

From the Prajna Paramita Sutra for understanding the mind of meditation in Samadhi

Chapter 24: ~CONCEIT~

Conditions Which are seen as Opening a Bodhisattva to Mara's Influence

As a Bodhisattva trains in perfect wisdom, makes endeavours about this and develops this, all the Evil Maras in the great trichiliocosm are seen as being in a state of uncertainty: "Does this Bodhisattva prematurely realize the reality-limit of the level of Sravaka, Disciple, or Pratyekabuddha, or know full enlightenment?" Even so, as a Bodhisattva dwells as this dwelling for perfect wisdom, beings believe with firm resolve that it is the Evil Maras which are pierced by a dart of sorrow. As a Bodhisattva ever courses toward perfecting wisdom, makes endeavours about this and develops this, the Evil Maras are resolutely believed to be thinking of how to hurt such a one as this.

For instance, beings resolutely believe these Maras try to invoke fear by letting loose a shower of meteors in all directions, causing an impression the horizon is all aflame. As a result, these beings believe with unquestioning certainty that these Maras hope now for the Bodhisattva to cower, for one's hair to stand on end, so even one single thought concentrated toward full enlightenment or any benevolent equanimity might get extinguished. [417] But Mara, the Evil One, does not hurt these Bodhisattvas. Some he is seen and resolutely believed to hurt, and yet others, not? Such fallaciousness in resolute belief. Such idleness of intent and action. Such unfortunate arrogance.

Ananda: What kind of a Bodhisattva is Mara seen as, or believed in as confounding, and herein called to blame for hurting?

The Lord: Mara is thus seen as, or believed in as confounding, or herein called to blame for hurting a Bodhisattva which in time, as this perfection of wisdom is taught, does not produce a thought of firm belief in what is the actual nature of these various dharmas, all-knowledge. Mara is thus firmly believed to gain entry. Such is this fallaciousness of resolute belief. He is believed to have already hurt Bodhisattvas which, as this deep perfection of wisdom is being taught, are seized by uncertainties, feel perplexed, and think, "perhaps this perfection of wisdom is so, perhaps it is not so"...or Bodhisattvas which are seen to be lacking a good friend, which are believed to have been taken hold of by bad friends who, as perfecting of wisdom is taking place, either do not hear or do not

understand about very deep stations in nature, or wisdom, and choosing to remain in ignorance of these, do not ask how this perfecting of wisdom is developed; or, Bodhisattvas which cling to someone who upholds any dharma which, not being true of any of these dharmas, thus says: "I am an adherent to this one [or mental state], and in all things this one I follow does not abandon me. [418] Here are many other Bodhisattvas whom I might adhere to, but these do not suit me. I have taken this one as my fitting companion and this suits me."

Moreover, a Bodhisattva might, as this deep perfecting of nature as wisdom is taking place, say to another Bodhisattva: "Deep, indeed, is this perfecting of wisdom! What point is here in your listening to this? For even as I apply myself to this in the way in which Tathagatas have taught in other Sutrantas, even so I do not get to the bottom of this, nor derive any enjoyment from this. What is any point in anyone's hearing and writing this?"

In this way one projects one's lack of understanding, and herein appears to be making attempts to estrange other Bodhisattvas. Thus, it is seen as being Mara coming also to such a Bodhisattva...to hurt and gain entry herein. Furthermore, Ananda herein is this thought to be Mara as the one being contented, elated or enraptured. Mara is accredited in one's thinking as being the one who is overjoyed, exultant and glad, thrilled, delighted and jubilant in any case in which a Bodhisattva in one's own laxity despises other Bodhisattvas, thinking: "I dwell in the dwelling of detachment, but not so these; theirs is not this dwelling in detachment." And blindly is it thought of as being Mara also who is so joyful as this Bodhisattva keeps far away from revealing full enlightenment. On the contrary, in this imagined joy and contented ecstasy of one who allows themselves to think thus, is Mara seen to be this most excellent teacher of the exceedingly tenuous nature of one's disconcerted application of right concentration, mindfulness and effort.

Besides this, as a Bodhisattva takes on a name or clan, or as ascetic qualities are proclaimed, one may regard this as a sufficient reason to despise other Bodhisattvas, well-behaved and lovely in character though these are. [419] But this one has no depth of practice and does not apply qualities of irreversible Bodhisattvas which course toward perfect wisdom, nor their attributes, tokens or signs. As this one does not exude the irreversible qualities, such a one gives rise to defilement, seeing as this one thinks to attempt exalting one's self and self's concepts above others, and deprecates others, and thinks these are not equal to such dharmas, as oneself is. The Evil Maras, which are anyone's unpracticed, untrained inclinations toward such, then foresee that the realms of Mara will not remain empty, and the great hells, the animal kingdom, the world of the Pretas, and the assemblies of the Asuras are overcrowded. And what is thought of as Mara, and blamed on this Evil One, is seen as becoming even more determined, and thinking something such as: "With this kind of start any Bodhisattvas such as this are soon smothered by gain and honor. These are plausible talkers, and with their plausible talk these catch hold of many people. Many people decide to listen to these, imitate what these speak of and show, and consequently do not train in Thusness, do not progress in this, do not make endeavours about this, and as well, these further increase defilements. So it is a

fact all these deeds -of body, voice or mind- which these undertake with perverted mentality impels these to a rebirth in conditions which are unserviceable and do not provide selfless service, disagreeing as disagreeable, unpleasing as well as unpleasant. Consequently, what is seen to be the realms of Mara are overcrowded, i.e. the great hells, the animal world, the world of the Pretas, and [420] the assemblies of the Asuras." As this Bodhisattva considers this sequence of events, one believes it to be Mara the Evil One who is contented, elated, enraptured, overjoyed, exultant and jubilant. It is not Mara, however, who is given to sloth, this contented unawareness or ecstatic jubilation.

Furthermore, Ananda, as a Bodhisattva fights with any person belonging to the vehicle of the Sravakas, or Disciples, disputes and quarrels with these, abuses and reviles these, feels ill-will and hatred for these, a person comes to think to themselves that Mara thinks "surely, this son or daughter of good family keeps away from all-knowledge, this one remains far away from this." Now also, Mara is thought of as being even more jubilant as any person belonging to the vehicle of the Bodhisattvas fights with someone else which also belongs to this vehicle of the Bodhisattvas, for he thinks that "both these Bodhisattvas remain far from all-knowledge." But as a Bodhisattva which has one's prediction fights with another Bodhisattva which also has this prediction, and cherishes malice for one such as this - for many aeons this one does, as this one may have such an attitude of mind, put on the armor [which enables any to struggle against it], -unless, of course, one has abandoned all-knowledge completely. [421] Still in this, one here sees that it is not Mara, but one's own inclinations, attitudes and disconcertedness, seen as being Mara, which brings these unfortunate circumstances to bear...as well, it will be one's own right intentions and efforts, mindfulness and concentrations which comes to reveal these circumstances as dissolved in equanimity and perfect wisdom.

The Bodhisattvas Right Attitude Towards other Bodhisattvas

Ananda: Can one escape from these attitudes of mind, or is one definitely condemned to go on putting on the armor for all this length of time?

The Lord: Ananda, a dharma is demonstrated which includes the possibility of escape, -for persons of the Sravaka, Disciple-vehicle, for persons of the Pratyekabuddha-vehicle, for persons of the Bodhisattva-vehicle. As to this person which belongs to the vehicle of the Bodhisattvas and quarrels with someone else which also belongs to the vehicle of the Bodhisattvas, -as one does not confess one's fault, does not promise restraint in future, harbors a latent bias towards hate, and dwells tied to bias, -this person does not allow for the teaching of escape [i.e. from the consequence of action], but is definitely condemned to go on putting on the armor for any and all lengths of time. But, to any one which confesses any and all fault, resolves true restraint throughout any of the three times, and reflects as follows: "This nature is to drive away bias, to pacify and appease the quarrels, disputes and

conflicts of all beings, yet I myself engage in disputes! It is indeed a loss to me, and not a gain, as I answer back as I am spoken to. As I am to any and all beings a bridge across the sea of birth-and-death, I nevertheless say to another, 'the same to you,' or return a harsh and rough answer. This is not a way in which to speak. In fights, quarrels and disputes, here I behave as a senseless idiot, or dumb sheep. As I hear someone using offensive, abusive, insulting words towards me, this heart does not cherish malice for these or others. It is not [422] disciplined for me to mete and perceive faults assumed by me or another of others, or to think what is being said or even thought about any faults of others is worth listening to. As well, neither are any which mete and perceive thusly thought of as such. For as I am earnestly intent and intentioned, I do not do harm to others. As I indicate joy and contentment by pointing out any and all things which allow for joy and contentment, I head this way, as these, toward Nirvana, -yet nevertheless I bear ill will! I truly resolve to not bear ill will even against these which I perceive as having offended against me, and I truly resolve to avoid rage, and I truly resolve by making diligent and persistent effort in this direction. Even as my life is in danger I truly resolve not to allow a rage, or even a frown to appear on my face." -To such a Bodhisattva, Ananda, I teach escape. This is the attitude which a Bodhisattva adopts also towards persons who belong to the vehicle of the Disciples. Never to allow anger with any being, this is the attitude of mind one adopts towards all beings. What attitude now does a Bodhisattva have towards other persons avowed to this vehicle of the Bodhisattvas? The same as towards any Teacher. One has the attitude that, "these Bodhisattvas are my teachers. Surely, these mount on this same vehicle as I, have ascended by this same path, are of like intention with me, are set out in this same vehicle as I. Here these are trained, this is the method by which I train. But as some of us dwell in a dwelling tainted [by the ideas of Maras, Disciples and Pratyekabuddhas], [423] I do not do likewise. As, however these dwell in an uncontaminated dwelling, in mental activities which accord unto all-knowledge, now I also train as these. No obstacles can arise to any Bodhisattva which trains oneself in this way in all-knowledge, and one quickly reveals full enlightenment.

Chapter 25: TRAINING

How a Bodhisattva is Trained in All-Knowledge

Subhuti: In which training, O Lord, does a Bodhisattva train to be trained in all-knowledge?

The Lord: A Bodhisattva trains in Extinction, in Non-production, in Non-stopping, in No-birth, in the absence of positivity, in Isolatedness, in Dispassion, in Space, in the element of dharma, and Nirvana.

Subhuti: How do these amount to a training in all-knowledge?

The Lord: Do you think, Subhuti, this Suchness which is (also) Tathagatas, which is the prime cause of Tathagata being a Tathagata, can this become extinct?

Subhuti: No, Lord. For extinction cannot become extinct, extinction being inextinguishable.
[425]

The Lord: Suchness of Tathagata is primordial essence of Tathagata, as a Tathagata, is this now produced, or stopped, or born; or does this become or cease to become; or does this become isolated; or impassioned or dispassionate; or does this become like space, or does this become of the nature of dharma?

Subhuti: No, Lord.

The Lord: Does this Suchness then, or even now, enter Nirvana?

Subhuti: No, Lord.

The Lord: Now...Subhuti, any Bodhisattva which trains oneself trains thus, "Suchness does not, indeed cannot get extinct"...as one trains thus, one realizes this perfection of all training. One cannot be crushed by what is seen or thought to be Mara, or by what is seen or thought to be Mara's associates or by Mara's host.

Soon one reveals to oneself this condition of irreversibility which becomes realized by others. Soon one sits on this terrace of enlightenment. One courses in one's own range.
[426]

One is trained in the dharmas by which one is revealed as a facilitator and guide to realization, in great friendliness, great compassion, great sympathetic joy, as well as great and equanimous impartiality. One trains as turning the wheel of dharma with three revolutions and twelve aspects. One trains to indicate these revelations and the realization herein to no limit of beings. One trains to ensure non-interruption of this lineage of Tathagatas. One trains by opening this door and indicating such, as well as revealing this deathless element. Any being not training thusly is however, incapable of this sublime training. A weakling cannot train in this training.

As these which train thusly are the very cream of beings which indicate realization to any and all beings, these persevere and reach this state of elevated awareness for these beings. A Bodhisattva which trains thus is not reborn in the hells, nor among animals, nor in the realms of the Pretas, nor among the Asuras, nor in outlying districts [among barbarous populations], nor in the families of outcasts or fowlers, of hunters, fishermen or butchers, nor in any families of a kind in which one is addicted to the lower deeds. This one is not blind, deaf, or one-eyed; neither a cripple nor hunch-backed, nor a being with withered hand or arm, nor limping, nor lame, or stunned, [427] not tremulous, quivering or shaky; this one's limbs are not puny, nor incomplete, nor abnormal; such a one is not weak, nor have a bad complexion or shape; these faculties are not inferior nor incomplete, but are in every way perfect; and this one also has a melodious voice. Such a one as this is not a

person who takes life, or who takes what is not given, or who goes wrong about sense-desires, or who speaks falsely, or maliciously, or harshly, or who prattles indistinctly, or who is covetous, or who harbours ill will in one's heart, or who has wrong views, and does not earn a livelihood in some wrong fashion. This one is not reborn among the long-lived Gods, does not take up bad moral practices, does not take hold of unreal dharmas, and does not get reborn through the influences of trances and [formless] attainments. For here is skill in means, and endowed with this, one does not get reborn among the long-lived Gods. But what is this skill in means of a Bodhisattva? This is just this perfection of wisdom. And this one applies oneself to this skill in means in such a way as, endowed with this, a Bodhisattva enters into these trances without being reborn through the influence of these trances. [428] As one trains thus, any Bodhisattva incurs the perfect purity of these powers, of these grounds of self-confidence, of these Buddha-dharmas. One reaches all this.

Subhuti: As we all know, O Lord, all dharmas are by nature perfectly pure. But now, with regard to this, whichever dharma does any Bodhisattva incur and reach perfect purity of these powers, these grounds of self-confidence and these Buddha-dharma?

The Lord: Well it is which you ask, Subhuti. For all dharmas are just by [their essential original] nature perfectly pure. A Bodhisattva which trains in perfection of wisdom does not lose heart and remains uncowed although all dharmas are by nature perfectly pure, now this is this perfection of wisdom. But the foolish neither know nor see these dharmas are really so constituted, and these neither know nor see the true nature of dharmas, even as this comes to be revealed. On behalf of such beings and things the Bodhisattva struggle on and exert vigour so any who do not know may be enabled to know, so any who do not see may choose to see. In this training these train, and here [in the world of appearance] a Bodhisattva realizes these powers through making these available to countless beings, these grounds of self-confidence, and all Buddha-dharmas. As these train thus, Bodhisattvas wisely (naturally come to) know these throbbing thoughts and actions of any and all beings, of any and all persons as these persons really are. And now, in this we go beyond the knowledge of the thoughts and actions of others. We traverse this ground upon which no foot gains footing, no words can mention, no thought can think, and neither can any eye behold. [429]

The Fewness of Bodhisattvas

On this earth, few are places free from stones, few the spots where gold and silver are found. Much more numerous are saline deserts, arid deserts, places covered with grass, or thorns, or steep chasms. Just so, in the worlds of beings few Bodhisattvas exist which train in this training in all-knowledge, i.e. in the training toward perfect wisdom which is perfect nature. Much more numerous are these which train in the training characteristics of Sravakas,

Disciples and Pratyekabuddhas.

Furthermore, Subhuti, in the worlds of beings few do deeds which lead to the authority of a universal monarch. Much more numerous are these which do deeds which lead to the authority of a commander of a fort. Just so, in these worlds of beings few are Bodhisattvas which are mounted on this path of perfect wisdom and/or nature, and which now are resolved to reveal and realize full enlightenment. Much more numerous are these which mount on the path of Sravakas, Disciples and Pratyekabuddhas.

Furthermore, few only do deeds which permit these to become Sakra, Chief of Gods. Much more numerous are those whose deeds lead to the world of [the minor] Gods. Just so, few beings only are Bodhisattvas which train in this training as the perfecting of wisdom. Much more numerous are these Bodhisattvas which train in the training of Sravakas, Disciples and Pratyekabuddhas. [430]

Furthermore, few beings only do deeds which permit these to become Brahma. Much more numerous are any whose deeds lead to Brahma's assembly. Just so, few beings only are irreversible to full enlightenment. Much more numerous are Bodhisattvas which turn away from full enlightenment.

Here now, Subhuti, in the worlds of beings few beings exist which set out toward full enlightenment. Fewer are these which progress toward Thusness. Still fewer are these very few which make endeavours about and toward perfecting wisdom. Still fewer even are these very very few Bodhisattvas which are irreversible from full enlightenment. A Bodhisattva which aspires to be numbered among these very, very few irreversible Bodhisattvas now train in just this perfection of wisdom, and make endeavours about this. Moreover, Subhuti, no harsh thoughts arise to a Bodhisattva which thus trains in perfecting this nature as wisdom, nor any doubting thought, or an envious or mean thought, or an immoral thought, or a thought of ill will, or a lazy thought, or a distracted thought, or a stupid thought.

The Perfection of Wisdom Comprehends All Perfections

It is thus as a Bodhisattva trains in the perfection of wisdom, [431] all the perfections are automatically incorporated, taken up, followed and included. The view of individuality includes all the sixty-two views, and even so, for a Bodhisattva which trains in this perfection of wisdom, all the perfections are included in this. As long as someone's life-faculty is present, all faculties are included in this. Even so for a Bodhisattva which trains in this perfection of wisdom all the wholesome dharmas are included in this. As someone's life faculty is not present, all faculties are not present. Even so, for a Bodhisattva which trains in perfect wisdom, any unwholesome dharmas are stopped as only non-cognition is

stopped, and all these perfections are included in this, and automatically revealed and realized.

Merit from Perfect Wisdom

Here and now, Subhuti, a Bodhisattva which has aspirations to reveal and realize all perfections trains in this perfection of wisdom. As one trains in this perfection of wisdom, a Bodhisattva trains in this which is unfathomable perfection as is any being. And herein lies this answer to this greatest of mysteries. For one's merit is different and unfathomable. Subhuti, consider all beings in the great trichilocosm, are these many?

Subhuti: Even in Jambudvīpa alone, here are many beings, how many more are here in this great trichilocosm?

The Lord: As one single Bodhisattva, during one's entire life, furnishes all these beings with robes, alms bowl, lodging, medicinal appliances for use in sickness, and all which brings these happiness, -[432] does such a Bodhisattva on the strength of this beget a great deal of merit?

Subhuti: One does, O Lord.

The Lord: Yet Subhuti, a different and unthinkable merit still does this Bodhisattva beget as a result of developing this perfection of wisdom, of buddha-nature, for even the duration of a finger-snap. So greatly profitable is this perfection of wisdom of Bodhisattvas, as she feeds these revelations of this supreme enlightenment. A Bodhisattva here now trains in perfecting wisdom as this aspiration to full realization, revealed as this supreme position common to all beings, as a protector of any which are helpless and helps these to reach this sphere of the Buddha, to emulate the humanness of the Buddha, to sport as a Buddha's sport, to roar a Buddha's lion roar, to reach the accomplishment of a Buddha, and to explain this dharma in this great trichilocosm. As a Bodhisattva trains in this perfection of wisdom, I do not see the accomplishment in which one does not train.

Bodhisattvas and Disciples

Subhuti: Is now a Bodhisattva also trained in this accomplishment of a Sravaka, a Disciple?

The Lord: He also trains in this. But one does not train with intentions of always continuing with these accomplishments of a Sravaka, or Disciple, or with any idea of making this or anything one's own. [433] Not thus does one train. One also knows qualities of the Disciples, but does not abide with these. One assimilates these, without opposing these. One trains with the intention as one demonstrates and reveals also these virtues of the

Disciples. As one trains thus, a Bodhisattva is revealed in a condition here as one worthy of receiving gifts from the world with its Gods, beings and Asuras. These surpass others which are worthy of gifts, associated with Disciples or Pratyekabuddhas. And all-knowledge is near to such one's as these. As one trains thus, a Bodhisattva does not part from this perfection of wisdom, but courses in this, is not lacking in the dwelling of this perfection of wisdom. As one courses thus a Bodhisattva is known as "unfailing, definitely unfailing" with regard to all-knowledge, and does not settle on any level of a Sravaka, Disciple or Pratyekabuddha. One such as this is near to full enlightenment. As, however, such may occur to this one "this is the perfection of wisdom which brings this all-knowledge," -now, one which has such a notion does not course in this perfection of wisdom. On the contrary any such as this have no notion whatsoever of perfecting wisdom. Do not perceive or review "this is the perfection of wisdom," or "this is the perfection of wisdom," or "this feeds all-knowledge." As one courses thus, a Bodhisattva courses in this perfection of wisdom.

Chapter 26: ~LIKE ILLUSION ~

Sakra Praises the Bodhisattvas

So now it occurs to Sakra, Chief of Gods: A Bodhisattva, even as one courses only just so far, surpasses all; how much more so as one knows full enlightenment! A great gain accrues to these beings, a good life do these live as thoughts stride in all-knowledge; how much more so as these have realized thoughts unto full enlightenment! To be emulated are these, the very cream of all beings, which realize full enlightenment!

So here, Sakra, Chief of Gods, conjured up Mandarava flowers, saluted these reverently, scattered these over Tathagata, and said: May any persons who are avowed to the vehicle of Bodhisattvas, and who have revealed and realized thoughts to full enlightenment, succeed in their resolve to know full enlightenment, and beyond this, to transfer any and all beings which are borne along by the great flood of birth-and-death to the smooth yonder shore! May this thought of enlightenment which these wish for, think over and take hold of, bring to fulfillment any dharmas of a Buddha, and dharmas in accord with all-knowledge, dharmas of the Self-Existent, insuperable dharmas! I have not even the slightest suspicion such Bodhisattvas, which are endowed with great compassion, might turn away from full enlightenment, [435] or these persons who are avowed to the vehicle of the Bodhisattvas and who are set out for full enlightenment might turn away from this. On the contrary, I am sure this resolve to reveal and realize full enlightenment increases more and more in these, as these survey the ills which afflict beings on the plane of birth-and-death. For through great compassion these desire the welfare of this world with its Gods, beings and Asuras, are of an aspiration to benefit this, are full of pity for this, these, who are endowed with this attitude of mind, dwell in the attitude of mind which is expressed in this resolution..."we have crossed over, we help beings to cross over! Freed, we free them! Recovered, we help these to recover! Gone to Nirvana, we lead these to Nirvana!" "Gat" | Gat" | Paragat" | Parasamgat" | Bodhi Svaha!"

Jubilation, Turning Over, and Merit

Any son or daughter of good family who rejoice at this production of thought of any Bodhisattvas, who are just now set out in the vehicle, as well as at this production of thought of any which realize progression as always, on course, as well as at this irreversible nature of any which realize irreversibility, as well as at this nature of any which inevitably realize one birth only, -to what extent is their merit a different one?

The Lord: One might be able, Kausika, to grasp the measure of Sumeru, king of mountains, or of a world system, up to a great trichiliocosm, with the help of a tip of straw, but one can not possibly grasp any measure of merit coming to these sons or daughters of good family, or to a Bodhisattva, from the production of this thought connected with that jubilation. [436]

Sakra: Seen as and thought of as beset by Mara are any beings which do not hear of this immeasurable merit of jubilation over the career of a Bodhisattva -which begins with the first thought of enlightenment [tathagatagarbha] and which ends with full enlightenment [Tathagata] -which do not know it, which do not see it, which do not bring this jubilation to mind. These are seen as partisans of Mara, deceased in Mara's realms. For any which bring to mind these thoughts, which turn these over into the supreme enlightenment, rejoice at these, such do so in order to bring to realization Mara's realm, as this truly is. One does O Lord, rejoice at the various stages of thought which these Bodhisattvas raise to enlightenment. [437] Sons and daughters of good family abandon neither the Tathagata, nor Dharma, nor Community, these rejoice in the stages of the thought of enlightenment!

The Lord: So it is, Kausika. And sons or daughters of good family who have rejoiced in the stages of the thought of enlightenment, these do - whether these belong to the vehicle of the Bodhisattvas, or of the Pratyekabuddhas, or of the Disciples - soon please the Tathagatas, and not displease such as these.

Sakra: So it is, O Lord. Here and now, these are reborn as a result of the wholesome roots [which these plant] as hearts are filled with jubilation, here these are treated with respect, revered, worshipped and adored. These never see any unpleasant sights, nor hear any unpleasant sounds, nor smell any unpleasant smells, nor taste any unpleasant tastes, [438] nor come into contact with anything unpleasant to the touch. One realizes these things to be reborn in the wholesome roots of countless beings, roots which bring happiness to all beings. The thoughts of jubilation of any beings which, as producing an aspiration towards enlightenment, rejoice over the successive stages of the thought of enlightenment [enlightened thought] in persons who aspire to the vehicle of Bodhisattvas, as these thoughts increase, are nourishers of full enlightenment. As these realize and reveal full enlightenment, and just so these lead countless beings to Nirvana.

The Lord: So it is, Kausika, as you say through Tathagatas might. The wholesome roots of countless beings are rejoiced over, planted and consummated as a consequence of these

actions of sons or daughters of good family who rejoice over the successive stages of the thought of enlightenment in these persons who belong to this vehicle of the Bodhisattvas.

The Nature of Illusion

Subhuti: But how can a thought which is like illusion know full enlightenment?

The Lord: Subhuti, do you see the thought which is like illusion as a separate real entity?

Subhuti: No, Lord.

The Lord: Do you see illusion as a separate real entity?

Subhuti: No, Lord. [439]

The Lord: So, as you see neither illusion, nor the thought which is like illusion, as a real separate entity, do you now perhaps see this dharma which knows full enlightenment as something other than illusion, or as something other than the thought which is like illusion?

Subhuti: No, Lord. I do not. In consequence, to which dharma can I point, and say "it is" or "it is not?" To a dharma which is absolutely isolated one cannot attribute "it is" or "it is not." Also any absolutely isolated dharma can not know full enlightenment. Here now, O Lord, perfect wisdom is absolutely isolated. But any dharma which is absolutely isolated, this is not a dharma which can be developed, nor does this bring about or remove any dharma. So, how can a Bodhisattva, by resorting to an absolutely isolated perfection of wisdom, know full enlightenment? Even full enlightenment is absolutely isolated. [440] As, O Lord, the perfection of wisdom is absolutely isolated, and as full enlightenment is absolutely isolated, how can the isolated become known through the isolated?

The Lord: So it is, Subhuti. It is just as this perfection of wisdom is absolutely isolated that absolutely isolated full enlightenment is known [by this]. But as a Bodhisattva forms such a notion as "the perfection of wisdom is absolutely isolated," this is not the perfection of wisdom. It is thus certain, thanks to perfecting wisdom a Bodhisattva can know full enlightenment, and one cannot know this without resorting to this. The isolated cannot be known by the isolated, and nevertheless a Bodhisattva knows full enlightenment, and does not know this without resorting to the perfection of wisdom.

Subhuti: As I understand the meaning of the Lord's teaching, a Bodhisattva in this way courses in an unfathomable object.

The Lord: A doer of what is hard is the Bodhisattva which courses in an unfathomable object, and which yet does not realize such object [or: gain], i.e. on the level of Sravaka, Disciple or Pratyekabuddha.

Subhuti: As I understand the meaning of the Lord's teaching, here is in this way no Bodhisattva at all which is any doer of what is hard. [441] As this very dharma is not got at which is realized, nor anything whatsoever which can be revealed or realized, nor anything whatsoever by means of which one can realize. So, as this is being taught, as a Bodhisattva is not despondent, cowed or stolid, does not turn back, and remains unafraid, this one courses in perfect wisdom. As one does not review this as a certain fact as one courses, one such courses in perfect wisdom. As one does not review this as a real fact one is near to full enlightenment, one such as this courses in perfect wisdom. As it does not even occur to one that one is keeping aloof from the level of Disciples and Pratyekabuddhas, this one courses in perfect wisdom. This does not occur to space, "I am near to this, or, I am far from that," for space cannot make such discriminations, just so it cannot in truth occur to a Bodhisattva which courses in perfect wisdom..."full enlightenment is near to me, the level of Sravaka, Disciple or Pratyekabuddha is far from me."

The perfection of wisdom does not make any discriminations. It is as with a man created by magical illusion to which (!) it does not occur "the conjurer is near to 'me', but this assembled crowd of spectators is far from 'me'." For illusory men make no such discriminations. [442] It is as with the reflection of an object in a mirror or in water, to which it does not occur "the object which produces the reflection is near to 'me', but these who come along and cast the reflection in the mirror or in water, are far from 'me'." For this reflection of an object makes no discrimination. Just as Tathagata, as one which forsakes all constructions and discriminations, finds nothing dear or not dear, just so a Bodhisattva which courses in perfecting wisdom, for here is no discrimination on the part of perfect wisdom. Just as Tathagata is one which forsakes all constructions and discriminations, even so perfect wisdom forsakes all constructions and discriminations. It does not occur to a fictitious creature which Tathagata magically conjures up "the level of Sravakas, Disciples and Pratyekabuddhas is far from 'me', full enlightenment is near to 'me'," for any fictitious creature can not make any discriminations. In the same way a Bodhisattva which courses in perfect wisdom does not think "the level of Sravakas, Disciples and Pratyekabuddhas is far from 'me', full enlightenment is near to 'me'," and this simply due to an absence of any and all discrimination on the part of the perfection of wisdom. [443] A fictitious creature [which has been conjured up by the Tathagata] to do a certain work [in converting beings], performs this work, but remains without discrimination, just due to being so constituted as it lacks all discrimination. Just so a Bodhisattva performs the work for the sake of which one develops this perfection of wisdom, but this perfection of wisdom remains without discrimination, due to the fact as it is so constituted it lacks all discrimination. An expert mason, or mason's apprentice, makes of wood an automatic man or woman, a puppet which can be moved by pulling the strings. Whatever action it is made to perform, this action it performs, yet this wooden machine has no discrimination. Just due to the fact as it is so constituted that it lacks all discrimination. Just so a Bodhisattva performs this work for the sake of which one develops this perfection of wisdom, but this perfection of wisdom remains without discrimination, just due to the fact as this perfection of wisdom is so constituted it lacks all discriminations.

Chapter 27: ~THE CORE~

The Bodhisattvas Courage in Difficulties

Sariputra: Translucently...in this core and substance of things course these Bodhisattvas coursing in perfect wisdom!

Subhuti: Translucently as well, Sariputra...devoid of any center or boundary, in dharmas devoid even of substantiality course these Bodhisattvas coursing in perfect wisdom.

Here and now, these thoughts occur at once to many thousands of Gods of the realm of sense-desire: Homage is due to these beings which raise thoughts to, and are consummating these thoughts in full enlightenment, these coursing in this most profound perfection of wisdom, and as these are coursing thus, do not realize any boundary to reality, be this on the level of a Sravaka, Disciple, or even of a Pratyekabuddha. In this way also are Bodhisattvas known as doers of what is hard, as these course in this true nature of dharma, but do not realize this as such, for of this truth is herein no thing to be revealed, and indeed, nothing to realize. This is, again...Suchness. We, as any and all dharmas, are this already, prior to and beyond even any thought to seek for it...and once we begin to seek, are no longer that which we seek, for we think of this, then, as some thing other than what this is.

Subhuti read their thoughts, and said to them: This is not hard for these Bodhisattvas that these do not realize any reality-limit. This, however, is hard for these, this is most hard for these, [445] as these put on this armor of this resolution to lead countless beings to Nirvana, but now absolutely such beings do not exist. And since these do not exist, these cannot be got at.

Owing to isolatedness of beings, these who are disciplined thus absolutely do not exist. It is in this spirit the Bodhisattva set out toward revealing full enlightenment, and decides to discipline beings. For isolatedness of beings is known only as is the design of isolatedness of space [as dharmakaya]. In this way also Bodhisattvas are doers of what is hard, as these put on this armor for the sake of beings who do not exist, who cannot be got at. One decides to put on space exactly the same as one decides to put on this armor for the sake of beings. And yet this armor, as non-extinguishable space IS put on by Bodhisattvas for the sake of beings. But this non-apprehension of beings, in [ultimate and] absolute reality, is taught by Tathagatas. And this non-apprehension of beings is inferred from this very isolatedness, and from the isolatedness of any who are so disciplined is the isolatedness of a Bodhi-being inferred. As a Bodhisattva, while this is being taught, does not lose heart, one can know this one courses in this perfection of wisdom. For from the isolatedness of a being is known the isolatedness of form, feeling, perception, impulse, and consciousness...and this the same of all dharmas. [446] Thus is the isolatedness of all

dharmas viewed. As this isolatedness of all dharmas is thus taught, a Bodhisattva does not lose heart, and due to this, one courses in this perfection of wisdom.

The Lord: For what reason does a Bodhisattva not lose heart as the isolatedness of all dharmas is thus taught?

Subhuti: Due to isolatedness no dharma can ever lose heart. For one cannot get at any dharma as loses heart, nor at any dharma which makes a dharma lose heart.

The Lord: So it is, Subhuti. It is quite certain a Bodhisattva courses in perfect and natural wisdom as this is being taught, demonstrated, expounded and pointed out...one does not lose heart, is neither cast down nor depressed, is not cowed or stolid, does not turn one's mind away from this, does not have one's back broken, and remains unafraid.

The Bodhisattva Protected by the Gods, and against Mara

Subhuti: So it is. As a Bodhisattva courses thus, one courses in perfect wisdom. And the Gods round Indra, around Brahman, round Prajapati, round Ishana, and the crowds of men and women round the Rishis, from a distance pay homage with hands together to a Bodhisattva coursing thus. [447]

The Lord: And not only these, but also all the other Gods, up to the Akanistha Gods, pay homage to such a one. And with the Buddha-eye, Tathagatas within any present moment residing in countless world systems behold these Bodhisattvas thus coursing in perfect wisdom, and these help such a one, and bring one to mind. This is quite certain, Subhuti, these Bodhisattvas coursing in perfect wisdom, and being helped and brought to mind by Tathagatas, are borne in mind as irreversible from full enlightenment being revealed and realized as such. No obstacle seen or thought of as being put up by Mara or anyone else can stop these. Even as all beings in the great trichiliocosm are seen as being evil Maras, and each one of these conjure up just as many diabolic armies, [448] even these all together have not the strength to obstruct on one's way to full enlightenment any Bodhisattva brought to mind by the Buddhas and coursing in perfect wisdom. And this remains true even as all the beings in all the countless trichiliocosms are seen as evil Maras, and as each one of these conjures up just as many diabolic armies. The endowment with these two dharmas safeguards a Bodhisattva against all attacks which are seen and thought of as coming from the Maras, or their hosts: 1) One can not abandon any being, and 2) One surveys all dharmas as reflected from emptiness. Two other dharmas have this same effect: 1) As one speaks so one acts, and 2) One is brought to mind by the Buddhas, the Lords.

As a Bodhisattva courses thus, the Gods also decide to go up to one such as this. These decide to ask questions and counter-questions, [449] to honor, and to strengthen one's determination by saying: "Soon, child of good family, shall you know full enlightenment! Here now, go on dwelling in this dwelling of perfect wisdom! Thus you offer safety to the helpless, defense of the defenseless, a refuge to these without refuge, a place of rest to these

without resting place, the final relief of these who are without this, an island to any without one, a light to the blind, a guide to the guideless, a resort to any without one, and you guide to the path any who have lost this, herein you become a support to one's who are without support."

The Buddha's Praise the Bodhisattva

The Buddhas, Lords who reside in countless world-systems, and who demonstrate dharma surrounded by a congregation of monks and attended by a multitude of Bodhisattvas, proclaim the name, clan, power, appearance and form of a Bodhisattva which courses and dwells in perfect wisdom, and is endowed with the virtues of roaming in perfect wisdom, perfecting wisdom. And these demonstrate Dharma, and exult over this Bodhisattva, proclaiming name, clan, power, color and form. Just here and now I demonstrate dharma, and I proclaim the name, etc., of the Bodhisattva Ratnaketu, and of the Bodhisattva Sikhin. [450] I exult over these, and also over the other Bodhisattvas which just now lead the holy life with Tathagata Akshobhya. In a similar way, the Buddhas in other Buddha-fields proclaim the name, etc., of Bodhisattvas just now leading the holy life here in this Buddha-field, and which dwell in the dwelling of perfect wisdom. And these exult over such as these.

Subhuti: Do the Buddhas honor all Bodhisattvas in such a manner?

The Lord: No, Subhuti. But only one's which are irreversible and free from all attachment.

Subhuti: Apart from the irreversible Bodhisattvas, do the Buddhas in such a manner honor any other Bodhisattvas?

The Lord: Yes, here are others. These are persons belonging to the vehicle of the Bodhisattvas, who are strong in assimilating what may be seen as an enemy. These are [451] just now engaged in learning this course of a Bodhisattva under Tathagata Akshobhya, and the Bodhisattva Ratnaketu, courses here on the pilgrimage of a Bodhisattva, and dwells, engaged in learning it. In addition, these Bodhisattvas which course in perfect wisdom, and resolutely believe "all dharmas fail to be produced" without, however, so far acquiring definitely the patient acceptance of dharmas which fail to be produced; as well as these which resolutely believe "all dharmas are calmly quiet," without, however, having entered into accord with the irreversible domain over all dharmas; any Bodhisattvas which dwell in this dwelling are honored by the Buddhas in the above manner. [452] Bodhisattvas of whom the Buddhas proclaim the name, etc., and over whom these exult, have forsaken the level of the Sravakas, Disciples and Pratyekabuddhas, and one can well see these come to be on the level of the Buddha. And these are predicted to full enlightenment. For Bodhisattvas of whom the Buddhas proclaim the name, etc., and over whom these exult, also stand in irreversibility.

Enlightenment and Suchness

In addition to this, Subhuti, Bodhisattvas stand in irreversibility as, upon hearing this deep perfection of wisdom being taught, these resolutely believe in this, are not stupefied, do not hesitate or doubt; as in this resolute belief "so it is, as Tathagata teaches" these go on listening to this in greater detail; and as these make up their minds to listen in still greater detail to this perfection of wisdom in the presence of Tathagata Akshobhya; and as these resolutely believe from just hearing this perfection of wisdom in the presence of persons avowed to this vehicle of the Bodhisattvas which in this Buddha-field lead the holy life. [453] Thus I teach merely to hear perfection of wisdom achieves much. How much more is achieved by any who resolutely believe in this, who, upon this, take up a position in relation to Thusness and progress toward Thusness, and who, upon this, stand firmly in Suchness and who, standing firmly in Suchness and in all-knowledge, demonstrate dharma.

Subhuti: As, O Lord, one cannot get at any different dharma, distinct from Suchness, what is this dharma which stands firmly in Suchness, or which knows full enlightenment, or which even can demonstrate this dharma?

The Lord: One cannot get at any different dharma, distinct from Suchness, which stands firmly in Suchness. This very Suchness, to begin with, is not apprehended, how much less one which stands firmly in Suchness. Suchness does not know full enlightenment, and no dharma is got at which knows full enlightenment, can do so, or does do so. Suchness does not demonstrate dharma, and this dharma cannot be got at which is demonstrated. [454]

Emptiness and Dwelling in Perfect Wisdom

Sakra: Deep, O Lord, is perfecting of wisdom. Doers of what is hard are these Bodhisattvas which aspire to full enlightenment. Indeed, no dharma stands in Suchness, no dharma knows full enlightenment, no one demonstrates dharma. And yet this does not cow these, nor do these hesitate, nor are these stupefied.

Subhuti: You say, Kausika, "doers of what is hard are Bodhisattvas which, as dharmas as deep as these are being taught, feel neither hesitation nor stupefaction." But, as all dharmas are empty who can herein feel hesitation or stupefaction? Who herein, can even begin to raise a question of hesitation or stupefaction?

Sakra: Whatever the holy Subhuti is expounding, this he expounds with reference to emptiness, and he does not get stuck anywhere. The holy Subhuti's demonstration of dharma does not get stuck anywhere, no more than an arrow shot into the air. Now perhaps, O Lord, I, as I take into consideration Subhuti the Elder, and teach as he thus teaches and expounds, may be one who correctly preaches Tathagata-truth, a preacher of Dharma, and one who declares also the logical sequence of dharma.

The Lord: So it is, Kausika. As you come to teach and expound as he does, you come to be one who correctly preaches Tathagata-truth, a preacher of dharma, and one who declares also the dharma's logical sequence. For whatever [455] the Elder Subhuti makes clear, this he makes clear with reference to emptiness. As the Elder Subhuti does not, to begin with, even review or apprehend perfection of wisdom, how much less one coursing in perfection of wisdom. Enlightenment, even to begin with he does not get at, how much less at one who knows full enlightenment. Even all knowledge, he does not get at, how much less at one who reaches unto all-knowledge. Even Suchness he does not get at, how much less at one who becomes a Tathagata. Even non-production he does not get at, how much less at one who fully has awoken to enlightenment. Even the powers Subhuti does not get at, how much less at one who possesses the powers. Even the grounds of self-confidence he does not review, how much less at one who is self-confident. Even the dharma he does not get at, how much less at one who demonstrates dharma. For Subhuti the Elder dwells in this dwelling of the isolatedness of all dharmas, in this dwelling of the baselessness of all dharmas. And this is quite certain this dwelling in isolatedness and baselessness of all dharmas, on the part of Subhuti the Elder, is of infinitesimal value compared with the dwelling of a Bodhisattva coursing in perfect wisdom, perfecting herein and dwelling in this. You see Kausika, except for the dwelling of Tathagata this dwelling of a Bodhisattva coursing in perfect wisdom, which dwells in it, surpasses all other dwellings. [456] This dwelling is described as the foremost of all dwellings, as the best, the choicest, the most excellent, the most sublime, the highest, the supreme, the unequalled, the incomparable. It surpasses the dwellings of all Sravakas, Disciples and Pratyekabuddhas. So here now, Kausika, a son or daughter of a good family who have this aspiration to arrive at the highest possible degree of perfection of all beings, to arrive at the best state, the choicest state, the most excellent state, the most sublime state, the incomparable state, -these do with diligence aspire to dwell in this dwelling of Bodhisattvas which course in perfect wisdom, which dwell in this.

Chapter 29: ~Approaches~

What is more, Subhuti, a Bodhisattva approaches the perfection of wisdom as follows: Through non-attachment to any and all dharmas. From the non-differentiatedness of any and all dharmas. From the fact all dharmas cannot possibly come about. In the conviction "any and all dharmas are equal in remaining unaffected by change." One recognizes by innate wisdom as pure Buddha-nature, all dharmas as without self, give us no hint [about their true nature or intentions]. In the conviction "any and all talk about dharmas [is extraneous to them], consists in mere words, mere conventional expressions, - but these conventional expressions do not refer to anything real, are not derived from anything real, nor are these conventional expressions anything real." In this conviction "any and all dharmas lie outside conventional expression and discourse, and it is not these which are conventionally expressed or uttered." The Bodhisattva approaches the perfection of wisdom from unlimitedness of any and all dharmas. [476] By penetration into any and all dharmas.

From the fact any and all dharmas are perfectly pure in their original nature. From the fact any and all dharmas are beyond words. Even the different kinds of forsaking are equal [in value and kind], since any and all dharmas can never be stopped. Suchness is everywhere sameness, since any and all dharmas are already realized Nirvana. In this conviction "any and all dharmas do not come, nor do these go; these cannot be generated, these are unborn...this non-birth being absolute." One such as this observes neither oneself nor others. In this conviction "any and all dharmas are holy Arhats, perfectly pure in this original nature." In this conviction "any and all dharmas laid down this burden, as no burden has ever been taken on by these." Such ones approach perfection of wisdom from the fact any and all dharmas have neither place nor locality. For form, feeling, perception, impulses, and consciousness, are without place and locality, in accordance with the own-being of original nature which is no-being. One is exhilarated by the cessation of any and all dharmas. One feels neither content nor discontent. One is neither impassioned nor dispassionate. For form, etc., in their nature reality, in their own-being, are not either impassioned or dispassioned. In the conviction "the original nature [of any and all dharmas], is perfectly pure." In the conviction, "all dharmas are non-attached, free from both attachment and non-attachment." [477] In the conviction "any and all dharmas are essentially enlightenment, as these are equally understood by Buddha-cognition." From the Emptiness, Signlessness and Wishlessness of all dharmas. In the cognition "any and all dharmas are essentially a healing medicine, as controlled by friendliness and accord." In the conviction "all dharmas are dwellers in friendliness, dwellers in compassion, dwellers in sympathetic joy, dwellers in impartiality." In the conviction "all dharmas are identified as this supreme universal spirit, as in simply being no faults can arise, as in essential being all faults remain unproduced." In the conviction "all dharmas are equally neither hopeful nor hostile."

One approaches this boundlessness of perfection of wisdom through [the analogy of] boundlessness of the ocean; through [the analogy of] multicolored brilliance of Meru. One approaches boundlessness of perfection of wisdom: from boundlessness of form, feeling, perception, impulses, consciousness; through [analogy of] boundless illumination shed by the circle of the sun's rays; from boundlessness of all sounds; from boundlessness of the final achievement of any and all dharmas of a Buddha; from boundlessness [of the excellence] of the equipment of any worlds of limitless beings with merit and cognition; from boundlessness of element earth; and so from boundlessness of elements water, fire, air, space and consciousness. [478]

One approaches unlimitedness of perfection of wisdom from unlimitedness of the collection of wholesome and unwholesome dharmas; from unlimitedness of the collection of all dharmas.

One approaches boundlessness of perfection of wisdom: through acquisition of boundlessness of concentration on all dharmas; from boundlessness of all Buddha-dharmas; from boundlessness of all dharmas; from boundlessness of emptiness; from boundlessness of thought and constituents; from boundlessness of thoughts and actions.

One approaches measureless perfection of wisdom from measureless wholesome and unwholesome dharmas. One approaches resounding declarations of perfection of wisdom through the [analogy of the] roaring of the lion's roar.

One approaches the fact that perfection of wisdom cannot be shaken by outside factors from the fact that any and all dharmas cannot be shaken by outside factors. Form, etc., is like the ocean. Form, and each skandha, is like firmament; like brilliant and multicolored Meru; like production of the rays of the disk of the sun; boundless like all sounds; boundless like the whole world of beings; boundless like final achievement of the dharmas of a Buddha; boundless like equipment with merit and cognition of all beings in all worlds; [479] this is like earth, like water, fire, air, space and consciousness; this has no definite boundary like collection of all wholesome and unwholesome dharmas; this has no definite boundary like collection of all dharmas. Form is departure [into Buddhahood], the own-being of form is Buddha-dharma which is essentially Suchness of form; etc., to: consciousness is departure [into Buddhahood], the own-being of consciousness is the Buddha-dharma which is essentially Suchness of consciousness. Form, and each skandha, is boundless true nature of any and all dharmas; Suchness as empty, boundless true nature [of things]; boundlessness of thought and constituents; which merely appears to give rise to thought and action; which is apprehended as wholesome or unwholesome until non-apprehension; it is as the lion's roar; it cannot be shaken by outside factors.

In such ways a Bodhisattva approaches perfect wisdom. [480] As the Bodhisattva approaches perfect wisdom in this way, apperceives this, enters into this, understands this, reflects on this, examines, investigates, and develops this, -with acts of mind which abandon any and all deception and deceit, any and all conceit, any exaltation of self, any and all laziness, any deprecation of others, notion of self, any notion of a being, gain, honor and fame, the five hindrances, envy and meanness, and any and all vacillation, - so this is not hard for one to gain full perfection of all virtues, of the Buddha-field and of supreme dharmas of a Buddha.