

## “A Song of Longing for Tara, the Infallible”

By Lama Lobsang Tenpey Gyaltzen

The following is a request prayer to Tara, “A Song of Longing for Tara, the Infallible” (Tib: *Dung bo lu may ma*) written by Lama Lobsang Tenpey Gyaltzen.<sup>1</sup> It was translated by Lama Thubten Yeshe in February 1979, when he gave the Chittamani Tara initiations and teachings to a group of us at Kopan Monastery. In Lama’s style, this may not be a literal translation, and words may be added to clarify the meaning. These verses deeply touched me at the time and continue to do so.

Lama Lobsang Tenpey Gyaltzen was born in 1836 and was recognized as the incarnation of Gomgan of Hormo. I find it remarkable that he wrote these verses when he was eighteen or nineteen. His mind was in a completely different place than my mind was at that age! He clearly had meditation experience and a strong connection with Tara. In fact, he speaks of her here as his personal guru.

From my heart I bow to Divine Mother Tara, essence of love and compassion, the most precious objects of refuge gathered into one. From now until I reach enlightenment, hook me with your great love and kindness to liberate me.

By the witness of the Three Jewels, not just from my mouth but from the depths of my innermost heart and bones, I pray to you morning and evening. Show your blissful face to me, Loving One. Grant me the nectar of your speech.

Great gurus and small gurus cheat us with their made-up teachings, selling Dharma, teaching without comprehension, not observing who is qualified and who is not, being concerned about their own happiness and the eight worldly concerns. Since I can no longer trust friends of this degenerate age, you are my principal guru. Inspire me, Divine Mother, essence of love. Arouse the great power of your compassion and think of me.

I take refuge in you, Tara; like you, no Buddha could ever deceive me. But understanding the odd character of these times, most Buddhas have gone into the bliss of nirvana. Even though they have great compassion, we have no connection. Since for me there are no other deities, you are my principal deity. Bestow realizations upon me, Divine Mother, essence of love. Arouse the great power of your compassion and think of me.

Most Dharma protectors do not show their powers. Tired of those who invoke them, they do not act. Other protectors, lacking insight but proud of their power, may be friendly for a while but will later do me harm. Since I cannot rely on other protectors, you are my principal protector. With divine action, Wisdom Mother, essence of love, arouse the great power of your compassion and think of me.

To ordinary view the names of objects are the same as their meaning. Like this, they produce afflictions and bind us to samsara. When it is time to die, unless I understand the

true nature, could a wish-fulfilling gem enable me to carry even a sesame seed with me? Since I do not trust in illusions, you are my real richness. Please grant my desires, Divine Mother, essence of love. Arouse the great power of your compassion and think of me.

I cannot rely on non-virtuous friends for even a day. They pretend to be close to me and all the while have in mind the opposite. They are friends when they wish it and enemies when they don't. Since I cannot trust in this kind of friend, you are my best friend. Be close to me, Divine Mother, essence of love. Arouse the great power of your compassion and think of me.

You are my guru, my yidam, my protector, my refuge, my food, my clothes, my possessions and my friend. Since your divine quality is everything to me, let me spontaneously achieve all that I wish.

Although I am overwhelmed by my habitual, uncontrolled mind, please cut these self-centered thoughts so I will be able to give my body and my life millions of times without difficulty to each sentient being. Inspire me to be able to develop this kind of compassion to benefit all.

Empower me to cut the root of samsara, self-grasping, and to understand the pure doctrine, the most difficult middle way free from the errors of extremes.

Inspire me to practice as a bodhisattva, turning away from what is worldly, dedicating all my virtues to teaching living beings, never for even one instant thinking of just my own happiness. Let me wish to attain Buddhahood for the benefit of all.

Empower me to actualize as much as possible the most subtle vows and to keep them without a careless mind, thus becoming the most perfect bodhisattva.

Outwardly, let me be simple in my practice, while inwardly, actualize the depth of the diamond vehicle with the strong wish to practice the two stages. Inspire me to attain enlightenment quickly for the benefit of all.

Divine Wisdom Mother Tara, you know everything about my life—my ups and downs, my good and bad. Think lovingly of me, my only mother.

I give myself and all who trust in me to you, Divine Wisdom Mother Tara. Being completely open to you, let us be born in the highest pure land. Set me there quickly with no births in between.

May the hook of your compassion and your skillful means transform my mind into Dharma and transform the minds of all beings, whoever they are. They have all been my mother, the mother of one unable to follow the Conqueror's teachings.

By reciting this prayer three times a day and by remembering Divine Wisdom Mother Tara, may I and all beings who are connected to me reach whatever pure land we wish.

May the Three Jewels and especially the Divine Wisdom Mother, whose essence is compassion, hold me dear until I reach enlightenment. May I quickly conquer the four negative forces.

If, as long as you live, you recite this prayer three times every day, not just from the mouth (in words only) but strongly linked with your mind, you will have close connection and will see Tara's face. No hindrances will be experienced and all wishes will be fulfilled. You will have a close relationship with all Buddhas and bodhisattvas, and they will hold you dear. If you recite the "Homage to the Twenty-one Taras" and this prayer, you will attain the Divine Liberating Mother.

*Colophon: This prayer to Venerable Tara, in heart words making his own requests and also non-deceptive to others, was composed by the Buddhist monk, Lobsang Tenpey Gyaltzen, in his nineteenth year, the Water Mouse year (1852), on the third day of the miracle month (second month of the lunar calendar) at Bengar Namgyal Ling. It is sure to have great benefit.*

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<sup>1</sup> "A Song of Longing" was translated by Lama Thubten Yeshe. Reprinted with kind permission from Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archives.