



## The Benefits of Reciting the Buddhas' Names

There are two texts that explain the benefits of prostrating to each of the Thirty-Five Confession Buddhas. One is as Lama Atisha explained and the other is by Gyältsab Rinpoche, Lama Tsongkhapa's disciple. Then there is another text by Ngülchu Dharmabhadra that explains it a little bit differently.

The prayer begins, “I (*say your name*) throughout all times, take refuge in the guru...”

Say your name where it says “*da ming*” in Tibetan. This has some effect in the mind. In one way, you can feel sad because you have created negative karma and are obscured. In another way, you can feel happy because of having met a reliable object of refuge. Reciting each name purifies the following negative karmas:

***Guru Shakyamuni Buddha*** – purifies 40,000 eons of negative karma. Sometimes it is said that 80,000 eons is purified.

***Thoroughly Destroying with Vajra Essence (Dorje nying po)*** – 10,000 eons of negative karma are purified. Also, by reciting it, you become enlightened.

***Radiant Jewel (Rin chhen ö thrö)*** – 10,000 eons.

***King, Lord of the Nagas (Luwang gi gyälpo)*** – 1,000 eons. Purifies naga harms. This buddha liberated so many nagas from suffering, benefited them so much, healed their sicknesses. Therefore, the nagas are indebted to this Buddha, King, Lord of the Nagas. So, if you recite the Naga King mantra name, any sicknesses caused by nagas such as cancer and ulcers, leprosy, sicknesses, infections – both inside and outside – and all skin disease, white marks on the skin, gets purified. All skin disease is due to nagas. Also bone aches, like when people sit, all this is due to nagas. By reciting this, you purify the naga and also you purify naga harms. Also, you can think of people who have these sicknesses and then when you recite this, nectar comes from this Buddha and purifies them. This can be very, very helpful. Or, if you have those sicknesses caused by nagas, you can also purify yourself by visualizing and by reciting the name mantra. This is regarded as very powerful purification. By reciting this buddha's mantra 100,000 times, it completely heals the sickness of leprosy. Those very heavy negative karmas that result in suffering you see in this life, they get purified by reciting this buddha's name mantra.

***Army of Heroes*** (*Pa wö de*) – 1,000 eons. Purifies negative karma created with speech, especially gossip.

***Delighted Hero*** (*Päl gye*) – 2,000. It is like inflation! Like the stock market! I’m joking. Purifies negative karma created with the mind.

***Jewel Fire*** (*Rin chhen me*) – 2,000 eons. Five uninterrupted negative karmas, especially causing disunity amongst the Sangha. Also, receiving pollution of Sangha. This means that people offer food, money, and so forth with devotion to the Sangha. Then, as a member of the Sangha, you receive it. Then, one doesn’t practice, doesn’t live in pure morality or doesn’t practice – either you have to offer service to the Sangha or you have to practice Dharma, do service, or studies, or practice, and live in pure morality. Otherwise, it becomes pollution. It obscures the mind, obscures realizations. This purifies that.

***Jewel Moonlight*** (*Rin chhen da ö*) – 8,000 eons. Purifies criticizing the arya Sangha. In general, this means the arya Sangha, those who have realization of the absolute Dharma (emptiness). Of course, by criticizing them one creates much heavier negative karma. However, even criticizing the ordinary Sangha is very, very heavy. The meaning of “arya” is exalted, because they are exalted from lay people. Even ordinary Sangha are exalted from the lay because they are living in a greater number of vows, living in renunciation, having left the householder’s life, and so forth. Exalted, special, exalted from the lay – it can have that meaning.

***Meaningful to See*** (*Tong wa dön yö*) – 1,000 eons of negative karma. The general five uninterrupted negative karmas, and in particular, killing one’s mother. Also purifies heresy.

***Jewel Moon*** (*Rin chhen da wa*) – purifies the five negative karmas of immediate retribution, especially killing one’s father.

***Stainless One*** (*Dri ma me pa*) – purifies the negative karmas close to those of immediate retribution: for example, stepping over monks’ robes or stepping on the shadow of, or on animals belonging to, the guru. Also, stepping on the shadows of stupas.

***Bestowed with Courage*** (*Päl jin*) – the negative karmas accumulated with anger. Also killing arhats.

***Pure One*** (*Tshang pa*) – the negative karmas accumulated with attachment. Also causing blood to flow from a buddha.

***Bestowed with Purity*** (*Tsang pä jin*) – 10,000 eons. Causing disunity among the Sangha.

***Water God*** (*Chu lha*) – 1,000 eons. Provoking or criticizing a female arhat. You advertise the mistakes, telling people.

**Deity of the Water God** (*Chu lhä lha*) – 5,000 eons. Also killing a bodhisattva.

**Glorious Goodness** (*Päl zang*) – 5,000 eons. Also having killed the guru.

**Glorious Sandalwood** (*Tsän dän päl*) – 7,000 eons. Taking belongings of the Sangha and limiting offerings made to the Sangha. For example, a benefactor wants to offer butter to the Sangha and you cut the amount of butter the Sangha gets. You make a limit even though the benefactor wanted to offer more or already offered. Then you say, they don't need that much and give it back. There is a Tibetan term for this that means, "belongs to the Sangha." In this way, you take away from the Sangha. This is regarded as heavy karma, so this heavy karma gets purified. If this negative karma is not done in this life, you might think, "Oh, I never did that. I'm not in this situation. What's the use for me to recite this buddha's name." You might think that. However, since there is no beginning to our past lives, samsaric rebirth, we have created all kinds of negative karmas in the past, even some karmas not done in this life.

**Infinite Splendor** (*Zi ji tha yä*) – 7,000 eons. Destroying holy objects such as stupas.

**Glorious Light** (*Ö päl*) – 7,000 eons. This has immeasurable benefits. Also purifies negative karma collected with anger.

**Sorrowless Glory** (*Nya ngän me pä päl*) – negative karmas collected with attachment gets purified. Also, that accumulated with ignorance.

**Son of Non-craving** (*Se me kyi bu*) – 10,000 eons of negative karma get purified. Also the imprints of negative karma, when you create negative karma there is an imprint left on the mind – that gets purified.

**Glorious Flower** (*Me tog päl*) – 1,000 eons. The negative karmas accumulated with the body.

**Pure Light Rays Clearly Knowing by Play** (*Tsang päi özer nam par röl pä ngön par khyen pa*) – 1,000 eons. The negative karmas collected with speech.

**Lotus Light Rays Clearly Knowing by Play** (*Pä mäi özer nam par röl pä ngön par khyen pa*) – 7,000 eons. The negative karmas accumulated with the mind.

**Glorious Wealth** (*Nor päl*) – the negative karmas accumulated with respect to the Sangha by the Sangha, and possibly also by lay persons, karmic pollutions received from the Sangha with respect to food and so forth. Also the defilements and imprints get purified.

**Glorious Mindfulness** (*Drän pä päl*) – the negative karmas accumulated by criticizing holy beings. Also, criticizing others in general and negative actions done with the body.

***Glorious Name Widely Renowned*** (*Tshän päl shin tu yong drag*) – the negative karmas accumulated out of jealousy. So somebody who has a lot of jealousy has to recite a lot of this Buddha's name! Also being unhappy with a Buddha's descent.

***King Holding the Victory Banner of Foremost Power*** (*Wang pö tog gi gyäl tshän gyi gyäl po*) – the negative karmas accumulated with pride. Also jealousy.

***Glorious One Totally Subduing*** (*Shin tu nam par nön päi päl*) – it says subtle vices and karmas, mainly slander. Also causing others to collect negative karma.

***Utterly Victorious in Battle*** (*Yül lä shin tu nam par gyäl wa*) – the negative karmas accumulated with all the delusions. Also negative karmas done with pride.

***Glorious Transcendence Through Subduing*** (*Nam par nön pä sheg päi päl*) – the negative karmas from causing others to create negative karma. Also slander.

***Glorious Manifestations Illuminating All*** (*Kün nä nang wa kö pä päl*) – the negative karmas accumulated by rejoicing in the negative karmas created by oneself and others. For example, when there was war between the United States and the Muslims – the Afghanis, the Taliban. When one hears that so many of the Taliban were killed or something, if one rejoices, feels happy that so many Taliban were killed, this is what that is. This is very heavy negative karma, rejoicing when others have created negative karma. So, you recite this buddha's name to purify that.

***All-Subduing Jewel Lotus*** (*Rin chhen pä mäi nam par nön pa*) – the negative karma of avoiding the Dharma. The means while something is Buddha's teaching, thinking or saying that this is not Buddha's teaching. For example, Theravadan teachings, or Mahayana teachings, a Theravadan teaching which is the Hinayana teaching of the Buddha – saying it is no good and so avoiding it, or rejecting another teaching saying it is no good. Or being a Hinayana and then rejecting a Mahayana teaching, saying it is not Buddha's teaching or that is no good, so rejecting it. Then a tantric practitioner rejecting sutra practices saying there is no point to practice them or that they are no good and so rejecting or avoiding them, like that. The real meaning of avoiding the Dharma is to give up from the heart. Pabongkha Rinpoche mentioned of the four teaching traditions, while it is a teaching of the Buddha, then saying that while it is a teaching of the Buddha, it is no good. That's avoiding Dharma. Of course, something which is not Buddha's teaching, of course that doesn't become avoiding Dharma, when you say the truth, that you know it is not Buddha's teaching. In order to avoid the holy Dharma, it has to be the holy Dharma – Buddha's teaching.

***King of the Lord of Mountains Firmly Seated on Jewel and Lotus*** (*Dra chom pa yang dag par dzog päi sang gyä rin po chhe dang pä ma la rab tu zhug pa ri wang gi gyäl po*) – purifies the negative karma created by degenerating samaya with the guru and from criticizing the guru. If things like this have happened, you can recite this name

two or three times more. Even if you recite all the other names only once, but you can recite this name three times. These things have happened, they have happened in this life many times.

Lama Atisha explained that why these names have so much power, that the Thirty-Five Buddhas, before when they were following the bodhisattva's path, they made prayers. They prayed that when we become enlightened, anybody who recites our names and does prostrations, may they purify such and such – this and that negative karma. They made so many prayers in the past, when they were bodhisattvas. This is the reason why these names have so much power to purify and benefit. Also, when they became enlightened, they achieved the ten powers. One of the Buddha's qualities is having achieved the ten powers. Amongst the ten powers, the power of prayer is one of them. Because the Thirty-Five Buddhas became enlightened and achieved all the Buddha's qualities, they achieved the ten powers, including the power of prayer. Because of that, when sentient beings recite their names, it has the power for the sentient beings to receive all that benefit. This is how we get benefit. So there are unbelievable skies of benefit from reciting these buddha's names, even once. There is unbelievable purification. That is the result of karma and that came from the root, compassion.

When the Thirty-Five Buddhas were bodhisattvas, not only during the time they were bodhisattvas, but before, even before they generated bodhichitta, there was the root of bodhichitta, compassion – the great compassion they generated to us sentient beings. So, actually, all these skies of benefit we get from reciting these names, this mantra, why it has so much power, came from that compassion, even before bodhichitta – the root of bodhichitta – compassion. Even before entering the path to enlightenment, there came the root, compassion. This is how I think. This is the power of compassion, the benefit of compassion that we numberless sentient beings receive.