

Rājādeśa nāma mahāyāna sūtra
Rgyal po la gdams pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo
Mahāyāna Sūtra Known as 'Advice to a King'

Prostrations to all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

Thus did I hear at one time. When the Bhagavān was teaching Dharma to his retinue in the great city of Vārāṇasī, seeing that the time had arrived to tame the Vaiśālī King Udayanaḥ, he embarked for Vaiśālī together with his retinue. He encountered Vaiśālī King Udayanaḥ, setting out with four armies to conquer the great city known as Kanaka. King Udayanaḥ wrathfully said, "Such an inauspicious encounter! Let's kill them!", drew an arrow with a tip like an ax and a tail like a fish and shot it at the Bhagavān.

The arrow spun in the sky, proclaiming thus:

Hatred produces suffering,
Here, too, weariness, battling, and fighting.
Later, the suffering of hell will arise,
Therefore, renounce hatred, battling, and fighting.

King Udayanaḥ heard these words, became devoted to the Bhagavān, prostrated, and sat at one side. The Bhagavān advised, "Mahārāja, battling and fighting bring exhaustion here and lower birth later, so for what purpose do you constantly engage in battling and fighting?"

The King replied, "Gautama, Because whomever I fight with, I never experience defeat and am victorious, so I am devoted to war and fighting.

The Bhagavān advised, "Mahārāja, this enemy is a small enemy. Mahārāja, there is a great vengeful enemy other than this one."

The King asked, "Who is that enemy?"

The Bhagavān advised, "It is known as the great enemy *defilement of self clinging*.

The King asked, "Please explain what sort of enemy that is."

The Bhagavān replied:

That great enemy, conceptual self-clinging:
Concerning this, while it is the cause, and while it is non-material,
From beginningless time, it has dwelt within the self.
That enemy stole the self's dharmakāya wishfulfilling jewel
In primordial¹ time and buried it
In the dense forest of characteristics.

Still shackled and made to wander in saṃsāra,

Worldly enemies merely kill and steal wealth,
By patience toward them, a heap of merit is also accomplished.
But this enemy severs a life of peace, happiness, and liberation;
Relying on it shackles that meritⁱⁱ in the swamp of saṃsāra.

The King asked, "How does one do battle with that great enemy?"

The Bhagwan replied, "To gird oneself to challenge the enemy of conceptuality, with faithⁱⁱⁱ build a fort of giving and morality; with the force of virtue don the armor^{iv} of patience; grasp the whip of diligence; draw the bow of samādhi; and kill self clinging with the arrow of empty selflessness.

The king asked, "Please explain what you referred to as *selflessness*."

The Bhagavān replied,
Harken, King, concerning the selflessness of the person.
Because the *person*ⁱ [literally, in Tibetan *whence falls*] is a continuum of five aggregates,
That cause is from *whence** karma and defilements
And the resulting aggregates *fall*.*
That self, in the body of various sentient beings
Clings to "I" and^v "self", attaches, and
Fears that the self may become sick, dead, hungry, or cold,
Is pleased at praise, and displeased at blame,
And based on that, engages in heretical views^{vi}.
Because the "I" and "self" do not exist,
Upon analysis,^{vii} these aggregates are a delusion.
Name is not self, as it is a mere label^{viii}.
Body is not self, as the flesh, bone, and
Gathering of great elements are like an external wall.
Mind too, is not the self because it is not material.

Hearken, King, about the selflessness of phenomena.
Concerning phenomena, they are all material, forms, etc.;
Mere clinging to characteristics, because they are uncreated.
This misunderstanding of characteristics
Causes disharmonious views, yet they do not exist.

If you wonder why, concerning these outer and inner phenomena,
Do not search for emptiness by abandoning these material entities,
Because appearance itself is emptiness itself.
Mere disintegration and impermanence are labeled by the name *emptiness*.
If something manifests as appearance without inherent nature,
It does not abide as any of the three: existence, non-existence, or in between;
Then what is known as existence is saṃsāra and nirvāna.
Saṃsāra's nature is two: object and mind.

¹ *Khang zag* literally, "from whence falls" is usually rendered *person* in English.

The object is analyzed as non-material.
The appearance of a self disintegrates into atoms, the atoms too, break down to nothing.
All perceptions of matter are the mind, like a dream.
The mind, too is free of color, shape, etc.^{ix},
Therefore, saṃsāra is empty and without self.
As saṃsāra is nonexistent, so too nirvāna is nonexistent;
If existence is not established, then there is no nonexistence.
Because the two extremes are not existent, then in between is not existent, too.
Thus, if the King meditates selflessness,
Self clinging, the root of saṃsāra, will be cut.

The King said, "Previously, because I held as an enemy that which is not an enemy, I was tormented by anger. Now that I recognize the real enemy, to fight with that enemy, I will surely be devoted to selflessness.

The Bhagavān said, "Great king, well done, you have defeated the enemy that is self clinging."
The Bhagavān spoke thus, and the Vaiśālī King Udayanaḥ and the others rejoiced and thoroughly praised what Bhagavān said.

This completes *Mahāyāna Sūtra Known as 'Advice to Vaiśālī King Udayanaḥ*.

Indian abbot Dānaśīla and the Tibetan Bhante Yeshe De translated this from Sanskrit to Tibetan, edited and finalized this. Khenpo Kalsang Gyaltzen and Chodrun-ma Kunga Chodron translated this from Tibetan to English.

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Abbreviations

C Coné edition

D Degé edition

L Lithang edition

N Narthang edition

Q Beijing edition

Y Yunglo (g.yung lo) edition

ⁱ C: zod ma (patience) D: gzod ma (primordial)

ⁱⁱ Y: bsot nyam (merit decline) D: bsod nam (merit)

ⁱⁱⁱ Q: dang bas (clarity) D: dad pas (faith)

^{iv} Q: gos (clothing) D: go (armor)

^v YQ: de (that) D: dang (and)

^{vi} YQ: lta (view) D: lnga (five)

^{vii} YQ: btags (label) D: brtags (analysis)

^{viii} Y: brtags (analysis) D: btags (label)

^{ix} YQ: gnyis (itself) D: sogs (etc.)