

༄༅། །ཐེག་པ་རིམ་དགའི་སྒྲོན་ལམ་རྩོུ་རྩེའི་ཚིག་རྒྱུ་།

Vajra Verses of Aspiration for the Nine Vehicles

Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo



KHYENTSE VISION
PROJECT

This text includes Vajrayāna content. Please be aware that some Vajrayāna texts may only be fully understood and appreciated through receiving the necessary empowerments, transmissions, or practice instructions from a qualified teacher.

theg pa rim dgu'i smon lam rdo rje'i tshig rkang

B1599, D666

Kabum, vol. 23 (a), 236.4–237.5, Dzongsar 2014;
Kabab Dun, vol. 22 (za), 733.1–734.1, Dzongsar 2013.

Translated by Elizabeth McDougal. The translation was completed under the patronage of Khyentse Foundation and the supervision of Khyentse Vision Project.

First Published 2023

Version 1

Generated from KVP's reading room on 16-Sep-2026

Khyentse Vision Project: Translating the Works of
Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo

This work is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/).

CONTENTS

TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION	1
VAJRA VERSES OF ASPIRATION FOR THE NINE VEHICLES	3
NOTES	7
GLOSSARY	9

TRANSLATOR’S INTRODUCTION

Vajra Verses of Aspiration for the Nine Vehicles is a short prayer summarizing the entire spiritual path according to the Dzogchen tradition. These nine vehicles (or “nine yānas”) are pathways to enlightenment that encompass all sūtra and tantra approaches and span all individual capacities on the path. They are grouped overall into three progressive classes: (1) three sūtra vehicles of hearers (śrāvakas), solitary realizers (pratyekabuddhas), and bodhisattvas; (2) three outer tantra vehicles of Kriyā (action), Caryā (conduct), and Yoga Tantra; and (3) three inner tantra vehicles of Mahāyoga, Anuyoga, and Atiyoga.

These nine vehicles also include the three levels of vows found in Tibetan and Himalayan Buddhism: the prātimokṣa vows of self-liberation, the bodhisattva vows of universal enlightenment, and the tantric vows of secret mantra. Each level of vows is said to be subsumed in the next, so that in full Dzogchen awakening the conduct of all three is naturally perfected.

Great Nyingma masters such as Khyentse Wangpo and Ju Mipham Rinpoche have explained that these nine vehicles are complex and provisional, and encompass the perceptions and potentials of all sentient beings on the path to full awakening. Thus, within the framework of the nine vehicles, it is understood that pathways to enlightenment are as inexhaustible as beings’ mental afflictions.

This prayer comes from volume 22 of Khyentse Wangpo’s *Seven Transmissions* (Kabab Dun). As the colophon states, Khyentse Wangpo wrote this as a young teenager in a joyful mood of aspiration.

ཐེག་པ་རིམ་དགུའི་སྒྲིན་ལམ་རྡོ་རྗེའི་ཚིག་ཀླང་།

Vajra Verses of Aspiration for the Nine Vehicles

Namo gurubhyaḥ!

རྒྱལ་བས་གདུལ་བྱའི་རྗེས་འགོ་ལེགས་གསུང་ཚེས།།

gyal wé dül ché jé dro lek sung chö

The Victor's Dharma teachings of discipline for followers

གོང་ནས་གོང་དུ་བཟོད་བྱེད་ཐེག་པའི་ཚུལ།།

gong né gong du drö ché tek pé tsül

Progress in the manner of successive vehicles

དབང་པོའི་རིམ་པ་དང་མཚུངས་རྣམ་པ་དག།

wang pö rim pa dang tsung nam pa gu

According to nine stages of individual capacity—

མ་འདྲེས་ཡོངས་རྫོགས་ཉམས་ལེན་མཐར་ཕྱིན་ཤོག།

ma dré yong dzok nyam len tar chin shok

May we practice these without confusion to their full perfection!

ཉན་ཐོས་ཐེག་པའི་བདེན་བཞིའི་སྒྲུང་དོར་ཐོས།།

nyen tö tek pé den zhi lang dor tö

With the vehicle of listeners, one studies the four truths to accept and avoid;

རང་རྒྱལ་ཐེག་པའི་རྟེན་འབྲེལ་འཕྲུག་ལྷོག་བསམ།།

rang gyal tek pé ten drel juk dok sam

With the vehicle of pratyekabuddhas, one reflects on engagement and reversal of dependent arising;

བྱང་སེམས་ཐེག་པའི་བདེན་གཉིས་དབྱེར་མེད་བསྐྱོམ།།

jang sem tek pé den nyi yer mé gom

With the vehicle of bodhisattvas, one meditates on the indivisible two truths.

ཀུན་འབྱུང་འབྲེན་པའི་ཐེག་པས་རྒྱུད་སྦྱོང་ཤོག།

kun jung dren pé tek pé gyü jong shok

May our consciousness be purified through these causal vehicles!

ཀྱི་ཡའི་ཐེག་པས་མཐའ་བྲལ་ལྟ་བུ་བརྟོགས།།

kri yé tek pé ta drel ta wa tok

With the Kriyā Vehicle, one realizes the view beyond limits;

ལྷུ་བྱའི་ཐེག་པས་བྱི་ནང་མཉམ་པར་བསྐྱོམ།།

u bhé tek pé chi nang nyam par gom

With the Ubhaya Vehicle, one meditates on outer and inner equality;

ཡོ་གའི་ཐེག་པས་སངས་རྒྱས་མཛད་པ་སྦྱོང་།།

yo gé tek pé sang gyé dzé pa chö

With the Yoga Vehicle, one enacts the deeds of a buddha.

དཀའ་ཐུབ་རིག་བྱེད་ཐེག་པས་རྒྱུད་སྦྱོན་ཤོག།

ka tub rik ché tek pé gyü min shok

May our minds mature as awareness through these vehicles of ascetic practice!

མ་རྒྱའི་ཐེག་པས་གཞི་རྒྱུད་ལྷ་སྐྱར་དག།

ma hé tek pé zhi gyü lha kur dak

The Mahā Vehicle is the ground tantra, ripening as the divine body;

ཨ་ནུའི་ཐེག་པས་ལམ་རྒྱུད་བདེ་སྟོང་རྫོགས།།

A nü tek pé lam gyü dé tong dzok

The Anu Vehicle is the path tantra, the completion of bliss and emptiness;

ཨྲིའི་ཐེག་པས་འབྲས་རྒྱུད་ཡེ་ཤེས་སྦྱིན།།

a ti tek pé dré gyü yé shé min

The Ati Vehicle is the resultant tantra, maturing as timeless awareness.¹

དབང་བསྐྱར་ཐབས་ཀྱི་ཐེག་པས་རྒྱད་གྲོལ་ཤོག།

wang gyur tab kyi tek pé gyü dröl shok

May our minds be liberated through these skillful vehicles of powerful transformation!

མདོར་ན་དེས་འབྱུང་བྱང་སེམས་གཏིང་ནས་འབྱོངས།།

dor na ngé jung jang sem ting né jong

In summary, deeply cultivating bodhi mind and the resolution to be free,

ལྷག་པའི་ལྷ་ཡི་བྱིན་རྒྱབས་སྦྱིང་ལ་བྱགས།།

lhak pé lha yi jin lab nying la zhuk

Receiving in one's heart the blessings of a supreme deity,

སྒྲུང་གྲགས་རིག་པ་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་གསུམ་གྱི་ངང་།།

nang drak rik pa kyil khor sum gyi ngang

With all sights and sounds as the three maṇḍalas of awareness,

འགྲོ་ཀླན་ཕྱམ་གཅིག་སངས་རྒྱས་སར་འགོད་ཤོག།

dro kun cham chik sang gyé sar gö shok

May all beings simultaneously reach the level of enlightenment!

Youthful Abhaya ("Fearless One") wrote this at the age of fourteen in a playful spirit in the presence of Mogtön, the great holder of the secret, who laughed, "You should call this composition of yours Vajra Verses of Aspiration for the Nine Vehicles." [733]

Auspiciousness!

NOTES

1. *Mahā*, *anu*, and *ati* refer to their longer forms: Mahāyoga, Anuyoga, and Atiyoga. These are the three inner yogas of the nine vehicles.

GLOSSARY

Anu Vehicle

ཨ་ནུའི་ཐེག་པ། • *a nu'i theg pa*

Second of three inner tantras emphasizing completion stage with signs; mostly comprising Mother Tantras.

Ati Vehicle

ཨ་ཏིའི་ཐེག་པ། • *a ti'i theg pa*

Third of the three inner tantras, and highest of the nine vehicles; “Utmost Vehicle” that realizes all phenomena are nothing other than appearances of the naturally arising primordial, unborn awareness.

bodhisattva

བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་དཔལ། བྱང་སེམས། • *byang chub sems dpa', byang sems*

Anyone who has generated the mind of awakening; spiritual “heroes” who engage with awakened minds of great compassion for the liberation of others.

causal vehicles

ཀུན་འབྱུང་འདྲིན་པའི་ཐེག་པ། • *kun 'byung 'dren pa'i theg pa*

Vehicles reversing the cause of suffering; vehicles of śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas.

Fearless One

ཨ་བྱ་ཡ། • *a b+ha ya* • *abhāya*

Epithet of Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo.

four truths

བདེན་བཞི། • *bden bzhi* • *catvāri āryasatyāni*

The four truths of the noble ones of suffering, origin, cessation, and the path; the first teaching given by Gautama Buddha in Sarnath.

hearer

ཉན་ཐོས། • *nyan thos* • śrāvaka

“Hearer” or “listener” of the first turning of the wheel of Dharma of the four truths of the noble ones; an individual who attains liberation through listening to the teachings of a fully enlightened buddha.

Kriyā

བྱ་རྒྱུ། གི་ཡའི་ཐེག་པ། • *bya rgyud; kri ya'i theg pa*

The kriyā tantras, or “action” tantras, are so-called because they are concerned mainly with external conduct and the practices of ritual purification and cleanliness.

Mahā Vehicle

མ་རྒྱའི་ཐེག་པ། • *ma ba'i theg pa* • mahāyoga

First of three inner tantras that emphasizes generation stage; mostly comprising so-called Father Tantras and having two categories, *rgyud sde* (“tantra series”) and *sgrub sde* (“practice series”).

Mogtön

མོག་སྟོན། • *rmog ston*

Mogtön Jigdral Chöying Dorje (nineteenth century), paternal uncle of Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo.

nine vehicles

ཐེག་པ་རིམ་པ་དགུ་ ཐེག་པ་རིམ་པ་དགུ་ • *theg pa rim pa dgu; theg pa rim dgu*

Pathways to enlightenment that encompass all sūtra and tantra approaches, and span all individual capacities on the path.

solitary realizer

རང་རྒྱལ། • *rang rgyal* • pratyekabuddha

One who attains arhatship or liberation mainly through contemplating the twelve links of interdependence, without relying on a teacher or other guides.

Ubhaya

ཕྱི་དང་རྒྱུ། ལུ་རྒྱའི་ཐེག་པ། • *spyod rgyud; u b+ba'i theg pa*

Second of three outer tantras; “conduct” tantra, so-called for placing equal emphasis on the outer actions of body and speech and the inner cultivation of samādhi. It is also called the “tantra of both” (*ubhaya tantra*) because its view conforms with that of yoga tantra while its conduct is like that of kriyā tantra.

Yoga

ཡོ་ག། • *yo ga*

Third of the three outer tantras; Yoga Tantra vehicle of inner yogic meditation on method and wisdom.