

The King of Prayers



Samantabhadra
One of the eight close bodhisattava disciples of the Buddha
woodblock print

*The Noble King of Vows of the Conduct of
Samantabhadra*



From the teachings of Lama Zopa Rinpoche:

When someone dies, one should perform many prayers and practices to benefit that person in their next rebirth. If one does not have time to do more, at the very least one should recite *The King of Prayers*. This prayer is very powerful purification and a cause for enlightenment. If recited daily, it is a cause to be reborn in Amitabha's pure land, and one will never be reborn in the lower realms.



Colophon

This is the complete *Great King of Prayers, The Prayer of Ways Sublime*. It is also known as *The Noble King of Vows of the Conduct of Samantabhadra*.

This version is a compilation of various translations, as we found that some translations are missing a number of verses. Most verses have been taken from a translation by Glenn H. Mullin with Thepo Tulku. Verses 51–53, 62, and 63 (marked by **) have been adapted from a translation by Martin Willson found in appendix 1 of *Shakyamuni Pyla: Worshipping the Buddha*. London: Wisdom Publs., 1988 (out of print). The entire prayer has been very lightly edited by Ven. Constance Miller, FPMT Education Services, November 2000.



The King of Prayers

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སྐུ་པོ་བཞུགས་སོ། །



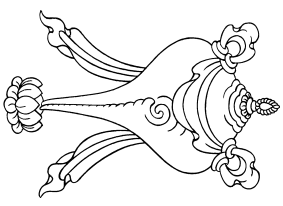
O lions amongst men,
Buddhas past, present, and future,
To as many of you as exist in the ten directions
I bow down with my body, speech, and mind.

On waves of strength of this king
Of prayers for exalted sublime ways,
With bodies as numerous as atoms of the world
I bow down to the buddhas pervading space.

On every atom is found a buddha
Sitting amongst countless buddha sons,
I look with eyes of faith to the victorious ones
Thus filling the entire dharmadhātu.

Of these with endless oceans of excellence
Endowed with an ocean of wondrous speech
I sing praises of the greatness of all buddhas,
A eulogy to those gone to bliss.

Garlands of flowers I offer them,
And beautiful sounds, supreme perfumes,
Butter lamps and sacred incense,
I offer to all the victorious ones.

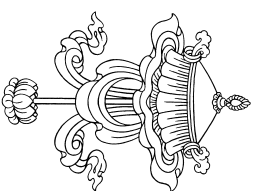




Excellent food, supreme fragrances,
 And a mound of mystic substances high as Mount Meru
 I arrange in a special formation
 And offer to those who have conquered themselves.
 And all peerless offerings I hold up
 In admiration of those gone to bliss:
 With the strength of faith in sublime ways
 I prostrate and make offerings to the conquerors.
 Long overpowered by attachment, aversion, and ignorance,
 Countless evils I have committed
 With acts of body, speech, and mind.
 Each and every one of these I now confess.
 In the perfections of the buddhas and bodhisattvas,
 In the arhats, training and beyond,
 And in the latent goodness of every living being,
 I lift up my heart and rejoice.
 O lights into the ten directions,
 Buddhas who have found the passionless stage of enlightenment,
 To all of you I direct this request:
 Turn the incomparable wheel of Dharma.
 O masters wishing to show parinirvana,
 Stay with us and teach, I pray,
 For as many eons as there are specks of dust,
 In order to bring goodness and joy to all beings.
 May any small merits that I may have amassed
 By thus prostrating, making offerings, confessing, rejoicing,
 And asking the buddhas to remain and teach the Dharma,
 Be dedicated now to supreme and perfect enlightenment.
 May my offerings be received by all past buddhas
 And by all those now abiding in the ten directions,
 And may all the buddhas who have not yet come
 Quickly perfect their minds and reach buddhahood, the state of
 supreme full awakening.



May all the buddha realms of the ten directions
 Remain forever vast and completely pure,
 May the world be completely filled with buddhas who have attained
 illumination under sacred trees,
 And may they all be surrounded by bodhisattvas.
 May all living beings in the ten directions
 Always abide in health and joy.
 May they live in accord with the way of Dharma
 And may their every wish become fulfilled.
 By my living in the ways of enlightenment
 May I remember my past lives in all my reincarnations,
 And in all cycles of death, migration, and rebirth
 May a sensitivity for truth be ever strong in me.
 By my following in the footsteps of the buddhas
 May I utterly perfect the sublime ways of the bodhisattvas,
 And may I practice the faultless, undegenerating, stainless,
 And pure ways of self-control.
 May I master all languages that exist, including those of
 The gods, yakshas, spirits, and varieties of men,
 As well as all forms of communication of living beings,
 That I may be able to show the Dharma in every way.
 Striving thus and in the transcending perfections
 May I never forget the bodhi mind,
 And may I totally cleanse from within my mindstream
 All negativities and mental veils.
 May I gain freedom from karma, delusion, and karmic maras
 To be able to live in the world unaffected by its stains
 Like an unstained lotus grows in the mud,
 And like the sun and moon shine without obstruction in the sky.
 For as long as there are buddha-fields and directions
 May I strive to quell the misery of the lower realms,
 May I place all beings only in happiness
 And bring them all only happiness and joy.





May I strive to complete the ways of enlightenment
 And to abide in ways harmonious with the world;
 May I expose to others the ways most sublime
 And myself abide in them throughout all future eons.

May my ways and the ways of a bodhisattva
 Always go together hand in hand.
 In body, speech, and mind
 May I attune to their sublime ways.

May I never be separated from the good friends
 Who reveal the path of the sublime ways
 And who wish only to benefit me;
 May I never disappoint them for even a moment.

May I constantly envision the perfect buddhas,
 The protectors who are surrounded by bodhisattvas,
 And in the future may I never weary
 Of devoting myself to them with all my strength.

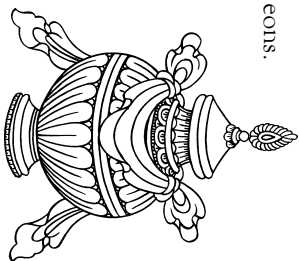
May I forever uphold the holy Dharma of the buddhas
 And illumine the sublime way of enlightenment;
 May I practice throughout all future ages
 The ways of deeds of the sublime path.

Circling in the various realms of existence
 May I amass inexhaustible goodness and wisdom,
 And may I become an unending treasure of qualities
 Such as methods, wisdom, samadhi, and the experience of a bodhisattva.

In every atom are buddha-fields numberless as atoms,
 Each field is filled with buddhas beyond conception,
 And each buddha is surrounded by myriad bodhisattvas:
 To all these dwellers in sublime ways I turn my attention.

Thus, in all atoms within the directions
 Abide within the space of a single hair
 An ocean of buddhas within an ocean of buddha-fields
 Performing enlightened activities for an ocean of eons.

Each buddha with his perfect speech releases
 An ocean of sounds with every word he says.



To satisfy the infinitely diverse tendencies of beings:
 Thus does the speech of a buddha constantly flow.

All these conquerors past, present, and future
 Continually turn the methods of Dharma wheels;
 With all the powers of my mind I listen
 For the inexhaustible sound of their words.

All future eons that could possibly be,
 Manifest within me in a single instant;
 And I myself in a fraction of a moment
 Enter into all these eons of the three times.

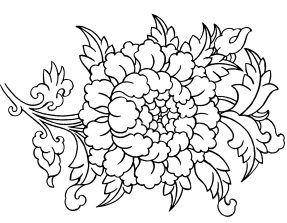
All past, present, and future lions amongst men
 I envision with the instantaneous wisdom
 And by the power of the bodhisattvas' examples
 I focus upon the objects of their experience.

I manifest buddha-fields past, present, and future
 Upon one single atom of existence,
 And then I transform every single atom
 Of existence into a buddha-field.

By this, when the future lights of the worlds
 Eventually gain bodhi, turn the Dharma wheels,
 And reveal the passing to nirvana's supreme peace,
 May I take rebirth in their very presence.

Then may I attain the ten powers:
 The power of instant magical emanation,
 The power which is a vehicle with every door,
 The power of excellent activity,
 The power of all-pervading love,
 The power of constantly positive energy,
 The power of passionless wisdom,
 The powers of knowledge, method, and samadhi,
 And the power of enlightenment itself.

May I purify the power of karma,
 May I crush the powers of delusion,
 May I render powerless the powerful maras,
 And may I perfect the powers of sublime ways.





May I purify an ocean of realms,
 May I liberate an ocean of sentient beings,
 May I see an ocean of truths,
 And may I realize an ocean of wisdom.
 May I perform an ocean of perfect deeds,
 May I perfect an ocean of prayers,
 May I revere an ocean of buddhas,
 And may I practice untriflingly for an ocean of eons.

Through my practice of the sublime bodhisattva ways
 May I gain the enlightenment of buddhahood
 And then fulfill the enlightened and sublime aspiration
 Of the buddhas past, present, and future.

In order to match the ways of the sage
 Called Samantabhadra, the always-sublime one,
 Chief amongst the awakened ones' sons,
 I now dedicate all virtues that I possess.

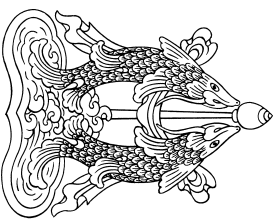
Just as the sublime sage Samantabhadra
 Dedicated all pure practices of body, speech, and mind
 To the attainment of a pure state and pure realms,
 So do I now dedicate the fruit of all my efforts.

In order to engage in all sublime virtues
 I offer the prayer of Manjushri;
 In the future may I never become faint
 In striving to perfect the exalted bodhisattvas' way.

May my deeds never reach a limit,
 May my qualities of excellence become boundless,
 And by abiding in immeasurable activity
 May I find buddhahood, the state of limitless manifestation.

Limitless is the extent of space,
 Limitless is the number of sentient beings,
 And limitless are the karma and delusions of beings—
 Such are the limits of my aspirations.

One may offer supreme ornaments of the buddha-fields
 Of the ten directions to the conquerors,



And also offer the highest joys of men and gods
 For eons numerous as atoms of the world.

But to read or hear this king of prayers
 With eyes looking toward supreme illumination
 And faith shining in one's heart for even an instant
 Gives birth to a far more superior merit.

Should anyone recite this aspiration of sublime ways
 They will pass beyond all states of sorrow,
 Rise above all inferior beings, and gain
 A vision of Amitabha, Buddha of Infinite Light.

Even in this very lifetime
 All sublime joys will be theirs;
 The experiences of the all-sublime Samantabhadra,
 Without obstructions, will quickly be theirs.

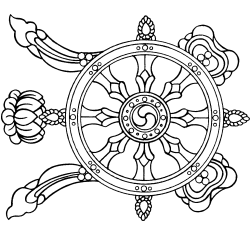
**Whoever by the power of ignorance
 Has committed the five heinous deeds,
 If he should recite this prayer of Samantabhadra,
 Will rapidly dissolve them without a trace.

**One will become endowed with wisdom knowledge,
 Beauty, enlightened marks, good lineage, and race.
 Hordes of maras and tirthikas dare not attack one
 Who is so honored throughout the three realms.

**Swiftly one reaches the royal bodhi tree
 To sit beneath it for the welfare of all beings.
 Swiftly one awakens to enlightenment, then turns the Dharma wheel,
 Overcoming the maras and their host.

Merely by giving voice to these aspirations
 Of the sublime ways of a bodhisattva,
 The effects can only be known by an omniscient buddha.
 Therefore, doubt not that it leads to enlightenment.

In order to follow the excellent examples set
 By the wisdom of the bodhisattva Manjushri
 And the always-sublime Samantabhadra,
 All virtues I dedicate to their peerless ideals.





All conquerors passed into the three times
Have praised as supreme this peerless dedication.
Therefore, I also surrender all roots of my activities
To the sublime goals of a bodhisatva.

When the moment of my death arrives,
May I remain free from the spiritual obscurations;
May I perceive the face of Amitabha
And transmute to Sukhavati, the pure land of joy.

Having arrived there, may I fulfill
All aims of this prayer of aspirations
And benefit the countless living beings
Residing throughout the ten directions.

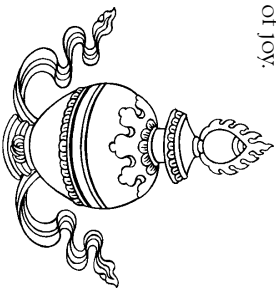
In the joyous mandala of Amitabha Buddha
May I be reborn from a beautiful lotus,
And may I there have the pleasure of gaining
A pure prophecy from Amitabha himself.

Having won this word of prophecy,
By the power of mind may I fill all directions
With many millions of mystical emanations
And bring limitless benefits to the world.

If by reciting this prayer of the sublime ways
I have amassed a tiny fragment of goodness,
May it work immediately to fulfill
All Dharmic hopes of living beings.

**Through the supreme merit I have gained
By my dedication of the sublime deeds of the bodhisatva,
May all living beings drowning in the flood of suffering
Be reborn in the immaculate realm of Amitabha Buddha.

**May this supreme unsurpassable king of vows
Benefit all infinite migrating beings.
This text adorned by Samantabhadra being accomplished,
May all streams of ill fortune be emptied.



Care of Dharma Books



Dharma books contain the teachings of the Buddha; they have the power to protect against lower rebirth and to point the way to liberation. Therefore, they should be treated with respect – kept off the floor and places where people sit or walk – and not stepped over. They should be covered or protected for transporting and kept in a high, clean place separate from more mundane materials. Other objects should not be placed on top of Dharma books and materials. Licking the fingers to turn pages is considered bad form as well as negative karma. If it is necessary to dispose of written Dharma materials, they should be burned rather than thrown in the trash. When burning Dharma texts, it is taught to first recite a prayer or mantra, such as OM, AH, HUM. Then, you can visualize the letters of the texts (to be burned) absorbing into the AH and the AH absorbing into you, transmitting their wisdom to your mindstream. After that, as you continue to recite OM, AH, HUM, you can burn the texts.

Lama Zopa Rinpoche has recommended that photos or images of holy beings, deities, or other holy objects not be burned. Instead, they should be placed with respect in a stupa, tree, or other high, clean place. It has been suggested to put them into a small structure like a bird house and then seal the house. In this way, the holy images do not end up on the ground.

Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition

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