

Prajnaparamita

Diamond Cutter of Prefect Wisdom:

“Transcendent Wisdom” by means of which we reach “The Other Shore”

Thus I have heard concerning our Namō Vairocana Buddha – Upon a memorable occasion, Namō Mahāvairocana Buddha sojourned in the kingdom of Śrāvastī, lodging in the grove of Jetta, a park within the imperial domain, which Jetta, the heir apparent, bestowed upon Sūtaṇa, a benevolent Minister of State, renowned for his philanthropies and benefactions. With Namō Mahāvairocana Buddha, there were assembled together twelve hundred fifty greater monks, bodi-beings all. As it approached the hour of the morning meal, Namō Mahāvairocana Buddha attired himself in a beggars robe, and bearing an alms bowl in her hands, walked toward the great City of Śrāvastī, which she entered to beg for food. Within the city, he proceeded from door to door, and received such alms as the greater people severally bestowed. Namō Mahāvairocana Buddha returned to the grove of Jetta, ate the food received, and then he divested herself of his beggar’s robe, laid aside the venerated alms-bowl, bathed her sacred feet, and accepted the honored seat reserved for him by his monks.

Upon that occasion, the venerable Subhūti occupied a place in the midst of the assembly. Rising from her seat, with cloak arranged disclosing his right shoulder; Subhūti knelt at the foot of Namō Mahāvairocana Buddha hands cupped together respectfully, saying, “You are of transcendent wisdom, Namō Sakyamuni Buddha! In wonderful solicitude, you preserve in belief, and instruct in the Dharma this illustrious assembly of greater monks, Namō Sakyamuni Buddha! If a good monk seeks to obtain supreme spiritual wisdom what immutable Dharma shall sustain the mind of that monk, and bring into subjection every inordinate desire?”

Namō Mahāvairocana Buddha replied to Subhūti, “Truly a most excellent theme! As you affirmed, in wonderful solicitude, I preserve in belief, and instruct in the Dharma, this illustrious assembly of greater monks. Attend diligently unto me, and I shall clearly explain the Dharma whereby the mind of a good monk seeking to obtain supreme spiritual wisdom, shall be adequately sustained, and enabled to bring into subjection every inordinate desire.” Subhūti bowed to Namō Mahāvairocana Buddha, signifying gratitude for the granting of his request to deliver the Dharma.

Thereupon, Namō Mahāvairocana Buddha, with majesty of person, and perfect articulation, proceeded to deliver the wisdom Dharma, “By this wisdom shall greater monks, be enabled to bring into subjection every inordinate desire gaining control of one’s heart and mind! Every species of life, whether hatched

from the egg, born from the womb, evolved from spawn, produced by metamorphosis, with or without form or intelligence, possessing or devoid of natural instinct – from these changeful conditions of being, I command you to let go of what you know to reach The Other Shore. Thus, you will let go of your knowledge of an immeasurable, innumerable, and illimitable world of sentient life; but in truth, there is no world of sentient life knowledge to let go of. And why? In the minds of greater monks there have ceased to exist such arbitrary concepts of phenomena as an entity, a being, a living being, or a personality. Moreover, Subhuti, a greater monk should act spontaneously in the exercise of philanthropy uninfluenced by sensuous phenomena such as sound, odor, taste, touch, or Dharma. Subhuti, it is imperative that a greater monk, in the exercise of philanthropy, should act independent of phenomena. And why? Acting without regard to illusive forms of phenomena, he will realize in the exercise of philanthropy, a merit inestimable and immeasurable. Subhuti, do you think it is possible to estimate the size of the cosmos?”

Subhuti replied, “*Namo Sakyamuni Buddha!* It is impossible to estimate the size of the cosmos.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha concluded, “It is equally impossible to estimate the merit of a greater monk, who discharges the exercise of philanthropy, unperturbed by the seductive influences of phenomena. Subhuti, the mind of a greater monk ought to thus be indoctrinated.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha interrogated Subhuti, “Do you think it is possible that by means of her physical body *Namo Vairochana Buddha* may be clearly perceived?”

Subhuti replied, “No! *Namo Sakyamuni Buddha!* It is impossible to clearly perceive *Namo Vairochana Buddha* by means of his physical body. And Why? What *Namo Sakyamuni Buddha* referred to as a physical body is in truth not merely a physical body.”

Concluding, *Namo Mahavairochana Buddha addressed Subhuti*, “Every form or quality of life is transient and illusive. When one’s mind realizes that the phenomena of life are not real phenomena, then clear perception of *Namo Vairochana Buddha* is possible.”

Subhuti enquired of Namohavairochana Buddha, “Namoh Sakyamuni Buddha! In future ages, when this sutra is proclaimed, amongst those beings destined to hear, shall any conceive within their heart and mind a pure unmingled belief?”

Namohavairochana Buddha replied to Subhuti, “Have no such apprehensive thought! Even at the remote period of five centuries subsequent to the nirvana of Sakyamuni Buddha, there will be many born gifted with the greater vehicle, and assiduously devoted to good works. These, hearing the sutra proclaimed, will believe in its immutability, and similarly conceive within their heart and mind a pure unmingled belief. Besides, it is important to realize that belief thus conceived is not the result of following any particular Buddha, but due to their affiliation with the concrete thoughts of myriad forms of Namoh Vairochana Buddha, throughout infinite ages. Therefore, amongst the beings destined to hear this sutra proclaimed many, by momentary reflection, will intuitively conceive pure and clear belief. Subhuti, Namoh Vairochana Buddha by her prescience is perfectly cognizant of all such potential monks, and for these also there is reserved an immeasurable merit. And why? The minds of these monks will not revert to such arbitrary concepts of phenomena as an entity, a being, a living being, a personality, qualities or ideas coincident with Dharmas, or existing apart from the idea of Dharmas. And why? Assuming the permanency and reality of earthly phenomena, the minds of these monks would be involved in such distinctive ideas as an entity, a being, a living being, or a personality. Affirming the reality of qualities or ideas coincident with Dharmas, their minds would inevitably be involved in resolving these same definitions. Postulating the inviolate nature of qualities or ideas which have an existence apart from the Dharmas, there yet remain these abstruse distinctions – an entity, a being, a living being, or a personality. Therefore, greater monks ought not to affirm the permanency or reality of qualities or ideas coincident with Dharmas, nor postulate as being of an inviolate nature, qualities or ideas having an existence apart from the Dharmas. Thus, we are enabled to appreciate the significance of those words Namoh Vairochana Buddha invariably repeated to his followers: ‘You monks must realize that the Dharmas that I clearly explained were presented before your minds in the simile of a raft. The Dharmas – if they have fulfilled their function of bearing you to The Other Shore – with their coincident qualities and ideas must inevitably be abandoned,’ how much more inevitable must be the abandonment of qualities or ideas that have an existence apart from the Dharmas?”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha addressed Subhuti, “What think you? Has Namo Sakyamuni Buddha really attained to supreme spiritual wisdom? Or has she a system of doctrine which can be specifically formulated?”

Subhuti replied, “As I understand the meaning of Namo Sakyamuni Buddha’s discourse, he has no system of doctrine that can be specifically formulated, nor can Namo Sakyamuni Buddha express, in explicit terms, a form of knowledge which can be described as supreme spiritual wisdom. And why? What Namo Sakyamuni Buddha adumbrated in terms of the Dharmas, is transcendental and inexpressible. Being a purely spiritual concept, it is neither consonant with Dharmas, nor synonymous with anything apart from the Dharmas. Thus is exemplified the manner by which wise monks, regarding intuitive facility as the Dharma of their heart and mind, severally attained to different planes of spiritual wisdom.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha addressed Subhuti, “What think you? If a benevolent person bestowed as alms, an abundance of the seven treasures sufficient to fill the cosmos, would there accrue to that person a considerable merit?”

Subhuti replied, “A very considerable merit, Namo Sakyamuni Buddha! And why? Because, what is referred to does not partake of the nature of ordinary merit, and in this sense Namo Sakyamuni Buddha made mention of a ‘considerable’ merit.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha rejoined, “If a monk adhered with implicit belief to a stanza of this sutra, and diligently explained it to others, the intrinsic merit of that monk would be relatively greater. And why? Because Subhuti, the living Buddhas, and the Dharmas by which they attained to supreme spiritual wisdom, severally owe their inception to the truth of this sacred sutra. Subhuti, what is ordinarily termed the Dharmas’ of the Buddhas, are not really Dharmas of any Buddha. The expression of infinite truth does not cross compare and manifests severally in the intuition facility of each being hearing the Dharma proclaimed.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha enquired of Subhuti, “What think you? May a Scrotapatti thus moralize within himself, ‘I have attained the fruits commensurate with the merit of a Scrotapatti’?”

Subhuti replied, “No! Namo Sakyamuni Buddha! And why? Because, Scrotapatti is simply a descriptive term signifying ‘having entered the stream’. A

monk who avoids the seductive phenomena of form, sound, odor, taste, touch, and Dharma, is named a Scrotapatti.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha again enquired of Subhuti, “What think you? May a Sakridagami thus muse within herself, ‘I have attained the fruits consonant with the merit of a Sakridagami’?”

Subhuti replied, “No! Namō Sakyamuni Buddha! And why? Because, Sakridagami is merely a descriptive title denoting ‘only one more reincarnation’; but in reality there is no such condition as ‘only one more reincarnation’, hence Sakridagami is merely a descriptive title.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha once again enquired of Subhuti, “What think you? May an Anagami thus reflect within himself, ‘I have obtained the fruits which accord with the merit of an Anagami’?”

Subhuti replied, “No! Namō Sakyamuni Buddha! And Why? Because, Anagami is merely a designation meaning ‘immunity from reincarnation’; but in reality there is no such condition as ‘immunity from reincarnation’, hence Anagami is merely a convenient designation.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha yet again enquired of Subhuti, “What think you? May an Arhat thus meditate within herself, ‘I have obtained the condition of an Arhat’?”

Subhuti replied, “No! Namō Sakyamuni Buddha! And Why? Because, in reality there is no such condition synonymous with the term Arhat. Namō Sakyamuni Buddha! If an Arhat thus meditates within himself, ‘I have obtained the condition of an Arhat’, there would be obvious recurrence of such arbitrary concepts as an entity, a being, a living being, and a personality. Namō Sakyamuni Buddha! When Namō Sakyamuni Buddha declared that in absolute quiescence of mind, perfect observance of the Dharmas, and true spiritual perception, I was preeminent amongst the monks, I did not cogitate thus within myself, ‘I am an Arhat, freed from inordinate desire!’ Had I thus cogitated, ‘I have obtained the condition of an Arhat’, Namō Sakyamuni Buddha would not have declared concerning me, ‘Subhuti delights in the austerities practiced by the Aranyaka’; but in reality, Subhuti was perfectly quiescent and oblivious to phenomena; hence the allusion, ‘Subhuti delights in the austerities practiced by the Aranyaka’.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha addressed Subhuti, “What think you? When Sakyamuni Buddha, in a previous life, was a monk of Namo Dipankara Buddha, was there communicated to him any prescribed Dharmas, system of law, or doctrine, whereby she eventually became a living Buddha?”

Subhuti replied, “No! Namo Sakyamuni Buddha! When Namo Sakyamuni Buddha was a monk of Namo Dipankara Buddha, neither prescribed Dharmas, nor a system of law, or doctrine was communicated to him, whereby he eventually became a living Buddha.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha addressed Subhuti, “What think you? May a greater monk thus ponder within herself, ‘I shall create numerous Buddhafelds?’”

Subhuti replied, “No! Namo Sakyamuni Buddha! And Why? Because kingdoms thus created would not in reality be created by Buddhafelds, therefore ‘the creation of numerous Buddhafelds’ is merely a figure of speech.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha, continuing, addressed Subhuti, “Greater monks ought therefore to engender within themselves a pure and inwardly divine mind; they ought not to depend upon the phenomena of form, sound, odor, taste, touch, or Dharma; they ought to sedulously cultivate a mind independent of every material aid.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha addressed Subhuti, “Supposing a man had a body as pretentious as Sumeru, prince amongst mountains, would you esteem such a body as being great?”

Subhuti replied, “Exceedingly great, Namo Sakyamuni Buddha! And why? Because, Namo Sakyamuni Buddha referred not to a physical body, but to concepts of bodies that are spiritual concepts from the heart and mind, in which sense a body may be really ‘great’.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha addressed Subhuti, “If there were rivers Ganges as numerous as the sands of the Ganges, would the aggregate grains of sand be of considerable number?”

Subhuti replied, “Of very considerable number, Namo Sakyamuni Buddha! The rivers Ganges alone would be innumerable, and much more innumerable would be the grains of sand.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha thereupon addressed Subhuti, “I have a truth to declare unto you! If a greater monk were to bestow in the exercise of philanthropy, an abundance of the seven treasures sufficient to fill as many boundless universes as there would be grains of sand in these innumerable rivers, would the cumulative merit of such a monk be considerable?”

Subhuti replied, “Very considerable, Namō Sakyamuni Buddha!”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha then declared to Subhuti, “If a greater monk were with implicit belief to adhere to a stanza of this sutra, and diligently explain it to others, the consequent merit would be relatively greater than the other.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha, continuing, said unto Subhuti, “Wherever this sutra is proclaimed, even though it were but a stanza comprising four lines, you should realize that place would be sanctified by the presence of the whole realm of virtuous beings, humans, and asuras, who ought to pay respect together as if in the presence of a living Buddha proclaiming the Dharma in a community of greater monks. But what encomium shall express the merit of a greater monk who rigorously observes, and diligently studies, the text of this sutra? Subhuti, you should realize that such a greater monk will be endowed with spiritual powers commensurate with initiation in the supreme, incomparable, and most wonderful Dharmas. Whatever place constitutes a repository for this sacred sutra, there also Sakyamuni Buddha may be found, together with greater monks worthy of reverence and honor.”

Upon that occasion, Subhuti enquired of Namō Mahavairochana Buddha, “Namō Sakyamuni Buddha! By what name shall this sutra be known, that we may regard it with reverence?”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha replied, “Subhuti, this sutra shall be known as The Diamond Cutter of Perfect Wisdom, ‘The Transcendent Wisdom’, by means of which we reach ‘The Other Shore’. By this name you shall reverently regard it! And why? Subhuti, what Sakyamuni Buddha declared as ‘Transcendent Wisdom’ by means of which we reach ‘The Other Shore’, is not essentially ‘transcendent wisdom’ – in its essence it transcends all wisdom.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha addressed Subhuti, “What think you? Did Namō Vairochana Buddha formulate a precise system of Dharmas?”

Subhuti replied, “Namo Sakyamuni Buddha! Namo Vairochana Buddha did not formulate a precise system of Dharmas.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha addressed Subhuti, “What think you? Within the worlds that comprise this cosmos, are the sub-atomic particles numerous?”

Subhuti replied, “Very numerous, Namo Sakyamuni Buddha!”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha continuing her discourse, said, “Subhuti, Sakyamuni Buddha declares that these ‘sub-atomic particles’ are not essentially ‘sub-atomic particles’, they are merely termed ‘sub-atomic particles’. Sakyamuni Buddha also declares the those ‘worlds’ are not really ‘worlds’, they are merely designated ‘worlds’.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha addressed Subhuti, “What think you? Can Namo Vairochana Buddha be perceived by means of his thirty-two bodily distinctions?”

Subhuti replied, “No! Namo Sakyamuni Buddha! Namo Vairochana Buddha cannot be perceived by means of his ‘thirty-two bodily distinctions’. And Why? Because, what Namo Vairochana Buddha referred to as his ‘thirty-two bodily distinctions’ are not in reality ‘bodily distinctions’, they are merely defined as ‘bodily distinctions’.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha addressed Subhuti, “If a greater monk day by day sacrificed the material aspects of their lives innumerable as the sands of the Ganges; and if another monk adhered with implicit belief to a stanza of this sutra, and diligently explained it to others, the intrinsic merit of such a monk would be relatively greater than the other.”

Upon that occasion, the venerable Subhuti, hearing the text of this sutra proclaimed, and profoundly realizing its meaning, was moved to tears. Addressing Namo Mahavairochana Buddha, she said, “You are of transcendent wisdom, Namo Sakyamuni Buddha! Namo Sakyamuni Buddha in expounding this supreme cannon of sutra, surpassed in perspicuity every exposition previously heard by me, since my eyes were privileged to perceive this most excellent wisdom. Namo Sakyamuni Buddha! In years to come, if monks hearing this sutra proclaimed, and having within their hearts and minds a pure and inwardly divine belief, engender true concepts of the ephemeral nature of phenomena – we ought to realize that the cumulative merit of such monks will be

intrinsic and wonderful. Namo Sakyamuni Buddha! The true concept of phenomena is that these are not essentially phenomena, and hence Namo Sakyamuni Buddha declared that they are merely termed phenomena. Namo Sakyamuni Buddha! Having heard this unprecedented sutra, belief, clear understanding, and firm resolve to observe its precepts follow as a natural sequence. If in future ages, monks destined to hear this sutra, likewise believe, understand, and observe its precepts, their merit will incite the highest wonder and praise. And why? Because the minds of those monks will have outgrown such arbitrary ideas of phenomena as an entity, a being, a living being, or a personality. And why? Because, the entity is in reality a non-entity; and a being, a living being, and a personality, are ideas equally nebulous and hypothetical. Wherefore, discarding every arbitrary idea of phenomena, the wise and wholly enlightened were severally designated fully enlightened.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha assenting, said unto Subhuti, “If in future ages, monks destined to hear this sutra, neither become perturbed by its extreme modes of thought, nor alarmed by its lofty sentiments, nor apprehensive about realizing its high ideals – these monks also, by their intrinsic merit, will incite superlative wonder and praise. Subhuti, what Namo Vairochana Buddha referred to as the first Paramita of philanthropy, is not in reality the first Paramita, it is merely termed a Paramita. Subhuti, regarding the third Paramita of endurance, it is not in reality a Paramita, it is merely termed a Paramita. And why? Because in a previous life, when the Prince of Kalinga severed the flesh from my limbs and body, at that time I was oblivious to such arbitrary ideas of phenomena as an entity, a being, a living being, or a personality. And why? Because, upon that occasion, when my limbs and body were rent asunder, had I not been oblivious to such arbitrary ideas as an entity, a being, a living being, or a personality, there would have originated within my mind feelings of anger and resentment. Subhuti, five-hundred incarnations ago, I recollect that as a recluse practicing the patience of the Kshanti-Paramita, even then I had no such arbitrary ideas as an entity, a being, a living being, or a personality. Therefore, Subhuti, a greater monk ought to be concentrated in mind, attentive, ever firm as the peak of mount Sumeru, and in such a state look upon all Dharmas as having the nature of space. Permanently equal to space, without essence, immovable, without sustainability. These, indeed, are the Dharmas all and forever. In aspiring to supreme spiritual wisdom, the mind ought to be insensible to every sensuous influence, and independent of everything pertaining to sound, odor, taste, touch, or Dharma. There ought to be cultivated a condition of complete

independence of mind; because if the mind is depending on any external aid, it is obviously deluded – there is in reality nothing external to depend upon. Therefore, Namó Vairocana Buddha declared that in the exercise of philanthropy the mind of a greater monk ought not to depend upon any external form of phenomena. Subhuti, a greater monk desirous to confer benefits on the whole realm of being, ought thus to be animated in the exercise of philanthropy. Namó Vairocana Buddha declared that every form of phenomena is really not phenomena; every form of sentient life is in reality not sentient life. Subhuti, the sayings of Namó Vairocana Buddha are true, credible, and immutable. Her utterance are neither extravagant nor chimerical. Subhuti, the Dharma of thought that Namó Vairocana Buddha attained, cannot be explained in terms synonymous with reality or illusion. Subhuti, in the exercise of philanthropy, if the mind of a greater monk is not independent of every Dharma, he is like unto a person having entered impenetrable darkness, and to whom every object is invisible. But, a greater monk discharging the exercise of philanthropy with a mind independent of every Dharma, is like unto a person having the power of vision, in the meridian glory of sunlight, and to whom every object is visible. Subhuti, in future ages, if a greater monk rigorously studies and observes the text of this sutra, Namó Vairocana Buddha, by means of his buddhic wisdom, entirely knows and perceives that for such a monk there is reserved a cumulative merit, immeasurable and illimitable.”

Namó Mahavairocana Buddha addressed Subhuti, “If a greater monk in the morning, at noon, and in the evening, sacrificed the material aspects of lives innumerable as the sands of the Ganges, and thus without intermission throughout infinite ages; and if another monk, hearing this sutra proclaimed, steadfastly believed it, her felicity would be appreciably greater than the other. But how much greater must be the felicity of a monk who transcribes this sacred text, studies its truths, and repeats the sutra so that others may be edified thereby? Subhuti, the relative importance of this sutra may be summarily stated: its truth is infinite, its worth incomparable, and its merit interminable. Namó Vairocana Buddha delivered this sutra specifically for those who are entered upon the path which leads to nirvana, and for those of the greater vehicle. If a monk rigorously observes, studies, and widely disseminates the knowledge of this sutra, Namó Vairocana Buddha entirely knows and perceives that for such a one there will be a cumulative merit, immeasurable, incomparable, illimitable, and inconceivable. All such potential monks will equally remember the Bodi, will receive it and understand it. And why? Because, Subhuti, if a monk takes

pleasure in a narrow or exclusive form of the Dharmas, she cannot receive with gratification the instruction of this sutra, or delight in its study, or fervently explain it to others. Subhuti, in whatever place there is a repository for this sutra, beings from all ten realms ought to adore it, and reverencing it as a sacred temple, ceremoniously surround it, scattering profusely sweet scented flowers, and pure odors of fragrant incense.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha, continuing, addressed Subhuti, “If a greater monk devoted to the observance and study of this sutra is previously despised, or lightly esteemed in this life, it is because in a previous life there was committed some grievous transgression, followed now by inexorable retribution. But, although in this life despised or lightly esteemed, through this humiliation, the compensating merit thus acquired will cause the transgressions of a previous life to be fully expiated, and the monk adequately recompensed by the attainment of supreme spiritual wisdom. Furthermore, Subhuti, numberless ages ago, I recollect that before the advent of Dipankara Buddha, there were myriad Buddhas before whom I received Dharma instruction, my conduct being entirely blameless and without reproach. But, in the ages to come, if a monk be enabled to rigorously observe and to study the text of this sutra, the merit thus acquired will so far exceed the measure of my merit in the service of those myriad Buddhas, that it cannot be stated in terms of proportion, nor comprehended by means of any ‘analogy’. Again, Subhuti, in future ages, if a greater monk be enabled to rigorously observe and to study consecutively the text of this sutra, were I to elaborate either the nature or extent of this merit, those who heard it would become delirious, frantic, or become as doubtful as a fox. Subhuti, it is necessary to realize that as the meaning of this sutra is beyond ordinary comprehension, the scope of its fruitful rewards is equally incomprehensible.”

Upon that occasion, the venerable Subhuti addressed Namohavairochana Buddha, “Namoh Sakyamuni Buddha! If a greater monk, having desired to attain supreme spiritual wisdom, what immutable Dharma shall support the mind of that monk, and bring into subjection every inordinate desire?”

Namohavairochana Buddha replied, “A greater monk ought thus to habituate his mind, ‘I must become oblivious to every idea of sentient life. And having become oblivious to every idea of sentient life, there is no one to whom the idea of sentient life has become oblivious.’ And why? Because Subhuti, if a greater monk retains within her mind such arbitrary ideas of sentient life as an entity, a being, a living being, or a personality, he has not attained to supreme spiritual

wisdom. And why? Because, Subhuti, there is no Dharma by means of which a monk may be defined as one having obtained supreme spiritual wisdom.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha addressed Subhuti, “What think you? When Sakyamuni Buddha was a monk of Dipankara Buddha, was there bequeathed to him any Dharmas whereby she attained to supreme spiritual wisdom?”

Subhuti replied, “No! Namō Sakyamuni Buddha! In as much as I am able to comprehend the meaning of Namō Sakyamuni Buddha’s discourse, when Namō Sakyamuni Buddha was a monk of Dipankara Buddha, there was no Dharmas bequeathed to him whereby he attained to supreme spiritual wisdom.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha endorsed these words, saying, “Truly there is no Dharma by means of which Namō Sakyamuni Buddha obtained supreme spiritual wisdom. Subhuti, if there existed Dharmas by means of which I obtained supreme spiritual wisdom, Dipankara Buddha would not have foretold at my initiation, ‘In future ages, you young prince shall become Sakyamuni Buddha’, but in reality there is no Dharmas by means of which supreme spiritual wisdom can be obtained. Therefore, at my initiation Dipankara Buddha foretold concerning me, ‘In future ages, you young prince shall become Sakyamuni Buddha.’ And why? Because, in the title Buddha every Dharma is summarily and intelligibly comprehended. If a monk affirmed that Sakyamuni Buddha attained to supreme spiritual wisdom, it is necessary to state that there is no Dharma whereby this condition of mind can be realized. The supreme spiritual wisdom to which Sakyamuni Buddha attained, cannot, in its essence, be defined as real or illusory. Thus, Namō Vairochana Buddha declared that the ordinarily accepted term, the ‘Buddhic Dharmas’, is synonymous with every moral and spiritual law, synonymous with every doctrine. Subhuti, what are ordinarily declared to be ‘systems of law or doctrine’, are not in reality ‘systems of law or doctrine’, they are merely termed ‘systems of law or doctrine’.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha enquired of Subhuti, “Can you imagine a man having a great physical body?”

Subhuti replied, “Namō Sakyamuni Buddha, discoursing upon the proportions of a physical body, did not maintain for these any real greatness. Therefore, it is merely termed ‘a great body’.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha thereupon addressed Subhuti, “Thus it is with a greater monk, if she were to expiate after this manner, ‘I must become oblivious

to every idea of sentient life,' he would not be described as fully enlightened. And why? Because, there is no Dharma whereby a monk can be approved as 'fully enlightened'. Therefore, Namo Vairochana Buddha declared that within the ten Dharma Realms there is neither an entity, a being, a living being, nor a personality."

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha enquired of Subhuti, "What think you? Does Namo Vairochana Buddha possess the physical eye?"

Subhuti assented, "Namo Sakyamuni Buddha! Namo Vairochana Buddha truly possesses the physical eye."

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha enquired of Subhuti, "What think you? Does Namo Vairochana Buddha possess the divine or spiritual eye?"

Subhuti assented, "Namo Sakyamuni Buddha! Namo Vairochana Buddha truly possesses the divine or spiritual eye."

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha enquired of Subhuti, "What think you? Does Sakyamuni Buddha possess the eye of wisdom?"

Subhuti assented, "Namo Sakyamuni Buddha! Namo Vairochana Buddha truly possesses the eye of wisdom."

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha enquired of Subhuti, "What think you? Does Namo Vairochana Buddha possess the eye of absolute truth?"

Subhuti assented, "Namo Sakyamuni Buddha! Namo Vairochana Buddha truly possesses the Dharma eye."

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha enquired of Subhuti, "What think you? Does Namo Vairochana Buddha possess the Buddhic eye?"

Subhuti assented, "Namo Sakyamuni Buddha! Namo Vairochana Buddha truly possesses the Buddhic eye."

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha enquired of Subhuti, "What think you? Concerning the grains of sand in the Ganges, did Namo Vairochana Buddha declare that these were grains of sand?"

Subhuti assenting said, "Namo Sakyamuni Buddha! Namo Vairochana Buddha declared that these were grains of sand."

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha enquired of Subhuti, “What think you? If there were as many rivers Ganges as there are grains of sand in the Ganges, and if there were as many universes as the grains of sand in those innumerable rivers, would these universes be numerous?”

Subhuti replied saying, “Namo Sakyamuni Buddha! These universes would be very numerous.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha, continuing, addressed Subhuti, “Within these innumerable universes, every form of sentient life, with their various mental dispositions, are entirely known to Namo Vairochana Buddha. And why? Because, what Namo Vairochana Buddha referred to as their ‘various mental dispositions’ are not in reality their ‘various mental dispositions’, these are merely termed ‘various mental dispositions’. And why? Because, Subhuti, dispositions of mind, or modes of thought, whether relating to the past, the present, or the future, are alike, unreal, and illusory.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha addressed Subhuti, “What think you? If a monk having obtained all the treasures of this universe were to bestow these in the exercise of philanthropy, would such a monk consequently enjoy a considerable merit?”

Subhuti assenting said, “Namo Sakyamuni Buddha! Such a monk would enjoy a very considerable merit.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha thereupon addressed Subhuti, “If there were any real or permanent quality in merit, Namo Mahavairochana Buddha would not have spoken of such merit as ‘considerable’. It is because there is neither tangible nor material quality in merit that Namo Mahavairochana Buddha referred to the merit of that monk as ‘considerable’.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha addressed Subhuti, “What think you? Can Namo Vairochana Buddha be perceived by means of his perfect material body?”

Subhuti replied, “Namo Sakyamuni Buddha! It is improbable that Namo Vairochana Buddha can be perceived by means of her perfect material body. And why? Because, what Namo Sakyamuni Buddha referred to as a ‘perfect material body’, is not in reality a ‘perfect material body’. It is merely termed a ‘perfect material body’.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha addressed Subhuti, “What think you? Can Namō Vairochana Buddha be perceived by any physical phenomena?”

Subhuti replied, “Namō Sakyamuni Buddha! It is improbable that Namō Vairochana Buddha can be perceived by means of any physical phenomena. And why? Because, what Namō Sakyamuni Buddha referred to as ‘physical phenomena’, are not in reality ‘physical phenomena’, these are merely termed ‘physical phenomena’.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha addressed Subhuti, “Do not affirm that Namō Vairochana Buddha thinks thus within himself, ‘I ought to promulgate a system of Dharmas.’ Have no such irrelevant thought! And why? Because, if a monk affirmed the Namō Vairochana Buddha promulgated a system of Dharmas, she would defame Namō Vairochana Buddha, being manifestly unable to understand the purport of my instruction. Subhuti, regarding the promulgation of a ‘system of Dharma’, there is in reality no ‘system of Dharma’ to promulgate, it is merely termed a ‘system of Dharma’.”

Upon that occasion, the virtuous and venerable Subhuti enquired of Namō Mahavairochana Buddha, “Namō Sakyamuni Buddha! In ages to come, will sentient beings destined to hear this Dharma engender within their hearts and minds the essential elements of belief?”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha replied, “Subhuti, it cannot be asserted that these are sentient beings, or that these are not sentient beings. And why? Because, regarding ‘sentient beings’, Namō Vairochana Buddha declared that in reality these are not ‘sentient beings’, they are merely termed ‘sentient beings’.”

Subhuti enquired of Namō Mahavairochana Buddha, “Namō Sakyamuni Buddha! Did Namō Vairochana Buddha in attaining to supreme spiritual wisdom, obtain nothing of a real and tangible nature?”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha replied, “In attaining to supreme spiritual wisdom, not a vestige of Dharma was obtained, and therefore it is termed ‘supreme spiritual wisdom’.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha addressed Subhuti, “This Dharma is coherent and indivisible. It is neither ‘above’ nor ‘below’. Therefore, it is termed ‘supreme spiritual wisdom’. It excludes such arbitrary ideas as an entity, a being, a living being, or a personality; but includes every Dharma, law, and doctrine pertaining

to the cultivation of goodness. Subhuti, what are referred to as, 'Dharmas, laws, and doctrines pertaining to goodness', these Namō Vairocana Buddha declared are not in reality 'Dharmas, laws, and doctrines pertaining to goodness', they are merely termed 'Dharmas, laws, and doctrines pertaining to goodness'."

Namō Mahāvairocana Buddha addressed Subhuti, "If within the innumerable universes of the cosmos, the seven treasures were heaped together, forming as many great elevations as there are Sumerus, prince of mountains, and these treasures were bestowed entirely in the exercise of philanthropy; and if a monk were to select a stanza of this sutra, rigorously observe it, and diligently explain it to others, the merit thus obtained would so far exceed the former excellence, that it cannot be explained in terms of proportion, nor comprehended by any analogy."

Namō Mahāvairocana Buddha addressed Subhuti, "What think you? You monks do not affirm that Namō Vairocana Buddha reflects thus within herself, 'I bring to Nirvana every living being.' Subhuti, have no such delusive thought! And why? Because in reality there are no living beings to whom Namō Vairocana Buddha could bring to Nirvana. If there were living beings to whom Namō Vairocana Buddha could bring to Nirvana, Namō Vairocana Buddha would necessarily assume the reality of such arbitrary concepts as an entity, a being, a living being, and a personality. Subhuti, what Namō Vairocana Buddha averted to as an entity, is not in reality an entity, it is only believed in as such by the common unenlightened humans. Subhuti, what are ordinarily referred to as the 'common unenlightened humans', these Namō Vairocana Buddha declared to not be merely 'common unenlightened humans'."

Namō Mahāvairocana Buddha addressed Subhuti, "Can Sakyamuni Buddha be perceived by means of his thirty-two bodily distinctions?"

Subhuti replied, "Even so, Namō Vairocana Buddha can be perceived by means of her thirty-two bodily distinctions."

Namō Mahāvairocana Buddha, continuing, said unto Subhuti, "If by means of his thirty-two bodily distinctions it were possible to perceive Namō Vairocana Buddha, then Namō Vairocana Buddha would merely resemble one of the great wheel turning kings."

Subhuti thereupon addressed Namō Mahāvairocana Buddha, "Namō Sakyamuni Buddha! According as I am able to interpret Sakyamuni Buddha's

instruction, it is improbable that Namó Vairochana Buddha may be perceived by means of her thirty-two bodily distinctions.”

Thereafter, Namó Mahavairochana Buddha delivered this sublime Gatha:

Those who by my form did see me,
And those who followed my voice,
Walk in the way of iniquity,
They cannot see my divinity.

From the Dharma should one see the Buddhas,
From the Dharmabodies comes their guidance.
Yet Dharma's true nature cannot be discerned,
And no one can be conscious of it as an object.

Namó Mahavairochana Buddha said unto Subhuti, “If you think thus within yourself, ‘Namó Vairochana Buddha did not by means of his perfect bodily distinctions obtain supreme spiritual wisdom.’ Subhuti, have no such delusive thought! Or if you think thus within yourself, ‘In obtaining supreme spiritual wisdom Namó Vairochana Buddha declared the abrogation of every doctrine.’ Subhuti, have no such delusive thought! And why? Because, those monks who obtain supreme spiritual wisdom, neither affirm the abrogation of any Dharma, nor the destruction of any distinctive quality of phenomena.”

Namó Mahavairochana Buddha addressed Subhuti, “If a greater monk in the exercise of philanthropy bestowed as considerable an amount of the seven treasures as might fill worlds numerous as the grains of sand in the Ganges; and if a monk, realizing that within the meaning and purport of the Dharmas, there is no abstract individual existence, perfects himself in the virtue of endurance, this latter monk will have a cumulative merit, relatively greater than the other. And why? Because, greater monks are entirely unaffected by the consideration of ‘reward or merit’. Greater monks do not aspire in a spirit of covetousness to rewards consummate with their merit. Therefore, I declare that they are entirely unaffected by considerations of ‘reward or merit’.”

Namó Mahavairochana Buddha addressed Subhuti, “If a monk asserts that Namó Vairochana Buddha comes or goes, sits or reclines, obviously he has not understood the meaning of my discourse. And why? Because the idea ‘Namó

Vairochana Buddha' implies neither coming from anywhere, nor going to anywhere, and hence the synonym 'Namo Vairochana Buddha'!"

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha addressed Subhuti, "If a greater monk were to take infinite worlds and 'reduce' them down to sub-atomic particles, what think you, would the aggregate of all those sub-atomic particles be great?"

Subhuti replied, "Namo Sakyamuni Buddha! The aggregate of all those sub-atomic particles would be exceedingly great. And why? Because, if all those were in reality 'sub-atomic particles' Namo Sakyamuni Buddha would not have declared them to be 'sub-atomic particles'. And why? Because, Namo Sakyamuni Buddha discoursing upon 'sub-atomic particles' declared that in reality those are not 'sub-atomic particles'."

Subhuti continuing addressed Namo Mahavairochana Buddha, "Namo Sakyamuni Buddha! What Namo Sakyamuni Buddha discoursed upon as 'infinite worlds' are not in reality 'infinite worlds', they are merely termed 'infinite worlds'. And why? Because, if these were in reality 'infinite worlds' there would necessarily be unity and eternity of matter. But Namo Sakyamuni Buddha, discoursing upon the 'unity and eternity of matter' declared that there is neither 'unity' nor 'eternity of matter', therefore it is merely termed 'unity and eternity of matter'."

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha thereupon declared unto Subhuti, "Belief in the unity and eternity of matter is incomprehensible, and only common unenlightened, worldly-minded people, for purely materialistic reasons covet this hypothesis."

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha addressed Subhuti, "If a monk affirmed that Sakyamuni Buddha enunciated a belief that the mind can comprehend the idea of an entity, a being, a living being, or a personality, what think you, would that monk be interpreting correctly the meaning of my discourse?"

Subhuti replied, "Namo Sakyamuni Buddha! That monk would not be interpreting correctly the meaning of Namo Sakyamuni Buddha's discourse. And why? Because, Namo Sakyamuni Buddha discoursing upon comprehending such ideas as an entity, a being, a living being, and a personality, it was declared that these are entirely unreal and illusive, and therefore they are merely termed an entity, a being, a living being, and a personality."

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha thereafter addressed Subhuti, “Those who aspire to the attainment of supreme spiritual wisdom, ought thus know, believe in, and interpret phenomena. They ought to eliminate from their minds every tangible evidence of every visible object. Subhuti, concerning ‘visible objects’, *Namo Vairochana Buddha* declared that these are not in reality ‘visible objects’, they are merely termed ‘visible objects’.”

Namo Mahavairochana Buddha addressed Subhuti, “If a monk, having immeasurable spheres filled with the seven treasures, bestowed these in the exercise of philanthropy, and if a monk, having aspired to supreme spiritual wisdom, selected from this sutra a stanza comprising four lines, then rigorously observed it, studied it, and diligently explained it to others, the cumulative merit of such a monk would be relatively greater than the other. How would one diligently explain this sutra to others? By not assuming the permanency or reality of phenomena, relying on no conditions or distinctions whatsoever, thus acting without agitation or excitement with the mind at perfect rest in conscious bliss. And why? Because, the phenomenon of life are:

As stars, a fault of vision, as a lamp,
A mock show, dew drops, or a bubble,
A dream, a lightning flash, or cloud,
So should one view that which is perceived.”

When Namu Mahavairochana Buddha concluded her enunciation of the Diamond Cutter of Perfect Wisdom the “Transcendent Wisdom” that carries us to “The Other Shore”, the venerable Subhuti, the greater monks, students of the Buddha, common unenlightened humans, virtuous beings, and Asuras rejoiced exceedingly, and devoted to its practice they received it and departed.