

THE
VIMALAKĪRTI
NIRDEŚA SŪTRA
(THE HOLY
TEACHING OF
VIMALAKĪRTI)

Summary and Notes
July 1, 2026

Dear Respected Readers,

XGM congratulates you on receiving the translation of the Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra ("the Sūtra"), translated from the English version by Professor Robert A. F. Thurman. This Sūtra encapsulates nearly the entire core of the Buddha's Dharma teachings on voidness and the inconceivable liberation for the monastic community and the public.

Following this, XGM would like to present to you the Summary and Index of the Sūtra ("the Summary"). To use this document effectively, XGM would like to share a few notes:

- The purpose of this Summary is to serve as a quick reference for readers with a karmic connection to reflect upon the insights they gain while reading the full Sūtra.
- Readers may use this document for personal study and practice, or share it to propagate the True Dharma of the Buddha.
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Wishing our Respected Readers perpetual peace of body and mind, and swift attainment of ultimate spiritual perfection.

Summary and Notes – Chapter 1: Purification of the Buddha-field

Vimalakīrti Sutra

No.	Summary of Dhamma Teachings and Insights
1	Section 1.2 describes the qualities and virtues of the Arahats, highlighting how their true gnosis has completely liberated their minds from the cycle of birth and death (samsara).
2	Sections 1.3 – 1.9 describe the qualities, virtues, and miraculous supernatural powers of the Bodhisattvas, highlighting how they employ these powers as a liberative technique to liberate living beings, having realized the signless Dhamma, voluntarily remaining in samsara, and approaching the Buddha-qualities.
3	Sections 1.14 – 1.15 describe the Buddha's supernatural power pervading the Buddha-field, where no dhamma fails to manifest within the serene and impartial mind of His omniscience.
4	Sections 1.16 – 1.30: The Bodhisattva Ratnakūṭa recites verses praising the qualities, virtues, and miraculous supernatural powers of the Buddha.
5	Sections 1.32 – 1.45: The Buddha teaches the purification of the Buddha-field of Bodhisattvas at the request of the Bodhisattva Ratnakūṭa. The Buddha also explains the profound meaning of purifying a Buddha-field. The liberative practices that Bodhisattvas employ on the Bodhisattva path include: the Six Paramis (Transcendences), the Four Immeasurables, the Four Social Practices, the Thirty-seven Aids to Enlightenment, the Ten Virtues... to cultivate the Ten Powers of a Bodhisattva (see note g.320).
6	Sections 1.46 – 1.55: The Buddha manifests the absolute purity and splendor of His Buddha-field to demonstrate to Sāriputta that the purity of visual perception corresponds directly to the purity of the mind, which is confirmed by Brahma Sikhin. When the mind is pure, the world is pure; when the mind is at peace, the world is at peace.
7	Section 1.56 describes the spiritual realizations of the assembly after hearing the Buddha's teaching.
8	The content of Chapter 1 provides insight into the qualities, divine deeds of the Noble Ones, and the purification of the Buddha-field by the Bodhisattvas.

Summary and Notes – Chapter 2: Inconceivable Liberative Technique

Vimalakīrti Sutra

No.	Summary of Dhamma Teachings and Insights
1	Sections 2.1 – 2.6 describe the qualities and virtues of the great Bodhisattva Vimalakīrti, who manifested as a layman living in the city of Vesālī. He was highly skilled in employing appropriate liberative techniques to stay close to and liberate living beings from all walks of society at that time. In this section, readers are invited to contemplate the way he liberated people when they visited him, in order to apply it to their own personal practice.
2	Sections 2.8 – 2.9: Ven. Vimalakīrti describes the impermanent, suffering, and empty nature, lacking any real inherent existence, of this physical body.
3	Sections 2.10 – 2.11: Ven. Vimalakīrti describes the characteristics and virtues that give birth to the body of the Tathāgata, which is the Dhamma-body, a body of merit and wisdom, to inspire those who come to visit him to arouse the spirit of enlightenment and seek ultimate awakening to attain such a true body.
4	Living beings who came to visit him all aroused the spirit of ultimate and perfect enlightenment.
5	Notes and Insights: • Readers need to contemplate and realize the nature of suffering, emptiness, impermanence, and voidness (lacking real inherent existence) within their own physical body composed of the four great elements, and arouse the spirit of enlightenment to practice the Bodhisattva path. Understanding without practicing becomes mere conceptual knowledge; stored in the mind, intellectual knowledge turns into an obstacle to enlightenment. • To attain the true body of the Tathāgata—the body of merit and wisdom—practitioners must cultivate the mind and accumulate merit. Cultivating the mind means practicing concentration and wisdom, also known as samatha and vipassanā (the last two Paramis within the Six Paramis); while accumulating merit means practicing Giving, Morality, and Tolerance (the first three Paramis within the Six Paramis), and naturally, Vigor applies to both cultivation and merit. • Furthermore, the exemplary Bodhisattva path of the layman Vimalakīrti has demonstrated and inspired lay practitioners like us, who live a householder life but whose minds have left the household life.

Summary and Notes – Chapter 3.1: The Disciple Sāriputta

Vimalakīrti Sutra

No.	Summary of Dharma Teachings and Insights
1	Section 3.1: When Ven. Vimalakīrti thought to himself [about his illness], the Buddha knew his thoughts and asked his Disciples and Bodhisattvas to visit and inquire after the Licchavi's illness. One by one, the Disciples recounted their stories, explaining why they were extremely reluctant to go inquire after his illness.
2	Sections 3.2 – 3.3: While the Venerable Sāriputta was sitting under a tree absorbed in contemplation, Ven. Vimalakīrti approached and told him that this was not the way to sit in contemplation. The Licchavi then expounded the proper way of contemplation suitable for the Venerable Sāriputta.
3	Notes and Insights: • The Venerable Sāriputta is one of the 10 Great Disciples of the Buddha, renowned as "foremost in wisdom" through his practice of meditation. He is also the key interlocutor addressed by the Buddha in the Heart Sutra. • The ordinary way of meditation is to sit in a quiet place to enter absorption (samatha) for mind contemplation (vipassanā), just as Sāriputta practiced under the trees in the forest. However, since Sāriputta was already an Arahant, he should no longer cling to the practice of quietude (samatha and vipassanā) or depend on environmental conditions (a quiet place under a tree). Therefore, the appropriate meditation practice for Sāriputta is to maintain contemplation within the daily activities of ordinary people; only then is it true absorption and mind contemplation. • Readers should reflect upon the pointers on meditation practice in Section 3.2 to apply to themselves. However, samatha and vipassanā remain suitable for meditators who still require an object to enter absorption. • Readers are invited to review note (g.76) on the minds of liberation and note (g.286) on the Seven Abodes of Consciousness to comprehend the meaning of the Dhamma teaching: "...neither body nor mind in the three realms."

Summary and Notes – Chapter 3.2: The Disciple Moggallāna

Vimalakīrti Sutra

No.	Summary of Dhamma Teachings and Insights
1	Sections 3.4 – 3.9 describe the Venerable Moggallāna expounding the Dhamma to the white-robed lay Buddhists, when Ven. Vimalakīrti approached and pointed out that the Dhamma must be taught according to reality. Because the Dhamma encompasses the cosmic realm (dhammadhātu) and exists everywhere, it is not an object. Therefore, there is no such teaching on Dhamma, no one to teach the Dhamma, and those who hear the Dhamma are hearing mere assumptions.
2	Section 3.10: Ven. Vimalakīrti points out how the Venerable Moggallāna should expound the Dhamma appropriately: it is necessary to master the mental disposition of living beings, rely on the right view of the wisdom-eye... to ensure the continuity of the Triple Gem.
3	Section 3.11 records that 800 lay Buddhists in the crowd aroused the spirit of ultimate and perfect enlightenment after hearing the Dhamma.
4	Notes and Insights: The Venerable Moggallāna is one of the 10 Great Disciples of the Buddha, renowned as "foremost in miraculous supernatural powers." He is often paired with the Venerable Sāriputta when mentioned in the Suttas. • Even though the Venerable Moggallāna is renowned as "foremost in miraculous supernatural powers," which includes the divine eye, it is essential to have the right view of the wisdom-eye to discern the mental disposition of living beings in order to expound the Dhamma according to reality. There are 5 types of eyes: the physical eye, the divine eye, the wisdom-eye, the Dhamma-eye, and the Buddha-eye. • Thus, the Dhamma that the Venerable Moggallāna expounded to the lay Buddhists consists of Dhamma-characteristics (phenomena), whereas the Dhamma that Ven. Vimalakīrti expounded to the Venerable Moggallāna is the Dhamma-nature (ultimate reality). Therefore, to expound the Dhamma (phenomena), one must clearly understand the capacity of the listener to teach. It is just like knowing where the listener stands to point out the existing moon to them, rather than adding or subtracting anything. The original mind is eternally pure, and the Dhamma-nature is present everywhere.

Summary and Notes – Chapter 3.3: The Disciple Mahākassapa

Vimalakīrti Sutra

No.	Summary of Dhamma Teachings and Insights
1	Sections 3.12 – 3.13: The Venerable Mahākassapa recounts that while he was begging for alms in the poor quarter, Ven. Vimalakīrti approached and pointed out that avoiding the wealthy and favoring the poor stems from an un-impartial benevolence. The Licchavi then expounded to him the teaching of begging for alms with an impartial mind, without making dualistic distinctions based on the ultimate nature of all dhammas. Furthermore, one must practice according to the Mahayana Dhamma with the goal of directing toward perfect enlightenment, rather than practicing according to the Hinayana Dhamma.
2	Notes and Insights: • The Venerable Mahākassapa is one of the 10 Great Disciples of the Buddha, renowned as "foremost in ascetic practices" (dhutanga) who observed rigorous practices (see note g.332). When begging for alms, he intentionally went to the poor quarter to give the poor an opportunity to practice generosity (dana), thereby gaining merits to transcend poverty. • Because of the dualistic thought of separating the wealthy and the poor—meaning the mind still clings to objects, where there is a distinguisher, a discrimination, and an object of discrimination—duality is established. Ven. Vimalakīrti taught that while begging for alms, one must contemplate that the contact between the 6 sense-organs and the 6 sense-objects is ultimately void (the organs and objects are like entering an empty town, the five aggregates are murderers, and the four great elements are poisonous snakes). • Furthermore, one must remember to practice according to the Mahayana Dhamma (when entering a village, it is like entering the family of the Buddha). One begs for alms to establish the physical body in the peace of the Dhamma and to liberate living beings, not merely for food. It is also a reminder that the giver must practice in the Buddha's way (the mind seeks enlightenment) rather than merely seeking mundane, contaminated merits. • When abiding in the aforementioned impartial insight during alms-begging, the state of non-duality is reached, meaning one is no longer afflicted. While the Hinayana holds that those who are not yet enlightened are still tormented by afflictions daily and must act urgently as if extinguishing a fire on one's head, once awakened, there is no fire to be burned by, hence no need to extinguish anything.

Summary and Notes – Chapter 3.4: The Disciple Subhūti

Vimalakīrti Sutra

No.	Summary of Dhamma Teachings and Insights
1	Section 3.15: When the Venerable Subhūti came to beg for alms, Ven. Vimalakīrti expounded the ultimate sameness of objects, of all dhammas of the Buddha-nature, which are identical. Only then can we remain in the world without being polluted by greed, hatred, and delusion (worldly dhammas), acting in the unique way that has never disrupted the identity of the body (such as wise attention).
2	Sections 3.16 – 3.17: Ven. Vimalakīrti pushes the climax higher by reversing the ordinary understanding of the Disciples (Śrāvakas) regarding attachment (to dhammas and persons): having animosity toward living beings, despising all Buddhas, criticizing the Buddha's Dhamma teachings, not entering the Sangha community... to evaluate the reaction of the Venerable Subhūti.
3	Sections 3.18 – 3.19: The Venerable Subhūti was confused upon hearing such contradictory words, then Ven. Vimalakīrti pointed out that if the speaker is an illusion (voidness of person), the words are also an illusion (voidness of dhammas), lacking real inherent existence and thus not truly existing; therefore, there is nothing to fear, as the nature of all dhammas is liberation and ultimate peace (tịch diệt).
4	Section 3.20: After hearing such a teaching, 200 gods (devas) obtained the pure Dhamma-eye, and 500 devas attained the tolerance of unproduced dhammas (refer to introduction section i.9).
5	Notes and Insights: - The Venerable Subhūti is one of the 10 Great Disciples of the Buddha, renowned as "foremost in the realization of voidness" (subhūti). He is also the key figure addressed by the Buddha in the Diamond Sutra. He only begged for alms in the wealthy quarter, which was opposite to the alms-begging practice of the Venerable Mahākassapa; that is why he came to beg for alms in front of the house of Ven. Vimalakīrti as described in the Sūtra. - Ven. Vimalakīrti skillfully used the voidness of food and language to test and open up the realization of the voidness of the Dhamma for the Venerable Subhūti.

Summary and Notes – Chapter 3.5: The Disciple Puṇṇa

Vimalakīrti Sutra

No.	Summary of Dhamma Teachings and Insights
1	Sections 3.21 – 3.22: While the Venerable Puṇṇa was expounding the Dhamma to the young bhikkhus in the forest, Ven. Vimalakīrti approached and pointed out that one must enter concentration to examine the spiritual capacity of living beings before expounding the Dhamma. One should not make one-sided assumptions about their capacity to cause them harm, nor present the Hinayana Dhamma to those who thirst for the Mahayana.
2	Sections 3.23 – 3.24: Ven. Vimalakīrti states that the Disciples (Śrāvakas) cannot discern the spiritual capacity of living beings. The Licchavi then demonstrates this by entering concentration, causing the bhikkhus to remember their past lives when they had served 500 Buddhas and generated the spirit of ultimate and perfect enlightenment. After hearing this Dhamma teaching, the bhikkhus attained the stage of non-regression from the spirit of ultimate and perfect enlightenment.
3	Notes and Insights: • The Venerable Puṇṇa is one of the 10 Great Disciples of the Buddha, renowned as "foremost in expounding the Dhamma" (puṇṇa mantāniputta). • The Venerable Puṇṇa also exemplifies that the Disciple Śrāvakas are not masters in discerning the spiritual capacity of living beings, because they do not always abide in the state of mind-equanimity like the Tathāgata. • The lesson is that to know the spiritual capacity of living beings, we need to be in a state of meditative absorption (samādhi) to contemplate the capacity of the audience, and then expound the Dhamma according to reality. • Similar to Slide 5 regarding the Venerable Moggallāna, expounding the Dhamma is not merely about providing information or solutions for learners, but about helping them awaken to their own internal obstacles. To point out the moon to someone (the mind unhindered by obstacles), the guide must know where the listener stands; only then can they help them recognize their obstacles. When their minds are pure, they will naturally see the moon that is already there. The moon is merely a metaphor for the luminous mind, not an object to be sought or seen.

Summary and Notes – Chapter 3.6: The Disciple Mahākaccāna

Vimalakīrti Sutra

No.	Summary of Dhamma Teachings and Insights
1	Section 3.25: While the Venerable Mahākaccāna was explaining the four Dhamma seals—suffering, impermanence, voidness, and ultimate peace - to the young bhikkhus, the Vimalakīrti approached and expounded: • Nothing has ceased, is ceasing, or will cease to exist (without cessation, there is no production); this is the true meaning of impermanence. • Realizing non-production through realizing that the five aggregates are ultimately void; this is the true meaning of suffering. • The ultimate truth of the non-duality of self and non-self; this is the true meaning of non-self. • That which has no inherent nature cannot be burned, and that which cannot be burned cannot be extinguished; this is the true meaning of ultimate peace (refer to the discussion with the Venerable Mahākassapa in slide 6 above).
2	Section 3.26: The minds of the bhikkhus were liberated from afflictions and entered a state of non-clinging (non-attachment).
3	Notes and Insights: • The Venerable Mahākaccāna is one of the 10 Great Disciples of the Buddha, renowned as "foremost in doctrinal analysis." He is also regarded as the founder of the Abhidhamma tradition. Yet, while expounding the Dhamma, he was corrected by the Vimalakīrti. This is because the Hinayana relies on Dhamma-characteristics (phenomena) to teach, whereas the Vimalakīrti utilizes Dhamma-nature (ultimate reality) to expound. The Hinayana expounds the Dhamma by describing the exact process of one's own realization. Conversely, the Mahayana expounds based on the inclinations of the learners to guide them accordingly, rather than rigidly adhering to one's own practice and realization. • Clinging (<i>upādāna</i>) is the 9th link within the 12 links of Dependent Origination (<i>paṭiccasamuppāda</i>). A clinging mind is a mind attached or covetous, leading to the manifestation of an object within the mind, which subsequently drives the arising and ceasing within the mind—the primary cause of the cycle of birth and death (samsara).

Summary and Notes – Chapter 3.7: The Disciple Anuruddha

Vimalakīrti Sutra

No.	Summary of Dhamma Teachings and Insights
1	Sections 3.27 – 3.28: When the Venerable Anuruddha described his ability of the divine eye to the devas, Ven. Vimalakīrti approached and asked whether his divine eye is of a conditioned nature (saṅkhata) or an unconditioned nature (asaṅkhata). The Venerable Anuruddha was confused and could not answer. When asked by the devas, Ven. Vimalakīrti expounded that only the Buddha possesses the true Buddha-eye, which sees all Buddha-fields without ever leaving the state of meditative absorption (samādhī) and without being influenced by duality.
2	Notes and Insights: • The Venerable Anuruddha is one of the 10 Great Disciples of the Buddha, renowned as "foremost in the divine eye." His divine eye is one of the 6 supernatural powers (abhiññā) that Arahats possess. However, his divine eye belongs to the conditioned realm, which non-Buddhist ascetics can also attain. • Now let us turn inward to observe the operation of our own mind. When we perceive things, through the eye-organ and the optic nerve, we see the characteristics of phenomena appearing within the consciousness. • By instinctual habit, our brain analyzes and synthesizes to recognize what it is, then our thoughts perceive and give birth to concepts (objects) to bring out ideas or solutions (dhamma-objects). Based on that, the mind commands (issues orders to the body and speech), then executes, becomes an experience, and is stored in brain cells in the form of memory. A corresponding process occurs for the remaining sense-organs: ear – sound, nose – odor, tongue – taste, body – touch, mind – dhamma. • If we focus our entire mind (right concentration / sammā-samādhī) to observe the characteristics of phenomena appearing in the mind without arousing thoughts, perception will not occur and concepts (objects) will not be born; therefore, the entire process of arising and ceasing will come to an end. At that moment, we will possess pure knowledge; greed, hatred, and delusion will not arise, and we abide in impartial knowing and wise attention. The reason here is the operational principle of the Dhamma, not an intentional volition of the intellect.

Summary and Notes – Chapter 3.8: The Disciple Upāli

Vimalakīrti Sutra

No.	Summary of Dhamma Teachings and Insights
1	Sections 3.30 – 3.33: Two bhikkhus who had violated the precepts felt remorseful for their sins and came to meet the Venerable Upāli to ask him to absolve them. While the Venerable Upāli was expounding the Dhamma to help them alleviate their remorse, Ven. Vimalakīrti suddenly appeared and pointed out: Sin does not exist outside the mind, and the nature of the mind is eternally pure; it is because of this that living beings are liberated. Living beings suffer due to afflicted thoughts; when thoughts are pure, living beings are pure. They do not exist outside this ultimate reality.
2	Section 3.34: Ven. Vimalakīrti points out the true nature of the mind and the primary causes of suffering, which include conceptualization, misunderstanding, and assumptions about the self. All mental objects (dhammas) are unproduced, non-abiding, and non-ceasing, lacking any real inherent existence; rather, they are all born from the discriminatory explanations of the mind. Whoever recognizes this is a master of discipline and truly authentic.
3	Notes and Insights: • The Venerable Upāli is one of the 10 Great Disciples of the Buddha, renowned as "foremost in keeping the precepts" (vinaya). Within the Sangha, he was responsible for handling violators of the precepts, and he was trusted to recite the Vinaya established by the Buddha during the First Buddhist Council after the Buddha's Parinibbāna. • In these sections, the Vimalakīrti clearly points out and explains the pure mind-nature versus the defiled, afflicted mind-consciousness. The process of affliction begins with a misunderstanding of intellect and mind-nature, leading to assumptions about the self; where there is a self, there is what belongs to the self, and where there is what belongs to the self, objectification occurs. It is precisely this dualistic splitting (duality) that is the cause of conflict, and wherever there is conflict, there is suffering. When one realizes this operational process of mind-consciousness, there will be: pure vision (the pure Dhamma-eye), the cessation of greed, hatred, and delusion, and impartial knowing with no more violations of precepts. Hence, in the realization song of the Venerable Master Xuan Jue, there is the line: "Realizing the karmic obstacles, the four elements are ultimately void." • The Ven. Upāli made the two bhikkhus confused because he separated the sinner from the sin. That is why there is a precept-keeper—someone who tries to control themselves not to violate precepts—but in truth, the precept-keeper and the kept precept are one, both originating from the mind.

Summary and Notes – Chapter 3.9: The Disciple Rāhula

Vimalakīrti Sutra

No.	Summary of Dhamma Teachings and Insights
1	Section 3.38: Ven. Vimalakīrti expounds that true renunciation is an unconditioned dhamma (asaṅkhata), free from all physical attributes and material signs. Ven. Vimalakīrti encourages the princes to leave the household life in this manner because there are 3 things difficult to attain in this world: being born as a human being, being born during the time a Buddha appears in the world, and having a human life of leisure and ample opportunity.
2	Section 3.39: Ven.Vimalakīrti resolves the doubt of the princes regarding the requirement of parental permission before leaving the household life, and points out the essence of the renunciation of the mind.
3	Notes and Insights: • The Venerable Rāhula is one of the 10 Great Disciples and also the son of the Buddha. Because he was deeply devout, meticulously precise, and patiently diligent in his practice, he was renowned as "foremost in esoteric practices" (or foremost in quiet discipline). • The Venerable Rāhula and the princes discussed renunciation based on signs (phenomena), whereas Ven. Vimalakīrti pointed out renunciation based on the mind. After being taught, the princes were still attached to the physical appearance, thinking that leaving the household life must involve shaving the head, wearing robes, and joining the Sangha community to be called renunciation. Therefore, Ven.Vimalakīrti explicitly pointed out that cultivating oneself, arousing the spirit of enlightenment, is true renunciation and the taking of high vows. • According to the traditional perspective, only those who shave their heads, wear robes, join the Sangha, and take the bhikkhu precepts can practice to attain liberation. In this section, Ven.Vimalakīrti points out that the renunciation of the mind is even loftier than the renunciation of signs. In fact, Ven. Vimalakīrti himself, living as a layman, is the prime evidence for this. • Furthermore, we are fortunate to have 3 things difficult to obtain: being born as a human being with a healthy body—not suffering from the eight adversities—and although we do not meet the Buddha today, reading this Sūtra and studying the Buddha's Dhamma is no different from the assembly hearing the Buddha expound the Dhamma in the grove of Amrapālī.

Summary and Notes – Chapter 3.10: The Disciple Ānanda

Vimalakīrti Sutra

No.	Summary of Dhamma Teachings and Insights
1	Sections 3.41 – 3.45: The physical body of the Lord (Buddha) suffered a slight indisposition, so the Venerable Ānanda went to the mansion of a brahmin to beg for a little milk for the Buddha's consumption. At that moment, Ven. Vimalakīrti approached and questioned him, stating that the body of the Lord is the Dhamma-body, which has abandoned all afflictions and cannot be harmed by anything; how then could He fall ill? The Licchavi told the Venerable Ānanda to go away quietly and not let others see him.
2	Section 3.46: While the Venerable Ānanda was confused and ashamed, not knowing what to do, a voice from the sky whispered to him that to liberate living beings, the Buddha appeared in the world of five corruptions with an impermanent incarnate body that shows illness.
3	Notes and Insights: • The Venerable Ānanda is one of the 10 Great Disciples of the Buddha, known as "foremost in attendance." Serving diligently as an attendant for over 25 years, he heard and memorized all the Buddha's discourses; thus, he was also renowned as "foremost in wide learning" and was responsible for reciting the Buddha's Dhamma teachings during the First Buddhist Council of 500 Arahats after the Buddha's Parinibbāna. • According to records, despite his wide learning and extensive knowledge, the Venerable Ānanda did not attain Arahatship while the Buddha was alive, until the very night before the First Buddhist Council took place. • Because knowledge gained from wide learning requires time to analyze and synthesize information before delivering a solution, when suddenly questioned by Ven. Vimalakīrti—who used the absolute truth of the Dhamma-body to contrast and dismantle the reason for begging milk for the Buddha's incarnate body—the Venerable Ānanda could not respond. • Therefore, wide learning and extensive knowledge for memorization can form an intellectual consciousness that becomes an obstacle to the mind of liberation (the obstacle of knowledge / jñeyāvaraṇa). By instinctual habit, the mind mistakes the "intellectual consciousness" for the "self," from which arises clinging and discrimination—the source of suffering and the cycle of birth and death (samsara). In a single moment of un-mindfulness, we have mistaken the thief for our own son.

Summary and Notes – Chapter 3.11: The Bodhisattva Metteyya

Vimalakīrti Sutra

No.	Summary of Dhamma Teachings and Insights
1	Sections 3.48 – 3.49: While the Bodhisattva Metteyya was expounding the stage of non-regression in the Tusita heaven, Ven. Vimalakīrti approached and questioned him by presenting a dilemma regarding his prophecy of attaining full enlightenment in one more lifetime: whether this prophecy applies to a state of production (birth) or non-production.
2	Sections 3.50 – 3.51: Ven. Vimalakīrti points out that reality is ultimately without production or cessation, and that reality is completely identical, meaning there is no differentiation between the reality of saints and ordinary people. Following this, the Licchavi expounds to the devas in the Tusita heaven that a mind free from discriminatory explanations regarding enlightenment is itself the real mind and true enlightenment.
3	Sections 3.52 – 3.53: Ven. Vimalakīrti expounds with ultimate clarity and completeness on the true nature of enlightenment.
4	Section 3.54 describes that after hearing this teaching, 200 devas in the assembly of the Tusita heaven attained the tolerance of unproduced dhammas.
5	Notes and Insights: • The Bodhisattva Metteyya received a prophecy from the Buddha indicating he is only one lifetime away from Buddhahood. According to scriptures, he is currently expounding the Dhamma in the Tusita heaven and will manifest as the 5th incarnate Buddha in this Sahā world. (The four preceding Buddhas are Kakusandha, Koṇāgamana, Kassapa, and Gotama). • Furthermore, in Chapter 12, Section 19, the Buddha officially and directly entrusts the Bodhisattva Metteyya to propagate and preserve this ultimate teaching throughout the world. • Ven. Vimalakīrti expounds with meticulous precision on the real mind and the enlightened mind, so readers must personally engage in deep contemplation to penetrate this core Dhamma meaning.

Summary and Notes – Chapter 3.12: The Licchavi Prince Prabhāvyūha

Vimalakīrti Sutra

No.	Summary of Dhamma Teachings and Insights
1	Sections 3.55 – 3.60: When the Licchavi Prince Prabhāvyūha asked where Ven. Vimalakīrti came from, the Licchavi replied that he came from the "seat of enlightenment" (bodhimaṇḍa). Following this, the Licchavi expounds that the "seat of enlightenment" is the domain where one practices the Six Paramis, the Four Immeasurables, the Four Social Practices, the 12 links of Dependent Origination, the 37 Aids to Enlightenment... and all the roots of virtue that lead to awakening.
2	Section 3.61: Ven. Vimalakīrti points out that all activities of the Bodhisattvas originate from the seat of enlightenment, because they always abide in the Buddha-cognition to carry out their holy deeds.
3	Section 3.62 describes that after hearing this teaching, 500 devas and humans generated the spirit of ultimate and perfect enlightenment.
4	Notes and Insights: • In this section, while the Licchavi Prince Prabhāvyūha questioned regarding a physical location, Ven. Vimalakīrti answered from the perspective of the "seat of enlightenment" (bodhimaṇḍa), which belongs to the mind. • In the Vietnamese translation, the term "Đạo tràng" is currently used based on the Chinese phonetic pronunciation "dàochǎng". Readers are invited to refer to note (g.281) and note (v.6) for further information. • Ven. Vimalakīrti explicitly and comprehensively indicated all the Dhammas that lead to enlightenment. Readers need to contemplate to see which Dhammas they have penetrated and which Dhammas need to be supplemented during their practice of the Bodhisattva path (refer to the core Dhammas presented in Part II – Index of this Summary). This helps practitioners focus solely on studying and practicing the Dharma-doors that lead directly to enlightenment, without becoming lost in the massive system of Buddhist knowledge.

Summary and Notes – Chapter 3.13: The Bodhisattva Jagatīṃdhara

Vimalakīrti Sūtra

No.	Summary of Dhamma Teachings and Insights
1	Sections 3.63 – 3.67: Māra Pāpīmān disguised himself as Sakka to tease the Bodhisattva Jagatīṃdhara, but Ven. Vimalakīrti arrived, exposed the conspiracy, and caused Māra to completely lose his supernatural powers.
2	Sections 3.68 – 3.69: Ven. Vimalakīrti expounds the Dhamma to liberate the heavenly nymphs, causing them to generate the spirit of enlightenment. He awakens them to the joys of the sublime Dhamma, which are far superior to the pleasures of sensual desires, including: generating the spirit of renunciation, practicing the Paramis, and contemplating the sense-organs, the five aggregates, and the four great elements...
3	Sections 3.70 – 3.72: Ven. Vimalakīrti instructs Māra, the Evil One, to fulfill the spiritual aspirations of practicing living beings, and teaches the Dharma-door of the "Inexhaustible Lamp" to the heavenly nymphs on how to live in the palace of Māra after having generated the spirit of enlightenment.
4	Notes and Insights: - Māra Pāpīmān (abiding in the highest heaven of the desire realm) only creates disturbances to test practitioners of high spiritual attainment, such as when the Buddha sat in meditation for 49 days under the Bodhi tree, or as with the Bodhisattva Jagatīṃdhara in this Sūtra. In Chapter 5, Section 2 of this Sūtra, Ven. Vimalakīrti expounds that those who play the role of the devil in countless worlds of the ten directions are actually Bodhisattvas who abide in the inconceivable liberation, playing the role of the evil one to instruct living beings through the skillful use of liberative techniques. - After exposing the conspiracy of Māra, the Evil One, Ven. Vimalakīrti further desires that Māra fulfill the spiritual aspirations of living beings (3.71), and he liberates the heavenly nymphs to generate the spirit of enlightenment, abandon sensual desires, and practice Dhamma-charity upon returning to the palace of Māra. - The practice of propagating enlightenment not only ignites the lamp of wisdom of the practitioner but also helps the lamps of wisdom of others become brighter and stronger without limit. This also carries the meaning that the gift of Dhamma excels all gifts, which not only spreads endlessly, without depletion or diminution, but grows increasingly more powerful day by day.

Summary and Notes – Chapter 3.14: The Licchavi Son Sucitti

Vimalakīrti Sutra

No.	Summary of Dhamma Teachings and Insights
1	Sections 3.74 – 3.77: When the Licchavi son Sucitti organized a great sacrificial assembly of charity at his house, on the seventh and final day, Ven. Vimalakīrti arrived and pointed out that Dhamma-charity is the ultimate supremacy. This is because Dhamma-charity encompasses all practices and perfects all Dhammas, such as: the Four Immeasurables, the Six Paramis, the contemplation of voidness, and the three doors of liberation...
2	Section 3.79: Practicing the Dhamma-charity to accumulate the store of merit and achieve perfection through the manifestation of the 32 major marks and 80 minor signs of excellence, the magnificence of the Buddha-field, and through the employment of liberative techniques to liberate living beings...
3	Section 3.80: Ven. Vimalakīrti points out that any Bodhisattva who lives by Dhamma-charity is the supreme donor, worthy of receiving the offerings of devas and humans, also known as an "Arahat" (the Worthy One), 1 of the 10 titles of a Buddha.
4	Sections 3.81 – 3.82: Sucitti offered a precious pearl necklace and implored Ven. Vimalakīrti to accept it. The Licchavi divided it into two halves, presenting one half to the poorest beggars and the other half as an offering to the Tathāgata Duṣprasaha through a miraculous feat. He pointed out that Charity without discrimination, without partiality, without seeking reward, and driven by great compassion is itself Dhamma-charity.
5	Notes and Insights: - Sucitti is also known as a son of Venerable Licchavi Vimalakīrti (The Licchavi Son) - He was a truly magnificent donor who gave without withholding anything, which had formed an ingrained habit. Therefore, even after hearing the Licchavi's discourse, he still practiced material charity by offering the precious necklace with a mind that still discriminated the value of the material gift and the recipient; it was only then that the Licchavi taught that charity with an Impartial mind is indeed the supreme Dhamma-charity. - Furthermore, through expounding on Dhamma-charity, the Licchavi also encouraged Sucitti to accumulate the store of wisdom and knowledge through the practice of Dhamma-charity, rather than focusing solely on material charity to accumulate the store of merit.

Summary and Notes – XGM's Insights on Chapter 3

Vimalakīrti Sutra

No.	Summary of Dhamma Teachings and Insights
1	The structural arrangement within this Chapter 3 is extraordinarily coherent and profound. It begins with the accounts of the 10 Great Disciple Śrāvakas and 4 Great Bodhisattvas. All of them were guided by Ven. Vimalakīrti to unlock a transcendental state of mind that surpassed the very highest spiritual attainments of each individual.
2	The first 10 dialogues between the Ven. Vimalakīrti and the 10 Great Disciples expose the mental limitations of each individual. Among them, 9 had already attained the holy fruit of Arahatsip. They had escaped the cycle of birth and death, free from greed, hatred, and delusion, and had abandoned the self and what belongs to the self; yet, they were still bound by Dhamma-attachment (attachment to phenomena). As for the Ven. Ānanda alone, because he stayed close to the Buddha, he possessed wide learning and extensive memory; however, because he focused his mind entirely on attending to the Buddha without penetrating the depths of practice, he had not yet attained Arahatsip while the Buddha was alive.
3	- While the aforementioned Arahats clung to existence (holding that there is a dhamma to expound, to practice, and there are listeners and practitioners), in the next 4 dialogues with the 4 Bodhisattvas who had already attained the stage of non-regression, they were still reminded and instructed by Ven. Vimalakīrti to diligently practice the Bodhisattva path in order to accumulate merit to adorn themselves and purify the Buddha-field: - For the Bodhisattva Metteyya to attain Buddhahood, he needs to fulfill the vow of being only one lifetime away from full enlightenment to liberate living beings. This is because in true awakening, there is only the present reality, whereas the three periods of time (past, present, and future) manifest only within thoughts. - The Licchavi Prince Prabhāvyūha was instructed regarding the seat of enlightenment through practicing the Bodhisattva path to accumulate both stores of merit and wisdom. - The Bodhisattva Jagatīṃdhara was warned about the supernatural power of Māra, the Evil One, and needed to diligently practice to possess spiritual authority like Ven. Vimalakīrti or the Buddha. - Although Sucitti had practiced material charity to the utmost excellence, he still needed to practice Dhamma-charity—the ultimate supremacy that encompasses all Dhammas. To perform Dhamma-charity, one must first comprehend the Dharma-doors to be able to share them. This also reminds Sucitti that he must practice to accumulate the store of wisdom, so that he may possess both stores of merit and wisdom in full abundance.

Summary and Notes – Chapter 4: The Inquiry into the Illness

Vimalakīrti Sutra

No.	Summary of Dhamma Teachings and Insights
1	Section 4.1: The Venerable Mañjuśrī describes the extraordinary, special capacities of Ven. Vimalakīrti regarding his employment of liberative techniques to expound the Dhamma and liberate living beings...
2	Section 4.5: The two supreme Bodhisattvas utilize "voidness" (voidness of ultimate reality) to converse and engage with each other during their initial greeting.
3	Section 4.7: Ven. Vimalakīrti explains that his illness originates from ignorance and the craving for existence (the 1st and 10th links within the 12 links of Dependent Origination); as long as living beings remain in the cycle of birth and death (samsara), illness is inevitable. A great Bodhisattva possesses a mind of great compassion that resonates with the suffering of all living beings, connecting his own pain with the pain of the public. Within his personal suffering, he recognizes the suffering of everyone. He no longer holds a dualistic concept of "my suffering" versus "the suffering of others." Therefore, he voluntarily manifests an incarnate body to liberate living beings.
4	Sections 4.8 – 4.11: The two Noble Ones converse about voidness, the 62 false views, the liberation of the Tathāgata, the primordial mind, and having maras and non-Buddhists as servants. The Mahayana teaching that "affliction is itself enlightenment" is precisely the meaning of this section. The Licchavi also points out that the liberation of the Tathāgata is the primordial mind, meaning a mind that has not yet aroused thoughts or engaged in perception.
5	Sections 4.12 – 4.14: Although the Bodhisattva has already awakened to the ultimate reality of the voidness of the physical body, he still needs to manifest an incarnate body to practice the path.
6	Sections 4.15 – 4.21 contain the most profound and subtle ultimate Dhammas, which readers must personally engage in deep contemplation within their own minds to comprehend; among these, pay close attention to the three doors of liberation.
7	Sections 4.22 – 4.27: The Dhammas point out the skillful integration between wisdom and liberative techniques to practice the Bodhisattva path. Readers must engage in deep thought and contemplation to avoid becoming bound during their practice.
8	Sections 4.28 – 4.30: The Bodhisattvas practice Dhamma-characteristics but their minds always abide in the signless (ultimate reality)—impartial cognition.
9	Once readers have deeply penetrated the Dhamma meanings within this chapter, it will be easy to comprehend the Dhamma meanings in the other chapters.

Summary and Notes – Chapter 5: The Inconceivable Liberation

Vimalakīrti Sūtra

No.	Summary of Dhamma Teachings and Insights
1	Sections 5.1 – 5.5: Ven. Vimalakīrti detects that within the mind of the Venerable Sāriputta, there arises an attachment to material attributes (such as seats); he seizes this opportunity to expound on the true Dhamma-nature and the operational principle of the Dhamma, which is completely devoid of physical attributes and rests in ultimate reality. Therefore, if during the Dhamma discourse, ideas or material attributes arise within the mind, it indicates that perception is still bound by objects. At that moment, one is no longer concerned with the Dhamma itself, but merely focused on the object of perception. In other words, one is only looking at the finger instead of looking at the moon. This section, along with Section 3.2 regarding the Venerable Moggallāna, helps us comprehend what the Dhamma is, its operational principles, and the true meaning of expounding the Dhamma.
2	Sections 5.6 – 5.19: Ven. Vimalakīrti performs a miraculous feat and explains the Dharma-door of the inconceivable liberation of the supreme Bodhisattvas and the Tathāgata to the Venerable Sāriputta and the assembly.
3	Section 5.20: The Venerable Kassapa weeps with deep regret because the Śrāvakas (Disciples) and the Paccekabuddhas (Pratyekabuddhas) are unable to perceive this magnificent, vast Dharma-door of inconceivable liberation and its supernatural powers.
4	Sections 5.21 – 5.22: Ven. Vimalakīrti expounds that those who come to create disturbances and test the Bodhisattvas—such as evil maras or disabled beggars—are all incarnate bodies of the Bodhisattvas who abide in the Dharma-door of the inconceivable liberation.
5	Notes and Insights: • Only those at the stage of Bodhisattvas and above can perceive the Dharma-door of the inconceivable liberation; from Śrāvakas and Paccekabuddhas downwards, it remains invisible, hence we cannot even engage in discussions about it. • The content of this chapter, along with several other sections, relates to the yogi capacities of the inconceivable liberation and carries a strong Esoteric/Tantric temperament (refer to introduction section i.14 on page 12 of the Sūtra).

Summary and Notes – Chapter 6: The Goddess

Vimalakīrti Sutra

No.	Summary of Dhamma Teachings and Insights
1	Sections 6.1 – 6.11: Ven. Vimalakīrti answers the Venerable Mañjuśrī regarding how living beings are like an illusion, and expounds how to generate Love, Compassion, Joy, and Impartiality (the Four Immeasurables) toward living beings if they are contemplated as illusions. Through this section, we learn how holy deeds are generated from the Four Immeasurables. Of particular note is that "compassion has no dualistic nature because it is completely unassociated with interior or exterior reference points," which serves as the pivotal turning point for penetrating the non-duality in Chapter 8 below.
2	Sections 6.55 – 6.11: Ven. Vimalakīrti expounds on how to rely on the great magnanimity of the Tathāgata so that Bodhisattvas can overcome the fear of the cycle of birth and death (samsara) and erroneous concepts (a single un-mindful thought is the primary cause of affliction and suffering).
3	Sections 6.12 – 6.42: The Goddess utilizes the ultimate reality of the Dhamma to dismantle the attachments of the Venerable Sāriputta, which exemplify the Dhamma-attachment of the Śrāvakas regarding: time, the practice of liberation, spiritual realizations, the vehicles, gender, the dissolution of the incarnate body after death, and the attainment of Buddhahood. Furthermore, the Goddess introduces 8 wonderful, miraculous things that constantly occur at the mansion of Ven. Vimalakīrti, including the assembly of the Tathāgatas teaching the Esoteric Treasury of the Tathāgata, also known as the Dharma-doors of the Tantric school.
4	Section 6.43: Ven. Vimalakīrti describes the holy deeds that the incarnate body of the Goddess has performed in the past, noting that the capacity of the Goddess equals that of advanced, veteran Bodhisattvas, and she possesses the ability to employ yogi capacities to manifest transformations as a liberative technique to liberate living beings according to their capacities and vows.
5	Notes and Insights: • The dialogues and exchanges in this chapter between the two supreme Bodhisattvas serve as a raft for us to rely upon in order to deeply penetrate the Dharma-door of liberation and voidness. • It also highlights the supreme eloquence and yogi capacity of the incarnate Goddess to shatter the Dhamma-attachments of the Śrāvakas.

Summary and Notes – Chapter 7: The Family of the Tathāgatas

Vimalakīrti Sutra

No.	Summary of Dhamma Teachings and Insights
1	Sections 7.1 – 7.8: Ven. Vimalakīrti expounds the ways to practice the Bodhisattva path in order to realize the Buddha-nature. This involves engaging in the activities of the mundane world, even practicing non-Dhamma ways or committing wrongful deeds... to ultimately lead toward the Buddha-nature.
2	Sections 7.9 – 7.12: The Venerable Mañjuśrī expounds on the family of the Tathāgatas, stating that all living beings who dwell within afflictions, obstacles, and the 62 false views... yet are capable of generating the spirit to seek ultimate awakening and liberation, all belong to the family of the Tathāgatas. Conversely, those who have abandoned afflictions and suffering but have entered the fixed state of salvation (the absolute position), isolating themselves from the world and abandoning living beings, no longer possess the capacity to generate the spirit of enlightenment.
3	Sections 7.13 – 7.15: The Venerable Kassapa praises the discourse of the Venerable Mañjuśrī, agreeing that afflictions indeed give birth to the family of the Tathāgatas. He laments that the Śrāvakas (Disciples) like himself, having abandoned afflictions but being unable to arouse the spirit of enlightenment to practice the Bodhisattva path, are like scorched seeds or disabled organs; they no longer thirst for the Buddha-nature, fail to recognize the Buddha's benevolence, and cannot ensure the continuity of the Triple Gem.
4	Sections 7.16 – 7.58: Ven. Vimalakīrti recites a great verse describing his family, relatives, and possessions, all of which are liberative techniques employed by him to liberate living beings. Readers need to engage in deep contemplation to gain clarity.
5	Notes and Insights: • In classical philosophy, there is a saying: <i>"While the body walks the path of the mundane world, the mind always directs toward the realm of the divine."</i> This carries a similar meaning to the practice of the Bodhisattva path expounded by Ven. Vimalakīrti. • In the scriptures, the phrase <i>"Affliction is itself enlightenment"</i> precisely encapsulates the core meaning of the family of the Tathāgatas. • The Bodhisattvas abide in impartial, non-discriminatory cognition and possess the stores of merit, wisdom, and knowledge as liberative techniques; therefore, their minds remain unhindered and fearless in all circumstances.

Summary and Notes – Chapter 8: The Dharma-door of Non-duality

Vimalakīrti Sutra

No.	Summary of Dhamma Teachings and Insights
1	Sections 8.2 – 8.32: At the invitation of Ven. Vimalakīrti, 31 Bodhisattvas take turns to expound on the entrance into the Dharma-door of non-duality that they have personally practiced and realized.
2	Section 8.33: The Venerable Mañjuśrī praises their explanations but notes that because they still utilize language to expound, there remain traces of dualistic nature. He then declares that the true entrance into non-duality is where there is no expounder, no speech, no explanation, no communication, no manifestation, and no designation.
3	Section 8.34: After expounding this, the Venerable Mañjuśrī turns to ask Ven. Vimalakīrti about his entrance into the Dharma-door of non-duality, and receives the silence of Vimalakīrti, which is highly praised by the Venerable Mañjuśrī.
4	Notes and Insights: - The structural arrangement of this chapter is extraordinarily profound. The 31 Bodhisattvas employ words as a liberative technique to expound on non-duality so that we may rely upon them to comprehend. At the end of the chapter, the Venerable Mañjuśrī concludes that the Dharma-door of non-duality is unconditioned (asaṅkhata), abandoning all language and independent of words. This is ultimately validated by the thunderous silence of Ven. Vimalakīrti when requested to clarify non-duality. If this structural sequence were reversed, we would have no foundation to rely upon to penetrate the Dharma-door of non-duality. - In Chapter 6, Ven. Vimalakīrti taught that <i>"compassion has no dualistic nature because it is completely unassociated with interior or exterior reference points,"</i> meaning it has no connection to the sense-organs and sense-objects. This means contemplating that the organs and objects are like entering an empty town. When the sense-organs contact the sense-objects, giving rise to dhammas, sensations, and perceptions (the primordial mind). Within this exact split second, if we focus our entire mind to observe without arousing volitional effort (unconditioned/asaṅkhata), the principle of the Dhamma will operate according to reality (wise attention). However, if the mind wanders into thoughts (mental formations/saṅkhāra), they manifest and operate, creating karma and inscribing it into the store-consciousness.

Summary and Notes – Chapter 9: The Feast Brought by the Incarnate Bodhisattva

Vimalakīrti Sutra

No.	Summary of Dhamma Teachings and Insights
1	Section 9.1: Ven. Vimalakīrti reads the thoughts of the Venerable Sāriputta and reminds him that he should enter the meditative absorption (samādhi) of the eight liberations without becoming preoccupied with the physical attributes of material food.
2	Sections 9.2 – 9.21: Ven. Vimalakīrti performs an extraordinary, miraculous feat (yogi capacity) by creating an incarnate Bodhisattva to travel to the world Sarvagandhasugandhā to bring back a vessel of fragrant food to feast the entire assembly gathered at his mansion.
3	Section 9.22: The Bodhisattvas of the world Sarvagandhasugandhā describe how the Tathāgata Gandhotkaṭa utilizes fragrance to expound the Dhamma. The Bodhisattvas merely sit beneath the fragrance-radiating trees and enter absorption, and within their bodies arise all the virtues of a Bodhisattva.
4	Sections 9.23 – 9.27: Ven. Vimalakīrti describes the methods to discipline and develop living beings of low spiritual capacities in this Sahā world of the Buddha Gotama, noting that it brings greater benefit to living beings than what can be accomplished in 100,000 eons in the world Sarvagandhasugandhā. He then lists the 10 virtues unique to this Sahā realm that other Buddha-fields do not possess.
5	Section 9.28: Ven. Vimalakīrti lists the 8 qualities that a Bodhisattva in this Sahā world needs to possess in order to depart peacefully to a pure Buddha-field immediately upon the moment of death.
6	After hearing this Dhamma discourse, 100,000 living beings generated the spirit of ultimate, perfect enlightenment, and 10,000 Bodhisattvas attained the tolerance of unproduced dhammas.
7	Notes and Insights: • Within this Sahā world, there are 10 unique virtues that other Buddha-fields do not possess, where the benefit brought to living beings is extraordinarily vast, and there are 8 essential qualities required for a Bodhisattva to depart peacefully to a pure Buddha-field.

No.	Summary of Dhamma Teachings and Insights
1	Sections 10.1 – 10.13: Seizing the opportunity when the Venerable Ānanda questions how the food from the Buddha-field of the Tathāgata Gandhotkaṭa could perform the Buddha-work, the Buddha expounds on how different Buddha-fields employ different liberative techniques to perform the Buddha-work. The Buddha describes the Dharma-door that introduces and familiarizes one with the entirety of the Buddha-nature.
2	Sections 10.14 – 10.17: The Buddha teaches the Venerable Ānanda that while different Tathāgatas vary in their physical bodies, their ultimate awakening is completely identical, just as different Buddha-fields vary in their characteristics, yet the sky above them remains the same. The Buddha also expounds on the three epithets: "Sammā-sambuddha" (Perfect Omniscience), "Tathāgata", and "Buddha" for the Venerable Ānanda.
3	Sections 10.18 – 10.24: At the request of the visiting Bodhisattvas from the world Sarvagandhasugandhā, the Buddha expounds the lesson of "the Destructible and the Indestructible."
4	Section 10.24: After hearing the Buddha's discourse, the visiting Bodhisattvas scatter heavenly flowers as an offering and return to the world Sarvagandhasugandhā.
5	Notes and Insights: • Bodhisattvas must rely on conditioned dhammas (saṅkhata) while practicing the Bodhisattva path to accumulate the store of merit to adorn their body, speech, and mind, and to purify the Buddha-field, without ever destroying conditioned dhammas (the destructible). • Although Bodhisattvas have already awakened to voidness, they do not remain permanently immersed in the unconditioned (asaṅkhata)—Nibbāna (the indestructible). • Readers are invited to integrate this with Sections 1.33 and 1.34, where the Buddha teaches the purification of the Buddha-field. Despite knowing that the ultimate nature of all dhammas is void, Bodhisattvas still accept the responsibility of a Buddha-field to develop living beings.

No.	Summary of Dhamma Teachings and Insights
1	Sections 11.1 – 11.3: Ven. Vimalakīrti describes how he contemplates the Tathāgata when questioned by the Buddha.
2	Sections 11.4 – 11.13: The Venerable Sāriputta questions regarding the Buddha-field where Ven. Vimalakīrti previously dwelt before manifesting an incarnate body in this Sahā world. The Buddha reveals that Ven. Vimalakīrti came from the universe Abhirati, the realm of the Tathāgata Akṣobhya.
3	Sections 11.14 – 11.17: Ven. Vimalakīrti performs a miraculous feat by shrinking the universe Abhirati and bringing it into this Sahā world to exhibit it to the assembly for their contemplation, without causing any disruption to the universe Abhirati itself.
4	Sections 11.18 – 11.20: The assembly admires the magnificent splendor of the universe Abhirati, and the Buddha bestows prophecies indicating that they will be reborn in the universe Abhirati in the future.
5	Sections 11.21 – 11.22: The Venerable Ānanda praises the universe Abhirati and prays that living beings may be reborn in such a magnificent Buddha-field, and that they may attain supernatural powers like Ven. Vimalakīrti. He also states the immense benefits of hearing, reading, reciting, honoring the Dhamma, and serving those who are well-versed in the teachings of the Dhamma.
6	Notes and Insights: • Through the description of how Ven. Vimalakīrti contemplates the Tathāgata, we can grasp the ultimate reality of the Tathāgata. • Once again, Ven. Vimalakīrti demonstrates his yogi capacity to shrink the universe Abhirati for the assembly to behold. He is truly proficient in both mundane and supramundane sciences.

Summary and Notes – Chapter 12: Antecedents and Activation of the True Dhamma

Vimalakīrti Sutra

No.	Summary of Dhamma Teachings and Insights
1	Sections 12.1 – 12.2: Sakka praises the teaching and vows to protect the True Dhamma, and the Buddha expounds on the benefits for those who honor and protect the True Dhamma.
2	Sections 12.6 – 12.18: The Buddha recounts His own antecedents (past lives), where He was taught by the Tathāgata Bhaisajyaguru regarding the benefits and methods of honoring the Dhamma.
3	Sections 12.19 – 12.22: The Buddha entrusts the Bodhisattva Metteyya to protect and propagate His ultimate awakening over a long period of time, ensuring the uninterrupted continuity of this True Dhamma. Following this, the Buddha expounds on how beginner Bodhisattvas and veteran Bodhisattvas can cause self-harm.
4	Sections 12.23 – 12.26: The Bodhisattva Metteyya, the other Bodhisattvas, and the Four Great Kings present in the assembly all vow to protect and propagate the Dhamma teachings.
5	Sections 12.27 – 12.28: The Venerable Ānanda questions the Buddha, and the Buddha provides three titles for these Dhamma teachings: • The Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa (The Teaching of Vimalakīrti); The Reconciliation of Duality; The Inconceivable Door of Liberation
6	Notes and Insights: • The Buddha directly entrusts the Bodhisattva Metteyya to protect and propagate these Dhamma teachings. • The benefits and methods of honoring the Dhamma are fully and clearly expounded by the Tathāgata Bhaisajyaguru. Among these, pay close attention to the Four Reliances (Section 12.13), which include: 1. Rely on the spirit, not on the letter. 2. Rely on the Dhamma, not on the person. 3. Rely on the definitive meaning, not on the interpretable meaning. 4. Rely on gnosis, not on consciousness.

1. This index contains the headings of the core Dhamma meanings mentioned in the Sūtra, arranged in ascending numerical order of the Dhamma categories, such as triads, tetrads, pentads...
2. Brief explanations are included for each heading within this index. To gain a thorough understanding of these Dhamma meanings, readers need to study the full Sūtra alongside other Buddhist scriptures that expound them in comprehensive detail.
3. These Dhamma meanings also appear frequently throughout various Buddhist scriptures; therefore, mastering them will bring immense benefit to your process of spiritual study, practice, and discussion.
4. Through this index, readers can recognize the Dhamma meanings that are frequently taught to serve as reference points when seeking a Dharma-door that suits their own spiritual capacity to initiate their practice.
5. According to Buddhist tradition, there are three types of wisdom (the threefold training of wisdom): Wisdom through hearing, Wisdom through reflection, and Wisdom through practice (Suta-mayā-paññā, Cintā-mayā-paññā, Bhāvanā-mayā-paññā). After reading the full Sūtra and engaging in deep thought and contemplation on the contents within this Summary, we have accomplished 50%. Following this, we need to contemplate and select an appropriate Dharma-door to practice; only then will our learning reach ultimate perfection.

Table of Contents: Core Dhamma Meanings

Vimalakīrti Sūtra

No.	Dharma-doors and Terminology	Explanation	Reference Sections
1	Voidness (<i>Suññatā, emptiness, voidness</i>)	The emptiness of the absolute nature, the ultimate reality, or the inherent existence (self) of all persons and dhammas.	4.8, 4.9, 4.10, n.113, 114, 115, 116, 117, g.83, g.313
2	Non-duality (<i>Non-duality</i>)	The Dharma-door of non-duality expounded by the 31 Bodhisattvas in Chapter 8 of the Sūtra.	From 8.1 to 8.33
3	Tolerance of unproduced dhammas (<i>Tolerance of the birthlessness of things</i>)	The intuitive tolerance toward the unproduced (or ungraspable) nature of all dhammas.	3.54, 6.43, 8.2, 8.35, 9.29, 12.22, g.325, g.326
4	Sameness (<i>Sameness</i>)	The ultimate sameness of all dhammas, from the self to liberation.	3.15, 4.17, and 8.6
5	Twofold selflessness (<i>Two selflessness</i>)	Consists of the selflessness of persons (<i>puggala-anattā</i>) and the selflessness of dhammas (<i>dhamma-anattā</i>).	n.48, n.53, n.120, n.126, g.83, g.327
6	Two views (<i>Two views</i>)	One's own views and the views of others (<i>self of one and self of others</i>).	4.19
7	Duality (<i>Dualism</i>)	The attachment to exterior reference points (6 sense-objects) and interior reference points (6 sense-organs).	4.17, 6.2
8	Two great stores (<i>Two great stores</i>)	Consists of the store of merit and the store of wisdom, accumulated by the Bodhisattvas.	1.5, 1.6, 1.35, 2.10, 7.2, 7.6, g.303

Table of Contents: Core Dhamma Meanings (Continued)

Vimalakīrti Sutra

No.	Dharma-doors and Terminology	Explanation	Reference Sections
9	Three inexhaustibles (3 indestructibles)	The three inexhaustible stores of a fully enlightened being, including: infinite physical body, infinite life, and boundless wealth.	1.43, 3.63, 3.78, n.110
10	Three doors of liberation (3 doors of liberations)	Voidness (<i>suññatā</i>) – signlessness (<i>animitta</i>) – wishlessness (<i>appaṇihita</i>).	1.30 (n.32), 3.8, 3.77, 4.23, 4.24, 4.29, 8.22, 10.21, 12.12, g.281, g.351
11	Three bodies of the Buddha (3 bodies)	Consists of: the incarnate body (<i>nirmāṇakāya</i>), the reward body (<i>sambhogakāya</i>), and the Dhamma-body (<i>dhammakāya</i>).	2.10, 3.45, n.51, n.52, n.202, g.36, g.303
12	Three realms (3 realms)	Also known as the three worlds, including: the desire realm (<i>kāmadhātu</i>), the form realm (<i>rūpadhātu</i>), and the formless realm (<i>arūpadhātu</i>).	3.2, 3.60, 4.19 and g.324
13	Four Noble Truths (4 Noble Truths)	Realizing suffering (<i>dukkha</i>), abandoning the origin of suffering (<i>samudaya</i>), realizing the cessation of suffering (<i>nirodha</i>), and practicing the path (<i>magga</i>).	3.15, 4.29, 5.2
14	Four great elements (4 elements)	Consists of: earth (<i>paṭhavī</i>), water (<i>āpo</i>), fire (<i>tejo</i>), and air (<i>vāyo</i>). These are the four foundational elements that constitute the physical world, including our own body.	2.7, 2.9, 3.69, 4.6, 4.13, 4.15, 5.2, 8.19, 10.20, n.49, n.50, g.81
15	Four social practices (4 means of unification)	Giving (<i>dāna</i>), kindly speech (<i>peyyavajja</i>), beneficial action (<i>atthacariya</i>), and cooperative integration (<i>samānattatā</i>). (Note g.182 presents a slightly different interpretation of meaning).	1.40, 3.58, 3.78, 7.20, g.78, g.182

Table of Contents: Core Dhamma Meanings (Continued)

Vimalakīrti Sutra

No.	Dharma-doors and Terminology	Explanation	Reference Sections
16	Four bases of psychic powers	Desire (<i>chanda</i>) – Vigor (<i>viriya</i>) – Mind (<i>citta</i>) – Investigation (<i>vīmaṃsā</i>). (Constituting a part of the 37 Aids to Enlightenment).	4.30, n.133, g.94, g.323
17	Four foundations of mindfulness	Establishing right mindfulness on the body (<i>kāya</i>), sensations (<i>vedanā</i>), mind (<i>citta</i>), and dhammas (<i>dhamma</i>). (Constituting a part of the 37 Aids to Enlightenment).	4.30, g.96, g.323
18	Four Dhamma seals	All conditioned dhammas are impermanent (<i>anicca</i>), all contaminated dhammas are suffering (<i>dukkha</i>), all dhammas are non-self (<i>anattā</i>), and Nibbāna is ultimate peace (<i>santi</i>).	3.25, n.75, g.95
19	Four Reliances	Rely on the spirit, not on the letter; rely on the Dhamma, not on the person; rely on the definitive meaning, not on the interpretable meaning; and rely on gnosis, not on consciousness.	12.18, g.99
20	Four Immeasurables	Great Love (<i>mettā</i>) – Great Compassion (<i>karuṇā</i>) – Great Joy (<i>muditā</i>) – Great Impartiality (<i>upekkhā</i>). (These are the virtues of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas).	1.40, 4.30, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 6.5, 10.20, g.97
21	Four fearlessnesses	There are two sets of fearlessnesses: one for the Buddha and one for the Bodhisattvas. (See note g.87).	1.7, 2.10, g.87
22	Five hindrances	Consists of: sensual desire (<i>kāmachanda</i>), ill-will (<i>byāpāda</i>), sloth and torpor (<i>thīna-middha</i>), restlessness and worry (<i>uddhacca-kukkucca</i>), and doubt (<i>vicikicchā</i>). These are the five veils that obstruct the mind.	1.4, 3.79, 7.9, g.91
23	Five sensual pleasures	Consists of: visible objects (<i>rūpa</i>), sounds (<i>sadda</i>), odors (<i>gandha</i>), tastes (<i>rasa</i>), and tangible objects (<i>phoṭṭhabba</i>). These are the 5 objects of the 5 sensory organs.	7.14, g.90

Table of Contents: Core Dhamma Meanings (Continued)

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No.	Dharma-doors and Terminology	Explanation	Reference Sections
24	Five precepts	For lay Buddhists, these include: refraining from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, and consuming intoxicants.	1.43, g.29
25	Five spiritual faculties	Faith (<i>saddhā</i>) – Vigor (<i>viriya</i>) – Mindfulness (<i>sati</i>) – Concentration (<i>samādhi</i>) – Wisdom (<i>paññā</i>). (<i>Constituting a part of the 37 Aids to Enlightenment</i>).	3.38, 4.30, n.133, g.92, g.323
26	Five powers (<i>Five spiritual faculties</i>)	Faith (<i>saddhā</i>) – Vigor (<i>viriya</i>) – Mindfulness (<i>sati</i>) – Concentration (<i>samādhi</i>) – Wisdom (<i>paññā</i>). (<i>Constituting a part of the 37 Aids to Enlightenment</i>).	3.38, 3.30, n.133, g.93, g.323
27	Five deadly sins	The five gravest sins that lead to immediate karmic retribution in the Avīci hell: killing one's father, killing one's mother, killing an Arahāt, causing blood to flow from a Buddha's body, and causing a schism in the Sangha.	7.2, 7.13, n.6, g.89
28	Five eyes	The physical eye (<i>maṃsacakkhu</i>), the divine eye (<i>dibbacakkhu</i>), the wisdom-eye (<i>paññācakkhu</i>), the Dhamma-eye (<i>dharmacakkhu</i>), and the Buddha-eye (<i>buddhacakkhu</i>).	g.69, g.72
29	Five Dhamma aggregates	Morality (<i>sīla</i>) – Concentration (<i>samādhi</i>) – Wisdom (<i>paññā</i>) – Liberation (<i>vimutti</i>) – Gnosis of liberation (<i>vimuttitñāṇadassana</i>).	2.10, 10.5 and n.52
30	Five aggregates	Form (<i>rūpa</i>) – sensation (<i>vedanā</i>) – perception (<i>saññā</i>) – mental formations (<i>saṅkhāra</i>) – consciousness (<i>viññāṇa</i>). The evolutionary process of human mind-consciousness.	3.25, 3.69, 5.2, 8.18, 11.1, g.7, g.180

Table of Contents: Core Dhamma Meanings (Continued)

Vimalakīrti Sutra

No.	Dharma-doors and Terminology	Explanation	Reference Sections
31	Six Paramis (6 transcendences)	Consists of: Giving, Morality, Tolerance, Vigor, Meditation, and Wisdom. Among these, the first 3 Paramis generate merit, while the last 2 Paramis generate wisdom.	1.4, 1.38, 2.10, 3.61, 4.30, 6.28, 7.20, 10.21, 12.11, g.303
32	Six pairs of sense-bases and sense-objects	Consists of: eye – visible objects, ear – sounds, nose – odors, tongue – tastes, body – tangible objects, and mind – mental objects (<i>dhammas</i>).	2.9, 3.53, 3.69, 5.2, 7.9, 10.20, 11.1, g.81, g.285
33	Six recollections	Recollections of: the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Saṅgha, Morality (<i>sīla</i>), Liberality (<i>cāga</i>), and Devas. These are the six things to keep in mind.	3.78, 4.30, g.295
34	Six supernatural powers	Consists of: the divine eye, the divine ear, miraculous feats, recollection of past lives, knowledge of the minds of others, and the destruction of defilements.	3.58, 4.30, 5.9, 7.23, 10.22, 12.15, g.314
35	Seven factors of enlightenment	Mindfulness (<i>sati</i>), investigation of dhammas (<i>dhamma-vicaya</i>), vigor (<i>viriya</i>), joy (<i>pīti</i>), tranquility (<i>passaddhi</i>), concentration (<i>samādhi</i>), and impartiality (<i>upekkhā</i>). (Constituting a part of the 37 Aids to Enlightenment).	4.30, 7.21, 12.11, n.133, g.287, g.323
36	Seven abodes of consciousness	Mentions 7 classes of living beings from the desire realm (including humans and devas) up to the formless realm.	7.9, g.286
37	Eight liberations	Corresponding to the 8 meditative absorptions (<i>jhanas</i>).	3.13, 7.22, 9.1 and g.76

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No.	Dharma-doors and Terminology	Explanation	Reference Sections
33	Eight wrong paths	The opposite of the Noble Eightfold Path: wrong view, wrong thought, wrong speech, wrong action, wrong livelihood, wrong effort, wrong mindfulness, and wrong concentration.	3.13, 7.9, g.77
34	Eight adversities	Being born in hell, as a hungry ghost, as an animal, in the heaven of long life, in a border country, with defective faculties, holding false views, or being born in a time without a Buddha.	1.42, 3.17, 9.27
35	Eighth stage of Bodhisattvahood	The 8th position within the ten Bodhisattva stages (<i>dasa-bhūmi</i>). A Bodhisattva reaching this stage realizes the tolerance of unproduced dhammas, achieves non-regression from awakening, and it is also called the "Immovable Stage" (<i>Acalā</i>).	n.73, n.168
36	Nine causes of irritation	Nine types of thoughts or conceptualizations that give rise to afflictions.	7.9, g.196
37	Ten powers	There are two sets of the Ten Powers: one for the Buddha (<i>dasa-bala</i>) and one for the Bodhisattvas. (See note g.320).	1.7, 1.27, 2.10, 4.30, g.320
38	Ten Paramis (<i>Ten Transcendences</i>)	Consists of the 6 core Paramis plus 4 supplementary Paramis: Expedient Techniques (<i>upāya</i>), Vow (<i>paṇidhāna</i>), Power (<i>bala</i>), and Gnosis (<i>ñāṇa</i>).	7.9, n.38, g.321
39	Ten wholesome paths of action	Body: saving life, right love, giving. Speech: truth, gentle speech, reconciling speech, right discourse. Mind: giving, benevolence, right view.	1.37, 1.43, 2.10, 10.20, n.38, g.322
40	Ten unwholesome paths of action	Body: killing, sexual misconduct, stealing. Speech: lying, frivolous speech, malicious speech, harsh speech. Mind: covetousness, ill-will, false views.	7.9, n.38, g.321

Table of Contents: Core Dhamma Meanings (Continued)

Vimalakīrti Sutra

No.	Dharma-doors and Terminology	Explanation	Reference Sections
41	Twelve links of Dependent Origination	Ignorance (<i>avijjā</i>) – Mental formations (<i>saṅkhāra</i>) – Consciousness (<i>viññāṇa</i>) – Name and form (<i>nāmarūpa</i>) – Six sense-bases (<i>saḷāyatana</i>) – Contact (<i>phassa</i>) – Sensation (<i>vedanā</i>) – Craving (<i>taṇhā</i>) – Clinging (<i>upādāna</i>) – Existence (<i>bhava</i>) – Birth (<i>jāti</i>) – Aging and death (<i>jarāmaraṇa</i>). The cycle of samsara for un-enlightened living beings.	3.59, 6.23, 12.13, n.98, g.62, g.256, g.285
42	Eighteen uncommon qualities	There are two sets of the 18 uncommon qualities: one for the Buddha (<i>āveṇikadhamma</i>) and one for the Bodhisattvas. (See notes g.78 and g.79).	1.7, 2.10, 3.61, g.78 and g.79
43	Eighteen elements	Six pairs of sense-bases and sense-objects constitute 12 elements, which function as the components of experience; plus the third member added to each pair, which is the corresponding consciousness (<i>viññāṇa</i>), total 18 elements (<i>dhātuyo</i>).	g.81, g.334
44	Thirty-two major marks and eighty minor signs of excellence	The Bodhisattvas have practiced wholesome actions to fully accumulate both stores of merit and wisdom, which adorn them with the complete major marks and minor signs of excellence.	1.38, 2.3, 3.79, 4.23, 4.24, 4.30, 7.6, 9.6, 10.12, 10.20, g.24
45	Thirty-seven Aids to Enlightenment	Includes: 4 foundations of mindfulness, 4 right efforts, 4 bases of supernatural power, 5 spiritual faculties, 5 powers, 7 factors of enlightenment, and the Noble Eightfold Path; total 37 qualities.	1.41, 2.10, 3.2, 5.58, 3.69, 3.79, 7.19, 10.20, 12.11, g.8
46	Sixty-two false views	These are listed in the Brahmajāla Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya and include all other views apart from the non-self "right view."	4.10, 7.9, g.296

THE VIMALAKĪRTI NIRDEŚA SŪTRA

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Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammā-sambuddhassa

(Homage to the Buddha, the Blessed One, the Worthy One, the Fully Enlightened One)

Once again, XGM congratulates you, our Respected Readers, on your unremitting vigor. Therefore, after reading the full Sūtra combined with reflecting upon this Summary, readers need to select an appropriate Dharma-door that suits their own spiritual capacity to initiate their practice. For even if one reads ten thousand books, one must still walk ten thousand miles; no one can walk in your place on the path to enlightenment. Just as the Buddha's final instruction states:

"Therefore, Ānanda, be lamps unto yourselves, refuges unto yourselves, seeking no external refuge; with the Dhamma as your lamp, the Dhamma as your refuge, seeking no other refuge".

Recognizing the profound Dhamma meanings through the teachings of the great Bodhisattva Vimalakīrti is truly magnificent. However, if we do not take action to apply them to our practice, our understanding will merely be stored within the store-consciousness and turn into the obstacle of knowledge (jñeyāvaraṇa), hindering our own awakening. All dhammas need to be thoroughly realized and dissolved into voidness.

May all living beings fully attain ultimate Buddhahood.