As many ills as there are in the world, [all] that I [will] endure,'
[When he thinks thus, then] the Bodhisattva stands in the perfection of
patience.

Chapter XXXI

The Perfection of Morality

By morality those who hanker after calm are lifted up,
Established in the sphere of those with the ten powers,
unbroken in their morality.

How ever many actions of restrain they comply with,
They dedicate them to enlightenment for the benefit of all beings.

If he generates a longing for the enlightenment of Arhats
and Pratyekabuddhas,
He becomes immoral, unwise, and likewise faulty in his coursing.
But when one turns over [all one's merit]
into the utmost Bliss of enlightenment,
Then one is established in the perfection of morality,
[although] joined to the sense-qualities.

The Dharma from which come the qualities of the enlightenment of the
Gentle,
That is the object of the morality of those who are endowed with qualities
of Dharma.

The Dharma [involves] in the loss of the qualities of the enlightenment of
those who act for the weal of the world,
As immorality has that been proclaimed by the Leader.

When a Bodhisattva tastes of the five sense-qualities,
But has gone for refuge to the Buddha, the Dharma, and the holy Samgha
And has turned his attention toward all-knowledge, [thinking]
'I will become a Buddha,'
As established in the perfection of morality should that discerning one be
known.

If, when coursing for kotis of aeons in the ten paths of wholesome action,

He engenders a longing for Arhatship or Pratyekabuddhahood,
 Then he becomes one whose morality is broken, and faulty in his morality.
 Weightier than an offense deserving expulsion is such a production of
 thought.

When he guards morality,
 he turns [the resulting merit] over to the foremost enlightenment,
 But he does not feel conceited about that, nor does he exalt himself.
 When he has got rid of the notion of I and the notion of other beings,
 Established in the perfection of morality is that Bodhisattva called.

If a Bodhisattva, coursing in the path of the Jinas,
 Makes [a difference between] these beings as observers of morality
 and those as of bad morality,
 Intent on the perception of multiplicity he is perfectly immoral.
 He is faulty in his morality, not perfectly pure in it.

He who has no notion of I and no notion of a being,
 He has performed the withdrawal from perception,
 [and] he has no [need for] restraint.
 One who minds neither about restraint nor about non-restraint,
 He has been proclaimed by the Leader as restrained by morality.

The Perfection of Giving

But one who, endowed with morality, a pure being,
 Becomes unconcerned about anything that may be dear or undear,
 If, when he renounces head, hands, and feet
 his thought remains undejected,
 He becomes one who gives up all he has, always uncowed.

And having known the essential original nature of dharmas as void and
 without self,
 He would renounce his own flesh, undejected in thought,

To say nothing of his renouncing in property and gold.
It is impossible that he should act from meanness.

Through the notion of I comes about a sense of ownership about property,
as well as greed;
How can the deluded have the resolve to renunciation?
The mean are reborn in the world of the Pretas,
Or if as humans, then they are poor.

Then the Bodhisattva, having understood why these beings are poverty
stricken,
Becomes resolved on giving, always a generous giver.
When he has given away the four Continents, well adorned,
as if they were just spittle,
He becomes elated, for he has not kept the Continents.
Having given gifts, the wise and learned Bodhisattva,
Having brought to mind all the beings that they are in the triple world,
Becomes to all of them a donor, and he turns over
That gift into the most excellent enlightenment, for the weal of the world.

When he has given a gift, he does not make it into a basis or support.
And he does never expect any reward from it.
Having thus renounced, he becomes a wise renouncer of all.
The little he has renounced becomes much and immeasurable.

If all the beings in the entire triple world, as many as there are
Would, let us assume, give gifts for endless aeons,
To the Buddhas, Knowers of the world, to Arhats and Pratyekabuddhas,
But would wish for the virtues of the Disciples;

And if a Bodhisattva, wise and skilled in means,
Would rejoice at the foundation of their meritorious deed,
And would, for the weal of beings, turn it over into the best and most
excellent enlightenment,

By having turned over he surpasses the [merit of the] entire world.

If there were a large heap of spurious glass jewels,
One single gem of lapis lazuli surpasses it all:
Just so the Bodhisattva, who rejoices, surpasses
The [merit from the] whole vast heap of gifts of the entire world.

If the Bodhisattva, when giving gifts to the world
Remains unaffected by a sense of ownership or by affection for his property,
From that his wholesome root grows into something of great might:
As the moon, in the absence of cloud, is a circle of radiant light in the
bright half of the lunar month.

Chapter XXXII

Rewards of the Six Perfections

Through Giving a Bodhisattva cuts off rebirth as a Preta.
 He also cuts off poverty, and likewise all the defilements.
 When he courses in it [i.e. giving] he gains infinite and abundant wealth.
 Through [his] giving he matures beings in trouble.

Through Morality he avoids rebirth as one of the many animals,
 And also the eight untoward moments;
 he constantly gains rebirth at an auspicious moment.

Through Patience he gains a perfect and exalted body,
 With golden skin, dear to the world to look at.

Through Vigour he does not incur the loss of the bright qualities.
 He gains the storehouse of the infinite cognition of the Jinas.

Through Trance he casts off the sense-qualities in disgust,
 He acquires the "lore," the superknowledges and concentrations.

Having, through Wisdom,
 comprehended the essential original nature of dharmas,
 He completely transcends the triple world and the states of woe.

Having turned the precious wheel of the Mightiest of Men,
 He demonstrates Dharma to the world for the complete extinction of ill.

When the Bodhisattva has fulfilled these dharmas,
 He then still receives the purity of the field
 and the purity of [the] beings [in it].
 He also receives the lineage of the Buddha, the lineage of the Dharma,
 And likewise the lineage of the Samgha. He receives all dharmas."

Conclusion

The supreme physician who accords medical treatment
to the sickness of the world,
Has taught this exposition of wisdom which is the path to enlightenment.

It is called "The Path to enlightenment which is the 'Accumulation of
Precious Qualities,'"

And it has been taught so that all beings might reach that Path.