

The Divine Mantra

by

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Translated from the Thai by
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Introduction

I have written this book, *The Divine Mantra*, as a means of drawing to purity those who practice the Dhamma, because the chant given here brings benefits to those who memorize and recite it, inasmuch as it deals directly with matters that exist in each of us. Normally, once we are born, we all dwell in the six elements. These elements are brought together by our own actions, both good and evil. This being the case, these elements can give a great deal of trouble to those who dwell in them, like a child who can be a constant nuisance to its parents. Repeating this chant, then, is like nourishing and training a child to be healthy and mature; when the child is healthy and mature, its parents can rest and relax. Repeating this chant is like feeding a child and lulling it to sleep with a beautiful song: the *Buddhaguna*, the recitation of the Buddha's virtues.

The power of the *Buddhaguna* can exert influence on the elements in each individual, purifying them and investing them with power (*kaya-siddhi*), just as all material elements exert gravitational pull on one another every second. Or you might make a comparison with an electric wire: This chant is like an electric current, extending to wherever you direct it. It can even improve the environment, because it also includes the chant of the Kapila hermit, whose story runs as follows:

There was once a hermit who repeated this chant in a teak forest in India. As a result, the forest became a paradise. The trees took turns producing flowers and fruit throughout the year. The waters were crystal clean. Any diseased animal that happened to pass into the forest and drink the water would be completely cured of its illness. The grasses and vines were always fresh and green. Fierce animals that normally attacked and ate one another would, when entering the forest, live together in peace, as friends. Life was joyous for animals in this forest. The smell of dead animals never appeared because whenever an animal was about to die, it would have to go and die elsewhere. This forest is where the Buddha's ancestors, the Sakyan clan, later established their capital, *Kapilavatthu*, which still stands today within the borders of Nepal.

All of this was due to the sacred power of the chant repeated by the Kapila hermit. And this is how he did it: First, he faced the east and repeated the chant day and night for seven days; the second week, he faced north; the third week, south; and the fourth week, west. The fifth week, he looked down

toward the earth; the sixth week, he raised his hands and lifted his face to the sky, made his heart clear, and focused on the stars as the object of his meditation. The seventh week, he practiced breath meditation, keeping his breath in mind and letting it spread out in every direction through the power of a mind infused with the four Sublime Attitudes: good will, compassion, appreciation, and equanimity. Thus the chant was named the Divine Mantra.

When all of this was related to me while I was in India, I couldn't help thinking of the Buddha, who was pure by virtue of the peerless quality of his heart to the point where he was able to invest the elements in his body with power, making them more pure than any other elements in the world. His relics, for example, have appeared to those devoted to him and, I have heard, come and go on their own, which is very strange indeed.

All of these things are accomplished through the power of a pure heart. When the heart is pure, the elements also become pure as a result. When these elements exist in the world, they can have a refreshing influence on the environment — because all elements are interrelated. If we Buddhists set our minds on training ourselves in this direction, we can be a powerful influence to the good in proportion to our numbers. But if we don't train ourselves and instead run about filling ourselves with evil, our hearts are bound to become hot and disturbed. The flames in our hearts are bound to set the elements in our bodies on fire, and the heat from these inner fires is certain to spread in all directions throughout the world.

As this heat gathers and becomes greater, it will raise temperatures in the atmosphere around the world. The heat from the sun will become fiercer. Weather will become abnormal. The seasons, for example, will deviate from their normal course. And when this happens, human life will become more and more of a hardship. The ultimate stage of this evil will be the destruction of the world by the fires at the end of the aeon, which will consume the earth.

All this from our own thoughtlessness, letting nature by and large go ahead and follow this course — which shows that we're not very rational, because everything has a reason, everything comes from a cause. *The world we live in has the heart as its cause. If the heart is good, the world is sure to be good. If the heart is corrupt, the world is sure to be corrupt.*

Thus, in this book I have written down the way to train the heart so as to lead to our happiness and well-being in the coming future.

Part I: Worship

To pay respect to, and ask forgiveness of, the Buddha's relics, relics of the Noble Disciples, Buddha images, stupas, the Bodhi tree — all of which are objects that all Buddhists should respect, both inwardly and outwardly:

Araha.m sammaa-sambuddho bhagavaa.

The Blessed One is Worthy & Rightly Self-awakened.

Buddha.m bhagavanta.m abhivaademi.

I bow down before the Awakened, Blessed One.

(BOW DOWN)

Svaakkhaato bhagavataa dhammo.

The Dhamma is well-expounded by the Blessed One.

Dhamma.m namassaami.

I pay homage to the Dhamma.

(BOW DOWN)

Supa.tipanno bhagavato saavaka-sa"ngho.

The Sangha of the Blessed One's disciples has practiced well.

Sa"ngha.m namaami.

I pay respect to the Sangha.

(BOW DOWN)

Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammaa-sambuddhassa. (Three times.)

Homage to the Blessed One, the Worthy One, the Rightly Self-awakened One.

Ukaasa, dvaara-tayena kata.m, sabba.m apaaradha.m khamatu no (me) bhante.

We (I) ask your leave. We (I) ask you to forgive us (me) for whatever wrong we (I) have done with the three doors (of body, speech, & mind).

Vandaami bhante cetiya.m, sabba.m sabbattha .thaane, supati.t.thita.m saariira"nka-dhaatu.m, mahaa-bodhi.m buddha-ruupa.m, sakkaarattha.m.

I revere every stupa established in every place, every Relic of the Buddha's body, every Great Bodhi tree, every Buddha image that is an object of veneration.

Aha.m vandaami dhaatuyo, aha.m vandaami sabbaso, icceta.m ratana-taya.m, aha.m vandaami sabbadaa.

I revere the relics. I revere them everywhere. I always revere the Triple Gem.

Buddha-puujaa mahaa-tejavanto, Dhamma-puujaa mahappañño, Sa"ngha-puujaa mahaa-bhogaavaho.

Homage to the Buddha brings great glory. Homage to the Dhamma, great discernment. Homage to the Sa"ngha, great wealth.

Buddha.m Dhamma.m Sa"ngha.m, jivita.m yaava-nibbaana.m sara.na.m gacchaami.

I go to the Buddha, Dhamma, & Sa"ngha as my life & refuge until reaching Liberation.

Parisuddho aha.m bhante, parisuddhoti ma.m, Buddho Dhammo Sa"ngho dhaaretu.

I am morally pure. May the Buddha, Dhamma, & Sa"ngha recognize me as morally pure.

Sabbe satta sadaa hontu, averaa sukha-jivino.

May all living beings always live happily, free from enmity.

Kata.m puñña-phala.m mayha.m, sabbe bhaagii bhavantu te.

May all share in the blessings springing from the good I have done.

(BOW DOWN THREE TIMES)

Part II: Chanting

Investing the six elements with the Buddhagu.na

Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammaa-sambuddhassa. (Three times.)

Homage to the Blessed One, the Worthy One, the Rightly Self-awakened One.

Buddha.m aayu-va.d.dhana.m jivita.m yaava-nibbaana.m sara.na.m gacchaami.

I go to the Buddha as my life, vitality, & refuge until reaching Liberation.

Dhamma.m aayu-va.d.dhana.m jivita.m yaava-nibbaana.m sara.na.m gacchaami.

I go to the Dhamma as my life, vitality, & refuge until reaching Liberation.

Sa"ngha.m aayu-va.d.dhana.m jivita.m yaava-nibbaana.m sara.na.m gacchaami.

I go to the Sangha as my life, vitality, & refuge until reaching Liberation.

Dutiyampi buddha.m aayu-va.d.dhana.m jivita.m yaava-nibbaana.m sara.na.m gacchaami.

A second time, I go to the Buddha as my life, vitality, & refuge until reaching Liberation.

Dutiyampi dhamma.m aayu-va.d.dhana.m jivita.m yaava-nibbaana.m sara.na.m gacchaami.

A second time, I go to the Dhamma as my life, vitality, & refuge until reaching Liberation.

Dutiyampi sa"ngha.m aayu-va.d.dhana.m jiivita.m yaava-nibbaana.m sara.na.m gacchaami.

A second time, I go to the Sangha as my life, vitality, & refuge until reaching Liberation.

Tatiyampi buddha.m aayu-va.d.dhana.m jiivita.m yaava-nibbaana.m sara.na.m gacchaami.

A third time, I go to the Buddha as my life, vitality, & refuge until reaching Liberation.

Tatiyampi dhamma.m aayu-va.d.dhana.m jiivita.m yaava-nibbaana.m sara.na.m gacchaami.

A third time, I go to the Dhamma as my life, vitality, & refuge until reaching Liberation.

Tatiyampi sa"ngha.m aayu-va.d.dhana.m jiivita.m yaava-nibbaana.m sara.na.m gacchaami.

A third time, I go to the Sangha as my life, vitality, & refuge until reaching Liberation.

1. Wind element:

Vaayo ca buddha-gu.na.m araha.m buddho itipi so bhagavaa namaami'ha.m.

Wind has the virtue of the Buddha. The Awakened One is worthy & so he is Blessed: I pay him homage.

Araha.m sammaa-sambuddho,
Worthy is the Rightly Self-awakened One,

Vijjaa-cara.na-sampanno sugato lokaviduu,
consummate in knowledge & conduct, one who has gone the good way,
knower of the cosmos,

Anuttaro purisa-damma-saarathi satthaa deva-manussaana.m buddho bhagavaati.

unexcelled trainer of those who can be taught, teacher of human & divine beings; awakened; blessed.

(Think of the Buddha & his purity)

Vaayo ca dhammeta.m araha.m buddho itipi so bhagavaa namaami'ha.m.

Wind is that quality. The Awakened One is worthy & so he is Blessed: I pay him homage.

Svaakkhaato bhagavataa dhammo,
The Dhamma is well-expounded by the Blessed One,

Sandi.t.thiko akaaliko ehipassiko,

to be seen here & now, timeless, inviting all to come & see,

Opanayiko paccatta.m veditabbo viññuuhiiti.

pertinent, to be seen by the wise for themselves.

(Think of Ven. Sariputta & his wisdom)

Vaayo ca sa"nghaana.m araha.m buddho itipi so bhagavaa namaami'ha.m.

Wind is given over to the Sanghas. The Awakened One is worthy & so he is Blessed: I pay him homage.

Supa.tipanno bhagavato saavaka-sa"ngho,

The Sangha of the Blessed One's disciples who have practiced well,

Uju-pa.tipanno bhagavato saavaka-sa"ngho,

the Sangha of the Blessed One's disciples who have practiced straightforwardly,

Ñaaya-pa.tipanno bhagavato saavaka-sa"ngho,

the Sangha of the Blessed One's disciples who have practiced methodically,

Saamiici-pa.tipanno bhagavato saavaka-sa"ngho,

the Sangha of the Blessed One's disciples who have practiced masterfully,

Yadida.m cattaari purisa-yugaani a.t.tha purisa-puggalaa:

i.e., the four pairs — the eight types — of Noble Ones:

Esa bhagavato saavaka-sa"ngho —

That is the Sangha of the Blessed One's disciples —

AAhuneyyo paahuneyyo dakkhi.neyyo añjali-kara.niiyo,

worthy of gifts, worthy of hospitality, worthy of offerings, worthy of respect,

Anuttara.m puññakkhetta.m lokassaati.

the incomparable field of merit for the world.

(Think of Ven. Moggallana, his supernormal powers & his compassion.)

Dhaatu-parisuddhaanubhaavena, sabba-dukkhaa sabba-bhayaa sabba-roga vimuccanti.

Through the power of the purity of the element, they are released from all pain, all danger, all disease.

Iti uddham-adho tiriya.m sabbadhi sabbattataaya sabbaavanta.m loka.m, mettaa karu.naa muditaa upekkhaa sahatatena cetasaa, catuddisa.m pharitvaa viharati,

When one dwells spreading an awareness imbued with good will, compassion, appreciation, & equanimity in this way to the four

directions, above, below, around, in every way throughout the entire cosmos,

Sukha.m supati sukha.m pa.tibujjhati, na paapaka.m supina.m passati,
one sleeps with ease, wakes with ease, dreams no evil dreams.

Manussaana.m piyo hoti, amanussaana.m piyo hoti, devataa rakkhanti,
Naassa aggi vaa visa.m vaa sattha.m vaa kamati,
One is dear to human beings, dear to non-human beings, guarded by divine beings, and untouched by fire, poison, or weapons.

Tuva.ta.m citta.m samaadhiyati, mukha-va.n.no vippasiidati,
One's mind is quickly concentrated & one's complexion bright.

Asammu.lho kaala.m karoti,
Uttari.m appa.tivijjhanto brahma-lokuupago hoti.
One dies unconfused and — if penetrating no higher — is reborn in the Brahma worlds.

Iti uddham-adho tiriya.m avera.m averaa sukha-jiivino.
Thus feeling no enmity above, below, & all around, free from enmity, one lives happily.

Kata.m puñña-phala.m mayha.m sabbe bhaagii bhavantu te.
May all share in the blessings springing from the good I have done.

Bhavantu sabba-ma"ngala.m rakkhantu sabba-devataa.
May there be every blessing, may divine beings keep guard.

Sabba-buddhaanubhaavena sabba-dhammaanubhaavena sabba-sa"nghaanubhaavena sotthi hontu nirantara.m,
Through the power of all the Buddhas, Dhammas, & Sanghas may there be well-being without end.

Araha.m buddho itipi so bhagavaa namaami'ha.m.
The Awakened One is worthy & so he is Blessed: I pay him homage.

The chant for each of the remaining elements is identical with the chant for

the wind element, i.e., (1) the passage on the Buddha's virtues, (2) the passage on the Dhamma's virtues, (3) the passage on the Sangha's virtues, followed by the passage beginning, 'Dhaatu-parisuddhaanubhaavena....' Only the name of the element is changed:

2. Fire element:

Tejo ca buddha-gu.na.m...

Tejo ca dhammeta.m...

Tejo ca sa"ngahaana.m...

3. Water element:

AApo ca buddha-gu.na.m...

AApo ca dhammeta.m...

AApo ca sa"ngahaana.m...

4. Earth element:

Pa.thavii ca buddha-gu.na.m...

Pa.thavii ca dhammeta.m...

Pa.thavii ca sa"ngahaana.m...

5. Space element:

AAkaasaa ca buddha-gu.na.m...

AAkaasaa ca dhammeta.m...

AAkaasaa ca sa"ngahaana.m...

6. Consciousness element:

Viññaa.nañca buddha-gu.na.m...

Viññaa.nañca dhammeta.m...

Viññaa.nañca sa"ngahaana.m...

Once you have memorized Section 1, the remaining sections will be no problem, because they are virtually the same, differing only in the name of the element.

These six elements exist within each of us, so when you repeat the chant you should also think about the element you are chanting about: Wind — feelings of movement, such as the in-and-out breath; Fire — feelings of warmth; Water — liquid or cool feelings; Earth — feelings of heaviness or solidity; Space — feelings of emptiness; Consciousness — awareness of objects. If you think about these elements while you chant, the chant will be very beneficial.

The same chant can be used for the five aggregates, the twelve sense media, and the 32 parts of the body. The method of chanting is the same as with the six elements, simply substituting the names of the various aggregates, sense media, and parts of the body, as follows:

The Five Aggregates

1. *Ruupañca* — form, sense data
2. *Vedanaa ca* feelings of pleasure, pain, and indifference
3. *Sañña ca* names, labels, acts of perceiving and identifying
4. *Sa"nkhaaraa ca* — mental forces and processes
5. *Viñña.nañca* — consciousness of the six senses

The Twelve Sense Media

1. *Cakkhu ca* — eyes
2. *Sotañca* — ears
3. *Ghaanañca* — nose
4. *Jivhaa ca* — tongue
5. *Kaayo ca* — body
6. *Mano ca* — mind
7. *Ruupañca* — forms
8. *Saddo ca* — sounds
9. *Gandho ca* — smells
10. *Raso ca* — flavors
11. *Po.t.thabbaa ca* — tactile sensations
12. *Dhammaaramma.nañca* — ideas

The 32 Parts of the Body

1. *Kesaa ca* — Hair of the head
2. *Lomaa ca* — Hair of the body
3. *Nakhaa ca* — Nails
4. *Dantaa ca* — Teeth
5. *Taco ca* — Skin
6. *Ma.msañca* — Flesh
7. *Nhaaruu ca* — Tendons
8. *A.t.thii ca* — Bones
9. *A.t.thimiñjañca* — Bone marrow
10. *Vakkañca* — Spleen
11. *Hadayañca* — Heart
12. *Yakanañca* — Liver
13. *Kilomakañca* — Membranes
14. *Pihakañca* — Kidneys
15. *Pappaasañca* — Lungs
16. *Antañca* — Large intestines
17. *Antagu.nañca* — Small intestines
18. *Udariyañca* — Gorge

19. *Kariisañca* — Feces
20. *Matthalu"ngañca* — Brain
21. *Pittañca* — Gall
22. *Semhañca* — Phlegm
23. *Pubbo ca* — Lymph
24. *Lohitañca* — Blood
25. *Sedo ca* — Sweat
26. *Medo ca* — Fat
27. *Assu ca* — Tears
28. *Vasaa ca* — Oil
29. *Khe.lo ca* — Saliva
30. *Si"nghaa.nikaa ca* — Mucus
31. *Lasikaa ca* — Oil in the joints
32. *Muttañca* — Urine

Part III: Meditation

There are seven basic steps:

1. Start out with three or seven long in-and-out breaths, thinking *bud-* with the in-breath, and *dho* with the out. Keep the meditation syllable as long as the breath.
2. Be clearly aware of each in-and-out breath.
3. Observe the breath as it goes in and out, noticing whether it's comfortable or uncomfortable, broad or narrow, obstructed or free-flowing, fast or slow, short or long, warm or cool. If the breath doesn't feel comfortable, change it until it does. For instance, if breathing in long and out long is uncomfortable, try breathing in short and out short. As soon as you find that your breathing feels comfortable, let this comfortable breath sensation spread to the different parts of the body.

To begin with, inhale the breath sensation at the base of the skull and let it flow all the way down the spine. Then, if you are male, let it spread down your right leg to the sole of your foot, to the ends of your toes, and out into the air. Inhale the breath sensation at the base of the skull again and let it spread down your spine, down your left leg to the ends of your toes, and out into the air. (If you are female, begin with the left side first, because the male and female nervous systems are different.)

Then let the breath from the base of the skull spread down over both shoulders, past your elbows and wrists, to the tips of your fingers, and out into the air.

Let the breath at the base of the throat spread down the central nerve at the front of the body, past the lungs and liver, all the way down to the bladder and colon.

Inhale the breath right at the middle of the chest and let it go all the way down to your intestines.

Let all these breath sensations spread so that they connect and flow together, and you'll feel a greatly improved sense of well-being.

4. Learn four ways of adjusting the breath:

- 4.a. in long and out long,
- 4.b. in short and out short,
- 4.c. in short and out long,
- 4.d. in long and out short.

Breathe whichever way is most comfortable for you. Or, better yet, learn to breathe comfortably all four ways, because your physical condition and your breath are always changing.

5. Become acquainted with the bases or focal points for the mind — the resting spots of the breath — and center your awareness on whichever one seems most comfortable. A few of these bases are:

- 5.a. the tip of the nose,
- 5.b. the middle of the head,
- 5.c. the palate,
- 5.d. the base of the throat,
- 5.e. the breastbone (the tip of the sternum),
- 5.f. the navel (or a point just above it).

If you suffer from frequent headaches or nervous problems, don't focus on any spot above the base of the throat. And don't try to force the breath or put yourself into a trance. Breathe freely and naturally. Let the mind be at ease with the breath — but not to the point where it slips away.

6. Spread your awareness — your sense of conscious feeling — throughout the entire body.
7. Unite the breath sensations throughout the body, letting them flow together comfortably, keeping your awareness as broad as possible. Once you are fully aware of the aspects of the breath you already know in your body, you'll come to know all sorts of other aspects as well. The breath, by its nature, has many facets: breath sensations flowing in the nerves, those flowing around and about the nerves, those spreading from the nerves to every pore. Beneficial breath sensations and harmful ones are mixed together by their very nature.

To summarize: (a) for the sake of improving the energy already existing in every part of your body, so that you can contend with such things as disease and pain; and (b) for the sake of clarifying the knowledge already within you, so that it can become a basis for the skills leading to release and purity of heart — you should always bear these seven steps in mind, because they are absolutely basic to every aspect of breath meditation.

Worship, chanting, and meditation have to go hand-in-hand before they can truly purify the mind, in line with the basic principles of the Buddha's teachings:

Sabba-paapassa akara.na.m

Don't let anything corrupt or second-rate
find its way into your thoughts, words, or deeds.

Kusalassuupasampadaa

Develop skill in all of your actions.

What this means is that in worship we have acted skillfully with our deeds, in chanting we have acted skillfully with our words, and in meditation we have acted skillfully with our thoughts. Once this is the case, we will be able to reach the heart of the Buddha's teachings:

Sacitta-pariyodapana.m

Attain purity of heart.

Everything in the world comes about solely through the power of the heart. A corrupt heart will abuse this power. A well-trained heart can use this power to uplift others and to gain blessings beyond price.