



THE ASIAN CLASSICS INSTITUTE

The Asian Classics Institute Dharma Essentials Course VI: The Diamond-Cutter Sutra

Class One Outline

- I. Introduction to the Dharma Essentials Series and to this Course
- II. Introduction and Importance of the Text
 - A. Meaning of the name (Sanskrit, *Vajra Chedika*; Tibetan, *Dorje Chupa*)
 - B. Commentaries by Masters Vasubandha (350 A.D.), Kamalashila (750 A.D.), and Choney Drakpa Shedrup (1675-1748)
- III. Emptiness and the Three Meanings of “Diamond”
 - A. The meaning of “cutter” in the title
- IV. Subhuti’s Opening Question
 - A. The definitions of a “bodhisattva” and “bodhicitta”
 - B. The deceptive and ultimate forms of the wish for enlightenment
- V. Emptiness and the Object We Deny
 - A. The existence of things through names and labels only
- VI. Meditation Assignment

For fifteen minutes each day, think about whether a pen exists a) in any one or some of its parts; b) is something outside of or apart from its parts; or c) is the collection of its parts (a whole pen) apart from the concept and label “pen” that is imposed on top of that collection.

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Class Two Outline

- I. The Four Bodies of a Buddha
 - A. The Emanation and Enjoyment Bodies
 - B. The Wisdom and Essence Bodies
- II. How to Obtain the Bodies of a Buddha
 - A. The Six Perfections
 1. Giving
 2. Ethics
 3. Patience
 4. Joyful Effort
 5. Meditative Concentration
 6. Wisdom
- III. The Marks of a Buddha's Body
- IV. The Two Types of Teachings of a Buddha
 - A. Physical Dharma
 - B. Dharma of Realizations
- V. The Emptiness of Karma
- VI. The Three Spheres of a Good Deed
- VII. Meditation Assignment

For fifteen minutes each day, reflect on what it would be like to be a Buddha.

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Class Three Outline

- I. The Two Kinds of Beings in the Universe
- II. Overview of the Five Paths
- III. The Path of Accumulation: What Renunciation Is
- IV. The Path of Preparation and the Intellectual Understanding of Emptiness
 - A. Quality and characteristic
 - B. The “highest dharma”
- V. The Path of Seeing
 - A. “ Non-duality” and the Direct Perception of Emptiness
 - B. “Subsequent Wisdom” and the Four Arya Truths
 1. The truth of suffering
 2. The truth of the origin of suffering
 3. The truth of the cessation of suffering
 4. The truth of the path to the end of suffering
 - C. The Cessations Obtained by the Direct Perception of Emptiness
- VI. The Path of Habituation and the Meaning of “Illusion”
- VII. Meditation Assignment

For fifteen minutes each day, reflect on the difference between the *quality* “car” and the *characteristic* “this car.”

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Class Four Outline

- I. The Bodhisattva Levels
- II. Creating a Buddha Paradise
- III. Purifying Karma
 - A. The four forces
 1. The force of foundation
 2. The force of destruction
 3. The force of restraining from the bad deed
 4. The force of applying an antidote.
- IV. The Four Kinds of Perfection of Wisdom
 - A. Natural perfection of wisdom
 - B. Textual perfection of wisdom
 - C. Path perfection of wisdom
 - D. Result perfection of wisdom
- V. The Two Extremes and the Middle Way
 - A. The extremes of existence and non-existence
 - B. The four “great facts”
 1. Nothing exists naturally
 2. But that doesn’t mean nothing exists at all
 3. Everything exists merely by convention
 4. But everything exists without existing naturally
- VI. How Empty Things Still Function

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Class Four Outline

VII. Meditation Assignment

For fifteen minutes each day, do the four forces on one or another of your misdeeds. Spend a few minutes each day reflecting on emptiness as your antidote force.