

— *A Spiritual Classic* —

LIBERATION
IN THE
PALM OF
YOUR HAND

PABONGKA RINPOCHE



A CONCISE DISCOURSE ON THE
PATH TO ENLIGHTENMENT

Edited by Trijang Rinpoche
Translated by Michael Richards

Courtesy of Wisdom Publications

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A CONCISE DISCOURSE ON THE PATH
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NEW REVISED EDITION

Pabongka Rinpoche

Edited in the Tibetan by Trijang Rinpoche

Translated into English by Michael Richards

Including a memoir of Pabongka Rinpoche by Rilbur Rinpoche



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TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

IN 1921, some seven hundred Tibetan monks, nuns, and lay people gathered at Chuzang Hermitage, near Lhasa, to receive a *lamrim* discourse from the renowned teacher, Kyabje Pabongka Rinpoche. For the next twenty-four days they listened to what has become one of the most famous teachings ever given in Tibet.

The term *lamrim*—steps on the path to enlightenment—refers to a group of teachings that have developed in Tibet over the past millennium based on the concise, seminal text, *A Lamp on the Path*, by the great Indian master Atiśha (Dīpaṅkara Śhrījñāna, 982–1054). In some ways, *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand* represents the culmination of the lamrim tradition in Tibet.

Over 2,500 years ago, Śhākyamuni Buddha spent about forty-five years giving a vast array of teachings to an enormous variety of people. He did not teach from some predetermined syllabus but according to the spiritual needs of his listeners. Hence any individual studying the Buddha's collected works would find it extremely difficult to discern a clear path that he or she could put into practice. The importance of Atiśha's lamrim was that he put the Buddha's teachings into logical order, delineating a step-by-step arrangement that could be understood and practiced by whoever wanted to follow the Buddhist path, irrespective of his or her level of development.

Not only did Atiśha rely on what the Buddha himself taught, he also brought with him to Tibet the still-living oral traditions of those teachings—the unbroken lineages of both method and wisdom, which had passed from the Buddha to Maitreya and Mañjuśhrī respectively, and then on down through Asaṅga, Nāgārjuna and many other great Indian scholars to Atiśha's own spiritual masters. Thus as well as writing the first lamrim text, Atiśha also conveyed these extremely important oral traditions,

which still exist today, and are being transmitted to Westerners through contemporary lamas such as His Holiness the Fourteenth Dalai Lama.

Atiśha's disciples formed a school known as the Kadam, most of whose traditions were absorbed into the Gelug school of Tibetan Buddhism, which was founded by the great Tsongkapa (1357–1419). Many Kadam and Gelug lamas wrote lamrim commentaries, and the most famous was Tsongkapa's master work, the *Great Stages of the Path (Lamrim Chenmo)*. Pabongka Rinpoche followed the general outline of this text in the 1921 discourse that was to become *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand*. However, while Tsongkapa's work has a more scholarly emphasis, Kyabje Pabongka's focuses on the needs of practitioners. It goes into great detail on such subjects as how to prepare for meditation, guru yoga, and the development of *bodhichitta*. Thus *Liberation* is a highly practical text.

Among those present in 1921 was Kyabje Trijang Dorje Chang (1901–81), one of Pabongka Rinpoche's closest disciples, and later Junior Tutor to the Fourteenth Dalai Lama and root guru of many of the Gelug lamas who fled Tibet in 1959. Trijang Rinpoche took notes at the teachings, and over the next thirty-seven years edited them painstakingly until they were ready to be published in Tibetan as *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand (rNam grol lag bcangs)*.

Pabongka Rinpoche was probably the most influential Gelug lama of this century, holding all the important lineages of sūtra and tantra and passing them on to most of the important Gelug lamas of the next two generations; the list of his oral discourses is vast in depth and breadth. He was also the root guru of Kyabje Ling Rinpoche (1903–83), Senior Tutor of the Dalai Lama, Trijang Rinpoche, and many other highly respected teachers. His collected works occupy fifteen large volumes and cover every aspect of Buddhism. If you have ever received a teaching from a Gelug lama, you have been influenced by Pabongka Rinpoche.

There are four main schools of Tibetan Buddhism, and all have lamrim-style teachings, but the Nyingma, Sakya and Kagyu schools do not emphasize the lamrim as does the Gelug. Although generally in the Gelug monastic curriculum the lamrim is not taught to the monks until quite late in their careers, it is often the first teaching given to Westerners. And *Liberation* has been the lamrim that Gelug masters teach most.

In his brief introduction, Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche conveys a strong sense of what it was like to be there. Indeed, this text is unusual among Tibetan works in that it is the edited transcript of an oral discourse, not a

literary composition. Hence not only do we receive some very precious teachings—the essence of the eight key lamrims—but we also gain insight into how such discourses were given in Tibet. The points that detail the special features of this teaching may be found in Trijang Rinpoche's introduction and at the end of Day 1.

Each chapter corresponds to a day's teaching and usually begins with a short talk to set the motivation of the listeners. In the book, the motivations have been abbreviated in favor of new material, but the remarkable first chapter, Day 1, is both an elaborate motivation and an excellent glance meditation on the entire lamrim. In a sense, the rest of the book is a commentary on this chapter. As Pabongka Rinpoche makes clear throughout, dedicating ourselves to the development of bodhichitta is the most meaningful way of directing our lives, and the graded realizations summarized in Day 1 lead us to that goal. At the end of the book, Pabongka Rinpoche says, "Practice whatever you can so that my teachings will not have been in vain... But above all, make bodhichitta your main practice."

These teachings contain much that is new and unfamiliar, especially for Westerners, but as with any meaningful pursuit, study and reflection lead to clarity and understanding.

A NOTE ON THIS TRANSLATION

I have tried to make this translation as readable as possible without sacrificing accuracy, but since Trijang Rinpoche was a poet of renown, there can be no doubt that some of the beauty of the Tibetan text has been lost. To help Western readers, I have presented the structural hierarchy of the material in a way that Tibetan books do not: the outline of these headings and subheadings is clearly displayed in appendix 1 and serves as an elaborate table of contents.

I have not translated all the technical terms, preferring to leave the Sanskrit word where there is no suitable English equivalent. This is preferable to concocting some English term that may be even less familiar to the reader than the Sanskrit, and new Sanskrit Buddhist words are entering English dictionaries all the time.

In the main body of the text, all Tibetan words and proper names are in phonetics only; their transliterations are in the glossary. Sanskrit transliteration is standard except that *ś* is written as *sh*, *ṣ* as *sh*, *c* as *ch*, *ṛ* as *ri*, and *ḷ* and *ḻ* to assist readers in pronunciation.

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I also thank my many friends and colleagues in Dharamsala for their help, encouragement, and support: Losang Gyatso, Geshe Dhargyey's translator at the time, for suggesting I translate this book; Gyatsho Tshering and his staff at the Tibetan Library; all at Delek Hospital and Jean-Pierre Urolixes and Mervyn Stringer for their help after my road accident in 1983; David Stuart, who retrieved the draft translation of Days 9 and 10 from Jammu, where it finished up after the accident; Cathy Graham and Jeremy Russell, who offered valuable suggestions to improve the manuscript; my mother and late father, who have always helped and supported me; Alan Hanlay, Lisa Heath, and Michael Perrott; my late friends Keith Kevan and Andy Brennand; and my dear wife, Angela, who shared with me all the pain that this lengthy project brought and kept her patience and hope throughout; her encouragement and sacrifice were beyond measure.

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PABONGKA RINPOCHE

A MEMOIR BY RILBUR RINPOCHE

MY GURU, kind in three ways, who met face to face with Heruka, whose name I find difficult to utter, Lord Pabongka Vajradhara Dechen Nyingpo Pael Zangpo, was born north of Lhasa in 1878. His father was a minor official, but the family was not wealthy. Although the night was dark, a light shone in the room, and people outside the house had a vision of a protector on the roof.

Pabongka Rinpoche was an emanation of the great scholar Changkya Rolpai Dorje (1717–86), although initially it was thought that he was the reincarnation of a learned Khampa geshe from Sera Mae Monastery. Rinpoche entered the monastery at the age of seven, did the usual studies of a monk, earned his geshe degree, and spent two years at Gyuetoe Tantric College.

His root guru was Dagpo Lama Rinpoche Jampael Lhuendrub Gyatso, from Lhoka. He was definitely a bodhisattva, and Pabongka Rinpoche was his foremost disciple. He lived in a cave in Pasang, and his main practice was bodhichitta. His main deity was Avalokiteśvara, and he would recite 50,000 *manis* [the mantra, *om maṇi padme hūṃ*] every night. When Kyabje Pabongka first met Dagpo Rinpoche at a *tsog* offering ceremony in Lhasa, he cried from beginning to end out of reverence.

When Pabongka Rinpoche had finished his studies, he visited Dagpo Lama Rinpoche in his cave and was sent into a lamrim retreat nearby. Dagpo Lama Rinpoche would teach him a lamrim topic and then Pabongka Rinpoche would go away and meditate on it. Later he would return to explain what he'd understood: if he had gained some realization, Dagpo Lama Rinpoche would teach him some more, and Pabongka Rinpoche would go back and meditate on that. It went on like this for ten years (and if that's not amazing, what is!).

Pabongka Rinpoche's four main disciples were Kyabje Ling Rinpoche, Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche, Khangsar Rinpoche, and Tathag Rinpoche, who was a regent of Tibet. Tathag Rinpoche was the main teacher of His Holiness the Dalai Lama when he was a child and gave him his novice ordination.

I was born in Kham, in Eastern Tibet, and two of my early teachers were disciples of Pabongka Rinpoche, so I was brought up in an atmosphere of complete faith in Pabongka Rinpoche as the Buddha himself. One of these teachers had a picture of Pabongka Rinpoche that exuded small drops of nectar from between the eyebrows. I saw this with my own eyes, so you can imagine how much faith I had in Rinpoche when I finally came into his presence.

But I also had a personal reason for having great faith in him. I was the only son of an important family, and although the Thirteenth Dalai Lama had recognized me as an incarnate lama and Pabongka Rinpoche himself had said I should join Sera Monastery in Lhasa, my parents were not happy about this. However, my father died soon after this, and I was finally able to set out for Central Tibet. Can you imagine my excitement as I embarked on horseback on the two-month voyage? I was only fourteen, and becoming a monk really was the thing to do for a fellow my age. I felt that the opportunity to go to Lhasa to get ordained and live as a *rinpoche* as the Dalai Lama had said I should was all the wondrous work of Pabongka Rinpoche.

At the time of my arrival in Lhasa, Pabongka Rinpoche was living at Tashi Choeling, a cave above Sera Monastery. We made an appointment, and a few days later my mother, my *changdzoe* (the man in charge of my personal affairs), and I rode up on horseback. Although Rinpoche was expecting us that day, we had not arranged a time. Nevertheless, he had just had his own *changdzoe* prepare tea and sweet rice, which freshly awaited our arrival. This convinced me that Rinpoche was clairvoyant, a manifestation of the all-seeing Vajradhara himself.

After we had eaten, it was time to visit Rinpoche. I remember this as if it were today. A narrow staircase led up to Pabongka Rinpoche's tiny room, where he was sitting on his bed. He looked just like his pictures—short and fat! He said, "I knew you were coming—now we have met," and stroked the sides of my face. While I was sitting there, a new *geshe* from Sera came in to offer Rinpoche a special *tsampa* dish that is made only at the time of receiving the *geshe* degree. Rinpoche remarked how auspicious

it was that this new geshe had come while I was there and had him fill my bowl just like his own. You can imagine what that did to my mind!

The room had almost nothing in it. The most amazing thing was a pure gold, two-inch statue of Dagpo Lama Rinpoche, Pabongka Rinpoche's root guru, surrounded by a circle of tiny offerings. Behind Rinpoche were five tangkas of Khaedrub Je's visions of Tsongkapa after he had passed away. The only other thing in the room was a place for a cup of tea. I could also see a small meditation room off to the side and kept peeking into it (I was only fourteen and extremely curious). Rinpoche told me to go inside and check it out. All it contained was a meditation box and a small altar. Rinpoche called out the names of the statues on the altar: from left to right there were Lama Tsongkapa, Heruka, Yamāntaka, Naeljorma, and Paelgon Dramze, an emanation of Mahākāla. Beneath the statues were offerings, set out right across the altar.

I was not yet a monk, so Rinpoche's long-time servant Jamyang, who had been given to Pabongka Rinpoche by Dagpo Lama Rinpoche and always stayed in Rinpoche's room, was sent to get a calendar to fix a date for my ordination, even though I had not asked for it. Rinpoche was giving me everything I had ever wanted, and I felt he was just too kind. When I left, I floated out on a cloud in a complete state of bliss!

Rinpoche's changdzoe was a very fierce-looking man, said to be the emanation of a protector. Once, when Rinpoche was away on a long tour, out of devotion the changdzoe demolished the old small building in which Rinpoche lived and constructed a large ornate residence rivaling the private quarters of the Dalai Lama. When Rinpoche returned he was not at all pleased and said, "I am only a minor hermit lama, and you should not have built something like this for me. I am not famous, and the essence of what I teach is renunciation of the worldly life. Therefore I am embarrassed by rooms like these."

I took lamrim teachings from Pabongka Rinpoche many times. The Chinese confiscated all my notes, but as a result of his teachings, I still carry something very special inside. Whenever he taught I would feel inspired to become a real yogi by retreating to a cave, covering myself with ashes, and meditating. As I got older I would feel this less and less, and now I don't think of it at all. But I really wanted to be a true yogi, just like him.

He gave many initiations such as Yamāntaka, Heruka, and Guhyasamāja. I myself took these from him. We would go to his residence for important secret initiations, and he would come down to the monastery to

give more general teachings. Sometimes he would go on tour to various monasteries. Visiting Pabongka Rinpoche was what it must have been like to visit Lama Tsongkapa when he was alive.

When he taught he would sit for up to eight hours without moving. About two thousand people would come to his general discourses and initiations and fewer to special teachings, but when he gave bodhisattva vows, up to ten thousand people would show up. When he gave the Heruka initiation he would take on a special appearance. His eyes became very wide and piercing, and I could almost see him as Heruka, with one leg outstretched, the other bent. It would get so intense that I would start crying, as if the deity Heruka himself were right there. It was very powerful, very special.

To my mind he was the most important Tibetan lama of all. Everybody knows how great his four main disciples were—well, he was their teacher. He spent a great deal of time thinking about the practical meaning of the teachings and coming to an inner realization of them, and he had practiced and accomplished everything he had learned, right up to the completion stage. He didn't just spout words, he tried things out for himself. Also, he never got angry; any anger had been completely pacified by his bodhi-chitta. Many times there would be long lines of people waiting for blessings, but Rinpoche would ask each one individually how they were and tap them on the head. Sometimes he dispensed medicine. He was always gentle. All this made him very special.

I would say he had two main qualities: from the tantric point of view, his realization and ability to present Heruka, and from the sūtra point of view, his ability to teach lamrim.

Just before he passed away, he was invited to explain a short lamrim at his root guru's monastery of Dagpo Shidag Ling, in Lhoka. He had chosen the text called the *Quick Path*, by the Second Paṅchen Lama. This was the first lamrim that Dagpo Lama Rinpoche had taught him, and Pabongka Rinpoche had said that it would be the last he himself would teach. Whenever he visited his lama's monastery, Rinpoche would dismount as soon as it appeared in view and prostrate all the way to the door—which was not easy because of his build; when he left he would walk backward until it was out of sight. This time when he left the monastery, he made one prostration when it was almost out of sight and went to stay at a house nearby. Having manifested just a little discomfort in his stomach, Rinpoche retired for the night. He asked his attendants to leave while he did his prayers, which he

chanted louder than usual. Then it sounded like he was giving a lamrim discourse. When he had finished and his attendants went into his room, they found he had passed away. Although Tathag Rinpoche was extremely upset, he told us what to do. We were all distraught. Pabongka Rinpoche's body was clothed in brocade and cremated in the traditional way. An incredible reliquary was constructed, but the Chinese demolished it. Nevertheless, I was able to retrieve some of Rinpoche's relics from it, and I gave them to Sera Mae Monastery. You can see them there now.

I have had some success as a scholar, and as a lama I am somebody, but these things are not important. The only thing that matters to me is that I was a disciple of Pabongka Rinpoche.

The Venerable Rilbur Rinpoche was born in Eastern Tibet in 1923. At the age of five he was recognized by the Thirteenth Dalai Lama as the sixth incarnation of Sera Mae Rilbur Rinpoche. He entered Sera Monastic University in Lhasa at fourteen and became a geshe at twenty-four. He meditated and taught Dharma until 1959, after which he suffered under intense Chinese oppression for twenty-one years. In 1980 he was allowed to perform some religious activities, and he helped build a new stupa for Pabongka Rinpoche at Sera, the Chinese having destroyed the original. He then came to India and lived for several years at Namgyal Monastery, Dharamsala. Toward the end of his life, Rinpoche traveled several times to Western countries and lived for a period in the United States. He passed away at Sera Mae Monastery in Bylakuppe, South India, on January 15, 2006.

Courtesy of Wisdom Publications

THE TEXT

A Profound, Completely Unmistaken Instruction for Conferring Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand, Pith of the Thoughts of the Unequaled King of the Dharma [Tsongkapa], the Written Record of a Concise Discourse on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment, Pith of All Scripture, Essence of the Nectar of Instructions

*rNam sgrol lag bcangs su gtod pa'i man ngag zab mo tshang la ma nor ba
mtshungs med chos kyi rgyal po'i thugs bcud byang chub lam gyi rim pa'i
nyams khrid kyi zin bris gsung rab kun gyi bcud bsdus gdams ngag bdud rtsi'i
snying po*



GURU ŚHĀKYAMUNI BUDDHA

INTRODUCTION BY TRIJANG RINPOCHE

*Prasārīn paraṇa syakluṭaki yanta
Trayam guhyaṇatā tigolama eka
Sudhī vajradharottaraḥ muni akṣha
Prayachchha tashubhaṃ valāruga koṭa*

O Lama Lozang Dragpa,
One with Śhākyamuni and Vajradhara,
O sum of every perfect refuge,
O maṇḍala guise complete
With three mysteries of enlightenment:
Rain upon us ten million goodnesses.
O my guru, my protector,
Who, through the Supreme Vehicle,
Vanquished the extreme of selfish peace,
Who, unattached to worldly comforts,
Upheld the three high trainings
And the teachings of the Victor,
Whose noble good works remained
Untarnished by the eight worldly concerns:
You were the very fountainhead of goodness.
Everything you said was medicine
To drive out hundreds of diseases;
Our childish minds were unfit vessels
For so vast an ocean of teachings,
So precious a source of qualities.
How sad if these teachings were forgotten!
Here I have recorded but a few.

Immeasurable, countless numbers of buddhas have come in the past. But unfortunate beings such as myself were not worthy enough to be direct disciples even of Śhākṃyamuni, the best of protectors, who stands out like a white lotus among the thousand great buddhas, the saviors of this fortunate eon. First we had to be forced into developing even a moment's wholesome thought; this took us to the optimum physical rebirth as a human. We have been taught this most unmistakable path, which will lead us to the level of omniscience, at which time we shall gain our freedom.

But, to be brief, I was saved time and time again from infinite numbers of different evils, and was brought closer to an infinity of magnificent things. My glorious and holy guru did this. His kindness is without equal. He was—and now I shall give his name in view of my purpose—Jetsun Jampa Taenzin Trinlae Gyatso Paelzangpo. Although people like me are immature, uncultured, and unregenerate, there was a time when I feasted on his oral instructions into the Mahāyāna [the Supreme or Great Vehicle] at Chuzang Hermitage, a solitary place that was blessed by the presence of great meditators.

He started the following informal teaching on the thirtieth, the new-moon day of the seventh month of the Iron-Bird Year [1921], and it lasted twenty-four days. People braved great hardships to get there from the three major monasteries in Lhasa, from the Central Province, from Tsang, Amdo, and Kham just to taste the nectar of his oral teachings, as the thirsty yearn for water. There were about thirty lamas and reincarnations of lamas, and many upholders of the three baskets of the teachings—in all a gathering of over seven hundred. The practical teaching he gave combined various traditions on the lamrim: the stages of the path to enlightenment. There were the two oral lineages related to the lamrim text *Mañjuśhri's Own Words*. One of these lineages was quite detailed and had developed in the Central Province; another lineage of a briefer teaching flourished in the south of Tibet. He also included the concise teaching, the *Swift Path* lamrim; and in the part of the great-scope section that deals with the interchange of self and others, he taught the *Seven-Point Mind Training*.

Each part of the teaching was enriched by instructions taken from the confidential oral lineages. Because each section was illustrated by analogies, conclusive formal logic, amazing stories, and trustworthy quotations, the teaching could easily be understood by beginners, and yet was tailored for all levels of intelligence. It was beneficial for the mind because it was so inspiring. Sometimes we were moved to laughter, becoming wide awake

and alive. Sometimes we were reduced to tears and cried helplessly. At other times we became afraid and were moved to feel, “I would gladly give up this life and devote myself solely to my practice.” This feeling of renunciation was overwhelming.

These are some of the ways in which all of his discourses were so extraordinary. How could I possibly convey all this on paper! Yet what a pity if I were to forget all the key points contained in these inspiring instructions. This thought gave me the courage to write this book. As my precious guru later advised me, “Some of the people present could not follow the teaching, and I cannot teach them again. I’m afraid I do not trust all the notes people took during the classes. I therefore ask you to publish a book. Put in it anything you feel sure of.”

In this book I have recorded my lama’s teachings without any changes in the hope that this book, while no substitute for his speech, may still benefit my friends who wish to succeed in their practice.

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PART ONE

THE PRELIMINARIES



KYABJE PABONGKA RINPOCHE

DAY 1

Kyabje Pabongka Rinpoche, a peerless king of the Dharma, spoke a little in order to set our motivations properly for the teaching to follow. He said:

So be it. The great Tsongkapa, the Dharma king of the three realms, has said:

This opportune physical form
Is worth more than a wish-granting gem.
You only gain its like the once.
So hard to get, so easily destroyed,
It's like a lightning bolt in the sky.

Contemplate this, and you will realize
All worldly actions are but winnowed chaff,
And night and day you must
Extract some essence from your life.
I, the yogi, practiced this way;
You, wanting liberation, do the same!

In all our births from beginningless time till the present, there has not been any form of suffering we have not undergone here in saṃsāra, nor any form of happiness we have not experienced. But no matter how many bodies we have had, we have obtained nothing worthwhile from them. Now that we have gained this optimum human form, we should do something to derive some essence from it. So long as we do not examine this life, we will feel no joy whatsoever in finding such a supreme rebirth, and would probably be happier on finding some pennies; we will

not feel at all sorry if we waste this optimum human rebirth; we would probably feel much more regret if we lost some money. But this physical form we have now is a hundred thousand times more valuable than any wish-granting jewel.

If you were to clean a wish-granting jewel by washing it three times, polishing it three times, and then offer it at the top of a victory banner, you would effortlessly obtain the good things of this life—food, clothes, and the like. You may obtain a hundred, a thousand, ten thousand, even a hundred thousand such gems, but they cannot do for you even the smallest thing that you can achieve by means of this rebirth, for they cannot be used to prevent you from taking your next rebirth in the lower realms. With your present physical form you can prevent yourself from ever going to the lower realms again. Moreover, if you want to achieve the physical rebirth of a Brahmā, an Indra, and so forth, you can achieve it through your present one. If you want to go to pure realms such as Abhīrati, Sukhāvati, or Tuṣhita, you can do so by means of this present physical rebirth. And this is not all, for you can even achieve the states of liberation or omniscience through this present rebirth—unless you don't practice. Most important of all, through this physical rebirth you are able to achieve the state of Vajradhara [the unification of the illusory body and great bliss] within one short lifetime in this degenerate age; otherwise it would take three countless great eons to achieve. Thus, this rebirth is worth more than one thousand billion precious jewels.

If you meaninglessly squander this rebirth that you have managed to obtain, it would be an even greater pity than if you had wasted one thousand billion precious jewels. There is no greater loss; nothing could be blinder; no self-deception could be greater. Protector Śhāntideva said:

No self-deception could be worse
 After gaining such a chance
 Than not cultivating virtue!
 Nothing could be blinder!

You must therefore try to extract essence from it now. If you don't, you are sure to die anyway, and you cannot know when that will happen.

We are now attending this Dharma teaching, but none of us will be left in a hundred years' time. In the past, Buddha, our Teacher, amassed the two collections [of merit and primal wisdom] over many eons, thus

obtaining the vajra body. Yet even he, to the common appearance, went to nirvāṇa [beyond suffering]. After him, there came scholars, adepts, translators, and pandits to both India and Tibet, but they have all seemingly departed this life. Nothing is left of them but their names to say “There was this one and some other.” In short, there is no one you can produce as an example of a person who death has spared. How could you alone live forever? You have no hope of being spared.

Therefore, not only are you sure to die, but also you cannot be certain when this will happen. You cannot even be sure that you will still be alive next year in the human realm, still wearing your three types of monk’s robes.¹ By this time next year, you may have already been reborn as an animal covered in shaggy fur, with horns on your head. Or you may have been born as a hungry ghost, for example, having to live without being able to find any food or even a drop of water. Or you may have been reborn in the hells, having to experience the miseries of heat and cold, being roasted or on fire.

Your mental continuum does not cease after your death; it must take rebirth. There are only two migrations for rebirth—the upper and the lower realms. If you are born in the Hell Without Respite, you will have to stay there with your body indistinguishable from the hellfire. In the milder hells, such as the Hell of Continual Resurrection, you are killed and then revived hundreds of times each day: you continually suffer torments. How could we endure this if we cannot even bear to put our hand in a fire now? And we will suffer in these hells the same way that we would suffer from such heat in our present bodies. We might wonder, “Maybe the experience [suffering] is different, and easier?” but that is wrong.

If reborn as a hungry ghost you will not be able to find so much as a drop of water for years. If you find it hard to observe a fasting retreat now, how could you endure such a rebirth? And as for the animal rebirths, take the case of being a dog. Examine in detail the sort of places where they live, the way they have to go in search of food and the sort of food they eventually find. Do you think you could possibly bear living that sort of life? You may feel, “The lower realms are far away.” But between you and the lower realms is only that you can still draw breath.

As long as we remain uncritical, we never suspect that we are going to the lower realms. We probably think that we more or less keep our vows, perform most of our daily recitations, and have not committed any serious sin, such as killing a person and running off with his horse. The trouble is

we have not looked into things properly. We should think it over in detail; then we would see that we are not free to choose whether we go to the lower realms or not. This is determined by our karma. We have a mixture of virtuous and nonvirtuous karma in our mental streams. The stronger of these two will be triggered by craving and clinging when we die. When we look into which of these two is the stronger in our mental streams, we will see that it is nonvirtue. And the degree of strength is determined by the force of the *motive*, the *deed*, and the *final step*. Thus, although we might think we have only done small nonvirtues, their force is in fact enormous.

Let us take an example. Suppose you say one scornful word to your pupils, for instance. You are motivated by strong hostility and, as for the deed, you use the harshest words that will really wound them. And for the final step, you feel proud and have an inflated opinion of yourself. These three parts—motivation, deed, and final step—could not have been done better! Suppose you kill a louse. Your motive is strong hostility. You roll the louse between your fingers, and so on, torturing it a long while, then eventually you kill it. For the final step, you think “That was helpful” and become very smug. So the nonvirtue has become extremely powerful.

We might feel our virtue is very strong, but in fact it is extremely weak. The preparation, the motive, the main part of the deed, the final step, dedicating the virtue, etc.—all have to be done purely if the virtue is to be very strong. Contrast this with the virtue *we* perform. First, there is our motive. I think it is rare for us to be motivated by even the least of motives, a yearning for a better rebirth—let alone have the best of motives, bodhichitta [the mind that aspires to enlightenment], or the next best, renunciation. Right at the beginning, we usually aspire to achieve desires related to this life’s trivia; any prayers we make to this end are in fact sinful. Then, for the main part of the deed, there is no pure joy or enthusiasm to it; when we recite even one rosary of *om maṇi padme hūm*, for example, our minds cannot stay focused the whole time. Everything is either sleep or distraction! It is difficult to do things well for even the time it takes to recite the *Hundreds of Gods of Tuṣhita* once. And when it comes to making the final prayers and dedications, we slip back into directing them toward this life. So, although we might feel we have performed great virtues, in fact they are only feeble.

Sometimes we do not prepare properly; at other times we botch the motive or the final step; and there are times when we don’t do any of them properly. Thus only the nonvirtuous karma in our mental streams is very strong; it is the only possible thing that will be activated when we die. And

if this is what indeed happens, the place where we will go could only be the lower realms. That is why it is definite we shall be reborn in the lower realms. Now, we say that our lamas possess clairvoyance, and we ask them for dice divinations or prophecies on where we shall take rebirth. We feel relieved if they say, “You will get a good rebirth,” and are afraid if the answer is, “It will be bad.” But how can we have any confidence in such predictions? We do not need dice divinations, prophecies, or horoscopes to tell us where we will go in our next lives. Our compassionate Teacher has already given us predictions in the sūtra basket [*sūtra piṭaka*]. We have also received them from many pandits and adepts of both India and Tibet. For example, Ārya Nāgārjuna says in his *Precious Garland*:

From nonvirtue comes all suffering
And likewise all the lower realms.
From virtue come all upper realms
And all happy rebirths.

We cannot be certain—even by means of direct valid cognition—of such things as where we will go in our future rebirths. Nevertheless, our Teacher correctly perceived this extremely obscure object of valid cognition and taught on it without error. Thus we can be certain only by using the Buddha’s valid scriptures for an inference based on trust.

So, if it is so definite that we shall be reborn in the lower realms, from this moment on we must look for some means to stop it from happening. If we really want to be free of the lower realms, we should seek some refuge to protect us. For example, a criminal sentenced to execution will seek the protection of an influential official in order to escape punishment. If we have become tainted by intolerably sinful karma through our misdeeds, we are in danger of being punished under [karmic] law and of going to the lower realms. We should seek the refuge of the Three Jewels [Buddha, Dharma, and Saṅgha], because only they can protect us from this fate. But we must not just *seek* this refuge; we must also modify our behavior.² If there were some way the buddhas could rid us of our sins and obscurations by, say, washing them away with water, or by leading us by the hand, they would have already done so, and we would now have no suffering. They do not do this. The Great One taught the Dharma; it is we who must modify our behavior according to the laws of cause and effect, and do so unmissakenly. It says in a sūtra:

The sages do not wash sin away with water;
 They do not rid beings of suffering with their hands;
 They do not transfer realizations of suchness onto others.
 They liberate by teaching the truth of suchness.

Thus you should feel, “I shall seek refuge in the Three Jewels in order to be free of the lower realms, and I shall adopt the means to free me from these realms. I shall modify my behavior according to the laws of cause and effect.” This is setting your motivation on the level of the lamrim shared with the small scope.

All the same, is it enough merely to be free of the lower realms? No, it is not. You will only achieve one or two physical rebirths in the upper realms before falling back to the lower realms when your evil karma catches up with you. This is not the ultimate answer, not something in which you can put your trust. We have in fact obtained many rebirths in the upper realms and afterward have fallen back into the lower realms. We are sure to fall back the same way yet again. In our past rebirths, we took the form of the powerful gods Brahmā and Indra and lived in celestial palaces. This happened many times, yet we left these rebirths and had to writhe on the red-hot iron surface of the hells. Again and again this happened. In the celestial realms, we enjoyed the nectar of the gods; then, when we left these rebirths, we had to drink molten iron in the hells. We amused ourselves in the company of many gods and goddesses, then had to live surrounded by terrifying guardians of hell. We were reborn as universal emperors and ruled over hundreds of thousands of subjects; and then we were born as the meanest serfs and slaves, such as donkey drivers and cowherds. Sometimes we were born as sun and moon gods, and our bodies gave off so much light that we illuminated the four continents.³ Then we were born in the depths of the ocean between continents, where it was so dark we could not even see the movements of our own limbs. And so on. No matter what you achieve of this sort of worldly happiness, it is untrustworthy and has no worth.

We have already experienced so much suffering, but as long as we are not liberated from saṃsāra [cyclic existence], we must experience very much more. If all the filthy things—all the dung and dirt we have eaten in our past animal rebirths as dogs and pigs—were piled up in one place, the dung heap would be bigger than Meru, the king of mountains. Yet we will have to eat even more filth as long as we are still not liberated from saṃsāra. If all our heads cut off by past enemies were piled up, the top of

the heap would be even higher than Brahmā's realm. Yet, if we do not put an end to our cyclic existence, we must lose even more heads. In our past hell rebirths, boiling-hot water was forced down our throats—more water than there is even in the great oceans—but we must drink even more, so long as we have not freed ourselves from saṃsāra. Thus we should be hugely depressed when we think about how in the future we will wander aimlessly, with no end to our cyclic existence.

Even the rebirths of gods and humans are nothing but suffering. The human rebirth has the sufferings of birth, old age, sickness, and death; it has the suffering of being separated from the things one holds dear, meeting with unpleasantness, and not finding the things one wants despite searching for them. The demigods also have sufferings, for they are maimed or wounded when they go to battle, and they suffer all the time from gnawing jealousy. When reborn as a god of the desire realm, one suffers because one displays the omens of death. The gods of the [two] higher realms do not have any manifest suffering. However, they are still, by nature, under the sway of the suffering that applies to all conditioned phenomena because they have not gained enough freedom to maintain their state. In the end they will fall, so they have not transcended suffering.

In short, as long as you are not free of saṃsāra for good, you have not transcended the nature of suffering. You therefore must definitely become liberated from it; and you must do so with your present rebirth.

We normally say, “We cannot do anything in this rebirth,” and make prayers for our next rebirth. But it is possible to do it in this rebirth. We have gained the optimum human rebirth, and this is the most advantageous physical form to have for the practice of Dharma. We are free from adverse conditions—we have met with the Buddha's teachings, and so forth. We have all the right conditions, and so if we cannot achieve liberation now, when shall we ever achieve it?

Thus you should feel, “Now I definitely must liberate myself from saṃsāra, come what may. And liberation is achieved only by means of the precious three high trainings. I will therefore train myself in these three and gain my liberation from this great ocean of suffering.” This is setting your motivation at the level of the lamrim shared with the medium scope.

But is even this sufficient? Again, it is not. If you achieve the state of a *śhrāvaka* [hearer] or *pratyekabuddha* [solitary realizer] arhat for your own sake, you have not even fulfilled your own needs and done virtually nothing for the sake of others. This is because you have not yet abandoned

some of the things you ought, such as the obscurations to omniscience and the four causes of ignorance. It would be like having to bundle up everything twice to cross a river once: although you may have achieved all the steps up to arhatship in the path of the Hīnayāna [Lesser Vehicle], you must then develop bodhichitta and train in the tasks of a child of the victorious ones right from the basics, starting at the Mahāyāna path of accumulation. It would be like entering a monastery and working your way up from being a kitchen hand to the abbot; then, on entering another monastery, you have to go back to working in the kitchen again.

[Chandragomin] said in his *Letter to a Disciple*:

They are kinsmen stranded in saṃsāra's ocean
 Who seem to have fallen into the abyss;
 When due to birth, death, and rebirth
 You don't recognize them and reject them,
 Freeing only yourself: there is no greater shame.

In other words, although we do not recognize each other as such, there is not one sentient being who has not been our mother. And just as we have taken countless rebirths, we have had countless mothers; no being has not been our mother. And each time they were our mother, the kindness they showed us was no different from the kindness shown by our mother in this life. Since they did nothing but lovingly care for us, there is not the slightest difference between our present mother's kindness and care toward us and that of every sentient being.

However, some may feel, "All sentient beings are not my mother. If they were, I would recognize them as my mother; instead, I do not!" But since it is quite possible that many do not recognize even their mother of this life, mere nonrecognition is not sufficient reason for someone not to be your mother. There are others who might feel, "Mothers of past lives belong to the past. It makes no sense to say they are still one's kind mothers." But the kindness and care that mothers showed you in the past, and the kindness and the care your present mother shows you, are not in the least bit different from each other, either in being your mother or in their kindness and care. The kindness is the same if you received some food or wealth from someone last year or this year. The time of the deed, past or future, does not alter the degree of kindness. Thus all sentient beings are nothing but kind mothers to you.

How could we ignore these kind mothers of ours, who have fallen into the middle of the ocean of saṃsāra, and doing only what pleases us, work only for our own liberation? It would be like children singing and dancing on the shore when one of their dearly beloved close relatives, such as their mother, was about to fall into the ocean's riptide. The rip is flowing out to the ocean, and she cries and calls out to them in terror, but they are completely oblivious to her. Is there anyone who is more shameful or contemptible? The currents in the oceans are said to be whirlpools, and it is a most horrifying thing when a boat, coracle, and so on, enters the maelstrom, for it is sure to sink. Just like in that example, though we presently do not seem to have any relationship with all sentient beings who have fallen into these ocean currents of saṃsāra, this is not so. All are our kind mothers, and we must repay their kindness. Giving food to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, wealth to the poor, etc., and satisfying their wants, would repay some of them their kindnesses; but this would really not be of much benefit. The best way to repay their kindness is to cause them to have every happiness and to be without every kind of suffering. There is no better way to repay their kindness.

With these thoughts you should come to think, "May these sentient beings have every form of happiness," which is the development of love. You also feel, "May they be without every suffering," which is the development of compassion. You develop altruism when you feel, "The responsibility for carrying out these two has fallen on me. I, and I alone, shall work for these ends."

Still, are you now able to do these? As for right now, forget about all beings—you cannot work for the sake of even one sentient being. Who then can? The bodhisattvas abiding on the pure levels⁴ and the śhrāvakas or pratyekabuddhas can benefit sentient beings; but they can only do a little of what the buddhas are capable of doing. Thus a buddha, who is without equal in his deeds for the welfare of beings, is the only one. Each ray of light from the body of a buddha is able to mature and liberate immeasurable sentient beings. Buddhas emanate bodies that appear before each sentient being. These forms are tailored to the mental dispositions, sense faculties, wishes, and karmic tendencies of these beings. Buddhas can teach them the Dharma in their individual languages. These are some of the capabilities of buddhas.

If you wonder whether we can achieve the same level of buddhahood, the answer is, we can. The best of all physical rebirths to have for its

attainment is the optimum rebirth. We have gained a very special type of physical rebirth: we were born from the womb of a human of the Southern Continent, and we have the six types of physical constituents. We are thus able to achieve in one lifetime the state of unification of Vajradhara, unless we do not apply ourselves. We have attained such a physical rebirth. The means to achieve buddhahood is the Dharma of the Supreme Vehicle; and the teachings of the second Victorious One [Je Tsongkapa] on this vehicle are completely unmistakable. His stainless teachings combine both the sūtras and the tantras. We have met with such teachings.

In short, we are free from any unfavorable conditions, except for cheating ourselves by not making effort. If now, when we have attained such an excellent foundation with all the favorable conditions, we cannot achieve buddhahood, it is certain that in the future we will not gain any better rebirth or Dharma. Some of us might claim, “Now is a degenerate time; our timing has been bad.” But since beginningless cyclic existence we have never experienced a time with more potential benefit for us than now. We could have no better a time than this. We shall find such a situation only once. We must therefore work toward our buddhahood, come what may.

Thus, this should lead you to feel, “I shall do all I can to achieve my goal: peerless, full enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings.” This thought summons up bodhichitta, and it is how you set your motivation according to the great scope of the lamrim. You have developed bodhichitta if you genuinely experience this thought in an unforced manner.

You must practice in order to achieve this buddhahood, and you must know what to practice in order to succeed. Some people wanting to practice Dharma, but not knowing how to do so, may go to some isolated retreat and recite a few mantras, make a few prayers, or even manage to achieve a few of the [nine] mental states [leading to mental quiescence], but they will not know how to do anything else. You must study complete and error-free instructions that leave out nothing about the practice of Dharma in order to know these things. And the king of such instructions is the lamrim, the stages of the path to enlightenment. You must therefore develop the motivation: “I shall listen attentively to the lamrim and then put it into practice.”

In general, it is vital to have one of these three motives at the beginning of any practice. Especially when you listen to a discourse on the lamrim, just any motive is not sufficient. You must at least listen in conjunction with a

forced or contrived form of bodhichitta. For people who have already experienced the development of bodhichitta, it may be sufficient for them to think over a short formula such as “For the sake of all mother sentient beings...” However, this is not enough to transform the mind of a beginner. If you think over the lamrim, starting with the immense difficulty of gaining an optimum human rebirth, your mind will turn toward bodhichitta. This does not apply only to the lamrim. When we Geluggas attend any teaching at all, be it an initiation, oral transmission, discourse, or whatever, we should go over the whole lamrim as a preliminary when we set our motivation. Even short prayers include all of the three scopes of the lamrim, with nothing left out.⁵ My precious guru has said time and again that this is the supreme distinguishing feature of the teachings of the old Kadampas and of us new Kadampas. Those of you who will bear the responsibility of preserving these teachings must carry out your studies in this fashion. (However, when giving a long-life initiation, it is the practice not to speak about impermanence, [death], and so on, as this is an inauspicious gesture: one only speaks on the difficulty of obtaining this beneficial, optimum human rebirth.)

Some of the people attending this teaching of the Dharma might feel, “I am truly fortunate to be studying this, but I cannot put it into practice.” Others attend because they are imitating others—“If you go, I’ll come too.” No one will attend this teaching in order to make a living out of performing rituals in people’s homes; but this happens with other teachings like major initiations. When you attend other teachings—initiations for example—you may think you will receive the power to subdue evil spirits by reciting the mantra, and so forth; or you may think you will subdue sicknesses or spirits, achieve wealth, acquire power, etc. Others, no matter how many teachings they have received, treat Dharma as if it were, for example, capital to start a business; they then go to places like Mongolia to peddle the Dharma. Such people accumulate enormous, grave sins through the Dharma. The Buddha, our Teacher, discussed the means to achieve liberation and omniscience. To exploit such teachings for worldly ends is equal to forcing a king off his throne and making him sweep the floor. So, if you seem to have any of these above-mentioned bad motives, get rid of them; summon up some contrived bodhichitta and then listen. So much for the setting of your motivation.

Here follows the main body of the teaching to which you are actually going to listen.



Firstly, the Dharma you are going to practice should have been spoken by the Buddha and discussed and proven by the [Indian] pandits. Your practice must be one from which the great adepts derived their insights and realizations; otherwise, an instruction could be termed “profound” even if it were not something spoken by Buddha and were unknown to the other scholar-adepts. Meditate on such an instruction and you could be in danger of getting some result that no one else has ever achieved before—not even the buddhas! You therefore must examine the Dharma you are going to make your practice. As the master Sakya Paṇḍita says:

With the pettiest business deal
 In horses, jewels, and so on,
 You question everything and examine all.
 I have seen how diligent you are
 With the petty actions of this life!

The good or bad in all your future lives
 Comes from the holy Dharma,
 Yet you treat that Dharma like a dog eats food:
 You worship whatever comes along
 Without first checking whether it is good or evil.

When we buy a horse for example, we examine numerous things, get a divination beforehand, and question lots of other people. Take the example of an ordinary monk. Even when he buys a tea brick, he checks its color, weight, and shape many times over. He makes quite sure it has not been damaged by water, etc., and he asks other people’s opinions. Yet if he is unlucky, it would only affect a few cups of tea.

You investigate such things as this thoroughly, even though they have only temporary value for you. But you do not seem to investigate at all the Dharma you are to practice, although this is the foundation of your eternal hopes for all your rebirths. You treat it like dog does food—whatever you chance upon is acceptable. How very wrong that is! If you go wrong here, you have ruined your eternal hopes. Thus, you must examine the Dharma you intend to practice before you engage in it.

If you examine our present Dharma, the lamrim, you will see it is the best of all. Even the extraordinary profundity of the secret tantras depends upon the lamrim; if you do not develop the three fundamentals of the path

[renunciation, bodhichitta, and the correct view of emptiness] in your mindstream, you cannot be enlightened in one lifetime by means of the mantra path. I have heard of many supposedly profound teachings that derive from visions or from hidden texts, all of which are supposed to bestow such miraculous powers—but there is absolutely nothing in them to teach you the three fundamentals of the path, nor any instruction of outstanding value.

Now what we call the *lamrim* was not invented by Je Rinpoche [Lama Tsongkapa], or Atiṣha, etc. Its lineage stems from the completely perfect Buddha himself and from him alone. But when you come to understand the teachings, beyond whether they have been given the name “lamrim” while others have not, you will see that all the scriptures are the lamrim. The precious set of the Perfection of Wisdom sūtras is supreme, outstanding, and most excellent among all the teachings of our Teacher. In these sūtras he taught directly the profound stages of the path [the wisdom of emptiness], which are the profound items of the eighty-four thousand bundles of the Dharma; he also covertly taught the extensive part of the lamrim in them [the methods of the buddhas]. This then is the source of the lineage. The extensive part was passed on to the Buddha’s foremost disciple Maitreya, who in turn passed it on to Aśaṅga. The profound part of the lamrim passed from Mañjuśrī to Nāgārjuna. This is how the lamrim lineage split into two—the Profound and the Extensive.

In order to clarify the lamrim, Maitreya composed his *Five Treatises*, Aśaṅga wrote the *Five Texts on the Levels*, Nāgārjuna his *Six Logic Treatises*, and so on. So the Profound and Extensive lamrim lineages came down separately to the great peerless Atiṣha. He received the Extensive Lineage from Suvarṇadvīpa and the Profound from Vidyākoka; he combined the two into one stream. He also inherited the Lineage of Deeds Bestowing Great Blessing that Śhāntideva received from Mañjuḥṣha, as well as the lineages of the secret tantras, and so on. Thus, the lineages he inherited carried the complete sūtras and tantras.

Atiṣha composed his *Lamp on the Path to Enlightenment* in Tibet. This work combines the key points of the complete doctrine. Since that time, the convention of calling these teachings by the name *lamrim* developed. After that, the lineages concerning the profound view and the extensive tasks have been combined into one stream. But due to further expanding and condensing, this was split into three during the Kadampa period: the Classical, the Stages of the Path, and the Oral Instruction lineages. Later

still, Je Tsongkapa received all three of these from Namkha Gyaeltsaen of Lhodrag, himself a great adept, and from Choekyab Zangpo, the abbot of Dragor. It has been a single lineage from that time on.

Great Je Rinpoche made petitions in his prayers [to the lineage holders of this tradition] below the Lion Rock at Radreng to the north of Lhasa; and there he started to write “Unlocking the Door of the Supreme Path.” He had with him a statue of Atiśha that depicted Atiśha with his head bent over to one side. Whenever Je Rinpoche petitioned this statue, he received visions of all the gurus of the lamrim lineage, and they would discuss Dharma with him. In particular, he had visions of Atiśha, Dromtoenpa, Potowa, and Sharawa for a month. These latter three figures finally dissolved into Atiśha, who placed his hand at the crown of Je Rinpoche’s head and said, “Perform deeds for the teaching and I shall help you.” This means that it was he who requested Tsongkapa to write the *Great Stages of the Path*. Je Rinpoche completed it up to the end of the part dealing with mental quiescence. Venerable Mañjughoṣha requested him to complete the book. As a result, Je Rinpoche wrote the section on special insight. Thus, be aware that the book is a veritable treasure trove of blessings, even if we ignore everything else and only consider those who requested him to compose it. This is secretly taught in passages, such as the colophon, which begins “By the amazing good works of the victors and their children...” [see p. 724]

Later, he composed the *Stages of the Path* to summarize the essence of the matter treated in the *Great Stages of the Path*, leaving out the extra explanations. This work deals mainly with the whispered lineages and older explanation lineages; the two lamrims are said to complement each other with different key points from the oral instructions.

You may not know how to integrate these texts into your practice. Je Rinpoche later said:

People will eventually find it almost impossible to understand how to put all these teachings into practice, so a condensed version of how to practice them should be made in the future.

Following this injunction, the [Third] Dalai Lama Soenam Gyatso wrote the *Essence of Refined Gold*. The great Fifth Dalai Lama wrote the *Mañjuśhri’s Own Words* lamrim as a commentary to this. The Pañchen Lama Lozang Choekyi Gyaeltsaen wrote the *Easy Path*, and Lozang Yeshe

[another Pañchen incarnation] composed its commentary, the *Swift Path*. Je Rinpoche himself wrote three lamrims: the *Great*, *Medium*, and *Small* (also known as *Songs from Experience*). And, in addition to the above four concise teachings by the Dalai Lamas and Pañchen Lamas, Ngagwang Dragpa of Dagpo wrote the *Essence of Eloquence*. These are the eight most famous teachings on the lamrim.

You must receive the lineage discourses for these root texts and commentaries separately: these do not relate as root texts and commentaries. In particular, there are two lineages of discourses on *Mañjuśrī's Own Words*, one more detailed than the other. One of these was maintained in the Central Province, while the other was upheld in the south; this resulted in the two splitting off from each other. You must also receive the lineage discourses for both of these separately. Chancellor Tapugpa and his followers later assessed the lineages of this text. He claimed that if he had read this text earlier, he would not have had so many problems with lamrim meditation topics. And it is as he says: the concise teaching of the *Swift Path* and the two lines of *Mañjuśrī's Own Words* go together to make something particularly profound that just one text would not.

When our Teacher Buddha taught, there was no difference between the two lineages—one for the oral transmission and one for the oral discourse. Only later, when his teachings were no longer fully comprehensible, were those discourses given separately. The discourses that painstakingly give a detailed and elaborate discussion of the individual words in a text have been called *formal discourses*. The *concise discourse* refers to oral teachings that do not elaborate much on the words of the text but instead expose the heart of the instruction, much as skillful doctors dissect a fresh corpse in front of their students. The way they point out the five solid organs, the six hollow organs, etc., would give a vivid introduction. In the *practical discourse*, the lama speaks from his own experience, according to what the students' minds can manage. The *experiential teaching* is as follows. The disciples stay together around a retreat house. They are taught a set of visualizations, which they then begin to meditate on. They are not taught the next topic until they have gained some meditative experience on those practices. When they gain some experience, they are taught the next one. These discourses come down to us in lineages blessed by insight. They are most beneficial for taming the mindstream.

The teaching I shall now offer is a practical discourse. A few of those present are unfortunate enough only to have the time to attend this sort of

teaching once or twice. They are interested in these teachings, although they must later go their separate ways. For their sakes I shall be combining the *Swift Path* and the brief and detailed lineages of *Mañjuśhrī's Own Words*. Later on, when we get to that part, I shall give the seven-point mind training on the interchange of self and others.

I have no reservations about giving this teaching. It will create root merits for the two departed aristocrats in whose memory this teaching is being given. And when I teach the lamrim, I do not have to weigh the benefits or dangers to guru or disciple, something I have to do when I give other teachings, such as initiations. A lamrim teaching can only be most beneficial.

All of you, practice what you can; and you must pray on behalf of these two departed noblemen.

Kyabje Pabongka Rinpoche gave a short oral transmission of the opening lines of these lamrim texts. Then we were free to go.

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APPENDIXES

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1. OUTLINE OF THE TEXT

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2. THE LINEAGE OF THESE TEACHINGS

Guru Śhākyamuni Buddha

Lineage of Extensive Deeds

Maitreya
Asaṅga
Vasubandhu
Vimuktisena
Vimuktisenagomin
Parasasena
Vinitasena
Vairochana
Haribhadra
Kusali
Ratnasena
Suvarṇadvīpa

Lineage of Profound View

Mañjuśhri
Nāgārjuna
Chandrakīrti
Vidyakokila the elder
Vidyakokila the younger
(Avadhūtipa)

Atisha

Dromtöenpa

Lamrim Lineage

Goenpawa
Nēzurpa
Tagmapa
Namkha Senge

Classical Lineage

Potowa
Sharawa
Chilbupa
Lhalung Wangchug

Instruction Lineage

Chaen Ngawa
Tsultrimbar
Zhoenue Oe
Gyergompa

Namkha Gyaelpo	Goenpo Rinpoche	Sangyae Oen
Senge Zangpo	Zangchenpa	Namkha Gyaelpo
Gyalsae Zangpo	Tsonawa	Senge Zangpo
Namkha Gyaeltsaen	Moendrapa	Gyalsae Zangpo
	Choekyab Zangpo	Namkha Gyaeltsaen
	<i>Gelugpa Lineage</i>	
	Tsongkapa	
	Jampael Gyatso	
	Kaedrub Rinpoche	
	Basoje	
	Choekyi Dorje	
	Gyaelwa Ensapa	
	Sangyae Yeshe	
	Lozang Choekyi Gyaeltsaen (First Panchen Lama)	
	Koenchog Gyaeltsaen	
	Lozang Yeshe (Second Panchen Lama)	
	Purchog Ngagwang Jampa	
	Lozang Nyaendrag	
	Yoentaen Tayae	
	Taenpa Rabgyae	
	Lodroe Zangpo	
	Lozang Gyatso	
	Jinpa Gyatso	
	Taenzin Kaedrub	
	Lozang Lhuendrub Gyatso	
	Jampa Taenzin Trinlae Gyatso (Pabongka Rinpoche)	
	Lozang Yeshe Taenzin Gyatso (Trijang Rinpoche)	

3. THE THREE FUNDAMENTALS OF THE PATH

Homage to the venerable gurus.

I shall explain, as best I can,
The import of the essence
Of all the victors' scriptures,
The path praised by holy victors
And their children—the gateway
For the fortunates wanting liberation.

Those unattached to worldly happiness who,
Yearning to give meaning to their optimum rebirth,
Follow a path pleasing to the victors,
O fortunate ones! Listen with clear minds.

Without pure renunciation, there is no way
To still the yearning for the happy fruits
Of this ocean of existence;
And because all embodied beings
Thirst after existence,
They are utterly bound.
Thus, from the first, seek renunciation.

The optimum human rebirth
Is difficult to acquire.
This life does not last long.
Familiarize your mind with these things
And turn away from this life's trivia.

If you contemplate over and over
The undeceptive laws of cause and effect
And saṃsāra's sufferings,
You will turn away from your next lives' trivia.

After such meditations, when you do not long
For the splendors of saṃsāra for even a moment,
When your thoughts day and night
Always yearn for liberation,
You have developed renunciation.

But, if not conjoined with pure bodhichitta,
Even renunciation is not cause
For the choice bliss of highest enlightenment.
Thus the discerning develop supreme bodhichitta.

Swept away by the stream of the four strong currents,
Bound by the fetters of hard-to-stop actions,
Trapped in the iron mesh of self-grasping,
Smothered in the blackness of ignorance,

They are endlessly born and reborn to the world
And continuously tortured by the three sufferings.
Such is the condition of our mothers;
Contemplate this situation,
And develop supreme bodhichitta.

Despite acquaintance with renunciation and bodhichitta,
If you do not have the wisdom that understands the way things exist,
You cannot eradicate the roots of existence.
Thus, work hard at the means of realizing the interdependence of things.

He who sees that for all phenomena in saṃsāra and nīrvāṇa
The law of cause and effect is inevitable
And has righted his perception
Is on the path that gladdens the buddhas.

The appearance that things are mutually interdependent
Is no illusion; but there are those
Who understand emptiness to be something
Devoid of this appearance.
As long as these two
Seem separate to you, you will never
Realize the thoughts of the Great One.

The mere perception [that these two]
Go together—that they are not alternatives,
And that mutual interdependence is undeceptive—
Will destroy all the ways in which you grasp at objects
With the mind. At this point you perfect
Your analysis of the view.

You eliminate the extreme of specious substantialism;
You eliminate the extreme of empty nihilism.
If you understand how emptiness presents itself as causes and effects,
Views that grasp extremes will not impress you.

When you rightly understand these points
Of the three fundamentals of the path,
Take up solitude and develop
The strength of your perseverance;
You will soon achieve the eternal hope, my child.

*The learned monk Lozang Dragpa [Je Tsongkhapa] gave the above advice to
Ngawang Dragpa, an official at Tsako.*

4. AN ORNAMENT FOR THE THROATS OF THE FORTUNATE

*A Preparatory Rite in Convenient Sections for Recitation for the Swift Path
Concise Teaching of the Lamrim by Jampael Lhuendrub of Dagpo.*

Before the guru inseparable from Buddha and Vajradhara
I prostrate myself and take refuge for all time.
Out of your great love, take care of me.

This brings together the instructions of the great Gyaelwa Ensapa on the recitations to be performed as the six-part rite to precede lamrim [meditation]. The layout is as follows:

THE FIRST [RITE]: CLEANING YOUR ROOM AND ARRANGING THE SYMBOLS
OF ENLIGHTENED BODY, SPEECH, AND MIND

THE SECOND [RITE]: OBTAINING OFFERINGS HONESTLY AND ARRANGING
THEM BEAUTIFULLY

THE THIRD [RITE]: ADOPTING THE EIGHT-FEATURED SITTING POSTURE OF
VAIROCHANA ON A COMFORTABLE SEAT AND THEN TAKING REFUGE AND
DEVELOPING BODHICHITTA IN AN ESPECIALLY VIRTUOUS FRAME OF MIND

First, you visualize the objects of refuge:

In space directly before me is a broad, wide, and precious throne supported by eight huge lions. On it is a seat [built up of] a multicolored lotus, a moon and a sun maṇḍala. [There sits a figure] who is by nature my precious root guru, in the aspect of the Victor Śhākyamuni. His body is like burnished gold; his head has the crown protrusion. He has one face, two

hands—his right makes the earth-touching gesture, his left makes the meditative absorption gesture while holding a begging bowl full of nectar. He wears saffron-colored robes. He is adorned and made brilliant by the marks and signs; he is of the nature of light and sits amid a mass of light generated from his body. His two legs are crossed in the vajra posture.

He is surrounded by my personal and lineage gurus, tutelary deities, and the buddhas, bodhisattvas, ḍākas, ḍākinīs, and Dharma protectors, who form a group around him. Before each of these, on magnificent thrones, rests the Dharma that each of them orally transmitted, in the aspect of loose-leaf books having the nature of light.

The figures of this merit field show that they are pleased with me; for my part, I have great faith in them when I remember their qualities and kindness.

Since beginningless time, I and all sentient beings, who have been my mothers, have been born into saṃsāra and for a long while, up until now, have experienced the very many different sufferings of saṃsāra in general, and those of the three lower realms in particular. Even now, it is hard to understand the extent and depth of that suffering. But [now] I have gained something special that is difficult to achieve, and once achieved is most beneficial: the optimum human rebirth. It is difficult to meet with the precious teachings of the Buddha. Now that I have met with these teachings, if I do not achieve pure and complete buddhahood, the best form of liberation from all the sufferings of saṃsāra, I must again experience the whole range of sufferings that saṃsāra in general involves and, more importantly, the sufferings of the three lower realms. The power to protect me from these sufferings resides in the guru and the Three Jewels. So for the sake of all sentient beings, my former mothers, I shall achieve complete buddhahood. I therefore take refuge in the guru and the Three Jewels.

With these thoughts, [recite this formula] three times or however many times you are able:

I take refuge in the guru.
 I take refuge in the Buddha.
 I take refuge in the Dharma.
 I take refuge in the Saṅgha.

Repeat [this verse] three times for the development of bodhichitta:

Until enlightenment, I take refuge
In Buddha, Dharma, and the Supreme Assembly.
With the merit I earn through generosity and so on,
May I gain buddhahood for the sake of all beings.

Recite the following three or more times, so that meditation on the four immeasurables thoroughly suffuses your mental continuum:

How welcome it would be if all sentient beings remained in a state of equanimity: free of feelings of intimacy or distance, attachment, or hostility. May they come to this state. I will bring them to this state. May I be blessed by my gurus and deities to have the power to do this!

How welcome it would be if all sentient beings possessed happiness and its causes. May they come to have them. I will make them have them. May I be blessed by my gurus and deities to have the power to do this!

How welcome it would be if all sentient beings were free of suffering and its causes. May they come to be free of them. I will make them free of them. May I be blessed by my gurus and deities to have the power to do this!

How welcome it would be if all sentient beings were never separated from the holy bliss of high rebirth and liberation. May they come to have these. I will make them have these. May I be blessed by my gurus and deities to have the power to do this!

With the following, generate especially [strong] bodhichitta:

For the sake of all sentient beings, who have all been my mother, I will do anything to quickly, quickly obtain the precious state of pure and complete buddhahood. Therefore I shall enter meditation on the teachings of the stages of the path to enlightenment—the door to the profound path of guru deity yoga.

May the ground everywhere
Have no pebbles and so forth,
Be as flat as the palm of one's hand,
Have the nature of lapis lazuli
Yet remain soft.

May the offerings of humans and the gods,
Both real and those emanated by the mind,
And peerless offering-clouds of Samantabhadra
Pervade the whole of the element of space.

Say three times:

*Oṃ namo bhagavate, vajra sara pramardane tathagātaya, arhate samyaksam
buddhaya, tadyathā, oṃ vajre vajre, mahā vajre, mahā tejra vajre, mahā vidya
vajre, mahā bodhichitta vajre, mahā bodhi maṇḍopa samkramaṇa vajre,
sarva karma āvaraṇa vishodhana vajre svāhā.*

Bless the offering substances by saying these words of the power of truth:

By the truth of the Three Jewels; by the great might of the blessings of all
the buddhas and bodhisattvas, along with their might from completing
the two accumulations; by the power of the purity and inconceivability of
the dharmadhātu [sphere of truth], may everything become suchness.

THE FOURTH [RITE]: VISUALIZING THE MERIT FIELD

*Of the two traditions, we will proceed according to the Guru Pūjā because this
is easy to recite.*

Visualization of the merit field:

In space, the broad road used by the gods,
Seen as bliss and void combined,
At the center of overlapping banks of cloud
Of Samantabhadra's offerings,
Stands a wish-granting tree
Bedecked with leaves, flowers, and fruit.
At its summit is a precious throne
Ablaze with five colors of light;
On this rests a huge lotus
With sun and moon discs.
On these sits my root guru
Who is thrice kind to me.

He is by nature all buddhas;
 In aspect, a saffron-robed monk,
 With one face, two hands, and radiant smile.
 His right hand makes the Dharma-teaching mudrā;
 The left, the gesture of meditative absorption,
 While holding a nectar-filled begging bowl.
 He wears the three bright-saffron Dharma robes;
 On his head is a yellow pandit's hat.
 At his heart are Śhākyamuni and blue Vajradhara
 Of one face, two hands, holding bell and vajra.
 Vajradhara sits in union with Dhatvīśhvarī;
 They experience bliss and void combined;
 They wear precious ornaments and robes of celestial silks.

My guru has the marks and signs
 And blazes forth thousands of light rays;
 A five-colored rainbow encircles him.
 He sits in vajra posture; his pure aggregates
 Are the five dhyāni buddhas;
 His four constituents, the four consorts;
 His senses, veins, muscles, and joints
 Are actually bodhisattvas; his pores
 Are twenty-one thousand arhats;
 His limbs—powerful wrathful ones.
 The light rays from his body are direction protectors.
 Indra, Brahmā, and other gods
 Throw themselves at his feet. Around him sit:
 My own lamas, a profusion of tutelary gods,
 Their maṇḍalas, their attendant gods,
 The buddhas and bodhisattvas,
 Ḍākās and the protectors of the teachings.
 All their three doors are marked by the three vajras.
 Hooked rays of light spread out from their *hūṃ* letters,
 Bringing back wisdom beings from their natural abodes,
 Who indistinguishably merge and stabilize.

[Invocation]

The protectors of each and every sentient being,
Gods who conquer mighty Māra and his hordes,
You who perfectly know all things—
O bhagavān buddhas and your train,
Please come here. *Ja hūṃ baṃ boh:*
You become inseparable
From the commitment beings.

Generation of the bath house:

Here is a perfumed bath house;
With clear and brilliant crystal floor;
With radiant, exquisite pillars
Made of precious substances;
Adorned with a canopy of dazzling pearls.

Carry out the washing:

Just after [Buddha's] birth,
The gods washed his body;
So I also wash with celestial waters
The bodies of the sugatas.
Oṃ sarva tathāgata abhiṣhekata samaya shrīye āḥ hūṃ

Body born of ten million virtues and excellences,
Speech that fulfills the hopes of infinite beings,
Mind that sees all knowables as they are:
I wash the body of Śhākyamuni-Vajradhara.
Oṃ sarva tathāgata abhiṣhekata samaya shrīye āḥ hūṃ

I wash the bodies of the Lineage of Extensive Deeds.
I wash the bodies of the Lineage of Profound View.
I wash the bodies of the Lineage of Consecrated Practices.
I wash the bodies of the gurus of my lineage.
Oṃ sarva tathāgata abhiṣhekata samaya shrīye āḥ hūṃ

I wash the bodies of the buddhas, our teachers.
 I wash the body of the holy Dharma, our protector.
 I wash the bodies of the Saṅgha, our saviors.
 I wash the bodies of the Three Jewels, our refuge.
Oṃ sarva tathāgata abhiṣhekata samaya shrīye āḥ hūṃ

Wipe their bodies:

I wipe their bodies with peerless cloth—
 Clean and steeped in choice perfume.
Oṃ hūṃ trāṃ hrīḥ āḥ kāya viśhodhanaye svāhā

Anoint their bodies:

I anoint the dazzling bodies of the sages—
 As dazzling as burnished, refined gold—
 With the choicest fragrances
 The billion worlds have to offer.

Offer garments:

Out of my unceasing faith,
 I offer celestial robes—soft, light,
 Diaphanous—to you who have achieved
 The indestructible vajra body.
 May I, too, gain the vajra body.

Offer ornaments:

Because the victors are naturally adorned
 With the marks and signs,
 They have no need of other ornaments;
 But I offer the best of jewels and ornaments
 So that all beings may obtain
 A body with these self-same marks.

The request for them to resume their places:

Because the bhagavāns love
All beings and myself
I ask you to remain
Through your magic powers
As long as I still make offerings to you.

THE FIFTH [RITE]: OFFERING THE SEVEN-LIMBED PRAYER AND
A WORLD MAṄḌALA—PRACTICES THAT CONTAIN ALL THE KEY POINTS
FOR ACCUMULATING MERIT AND SELF-PURIFICATION

Body born of ten million virtues and excellences,
Speech that fulfills the hopes of infinite beings,
Mind that sees all knowables as they are:
Homage to the head of the Śhākya tribe.

The great compassion of Vajradhara,
The supreme perception of Tilopa and Nāropa,
The supreme glory of Ḍoṃbhīpa and Atiśha:
Homage to the Lineage of Consecrated Practices.

Maitreya, Asaṅga, Vasubhandu, Vimuktisena,
Paranasena, Vinītasena, Dharmakīrti,
Haribhadra, both Kusalis, Suvarṇadvīpa:
Homage to the Lineage of Extensive Deeds.

Mañjuśrī, who destroyed existence and nonexistence,
Nāgārjuna, Chandrakīrti, the first Vidyakokila,
And other children of the Ārya [Nāgārjuna] who pursued the Buddha's
meaning: Homage to the Lineage of Profound View.

Atiśha, holder of supreme instruction on theory and practice,
Lord Drom, grandfather of the Kādampa teachings,
The four yogis, the three brothers, and the rest:
Homage to the Kādampa gurus.

Tsongkapa, who revived the forerunners' tradition in the Land of Snows,
Gyaeltsab Je, great logician, powerful siddha,
Kaedrub Je, lord of sūtra and tantra teachings:
Homage to the Lineage of the Father and his Children.

Vajradhara, embodiment of all three refuges,
Who takes the form of spiritual guides
In order to subdue any disciple,
Who confers common and supreme siddhis:
Homage to my kind gurus.

O eyes through which we see the whole of vast scripture,
Supreme doorways to lead the fortunate to liberation,
Users of skillful means to lovingly protect:
Homage to illuminating spiritual guides.

Guhyasamāja, blissful Heruka,
Most glorious Yamāntaka and the rest,
Protectors of the four wheels of countless tantras:
Homage to the host of tutelary deities.

Marvelous merits from harmonious prayers,
Deeds that never can be rivalled,
Deeds fulfilled in this one fortunate eon:
Homage to the thousand buddhas.

Sunāman, Ratna, Suvarṇabhadra, Aśhoka,
Dharmakīrti, Abhijña, Bhaiṣajyarāja, Śhākyamuni,
Who have fulfilled the gist of vastest prayers:
Homage to the eight sugatas.

Perfection of Wisdom, the mother of the victors,
Who destroys the seeds of all dark sorrow,
Who removes suffering by its deepest roots:
Homage to the Dharma of the three vehicles.

Mañjuśhrī, Vajrapāṇi, Avalokiteśhvara,
Kṣhitagarbhā, Sarvanivaranaviṣhkambhi,

Ākāśhagarbha, Maitreya, Samantabhadra:
Homage to the eight main princes.

Those who have meditated on the profound twelve links,
Who by themselves reached pratyekabuddha wisdom
And took it to heart in isolation:
Homage to the noble pratyekabuddhas.

Those who heard the Sage's words,
Who held aloft the doctrine's banner,
Aṅgaja, Ajita, Vanavasin,
Kālīka, Vajrīputra, Śhrībhadra,
Kanakavatsa, Kanakabharadvāja,
Ārya Bakula, Rāhula,
Chūḍapanthaka, Piṅḍolabharadvāja,
Panthaka, Nāgasena, Gopaka, and Abhedā:
Homage to the elders and their retinue.

You who look down from holy Kechari,
Powerful ones who have clairvoyance and work miracles,
You look upon practitioners as a mother sees her son:
Homage to the three divisions of ḍākinīs.

In times long past, when the Blessed One was here,
You protected and, as a mother on her child,
Smiled upon those who practiced properly:
Homage to the Dharma protectors and defenders.

Dhṛitarāṣṭra, Virūḍhaka,
Virūpākṣha and Vaiśhravaṇa,
You control your retinues and guard the four gates:
Homage to the four mahārājās.

To all those worthy of homage,
I prostrate myself in supreme faith,
With as many bodies
As the atoms in the world.

Homage to the youthful Ārya Mañjuśhrī.
To all the tathāgatas of the three times—those lions among men—
To be found in the ten directions of the universe:
With cleansed body, speech, and mind,
I pay homage to each and every one of you.

With this powerful prayer of noble deeds,
I prostrate before all the victors:
I imagine I have as many bodies
As there are atoms in the world.

On each atom there are as many buddhas
As [the universe] has atoms; and those buddhas
Sit among bodhisattvas. So too do I believe
That all victors fill the expanse of all phenomena.

I sing of the qualities of all the victors
With an inexhaustible ocean of praise,
With a great ocean of every melodious sound.
Thus I praise all sugatas.

I offer the victorious ones
Exquisite flowers, choice garlands,
The clash of cymbals, the best
Of lotions, of parasols,
Of oil lamps and choice incense.

I offer the victorious ones
Exquisite robes, the best of fragrances,
Mounds of incense powders high as Meru—
A sublime array of matchless things.

All this peerless, expansive offering
I imagine for all the victors.
To all the victors I pay this homage,
Making this offering by the power
Of my faith in noble deeds.

Offer the maṇḍala with the following:

Oṃ vajra bhūmi āḥ hūṃ: the most powerful golden base. *Oṃ vajra rekhe āḥ hūṃ*: an iron mountain chain completely surrounds it. In the center—Meru, king of mountains. To the east, the continent of Videha. To the south, Jambudvīpa. To the west, Godāniya. To the north, Kuru. Then east, the minor continents of Deha and Videha; south, Chāmara and Aparachāmara; west, Śhāthā and Uttaramantriṇa; north, Kuru and Kaurava. jewel-mountains, wish-granting trees, wish-granting cows, unploughed wild crops. The precious wheel, precious jewel, precious concubine, precious minister, precious elephant, precious horse, precious general. The great treasure vase. Goddesses of beauty, garlands, songs, dance, flowers, incense, light, perfume. The sun and moon; the precious parasol and banner of absolute victory. In the center: all the magnificent wealth of gods and humans. All this I present to my kind root guru and the holy gurus of his lineage, together with great Lama Lozang Tubwang Dorje Chang, the deities and their trains. For the sake of all beings, please compassionately accept these things. Take them and bless me.

I offer this base, anointed with perfume,
 Strewn with flowers, adorned by Mount Meru,
 The continents, sun, and moon—
 All visualized into a buddhafield.
 May all beings enjoy this pure land.

I offer my body, speech, and mind and those of other beings,
 Our pleasures, our root virtues from all three times;
 I mentally offer a precious maṇḍala,
 And the mass of Samantabhadra's offerings,
 To my gurus, deities and Three Jewels.
 Take them out of your compassion; please bless me.
Idaṃ guru ratna maṇḍalakaṇṇī niryātayāmi

You may also recite the Confession of Transgressions Sūtra if you wish to do things more elaborately.

The mantra to multiply virtue:

Oṃ sambhara sambhara vīmanasara mahājapa hūṃ. Oṃ smara smara vīmanaskara mahājapa hūṃ.

The Confession of Transgressions Sūtra:

Homage to our Teacher, the Bhagavān, the Tathāgata, the Completely Enlightened One, the Glorious Victor—Śhākyamuni.

Homage to Tathāgata Who Vanquishes through Vajra Essence [Vajramaṇḍapramardin].

Homage to Tathāgata Emanator of Precious Light Rays [Ratnarchi].

Homage to Tathāgata King of the Powerful Nāgas [Geyarāja].

Homage to Tathāgata Tribe of Heroes [Vorasena].

Homage to Tathāgata Glorious Happiness [Vorānandin].

Homage to Tathāgata Precious Fire [Ratnāgni].

Homage to Tathāgata Precious Moonlight [Ratnachandraprabha].

Homage to Tathāgata Meaningful to Behold [Amoghadarshin].

Homage to Tathāgata Precious Moon [Ratnachandra].

Homage to Tathāgata Stainless [Vimala].

Homage to Tathāgata Glorious Generosity [Śhrīdatta].

Homage to Tathāgata Purity [Brahmā].

Homage to Tathāgata Bestowed by Purity [Brahmādatta].

Homage to Tathāgata Water God [Varuṇa].

Homage to Tathāgata God of the Water God [Varuṇadeva].

Homage to Tathāgata Gloriously Noble [Śhrībhadra].

Homage to Tathāgata Glorious Sandalwood [Chandanashrī].

Homage to Tathāgata Infinite Brilliance [Anantejas].

Homage to Tathāgata Glorious Light [Prabhāśhrī].

Homage to Tathāgata Glory of Having No Sorrow [Ashokaśhrī].

Homage to Tathāgata Man of No Clinging [Nārāyaṇa].

Homage to Tathāgata Glorious Flower [Kusumāśhrī].

Homage to Tathāgata Directly Knowing through the Play of Purity's Light Rays [Brahmajyotirvikroḍhitābhijña].

Homage to Tathāgata Directly Knowing through the Play of the Lotus's Light Rays [Padmajyotirvikroḍhitābhijña].

Homage to Tathāgata Glorious Wealth [Danaśhrī].

Homage to Tathāgata Glorious Remembrance [Smṛitiśhrī].

- Homage to Tathāgata Most Renowned for Glorious Purity
[Brahmāśhrisuparikīrti].
- Homage to Tathāgata King of the Victory Banner that Flies above Indra
[Indraketudhvajarāja].
- Homage to Tathāgata Glory of Most Complete Dominance
[Suvikrāntaśhri].
- Homage to Tathāgata Most Complete Victory in Battle [Yuddhajaya].
- Homage to Tathāgata Glory of Having Reached Complete Dominance
[Vikrāntagāmiśhri].
- Homage to Tathāgata Glorious Pattern of Light Everywhere
[Samantāvabhāsavyuhaśhri].
- Homage to the Tathāgata Complete Dominance through the Precious
Lotus [Ratnapadmavikrāmin].
- Homage to Tathāgata, the Arhat, the Completely Enlightened Precious
One who Sits on a Lotus—King of the Lord of Mountains
[Śhailendrarāja].

These and all the tathāgatas, arhats, completely enlightened ones, and bhagavāns to be found in all the worlds in [all] ten directions—all the living bhagavān buddhas in existence—please heed me:

In this rebirth, and in all my rebirth states since beginningless time on the wheel of saṃsāra, I have committed, encouraged others to do, and rejoiced over sinful actions. I have stolen offerings made to stūpas, to the Saṅgha, to the Saṅgha of the ten directions; I have encouraged others to do these; I have rejoiced over such actions. I have committed the five heinous crimes, encouraged others to do them, and rejoiced over such crimes. I have fulfilled the complete karmic process for the ten nonvirtues; I have encouraged others to do this; I have rejoiced when others did this. Obscured by every sort of karmic obscuration, I have been hell beings, and I have been born in animal states, in the realms of hungry ghosts, in remote regions, as barbarians, as long-lived gods, as [humans] with defective sense organs, as people upholding wrong views, and as people who did not rejoice over the coming of a Buddha. Whatever my karmic obscurations may be, I confess them all, admit them all, reveal them all, uncover them all before the bhagavān buddhas, who have primal wisdom, the eyes [of compassion], who have power, valid cognition, and see with their omniscience. In future I will cut myself off from such actions and will refrain from them.

All the bhagavān buddhas, please heed me:

I may have root virtues from practicing generosity in this rebirth and in my other rebirths states in saṃsāra since beginningless time—even of giving a single scrap of food to beings who have been reborn in animal states. I may have root virtues from safeguarding my ethics; I may have root virtues from practicing celibacy; I may have root virtues from ripening sentient beings; I may have root virtues from developing the wish for supreme enlightenment; I may have root virtues from supreme primal wisdom. All the root virtues I may have, I gather them together, bring them together. I gather them together and dedicate them to the supreme, the highest, the higher-than-high, the supreme of supremes. I dedicate them to my supreme, perfect, complete enlightenment. Just as the bhagavān buddhas of the past dedicated their root virtues, and just as the bhagavān buddhas yet to come will dedicate their root virtues, and just as the bhagavān buddhas still alive at present dedicate their root virtues, so I dedicate mine. I confess each and every sin. I rejoice over all merit. I plead with all the buddhas and petition them: may I gain holiest and supreme primal wisdom. I fold my hands to all the present victorious ones still alive and supreme among humans, to all victorious ones of the past, and to all of time yet to come; may I come under your protection.

(Colophon: so ends the Mahāyāna Sūtra entitled the *Three Noble Heaps*.)

The General Confession:

Alas! All the buddhas abiding in the ten directions, such as Guru Vajradhara, all the bodhisattvas, and the Saṅgha: please heed me. I, [*say your name*] by name, in all my [past] lives in beginningless saṃsāra until now, being under the power of the delusions of attachment, hostility, and benighted ignorance, have committed the ten nonvirtuous sins with my body, speech, and mind. I have committed the five major heinous crimes, the five minor heinous crimes; I have broken my pratimokṣha vows, my bodhisattva vows, my secret tantra vows. I have shown disrespect to my father and mother, and to my abbot, ordination master, and celibate companions. I have done actions harmful to the Three Jewels; I have abandoned the holy Dharma; I have disparaged the Ārya Saṅgha; I have done things harmful to sentient beings, and so on—I have performed a set of nonvirtuous sins, encouraged others to do these, rejoiced when others did these, and so forth. In brief, whatever my set of grave misdeeds

may consist of, whatever causes [it may contain] to prevent my gaining high rebirth or liberation and make me take rebirth in saṃsāra or the lower realms, all these I confess, admit, do not conceal, and reveal before all the buddhas living in the ten directions, such as Guru Vajradhara, and the bodhisattvas; in the future I shall refrain from doing these; as I have confessed and expiated these, may I reach happiness and remain there; this would not have happened had I not confessed and expiated them.

If you are going to perform only a short version, recite:

Under the power of attachment, hostility,
And benighted ignorance, I have sinned
With my body, speech, and mind.
I confess all these individually.

I rejoice over all merits
Of the victors of the ten directions.
Of their children, pratyekabuddhas,
Still-learners and no-more-learners,
And every other being.

O lamps to worlds in the ten directions,
You who achieved nonattachment
And the level of enlightened buddhas,
I beseech you, O protectors:
Turn the supreme wheel!

To those who, to common appearance,
Intend to go to their nīrvāṇa,
With folded hands I plead:
Stay for as many eons
As there are atoms in this world
To help and bring happiness to all beings.

What little virtue I acquired
From homage, offerings, confession,
Rejoicing, requests, and petitions,
I dedicate it all to my enlightenment.

At this point make a long maṇḍala offering. Then, request the three great aims:

I take refuge in the guru and the Three Precious Jewels. Please bless my mindstream. Please bless us so that I and all sentient beings, beings who were once my mothers, stop having any sort of wrong thoughts—from having disrespect for our spiritual guides to our grasping at dualistic signs in the self. Please bless us so that we easily develop every sort of right thought—from having respect for our spiritual guides, and so on. Please, bless us and pacify all our external and internal hindrances.

THE SIXTH [RITE]: FURTHER PETITIONS, WHICH FOLLOW THE ORAL INSTRUCTIONS, MADE IN ORDER TO BE SURE YOUR MINDSTREAM HAS BEEN SUFFICIENTLY IMBUED BY YOUR MEDITATIONS

My precious root guru, take your place
On the lotus and moon-disc on my crown;
Care for me out of great compassion,
And confer the siddhis of body, speech, and mind.

Our Teacher, the Bhagavān—the peerless savior,
Maitreya the invincible—the Victor’s holy regent,
Ārya Asaṅga—predicted by the Victorious One:
I make petition to three buddhas and bodhisattvas.

Vasubhandu—crest jewel of Jambudvīpa’s scholars,
Ārya Vimuktisena—who found the middle path,
Vimuktisenagomin—who still commands faith:
I make petition to three friends of beings.

Paranasena—who achieved a most wondrous state,
Vinītasena—who trained his mind in profound paths,
Vairochana—treasured for his powerful deeds:
I make petition to the three who opened the eyes of the world.

Haribhadra—who spread the path of perfecting wisdom,
Kusali—who held all the Victor’s instructions
Ratnasena—who cared for all with love:
I make petition to three captains of beings.

Suvarṇadvīpa—whose mind had bodhichitta,
Dīpaṃkāra Atīṣha—who held the forerunners' tradition,
Dromtoenpa—who made clear the noble path:
I make petition to three backbones of the teachings.

Śhākyamuni—peerless exponent, supreme savior,
Mañjuśrī—who embodies the omniscience of the victors,
Nāgārjuna—most exalted ārya to see profound meaning:
I make petition to the three crest jewels of philosophers.

Chandrakīrti—who clarified the ārya's thoughts,
Vidyakokila—Chandrakīrti's best disciple,
Vidyakokila the younger—a true victors' child:
I make petition to three powerful intellects.

Dīpaṃkāra Atīṣha—who rightly perceived the depth
Of mutual dependence and upheld the forerunners' way,
And Dromtoenpa—who clarified the noble path:
I make petition to two jewels of Jambudvīpa.

Goenpawa—that splendid, powerful yogi,
Nēuzurpa—profound single-pointed concentration,
Tagmapa—who upheld all branches of vinaya:
I make petition to three lamps lighting these remote regions.

Namkha Senge—who practiced with great diligence,
Namkha Gyaelpo—who was blessed by the holy ones,
Senge Zangpo—who gave up the eight worldly concerns:
And I make petition to Gyaelsae Zangpo.

Who with bodhichitta saw all beings as his child,
Who was blessed and cared for by the god of gods,
Who was supreme guide for beings in degenerate times:
I make petition to Namkha Gyaeltsaen.

Geshe Potowa—the Victor's regent,
Sharawa—whose wisdom has no equal.

Chaekawa—lineage holder of bodhichitta:
I make petition to three who answer the hopes of beings.

Chilbupa—bodhisattva, lord over transmissions and insights,
Lhalung Wangchug—great scholar steeped in scripture,
Goenpo Rinpoche—protector of beings in all three realms:
I make petition to three great elders.

Zangchenpa—whose ethics were stainless,
Tsonawa—who upheld the hundred thousand sections of vinaya.
Moendrapa—who perfected vast metaphysics;
I make petition to three great saviors of beings.

Lord of vast and profound Dharmas,
Who protected all fortunate beings,
Whose noble works spread the teachings:
I make petition to a glorious guru [Choekyab Zangpo].

Tsultrimbar—great prince of adepts,
Zhoenué Oe—who cultivated his spiritual guide,
Gyergompa—whose mind trained in the Supreme Vehicle's path:
I make petition to three children of the victors.

Sangyaeb Oen—treasure of wondrous qualities,
Namkha Gyaelpo—blessed by the saints,
Senge Zangpo—who gave up eight worldly concerns:
And I make petition to Gyaelsae Zangpo.

Who with bodhichitta saw all beings as his son,
Who was blessed and cared for by the god of gods,
Who was supreme guide for beings in degenerate times:
I make petition to Namkha Gyaeltsaen.

Avalokiteśhvara—great treasure of right-perceiving compassion,
Mañjuśhri—master of stainless omniscience,
Tsongkapa—crest jewel of scholars in the Land of Snows:
I make petition at Lozang Dragpa's feet.

Jampael Gyatso—great prince of adepts,
Kaedrub Rinpoche—the sun of philosophers and adepts,
Basoje—who held a store of secret instruction:
I make petition to three peerless gurus.

Choekyi Dorje—who attained unification,
Gyaelwa Ensapa—who achieved the three kāyas,
Sangyae Yeshe—who held both transmissions and insights:
I make petition to three great scholar-adepts.

Lozang Choekyi Gyaeltsaen—who held the victory banner of
the teachings,
Koenchog Gyaeltsaen—his closest disciple,
Lozang Yeshe—who shone light on the noble path:
I make petition to three venerable lamas.

Ngagwang Jampa—who spread Śhākyamuni's teachings,
Lozang Nyaendrag—considered his closest disciple,
Yoentaen Tayae—who had infinite good qualities:
I make petition to three kind gurus.

Taenpa Rabgyae—who spread Lozang Yeshe's teachings,
Lodroe Zangpo—who worked for all beings' liberation,
Lozang Gyatso—skilled in the right way to teach:
I make petition to three unequalled gurus.

To my supremely kind root guru:
Peerless one, who upheld both teachings and practices,
Who conveyed both transmissions and insights
To four types of receptive fortunates:
With great reverence of body, speech, and mind, I make petition.

He who studied much, who extended
The maṇḍala of oral instruction
And revealed hidden practices of the two stages:
I make petition to Taenzin Kaedrub.

Kindest incarnate lama, whose body
 Contained all past, present, and future refuge;
 Whose speech taught with Mañjuśhrī's eloquence;
 Whose mind was an ocean of spontaneous wisdom
 In the three high trainings and cause and effect:
 I make petition to Lozang Lhuendrub Gyatso.

[My venerable lama, skilled in all fields,
 Whose mind was devoted to the āryas' jewels—
 Right love and so on—
 Who wore the robes of the four vast good works.
 I make petition to Jampa Taenzin Trinlae.

Lozang Yeshe Taenzin Gyatso,
 Who embodied the primal wisdom
 Of all the noble victors;
 O foremost in their stainless teachings,
 O protector who emanated
 A vast profusion of maṇḍalas.
 I make petition to my kind guru.]

You are eyes for seeing into all vast teachings,
 You are the best gate taking fortunates to liberation,
 You, motivated by love, used skillful means:
 I make petition to these spiritual guides, givers of light.

After making this petition most strongly, recite [Tsongkapa's Basis of All Good Qualities].

Most kind one, basis of all good qualities,
 Proper devotion to you is the root of the path.
 Bless me to see this and,
 With much effort and respect, to depend on you.

Such a free, wholesome rebirth I shall get only once.
 I know it is difficult to receive but most beneficial.
 Bless me to give rise to the uninterrupted thought
 Wishing both night and day to extract its essence.

Life and body are like foam moving on water.
They will soon be destroyed. I am reminded of death,
And that after death, my body is like a shadow,
And I shall follow black and white karmic results.

Bless me to gain strong conviction
And abandon my host of misdeeds,
Even down to the subtlest of the subtle,
To accomplish every virtue
And to always be scrupulous.

Analyze it: discontent is the door to all suffering.
The magnificence of the world is untrustworthy.
Bless me so that I understand the disadvantages
And develop yearning for the bliss of liberation.

Recalling those most pure thoughts:
Recollection, vigilance, and great scruple;
Bless me to undertake the essence of the practice,
The root of the doctrine—the pratimokṣha vows.

Just as I have fallen into worldly feelings,
So too have all beings, once my mothers;
Bless me to see this, train in supreme bodhichitta,
And take responsibility for freeing these beings.

Yet mere development of bodhichitta while not meditating
On the three types of ethics will not accomplish enlightenment.
Bless me to see this well, and to train
With strong endeavor in the vows of the victors' children.

Pacify my distraction to wrong objects
And may I properly engage in right things;
Bless me to be pacified and soon develop in my stream
Combined mental quiescence and special insight.

May I train in the common path and become a fitting vessel,
Then bless me to become fortunate

To easily take the vows that are the entrance
To the supreme of all the vehicles, the Vajrayāna.

The basis of achieving the two kinds of siddhis
Is said to be keeping one's commitments;
Bless me to hold these with genuine conviction
And keep them as I would my life.

Then may I strive to realize all points
In the essence of the tantras: the two stages.
Bless me that I never waver from performing
The four-session yoga and accomplish the holy teachings.

Long live the spiritual guides who teach this wholesome path
And the companions who practice well.
Bless them so that inner and outer hindrances
May be completely stilled.

In all my lives may I be inseparable from my pure guru,
May I enjoy the glories of the Dharma,
May I consummate the qualities of the levels and paths,
And may I soon achieve the state of Vajradhara.

Think over the meaning of the words as you recite them.

The dissolution of the merit field:

My precious root guru, take your place
On the lotus and moon-disc on my crown;
Care for me out of great compassion,
And confer the siddhis of body, speech, and mind.

*The guru moves to the crown of your head, and you perform a brief seven-
limbed prayer and maṇḍala offering:*

Body born of ten million virtues and excellences,
Speech that fulfills the hopes of infinite beings,

Mind that sees all knowables as they are:
Homage to the head of the Śhākya clan.

The supreme teacher: the precious Buddha,
The supreme protector: the precious holy Dharma,
The supreme savior: the precious Saṅgha:
Homage to you who comprise all refuge.

I make every offering, both real and imagined.
I confess every sin and transgression
Acquired from the beginningless past.
I rejoice in the virtue of all ārya beings.
Remain [with us] till saṃsāra is emptied.
Turn the wheel of Dharma for beings.
I dedicate my own virtue and that of others to enlightenment.

To the guru, tutelary deities, and the Three Jewels,
I offer the four continents, Mount Meru, the sun and moon,
These precious seven in a jeweled maṇḍala,
And a mass of Samantabhadra's offerings.
Out of your compassion, be pleased and bless me.

Make this petition bound to the one guru:

My most divine guru, lord of the four kāyas,
I make petition to you: Śhākyamuni-Vajradhara.
My divine guru, lord of unimpeded dharmakāya,
I make petition to you: Śhākyamuni-Vajradhara.
My divine guru, lord of blissful saṃbhogakāya,
I make petition to you: Śhākyamuni-Vajradhara.
My divine guru, lord of sundry nirmāṇakāya,
I make petition to you: Śhākyamuni-Vajradhara.
My divine guru, embodiment of all gurus,
I make petition to you: Śhākyamuni-Vajradhara.
My divine guru, embodiment of all deities,
I make petition to you: Śhākyamuni-Vajradhara.
My divine guru, embodiment of all buddhas,
I make petition to you: Śhākyamuni-Vajradhara.

My divine guru, embodiment of all Dharma,
I make petition to you: Śhākyamuni-Vajradhara.
My divine guru, embodiment of all Saṅgha,
I make petition to you: Śhākyamuni-Vajradhara.
My divine guru, embodiment of all ḍākas,
I make petition to you: Śhākyamuni-Vajradhara.
My divine guru, embodiment of all dharmapalas,
I make petition to you: Śhākyamuni-Vajradhara.
My divine guru, embodiment of all refuge,
I make petition to you: Śhākyamuni-Vajradhara.

Visualize the guru on your crown as Śhākyamuni and recite:

Homage to Śhākyamuni, guru and Victorious One.
I make offerings to you. I take refuge in you.

Oṃ muni muni mahāmuniye svāhā.

Then, after repeating this name mantra as many times as you can manage, continue [with prayers of dedication and auspiciousness]:

By this virtue, may I soon
Become a guru-buddha
So that I may lead every single being
To that very level.

[The Lamrim Prayer]

By the two accumulations I have amassed
With much effort over a great time,
Which fill a vastness like the sky,
May I become a victor, a powerful one,
A leader of beings—for those whose mental eyes
Are closed by ignorance.

From now on in all my lives
May Mañjuśhrī lovingly care for me.

May I find the supreme path of all the teachings,
Practice it, and please all the victors.

Using whatever I have realized of the points of the path,
May I dispel the mental darkness of beings
Through powerful love and honest skillful means;
May I long uphold the victor's doctrine.

In any place the precious teachings have not reached,
Or where they have since declined,
May I, moved by great compassion,
Shed light upon these beneficial treasures.

By the amazing good works of the victors and their children
And the excellent practice of enlightenment's path in stages,
May the minds of liberation seekers be enriched
And the victors' deeds long be continued.

May all be made conducive for practicing the wholesome path;
May the unconducive be dispelled.
In all their lives, may all
Humans and nonhumans not be cut off
From the pure path praised by the victors.

Whenever the preparatory rites of the Supreme Vehicle
Are properly practiced with [much] effort,
May the powerful always proclaim it,
And may an ocean of auspiciousness pervade all directions.

[Reciting] these words with a strong aspiration, dedicate the root virtues you have acquired toward [fulfilling] the wishes of your own and others' prayers.

Kaendaen Rabgyae, the retired head of Bangrim Choede Monastery, out of much faith, perseverance, and discernment said, "I would like a convenient recitation for the preparatory rites for the concise teaching on the stages of the path to enlightenment, the Swift Path Leading to Omniscience." He made this request most urgently, and I have composed this for my own daily practice and with the great altruistic hope that it would benefit others with the same

level of fortune as myself. I, who am called Jampael Lhuendrub, and who will always be passing himself off as a leader [of disciples] until the end of time, based this on the instructions from the oral lineage of that peerlessly kind child of the buddhas and lamp of the Kadampa teachings, Kyabje Kaelzang Taenzin, and his two foremost disciples. May the confidential lineages of Mañjuśrī the protector not die out but become a victory banner for the precious teachings.

Sarva maṅgalaṃ

May all be good!

5. THE SEVEN-POINT MIND TRAINING

Om svasti.

[Homage to the Great Compassion]

Though there are many ways to teach the Mahāyāna mind training instruction, Geshe Chaekawa formulated the tradition of the seven points. The seven are: (1) teaching the preliminaries on which this Dharma depends; (2) training in bodhichitta, the foundation; (3) converting unfortunate circumstances into a path to enlightenment; (4) teaching a practice to be applied to your whole life; (5) the criteria of having trained the mind; (6) the commitments of the mind-training practice; (7) pieces of advice for the mind-training practice.

(1) TEACHING THE PRELIMINARIES ON WHICH THIS DHARMA DEPENDS

First train in the preliminaries.

There are three of these: meditation on: (1) the difficulty of gaining the optimum human rebirth; (2) death and impermanence; (3) the drawbacks of saṃsāra.

(2) TRAINING THE MIND IN BODHICHTTA, THE FOUNDATION

This has two subdivisions: (1) the ultimate; (2) the relative.

ULTIMATE BODHICHTTA

This has three subdivisions: (1) the preliminaries; (2) the meditation session; (3) between sessions.

THE PRELIMINARIES

(1) Taking refuge and developing bodhichitta; (2) requests; (3) offering the seven-limb prayer; (4) assuming correct posture; (5) taking twenty-one calm breaths.

THE MEDITATION SESSION

Think all phenomena are like a dream.
Examine with the basis of unproduced knowing.
Even the antidote will liberate to its ground.
Sit within the nature of the basis of all.

BETWEEN SESSIONS

Between sessions, be as a person in a dream.

MEDITATION ON RELATIVE BODHICHITTA

This has two sections: (1) during the meditative absorption; (2) between sessions.

DURING MEDITATIVE ABSORPTION

Train alternately in taking and giving.
Mount these two on the energy winds.

BETWEEN SESSIONS

Three subjects, three poisons, and three root virtues.
In your everyday life,
Train yourself with verses
To stimulate remembrance.
Build up your taking by starting with yourself.

(3) CONVERTING UNFORTUNATE CIRCUMSTANCES INTO A PATH TO ENLIGHTENMENT

When the universe is full of sin,
Turn these unfortunate conditions
Into the path to enlightenment!

This has two parts: (1) through thought; (2) through action.

THROUGH THOUGHT

There are two subsections: (1) the relative; (2) the ultimate.

THE RELATIVE

Put the blame on one thing alone.
Meditate on the greater kindness of all.

THE ULTIMATE

Regard all deceptive appearances
As being the four kāyas.
This is the unexcelled
Safekeeping of emptiness.

THROUGH ACTION

The supreme means has four actions.
Immediately apply your practice
To whatever you encounter.

(4) TEACHING A PRACTICE TO BE APPLIED YOUR WHOLE LIFE

The brief essence of instruction
Is the five powers. Practice them!
The Mahāyāna instruction on transference
Concerns the five powers.
Cherish this activity!

(5) THE CRITERIA OF HAVING TRAINED THE MIND

All Dharma comes within one thought.
Uphold the chief of the two witnesses.
Always cultivate mental happiness.
You have mastered it
If you are capable
While distracted.

(6) THE COMMITMENTS OF THE MIND-TRAINING PRACTICE

Always keep to three general points.
Change your aspirations,
But preserve your old manner.
Do not mention others' withered limbs.
Do not think of others at all.
Purify the greatest delusion first.
Abandon all hopes of a result.
Abandon food with poison in it.
Treat [delusion] unfairly.
Don't go wild over insults.
Do not wait in ambush.
Do not attack weak spots
Do not put the load of a dzo on an ox.
Do not run a race.
Don't let the spell go awry.
Don't let the god become a devil.
Don't look for happiness in unhappiness.

(7) PIECES OF ADVICE FOR THE MIND-TRAINING PRACTICE

All yogas are practiced through the one.
Apply the one thing for all distress.
Two actions for first and last.
Patience, if either two happen!
Guard the two as you would your life.
Train in three ascetic practices.
Acquire the causes for the three main things.
Meditate that the three not degenerate.
Do not leave the three idle.
Be impartial to subjects, regard them as pure;
Be versed in the profound and pervasive,
And hold everything dear.
Always meditate when in difficulties.
Don't be dependent on other circumstances.
From today, practice the main thing.
Don't misunderstand.

Don't be too hopeful.
Do not train intermittently.
Be liberated through the two:
Conceptualization and analysis.
Don't get arrogant.
Don't be spiteful.
Don't be changeable.
Don't wish for thanks.

Keep this advice well.

The five degenerations are rampant
But change them to the path to enlightenment.

(That is, practice patience, aspiration, tasting [emptiness], compassion, friendliness, and rejoicing.)

(The source of this instruction:)

This instruction, the essence of nectar,
Comes in a lineage from Suvarṇadvīpa.

(That great and powerful yogi, Chaekawa, having trained his mind well in this instruction, said:)

I have awakened happiness
Through my mind training.
I have much cause to respect it.
All talk of suffering is quite dead.
I now offer this instruction
For subduing self-cherishing.
Now I can die without regrets.

[This version of the root text, in both its length and order, is based on the teachings of Togme Rinpoche, that child of the victorious ones.]

Maṅgalaṃ

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PABONGKA RINPOCHE, Jampa Tenzin Trinlae Gyatso (1878–1941), attained his geshe degree at Sera Monastic University, Lhasa. He became a highly influential teacher in Tibet, serving as the root guru of the present Dalai Lama's two tutors and of many other Gelug lamas who have brought the Dharma to the West since they fled Tibet in 1959. *Liberation* captures the essence of Pabongka Rinpoche's fifteen published volumes on all aspects of Buddhism.



TRIJANG RINPOCHE (1901–81) was the foremost student of Pabongka Rinpoche. He was also the Junior Tutor of the Fourteenth Dalai Lama and the root guru of many Gelug lamas now teaching in the West.

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