

The Sutra of the Heart of the Glorious Lady Prajñāpāramitā

Thus, I have heard. Once the Bhagavān was residing on Vulture Flock Mountain in Rājagṛha together with a great assembly of fully ordained monks and a great assembly of bodhisattvas. At that time the Bhagavān entered the samādhi of the enumerations of phenomena called “perception of the profound.” At the time noble Avalokiteśvara, the bodhisattva mahāsattva, while practicing the profound prajñāpāramitā, saw the following: he saw the five skandhas to be empty of nature.

Then, through the power of the Buddha, venerable Śāriputra spoke thus to noble Avalokiteśvara, the bodhisattva mahāsattva: “How should a son of noble family or a daughter of noble family train who wishes to practice the profound prajñāpāramitā?”

Noble Avalokiteśvara, the bodhisattva mahāsattva, said to venerable Śāriputra, “O Śāriputra, a son of noble family or daughter of noble family who wishes to practice the profound prajñāpāramitā should see in this way: they see the five skandhas to be empty of nature. Form is emptiness; emptiness also is form. Emptiness is no other than form; form is no other than emptiness. In the same way feeling, discrimination, formation, and consciousness are emptiness. Thus, Śāriputra, all phenomena are emptiness, without characteristics, without arising, without ceasing, without stain, not without stain, without decrease, and without increase. Therefore, Śāriputra, in emptiness there is no form, no feeling, no discrimination, no formation, no consciousness; no eye, no ear, no nose, no tongue, no body, no mind; no form, no sound, no smell, no taste, no tangible object, no phenomenon; no eye dhātu up to no mind dhātu, no dhātu of phenomena, no mental consciousness dhātu; no ignorance, no termination of ignorance up to no aging and death and no termination of aging and death; no suffering, no origin, no cessation, no path, no wisdom, no attainment, and no nonattainment.

“Therefore, Śāriputra, since bodhisattvas have no attainment, they abide by relying on prajñāpāramitā. Since their minds are without obscuration, they have no fear. Having fully transcended delusion, they attain complete nirvana. All the buddhas who abide in the three times fully awaken to unsurpassable completely perfect enlightenment by relying on prajñāpāramitā. “Therefore, the great mantra of prajñāpāramitā, the mantra of great insight, the unsurpassed mantra, the mantra equal to the unequalled, the mantra that calms all suffering, should be known to be true, since it is undeceiving. The prajñāpāramitā mantra is said as follows:

OM GATE GATE PĀRĀGATE PĀRASAMGATE BODHI SVĀHĀ

“In this way, Śāriputra, bodhisattva mahāsattvas should train in the profound prajñāpāramitā.”

Then the Bhagavān rose from that Samādhi and spoke to noble Avalokiteśvara, the bodhisattva mahāsattva. “Well done! Good, good, O son of noble family. Thus it is, O son of noble family, thus it is. One should practice the profound prajñāpāramitā just as you have taught and the tathāgatas will rejoice.”

When the Bhagavān had said this, venerable Śāriputra and noble Avalokiteśvara, the bodhisattva mahāsattva, all those surrounding them, and the world with its gods, humans, asuras, and gandharavas rejoiced and praised the words of the Bhagavān.

This was translated into Tibetan by the Indian pandita Vimalamitra and the translator and fully ordained monk Rinchen Dé. It was edited by the great editor-translator Gelo, Namka, and others.

English translation by Karl Brunnhölzl based on several Tibetan and Sanskrit editions.

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