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# 金刚般若波罗蜜经受持法略说

*A Brief Explanation of the Practice of Receiving and Upholding the Vajra Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra*

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| 《金刚经》是说心佛众生三无差别的金刚性体，这个性体人人同具，个个现成，所谓平等。平等，经云“彼非众生”是也。 | The Diamond Sūtra teaches that the vajra-nature of mind, Buddha, and sentient beings is without distinction. This nature is equally possessed by all and fully present in each person; this is what is meant by equality. Equality: as the sūtra says, “they are not sentient beings.” |
| 徒因众生不觉，所以本有的般若妙用，不能起发，妄生情见，枉生六道，世世沉沦，无有出期，经云“非不众生”是也。此经是难行之法，佛不是单向大乘者和最上乘者说，是对信的人说。惟净信的人，方堪信受。 | It is only because sentient beings are unaware that the wondrous functioning of prajñā, originally inherent in them, cannot arise. They vainly give rise to emotional attachments and views, needlessly undergo birth in the six realms, and sink from life to life without any prospect of release. This is what the sūtra means by “nor are they not sentient beings.” This sūtra teaches a difficult practice. The Buddha did not speak it solely for followers of the Mahāyāna or the Supreme Vehicle, but for those who have faith. Only those of pure faith are capable of believing and accepting it. |
| 不生惊怖，果能信受者，即是大乘人。由信而能依法受持，言行一致，由此开发般若慧，明心见性，了脱生死者，是最上乘人。佛平等慈视众生，而众生自生分别，昧却本性，自乐小法，所以不能受持。既不受持，即不得受用，将何法以为人乎？ | Those who do not give rise to alarm or fear and can truly believe and accept it are practitioners of the Mahāyāna. Those who, through faith, can uphold it in accordance with the Dharma, whose words and deeds are consistent, and who thereby develop prajñā, realize the mind and see their true nature, and are liberated from birth and death, are practitioners of the Supreme Vehicle. The Buddha regards sentient beings with equal compassion, yet sentient beings themselves give rise to discriminations. Obscuring their intrinsic nature and delighting in lesser teachings, they are therefore unable to accept and uphold it. If they neither accept nor uphold it, they cannot benefit from it. What Dharma, then, can they use to benefit others? |
| 《金刚经》的法用，自有极简净的法门。如“离一切诸相”，“不应取法，不应取非法”，“不立四见”，“不断灭”等语。 | The Diamond Sūtra has its own Dharma gate of utmost simplicity and purity. Such sayings include “apart from all appearances,” “one should not grasp at dharmas, nor should one grasp at non- |

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| | dharmas,” “not establishing the four views,” and “not annihilating.” |
| 再总括一句，“应生无所住心，若心有住，即为非住”，言一住于法，即为有心，有心即惑，不得见性，不能安住于菩提，即为谤佛矣。 | To sum it up in one sentence: “One should give rise to a mind that abides nowhere; if the mind abides anywhere, it is not abiding.” As soon as the mind settles on a dharma, it becomes a clinging mind. Such clinging brings delusion. One can then neither see one’s true nature nor abide securely in bodhi, and in this way one slanders the Buddha. |
| 众生总是执取地、水、火、风，四大假合的相，以为我身；又执取六根六尘缘起的幻影，以为我心。外而幻身，内而幻心，无形中缘起和合立此幻想成种种相，坚固执持以为我。 | Sentient beings invariably grasp at the appearance of the four great elements—earth, water, fire, and wind—provisionally combined, and take it to be their body. They also grasp at the illusory images that arise when the six sense faculties meet their objects, and take them to be their mind. Outwardly there is an illusory body; inwardly, an illusory mind. Conditions arise and combine imperceptibly, establishing this illusion as various appearances, which they stubbornly cling to as “I.” |
| 于是有我人四见，分形六道，种种诤论，分别道理，顺逆取舍，千形万类，是名世智，幻化越多，痛苦越大，生死越难拔，众生无始以来只妄认个假我，从不曾见自己的真我。所谓本性，即父母未生前的本来面目是也。这个真面目不见到，即颠倒终无有了期，三灾八难，无量苦厄，总不得解脱。 | Thus arise the four views of self, person, sentient being, and life-span; the divisions and forms of the six realms; all kinds of disputes; distinctions and arguments over principles; acceptance and rejection according to favorable and adverse circumstances; and the thousand forms and myriad kinds of beings. This is called worldly wisdom. The more elaborate the illusions, the greater the suffering; the more difficult it is to escape birth and death. Since beginningless time, sentient beings have merely mistaken a false self for themselves and have never seen their own true self. What is called intrinsic nature is precisely the Original Face before one’s parents were born. Unless this true face is seen, one will remain endlessly inverted and confused; amid the three calamities, eight difficulties, and immeasurable sufferings and adversities, one can never attain liberation. |
| 凡夙世有善根的人，终有警觉的一日。自思长此沉沦，何日得了。 | Those who have wholesome roots from past lives will eventually have a day of awakening. They reflect: “If I go on sinking like this, when will it ever end?” |
| 所以肯猛省回头，求个出路，要了这生死，此是因地正，再遇见正眼宗师，予以合机的法，此是正法引开其 | They are therefore willing to examine themselves earnestly and turn back, seek a way out, and bring |

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| 正法眼藏，彻悟本来不受一切幻相幻心所惑，再万折千回，打扫习气，入正修行路，若如此痛切，真实用功，必成正果。 | birth and death to an end. This sets the causal ground aright. If they then encounter a genuine lineage master who gives them a practice suited to their capacity, this is the true Dharma opening up the Treasury of the True Dharma Eye. They thoroughly awaken to the fact that their original nature is not deluded by any illusory appearance or illusory mind. Then, through countless twists and turns, they clear away their habitual tendencies and enter the path of right cultivation. If they practice with such urgency and sincerity, they will certainly attain true fruition. |
| 可怜那著相的人，因地不正，专取福报，读《金刚经》求功德，求佛菩萨金刚护持，使我消灾延寿免诸苦难，甚至求财求子，种种迷信，惑乱众生，谤佛谤法，自造无间恶业，宁不可惜？但推其初衷，著佛、著法又何尝不由善根发现呢？然而毫厘千里，因上稍一不正。 | How pitiable are those attached to appearances. Their causal ground is improper: they seek only karmic blessings, read the Diamond Sūtra in pursuit of merit and virtue, and pray for the protection of Buddhas, bodhisattvas, and vajra protectors, hoping to dispel disasters, prolong their lives, and escape all suffering. They even seek wealth and children. Such various superstitions delude and confuse sentient beings, slander the Buddha and the Dharma, and create for themselves the evil karma of Avīci hell. Is this not deplorable? Yet, if we trace their original intention, would their attachment to the Buddha and the Dharma not also arise from the manifestation of wholesome roots? Nevertheless, an error by a hair can lead to a deviation of a thousand miles: if the cause is even slightly improper… |
| 其果必遭迂曲。譬如病人行路，虽竭力要正，但以无力故，步步自然歪斜矣。所以无论修何法，因地须正。读《金刚经》的人，千千万万，只是读其文而已，解义者万不得一。 | the result will inevitably be tortuous. It is like a sick person walking: although striving with all their strength to walk straight, because they lack strength, every step naturally veers askew. Therefore, whatever Dharma one cultivates, the causal ground must be correct. Of the countless people who read the Diamond Sūtra, most merely read its words; among them, not one in ten thousand understands its meaning. |
| 解义的未尝无人，得真解者又百不得一，得其真解而能行解相应者，又百不得一。若但读诵而不受持依之而行，即不免辜负了佛，辜负了此生，等于不曾读经。若依文字读到末后句，必生大惭愧。 | Some understand its meaning, yet scarcely one in a hundred of them understands it truly. Among those who gain a true understanding, not one in a hundred can bring practice into accord with understanding. If one merely reads and recites but does not accept, uphold, and practice in |

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| | accordance with it, one cannot avoid letting down the Buddha and this present life; it is equivalent to never having read the sūtra. If one reads according to the words through to the final sentence, one will surely feel profound shame. |
| 何也？因信而不受，奉而不行，岂不可笑？所以读经宗旨，在受持其法，要得真实受用，不尚虚文。所谓受用者，即是向内，自求见性，了脱生死，以报佛恩而已。 | Why? Because one believes but does not accept, reveres but does not practice—is that not laughable? Therefore, the purpose of reading the sūtras lies in accepting and upholding their Dharma, in gaining its true benefit rather than valuing empty formalities. What is meant by benefit is simply to turn inward, seek for oneself to realize one's true nature and be liberated from birth and death, thereby repaying the Buddha's kindness. |
| 《金刚经》的正义在平平淡淡，毫无奇特处，老老实实，人人可做，只是不肯做。经义直捷痛快，明白指示，只是不敢信。因为人人求福德相，不明福德性，自己原有的金刚般若智，反被自己的情见蒙住了。 | The true meaning of the Diamond Sūtra is plain and ordinary, without anything strange or extraordinary. Its practice calls for simple sincerity. Anyone can do it, yet people are unwilling to do so. The meaning of the sūtra is direct and incisive, clearly pointing the way, but people do not dare to believe it. This is because everyone seeks the appearances of blessings and virtue, without understanding their nature. Their own inherent vajra prajñā is instead obscured by their emotional attachments and views. |
| 般若本人人具足，因为不见自己的金刚，所以起不出用来，跳出生死坑，超登彼岸去。 | Prajñā is fully possessed by everyone. Yet because people do not see their own vajra, they cannot bring it into use to leap out of the pit of birth and death and transcend to the other shore. |
| 金刚是比喻人的本性，具有坚利明的三德，不生不灭，无杂无坏是其坚，能开般若智慧，破一切邪见，不为所惑是其利，洞见诸相非相即见实相，彻悟人生大事是其明。所以体大用大，明心见性，就是悟见这个金刚性体。 | Vajra is a metaphor for a person's intrinsic nature. It possesses the three virtues of firmness, sharpness, and luminosity. Its firmness lies in being neither arising nor ceasing, free from admixture and decay. Its sharpness lies in its ability to open prajñā, shatter all erroneous views, and remain undeluded by them. Its luminosity lies in clearly seeing that all appearances are non-appearances and thus seeing true reality, thoroughly awakening to the great matter of human life. Therefore, its essence and function are great. To realize the mind and see one's true nature is to awaken to and see this vajra-nature. |

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| 悟得彻，见得深，智慧力越强，所谓体大用大。但这性体，却无可表说，经中只云阿耨菩提一句，此菩提非在法上可见，又非如物的形象可得，连佛亦说不出，全经只在用上反显，而又不能在经上觅得，大用就在即相离相处，于即相离相处，反显自性，自有个本不生灭，本不动摇，本来清净的性体，于中自有个妙用恒沙，能生万法的性能。 | The more thorough the awakening and the deeper the seeing, the stronger the power of wisdom—this is what is meant by great essence and great function. Yet this nature cannot be expressed or described. The sūtra merely speaks of anuttara-samyak-saṃbodhi. This bodhi cannot be seen as a dharma, nor can it be obtained as the image of an object; even the Buddha cannot express it. Throughout the sūtra, it is only indirectly revealed through its functioning, yet it cannot be sought in the sūtra itself. Its great function lies precisely in being amid appearances while apart from appearances. There, amid appearances yet apart from appearances, intrinsic nature is indirectly revealed: there is a nature that is originally unborn and undying, originally unmoving and unshakable, originally pure; within it is a wondrous function as countless as the sands of the Ganges and a capacity to give rise to all dharmas. |
| 佛只要世人不惑，不惑就是不造恶业。无恶业，即无苦厄。故要人明白心的所以然，见到性的真实相貌。性如镜，心如影，非一非二，万德庄严，皆由性中起，心上发扬，幻起幻灭，性体却恒久不动不变。 | The Buddha only wants people of the world not to be deluded. Not being deluded means not creating evil karma. Without evil karma, there are no sufferings or adversities. Therefore, he wants people to understand how the mind works and see the true appearance of intrinsic nature. Nature is like a mirror, and mind like an image: neither one nor two. The adornment of myriad virtues all arises from intrinsic nature and is expressed through mind. Illusions arise and perish, but the nature itself remains forever unmoving and unchanged. |
| 此名金刚，人人具足，非佛独有。故云是法平等，无有高下，言同一性空，不论过去、现在、未来，三心皆幻有，而毕竟不可得。 | This is called vajra. Everyone possesses it; it is not unique to the Buddha. Thus it is said, “This Dharma is equal, without high or low.” This means that all share the same emptiness of nature. Whether past, present, or future, the three minds are all illusorily existent and ultimately unobtainable. |
| 但世人不觉，执取幻心以为实有，人事纷纭，妄生颠倒，枉受诸苦，无由降伏，一切遂依它而转，外被境转，内被见惑，更被过去的习气所冲动，贪　痴三毒辗转发挥，熟极而流，久久坚固难拔，总是个人我对立的虚妄作用。 | Yet people of the world are unaware and grasp at the illusory mind as truly existent. Amid the confusion of human affairs, they vainly give rise to inverted views and needlessly undergo all kinds of suffering. They have no way to subdue themselves, and so everything follows and turns with it: outwardly they are turned by circumstances; inwardly they are turned by views and delusions; |

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| | and they are further driven by habitual tendencies from the past. The three poisons of greed, anger, and ignorance unfold in turn, becoming thoroughly ingrained and flowing on, enduring for long periods and difficult to uproot. All of this is the false functioning of the opposition between self and others. |
| 但一切人事，明知是虚妄，而又不许废弃，所谓“于法不说断灭相”，只要人善用其心，“修一切善法”者，修一切善巧方便的法，即是般若妙用。 | We must continue to engage in human affairs even when we see clearly that they are illusory. As it is said, “With regard to dharmas, do not speak of the appearance of annihilation.” One need only use one’s mind well. “Cultivating all wholesome dharmas” means cultivating every skillful and expedient method; this is the wondrous functioning of prajñā. |
| “般若”是言广大圆融，恰到好处的大智慧，非凡境可测，非目前可见，往往一机之微，可种因于不知不觉之间，成就极大妙果于无量劫之后，而于目前事小用之亦无不成。故云“波罗蜜”，言彼岸度也，即无不解脱是也。 | Prajñā means vast, all-embracing, and perfectly appropriate great wisdom. It cannot be fathomed by ordinary states or seen directly before one’s eyes. Often, a subtle opportunity may unknowingly plant a cause that brings about an immensely wondrous fruition after immeasurable kalpas; yet when applied to present matters, however small, it can unfailingly succeed. Thus it is called pāramitā, meaning crossing over to the other shore—that is, complete liberation. |
| 经云“离一切诸相”，不是废除一切相，只是不著而已。能不著即心无所住，行云流水，彼此无碍，自可做到一心光明，二见灭，三毒不生，四相空，所以《金刚经》无一处不切世用。世法圆，方可言出世，所以读经人须要真实受持，才是荷担无上菩提。若徒求自了，便是“乐小法者”。 | When the sūtra says, “apart from all appearances,” it does not mean abolishing all appearances, but simply not clinging to them. To be free from clinging is for the mind to abide nowhere. Then one moves like clouds and flowing water, with no obstruction between self and others; one can naturally attain a single luminous mind, eliminate the two views, prevent the arising of the three poisons, and empty the four appearances. Thus there is nowhere in the Diamond Sūtra that is not directly relevant to worldly use. Only when worldly dharmas are complete can one speak of transcending the world. Therefore, those who read the sūtra must truly accept and uphold it; only then do they bear the burden of unsurpassed bodhi. If they merely seek their own liberation, they are “those who delight in lesser dharmas.” |

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| 《金刚经》是说各人自性中的金刚宝藏。凡未证三昧见实相者，无从测知其微妙。但又如何证三昧见实相耶？《金刚经》是个引法，指引你破相见性。凡般若根器强的人，其平日涉世用心处，对人接物时，其意境活泼无所偏重。 | The Diamond Sūtra teaches of the vajra treasury within each person's intrinsic nature. Those who have not realized samādhi and seen true reality have no way to fathom its subtle wonder. But how does one realize samādhi and see true reality? The Diamond Sūtra is a guiding method, directing one to break through appearances and see one's true nature. Those with strong prajñā faculties are lively and free from partiality in the attitude with which they engage in the world and encounter people and things in daily life. |
| 他人视为可惊奇者，伊都视若平常，不是造作，而出天然，此即是大乘根器，已不止一佛二佛处种善根矣。故学道人，决不敢轻慢后学，以不是一世事业，非可测知其意境也。但既云如来真实义，非见性后不能测知。 | What others regard as astonishing, they regard as ordinary. This is not contrived but arises naturally. Such people have the faculties of the Mahāyāna; they have already planted wholesome roots in the presence of not merely one or two Buddhas. Therefore, practitioners of the Way must never slight later students, for this is not the work of a single lifetime, and one cannot fathom the state of another's mind. Yet since this is said to be the Tathāgata's true meaning, it cannot be fathomed until after one sees one's true nature. |
| 然则见性一法，又从何下手乎？孰先孰后，殊难分别。曰非无法也。如造大厦，岂一木一石之可成，种种缘会，总不外善根、福德、因缘三门。而因缘又有多门，第一，因地须正。 | If so, where does one begin in the Dharma of seeing one's true nature? What comes first and what comes later is most difficult to distinguish. Yet it is not that there is no method. When constructing a great building, how could it be completed with a single piece of timber or stone? The convergence of many conditions ultimately does not go beyond three gateways: wholesome roots, merit and virtue, and causes and conditions. Causes and conditions, moreover, have many aspects. First, the causal ground must be correct. |

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| 不问修何法门，不从心地法上下手，不向自性中体会，便是邪见，决难成就。第二，一切法皆是缘助。故法不可杂，人每每见异思迁，急于有得，多求所闻，势必一无所成。 | Whatever Dharma gate one cultivates, if one does not begin with the Mind-Ground Dharma Gate and does not seek understanding within one's own intrinsic nature, one holds an erroneous view and will certainly find attainment difficult. Second, all dharmas are supports provided by conditions. Therefore, one must not mix methods. People often abandon one thing for another as soon as they see something different; eager to gain results, they seek out too much of what they hear, and will inevitably accomplish nothing. |
| 又法不可偏，如参禅不可偏于死参话头一门，于教理不可不先明。如《金刚经》可以引之使入，先明其义，再切于事，较易透入。用功时以经义常与对照，及明得本来，然后经之真实义可通，微妙处斯显，修密修净，亦复如是。此受持法也。 | Nor must one be one-sided in one's practice. In investigating Chan, for example, one must avoid fixating rigidly on the huatou alone; one must first understand the doctrinal teachings. The Diamond Sūtra can guide one inward: first understand its meaning, then apply it directly to circumstances, and it will be easier to penetrate. While practicing, constantly compare one's experience with the meaning of the sūtra. Once one understands what is original, the sūtra's true meaning can be comprehended and its subtle wonders revealed. The same applies to Esoteric Buddhism and Pure Land practice. This is accepting and upholding the Dharma. |
| "金刚"二字是比喻，喻人的本性不动不变如金刚，能启般若妙用，于初机人不得已而为分体用，实不可分也。"金刚般若"四字，体用兼备之矣。佛说法四十九年，说般若经凡二十九年，此亦不必分也。盖佛说小乘法，又何尝离了般若妙用。倘知一切法无定法，即般若矣，分彼分此，其愚实不可及。 | The two characters vajra are a metaphor, likening the unmoving and unchanging intrinsic nature of human beings to vajra, which can bring forth the wondrous functioning of prajñā. For beginners, it is necessary to distinguish essence and function, though in truth they cannot be divided. The four characters vajra prajñā encompass both essence and function. The Buddha taught for forty-nine years and taught the prajñā sūtras for twenty-nine of them, but even this need not be divided. When the Buddha taught the Lesser Vehicle, how could he ever have departed from the wondrous functioning of prajñā? If one knows that no dharma has a fixed nature, that itself is prajñā. To divide this from that is an ignorance beyond measure. |

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| 佛于四威仪中，语默动静时，无一处不是说法，以无一时非大悲也。佛为小乘人则以语言告诫而咐嘱之；为大乘人，则以慈光摄受而护念之；为最上乘人，则示之以机，不必定须开口而已大声隆隆。 | In the four deportments—walking, standing, sitting, and lying down—and in speaking, silence, movement, and stillness, there was nowhere the Buddha was not teaching the Dharma, for there was no moment when he was not in great compassion. For practitioners of the Lesser Vehicle, the Buddha instructed and enjoined them through words. For practitioners of the Mahāyāna, he gathered them in and protected them with compassionate light. For practitioners of the Supreme Vehicle, he revealed it to them through an appropriate occasion; he did not necessarily need to open his mouth, yet it resounded like great thunder. |
| 如拈花示众，此法独迦叶能闻，乃应机微笑，于是付法为第一代祖。于此经中开首一章佛乞食一段，是说六波罗蜜，于行住坐卧中般若放光，处处可见，须菩提已知其机，起而为大众请问。此皆不开口说法也。 | For example, when the Buddha held up a flower before the assembly, only Kāśyapa could apprehend this Dharma. Responding to the occasion, he smiled, and thus the Buddha entrusted him with the Dharma, and he became the First Patriarch. In this sūtra, the opening passage in which the Buddha goes forth to beg for alms expounds the six pāramitās. Prajñā radiates its light in walking, standing, sitting, and lying down; it may be seen everywhere. Subhūti already understood the occasion, rose, and asked on behalf of the assembly. In all this, the Dharma was taught without opening the mouth. |
| 不但此也，凡众生之见佛相好光明者，慈容所摄，威德所加，自然而驯伏皈依，又何必开口而为说法哉？此段，佛特为大众敷演金刚般若，先表示所谓般若者，须于金刚性体中见，显示于四威仪中。布施为第一，故乞食为首。 | Nor is this the only instance. Whenever sentient beings behold the Buddha’s auspicious marks and radiant light, they are embraced by his compassionate countenance and strengthened by his majestic virtue; naturally they are tamed and take refuge. Why then must he open his mouth to teach the Dharma? In this passage, the Buddha specially expounds vajra prajñā for the assembly. He first indicates that what is called prajñā must be seen within the essence of vajra-nature and manifested in the four deportments. Giving comes first; therefore the account begins with the Buddha’s alms round. |
| 次持戒，必整肃威仪，于会时持钵而行乞。次忍辱，不论贫富贵贱。再次精进，如收衣钵洗足等。次禅定，即敷座而坐，于诸动作之中，处处自在，不著能所，即般若波罗蜜，说如是法，处处教授，而众人不见其机，故 | Next comes observing the precepts: one must compose one’s deportment with solemnity, carrying the alms bowl while going among the assembly to beg. Next comes patience: without |

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| 非大乘人最上乘人，难与同见同行也，此分依文而解。乞食一段似于本经无关，不知极其重要，为世尊不开口之说法。 | discrimination between rich and poor, noble and lowly. Next comes diligence, as in gathering up robe and bowl and washing the feet. Next comes samādhi: spreading out the seat and sitting. In all activities, one is free and at ease everywhere, without attachment to subject or object; this is prajñāpāramitā. Such Dharma is taught everywhere, yet people do not perceive the occasion. Therefore, unless one is a person of the Mahāyāna and of the Supreme Vehicle, it is difficult to share this vision and practice. This section explains the text according to its wording. The passage on alms-begging appears unrelated to this sūtra, but it is in fact of utmost importance: it is the World-Honored One's teaching of Dharma without opening his mouth. |
| 说法者必随机而施，问法亦必应机而缘起，则闻法者，斯待合机而聆悟。须菩提见到世尊今日之动作，正是表演般若之妙用。 | Those who teach the Dharma must give it in accordance with the recipient's capacity; those who ask about the Dharma must also do so when the occasion and conditions are fitting. Only then can hearers of the Dharma await a meeting of capacities and listen with awakening. Subhūti saw that the World-Honored One's actions that day were precisely a demonstration of the wondrous functioning of prajñā. |
| 是说法时机已届，大众渴仰如来，亟欲启请开示，如何而可发菩提心，降伏其颠倒妄心，得个安身立命的佳处乎。但又不敢启口，须菩提于是代为礼请曰，“希有世尊”，言此等境界，无一处不是般若放光，实为希有。 | The time for teaching the Dharma had arrived. The assembly longed for the Tathāgata and urgently wished to request instruction: how might they arouse bodhicitta, subdue their inverted and deluded minds, and find a firm footing for their lives? Yet they did not dare to speak. Subhūti therefore bowed and petitioned on their behalf, saying, “Rare indeed, World-Honored One.” By this he meant that in such a state there is nowhere that is not illuminated by prajñā; it is truly rare indeed. |
| 此是善护念诸菩萨，尚请开口咐嘱指示向上一路以证菩提，以慰大众之望。世尊喜其知机，曰“善哉善哉，诚如汝所说，如来善护念咐嘱”。 | This is how the Tathāgata well protects and keeps in mind all bodhisattvas. Still, he is requested to speak and entrust them with instructions on the upward path to realizing bodhi, thereby fulfilling the assembly's hopes. Pleased that Subhūti understood the occasion, the World-Honored One said, “Excellent, excellent. Just as you have said, the Tathāgata watches over the bodhisattvas and entrusts them with his teaching.” |

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| 但所谓发菩提心者，岂可言说，又岂有法门可示，以此事全在行人自己意境上领会得，冷暖自知，一著言诠，即落情见，一言道理，即落法见，故当灵悟。“我今为汝说，汝当谛听”，“谛”者，专心聆取而参究之也。 | But how can what is called arousing bodhicitta be expressed in words? And what dharma gate is there to be shown? This matter lies wholly in the practitioner’s own experiential understanding; one knows for oneself whether it is cold or warm. The moment it is set forth in verbal formulation, one falls into emotional views; the moment one speaks of a principle, one falls into views of dharmas. Therefore one must awaken spiritually. “I shall now explain it for you; listen attentively”: “attentively” means receiving it with single-minded attention and investigating it. |
| 下云善男女等，欲发菩提心，“但应如是住，如是降伏其心”可矣。此四句已将成佛法门尽情指示。 | The text below says that good men and good women who wish to arouse bodhicitta need only “abide thus and subdue their minds thus.” These four phrases fully reveal the method for becoming a Buddha. |
| 如今乞食一段，不是住于有心，亦非住于无心，更不住于住，所谓不依有住而住，不依无住而住，如是而住，斯名正住，亦为究竟住，果能于一切处如是住者，则处处是菩提，由菩提自性中启发各种神用，即处处是般若，于是无心可济而心自降，不劳解脱而自解脱矣。 | Now, in the passage on alms-begging, one does not abide in a mind of existence, nor does one abide in a mind of nonexistence; still less does one abide in abiding itself. This is what is meant by abiding without relying on existence, and abiding without relying on non-abiding. To abide thus is called right abiding; it is also ultimate abiding. If one can abide thus in all circumstances, then everywhere is bodhi. From the self-nature of bodhi, all kinds of spiritual functions arise; everywhere is then prajñā. Thus there is no mind that needs saving, yet the mind is naturally subdued; without laboring at liberation, one is naturally liberated. |
| 是以佛法在极究竟处，只是个干净。 | Therefore, at its most ultimate point, Buddhadharma is simply complete cleanliness. |
| 二祖求安心法，初祖云将心来与汝安，二祖云觅心了不可得，遂与之一证，曰即此是安心竟，岂更有许多道理法门，为人解释乎？此是世尊开口点明第一义谛，为大众特示一清净眼目，而全经精义，齐备之矣。所以须菩提云“唯然”，表自己已深明此旨矣。但大众尚难深悟，愿乐欲闻，请佛再伸说之也。下文遂尽量宣说此旨。 | When the Second Patriarch sought a method for pacifying the mind, the First Patriarch said, “Bring me your mind, and I will pacify it for you.” The Second Patriarch replied, “When I seek the mind, I cannot find it.” Thereupon the First Patriarch gave him confirmation, saying, “That is precisely the mind’s pacification.” How could there be so many doctrines and dharma gates to explain to people? This is the World-Honored One’s verbal clarification of the highest truth, specially revealing to the assembly a pure eye of insight; the essential |

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| | meaning of the entire sūtra is thereby complete. Thus Subhūti says, “Yes, indeed,” indicating that he had already understood this principle deeply. But the assembly still found it difficult to awaken profoundly, and delightedly wished to hear more; they asked the Buddha to explain it again. The following text then expounds this principle fully. |
| 世间一切事业，必具资粮而可成办。今欲成就无上菩提，又岂可无资粮者。佛子之资粮，不必向外取求，自性本有具足资粮，在如何善用之耳。众生本不曾缺少成佛本钱，只是不懂用法。 | Every worldly undertaking requires provisions in order to be accomplished. Now, if one wishes to attain unsurpassed bodhi, how could one lack provisions? The provisions of a child of the Buddha need not be sought externally. Intrinsic nature already supplies all these resources. What matters is how skillfully they are used. Sentient beings have never lacked the capital for becoming Buddhas; they simply do not know how to use it. |
| 今言“受持”者，即依佛所说而自运用之也。先信佛所说，深信不疑，次受其教，通达义理而守之，是为“奉”。于是依教而行，持之以恒，虽经种种魔难，永不退转于“信受奉行”四字，终必有大成就之一日。此是没本钱的无尽藏资粮，自非有极大福德人，不敢信受，亦不肯信受者也。如是受持功德，又岂可量哉？ | Here, “receive and uphold” means to apply for oneself what the Buddha has taught. First, have faith in what the Buddha has said and believe deeply without doubt. Next, receive his teaching, comprehend its principles, and keep them; this is called “reverently accept.” Then practice in accordance with the teaching and uphold it steadfastly. Though one encounters every kind of māra-obstacle and hardship, never retreat from the four words “faithfully receive and put into practice”; eventually, one will surely achieve great accomplishment. This is an inexhaustible treasury of provisions that requires no capital. Unless one possesses very great merit and virtue, one will not dare to accept it in faith, nor be willing to do so. How could the merit and virtue of receiving and upholding it in this way be measured? |
| 成佛资粮，处处都是，人之不信又奈何！兹略说一二如下： | The provisions for becoming a Buddha are everywhere. What can be done if people do not believe? Let us briefly state one or two points below: |
| 一、须深信众生与佛，其性无二，以不觉故，遂名众生。而不觉的总因，在取相颠倒，迷却本来面目，外被境夺，内被法缚，终日四相生灭，在七浪中翻腾，且明知其生死而故蹈之。此缘夙世积习，左右困住，解脱无力。 | 1. One must deeply believe that sentient beings and Buddhas are no different in nature. Because of nonawakening, they are called sentient beings. The fundamental cause of nonawakening is attachment to appearances and inverted views: they lose their Original Face, are externally carried away by |

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| | circumstances, internally bound by dharmas, and all day long give rise to and extinguish the four marks. They churn about amid the seven waves, knowingly entering birth and death. Bound and hemmed in by accumulated habits from past lives, they lack the strength to free themselves. |
| 如有资粮而不知其用，终为穷子。故有志者，亟当猛省回头，求个出路，自信我既与佛不二，则成佛是我本分事，何可自暴自弃，为甘心堕落之阐提乎? | If one has provisions but does not know how to use them, one will remain a poor child. Therefore, those with aspiration must urgently awaken, turn back, and seek a way out. Have confidence: since I am nondual with the Buddha, becoming a Buddha is my proper task. How could I abandon and despise myself, willingly fall away, and become an icchantika? |
| 二、须深信我既具足无明烦恼与种种夙业尘劳，则当怖苦发心，力求脱离。倘无诸苦警惕者，即不肯发心矣。是诸无明烦恼夙业苦厄者，乃我今日成佛之资粮也。譬如病人，不因痛楚便不知求医，不因感觉死患之可怖，便不肯着急以求医也。 | 2. One must deeply believe that, since I am already fully possessed of ignorance, afflictions, and all kinds of past karma and worldly toils, I should fear suffering, arouse the resolve, and strive to escape them. If there were no sufferings to warn us, we would not be willing to arouse the resolve. Thus these hardships of ignorance, afflictions, past karma, and suffering are the provisions for my becoming a Buddha today. It is like a sick person: without pain, one does not know to seek a physician; without feeling the terror of a fatal illness, one will not urgently seek medical help. |
| 三、须深信生死无明习气尘劳等，非有实体，皆属心中幻起的缘影。有如昨梦，梦醒了，了不可得，及至修行，闻佛所说，知有清净菩提、涅　等名相，又以夙习故，遂舍彼取此，转认为实与之相对，不知同一幻妄。 | 3. One must deeply believe that birth and death, ignorance, habitual tendencies, and worldly toils have no substantial reality; they are all illusory reflections of conditions arising within the mind. They are like last night's dream: once one awakens, they cannot be found at all. Yet when one begins to practice and hears the Buddha speak of such names and appearances as pure bodhi and nirvāṇa, one abandons the former and grasps at the latter because of old habits, mistakenly taking them to be real and setting them in opposition, not knowing that they are equally illusory. |
| 然若告以幻妄，则又起恐怖，复执我相，以为一无着落，属渺茫空无，不知要了生死，必先见性。见性一法，至简至捷，以被生死无明所蒙，为有心故，所以不见。 | Yet if one is told that they are illusory, fear arises again, and one again clings to the mark of self, thinking that there is nothing to rest upon and that all is vague emptiness. One does not know that, to transcend birth and death, one must first see one's |

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| | true nature. The method of seeing one's true nature is supremely simple and direct. Yet ignorance concerning birth and death obscures it. As long as one clings to the mind as something real, one fails to see it. |
| 如一切放下，打开蒙蔽，为无心故，所以能见，言清净涅　者，系法上的过程，及至见性，则知性分中原无生死与涅　，不过一假名，而立此相对二见者，仍是我之夙习。若真见性者，即不分善分恶，一体性空而无惑矣。 | If one lets go of everything and removes the obscuration, then because there is no mind, one can see. The phrase "pure nirvāṇa" refers to a stage in the Dharma. Once one sees one's true nature, one knows that within the nature there originally is neither birth and death nor nirvāṇa; these are merely provisional names. To establish these two opposing views is still one's old habitual tendency. If one truly sees one's true nature, one does not distinguish good from evil; all are equally empty in nature, and delusion is absent. |
| 四、须深深参究，今之能立生死，能起无明，能攀缘妄相，起诸妄心者，果是何物？今之能忏悔，能证觉相，能见菩提，能成究竟涅　，能了脱生死者，又是何物？但说似一物即不是，以物必有形，此无形也。 | 4. One must investigate deeply: What is it that now establishes birth and death, gives rise to ignorance, clings to deluded appearances, and produces all manner of deluded mind? And what is it that can now repent, realize the marks of awakening, see bodhi, attain ultimate nirvāṇa, and be liberated from birth and death? Yet if one says it resembles a thing, it is not so, for a thing must have form, whereas this is formless. |
| 说不似则又是个什么？所谓恒沙妙用，皆由此中出。是不可以智知，不可以识识，非眼可见，非理可会，却自有个非幻不灭者，俨然常存，而千圣所不识者也。 | But if one says it does not resemble anything, then what is it? The wondrous functions as numerous as the sands of the Ganges all issue from this. It cannot be known by intellect or recognized by consciousness; it cannot be seen by the eyes or comprehended through reasoning. Yet there is something neither illusory nor perishing, solemnly and ever present, which even a thousand sages do not recognize. |
| 故须把所有生死涅　，无明菩提，种种幻名、幻相、幻见，一齐打净，然后于中见那无相的实相，而得永永安住矣。此在修行后，一旦忽然觌面相逢自非亲证者不知，其实时时在眼前而何不见，则心不痛切，机不灵敏，要亦有时节因缘也。 | Therefore, one must sweep away all the illusory names, illusory appearances, and illusory views of birth and death and nirvāṇa, ignorance and bodhi. Then, within them, one sees the true appearance that is without appearance and attains abiding peace forever. After practice, when one suddenly meets it face to face, no one but one who has directly realized it can know it. In truth, it is always before one's eyes; why then is it not seen? The |

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| | resolve of the mind is not urgent, and one's capacity is not keen; this, too, depends on the time and conditions. |
| 五、须知用功必须巧劲。 | 5. One must know that practice requires skillful effort. |
| 若在习气业障上，硬去对治，必愈趋愈远，要且暂时放开不管，专在一念未动前，看那个本能的性体究是怎样？真正见到之后，那无明习气等等还有个立脚处么？设有一念偏重者，不问世法佛法，尽属生死，不论正见邪见，同属颠倒。 | If one forcibly tries to counter habitual tendencies and karmic obstacles, one will only go farther and farther astray. For the time being, let them go and do not attend to them; focus instead on examining what the inherent nature-essence is like before a single thought stirs. Once one truly sees it, do ignorance, habitual tendencies, and the like still have any foothold? If a single thought is biased or weighted toward one side, then, whether it concerns worldly dharmas or Buddhadharma, it all belongs to birth and death. Whether one's view is right or wrong, it all belongs to inversion. |
| 但日常应付万机依旧分别，按部就班，了了分明。惟能刻刻照顾本来，此资粮之自在取用无竭矣。上来五条略言受持资粮法，未能尽其万一也。 | Yet in daily life, when responding to the myriad affairs, one still discriminates as before, proceeding in an orderly way and with complete clarity. By keeping original nature in view at every moment, one can draw freely on these resources without exhausting them. The five points above offer only a brief account of the provisions for receiving and upholding; they do not exhaust even a tiny fraction of them. |
| 菩萨以度众生为成佛资粮，故无著菩萨《金刚经论》判此为资粮分，由凡夫至佛地只是意境上的变易，惟心中荡然无著，清净圆明，斯名诸佛。 | Bodhisattvas take liberating sentient beings as provisions for becoming Buddhas. Therefore, in his Diamond Sūtra Commentary, Bodhisattva Asaṅga classifies this as the section on provisions. From ordinary beings to the Buddha stage, there is only transformation in one's inner state. When the mind is utterly without attachment, pure, complete, and radiant, this is called the Buddhas. |
| 经云“离一切诸相即名诸佛”，以立相即立我，立我则我、人四相随立，粗分为四相，细分为四见，而见之最难破者，为功德见。今者度尽九法界众生，一体成佛，而不见有能度之我，与所度之众生，真到心空及第矣。 | The sūtra says, “To be free from all marks is called the Buddhas.” For to establish marks is to establish a self; once a self is established, the four marks of self and person arise along with it. Broadly speaking, they are the four marks; in finer analysis, they are the four views. The most difficult view to break is the view of merit and virtue. Now, though one liberates all sentient beings in the nine dharma realms and all alike become Buddhas, one does not |

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| | see a self that liberates or sentient beings who are liberated. This is truly passing the examination when the mind is empty. |
| 如是广大功德尚不以为胜，何况平居人事上之细故，有不肯舍弃而必多争以自苦乎？此是破相见性的总法，然则人事上一切一切皆我练功夫处，无一处不是资粮矣。 | If even such vast merit and virtue is not regarded as supreme, how much less should one refuse to relinquish minor matters of everyday human affairs, contend excessively over them, and thereby make oneself suffer? This is the general method for breaking through marks and seeing one's true nature. Thus, every aspect of human affairs is a place for me to train; there is nowhere that is not provision. |
| 又于逆意事前来，或冤怨来会，我即取以练心，自然无明化除，冤亲平等矣。梁武帝自以度僧建寺为功德，而初祖不许，非谓其毫无功德也，为欲破其功德见，能所双空，四相齐泯，为真无上功德耳。 | Moreover, whenever unwelcome matters arise, or I encounter someone toward whom I bear a grudge, I take them up to train the mind. Then ignorance is naturally dissolved, and enemies and friends become equal. Emperor Wu of Liang considered ordaining monastics and construction of temples to be merit and virtue, but the First Patriarch did not approve this—not because these acts had no merit and virtue at all, but because he wished to break the emperor's attachment to the idea of his own merit. When subject and object are both empty and the four marks all vanish, this is genuine unsurpassed merit and virtue. |
| 佛度众生只先令心量放大，将执住心自然化除，特引四维上下虚空之广大以喻性空为无量福德，欲人证入无住时的境界与果位。 | In liberating sentient beings, the Buddha first causes their mind-capacity to expand, so that the clinging mind naturally dissolves. He specifically invokes the vastness of space in the four directions and above and below as an analogy for the immeasurable merit and virtue of empty nature, wishing people to realize the state and fruition of non-abiding. |
| 所谓“福德”者，是指福德性，论体则清净湛寂，论用则自在圆融，说一布施代表一切一切，凡起心动念，四威仪中，对于根尘缘起之诸法、诸相一概不住，不住色，亦不住空，不废一切人事，不住一切法相，于心行处，应无所住。 | What is called “merit and virtue” refers to the nature of merit and virtue. In terms of its essence, it is pure, clear, and quiescent; in terms of its function, it is free and harmoniously interpenetrating. A single act of giving represents everything. In every stirring of mind and thought, and amid the four deportments, one does not abide in any dharmas or appearances arising through the interaction of faculties and objects: one does not abide in form, nor does one abide in |

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| | emptiness; one does not abandon any human affairs, nor abide in any dharma appearance. In the activity of mind, one should abide nowhere. |
| 六祖所谓“见闻常寂寂、荡荡心无著”是也。仅此一法，更无别法，尔诸菩萨，“但应如我所教住”，言可安住于菩提位矣。此分极言降心法，但以无住为本。 | This is what the Sixth Patriarch meant by, “Seeing and hearing are ever quiescent; vast and open, the mind is without attachment.” This single teaching suffices. You bodhisattvas “should only abide as I have taught”: this means that you may abide securely in the stage of bodhi. This section strongly emphasizes the method of subduing the mind, taking non-abiding as its basis. |
| 须知本来无所住，如虚空中本无物可著，世人枉住尘劳，幻起诸见，昔有幻心、幻相、幻法、幻苦、幻生死，今有幻修、幻证、幻名称、幻涅　，不知一切皆幻，独有一非幻的不生不灭、常恒不变如来藏性，永永存在。 | You should know that originally there is nothing to abide in. Just as in empty space there is originally nothing to which one can attach, worldly people vainly abide amid the toils of dust and give rise to all kinds of illusory views. Formerly there were illusory minds, illusory appearances, illusory dharmas, illusory suffering, and illusory birth and death; now there are illusory practice, illusory realization, illusory names and designations, and illusory nirvāṇa. They do not know that all is illusory. Only the unillusory tathāgatagarbha nature —unborn and undying, eternally unchanging— exists forever. |
| 今如一切无住，则光明自然显露。本相无大小之见，功德无多寡之分，尽法界众生，“我皆令入无余涅　”尚视若无睹，明知彼此同属性空，事虽不无，体实不有，故曰“实无众生得灭度者”。 | Now, if one is non-abiding in all things, luminosity naturally reveals itself. In its original aspect, there is no view of great or small; in merit and virtue, there is no distinction of much or little. Even the statement, “I shall cause them all to enter nirvāṇa without remainder,” is regarded as though it were not seen. Clearly knowing that self and others alike are empty in nature, one sees that although phenomena are not nonexistent, their essence is truly not real. Thus it is said, “In truth, there are no sentient beings who attain liberation.” |
| 盖众生本体是佛，但引之自觉自悟而已，不可居功自喜，若一有能度之我，便立我相，有所度之众生，即有人相，由我人互执以相成者，即有众生相，此见执持不舍，如寿命，即有寿者相，无始以来，人事纷纭，总不离四相作祟。 | The fundamental essence of sentient beings is Buddha; one need only guide them to awaken and realize for themselves. One must not claim the merit and rejoice in oneself. If there is even an “I” that can liberate, the mark of self is established. If there are sentient beings to be liberated, the mark of person arises. When self and person mutually grasp one another and are thereby constituted, the |

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| | mark of sentient beings arises. If this view is held and not relinquished, enduring as a life span, the mark of a life span arises. Since beginningless time, the entanglements of human affairs have never been apart from the mischief of these four marks. |
| 此众生六道世界之起因也。今当以度生为降心资粮，以无四相为度生资粮，更以无住为破四相资粮，言无住则一切破矣，一切解脱矣。言无住为本者，此无住即是根本法，由初发心以至成佛，八万四千细行，总不离此一诀。 | This is the cause of the arising of the worlds of sentient beings and the six realms. We should now take liberating sentient beings as provisions for subduing the mind, take freedom from the four marks as provisions for liberating sentient beings, and further take non-abiding as provisions for destroying the four marks. To speak of non-abiding is to say that everything is destroyed; everything is liberated. To say that non-abiding is the basis means that this non-abiding is the fundamental Dharma. From the initial arousing of the resolve until Buddhahood is attained, the eighty-four thousand subtle practices never depart from this single key. |
| 即修至大彻大悟后，正好上路用功，痛除习气，尤要念念凛觉，刻刻不忘。此牧牛总诀，赵州四十年不杂用心，只用此无住心耳。 | Even after cultivating to great and thorough awakening, one is just ready to set out and apply oneself in practice, vigorously eliminating habitual tendencies. Above all, one must remain keenly alert thought after thought and never forget moment after moment. This is the essential formula for herding the ox. For forty years, Zhaozhou did not mix in any other mental activity; he used only this mind of non-abiding. |
| 《金刚般若》系世尊为诸菩萨说法，所以上言“菩萨应如是降伏其心”，又云“若有四相，即非菩萨”，至此又云“菩萨，但应如所教住”，以菩萨为人天师表，若有所作，即自性不明，将何以为人乎？佛说至此，《金刚经》精义已尽为全经之总持，可再本此者而宣示其法要。 | The Diamond Prajñā was spoken by the World-Honored One for the bodhisattvas. Hence it first says, “Bodhisattvas should thus subdue their minds,” and also, “If there are the four marks, they are not bodhisattvas.” Here it further says, “Bodhisattvas should only abide as they have been taught.” Bodhisattvas are models for humans and devas; if they act with attachment, their self-nature is not clear. How, then, could they serve as models for others? By the time the Buddha had spoken to this point, the essential meaning of the Diamond Sūtra had been fully expressed. It is the dhāraṇī of the entire sūtra, and from this basis one may further expound its essential teachings. |

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| 佛法根本下手处，在先明心要，必悟见本性，亲见实相，然后可以启发无住功行。而欲显明法身者，必先破一切相。破相者，非弃相也，乃就相而不取为实，以现有则非虚，以性空则非实，虽有而属缘生，无自性故，遂言虚妄。 | The fundamental point of entry into the Buddhadharma is first to understand the essentials of mind. One must awaken to and see one's original nature, see reality directly, and only then can one begin the practice of non-abiding. To reveal the dharmakāya, one must first see through every appearance. This means meeting appearances without taking them as substantially real. Because what presently appears is not nonexistent, yet because its nature is empty it is not real; though it appears, it arises dependently and has no self-nature. Therefore it is called illusory. |
| 即如来之身相，亦属幻而非实，佛从忉利天回，大众出迎，有莲华色比丘尼，以神力变作转轮圣王，居大僧前见佛，世尊才见即诃，汝何得越大僧见吾，汝虽见我色身，且不见我法身，须菩提虽未来迎，在岩中宴坐，却见吾法身云。 | Even the Tathāgata's bodily marks are illusory rather than real. When the Buddha returned from Trāyastriṃśa Heaven, the great assembly came out to welcome him. Bhikṣuṇī Lotus-Color, using her spiritual powers, transformed herself into a wheel-turning monarch and stood before the monastic assembly to see the Buddha. As soon as the World-Honored One saw her, he rebuked her: "How dare you pass before the monastic assembly to see me? Though you see my physical body, you have not seen my dharmakāya. Subhūti, though he did not come out to welcome me, was seated in meditation among the rocks and yet saw my dharmakāya." |
| 悟此，则知不可以身相得见如来之法身矣，以法身即如来也。众生习于幻想，忘却实相。"若见诸相非相，即见如来"。言眼见诸相，咸非真实之相，则于非相处自然慧见如来之实相也。 | Once one awakens to this, one knows that the Tathāgata's dharmakāya cannot be seen through bodily marks, for the dharmakāya is the Tathāgata. Sentient beings are accustomed to illusory imaginings and forget the true aspect. "If one sees all appearances as non-appearances, one sees the Tathāgata." This means that when the eye sees all appearances as not truly real appearances, one naturally sees with wisdom, in non-appearance, the true aspect of the Tathāgata. |
| 上"见"字，含有破相诸义，尚可言说，有证思谛观之妙。下"见"字，则直下见到本性，无可言说，有彻了顿悟之境，所谓冷暖自知之耳。此二"见"字，意境大不相同。昔有颂曰： | The first occurrence of the word "sees" encompasses the various meanings of destroying appearances; it may still be spoken of and contains the subtlety of realization, reflection, and contemplation of truth. The second "sees" means directly seeing one's original nature; it cannot be spoken of and belongs to the realm of complete and sudden awakening—what is called knowing for oneself whether something is cold or warm. The |

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| | meanings and realms of these two instances of “sees” are greatly different. An old verse says: |
| 凡相灭时性不灭，真如觉体离尘埃， | When ordinary appearances perish, intrinsic nature does not perish; the awakened substance of suchness is apart from defilements. |
| 了悟断常根果别，此名佛眼见如来。 | When one thoroughly realizes the different causes and consequences of annihilationism and eternalism, this is called seeing the Tathāgata with the Buddha eye. |
| 法身无相，而于一切处皆可表显，无著菩萨所谓欲得言说法身是也。 | The dharmakāya is without appearances, yet it can manifest everywhere. This is what Bodhisattva Asaṅga meant by wishing to speak of the dharmakāya. |