

The Dhāraṇī of Lapis Light for Generating the Power of the Tathāgata’s Samādhi (The Concise Medicine Buddha Sūtra)

A Text from the Tibetan Buddhist Canon (Kangyur); Translated by Erick Tsiknopoulos

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HOMAGE TO ALL BUDDHAS AND BODHISATTVAS!

Thus have I heard: At one time, the Bhagavāt [Śākyamuni Buddha] was dwelling in the Abode of Medicine; together in one company with a great congregation of monks and a great congregation of Bodhisattvas. And it was at that moment that the Bhagavāt entered into the Samādhi known as 'Invoking the Field of the Buddha'.

Immediately thereupon, all the world-systems in this three thousand-fold universe shook intensely, and an immeasurable rain of divine sandalwood powder and flowers showered down; for the Seven Tathāgatas, along with their retinues, had come to the realm of this world, and there sat upon lion thrones which arose from those Tathāgatas' previous roots of virtue. Thereupon, all the Bodhisattvas circumambulated them. Devas, nāgas, yakṣas, gandharvas, āsuras, kinnaras, mahoragas, kings, government officials, brāhmiṇs, and householders also circumambulated them with joy.

Then, through the power of the Buddha, Mañjuśrī-kumārabhūta arose from his seat; and, joining his palms, spoke the following words: "May all Tathāgatas consider this, I pray. Please purify the negativity of all sentient beings, dispel their illness, and fulfill all their hopes. O Bhagavāt, I implore you; please relate the names of these [Seven Medicine Buddha] Tathāgatas; and impart the Dhāraṇī which is blessed by their previous aspirations."

Thereupon the Bhagavāt gave Mañjuśrī-kumārabhūta a confirmation of excellence by saying: "Mañjuśrī, excellent, excellent! Listen well and intensely; and keep this in mind! For I shall explain it to you."

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“So be it!”, replied Mañjuśrī-kumārabhūta to the Bhagavāt; and accordingly he listened well to the Bhagavāt. Then the Bhagavāt granted instruction thus: “They are as follows:

[The Praises to the Names of the Seven Medicine Buddhas]

- - a. **HOMAGE TO THE TATHĀGATA GLORIOUS KING OF EXTREMELY WELL RENOWNED NAME (NAMO SUPARI-KĪRTITA-NĀMA-ŚRĪ-RĀJA TATHĀGATA).**
 - b. **HOMAGE TO THE TATHĀGATA ERUDITE DAZZLING KING OF MELODIOUS ABUNDANCE, WHO IS ADORNED BY GEMS, MOONS AND LOTUSES (NAMO SVARA-GHOṢA-RĀJA TATHĀGATA).**
 - c. **HOMAGE TO THE TATHĀGATA KING OF EXCELLENT STAINLESS PRECIOUS GOLD RADIANCE, WHO IS ACCOMPLISHED IN DEPARTMENT (NAMO SUVARṆA-BHADRA-VIMALA-RATNA-PRABHĀSA-RĀJA TATHĀGATA).**
 - d. **HOMAGE TO THE TATHĀGATA GLORIOUS KING OF THE UNSURPASSED FREEDOM FROM SORROW (NAMO AŚOK-OTTAMA-ŚRĪ-RĀJA TATHĀGATA).**
 - e. **HOMAGE TO THE TATHĀGATA KING OF THE OCEANIC MELODY OF RENOWNED DHARMA (NAMO DHARMA-KĪRTI-SĀGARA-GHOṢA-RĀJA TATHĀGATA).**
 - f. **HOMAGE TO THE TATHĀGATA KING OF CLEAR UNDERSTANDING, WHO REVEALS THE MIND OF THE DHARMA’S SUPREME OCEAN (NAMO ABHIJÑĀ-RĀJA TATHĀGATA).**
 - g. **HOMAGE TO THE TATHĀGATA MEDICINE GURU, KING OF LAPIS LIGHT (NAMO BHAIṢAJYA-GURU-VAIḌŪRYA-PRABHĀ-RĀJA TATHĀGATA).**

[Praises to the Names of Other Buddhas and Bodhisattvas]

HOMAGE TO THE TATHĀGATA, THE GLORIOUS ŚĀKYAMUNI.

HOMAGE TO THE BHAGAVĀTĪ, THE MOTHER PRAJÑĀ-PĀRAMITĀ.

HOMAGE TO THE BODHISATTVA-MAHĀSATTVA MAÑJUŚRĪ- KUMĀRABHŪTA.

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HOMAGE TO THE BODHISATTVA-MAHĀSATTVA AVALOKITEŚVARA .

HOMAGE TO THE BODHISATTVA-MAHĀSATTVA VAJRAPĀṆI.

HOMAGE TO THE BODHISATTVA-MAHĀSATTVA SURYA-VAIROCANA.

HOMAGE TO THE BODHISATTVA-MAHĀSATTVA CANDRA-VAIROCANA.

HOMAGE TO THE BODHISATTVA-MAHĀSATTVA MAHĀMATI.

HOMAGE TO THE BODHISATTVA-MAHĀSATTVA MAITREYA.

HOMAGE TO THE BODHISATTVA-MAHĀSATTVA VAJRA.

HOMAGE TO THE BODHISATTVA-MAHĀSATTVA PRATIBHĀNA-KŪṬA.

HOMAGE TO THE BODHISATTVA-MAHĀSATTVA MEANINGFUL DOMINANCE.

HOMAGE TO THE BODHISATTVA-MAHĀSATTVA BEAUTIFUL TO BEHOLD.

**HOMAGE TO THE BODHISATTVA-MAHĀSATTVA INTELLECT THAT DEFINITELY
OVERPOWERS ALL DARK BEWILDERMENT.**

HOMAGE TO THE BODHISATTVA-MAHĀSATTVA INTENTION OF EXCELLENT ASPIRATION.

HOMAGE TO THE BODHISATTVA-MAHĀSATTVA MERU-KŪṬA.

HOMAGE TO THE BODHISATTVA-MAHĀSATTVA BRIGHTLY SHIMMERING MELODY.

**HOMAGE TO THE BODHISATTVA-MAHĀSATTVA KING WHO CAPTURED THE PEAK OF
GREAT MERU.**

HOMAGE TO THE ĀRYA ARHATS, ŚĀRIPUTRA AND MAHĀ- MAUDGALYĀYANA.

HOMAGE TO THE GREAT UPĀSAKAS, BRĀHMA AND INDRA.

HOMAGE TO THE FOUR GREAT HEAVENLY KINGS.

HOMAGE TO THE GREAT NĀGA UPĀSAKA NAMED 'BUDDHA-BHAGAVĀT'.

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HOMAGE TO THE TWELVE GREAT YAKṢA GENERALS.

Then those Tathāgatas gave instruction in the words of the Dhāraṇī; in a single voice, as follows:

**NAMO RATNA TRAYĀYA/ NAMO BHAGAVĀTE/ APRATIHATA/ BHAIṢAJYAI-RĀJĀYA/
TADYATHĀ/ OM̐ SARVA TATHĀGATA HŪM̐/ GHUME GHUME/ IMINI MIHI/ MATI MATI/
SAPTA TATHĀGATA/ SAMĀDHYA DHIṢTHITE/ ATE MATE PĀLE PĀPAM ŚODHANI/ SARVA
PĀPAM NAŚAYA/ MAMA BUDHE/ BUDHO TATAME/ UME KUME/ BUDHAKṢE TRAPARI
ŚODHANI/ DHAMENI DHAME/ MERU MERU/ MERU ŚIKHARE/ SARVA AKĀLA MṚTYU
NIVĀRANI/ BUDHE SUBUDHE/ BUDHE ADHIṢTHITENA/ ADHIṢTHITENA/ RAKṢANTUME/
SARVA DEVA SAME ASAME/ SAMAN- VĀHARAN-TUME/ SARVA BUDDHA BODHISATTVA/
ŚAME ŚAME/ PRAṢAMAN-TUME/ SARVA ITYU PADRĀPA/ VYADHAYAḤ PŪRANI/
SUPŪRANI/ PŪRAYAME/ SARVA ĀŚĀME/ VAIDŪRYA PRATIBHĀSI SARVA PĀPAM KṢAYAM
KARI SVĀHĀ/ OM̐ BHAIṢAJYA BHAIṢAJYA/ MAHĀ BHAIṢAJYA BHAIṢAJYA/ SAMUDGATE
SVĀHĀ**

[Tibetan pronunciation:

**NAMO RATNA TRAYĀYA/ NAMO BHAGAWĀTE/ APRATIHATA/ BHEYZHADZYAI-RĀDZĀYA/
TAY-YATHĀ/ ONG SARBA TATHĀGATA HŪNG/ GHUME GHUME/ IMINI MIHI/ MATI MATI/
SAPTA TATHĀGATA/ SAMĀDHYA DHIZHTHITE/ ATE MATE PĀLE PĀPAM SHODHANI/
SARBA PĀPAM NASHAYA/ MAMA BUDHE/ BUDHO TATAME/ UME KUME/ BUDHAKZHE
TRAPARI SHODHANI/ DHAMENI DHAME/ MERU MERU/ MERU SHIKHARE/ SARBA AKĀLA
MṚITYU NIBĀRANI/ BUDHE SUBUDHE/ BUDHE ADHIZHTHITENA/ ADHIZHTHITENA/
RAKZHAN-TUME/ SARBA DEVA SAME ASAME/ SAMAN-BĀHARAN-TUME/ SARBA**

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**BUDDHA BODHISATTWA/ SHAME SHAME/ PRAZHAMAN-TUME/ SARBA ITYU PADRĀPA/
BYADHAYAḤ PŪRANI/ SUPŪRANI/ PŪRAYAME/ SARBA ĀSHĀME/ BAIḌŪRYA PRATIBHĀSI
SARBA PĀPAM KZHAYAM KARI SWĀHĀ/ ONG BHEYZHADZYA BHEYZHADZYA/ MAHĀ
BHEYZHADZYA BHEYZHADZYA/ SAMUNG-GATE SWOHĀ]**

When instruction in the Names and Dhāraṇī had thus been granted, a great luminosity arose; the great earth shook as well, and displays of miracles manifested. The retinue that had thus assembled then made offerings to the Tathāgatas with incense and scents, saying “Excellent!”; and thereafter circumambulated them seven times.

Then, those Seven Tathāgatas became invisible; and at that the Bhagavāt, the glorious Śākyamuni, granted teaching in the following words: “If any good son or good daughter, who retains, upholds, reads and pays reverence to the [aforementioned] Names and the Dhāraṇī of these [Seven Medicine Buddha] Tathāgatas, should cleanse themselves, in a clean place imbue themselves with the Eight Ennobling Factors [of the Noble Eightfold Path], and, with supreme compassion for all sentient beings, commence on the full moon, during the fourth (4th) month of the lunar cycle, and then arrange statues of those [Seven Medicine Buddha] Tathāgatas, perform fasting observances on the eighth (8th), fourteenth (14th), and fifteenth (15th) days of the lunar month, recite the Dhāraṇī forty-nine (49), one thousand and eight (1008), or forty-nine thousand times (49,000), and three (3) times during the day and three (3) times during the evening make offerings of flowers, scents, incense, butter lamps, garlands, musical sounds, parasols, victory banners and flags; then thereafter, those Tathāgatas will consider them; and all Bodhisattvas will think of them. Brahmā, Indra, the Four Great Heavenly Kings, and the Great Nāga Upāsakas will also fully protect them; and all the Vajra-Bearing Yakṣa Generals shall defend them impeccably, as well.”

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“All their karmic obscurations, such as the five heinous deeds, will be completely purified. They will not be stricken by any illnesses, they will live for a long time, they will be totally freed from all untimely death; and for them all fatalities, enemies, harm from the wilderness, fighting, arguments and disputes will be powerfully pacified. They will not fall under the power of any enemies; and all wishes that they formulate in mind shall be comprehensively achieved.”

Then Mañjuśrī-kumārabhūta spoke the following words to the Bhagavāt: “Bhagavāt, what is the name of this discourse on Dharma? How should it be retained?”

The Bhagavāt issued a command thus: “Mañjuśrī, as for that, retain it as ‘The Dhāraṇī of Lapis Light for Generating the Power of the Tathāgata’s Samādhi’. Retain it also as ‘The Destruction and Purification of All Karmic Obscurations’.”

After the Bhagavāt had bestowed teaching thus in those words, the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī-kumārabhūta, and that all-inclusive assembly, rejoiced; they enthusiastically praised what had been spoken by the Bhagavāt.

THE DHĀRAṆĪ KNOWN AS ‘LAPIS LIGHT WHICH GENERATES THE POWER OF THE TATHĀGATA’S SAMĀDHI’ IS COMPLETE.

Colophon: This was translated, edited and checked by the Indian Paṇḍitas Jinamitra, Dānaśīla, and Śrīrendrabodhi, and the Tibetan translator and editor Lotsāwa Bendé Yéshey Dé (lo tshwaa ba ban de ye shes sde). Later, it was revised and checked according to new linguistic terminology by the Indian Paṇḍita Dīpaṃkara Śrī Jñāna [Atiśa] and Gélong Tsultrim Gyelwa (dge slong ‘khrims rgyal ba); in the Golden House of Tönding.

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Notes on the translator

Translated from Tibetan into English by Erick Tsiknopoulos in late April of 2013, in the Sanctuary of Yearning for Release (Thardö Ling), McLeod Ganj, Dharamsala, India.

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This translation was revised in early October of 2013, again in mid-January of 2014, once again in late March of 2017; and finally in early January of 2019.

Special thanks to Dr. Lobzang Gyatso for his skilled explanation of certain difficult points in the Tibetan text; and to Ned Branchi for his valuable help with the Sanskrit, English editing, and insights on Buddhist terminology.

Very special thanks to Thekchen Choling Singapore, who commissioned the translation of this text; which they have also compassionately published for free distribution in Singapore and Malaysia. May we all rejoice in their merit and virtue. By the positive karmic potential arising from this translation, may all living beings be healed from the sickness of dualistic fixation.

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Notes on the sutra:

1. *Vaiḍūrya* has indeed been translated as 'sapphire' and also 'lapis', but it also refers to beryl. In Wikipedia we find the following definition for beryl: 'In geology, beryl is a mineral composed of *beryllium aluminium cyclosilicate* with the chemical formula $Be_3Al_2(SiO_3)_6$. The hexagonal crystals of beryl may be very small or range to several meters in size. Terminated crystals are relatively rare. Pure beryl is colorless, but it is frequently tinted by impurities; possible colors are green, blue, yellow, red, and white.' The English name beryl is derived (via Latin: *beryllus*, Old French: *beryl*, and Middle English: *beril*) from Greek βήρυλλος (*beryllos*), which referred to a greenish

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blue precious stone, like the color of sea water. This in turn originated from the Prakrit *veruliya* (वेरुलिय) and the Pāli *veḷuriya* (वेलुरिय) and *veḷiru* (भेलिरु), which are derived from the Sanskrit वैडूर्य *vaiḍūrya*, which is ultimately of Dravidian origin; maybe from the name of Belur or “Velur” in southern India. The term was later adopted for the mineral beryl more exclusively. The late Latin word *berillus* was abbreviated as *brill-*, which produced the Italian word *brillre*, “shine”, the French word *brille* meaning “shine”, the Spanish word *brillo*, also meaning “shine”, and the English word “brilliance”. Why is this important? If we are visualizing Medicine Buddha in practice, we visualize the body as not solid but translucent, like dark blue crystal (blue beryl) that shines with a blue light. Indeed, that could even give a blue sapphire-like appearance; and that color is also related to the blue hue of the lapis stone. We see lapis related to blue deities in many ways where the stone is used to represent blue practices such as *mālās* made of ‘lapis’. However, when it comes to the actual description and the visualization of Medicine Buddha and his trademark *vaiḍūrya* light, then a body of dark blue sapphire-colored light is closer to the original blue-colored crystal indicated by *vaiḍūrya*; that is, blue beryl. ‘Lapis’ however works well as a description of *vaiḍūrya*, simply because people are more familiar with the color of ‘lapis lazuli blue’.

2. **“during the fourth month of the lunar cycle”**: That is, on the fifteenth (15th) day of the fourth (4th) month of the lunar calendar. This corresponds to the holy month of Saga Dawa (*sa ga zla ba*) in Tibetan Buddhism; known elsewhere in the Buddhist world as Vesak/Wesak.
3. For the names of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas in the translation, the Sanskrit has been retained wherever possible and reasonable. Most of the names that are in Sanskrit are the names of *bodhisattva*-s who are more well-known in general; and by their Sanskrit proper names in particular.