

The following text has been translated after Venerable Kirti Tsenshap Rinpoche commented that two practices that would be beneficial for his health are the *King of Prayers* and Medicine Buddha meditation and recitation.

KING OF PRAYERS

By Jang Lung Pandita

Explanation of the meaning of the text of the prayer of the conduct of arya Samantabhadra, the entrance to the conduct of bodhisattvas.

I prostrate from my heart to Thubwang Dorjechang,
the supreme deity that acts as a teacher to me,
with special affection for those who proceed in this degenerate era,
the main ones among the two-legged beings abiding in a multitude of fields.

I prostrate with pure faith with all my three doors of activities
to the great Dorjechang sporting in the vajra
shining the beacon of all teachings,
having combined in one the wisdom and affection of limitless conquerors.

Even a single drop from the great ocean of the explanation of the supreme text of
Samantabhadra's Prayer,
that is the single path traveled by all conquerors and their children
creates a festival of joy when taken in with a handful of faith.

In this text here, the subject matter from all the many prayers that exist in the sutras of the
Bhagavan and the treatises of scholars and yogis in arya land (of India) and Tibet, is profound,
vast and complete. For this reason this is a prayer that is supreme compared to the others and
it is known as *The King of Prayers*.

There are four parts in the explanation of this text:

1. The meaning of the name
2. The translator's expression of homage
3. The need (for composing the text) and the relation (between its parts)
4. The meaning of the text.

The meaning of the name

In the (Sanskrit) language of perfect grammar the name of the text begins with the word *arya*. Translated into Tibetan, *arya* is *phagpa*, *bhadra* is *zangpo*, *tsarya* is *joepa*, *pranidhana* is *monlam* and *raja* is *gyelpo*. Therefore the title (in Tibetan) translates as *phagpa zangpo joepai monlam gyi gyelpo*. (In English it translates as *The King of Prayers of Arya Noble Conduct* or *The King of Prayers of Arya Samantabhadra's Conduct*). [2]

The splendid of conduct of bodhisattva Samantabhadra, that is the conduct of the children of the conquerors, thoroughly complete in every direction, is condensed in one aspect and composed as a prayer and since the subject matter is vast and superior compared to all other prayers, it is called *The King*.

The translator's expression of homage

I prostrate to Arya Youthful Manjushri.

The meaning is easy (and does not require any further explanation.)

The need for composing the text and the relation between its parts

The subject matter of this text is the conduct of bodhisattvas on the resolute (ground) and the ocean of qualities and conduct of bodhisattvas abiding on the (actual) grounds. When one prays while keeping these in the mind, the potency of the Great Vehicle lineage increases and one places sound imprints of all the stages of the bodhisattva paths. There is also the need for manifesting the benefits of making this prayer as they are described further down the text. As for the ultimate need, this is manifesting great enlightenment, which is the ultimate benefit. The ultimate need depends on the (general) need and since the (general) need depends on the subject matter, there is a relation. This presentation of the need for composing the text and the relation between its parts does not occur in Chinese commentaries and also in some Tibetan commentaries there is a different explanation. However, this previous explanation is fine.

The meaning of the text

There are four headings in this:

1. The stages of practices that amass (virtue) and purify (negativities) that are the causes actualizing the prayer
2. The actual practice of the stages of the bodhisattva prayer
3. The benefits of having paid attention to this prayer
4. The benefits of reciting the texts and so forth.

Accumulation and Purification

In the way that the Protector Serlingpa and Lord Atisha practiced, one cleans the room and arranges images representing the body, speech and mind (of the buddhas), one arranges beautifully whatever offerings one has been able to receive in an honest manner, one reflects on impermanence, the suffering of unfortunate migrations and the shortcomings of samsara. One also trains the mind by focusing on love and compassion observing all sentient beings and so forth. One must definitely engage in these preliminaries. Then one must certainly mix one's mental continuum with refuge and bodhichitta.

Those with sharp mental faculties, can think that the array of pure fields of buddhas and bodhisattvas existing in the multitude of fields of the ten directions is present in their room. However, beginners are advised to visualize the field of accumulation according to the *Lamrim* instructions, so that the focal object can appear easily. One generates strong devotion for the objects of refuge as well as strong love and compassion for all encircling sentient beings. And while one is influenced by these thoughts one offers the seven-limb prayer.

1. PROSTRATION

The branch of prostration has four subheadings:

1. Combined prostration of all three doors
2. Physical prostration
3. Mental prostration
4. Verbal prostration

Combined prostration of all three doors of activities

The root text teaches that with four lines:

**1) To all lions of men, the Sugathas of the three times
to as many as they exist in the worlds of the ten directions
I prostrate to all of them without exception
with body, speech and clear mind.**

On every worldly realm and every period of time there are buddhas abiding in the ten directions: there are those who came in the past, those who will come in the future and the lions of men who are coming now. [4] I focus on all the bhagavan buddhas and their children, however many and wherever they exist, and prostrate respectfully with clear body, speech and mind, sincerely and without just imitating others.

If there is inestimable merit in prostrating to simply to one buddha, there is no need to explain what happens when one prostrates by focusing in this way.

Physical prostration

The meaning is taught in one verse:

**2) Through the strength of prayer of noble conduct
all the conquerors appear directly to my mind
I bow deeply with as many bodies as the atoms of the fields
and fully prostrate to all conquerors.**

Moved by the strength of faith in the qualities of the noble conduct of the objects of refuge, I focus on the mental object that includes all conquerors in every direction and every period of time as if I could perceive them directly. Emanating as many replicas of my body as there are atoms in the various fields I bow touching the ground with my five limbs¹ and prostrate with utterly pure faith.

Mental prostration

The meaning is taught in one verse:

**3) On every atom (there) are buddhas as many as the atoms that exist
seated in the centre of the children of buddhas.
Thus I appreciate that all dharma spheres without exception
are filled completely with conquerors.**

The number of buddhas on every single atom is equal to the number of atoms that exist. [5] Each of these buddhas abides in the centre, surrounded by an entourage of bodhisattvas who are his or her children. In that manner, space is completely pervaded by the mind of conquerors abiding in equipoise in the dharma sphere of thusness, sporting with the gnosis of non-duality. Similarly, I appreciate that all realms of dharma spheres are filled with (conquerors) bodies and (their pure) fields. I have faith in these inconceivable qualities.

Verbal prostration

The meaning is taught in one verse:

¹ Five Limbs: two arms, two legs and the head.

**4) With every sound of an ocean of melodies
and an ocean of these inexhaustible praises
I pronounce the qualities of all conquerors
and praise all *sugatas*.**

Having manifested many tongues and palates that act as causes for the various types of melodiousness I praise the ocean-like, inexhaustible qualities of these (focal) objects. With sweet melodious sounds I thoroughly express the limitless qualities of all conquerors and their children and I praise all the *sugatas*.

2. OFFERINGS

This is presented in two subheadings:

1. Surpassable offerings
2. Unsurpassable offerings

Ordinary offerings

The meaning is taught in two verses:

**5) With immaculate flowers and immaculate garlands,
cymbals perfumed ointments, supreme parasols and well as
supreme butter lamps and immaculate incense,
I make offerings to these conquerors. [6]**

**6) By (arranging) immaculate garments and supreme aromas
and powdered incense as high as the supreme Mountain (Meru)
in a formation that is superior and supreme in every (aspect)
I make offerings to these conquerors.**

Flowers, garlands, cymbals, perfumed ointments, parasols, butter lamps, incense, garments and aromas are easy to understand. Each of these words is accompanied by the terms *immaculate* and *supreme*. These words indicate that I make inconceivable offerings. Taking the flowers as an example, this refers to every flower that exists in the human and god realm, and to the assembly of countless perfections of every aspect such as that of every color, shape, aroma and condition.

Powdered incense refers to sweet smelling incense in a powdered form, packaged as loose powder or as incense sticks, that is further arranged in alternating patters such as these of the colored sand particles of a mandala, vast and awesome, as high as supreme Mt. Meru. The arrangement of these offerings is particularly superior. Taking the flowers as an example, there are various arrangements for every type of flower. For example there are various shapes such as parasols made exclusively out of these flowers, as well as banners of victory, canopies, inestimable mansions, thrones, tassels and so forth, all radiating light. Having emanated various aspects such as these, the same (visualizations) should be applied to the rest of the offerings such the garlands and so forth.

Unsurpassable offerings

The meaning is taught in one verse:

7) Vast unsurpassable offerings

**I imagine for all conquerors
Through the strength of faith in the noble conduct [7]
I prostrate and offer to all conquerors.**

These are unsurpassable offerings of bodhisattvas with the extraordinary might of miracles and concentration. I manifest many things with noble characteristics that do not exist in this world, such as the noble vase, the wish-fulfilling tree, the wish-fulfilling jewel and so forth. Then with a mere thought, countless (other) useful things as well as countless praising melodies and the sound of immaculate dharma are emanated from these. These are vast since they completely fill all buddha fields. I also offer my own body, having emanated just as many replicas. The expression *through the strength of faith in the noble conduct* indicates the characteristic of the motivation. I prostrate and make offerings influenced by two types of faith, both very strong: faith through mental respect in the qualities of the objects receiving my offerings and faith vividly wishing to actualize their state.

3. CONFESSION OF NEGATIVITY

The meaning is taught in one verse:

**8) Whatever negativity exist and I have done
with my body, speech and similarly with my mind
due to the power of attachment, hatred and confusion
I confess all of them individually.**

Due to the three causes of attachment, hatred and confusion, I have committed negativities that are non-virtuous in nature, namely the natural and proscribed negativities, through the bases of the three doors of physical, verbal and mental activities. I have committed these, I have caused other to commit them, and I have rejoiced when those were done by others.

-I regret them and fearful that they might come to maturation I confess all of them.

-From now on I will restrain my mind.

-I am convinced that the objects of refuge have the power to protect me from the results of negativity.

-I comprehend the selflessness of the three rounds of negativity.

I confess these negative actions individually through the complete set of the four (aforementioned) strengths.

4. REJOICING

The meaning is taught in one verse:

**9) I rejoice in the virtue
of all conquerors of the ten directions, that of the children of the buddhas,
that of solitary realizers, learners and non-learners
and in the merit of all migrators.**

I meditate on the joy of rejoicing from the bottom of my heart, like a beggar who has found a treasure, in however merit exists among the five types of individuals. These are the buddhas abiding in the ten directions, bodhisattvas, solitary realizers, hearers who are learners and non-learners, and ordinary migrators.

5. URGING TO TURN THE WHEEL OF DHARMA

The meaning is taught in one verse:

**10) All those who are the beacons of the worlds in the ten directions,
those who have found buddhahood without attachment
in the stages of enlightenment, all those protectors
I urge to turn the unsurpassable wheel of dharma.**

All the bhagavan buddhas, the beacons dispelling the decline of the worlds in the fields of the ten directions, the enlightened buddhas [9] who have found knowledge without attachment and impediment, I urge them to quickly turn the unsurpassable wheel of vast and profound dharma, having manifested replicas of my body equal to their numbers.

6. PRAYING NOT TO PASS INTO PARANIRVANA

The meaning is taught in one verse:

**11) To those wishing to demonstrate *paranirvana*
I pray with my palms joined together:
for the benefit and happiness of all migrators
please remain for as many eons as there are atoms in the fields.**

Having manifested inestimable bodies, I join together the palms of my hands and make this requesting prayer: for the sake of the ultimate benefit of migrators and in order to generate happiness in the present, I request those wishing to demonstrate the mode of passing into *paranirvana* in the fields of the ten directions, to please remain without passing into *paranirvana* for as many eons as there are atoms in the fields.

7) DEDICATION

The meaning is taught in one verse:

**12) Whatever little virtue I have accumulated through
prostrating, making offerings, confessing,
rejoicing, urging and praying
I dedicate them all towards enlightenment.**

I share all roots of virtue represented by the six aforementioned branches, such as prostrating and so on, with all sentient beings and I dedicate them with the strong aspiration to become the cause for complete enlightenment. [10]

What stops me from actualizing the things I am praying for, as they are, further down in the text, is negativity and obscurations. And since the favorable factor purifying those and actualizing the prayer is merit, I need whatever acts as the causes for increasing this merit, whatever guarantees that it will never be exhausted and whatever actualizes the things I am praying for. The seven limb prayer acts in three ways: it purifies negativities and obscurations, it amasses the accumulation of merit, and increases the roots of virtue, while not allowing them to be exhausted. Therefore if the seven-limb prayer is done in the beginning, it amplifies the potency to actualize whatever one prays for further down the text.

The Actual Practices of the Bodhisattva Prayer

This has three subheadings:

1. Practicing the stages of the prayer on the ground of resolute conduct
2. Practicing the stages of the prayer on the ground of arya bodhisattvas
3. The measure of actualizing the results of the prayer.

1. Practicing the stages of the prayer on the ground of resolute conduct

This is presented in ten parts:

1. Training to purify intention
2. The path remembering bodhichitta
3. Unaffected application
4. Benefiting sentient beings
5. Putting on the armor
6. Aspiration to meet with bodhisattvas of equal fortune
7. Aspiration to please virtuous friends
8. Aspiration that the tathagatas become manifest
9. Aspiration to uphold the dharma
10. Aspiration to acquire inexhaustible treasures

Training to purify intention

This has three subheadings:

1. Aspiration to make offerings to the buddhas and that they perfectly complete their intentions
2. Intention to thoroughly purify buddha fields
3. Training in the special intention for happiness for all sentient beings.

Aspiration to make offerings to the buddhas and that they perfectly complete their intentions

The meaning is taught in one verse:

**13) May my offerings be made to the buddhas of the past and
to those abiding in every world of the ten directions
and may those who have not yet come, very quickly
complete the intention of enlightenment and gradually come as buddhas.**

Since the things one prays for, from this point onward are for the sake of benefiting ordinary beings, they are explained in conjunction with the stages of one's practices.

Having represented the root of virtue with prostrations and so forth, I offer my body, enjoyments and root of virtue of the three times to bhagavan buddhas who came in the past and to those who presently abide in the worldly realms of the ten directions. [11] And thinking that it has become a cloud of Samantabhadra's offering (noble in every aspect) and that it has pleased them, I pray that I may always be able to present such offerings.

As for the buddhas who have not yet come, I make offerings to those abiding in the path of the three vehicles who will become enlightened in the future so that the conditions that are conducive for their enlightenment will be completed. This is the aspiration that once they complete their intention, they will arrive to the ground of buddhahood following the stages as they are.

This is the way to dedicate the root of one's virtue and so forth for those learners and non-learners abiding on the path. As for the aspiration to be able to act in this way in future lives as well, this will also be explained further down in the text.

Intention to thoroughly purify buddha fields

The meaning is taught in one verse:

14) May however many fields exist in the ten directions become vast and completely pure and may they will be filled completely by conquerors who have proceeded to enlightenment under powerful bodhi trees and by children of the buddhas

Just like before, having offered my own body, enjoyments, roots of virtue (found) in the realms of worldly environments in the ten directions, may the faults of these environments such as the stones, pebbles, thorns, gravel, tree stumps, eroded ravines, cliff edges and so forth, become purified and may the nature of the ground base of these places turn into precious substances. May these places be endowed with vast endowments such as vegetation of wish-fulfilling trees, lakes whose waters bear the eight characteristics², mountains made of the seven precious substances³, inestimable mansions, [12] thrones made of precious substances and so forth and may they become similar to the array of Sukavati pure field. May they be completely filled with bodhisattavas, the children of the buddhas, as well as *sugata* conquerors sitting in front of powerful bodhi trees, in the centre (of these fields.) This offering is mainly for the sake of the environment.

Training in the special intention for happiness for all sentient beings
The meaning is taught in one verse:

15) May however many sentient beings exist in the ten directions be always without sickness, may they have happiness and may the dharma-related purposes and hopes of all migrators be fulfilled accordingly.

Just like before, having offered my own body and so forth, for the sake of sentient beings, however many are included in the six classes of the worldly realms of the ten directions, may they become free of sickness. There are many words in the sutras for samsaric suffering and all actions and afflictions that are its causes, such as sickness, suffering and pain. Therefore, once liberated from samsaric suffering and its causes, may they come to experience perfect physical and mental happiness. May the conditions that are conducive for actualizing the dharma-related purposes that all these migrating beings deeply desire, all be established according to their wishes and may they actualize their hope of obtaining the state of buddhahood.

This is the way to dedicate mainly for the sake of sentient beings that have not entered the path. What follows from this point onward is the way to train in the focal object of love and compassion as well as the way to train in love seeking to establish the benefit of others. [13]

The path remembering bodhichitta

This is presented in five subheadings:

1. Aspiration to remember previous births and to be ordained
2. Aspiration not to allow the deterioration of ethics
3. Aspiration to teach dharma in individual languages

² The eight characteristics of water: cool, light, tasty, smooth, clear, without odor, comfortable to the throat when drunk and not harming the stomach when drunk.

³ The seven precious substances: gold, silver, lapis lazuli, gems, iron, crystal, and red pearls.

4. Aspiration to soften one's mental continuum and to exert in the six perfections
5. Aspiration to abandon negativities and obscurations.

Aspiration to remember previous births and to be ordained

The meaning is taught in one verse:

**16) May I practice of conduct of enlightenment
may I remember (past) births in all migrations and
in all successive lives, at death, transference and birth
may I always be ordained.**

In order to be in a position to establish the purposes of others I must obtain the state of buddhahood. Therefore I will engage in the conduct that is the main cause of that, namely the noble conduct that generates and increases bodhichitta. And in whichever type of migration I am reborn as a god, human and so forth, I will obtain recollection of successive lives in all aspects, remembering the rebirth previous to that life, exactly as it was. Through this power, when I experience the continuum of rebirths as well as death, transference and rebirth in successive lives, I will remember the shortcomings of living as a householder and the benefits of living as ordained. Through that may I always be ordained.

Here, since mainly there are shortcomings in the livelihood of a householder who has not obtained a path, there are more obstacles for bodhichitta and therefore one aspires to be ordained in all successive lives up to that point. This is the first cause for remembering bodhichitta.

Aspiration not to allow the deterioration of ethics

The meaning is taught in four lines:

**17) May I train in the footsteps of all conquerors and
thoroughly complete the noble conduct
may I always practice non-deteriorated and faultless,
stainless, thoroughly pure moral conduct.**

[14] May I be able to practice the three types of ethics, by paying attention to the meaning of each in a non-deteriorated manner, without being affected by the faults of afflicted downfalls. They are the basis and foundation for training in the footsteps of all conquerors of the three times, while being influenced by aspiring and engaging bodhichitta in all successive lives, and the basis for thoroughly completing the conduct of bodhisattva Samantabhadra (that is noble in every aspect). This aspiration for totally pure vows of engaging bodhichitta is the second cause for remembering bodhichitta.

Aspiration to teach dharma in individual languages

The meaning is taught in four lines:

**18) May I teach the dharma in all languages
however many languages of migrators (exist, such as)
the languages of gods, nagas, yakshas,
vampires and humans.**

This is an aspiration to teach dharma in the individual languages of migrators such as the gods, nagas, yakshas, vampires, humans and so forth. This includes two (separate aspirations): to teach dharma in the language for whichever migration one is born into and to teach dharma in the individual language and dialect of each ethnic type included in the same group of “gods” or “humans”. And in brief, since this refers to teaching the dharma of the great vehicle, the dissemination of the great vehicle dharma is the third cause for remembering bodhichitta.

Aspiration to soften one’s mental continuum and to exert in the six perfections
The meaning is taught in two lines:

**19a) Through that and through exertion in the (six) perfections
may the mind of bodhichitta never be forgotten.**

This refers to softening one’s mental continuum and it is the aspiration to abide in the qualities of the (mahayana) lineage. Although the qualities of the great vehicle lineage are said to be many, it appears to be saying that one’s mental continuum is softened mainly with the greatness of love and affection. Regarding exerting in the (six) perfections, there is exertion in the sense that one puts effort into getting to know the unknown points of the conduct of the six perfections and into developing those that one already knows, without any deterioration. In brief, this aspiration to abide and train in the conduct of the great vehicle is the fourth cause for remembering bodhichitta.

The following half and four verses are the aspiration to establish conditions conducive for the generation of bodhichitta, from the point of view of antidotes.

Aspiration to abandon negativities and obscurations
The meaning is taught in two lines:

**19b) May whatever negativities that are obscurations (exist)
be thoroughly cleansed.**

In terms of negativities, there are negative downfalls such as the four black dharmas and so forth. In terms of obscurations, there are karmic obscurations such as abandoning the great vehicle and so forth and afflictive obscurations such as pride, wrong views and so forth. In brief, the aspiration to put effort into cleansing negativities and obscurations that obstruct the generation of the great vehicle path, in this context is the aspiration to abandon states that are unfavorable for the generation of bodhichitta.

Unaffected application
The meaning is taught in one verse:

**20) May I be liberated from the actions of the demons of karma and afflictions
and also in all worldly migrations may I
remain without attachment , like the lily is with the water and
like the sun and moon (that move) unhindered in the sky.**

The projecting causes for taking birth in samsara [16] are contaminated karma that is virtuous, non-virtuous, or unchanging, afflictions such as craving, taking and so forth, as well as craving such as craving the experience of the five sensual pleasures. Apart from those who benefit me,

there those who obstruct dharma and these are called *demons*. There are two aspirations in being reborn again and again in samsara without liberation from these three faults wherever I am born a worldly migration. In the first example, although the lotus lily is born from the water it is unaffected since it is not attached to water. In the second example, the sun and the moon move across the sky unhindered and never weary, in order to dispel the darkness of the world. Since this is in the context of the ground of resolute activities, although I am not able to completely abandon these three faults, these do not have the potency to create obstacles on my path when I am born in samsara. Merely this aspiration can be found in some arhants of the lesser vehicle, while here, apart from that, it is an aspiration to be reborn in samsara for the sake of others, without weariness.

Benefiting sentient beings

The meaning is taught in one verse:

**21) May I thoroughly pacify the suffering of lower migrations
in however many vast fields and directions (it exists).
May I place all migrators in many types of happiness
and may I practice that which is beneficial for all.**

I pray to thoroughly pacify all types of samsaric suffering that is the suffering of lower migrations as it is exemplified by the vastness of a field that reaches the limits of space. Further, without limiting this to one single field, I include however many fields exist in the ten directions. [17] Then I pray to place all migrating beings in the well-being of the fortunate migrations such as the excellence of gods and humans. And without stopping at that, I pray that I will be able to establish the ultimate benefit of all migrating beings by guiding them through the method of great enlightenment in accordance with what is appropriate with their individual fortune.

This is different from the previous verse. The previous verse is merely a prayer to be able to act in this way in other (future) rebirths. Here it is an aspiration to establish the benefit of sentient beings having taken rebirth in many places, in accordance with my wish, through the influence of prayer and compassion, with a purpose similar to the previous one. Since this is still in the context of resolute activities, it is different from the case of bodhisattvas who have reached (the actual) grounds. They can teach in many different types of existence in the world through having obtained power over (choosing) their rebirth.

Putting on the armor

The meaning is taught in one verse:

**22) May I thoroughly complete the conduct of enlightenment and
cause sentient beings to enter in accordance with their conduct,
may I teach them well (various) noble conducts and
may I practice them in all future eons.**

I will thoroughly complete the conduct of my two accumulations for the sake of obtaining unsurpassable enlightenment and I will cause sentient beings to enter the great enlightenment by teaching types of conduct in accordance with their individual capacities, interests and imprints. This is explained as teaching in detail the immaculate dharma of the great vehicle that is teaching the mode of conduct that is noble in every aspect (Samantabhadra's conduct).

Saying that I will thoroughly practice these three types of conduct in all future eons without becoming weary, is putting on the armor.

The terms *conduct of enlightenment* and *noble conduct* occur many times in this text. [18] As they are not explained as having the same meaning, each term is explained differently in every case. One should also know that they occur many times in the explanation of the sutras, when one relies on the texts of Indian scholars.

Aspiration to meet with bodhisattvas of equal fortune

The meaning is taught in one verse:

**23) May I always befriend
those whose conduct is similar to mine.
May through body, speech and also mind
pure conduct and prayer be practiced as one.**

I pray with the wish to always meet bodhisattvas with equal fortune of conduct with my own practice of the bodhisattva conduct, in all my births till I obtain the state of enlightenment. And once I have met them, I pray to mutually befriend, endear and be close to them with totally pure body, speech and mind. I pray to be able to practice the prayer and the conduct of bodhisattva Samantabhadra as one, through this salient point. This is the aspiration to meet with special companions who practice the path of the great vehicle.

Aspiration to please virtuous friends

The meaning is taught in one verse:

**24) May I always meet with those friends who
whish to benefit me and who
teach well the noble conduct;
may I never disappoint their minds.**

[19] Until I obtain enlightenment may I always meet those companions who wish to teach me the path of the great vehicle in order to benefit me out of compassion, the virtuous friends who teach me well the conduct of bodhisattva Samantabhadra (that is noble in every aspect), those who explain it, and those who offer me instructions on it. And once I have met them, with my thoughts actions may I always behave in a way that will only please them, without even for a moment displeasing and upsetting their minds. These words teach us that all qualities of the great vehicle depend on meeting with spiritual friends and on properly relying on them. This type of understanding is very important.

Aspiration that the tathagatas become manifest

The meaning is taught in one verse:

**25) May I always behold directly the conquerors,
protectors surrounded by the children of the buddha.
In all future eons may I never become impoverished
and may I also make vast offerings to them.**

May my eyes directly engage the array of the all the supreme emanation bodies of the conquerors of the ten directions, the protectors who are surrounded by the group of their own

children, the bodhisattvas. Once they become the object engaged by my sight, may I look at those conquerors with a faithful mind. In all future eons also, until I meet with the essence of enlightenment, may I be able to present them with actual offerings, with a never-wearing enthusiasm and may I also be able to please them with vast offerings that are not actual ones but are rather produced by the strength of concentration and the strength of miracles.

[20] Similar to the meaning of the previous verse, this is an important point teaching that the attainment of the type of concentration that is able to remember the stream of dharma, as well as being in a position to actually meet the supreme emanation bodies and receive instructions from them and so forth, are all the results of a similar cause of properly relying on the spiritual friend who teaches the path of the great vehicle.

Aspiration to fully uphold the immaculate dharma

The meaning is taught in one verse:

**26) May I uphold the immaculate dharma of the conquerors
and illuminate every aspect of the conduct of enlightenment
may I practice the noble conduct (now) and
may I practice it in all future eons.**

I pray to be able to uphold the dharma by being able to retain without forgetting the words and meaning of however many collections of dharma have been taught, such as the twelve divisions of the teachings of the conquerors and so forth. Further, may I be able to fully illuminate for others the transmitted dharma of the great vehicle through the conduct of highest enlightenment. This refers to teaching. May I generate the realized dharma of the great vehicle that is the conduct of bodhisattva Samantabhadra, noble in every aspect, in the mind streams of myself and others. May I be able to purify whatever is adverse to that, and to cleanse it, and may I be able to practice this in all future eons without becoming weary.

Thus the first line refers to upholding the words and meaning of dharma. The second line refers to teaching the realized dharma to others. The third line explains my practice from the point of view of what is to be adopted, in order to generate the realized dharma in the mind streams of myself and others.

The intention in the context of the path of preparation is that one does not forget the words and meaning of dharma and that the power to uphold the immaculate dharma of the conquerors is greatly enhanced by obtaining the power to retain dharma, meaning, patience, and mantra.

Aspiration to acquire inexhaustible treasures

The meaning is taught in one verse:

**27) May I find inexhaustible treasures and gnosis
when circling in all (types) of existence
may I become an inexhaustible treasury of all qualities,
method, wisdom, concentration and freedom.**

I pray to find an inexhaustible and limitless accumulation of merit and gnosis as I take birth and circle in all types of existence in the desire, form and formless realms. I also pray that I will be able to obtain a limitless and inexhaustible treasury of all qualities as I train in various means for taming sentient beings, in various types of wisdom abiding in thusness, in various types of concentration establishing the entry to qualities and in various types of illusory freedom. The intention is that during one countless great eon up to the level of supreme mundane dharma of

the path of preparation, I will complete the accumulations (related to these levels), I will extensively familiarize myself by repeatedly training in all aspects of the great vehicle path, I will perceptually comprehend thusness as soon as I obtain the great vehicle path of seeing and I will find the fully complete potency of obtaining the inconceivable door to miracles, the lion-type concentration and so forth.

2. Practicing the stages of the prayer on the ground of arya bodhisattvas

This is presented in six parts:

1. Entering the freedom of all bodhisattvas
2. Aspiration to establish the ten strengths of bodhisattvas
3. Establishing the antidotes
4. Bodhisattva deeds
5. Training in the footsteps of others
6. The meaning in brief

Entering the freedom of all bodhisattvas

This is presented in eight subheadings:

1. Aspiration to see the inhabitants of all pure realms on a single atom
2. Aspiration to see the pure fields
3. Engaging the speech of the buddha
4. Engaging the tathagatas' turning of the wheel of dharma
5. Engaging the eons
6. Beholding the tathagatas and engaging the object of their practice
7. Actually establishing buddha fields
8. Aspiration to go to the direction of the tathagatas

Aspiration to see the inhabitants of all pure realms existing in the ten directions on a single atom

[22] The meaning is taught in one verse:

**28) On every atom there are as many fields as the atoms that exist
the inconceivable buddhas in these fields
abide surrounded by children of the buddhas
I behold them and practice the conduct of enlightenment.**

On a single atom there are as many inconceivable buddhas as the number of atoms existing in the fields of the ten directions. They abide in the centre surrounded by their children, the bodhisattvas. In order to obtain their unsurpassable enlightenment I behold them with my gaze and practice the conduct.

Aspiration to see all pure fields in the ten directions

The meaning is taught in four lines:

**29) Thus also in the expanse of a single hair there is an ocean
of as many buddhas as they exist in the three times in every
direction without exception and there is an ocean of pure fields
and for an ocean of eons may I thoroughly engage in the practice of this
conduct.**

As it has just been explained, in all directions of all realms in every world, in the expanse of minute ground similar to the tip of a single hair, there is an ocean of arrayed buddha bodies whose number is equal to the number of the buddhas who have come in the measure of the three times, the past, present and future. I will thoroughly engage in the ocean of array of their pure fields and practice the conduct of enlightenment for an ocean of eons, with a never-wearing mind. [23] The pure fields and the manner of beholding them taught in the last couple of verses are different from what has been taught previously on verse 25 by the words “**may I always behold directly the conquerors surrounded....**” That was about the manner that bodhisattvas who are ordinary beings behold the array of supreme emanation bodies and their fields. Since this verse is about the manner that arya bodhisattvas behold the array of complete enjoyment bodies and their fields, the difference is substantial. Although in some Tibetan commentaries it is explained that this applies only to the presentation of pure fields, it is acceptable to apply it to the first ground and so forth, since the intention of the *Sutra of Ten Bhumis* is similar to the teachings of arya Nagarjuna and his spiritual children, (in teaching that) one sees many arrays of enjoyment bodies from the first ground and that also every moment one sees many greatneses. Nevertheless despite the fact that the focal object is only one array of a pure field of enjoyment bodies, the beholders are many arya bodhisattvas. But despite the fact that at the time of beholding there are differences between higher and lower realizations and for that reason it appears that there are many different ways of beholding, this is not the object of debate of a dialectician’s faulty reasoning.

Engaging the speech of the buddha

The meaning is taught in four lines:

**30) With a language of an ocean of qualities in every single word
all conquerors speak with the pure qualities of melodiousness.
This melodiousness is in accordance with the thoughts of all migrators.
May I always engage the speech of the buddha.**

Even a single word of the enjoyment body is endowed with the sixty types (of melodiousness) and so forth and their language is like an ocean. It engages each type of migrating being existing in the surrounding mandalas, with their intentions and mentalities. [24] It engages all of them through their own individual language. Through the purity of the aspects of speech of all conquerors, endowed with the quality of eliminating doubt and being understood in each individual language, the speech of the buddha fulfils the hopes and intentions of all migrating beings. May I engage in listening that melodious speech with faith and may I come to hear it. This refers to hearing as it is, even a single part of the melodious speech of the enjoyment body, expressed in such a manner of speaking that it is understood in the individual languages of limitless migrating beings. Again, since there are two types of hearing for arya bodhisattvas: hearing according to their own strength and hearing through the blessing of the buddha, there is no need to exclusively apply this to the ninth ground.

Engaging the tathagatas’ turning of the wheel of dharma

The meaning is taught in four lines:

**31) I will also thoroughly engage through the strength of my mind
in the inexhaustible melody of the speech of
all conquerors coming during the three times and
turning the wheel (of dharma) in (different) ways.**

All the conquerors, the bhagavan buddhas who come during the three times, fully turn the wheel of dharma in profound and extensive ways, in an uninterrupted stream. May I fully engage the meaning of the boundless and inexhaustible melody of their speech through the strength of my mind, with perfect understanding of its meaning by the strength of vast gnosis. The previous verse refers to merely hearing the language of inconceivably melodious speech. Since this verse refers to the need to see the unmixed characteristics of the meaning of the turnings of the wheel of dharma through gnosis, the difference is substantial. [25] Further this is a quality in the context of a high ground since teaching each subject to each migrating being with relevant melodiousness while eliminating doubt without mixing the aspects, is a realization of the momentary nature of the mind.

Engaging the eons

The meaning is taught in four lines:

**32) I can even enter in an instant
in all future eons
whatever is the measure of the eons in the three times
I practice entering (them) in a fraction of an instance.**

(I aspire) to engage in however vast enlightened activities of body and speech of buddhas will occur in all future eons. Here, I condense all these future events in a sole instance of the mind and engage them. Similarly, whatever is the measure of whatever exists in the three times, I thoroughly engage them through the strength of gnosis by condensing them in a fraction of an instance of the mind.

With these words one instance is blessed for eons and eons are blessed in an instance. This is the freedom of the bodhisattvas, the great beings who have obtained powers. The object they engage must be understood to be the enlightened activities of the buddhas.

Regarding this group of five verses, it is all about engaging the enlightened activities of the buddhas through the strength of gnosis. With the first two verses there is engagement of the secret holy body, with the third verse there is engagement of the secret holy speech and with the fourth verse there is engagement of the secret holy mind. Although I do not have the power to comprehend them as they are, they are illustrated by relying on the meaning of the dharma wheel. [26] In this fifth verse, there is engagement of the enlightened activities from the point of view of time.

Beholding the tathagatas and engaging the object of their practice

The meaning is taught in one verse:

**33) In an instance I behold
the lions of men coming in the three times and
I enter through the strength of illusory freedom
in the object of their practice.**

With my mind, I behold all at once, in an instance, the array of bodies of all lions among men who are coming over the three times, the bhagavan buddhas, together with the ocean of the vast assembly of their entourage and I always engage the object of their practice. The inconceivable gateway of the deeds of these buddhas arisen from the play of miraculous

concentration, blessings and illusory aspects I engage through the strength of manifesting illusory freedom having myself become an illusion. These words refer to engaging in the inconceivable deeds of the buddhas and the mode of engagement is that of great bodhisattvas who have obtained the powers of concentration and miracles.

Actually establishing buddha fields

The meaning is taught in four lines:

**34) Moreover I arrange the pure fields of the three times
I actually establish them on a single atom.
Thus I enter the array of the fields of conquerors
in all directions, without exception.**

The array of pure fields existing over the three times [27] is vast like an ocean. Through the might of miracles and concentration I actually establish however many pure fields exist on a single atom. And in a similar manner, I engage in establishing limitless arrays of pure fields of the buddhas in all directions, without exception.

What is taught on verse 3 with the words **on every atom** etc., is that I behold the pure fields of other buddhas. Here, since I establish an array of fields through the might of my own miracles and concentration, the difference is substantial. The actual preparation of pure fields is obtained from the eighth ground onwards. However one can start visualizing and taking them into mind from right now, and one can practice with the special way meditating on concentration, already from the first ground.

Aspiration to go towards the tathagatas

The meaning is taught in four lines:

**35) Moreover I proceed in front of all protectors,
the future beacons of the world
as they gradually become enlightened, the turn the wheel (of dharma)
and demonstrate the conclusion of *paranirvana's* intense peace.**

I proceed in front of all the limitless bhagavan buddhas who have not yet come, those who will be the beacons of the world until the end of future times, those who abide and are asserted (to exist) in the worldly realms of the ten directions, whoever many they are. Simultaneously and in their own time according to their process, some demonstrate the mode of enlightenment in their fields, some turn the wheel of dharma, while others demonstrate the conclusion of *paranirvana's* intense peace. In limitless fields, these teachers and protectors engage in limitless sets of the twelve deeds, demonstrated here by the fore mentioned three main activities. [28] I proceed in front of all of them instantaneously, through the strength of miracles. Having emanated a number of bodies equal to their number, I prostrate, offer service, present an ocean-like cloud of offerings and make request so that they turn the wheel of dharma and so forth. I arrive there in order to make offerings and pay homage.

With these words, I actually perform limitless prayers of offerings and homage to the tathagatas just as it occurs in the *Freedom of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra*.

Prayer to establish the ten strengths of bodhisattvas

The meaning is taught in two verses:

**36) The strength of all swift miracles,
the strength of the vehicle which is the gateway for all,
the strength of conduct of all qualities,
the strength of love which is all pervasive**

**37) The strength of merit which is virtuous in all aspects,
the strength of gnosis without formation,
the strengths of wisdom, method and concentration:
May I attain pure strength of enlightenment through these.**

Regarding the first line, those proceeding on the path from the seventh ground onward, they progress very fast and for the sake of making offerings and so forth to all buddha fields simultaneously, they arrive quickly through miracles. Also the might needed to mature and liberate sentient beings is (obtained) very quickly. Similarly, everything (is established) through the strength of swift miracles.

Regarding the second line, (in terms of vehicles) apart from the three greatly renowned vehicles, [29] there are also various ocean-like vehicles (defined) through the disposition, capacity, and interests of limitless sentient beings of infinite regions. The strength of vehicle places sentient beings from all these other vehicles, however many they exist, in the great vehicle.

Regarding the third, as it is said in the *Sutra of Perfectly Pure Object of Conduct*: “when a bodhisattva is inside a house, he remains endowed with natural awareness of all sentient beings, without being overpowered by the darkness of the house. One should generate such a type of bodhicitta”. In a similar way, the unlimited activities of the three doors and commotion are all for the sake of benefiting sentient beings. The fact that one is able to actually accomplish these through the strengths of miracles and concentration, is the strength of conduct of all qualities.

Regarding the fourth, this is the strength of love that pervades all worldly realms of the ten directions similar to the way of manifesting a cloud and causing a stream of rain to fall through the concentration of love for the inhabitants of the hot hells and in that way ensuring their wellbeing.

Regarding the fifth, this is the strength of merit, virtuous in all aspects, a boundless mass of merit gathered in an instance, outshining the merit of Brahma, Indra and so forth. Their merit can not compete even with (the merit taken to establish) a single pore in the skin (of these bodhisattvas).

Regarding the sixth, this is the strength of gnosis that enters without obstruction the moment by moment formation of the sciences of the training of bodhisattvas, various mundane treatises, as well as the sciences of arts, crafts and karma.

Regarding the seventh, this is the strength of wisdom which can enter and rise from equipoise on thusness, that is the state mode of abidance of dharmas, in an instance. It does that having halted the movement of other gross types of awareness and having reached the ultimate point of correct negation. [30]

Regarding the eighth, this is the strength of method that is skillful in inconceivable number of methods that mature sentient beings, that transforms even the grosser non-virtuous physical and verbal actions into a supreme path and that is able to generate even very gross types of mind of the desire realm as a path that is uncontaminated in nature.

Regarding the ninth, this is the strength of concentration that in each instance sends the mind from the limit of non-pacification to the limit of total pacification and boldly goes there. It has obtained mastery on the sky-treasure, the strainless, and other such types of concentration. Regarding the tenth, this is the strength of unsurpassable enlightenment (that is developed) by relying on the previous ones. It is the strength that swiftly actualizes the inconceivable qualities of a buddha in one's own mind stream.

I pray to correctly establish these ten strengths in my own mind stream. These are called *strengths* because when one obtains the higher grounds the potency of the ten qualities such as miracles and so forth, is gradually intensified to the point where they can not be challenged by their opposing states.

Establishing the antidotes

The meaning is taught in one verse:

**38) May I thoroughly purify the strength of actions and
utterly destroy the strength of afflictions
render the strength of demons powerless and
complete the strength of noble conduct.**

May the strength of contaminated actions subsumed in samsara, be thoroughly purified and become cleansed and may all afflictive obscurations that are the root and secondary afflictions and so forth be utterly destroyed. May the strength of the four demons⁴ such as the demon of the aggregates and so forth become powerless [31]. Through establishing the strength of an exceptional antidote that divorces unfavorable conditions of their potency, may I complete the strength of the conduct of bodhisattva Samantabhadra (that is noble in every aspect).

The complete abandonment of all four types of demons should be understood in the following manner: it is explained that when the Bhagavan buddha declared that he was enlightened he obtain the sign of irreversibility for the sake of the great vehicle and after that he overcame *Mara*. The other three types of demons are abandoned on a gross level when one obtains the eighth ground.

Bodhisattva deeds

The meaning is taught in two verses:

**39) I will purify an ocean of fields
liberate an ocean of sentient beings
see through an ocean of dharmas and
comprehend with an ocean of gnosis.**

**40) I will perform an ocean of pure conducts
complete an ocean of prayers
make offerings to an ocean of buddhas
for an ocean of eons, without becoming weary.**

The ocean conveys the meaning of something boundless and immeasurable. In the places where I will become enlightened I will totally purify an ocean of fields from the faults of their

⁴ The four types of demons are the demon of the aggregates, the demon of afflictions, the demon who is the lord of death and the demon personified as the son of a god, known as *Mara*.

environment and inhabitants as the realms of buddha fields, such as *Sukavati* and so forth. I will liberate an ocean of sentient beings from the fears of samsara and nirvana through the three types of miraculous activities. With the eyes of an ocean of gnosis I will individually see and comprehend all types of transmitted and realized dharmas. [32] I will actualize the deep realizations of this ocean of gnosis that simultaneously engages countless existing aspects. I will perform the totally pure ocean of bodhisattva conducts including the noble conduct of the accumulation of merit and the enlightened conduct of the accumulation of gnosis, without being defiled by stains. I will complete an ocean of bodhisattva prayers such as the *Ten Countless Great Aspirations*, countless times. I will always present an ocean of clouds of Samantabhadra's offerings to an ocean of buddhas in the ten directions. I will even perform these seven actions through the strength of the perfection of enthusiastic effort, for an ocean of eons without becoming weary. Further, these eight ocean-like actions will be completed in each moment.

This is mainly about activities that are performed when one obtains the tenth ground, (known as) *dharma cloud*, where one has fully completed the ten powers, ten strengths and so forth. However practices conforming with that already exist prior to the tenth ground. The prayers of arya grounds beyond that point are a special method for placing imprints and for going into practices. If from right now a beginner pays attention to the aspects of these activities of arya bodhisattvas when he or she recites the text of the prayer, and generates strong resolution, the path that is issued from making the prayer already exist. Therefore it is very important to strive on this point through many other, subtle and renowned, instructions without even a small part of fabrication.

Training in the footsteps of others

This is presented in two subheadings:

1. Training in the footsteps of tathagatas
2. Training in the footsteps of bodhisattvas

Training in the footsteps of tathagatas

The meaning is taught in one verse:

**41) All the conquerors of the three times
became enlightened through the noble conduct and
the specific prayers of the enlightened conduct:
I will complete all these without exception.**

However many conquerors come in the three times, they all make an ocean of specific prayers for the sake of obtaining unsurpassable enlightenment when they engage in (various types of) conduct. I will thoroughly complete all of these without exception, for the sake of obtaining the state of buddhahood actualizing enlightenment, through the strength of the prayer of Samantabhadra's conduct, starting right now.

With these words I am praying that myself alone will be able to completely actualize the prayers of all buddhas of the three times, without exception.

Training in the footsteps of bodhisattvas

The meaning is taught in three verses:

**42) The eldest of all conquerors' children
is called Samantabhadra.**

**In order to practice with a skill similar to his
I dedicate fully all this virtue.**

**43) To purify my body, speech and mind
to purify my conduct and to thoroughly purify fields
may I do a dedication that is similar to his
noble and skillful one.**

**44) In order to practice totally virtuous conduct
I will practice Manjushri's prayer and [34]
without becoming weary in future eons
I will complete their actions without exception.**

All the buddhas and their children of the ten directions they all agree that the name of the bodhisattva who was the eldest among the children of all conquerors, is Samantabhadra, Noble in Every Aspect. I fully dedicate all this virtue in order to train in the great wave of conduct similar to that great and skillful bodhisattva.

And how is it similar? It is similar in five ways, as my body, speech, mind, conduct and fields are totally pure. The purify of the body refers to appearing in a form according to the needs of those to be tamed, appearing in as many bodies as the buddha fields existing in each atom, appearing to fill all buddha fields with a single body, appearing to remain immovable in front of the feet of all buddhas and so forth. The purity of speech refers (to qualities such as) teaching all languages in a single mandala of melodious songs. The purity of mind refers to actualizing an ocean of conducts on each moment. The purity of conduct refers to purifying the conduct of concentration, absorption and (the six) perfections in their entirety, on each moment. The purify of fields refers to thoroughly purifying on each moment the great wave of riches of the environment and inhabitants of the buddha fields by relying on the previous four purities. This explanation comes from master Manjushrimitra.

In a similar way, I pray that I also may be able to do a noble and skillful dedication in accordance with the conduct of bodhisattva Samantabhadra, consistent with these five aspects. [35] For the sake of thoroughly engaging in this noble conduct that is deep and vast, virtuous in the beginning, middle and end, and beautiful in every way, I will do the prayer of arya Manjushri called the *Arya Manjushri, King of Space*.

For whoever long samsara exist without beginning or end, for that long I promise to establish an immeasurable benefit of all space-filling sentient beings and similar to the prayer, in accordance with the conduct, dedication and prayer of bodhisattvas Samantabhadra and Manjushri, I also make aspirational prayers. Again in order that these aspirations are not destroyed or reversed in the interim but so that they reach perfection, I will complete this conduct comprised of all these activities in all future eons without ever becoming weary, through intense and enthusiastic effort.

These words are a promise and a prayer and they teach explicitly that these two bodhisattvas are especially superior to all other bodhisattvas in terms of being skillful and in terms of the strength of the perfection of their wisdom.

The meaning in brief

The meaning is taught in one verse:

**45) May this conduct be without measure
may qualities not be restricted by any measure and**

**by abiding in this immeasurable conduct
may I set forth emanations.**

By assuming the responsibility of the complete great wave of all conducts of bodhisattvas as explained earlier, it becomes without measure. And since it can not be contained by any number, time-frame or example, it is an ocean and it limitless. Similarly also qualities [36] are immeasurable since one obtains the inconceivable qualities of the secret activities of body, speech and mind of bodhisattvas. In that way by abiding in such an immeasurable conduct I will actualize inestimable, pure emanations in the aspect of buddhas and bodhisattvas of the ten directions.

The measure of actualizing the results of the prayer

The meaning is taught in one verse

**46) Sentient beings are as limitless as
the expanse of space.
May my aspiration prayers be as limitless as
the limitless karma and affliction of them all.**

Sentient beings are not restricted by any limit, so for example, one can not say that there are just so many of them in this direction, or so many of them in that particular frame of time and so forth. In that sense they reach the expanse of space. Therefore the realm of their karma and the realm of their afflictions are similarly not restricted by any number or measure: they are only limitless. Just as the karma and afflictions of these sentient beings are limitless, in a similar way, may each one of all the aspiration prayers I have been doing, be only limitless. This is because I have made these prayers so that the karma and afflictions of each and every one of these space-filling sentient beings become exhausted and that they are all placed in the bliss of unsurpassable enlightenment.

The actual, main part of the prayer is completed here. This includes the ten great prayers that are an abbreviation of what appears in the sutra of the bodhisattvas prayer, the *Ten Countless Great Aspirations*, composed by the protector Shantideva.

These are:

1. Aspiration to make complete offerings to all buddhas.
2. Aspiration to completely uphold and protect all dharmas.
3. Aspiration to proceed with unobstructed bodies in front of all buddhas of the ten directions performing incredible deeds.
4. Aspiration to always perform all types of bodhisattva conduct.
5. Aspiration to personally bring all sentient beings to maturity.
6. Aspiration to establish countless mundane realms as places of my future enlightenment.
7. Aspiration to engage only in the type of conduct of countless purities such as filling countless numbers of actually established fields with supreme bodhisattvas from among the subjects of inconceivable conduct.
8. Aspiration that my thoughts and actions will be the same as those of all bodhisattvas.
9. Aspiration to establish countless types of conduct and practices, all of them being only for the supreme purpose.
10. Aspiration to actualize complete enlightenment through manifesting countless deeds for all sky-filling sentient beings.

The first one is presented in verse 13, with words such as: **May my offerings be made to the buddhas of the past** etc., as well as in verse 40, with words such as: **make offerings to an ocean of buddhas** and so forth.

The second is presented in verse 26, with words such as: **May I uphold the immaculate dharma of the conquerors** etc., and similarly in verse 39, with words such as these: **see through an ocean of dharmas**.

The third is presented in verse 35, with words such as these: **Moreover I proceed in front of all protectors, the future beacons of the world as they gradually become enlightened, the turn the wheel (of dharma) and demonstrate the conclusion of paranirvana's intense peace**.

The fourth is presented in verse 40, with words such as these: **I will perform an ocean of pure conducts**. [38]

The fifth is presented in verse 39, with words such as these: **liberate an ocean of sentient beings**.

The sixth is presented in verse 39 with words such as these: **I will purify an ocean of fields**.

The seventh is presented in verse 34 with words such as these: **Thus I enter the array of the fields of conquerors in all directions, without exception**.

The eighth is presented in verse 42 with words such as: **In order to practice with a skill similar to his** and so forth.

The ninth is presented in verse 36 with words such as: **the strength of conduct of all qualities** and so forth as well as in verse 41 with words such as: **All the conquerors of the three times** and so forth.

The tenth is presented in verse 46 with words such as: **Sentient beings are as limitless as the expanse of space** and so forth.

Having examined the meaning of the words in previous and later verses one should know in depth the way these verses relate to the bodhisattva's prayer.

The benefits of having paid attention to this prayer

This is presented in two subheadings:

1. Benefits to be seen in this life
2. Benefits to be seen in future lives

Benefits to be seen in this life

This is presented in four subheadings:

1. Maintaining extraordinary merit
2. Seeing the face of the tathagatas after abandoning lower migrations and negative companions
3. Obtaining equal fortune with bodhisattvas and acquiring gain
4. The benefit of having exhausted karmic obscurations.

Maintaining extraordinary merit

The meaning is taught in two verses:

**47) Compared to someone who offers the conquerors
limitless fields of the ten directions adorned with
precious substances
as well as the supreme happiness of gods and humans
for as many eons as there are atoms in the fields**

**48) Whoever upon hearing this king of dedications
yearns for supreme enlightenment
and generates faith even once
will gain immaculate, supreme merit, superior to them.**

Whoever [39] fills up all mundane realms of the ten directions without exception, decorating them with the seven types of precious substances and then offers them with a pure mind to the buddhas of the ten directions and whoever desires to generate supreme happiness derived from marvelous provisions similar to the possessions of gods and humans and makes these offerings for the period of limitless eons equal in number to the number of atoms in the fields, will amass an inconceivable amount of merit with such offerings. Then again whoever having heard this king of dedication of bodhisattva Samantabhadra, while rejoicing and recalling the meaning of the words, rejoicing in the cause and effect of unsurpassable, supreme enlightenment, and with a strong resolution fully generates faith, even once, will accumulate supreme, immaculate merit that surpasses by far the previously mentioned merit. Making offerings with vast substances, for a long period of time, to a limitless field, in the most respectful way, accumulates substantial merit, but the merit generated from familiarizing the mind, even once, with this prayer while remembering its meaning, it is said to be extremely vast.

Seeing the face of the tathagata after abandoning the lower migrations and evil companions

The meaning is taught in one verse:

**49) Whoever recites this prayer aspiring for noble conduct
abandons the lower migrations
abandons evil companions
and will soon behold the Buddha of Limitless Light.**

Whoever faithful individual recites this prayer of noble conduct by paying attention, doing a meditation on the main points, abandons the dharmas that are causes for taking rebirth in the lower migrations and having abandoned actions such as going against the advice of the spiritual friend, causing harm to an immaculate field (of merit) and so forth, abandons all negative migrations. Similarly, this individual completely abandons evil friends such as the negative friends who have no faith towards the three jewels and have wrong views, as well as the evil friends who cause others to turn away from the great vehicle and enter the lesser vehicle. Such an individual will soon behold directly the body of the Buddha of Limitless Light, adorned with marks and signs, in this life, before long. Not only will one put a long distance between oneself and the causes and conditions for lower migrations, namely evil karma and negative friends respectively, but also at the time of death one will behold the face of Buddha Amitabha and proceed to a pure field having destroyed the opportunity to produce results out of the evil karma that exists in one's own mind stream, accumulated over past lives, as the cause for lower migrations.

Obtaining equal fortune with bodhisattvas and acquiring gain

The meaning is taught in one verse:

**50) Will live happily having acquired many gains
things will go well in this present life
and before long
will be like Samantabhadra.**

Further such an individual will acquire many gains finding virtuous friends who enjoy the dharma of the great vehicle, and all conducive conditions such as friends, abodes, possessions and so forth will be gathered easily, on their own. Even unfavorable conditions such as a disease that might cause suffering for others, for that particular individual it will become an ally for one's bodhichitta and conduct and therefore will bring about physical and mental wellbeing. Through the blessing of the conquerors and their children in this present life, all matters in this and future lives will go well. Further this individual before long, in a short period of time will be like bodhisattva Samantabhadra, having mentality, conduct, qualities and merit similar to his. In brief, this verse teaches that in this very life such an individual will attract the favorable conditions of enjoying the dharma of the great vehicle while his or her thoughts and actions will be enhanced. Having being touched by the blessing of buddhas and bodhisattvas, all matters of this and future lives will be achieved smoothly and one will obtain the supreme realization of the grounds and paths, quickly.

The benefit of having exhausted karmic obscurations
The meaning is taught in one verse:

**51) The negativity of the five heinous crimes and
all those done under the power of ignorance
will soon be thoroughly cleansed
if they recite this (prayer of) noble conduct.**

The negativities of the five heinous crimes of killing one's father, killing one's mother, causing a schism in the sangha and drawing blood with malicious intent from a bodhisattva, [42] performed by someone out of ignorance, done in a state of confusion when the mind which can distinguish between what is to be practiced and what it to be abandoned is weak, even these can be purified quickly if one truly recites this very prayer of noble conduct, with resolution while remembering the meaning of the words. In this very life, all the obscurations of the heinous crimes can be totally purified without anything left behind to be experienced as their result. They completely vanish and become exhausted. The five heinous crimes are the heaviest among all non-virtuous actions, and if one has the potency to purify them in this very lifetime, there is no need to be concerned about others. This verse teaches the extraordinary might for purifying obscurations.

Benefits to be seen in future lives
This is presented in two subheadings
1. Subsuming causes
2. Subsuming results

Subsuming causes
The meaning is taught in one verse:

**52) Will be endowed with knowledge, form, signs,
lineage and radiance,
many demons and heretics will not overpower them
and all the three worlds will present them with offerings.**

The individuals who make the pledge of this prayer of noble conduct, also in future lives wherever they are born as gods or humans will have perfect gnosis entering without obstruction the understanding of different types of logic, as well as beautiful form with a well proportioned body and so forth, noble signs such as a broad head like an umbrella and so forth, high lineage such as the royal lineage, and perfect radiance such as golden radiance and so forth. [43] Even many demons who create obstacles on the path to enlightenment and heretics who abide in wrong paths and bad views will not be able to create obstacles on the path of those individuals. Not only will they not have the potency to do that but also they themselves will be overpowered by the strength of merit and gnosis. These individuals will become the objects receiving offerings and prostrations from migrating beings and gods of the three worlds.

Subsuming results

The meaning is taught in one verse:

**53) Will quickly proceed beneath the powerful bodhi tree
and sit there for the benefit of sentient beings
turn the wheel of an enlightened buddha
and tame the hordes of demons.**

The individuals who make the pledge of this prayer quickly perfect their progress on the path and therefore quickly proceed beneath a powerful bodhi tree and once there, they abide in the full lotus position for the sake of establishing the intention for unsurpassable enlightenment for all sentient beings. After taming the hordes of billions of demons through the vajra-like concentration, they manifest the state of the unsurpassable enlightenment of a buddha and fully turn the wheel of profound and vast dharma.

Teaching the benefits of reciting this text

This is presented in five subheadings:

1. Teaching them in brief
2. Dedication of the root of virtue of reciting the noble conduct, in the footsteps of bodhisattvas
3. Dedication in the footsteps of tathagatas
4. Abandoning obscurations and seizing a special, pure physical basis
5. Receiving a prophesy and establishing the purpose of sentient beings.

Teaching the benefits in brief

The meaning is taught in one verse:

**54) The maturation of those who keep, teach or read
this aspiration prayer of noble conduct [44]
is known by the buddhas:**

have no doubt about supreme enlightenment.

Whichever faithful individual recites merely one word of this text of the prayer of noble conduct and in this way keeps it, teaches it to others, reads the volume or persistently asks revealing questions, will obtain an inconceivable, perfect maturation transcending this world. This is an object of conduct known only by the buddhas. Even hearers and solitary realizers are not capable to realize the extent of that merit. One should not have any doubt or uncertainty about this method for unsurpassable enlightenment. Since the faith of conviction that has abandoned doubt regarding the speech of the buddha is the main cause for actualizing the benefits mentioned everywhere earlier and further down the text, this last line should be applied to every prior and later verse.

Dedication of the root of virtue of reciting the noble conduct, in the footsteps of bodhisattvas

The meaning is taught in one verse:

**55) However the brave Manjushri became wise
and in the way of Samantabhadra too
I also fully dedicate all this virtue
in order to train in the footsteps of them all.**

Often the first line appears as: “However Manjushri became omniscient and a hero...” Arya Manjushri holds the sword of wisdom [45] in the manner of totally cutting off the life force of the objects of ignorance and with his skill he is also a hero. Further his way of dedicating the root of virtue towards great enlightenment, influenced by the non- conceptual wisdom of the three rounds of that, is wise. Also, in a similar way, arya Samantabhadra is extremely skilful in dedicating virtue with unsurpassable methods. Further also there are other greatly skilful sons of the conquerors such as arya Avalokiteshvara, Sarvanirvirana-Viskambin and so forth. I will also train in their footsteps just as they all did, and will fully dedicate all this root of virtue from reciting the noble conduct and so forth.

Dedication in the footsteps of tathagatas

The meaning is taught in one verse:

**56) All the conquerors, the tathagatas of the three times
praise dedication as supreme
I also dedicate fully all this root of virtue
towards the noble conduct.**

All baghavan buddhas, the conquerors who come over the three times, have praised this type of dedication as supreme. This is the dedication where all roots of virtue are dedicated as causes to obtain the state of supreme enlightenment in order to increase the festival of joy and bring about the unsurpassable benefit for all sentient beings filling space, for as long as samsara remains. In a similar way, also I dedicate all root of virtue from reciting the prayer of noble conduct and so forth, as a cause for obtaining great enlightenment through the noble conduct. [46] The protector

Shantideva has said that these last two verses include all the previously mentioned prayers.

Abandoning obscurations and seizing a special, pure physical basis

The meaning is taught in two verses:

**57) When the time of my death comes
may all my obscurations clear away
may I behold the Buddha of Limitless Light directly and
go at once at the pure field of Sukhavati.**

**58) Having reached there may everything
I have prayed for, without exception, be actualized.
May I fulfill these aspirations without exception and
benefit sentient beings for as long as the world exists.**

By relying on these roots of virtue when the time of my death comes, when I actually have to let go of this physical basis, may I cast away the three types of obscurations. These are karmic obscurations such as the heinous crimes, afflictive obscurations such as wrong views and so forth, and maturing obscurations of not having the opportunity to see the truth about this physical basis. Having done that the actual object of my eyes at the time of death is the conqueror of Limitless Light, Buddha Amitabha surrounded by an entourage of his two elder sons and so forth. I see them well and due to their compassion and the might of my own prayers, immediately after death, I go without any delay at all to the pure field of Shukavati. Having reached there, through the power of the prayer, [47] I will assume a totally pure mental body, and after that I will be able to actualize the meaning of all the prayers mentioned before, such as the ten great prayers and so forth. Having actualized such things, may I be able to totally fulfill and complete the meaning of all these prayers without exception. Then, for as long as the world exists filled with sentient beings, I will establish their temporary and ultimate benefit.

Receiving a prophesy and establishing the purpose of sentient beings

The meaning is taught in two verses:

**59) Having been born from an exquisite and immaculate lotus
in the noble and joyous mandala of the conquerors
may I receive a prophesy, there
directly from the Buddha of Limitless Light.**

**60) Having receive a prophesy there
may I send billions of emanations
through the strength of the mind, in the ten directions
and bring great benefit to sentient beings.**

I will be born in the mandala of conqueror Amitabha, which is a well established mandala of the pure field and the entourage, experiencing the joy of the great wave of practice of the dharma of great vehicle, the two accumulations and the noble states established through the might of the prayer. I will appear miraculously, without

hindrance, inside the opening of an immaculate lotus, made of the seven precious substances and decorated with garlands of rays of variegated lights. Then the Buddha of Limitless Light, conqueror Amitabha himself will appear directly [48] and place his right hand on my head. He will prophesize my unsurpassable enlightenment by saying: “Child of the lineage, you will become enlightened in a mundane realm similar to this.” With this verse I pray that I may obtain such things. Having obtained the prophesy in such a way in that place, at that very moment may I miraculously emanate many billions of bodies. And may these bodies that have been emanated in such a manner through the strength of the intelligence of the perfection of method and wisdom, be able to establish the benefit of limitless sentient beings in the ten directions, setting them in supreme unsurpassable enlightenment, through various gateways of freedom.

These two verses do not appear in certain commentaries such as the commentary of master Dignaga and so forth.

61) Through whatever small amount of virtue I have gathered from reciting this aspiration prayer of noble conduct may all virtuous aspiration prayers of migrating beings be instantly accomplished.

62) Through whatever limitless immaculate merit is obtained through the dedication of the aspiration prayer of noble conduct may migrating beings sinking in the great river of suffering obtain the fine abode of (protector) Amitabha.

Although these verses do not appear in master Dignaga’s and other commentaries, they appear in the commentary of Shakyas Shenyen although they seem to be translated in a slightly different manner. The meaning of these verses is that I pray that through the might of whatever small amount of virtue I have amassed with my three doors by reciting this prayer of noble conduct, reciting the text, thinking about the meaning and so forth, all virtuous prayers of migrating beings in the ten directions, done in accordance with the white side, become instantly accomplished. I pray that the aims of their dharma-related wishes become established right now. Also through dedicating the root of virtues of reciting and thinking about this prayer of the conduct of bodhisattva Samantabhadra, towards unsurpassable enlightenment, I amass immaculate merit that is supreme compared to other mundane virtue and limitless. This accumulation of merit does not know exhaustion for as long as space remains. Through the might of that merit, may I be able to quickly free pitiful migrating beings who are sinking deeply in the great river of samsaric suffering through the power of karma and afflictions, degenerate and disadvantaged. May I quickly free them from that ocean of suffering and then cause them to obtain an ocean-like collection of qualities such as being born in the supreme field established through the prayer and the compassion of protector Amitabha.

The following verse is an addition of the translation of the great Vairochana and it does not exist in the actual sutra.

**63) May this king of prayers, the principle among supreme ones,
bring about the benefit of limitless sentient beings.
Having practiced this text adorned by Samantabhadra
may the streams of lower migrations without exception be emptied.**

This text of the king of prayer of noble conduct, was taught by the Bhagavan and therefore its blessing is greater and since it includes all the prayers of bodhisattvas, its meaning is greater. Therefore it is supreme among all other prayers. Through reciting, thinking, explaining it and so forth one brings benefit to all limitless migrating beings. Having fully and extensively practiced this text that is fully adorned by the conduct of bodhisattva Samantabhadra, may the streams of samsara represented by lower migrations will become totally empty and may the hopes of all sentient beings be quickly fulfilled through the happiness of unsurpassable enlightenment.

One should properly see the vast meaning and blessing of the prayer of noble conduct. The Bhagavan with his valid, non-deceptive speech has said that inconceivable benefit is issued from merely reciting the words of the text. Therefore if one strives to practice it while paying attention, it becomes a supreme method for obtaining a good physical basis and for making it meaningful.

Colophon

The single path traversing the ocean that all conquerors and their children have taken
Is the prayer of conduct, as it condenses a hundred thousand rivers.
I have come to meet with this king of prayers, the supreme of all texts,
Through the wealth of merit established over hundred of eons.
I have arranged this explanation according to my mental capacity
With the hope of placing the imprints of this conduct
And the wish to never be separated from this noble path.
I disclose all faults in front of the eyes of scholars.
I dedicate the whole accumulation of white virtue obtained through this
As the cause through which all ageing mother sentient beings
Will quickly completed the conduct of bodhisattva Samantabhadra
And obtaining these states.

All internal and external dharmas are seen as the reflection of the moon on water. Satisfying fortunate disciples by this excellent explanation issued from the path of stainless logic, Dorjechang Jankya Rolpe Dorje, whose kindness is incomparable and who is the crown ornament of holy beings who are holders of the teachings, composed the text called *Ornament Clarifying the Intention of the Noble in Every Aspect Explanation of the Prayer of Samantabhadra's Conduct*. Having set forward the introduction, the elaborate explanation and so forth, the meaning of the text was set forward with the thought to benefit those of inferior mind and was given to the wandering beggar Nawang who touches with the crown of his head the dust of Dorjechang's feet. The person recording this was getsul Nawang Tsultrim who is a man of letters, able to analyze things. This was the cause that brought about the spreading of this noble path in every direction, over time.

The Buddha, as well as Brahma and Indra with their perfectly sweet voices

have praised extensively the profound meaning of the King of Prayers saying that immeasurable happiness and benefit arise if one recites even one word of the text while paying attention to its meaning. Holding in my mind that method explained by the supreme guide Ngani who explained well the supreme meaning of the text, this highest ford of conduct of the ocean of the children of conquerors fulfilling the heart intention of the venerable lamas and spreading the teachings it is the undefeatable virtuous friend for the king, his retinue and the ministers. It purifies obscurations and assists in establishing the method of accumulating merit. By the virtue of the amazing focal object may I be born miraculously in a lotus, in the pure field of Sukhavati in the ocean of nectar of the speech and the direct vision of Buddha Amitabha and his retinue of eight sons. With this excellent experience may I gain empowerment in the treasure of limitless qualities such as confidence in *dharani*, higher perception and so forth and before long may I manifest unsurpassable enlightenment and satisfy all sentient beings who are as vast as the vastness of space.

This text called *The Ford of Conduct of The Children of the Buddha Explaining the Meaning of the Text of the Prayer of the Conduct of Samantabhadra* was composed over a period of fifteen years while acting as a servant and continuously training my mind in the *Lamrim*. I organized the previously rough material in a book thinking it might be beneficial. I took on the effort of producing many copies voluntarily, printing in both Tibetan and Mongolian languages, keeping the image of my lama in my mind. Mipham Shenyen acted as a secretary for three years. During that period I suffered due to severe conditions such as disputes and curses and was not able to repay the kindness. When the woodblocks were engraved, on the eighth day of the month of Sakadawa, during the Earth-Tiger year, the venerable Nawang Losang newly spread the banner of victory of the teachings. I, bikshu Nawang Pelden with virtuous aspiration and enthusiasm, tolerant and open-minded, committed this noble text to paper.

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Colophon

Translated from Tibetan to English by Voula Zarpani, October 2006.