

*The Heart of Wisdom Sūtra*  
*Bhagavatī-Prajñāpāramitā-Hṛdaya-Sūtra*

Trans J Garfield

This is what I heard at one time: The Lord was staying at Vulture Peak near the city of Rajgir. He was accompanied by a large assembly of monks as well as a large assembly of bodhisattvas.

At that time the Lord was absorbed in a meditation known as the profound enumeration of phenomena. At the same time, the bodhisattva, the great being, the noble Avalokiteśvara was contemplating the profound discipline of the perfection of wisdom. He came to see that the five aggregates are empty of essence.

Through the power of the Buddha, the venerable Śāriputra approached the noble Avalokiteśvara and asked him, “How should a son of noble lineage proceed when he wants to train in the profound discipline of the perfection of wisdom?”

The noble Avalokiteśvara replied to the venerable Śāriputra:

If any son or daughter of the noble lineage who wants to train in the profound discipline of the perfection of wisdom s/he should consider things in the following way:

First, s/he should understand clearly and thoroughly that the five aggregates are empty of essence.

Form is empty. Emptiness is form. Emptiness is not other than form. Form is not other than emptiness.

In the same sense, feeling, perception, dispositions and consciousness are also empty.

In the same sense, Śāriputra, all phenomena are empty. They have no defining characteristics. They are unarisen; they are unceasing. They are neither contaminated nor are they purified of contamination. They are neither diminishing nor increasing.

Therefore, Śāriputra, in emptiness there is no form, no feeling, no perception, no dispositions, no consciousness;

No eye, no ear, no nose, no tongue, no body, no mind;

No visible object, no sound, no smell, no taste, no tactile sensation, no mental object;

No sensory awareness; no cognitive awareness; no object of cognitive awareness.

There is neither ignorance nor the end of ignorance; neither aging and death nor the end of aging and death.

In the same sense, there is no suffering, no origin of suffering, no cessation and no path;

No wisdom, and neither attainment nor lack of attainment.

Therefore, Śāriputra, since bodhisattvas have no attainment, they depend upon and dwell in the perfection of wisdom; their minds are unobstructed and they are fearless. They transcend all error and finally reach their goal—nirvana.

Therefore, the mantra of the perfection of wisdom is a mantra of great knowledge; it is an unsurpassable mantra; it is an incomparable mantra; it is a mantra that totally eliminates all suffering. It is non-deceptive. Therefore, you should know that it is true. Here is the mantra of the perfection of wisdom:

*Gate, gate, pāragate, pārasamgate, bodhi svāhā.*

(Gone, gone, gone beyond, gone completely beyond, awakened existence.)

Śāriputra, this is how the great bodhisattvas train in the profound perfection of wisdom.

Then the Lord arose from his meditation and said to the noble Avalokiteśvara, “Well said! Well said! That is just how it is, my son; that is just how it is. The profound perfection of wisdom should be practiced exactly as you have explained it. The tathāgatas are truly delighted.”

When the Lord has spoken these words, the venerable Śāriputra and the bodhisattva, the great being, the noble Avalokiteśvara and the entire assembly of divinities, humans great beings and gandharvas were happy, and they praised what the Lord had said.