



Jorchö

The Six Preparatory Practices

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(sByor-ba'i chos-drug bya-tshul thub-bstan lhun-po'i mdzes-rgyan)

THE SIX PREPARATORY PRACTICES Adorning the Buddha's Sublime Doctrine

by

Ngag-dbang Chos-'byor

Translated by

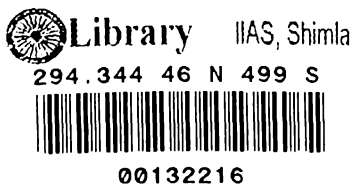
Losang C. Ganchenpa and
Karma Lekshe Tsomo

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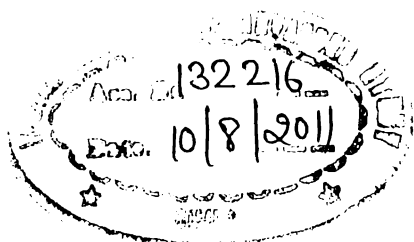
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Publisher's Note



We are happy to present this translation into English of *The Six Preparatory Practices Adorning the Buddha's Sublime Doctrine*. Mr. Losang C. Ganchenpa and Ani-la Karma Lekshe Tsomo are to be congratulated for their most competent translation of this valuable Tibetan texts, which is both a complete daily recitation and meditation practice and all the preliminaries essential to subsequent higher practices. An appealing feature of this text is that it may be used by the practitioners of all schools and at all levels of practice—beginning, intermediate, and advanced.

We are sure that this work will be of great help to non-Tibetan-speaking Buddhist scholars and practitioners. The original edition of this rare text can¹¹ be found in the manuscript section of this Library.

Gyatsho Tshering
Director

October 1984

Translator's Note



The *Six Preparatory Practices Adorning the Buddha's Sublime Doctrine* (*sByor-ba'i-chos-drug bya-tshul thub-stan lhun-po'i mdzes-rgyan*) is important as an example of that body of Tibetan literature explaining preparatory practices. It outlines the organization of a Buddhist practitioner's daily meditation session, including visualizations, verses of praise, and a convenient condensation of the Graded Path (*Lam-rim*) contemplations. All the major points of the Graded Path meditation, including Bodhicitta and right view, are touched upon. In addition, the verses of the famous and well-loved prayer *Yon-tan bzhi-gyur-ma* are to be found herein.

In the colophon of the text, the author's name is not mentioned. The author himself merely states that it was composed by "this humble bhikshu." However, there is a reference in a commentary to the text entitled *Byang-chub lam-gyi rin-pa'i sngon-'gro'i zin-bris sbyor-ba'i chos-drug thub-bstan lhun-po'i mdzes rgyan-la khungs-ldan man-ngag du-mas slar-yang brgyan-te cung-zad gsal-bar byas-pa thub-dbang rdo-rje-'chang chen-po'i zhal-bzang blta-ba'i dvangs-shel me-long* and written by *Ser-sngags nam-mkha' bstan-skyong* (*Ser-sngags drva-thang* edition, Folio 4, reverse), which ascertains that the text is the work of *mKhan ngag-dbang chos-'byor*.

The precise date of the text is also absent in the original Tibetan edition. However, the chronology of the text can be established by noting the name of [The Second *rva-sgreng Khri-chen*] *bLo-bzang ye-shes bstan-pa rab-rgyas* (1759?-1816), who appears last in the lineage prayer (page 17 of this English translation), indicating that he was contemporary with *Ngag-dbang chos-'byor*. Thus the date of authorship can be assumed to be sometime in the early 19th century.

We wish to express our sincere thanks to Ven. Geshe Ngawang Dhargyey and Ven. Geshe Sonam Rinchen for their valuable clarification of difficult sections of the text. In addition, we are

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grateful to Jeremy Russell and Elizabeth Richards for their kind suggestions regarding the English expression, and to all those others who contributed in bringing this project to completion.

Losang C. Ganchenpa
Karma Lekshe Tsomo

Dharamsala
September 1984

OM SVASTI—May happiness prevail!

Embodiment of the wisdom and compassion of all the
Victorious Ones,
Uprooting the gross and subtle ignorance of those to be
tamed;
May the revered Guru, of unequalled kindness,
Stay in the lotus lake of my heart until enlightenment!

Here, as in the *Great Lam-Rim* text, the root of the path for leading fortunate beings toward liberation and omniscience is the cultivation of a spiritual guide. The *Great Lam-Rim* gives a short explanation to gain certainty of Guru devotion as the root of the path, and also briefly describes the process of meditation. An explanation is given both on how to conduct oneself during the meditation session and how to conduct oneself between sessions. The meditation session has three parts: preparation, actual session, and conclusion.

There are six preparatory practices:

- I. To clean the room and arrange the objects symbolizing Buddha's Kaya¹, speech, and mind.
- II. To acquire uncontaminated offerings and arrange them beautifully.
- III. To sit on a comfortable cushion in the posture with eight features or in whatever position is convenient. In that position, to examine your continuity of thought and with an especially virtuous mind, take refuge, generate Bodhicitta,² and meditate on the four immeasurable wishes, making them a definite part of your stream of thought.
- IV. To visualize the Merit-field³.
- V. To offer the Seven Limb Puja of Maṇḍala⁴, etc., which is the essence of accumulation and purification.
- VI. To make supplication as instructed, mingling it well with your mental stream.

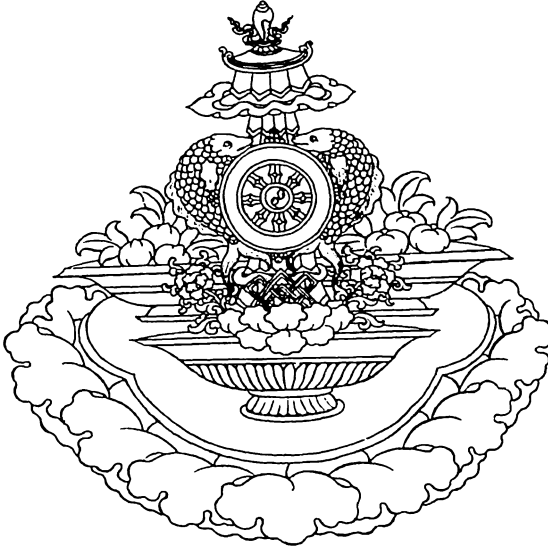
Cleaning the Room and Arranging the Objects



The first practice is cleaning. Sweep and clean the room thinking, 'In order to attain the state of Buddhahood in the interest of all sentient beings, I shall sweep away the dirt of mental delusions and obscurations to omniscience of myself and all sentient beings.' This gives rise to five benefits,⁵ such as purifying obscurations to actualizing the Buddha-field, which is said to symbolize purification of the mind. The story of P'ag-pa Lamchung⁶ is often narrated to illustrate how such actions purify obscurations.

Next, the objects are arranged. A statue of the Buddha is indispensable and should be placed on whatever base one can afford. To its right and left, place the symbolic representations of the body, speech, and mind of noble Atiśa, Je Tzong Khapa, Dromtonpa, and the Gurus and meditational deities of the Lam-rim lineage.

Acquiring and Arranging the Offerings



It is better not to offer anything than to offer materials acquired by means of the five wrong livelihoods⁷. Offer the first portion of whatever you have with an attitude free from deceitful thoughts, recalling the disadvantages of such an attitude. Without thoughts of gaining reputation, food, possessions and so forth, think that this offering is being made for the attainment of enlightenment in the interest of all sentient beings.

The offering bowls should not touch each other nor should the other objects be haphazardly arranged. Offerings should be made with great reverence. To treat the offerings with disrespect or to offer them with a sense of compulsion is not at all appropriate. Arrange beautifully whatever offerings you can afford, such as water bowls filled two or three times daily.

III

Posture and Generation of Thought



Draw a mystic cross clockwise with grains and spread sword grass under your cushion. This symbol is to remind us that diamond is the only substance worthy to support the transcendental wisdom gained by all Buddhas beneath the Bodhi tree. Think, 'Just as the fully-accomplished Buddha obtained sword grass from a grass seller and spread it under his mat, and sat in meditative absorption with the determination not to arise until he had attained Buddhahood despite what might happen to his body and speech, so shall I develop extraordinary realization of the Lam-rim teachings on this very spot.'

On a meditation cushion or whatever is available, with the back slightly raised, sit in the seven-featured posture of Vairocana Buddha. The legs are crossed in Vajra-asana⁸, the hands placed in

the gesture of meditation, the spine straight as an arrow, shoulders level, eyes gazing toward the tip of the nose, the neck slightly bent, teeth and lips placed naturally, and the tip of the tongue touching the palate. Counting the breath is the eighth feature. If by breathing naturally the virtuous mind is stronger, inhale and hold the breath visualizing the Guru and the Triple Gem before you. Visualize, absorbing the blessings of the body, speech, and mind, and generate Bodhicitta. If, on the other hand, the mind is preoccupied with worldly ideas, such as 'Tomorrow I shall do this,' 'To that person I shall say this,' etc., you should develop resolve, thinking, 'Since beginningless cyclic existence, these negative thoughts have immersed me in misery. Therefore, from now on I shall dispel them for good.' Exhaling through the right nostril, imagine that all misconceptions are completely expelled along with the breath. Inhaling through the left nostril, imagine receiving the blessings of your Guru and the Triple Gem, and expand the Bodhicitta. Repeat this for about 21 rounds until finally the mind is in an unspecified state resembling clear light, free of both virtuous and non-virtuous conceptions. Just as stainless crystal takes on whatever colour (red, yellow, etc.) it contracts, so should you engage in the practice of meritorious actions by taking on the extraordinarily virtuous Bodhicitta.

Being of Initial Level

'Since beginningless Saṃsāra⁹, I have been overpowered by mind, and the mind in turn has been dominated by delusions. Due to this, I have produced negative Karma,¹⁰ and by the force of that negative Karma, I have had to experience the various miseries of the three unfortunate realms.' Generate a genuine wish to be free from such miseries, which is the thought of a being of initial level.

Being of Intermediate Level

'Even if a fortunate rebirth is gained once or twice, I must still undergo the numerous sufferings of Saṃsāra in general, as well as the particular sufferings of the individual realms.' Thus train in the thought of a being of intermediate level, that is, develop an urge to be free from all these miseries and engage in the practices leading to liberation.

Being of Advanced Level

Bodhicitta is the main practice of a being of advanced level. Such a practitioner reflects as follows: 'Each and every sentient being is tortured by miseries just as I am. They have all been my mothers countless times, and at such times were as kind as my present mother. I should repay their kindness not merely by giving such small things as cups of tea, but by ensuring that they possess every happiness and are free from all sufferings. Just as the responsibility for removing his mother's sufferings falls to the son, similarly, the responsibility for removing the sufferings of these motherly beings and accomplishing their happiness falls upon me. The Buddhas can do this, but at present I am incapable. At this singular juncture, having obtained a rare and meaningful human birth, I will apply myself diligently to the definite attainment of enlightenment, separating myself and all beings from the fears both of Samsāra in general and of the unfortunate realms in particular. Toward this end, I shall take refuge purely, visualize the object of refuge, and generate the precious Bodhicitta.' Since the entire meditation on Lam-rim is contained in the motivation of the extraordinarily virtuous Bodhicitta, it is essential to accompany every virtuous action with this impeccable motivation.

Visualizing the Refuge Objects

Before me amidst an ocean of Samantabhadra offerings,
Towards the back of a spacious throne of precious gems, .
Is a [smaller] radiant, jewelled throne.
On cushions of variegated lotus, sun, and moon,
My root Guru sits in the aspect of Buddha Śākyamuni,
Of purest gold colour, adorned with crown protrusion,
His hands in the Mudra¹¹ of pressing the earth and
meditation.
He sits in the Vajra cross-legged position,
Wearing the three brilliant saffron robes,
Rays brighter than the sun extending in the ten directions.
Eyes never tire of his resplendent form
With its perfect, vivid, major and minor marks;
Ears never tire of his enchanting speech with its 60
melodies.

His vast and profound mind is a treasure of knowledge
and love,

Whose depth is beyond measure.

Consummation of all good qualities, free from all stains of
imperfection—

Mere recollection of which dispels the anxieties

Both of Saṃsāra and of self-complacent peace

He displays manifold amazing powers to tame the beings,
Like the 12 deeds in countless worlds.

Cushions of lotus, sun, and moon to right and left— .

Nine in the middle, with 10 to each side, beautifully
arranged.

In the space to the right, sit the Gurus of the lineage of
extensive deeds;

In the space to the left, sit the Gurus of the lineage of
profound view.

On a magnificent throne in front of Buddha Śākyamuni

Is my own root Guru in the aspect of giving teachings,

Surrounded by the Gurus to whom I am directly linked by
the Dharma,

Seated upon cushions of lotus, sun, and moon.

In the space behind Buddha Śākyamuni

On thrones of lotus, sun, and moon,

Sit Vajradhara, victorious lord of myriad Tantras,

And the surrounding lineage Gurus of blessed practice.

In the four directions around Buddha Śākyamuni and his
retinue.

Sit Guhyasamāja, Cakrasamvara, Vajrabhairava,

Kalācakra and Heruka,

With their Maṇḍalas and attendant deities.

Beyond these are the meditational deities,

Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, Srāvakas and Pratyeka Buddhas,

Heroes, Dākinis, Dharmapālas and protectors,

In innumerable peaceful and wrathful aspects on their
respective seats.

Around Vajradhara and his attendants,
 Innumerable lineage Gurus who conferred empowerment,
 teaching, and instructions
 Of the Vinaya, Abhidharma, and Sūtra collections,
 Are beautifully seated upon cushions of lotus, sun and
 moon.

Upon splendid stands before them
 Are their individual teachings of the holy Dharma,
 Represented by brilliantly radiant texts;
 Thus, all space is filled with objects of refuge.

Surrounding me are gathered all beings of the six realms,
 Totally overwhelmed by sufferings.
 In the face of such terrors,
 Beseech the protection of the Gurus and the Triple Gem.

While reciting the above verses, in the space in front at the level of your forehead, visualize an immense, precious throne supported by eight great snow lions with three smaller thrones upon it. Envision lotus, moon, and sun cushions on all the thrones. Upon the central throne, visualize your root Guru in the aspect of Buddha Śākyamuni. Upon the back throne is Vajrādhara with consort, encircled by great Atiśa, Dromtonpa and the 16 lineage Gurus of the Kadam tradition. To Buddha Śākyamuni's right is Maitreya with the Gurus of the extensive lineage. To [Buddha Śākyamuni's] left is Mañjuśrī with the Gurus of the profound lineage. On the front throne is your root Guru in the aspect of giving teachings, surrounded by the Gurus with whom you have Karmic links. Then, in successive stages, envision the deities of the Anuttarayoga, Yogacārya, and Kriyā Tantras, Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, Pratyeka Buddhas, Śrāvakas, Heroes, Dākinis, Dharmapālas, and the four directional guardians. All are facing their respective directions with their individual scriptural teachings before them in the form of scriptural texts placed on splendid stands of lotus, etc., giving forth a spontaneous resonance. Seeing the holy objects of refuge majestically discussing Dharma indicates the strength of your visualization.

As the all-knowing Panchen Rinpoche has said, "The essence of taking refuge is total entrustment."

To your right, left, front, and back, imagine all sentient beings, including your parents of this life, tortured by sufferings and appearing with dark mouths agape. Then reflect, 'Throughout beginningless lives, I and all others have amassed various types of misdeeds. Even in this life, there is not one of the pledged Pratimokṣa, Bodhicitta, or Tantric vows that can be recalled and pointed out as having been kept purely.' The true words of the Buddha teach that such actions result in lower rebirths. As soon as such a person dies, birth in the lower realms is inevitable. Consider the unimaginable sufferings of heat, cold, hunger, thirst, stupidity, and ignorance when reborn there.

The first cause of taking refuge is fear of these sufferings that confront yourself and others in cyclic existence and the lower realms. Then, developing faith by remembering the qualities of body, speech, and mind of the objects of refuge and entrusting yourself to them, their compassion will definitely have the power to protect you and others from all fears. Developing such faith is the second cause of taking refuge. If these two causes are merely verbal, the refuge will merely be verbal. But if one takes these beyond mere words, one's refuge will surely be sound. Therefore, both causes are essential. For instance, when travelling by an unfamiliar route, if someone who knows the way leads you, the destination can be reached without difficulty. Similarly, since the Gurus and Buddhas know the way to lead you and others to the state of Buddhahood, they are the refuge-guides. Since the graded course to enlightenment is the actual path to the state of enlightenment, it is the actual refuge. All those beings from the Āryas down to those Sangha living within society as equals are your companions travelling to Buddhahood. Thus, develop faith in the Sangha as friends helping to actualize the Refuge.

The Gurus and the Triple Gem realise whether you and all sentient beings are headed toward higher or lower realms. Fully entrust yourself thinking, 'May I and all beings be protected from the miseries of Saṃsāra in general and the lower realms in particular, and in this very life, protect us immediately from the physical and mental sufferings of sickness, evil spirits, and all misfortunes.'

“I take refuge in the Guru”

Reciting this as many times as possible, imagine the blessings of the Guru’s body, speech, mind, qualities, and virtuous conduct falling from the manifest Kaya of Guru Śākyamuni and the Gurus around him in the aspect of five radiant nectars entering the body and mind of yourself and all others. All negativities collected since beginningless time, particularly those of endangering the Guru’s life, disregarding his speech, disturbing his mind, disbelieving and disparaging him, misappropriating his belongings, in short, all negativities committed in relation to the Guru as well as resultant sicknesses and harms are discharged from all one’s orifices and pores in the form of smoky liquid. Imagine that they fall into the upturned open mouth of the Lord of Death, who is beneath the great golden base, that he is fully satisfied, and that you and all others come under the protection of the Gurus. In the following visualizations, the falling of nectars and purification is the same except for minor variations.

“I take refuge in the Buddha”

While reciting this, imagine radiant nectar falling from the bodies of all Buddhas and entering the bodies and minds of yourself and all others. Thus, all non-virtues committed since beginningless time, particularly the negativities of destroying Buddha statues and Stūpas, buying and selling statues, examining the quality of statues, and breaching the Buddha’s words, are discharged from one’s sense organs and pores in the form of smoky liquid. Imagine that all this filth enters the wide-open mouth of the Lord of Death, that he is satisfied, and that you and all others come under the protection of the Buddha.

“I take refuge in the Dharma”

While saying this, imagine radiant nectar falling from the Dharma in the form of scriptural texts and entering the bodies and minds of yourself and all others. Thus all negative actions committed since beginningless time, particularly those of abandoning the Dharma, buying and selling scriptures, pawning and leaving texts uncovered on the ground, in short, all irreverence committed in relation to the

Dharma including resultant sicknesses and harms, are discharged from your orifices and pores in the form of smoky liquid. Imagine that they pour into the wide open mouth of the Lord of Death, that he is fully satisfied, and that you and all others come under the protection of the Dharma.

“I take refuge in the Sangha”

While reciting this, imagine radiant nectar descending from the merit-field and entering the bodies and minds of yourself and all others. Thus, all negativities committed since beginningless time, particularly misbehaviour related to the Saṅgha, such as criticizing, causing divisions, misappropriating donations, and failing to make periodic and thanksgiving offerings come out from your orifices and pores in the form of smoky liquid. Imagine that they enter the wide-open mouth of the Lord of Death, that he is fully satisfied, and that you and all others come under the protection of the Saṅgha.

I go for refuge, until I am enlightened
To the Buddha, Dharma, and the Supreme Assembly.

While reciting this, imagine radiant nectar falling from the merit-field and entering the minds and bodies of yourself and all others. Thus all negativities committed since beginningless time, especially those of transgressing the refuge precepts, are discharged from your orifices and pores in the form of smoky liquid and enter the mouth of the Lord of Death, fully satisfying him. In this way, you and all others come under the protection of the Triple Gem. This is the extraordinary refuge.

By the virtue of my practice of generosity and other
perfections,
May I attain Buddhahood to benefit all living beings.

While reciting this, generate the wish to attain Buddhahood in order to benefit all sentient beings by the power of virtues such as generosity, morality, etc., practised by yourself and others. Think, ‘To this end, I shall properly train in the Bodhisattvas’ conduct such as the six perfections and four ways of collecting disciples.’ Thus, Guru Śākyamuni is pleased, and an identical Buddha comes forth from him. As it is absorbed into you, you are suddenly transformed

into Śākyamuni Buddha. Imagine your body radiating light which falls on all the surrounding sentient beings, purifying their obscurations and negativities, and causing them all to attain the state of Buddhahood. These rays strike your surroundings, transforming them into a pure land. Remain in such contemplation for a short while.

‘I am merely viewing myself and all others as transformed into Buddhas, yet why have we not actually become so?’ Since the blame for this lies in being attached to those on your own side and hostile toward others, you should imagine yourself and all sentient beings in a state of equanimity free from attachment and hatred, nearness and distance. Then cultivate the boundless prayer, thinking, ‘How wonderful it would be if all beings dwelt in equanimity, free from attachment to those near and from aversion towards others!’ ‘May they so abide’ is the boundless aspiration. ‘I shall work for that’ is the exalted boundless thought. Meditate on immeasurable equanimity and request the blessings of the Gurus and deities to be able to develop it. Similarly, cultivate immeasurable love, thinking, ‘How wonderful it would be if all beings enjoyed happiness and its causes. May they do so. I shall work for that.’ Then cultivate immeasurable compassion, thinking, ‘How wonderful if all beings were free from suffering and its causes. May they be freed. I shall work for that.’ Next, cultivate immeasurable joy, thinking, ‘How wonderful if all beings enjoyed perfect happiness and were free of suffering. May they so abide. I shall work for that.’

While meditating on the four immeasurable wishes, visualize radiant nectar falling from the merit-field and purifying all negativities, particularly those that obstruct realization of these wishes, which are discharged from your orifices and pores in the form of smoky liquid. ‘I shall definitely attain the fully consummated state of a Buddha as swiftly as possible for the sake of all motherly sentient beings. To this end, I shall meditate on the Lam-rim teachings through the practice of profound Guru-deity yoga.’ This is how to develop Bodhicitta with relation to the path.

IV

Visualizing the Merit-Field



Of the two traditions, (a) assembling the refuge objects, and (b) visualizing the refuge objects as the merit-field, the latter is easier and we follow it here. Visualize the merit-field in the space in front of you as before. On each of the five places¹² of each being in the merit-field is one of the five seed syllables.¹³ Each of these five syllables is in the nature of one of the five Dhyāni Buddhas.¹⁴ Rays from the syllable *Hūṃ* at Śākyamuni's heart radiate in the ten directions and invoke the wisdom beings, which are then absorbed into you.

Lord of all sentient beings,
Subduer of all demonic forces,
Knower of all phenomena without exception;
Lord Buddha and all attendants, I entreat you.

The Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the ten directions are thus invoked. Imagine a complete merit-field being absorbed into each one of them, and regard each as an embodiment of all the objects of refuge. You should think that emanations from the merit-field tame sentient beings according to their needs. There is not even the point of a needle which is not within the scope of a Buddha's omniscient mind, and wherever a Buddha's mind pervades, his form is also there. Therefore, there is actually no need for invitation. But, as we are inclined to think that Buddhas would not appear unless invited, we invoke them from their respective abodes in the aspect of merit-fields. If they are in front of us, we may wonder why we cannot see them. This is because our mind streams are clouded by obscurities. For example, if water is clear, the reflection of the moon can be seen in any vessel, large or small. But if water is murky, no reflection will be seen.

The Purifying Bath and Offerings

A bath house of sweet fragrance,
A crystal floor, clear and shining,
Pillars of radiant gems alluring,
A brilliant canopy of pearls.

Saying this, visualize a perfect bath house to each of the four sides of the great lion throne. The merit-fields proceed to the bath houses in their respective directions. From your heart, mentally create three offering goddesses before each merit-field, and offer the purifying bath.

Embodiment of all Buddhas,
In the nature of Vajradhara,
Root of the Triple Gem;
To all the Gurus, I offer the purifying bath.

As you offer the purifying bath recite such verses, briefly or at length, without being distracted. This is said to have advantages such as purifying negativities and clarifying the mind.

Their holy bodies are dried,
With finest clean and fragrant cloth.
Oṃ Hūṃ Tāṃ Hriḥ Āḥ Kāya Visodhanāye Svāhā.

Saying this, dry their bodies.

To the holy bodies of the victorious ones,
I offer precious perfumes, their fragrance pervading the
three worlds.
Just as a smith polishes highly refined gold,
I anoint them with magnificent scents.

Saying this, offer fragrances.

I offer precious garments of rainbow brightness,
Delightful to touch.
In order to purify my mind,
May I be adorned with the sublime clothing of patience.

Saying this, offer clothing.

Naturally adorned with the noble signs,
 The Buddhas need no other ornaments,
 Yet supreme jewelled ornaments are offered,
 That all beings may attain a body with excellent marks.

Saying this, offer ornaments. Then, with appropriate verses, offer precious umbrellas, vases, flowers, etc.

With love to me and all sentient beings,
 By the force of your miraculous powers,
 As long as I make offerings,
 O Buddhas, please prevail.

Now imagine that the merit-fields return to their original abodes. The bath houses merge into the lion thrones, the offering goddesses into yourself, and the old clothes in the form of yellow rays are absorbed into the place between your eyebrows.

Offering the Seven Limb Puja



1. *Prostration*

Embodiment of all Buddhas,
In the nature of Vajradhara,
Root of the Triple Gem;
I bow down to all the Gurus.

Body born of myriad excellent virtues,
Speech fulfilling untold beings' hopes,
Mind knowing all phenomena as they are;
I bow down to the lord of the Śākya clan.

Maitreya, Asaṅga, Vasubhandu, Vimuktisena,
Prāmaṣena, Vinītasena, Śrīkīrti, Siṅghabhadra,

Kuśali the elder, Dharmamati of Sumatra;
I bow down to the lineage of extensive deeds.

Mañjuśri, destroyer of eternalism and nihilism,
Nāgārjuna, Candrakīrti, Vidyakokila the elder,
Buddhagoṣa, Aryadeva, and Bhāvaviveka;
I bow down to the lineage of the profound view.

Vajradhara, compassionate Tathāgata,
Perfectly realized Tilopa and Nāropa,
Glorious Ḍombipā and Atiśa;
I bow down to the lineage of blessed practice.

Buddha, Maitreya, Mañjuśri,
Lineages of extensive deeds and profound view,
And those who imparted the oral tradition of practice;
I bow down to all the lineage Gurus.

Atiśa, holder of supreme instructions on teaching and
practice,
Dromtonpa, forefather of the Kadam tradition,
The three brothers¹⁵ and the four Yogis;¹⁶
I bow down to all the Kadam Gurus.

Je Tzongkhapa, direct manifestation of all Buddhas,
Jampel Gyatso, Khedrup and his brother¹⁷,
Dharma-vajra, Wensapa, father and son;
I bow down to Losang Chögyen and all.

Drungpa, father and son, and noble Gelek Gyatso,
Losang Namgyal, renowned as Maitreya,
Exalted Yeshe Gyaltsen and Losang Tenpa;
I bow down at the feet of all sublime Gurus.

Guru Vajradhara, embodiment of the Triple Gem,
Taking the role of spiritual master to give appropriate
benefit,
Bestowing common and supreme realizations;
I bow down to all my kind Gurus.

More verses of this kind, or even the complete Lam-rim prayers,
can be recited here.

Salutation of Body, Speech, and Mind

Past, present, and future lions-among-men,
 Throughout countless worlds in the the ten directions;
 To all these without exception,
 I bow respectfully with body, speech, and mind.

Salutation of Body

By the force of the Prayer of Noble Conduct,
 Visualizing all Buddhas before my eyes,
 With bodies numerous as the atoms of the universe,
 I bow respectfully to all the Victorious Ones.

Salutation of Mind

Upon every atom are innumerable Buddhas
 Seated amidst countless Bodhisattvas,
 All in meditation on suchness;
 I greatly esteem all these Victorious Ones.

Salutation of Speech

Praiseworthy, boundless as the sea,
 I proclaim the qualities of all Buddhas;
 With oceans of melodies,
 I praise all these Tathāgatas.

Visualize your own and others' bodies being as numerous as the tiny atoms of the universe. On each body are countless heads, on each head are countless mouths, and each mouth has countless tongues. Bowing to the ground in reverence is the physical prostration. Reciting verbally, generate the merit-field, accumulate merit, and sing praises to the qualities of the Buddhas whose deeds benefit beings to be tamed. This is the prostration of speech. Joyfully recalling the qualities of body, speech, and mind of the exalted ones is the prostration of mind.

(2) Offerings

If you like, make Maṇḍala and other offerings.

Pure flowers, pure garlands,
 Cymbals, perfumes, and precious umbrellas,

Finest butter lamps and best incense,
I offer to all the Victorious Ones.

Saying this, arrange the offerings before you and mentally present fine flowers, fruits, and other foods, music of both human and heavenly realms, etc.

All offerings, peerless and vast;
With admiration for all the Victorious Ones,
And great faith in their virtuous activity,
I offer prostrations to all the Conquerors.

Reciting this, offer the unsurpassable offerings such as foods and sounds created by the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

(3) *Confession*

If you like, recite confession rites such as *Tung-shak* (confession of downfalls), *Chi-shak* (general confession), etc.

Whatever negative actions I have committed
Influenced by attachment, hatred, and ignorance,
With the body, speech, and mind,
I confess all these individually.

The Four Opponent Powers

As you say the above verse, recall and enumerate past non-virtuous actions regretting them as intensely as if you had eaten poison. This is the opponent power of remorse. Entreating the merit-field and generating refuge and Bodhicitta constitute the opponent power of reliance. Engaging physically, verbally, or mentally in meritorious actions such as reciting confession sutras, making prostrations and offerings, etc is the opponent power of applying the antidotes. Resolving never to repeat such negative actions henceforth, even at the cost of your life, is the opponent power of not relapsing. If confession is done fulfilling these four (opponent powers), it is taught that even destined karmic actions can be purified. Thus, this practice is vitally important. As taught by your Guru, contemplate on how the maturational result, result corresponding to the experience, habitual action corresponding to

the cause, and environmental result can be purified by the four opponent powers.

(4) *Rejoicing*

In the merits of all migrating beings,
Solitary realizers, trainees, and those already trained.
Buddhas of the ten directions and their sons;
I rejoice in all these virtues.

At this point, develop sincere delight in all the virtues of the five classes of beings,¹⁸ especially those abiding by the Bodhisattva's precepts who have taken on the responsibility to free all sentient beings from suffering and to create their happiness. Thus, when seeing others performing even the slightest virtue, one should feel as much joy as a beggar finding a treasure. All such virtues should be dedicated to the attainment of ultimate enlightenment.

(5) *Supplication*

O, lamps of the world of the ten directions,
Who attained Buddhahood through the Bodhi stages;
I implore all these protectors
To turn the impeccable wheel of Dharma.

While saying this, visualize your body as countless forms of Brahmā, each with four faces and holding a golden wheel with 1,000 spokes. Offer these to the merit-field and imagine that, in compliance with one's request, the Buddhas agree to turn the wheel of Dharma.

(6) *Entreaty*

Those intending to enter Parinirvana,
I request with hands in prayer,
To live for aeons as countless as atoms,
To benefit and bring joy to all beings.

With this verse, entreat all Gurus, Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, and those about to enter Parinirvana not to pass away. Offering thrones with double vajras, imagine that they consent to stay.

(7) *Dedication*

Whatever little merit I may have accumulated,
 By prostrating, offering, confessing, rejoicing,
 And entreating the holy beings to remain and teach
 Dharma,
 I dedicate to the attainment of supreme enlightenment.

Saying this, dedicate the roots of merit amassed by yourself and others throughout the three times of the attainment of the union state¹⁰ of Vajradhara.

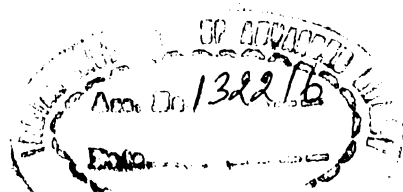
Prostration is the remedy for arrogance, and offering is the remedy for miserliness. Confession counteracts all the three poisonous delusions, and rejoicing counteracts jealousy. Requesting the turn of the wheel of Dharma purifies the non-virtues of abandoning Dharma, and requesting the Gurus to live long purifies the negativities of disturbing their minds. Dedication of merits is the antidote for wrong views.

The Seven Limb Puja can be summarized into accumulation of merits and purification. Prostrating, offering, requesting the holy beings to turn the Dharma wheel, requesting them not to pass away, and one aspect of rejoicing result in accumulation of merits. Confession purifies negativities. Another aspect of rejoicing enhances virtues. Dedication makes the virtues of accumulation, purification, and enhancement inexhaustible. This Seven Limb Puja, which includes all essential points of accumulation and purification, is vitally important both for Sūtra and Tantra. Therefore, this practice should be refined to excellence.

Mandala Offering

Oṃ Vajra Bhūmi Āḥ Hūm
 Here is the powerful golden base.
Oṃ Vajra Rekhe Āḥ Hūm
 Within the encircling iron fence
 Stands Mount Meru, king of mountains.

To the east is the continent Purvā-Videha,
 To the south, Jambudvīpa,



To the west, Apara-Godāniya,
To the north, the continent Uttarakuru.

Around the east are the subcontinents Deha and Videha,
Around the south, Cāmara and Apara-cāmara,
Around the west, Śāṭhā and Uttara-mantriṇa,
Around the north, the subcontinents Kurava and Kaurava.

In the east is the precious mountain,
In the south, the wish-fulfilling tree,
In the west, the wish-fulfilling cow,
In the north, the unploughed harvest.

Here is the precious wheel,
Here is the precious jewel,
Here is the precious queen,
Here is the precious minister.

Here is the precious elephant,
Here is the finest precious horse,
Here is the precious general,
Here is the great treasure vase.
Here is the goddess of beauty,
Here is the goddess of garlands,
Here is the goddess of song,
Here is the goddess of dance,
Here is the goddess of flowers,
Here is the goddess of incense,
Here is the goddess of light,
Here is the goddess of perfume.

Here is the sun,
Here is the moon,
Here is the precious umbrella,
Here is the banner victorious in all directions;
In the centre is all the priceless wealth precious to gods
and men.

All this without exception, pure and magnificent,
I offer to you, my kind and holy root Gurus,
As well as all sublime lineage Gurus,

And to you, Lama Je Tzongkhapa,
 To you, O Buddha, and to you, Vajradhara,
 Together with your attendant deities.

Please accept these for the sake of all beings,
 And having accepted them,
 Bestow your blessings with loving compassion
 On me and all motherly beings as infinite as space.

The Maṇḍala offering involves offering the four continents, Mount Meru, and all (precious substances of the universe). Thus, it is necessary to have some rough understanding of the cosmos. According to the *Abhidharmakośa*²⁰, the universe is first destroyed by fire. Everything up to and including the first Dhyāni stage²¹ is destroyed, creating a vacuum. The next destruction occurs by water, up to and including the second Dhyāni stage. The final destruction occurs by wind, up to and including the third Dhyāni stage. The fourth Dhyāni stage and above are never destroyed; they remain immutable.

The wind which forms the world arises from the vacuity found below the first Dhyāni stage, as an outcome of the destruction by fire. By the force of sentient beings' Karma, this wind is constantly swirling, such that the wind Maṇḍala evolves and forms the foundation of the world. Upon the wind Maṇḍala, rain falls as continuously as a chariot wheel turning for years on end, and thus the water Maṇḍala is formed. Wind stirs the water Maṇḍala producing the great golden base. The cosmic element of fire is a component of the other three elements.²² A rain of the five precious substances²³ continuously falls upon the great golden base for a long time. As this mixture is stirred by the wind, precipitation occurs and Mount Meru evolves from the finest of substances. From the ordinary substances, seven gold mountains are formed. The inferior substances produce the four continents, the subcontinents and the outer iron fence. Seven successive rings of golden mountains and paradise lakes encircle Mount Meru.

Mount Meru has eight layers. The four successive Asura²⁴ layers, including the Thak-zang abode, are immersed in the ocean. The four successive layers above the water, from the bottom up, are those of the spirits *Lakna-shongtok*, *Trentok*, *Tak-nyo*, and the

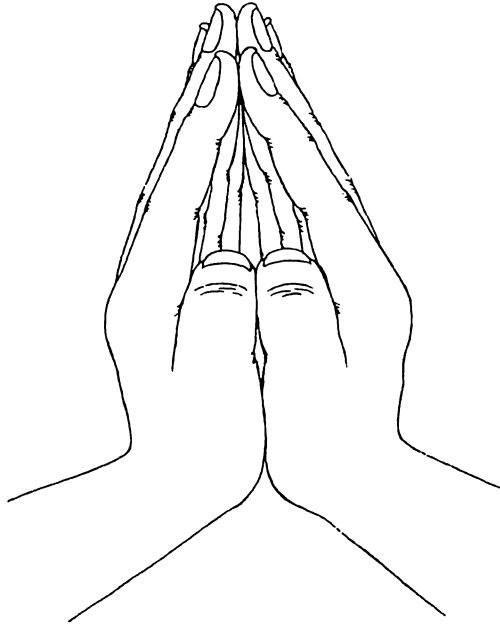
Devas²⁵ of the four directions. On the peak of Mount Meru are the towers in the four directions where the spirits holding vajras reside. In the centre is a beautiful city, and in the centre of this city is the abode of Indra, king of devas, along with his 32 attendant devas.

While making the Maṇḍala heaps, recall all the offering substances without exception - the four continents, subcontinents, special treasures of the individual continents, seven imperial emblems, eight goddesses, sun and moon, precious umbrella, and victory banner. Then, imagining yourself as Brahmā who rules the 3,000 worlds, offer these and all the bodies, wealth, and merits of yourself and others, without hesitation. While making offerings, the eastern direction may be assumed to be either directly in front of you or in front of the object to whom you are making offerings, and there is said to be no difference between the two methods.

From the wind Maṇḍala which serves as the base, up to the Thirty-third Deva Realm, the first 1,000 worlds are found. These include the four continents, the Brahmā realm, etc., and are known as the Realm of the First Thousand Worlds. The Realm of the Intermediate Thousand Worlds is comprised of these 1,000 worlds multiplied by a 1,000. A thousand times this intermediate realm constitutes the Realm of the Third Thousand Worlds. Those who wish to know more concerning the nature and measurements of these worlds are advised to consult the *Jigten Dakpo* and *Abhidharmakośa* texts.

VI

Supplication



I take refuge in the Guru and the precious Triple Gem,
And beseech them to bless my mental stream.
Please quickly banish all distorted thoughts,
Including disregard for spiritual masters,
And grasping at the duality of self.
Kindly bless me to cultivate all unmistakable thoughts,
Including respect toward spiritual masters,
And understanding of suchness.
Please pacify completely all outer and inner interferences.

While reciting this, make supplication to realize the three great purposes. First think, 'May the negative thoughts which are inharmonious with the Lam-rim teachings cease and not generate further in the mental streams of myself and others.' These thoughts

include not seeing Gurus as Buddhas, not seeing the precious human rebirth as meaningful and difficult to attain, grasping at permanence, grasping at body, speech, and mind as separate (in terms of true existence), etc. Secondly think, 'May I develop in my mental continuum the positive thoughts that are harmonious with the Lam-rim.' These thoughts include seeing Gurus as Buddhas, seeing the precious human rebirth as meaningful and rare, seeing death as impermanent, etc. 'May I generate the paths of the initial, intermediate, and advanced beings, particularly the union state of seeing body and mind as indistinguishable in nature.' Thirdly think, 'May all internal and external hindrances to these realizations be completely pacified.'

According to another system, the first two purposes refer to mistaken and unmistaken views up to the attainment of penetrative insight, while the request for pacification of hindrances refers exclusively to Tantra.

The development of realizations on the path relies upon the blessing of the Guru. Receiving these blessings depends on making heartfelt supplications. If you wish to elaborate further while making supplication, you may recite all the Lam-rim prayers. Feel that the blessings of all the Gurus have been conferred.

Magnificent, precious root Guru,
Please stay in the lotus of my heart.
Care for me with great compassion,
And bestow realizations of body, speech, and mind.

While reciting this verse for the first time, imagine that a duplicate of your root Guru, who is in front of Guru Śākyamuni, comes and sits on the crown of your head facing forward. Think that the Guru supports your supplications and pray, 'Please grant my sons quick development of the Lam-rim realizations.' While reciting the verse for the second time, imagine that nectar falls from Buddha Śākyamuni and your spiritual masters and removes all interferences, especially those impeding your realizations of Guru devotion. Think that an extraordinary realization of Guru devotion is developed in the mental streams of both yourself and others.

Maitreya, Asaṅga, Vasubhandu, Vimuktisena,
Prāmaṣena, Vinīlasena, Śrīkīrti, Śiṅghabhadra,

Kuśali the elder, Dharmamati of Sumatra;
I entreat the lineage of extensive deeds.

On the first repetition, imagine that nectar falls that clears away all interferences, especially those impeding realization of the path of extensive deeds. On the second repetition, imagine that duplicates of the extensive lineage Gurus absorb into you, and feel that you develop an extraordinary realization of this path of extensive deeds.

Mañjuśrī, destroyer of eternalism and nihilism,
Nāgārjuna, Candrakīrti, Vidyakokila the elder,
Buddhagoṣa, Āryadeva, and Bhāvaviveka;
I entreat the lineage of profound view.

On the first repetition, imagine that nectar falls that eliminates all interferences, especially those obscuring realization of the path of profound view. On the second repetition, imagine that duplicates of the profound lineage Gurus absorb into you, and feel that you develop an extraordinary realization of this path of profound view.

Vajradhara, compassionate Tathāgata,
Perfectly realized Tilopa and Nāropa,
Glorious Ḍombipa and Atiśa;
I entreat the lineage of blessed practice.

On the first repetition, imagine that nectar falls that removes all interferences, especially those hindering development on the Tantric path. On the second repetition, imagine duplicates of the practice lineage Gurus absorbing into you, and feel that you develop an extraordinary realization of this path of blessed practice.

Atiśa, holder of supreme instructions on teaching and
practice,
Dromtonpa, forefather of the Kadam tradition,
The three brothers and the four yogis;
I entreat all the Kadampa masters.

On the first repetition, imagine that nectar falls that clears away all interferences. On the second repetition, imagine that the blessings of all the individual Gurus absorb into the mental streams of both yourself and others.

The Foundation of All Qualities

(Tibetan: Yonten Zhigyorma)



This prayer, written by Je Tzongkhapa, requests “inclusive” blessings, meaning that it invokes blessings on all the stages from the cultivation of Guru devotion up to the union state (of the illusory body and the clear light).

Proper cultivation of kind spiritual masters
Is the root of the path and of all good qualities.
Seeing this clearly and applying much effort,
Inspire me to follow them with great respect.

While reciting this verse for the first time, imagine that nectar falls that clears away all interferences, especially those impeding the realizations of Guru devotion. While reciting this verse for the second time, imagine that duplicates of the merit-field come forth that absorb into yourself and others, and feel that an extraordinary realization of Guru devotion is thus developed. On the first repetition of all the successive verses, imagine that nectar falls that purifies negativities and obscurations in general as well as impediments to the realization of the specific paths. On the second repetition of each verse, feel that duplicates absorb into yourself and others that bring realizations of the specific paths. Now the nature of these individual paths is explained.

By recognizing the significance and rarity
Of this precious rebirth, found just once,
Day and night, continuously,
Inspire me to generate the thought of taking its essence.

While reciting this, think that you and others develop an awareness wishing to take the essence of this precious human rebirth.

Life is as ephemeral as a water bubble—
 Be mindful that death attacks quickly.
 And after that, good and bad karma follow
 Like a shadow after a form.

Having ascertained this definitely,
 Inspire me to always take care
 To eliminate even slight negativities,
 And to accomplish all virtuous deeds.

Reciting this, think that death is imminent, but that the time of death is uncertain. And after death, the sufferings of the three lower realms are frightening. In order to gain protection against them, you go for refuge to the Triple Gem. Thus imagine that an extraordinary realization of a being of initial level is developed that enables you to eliminate negativities and to practice all virtues.

Worldly prosperity is the door of all miseries,
 Unworthy to be relied upon, and powerless to quench
 desires.
 Recognizing its flaws,
 Inspire me to develop great longing for the peace of
 liberation.

At this point, think that you develop renunciation by seeing the whole of Saṃsāra as being in the nature of suffering.

Being drawn by this perfect aspiration,
 With mindfulness, alertness, and care,
 Inspire me to primarily train in Pratimokṣa,
 Root of the Buddha's teachings.

Here, imagine that a sense of renunciation enables you to gain the realization of a being of intermediate level, which is to properly practice the three higher trainings,²⁶ such as the Pratimokṣa vows that form the foundation of the teachings.

Just as I have fallen into the ocean of Saṃsāra,
 So have all motherly sentient beings.
 Inspire me to train in the impeccable Bodhicitta,
 To shoulder the burden of liberating them.

While reciting this think, 'Just as I have fallen into the ocean of cyclic existence, so have all motherly sentient beings.' Imagine that you and others develop the precious Bodhicitta motivated by love and compassion for sentient beings who all lack happiness and are tortured by unbearable miseries.

Without familiarity with the three moral trainings,
Merely developing the mind cannot give Buddhahood,
Recognizing this clearly,
Inspire me to train diligently in the Bodhisattva's deeds.

At this point, be aware that even if you develop Bodhicitta, great enlightenment cannot be attained without training in the extensive deeds of the Bodhisattvas. Seeing this, think that you develop an extraordinary realization enabling you to train in the great deeds of the Buddha's sons. This is the exposition of the advanced path.

Inspire me to quickly generate in my mental stream
The path of uniting mental quiescence and penetrative
insight,
Which pacifies mental wandering to mistaken objects,
And analyzes properly the perfect aim.

Reciting this, imagine that you develop an extraordinary realization of the union of mental quiescence and penetrative insight. Mental quiescence is conjoined with physical and mental ecstasy arising from single-pointedly placing the mind on a virtuous object and pacifying distractions to mistaken objects. Penetrative insight is the outcome of examining suchness by analytical wisdom. This explains the path of profound view.

Becoming a receptive vessel for the common path
Inspire me to engage effortlessly
In the supreme Vajrayāna,
The gateway for fortunate beings.

At this point, receive the four initiations in the form of blessings, and feel that the special potentiality to actualize the resultant form of Vajradhara is progressively enhanced. Think that you develop

realization of never being separated from the perfect path of the four initiations in all lives to come.

Pure vows and Samaya²⁷ are said to be
The basis of the two realizations.
Gaining a genuine certainty of this,
Inspire me to guard them at the cost of my life.

Reciting this, think that you have gained the realization to be able to protect at the cost of your life the vows and Samaya that you have committed yourself to at the time of initiation.

Understanding and persevering in the two stages
That form the essence of Tantra,
Without failing to conduct the four-session yoga,
Inspire me to practice as taught by the Holy One.

Reciting this, think that you develop an extraordinary realization of the developing and accomplishing stages, seeing the entire world and the beings dwelling therein as being in the nature of bliss and void.

Long life to the spiritual masters who show the sublime
path,
And to the spiritual friends who practice purely,
Inspire me to pacify completely
All inner and outer interferences.

Reciting this, think that the spiritual masters who teach the paths of Sūtra and Tantra and all good spiritual friends enjoy long life. Think that all conducive conditions, both inner and outer, are perfectly fulfilled.

Never separated from the perfect Guru,
May I enjoy the noble Dharma in all my lives.
Fully consummating the qualities of the path and stages,
May I quickly attain the state of Vajradhara.

At this point, by the power of the collective merits of yourself and all others, make dedication that you may not be separated even for a moment from spiritual masters in this and future lives. By practicing on the profound and extensive path, pray to ascend

through the ten Bhūmis²⁸ and five paths. Think that you become a blessed and fortunate being, capable of actualizing the state of Vajradhara swiftly.

Rays shine from the *Hūṃ* at the heart of Śākyamuni,
 Chief of the vast merit-field,
 Striking countless peaceful and wrathful deities around,
 Who eventually absorb into him.
 Guru Śākyamuni, embodiment of all objects of refuge,
 To see him directly is immensely fortunate!

While reciting this, from the heart of Guru Śākyamuni radiant light shines that falls on all those surrounding him. These beings successively melt into light and absorb into the Gurus. The lineage of extensive deeds absorbs into Maitreya, and the lineage of profound view absorbs into Mañjuśrī. The blessed practice lineage absorbs into Vajradhara, and all those Gurus with whom you have direct Dharma links absorb into your root Guru. With maximum clarity, visualize the central and four surrounding figures, thinking that to see them like this is extremely fortunate. Maitreya and Mañjuśrī then absorb into the Buddha, and Vajradhara enters the crown of Śākyamuni and sits as the wisdom being at his heart. Your root Guru subsequently melts into light and becomes inseparable from the wisdom being at the heart of Śākyamuni. The snow lion thrones also dissolve into Śākyamuni. This process of successive absorptions is said to have special significance implying interdependent origination.

A pleased Śākyamuni then dissolves into the Guru at the
 crown of my head,
 And my Guru in turn is transformed into Buddha.

While reciting this, Śākyamuni dissolves into the Guru at the crown of your head. Having completed this transformation, visualize your kind root Guru in the aspect of Śākyamuni Buddha sitting in the Vajra position on a lion throne with cushions of lotus, sun, and moon. You and all sentient beings should then recite the following verses:

Body born of myriad excellent virtues,
 Speech fulfilling untold beings' hopes,

Mind knowing all phenomena as they are;
I bow down to the lord of the Śākya clan.

Water for washing mouth and feet, flowers, incense,
Lights, fragrant water, food, and music,
Ocean-like clouds of offerings, both actual and mentally
created,
I offer to the Gurus and the Triple Gem.

Making masses of real and imagined offerings,
Confessing all negativities and downfalls,
Rejoicing in virtues, requesting and entreating;
I dedicate all these merits to the great enlightenment.

Next offer the Seven Limb Puja and Maṇḍala in brief. Then
make fervent prayers in unison with all beings.

Exalted Guru deity in the nature of four Kayas—
I beseech Buddha Vajradhara.
Exalted Guru deity in the nature of the Dharmakāya, free
of obscurities—
I beseech Buddha Vajradhara.
Exalted Guru deity in the nature of the great blissful
Saṃbhogakāya—
I beseech Buddha Vajradhara.
Exalted Guru deity in the nature of manifold
Nirmāṇakāyas—
I beseech Buddha Vajradhara.
Exalted Guru deity who is the embodiment of all Gurus—
I beseech Buddha Vajradhara.
Exalted Guru deity who is the embodiment of all
meditational deities—
I beseech Buddha Vajradhara.
Exalted Guru deity who is the embodiment of all
Buddhas—
I beseech Buddha Vajradhara.
Exalted Guru deity who is the embodiment of all the holy
Dharma—
I beseech Buddha Vajradhara.

Exalted Guru deity who is the embodiment of all the
Saṅghā—

I beseech Buddha Vajradhāra.

Exalted Guru deity who is the embodiment of all Ḍākinis—

I beseech Buddha Vajradhara.

Exalted Guru deity who is the embodiment of all Dharma
protectors—

I beseech Buddha Vajradhāra.

Exalted Guru deity who is the embodiment of all refuge
objects—

I beseech Buddha Vajradhara.

Before concluding the session, review the three paths of the initial, intermediate, and advanced beings, which require direct experience. Begin with the advantages of cultivating a Guru and the disadvantages of not doing so, the methods of disciplining the body and mind, the significance of the precious human rebirth and the difficulty of finding one, etc. Investigate whether you have practised in accordance with the motivation set before beginning the session. If you have done so, feel happy about it and set your mind to do likewise in the future. If you have not done so, rebuke yourself soundly and determine to do better in the future. Entreat the Gurus and the Triple Gem. This method of reviewing one's practice is called 'the single-pointed concentration like a snow lion's love', and is said to greatly further one's practice of virtue.

To the guide, Bhagavān, Tathāgata, ~
Arhat, fully consummated Buddha,
Glorious Śākyamuni, I prostrate;
I make offerings and take refuge in him.

With fervent regard, recite this many times.

The Guru is pleased and a duplicate of him comes forth;
It dissolves into me and I transform into Buddha,
At my heart a letter *Hūm* appears on lotus and moon
cushions;

A mantra rosary, shining radiantly, surrounds it.

As light streams forth, the world becomes a pure land,

And the inhabitants are transformed into Buddhas.
 I and all others visualize the seed syllable at our hearts,
 And commence reciting the Mantra.
Oṃ Muni Muni Mahā Muniye Svāhā.

At this point, a duplicate of the Guru Buddha comes forth. It dissolves into you, and you become Buddha. At the heart of yourself visualized as Buddha, on cushions of lotus and moon, is either a white *Āḥ* marked by a yellow *Hūm*, or a solitary *Hūm*. Visualize this as surrounded by a radiant Mantra rosary. Rays of light extend throughout the world and strike the inhabitants, leading all of them to the state of Buddhahood. Imagine that the world is transformed into a pure land. As before, visualize the seed syllable and Mantra rosary on cushions at the hearts of yourself and others, and recite “*Oṃ Muni Muni Mahā Muniye Svāhā*” as many times as possible.

By the power of this virtue,
 May I quickly attain the state of Guru Śākyāmuni,
 And may all beings without exception
 Also be lead to this state!

Make perfect dedication by reciting such verses as this, the Prayer of Noble Conduct, and so forth. Dedication is a method for transforming virtue into whatever you wish. It is essential to make such final prayers in order to ensure the flourishing of the teachings. This is an unsurpassable method protecting virtues against destruction by anger, etc. The practice is consolidated by regarding the creator of the virtue, the virtue itself, the dedication, the result of dedication, and all phenomena as being merely imputed by concepts and not existing on their own accord even in the slightest. This is essential.

Light radiates from the *Hūm* at your heart, extending throughout the world and to all its inhabitants. The world melts into light and dissolves into the beings, and all the sentient beings in turn dissolve into you. You then dissolve into the lotus and the moon, which subsequently dissolve into the Mantra rosary. If you have visualized an *Āḥ*, the Mantra rosary dissolves into that. Otherwise it dissolves into the *Hūm*. The *shabkyu* (𑖦) dissolves into the letter *Ha* (𑖦), which dissolves into its head portion (𑖦). That

dissolves into the crescent moon (☾), which dissolves into the dot (●), which in turn dissolves into the *nada* (ॐ). That subsequently dissolves into voidness. Place your attention on that for some time. Arise from that concentration in the form of Vajrabhairava or the deity for whom you have special respect.

During the post-meditation period, by guarding the sense faculties, accumulate merits and purify negativities diligently, so as to make this precious human rebirth meaningful. This is the way to engage in the Six Preparatory Practices as taught by the Guru.

Colophon



This complete summarized meditation was written by this humble Bhikshu in accordance with the teaching of my precious Guru in order to refresh the memories of those of equal fortune. Whatever errors there may be, I acknowledge and confess them before the Guru, the Triple Gem, and the scholars. Through the virtue of this composition, may I and all sentient beings be held within the kind guidance of the noble Gurus. By stressing the Lam-rim practices as the essence of the teachings, may we all thereby swiftly attain the state of Vajradhara.



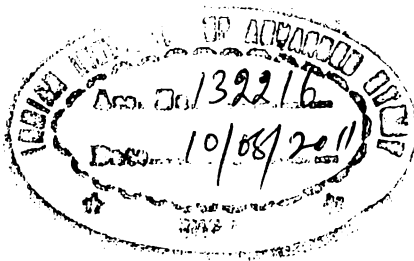
SARVĀ MAṄGALĀM!
May all be auspicious!

Notes



1. Literally, “form”; in this context, “physical form”.
2. The altruistic thought of wishing to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings.
3. Objects of meditation that act as a field for the collection of merit.
4. A representational offering of the entire universe.
5. The five benefits are clarifying your mind, clarifying the minds of others, pleasing the deities who support Dharma practices, attaining physical beauty, and attaining the Pure Land.
6. P’agpa Lamchung was an ignorant monk who could not even remember a single mantra. Yet, due to the Buddha’s instructions to recite, “Sweep away the dust, sweep away the stains,” while sweeping the temple, he was able to attain arhatship.
7. The five wrong livelihoods are flattery, hinting, giving something small in order to get something better in return, bribery, and pretension.
8. Vajra-asana is the vajra cross-legged position with the left foot placed upon the right thigh and the right foot placed upon the left thigh. Vajra is the adamant sceptre symbolizing compassion.
9. Cyclic existence, the wheel of repeatedly dying and taking rebirth.
10. Actions, both positive and negative.
11. Gesture.
12. The five places are the crown of the head, throat, heart, navel, and secret place.
13. The five syllables are *Oṃ*, *Āh*, *Hūm*, *Svā*, and *Hā*.
14. The five Dhyani Buddhas are Vairocana, Amitābha, Akśobhya, Ratnasambhāva, and Amogasiddhi.
15. The three brothers are Geshe Potawa, Geshe Chengawa, and Geshe Pulchungwa.
16. The four Yogis are Yogi Chakdrugjuba, Yogi Chaktongdenba, Ama Changchub Rinchen, and Gompowa.
17. Batso Chögi Gyaltzen.
18. The five classes of beings are Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, Pratyeka Buddhas, Śrāvakas, and those who have not yet entered the path.
19. This refers to the union of the illusory body and the clear light.
20. The *Abhidharmakośa* (*Treasury of Knowledge*) is a text by Vasubandhu elucidating the Buddhist concept of the cosmos and the infinitude of time.

21. The Dhyāni stages are successive levels of meditative concentration.
22. The four elements are earth, water, fire, and air, and each element is itself composed of the other three.
23. The five precious substances are gold, silver, copper, iron, and lead.
24. Demi-god.
25. Celestial beings.
26. The three higher trainings are higher morality, higher concentration, and higher wisdom.
27. Words of honour to be observed in connection with Tantric initiation.
28. Spiritual stages in the development toward enlightenment.



JORCHÖ - THE SIX PREPARATORY PRACTICES

The Six Preparatory Practices Adorning the Buddha's Sublime Doctrine (sbyor-ba'i chos-drug bya-tshul thub-bstan lhun-po'i mdzes-rgyan) is important as an example of that body of Tibetan literature explaining preparatory practices. It outlines the organization of a Buddhist practitioner's daily meditation session, including visualizations, verses of praise, and a convenient condensation of the Graded Path (Lam-rim) contemplations. All the major points of the Graded Path meditation, including bodhicitta and right view, are touched upon. In addition, the verses of the famous and well-loved prayer Yon-tan bzhi-gyur-ma are to be found herein.

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