

The Noble Mahāyāna Sūtra

The Dhāraṇī “The Receptacle of Secret Relics, Quintessence of the Blessings of All the Thus-Gone Ones”

Ārya sarva tathāgatā dhiṣṭhāna hṛdaya guhya dhātu karaṇḍa nāma dhāraṇī mahāyāna sūtra

འཕགས་པ་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་བྱིན་གྱིས་བརྒྱབས་ཀྱི་སྣོད་པོ་གསང་བ་རིང་བསྐལ་གྱི་ཟ་མ་ཏོག་ཅེས་བྱ་བའི་གཟུངས་ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་མདོ།

'phags pa de bzhin gshegs pa thams cad kyi byin gyis brlabs kyi snying po gsang ba ring bsrel gyi za ma tog ces bya ba'i gzungs theg pa chen po'i mdo

Homage to all the buddhas and bodhisattvas!

Thus did I hear at one time. The Blessed One was dwelling in Magadha at a pool made of the seven precious materials in the Stainless Pleasure Grove, together with a great congregation of bodhisattvas, a great congregation of hearers, and several tens of millions of gods, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, asuras, garuḍas, kinnaras, mahoragas, humans, and nonhumans, and hundreds of thousands of local people, all of whom surrounded and esteemed him.

Among this retinue was a great brahmin who was like a great sal tree, who was skilled, astute, clear-minded, and handsome to behold, and who upheld the path of the ten virtuous deeds. He was called Stainless Glow. Endowed with the virtuous mindset of paying homage only to those who have faith in and respect for the Three Jewels, he examined things in detail and persevered for the sake of virtue and of all sentient beings. He had great wealth and expansive enjoyments, was affluent, and had many possessions and abundant provisions.

The great brahmin Stainless Glow went to the Blessed One and circumambulated him seven times, worshiping him with flowers and incense. He presented him with a very costly robe and an expensive pearl necklace and prostrated at the Blessed One's feet. Sitting down before the Blessed One, he asked, "Would the Blessed One agree to be invited, along with your retinue of bodhisattva sons, to take your midday meal at my home?" The Blessed One considered this invitation by the great brahmin Stainless Glow and consented by remaining silent. The great brahmin Stainless Glow knew that by remaining silent the Blessed One had accepted his invitation, and so he promptly returned home. When the night had passed, he arranged many foods, provisions, and delicacies. Along with this great array of foodstuffs, he carried an auspicious palanquin, a variety of large palanquins, flowers, and incense. With a large entourage, cymbals, and percussion instruments, he went to the Blessed One to inform him that the time had come.

The great brahmin Stainless Glow told the Blessed One, "O Blessed One, the time has come. Now that it is

time, would the Blessed One agree to come with me?”

The Blessed One reassured the great brahmin Stainless Glow; looking at him and his entourage, he said, “Since all of you gathered here in this retinue will accomplish a great purpose today, let us go!” The Blessed One then rose from his seat. As soon as he had risen, multicolored light rays manifested from his body. The brilliance of these rays of light illuminated all the buddha fields of the ten directions, exhorting all the thus-gone ones. Having beheld this, the great brahmin knew that the Blessed One was about to leave. The great brahmin Stainless Glow worshiped him with offerings and great honor and beautified the Blessed One’s route. The large entourage; the gods, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, asuras, garuḍas, kinnaras, and mahoragas; and Śakra, Brahmā, the protectors of the world, Maheśvara, Nārāyaṇa, and the Four Great Kings also beautified his route.

Not far from the Blessed One’s path was a park called Pleasurable. In this park was a great old stūpa. Derelict, overgrown with brambles, and totally covered in grass, trees, and gravel, it resembled a heap of rubbish. When the Blessed One approached it, the old stūpa resembling a rubbish heap blazed forth, emitting blazing light rays of various colors. From the heap of rubbish and gravel the sound “Excellent!” came forth. “Excellent, excellent is the Thus-Gone One, the Sage of the Śākyas! It is a good omen that you have come here today. O great brahmin, it is excellent that you have invited the Thus-Gone One. Today you have accomplished a great purpose!”

The blessed Thus-Gone One then prostrated with the five points of his body in front of the old stūpa that resembled a rubbish heap and circumambulated it three times. He took the robes from his own body and offered them to the old stūpa resembling a rubbish heap. The Blessed One wept profusely and then smiled. Because of his smile, all the thus-gone ones of the ten directions could be seen as if they were in the palm of one’s hand. The eyes of all the thus-gone ones, too, filled with tears. All the thus-gone ones also emitted light rays, which entered the great heap that was the old stūpa. The many assemblies gathered there marveled and were infused with trust. The body of the great yakṣa commander, Vajrapāṇi, trembled, and his heart pounded. Grabbing his scepter, he swiftly went to the Blessed One. He prostrated at the Blessed One’s feet, and said to the Blessed One, “What, O Blessed One, is the presage causing the Blessed One to weep? What is the presage causing the Blessed One’s eyes to fill with tears? Would the Blessed One grant me an opportunity to ask, on behalf of those in this assembly, why this is the case?”

The Blessed One said the following to Vajrapāṇi, the great yakṣa commander: “O Vajrapāṇi, this stūpa of the Thus-Gone One, a heap of relics, contains a doctrinal synopsis for the stūpa of the dhāraṇī seal that is the quintessence of all the thus-gone ones, who are as numerous as ten million times the number of sesame seeds in a pod. O Vajrapāṇi, wherever this doctrinal synopsis resides, there are thus-gone ones as numerous as a hundred thousand times ten million times the number of sesame seeds in a pod, and relics of the bodily remains of the thus-gone ones too numerous to mention. Eighty-four thousand compendiums of the doctrine reside there. Likewise, the uṣṇīṣas and the crowns of the heads of ninety-nine times the number of thus-gone ones who are as numerous as a hundred thousand times ten million times the number of sesame seeds in a pod also reside there. O Vajrapāṇi, wherever this doctrinal synopsis resides is declared to be a stūpa of a thus-gone one. O Vajrapāṇi, these are the great beneficial qualities and the great power of this doctrinal synopsis. O Vajrapāṇi, the beneficial qualities of this

doctrinal synopsis are immense. O Vajrapāṇi, this doctrinal synopsis consummates all auspiciousness.”

When the many assemblies gathered there heard this doctrinal synopsis from the Blessed One, with regard to phenomena, they attained the dustless and stainless eye of the doctrine, and they were freed from the subsidiary afflictions. Some of them attained the fruition of a stream enterer. Some obtained the fruition of a worthy one, some the fruition of the enlightenment of a solitary buddha. Some attained the fruition of a non-returner. Some attained the fruition of a once-returner. Some came to abide on the bodhisattva stages. Some obtained a prophecy concerning their enlightenment. Some came to abide on the first bodhisattva stage. Some came to abide on the second stage, some on the third stage, some on the fourth, some on the fifth, some on the sixth, some on the seventh, some on the eighth, some on the ninth, and some on the tenth bodhisattva stage. Some of them completed the six perfections. The great brahmin, too, obtained the five supercognitions, was freed from stains, and was freed from avarice and jealousy.

The great yakṣa commander Vajrapāṇi, having beheld such a great miracle, was filled with wonder and amazement. He asked the Blessed One, “If one obtains, O Blessed One, such an ornament of beneficial qualities by hearing the name of this doctrinal synopsis, what is there to say, O Blessed One, of extensively revering and honoring it? How might one, O Blessed One, view that aggregation of merit?”

The Blessed One responded, “Listen, Vajrapāṇi! If a son or daughter of good family, a monk or nun, or a layman or laywoman writes down this doctrinal synopsis, they will generate the roots of virtue and will possess an aggregation of merit equal to that of ninety-nine times the number of thus-gone ones who are as numerous as a hundred thousand times ten million times a hundred billion times the number of sesame seeds in a pod. They will be cared for by those thus-gone ones. Those who read it will come to grasp the sūtras spoken by all the thus-gone ones. Those who hold this doctrinal synopsis are held and watched over, on a single day, by ninety-nine times the number of the thus-gone ones of the ten directions who are as numerous as a hundred thousand times ten million times a hundred billion times the number of sesame seeds in a pod, and by the thus-gone, worthy, completely perfect buddhas of each direction. Any son or daughter of a good family, or any layman or laywoman who worships this doctrinal synopsis, who assimilates it and offers it flowers, incense, perfumes, flower garlands, ointments, robes, decorations, and ornaments, will be offering divine substances consisting of flowers, incense, perfumes, flower garlands, ointments, robes, decorations, and ornaments to ninety-nine times the number of thus-gone ones in each of the ten directions who are as numerous as a hundred thousand times ten million times a hundred billion times the number of sesame seeds in a pod. Such clouds of a thus-gone one’s offerings presented before the thus-gone ones in each of the ten directions beget heaps of qualities, which in size are like a great Mount Meru made of the seven precious materials.”

The gods, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, asuras, garuḍas, kinnaras, mahoragas, humans, and nonhumans, and all those in this great gathering of sentient beings, marveled and told one another, “This old stūpa, a heap of rubbish and gravel, has been blessed by the Thus-Gone One and thereby displayed such a great magical miracle. Great is its power!”

The great yakṣa commander, Vajrapāṇi, asked the Blessed One, “Who, O Blessed One, fashioned a

precious stūpa from what had become a heap of rubbish?”

The Blessed One answered, “O Vajrapāṇi, this is not a heap of rubbish, but a great and precious stūpa made of the seven precious materials. Yet it vanished from sight, O Vajrapāṇi, to show the maturation of the results of sentient beings’ deeds. Stūpas containing the quintessence of the relics of the buddhas, the thus-gone ones, are never destroyed or dispersed. How could the Thus-Gone One’s adamant quintessence body be dispersed? Yet when the maturation of the results of sentient beings’ deeds appeared, the stūpa vanished from sight.

“Furthermore, Vajrapāṇi, there will be a time in the future, exceedingly dire, when sentient beings will be engaged in evil, will be possessed of evil, and will descend to the hells. There will be neither Buddha nor Doctrine nor Community, and virtuous roots will not be generated. Due to these causes and conditions, the holy doctrine will vanish from sight. That is why, Vajrapāṇi, my eyes filled with tears, and why all the thus-gone ones too were in tears. Expositions of the holy doctrine such as this will have vanished from sight; there will only remain stūpas of a thus-gone one that are blessed by all the thus-gone ones.”

The great yakṣa commander, Vajrapāṇi, then asked the Blessed One, “If, O Blessed One, someone writes down this doctrinal synopsis and places it inside a stūpa, what sort of virtuous roots will they produce?”

The Blessed One replied, “O Vajrapāṇi, if someone writes down this doctrinal synopsis and places it inside a stūpa, this will become a stūpa with relics that are the adamant quintessence of all the thus-gone ones. It will become a stūpa blessed by the secret quintessence of the dhāraṇī of all the thus-gone ones. It will become a stūpa of ninety-nine times the number of thus-gone ones who are as numerous as there are sesame seeds in a pod. It will be blessed as a stūpa of the uṣṇīṣa and the eyes of all the thus-gone ones. If someone places it within a buddha image or inside a stūpa, the image of the Thus-Gone One will be blessed with the nature of the seven precious materials. The stūpa’s circular rings, connected lattices of little bells, auspicious signs, rain gutters, and bells will be blessed with the nature of the seven precious materials. Such persons will be blessed by all the thus-gone ones and by the power, blessings, truth, and pledges of this doctrinal synopsis until they arrive at the seat of enlightenment.

“Those sentient beings who revere and honor the stūpa will certainly not regress and they will be awakened to unsurpassed, completely perfect enlightenment. Those who prostrate to or circumambulate it once will be released from falling into the Avīci hell and they will no longer turn away from unsurpassed, completely perfect enlightenment. Areas where there are such stūpas or images will be blessed by all the thus-gone ones. Such areas will be unaffected by hostile nāgas, frost, and hail. These places will be unaffected by hostile or malevolent creatures and unaffected by predators. There will be no fear of birds of prey, or of parrots, mynah birds, rats, mongooses, biting insects, bees, ladybugs, worms, mosquitoes, or centipedes. These areas will be unaffected by poisonous snakes, and there will be no epidemics, contagious diseases, or disturbances. There will be no fear of yakṣas, rākṣasas, bhūtas, pretas, piśācas, or apasmāras. These areas will be unaffected by any type of graha. They will be unaffected by fever. Their inhabitants will be unaffected by any illness—by boils, blisters, ulcers, fistulas, eczema, scabies, or leprosy—and by just seeing the stūpa, they will be cleansed of all these diseases. These areas will be unaffected by the diseases of cattle and herd animals, or by the many other kinds of illnesses that beset

animals. They will never be affected by the diseases of men, women, boys, or girls. There will be no untimely death, and the people will never be affected by poison, weapons, fire, or water.

“There will be no fear of external armies, and the people will never be affected by the fear of bad harvests. There will be no fear of the royal army, and the Four Great Kings will continuously guard and protect these areas. The twenty-eight yakṣa commanders, too, will continuously guard, protect, and defend these areas. The twenty-eight constellations, the moon, the sun, and the great comets will maintain harmony, day and night. All the nāga kings, moreover, will never steal vitality; they will only bring down a rainfall of excellence. Even the gods will come thrice a day from their thirty-two abodes in order to prostrate to, honor, and worship the great stūpa. All the local deities will also come before those stūpas and images of the buddha thrice a day to praise and circumambulate them. Even the sovereign of the gods, Śakra, along with the goddesses and gods themselves, will always come thrice a day and night before the stūpas or buddha images, and will prostrate to and worship them.

“All the thus-gone ones will constantly consider and bless the stūpas. Whatever the stūpas and images are made of—whether of clay, stone, wood, silver, gold, or copper—as soon as this doctrinal synopsis has been written down and placed inside them, they will be blessed with the nature of the seven precious materials. All their moldings, steps, railings, circular rings, auspicious signs, parasols, dangling bells, pennants, and lattices of little bells will likewise take on the nature of the seven precious materials. Everywhere in the four directions there will be images of the Thus-Gone One. There will be precious stūpas blessed by all the thus-gone ones, stūpas of the quintessence of their bodily remains, and places of worship. The images and stūpas will be protected by the gods of Akaniṣṭha, who will be committed to their worship.”

The great yakṣa commander, Vajrapāṇi, then asked the Blessed One, “How, O Blessed One, did this doctrinal synopsis come to have such distinctive qualities?”

The Blessed One replied, “The quintessence of the blessings of all the thus-gone ones is this dhāraṇī that is the seal of the receptacle of secret relics. It is, therefore, O Vajrapāṇi, this power that instills it with blessings of such distinctive qualities.”

“Would the Blessed One please teach the doctrinal synopsis of the dhāraṇī that is the seal of the precious receptacle?” asked the vajra holder.

“Listen, Vajrapāṇi!” answered the Blessed One. “This is the doctrinal synopsis of the dhāraṇī that is the seal of the receptacle of relics, for the thus-gone ones of the past, present, and future, for all the blessed buddhas who have attained complete nirvāṇa and the three bodies of the thus-gone one—the body of reality, the body of enjoyment, and the body of emanation—throughout all three times:

“nama straiyadhvikānāṃ | sarva tathāgatānāṃ | om̐ bhū vibhavān vare vacaṭau | culu culu | dhara dhara | sarva tathāgatā | dhātudhare | pemaḡarbhe | jayavare | acale | smara tathāgata | dharmachakra | pravartana | bensa bodhimaṇḡa alaṃkāra | alaṃkṛte | sarva tathāgata | adhiṣṡhite | bodhaya bodhaya | bodhani bodhani | budhya buddhya | sambodhani sambodhaya | cala cala | calantu sarva āvaraṇāni | sarva pāpaṃ vigate | huru huru | sarva śhoka vigate | sarva tathāgatahṛdaya | bensiṇi | sambhava sambhava | sarva tathāgataguhye | dhāraṇimudre | buddhe | subuddhe | sarva tathāgata adhiṣṡhite | dhātugarbhe sohā | samaya adhiṣṡhite sohā | sarva tathāgatahṛdaya | dhātumudre sohā | supraṡiṣṡhita stūpe tathāgata adhiṣṡhite | hūṅ hung sohā | om̐ sarva tathāgata uṣṇīṣa dhātu mudrāṇi sarva tathāgata dharmadhātu vibhūṣita adhiṣṡhite huru huru | hūṅ hūṅ sohā” ||

As soon as the Blessed One had uttered this dhāraṇī that is the seal of the receptacle of relics, from each of the ten directions came ninety-nine times the number of thus-gone ones who are as numerous as a hundred thousand times ten million times a hundred billion times the number of sesame seeds in a pod. They said to the Blessed One, the Sage of the Śākyas, “For the sake of sentient beings, the Sage of the Śākyas has placed this doctrinal synopsis, a treasure of the doctrine, in this world and has blessed this stūpa that is the quintessence of relics. This is excellent, excellent!” Thus was the pledge and blessing of all the thus-gone ones.

Wherever this dhāraṇī that is the seal of relics is taught, or wherever it is placed inside a stūpa or image, the thus-gone ones, all as one, will follow it continuously and remain there. It will always be infused with the blessings of the thus-gone ones. As soon as the dhāraṇī had been pronounced, the old stūpa that resembled a rubbish heap was restored as a stūpa having the nature of the seven precious materials, along with its moldings, symmetrical features, circular rings, and auspicious signs.

When the Blessed One had rejoiced and spoken thus, the great bodhisattva hero Vajrapāṇi, along with the world of gods and humans—the gods, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, garuḡas, kinnaras, and mahoragas—rejoiced in and praised the words of the Blessed One.

This completes the noble Mahāyāna sūtra, “The Dhāraṇī ‘The Receptacle of Secret Relics, Quintessence of the Blessings of All the Thus-Gone Ones.’”

Kolophon:

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