् । । । अह्या ।

mandel

เลาสุดิรัฐลาฏิลาสูสุลาผิราลิารัสาสภุลเ sashi pukyi jukshing metok tram,

|२.४य.मू८.पक्षे.भे.च्यापम्परायदी|
rirab lingshi nyinde gyenpa di,

sangye shingdu mikte ulwar gyi,

|दर्शेगुर-इस-५मान्दिः त्यः र्श्वेदः पर-विम ॥
drokun namdak shingla chupar shok.

ाखीः देः त्युः दुः रुङ्गः अङ्गः व्यः गीः वेद्धः प्रः प्यः स्रो ।

Idam guru ratna mandalakam niryatayami.

Offering the Mandala

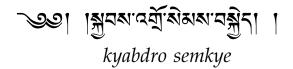
Here is the great Earth, Filled with the smell of incense, Covered with a blanket of flowers,

The Great Mountain, The Four Continents, Wearing a jewel Of the Sun, and Moon.

In my mind I make them The Paradise of a Buddha, And offer it all to You.

By this deed May every living being Experience The Pure World.

Idam guru ratna mandalakam niryatayami.



|लटल.क्रील.क्रूब.टेट.क्र्योल.ग्री.अक्र्यं.र्यश्वताता

sangye chudang tsokyi choknam la,

|चु८:कुव:वर:रु:वर्गाःदे:श्रुवशःशुःअकेश|

jangchub bardu dakni kyabsu chi,

| บารุการกุลาลักลาสฏิลานวิ เฉลัราสุมลาฏิลา dakki jinsok gyipay sunam kyi,

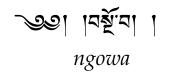
| तर्ज्ञाः ताः प्रवाद्याः अद्याद्याः प्रवाद्याः प्रवाद्याः विवाद्याः विवाद्याः विवाद्याः विवाद्याः विवाद्याः व

Refuge and The Wish

I go for refuge To the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha Until I achieve enlightenment.

By the power Of the goodness that I do In giving and the rest,

May I reach Buddhahood For the sake Of every living being.



| इस्मान प्रतिक्षा हिन्तु । इस्मान प्रतिक्षा हिन्तु । इस्मान हिन्तु । इस्मान

। पर्शेर् न्स्रमः प्रेम् त्रिम् स्वामः स्विरः। sunam yeshe tsok-dzok shing,

รunam yeshe lejung way,

|८४.त.भी.चार्ष्ठश्वात्त्रस्य प्रेचा ।।

dampa kunyi topar shok.

Dedication of the Goodness of a Deed

By the goodness Of what I have just done May all beings

Complete the collection Of merit and wisdom,

And thus gain the two Ultimate bodies That merit and wisdom make.

ञ्जा ।सर्केर्:या । chupa

|क्रेंब:य:ब्र:बोद:बदश:क्रुब:देव:यें:के|

tonpa lame sanggye rinpoche,

ब्रिंच यः त्वः येऽ : ५ यः केंशः रे दः यें के ।

kyoppa lame damchu rinpoche,

विदेशमास्यासेनान्यो विद्युत्र देशमें की

drenpa lame gendun rinpoche,

।श्चित्रशः वाद्यशः नृग्वितः सक्त्याः वासुसः तः सक्ति ।

kyabne konchok sumla chupa bul.

A Buddhist Grace

I offer this To the Teacher Higher than any other, The precious Buddha.

I offer this To the protection Higher than any other, The precious Dharma.

I offer this
To the guides
Higher than any other,
The precious Sangha.

I offer this
To the places of refuge,
To the Three Jewels,
Rare and supreme.



The Asian Classics Institute

Course VI: The Diamond-Cutter Sutra

Level One of Middle Way Philosophy (Madhyamika)

Course Syllabus

Selections from the following texts will be read:

The Diamond-Cutter Sutra, spoken by Lord Buddha, 500 BC

Illumination of the True Thought, by Je Tsongkapa (1357-1419) *Overview of the Middle Way,* by Master Kedrup Tenpa Dargye (1493-1568)

of Sera Mey Tibetan Monastery

Sunlight for the Path to Freedom, a Commentary on the Diamond-Cutter Sutra, by Choney Lama Drakpa Shedrup (1675-1748) of Sera Mey Tibetan Monastery

Reading One

Subject: The commentarial tradition; meaning of the title, and how the

sutra was spoken

Reading: Sections I.A to II.B.3:

The Diamond-Cutter Sutra, ff. 215a-216b

Sunlight for the Path, ff. 1b-4b

Reading Two

Subject: Emptiness and the wish for enlightenment

Reading: Sections II.B.4 to II.B.5:

The Diamond-Cutter Sutra, f. 216b Sunlight for the Path, ff. 4b-7a

Reading Three

Subject: Emptiness and the bodies of a Buddha

Reading: Sections II.B.9 to II.B.12:

The Diamond-Cutter Sutra, ff. 217a-217b

Sunlight for the Path, ff. 8b-9b

Course VI: The Diamond-Cutter Sutra Course Syllabus

Reading Four

Subject: The future of the Buddha's teaching

Reading: Sections II.B.13 to II.B.17:

The Diamond-Cutter Sutra, f. 217b-218b

Sunlight for the Path, ff. 9b-10b

Reading Five

Subject: Emptiness and karma

Reading: Sections II.B.23 to II.B.26:

The Diamond-Cutter Sutra, ff. 219a-219b

Sunlight for the Path, ff. 12b-13a

Reading Six

Subject: The direct perception of emptiness

Reading: (There is no reading for this class)

Reading Seven

Subject: Emptiness and the destruction of the mental afflictions

Reading: Sections II.B.31 to II.B.32, II.B.55 to II.B.56:

The Diamond-Cutter Sutra, ff. 220b-221a, 224b

Sunlight for the Path, ff. 14b-16a, 22a

Reading Eight

Subject: Emptiness and paradise; emptiness and purification

Reading: Sections II.B.33 to II.B.36, II.B.71 to II.B.73:

The Diamond-Cutter Sutra, ff. 221a-221b, 226b-227a

Sunlight for the Path, ff. 16a-17a, 25a-25b

Reading Nine:

Subject: Emptiness and the perfection of wisdom; how they prevent the

two extremes

Reading: Sections II.B.40 to II.B.42:

The Diamond-Cutter Sutra, ff. 222b-223a

Sunlight for the Path, ff. 17b-18a

Course VI: The Diamond-Cutter Sutra Course Syllabus

Reading Ten

Subject: How empty things still work

Reading: Sections II.B.52 to II.B.53:

The Diamond-Cutter Sutra, ff. 224a-224b

Sunlight for the Path, ff. 21a-21b

Reading Eleven

Subject: The poem of impermanence and emptiness

Reading: Section II.B.129:

The Diamond-Cutter Sutra, f. 235b Sunlight for the Path, ff. 42a-43a

The Asian Classics Institute Course VI: The Diamond-Cutter Sutra

Reading One: About the Sutra

The following selections are taken from Sunlight on the Path to Freedom, written by Choney Lama Drakpa Shedrup (1675-1748) of Sera Mey Tibetan Monastery. The original root text of the sutra by Lord Buddha is included in darker type.

Herein contained is a commentary upon the *Diamond Cutter Sutra* entitled *Sunlight to See the Profound, the Excellent Path to Travel to Freedom.*

I bow down to Manjughosha.

नित्त्रास्त्रःश्चितःत्वरः कुः वहेतः द्वरः विद्वा । वित्तेतः सहितः श्वरः विद्वा । विद्वा सहितः स्वरः स्वरः विद्वा । विद्वा सहितः स्वरः स्वरः विद्वा । विद्वा सहितः स्वरः स

I bow down to the Lord of the Able Ones, the king of sponge-like clouds Floating high in the great expanse of the sky, the dharma body, unobscured, Stunning in the glory of his thunder, the sound of emptiness profound,

Sending down to fields of students a stream of rain—both of the goals.

विस्वाक्षःसःस्वः वर्त्ते स्वित्रः विष्यः व्याः स्वाः स्वाः वर्त्तः विद्याः वर्त्तः वर्तः वर्तः वर्तः वर्त्तः वर्तः वर्तः वर्तः वर्तः वर्तः वर्त्तः वर्तः वर्त

I make obeisance to the spiritual friends who one by one appeared To clarify the deepest teaching, as foretold by the Victors:

Nagarjuna, and Aryadeva, and Chandrakirti too, Lobsang the Victor come again father and sons—and the rest.

🕴 । वर्देर र्ह्र यार्रेट र् यायाबाय येर क्षेत्र सुमायमु यवे वर्षेवाय है सूर वर्षमाय

चल्नेत्राचन्द्रम् स्वाचित्राच्याः स्वाचित्राच्याः स्वाच्याः स्वच्

Here I will, with great feelings of faith and in keeping with my own capacity, offer a commentary in explanation of the *Perfection of Wisdom in 300 Verses*, more commonly known as the *Diamond-Cutter*. It would seem that this text is rather difficult to comment upon correctly, for a number of reasons. First of all, the work is largely devoted to elucidating the meaning of the absence of a self-nature. Moreover, Lord Buddha repeats himself quite a number of times during the teaching. Finally, there appears to be but a single explanation of the work by the masters of ancient India, and none by a Tibetan at all. Nonetheless, I will undertake a commentary, to the best of my intellectual ability.

म्री अस्य म्री स्वर्त्त । प्रस्थानि सह्यामि । म्रीट मिर्टिस प्राप्त । प्रदेश प्रस्थानि । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त्त । स्वर्त । स्वर्त्त

We will proceed in three steps: the preliminaries, the actual body of the text, and the conclusion. The first part here has three sections of its own: a translation of the title, along with an explanation of its significance; the translator's obeisance; and setting the scene. Here is the first.

र्विःयारः स्निरः तुं अतुः वर्षः क्ट्रें रः यां तः स्याः ह्यं याः रे हो यां वे रः याः वे सः वाः वे सः वाः वे स त्रा वसवासः या वे सः र वाः याः वे सः र वाः वि सः वाः वे सः वि सः वाः वाः वे वाः याः के तः विके स्वारं सिरः विकार वाः विकार विकार विकार विकार

In the language of India, this teaching is called the Arya Vajra Chedaka Nama Prajnya Paramita Mahayana Sutra. In the language of Tibet, it is called the Pakpa Sherab Kyi Paroltu Chinpa Dorje Chupa Shejawa Tekpa Chenpoy Do. [In the English language, it is called An Exalted Sutra of the Greater Way on the Perfection of Wisdom, entitled "The Diamond-Cutter."]

शुं क्र के अर्र लिकायर विद्युर में।

The root text here begins with "In the language of India, this text is called the Arya Vajra..." The Tibetan equivalents of the words in the title are as follows. Arya means pakpa, [or "exalted."] Vajra means dorje, [or "diamond."] Chedaka is chupa, [or "cutter."] Prajnya is sherab, [or "wisdom."] Para is paroltu, [or "to the other side,"] while ita means chinpa, [or "gone," and the two together mean "perfection."]

Nama is for shejawa, [which means "entitled."] Maha stands for chenpo, [or "greater."] Yana means tekpa, [which is "way," or "vehicle."] Sutra translates as do, [or "sutra," meaning the teaching of an enlightened being.]

ष्यभानुवि, यं भाषात्रीयात्रीयात्रीयात्रीयात्रीयात्रात्रीय स्तर्भात्र स्वास्त्र स्वास्त

How do we get this word paramita? The ending am is required between the words para and ita, to represent the second grammar case. In combination the a of the am drops out, and the resulting m is attached to the ita, which gives us mita.

स्वानस्याम्य । वश्चान्त्र । वश्चान्त्य । वश्चान्त्र । वश

Here is the significance of the name. The worldly god named Hundred Gifts, or Indra, wields a diamond bolt, which no physical object in the entire world

can destroy. A mere touch of this bolt though can reduce mountains of stone and other such entities to piles of dust. The subject of this work is the actual perfection of wisdom; that is, the wisdom with which one perceives emptiness. The point of the title is that the antithesis of this wisdom can never affect it in the least; and that the wisdom, on the other hand, cuts from the root everything involved with the mental afflictions, and each and every suffering.

|शरशःमुशः८८:यु८:रुवःश्रेशशः८्यवःत्रश्रशः उदःवःयुवाःवर्द्रवःवे।

I bow down to all Buddhas and bodhisattvas.

The import of the second point, the translator's obeisance, is self-evident.

श्रेश्रान्यन्तरः क्रेत्रः न्याः स्वार्थः स्वर्थः स्वार्थः स्वार्थः स्वार्थः स्वार्थः स्वार्थः स्वार्थः स्वार्थः स्वर्थः स्वार्थः स्वर्थः स्वर्यः स्वर्थः स्वर्थः स्वर्थः स्वर्थः स्वर्यः स्वर्थः स्वर्थः स्वर्थः स्वर्यः स्वर्थः स्वर्थः स्वर्थः स्वर्थः स्वर्यः स्वर्थः स्वर्थः स्वर्थः स्वर्यः स्वर्यः स्वर्थः स्वर्थः स्वर्यः स्वर्यः स्वर्थः स्वर्यः स्वर

These words once I heard. The Conqueror was residing at Shravasti, in the park of Anatapindada at the gardens of Prince Jetavan. In convocation with him were a great gathering of 1,250 monks who were listeners, as well as an immense number of bodhisattvas who were great beings.

कृ स्वतः क्षेत्रान्तः त्वत्वात्रः व्याविष्ठाः विष्ठाः विष्ठाः

Third is the third preliminary, where the scene is set. The speaker is the person who compiled the **words** of this text, who says "I heard" the following. **Once,** meaning at a certain time, the Conqueror was residing at Shravasti, in

the park of Anatapindada at the gardens of Prince Jetavan. In convocation with him—that is, together with him—were a great gathering of 1,250 monks who were listeners, as well as an immense number of bodhisattvas who were great beings.

त्रेन्छ्यात्त्राच्यत्रःश्चेन्थ्येतःस्याय्यं स्वायःस्याव्यायःस्याव्याःस्याय्यःस्यायःस्याय्यःस्यायःस्य

In India there were six great cities, including the one known as "Shravasti." This particular city was located in the domain of King Prasenajita, and contained a particularly excellent site—the exquisite gardens of one known as Prince Jetavan.

There came a time, several years after the Conqueror attained his enlightenment, when a certain householder by the name of Anatapindada resolved that he would construct a large, wondrous temple where Lord Buddha and his retinue could reside on a regular basis. To this end he approached Prince Jetavan and purchased his gardens by paying him many thousands of gold coins, enough in fact to fill the gardens themselves.

क्रीयाचीराग्रीयायाराञ्चीत्रात्मा वार्ष्यात्मात्मात्मे स्वात्मात्मे स्वात्मात्मे स्वात्मात्मे स्वात्मे स्वात्मे

यम्यायाः । स्मित्रं स्थायाः स्थायः स्थाः स्थायः स्थाय

Jetavan as well offered to the Conqueror a parcel of land that had been part of the quarters for the caretakers of the property. In these gardens Anatapindada, availing himself of the abilities of Shariputra, directed artisans from the lands of both gods and men to construct an extraordinary park.

When the park was completed, the Conqueror, perceiving that Jetavan wished it, named the main temple after him. Anatapindada, by the way, was a great being who had purposely taken a birth as someone who could act as the Teacher's sponsor. He had the power to see deposits of precious gems and metals deep under water or below the earth itself, and could utilize these riches whenever he wished.

In the morning then the Conqueror donned his monk's robes and outer shawl, took up his sage's bowl, and entered the great city of Shravasti for requesting his meal. When he had collected the food, he returned from the city and then partook of it. When he had finished eating he put away his bowl and shawl, for he was a person who had given up the later meal. He washed his feet and then seated himself on a cushion that had been set forth for him. He crossed his legs in the full lotus position, straightened his back, and placed his thoughts into a state of contemplation.

रे. प्रमालिया चार्या निर्मालया चित्र हैं ते. रे. क्रि. हैं ते. रे. क्रि. क्रि

In the morning then the Conqueror—all for the sake of his disciples—donned the three parts of a monk's attire, took up his sage's bowl, and went to the great city of Shravasti for requesting, in order to request, his meal. He accepted his food and then, after coming back, partook of it.

वयाय्यीयार्थ्। यविट्यं स्र्रियायः वय्यीयः याय्यीयः याय्ये स्याय्ये याय्ये स्थाय्ये याय्ये स्थाय्ये याय्ये स्थाय्ये स्थाये स्याये स्थाये स्थाये

When he had finished eating he put away his bowl and so on, for he was a person who had given up the later meal; that is, who would never go to request a meal in the latter part of the day. He washed his feet, bathed them, and then seated himself on a cushion that had been set forth for him. He crossed his legs in the full lotus position, and straightened his back. Then he placed his thoughts into a state of contemplation, knowing that he was about to deliver this teaching.

पश्राचेत्र वित्र मुश्या पश्चित्र प्राची श्रीत प्राची स्ट क्षेत्र पश्चित्र पश्चित्र प्राची स्ट क्षेत्र स्ट

र्यं त्या त्रा विष्णा विषण्या विषण्या

We should speak a bit here about the fact that the Conqueror went to request food. As far as the Buddha is concerned, there is no need at all to go and ask for his meal. Rather, he does so only so that his disciples will have an opportunity to collect masses of good karma, or else in order to give instruction in the Dharma, or for some similar reason.

The *Sutra of Golden Light* explains how it is completely impossible for a Buddha to suffer hunger or thirst. And even if they did need to eat or drink something, it is a complete impossibility that the Buddhas would ever find themselves without sufficient supplies; they could take care of themselves perfectly well, for they have gained total mastery over what we call the "knowledge of the store of space." They have as well the ability, should they so desire, to turn dirt or stones or other things of the like into gold, or silver, or precious jewels.

Furthermore they have the power to transform such objects, and also inferior kinds of food, into feasts of a thousand delectable tastes. No matter how poor some meal might be, it turns to a matchless, savory banquet as soon as a Buddha touches it to his lips—delicious in a way that no other kind of being could ever in his life experience. The *Ornament of Realizations* is making this same point when it says "To him, even a terrible taste turns delicious to the supreme."

यश्चि। स्वीत् स्वीत् स्वीत् स्वीत् स्वीत् स्वात् स

अक्र-दिश्चिर-तान्विर-स्। अक्र-दिश्चिर-तान्विर-स्। अक्र-दिश्चिर-तान्विर-स्।

There was a time before when, for three months, the Teacher pretended to be so destitute that he was forced to eat the barley that we usually use for horse fodder. His disciple Ananda was depressed by the sight, thinking to himself, "Now the day has come that the Teacher, who was born into royalty, is reduced to eating horse fodder." The Teacher then took a single piece of the grain from his mouth, handed it to Ananda, and instructed him to eat it. The disciple complied, and was filled; in fact, for an entire week thereafter he felt no urge to eat anything at all, and was overcome with amazement. This incident applies here too.

त्राचार्रकार्श्व भुग्याविदार्श्वर प्रथा वर्षात्र वर्य वर्षात्र वर्य वर्य वर्षात्र वर्य वर्य वर्य वर्षात्र वर्य वर्य वर्य वर्य वर्षात्र वर्य वर्य व

The Golden Light relates how—despite the fact that the Teacher appeared to have to go for requesting his meal—and seemed as well to eat it, in truth he did not eat, and had no feces or urine either. The Sutra of the Inconceivable explains as well that the holy body of the Ones Thus Gone are like a lump of solid gold: there is no cavity inside, and no organs like the stomach, nor large or small intestines. This is actually the way it is.

And then a great number of monks advanced towards the Conqueror and, when they had reached his side, bowed and touched their heads to his feet.

They circled him in respect three times, and then seated themselves to one way. At this point the junior monk Subhuti was with the same group of disciples, and took his seat with them.

The root text is saying that, then, a great number of monks too advanced to the side of (which is to say approached) the Conqueror. Then they circled him in respect three times, and seated themselves to "one way"; that is, they sat down all together. Not only that, but at this point the respected elder named Subhuti was with this same group of disciples, and took his seat with them.

३ । याद्येश्वर म्हास्त्र याद्वि याद्वर प्रदेश । प्रदः संदेश । अस्ति स्वर स्वर स्वर प्रदेश । प्रदः संदेश । अस्ति स्वर स्वर स्वर प्रदेश । प्रदः संदेश । अस्ति स्वर स्वर स्वर स्वर प्रदेश । प्रदः संदेश ।

We now begin the second step in our commentary to the sutra, which is an explanation of the actual body of the text. This itself comes in two parts: a description of how the teaching was initially requested, and then an explanation of the series of answers that followed. Here is the first of these.

शुःष्रयः क्रें न्दर्यः प्रत्ते त्यं क्षेत्रः व्यव्यायः विष्यः विषयः विष्यः विष्यः विष्यः विष्यः विष्यः विषयः विषयः विषयः विषयः विष्यः विषयः विषयः

And then the junior monk Subhuti rose from his cushion, and dropped the corner of his higher robe from one shoulder in a gesture of respect, and knelt with his right knee to the ground. He faced the Conqueror, joined his palms at his heart, and bowed. Then he beseeched the Conqueror in the following words:

याःयःचःदेरःवयःभ्रःश्चरःचःचतृत्र्वयःभ्रंदेःव्ययःचर्ष्व्ययःहेरःवद्यःयःवद्यायःहेरःव्ययःभ्रंद्यायः

The root text next describes how the junior monk Subhuti then rose from the cushion where he had been seated, and dropped the corner of his "higher" robe—meaning his upper robe—from his left shoulder in a gesture of respect. He placed the sole of his left foot on the ground, and then knelt with his right knee as well. He faced in the direction of the Conqueror, joined his palms at his heart, and bowed. Then he beseeched the Conqueror in the following words.

O Conqueror, the Buddha—the One Gone Thus, the Destroyer of the Enemy, the Totally Enlightened One—has given much beneficial instruction to the bodhisattvas who are great beings. Whatever instruction he has ever given has been of benefit.

And the One Gone Thus, the Destroyer of the Enemy, the Totally Enlightened One, has as well instructed these bodhisattvas who are great beings by granting them clear direction. Whatever clear direction he has granted, o Conqueror, has been a wondrous thing. O Conqueror, it is a wondrous thing.

|२े.४४१.कूच।कै.चर्डें अ.छे.चर्ड्र्ट्र.४। चर्ड्र् अ.उंन्द्रें केश्वात्त्र व्याचित्र ग्रीशाचित्र क्षेत्र श्रामाः १८१४४१.कूच।कै.चर्ड्रें अ.छे.चर्ड्र्य व्याचित्र ग्रीशाचित्र क्षेत्र श्रामाः

के. श्री मार्श्व मार्श मार्व मार्श्व मार्श्व मार्य मार्य मार्य मार्व मार्य मार्य मार्व मार्व मार्य मार्य मार्

To put it simply, Subhuti beseeches the Buddha by saying:

O Conqueror, you have given much instruction to the bodhisattvas who are great beings; and in a spiritual sense it has been of the highest benefit, the ultimate help, for both their present and future lives. Whatever instruction you have ever given, all of it has been of this same benefit.

You have as well **instructed these bodhisattvas by granting them** three kinds of **clear direction.** You have directed them towards the source, and towards the dharma, and towards the commands.

Subhuti then tells the Conqueror how wondrous this is, and so on.

यास्य यान्यायाः प्रति व्याप्त प्राप्ति । त्याप्त प्राप्ति । त्याप्ति । त्याप्ति । त्याप्त प्राप्ति । त्याप्त । त्याप्ति । त्याप्ति । त्याप्ति । त्याप्ति । त्याप्ति । त्याप्ति । त्याप्त । त्याप्ति । त्य

In Master Kamalashila's thinking here the word "source" would refer to directing a disciple to a spiritual guide. The word "dharma" would signify how this guide leads his disciple to engage in what is beneficial. And the "commands" would describe the Buddha's directions: "You, my bodhisattva, must act to help all living beings."

पश्ची ट्रेस्ट्रिश्चार्थ्यायार्थ्यायार्थ्यायार्थ्यायार्थ्यायाय्यायाः विष्यायार्थ्याय्यायाः विष्यायार्थ्याय्यायाः विष्यायार्थ्याय्यायाः विष्यायार्थ्याय्यायाः विष्यायाः विष्यायः विषयः विष्यायः विष्यायः विषयः विष्यायः वि

O Conqueror, what of those who have entered well into the way of the bodhisattva? How shall they live? How shall they practice? How should they keep their thoughts?

This did Subhuti ask, and then...

रयः र्यः याचितः ययः यञ्चीः वेशः रूपः याश्रेशः विशः श्री । याश्रेशः यः यश्रेशः या या यः विश्वाश्वाः या या विशः स्वाश्वाः या विश्वाः स्वाश्वाः या विश्वाः स्वाश्वः या विश्वः स्वाशः स्वाशः या विश्वः स्वाशः स्वाशः

This brings us to the actual way in which the sutra was requested. Subhuti asks the Conqueror, "What of those who have entered well into the way of the bodhisattva?" He phrases his question in three different sections: "How shall they live? How shall they practice? How should they keep their thoughts?"

Here secondly we explain the Buddha's reply.

श्री.चिट्ट्री श्री.चट्ट्री श्री.चट्ट्री

...the Conqueror bespoke the following words, in reply to Subhuti's question:

O Subhuti, it is good, it is good. O Subhuti, thus it is, and thus is it: the One Thus Gone has indeed done benefit to the bodhisattvas who are great beings, by granting them beneficial instruction. The One Thus Gone has indeed given clear direction to the bodhisattvas who are great beings, by granting them the clearest of instruction.

The Conqueror is greatly pleased by the request that Subhuti submits to him, and so he says "It is good." Then he provides his affirmation of the truth of what Subhuti has spoken, by assenting that the One Thus Gone has indeed done benefit to the bodhisattvas who are great beings, and has indeed given them clear direction.

यत्तर्र्। इ.क्रंप्राचर्श्चियात्तराचित्तरा इ.क्रंप्रश्रिश्चात्तराचित्रयाचित्रया

And since it is so, o Subhuti, listen now to what I speak, and be sure that it stays firmly in your heart, for I shall reveal to you how it is that those who have entered well into the way of the bodhisattva should live, and how they should practice, and how they should keep their thoughts.

२८। म्र्यूट्या वृद्वः विकामकुरका

"And since this reason is so," continues the Buddha, "listen well *now* to what I speak, and be sure that it stays firmly, without ever being forgotten. For I shall reveal to you the answer to those three questions about how these beings should live, and so on."

|पर्छराः स्वरः वर्षा देः पत्रिवः वर्षा । विषः पार्रावः वर्षाः दरः स्वरः यः रपः वर्षे रः

बुवार्ते। वर्ष्ठमाञ्चर वर्षाणी सुर १९४१ पार्टा वर्ष्ठमाञ्चर वर्षणी सावरी स्निर छेषा वागवः

"Thus shall it be," replied the junior monk Subhuti, and he sat to listen as instructed by the Conqueror. The Conqueror too then began, with the following words:

त्रम्याविक्त्रिं।

त्रम्याविक्त्रिं।

त्रम्याविक्त्रिं।

तर्म्याविक्त्रिं।

तर्म्याविक्त्याविक्त्याविक्त्रिं।

तर्म्याविक्त्याविक्त्याविक्त्याविक्त्रिं।

तर्म्याविक्त्याविक

In reply then Subhuti proffers to the Conqueror, "Thus shall it be." He sits to listen as instructed by the Conqueror, and the Conqueror too begins his explanation with the words that follow.

This Subhuti, by the way, is only posing as a disciple: in reality he would appear to be an emanation of Manjushri himself. When the Teacher spoke the sutras on the Mother of the Buddhas, it was none other than Subhuti that he would appoint to give the opening presentations—and there is a special significance to why he did so.

म्रीकामी कार्या स्थानिक स्थान

पर्यादरार्धे नुदाकुवाकु स्थेयया मुक्ति पर्या

As for the general structure of the text, Master Kamalashila makes his presentation in a total of eighteen different points. These begin with relating the text to the Wish for enlightenment, and then to the perfections, and then discussing the aspiration for the Buddha's physical body. After covering all the others, he reaches finally the part where the Buddha has completed his pronouncement.

Master Kamalashila provides his commentary by relating the first sixteen of these points to the levels of those who act in belief. The one point that follows then he relates to the levels of those who act out of total personal responsibility. Point number eighteen refers, lastly, to the level of a Buddha.

My intention here is to offer a somewhat more concise explanation, and I begin with the part that concerns the Wish for enlightenment.

The Asian Classics Institute Course VI: The Diamond-Cutter Sutra

Reading Two: Emptiness and the Wish for Enlightenment

The following selections are taken from the Diamond-Cutter Sutra, spoken by Lord Buddha (500 BC), and the commentary to it named Sunlight on the Path to Freedom, by Choney Lama Drakpa Shedrup (1675-1748) of Sera Mey Tibetan Monastery. The root text is in bold and has been inserted into the commentary.

Subhuti, this is how those who have entered well into the way of the bodhisattva must think to themselves as they feel the Wish to achieve enlightenment:

I will bring to nirvana the total amount of living beings, every single one numbered among the ranks of living kind: those who were born from eggs, those who were born from a womb, those who were born through warmth and moisture, those who were born miraculously, those who have a physical form, those with none, those with conceptions, those with none, and those with neither conceptions nor no conceptions. However many living beings there are, in whatever realms there may be—anyone at all labelled with the name of "living being"—all these will I bring to total nirvana, to the sphere beyond all grief, where none of the parts of the person are left at all. Yet even if I do manage to bring this limitless number of living beings to total nirvana, there will be no living being at all who was brought to total nirvana.

र्यादर्वेरादरेग्यानुरास्याक्षेत्रसार्यस्य विष्यात्रात्यः भूषास्य विष्यास्य स्थानित्रस्य स्थानित्रस्य न्रभुद्दित्र के त्रिक्ष अद्भाव के अर्था स्वर्धित स्वर्धा स्वर्धित स्वर्य स्वर्य स्वर्य स्वर्धित स्वर्य स्वर्य स्वर्य स्वर्य स्वर्य स्वर्य स्वर्य स्वर्य स्वर स्राम्या १ १ वर्षे स्राम्या स्राम्य स् रु: अरयः ५८। र्देरामिवरः ५८। ह्याहे क्रीयः याविः ५८। वर्देराम्ययः ५८। म्बुम्बान्यस्य म् स्पेर्यं से से स्वर्थं स्वर्थं स्वर्थं स्वर्धं स्वर्थं स्वरं स्वर्थं स्वर्थं स्वरं स्वरं स्वरं स्वर्थं स्वरं यदे'ग्|**बुग्|राउद्,याःप्रेद,तः** दच्याचु'क्रे'च'न्टःश्चेन्'स्रेदे'स्रेयश्यराउद,तायः म्बिर,तर्द,त्रेश,२४,म्बी,श्रंशश,२४,२८। यत्रश,यःक्र,मद,स्रीमश,मश्रम,म्बी, म्राम्यात्रवात्रम्यात्रप्तित्राम्यात्रात्रा म्रीत्रस्त्रम्भ्राम्यतः स्राम्यात्रप्ता विषारमाषायायोराचेरासामायोरायवरायायोरायास्री यर्देरादाबोयायाचा उरःश्रीयःगानेशः रदःश्रुवाः वश्यः ग्रीः सुदः संः स्वृवाः सः स्वेरः पदेः स्रोः वादशः सदेः स्रुः ददः

चुर्। । तमायन्यायते न्त्रीट्यासु प्रेट्यासु सु मुन्दर त्यमा न्यूर् सूमा नु से समा न्यूर्

What the root text is saying is: "Subhuti, this is how those who have entered the way of the bodhisattva must think to themselves first as they feel the Wish to achieve enlightenment:

Whatever realms there may be, and however many living beings there are, they reach to infinity, they are countless. If one were to classify those numbered among the ranks of living kind by type of birth, there would be four: those who were born from eggs, and then those who were born from a womb, those who were born through warmth and moisture, and those who were born miraculously.

Then again there are the sentient beings living in the desire realm and the form realm: **those who have a physical form.** There are also the beings in the formless realm: **those with no** physical form.

There are "those with conceptions," meaning the beings who live in all the levels except the ones known as the "great result" and the "peak of existence." There are "those with no conceptions," which refers to a portion of the beings who reside at the level of the great result. In addition are the beings who have been born at the level of the peak of existence: those with no coarse kinds of conceptions but who on the other hand are not such that they have no subtle conceptions.

The point, in short, is that I speak of all living beings: of anyone at all labelled with the name of "living being." All these will I bring to total nirvana, to the sphere beyond all grief, where one no longer remains in either of the extremes—and where none of the two kinds of obstacles, and none of the suffering heaps of parts to the person, are left at all.

यशिषात्, कु. सू योषातावा भूष्टिं त्रिक्षण त्र सूर्या विषय त्र भूष्टिं कु प्रत्य विषय क्षिण क्षिण विषय विषय क्षिण क्षिण विषय क्षिण क्षिण विषय क्षिण क्षेण क्षिण क्षेण क्षिण क्षेण क्षिण क्षेण क्षिण क्षिण क्षिण क्षिण क्षेण क्

To summarize, these bodhisattvas develop the Wish for the sake of bringing all these different living beings to the state of that nirvana where one no longer remains in either of the extremes; to bring them to the dharma body, the essence body, of the Buddha. The reference here is either to someone who is feeling the Wish for the first time, or to someone who has already been able to develop it. The first of these two has been practicing the emotion of great compassion, where one wishes to protect all living beings from any of the three different kinds of suffering they may be experiencing. This has made him ready for his first experience of the state of mind where he intends to lead all sentient kind to the ultimate nirvana. The latter of the two, the one who has already developed the Wish, is re-focussing his mind on his mission, and thus increasing the intensity of his Wish.

त्रियान्य प्रति स्त्रास्त्र स्त्रास्त्र स्त्रास्त्र स्त्रास्त्र स्त्र स

Here is a little on the four types of birth. Birth from an egg exists among humans, serpentines, birds, and other creatures. Birth from the womb is found with humans and animals, and is also one of the ways in which craving spirits take birth. There are many examples of inanimate objects which grow from warmth and moisture—crops and so on. Among humans though there was the case of the king called "Headborn." The majority of the insects which appear in the summer are also born this way. Miraculous birth occurs with the humans who appear at the beginning of the world, and with pleasure beings, hell beings, inbetween beings, and near pleasure-beings. It is also one of the ways in which animals take birth. An example of birth from an egg among humans would be the story that we see of Saga, who possessed the lifetime

vows of a laywoman. She gave a great number of eggs, and from these eggs grew boys.

The above description applies to the way in which a person thinks as he or she feels what we call the "deceptive" Wish for enlightenment. It refers both to the Wish in the form of a prayer and to the Wish in the form of actual activities. I would say as well that Lord Buddha's intention at this point is to refer primarily to the Wish as it occurs at the paths of accumulation and of preparation.

ह्याय्ट्रेन् क्षेयान्य्र्याक्ष क्षाय्येन्त्र्र्।

ह्याय्ट्रेन् क्षेयान्य्र्याक्ष क्षाय्येन्त्र्र्।

ह्याय्य्याय्याय्याय्य्येन्त्र्न्। । ह्यायाय्येन्याक्षेत्र प्राप्त प्र प्राप्त प्राप्त प्र प्राप्त प्र प्राप्त प्र प्राप्त प्र प्राप्त प्र प्राप्त प्र प्राप्त प्त

For a person to feel a Wish for enlightenment which is complete in every necessary characteristic, it is not sufficient simply to intend to lead all other sentient beings to the state of Buddhahood. Rather, you must have the desire that you yourself reach this state as well. This is exactly why Maitreya stated that "The Wish for enlightenment consists of the intention to reach total enlightenment for the sake of others." The part about "the sake of others" is meant to indicate that you must intend to lead other beings to nirvana, whereas the part about the "intention to reach total enlightenment" means that you must intend to reach perfect Buddhahood yourself.

त्रिम्मा प्रमान्त्र स्त्रित्त्र स्त्रिम्स स्त्रिम स

Lord Buddha wants us to understand that this Wish for enlightenment must be imbued with that correct view wherein you perceive that nothing has a self-nature. This is why He states that we must develop a Wish for enlightenment where we intend to lead **this limitless number** of living beings to the nirvana beyond both extremes, but where at the same time we realize that, **even if we do manage to bring them to this total nirvana, there will be no living being at all** who achieved it, and who also existed ultimately.

निश्च स्त्राह्म स्त्रीत्त्र क्ष्या स्त्राह्म स्त्राह्म स्त्राह्म स्त्राह्म स्त्राह्म स्त्राह्म स्त्राह्म स्त्र स्त्राह्म स्त्राहम स्त्राह्म स्त्

The Tibetan term for "nirvana" means "passing beyond sorrow." The "sorrow" mentioned here refers to the pair of karma and mental afflictions, as well as to suffering. The nirvana to which you wish to bring beings then refers to a state of escaping from the combination of karma and bad thoughts, along with suffering: it means to go beyond them. This is why the unusual Tibetan verb here refers not only to nirvana, but to the act of *bringing* someone to nirvana as well. The root text at this point is meant to indicate that ordinary beings can possess something that approximates the ultimate Wish for enlightenment. It is also indicating the existence of the actual ultimate Wish for enlightenment, which only realized beings possess.

At this juncture in his commentary, Master Kamalashila presents a great deal of explanation concerning the correct view of reality. He does so because he realizes that this background is very important for a proper understanding of the remainder of the root text, which is all spoken relative to the correct view of emptiness. If I did the same here in my own commentary I fear it would become too long for the reader, and so I will cover some of these points now, but only in the very briefest way, just to give you a taste.

यान्वायान्तः देशः वेश्वर्यात्रास्त्रः वश्वर्याः स्वर्याः विद्याः विद्याः विद्याः विद्याः विद्याः विद्याः विद्य निर्देश्य विद्याः विद्य यान्वायाः विद्याः विद्य

Now each and every existing object, be it part of the afflicted part of existence or part of the pure side, is established as existing only by virtue of terms. If one performs an analysis with reasoning which examines an object in an ultimate sense, no object can bear such examination, and we fail to locate what we gave our label. Here the thing we deny is easier to deny if we can identify it clearly. As such I will speak a bit about what this thing we deny is like.

Generally speaking there are a great number of different positions that exist about what the object we deny exactly is. Here though I will give my explanation according to the position of the Consequence section of the Middle Way school. A certain sutra says that "They are all established through concepts." The Commentary to the Four Hundred too contains lines such as the one which says, "It is only due to the existence of concepts that existence itself can exist, and..." The Lord, in his Illumination of the True Thought, says as well that "These lines [from sutra] are describing how all existing things are established by force of concepts; and we see many other such statements, that

all existing objects are simply labelled with our concepts, and are established only by force of concepts."

क्र्यायम्य प्रमाण्य प्रमाण प्रमा

There is a metaphor used to describe how all existing things are labelled with our concepts. When you put a rope with a checkered pattern on it in a dark corner, some people might get the impression that it's a snake. The truth at this point though is that nothing about the rope is a snake: neither the rope as a whole, nor the parts of the rope. Nonetheless the person thinks of the rope as a snake, and this snake is an example of something which only makes its appearance as something labelled with a concept.

परेत्रक्षर्यं प्रत्ये विष्णा प्रत्ये विष्णा प्रत्ये विष्णा प्रत्ये विष्णा विष्

In the same way, the heaps of parts that make us up serve as a basis for us to get the impression "This is me." There is nothing at all about these heaps as a whole, nor their continuation over time, nor their separate components, that we could establish as being an actual representation of "me." At the same time though there is nothing else, nothing essentially separate from these heaps of parts to ourselves, that we could consider an actual representation of "me" either. As such, this "me" is merely something labelled upon the heaps of parts that make us up; there is nothing which exists by its own essence.

न्त्रिः स्त्रेन् स्त्रुन् स्त

। देश्यक्षः याव्यक्षः स्वरः श्रीकः यः यादः । । इसः विकासः ध्येवः यादः श्रीकः यः यादः ।

This too is the point being made in the *String of Precious Jewels*, by the realized being Nagarjuna:

If it's true that the persona is not the element Of earth, nor water, nor fire, nor wind, Not space, or consciousness, not all of them, Then how could he ever be anything else?

The part of the verse that goes from "not earth" up to "not consciousness" is meant to deny that you could ever establish a self-nature of the person in any of the six elements that make up a persona, considered separately. The words "not all of them" are meant to deny that you could establish such a self-nature in the collection of the six elements, considered as a whole. The final line of the verse denies that there could be any self-nature which was essentially separate from these same elements.

विश्वान्तर्भः विश्वान्त्रभः विश्वान्यः विश्वान्त्रभः विश्वान्त्यम्यः विश्वान्यः विश्वान्त्यः विश्वान्त्यः विश्वान्त्यः विश्वान्त्यः विश्वान्त्यः विश्वान्त्

र् प्रम्याबार्य र्थं अया मित्राबा या प्रमान्य अया मुनार्ये।

How then do we establish the existence of the persona (which in this case simply means "person")? The same work says:

Because the persona includes all six Elements, he's nothing that purely exists; Just so, because they include their parts, None of these elements purely exist.

Given the reason stated above, the persona is nothing more than something labelled upon the six elements that make him up—he does not though purely exist.

Just so none of these elements themselves exist purely, for they too are simply labelled upon the parts that they include. This same reasoning can be applied to the heaps of parts that make up a person, and all other objects as well: you can say about all of them that, because they are labelled on their parts and their whole, they do not exist independently. The physical heap of parts that I myself possess is something labelled upon my five appendages and so on; these appendages themselves are something labelled upon the body as a whole and the parts that go off to each side of it; and the smaller appendages like fingers and toes too are labelled upon their whole and their parts.

ग्रीट.प्रट.ग्री.क:वेश.टट.क.२४.वेश.त.ज.यप्टेय.श.त.यप्टेय.श.त.र्या.श.व्याश.यांच्याश.२४. विश्व.त.यु.प्रट.ग्री.शर्थ.वेयश.कुं.य.श्र्याश.ज.यप्टेय.श.त.यप्टेयाश.त.रट.। शर्थ.वेयश.श्र्याश.

दश्यायम्याश्वाद्योः विश्वाद्याः विश्वाद्याः स्वाद्याः स्वतः स्वाद्याः स्वतः स्वाद्याः स्वतः स्वाद्याः स्वाद्याः स्वाद्याः स्वाद्याः स्वाद्याः स्वाद्याः स्

A water pitcher is something labelled on its spout and base and other parts; the spout and base and such in turn are labelled on their parts and whole; and so on—the same pattern applies to all physical objects. Mental things too are labelled on mental events of successive moments, and through the objects towards which they function, and so on. Even uncaused phenomena are labelled upon the respective bases that take their labels. All this I have covered before, in other writings.

वित्रः से रायहेष वित्रः साधिष स्वी वित्रः से राया साधिष स्वी वित्रः से राया साधिष स्वी वित्रः से राया साधिष स्वी वित्रा से साधिष स्वी

াৰ্ভিমানামুদ্মার্ম্যা

Given the above, there does not exist anything which does not occur in dependence, or which is not labelled through a dependent relationship. Therefore the point at which we can say something is the object denied by our search for a hypothetical self-existent thing would be any time that thing existed without having been labelled through a dependent relationship. This too is why the *Root Text on Wisdom* states:

No object which does not occur Through dependence even exists at all; As such no object could exist At all if it weren't empty.

।यन्याः छः तदः यरः नेः तदः नेः तद्ररः क्रेंबः गुवः विका। ।यन्याः छः तदः यरः नेः तद्ररः क्रेंबः गुवः विका।

बिरादर।

In short, when you search for the thing given the name of "self" or "me" you will never find anything; despite this, the fact that things can do something is completely right and proper, in the sense of an illusion, or magic. And this fact applies to each and every existing thing there is. As the *Shorter [Sutra on the Perfection of Wisdom]* states,

You should understand that the nature of every single living is the same as that of the "self."

You should understand that the nature of all existing objects is the same as that of every living being.

हैर:दे:वहेंब:कुवा:दें:वार्यागुर:।

विश्वास्त्रीत्रः श्रीश्वास्त्रास्त्रीत्रः स्त्रीश्वास्त्रीत्रः स्त्रीत्रः स्त्रीत्रः स्त्रीत्रः स्त्रीत्रः स्त

श्री विश्वानश्रुद्याश्री दि:चल्लिन्दुःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्यःश्चित्रःश्चित्यःश्चित्रःश्चित्यःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्यःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्यःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्यःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्रःश्चित्य

The King of Concentration says as well,

You should apply what you understand about how You think of your "self" to every thing there is.

All this is true as well for objects like the perfection of giving and so on: they exist only through being labelled with a term, and are empty of any natural existence. Seeking to make us realize how necessary it is to understand this fact, Lord Buddha makes statements like "Perform the act of giving without believing in any object at all."

विश्वानश्चर्यात्वे व्यवाश्वान स्थान स्थान

मेन्यम् । व्यवस्थान्य । व्यवस्य । व्यवस्थान्य । व्यवस्य । व्यवस्थान्य । व्यवस्थान्य । व्यवस्थान्य । व्यवस्थान्य । व्यवस्यस्य । व्यवस्यस्य । व्यवस्यस्य । व्यवस्थान्य । व्यवस्थान्य । व्

This is the most important thing for us to learn: so long as we are still not free of the chains of grasping to things as truly existing, and so long as we have yet to grasp the meaning of emptiness, then we will never be able to achieve freedom, even if the Buddha should appear himself and try to lead us there. This is supported by the words of the savior Nagarjuna:

Freedom is a complete impossibility
For anyone who does not understand emptiness.
Those who are blind will continue to circle
Here in the prison of six different births.

Master Aryadeva as well has spoken that "For those who conceive of things, freedom does not exist." And there are many other such quotations.

१२.३५.द्वीर खे.४। रयत्त्र्येर। याता.हे.यिर.क्याश्रेशश्चरत्रश्चेशश्चरत्र्यं

Why is it so? Because, Subhuti, if a bodhisattva were to conceive of someone as a living being, then we could never call him a "bodhisattva."

श्रेम् द्रम्यः विश्वास्त्रः त्र्यास्यः त्र्यास्यः स्रम्यः त्र्यः विश्वास्यः स्रम्यः विश्वास्यः स्रम्यः विश्वास्यः स्रम्यः विश्वास्यः स्रम्यः विश्वास्यः स्रम्यः विश्वास्यः स्रम्यः विश्वास्यः विश्वास्यः स्रम्यः स्

Here we return to where we left off in the root text. One may ask, "Why is it so? What reason is there for saying that we should develop a Wish for enlightenment, while still understanding that there is no truly existing sentient being at all who ever achieves it?" Lord Buddha first calls Subhuti by name, and then explains that we could never call any particular bodhisattva a "bodhisattva who had realized the meaning of no-self-nature" if this bodhisattva were to conceive of any living being as a living being who existed truly.

The Asian Classics Institute Course VI: The Diamond-Cutter Sutra

Reading Three: Emptiness and the Bodies of a Buddha

The following selections are taken from Sunlight on the Path to Freedom, written by Choney Lama Drakpa Shedrup (1675-1748) of Sera Mey Tibetan Monastery. The original root text of the sutra by Lord Buddha is included in darker type.

पदेः स्वेरः स्वेरः विषयः प्राप्ते । यदः स्वेरः विषयः स्वेरः यदः स्वेरः यदः स्वेरः यदः स्वेरः यदः स्वेरः यदः स्व

Why is that? Think, o Subhuti, of the mountains of merit collected by any bodhisattva who performs the act of giving without staying. This merit, o Subhuti, is not something that you could easily ever measure.

पदे-अवदः क्रिंग् जीक्षा पश्चेत्रा पादे श्री क्रिंग स्था प्राप्त प्राप

One would have to admit that a person locked in the chains of grasping to some true existence can collect a great amount of merit through acts of giving and the like. But suppose a person is able to practice giving and the rest after

he has freed himself from these same chains. His merit then is certain to be ever much greater. And it is to emphasize this point that the Buddha says, Why is that? Think, o Subhuti, of the mountains of merit collected by any bodhisattva who performs the act of giving without staying. This merit is not something whose limit you could easily ever measure; in fact, it would be quite difficult to measure.

स्ट.क्ट्र-श्रीश्वर्याट श्रीयात्र स्थित्र स्थित स्थित

O Subhuti, what do you think? Would it be easy to measure the space to the east of us?

And Subhuti replied,

O Conqueror, it would not.

The Conqueror bespoke:

And just so, would it be easy to measure the space to the south of us, or to the north of us, or above us, or below us, or in any of the ordinal directions from us? Would it be easy to measure the space to any of the ten directions from where we now stand?

And Subhuti replied,

O Conqueror, it would not.

The Conqueror bespoke:

And just so, o Subhuti, it would be no easy thing to measure the mountains of merit collected by any bodhisattva who performs the act of giving without staying.

पर्नेश्राम् विम्यास्त्री विम्यास्त्रियोत्राय्येत्रेश्वास्त्राय्येत्राय्येत्र्यः स्वित्राय्येत्र्यः स्वित्रायः स्वति स्वत्रः स्वति स्

The root text here is presenting an example. It would be no easy thing to measure the space to the east or any of the rest of the ten directions reaching out from the particular point where we are now. Then the Buddha summarizes the point of the example with the words that start with "Just so, Subhuti..."

र्रा चक्र्यत्त्रं त्ये त्ये स्वित्त्रं स्वित्तं स्वतं स्वतं

O Subhuti, what do you think? Should we consider someone to be the One Thus Gone because he possesses the totally exquisite marks on a Buddha's body?

And Subhuti replied,

O Conqueror, we should not. We should not consider someone the One Thus Gone because he possesses the totally exquisite marks on a Buddha's body. And why not? Because when the

One Thus Gone himself described the totally exquisite marks on a Buddha's body, he stated at the same time that they were impossible.

And then the Conqueror spoke to the junior monk Subhuti again, as follows:

वर्ष्युर हिटा म्ब्यायाणी भूरे अर्वन द्येया मुन्य वर्षे । यस वर्षे र वरे हे भूया नुःबोस्रयालेबायाचे। रवावर्त्वेराम्बिन्गीकार्नेदावनैःवाहात्वराधीदाङ्गसाराबोस्रयान म्रे'प्रथम। दे'प्रविद्यायिषायायदे'म्ब्यायाग्रीःभ्याद्यायाग्रीःभ्याद्यायान्त्रेयादे सर्वर द्यास्य स्यार्केन्यायाप्तराष्ट्रवायाधीवार्येत्। वेवागुरायक्वात्राप्त्वास्यार्वेन्यायाधीता य'दे'र्र्थराश्चीरा'दे'प्रविद्यापियारा'यर'व्यु'प'र्बे'प्रदेर्द'यर'तु'प'र्थोद'सूसा'स्रवस'विरा दैकायाम् रवादर्वेराग्रीकावर्षेकायूमावरकारीकेरीयूमावयूपाकाकार्कालेका বার্ষবেদী ত্র্ের্-রেন্ট্রন্বীমর্কর-র্থান্ত্র্বান্ত্র্মার্ক্রবান্ত্র্বান্ত্বান্ত্র্বান্ত্র্বান্ত্র্বান্ত্র্বান্ত্র্বান্ত্র্বান্ত্র্বান্ত্র্বান্ত্র্বান্ত্র্বান্ত্র্বান্ত্ব্বান্ত্বান্ত্বান্ত্বান্ত্ব্বান্ত্ব্বান্ত্বান यबिब मिवियाबायम प्रायः प्रायः प्रायः प्रायः निष्ठे । निष्ठे विष्ठे । निष्ठे विष्ठे । निष्ठे विष्ठे । निष्ठे विष्ठे । त्रश्याचियोश्यीःभ्रेष्ट्रश्रम्भ्यः रीत्रस्यः श्रीशः सूयोश्वातायोदः योश्वीदश्वाताः दे क्षेत्रयोषः ह्यः र्रे.श्च.रा.क्षेर.लूरे.तर.योशेटरा.ग्री ट्रेय.रेश.तर.शक्य.रेग्.सेय.श्रेश.क्र्याश.त.श. अळें अ'यदे' शुर्' तुर्दे 'ब्रे अ'या श्रें या हैं।

The merit of acts such as giving and the rest bring us the physical body of a Buddha, and this physical body is adorned with various marks and signs. The words "Subhuti, what do you think?" mean "Subhuti, turn your mind to this subject, and think about how it could be—contemplate upon it."

The Buddha then asks Subhuti, "Assume for a minute that **someone possessed the totally exquisite marks** and signs, or the two physical bodies, of the One Thus Gone. Would that in itself **require us to consider him**—that is, assert that he is—**the One Thus Gone?** What do you think?"

Subhuti replies to the Buddha with the words starting off from, "We should not consider him so." At this point we have to draw a slight distinction. One should not necessarily consider someone the One Thus Gone simply because he possesses the totally exquisite marks and signs. "And why not?" says Subhuti. He answers himself by saying, "Because when the One Thus Gone himself described the totally exquisite marks and signs on a Buddha's body, he stated at the same time that they existed deceptively, in the way of an illusion. Signs and marks of this kind that existed ultimately, however, would be a complete impossibility."

प्रयायर्चेर। यरे:है:क्षुआरु:बोश्यायः स्वायर्चेर:चीश्यायः स्वायं स्वायं स्वायं स्वायं स्वायं स्वायं स्वायं स्वाय प्रविवायः यायाः स्वायं स्वयं स्वयं स्वायं स्वयं स्वयं

O Subhuti, what do you think? The totally exquisite marks on a Buddha's body, as such, are deceptive. The totally exquisite marks on a Buddha's body are also not deceptive, but only insofar as they do not exist. Thus you should see the One Thus Gone as having no marks, no marks at all.

Thus did the Conqueror speak. And then the junior monk Subhuti replied to the Conqueror, as follows:

भाश्ची-त्तरावक्षेत्वराविष्णं विद्याचिष्णं स्थित्याचिष्णं स्थान्यविष्णं स्थित्याचिष्णं स्थित्याचिष्णं विद्याचिष्णं स्थित्याचिष्णं स्याचिष्णं स्थित्याचिष्णं स्थित्याचिष्णं स्थित्याचिष्णं स्थित्याचिष्णं स्थित्याचिष्णं स्थित्याचिष्णं स्थित्याचिष्णं स्थित्याचिष्णं

The marks and signs on the physical body of the Buddha are like an image drawn on a piece of paper: they are not the real thing—they exist in a deceptive manner, as things that occur when all of their causes have gathered together. They do not exist as something with a true nature. To indicate this fact, Lord Buddha says to Subhuti, "Insofar as the totally exquisite marks on a Buddha's body exist, as such they are deceptive.

"Just what," you may ask, "is meant by the word deceptive?" The totally exquisite marks and signs on a Buddha's body are also not deceptive, and true, but only insofar as they do not exist truly. Thus you should see the One Thus Gone as having no marks, no marks to indicate his nature, at all.

The section here helps to prevent us from falling into either one of the two extremes. The physical body of the Buddha and its various marks and signs do exist—albeit in a deceptive way, in a false or empty way—and this fact keeps us from the extreme of denying the existence of something which actually does exist.

The text though also states that there exist no marks, and no marks that would indicate any nature, which also exist truly. This fact keeps us from the extreme of asserting the existence of something which actually does not exist. The former of these two [marks] is referring to the physical body of a Buddha. The latter is referring to the dharma body, and chiefly to the essence body.

The Asian Classics Institute Course VI: The Diamond-Cutter Sutra

Reading Four: The Future of the Buddha's Teaching

The following selections are taken from Sunlight on the Path to Freedom, written by Choney Lama Drakpa Shedrup (1675-1748) of Sera Mey Tibetan Monastery. The original root text of the sutra by Lord Buddha is included in darker type.

दर्नेश्च मुर्ने न्यर त्यीर या के श्रम्भ श्रम् श्रम् श्रम् । विर्यं प्रम् त्यीर प्राप्त प्रम् त्यीर प्राप्त प्रम् त्यीर प्राप्त प्रम् त्यीर प्राप्त प्रम् त्यीर प्रम् त्यीय प्रम् त्यीर प्रम् त्यीर प्रम् त्यीय प्

O Conqueror, what will happen in the future, in the days of the last five hundred, when the holy Dharma is approaching its final destruction? How could anyone of those times ever see accurately the meaning of the explanations given in sutras such as this one?

And the Conqueror bespoke,

O Subhuti, you should never ask the question you have just asked: "What will happen in the future, in the days of the last five hundred, when the Dharma is approaching its final

destruction? How could anyone of those times ever see accurately the meaning of the explanations given in sutras such as this one?"

The issue is whether or not there will be anyone at all in the future who believes in, or has any great interest in, sutras such as this one—sutras which explain the nature of the dharma body, and the physical body, of a Buddha. In order to raise this issue, Subhuti asks the question that begins with "O Conqueror, what will happen in the future, in the days of the last five hundred, when the holy Dharma is approaching its final destruction?"

In reply, the Conqueror speaks: "O Subhuti, you should never ask the question you have just asked." What he means here is that Subhuti should never entertain the uncertainty of wondering whether or not there will be anyone of this type in the future; and if he never had this doubt, Subhuti would never ask the question.

रचार में र्या श्रास्त के स्वास्त स्वास स्

नम् र्सूट तु साया नम् नियदे सामा नम् नियदे से ना नम् मी नाय के सामा नम् नियदे से सामा नम् नियदे से सामा निया के साम निया के सामा निया के सामा निया के सामा निया के सामा निया के साम निया के सामा निया के सामा निया के सामा निया के सामा निया के साम निया के सामा निया के सामा निया के साम निया के सामा निया के साम निया के साम निया के साम निया के साम निया के सामा निया के सामा निया के सामा निया के सामा निया के साम निया के सामा निया के साम निया के सामा निया

And again the Buddha bespoke,

O Subhuti, in the future, in the days of the last five hundred, when the holy Dharma is approaching its final destruction, there will come bodhisattvas who are great beings, who possess morality, who possess the fine quality, and who possess wisdom.

And these bodhisattvas who are great beings, o Subhuti, will not be ones who have rendered honor to a single Buddha, or who have collected stores of virtue with a single Buddha. Instead, o Subhuti, they will be ones who have rendered honor to many hundreds of thousands of Buddhas, and who have collected stores of virtue with many hundreds of thousands of Buddhas. Such are the bodhisattvas, the great beings, who then will come.

स्यम्भेर्यास्य स्वास्त्र द्वास्त्र द्वास्त्र द्वास्त्र ह्वास्त्र ह्वास्त्र

O Subhuti, says the text, in the future, even when the holy Dharma is approaching its final destruction, there will come bodhisattvas who are great beings. They will possess the extraordinary form of the training of morality; they will possess that fine quality which consists of the extraordinary form of the training of concentration, and they will possess the extraordinary form of the training of wisdom.

And these bodhisattvas who are great beings will not be ones who have rendered honor to or collected stores of virtue with only a single Buddha, but instead they will be ones who have rendered honor to and collected stores of virtue with many hundreds of thousands of Buddhas. This fact, says the Conqueror, is something I can perceive right now.

२८.ये. क्रॅ्य.२८.इ. त्या श्रं श्रं क्रीय विद्र्य ताता थु. तस्त्राचा तति ता क्रीय विद्र्य क्रीय विद्र्य विद्र विद्र्य विद्र्य विद्र्य विद्र विद्र्य विद्र विद्र्य विद्र्य विद्र विद्र्य विद्र्य विद्र्य विद्र्य विद्र्य विद्र्य विद्र्य विद्र विद्र्य विद्र्य विद्र विद्र विद्र्य विद्र व

Master Kamalashila explains the expression "days of the last five hundred" as follows:

"Five hundred" here refers to a group of five hundreds; it refers to the well-known saying that "The teachings of the Conqueror will remain for five times five hundred."

As such, the "five times five hundred" refers to the length of time that the teachings will remain in the world: 2,500 years.

On the question of just how long the teachings will survive in this world, we see a number of different explanations in the various sutras and commentaries upon them. These state that the teachings of the Able One will last for a thousand years, or two thousand, or two and a half thousand, or five thousand years. When we consider their intent though these various statements, they are not in contradiction with each other.

The reason for their lack of contradiction is that some of these works are meant to refer to the length of time that people will still be achieving goals, or still be practicing. Still others refer to the length of time that the physical records of these teachings remain in our world. Some, finally, appear to be referring to the Land of the Realized [India].

There are many examples of the kinds of bodhisattvas mentioned in the text. In the Land of the Realized, there have been the "Six Jewels of the World of Dzambu," and others like them. In Tibet there have been high beings like the Sakya Pandita, or Buton Rinpoche, or the Three Lords—the father and his spiritual sons.

O Subhuti, suppose a person reaches even just a single feeling of faith for the words of a sutra such as this one. The One Thus Gone, o Subhuti, knows any such person. The One Thus Gone, o Subhuti, sees any such person. Such a person, o Subhuti, has produced, and gathered safely into himself, a mountain of merit beyond any estimation.

यः स्याकारात्।

विदेश्यः स्राकारात्।

विदेशः स्राकारात्।

विद

Suppose, says the text, that a person of those future days learns, and then contemplates, a sutra such as his one; that is, a scripture which teaches the perfection of wisdom. And say further that this brings him to reach, or develop, even just a single feeling of admiration for this teaching—much less any frequent emotion of faith for it. From this moment on the One Thus Gone knows and sees that any such person has produced, and gathered safely into himself, a mountain of merit beyond any estimation. He "knows" the person's thoughts, and "sees" his visual form and such.

त्र त्रुर्वि स्वित् र्वा रवावर्ष्य । व्याप्त स्वाप्त स्वित् स्वि

Why is it so? Because, Subhuti, these bodhisattvas who are great beings entertain no conception of something as a self, nor do they entertain any conception of something as a living being, nor any conception of something as being alive, nor any conception of something as a person.

यन्यायोमः विद्वस्य स्तुः स्वार्त्तास्य स्तुः स्वार्त्तास्य स्तुः स्तुः स्तुः स्तुः स्तुः स्तुः स्तुः स्तुः स्तु स्तुः स्तुः स्तुः स्तुः सुः स्तुः सुः स्तुः स्तु स्तुः स्तुः

श्रे वह्या य दे प्यत्या श्रेन हेया श्रायदे स्मयश्या नर्यो दशा श्री

One may ask the reason why the above is so. It's because these particular bodhisattvas will entertain no manifest conception of something as a self, or as a living being, or as being alive, or as a person. The denotation of the words "self" and "person" and so on here are the same as I have mentioned earlier. Master Kamalashila at this point says:

The expression "conceive of something as a self" means thinking "me," or grasping that the self exists. "Conceiving of something as a living being" means grasping that something belonging to the self exists. "Conceiving of something as being alive" means continuing to grasp to the same "self" as above, but for the entire length of its life. "Conceiving of something as a person" means grasping that those who are born again and again are born.

Thus the meaning of grasping to something as belonging to the self is a bit different than before.

When the text says that these bodhisattvas **entertain no** such coarse **conceptions**, it is referring specifically to the occasions at which one realizes the lack of a self-nature.

वीरः चतुः हीरः र्रा बुटा श्रुश्चश्चर्यात्र त्यात्र त्या श्रूचा है त्यां त्याः व्याप्तः विद्यायात्र त्याः विद्यायात्र त्यायात्र त्यायात्य त्यायात्र त्यायात्र त्यायात्य त्यायात्र त्यायात्र त्यायात्र त्यायात्र त्यायात्य त्यायात्य त्यायात्र त्यायात्य त्यायात्य त्यायात्य त्यायात्य त्यायात्य त्यायात्य त्यायात्य त्यायात्य त्यायायात्य त्यायात्य त्यायात्य त्यायायात्य त्यायात्य त्यायात्य त्यायात्य

O Subhuti, these bodhisattvas who are great beings neither entertain any conception of things as things, nor do they entertain any conception of things as not being things. They neither entertain any conception of a thought as a conception, nor do they entertain any conception of a thought as not being conception.

Why is it so? Because if, o Subhuti, these bodhisattvas who are great beings were to entertain any conception of things as things, then they would grasp these same things as being a "self"; they would grasp them as being a living being; they would grasp them as being something that lives; they would grasp them as a person.

And even if they were to entertain them as not being things, that too they would grasp as being a "self"; they would grasp as being a living being; they would grasp as being something that lives; they would grasp as a person.

त्र त्रिक्ष यहिया य त्या त्रिक्ष स्याक्ष प्रत्य विष्य स्याक्ष प्रत्य विष्य स्याक्ष प्रत्य विष्य यहिया व त्य त्य विष्य स्याक्ष प्रत्य विष्य यहिया व त्य विष्य स्याक्ष प्रत्य विष्य स्याक्ष स्याविक्ष स्याक्ष स्याविक्ष स्याक्ष स्याविक्ष स्याक्य स्याक्ष स्याक्ष स्याक्ष स्याक्ष स्याक्ष स्याविक्ष स्याविक्ष

The text is saying: "Not only do these beings avoid entertaining a belief in things as being something true; **neither do they entertain any conception of** physical form and other **things as** being true **things** nominally. **Nor** as well **do they entertain any conception** where they believe that **these things are not things."**

From another point of view, it is appropriate as well to gloss the passage as follows. Physical form and other such things are deceptive objects, and deceptive objects are not something which is true. These bodhisattvas avoid entertaining even the conception where one believes that this fact itself is

something true. If one in fact did entertain such a conception, then certain problems would arise—and this explains the relevance of the two paragraphs that come next in the root text, the one that mentions "If they were to entertain any conception of things as things" and so on; and the other that starts with "If they were to entertain them as not being things" that had a self.

The Asian Classics Institute Course VI: The Diamond-Cutter Sutra

Reading Five: Emptiness and Karma

The following selections are taken from Sunlight on the Path to Freedom, written by Choney Lama Drakpa Shedrup (1675-1748) of Sera Mey Tibetan Monastery. The original root text of the sutra by Lord Buddha is included in darker type.

The Conqueror bespoke:

O Subhuti, what do you think? Suppose some son or daughter of noble family were to take all the planets of this great world system, a system with a thousand of a thousand of a thousand planets, and fill them all up with the seven kinds of precious substances, and offer them to someone. Would that son or daughter of noble family create many great mountains of merit from such a deed?

ग्रदःश्चर्त्रः स्वर्धः स्वर्धः याः स्वेत्रः याः स्वर्धः याः स्वर्धः याः स्वर्धः याः स्वर्धः याः स्वर्धः याः स्वर ग्रदः श्चरः स्वर्धः स्वर्धः याः स्वर्धः

चक्रियाट्टर्स्याच्टर्स्याट्ट्र्याट्टर्स्याच्ट्र्याट्ट्र्याट्ट्याट्ट्य्याट्ट्र्य्याट्ट्याट्ट्याट्ट्याट्ट्याच्ट्र्याच्ट्र्याच्ट्र्याच्ट्र्याच्ट्र्याच्ट्र्याच्ट्र्याच्ट्र्याच्ट्र्याच्ट्र्याच्ट्र्याच्ट्र्याच्ट्र्याच्ट्र्याच्ट्र्याच्ट्र्याच्याच्ट्याच्ट्याच्ट्र्याच्ट्र्याच्ट्र्याच्ट्याच्याच्ट्याच्याच्याच्ट्याच्याच्ट्याच्याच्ट्याच्याच्ट्याच्याच्याच्याच्याच्याच्याच्या

With this next section of the sutra, Lord Buddha wishes to demonstrate a certain fact. In the sections above we have spoken about the act of becoming enlightened, and of teaching the dharma, and so on. Neither these, nor any other object in the universe, exists ultimately. Nonetheless, they do exist nominally. As such, one would have to admit that anyone who performs an act of giving does acquire great merit thereby. Yet anyone who carries out the process of learning, or contemplating, or meditating upon this teaching acquires infinitely greater merit.

To convey this point, the Conqueror asks Subhuti the question beginning with "What do you think? Suppose some son or daughter of noble family were to take this great world system, a system with a thousand of a thousand of a thousand of a thousand planets..." The system mentioned here is described in the *Treasure House* [of Higher Knowledge, the Abhidharmakosha,] as follows:

A thousand sets of all four continents with A sun and moon, Mount Supreme, pleasure Beings of the desire, and world of the Pure agreed as an elementary system. A thousand of these is a second-order kind, The intermediate type of world system. A third-order system is a thousand of these.

"Suppose further," continues Lord Buddha, "that they were to fill up this system of planets with the seven kinds of precious substances: with gold, silver, crystal, lapis, the gem essence [emerald], karketana stone, and crimson pearl. And say then that they offered them to someone. Would they create many great mountains of merit from such a deed, from giving someone else such a gift?"

र्या वर्षेत्र क्रीश्रा वार्श्या यर्ष्य व्यवस्थ व्यवस्थ स्वा अदः व्यवस्थ विश्वा वर्ष्य व्यवस्थ वर्षेत् व्यवस्थ क्षेत् व्यवस्थ क्षेत्र व्यवस्थ क्षेत् व्यवस्थ क्षेत्र व्यवस्थ क्षेत् व्यवस्थ क्षेत् व्यवस्थ क्षेत् व्यवस्थ क्षेत् व्यवस्य क्षेत् व्यवस्थ क्षेत् व्यवस्य क्षेत् व्यवस्य क्षेत् व्यवस्थ क्षेत् व्यवस्य क्षेत् व्यवस्

O Conqueror, many would it be. O Conqueror, it would be many. This son or daughter of noble family would indeed create many great mountains of merit from such a deed. And why so? Because, o Conqueror, these same great mountains of merit are great mountains of merit that could never exist. And for this very reason do the Ones Thus Gone speak of "great mountains of merit,"

चैर-चन्नास्तर्भेर-भिर्म-द्रम् स्थान्य स्थान्य

८८. तम्यात्रात्यकात्यकात् । तम्यात् । तम्यत् । तम्यात् । तम्यात्

In response, Subhuti replies:

It would be many great mountains of merit—and these great mountains of merit are mountains of merit that we could establish as existing only in name, only in the way that a dream or an illusion exists: these same great mountains of merit though could never exist as mountains that existed ultimately. The Ones Thus Gone as well speak in a nominal sense of "great mountains of merit, great mountains of merit"—applying the name to them.

This section is meant to demonstrate a number of different points. Black and white deeds that you have committed before now, and which you are going to commit later, are such that the ones in the past have stopped, and the ones in the future are yet to come. Therefore they are non-existent, but we have to agree that, generally speaking, they exist. We also have to agree that they are connected to the mind stream of the person who committed them, and that they produce their appropriate consequences for this person. These and other difficult issues are raised in the words above.

And the Conqueror bespoke:

O Subhuti, suppose some son or daughter of noble family were to take all the planets of this great world system, a system with a thousand of a thousand of a thousand planets, and fill them all up with the seven kinds of precious substances, and offer

them to someone. Suppose on the other hand that one of them held but a single verse of four lines from this particular dharma, and explained it to others, and taught it correctly. By doing the latter, this person would create many more great mountains of merit than with the former: they would be countless, and beyond all estimation.

We should first say something about the word "verse" here. Although the sutra in Tibetan is not written in verse, the idea is that one could put it into verse in Sanskrit. The word "hold" refers to "holding in the mind," or memorizing. It can also apply to holding a volume in one's hand and, in either case, reciting the text out loud.

The phrase "explain it correctly" is explained as stating the words of the sutra and explaining them well. The phrase "teach it correctly" is explained as teaching the meaning of the sutra well, and this is the most important part.

Suppose now that one held the sutra and did the other things mentioned with it, rather than the other good deed described. This person would then create great mountains of merit that were ever more countless, and beyond all estimation.

ह्यान्नात्तर्भात्त्रात्त्रात्त्रम् स्वायत्त्र्या ने प्रविद्यात्रात्त्रम् । दे प्रविद्यात्रम् विद्यात्रम् । दे प्रविद्यात्रम् विद्यात्रम् । दे प्रविद्यात्रम् । दे प्रविद्यात्रम्यात्रम् । दे प्रविद्यात्रम् । दे प्रविद्यात्यात्रम्यत्रम् । दे प्रविद्यात्यात्रम् । दे प्रविद्यात्रम् । दे प्

द्वीर-र्रा वर्दे:जश्चीर-ङ्गी श्रद्धाःमिश्चव्र्थाःक्षेत्र-वर्दशःष्ट्रभशःग्रीर-वर्द्दे:जशःश्चीशःचव्रः

Why is it so? Because, Subhuti, this is where the matchless and totally perfect enlightenment of the Ones Thus Gone, the Destroyers of the Foe, the Totally Enlightened Buddhas, comes from. It is from this as well that the Buddhas, the Conquerors, are born.

The reason for this is as follows. The act of giving someone the dharma is of much more benefit that the act of giving material things. Not only that, but the enlightenment of the totally enlightened Buddhas comes from—is achieved through—the perfection of wisdom: the realization of emptiness which forms the subject matter of this text. It is from putting this into practice as well that the Buddhas, the Conquerors, are born.

(There is no reading for class six)

The Asian Classics Institute
Course VI: The Diamond-Cutter Sutra

Reading Seven: Emptiness and the Destruction of the Mental Afflictions

The following selections are taken from Sunlight on the Path to Freedom, written by Choney Lama Drakpa Shedrup (1675-1748) of Sera Mey Tibetan Monastery. The original root text of the sutra by Lord Buddha is marked with an ornament in the Tibetan and bold in the English.

योषकासी क्षेत्रक्र्स्यासक्ष्मे स्थान्य स्थान स्थान्य स्थान्य

O Conqueror, I declare that the Ones Thus Gone—those Destroyers of the Foe who are the Totally Enlightened Buddhas—reside in the highest of all those states that are free of the mental afflictions. I am, o Conqueror, a person who is free of desire; I am a foe destroyer.

But I do not, o Conqueror, think to myself, "I am a foe destroyer." For suppose, o Conqueror, that I did think to myself, "I have attained this very state, the state of a foe destoyer." If I did think this way, then the One Thus Gone could never have given me the final prediction: he could never have said: "O son of noble family, o Subhuti, you will reach the highest of all those states that are free of the mental afflictions. Because you stay in no state at all, you have reached the state free of mental afflictions; you have reached what we call the 'state free of mental afflictions.'

प्रहें के केंद्र केंद्

Then Subhuti explains, "I am, nominally speaking, a foe destroyer. But it is also true that I do not, while grasping to some true existence, think to myself, "I am a foe destroyer." If I did grasp to it this way then I would start to have mental afflictions, and then I would stop being a foe destroyer. I am a foe destroyer, and the Conqueror has given me the final prediction: he has told me, "Nominally speaking Subhuti, son of noble family, you will reach the highest of all those states that are free of the mental afflictions." In an ultimate sense though, because I stay in no state at all, he could never have given me the final prediction, he could never have said, "O son of noble family, o Subhuti, you will reach the state free of mental afflictions." This is because, ultimately speaking, there does not even exist any place to stay, no thing to make one stay there, nor even anyone who stays there. All this is consistent with the position of the Consequence school, which says that grasping to some true existence is a mental affliction.

्राविक्षात्त्र्व्यात्व्यात्व्यात्व्यात्यात्यः श्रूयाया स्वावर्त्वेसा वर्देद्देश्वस्य पुराविक्षात्यात्यः श्रूयाया स्वावर्त्वेसायायः विक्षात्यात्यः श्रूयाया स्वावर्त्वेसायायः विक्षात्यायः वर्ष्वेसायायः वर्षेसायायः वर्षेसायायः वर्षेसायायः वर्षेसायायः वर्षेसायायः वर्षेसायायः वर्षेसायायः वर्षेसायायः वर्षेसायायः वर्षेसायः वर्षेस

O Subhuti, what do you think? Was there any dharma at all which the One Thus Gone took up from that One Thus Gone, the Destroyer of the Foe, the Perfectly Enlightened Buddha called "Maker of Light"?

And Subhuti respectfully replied,

O Conqueror, there was not. There exists no dharma at all which the One Thus Gone received, the One Thus Gone took up from that One Thus Gone, the Destroyer of the Foe, the Perfectly Enlightened Buddha called "Maker of Light."

Ultimately speaking then there is nothing for one to achieve, and nothing that helps one achieve it, and no one even to do the achieving. But we can say even further that, again speaking ultimately, there is no dharma at all that one takes up, and practices. In order to demonstrate this point, Lord Buddha states the following.

The Conqueror asks, "O Subhuti, do you think that there was any dharma at all which I, the One Thus Gone, in those days long ago took up, ultimately speaking, from the Buddha called 'Maker of Light'?"

And Subhuti offers up the reply, "No, there was no such dharma."

त्रीरः श्चें श्वास्य प्राप्त स्वास्य स्वास्य

This specific reference, wherein Lord Buddha speaks of the Buddha "Maker of Light" by name, recalls an event which had taken place long before. In those times our Teacher was a youth known as "Cloud of Dharma." Due to the blessing of the Buddha "Maker of Light," he was able to achieve a stage known as the "great mastery of things that never grow," and to bring about the eighth bodhisattva level. When this had happened, Light Maker gave him the final prediction, saying "In the future, you will become the Buddha known as 'Shakyamuni'." In order to remember the kindness that Light Maker paid on this occasion, I will speak more of this later on.

We should say a little about this expression, the "great mastery of things that never grow." This refers to a point at which one has eliminated the mental afflictions, and achieved total mastery, fluency, in meditating upon non-conceptual wisdom, which perceives directly each and every instance of the very nature of all things, their emptiness of any natural existence. As such, all caused objects appear to this person exclusively in the nature of an illusion, as empty of any true existence, not only during periods of deep meditation but during the times between these meditations as well.

र्थः श्रीः प्रतः क्रिंशः व्याय व्याय क्रिंशः क्रिंशः व्याय प्रतः व्याय व्याय

વી. તવલ હુવા. ધે. જૈંદ. વર. તવીર. સ્ર્રા વિલ્લા છે. જે ત્યાર હુવા. તવાલ હુવા. ધે. જૈંદ. વર. તવીર. સ્ર્રા વિલ્લા હુવા. તાલું છે. જે તાલું જે તાલું છે. જે તાલું જે ત

When one reaches the stage of the great mastery of things that never grow, one directly perceives that no object at all has any true existence. One perceives that what was predicted to finally happen, and the thing one is to achieve, and becoming enlightened—all of them—are empty of any natural existence. As such the Buddha had no belief that he was taking up any truly existing dharma at all from the Buddha Light Maker.

It is true that, at the time that the final prediction is made, the Buddha who is predicted does not yet exist. And it is true that, by the time he becomes a Buddha, the person who received the prediction no longer exists. In a nominal sense though there is a single continuum, a single person, who exists from the point of the prediction up to the point of enlightenment. There does exist a general kind of "me," one which extends to the whole "me" of the past and the future, where we do not divide out the separate me's of some specific points

in the past and future. It is with reference to this general "me" that the Buddha grants his final prediction, and says "You will become such and such a Buddha."

To give an example, it is true that the particular me's of specific past or future lives, or else the particular me's of some point early on in your life, or later on in your life, are not the "me" you are at this present moment in time. Nonetheless it is allowable for us to say, of things that those me's have done or are going to do, "I did that," or "I am going to do that." It's just the same with the final prediction.

त्तः दशकाः ग्रीटः यद्देरः त्याटः क्रीयः स्त्राच्यायः विद्याः क्रियः यविद्याः क्रीयः यविद्याः क्रीयः यविद्याः क्रियः यविद्याः विद्याः क्रियः यविद्याः विद्याः क्रियः यविद्याः विद्याः विद्य

We also say things like "I am going to build a house," or "I am going to make a hat, or some clothes, or a pair of shoes." Even though the house and the rest have no existence at the moment that we say these things, we can speak nonetheless of them, for we are thinking of them in the sense of something that will come about in the future. And they will occur, if only nominally; but they will not come forth through any nature of their own. If they could come about

through some nature of their own, then the house and so forth that we must agree exist even as we speak of building or making them could never exist at all. This is exactly the idea expressed in the *Sutra Requested by Madrupa*, where it says:

Anything which arises from conditions does not arise; There is no nature of arising in such a thing. Anything dependent on conditions is explained as empty; Anyone who understands emptiness is mindful.

You can also apply at this point all the reasonings presented earlier for demonstrating how things have no true existence.

At some point you will gain a really correct understanding of how, despite the fact that results do come from causes, they do not come from these causes through any nature of their own. At that moment you will finally grasp the way in which Middle Way philosophy describes how, despite the fact that things are empty of any natural existence, they can still quite properly work and function as they do. At that point too you will have discovered the Middle Way itself, the path where the appearance of the normal world and emptiness itself are inseparably married together.

कीर मालट शालु रे मह हुई र रू।

यीर मालट शालु रे मह हुई र रे मह स्वार्थ र मह स्वार्

Why is it so? Because, o Subhuti, there was a time when the King of Kalingka was cutting off the larger limbs, and smaller appendages, of my body. At that moment there came into my

mind no conception of a self, nor or of a sentient being, nor of a living being, nor of a person—I had no conception at all. But neither did I not have any conception.

ततुः कूर्यायक्ताः द्वार्यात्रा क्षेत्राचित्रः क्षेत्रः क्षेत्रः क्षेत्रः त्वार्यात्रे क्षेत्रः क्षेत्रः व्याप्त्रे क्षेत्रः व्याप्ते क्षेत्रः व्यापते कष्ते कष्ते कष्ते कष्ते कष्ते क्षेत्रः व्यापते कष्ते व्यापते व्यापते कष्ते कष्ते व्यापते व्यापते व्यापते व्यापते व्यापते कष्ते व्यापते व्यापते

For what reason is it so? Because long ago there was a time, o Subhuti, when the king of Kalingka got the evil suspicion that I had engaged in relations with his woman. And so he was cutting off the larger limbs, and smaller appendages of my body. (The latter refers to the fingers and toes.)

At that moment I practiced patience, keeping my mind on an understanding of the lack of true existence to each of the three elements to the act of patience. As I focussed on the "me" which exists nominally, there came into my mind no conception where I held any belief in some truly existing "me": and so I had no conception of anything from a truly existing "self" up to a truly existing "person."

At that moment I had no conception at all of any such conception that something was existing truly. At the same time though it was neither as if I had no other, nominal conceptions at all. What Subhuti is saying here is the following. I did have the thought that I would have to keep my patience: I did have the thought to take the pain on willingly, and not to be upset about the harm being done to me. And I did have the kind of conception where I reconfirmed my knowledge of how I had perceived that no existing object has any true existence.

Why is it so? Suppose, o Subhuti, that at that moment any conception of a self had come into my mind. Then the thought to harm someone would have come into my mind as well.

The conception of some sentient being, and the conception of some living being, and the conception of person, would have come into my mind. And because of that, the thought to harm someone would have come into my mind as well.

त्युर्न्, व्याप्तान्त्रः विश्वान्त्रः विश्वान्तः विश्वान्तः विश्वान्त्रः विश्वान्त्रः विश्वान्त्रः विश्वान्त्रः विश्वान्तः विश्वान्त

Here is the reason why it is so. Suppose that at that moment any conception of a self, where I thought of "me" as existing in an ultimate way, had come into my mind. Or suppose any of the other conceptions mentioned had come into my mind. Then the thought to harm someone would have come into my mind as well; but the fact is that it did not.

The Asian Classics Institute
Course VI: The Diamond-Cutter Sutra

Reading Eight: Emptiness and Paradise; Emptiness and Purification

The root text is found in bold in the translation, and is marked with an ornament in the Tibetan. The commentary is by Choney Lama Drakpa Shedrup (1675-1748) of Sera Mey Tibetan Monastery.

विश्वः चर्ता देने। श्रेनदेशः पर्यात् श्रुयः पर्याः विश्वः चर्ताः चर्तः चर्ताः चर्ताः

The Conqueror bespoke:

Suppose, o Subhuti, that some bodhisattva were to say, "I am working to bring about paradises." This would not be spoken true.

Lord Buddha wishes to indicate that, in order for a person to reach the enlightenment described above, he or she must first bring about a paradise in which to achieve the enlightenment. Therefore **the Conqueror** says to **Subhuti**,

Suppose some bodhisattva were to say or think to himself—while holding a belief in true existence, and referring to ultimate existence—"I am working to bring about paradises." This statement would not be spoken true.

Why is it so? Because the Ones Thus Gone have stated that these paradises, these "paradises," these lands that are put there do not even exist. And this is why we call them "paradise."

Why is this the case? The reason is that the Ones Thus Gone have stated that these perfect paradises, these places where you achieve your enlightenment, are put there like an illusion; that is, they occur because a great many causes and conditions have come together. But lands which have been put there in an ultimate sense, say the Buddhas, do not even exist. Since though they do exist to that state of mind which performs no check or analysis, we can nominally call them "paradise."

This fact refers not only to the paradise of a Buddha, but also to each and every thing which has ever been put here: to both the world where beings live and the beings who live in the world. All of these are simply a label put on the collection of a number of parts: they are all the same as a house, for

example. And all of these are such that, should you break them down mentally all the way to their tiniest atoms, you would reach the point where they are nothing at all. (This is the briefest sketch of the meaning for you.)

पश्चिर्या देश्वा विद्या क्ष्राया विद्या क्ष्राया विद्या क्ष्राया विद्या विद्या

Since this is so, o Subhuti, those bodhisattvas who are great beings develop their wish without residing in these thoughts. They develop their wish without residing in anything at all. They develop their wish without residing even in visible form. They develop their wish without residing even in sounds, or in smells, or in tastes, or in things to touch, or in any object at all.

पश्चित्रप्रस्ति स्थान्य स्थान

Since this is so, says Lord Buddha, bodhisattvas who are working to bring about their paradise should develop their wish [for enlightenment] without residing in any such state where they hold a belief in some true existence. They should develop their wish without residing in any state where they believe in the ultimate existence of anything at all. They should develop their wish without residing in any state where they hold a belief in some true existence of any object at all: visible form, or any of the rest.

हो। यदे.कि.की दुव.कील.स्.इ.प्य.क्षा.दे.बीय.वी स्व.वर्च्या वदे.ह.क्षेत्रा.दे. कि प्रिय.वर्च्या वदे.कि.की राज्या क्षेत्रा.वे.कीय.विया.वीय.वदे.कि.वीय.वीय.

यश्चाश्चर्यात्री देशाची तीश्चरक्षी स्वाति स्वाति स्वाति स्वात्रीत्। तीशादी कुरायात्राश्चर्या विद्यायात्रीत्। विद्यायात्राश्चर्यात्रीत्राश्चर्यात्रीयात्रायाः तीश्चर्यात्रीयात्रायाः तीश्चर्यात्रीयात्रायाः तीश्चर्यात्रीयात्रायाः तीश्चर्यायत् स्वित्रायाः विद्यायाः विद्यायः विद्य

O Subhuti, it is thus: Suppose, for example, that someone's body were to grow this large—suppose it were to grow as large as the king of all mountains, Mt. Sumeru. What do you think, o Subhuti? Would that person's body be large?

And Subhuti replied,

O Conqueror, such a body would be large. O you who have Gone to Bliss, such a body would be large. And why so? Because Those Gone Thus have stated that it could never be a thing at all. And this is why we call it a "body." Because Those Gone Thus have stated that it could never be a thing at all, we call it a "large body."

तीश्र (ब्रेश विद्र) विश्व कु चर्या सक्ष्य प्रश्न विद्रा विश्व विद्रा विश्व विद्रा विश्व कु चर्या विश्व कु चर्या स्थित विश्व कु चर्या कु चर्य कु चर्या कु चर्या

र्स्ट्रायर मुस्रायदे स्वायत्य प्रत्यायत्य । वित्य प्रत्यायत्य । वित्य प्रत्याय वित्य प्रत्य । व

Lord Buddha wishes to show that the above applies not only to outer things such as paradises, but also to the beings who inhabit this world: to objects such as the body of a person. He wishes to show that they too exist only because conditions have come together, and not in an ultimate way. Therefore he asks **Subhuti**,

Suppose some person's body were to grow to the size of the king of mountains, Mt. Sumeru. What do you think? Would that body be something large?

And Subhuti respectfully replies,

Such a body would be large. Those who have Gone Thus though have stated that this same body exists only as a term applied to the heaps, to some collection of a great many parts. It could never be a thing at all which existed in essence; that is, it could never be something which did not depend on its parts, say they. And this is why we can call such a body "large," in the sense that words are used in the everyday world.

Here a large body is just a representative example; we are meant to apply this reasoning to all physical objects, large or small. The entire statement here in the sutra is aimed at showing us how to meditate upon the fact that each and every detail of the world and the beings who inhabit it are all empty of any natural existence.

त्यीरः र्रा । श्रः स्र्याशः रे. श्रे । श्रः स्याशः त्यीरः र्रा । श्रः स्याशः त्याशः त्याशः र्याशः त्याशः र्याशः त्याशः र्याशः र

And I tell you further, o Subhuti: any place where this sutra is taught thereby becomes a place worthy of the offerings of the entire world, with its gods, and men, and demigods. It

becomes a place which is worthy of their prostrations, and worthy of their circumambulations. That place becomes something like a stupa.

चिर्त्य क्ष्मी क्ष्मा क्ष्मी क्ष्मी

Furthermore, any place where this sutra is taught thereby becomes a place worthy of the offerings, and the prostrations, and the circumambulations of all the living beings in the entire world, with its gods, and men, and demigods. This point recalls the line in the *Ornament of Realizations* where it talks about "enlightenment and none other than a stupa." This refers to a fact mentioned in the root sutra—in the Mother, in its more extensive, medium, and shorter versions, as well as in the commentaries. Here it says that any place where a bodhisattva on the path of habituation stays thereby becomes a place like a stupa, a place that should be revered by other people. The reference here in this case is mainly to any place where there resides a person who has managed to develop the whole point of this text—that is, an extraordinary form of actual perfection of wisdom—within the stream of his mind. Previously in the sutra a section similar to this one appears, but each instance applies to a different case.

२० । रवायम् । रवायाणी व्यवसारिवायाणी व्यक्तिया में वायाय विष्याय स्वाया विष्याय स्वाया विष्याय स्वाया विष्याय स्वाया विषया वि

यारी रामी अवरायरावयुरा विवानुः अवरायरावयुरारी

O Subhuti, any son or daughter of noble family who takes up a sutra like this, or who holds it, or reads it, or comprehends it fully, will suffer. They will suffer intensely.

Here in a statement over and above the one before, Lord Buddha says,

O Subhuti, consider any son or daughter of noble family who takes up this sutra, who holds it in their hands, and so on—any living being who does these things and then puts the meaning of the sutra into practice. It is entirely possible that such a person could experience some pain, that they could suffer, and suffer intensely, through various kinds of illness, or conflict with others, or being criticized, or chained, or beaten, or anything of the like. It could happen, but it would be no great problem, because. . .

शरका क्षीका ग्री मिट क्ष्या ग्रीट त्व्या स्टार त्यीं र प्राय त्यीं र प्राय है। स्वाय प्राय प्राय है। स्वाय प्राय प्राय है। स्वाय प्राय प्राय प्राय है। स्वाय प्राय प्रा

Why is it so? Because, o Subhuti, such beings are purifying non-virtuous karma from the entire string of their previous lives, karma that would have taken them to the three lower realms. As they purify this karma, it causes them to suffer here in this life. As such they will succeed in cleaning away the karma of these non-virtuous deeds of their previous lifetimes, and they will as well achieve the enlightenment of a Buddha.

য়ৣৢয়য়ঌয়৽ঀ৾৽উয়৽য়ৣয়৽৾৾ঀ৽য়ৢৢৢয়য়য়৽ড়য়৽ঀ৾৽ঀয়৽য়ৗয়৽য়৾৽য়৾৽য়য়য়৽য়ৼ৾৽ঀৼ৽য়ৄ৽য়য়৽ त्रासुः से 'दवो 'दवे 'वसा के से पे 'दस से दानसुस 'तु क्री 'दस 'दशुर 'दवे 'वस 'वाद नगानुरायाने नगावस्राया उत्रात्ती वर्षान् के के वित्राती के नाम के नाम के निष् বশ্বঅ:শ্রীঝ:মর্ম:ব:ব্রি:শ্র্রিঝ:শ্রীঝ:র্র্র:মব্রম:শ্রু:মর্র:ম্রী:বর্র:অম:ব্র:বৃগ্ ब्रथम.१८८.५चिट.च.र्सु.२वो.तर.५वीर.५। सरम.मैम.ग्री.चेट.केच.ग्रोट.शैर.२.ब्र्च. यर विज्ञूर दे। विर धुँद या वर्से द यदे मित्र से गुद मुंद यदे से वर्ष मित्र में व શ્રેવા'વાશ' કુશશ'ગું) કુ' વ'વડવા' વદેં ક' વર્ડે અ' શ્રે' શ્રર 'વ' ૬૮' શશ્રશ' હડ્' અચિક 'વ' પ્યદ' ब्र्यायर प्रशुर हिंबायवर मा दव पर्योर क्षे प्रशेषा इसवाय हिंसवाय है हैं बा र्शे। १र्द्धवारी सूर हेवा वी वयर पार्शेवाश दश प्रवृत हैटा। बर पार हेदारी प्रश म्बुट्बः क्षे । द्येरः दः बः चेंद्रः चह्नः ग्रुटः द्वः खुदः चेंद्रः मिवेरः क्षेम्बायान्द्रः क्षेदः दः ह्युःग्'र्रो'ङ्गे'रा'सूर'पर्गा'वहेंब'र्श्वेट'त्र्रा'व'रे। प्रमार्थायवे'यशं रे'र्थेर'गुट' म्याबाद्धेया स्ट्रीय स यदैःश्रीरःयशः इसः प्रम्तायदे। ।यशः म्विरः द्वेरः सुशः सः ध्वेरः है। । व्हुरः हैमः त्रेर'य'बर'धैर'र्रे । बिश'गशुरश'य'खूर'र्रे।

For what reason is it so? Because such beings are purifying great non-virtuous karma that they have committed both in this life and in their lifetimes past—karma so serious that it would normally have taken them to the three lower realms. As such, the results of all these deeds are ripening here in this very life. Thus one is suffering pain, and by force of this suffering he or she is "cleaning away"—that is, purifying—all of this non-virtuous karma. As such, one will quickly achieve the enlightenment of a Buddha.

The force of an antidote action consisting of making great efforts in the perfection of wisdom is destroying the grasping to some self-existence, the very root of all non-virtuous deeds. This is why the text goes on to say that one will achieve freedom and the state of omniscience. And since the text does say this, then needless to say one could destroy the karma that is leading you to a birth in the lower realms. The way in which this works is explained in texts such as the *Blaze of Reasoning* and others. As the *Sutra of the Great Liberation* says as well,

Even though one may have the bad karma To take his birth in the three lower realms, A simple headache will clean it away.

Suppose for example that a seed is planted, but is then deprived completely of water, or fertilizer, or warmth, or the rest. Then it would never sprout.

Here the case is the same. If you are able to eliminate grasping to some selfnature, then none of the karmas you have collected, regardless of how many there are, can ever ripen forth. This is because their companion, the mental afflictions, are absent. As the *Commentary on Valid Perception* states,

No further karmas can ever project their results In one who has gone beyond the desire for existence; This is because the conditions have all been finished. The Asian Classics Institute
Course VI: The Diamond-Cutter Sutra

Reading Nine: Emptiness and the Perfection of Wisdom; How They Prevent the Two Extremes

The root text is found in bold in the translation, and is marked with an ornament in the Tibetan. The commentary is by Choney Lama Drakpa Shedrup (1675-1748) of Sera Mey Tibetan Monastery.

रवाग्री तार्श्या के स्वार्थ त्या के स्वार्थ त

The junior monk Subhuti spoke the following words, with great respect, to the Conqueror:

O Conqueror, what is the name of this particular kind of Dharma? How are we to consider it?

And the Conqueror bespoke the following to the junior monk Subhuti:

O Subhuti, this particular kind of Dharma is known as the "perfection of wisdom," and that is how you should consider it.

१२.४४.४च.४म्.मीश्रामविर.४५५५.शुर.८८.५४.जमश्राव्यात्राची त्राच.री

न्यःश्चीःसरः द्वीतः श्चीः श्वीरः योश्चार्यक्षः स्वान्तः स्व

Then **Subhuti** asks, "What is the name of this text?" In reply the Conqueror states, "Its name is the 'perfection of wisdom," and "that is how you should consider it to be named." The subject matter selected by the Teacher, the subject expressed by the text, is the perfection of wisdom in its actual form. The point here then is that the Teacher has named the text that expresses this subject by using the name of the subject it expresses. Here the name of the perfection of wisdom is meant to represent all the other perfections as well.

Why is it so? Because, o Subhuti, that same perfection of wisdom spoken by the Ones Thus Gone is a perfection of wisdom that doesn't even exist. And this is why we call it the "perfection of wisdom."

याक्षेत्र,योश्यावियात्र,यांश्व,योश्याः याक्षेत्र,यं वित्र, वित्र

यण्यः स्रीतः प्राप्तः स्रीतः स्रीतः

That same perfection of wisdom spoken by the Ones Thus Gone to be the "perfection of wisdom" is a perfection of wisdom that doesn't even exist as a perfection of wisdom in an ultimate sense. And this is why we can, in a nominal sense, label it the "perfection of wisdom." All these kinds of explanations, where they state that things do not exist ultimately but do exist nominally, illustrate the path of the middle way, wherein the two truths are accepted as an inseparable unity, which functions to prevent completely the two extremes. They illustrate, in short, how the quality of being empty of any natural existence, and the quality of existing nominally, coexist with each other as simultaneous attributes of any single object.

Here is a bit on the literal meaning of the expression "perfection," or "gone to the other side." This term connotes either that thing which takes you to the other side of the ocean of cyclic life, or else the state of having already reached that other side. Taken the former way, the expression refers the perfection of wisdom as it exists on the paths of those who are still learning [that is, non-Buddhas]. Taken the latter way, it refers to the perfection of wisdom which exists at the level of a Buddha, and is equivalent to the knowledge of all objects.

If we go beyond its strictest sense, there are many different usages of the term "perfection of wisdom": it can refer to the "natural," or the "textual," or the "path," or the "resulting" perfection of wisdom. It's important to be able to distinguish between all these, but it would be beyond the scope of this commentary for me to discuss them here. To put it briefly, what was **spoken** of as the **"perfection of wisdom"** refers to that knowledge which is imbued

with the wish to attain enlightenment, and which perceives emptiness. It is this same perfection of wisdom which acts as an extraordinary kind of method for taking the first five perfections—those of giving and the rest—and leading them up to the point of enlightenment. I will speak further of this later.

र्श । प्रतिविद्यानियात्रात्मरायात्मान्यात्मर्थः स्वा ने प्रविद्यात्मित्रात्मरायात्म प्रविद्यात्मे प्रतिविद्यात्मा पर्वे स्वा ने प्रविद्यात्मे प्रविद्यात्मे

O Subhuti, what do you think? Is there any dharma at all which the Ones Thus Gone ever speak?

And Subhuti respectfully replied,

O Conqueror, none of the dharmas ever spoken by the Ones Thus Gone even exist.

यिवेयाकाराकाक्र्यायक्षेत्रायाक्ष्याक्षेत्रायाक्ष्यायक्ष्याच्याक्षेत्रायाक्ष्याविव्याव्याक्ष्याक्ष्याच्याक्षेत्रायाक्ष्याच्याक्षेत्रायाक्ष्याच्याक्षेत्रायाक्ष्याच्याक्षेत्रायाक्ष्याच्याक्षेत्रायाक्ष्याच्याक्षेत्रायाक्ष्याच्याक्षेत्रायाक्ष्याच्याक्षेत्रायाक्षेत्रायाक्ष्याच्याक्षेत्रायाक्ष्याच्याक्षेत्रायाक्ष्याच्याक्षेत्रायाक्रायाक्षेत्रायाक्षेत्रायाक्षेत्रायाक्षेत्रायाक्षेत्रायाक्षेत्रायाक्षेत्रायाक्षेत्रायाक्षेत्रायाक्षेत्रायाक्षेत्रेत्रायाक्षेत्रायाक्षेत्रायाक्षेत्रायाक्षेत्रायाक्षेत्रायाक्षेत्रायाक्षेत्रायाक्

In the part before this one, Lord Buddha mentioned "the perfection of wisdom spoken by the Ones Thus Gone," and explained how it could be the perfection of wisdom. Someone might think to themselves, "Are there though any other dharmas which were spoken by the Ones Thus Gone, and which *do* exist in an ultimate sense?"

In order to answer this question with an emphatic "No!" the Buddha poses a question to **Subhuti: "Is there any** such **dharma at all?"**

In reply, Subhuti offers up the following answer: "None of the dharmas ever spoken by the Ones Thus Gone even exist, at least in an ultimate sense." The point here is very similar to the one before, where it said that the teaching of the dharma by the Ones Thus Gone did not even exist.

The following selection is from the 18th Chapter of the Commentary on the Three Principal Paths, written by Pabongka Rinpoche (1878-1941).

XVIII. A Unique Teaching of the "Implication" School

The fifth and final section in our explanation of correct view concerns a unique teaching followed by the "Implication" group of the Middle Way school. This instruction is contained in the following verse of the root text.

(13)

In addition, the appearance prevents the existence extreme; Emptiness that of non-existence, and if You see how emptiness shows in cause and effect You'll never be stolen off by extreme views.

বস: বঙ্গির নামুখার ব্যার্থ প্রায় ব্যার্থ প্রায় প্রায় প্রার্থ প্রায় প্রায়

Now all the schools except for the members of the "Implication" group hold that an understanding of the appearance of things prevents you from falling into what we call the "extreme of thinking things do not exist," while an understanding of emptiness prevents you from falling into what is known as the "extreme of thinking things do exist."

The position of the Implication group though is that no particular object you can choose has any true existence, aside from merely appearing this way; and understanding this prevents you from going to the extreme of thinking things exist—that is, exist in an ultimate way. And because this mere appearance itself cannot exist on its own, an understanding of emptiness prevents your falling into the extreme of thinking things do not exist—that is, do not exist in a conventional way.

यहेत्र-त्य्रींश-क्र-र-र-प्रवेत्र-श्रीश-क्र्याश-अःश्रुवाश-अःश्रिवाश-अःश्रुवाश-अःश्रुवाश-अःश्रुवाश-अःश्रुवाश-अःश्रुवाश-अःश्रुवाश-अःश्रुवाश-अःश्रुवा

Once something is interdependent there is no possibility for it to be anything else but something which does not exist naturally—something which cannot stand on its own. This is because it must then occur in dependence on the collection of parts which serve as the basis that receives our label. Look at the example of some feeble old man, unable to rise from his chair by himself, who must seek some other support to get up—he cannot stand on his own. Here it's a similar case: no object can stand on its own, no object can exist just naturally, so long as it must depend on any other factor.

व्यदः चुेरा

Generally speaking, there are a great number of logical proofs that can be used when you want to establish the meaning of no self-nature. There is one though which is like the king of them all, and this is it: the "proof through interdependence." Let's say we put forth this argument to someone, and we say:

Consider a sprout. It cannot exist truly, For it is interdependent.

Members of certain non-Buddhist schools will answer "I disagree with your reason," which is to say, "Sprouts are not interdependent." This they must say because they believe that every object in the universe is a manifestation of some primeval One.

श्रव्याः स्त्रीः स्टा श्रीः श्रव्याः स्त्रीः स्त्राः स्त्रीः स्त्राः स्त्रीः स्त्राः स्त्र

The majority of the earlier Tibetan Buddhists fell into the extreme that we call "thinking things have stopped," for they would say that if something did not exist truly it could not exist at all. The schools from the Mind-Only on down, the group of schools known collectively as the "Functionalists," all fall into the extreme of "thinking things are permanent," for they cannot explain interdependence if they accept that nothing exists naturally. Members of the "Independent" group within the Middle Way school accept the idea of interdependence, but do not agree that if something is interdependent it cannot "exist by definition." This too is tantamount to the extreme of thinking things are permanent.

य्यक्ष्यः प्राप्त्यः स्वाप्त्यः स्वाप्त्यः स्वाप्त्यः स्वाप्त्यः स्वाप्त्यः स्वाप्त्यः स्वाप्त्यः स्वाप्त्यः स यः क्ष्यः प्राप्त्यः स्वाप्त्यः स्वाप्त्यः स्वाप्त्यः स्वाप्त्यः स्वाप्त्यः स्वाप्त्यः स्वाप्त्यः स्वाप्त्यः स

ह्यु पर्श्विम्राणी प्रवितायित स्त्रित्र स्त्रीत स्त्री

The real sages of the Middle Way school make a fourfold distinction: they say that nothing exists naturally, but not that nothing exists at all; everything exists merely by convention, but everything exists without existing naturally. The point of error for the Functionalists and those other schools is their failure to distinguish between these four: two kinds of "nothing exists" and two kinds of "everything exists."

यक्षिश्चायम् स्वतः स स्वतः स

According to the Implication system, both extremes--thinking things are permanent and thinking things have stopped--can be prevented with a single logical statement: "It cannot exist truly, because it is interdependent." The first part of the statement keeps us from the extreme of thinking things are permanent; the second, from the extreme of thinking things have stopped.

र्श्व स्वास्त्र स्वास्त्र

My own precious teacher, Choney Lama, was always saying that both parts of the statement *each* prevent *both* of the extremes--permanence and stopping. He would explain this as follows: the literal sense of the statement's first part, "It cannot exist truly," serves to prevent the extreme of thinking things are permanent. The implication of saying that something cannot exist "truly" though is to say that, more generally, it is not non-existent; this then disallows the extreme of thinking that things have stopped. And this description, he would say, was enough for us to figure out for ourselves the process for the second part of the statement: "...because it is interdependent."

देशक्षत्रप्राचित्रक्ष्यः व्याचित्र । देश्वेर हेव विद्याया स्वित्र । विद्याया स्वत्य । विद्याया स्वत्य । विद्याय

With this understanding we can see why the glorious Chandrakirti stated:

Therefore this proof employing interdependence Cuts the net of every mistaken view.

व्यवस्य क्षित्र स्त्रीय । विष्य प्रत्य विषय । विषय विषय विषय । व

So we've shown that no object in the universe exists truly; we've given "because it's interdependent" as our reason for saying so; and we've demonstrated that these two facts can prevent one from falling into either extreme. This too is why we see statements like the following, from *Root Wisdom:*

Everything is right for any thing For which the state of emptiness is right.

Or the well-known sutra lines:

Form is emptiness, Emptiness form.

यर्ग याध्येत्रा दर्भण्यः मेंद्र्यं । मेंद्र्यः याद्र्यं । बिश्वः मेंद्र्यः याद्यं । विश्वः याद्यं ।

These last lines by the way are stated to show that interdependence is itself empty, and emptiness itself interdependent. It helps your understanding of this point if you take the same pattern and read it as

I am emptiness, Emptiness me.

In short, concluded our Lama, the laws of cause and effect are all totally proper for any entity which is empty of any natural existence. If you can just keep yourself from falling into the two extremes, you will make no great other blunders in your effort to develop correct view.

The Asian Classics Institute Course VI: The Diamond-Cutter Sutra

Reading Ten: How Empty Things Still Work

The root text is found in bold in the translation, and is marked with an ornament in the Tibetan. The commentary is by Choney Lama Drakpa Shedrup (1675-1748) of Sera Mey Tibetan Monastery.

It is thus. Any living beings who receive an explanation of this sutra and who are not made afraid, and are not frightened, and who do not become frightened, are truly wondrous.

यशिरमाताक्षेरातामा प्राप्त स्वास्त्र स्वस्त्र स्वास्त्र स्वास्त्र स्वास्त्र स्वास्त्र स्वास्त्र स्वास्त्र

Here is the reason. In future days, certain living beings will receive, they will listen to, an explanation of the meaning of the words of this sutra. And yet they will not be made afraid, and they will not be frightened, and they will not become extremely frightened, by any such thought as: "If this is so, and if nothing at all exists in a true way, then all the ways in which things like karma and its consequences work cannot be right, and so really nothing at all can work."

Rather they will find a greater belief, an even greater faith, in all these objects. And beings like this will be **truly wondrous**.

If things did exist in a true way, then it would be improper to say that they ever changed. And then it would be improper, it would never be right, to describe all the workings of things like karma and its consequences.

The way in which all things work, and nirvana itself, and everything else are all quite proper. And none of these objects has any true existence, none of them has any nature of their own. How all this can be is described by Lord Tsongkapa in his *Praise from Interdependence*:

Reaching the state of nirvana could never occur, And elaborations too could never be stopped, If objects had any nature of their own, because A nature could not be stopped, You stated.

He also says,

Since things are empty of any nature And the way things work is right, There is no contradiction between them.

Those who see things the opposite Think nothing can work with emptiness...

ग्रीभाग्राट्याश्चरमायदे हो स्वास्त स्वास्त स्वास्त स्वास्त स्वास स्वास

Why is it so? Because, o Subhuti, the One Thus Gone now speaks to you the holy perfection of wisdom; and the holy perfection which the One Thus Gone now speaks to you is the same perfection of wisdom which Conquering Buddhas beyond any number to count have spoken as well. And this is why we can call it the "holy perfection of wisdom."

Here is the reason why it will be so wondrous. The holy, or highest, perfection of wisdom—a work which teaches how no object exists through any nature of its own—is now being spoken to you by myself, by the One Thus Gone. And this is the same perfection of wisdom which has been spoken in the past by Conquering Buddhas who are beyond any number to count.

Lord Buddha makes this statement because he wants his listeners to consider what he has just said above as something authoritative. What he has just said, remember, is that nothing involved with cause and effect has any nature of its own. And this reason is why we can call it the "holy perfection of wisdom."

The Asian Classics Institute Course VI: The Diamond-Cutter Sutra

Reading Eleven: The Verse of Impermanence and Emptiness

The following selections are taken from Sunlight on the Path to Freedom, written by Choney Lama Drakpa Shedrup (1675-1748) of Sera Mey Tibetan Monastery. The original root text of the sutra by Lord Buddha is marked with an ornament in the Tibetan and bold in the English.

७७।श्गरःस्रास्यास्यास्यास्या

See anything
Brought about by causes
As like a star,
An obstruction of the eye,
A lamp, an illusion,
The dew, or a bubble;
A dream, or lightning,
Or else a cloud.

तदुःस्ट्रां स्ट्रां स्वार्था स्वार्थी स्वार्था स्वार्थी स्वार्थी

Next comes a concluding summary, which shows how all **things brought about by causes** are empty of any nature of their own, and are also impermanent. All this is contained in the verse about the "star, an obstruction of the eye, a lamp," and the rest.

We could take for example the five heaps—physical form and the rest—or any such objects. All these can be described in the following metaphors.

यक्षेत्।

Stars appear at night, and then by day they no longer appear. The parts to a person and other things brought about by causes are just the same. If a person's mind is full of the darkness of ignorance, then they appear to exist in an ultimate sense. [Correcting an error in Tibetan text, *stong* for *snang*.] Suppose though that the sun rises—the sun of the wisdom which perceives that nothing exists truly. Then these objects no longer appear in an ultimate sense. As such we should see these things **as** being **like a star**.

चित्राः स्यान्यः स्यान्त्रः स्यान्यः स्यान्त्रः स्यान्त्रः स्यान्त्रः स्यान्त्रः स्यान्त्रः स्यान्त्रः स्यान्य याल्यः नुः स्रेष्ट्रः याः स्यान्यः स्यान्त्रः स्यान्त्रः स्यान्त्रः स्यान्त्रः स्यान्त्रः स्यान्त्रः स्यान्त्र च्याः स्यान्यः स्यान्त्रः स्यान्त्रः स्यान्त्रः स्यान्त्रः स्यान्त्रः स्यान्त्रः स्यान्त्रः स्यान्त्रः स्यान्त

Suppose your **eyes** are blocked by some **obstruction** in them—by particles of dust or something of the like. The thing that you're trying to look at then doesn't look the way it really is; rather, you see it some other way. It's just the same with the eye of the mind when it's blocked by the obstruction of ignorance. Things brought about by causes then appear to this mind as something other than what they are.

विष्यः स्थान्ते । क्षेत्रं त्याः याने क्षान्यः याने क्षान्यः त्रः क्षेत्रः त्रः कष्टे कर्टे कर्ये कष्टे कर्ये

The flame of a butter **lamp**, supported by a thin plant wick, flares and then quickly dies out. Caused things, each supported their various causes and conditions, also go through a continuous process of rising and quickly dying out.

An illusion is something that looks different than what is actually there. Things brought about by causes also appear to exist truly, to a mistaken state of mind.

Dew vanishes quickly; things with causes are the same—they die away speedily, without lasting even into the second instant of their existence.

Bubbles pop up at random, because some water is stirred up or something of the like, and then they burst and disappear just as suddenly. Caused things work the same way: when the various conditions all come together, they pop up suddenly, and then they die out just as suddenly.

Dreams are an example of a misperception, which is due to the affects of sleep on the mind. Things brought about by causes as well are misapprehended, they seem to exist truly, to the mind which is affected by ignorance.

Lightning flashes and dies out quickly. Caused things too rise and die out quickly, depending on the conditions that assemble to bring them about.

र्गे वश्चित्रक्षेत्रक्ष्यात्रक्षेत्रक्ष्यात्रक्षयात्रकष्यवित्यवत्रव्यवित्रक्षयात्रक्षयात्रक्षयात्रक्षयात्रक्षयात्रवित्रक्षयात्रक्षयात्रक्षयात्रक्षयात्य

Clouds are something that gather and fade in the sky, depending on the wishes of the serpent-beings and such. Things brought about by causes are the same; depending on the influence of karma which is either communal or not, they rise or die out.

Each of the metaphors above is also meant to represent how no object brought about by causes has any true existence.

तर्राचरायवर्ग्यादाक्षात्यावर्ष्ण । विद्यायवर्ष्ण । विद्यायवर्षण । विद्यायवर्यवर्यायवर्यायवर्यायवर्यायवर्यायवर्यायवर्यायवर्यायवर्यायवर्यायवर्यायवयवयवययवययवययवयवयवयवयवययवयव

The explanation given here applies to things brought about by causes as an entire group. A more restricted application is quoted from sutra by Master Nagarjuna:

The physical form is like a bubble that forms, And the feelings resemble the froth of a wave; Discrimination is just a mirage, And the other factors like empty cane; Awareness is similar to an illusion—
Thus did the Cousin of the Sun speak.

Master Kamalashila relates the final three metaphors to the three times; this is a little different from the explanation here, but the two are in no way contradictory.

श्रेर्यायाष्ट्रेश्वायास्त्र्यात्र्यात् व्येष्ट्रात्यात् व्येष्ट्रायाः व्येष्ट्रायः व्येष्ट्र्यः व्येष्ट्रायः व्येष्ट्र्यः व्येष्ट्यः व्येष्ट्यः व्येष्ट्र्यः व्येष्ट्यः व्येष्ट्यः व्येष्ट्र्यः व्येष्ट्यः व्येष्ट्यः व्येष्ट्यः व्

To put it briefly, Lord Buddha is telling us that we should "See that each and every thing brought about by causes is impermanent, and is empty of any nature of its own, all just like the nine examples given above." We should also consider these lines as indicating both the lack of self to the person, and the lack of self to phenomena.