

BDK ENGLISH TRIPIṬAKA

THE PRATYUTPANNA  
SAMĀDHI SŪTRA

---

THE ŚURAṄGAMA  
SAMĀDHI SŪTRA

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**BDK English Tripiṭaka 25-II, 25-III**

**The Pratyutpanna  
Samādhi Sutra**

Translated by

**Lokakṣema**

Translated from the Chinese

(Taishō Volume 13, Number 418)

by

Paul Harrison

**The Śūraṅgama  
Samādhi Sutra**

Translated by

**Kumārajīva**

Translated from the Chinese

(Taishō Volume 15, Number 642)

by

John McRae

**Numata Center  
for Buddhist Translation and Research  
1998**

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## **A Message on the Publication of the English Tripiṭaka**

The Buddhist canon is said to contain eighty-four thousand different teachings. I believe that this is because the Buddha's basic approach was to prescribe a different treatment for every spiritual ailment, much as a doctor prescribes a different medicine for every medical ailment. Thus his teachings were always appropriate for the particular suffering individual and for the time at which the teaching was given, and over the ages not one of his prescriptions has failed to relieve the suffering to which it was addressed.

Ever since the Buddha's Great Demise over twenty-five hundred years ago, his message of wisdom and compassion has spread throughout the world. Yet no one has ever attempted to translate the entire Buddhist canon into English throughout the history of Japan. It is my greatest wish to see this done and to make the translations available to the many English-speaking people who have never had the opportunity to learn about the Buddha's teachings.

Of course, it would be impossible to translate all of the Buddha's eighty-four thousand teachings in a few years. I have, therefore, had one hundred thirty-nine of the scriptural texts in the prodigious Taishō edition of the Chinese Buddhist canon selected for inclusion in the First Series of this translation project.

It is in the nature of this undertaking that the results are bound to be criticized. Nonetheless, I am convinced that unless someone takes it upon himself or herself to initiate this project, it will never be done. At the same time, I hope that an improved, revised edition will appear in the future.

It is most gratifying that, thanks to the efforts of more than a hundred Buddhist scholars from the East and the West, this monumental project has finally gotten off the ground. May the rays of the Wisdom of the Compassionate One reach each and every person in the world.

NUMATA Yehan  
Founder of the English  
Tripiṭaka Project

August 7, 1991



## Editorial Foreword

In January, 1982, Dr. NUMATA Yehan, the founder of the Bukkyō Dendō Kyōkai (Society for the Promotion of Buddhism), decided to begin the monumental task of translating the complete Taishō edition of the Chinese Tripiṭaka (Buddhist Canon) into the English language. Under his leadership, a special preparatory committee was organized in April, 1982. By July of the same year, the Translation Committee of the English Tripiṭaka was officially convened.

The initial Committee consisted of the following members: HANAYAMA Shōyū (Chairperson); BANDŌ Shōjun; ISHIGAMI Zennō; KAMATA Shigeo; KANAOKA Shūyū; MAYEDA Sengaku; NARA Yasuaki; SAYEKI Shinkō; (late) SHIOIRI Ryōtatsu; TAMARU Noriyoshi; (late) TAMURA Kwansei; URYŪZU Ryūshin; and YUYAMA Akira. Assistant members of the Committee were as follows: KANAZAWA Atsushi; WATANABE Shōgo; Rolf Giebel of New Zealand; and Rudy Smet of Belgium.

After holding planning meetings on a monthly basis, the Committee selected 139 texts for the First Series of translations, an estimated one hundred printed volumes in all. The texts selected are not necessarily limited to those originally written in India but also include works written or composed in China and Japan. While the publication of the First Series proceeds, the texts for the Second Series will be selected from among the remaining works; this process will continue until all the texts, in Japanese as well as in Chinese, have been published.

Frankly speaking, it will take perhaps one hundred years or more to accomplish the English translation of the complete Chinese and Japanese texts, for they consist of thousands of works. Nevertheless, as Dr. NUMATA wished, it is the sincere hope of the Committee that this project will continue unto completion, even after all its present members have passed away.

It must be mentioned here that the final object of this project is not academic fulfillment but the transmission of the teaching of the

Buddha to the whole world in order to create harmony and peace among mankind. Therefore, although scholarly notes are indispensable for academic purposes, they are not given in the English translations because they might distract the general reader's attention from the valuable content of the Buddhist scriptures. Instead, simple endnotes and a glossary are added at the end of each work, in accordance with the respective translators' wish.

To my great regret, however, Dr. NUMATA passed away on May 5, 1994, at the age of 97, entrusting his son, Mr. NUMATA Toshihide, with the continuation and completion of the Translation Project. The Committee also lost its able and devoted Chairperson, Professor HANAYAMA Shōyū, on June 16, 1995, at the age of 63. After these severe blows, the Committee elected me, Vice-President of the Musashino Women's College, to be the Chair in October, 1995. The Committee has renewed its determination to carry out the noble intention of Dr. NUMATA, under the leadership of Mr. NUMATA Toshihide.

The present members of the Committee are MAYEDA Sengaku (Chairperson), BANDŌ Shōjun, ISHIGAMI Zennō, ICHISHIMA Shōshin, KAMATA Shigeo, KANAOKA Shūyū, NARA Yasuaki, SAYEKI Shinkō, TAMARU Noriyoshi, URYŪZU Ryūshin, and YUYAMA Akira. Assistant members are WATANABE Shōgo and MINOWA Kenryō.

The Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research was established in November, 1984, in Berkeley, California, U.S.A., to assist in the publication of the BDK English Tripiṭaka First Series. In December, 1991, the Publication Committee was organized at the Numata Center, with Professor Philip Yampolsky as the Chairperson. To our sorrow, Professor Yampolsky passed away in July, 1996, but thankfully Dr. Kenneth Inada is continuing the work as Chairperson. The Numata Center has thus far published eleven volumes and has been distributing them. All of the remaining texts will be published under the supervision of this Committee, in close cooperation with the Translation Committee in Tokyo.

MAYEDA Sengaku  
Chairperson  
Translation Committee of  
the BDK English Tripiṭaka

June 1, 1997

## Publisher's Foreword

The Publication Committee works in close cooperation with the Editorial Committee of the BDK English Tripiṭaka in Tokyo, Japan. Since December 1991, it has operated from the Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research in Berkeley, California. Its principal mission is to oversee and facilitate the publication in English of selected texts from the one hundred-volume Taishō Edition of the Chinese Tripiṭaka, along with a few major influential Japanese Buddhist texts not in the Tripiṭaka. The list of selected texts is conveniently appended at the end of each volume. In the text itself, the Taishō Edition page and column designations are provided in the margins.

The Committee is committed to the task of publishing clear, readable English texts. It honors the deep faith, spirit, and concern of the late Reverend Doctor NUMATA Yehan to disseminate Buddhist teachings throughout the world.

In July 1996, the Committee unfortunately lost its valued Chairperson, Dr. Philip Yampolsky, who was a stalwart leader, trusted friend, and esteemed colleague. We follow in his shadow. In February 1997, I was appointed to guide the Committee in his place.

The Committee is charged with the normal duties of a publishing firm—general editing, formatting, copyediting, proofreading, indexing, and checking linguistic fidelity. The Committee members are Diane Ames, Brian Galloway, Nobuo Haneda, Charles Niimi, Koh Nishiike, and the president and director of the Numata Center, Reverend Kiyoshi S. Yamashita.

Kenneth K. Inada  
Chairperson,  
Publication Committee

June 1, 1997





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**BDK English Tripiṭaka 25-III**

**The Śūraṅgama  
Samādhi Sutra**

Translated by  
**Kumārajīva**

Translated from the Chinese  
(Taishō Volume 15, Number 642)

by  
**John McRae**

**Numata Center  
for Buddhist Translation and Research  
1998**



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## Translator's Introduction

The Śūraṅgama Samādhi Sūtra is an exquisite religious scripture. One of the most profound of all Mahāyāna texts, it depicts a vision of Buddhism that is thoroughly transcendent and at the same time uniquely humanistic. Here the Buddha Śākyamuni is no mere historical personage, but the one eternal cosmic Buddha who is the source of all other Buddhas. The Dharma Śākyamuni teaches is the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, the meditative concentration of the “heroic march” to Buddhahood, which is presented in overwhelmingly lavish terms as the very key to the enlightenment of the Buddhas and all of their awesome spiritual power. And the prize that awaits those who practice and achieve mastery of this incredible samādhi is not merely enlightenment in individual terms, but the insurpassable and perfect enlightenment of Buddhahood itself. Indeed, this text implies it would be impossible to remain in any Hīnayānist state of enlightened extinction, since the Śūraṅgama Samādhi even gives the Buddha the power to recall the Pratyekabuddhas (those who are enlightened by their own efforts and who pass into extinction without teaching others), and Arhats (those who complete the entire Hīnayāna path to achieve total Nirvāṇic extinction) from their religious comas to achieve perfect Buddhahood.

The text is classically Mahāyāna in format and structure. It begins with a grand assembly on Mount Gṛdhrakūṭa (Vulture Peak), where the Buddha is surrounded by great numbers of bhikṣus, Bodhisattvas, and other beings. The dialogue begins with a question by a Bodhisattva named Resolute Mind (one of several figures who appear here who are not known in other texts), then proceeds involving a number of participants, including Bodhisattvas, Śrāvakas (the human disciples of

the Buddha identified with the Hīnayāna), gods, and goddesses. It also uses several different supernatural manifestations, such as the simultaneous offering of innumerable elaborate chairs for the Buddha by all the most highly ranked gods present, the appearance of Māra bound hand and foot and unable at first to attend the preaching of the Sūtra, and the manifestation of the palaces of Māra and innumerable Indra gods. The grand climax of all these is the Buddha's manifestation of all the innumerable Buddhas of the ten directions, shining with light and surrounded by their assemblies, who then offer flowers to form canopies over the heads of these Buddhas, first over Śākyamuni and then over all the others. This magnificent epiphany is presented as part of a dramatic hesitation toward the end of the dialogue, when some of the Bodhisattvas in Śākyamuni's assembly become discouraged by the apparent difficulty of the path to Buddhahood being described. Finally, there is the charge to Ānanda to preach the Sūtra, which is also carried up by one of the many Indra kings who appear in the text. The incomparable merits of copying, reciting, and teaching the Sūtra are extolled, and as the scene closes countless numbers of sentient beings generate the Bodhicitta, the intention to achieve insurpassable and perfect enlightenment, eighteen thousand Bodhisattvas attain the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, an equal number of bhikṣus and bhikṣunis (monks and nuns) attain Arhatship, and even greater numbers of laypeople and gods attain different levels of understanding.

From the very beginning of the dialogue it is apparent that this Sūtra (or, rather, its anonymous author) grapples with a fundamental problem that faced the practitioners of the Mahāyāna: how to account for the apparently dismal spiritual fates of Hīnayānist practitioners, the Śrāvakas, Pratyekabuddhas, and Arhats. Resolute Mind Bodhisattva's opening question concerns whether or not there exists a samādhi that causes Bodhisattvas to rapidly achieve perfect enlightenment, while at the same time allowing beings of lesser aspirations to practice successfully according to their own understanding even as they proceed along the Mahāyāna path. We learn that this is indeed one of the cardinal attributes of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, so



that those who appear to practice and even believe themselves to be practicing the so-called Hinayāna will actually achieve Buddhahood according to the Mahāyāna at some point in the future. Even more, as the text proceeds we learn that the Śūraṅgama Samādhi allows many enlightened beings to manifest themselves in any number of worldly shapes for the purpose of teaching sentient beings, so that gods, kings, monks, and laypeople may actually be forms taken by the enlightened for salvific purposes. The ultimate variation on this theme is the information given toward the end of the scripture that Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva was actually a perfectly enlightened Buddha (his name and the particulars of his true identity are given) who had manifested himself as a Pratyekabuddha in thirty-six billion different lifetimes in order to teach sentient beings.

This is a magnificent contradiction of the Buddhist doctrinal convention—explicitly refuted in the text—that entry into Nirvāṇa as a Pratyekabuddha or Arhat represents a spiritual dead end, a total extinction from which one cannot return. (The discouragement felt by some of the Buddha's listeners at the end of the text, already mentioned above, is actually that they might have to labor mightily for the achievement of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi yet still get sidetracked into a lesser enlightenment.) This text simply cannot allow the Hinayānist to remain in such a spiritual void, and it does not stop with merely saying that they are to be retrieved from their extinctions, but goes on to describe a religious world in which personal identity may be adopted and manifested at will for teaching purposes. Given such thoroughgoing fluidity of identity, the earlier doctrinal conventions about the distinctiveness and irreversibility of different spiritual paths are not just rejected but thoroughly transformed.

There are several other themes present in this Sūtra that should not go unmentioned. The existence of innumerable other Buddha lands is basic to the philosophy of the scripture, since Bodhisattvas have to worship other Buddhas in order to achieve their own Buddhahood. Several other Buddha lands are mentioned by name and described, although the only one known widely from other sources is the Wondrous Joy world of the Buddha Akṣobhya. It is especially

interesting to notice, then, that Amitābha/Amitāyus and his Sukhāvatī are unmentioned. Also, great significance is placed on the Buddha's bestowal of the prediction of future Buddhahood throughout the text, and even Māra is the recipient of such a prediction—before he has even sincerely generated the Bodhicitta. Offerings are extremely important in this text, and they seem to receive greater weight than other forms of religious praxis. The spiritual identity and fate of women is touched on in a couple of the scripture's anecdotes, most particularly regarding two hundred goddesses introduced as attendants to Māra, who are revealed by the Buddha to have already “planted good roots” under five hundred Buddhas in the past. The Buddha goes on to predict that they will make offerings to innumerable Buddhas in the future and after seven hundred eons will themselves achieve Buddhahood. Although the Buddha states that their next lifetimes will be as human females serving the future Buddha Maitreya, their transformation into male form is never explicitly mentioned.

But all these features are of secondary importance to the religious significance of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi itself. What are we to make of this incredible and spectacular concentration? Indeed, the explanation of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi is so conceptually abstruse that it amounts to an encapsulation of the entirety of the Mahāyāna Buddhist path. The description of how one learns it begins with a common simile for meditation practice, the progressive training in archery so that one can hit even small targets. Following this, the practitioner is told to study a sequence that proceeds rapidly through the mind of ecstasy, the profound mind, great sympathy, great compassion, and so forth, through the five supernatural “penetrations” and the six Mahāyāna Perfections, so that he achieves forbearance of the birthlessness of the dharmas and thus receives a prediction of Buddhahood. At this point, the practitioner is at the eighth Bodhisattva stage, but it is only at the tenth stage that he is able to attain the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. This is compared to perfect mastery of archery, in which one can consistently hit targets smaller than a single hair. No doubt some of the Buddha's listeners became discouraged!

Presumably, one way to approach this mind-boggling complexity is to consider it a vehicle for the transmission of ideas about emptiness [śūnyatā] and the subtle profundity of the Bodhisattva ideal. Here I can do no better than to let the reader experience the text directly, to imbibe of its inestimable spiritual power.



## Fascicle I

### Translated by the Kuchean Tripiṭaka Master Kumārajīva during the Later Ch'in [Dynasty]

Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was on Mount Gr̥dhra-kūṭa near Rājagṛha, with thirty-two thousand great *bhikṣus* in attendance. There were also seventy-two thousand Bodhisattva Mahāsattvas there who were known to the assembly and who had mastered *dhāraṇī*, were accomplished in the discrimination [of spiritual matters], and took unlimited pleasure in preaching [the Dharma]. They resided in samādhi without any vacillation, well comprehended the inexhaustible wisdoms, had achieved profound forbearance of [the inherent birthlessness of] all dharmas, had attained profound insight into the Dharma, and had completed all the training that there is to be undertaken in all the excellent Dharmas during all the limitless and innumerable eons. They had subjugated the hordes of demons [Māras] and had vanquished their enemies. They had incorporated within themselves that which is most honored and had ornamented and purified the Buddha lands. They possessed great compassion, had ornamented their bodies with the various marks [of enlightened beings], and had with great endeavor attained the other shore [of Nirvāṇa]. Well did they know all the verbal expedient means [of teaching], and their practice of the ceremonial deportments was complete and pure. They all had achieved residence in the three emancipations and had penetrated the three periods of time with their unhindered wisdom. They had generated the determination not to abandon all [sentient beings], remembered the purport of the doctrines, and possessed the tolerant forbearance of wisdom. Such was the virtue of all these Bodhisattvas.

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Their names were Turns the Wheel of the Dharma without Regressing Bodhisattva, Generating the Intention [to Achieve Enlightenment] That Constitutes Turning the Wheel of the Dharma Bodhisattva, Turns the Wheel of the Dharma without Hindrance Bodhisattva, Purity That Transcends Defilement Bodhisattva, Obstructions Eradicated Bodhisattva, Manifests Pure Deportment and Perceives All with Loving Joy Bodhisattva, Mind of a Wondrous and Dignified King Bodhisattva, Does Not Delude All Sentient Beings Bodhisattva, Mind Like an Ocean of Unlimited Merit Bodhisattva, Senses Always Composed and Not Disordered Bodhisattva, True Sound Bodhisattva, Praised by All the Gods Bodhisattva, Autonomous King of *Dhāraṇī* Bodhisattva, Ornamented with Discernment Bodhisattva, the Dharma Prince Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva, Maitreya Bodhisattva, King of Mount Sumeru Bodhisattva, Pure Mind of the Ocean of Virtues and Treasured Dignity Bodhisattva, Greatly Dignified and Pure Bodhisattva, Great Characteristic Bodhisattva, Characteristic of Refulgence Bodhisattva, Pure Mind Bodhisattva, Joyous King Bodhisattva, Resolute Energy Bodhisattva, and Resolute Mind Bodhisattva.

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There were seventy-two thousand such Bodhisattva Mahāsattvas, plus all the Indra gods, Brahmā gods, and world-protecting heavenly kings of the great trichilocosm, as well as gods, dragons, *yakṣas*, *gandharvas*, *asuras*, *garuḍas*, *kiṃnaras*, and *mahoragas*, both human and nonhuman beings. All those who were recognized by the congregation, who had planted many types of good roots, and who took joy in the Mahāyāna had come to the assembly.

At that time, while in the great assembly, Resolute Mind Bodhisattva had the following thought: “I should now ask the Tathāgata [about the Dharma]. By such inquiries will I protect the seed of the Buddha, the seed of the Dharma, and the seed of the Saṅgha. By rendering the palaces of the demons invisible and subjugating [all] those with great arrogance, those who have not yet planted the good roots [for spiritual growth] will be made to do so now. Those who have planted good roots will have them made to grow. Anyone who has not yet generated the intention to achieve unsurpassable

and perfect enlightenment [on behalf of all sentient beings] (Bodhicitta) will be induced to do so now. Those who have already generated this intention should not be allowed to regress. Those who have not regressed should be made to attain rapidly the unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment. Those who presume to possess some [degree of] attainment and who are mired [*lit.*, reside] in ascriptive views should all generate an attitude of detachment [from such views]. Those who take pleasure in the lesser Dharma (the Hinayāna) should be made not to doubt the great Dharma (the Mahāyāna.) Those who take pleasure in the great Dharma should be inspired to generate joy.”

After thinking thus, [Resolute Mind Bodhisattva] arose from his seat, arranged his robe over his right shoulder, and touched his right knee to the ground. Holding his palms together [in the *añjali-mudrā*] he addressed the Buddha as follows: “O World-Honored One, I would like to ask a few questions regarding the Tathāgata’s teaching. I beseech you to hear my inquiries.” The Buddha told Resolute Mind: “I will answer your questions in a way that will give you joy [in the Dharma].”

Resolute Mind Bodhisattva then said to the Buddha: “O World-Honored One, is there a samādhi that can cause Bodhisattvas to achieve unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment rapidly; that allows one always to see the Buddhas face to face; that allows one to illuminate all the ten directions with [great] brilliance; that gives one an autonomous mastery of wisdom [*hui*] by which the demons may be destroyed; and that allows one to achieve an autonomous mastery of wisdom [*chih*], to attain spontaneous wisdom [*tzu-jan chih*], and to attain birthless wisdom, which cannot be attained from any other source? Its uninterrupted [power of] discernment should allow one to achieve the bases of supernormal power and limitless rebirths. Those who would take pleasure in being Śrāvakas (Hinayānists) will be shown the Vehicle of the Śrāvaka; those who would take pleasure in being Pratyekabuddhas will be shown the Vehicle of the Pratyekabuddha; and those who would take pleasure in the Great Vehicle will be shown the Mahāyāna.

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They will penetrate the Dharma of the Śrāvaka but will not enter the path of the Śrāvaka; they will penetrate the Dharma of the Pratyekabuddha but will not enter the path of the Pratyekabuddha; they will penetrate the Dharma of the Buddhas but will not proceed to ultimate and final extinction. While manifesting the form and deportment of Śrāvakas, within themselves they will not depart from their intention to achieve Buddhahood; while manifesting the form and deportment of Pratyekabuddhas, within themselves they will not depart from the Great Compassion of the Buddhas. Using the phantasmagorical power of samādhi, they will manifest the form and deportment of Tathāgatas. Using the power of their good roots, they will manifest themselves residing in the Tuṣita heaven, receiving their final bodies, entering into wombs, being born, leaving home, and sitting in the places of enlightenment [*bodhi-maṇḍa*] of Buddhas. Using the power of their profound wisdom, they will manifest the turning of the Wheel of the Dharma; with the power of their expedient means, they will manifest the entry into Nirvāṇa; with the power of samādhi, they will manifest the distribution of relics [*śarīra*]; and with the power of their original vows, they will manifest the final extinction of [all the multifarious] dharmas [of their personal existence]. Although it shall be so, O World-Honored One, what samādhi should Bodhisattvas practice in order to manifest these meritorious affairs without actually entering into ultimate Nirvāṇa?”

The Buddha told Resolute Mind Bodhisattva: “Excellent, excellent! O Resolute Mind, that you can ask the Tathāgata such a question indicates that you can greatly benefit and comfort sentient beings, that you have pity on the world, and that you will aid gods and humans. A Bodhisattva is to be of benefit [to others] in both present and future. You should realize that to have such profound good roots you must have made offerings to and associated intimately with limitless hundreds and thousands and hundred-millions of Buddhas in the past. You have practiced all the paths and subjugated the enemies; you have attained autonomous mastery of wisdom in the Dharma of the Buddhas; you have taught



and protected the assemblies of Bodhisattvas; and you already know the Dharma Treasury of All the Buddhas. In the past you have engaged in dialogue before Buddhas as limitless as the number of grains of sand in the River Ganges. O Resolute Mind, in the present assembly I see no dragon, *yakṣa*, *gandharva*, Śrāvaka, or Pratyekabuddha able to ask such a question. Only those of great adornment [of the path] such as yourself are able to formulate questions such as this. You should now listen clearly and think well on this, for I will now explain for you how the Bodhisattvas accomplish their samādhi so as to achieve merits even greater than those you describe.”

Resolute Mind said to the Buddha: “I beseech you to let us hear [this teaching].”

The Buddha said to Resolute Mind: “There is a samādhi by the name of Śūraṅgama (heroic march). All Bodhisattvas who achieve this samādhi will, as you have described, be able to manifest Parinirvāṇa without undergoing eternal extinction. They will be able to manifest the various forms without destroying the characteristics of form. They will be able to wander throughout all the Buddha lands without any discrimination with regard to those lands. They will all be able to meet all the Buddhas but without discrimination with regard to the universally equivalent [*p’ing-teng*, *samatā*] essence of the Dharma [*fa-hsing*, *dharmatā*]. They will manifest universal accomplishment of all the practices but will well realize the purity of those practices. They will be the very highest of those most honored by the gods and humans but will be without any self-conceit, pride, or laxity. They will manifest autonomous mastery of all the demonic powers but will not depend on demonic practices. They will practice throughout all the triple realm (the desire, form, and formless realms) but will lack any vacillation with regard to the characteristics of the dharmas. They will manifest rebirth in all the various modes of existence but will not discriminate with regard to the characteristics of those modes. They will be skilled in the explanation of all the phrases of the Dharma and able to reveal their meanings in

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words, but they will realize that words have [*lit.*, enter into] the characteristic of universal equivalence and have no discrimination with regard to words. They will always remain in meditation as they manifest their teachings to sentient beings. They will practice total forbearance of the birthlessness of all dharmas but preach that all dharmas have the characteristics of generation and extinction. They will walk alone, without fear, like lions.”

At that time all the Indra gods, Brahmā gods, and world-protecting heavenly kings and everyone else in the great assembly had the following thought: “We have never before heard even the name of this samādhi; how could we have ever heard an explanation of its meaning? Now we can see the Buddha and will joyfully receive good [spiritual] benefit through hearing him preach the name of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. If a good man or woman seeking the enlightenment of Buddhahood were to hear the doctrine of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi and to understand and accept it without doubt, then he or she would certainly never regress on the path to enlightenment. How much more so for those who accept it, maintain it, and recite it, and who teach it to others and practice it as it has been taught!”

At that time the Indra gods, Brahmā gods, and world-protecting heavenly kings all had the following thought: “I will now prepare for the Buddha a Lion’s Seat, a seat of the True Dharma, a seat for the most exalted of persons, a great ornamented seat, a great seat for the turning of the Wheel of the Dharma, so that the Tathāgata can preach the Śūraṅgama Samādhi on this seat prepared by me.” Every one of them had the same thought, each thinking that he was the only one able to prepare the Lion’s Seat for the Tathāgata and that the others were unable to do so. At that time the Indra gods, Brahmā gods, and world-protecting heavenly kings each prepared a Lion’s Seat for the Tathāgata, ornamenting it in purity and making it correct and high, draping the top with robes made with immeasurable treasures, each one of them covering the seat with canopies made with many wondrous treasures. There were also handrails made with various precious things. To the

right and left of each seat were matching rows of innumerable precious trees, with their leaves and branches intertwined. From them hung canopies, which spread out together into a great cover made of treasures. From ropes made of various treasures hung many precious bells. Many types of wondrous flowers were scattered about the top of the seat, and a mixture of incenses from the heavens was burning, adding its fragrance. A profusion of light gleamed from the gold, silver, and many precious things, and none of the many types of pure and beautiful things were omitted. In the space of an instant there appeared before the Tathāgata eighty-four thousand billion *ṇayutas* of such precious Lion's Seats, and none of them interfered with any of the other seats in the assembly. Each individual god was unable to see the other seats, and each thought as follows: "I alone have prepared the Lion's Seat for the Buddha. The Buddha will now preach the Śūraṅgama Samādhi on the seat I have prepared for him."

At that time the Indra gods, Brahmā gods, and world-protecting heavenly kings, having finished preparing the seats, each addressed the Buddha as follows: "I beg the Tathāgata to sit upon the seat I have prepared and preach the Śūraṅgama Samādhi." The World-Honored One then manifested his great supernormal power and sat upon all the eighty-four thousand billion *ṇayutas* of Lion's Seats, so that each and every god saw the Buddha sitting on the seat he had prepared, but did not see the other seats. One of the Indra gods said to the others: "See the Tathāgata sitting upon the seat I have prepared." Then all the Indra gods, Brahmā gods, and world-protecting heavenly kings said to each other: "See the Tathāgata sitting upon the seat I have prepared." One Indra said: "The Tathāgata is now sitting on the seat I have prepared, not on yours."

At that time the Tathāgata, wishing to help the many Indra gods, Brahmā gods, and world-protecting heavenly kings overcome their karmic bonds from the past [*lit.*, to save them from past conditions], wanting to manifest a small part of the power of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, and in order to generate the practice of the

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Mahāyāna, made everyone in the assembly see that the Tathāgata was sitting on all the other eighty-four thousand billion *nayutas* of precious Lion's Seats. Everyone in the assembly experienced great joy such as they had never felt before, and they all arose from their seats, put their hands together, and worshipped the Buddha, saying: "Excellent, O World-Honored One! Your supernatural abilities are immeasurable! You have allowed the many gods to fulfill their desires!" Seeing the Buddha's divine power, the gods who had prepared seats for the Tathāgata all generated the aspiration to achieve unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment on behalf of all sentient beings. In unison, they said to the Buddha: "O World-Honored One, we have now generated the intention to achieve unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment on behalf of all sentient beings in order to make an offering to the Tathāgata, to eradicate all the afflictions of sentient beings, to protect the True Dharma, and to prevent the Buddha's seed from being eradicated. We wish to be able to exercise such supernormal powers of a Buddha in the future, to be able to perform transformations such as the Tathāgata has done now." The Buddha then praised those gods, saying: "Excellent, excellent! As you have said, out of the wish to benefit all sentient beings, you have now generated the aspiration to achieve unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment. This is the highest offering that can be made to the Tathāgata."

At that time there was a Brahmā king within the assembly named Equivalent Practice, who addressed the Buddha, saying, "O World-Honored One, which Tathāgata is the real one, the one on the seat I have prepared, or one on another seat?" The Buddha told Equivalent Practice, "All the dharmas are empty, like phantasms, and only exist in conjunction with each other. They have no creator, but arise entirely due to the discrimination of conceptual thought. Because there is no master [of consciousness, the myriad dharmas] appear according to one's thoughts. All the Tathāgatas are real.

"What is real? All these Tathāgatas are fundamentally not born, and so they are real. All these Tathāgatas will not cease to

exist in the future, and so they are real. These Tathāgatas are not collocations of the four elements, and so they are real. Nor are they collocations of the *skandhas*, *āyatanas*, and *dhātus*, and so they are real. There are no differentiations of first, middle, and last between these Tathāgatas, and so they are real.

“O Brahmā king, these Tathāgatas are without differentiation. Why? The form [*skandhas*] of these Tathāgatas are suchlike, and hence they are equivalent. The feelings, perceptions, impulses, and consciousness [*skandhas*] of these Tathāgatas are suchlike, and hence they are equivalent. Because of these reasons, they are equivalent. The pasts of these Tathāgatas are suchlike, and hence they are equivalent. Their futures are suchlike, and hence they are equivalent. Their presents are suchlike, and hence they are equivalent. Being like phantasmagorical dharmas, they are equivalent. Being like shadow dharmas, they are equivalent. Being dharmas that cannot exist, they are equivalent. With nowhere that they came from and nowhere that they go to, they are equivalent. For these reasons, these Tathāgatas are called equivalent. Just as all dharmas are equivalent, so are all these Tathāgatas. Just as all sentient beings are equivalent, so are all these Tathāgatas. Just as the Buddhas of all the worlds are equivalent, so are all these Tathāgatas. Just as all the worlds are equivalent, so are all these Tathāgatas. For these reasons, the Buddhas are called equivalent. O Brahmā king, these Tathāgatas are nothing more than the Suchness of all the dharmas, and so they are called equivalent. You should realize, Brahmā king, that the Tathāgata knows all the myriad dharmas to be equivalent, and for this reason the Tathāgata is called equivalent with regard to all the myriad dharmas.”

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Equivalent Practice Brahmā King said to the Buddha: “This is unprecedented, O World-Honored One! Having attained the equivalence of all the dharmas, the Tathāgata manifests it to sentient beings by means of these wondrous form bodies.” The Buddha said, “Brahmā king, all this has been accomplished through the power of my fundamental practice of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. It is thus that the Tathāgata has attained the equivalence of all

dharma and has used these wondrous form bodies to manifest [this teaching] to sentient beings.” When the Tathāgata explained this Dharma, Equivalent Practice Brahmā King and ten thousand Brahmā gods all achieved a pliant forbearance of all the dharmas. The Tathāgata then reined in his divine power, and the many Buddhas and seats all disappeared, so that the entire assembly saw only one Buddha.

At that time the Buddha told Resolute Mind Bodhisattva, “The Śūraṅgama Samādhi cannot be attained by Bodhisattvas of the first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth, or ninth stage. Only Bodhisattvas who are on the tenth stage can attain this Śūraṅgama Samādhi. What is the Śūraṅgama Samādhi? (1) It is to cultivate the mind as if it were like space. (2) It is to observe the present mental states [*hsin*] of sentient beings. (3) It is to discriminate the inherent abilities of sentient beings. (4) It is to comprehend the causes and results of sentient beings definitively. (5) It is to know that there is no karmic retribution within the various karmas. (6) It is to enter the various types of desire, without forgetting after entering. (7) It is to know firsthand the various types of natures. (8) It is always to be able to disport in the Flower Sound Samādhi, to be able to demonstrate to sentient beings the Adamantine Mind Samādhi, and to have autonomous mastery of all samādhis at will. (9) It is to see universally all the paths that beings traverse. (10) It is to attain unhindered knowledge of past karma. (11) It is for one’s divine eye to be unobstructed. (12) It is to attain extinction of the outflows and not to realize any improper occasion. (13) It is to attain the wisdom of equivalent entering into both form and the formless. (14) It is to manifest disportment in all of form. (15) It is to understand all sounds to resemble the characteristics of echoes. (16) It is to enter directly into the wisdom of mindfulness. (17) It is to make sentient beings happy with excellent speech. (18) It is to preach the Dharma according to the occasion. (19) It is to understand the proper and improper times. (20) It is to be able to transform the various roots. (21) It is to preach the Dharma without falsehood. (22) It is to

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enter directly into the True. (23) It is to be able to subjugate well the [different] classes of sentient beings. (24) It is to be sufficient in all the Perfections. (25) It is to be without differentiation in one's deportment of going and stopping. (26) It is to destroy the various types of rational thought and false discrimination. (27) It is to exhaust the limits of the dharma-natures without destroying them. (28) It is to manifest bodies in the locations of all the Buddhas simultaneously. (29) It is to be able to maintain all the Dharmas preached by the Buddha. (30) It is to create physical manifestations autonomously, like shadows, throughout all the worlds. (31) It is to preach well the Vehicles for saving sentient beings and to protect the Triple Jewel always and unceasingly. (32) It is to generate great ornamentations throughout the entire future without one's mind ever having the thought of fatigue. (33) It is always to be able to manifest bodies in all the places where [sentient beings] are born, without stopping at any time. (34) It is to manifest activities wherever one is born. (35) It is to be able to fulfill well [the roles of] all sentient beings. (36) It is to be able to understand all sentient beings well. (37) It is for the teachings of the two [Hinayāna] Vehicles to be immeasurable. (38) It is to be able well and completely to know the myriad sounds. (39) It is to be able to cause all the myriad Dharmas to flourish brightly. (40) It is to be able to make one eon be immeasurable eons. (41) It is to be able to make immeasurable eons be a single eon. (42) It is to be able to cause a single country to enter into an immeasurable number of countries. (43) It is to be able to cause an immeasurable number of countries to enter into a single country. (44) It is for limitless Buddha realms to enter into a single pore. (45) It is to manifest the entrance of all sentient beings into a single body. (46) It is to comprehend that the various Buddha lands are the same, like space. (47) It is for one's body to be able to pervade throughout the remainderless Buddha lands. (48) It is to cause all bodies to enter into the dharma-natures and to cause there to be no bodies at all. (49) It is to penetrate the characterlessness of all the dharma-natures. (50) It is to be able to comprehend all the expedient means

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well. (51) It is to be able to penetrate all the dharma-natures with the one sound of the teaching. (52) It is to be able to expound on a single phrase of the Dharma for a countless number of immeasurable eons. (53) It is to contemplate well the differences among all the teachings. (54) It is to preach the Dharma knowing well [the occurrence of] agreement and difference [and the need for] abbreviation and dilation. (55) It is to know well how to pass beyond all the demonic ways. (56) It is to issue forth the refulgence of the great wisdom of expedient means. (57) It is to have wisdom as the primary [characteristic] of one's actions of body, speech, and mind. (58) It is to have supernormal powers always immediately available without [intentionally] practicing them. (59) It is to use the four unhindered wisdoms to make all sentient beings happy. (60) It is to manifest the power of the supernormal abilities to penetrate all the dharma-natures. (61) It is to be able to use dharmas of collocation to universally attract [*she, lit. collocate*] sentient beings [to the Dharma]. (62) It is to understand the languages of sentient beings in all the various worlds. (63) It is to have no doubts with regard to the phantasmagorical dharmas. (64) It is to be able to maintain autonomous [freedom of action] throughout all the places of birth (*or, generation*). (65) It is to be without want for anything one needs. (66) It is to manifest oneself to all sentient beings autonomously. (67) It is [to understand] both good and evil to be identical to the fields of blessing. (68) It is to attain entry into all the secret dharmas of the Bodhisattvas. (69) It is always to issue forth a brilliant illumination throughout the remainderless worlds. (70) It is for one's wisdom to be immeasurably profound. (71) It is for one's mind to be like earth, water, fire, and wind. (72) It is to turn well the Wheel of the Dharma using the words and phrases of all the [individual] dharmas. (73) It is to be at the stage of a Tathāgata without obstruction. (74) It is to attain spontaneously the forbearance of the birthlessness of all dharmas. (75) It is to attain the real mind, which cannot be defiled by the impurities of the various afflictions. (76) It is to [be able to] cause all water to enter into a single pore without interfering with the nature of the



water itself. (77) It is to cultivate and accumulate the immeasurable blessed and meritorious good roots. (78) It is to know well all the expedient means for the transference [of religious merit to others]. (79) It is to be able to [perform] transformations well and to undertake universally all the practices of a Bodhisattva. (80) It is to have peace in one's mind about all the dharmas of the Buddha. (81) It is to have already transcended the body [generated from] one's own karma. (82) It is to be able to enter into the secret dharma-stores of the Buddhas. (83) It is to manifest disporting at will in the various desires. (84) It is to hear immeasurable dharmas and to maintain them sufficiently. (85) It is to seek all the dharmas without any feeling of satiation. (86) It is to be in accord with worldly conventions without being defiled thereby. (87) It is to preach the Dharma for people for immeasurable eons such that they all think [the time passed as if it were the interval] from morning to the [noon] meal. (88) It is to manifest various types of illness, lameness, deafness, blindness, and dumbness in order to save sentient beings. (89) It is to have a hundred thousand invisible *vajra* warriors always serving and protecting one. (90) It is to be able to contemplate naturally the enlightenment of the Buddhas. (91) It is to be able to manifest in a single moment of thought a life span of immeasurable countless eons. (92) It is to manifest all the elements of deportment within the two [Hīnayāna] Vehicles without internally dispensing with the practices of a Bodhisattva. (93) It is for one's mind to be well serene, empty, and without characteristics. (94) It is to manifest pleasure in the various amusements without internally dispensing with the Samādhi of the Remembrance of the Buddha [*nien-fo san-mei*]. (95) It is to be able to create innumerable sentient beings that may be seen, heard, or touched without disappearing. (96) It is to manifest the achievement of the enlightenment of Buddhahood in every moment of thought and to cause the attainment of emancipation in the teaching that proceeds from this basis. (97) It is to manifest entering a womb and becoming born. (98) It is to leave home and achieve the enlightenment of Buddhahood. (99) It is to turn the Wheel of the

Dharma. (100) It is to enter Parinirvāṇa without ever achieving extinction.

“Resolute Mind, thus does the Śūraṅgama Samādhi have the immeasurable ability to manifest all the supernormal powers of the Buddha, so that innumerable sentient beings may attain benefit thereby. Resolute Mind, the Śūraṅgama Samādhi cannot be understood by means of a single affair, a single condition, or a single meaning. All the meditations, emancipations, samādhis, autonomous supernormal powers, and unhindered wisdoms are all contained within the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. It is likened to the currents from the mountain springs and rivers, which all enter the ocean. Thus are the Bodhisattvas’ meditations all contained within the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. It is likened to the great valor of the Wheel Turning Sage King, which induces all the four types of soldiers to follow him. Resolute Mind, thus are the teaching of samādhi, the teaching of meditation, the teaching of discrimination, the teaching of emancipation, the teaching of *dhāraṇī*, the teaching of supernormal powers, and the teaching of brilliant emancipation: all these teachings are contained within the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. Hence when a Bodhisattva practices the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, he practices all the samādhis. Resolute Mind, it is likened to the seven treasures of the Wheel Turning Sage King, which follow him wherever he goes. Thus, O Resolute Mind, do all the Dharmas that contribute to enlightenment follow the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. It is for this reason that this samādhi is called Śūraṅgama (heroic march).”

The Buddha told Resolute Mind, “When a Bodhisattva resides in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, he practices charity without having to seek for wealth [to donate to others]. All the treasures, food and drink, clothing, elephants and horses, and chariots within the great oceans, the heavens, and the realms of mankind within the great chiliocosm—all these objects are automatically given. All this is the achievement of the fundamental merit [of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi]. How much more so with the accomplishments performed at will through the divine power [of this samādhi]! This is said to

be the fundamental fruit of the Perfection of Charity of the Bodhisattva residing in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi.”

The Buddha told Resolute Mind, “When a Bodhisattva resides in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, he is immovable in the precepts without having taken the precepts again. Because he wants to teach all sentient beings, he may manifest the maintenance of the precepts and the various rules of deportment. He may manifest violations and the elimination of transgressions, but his internal purity is always flawless. Because he wants to teach all sentient beings, he may be born in the realm of desire as a Wheel Turning Sage King, with a harem of princesses worshipfully surrounding him. He may manifest the existence of wife and children and may be wantonly engaged in the five desires, but internally he will always remain within meditation and the pure precepts, well comprehending the three disastrous transgressions. Resolute Mind, this is said to be the fundamental fruit of the Perfection of Morality of the Bodhisattva residing in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi.”

The Buddha told Resolute Mind, “When a Bodhisattva resides in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi he completely cultivates the ultimate forbearance. Because of this, he cultivates forbearance before sentient beings are even born, he cultivates forbearance before the dharmas are even generated, he cultivates forbearance before the mind even takes form, he cultivates forbearance before [the discrimination of] self and other even occurs, he cultivates forbearance before there is even a thought of birth and death. He cultivates forbearance with the essence of Nirvāṇa, he cultivates forbearance without destroying the dharma-natures. Thus does the Bodhisattva cultivate forbearance without there being anything that is cultivated and without any not cultivating. In order to teach sentient beings, he is born in the realm of desire. He may manifest anger, but within he is pure. He may manifest the cultivation of distant transcendence, but [he knows that there actually] is no far or near. In order to purify the sentient beings he may break worldly rules of deportment, but he never breaks the dharma-natures [never goes counter to the inner realities of things]. He may manifest

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forbearance, but [in reality] there are no dharmas [that can be forborene]. He is able to forbear through the indestructibility of his permanent meditation. Thus does the Bodhisattva achieve forbearance. In order to eradicate the great anger of sentient beings, he always praises the blessings of forbearance, but he never attains either forbearance or anger. Resolute Mind, this is said to be the fundamental fruit of the Perfection of Forbearance of the Bodhisattva residing in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi.”

The Buddha told Resolute Mind, “When a Bodhisattva resides in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, he generates great energy and attains all the good dharmas, but he does not generate karma of body, speech, and mind. It is for the lazy that he manifests the practice of energy. He wants to make sentient beings follow my teaching, but he neither generates nor accepts the dharmas. Why? The Bodhisattva understands that all the dharmas completely and constantly reside within the dharma-natures, without coming and going. Thus does he distantly transcend the actions of body, speech, and mind; and yet he is able to manifest the practice of energy. Nor does he consider that dharmas achieve completion. He manifests the practice of energy within the world but is without any actions either within or without. He is always able to travel about the innumerable Buddha realms, but his body remains universally ‘equivalent’ and does not move. He manifests the practice of all the good dharmas but never perceives the good or wrong of any of the dharmas. He manifests the acceptance of teaching [from others] in his spiritual quest but never follows any teaching other than that of Buddhism. He manifests becoming intimate with the preceptors and masters but is revered by all gods and humans. He manifests earnest inquiries [about the teaching] but within himself has attained unhindered discrimination. He manifests reverence but is worshipped by all gods and humans. He manifests entry into the womb but is without defilement within all the dharmas. He manifests birth but does not perceive generation and extinction within all the dharmas. He manifests existence as a child but his physical faculties are all complete. He manifests abilities in

the arts, medicine, magic, literature, mathematics, and the crafts but has already penetrated everything within himself. He manifests illness but has already permanently transcended the afflictions. He manifests old age, but his senses are already indestructible. He manifests death, but he has never been defeated by *samsāra*. Resolute Mind, this is said to be the fundamental fruit of the Perfection of Energy of the Bodhisattva residing in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi.”

The Buddha told Resolute Mind, “When a Bodhisattva resides in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, although he knows that the dharmas always have the characteristic of meditation, he manifests the various distinctions of meditation for sentient beings. He manifests residence in meditation in order to teach those with confused minds but does not perceive any confusion within the dharmas. All the dharmas are as the characteristics of the dharma-natures, and he subjugates his mind and is motionless in meditation. He manifests the various deportments of coming, going, sitting, and lying down, but he is always serene within meditation. He manifests agreement with what the majority say but never rejects the characteristics of the various meditations. Out of compassion for sentient beings, he enters the cities, villages, and countries, but he is always in meditation. He manifests eating, out of a desire to benefit sentient beings, but he is always in meditation. His body is hard, like *vajra*; inside it is substantial, not empty, and indestructible. Within it there are no growing organs or mature organs and none of the impure and malodorous defilements of defecation and urination. He manifests eating, but [the food] does not enter him. [He eats] only through his compassion to benefit sentient beings; although he has no faults in any of his [physical or sensory] functions, he manifests behavior like that of all ordinary people. However, he is actually without any activity that transgresses against the various [Buddhist] practices. Resolute Mind, when a Bodhisattva resides in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi he manifests no distinction between open space and villages. He manifests no distinction between living as householder or monk. He may manifest the white

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robes [of the householder], but he is not lax. He may manifest [the form of] a monk, but he is not arrogant. He will not become a monk within the dharmas of the non-Buddhist teachings, so as to teach sentient beings. He is not affected by all the heterodox views, and he does not claim to achieve purity within them. He may manifest practice of all the non-Buddhist rituals, but he does not follow their practice of the path.

“Resolute Mind, he is likened to a guide who has led a group of people over a steep road, only to return to save other people. It is thus, O Resolute Mind, that the Bodhisattva residing in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi acts in accordance with the spiritual aspirations of sentient beings. [Sentient beings] may aspire to the path [i.e., the enlightenment] of the Śrāvaka, or the path of the Pratyekabuddha, or the path of the Buddha; he teaches them and leads them to salvation as appropriate, and then returns to save other sentient beings. Therefore he is called a guide.

“He is likened to a ferry, which carries innumerable people from this shore to the other shore. When it reaches the other shore it returns to carry over [i.e., save] more people. Thus, O Resolute Mind, does the Bodhisattva who resides in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi perceive sentient beings. He lets himself be carried along by the four currents of the river of birth and death only because he wants to help others escape. He accomplishes this according to the good roots sown by those sentient beings. If he sees that someone can be saved as a Pratyekabuddha, he manifests for that person the enlightenment of Nirvāṇa in his own body. If he sees that someone can be saved as a Śrāvaka, he preaches extinction to that person and enters Nirvāṇa together with him. Because of the power of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, he manifests birth once again and saves more people. Thus is the Bodhisattva called the ferryman.

“Resolute Mind, he is likened to a magician who manifests his own death, dismemberment, and immolation before an audience. He may manifest to his audience that he is burned by fire and eaten by birds, but after receiving payment [from the audience] he will be revived. [The magician] is able to do so because he is

proficient in magic. The Bodhisattva who thus resides in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi manifests old age and death in order to teach sentient beings, but actually there is no birth, old age, disease, and death. Resolute Mind, this is said to be the fundamental fruit of the Perfection of Meditation of the Bodhisattva residing in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi.”

The Buddha told Resolute Mind, “When a Bodhisattva resides in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, his senses are sharp in his cultivation of wisdom. Never perceiving the existence of the essences [*hsing*, natures] of sentient beings, he preaches the existence of sentient beings in order to save them. Never perceiving longevity [*shou*] and life span [*ming*], he preaches that there are [such things as] longevity and life span. Never perceiving karma and karmic retribution, he indicates to sentient beings that there are [such things as] karma and karmic retribution. Never perceiving the essences of the afflictions [*kṛśa*] of saṃsāra, he preaches that one should understand the afflictions of saṃsāra. Never perceiving Nirvāṇa, he preaches that one proceeds to Nirvāṇa. Never perceiving the distinguishing characteristics possessed by the dharmas, he preaches that there are good and bad dharmas. Thereby is he able to carry [sentient beings] over to the other shore of unhindered wisdom. He manifests birth in the realm of desire but is not attached to the realm of desire. He manifests the practice of meditations of the realm of form but is not attached to the realm of form. He enters into the meditations of the formless [realm] but is born in the realm of form. He manifests the meditations of the realm of form but is born in the realm of desire. He manifests himself in the realm of desire but does not practice the practices of the realm of desire. He knows all the various meditations, and he knows the portions of meditation. He can freely enter into meditation and leave meditation. In order to teach sentient beings, he can be born anyplace at will. He is always able to accomplish the profound and wondrous wisdom and to eradicate all the various activities [*hsing*, *saṃskāra*?] of sentient beings. In order to teach sentient beings, he manifests the occurrence of activities, but he is actually without

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activity with regard to the various dharmas. He has completely gone beyond all the various activities and has long since eradicated the illusions of self and personal possession, although he manifests the receipt of the various things that are required.

“When a Bodhisattva accomplishes wisdom such as this, everything that he does derives from that wisdom and is never defiled by the results of karma. In order to teach sentient beings he manifests being deaf and dumb, but subtle pure sounds actually occur within him. He comprehends the spoken word, the scriptures, and mathematics, and he does not have to stop to consider what Dharma to preach [on any given occasion]. Wherever he goes, audiences always consider his preaching wonderful, and he can always make [his listeners] be joyful and attain resolute [faith]. He preaches the Dharma as the occasion arises, and the wisdom of this Bodhisattva does not decrease.

“Resolute Mind, he is likened to men and women, who are either large or small, who carry vessels to a place where there is water, which may be a spring, a lake, a river, or the ocean. They fill the vessels large and small and return, but the various bodies of water do not decrease. Thus, O Resolute Mind, does the Bodhisattva who resides in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi appear to audiences anywhere, whether of kṣatriyas or brahmins, whether laypeople, monks, or gods. He appears to all these various congregations without any mental effort, and he is able to make them all joyous through his good words. He preaches the Dharma wherever it is appropriate to do so, but his wisdom is never lessened. Resolute Mind, this is said to be the fundamental fruit of the Perfection of Wisdom of the Bodhisattva residing in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi.”

The Buddha told Resolute Mind, “When a Bodhisattva resides in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, those sentient beings who see him all attain emancipation. Those who hear his name, see his ritual deportment, hear him preach the Dharma, or see him in silence—all these attain emancipation. Resolute Mind, he is likened to the great medicine-tree king named Joyous Vision—all those who see him are healed of illness. Thus it is, Resolute Mind, with the Bodhisattva who resides in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. The illnesses of greed,



anger, and stupidity of any sentient being who sees him will be eradicated. It is like the great medicine king named Eradication. If [this medicine] is painted on one's drums during wartime, the sound of the drum will pull the arrow, sword, or lance out and eliminate the poison from any injuries suffered from arrows, and the like. Thus it is, Resolute Mind, with the Bodhisattva who resides in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. The arrows of greed, anger, and stupidity will naturally come out of those who hear his name, and the poison of wrong views will be completely eliminated, so that all the afflictions will operate no more.

“Resolute Mind, he is likened to the medicine tree named Sufficient. If a person uses its root, his illness will be healed. His illness will be healed by the stems, knots, core, bark, twigs, leaves, flowers, or fruit, which may be fresh, dried, or ground—any form may be used to heal the illnesses of sentient beings. The Bodhisattva who resides in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi is also like this. There is no time at which he does not benefit sentient beings—he is always able to eliminate all the afflictions. While preaching the Dharma, he concurrently practices the four embrasures [*she*] [charity, loving speech, beneficial action, and homologous behavior] and the various Perfections, so that [sentient beings] attain emancipation. Whether a person makes offerings or not, and whether there is benefit [to him] or not, the Bodhisattva always uses the advantage of the Dharma so that the person will attain peace. And when he dies and his body is eaten—whether by animals with two legs or four, or by birds, or by humans or non-humans—due to the power of the Bodhisattva's preceptual vows, when these sentient beings die they are reborn in heaven and are forever without the calamities of illness, pain, old age, and the afflictions. Resolute Mind, thus is the Bodhisattva who resides in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi like a medicine-tree.”

The Buddha told Resolute Mind, “When a Bodhisattva resides in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, for lifetime after lifetime he automatically understands the Six Perfections without having to study them from anyone else. Lifting his foot and lowering his foot, breathing in and breathing out, he is in possession of the Six Perfections

with each moment of thought. Why? Resolute Mind, the entire body of a Bodhisattva like this is the Dharma, and his entire activities are the Dharma.

“Resolute Mind, he is likened to a king and his great ministers, who have a hundred thousand varieties of incense ground together into powder. If someone searches for one particular variety without having its fragrance mixed up with the other [varieties of] incense, Resolute Mind, within these hundred thousand varieties of incense powders, will he be able to separate one from the others?” [Resolute Mind answered,] “No, World-Honored One.” [The Buddha continued,] “Resolute Mind, since the Bodhisattva has perfumed his body and mind with all the Perfections, he always generates the Six Perfections in every moment of thought.

633c “Resolute Mind, how can the Bodhisattva generate the Six Perfections in every moment of thought? Resolute Mind, the Bodhisattva has complete equanimity and is without attachment; this is the Perfection of Charity [*dāna*]. His mind is well serene and ultimately without any wrong; this is the Perfection of Morality [*śīla*]. He understands that the mind exhausts [all] characteristics and exists unharmed within [the realms of] sensory data; this is the Perfection of Patience [*kṣānti*]. He strives in contemplation and selects [advantageous states of] mind but understands that the mind transcends characteristics; this is the Perfection of Energy [*vīrya*]. He is ultimately well serene and has controlled his mind; this is the Perfection of Meditation [*dhyāna*]. He contemplates the mind and understands the mind, penetrating the characteristics of the mind; this is the Perfection of Wisdom [*prajñā*]. Resolute Mind, a Bodhisattva who resides in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi possesses the Six Perfections in every moment of thought as given in this teaching.”

At this time Resolute Mind Bodhisattva addressed the Buddha, saying, “Never before, O World-Honored One, [have I heard such a teaching]! The activities of a Bodhisattva who has achieved the Śūraṅgama Samādhi are inconceivable! World-Honored One, if the Bodhisattvas wish to practice the practice of the Buddhas,

they should study this Śūraṅgama Samādhi. Why? World-Honored One, such Bodhisattvas manifest the practice of all the various activities of ordinary people, but in their minds they are without greed, anger, and stupidity.”

At that time there was a great Brahmā king named Creating Sympathy within the audience. He addressed the Buddha, saying, “World-Honored One, if a Bodhisattva wishes to practice all the activities of ordinary people, he should study the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. Why? Such a Bodhisattva manifests the practice of all the various activities of ordinary people, but in his mind he is without the activities of greed, anger, and stupidity.” The Buddha said, “Excellent, excellent, Creating Sympathy! It is as you have said. If a Bodhisattva wishes to practice all the activities of ordinary people, he should study the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, because he will not think about all that has to be learned.”

Resolute Mind Bodhisattva said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, if a Bodhisattva wishes to study the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, what should he study?” The Buddha told Resolute Mind, “It is likened to the study of archery, in which one first shoots at a large target. When one can hit the large target, one shoots at a small target. When one can hit the small target, one shoots at the bull’s-eye. When one can hit the bull’s-eye, one shoots at an [arrow]-shaft. When one can hit the shaft, one shoots at [a bundle of] one hundred hairs. When one can hit the one hundred hairs, one shoots at [a bundle of] ten hairs. When one can hit the ten hairs, one shoots at a single hair. When one can hit the single hair, one shoots at a hundredth of a hair. When one can hit a hundredth of a hair, he may be called a good archer. He [can shoot] unerringly and at will. Such a person can shoot without mental effort, with complete accuracy, on the basis of a sound heard in the dark of night, or if a human or nonhuman incautiously strikes at him.

“Thus, Resolute Mind, should the Bodhisattva who wishes to study the Śūraṅgama Samādhi first study the mind of ecstasy. After studying the mind of ecstasy, he should study the profound mind. After studying the profound mind, he should study great

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sympathy. After studying great sympathy, he should study great compassion. After studying great compassion, he should study the four pure practices [*brahmavihāra*], which are sympathy, compassion, joy, and equanimity. After studying the four pure practices, he should study the five highest penetrations (the divine eye, the divine ear, clairvoyance, knowledge of others' past lives, and knowledge of anything at will), which have the highest benefit, always maintaining his mastery of them. When he has studied the penetrations, he can then accomplish the Six Perfections. When he has accomplished the Six Perfections, he will be able to penetrate expedient means. When he has penetrated expedient means, he will be able to reside in the third pliant forbearance. When he can reside in the third pliant forbearance, he will attain the forbearance of the birthlessness of the dharmas. When he has attained the forbearance of the birthlessness of the dharmas, the Buddhas will confer the prediction of enlightenment on him. When the Buddhas have conferred the prediction of enlightenment on him, he will be able to enter the eighth Bodhisattva stage. When he has entered the eighth Bodhisattva stage, he will attain the Samādhi of Presence before the Buddhas. When he has attained the Samādhi of Presence before the Buddhas, he will never be without a vision of the Buddhas. When he is never without a vision of the Buddhas, he will be able to fulfill all the causes and conditions of the Buddhist Dharma. When he can fulfill all the causes and conditions of the Buddhist Dharma, he will be able to activate the merit of ornamenting the Buddha lands. When he can activate the merit of ornamenting the Buddha lands, he will be provided with a house and family into which to be born. When he is provided with a house and family into which to be born, he will enter a womb and be born. When he enters a womb and is born, he has fulfilled the tenth [Bodhisattva] stage. When he has fulfilled the tenth stage, he will then attain a title for his career as a Buddha. When he attains a title for his career as a Buddha, he will attain all the Bodhisattva samādhis. After he has attained all the Bodhisattva samādhis, he will be able to attain the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. When

he has attained the Śūraṅgama Samādhi he will be able to perform the affairs of a Buddha on behalf of sentient beings, but he will not dispense with the practices of the Bodhisattva. Resolute Mind, if a Bodhisattva studies the Dharmas like this, then he will attain the Śūraṅgama Samādhi.

“Once a Bodhisattva has attained the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, he has nothing more to study in all the Dharmas. Why? Because he has already well studied all the Dharmas. It is likened to being able to hit a portion of a hair [in archery], after which there is nothing more to be studied. Why is this? Because he has already studied [everything]. Thus it is, Resolute Mind, with the Bodhisattva who resides in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. There is nothing more for him to study in all the Dharmas, because he has already studied all the samādhis and all the [forms of] merit.”

At that time Resolute Mind Bodhisattva addressed the Buddha, saying, “World-Honored One, I will now explain a metaphor, to which I would beseech you to listen for a moment.” The Buddha said, “Go ahead and speak.” “World-Honored One, it is likened to a great Brahmā king of the trichiliocosm, whose contemplation automatically and effortlessly extends throughout the entire trichiliocosm. Thus is the Bodhisattva who resides in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi automatically and effortlessly able to contemplate all the Dharmas. Also, he is able to understand the minds and mental activities of all sentient beings.” The Buddha told Resolute Mind, “It is as you have spoken. If a Bodhisattva resides in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, he understands all the Dharmas of the Bodhisattvas and all the Dharmas of the Buddhas.”

At that time there was in the audience an Indra king named Holding Mount Sumeru, who resided at the farthest extremity of the entire trichiliocosm. He addressed the Buddha saying, “World-Honored One, it is likened to living on the top of Mount Sumeru and being able to look at the entire world. Thus is the Bodhisattva who resides in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi automatically able to see the activities of the Śrāvakas, Pratyekabuddhas, and all sentient beings.”

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At that time Resolute Mind Bodhisattva asked the Indra king Holding Mount Sumeru, “Would you tell us from which of the four continents you have come? Where on Mount Sumeru do you reside?” The Indra king replied, “Good youth, a Bodhisattva who has attained the Śūraṅgama Samādhi would not have to ask where I reside. Why is this? For such a Bodhisattva, all the Buddha realms are his residence, yet he is not attached to any residence. He attains no residence and perceives no residence.”

Resolute Mind asked, “Have you, sir, attained the Śūraṅgama Samādhi?” The Indra king replied, “Could the characteristics of ‘attain’ and ‘not attain’ exist within this samādhi?” Resolute Mind said, “No.” The Indra king said, “Good youth, you should understand that when a Bodhisattva practices this samādhi, there is nothing that is attained in any of the dharmas.” Resolute Mind said, “Since your understanding is like this, you must have already attained the Śūraṅgama Samādhi.” The king said, “Good youth, I do not perceive that the dharmas have any place of residence. He who has no residence in all the dharmas has attained the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. Good youth, to reside in this samādhi is to be completely without residence in all the dharmas. If one is without residence, then one is without grasping. If one is without grasping, one is also without preaching.”

At this time the Buddha said to Resolute Mind Bodhisattva, “Do you see the Indra king Holding Mount Sumeru?” “I do, World-Honored One.” “Resolute Mind, this Indra king has automatically and of his own will attained the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. Residing in this samādhi, he is able to manifest himself in all the palaces for Indra kings throughout the trichiliocosm.”

At this time the Indra king of this realm, Devendra, addressed the Buddha, saying, “World-Honored One, if Indra king Holding Mount Sumeru is able to manifest himself in all the palaces for Indra kings, why is it that I cannot see him in all the locations of the Indra kings?” At this time Indra king Holding Mount Sumeru replied to the Indra king [of this world system], saying, “Kauśika [Devendra], if I were to reveal my real body to you now, you would

no longer take joy in your palace. I am always in the palace in which you reside, but you do not see me.”

At this time Devendra addressed the Buddha, saying, “World-Honored One, I wish to see the wondrous body achieved by this Bodhisattva.” The Buddha said, “Kauśika [Devendra], do you wish to see it?” “World-Honored One, I beseech you to let me see it.” The Buddha said to Indra king Holding Mount Sumeru, “Good youth, reveal your true, wondrous body to this Indra king.” Indra king [Holding Mount Sumeru] then manifested his true, wondrous body. At that time, the bodies of all the Indra gods, Brahmā gods, and world-protecting kings, Śrāvakas, and Bodhisattvas within the audience who had not attained the Śūraṅgama Samādhi became invisible, as if they were a collection of ink spots. The body of Indra king Holding Mount Sumeru became tall and imposing, like Mount Sumeru, the king of mountains itself, with brilliant light shining into the distance. At that time the body of the Buddha became even brighter and more apparent.

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The Indra king Devendra addressed the Buddha, saying, “Never before, World-Honored One, [have I experienced such a thing as this]! The body of this Bodhisattva is unmatchably pure and wondrous. And the bodies of all the Indra gods, Brahmā gods, and world-protecting kings have all become invisible, like a collection of ink spots. World-Honored One, when I in the Hall of Good Wonders atop Mount Sumeru put on the Śakrābhilagna maṇi pearl necklace, the brilliance of it is such that the bodies of the entire assembly of gods become invisible. But I have now become invisible through the brilliant light of this Bodhisattva, and there is also no light from the precious necklace I am wearing!”

The Buddha told the Indra king Devendra, “Kauśika, even if the entire trichiliocosm were filled with Śakrābhilagna maṇi pearls, the brightly shining maṇi pearls of all the gods would render the [Śakrābhilagna] pearls invisible. Kauśika, even if the entire trichiliocosm were filled with the brightly shining maṇi pearls of all the gods, there is yet a bright adamantite maṇi pearl that can render all the other pearls invisible. Kauśika, even if the entire trichiliocosm

were filled with bright adamantine maṇi pearls, there is yet a maṇi pearl embodying all the brilliances that can render the other pearls invisible. Kauśika, do you see the maṇi pearl embodying all the brilliances worn by this king?” [Devendra replied,] “I see it, World-Honored One. But the brilliance of this pearl is so intense my eyes cannot stand it.” The Buddha told Devendra, “Bodhisattvas who attain the Śūraṅgama Samādhi may become Indra kings who always wear maṇi pearl necklaces such as this.”

At this time the Indra king Devendra addressed the Buddha, saying, “World-Honored One, will those who have not generated the intention to achieve unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment on behalf of all sentient beings attain a pure and wondrous body such as this? Also, can one lose this Śūraṅgama Samādhi [after once attaining it]?”

At this time the god Gopaka [who had been the Buddha’s princess Gopā before being born into the Heaven of the Thirty-three] said to the Indra king Devendra, “The Śrāvakas have entered into Suchness [*fa-i*, the stage of Dharma; i.e., entered into extinction], and although they have repeatedly extolled and delighted in the enlightenment of Buddhahood they cannot accomplish it. This is because they have created obstacles for themselves within saṃsāra. If a person generates the intention to achieve unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment on behalf of all sentient beings, he should generate it now as it should be generated. Such a person will love the path of the Buddha and will be able to attain the wondrous form body just revealed.

“It is likened to a person who is blind from birth. Although he may praise and love the sun and moon, he has never experienced their brilliant light. Thus it is with the Śrāvakas who have entered into Suchness. Although they extol and delight in the enlightenment of Buddhahood, the Buddha’s merit has had no physical benefit for them. For this reason, those of great wisdom who wish to attain this wondrous body should generate the Buddha’s unsurpassable intention to achieve enlightenment. They will then be able to attain the wondrous body just revealed.” When the god



Gopaka spoke these words, twelve thousand gods generated the intention to achieve unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment.

At this time, Resolute Mind Bodhisattva asked the god Gopaka, saying, “What merit should a woman cultivate to transform her body?” He answered, “Good youth, those who generate [the intention to achieve enlightenment in] the Mahāyāna do not perceive differences of male and female. Why? The mind of omniscience [*sarvajñā*] does not exist in the three realms. It is through discrimination that there is male and female. If your question is what merit a woman should cultivate to transform her body, then from the past she should serve the Bodhisattva(s) and be without deviation.” [Resolute Mind asked,] “How should she serve?” [The god answered,] “As if serving the World-Honored One.” [Resolute Mind inquired,] “What is it for one’s mind to be without deviation?” [The god] answered, “Physical actions should follow oral actions, and oral actions should follow the mind. [When this is the case] it is said that the woman’s mind is without deviation.”

[Resolute Mind] asked, “How is the female body transformed?” [The god] answered, “As it is formed.” [Resolute Mind asked,] “What does ‘as it is formed’ mean?” [The god answered,] “As it is transformed.” [Resolute Mind] asked, “O god, what do you mean?” [The god] answered, “Good youth, within all the dharmas, there is no forming, no transforming. All the dharmas have one taste [i.e., emptiness, or Suchness], which is known as the taste of the Dharma. Good youth, through my vows I had the body of a woman. Even if I had wanted my body to be transformed into that of a man, the characteristics of the female body would have been neither destroyed nor dispensed with. Good youth, for this reason you should understand that male and female are both misconceptions. All the dharmas and misconceptions ultimately transcend these two characteristics.”

Resolute Mind Bodhisattva asked Gopaka, “Do you understand some small part of this Śūraṅgama Samādhi?” [Gopaka] answered, “Good youth, what I know has been gained from others; I have not realized it myself. I remember one clear night in the past when

Śākyamuni Buddha was a Bodhisattva in the house of King Śuddhodana, when he was in the palace among the princesses. At that time Brahmā kings as numerous as the sands of the River Ganges came from the East [to receive his teachings]. Some of them inquired about the Bodhisattva Vehicle; some of them inquired about the Śrāvaka Vehicle, and the Bodhisattva answered each of them according to their questions. Within this group, one of the Brahmā kings did not understand the expedient means practiced by Bodhisattvas. He spoke as follows: ‘If you are so wise, please answer my questions. How can you lust for royal rank and sensual pleasures [*lit.*, sensual desire]?’ The other Brahmā kings, who comprehended the Bodhisattva’s wisdom and expedient means, spoke to this one Brahmā king, saying, ‘The Bodhisattva does not lust for royal rank or sensual pleasure. In order to teach sentient beings and [bring them to the ultimate] accomplishment, he has manifested himself as a Bodhisattva residing in the home. At present, in other locations, he has accomplished the enlightenment of Buddhahood and is turning the wondrous Wheel of the Dharma.’ Upon hearing this, the first Brahmā [king] spoke as follows: ‘What samādhi has he attained that makes him autonomously capable of such divine transformations?’ The other Brahmā [kings] said to him, ‘It is the power of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi.’”

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[Gopaka continued,] “Good youth, at that time I thought as follows: ‘When a Bodhisattva resides in samādhi, his divine power is able to respond in ways that are unprecedented. He may reside within desires and may administer affairs of state, but he never departs from his samādhi.’ When I heard this [dialogue between the Brahmā kings], my reverence doubled, and there, at the Bodhisattva’s [palace], I generated the thought of the World-Honored One, as well as the profound intention to seek unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment. [I vowed,] ‘I hope that in the future I will be able to create merit such as this.’ Good youth, that which I have perceived is only this small portion. All I know is that this Śūraṅgama Samādhi has a power for merit that is immeasurable and inconceivable.”

Resolute Mind said to the Buddha, “How rare, World-Honored One, for someone to speak as profoundly as has the god Gopaka! This is entirely the accomplishment of the Tathāgata, because he has always been protected by spiritual compatriots. World-Honored One, not long from now the god Gopaka will certainly reside in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi and attain an autonomous power of divine transformations identical to that of the Tathāgata.”

Resolute Mind Bodhisattva addressed the Buddha, saying, “World-Honored One, are there others within this assembly who have attained the Śūraṅgama Samādhi?” At that time there was a god in the assembly called Manifest Mind, who said to Resolute Mind Bodhisattva, “You are like a stupid traveling businessman who enters the ocean, saying, ‘Are there any maṇi pearls within this ocean that I can take with me?’ Your words resemble this. Why? Within this assembly of the great ocean of the Tathāgata’s wisdom there are Bodhisattvas who have created the Dharma-treasure and who have generated great ornamentation [of it], and yet you sit here and ask such a question as ‘Are there others within this assembly who have attained the Śūraṅgama Samādhi?’!

“Resolute Mind, there are within this assembly Bodhisattvas who have attained the Śūraṅgama Samādhi and who manifest the bodies of Indra gods, who manifest the bodies of Brahmā kings, who manifest the bodies of gods, dragons, *yakṣas*, *gandharvas*, *asuras*, *garuḍas*, *kiṃnaras*, and *mahoragas*. There are those who have attained the Śūraṅgama Samādhi who manifest the bodies of monks and nuns and male and female novices. There are those who have attained the Śūraṅgama Samādhi who manifest bodies ornamented by themselves with the various auspicious physical marks [of enlightened beings]. In order to teach sentient beings, there are Bodhisattvas who manifest themselves in the bodies and forms of women, or who manifest themselves in the bodies and forms of Śrāvakas, or who manifest themselves in the bodies and forms of Pratyekabuddhas.

“Resolute Mind, the Tathāgata has the autonomous ability to manifest himself in any body and form, according to the manner

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of the group he is teaching: kṣatriyas, brahmins, laypeople, Indra gods, Brahmā gods, or world-protectors. You should understand that this is entirely the fundamental fruit of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. Resolute Mind, when you see that the Tathāgata is preaching the Dharma somewhere, you should understand that there are innumerable Bodhisattvas there whose great wisdom automatically generates great ornamentation, who operate autonomously within all the dharmas, and who accompany the Tathāgata whenever he turns the Wheel of the Dharma.”

Resolute Mind Bodhisattva addressed the Buddha, saying, “World-Honored One, I now suggest that this god Manifest Mind has attained the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, since his wisdom discriminates without hindrance and his supernormal abilities are such-like.” The Buddha said, “Resolute Mind, it is as you have said. This god Manifest Mind resides in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. He is able to preach thus because he has penetrated this samādhi.”

At that time the Buddha said to the god Manifest Mind, “You may now manifest a small portion of the fundamentals of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi.” The god Manifest Mind said to Resolute Mind, “Do you wish to see a small [portion of the] power of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi?” [Resolute Mind] answered, “O god, I would like to see it.” Since the god Manifest Mind had well attained the power of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, he manifested transformations so that everyone in the assembly was adorned with the thirty-two marks of Wheel Turning Sage Kings, each with attendants carrying the seven precious things. The god asked, “What do you see?” Resolute Mind replied, “I see that everyone in the assembly is adorned with the physical marks of Wheel Turning Sage Kings, each with attendants carrying the seven precious things.”

At that time the god manifested everyone in the assembly as Indra kings within Kauśika’s Palaces of the Thirty-three, where a hundred thousand goddesses danced around them for their pleasure. Then again, using his divine power, he made everyone in the assembly take on the physical characteristics and deportment of Brahmā kings, residing in Brahmā palaces and practicing the four

unlimited states [i.e., the *brahmavihāras*]. He asked Resolute Mind once again, “What do you see?” [Resolute Mind] answered, “O god, I see everyone in the assembly [in the form of] Brahmā kings.” Then [the god] manifested his divine power once again, making everyone in the assembly take on the physical appearance of the elder Mahākāśyapa, holding his robe and bowl, entering into various meditations, and practicing the eight emancipations, without any [manifestation] differing [from the others in appearance]. He again manifested his divine power, making everyone in the assembly take on the physical characteristics and deportment of the Buddha Śākyamuni, each surrounded by monks and attendants. He asked again, “Resolute Mind, what do you see?” [Resolute Mind] answered, “O god, I see that everyone in the assembly has taken on the physical characteristics and deportment of the Buddha Śākyamuni, each surrounded by monks and attendants.”

The god Manifest Mind said to Resolute Mind, “Such is the inherent power of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. When a Bodhisattva attains the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, Resolute Mind, he is able to insert the trichiliocosm into a mustard seed, with the mountains, rivers, sun, moon, and stars appearing unchanged, and to manifest all this to all sentient beings without frightening them. Resolute Mind, such is the inconceivable power of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi!”

At that time the great disciples, along with the gods, dragons, *yakṣas*, *gandharvas*, Indra gods, Brahmā gods, and world-protecting kings all addressed the Buddha in unison, saying, “World-Honored One, the merit of him who attains the Śūraṅgama Samādhi is inconceivable. Why? Such a person achieves the ultimate enlightenment of Buddhahood and accomplishes the various brilliances [*ming*, *vidyā*] of wisdom and the supernormal powers. While sitting here today we have seen this assembly in various physical forms and several different transformations, and [after] consideration [we suggest] that those who have not heard of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi must be understood as being controlled by Māra. [On the other hand,] you must understand that those who have heard [of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi] are protected by the

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Buddhas. How much more so for those who hear it and are able to practice it as preached!

“World-Honored One, if a Bodhisattva wants to penetrate the Dharma of the Buddha and reach the other shore [of Nirvāṇa], he should singlemindedly listen to [this teaching of] the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, then he should remember it, recite it, and preach it to others. World-Honored One, if a Bodhisattva wishes to manifest all the physical forms and deportments, he should comprehensively understand all the activities [*hsing, saṃskāra*] of the minds and mental attributes of sentient beings. Also, if he wants to understand comprehensively how to apply medicine to all the illnesses of sentient beings, he should listen well to the Dharma-treasure of this samādhi, then remember and recite it. World-Honored One, one should realize that if a person attains this Śūraṅgama Samādhi, he will enter into the realm of the Buddhas, with wisdom autonomous.”

The Buddha said, “It is so, it is so. It is as you have spoken! He who has not attained the Śūraṅgama Samādhi cannot be called a Bodhisattva of profound practice. The Tathāgata would not describe such a person as sufficient in charity, morality, forbearance, energy, meditation, and wisdom. For this reason, if all of you wish to practice all the paths, you should study this Śūraṅgama Samādhi. You should not think about all the teachings to be learned.”

At this time Resolute Mind Bodhisattva asked the god Manifest Mind, saying, “If a Bodhisattva wishes to attain this samādhi, what dharmas should he cultivate?” The god replied, “If a Bodhisattva wishes to attain this samādhi, he should cultivate the dharmas of ordinary people. If he perceives the dharmas of ordinary people, the dharmas of the Buddha will be neither conjoined nor dispersed. This is called cultivation of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi.” Resolute Mind asked, “What conjoining and dispersing are there in the dharmas of the Buddha?” The god answered, “Conjoining and dispersing do not exist even in the dharmas of ordinary people, how much less so in the dharmas of the Buddha!” [Resolute Mind asked,] “What is cultivation?” [The god answered,] “To be able to penetrate [the fact] that there is no difference between the dharmas

of ordinary people and the dharmas of the Buddha is called cultivation. But in fact, there is neither conjoining nor dispersing in these dharmas. Good youth, this is because there is no characteristic of birthlessness in all collocations of dharmas, because there is no characteristic of disintegration in all collocations of dharmas, because all collocations of dharmas have the characteristic of emptiness, and because there is no characteristic of acceptance in all collocations of dharmas.”

Resolute Mind Bodhisattva asked again, “To what locations does the Śūraṅgama Samādhi extend?” The god answered, “The Śūraṅgama Samādhi extends to the mental activities [*hsin hsing*] of all sentient beings, but it does not depend on the characteristic of grasping of those mental activities. It extends to all places of birth, but it is not defiled by those places of birth. It extends to the locations of the Buddhas in all the worlds, but it does not discriminate the Buddhas’ extraordinary physical characteristics. It extends to all sounds and speech, but it does not discriminate the characteristics of words. It can reveal all the dharmas of the Buddha, but it does not extend to absolutely all locations. Good youth, if you ask to what locations this samādhi extends, [the answer is that] this samādhi extends to wherever the Buddha goes.”

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Resolute Mind asked, “To what locations does the Buddha go?” The god answered, “Since the Buddha is suchlike, his going is without going.” [Resolute Mind] asked again, “Does the Buddha not go into Nirvāṇa?” [The god] answered, “All the dharmas are ultimately Nirvāṇa. Therefore the Tathāgata does not go into Nirvāṇa. Why? He does not go into Nirvāṇa because [he is] the essence of Nirvāṇa.” [Resolute Mind] asked again, “Did the Buddhas of the past, who were as numerous as the sands of the River Ganges, not go into Nirvāṇa?” [The god] answered, “Were they born, these Buddhas as numerous as the sands of the River Ganges?” Resolute Mind said, “The Tathāgata has preached that these Buddhas, who were as numerous as the sands of the River Ganges, were born and then passed into extinction.” The god said, “Good youth, the Tathāgata has not [ever] said that [even] a single person came

into the world to bring great benefit and peace to sentient beings. What is [the Tathāgata's] meaning? Has the Tathāgata definitively attained [a realization that] sentient beings have birth and extinction?" [Resolute Mind] answered, saying, "O god, the Tathāgata has not attained birth and extinction in the dharmas." [The god said], "Good youth, you should understand that although the Tathāgata preaches that the Buddhas appear in the world, the characteristics of the Tathāgata are in reality without birth. Although he preaches that the Buddhas proceed to Nirvāṇa, the characteristics of the Tathāgata are really without extinction."

[Resolute Mind] asked again, "Have all the innumerable Tathāgatas [existing] at present attained enlightenment?" [The god] answered, "The Tathāgatas, the characteristics of whom are without birth and without extinction, have thus attained enlightenment. Good youth, there is no distinction as to whether the Buddhas have come into [the world] or whether they have entered Nirvāṇa. Why? The Tathāgatas have penetrated [the truth that] all the dharmas have the characteristic of extinction. Thus are they called Buddhas." [Resolute Mind] asked another question, "If all the dharmas are ultimately extinguished, how can the characteristic of Nirvāṇa be penetrated?" [The god] answered, "If all the dharmas are ultimately extinguished, this is identical to the characteristic of Nirvāṇa; and likewise with the penetration of that characteristic. Good youth, the Tathāgatas do not come into [the world] on the basis of birth, residing, and extinction. The absence of birth, residing, and extinction is called 'coming into [the world] of the Buddhas.'"

Resolute Mind asked, "Is it because you reside in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi that you are able to preach this way?" [The god] answered, "Good youth, what do you think? When the Tathāgata transforms himself into a human, in what dharmas does he reside while preaching?" Resolute Mind answered, saying, "He is able to preach by utilizing his divine power as a Buddha." [The god] asked again, "In what location does the Buddha reside when he transforms himself into a human?" [Resolute Mind] answered, "The Buddha



transforms himself into a human while residing in the nondual supernormal powers.” The god said, “Just as the Tathāgata resides in the non-residing dharmas while he transforms himself into a human, so does the human thus transformed also reside in the non-residing dharmas while preaching.” Resolute Mind said, “If there is no place of residing, how can there be preaching?” The god said, “Just as there is no place of residing, so it is with preaching.” [Resolute Mind] asked again, “How can a Bodhisattva be sufficient in the discriminative ability to preach pleasantly?”

[The god] answered, “The Bodhisattva uses neither the characteristic of self, nor the characteristic of other, nor the characteristic of Dharma, yet there is preaching. This is called being sufficient in the discriminative ability of joyous preaching. In accordance with such preaching of the Dharma, neither the characteristics of words nor the characteristics of the Dharma are extinguished. If one thus preaches without using dualities, this is called being sufficient in the discriminative ability of joyous preaching. Also, good youth, if the Bodhisattva does not dispense with the phantasmagorical characteristics of the dharmas and does not reject the characteristics of echoes among the sounds, this is called being sufficient in the discriminative ability for joyous preaching. Also, just as the letters, sounds, and words are without place, without location, without interior, and without exterior, but are based on a multiplicity of conditions and exist without any place of residing, so [in truth] are all the dharmas, which are without place, without location, without interior, and without exterior, and without any place of residing. The [dharmas] are without past, future, and present; they cannot be expressed with letters and words. They must be penetrated within oneself; yet there is preaching. This is called being sufficient in the discriminative ability of joyous preaching. It is likened to an echo. All the sounds are preached in accordance with the characteristics of echoes.” Resolute Mind asked, “What is the meaning of ‘in accordance with’ [*sui*]?” [The god replied], “Good youth, the meaning of ‘in accordance with’ is ‘in accordance with space.’ Just as there is nothing that is in accordance with space, so

is there nothing that is in accordance with the dharmas (or, ‘with the preaching of the dharma[s]’). The dharmas are without comparison, without metaphors or similes. It is said to be ‘in accordance with’ in order that there [may appear to be the] attainment [of realization].”

At this time the World-Honored One praised the god, saying, “Excellent, excellent! It is as you have preached. Bodhisattvas should not become afraid regarding this. Why? If there were being ‘in accordance with’ there would be no attainment of unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment.”

Resolute Mind Bodhisattva addressed the Buddha, saying, “World-Honored One, from which Buddha land did the god Manifest Mind come?” The god said, “Why do you ask?” Resolute Mind answered, “I would like to do reverence in the direction of that [land], since it is the location in which this Bodhisattva wanders and resides.” The god answered, “One who attains this Śūraṅgama Samādhi will be personally revered by all the gods and people of all the worlds.”

At this time the Buddha told Resolute Mind Bodhisattva, “The god Manifest Mind has come here from the Wondrous Joy world of Akṣobhya Buddha. There does he always preach the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. Resolute Mind, all the Buddhas never fail to preach the Śūraṅgama Samādhi! Resolute Mind, this god Manifest Mind will achieve the enlightenment of Buddhahood in this Sahā world! He wishes to eradicate the five tainted wrongs [prevalent in] this [world], to teach sentient beings in the pure Buddha land, and he has come here in order to increase his practice of the Śūraṅgama [Samādhi].”

Resolute Mind said to the Buddha, “When will this god achieve the enlightenment of Buddhahood in this world? What will be his title? And what will be the name of his world?” The Buddha said, “After the extinction of a thousand Buddhas during this Good Eon, sixty-two eons will pass without a Buddha. There will only be a hundred thousand ten-thousand hundred-million Pratyekabuddhas [during this time]. The sentient beings during this period will plant good roots, so that [this god] will be able to achieve

Buddhahood after the end of these [sixty-two] eons. His title will be King Praised for Pure Brilliance Tathāgata. The world at that time will be named Pure Vision. At that time King Praised for Pure Brilliance Tathāgata will be able to make the minds of sentient beings attain purity. The [minds of the] sentient beings of that world will not be obscured by greed, anger, and stupidity, but will attain pure faith in the Dharma and will all practice good dharmas. Resolute Mind, the life of King Praised for Pure Brilliance Tathāgata will be ten short eons. He will emancipate sentient beings with the Dharmas of the Three Vehicles. Of these, the Śūraṅgama Samādhi will be attained by immeasurable and innumerable Bodhisattvas, who will gain the power of autonomy within the dharmas. At that time Māra and his followers will all cultivate the Mahāyāna and take compassion on sentient beings, and that Buddha land will be without the three lower modes of existence and the various difficult locations (the hells). It will be ornamented with purity, like [the far-off continent] Uttarakuru. It will be without demonic affairs and the heterodox views. After the extinction of that Buddha, the Dharma will reside for a thousand ten-thousand hundred-million years. Resolute Mind, this god will achieve the enlightenment of Buddhahood in a pure land such as this!”

At this time Resolute Mind Bodhisattva addressed the god, saying, “You will attain great benefit! The Tathāgata has conferred on you the prediction of unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment!” The god replied, “Good youth, to be without anything that is attained in all the dharmas is called ‘great advantage.’ To attain anything in the dharmas is no advantage. Good youth, for this reason you should understand that not to attain the dharmas is called ‘great benefit’.”

When this Dharma was preached, twenty-five thousand gods who had previously planted virtuous roots all generated the intention to achieve unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment, and ten thousand Bodhisattvas attained the forbearance of the birthlessness of all dharmas.



## Fascicle II

### Translated by the Kuchean Tripiṭaka Master Kumārajīva during the Later Ch'in [Dynasty]

At that time Śāriputra addressed the Buddha, saying, “World-Honored One, never before [has anything like this occurred]! You are now preaching the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, but Māra has not come to disturb us!” The Buddha told Śāriputra, “Do you wish to see what is troubling Māra?” [Śāriputra said], “I would like to see that.” The Buddha then emitted from the space between his eyebrows a light [showing] the form of a giant person. The entire assembly saw Māra bound up five times over [i.e., with his two arms, two legs, and head bound] and unable to escape. The Buddha asked Śāriputra, “Do you see Māra bound up five times over?” [Śāriputra said], “I see him. Who has bound up Māra?” The Buddha said, “This [was done by] the divine power of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. When the Śūraṅgama Samādhi is preached in any Buddha land, any demons there with an evil wish to impede [its preaching] will perceive their own bodies to be bound up five times over through the divine power of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi and the Buddhas. Śāriputra, wherever the Śūraṅgama Samādhi is preached, whether while I am in the world or after my extinction, any demons or followers of the demons and anyone else harboring evil intentions will be bound up five times over by the divine power of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi.”

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At that time the gods, dragons, *yakṣas*, and *gandharvas* in the assembly addressed the Buddha, saying, “World-Honored One,

our minds are without doubt regarding this samādhi. We will not impede [its preaching], because we do not wish to see ourselves bound up five times over. World-Honored One, because of our reverence for this samādhi, we will all go and protect anyone who preaches this Dharma, so that the samādhi will then [inspire them to] generate the thought of the World-Honored One.” The Buddha told the gods and dragons, “Because you [have pledged] to do this you will attain emancipation from the twelve bonds of [mistaken] views. What are these twelve? These are the twelve: the bond of the view of self, the bond of the view of sentient beings, the bond of the view of life span, the bond of the view of person, the bond of the view of eradication, the bond of the view of permanence, the bond of the view of personal action, the bond of the view of personal possession, the bond of the view of being, the bond of the view of nonbeing, the bond of the view of [discrimination into] this and that, and the bond of the view of the dharmas. You should understand that any sentient being who wishes out of anger to damage the Buddhist Dharma resides in these twelve bonds of [mistaken] views. If a person has faithful understanding and is obedient and not contrary [to the Dharma] he will attain emancipation from these twelve bonds of [mistaken] views.”

637c Śāriputra then addressed the Buddha, saying, “World-Honored One, is Māra now able to hear you preach the name of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, [as we can]?” The Buddha said, “He can hear it as well [as you can], but he is unable to come [to this assembly] because he is bound up.” Śāriputra said, “Why do you not use your divine power to make Māra unable to hear the preaching of the name of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi?” The Buddha said, “Cease! Do not say that! Even if worlds as numerous as the sands of the River Ganges were filled with a great fire, anyone hearing the preaching of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi should [be able to] escape. Why? I say that merely to hear the preaching of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi is to attain great benefit, superior to attaining the four states of *dhyāna* or the four *brahmavihāras*. Śāriputra, because Māra can hear the preaching of the name of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, there

now will form the causes and conditions for his escape from the entire predicament [*lit.*, all the affairs] of being Māra. If he is bound up but able to hear, he should also be able to attain emancipation from the twelve bonds of [mistaken] views. It is for this reason, Śāriputra, that evil persons of heterodox views who have entered the web of demons should be able to hear this Śūraṅgama Samādhi. How much more so those who are pure of mind and who joyfully wish to hear!”

At that time there was in the assembly a Bodhisattva named Practicing Nondefilement in Māra’s Realm, who addressed the Buddha, saying, “Thus it is, World-Honored One. I should now manifest [myself] in Māra’s realm and with my autonomous divine power cause him to reside in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi.” The Buddha said, “As you wish.” Practicing Nondefilement in Māra’s Realm Bodhisattva then suddenly disappeared from the assembly and reappeared in Māra’s palace, where he said to Māra, “Why do you not listen to the Buddha preaching the Śūraṅgama Samādhi? Innumerable sentient beings have generated the intention to achieve insurpassable and perfect enlightenment and are escaping your realms. They are also helping others to become emancipated and escape your realms.” Māra replied, “I hear the Buddha preaching the name of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, but I have been bound up five times over and am unable to attend. That is, my two arms, two legs, and head [are bound.]” The Bodhisattva asked the Māra again, “Who has bound you?” Māra replied, “Just as I decided to go disrupt those listening to the [preaching of the] Śūraṅgama Samādhi, I was bound up five times over. Thereupon, I thought, ‘The Buddhas and Bodhisattvas have great virtue that is impossible to disrupt. If I go, I will be myself destroyed, not simply [bound up and] kept in this palace.’ When I had this thought, I was released from my fivefold bonds.”

The Bodhisattva answered, “Thus it is that all ordinary persons, in their discriminative thinking, mistakenly grasp at characteristics, making themselves bound. Their bonds exist because they think actively and theorize argumentatively; their bonds exist

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because they see, hear, perceive, and know. Here there actually is no being bound and emancipated. Why? Because the dharmas are without bonds and are fundamentally emancipated, and because the dharmas are without emancipation and are fundamentally without bonds, [therefore the dharmas] permanently possess the characteristic of emancipation, and [therefore sentient beings are permanently] without stupidity. The Tathāgata preaches the Dharma using this teaching. Any sentient being who understands the meaning of this and energetically strives in order to achieve emancipation will attain emancipation from all bonds.”

At that time there were in Māra’s assembly seven hundred goddesses who scattered heavenly flowers, incense, and necklaces before Practicing Nondefilement in Māra’s Realm Bodhisattva, and then said, “When will we attain emancipation from Māra’s realm?” The Bodhisattva answered, “You will attain emancipation when you are able not to destroy your bonds to Māra.” [They inquired,] “What are our bonds to Māra?” [He replied,] “The sixty-two [mistaken] views. If you do not destroy the [mistaken] views, you will attain emancipation from your bonds to Māra.” The goddesses said, “How can you say that we will attain emancipation by not destroying our bonds to Māra?” [The Bodhisattva] answered, “The [mistaken] views are fundamentally without coming and without going. If you understand the characteristic of the non-coming and non-going of the views, then you will attain emancipation from your bonds to Māra. The [mistaken] views are neither being nor nonbeing, [so] if you do not discriminate being and nonbeing, then you will attain emancipation from your bonds to Māra. To be without views is the correct view, but such a correct view is not correct and heterodox. If [you understand] the Dharma to be not correct and heterodox, without action and without influence, then you will attain emancipation from your bonds to Māra. [If you understand that] these [mistaken] views are neither within, nor without, nor in any intermediate location, [and if] you thus do not think about the [mistaken] views any more, then you will attain emancipation from your bonds to Māra.” On hearing this teaching,



the seven hundred goddesses attained the forbearance of accordance [with the dharmas] and said, “We also should practice nondefilement in Māra’s realm and save everyone who has been bound by Māra.”

Practicing Nondefilement in Māra’s Realm Bodhisattva then said to Māra, “Your attendants have generated the intention to achieve insurpassable and perfect enlightenment. What are you going to do?” Māra replied, “I am bound up five times over and do not know what to do.” The Bodhisattva replied, “You should generate the intention to achieve insurpassable and perfect enlightenment, so that you attain emancipation from these bonds.” Through their compassion for Māra, the goddesses then said in unison, “You should definitely generate the intention to achieve insurpassable and perfect enlightenment! Do not create thoughts of fear where there is peace! Do not create thoughts of suffering in the midst of happiness! Do not create thoughts of bondage in emancipation!”

Māra then decided to try deceit, saying [to the goddesses], “If you give up the intention to achieve enlightenment, I will then generate the intention to achieve enlightenment.” Using the power of expedient means, the goddesses then said to Māra, “We have all given up the intention to achieve enlightenment. You should now generate the intention to achieve insurpassable and perfect enlightenment. If a single Bodhisattva generates the intention to achieve enlightenment, then all Bodhisattvas will have the same intention. Why? The minds [of Bodhisattvas] are without distinction; they are all universally ‘equivalent’ with regard to the minds of sentient beings.”

Māra then said to Practicing Nondefilement in Māra’s Realm Bodhisattva, “I will now generate the intention to achieve insurpassable and perfect enlightenment. Because of the good roots [of merit of this action], release my bonds!” When he finished saying this, he saw himself released from his bonds. Using his supernatural power, Practicing Nondefilement in Māra’s Realm Bodhisattva then emanated a great brilliance, revealing his pure and wondrous body and illuminating Māra’s palace. Māra saw that his own body was without brilliance, like an ink spot.

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Two hundred goddesses within Māra's assembly, being deeply attached to lustful desire, generated a defiled feeling of love upon seeing the beauty of the Bodhisattva's body. They said, "If you could stay with us, we would all follow your teachings." Understanding that the past [karmic] conditions of the goddesses made them ready for salvation, the Bodhisattva created two hundred gods [for them] who were imposing in countenance and physically no different [from himself]. He also created two hundred Māra-defeating palaces with jewel-bedecked towers. The goddesses all saw themselves in these jewelled towers, and each said to herself, "I will share great pleasure through being with this Bodhisattva. I hope never to be able to satiate my lustful desires." All of them generated a profound reverence for the Bodhisattva, who then preached the Dharma for them according to their needs, so that they all generated the intention to achieve insurpassable and perfect enlightenment.

At that time Practicing Nondefilement in Māra's Realm Bodhisattva said to Māra, "You may approach the Buddha." Māra thought, "My bonds have been released, so I can approach the Buddha and disrupt his preaching of the Dharma." With his attendants all round, Māra then approached the Buddha and said, "World-Honored One, do not preach this Śūraṅgama Samādhi anymore. Why? When you preached this samādhi, my body was immediately bound up five times over. I beseech the Tathāgata to preach about something else." Resolute Mind Bodhisattva then addressed Māra, "Who released your bonds?" [He] answered, "Practicing Nondefilement in Māra's Realm Bodhisattva released my bonds." [Resolute Mind asked], "What did you do such that your bonds were released?" Māra answered, "I generated the intention to achieve insurpassable and perfect enlightenment."

At that time the Buddha told Resolute Mind Bodhisattva, "Because Māra generated the intention to achieve insurpassable and perfect enlightenment in order to have his bonds released, his intentions were not pure. Thus it is, Resolute Mind, that in the last period of five hundred years after my extinction there will be many monks who will generate the intention to achieve insurpassable

and perfect enlightenment for [their own] benefit and with impure intentions. Resolute Mind, you should observe the power of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi and the spirit of the Buddha's Dharma: monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen who hear about this samādhi may generate the intention to achieve enlightenment lightheartedly, with a desire for [self-]benefit, or under the influence of some other person. I understand that such attitudes may form the causes and conditions for the generation of the intention to achieve unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment. How much more so those who hear about the Śūraṅgama Samādhi and generate the intention to achieve unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment with a pure mind! You should understand that such persons will attain the ultimate and definite [attainment, i.e., Buddhahood] within the Buddha Dharma!"

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Resolute Mind Bodhisattva addressed the Buddha, saying, "World-Honored One, Māra has heard the preaching of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi and has generated the intention to achieve enlightenment in order to be released from his bonds. Will this also constitute sufficient causes and conditions [for attaining emancipation in] the Buddha's Dharma?" The Buddha said, "It is as you have spoken. Due to the fortunate causes and conditions of this samādhi and the causes and conditions of generating the intention to achieve enlightenment, in the future he will be able to reject all the demonic affairs, demonic practices, demonic deceit, and demonic trouble-making. From now on, he will gradually attain the power of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi and will accomplish the enlightenment of Buddhahood." Resolute Mind Bodhisattva said to Māra, "The Tathāgata has now conferred on you the prediction [of future enlightenment]." Māra said, "Good youth, I have at present not generated the intention to achieve unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment with a pure mind. Why has the Tathāgata conferred this prediction on me? As the Buddha has said, karma proceeds from the mind, and retribution proceeds from karma. I myself have no intention of seeking enlightenment, so why has the Tathāgata conferred this prediction on me?"

Wishing to eradicate the doubts of those in the assembly, the Buddha then told Resolute Mind, “There are four types of predictions of enlightenment that are conferred on Bodhisattvas. What are these four? They are the prediction of enlightenment before the intention to achieve enlightenment has been generated, the prediction of the enlightenment of those who are about to generate the intention to achieve enlightenment, the secret prediction of enlightenment, and the prediction of enlightenment at the moment someone attains the forbearance of the birthlessness of all dharmas. These are the four. [This teaching] is only understandable to the Tathāgatas—the Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas are all unable to understand it.

“Resolute Mind, what is it to confer the prediction of enlightenment before the intention to achieve enlightenment has been generated? There may be a sentient being who has wandered throughout the five modes of existence. He may be in the hells, he may be an animal, he may be a hungry ghost, he may be a god, or he may be a human, but if his senses are sharp and he takes pleasure in the great Dharma, the Buddha will know that he will generate the intention to achieve unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment in a few hundred thousand ten-thousand hundred-million immeasurable eons. During those hundred thousand ten-thousand hundred-million immeasurable eons he will practice the Bodhisattva path, making offerings to several hundred thousand ten-thousand hundred-million *nayutas* of Buddhas and teaching several hundred thousand ten-thousand hundred-million sentient beings, causing them to reside in enlightenment. Also, after several hundred thousand ten-thousand hundred-million immeasurable eons, he will attain unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment, after which he will have such-and-such a title and have such-and-such a Buddha land. His life span and his congregation of Śrāvakas will be such-and-such. After his extinction the Dharma will remain for such-and-such a length of time.” The Buddha told Resolute Mind, “The Tathāgatas are able to understand all such things, even in cases exceeding this one. This is called conferring the prediction of

enlightenment before the intention to achieve enlightenment has been generated.”

At that time the elder Mahākāśyapa came forward to address the Buddha, saying, “From now on, we should generate the thought of the World-Honored One with regard to all sentient beings. Why? We do not have the wisdom [to know] which sentient beings have the roots of Bodhisattvahood and which sentient beings do not. World-Honored One, because we do not know such things, we might belittle such sentient beings, only to our own disadvantage.” The Buddha said, “Excellent, excellent! Kāśyapa, you have spoken well. It is because of this that I have preached in the Sūtras that people should not falsely evaluate sentient beings. Why? If you falsely evaluate other sentient beings, it will be to your own disadvantage. Only the Tathāgatas should evaluate sentient beings and others. It is thus that the Śrāvakas and other Bodhisattvas should think of other sentient beings as Buddhas [*lit.*, generate the thought of a Buddha regarding sentient beings].

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“Now to the prediction of the enlightenment of those who are about to generate the intention to achieve enlightenment. For example, there may be a person who has long planted meritorious roots and who has cultivated the good practices, who is diligent and energetic, with his senses sharp, taking joy in the great Dharma, with the mind of great compassion, and seeking the enlightenment of emancipation for all sentient beings. When such a person generates the intention [to achieve enlightenment], he will reside in the state of non-regression and enter the stage of a Bodhisattva. He will be counted among those [whose Buddhahood] is assured and will escape the eight situations in which it is difficult [to encounter the Buddha’s teaching, i.e., rebirth in the hells, as a hungry ghost, as an animal, as a god, in the joyous continent of Uttarakuru, as a deaf or blind person, as one who has worldly wisdom, or before or after the lifetime of the Buddha]. When it is appropriate for a person such as this to generate the intention [to achieve enlightenment], the Buddha will confer on him a prediction of unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment, with a title of

such-and-such, with such-and-such a land, and a life span of such-and-such. For such a person, the Tathāgata will confer the prediction of enlightenment through understanding his mind. This is called generating the intention [to achieve enlightenment] and conferring the prediction [of future enlightenment].

“The secret conferring of the prediction [of future enlightenment] is for Bodhisattvas who are constantly diligent in seeking unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment but who have not yet received the prediction. [Such a Bodhisattva] takes joy in the various types of charity; he takes joy in all [types of] charity. He has a firm understanding of the Dharma, maintains the precepts without omission, and generates profound ornamentation. He has great power of forbearance and empathizes with sentient beings. With diligence and energy, he seeks the various good Dharmas. He is never lazy in either body or mind, [as he strives as energetically] as if his head were on fire. He practices mindfulness in peace and is able to attain the four *dhyānas*. He seeks wisdom joyfully and practices the enlightenment of Buddhahood. Long does he practice the Six Perfections, and he has the characteristic of achieving Buddhahood.

“The other Bodhisattvas, dragons, *yakṣas*, and *gandharvas* of that time will all have the following thought: ‘Such a Bodhisattva, who is diligent and energetic like this, is truly rare! How long will it take him to attain unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment? What will his title be? What will his land be called? What will be the size of his assembly of Śrāvakas?’ In order to eradicate the doubts of these sentient beings, the Buddha confers the prediction so that the entire assembly is able to hear it. Only the Bodhisattva himself is unable to hear it, because of the Buddha’s divine power. All the other sentient beings are made to know the Bodhisattva’s title as a Buddha, the name of his land, and the size of his assembly of Śrāvakas. All their doubts are resolved, and they think of him [*lit.*, generate thoughts regarding him] as a World-Honored One, but the Bodhisattva himself does not know whether he has already received the prediction [of future enlightenment] or not.

This is the secret reception of the prediction [of future enlightenment] of Bodhisattvas.

“The present reception of the prediction [of future enlightenment] is for Bodhisattvas who have long accumulated good roots with unremitting [true] perception. Constantly cultivating pure practices and contemplating the emptiness of selflessness, [such a Bodhisattva] attains the forbearance of the birthlessness of all dharmas. Knowing that such a person’s virtue and wisdom are sufficient, the Buddha confers the prediction [of future enlightenment] upon him in the presence of a great assembly of all the gods, humans, demons, Brahmā gods, monks, and brahmins, saying, ‘Good youth, you will attain Buddhahood after passing through several hundred thousand ten-thousand hundred-million eons. Your title will be such-and-such. Your land will be such-and-such. Your congregation of Śrāvakas and your longevity will be such-and-such.’ At that time innumerable people will be inspired by his example to generate the intention to achieve insurpassable and perfect enlightenment. After receiving the prediction [of future enlightenment] in the presence of the Buddha, the Bodhisattva’s body will ascend into space, to the height of seven *tāla* trees. Resolute Mind, this is called the fourth, or receiving the prediction in the presence.”

Resolute Mind Bodhisattva then addressed the Buddha, saying, “Are there any Bodhisattvas in the present assembly who have received the prediction [of future enlightenment] in these four ways?” The Buddha answered, “There are.” [Resolute Mind asked], “World-Honored One, who are they?” The Buddha said, “Lion King Bodhisattva, son of the layman Enjoys Desires, received the prediction [of future enlightenment] before he generated the intention [to achieve enlightenment]. In the same fashion, innumerable Bodhisattvas of other worlds have received the prediction [of future enlightenment] before they generated the intention [to achieve enlightenment]. There are also Serene Extinction Bodhisattva, Dharma Prince Great Merit Bodhisattva, Dharma Prince Mañjuśrī Bodhisattva, and innumerable other Bodhisattvas, upon whom the

prediction [of future enlightenment] was conferred when they were ready to generate the intention [to achieve enlightenment]. They all reside at the stage of non-regression. Here also are Wise Valiance Bodhisattva and Beneficial Mind Bodhisattva. There are innumerable Bodhisattvas like them, who have had the prediction [of future enlightenment] conferred on them secretly. Resolute Mind, I, Maitreya, and all the thousand Bodhisattvas of this Wisdom Eon all attained the forbearance of the birthlessness of all dharmas and received the prediction [of future enlightenment] in the presence [of a Buddha].”

Resolute Mind addressed the Buddha, saying, “How rare, World-Honored One! The practices of the Bodhisattvas are inconceivable! Their receipt of the prediction [of future enlightenment] is also inconceivable! The Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas are all unable to understand this; how much more so the other sentient beings!” The Buddha said, “Resolute Mind, the energy and divine powers practiced and generated by Bodhisattvas are all inconceivable.”

At that time the goddesses taught by Practicing Nondefilement in Māra’s Realm Bodhisattva and made to generate the intention to achieve insurpassable and perfect enlightenment all scattered heavenly flowers above the Buddha and addressed him, saying, “World-Honored One, we do not wish to receive a prediction [of our future enlightenment] secretly. We wish to attain the forbearance of the birthlessness of all dharmas and receive the prediction [of future enlightenment] in your presence. We beseech you, World-Honored One, to grant us a prediction of insurpassable and perfect enlightenment now!”

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The Buddha smiled delicately, and from his mouth appeared a wondrous refulgence of variegated colors that illuminated all the world and then returned to enter him through the crown of his head. Ānanda addressed the Buddha, saying, “World-Honored One, why do you smile?” The Buddha told Ānanda, “Do you now see these two hundred goddesses reverently holding their palms together in front of the Tathāgata?” [Ānanda replied], “I see them, World-Honored One.” [The Buddha said], “Ānanda, these goddesses



have already deeply planted good roots before five hundred Buddhas of the past. From this time forth they will make offerings to innumerable Buddhas. After seven hundred immeasurable eons, they will all achieve Buddhahood and have the titles of Pure King [such-and-such]. Ānanda, after the end of these goddesses' lifetimes, they will be converted to the form of [human] females and be born in the Tuṣita heaven, where they will make offerings to and serve Maitreya Bodhisattva."

At that time, when Māra heard that the goddesses had already received a prediction [of future enlightenment], he addressed the Buddha, saying, "World-Honored One, I am now unable to exercise autonomy over my own attendants, because [they] have heard you preach the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. How much less [my power over] others who have also heard! If a person is able to hear the [preaching of the] Śūraṅgama Samādhi, he will definitely attain residence within the Buddha's Dharma."

The goddesses then spoke fearlessly to Māra, saying, "You should not lament so. We have not now left your realm. Why? Māra's realm is suchlike, just as the realm of the Buddhas is suchlike. The Suchness of Māra's realm and the Suchness of the realm of the Buddhas are identical and not separate, and we will not transcend this Suchness. The characteristics of Māra's realm are the characteristics of the realm of the Buddhas. The dharmas of Māra's realm and the dharmas of the realm of the Buddhas are identical and not separate, and we will not leave or escape this characteristic of the dharmas. Māra's realm is without any fixed dharmas that can be manifested; likewise is the realm of the Buddhas without any fixed dharmas that can be manifested. Māra's realm and the realm of the Buddhas are not different and not separate, and we will not leave or escape this characteristic of the dharmas. Therefore, you should understand that all the dharmas are indeterminate. Since they are indeterminate, you have no attendants and there are none who are not your attendants."

At that time Māra became despondent and distraught and wished to return to his heaven, but Practicing Nondefilement in

Māra's Realm Bodhisattva addressed him, saying, "Where do you wish to go?" Māra said, "I wish to return to the palace where I reside." The Bodhisattva said, "You may be in your palace without leaving this assembly," and Māra then saw himself within his own palace. The Bodhisattva said, "What do you see?" Māra replied, "I see myself within my own palace. The pleasant grove, garden, and lake are mine." The Bodhisattva said, "You may now donate them to the Tathāgata." Māra said, "So it shall be." When he said this he saw the Tathāgata, Śrāvakas, Bodhisattvas, and the entire great assembly within [the palace listening to the] preaching of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi.

Ānanda then addressed the Buddha, saying, "World-Honored One, in the present location, [which has just been donated to you,] you are preaching the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. Previously, you attained enlightenment after being given food. Of the blessings received by the two donors, which is greater?" The Buddha said, "Ānanda, after food was given to me, I achieved unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment. After I ate, I turned the Wheel of the Dharma. After I ate, I preached the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. There is no distinction among the blessings [derived from these] three [offerings of] food.

"Ānanda, where was I when I attained unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment? You should understand that that location was the Vajrāsana. All the Buddhas of the past, future, and present attain the enlightenment of Buddhahood within [the Vajrāsana]. Wherever they are, they preach the Śūraṅgama Samādhi identically and without any difference. It is the same with the locations in which [the scriptures] are recited or copied. Ānanda, as to the offering of food to me prior to the first turning of the Wheel of the Dharma, if a Dharma master recites or preaches this Śūraṅgama Samādhi after receiving an offering of food, the blessings accruing from these two offerings will be identical and not different. Also, Ānanda, as to when I reside in the monastery and use the eighteen types of supernormal transformations to lead sentient beings to emancipation, if someone recites or preaches this Śūraṅgama

Samādhi in another monastery [after receiving an offering of food], the blessings accruing from these two offerings will be identical and not different.”

Ānanda then said to Māra, “You have attained great benefit, since you have been able to donate your palace and have had the Buddha reside therein.” Māra said, “This was the effect of the compassionate power of Practicing Nondefilement in Māra’s Realm Bodhisattva.”

Resolute Mind Bodhisattva addressed the Buddha, “World-Honored One, this autonomous mastery of divine power of Practicing Nondefilement in Māra’s Realm Bodhisattva—is it due to his residence in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi?” The Buddha said, “Resolute Mind, it is as you have said. This Bodhisattva now resides in this samādhi and is thus able to have autonomous mastery of divine power. He manifests the practice of all the practices of Māra’s realm, but is able to remain undefiled by those demonic practices. He manifests pleasure with the goddesses, but is actually never influenced by the evil dharmas of lust. This good youth resides in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi and manifests entry into Māra’s palace, but his body never leaves my assembly. He manifests amusement in the pleasures of Māra’s realm, but teaches sentient beings with the Dharma of the Buddhas.”

Resolute Mind Bodhisattva addressed the Buddha, saying, “World-Honored One, you reside in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi and are able to manifest various types of autonomous divine power. How excellent this is, World-Honored One! Could you explain this briefly?” The Buddha said, “Resolute Mind, I am now residing in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi throughout the trichiliocosm: in the hundred hundred-million [worlds] beneath the fourfold heavens, the hundred hundred-million suns and moons, the hundred hundred-million places of the heavenly kings, the hundred hundred-million Heavens of the Thirty-three, the hundred hundred-million Yama heavens, the hundred hundred-million Tuṣita heavens, the hundred hundred-million Joyous heavens, the hundred hundred-million Autonomous Transformation of Others’ [Pleasures] heavens,

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etc., up until the hundred hundred-million Ultimate in Materiality heavens, the hundred hundred-million Mount Sumerus, and the hundred hundred-million great oceans, [all of which] is called the trichiliocosm. Resolute Mind, I reside in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi throughout the trichiliocosm.

“I may manifest the practice of the Perfection of Charity in [this continent] Jambudvīpa, or I may manifest the practice of the Perfection of Morality in Jambudvīpa, or I may manifest the practice of the Perfection of Patience in Jambudvīpa, or I may manifest the practice of the Perfection of Energy in Jambudvīpa, or I may manifest the practice of the Perfection of Meditation in Jambudvīpa, or I may manifest the practice of the Perfection of Wisdom in Jambudvīpa, or I may manifest myself as an immortal god with the five supernormal powers in Jambudvīpa, or I may manifest myself as a householder in Jambudvīpa, or I may manifest myself as a monk in Jambudvīpa.

“I may manifest myself in the location of the penultimate birth in the Tuṣita heaven, or I may manifest myself as a Wheel Turning Sage King throughout [the world] beneath the fourfold heavens, or I may become an Indra king, or a Brahmā king, or one of the four heavenly kings, or the king of the Yama heaven, or the king of the Tuṣita heaven, or the king of the Joyous heaven, or the king of the Teaching Others Autonomy heaven. I may manifest myself as an elder, or I may manifest myself as a layman, or I may manifest myself as a minor prince or a great king, or I may become a kṣatriya, or I may become a brahmin, or I may become a Bodhisattva.

“Or, within [the world] beneath the fourfold heavens, I may wish to be reborn from the Tuṣita heaven into the world below and manifest entry into a womb, or manifest location in a womb, or manifest a desire to be born. I may manifest being born, walking seven steps, and raising my hand and saying, ‘On earth and in the heavens, only I am worthy of honor.’ I may manifest being in a palace, accompanied by princesses, or I may manifest leaving home, or I may manifest ascetic practices, or I may manifest taking grass [for a seat], or I may manifest sitting on the seat of enlightenment

[*bodhimaṇḍa*], or I may manifest subjugating Māra, or I may manifest achieving Buddhahood, or I may manifest seeing the tree king [the god within the tree behind the *bodhimaṇḍa*], or I may manifest being asked by Indra and Brahmā to turn the Wheel of the Dharma, or I may manifest turning the Wheel of the Dharma, or I may manifest dispensing with my life, or I may manifest entering Nirvāṇa, or I may manifest having my body cremated, or I may manifest my entire body as relics, or I may manifest having my physical relics scattered [divided].

“I may manifest the imminent extinction of the Dharma, or I may manifest the extinction of the Dharma. I may manifest an immeasurable life span, or I may manifest a very short life span. I may manifest a land without the names of any evil modes of existence, or I may manifest the existence of the evil modes. I may manifest Jambudvīpa pure and ornamented like a heavenly palace, or I may manifest the evils, or I may manifest superior, intermediate, and inferior [realms].

“Resolute Mind, all this is [done through the] autonomous divine power of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. When a Bodhisattva manifests entry into Nirvāṇa he does not undergo ultimate extinction but rather is able to manifest such an autonomous divine power throughout the trichiliocosm, manifesting ornamentations [of the Dharma] such as these. Resolute Mind, you see me now [in this world] underneath the fourfold heavens turning the Wheel of the Dharma, but elsewhere in Jambudvīpa I have not yet achieved Buddhahood, and yet elsewhere in Jambudvīpa I have already manifested entry into extinction. This is known as the teaching entered [by means of] the Śūraṅgama Samādhi.”

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At that time the various gods, dragons, *yakṣas*, and *gandharvas* within the assembly, as well as the Bodhisattvas and great disciples, all had the following thought: “Is it only in this trichiliocosm that Śākyamuni Buddha has this divine power, or does he also have this power in other worlds?” Dharma Prince Mañjuśrī, knowing the thoughts of those in the assembly and wanting to eradicate their doubts, then addressed the Buddha saying, “World-Honored

One, in my wandering throughout the Buddha lands, I have been to a Buddha land that is more than sixty times as many worlds above our world as there are grains of sand in the River Ganges. The name of this Buddha land is Brilliance of a Single Lamp, and there is a Buddha there who preaches the Dharma on behalf of people. I went to him, revered him by placing my head on his feet, and asked, ‘World-Honored One, what is your title? How should I address you as a Buddha?’ The Buddha there answered me, ‘You should proceed to Śākyamuni Buddha. He will answer you.’ World-Honored One, if one were to speak of the merit and splendor of that Buddha land, one would not finish in an entire eon. Even more than this, that land lacks the names of Śrāvaka and Pratyekabuddha; there are only Bodhisattva monks, [to whom that Buddha] constantly turns the Wheel of the Dharma, preaching without [ever] regressing. I beseech you, World-Honored One, to please tell us the name of this Buddha, please tell us about the Buddha who is preaching the Dharma in the Land of the Brilliance of a Single Lamp!”

At that time the Buddha told Dharma Prince Mañjuśrī, “Listen well! Do not be afraid or have doubts! Why? The divine power of the Buddha is inconceivable. The power of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi is also inconceivable. Mañjuśrī, he who preaches the Dharma in the Land of the Brilliance of a Single Lamp is a Buddha with the title King of Brilliance That Autonomously Manifests All Merit. Mañjuśrī, the Buddha King of Brilliance that Autonomously Manifests All Merit of that Land of the Brilliance of a Single Lamp is actually [one of] my own bodies, which I have manifested in that land through my divine power as a Buddha. It is I who constantly turn the Wheel of the Dharma, preaching without [ever] regressing. This is a pure land cultivated by me in past lives. Mañjuśrī, you should now understand that I have this divine power throughout the immeasurable and innumerable hundred ten-thousand thousand hundred-million *nayutas* of other lands. The Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas are unable to understand this. Mañjuśrī, this is entirely the power of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi.

“The Bodhisattva always manifests his divine transformations in immeasurable worlds, but there is no movement or change in the samādhi [itself]. Mañjuśrī, it is likened to the sun and moon in their own palaces, which manifest all the cities, towns, and villages without ever moving themselves. Likewise does the Bodhisattva reside in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi: without ever moving himself, he is able to manifest his bodies throughout the immeasurable worlds, preaching the Dharma according to the pleasure of his congregations.”

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At that time those in the assembly had [an experience they had] never had before. They all jumped up in great and immeasurable joy, holding their palms together in reverence. The gods, dragons, *yakṣas*, *gandharvas*, *asuras*, *garuḍas*, *kiṃnaras*, and *mahoragas* scattered pearl-flowers, wondrous flowers of variegated colors, incense powders, and unguents about above the Buddha, [meanwhile] performing the dances of their heavens and making offerings to the Tathāgata. The disciples took off their upper robes and offered them to the Buddha, and the Bodhisattvas then scattered about above the Buddha [a mass of] wondrously colored flowers the size of Mount Sumeru, as well as various types of incense powders, unguents, and jewelled necklaces, all saying, “Thus it should be, World-Honored One—if the Śūraṅgama Samādhi is preached somewhere, that place should be [as firm as] *vajra*. If someone hears the preaching of this samādhi, believes in it, recites it, and preaches it for others without their being shocked or afraid, it should be understood that such a person will have the forbearance of adamant indestructibility. Profoundly residing in his faith, he will be protected by the Buddhas. Having extensively planted good roots, he will attain great benefit. Subjugating the demons and enemies, he will eradicate [the influence of] the evil modes of existence and will be protected by spiritual compatriots. World-Honored One, this is how we understand the doctrine that the Buddha has preached. If a sentient being hears this Śūraṅgama Samādhi and has faith in it, reciting it and understanding its doctrines, preaching it for people and practicing it

according to how you have preached it, then such a person will reside in the Dharma of the Buddhas and will attain to the ultimately certain [attainment] without regressing.”

The Buddha said, “Thus it is, thus it is. It is as you have said. There will be some who do not extensively plant good roots, and who hear the Śūraṅgama Samādhi but are unable to believe in it. There will be fewer who hear the Śūraṅgama Samādhi and are able to believe in it, and more who are unable to believe. Good youth, there are four types of persons who can hear and have faith in this samādhi. What are these four? The first are those who have heard this samādhi from the Buddhas in the past. The second are those who are protected by spiritual compatriots and who long for the enlightenment of the Buddhas. The third are those with good roots that are deep and wide and who love the great Dharma. The fourth are those who have themselves realized the profound Dharma of the Mahāyāna. These are the four types of persons who are able to believe in a samādhi such as this. Good youth, there are also Arhats who have completed their vows, those who believe and practice as they have been taught, and those who practice the Dharma according to their own understanding. Since these persons believe in and follow my words, they will believe in this samādhi but not realize it themselves. Why? This samādhi cannot be understood by any of the Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas. How much less by other sentient beings!”

641b The elder Mahākāśyapa then addressed the Buddha, saying, “World-Honored One, it is likened to a person who is blind from birth. In his dreams he may see various forms with his eyes and be greatly happy, and he may reside with and talk with sighted people in his dreams. When he awakes, however, he will not see form. We are like this: when we [disciples] had not heard of this Śūraṅgama Samādhi, our hearts were happy, and we declared that we had attained the heavenly eye. We resided together with the Bodhisattvas and spoke with them, discussing the doctrines. World-Honored One, now that we have heard of this samādhi from you [we realize that] we did not understand. Like people blind from birth,



we were unable to understand the Dharmas practiced by the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. From now on, we will think of our former selves as if we had been blind from birth, with no wisdom regarding your profound Dharma and neither understanding nor [even] perceiving your practices. From now on we will understand that it was the Bodhisattvas who have really attained the heavenly eye and who have been able to attain such profound wisdoms. World-Honored One, if a person is without omniscience, how can he say ‘I am wise, I am a field of blessings?’”

The Buddha said, “Thus it is, thus it is. Kāśyapa, it is as you have spoken. The Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas are unable to attain to the profound wisdoms attained by the Bodhisattvas.” When Mahākāśyapa spoke these words, eight thousand sentient beings all generated the intention to achieve insurpassable and perfect enlightenment.

Resolute Mind Bodhisattva then asked Dharma Prince Mañjuśrī, “Mañjuśrī, [Kāśyapa has just used] the term ‘field of blessings’. What is a ‘field of blessings’?” Mañjuśrī said, “Those who possess the ten types of practice are called fields of blessings. What are these ten? [They are] (1) to reside in the emancipations of emptiness, characteristiclessness, and wishlessness without entering into the absolute; (2) to understand the Four Noble Truths without realizing the fruit of enlightenment; (3) to practice the eight emancipations without dispensing with the practice of the Bodhisattva; (4) to be able to generate the three wisdoms and yet practice throughout the triple realm; (5) to be able to manifest the form and deportment of a Śrāvaka and follow the [Buddha’s] oral teaching without seeking the Dharma from anyone else; (6) to manifest the form and deportment of a Pratyekabuddha and yet preach the Dharma with unhindered discrimination; (7) to remain constantly in meditation and yet manifest the practice of all the various practices; (8) never to depart from the correct path but to manifest entry into the heterodox paths; (9) to have profound greed and defiled lust but to transcend the desires and all the afflictions; and (10) to enter into Nirvāṇa and neither destroy nor dispense

with saṃsāra. These are the ten. You should understand that a person [versed in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi] is a true field of blessings.”

641c Resolute Mind Bodhisattva then asked Subhūti, “Elder Subhūti, the World-Honored One has preached that you are premier among the fields of blessings. Have you attained these ten?” Subhūti said, “I do not have even one of them. How could I have [all] ten?” Resolute Mind said, “Why are you called premier among the fields of blessings?” Subhūti said, “I am not premier among the fields of blessings in the context of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. The Buddha has preached that I am premier in the fields of blessings in the context of the Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas. Resolute Mind, I am like the princes of a marginal location who are called kings. If a Wheel Turning Sage King went to that marginal location, the princes would no longer be called kings—there would then be only that Wheel Turning Sage King. This is because the virtue of that Sage King is particularly wondrous and excellent. Resolute Mind, since there are places in the countries, cities, towns, and villages where there are no Bodhisattvas, I may be said to be a field of blessings in that context. However, where the Buddha and Bodhisattvas are, I may not be called a field of blessings. The Bodhisattvas possess omniscience and are therefore superior to me.” At this time the Buddha praised Subhūti, saying, “Excellent, excellent. It is as you have spoken. These are the words of a great disciple who is without arrogance.”

Resolute Mind Bodhisattva then asked Dharma Prince Mañjuśrī, “Mañjuśrī, you are said to be well-versed (*lit.*, greatly heard) [in the Buddhist scriptures]. Why are you called well-versed?” Mañjuśrī said, “To hear a single phrase of the Dharma, to understand within it the thousand ten-thousand hundred-million doctrines, and to explain it extensively for a hundred thousand ten-thousand eons, with one’s wisdom and discrimination inexhaustible: this is called ‘well-versed.’ Also, Resolute Mind Bodhisattva, to listen to and be able to maintain [remember and recite] everything preached by all the innumerable Buddhas of the ten directions, so that there is not a single phrase one has not heard—so that every [phrase of

the Dharma] that one hears, one would thus have heard before—and to be able to maintain all the Dharma that one has heard without forgetting, to be able to preach [the Dharma] to sentient beings without there being sentient beings, and without any distinction between self, sentient beings, and the Dharma being preached: this is called ‘well versed’.”

At that time there was in the assembly a Bodhisattva god named Pure Moon Store, who thought as follows: “The Buddha has taught that Ānanda was premier in being well-versed. But is Ānanda well-versed in the manner that has just been explained by Mañjuśrī?” When he had this thought, he asked Ānanda, “The Tathāgata has taught that you are premier in being well-versed. Are you well-versed in the manner just explained by Mañjuśrī?” Ānanda answered, “I am not well-versed in the manner explained by Mañjuśrī.” Pure Moon Store Bodhisattva said, “Then why did the Tathāgata declare you to be premier in being well-versed?” Ānanda answered, “I am said to be premier among those disciples of the Buddha who have become emancipated upon following the sounds [of the Buddha’s teachings]. This is not to say that I am premier in being well-versed among the Bodhisattvas, who have oceans of immeasurable wisdom, unequalled great sagacity, and unhindered discrimination. O god, it is likened to the brilliance of the sun and moon, by which the people of Jambudvīpa see the various forms and perceive their own activities. I am like this. However, with the brilliance of the wisdom of the Tathāgata one may maintain the Dharmas. I am powerless in this regard. You should understand that this is entirely the divine power of the Tathāgata.”

The World-Honored One then praised Ānanda, saying, “Excellent, excellent! It is as you have spoken. You should understand that all the Dharmas which you maintain and recite are all [due to] the divine power of the Tathāgata.”

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Then the Buddha told Pure Moon Store, “The Dharmas maintained by Ānanda are extremely few; those he does not recite are immeasurable and infinite. O god, of the Dharmas I attained at my enlightenment (*lit.*, at my place of enlightenment, *bodhimāṇḍa*), I

have preached not even a single hundred thousand hundred-millionth part. And of those that I have preached, Ānanda maintains not even a single hundred-thousand hundred-millionth part. O god, in just a single day and night, I preach the Dharma to all the Indra gods, Brahmā gods, world-protecting kings, gods, dragons, *yakṣas*, *gandharvas*, *asuras*, *garuḍas*, *kiṃnaras*, *mahoragas*, and Bodhisattvas in all the worlds of the ten directions. With the power of my wisdom I compose verses and preach the Sūtras, stories, and parables, as well as [explanations of the] Perfections to be practiced by sentient beings. I also preach the Dharmas of the Śrāvaka and Pratyekabuddha Vehicles. The unsurpassable Vehicle of the Buddhas encompasses the teaching of the Mahāyāna. I decry saṃsāra and praise Nirvāṇa. Even if all the sentient beings within Jambudvīpa were as well versed as Ānanda, they would be unable to maintain [all these Dharmas] for a hundred thousand eons. O god, because of this, you should understand that the Dharmas preached by the Tathāgata are innumerable and infinite, and that the portion maintained by Ānanda is extremely small.”

At that point the god Pure Moon Store proffered to the Tathāgata a canopy made of a hundred thousand flowers of the seven precious things. The canopy immediately spread out throughout space, imparting a golden color onto all the sentient beings it covered. After proffering this canopy, he said, “Thus it is, World-Honored One. With this merit, I beseech you to grant all sentient beings the discrimination to preach the Dharma like you and to be able to maintain the Dharmas like Mañjuśrī, the Dharma prince.” The Buddha then realized that this Bodhisattva god longed profoundly for the enlightenment of Buddhahood and conferred upon him a prediction of the achievement of unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment, saying, “After four million four hundred thousand eons, this god will become a Buddha. His title will be Single Treasured Canopy and his land will be named Ornamented with All the Treasures.”

When the Buddha said this, two hundred Bodhisattvas became discouraged, [thinking] “The Dharma of the Buddhas, the World-Honored Ones, is extremely profound, and unsurpassable;

and perfect enlightenment is this difficult to achieve! We will not be able to complete the task! This is worse than if we had just entered Nirvāṇa as Pratyekabuddhas. Why? The Buddha has preached that if a Bodhisattva regresses he will become either a Pratyekabuddha or a Śrāvaka.”

At that time Dharma Prince Mañjuśrī knew that these two hundred Bodhisattvas had become discouraged. Wishing to rekindle their intention to achieve insurpassable and perfect enlightenment, and also wishing to teach the gods, dragons, *yakṣas*, *gandharvas*, *asuras*, *garuḍas*, *kiṃnaras*, and *mahoragas* in the assembly, he addressed the Buddha, saying, “World-Honored One, I remember an eon in the past named Luminous Brilliance, during which I entered Nirvāṇa as a Pratyekabuddha in thirty-six billion lifetimes.” Everyone in the assembly then became doubtful, [thinking that] “Someone who enters Nirvāṇa should not return to the succession of birth and death. How can Mañjuśrī say, ‘World-Honored One, I remember an eon in the past named Luminous Brilliance, during which I entered Nirvāṇa as a Pratyekabuddha in thirty-six billion lifetimes.’ How could this be?”

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Śāriputra, taking up the Buddha’s divine intent, then addressed the Buddha, saying, “World-Honored One, someone who enters Nirvāṇa should not return to the succession of birth and death. How could Mañjuśrī have entered Nirvāṇa and then return to be born?” The Buddha said, “You may ask Mañjuśrī. He will answer you himself.” Śāriputra then asked Mañjuśrī, saying, “Anyone who enters Nirvāṇa should not return to the realms of existence. Why did you say ‘World-Honored One, I remember an eon in the past named Luminous Brilliance, during which I entered Nirvāṇa as a Pratyekabuddha in thirty-six billion lifetimes?’ What do you mean by this?”

Mañjuśrī said, “The Tathāgata is now [in the world]. He is the all-knowing one, the all-seeing one, the one who speaks the truth, the one who does not deceive, the one who cannot be deceived by the gods and people of this world. What I have said, the Buddha realizes to be true. If I have spoken incorrectly, then it would be to

deceive the Buddha. Śāriputra, at that time in the Luminous Brilliance eon, there was a Buddha in the world named Puṣya, who entered Nirvāṇa after benefitting the gods and people of that world. The Dharma lasted for one hundred thousand years after the extinction of [Puṣya] Buddha. After the extinction of the Dharma, there were sentient beings there who had karmic connections [*lit.*, causes and conditions] to be saved as Pratyekabuddhas; but even if a hundred thousand hundred-million Buddhas had preached the Dharma to them they would not have believed it or accepted it—they could only achieve emancipation through [the impact of seeing] the body and deportment of a Pratyekabuddha. Since these sentient beings all longed for the enlightenment of Pratyekabuddhas, they would have had no opportunity [*lit.*, causes and conditions] to plant good roots if no Pratyekabuddha had appeared.

“In order to teach [those sentient beings], I then declared my body to be that of a Pratyekabuddha. Throughout all the countries, cities, towns, and villages, everyone knew that my body was that of a Pratyekabuddha, and I always manifested the physical form and deportment of a Pratyekabuddha. The sentient beings there had profound reverence, and they all made offerings of food and drink to me. After accepting [these offerings] and partaking of them, I considered how their [various] karmic dispositions [*lit.*, fundamental conditions] would make them responsive to hearing the Dharma. After preaching [the Dharma] to them I had my body fly up into the sky, like the king of the geese. Those sentient beings all became very happy at this, bowing their heads in obeisance to me with reverential minds and saying, ‘We wish that in the future we may all attain benefit in the Dharma such as you have!’ Śāriputra, through these causes and conditions immeasurable and innumerable sentient beings planted good roots.

“When I realized that the people had developed feelings of laziness through offering me food [and were no longer striving for their own enlightenment], I announced to them that ‘The time for my Nirvāṇa has arrived.’ Upon hearing this, a hundred thousand sentient beings came to where I was, carrying flowers, incense,

and oil. However, when I then entered the meditation of extinction [*nirodha-samāpatti*], because of my original vow I did not undergo final extinction, [even though] the sentient beings there said that my life had finished. In order to make offerings to me they cremated my body with fragrant wood, saying that I had really undergone extinction.

“I then proceeded to a great city in another country, where I proclaimed myself to be a Pratyekabuddha. The sentient beings there came with food and drink to make offerings to me, and I manifested the entry into Nirvāṇa there [as well]. They too said that I had undergone extinction, and they all came to make offerings and to cremate my body. Thus, O Śāriputra, did I spend a single small eon. For thirty-six billion lifetimes I took on the body of a Pratyekabuddha and manifested entry into Nirvāṇa. In those great cities I led three billion six hundred million sentient beings to salvation using the Vehicle of the Pratyekabuddha. Śāriputra, thus does a Bodhisattva use the Vehicle of the Pratyekabuddha to enter Nirvāṇa without undergoing permanent extinction.”

When Mañjuśrī spoke these words, the six types of vibrations shook the trichiliocosm and a brilliant light illuminated everywhere. A trillion gods made offerings to Dharma Prince Mañjuśrī, raining heavenly flowers upon him and saying, “This is truly rare! We have today attained great benefit by seeing the Buddha, the World-Honored One, by seeing Mañjuśrī, the Dharma prince, and by hearing the preaching of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. O World-Honored One, Dharma Prince Mañjuśrī has accomplished such an unprecedented Dharma! In what samādhi does he reside that he is able to manifest this unprecedented Dharma?”

The Buddha told the gods, “Mañjuśrī, the Dharma prince, is able to accomplish such rare and difficult feats because he resides in the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. When a Bodhisattva resides in this samādhi he performs the practice of faith for [sentient beings] yet does not follow any other faith. He also performs the practice of the Dharma and, with regard to the characteristic of the Dharma, neither regresses nor fails in the turning of the Wheel of the Dharma.

He also transforms himself into eight [different types of] persons and cultivates enlightenment during countless immeasurable eons on behalf of those beings [misled by] the eight heterodoxies [the opposites of the eightfold noble path]. He becomes a stream-enterer, but on behalf of sentient beings floating in the waters of saṃsāra he does not enter the absolute. He becomes a seldom-returner and manifests his body throughout the worlds. He becomes a once-returner and returns again to teach sentient beings. He becomes an Arhat and studies the Dharma of the Buddhas with constant energy. He becomes a Śrāvaka and preaches the Dharma with unhindered discrimination. He becomes a Pratyekabuddha, and in order to teach sentient beings having [appropriate] aptitudes [*lit.*, causes and conditions], he manifests entry into Nirvāṇa and then, through the power of samādhi, returns to be born once again. O gods, Bodhisattvas who reside in this Śūraṅgama Samādhi are all pervasively able to practice the practices of the sages. In accordance with their stages they also preach the Dharma, although they do not reside therein.”

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When the gods heard the Buddha preach this doctrine, they all burst into tears, saying, “World-Honored One, if someone has already entered the rank of Śrāvaka or Pratyekabuddha, he [must] lose forever this Śūraṅgama Samādhi. However, O World-Honored One, even if someone has committed [any of] the five major transgressions, if he hears the preaching of this Śūraṅgama Samādhi, he will become an Arhat with his impurities exhausted and without entering into the absolute [i.e., extinction]. Why? Even if someone has committed [any of] the five major transgressions, after hearing this Śūraṅgama Samādhi and generating the intention to achieve unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment, even though his original transgression would [ordinarily lead him to being] cast into the hells, by the good roots and the causes and conditions of hearing this samādhi he will instead achieve Buddhahood.

“World-Honored One, an Arhat with impurities exhausted is yet like a broken vessel, [because he is] permanently unable to receive this samādhi. World-Honored One, it is likened to an offering of ghee



and honey, which is to be carried in various vessels by many people. One of those people may be careless and break the vessel [he is carrying], so that even though he arrives at the location where the ghee and honey is to be donated, it is of no benefit. Although he can satisfy himself, he cannot carry any back to give to others. Another person, who carries a vessel that remains complete and strong, is able to satisfy himself and carry the filled vessel to give to others. The ghee and honey stands for the correct Dharma of the Buddhas. Those who break the vessels they carry, who satisfy themselves without being able to carry any [ghee and honey] back to give to others, are the Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas. Those carrying the whole vessels are the Bodhisattvas, who are able to satisfy themselves and also carry [the Dharma] back to all sentient beings.”

At this time the two hundred Bodhisattvas [*lit.*, gods] who were about to regress from the intention to achieve unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment, upon hearing the words of these gods, and upon hearing of the inconceivable power of the merit of Dharma Prince Mañjuśrī, experienced a profound intention to achieve unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment. Dispensing with their previous inclinations to regress, they addressed the Buddha, saying, “We will never forsake this intention, even at the cost of personal injury or loss of life, and we will never forsake all sentient beings!

“World-Honored One, we only wish that we might hear the good roots and causes and conditions of this Śūraṅgama Samādhi and that we might attain the ten powers of the Bodhisattva. What are these ten? [They are] (1) the power of firm resolve in the intention to achieve enlightenment, (2) the power to attain profound faith in the inconceivable Dharma of the Buddhas, (3) the power to be well-versed in and not forget [the Dharma], (4) the power to travel tirelessly throughout saṃsāra, (5) the power of resolute great compassion for all sentient beings, (6) the power of resolute equanimity in charity, (7) the power of indestructibility in morality, (8) the power of resolute acceptance in forbearance, (9) the power of wisdom indestructible by demons, and (10) the power of joy of faith

in the profound Dharmas.” The Buddha then told Resolute Mind Bodhisattva, “You should understand that any sentient beings who hear this Śūraṅgama Samādhi and are able to have faith and take joy in it, whether during my presence or after my extinction, will all attain these ten powers of the Bodhisattva.”

At that time there was within the assembly a Bodhisattva named Mind of Name, who addressed the Buddha, saying, “World-Honored One, those who desire blessings should make offerings to the Buddhas. Those who desire wisdom should strive to be well-versed [in the Dharma]. Those who desire favorable rebirth should strive in morality. Those who desire great fortune should perform charity. Those who desire to attain a wondrous physical form should cultivate forbearance. Those who desire discrimination should honor teachers. Those who desire *dhāraṇīs* should transcend arrogance. Those who desire wisdom should cultivate correct mindfulness. Those who desire joy should dispense with all [that is] wrong. Those who desire to benefit sentient beings should generate the intention to achieve enlightenment. Those who desire wondrous sounds should cultivate true speech [honesty]. Those who desire merit should take pleasure in transcendence. Those who desire to seek the Dharma should associate with spiritual compatriots. Those who desire [to practice] seated meditation should separate themselves from disturbance. Those who desire understanding should cultivate meditation. Those who desire rebirth in the realms of Brahmā should cultivate the unlimited states of mind. Those who desire rebirth as gods or humans should cultivate the ten forms of good.

“[However], World-Honored One, those who desire good fortune, those who desire wisdom, those who desire favorable rebirth, those who desire great fortune, those who desire to attain a wondrous physical form, those who desire discrimination, those who desire *dhāraṇīs*, those who desire wisdom, those who desire joy, those who desire to benefit sentient beings, those who desire wondrous sounds, those who desire merit, those who desire to seek the Dharma, those who desire [to practice] seated meditation, those who desire understanding, those who desire rebirth in the realms

of Brahmā, those who desire rebirth as gods or humans, those who desire Nirvāṇa, those who desire the attainment of all forms of merit: such persons should hear the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, remember it, recite it, preach it for others, and practice it as it has been preached.”

[Mind of Name Bodhisattva then inquired,] “World-Honored One, how should the Bodhisattva cultivate this samādhi?”

The Buddha said, “Mind of Name, if a Bodhisattva is able to contemplate the dharmas as empty and unobstructed, with each moment of thought completely extinguished and transcending like and dislike, this is to cultivate this samādhi. Also, Mind of Name, one cannot study this samādhi by one approach alone. Why? In accordance with the activities [*hsing, saṃskāra*] of the minds and mental attributes [*hsin hsin-yu, citta-caitta*] of sentient beings, this samādhi has various practices. In accordance with the sensory realms [*ju, āyatana*] of the minds and mental attributes of sentient beings, this samādhi has various realms. In accordance with the entryways [*ju-men*] of the senses of sentient beings, this samādhi has various entryways. In accordance with the names and forms [*ming-se*] of sentient beings, Bodhisattvas who have attained this samādhi also manifest a variety of names and forms. To be able to understand thus is to cultivate this samādhi. In accordance with all the names and forms and physical characteristics of the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas who have attained this samādhi also manifest a variety of names and forms and physical characteristics. To be able to understand thus is to cultivate this samādhi. In accordance with [their] vision of all the Buddha lands, Bodhisattvas are also able to create such lands. This is to cultivate this samādhi.”

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Mind of Name Bodhisattva addressed the Buddha, “World-Honored One, it is extremely difficult to cultivate this samādhi.” The Buddha told Mind of Name, “It is because of this that few Bodhisattvas reside in this samādhi, while many Bodhisattvas practice other samādhis.”

Mind of Name Bodhisattva then addressed the Buddha, saying, “World-Honored One, Maitreya, who is now in the location of his penultimate birth [in the Tuṣita heaven] and who is to succeed

you, must have attained unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment. Has Maitreya attained the Śūraṅgama Samādhi?" The Buddha said, "Mind of Name, those Bodhisattvas who reside on the tenth stage, who are in the location of their penultimate birth [in the Tuṣita heaven], and who have attained the true rank of Buddhahood—every one of these [Bodhisattvas] has attained this Śūraṅgama Samādhi."

Maitreya Bodhisattva then manifested his divine power as follows: Mind of Name Bodhisattva and the rest of the assembly saw all the Jambudvīpa [continents in all the worlds of] the trichilocosm. They saw Maitreya Bodhisattva in the center of each [Jambudvīpa], or in the heavens, or among humans, or as a monk, or as a householder, or as an attendant to the Buddha like Ānanda, or as one premier in wisdom like Śāriputra, or as one premier in supernormal powers like Maudgalyāyana, or as one premier in asceticism like Mahākāśyapa, or as one premier in preaching the Dharma like Pūrṇa, or as one premier in the precepts (or, esoteric practices) like Rāhula, or as one premier in maintaining the Vinaya like Upāli, or as one premier in the heavenly eye like Aniruddha, or as one premier in seated meditation like Revata. Thus did they see Maitreya in the form of those premier in all [aspects of the Dharma]. They saw him entering into the cities, towns, and villages begging, or preaching the Dharma, or in seated meditation. Everything that was seen by Mind of Name Bodhisattva and the great assembly was manifested by Maitreya Bodhisattva through the power of the supernormal abilities [achieved through] the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. After seeing all this, [Mind of Name Bodhisattva] addressed the Buddha in great joy, saying, "World-Honored One, it is likened to gold, which is not altered in nature even when refined! And all these Bodhisattvas can do likewise: in whatever they attempt, they are able to manifest the inconceivable Dharma-nature!"

Mind of Name Bodhisattva then addressed the Buddha, "World-Honored One, I suggest that if a Bodhisattva is able to penetrate the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, one should understand that he penetrates all religious practices. He penetrates the Vehicle of the Śrāvaka, the

Vehicle of the Pratyekabuddha, and the Great Vehicle (the Mahāyāna) of the Buddha.” The Buddha said, “Thus it is, thus it is. It is as you have spoken. If a Bodhisattva is able to penetrate the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, he penetrates all religious practices.”

At that time the elder Mahākāśyapa addressed the Buddha, “World-Honored One, I suggest that Dharma Prince Mañjuśrī has already been a Buddha in a past life. He has himself sat in the seat of enlightenment and turned the Wheel of the Dharma, and he has manifested entry into Parinirvāṇa to sentient beings.” The Buddha said, “Thus it is, thus it is. It is as you have spoken, Kāśyapa. Long in the distant past, an immeasurable and innumerable [number of] inconceivable immeasurable eons ago, there was a Buddha who was called Paragon of the Dragons [as well as by the ten titles] Tathāgata, He Who Should Receive Offerings, Of Correct and Universal Understanding, Sufficient in Wise Practice, Well-Gone, He Who Understands the World, the Unsurpassed One, He Who Disciplines Humans, Teacher of Humans and Gods, and World-Honored Buddha. A thousand Buddha lands south of this world, there was a country called Universal Equivalence, which had neither mountains nor rivers, neither stones nor rocks, and neither hills nor dales. The land there was as flat as the palm of one’s hand, and on it grew a soft grass, like that in Kaliṅga. When Paragon of the Dragons Buddha attained unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment and first turned the Wheel of the Dharma in that world, he created an assembly of seven billion Bodhisattvas through his teaching. Eight billion people became Arhats, and ninety-six thousand people resided as Pratyekabuddhas [*lit.*, resided within the dharmas of the causes and conditions of Pratyekabuddhas]. Afterward, there were also an immeasurable number of Śrāvaka monks.

“Kāśyapa, the life span of Paragon of the Dragons Buddha was four million four hundred thousand years, during which time he saved humans and gods and then entered into Nirvāṇa. His physical relics were divided and distributed around the world, and there were erected thirty-six hundred-million stūpas, at which sentient beings made offerings to him. After that Buddha died,

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the Dharma remained for ten thousand years. When Paragon of the Dragons Buddha was about to enter Nirvāṇa, he conferred a prediction [of future enlightenment] on Brilliance of Wisdom Bodhisattva, saying, ‘After I am gone, this Brilliance of Wisdom Bodhisattva will achieve insurpassable and perfect enlightenment. He will again be called Brilliance of Wisdom [Buddha].’

“Kāśyapa, could that Paragon of the Dragons Buddha of the world Universal Equivalence be anyone else? You must have no doubt! Why? It was none other than Mañjuśrī, the Dharma prince. Kāśyapa, you should now perceive the power of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. It is by its power that the great Bodhisattvas manifest entry into the womb, are born, leave home, proceed to the Bodhi Tree, sit upon the seat of enlightenment, turn the wondrous Wheel of the Dharma, enter into Parinirvāṇa, and distribute their relics, without ever dispensing with the Dharma of the Bodhisattva and not entering final extinction at Parinirvāṇa.”

The elder Mahākāśyapa then asked Mañjuśrī, “Are you able to perform such rare and difficult things to manifest for sentient beings?” Mañjuśrī said, “Kāśyapa, what do you mean? Who created this Mount Gr̥dhra-kūṭa? From whence did this world derive?” Kāśyapa replied, “Mañjuśrī, all the worlds are created out of foam, and they are derived from the causes and conditions of the inconceivable karma of sentient beings.” Mañjuśrī said, “All the dharmas also exist in dependence on the causes and conditions of inconceivable karma. I have no power to effect such things. Why? The dharmas are all based on causes and conditions. Since they are without any [ultimate] master, they may be created at will. If one understands this, such actions [as those described above] are not difficult. Kāśyapa, it would be difficult for someone who does not know of the Four Noble Truths to hear and believe in such things. Once one understands the Four Noble Truths and attains the supernatural powers, however, it is not difficult to hear and believe this.”

At that time the World-Honored One sent his body up into space, to the height of seven *tāla* trees. Seated [in the air] in full lotus position, he emitted a refulgence from his body that illuminated throughout [all] the immeasurable worlds in the ten directions.

The entire assembly saw the immeasurable Buddhas of the ten directions and heard them from afar all preaching the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, without increase and without decrease. Those Buddhas of the ten directions also sent their bodies up into space, to the height of seven *tāla* trees. Seated [in the air] in full lotus position, they emitted refulgences from their bodies that illuminated throughout [all] the immeasurable worlds in the ten directions. The sentient beings in those [other worlds] also saw the body of Śākyamuni Buddha risen up in the air and sitting in full lotus position. Those assemblies [listening to the other Buddhas] then all took flowers and scattered them over Śākyamuni Buddha from afar, and everyone saw the collections of flowers combine in the air to form a flowered canopy. The Bodhisattvas, gods, dragons, *yakṣas*, and *gandharvas* of this land all scattered flowers about over the other Buddhas; and everywhere flowered canopies were formed over the heads of the Buddhas.

Śākyamuni Buddha then reined in his supernormal ability of levitation, sat back down on his original seat, and told Resolute Mind, “This is the power of the supernormal abilities of the Tathāgata. The Tathāgata has manifested thus in order to increase the merit of sentient beings.” When the Buddha manifested his supernormal abilities, eight thousand gods generated the intention to achieve insurpassable and perfect enlightenment. Also, as the preaching of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi was about to end, Resolute Mind and five hundred [other] Bodhisattvas attained the Śūraṅgama Samādhi. All of them had seen the divine power of the Buddhas of the ten directions, had attained the brilliance of wisdom in the profound Dharma of the Buddhas, resided on the tenth stage, and received the rank of Buddhas. [All] the worlds of the trichiliocosm [shook] with the six types of vibration, and a great refulgence was released that illuminated throughout [all] the worlds. A thousand ten-thousand dancers performed at once, and the gods rained various types of flowers down from the sky.

The Buddha then told Ānanda, “You should accept this Śūraṅgama Samādhi, recite it, and preach it extensively for people.” Indra king Holding Mount Sumeru then said to the Buddha,

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“World-Honored One, there is a limit to Ānanda’s wisdom and memory. Since Śrāvakas follow the [teaching] of objectified sound [*t’a yin-sheng*, *lit.*, other sound], why do you confer this Dharma treasure of this samādhi on Ānanda?” Indra king Holding Mount Sumeru then spoke in utter sincerity, “If I will truly be able to disseminate this precious samādhi now and in the future, then let all the trees here on Mount Gṛdhra-kūṭa appear as Bodhi Trees, with a Bodhisattva beneath each one!” After Indra king Holding Mount Sumeru said this, all the trees were seen to be like Bodhi Trees, with a Bodhisattva visible beneath each and every tree. The Bodhi Trees all uttered the following words, “It is as Indra king Holding Mount Sumeru has said. Truly, this person must be able to disseminate this samādhi widely!”

At that time the gods, dragons, *yakṣas*, and *gandharvas* addressed the Buddha in unison, saying, “World-Honored One, even if your lifetime were an entire eon, you should do nothing other [than preach the Śūraṅgama Samādhi]. Rather than preaching the Dharma for people using the Vehicle of the Śrāvakas—[even though you] preach the Dharma for each and every one so that you are always able to save sentient beings, just as at the time of your first turning of the Wheel of the Dharma—it would be better if you were to save people by preaching this Śūraṅgama Samādhi. Why? The [number of] sentient beings who would be saved by the Śrāvaka Vehicle is not even one part in a hundred of [those who would be saved by] the Bodhisattva Vehicle, [nor even] one part in a hundred thousand ten-thousand hundred-million, nor even [one part in] any number that could be described metaphorically. Thus does the Śūraṅgama Samādhi have immeasurable power to make all Bodhisattvas achieve [their goals] and become sufficient in the Dharma of the Buddhas.”

Resolute Mind Bodhisattva then addressed the Buddha, saying, “World-Honored One, what will your life span truly be? When will you finally enter Nirvāṇa?” The Buddha said, “Resolute Mind, thirty-two thousand Buddha lands to the east of this world, there is a country named Ornamentation. There is a Buddha there who



is called King of Autonomous Illumination and Ornamentation, [as well as by the ten titles] Tathāgata, He Who Should Receive Offerings, Of Correct and Universal Understanding, Sufficient in Wise Practice, Well-Gone, He Who Understands the World, the Unsurpassed One, He Who Disciplines Humans, Teacher of Humans and Gods, and World-Honored Buddha. He is now preaching the Dharma. Resolute Mind, my life span is the same as that of the Buddha King of Autonomous Illumination and Ornamentation.” [Resolute Mind asked], “World-Honored One, what is the life span of this Buddha King of Autonomous Illumination and Ornamentation?” The Buddha told Resolute Mind, “You may go ask him yourself; he will answer you.”

At that instant, the Buddha imparted his divine power unto Resolute Mind, who, through the power of the *Sūraṅgama Samādhi* and through the power of the supernormal abilities [deriving from] his own good roots, arrived in a single moment in that world [known as] Ornamentation. [Resolute Mind] placed his head on that Buddha’s feet in worship, walked around him three times, then faced that Buddha and addressed him saying, “World-Honored One, what is your life span? When will you enter into Nirvāṇa?” That Buddha replied, saying, “My life span is the same as that of the Buddha Śākyamuni. If you wish to know, Resolute Mind, my life span is seven hundred immeasurable eons. The life span of the Buddha Śākyamuni is the same.” Feeling great joy, Resolute Mind Bodhisattva then returned to this *Sahā* world. He addressed the Buddha, saying, “World-Honored One, that Buddha King of Autonomous Illumination and Ornamentation has a life span of seven hundred immeasurable eons. He told me your life span is the same as his.”

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At that time Ānanda arose from his seat, placed his robe over his right shoulder, held his palms together, and faced the Buddha. He addressed the Buddha, saying, “World-Honored One, according to my understanding of the doctrines you have preached, I suggest that it is you who, under a different name, benefit sentient beings in that Ornamentation world.” The World-Honored One then praised Ānanda, saying, “Excellent, excellent. You are

able to understand this by the power of the Buddhas. The body of that Buddha is my body; under a different name do I preach the Dharma and save sentient beings there. Ānanda, such autonomous power in the supernormal abilities is entirely the power of the Śūraṅgama Samādhi.” The Buddha then told Resolute Mind Bodhisattva, “Resolute Mind, because of this, you should understand that my life span is seven hundred immeasurable eons, after which I will finally enter into Nirvāṇa.”

Hearing that the life span of the Buddha was so inconceivably [long], everyone in the great assembly then experienced great joy and attained [an experience they] had never had before. They addressed the Buddha, saying, “World-Honored One, the divine power of the Buddhas is utterly unprecedented. All of their activities [*hsing*, practices] are inconceivable. You manifest such a brief life span in this [world], yet your real [life span] is seven hundred immeasurable eons. World-Honored One, we beseech you to allow all sentient beings to have inconceivably long life spans such as this!”

The World-Honored One then said to Resolute Mind once again, “The demons and demonic people within the countries, cities, towns, villages, and empty forests will not be able to gain mastery of this Śūraṅgama Samādhi.” He also told Resolute Mind, “Any Dharma master who copies, recites, and explains this Śūraṅgama Samādhi should have no fear of humans or nonhumans but will attain twenty forms of inconceivable merit. What are these twenty forms of inconceivable merit? [They are]: inconceivable wisdom, inconceivable sagacity, inconceivable expedient means, inconceivable discrimination, inconceivable wisdom in the Dharma [*fa-ming*], inconceivable *dhāraṇīs*, inconceivable teachings [*fa-men*], inconceivable memory [of anything] at will, inconceivable power in the supernormal abilities, inconceivable discrimination of the words of sentient beings, inconceivable profound understanding of the longings of sentient beings, inconceivable attainment of vision of the Buddhas, inconceivable hearing of the Dharmas, inconceivable teaching of sentient beings, inconceivable autonomous mastery of samādhi, inconceivable creation of pure lands, inconceivable

most wondrous physical form, inconceivable autonomous mastery of merit, inconceivable cultivation of the Perfections, and inconceivable attainment of the Dharma of the Buddhas without regression. These are the twenty.

“Resolute Mind, anyone who copies or recites this Śūraṅgama Samādhi will attain these twenty forms of inconceivable merit. For this reason, Resolute Mind, anyone who wants to attain any of the benefits in this lifetime or the next should copy, recite, explain, and practice according to this Śūraṅgama Samādhi. Resolute Mind, if good men and women seeking the enlightenment of Buddhahood and engaged in the thousand ten-thousand eons of diligent cultivation of the Six Perfections hear this Śūraṅgama Samādhi, are able to accept it in faith without becoming discouraged, and are not upset or frightened by it, the blessings [accruing from this] will surpass those of anything else, and they will rapidly attain unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment. How much more so for those who hear it, accept it, recite it, practice according to it, and explain it for people! Any Bodhisattva who wishes to hear the inconceivable Dharma of the Buddhas without being upset or frightened, who wishes to realize his own understanding of all the Dharmas of the Buddhas without being dependent on any other teaching, should cultivate and practice this samādhi. If you wish to hear a Dharma you have not heard before, to accept [the Dharma] in faith and without disagreement, you should hear this Śūraṅgama Samādhi.”

When this *Śūraṅgama Samādhi Sūtra* was preached, innumerable sentient beings generated the intention to achieve unsurpassable and perfect enlightenment! Twice that number [were able to] reside in the stage of non-regression, and twice that number attained the forbearance of the birthlessness of all dharmas! Eighteen thousand Bodhisattvas attained the Śūraṅgama Samādhi, and eighteen thousand monks and nuns, because they were not influenced by the dharmas, [achieved] the emancipation of the extinction of impurities [*lit.*, outflows] and attained Arhatship. Twenty-six thousand laymen and laywomen attained the purity of the Dharma

eye with regard to the dharmas, and thirty *nayutas* of gods attained the rank of sage.

After the Buddha had preached this Sūtra, Dharma Prince Mañjuśrī, Resolute Mind Bodhisattva, all the great Bodhisattvas, Śrāvakas, and great disciples, and all the gods, dragons, *gandharvas*, *asuras*, and people of the world, having heard what the Buddha had preached, joyously believed in and accepted it.

**Here Ends the Śūraṅgama Samādhi Sūtra**

## Glossary

**Ānanda:** The name of the Buddha's cousin, close disciple, and personal attendant. He was renowned for his ability to recite all of the Buddha's sermons from memory.

**Arhat:** "One who is worthy" since he has attained a spiritual goal, usually the eradication of all passions. While Buddha is the highest rank on the Bodhisattva's path, Arhat is the highest on the Śrāvaka's. Being an Arhat is not considered good enough by the Mahayanists, who posit different virtues, such as charity, zeal, and compassion.

**āyatana** ("entrance"): The six *āyatanas* are the six sense organs: (1) the eye, (2) the ear, (3) the nose, (4) the tongue, (5) the body, and (6) the mind, which comprise all of the human sense organs. The twelve *āyatanas* are the six sense organs and their respective objects: (1) form, (2) sound, (3) odor, (4) flavor, (5) sensation, and (6) concepts. These comprise the entire epistemological world.

**Bodhicitta:** The initial desire, intent, or hope to attain enlightenment.

**Bodhisattva:** In the Mahāyāna, a selfless being with universal compassion who sees the universal emptiness of phenomena and is destined to become a Buddha.

**dhāraṇī:** A mystic phrase, spell, or incantation.

**dhātu** ("element," "world"): The three *dhātus* are the three realms of samsara, namely the realms of desire, of (pure) form, and of non-form. The eighteen *dhātus* are the twelve *āyatanas* (q.v.) plus their respective consciousnesses.

**eightfold noble path:** The eight aspects of practice aimed at attaining Nirvāṇa. The practitioner must develop: (1) right views, (2) right thought, (3) right speech, (4) right acts, (5) right livelihood, (6) right effort, (7) right mindfulness or recollection, and (8) right meditation. *See also* Four Noble Truths.

**five major transgressions:** Violations of the Five Precepts (q.v.).

**Five Precepts:** (1) Not to kill, (2) not to steal, (3) not to commit adultery, (4) not to speak falsely, and (5) not to drink intoxicants.

five modes of existence (five *gatis*): Sometimes translated as the five destinies of sentient beings. According to its own past karma (q.v.), a sentient being is born as a (1) god, (2) human being, (3) hungry ghost, (4) animal, or (5) hell being. All five kinds of beings, including gods, are within the samsaric world and are suffering. Only human beings have a chance to attain liberation from samsara; gods do not know that they are suffering, and in the other three states, suffering is too severe to handle.

Four Noble Truths: (1) Life is suffering. (2) The cause of suffering is desire. (3) There is a world without suffering called Nirvāṇa. (4) The means of attaining Nirvāṇa is the practice of the eightfold noble path (q.v.).

*gandharva*: A mythical being who is a celestial musician.

*garuḍa*: A mythical being that is half bird and half human.

karma (“action”): There are three kinds, of body, mouth, and mind. Karma is the cause of samsara, and its cessation is, therefore, the way to liberation from karmic existence. Avoiding the nihilistic extreme, Buddhist moralists maintain that the essence of action is volition (*cetanā*) and that the cause of suffering is passion (*kleśa*).

*kiṃnara*: A mythical being who is a heavenly vocal musician.

*kṣatriya*: The governmental or warrior caste in ancient India; a member of this caste.

*mahoraga*: A snake-like mythical being.

Mañjuśrī: The celestial Bodhisattva who represents the wisdom and realization of all Buddhas.

Māra: The demon who hinders Buddhist practice.

Nirvāṇa: The final goal of Buddhists; the extinction of all passions; the state of liberation.

non-returner (*anāgāmin*): One who, without coming back to this world, will appear in the world of the gods and from there will attain Nirvāṇa.

once-returner (*sakṛdāgāmin*): One who, after having returned once more to this world, will attain the end of suffering.

Pratyakabuddha: A solitary Buddha. A Buddha who has realized enlightenment alone and does not want to teach.

*samādhi*: A kind of meditation. A mental state in which the mind is focused on one point to the exclusion of all else. It aims at the cessation of karma (q.v.). Nine kinds are often recognized: the four meditations (*dhyāna*) in the world of form, the four attainments (*samāpatti*) in the world of non-form, and finally the attainment of cessation (*nirodhasamāpatti*). The last, being beyond the three realms of samsara, is Nirvāṇa.

- samsara: This world of suffering, which consists of the three *dhātus* (q.v.). The cause of samsara is karma (q.v.). The Four Noble Truths (q.v.) say that there is a world beyond samsara called Nirvāṇa.
- Śāriputra: A disciple of Śākyamuni, known as the foremost of those possessed of great wisdom. The authors of the Prajñāpāramitā literature, who claimed that they had more profound wisdom, criticized Śāriputra.
- Saṅgha: The Buddhist order, the monastic community. The fourfold Saṅgha consists of four assemblies: monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen.
- skandha* (“aggregate”): The five aggregates, which comprise all phenomenal things, are (1) matter, (2) perception, (3) conception, (4) volition, and (5) consciousness.
- stream-enterer (*srotāpanna*): One who has just entered the stream of noble disciples and who is sure to be delivered someday. He is no longer subject to rebirth in the lower modes of existence (hell beings, animals, and hungry ghosts).
- Śrāvaka: A “hearer” of Śākyamuni’s teaching. The Śrāvakas preserved the Buddha’s words, observed monastic rules, and organized the teachings into three bodies of scriptures called *piṭakas*. Mahayanists called the Śrāvaka tradition a deficient Vehicle (Hinayāna).
- three lower modes of existence: Hungry ghosts, animals, and hell beings. These beings cannot attain Nirvāṇa because their suffering is too severe to handle.
- Three Vehicles: The Śrāvaka Vehicle, the Pratyekabuddha Vehicle, and the Bodhisattva Vehicle.
- Triple Jewel: The Buddha, the Dharma, and the Saṅgha. The Buddha said that the truth (Dharma) is the only light (*dīpa*), but his followers worshipped him and believed their community to be of similar importance.
- yakṣa*: A kind of demi-god, a spirit of the woods and the earth, sometimes benevolent and sometimes not.





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# **A List of the Volumes of the BDK English Tripiṭaka (First Series)**

## **Abbreviations**

*Ch.*: Chinese  
*Skt.*: Sanskrit  
*Jp.*: Japanese  
*T.*: Taishō Tripiṭaka

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