

The Vajra¹ Speech of the Mahasiddha Thang Tong Gyälpo:

The Prayer Liberating Sakya from Disease

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Motivation

All sentient beings, equal to space, go for refuge to the precious guru-buddha. We go for refuge to the Buddha,² the Dharma, and the Sangha.³

We go for refuge to the assembly of gurus, meditational deities, and dakinis. We go for refuge to the empty clarity of our own minds, the dharmakaya.

Recite these verses as many times as you are able.

OM MANI PÄDME HUM

Recite this mantra hundreds of times, as many as you are able.

Then:

May all the diseases that sadden the minds of sentient beings that result from karma and temporary conditions, such as the harms of spirits, illnesses, and the elements, not occur in the realms of the world.

May whatever sufferings there are from life-threatening diseases that, like a butcher leading a being to be slaughtered, separate the body from the mind in a mere instant, not occur in the realms of the world.

May all embodied beings be unharmed by acute, chronic,⁴ and other infectious diseases, the mere sound of whose names terrifies beings, as though they had been placed inside the mouth of Yama, the Lord of Death.

May all embodied beings be unharmed by the 80,000 classes of harmful interferers,⁵ the 360 evil spirits⁶ that harm suddenly, the 424 diseases, and so forth.

May whatever sufferings there are due to disturbances of the four elements, depriving the body and mind of every pleasure, be totally pacified, and may the body and mind have radiance and power and be endowed with long life, good health, and well-being.

By the compassion of the gurus and the Triple Gem, by the power of the dakinis, Dharma protectors, and guardians, and by the strength of the infallibility of karma and its results, may these many dedications and prayers be fulfilled as soon as they are made.

Colophon:

Once an epidemic was spreading from one person to another at the great monastery of the Glorious Sakya (tradition). Whatever the mantric masters tried – effigies, tormas medicines, mantras, protection-amulets, and so forth – had no effect, and the monastery was in danger of annihilation. At that time, the master Mahasiddha (T'ang Tong Gyälpo) performed the 'Space' refuge⁷, recited a number of Manis⁸, and proclaimed this prayer called 'Attainment,' during which the entire epidemic immediately ceased in dependence upon its performance. Thereby, it became renowned as the vajra speech radiating masses of clouds of blessing entitled 'The Prayer Liberating Sakya from Disease.'

*Sarvamangalam*⁹

¹ The vajra (Tib: *rdor-rije*) is a symbol of immutability, the unchanging union of wisdom and method.

² The guru (Tib: *bla-ma*) is the spiritual guide who in esoteric practice is understood to be an emanation of the Buddha and directs our practice. The Buddha is a fully enlightened being and represents our ultimate potential of spiritual growth and healing. The Dharma is that which protects us from suffering – the spiritual teachings and their realization in practice. The Sangha is the spiritual community who, through example and guidance, help us practice Dharma. Thus, the Three Jewels of Refuge – Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha – are the spiritual equivalents of doctor, medicine and nurse.

³ This form of "going for refuge" was given by Arya Avalokitesvara to Ka nga pa Päljor Sherab, and by him to the Mahasiddha Thang Tong Gyälpo. Afterwards, it provided infinite benefits for migrating beings. (Note: *dka-nga-pa* is Tibetan for a person who has mastered the five (*nga*) difficult (*dka*) teachings: the perfection of wisdom (*prajña-paramita*), the middle way philosophy (*madhyamaka*), higher knowledge (*abhidharma*), epistemology (*pramana*), and discipline (*vinaya*).

⁴ Acute infectious diseases affect the patient for a short time, whereas chronic diseases last for months or years. Many types of infectious disease are mentioned in certain prayers to the tantric deity White Parasol (Tib: *sDugs-dkar*, Skt: *Sitatapatra*).

⁵ In general, harmful interferers (Tib: *bgegs*; Skt: *vighna*) are sentient beings, but they may also be events, such as famines.

⁶ Evil spirits (Tib: *ye'drog*) are non-humans who interrupt virtuous practice and connect one with what is unwanted. The term is synonymous with demon (Tib: *gdön*; Skt: *graha*).

⁷ Tib: *Nam-mka'mai skyab'dro*, so-called because the verse has the words "equal to space."

⁸ Short for the mantra OM MANI PÄDME HUM.

⁹ Sanskrit for "May all be auspicious!"