

## **BHAGAVATI PRAJNAPARAMITA HRIDAYA**

### **THE HEART ESSENCE OF THE PERFECTION OF SUBLIME KNOWING—THE TRANSCENDENT, ACCOMPLISHED, AND VICTORIOUS GODDESS**

Indescribable, inconceivable, and inexpressible, the perfection of sublime knowing is unborn and unceasing—the very nature of space. It is the realm of your own self-knowing timeless awareness. I pay homage to the mother of the buddhas of the three times.

Thus have I heard. At one time the transcendent and accomplished conqueror was abiding on Vulture Peak in Rajagriha, accompanied by an enormous sangha of monks and an enormous sangha of bodhisattvas.

At that time the transcendent and accomplished conqueror was resting in equipoise in the meditative absorption of examining phenomena, known as “the state of profound perception.” Also at that time, the great and courageous bodhisattva, the exalted Avalokiteshvara, was looking intently into the profound way that sublime knowing is perfected and saw with precision that the five mind-body aggregates are empty of self-nature.

Then, through the power of the Buddha, the worthy Shariputra spoke the following words to the great and courageous bodhisattva, the exalted Avalokiteshvara:

“How should any child of spiritual heritage proceed who wishes to engage in the profound way that sublime knowing is perfected?”

Once he had said these words, the great and courageous bodhisattva, the exalted Avalokiteshvara, spoke the following words to the worthy Shariputra:

“O Shariputra, any sons or daughters of spiritual heritage who wish to engage in the profound way that sublime knowing is perfected should see with precision as follows: They should see—precisely, correctly, and intimately—that their five mind-body aggregates are empty of self-nature. Form is empty; emptiness is form. Emptiness is not other than form, and form is not other than emptiness. In the same way, sensations, perceptions, conditioning factors, and modes of consciousness are empty.

“O Shariputra, thus all phenomena are emptiness—they are without characteristics, unborn, unceasing, immaculate, and free of flaws. They do not diminish and they do not increase.

“O, Shariputra, therefore, with emptiness there is no form, there is no sensation, there is no perception, there are no mental states, and there is no consciousness.

“There are no senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, or discursive mind. There are no forms, no sounds, no odors, no tastes, no tactile sensations, and no concepts.

“There are no components—from sight on to discursive mind, and on further to the component of consciousness based on discursive mind.

“There is neither ignorance nor the absence of ignorance, and so forth, including neither aging and death nor the absence of aging and death.

“Similarly, there is no suffering, no origin of suffering, no cessation of suffering, and no path. There is no timeless awareness, no attainment, and no lack of attainment.

"O, Shariputra, therefore, because there is no attainment for bodhisattvas, they abide instead by relying on the perfection of sublime knowing. Since their minds are unobscured, they are fearless. They are far beyond any misconceptions, and so they reach the consummate state of nirvana. Moreover, all buddhas abiding throughout the three times become buddhas—awakening perfectly and completely to unsurpassable, true, and perfect enlightenment—by relying on the perfection of sublime knowing.

"Therefore, since the mantra of the perfection of sublime knowing—the mantra of supreme intrinsic awareness, the unsurpassable mantra, the mantra that brings equalness to that which is unequal, the mantra that utterly pacifies all suffering—is not false, you should know it to be true. I recite the mantra of the perfection of sublime knowing:

### **TADYA T'HA GATÉ GATÉ PARAGATÉ PARASAMGATÉ BODHI SOHA**

"O Shariputra, thus a great and courageous bodhisattva should train in the perfection of sublime knowing."

Then the transcendent and accomplished conqueror arose from that state of meditative absorption. He expressed his approval to the great and courageous bodhisattva, the exalted Avalokiteshvara, by saying, "Excellent! Excellent! O son of spiritual heritage, it is just so. It is just so. In just the manner you have shown, one should engage in the profound perfection of sublime knowing. Those who have gone to suchness rejoice in this."

Once the transcendent and accomplished conqueror had bestowed this command, they all rejoiced—the worthy Shariputra, the bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara, all those in the retinue, and the entire world of gods, humans, demigods, and gandharvas. They extolled the words spoken by the transcendent and accomplished conqueror.

This concludes the *Heart Essence of the Perfection of Sublime Knowing*.

*If you wish to perform the practice of this sutra, imagine that the Tathagata is in the sky in front of you with his hands in the gesture of taming the maras. He is surrounded by hinayana and mahayana sanghas, with Avalokiteshvara replying to Shariputra's questions. Recite the sutra as many as seven times, and repeat the mantra of intrinsic awareness as much as you like. Finally, if you wish to perform the averting ritual, recite the following:*

I pay homage to the Buddha. I pay homage to the dharma. I pay homage to the sangha. I pay homage to the supreme mother, the perfection of sublime knowing. May my words of truth be accomplished!

Just as in the past the lord of the gods, Indra, by contemplating the profound ultimate meaning of the perfection of sublime knowing and reciting these words aloud, turned back the evil maras and all other counterproductive forces, so too may I, by contemplating the profound ultimate meaning of the supreme mother, the perfection of sublime knowing, and reciting these words aloud, turn back the evil maras and all other counterproductive forces. May they be neutralized. May they be pacified. May they be utterly pacified.

*After reciting this, conclude with the following:*

Things that occur due to interdependent connection are unceasing and unborn, cannot be denied yet are not permanent, do not come or go, are not separate yet are not identical. This is the complete pacification of elaborations. This state of pacification is revealed by the speech of perfect buddhas, and to this holy truth I pay homage.