The Aspirations of Samantabhadra

The Noble King of Aspirations to Sublime Conduct

Āryabhadracaryāprāṇidhānarāja

To youthful Mañjuśrī we bow!

Countless buddhas, lions of humankind,
Throughout all realms of time and space prevail.
To each of them with body, speech, and mind,
With hearts imbued with reverent love we bow.

By power of my bodhisattva prayer
The buddhas vividly appear to mind.
With bodies infinite as stars’ array—
To each of them devotedly we bow.

Within each atom which abounds in space
Abound infinite buddhas with their heirs.
With victors in their infinite array,
Infinite space, I see, is full this way.

To each and every one of them that are,
We sound their noble qualities, we roar,
With multitudes of melodies we sing
And praise all those to perfect bliss who’ve gone.

Here, gem-strung garlands and the freshest flowers,
Sweet melodies, divine balms I present,
Bright lights, fine incense, silken parasols—
I offer to the victor buddhas all.

Delightful scent, the finest apparel,
Heaps of fragrant powders, mountain high,
Arranged in pure, exalted symmetry—
I offer to the ones who’ve gone to bliss.
The Aspirations of Samantabhadra

Mind-offerings as peerless as they’re vast,
With pure intent to them I form; and with
Conviction in the bodhisattva way
To all infinite buddhas I here yield.

All of my degraded actions past
Committed with my body, speech, and mind,
Through the force of dullness, passion, hate—
I each confess to purify them all.

This joyful heart lifts at the merit of
The buddhas and their heirs throughout all space—
Self-buddhas, learners, those beyond the path,
And myriad wandering beings everywhere.

Beacons of the ten directions’ realms
Who, step by step, attained the buddha way
Of wakeful freedom, you, my guides, I pray
Please turn the matchless wheel of Dharma still.

I join my palms and reverently implore
The ones who’ll fade into nirvana’s peace—
For beings’ comfort and their final good,
Remain for endless eons yet to come.

The slightest virtue born from homage and
These offerings, confession, and this joy,
Requests to teach and stay—all these I pledge
To the full awakening of all.

Great offerings we give to buddhas past
And to those who in ten directions dwell;
And may those nascent buddhas yet to be
In stages fly to full awakening.

The teeming worlds which span all endless space
Become pure realms and vast, entirely filled
With all the victor buddhas and their heirs,
Assembled by the mighty Bodhi tree!

May every being throughout endless space
Be well and happy, may they come upon
The teaching that befits them best and may
Their every Dharma longing be fulfilled.
May I recall my former lives as I
Am training in the bodhisattva way
And as I stream through lives and deaths to come
Forever worldly life may I forgo.

The training of the victors I shall heed,
And thus perfect the conduct most supreme.
My conduct shall be stainless, fully pure.
Never waning, from fault ever free.

Devas, nāgas, yakshas—in their tongues,
And in the voice of demons and our own,
In any kind of language there may be,
The Dharma far and wide I shall proclaim.

Well tamed, I'll train in the perfections all,
Shall never once neglect the bodhi-mind,
And thoroughly, I'll cleanse myself of all
The stains and shades that veil this waking heart.

Freed from karma, klesha, force malign
Through every world and every realm I'll move,
Untouched like lotus on the water's wave,
As sun and moon course freely through the sky.

Throughout the reach and range of all the worlds
I'll pacify the lower realms' torment.
All beings I shall lead to greater joys
And strive to reap the farthest good for each.

Enlightened conduct—this I shall perfect,
Acting in accord with beings' ways,
Expounding well the conduct most sublime;
Evermore, this course I shall pursue.

Always may I find friends who pursue
Noble conduct which accords with mine.
In body and in speech and mind as well,
May all our wishes and our deeds align.

And always may I meet those noble friends,
The teachers of the conduct most sublime,
Who wish to be of help to me indeed—
Such friends I'll never cause to be dismayed.
May I always see before my eyes
The victors all encircled by their heirs.
Unflagging, for long eons yet to come,
I’ll worship them with offering and praise.

May I hold the buddhas’ sacred word,
Reveal awakened conduct perfectly,
In all good actions to perfection train,
And practice such in every age to come.

Wherever in samsara’s realms I wheel,
Infinite merit-wisdom I’ll accrue:
Samādhi, prajñā, freedoms, means, and thus,
Of qualities become a boundless trove.

Within each atom, boundless realms wherein
Abide infinite buddhas may I see,
Each circled by their bodhisattva heirs;
And thus, to noble conduct be inspired.

Infinite realms of buddhas everywhere,
Countless buddhas filling time and space,
Within a hair’s breadth may I see them all,
And be with them for tides of time to come.

Always with enlightened speech I shall
Resound a voice forever deep and vast,
Each sound marked by the perfect victors’ speech:
The songs I sing with beings’ hearts accord.

With sharpest acumen I shall employ
Those melodies of speech which know no bounds,
Such as the three-time victors do express
As perfectly the Dharma wheel they turn.

Moreover I shall enter in a flash
All future eons which are yet to come,
And in a fraction of an instant still
Pervade the ages of the three-fold time.

In one instant I shall clearly see
The lions, thus-gone, of the three-fold time,
And through the force by which illusion’s freed
Align forever with their action-field.
Upon each atom may I manifest
The three-times’ buddha fields in full array,
Before me seen, extending everywhere.
Then enter each of these awakened realms.

When guiding lights of this world yet to come
Display the stages of the ‘wakening path,
And turn the wheel, and enter perfect peace—
Near these protectors may I ever be.

By power of forever wondrous speed,
By power of the path’s ten thousand doors,
By power of good conduct well replete,
By flow and force of all-embracing love,

By power of all virtues’ perfect good,
By power of awakened wisdom freed,
By power of samādhi, wisdom, means,
All powers of awak’ning be fulfilled.

Karma’s power I shall purify,
Afflictions’ power shall obliterate,
Mara’s power I shall pacify,
Perfect the force of noble conduct thus.

An ocean’s depth of worlds I’ll purify,
An ocean’s depth of beings liberate,
An ocean’s depth of Dharma clearly see,
A sea of pristine wisdom realize.

An ocean’s depth of deeds I’ll purify,
Fulfill an ocean’s depth of wishing prayers,
An ocean’s depth of buddhas worship and
Unflagging practice through the tides of time.

The thus-gone victors of the three-fold time,
Their aspirations for awakened deeds;
The same I shall perfect the instant I’ve
Awakened through the conduct most sublime.

The elder son amongst the victors’ heirs
Is called Samantabhadra, Perfect Good.
That I may emulate his skillful ways,
I dedicate completely these good deeds.
With pure intent of body, speech, and mind,
Pure in conduct, pure in buddha-realm,
The Skilled One’s dedication is supreme—
May my ways be equal to his own.

Pure, exalted conduct I’ll display,
Pursuing youthful Mañju’s wishing prayers.
Unflagging, then, for endless time to come
I shall perfect each of his noble aims.

Boundless shall my noble actions be,
Boundless qualities I shall perfect,
Boundless in my waves of wisdom-deeds
May I emanate unnumbered forms.

Infinite are the reachless depths of space,
Numberless the beings that there dwell,
Endless all their karma and their blights—
May my aspirations thus extend.

One may well offer to the victors all,
Throughout the endless reach of time and space,
Infinite pure lands heaped with jewels, then more:
The highest joys of gods and humankind.

But if this mighty King of Prayers is heard
By those who then long for awakening,
And merely once give rise to yearning faith,
The merit garnered shall be greater still.

Of evil destinies shall they be rid,
Those who aspire to conduct most sublime,
And of malign companions they’ll be freed,
And soon behold the Buddha Boundless Light.

Whatever needs they have are met with ease,
This very life with fortune shall abound,
And swiftly they shall match the measure of
Samantabhadra, Universal Good.

The heinous five and every evil deed,
And all the stains that ignorance incurs,
Will quickly and completely be well-cleansed
For those who voice aloud this noble prayer.
Awareness and the signs belong to them,  
Of noble family born and radiant,  
Unstirred by māras and misguided kind,  
At their feet the threefold world shall bow.

The mighty Bodhi tree they’ll swiftly reach  
To take their seat there for the sake of all,  
Awakened they shall turn the Dharma wheel,  
And tame the māras and their evil hordes.

By reading, holding, teaching these true words,  
The fully-ripened fruit of this great prayer  
To the buddhas solely it is known.  
Take heart and trust in buddhahood supreme!

As Mañju, the wise hero, understands,  
And as Samantabhadra knows as well,  
As such their noble ways I’ll emulate  
And dedicate my virtues to this end.

All victor buddhas celebrate and praise  
This dedication as foremost of all.  
All roots of goodness I thus pledge and yield  
Completely to this conduct most sublime.

As my final breath at last expires,  
May all veils dissolve so that I see  
Before me Amitābha, Boundless Light,  
And pass to his pure realm of utter bliss.

There, I shall perfect and realize  
All I’ve here aspired for and have prayed,  
Fulfilling these grand wishes for the sake  
Of every world so far as each endures.

In that delightful buddha mandala,  
From the exquisite lotus blossom born,  
I shall receive from Boundless Light himself  
The telling of my buddhahood to be.

Once in this land, such having been foretold,  
Countless magic forms I shall send forth,  
By power of the mind, to every realm,  
Thus benefiting beings evermore.
By the slightest virtue I’ve here gained,
Reciting well the Conduct Most Sublime,
May all beings’ wholesome aims and prayers
Completely and at once all be fulfilled.

By the boundless merit most sublime
Gained by dedicating in this way,
May those who flounder in the floods of pain
Reach Buddha Boundless Light’s exalted realm.

And so, may I attain the highest aim,
Thereby benefiting beings all.
May Samantabhadra’s words come true
And from the woeful realms may all be free.

Thus ends the Noble King of Aspirations to Sublime Conduct.


Debut performance on October 20, 2022 (25th day of the 8th month) at Dzongsar Khyentse Chokyi Lodro Institute, Chauntra, HP, India, on the auspicious occasion of the transmission of the Compendium of Sādhanas by Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche. Melody by Christian Bernert and musical arrangement by Jamie Creek.

Any merit born from this we dedicate so that all beings may be blessed with inspiration to pursue awakened paths,
that the flowers of true Dharma may blossom in their hearts,
and that all genuine upholders of the teachings may enjoy perfect conditions to benefit the worlds of beings in myriad skillful ways.
May the winds of Dharma bless the jeweled sailboats of the arts, so that these too be sacred vehicles that deliver beings to the haven of true freedom and sublime wisdom.