

Melody of Dharma

❁ **The Law of Cause and Effect**

A teaching by H.H. Sakya Gongma Trichen Rinpoche

❁ **Remembering Great Masters –
Nagarjuna**

❁ **H.H. Sakya Gongma Trichen
Rinpoche in South India**

❁ **The First North American
Monlam Prayer Festival**



*A Publication of the Office of Sakya Dolma Phodrang
Dedicated to the Dharma Activities of*

**HIS HOLINESS SAKYA GONGMA TRICHEN RINPOCHE
AND HIS NOBLE FAMILY**

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Patrons: H.E. Gyalyum Chenmo
H.E. Dagmo Kalden Dunkyi Sakya
H.E. Dagmo Sonam Palkyi Sakya

Publisher: The Office of Sakya Dolma Phodrang

Executive Editor: Ani Jamyang Wangmo

Managing Editor: Patricia Donohue

Editorial Advisor: Ven. Ngawang Jungney

Art Director/Designer: Chang Ming-Chuan

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Sakya Academy

The 11th of April 2016 marked the start of a bold, exciting and hugely rewarding undertaking, as the Sakya Academy monastic school held its first day of classes.

This was the beginning of bright new times and the fulfillment of a long-time aspiration for its founder, Khöndung Gyana Vajra Sakya Rinpoche. The project had been several years in the making and this day was the fruit of tenacious effort through the course of long years.

Well ensconced in quiet and serene surroundings in the outskirts of Dehradun, India, the school provides its monk students with an ideal environment for them to develop their potential to its fullest.

The young monks at Sakya Academy, now numbering 223, are children who come from impoverished regions of India and neighbouring Nepal, where health care and education facilities are virtually non-existent. The older ones had previously come as young children to Sakya Centre, His Holiness the Gongma Trichen's monastery in Dehradun, and were transferred



Sakya Academy founder Khöndung Gyana Vajra Sakya Rinpoche dedicates as much of his time and resources to the school as he possibly can, but this has to be shared with his many other responsibilities. And so his wife, Dagmo Kushok Sonam Palkyi Sakya, has taken on the role of Director of Sakya Academy. Rinpoche and Dagmo Kushok oversee every aspect of the school and act as surrogate parents to the children, with Dagmo Kushok periodically meeting with each individual child to evaluate their needs and progress. The children lovingly address Dagmo Kushok as “Mamma”. Their daughter Jetsunma Ngawang Tsejin Lhamo currently attends class 2 at the school.



to Sakya Academy in the autumn of 2015. For the newcomers from Nepal, some as young as five years old, joining Sakya Academy meant escaping the dire conditions created by the devastating earthquake that had struck Nepal a year earlier and had left in its wake desolation and unimaginable suffering, especially for the inhabitants of remote regions. Among their many misfortunes was the scouring of villages for children to be sold into slavery. And so, when the opportunity arose for these new students

to join Sakya Academy, it was an incalculable bounty for them and their families that they were not only being saved from such a grievous fate, but that they would be receiving a world-class education.

Sakya Academy is a progressive monastic school dedicated to offering its young students an all-round education based on Buddhist principles. Its aim is to shape a new generation of Tibetan Buddhist monks into highly educated adults, steeped in the teachings of the Buddha and equipped with the moral qualities needed to be good leaders.

Sakya Academy is in the process of registering as an English Medium School with the Government of India. The young monks have had much to catch up with, as this has been their first introduction to classroom subjects. Within the mere two years since their first day of classes, they have



acquired three new languages in addition to Nepalese – English, Tibetan and Hindi. They are making great strides in their exploration of science, maths, environmental studies, general studies and now, thanks to the kindness of generous sponsors, computer studies.

Final exams, set according to national standards, were held in March to mark the end of the 2017-18 academic year. With a handful of exceptions, everyone successfully passed, with the highest result striking a mid-nineties percentage mark.

Over and above their everyday curriculum, the children engage in extracurricular activities, including meditation, basic Buddhist Philosophy, yoga, art, music, drama, elocution, quiz and caring for the environment.



The children take great pride and pleasure in displaying their skills during special functions.



Sakya Academy is a happy place. The children's desire to learn is insatiable and they are blessed with a team of teachers who are wholeheartedly committed to their growth. Under the able guidance of the school's Headmistress, Mrs. Tsering Choedron, the teaching staff goes well beyond the call of duty to ensure that the children learn and that they thrive as human beings.



Discipline is flawless and the children infinitely malleable, deeply aware that the school only aspires to their happiness and sound development. All efforts are made to ensure the children's physical, mental, spiritual and emotional growth and wellbeing. It is worth mentioning that the teaching staff receives the wholehearted and assiduous support of the administrative and managerial members of the Sakya Academy family, who work every bit as hard as their academic counterparts to ensure that the school meets with every possible success.



The students are divided into four houses - Red (Shariputra), Yellow (Maudgalyana), Green (Chandrakirti) and Blue (Nagarjuna), which compete with each other in different spheres of activity.

Sports hold an important place at the school, with football passionately a favourite. The school's second Sports Day was held in



November, where well-deserved medals and certificates were distributed. Hotly disputed events eventually gave way to the Green House winning the day.



Sakya Academy is also a holy place. It has been blessed by the presence of great masters, including His Holiness the 41st Sakya Trizin, His Holiness the 42nd Sakya Trizin, Their Eminences Chogye Trichen Rinpoche, Luding Khenchen Rinpoche, Luding Khenshoen Rinpoche and Jetsun Kushok Chimed Luding.



The religious and spiritual facet of the children's growth is the foundation and the *raison-d'être* of all the learning that takes place in the classrooms. It is Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche's ambition

that the school contribute to the preservation and dissemination of the Sakya spiritual treasures. Over two hours are dedicated to Scriptures Studies on a daily basis, and the senior students practise mind-

fulness meditation and study basic Buddhist Philosophy. A group of more than sixty students attended the Lamdre teachings bestowed by His Holiness Trizin Rinpoche last spring at the Sakya Centre.



A new prayer hall was established last autumn and was inaugurated with the celebration of the Amitayus Puja for the long life of His Holiness Trichen Rinpoche on the occasion of His Tibetan Birthday in September. A second long-life puja followed in November, under the direction of Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche, in honour of His Holiness Trizin Rinpoche's Tibetan Birthday.

Since then, our monks have learned to perform several kinds of pujas, including their respective mudras, use of *dorje* and bell, and the playing of cymbals. At their own request, these skills were acquired through hours of hard work over their three-week winter holiday last December. A group of senior students are currently learning to play the *gyaling*, while another group is learning to perform the *Vajrakilaya Gharpa Sarpa cham*.



It is worth noting that the students have planted 1000 shrubs to embellish their school's driveway and buildings, as well as a veggie garden. All the children are proud of their school, and everyone enthusiastically participates in its maintenance, helping to keep it clean and beautiful. The students also helped to erect a shed for compost to nurture the soil and to dispose sensibly of organic matter. The veggie garden already provides for a hefty percentage of the children's vegetable consumption, with a view to attaining self-sufficiency by the end of this year.

It is within this context that the Sakya Academy students are striving to become better human beings by embracing every aspect of knowledge and wisdom that they are given access to. They passionately aspire to make the world a better place. Rinpoche's vision of creating this sacred space of learning is palpable everywhere, and everyone at the school is suffused by it, students, teachers and all other staff members alike. Everyone at the school gives their heart and soul to make Rinpoche's vision a reality.

Sakya Academy gives every

promise of fulfilling its ambition of shaping a new generation of Sakya monastics into well-rounded citizens of the world. Rinpoche's intent is to bring the number of monks up to 250 and, eventually, to give the same opportunity to an additional corps of 250 nuns to partake of this extraordinary journey.

Not only will this be a great boon to the Sakya tradition, but it will also benefit countless beings everywhere.

Remembering Great Masters

ARYA NAGARJUNA



Little is known about Nagarjuna's life. According to accounts, he was born into a South Indian Brahmin family between 150 and 250 BC.

In his infancy, his parents were told by an astrologer that their child would not live beyond the age of seven. As Nagarjuna's seventh birthday was approaching, his parents sent him on pilgrimage with a servant, unable to bear the thought of witnessing his death. Good fortune would have it that, upon arriving at Nalanda Monastery, Nagarjuna met the Mahasiddha Saraha, who told him that he would escape death if he became a monk and received the initiation of Amitayus.

Nagarjuna took Saraha's advice, which averred itself to be sound. Not only did he survive, but he stayed on at Nalanda and became versed in all the sciences, and later served as abbot of the monastery. Tradition has it that he lived 600 years and that he retrieved the Prajnaparamita (Perfection of Wisdom) sutras from the King of the Nagas, to whom the Buddha had entrusted their care, and who kept them at the bottom of the sea.

What we do know of Nagarjuna is that he was one of the greatest philosophers that the world has known, a precursor to modern-day physicists. He was one of the originators of the

Mahayana school of Buddhism and the prime proponent of the Middle Way, a view that rebuked the extremist views of both absolutism and nihilism. Nagarjuna developed a philosophical system based on emptiness, which he expounded in his *Mulamadhyamakakarika*, and in which he demonstrates that phenomena do not exist by their own virtue, but rather in a process of dependent origination.

Reiterating and developing upon the teachings of the Buddha, Nagarjuna states that phenomena are the result of an interplay between themselves and other phenomena. Like the Buddha, he does not deny the empirical existence of objects, but he does reject the concept of their absolute, permanent and independent existence.

Nagarjuna's view of reality goes hand in hand with that of quantum physics, which stipulates that bodies are affected and defined by interacting forces at work between themselves and other bodies. This creates systems that cannot be separated into independent parts or reduced to independent bodies or states.

But, however much Nagarjuna's view of reality coincides with that of modern physics, his purpose in realising the meaning of emptiness is not merely scientific. His purpose is the uprooting of all mental obscurations and negative emotions; it is the complete elimination of suffering and the attainment of nirvana. For him, emptiness is the subtlest form of reality and it characterized by the five natures: not known though other words, peaceful, devoid of elaborations, transcending conceptualisation, and devoid of duality.

Reiterating the Buddha's second truth that ignorance is the cause of suffering, Nagarjuna provides us with the key to undermining this ignorance. Because of ignorance, we grasp at absolute and permanent existence, and we are forever stunted in our search for satisfaction and happiness. Only through the realisation of the meaning of emptiness can we free ourselves from the delusion that hides our true nature from us, our enlightened mind.



The Bodhisambhara Shastra

The Treatise on the Provisions Essential to Enlightenment The Bodhisambhara Shastra

By Arya Nagarjuna

*Translated into Chinese by the Great Sui Dynasty's
South Indian Tripitaka Master Dharmagupta (550?-619 ce)
English Translation by Bhikshu Dharmamitra*

001

Now, in the presence of all the Buddhas,
With palms pressed together, I bow down my head in reverence.
I shall, in accordance with the teachings, explain
The provisions essential for the bodhi of the Buddhas.

002

How would one be able to describe without omission
All of the provisions for the realization of bodhi?
This could only be accomplished by the Buddhas themselves,
For they, exclusively, have realized the boundless enlightenment.

003

As for the boundless meritorious qualities of a Buddha's body,
The provisions for enlightenment constitute their very root.
Therefore the provisions for enlightenment
Themselves have no bounds.

004

I shall then explain but a lesser portion of them.
I respectfully offer reverence to the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas.
All such bodhisattvas as these—
They, after the Buddhas, should be given one's offerings.

005

Since it is the mother of the Bodhisattvas,
It is also the mother of the Buddhas:
The Prajñāparamita :
Is the foremost among the provisions for enlightenment.

006

Giving, moral virtue, patience, vigor, and meditative discipline
As well as that which extends beyond these five—
In every case, because they arise from the perfection of wisdom,
They are subsumed within this prajñāparamita;

007

These six paramitas
Encompass the provisions for bodhi,
They are comparable in this to empty space,
Which entirely envelops all things.

008

There is in addition the opinion of another master
That, as for the provisions for enlightenment,
Truth, relinquishment, quiescent cessation, and wisdom—
These four bases subsume them all.

009

The great compassion penetrates even the marrow of one's bones.
Thus one becomes for all beings one on whom they can rely.
One's regard for them is like that of a father towards his only son.
Thus loving-kindness then extends to everyone.

010

If one brings to mind the meritorious qualities of a Buddha
Or hears of a Buddha's spiritual transformations,
One may be purified through one's affection and joyfulness.
This is what qualifies as the great sympathetic joy.

011

As regards his relations with beings, the bodhisattva
Should not, on realizing equanimity, simply forsake them.
In accordance with whatever abilities his powers enable,
He should always strive to draw them in.

012

The bodhisattva, even from that time when his efforts begin,
Should, as befits the power of his abilities,
Employ skilful means to transform beings,
Thus causing them to enter the Great Vehicle.

013

If one transformed through teachings a Ganges' sands of beings,
Causing them all to gain the fruit of arhatship,
Still, transforming a single person so he enters the Great Vehicle—
The merit from this is superior to the former.

014

Instructing through resort to the Hearer Vehicle
Or through resort to the Pratyekabuddha Vehicle
Is undertaken where, on account of lesser abilities,
Beings are unable to accept instruction in the Great Vehicle.

015

Where, even by utilizing the Hearer and Pratyekabuddha Vehicles
In addition to drawing on the Great Vehicle,
There are those who still cannot accept transformative teaching—
One should establish them in merit-creating circumstances.

016

If there be persons who are unable to accept
Transformative teachings conducing to the heavens or liberation,
One should employ the means of bestowing present-life benefits
And, as one's powers dictate, one should draw them in.

017

Where a bodhisattva with respect to particular beings
Has no basis through which to teach and transform them,
He should raise forth great loving-kindness and compassion
And should not then simply cast them aside and forsake them.

018

Drawing in through giving, or through explaining Dharma,
Or through listening in return to others speaking about Dharma,
Or also through endeavors beneficial to them—

These are skilful means by which one may draw them in.

019

In that which is done for the benefit of beings,
One should not become either weary or negligent.
One should bring forth vows for the sake of bodhi.
Benefiting the world is just benefiting oneself.

020

Entering the extremely profound state of the Dharma realm,
One extinguishes and abandons discriminations.
They all become devoid of any useful function.
Thus, in every circumstance, one naturally abides in equanimity.

021

Personal gain, reputation, praise, and happiness—
In every case, one refrains from attachment to these four points.
Moreover, even their opposites present no obstacle.
Conduct of this sort constitutes the practice of equanimity.

022

In the bodhisattva's striving for bodhi,
So long as he has not yet gained irreversibility,
He acts as urgently as the person whose turban has caught fire.
Thus one should take up just such intensely diligent practice.

023

Thus it is that those bodhisattvas,
When striving for the realization of bodhi,
Should not rest in their practice of vigor,
For they have shouldered such a heavy burden.

024

So long as he has not generated great compassion or the patiences,
Even though he may have gained an irreversibility,
The bodhisattva is still subject to a form of "dying"
Which occurs through allowing negligence to arise.

025

The grounds of the Hearers or the Pratyekabuddhas
If entered, become for him the same as dying.
Because he would thereby sever the bodhisattva's
Roots of understanding and awareness.

026

Even at the prospect of falling into the hell-realms,
The bodhisattva would not be struck with fright.

The grounds of the Hearers and the Pratyekabuddhas, however,
Do provoke a great terror in him.

027

It is not the case that falling into the hell realms
Would bring about an ultimate obstacle to his bodhi.

The grounds of the Hearers and the Pratyekabuddhas, however,
Do create just such an ultimate obstacle.

028

Just as is said of he who loves long life,
That he becomes fearful at the prospect of his own beheading,
So, too, the grounds of the Hearers and Pratyekabuddhas
Should bring about a fearfulness of just this sort.

029

Not produced and not destroyed—
Neither unproduced nor undestroyed—
Nor is it the case that one posits “both” or “neither”—
As for “emptiness” and “non-emptiness” it is the same for them.

030

No matter which among all dharmas one encounters,
In their midst, one remains unmoving in one’s contemplation.
Those who achieve this abide in the patience of the unproduced-
dharmas,
On account of having cut off all forms of discrimination.

031

Once one has succeeded in gaining this patience,
One immediately receives the prediction:
“You will definitely become a buddha.”

It is then that one succeeds in achieving irreversibility.

032

Those bodhisattvas already dwelling at the stage of immovability
Have gained irreversible knowledge of dharmas as they really are.
Their knowledge is invincible to those of the Two Vehicles.
Hence this stage alone is designated as “irreversible.”

033

Up until the bodhisattva has gained
The ground of all Buddhas’ present manifestation
Along with its durably-solid samadhis,
He should not allow any negligence to arise.

034

The ground of all Buddhas’ present manifestation
With its durably-solid samadhis—
This constitutes the bodhisattva’s father
While the great compassion and the patiences serve as his mother.

035

As for the perfection of wisdom serving as his mother
And skilful means serving as his father,
It is on account of the one’s giving birth and the other’s support.
Thus those are also claimed as the bodhisattva’s father and mother.

036

With but a lesser accumulation of merit
One remains unable to realize bodhi.
Merit the measure of a hundred Mount Sumerus—
Only an accumulation exceeding that would enable its realization.

037

Although one may perform but a minor meritorious deed,
Even in this, one possesses a skilful means:
Taking all beings as the object of this act,
One in all cases brings about transformation of the conditions.

038

As for he who reflects, “Whatever actions I undertake,
They will always be for the sake of benefiting beings”—
With a mind which courses on in this way—
Who could be able to measure his merit?

039

When he is not cherishing of even his relatives, his retinue,
Or of his own body, life, or wealth—
When he does not covet the “sovereign-independence” happiness,
The Brahma-world heavens, or any other heavens—

040

When he does not covet even nirvana,
This because his actions are undertaken for the sake of beings—
When in this way, he bears in mind only other beings—
Who could be able to measure his merit?

*As for he who reflects, “Whatever
actions I undertake,*

They will always be for the sake of benefiting beings”—

With a mind which courses on in this way—

Who could be able to measure his merit?

041

When for those of the world without refuge or protection,
He rescues and protects them from their bitter afflictions—
When he raises forth such thought and actions as these—
Who could be able to measure his merit?

042

If he were to act in accord with the perfection of wisdom
Only for the moment of tugging cow’s milk, it would then be so.
If he did so for a month or for many more months—
Who could be able to measure his merit?

043

When, taking up those profound sutras praised by Buddhas,
One recites them to himself, teaches them to others,
Or provides analysis and explanation for their sakes—
It is this which generates the accumulation of merit.

044

When one causes countless beings
To generate the mind resolved on bodhi,
That treasury of merit becomes even more supreme.
One thus becomes bound to gain the ground of immovability.

045

When one follows along in turning what the Buddha turned,
The wheel of the most supreme Dharma,
Bringing to quiescent cessation all of the evil piercings—
It is this which establishes the bodhisattva’s treasury of merit.

046

For the sake of bringing benefit and happiness to beings,
One would endure even the great sufferings of the hells,
How much the more so the other lesser sufferings.
In such a case, bodhi resides in one’s own right hand.

047

When in initiating actions, it is not for one’s own sake,

But rather solely to bring benefit and happiness to beings—
Because in all cases this arises from the great compassion,
Bodhi resides in one’s own right hand.

048

When one’s wisdom abandons frivolous discourse—
When one’s vigor abandons indolence—
When one’s giving abandons miserliness—
Bodhi resides in one’s own right hand.

049

When meditative concentration is free of dependence or ideation—
When moral precepts are perfectly fulfilled and unadulterated—
When one has gained the patience of unproduced-dharmas—
Bodhi resides in one’s own right hand.

050

Those now abiding in the ten directions—
All of those who have gained the right enlightenment—
I, in the presence of them all, directly before them,
Lay forth and describe those unwholesome deeds I have done.

051

In those realms throughout the ten directions,
If there be Buddhas who have gained realization of bodhi
And yet have not proclaimed and expounded the Dharma—
I request of them that they turn the wheel of Dharma.

052

In the present era, throughout the ten-directions’ realms,
Among all those possessed of the right enlightenment—
If there be those about to relinquish their lives and practices,
I prostrate in reverence, exhorting and requesting them to remain.

053

Wherever there are any beings who,
By their physical, verbal, or mental deeds,
Generate merit through giving, moral virtue,
And so forth, on through to the cultivation of meditation—

054

Whether it be that of aryas or common persons,
And whether it be created in the past, present, or future—
All of their accumulated merit—
In every case, I am moved to accord with it and rejoice in it.

055

If all of the merit that I have created
Could be formed into a single sphere,
I would bestow it on all beings through transference
For the sake of causing them to realize the right enlightenment.

056

My acting in this manner in repentance of transgressions,
Exhortation, requesting, accordant rejoicing in others' merit,
And the transference through dedication to bodhi—
One should realize these accord with the acts of all Buddhas.

057

That confession and repentance of the evils of my karmic offenses,
The requesting of the Buddha, the accordant rejoicing in merit,
And the transference through dedication to bodhi—
These accord with the instructions of the most supreme ones.

058

Kneeling down with the right knee touching the ground,
And the upper robe arranged, baring the one shoulder—
Three times each day and three times each night,
One places the palms together and proceeds in this manner.

059

The merit created in even a single instance of this,
If it were allowed to manifest in material form,
Even great chiliocosms as numerous as grains of sand in the
Ganges

Would not be able to contain it.

060

After the initial generation of resolve,
In relating to bodhisattvas of lesser standing,
One should bring forth for them a veneration and cherishing
Comparable to that reserved for one's own guru and parents.

061

Although a bodhisattva may have committed transgressions,
Even so, one still should not speak about them.
How much the less might one do so where no actual case exists.
One should then engage only in praises which accord with truth.

062

In an instance where a person has vowed to become a Buddha
And one wishes to influence him to achieve irreversibility,

Make matters manifestly apparent, cause him to blaze full of fire,
And also inspire in him the happiness of sympathetic joy.

063

When one has not yet understood extremely profound scriptures,
One must not claim they were not spoken by a Buddha.
If one makes statements of this sort,
One undergoes the most intense suffering in retribution for evil.

064

As for karmic offenses generating "non-intermittent" retributions—
If one were to form them all into a single sphere
And compare them to the two karmic offenses described above,
They would not amount even to the smallest fraction thereof.

065

As regards the three gates to liberation,
One should skilfully cultivate them:
The first is emptiness, the next is single-mindedness,
And the third is the absence of desire.

066

Because they have no self-existent nature, phenomena are empty.
If already empty, how could they establish any characteristic signs?
Since all characteristic signs abide in a state of quiescent cessation,
What could there be that the wise might wish for?

067

When cultivating and bearing this in mind,
One goes toward and draws close to the nirvana path.
Do not bear in mind anything not resulting in a buddha's body
And, in that matter, one must not allow any negligence.

068

"In this matter of nirvana, I
Should not immediately bring about its realization."
One ought to generate a resolve of this sort,
And then one should bring to ripening the perfection of wisdom.

069

Just as an archer might shoot his arrows upwards,
Causing each in succession to strike the one before,
Each holding up the other so none are allowed to fall—
Just so it is with the great bodhisattva.

070

Into the emptiness of the gates to liberation,

He skilfully releases the arrows of the mind.
Through artful skilful means, arrows are continuously held aloft,
So none are allowed to fall back down into nirvana.
071
“I refuse to forsake beings
And so I continue on for the sake of benefiting beings.”
One first brings forth just such resolve as this,
And thence, forever after, one’s practice accords with that.

Because they have no self-existent nature, phenomena are empty.

If already empty, how could they establish any characteristic signs?

Since all characteristic signs abide in a state of quiescent cessation,

What could there be that the wise might wish for?

072
There are those who’ve been attached to existence of beings and the like
Throughout time’s long night and in present actions as well.
They retain inverted views regarding characteristic signs.
This is due in every case to confusion wrought by delusion.
073
For those attached to marks, who retain inverted views,
One resolves to proclaim the Dharma so that these might be severed.
One first generates just such a mind as this.
And thence, forever after, one’s practice accords with that.
074
The bodhisattva strives on for the benefit of beings
And yet does not perceive the existence of any being.
This in itself is the most difficult among endeavors
And is such a rarity, that it transcends one’s powers of conception.
075
Although one may have entered “the right and definite position,”
And one’s practice may accord with the gates to liberation,
Because one has not yet fulfilled one’s original vows,

One refrains from proceeding to the realization of nirvana.
076
Where one has not yet reached the “definite” position,
One holds oneself back through the power of skilful means.
Because one has not yet fulfilled one’s original vows,
In this case, too, one refrains from opting for the realization of nirvana.
077
Equipped with the most ultimate renunciation of cyclic existence,
One nonetheless still confronts cyclic existence directly.
While maintaining faith and happiness in nirvana,
One still turns one’s back on taking up the realization of nirvana.
078
Although one should maintain a dread of afflictions,
One still should not bring afflictions to their final end.
One should proceed to accumulate the many forms of goodness,
Employing blocking techniques to block off the afflictions.
079
For the bodhisattva, afflictions fit with his very nature.
He is not one for whom nirvana is the basis of his very nature.
It is not the case that the burning up of the afflictions
Can bring about the generation of the bodhi seed.
080
As for the predictions accorded to those other beings,
These predictions involved their own causes and conditions.
They were only a function of the Buddha’s excellent skilfulness,
And were expedient means to facilitate reaching the far shore.
081
The comparisons involve “empty space,” “lotus flowers,”
“Precipitous cliffs,” and “a deep abyss.”
Just so, their realms. Analogies cite “non-virility” and “klecamani,”
With an additional comparison made to “seeds which are burned.”
082
All of the treatises as well as artisan’s skills,
The esoteric skills of higher clarity, all of the sorts of livelihoods—
Because they bring benefit to the world,
One brings them forth and establishes them.
083
Adapting to beings amenable to transformative teaching,

To their realms, paths, and birth circumstances,
As befits one's reflections, one proceeds forthwith to them,
And, through power of vows, takes birth among them.
084
In the midst of all sorts of circumstances rife with evil
And in the midst of beings prone to guileful flattery and deceit,
One should put to use one's sturdy armor
And so must not yield to loathing and must not become fearful.

***The bodhisattva strives on for the benefit
of beings***

***And yet does not perceive the existence
of any being.***

***This in itself is the most difficult among
endeavors***

***And is such a rarity, that it transcends
one's powers of conception.***

085
One equips oneself with the supremely pure mind,
Does not resort to guileful flattery or deception,
Reveals all of the evils of one's karmic offenses,
And keeps concealed his many good deeds.
086
One purifies the karma of body and mouth
And also purifies the karma of the mind,
Cultivating observance of all passages in the moral-code training.
One must not allow any omissions or diminishment in this.
087
One establishes himself in right mindfulness,
Focuses on objective conditions, and meditates in solitary silence.
Having put mindfulness to use to serve as a guard,
The mind becomes free of any obstructive thoughts.
088
When bringing forth discriminations,
One should realize which are good and which are not.
One should forsake all that are not good
And extensively cultivate those which are good.

089
If the mind trained on the objective sphere becomes scattered,
One should focus one's mindful awareness,
Return it to that objective sphere,
And, whenever movement occurs, immediately cause it to halt.
090
One should not indulge any laxness, any grasping at what is bad,
Nor any intense cultivation of such things.
Since one is prevented thereby from maintaining concentration,
One should therefore constantly cultivate accordingly.
091
Even if one were to take up the vehicle of the Hearers
Or the vehicle of the Pratyekabuddhas,
And hence one practiced solely for one's own self benefit,
Still, one would not relinquish the enduring practice of vigor.
092
How much the less could it be that a great man,
One committed to liberating himself and liberating others,
Might somehow not generate
A measure of vigor a thousand kotis times greater?
093
It may be that one tries to carry on a separate practice half the time,
Thus practicing some other path of cultivation simultaneously.
In cultivating meditative concentration, one should not do this.
One should rather focus only on a single objective phenomenon.
094
One must not indulge any covetousness regarding the body
And must not cherish even one's very life.
Even if one allowed a protectiveness towards this body,
In the end, it is but a dharma bound to rot and destruction.
095
Offerings, reverence from others, or fame—
One must never develop a covetous attachment to them.
In the manner of one whose turban has caught fire, one should
Act with diligence, striving to accomplish what one has vowed.

***One should contemplate conditioned things
as impermanent. As devoid of self, and as
devoid of anything belonging to a self.***

096

Acting resolutely and immediately, pull forth the supreme benefit.

In this, one cannot wait for tomorrow.

Tomorrow is too distant a time,

For how can one ensure survival even for the blink of an eye?

097

Establishing oneself in right mindfulness,

When eating, it is as if consuming the flesh of one's cherished son.

With respect to that food which one takes to eat,

One must not indulge affection for it or disapproval of it.

098

For what purpose has one left the home life?

Have I finished what is to be done or not?

Reflect now on whether or not one is ripening the endeavor,
doing so as described in the Ten Dharmas Sutra.

099

One should contemplate conditioned things as impermanent

As devoid of self, and as devoid of anything belonging to a self.

As for all forms of demonic karmic actions—

One should become aware of them and abandon them.

100

The roots, powers, limbs of enlightenment,

Bases of spiritual powers, right efforts and severances, the Path,

As well as the four stations of mindfulness—

One generates energetic diligence for the sake of cultivating these.

101

In beneficial and happiness-creating acts of goodness, the mind
Serves as the source for their continuously-repeated generation.

It also acts as the root of all manner of evil and turbidity.

One should make it the focus of skillful analytic contemplation.

102

"In my relationship to good dharmas—

What sort of daily increase is occurring in them?

And, again, what sort of reduction?"

Those should be the contemplations of utmost concern.

103

When one observes another gain increasing measure

Of offerings, of reverences, and of fame,

Even the most subtle thoughts of stinginess and jealousy

Are in all cases not to be indulged.

104

One should not cherish any aspect of the objective realms,

But rather should act as if dull-witted, blind, mute, and deaf.

Still, when timely, one should respond by roaring "the lion's roar,"

Frightening off the non-Buddhist "deer."

105

In welcoming them on arrival and escorting them off as they go,

One should be reverential towards those worthy of veneration.

In all endeavors associated with the Dharma,

One should follow along, participate and contribute assistance.

106

One rescues and liberates beings bound to be killed,

Naturally increasing and never decreasing such works.

One cultivates well those karmic deeds requiring clarity and skill,

Training in them oneself while also teaching them to others.

107

Regarding all of the supremely good dharmas,

One adopts them through enduring and solid practice.

One cultivates the four means of attraction,

Making gifts of clothing as well as food and drink.

108

One does not turn away from those who beg for alms,

Brings together in harmony all who are related,

Does not allow his retinue to drift into estrangement,

And provides them with dwellings as well as material wealth.

109

As for one's father, mother, relatives, and friends,

One provides circumstances for them befitting their station

And, wherever they are provided such fitting circumstances,

One treats them as supreme and independent sovereigns.

110

Although there are yet others who act as one's servants,

One speaks to them with goodness and also, in effect, adopts them.

One should accord them the highest esteem,

Providing them with medicines and treatment for any illnesses.

111

Being the first to act, one becomes foremost in good karmic deeds,

One speaks with smooth and wonderfully sublime words,

Is skilful in discourse guided by right intention,
And has none above or below to whom he does not proffer gifts.
112

One avoids any harm to the retinue of another,
Regards beings with the eye of loving-kindness,
Does not course in disapproving thoughts,
And treats all as one would close relatives or friends.
113

One should accord with the words he speaks,
Immediately following them with concordant actions.
If one immediately acts in accordance with his words,
Other people will then be caused to develop faith.
114

One should support and protect the Dharma,
Being aware of and looking into instances of neglectfulness,
Going so far as to create even a canopy of gold and jewels
Which spreads over and covers a caitya.
115

For those who wish to find a maiden mate,
Once adorned, one may see to her presentation,
And also discourse to them on Buddha's meritorious qualities,
Presenting them with prayer beads gleaming in varying hues.
116

One creates images of the Buddha
That sit upright on supreme lotus blossoms.
And, in the six dharmas of monastic harmony,
One cultivates them, thus creating common delight and happiness.
117

To those who should be given offerings, none should be refused.
Even for the sake of preserving one's life, one still does not slander
The Dharma spoken by the Buddha
Or the person who expounds the Dharma.
118

Gold and jewels are distributed among teaching masters
And also among the caityas of teaching masters.
If there are those who forget what is to be recited,
One assists their remembrance, enabling them to stay free of error.
119

When one has not yet reflected on what should be done,

One must not be impulsive and must not simply emulate others.
As for the non-Buddhists, gods, dragons, and spirits—
In every case, one must not invest one's faith in them.
120

One's mind should be like a vajra,
Able to penetrate all dharmas.
One's mind should also be like a mountain,
Remaining unmoved by any circumstance.
121

One finds delight and happiness in world-transcending discourse,
But must not derive pleasure from words based on the worldly.
Having adopted all manner of meritorious qualities oneself,
One should influence others to adopt them as well.
122

One cultivates the five bases of liberation,
And also cultivates the ten reflections on impurity.
The eight realizations of the great men
Should also be the focus of analytic contemplation and cultivation.
123

The heavenly ear, the heavenly eye,
The bases of spiritual powers, the cognition of others' thoughts,
And the cognition of past lives and abodes—
One should cultivate purification of these five spiritual abilities.

***The four bases of spiritual powers
constitute the root.***

***They are zeal, vigor, mental focus, and
contemplative reflection.***

***The four immeasurables control and
sustain them.***

***They are kindness, compassion,
sympathetic joy, and equanimity.***

124
The four bases of spiritual powers constitute the root.
They are zeal, vigor, mental focus, and contemplative reflection.
The four immeasurables control and sustain them.
They are kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity.

125

The four elements are like poisonous serpents,
The six sense faculties are like an empty village
The five aggregates are like assassins.
One should contemplate them in this way.

126

One esteems the Dharma as well as the masters of Dharma
And also relinquishes any stinginess with the Dharma.
The instructing masters must not be tight-fisted or secretive
And those listening must not be mentally scattered or confused.

127

Free of arrogance and free of any particular hopes,
One resorts only to the mind motivated by compassion and pity.
With intentions imbued with veneration and reverence,
One expounds the Dharma for the sake of the assembly.

128

In learning, one never becomes weary or sated,
And having heard, in every case, one then recites and retains it.
One does not deceive any among the venerable fields of merit,
And, additionally, causes the teacher to be delighted.

129

One should not pay visits to the houses of others,
With a mind cherishing hopes for reverence or offerings.
One must not, for the sake of debating challenging topics,
Take up study and recitation of worldly texts.

130

One must not, on account of hatefulness or anger,
Defame anyone who is a bodhisattva.
With respect to dharmas not yet received or learned,
In those cases, too, one must not initiate slanders.

131

In order to cut off and get rid of arrogance and pride,
One should abide in the four lineage bases of the arya.
One must not course in disapproval of others
And must not allow oneself to become conceited.

132

Whether someone has actually committed a transgression or not,
One must not bring their cases to the attention of others.
Do not seek out the errors and faults of anyone else.

As for one's own errors, one should become aware of them.

133

As for the Buddha and the Dharma of all Buddhas,
One should not course in discriminations and doubts about them.
Even though a dharma may be extremely difficult to believe,
One should still maintain one's faith in it.

134

Even though one might be put to death for speaking the truth
Or be forced to abdicate the throne of wheel-turning king,
Or even that of a king of the gods,
One should still engage only in truthful speech.

135

Even if beaten, cursed, terrorized, slain, or bound up,
One must never subject others to enmity or castigation.
Think, "This is all the product of my own karmic offenses.
It is on account of karmic retribution that this has manifested."

136

One should, with the most ultimate respect and affection,
Provide offerings in support of one's father and mother,
Also supplying the needs of and serving the upādhyāyas,
While extending one's reverence to the ācāryas as well.

137

When, for the sake of those who believe in the Hearer Vehicle
Or those who resort to the Pratyekabuddha Vehicle,
One discourses on the most profound of dharmas,
This, for a bodhisattva, is an error.

138

When, for believers in the profound Great-Vehicle teachings,
One discourses to those beings
On the Hearer or Pratyekabuddha vehicles,
This, too, is an error for him.

139

So, too, where some eminent personage comes seeking the Dharma
And one delays this, thus failing to speak Dharma for him,
And then, on the contrary, one draws in and accepts what is evil—
So, too, if one appoints the unfaithful to positions of responsibility.

140

One should depart far from the errors herein described.
As for such herein-described meritorious practices as the dhūtas,

One should bear them in mind, come to know them,
And also draw close to them all in one's practice.

141

Regard all equally in one's thoughts, speak equally to all,
Be uniformly equal in skilfully establishing others,
And also in influencing others to accord with what is right.
Thus, in relating to beings, one remains free of discrimination.

142

One acts for the sake of Dharma and not for the sake of benefit,
Acts for the sake of what is meritorious, not for the sake of fame.
One aspires to liberate beings from suffering,
And does not wish simply to bring about one's own happiness.

143

With purposes kept to oneself, one seeks fruition in one's works.
When the results of one's merit-generating endeavors come forth,
Even then, one applies them to the ripening of the many.
Thus, in this, one relinquishes and abandons one's own concerns.

144

One should grow close to good spiritual friends (*kalyānamitra*).
This refers to the masters of Dharma, to the Buddhas,
To those who encourage one to leave the home life,
And to that class of persons which comes begging for alms.

145

Those who ground themselves in worldly treatises,
Those who exclusively seek worldly wealth,
Those with faith and awareness in the Pratyekabuddha Vehicle,
And those who are devoted to the Hearer Vehicle—

146

As for these four types of unwholesome spiritual friends,
The bodhisattva should be aware of them.
There are moreover those things which one should strive to gain.
This refers specifically to four great treasures:

147

The emergence of Buddhas; hearing the perfections explained;
Being able where a Dharma master dwells,
To behold him with unobstructed mind;
And being able to abide happily in a place of solitude.

148

Earth, water, fire, wind, empty space—

One should abide in a manner comparable to them.
In all places, one should remain uniformly equal to all
And bestow one's benefit to all beings.

149

One should skilfully reflect upon the meanings
And should be diligent in generation of the dhāraṇīs.
In relating to those who listen to Dharma, one must not
Manifest any sort of obstruction to them.

150

In the midst of afflictions, one should be able to overcome them.
In minor matters, one is able to relinquish them without a trace.
In the eight circumstances involving indolence,
One should also in all cases cast it aside and cut it off.

151

One must not engage in covetousness for what is not one's lot,
Unprincipled covetousness will not bring satisfaction.
The estranged should be influenced to come together
Regardless of whether or not they are one's relations.

152

As for trying to get at emptiness itself in what is empty,
Those who are wise must not base their practice on that.
In the case of one determined to get at emptiness itself,
That wrong is even more extreme than viewing the body as a self.

153

From sweeping and maintaining floors to setting up adornments—
This as well as providing many sorts of drums and music—
Offering fragrances, flower garlands, and other sorts of offerings—
One should bestow all such sorts of offerings on the caityas.

154

One should create all sorts of lantern wheels
To make as offerings to the caityas and their buildings.
Provide then canopies as well as sandals,
Horse-drawn carriages, sedan chairs, and the like.

155

One should especially find delight and happiness in the Dharma
And be happy realizing what is gained through faith in Buddha.
One finds delight and enjoyment supplying and serving Sangha,
While also being pleased by listening to right Dharma.

156

They do not arise in the past.

They do not abide in the present.

They do not extend forward, thus arriving into the future.

One should contemplate dharmas in this way.

157

As for those things that are fine, one bestows them on beings

And does not seek that they will proffer fine rewards in return.

One should act so that only oneself is bound to endure suffering

And not favor oneself in the partaking of happiness.

As for trying to get at emptiness itself in what is empty,

Those who are wise must not base their practice on that.

In the case of one determined to get at emptiness itself,

That wrong is even more extreme than viewing the body as a self.

158

Although one has become complete in rewards from great merit,

One's mind is not raised up by it nor should one feel delighted.

Although one may be as poverty-stricken as a hungry ghost,

Still, one does not become dejected or overcome with distress.

159

If there be one already accomplished in study,

One should accord him the most ultimate honorific esteem.

Those who've not yet studied, one should cause to take up study.

One should not generate towards them any slighting or disdain.

160

To those perfect in moral prohibitions, one should be reverential.

Those who break precepts, one should cause to adopt precepts.

To those equipped with wisdom, one should draw close.

Those who act foolishly, one should influence to abide in wisdom.

161

The sufferings of cyclic existence are of many kinds,

Involving birth, aging, death, and the wretched destinies.

One should not be frightened by their fearsomeness,

But rather should overcome demons and knowledge rooted in evil.

162

In the lands of all the Buddhas,

One amasses every form of merit.

So that all will reach one of them for themselves,

One generates vows and proceeds with vigor.

163

In the midst of all dharmas, one is constant

In not seizing on them, thus coursing along in equanimity.

Proceeding in this manner, for the sake of all beings,

One accepts the burden, wishing to carry it on forth.

164

One abides in the right contemplation of all dharmas

Wherein there is no self and nothing belonging to a self.

Even so, one must not relinquish the great compassion

And must also avail oneself of the great loving-kindness.

165

As for that which is superior even to using every sort of gift

In making offerings to the Buddha, the World Honored One,

What sort of action might that be?

This refers specifically to making offerings of Dharma.

166

If one upholds the Bodhisattva Canon,

Even to the point of gaining realization of the dhāranīs▲

If one enters into and reaches the bottom of Dharma's source▲

This is what constitutes the offering of Dharma.

167

One should rely upon the meaning.

One must not cherish only the various flavors.

In the Path of the profound Dharma

One enters skilfully and does not fall prey to negligence.

168

It is in this manner that one cultivates these provisions

Across the course of kalpas as numerous as the Ganges' sands,

Doing so as a monastic as well as in the role of a householder,

Thus becoming bound to gain fulfilment of right enlightenment.

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The Law of Cause & Effect



*Avoid all behaviour that harms
and cultivate that which promotes betterment.*

Part of the teachings on the impure vision is the clarification of what is wholesome, which is to be accepted, and what is unwholesome, which is to be rejected. This is done by reflecting on non-virtuous, virtuous and neutral deeds. In the Vajra Verses, “impure vision” means this samsaric life which sentient beings are experiencing. The latter are subjected to a myriad of feelings, all of which are the result of their own karma. All that you are experiencing in your life do not arise without a cause, from an external cause, or by chance. Each and every phenomenon has its own causes and conditions. All pleasure and happiness arise from virtuous deeds, and conversely, all pain and suffering arise from non-virtuous deeds. In the case of the impure vision there are two kinds of appearances: the illusory and the karmic. Although in reality, at the ultimate level all phenomena are devoid

of inherent existence, at the relative level they are polarised manifestations of subject and object. This dualistic manifestation is illusory appearance. Karmic appearances are phenomena that manifest as a result of the individual’s own karma, such as a long life or a short life, wealth or poverty, which leads each sentient being to experience different appearances. This explains, for instance, why some live a long life while others live a shorter life.

There are three kinds of deeds: non-virtuous deeds, virtuous deeds and neutral deeds. The way to engage them is firstly, to discard non-virtuous deeds by reflecting on these deeds and their results; secondly, to generate the desire to practise virtuous deeds by reflecting on these deeds and their results; and thirdly, to transform neutral deeds into virtuous deeds by reflecting on them.



Non-Virtuous Deeds

First, non-virtuous deeds are reflected upon in three ways: the nature of non-virtuous deeds, their results and how to discard them. What is a non-virtuous deed? A non-virtuous deed means any action that is committed out of greed, hatred or ignorance whether it is committed physically, verbally or mentally. If classified, there are ten of them: three committed physically, four verbally and three mentally.

The first non-virtuous deed committed physically is killing any living being intentionally, either by oneself or through others. The second is stealing anything that belongs to someone else, ranging from valuables like gold to trifles like needles and strings, either by force, by deceit, or any other means. The third is sexual misconduct. This means to engage in any form of carnal activities with someone apart from one's lawful partner. And even if it is with one's partner, it is a misconduct if, firstly it is performed at an improper time, such as when the female partner is pregnant or when she is taking the precepts; secondly in improper places, such as in a temple or in the presence of one's parents; and thirdly through improper passages like the anal or oral passages.

The first non-virtuous deed committed by speech is lying. Lying means speaking untrue words, especially with the intention to deceive. The second is divisive speech, or using words that can either be true or untrue with the intention of creating disharmony between individuals or groups. The third is harsh speech, which is saying something nasty so that it pains the heart of the one who hears it. The fourth is idle talk, which means useless talk, particularly that which increases desire or anger, such as speaking about war or prostitution.

The first non-virtuous deed committed by the mind is covetousness, which is the desire to expropriate another person's property. The second is malicious thought, such as wishing another person whom you dislike to suffer, through sickness, death or such-like. The third is the wrong view that the teaching about the Triple Gem and Law of cause and effect is a fallacy.

Altogether, there are ten non-virtuous deeds. Next is to reflect on the results of non-virtuous deeds. It is said that all suffering arises from these deeds including rebirth in the lower realms. Each of them has three results: ripened result, result similar to its cause and result of ownership. The first result is the ripened result. If you indulge in non-virtuous deeds, the ripened result is to fall down into the lower realms. And which lower realm depends on your motivation and the extent of the non-virtuous deeds that you have committed. For example, if out of hatred you kill a human being, it will cause you to fall into the hell realm; out of desire, like killing an animal for the sake of its flesh, skin or bone, into the hungry ghost realm; and out of ignorance of the result, like children while at play kill worms or flies, into the animal realm. In addition, if the amount of negative deeds that one has committed is large, one will most likely be born in the hell realm, if medium in the hungry ghost realm, and if small in the animal realm. The second result is the result similar to its cause. This has two aspects: the experience similar to its cause, and the action similar to its cause.

First, the experience that is similar to its cause. Through the act of killing you have caused distress and have shortened another life, so that even if you are born in the higher realm, you will have a short life that is beset with sickness and distress. Through stealing, you will be destitute and even if you own little, you won't be able to enjoy it. Through sexual misconduct, you will have many enemies and lead

an unhappy married life. Through lying, you will be badly slandered. Through divisive speech that causes disharmony, you will have very few friends, and even these friendships will not last long. Through harsh speech, you will hear unpleasant remarks and whatever you say will become the basis for quarrels. Through idle talk, even when you tell the truth no one will believe you. Through covetousness, all your wishes will not be fulfilled, or even if fulfilled, you will not be satiated. Through malicious thoughts, you will always live in fear of harm from others. Through wrong view, you will have very little wisdom and will always continue to hold the wrong views.

Second, the action that is similar to its cause means that the negative deeds that you perform in the present are similar to those that you have committed in the past. For example, there are some people who have a natural tendency to engage in negative deeds such as killing, stealing and sexual misconduct.

The third result is the result of ownership. It means the result will ripen at the place in which one is born and dwells. Thus, for example, stealing will result in being born in a place with hailstorms and frost; and sexual misconduct in a place with dust storms. Thus, through indulging in non-virtuous deeds, all that is achieved is rebirth in the lower realms where the suffering is abysmal. Even if one is born in the higher realms, one cannot escape the suffering therein. Nobody wishes for misfortune but instead wishes to be free from suffering.

At the time of death worldly activities are of no use, so that no matter how wealthy, powerful, clever or even sagacious you are; or how many relatives or friends you have, nothing can help you except the Dharma. Now that you are not sick, old or dying, you should practise without further delay.

To be free from suffering, you must abstain from

its causes, which are non-virtuous deeds. Now that you have obtained the precious human body with the prerequisites, if you continue to indulge in non-virtuous deeds, it is like using a golden vessel to hold spittle. And even a small negative deed should not be ignored because it will accumulate and later cause much harm, like a small spark of fire having the capacity to burn down a whole forest.

For an ordinary person it is difficult to avoid non-virtuous deeds of mind. The way to counteract this is to practise more virtuous deeds. If you have committed any non-virtuous deed, you should immediately confess with deep remorse. It is said in a sutra that there are two kinds of noble persons; one who never commits any non-virtuous deed, and one who confesses once he has committed one. If you confess properly, the result of whatever non-virtuous deed committed can be purified. For example, in the past there were cases of people who had excessive defilements, like Angulimala who killed numerous people, Ajatashatru who killed his father and Udayana who killed his mother. They had committed heinous acts that they regretted and confessed, and through the power of the Dharma they were extricated from imminent suffering.



Virtuous Deeds

Next, is to produce the desire to practise virtuous deeds by reflecting on them and their results. This is also done in three ways: reflecting on the nature of virtuous deeds, their results and on how to perform them. A virtuous deed means any action that is committed through the body, voice and mind devoid of greed, hatred and ignorance. This can be classified into ten virtuous deeds, which are the diametrical op-

posites of the ten non-virtuous deeds. They are abstinence from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, harsh speech, divisive speech, idle talk, covetousness, hatred and wrong view. There also have three results: ripened result, result similar to its cause, and result of ownership of the ripened result.

First is the ripened result. By practising virtuous deeds extensively, it can be a cause to be reborn in the heavenly realms; quite extensively, in the demi-god realm; and least extensively, in the human realm. You may wonder why the teachings stress the difficulty of obtaining the precious human body and affirm that human life is the most precious one, whereas here it says that performing many virtuous deeds will lead to rebirth in the heavenly realms. The difference is that from the standpoint of practising Dharma, human life is the most favourable, whereas from the standpoint of the result of practising virtuous deeds the heavenly realm is the best.

The second result, the result that is similar to its cause also has two aspects: experience similar to its cause and action similar to its cause. The experience similar to its cause means that by abstaining from killing you will have a healthy and long life; by abstaining from stealing, you will be prosperous and be able to enjoy your wealth; and by abstaining from sexual misconduct will have many friends and lead a happy married life. It is the diametrical opposite of the result of non-virtuous deeds. The action similar to its cause means that, for example, if you had abstained from killing in the previous life, in this life naturally you will not be inclined to kill and as such, you will continue to experience happiness.

The third, the result of ownership means that your virtuous deeds will ripen as the outer aspect of the world where you are born and dwell. For example, by abstaining from killing you will be born in a place that has much splendour, good climate, bountiful harvests and free from natural disasters. If these virtuous deeds

are carried out in the beginning with the motivation of the enlightenment mind, in the interim with the wisdom of emptiness, and if at the end they are dedicated, they will not only be the cause of higher rebirth but also that of liberation and enlightenment.

The way to practise is to weigh the benefits of doing virtuous deeds so that even an insignificant one should not be underestimated. For, just as an accumulation of drops of water can become an ocean, similarly, seemingly insignificant virtuous deeds can accumulate to form a significant virtuous deed.



Neutral Deeds

Next is to transform the neutral deeds into virtuous deeds. These are also reflected on in three ways: their nature, their result and how to transform them. A neutral deed means any deed that is neither virtuous nor non-virtuous such as walking, sitting, sleeping and eating. Since they are neither the result of defilements nor of non-defilements, they do not produce any karmic result. Moreover, since they do not lead to any suffering they are exemplary. But by not leading to any positive results, they are of no benefit. Since the outcome of every deed depends on one's motivation, neutral deeds can be transformed into virtuous deeds if the motivation is proper. A change in motivation is able to transform any neutral deed. For example, eating by itself is an indifferent act. But if you eat in order to stay alive and to prolong your life for the practice of dharma, the act of eating is transformed into a virtuous deed. Similarly, you can apply this to the other aspects of your daily life. Thus when staying in a house, you should wish for all living beings to attain the city of liberation; when you sit, may all attain the Vajra seat; when you sleep may all attain the Dhar-

makaya; when you awake, may all beings attain the Rupakaya; when you put on your clothes, may all beings wear the clothes of piety and modesty; when you bathe, may all beings be cleansed of the stains of their defilements; when you eat, may all beings eat the food of Samadhi. When you leave the house, may all sentient beings leave the city of worldly existence; when you embark on a trip, may all sentient beings enter the path of the Noble Ones; when you meet people, may all sentient beings meet with enlightened beings; when you do different activities may all sentient beings complete the two purposes; when you enter your house, may all beings enter the city of Liberation; and having arrived home, may all sentient beings reach the state of Buddhahood.

Now that we have covered all the subjects of the impure vision, the way to meditate on them is first to reflect on the three sufferings: the suffering of suffering, the suffering of change and the suffering of conditioned existence. This is followed by the reflection on the difficulty of obtaining the prerequisites. First, that the human body is difficult to obtain from many points of view, from the cause, number, example and nature points of view. Second, not only it is difficult to be obtained, it is also precious. Third, the prerequisites that are now obtained will not last long.

Death is certain, as anyone who is born will have to die, the body is fragile and void of essence, and life is not permanent. On the other hand, the time of death is uncertain as there is no definite life span, and there are many causes of death and very few causes to prolong life. At the time of death worldly activities are of no use, so that no matter how wealthy, powerful, clever or even sagacious you are; or how many relatives or friends you have, nothing can help you except the Dharma. Now that you are not sick, old or dying, you should practise without further delay.

Next, reflect on the three kinds of deeds, first on the non-virtuous deeds, their nature and their results.

Reflect that everything you experience is due to your actions. Since non-virtuous deeds are harmful, there is no point in performing such deeds; and thus plant the firm resolve that, even at the cost of your life you will not do so. Second, on the virtuous deeds: their nature and their results. Since performing virtuous deeds is beneficial, you should cultivate this. Third, on the neutral deeds that can be transformed into virtuous deeds. Finally, you need to request your Guru and the Triple Gem that you be successful in your practice. At the end, you dedicate the merits arising from the meditation. It is important to dedicate the merits because these can be destroyed by gross defilements like pride or hatred. If you can, dedicate it for a specific purpose, with the right motivation of enlightenment, and with the understanding of emptiness; or if not, at least with a firm intention to follow the great Bodhisattvas' manner of dedicating, then the merits will not be wasted. Instead, they will increase your virtue all the time. With this we have completed the instruction on cause and effect.



(An excerpt from “Entry Into the Adamantine” by His Holiness the 41st Sakya Trizin).

The Sage's Intent

by Sakya Pandita



An oral commentary by His Holiness the 42nd Sakya Trizin

(Part I)

The Lord Buddha turned the wheel of Dharma by giving an enormous amount of teachings to suit the different mentalities of his followers, and so we are blessed with many kinds of teachings, authentic teachings. We can combine all these teachings into two yantras, the Mahayana and the Hinayana. The Mahayana teachings themselves fall into two categories, which are known as the Cause Paramitayana and the Result Vajrayana. This particular teaching by Sakya Pandita belongs to the Mahayana and, more precisely, to the Cause Paramitayana.

The basic teachings of Sutrayana contained in the Cause Paramitayana, including this teaching, are of great importance and form the basis of the Vajrayana practice. This teaching is actually a complete path to Buddhahood

according to the Cause Paramitayana teachings.

So, as always, before receiving the teachings on this text, it is important that we develop the correct motivation, which means the thought of renunciation towards all of samsara, infinite loving kindness, infinite compassion, and wishing and engaging *bodhicitta*. It is with such right motivation that we should receive this teaching. I myself need to develop the right motivation to teach, and you need to develop the right motivation to receive the teaching.

This teaching is based on the text known in Tibetan as *thub pa'i dgongs pa rab tu gsal ba*. *Thub pa'i dgongs pa* means *the Sage's Intent*, or the Buddha's Intent – here 'Sage' refers to the Buddha – and the text encompasses

all the teachings of the Buddha. It is based principally on the Mahayana or Cause Paramitayana teachings.

Although we have faith in and devotion to the Buddha, and we believe in his teachings, we cannot directly understand their deep and profound meaning, and so we need the help of commentaries drawn up by illuminators who have a thorough understanding of their content.

So normally, when we study the Buddha's teachings, we study them through texts composed by great followers of the Buddha that are based on his teachings. We don't study the teachings of Lord Buddha directly. We study them through commentaries that were composed by great followers of the Buddha, great beings, especially those of India and Tibet. *The Sage's Intent* is such a commentary, and *rab tu gsal ba* means illuminating or clarifying the Buddha's teaching, or the meaning of the Buddha's teachings.

Not every Buddhist or every follower of the Buddha can illuminate or clarify the meaning of the Buddha's teachings. Only those noble ones or highly realized beings can understand the meaning of Lord Buddha's teachings directly. It is very important to respect highly realised beings. Even nowadays, if one claims to be a scholar and then criticizes Nagarjuna or any of the great past masters of India or of Tibet, this is not right. If a modern scholar criticises Nagarjuna, it seems to me that this person is criticising Buddha's teachings themselves, because there is no doubt that Nagarjuna's teachings are in accordance with the Buddha's teachings. There is no doubt about this.

It doesn't seem right that someone who claims to be a scholar should criticise any of the great masters of the past. The Buddha gave us license to analyse, to investigate, to inspect his teachings, the Buddha

himself told us not to believe merely out of faith. But at the same time, great scholars like Nagarjuna never pronounced anything without previous profound analysis and thorough logical reasoning. Only after exhaustive investigation and meticulous analysis did these scholars expound teachings on what the Buddha taught. And so, if we study the Buddha's teachings and understand them differently from what is expounded by Nagarjuna, I venture to say that we are mistaken in our understanding.

In short, the most important thing is that we need to rely on authentic teachings in order to practise Buddhism. Whether a teaching is authentic or not depends on whether it is based on the Lord Buddha's teachings, and in no way contradictory to them. It is important that we ascertain which are the authentic teachings, either by consulting with others or by scrutinising the teachings ourselves.

It is also important that our motivation be authentic and genuine. We should not learn these profound teachings merely to acquire knowledge, merely to understand their meaning in order to become a scholar or a teacher. If our motivation is based on this, it is not right because it represents attachment to this life. Of course, it is good if we become a teacher, but it shouldn't be our principal goal, our principal ambition. Our main ambition should be to attain Buddhahood for the sake of all sentient beings. This should be our main goal, our ultimate goal. And so, our motivation to learn and share these profound teachings should be pure, and it should be based on loving kindness, compassion and *bodhicitta*.

Today we are learning the text Clarifying *The Sage's Intent*, also known as *Illuminating the Sage's Intent*. The title refers to the fact that Sakya Pandita explains the teaching with great clarity, and makes it easy for all to understand it.

In Buddhist literature, it is customary for an author to begin his work by paying homage. Here, Sakya Pandita pays homage and performs prostrations to Manjushri as well to *bodhicitta*, which is the source of Buddhahood and without which we cannot become a Buddha.

The purpose of composing this text is to benefit sentient beings. Whatever we do, we should do for the sake of others, for the sake of infinite beings. And so Sakya Pandita's purpose in composing and teaching this text is the benefit of all sentient beings.

He sets out to explain the process of the Buddhist Path, which leads to Buddhahood. He states that this process comprises seven main topics. The first among these is the *alaya* consciousness.

There are different types of consciousness. In this case Sakya Pandita is not referring to sensory consciousness, or mental consciousness, or defilements consciousness. Rather, he is referring to the *alaya* consciousness.

The reality of *alaya* consciousness is emptiness, in other words the ultimate view, or the state that is free from all extremes. *Alaya* consciousness is not a thought. It doesn't have subject or object. It is neither virtuous nor non-virtuous. Generally virtuous and non-virtuous thoughts include subject and object. But the *alaya* is free from subject and object, and it is not associated with either virtue or non-virtue. Loving kindness and compassion are thoughts, positive thoughts. Although they are virtues, they are still thoughts. They presuppose subject and object. The subject is positive thought and the object is all sentient beings. So loving kindness and compassion, as well as aspiring and engaging *bodhicitta*, involve thoughts, and so they are defined by subject and object. Similarly defilements such as anger and attachment, are associated with thoughts, and along with

these, subject and object. The *alaya* is different from this. It has neither subject nor object – one might say that it's an inner consciousness, it's a consciousness that doesn't project outwards.

There are two differing views among Vajrayana practitioners regarding the *alaya*. One view, mainly held by the *Sauthantika* school of thought, affirms the existence of the *alaya* within relative truth, and the other view refutes it. Our school adheres to the first of these two views, but our view differs somewhat from that of the Sauthantikas, who affirm that the *alaya* is truly existent. We accept the *alaya*, but we do not believe it to be truly existent.

The concept of *alaya* is not only important to followers of the Mahayana tradition. It is equally so to the followers of Vajrayana who believe in it. Without the concept of *alaya*, there is no consciousness that continues from previous lifetimes, through the current one, to future ones.

Followers of the Vajrayana tradition who accept the *alaya*, believe that it is what makes a connection between sentient beings and the Buddha. Here Buddha refers to the Buddha within us, the Buddha that we will all eventually become in the future.

The *alaya* is always there, even when we lose consciousness, or even when we die. When this happens, our sensory consciousness and our mental consciousness cease, but the *alaya* never ceases. It is there continually from when we are sentient beings until we become Buddhas.

Although the *alaya* consciousness changes from moment to moment, the continuity of the *alaya* consciousness is unceasing. Much like a waterfall, which we can observe seemingly unchanging through years,

decades, even centuries. Even though it seems not to undergo any changes throughout all this time, it is in actuality continually changing. It is never the same water that is falling. In the same way, the *alaya* consciousness is always there, unchanging, while one lifetime follows another and one moment of consciousness follows another.

The main cause of a present moment of consciousness is the previous moment of consciousness. Other factors are not the main cause of consciousness, including outer elements. Likewise, the main cause of the next moment of consciousness is the present one. This continuity never stops, it persists even when we die. There will be a life after this one, just as there was one before it.

And because of this unceasing *alaya*, we have the hope and possibility of attaining Buddhahood. And also because of the *alaya*, we can say that there is a cause and effect relationship between our present consciousness and the consciousness that we will have when we become a Buddha. If these two states of consciousness were two different mental continua, then this would leave no space for cause and effect or for the law of karma, and we couldn't obtain the result of Buddhahood.

The word for *alaya* in Tibetan is *künshi*, which means 'all-base'. The *alaya* is the base of all samsaric phenomena and of all nirmanic phenomena. It is the base of these phenomena, but it is not their cause, nor does it generate them.

Everything is based on the *alaya* consciousness, everything depends on it, including the other kinds of consciousness like the six sensory consciousnesses and the defilement consciousness. Without the *alaya* consciousness, there is no other consciousness, no

physical body, no speech, no action, nothing. The *alaya* is the base of all positive and negative actions of all samsaric and nirmanic phenomena.

And *alaya* consciousness is none other than Buddha nature. It has two facets, known as natural *alaya* and developed *alaya*, or natural Buddha nature and developed Buddha nature. In Tibetan, we call it *rig*, which is translated literally as 'race', but really refers to Buddha nature.

Natural Buddha nature refers to the *alaya* that is devoid of self-nature, that is in reality emptiness, free from all extremes. In other words, it is non-dual and inseparable from the ultimate view. And it is because of this Buddha nature that every sentient being has the chance of becoming a Buddha.

The second kind of 'race' is developed Buddha nature. It refers to the *alaya* consciousness that we experience when we're on the path, when we are practising the dharma. So before we enter the Buddhist path, we have natural Buddha nature, but once we embark on the path, we have developed Buddha nature, which is sealed by the practice of the Buddha's teachings. Our natural Buddha nature has been awakened by the practice of the Buddha Dharma.

There are four signs to indicate that this change has occurred. These are the inherent compassion that has been awakened by our practice, faith in the three jewels, patience in the face of harm inflicted upon us by others, and a natural inclination to performing virtuous deeds.

There are also four impediments to the awakening of Buddha nature within us. These are the product of our defilements, our actions driven by afflicting emotions. As a result of these impediments, the propensity to practise dharma does not arise. An example of

these impediments is the lack of virtue conducive to enlightenment.

These impediments, however, do not form part of the *alaya*, which is free from thought, subject and object, and defilements, and which is pure from beginningless time. It can be stained by defilements, but these are not in its nature. They are temporary, adventitious. And so, if we adopt the right remedy, the right antidote, there is no doubt that we can purify these defilements and free our mind from them.

The *alaya* consciousness is pure, and it exists within every sentient being. And so every sentient being has the potential to become a Buddha, but only if the right method is met. A seed of barley won't grow into a plant if we place it in a dry box and deprive it of soil, water and light. Although it has the potential to become a plant, it won't do so if we don't provide it with the right conditions. Similarly, our Buddha nature won't evolve into the Buddha if the right conditions are not met with. Meeting with the right conditions is indispensable to becoming a Buddha.

As an example, if a white cloth is stained with dirt, the dirt is not in the nature of the cloth. It is only temporary, and if we use the right method, like soap and water, then there is no doubt that we can remove the dirt from the cloth. Similarly, our *alaya* consciousness is pure from the beginning, and defilements are not in its nature. The defilements are like the dirt on the cloth. If we adopt the right method, there is no doubt that we can remove the dirt-like defilements from our pure mind.

Buddha nature is very important. It is one of the main teachings of the Buddha. Without it, we cannot progress on the path, nor can we practise properly. Also, without Buddha nature, without the *alaya*, there is no space for the law of karma. In order to believe in the law

of karma, we need to believe in rebirth. And without the law of karma, we cannot say that by performing good deeds in this life, we will obtain good results in the next life, nor can we say that by performing negative deeds in this life, we will obtain negative results in the next life. So we cannot talk about cause and effect or about the law of karma if we don't believe in rebirth, and we cannot believe in rebirth if we don't believe in the *alaya*.

Because we have Buddha nature, we can practise and progress on the path and eventually attain Buddhahood. There are different stages on the path, such as the stage before we actually engage on the path, the stage when we are pursuing it, and the stage when we attain the result, when we become a Buddha. These three stages are linked by the *alaya*, which is present throughout but doesn't itself change with each stage. They are linked by the continuity of the *alaya* consciousness.

The nature of the *alaya* consciousness itself never changes – it is the non-duality of awareness and emptiness. Much like molten copper or bronze, which retains its same nature whether we cast it into a dustbin, a necklace or a Buddha statue, the *alaya* consciousness retains its nature and remains unchanged throughout the three stages, even though it takes on different appearances.

(To be continued...)

Bodhicitta And Wisdom

A teaching by Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche



Manjushri is the emanation of all the Buddhas' wisdom. Wisdom is the antidote to ignorance, which is the main affliction that keeps us in samsara, along with desire and anger. And so wisdom is of infinite importance, because it is what can liberate us from the suffering of samsara.

Samsara is composed of six realms, three of which are the lower realms and the other three the higher realms. The lower realms comprise the hell realm, the hungry ghost realm and the animal realm; all three are pervaded by unbearable suffering.

Beings in the hell realms continually experience horrifying pain, being burned in molten lava in the hot hells or being frozen and shattered in the cold hells, carved by razors, or having parts of their body devoured. These unendurable conditions go on for endless periods of time until their negative karma has been exhausted. The hungry ghosts relentlessly suffer unendurable hunger and thirst, unable to even slightly

alleviate their craving. As for animals, they live their lives in constant fear and harsh conditions, they are beaten, forced to perform hard work, and they are killed for their meat.

To make things worse, beings in the lower realms never have the opportunity to be exposed to the Buddha Dharma, which would be their only opportunity of freeing themselves from their intense suffering.

As for the three higher realms, they are made up of the gods' realm, the jealous gods' realm and the human realm. In the first, the gods are endowed with beautiful bodies, pleasant conditions and very long lives. This causes them to be filled with pride. But these conditions are not permanent and, when they eventually become exhausted, the gods are left in a state of pain that is even more intense than the one experienced in the hell realms. Because they are so content during their lives, the gods never feel the need

to practise the Buddha Dharma and so, when their favourable conditions disappear, there is nothing that can allay their suffering.

In the second higher realm, although the jealous gods are also endowed with favourable conditions, they spend their entire existence vying for power with the higher gods. As they invariably lose all their battles and continually suffer unbearable losses, their pain is excruciating and unceasing. And as they are only concerned with fighting throughout their entire existence, they never encounter the possibility of practising the Buddha Dharma. And so in spite of their favourable conditions, they have no access to a source of happiness that can cure their suffering.

In the third higher realm, our human realm, conditions are not ideal like the ones that exist in the two higher ones. Our lives are a mixture of pleasant and unpleasant conditions. But we have the greatest blessing of all, we have the opportunity to practise the Buddha Dharma, and therefore we have the opportunity to become free of our suffering.

Now we have this precious human body, but we are still caught up in samsara and all its suffering because we are afflicted with the three poisons of ignorance, desire and anger. These are what causes all our suffering. In order to become free of our pain, we need to overcome these three poisons. The main poison that keeps us locked in samsara is ignorance. It is the root of the other poisons of desire, attachment, anger, pride and jealousy. So most importantly, we need to eradicate our ignorance. And in order to do this, we need to cultivate wisdom, its antidote.

There are many ways to cultivate wisdom, but the most powerful way and the quickest way, is to supplicate Manjushri, the source of all wisdom. And

the best way to obtain his blessing is to receive the Manjushri empowerment and then to practise its sadhana and teaching assiduously.

Before we receive the Manjushri empowerment – or any empowerment or teaching – the first thing we need to do is develop good motivation. Motivation is the most important factor in the practice of the Buddha Dharma. For example, if we receive an empowerment just out of curiosity, without any real interest or commitment, this will be of no value, we won't receive its blessing nor will we create any merit. And also if we receive it just for our own sake, for our own personal growth, then the empowerment will be of little value and it will create very little merit.

But if we receive the empowerment with a good motivation, with the intense wish to create *bodhicitta*, the desire to attain enlightenment in order to benefit all beings, then we receive Manjushri's full blessing, and we accumulate an enormous amount of merit.

Likewise if, after receiving the empowerment, we faithfully practise Manjushri's sadhana and teaching, and we do this with the same good motivation of creating *bodhicitta*, of seeking liberation for the sake of all beings, then the blessing that we receive and the merit that we accumulate are incalculable.

With this constant accumulation of blessings and merit, we gradually gain the wisdom that will free us from the suffering of samsara, and will help us to also liberate others.

And so, good motivation, the mind of *bodhicitta*, is the basis of all practice of the Buddha Dharma and it is the key to gaining wisdom, becoming liberated from samsara, and attaining enlightenment for the sake of all beings.

Enlightenment Thought

A Teaching by Khenchen Appey Rinpoche



By definition, enlightenment thought means to promise something with the mind. For instance, if one were thinking of going somewhere today, then one would go according to the idea that one had created in one's mind. If one thinks of going to eat, then one will create that idea or the mental thought of eating. This is actually a promise in one's mind.

This idea of promising something with the mind occurs not only in the Mahayana tradition but in the Hinayana tradition as well. Within the Hinayana tradition, there are three different types of enlightenment thought:

The thought of gaining the state of an Arhat. This is the Arhat enlightenment thought.

The thought of gaining the state of the Pratyeka Buddha. This is the Pratyeka Buddha enlightenment thought.

The thought of gaining the state of full and

perfect enlightenment. This is called the fully enlightened Buddha enlightenment thought.

It can be seen that within the Hinayana tradition, there is an enlightenment thought. This is called by definition a small enlightenment thought.

Within Mahayana we have the thought of working for others. This is called the great enlightenment thought. So within Hinayana, the enlightenment thought refers to a thought that is directed to one's own purpose alone, whereas in Mahayana the thought is directed toward the purpose of all living beings. This is known as the great enlightenment thought because it encompasses someone other than oneself.

Within the Mahayana tradition, there are two main schools of enlightenment thought. One is known as the Mind-Only (Cittamatra) school of the enlightenment thought, and the other is the Middle-

Way (Madhyamika) school of enlightenment thought. The Mind-Only school originated from the great Bodhisattva Maitreya and was transmitted to the Indian saint Asanga and others like Chandragomin. Through them it was passed on to and practiced in Tibet by the earlier Kadampa school and later by the Gelukpa school.

The Middle-Way school originated from the Bodhisattva Manjushri and was passed down to Nagarjuna and other great scholars and saints like Shantideva. When it went into Tibet it was practiced by the Sakya and other schools.

According to certain teachers, even within the Sakya, there are many distinctions between the Mind-Only school of enlightenment thought and the Middle-Way school of enlightenment thought. Some of the differences can be seen in the qualities of the one who bestows the precept of the enlightenment thought, the one who receives it and the rules that one has to follow. According to some other scholars, there is actually no distinction between the two.

The enlightenment thought can be divided into two parts, the wishing enlightenment thought and the entering enlightenment thought. The wishing enlightenment thought is the wish to gain the state of full and perfect enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings. It is a promise to obtain the result of Buddhahood. The entering enlightenment thought is the promise to engage in the cause of gaining that result. It uses various methods of practicing and gaining the merit and wisdom to achieve the result of Buddhahood.

The enlightenment thought can also be divided into two other main categories – the relative enlightenment thought and the ultimate enlightenment

thought. Both the wishing enlightenment thought and the entering enlightenment thought fall under the category of the relative enlightenment thought. The ultimate enlightenment thought refers to the nature of ultimate reality or the wisdom of emptiness, by which one can understand all phenomena to be free from any conceptualization. It is being completely void of any characteristic, or being what is known as empty by nature.

According to certain teachers, it is said that at the time the enlightenment thought is bestowed upon a person, it is given in the form of a ritual. The moment when we make the promise to gain Buddhahood for the sake of others is known as the ritual, the taking of this enlightenment thought. According to certain teachers, it is also said that both the relative and the ultimate enlightenment thought can be given in the form of a ritual, just like taking refuge.

Sakya Pandita, however, objected to this strongly. He said that it is only the relative enlightenment thought that can be taken in the form of a ritual. The ultimate enlightenment thought could only arise in the meditation of someone who has gained the first Bhumi or the first stage of Buddhahood. At the time of meditation, one would gain the realization of emptiness, which signifies the attainment of the first Bhumi. This realization of emptiness in a state of meditation is known as the awakening of the ultimate enlightenment thought. Hence, according to Sakya Pandita, this can only arise through a meditative experience, and can never be given through a ritual or ceremony. It cannot be passed on to a person through words.

According to the teaching of the Bodhisattva Maitreya, the latter said that there are five ways by which we can create the enlightenment thought:

Through a spiritual friend who explains what the enlightenment thought is, and also the benefits of the enlightenment thought.

Through awakening to one's race and thereby creating the cause for entering into the enlightenment thought.

Through the accumulation of great virtue and merit.

Through studying or listening to the teaching, whereby one knows the benefits of the enlightenment thought, the qualities of the Buddha and the various teachings of the Mahayana.

Through continuous meditation upon the various teachings that we have heard and studied.

The performance of the ceremony of the enlightenment thought can be given according to four different traditions:

There is a tradition in accordance to the teaching of the Mind-Only school. This is explained in great detail in a book called the "Twenty Verses Concerning the Enlightenment Thought", written by Chandragomin.

There is a tradition according to the Middle-Way school, which we will explain later.

There is another tradition that arises from the great Mahasiddhas, like the one given at the Sakya "Lamdre" teaching, which arises from the two great Mahasiddhas Virupa and Naropa.

It can also be taken through the taking of Tantric initiation. During the initiation there is the recitation of the Vajrayana Sevenfold Prayer, whereby one receives the Bodhisattva vows or the enlightenment thought vows.



The Enlightenment Thought According To The Middle-Way School

The Middle-Way school divides the rules of taking the enlightenment thought into two parts. One is the rule in relation to the wishing enlightenment thought, and the other is the rule in relation to the entering enlightenment thought.

Wishing Enlightenment Thought

The rules in relation to the wishing enlightenment thought are given in a very brief, middle or extensive form.

BRIEF VOW – The brief form of the enlightenment thought vow is just the wish that “I must gain the state of full and perfect enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings.” The thought of never being separated from that wish or never discarding that wish represents all the precepts of producing the enlightenment thought.

MIDDLE VOW – When we are adopting the enlightenment thought, we may have the idea that we are not able to fulfill this wish to gain the state of full and perfect enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings. When we have that thought, we must overcome it. The thought of overcoming this negative thinking is actually the middle form of the enlightenment thought vow, and this is divided into three parts:

- To be discouraged right at the very beginning and feeling that one is unable to do it. One has doubts about one’s strength, power or bravery to accomplish this, and one does not create the proper interest right from the very beginning. This is mediocre thinking.
- To be discouraged at a later point in time.
- To abandon the enlightenment thought through fear of worldly existence.

The first point means that having the thought that there is such a vast difference between ourselves and the Buddha, who has such great qualities and high realization, we can never gain such a state, due to this, it creates a wish to abandon our enlightenment thought. The whole purpose of the middle form of vow is to realize that we have this thought of obstructing our enlightenment thought and the method to overcome it. To overcome this lack of strength or confidence, the great Bodhisattva Maitreya, for example, said that every moment in this world there is someone who gains enlightenment in some place.

Because of this, there is no reason why we cannot gain such a state. Thinking this way will help us to overcome our discouragement of accomplishing the path.

Also the great Bodhisattva Shantideva said that not only ordinary people but even a small insect, which doesn’t have the advantage of a human existence, is able, through diligence, to gain such a state of liberation and omniscience. If such a being has the possibility to attain this, then why shouldn’t someone like ourselves who has the power to understand what are good and bad deeds, and has the power to gain such a state of enlightenment, be able to do so? Through thinking in this way, we can overcome this initial discouragement.

There is a story to show that through even a very small cause we can obtain a very good result. Once upon a time, there were seven insects on top of a leaf. The leaf was blown into a stream that carried it out into the ocean. Because of the wind, the leaf was taken to a place where a Buddha image was floating in the ocean. Due to the wind and the current, the leaf circled around the image three times.

Even though the insects did not have any motivation to circumambulate the image, their merit acquired by this action, they were reborn in their next life as seven women. In this new human life, they belonged to a very low caste. They were very poor, but they would cut grass and collect wood, and then sell these. With the earnings from these menial tasks, they made offerings and created virtuous deeds. As a result of their virtue, they were reborn in a later life as the seven daughters of a king who lived in the time of the Buddha Kashyapa.

During that lifetime, they made many offerings

to the Buddha Kashyapa. The latter related the story about how they had come to be what they were and also made the prediction that the seven sisters would eventually gain full and perfect enlightenment. In this way, even from a very small cause not even arisen from a proper motivation, they were able to attain the state of enlightenment.

Also, there was once a layperson who lived during the time of Buddha Shakyamuni. He had decided to become a monk and take ordination. He approached Shariputra asking him to bestow upon him the ordination of a fully ordained monk. Through the supernatural power of his mind, Shariputra looked into this person's past and could see no cause for him to be given ordination at that time. He told him that he did not have any cause or had performed any virtuous act that would allow him to take ordination at that time. The petitioner was very upset.

The man then approached the Buddha and told him what had happened. The Buddha said that this was not correct. Actually, a very long time ago, the man was a pig and one day, as he was being chased by a dog, he ran around a stupa three times. Due to this, he had gained enough merit to create a cause for him to receive ordination. So the Buddha himself bestowed upon him ordination and, through his own practice in that very lifetime, he gained Arhatship. Shariputra had supernatural power, had clairvoyance, and was able to understand the mind of others. Being an Arhat, however, his power could only extend to a certain limit in time and space. Due to this, he was not able to see completely all the deeds of others.

The great Bodhisattva Shantideva said that not only ordinary people but even a small insect, which doesn't have the advantage of a human existence, is able, through diligence, to gain such a state of

liberation and omniscience. If such a being has the possibility to attain this, then why shouldn't someone like ourselves who has the power to understand what are good and bad deeds, and has the power to gain such a state of enlightenment, be able to do so?

Also, once there lived a woman who made an offering of rice to the Buddha. The Buddha gave a prediction that, due to the offering, she would for many lifetimes in the future, gain fortunate rebirths in the realms of gods and men, and that she would eventually attain the state of Pratyeka Buddha. The woman's husband thought that this was rather absurd and said that for just one bowl of rice the Buddha would lie by saying that someone could attain such a great result. So he approached the Buddha and asked him why he had to lie and told him that he was making trouble for himself by telling such a lie just for the sake of obtaining a simple bowl of rice.

The Buddha asked him in return about the huge fruit tree that he had in his yard. He asked him the size of the seed that resulted in such a huge fruit tree. The man replied that the seed that had produced such a huge tree was actually very small, even smaller than a mustard seed. The Buddha said to him that he could see for himself that from a very small cause he could have a very great result. The man thought for himself and agreed that from a small cause one could gain great result. He was convinced of what the Buddha had said and, in that very lifetime, he was able to attain the first Bhumi.

Similarly, there were cases of people who just offered a small amount of herbs to the Buddha and through this created the enlightenment thought and were able to attain the state of enlightenment. There were others who gave a very small piece of cloth or even just a little bit of drinking water to the Buddha.

Even from very small causes, they were able to produce the enlightenment thought and gain the stage of result. Therefore, there is no reason why we should be discouraged about never being to attain the state of enlightenment. If we do not produce the enlightenment thought and attain the state of realization of liberation, then we will have to stay in this world of existence for a very long time. And the suffering that arises from having to stay here will be much greater than the suffering that we could ever experience through practicing the path to gain enlightenment. Since this is the case, there is no reason why we should not produce the enlightenment thought.

The second aspect of the middle form of vow is to lose interest in the practice and be discouraged, thinking that we will never be able to gain the result. For example, sometimes when we perform deeds of giving, we think that we can gain the result very quickly, that we can become rich very quickly. Instead, it ends up that we become very poor after giving something and this causes discouragement. Again, if we are practicing our Sadhana meditation, but we do not receive the blessing of the deity, we become discouraged and want to throw away the practice. Similarly, we can also become very discouraged if our effort to help a friend or relative to overcome his obstacles and recover from his sickness is not successful and the person dies, though many rituals or other dharma activities have been performed. This may lead us to abandon our practice.

If someone is very sick and dies even after rituals have been performed to overcome the sickness, this may be due to any of the seven causes. There are seven different causes for a person's death. If any of these seven causes are not averted, then the person can die. The three main causes for death are:

- The exhaustion of one's life force
- One's previous deeds
- The exhaustion of one's merits

Any one of these can act as the cause of death. Death may also be caused by a combination of any of these three factors. Hence, from these three main causes there are seven different causes of death.

If our life force is exhausted, we should perform certain rituals or meditations on long-life deities such as Amitayus or Vijaya in order to restore it. If our previous bad deeds are the cause of our death, we should release animals in order to avert it. The animals that we release must be those that are either going to be killed or that are dying. We can buy them and release them so that they can have life. This will purify our karma and restore our life force.

If our merit is exhausted, we can replenish it through many means – like making offerings to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, reciting scriptures like Sutras, making offerings to the Sangha, making gifts to others, and making food offering to various spirits of the world. It can also be any type of manner that creates virtue, that replaces non-virtuous thoughts with thoughts of virtuous, or any manner that obstructs any thought of non-virtue in our mind. These are different methods to replenish our merit and thereby extend our life span.

If only one of these three – life force, karma or merit – is exhausted, then there are methods to extend someone's life span and also to make sure that a person will not die. If two of these factors are exhausted, then it is a little difficult, but possible to avert death. If, however, all three are exhausted simultaneously, there is no method that can help. Even the methods possessed by the Buddha are unable

to avert this person's death at that moment. So if someone dies even after different rituals have been performed, this is the sign that the person died because the three factors were simultaneously exhausted.

We should also see that there are three different types of result of karma that can arise:

- The fully ripened result that means that the result of the deed can appear in this very lifetime
- The second type of result is less powerful than the first and its result will arise only in the next lifetime
- The third type of result will only appear at the earliest three lifetimes later or even very far in the future.

Sometimes we see that a person who has performed much virtue in his lifetime is experiencing a lot of suffering, while someone who has performed a lot of non-virtue seems to be experiencing a lot of happiness. We should understand that the experience of suffering and happiness are the results of the deeds of one's previous lives and not only of this life.

So, in order for a result to arise in this lifetime, the deed must have very great power. And to produce a deed that has great force, the object for whom we are performing this deed must be someone very special, such as a fully enlightened being. The motivation for performing the deed must be incredibly strong, also the article involved in the deed must be a very special object. If any of these factors are less strong, then the result will arise in the next lifetime and, if less powerful than that, then the result can only arise after three or more lifetimes. This means that it is very difficult for a result to arise very quickly, in this very lifetime.

Sometimes we see that a person who has performed much virtue in his lifetime is experiencing a lot of suffering, while someone who has performed a lot of non-virtue seems to be experiencing a lot of happiness. We should understand that the experience of suffering and happiness are the results of the deeds of one's previous lives and not only of this life. Also, some people think that those who follow the Buddha's path will experience great suffering. One should understand that until the state of enlightenment is attained, everyone has to suffer, like Maudgalyana who was murdered and another Arhat who died after eating grass ashes. This means that the practice of dharma does not exclude us from experiencing suffering.

Nonetheless, the methods employed in the dharma are the best methods to completely destroy all our sufferings from the result point of view.

Some new practitioners think that by making a few offerings in one day, they will have a night of good dreams or that something wonderful will happen to them. Some people practice their Sadhana for one or two days thinking that they will meet one of the deities the next day. They may even think that one of the Buddhas will walk into their room and shake their hand to congratulate them on their meditation. For someone who has practiced just a little bit of virtue, the result cannot come so quickly. We do not have the causes or conditions for the result to arise.

On top of that, it is not even good that the results ripen too quickly. This is because a lot of non-virtue has been committed through our speech and mind daily. If the results were to come too rapidly, we would have a lot of suffering very quickly. Also, if we perform a little virtue and gain a very fast result, the happiness is also going to disappear very quickly. It would create more unhappiness in our mind. So it is

actually better for the result to ripen a little bit slower and at the proper time. We should not expect the result to ripen too quickly. It has to come through the proper causes and conditions.

The fact that the result of a practice cannot arise immediately is a sure sign of the infallibility of the law of cause and result. The reason for this is that a result must arise from proper causes and conditions. If all the causes and conditions do not happen simultaneously, then the result cannot arise. If we want the result to arise at an improper time, at the time when all the causes and conditions have not ripened, then it will show that the law of cause and result is not correct because it would mean that the result could arise before the condition. For example, if we plant a seed of a flower and as soon as we have planted the seed, we think that we should see the flower the same day or the next, that will not happen. This is because the causes and conditions not have ripened for that result. Also, if we are a little sick and we think that we can overcome it immediately by doing a little bit of virtue, it cannot happen because all the causes and conditions have not ripened for that to happen.

The third aspect of the middle form of vow is to abandon the enlightenment thought due to fear of samsara. It means that due to being afraid of having to experience many great sufferings in this world, one abandons one's enlightenment thought. Again, when someone harms us, we think that we cannot return his harm in a peaceful way, and instead we want to harm him in return, that way we throw away our enlightenment thought. Sometimes for the sake of all sentient beings we have to endure staying in this world of existence for a very, very long time and we are unwilling to do so. Due to these three thoughts, we wish to abandon our enlightenment thought.

In regards to our great fear of this world of existence and the suffering in this world, we should understand that this world of existence is by its very nature not real. It has no existence of its own, no true nature of its own. The world that we are experiencing or perceiving is just like a magical show. Since it is not real, there is no cause for us to fear it. Through understanding the illusory nature of this world of existence we can overcome fear of being in this world of existence.

If someone harms us, we should understand that by harming him in return we will only create greater suffering. Whenever we experience harm from someone, we must meditate very carefully that we should return any harm that we receive with compassion or with loving kindness, that through this compassion and loving kindness towards others, we will be able to overcome any harm that we have received.

We have the idea that this world of existence lasts for a very long time, and as it takes a very long time to gain the stage of enlightenment for the benefit of others, we do not wish to stay here for that long. We should understand that the concept of short or long is just a conceptualization of our own mind. They have no meaning of their own. The ideas of long periods or short periods are just ideas that we conceive through our own misconception. In reality, this concept of time is meaningless. Through this understanding, we can abandon the wrong thought and overcome our wish to abandon the enlightenment thought.

In regards to our great fear of this world of existence and the suffering in this world, we should understand that this world of existence is by its very nature not real. It has no existence of its own, no true nature of its own. The world that we are

experiencing or perceiving is just like a magical show. Since it is not real, there is no cause for us to fear it. Through understanding the illusory nature of this world of existence we can overcome fear of being in this world of existence.

We can also overcome our abandonment of the enlightenment thought by praying to the great Bodhisattvas or deities. For example, one very great Indian saint by the name of Dinnaga had at one point in time thought of giving up his enlightenment thought and through praying to Manjushri, Manjushri appeared to him. Through Manjushri's blessing, Dinnaga kept his vows of enlightenment thought.

EXTENSIVE VOW - The third form of vow, which is the extensive vow of the enlightenment thought, has three parts:

- The causes of producing the enlightenment thought
- The conditions to increase the enlightenment thought
- The methods to overcome the destruction of the enlightenment thought

The cause of the enlightenment thought is the production of thoughts of loving kindness and compassion.

The conditions for increasing the enlightenment thought are to rely upon spiritual friends, to produce great faith in the Buddhas, and also to understand the deeds of Mara – the nature and influence of Mara and the methods to overcome them. In order to produce the conditions to increase our enlightenment thought, we pray to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas to overcome the deeds of Mara, that we do not fall under the influence of Mara. We also pray that we remember

the benefits of the enlightenment thought, the faults of this world of existence as well as the faults of Nirvana or personal liberation. We also remember the various qualities of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, such as their miraculous powers, their supernatural cognition, and supernatural knowledge. We also meditate on the idea that through the enlightenment thought we are able to bring benefit not only to ourselves but also to others. In this way, we are able to produce the conditions for increasing the enlightenment thought.

The methods to overcome the destruction of our enlightenment thought means that we can destroy our enlightenment thought:

- Through losing faith in the Buddhas and in the Guru, and creating anger or hatred toward the Buddhas or the Gurus. In order to overcome this, we should first of all create proper faith in the Buddhas and also in the Guru. Through producing faith in the Triple Gem and the Guru this would obstruct any thought of anger or bad thoughts toward them.
- Through jealousy of the prosperity of others. When we see others' prosperity, it creates jealousy in our mind and this jealousy itself will harm our enlightenment thought. To overcome this, we should produce a thought of joy at the prosperity of others, that whatever they have we should be very happy that they are able to obtain it.
- Through thinking of benefitting only ourselves, and not to benefit anyone else. To overcome this improper thought, we should meditate on cherishing others in place of cherishing ourselves.

When we do not know the qualities of the Buddhas or the enlightened ones, we have no

desire to obtain these qualities and due to that our enlightenment thought can be destroyed. In order to overcome this, we must understand the various qualities that the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas have. Having understood them, we should engage in the various methods by which we will be able to gain them.

Entering Enlightenment Thought

What has been described above are the three trainings of the wishing enlightenment thought. Also, from the point of view of the entering enlightenment thought, there are three trainings – the brief, middle and extensive.

BRIEF VOW – The brief training for the entering enlightenment thought is basically the idea that we should abandon as much as we can, according to our capacity, all non-virtuous deeds and to accomplish all the virtuous deeds that we are able to. And also if by chance we perform any non-virtue in the morning, we should confess it at night, and any non-virtuous act we do in the night we should confess it the next day. And whatever virtuous deeds we do, we should always dedicate the merit arising from that act as a cause for our gaining the state of full and perfect enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings.

MIDDLE VOW – In regards to the middle vow of the entering enlightenment thought, there are four black dharmas and through performing them we will forget the enlightenment thought in the next life, and it will become spoilt. Through performing the four white dharmas, our practice of the enlightenment thought will continue to increase and grow in the next life and will not be spoilt.

The four black dharmas are:

- To deceive the Guru, the Triple Gem or those who are worthy of receiving offering.
- If we tell those who are practicing virtue, especially those who are practicing the Mahayana path that what they are practicing is wrong and thus create a thought of regret in their mind for what they have done.
- To criticize the Bodhisattvas.
- To deceive or trick sentient beings in this world.

The four white dharmas are:

- Not to lie.
- To call others to enter the practice of virtue especially to enter the Mahayana path.
- To praise or to create faith in the Bodhisattvas.
- To have the thought of benefitting other living beings.

EXTENSIVE VOW – The extensive vow for training for the entering enlightenment thought is to meditate again and again on the enlightenment thought. This acts as a cause to produce the enlightenment thought. This acts as a cause to produce the enlightenment thought.

To create the conditions for increasing the enlightenment thought, one should recite any seven-fold prayer that one knows three times in a day and three times in the night, and also to engage in the various deeds that the Buddhas or the Bodhisattvas have done. One should engage in deeds of giving and other deeds of virtue. Examples of these deeds can be found in the Jakatas, or life stories of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

The method for not spoiling the entering enlightenment thought according to the Akashagarba Sutra is to avoid the fourteen root downfalls of the Bodhisattva vows. And should they be broken, one

should confess them.

The cause of the enlightenment thought is the production of thoughts of loving kindness and compassion.

One method for not spoiling our Bodhisattva vows is through reliance upon our Yidam or special deity, like the great Indian teacher Dinnaga, who had managed to keep his enlightenment thought through reliance on Manjushri. Dinnaga was born in South India to a very powerful and rich king. When he grew up, he gave up his life as a prince and entered the Buddhist Order. The Order he entered into followed one of the Hinayana traditions. This tradition held the view that there was a self, and that everyone possessed it. However, Dinnaga had heard that within the (Mahayana) Buddhist tradition, there was the idea of no self.

Nevertheless, being a monk in that monastery, he felt that he should not contradict the abbot who had mentioned such a view. He thought that he might be wrong. But in order to find out the existence of self that the abbot had mentioned, he created four new windows in his room and burned four more lamps at night. He examined his body very carefully to find where the self was. He could, however, not find the self. At times, he would even take off all his clothes and stand naked in front of a mirror to search all over his body for his self. Some of the monks in the monastery saw him doing this and told the abbot about it.

The abbot called for him and told him that since he had renounced the world, he should act in the proper way and should stop doing strange things. Dinnaga then told the abbot that he was trying to find the self and was thinking that his impure vision

might have been obstructing him from seeing properly what the abbot was talking about. So he made four new windows and burned more lamps, hoping to see it. Failing to see the self, he thought that his clothes might be obstructing the vision of his true self. So he took off his clothes and searched very carefully. Since he could not find the self, he told the abbot that maybe the abbot's view of the existence of a self was not proper. The abbot told him that the other monks in the monastery had accepted his view of the self, and as Dinnaga was denying his view and had the negative view of nihilism, he felt that it would be better for Dinnaga to leave the monastery.

Dinnaga left the monastery and decided to go the mountains of Northern India to meditate. On the way, he met another prince who noticed the sign of a wheel on Dinnaga's foot. He told Dinnaga that if Dinnaga were to become a king, he would be very powerful. He was willing to give half of his kingdom to Dinnaga if he agreed to join him. Dinnaga told him that within the three realms of existence, there was no purpose in him ruling a kingdom or having worldly power.

Dinnaga found himself a cave where he meditated and studied the various scriptures of the Buddha. During his study, he realized that the meaning of the Buddha's teachings were scattered in many books. So he decided to write a book to bring all the ideas together in a short manageable form. Before he started on his work, he wrote one verse in praise of the Buddha on the wall of his cave and stated his purpose in writing the book. Many wonderful signs like earthquakes arose and lights illuminated a wide area at that time.

In the same area, a Hindu scholar and meditator saw the signs appearing. Being a good meditator, he saw through his supernatural power that Dinnaga was

writing the text in a cave. He realized that the book that Dinnaga was writing would create great harm to the Hindu tradition. So, whenever Dinnaga went out on his alms rounds, he would go to the cave and wipe out the verse on the wall. Every time he did that, Dinnaga would rewrite the verse on the wall. That happened three times. On the fourth day, when Dinnaga wrote the verse, he left a message inviting the person who had wiped out the verse to meet him and clarify the reason for doing this. When the Hindu went to wipe out the verse for the fourth time, he saw the message on the wall. So he remained until Dinnaga returned.

When Dinnaga returned to the cave, they debated on the proper view of ultimate reality. Dinnaga won the debate and said that the Hindu scholar should give up his religion and embrace Buddhism. The scholar refused to. So, through his miraculous power, he issued forth fire from his mouth and burned off Dinnaga's hair and beard. Though the fire was so powerful that it burned the trees around that area, it could not harm Dinnaga because he had produced the enlightenment thought. The Hindu scholar flew off and disappeared in the sky.

Dinnaga at that point thought that in return for what he had done for the dharma, his hair and beard had been burnt. He thought that this was only one person, and if there were many such people in the world, and if that was the kind of return that he would get, there would be no use for him gaining Buddhahood for the sake of all the wretched sentient beings.

Thinking in this way, he wrote his intention to give up the enlightenment thought on a piece of wood and threw it into the air. He decided that from the moment the piece of wood landed on the ground

he would give up his enlightenment thought and never work for the sake of sentient beings again. But the piece of wood didn't land on the ground. When Dinnaga looked up into the sky, he saw Manjushri holding the piece of wood and he asked Manjushri why he was doing that. Manjushri asked him what he was doing, and Dinnaga explained what he was doing, and Dinnaga explained what had happened. Manjushri told him that he should not give up his enlightenment thought. He said that he would stay with him and act as his spiritual friend until he attained the first Bhumi. He also told Dinnaga that what he was writing was very good and he should continue with his writing because it would be beneficial to many sentient beings.

Saraha's Royal Song

Saraha's Dohakosa: The Royal Song

Doha mdzod spyod pa'i glu: Dohakosa nama caryagiti



HOMAGE TO ARYAMANJUSRI!
Homage to the destroyer of demonic power!

The wind lashes calm waters into rollers and breakers;
The king makes multifarious forms out of unity,
Seeing many faces of this one Archer, Saraha.

The cross-eyed fool sees one lamp as two;
The vision and the viewer are one,
You broken, brittle mind!

Many lamps are lit in the house,
But the blind are still in darkness;
Sahaja is all-pervasive
But the fool cannot see what is under his nose.

Just as many rivers are one in the ocean
All half-truths are swallowed by the one truth;
The effulgence of the sun illuminates all dark corners.

Clouds draw water from the ocean to fall as rain on the earth
And there is neither increase nor decrease;
Just so, reality remains unaltered like the pure sky.

Replete with the Buddha's perfections
Sahaja is the one essential nature;
Beings are born into it and pass into it,
Yet there is neither existence nor non-existence in it.

Forsaking bliss the fool roams abroad,
Hoping for mundane pleasure;
Your mouth is full of honey now,
Swallow it while you may!

Fools attempt to avoid their suffering,
The wise enact their pain.
Drink the cup of sky-nectar
While others hunger for outward appearances.

Flies eat filth, spurning the fragrance of sandalwood;
Man lost to nirvana furthers his own confusion,
Thirsting for the coarse and vulgar.

The rain water filling an ox's hoof-print
Evaporates when the sun shines;
The imperfections of a perfect mind,
All are dissolved in perfection.

Salt sea water absorbed by clouds turns sweet;
The venom of passionate reaction
In a strong and selfless mind becomes elixir.

The unutterable is free of pain;
Non-meditation gives true pleasure.
Though we fear the dragon's roar
Rain falls from the clouds to ripen the harvest.

The nature of beginning and end is here and now,
And the first does not exist without the last;
The rational fool conceptualising the inconceivable
Separates emptiness from compassion.

The bee knows from birth
That flowers are the source of honey;
How can the fool know
That samsara and nirvana are one?

Facing himself in a mirror
The fool sees an alien form;
The mind with truth forgotten
Serves untruth's outward sham.

Flowers' fragrance is intangible
Yet its reality pervades the air,
Just as mandala circles are informed
By a formless presence.

Still water stung by an icy wind
Freezes hard in starched and jagged shapes;
In an emotional mind agitated by critical concepts
The unformed becomes hard and intractable.

Mind immaculate by nature is untouched
By samsara and nirvana's mud;
But just like a jewel lost in a swamp
Though it retains its lustre it does not shine.

As mental sloth increases pure awareness diminishes;
As mental sloth increases suffering also grows.
Shoots sprout from the seed and leaves from the branches.

Separating unity from multiplicity in the mind
The light grows dim and we wander in the lower realms;
Who is more deserving of pity than he
Who walks into fire with his eyes wide open?

Obsessed with the joys of sexual embrace
The fool believes he knows ultimate truth;
He is like someone who stands at his door
And, flirting, talks about sex.

The wind stirs in the House of Emptiness
Exciting delusions of emotional pleasure;
Fallen from celestial space, stung,
The tormented yogin faints away.

Like a brahmin taking rice and butter
Offering sacrifice to the flame,
He who visualises material things as celestial ambrosia
Deludes himself that a dream is ultimate reality.

Enlightening the House of Brahma in the fontanelle
Stroking the uvala in wanton delight,
Confused, believing binding pleasure to be spiritual release,
The vain fools calls himself a yogin.

Teaching that virtue is irrelevant to intrinsic awareness,
He mistakes the lock for the key;
Ignorant of the true nature of the gem
The fool calls green glass emerald.

His mind takes brass for gold,
Momentary peak experience for reality accomplished;
Clinging to the joy of ephemeral dreams
He calls his short-thrift life Eternal Bliss.

With a discursive understanding of the symbol EVAM,
Creating four seals through an analysis of the moment,
He labels his peak experience sahaja:
He is clinging to a reflection mistaken for the mirror.

Like befuddled deer leaping into a mirage of water
Deluded fools in their ignorance cling to outer forms
And with their thirst unslaked, bound and confined,
They idealise their prison, pretending happiness.

The relatively real is free of intellectual constructs,
And ultimately real mind, active or quiescent, is no-mind,
And this is the supreme, the highest of the high, immaculate;
Friends, know this sacred high!

In mind absorbed in samadhi that is concept-free,
Passion is immaculately pure;
Like a lotus rooted in the slime of a lake bottom,
This sublime reality is untouched by the pollution of existence.

Make solid your vision of all things as visionary dream
And you attain transcendence,
Instantaneous realisation and equanimity;
A strong mind binding the demons of darkness
Beyond thought your own spontaneous nature is accomplished.

Appearances have never ceased to be their original radiance,
And unformed, form never had a substantial nature to be
grasped;
It is a continuum of unique meditation,
In an inactive, stainless, meditative mind that is no-mind.

Thus the I is intellect, mind and mind-forms,
I the world, all seemingly alien show,
I the infinite variety of vision-viewer,
I the desire, the anger, the mental sloth -
And bodhicitta.

Now there is a lamp lit in spiritual darkness
Healing the splits riven by the intellect
So that all mental defilements are erased.
Who can define the nature of detachment?

It cannot be denied nor yet affirmed,
And ungraspable it is inconceivable.
Through conceptualisation fools are bound,
While concept-free there is immaculate sahaja.

The concepts of unity and multiplicity do not bring integration;
Only through awareness do sentient beings reach freedom.
Cognition of radiance is strong meditation;
Abide in a calm, quiescent mind.

Reaching the joy swollen land
Powers of seeing expand,
And there is joy and laughter;
Even chasing objects there is no separation.

From joy, buds of pure pleasure emerge,
Bursting into blooms of supreme pleasure,
And so long as outflow is contained
Unutterable bliss will surely mature.

What, where and by whom are nothing,
Yet the entire event is imperative.
Whether love and attachment or desirelessness
The form of the event is emptiness.

Like pigs we wallow in this sensual mire
But what can stain our pearly mind?
Nothing can ever contaminate it,
And by nothing can we ever be bound.

*This song of existential freedom was composed by
the Glorious Master Yogin Saraha.*

*This Dohakosa of Saraha was translated by
Kunzang Tenzin in Kathmandu over many years,
finished on the full moon of the seventh month
of the wood-ox year. May all beings be happy!
May all manner of things be well!*

*(Saraha, known as The Great Brahmin, was a Great
Mahasiddha and one of the founders of Buddhist
Vajrayana. He was one of Nagarjuna's teachers).*

Dharma Activities



His Holiness Trichen Rinpoche In South India

On the 4th of April 2017, His Holiness the 41st Sakya Trizin arrived in Mundgod, the first stop in an intensive three-week tour of Tibetan settlements and monasteries in the southern Indian state of Karnataka.

The visit was an initiative and joint effort undertaken by three local Sakya monasteries, Tsechen Do Ngag Ling, Tsechen Dhamchos Ling and Tsechen Chokhor Ling. Over the course of these three weeks, His Holiness was to bless the region's Tibetan communities and monasteries from all four schools of Tibetan Buddhism, while

bestowing numerous initiations and teachings.

The settlements in the state of Karnataka were among the first to be established for Tibetans in exile following the diaspora of 1959. In the early 1960's, the government of India generously set aside considerable tracts of arable land to enable the Tibetan community to put down new roots and sustain themselves, which they did with great success. The establishment of these settlements brought with it the founding of monasteries, which traditionally form the mainstay of Tibetan culture.



Monastics and community members welcome His Holiness to the Doeguling settlement

The first of these settlements to be blessed with the presence of His Holiness Gongma Trichen Rinpoche was Doeguling, a sizeable colony on the outskirts of Mundgod that boasts the existence of several important monasteries of all four Tibetan Buddhist traditions. Upon his arrival at the gates of the settlement, His Holiness was given a traditional welcome by the monasteries' khenpos and monks, as well as by Indian and Tibetan local government officials and the throngs of colonists who had gathered for this memorable occasion.

During the first week of his stay, His Holiness was hosted by Tsechen Damchos Ling, where he was to bestow important

empowerments and teachings, and whose new temple His Holiness was to inaugurate.

The second week of His Holiness' visit was spent at Tsechen Do-Ngag Choeling, also in Mundgod, where his first religious activity was to bestow the Mahavairocana empowerment to thousands of devotees. The ceremony was attended by H.E. Kundo Ling Rinpoche and by the abbots and other representatives of the

Gaden and Drepung monasteries. This was followed by the conferral by His Holiness of the Jung-Due initiation upon a throng of several thousands of followers.



Tsechen Do-Ngag Choeling



Tsechen Dhamchos Ling temple



New Phodrang at Sakya Dhamchos Ling



His Holiness dedicated several days of his stay at Do-Ngag Choeling to visiting nearby monastic institutions, temples, schools as well as a home for the elderly.



Drepung Lachi Monastic Centre for Advanced Learning



Gaden Shartse Monastery

Nyingma Monastery



Jangchup Choeling Nunnery

Home for the Aged



Gaden Jangtse Monastery

Gajang Monastic School

His Holiness was regaled with an offering by Do-Ngag Choling students that included a heated performance of their debating skills.



The Do-Ngag Choeling monks were deeply touched by Her Eminence Gyalyum Chenmo's caring visit to the monastery's elderly monks in their sleeping quarters.



His Holiness' last compassionate activity in Mundgod was the bestowal of the Three-Wrathful-Deity initiation at the Drepung Gomang monastery.



Three-Wrathful-Deities initiation at Drepung Gomang



Much to the regret of the Doeguling community, His Holiness left the following day for the closing leg of his trip, which was to take place in the settlements of Bylakuppe, some 400 kilometres north of Mundgod. On his way, His Holiness stopped at Kollegal.



Vajrakilaya blessing and powa oral transmission to the sick and elderly in Kollegal

On the 21st of April, His Holiness arrived in Bylakuppe, where he was hosted by the Tsechen Chokhor Ling Sakyapa Monastic Cultural Society.



Tsechen Chokhor Ling



His Holiness lights the butter lamp at Tsechen Chokhor Ling

Beginning with the bestowal of blessings by His Holiness to the thousands of avid followers who had flocked to Tsechen Chokhor Ling to pay their respects, the following days were filled with religious activities.



Blessings at Tsechen Chokhor Ling



Visit to Dzongkar Choede Monastery in Hunsur



Rig Sum and Thangton Gyalpo Long-life initiations at Chokhor Ling

Khünrig Puja at Chokhor Ling



Rinpoche conducting the Vajrakilaya ritual



His Holiness at Tashilunpo monastery – Chief Guest at the Panchen Lama's birthday celebrations



Vajrakilaya Torma Initiation at Namdrolling



Sera Jey Monastery



Debate at Sera Lachi Monastery

Kagyu Nalanda Institute

Sera Me monastery



Powa for the public at Chokhor Ling

And so, after nearly a month of relentless activity, His Holiness returned to His residence in Dehradun, leaving behind him countless numbers of devotees who had been blessed and replenished by His presence.

His Holiness The 42nd Sakya Trizin 2017 European Teaching Tour



Since his enthronement as the new Sakya Throne Holder, His Holiness the 42nd Sakya Trizin has scarcely taken pause in his Dharma activities, and is unlikely to do so in the foreseeable future.

Beginning with his bestowal of the Holy Lamdre teachings at Sakya Centre last March, His Holiness has blessed students – both monastic and lay, at home and abroad – with the ceaseless proffering of precious teachings. At the very conclusion of the Lamdre teachings, on 20th May 2017, His Holiness embarked on a European tour



Medicine Buddha empowerment and public talk at Sakya Trinley Ling, Bristol



Green Tara initiation in Paris



Rinpoche, entourage and Lama Jampa Thaye in Bristol



Guru Rinpoche empowerment at Sakya Thupten Ling, Bournemouth



Tara initiation and teaching on 'The Benefit of Mind Training', Lisbon



Vajrakilaya empowerment, Marpa House, UK



Precious initiations and teachings at Fundación Sakya, Spain

Fundación Sakya photos: Alejandro Mari Escalera

that was to take him to France, the UK, Portugal, Spain, France, Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, the Netherlands, Hungary and Italy. In all the centres that he visited, His Holiness bestowed precious initiations and teachings.



Vajrakilaya Torma initiation, land blessing and consecration of future stupa site, Sakya Changlochen Ling retreat centre, Dordogne, France

A singular highlight of Rinpoche’s journey was a three-day trek to a yak farm in the Swiss Alps. Rinpoche and his assembly of monks and disciples were led up an arduous mountain trail by old-time follower cum yak herder Nicola Toscano. No feat for the dainty, the climb took the group several thousand feet up through rough weather and terrain, until they reached Nicola’s cabin, where spartan bunk beds and hot thukpa awaited them.



His Holiness on an Alpine trek with disciple/yak herder Nicola Toscano in Cadlimo, Ticino, Switzerland

Rinpoche’s presence and the dizzying beauty of the landscape made for an exhilarating experience for each of those who partook of the journey. A ritual was performed, yaks and mountain sheep were blessed, and prayer flags were hung, as the small group of pilgrims basked in the sacredness of the breathtaking surroundings.

All too soon, it was time to return to a more conventional reality, as Rinpoche and his party made their way to Arosio, where Rinpoche was to impart the last teaching on his trip.

Rinpoche’s first teaching tour as Sakya Throne Holder had lasted over two months and had been replete with precious Dharma activities. For European students, this was an invaluable boon and an assurance of continuity in the unfailing spiritual guidance that they have come to rely upon for sustenance over the past decades.

Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche 2017 Phurdup Tour

On 4th April 2017, Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche began his now yearly Vajrakilaya Asian Tour, along with his assembly of monks. This year, Rinpoche's trip took place in two stages, the first taking him to Mongolia, Hong Kong and Singapore, and the second to Taiwan. Rinpoche's Phurdup tour has become an institution of sorts for the centres that host it, and year by year the disciples who join the Vajrakilaya rituals have

become increasingly adept in their participation, thereby reaping more and more benefit from them.

Rinpoche's first stop on his tour was Mongolia, where he spent nearly two weeks conducting the Vajrakilaya ritual and giving teachings and initiations. Rinpoche began his Mongolian trip with a visit to the Sakya Pandita Dharma Chakra Monastery in Ulaan Baatar.



Rinpoche then travelled to the centuries-old Erdenezu Monastery in Karkorin, where he conducted the elaborate *Phurdup* ritual. This monastery was built by Sakya masters during the Mongol Empire and was the crown jewel of its capital, Karakorum.

Rinpoche's stay in Mongolia included a stop in Erdenet, the country's second largest city and one of its newest. There, Rinpoche bestowed the Long-life initiation.



Rinpoche and his monks then flew to Hong Kong for yet another celebration of the Vajrakilaya ritual.



Rinpoche's last stop on this first part of his tour was in Singapore where, once again, he conducted the Vajrakilaya ritual. The religious ceremonies went on until the end of May, at which time Rinpoche's monks returned to India.



The second part of Rinpoche's tour took place one month and a half later when, on the 14th of July, Rinpoche left India for Taiwan in order to bestow teachings and initiations over the following month and, importantly, the Vajrakilaya rituals. Rinpoche's visit also included a teaching to prisoners and a blessing to the elderly in a local hospice, in both cases a balm to alleviate acute suffering.

Among other precious Dharma activities, Rinpoche bestowed the White Mahakala initiation at the Vajrayana Sakya Manjushri Centre.



Last day of the Vajrakilaya ritual at the Manjushri centre.



Rinpoche also conducted the Wealth Deities Fire Puja in Sanshia.



This second part of Rinpoche's tour ended on 10th August, when he and his entourage left for India, on time for Rinpoche's visit to Nepal, which was to take place a few days later.

Khöndung Gyana Vajra Sakya Rinpoche In Tibet



The 18th of August 2017 marked an historic moment, as Khöndung Gyana Vajra Sakya Rinpoche, younger son of His Holiness the 41st Sakya Trizin, arrived at the Great Sakya Temple in Derge, Kham, in the Eastern part of Tibet. It was the first time in the history of the Khön lineage that one of its Masters visited this region.



This extraordinary event had a precursor, with the visit to Derge less than a year before by Rinpoche's children, Dungsey Siddharth Vajra Rinpoche and Jetsünma Tsejin Lhamo, alongside their mother Dagmo Kushok Sonam Palkyi Sakya. This in itself had been an unforgettable occasion, as it had revealed the impassioned fervour that fills the hearts and soul of the region's devotees.

And now, with the arrival of one the very

senior-most lineage holders of the Khön family among them, this fervour has been brought to a pinnacle, as throngs of people filled the Derge Gönchen temple courtyard to seek Rinpoche's blessing – a staggering 90,000 devotees on the first day alone, while each of the following days brought some 35,000 people to Derge Gonchen and to the nearby monasteries that Rinpoche visited.



There are eighteen Sakya monasteries in the area and, over the following three days, Rinpoche bestowed the Manjushri Jenang and granted blessings in each one of them. Touchingly,

these visits included the monastery in Gyalyum Chenmo's birthplace. Rinpoche also dedicated his time to visiting schools and hospitals.



With his visits to the nearby monasteries over, Rinpoche bestowed the two-day Vajrakilaya initiation to over 100,000 people at the Gonchen Shedra. At the conclusion of the initiation, Rinpoche forewent the traditional individual blessing and instead descended from his throne and, as paths opened up to his passage, he waded into the sea of people and showered

them with blessed rice. This ritual lasted for well over three hours, as Rinpoche made his way to every reach of the multitude, ensuring that no one would be left without a blessing. Emotions ran high, as tears of gratitude were shed.

By the time the ceremony ended, all were astonished to discover that a thousand kilograms of rice had been used.



On the 24th of August, Rinpoche was given a warm welcome at the Dzongsar Monastery, as the whole monastic sangha and vast numbers of devotees gathered for this extraordinary occasion.

Rinpoche had barely finished bestowing the Manjushri Jenang, when he began giving the Long-life initiation to the assembly of monks.



Rinpoche also visited the Dzongsar Nunnery Meditation Centre



Rinpoche concluded his trip with a short pilgrimage to Mount Jiuhua in Qingyang, Anhui. Mount Jiuhua is one of the four sacred mountains in Chinese Buddhism. It is home to numerous shrines and temples, many of which are dedicated to the Bodhisattva Ksitigarba, the great protector of beings in the hell realms. From there, Rinpoche flew to Beijing, where he conducted a three-day Mahakala puja before embarking on a visit to Mongolia.



His Holiness The 42nd Sakya Trizin In Nepal And East Asia



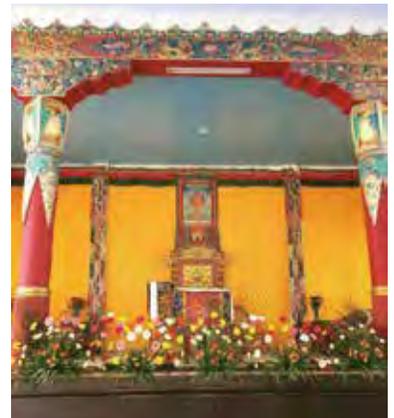
Immediately he concluded his European tour, Rinpoche embarked on further holy activities that included Nepal, India, the USA, Hong Kong and Vietnam.

His Holiness' journey in Nepal centered upon his bestowal of teachings on Sakya Pandita's 'Clarifying the Sage's Intent' at

the International Buddhist Academy in Kathmandu, the first installment of a seven-year programme that promises to bless

its students with a priceless wisdom jewel.

In addition, Rinpoche bestowed the Long-life initiation and the Sum Dril Jehngang at



Tharlam monastery to thousands of devotees.

With a hiatus comprising the Annual Vajrakilaya Ritual in India and the celebration of the

1st American Monlam Prayer Festival in New York, Rinpoche embarked on an Asian tour.

His Holiness' first stop was in Hong Kong, where he was to

give a six-day teaching on the Triple Vision. This was coupled with the bestowal of the Orange Manjushri and Avalokiteshvara initiations and the recitation of 100,000 *manis*.



His Holiness bestows the Orange Manjushri Initiation

His Holiness bestowed teachings on the Triple Vision



Taking refuge



H.H. the 42nd Sakya Trizin and Thartse Rinpoche lead the Mani Recitation Puja

It was remarkable to see how the Sakya Dharma has taken root in Hong Kong, with huge numbers of devotees participating in the events. It was also promising to see how many new students took their refuge vows from Rinpoche. Rinpoche's visit to Hong Kong had lasted nearly two weeks, and now it was time for the other part of his Asia tour: Vietnam.

It was the first time that a Sakya Throne Holder was visiting Vietnam, the presence of Tibetan Buddhism being a relatively new phenomenon in the region. While the vast majority of Vietnamese adhere to traditional folk religions, Buddhism is the most popular among the other religions. Eclectic in nature, the brand of Buddhism prevalent in Vietnam

embraces a variety of doctrines and traditional practices, with Pure Land Buddhism being the most widespread.

The events were well attended, with Rinpoche travelling to both North and South Vietnam. In both places, he was invited by important local temples to conduct ceremonies. It was heartening to witness the warm welcome extended to



Fire Puja and Refuge Vows at Chùa Súi Buddhist Temple in Hanoi



White Manjushri initiation and Refuge Vows at Chùa Phúc Khánh Yên Viên Buddhist Temple



Medicine Buddha initiation at Trúng Hau Pagoda

White Manjushri Initiation at the Vinh Nghiem Pagoda in Ho Chi Minh

Powa teachings at the Vietnam Sakya Centre

Rinpoche by the abbots of the hosting traditional Mahayana Buddhist temples and their members' devout participation in the initiations and teachings

conducted by His Holiness.

Thus concluded His Holiness the 42nd Sakya Trizin's historic visit to Vietnam, bringing to an end his Asian Teaching Tour. It

was now time for Rinpoche to return to India on time for his one-month-long bestowal of the Hevajra Root Tantra at Sakya College in Dehradun.

Jetsunma Kunga Thinley Palter Sakya In Tibet



It was not very long after Khöndung Gyana Vajra Sakya Rinpoche's visit to Tibet that, on the 14th of September 2018, Jetsunma Kunga Thinley Palter Sakya, elder daughter of His Holiness the 42nd Sakya Trizin, left India to follow her uncle's footsteps, accompanied by her mother Dagmo Kushok Kalden Dunkyi Sakya.

With this the third visit of Khön family members to the region, it was touching to see how the pious ardour of its devotees had not in the



The new Mt Trola Pass tunnel



Chengdu

least abated. After flying to Chengdu, capital of the Sichuan province in China, Jetsunma and her mother undertook the challenging drive to Derge, once the capital of the Kingdom of Derge in the Kham region.

Derge is home to the world-famous Parkhang printing press, which, over the past three hundred years, has been responsible for the block printing of a considerable majority of the Tibetan Buddhist scriptures extant today. The Parkhang is housed by the



Derge Gonchen monastery, a sizeable complex whose original structure was founded by Thangtong Gyalpo in the 15th century, and which was to host Jetsunma and her mother during their stay in Derge.

Under the dotting care of Khenpo Kalden Tsering, Jetsunma and Dagmo Kushok spent ten unforgettable days

at Gonchen Monastery, filled with precious Dharma activities. Again, the temple courtyard filled to capacity with devotees coming to pay their respects to one of their revered Khön gurus. In spite of her young age (she was 10 years old at the time of her visit), Jetsunma fulfilled her duties impeccably, and with astonishing grace and aplomb.

Not only did Jetsunma give her blessing to the seemingly unending stream of devotees who had come to seek it, but she also visited schools and hospitals, the Dzongsar shedra, performed consecrations, and even bestowed an oral transmission, duties that are normally the preserve of more mature Lamas.

These precious days passed all too quickly for everyone, and it was now time for Jetsunma and Dagmo Kushok to travel to



Amdo. This was the first time in modern history that a Khön family member had visited Amdo. Again, the show of devotion that greeted Jetsunma was overwhelming. An endless cavalcade of flag-bearing Amdo horsemen heralded her arrival at Dzogey Dzong, where she and Dagmo Kushok were to spend the rest of their time in Tibet, and whose temple courtyard would swell daily with devotees seeking Jetsunma's blessing.

Here again, the visit came to an end far too quickly and, as if

to bid its farewell, the landscape covered itself with a blanket of white, as the winter's first snow showered from the skies, filling all with wonderment.

Jetsunma and Dagmo Kushok continued their journey with a pilgrimage that included the first iron bridge ever built by Thangton Gyalpo; the 8th century giant Maitreya Buddha at Leshan, Sichuan; two of the mountains sacred to Tibetan Buddhism, Mount Emei and Mount Wutai, dedicated to the Bodhisattvas Samantabhadra

and Manjushri respectively, and home to many of China's most sacred monasteries. After an intensive month filled with auspicious activities, Jetsunma and Dagmo Kushok concluded their travels with a brief stay in Beijing, before regaining their residence in Dehradun.



First North American Sakya Monlam For World Peace



On 21st September 2017, the first North American Monlam for World Peace was held at Tsechen Kunchab Ling, in Walden, N.Y., His Holiness the 41st Sakya Trizin's Seat in the U.S.A. It was presided over by His Holiness Gongma Trichen Rinpoche and His Holiness Gongma Trizin Rinpoche, and was attended by Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche, Jetsun Kushok, and Phuntsok Phodrang Khön family members.

Also in attendance were Khenpos and lamas from India, Nepal, Tibet and the USA, as well as dignitaries of the Tibetan community in the USA. Sakyapa followers in their thousands

travelled to Walden in order to participate in this memorable event.

Early in the morning of the first day, preliminary rituals were conducted by H.H. the 42nd Sakya Trizin in preparation for the Tenshug ceremony that was to be held for the long life of H.H. the 41st Sakya Trizin.



The official proceedings began with the arrival of Gongma Trichen Rinpoche at

the temple, and his lighting of the ceremonial candle.



On behalf of all Sakya followers, H.H. the 42nd Sakya Trizin offered the universal





mandala to Kyabgon Gongma Trichen Rinpoche, supplicating him to live long.

Auspiciously, the afternoon saw the celebration of His Holiness Gongma Trichen Rinpoche's Birthday according to the Tibetan Lunar calendar. All rejoiced with His Holiness as He was presented with a magnificently decorated six-tier cake.

The second day of the



Monlam opened with a teaching bestowed by H.H. Gongma Trizin Rinpoche, followed in the afternoon by the recitation of the Samantabhadra Aspiration



Prayer by all those present.

The third day began with the preparation for the Tenshug for His Holiness the 42nd Saky Trizin, conducted by Khöndung





Gyana Vajra Rinpoche.

This was followed by the celebration of the White Tara Puja and the Tenshug ceremony held in honour of the enthronement of Kyabgon Gongma Trizin Rinpoche as the 42nd Sakya Throne Holder.

The Prayer Festival came to a conclusion on the fourth

day with the conferral by His Holiness the 41st Sakya Trizin of the Long-life initiation upon the congregation.

Thus, the First North American Sakya Monlam Prayer Festival came to a close. This had been an historic event that was to set a precedent for years to come. For all Sakyapas in

North America, this meant a life-changing rejoining with their roots, a sense of religious and cultural belonging that will bring coming generations into its fold.

Photos: Kurt Smith

In Memoriam



Venerable Khenpo Dagpa Wöser

On the 29th of November 2017, the Venerable Khenpo Dagpa Wöser left his body at his residence in Kuttolsheim, France.

Khenpo Dagpa Wöser had led an exemplary life, utterly devoid of self-interest and completely devoted to the wellbeing of others.

Born in Tibet in the year 1939, he joined the main Sakya monastery, where he completed his studies and sat several major retreats. He fled to India in 1959 and joined the Ghoom monastery in Darjeeling, where he pursued his Tantric studies and where he remained as teacher for a period of 32 years.

In 1991, at the request of Khenchen Sherab Gyaltzen Amipa, he joined the latter in Kuttolsheim and served as Resident Lama at the Sakya Tsechen Ling centre until his demise last year.

He was an extraordinary human being and practitioner, always humble in spite of his considerable spiritual achievements, and he was much loved and admired by all who came to know him.

Year of the Earth Dog Calendar of Events

Annual Grand Pujas at the Sakya Centre, Dehradun

Every year the Sakya Centre in Rajpur, Dehradun, holds various grand pujas:

1. Annual Grand Vajrayogini Puja 8 th of the 1 st lunar month for 3 days	7. Dhamtsig Kangso 25 th of the 10 th lunar month for 8 days
2. Annual Grand Vajra Nairatmya Puja 8 th of the 2 nd lunar month for 7 days	8. Annual Grand Cakrasamvara Puja 9 th of the 11 th lunar month for 7 days
3. Annual Grand Mahavairocana Puja 11 th of the 4 th lunar month for 5 days	9. Dochen Puja 23 rd of the 11 th lunar month for 7 days
4. Wrathful Guru Rinpoche Puja 10 th of the 5 th lunar month for 1 day	10. Gu-Tor 23 rd of the 12 th lunar month for 7 days
5. Annual Grand Vajrakilaya Puja 11 th of the 7 th lunar month for 11 days	11. Mahakala Day Each 26 th of every lunar month for 5 days
6. Annual Grand Hevajra Puja 8 th of the 9 th lunar month for 8 days	

Auspicious Dates

Six Auspicious Days

The 8th, 14th, 15th (full moon day), 23rd, 29th & the 30th (new moon day) of every month.

Losar – (Feb 16, 2018)

Losar is the Tibetan New Year. It starts on the first day of the first lunar month. It is said that, during this month, the effects of positive and negative actions are magnified 100,000 times, and that therefore the benefits of practice are hugely enhanced.

The Four Great Festivals (düchen)

These days commemorate great deeds performed by the Buddha. On these days, the effects of positive or negative actions are magnified 10 million times.

1. Chotrul Düchen: 1-15 (Feb 16-Mar 1)

Shakyamuni Buddha displayed a different miracle each day for 15 days in order to increase the faith and devotion of disciples. The 15th of the 1st month is called "Day of Miracles".

2. Saga Dawa Düchen: 4-15 (May 29)

The day Shakyamuni Buddha entered His mother's womb, attained Enlightenment and passed into Parinirvana.

3. Chökhör Düchen: 6-4 (Jul 16)

This celebrates the Buddha's first Turning of the Wheel of Dharma. It was only seven weeks after His Enlightenment that, exhorted by Indra and Brahma, He consented to teach the Four Noble Truths in Sarnath.

4. Lha Bab Düchen: 9-22 (Oct 31)

The day Shakyamuni Buddha descended from Tushita heaven and taught for three months in the Heaven of Thirty Three, where His mother had been reborn. This was in order to benefit the gods in the desire realm and to repay His mother's kindness by liberating her from Samsara.

✿ NB: Lamp offerings in the monastery or food offerings to the monks are welcome during all important pujas and ceremonies. If you wish to make any offerings, please contact the Sakya Centre in Rajpur Dehradun directly (contact details on the last page)

AUSPICIOUS BIRTHDAYS	TIBETAN (M/D)	WESTERN
Jetsunma Kunga Trinley Palter Sakya	11-14	Jan 2
Jetsunma Kunga Chimey Wangmo Sakya	12-13	Jan 24
Khondung Siddharth Vajra Rinpoche	1-18	Mar 19
Khöndung Akasha Vajra Rinpoche	2-12	Mar 27
Jetsunma Ngawang Tsejin Lhamo Sakya	1-29	Apr 2
Khöndung Gyana Vajra Rinpoche	5-10	Jul 5
His Holiness the Dalai Lama	5-5	Jul 6
His Holiness the Sakya Trizin	8-1	Sept 7
His Holiness Jigdal Dagchen Rinpoche	9-15	Nov 2
H.E. Luding Khenchen Rinpoche	9-14	Oct 25
H.E. Jetsun Kushok Chimey Luding	9-22	Nov 14
Khöndung Ratna Vajra Rinpoche	10-5	Nov 19

Holy Days

TIBETAN	HOLY DAYS	TIBETAN	HOLY DAYS
1-3	Parinirvana Day of Dagshul Thinley Rinchen (Grand-father of H.H. the 41 st Sakya Trizin)	4-25	Parinirvana Day of Ngorchen Dorje Chang Kunga Sangpo
1-21	Parinirvana Day of Kunkhyen Gorampa Sonam Senge & Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo	5-2	Parinirvana Day of Sachen Kunga Lodro
2-8	Parinirvana Day of Yabje Kunga Rinchen (Father of H.H. the 41 st Sakya Trizin)	5-6	Parinirvana Day of Khyentse Dorje Chang Jamyang Chokyi Lodro
2-12	Parinirvana Day of Jetsun Drakpa Gyaltsen & Khangsar Shabrun Ngawang Lodroe Tenzin Nyingpo	6-20	Parinirvana Day of Ngawang TUEtop Wangchuk
2-23	Parinirvana Day of Khenchen Dorje Chang Jampa Jampal Sangpo	6-29	Parinirvana Day of Dorje Chang Ngawang Lodro Rinchen
2-26	Parinirvana Day of Khuwo Rinpoche Kunga Gyaltsen	7-14	Parinirvana Day of Ngakchang Kunga Rinchen
2-30	Parinirvana Day of Jamgon Loter Wangpo	7-15	Parinirvana Day of Tsarchen Losal Gyatso
3-15	Parinirvana Day of Phende Khenchen Ngawang Khedup Gyatso	7-19	Parinirvana Day of Ngakchang Kunga Tashi
3-18	Parinirvana Day of Dezhung Tulku Kunga Tenpei Nyima	9-14	Parinirvana Day of Bari Lotsawa, Khön Konchok Gyalpo & Sachen Kunga Nyingpo
3-25	Parinirvana Day of Gongkhar Dorje Denpa Dzongpa Kunga Namgyal	9-21	Parinirvana Day of Ngorchen Konchok Lhundrup
3-29	Parinirvana Day of Gaton Ngawang Lekpa, Luding Khenchen Jamyang TUEpten Lundok Gyaltsen	10-8	Parinirvana Day of Munchen Konchok Gyaltsen Sempa Chenpo
4-12	Parinirvana Day of Khenchen Dhampa Dorje Chang Ngawang Lodoe Shenpen Nyingpo	11-10	Parinirvana Day of Jamgon Ameshab
4-23	Anniversary of Mahasiddha Virupa's attainment of the First Bhumi	11-11	Parinirvana Day of Lopon Sonam Tsemo
		11-14	Parinirvana Day of Sakya Pandita Kunga Gyaltsen Pal Sangpo
		11-22	Parinirvana Day of Drogon Chogyal Phagpa & Dezhung Anjam Rinpoche
		11-23	Parinirvana Day of Khenchen Appey Rinpoche
		12-4	Parinirvana Day of Chogye Trichen Dorje Chang Ngawang Khyenrab Lekshey Gyaltsen

Melody of Dharma

Representatives

INDIA AND NEPAL

Patricia Donohue

Office of Sakya Dolma Phodrang
192, Rajpur Road
P.O. Rajpur, 248009
Dehra Dun (U.K.), India
Email: melodyofdharma@gmail.com

AUSTRALIA

Penny Moody

24 Tyssen Street
Warragul, Victoria 3820
Australia
Email: penny-moody@netspace.net.au

MALAYSIA

Datin Sri Loo Chooi Ting J.P.

5th Floor, Lot 442, Kompleks Galleria
Jalan Pahang, 53000 Kuala Lumpur,
Malaysia
Email: norzin88@gmail.com

SINGAPORE

Sakya Tenphel Ling

Honorary Secretary
5 Pasir ris Drive 4
Singapore 519455
www.sakyatenphelling.org

FRANCE

Gabriela and Hans-Erich Frey

71, Boulevard d'Anvers
F-67000, Strasbourg, FRANCE
Email: gabriela.frey@free.fr
(Kindly make cheque out to 'Sakyadhita France')

GERMANY

Isabelle Fehler

Jetsun Sakya Foundation
Wilhelm-Leuschner Str.
76189 Karlsruhe, Germany
Email: fehler@sakya-foundation.de

SWITZERLAND

Anne Deriaz

Cité Villars, 10
1203 Geneva
Email: anne.deriaz@vtxnet.ch

U.K.

Richard and Sue Sedgley

c/o Sakya Thubten Ling
167 Shelbourne Road
Bournemouth BH8 8RD, U.K.
Email: richnsue51@btinternet.com

U.S.A.

Sakya Thupten Dargye Ling

Ms. Silvia M. Yueh
2735, Hemlock Lane N.
Plymouth MN 55441, USA
Email: mnsakya@mac.com

TAIWAN

Vajrayana Sakya Manjusri Center

3F, No.81, Tayou Rd., Songshan Dist.,
Taipei City 105, Taiwan(R.O.C.)
E-mail: hhtwcenter@gmail.com
http://www.hhtwcenter.org

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Please find below the contact details for the monasteries in India and Nepal directly under the aegis of His Holiness the 41st Sakya Trizin:

Sakya Dolma Phodrang

Address: 192 Rajpur Road, P.O. Rajpur 248009
Dehradun, U.K. INDIA
Email: sakyadolmaphodrang@gmail.com
Tel: 91-135-2734-081

Sakya College

Address: Mussoorie Road, P.O. Rajpur 248009
Dehradun, U.K. INDIA
Email: sakya_college@yahoo.co.in
Tel: 91-135-2734-308

Sakya Centre

Address: 187 Rajpur Rd, PO Rajpur 248009,
Dehradun, Uttarakhand, INDIA
Email: shrisakya@yahoo.co.in
Tel: 91-135-2734-286
Fax: 91-135-2734-493

Sakya Monastery Kalimpong

Address: 11th Mile, P.O. Topkhana,
Kalimpong 734301
Dist. Darjeeling, West Bengal, INDIA
Email: sakyamonasterykpg@gmail.com
Tel: 91-355-2255-425
Mob: 91-933-3092-858

International Buddhist Academy (IBA)

Address: IBA, Tinchuli-Boudha, PO Box 23034,
Kathmandu, Nepal, 44600
Email: ibanepal888@gmail.com
Tel: +977-1-4915218

Sakya Academy

Address: Purkul Road, Bhagwantpur 248001
Dehradun, INDIA
Email: sakya_academy@yahoo.com
sakyaacademy.org@gmail.com
Tel: 91-135-273-4286
Mob: 91-897-943-1316

Sakya Thupten Namgyal Ling

Address: Puruwala
P.O. Gorkhuwala
173025 Dstt Sirmaur, H.P. INDIA
Email: sakyamagon@yahoo.co.in
Tel: 91-1704-238895

Sakya Nunnery

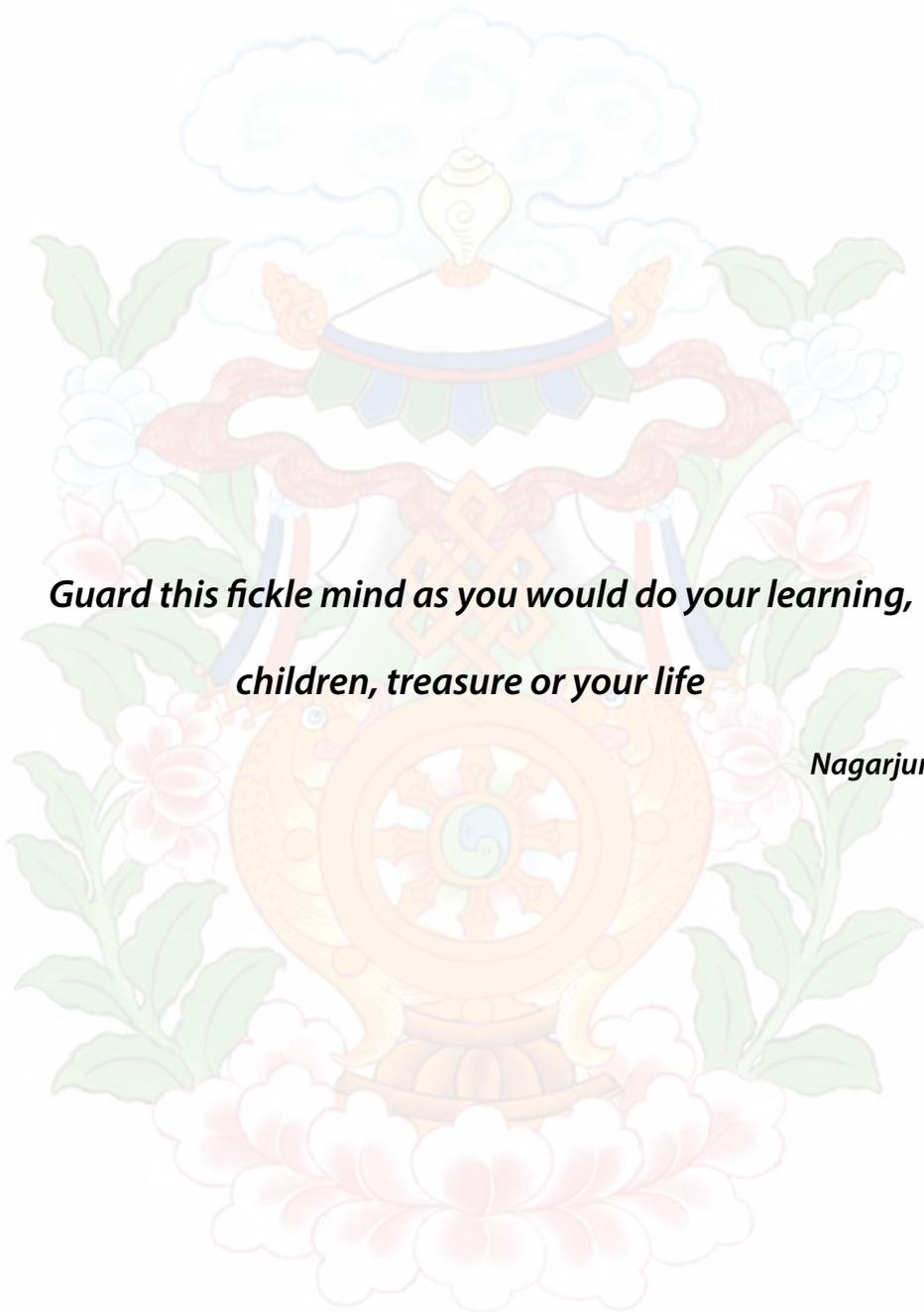
Address: Sahastradhara Road, P/O Kulhan 248001,
Dehradun, Uttarakhand, INDIA
Email: sakyannunnery_office@yahoo.com
Tel: 91-135-2607-560

Sakya College for Nuns

Address: P.O. Manduwala, Via Premnagar
Dehradun, UK 248007
Email: sakyacollegefornuns@hotmail.com
Tel: 91-9557-420-432

Vajrayogini Meditation Center

Address: 207/14 Bhuwaldanda, boudha -6
GPO Box : 6765 KMC, Kathmandu, Nepal
Tel : 977-1-4915068
E-Mail : vajrayogini2009@gmail.com



***Guard this fickle mind as you would do your learning,
children, treasure or your life***

Nagarjuna



**Melody of Dharma
Sakya Dolma Phodrang**

192, Rajpur Road

P.O. Rajpur 248009

Dehradun, U.K. INDIA

Tel: 91-135-273-4081 Fax: 91-135-273-4883

Email: melodyofdharma@gmail.com