**The Wonderful Dharma Lotus Flower Sutra**

Chapter 8: Five Hundred Disciples Receive Predictions  
With Commentary by the Venerable Master Hsuan Hua

Originally there were 1,250 disciples who received predictions, here it only says five hundred. Actually these five hundred include the 1,250 disciples. This chapter describes predictions of Buddhahood for 1,250 disciples. The Dharma Flower Sutra is the Dharma that unveils the provisional and manifests the real: all beings can become Buddhas. Earlier, the Sutra said, although you realize Buddhahood, but there is a difference in time. Shakyamuni predicts Buddhahood for his disciples who are Hearers or Bodhisattvas now. That is why this eighth chapter is the chapter on Five Hundred Disciples Receiving Predictions.  
  
**Sutra:**  
  
**At that time Purnamaitreyaniputra, having heard about wisdom and the expedients from the Buddha who speaks of Dharma in accord with what is appropriate, having heard all the great disciples receive predictions of anuttarasamyaksambodhi; and in addition having heard of the matters of causes and conditions of former lives, and furthermore, having heard of the Buddha's great comfort and the power of his spiritual penetrations, obtained what he had never had, his mind was purified and he rejoiced.**  
**Commentary:**   
  
**At that time, Purnamaitreyaniputra**, whose name means "son of fullness and compassion," **having heard about wisdom and expedients from the Buddha**--in the presence of the Buddha, he heard the Dharma-doors of wisdom and expedients--**who speaks of Dharma in accord with what is appropriate.** In accord with the potentials of living beings, speaking all the provisional dharmas. **Having heard all the great disciples received predictions of anuttarasamyaksambodhi,** the utmost right and perfect enlightenment. **And in addition having heard of the matters of causes and conditions of former lives,** concerning the Buddha Great Penetration Wisdom Victory in former lives in the distant past. **And furthermore, having heard of the Buddha'sgreat comfort and the power of his spiritual penetrations,** power of greatly freeing spiritual penetrations. All the Buddhas have the inconceivable, wonderful function of spiritual penetrations.  **Sutra:**  
 **Obtained what he had never had, his mind was purified and he rejoiced.**   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**Obtained what he had never had.** He had never heard such a wonderful Dharma. **His mind was purified and he rejoiced.** His mind became pure and he was so happy he jumped for joy. He wanted to sit still, but he just could not contain himself and started jumping for joy. He jumped up and ran before the Buddha.  
  
**Sutra:**  
 **Thereupon, he rose from his seat, bowed with his head at the Buddha's feet, and withdrew to one side, gazing unblinkingly at the honored one’s countenance.**Outline:  
  
F2. Predictions for those of lesser roots.   
G1. Twelve hundred predictions.   
H1. Prediction for Purnamaitreyaniputra.   
I1. Preface.   
J1. Happiness at gaining understanding.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**Thereupon, he rose from his seat, bowed with his head at the Buddha's feet.** He was pure and rejoicing and filled with excitement. His awesome deportment failed him, in fact, and he ran to the Buddha and bowed to him. Then he calmed himself down **and withdrew to one side,** to be more respectful. **Gazing unblinkingly at the honored one's countenance**--he looked up at the Buddha, the World Honored One, and he did not turn his gaze away. It was as if he had entered samadhi. Although he certainly had not taken any drugs, he was definitely "stoned."  
  
**Sutra:**  
 **He then thought, “the World Honored One is most unique. His deeds are rare. He accords with all the various dispositions of beings in the world, employing expedient devices with knowledge and vision. He speaks the Dharma for them, releasing them from various types of greed and attachment. We could never fully express in words the merit and virtue of the Buddha. Only the Buddha, the World Honored One can know our deepest thoughts and past vows.”**Outline:J2. Narrating his silent thoughts leading to understanding.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
His eyes may not have been moving, but his mind was striking up some false thinking. **He then thought, the World Honored One is most unique.** The Buddha is really too great, too special. **His deeds are rare.** He does things no one else can do. He is the number one in everything he does. **He accords with all the various dispositions of beings in the world,** all their different temperaments, **employing expedient devices with knowledge and vision. He speaks the Dharma for them, releasing them from various types of greed and attachment.** All their attachments, regardless of where they are attached be it to wealth, sex, fame, food, or sleep, forms, sounds, smells, tastes, or objects of touch--the five dusts.   
  
**We could never fully express in words the merit and virtue of the Buddha.** When it comes to the Buddha, we cannot describe his virtue and wisdom in words. **Only the Buddha, the World Honored One, can know.** We cannot know the Buddha, but the Buddha can know us, know **our deepest thoughts and past vows.** The Buddha knows all the thoughts in our minds. He knows the vows we made in the past under all their different circumstances. The Buddha knows about the vows we made. We do not know ourselves, but the Buddha knows these things about us. The Buddha knows all the causes and conditions from past and present lifetimes.  
  
**Sutra:  
  
At that time, the Buddha told the Bhikshus, “Do you see this Purnamaitreyaniputra? I constantly praise him as being foremost of those who speak the Dharma, and I extol his various meritorious qualities, his vigorous and diligent support in helping to proclaim my Dharma. In the midst of the fourfold assembly, he can demonstrate the teaching to the delight and advantage of all. He perfectly interprets the Proper Dharma of the Buddha, greatly benefiting his fellow practitioners of Brahman conduct. Except for the Thus Come One, no one can fully appreciate his eloquence in discussion.”**Outline:  
  
I1. The Thus Come One gives predictions.   
J1. Prose.   
K1. Narrating the roots and traces.   
L1. Traces of Shakyamuni Buddha's practice in the world.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**At that time, the Buddha told the Bhikshus: Do you see this Purnamaitreyaniputra?** Do you see him, or not? Do you see this Hearer Disciple? In former lives, he made great vows to help the Buddha propagate the Buddhadharma. Do you see him? **I constantly praise him as being foremost of those who speak the Dharma.** I always praise him in the great assembly as being the best at speaking Dharma. So the Buddha also had his disciples take turns speaking the Dharma. Doesn't the Shurangama Sutra speak of the Four Great Disciples turning the Dharma-wheel? That just means taking turns speaking the Dharma.

The Buddha did not necessarily speak the Dharma every day. He had his disciples take turns, and when they had all had a turn, he asked, "Who do you think was the best speaker?" For sure, no one said anything. They did not know who was the best. The Buddha said, "Purnamaitreyaniputra is the very best. His eloquence is unlimited." The Buddha brought this up many times. Sometimes he would say, "Which disciple do you think is the poorest speaker?” Again, nobody said anything! It is just like you now. Whenever I ask you anything, you go into samadhi. When I did not ask you anything, you have plenty to say. Your tongues practically run outside of your mouths to talk. Inside, they cannot say anything. So they run outside of your mouths and "everywhere cover the three thousand great thousand worlds." However, when I ask who lectures well or poorly among you, "Huh?" you say, but nobody says a word, not even the most talkative of you. You all call your tongues back into your heads, and they no longer "everywhere cover the three thousand great thousand worlds."

The Buddha's intention in asking these questions was to encourage his disciples to be more vigorous. None of them wanted to be the worst speaker. The best speaker would work even harder. By the time the Buddha went to Nirvana, all of his disciples could speak the Dharma and turn the Great Dharma Wheel. Now, I am no Buddha, but I want to copy this Dharma-door of the Buddha's. And so frankly, I tell you what I know, but I could never tell you all I know. There is no end to that, and there is not enough time. So, when you lecture, you do not have to think, "Well, the Master did not explain that." There are a lot of things I do not explain! It is up to you to investigate these things in more detail and expand your knowledge. Take care to keep within the scope of the Sutra's principles, however.   
  
Anyway, Shakyamuni Buddha always praised Purnamaitreyaniputra as being number one in lecturing all Dharmas. He spoke the Dharma most miraculously. The gods liked to hear him speak the Dharma. The hungry ghosts liked to hear it too. Animals enjoyed his discourses, and the asuras, hearing him, would immediately quit fighting. They would strike up a truce and go hear the Dharma. The Arhats and the Bodhisattvas also liked to hear him. So, among those who spoke the Dharma, Purnamaitreyaniputra was foremost. Tops.   
  
**And I extol his various meritorious qualities.** I always extol his deeds in former lives when he made offering to all the Buddhas and the Triple Jewel, thereby nurturing various meritorious qualities.  
  
**His vigorous and diligent support in helping to proclaim my Dharma.** He was energetic in helping me to spread the Buddhadharma.   
  
**In the midst of the fourfold assembly, he can demonstrate the teaching to the delight and advantage of all.** Amidst the Bhikshus, Bhikshunis, Upasakas, and Upasikas, he can demonstrate the methodologies of the Buddhadharma. He delights his listeners who gain great benefit. **He perfectly interprets the Proper Dharma of the Buddha.** His knowledge and views are the same as the Buddha's. That is why he can interpret the Buddha's proper Dharma. **Greatly benefiting his fellow practitioners of Brahman conduct.** He greatly benefits all those who cultivate the Bodhisattva Path, pure Brahma conduct. **Except for the Thus Come One,** the Buddha, **no one can fully appreciate his eloquence in discussion.** The Bodhisattvas, Hearers, and Conditioned Enlightened Ones cannot out-debate the eloquent Purnamaitreyaniputra.   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **“You should not say that Purnamaitreyaniputra is only able to protect, support, and help propagate my Dharma alone. He has also, in the presence of ninety million Buddhas of the past, protected, supported, and helped to propagate those Buddhas' Proper Dharma, being foremost among the speakers of Dharma.   
  
Further, he has thoroughly understood the Dharma of emptiness taught by those Buddhas, and gained the four unobstructed wisdoms. He is always able to speak the Dharma, purely and precisely, without doubts. He has perfected the power of the Bodhisattva’s spiritual penetrations. Throughout his entire life, he has cultivated Brahman conduct. The Buddhas’ contemporaries all spoke of him as actually a Hearer, but this was just an expedient device he used in order to benefit limitless hundreds of thousands of living beings. He further transformed limitless asamkhyeyas of people, causing them to stand in anuttarasamyaksambodhi. In order to purify the Buddhalands, he constantly performs the Buddha's work in teaching and transforming living beings.”**Outline:  
  
L2. Narrating deeds of the past to reveal present roots.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
Shakyamuni Buddha, fearing that his listeners might think that Purnamaitreyaniputra had only recently assumed the position of Foremost Speaker of Dharma, says, **you should not say that Purnamaitreyputra is only able to protect, support, and help propagate my Dharma alone. He has also, in the presence of ninety million Buddhas of the past, protected, supported, and helped to propagate those Buddhas' Proper Dharma.** He made vows to help proclaim the Buddhadharma. Actually, it was not only ninety million. Ninety million just represents a large number. It could have been ninety million or ninety nine million; there is nothing fixed about it. **Being foremost among the speakers of Dharma.   
  
Further, he has thoroughly understood the Dharma of emptiness taught by those Buddhas.** The Dharma of emptiness refers to the Prajna Dharma. **And gained the four unobstructed wisdoms.** "Four unobstructed wisdoms” refers to the four unobstructed eloquences.   
  
1) Unobstructed eloquence in phrasing;

2) Unobstructed eloquence in meaning; this means that out of one principle he can derive limitless principles, and the limitless principles can all be traced back to the one principle. The one is many, and the many are the one. They perfectly interpenetrate.

3) Unobstructed eloquence in Dharma; from one Dharma, he understands the hundred Dharmas, and the hundred Dharmas revert to the one Dharma.

4) Unobstructed eloquence in delight in speech: if he merely had eloquence in phrasing, meaning, and Dharma, but took no delight in speech, no one would benefit. But, with the eloquence of delight in speech, one takes pleasure in speaking the Dharma in all situations. If a pig walks by, he says, "Hey, do not keep on being a pig. It is a miserable existence. All you do is eat and sleep. What meaning is there in that?" If he sees a dog, he says, "Quit being so stingy. Your greed has turned you into a dog, and it is really a dog's life. You held on to your money so tightly it has turned into water, and then you wondered where it went! Now as a consequence you have turned into a dog." Accordingly, you should speak the dharma for dogs when you see dogs.

When you see pigs, you should say, “Do not be so stupid and lazy! Being so useless, you will be killed and eaten in the future. People will say, ‘You fat pig, you are so fat that your meat is not too tasty!’ People who do not enjoy lean meat will say, ‘You pig, you do not even know how to eat. You are so skinny that your meat taste like wood.’ They will chew you out.” You speak dharma for pigs and dogs. You speak dharma in accord with the type of being. If you see hippies you speak the hippie-dharma. If you see non-hippies, you speak the dharma of non-hippies. Thus, the Dharma is spoken with delight to accord with living beings. Do not forget it. Without the fourth eloquence the first three are of no use.

**He is always able to speak the Dharma, purely and precisely, without doubts.** He speaks with great precision; he would never speak an impure dharma. Because he himself never has doubts about the Dharma, he never says anything to cause others to have doubts. If you yourself have doubts when you speak the Dharma, your listeners will certainly not believe you. "Let us not listen to him. He does not know what he is taking about," they will say.   
  
**He has perfected the power of the Bodhisattvas' spiritual penetrations.** He may look like a Hearer, but he is really practicing the Bodhisattva Path.   
  
**Throughout his entire life, he has cultivated Brahman conduct,** pure conduct.   
  
**The Buddhas’ contemporaries all spoke of him as actually a Hearer, but this was just an expedient device he used in order to benefit limitless hundreds of thousands of living beings.** Everyone thought he was a Hearer, but he was really a Bodhisattva. Outwardly he appeared to be a Hearer, but inside, he practiced the Bodhisattva Path. He hid the great and manifested the small. **He further transformed limitless asamkhyeyas of people, causing them to stand in anuttarasamyaksambodhi** to bring forth the mind for the utmost right and perfect enlightenment. **In order to purify the Buddhalands, he constantly performs the Buddha's work in teaching and transforming living beings.** Because he wants to adorn and purify the Buddhalands, he is always doing the Buddha's work; he never fails to benefit living beings. He is always busy teaching hundreds of thousands of millions of living beings.   
  
Purnamaitreyaniputra used the four kinds of unobstructed eloquence to teach living beings, to lead them to bring forth the Bodhi mind and cultivate the supreme Path. We should learn these four types of eloquence, too. But, do not just learn the eloquence of delight in speech and then be turned by living beings. How is one turned by living beings? Originally, you want to save a pig, let us say, and so you speak Dharma to the pig. But you get confused by the pig and turn into a pig yourself! Say a left-home person wants to save a lay person. He ends up failing to save them and taking drugs himself! Or, say you try to save a dog and get real impressed by the dog. In the end, you turn into a dog yourself. Thus, the dog ends up "saving" you!   
  
When I was in Manchuria, a friend of mine, a playwright, had a dog that he loved above all else. Eventually, the dog died and became a person. The person grew up and became the man's wife. However, the wife nagged and picked at her husband constantly, sort of like a puppy barking and yelping. The man wanted to cultivate, but his wife would not let him. It was a difficult situation. If he accused her of fighting with him, she would say that she was just joking with him. If he tried to think of it like a joke, well, it sure seemed real enough. So he did not know what to do. Finally, he said to me, "My wife just gives me trouble all day long. I want to cultivate, but she would not let me." I said, "You just do not have enough samadhi power. If you had samadhi power, she would stay away from you. If you just ignore her, she will eventually go away. When the conditions are over with, they disperse."   
  
He said, "Really?"   
  
I said, "Try it out."   
  
So he practiced at home. He cultivated patience for three years; his wife scolded him for three years. Finally, she died. She was gone--no more dog bite.   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **“O Bhikshus, Purnamaitreyaniputra has been the foremost speaker of the Dharma for the past seven Buddhas, and he is also foremost speaker of Dharma under me. He will also be the foremost speaker of Dharma under all the Buddhas to come in the Worthy Kalpa, for whom he will protect, uphold and help in propagating the Buddhadharma. He shall also protect, uphold and help the Dharma of limitless, boundless numbers of future Buddhas, teaching, transforming and benefiting limitless living beings, causing them to stand in anuttarasamyaksambodhi. In order to purify the Buddhalands, he will be ever vigorous and diligent in teaching and transforming living beings.”**Outline:  
  
L3. Telling of the Buddhas of the three periods of time (causes cultivated with).   
 **Commentary:**   
  
Shakyamuni Buddha tells the Bhikshus, **O Bhikshus, Purnamaitreyaniputra has been the foremost speaker of the Dharma for the past seven Buddhas.** This Hearer who "hides the great and manifests the small" has been the foremost speaker of the Dharma for the past seven Buddhas. The past seven Buddhas were:   
  
1. Vipashin Buddha,   
2. Shikin Buddha   
3. Vishvabhu Buddha   
4. Krakucchanda Buddha,   
5. Kanakamuni Buddha,   
6. Kashyapa Buddha,   
7. Shakyamuni Buddha   
  
Why was Purnamaitreyaniputra foremost speaker of Dharma under the first seven Buddhas? The phrase "seven Buddhas" actually includes Shakyamuni Buddha, but the Buddha mentions himself specifically. "Now, at present," he says, "he is the foremost speaker of Dharma."   
  
How did he get to be the number one? I will tell you about the causes and conditions behind this. Long ago, limitless, limitless, limitless eons ago, he was a person who could not express himself verbally, and he could not speak the Dharma. This is not to say that he was a mute, he just could not talk very well. Every time someone was lecturing on the Sutras or Dharma, he made a point of going to listen. Not only that, when he listened to Sutras, he would not have to eat to get full or drink to satisfy his thirst. He did not even need to sleep! He took the Dharma as his food, drink, and sleep. That is no big deal.

At first he insisted on standing during the lecture to show his respect. Everyone else would be sitting down, but he would stand. Later, he got to feel that standing was not respectful enough, so he knelt whenever anyone lectured on the Sutras. If someone spoke the Dharma, he would kneel there with his palms together, very respectfully, listening. At that time, he could not talk very well. He had had a lot of experience listening to Dharma speakers, good ones and not-so-good ones, and so he made a vow: "In the future, I will certainly leave the home-life to become a Dharma Master, and I am going to be the best speaker of Dharma. I will sit beneath the Dharma Throne of every single Buddha and be foremost speaker of the Dharma. I will not be number two!" In every life he made that vow.

It was like planting a seed. Eventually, the seed of unobstructed eloquence sprouted, and he fulfilled his vow. He was born in the presence of a Buddha, and he had limitless wisdom and unobstructed eloquence. He opened great wisdom, attained great eloquence, and was the number one in speaking the Dharma. Now you know. If you want to be the number one, you have to have some real skill. If you do not have real skill, you cannot get that position. This is a general explanation of why Purnamaitreyaniputra is the number one at speaking the Dharma. It would not be possible to explain all the causes and conditions in detail. He received various benefits listening to Dharma from various Dharma Masters and gained various small awakenings leading to his final awakening. But, we cannot go into all that here.   
  
**And he is also foremost speaker of Dharma under me.** It is not easy to be the number one. It is no simple thing. **He will also be the foremost speaker of Dharma under all the Buddhas to come in the Worthy Kalpa.** What is a Worthy Kalpa? It is the kalpa we are presently in, a kalpa that will see the emergence of many worthy sages. Shakyamuni Buddha is the fourth Buddha to appear in the Worthy Kalpa. Krakucchanda Buddha was the first. Kanakamuni Buddha was the second. Kashyapa Buddha was the third.   
  
There will be a thousand Buddhas appearing in the Worthy Kalpa, and Purnamaitreyaniputra will be foremost speaker of Dharma in every Buddha's assembly. So, you see that the number one position is not something you can take by force. He used his cultivated skill. If someone is a little better than you, be careful not to get jealous of him or her. "Hey, I cannot let him be number one!" That is a terrible attitude. If you want to be the number one, you have to work for it. You cannot steal it. You cannot try to take it by force. If everyone agrees that you are the number one, then that is different. You cannot force the issue. That is like stealing someone else's money and putting it in your pocket. There is no glory in such riches.

In Buddhism you cannot fight to be number one, and you cannot be jealous or obstructive just because someone has a little talent. How should you be? You should praise them: "The more cultivation anyone has, the happier I am. Whoever is intelligent and wise, I will study with them." Do not be jealous. If you get jealous, you will not have any great accomplishment because your mind is too petty. Purnamaitreyaniputra got the number one position through hard work. When he listened to the Sutras, he did not need to eat, drink, or sleep. What is more, when he heard the Dharma, he forgot absolutely everything else. He had no other hopes or false thoughts as he knelt to listen to the Dharma.

In the past there was a cultivator called the Living Buddha of Gold Mountain. Where did he get his name? It was very easy. He just wrote the two words "living Buddha" on his head like a billboard. He told everyone to call him by that name, and they did. He jumped off a many-storied pagoda and did not even get hurt! If anyone was sick, all he had to do was touch that person or blow a breath of air on that person, and they would get well. Or he might have the sick person drink some of his saliva or the water he had washed his feet with, and they would get well. He called this water "Prajna soup!"

Living Buddha he may have been, but whenever anyone lectured on the Sutras, no matter who they were, or whether they lectured well or not, he would kneel right on the ground to listen, without a pad or pillow. If you lectured for two hours, he would kneel there for two hours. If a Living Buddha knelt to listen to the Sutras, how much the more so should we "dead" Buddhas kneel! Ha! As a result of such bitter practices, he gained magical responses. When the monastery ran out of rice, the Abbot of Gold Mountain would send for the Living Buddha. "Hey! Go get us some rice!" he would say, and Living Buddha would come back with a lot of rice. How did he get it? He recited a mantra, saying, "Come on rice, come on rice..." and the rice showed up! That is how strange it was.   
  
**For whom he will protect, uphold, and help in propagating the Buddhadharma.** He was first in speaking Dharma, but it was not because he declared himself number one. The Buddha pronounced him number one. You should all be very clear about this. I hope that none of you will fight over the number-one position. If you do, you will just become a thief.   
  
**He shall also protect, uphold, and help to propagate the Dharma of limitless, boundless numbers of future Buddhas, teaching, transforming, and benefiting limitless living beings, causing them to stand in anuttarasamyaksambodhi.** Following the Worthy Kalpa, he will continue to be foremost speaker of Dharma in the Dharma Assemblies of countless Buddhas. He will teach and transform limitless living beings. He will benefit limitless living beings. He will cause living beings to stand firm in the utmost right and perfect enlightenment, the realization of Buddhahood.   
  
**In order to purify the Buddhalands,** to adorn and purify all the Buddhalands, **he will be ever vigorous and diligent in teaching and transforming living beings.** Whoever can be vigorous can purify and adorn the Buddhalands. Whoever can remain unafraid in the face of so much work, can purify the Buddhalands. So we are now translating the Sutras and that is purifying the Buddhalands. We are not afraid of toiling for the future of Buddhism, and that is purifying the Buddhalands.

For example, the person who works might think, "He is just saying that so it sounds good. He is just going to give us more work!" That is not it at all. I would say the same thing whether you work or not. That is because I have not become a Buddha, and I do not want my land purified anyway. Whether you are lazy or vigorous is entirely up to you. If you are diligent, you are purifying the Buddhalands. If you are not, you are not purifying them. There is something else you should be clear about. If you purify the lands of other Buddhas, then in the future, when you become a Buddha, your land will be adorned and pure. This is to take the Buddha's adornments as your own adornments. To purify other Buddhalands is to purify the Buddhaland of your own nature.

Since you are studying the Buddhadharma, in the future you are certainly going to become Buddhas. Therefore, if you are lazy now, in the future your land might be a land of ten evil turbidities! You will have twice as many turbidities in the future land as the land we are now in! I am not joking! It is true. If you do not cultivate now and purify the Buddhalands, your own land will be very unclean. I am not kidding you. All of you good knowing advisors should deeply understand the Buddhadharma, teach and transform living beings.

The Venerable Purnamaitreyaniputra taught and transformed living beings. The reason I can lecture Sutras now is because I was taught by the Venerable Purnamaitreyaniputra in the past. I basically cannot talk very well. I am pretty dense, denser than all of you. Although you do not dare to lecture the Sutras, you can say a few sentences. When I was young, I did not even talk. Now, I am speaking Dharma to you because I have been taught and transformed by Purnamaitreyaniputra. All of you should resolve to purify your Buddhalands. One of my disciples said, "Oh, now that we are putting out this magazine, we will have even more work to do!"   
  
I said, "All the Buddhas of the past had more work to do than you, and they were not afraid!"   
  
"Right," he said, and I believe now he is not afraid of having too much to do.   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **He will gradually perfect the Bodhisattva Path, and after limitless asamkhyeyaeons he will in this land attain anuttarasamyaksambodhi. His name will be Dharma Brightness Thus Come One, One Worthy of Offering, One of Proper and Universal Knowledge, One of Perfect Clarity and Conduct, Well-Gone One Who Understands the World, Supreme Lord, A Hero Who Subdues and Tames, A Teacher of Gods and Humans, The Buddha, The World Honored One.**Outline:  
  
K2. Bestowing the prediction.   
L1. Showing the perfection of cause and result.   
  
**Commentary:**  
  
**He will gradually perfect the Bodhisattva Path.** Purnamaitreyaniputra will practice the Bodhisattva Way to perfection and become a Buddha. **And after limitless asamkhyeya eons he will in this land,** in the Saha World, **attain anuttarasamyaksambodhi.** He will realize Buddhahood. **His** Buddha **name will be Dharma Brightness Thus Come One.** You should all remember that this will be his Buddha name. **One Worthy of Offerings** from humans and gods, **one of Proper and Universal Knowledge.** He will know that the ten thousand dharmas are the mind, and the mind gives birth to the ten thousand dharmas--that is right and universal knowledge. **One of Perfect Clarity and Conduct,** his intelligence and wisdom are complete. **Well-Gone One Who Understands the World,** he understands what most did not understand. **Supreme Lord** means there is no one higher than the Buddha is. **A Hero Who Subdues and Tames,** he regulates all in the three realms. **A Teacher of gods and Humans,** he is a guide for those in the human realm and also for the gods. **The Buddha, The World Honored One**-honored by those in and beyond the world. All Buddhas have these Ten Titles.

**Sutra:**  
 **This Buddha shall take great trichiliocosms as many as the sands in the Ganges River as his Buddhaland, with the seven jewels for earth. The land will be as level as the palm of one's hand. It shall have no mountains or hills, gorges, gullies or ditches. It will be filled with pavilions and palaces of the seven jewels. The palaces of the gods will be located in space nearby so the humans and gods may consort and see one another.**Outline:  
  
L2. Showing the vast adornments in that land.   
M1. Vast adornments of the country.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**This Buddha,** named Dharma Brightness, **shall take great trichiliocosms as many as the sands in the Ganges River as his Buddhaland with the seven jewels for Earth:** gold, silver, lapis lazuli, crystal, mother of pearl, red pearls and carnelian. **The land will be as level as the palm of one's hand.** There are two ways to explain this. The first is that the land will be level, like the palm of one's hands.   
  
"Well, the palm of my hand is not flat," you might say. This does not mean our hands. It means the Buddha's palm. The Buddha's palm is perfectly flat. The other way to explain it is that in the ocean there is a kind of stone that is absolutely flat, without the slightest bump. The tone is called "palm" stone. **It shall have no mountains or hills, gorges, gullies or ditches**--no mountains, hills, valleys, or other uneven spots. **It will be filled with pavilions and palaces of the seven jewels.** It will be filled with any beautiful buildings and scenic spots. **The palaces of the Gods will be located in space nearby so the humans and gods may consort and see one another.** The gods will be able to see the people, and the people will be able to see the gods. In this world, we can only see other people; we cannot see the gods. You say, "I have seen the gods."   
  
Well, maybe you have seen them. I have not. If everyone could see them as a matter of course, then you could say that we "see one another." Just because a few people have the Heavenly Eye and have seen them does not mean people in general can see them. Those without the Heavenly Eye cannot see them.

**Sutra:**  
 **There will be no evil paths and no women. All the living beings will be born by transformation and have no sexual desire.**Outline:  
  
M2. Only good destinies.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**There will be no evil paths.** In the Buddhaland of Dharma Brightness Thus Come One, the gods and humans will be able to see one another. Why is this? Because the people in that land will all have spiritual powers. They will all be able to fly and transform. Because of this, they can see each other. Also, there will be no hell-beings, animals, hungry ghosts, or asuras. Because there will be no hells, when people die, they will not suffer. Because there will be no hungry ghosts, when people are dead, they will not be hungry. Because there will be no animals, after they die, people will not be reborn as animals. So, there will be no evil paths and no women. Strange! No women in this land! "If there are no women," you may wonder, "then where do the people come from?"

**All the living beings will be born by transformation** from lotus flowers. They will not have to be born from women. In the Land of Ultimate Bliss there are no women, either. In the Eastern Land of Akshobya Buddha, there are women. But although there are women, there is no sexual desire, and the women are also born from lotuses by transformation. Purnamaitreyaniputra, who will be the Buddha Dharma Brightness, will have a land in which the living beings will be born from transformation, not from wombs. What is meant by "birth by transformation?" It means that originally there was nothing there and then all of a sudden, it appeared. The person just appears out of nowhere as it were. Some are born from trees by transformation. Trees can grow people! Some are born from the ocean by transformation. Everyone in Purnamaitreyaniputra's land will have an inconceivable state.   
  
**And have no sexual desire.** Sexual desire is impure. People who cultivate should not harbor thoughts of sexual desire; they should not have this kind of greed. If you are not even supposed to have such thought, how much the less should one actually indulge in sexual misconduct! Because they have no sexual desire, they attain great spiritual powers. They all have great spiritual powers, the spiritual powers of the Bodhisattvas.   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **They will obtain great spiritual penetrations. Their bodies will emit light, and they will be able to fly at will. Their resolve will be solid. They will be vigorous and wise. They will be golden colored, and adorned with the thirty-two marks. The living beings in that land will always take two kinds of food: The first, the food of Dharma joy and the second, the food of Dhyana happiness.**Outline:  
  
M3. The perfect blessings and wisdom of the humans and gods.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
Because they will have no sexual desire, **they will obtain great spiritual penetrations. Their bodies will emit light.** Because they are not born of sexual desire, rather by transformation, they will have great wisdom. Because they will have great wisdom, their bodies will give off light. **They will be able to fly at will.** Wherever they want to go, they just have to think, and--zip! They are there. **Their resolve** to cultivate the Buddhadharma **will be solid,** extremely solid. They will only go forward. They will never retreat. They will make progress everyday. Everyday they will be more vigorous. **They will be vigorous and** so they will be greatly **wise. They all will be golden colored.** The bodies of these living beings will be golden **and adorned with the thirty-two marks.** Their marks will be perfect. Even if they have not completed all the thirty-two marks, they will still adorn themselves towards that perfection.

**The living beings in that land will always take two kinds of food.** These two kinds of food are very unusual. **The first kind is the food of Dharma joy.** Yesterday I told you that when Purnamaitreyaniputra listened to the Dharma, he did not need to eat or sleep. How could he go without eating? It is because he gained the food of Dharma joy. It is like you students of the Buddhadharma now all eat one meal a day. This is something that is basically impossible. It is very difficult not to eat, because people's most basic instincts are food and sex. People like to eat, and they have desire; these two instincts come with them at birth. Now you can listen to the Buddhadharma and forget about eating. Listening to the Dharma makes you so elated that you forget everything. You forget about eating, you forget about sleeping. If you nod out during the lectures, though, that does not count as being filled with Dharma joy!

**The second** kind is **the food of Dhyana happiness.** You meditate everyday. You sit in *chan* everyday. The more you sit, the more you enjoy it, and the happier you are. You cannot bear to get up from meditation. The flavor of Dhyana happiness is really extremely wonderful. Once you attain the happiness of Dhyana, wild horses cannot keep you from meditating. Why? It is because you have tasted this flavor, and you must sit in meditation and cultivate the flavor of Dhyana happiness.   
  
There are many kinds of food. We living beings eat “portion food.” That is, we eat regular food. The gods eat by means of thought. The ghosts and spirits eat by "contact."   
  
"Portion" food means that everyone eats their share of food and gets full. That is how ordinary people eat. The gods eat by thought. They just think of food and they get full. This indicates they have gained a certain amount of Dhyana happiness. Ghosts and spirits eat by "contact." They do not need to put the food in their mouths. They just take a good whiff of it and are full. If you have gained the Heavenly Eye, you will be able to see that a change takes place in the food you offer to the Buddha. Let us take oranges and apples for example. Before you offer them to the Buddha, each orange, say, has two parts. There is the orange, and the orange-essence. If you have opened your Heavenly Eye, you will see the orange as "two" oranges, not one. Your ordinary eyes cannot see this. When you offer the orange to the Buddha, the Buddha accepts the orange-essence. After you have offered the orange, its essence is gone. The ghosts also eat this essence of the object. When you give something to the ghosts to eat, that is the part of it they eat. This is a very subtle process and is not something most people are aware of. In the land of Dharma Brightness Thus Come One, the living beings will eat the foods of Dharma joy and Dhyana happiness.

**Sutra:**  
 **The host of Bodhisattva will number in the limitless *asamkhyeyas,* of thousands of myriads of millions of *nayutas*. They will attain great spiritual penetrations and the Four types of Unobstructed Wisdom, they will be skilled at teaching and transforming all kinds of living beings. The host of Hearers will be uncountable and unreckonable in number. All will perfect the Six Penetrations, the Three Clarities and the Eight Liberations.**Outline:  
  
M4. The vast number of Bodhisattvas and Hearers.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**The host of Bodhisattvas will number in the limitless *asamkhyeyas* of thousands of myriads of millions of *nayutas*. They will attain great spiritual penetrations and the Four types of Unobstructed Wisdom.** Each Bodhisattva will have the four types of unobstructed eloquence, that kind of wisdom. **They will be skilled at teaching and transforming all kinds of living beings.** They will have perfected skill-in-means so that they can bestow the teaching in accord with the potential of living beings that receive it. They will speak the Dharma most appropriate to the individual.   
  
There will be countless Bodhisattvas there, but what about the Hearers? Will there be Hearers in that land?   
  
**The host of Hearers will be uncountable and unreckonable in number.** No matter how you try to count them, you will not be able to do so. **All will perfect the Six Penetrations:**  
  
1. The penetration of the heavenly eye,   
2. The penetration of the heavenly ear,   
3. The penetration of others' thoughts,   
4. The penetration of past lives,   
5. The penetration of the extinction of outflows,   
6. The penetration of the complete spirit.   
  
**The Three Clarities:**  
  
1. The clarity of past lives,   
2. The clarity of the heavenly eye, and   
3. The clarity of the extinction of outflows.   
  
**And the Eight Liberations:**

1. The liberation in which inwardly there is the mark of form, and outwardly form is contemplated.

2. The liberation in which inwardly there is no mark of form, and outwardly form is contemplated.

3. The liberation in which the pure body of wisdom certifies to the complete dwelling.

4. The liberation of the station of boundless emptiness.

5. The liberation of the station of boundless consciousness.

6. The liberation of the station of nothing whatsoever.

7. The liberation of the station of neither perception nor non-perception.

8. The liberation of the extinction of the skandhas of feeling and thought.   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **The realization of this Buddhaland will be thus adorned with limitless meritorious virtues.**Outline:  
  
M5. General conclusion regarding the adornments.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**The realization of this Buddhaland will be thus adorned with limitless meritorious virtues.** It will be created by and adorned with merit and virtue.   
 **Sutra:**  
 **The *eon* will be named “Jeweled Brightness.” The country will be named “Well Purified.”**Outline:  
  
L3. Name of the eon and the country.   
 **Commentary:**   
  
**The eon will be named “Jeweled Brightness.” The country will be named “Well Purified.”** The Buddhaland of Dharma Brightness Thus Come One will be called "Well Purified."   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **The life span of that Buddha will be limitless *asamkhyeyaeons* and his Dharma will abide for a very long time.**Outline:  
  
L4. Life span as a Buddha and the Dharma's dwelling.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**The life span of that Buddha will be limitless *asamkhyeya eons* and his Dharma will abide for a very long time.**  
  
**Sutra:**  
 **After that Buddha's extinction, *stupa*s of the seven jewels will be built everywhere in that land.**Outline:  
  
L5. Offerings to that Buddha's sharira after his extinction.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**After that Buddha's extinction,*stupas* of the seven jewels will be built** by his disciples to contain his relics. **Everywhere in that land** there will be sharira-*stupas*.   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **At that time, the World Honored One, wishing to restate this meaning, spoke verses saying,**

***“All of you Bhikshus listen well,  
The path walked by the Buddha's sons,  
Because they thoroughly studied the expedient devices,   
Was inconceivable.   
Knowing that the multitudes delight in lesser dharmas,  
And also that they fear great wisdom,   
Therefore the Bodhisattvas   
Become Hearers and Conditioned Enlightened Ones.  
Employing countless expedient devices,  
They transform all the varieties of living beings.  
They speak of themselves as being Hearers,   
Very far from the Path of the Buddha.   
They cross over limitless multitudes,   
Bringing them all to accomplishment.   
Even those of little zeal and who are remiss  
Are gradually caused to become Buddhas.   
Inwardly they practice as Bodhisattvas,   
While outwardly they manifest as Hearers   
Of few desires, who despise birth and death,   
While in reality they are purifying their Buddhalands.   
Displaying to the multitudes the three poisons,   
Appearing to have deviant views   
In this way my disciples,   
Expediently save living beings.   
Were I to speak fully,   
Of their various deeds of transformation   
Living beings, hearing it,   
Would harbor doubts within their minds.***

Outline:  
  
J2. Verse.   
K1. Relating the past.   
L1. General disclosure of past as a Hearer.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**At that time, the World Honored One, wishing to restate his meaning, spoke verses saying,** Shakyamuni Buddha wanted to repeat the principles he had just spoken to elaborate upon them.   
  
**All of you Bhikshus listen well,** pay close attention. Do not be sloppy. **The path walked by the Buddha's sons,** the Bodhisattva Path as walked by disciple Purnamaitreyaniputra. **Because they thoroughly studied the expedient devices,** studying the Buddhadharma well, mastering expedient devices **was inconceivable.** His state was not something that common people could understand. He cultivated the Bodhisattva Path.   
  
**Knowing that the multitudes delight in lesser dharmas.** He knew that all living beings like petty, Small Vehicle Dharmas and do not like the Great Vehicle Dharma. **And also that they fear great wisdom.** They are afraid of the Buddha's wisdom. **Therefore the Bodhisattvas become Hearers and Conditioned Enlightened Ones.** For this reason, the Bodhisattvas hide the great and manifest the small. They hide away their Bodhisattvaship and manifest in bodies of Hearers or Conditioned Enlightened Ones. **Employing countless expedient devices,** limitless, countless expedient devices, **they transform all the varieties of living beings.** They use all different kinds of Dharma-doors to teach and transform all kinds of living beings.   
  
**They speak of themselves as being Hearers.** They say that they are Two Vehicle People, **very far from the path of the Buddha.They cross over limitless multitudes, bringing them all to accomplishment.** They teach, transform, and rescue limitless living beings; all of those living beings obtain the Way of the Buddha.   
  
**Even those of little zeal and who are remiss, are gradually caused to become Buddhas.** “Little zeal” means that their resolve is for the lesser vehicle. “Remiss” means that they do not seek the Great Vehicle. Even though those of the Small Vehicle want to relax, to stop half way, the Bodhisattvas gradually teach them so that they can become Buddhas.   
  
**Inwardly they practice as Bodhisattvas while outwardly they manifest as Hearers.** On the outside they look like your typical Hearer-type, but inside they are practicing the Bodhisattva Path. They are really great Bodhisattvas already. **Of few desires, who despise birth and death.** They have some desire, but not very much--very, very little. Hearers despise birth and death and want to escape from it. That is their focus on cultivation. Bodhisattvas on the other hand are not afraid of birth and death. They enter birth and death to save living beings. **While in reality they are purifying their Buddhalands.** They are practicing Bodhisattva practices.   
  
**Displaying to the multitudes the three poisons:** greed, hatred and stupidity. They just do this for show, however. They do not really have the three poisons. **Appearing to have deviant views,** they would seem to have deviant views. This is like the Buddha's disciple, Kalodayin, who pretends to be very fond of women. He did not like women really, though; he just pretended to. He put on a show, and no one could tell if it was for real or not. People with genuine wisdom knew that he was not really that way, he was just manifesting as having deviant views.   
  
**In this way, my disciples expediently save living beings.** Shariputra would sometimes manifest anger. A disciple would manifest greed. Another disciple would manifest stupidity. People with wisdom knew that they were just putting on a show. My disciples contemplate the causes and conditions of living beings and manifest a style, when in reality they are just using this method to save living beings. **Were I to speak fully,** if I told the whole story **of their various deeds of transformation;** how they taught the Dharma to the **living beings, hearing it,** hearing about these states, **would harbor doubts within their minds.** They would have doubts. So, I am not going to go into detail about it.   
  
Yesterday was the anniversary of Shakyamuni Buddha's leaving home. We should know the date of the anniversary of Shakyamuni Buddha's leaving home. We should also not forget the date of the anniversary of our own leaving home. We should also remember what day we took refuge. The day we took refuge is like our new birthday. So do not forget what day you took refuge and what day you left home. You also should not forget how it was that you came to study the Buddhadharma.

The students of the Dharma in this hall were mainly introduced by Guo Rong. Guo Rong was studying (at the University of Washington) with Dr. Conze. Guo Rong influenced a lot of people to study the Buddhadharma. The old professor has, however, taken slightly ill. It is basically a small problem, and he does not need our help to get well. However, we should show our good feeling for him by reciting the Buddha's name for him while contemplating the Buddhas of the ten directions coming to aid the old professor so that he can get well. That is what I hope you will do. I hope that my disciples will not take what I say as the wind passing by their ears and ignore it.   
  
**Sutra:**

***Now, this Purnamaitreyaniputra,  
In the past under thousands of millions of Buddhas,  
Has cultivated diligently his practice of the Path.   
Proclaiming and protecting the Dharma of all Buddhas.   
Seeking supreme wisdom,   
In the presence of the Buddhas,   
He appeared as the head of the disciples.   
With much learning and with wisdom  
He spoke without fear,   
Leading the assembly to rejoice,   
And never did he grow weary,   
Participating in the Buddha's work.   
Having already crossed over into great spiritual penetrations,   
And having perfected the four unobstructed wisdoms,   
He knew the faculties of beings, sharp or dull,   
And always spoke pure Dharma.   
Proclaiming principles such as this,   
He taught thousands of millions of multitudes,   
To dwell in the Dharma of the Great Vehicle,   
While he purified his own Buddhaland.   
In the future, too, he will make offerings,   
To limitless, countless Buddhas.   
  
Helping to proclaim the Proper Dharma,   
And also purifying his own Buddhaland.   
Always using expedient devices,   
He will speak the Dharma without fear,   
Saving incalculable multitudes,   
So that they accomplish All-Wisdom.***

Outline:  
  
L2. Purnamaitreyaniputra’s past.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**Now, this Purnamaitreyaniputra**--The first twenty lines discuss Purnamaitreyaniputra's past roots. The last eight lines generally discuss his future practices. **In the past under thousands of millions of Buddhas, has cultivated diligently his practice of the Path,** the pure path of the Great Vehicle Bodhisattva. **Proclaiming and protecting the Dharma of all the Buddhas,** teaching and maintaining the Dharma.   
  
**Seeking supreme wisdom,** the supreme wisdom of the Thus Come One. **In the presence of the Buddhas, he appeared as the head of the disciples.** In the assembly of all those Buddhas, he was foremost in speaking the Dharma. He appeared as the head of the Disciples.   
  
**With much learning and with wisdom, he spoke without fear.** He had attained the Four Fearlessnesses and spoke the Dharma fearlessly. **Leading the assembly to rejoice,** causing those who were listening to be delighted. **And never did he grow weary.** He never appeared to be tired of speaking and teaching the Buddhadharma. **Participating in the Buddha's work,** he helped the Buddhas proclaim the Dharma.   
  
**Having already crossed over into great spiritual penetrations.** He had already crossed over the sea of birth and death and attained great spiritual penetrations. **And having perfected the Four Unobstructed Wisdoms, he knew the faculties of beings, sharp or dull. And always spoke pure Dharma.** He knew the root-natures of all the living beings, if they were intelligent or dull. **Proclaiming principles such as this, he taught thousands of millions of multitudes to dwell in the Dharma of the Great Vehicle, while he purified his own Buddhaland.** He always spoke the supreme, pure, wonderful Dharma, propagating and proclaiming its principles. Although he manifested as a Hearer, his mind was always purifying his Buddhaland as a Bodhisattva.   
  
**In the future, too, he will make offerings to limitless, countless Buddhas,** thereby cultivating his blessings. **Helping to proclaim the Proper Dharma and also purifying his own Buddhaland.** Outwardly, he will appear to be a lowly Hearer who helps lecture on the Dharma. Inwardly, in his true mind, he will be a Bodhisattva at work purifying his Buddhaland. **Always using expedient devices, he will speak the Dharma without fear.** He will employ clever expedient devices, speaking the wonderful Dharma without fear. **Saving incalculable multitudes, so that they accomplish All-Wisdom.** So they all realize the Buddha's wisdom.

**Sutra:**

***Having made offerings to Thus Come Ones   
And protected and upheld the precious storehouse of Dharma,   
He will then become a Buddha   
By the name Dharma Brightness.***

Outline:  
  
K2 . The prediction.  
L1. The perfection of cause and completion of fruit.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**Having made offerings to Thus Come Ones,** Purnamaitreyaniputra will make offerings to limitless Buddhas, as well as to save and rescue living beings, so that they realize All-Wisdom. **And protected and upheld the precious storehouse of Dharma,** the Buddhadharma. By making offerings, he will cultivate his blessings. By speaking the Dharma, he will cultivate his wisdom. **He will then become a Buddha by the name of Dharma Brightness.** His individual Buddha name will be Dharma Brightness.   
  
**Sutra:**

***His country will be named "Well Purified"   
made of the seven jewels.   
The eon will be named "Jeweled Brightness"***

Outline:  
  
L2. Name of the country and eon.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**His country will be named "Well Purified" made of the seven jewels.** The country referred to here is a trichiliocosm, that is one country that the Buddha teaches and transforms. His land will spread over universes as many as the motes of dust in the Ganges River for its territory. The ground in this country will not be just plain dirt. It will be made of the seven jewels: gold, silver, lapis lazuli, crystal, mother-of-pearl, red pearls, and carnelian. **The *eon* will be named "Jeweled Brightness."**  
**Sutra:**

***The host of Bodhisattvas, very great,   
Will entirely fill that land,   
Numbering in the limitless millions,   
All with great spiritual penetrations,   
And the perfect power of awesome virtue   
The Hearers also will be countless.   
Having the Three Clarities and the Eight Liberations   
And the Four Unobstructed Wisdoms,   
They will constitute the Sangha there.   
The living beings in that land,   
Will all have severed sexual desire,  
Born purely from transformation,   
Their bodies adorned with perfect marks.  
Taking Dharma-joy and Dharma-happiness as food,   
They will have no thoughts of other kinds of food.   
There will be no women there,   
Nor any of the evil paths.   
The Bhikshu Purna   
Having perfected his virtue   
Will gain such a pure land,  
With a host of very many worthy sages.   
Such are the limitless things, of which   
I have now but spoken in a general way.”***

Outline:  
  
L3. The vast purity of that land.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**The host of Bodhisattvas, very great, will entirely fill that land.** The land will be filled with limitless, boundless, great Bodhisattvas. **Numbering in the limitless millions, all with great spiritual penetrations and the perfect power of awesome virtue.** Most of the Bodhisattvas in that land will be of this caliber.   
  
**The Hearers also will be countless, having the Three Clarities and the Eight Liberations, and the Four Unobstructed Wisdoms,** the four kinds of unobstructed eloquence. **They will constitute the Sangha there.** They will make up the religious community in that land.   
  
**The living beings in that land will all have severed sexual desire.** They might look like ordinary people, but they have no sexual desire. People in the Saha World can cultivate and cut off sexual desire too. There is a way to test this. If you have no sexual desire towards anyone, then if someone has sexual desire towards you, you will not be moved by it. In other words, it is not that you would not know that someone has desire for you. If you did not know, that would mean that you were like a piece of wood or a rock or something. But, even though you know someone has desire for you, you will not react with desire in yourself. That is what is meant by the phrase in *The Vajra Sutra*: "You should not produce that thought which does not dwell anywhere." Not producing sexual desire means that you have severed sexual desire.   
  
If you cultivate and have no sexual desire, then others will not have desire towards you. If you have sexual desire, others will have desire towards you. If you have no sexual desire, others will not, or if they do, and you are unmoved, there will be no problem. That is what it meant by having severed sexual desire.   
  
**Born purely from transformation,** these people will all be born from lotuses through transformation--now you see them, now you don't! **Their bodies adorned with perfect marks,** with the thirty-two marks and the eighty minor characteristics. **Taking Dharma-joy and Dharma-happiness as food, they will have no thoughts of other kinds of food.** These people will take the Dharma lectures as food and drink. They take hearing the Dharma as nourishment. As soon as they hear the Dharma, they are happy, they forget about their hunger. If you do not believe it, try it out. If you give rise to happiness, thinking, "I have never heard anything as wonderful as the Dharma! It is better than eating any wonderful dish!" Then in your happiness your hunger pangs will abate, because you would have been filled with the joy of Dharma.   
  
As to the happiness of Dhyana, when people meditate, sometimes they would rather sit than eat. It is not because they are sick and had lost their appetite. It is rather that they are full already. They have taken meditation as their food and drink. In the land of Dharma Brightness Thus Come One, people will eat these two kinds of food: Dharma-joy and Dhyana-happiness. They will not think about any other kinds of food.   
  
**There will be no women there, nor any of the evil paths.** The four evil destinies of hell-beings, hungry ghosts, animals, and asuras do not exist there. You say, "I do not understand this at all. If there are no women, how can there be people? I mean, er… How will people get born!" Didn't I say before that they would be born by transformation from lotuses? Their parents will be the nine grades of lotuses. So I said before that the Land of Ultimate Bliss is populated by lotus-born beings. People in the Land of Dharma Brightness, "Well-Purified," will also be born by lotuses, so there will not be any women.   
  
**The Bhikshu Purna having perfected his virtue,** he will have perfected the three kinds of enlightenment: self-enlightenment, the enlightenment of others, and the perfection of enlightenment and practice. He **will gain such a pure land with a host of very many worthy sages. Such are the limitless things, of which I have now but spoken in a general way.** All these limitless doctrines, I have now just told you a little bit about.

**Sutra:**  
 **At that time, the twelve hundred Arhats whose minds had attained self-mastery had this thought, “We all rejoice, having attained what we never had before. If the World Honored One would see to conferring upon us a prediction as he has the other great disciples, would this not be a cause for rejoicing?”**Outline:  
  
H2. Verses for the twelve hundred fifty Arhats.   
I1. The request.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**At that time, the twelve hundred Arhats,** great disciples, were nervous. Why? They heard Shakyamuni Buddha give a prediction to Purna, and they could not wait any longer. They all wanted predictions too. "Will the Buddha give us predictions?" they wondered. So you see, these Arhats **whose minds had attained self-control** were suddenly false thinking, and no doubt were a bit uncomfortable. It is not surprising that living beings today are so greedy. Even in the time of the Buddha, the Arhats were clamoring to get their predictions. Now we should not get rid of our greed. In fact, we should escalate it as much as we can. What should we be greedy for? We should be greedy for the Buddhadharma. We should be greedy for the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha! Ha! If the Arhats can be greedy for their predictions, then we can get away with being greedy to study the Buddhadharma.   
  
Originally, the Arhats' minds were very much at ease. They were not greedy at all. They just sat there and did not think of anything at all. They were not greedy for the Buddha, the Dharma, or the Sangha. They just sat there thinking, "I am the Buddha. I am the Dharma, and I am the Sangha!" They were not greedy. But when the Buddha gave a prediction to Purna, they could not wait any longer. They could not stand it. Even though they had attained the patience with the non-production of Dharma, they lost their patience! They could not help but get greedy, thinking, "Will we get predictions?" There were twelve hundred fifty Arhats and twelve hundred fifty greedy minds, boy! Pathetic, isn't it?   
  
Someone is thinking, "What is an Arhat?"   
  
An Arhat is an old Bhikshu. How old is he? It is not fixed. He could be in his thirties, twenties, and forties. Why do we say "old"? Because he has a bit of samadhi power, so we say he is old. If he did not have samadhi power, he would not be old.   
  
On the causal ground, he is called a Bhikshu. On the result ground, he is called an Arhat. The word Arhat has three meanings: 1) one worthy of offerings, 2) slayer of thieves, 3) not born. Worthy of offerings means that the Arhat is worthy of accepting the offerings from people and gods. Not only should people in the human realm make offerings to the Arhat, the gods in the heavens should make offerings to him, as well as all the spirits. Unless, of course, that you do not want to certify to Arahatship. If you are an Arhat, you just have to sit there, and pretty soon the gods will give you offerings. This is because you are worth it. It is right for you. You do not have to go to work. If you want to be lazy and not work now, you might have a hard time. Wait until you are an Arhat. Then you will not have to do anything at all. Great, isn't it?   
  
"Killer of thieves" means that he has killed the thieves of affliction. He has also killed the “non-thieves.” What the Arhat sees as thieves, the Bodhisattvas do not see as thieves. The Arhat has slain them both. The precepts of the Arhat and the Bodhisattva differ. Arhats are supposed to kill the thieves where the Bodhisattvas should kill the non-thieves. Even those who are not thieves should be killed. Isn’t that pretty serious? They are being unreasonable.   
  
"Not-born" means that the Arhat is not born again. It also means that affliction is not produced. There is no production and no extinction. What is not produced cannot be extinguished, and what is not extinguished cannot be produced. If you want it extinguished, it will be born. If you want it to be born, it will be extinguished. One is dependent on the other. Having certified to the patience with the non-production of dharmas, the Arhat is beyond production and extinction. Would you not agree that the state of the Arhat is really terrific? The Arhat is not busy in the least. He is just totally free and at ease, taking it easy, kick back, not doing much, collecting unemployment. Do you recognize the Arhats? Their heads are bald and shiny, and so are their feet! That is, they do not wear shoes. Nobody supervises them, and they do not pay attention to anyone else. No ties, no cares, no hang-ups, no self, no others, no living beings, no life, no nothing. Ahh...   
  
Their minds are at ease. They have no false thinking. Once they enter samadhi, they can sit there for several thousand years. The first Patriarch, Kashyapa, went to Chicken Foot Mountain and entered samadhi. He has not come out of it yet. That is because his mind is at ease.   
  
**Had this thought:** They had a thought! That means they had a false thought! What was it? **We all rejoice having attained what we never had before.** We are really happy. Why? The Buddha gave Purna a prediction of Buddhahood. That is great. We are happy. We never saw such a wonderful thing. Wonderful thing, wonderful thing. Wonderful thing it might have been, but they all got greedy too. **If the World Honored One would see to conferring upon us a prediction as he has the other great disciples,** Shariputra, Purnamaitreyaniputra, Mahamaudgalyayana, and Subhuti, those guys, they all got one. What about us? So they were jumping up and down, pestering the Buddha. **Would this not be a cause for rejoicing?** Wouldn't it be great? When will we become Buddhas?   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **The Buddha, knowing the thoughts in their minds, told Mahakashyapa: “I now confer upon these twelve hundred Arhats in succession a prediction of anuttarasamyaksambodhi.”**Outline:  
  
I2. Bestowing predictions.   
J1. Prose.   
K1. Prediction for twelve hundred Arhats.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**The Buddha, knowing the thoughts in their minds,** the Buddha did not even have to look. With his Five Eyes and Six Spiritual Penetrations, he knew right what these kids were up to. "What little dickens they are! They really have a lot of ideas!" **Told Mahakashyapa: I now confer upon these twelve hundred Arhats**--Mahakashyapa was the oldest, so he told him--**in succession a prediction of anuttarasamyaksambodhi.** A prediction of the utmost right and perfect enlightenment. Tell them not to have false thinking and not to be so nervous. I will give them a prediction right away!   
 **Sutra:**  
 **“In this assembly, my great disciple, the Bhikshu Kaundinya, will make offerings to sixty-two thousands of millions of Buddhas. Having done so, he will then become a Buddha by the name of Universal Brightness Thus Come One, One Worthy of Offerings, One of Proper and Universal Knowledge, One of Perfect Clarity and Conduct, Well-Gone One Who Understands the World, Unsurpassed Lord, A Taming and Regulating Hero, Teacher of People and Gods, a Buddha, the World Honored One.”**  
Outline:  
  
K2. Prediction for Ajnatakaundinya.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
Shakyamuni Buddha says, “**In this assembly, my great disciple,** my very good disciple, my most obedient disciple, my best cultivating disciple, my most non-lazy disciple, my most Dharma-upholding disciple--Who is it? **The Bhikshu Kaundinya.**”   
  
In former lives, Kaundinya had killed the Buddha, slandered the Buddha, beaten the Buddha, cut off his arms, cut off his legs, and cut off his ears and nose. But, when Kaundinya cut the Buddha's limbs off, the Buddha made a vow, "When I become a Buddha, I will save you first." So, in this life, when he became a Buddha, he went straight to the Deer Park to save five Bhikshus, the first of whom, was Kaundinya. Ajnatakaundinya means "understanding the original limit," or "the first to understand." He understood his original face and was the first to become enlightened. He, too, was an elder among the twelve hundred fifty Bhikshus, one of the first to leave home under the Buddha.   
  
He **will make offerings to sixty-two thousands of millions of Buddhas. Having done so, he will then become a Buddha by the name of Universal Brightness Thus Come One.** In the future, these 1,250 disciples will all be Buddhas by the name of Universal Brightness Thus Come One since they all received predictions from Shakyamuni Buddha. They will all be complete with the ten titles of a Buddha.

They are: **One Worthy of Offerings,** they deserve offerings from gods and humans. **One of Proper and Universal Knowledge.** Proper Knowledge is the understanding that the mind gives rise to myriad dharmas. Universal Knowledge is the understanding that myriad dharmas are but in the mind. **One of Perfect Clarity and Conduct.** He has perfected his cultivation of both wisdom and virtuous conduct. **Well-Gone One Who Understands the World.** He goes to good places and understands the most about the world. **Unsurpassed Lord, A Taming and Regulating Hero, Teacher of People and Gods,a Buddha,** the Buddha enlightens himself and others. One who has perfected both enlightenment and conduct is called Buddha. **The World Honored One** who transcends the world. Every Buddha has these ten titles. When Bhikshu Ajinatakaundinya became a Buddha, he also became replete with these ten titles.   
  
I do not believe that any of you are as anxious to get a prediction from Shakyamuni Buddha as those Arhats were.   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **“The five hundred Arhats, Uruvilvakashyapa, Gayakashyapa, Nadikashyapa, Kalodayin, Udayin, Aniruddha, Revata, Kapphina, Vakkula, Cunda, Svagata, and others all will attain anuttarasamyaksambodhi, all of them with the same name Universal Brightness.”**Outline:  
  
K3. Prediction for the five hundred Arhats.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
Among the twelve hundred fifty, there will be Arhats. **Five Hundred** of the **Arhats**, will become Buddhas. **Uruvilvakashyapa, Gayakashyapa,** and **Nadikashyapa** were brothers. Uruvilvakashyapa's name means "papaya grove". Gayakashyapa is the name of a city. Nadikashyapa's name means "river".   
  
**Kalodayin** means "black light". He was one of the "gang of six" Bhikshus. He did not follow the rules and always ran out into the street to play. Not only that, he went out at night. One time he was out in the street, and there were no streetlights. His complexion was very black and shiny. Although there were no lights on the street, his face glowed in the dark! He was walking along and a lady opened the door of her house as he walked by. She thought he was a ghost! Seeing a ghost is very inauspicious. It scared her so badly that she had a miscarriage. Then she realized it was not a ghost. It was a person. Not only was it a person, it was a disciple of the Buddha! She went to the Buddha to complain, "You should not allow your disciples to run around at night and scare people into having miscarriages." So the Buddha set up a rule that Bhikshus cannot go out into the street at night. He said, "Do you all agree with that rule?" The assembly, for the most part, agreed. It is because cultivators should not do things that scare lay people. Kalodayin means "black light". He had a lot of affinities with people, and everyone believed what he said, so he was able to teach a lot of people. Although he was one of the six unruly Bhikshus, still, strangely enough, when others saw him, they followed the rules. He taught over a thousand married couples and a lot of people took refuge with him. He was a teacher who did not follow the rules, yet many students that he taught followed the rules. It was strange.   
  
**Udayin** means “manifesting”. He was Ananda's disciple. What does “manifesting” mean? It means that he was born at sunrise. He manifested then. He studied the precepts and the vinaya in particular. He follows the rules and precepts most strictly.   
  
**Aniruddha.** Do you remember this honored one? This honored individual did not sleep for seven days and cried so that his eyes went blind. Why did he not sleep for seven days? He was scolded by the Buddha for sleeping during lectures. "Do you mean that the Buddha got mad and scolded him?" Sure, the Buddha got mad. If he did not get angry once in a while, his disciples would not be afraid of him. Besides, it was very aggravating. Just as the Buddha was speaking the Sutras in the most wonderful way, he would look over and see Aniruddha sleeping--in the most wonderful way! So the Buddha slammed his fist on the table and shouted,

Hey! Hey, how can you sleep   
Like an oyster or a clam?   
Sleep! Sleep for a thousand years,   
And you'll never hear the Buddha's name!

"You are so lazy, all you do is sleep!" Aniruddha was the Buddha's cousin. He felt very embarrassed to be scolded in front of all the Arhats. He did not sleep for a week and went blind. The Buddha then taught him the Vajra Illuminating Samadhi, and he opened his Heavenly Eye. He could, using his Heavenly Eye, regard the entire three thousand great thousand worlds like an apple in the palm of his hand. His name means "never poor". This is because in the distant past he made offering to an old cultivator who was a Sage who had certified to the fruit. The old cultivator had cultivated wisdom and not blessings, and so he did not get many offerings of food. What is more, at that time there was a famine.

I said earlier that Arhats just sat and waited for the offerings to come in. This cultivator was a Pratyekabuddha, a bit higher than an Arhat was, but he had not cultivated blessings, so no one made offerings to him. Even though he was a sage, he still had to eat. He made a vow that he would go begging for food once every seven days. He would beg from seven houses in a row, and if he did not receive an offering by then, he would forget it and go back up the mountain. One day, he was returning to his mountain with an empty bowl, when he passed by a farmer who was planting his fields. The farmer was very poor, and all he had was a lunch bag since he was so far from his house. The farmer did not know the cultivator was a Pratyekabuddha. He asked him, "Oh, you have just come back from begging?"   
  
Although he was a sage, he was still a bit disgruntled. "Today I did not get anything. I will just go hungry for another week."   
  
The farmer thought, "That is too much suffering. I would not eat today. I will give my lunch to this cultivator.” “Old cultivator, I have some coarse rice, would you eat it? I would like to make an offering of it to you." The Pratyekabuddha was uncomfortable with hunger pangs. "What will you eat then?" he asked.   
  
"If I do not eat for one day, it is not important. I can get something when I get home."   
  
We do not know if it was some vestige of greed or if the Pratyekabuddha wanted to give the farmer a chance to plant blessings. Only the Pratyekabuddha knows for sure. Anyway, he accepted the offering. Then he transferred the merit to the farmer:

Those who practice giving,   
Will attain benefit.   
If they give seeking happiness,   
They will attain the happiness they seek.

Having done this, he left the farmer, hungry or not. The Pratyekabuddhas look after themselves, you know.   
  
Now the farmer continued working when all of a sudden a very naughty rabbit started to play tricks on him, jumping on his hoe and things like that. Finally, the rabbit jumped onto his back. He tried to get it off with his hoe but it would not budge. That frightened him. He ran home and asked his wife to help him get the rabbit off his back. His wife tried, but the rabbit had turned to gold! She plucked off one leg and took it to town to exchange it for money. When she got back, the leg had grown back. They were rich! Not only was he rich for one life, but for ninety-one kalpas in every life he was wealthy. So his name means "not poor." He was not poor because he gave his lunch to the Pratyekabuddha. As a result, he was wealthy for ninety-one kalpas.   
  
**Revata** means "constellation."   
  
**Kapphina** means "house constellation", the fourth constellation out of the 28 constellations. Kapphina was named after the constellation his parents prayed at in order to have him. They were over forty and childless when they decided to pray to the constellation for a son. The couple knelt before the altar to the House Constellation and made a vow. They vowed that if they were to receive a son, they would do lots of good deeds. “We will make offerings to the Triple Jewel and do all kinds of good deeds.” Once they prayed, despite being in their 40’s, the wife became pregnant. “Ah! The House Constellation gave us this son.” So they named their son House Constellation.   
  
**Vakkula** in the past kept the precept against killing, and so in his present life, he received five kinds of non-dying retribution. When he was born, he was laughing, as if to say, "Hi!" This scared his mother. “He must be a goblin! Why is he laughing instead of crying?” So she tried to fry him in the frying pan. He could not be fried, however. Then she tried to boil him in water, but he could not be boiled! Then she threw him in the ocean hoping he would drown, but he could not be drowned, either. Then a hungry fish tried to gobble him up. A fisherman caught the fish and cut it open. There was Vakkula! The knife did not kill him. He could not be fried, boiled, drowned, eaten, or stabbed to death. He had these five kinds of non-dying retribution gained through his practice of non-killing in former lives. “How come he has five kind of non-dying retribution whereas we have none?” It is because you have not kept to this precept of refraining from killing. Life after life he kept this precept very purely, and so he gained this retribution.   
  
**Cunda** is another name for Suddhipanthaka, and **Svagata** is another name for Mahapanthaka. Svagata is Cunda’s younger brother. These two brothers were disciples of the Buddha. One was very stupid; the other was very intelligent. The name of the intelligent one means “major pathway.” The name of the dumb one means “minor pathway.” They have these names because the custom in India is different from other places. When married women are about to go into labor, they need to be back at their mother’s house. By the time that Major Pathway’s mother was on her way to grandma’s, it was too late. The kid was eager to be born and was born on the road. That is why he was named Major Pathway.

It was the same with the younger brother. His mother probably enjoyed giving birth on the road. When she was about to give birth to a second child, she should have gone back to her mother’s house long ago, but she must have the power of samadhi, thinking, “The first one was born on the road. It cannot be so coincidental that the same happens with the second-born.” When the second child was about to be born, the mother was on her way home to the grandmother’s house. The little brother must have thought, “My big brother was born on the way, I cannot let you go back to grandmother either.” So he was born on the road too. Consequently, he was named Minor Pathway.

Major Pathway was very smart and memorizes the Buddhadharma by heart as soon as he hears it. However, Minor Pathway is just the opposite. He listens to it once, ten times, a hundred times, a thousand times, ten thousand times, and he cannot remember it. It took a long time for the five hundred Arhats to teach him a verse, yet he still could not remember. Other Arhats and Bhikshus began to gossip about why the older brother is so intelligent and the younger brother is so stupid. That is really very strange. When the older brother heard this, he was quite unhappy. He told his little brother, “You cannot even memorize one verse that five hundred Arhats took such a long time to teach you! Hurry up and go home! Do not join the monastic life!” Little Pathway insisted on becoming a monk. The older brother said, “I refuse to let you become a monk. If you are going to stay, I am going to boss you around.” The younger brother thought, “My brother would not let me join the monastic life and I cannot remember any Buddhadharma. I might as well die!” Hence he was ready to hang himself right there in the garden. Why did he want to hang himself? It is because he is too stupid. He wants to end it all by death.   
  
Then Shakyamuni Buddha came to him by means of spiritual penetration and said, “Why do you want to hang yourself?” He said, “I am so dumb that I am not able to learn any Buddhadharma. My older brother told me to go home instead of joining the monastic life. But I want to be a monk. I do not want to go home. I would rather die.” Shakyamuni Buddha said, “Your older brother will not allow you to be a monk, but as long as you are sincere, you could be a monk. Do not die.”   
  
“Do not die? But I am unable to learn any Buddhadharma, what would be the use?”   
  
Shakyamuni Buddha said, “There is something that you could read every day. By doing so, you will become enlightened.”   
  
“Oh, what wonderful method do you have for me. I am afraid that I will not be able to memorize it though.”   
  
“You will be able to memorize this. Just recite ‘sweep clean.’ Sweep clean the ground of your mind and purify your thoughts. Once the ground of your mind is clean, you would have become enlightened.”   
  
“Uh, what is that first word?” Shakyamuni Buddha said, “Sweep.”   
  
“The other word?”   
  
“Clean.”   
  
“Uh, clean, clean, clean… clean what?”   
  
Shakyamuni Buddha answered, “Sweep.”   
  
“Sweep, sweep, sweep… sweep what?”   
  
Shakyamuni Buddha told him again, “Clean.”   
  
Every time he is told the word “sweep”, he forgets the word “clean”, and vice versa. He said, “World Honored One, please tell me a few more times.” Shakyamuni Buddha said, “Sweep clean. Sweep the ground of your mind.”   
  
“Clean. Sweep the ground of my mind.” After reciting a few more times, he suddenly became enlightened. He memorized it! This time he was enlightened. Everyone here in this audience is smarter than this honored one. All of you could remember not only these two words, even four words or eight words. If you do not remember after being taught once, you would remember by about the second or third time. You could all recite “Namo Amitabha Buddha, Namo Amitabha Buddha” frequently, for instance. Although we are all smarter than this honored one, we become enlightened much more slowly.

That stupid honorable one became enlightened very quickly. We do not become enlightened after reciting those words for so many times. Therefore, do not look down on this stupid one. Although unintelligent, he had planted lots of roots of goodness and made offerings to all Buddhas throughout the ten directions and the three periods of time. In this life, he purposely appeared as a dumb person so that sentient beings will see that Suddhipanthaka, Little Pathway, could become enlightened despite his stupidity. “I am much smarter than he is, so of course I can become enlightened.” This way, we will not forego the opportunity for enlightenment so easily.

This honored one purposely manifested as a stupid individual because as a Dharma Master in another life he thought that he alone understood the Buddhadharma while no one else did. The stupid one, however, managed to get enlightened right away. This is because in past lives the stupid one thought that he alone understood the Buddhadharma and others did not. Not only that, he would not explain it to other people. "It is so wonderful, I want it all to myself." Consequently, he was a high Dharma Master for five hundred lives, but he never taught the Dharma. If someone asked him to, he would not. He was stingy with the Dharma. For this reason, as retribution, he was very stupid. He did not want other people to be smart, so he became very stupid. Luckily, in the past he made offerings to the Buddhas and created a lot of merit and virtue. This life he got enlightened very fast, even though he was stupid.

The reason we are more intelligent but slower to get enlightened, study and study but feel that we have not attained anything, is because we have not created merit and virtue and have not made offerings to the Triple Jewel. Good roots are like the roots of trees, if they are nourished and taken care of, the tree will grow well. If the roots dry up, it will not grow.   
  
So, now we must both cultivate and do good deeds, then we can get enlightened. Take care not to fail to speak the Buddhadharma. If you know one sentence, then speak that one sentence. Do not just look after yourself. Do not be critical of other people and fail to correct your own faults. Do not just do other people’s dirty laundry and forget that your clothes are just a dirty. Do not be stingy with the Dharma either, or you will end up stupid. Or, what is worse, you will be unable to speak at all. You will not be able to say anything, not even the words “sweep clean”. You will not have much chance of getting enlightened then.   
  
**And others all will attain anuttarasamyaksambodhi, all of them with the same name Universal Brightness.** "And others" means the rest of the five hundred Arhats. They will all attain the utmost right and perfect enlightenment, the position of Buddhahood. They will all have the same name, "Universal Brightness."   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **At that time the World Honored One, wishing to restate his meaning, spoke verses, saying:**

**“The Bhikshu Kaundinya, Will see limitless Buddhas, And after asamkhyeya eons, Will realize Equal Proper Enlightenment. Ever putting forth great light, Perfecting all spiritual powers, His name will be heard in the ten directions, And he shall be revered by all. He will always speak the Unsurpassed Path, And will therefore be called Universal Brightness. His land will be pure, With courageous and heroic Bodhisattvas. All will mount wonderful towers, And roam through the ten direction lands, With supreme offerings They will present to all the Buddhas. Having made these offerings, With minds full of rejoicing, They will instantly return to their own lands, Such are the spiritual powers they will have. The life span of that Buddha will be sixty thousand eons, His Proper Dharma will dwell twice that long. The Dharma Image Age will be twice the length of that. When the Dharma is extinguished, the gods and people will mourn. These five hundred Bhikshus Shall in turn become Buddhas All by the name of Universal Brightness. Each shall bestow predictions on his successors Saying, “After my extinction Such and such shall become a Buddha.”The world in which he will teach Will be like mine today. The adornments of his land And his spiritual powers,The host of Bodhisattvas and Hearers, The Proper Dharma and Dharma Image Ages, The numbers of eons in his life span, Will be as just stated.**

Outline:  
  
J2. Verse.   
K1. Prediction for Ajnatakaundinya and five hundred Arhats.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**At that time** after he had finished the prose section, **the World Honored One, wishing to restate his meaning, spoke verses, saying:   
  
The Bhikshu Kaundinya,** the first to understand, **will see limitless Buddhas,** countless, numberless Buddhas. **And after asamkhyeya eons will realize Equal, Proper Enlightenment,** will become a Buddha. **Ever putting forth great light, perfecting all spiritual powers, his name shall be heard in the ten directions. And he shall be revered by all.** All living beings will pay him homage.   
  
**He will always speak the Unsurpassed Path,** the supreme, wondrous Path. **And will therefore be called Universal Brightness.   
  
His land will be pure with courageous and heroic Bodhisattvas. All will mount wonderful towers,** many stories high, with countless windows and doors, **and roam through the ten directions lands,** to frolic in the "roaming and playing samadhi." **With supreme offerings, they will present to all the Buddhas. Having made these offerings, with minds full of rejoicing, they will instantly return to their own lands.** They will make offerings of jewels, and palaces, and various things adorned with the seven jewels. **Such are the spiritual powers they will have.   
  
The life span of that Buddha will be sixty thousand eons. His Proper Dharma will dwell twice that long,** one hundred twenty thousand eons. **The Dharma Image Age will be twice the length of that,** two hundred forty thousand eons.   
  
**When the Dharma is extinguished, the gods and people will mourn. These five hundred Bhikshus shall in turn become Buddhas.** They will succeed one another in turn, **all by the name of Universal Brightness.Each shall bestow predictions on his successors, saying, “After my extinction, such and such shall become a Buddha. The world in which he will teach will be like mine today. The adornments of his land and his spiritual powers, the host of Bodhisattvas and Hearers, the Proper Dharma and Dharma Images Ages** and **the number of eons in his life span will be as just stated.”** The same as those given for Universal Brightness.   
**Sutra:**

**Kashyapa, you should know About these five hundred who have attained self-mastery.As for the remaining Hearers, They shall be likewise. To those not present in this assembly, You should expound these matters.”**

Outline:  
  
K2 . General prediction for all the Hearers.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**Kashyapa, you should know,** you have just been told the particulars concerning **these five hundred who have attained self mastery.** You have heard about the five hundred Arhats whose minds have attained comfort. You should know that the rest of the Arhats will also become Buddhas called Universal Brightness, etc. **As for the remaining Hearers, they shall be likewise.** It means the rest of the twelve hundred fifty Arhats. **To those not present in this assembly, you should expound these matters.** Those not in the Dharma assembly, you should on my behalf, tell them that they will become Buddhas, that I have given them predictions. Do not forget now!

**Sutra:**  
 **At that time, the five hundred Arhats, having received predictions from the Buddha, jumped for joy.**Outline:  
  
I3. The explanation.   
J1. Prose.   
K1. Sutra compiler records their rejoicing.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**At that time,** after the Buddha had spoken the verses to Kashyapa, **the five hundred Arhats, having received predictions from the Buddha, jumped for joy.** They received predictions of anuttarasamyaksambodhi, which was exactly what they wanted. They were so happy, they jumped for joy.   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **They rose from their seats and went before the Buddha, bowing with their heads at his feet. Repenting of their errors, they reproached themselves, saying, “World Honored One, we had always thought that we had already gained ultimate extinction. Now we know that we were like unknowing ones. Why is this? We should have obtained the Thus Come One's wisdom, but were content instead with lesser knowledge.”**Outline:  
  
K2. The Arhats explain themselves.   
L1. Their speech concerning Dharma.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**They rose from their seats and went before the Buddha, bowing with their heads at his feet. Repenting of their errors, they reproached themselves.** People who know enough to repent of their errors are Sagely material. People who do not are really stupid. The Arhats are repentant. They are sorry for what they did. They reproached themselves because they had been satisfied with just a little. They had not attained ultimate Nirvana, but they thought that they had. They now know they were wrong and were sorry.

**Saying: World Honored One, we had always thought that we had already gained ultimate extinction,** had certified to the fruition of Arhatship. They did not seek the Buddha Path above, and they did not teach living beings below. They felt they did not need to become Buddhas or save living beings. All they needed to do was sit there all day and be at ease and happy and not pay attention to anything at all—self-ending Arhats. **Now we know that we were like unknowing ones. Why is this? We should have obtained the Thus Come One's wisdom,** but we did not seek the Buddha's wisdom. What a terrible mistake! **But** we **were content instead with lesser knowledge.** We took our small Arhat-fruit wisdom and were satisfied with it, thinking we had attained ultimate extinction.  
  
**Sutra:  
  
“World Honored One, it is like a person who goes to a close friend's house, gets drunk on wine, and lies down. His friend who is about to go away on official business, sews a priceless pearl inside his clothing as a gift, and then leaves.”**Outline:  
  
L2. The parable.   
M1. Setting up the parable.

N1. Their drunkenness as likened to the Arhats saying they had attained extinction and contenting themselves with petty knowledge.

O1. Parable of sewing the pearl.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**World Honored One, it is like a person who goes to a close friend's house,** the person refers to the five hundred Arhats. The close friend is the Buddha. That person **gets drunk on wine.** Gets drunk means to be stupid. The wine represents the five desires. **And lies down** means that they were satisfied with little, and did not do anything, just sat around. **His friend,** the Buddha, **who is about to go away on official business,** he has to go off to some other worlds to save living beings there. His conditions with beings have come to an end in that place, so he will go somewhere else to save living beings. He **sews a priceless pearl inside his clothing as a gift, and then leaves.** The priceless pearl is the basic substance of the real mark, the inherent Buddha nature. "Inside his clothing" means that they were taught the wonderful principles of the real-mark, the Great Vehicle, and this planted in them the seed for their future attainment.   
  
**Sutra:  
  
“That person, in a drunken stupor, is not aware of anything.”**Outline:  
  
O2. Parable of lying down in a drunken stupor.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
But, **that person** has no great wisdom, he sunk in dreams of stupidity and the five desires. **In a drunken stupor,he is not aware of anything.** He does not know enough to accept the Great Vehicle Buddhadharma.   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **“On arising, he sets out on his travels and reaches another country, where, for the sake of clothing and food, he expends much effort, endures great hardships, and is content with whatever little he may get.”**Outline:  
  
O3. He gets up and goes traveling.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**On arising, he sets out on his travels, and reaches another country,** means that because he is still covered with ignorance, he does not know enough to turn back towards the Great Vehicle, his own "country." Instead, he seeks the lesser vehicle.   
  
**Where, for the sake of clothing and food,** for the sake of the "clothing" of the proper path and the "food" of the aids to the path, **he expends much effort, endures great hardships.** He is satisfied with the small state he has attained in the Small Vehicle, **and is content with whatever little he may get.** He thought he has gained the Nirvana of the Two Vehicles, the fruit of Arhatship, and is satisfied with that.   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **Later, his close friend happens to meet him again and says, “Hey man! How can you, for the sake of food and clothing, have come to this?”**Outline:  
  
N2. Friend wakes him up.   
O1. The scolding.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**Later, his close friend,** the Buddha, **happens to meet him again.** The Hearers are quite satisfied with their attainment. When the Buddha **says, "Hey, man!"** He calls out in this way to startle him. "For crying out loud, **how can you, for the sake of food and clothing,** for the sake of cultivating the Way, for the sake of seeking the clothing of the Proper Path and the food of the Aids to the Path, **have come to this?"** How could you be so poor? How could you have been satisfied with so little? As Fourth Stage Arhats, they think that above there is not Buddha Way for them to seek, and below there are no living beings to save. There is nothing at all. There is nobody in the whole world but them!   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **Long ago, wishing you to gain peace, happiness, and enjoyment of the five desires, on such and such a day, month, and year, I sewed a priceless pearl into your clothing. From of old until now, it has been present, but you did not know of it. Thus you have toiled and suffered to gain your livelihood. How stupid of you!**Outline:  
  
O2. Showing him the pearl.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**Long ago, wishing you to gain peace, happiness,** the Buddha wanted to lead those of the Two Vehicles to perfect the fruition of Bodhi of the Great Vehicle. **And enjoyment of the five desires,** ordinarily, the five desires are forms, sounds, smells, tastes, tangible objects, and dharmas. Here, they refer to the Five Roots, and the Five Powers, and so on.   
  
**On such and such a day, month, and year** refers to the time when the Buddha, Great Penetrating Wisdom Victory, spoke The Dharma Flower Sutra, some eighty thousand eons or more ago, teaching the Great Vehicle Buddhadharma.   
  
**I sewed a priceless pearl into your clothing.** In you were planted the seeds of the Great Vehicle. **From of old until now, it has been present, but you did not know of it. Thus you have toiled and suffered to gain your livelihood.** The pearl is still there. You have not lost it. But you Arhats did not know of it before. You forgot the Great Vehicle Dharma and chose instead to study the Small Vehicle Dharma. It has been a lot of hard work for you cultivating just to keep yourselves spiritually alive. **How stupid of you!** Too, too stupid!   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **You may now take this jewel, exchange it for what you need, and you will always have whatever you wish and be free from want.**Outline:  
  
O3. Encouraging him to exchange the jewel.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**You may now take this priceless jewel, exchange it for what you need,** you will acquire the fruition you deserve if you cultivate the Mahayana Dharma. **And you will always have whatever you wish.** If you cultivate the Great Vehicle, you will never lack for anything. **And be free from want.** You will never be poor again.   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **The Buddha is also like this. When he was a Bodhisattva, he taught and transformed us, causing us to bring forth the thought of All-Wisdom.**  
Outline:  
  
M2. Correlating the parable with the Dharma.   
N1. Correlating the drunkenness.   
O1. Correlating sewing the pearl.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**The Buddha is also like this,** like the good friend mentioned in the above analogy. **When he was a Bodhisattva, he taught and transformed us, causing us to bring forth the thought of All-Wisdom.** During the time of Shakyamuni Buddha, the Buddha Great Penetrating Wisdom Victory, the Buddha was also teaching us. He has appeared in various Bodhisattva bodies to teach and transform us in the Great Vehicle Buddhadharma.   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **But, we later completely forgot, and were unknowing and unaware.**  
Outline:  
  
O2. Correlating the lying down in a drunken stupor with the Dharma.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**But, we later completely forgot.** We had been away from the Buddha for too long. We had gotten involved in the five desires--the objects of the five senses--and forgotten the Great Vehicle Buddhadharma altogether. **And were unknowing and unaware.** We will not even realize that we will not become enlightened.   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **Having attained the way of Arhatship, we said of ourselves that we had gained extinction. In the difficulty of maintaining our livelihood, we were content with what little we had gained.**Outline:  
  
O3. Correlating the arising, traveling, and being contented with little.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**Having attained the way of Arhatship, we said of ourselves that we had gained extinction,** that we had gained ultimate Nirvana. **In the difficulty of maintaining our livelihood**--the lifestyle of the Small Vehicle is like that of a very poor person--**we were content with what little we had gained.**  
  
**Sutra:**  
 **Still, our vows for All Wisdom remain; they have not been lost. Now, the World Honored One has caused us to wake up, saying, “Bhikshus! What you have obtained is not ultimate extinction!”**Outline:  
  
N2. Correlating the close friend waking him up.   
O1. Correlating the scolding.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**Still, our vows for All Wisdom remain.** The seeds of the Great Vehicle teaching we received before and the vows we made for the Great Vehicle are still here within us. **They have not been lost.**  
  
All of you here in the Buddhist Lecture Hall made vows recently, and this is because you did so in the past. If you have not made vows in the past, you would not know how to go about making vows now. People who have made vows before know it is important to make vows. Probably you who recently made vows have made Great Vehicle vows before, and that is why you caught on so quickly and made them right away. The Arhats did not know enough at first to make Great Vehicle vows, even though they had made them before. It had been too long, and they forgot all about it. Those of you here who have not made vows have made them before too, but it has been too long, and you are confused. You want to go forward, but cannot figure out how. You think about retreating, but that would be worse. Quite a troublesome predicament! **Now, the World Honored One has caused us to wake up** to our past vows, **saying, “Bhikshus! What you have obtained is not ultimate extinction!”** You have not attained the utmost right and perfect enlightenment.   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **‘For a long time, I have been leading you to plant good roots with the Buddha. As an expedient device, I manifested the marks of Nirvana. You said of yourself however, that you had actually attained extinction.’**Outline:  
  
O2. Correlating the showing of the pearl.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**For a long time,** for many eons, **I have been leading you to plant good roots with the Buddha. As an expedient device, I manifested the marks of Nirvana.** Because you were afraid of the Great Vehicle, through the power of my expedient devices, I showed to you the marks of the Small Vehicle Extinction, the principle of one-sided emptiness, the Small Vehicle Nirvana. **You said of yourself, however, that you had actually attained extinction.** You thought you had gained the ultimate extinction. No way!   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **“World Honored One, now at last we know that we are actually Bodhisattvas; having obtained a prediction for anuttarasamyaksambodhi. For this reason we rejoice greatly, having gained what we never had before.”**Outline:  
  
O3. Encouraging him to exchange the pearl.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**World Honored One, now at last we know that we are actually Bodhisattvas,** that really we are Great Vehicle Bodhisattvas. We are not Arhats. **Having obtained a prediction for anuttarasamyaksambodhi,** we have received a prediction for the utmost right and perfect enlightenment of the Buddha. **For this reason we rejoice greatly.** We are really happy, **having gained what we never had before.** We have never been this happy.   
  
**Sutra:**  
 **At that time, Ajnatakaundinya and the others, wishing to restate this meaning spoke verses saying,**

**“Hearing the supreme sound Of the prediction of peace and tranquility, We rejoice, gaining what we never had, And bow before the Buddha of limitless wisdom.Now, in the presence of the World Honored One, We repent of our faults and mistakes.**

Outline:  
  
J2. The verse.   
K1. Verses about the understanding gained in their own hearts.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**At that time, Ajnatakaundinya,** the "first to understand," **and the others,** the other five hundred Arhats, **wishing to restate this meaning spoke verses saying.**All of us Arhats, **hearing the supreme sound of the prediction of peace and tranquillity,** hearing the Supremely Honored One give us the prediction for Buddhahood, **we rejoice gaining what we never had. And bow before the Buddha of limitless wisdom.** We are happy as never before, and so we make obeisance to the Buddha, the one of limitless wisdom. **Now, in the presence of the World Honored One, we repent of our faults and mistakes.** We are greatly ashamed. We express our regret to the Buddha. We have made mistakes, and committed offenses.   
  
**Sutra:**

**Of the limitless jewels of the Buddha, We'd gained but a small portion of Nirvana, And, like unknowing, senseless people, Contented ourselves with that.**

Outline:  
  
K2 . Explaining how they were led to understanding.   
L1. Verses of speaking the Dharma.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**Of the limitless jewels of the Buddha,** the unlimited treasury of the Buddhadharma, **we'd gained but a small portion of Nirvana**--Nirvana with residue. **And, like unknowing, senseless people,** real dummies, we **contented ourselves with that.** We thought that was quite sufficient, that we had attained the ultimate Nirvana. Actually, we had not.  
**Sutra:**

**It's like a poor person, Who goes to a close friend's home, A very wealthy household, Stocked with delicacies. Taking a priceless pearl The friend sews it in the poor man's clothing And silently departs, While the poor man sleeps unaware. When the man arises, He travels to another land, Where, seeking food and clothes to stay alive,He suffers many difficulties, and Satisfied with what little he may get, Wishes for nothing better. He's unaware that within his clothing There is a priceless pearl.**

Outline:  
  
L2. Verses about speaking the parable.   
M1. Verse setting up the parable.   
N1. Parable of drunkenness.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**It's like a poor person.** Ajnatakaundinya continues saying, “We are like poor people **who goes to a close friend's home**,” to the Buddha's house. The poor folks are living beings. The close friend is the Buddha. The living beings meet up with the Buddha's teaching, **a very wealthy household.** The Buddha's teaching is the richest of teachings. The house is **stocked with delicacies,** with the food of Dhyana happiness and Dharma joy.   
  
**Taking a priceless pearl,** the friend is about to go away to another country. **The friend sews it in the poor man's clothing.** The pearl is the perfect, sudden teaching of the One Vehicle. **And** the friend **silently departs.** The Buddha goes to another world to teach and transform living beings, **while the poor man sleeps unaware.** The poor man obtains the seed of the Great Vehicle. Even though he has been taught the Great Vehicle, he does not realize it as such and does not know its great value. He is as if drunk, drunk on the wine of the five desires. Besides that, he is ignorant and so he sleeps "unaware."   
  
**When the man arises,** when he gets a bit of wisdom, **he travels to another land.** He does not cultivate the Great Vehicle Dharma. He goes looking for some Small Vehicle Dharma. **Where, seeking food and clothes to stay alive,** cultivating the Small Vehicle Path, seeking the fruit of Arhatship, **he suffers many difficulties.** Cultivating the fruit of Arhatship is like living the life of a very poor person. It is extremely difficult. **And satisfied with what little he may get,** having gained Fourth Stage Arhatship, he is satisfied with that. He **wishes for nothing better.** He does not want to go forward and seek the Buddha Way. **He's unaware that within his clothing, there is a priceless pearl.** Within his self-nature, his Buddha nature, there is the disposition of the Great Vehicle.   
  
**Sutra:**

**The friend who gave him the pearl Later sees the poor man again, And having bitterly rebuked him, Shows him the pearl he sewed in his clothing. Seeing the pearl, the poor man's heart Gave rise to great rejoicing. Rich with much wealth He enjoys the five desirable objects.**

Outline:  
  
N2. Parable of the close friend waking him up.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
The Buddha spoke the Great Vehicle Buddhadharma to all living beings, but they paid no attention to it and forgot it. This is like, for example, someone came here to study the Buddhadharma and was taught the Dharma-door of developing great wisdom and realizing Buddhahood. They listened, all right, but they did not really understand it. Later, they forgot it and went off looking for the Small Vehicle Teaching. Perhaps they ran off to India, Thailand, Ceylon, Burma, Nepal, or Pakistan, looking everywhere for the Buddhadharma. Everywhere they looked, they found only the Small Vehicle Buddhadharma, so they were poor. As poor people, they still had the Great Vehicle seed, because they had studied it before. But they thought the Great Vehicle was very ordinary, and so they did not study it, preferring instead to look for the Small Vehicle. They underwent a lot of hardships and later met the real, genuine Buddhadharma and studied it. The pearl represents the Great Vehicle Dharma.   
  
**The friend who gave him the pearl later sees the poor man again.** Later, the Buddha runs into the person he taught. **And having bitterly rebuked him.** "Bitterly" means he said things that were difficult to hear. Underneath his sharp scolding was a very compassionate heart. He appeared to be blowing up at him, but he was really being good to him. You should not think that when someone gets mad at you, it is not good. If someone did not get mad at you under certain circumstances, you would not be motivated to turn away from the small and go towards the great.   
  
The Buddha "bitterly rebukes" or roundly scolds his former student. Before the Buddha can "re-teach" the Great Vehicle Dharma, he “bitterly rebukes” his former students. This means that he goes to all the trouble of teaching the Storehouse Teaching. Then, during the Vaipulya Teaching, he criticizes the one-sided doctrines of the Small Vehicle, rebuking them for their ignorance. He praises the Great Vehicle and lauds the Perfect Teaching.   
  
You may wonder, "Why did he have to go to all that trouble? Why couldn't he just have spoken The Dharma Flower Sutra?"   
  
If he had spoken it then, no one would have accepted it. Only later on, after they had been prepared, could he speak it. He also prepared them with the Prajna Teachings, which open the door of the Great Vehicle. The Buddha's exposition of the Storehouse, Vaipulya, and Prajna Teachings are what is meant by the phrase in the text "bitterly rebuked." These several decades worth of teaching were preparatory to the Buddha's opening of the provisional and revealing the real in speaking The Dharma Flower Sutra.  
  
**Shows him the pearl he sewed in his clothing.** He makes it clear to you that your friend or relative had hidden a priceless gem inside your clothes. The person who did so is the Buddha. The Buddha observes the world and practices. When affinities in this area end, he goes to other worlds to propagate the Dharma. Although he goes to other worlds to propound the Dharma, he had first explained the Mahayana Dharma for you. You had simply forgotten and failed to cultivate. Just as I had said earlier, this is the same as you traveling to Theravadan nations in search of the Buddhadharma.   
  
The friend points out, "Basically, you should study the Great Vehicle. How come you are studying the Small Vehicle Dharma?" Probably, by this time the person has realized that studying the Small Vehicle is very difficult. So **seeing the pearl, the poor man's heart gave rise to great rejoicing.** When he sees the Great Vehicle Buddhadharma, he is extremely happy.   
  
**Rich with much wealth,** all the treasures of the Great Vehicle, **he enjoys the five desirable objects.** Understanding the Great Vehicle Buddhadharma is to be truly wealthy. I just saw Guo Jing studying The Shurangama Sutra. I said to her, "If you can study and master The Shurangama Sutra, then you will be one of great wealth and riches. Truly! If you learn the Buddhadharma by heart, then you are the richest of people." So someone said she had not "gotten" anything. You have obtained a priceless pearl. It is in your robe, but you do not know it! Ha! Really, so you still think you are poor!   
  
Originally, the five desires refer to form, sound, smell, taste, and sensation, but, here they refer to attaining the wonderful doctrine of the Great Vehicle. At that time, you will have gained all possible good advantage. You will be complete with all the wonderful, inconceivable spiritual powers. You will be able to do whatever you want. It is like enjoying an abundance of forms, sounds, smells, tastes, tangible objects, or dharmas, wealth, form, fame, food, or sleep. You will have everything you need. If you want to sleep, you will be able to sleep for several tens of thousands of years. Isn't that wonderful? Mahakashyapa, the First Patriarch, went to Chicken Foot Mountain, in Yunnan, and entered samadhi. That is just about like sleeping, isn't it? He has "slept" for several thousand years. Several tens of thousands of years is not that long, either. It is just the blink of an eye.   
  
If you like to eat, all the best delicacies in the world are yours. If you like fame, you will be the most famous person in the world. If you like wealth, it is everywhere for you. All you have to do is stick out your hand, and gold and jewels are yours. How wonderful would you say that is? How about form? It is everywhere for you. You do not have to try. It is just there for you, whatever you like.   
  
**Sutra:**

**We, too, are like this In the long night, the World Honored One Has constantly pitied, seen, taught and transformed us. Causing us to plant the supreme vows. But, because we lacked wisdom We were unaware and did not know, And, gaining a small portion of Nirvana We were satisfied and sought nothing more.**

Outline:  
  
M2. Correlation with Dharma.   
N1. Correlation with the drunkenness.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**We, too, are like this. In the long night, the World Honored One has constantly pitied, seen, taught, and transformed us** with his great compassion, **causing us** to make the supreme resolve for Bodhi, **to plant the supreme vows,** and to bring forth the supreme Bodhi conduct. These four lines correspond to the analogy of sewing the pearl inside the cloak.   
  
**But because we lacked wisdom, we were unaware and did not know.** We were terribly ignorant. We did a lot of wrong things. Now we know we are wrong. Having attained the precious pearl, the Great Vehicle Buddhadharma, we know that we were just too stupid, too dumb! Although we were stupid, we did not know we were stupid. We were unaware of the fact. These two lines correspond with the analogy of lying down in a drunken stupor.   
  
**And, gaining a small portion of Nirvana, we were satisfied and sought nothing more.** We had attained the state of no production and no extinction, Nirvana with residue. We were quite satisfied with this. "That is fine. That is enough." We did not seek the Great Vehicle. We were content with Arhatship, thinking we had put an ultimate end to birth and death.   
  
**Sutra:**

**Now the Buddha has awakened us, Saying this is not really extinction. Gaining the Buddha's supreme wisdom, That is true extinction. Now, having heard from the Buddha Of the matters of predictions and adornments, And these predictions having been bestowed in succession, We rejoice in body and in mind.**

Outline:  
  
N2. Correlation of the waking up.   
  
**Commentary:**   
  
**Now the Buddha has awakened us saying this is not really extinction.** He says, "This is not ultimate extinction. It is a transformed city at the halfway point. It is not real. **Gaining the Buddha's supreme wisdom, that is true extinction.** That is ultimate Nirvana.   
  
**Now, having heard from the Buddha,** the Great Vehicle Dharma, **of the matters of predictions and adornments;** predictions of Buddhahood and the adornments of the Buddhalands, these unusual things. **And these predictions having been bestowed in succession.** First Subhuti, Shariputra, and so on, and then Ajnatakaundinya and Mahakashyapa, and now us. **We rejoice in body and in mind.** Because our minds are happy, our bodies are happy, entirely filled with happiness. They were so happy that they forgot their headaches and other minor ailments. They had a great deal of endurance, because they were intent on seeking the Dharma. If you want to get enlightened, you must not fear suffering, difficulty, or any problems. You have to have endurance, and then you will have success.   
  
Someone has just brought forth the Great Vehicle Bodhi mind. He thinks, "The Great Vehicle is really great! From now on, I am certainly going to bring forth the Great Bodhi mind. Think of it: Wonderful use of spiritual powers and the enjoyment of the objects of the five desires! I am going to attain this state, boy! Then I can have whatever I want. Inconceivable! I am going to get it no matter what!"   
  
You are wrong! If you bring forth the mind for the sake of getting such a state, you will soon fall into the hells. Why? It is because you brought forth your mind for the wrong reason, for the five desires. That is a big mistake. What should you do then? Do not bring forth the Bodhi mind seeking the five desires. You should bring forth the mind seeking to get rid of desire. How can you cultivate the Great Vehicle Dharma and still is attached to the five desires? My earlier explanation of the five desires was merely an analogy. You should not take it seriously and start cultivating so that you can sleep for ten thousand years or eat the world's finest food. That is a mistake. Even though the Great Vehicle Bodhisattvas could have such things, they do not want them.

The Sutra speaks of their happiness and comfort in a descriptive phrase as "enjoying the five desires." They would never take pleasure in the five desires. Why not? If you enjoy such states, then you have an attachment. Bodhisattvas have no attachments. If you bring forth the Bodhi mind for the sake of the five desires, then you have not really brought forth the Bodhi mind at all. The Vajra Sutra says, "You should produce an unsupported thought." That means no attachments. It is the demons who cannot put down the five desires. They like wealth, sex, fame, food, and sleep. Because I noticed that "one and a half" of you were thinking of bringing forth the Bodhi mind for the sake of the five desires, I have clarified this matter for you.

Do not wait until you have fallen into the hells before you wake up. It will then be too late. You should bring forth the "desireless and unattached" Bodhi mind. That is the kind of thought you should have. That is truly bringing forth the Bodhi mind. If you can do this, then in the future you will certainly become a Buddha. You will not fall into the hells. So you must understand the Sutras. Do not just hear the "five desires" and bring forth the Bodhi mind for that. That is being upside down!   
  
Someone hears this and starts crying to themselves, "I had brought forth a very vigorous and courageous resolve. Now it is shot!"   
  
Too bad! Do not cry. You should be happy. You have already got what you were hoping for.