

31. Here is an important statement indicating that within every human being there is Buddha-nature, which gives rise to religious aspiration, i.e., the quest for perfection and ultimate meaning in life. This Buddha-nature is called here the 'Tathāgata-embryo'.

32. Presumably Queen Śīmālā's husband.

20 普明菩薩會

The Sūtra of Assembled Treasures

Thus have I heard. Once the Buddha was dwelling on Mount Gṛdhra-kūṭa near Rājagṛha, accompanied by eight thousand great monks. Also in the assembly were sixteen thousand Bodhisattva-Mahāsattvas from various Buddha-lands, all of whom had attained the stage of nonregression and were destined for supreme enlightenment in their next lives.

That day, the World-Honored One told Mahākāśyapa, "Four things cause a Bodhisattva's wisdom to decrease or be lost. What are the four?"

- (1) To disrespect the Dharma or Dharma-masters;
- (2) to withhold the profound Dharma he has acquired instead of disclosing it fully;
- (3) to hinder those who rejoice in the Dharma by giving them reasons to despair; and
- (4) to be arrogant and conceited, and to disdain others.¹

Furthermore, Kāśyapa, four things cause a Bodhisattva to gain great wisdom. What are the four?"

- (1) Always to respect the Dharma and revere Dharma-masters;
- (2) to preach widely whatever Dharma he has learned, with a pure mind not in pursuit of fame or profit;
- (3) to know that wisdom arises from much learning, and to pursue learning with such constant, urgent effort as if to save his head from fire; and
- (4) to recite the sūtras he has learned, and practice cheerfully as instructed, without becoming entangled in words.

"Furthermore, Kāśyapa, four things cause a Bodhisattva to lose his bodhicitta. What are the four?

- (1) To deceive his teacher and pay no respect to the sūtras he has been taught;
- (2) to cause unwarranted doubt or regret in others;
- (3) to revile and slander those who seek the Mahāyāna, thus defaming them far and wide; and
- (4) to be fawning and crooked in dealing with people.

"Furthermore, Kāśyapa, four things enable a Bodhisattva to retain his bodhicitta from one lifetime to another, so that it will always be naturally present in him until his attainment of Buddhahood. What are the four?

- (1) Not to lie even when his life is at stake, much less in jest;
- (2) always to deal with people sincerely and honestly, without flattery or crookedness;
- (3) to think of Bodhisattvas as World-Honored Ones, and to extol their names in all the four directions; and
- (4) not to enjoy the Hīnayāna doctrines, but [instead] to cause all who believe in the Dharma to pursue supreme bodhi.

"Furthermore, Kāśyapa, four things cause the wholesome practices cultivated by a Bodhisattva to stop increasing or to cease. What are the four?

- (1) To read, recite, and study the secular scriptures out of arrogance;
- (2) to approach a donor with a mind lusting for material gains;
- (3) to resent and slander other Bodhisattvas; and
- (4) to discredit and contradict sūtras which he has not heard before.

"Furthermore, Kāśyapa, four things cause the wholesome practices cultivated by a Bodhisattva to grow instead of ceasing. What are the four?

- (1) The Bodhisattva rejects heterodox doctrines and seeks the orthodox scriptures—such as those on the six pāramitās, which constitute the Bodhisattva's canon—and when doing so, casts away arrogance and remains humble toward all sentient beings.
- (2) He receives offerings in accordance with the Dharma, is content with what he obtains, does not earn a livelihood in improper ways, and abides in the four noble practices.
- (3) He does not expose others' wrongdoings, whether they are true or not, and does not look for people's shortcomings.
- (4) When he finds some [Buddhist] doctrines incomprehensible, he thinks, 'The Buddha-Dharma has infinite varieties, for it is preached according to the inclinations of sentient beings. It is known to the Buddha only, not to me. I should defer to the Buddha as the certifying authority and not harbor disobedience or opposition.'

"Furthermore, Kāśyapa, a Bodhisattva must shun four wrong mentalities.² What are the four?

- (1) To harbor doubts about the Buddha-Dharma or to regret [having accepted it];
- (2) to be resentful and arrogant toward sentient beings;
- (3) to be jealous of others for their gains and good living; and
- (4) to [wish to] revile other Bodhisattvas and defame them far and wide.

"Furthermore, Kāśyapa, four signs indicate a Bodhisattva's right mentality.³ What are the four?

- (1) The Bodhisattva does not hide his transgressions, but exposes them to others so that his mind is free from covers and bonds.
- (2) He never speaks false words even if he loses his own body, life, country, or kingdom.
- (3) When he encounters misfortunes, being scolded, beaten, slandered, bound, or otherwise injured, he blames himself only; resigning himself to karmic retribution, he does not hate others.⁴
- (4) He maintains his faith firmly; when he hears the Buddha-Dharma which is profound and difficult to believe, his pure mind can accept and uphold it entirely.

"Furthermore, Kāśyapa, four signs indicate a Bodhisattva's corruption. What are the four?

- (1) After reading a scripture, a corrupted Bodhisattva indulges in play-words, instead of practicing in accordance with the Dharma.
- (2) He does not obey, respect, or gladden his masters.
- (3) He wastes devotees' offerings by accepting them even when he has broken his former vows.
- (4) He is contemptuous and disrespectful toward virtuous Bodhisattvas.

"Furthermore, Kāśyapa, four signs indicate a Bodhisattva's willing compliance. What are the four?

- (1) The Bodhisattva faithfully accepts a sūtra the first time he hears it, and practices it as taught, relying on the doctrine rather than on the words.
- (2) He follows his master's instructions, knows his intention, and speaks with him openly; everything he does is in harmony with virtue and his master's intention.
- (3) He never regresses in discipline or dhyāna, and accepts offerings with a mind well subdued.
- (4) When he sees a virtuous Bodhisattva, he respects him, admires him, and emulates his virtuous deeds.

"Furthermore, Kāśyapa, there are four mistakes that a Bodhisattva may make. What are the four?

- (1) To comply with an untrustworthy person;
- (2) to preach a profound doctrine to a sentient being who is incapable of accepting it;
- (3) to praise the Hīnayāna among those who rejoice in the Mahāyāna; and
- (4) to give only to virtuous precept-keepers, not to wicked people.

“Furthermore, Kāśyapa, there are four right paths for a Bodhisattva. What are the four?

- (1) To treat all sentient beings impartially;
- (2) to teach all sentient beings impartially [on the basis of the] Buddha’s wisdom;
- (3) to preach the Dharma to all sentient beings without discrimination; and
- (4) to cause all sentient beings to abide in right action equally.

“Furthermore, Kāśyapa, there are four kinds of people who are not good friends or companions for a Bodhisattva. What are the four?

- (1) Śrāvakas, who desire only to benefit themselves;
- (2) Pratyekabuddhas, who enjoy having few things to attend to;
- (3) the worldly scholars, who study heterodox scriptures and indulge in flowery literature; and
- (4) associates who can only increase his worldly acquisitions, not his acquisition of the Dharma.

“Furthermore, Kāśyapa, there are four kinds of people who are good friends and companions for a Bodhisattva. What are the four?

- (1) Those who call upon a Bodhisattva for help are his good friends, because they cause him to walk upon the Buddha’s path.
- (2) Those who can expound the Dharma are his good friends, because they spread wisdom.
- (3) Those who can persuade others to renounce the household life are his good friends, because they can increase [others’] virtues.
- (4) All the Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, are his good friends, because they cause all Buddha-Dharmas to grow and thrive.

“Furthermore, Kāśyapa, there are four kinds of people who may appear to be Bodhisattvas but actually are not. What are the four?

- (1) Those who lust for material gains instead of seeking the Dharma;
- (2) those who wish to acquire fame instead of virtues;
- (3) those who seek their own happiness and do not show other sentient beings the path to the cessation of suffering; and
- (4) those who enjoy the company of many disciples and dislike detachment and seclusion.

“Furthermore, Kāśyapa, there are four kinds of true Bodhisattvas. What are the four?

- (1) Those who not only understand and believe in emptiness, but also believe in karmic retribution;⁵
- (2) those who know that all dharmas are devoid of self-entity, but who still have great compassion for sentient beings;⁶
- (3) those who deeply cherish nirvāṇa, but continue to roam in saṃsāra; and
- (4) those who practice giving for the benefit of sentient beings, without seeking any reward.

“Furthermore, Kāśyapa, a Bodhisattva has four great treasures. What are the four?

- (1) Encountering Buddhas;
- (2) hearing the six pāramitās and the elucidation of their meaning;
- (3) regarding a Dharma-master with an unobstructed mind; and
- (4) being inclined to the unremitting practice of renunciation.

“Furthermore, Kāśyapa, four things enable a Bodhisattva to transcend devilish hindrances.⁷ What are the four?

- (1) Never to be apart from bodhicitta;
- (2) to harbor no ill feelings against sentient beings;
- (3) to be aware of every kind of knowledge and view; and
- (4) never to despise or belittle any sentient being.

“Furthermore, Kāśyapa, four things enable a Bodhisattva to accumulate good roots. What are the four?

- (1) To avoid a wrong mentality when in solitude;
- (2) to practice the four inducements among sentient beings without expecting any reward;
- (3) to pursue the Dharma vigorously, even at the cost of his life; and
- (4) to cultivate numerous good roots without satiety.

“Furthermore, Kāśyapa, a Bodhisattva has four adornments [causing] immeasurable blessings.⁸ What are the four?

- (1) To teach the Dharma with a pure mind;
- (2) to have great compassion for those who break the precepts;
- (3) to extol bodhicitta among sentient beings; and
- (4) to practice patience when insulted by the lowly and inferior.

“Furthermore, Kāśyapa, a [true] Bodhisattva is not a Bodhisattva in name only. One who can practice wholesome dharmas and has a mind of equality is called a Bodhisattva. Briefly speaking, one who accomplishes thirty-two things is called a Bodhisattva. What are the thirty-two?

- (1) To aspire to bring sentient beings peace and happiness;
- (2) to enable all sentient beings to abide in all-knowing wisdom;
- (3) not to resent others' wisdom;
- (4) to shatter one's own haughtiness and arrogance;
- (5) to take deep pleasure in the Buddha's path;
- (6) to love and respect all sentient beings sincerely;
- (7) to remain thoroughly kind to friends and foes alike up to one's attainment of nirvāṇa;
- (8) always to speak with a smile and be the first to offer greetings;
- (9) never to stop halfway through in performing a task;
- (10) to extend great compassion equally to all sentient beings;
- (11) to seek extensive learning untiringly and insatiably;
- (12) to look for one's own faults, but not to speak of others' shortcomings;
- (13) to be inspired by bodhicitta in every aspect of one's behavior;
- (14) to practice giving without expecting anything in return;⁹
- (15) to observe the discipline, but not for the purpose of a higher rebirth;
- (16) to practice patience with an unimpeded mind among sentient beings;
- (17) to strive with vigor to cultivate all good roots;
- (18) to practice meditation without aspiring to rebirth in the realm of formlessness;
- (19) to apply the wisdom of skillful means;
- (20) to practice the four inducements;
- (21) to be equally kind to both good and evil sentient beings;
- (22) to listen to the Dharma single-mindedly;
- (23) to remain detached in mind;
- (24) not to indulge in worldly affairs;
- (25) not to enjoy the Hīnayāna, but always to see great benefit in the Mahāyāna;
- (26) to avoid bad friends and associate with good ones;
- (27) to accomplish the four immeasurables and achieve total command of the five miraculous powers;
- (28) always to rely on the true wisdom;
- (29) not to forsake any sentient beings, whether their actions are right or wrong;
- (30) always to discourse with decisiveness;
- (31) to value the true Dharma; and
- (32) to dedicate all one's deeds to bodhi.

Kāśyapa, if a person fulfills these thirty-two things, he is called a Bodhisattva.

"Furthermore, Kāśyapa, the virtues of a Bodhisattva are innumerable and boundless; they can only be illustrated by parables and similes.

"Kāśyapa, just as the great earth, used by all sentient beings, does not

discriminate or seek rewards, so a Bodhisattva benefits all sentient beings from the time he engenders bodhicitta until the time he attains Buddhahood, but does not discriminate or seek rewards.

"Kāśyapa, just as the element water causes all kinds of grains, medicinal herbs, and trees to grow, so a Bodhisattva, because his mind is pure, extends his kindness and compassion to all sentient beings and causes all wholesome dharmas to grow.

"Kāśyapa, just as the element fire ripens all grains and fruits, so a Bodhisattva's wisdom ripens all wholesome dharmas.

"Kāśyapa, just as the element air causes the formation of all the worlds, so a Bodhisattva's ingenuity causes the formation of all the Buddha-Dharmas.

"Kāśyapa, just as the brilliance and size of a new moon increase from day to day, so all the wholesome dharmas in a Bodhisattva's pure mind grow from day to day.

"Kāśyapa, just as the light of the rising sun simultaneously illuminates all sentient beings, so a Bodhisattva's light of wisdom simultaneously illuminates all sentient beings.

"Kāśyapa, just as the lion, the king of beasts, is fearless wherever it goes, so a Bodhisattva, being flawless in keeping the precepts and endowed with true wisdom, is fearless wherever he dwells.

"Kāśyapa, just as a well-trained, huge elephant can perform great feats without tiring, so a Bodhisattva, due to his well-subdued mind, can yield great benefits to sentient beings without feeling weary at heart.

"Kāśyapa, just as the lotus grows in muddy water but is not soiled by the mud, so a Bodhisattva lives in the world, but is unsullied by worldly things.

"Kāśyapa, after a tree is felled, its stump will continue to grow as long as its root remains. In the same way, after a Bodhisattva has severed the knots of defilement, he still takes rebirth in the three realms by the power of his ingenuity, because he retains his intrinsic love [for sentient beings].

"Kāśyapa, just as the streams flowing from all directions assume a uniform taste when they join the ocean, so the numerous good roots accumulated in different ways by a Bodhisattva become uniform in taste¹⁰ when they are dedicated to the attainment of supreme enlightenment.

"Kāśyapa, just as Mount Sumeru, the king of mountains, is the dwelling-place of the gods of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three and the Heaven of the Four Deva Kings, so the Bodhisattva's bodhicitta is the basis of all-knowing wisdom.

"Kāśyapa, just as the king of a large country can administer state affairs with the assistance of his ministers, so a Bodhisattva's wisdom can accomplish all the Buddha's undertakings with the power of ingenuity.

"Kāśyapa, just as a sunny sky without a speck of cloud is a sure sign that there will be no rain, so a Bodhisattva who has learned little will show no sign of a Dharma-rain.

"Kāśyapa, just as a dark, cloudy sky will inevitably produce rain to fulfill the needs of sentient beings, so a Bodhisattva produces a heavy Dharma-rain from the cloud of great compassion, for the benefit of sentient beings.¹¹

"Kāśyapa, just as the seven treasures appear wherever a universal monarch appears, so the thirty-seven ways to enlightenment appear in the world whenever a Bodhisattva appears.

"Kāśyapa, just as there is an infinite quantity of gold, silver, and precious gems wherever a wish-fulfilling pearl is found, so there are infinite numbers of Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas wherever a Bodhisattva appears.

"Kāśyapa, when the gods of the Heaven of the Thirty-Three enter the Garden of Equality, all the things they use are the same; similarly, a Bodhisattva, with his truly pure mind, teaches all sentient beings equally.

"Kāśyapa, just as poisons can be rendered harmless by charms and antidotes, so the poison of defilements is rendered harmless to a Bodhisattva by the power of his wisdom, and does not cause him to fall to the miserable planes of existence.

"Kāśyapa, just as the excrement and garbage discarded by the people living in big cities will yield benefits when placed in vineyards and sugarcane fields, so the residual defilements of a Bodhisattva will yield benefits because they are conducive to all-knowing wisdom.¹²

"Moreover, Kāśyapa, a Bodhisattva who wishes to learn this Sūtra of Assembled Treasures should constantly cultivate the right insight into all dharmas. What is the right insight? It is to think of all dharmas as they really are. The true, right insight means not to see a self, a personal identity, a sentient being, or a life. This is called the middle way,¹³ the true, right insight.

"Furthermore, Kāśyapa, true insight means to regard forms as neither permanent nor impermanent; to regard feelings, conceptions, impulses, and consciousness as neither permanent nor impermanent. This is called the middle way, the true, right insight.

"Furthermore, Kāśyapa, true insight means to regard the element earth as neither permanent nor impermanent, and to regard the elements water, fire, and air as neither permanent nor impermanent. This is called the middle way, the true, right insight.

"Why? Permanence is one extreme, impermanence is the other, and [the two-in-one of] permanence-impermanence is the middle, which is formless, shapeless, incognizable, and unknowable. [To realize] it is called the middle way, the true insight into all dharmas.

"Ego is one extreme, egolessness is the other, and [the two-in-one of] ego-egolessness is the middle, which is formless, shapeless, incognizable, and unknowable. [To realize] it is called the middle way, the true insight into all dharmas.

"Furthermore, Kāśyapa, [to regard] the mind as real is one extreme; [to regard] it as unreal is the other. [To realize] that there is no mind or mental function is called the middle way, the true insight into all dharmas.

"The same is true of the dharmas which are wholesome and unwholesome,

mundane and supramundane, sinful and not sinful, afflictive and nonafflictive, conditioned and unconditioned, defiled and undefiled. That which is apart from the two extremes cannot be felt¹⁴ or expressed. [To realize] it is called the middle way, the true insight into all dharmas.

"Furthermore, Kāśyapa, existence is one extreme, nonexistence is the other, and that which falls on neither extreme is formless, shapeless, incognizable, and unknowable. [To realize] it is called the middle way, the true insight into all dharmas.

"Next, Kāśyapa, there is a doctrine I have expounded, namely, the twelve links of dependent origination: on ignorance depend actions; on actions depends consciousness; on consciousness depend name and form; on name and form depend the six senses; on the six senses depends contact; on contact depends feeling; on feeling depends craving; on craving depends grasping; on grasping depends becoming; on becoming depends birth; on birth depend old age, death, worry, sorrow, misery, and distress. These links of dependent origination are nothing but a great mass of suffering. If ignorance ceases, actions cease; if actions cease, consciousness ceases; if consciousness ceases, name and form cease; if name and form cease, the six senses cease; if the six senses cease, contact ceases; if contact ceases, feeling ceases; if feeling ceases, craving ceases, if craving ceases, grasping ceases; if grasping ceases, becoming ceases; if becoming ceases, birth ceases; if birth ceases, then old age, death, worry, sorrow, distress, and the whole mass of suffering altogether cease.

"[Concerning the twelve links of dependent origination,] ignorance, [or not knowing], and wisdom, [or knowing], are one and the same. To understand this is called the middle way, the true insight into all dharmas. In like manner, actions and nonactions, consciousness and the objects of consciousness, the perceptible and the imperceptible aspects of name and form, the six senses and the six miraculous powers, contact and objects of contact, feeling and its cessation, craving and its cessation, grasping and its cessation, becoming and its cessation, birth and its cessation, old age and death and their cessation—all these are one and the same. To understand this is called the middle way, the true insight into all dharmas.

"Next, Kāśyapa, to one who has the true insight, things are empty, not because one contemplates them as empty; they are empty by nature. Things are signless, not because one contemplates them as signless; they are signless in themselves. Things are unsought,¹⁵ not because one contemplates them as unsought; they are unsought in themselves. Things are devoid of origination, arising, entity, and self-nature; they are impossible to grasp, not because one contemplates them as such; they are so in themselves. This understanding is called the true insight.

"Furthermore, Kāśyapa, personal identity is empty, not because one thinks there is no personal identity; it is empty in itself. It was empty in the past; it will be empty in the future; and it is empty at present. Therefore, one should rely on emptiness, not on personal identity.

"However, if one thinks that he has realized emptiness and becomes attached

to emptiness, then he regresses in the pursuit of the Buddha-Dharma. Thus, Kāśyapa, it is better for one to take a view of the self as massive as Mount Sumeru than to take a view of emptiness and become arrogant. Why? Because all views can be eliminated by emptiness, but if one gives rise to the view of emptiness, there is no way to do away with it.¹⁶

"Kāśyapa, if a physician gives his patient some medicine to purge an illness, but the medicine stays in the body instead of being discharged, what do you think? Will the patient get better?"

"No, World-Honored One. The patient's illness will become worse if the medicine is not discharged."

"In like manner, Kāśyapa, all views can be eliminated by emptiness, but the view of emptiness cannot be eradicated."

"Suppose a person is afraid of empty space and wails in grief and pounds his chest, saying, 'I want to escape from empty space!' What do you think? Can one escape from empty space?"

"No, World-Honored One."

"Similarly, Kāśyapa, if a person is afraid of the doctrine of emptiness, I say, he is crazy and has lost his mind. Why do I say so? Because he is always in emptiness, and yet is afraid of it."

"Just as a painter paints a picture of demons and then faints at the sight of his own creation, so ordinary people fabricate forms, sounds, odors, tastes, and textures, and then wander in saṃsāra afflicting themselves with all kinds of suffering without knowing it."

"Just as a magician produces an illusory being and then is devoured by it, so a monk who follows the path engenders the view that all dharmas are empty, still, and insubstantial; and then he, the viewer, is also voided [by this view].¹⁷"

"Kāśyapa, just as fire produced by rubbing two pieces of wood together will burn up wood, so, Kāśyapa, the sacred wisdom born of true insight will burn up true insight."

"When a lamp is lit, the darkness completely vanishes. The darkness goes nowhere, just as it comes from nowhere—it does not go to or come from the east, the south, the west, the north, the four intermediate directions, the zenith, or the nadir. Furthermore, the lamplight does not think. 'I can dispel darkness,' though it is because of the light that the darkness vanished. Both light and darkness are empty, inert, and impossible to grasp. Similarly, Kāśyapa, once true wisdom arises, ignorance ends. Both wisdom and ignorance are empty, inert, and impossible to grasp."

"Kāśyapa, suppose a room has been totally dark for a thousand years and then a lamp is lit therein. Do you suppose the darkness will think to itself, 'I have lived here for a long time and do not want to go'?"

"No, World-Honored One. When the lamp is lit, the darkness will be powerless. Even if it should refuse to go, it would surely be dispelled."

"In the same way, Kāśyapa, with one true insight, all the defilements and

karmas accumulated through hundreds of thousands of millions of kalpas can be eradicated. The lamplight stands for the sacred wisdom; the darkness stands for the defilements and karmas.

"To illustrate, Kāśyapa, it is absolutely impossible for a seed to grow in midair. Likewise, it is impossible for a Bodhisattva to develop the Buddha-Dharma if he clings to his realization [of emptiness]. Kāśyapa, just as a seed sprouts when sown in a fertile field, so, Kāśyapa, the Buddha-Dharma grows when a Bodhisattva dwells among defilements and involves himself in worldly things.¹⁸

"Kāśyapa, just as a lotus flower cannot grow in high, dry land, so the Buddha-Dharma cannot grow in a Bodhisattva who stays in [the realm of] the unconditioned. Kāśyapa, just as a lotus flower grows in a low, wet, muddy land, so the Buddha-Dharma grows only when a Bodhisattva stays in the mire of saṃsāra among those in the group convinced by heterodox teachings.¹⁹

"Kāśyapa, the quantity of a Bodhisattva's conditioned good roots is like the quantity of cream sufficient to fill the four great oceans, while the quantity of a Śrāvaka's good roots is like a tiny droplet from that ocean suspended from a hundredth part of a hair."

"Kāśyapa, a Śrāvaka's conditioned wisdom is like the space inside a tiny mustard seed. Kāśyapa, a Bodhisattva's conditioned wisdom²⁰ is like the immeasurable, boundless space throughout the ten directions, and its power is infinite."

"Kāśyapa, suppose the wife of a kṣatriya ruler bears the child of a poor, lowly man. What do you think? Will the child be a prince?"

"No, World-Honored One."

"In the same way, Kāśyapa, although my Śrāvaka disciples [and the Bodhisattvas] both realize the Dharma-nature and are born of it, Śrāvakas are not called the true sons of the Tathāgata."

"Kāśyapa, if a kṣatriya ruler has a child with his maidservant of low caste, the child may be called a prince. Similarly, though a novice Bodhisattva is not fully equipped with merits or wisdom, wanders in saṃsāra, and can only benefit sentient beings within the limits of his [meager] power, he is still called a true son of the Tathāgata."

"Kāśyapa, if a universal monarch has a thousand sons, but not one of them bears the characteristics of a universal monarch, the monarch will not consider any of them as heir to the throne. Similarly, if a Tathāgata is surrounded by hundreds of thousands of millions of Śrāvakas, but no Bodhisattvas, he will not consider any of them as his true son."

"Kāśyapa, suppose the wife of a universal monarch is pregnant for seven days with a son who is already endowed with all the characteristics of a universal monarch. This son will be respected by gods more than other, grown sons [who lack those characteristics]. Why? Because this embryo prince will someday inherit the throne and perpetuate the lineage of the universal monarch. Similarly, Kāśyapa, though a novice Bodhisattva does not yet fully possess the qualities of a

Bodhisattva, he will, as in the case of the embryo prince, be more deeply honored by gods and spirits than great Arhats who have achieved the eightfold liberation. Why? Because such a Bodhisattva is heir to the supreme throne [of the Tathāgata] and will perpetuate the Buddha-lineage.

"Kāśyapa, just as one bead of lapis lazuli is worth more than ordinary crystal beads piled as high as Mount Sumeru, so a Bodhisattva, even when he first brings forth bodhicitta, surpasses all Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas combined.

"Kāśyapa, when a prince is newly born, all the chieftains and ministers come to pay their respects to him. Similarly, when a Bodhisattva first brings forth bodhicitta, all gods and humans should pay homage to him.

"Kāśyapa, just as the herbs growing in the Himalayas belong to no one and will cure any person of his illness without discrimination, so the medicine of wisdom acquired by a Bodhisattva can deliver all sentient beings equally, without discrimination.

"Kāśyapa, just as people adore a new moon more than a full moon, so those who believe my words adore a Bodhisattva more than they adore a Tathāgata. Why? Because Tathāgatas are born of Bodhisattvas.²¹

"Kāśyapa, a fool may worship stars instead of the moon, but a wise man will never pay homage to Śrāvakas instead of Bodhisattvas.

"Kāśyapa, no matter how skillful a god or human may be in making artificial gems, he cannot turn an ordinary bead into a precious bead of lapis lazuli. Similarly, for all their accomplishments in discipline and meditation, those who seek Śrāvakahood can never sit at the bodhi-site to realize supreme bodhi.

"Kāśyapa, when a bead of lapis lazuli is formed, myriads of gems will appear with it. Similarly, when a Bodhisattva is taught and develops, he will yield myriads of Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas."

Then the World-Honored One told Mahākāśyapa further, "A Bodhisattva should always try to benefit sentient beings. He should correctly cultivate all meritorious deeds and good roots and dedicate them to all sentient beings equally. He should administer to sentient beings everywhere in the ten directions the medicines of wisdom he has acquired, and thus cure them thoroughly.

"What are the genuine medicines of wisdom?²² Contemplation on [bodily] impurities cures lust. Contemplation on kindness cures anger and hatred. Contemplation on dependent origination cures ignorance.²³

"Contemplation on the emptiness of phenomena cures all deluded views. Contemplation on signlessness cures memories, discriminations, and wandering thoughts. Contemplation on wishlessness cures the desire to escape from the three realms.

"Contemplation on the four right views cures the four wrong views; contemplation on the impermanence of all conditioned dharmas cures the wrong view of regarding the impermanent as permanent; contemplation on the sufferings caused by conditioned dharmas cures the wrong view of regarding suffering as pleasure; contemplation on the absence of self-entity in dharmas cures the wrong view of

regarding that which has no self as having a self; and contemplation on the tranquillity of nirvāṇa cures the wrong view of regarding the impure as pure.

"The four mindfulnesses²⁴ cure clinging to body, feelings, mind, and dharmas. One who practices the Dharma and contemplates the body as it really is will not be trapped by the view of a real self. One who contemplates feelings as they really are will not be trapped by the view of a real self. One who contemplates the mind as it really is will not be trapped by the view of a real self. One who contemplates dharmas as they really are will not be trapped by the view of a real self. These four mindfulnesses, therefore, cause one to abhor the body, feelings, mind, and all dharmas, and thereby open the door to nirvāṇa.

"By the four right efforts one can put an end to present unwholesome dharmas, prevent new unwholesome dharmas from arising, bring new wholesome dharmas into existence, and at the same time cultivate all virtues and good roots. . . . When such a Bodhisattva has acquired the medicine of wisdom, he will proceed in all the ten directions to cure sentient beings thoroughly [of their afflictions].

"What is a Bodhisattva's medicine of supramundane wisdom? It is to know that all dharmas arise from combinations of causes and conditions. It is to believe that all dharmas are devoid of self-entity, personal identity, being, or life; that there is no knower, seer, doer, or receiver.²⁵ It is to believe in and penetrate this truth [that] there is no 'I' or 'mine.'

"A Bodhisattva should not be afraid of or terrified by this Dharma of emptiness, in which nothing is apprehensible. He should further exert himself to probe the characteristics of the mind.

"A Bodhisattva probes the mind by thinking: 'What is the mind? Is it desire? Is it hatred? Is it ignorance? Does it belong to the past, the present, or the future?' If it belongs to the past, the past is gone. If it belongs to the future, the future has not yet come. If it belongs to the present, the present never stands still. The mind is not inside or outside [the body], nor in between. It is formless, shapeless, incognizable, and unknowable; it relies on nothing and has no location. Such a mind was not, is not, and will not be seen by any of the Buddhas of the ten directions and the three phases of time. If it is not seen by any of the past, present, or future Buddhas, how can it exist? It is due to wrong thinking that the mind arises, and along with it all the different dharmas. The mind is illusory, but through thought, fantasy, and discrimination, it gives rise to all kinds of karmas and consequently causes one to receive various bodily forms [as karmic results].

"Furthermore, Mahākāśyapa, the mind is like the wind blowing, which no one can catch. It is like flowing water, continually arising and ceasing. It is like the flame of a lamp, caused by various factors. It is like lightning, for it perishes from moment to moment. It is like the air, for it is polluted by the dust of external objects. It is like a monkey, for it clings to the six desires one after another. It is like a painter, for it is able to create numerous karmic causes and conditions.

"The mind is not fixed, for it runs after various defilements. It is like a

mighty ruler, for all dharmas are governed by it. It acts alone, without companion, for two minds cannot exist simultaneously. It is a bitter enemy, for it causes all sufferings. It can ruin all good roots, just as a mad elephant may trample mud huts under its feet. It behaves like [a fish] swallowing a hook, considering suffering to be pleasure. It is like a dream, giving rise to the idea of an 'I' where there is no 'I.' It is like a fly, considering impurities to be pure.

"The mind is like a rogue, for it can torture one in every way. It is like a demon, always looking for opportunities to attack. It constantly swings between high and low, for it is spoiled by greed and anger. It is like a bandit, for it can rob one of all good roots. It lusts for forms, just as a moth plunges into fire. It yearns for sounds, just as a veteran soldier yearns to hear drumbeats signaling victory. It is always greedy for fragrances, just as a hog enjoys wallowing in filth. It always pursues flavors, just as a young girl indulges in delicacies. It always craves pleasant textures, just as a fly clings to oil.

"Thus, Kāśyapa, [a Bodhisattva] probes the characteristics of the mind but finds the mind to be inapprehensible. If it is inapprehensible, it has nothing to do with the past, present, or future. If it has nothing to do with the past, present, or future, it transcends the three phases of time. If it transcends the three phases of time, it is neither existent nor nonexistent. If it is neither existent nor nonexistent, it is birthless. If it is birthless, it has no self-nature. If it has no self-nature, it does not arise. If it does not arise, it does not cease. If it does not cease, it parts with nothing. If it parts with nothing, then it neither comes nor goes, and neither gains nor loses anything. If it neither comes nor goes, and neither gains nor loses anything, then it performs no actions. If it performs no actions, then it is unconditioned.

"Since it is unconditioned, it is the root from which all saints develop. In the unconditioned, there is no keeping or breaking of precepts. If there is no keeping or breaking of precepts, then there is no action or inaction. If there is no action or inaction, then there is no mind or mental function. If there is no mind or mental function, then there is no karma or karmic result. If there is no karma or karmic result, then there is no joy or suffering. What is free from joy and suffering is the holy nature; in it, there is no karma or creator of karma; no bodily karma, no verbal karma, and no mental karma; nor any such distinctions as high, middle, or low.

"The holy nature is equal throughout, for it is like empty space. It is beyond distinction, for all dharmas are of one taste. It is detachment, for it is detached from all phenomena of body and mind. It is apart from all dharmas, for it accords with nirvāṇa. It is purity, for it is free from all defilements. It has no 'I,' for it is devoid of the 'I' and 'mine.' It has no high or low, for it is born of equality.

"The holy nature is the real truth, for it is the ultimate truth. It never ends, for it ultimately does not come into being. It always abides, for all dharmas forever remain the same. It is bliss, for nirvāṇa is the highest [bliss]. It is pure, for it is apart from all phenomena. It has no 'I,' for the 'I' is inapprehensible. The holy nature is true purity, for it is ultimately pure from the beginning.

"Furthermore, Mahākāśyapa, all of you should contemplate inwardly. Do not let your minds gallop outside.

"Now, Mahākāśyapa, some monks in the future will behave like a dog chasing clods of earth. What does this mean? If a person throws clods of earth at a dog, the dog will chase the clods instead of the person. In the same way, Kāśyapa, a śramaṇa or brāhmin may fear the bondage of pleasant forms, sounds, scents, tastes, and textures, and live completely alone in a secluded place, far away from the bustling multitude; but, while his body is separated from the objects of the five sensuous desires, his mind has not renounced them. Such a person will at times think about pleasant forms, sounds, scents, tastes, and textures, and yearn to enjoy them instead of contemplating inwardly. He does not know how to detach himself from forms, sounds, scents, tastes, and textures. Because he does not know this, when he enters a city, town, or village and mingles with the crowd, he will still be attached to the pleasant forms, sounds, scents, tastes, and textures. Because he has observed the mundane rules of conduct in a secluded place, he can be reborn in heaven after death. However, he will then be bound again by the five sensuous pleasures in heaven; and when his life there ends, he will still be unable to escape falling to the four miserable planes of existence, namely, those of hell-dwellers, hungry ghosts, animals, and asuras. Such a monk may be likened to a dog chasing clods of earth.²⁶

"Furthermore, Kāśyapa, how can a monk not be like a dog chasing clods of earth? Suppose a monk does not return a scolding for a scolding, nor does he retaliate for beatings, injuries, hatred, or slander; instead, he only reflects inwardly, seeking to subdue his own mind, and thinks, 'Who is the scolder? Who is the scolded? Who is the beater, the injurer, the hater, or the slanderer?' Such a monk is not like a dog chasing clods of earth.

"Kāśyapa, just as a good horse trainer can immediately tame a rampageous, unruly horse, so one who practices the Dharma can instantly arrest his mind whenever it wanders, not allowing it to go astray.

"Kāśyapa, just as a throttling disease can cut short one's life immediately, so, Kāśyapa, among all views, the view of an 'I' can cut short the life of wisdom instantly.

"Just as a person seeks to release himself from whatever bonds restrict him, so, Kāśyapa, one should seek to release himself from whatever his mind is attached to.

"Furthermore, Kāśyapa, one who has left the household life may have two impurities of the mind. What are the two? First, to read heterodox scriptures, such as those of the materialists; second, to collect fine robes and bowls.

"Furthermore, Kāśyapa, one who has left the household life may suffer from two strong fetters. What are the two? First, the fetter of wrong views; second, the fetter of material gains.

"Furthermore, one who has left the household life may meet two obstacles. What are the two? First, to be intimate with laypeople; second, to resent virtuous persons.

“Furthermore, one who has left the household life may have two blemishes. What are the two? First, to tolerate defilements [in himself]; second, to be attached to donors.

“Furthermore, one who has left the household life may be afflicted by two hailstorms that will ruin his good roots. What are the two? First, to rebel against and to corrupt the true Dharma; second, to accept offerings from devotees after having broken the precepts.

“Furthermore, one who has left the household life may suffer from two abscesses. What are the two? First, to find fault with others; second, to hide his own faults.

“Furthermore, one who has left the household life may be afflicted with two fevers. What are the two? First, to be defiled in mind while wearing a monastic robe; second, to accept offerings from virtuous people who keep the precepts, [while violating the precepts himself].

“Furthermore, one who has left the household life may suffer from two illnesses. What are the two? First, to be arrogant and refuse to be humble; second, to ruin others’ aspirations for the Mahāyāna.

“Moreover, Mahākāśyapa, there are four kinds of śramaṇas. What are the four?

- (1) Śramaṇas in appearance and attire [only];
- (2) śramaṇas who are deceptively dignified in conduct;
- (3) śramaṇas who lust for fame; and
- (4) śramaṇas who really practice the Dharma.

“What is a śramaṇa in appearance and attire [only]? Suppose a śramaṇa is fully dressed in a monastic robe, has cleanly shaven hair and beard, and an alms-bowl in hand, yet he performs impure actions of body, speech, and mind. Instead of properly guarding himself from evil, he is miserly, jealous, idle, and lazy; he violates the precepts and engages in vile pursuits. Such a śramaṇa is one in appearance and attire [only].

“What is a śramaṇa who is deceptively dignified in conduct? Suppose a śramaṇa displays full dignity in walking, standing, sitting, and lying down. He is composed and serene; does not take delicacies; follows the four noble practices; avoids the bustling crowd, even a group of monks; and speaks softly. However, he does all this deceitfully, not for the sake of true purity. Or, he thinks there is something to be attained in emptiness, and is afraid of the doctrine of nonattainment, just as one is afraid of an abyss; he regards as enemies or bandits those monks who preach that all dharmas are ultimately empty. Such a śramaṇa is one who is deceptively dignified in conduct.

“What is a śramaṇa who lusts for fame? Suppose a śramaṇa observes the precepts only because he wants to be known and to achieve certain goals in his present life. He reads and recites the sūtras on his own because he wants people to know that he is learned; and he lives alone in a secluded spot because he wants

people to know that he is a recluse who has few desires, is content, and practices detachment. In short, he does everything for the sole purpose of fame, not out of renunciation, nor to achieve true tranquillity, nor to realize the truth, nor to attain the fruit of a śramaṇa or brāhmin, nor to achieve nirvāṇa. Such a śramaṇa is one who lusts for fame.

“Finally, Kāśyapa, what is a śramaṇa who really practices the Dharma? Suppose a śramaṇa does not even crave for physical existence, much less for material gains. When he hears that all dharmas are empty, signless, and unsought, he understands this doctrine thoroughly, conforms to it, and practices it as taught. He does not cultivate pure conduct in order to achieve nirvāṇa, much less to [be reborn in] the three realms. He does not cherish the idea of emptiness, or the idea that there is no ‘I,’ let alone the idea of an ‘I,’ a being, or a personal identity.

“He parts with reliance in seeking release from all defilements; seeing that all dharmas are originally undefiled and ultimately pure, he relies on himself instead of others. Realizing the true Dharma-body, he does not even see the Buddha, much less [his physical] form. Through realizing emptiness, he has become detached, and does not even perceive the Dharma; much less does he crave for the sounds and words [describing it]. Realizing the unconditioned, he does not even see the Saṅgha, much less the existence of a harmonious assembly. He does not eradicate anything or cultivate anything; he does not abide in saṃsāra or attach himself to nirvāṇa.²⁷ Knowing that all dharmas are from the beginning ultimately quiescent, he perceives no bondage and seeks no liberation. Such a śramaṇa is one who really practices the Dharma.

“Thus, Kāśyapa, you should imitate the śramaṇa who really practices the Dharma. Do not be ruined by names. Kāśyapa, suppose a poor, lowly man assumed the name of a rich, noble person. Do you think the name would fit him?”

“No, World-Honored One.”

“In the same way, Kāśyapa, if one is called a śramaṇa or brāhmin but does not perform the real meritorious deeds of a śramaṇa or brāhmin, he will be ruined by the name.

“For example, a person swept away by a flood may die of thirst and fatigue. Similarly, Kāśyapa, if a śramaṇa reads many sūtras but cannot quench his thirst of desire, hatred, and ignorance, he will be swept away by the Dharma-flood, die of the thirst of defilements, and fall to the miserable planes of existence.

“For example, a physician who always carries a medicine pouch may be unable to cure his own illness. The same is true of a learned person afflicted with the illness of defilements; although he has much learning, he cannot benefit himself unless he puts an end to his defilements.

“A person who takes a king’s expensive medicine may be unable to adjust himself to it and be hurt by it. The same is true of a learned person afflicted with the illness of defilements: although he has obtained the good medicine of the Dharma, he will hurt his own root of wisdom if he does not cultivate virtues.

“Kāśyapa, just as a wish-fulfilling pearl that has just fallen into filth cannot

be worn, so a learned person who covets material gains cannot benefit humans or gods.

"Just as a corpse may wear gold ornaments, so a learned monk who breaks the precepts may [improperly] wear monastic robes and accept offerings from people.

"If an elder's son trims his nails, bathes, rubs himself with red sandalwood incense, puts a garland around his neck, and wears new, white clothing, then his appearance befits his social status. Similarly, Kāśyapa, a learned monk who observes the precepts is worthy to wear a monastic robe and accept offerings from people.

"Next, Mahākāśyapa, there are four kinds of monks who break the precepts but appear to keep the precepts well. What are the four?

"Some monks observe the precepts completely. They are always afraid of committing any transgression, whether major or minor, and obey all the rules of discipline they have learned. They are pure in action, word, and thought, and adopt a pure, right means of livelihood. However, they uphold the doctrine which claims that there is a real 'self.'²⁸ These people constitute the first kind of monk who breaks the precepts but appears to keep the precepts well.

"Furthermore, Kāśyapa, some monks recite the code of discipline and practice its teachings. However, they continue to hold the view of a real body. They constitute the second kind of monk who breaks the precepts but appears to keep the precepts well.

"Furthermore, Kāśyapa, some monks observe the precepts completely. However, in practicing kindness they become attached to sentient beings, and when they hear that no dharma ever arises, they are terrified. They constitute the third kind of monk who breaks the precepts but seems to keep the precepts well.

"Finally, Kāśyapa, some monks practice all twelve austerities,²⁹ but see something attainable in doing so. They constitute the fourth kind of monk who breaks the precepts but seems to keep the precepts well.

"Next, Kāśyapa, one who observes the precepts well sees no 'I' or 'mine'; no doing or nondoining, no deed or doer, no action or inaction, no name or form, no signs or nonsigns, no cessation or continuation, no clinging or abandoning, nothing to grasp and nothing to give up, no sentient being and no term 'sentient being,' no mind and no term 'mind,' no world or nonworld, and no reliance or nonreliance. Such a person does not pride himself on keeping the precepts, nor does he look down upon the way others observe the precepts, nor does he think or discriminate about the precepts. He is called one who observes the discipline of all saints; he is free from defilements and bondage, not caught in the three realms, and beyond all doctrines of reliance."

Thereupon, to clarify this point, the World-Honored One spoke in verse:

"One who observes the precepts purely
Is free from any blemish;
He is free from everything.

In keeping the precepts,
He is not arrogant,
And relies upon nothing.
In keeping the precepts,
He is not deluded,
And is free from all bonds.

In keeping the precepts,
He is untainted,
And does nothing amiss.
In keeping the precepts,
His mind is pliant and gentle,
And he always dwells in ultimate quiescence.

Such a person is far apart
From all thoughts and discriminations;
He is liberated from every stirring
Of the mind.
This is the pure observance
Of the Buddha's precepts.

If one is not attached to his [present] life,
Nor craves for any [future] birth,
But performs only right actions,
And abides securely in the noble path—
He is one who purely, and in truth,
Observes the Buddha's precepts.

One who keeps the precepts
Is not defiled by the world,
Nor does he rely
On anything mundane.
Once he attains the light of wisdom,
All darkness vanishes and nothing remains;
Without a notion of self or others,
He knows and sees all phenomena.
He is one who purely, and in truth,
Observes the Buddha's precepts.

There is no this or other shore,
Nor anything in between.
Be not attached [to them], nor
To the absence of the three.
To be free from bondage, defilements, and deceit
Is called the true, pure observance
Of the Buddha's precepts.

If one is not attached to name or form
 And has no notion of 'I' or 'mine,'
 He is said to securely abide
 In the true, pure observance
 Of the precepts.

Although one may observe all precepts,
 His arrogance should not increase,
 Nor should he regard
 The discipline as supreme.
 He should transcend it,
 And seek the holy path.
 To do this is a sign
 Of the true, pure observance
 Of the precepts.

Do not regard the discipline as supreme,
 Nor overvalue samādhi.
 If one can transcend both discipline and samādhi,
 But cultivate wisdom,
 He will realize emptiness, still and void,
 Which is the very nature shared
 By all saints and sages.
 To do this is the true, pure
 Observance of the precepts,
 Extolled by all Buddhas.

Release the mind from the view of a self,
 Eliminate the 'I' and 'mine,'
 Believe in and understand
 The teaching of quiescence and emptiness,
 Which all Buddhas practice;
 He who so observes the holy discipline
 Is indeed peerless.

One depends on discipline to achieve samādhi,
 And on samādhi to cultivate insight.
 Relying on the insight thus cultivated,
 One achieves the pure wisdom:
 He who achieves the pure wisdom
 Is able to keep the pure precepts."

When this was spoken, five hundred monks became detached from all dharmas and achieved mental liberation;³⁰ thirty-two thousand persons left mundane filth behind and attained the clear Dharma-eye.³¹ However, five hundred monks did

not understand or believe in the profound Dharma they had heard, and they rose from their seats and walked away.

Seeing this, Mahākāśyapa said to the Buddha, "World-Honored One, these five hundred monks have all attained dhyāna; however, because they cannot understand or have faith in the profound Dharma, they have risen and gone away."

The Buddha said to Kāśyapa, "These monks all have arrogance; therefore, when they hear of the pure, flawless discipline, they cannot understand it or have faith in it. The meaning of the verses spoken by the Buddha is profound. Why? Because the enlightenment of Buddhas is profound. If a person has not planted good roots abundantly, or associates with evil friends, he will lack the power of faith and understanding, and it will be difficult for him to accept and believe in [this doctrine].

"Furthermore, Mahākāśyapa, at the time of Kāśyapa Buddha, these five hundred monks were disciples of heterodox masters. Once they visited Kāśyapa Buddha in order to find fault with him; however, after they heard that Buddha expound the Dharma, they acquired a little faith and thought, 'This Buddha is unusual; how wonderfully he speaks!' Because of this virtuous thought, they were born in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three after death. When their lives ended there, they were born in this world, and here they renounced the household life for the Dharma.

"These monks are strongly attached to various views; therefore, they cannot believe in, conform to, or thoroughly understand the profound Dharma they hear expounded. Although they do not thoroughly understand the profound Dharma, they will obtain great benefit merely because they have heard it. They will not be reborn in the miserable planes of existence, but will realize nirvāṇa in this very life."

Then the Buddha told Subhūti, "Go bring those monks back."

Subhūti said, "World-Honored One, these people do not even believe the Buddha; much less will they believe Subhūti."

Thereupon the Buddha magically produced two monks to follow the five hundred monks. When the [real] monks saw the two magically produced ones, they asked them, "Where are you going?"

The magically produced monks answered, "We are going to some secluded spot to enjoy the practice of meditation. Why? Because we cannot understand or believe in what the Buddha said."

The other monks said, "Elders, we cannot understand or believe in what the Buddha said, either. We, too, are going to a secluded spot to practice meditation."

Then the magically produced monks said to the others, "We should give up arrogance, defiance, and contention, and try to understand and believe in what the Buddha taught. Why? Because to have no arrogance or contention is the law of śramaṇas. Nirvāṇa means cessation. What ceases? In the body, is there an 'I,' a personal identity, a doer, a receiver, or a life to cease?"

The other monks said, "In the body, there is no 'I,' no personal identity, no

doer, no receiver, and no life that ceases. It is the cessation of desire, hatred, and ignorance that is called *nirvāṇa*.”

The magically produced monks asked, “Do the desire, hatred, and ignorance you mentioned have definite forms to be totally extinguished?”

The other monks answered, “Desire, hatred, and ignorance are neither inside nor outside the body, nor anywhere in between. When one does not stir his mind, they do not arise.”³²

The magically produced monks said, “In that case, you should not stir your minds. If you do not stir your minds or make distinctions about dharmas, then you will be neither defiled by nor detached from anything. To be neither defiled by nor detached from anything is called ultimate quiescence. Discipline does not come or go or perish; meditation, wisdom, liberation, and the knowledge and awareness derived from liberation³³ also do not come or go or perish. It is in light of this doctrine that we speak of *nirvāṇa*. This truth is empty [in itself], detached from all things, and cannot be grasped. You should abandon even the thought of *nirvāṇa*. Do not follow any thought³⁴ or nonthought. Do not rid yourselves of a thought by another thought. Do not contemplate a thought by another thought. If you rid yourselves of a thought by using a thought, you are still bound by thought. You should not discriminate anything concerning the *Dhyāna* of Cessation of Feeling and Conception, because all dharmas are beyond discrimination. If a monk eliminates all feelings and conception and attains this *dhyāna*, then he fulfills himself to the utmost.”

When the magically produced monks had spoken thus, the five hundred [real] monks became detached from all dharmas and liberated in mind. They returned to the Buddha, bowed with their heads at his feet, and stood to one side.

Subhūti asked the monks, “Where did you go and where do you come from?”

The monks said, “The Dharma expounded by the Buddha comes from nowhere and goes nowhere.”

“Who is your teacher?”

→ “He who has never been born and will never die is our teacher.”

“Where do you learn the Dharma?”

“We learn the Dharma in the place where the five aggregates, the twelve entrances, and the eighteen elements do not exist.”

“Why do you learn the Dharma?”

“Not for the sake of bondage or for the sake of liberation.”

“What doctrine do you practice?”

“We do not try to attain anything or to eliminate anything.”

“Who subdued you?”

“We are subdued by [one whose] body has no definite nature and [whose] mind does not act.”³⁵

“What action leads to the liberation of the mind?”

“Neither the eradication of ignorance nor the generation of wisdom.”

“Whose disciples are you?”

“We are disciples of one who attains nothing and knows nothing.”

“You have attained [the ultimate liberation]; when will you enter *nirvāṇa*?”

“When a person magically produced by the *Tathāgata* enters *nirvāṇa*, we will do so, too.”³⁶

“Have you obtained benefit for yourselves?”

“Self-benefit is inapprehensible.”

“Have you accomplished what you set out to do?”

“Deeds are inapprehensible.”

“Have you cultivated pure conduct?”

“We cultivate nothing in the three realms, nor do we not cultivate anything; this is our pure conduct.”

“Have you exhausted your defilements?”

“Ultimately, nothing can be exhausted.”

“Have you vanquished the demons?”

“The demons of the aggregates are inapprehensible.”

“Do you serve the *Tathāgata*?”

“Not with body or mind.”

“Do you abide in the fields of blessings?”

“We do not abide in anything.”

“Have you cut off circling in *saṃsāra*?”

“There is neither permanence nor severance.”

“Do you conform to the Dharma?”

“We are liberated from every obstruction.”³⁷

“What is your ultimate destination?”

“Wherever a person magically produced by the *Tathāgata* goes, we will go.”

While Subhūti was questioning the monks, five hundred other monks became detached from all dharmas and liberated in mind; thirty-two thousand people parted from mundane defilements and attained the clear Dharma-eye.

Then a Bodhisattva in the assembly named Universal Light asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, if a Bodhisattva wishes to learn this *Sūtra* of Assembled Treasures, what should he abide in and how should he learn it?”

The Buddha answered, “A Bodhisattva learning this *sūtra* should know that what I have said has no definite nature, and he should not be attached to it or cling to it. If he follows this instruction in his practice, he will benefit greatly.

“Universal Light, suppose a person tries to cross the Ganges in a poorly built boat. With what vigor should he row the boat?”

Bodhisattva Universal Light replied, “World-Honored One, he should row it with great vigor. Why? Because it may collapse in midstream.”

The Buddha said, “Universal Light, a Bodhisattva who wishes to cultivate the Buddha-Dharma should exert himself twice as hard. Why? Because the body is

impermanent and uncertain, a decaying form which cannot long remain and will eventually wear out and perish; it may disintegrate before one benefits from the Dharma.

“[A Bodhisattva should think,] ‘I will learn to navigate the Dharma boat in this stream [of saṃsāra], so that I may ferry sentient beings across the four currents. I will ply this Dharma boat back and forth in saṃsāra to deliver sentient beings.’

“The Dharma boat which a Bodhisattva should use is made for the purpose of saving all sentient beings equally. Its strong, thick planks are the immeasurable merits resulting from the practice of pure discipline; its embellishments are the practice and the fruit of giving; its beams are the pure faith in the Buddha-path; its strong riggings are all kinds of virtues; its nails are patience, tenderness, and thoughtfulness. The raw wood is the various ways to enlightenment, cultivated with vigor, taken from the forest of the supreme, wonderful Dharma.

“Its builders are the infinite, inconceivable dhyānas and the tranquil, well-subdued mind resulting from one’s meritorious deeds. Ever-enduring compassion and the four inducements are the means to attract immense numbers of sentient beings aboard to ferry them over the great distance. The power of wisdom guards the boat from robbers. Ingenuity of all kinds and the four immeasurables are its splendid adornments. The four right mindfulnesses form its golden bridge. The four right efforts and the four bases of miraculous powers are the swift winds [that propel the boat].

“The five roots are the able navigator who steers the boat away from the dangerous waters. The five powers are its strong buoyancy. The seven factors of enlightenment serve to discover and vanquish devilish pirates. By sailing [on the course of] the eightfold noble path, the boat will arrive at its destination on the other shore, away from the landings of heterodox teachings.

“Concentration serves as the helmsman, while insight brings the true benefit. The boat steers clear of [the reefs of] the two extremes and sails safely by the law of dependent generation. The follower of the vast Mahāyāna has inexhaustible eloquence, and his name spreads far and wide. Being able to deliver sentient beings in the ten directions, he proclaims, ‘Come aboard this Dharma boat! It sails on a safe course to nirvāṇa. It ferries you from the shore of all wrong views, including that of a real self, to the shore of Buddhahood.’

“Thus, Universal Light, a Bodhisattva-Mahāsattva should learn everything about this Dharma boat. For hundreds of thousands of millions of billions of incalculable kalpas, he should use this Dharma boat to rescue those sentient beings who are drifting and drowning in the vast stream of saṃsāra.”

The Buddha then said to Universal Light, “Moreover, there are other Dharma instructions that can cause a Bodhisattva to achieve Buddhahood quickly. They are:

Be sincere in every endeavor and cultivate an abundance of virtue.
Keep a pure, deeply [compassionate] mind and never cease to be vigorous.

Take delight in approaching enlightenment and cultivate all good roots.
Always maintain right thought and enjoy wholesome dharmas.
Learn the Dharma insatiably in order to be filled with wisdom.
Shatter your conceit and arrogance in order to increase your knowledge.
Rid yourself of play-words in order to accomplish meritorious deeds.
Take pleasure in solitude in order to be detached in body and mind.
Stay away from noisy crowds in order to avoid wicked people.
Probe the depth of the Dharma in accordance with the ultimate truth.
Seek the wisdom that penetrates reality.
Seek the real truth to attain the indestructible Dharma.
Seek the doctrine of emptiness so that your practice may be right.
Seek detachment in order to attain ultimate quiescence.

In this way, Universal Light, a Bodhisattva may quickly achieve Buddhahood.”

When this sūtra had been spoken, Bodhisattva Universal Light, Mahākāśyapa, and all the gods, asuras, and humans were jubilant. With great veneration, they began to practice the sūtra as taught.

NOTES

1. After each series of four, the category is repeated (e.g., “These four cause a Bodhisattva’s wisdom to decrease.”) We have omitted this repetition for brevity.
2. Literally, “crooked minds.”
3. Literally, “straight mind.”
4. That is, he considers all adversity as retribution for his own negative karma committed in a previous life.
5. This is a recurring quandary for people who are interested in Buddhist doctrine: If there is no ‘I’, no ‘mine’, and all dharmas are utterly empty, how can the law of karma prevail? The answer is: it is precisely because everything *is* empty and there is no self or ‘I’, that everything *can* exist and the principle of karma *can* prevail. If things were truly existent, i.e., with a definite, enduring substance or entity, then *no* change or flow would be possible. Because nothing has a self-nature (*svabhāva*), everything is possible. The Buddhist way of thinking is unique in this aspect. To understand this point more clearly, the reader is referred to the Mādhyamika and Prajñāpāramitā literature, such as T.R.V. Murti, *The Central Philosophy of Buddhism* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1955) ch. 1, 2, and 3; and Garma Chang, *The Buddhist Teaching of Totality*, (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1971) Part 2, sec. 1. (G.C.)
6. A similar quandary. If sentient beings, like all dharmas in the universe, are utterly empty and do not exist, on whom is compassion bestowed?
I think this problem is much more difficult to explain than that in note 5. I personally do not know any completely satisfactory answer, for it is not only an ontological problem,

but also an ethical one; hence, it involves a much broader spectrum of questions than the preceding one. The traditional Buddhist answers to this problem are as follows:

A. When a Bodhisattva sees the illusory sentient beings undergo the illusory sufferings caused by their illusory karma, he generates an illusory compassion toward the illusory sentient beings and delivers them from their delusions. The Bodhisattva is illusory and empty, for he has no concept of 'self'; the sentient beings and their sufferings are also illusory and empty because they have no self-entities; the compassion of the Bodhisattva and the sufferings of sentient beings are also illusory, because they are inapprehensible or unobtainable, like dreams or magic. Everything in *samsāra* is illusory (*māyā*), like magic. However, an illusory or magic-like Buddhist game—the Bodhisattva's compassion and his altruistic deeds—can still take place without there being attachment to man's innate view that self and beings are all real (*satkāyadṛṣṭi*).

B. On the mundane level, sentient beings and their sufferings, Bodhisattvas and their vows, etc., are all 'real' and do appear to exist, but on the transcendental level they are all empty or nonexistent. However, these two levels (the two truths system) are not separate realms or entities; they are actually one. There is a mutually penetrating and mutually identical all-merging totality, in which the arising of compassion and the emptiness of sentient beings are not contradictory but interdependent and mutually supplementary. The complete merging of the mundane and the transcendental is expressed here as the coexistence of the arising of the Bodhisattvas' compassion and the emptiness of sentient beings. Compassion and emptiness seem to be irreconcilable and contradictory by definition. However, this is only from the limited human viewpoint; in the great merging totality (圓融法界) the contradictions all become harmonious noncontradictions. As long as there is the appearance of a dichotomy of *samsāra* and *nirvāṇa*, these contradictions are unavoidable, because the *svabhāva* way of thinking preconditions men to think in this manner. In the totalistic way of thinking no such problem exists. See Chang, *The Buddhist Teaching of Totality*, Part 2, sec. 2.

7. The literal translation of *mo shih* (魔事) could be 'devilish matters'. Its meaning is very broad; it can include acts of demons affecting the Bodhisattva, as well as any devilish tendencies he may have himself.

8. Literally, "four immeasurable virtuous adornments" (四無量福德莊嚴).

9. This and the five following lines refer to the practice of the six *pāramitās*.

10. 一味 is translated here as 'uniform in taste'. 'Taste' here means 'nature'. 一味 has been translated by different scholars as 'one taste', 'one nature' or 'at-one-ment'.

11. These two similes taken together indicate the two main themes of the Mahāyāna: wisdom and compassion.

12. This perhaps is suggestive of the Tantric view that enlightenment can be found directly in defilements themselves, as when the Bodhisattva identifies his defilements with *bodhi*.

13. 'The middle way', as it is translated here, may also be interpreted as an adjective modifying 'insight', and meaning 'not favoring one extreme or another'. (Y.C.H.)

14. Although the Chinese text reads 受 ('felt'), I believe that this could be a mistranslation, and that it should be rendered as 'apprehended'. That which is apart from the two extremes cannot be apprehended or expressed, but it can be "felt" or "experienced" by enlightened beings. (G.C.)

15. 'Unsought' indicates that things cannot be wished for. Since 'wishless' and 'beyond wishing' are ambiguous terms—though corresponding to the third door to liberation called wishlessness—we use 'unsought'.

16. The tendency to cling to emptiness is very common, especially for advanced yogis. Many Zen koans bear witness to this fact. (G.C.)

17. Alternate translation: "Just as beings magically produced by a magician may destroy each other and finally all comes to nought, so dharmas contemplated by a monk who follows the path are empty, still, and insubstantial, and even his contemplation of them is also empty."

18. Literally, "he is apart from worldly things," but the Chinese word 離 ('apart from') does not fit the context. It may be a misprint for 雜 ('become involved'). Shih Hu's translation, Taishō 352, p. 208, comes close to our interpretation here.

19. One of the three groups. See Numerical Glossary.

20. This and the preceding sentences all use the word 'conditioned' (有爲). It could be a corruption of the text; Shih Hu's translation has no modifying word 'conditioned', and it reads more smoothly and clearly. Of course, Shih Hu's text is obviously a different version, probably of a much later date. See Taishō 325, pp. 208–209. (G.C.)

21. A novice Bodhisattva, with all his immaturity and imperfections, strives for Buddhahood and practices the Bodhisattva's deeds. In his undertaking of the Bodhisattva's acts, he often appears more attractive and appealing to man, because he speaks our language, understands our problems, and shares our feelings. He is one of us. As in the parable of the new moon and the full moon, imperfection is sometimes more beautiful than perfection. (G.C.)

There may be a different interpretation. Those who believe the Buddha's words (as opposed to people in general) "adore a Bodhisattva more than they adore a Tathāgata" simply because they accept the Buddha's statement that "Tathāgatas are born of Bodhisattvas." To "adore a new moon more than a full moon" may be just a custom in India, marking the beginning of a bright future, and thus a handy illustration in this case; it may have nothing to do with beauty. (S.L.M.)

22. Or, "the Bodhisattva's ultimate medicines of wisdom."

23. In this way, the three poisons or defilements are counteracted.

24. This and the subsequent six paragraphs apply the thirty-seven ways to enlightenment.

25. All these eight terms are different names for the 'I', which non-Buddhists think of as that which knows and sees, performs actions, and receives karmic results.

26. This parable is not clear in the text, but we presume it means this: the person who throws the clods of earth at the dog represents the inner desires, while the clods he throws represent sensuous pleasures. The person is the root of the dog's problem; as long as the person is there, the clods of earth will keep coming. Therefore, to free itself from the attack, the dog should chase the person instead of the clods of earth. Similarly, a *śramaṇa* should conquer the desires within instead of trying to live in a secluded place devoid of sensuous pleasures in order to cure his defilements.

27. See Glossary, "nirvāṇa." This is the nonabiding *nirvāṇa*.

28. *Ātma-vāda*, Ch. 有我論. This is the doctrine which claims that 'self' (*ātman*), which also may be translated as 'soul' or 'substance', is real, permanent, eternal, unchanging, and irreducible.

29. The twelve are:

- 1) living in a secluded forest;
- 2) begging for food;

- 3) taking turns at begging for food;
- 4) eating only one meal a day;
- 5) eating only a small amount of food;
- 6) taking no food, and no drinks made with fruit or honey, after midday;
- 7) wearing garments of cast-off rags;
- 8) having only three garments;
- 9) dwelling among graves;
- 10) staying under a tree;
- 11) sitting on bare ground; and
- 12) never lying down.

30. To become detached from all dharmas and achieve mental liberation is tantamount to attaining Arhatship, the fourth and ultimate fruit of a Śrāvaka.

31. To leave mundane filth behind and attain the clear Dharma-eye is to achieve the fruit of a Stream-enterer, the first fruit of a Śrāvaka.

32. Literally, "When one does not remember and think, they do not arise."

33. Discipline, meditation, wisdom, liberation, and the knowledge and awareness derived from liberation are called 'the five factors and the Dharma-body'.

34. The Chinese word *hsiang* (想) is here rendered as 'thought', which is not an altogether satisfactory translation. Other renderings have difficulties, too, however. *Hsiang* seems to contain many meanings; here, in this context, it denotes thoughts, concepts, notions, ideas, etc., a broad range of mental activities.

35. Alternate translation: "We are subdued because we realize that the body has no definite nature and the mind does not act." (W.H.)

36. Shih Hu's translation reads:

"When will you enter nirvāṇa?"

The monks said, "When the Tathāgata enters nirvāṇa, we will then enter nirvāṇa." (Taishō 352, p. 215)

37. This can also be translated, "We are unimpededly liberated." (Y.T.L.)

21 無盡慧菩薩會

Dialogue With Bodhisattva Infinite Wisdom

Thus have I heard. Once the Buddha was dwelling near Rājagṛha on Mount Gṛdhrakūṭa, together with an assembly of twelve hundred fifty monks. There were also ten thousand Bodhisattva-Mahāsattvas present, among whom were Bodhisattva Wisdom Banner, Bodhisattva Dharma Banner, Bodhisattva Moon Banner, Bodhisattva Sun Banner, and Bodhisattva Boundless Banner; sixteen lay Bodhisattvas, with Bhadrāpāla foremost; sixty Bodhisattva-Mahāsattvas of incomparable mind, with Mañjuśrī foremost; all the Bodhisattva-Mahāsattvas of the Worthy Kalpa, with Bodhisattva Maitreya foremost; and sixty thousand other Bodhisattva-Mahāsattvas, with Bodhisattva Infinite Wisdom foremost.

At that time, Bodhisattva Infinite Wisdom rose from his seat, uncovered his right shoulder, knelt upon his right knee, faced the Buddha with palms joined, and paid homage to him by bowing down with his head at the Buddha's feet. He then scattered precious flowers around the Buddha as an offering and said, "The World-Honored One speaks of bodhi-mind [*bodhicitta*]. By what principle do you speak of it? What are the ways in which a Bodhisattva achieves bodhi-mind? What is bodhi-mind? In bodhi, the mind is inapprehensible; in the mind, bodhi is also inapprehensible. Apart from bodhi, the mind is inapprehensible; apart from the mind, bodhi is also inapprehensible. Bodhi is formless, signless, and inexpressible; the mind is also formless, signless, and not demonstrable; thus, too, are sentient beings. None of the three is apprehensible. World-Honored One, since all dharmas are such, by what principle should we cultivate ourselves?"

The Buddha said, "Good man, listen to me attentively. The bodhi I speak of has intrinsically no name or description. Why? Because in bodhi, name and description are inapprehensible. The same is true of the mind and sentient beings. Such an understanding is called bodhi-mind.

* Sūtra 45, Taishō 310, pp. 648-650; translated into Chinese by Bodhiruci.