

Longer Prajñāpāramitā Hṛdaya Sūtra

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Thus have I heard. At one time, the Buddha was in Rājagṛha on the mountain of Gṛdhṛakūṭa, along with a great assembly of bhikṣus. At that time, the Buddha, the Bhagavān, entered the Great Vast and Extremely Profound Samādhi. Within the multitude, Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva-mahāsattva was practicing the profound Prajñāpāramitā, when he illuminated the Five Skandhas and saw they were all empty, and left all suffering and misery. Then Śāriputra, by the power of the Buddha, joined his palms together in respect for the noble Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva-mahāsattva, and said, “Virtuous man, if there are those who wish to cultivate the extremely profound practice of Prajñāpāramitā, how should they practice cultivation?”

After speaking thusly, Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva-mahāsattva addressed Elder Śāriputra, saying, “Śāriputra, if virtuous men and virtuous women practice the extremely profound practice of Prajñāpāramitā, they should contemplate the Five Skandhas as empty of self-nature. Śāriputra, form is not different from emptiness, and emptiness is not different from form. Form itself is emptiness, and emptiness itself is form. Sensation, conception, synthesis, and discrimination are also such as this.

“Śāriputra, all dharmas are empty of characteristics—they are neither created nor destroyed, neither defiled nor pure, and they neither increase nor diminish. This is because in emptiness there is no form, sensation, conception, synthesis, or discrimination. There are no eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, or thoughts. There are no forms, sounds, scents, tastes, sensations, or dharmas. There is no field of vision and there is no realm of thoughts. There is no ignorance nor elimination of ignorance, even up to and including no old age and death, nor elimination of old age and death. There is no suffering, its accumulation, its elimination, or a path. There is no understanding and no attaining.

“Because there is nothing to attain, bodhisattvas rely on Prajñāpāramitā, and their minds have no obstructions. With no obstructions, they have no fears. Because they are far removed from backward dream-thinking, their final result is Nirvāṇa. Because all buddhas of the past, present, and future rely on Prajñāpāramitā, they attain Anuttarā Samyaksambodhi. Therefore, know that Prajñāpāramitā is a great spiritual mantra, a great brilliant mantra, an unsurpassed mantra, and an unequalled mantra. Because it can truly eliminate all afflictions, the Prajñāpāramitā Mantra is spoken. Speak the mantra thusly:

gate gate pāragate pārasaṃgate bodhi svāhā

“Thusly, Śāriputra, all bodhisattva-mahāsattvas should practice Prajñāpāramitā thusly.” At that time, after he had spoken, the Bhagavān arose from the Great Vast and Extremely Profound Samādhi, and praised Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva-mahāsattva, saying, “Excellent, excellent, virtuous man! Thusly, thusly, you have spoken. The extremely profound practice of Prajñāpāramitā should be practiced like this. When practicing thusly, each and every tathāgata is in approval.”

At that time, after the Bhagavān had spoken, Elder Śāriputra and Avalokiteśvara Bodhisattva-mahāsattva both experienced great bliss. Then the multitude of devas, humans, asuras, and gandharvas heard what the Buddha had said. With great bliss, they believed, accepted, and practiced in accord.