

Liberation from Sorrow

PRAISES AND REQUESTS TO THE TWENTY-ONE TARAS

Introduction

Tara is a female Buddha, a manifestation of the ultimate wisdom of all the Buddhas. Each of the Twenty-one Taras is a manifestation of the principal Tara, Green Tara. Tara is also known as the 'Mother of the Conquerors'.

Tara is our common mother, our Holy Mother. When we are young we turn to our worldly mother for help. She protects us from immediate dangers, provides us with all our temporal needs, and guides and encourages us in our learning and personal development. In the same way, during our spiritual growth we need to turn to our Holy Mother, Tara, for refuge. She protects us from all internal and external dangers, she provides us with all the necessary conditions for our spiritual training, and she guides us and inspires us with her blessings as we progress along the spiritual path.

'Tara' means 'Rescuer'. She is so called because she rescues us from the eight outer fears (the fears of lions, elephants, fire, snakes, thieves, water, bondage and evil spirits), and from the eight inner fears (the fears of pride, ignorance, anger, jealousy, wrong views, attachment, miserliness and deluded doubts). Temporarily Tara saves us from the dangers of rebirth in the three lower realms, and ultimately she saves us from the dangers of samsara and solitary peace.

If we rely upon Mother Tara sincerely and with strong faith, she will protect us from all obstacles and fulfil all our wishes. Since she is a wisdom Buddha, and since she is a manifestation of the completely purified wind element, Tara is able to help us very quickly. If we recite the twenty-one verses of praise, we shall receive inconceivable benefits. These praises are very powerful because they are Sutra, the actual words of Buddha. It is good to recite them as often as we can.

Geshe Kelsang Gyatso
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Going for refuge

I and all sentient beings, until we achieve enlightenment,
Go for refuge to Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. (3x)

Generating bodhichitta

Through the virtues I collect by giving and other perfections,
May I become a Buddha for the benefit of all. (3x)

Generating the four immeasurables

May all sentient beings possess happiness and its causes,
May they be free from suffering and its causes,
May they never be separated from the happiness that is without
suffering,
May they abide in equanimity, without feeling close to some out
of attachment or distant from others out of hatred.

Inviting Arya Tara

From the supreme abode of Potala,
Born from the green letter TAM,
You who liberate migrators with the light of the letter TAM
O Tara, please come here together with your retinue.

Prostration

Gods and demi-gods bow their crowns
At your lotus feet;
O Liberator from all misfortune,
To you, Mother Tara, I prostrate.

Homage to the Twenty-one Taras

OM Homage to Venerable Arya Tara
Praising Tara by her life story
Homage to Tara, the Swift One, the Heroine,
Whose eyes are like a flash of lightning,
Who arose from the opening of a lotus,
Born from the tears of the Protector of the Three Worlds.

Praising Tara by the brightness and radiance of her face

Homage to you with a face like a hundred full moons in autumn
Gathered together into one;
Blazing with brilliant light
Like a thousand constellations.

Praising Tara by her colour, what she holds and her causes

Homage to you who are bluish gold,
Your hand perfectly adorned with a lotus flower;
Who arose from practising giving, moral discipline,
Patience, effort, concentration and wisdom.

Praising Tara by her being honoured by the Conquerors and the Bodhisattvas

Homage to you who surmount the Tathagatas' ushnishas,
Whose victorious actions are limitless;
Who are greatly honoured by the Sons of the Conquerors,
Who have attained every perfection.

Praising Tara by her subduing unfavourable conditions

Homage to you who with the letters TUTTARA and HUM
Fill the realms of desire, direction and space.
With the seven classes of evil spirits beneath your feet,
You are able to draw all beings to bliss.

Praising Tara by her being worshipped by the great worldly gods

Homage to you who are worshipped by Indra, Agni,
Brahma, Vayu and the other mighty gods;
And before whom the host of evil spirits,
Zombies, smell-eaters and givers of harm respectfully offer
praise.

Praising Tara by her destroying opponents

Homage to you who by saying TRÄ and PHAT
Completely destroy the obstructions of enemies.
You suppress with your right leg drawn in and your left
extended,
And blaze with a fierce and raging fire.

Praising Tara by her purifying demons and the two obstructions

Homage to TURE, extremely fearsome one,
Who completely destroy the chief of demons.
With the wrathful expression on your lotus face
You vanquish all foes without exception.

Praising Tara by the objects she holds in her right and left hands

Homage to you whose fingers perfectly adorn your heart
With the mudra symbolizing the Three Precious Jewels.
Adorned with a wheel of all directions
Whose radiant light outshines all.

Praising Tara by her crown ornament and the sound of her laughter

Homage to you whose very joyful and shining crown ornament
Radiates a garland of light;
Who, with your mirthful laughter of TUTTARE,

Subdue the demons and worldly gods.

Praising Tara by her accomplishing divine actions through the ten directional guardians

Homage to you who are able to summon
All the directional guardians and their retinues.
Frowning and shaking, with the letter HUM,
You rescue all from their misfortune.

Praising Tara by her crown ornament

Homage to you with a crescent moon adorning your crown,
And all your ornaments shining brightly;
With Amitabha in your top-knot
Eternally radiating light.

Praising Tara by her wrathful posture

Homage to you who dwell amidst a garland of flames
Like the fire at the end of the aeon.
With your right leg extended and left drawn in,
You destroy the hosts of obstructions of those who delight in the
Dharma Wheel.

Praising Tara by the light that radiates from the letter HUM

Homage to you who strike the ground with the palm of your
hand
And stamp it with your foot.
With a wrathful glance and letter HUM,
You subdue all seven levels.

Praising Tara by her Dharmakaya aspect

Homage to you who are happy, virtuous and peaceful,
Within the sphere of the peace of nirvana.
Fully endowed with SÖHA and OM,
You completely destroy heavy evil actions.

Praising Tara by her divine actions of peaceful and wrathful mantras

Homage to you who completely subdue the obstructions
Of those who delight in the Dharma Wheel
Rescuing with the array of the ten-letter mantra
And the knowledge-letter HUM.

Praising Tara by her divine actions of wrathfully shaking the three worlds

Homage to TURE, stamping your feet,
Born from the seed in the aspect of HUM,
Who cause Mount Meru, Mandhara and Vindhya,
And all the three worlds to shake.

Praising Tara by her divine actions of dispelling internal and external poisons

Homage to you who hold in your hand
A moon, the lake of the gods;
Saying TARA twice and the letter PHAT,
You completely dispel all poisons.

Praising Tara by her divine actions of dispelling conflicts and bad dreams

Homage to you who are honoured by the kings of the hosts of
gods,
And the gods and the kinnaras.
Through your joyful and shining pervasive armour
All conflicts and bad dreams are dispelled.

Praising Tara by her divine actions of dispelling diseases

Homage to you whose two eyes, like the sun or the full moon,
Radiate a pure, clear light.
Saying HARA twice and TUTTARA,

You dispel the most violent, infectious diseases.

Praising Tara by her divine actions of subduing evil spirits and zombies

Homage to you who have the perfect power of pacifying
Through your blessing of the three thatnesses;
Subduer of the hosts of evil spirits, zombies and givers of harm,
O TURE, most excellent and supreme!

This concludes the praise of the root mantra
And the twenty-one homages.

Benefits of recitation of this Sutra

The wise who recite this with strong faith
And perfect devotion to the Goddess,
In the evening and upon arising at dawn,
Will be granted complete fearlessness by remembering her.

Through the complete purification of all negativity
They will destroy all paths to the lower realms.
They will swiftly be granted empowerment
By the seventy million Conquerors.

They will attain greatness here
And advance to the ultimate state of Buddhahood.
Their violent and great poisons,
Both stable and moving

And even those that they have eaten or drunk,
Will be thoroughly eliminated by remembering her.
They will be able to prevent all suffering
That arises from spirits, diseases or poisons;

And be able to help others in the same way.

If they recite these seven times, six times a day,
Those who wish for a son will attain a son,
And those who wish for wealth will attain wealth.

All their wishes will be accomplished.
No more obstacles will arise for them,
And those that have already occurred
Will all be completely destroyed.

Prayer of seven limbs

To Venerable Arya Tara
And all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas
Residing in the ten directions and the three times,
I prostrate with sincere faith.

I offer you flowers, incense, lights,
Perfumes, foods, music and other offerings,
Both actually set out and mentally imagined;
Please accept these, O Assembly of Aryas.

I confess all negative actions,
The five heinous actions and the ten non-virtues,
That I have committed since beginningless time
Through my mind being overcome by delusions.

I rejoice in the merit of all the virtues
Collected throughout the three times
By Bodhisattvas, Solitary Conquerors,
Hearers, ordinary beings and others.

Please turn the Wheel of Dharma
Of the great, small and common vehicles,
According to the different wishes

And capacities of living beings.
For as long as samsara has not ceased,
Please do not pass beyond sorrow;
But with compassion care for all living beings
Drowning in the ocean of suffering.

May all the merit I have collected
Become the cause of enlightenment;
And before too long may I become
The Glorious Guide of migrators.

Offering the mandala

OM VAJRA BHUMI AH HUM
Great and powerful golden ground,
OM VAJRA REKHE AH HUM
At the edge the iron fence stands around the outer circle.
In the centre Mount Meru the king of mountains,
Around which are four continents:
In the east, Purvavideha, in the south, Jambudipa,
In the west, Aparagodaniya, in the north, Uttarakuru.
Each has two sub-continent:
Deha and Videha, Tsamara and Abatsamara,
Satha and Uttaramantrina, Kurava and Kaurava.
The mountain of jewels, the wish-granting tree,
The wish-granting cow, and the harvest unsown.
The precious wheel, the precious jewel,
The precious queen, the precious minister,
The precious elephant, the precious supreme horse,
The precious general, and the great treasure vase.
The goddess of beauty, the goddess of garlands,
The goddess of music, the goddess of dance,
The goddess of flowers, the goddess of incense,

The goddess of light, and the goddess of scent.
The sun and the moon, the precious umbrella,
The banner of victory in every direction.
In the centre all treasures of both gods and men,
An excellent collection with nothing left out.
I offer this to you my kind root Guru and lineage Gurus,
To all of you sacred and glorious Gurus,
And especially to you, assembly of Arya Taras, together with
your retinues.
Please accept with compassion for migrating beings,
And having accepted, out of your great compassion,
Please bestow your blessings on all sentient beings pervading
space.

The ground sprinkled with perfume and spread with flowers,
The Great Mountain, four lands, sun and moon,
Seen as a Buddha Land and offered thus,
May all beings enjoy such Pure Lands.

Thus, O Sublime object of refuge,
Please quickly protect all living beings
From fears such as sickness, spirits, obstacles,
Untimely death, bad dreams and ill omens.

IDAM GURU RATNA MANDALAKAM NIRYATAYAMI

Requesting fulfilment of wishes

O Venerable, Blessed, Compassionate Mother,
May I and all countless living beings
Quickly purify the two obstructions, complete the two collections,
And attain the state of complete Buddhahood.

Throughout all our lives before we reach Buddhahood,

May we attain the supreme happiness of humans and gods;
And so that we may accomplish the omniscient mind,
Please quickly pacify and eliminate all interferences,

Evil spirits, hindrances, epidemics and sickness,
As well as the various causes of untimely death,
Bad dreams, ill omens, the eight fears,
And all other forms of danger.

May all mundane and supramundane collections
of good fortune, happiness, goodness and excellence increase,
And may every beneficial purpose without exception
Be effortlessly and spontaneously accomplished.

May I strive in my practice of sacred Dharma and increase my
realizations,
May I always accomplish you and behold your sublime face;
And may my understanding of emptiness and the precious
bodhichitta
Increase and grow like a waxing moon.

May I be born from a sacred and most beautiful lotus
In the excellent, joyful mandala of the Conqueror;
And there may I accomplish the prophecy I receive
Directly from Conqueror Amitabha.

O Goddess upon whom I have relied in previous lives,
Embodiment of the divine actions of all the Buddhas of the three
times,
Bluish-green One with one face and two hands,
O Swift Pacifier, Mother holding an upala, may everything be
auspicious.

O Conqueror Mother Tara,

Whatever your body, retinue, life span and Pure Land,
And whatever your supreme and excellent name,
May I and all others attain only these.

Through the force of my making these praises and requests to
you,
Please pacify all sickness, poverty, misfortune, fighting and
quarrelling,
Throughout all directions where I and others live,
And cause the Dharma and all good fortune to flourish.

Mantra recitation

OM TARE TUTTARE TURE SÖHA (21x, 100x, etc.)

The meaning of this mantra is: with OM we are calling Arya Tara, TARE means permanent liberation from the suffering of lower rebirth, TUTTARE means permanent liberation from samsaric rebirth, TURE means the great liberation of full enlightenment, and SÖHA means please bestow. Together the meaning is: 'O Arya Tara, please bestow upon us permanent liberation from the suffering of lower rebirth, permanent liberation from the suffering of samsaric rebirth, and the great liberation of full enlightenment.'

Dedication

By this virtue may I quickly
Become Arya Tara,
And then lead every living being
Without exception to that ground.

Through the virtues I have collected
By worshipping the Blessed Mother,
May every living being without exception

Be born in the Pure Land of Bliss.

Auspicious verse

You, who having abandoned all bodily faults, possess the signs and indications,

Who having abandoned all verbal faults, possess a heavenly voice,

Who having abandoned all mental faults, realize all objects of knowledge;

O Lady of blessed, glorious renown, may there be the auspiciousness of your presence.

Prayers for the Virtuous Tradition

So that the tradition of Je Tsongkhapa,

The King of the Dharma, may flourish,

May all obstacles be pacified

And may all favourable conditions abound.

Through the two collections of myself and others

Gathered throughout the three times,

May the doctrine of Conqueror Losang Dragpa

Flourish for evermore.

The nine-line Migtsema prayer

Tsongkhapa, crown ornament of the scholars of the Land of the Snows,

You are Buddha Shakyamuni and Vajradhara, the source of all attainments,

Avalokiteshvara, the treasury of unobservable compassion,

Manjushri, the supreme stainless wisdom,

And Vajrapani, the destroyer of the hosts of maras.

O Venerable Guru-Buddha, synthesis of all Three Jewels,

With my body, speech and mind, respectfully I make requests:

Please grant your blessings to ripen and liberate myself and others,

And bestow the common and supreme attainments. (3x)

Colophon: This sadhana was compiled from traditional sources by Venerable Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, and translated under his compassionate guidance.