

大智度論卷之九

循明 循明

摩訶循明

補循明

娑婆訶

奉請除災金剛

奉請辟毒金剛

奉請黃隨求金剛

奉請白淨水金剛

奉請赤聲金剛

奉請定除厄金剛

奉請紫賢金剛

奉請大神金剛

金剛般若波羅蜜經

如是我聞一時佛在舍衛國祇樹給孤獨園與大比丘眾千二百五十人俱尔時世尊食時普衣持鉢入舍衛大城乞食於其城中次第乞已還至本處飯食訖收鉢洗足已敷座而坐時長老須菩提在大眾中即從坐起偏袒右肩右膝著地合掌恭敬而白佛言希有世尊如來善護念諸菩薩善付囑諸菩薩世尊善男子善女人發阿耨多羅三藐三菩提心應云何住云何降伏其心佛言善哉善哉須菩提如汝所說如來善護念諸菩薩善付囑諸菩薩汝今諦聽當為汝說善男子善女人發阿耨多羅三藐三菩提心應如是住如是降伏其心唯然世尊願樂欲聞

佛告須菩提諸菩薩摩訶薩應如是降伏其心所有
一切眾生之類若卵生若胎生若濕生若化生若
有色若無色若有想若無想若非有想若非無想
我皆令入無餘涅槃而滅度之如是滅度無量無數無
邊眾生實無眾生得滅度者何以故須菩提若
菩薩有我相人相眾生相壽者相即非菩薩
復次須菩提菩薩於法應無所住行於布施所謂
不住色布施不住聲香味觸法布施須菩提菩薩
應如是布施不住於相何以故若菩薩不住相布施

This copy of the *Diamond Sūtra* in Chinese language, complete with a beautifully illustrated frontispiece, is the world's earliest dated, printed book. It was produced on the 11 May 868, according to the Western calendar.



Full title:	<i>Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra;</i> 金剛般若波羅蜜經 (Jin gang bo re bo luo mi jing)
Created:	11 May 868, China
Format:	Scroll, Woodblock- printed scroll, Audio description available
Language:	Chinese
Copyright:	British Library
Usage terms	Public Domain
Held by	British Library
Shelfmark:	Or.8210/P.2

Where did it come from?

It was found in a holy site called the Mogao (or 'Peerless') Caves or the 'Caves of a Thousand Buddhas,' which was a major Buddhist centre from the 4th to 14th centuries. This long cliff wall, carved with 492 caves, is located near Dunhuang, an oasis-town at the junction of the northern and southern Silk Roads, in the present-day province of Gansu (Northwest China). In 1900, a monk named Wang Yuanlu discovered the sealed entrance to a hidden cave, where tens of thousands of manuscripts, paintings and other artefacts had been deposited and sealed up sometime around the beginning of the 11th century. This copy of the *Diamond Sūtra* was one of such items and was brought to England by the explorer Sir Aurel Stein in 1907.

Why is it so important?

The *Diamond Sūtra* is one of the most influential Mahāyāna scriptures in East Asia. Thanks to the colophon – the short dedication note written at the end, after the sacred Buddhist text – we have quite a lot of information about the context surrounding the commissioning of this particular copy. The few characters translate as follows: ‘On the 15th day of the 4th month of the 9th year of the Xiantong reign period, Wang Jie had this made for universal distribution on behalf of his two parents.’ We therefore know the precise date the scroll was made (11 May 868), who financed it, on behalf of whom and for what purpose.

Each section of the scroll was printed separately, by using a single wood block, and then joined to the others in order to form a 5-metre long horizontal roll. This makes this copy of the *Diamond Sūtra* not only the earliest surviving dated piece of printing, but also the most substantial one. The intricate frontispiece depicts the historical Buddha addressing his elderly disciple Subhūti, surrounded by an assembly gathered under a grove of trees. The finesse in the details evidences the fact that printing had already grown into a mature technology by the 9th century in China.