

The Divine Mantra

by

Ajaan Lee Dhammadharo

Translated by

Thānissaro Bhikkhu
(Geoffrey DeGraff)

FOR FREE DISTRIBUTION

I have written this book, *The Divine Mantra*, as a means of drawing to purity those who practice the Dhamma, because the chant given here brings benefits to those who memorize and recite it, inasmuch as it deals directly with matters that exist in each of us. Normally, once we are born, we all dwell in the six properties. These properties are brought together by our own actions, both good and evil. This being the case, these properties can give a great deal of trouble to those who dwell in them, like a child who can be a constant nuisance to its parents. Repeating this chant, then, is like nourishing and training a child to be healthy and mature; when the child is healthy and mature, its parents can rest and relax. Repeating this chant is like feeding a child and lulling it to sleep with a beautiful song: the *Buddhaguna*, the recitation of the Buddha's virtues.

The power of the *Buddhaguna* can exert influence on the properties in each individual, purifying them and investing them with power (*kāya-siddhi*), just as all material properties exert gravitational pull on one another every second. Or you might make a comparison with an electric wire: This chant is like an electric current, extending to wherever you direct it. It can even improve the environment, because it also includes the chant of the Kapila hermit, whose story runs as follows:

There was once a hermit who repeated this chant in a teak forest in India. As a result, the forest became a paradise. The trees took turns producing flowers and fruit throughout the year. The waters were crystal clean. Any diseased animal that happened to pass into the forest and drink the water would be completely cured of its illness. The grasses and vines were always fresh and green. Fierce animals that normally attacked and ate one another would, when entering the forest, live together in peace as friends. Life was joyous for animals in this forest. The smell of dead animals never appeared because whenever an animal was about to die, it would have to go and die elsewhere. This forest is where the Buddha's ancestors, the Sakyan clan, later established their capital, Kapilavatthu, which still stands today within the borders of Nepal.

All of this was due to the sacred power of the chant repeated by the Kapila hermit. And this is how he did it: First, he faced the east and repeated the chant day and night for seven days; the second week, he faced north; the third week, south; and the fourth week, west. The fifth week, he looked down toward the earth; the sixth week, he raised his hands and lifted his face to the sky, made his heart clear, and focused on the stars as the object of his meditation. The seventh week, he practiced breath meditation, keeping his breath in mind and letting it spread out in every direction through the power of a mind infused with the four Sublime Attitudes: good will, compassion, empathetic joy, and equanimity. Thus the chant was named *The Divine Mantra*.

When all of this was related to me while I was in India, I couldn't help thinking of the Buddha, who was pure by virtue of the peerless quality of his heart to the point where he was able to invest the properties in his body with power, making them more pure than any other properties in the world. His relics, for example, have appeared to those devoted to him and, I have heard, come and go on their own, which is very strange indeed.

All of these things are accomplished through the power of a pure heart. When the heart is pure, the properties also become pure as a result. When these properties exist in the world, they can have a refreshing influence on the environment—because all properties are interrelated. If we Buddhists set our minds on training ourselves in this direction, we can be a powerful influence to the good in proportion to our numbers. But if we don't train ourselves and instead run about filling ourselves

with evil, our hearts are bound to become hot and disturbed. The flames in our hearts are bound to set the properties in our bodies on fire, and the heat from these inner fires is certain to spread in all directions throughout the world.

As this heat gathers and becomes greater, it will raise temperatures in the atmosphere around the world. The heat from the sun will become fiercer. Weather will become abnormal. The seasons, for example, will deviate from their normal course. And when this happens, human life will become more and more of a hardship. The ultimate stage of this evil will be the destruction of the world by the fires at the end of the eon, which will consume the earth.

All this from our own thoughtlessness, letting nature by and large go ahead and follow this course—which shows that we're not very rational, because everything has a reason, everything comes from a cause. The world we live in has the heart as its cause. If the heart is good, the world is sure to be good. If the heart is corrupt, the world is sure to be corrupt.

Thus, in this book I have written down the way to train the heart so as to lead to our happiness and wellbeing in the coming future.

P A R T I : H O M A G E

To pay respect to, and ask forgiveness of, the Buddha's relics, relics of the Noble Disciples, Buddha images, stupas, the Bodhi tree—all of which are objects that all Buddhists should respect, both inwardly and outwardly:

Araham sammā-sambuddho bhagavā.

The Blessed One is Worthy & Rightly Self-awakened.

Buddham bhagavantam abhivādemī.

I bow down before the Awakened, Blessed One.

(B O W D O W N)

Svākkhāto bhagavatā dhammo.

The Dhamma is well-expounded by the Blessed One.

Dhammam namassāmi.

I pay homage to the Dhamma.

(B O W D O W N)

Supaṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka-saṅgho.

The Saṅgha of the Blessed One's disciples has practiced well.

Saṅgham namāmi.

I pay respect to the Saṅgha.

(B O W D O W N)

Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammā-sambuddhassa.

(T H R E E T I M E S .)

Homage to the Blessed One, the Worthy One, the Rightly Self-awakened One.

Ukāsa, dvāra-tayena kataṃ, sabbam apāradham khamatu no [me] bhante.

We [I] ask your leave. We [I] ask you to forgive us [me] for whatever wrong we [I] have done with the three doors (of body, speech, & mind).

Vandāmi bhante cetiyam, sabbam sabbattha ṭhānesu paṭiṭṭhitam sāriraṅka-dhātum, mahā-bodhiṃ buddha-rūpaṃ, sakkārattham.

I revere every stupa established in every place, every relic of the Buddha's body, every Great Bodhi tree, every Buddha image that is an object of veneration.

Aham vandāmi dhātuyo, aham vandāmi sabbaso, iccetam

ratanattayaṃ, ahaṃ vandāmi sabbadā.

I revere the relics. I revere them everywhere. I always revere the Triple Gem.

Buddha-pūjā mahā-tejavanto, Dhamma-pūjā mahappañño, Saṅgha-pūjā mahā-bhogāvaho.

Homage to the Buddha brings great glory. Homage to the Dhamma, great discernment. Homage to the Saṅgha, great wealth.

Buddhaṃ Dhammaṃ Saṅghaṃ, jīvitāṃ yāva-nibbānaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.

I go to the Buddha, Dhamma, & Saṅgha as my life & refuge until reaching Liberation.

Parisuddho ahaṃ bhante. Parisuddhoti maṃ, Buddho Dhammo Saṅgho dhāretu.

I am morally pure. May the Buddha, Dhamma, & Saṅgha recognize me as morally pure.

Sabbe sattā sadā hontu, averā sukha-jivino.

May all living beings always live happily, always free from animosity.

Kataṃ puñña-phalaṃ mayhaṃ, sabbe bhāgī bhavantu te.

May all share in the blessings springing from the good I have done.

(B O W D O W N T H R E E T I M E S)

P A R T I I : C H A N T I N G

(Investing the six properties with the Buddhagūṇa)

Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammā-sambuddhassa.

(T H R E E T I M E S .)

Homage to the Blessed One, the Worthy One, the Rightly Self-awakened One.

Buddhaṃ āyu-vaḍḍhanaṃ jīvitāṃ yāva-nibbānaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.

I go to the Buddha as my life, vitality, & refuge until reaching Liberation.

Dhammaṃ āyu-vaḍḍhanaṃ jīvitāṃ yāva-nibbānaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.

I go to the Dhamma as my life, vitality, & refuge until reaching Liberation.

Saṅghaṃ āyu-vaḍḍhanaṃ jīvitāṃ yāva-nibbānaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.

I go to the Saṅgha as my life, vitality, & refuge until reaching Liberation.

Dutiyampi buddhaṃ āyu-vaḍḍhanaṃ jivitaṃ yāva-nibbānaṃ
saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.

A second time, I go to the Buddha as my life, vitality, & refuge until reaching Liberation.

Dutiyampi dhammaṃ āyu-vaḍḍhanaṃ jivitaṃ yāva-nibbānaṃ
saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.

A second time, I go to the Dhamma as my life, vitality, & refuge until reaching Liberation.

Dutiyampi saṅghaṃ āyu-vaḍḍhanaṃ jivitaṃ yāva-nibbānaṃ
saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.

A second time, I go to the Saṅgha as my life, vitality, & refuge until reaching Liberation.

Tatīyampi buddhaṃ āyu-vaḍḍhanaṃ jivitaṃ yāva-nibbānaṃ
saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.

A third time, I go to the Buddha as my life, vitality, & refuge until reaching Liberation.

Tatīyampi dhammaṃ āyu-vaḍḍhanaṃ jivitaṃ yāva-nibbānaṃ
saraṇaṃ gacchāmi.

A third time, I go to the Dhamma as my life, vitality, & refuge until reaching Liberation.

Tatīyampi saṅghaṃ āyu-vaḍḍhanaṃ jivitaṃ yāva-nibbānaṃ saraṇaṃ
gacchāmi.

A third time, I go to the Saṅgha as my life, vitality, & refuge until reaching Liberation.

1. Wind property:

Vāyo ca buddha-guṇaṃ arahāṃ buddho itipi so bhagavā
namāmi'haṃ.

*Wind has the virtue of the Buddha. The Awakened One is worthy & so he is Blessed:
I pay him homage.*

Arahāṃ sammā-sambuddho,

Worthy is the Rightly Self-awakened One,

Vijjā-caraṇa-sampanno sugato lokavidū,

*consummate in knowledge & conduct, one who has gone the good way, knower of the
cosmos,*

Anuttaro purisa-damma-sārathi satthā deva-manussānaṃ buddho
bhagavāti.

*unexcelled trainer of those who can be taught, teacher of human & divine beings;
awakened; blessed.*

(Think of the Buddha & his purity)

Vāyo ca dhammetaṃ arahāṃ buddho itipi so bhagavā namāmi'haṃ.

*Wind is that quality. The Awakened One is worthy & so he is Blessed: I pay him
homage.*

Svākkhāto bhagavatā dhammo,

The Dhamma is well-expounded by the Blessed One,

Sandiṭṭhiko akāliko ehipassiko,

to be seen here & now, timeless, inviting all to come & see,

Opanayiko paccattaṃ veditabbo viññūhiti.

pertinent, to be seen by the observant for themselves.

(Think of Ven. Sāriputta & his wisdom)

Vāyo ca saṅghānaṃ arahāṃ buddho itipi so bhagavā namāmi'haṃ.

*Wind is given over to the Saṅghas. The Awakened One is worthy & so he is Blessed:
I pay him homage.*

Supaṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka-saṅgho,

The Saṅgha of the Blessed One's disciples who have practiced well,

Uju-paṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka-saṅgho,

the Saṅgha of the Blessed One's disciples who have practiced straightforwardly,

Ñāya-paṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka-saṅgho,

the Saṅgha of the Blessed One's disciples who have practiced methodically,

Sāmīci-paṭipanno bhagavato sāvaka-saṅgho,

the Saṅgha of the Blessed One's disciples who have practiced masterfully,

Yadidaṃ cattāri purisa-yugāni aṭṭha purisa-puggalā:

i.e., the four pairs—the eight types—of Noble Ones:

Esa bhagavato sāvaka-saṅgho—

That is the Saṅgha of the Blessed One's disciples—

Āhuneyyo pāhuneyyo dakkhiṇeyyo añjali-karaṇīyo,

worthy of gifts, worthy of hospitality, worthy of offerings, worthy of respect,

Anuttaraṃ puññakkhettaṃ lokassāti.

the incomparable field of merit for the world.

(Think of Ven. Moggallāna, his supernormal powers & his compassion.)

Dhātu-parisuddhānubhāvena, sabba-dukkhā sabba-bhayā sabba-roḡā vimuccanti.

Through the power of the purity of the property, they are released from all pain, all danger, all disease.

Iti uddham-adho tiriyaṃ sabbadhi sabbattatāya sabbāvantam lokam,
mettā-karuṇā-muditā-upekkhā-sahagatena cetasā, catuddisaṃ
pharivā viharati,

When one dwells spreading an awareness imbued with good will, compassion, empathetic joy, & equanimity in this way to the four directions, above, below, around, in every way throughout the entire cosmos,

Sukham supati, Sukham paṭibujjhati, Na pāpakaṃ supinaṃ passati,
one sleeps with ease, wakes with ease, dreams no evil dreams.

Manussānaṃ piyo hoti, amanussānaṃ piyo hoti, Devatā rakkhanti,
Nāssa aggi vā visam vā sattham vā kamati,

One is dear to human beings, dear to non-human beings, guarded by divine beings, and untouched by fire, poison, or weapons.

Tuvaṇṇam cittam samādhiyati, Mukha-vaṇṇo vipasidati,

One's mind is quickly concentrated & one's complexion bright.

Asammulho kālam karoti, Uttariṃ appaṭivijjhanto brahma-lokūpago
hoti.

One dies unconfused and—if penetrating no higher—is reborn in the Brahmā worlds.

Iti uddham-adho tiriyaṃ averaṃ averā sukha-jivino.

Thus feeling no animosity above, below, & all around, free from animosity, one lives happily.

Kataṃ puṇṇa-phalam mayham sabbe bhāgi bhavantu te.

May all share in the blessings springing from the good I have done.

Bhavantu sabba-maṅgalaṃ rakkhantu sabba-devatā.

May there be every blessing; may all divine beings protect.

Sabba-buddhānubhāvena sabba-dhammānubhāvena sabba-saṅghānubhāvena sotthi hontu nirantaram.

Through the power of all the Buddhas, Dhammas, & Sanghas may there be well-being without end.

Araham buddho itipi so bhagavā namāmi'ham.

The Awakened One is worthy & so he is Blessed: I pay him homage.

The chant for each of the remaining properties is identical with the chant for the wind property, i.e., (1) the passage on the Buddha's virtues, (2) the passage on the Dhamma's virtues, (3) the passage on the Saṅgha's virtues, followed by the passage beginning, '*Dhātu-parisuddhānubhāvena....*' Only the name of the property is changed:

2. *Fire property:*

Tejo ca buddha-guṇaṃ...

Tejo ca dhammetaṃ...

Tejo ca saṅghānaṃ...

3. *Water property:*

Āpo ca buddha-guṇaṃ...

Āpo ca dhammetaṃ...

Āpo ca saṅghānaṃ...

4. *Earth property:*

Paṭhavi ca buddha-guṇaṃ...

Paṭhavi ca dhammetaṃ...

Paṭhavi ca saṅghānaṃ...

5. *Space property:*

Ākāsā ca buddha-guṇaṃ...

Ākāsā ca dhammetaṃ...

Ākāsā ca saṅghānaṃ...

6. *Consciousness property:*

Viññāṇaṅca buddha-guṇaṃ...

Viññāṇaṅca dhammetaṃ...

Viññāṇaṅca saṅghānaṃ...

Once you have memorized section 1, the remaining sections will be no problem, because they are virtually the same, differing only in the name of the property.

These six properties exist within each of us, so when you repeat the chant you should also think about the property you are chanting about: Wind—feelings of movement, such as the in-and-out breath; Fire—feelings of warmth; Water—liquid or cool feelings; Earth—feelings of heaviness or solidity; Space—feelings of emptiness; Consciousness—awareness of objects. If you think about these

properties while you chant, the chant will be very beneficial.

The same chant can be used for the five aggregates, the twelve sense media, and the 32 parts of the body. The method of chanting is the same as with the six properties, simply substituting the names of the various aggregates, sense media, and parts of the body, as follows:

The Five Aggregates

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| 1. Rūpañca | <i>Form</i> |
| 2. Vedanā ca | <i>Feeling</i> |
| 3. Saññā ca | <i>Perception</i> |
| 4. Saṅkhārā ca | <i>Fabrications</i> |
| 5. Viññāṇaṇca | <i>Consciousness of the six senses</i> |

The Twelve Sense Media

- | | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. Cakkhu ca | <i>Eyes</i> |
| 2. Sotañca | <i>Ears</i> |
| 3. Ghānañca | <i>Nose</i> |
| 4. Jivhā ca | <i>Tongue</i> |
| 5. Kāyo ca | <i>Body</i> |
| 6. Mano ca | <i>Mind</i> |
| 7. Rūpañca | <i>Forms</i> |
| 8. Saddo ca | <i>Sounds</i> |
| 9. Gandho ca | <i>Aromas</i> |
| 10. Raso ca | <i>Flavors</i> |
| 11. Poṭṭhabbā ca | <i>Tactile sensations</i> |
| 12. Dhammārammaṇaṇca | <i>Ideas</i> |

The 32 Parts of the Body

- | | |
|------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Kesā ca | <i>Hair of the head</i> |
| 2. Lomā ca | <i>Hair of the body</i> |
| 3. Nakhā ca | <i>Nails</i> |
| 4. Dantā ca | <i>Teeth</i> |
| 5. Taco ca | <i>Skin</i> |
| 6. Maṃsañca | <i>Flesh</i> |
| 7. Nhārū ca | <i>Tendons</i> |
| 8. Aṭṭhi ca | <i>Bones</i> |
| 9. Aṭṭhimiñjaṇca | <i>Bone marrow</i> |
| 10. Vakkañca | <i>Spleen</i> |

11. Hadayañca	<i>Heart</i>
12. Yakanañca	<i>Liver</i>
13. Kilomakañca	<i>Membranes</i>
14. Pihakañca	<i>Kidneys</i>
15. Papphāsañca	<i>Lungs</i>
16. Antañca	<i>Large intestines</i>
17. Antaḡuṇañca	<i>Small intestines</i>
18. Udariyañca	<i>Gorge</i>
19. Karisañca	<i>Feces</i>
20. Matthaluṅgañca	<i>Brain</i>
21. Pittañca	<i>Gall</i>
22. Semhañca	<i>Phlegm</i>
23. Pubbo ca	<i>Lymph</i>
24. Lohitañca	<i>Blood</i>
25. Sedo ca	<i>Sweat</i>
26. Medo ca	<i>Fat</i>
27. Assu ca	<i>Tears</i>
28. Vasā ca	<i>Oil</i>
29. Kheḷo ca	<i>Saliva</i>
30. Siṅghāṇikā ca	<i>Mucus</i>
31. Lasikā ca	<i>Oil in the joints</i>
32. Muttañca	<i>Urine</i>

P A R T I I I : M E D I T A T I O N

There are seven basic steps:

1. Start out with three or seven long in-and-out breaths, thinking *bud-* with the in-breath, and *dho* with the out. Keep the meditation syllable as long as the breath.

2. Be clearly aware of each in-and-out breath.

3. Observe the breath as it goes in and out, noticing whether it's comfortable or uncomfortable, broad or narrow, obstructed or free-flowing, fast or slow, short or long, warm or cool. If the breath doesn't feel comfortable, change it until it does. For instance, if breathing in long and out long is uncomfortable, try breathing in short and out short. As soon as you find that your breathing feels comfortable, let this comfortable breath sensation spread to the different parts of the body.

To begin with, inhale the breath sensation at the base of the skull and let it flow all the way down the spine. Then, if you are male, let it spread down your right leg to the sole of your foot, to the ends of your toes, and out into the air. Inhale the breath sensation at the base of the skull again and let it spread down your spine, down your left leg to the ends of your toes, and out into the air. (If you are female, begin with the left side first, because the male and female nervous systems are different.)

Then let the breath from the base of the skull spread down over both shoulders, past your elbows and wrists, to the tips of your fingers, and out into the air.

Let the breath at the base of the throat spread down the central nerve at the front of the body, past the lungs and liver, all the way down to the bladder and colon.

Inhale the breath right at the middle of the chest and let it go all the way down to your intestines.

Let all these breath sensations spread so that they connect and flow together, and you'll feel a greatly improved sense of wellbeing.

4. Learn four ways of adjusting the breath:

- a. in long and out long,
- b. in short and out short,
- c. in short and out long,
- d. in long and out short.

Breathe whichever way is most comfortable for you. Or, better yet, learn to breathe comfortably all four ways, because your physical condition and your breath are always changing.

5. Become acquainted with the bases or focal points for the mind—the resting spots of the breath—and center your awareness on whichever one seems most comfortable. A few of these bases are:

- a. the tip of the nose,
- b. the middle of the head,
- c. the palate,
- d. the base of the throat,
- e. the breastbone (the tip of the sternum),
- f. the navel (or a point just above it).

If you suffer from frequent headaches or nervous problems, don't focus on any spot above the base of the throat. And don't try to force the breath or put yourself into a trance. Breathe freely and naturally. Let the mind be at ease with the breath—but not to the point where it slips away.

6. Spread your awareness—your sense of conscious feeling—throughout the entire body.

7. Unite the breath sensations throughout the body, letting them flow together comfortably, keeping your awareness as broad as possible. Once you are fully aware of the aspects of the breath you already know in your body, you'll come to know all sorts of other aspects as well. The breath, by its nature, has many facets: breath sensations flowing in the nerves, those flowing around and about the nerves, those spreading from the nerves to every pore. Beneficial breath sensations and harmful ones are mixed together by their very nature.

To summarize: (a) for the sake of improving the energy already existing in every part of your body, so that you can contend with such things as disease and pain; and (b) for the sake of clarifying the knowledge already within you, so that it can become a basis for the skills leading to release and purity of heart—you should always bear these seven steps in mind, because they are absolutely basic to every aspect of breath meditation.

* * *

Homage, chanting, and meditation have to go hand-in-hand before they can truly purify the mind, in line with the basic principles of the Buddha's teachings:

Sabba-pāpassa akaraṇaṃ

Don't let anything evil
leak into your thoughts, words, or deeds.

Kusalassūpasampadā

Develop skill in all of your actions.

What this means is that in homage we have acted skillfully with our deeds, in chanting we have acted skillfully with our words, and in meditation we have acted skillfully with our thoughts. Once this is the case, we will be able to reach the heart of the Buddha's teachings:

Sacitta-pariyodapanam

Attain purity of heart.

Everything in the world comes about solely through the power of the heart. A corrupt heart will abuse this power. A well-trained heart can use this power to uplift others and to gain blessings beyond price.