Fundamental Verses on the Middle Way

NAGARJUNA

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मूलमध्यमककारिका

Translated from the Sanskrit with AI (Claude) and edited

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INTRODUCTION

The *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, the "Fundamental Verses on the Middle Way," is the founding text of the Madhyamaka, or "Middle Way," school of Buddhist philosophy. Its author, Nagarjuna, probably lived in south India in the second century AD; almost nothing certain is known about his life. The work is some 450 short verses in twenty-seven chapters, written as memorable summaries of arguments that teachers and commentators would unpack.

Nagarjuna takes up, one by one, the basic notions that Buddhist thinkers and their rivals used to describe the world—causation, motion, the senses, time, the self, action and its fruit, bondage and liberation, even the Buddha and nirvana—and shows that none of them can be made sense of if things have an intrinsic nature of their own. Everything that arises in dependence on other things is "empty" of such a nature. Emptiness is not a hidden essence or a kind of nothingness, but simply dependent origination rightly understood, and it too is empty.

The famous chapter 24 answers the charge that this destroys the Buddha's teaching, with the doctrine of the two truths, conventional and ultimate; chapter 25 concludes that there is not the slightest difference between nirvana and the round of rebirth.

Chapter 1: Conditions

प्रत्ययपरीक्षा *(Pratyayaparīkṣā)*

Things arise neither from themselves, nor from something else, nor from both, nor without a cause; the four kinds of condition examined.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
Ded.	अनिरोधमनुत्पादमनुच्छेदमशाश्वतं । अनेकार्थमनानार्थमनागममनिर्गमं । यः प्रतीत्यसमुत्पादं प्रपञ्चोपशमं शिवं । देशयामास संबुद्धस्तं वन्दे वदतां वरं ॥	Without ceasing, without arising, not cut off, not eternal, not single, not manifold, not coming, not going— the one who taught this dependent origination, the auspicious stilling of conceptual proliferation, the fully awakened one, best of speakers: him I salute.[1]
1.1	न स्वतो नापि परतो न द्वाभ्यां नाप्यहेतुतः । उत्पन्ना जातु विद्यन्ते भावाः क्वचन के चन ॥	Not from itself, not from another, not from both, and not without a cause: nowhere and never is anything found that has arisen.
1.2	चत्वारः प्रत्यया हेतुश्चालम्बनमनन्तरं । तथैवाधिपतेयं च प्रत्ययो नास्ति पञ्चमः ॥	There are four conditions: the causal condition, the supporting object, the immediately preceding condition, and likewise the dominant condition; there is no fifth condition.[2]
1.3	न हि स्वभावो भावानां प्रत्ययादिषु विद्यते । अविद्यमाने स्वभावे परभावो न विद्यते ॥	For the intrinsic nature of things is not found in the conditions and the rest. Where intrinsic nature is not found, extrinsic nature is not found.[3]
1.4	क्रिया न प्रत्ययवती नाप्रत्ययवती क्रिया । प्रत्यया नाक्रियावन्तः क्रियावन्तश्च सन्त्युत ॥	Activity is not endowed with conditions, nor is activity without conditions. There are no conditions without activity, and none endowed with activity either.
1.5	उत्पद्यते प्रतीत्येमानितीमे प्रत्ययाः किल । यावन्नोत्पद्यत इमे तावन्नाप्रत्ययाः कथं ॥	“These are conditions, because something arises in dependence on them,” so it is said; but as long as it does not arise, how are they not non-conditions?
1.6		Neither for an existent nor for a nonexistent object is a condition possible.

1 Dependent origination (pratītyasamutpāda): the teaching that things arise in dependence on conditions. Conceptual proliferation (prapañca): the mind’s spinning out of concepts and distinctions.

2 The four conditions of Abhidharma analysis: the cause proper, the object that supports a cognition, the moment immediately preceding, and the decisive or dominant factor.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
	नैवासतो नैव सतः प्रत्ययोऽर्थस्य युज्यते । असतः प्रत्ययः कस्य सतश्च प्रत्ययेन किं ॥	If it is nonexistent, whose condition is it? If it is existent, what use is a condition?
1.7	न सन्नासन्न सदसन्धर्मो निर्वर्तते यदा । कथं निर्वर्तको हेतुरेवं सति हि युज्यते ॥	When a thing comes about neither as existent, nor as nonexistent, nor as both existent and nonexistent, how, this being so, can a producing cause make sense?[4]
1.8	अनालम्बन एवायं सन् धर्म उपदिश्यते । अथानालम्बने धर्मे कुत आलम्बनं पुनः ॥	An existent thing is taught to be simply without a supporting object. And if a thing is without a supporting object, how then can there be a supporting object?
1.9	अनुत्पन्नेषु धर्मेषु निरोधो नोपपद्यते । नानन्तरमतो युक्तं निरुद्धे प्रत्ययश्च कः ॥	Since things have not arisen, cessation is not possible. So an immediately preceding condition is untenable; and when something has ceased, what condition is it?
1.10	भावानां निःस्वभावानां न सत्ता विद्यते यतः । सतीदमस्मिन् भवतीत्येतन्नैवोपपद्यते ॥	Since things without intrinsic nature have no being, the formula “when this exists, that comes to be” is not tenable.
1.11	न च व्यस्तसमस्तेषु प्रत्ययेष्वस्ति तत्फलं । प्रत्ययेभ्यः कथं तच्च भवेन्न प्रत्ययेषु यत् ॥	The effect is not in the conditions, taken separately or together. And how could what is not in the conditions come from the conditions?
1.12	अथासदपि तत्तेभ्यः प्रत्ययेभ्यः प्रवर्तते । अप्रत्ययेभ्योऽपि कस्मान्नाभिप्रवर्तते फलं ॥	But if, though nonexistent, it comes forth from those conditions, why does the effect not come forth from non-conditions as well?
1.13	फलं च प्रत्ययमयं प्रत्ययाश्चास्वयंमयाः । फलमस्वमयेभ्यो यत्तत्प्रत्ययमयं कथं ॥	The effect is made of the conditions, yet the conditions are not made of themselves. How could an effect that comes from what is not made of itself be made of the conditions?
1.14	तस्मान्न प्रत्ययमयं नाप्रत्ययमयं फलं । संविद्यते फलाभावात्प्रत्ययाप्रत्ययाः कुतः ॥	Therefore no effect is found, whether made of conditions or made of non-conditions. Since there is no effect, how could there be conditions and non-conditions?

3 Intrinsic nature (svabhāva): a nature of its own, independent of anything else. Extrinsic nature (parabhāva): the nature of something else.

4 Things (dharma, plural): the basic elements into which Buddhists analyzed experience.

Chapter 2: Motion

गतागतपरीक्षा *(Gatāgataparīkṣā)*

Where does going take place—on the path already gone, the path not yet gone, or the path being gone? Mover and motion.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
2.1	गतं न गम्यते तावदगतं नैव गम्यते । गतागतविनिर्मुक्तं गम्यमानं न गम्यते ॥	What has been gone over is not being gone over; nor is what has not yet been gone over. Apart from what has and has not been gone over, what is being gone over is not being gone over.
2.2	चेष्टा यत्र गतिस्तत्र गम्यमाने च सा यतः । न गते नागते चेष्टा गम्यमाने गतिस्ततः ॥	Where there is movement, there is going; and since movement is in what is being gone over, not in what has been gone over nor in what has not, going is in what is being gone over.
2.3	गम्यमानस्य गमनं कथं नामोपपत्स्यते । गम्यमाने द्विगमनं यदा नैवोपपद्यते ॥	How could the going of what is being gone over be possible at all, when two goings in what is being gone over are not possible?
2.4	गम्यमानस्य गमनं यस्य तस्य प्रसज्यते । ऋते गतेर्गम्यमानं गम्यमानं हि गम्यते ॥	Whoever holds that going belongs to what is being gone over is committed to this: there is “being gone over” without going—for what is being gone over is being gone over.
2.5	गम्यमानस्य गमने प्रसक्तं गमनद्वयं । येन तद्गम्यमानं च यच्चात्र गमनं पुनः ॥	If there is going in what is being gone over, two goings follow: the one by which it is “being gone over,” and the further going in it.
2.6	द्वौ गन्तारौ प्रसज्येते प्रसक्ते गमनद्वये । गन्तारं हि तिरस्कृत्य गमनं नोपपद्यते ॥	If two goings follow, two goers follow; for apart from a goer, going is not possible.
2.7	गन्तारं चेत्तिरस्कृत्य गमनं नोपपद्यते । गमनेऽसति गन्ताथ कुत एव भविष्यति ॥	If apart from a goer going is not possible, then, when there is no going, where could the goer come from?
2.8	गन्ता न गच्छति तावदगन्ता नैव गच्छति । अन्यो गन्तुरगन्तुश्च कस्तृतीयो हि गच्छति ॥	First, the goer does not go; nor does the non-goer go. What third, other than goer and non-goer, could go?
2.9	गन्ता तावद्गच्छतीति कथमेवोपपत्स्यते । गमनेन विना गन्ता यदा नैवोपपद्यते ॥	How could “the goer goes” be possible at all, when without going a goer is not possible?
2.10		Whoever holds the thesis “the goer goes” is committed

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
	पक्षो गन्ता गच्छतीति यस्य तस्य प्रसज्यते । गमनेन विना गन्ता गन्तुर्गमनमिच्छतः ॥	to a goer without going, since he wants the goer to have a going.
2.11	गमने द्वे प्रसज्येते गन्ता यद्युत गच्छति । गन्तेति चोच्यते येन गन्ता सन्यच्च गच्छति ॥	If the goer goes, two goings follow: the one by which he is called a goer, and the one by which, being a goer, he goes.
2.12	गते नारभ्यते गन्तुं गन्तुं नारभ्यतेऽगते । नारभ्यते गम्यमाने गन्तुमारभ्यते कुह ॥	Going is not begun in what has been gone over, nor in what has not been gone over; it is not begun in what is being gone over. Where, then, is going begun?
2.13	न पूर्वं गमनारम्भाद्गम्यमानं न वा गतं । यत्रारभ्येत गमनमगते गमनं कुतः ॥	Before going begins, there is nothing being gone over and nothing gone over in which going could be begun. How could there be going in what has not been gone over?
2.14	गतं किं गम्यमानं किमगतं किं विकल्प्यते । अदृश्यमान आरम्भे गमनस्यैव सर्वथा ॥	What has been gone over, what is being gone over, what has not—why are these conceptually constructed, when a beginning of going is nowhere seen at all?
2.15	गन्ता न तिष्ठति तावदगन्ता नैव तिष्ठति । अन्यो गन्तुरगन्तुश्च कस्तृतीयोऽथ तिष्ठति ॥	First, the goer does not stand still; nor does the non-goer stand still. What third, other than goer and non-goer, could stand still?
2.16	गन्ता तावत्तिष्ठतीति कथमेवोपपत्स्यते । गमनेन विना गन्ता यदा नैवोपपद्यते ॥	How could “the goer stands still” be possible at all, when without going a goer is not possible?
2.17	न तिष्ठति गम्यमानान्न गतान्नागतादपि । गमनं संप्रवृत्तिश्च निवृत्तिश्च गतेः समा ॥	One does not come to a stop from what is being gone over, nor from what has been gone over, nor from what has not. Going, setting out, and coming to a stop: the case is the same as with motion.
2.18	यदेव गमनं गन्ता स एवेति न युज्यते । अन्य एव पुनर्गन्ता गतेरिति न युज्यते ॥	That going and goer are the very same is not tenable; that the goer is something other than going is not tenable either.
2.19	यदेव गमनं गन्ता स एव हि भवेद्यदि । एकीभावः प्रसज्येत कर्तुः कर्मण एव च ॥	For if going and goer were the very same, it would follow that agent and action are one.
2.20	अन्य एव पुनर्गन्ता गतेर्यदि विकल्प्यते । गमनं स्यादृते गन्तुर्गन्ता स्याद्गमनादृते ॥	And if the goer is imagined to be other than going, there would be going without a goer, and a goer without going.
2.21	एकीभावेन वा सिद्धिर्नानाभावेन वा ययोः । न विद्यते तयोः सिद्धिः कथं नु खलु विद्यते ॥	If two things are established neither by being one nor by being different, how can they be established at all?
2.22		

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
	गत्या ययोच्यते गन्ता गतिं तां स न गच्छति । यस्मान्न गतिपूर्वोऽस्ति कश्चित् किं चिद्धि गच्छति ॥	The going by which a goer is called a goer—that going he does not go, since no one exists before the going who goes anywhere.
2.23	गत्या ययोच्यते गन्ता ततोऽन्यां स न गच्छति । गती द्वे नोपपद्येते यस्मादेके प्रगच्छति ॥	The going by which a goer is called a goer—he does not go a different one, since two goings are not possible in a single goer.
2.24	सद्भूतो गमनं गन्ता त्रिप्रकारं न गच्छति । नासद्भूतोऽपि गमनं त्रिप्रकारं स गच्छति ॥	A goer who is existent does not go any of the three kinds of going; nor does a goer who is nonexistent go any of the three kinds of going.
2.25	गमनं सदसद्भूतः त्रिप्रकारं न गच्छति । तस्माद्गतिश्च गन्ता च गन्तव्यं च न विद्यते ॥	One both existent and nonexistent does not go any of the three kinds of going. Therefore going, the goer, and what is to be gone over are not found.

Chapter 3: The Senses

चक्षुरादीन्द्रियपरीक्षा *(Cakṣurādīndriyaparīkṣā)*

Seeing cannot see itself; seer, seeing and the seen depend on one another.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
3.1	दर्शनं श्रवणं घ्राणं रसनं स्पर्शनं मनः । इन्द्रियाणि षडेतेषां द्रष्टव्यादीनि गोचरः ॥	Seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, and mind are the six senses; their fields are the seen and the rest.
3.2	स्वमात्मानं दर्शनं हि तत्तमेव न पश्यति । न पश्यति यदात्मानं कथं द्रक्ष्यति तत्परान् ॥	Seeing does not see itself. And if it does not see itself, how will it see others?
3.3	न पर्याप्तोऽग्निदृष्टान्तो दर्शनस्य प्रसिद्धये । सदर्शनः स प्रत्युक्तो गम्यमानगतागतैः ॥	The example of fire is not enough to establish seeing; it, together with seeing, has been answered by what is being gone over, gone over, and not gone over.[1]
3.4	नापश्यमानं भवति यदा किं चन दर्शनं । दर्शनं पश्यतीत्येवं कथमेतत्तु युज्यते ॥	When there is no seeing whatever that is not seeing, how can it make sense to say that seeing sees?
3.5	पश्यति दर्शनं नैव नैव पश्यत्यदर्शनं । व्याख्यातो दर्शनेनैव द्रष्टा चाप्युपगम्यतां ॥	Seeing does not see; non-seeing does not see either. And the seer should be understood as explained in the same way as seeing.
3.6	तिरस्कृत्य द्रष्टा नास्त्यतिरस्कृत्य च दर्शनं । द्रष्टव्यं दर्शनं चैव द्रष्टर्यसति ते कुतः ॥	Without seeing, or not without it, there is no seer. If there is no seer, how can there be the seen and seeing?
3.7	द्रष्टव्यदर्शनाभावाद्विज्ञानादिचतुष्टयं । नास्तीति उपादानादीनि भविष्यन्ति पुनः कथं ॥	Since the seen and seeing do not exist, the four beginning with consciousness do not exist; how, then, will grasping and the rest come about?[2]
3.8	व्याख्यातं श्रवणं घ्राणं रसनं स्पर्शनं मनः । दर्शनेनैव जानीयाच्छ्रोतृश्रोतव्यकादि च ॥	Hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, and mind are explained by seeing; so too should one understand the hearer, the heard, and the rest.

1 The opponent compares seeing to fire, which was held to burn or illuminate itself as well as other things.
2 The four beginning with consciousness: consciousness, contact, feeling and craving—links in the twelvefold chain of dependent origination, which continues with grasping.

Chapter 4: The Aggregates

स्कन्धपरीक्षा *(Skandhaparīkṣā)*

Material form cannot be found apart from its cause, nor its cause apart from it; the same holds for the other aggregates.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
4.1	रूपकारणनिर्मुक्तं न रूपमुपलभ्यते । रूपेणापि न निर्मुक्तं दृश्यते रूपकारणं ॥	Apart from the cause of form, form is not apprehended; apart from form, the cause of form is not seen either.[1]
4.2	रूपकारणनिर्मुक्ते रूपे रूपं प्रसज्यते । आहेतुकं न चास्त्यर्थः कश्चिदाहेतुकः क्व चित् ॥	If form existed apart from the cause of form, form would turn out to be without a cause; but nothing anywhere is without a cause.
4.3	रूपेण तु विनिर्मुक्तं यदि स्याद्रूपकारणं । अकार्यकं कारणं स्यान्नास्त्यकार्यं च कारणं ॥	But if there were a cause of form apart from form, it would be a cause without an effect; and there is no cause without an effect.
4.4	रूपे सत्येव रूपस्य कारणं नोपपद्यते । रूपेऽसत्येव रूपस्य कारणं नोपपद्यते ॥	If form already exists, a cause of form is not tenable; if form does not exist, a cause of form is not tenable either.
4.5	निष्कारणं पुना रूपं नैव नैवोपपद्यते । तस्माद्रूपगतान् कांश्चिन्न विकल्पान् विकल्पयेत् ॥	And form without a cause is utterly untenable. Therefore one should not engage in any conceptual construction about form.
4.6	न कारणस्य सदृशं कार्यमित्युपपद्यते । न कारणस्यासदृशं कार्यमित्युपपद्यते ॥	That the effect resembles the cause is not tenable; that the effect does not resemble the cause is not tenable either.
4.7	वेदनाचित्तसंज्ञानां संस्काराणां च सर्वशः । सर्वेषामेव भावानां रूपेणैव समः क्रमः ॥	For feeling, mind, perception, and formations, in every respect, and for all things, the procedure is the same as for form.
4.8	विग्रहे यः परीहारं कृते शून्यतया वदेत् । सर्वं तस्यापरिहृतं समं साध्येन जायते ॥	When a debate is conducted by way of emptiness, whoever replies with a rebuttal has rebutted nothing: it all stands on a par with what is still to be proved.[2]
4.9	व्याख्याने य उपालम्भं कृते शून्यतया वदेत् । सर्वं तस्यानुपालब्धं समं साध्येन जायते ॥	When an explanation is given by way of emptiness, whoever finds fault with it

1 Form (rūpa): matter, the first of the five aggregates; its cause was held to be the four great elements.
2 Emptiness (śūnyatā): the absence of intrinsic nature in things.

SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
	has faulted nothing: it all stands on a par with what is still to be proved.

Chapter 5: The Elements

धातुपरीक्षा *(Dhātuparīkṣā)*

Space and the other elements are neither a thing defined nor a defining mark, neither existent nor nonexistent.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
5.1	नाकाशं विद्यते किं चित्पूर्वमाकाशलक्षणात् । अलक्षणं प्रसज्येत स्यात्पूर्वं यदि लक्षणात् ॥	No space at all exists before the defining mark of space. If it existed before its defining mark, it would follow that it is without a defining mark.[1]
5.2	अलक्षणो न कश्चिच्च भावः संविद्यते क्व चित् । असत्यलक्षणे भावे क्रमतां कुह लक्षणं ॥	And nowhere is there any thing without a defining mark. If there is no thing without a defining mark, where does the defining mark come to apply?
5.3	नालक्षणे लक्षणस्य प्रवृत्तिर्न सलक्षणे । सलक्षणालक्षणाभ्यां नाप्यन्यत्र प्रवर्तते ॥	A defining mark does not operate on what has no mark, nor on what has a mark, nor does it operate anywhere other than what has a mark and what has none.
5.4	लक्षणासंप्रवृत्तौ च न लक्ष्यमुपपद्यते । लक्ष्यस्यानुपपत्तौ च लक्षणस्याप्यसंभवः ॥	When the defining mark does not operate, the thing to be marked is not possible; and when the thing to be marked is not possible, the defining mark is impossible too.
5.5	तस्मान्न विद्यते लक्ष्यं लक्षणं नैव विद्यते । लक्ष्यलक्षणनिर्मुक्तो नैव भावोऽपि विद्यते ॥	Therefore the thing to be marked does not exist, and the defining mark does not exist; nor does any thing exist apart from the marked and the mark.
5.6	अविद्यमाने भावे च कस्याभावो भविष्यति । भावाभावविधर्मा च भावाभावमवैति कः ॥	And when no existent is found, of what will there be nonexistence? And who, being unlike both existent and nonexistent, knows existent and nonexistent?
5.7	तस्मान्न भावो नाभावो न लक्ष्यं नापि लक्षणं । आकाशमाकाशसमा धातवः पञ्च ये परे ॥	Therefore space is neither existent nor nonexistent, neither the marked nor the mark; and the other five elements are just like space.[2]
5.8	अस्तित्वं ये तु पश्यन्ति नास्तित्वं चाल्पबुद्धयः । भावानां ते न पश्यन्ति द्रष्टव्योपशमं शिवं ॥	But those of little understanding who see existence and nonexistence in things do not see the auspicious stilling of what is to be seen.

1 Defining mark (lakṣaṇa): the characteristic by which a thing is identified; for space, in Abhidharma, it is unobstructedness.
2 The six elements (dhātu): earth, water, fire, air, space, and consciousness.

Chapter 6: Desire and the Desirer

रागरक्तपरीक्षा *(Rāgaraktaparīkṣā)*

Desire and the one who desires can be established neither apart nor together.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
6.1	रागाद्यदि भवेत्पूर्वं रक्तो रागतिरस्कृतः । तं प्रतीत्य भवेद्रागो रक्ते रागो भवेत्सति ॥	If the desirous one existed before desire, apart from desire, desire would arise in dependence on him: when there is a desirous one, there is desire.
6.2	रक्तेऽसति पुना रागः कुत एव भविष्यति । सति वासति वा रागे रक्तेऽप्येष समः क्रमः ॥	But if there is no desirous one, where could desire come from? Whether desire exists or not, the procedure is the same for the desirous one.
6.3	सहैव पुनरुद्भूतिर्न युक्ता रागरक्तयोः । भवेतां रागरक्तौ हि निरपेक्षौ परस्परं ॥	Nor is it tenable that desire and the desirous one arise together, for then desire and the desirous one would be independent of each other.
6.4	नैकत्वे सहभावोऽस्ति न तेनैव हि तत्सह । पृथक्त्वे सहभावोऽथ कुत एव भविष्यति ॥	In oneness there is no togetherness, for a thing is not together with itself; but in separateness, how could there be togetherness?
6.5	एकत्वे सहभावश्चेत्स्यात्सहायं विनापि सः । पृथक्त्वे सहभावश्चेत्स्यात्सहायं विनापि सः ॥	If there is togetherness in oneness, it would occur even without a companion; if there is togetherness in separateness, it would occur even without a companion.
6.6	पृथक्त्वे सहभावश्च यदि किं रागरक्तयोः । सिद्धः पृथक्पृथग्भावः सहभावो यतस्तयोः ॥	And if there is togetherness in separateness, is the separateness of desire and the desirous one already established, so that on its basis they are together?
6.7	सिद्धः पृथक् पृथग्भावो यदि वा रागरक्तयोः । सहभावं किमर्थं तु परिकल्पयसे तयोः ॥	Or if desire and the desirous one are established as separate, why do you imagine them to be together?
6.8	पृथङ्न सिध्यतीत्येवं सहभावं विकाङ्क्षसि । सहभावप्रसिद्ध्यर्थं पृथक्त्वं भूय इच्छसि ॥	Since they are not established separately, you want them to be together; yet to establish their togetherness, you again want separateness.
6.9	पृथग्भावाप्रसिद्धेश्च सहभावो न सिध्यति । कतमस्मिन् पृथग्भावे सहभावं सतीच्छसि ॥	Since separateness is not established, togetherness is not established. In what kind of separateness do you want togetherness to exist?

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
6.10	एवं रक्तेन रागस्य सिद्धिर्न सह नासह । रागवत्सर्वधर्माणां सिद्धिर्न सह नासह ॥	Thus desire is established neither together with the desirous one nor apart from him. Like desire, all things are established neither together nor apart.

Chapter 7: The Conditioned

संस्कृतपरीक्षा *(Saṃskṛtaparīkṣā)*

Arising, abiding and ceasing, the marks of what is conditioned, examined; the lamp that lights itself; like a dream, a magic show, a city in the clouds.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
7.1	यदि संस्कृत उत्पादस्तत्र युक्ता त्रिलक्षणी । अथासंस्कृत उत्पादः कथं संस्कृतलक्षणं ॥	If arising is conditioned, the three characteristics apply to it; but if arising is unconditioned, how can it be a characteristic of the conditioned?[1]
7.2	उत्पादाद्यास्त्रयो व्यस्ता नालं लक्षणकर्मणि । संस्कृतस्य समस्ताः स्युरेकत्र कथमेकदा ॥	Arising and the other two, taken separately, cannot do the work of characterizing the conditioned; taken together, how could they be in one place at one time?
7.3	उत्पादस्थितिभङ्गानामन्यत्संस्कृतलक्षणं । अस्ति चेदनवस्थैवं नास्ति चेत्ते न संस्कृताः ॥	If arising, abiding, and ceasing have another characteristic of the conditioned, there is an infinite regress; if they have none, they are not conditioned.
7.4	उत्पादोत्पाद उत्पादो मूलोत्पादस्य केवलं । उत्पादोत्पादमुत्पादो मौलो जनयते पुनः ॥	The arising of arising gives rise only to the primary arising; the primary arising in turn gives rise to the arising of arising.[2]
7.5	उत्पादोत्पाद उत्पादो मूलोत्पादस्य ते यदि । मौलेनाजनितस्तं ते स कथं जनयिष्यति ॥	If, as you hold, the arising of arising gives rise to the primary arising, how will it, not yet produced by the primary arising, produce that?
7.6	स ते मौलेन जनितो मौलं जनयते यदि । मौलः स तेनाजनितस्तमुत्पादयते कथं ॥	If, as you hold, the one produced by the primary gives rise to the primary, how does that primary, not yet produced by it, produce it?
7.7	अयमुत्पद्यमानस्ते काममुत्पादयेदिमं । यदीममुत्पादयितुमजातः शक्नुयादयं ॥	This one, while arising, might indeed give rise to that one, as you would like, if this one, not yet born, were able to produce that one.
7.8	प्रदीपः स्वपरात्मानौ संप्रकाशयिता यथा । उत्पादः स्वपरात्मानावुभावुत्पादयेत्तथा ॥	Just as a lamp illuminates both itself and others, so arising would produce both itself and others.[3]

1 In Abhidharma (Sarvāstivāda) doctrine, every conditioned thing bears three characteristics: arising, abiding, and ceasing.
2 The Sarvāstivāda held that arising is itself produced by a secondary "arising of arising," each producing the other.
3 The lamp was a standard example of something that illuminates itself as well as other things.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
7.9	प्रदीपे नान्धकारोऽस्ति यत्र चासौ प्रतिष्ठितः । किं प्रकाशयति दीपः प्रकाशो हि तमोवधः ॥	In the lamp there is no darkness, nor where the lamp is placed. What then does the lamp illuminate? For illumination is the destroying of darkness.
7.10	कथमुत्पद्यमानेन प्रदीपेन तमो हतं । नोत्पद्यमानो हि तमः प्रदीपः प्राप्नुते यदा ॥	How is darkness destroyed by the lamp while it is arising, when the lamp, while arising, does not reach the darkness?
7.11	अप्राप्यैव प्रदीपेन यदि वा निहतं तमः । इहस्थः सर्वलोकस्थं स तमो निहनिष्यति ॥	Or if darkness is destroyed by the lamp without reaching it, then the lamp, standing here, will destroy the darkness that is in all the world.
7.12	प्रदीपः स्वपरात्मानौ संप्रकाशयते यदि । तमोऽपि स्वपरात्मानौ छादयिष्यत्यसंशयं ॥	If the lamp illuminates both itself and others, then darkness too will without doubt conceal both itself and others.
7.13	अनुत्पन्नोऽयमुत्पादः स्वात्मानं जनयेत्कथं । अथोत्पन्नो जनयते जाते किं जन्यते पुनः ॥	How could this arising, if not yet arisen, produce itself? And if, already arisen, it produces, what more is produced when it is already born?
7.14	नोत्पद्यमानं नोत्पन्नं नानुत्पन्नं कथं चन । उत्पद्यते तथाख्यातं गम्यमानगतागतैः ॥	What is arising, what has arisen, what has not arisen—in no way do these arise; this has been explained by what is being gone over, gone over, and not gone over.
7.15	उत्पद्यमानमुत्पत्ताविदं न क्रमते यदा । कथमुत्पद्यमानं तु प्रतीत्योत्पत्तिमुच्यते ॥	When what is arising does not yet take part in arising, how can what is arising be said to be so in dependence on arising?
7.16	प्रतीत्य यद्यद्भवति तत्तच्छान्तं स्वभावतः । तस्मादुत्पद्यमानं च शान्तमुत्पत्तिरेव च ॥	Whatever comes to be in dependence, that is by intrinsic nature at peace. Therefore what is arising is at peace, and so is arising itself.
7.17	यदि कश्चिदनुत्पन्नो भावः संविद्यते क्व चित् । उत्पद्येत स किं तस्मिन्भाव उत्पद्यतेऽसति ॥	If some unarisen thing existed anywhere, it could arise; but if that thing does not exist, what arises?
7.18	उत्पद्यमानमुत्पादो यदि चोत्पादयत्ययं । उत्पादयेत्तमुत्पादमुत्पादः कतमः पुनः ॥	And if this arising produces what is arising, what further arising would produce that arising?
7.19	अन्य उत्पादयत्येनं यद्युत्पादोऽनवस्थितिः । अथानुत्पाद उत्पन्नः सर्वमुत्पद्यते तथा ॥	If another arising produces it, there is an infinite regress; if it arises without an arising, then everything arises in that way.
7.20		The arising of the existent is not tenable, nor that of the nonexistent,

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
	सतश्च तावदुत्पत्तिरसतश्च न युज्यते । न सतश्चासतश्चेति पूर्वमेवोपपादितं ॥	nor of what is both existent and nonexistent; this was shown earlier.
7.21	निरुध्यमानस्योत्पत्तिर्न भावस्योपपद्यते । यश्चानिरुध्यमानस्तु स भावो नोपपद्यते ॥	The arising of a thing that is ceasing is not possible; and a thing that is not ceasing is not possible.
7.22	न स्थितभावस्तिष्ठत्यस्थितभावो न तिष्ठति । न तिष्ठति तिष्ठमानः कोऽनुत्पन्नश्च तिष्ठति ॥	What is already abiding does not abide; what is not abiding does not abide; what is in the course of abiding does not abide; and what unarisen thing abides?
7.23	स्थितिर्निरुध्यमानस्य न भावस्योपपद्यते । यश्चानिरुध्यमानस्तु स भावो नोपपद्यते ॥	The abiding of a thing that is ceasing is not possible; and a thing that is not ceasing is not possible.
7.24	जरामरणधर्मेषु सर्वभावेषु सर्वदा । तिष्ठन्ति कतमे भावा ये जरामरणं विना ॥	Since all things are always subject to old age and death, what things are there that abide without old age and death?
7.25	स्थित्यान्यया स्थितेः स्थानं तयैव च न युज्यते । उत्पादस्य यथोत्पादो नात्मना न परात्मना ॥	Abiding cannot abide by another abiding, nor by that very abiding, just as arising does not arise by itself or by another.
7.26	निरुध्यते नानिरुद्धं न निरुद्धं निरुध्यते । तथापि निरुध्यमानं किमजातं निरुध्यते ॥	What has not ceased does not cease; what has ceased does not cease; nor does what is ceasing. What unborn thing ceases?
7.27	स्थितस्य तावद्भावस्य निरोधो नोपपद्यते । नास्थितस्यापि भावस्य निरोध उपपद्यते ॥	The cessation of a thing that is abiding is not possible; nor is the cessation of a thing that is not abiding possible.
7.28	तयैवावस्थयावस्था न हि सैव निरुध्यते । अन्ययावस्थयावस्था न चान्यैव निरुध्यते ॥	A state does not cease through that very same state, nor does a state cease through another state.
7.29	यदेव सर्वधर्माणामुत्पादो नोपपद्यते । तदेवं सर्वधर्माणां निरोधो नोपपद्यते ॥	Just as the arising of all things is not possible, so the cessation of all things is not possible.
7.30	सतश्च तावद्भावस्य निरोधो नोपपद्यते । एकत्वे न हि भावश्च नाभावश्चोपपद्यते ॥	The cessation of an existent thing is not possible, for in one and the same, existence and nonexistence are not possible.
7.31	असतोऽपि न भावस्य निरोध उपपद्यते । न द्वितीयस्य शिरसः छेदनं विद्यते यथा ॥	Nor is the cessation of a nonexistent thing possible, just as there is no cutting off of a second head.
7.32	न स्वात्मना निरोधोऽस्ति निरोधो न परात्मना । उत्पादस्य यथोत्पादो नात्मना न परात्मना ॥	

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
		Cessation does not cease by itself, nor by another, just as arising does not arise by itself or by another.
7.33	उत्पादस्थितिभङ्गानामसिद्धेर्नास्ति संस्कृतं । संस्कृतस्याप्रसिद्धौ च कथं सेत्स्यत्यसंस्कृतं ॥	Since arising, abiding, and ceasing are not established, there is no conditioned; and if the conditioned is not established, how will the unconditioned be established?
7.34	यथा माया यथा स्वप्नो गन्धर्वनगरं यथा । तथोत्पादस्तथा स्थानं तथा भङ्ग उदाहृतं ॥	Like an illusion, like a dream, like a city of the gandharvas— so arising, so abiding, so ceasing have been described.[4]

4 Illusion (māyā): a conjurer's magic show. A city of the gandharvas (celestial musicians) is a mirage-like city seen in the sky, a stock image of unreality.

Chapter 8: Action and Agent

कर्मकारकपरीक्षा *(Karmakārakaparīkṣā)*

Agent and action exist only in dependence on each other.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
8.1	सद्भूतः कारकः कर्म सद्भूतं न करोत्ययं । कारको नाप्यसद्भूतः कर्मासद्भूतमीहते ॥	An agent that is existent does not perform an existent action; nor does an agent that is nonexistent undertake a nonexistent action.
8.2	सद्भूतस्य क्रिया नास्ति कर्म च स्यादकर्तृकं । सद्भूतस्य क्रिया नास्ति कर्ता च स्यादकर्मकः ॥	If the action is existent, there is no activity, and the action would lack an agent; if the agent is existent, there is no activity, and the agent would lack an action.
8.3	करोति यद्यसद्भूतोऽसद्भूतं कर्म कारकः । अहेतुकं भवेत्कर्म कर्ता चाहेतुको भवेत् ॥	If a nonexistent agent performed a nonexistent action, the action would be without a cause, and the agent would be without a cause.
8.4	हेतावसति कार्यं च कारणं च न विद्यते । तदभावे क्रिया कर्ता करणं च न विद्यते ॥	If there is no cause, neither effect nor cause is found; without these, activity, agent, and instrument are not found.
8.5	धर्माधर्मौ न विद्येते क्रियादीनामसंभवे । धर्मे चासत्यधर्मे च फलं तज्जं न विद्यते ॥	When activity and the rest are impossible, right and wrong do not exist; and when right and wrong do not exist, the fruit born of them does not exist.[1]
8.6	फलेऽसति न मोक्षाय न स्वर्गायोपपद्यते । मार्गः सर्वक्रियाणां च नैरर्थक्यं प्रसज्यते ॥	Without the fruit, there is no path to liberation or to heaven, and it follows that all activity would be pointless.
8.7	कारकः सदसद्भूतः सदसत्कुरुते न तत् । परस्परविरुद्धं हि सच्चासच्चैकतः कुतः ॥	An agent both existent and nonexistent does not perform an action both existent and nonexistent, for existent and nonexistent contradict each other: how could they be in one?
8.8	सता च क्रियते नासन्नासता क्रियते च सत् । कर्त्रा सर्वे प्रसज्यन्ते दोषास्तत्र त एव हि ॥	The nonexistent is not done by an existent agent, nor the existent by a nonexistent one; for all those same faults would follow there.
8.9	नासद्भूतं न सद्भूतः सदसद्भूतमेव वा । करोति कारकः कर्म पूर्वोक्तैरेव हेतुभिः ॥	Neither a nonexistent action nor one both existent and nonexistent

1 Right and wrong (dharma and adharma): good and bad conduct, merit and demerit.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
		does an existent agent perform, for the reasons already given.
8.10	नासद्भूतोऽपि सद्भूतं सदसद्भूतमेव वा । करोति कारकः कर्म पूर्वोक्तैरेव हेतुभिः ॥	Nor does a nonexistent agent perform an existent action, or one both existent and nonexistent, for the reasons already given.
8.11	करोति सदसद्भूतो न सन्नासच्च कारकः । कर्म तत्तु विजानीयात्पूर्वोक्तैरेव हेतुभिः ॥	An agent both existent and nonexistent does not perform an existent or a nonexistent action; this should be understood from the reasons already given.
8.12	प्रतीत्य कारकः कर्म तं प्रतीत्य च कारकं । कर्म प्रवर्तते नान्यत्पश्यामः सिद्धिकारणं ॥	The agent comes about in dependence on the action, and in dependence on that agent the action comes about; we see no other ground for their being established.
8.13	एवं विद्यादुपादानं व्युत्सर्गादिति कर्मणः । कर्तुश्च कर्मकर्तृभ्यां शेषान् भावान् विभावयेत् ॥	In the same way one should understand grasping, from the refutation of action and agent; by means of action and agent one should examine the remaining things.

Chapter 9: What Comes Before

पूर्वपरीक्षा *(Pūrvaparīkṣā)*

Is there someone prior to seeing, hearing and feeling, to whom they belong?

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
9.1	दर्शनश्रवणादीनि वेदनादीनि चाप्यथ । भवन्ति यस्य प्रागेभ्यः सोऽस्तीत्येके वदन्त्युत ॥	Seeing, hearing and the rest, and feeling and the rest too— the one to whom they belong exists before them, some say.
9.2	कथं ह्यविद्यमानस्य दर्शनादि भविष्यति । भावस्य तस्मात्प्रागेभ्यः सोऽस्ति भावो व्यवस्थितः ॥	For how could seeing and the rest belong to a thing that does not exist? Therefore, before them, there is that thing, firmly established.
9.3	दर्शनश्रवणादिभ्यो वेदनादिभ्य एव च । यः प्राग्व्यवस्थितो भावः केन प्रज्ञप्यतेऽथ सः ॥	But that thing established before seeing, hearing and the rest, and before feeling and the rest— by what is it designated?
9.4	विनापि दर्शनादीनि यदि चासौ व्यवस्थितः । अमून्यपि भविष्यन्ति विना तेन न संशयः ॥	And if it is established even without seeing and the rest, then these too will exist without it, no doubt.
9.5	अज्यते केन चित्कश्चित्किं चित्केन चिदज्यते । कुतः किं चिद्विना कश्चित्किं चित्कं चिद्विना कुतः ॥	Someone is made known by something; something is made known by someone. Without something, how could there be someone? Without someone, how could there be something?
9.6	सर्वेभ्यो दर्शनादिभ्यः कश्चित्पूर्वो न विद्यते । अज्यते दर्शनादीनामन्येन पुनरन्यदा ॥	Someone prior to all of seeing and the rest does not exist; he is made known by one of seeing and the rest at one time, by another at another.
9.7	सर्वेभ्यो दर्शनादिभ्यो यदि पूर्वो न विद्यते । एकैकस्मात्कथं पूर्वो दर्शनादेः स विद्यते ॥	If there is no one prior to all of seeing and the rest, how is there someone prior to each one of seeing and the rest?
9.8	द्रष्टा स एव स श्रोता स एव यदि वेदकः । एकैकस्माद्भवेत्पूर्वमेवं चैतन्न युज्यते ॥	If the seer is the same as the hearer and the same as the feeler, he would exist prior to each one; but this is not tenable.
9.9	द्रष्टान्य एव श्रोतान्यो वेदकोऽन्यः पुनर्यदि । सति स्याद्द्रष्टरि श्रोता बहुत्वं चात्मनां भवेत् ॥	If the seer is one, the hearer another, and the feeler yet another, then when there is a seer there would also be a hearer, and there would be many selves.
9.10		

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
	दर्शनश्रवणादीनि वेदनादीनि चाप्यथ । भवन्ति येभ्यस्तेष्वेष भूतेष्वपि न विद्यते ॥	Seeing, hearing and the rest, and feeling and the rest— in the elements from which they arise, he is not found either.
9.11	दर्शनश्रवणादीनि वेदनादीनि चाप्यथ । न विद्यते चेद्यस्य स न विद्यन्त इमान्यपि ॥	Seeing, hearing and the rest, and feeling and the rest— if the one to whom they belong does not exist, they too do not exist.
9.12	प्राक् च यो दर्शनादिभ्यः सांप्रतं चोर्ध्वमेव च । न विद्यतेऽस्ति नास्तीति निवृत्तास्तत्र कल्पनाः ॥	Before seeing and the rest, at the same time, and afterward, he is not found; for him, the imaginings “exists” and “does not exist” have ceased.

Chapter 10: Fire and Fuel

अग्नीन्धनपरीक्षा *(Agnīndhanaparīkṣā)*

Fire is neither the same as its fuel nor other than it; so too the self and what it appropriates.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
10.1	यदिन्धनं स चेदग्निरेकत्वं कर्तृकर्मणोः । अन्यश्चेदिन्धनादग्निरिन्धनादप्यृते भवेत् ॥	If fire were fuel, agent and action would be one. If fire were other than fuel, it would exist even without fuel.[1]
10.2	नित्यप्रदीप्त एव स्यादप्रदीपनहेतुकः । पुनरारम्भवैयर्थ्यमेवं चाकर्मकः सति ॥	It would be forever burning, without any cause for its kindling; starting it again would be pointless, and so it would be without action.
10.3	परत्र निरपेक्षत्वादप्रदीपनहेतुकः । पुनरारम्भवैयर्थ्यं नित्यदीप्तः प्रसज्यते ॥	Because it would not depend on anything else, it would be without any cause for its kindling; starting it again would be pointless, and it would follow that it burns forever.
10.4	तत्रैतस्मादिध्यमानमिन्धनं भवतीति चेत् । केनेध्यतामिन्धनं तत्तावन्मात्रमिदं यदा ॥	If you say that fuel is simply what is being burned, by what is that fuel burned, if fuel is only that?
10.5	अन्यो न प्राप्स्यतेऽप्राप्तो न धक्ष्यत्यदहन् पुनः । न निर्वास्यत्यनिर्वाणः स्थास्यते वा स्वलिङ्गवान् ॥	Being other, it will not reach the fuel; not reaching it, it will not burn it; not burning it, it will not go out; not going out, it will remain with its own marks.[2]
10.6	अन्य एवेन्धनादग्निरिन्धनं प्राप्नुयाद्यदि । स्त्री संप्राप्नोति पुरुषं पुरुषश्च स्त्रियं यथा ॥	If fire were other than fuel, it could reach the fuel, as a woman reaches a man and a man a woman.
10.7	अन्य एवेन्धनादग्निरिन्धनं काममाप्नुयात् । अग्नीन्धने यदि स्यातामन्योन्येन तिरस्कृते ॥	Fire, though other than fuel, might indeed reach the fuel, if fire and fuel existed separated from each other.
10.8	यदीन्धनमपेक्ष्याग्निरपेक्ष्याग्निं यदीन्धनं । कतरत्पूर्वनिष्पन्नं यदपेक्ष्याग्निरिन्धनं ॥	If fire depends on fuel, and fuel depends on fire, which is produced first, in dependence on which there is fire or fuel?
10.9	यदीन्धनमपेक्ष्याग्निरग्नेः सिद्धस्य साधनं । एवं सतीन्धनं चापि भविष्यति निरग्निकं ॥	If fire depends on fuel, a fire already established is established again; and that being so, there will also be fuel without fire.
10.10	योऽपेक्ष्य सिध्यते भावस्तमेवापेक्ष्य सिध्यति । यदि योऽपेक्षितव्यः स सिध्यतां कमपेक्ष्य कः ॥	If a thing is established in dependence on another, and that other, on which it is to depend,

1 Fire and fuel: a standard image for the relation between the person and the aggregates it takes up (see 10.15).
2 To go out (nirvā-): the verb from which nirvāṇa, "blowing out," is formed.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
		is established in dependence on it, then which is established in dependence on which?
10.11	योऽपेक्ष्य सिध्यते भावः सोऽसिद्धोऽपेक्षते कथं । अथाप्यपेक्षते सिद्धस्त्वपेक्षास्य न युज्यते ॥	How can a thing that is established in dependence depend on anything while not yet established? But if it depends when already established, its dependence makes no sense.
10.12	अपेक्ष्येन्धनमग्निर्न नानपेक्ष्याग्निरिन्धनं । अपेक्ष्येन्धनमग्निं न नानपेक्ष्याग्निमिन्धनं ॥	There is no fire in dependence on fuel, and no fire independent of fuel. There is no fuel in dependence on fire, and no fuel independent of fire.
10.13	आगच्छत्यन्यतो नाग्निरिन्धनेऽग्निर्न विद्यते । अत्रेन्धने शेषमुक्तं गम्यमानगतागतैः ॥	Fire does not come from something else, nor is fire in the fuel. The rest concerning fuel has been stated by what is being gone over, gone over, and not gone over.
10.14	इन्धनं पुनरग्निर्न नाग्निरन्यत्र चेन्धनात् । नाग्निरिन्धनवान्नाग्नाविन्धनानि न तेषु सः ॥	Fuel is not fire, nor is fire anywhere other than fuel. Fire does not possess fuel; fuel is not in fire, nor fire in fuel.
10.15	अग्नीन्धनाभ्यां व्याख्यात आत्मोपादानयोः क्रमः । सर्वो निरवशेषेण सार्धं घटपटादिभिः ॥	Fire and fuel explain the whole case of the self and what it grasps, without remainder, together with pots, cloths, and the rest.
10.16	आत्मनश्च सतत्त्वं ये भावानां च पृथक् पृथक् । निर्दिशन्ति न तान्मन्ये शासनस्यार्थकोविदान् ॥	Those who describe the self and things as each having its own reality, separately, I do not consider to understand the meaning of the teaching.

Chapter 11: The Beginning and the End

पूर्वापरकोटिपरीक्षा *(Pūrvāparakoṭiparīkṣā)*

The round of rebirth has no first point and no last; birth and death cannot be ordered in time.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
11.1	पूर्वा प्रज्ञायते कोटिर्नेत्युवाच महामुनिः । संसारोऽनवराग्रो हि नास्यादिर्नापि पश्चिमं ॥	The Great Sage said that no first point is known. The round of rebirth is without beginning or end: it has no start and no last point.[1]
11.2	नैवाग्रं नावरं यस्य तस्य मध्यं कुतो भवेत् । तस्मान्नात्रोपपद्यन्ते पूर्वापरसहक्रमाः ॥	Where there is neither beginning nor end, how could there be a middle? So here the orders of before, after, and at the same time are not possible.
11.3	पूर्वं जातिर्यदि भवेज्जरामरणमुत्तरं । निर्जरामरणा जातिर्भवेज्जायेत चामृतः ॥	If birth came first and old age and death after- ward, birth would be without old age and death, and one who had not died would be born.
11.4	पश्चाज्जातिर्यदि भवेज्जरामरणमादितः । अहेतुकमजातस्य स्याज्जरामरणं कथं ॥	If birth came later and old age and death first, how could there be causeless old age and death of one not born?
11.5	न जरामरणेनैव जातिश्च सह युज्यते । म्रियेत जायमानश्च स्याच्चाहेतुकतोभयोः ॥	Nor is it tenable that birth occurs together with old age and death; one would die while being born, and both would be without a cause.
11.6	यत्र न प्रभवन्त्येते पूर्वापरसहक्रमाः । प्रपञ्चयन्ति तां जातिं तज्जरामरणं च किं ॥	Where these orders of before, after, and at the same time do not come about, why engage in conceptual proliferation about birth, and about old age and death?
11.7	कार्यं च कारणं चैव लक्ष्यं लक्षणमेव च । वेदना वेदकश्चैव सन्त्यर्था ये च के चन ॥	Effect and cause, the marked and the mark, feeling and the one who feels, whatever objects there are—
11.8	पूर्वा न विद्यते कोटिः संसारस्य न केवलं । सर्वेषामपि भावानां पूर्वा कोटी न विद्यते ॥	it is not only the round of rebirth whose first point is not found; of all things whatever, no first point is found.

1 The Great Sage: the Buddha. The round of rebirth (saṃsāra): the beginningless cycle of birth, death, and birth again.

Chapter 12: Suffering

दुःखपरीक्षा *(Duḥkhaparīkṣā)*

Suffering is made neither by oneself, nor by another, nor by both, nor without a cause.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
12.1	स्वयं कृतं परकृतं द्वाभ्यां कृतमहेतुकं । दुःखमित्येक इच्छन्ति तच्च कार्यं न युज्यते ॥	Made by oneself, made by another, made by both, or without a cause— so some hold suffering to be; but that it is something made is not tenable.
12.2	स्वयं कृतं यदि भवेत्प्रतीत्य न ततो भवेत् । स्कन्धानिमानमी स्कन्धाः संभवन्ति प्रतीत्य हि ॥	If it were made by oneself, it would not arise in dependence; for these aggregates arise in dependence on those aggregates.[1]
12.3	यद्यमीभ्य इमेऽन्ये स्युरेभ्यो वामी परे यदि । भवेत्परकृतं दुःखं परैरेभिरमी कृताः ॥	If these were other than those, or those different from these, suffering would be made by another: those would be made by these others.
12.4	स्वपुद्गलकृतं दुःखं यदि दुःखं पुनर्विना । स्वपुद्गलः स कतमो येन दुःखं स्वयं कृतं ॥	If suffering is made by one's own person, then, apart from suffering, who is that person of one's own by whom suffering is made by oneself?[2]
12.5	परपुद्गलजं दुःखं यदि यस्मै प्रदीयते । परेण कृत्वा तद्दुःखं स दुःखेन विना कुतः ॥	If suffering is born of another person, the one to whom it is handed over, the other having made it—where is that one, apart from suffering?
12.6	परपुद्गलजं दुःखं यदि कः परपुद्गलः । विना दुःखेन यः कृत्वा परस्मै प्रहिणोति तत् ॥	If suffering is born of another person, who is that other person who, apart from suffering, makes it and sends it to the other?
12.7	स्वयं कृतस्याप्रसिद्धेर्दुःखं परकृतं कुतः । परो हि दुःखं यत्कुर्यात्तत्तस्य स्यात्स्वयं कृतं ॥	Since suffering made by oneself is not established, how could suffering be made by another? For whatever suffering the other made would be, for him, made by himself.
12.8	न तावत्स्वकृतं दुःखं न हि तेनैव तत्कृतं । परो नात्मकृतश्चेत्स्याद्दुःखं परकृतं कथं ॥	First, suffering is not made by oneself, for it is not made by that very one. If the other is not self-made, how could suffering be made by another?

1 Aggregates (skandha): the five groups into which a person is analyzed—form, feeling, perception, formations, consciousness.
2 Person (pudgala): the Pudgalavāda schools held that there is a person neither identical with nor different from the aggregates.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
12.9	स्यादुभाभ्यां कृतं दुःखं स्यादेकैककृतं यदि । पराकारास्वयंकारं दुःखमहेतुकं कुतः ॥	Suffering could be made by both, if it could be made by each. Made neither by another nor by oneself, how could suffering be without a cause?
12.10	न केवलं हि दुःखस्य चातुर्विध्यं न विद्यते । बाह्यानामपि भावानां चातुर्विध्यं न विद्यते ॥	It is not only for suffering that none of the four options holds; for external things too, none of the four options holds.

Chapter 13: Conditioned Things

संस्कारपरीक्षा *(Saṃskāraparīkṣā)*

All conditioned things are deceptive; emptiness is the relinquishing of all views.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
13.1	तन्मृषा मोषधर्म यद्भगवानित्यभाषत । सर्वे च मोषधर्माणः संस्कारास्तेन ते मृषा ॥	The Lord said that whatever is of a deceptive nature is false. All formations are of a deceptive nature; therefore they are false.[1]
13.2	तन्मृषा मोषधर्म यद्यदि किं तत्र मुष्यते । एतत्तूक्तं भगवता शून्यतापरिदीपकं ॥	If whatever is of a deceptive nature is false, what is there that deceives? What the Lord said sheds light on emptiness.
13.3	भावानां निःस्वभावत्वमन्यथाभावदर्शनात् । अस्वभावो भावो नास्ति भावानां शून्यता यतः ॥	Things are without intrinsic nature, since they are seen to become otherwise. There is no thing without intrinsic nature, since things have emptiness.
13.4	कस्य स्यादन्यथाभावः स्वभावश्चेन्न विद्यते । कस्य स्यादन्यथाभावः स्वभावो यदि विद्यते ॥	Of what could there be becoming otherwise, if intrinsic nature is not found? Of what could there be becoming otherwise, if intrinsic nature is found?
13.5	तस्यैव नान्यथाभावो नाप्यन्यस्यैव युज्यते । युवा न जीर्यते यस्माद्यस्माज्जीर्णो न जीर्यते ॥	Becoming otherwise is not tenable for the thing itself, nor for something else; for the young do not grow old, and the old do not grow old.
13.6	तस्य चेदन्यथाभावः क्षीरमेव भवेद्दधि । क्षीरादन्यस्य कस्य चिद्दधिभावो भविष्यति ॥	If the thing itself became otherwise, milk itself would be curds, and the state of being curds will belong to something other than milk.
13.7	यद्यशून्यं भवेत्किं चित्स्याच्छून्यमिति किं चन । न किं चिदस्त्यशून्यं च कुतः शून्यं भविष्यति ॥	If something that is not empty existed, something empty might exist. Nothing exists that is not empty; so how will the empty exist?
13.8	शून्यता सर्वदृष्टीनां प्रोक्ता निःसरणं जिनैः । येषां तु शून्यतादृष्टिस्तानसाध्यान् बभाषिरे ॥	The Victors have taught emptiness as the relinquishing of all views. But those for whom emptiness is a view, they have called incurable.[2]

1 The Lord (bhagavān): the Buddha. Formations (saṃskāra): here, all conditioned things.
2 The Victors (jina): the buddhas.

Chapter 14: Contact

संसर्गपरीक्षा *(Saṃsargaparīkṣā)*

Seer, seen and seeing never meet, for things that are different cannot come into contact.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
14.1	द्रष्टव्यं दर्शनं द्रष्टा त्रीण्येतानि द्विशो द्विशः । सर्वशश्च न संसर्गमन्योन्येन व्रजन्त्युत ॥	The seen, seeing, and the seer: these three, whether in pairs or all together, do not enter into connection with one another.
14.2	एवं रागश्च रक्तश्च रञ्जनीयं च दृश्यतां । त्रैधेन शेषाः क्लेशाश्च शेषाण्यायतनानि च ॥	So too desire, the desirous one, and what is desired should be seen; and likewise, in threes, the remaining afflictions and the remaining sense bases.[1]
14.3	अन्येनान्यस्य संसर्गस्तच्चान्यत्वं न विद्यते । द्रष्टव्यप्रभृतीनां यन्न संसर्गं व्रजन्त्यतः ॥	Connection is of one different thing with another, and that difference is not found among the seen and the rest; therefore they do not enter into connection.
14.4	न च केवलमन्यत्वं द्रष्टव्यादेर्न विद्यते । कस्य चित्केन चित्सार्धं नान्यत्वमुपपद्यते ॥	Not only is the difference of the seen and the rest not found; no difference of anything from anything else is possible.
14.5	अन्यदन्यत्प्रतीत्यान्यन्नान्यदन्यदृतेऽन्यतः । यत्प्रतीत्य च यत्तस्मात्तदन्यन्नोपपद्यते ॥	The different is different in dependence on something different; nothing is different without the different. What depends on something is not tenably different from it.
14.6	यद्यन्यदन्यदन्यस्मादन्यस्मादप्यृते भवेत् । तदन्यदन्यदन्यस्मादृते नास्ति च नास्त्यतः ॥	If the different were different from the different, it would be so even without the different; but without the different the different is not different; therefore it does not exist.
14.7	नान्यस्मिन् विद्यतेऽन्यत्वमनन्यस्मिन्न विद्यते । अविद्यमाने चान्यत्वे नास्त्यन्यद्वा तदेव वा ॥	Difference is not found in what is different, nor in what is not different. And when difference is not found, there is neither the different nor the same.
14.8	न तेन तस्य संसर्गो नान्येनान्यस्य युज्यते । संसृज्यमानं संसृष्टं संस्रष्टा च न विद्यते ॥	Connection of a thing with itself is not tenable, nor of one different thing with another. What is connecting, what is connected, and the one who connects are not found.

1 Afflictions (kleśa): desire, hatred, delusion and the like. Sense bases (āyatana): the six senses and their six kinds of object.

Chapter 15: Intrinsic Nature

स्वभावपरीक्षा *(Svabhāvaparīkṣā)*

What arises from causes and conditions cannot have an intrinsic nature; neither "it is" nor "it is not."

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
15.1	न संभवः स्वभावस्य युक्तः प्रत्ययहेतुभिः । हेतुप्रत्ययसंभूतः स्वभावः कृतको भवेत् ॥	It is not tenable that intrinsic nature should come about through conditions and causes; intrinsic nature produced from causes and conditions would be something made.
15.2	स्वभावः कृतको नाम भविष्यति पुनः कथं । अकृत्रिमः स्वभावो हि निरपेक्षः परत्र च ॥	But how could intrinsic nature be something made? For intrinsic nature is not made, and does not depend on anything else.
15.3	कुतः स्वभावस्याभावे परभावो भविष्यति । स्वभावः परभावस्य परभावो हि कथ्यते ॥	Where intrinsic nature does not exist, how will extrinsic nature exist? For the intrinsic nature of an extrinsic nature is what is called extrinsic nature.
15.4	स्वभावपरभावाभ्यामृते भावः कुतः पुनः । स्वभावे परभावे वा सति भावो हि सिध्यति ॥	Apart from intrinsic and extrinsic nature, where is there an existent? For an existent is established when there is intrinsic or extrinsic nature.
15.5	भावस्य चेदप्रसिद्धिरभावो नैव सिध्यति । भावस्य ह्यन्यथाभावमभावं ब्रुवते जनाः ॥	If the existent is not established, the nonexistent is not established either; for people call the existent's becoming otherwise "the nonexistent."
15.6	स्वभावं परभावं च भावं चाभावमेव च । ये पश्यन्ति न पश्यन्ति ते तत्त्वं बुद्धशासने ॥	Those who see intrinsic nature and extrinsic nature, the existent and the nonexistent, do not see the truth in the Buddha's teaching.
15.7	कात्यायनाववादे चास्तीति नास्तीति चोभयं । प्रतिषिद्धं भगवता भावाभावविभाविना ॥	In the Instruction to Katyayana, both "it exists" and "it does not exist" were rejected by the Lord, who understands the existent and the nonexistent.[1]
15.8	यद्यस्तित्वं प्रकृत्या स्यान्न भवेदस्य नास्तिता । प्रकृतेरन्यथाभावो न हि जातूपपद्यते ॥	If something existed by its very nature, it would not become nonexistent; for a nature's becoming otherwise is never possible.
15.9		If a nature does not exist, of what will there be becoming otherwise?

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
	प्रकृतौ कस्य चासत्यामन्यथात्वं भविष्यति । प्रकृतौ कस्य च सत्यामन्यथात्वं भविष्यति ॥	If a nature does exist, of what will there be becoming otherwise?
15.10	अस्तीति शाश्वतग्राहो नास्तीत्युच्छेददर्शनं । तस्मादस्तित्वनास्तित्वे नाश्रीयेत विचक्षणः ॥	“It exists” is the grasping of eternalism; “it does not exist” is the view of annihilation. Therefore the wise should not rely on existence or nonexistence.
15.11	अस्ति यद्धि स्वभावेन न तन्नास्तीति शाश्वतं । नास्तीदानीमभूत्पूर्वमित्युच्छेदः प्रसज्यते ॥	“What exists by intrinsic nature does not not exist”—that is eternalism. “It does not exist now, but existed before”—that entails annihilation.

1 Instruction to Kātyāyana: the Kaccānagotta Sutta (Saṃyutta Nikāya 12.15), where the Buddha teaches a middle way between “everything exists” and “nothing exists.”

Chapter 16: Bondage and Liberation

बन्धमोक्षपरीक्षा *(Bandhamokṣaparīkṣā)*

Who is it that transmigrates, is bound, and is freed?

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
16.1	संस्काराः संसरन्ति चेन्न नित्याः संसरन्ति ते । संसरन्ति च नानित्याः सत्त्वेऽप्येष समः क्रमः ॥	If formations transmigrate, they do not transmigrate as permanent, nor do they transmigrate as impermanent; the same procedure holds for a living being.
16.2	पुद्गलः संसरति चेत्स्कन्धायतनधातुषु । पञ्चधा मृग्यमाणोऽसौ नास्ति कः संसरिष्यति ॥	If a person transmigrates—among the aggregates, sense bases, and elements, sought in five ways, he is not there; who will transmigrate?[1]
16.3	उपादानादुपादानं संसरन् विभवो भवेत् । विभवश्चानुपादानः कः स किं संसरिष्यति ॥	Transmigrating from grasping to grasping, he would be without existence; and without existence and without grasping, who is he, and what would transmigrate?
16.4	संस्काराणां न निर्वाणं कथं चिदुपपद्यते । सत्त्वस्यापि न निर्वाणं कथं चिदुपपद्यते ॥	The *nirvāṇa* of formations is not possible in any way; nor is the *nirvāṇa* of a living being possible in any way.[2]
16.5	न बध्यन्ते न मुच्यन्ते उदयव्ययधर्मिणः । संस्काराः पूर्ववत्सत्त्वो बध्यते न न मुच्यते ॥	Formations, subject to arising and passing away, are neither bound nor freed; as before, a living being is neither bound nor freed.
16.6	बन्धनं चेदुपादानं सोपादानो न बध्यते । बध्यते नानुपादानः किमवस्थोऽथ बध्यते ॥	If bondage is grasping, one with grasping is not bound, and one without grasping is not bound; then in what state is one bound?
16.7	बध्नीयाद्बन्धनं कामं बन्ध्यात्पूर्वं भवेद्यदि । न चास्ति तत् शेषमुक्तं गम्यमानगतागतैः ॥	Bondage might indeed bind, if it existed before the one to be bound; but it does not. The rest has been stated by what is being gone over, gone over, and not gone over.
16.8	बद्धो न मुच्यते तावदबद्धो नैव मुच्यते । स्यातां बद्धे मुच्यमाने युगपद्बन्धमोक्षणे ॥	First, one who is bound is not freed, nor is one who is not bound freed. If one who is bound were being freed, bondage and freeing would be simultaneous.

1 Sought in five ways: the person is neither the aggregates, nor other than them, nor in them, nor are they in him, nor does he possess them.

2 *Nirvāṇa*: the final extinction of the afflictions and release from the round of rebirth.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
16.9	निर्वास्याम्यनुपादानो निर्वाणं मे भविष्यति । इति येषां ग्रहस्तेषामुपादानमहाग्रहः ॥	“Free of grasping, I shall attain *nirvāṇa*; *nirvāṇa* will be mine”— those who seize on this are gripped by a great grasping.
16.10	न निर्वाणसमारोपो न संसारापकर्षणं । यत्र कस्तत्र संसारो निर्वाणं किं विकल्प्यते ॥	Where *nirvāṇa* is not superimposed and the round of rebirth is not removed, what round of rebirth is there, and what *nirvāṇa* is conceptually constructed?

Chapter 17: Action and Its Fruit

कर्मफलपरीक्षा *(Karmaphalaparīkṣā)*

How can an action that has ceased bear fruit later? Rival theories examined; action, afflictions and agent are like a mirage or a dream.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
17.1	आत्मसंयमकं चेतः परानुग्राहकं च यत् । मैत्रं स धर्मस्तद्बीजं फलस्य प्रेत्य चेह च ॥	The mind that restrains oneself and benefits others, and is kindly—that is *dharma*, the seed of fruit after death and here.[1]
17.2	चेतना चेतयित्वा च कर्मोक्तं परमर्षिणा । तस्यानेकविधो भेदः कर्मणः परिकीर्तितः ॥	Intention, and what is done having intended: the Supreme Sage called these action. Many kinds of distinctions in that action have been proclaimed.[2]
17.3	तत्र यच्चेतनेत्युक्तं कर्म तन्मानसं स्मृतं । चेतयित्वा च यत्तूक्तं तत्तु कायिकवाचिकं ॥	Of these, the action called intention is said to be mental; and what is called "having intended" is bodily and verbal.
17.4	वाग्विष्पन्दोऽविरतयो याश्चाविज्ञप्तिसंज्ञिताः । अविज्ञप्तय एवान्याः स्मृता विरतयस्तथा ॥	Speech, movement, and the non-abstentions known as unmanifest, and the other unmanifest ones, the abstentions, are likewise taught.[3]
17.5	परिभोगान्वयं पुण्यमपुण्यं च तथाविधं । चेतना चेति सप्तैते धर्माः कर्माञ्जनाः स्मृताः ॥	Merit that comes from use, and demerit of the same kind, and intention: these seven things are held to make action manifest.[4]
17.6	तिष्ठत्या पाककालाच्चेत्कर्म तन्नित्यतामियात् । निरुद्धं चेन्निरुद्धं सत्किं फलं जनयिष्यति ॥	If action remained until the time of its ripening, it would be permanent. If it has ceased, how, having ceased, will it produce a fruit?
17.7	योऽङ्कुरप्रभृतिर्बीजात्संतानोऽभिप्रवर्तते । ततः फलमृते बीजात्स च नाभिप्रवर्तते ॥	The continuum that begins with the sprout proceeds from the seed; from it comes the fruit; and without the seed it does not proceed.
17.8		Since the continuum comes from the seed and the fruit arises from the continuum,

1 *Dharma*: here right conduct as the Buddha taught it; both senses, conduct and teaching, are live.
2 Action (karman): the deed that bears fruit in this life or a later one.
3 Unmanifest (avijñapti): in Vaibhāṣika Abhidharma, a subtle action generated by a deed or vow that persists without showing itself.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
	बीजाच्च यस्मात्संतानः संतानाच्च फलोद्भवः । बीजपूर्वं फलं तस्मान्नोच्छिन्नं नापि शाश्वतं ॥	the fruit has the seed before it; therefore it is neither cut off nor eternal.
17.9	यस्तस्माच्चित्तसंतानश्चेतसोऽभिप्रवर्तते । ततः फलमृते चित्तात्स च नाभिप्रवर्तते ॥	Likewise the mental continuum that proceeds from a mental act— from it comes the fruit; and without the mind it does not proceed.
17.10	चित्ताच्च यस्मात्संतानः संतानाच्च फलोद्भवः । कर्मपूर्वं फलं तस्मान्नोच्छिन्नं नापि शाश्वतं ॥	Since the continuum comes from the mind and the fruit arises from the continuum, the fruit has action before it; therefore it is neither cut off nor eternal.
17.11	धर्मस्य साधनोपायाः शुक्लाः कर्मपथा दश । फलं कामगुणाः पंच धर्मस्य प्रेत्य चेह च ॥	The means of accomplishing *dharma* are the ten pure paths of action; the fruit of *dharma*, here and after death, is the five strands of sense pleasure.[5]
17.12	बहवश्च महान्तश्च दोषाः स्युरपि कल्पना । यद्येषा तेन नैवैषा कल्पनात्रोपपद्यते ॥	If this were how it is imagined, the faults would be many and great; therefore this way of imagining it is not tenable here.

THE PROMISSORY NOTE

A rival view is set out: action leaves an imperishable entity that holds its fruit like a note of debt.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
17.13	इमां पुनः प्रवक्ष्यामि कल्पनां यात्र योज्यते । बुद्धैः प्रत्येकबुद्धैश्च श्रावकैश्चानुवर्णितां ॥	But I will now explain the way of imagining that fits here, praised by the buddhas, the solitary buddhas, and the disciples.[6]
17.14	पत्रं यथाऽविप्रणाशस्तथर्णमिव कर्म च । चतुर्विधो धातुतः स प्रकृत्याव्याकृतश्च सः ॥	Non-perishing is like a promissory note, and action is like a debt. By realm it is fourfold, and by nature it is morally indeterminate.[7]
17.15	प्रहाणतो न प्रहेयो भावनाहेय एव वा । तस्मादविप्रणाशेन जायते कर्मणां फलं ॥	It is not abandoned by abandonment, but only by cultivation. Therefore it is through non-perishing that the fruit of actions arises.[8]
17.16		If it could be abandoned by abandonment, or through the transfer of action,

4 Merit from use: merit that accrues to a donor as the gift is used by the recipient.
5 The ten pure (literally "white") paths of action: refraining from three bodily, four verbal, and three mental wrongs. The five strands of sense pleasure: pleasant sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and touches.
6 Solitary buddhas (pratyekabuddha): those who reach awakening on their own and do not teach. Disciples (śrāvaka): literally "hearers" of the Buddha's teaching.
7 Non-perishing (avipraṇāśa): a doctrine of the Sāṃmitīya school—an entity that holds an action's result in store, like a note of debt, until it ripens.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
	प्रहाणतः प्रहेयः स्यात्कर्मणः संक्रमेण वा । यदि दोषाः प्रसज्येरंस्तत्र कर्मवधादयः ॥	faults would follow, such as the destruction of action.
17.17	सर्वेषां विषभागानां सभागानां च कर्मणां । प्रतिसंधौ सधातूनामेक उत्पद्यते तु सः ॥	Of all actions, whether of different kind or of like kind, at the linking to a new birth a single one arises for those of the same realm.
17.18	कर्मणः कर्मणो दृष्टे धर्म उत्पद्यते तु सः । द्विप्रकारस्य सर्वस्य विपक्वेऽपि च तिष्ठति ॥	In this present life it arises from each and every action, of every action of the two kinds, and it remains even when the action has ripened.
17.19	फलव्यतिक्रमाद्वा स मरणाद्वा निरुध्यते । अनास्रवं सास्रवं च विभागं तत्र लक्षयेत् ॥	It ceases either when the fruit has been passed through, or at death. Here one should mark the distinction between the uncontaminated and the contaminated.[9]
17.20	शून्यता च न चोच्छेदः संसारश्च न शाश्वतं । कर्मणोऽविप्रणाशश्च धर्मो बुद्धेन देशितः ॥	Emptiness, yet not annihilation; the round of rebirth, yet not eternal; and the non-perishing of action: this is the Dharma taught by the Buddha.[10]

ACTION WITHOUT INTRINSIC NATURE

Action does not arise, since it lacks intrinsic nature, so it neither persists eternally nor perishes.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
17.21	कर्म नोत्पद्यते कस्मान्निःस्वभावं यतस्ततः । यस्माच्च तदनुत्पन्नं न तस्माद्विप्रणश्यति ॥	Why does action not arise? Because it is without intrinsic nature. And because it has not arisen, it does not perish.
17.22	कर्म स्वभावतश्चेत्स्याच्छाश्वतं स्यादसंशयं । अकृतं च भवेत्कर्म क्रियते न हि शाश्वतं ॥	If action existed by intrinsic nature, it would without doubt be eternal, and action would be unmade, for what is eternal is not made.
17.23	अकृताभ्यागमभयं स्यात्कर्माकृतकं यदि । अब्रह्मचर्यवासश्च दोषस्तत्र प्रसज्यते ॥	If action were unmade, there would be the danger of meeting with what one has not done, and the fault of not living the holy life would follow.[11]
17.24	व्यवहारा विरुध्यन्ते सर्व एव न संशयः । पुण्यपापकृतोर्नैव प्रविभागश्च युज्यते ॥	All everyday conventions would be contradicted, no doubt; and the distinction between those who do good and those who do evil would not hold.

8 Abhidharma distinguishes what is abandoned by the insight of seeing the truths from what is abandoned only by repeated meditative cultivation.
9 Contaminated (sāsrava): bound up with the "outflows" of desire, becoming, views, and ignorance; uncontaminated (anāsrava): free of them.
10 The Dharma: the Buddha's teaching.
11 The holy life (brahmacarya): the celibate life of religious practice.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
17.25	तद्विपक्वविपाकं च पुनरेव विपक्ष्यति । कर्म व्यवस्थितं यस्मात्तस्मात्स्वाभाविकं यदि ॥	An action whose ripening has already ripened would ripen yet again, if action were fixed, and so had intrinsic nature.
17.26	कर्म क्लेशात्मकं चेदं ते च क्लेशा न तत्त्वतः । न चेत्ते तत्त्वतः क्लेशाः कर्म स्यात्तत्त्वतः कथं ॥	This action has the afflictions as its nature, and the afflictions are not real. If the afflictions are not real, how could action be real?
17.27	कर्म क्लेशाश्च देहानां प्रत्ययाः समुदाहृताः । कर्म क्लेशाश्च ते शून्या यदि देहेषु का कथा ॥	Action and the afflictions are declared to be the conditions of bodies. If action and the afflictions are empty, what is there to say of bodies?
17.28	अविद्यानिवृतो जन्तुस्तृष्णासंयोजनश्च सः । स भोक्ता स च न कर्तुरन्यो न च स एव सः ॥	The being obscured by ignorance and fettered by craving— he is the one who experiences the fruit; he is neither other than the agent nor the same.
17.29	न प्रत्ययसमुत्पन्नं नाप्रत्ययसमुत्थितं । अस्ति यस्मादिदं कर्म तस्मात्कर्तापि नास्त्यतः ॥	Since this action exists neither as arisen from conditions nor as arisen without conditions, there is no agent either.
17.30	कर्म चेन्नास्ति कर्ता च कुतः स्यात्कर्मजं फलं । असत्यथ फले भोक्ता कुत एव भविष्यति ॥	If there is neither action nor agent, where could a fruit born of action come from? And if there is no fruit, where will the one who experiences it come from?
17.31	यथा निर्मितकं शास्ता निर्मिमीत ऋद्धिसंपदा । निर्मितो निर्मिमीतान्यं स च निर्मितकः पुनः ॥	Just as the Teacher, by the perfection of his supernatural power, conjures up a conjured being, and that conjured being in turn conjures up another—[12]
17.32	तथा निर्मितकाकारः कर्ता यत्कर्म तत्कृतं । तद्यथा निर्मितेनान्यो निर्मितो निर्मितस्तथा ॥	so the agent has the form of a conjured being, and so does the action it does: it is just like a conjured being conjured up by another conjured being.
17.33	क्लेशाः कर्माणि देहाश्च कर्तारश्च फलानि च । गन्धर्वनगराकारा मरीचिस्वप्नसंनिभाः ॥	Afflictions, actions, bodies, agents, and fruits are like a city of the gandharvas, like a mirage, like a dream.

12 Conjured being (nirmitaka): a phantom produced by supernatural power, a stock image of what appears real but is empty.

Chapter 18: The Self

आत्मपरीक्षा *(Ātmaparīkṣā)*

The self is neither the aggregates nor other than them; the Buddhas taught self, no self, and neither.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
18.1	आत्मा स्कन्धा यदि भवेदुदयव्ययभाग्भवेत् । स्कन्धेभ्योऽन्यो यदि भवेद्भवेदस्कन्धलक्षणः ॥	If the self were the aggregates, it would partake of arising and passing away. If it were other than the aggregates, it would lack the characteristics of the aggregates.
18.2	आत्मन्यसति चात्मीयं कुत एव भविष्यति । निर्ममो निरहंकारः शमादात्मात्मनीनयोः ॥	And if there is no self, how could there be what belongs to the self? When self and what belongs to self are stilled, one is free of "mine" and free of "I."
18.3	निर्ममो निरहंकारो यश्च सोऽपि न विद्यते । निर्ममं निरहंकारं यः पश्यति न पश्यति ॥	And the one who is free of "mine" and free of "I"—that one too does not exist. Whoever sees someone free of "mine" and free of "I" does not see.
18.4	ममेत्यहमिति क्षीणे बहिर्धाध्यात्ममेव च । निरुध्यत उपादानं तत्क्षयाज्जन्मनः क्षयः ॥	When "mine" and "I" have wasted away, in outer things and inner alike, grasping ceases; and with its ending, birth comes to an end.
18.5	कर्मक्लेशक्षयान्मोक्षः कर्मक्लेशा विकल्पतः । ते प्रपञ्चात्प्रपञ्चस्तु शून्यतायां निरुध्यते ॥	Liberation comes from the ending of action and afflictions; action and afflictions come from conceptual construction; these come from conceptual proliferation; but proliferation ceases in emptiness.

WHAT THE BUDDHAS TAUGHT

The buddhas taught self, no self, and neither; reality is beyond naming and conceptual construction.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
18.6	आत्मेत्यपि प्रज्ञपितमनात्मेत्यपि देशितं । बुद्धैर्नात्मा न चानात्मा कश्चिदित्यपि देशितं ॥	It has been made known that there is a self, and it has been taught that there is no self; the buddhas have also taught that there is neither any self nor any no-self.
18.7	निवृत्तमभिधातव्यं निवृत्ते चित्तगोचरे । अनुत्पन्नानिरुद्धा हि निर्वाणमिव धर्मता ॥	What can be named has ceased, since the sphere of the mind has ceased; for, unarisen and unceasing, like *nirvāṇa*, is the nature of things.
18.8		

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
	सर्वं तथ्यं न वा तथ्यं तथ्यं चातथ्यमेव च । नैवातथ्यं नैव तथ्यमेतद्बुद्धानुशासनं ॥	Everything is real, or not real, or both real and not real, or neither not real nor real: this is the teaching of the buddhas.
18.9	अपरप्रत्ययं शान्तं प्रपञ्चैरप्रपञ्चितं । निर्विकल्पमनानार्थमेतत्तत्त्वस्य लक्षणं ॥	Not dependent on another, at peace, not spun out by conceptual proliferation, free of conceptual construction, without multiplicity: this is the mark of reality.
18.10	प्रतीत्य यद्यद्भवति न हि तावत्तदेव तत् । न चान्यदपि तत्तस्मान्नोच्छिन्नं नापि शाश्वतं ॥	Whatever comes to be in dependence on something is not, to begin with, that very thing, nor is it something other than it; therefore it is neither cut off nor eternal.
18.11	अनेकार्थमनानार्थमनुच्छेदमशाश्वतं । एतत्तल्लोकनाथानां बुद्धानां शासनामृतं ॥	Neither one in meaning nor many, neither cut off nor eternal: this is the deathless nectar of the teaching of the buddhas, protectors of the world.
18.12	संबुद्धानामनुत्पादे श्रावकाणां पुनः क्षये । ज्ञानं प्रत्येकबुद्धानामसंसर्गात्प्रवर्तते ॥	When fully awakened buddhas do not appear, and the disciples have passed away, the knowledge of the solitary buddhas arises without contact with others.

Chapter 19: Time

कालपरीक्षा *(Kālaparīkṣā)*

Present and future depend on the past, yet cannot be found in it; time without things does not exist.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
19.1	प्रत्युत्पन्नोऽनागतश्च यद्यतीतमपेक्ष्य हि । प्रत्युत्पन्नोऽनागतश्च कालेऽतीते भविष्यतः ॥	If the present and the future depend on the past, then the present and the future will exist in past time.
19.2	प्रत्युत्पन्नोऽनागतश्च न स्तस्तत्र पुनर्यदि । प्रत्युत्पन्नोऽनागतश्च स्यातां कथमपेक्ष्य तं ॥	And if the present and the future do not exist there, how could the present and the future depend on it?
19.3	अनपेक्ष्य पुनः सिद्धिर्नातीतं विद्यते तयोः । प्रत्युत्पन्नोऽनागतश्च तस्मात्कालो न विद्यते ॥	Yet without depending on the past, the two cannot be established. Therefore present and future time do not exist.
19.4	एतेनैवावशिष्टौ द्वौ क्रमेण परिवर्तकौ । उत्तमाधममध्यादीनेकत्वादींश्च लक्षयेत् ॥	By this same method the remaining two, taken in turn, and highest, lowest, middle and the rest, and one-ness and the rest, should be understood.
19.5	नास्थितो गृह्यते कालः स्थितः कालो न विद्यते । यो गृह्येतागृहीतश्च कालः प्रज्ञप्यते कथं ॥	Time that does not stay cannot be grasped; time that stays does not exist. How can time that would have to be grasped, but is not grasped, be designated?
19.6	भावं प्रतीत्य कालश्चेत्कालो भावादृते कुतः । न च कश्चन भावोऽस्ति कुतः कालो भविष्यति ॥	If time depends on things, how could there be time apart from things? And no thing at all exists; how then will there be time?

Chapter 20: The Assembly of Causes

सामग्रीपरीक्षा *(Sāmagrīparīkṣā)*

Does an effect come from a collection of causes and conditions? Cause and effect are neither the same nor different.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
20.1	हेतोश्च प्रत्ययानां च सामग्र्या जायते यदि । फलमस्ति च सामग्र्यां सामग्र्या जायते कथं ॥	If the effect is born from the combination of cause and conditions, and the effect exists in the combination, how is it born from the combination?
20.2	हेतोश्च प्रत्ययानां च सामग्र्या जायते यदि । फलं नास्ति च सामग्र्यां सामग्र्या जायते कथं ॥	If the effect is born from the combination of cause and conditions, and the effect does not exist in the combination, how is it born from the combination?
20.3	हेतोश्च प्रत्ययानां च सामग्र्यामस्ति चेत्फलं । गृह्येत ननु सामग्र्यां सामग्र्यां च न गृह्यते ॥	If you say the effect exists in the combination of cause and conditions, surely it should be perceived in the combination— yet it is not perceived there.
20.4	हेतोश्च प्रत्ययानां च सामग्र्यां नास्ति चेत्फलं । हेतवः प्रत्ययाश्च स्युरहेतुप्रत्ययैः समाः ॥	If you say the effect does not exist in the combination of cause and conditions, then causes and conditions would be the same as what are not causes and conditions.
20.5	हेतुकं फलस्य दत्त्वा यदि हेतुर्निरुध्यते । यद्दत्तं यन्निरुद्धं च हेतोरात्मद्वयं भवेत् ॥	If the cause ceases after passing its causal power to the effect, the cause would have a double nature: the part that was given and the part that ceased.
20.6	हेतुं फलस्यादत्त्वा च यदि हेतुर्निरुध्यते । हेतौ निरुद्धे जातं तत्फलमाहेतुकं भवेत् ॥	And if the cause ceases without passing its causal power to the effect, then the effect born after the cause has ceased would be without a cause.
20.7	फलं सहैव सामग्र्या यदि प्रादुर्भवेत्पुनः । एककालौ प्रसज्येते जनको यश्च जन्यते ॥	And if the effect were to appear together with the combination, it would follow that producer and produced exist at one time.
20.8	पूर्वमेव च सामग्र्याः फलं प्रादुर्भवेद्यदि । हेतुप्रत्ययनिर्मुक्तं फलमाहेतुकं भवेत् ॥	And if the effect were to appear before the combination, the effect, free of cause and conditions, would be without a cause.
20.9		If you say the effect exists once the cause has ceased, that would be a transfer of the cause,

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
	निरुद्धे चेत्फलं हेतौ हेतोः संक्रमणं भवेत् । पूर्वजातस्य हेतोश्च पुनर्जन्म प्रसज्यते ॥	and it would follow that a cause already born is born again.
20.10	जनयेत्फलमुत्पन्नं निरुद्धोऽस्तंगतः कथं । तिष्ठन्नपि कथं हेतुः फलेन जनयेद्धृतः ॥	How could a cause that has ceased, that has gone to its end, produce an effect that has arisen? And even while it lasts, how could a cause produce an effect it is already joined with?
20.11	अथावृतः फलेनासौ कतमज्जनयेत्फलं । न ह्यदृष्ट्वा वा दृष्ट्वा वा हेतुर्जनयते फलं ॥	Or, if it is not joined with the effect, what effect could it produce? For no cause produces an effect either without having met it or having met it.
20.12	नातीतस्य ह्यतीतेन फलस्य सह हेतुना । नाजातेन न जातेन संगतिर्जातु विद्यते ॥	For a past effect never has contact with a past cause, nor with one not yet born, nor with one already born.
20.13	न जातस्य ह्यजातेन फलस्य सह हेतुना । नातीतेन न जातेन संगतिर्जातु विद्यते ॥	Nor does an effect that is born ever have contact with a cause not yet born, nor with one that is past, nor with one already born.
20.14	नाजातस्य हि जातेन फलस्य सह हेतुना । नाजातेन न नष्टेन संगतिर्जातु विद्यते ॥	Nor does an effect not yet born ever have contact with a cause that is born, nor with one not yet born, nor with one that has perished.
20.15	असत्यां संगतौ हेतुः कथं जनयते फलं । सत्यां वा संगतौ हेतुः कथं जनयते फलं ॥	If there is no contact, how does the cause produce the effect? Or if there is contact, how does the cause produce the effect?
20.16	हेतुः फलेन शून्यश्चेत्कथं जनयते फलं । हेतुः फलेनाशून्यश्चेत्कथं जनयते फलं ॥	If the cause is empty of the effect, how does it produce the effect? If the cause is not empty of the effect, how does it produce the effect?
20.17	फलं नोत्पत्स्यतेऽशून्यमशून्यं न निरोत्स्यते । अनिरुद्धमनुत्पन्नमशून्यं तद्भविष्यति ॥	An effect that is not empty will not arise; what is not empty will not cease. What is not empty will be unceasing and unarisen.
20.18	कथमुत्पत्स्यते शून्यं कथं शून्यं निरोत्स्यते । शून्यमप्यनिरुद्धं तदनुत्पन्नं प्रसज्यते ॥	How will what is empty arise? How will what is empty cease? It follows that what is empty, too, is unceasing and unarisen.
20.19	हेतोः फलस्य चैकत्वं न हि जातूपपद्यते । हेतोः फलस्य चान्यत्वं न हि जातूपपद्यते ॥	The identity of cause and effect is never tenable; the difference of cause and effect is never tenable.
20.20	एकत्वे फलहेत्वोः स्यादैक्यं जनकजन्ययोः । पृथक्त्वे फलहेत्वोः स्यात्तुल्यो हेतुरहेतुना ॥	If effect and cause were one, producer and produced would be the same.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
		If effect and cause were separate, a cause would be like what is not a cause.
20.21	फलं स्वभावसद्भूतं किं हेतुर्जनयिष्यति । फलं स्वभावासद्भूतं किं हेतुर्जनयिष्यति ॥	If the effect exists by intrinsic nature, what will the cause produce? If the effect does not exist by intrinsic nature, what will the cause produce?
20.22	न चाजनयमानस्य हेतुत्वमुपपद्यते । हेतुत्वानुपपत्तौ च फलं कस्य भविष्यति ॥	And what does not produce cannot be a cause; and if there can be no being a cause, of what will the effect be the effect?
20.23	न च प्रत्ययहेतूनामियमात्मानमात्मना । या सामग्री जनयते सा कथं जनयेत्फलं ॥	And if the combination of conditions and causes does not produce itself by itself, how could it produce an effect?
20.24	न सामग्रीकृतं फलं नासामग्रीकृतं फलं । अस्ति प्रत्ययसामग्री कुत एव फलं विना ॥	The effect is not made by the combination, nor is it made by what is not the combination. Without an effect, how can there be a combination of conditions?

Chapter 21: Arising and Passing Away

संभवविभवपरीक्षा *(Saṃbhavavibhavaparīkṣā)*

Coming into being and ceasing to be; the stream of existence is neither eternal nor cut off.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
21.1	विना वा सह वा नास्ति विभवः संभवेन वै । विना वा सह वा नास्ति संभवो विभवेन वै ॥	There is no passing away, either without coming to be or together with it; there is no coming to be, either without passing away or together with it.
21.2	भविष्यति कथं नाम विभवः संभवं विना । विनैव जन्म मरणं विभवो नोद्भवं विना ॥	How could there be passing away without coming to be? There would be death without birth; there is no passing away without coming to be.
21.3	संभवेनैव विभवः कथं सह भविष्यति । न जन्ममरणं चैवं तुल्यकालं हि विद्यते ॥	How could passing away exist together with coming to be? For birth and death do not occur at the same time.
21.4	भविष्यति कथं नाम संभवो विभवं विना । अनित्यता हि भावेषु न कदा चिन्न विद्यते ॥	How could there be coming to be without passing away? For impermanence is never absent from things.
21.5	संभवो विभवेनैव कथं सह भविष्यति । न जन्ममरणं चैव तुल्यकालं हि विद्यते ॥	How could coming to be exist together with passing away? For birth and death do not occur at the same time.
21.6	सहान्योन्येन वा सिद्धिर्विनान्योन्येन वा ययोः । न विद्यते तयोः सिद्धिः कथं नु खलु विद्यते ॥	Two things whose establishment is found neither together with each other nor apart from each other— how could their establishment be found at all?
21.7	क्षयस्य संभवो नास्ति नाक्षयस्यापि संभवः । क्षयस्य विभवो नास्ति विभवो नाक्षयस्य च ॥	There is no coming to be of what is decaying, nor coming to be of what is not decaying; there is no passing away of what is decaying, nor passing away of what is not decaying.
21.8	संभवो विभवश्चैव विना भावं न विद्यते । संभवं विभवं चैव विना भावो न विद्यते ॥	Coming to be and passing away do not exist without an existent; an existent does not exist without coming to be and passing away.
21.9	संभवो विभवश्चैव न शून्यस्योपपद्यते । संभवो विभवश्चैव नाशून्यस्योपपद्यते ॥	Coming to be and passing away are not tenable for what is empty; coming to be and passing away are not tenable for what is not empty.
21.10		

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
	संभवो विभवश्चैव नैक इत्युपपद्यते । संभवो विभवश्चैव न नानेत्युपपद्यते ॥	It is not tenable that coming to be and passing away are one; it is not tenable that coming to be and passing away are different.
21.11	दृश्यते संभवश्चैव विभवश्चैव ते भवेत् । दृश्यते संभवश्चैव मोहाद्विभव एव च ॥	You may think that coming to be and passing away are seen; but coming to be and passing away are seen only through delusion.
21.12	न भावाज्जायते भावो भावोऽभावान्न जायते । नाभावाज्जायतेऽभावोऽभावो भावान्न जायते ॥	An existent is not born from an existent; an existent is not born from a nonexistent; a nonexistent is not born from a nonexistent; a nonexistent is not born from an existent.
21.13	न स्वतो जायते भावः परतो नैव जायते । न स्वतः परतश्चैव जायते जायते कुतः ॥	An existent is not born from itself, nor is it born from another, nor from both itself and another; from what, then, is it born?
21.14	भावमभ्युपपन्नस्य शाश्वतोच्छेददर्शनं । प्रसज्यते स भावो हि नित्योऽनित्योऽथ वा भवेत् ॥	For one who accepts an existent, the view of eternalism or annihilation follows, for that existent would have to be either permanent or impermanent.
21.15	भावमभ्युपपन्नस्य नैवोच्छेदो न शाश्वतं । उदयव्ययसंतानः फलहेत्वोर्भवः स हि ॥	For one who accepts an existent, there is neither annihilation nor eternalism, for existence is the continuous series of the arising and passing away of cause and effect.
21.16	उदयव्ययसंतानः फलहेत्वोर्भवः स चेत् । व्ययस्यापुनरुत्पत्तेर्हेतूच्छेदः प्रसज्यते ॥	If existence is the continuous series of the arising and passing away of cause and effect, then, since what has passed away does not arise again, the cutting off of the cause follows.
21.17	सद्भावस्य स्वभावेन नासद्भावश्च युज्यते । निर्वाणकाले चोच्छेदः प्रशमाद्भवसंततेः ॥	For what truly exists by intrinsic nature, becoming nonexistent is not possible; yet at the time of *nirvāṇa* there would be annihilation, since the series of existence is stilled.
21.18	चरमे न निरुद्धे च प्रथमो युज्यते भवः । चरमे नानिरुद्धे च प्रथमो युज्यते भवः ॥	If the last existence has ceased, a first existence is not possible; if the last existence has not ceased, a first existence is not possible.
21.19	निरुध्यमाने चरमे प्रथमो यदि जायते । निरुध्यमान एकः स्याज्जायमानोऽपरो भवेत् ॥	If the first were born while the last is ceasing, the one ceasing would be one existence, and the one being born another.
21.20	न चेन्निरुध्यमानश्च जायमानश्च युज्यते । सार्धं च म्रियते येषु तेषु स्कन्धेषु जायते ॥	Nor is it tenable that the ceasing and the being born are together: would one then be born in the very aggregates in which, at the same time, one dies?

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
21.21	एवं त्रिष्वपि कालेषु न युक्ता भवसंततिः । त्रिषु कालेषु या नास्ति सा कथं भवसंततिः ॥	Thus in none of the three times is a series of existence possible. What does not exist in the three times—how could it be a series of existence?

Chapter 22: The Tathāgata

तथागतपरीक्षा *(Tathāgataparīkṣā)*

The Buddha sought in the aggregates, apart from them and in five ways, and not found; his nature is the nature of the world.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
22.1	स्कन्धा न नान्यः स्कन्धेभ्यो नास्मिन् स्कन्धा न तेषु सः । तथागतः स्कन्धवान्न कतमोऽत्र तथागतः ॥	He is not the aggregates, nor other than the aggregates; the aggregates are not in him, nor is he in them; the Tathāgata does not possess the aggregates. What, then, is the Tathāgata?[1]
22.2	बुद्धः स्कन्धानुपादाय यदि नास्ति स्वभावतः । स्वभावतश्च यो नास्ति कुतः स परभावतः ॥	If the Buddha, taking up the aggregates, does not exist by intrinsic nature, how could what does not exist by intrinsic nature exist by extrinsic nature?
22.3	प्रतीत्य परभावं यः सोऽनात्मेत्युपपद्यते । यश्चानात्मा स च कथं भविष्यति तथागतः ॥	What exists in dependence on an extrinsic nature is rightly held to be no self; and how could what is no self be the Tathāgata?
22.4	यदि नास्ति स्वभावश्च परभावः कथं भवेत् । स्वभावपरभावाभ्यामृते कः स तथागतः ॥	And if there is no intrinsic nature, how could there be an extrinsic nature? Apart from intrinsic and extrinsic nature, what is this Tathāgata?
22.5	स्कन्धान्यद्यनुपादाय भवेत्कश्चित्तथागतः । स इदानीमुपादद्यादुपादाय ततो भवेत् ॥	If there were some Tathāgata who had not taken up the aggregates, he would now take them up, and taking them up, he would then exist.
22.6	स्कन्धान् चाप्यनुपादाय नास्ति कश्चित्तथागतः । यश्च नास्त्यनुपादाय स उपादास्यते कथं ॥	But without taking up the aggregates, there is no Tathāgata at all; and how will what does not exist without taking them up take them up?
22.7	न भवत्यनुपादत्तमुपादानं च किं चन । न चास्ति निरुपादानः कथं चन तथागतः ॥	Nothing is “what is appropriated” unless it has been taken up, and in no way is there a Tathāgata without what he appropriates.
22.8	तत्त्वान्यत्वेन यो नास्ति मृग्यमाणश्च पञ्चधा । उपादानेन स कथं प्रज्ञप्यते तथागतः ॥	He who, sought in five ways, exists neither as identical with them nor as different— how can that Tathāgata be designated through what he appropriates?[2]

1 The Tathāgata: a title of the Buddha, “one who has thus gone.”

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
22.9	यदपीदमुपादानं तत्स्वभावान्न विद्यते । स्वभावतश्च यन्नास्ति कुतस्तत्परभावतः ॥	And this, too, which is appropriated does not exist by intrinsic nature; and how could what does not exist by intrinsic nature exist by extrinsic nature?
22.10	एवं शून्यमुपादानमुपादाता च सर्वशः । प्रज्ञप्यते च शून्येन कथं शून्यस्तथागतः ॥	Thus what is appropriated and the one who appropriates are empty in every way. And how could an empty Tathāgata be designated by what is empty?
22.11	शून्यमिति न वक्तव्यमशून्यमिति वा भवेत् । उभयं नोभयं चेति प्रज्ञप्त्यर्थं तु कथ्यते ॥	One should not say "empty," nor should one say "not empty," nor "both," nor "neither"; but they are spoken for the sake of designation.
22.12	शाश्वताशाश्वताद्यत्र कुतः शान्ते चतुष्टयं । अन्तानन्तादि चाप्यत्र कुतः शान्ते चतुष्टयं ॥	How could the four—eternal, not eternal and the rest—apply to this, which is at peace? How could the four—finite, infinite and the rest—apply to this, which is at peace?
22.13	येन ग्राहो गृहीतस्तु घनोऽस्तीति तथागतः । नास्तीति स विकल्पयन्निर्वृतस्यापि कल्पयेत् ॥	But one who has taken hold of the solid conviction that the Tathāgata exists will, constructing the idea that he does not exist, imagine this even of one who has passed into *nirvāṇa*.
22.14	स्वभावतश्च शून्येऽस्मिंश्चिन्ता नैवोपपद्यते । परं निरोधाद्भवति बुद्धो न भवतीति वा ॥	And of this, which is empty by intrinsic nature, the thought is not tenable that after cessation the Buddha exists, or does not exist.
22.15	प्रपञ्चयन्ति ये बुद्धं प्रपञ्चातीतमव्ययं । ते प्रपञ्चहताः सर्वे न पश्यन्ति तथागतं ॥	Those who proliferate concepts about the Buddha, who is beyond proliferation and imperishable, are all struck down by proliferation and do not see the Tathāgata.
22.16	तथागतो यत्स्वभावस्तत्स्वभावमिदं जगत् । तथागतो निःस्वभावो निःस्वभावमिदं जगत् ॥	Whatever is the intrinsic nature of the Tathāgata, that is the intrinsic nature of this world. The Tathāgata is without intrinsic nature; this world is without intrinsic nature.

2 The five ways: the Tathāgata as identical with the aggregates, different from them, containing them, contained in them, or possessing them (as in 22.1).

Chapter 23: Errors

विपर्यासपरीक्षा *(Viparyāsaparīkṣā)*

Desire, hatred and delusion arise from conceptual thinking; the four inverted views and how they cease.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
23.1	संकल्पप्रभवो रागो द्वेषो मोहश्च कथ्यते । शुभाशुभविपर्यासान् संभवन्ति प्रतीत्य हि ॥	Desire, hatred and delusion are said to arise from conceptual thought, for they arise in dependence on errors about the attractive and the unattractive.
23.2	शुभाशुभविपर्यासान् संभवन्ति प्रतीत्य ये । ते स्वभावान्न विद्यन्ते तस्मात्क्लेशा न तत्त्वतः ॥	What arises in dependence on errors about the attractive and the unattractive does not exist by intrinsic nature; therefore the afflictions are not real.
23.3	आत्मनोऽस्तित्वनास्तित्वे न कथं चिच्च सिध्यतः । तं विनास्तित्वनास्तित्वे क्लेशानां सिध्यतः कथं ॥	The existence or nonexistence of the self is in no way established; without it, how could the existence or nonexistence of the afflictions be established?
23.4	कस्य चिद्धि भवन्तीमे क्लेशाः स च न सिध्यति । कश्चिदाहो विना कं चित्सन्ति क्लेशा न कस्य चित् ॥	For these afflictions belong to someone, and that one is not established. Or could there be afflictions without anyone, belonging to no one?
23.5	स्वकायदृष्टिवत्क्लेशाः क्लिष्टे सन्ति न पञ्चधा । स्वकायदृष्टिवत्क्लिष्टं क्लेशेष्वपि न पञ्चधा ॥	Like the view of one's own body, the afflictions are not in the afflicted in any of the five ways; like the view of one's own body, the afflicted is not in the afflictions in any of the five ways.[1]
23.6	स्वभावतो न विद्यन्ते शुभाशुभविपर्ययाः । प्रतीत्य कतमान् क्लेशाः शुभाशुभविपर्ययान् ॥	The errors about the attractive and the unattractive do not exist by intrinsic nature; in dependence on which errors about the attractive and the unattractive, then, could the afflictions arise?
23.7	रूपशब्दरसस्पर्शा गन्धा धर्माश्च षड्विधं । वस्तु रागस्य द्वेषस्य मोहस्य च विकल्प्यते ॥	Form, sound, taste, touch, smell and mental objects: this sixfold basis of desire, hatred and delusion is conceptually constructed.
23.8	रूपशब्दरसस्पर्शा गन्धा धर्माश्च केवलाः । गन्धर्वनगराकारा मरीचिस्वप्नसंनिभाः ॥	Form, sound, taste, touch, smell and mental objects are, in themselves, like a city of the gandharvas, like a mirage or a dream.

1 The "view of one's own body" (svakāyadṛṣṭi) is the belief in a real self, which Buddhist texts refute by the same fivefold analysis applied to the Tathāgata in 22.1.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
23.9	अशुभं वा शुभं वापि कुतस्तेषु भविष्यति । मायापुरुषकल्पेषु प्रतिबिम्बसमेषु च ॥	How could the unattractive or the attractive come to be in these, which are like a person conjured up by magic, or like a reflection?
23.10	अनपेक्ष्य शुभं नास्त्यशुभं प्रज्ञपयेमहि । यत्प्रतीत्य शुभं तस्माच्छुभं नैवोपपद्यते ॥	Without depending on the attractive, there is no unattractive in dependence on which we might designate the attractive; therefore the attractive is not tenable.
23.11	अनपेक्ष्याशुभं नास्ति शुभं प्रज्ञपयेमहि । यत्प्रतीत्याशुभं तस्मादशुभं नैव विद्यते ॥	Without depending on the unattractive, there is no attractive in dependence on which we might designate the unattractive; therefore the unattractive does not exist.
23.12	अविद्यमाने च शुभे कुतो रागो भविष्यति । अशुभेऽविद्यमाने च कुतो द्वेषो भविष्यति ॥	And when the attractive does not exist, how will there be desire? And when the unattractive does not exist, how will there be hatred?
23.13	अनित्ये नित्यमित्येवं यदि ग्राहो विपर्ययः । नानित्यं विद्यते शून्ये कुतो ग्राहो विपर्ययः ॥	If grasping the impermanent as “permanent” is an error— since in what is empty there is nothing impermanent, how is that grasping an error?
23.14	अनित्ये नित्यमित्येवं यदि ग्राहो विपर्ययः । अनित्यमित्यपि ग्राहः शून्ये किं न विपर्ययः ॥	If grasping the impermanent as “permanent” is an error, why is it not also an error to grasp what is empty as “impermanent”?
23.15	येन गृह्णाति यो ग्राहो ग्रहीता यच्च गृह्यते । उपशान्तानि सर्वाणि तस्माद्ग्राहो न विद्यते ॥	That by which one grasps, the grasping, the one who grasps and what is grasped— all are stilled; therefore grasping does not exist.
23.16	अविद्यमाने ग्राहे च मिथ्या वा सम्यगेव वा । भवेद्विपर्ययः कस्य भवेत्कस्याविपर्ययः ॥	And when grasping, whether false or true, does not exist, who would be in error, and who would be free of error?
23.17	न चापि विपरीतस्य संभवन्ति विपर्ययाः । न चाप्यविपरीतस्य संभवन्ति विपर्ययाः ॥	Errors do not arise for one who is already in error; nor do errors arise for one who is not in error.
23.18	न विपर्यस्यमानस्य संभवन्ति विपर्ययाः । विमृशस्व स्वयं कस्य संभवन्ति विपर्ययाः ॥	Errors do not arise for one who is falling into error. Consider for yourself: for whom do errors arise?
23.19	अनुत्पन्नाः कथं नाम भविष्यन्ति विपर्ययाः । विपर्ययेष्वजातेषु विपर्ययगतः कुतः ॥	How could errors that have not arisen exist at all? When errors are unborn, how could there be one who is in error?
23.20		An existent is not born from itself, nor is it born from another,

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
	न स्वतो जायते भावः परतो नैव जायते । न स्वतः परतश्चेति विपर्ययगतः कुतः ॥	nor from both itself and another; how, then, could there be one who is in error?
23.21	आत्मा च शुचि नित्यं च सुखं च यदि विद्यते । आत्मा च शुचि नित्यं च सुखं च न विपर्ययः ॥	If the self, the pure, the permanent and happiness exist, then the self, the pure, the permanent and happiness are not errors.[2]
23.22	नात्मा च शुचि नित्यं च सुखं च यदि विद्यते । अनात्माऽशुच्यनित्यं च नैव दुःखं च विद्यते ॥	If the self, the pure, the permanent and happiness do not exist, then no-self, the impure, the impermanent and suffering do not exist either.
23.23	एवं निरुध्यतेऽविद्या विपर्ययनिरोधनात् । अविद्यायां निरुद्धायां संस्काराद्यं निरुध्यते ॥	Thus, through the cessation of error, ignorance ceases; when ignorance has ceased, the formations and the rest cease.[3]
23.24	यदि भूताः स्वभावेन क्लेशाः के चिद्धि कस्य चित् । कथं नाम प्रहीयेरन् कः स्वभावं प्रहास्यति ॥	If someone had afflictions that were real by intrinsic nature, how could they be abandoned? Who could abandon an intrinsic nature?
23.25	यद्यभूताः स्वभावेन क्लेशाः के चिद्धि कस्य चित् । कथं नाम प्रहीयेरन् कोऽसद्भावं प्रहास्यति ॥	If someone had afflictions that were unreal by intrinsic nature, how could they be abandoned? Who could abandon what does not exist?

2 The four errors are taking what is without self, impure, impermanent and suffering to be self, pure, permanent and happiness.
3 Ignorance and the formations are the first two of the twelve links of dependent origination, set out in chapter 26.

Chapter 24: The Noble Truths

आर्यसत्यपरीक्षा *(Āryasatyaparīkṣā)*

An opponent charges that emptiness destroys the Buddha's teaching; the reply: the two truths, and dependent origination as emptiness.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
24.1	यदि शून्यमिदं सर्वमुदयो नास्ति न व्ययः । चतुर्णामार्यसत्यानामभावस्ते प्रसज्यते ॥	If all this is empty, there is no arising and no passing away; it follows for you that the four noble truths do not exist.[1]
24.2	परिज्ञा च प्रहाणं च भावना साक्षिकर्म च । चतुर्णामार्यसत्यानामभावान्नोपपद्यते ॥	Full understanding, abandonment, cultivation and realization are not tenable, since the four noble truths do not exist.
24.3	तदभावान्न विद्यन्ते चत्वार्यार्यफलानि च । फलाभावे फलस्था नो न सन्ति प्रतिपन्नकाः ॥	Since these do not exist, the four noble fruits do not exist either; without the fruits, there are neither those established in the fruits nor those on the way to them.[2]
24.4	संघो नास्ति न चेत्सन्ति तेऽष्टौ पुरुषपुद्गलाः । अभावाच्चार्यसत्यानां सद्धर्मोऽपि न विद्यते ॥	If those eight kinds of persons do not exist, there is no Sangha; and since the noble truths do not exist, the true Dharma does not exist either.[3]
24.5	धर्मे चासति संघे च कथं बुद्धो भविष्यति । एवं त्रीण्यपि रत्नानि ब्रुवाणः प्रतिबाधसे ॥	And if there is no Dharma and no Sangha, how will there be a Buddha? Speaking in this way, you undermine all three jewels.[4]
24.6	शून्यतां फलसद्भावमधर्मं धर्ममेव च । सर्वसंव्यवहारांश्च लौकिकान् प्रतिबाधसे ॥	In asserting emptiness, you undermine the reality of the fruit, wrong and right, and all the conventions of the world.

THE REPLY: TWO TRUTHS

Nagarjuna answers that the objector misunderstands emptiness and sets out conventional and ultimate truth.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
24.7	अत्र ब्रूमः शून्यतायां न त्वं वेत्सि प्रयोजनं । शून्यतां शून्यतार्थं च तत एवं विहन्यसे ॥	To this we reply: you do not understand the purpose of emptiness,

1 The four noble truths: suffering, its origin, its cessation and the path to its cessation.
2 The four noble fruits are the stages of stream-entry, once-returning, non-returning and arhatship (full awakening).
3 The eight persons are those on the way to and those established in each of the four fruits; they make up the noble Sangha (community).
4 The three jewels: the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
		nor emptiness, nor the meaning of emptiness; that is why you are thus confounded.
24.8	द्वे सत्ये समुपाश्रित्य बुद्धानां धर्मदेशना । लोकसंवृतिसत्यं च सत्यं च परमार्थतः ॥	The Dharma taught by the buddhas rests on two truths: the conventional truth of the world and the truth in the ultimate sense.[5]
24.9	येऽनयोर्न विजानन्ति विभागं सत्ययोर्द्वयोः । ते तत्त्वं न विजानन्ति गम्भीरं बुद्धशासने ॥	Those who do not understand the distinction between these two truths do not understand the profound reality in the Buddha's teaching.
24.10	व्यवहारमनाश्रित्य परमार्थो न देश्यते । परमार्थमनागम्य निर्वाणं नाधिगम्यते ॥	Without relying on convention, the ultimate is not taught; without arriving at the ultimate, *nirvāṇa* is not attained.
24.11	विनाशयति दुर्दृष्टा शून्यता मन्दमेधसं । सर्पो यथा दुर्गृहीतो विद्या वा दुष्प्रसाधिता ॥	Emptiness wrongly seen destroys the slow-witted, like a snake wrongly grasped or a spell wrongly performed.
24.12	अतश्च प्रत्युदावृत्तं चित्तं देशयितुं मुनेः । धर्मं मत्वास्य धर्मस्य मन्दैर्दुरवगाहतां ॥	And so the Sage's mind turned back from teaching the Dharma, knowing how hard this Dharma is for the dull to fathom.[6]
24.13	शून्यतायामधिलयं यं पुनः कुरुते भवान् । दोषप्रसङ्गो नास्माकं स शून्ये नोपपद्यते ॥	The objection you keep raising against emptiness is no fault that follows for us; it does not apply to what is empty.
24.14	सर्वं च युज्यते तस्य शून्यता यस्य युज्यते । सर्वं न युज्यते तस्य शून्यं यस्य न युज्यते ॥	Everything is possible for one for whom emptiness is possible; nothing is possible for one for whom the empty is not possible.
24.15	स त्वं दोषानात्मनीयानस्मासु परिपातयन् । अश्वमेवाभिरूढः सन्नश्वमेवासि विस्मृतः ॥	You, turning your own faults upon us, are like someone who, while riding a horse, has forgotten the very horse.
24.16	स्वभावाद्यदि भावानां सद्भावमनुपश्यसि । अहेतुप्रत्ययान् भावांस्त्वमेवं सति पश्यसि ॥	If you regard things as really existing by intrinsic nature, then you regard things as without causes and conditions.
24.17	कार्यं च कारणं चैव कर्तारं करणं क्रियां । उत्पादं च निरोधं च फलं च प्रतिबाधसे ॥	You undermine effect and cause, agent, means and act, arising and cessation, and the fruit.
24.18		Whatever is dependent origination, that we call emptiness.

5 Conventional truth (saṃvṛti, literally "covering") is the truth of worldly usage; ultimate truth (paramārtha) is truth in the highest sense.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
	यः प्रतीत्यसमुत्पादः शून्यतां तां प्रचक्ष्महे । सा प्रज्ञप्तिरुपादाय प्रतिपत्सैव मध्यमा ॥	It is a dependent designation; it is itself the middle way.
24.19	अप्रतीत्य समुत्पन्नो धर्मः कश्चिन्न विद्यते । यस्मात्तस्मादशून्यो हि धर्मः कश्चिन्न विद्यते ॥	Since there is no thing at all that has not arisen dependently, there is therefore no thing at all that is not empty.

EMPTINESS MAKES THINGS POSSIBLE

Only if things are empty can suffering, its origin, its cessation, and the path exist at all.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
24.20	यद्यशून्यमिदं सर्वमुदयो नास्ति न व्ययः । चतुर्णामार्यसत्यानामभावस्ते प्रसज्यते ॥	If all this were not empty, there would be no arising and no passing away; it would follow for you that the four noble truths do not exist.
24.21	अप्रतीत्य समुत्पन्नं कुतो दुःखं भविष्यति । अनित्यमुक्तं दुःखं हि तत्स्वाभाव्ये न विद्यते ॥	How could there be suffering that has not arisen dependently? For suffering is said to be impermanent; it does not exist if there is intrinsic nature.
24.22	स्वभावतो विद्यमानं किं पुनः समुदेष्यते । तस्मात्समुदयो नास्ति शून्यतां प्रतिबाधतः ॥	What exists by intrinsic nature—how could it originate? Therefore, for one who undermines emptiness, there is no origin of suffering.
24.23	न निरोधः स्वभावेन सतो दुःखस्य विद्यते । स्वभावपर्यवस्थानान्निरोधं प्रतिबाधसे ॥	There is no cessation of suffering that exists by intrinsic nature; by holding fast to intrinsic nature, you undermine cessation.
24.24	स्वाभाव्ये सति मार्गस्य भावना नोपपद्यते । अथासौ भाव्यते मार्गः स्वाभाव्यं ते न विद्यते ॥	If the path had intrinsic nature, its cultivation would not be possible; and if the path is cultivated, then for you it has no intrinsic nature.
24.25	यदा दुःखं समुदयो निरोधश्च न विद्यते । मार्गो दुःखनिरोधत्वात्कतमः प्रापयिष्यति ॥	When suffering, its origin and its cessation do not exist, to which cessation of suffering will the path lead?
24.26	स्वभावेनापरिज्ञानं यदि तस्य पुनः कथं । परिज्ञानं ननु किल स्वभावः समवस्थितः ॥	If suffering is by intrinsic nature not fully understood, how could it later be fully understood? Is intrinsic nature not said to be fixed?
24.27	प्रहाणसाक्षात्करणे भावना चैवमेव ते । परिज्ञावन्न युज्यन्ते चत्वार्यपि फलानि च ॥	For you, abandonment, realization and cultivation, like full understanding, are not possible, nor are the four fruits.

6 After his awakening, the Buddha (the Sage) at first hesitated to teach, until the god Brahmā urged him to do so.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
24.28	स्वभावेनानधिगतं यत्फलं तत्पुनः कथं । शक्यं समधिगन्तुं स्यात्स्वभावं परिगृह्णतः ॥	A fruit that by intrinsic nature is not attained— how then could it be attained, for one who holds to intrinsic nature?
24.29	फलाभावे फलस्था नो न सन्ति प्रतिपन्नकाः । संघो नास्ति न चेत्सन्ति तेऽष्टौ पुरुषपुद्गलाः ॥	Without the fruits, there are neither those established in the fruits nor those on the way to them; if those eight kinds of persons do not exist, there is no Sangha.
24.30	अभावाच्चार्यसत्यानां सद्धर्मोऽपि न विद्यते । धर्मे चासति संघे च कथं बुद्धो भविष्यति ॥	And since the noble truths do not exist, the true Dharma does not exist either; and if there is no Dharma and no Sangha, how will there be a Buddha?
24.31	अप्रतीत्यापि बोधिं च तव बुद्धः प्रसज्यते । अप्रतीत्यापि बुद्धं च तव बोधिः प्रसज्यते ॥	For you, it follows that a Buddha would exist even without depending on awakening; and for you, it follows that awakening would exist even without depending on a Buddha.
24.32	यश्चाबुद्धः स्वभावेन स बोधाय घटन्नपि । न बोधिसत्त्वचर्यायां बोधिं तेऽधिगमिष्यति ॥	And for you, one who is by intrinsic nature not awakened, even striving for awakening in the practice of a bodhisattva, will not attain awakening.[7]
24.33	न च धर्ममधर्मं वा कश्चिज्जातु करिष्यति । किमशून्यस्य कर्तव्यं स्वभावः क्रियते न हि ॥	And no one would ever do right or wrong; for what could be done by what is not empty? Intrinsic nature is not something done.
24.34	विना धर्ममधर्मं च फलं हि तव विद्यते । धर्माधर्मनिमित्तं च फलं तव न विद्यते ॥	For you, the fruit exists without right and wrong; for you, the fruit caused by right and wrong does not exist.
24.35	धर्माधर्मनिमित्तं वा यदि ते विद्यते फलं । धर्माधर्मसमुत्पन्नमशून्यं ते कथं फलं ॥	Or if, for you, a fruit caused by right and wrong does exist, how can a fruit arising from right and wrong be, for you, not empty?
24.36	सर्वसंव्यवहारांश्च लौकिकान् प्रतिबाधसे । यत्प्रतीत्यसमुत्पादशून्यतां प्रतिबाधसे ॥	You undermine all the conventions of the world, since you undermine the emptiness that is dependent origination.
24.37	न कर्तव्यं भवेत्किं चिदनारब्धा भवेत्क्रिया । कारकः स्यादकुर्वाणः शून्यतां प्रतिबाधतः ॥	There would be nothing to be done; action would never have begun; there would be an agent who does nothing—for one who undermines emptiness.
24.38	अजातमनिरुद्धं च कूटस्थं च भविष्यति । विचित्राभिरवस्थाभिः स्वभावे रहितं जगत् ॥	The world would be unborn, unceasing and changelessly fixed; if there were intrinsic nature, it would be devoid of its many different states.

7 A bodhisattva is one on the path to becoming a buddha.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
24.39	असंप्राप्तस्य च प्राप्तिर्दुःखपर्यन्तकर्म च । सर्वक्लेशप्रहाणं च यद्यशून्यं न विद्यते ॥	The attaining of what has not been attained, the action that ends suffering, and the abandoning of all afflictions—none of this exists if things are not empty.
24.40	यः प्रतीत्यसमुत्पादं पश्यतीदं स पश्यति । दुःखं समुदयं चैव निरोधं मार्गमेव च ॥	Whoever sees dependent origination sees this: suffering, its origin, its cessation and the path.

Chapter 25: Nirvana

निर्वाणपरीक्षा *(Nirvāṇaparīkṣā)*

Nirvana is neither existence nor nonexistence; there is not the slightest difference between nirvana and the round of rebirth.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
25.1	यदि शून्यमिदं सर्वमुदयो नास्ति न व्ययः । प्रहाणाद्वा निरोधाद्वा कस्य निर्वाणमिष्यते ॥	If all this is empty, there is no arising and no passing away. By the abandoning or cessation of what is *nirvāṇa* supposed to come about?
25.2	यद्यशून्यमिदं सर्वमुदयो नास्ति न व्ययः । प्रहाणाद्वा निरोधाद्वा कस्य निर्वाणमिष्यते ॥	If all this is not empty, there is no arising and no passing away. By the abandoning or cessation of what is *nirvāṇa* supposed to come about?
25.3	अप्रहीणमसंप्राप्तमनुच्छिन्नमशाश्वतं । अनिरुद्धमनुत्पन्नमेतन्निर्वाणमुच्यते ॥	Not abandoned, not attained, not cut off, not eternal, not ceased, not arisen: this is called *nirvāṇa*.
25.4	भावस्तावन्न निर्वाणं जरामरणलक्षणं । प्रसज्येतास्ति भावो हि न जरामरणं विना ॥	*Nirvāṇa*, to begin with, is not an existent; it would then follow that it has the marks of old age and death; for there is no existent without old age and death.
25.5	भावश्च यदि निर्वाणं निर्वाणं संस्कृतं भवेत् । नासंस्कृतो हि विद्यते भावः क्व चन कश्चन ॥	And if *nirvāṇa* were an existent, *nirvāṇa* would be conditioned; for no existent anywhere is unconditioned.
25.6	भावश्च यदि निर्वाणमनुपादाय तत्कथं । निर्वाणं नानुपादाय कश्चिद्भावो हि विद्यते ॥	And if *nirvāṇa* were an existent, how could it be without dependence? For no existent exists without dependence.
25.7	यदि भावो न निर्वाणमभावः किं भविष्यति । निर्वाणं यत्र भावो न नाभावस्तत्र विद्यते ॥	If *nirvāṇa* is not an existent, will it be a nonexistent? Where there is no existent, there is no nonexistent either.
25.8	यद्यभावश्च निर्वाणमनुपादाय तत्कथं । निर्वाणं न ह्यभावोऽस्ति योऽनुपादाय विद्यते ॥	And if *nirvāṇa* were a nonexistent, how could it be without dependence? For there is no nonexistent that exists without dependence.
25.9	य आजवंजवीभाव उपादाय प्रतीत्य वा । सोऽप्रतीत्यानुपादाय निर्वाणमुपदिश्यते ॥	What comes and goes, taking up or in dependence, is, when not in dependence and not taking up, taught to be *nirvāṇa*.
25.10		

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
	प्रहाणं चाब्रवीच्छास्ता भवस्य विभवस्य च । तस्मान्न भावो नाभावो निर्वाणमिति युज्यते ॥	And the Teacher spoke of abandoning both becoming and non-becoming; therefore it is right that *nirvāṇa* is neither an existent nor a nonexistent.
25.11	भवेदभावो भावश्च निर्वाणमुभयं यदि । भवेदभावो भावश्च मोक्षस्तच्च न युज्यते ॥	If *nirvāṇa* were both a nonexistent and an existent, liberation would be both a nonexistent and an existent—and that is not right.
25.12	भवेदभावो भावश्च निर्वाणमुभयं यदि । नानुपादाय निर्वाणमुपादायोभयं हि तत् ॥	If *nirvāṇa* were both a nonexistent and an existent, *nirvāṇa* would not be without dependence, for both of these are dependent.
25.13	भवेदभावो भावश्च निर्वाणमुभयं कथं । असंस्कृतं च निर्वाणं भावाभावौ च संस्कृतौ ॥	How could *nirvāṇa* be both a nonexistent and an existent? *Nirvāṇa* is unconditioned, while existent and nonexistent are conditioned.
25.14	भवेदभावो भावश्च निर्वाण उभयं कथं । न तयोरेकत्रास्तित्वमालोकतमसोर्यथा ॥	How could both a nonexistent and an existent be in *nirvāṇa*? The two cannot be in one place, just as light and darkness cannot.
25.15	नैवाभावो नैव भावो निर्वाणमिति याऽज्जना । अभावे चैव भावे च सा सिद्धे सति सिध्यति ॥	The claim that *nirvāṇa* is neither a nonexistent nor an existent is established only if the nonexistent and the existent are established.
25.16	नैवाभावो नैव भावो निर्वाणं यदि विद्यते । नैवाभावो नैव भाव इति केन तदज्यते ॥	If *nirvāṇa* exists as neither a nonexistent nor an existent, by what is it made known that it is "neither nonexistent nor existent"?
25.17	परं निरोधाद्भगवान् भवतीत्येव नोह्यते । न भवत्युभयं चेति नोभयं चेति नोह्यते ॥	It is not conceived that the Lord exists after cessation; nor is it conceived that he does not exist, or both, or neither.
25.18	तिष्ठमानोऽपि भगवान् भवतीत्येव नोह्यते । न भवत्युभयं चेति नोभयं चेति नोह्यते ॥	Even while he remains alive, it is not conceived that the Lord exists; nor is it conceived that he does not exist, or both, or neither.

NIRVANA AND THE ROUND OF REBIRTH

There is no difference at all between nirvana and the round of rebirth, and no view about them holds.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
25.19	न संसारस्य निर्वाणात्किं चिदस्ति विशेषणं । न निर्वाणस्य संसारात्किं चिदस्ति विशेषणं ॥	The round of rebirth has nothing at all to distinguish it from *nirvāṇa*; *nirvāṇa* has nothing at all to distinguish it from the round of rebirth.
25.20		

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
	निर्वाणस्य च या कोटिः कोटिः संसरणस्य च । न तयोरन्तरं किं चित्सुसूक्ष्ममपि विद्यते ॥	The limit of *nirvāṇa* and the limit of the round of rebirth— between these two there is not even the subtlest difference.
25.21	परं निरोधादन्ताद्याः शाश्वताद्याश्च दृष्टयः । निर्वाणमपरान्तं च पूर्वान्तं च समाश्रिताः ॥	The views about existence after cessation, about the finite and the like, and about the eternal and the like, depend on *nirvāṇa*, on the future and on the past.
25.22	शून्येषु सर्वधर्मेषु किमनन्तं किमन्तवत् । किमनन्तमन्तवच्च नानन्तं नान्तवच्च किं ॥	Since all things are empty, what is infinite, what finite? What is both infinite and finite, what neither infinite nor finite?
25.23	किं तदेव किमन्यत्किं शाश्वतं किमशाश्वतं । अशाश्वतं शाश्वतं च किं वा नोभयमप्यतः ॥	What is the same, what is other? What is eternal, what not eternal? What is both not eternal and eternal, or what is neither?
25.24	सर्वोपलम्भोपशमः प्रपञ्चोपशमः शिवः । न क्व चित्कस्य चित्कश्चिद्धर्मो बुद्धेन देशितः ॥	Auspicious is the stilling of all apprehending, the stilling of conceptual proliferation; no Dharma at all was taught by the Buddha to anyone, anywhere.

Chapter 26: The Twelve Links

द्वादशाङ्गपरीक्षा *(Dvādaśāṅgaparīkṣā)*

The twelve links of dependent origination, from ignorance to old age and death, and how they come to an end.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
26.1	पुनर्भवाय संस्कारानविद्यानिवृतस्त्रिधा । अभिसंस्कुरुते यांस्तैर्गतिं गच्छति कर्मभिः ॥	Veiled by ignorance, one creates in three ways the formations for renewed existence; through those actions one goes to a destiny.[1]
26.2	विज्ञानं संनिविशते संस्कारप्रत्ययं गतौ । संनिविष्टेऽथ विज्ञाने नामरूपं निषिच्यते ॥	With the formations as its condition, consciousness enters that destiny; and once consciousness has entered, name-and-form is infused.[2]
26.3	निषिक्ते नामरूपे तु षडायतनसंभवः । षडायतनमागम्य संस्पर्शः संप्रवर्तते ॥	Once name-and-form is infused, the six sense bases come to be; in dependence on the six sense bases, contact arises.
26.4	चक्षुः प्रतीत्य रूपं च समन्वाहारमेव च । नामरूपं प्रतीत्यैवं विज्ञानं संप्रवर्तते ॥	In dependence on the eye, on visible form and on attention— thus in dependence on name-and-form—consciousness arises.
26.5	संनिपातस्त्रयाणां यो रूपविज्ञानचक्षुषां । स्पर्शः सः तस्मात्स्पर्शाच्च वेदना संप्रवर्तते ॥	The coming together of the three—visible form, consciousness and the eye— is contact; and from that contact feeling arises.
26.6	वेदनाप्रत्यया तृष्णा वेदनार्थं हि तृष्यते । तृष्यमाण उपादानमुपादत्ते चतुर्विधं ॥	Conditioned by feeling is craving, for one craves for the sake of feeling; craving, one takes up grasping of four kinds.[3]
26.7	उपादाने सति भव उपादातुः प्रवर्तते । स्याद्धि यद्यनुपादानो मुच्येत न भवेद्भवः ॥	When there is grasping, existence arises for the one who grasps; for if he were without grasping, he would be freed, and there would be no existence.
26.8	पञ्च स्कन्धाः स च भवो भवाज्जातिः प्रवर्तते । जरामरणदुःखादि शोकाः सपरिदेवनाः ॥	And that existence is the five aggregates; from existence birth arises; old age, death, suffering and the rest, sorrows with lamentation,
26.9		

1 The three ways are body, speech and mind; a destiny (gati) is one of the realms of rebirth.
2 Name-and-form (nāmarūpa): the mental and physical constituents of a living being.
3 The four kinds of grasping: at sensual pleasures, at views, at rules and rituals, and at doctrines of a self.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
	दौर्मनस्यमुपायासा जातेरेतत्प्रवर्तते । केवलस्यैवमेतस्य दुःखस्कन्धस्य संभवः ॥	dejection and despair—all this arises from birth. In this way this entire mass of suffering comes to be.
26.10	संसारमूलान्संस्कारानविद्वान् संस्करोत्यतः । अविद्वान् कारकस्तस्मान्न विद्वांस्तत्त्वदर्शनात् ॥	Therefore the one who does not know forms the formations that are the root of the round of re-birth; hence the one who does not know is the agent, not the one who knows, since he sees reality.
26.11	अविद्यायां निरुद्धायां संस्काराणामसंभवः । अविद्याया निरोधस्तु ज्ञानेनास्यैव भावनात् ॥	When ignorance has ceased, the formations do not arise; and the cessation of ignorance comes through knowledge, from the cultivation of just this.
26.12	तस्य तस्य निरोधेन तत्तन्नाभिप्रवर्तते । दुःखस्कन्धः केवलोऽयमेवं सम्यङ्निरुध्यते ॥	Through the cessation of this and that, this and that no longer arises; in this way this entire mass of suffering completely ceases.

Chapter 27: Views

दृष्टिपरीक्षा *(Dṛṣṭiparīkṣā)*

Views about the past and the future—whether the self and the world are eternal or finite—examined and let go.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
27.1	अभूमतीतमध्वानं नाभूमिति च दृष्टयः । यास्ताः शाश्वतलोकाद्याः पूर्वान्तं समुपाश्रिताः ॥	The views “I existed in the past” and “I did not exist,” and those such as “the world is eternal,” depend on the past.
27.2	दृष्टयो न भविष्यामि किमन्योऽनागतेऽध्वनि । भविष्यामीति चान्ताद्या अपरान्तं समाश्रिताः ॥	The views “In the future I will not exist” or “I will be someone else” and “I will exist,” and those such as “the world has an end,” depend on the future.
27.3	अभूमतीतमध्वानमित्येतन्नोपपद्यते । यो हि जन्मसु पूर्वेषु स एव न भवत्ययं ॥	“I existed in the past”—this is not tenable. For the one who was in former births is not this very one.
27.4	स एवात्मेति तु भवेदुपादानं विशिष्यते । उपादानविनिर्मुक्त आत्मा ते कतमः पुनः ॥	It might be said, “It is the same self”; but what is appropriated is different. And what, for you, is the self apart from what is appropriated?
27.5	उपादानविनिर्मुक्तो नास्त्यात्मेति कृते सति । स्यादुपादानमेवात्मा नास्ति चात्मेति वः पुनः ॥	When it has been granted that there is no self apart from what is appropriated, then what is appropriated would itself be the self—and yet, for you, there is no self.
27.6	न चोपादानमेवात्मा व्येति तत्समुदेति च । कथं हि नामोपादानमुपादाता भविष्यति ॥	But what is appropriated is not the self: it passes away and it arises. How indeed can what is appropriated be the one who appropriates?
27.7	अन्यः पुनरुपादानादात्मा नैवोपपद्यते । गृह्येत ह्यनुपादानो यद्यन्यो न च गृह्यते ॥	Nor is it tenable that the self is other than what is appropriated; for if it were other, it would be perceived without what is appropriated—and it is not perceived.
27.8	एवं नान्य उपादानान्न चोपादानमेव सः । आत्मा नास्त्यनुपादानो नापि नास्त्येष निश्चयः ॥	Thus it is not other than what is appropriated, nor is it identical with what is appropriated; the self does not exist without what is appropriated, nor does it not exist: this is certain.
27.9	नाभूमतीतमध्वानमित्येतन्नोपपद्यते । यो हि जन्मसु पूर्वेषु ततोऽन्यो न भवत्ययं ॥	“I did not exist in the past”—this is not tenable. For this one is not other than the one who was in former births.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
27.10	यदि ह्ययं भवेदन्यः प्रत्याख्यायापि तं भवेत् । तथैव च स संतिष्ठेत्तत्र जायेत वामृतः ॥	For if this one were other, it would exist even without that one; and that one would remain just as he was, or would be born there without having died.
27.11	उच्छेदः कर्मणां नाशस्तथान्यकृतकर्मणां । अन्येन परिभोगः स्यादेवमादि प्रसज्यते ॥	There would follow annihilation, the destruction of actions, and actions done by one would be reaped by another, and so forth.
27.12	नाप्यभूत्वा समुद्भूतो दोषो ह्यत्र प्रसज्यते । कृतको वा भवेदात्मा संभूतो वाप्यहेतुकः ॥	Nor has it come into being after not having existed, for then a fault follows: the self would be something made, or would have arisen without a cause.
27.13	एवं दृष्टिरतीते या नाभूमहमभूमहं । उभयं नोभयं चेति नैषा समुपपद्यते ॥	Thus the view concerning the past—"I did not exist," "I existed," both, or neither—is not tenable.
27.14	अध्वन्यनागते किं नु भविष्यामीति दर्शनं । न भविष्यामि चेत्येतदतीतेनाध्वना समं ॥	The view "Will I exist in the future?" and "I will not exist"—these are the same as with the past.
27.15	स देवः स मनुष्यश्चेदेवं भवति शाश्वतं । अनुत्पन्नश्च देवः स्याज्जायते न हि शाश्वतं ॥	If the god is the same as the human, then it is eternal; and the god would be unborn, for what is eternal is not born.
27.16	देवादन्यो मनुष्यश्चेदशाश्वतमतो भवेत् । देवादन्यो मनुष्यश्चेत्संततिर्नोपपद्यते ॥	If the human is other than the god, it would then be not eternal; if the human is other than the god, continuity is not tenable.
27.17	दिव्यो यद्येकदेशः स्यादेकदेशश्च मानुषः । अशाश्वतं शाश्वतं च भवेत्तच्च न युज्यते ॥	If one part were divine and one part human, it would be both not eternal and eternal—and that is not right.
27.18	अशाश्वतं शाश्वतं च प्रसिद्धमुभयं यदि । सिद्धे न शाश्वतं कामं नैवाशाश्वतमित्यपि ॥	If both not eternal and eternal were established, then, admittedly, "neither eternal nor not eternal" would be established as well.
27.19	कुतश्चिदागतः कश्चित्किं चिद्गच्छेत्पुनः क्व चित् । यदि तस्मादनादिस्तु संसारः स्यान्न चास्ति सः ॥	If someone had come from somewhere and were to go again somewhere, then the round of rebirth would be without beginning; but there is no such one.
27.20	नास्ति चेच्छाश्वतः कश्चित्को भविष्यत्यशाश्वतः । शाश्वतोऽशाश्वतश्चापि द्वाभ्यामाभ्यां तिरस्कृतः ॥	If no one is eternal, who will be not eternal? Who will be both eternal and not eternal, or set apart from both?

IS THE WORLD FINITE?

Views that the world is finite, infinite, both, or neither are examined and found untenable.

	SANSKRIT	ENGLISH
27.21	अन्तवान् यदि लोकः स्यात्परलोकः कथं भवेत् । अथाप्यनन्तवांल्लोकः परलोकः कथं भवेत् ॥	If the world were finite, how could there be another world? And if the world were infinite, how could there be another world?
27.22	स्कन्धानामेष संतानो यस्माद्दीपार्चिषामिव । प्रवर्तते तस्मान्नान्तानन्तवत्त्वं च युज्यते ॥	Since this series of aggregates, like the flames of a lamp, goes on, neither finiteness nor infiniteness is tenable.[1]
27.23	पूर्वे यदि च भज्येरन्नुत्पद्येरन्न चाप्यमी । स्कन्धाः स्कन्धान् प्रतीत्येमानथ लोकोऽन्तवान् भवेत् ॥	If the earlier ones were to break up, and these were not to arise— aggregates in dependence on those aggregates— then the world would be finite.
27.24	पूर्वे यदि न भज्येरन्नुत्पद्येरन्न चाप्यमी । स्कन्धाः स्कन्धान् प्रतीत्येमान् लोकोऽनन्तो भवेदथ ॥	If the earlier ones were not to break up, and these were not to arise— aggregates in dependence on those aggregates— then the world would be infinite.
27.25	अन्तवानेकदेशश्चेदेकदेशस्त्वनन्तवान् । स्यादन्तवाननन्तश्च लोकस्तच्च न युज्यते ॥	If one part were finite and one part infinite, the world would be both finite and infinite—and that is not right.
27.26	कथं तावदुपादातुरेकदेशो विनङ्क्ष्यते । न नङ्क्ष्यते चैकदेश एवं चैतन्न युज्यते ॥	How, to begin with, could one part of the one who appropriates perish and one part not perish? This is not right.
27.27	उपादानैकदेशश्च कथं नाम विनङ्क्ष्यते । न नङ्क्ष्यते चैकदेशो नैतदप्युपपद्यते ॥	And how could one part of what is appropriated perish and one part not perish? This too is not tenable.
27.28	अन्तवच्चाप्यनन्तं च प्रसिद्धमुभयं यदि । सिद्धे नैवान्तवत्कामं नैवानन्तवदित्यपि ॥	If both finite and infinite were established, then, admittedly, "neither finite nor infinite" would be established as well.
27.29	अथवा सर्वभावानां शून्यत्वाच्छाश्वतादयः । क्व कस्य कतमाः कस्मात्संभविष्यन्ति दृष्टयः ॥	Or rather, since all existents are empty, views such as "eternal"— where, for whom, which ones, and from what would they arise?
27.30	सर्वदृष्टिप्रहाणाय यः सद्धर्ममदेशयत् । अनुकम्पामुपादाय तं नमस्यामि गौतमं ॥	To him who taught the true Dharma for the abandoning of all views, moved by compassion—to Gautama I bow.[2]

1 A lamp's flame is a series of momentary flames, each arising in dependence on the one before.
2 Gautama: the clan name of the Buddha.