

## **Dedication Prayer after Reading the Diamond Cutter Sutra** *Translation and footnotes by Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche*

### **Dedication Verses**

In this world, with its devas, to the founder who, with the roaring sound of a snow lion, proclaimed the talk of dependently connected arising,<sup>i</sup> I respectfully prostrate.

The son of the king, abiding majestically in the temple in the midst of an assembly of virtue beggars (bhikshu, ge.long) and those intending virtue (ge.dun),<sup>ii</sup> handed over this Dharma to the holy holder of Dharma, Kungawo (attendant Ananda) with great emphasis (great care) proclaiming the definite meaning with the defining words, "Even if all the Dharma is forgotten, don't forget this one."

It is said by Buddha that writing or reading one word of the Prajnaparamita has greater benefit than making offerings to all the buddhas for 1000 ten million eons.<sup>iii</sup>

Why is it like that? The only remedy extremely powerful in (directly) cutting the root of all the mistakes of the world (samsara), ignorance, is this holy Dharma, the Dharma supreme of all the teachings, the ultimate heart of Prajnaparamita (Wisdom Gone Beyond.)<sup>iv</sup>

Having written, read and made offerings to the supreme Dharma of all the (Buddha's) teachings, the heart of Prajnaparamita (Wisdom Gone Beyond), the ultimate one, the sutra called Diamond Cutter, may it cut the continuity of the sickness and harms of black magic, evil *si* (possession by an evil spirit)<sup>v</sup>, obstacles (astrological) and so forth, and increase the life and wealth; may whatever wishes spontaneously be accomplished according to holy Dharma.<sup>vi</sup>

Due to the merits and imprint of having listened to this Sutra and having read it at this time, in all future lifetimes may I and all sentient beings who have connection with me be able to hear, reflect and meditate on this profound Sutra.<sup>vii</sup>

May I become exactly like the life-stories of Sharipu and Muadiglyana: the minute one hears the words and meaning (of the Prajnaparamita Diamond Cutter Sutra) able to have the words and meaning within one's understanding and achieve the result.<sup>viii</sup>

By the virtue of having read this profound Sutra, may I directly perceive the truth and liberate in that second all transmigratory beings, equaling the sky, from the great ocean of samsaric suffering.<sup>ix</sup>

Not grasping at just mere emptiness<sup>x</sup> by seeing that the meaning of emptiness is dependent arising—while the mind is in that emptiness, free from creativity (mental fabrication projecting true existence), enjoy the view of emptiness-only.<sup>xi</sup>

Ascertain that the various appearances,<sup>xii</sup> the dual dharma,<sup>xiii</sup> are mere appearance.<sup>xiv</sup> May I realize emptiness while there is appearance, with the thought, “even though there is appearance it is not true (truly existent.)”

By the eminent heart wisdom,<sup>xv</sup> without abiding in the extremes of samsara and peace, quickly proceeding on the five paths, may I become the guide (leader) of all the transmigratory beings.<sup>xvi</sup>

By this particular virtue, and all (other) virtues, may the gurus’ holy lives be stable and all the deeds and actions of the victorious ones be accomplished by myself, alone.

May this holy Dharma, for which the founder (Guru Shakyamuni Buddha), while training in the path, gave up the holy body and all enjoyments and possessions, and accomplished the work only for sentient beings, last a long time.

The victorious one gave up lying for numberless eons even at the cost of the life and spoke truthfully; by that blessing may all the prayers be accomplished.<sup>xvii</sup>

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These prayer words, related to Diamond Cutter Sutra, were composed by Mipham Dawa. I am not familiar with this author but the words are extremely profound.

After this one can recite the Diamond Cutter Sutra mantra.

NAMO BHAGAWATI/ PRAGYA PARAMITAYE/ OM NA TA TATITHA/ ILISHI ILISHI MILISHI MILISHI  
BINAYAN BINAYAN / NAMO BHAGAWATI PRATAYANG PRATI/ IRIDHI/ IRIDHI/ MIRIDHI/ MIRIDHI/  
SHIRIDHI/ SHIRIDHI/ USHIRI/ USHIRI/ BUIYE/ BUIYE SWAHA

“The benefit of reciting the heart of the Diamond Cutter Sutra equals having recited the Diamond Cutter Sutra 9x3000 times.”

Then recite the mantra of dependent arising and Vajrasattva mantra. Also, after reciting the Diamond Cutter Sutra it is good to do the mantras for increasing merits.

May the merit of having translated this work bring the most benefit to and be used by all sentient beings, causing them to quickly realize emptiness and then with direct perception, bodhicitta, achieve full enlightenment as quickly as possible. May it cause all sentient beings in this world to be able to read the Diamond Cutter Sutra, realize emptiness and actualize bodhicitta, realizing other sentient beings' suffering and how they are so precious. May nobody experience war, famine, disease or danger from fire, water, wind and earthquakes.

Whoever reads this dedication, may all their negative karma get purified and may they never get reborn in the lower realms. May they immediately realize emptiness, actualize bodhicitta, complete the two stages of tantra in this very life and achieve enlightenment as quickly as possible. May each person who reads this dedication become the source of peace and happiness for all sentient beings, like Chenrezig, like Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, like Maitreya Buddha, Vajrapani and Manjushri.

May the wishes of whoever recites the Diamond Cutter Sutra succeed immediately, may they have a long life and receive all the benefits, whatever they wish.

*Kachoe Dechen Ling*

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## Notes

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<sup>i</sup> Tib: *ten.ching del.wai jung.wa*. *Ten* – depending; *del* – connecting; *jung* – arising. Things arise and come into existence by depending on the base, the mind.

<sup>ii</sup> The virtue they are begging (Tib. *ge.long*) is liberation or nirvana, and because they are seeking that, they are living in the vow. The other one is intending virtue (Tib. *ge.dun*; *ge* - virtue, *dun* - intending.) For that reason they have the wish to live in virtue.

<sup>iii</sup>  $10 \times 100,000 = 1 \text{ sa.ya}$ .  $10 \text{ sa.ya} = 1 \text{ che.wa}$  (10,000,000.) The result of making one offering to a picture or statue of Buddha includes all the happiness of samsara we have had since beginningless time and all the samsaric pleasures we will experience in the future. Not only that, the benefit continues as one achieves liberation from samsara, all the realizations, and doesn't finish until one achieves great liberation, enlightenment. That includes the complete Mahayana path from guru devotion, renunciation of this and future lives, then bodhicitta, right view, the five paths and ten bhumis, and the tantric path. It includes the limitless qualities of Buddha's holy body, holy speech and holy mind. Everything is the result of having made a tiny offering of

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one grain, a stick of incense or a tiny flower to Buddha or an image of Buddha, a stupa or scripture.

The text mentions liberation, which means great liberation, but my view is that even after you achieve enlightenment still you experience the benefits of making that tiny offering, because then you liberate numberless sentient beings by revealing Dharma. Through suitable means you liberate one sentient being from the lower realms, from the suffering of samsara, from lower nirvana and from the subtle defilements; then you bring that sentient being to enlightenment. Like that you bring numberless sentient beings from happiness to happiness to full enlightenment. So even after you achieve great liberation, there are all these unimaginable benefits of guiding each of the numberless sentient beings from happiness to happiness to full enlightenment; still you are experiencing the resultant merit of offering a tiny flower or grain to a statue, stupa or scripture. The benefit is the same when we make offering before we drink or eat.

So the benefit of making offerings to Buddha, even a picture or statue of Buddha, is limitless, it includes everything, all the happiness and every single realization on the path to enlightenment, every single samsaric pleasure that one has experienced from beginningless rebirth up to now and will experience in the future; for that long, still the merit doesn't finish. Here it says, for however long you make offerings to Buddha, even 1000 times ten million eons, even to *all* the buddhas, writing or reading one word of the Prajnaparamita has greater benefit.

<sup>iv</sup> Neither bodhicitta nor any other realization of sutra and tantra can directly cut ignorance.

<sup>v</sup> Tib: *si*, a being who, with an evil mind harmed others in a previous life. I think maybe *si* is somebody who criticized or broke the relationship with the vajra master; who created very heavy negative karma and died with hatred, then was reborn as a powerful spirit that harms holy beings or those sentient beings who preserve and spread the Dharma.

<sup>vi</sup> Only bodhisattvas living in the 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> bhumi don't have delusions, so I added "according to holy Dharma" to protect from the danger of someone dedicating for the success of harmful negative thoughts, like wishing someone to die, etc.

<sup>vii</sup> At the beginning this text tells how much Buddha cherished and emphasized the preciousness of this sutra and how Buddha handed this teaching precisely to Ananda. Then it talks about how it collects incredible merit; how offering to Buddha is incredible, like limitless sky, bringing benefits beyond our imagination and yet how having written or read even one word of Prajnaparamita has much greater benefits. It then explains how the Prajnaparamita benefits by being the only one powerful enough to cut the root of suffering, from where delusions and karma come, and other benefits. Then it tells why it is the only remedy powerful enough to cut the root of all the suffering, delusions, karma and ignorance. Then it talks about other benefits like stopping heavy problems such as black magic, astrological obstacle years and the evil *si* spirit, and increasing life and wealth.

So it talked about pacifying, then about increasing life, wealth and enjoyments, and for all wishes to spontaneously succeed.

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Then the next one is making prayers to be able to hear it in all future lifetimes. Here, I added, so that you are not doing the prayer and dedicating the merits only for yourself, "... I and all sentient beings who have connection with me, in all future lifetimes be able to hear..." Then I added "reflect and meditate on" this sutra.

<sup>viii</sup> One is able to understand the vast Prajnaparamita; just as many things can be packed inside a small container or suitcase, the minute one hears Prajnaparamita Diamond Cutter Sutra, one is able to have the complete words and meanings within one's understanding.

<sup>ix</sup> I added this dedication.

<sup>x</sup> This has a very profound meaning. "Grasping at mere emptiness" refers to ordinary emptiness, like space. When you meditate, if it didn't touch the hallucinated object, the object to be refuted, that would be ordinary emptiness. Then the whole life you would be meditating on ordinary emptiness, meditating on the sky, like looking from an airplane window at space.

<sup>xi</sup> In Tibetan "emptiness only" is *tong-nyi*. *Tong* is "emptiness" *nyi* is "only." Why not just *tong*? Why is *nyi* added? Putting the word *nyi* makes a huge difference, it gives incredible protection by cutting the misconception of ordinary emptiness; it gives the meaning of ultimate truth.

<sup>xii</sup> "The various appearances" means everything, all the billions of things here, in the department stores or supermarkets. They are all dual appearance or dual dharma.

<sup>xiii</sup> One meaning of dual dharma is true existence; another meaning is appearing as subject and object. When arya beings are in equipoise meditation on emptiness there is no duality, there is no subject/object in the view of that mind. The dual view is not cut at that time but absorbed. Only when you become enlightened, when the subtle negative imprint left by the concept of true existence, which projects the truly existent view, is ceased, is the dualistic view cut. During the path of the arya being it is not cut but temporarily absorbed, like having put water into water.

I think what it is saying is that one has to meditate on "merely labeled," like the example of a mirage. You look at the things that happen in everyday life as like an illusion or a dream, with your meditative awareness that there is no such thing in reality, everything is empty. Whatever appears to us here, right now—I appear to you, you appear to me, whatever appears to our six senses—the way they appear is not as phenomena merely labeled by mind, but as existing from their own side. When you are practicing mindfulness you see how all this is merely labeled by mind or like a dream, an illusion or a mirage.

When you apply those examples to everyday life, the understanding that comes in your heart is that all this is not true. There is no such subject I, there is no such action, object—there is no such thing. So it's a *totally* different world. The reality, what exists, is *completely* another world. When you don't meditate or practice mindfulness, the mind believes as true all the hallucinations that appear truly existent. But the reality is *completely* opposite: everything existing from its own side and believed as such, is completely non-existent. That is the truth, the other one is false. The

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way things appear to us—subject, action, object—and is believed by our own mind to be real, is all hallucination.

What exists is that non-existence. The reality, that nothing exists from its own side, is unknown. The non-existent, truly-existent I, action and object are the reality. For those who have realized emptiness or see things as illusory, perhaps it is different, but otherwise the reality is unknown. What is believed according to our concepts doesn't exist; what one doesn't believe or what is not known is what exists.

<sup>xiv</sup> All phenomena are merely imputed by mind on mere appearance. You have to get that idea. First there is mere appearance and then mind merely imputes on that and that is how things come into existence. If something is appearing as truly existent then it is not mere appearance. After being merely labeled it should appear back as a mere appearance, but when it appears back to us there is something additional, existing from its own side. When it appears back as merely labeled by mind, then it is mere appearance. That is the correct view, what it should be.

Here it says “ascertain mere appearance.” Another way you can say it is “ascertain as merely labeled by mind.” It has the same meaning.

For example, Pabongkha Rinpoche also mentioned in the teachings when you look at a drum and try to be aware that this drum is merely imputed by one's own mind, not just saying the words but meditating, you see the base, the shape and the function—beating to make a noise—and by reason of that that the mind merely imputed “drum.”

At that time if you are watching the mind as it merely imputes “drum” there is a very subtle moment of mere appearance, a very short second, then immediately after that it appears as existing from its own side.

For example, after you conceive a child, you think about a name. If your mind is aware, at the very first moment when your mind merely imputed a name, during the very second you are labeling, there will be a mere appearance, when there is not a strong clinging to that “Peter” or “Tashi.” But it's a very, very subtle moment; if you are not aware, of course, it looks like immediately truly existent Tashi or Peter.

I don't know whether you can say there is an extremely subtle true existence, but right after your mind merely imputed, because of habituation, the negative imprint left on the mental continuum by the past ignorance, the concept holding true existence, immediately projects “truly existent” on that. That is the evolution. There might be a second where it doesn't have heavy true existence; right after the parents said “What about ‘Peter’? Let's decide on ‘Peter.’ This is Peter,” while they are aware of labeling, merely imputing; but when you are not aware, you don't notice that extremely short second. You have to analyze.

There may be some cases when you put this name for a few seconds, then the next minute you change that name—during that time how does it appear? It's good to check how it appears to you. Does it appear as something very heavy truly existent or not? Pabongkha Rinpoche did

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express that there is a very, very short time of mere appearance and then the usual one, true existence.

When you look through the window at the road, there is, for example, a horse's body running and on that particular appearance, you label "horse running." Or a cat jumps—on the sudden mere appearance of that particular bodily shape the mind labels "cat jumping."

A particular design is called "bicycle." It appeared and in a finger-snap your mind made up the label "bicycle." Then you see a particular vehicle and because of that your mind immediately imputes "truck."

If you don't meditate, what happens then is that they appear as truly existent truck, truly existent bicycle, truly existent cat and dog and horse and all these different things—even though just now your mind merely imputed. The reality is what your mind merely imputed appears back as a mere appearance.

I think "mere" appearance should cut "truly" existent, appearing as heavily existing from its own side. In "merely labeled," "merely" cuts existing from its own side, so "mere" appearance is the same—it cuts that extra thing, not just mere appearance but truly existent appearance.

So if you practice awareness from the beginning, when your mind imputes, and continue that awareness, then you see that because the base is there, your mind merely imputed and believed in that.

What is horse? It is not something on that horse body; "horse" is just a name made up by your thought, and you believe in that. And "bicycle," seeing that base your mind thought of the label and believed in it. It is not something on the bicycle, on that material. If you analyze it, this is how it is. When you don't check, don't analyze, it looks like it is really there, on the base; when you analyze you cannot find it there. At that time it exists and receives the label according to the base and function. If a person's body is very fat and square, we say "such-and-such person is fat and square." If the person's body is very thin, "this person is very thin." So the label is received according to the function or quality of that base.

The conclusion is we have to meditate according to the reality that whatever it is, it is merely imputed by one's own mind. Whatever appears to you as truly existent is in reality mere appearance.

The other meaning of "mere appearance" could be like having walked through sand, looking back you see an appearance of water but you just came from there and you know there is no water at all. You have a mere appearance of water but you don't believe there is water. Similarly, everything appears to us as not merely labeled by mind, as existing from its own side. One meaning could be like that.

When you meditate in sitting meditation or break time, looking at everything as like a dream, an illusion or, if you are practicing subtle dependent arising, merely labeled, you have an

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appearance of true existence but you don't believe it. Because your mind is aware that it is merely labeled, you don't cling or grasp to that truly existent appearance as true. Just like when you recognize a dream as a dream, you don't cling to all those images that are appearing to you because while it is happening you know it is a dream.

So mere appearance could have the meaning that you have a truly existent appearance but you don't hold on to it or grasp it as true. Another meaning is, after you have done analysis of the "I", you see it is merely labeled by mind. "I" exists in mere name. There is no "I" to be found on the aggregates but there is "I" existing, merely imputed by mind. In other words there is a non-truly existent or merely labeled I. Because there are the aggregates so there is "I", existing in mere name. It is not that it absolutely doesn't exist— it exists as something extremely, unbelievably subtle.

Similarly, when you analyze the general aggregates you cannot find them on this collection of five, but there are aggregates—because you cannot find them doesn't mean there are no aggregates. What are they? They are merely imputed by your mind. Because there is the collection of five, your mind merely imputed "aggregates."

It is not like the real aggregates of before; it is something extremely subtle, existing by name. While you are meditating, seeing the aggregates as merely imputed by mind, you see what exists is extremely subtle, it doesn't have even the slightest atom of existence from its own side, *in* the aggregates.

That time is one example of mere appearance: seeing the aggregates as something extremely, unbelievably subtle. You can't say they don't exist. They exist, but compared to the previous view of inherently existent aggregates it's like they don't exist.

Furthermore, as you analyze form, sound, smell, taste and touch, again you cannot find them there, on the base—they are merely imputed by mind, extremely subtle.

Go through all the parts of the body, such as the limbs, down to the atom. Analyze even the atom's collection of parts, the sub-particles, as in the Prasangika view. The mind merely imputed atom, but cannot find it. The atom doesn't exist on the collection of parts but that doesn't mean atom doesn't exist; it exists, merely imputed by mind. "Atom" is empty of existing from its own side and, while it is empty, it exists in mere name. The logic is the same with the particles: you cannot find them on the collection of parts. Then the split seconds: within one second there are many split seconds of consciousness, which are merely imputed by mind, and therefore do not exist from their own side. They are empty.

Like that, through analysis, you cannot find anything on the base. Every single thing is existing in mere name. This analysis maybe gives you some idea of what mere appearance is. Everything becomes so subtle; everything is kind of empty, not existing from its own side. What exists is only what is merely labeled by mind—the whole thing.

These are the different ways you can think of mere appearance.



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<sup>xv</sup> This Diamond Cutter Sutra is similar to the Heart Sutra in that it is the heart all the teachings on perfection of wisdom. So it is the best, the eminent one. He is saying by actualizing the eminent wisdom which is the heart of all Buddha's teachings, the Prajnaparamita, even more, the heart of the Prajnaparamita, you don't abide in the extremes of samsara or nirvana, and along with this also you realize bodhicitta. I think what it is saying is that this wisdom directly perceiving emptiness, which is the meaning of the Diamond Cutter Sutra, ceases not only the gross defilements (that would be nirvana) but even the subtle defilements, which means freedom not only from samsara but from lower nirvana.

<sup>xvi</sup> The Tibetan word *dro* means "go." *Kun* is "all." Sentient beings are called *dro.la*. Why are they called *dro.la*? Because all the sentient beings migrate continuously in the six realms under the control of delusion and karma, they don't have any freedom. In the teachings another meaning of *dro.la* is that, because of delusion, from the time of birth, the nature of sentient beings is to continuously run towards death, not stopping to rest for one minute or second—they are "continuously going" or "goers".

<sup>xvii</sup> It means your prayer. There are many auspicious prayers related to Buddha's Twelve Deeds, the buddhas of the three times, and the five types of buddhas. There is a prayer called *Ta.shi Tse.pa*, Piles of Auspiciousness, which is recited most days as it is very important for the success of the Maitreya Project. So "due to this and this"—something that Buddha taught—"may this be auspicious, may my prayers and wishes be fulfilled." Dedicating like this, because it is true, has a lot of power to bring success.