

Praise to the Seventeen Nalanda Masters (Päl na len dräi pän drub chu dün gyi söl deb)
by His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Herein is a praise to seventeen Nalanda masters entitled “A Sun Illuminating the Threefold Faith”

1. DRO LA PHÄN ZHE THUG JE RAB TRÜN PÄI

Born from great compassion aspiring to help all beings,

PANG TOG KYOB PA CHHOG NYE LHA YI LHA

god of gods, you have attained the savior’s state of abandonment and realization

TEN JUNG TAM GYI DRO NAM DREN DZÄ PÄI

and you guide beings through the discourse of dependent origination.

THUB WANG MA WÄI NYI MAR GÖ CHHAG TSHÄL

O able one, the sun of speech, I bow my head to you.

2. GYÄL YUM GONG DÖN THA TRÄL DE NYI DÖN

I bow at your feet, O Nagarjuna, most skilled in elucidating

TEN JUNG RIG TSÜL ZAB MÖ SÄL KHÄ PÄI

suchness free of elaborations—the essence of the Mother of Conquerors sutras—

GYÄL WÄI LUNG ZHIN THEG CHHOG U MÄI SÖL

through the reasoning of dependent origination.

JE DZÄ LU DRUB ZHAB LA SÖL WA DEB

In accord with Conqueror’s prophecy, you initiated the Middle Way.

3. DE SÄ THU WO KHÄ SHING DRUB PÄI CHHOG

I bow to your principal son, bodhisattva Aryadeva,

CHI NANG DRUB THA GYA TSHÖ’I PHA THAR SÖN

most learned and realized,

LU DRUB ZHUNG DZIN KÜN GYI TSUG NOR PÄL

who has crossed the ocean of Buddhist and non-Buddhist philosophies,

GYÄL SÄ PHAG PA LHA LA SÖL WA DEB

and is the crown jewel among those who uphold Nagarjuna's treatises.

4. PHAG PÄI GONG PA TEN JUNG THAR THUG DÖN

I bow to you, O Buddhapalita, who has reached

TAG YÖ MING KYANG TSAM GYI ZAB MÖ'I NÄ

the supreme adept's state and who has clearly elucidated

SÄL DZÄ DRUB PA CHHOG GI SAR SHEG PA

Noble [Nagarjuna's] intent, the final meaning of dependent origination,

SANG GYÄ KYANG KYI ZHAB LA SÖL WA DEB

the profound point of existence as mere designation and as mere name.

5. DEN PÄ NGÖ PO KYE SOG THA KAG CHING

I bow to you, O master Bhavaviveka, most accomplished pandita,

TSHÄ MA THÜN NANG CHHI DÖN SHE PA YI

you initiated the philosophical tradition wherein while negating

DRUB THÄ'I SÖL TÖ YONG DZOG PAN DI TA

such extremes as the arising of truly existing things,

LOB PÖN LEG DÄN JE LA SÖL WA DEB

one upholds commonly verified knowledge as well as external reality.

6. TEN DREL KYEN NYI DI PA TSAM NYI KYI

I bow to you, O Chandrakirti, who disseminated all the paths of sutra and tantra.

THA NYI SEL WÄ NANG TONG U MÄ'I TSHÜL

You are most skilled in teaching the profound and the vast aspects of the Middle Way—

ZAB GYÄ DOM KHÄ DO NGAG YONG DZOG LAM

the union of appearance and emptiness dispelling the two extremes—

GYÄ DZÄ DA WA DRAG PA SÖL WA DEB

by means of dependent origination that is mere conditionality.

7. NGO TSHAR MÄ JUNG NYING JE CHEN PÖ'I LAM

I bow to you, O bodhisattva Shantideva, most skilled

ZAB DANG GYA CHE'I RIG TSHÜL NAM MANG GI

at revealing to the assembly of most-fortunate spiritual trainees

KÄL ZANG DÜL JE'I TSHOG LA TÖN KHÄ PA

the excellent path of compassion that is most wondrous

GYÄL SÄ SHI WA LHA LA SÖL WA DEB

through lines of reasoning most profound and vast.

8. DÜL JE'I KHAM SHIN NYI TONG U MÄ LAM

I bow to you, O master abbot Shantarakshita, who initiated

SÖL TÖ U TSHÄ RIG TSHÜL JE KHÄ SHING

the tradition of Nondual Middle Way in accordance with trainee's mental disposition.

KHA WÄ'I JONG SU GYÄL TEN PÄL DZÄ PA

You're versed in the reasoning modes of both Middle Way and valid cognition,

KHÄN CHEN SHI WA TSO LA SÖL WA DEB

and you disseminated the Conqueror's teaching in the Land of Snows.

9. THA DRÄL U MÄ'I TA DANG SHI LHAG ZUNG

I bow at your feet, O Kamalashila, you who, having explained excellently

GOM RIM DO GYÜ SHIN DU LEG TRÄL NÄ

the stages of meditation of the Middle Way view free of elaborations

GANG JONG GYÄL TÄN TRÜL ME SÄL DZÄ PA

and the union of tranquility and insight in accordance with sutra and tantra,

PÄ MÄ NGANG TSÜL ZHAB LA SÖL WA DEB

flawlessly elucidated the Conqueror's teaching in the Land of Snows.

10. JAM PÄ JE ZUNG THEG CHHEN DE NÖ KÜN

I bow at your feet, O Asanga, you who, sustained by Maitreya,

LEG PAR PEL KHÄ GYA CHHEN LAM TÖN ZHING

were versed in disseminating excellently all Mahayana scriptures

GYÄL WÄ LUNG ZHIN NAM RIG SHING TÄ SÖL

and taught the vast path and who, in accord with the Conqueror's prophecy,

JE DZÄ THOG ME ZHAB LA SÖL WA DEB

initiated the tradition of Mind Only.

11. CHHÖ NGÖN DE DÜN NYI TONG SÖL ZUNG NÄ

I bow at your feet, O master Vasubandhu, you who, while upholding

JE DO NAM RIG DRUB THA SÄL DZÄ PA

the systems of the seven Abhidharma treatises as well as Nonduality,

KÜN KHYEN NYI PAR DRAG PÄ'I KHÄ PÄ'I CHHOG

clarified the tenets of Vaibhashika, Sautrantika, and Mind Only.

LOB PÖN YIG NYEN ZHAB LA SÖL WA DEB

Foremost among learned ones, you're renowned as a second Omniscient One.

12. THUB PÄ'I ZHUNG LUG NGÖ TOB RIG PA YI

I bow at your feet, O Dignaga, the logician,

TÖN CHHIR TSHÄ MÄ'I GO GYA LEG CHE NÄ

you who, in order to present the Buddha's way through evidence-based reasoning,

NAM CHÖ LO MIG CHHIN DZÄ TSÄ MA PA

opened hundredfold gateways of valid cognition

CHHOG KYI LANG PÖ'I ZHAB LA SÖL WA DEB

and offered as a gift to the world the eyes of critical intelligence.

13. CHHI NANG TSÄ MÄ'I NÄ KÜN LEG GONG SHING

I bow at your feet, O Dharmakirti, you who, understanding

DO SEM ZAB GYÄ LAM KÜN RIG LAM NÄ

all the essential points of both Buddhist and non-Buddhist epistemology,

NGE TER MÄ JUNG CHHÖ TSHÜL DOM KHÄ PÄ'I

brought conviction in all the profound and vast paths of Sautrantika and Mind Only by means of reasoning;

CHHO KYI DRAG PÄ'I ZHAB LA SÖL WA DEB

you were most versed in teaching the excellent Dharma.

14. THOG ME KU CHHE LÄ ONG SHER CHHIN DÖN

I bow at your feet, O Vimuktisena, you who lit the lamp that illuminates

YÖ ME THA DRÄL U MÄ'I SÖL ZHIN DU

the meaning of the Ornament treatise wherein the themes of Perfection of Wisdom

GYÄN GYI ZHUNG DÖN NANG WÄ'I DRÖN ME BAR

stemming from Asanga and his brother were expounded

PHAG PA DRÖL DE'I ZHAB LA SÖL WA DEB

in accord with Middle Way view free of existence and nonexistence.

15. YUM DÖN JE LA GYÄL WÄ'I LUNG TÄN THOB

I bow to you, O master Haribhadra, who were prophesized

MI PHAM GÖN PÖ'I MÄN NGAG JI ZHIN DU

by the Conqueror as expounder of the meaning of the Mother the perfection of wisdom.

YUM SUM SHER CHHIN ZHUNG CHHOG SÄL DZÄ PÄ'I

You elucidated the excellent treatise on the perfection of wisdom, the three mothers,

LOB PÖN SENG GE SANG POR SÖL WA DEB

in perfect accord with the instruction of the savior Maitreya.

16. DÜL WA BUM DE GONG DÖN LEG DÜ NÄ

I bow at your feet, O Gunaprabha, most excellent in both

THAM CHÄ YÖ MÄ LUG ZHIN SO SO THAR

integrity and scholarship, who, having excellently distilled the intent

MA NOR LEG DOM TÄN KHÄ CHHOG GYUR PA

of one hundred thousand disciplinary teachings,

YÖN TÄN Ö KYI ZHAB LA SÖL WA DEB

expounded the individual liberation vows flawlessly according to the tradition of Sarvastivada school.

17. LAB SUM YÖN TÄN NOR BÜ DZÖ LA WANG

I bow at your feet, O Shakyaprabha, supreme upholder of discipline,

DÜL TÄN DRI ME RING DU PHEL WÄ'I LÄ

who reigned over the treasury of jewels of the three trainings.

GYA CHHEN ZHUNG DÖN LEG TRÄL DÜL DZIN CHHOG

In order to disseminate the stainless discipline teachings for a long time,

SHA KYA Ö KYI ZHAB LA SÖL WA DEB

you excellently expounded the meaning of the vast [discipline] treatises.

18. THUB SUNG ZAB GYÄ KA SÖL MA LÜ PA

I bow to you, O master Atisha, you who, having taught

KYE BU SUM GYI LAM DU DOM DZÄ DE

all the profound and vast traditions related to the words of the Buddha

GANG JONG THUB TÄN PEL WÄ'I DRIN CHEN JE

within the framework of the path of the persons of three capacities,

JO WO A TI SHA LA SÖL WA DEB

were the most kind master disseminating the Buddha's teaching in the Land of Snows.

19. DE TAR DZAM LING GYÄN GYUR KHÄ PÄ PHÜL

Having thus praised these most learned ornaments of the world,

NGO TSHAR LEG SHÄ JUNG NÄ CHHOG NAM LA

the excellent sources of wondrous and insightful teachings,

MI CHHE DANG WÄ'I YI KYI SÖL TAB PÄ

may I, with a mind unwavering and pure,

DAG GYÜ MIN CHING DRÖL WAR JIN GYI LOB

be blessed so that my mind becomes ripened and free.

20. ZHI YI NÄ TSHÜL DEN NYI DÖN SHE PÄ

By understanding the two truths, the way things exist,

DEN SHI KHOR WA JUG DOG JI ZHIN NGE

I will ascertain how, through the four truths, we enter and exit samsara;

TSHÄ MÄ DRANG PÄ'I KYAB SUM DÄ PA TÄN

I will make firm the faith in the Three Jewels that is born of valid reason.

THAR LAM TSA WA TSUG PAR JIN GYI LOB

May I be blessed so that the root of the liberating path is firmly established within me.

21. DUG KÜN NYER ZHI'I THAR PA DÖN NYER WÄ'I

May I be blessed to perfect the training in renunciation—

NGE JUNG LO DANG DRO NAM KYOB DÖ PÄ'I

an aspiration for liberation, the total pacification of suffering and its origin—

CHHOG THÄ TUG PÄ'I NYING JE'I TSA WA CHÄN

as well as in an uncontrived awakening mind that is rooted in

CHÖ MIN JANG SEM JONG PAR JIN GYI LOB

an infinite compassion that wishes to protect all sentient beings.

22. SHING TA CHHEN PÖ'I SHUNG GI DÖN NAM LA

May I be blessed so that I may easily develop conviction in all the paths

THÖ SAM GOM PÄ PHA RÖL CHHIN PA DANG

pertaining to the profound points of the Perfection and Vajra Vehicles,

DOR JE THEG PÄ'I ZAB NÄ LAM KÜN LA

by engaging in study, reflection, and meditation on the meaning

NGE PA DE LAG NYE PAR JIN GYI LOB of the treatises of the great trailblazers.¹

23. KYE ZHING KYE WAR LAB SUM DÄN PÄ'I TEN

May I, in life after life, obtain excellent embodiments that support

LEG THOB SHÄ DANG DRUB PÄ LUNG TOG TÄN

the three trainings and make contributions to the teaching that equal the great trailblazers

DZIN CHING PEL LA SHING TA CHHE NAM DANG

in upholding and disseminating the teaching of scripture and realization

TSHUNG PAR TÄN LA JA WA JE PAR SHOG

through engaging in exposition and meditative practice.

24. DÜL DE KÜN TU THÖ SAM SHÄ DRUB KYI

May the members of all spiritual communities spend their time

JA WÄ DÜ DA LOG TSHO YONG PANG PÄ'I

in learning, reflection, and meditation.

DAM PÄ'I KHÄ DRUB RAB TU PHEL WA YI

Through the proliferation of sublime masters who shun wrong livelihood,

DZAM LING SA CHHEN TAG TU DZE GYUR CHIG

may the great face of the earth be beautified throughout all time.

25. DE TÜ DO NGAG YONG DZOG SA LAM DRÖ

Through their power, may I traverse all the paths of sutra and tantra

DÖN NYI LHÜN DRUB NAM KHYEN GYÄL WA YI

and attain the conquerors' omniscience,

GO PHANG NYUR WA NYI DU THOB GYUR NÄ

characterized by spontaneous realization of the two purposes.

NAM KHA JI SI DRO WÄ DÖN JE SHOG

May I work for the welfare of sentient beings as long as space remains.