

The world's earliest dated printed book was found in a cave 1907 by the archaeologist Sir Marc Aurel Stein in north-west China. It had been hidden near Dunhuang on the Silk Road, with thousands of manuscripts and printed items. It is the earliest example of block printing to bear a date: 'the 13th of the fourth moon of the ninth year of Xiantong' (i.e. 11 May, 868). A central text of Indian Buddhism, the Diamond Sutra was first translated from Sanskrit into Chinese in about AD 400. It belongs to the British Library and is exhibited in London.



凡欲讀經先念淨口業真言施

循唎 循唎 摩訶薩唎 循唎 逆婆訶

奉請除災金剛 奉請辟毒金剛 奉請寶德求金剛

奉請白淨水金剛 奉請金寶金剛 奉請空際尼金剛

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
比丘衆千二百五十人俱爾時世尊食時著衣持
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
衆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較阿耨多羅三藐三菩