



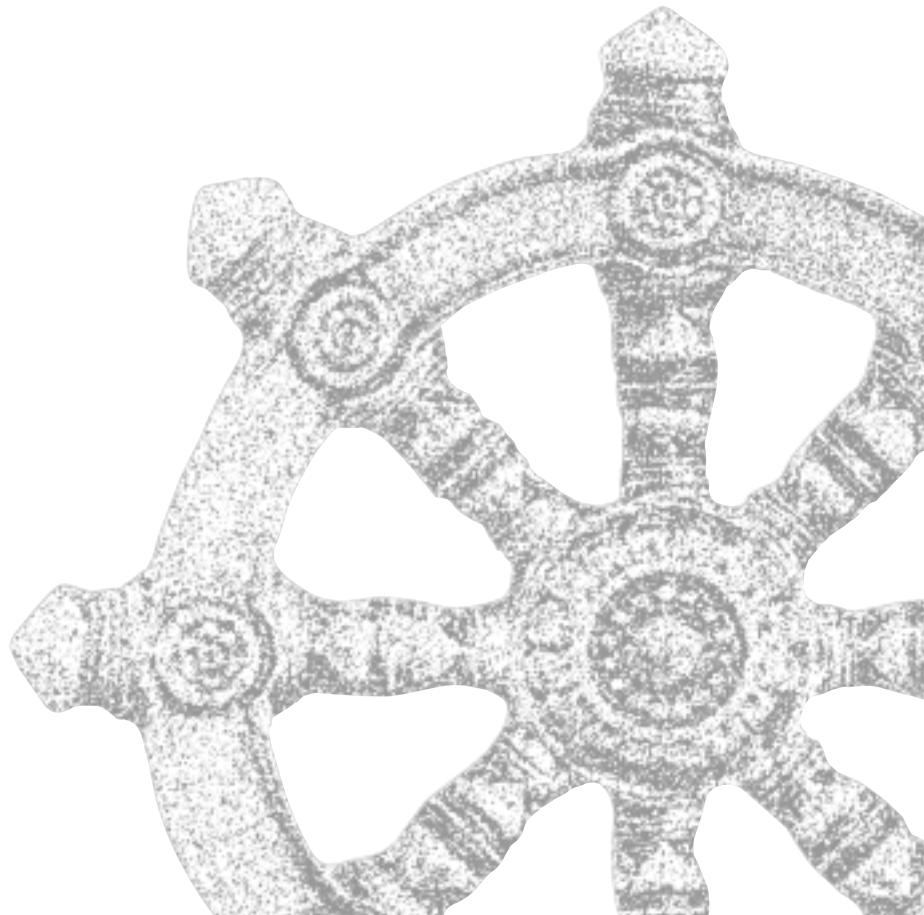
THE ASIAN CLASSICS
INSTITUTE

3

COURSE

APPLIED MEDITATION

Level 2 of The Steps to Buddhahood (*Lam Rim*)





THE ASIAN CLASSICS INSTITUTE

Thank you for your interest in the Asian Classics Institute's Correspondence Courses. A complete Formal Study Course consists of audio recordings from the original class series in New York, along with the supporting text materials from each class. The audio teachings may be downloaded (see www.world-view.org in the on-line teachings section), or ordered by mail as cassette tapes (see the Courses by mail section of the web site). The class text materials may also be ordered by mail, or can be printed from these files.

This Course consists of eleven classes, each of which has approximately two hours of audio, along with corresponding written materials. The audio can be listened to on-line as streaming Real Audio, or downloaded onto your computer for playback later. The written materials for this Course are contained in ten on-line files which can be downloaded, printed and assembled into a three-ring binder.

A complete Course binder contains the following sections in this order: a binder cover and spine, an overview of the teacher training program, prayers, a course syllabus, readings, class notes, homework, quizzes, a final examination, answer keys, Tibetan study materials, and a meditation chart. (The class notes were taken by a student in the original live classes, and you'll need these for reference as what's written on the board isn't always spoken.) For ease of binder assembly, be sure to print the files on three hole paper.

Each class lecture has a corresponding homework, quiz, meditation, and class notes. Most classes have readings, although not every class does. After listening to the audio from a class, the homework, quiz and meditation should be completed for that class before continuing on to the next class. The homework can be completed using your class notes, open book style. The quizzes should be completed from memory only, without the aid of notes or other materials. (A good approach is to look at an answer key *after* you have finished that homework, and to use that answer key to study for that quiz.) A final exam is given at the end of the Course.

You may grade your own papers using the supplied answer keys or, if you wish to do so, you may mail your quizzes, homework and final examination to the Asian Classics Institute to be graded. All of the quiz and final exam questions come from the homework, so the homework answer keys are also used to grade the quizzes and the final exam.

If you use the answer keys to complete your homework or quizzes by copying, please do not mail your papers to the Institute for grading. If you do mail your papers in, upon successfully passing, you will be presented with a certificate of proficiency from the Institute.

If you choose to have your papers graded by the Institute (this is completely optional), please mail all of the homework, quizzes and the final for the Course together – **DO NOT** mail papers from individual classes, or a partially completed Course. Once you have completed the entire Course, mail it to: The Asian Classics Institute, attention: Grading, PO Box 20373, New York, NY 10009. Please make a copy of all materials that you send to us, in case they are lost in the mail. **Be sure to provide a self-addressed, stamped envelope to have your papers returned.**

We would like to emphasize finally that, although recordings and written materials can be extremely helpful, it is essential for serious Buddhist practitioners to meet and study directly with a qualified Teacher who can give the necessary guidance and personal instructions of the lineage.

In these teachings the wisdom of Enlightened Beings has been passed down in an unbroken lineage to you. May you take these teachings and put them into practice in your life to benefit all. May every goodness grow and spread in all directions right now!



Overview of the Formal Study Course Teacher Training Program

The Six Great Books of Buddhism outlined below are the subject of a geshe's eighteen year program of monastic study. The Asian Classics Institute condenses these Six Great Books of Buddhism into a series of 15 Formal Study Courses.

Book One

Geshe Study Subject: The Perfection of Wisdom (Prajnya Paramita)

School of Buddhism Studied: Beginning Middle-Way (Madhyamika Svatantrika); also includes some material from Mind-Only (Chitta Matra)

Main Root Text: *The Jewel of Realization (Abhisamaya Alamkara)*

Written by: Maitreya (the Future Buddha) as related to Master Asanga, circa 350 AD

Traditional period to cover this subject: Six years in a Tibetan monastery

Summarized in ACI Courses:

Course II: Buddhist Refuge

Course XV: What the Buddha Really Meant

Principal monastic textbooks used for ACI Courses: *Analysis of the Perfection of Wisdom, Overview of the Art of Interpretation, Overview of the Twenty Practitioners, Overview of Dependent Origination, Overview of the Form and Formless*

Written by: Kedrup Tenpa Dargye (1493-1568); Gyalwang Trinley Namgyal (fl. 1850)

Typical Subjects: The three kinds of refuge; The wish for enlightenment; What is nirvana?; The proofs for emptiness; Who is Maitreya?; The twelve links of dependent origination in the Wheel of Life; Deep levels of meditation; How do we know when the Buddha was speaking figuratively?; A flow-chart for liberation.

Book Two

Geshe Study Subject: The Middle Way (Madhyamika)

School of Buddhism Studied: Advanced Middle Way (Madhyamika Prasangika); also includes some material from the Mind-Only School (Chitta Matra)

Main Root Texts: *Entering the Middle Way (Madhyamaka Avatara)* and *A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life (Bodhisattva Charya Avatara)*

Written by: The first by Master Chandrakirti, circa 650 AD in explanation of Master Nagarjuna, about 200 AD; and the second by Master Shantideva, circa 700 AD

Traditional period to cover this subject: Four years in a Tibetan monastery

Summarized in ACI Courses:

Course VI: The Diamond-Cutter Sutra

Course VII: The Vows of the Bodhisattva

Courses X, XI, XII: A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life

Overview of the ACI Teacher Training Program

Principal monastic textbooks used for ACI Courses: *Overview of the Middle Way; A Commentary on the Diamond-Cutter Sutra; The String of Shining Jewels, on the Three Sets of Vows; The Point of Entry for Bodhisattvas, a Commentary to the "Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life"*

Written by: Gyaltsab Je Dharma Rinchen (1364-1432); Kedrup Tenpa Dargye (1493-1568); Choney Lama Drakpa Shedrup (1675-1748); Geshe Tsewang Samdrup (c. 1830)

Typical Subjects: Emptiness and the Wish for enlightenment; Emptiness and the bodies of a Buddha; The future of the Buddha's teaching; Emptiness and karma; The direct perception of emptiness; Emptiness and paradise; How empty things still work; The root and secondary vows of a bodhisattva; How to keep the vows; How to purify bad deeds; Taking joy; How to fight mental afflictions; The perfection of giving; How anger destroys good karma; The nature of anger; Where bad things really come from; Dealing with jealousy; Quietude; Stopping attachment; On the joys of solitude; Devoting oneself to meditation; On the need to see emptiness; The two realities; The emptiness of feelings; The sliver of Diamond.

Book Three

Geshe Study Subject: Higher Knowledge (Abhidharma)

School of Buddhism Studied: Detailist (Vaibhashika)

Main Root Text: *The Treasure House of Higher Knowledge (Abhidharma Kosha)*

Written by: Master Vasubandhu, circa 350 AD

Traditional period to cover this subject: Two years in a Tibetan monastery

Summarized in ACI Courses:

Course V: How Karma Works

Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence

Principal monastic textbooks used for ACI Courses: *Light on the Path to Freedom, a Commentary to the Treasure House*

Written by: Gyalwa Gendun Drup, the First Dalai Lama (1391-1474)

Typical Subjects: The nature of karma; The role of motivation; The correlation of deeds and their results; How karma is carried; The relative severity of deeds; The three realms of existence; The nature of the *bardo* (intermediate state between birth and death); A description of time and space; The destruction of the world; How to do death meditation

Book Four

Geshe Study Subject: Vowed Morality (Vinaya)

School of Buddhism Studied: Detailist (Vaibhashika)

Main Root Text: *A Summary of Vowed Morality (Vinaya Sutra)*

Written by: Master Gunaprabha, circa 500 AD

Traditional period to cover this subject: Two years in a Tibetan monastery

Summarized in ACI Course:

Course IX: The Ethical Life

Principal monastic textbooks used for ACI Course: *Essence of the Ocean of Discipline; Daymaker--A commentary on the "Essence of the Ocean"*

Written by: Je Tsongkapa (1357-1419), Master Ngulchu Dharma Bhadra (1772-1851)

Typical Subjects: The nature of the vows of freedom; Their divisions; The specific vows (note: nuns and monks' vows are presented only to those with ordination); Who can take vows; How vows are lost; The benefits of keeping vows.

Book Five

Geshe Study Subject: Buddhist Logic (Pramana)

School of Buddhism Studied: Sutrist (Sautrantika)

Main Root Text: *The Commentary on Valid Perception (Pramana Varttika)*

Written by: Master Dharmakirti, circa 650 AD, on Master Dignaga, circa 450 AD

Traditional period to cover this subject: Three months per year for 15 years in a Tibetan monastery

Summarized in ACI Courses:

Course IV: The Proof of Future Lives

Course XIII: The Art of Reasoning

Principal monastic textbooks used for ACI Courses: *The Four Reasonings; Light on the Path to Freedom, An Explanation of the Commentary on Valid Perception; Jewel of the True Thought; An Explanation of the Art of Reasoning; An Explanation of the Path of Reasoning; The Collected Topics of the Spiritual Son; The Collected Topics of Rato; A Clear Exposition upon Mind and Mental Functions*

Written by: Khen Rinpoche Geshe Lobsang Tharchin (b. 1921); Gyaltsab Je Darma Rinchen (1364-1432); The First Panchen Lama, Lobsang Chukyi Gyaltsen (1567?-1662); Geshe Yeshe Wangchuk (1928-1997); Master Tutor Purbuchok Jampa Tsultrim Gyatso (1825-1901); Master Ngawang Trashin (c. 1700); Master Chok-hla U-ser (c. 1500)

Typical Subjects: The meaning of valid perception; The nature of omniscience; Proofs for past and future lives; The qualities of a Buddha; Why study the art of reasoning?; The definition of a reason; How to do Buddhist debate; The parts of a logical statement; Cause and effect; The nature of the subject mind; The concept of negatives and positives; The nature of definitions; The concept of time.

Book Six

Geshe Study Subject: The Steps to Buddhahood (Lam Rim)

School of Buddhism Studied: Advanced Middle Way (Madhyamika Prasangika)

Main Root Text: *The Great Book on the Steps to Buddhahood (Lam Rim Chenmo)*

Written by: Je Tsongkapa (1357-1419)

Traditional period to cover this subject: Intermittently over a period of 15 years in a Tibetan monastery

Overview of the ACI Teacher Training Program

Summarized in ACI Courses:

Course I: The Principal Teachings of Buddhism

Course III: Applied Meditation

Course XIV: Lojong, Developing the Good Heart

Principal monastic textbooks used for ACI Courses: *A Gift of Liberation, Thrust into Our Hands; The Principal Teachings of Buddhism; A Commentary on the Principal Teachings of Buddhism; A Thousand Angels of the Heaven of Bliss (Ganden Hlagyama); Preparing for Tantra (The "Source of All My Good" and its Commentary); A Collection of Lojong Texts; Offering of the Mandala; How to Offer the Mandala in Thirty-Seven Parts*

Written by: Khen Rinpoche Geshe Lobsang Tharchin (b. 1921); Je Tsongkapa (1357-1419); Pabongka Rinpoche (1878-1941); Master Ngulchu Dharma Bhadra (1772-1851)

Typical Subjects: The Meaning of Rennciation, the Wish for enlightenment, and correct world view; How to do a daily practice; How to meditate; What to meditate on; How to practice at work and other everyday situations; How to offer the mandala; How to practice love and compassion; Brief presentations of the entire path to Enlightenment; How to prepare for the secret teachings.

༄༅། །མཐུལ། །

mandel

།ས་གཞི་སྔོས་ཀྱིས་བྱགས་ཤིང་མེ་ཏོག་བཀམ།

sashi pukyi jukshing metok tram,

།རི་རབ་སྒྲིང་བཞི་ཉི་ལྷས་བརྒྱན་པ་འདི།

rirab lingshi nyinde gyenpa di,

།སངས་རྒྱས་ཞིང་དུ་དམིགས་ཏེ་དབུལ་བར་བསྒྱ།

sangye shingdu mikte ulwar gyi,

།འབྲོ་ཀུན་ནམ་དག་ཞིང་ལ་སྒྲོད་པར་ཤོག །།

drokun namdak shingla chupar shok.

།ཨི་དྲི་གུ་རུ་རྩ་མཚུ་ལ་ཀློ་ནི་རྒྱ་ཏ་ཡ་མི། །

Idam guru ratna mandalakam niryatayami.

Offering the Mandala

Here is the great Earth,
Filled with the smell of incense,
Covered with a blanket of flowers,

The Great Mountain,
The Four Continents,
Wearing a jewel
Of the Sun, and Moon.

In my mind I make them
The Paradise of a Buddha,
And offer it all to You.

By this deed
May every living being
Experience
The Pure World.

Idam guru ratna mandalakam niryatayami.

༄༅། །སྐབས་འགྲོ་སེམས་བསྐྱེད། །
kyabdro semkye

།སངས་རྒྱས་ཆོས་དང་ཆོག་གི་མཆོག་ནམས་ལ།
sangye chudang tsokyi choknam la,

།བྱང་རྩལ་བར་དུ་བདག་ནི་སྐབས་སུ་མཆིས།
jangchub bardu dakni kyabsu chi,

།བདག་གིས་སྤྱིན་སོགས་བགྱིས་པའི་བསོད་ནམས་གྱིས།
dakki jinsok gyipay sunam kyi,

།འགྲོ་ལ་ཕན་ཕྱིར་སངས་རྒྱས་འགྲུབ་པར་ཤོག །།
drola penchir sangye druppar shok.

Refuge and The Wish

I go for refuge
To the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha
Until I achieve enlightenment.

By the power
Of the goodness that I do
In giving and the rest,

May I reach Buddhahood
For the sake
Of every living being.

༄༅། །བཟླ་བ། །
ngowa

།དག་བ་འདི་ཡིས་སྐྱེ་བོ་ཀུན།
gewa diyi kyewo kun,

།བསོད་ནམས་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཚོགས་ཇོགས་ཤིང་།
sunam yeshe tsok-dzok shing,

།བསོད་ནམས་ཡེ་ཤེས་ལས་བྱུང་བའི།
sunam yeshe lejung way,

།དམ་པ་སྐྱུ་གཉིས་འཐོབ་པར་ཤོག །།
dampa kunyi topar shok.

Dedication of the Goodness of a Deed

By the goodness
Of what I have just done
May all beings

Complete the collection
Of merit and wisdom,

And thus gain the two
Ultimate bodies
That merit and wisdom make.

ལྷོ་མཚོ་པ། །
chupa

ཏོན་པ་སྤྲ་མེད་སངས་རྒྱས་རིན་པོ་ཆེ།
tonpa lame sanggye rinpoche,

ཀློབ་པ་སྤྲ་མེད་དམ་ཚུལ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ།
kyoppa lame damchu rinpoche,

འདྲེན་པ་སྤྲ་མེད་དགེ་འདུན་རིན་པོ་ཆེ།
drenpa lame gendun rinpoche,

ཀླུངས་གནས་དགོན་མཚོག་གསུམ་ལ་མཚོད་པ་འབུལ།
kyabne konchok sumla chupa bul.

A Buddhist Grace

I offer this
To the Teacher
Higher than any other,
The precious Buddha.

I offer this
To the protection
Higher than any other,
The precious Dharma.

I offer this
To the guides
Higher than any other,
The precious Sangha.

I offer this
To the places of refuge,
To the Three Jewels,
Rare and supreme.



The Asian Classics Institute
Course III: Applied Meditation

Level Two of The Steps to Buddhahood (Lam Rim)

Course Syllabus

Readings One and Two

Subject: The Six Preliminaries to Meditation, and the Seven Ingredients

Reading: Je Tsongkapa's *Great Book on the Steps of the Path*, folios 37a--40a,
a commentary upon selections from the *King of All Prayers*, the
Prayer of the Realized One, *Deeds of All Goodness*, folios 198b-199a

A Thousand Angels of the Heaven of Bliss

Reading Three

Subject: The Six Conditions for Meditation

Reading: Je Tsongkapa's *Great Book on the Steps of the Path*, folios 314a-315b

Reading Four

Subject: The Eight-Part Posture

Reading: Je Tsongkapa's *Great Book on the Steps of the Path*, folios 315b-316a

Readings Five and Six

Subject: The Five Problems of Meditation, and the Eight Corrections

Reading: A special chart on the stages of meditation designed by Kyabje
Trijang Rinpoche (1901-1981)

Reading Seven

Subject: The Nine States of Meditation

Reading: Pabongka Rinpoche's *A Gift of Liberation*, folios 357a-359a

Course III, Applied Meditation
Course Syllabus

Reading Eight

Subject: The Steps to Buddhahood, and Finding a Lama

Reading: Pabongka Rinpoche's *Opening Your Eyes to What You Should Keep, and What You Should Give Up*, a commentray on Je Tsongkapa's *Source of All My Good*, Part One

Reading Nine

Subject: Getting the Essence of Life

Reading: Pabongka Rinpoche's *Opening Your Eyes to What You Should Keep, and What You Should Give Up*, a commentray on Je Tsongkapa's *Source of All My Good*, Part Two

Reading Ten

Subject: Steps for Those of Medium and Greater Capacity

Reading: Pabongka Rinpoche's *Opening Your Eyes to What You Should Keep, and What You Should Give Up*, a commentray on Je Tsongkapa's *Source of All My Good*, folios Part Three

Readings One and Two: The Six Preliminaries to Meditation, and the Seven Ingredients

From the *Great Book on the Steps of the Path* by Je Tsongkapa:

Here we begin a brief presentation of how to practice the steps of the path to Buddhahood. First we will make the actual presentation, and after that refute certain mistaken ideas about the steps. The presentation itself comes in two sections; the first is how to proceed during meditation periods. This starts with Six Preliminaries to meditation.

༡༥ གསེར་གླིང་པའི་རྣམ་ཐར་ཡིན་པས། གནས་ཁང་ལེགས་པར་བྱི་དོར་བྱས་ལ་
སྐྱོ་གསུང་ཐུགས་ཀྱི་ཏེན་ལེགས་པར་དབྱེ།

Course III, Applied Meditation
Readings One and Two

[1] Here we are following the descriptions of how Serlingpa practiced during his life. The first preliminary to meditation is to make the room tidy and clean; then set up a beautiful altar, with representations of the Buddha's body, speech, and mind.

༢༽ མཚོད་པ་གཡོ་མེད་པར་བཅུ་ལ་བཀོད་པ་མངེས་པར་བཤམ།

[2] The second preliminary is to go and find offerings that you obtain without using any dishonest means. Put them forth in an attractive arrangement.

༣༽ དེ་ནས་ཉན་ས་ལས་གཉིད་ལྷགས་ཀྱི་སྒྲིབ་པ་ལས་སེམས་སྦྱང་བའི་སྐབས་སུ་
ཕན་ཚུན་འཆག་དགོས་ལ་དེ་ལས་གཞན་པའི་འདོད་པ་ལ་འདུན་པ་ལ་སོགས་པའི་
སྒྲིབ་པ་ནམས་ལས་སེམས་སྦྱང་བའི་ཆོ་བྱིའམ་བྱིའུ་ལ་སོགས་པའི་སྤྲོད་དུ་སྦྱིལ་མོ་
ཀྱང་དུ་འཁོད་ནས་བྱ་བར་གསུངས་པས། གནས་མལ་བདེ་བ་ལ་ལུས་དྲང་པོར་
བསྐང་སྟེ་སྦྱིལ་མོ་ཀྱང་ངམ་སྦྱིལ་མོ་ཀྱང་ཕྱེད་དུ་འང་རུང་བའི་སྦྱོད་ལམ་གྱིས་འཁོད་
ནས་སྐབས་སུ་འགྲོ་བ་དང་སེམས་བསྐྱེད་པ་རྒྱུད་དང་འདྲིས་ངེས་པ་ཞིག་བྱ།

[3] Now the *Levels of Listeners* [by Master Asanga] says that, when you are practicing to purify the mind of the obstacles of sleepiness and fogginess, you should "press them upon each other." It also states that, when you are practicing to purify the mind of other kinds of obstacles, such as attraction to the objects of the senses, you should seat yourself upon a platform or smaller seat and assume the full lotus position. Therefore the third preliminary is to seat yourself on a comfortable cushion, sit up straight, and assume a full lotus position with your legs (a half lotus is also acceptable). In this pose then sink your mind deep into the thoughts of taking refuge, and the wish for enlightenment.

༤༽ མདུན་གྱི་ནམ་མཁའ་ལ་རྒྱ་ཆེན་སྦྱོད་པ་དང་ཟབ་མོ་ལྷ་བའི་བརྒྱུད་པའི་སྒྲ་མ་
ནམས་དང་གཞན་ཡང་སངས་རྒྱས་དང་བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་དཔའ་འཕགས་པ་ཉན་ཐོས་
དང་རང་སངས་རྒྱས་བཀའ་སྦྱོད་དང་བཅས་པ་དཔག་ཏུ་མེད་པ་བཞུགས་པར་བསམས་

དེ་ཚོ་གསུམ་གསུམ་གསུམ་པའི་ཞིང་གསུམ་ལ་གདབ།

[4] The fourth preliminary is to visualize the garden for gathering the power of good. In the space before you, imagine the Lamas of both the far-reaching lineage, and the lineage of the profound view. Together with them are an inconceivable mass of Buddhas, and bodhisattvas, listeners, self-made Buddhas, and protectors of the Dharma.

༡༥ དེ་ནས་ལམ་རྒྱུད་ལ་སྐྱེ་བའི་མཐུན་རྒྱུན་ཚོ་གསུམ་བསག་པ་དང་འགལ་རྒྱུན་སྐྱེ་བ་
པ་སྐྱོང་བའི་ལྷན་ཅིག་བྱེད་རྒྱུན་མེད་ན་ཉེར་ལེན་གྱི་རྒྱུ་དམིགས་ནམ་སྐྱོང་བ་ཙམ་ལ་
འབད་ཀྱང་ལམ་ཤིན་ཏུ་སྐྱེ་དཀའ་བས་བསག་སྐྱོང་གི་གནད་ནམས་བསྐྱུས་པའི་ཡན་
ལག་བདུན་པས་རྒྱུད་སྐྱོང་དགོས་སོ།

[5] It is extremely difficult to bring the path to grow within the stream of your mind if all you practice is the various principal causes. You also need the supporting causes for the path to grow; you need to gather together the different factors that are conducive to the path, and you need to clean yourself of the factors that are obstacles, the ones that oppose the path. Therefore you must train your mind in the Seven Ingredients, which include in them all the critical points for gathering good and cleaning away obstacles.

༡༦ །དེ་ལ་ཕྱག་འཆལ་བའི་ཡན་ལག་ལ་སྒོ་གསུམ་བསྐྱུས་པའི་ཕྱག་ནི། ཇི་
སྒྲིང་སྐྱེད་གཅིག་པའི་ཚོ་གསུམ་བཅད་གཅིག་སྟེ། འཇིག་རྟེན་གྱི་ཁམས་ཕྱོགས་རི་བ་
དང་དུས་རི་རིའི་སངས་རྒྱས་མ་ཡིན་གྱི། ཕྱོགས་བཅུ་ཀ་ན་བཞུགས་པ་དང་སྤྱིར་བྱོན་
ཟིན་པ་དང་མ་འོངས་པ་ན་འབྱོན་པར་འགྱུར་བ་དང་ད་ལྟར་བྱུང་བའི་རྒྱལ་བ་ཐམས་
ཅད་ལ་དམིགས་ནས་གཞན་གྱི་གཡམ་ལ་རྒྱུག་ལྟ་བུ་མིན་པར་བསམ་པ་ཐག་པ་ནས་
སྒོ་གསུམ་གྲུས་པས་ཕྱག་འཆལ་བའོ། །དེ་ཡང་སངས་རྒྱས་གཅིག་ལ་ཕྱག་འཆལ་
ནའང་བསོད་ནམས་དཔག་ཏུ་མེད་པ་ལ་སངས་རྒྱས་དེ་ཙམ་ལ་དམིགས་ནས་ཕྱག་
འཆལ་ན་ལྟ་ཅི་སྒྲོས་ཞེས་སྒྲོབ་དཔོན་ཡེ་ཤེས་སྒྲེས་འགྲེལ་པར་བཤད་དོ།

Course III, Applied Meditation
Readings One and Two

[a] The first ingredient is prostration. There is one kind of prostration that combines all three doors of expression. It is found in the verse [from the *King of All Prayers, the Prayer of the Realized One, Deeds of All Goodness*] that includes the words "Whosoever they are, as many as there may be." [The full verse reads:

།ཇི་སྟོན་སུ་དག་ཕྱོགས་བཅུའི་འཇིག་རྟེན་ན།

།དུས་གསུམ་གཤེགས་པ་མི་ཡི་སང་གི་ཀུན།

།བདག་གིས་མ་ལུས་དེ་དག་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ།

།ལུས་དང་ངག་ཡིད་དང་བས་ཕྱག་བགྱོཌ།

I bow down, and purely,
In body and speech and mind,
To all those Lions of living kind,
Whosoever they are,
As many as there may be,
To those Who are Gone;
Gone in the past,
In the present or the future,
On any of the planets
In the ten directions of space.]

Here we are not talking of a Buddha on a certain planet in a certain direction of space, nor are we talking of a Buddha of a particular time; our prostrations rather are directed at each and every Victorious Buddha, those who live in every one of the ten directions of space itself—those who have already come before, those who are going to come in the future, and those who now are here. Don't do your prostrations just to go along with the crowd; do them rather out of deep respect, from the depths of your heart.

On this the master Yeshe De, in his commentary, notes that "The good deed you do by prostrating to a single Buddha is beyond any means of measuring. So there's no need to mention what a goodness it is to picture this many Buddhas, and then prostrate yourself to them."

།སྟོན་གསུམ་སོ་སོ་བའི་ཕྱག་ལ་ལུས་ཀྱི་ཕྱག་ནི། བཟང་པོ་སྟོན་པ་ཞེས་སོགས་ཆོགས་
བཅད་གཅིག་སྟེ། རྒྱལ་བ་ཕྱོགས་དང་དུས་ཀྱིས་བསུས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཡིད་ཀྱི་ཡུལ་དུ་

མངོན་སུམ་པ་ལྟར་དམིགས་ལ་རང་གི་ལུས་ཞིང་ནམས་གྱི་རྩལ་སྤྲ་རབ་དང་གྲངས་
མཉམ་པར་སྒྲུལ་ལ་ཕྱག་བྱའོ། །དེ་ཡང་ཡུལ་ནམས་གྱི་བཟང་པོའི་སྒྲོན་པ་ལ་རབ་རྩུ་
དད་པའི་སྒྲོབས་བསྐྱེད་དེ་དེས་ཀྱན་ནས་བསྐྱངས་ཏེ་འོ། །ལུས་གཅིག་གིས་ཕྱག་བྱས་
པའང་བསོད་ནམས་ཆེན་ལུས་དེ་ཙམ་གྱིས་ཕྱག་བྱས་པ་ནི་བསོད་ནམས་ཤིན་ཏུ་ཆེ་འོ་
ཞེས་སྒྲོབ་དཔོན་ཡེ་ཤེས་སྡེ་གསུང་ངོ་།

This is how we explain what it is to prostrate through each one of the three doors of expression. The first is the prostration in body, and is found in the one verse that includes the lines "Deeds of Goodness" [The full verse reads:

།བཟང་པོ་སྒྲོན་པའི་སྒྲོན་ལམ་སྒྲོབས་དག་གིས།

།རྒྱལ་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཡིད་གྱི་མངོན་སུམ་དུ།

།ཞིང་གི་རྩལ་སྤྲེད་ལུས་རབ་བརྟན་པ་ཡིས།

།རྒྱལ་བ་ཀྱན་ལ་རབ་རྩུ་ཕྱག་འཆལ་ལོ།

By all the power
Of the prayer of Deeds of Goodness
Each and every Victorious One
Is actually here
Before my mind,
And I bow myself to them
Perfectly,
With bodies that are as many
As the atoms
Of all the worlds
Of the universe.]

Here first picture each and every Victorious One, those of every place, and those of every time; see them in your mind, as if they were actually here before you. Then send forth copies of yourself, bodies that are equal in number to the atoms of all the worlds of the universe, and bow down to them.

།ཡིད་གྱི་ཕྱག་ནི། རྩལ་གཅིག་སྤྲེད་ན་ཞེས་པའི་ཆོག་མཁན་བཅད་གཅིག་སྤྲེ། རྩལ་སྤྲ་རབ་

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རེ་རེ་སྟེང་ནའང་རྩལ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་གྲངས་དང་མཉམ་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་འཁོར་བྱང་
སེམས་ཀྱིས་བསྐྱོར་བའི་དབུས་ན་བཞུགས་པ་ལ་དེ་དག་གི་ཡོན་ཏན་རྗེས་སུ་དྲན་པའི་
མོས་པ་བསྐྱེད་བའོ།

Next is the prostration in mind. This too is found in a single verse, the one with the words "Atop a single atom." [The full verse reads:

།རྩལ་གཅིག་སྟེང་ན་རྩལ་སྟེད་སངས་རྒྱས་རྣམས།
།སངས་རྒྱས་སྤྲས་ཀྱི་དབུས་ན་བཞུགས་པ་དག
།དེ་ལྟར་ཆོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས་རྣམས་མ་ལུས་པ།
།ཐམས་ཅད་རྒྱལ་བ་དག་གིས་གང་བར་མོས།

Atop a single atom
Are Buddhas as many
As all the atoms
There are.
Around them are
Their sons and daughters.
I see
Every corner of space,
Each and every place,
Filled like this,
With Victors.]

Imagine every single atom of the universe, and atop each one see Buddhas, as many as all the atoms there are. These Buddhas are surrounded by their followers, all the bodhisattvas. Try to have a feeling where you see, where you sense you are in the presence of, all their incredible good qualities.

།ངག་གི་ཕྱག་ནི། དེ་དག་བསྐྱགས་བཞེས་པའི་ཆོགས་བཅད་གཅིག་སྟེ། ཡུལ་
རྣམས་ཀྱི་ཡོན་ཏན་གྱི་བསྐྱགས་པ་ཟད་མི་ཤེས་པ་རྣམས་ལུས་རེ་རེ་ལ་མགོ་བོ་དཔག་
ཏུ་མེད་པ་དང་མགོ་རེ་རེ་ལ་ལྷུ་དཔག་ཏུ་མེད་པར་སྤྱལ་བར་གསུངས་པ་ལྟར་བྱས་ནས་
སྟན་པའི་དབྱངས་ཀྱིས་བརྗོད་པའོ། །འདིར་དབྱངས་ནི་བསྟོད་པ་ཡིན་ལ་དེའི་ཡན་

ལག་ནི་རྒྱ་སྟེ་ལྟོ་། །རྒྱ་མཚོ་ནི་མང་པོའི་ཚིག་གོ།

Last is the prostration in speech. This one is found in the single verse which mentions "my words of admiration." [The full verse reads:

།དེ་དག་བསྐྱབས་པ་མི་ཟད་རྒྱ་མཚོ་རྣམས།
།དབྱངས་གྱི་ཡན་ལག་རྒྱ་མཚོའི་སྒྲ་ཀུན་གྱིས།
།རྒྱལ་བ་ཀུན་གྱི་ཡོན་ཏན་རབ་བརྗོད་ཅིང་།
།བདེ་བར་གཤེགས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་བདག་གིས་བསྟོད།

I sing the praises
Of all those
Who have Gone to Bliss;
I proclaim
The high qualities
Of each and every Victor;
And my words of admiration
Are an ocean that will never dry,
A sea of sound
From the seed of harmony.]

Speak now words of admiration, words that never end, for each of the holy beings before you, in a song of lovely harmony. Do this the way it is described in the other books; turn each head of your bodies into an infinite number of tongues, and sing. Here in the verse the word "harmony" refers to the praises you sing, and their "seed" is what makes them come out; that is, your tongue. The words "sea" and "ocean" express the idea of a multitude.

ཁོ །མཚན་པའི་ཡན་ལག་ལ་སྒྲ་ན་ཡོད་པའི་མཚན་པ་ནི། མི་ཏོག་དམ་པ་ཞིས་
པའི་ཚིགས་བཅད་གཉིས་ཏེ། མི་ཏོག་དམ་པ་ནི་ལྷ་དང་མིའི་ཡུལ་ལ་སོགས་པའི་མི་
ཏོག་མད་དུ་བྱུང་བ་སིལ་མ་རྣམས་སོ། །ཤིང་བ་ནི་མི་ཏོག་སྒྲ་ཚིགས་སྟེའི་བརྒྱུས་པ་
སྟེ་དེ་གཉིས་ཀ་ཡང་དངོས་དང་བཅས་མ་ཐམས་ཅད་དོ། །སིལ་སྒྲ་ན་ནི་རོལ་མོ་རྒྱུད་
ཅན་དང་འབྱུང་པ་དང་བརྒྱུད་བ་དང་དགྲོལ་བ་རྣམས་སོ། །བྱུག་པ་ནི་སྟོན་ཞིམ་པོའི་ལྟེ་

གུའོ། །གདུགས་མཚེག་ནི་གདུགས་ནྟམས་ཀྱི་མཚེག་གོ། །མར་མེ་ནི་སྟོས་མར་ལ་
སོགས་པ་དྲི་ཞིམ་ཞིང་འོད་གསལ་བ་དང་རིན་ཆེ་བའི་ཉོར་བྱ་འོད་གསལ་བའོ།
།བདུག་པ་ནི་བདུག་སྟོས་སྒྱར་བ་དང་སྒྲ་གཅིག་པའོ། །ན་བཟའ་དམ་པ་ནི་གོས་ཐམས་
ཅད་ཀྱི་མཚེག་གོ། །དྲི་མཚེག་ནི་སྟོས་ཆུ་ཡོན་ཆབ་ཏུ་གསོལ་བ་ཟེར་ཏེ་སྟོང་གསུམ་
དུ་དྲི་ངད་ལྷང་བའི་དྲིས་བསྟོས་པའི་ཆུ་ལ་སོགས་པའོ། །ཕྱེ་མ་ཕྱར་མ་ནི་སྟོས་ཞིམ་
པོའི་ཕྱེ་མ་གཏོར་ཞིང་བདུག་ཏུ་རུང་བ་ཐུམ་པོར་བྱས་པའམ་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་བྲིས་པའི་
ཚོན་ཕྱེ་སྟེལ་བའི་རིམ་པ་རྒྱ་དང་རྩམས་རི་རབ་དང་མཉམ་པའོ།

[b] This brings us to the second ingredient: offering. The offering which does have something higher is found in the two verses that contain the words "holy flowers". [The full verses read:

།མེ་ཏོག་དམ་པ་འཕྲེང་བ་དམ་པ་དང་།
།སེལ་སྒྲན་ནྟམས་དང་བྱུང་པ་གདུགས་མཚེག་དང་།
།མར་མེ་མཚེག་དང་བདུག་སྟོས་དམ་པ་ཡིས།
།རྒྱལ་བ་དེ་དག་ལ་ནི་མཚོད་པར་བགྱི།

I make offerings
To all of these
Victorious Ones;
Holy Flowers, holy garlands,
Cymbals and ointments,
The highest parasol,
The highest lamp,
And holy incenses.

།ན་བཟའ་དམ་པ་ནྟམས་དང་དྲི་མཚེག་དང་།
།ཕྱེ་མ་ཕྱར་མ་རི་རབ་མཉམ་པ་དང་།

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།བཀོད་པ་བྱད་པར་འཕགས་པའི་མཆོག་ཀུན་གྱིས།

།རྒྱལ་བ་དེ་དག་ལ་ནི་མཆོད་པར་བགྱ།

I make offerings
To all of these
Victorious Ones;
Holy silken clothing,
The highest scent,
And a mountain of incense powder
High as Meru—
All set forth
In a way more lovely
Than any other thing there is.]

The words "holy flower" refer to the most wondrous blooms of all in the lands of both pleasure beings and humans; here they are single flowers. "Garlands" are assortments of flowers pressed together on a string. Either way, the flowers can be real ones, or made of other things.

The word "cymbals" refers to all types of music, whether it's on a stringed instrument, a wind instrument, or percussion like drums or cymbals. "Ointments" are thick potions with a delicious smell of incense. The "highest parasol" is the finest of all umbrella-like coverings. The "highest lamp" is one that burns from a fragrant mixture like incense and butter; it shines bright, and gives forth a light as lovely as the flask of a precious gem. The incense mentioned can be either the kind that is a concoction of various sweet-smelling substances, or just one of these substances by itself.

"Holy silken clothing" refers to the finest of all the clothing there is. "Highest scent" means perfumed liquid presented in the form of a water offering; it is made of water, or something similar, imbues with a delicious scent so powerful that it can spread throughout the entire system of a thousand thousand planets. "Incense powder" refers to incense in the form of powder, which you either spread itself or sprinkle atop a fire to make a fragrant smoke. It is in packets, or else laid out in lines like the colored sand used to draw a mandala, in a huge mass as high and wide as Meru, the great mountain in the center of the world.

The phrase "set forth" applies to each of the substances that are being offered; the original Sanskrit word here can mean "majority," or "put forth," or "various."

།བཀོད་པ་ནི་གོང་མ་ཀུན་གྱི་མཐར་སྐྱོར་བ་སྟེ་ཕལ་ཆེ་བ་དང་སྤྲོས་པ་དང་སྣ་ཚོགས་པ་
ལ་བྱའོ། །མཆོད་པ་སྤྲོས་མེད་པ་ནི། མཆོད་པ་གང་རྣམས་ཞེས་པའི་ཚོགས་བཅད་
གཅིག་སྟེ། སྤྲོས་ཡོད་པ་ནི་འཇིག་རྟེན་པའི་མཆོད་པ་ཡིན་པས། འདིར་ནི་བྱང་རྒྱལ་
སེམས་དཔའ་ལ་སོགས་པ་མཐུ་ཅན་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་བཟང་དགུ་སྤྲུལ་བའོ། །ཚིག་ཀླང་པ་
ཐ་མ་གཉིས་ནི་གོང་མ་དེ་གཉིས་མ་ཆང་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ་སྐྱར་ཏེ་ཕུག་དང་མཆོད་པ་
རྣམས་ཀྱི་ཀུན་སྐྱོང་དང་ཡུལ་སྟོན་པའོ།

The other kind of offering is the one which does not have anything higher.
This one is found in the single verse which includes the words "Any and every
offering." [The full verse reads:

།མཆོད་པ་གང་རྣམས་སྤྲོས་མེད་རྒྱ་ཆེ་བ།
།དེ་དག་རྒྱལ་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ་ཡང་སོས།
།བཟང་པོ་སྤྱོད་ལ་དད་པའི་སྟོབས་དག་གིས།
།རྒྱལ་བ་ཀུན་ལ་ཕུག་འཆལ་མཆོད་པར་བགྱི།

I see as well
Any and every offering
Unsurpassed, reaching far and wide,
Handed up to every Victor;
By all the power of my faith
In the Deeds of Goodness may I truly
Bow down and make offerings
Onto all the Victors.]

Offerings which we say "have something higher" are those of worldly beings.
Therefore the offerings made in this verse consist of all the many wondrous
things that very powerful beings, such as bodhisattvas, are capable of
emanating with their mind.

The words of the second half of this verse should be applied anywhere in the
verses before where the intent is not stated directly. Their function is to
express both the motivation with which the prostration and offering are made,
as well as the object towards which they are directed.

གཏོ། །སྒྲིག་པ་བདག་གིས་པའི་ཡན་ལག་ནི། འདོད་ཆགས་ཞེས་པའི་ཚིགས་བཅད་
གཅིག་སྟེ། རྒྱ་དུག་གསུམ་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་གཞི་ལུས་ལ་སོགས་པ་གསུམ་གྱིས་རང་
བཞིན་ནི་བདག་གིས་བགྱིས་པ་སྟེ་དེ་ཡང་དངོས་སུ་རང་གིས་བྱ་བ་དེ་ལ་ཞུགས་པ་དང་
གཞན་བྱེད་དུ་བཅུག་པ་དང་གཞན་གྱིས་བྱས་པ་ལ་ཡི་རང་བའོ། །དེ་དག་ཐམས་ཅད་
སྦྱིར་བསྐྱུས་པ་ནི། ཅི་མཆིས་པ་ཞེས་པ་སྟེ། དེ་དག་གི་ཉིས་དམིགས་དྲན་ནས་སྒྲུ་མ་
ལ་འགྲོད་ཅིང་ཕྱི་མ་ལ་བསྐྱུས་པའི་སེམས་ཀྱིས་སྦྱིང་ཐག་པ་ནས་བཤགས་ན་སྒྲུར་བྱས་
འཕེལ་བ་འཆད་ཅིང་ཕྱི་མ་རྣམས་འཕྲོ་འཆད་དོ།

[c] The third ingredient is confession, and is found in the single verse with the words "like and dislike". [The full verse reads:

།འདོད་ཆགས་ཞེ་སྒྲུང་གཏི་མུག་དབང་གིས་ནི།
།ལུས་དང་ངག་དང་དེ་བཞིན་ཡིད་ཀྱིས་ཀྱང་།
།སྒྲིག་པ་བདག་གིས་བགྱིས་པ་ཅི་མཆིས་པ།
།དེ་དག་ཐམས་ཅད་བདག་གིས་སོ་སོར་བཤགས།

I confess, one by one,
Each and every one
Of all the wrong deeds
I may have committed
In action or word,
And also thought,
Motivated by like or dislike,
Or by dark ignorance.]

This refers to what was done with one of the three mental poisons as its cause; and with my body or of the rest as the vehicle; and with a nature of having been committed, either directly by myself, or by someone else at my bidding, or by someone else with my gladness that it was done. The words "all the wrong deeds I may have committed" are meant to include all these elements.

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Try to bring to mind all the problems that these deeds will bring you, and so feel regret for whatever you have done in the past, and a sense to restrain yourself in the future. Then make your confession. Doing this prevents any future wrong from starting at all.

ང། རྒྱུ་སྤྱི་ཡི་རང་བའི་ཡན་ལག་ནི། རྒྱུ་གས་བཅུ་ཉི་ལྔ་ལ་བཞེས་པའི་ཆོག་གས་
བཅད་གཅིག་སྟེ། གང་ཟག་ལྔ་པོ་དེའི་དག་བའི་པན་ཡོན་དྲན་ནས་དབུལ་པོས་གཏེར་
སྟོན་པ་ལྟར་དགའ་བ་བསྐྱོམ་པའོ།

[d] The fourth ingredient is rejoicing, and is found in the one verse with the words "Victors in any of the ten directions." [The full verse reads:

ཤྱོགས་བཅུ་ཉི་ལྔ་ལ་གྲུན་དང་སངས་རྒྱས་སྤྱས།
།རང་རྒྱལ་རྣམས་དང་སྟོབ་དང་མི་སྟོབ་དང་།
།འགྲོ་བ་གྲུན་གྱི་བསོད་ནམས་གང་ལ་ཡང་།
།དེ་དག་གྲུན་གྱི་རྒྱུ་སྤྱི་བདག་ཡི་རང་།

I rejoice
Over every single one
Of the good deeds ever done
By beings in any of the ten directions:
By all of the Victors,
By all of their Sons and Daughters,
By those Self-Made,
By those on the paths of learning,
By those on the paths done learning,
By anyone at all.]

[d] Try to think about the great goodness that comes from the virtuous deeds of these five different kinds of holy beings, and dwell in a sense of gladness, like a beggar who has stumbled across a mine of gold.

ཅ། རྒྱུ་སྤྱི་ཡི་རང་བའི་ཡན་ལག་ནི། གང་རྣམས་ཤྱོགས་བཅུ་ཉི་
ལྔ་ལ་བཞེས་པའི་ཆོག་གས་བཅད་གཅིག་སྟེ། ཤྱོགས་བཅུ་ཉི་ལྔ་ལ་བྱུང་རྒྱུ་བྱུང་རྒྱུ་རྣམ་པར་སངས་

གྱུ་ཏེ་མ་ཆགས་ཤིང་ཐོགས་པ་མེད་པའི་མཁུན་པ་བརྟེན་ནས་རིང་དུ་མ་ལོན་པ་
ནམས་ལ་ལུས་ཀྱང་དེ་སྟེད་དུ་སྐྱུ་ལ་ནས་ཆོས་སྟོན་པར་བསྐྱུ་ལ་མ་གདབ་བོ། །སྟོབ་
དཔོན་ཡེ་ཤེས་སྟེས་བྱང་རྩབ་ནམ་པར་སངས་གྱུ་ཞེས་བཏོན་ནས་བཤད་པ་མཛད་དོ།

[e] The fifth ingredient is urging holy ones to turn the Wheel of the Dharma. This is found in the one verse with the words "Who in all the ten directions." [The full verse reads:

།གང་ནམས་ཕྱོགས་བཅུའི་འཇིག་རྟེན་སྟོན་མ་དག
།བྱང་རྩབ་རིམ་པར་སངས་གྱུ་མ་ཆགས་བརྟེན།
།མགོན་པོ་དེ་དག་བདག་གིས་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ།
།འཁོར་ལོ་སྤྲོ་ན་མེད་པ་བསྐྱོར་བར་བསྐྱུ་ལ།

Lamps who light
Each of the worlds
In all the ten directions
Of space;
Those who have taken
Each of the steps
To Buddhahood,
And so reached
The state beyond desire,
The Buddha's enlightenment;
Saviors I urge You all,
Turn the Wheel of the Dharma,
Nothing is higher.]

This verse is addressed to those who in paradises in all the ten directions of space have but only recently found Buddhahood in the Buddha's perfect enlightenment—who have reached the state beyond desire, a knowledge which goes anywhere it wants, unstoppable. We are urging them to send forth an equal number of bodies, to come and teach the Dharma.

The commentary by Yeshe De gives the root text here as "found Buddhahood in the Buddha's perfect enlightenment" [rather than "taken each of the steps to Buddhahood," and I have followed him.]

ཆ། །གསོལ་བ་འདེབས་པའི་ཡན་ལག་ནི། ཟླ་ངན་འདའ་སྟོན་ཞེས་པའི་ཚིགས་
བཅད་གཅིག་སྟེ། ཕྱོགས་བཅུའི་ཞིང་དུ་ཟླ་ངན་ལས་འདའ་བའི་ཚུལ་སྟོན་པ་རྣམས་ལ་
འགྲོ་བ་རྣམས་ལ་ཕུགས་སུ་ཕན་པ་དང་གནས་སྐབས་སུ་བདེ་བ་བསྐྱེད་པའི་ཕྱིར་དུ་
ཞིང་ཁམས་ཀྱི་རྩལ་ཕྱར་བ་ཀྱི་གྲངས་དང་མཉམ་པའི་བསྐྱེད་པར་ཟླ་ངན་མི་འདའ་བར་
བཞུགས་པར་ལུས་དཔག་ཏུ་མེད་པར་བྱས་ཏེ་གསོལ་བ་གདབ་བོ།

[f] The sixth ingredient is supplication, and is found in the one verse which contains the words "pretend to pass into nirvana." [The full verse reads:

།ཟླ་ངན་འདའ་སྟོན་གང་བཞེད་དེ་དག་ལ།
།འགྲོ་བ་ཀུན་ལ་ཕན་ཞིང་བདེ་བའི་ཕྱིར།
།བསྐྱེད་པ་ཞིང་གི་རྩལ་སྟེད་བཞུགས་པར་ཡང་།
།བདག་གི་ཐལ་མོར་བ་སྐྱར་གསོལ་བར་བགྱི།

I press my palms at my breast,
And make this supplication
To all of those who may intend
To pretend to pass into nirvana:
Stay, I pray to help all beings
And bring them to happiness;
Stay for eons equal in number
To the atoms of every world.]

Here we are making supplication to all those in worlds of the ten directions of space who might pretend to pass into nirvana. We are requesting them to stay, ultimately to bring all beings help, and in the interim to give them happiness. We ask them to stay, and not to pass on, for eons equal in their number to all the atoms that make up the various worlds of the universe. We make our supplication, praying that they will remain, in bodies beyond all counting.

ཇ། །བསྟོབའི་ཡན་ལག་ནི། ཕུག་འཛལ་བ་དང་ཞེས་པའི་ཚིགས་བཅད་དེ། གོང་
གི་ཡན་ལག་དུག་གི་དགོ་བས་མཚོན་ནས་དགོ་ཅུ་ཐམས་ཅད་སེམས་ཅན་ཐམས་ཅད་

དང་ཐུན་མོང་དུ་བྱས་ཏེ་རྫོགས་པའི་བྱང་ཆུབ་ཀྱི་རྒྱུར་འདུན་པ་དྲག་པོས་བསྡོམས་པས་
ནམ་ཡང་མི་འཇོག་པའོ། །དེ་ལྟར་ཆོག་དེ་དག་གི་དོན་གོ་བར་བྱས་ལ་ཡིད་གཞན་དུ་
མ་ཡིངས་པར་དལ་བྱས་ཇི་སྐད་བསྟན་པ་བཞིན་དུ་བྱས་ན་བསོད་ནམས་ཀྱི་ཡུང་པོ་
དཔག་དུ་མེད་པ་འཛིན་ཏོ། །དེ་ལྟར་ན་ཕྱག་དང་མཆོད་པ་དང་བསྐྱེལ་བ་དང་གསོལ་
བ་གདབ་པ་དང་ཡི་རང་དང་ལྷ་ནི་མཐུན་རྒྱུན་ཆོག་གས་གསོག་པ་ཡིན་ལ། བཤགས་པ་
ནི་འགལ་རྒྱུ་སྒྲིབ་པ་སྦྱོང་བ་དང་ཡི་རང་གི་ཕྱོགས་གཅིག་རང་གི་དགོ་བ་བྱས་པ་ལ་
དགའ་བ་བསྐྱོམ་པ་ནི་རང་གི་དགོ་བ་སྤེལ་བར་ཡང་འགྱུར་རོ། །བསྡོམས་ནི་
བསགས་པ་དང་སྦྱངས་པ་དང་སྤེལ་བའི་དགོ་བ་ནམས་ཉུང་དུ་འང་ཆེས་མང་བར་སྤེལ་
བ་དང་གནས་སྐབས་སུ་འབྲས་བུ་ཕྱུང་སྟེ་ཟད་པར་འགྱུར་བ་ནམས་ཀྱང་ནམ་ཡང་མི་
ཟད་པར་བྱེད་པ་སྟེ་བསྐྱེལ་བ་སྤེལ་བ་དང་སྦྱང་བ་དང་སྤེལ་ཞིང་མི་ཟད་པར་བྱེད་པ་
གསུམ་དུ་འདུའོ།

[g] The seventh ingredient is dedication, which is found in the verse with the words "prostrations and..." [The full verse reads:

།ཕྱག་འཆོལ་བ་དང་མཆོད་ཅིང་བཤགས་པ་དང་།

།རྗེས་སུ་ཡི་རང་བསྐྱེལ་ཞིང་གསོལ་བ་ཡི།

།དགོ་བ་ཅུང་ཟད་བདག་གིས་ཅི་བསགས་པ།

།ཐམས་ཅད་བདག་གིས་བྱང་ཆུབ་ཕྱིར་བསྡོམ་།

I dedicate
To my future enlightenment
All my merit,
Whatever little goodness
I may have gathered here
By bowing myself and offering,

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By confessing and rejoicing,
By urging and supplication.]

Here we are taking all the virtuous seeds within us, represented by the goodness we have accomplished in practicing the six ingredients that have already come, and dedicating them as a cause for the full enlightenment of ourselves and every living being, together. Make this dedication with tremendous will, and the power of your good will flow forever, and never finish.

Read this prayer as I have taught you to here; understand what each verse means, and say it out slowly, without letting your mind wander to something else. If you can do this, then you will gain a great mountain of good deeds, beyond any kind of measuring.

Five of the ingredients we have listed here—prostrating, offering, urging, supplicating, and rejoicing—help you to gather together the different factors that are conducive to the path. One of them, confessing, helps you clean yourself of the factors that are obstacles, ones that oppose the path. One part of rejoicing—dwelling in a sense of gladness over the good you have done yourself—also functions to multiply your virtue.

Dedication works to multiply, fantastically, even the minor good deeds you have done in the acts of gathering, and cleaning, and multiplying. It also takes good deeds that are short-term, those that are going to give a good result and then disappear, and changes them so that they will never be exhausted. In brief, it functions in all three ways: to gather, to clean, and to multiply such that goodness never ends.

༄༅ །དེ་ནས་དམིགས་པ་གསལ་བར་བྱས་ནས་མཚུལ་ལུལ་ཏེ། བཤེས་གཉིན་ལ་
མ་གུས་པ་ནས་བདག་གཉིས་སུ་མཚན་མར་འཛིན་པའི་བར་གྱི་ཕྱིན་ཅི་ལོག་གི་སྟོ་སྟོ་
མཐའ་དག་སྦྱར་དུ་འགག་པ་དང་། བཤེས་གཉིན་ལ་གུས་པ་ནས་བདག་མེད་པའི་དེ་
ཁོ་ན་ཉིད་རྟོགས་པའི་བར་གྱི་ཕྱིན་ཅི་མ་ལོག་པའི་སྟོ་སྟོ་ཐམས་ཅད་བདེ་སྒྲག་དུ་སྦྱོར་
དང་། ཕྱི་དང་ནང་གི་བར་ཆད་ཐམས་ཅད་ཉི་བར་ཞི་བར་བྱིན་གྱིས་བསྐྱབ་དུ་གསོལ།
ཞེས་ལན་མང་དུ་འདུན་པ་བྲག་པོས་གསོལ་བ་གདབ་པར་བྱའོ།

For the sixth and final preliminary, refresh your visualization, and make an offering of a mandala. Then make a request that the Lamas bless the stream

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of your mind. Ask Them to help you stop, quickly, everything from disrespecting your Spiritual Guide on up to grasping to some ingrained self-nature, in either of its two forms. Ask Them to help you develop, smoothly, every single kind of thought which is perfect and unmistaken; everything from respect for your Spiritual Guide, on up to the realization of suchness, the fact that nothing has any nature of its own. And ask them finally to help you put a final end to all the things, within you or outside of you, that might obstruct your spiritual progress.

Make this supplication over and over, many times, with fierce hopes for its success.

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A Thousand Angels
Of the Heaven of Bliss,
A Prayer of Lama Devotion

༄༅། །ལྷ་མའི་ནལ་འབྱོར་དགའ་ལྡན་ལྷ་བརྒྱ་མ། །

lamay nelnjor ganden hlagyama

།དགའ་ལྡན་ལྷ་བརྒྱའི་མགོན་གྱི་ཐུགས་ཀ་ནས།

ganden hla-gyay gungyi tukka ne,

།རབ་དཀར་ཞོགས་ར་སྤངས་འབྲེལ་ཆུ་འཛིན་ཅེར།

rabkar shosar pungdray chunzin tser,

།ཆོས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ་ཀུན་མཁྱེན་སློབ་ཅད་བྲགས།

chu-kyi gyalpo kun-kyen losang drak,

།སྤྲས་དང་བཅས་པ་གནས་འདིར་གཤེགས་སུ་གསོལ།

sedang chepa nendir sheksu sol.

Please come to me,
Lobsang Drakpa,
King of the Dharma, who knows all things,
Come with your Sons, riding upon
The tops of clouds
Like mountains of pure white snow;
Come,
Come from the heart
Of the Lord of a Thousand Angels
Living in the Heaven of Bliss.

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ཁདུན་གྱི་ནམ་མཁར་སེར་ཁྲི་པད་ཟླའི་སྟེང་།

dun-gyi namkar sertri penday teng,

ཇེ་བཙུན་སྤྲ་མ་དགུས་པའི་འཇུ་མ་དཀར་ཅན།

jetsun lama gyepay dzumkar chen,

ཁདག་སྟོ་དད་པའི་བསོད་ནམས་ཞིང་མཆོག་ཏུ།

daklo depay sunam shingchok tu,

ཁསྟན་པ་རྒྱས་སྤྱིར་བསྐྱལ་བརྒྱུར་བཞུགས་སུ་གསོལ།

tenpa gyechir kalgyar shuksu sol.

Sit in the air
In front of me,
On a throne with cushions
Of the moon, and the lotus;
Set on the backs of lions.

My holy Lama,
With pure white smile,
Happy with me,
I ask you to stay
For a million years
To spread the teaching;
Stay, for there is no one
Higher than you
With whom I may make merit
By goodness of my faith.

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ཤེལ་བྱའི་སྟོན་ཀུན་འཇལ་བའི་སློ་གྲོས་བྱུགས།

shejay kyunkun jelway lodru tuk,

སྐྱལ་བཟང་ན་བའི་རྒྱན་གྱུར་ལེགས་བཤད་གསུང་།

kelsang naway gyenggyur lekshe sung,

བྲགས་པའི་དཔལ་གྱིས་ལྷམ་མེར་མཛེས་པའི་སྐྱ།

drakpay pelgyi hlammer dzepay ku,

མཐོང་ཐོས་དྲན་པས་དོན་ལྡན་ལ་ཕྱག་འཆལ།

tongtu drenpe dunden la chaktsel.

Your Mind
Is knowledge
That wraps around
The entire mass
Of knowable things.

Your Words
Are jewels
Of good explanation
That we the fortunate
Wear on our ears.

Your Body
Shines forth
Shines with brightness
Shines with a glory
The world will see.

I bow to You;
Just to see You
Just to hear You
Just to think of You
Brings great things.

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ཡིང་འོང་མཆོད་ཡོན་སྣ་ཚོགས་མེདོག་དང་།

yi-ong chuyun natsok metok dang,

དྲི་ཞིམ་བདུག་སྒྲིམ་སྣང་གསལ་དྲི་ཆབ་སོགས།

drishim dukpu nangsel drichab sok,

འདྲེས་བཤམས་ཡིད་སྤྱལ་མཆོད་སྤྱན་རྒྱ་མཚོ་འདི།

ngusham yitrul chutrin gyatso di,

འབོད་ནམས་ཞིང་མཆོག་བྲིད་ལ་མཆོད་པར་འབུལ།

sunam shingchok kyela chupar bul.

I make in my mind
And place here as well
An ocean of gifts
That could cover the sky;

Presents to please
All of Your senses,
Every different color of flower,
Sweetest fragrant incense,
Lamps of light, perfumes
Upon your body,
And other gifts as well,
Do I offer You,
There is no higher
With whom I may make merit.

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།གང་ཞིག་ཐོག་མེད་དུས་ནས་བསགས་པ་ཡི།

gangshik tokme dune sakpa yi,

།ལུས་ངག་ཡིད་གསུམ་མི་དག་ཅི་བགྱིས་དང་།

lu-ngak yisum mige chigyi dang,

།བྱད་པར་སྒྲོམ་པ་གསུམ་གྱི་མི་མཐུན་ཕྱོགས།

kyepar dompa sumgyi mitun chok,

།སྒྲིང་ནས་འགྲོད་པ་དྲག་པོས་སོ་སོར་བཤགས།

nyingne gyupa drakpu sosor shak.

From deep within my heart,
I am sorry, deeply,
And openly confess
One by one
The harm that I have done
In my acts or words or thoughts;
Any and every wrong
Kept with me from time
With no beginning;
Especially what I may have done
Against any one
Of the three different kinds
Of vows.

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།སྒྲིགས་མའི་དུས་འདིར་མང་ཐོས་སྐྱབ་ལ་བརྩོན།

nyikmay dundir mangtu drupla tsun,

།ཆོས་བརྒྱད་སྤངས་པས་དལ་འབྱོར་དོན་ཡོད་བྱེད།

chugye pangpe delnjor dunyu je,

།མགོན་པོ་བྱོད་ཀྱི་སྒྲུབས་ཆེན་མཇུག་པ་ལ།

gunpo kyukyi labchen dzepa la,

།བདག་ཅག་བསམ་པ་ཐག་པས་ཡི་རང་ངོ་།

dakchak sampa takpe yirang ngo.

Here in the age
Of degeneration
You made every effort
To gain great learning;

You threw away
The eight worldly thoughts
And so made use
Of Your leisure and fortune.

Savior, we rejoice
We are glad, happy deep inside,
For what you have done,
So good and powerful.

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Readings One and Two

།ཇི་བཅུན་སྒྲ་མ་དམ་པ་བྲིད་རྣམས་གྱིས།

jetsun lama dampa kyenam kyi,

།ཆོས་སྐྱའི་མཁའ་ལ་མཁུན་བརྩེའི་རྩ་འཛིན་འབྲིགས།

chukuy kala kyentsey chunzin trik,

།ཇི་ལྷར་འཆམས་པའི་གདུལ་བྱའི་འཛིན་མ་ལ།

jitar tsampay duljay dzinma la,

།ཟབ་རྒྱས་ཆོས་གྱི་ཆར་པ་དབབ་ཏུ་གསོལ།

sabgye chukyi charpa aptu sol.

Holy lamas high,
Wrap the sky
Of your dharma bodies
In massive clouds
Of knowledge and love
And let them pour
Upon the earth
Of your disciples,
As we are ready,
A shower of rain,
The Teachings
Deep and wide.

Course III, Applied Meditation
Readings One and Two

ཁདག་གིས་ཇི་སྟེན་བསགས་པའི་དག་བ་འདིས།

dakki ji-nye sakpay gewa di,

ཁསྟན་དང་འགྲོ་བ་ཀུན་ལ་གང་ཕན་དང་།

tendang drowa kunla gangpen dang,

ཁྱད་པར་ཇི་བཙུན་སྟོ་བཟང་གྲགས་པ་ཡི།

kyepar jetsun losang drakpa yi,

ཁསྟན་པའི་སྟིང་པོ་རིང་དུ་གསལ་བྱེད་ཤོག །

tenpay nyingpo ringdu selje shok.

May any goodness
I have done
With this my prayer
Be a help to the teachings
And to every living being.

I make a special prayer too
That for many years to come
I may carry forth
The Light,
The Essence of the Word,
The Teachings of Je Tsongkapa.

Course III, Applied Meditation
Readings One and Two

།དཔལ་ལྷན་ཙ་བའི་སྤྲ་མ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ།

pelnden tsarway lama rinpoche,

།བདག་གི་སྒྱི་བོར་པད་ལྷའི་སྒྲིང་བཅུགས་ལ།

dakki chiwor penday tengshuk la,

།བཀའ་དྲིན་ཆེན་པོའི་སྒྲོ་ནས་ཇེས་བཟུང་སྟེ།

kadrin chenpoy gone jesung te,

།སྐྱུ་གསུང་བྱགས་ཀྱི་དངོས་གྲུབ་རྩོམ་དུ་གསོལ།

kusung tukkyi ngudrup tsoldu sol.

Come I pray and sit
My root Lama
Shining and precious
Upon the lotus
Atop my head;
Take me after You
In great kindness,
Grant that I attain
Your body, speech and mind.

།དངོས་གྲུབ་ཀྱན་འབྱུང་བྱབ་དབང་དོན་ལྡང་།

ngudrup kuynjung tubwang dorje chang,

I pray to the One who Holds the Diamond
The source from where
Every goal is found;

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Readings One and Two

།དམིགས་མེད་བརྩེ་བའི་གཏེར་ཆེན་སྤྱན་རས་གཟིགས།

mikme tseway terchen chenre sik,

།དྲི་མེད་མཁྱེན་པའི་དབང་པོ་འཇམ་དཔལ་དབྱངས།

drime kyenpay wangpo jampel yang,

།བདུད་དཔུང་མ་ལུས་འཇོམས་མཛད་གསང་བའི་བདག །

dupung malu jomdze sangway dak,

།གངས་ཅན་མཁས་པའི་གཙུག་རྒྱན་ཙོང་ཁ་པ།

gangchen kepay tsuk-gyen tsongkapa,

།ལྷོ་བཟང་གྲགས་པའི་ཞབས་ལ་གསོལ་བ་འདེབས།

losang drakpay shabla solwa deb.

I pray to Loving Eyes
Treasure of love
With no one it loves;

I pray to Soft Glorious Voice
Lord of knowledge
That has no stain;

I pray to the Keeper of the Secret
Who smashes all
The army of demons;

I pray to Tsongkapa
Crowning jewel
Of masters of the Land of Snow;

I pray to One,
I pray at the feet,
I pray to Lobsang Drakpa.

Course III, Applied Meditation
Readings One and Two

།དཔལ་ལྷན་ཙ་བའི་སྤྲ་མ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ།

pelnden tsarway lama rinpoche,

།བདག་གི་སྤྲིང་ཁར་པད་ལྷའི་སྤྲིང་བཅུགས་ལ།

dakki nying-kar penday tengshuk la,

།བཀའ་དྲིན་ཆེན་པོའི་སྤྲོ་ནས་ཇེས་བཟུང་སྟེ།

kadrin chenpoy gone jesung te,

།སྐྱུ་གསུང་བྱགས་ཀྱི་དངོས་བྱུང་ཚོལ་དུ་གསོལ།

kusung tukkyi ngudrup tsoldu sol.

Come I pray and sit
My root Lama
Shining and precious
Upon the lotus
In my heart;
Take me after You
In great kindness,
Grant that I attain
Your body, speech and mind.

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Readings One and Two

།དཔལ་ལྷན་རྩ་བའི་སྤྲ་མ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ།

pelnden tsarway lama rinpoche,

།བདག་གི་སྤྲིང་ཁར་པད་ལྷའི་སྤྲིང་བཅུགས་ལ།

dakki nying-kar penday tengshuk la,

།བཀའ་དྲིན་ཆེན་པོའི་སྤྲོ་ནས་ཇེས་བཟུང་སྟེ།

kadrin chenpoy gone jesung te,

།མཆོག་དང་ཐུན་མོང་དངོས་གྲུབ་རྩོལ་དུ་གསོལ།

chokdang tunmong ngudrup tsoldu sol.

Come I pray and sit
My root Lama
Shining and precious
Upon the lotus
In my heart;
Take me after You
In great kindness,
Grant that I attain
Both common and highest goals.

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།དཔལ་ལྷན་རྩ་བའི་སྤྲ་མ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ།

pelnden tsarway lama rinpoche,

།བདག་གི་སྤྲིང་ཁར་པད་ལྷའི་སྤྲིང་བཞུགས་ལ།

dakki nying-kar penday tengshuk la,

།བཀའ་དྲིན་ཆེན་པོའི་སྤྲོ་ནས་ཇེས་བཟུང་སྟེ།

kadrin chenpoy gone jesung te,

།བྱང་ཆུབ་སྤྲིང་པོའི་བར་དུ་བརྟན་པར་བཞུགས།

jangchub nyinpoy bardu tenpar shuk.

Come I pray and sit
My root Lama
Shining and precious
Upon the lotus
In my heart;
Take me after You
In great kindness,
Stay here never moving
Until the Buddha's essence.

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Readings One and Two

ཁོ་རབས་ཀུན་ཏུ་རྒྱལ་བ་ཙོང་ཁ་པས།

tserab kuntu gyalwa tsongkape,

ཐེག་མཆོག་བཤེས་གཉིན་དངོས་སུ་མཇུག་པའི་མཐུས།

tekchok she-nyen ngusu dzepay tu,

རྒྱལ་བས་བསྐྱེད་པའི་ལམ་བཟང་དེ་ཉིད་ལས།

gyalwe ngakpay lamsang de-nyi le,

སྐྱད་ཅིག་ཙམ་ཡང་བསྐྱོད་པར་མ་གྱུར་ཅིག །

kechik tsamyang dokpar magyur chik.

Through all the string of my future lives
May Tsongkapa the Victor come to me
And serve himself as my spiritual guide
In the teachings of the Greater Way.

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Readings One and Two

།སྐྱེ་བ་ཀུན་ཏུ་ཡང་དག་སྤྲོ་མ་དང་།

kyewa kuntu yangdak lama dang,

།འབྲུལ་མེད་ཆོས་ཀྱི་དཔལ་ལ་ལོངས་སྤྱོད་ཅིང་།

drelme chu-kyi pella longchu ching,

།ས་དང་ལམ་གྱི་ཡོན་ཏན་རབ་ཏུ་གསུམ་ནས།

sadang lamgyi yunten rabdzok ne,

།རྡོ་རྗེ་འཆང་གི་གོ་འཕང་སྤུར་ཐོབ་ཤིག །

dorje chang-gi gopang nyurtop shok.

In all my lives
May I never live
Apart from my perfect lamas,
May I bask
In the glory
Of the Dharma.

May I fulfil
Perfectly
Every good quality
Of every level
And path,
And reach then quickly
The place where I
Become myself
The One who Holds the Diamond.

The Asian Classics Institute Course III: Applied Meditation

Reading Three: The Six Conditions for Meditation

The following selection is taken from the *Great Book on the Steps of the Path* (*Lam-rim chen-mo*) written by Je Tsongkapa (1357-1419).

ཞི་གནས་ཀྱི་ཚོགས་པ།

The Conditions for Developing Quietude

༄༅། །ལམ་རིམ་ཆེན་མོ་ལས།

From the *Great Book on the Steps of the Path*:

།སོ་སོའི་བསྐྱབ་ཚུལ་ལ་གསུམ། ཞི་གནས་ལ་བསྐྱབ་ཚུལ། ལྷག་མཐོང་ལ་བསྐྱབ་
ཚུལ། དེ་གཉིས་ཟུང་དུ་འབྲེལ་བའི་ཚུལ་ལོ། །དང་པོ་ལ་གསུམ། ཞི་གནས་ཀྱི་
ཚོགས་བསྟན་པ། དེ་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་ཞི་གནས་བསྐྱེད་པའི་ཚུལ། བསྐྱེད་པས་ཞི་
གནས་གྲུབ་པའི་ཚད་དོ། །དང་པོ་ནི་རྣལ་འབྱོར་པས་ཐོག་མར་བདེ་ཞིང་སྤྱད་དུ་ཞི་
གནས་འགྲུབ་པར་འགྱུར་བའི་རྒྱ་ཞི་གནས་ཀྱི་ཚོགས་ལ་བརྟེན་པར་བྱའོ། །འདི་ལ་

དུག་ལས།

The explanation of how to train yourself in each of the two [quietude and special sight] has three parts: how to train yourself in quietude, how to train yourself in special sight, and how the two are joined in union. The first of these parts itself has three sections: how to gather together the conditions for quietude, how to meditate on quietude after you have gathered together these

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Readings Three

conditions, and how to know when your meditation has actually brought you to quietude. The first is described in the words, "Holy practitioners should first gather together the conditions for quietude: the causes that will allow them to develop quietude quickly and easily." Here there are six different conditions.

༡། མཐུན་པའི་ཡུལ་ན་གནས་པ་ནི། ཡོན་ཏན་ལྔ་དང་ལྔ་ན་པའི་ཡུལ་ཏེ། ཟས་
གོས་ལ་སོགས་པ་ཆོགས་མེད་པར་རྟེན་པས་རྟེན་སྒྲ་བ་དང་། གཅན་གཟན་ལ་སོགས་
པའི་སྐྱེ་བོ་མི་བསྐྱུན་པ་དང་དགྲ་ལ་སོགས་པ་མི་གནས་པས་གནས་བཟང་བ་དང་།
ནད་མི་བསྐྱེད་པའི་ས་ཡིན་པས་ས་བཟང་བ་དང་། རྩལ་བྱིས་དང་ལྷ་བ་མཚུངས་
པའི་གྲོགས་དང་ལྔ་ན་པས་གྲོགས་བཟང་བ་དང་། ཉིན་མོ་སྐྱེ་བོ་མང་པོ་མེད་ཅིང་
མཚན་མོ་སྒྲ་རྒྱུང་བས་ལེགས་པར་ལྔ་ན་པའོ།

[1] The first condition is to do your meditation staying in a place which is conducive for it. The place should have five different qualities:

- a) It should be a place with things that are "easy to find," in the sense that you can find food, clothing, and other necessities without any trouble.
- b) It should be a "good place," in the sense that there are no fearful creatures like wild animals or the like, nor any persons like enemies who would try to harm you.
- c) It should have a "good environment," in the sense that the environment doesn't cause any kinds of sickness to develop in you.
- d) There should be "good friends" there, in the sense that your companions in the place share your sense of morality, and your world view.
- e) The place should "have goodness," in the sense that, during the day, there should not be many people around and, during the night, there should not be many sounds.

མདོ་སྡེ་གྲུག་ལས་ཀྱང་།

སློ་ལྡན་གང་དུ་བསྐྱབ་པའི་ཡུལ།

ལེགས་པར་རྟེན་དང་གནས་བཟང་དང་།

ས་བཟང་བ་དང་གྲོགས་བཟང་དང་།

རྣལ་འབྱོར་བདེ་བའི་ཡོ་བྱད་ལྡན།

ཞེས་གསུངས་སོ།

As the Jewel of the Sutras says,

The place where intelligent people practice
Should have things that are good to find,
It should be a good place, with a good environment,
A place where good friends stay,
With all the practitioner needs, with ease.

༢༥ འདོད་པ་རྒྱུད་བ་ནི། ཆོས་གོས་ལ་སོགས་པ་བཟང་པོ་འཇམ་མའ་པོ་ལ་ལྷག་

པར་ཆགས་པ་མེད་པའོ།

[2] The second condition is that you keep your wants few; you have no great attachment to things like fine robes, or a lot of things, or the like.

༢༦ ཆོག་ཤེས་པ་ནི། ཆོས་གོས་ལ་སོགས་པ་དན་ངོན་ཅམ་རྟེན་པས་དྲག་ཏུ་ཆོག་

ཤེས་པའོ།

[3] The third condition is that you are easily satisfied; you always feel like you have enough, even if all you can find is robes or the like that are the worst.

༢༧ ཁྱུ་བ་མའ་པོ་ཡོངས་སུ་སྤངས་པ་ནི། ཉེ་ཆོང་ལ་སོགས་པའི་བྱ་བ་དན་པ་དང་

བྱིས་པ་དང་རབ་བྱུང་རྣམས་དང་ཉེ་ཅང་འབྲིས་བཤེས་བྱེད་པ་དང་སྒྲན་བྱེད་པ་དང་སྐར་

མ་བརྩི་བ་སོགས་ཡོངས་སུ་སྤངས་པའོ།

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[4] The fourth condition is that you give up trying to do too many things. You give up undesirable actions like business; you avoid being too familiar with laymen or monks; you stop practicing the minor arts of medicine, astrology, or the like.

༤༽ །ཚུལ་བྱིམས་ནམ་པར་དག་པ་ནི། སོ་ཐར་དང་བྱང་སེམས་ཀྱི་སྒྲུལ་པ་གཉིས་
ཀ་ལ་རང་བཞིན་དང་བཅས་པའི་ཁ་ན་མ་ཐོ་བའི་བསྐྱབ་བྱའི་གཞི་མི་འབྲལ་བ་དང་བག་
མེད་པས་རལ་ནའང་སྐྱེན་པར་འགྱུད་པས་ཆོས་བཞིན་དུ་ཕྱིར་འཆོས་པར་བྱེད་པའོ།

[5] The fifth condition is that your morality is perfectly pure. With regard to your vows of individual freedom, and your bodhisattva vows, you never break down the foundation of your training, the things you have been taught that are naturally wrong to do, and those that the Buddha has prohibited. If out of a lack of attention you do commit such deeds, you are quick to regret them, and you try to make up in the proper way.

༥༽ །འདོད་པ་ལ་སོགས་པའི་ནམ་རྟོག་ཡོངས་སུ་སྤངས་པ་ནི། འདོད་པ་ནམས་
ལ་གསོད་པ་དང་འཆིང་བ་ལ་སོགས་པ་ཆོ་འདིའི་ཉིས་དམིགས་དང་ངན་འགྲོར་འགྲོ་
བ་སོགས་ཕྱི་མའི་ཉིས་དམིགས་བསྒྲུལ་སྒྲུལ་ནས་སམ། ཡང་ན་འཁོར་བའི་དངོས་པོ་
ཡིད་དུ་འོང་མི་འོང་ཐམས་ཅད་ནི་འཇིག་པའི་ཆོས་ཅན་མི་རྟོག་པ་སྟེ་ངེས་པར་དེ་དག་
ཐམས་ཅད་དང་བདག་རིང་པོར་མི་ཐོགས་པར་འབྲལ་བར་འགྱུར་ན་བདག་དེ་ལ་ཅི་
ཞིག་ལྷག་པར་ཆགས་པ་ལ་སོགས་པར་འགྱུར་སྟེ་བསྒྲུལ་ལ་འདོད་པའི་ནམ་
རྟོག་ཐམས་ཅད་སྤང་བར་བྱའོ།

[6] The sixth condition is that you totally rid yourself of the stupid thoughts of desire and the rest. You meditate on the problems of desire in this life—how it can bring you to death, and to bondage; and you meditate on the problems it brings you in the life after—a birth in the realms of misery, or the like. Or else you can meditate on how each and every one of these pretty things in the suffering cycle of life is going to end; how quickly it disappears; how surely it will be torn from me before very long. Try then to get accustomed to thoughts like this: So why do I find myself caring at all about these things? What use are they for me? Use these to rid yourself of every stupid thought of desire.

འདི་དག་ནི་སྒྲོམ་རིམ་བར་པའི་དགོངས་པ་ལྟར་བཤད་པ་སྟེ། གྱུ་མ་པར་ནི་ཉན་ཐོས་
གྱི་ས་ལས་ཤེས་པར་བྱའོ། །དེ་ལྟ་བུའི་ཆོས་དྲུག་ནི་ཉིང་ངེ་འཇིན་བཟང་པོ་གསལ་དུ་
སྒྲིབ་དང་སྒྲིས་ཟིན་པ་མི་ཉམས་པར་གནས་པ་དང་གོང་ནས་གོང་དུ་འཕེལ་བའི་རྒྱ་
རྒྱུན་གྱི་གནད་བསྟུས་པ་སྟེ། བྱད་པར་དུ་རྩལ་བྲིམས་དག་པ་དང་འདོད་པ་ལ་ཉམས་
དམིགས་སུ་བལྟ་བ་དང་མཐུན་པའི་ཡུལ་ན་གནས་པ་གཙོ་བོ་ཡིན་ནོ།

I have explained all these following the *Stages of Meditation*; for a more detailed presentation, you can refer to the *Levels of Listeners*. These six include in them all the essential points, all the causes and conditions you need to know to first develop good concentration; and to keep from losing it once you have developed it; and to bring it to an ever higher and higher state. The most important points here are that you keep your morality pure, and that you realize all the problems of desire, and that you stay in a place which is conducive to meditation.

འདག་བཤེས་སྟོན་པའི་ཞལ་ནས། རང་ཅག་མན་ངག་ཁོ་ནས་ལན་སྟོམ་ཡིན་མན་ངག་
ཁོ་ན་བཙལ་བས་ཉིང་ངེ་འཇིན་སྒྱུར་མི་འདོད་པ་དེ་ཆོགས་ལ་གནས་པ་མེད་པས་ལན་
པ་ཡིན་གསུང་སྟེ། ཆོགས་ནི་སྤར་བཤད་པ་དྲུག་ལ་སོགས་པ་ཡིན་ནོ།

Geshe Tonpa has said, "When we find ourselves unable to develop deep concentration, we blame it on the instructions we got, and we go and look for some different ones. The real reason though is that we fail to do the gathering." Here "gathering" refers to the six conditions and so on that I have explained above.

འགཞན་ཡང་ཡར་སྤྱོད་དང་པོ་བཞི་ནི་ལྔ་པ་བསམ་གཏན་གྱི་ཆོགས་སུ་འགྲོ་བ་ཡིན་ཏེ།
སྒྲོམ་རིམ་དང་པོ་ལས། ཞི་གནས་ནི་རྟེན་པ་ལ་སོགས་པ་འདོད་པ་ལ་མི་བལྟ་ཞིང་
རྩལ་བྲིམས་ལ་ལེགས་པར་གནས་ལ་སྤྱད་བསྟུལ་ལ་སོགས་པ་དང་དུ་ལེན་པའི་ངང་
རྩལ་ཅན་དུ་གྱུར་ལ་བརྩོན་འགྲུས་བརྩམས་ན་སྤྱར་དུ་འགྲུབ་བོ། །དེ་བས་ན་འཕགས་

པ་དགོངས་པ་ངེས་པར་འགྲེལ་བ་ལ་སོགས་པ་ལས་ཀྱང་སྤྱིན་པ་ལ་སོགས་པ་གོང་མ་
གོང་མའི་རྒྱ་ཉིད་ཡིན་པར་བསྟན་ཏོ། །ཞེས་གསུངས་སོ།

We can also say that the first four of the perfections function as conditions for the fifth perfection, of meditation. The first book of the *Stages of Meditation* says,

If you want to reach quietude quickly, then make great effort: don't be concerned with a desire for things; keep your morality well; and be ready to undergo whatever pain or such you must. This is in fact why texts like the exalted *Commentary of the True Thought* teach that giving and the rest are causes for each of the perfections above them.

ལམ་སྒྲོན་ལས་ཀྱང་།

ཞི་གནས་ཡན་ལག་རྣམ་ཉམས་པས།

རབ་དྲུ་འབད་དེ་བསྐྱེམས་བྱས་ཀྱང་།

ལོ་ནི་སྤྱོད་པ་དག་གིས་ཀྱང་།

ཏིང་འཛིན་འབྱུང་པར་མི་འབྱུང་རོ།

ཞེས་གསུངས་པས།

A Lamp for the Path says as well,

You may try meditation as hard as you can,
But if the parts of quiet are lost
You may sit and practice for thousands of years
And never achieve this deep concentration.

ནི་ལྷག་གི་ཏིང་ངེ་འཛིན་སྤྱིང་ཐག་པ་ནས་བསྐྱུབ་པར་འདོད་པ་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་ཞི་གནས་ཀྱི་
ཡན་ལག་གམ་ཚོགས་ཉན་ས་ནས་གསུངས་པའི་བརྒྱ་གསུམ་ལ་སོགས་པ་ལ་འབད་
པ་ཤིན་ཏུ་གལ་ཆེ་ལོ།

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Therefore those who are really serious about achieving the state of concentration where quietude ("quiet") and special sight are joined must make special efforts in the various "parts" or conditions of concentration, for example in the thirteen conditions outlined in the *Levels of Listeners*. These conditions are absolutely vital for your success.

The Asian Classics Institute Course III: Applied Meditation

Reading Four: The Eight-Part Posture

The following selection on the proper way to sit for meditation is taken from the Great Book on the Steps of the Path to (Lam-rim chen-mo, ACIP electronic text S5392), written by Lord Tsongkapa (1357-1419).

།དེ་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་ཞི་གནས་བསྒྲུལ་པའི་ཚུལ་ལ་གཉིས། སྦྱར་བ་དང་། དངོས་
གཞིའོ།།

Here then is the section on how to meditate on quietude, once one has assembled all the proper circumstances. There are two parts here: the preparation, and then the actual meditation.

དང་པོ་ནི། སྦྱར་བཤད་པའི་སྦྱར་བའི་ཆོས་དྲུག་དང་བྱད་པར་དུ་བྱང་ཆུབ་ཀྱི་སེམས་
རིང་དུ་བསྒྲུལ་ཞིང་དེའི་ཡན་ལག་ཏུ་སྦྱིས་བྱ་ཆུང་འབྲིང་དང་ཐུན་མོང་བའི་དམིགས་
པའི་ངོ་བོ་རྣམས་ཀྱང་སྦྱང་བར་བྱའོ།།

Here is the first of the two. As a preparation, one should begin with the six preliminary practices presented above. One should, most especially, meditate for an extended period of time on the Wish for enlightenment. As an auxiliary to this meditation, one should finally train oneself in the subjects that are shared with people of lesser and medium capacities.

།གཉིས་པ་ལ་གཉིས། ལུས་ཀྱི་སྦྱོད་ལམ་ཇི་འདྲ་བས་བསྒྲུལ་པ་དང་། བསྒྲུལ་པའི་
རིམ་པ་ཉིད་བཤད་པའོ། །དང་པོ་ནི།

Meditating itself can be presented in two parts: an explanation of how one should position one's body during meditation, and an explanation of the actual steps of meditation itself.

སྒྲོམ་རིམ་བར་པ་དང་ཐ་མ་ལས་གསུངས་པ་ལྟར་སྟན་ཤིན་ཏུ་འཇམ་པོ་བདེ་བ་ལ་ལྟས་
ཀྱི་ཀུན་སྒྲིད་ཆོས་བརྒྱད་དང་ལྟན་པར་བྱའོ།།

The middle and the final books of the *Steps of Meditation* explain how one should position ones body; that is, one should sit on a very soft and comfortable meditation cushion, in a position with eight different features.

དེ་ལ་ཀང་པ་ནི་རྩེ་བཅུན་ནམ་པར་སྒྲང་མཇེད་ཀྱི་སྒྲིལ་མོ་ཀྱང་ལྟ་བུ་སྒྲིལ་མོ་ཀྱང་
ཡོངས་སུ་རྩོགས་པའམ་ཡང་ན་སྒྲིལ་ཀྱང་ཕྱིད་པའང་རུང་སྟེ་དེ་ལྟར་བྱའོ།།

[1] As for the legs, one should sit in a full lotus, similar to the full-lotus position of the holy being named Vairochana. It is also quite acceptable to sit in a half lotus position.

མིག་ནི་ཏ་ཅང་ཡང་མི་དབྱེ་ཏ་ཅང་ཡང་མི་བྱམ་པར་སྒྲུའི་ཅི་མོར་གཏད་དོ།།

[2] Ones eyes should be loosely focussed around the plane of the tip of the nose, and neither opened too wide nor completely closed.

ལུས་ནི་ཏ་ཅང་ཡང་རྒྱབ་ཏུ་མི་དབྱེ་ཏ་ཅང་ཡང་མཐུན་ཏུ་མི་དབྱེ་བར་བྱང་པོར་
བསྐངས་ལ་བྱན་པ་ནང་དུ་བཞག་སྟེ་འདུག་པར་བྱའོ།།

[3] Avoid having your body lean too far back or too far forward: straighten up your spine, and sit there directing your thoughts within.

ཕྱག་པ་ནི་ཐད་ཀར་མཉམ་པར་བཞག་གོ །

[4] The shoulders should be even, on a straight line.

མགོ་ནི་མི་མཐོ་མི་དམའ་ཞིང་ཕྱོགས་གཅིག་ཏུ་མ་ཡོ་བར་བཞག་སྟེ་སྒྲ་ནས་སྟེ་བར་
བྱང་པོར་བཞག་གོ །

[5] The head should be kept erect: neither tilted down nor up, nor pointed off to the side. The nose should draw a straight line to the navel.

སོ་དང་མཚུ་ནི་རང་ལུགས་སུ་ཐ་མལ་པར་བཞག་གོ །

[6] Leave your teeth and your lips in their normal, natural position.

ལྷོ་ནི་ཡ་སེའི་དྲུང་དུ་གཞན་རོ།།

[7] The tongue should be kept close to the palate, behind your upper teeth.

དབུགས་ནི་ཕྱི་ནང་དུ་རྒྱ་བ་སྒྲ་ཅན་དང་རྩམས་པ་དང་སྒོད་བག་ཅན་དུ་མི་བཏང་གི
།ཅི་ནས་ཀྱང་པར་རྒྱ་རྒྱར་རྒྱ་མི་ཚོར་བར་དལ་བུ་དལ་བུས་འབད་པ་མེད་པར་འཇུག་པ་
དེ་ལྟར་བྱའོ།།

[8] As for the breath, see that it makes no noise as you breathe it in. Don't let it be too rough, and don't just remain thoughtless about it. Try to reach a point where you can hardly tell when it is coming and going; where it runs very slowly and effortlessly.

ཉན་སར་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱིས་གནང་བའི་ཁྱིམ་ཁྱིམ་ལྟ་བུ་བཏིང་བའི་སྤྱང་དུ་སྒྲིལ་མོ་
ཀྱང་བཅས་ཏེ་འདུག་པ་ལ་རྒྱ་མཚན་ལྔ་གསུངས་ཏེ།

In the *Levels of Listeners*, five different reasons are given for sitting in a cross-legged position on a platform or seat of the kind allowed by Lord Buddha, and covered with comfortable straw or grass.

ལུས་ལེགས་པར་བསྒྲིམས་ན་སྤྱོད་ལམ་དེ་ཤིན་ཏུ་སྤྱངས་པ་སྒྲི་བ་དང་རྗེས་སུ་མཐུན་
པས་སྤྱར་བ་སྤྱར་བར་ཤིན་ཏུ་སྤྱངས་པ་སྒྲི་བ་དང་།

When you position your body a bit strictly, it is quite conducive to reaching the state of practiced ease; as a result, you will then be able to reach practiced ease very quickly.

འདུག་པས་དུས་ཡུན་རིང་པོ་འདུག་བར་བྱེད་ཀྱས་ཤིང་སྤྱོད་ལམ་དེས་དེའི་ལུས་ཤིན་ཏུ་
ངལ་བར་མི་འགྱུར་བ་དང་།

When you sit this way, you find yourself able to sit for a long period of time. It also helps to prevent you from feeling tired.

སྟོད་ལམ་དེ་སྤྱི་ལམ་དང་ཕན་གྱི་སྐོལ་བ་དག་དང་ཐུན་མོང་མ་ཡིན་པ་དང་།

Another advantage is that this position is unique to Buddhists, and cannot be confused with the position of non-Buddhists in general, or of those whom you may be debating.

གཞན་གྱིས་སྟོད་ལམ་དེས་འདུག་པ་མཐོང་ན་ཤིན་ཏུ་དང་བ་སྐྱེ་བ་དང་།

Whenever someone else sees you sitting in this position, then they start to have deep feelings of faith in you.

སྟོད་ལམ་དེ་སངས་རྒྱས་དང་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་ཉན་ཐོས་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་གནང་ཞིང་བསྟན་
པ་སྟེ་རྒྱ་མཚན་དེ་ལྟ་མཐོང་ནས་སྐྱེལ་མོ་ཀྱང་བཅས་ཏེ་གནས་པར་གསུངས་སོ།།

This position, finally, is one that Lord Buddha, and the disciples of Lord Buddha, have granted us, and have used themselves. Understanding these five reasons for doing so, states the text, one should determine to sit in a cross-legged position.

ལུས་དྲང་པོར་བསྐང་བ་ནི་སྤྱད་པ་དང་གཉིད་མི་འབྱུང་བའི་དོན་དུ་གསུངས་སོ།།

It is stated as well that the purpose of sitting up very straight is that this prevents mental foggiess and sleepiness.

དེ་ལྟར་ན་ཐོག་མར་ལུས་ཀྱི་ཀུན་སྟོད་བརྒྱད་དང་བྱད་པར་དུ་རྒྱང་ཆམ་ལ་དབབ་པ་ཇི་
ལྟར་བཤད་པ་བཞིན་བསྐྱབ་པར་བྱའོ།།

Practice then as we have explained it: start by putting your body into the meditation position, and remember especially to bring your breathing down first.

The Asian Classics Institute
Course III: Applied Meditation

**Readings Five and Six: The Five Problems of Meditation, and
the Eight Corrections**

The following is a translation of a special chart on the stages of meditation designed by Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche (1901-1981), tutor to His Holiness the XIVth Dalai Lama, and Root Lama of Khen Rinpoche Geshe Lobsang Tharchin. The chart itself is found in the pocket of the notebook for this course.

ཐེག་པ་གསུམ་གྱི་ཡོན་ཏན་ཐམས་ཅད་ནི་ལྷག་དངོས་སམ་རྗེས་མཐུན་གྱི་སྒོམ་གང་
ཡང་རུང་བའི་འབྲས་བྱར་གསུངས་ཤིང་། ཞི་གནས་བྱུང་ནས་དག་སྦྱོར་གང་བྱས་
སྟོབས་ཆེ་བ་སོགས་པན་ཡོན་དང་དགོས་པ་ཤིན་ཏུ་ཆེ་བས། ཐར་པ་དོན་དུ་གཉེར་
བའི་ནལ་འབྱོར་པ་ནམས་ཀྱིས་ཞི་གནས་སྐྱབ་པ་གལ་ཆེ་ཞིང་།

It has been spoken that each and every high spiritual quality of all three ways is a result of meditation, either in the form of quietude (*shamata*), or some state which is close to it. The benefits of meditation are many, beginning with the fact that—once you have attained quietude—then any virtuous practice you undertake becomes extremely powerful. It is an absolute necessity, and so attaining the state of quietude is extremely important for any deep practitioner who really hopes to reach freedom.

འདི་ལ་ནི་གནས་ཚུགས་དུག་ལ་གནས་པའི་སྒོམ་པ་པོས། དབུས་མཐའ་ནས་ལའང་
པ་ལྟར། ལེ་ལོ་དང་། གདམས་ངག་བརྗེད་པ་དང་། བྱིང་སྟོང་དང་། འདུ་མི་བྱེད་པ་
དང་། འདུ་བྱེད་པ་སྟེ་ཏིང་འཛིན་གྱི་ཉེས་པ་ལྷ་རིག་ནས་དང་པོའི་གཉེན་པོར། དད་པ།
འདུན་པ། ཤིན་སྦྱངས། ཚྱུ་ལ་བ་བཞི།

Course III, Applied Meditation
Readings Five and Six

And here is how to do it. A meditator must first seek out all six of the conditions that support the attempt to reach quietude. Then they should acquaint themselves with the five obstacles to one-pointed concentration; these are explained, in Lord Maitreya's work entitled *Distinguishing the Middle and the Extremes*, as not feeling like meditating, losing the object, dullness and agitation, failing to take action, and taking action when there is no need to do so.

The corrections for the first of these obstacles are a deep belief in the benefits of meditation, a strong desire to master it, the physical and mental pleasure of a person who gets good at meditation, and the hard work needed to get good at it.

གཉིས་པའི་གཉིན་པོར་བྱ་བ། གསུམ་པའི་གཉིན་པོར་ཤེས་བཞིན། བཞི་པའི་གཉིན་
པོར་འདུག་ཅེད་པ། ལྷ་པའི་གཉིན་པོར་བཏང་སྟོམས་ཏེ་གཉིན་པོ་འདུག་བརྒྱད་བསྟེན་
ནས་སྐྱབ་དགོས་ལ།

The correction for the second obstacle is to bring the mind back to the object. The correction for the third problem is watchfulness, and the correction for the fourth is taking the necessary action. The correction for the fifth problem is to leave well enough alone. Thus one must attain quietude through undertaking eight different corrective actions.

དེ་དག་ཀྱང་སེམས་གནས་དགུར་ཕྱི་བ་དང་། དེ་རྣམས་སྟོབས་དྲུག་གིས་འགྲུབ་
ལུགས་དང་། ཡིད་བྱེད་བཞིར་སྤྱད་ཚུལ་རྣམས་ཤེས་ན་ཏིང་འཛིན་སྟོན་མེད་བདེ་སྒྲག་
ཏུ་འགྲུབ་པར་གསུངས་པས།

It is further stated that—if you come to understand how these can be divided into nine mental states, and how these in turn are achieved through six different powers and grouped into four modes of focus—then you can quite easily attain a state of single-pointed concentration which is perfect.

དབུ་མ་སྣོད་པོ་ལས།
།ཡིད་ཀྱི་སྒྲུང་པོ་ལོག་འགྲོ་བ།
།དམིགས་པའི་ཀ་བ་བརྟན་པོ་ལ།

།དྲན་པའི་ཐག་པས་ངེས་བཅིངས་ནས།
 །ཤེས་རབ་ལྷགས་ཀྱས་རིམ་དབང་བ།
 །ཞེས་པ་ལྟར་སྒྲུང་པོ་ཆེ་མ་དུལ་བ་འདུལ་བའི་དཔེ་དང་སྒྱུར་ཏེ་གོང་དུ་རི་མོ་བཀོད་པ་
 རྣམས་ཀྱི་དོན་རག་རིམ་ཙམ་འགོད་པ་ལ།

The text called *The Essence of the Middle Way* includes a verse that says,

Master the elephant of the mind
 Step by step, as follows:
 He wants to go the wrong way,
 So be sure to tie him to the stake
 Of the object of your meditation
 With a strong rope made of bringing
 The mind back to your object;
 Then finally use the iron hook
 Of your wisdom to take control.

Here the process of learning to meditate is being compared to the way in which you tame a wild elephant, and this is the point of the illustration above. Here I will give you just a rough explanation of each of the steps you see here.

སེམས་གནས་དགུ་ནི། སེམས་འཛོག་པ། རྒྱུན་དུ་འཛོག་པ། སྒྲུན་དེ་འཛོག་པ། ཉི་
 བར་འཛོག་པ། དུལ་བར་བྱེད་པ། ཞི་བར་བྱེད་པ། རྣམ་པར་ཞི་བར་བྱེད་པ། ཅེ་
 གཅིག་ཏུ་བྱེད་པ། མཉམ་པར་འཛོག་པ་རྣམས་ཡིན་ལ།

The nine mental states are as follows: setting the mind on the object; keeping the mind on the object with brief continuity; keeping the mind on the object with patches where you lose the object; maintaining the mind tightly on the object; controlling the mind; quieting the mind; completely quieting the mind; attaining single-pointedness; and reaching deep meditation.

དེ་དག་སྟོབས་དུག་གིས་འགྲུབ་ལྷགས་ནི། སྒྲུ་མའི་གདམས་ངག་ཐོས་པའི་སྟོབས་
 ཀྱིས་སེམས་གནས་དང་པོ་འགྲུབ། བསམ་པའི་སྟོབས་ཀྱིས་གཉིས་པ་འགྲུབ། དྲན་

པའི་སྒོ་བས་ཀྱིས་གསུམ་པ་དང་བཞི་པ་འབྱུང་། ཤེས་བཞིན་གྱི་སྒོ་བས་ཀྱིས་ལྔ་པ་དང་
དྲུག་པ་འབྱུང་། བརྩོན་འགྲུས་ཀྱི་སྒོ་བས་ཀྱིས་བདུན་པ་དང་བརྒྱད་པའི་བྱུང་། འདྲིས་
པའི་སྒོ་བས་ཀྱིས་དགུ་པ་འབྱུང་པོ།

Here is how you use the six powers to attain these nine states. The first of the states is attained through the power of learning the instructions for meditation from your Lama. The second is reached through the power of contemplating these instructions. You achieve the third and fourth mental states through the power of bringing your mind back to the object. The fifth and sixth are attained by the power of watchfulness. The seventh and eighth you bring about through the power of effort, and the ninth with the power of complete habituation.

དེ་དག་ཡིད་བྱེད་བཞིར་སྟུང་རྒྱལ་ནི། དང་པོ་དང་གཉིས་པའི་སྐབས་བསྐྱེམས་ཏི་
འཇུག་པའི་ཡིད་བྱེད་དང་། བར་པ་ལཱའི་སྐབས་ཆད་ཅིང་འཇུག་པའི་ཡིད་བྱེད་དང་།
བརྒྱད་པ་ནི་ཆད་པ་མེད་པར་འཇུག་པའི་ཡིད་བྱེད་དང་། དགུ་པ་ནི་ལྷན་གྱིས་འབྱུང་
པའི་ཡིད་བྱེད་དུ་འཇོག་པ་ཡིན་ནོ།

Here is how these nine are grouped into four different modes of focus. During the first and second mental states, you focus by forcefully concentrating the mind. Over the course of the middle five states, you focus in a stream, but with interruptions. In the eighth mental state you focus in an uninterrupted stream, and during the ninth you focus on the object completely effortlessly.

།དེ་ལྟར་སེམས་གནས་དགུ་རིམ་གྱིས་འབྱུང་པའི་མཐར་ཤིན་སྦྱངས་མི་གཡོ་བ་ཐོབ་པ་
དང་དུས་མཉམ་དུ་བསམ་གཏན་དང་པོའི་ཉར་བཟློགས་ཀྱིས་བསྐྱེམས་པའི་ནི་གནས་
བྱུང་པ་ཡིན་ནོ།།

The final result of attaining these nine states, one by one, is that you reach an unshakeable state of physical and mental meditative pleasure. Simultaneous to achieving this pleasure, you attain a state of quietude which is taken in by the preparatory stage of the first concentration level, [which is the meditative platform needed to see emptiness directly].

དེ་ལྟ་བུས་ནི་གནས་གྲུབ་པའི་ཐེས་སུ་ཟབ་མོ་དབུ་མའི་ལྟ་བུ་ལ་ཙེ་གཅིག་ཏུ་དབྱད་
འཛིག་ཆ་མཉམ་དུ་གོམས་པར་བྱས་པས། དབྱད་པ་རང་སྟོབས་ཀྱིས་དྲངས་པའི་ཤིན་
སྒྲུངས་བྱད་པར་ཅན་ཐོབ་པ་ན། ལྷག་མཐོང་མཚན་ཉིད་པ་ཐོབ་པ་ཡིན་ལ།

Suppose that, after achieving quietude in the way described above, you go on to meditate one-pointedly upon the profound worldview of the middle way, reaching a balance in your practice between the ability to analyze reality and the ability to hold your mind fixed in meditation on the conclusions gained from your analysis. This analysis will automatically enable you to reach an extraordinary level of physical and mental meditative pleasure—and it is at this point that we can say you have attained the special insight into reality (*vipashyana*), in its authentic form.

དེ་ལྟར་རྩལ་བཞིན་ཉམ་སུ་སྒྲངས་ན་ནི་ལྷག་བྱད་དུ་འབྲེལ་བའི་ཉིང་འཛིན་ཤེས་རབ་ཀྱི་
རལ་གྱི་རྩོན་པོ་སྤང་བུ་སྒྲིབ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་གཡུལ་ངོ་རིམ་གྱིས་བཅོམ་ནས་སྐྱུ་བཞིའི་རྒྱལ་
ཐབས་ཆེན་པོ་མངོན་དུ་བྱས་ཏེ་ནམ་མཁའ་ཇི་སྟིན་བར་འགྲོ་བའི་རི་བ་སྐྱོང་བའི་འཕྲིན་
ལས་ལྷན་གྲུབ་རྒྱུན་མི་ཆད་པ་འབྱུང་བ་ཡིན་ནོ།

If you practice these instructions correctly, then you will gain the razor-sharp sword of wisdom, a form of one-pointed concentration where quietude and special insight (*shamata* and *vipashyana*) are married together. You can then carry this mighty sword onto the field of battle, and as time goes by smash the two great obstacles [those to achieving nirvana, and those to achieving total enlightenment]; that is, you can eliminate within you every undesirable quality. With this you will win the great victory of the four bodies of a Buddha, and find yourself able to perform enlightened deeds, constantly and spontaneously, without any conscious thought—fulfilling the hopes of every living creature, for as long as space itself endures.

།བསྐྱབ་པ་རྟོད་པའི་དག་སྟོང་དག།

།དབེན་པ་དག་ཀྱང་འཐོབ་པར་ཤོག།

།གཡིང་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་སྤངས་ནས་ནི།

།སེམས་ནི་ལས་རུང་སྒོམ་གྱར་ཅིག།

Course III, Applied Meditation
Readings Five and Six

May every monk who's taken their vows
Also attain those quiet places;
May they give up all distraction,
And master the art of meditation.

།དཔེ་རིས་འདྲ་མིན་མང་བས་ཁ་བྱང་གི།
།ཡི་གེ་གསལ་འཁོད་གསར་དུ་བྲིས་ཤིག་ཅིས།
།ལྷ་བྲིས་དབུ་དྲུང་བསོད་ནམས་རིན་ཆེན་ནས།
།བསྐྱེད་པོར་ཁྲི་བྱང་སྐུ་ལ་མིང་འཛིན་པས་བཀོད།

This has been written by the one
They gave the name of Trijang Trulku,
In response to a request by the artist
Called Udrung Sunam Rinchen,
Who said to me, "You know,
We see a lot of different versions
Of that chart, but would you mind
To write for us a new one,
With captions clear to read?"

།པར་གྱི་རྒྱ་སྒྲིབ་ཆེ་འདས་ཨ་མོང་གི།
ཞབས་འཇུག་བྱེད་པོ་རྒྱལ་སྟོན་སྒྲ་བྲང་དང་།
།དུང་དགོན་དགེ་སློང་སྒོ་བཟང་དོ་ཇེ་ཡིས།
འདས་དངོས་ཐོག་ནས་བསྐྱེད་པ་འདི་ཡིས་དགས།
།དེས་གཙོས་མར་གྱུར་སེམས་ཅན་འདས་ཚད་ཀྱིས།
།ཆེ་རབས་བྲིང་བསགས་སྒྲིག་ལྷུང་དག་གྱུར་ནས།
།ས་ལམ་རིམ་བརྒྱུད་སྒྲ་མེད་བྱང་ཆེན་གྱི།
།ས་ཡི་ལམ་བཟང་སྒྱུར་དུ་འཐོབ་པར་ཤོག།

Course III, Applied Meditation
Readings Five and Six

The cost of printing this chart
Was donated from the estate
Of Asong, now deceased,
By those who served him well,
The House of Gyaltun and also
That monk from Dungun Monastery
Whose name is Lobsang Dorje.

By the virtue of this deed,
Undertaken as it was
With the material wealth of the dead,
May every being who ever died,
With Asong at their head,
Come to see the wrong they've done,
Collected over every life
They ever lived, cleaned forever from them.

And may they then perfect,
One by one, the paths and levels,
Quickly reaching that excellent road,
The matchless state of enlightenment.

ཅེས་པའི་པར་གྱི་འདུ་བྱེད་བོད་མི་ལུག་ལོ་དང་སྤྱི་ལོ་༡༩༦༧་ལོར་སྤྲུལ་གནས་འབྲས་
མོ་ལྗོངས་སུ་ཁྱུས་ཏེ་པར་ཤིང་འདི་སྤྲུག་ས་ཚེས་སྐར་ཐར་འདོད་གླིང་དགོན་དུ་

བཞུགས། །

The carving of this blockprint was completed in the Tibetan Fire-Sheep year (1967), in Bene Dremo Jong. The block itself has been stored at the Tarndu Ling Temple of Baksa Monastery.

The following is a list of the scenes found in the middle of the blockprint chart just described.

༡༽ སེམས་འཛོག་པ།

[1] 1) Setting the mind on the object

༢༽ སྤྲུལ་པ།

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[2] Bringing the mind back to the object

༡༽ ཤེས་བཞིན།

[3] Watchfulness

༢༽ ལམ་གྱི་ཁྱུག་པ་དྲུག་སྟོབས་དྲུག་དང་སྦྱར་བ་ལས་དང་པོ་ཐོས་པའི་སྟོབས་སོ།
།འདི་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་སེམས་གནས་དང་པོ་འགྲུབ་པ་ཡིན།

[4] The six bends in the road represent the six powers. The first represents the power of learning the instructions. Based on this, one achieves the first mental state.

༣༽ སྤང་པོ་སེམས་དང་། ཁ་དོག་ནག་པ་བྱིང་བ་མཚོན།

[5] The elephant represents your mind, and his black color symbolizes dullness.

༤༽ སྤྲེལ་འཕྲོ་བ་དང་། ཁ་དོག་ནག་པ་གློད་པ་མཚོན།

[6] The monkey stands for distraction, and his black color represents agitation.

༥༽ འདི་ནས་སེམས་གནས་བདུན་པ་བར་མེ་ལྷུ་ཡོད་མེད་དང་། ཆེ་ཆུང་གི་བྱུང་
པར་བཀོད་པ་ནི། དྲན་ཤེས་གྱི་འབད་རྩོལ་སྟོབས་ཤུགས་བསྐྱེད་ཆེ་ཆུང་གི་བྱུང་པར་
རོ།

[7] The presence of the flames, and their relative size, from this point up to the seventh mental state represent the relative amount of effort needed to bring your mind back to the object, and the degree of watchfulness needed.

༦༽ བསམ་པའི་སྟོབས་སོ། འདིས་སེམས་གནས་གཉིས་པ་འགྲུབ།

[8] The power of contemplating the instructions. You use this to reach the second mental state.

༧༽ རྒྱུན་དུ་འཇོག་པ།

[9] 2) Keeping the mind on the object with brief continuity

༡༠༽ འདི་ནས་གཟུངས་མགོ་ནས་དཀར་ཆ་རིམ་གྱིས་འཕེལ་བ་དེ་གསལ་ཆ་དང་།
གནས་ཆ་ཇི་འཕེལ་འགོ་བ།

[10] The gradual increase in the white patch from this point on, starting with the elephant's head, represents a gradual increase in the clarity and fixation of the mind.

༡༡༽ འདོད་ཡོན་ལྔ་ནི་སྒོད་པའི་ཡུལ་མཚོན།

[11] This symbol stands for the five objects of the senses, which themselves represent the various objects that agitation focuses upon.

༡༢༽ དུན་པའི་སྟོབས་སོ། འདིས་སེམས་གནས་གསུམ་པ་དང་བཞི་པ་འགྲུབ།

[12] The power of bringing the mind back to the object. This allows you to attain the third and fourth mental states.

༡༣༽ སྒྲན་དེ་འཛོག་པ།

[13] 3) Keeping the mind on the object, with patches where you lose the object.

༡༤༽ གྱིང་བ་ཕྱ་སོ། འདི་ནས་གྱིང་བ་ཕྱ་རགས་སོགས་ངོས་ཟེན་པ།

[14] Subtle dullness. From this point on, you are able to recognize the distinction between obvious and subtle dullness, and other such details.

༡༥༽ ཕྱི་མིག་བ་ལྟ་བ་ནི། སེམས་གཡིང་བ་ངོ་ཤེས་ནས་སྒྲར་དམིགས་པ་ལ་
གཏོད་པའོ།

[15] The monkey looking back represents the ability both to tell when your mind is wandering, and to re-focus it upon the object of meditation.

༡༦༽ ཉི་བར་འཛོག་པ།

[16] 4) Maintaining the mind tightly on the object.

༡༧༽ ཤེས་བཞིན་གྱི་སྟོབས་སོ། །འདིས་སེམས་གནས་ལྔ་པ་དང་དྲུག་པ་འགྲུབ།

[17] The power of watchfulness. This allows you to reach the fifth and sixth mental states.

༡༥༽ རྟོག་པ་སྒྲིལ་སྒྲིབ་པའི་རྣམས་པ་ཉམས་པ།

[18] Agitation is the first of the two that loses its power to appear in your mind.

༡༩༽ གཞི་གནས་སྐྱབ་སྐྱབས་སེམས་དག་བའི་ཕྱོགས་ལ་འཕྲོ་བའང་བར་གཙོད་
ཡིན་པས་འགོག་དགོས་ཀྱང་། སྐྱབས་གཞན་དུ་མི་འགོག་པར་དོན་གཉིས་ཀྱི་འབྲས་
བྱ་ལེན་པ།

When you are trying to develop quietude, even allowing your mind to be distracted to a virtuous object becomes an obstacle, and you must seek to stop it. When you are doing other practices though you do not have to stop it. And so we see the monkey reaching for the fruit of a second activity.

༢༠༽ ཤེས་བཞིན་གྱིས་སེམས་འཕྲོར་མི་སྟེར་ཞིང་། གཟེངས་གཏོད་ནས་ཉིང་
འཛིན་ལ་བྱིན་པ།

[20] Watchfulness will not let the mind get distracted; and uplifting your heart leads you to a state of one-pointed concentration.

༢༡༽ དུལ་བར་བྱེད་པ།

[17] 5) Controlling the mind.

༢༢༽ ཞི་བར་བྱེད་པ།

[22] 6) Quieting the mind.

༢༣༽ བརྩོན་འགྲུས་ཀྱི་སྒྲོབས་སོ། །འདིས་སེམས་གནས་བདུན་པ་དང་བརྒྱད་པ་
འགྲུབ།

[23] The power of effort. This allows you to reach the seventh and eighth mental states.

༢༩ རྣམ་པར་ཞི་བར་བྱེད་པ། སྐབས་འདིར་བྱིང་གོད་ཕྱ་མོའང་སྐྱེ་དགའ་ལ་ཅུང་
ཟད་སྐྱེས་ཀྱང་དེ་མ་ཐག་ཚུལ་བ་རྒྱང་དུས་སྤོང་བར་བྱས་པའོ།

[24] 7) Completely quieting the mind. At this point it is difficult for even subtle forms of dullness and agitation to occur. Even if they do come, you are able to eliminate them immediately with a minimum of effort.

༣༠ འདིར་སྤང་པའི་ནག་ཆ་ཟད་ཅིང་སྤྱུ་དང་བྲལ་བ་ནི་ཐོག་མར་དཔྱད་ཤེས་ཅུང་
ཟད་བརྟན་ན་བྱིང་གོད་དང་འཕྲོ་བས་བར་གཅོད་མི་རྣམས་པར་ཉིང་འཛིན་ཆད་མེད་དུ་
འཇུག་པའོ།

[25] Here the fact that the elephant has lost all the black, and left behind the monkey as well, represents your ability to engage in one-pointed concentration in an uninterrupted stream: if you apply just a little effort to bring your mind to the object and maintain watchfulness, then dullness, agitation, and distraction can no longer interrupt your meditation.

༣༡ ཅེ་གཅིག་ཏུ་བྱེད་པ།

[26] 8) Attaining single-pointedness

༣༢ ཡོངས་སུ་འབྲིས་པའི་སྟོབས་སོ། །འདིས་སེམས་གནས་དགུ་པ་འགྲུབ།

[27] The power of complete habituation, which enables you to reach the ninth mental state

༣༣ མཉམ་པར་འཇོག་པ།

[28] 9) Reaching deep meditation

༣༤ ཞི་གནས་ཐོབ་པ།

[29] Achieving quietude [*shamata*]

༣༥ ལུས་ཤིན་སྤངས།

[30] Physical meditative pleasure

མཉམས་ཤིན་སྤངས།

[31] Mental meditative pleasure

སྤྲོད་ཉིད་ལ་དམིགས་པའི་ཞི་ལྷག་བྱང་འབྲེལ་གྱིས་སྤོང་ཅ་གཅོད་པ།

[32] Special insight [*vipashyana*] and quietude [*shamata*] marry together, focussing on emptiness, and allow you to cut the root of this suffering life.

དེ་ནས་ཤེས་ཤུགས་ཅན་གྱིས་ལྟ་བ་འཛོལ་བ།

[33] One goes on to seek the correct view of reality, with a great ability to bring the mind to the object, and to maintain watchfulness.

The Asian Classics Institute
Course III: Applied Meditation

Reading Seven: The Nine States of Meditation

The following selection is taken from the *Great Book on the Steps of the Path* (*Lam-rim chen-mo*) written by Je Tsongkapa (1357-1419).

ཨོཾ།སེམས་གནས་དགུ །།

The Nine States of Meditation

གསུམ་པ་དེ་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་སེམས་གནས་དགུ་སྐབ་ཚུ་ལ་ནི། སྒོམ་བྱེད་པར་འདོད་ན་
སེམས་གནས་ལ་སྒྲོང་བ་ཐོན་པ་དགོས། དེ་ལ་སེམས་གནས་དགུ་ཤེས་དགོས། དེ་
ཡང་སེམས་འཛོག་པ། རྒྱན་དུ་འཛོག་པ། སྒྲན་ཏི་འཛོག་པ། ཉེ་བར་འཛོག་པ།
དུལ་བར་བྱེད་པ། ཞི་བར་བྱེད་པ། རྣམ་པར་ཞི་བར་བྱེད་པ། ཅི་གཅིག་ཏུ་བྱེད་པ།
མཉམ་པར་འཛོག་པ་སྟེ་དགུ་ལས།

Here is the third division, which is a description of how one achieves the nine states of meditation using the steps explained above. Anyone who hopes to practice meditation must become proficient in these nine states; and to become proficient in them, one must know what they are. So here is an explanation of the nine states, which are called (1) placing the mind on the object; (2) placing the mind on the object with some continuity; (3) placing the mind on the object and patching the gaps; (4) placing the mind on the object closely; (5) controlling the mind; (6) pacifying the mind; (7) pacifying the mind totally; (8) making the mind single-pointed; and (9) achieving equilibrium.

དང་པོ་ནི། ལྷ་མ་ལས་དམིགས་པའི་གདམས་ངག་ཐོས་སྟོབས་ཀྱིས་འགྲུབ་ཅིང་། དེ་
ཡང་དམིགས་པ་ལ་བཞག་ཙམ་བཞག་ཙམ་ལས་ཤས་ཆེར་མི་གནས་པས་རྒྱུན་མཐུད་
མི་བྱུང་བ་སྟེ། དེའི་ཆོ་སེམས་ལ་རྟོག་དཔྱད་ཞུགས་པའི་སྟོབས་ཀྱིས་འཕྲོ་ཤོད་ཀྱི་
དབང་དུ་ཤོར་བ་རིགས་པས་སྒར་ལས་རྣམ་རྟོག་ཤས་ཆེ་བའི་ཉམས་འབྱུང་ཡང་།
འདི་རྣམ་རྟོག་མང་དུ་སོང་བ་མིན་གྱི། རྣམ་རྟོག་ངོས་ཟེན་པའི་ཉམས་ཡིན།

Here is the first state of meditation, called "placing the mind on the object." You achieve this state by means of receiving instructions from your lama about the object you should use for your meditation. The mind at this point stays on the object only from time to time, and for the most part is not fixed on the object at all: you are unable to keep your mind on the object for any continuous length of time. The two mental functions of noting and examining are present, and due to this you often lose yourself to scattering and agitation. You become aware of this condition and so you get the impression that you have even a greater problem of too many thoughts coming up to your mind than you ever had before. What's really happening though is not that you have more of these thoughts than before; it's just that you have now become aware of the problem.

གཉིས་པ་ནི་དེ་ལྟར་བསྐྱོམས་པས་སེམས་དམིགས་པ་ལ་བཞག་ཙམ་གྱིས་རྒྱུན་ཅུང་
ཟད་མཐུད་བྱུང་བ་ནི་དཔེར་ན་མ་ཁི་ཤིང་སྒོར་གཅིག་ཙམ་གྱི་རིང་བསྐྱོམ་ན་དེའི་རིང་མི་
ག་ཡིང་བ་འབྱུང་བ་ལྟ་བུ་ཡིན། འདིའི་ཆོ་སྐབས་རེ་རྣམ་རྟོག་ཞི་ཞིང་སྐབས་རེ་རྣམ་
རྟོག་སྐྱེ་བས་རྣམ་རྟོག་ངལ་བཅོ་བའི་ཉམས་འོང་། འདི་བསམ་པའི་སྟོབས་ཀྱིས་
འགྲུབ།

Here is the second state of meditation, called "placing the mind on the object with some continuity." This state is reached when you practice placing the mind on the object enough that you can now keep your mind on it for some continuous, although brief, period of time. You could say it would be like being able to keep your mind from wandering for as long as it would take to do one round of the *mani* mantra on your rosary. At this point your problem of having too many thoughts goes away for a while, and then comes back for a while, so the impression you have is that these thoughts are making a

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periodic resurgence. This particular state of meditation is achieved through contemplating.

སེམས་གནས་དང་པོ་དང་གཉིས་པ་འདི་གཉིས་ལ་བྱིང་གོད་མང་ཞིང་གནས་པ་ཉུང་
བས་ཡིད་བྱེད་བཞིའི་དང་པོ་བསྐྱེམས་ཏེ་འཇུག་པའི་སྐབས་ཡིན་ཞིང་གནས་པ་ལས་
ག་ཡིང་བ་རྒྱན་རིང་བ་ཡིན་གསུངས།

During these first two states of meditation, you have an abundance of dullness and agitation, and only occasionally fix your mind on the object. Therefore at this point we say that your mind is in the first of the four mental modes, the one described as having to "concentrate to focus." During these stages, said our Lama, the periods of distraction last longer than the periods in which the mind is fixed on the object.

གསུམ་པ་ནི། གོས་ལྟ་བུའི་གཞི་ལ་ལྟན་པ་བརྒྱག་པ་བཞིན། རྒྱན་མཐུད་པའི་གཞི་
དེའི་སྟངས་སེམས་དམིགས་པ་ལས་ག་ཡིངས་པ་འཕྲལ་དུ་ཤེས་ནས་སྐར་དམིགས་
ཏེན་ལ་སྐྱོན་ཏེ་འཇོག་པ་ལ་ཟེར་བས་འདི་དང་ཟླ་མ་གཉིས་ལ་ག་ཡིང་བ་ཡུན་རིང་བུང་
ཡོད། འདིའང་དྲན་པ་སྟོབས་ལྡན་བསྐྱེད་པའི་དུས་ཡིན་གསུངས།

Here is the third state of meditation, called "placing the mind on the object and patching the gaps." The place where you put a normal patch is a piece of cloth; here the place you put the patch is the continuation of your focus. What this means is that you catch your mind quickly after it wanders away from the object, and so "patch" the hole in the continuation. The difference between this state of meditation and the two that come before it is in the length of time you are distracted. Our Lama also noted that this is the time when you are able to develop your recollection to a high degree.

བཞི་པ་ནི། དྲན་པ་ཤུགས་ཅན་དུ་བསྐྱེད་ནས་དམིགས་ཏེན་ལ་འཇོག་པ་སྟེ། འདི་ནས་
དམིགས་ཏེན་ཤོར་མི་སྲིད་པས་ཟླ་མ་གསུམ་ལས་བྱང་ལྷགས་པ་ཡིན། འོན་ཀྱང་
དམིགས་ཏེན་མ་ཤོར་བཞིན་དུ་བྱིང་གོད་ཤུགས་ཆེན་པོ་འབྱུང་བས་བྱིང་གོད་ཀྱི་གཉིན་
པོ་བསྐྱེན་དགོས། སེམས་གནས་གསུམ་པ་དང་བཞི་པ་འདི་གཉིས་དྲན་པའི་སྟོབས་

གྱིས་འགྲུབ། འདི་ནས་ནར་སོན་པའི་མི་ལྟར་དྲན་པ་ནར་སོན་པའམ། དྲན་པའི་
སྟོབས་ཚླགས་པ་ཡིན་གསུངས།

Here is the fourth state of meditation, called "placing the mind on the object closely." Since by now your recollection is highly developed, you are able to place your mind on the object of meditation in such a way that it is no longer possible to lose it completely; this then is what differentiates this state from the three before it. Even though you are succeeding in keeping the object from being lost, nonetheless dullness and agitation are present in your mind, and they are very strong. Therefore you must at this point apply the correction for dullness and agitation. These two levels, the third and fourth, are achieved by means of recollection. Our Lama noted that from this point on the power of our meditation was complete, or full-grown, like a person who has reached maturity.

ལྟ་པ་ནི། བཞི་པའི་སྐབས་སུ་སེམས་ནང་དུ་བསྐྱེད་དུགས་པས་འདིར་བྱིང་བ་ཕྱ་མའི་
ཉེན་ཆེ་བས་ཤེས་བཞིན་སྟོབས་ལྡན་བསྐྱེད་ནས། དེས་བྱ་ར་བྱས་ཏེ་ཏིང་ངེ་འཛིན་གྱི་
ཡོན་ཏན་བསམས་ནས་སེམས་གཟེངས་བསྟོད། འདི་དང་ལྟ་མ་གཉིས་ལ་བྱིང་གློད་
རགས་པ་འབྱུང་མི་འབྱུང་གི་བྱུང་ཡོད།

Here is the fifth state of meditation, called "controlling the mind." There is a tendency during the fourth state to draw your mind too far inside, and there is a great danger that this can lead to subtle dullness. Therefore we must now develop our watchfulness to a high degree. It goes and spies on the mind, and finds something wrong; in response then we must uplift the mind by thinking over the many benefits that single-mindedness can bring to us. The difference between this state and those before it is whether or not obvious dullness can occur.

དུག་པ་ནི། ལྟ་པའི་སྐབས་སུ་སེམས་གཟེངས་བསྟོད་དུགས་པའི་རྒྱུན་གྱིས་འདིར་
གློད་པ་ཕྱ་མའི་ཉེན་ཆེ་ལ། གློད་པ་ཕྱ་མོ་སྐྱེས་པ་ན། དེ་རིག་པའི་ཤེས་བཞིན་སྟོབས་
ལྡན་བསྐྱེད་དེ་གློད་པ་ཕྱ་མོ་ལའང་སྐྱོན་དུ་བསྐྱེད་ནས་འགོག་དགོས། ལྟ་མ་ལས་འདི་
སྐབས་བྱིང་བ་ཕྱ་མའི་ཉེན་ཆེ་བ་མེད་པའི་བྱུང་ཡོད། ལྟ་པ་དང་དུག་པ་གཉིས་ཤེས་

བཞིན་གྱི་སྤྲོབས་ཀྱིས་འགྲུབ། འདི་ནས་ཤེས་བཞིན་གྱི་སྤྲོབས་རྫོགས་པར་གསུངས།

Here is the sixth state of meditation, called "pacifying the mind." The great danger at this point is that subtle agitation occurs, as a result of uplifting the mind too far while in the fifth state. Whenever this subtle agitation comes, you must raise up a powerful kind of watchfulness to detect it; realize that even very subtle agitation is a serious fault in your meditation, and stop it. What distinguishes this stage from the one before it is whether or not there is a great danger of having subtle dullness. These last two states, the fifth and the sixth, are achieved by means of watchfulness. From this point on, said our Lama, the power of our watchfulness is complete.

བདུན་པའི་སྐབས་སུ་བློ་ཤེས་ཀྱི་སྤྲོབས་རྫོགས་པས་བྱིང་གློད་སྐྱེ་དཀའ་ཡང་། དེ་
ནས་བཙུན་འགྲུས་ཀྱི་སྤྲོབས་བསྐྱེད་དེ་བྱིང་གློད་སྐྱེ་ལའང་སྐྱེན་དུ་བལྟས་ནས་སྤོང་
གང་ཐུབ་བྱེད་དགོས། འདི་དང་སྤྲོ་མ་གཉིས་ལ་བྱིང་གློད་སྐྱེ་མེད་ཤོར་བའི་ཉེན་དོགས་
ཆེར་བྱེད་དགོས་མི་དགོས་ཀྱི་བྱུང་ཡོད། འདིར་བྱིང་གློད་སྐྱེ་མེད་ཅམ་གྱི་ཉེན་ཆེར་མེད་
ཀྱང་། ད་དུང་དེ་གཉིས་སྤོང་ཐབས་ལ་ནི་བཙུན་དགོས་པ་ཡིན། ལྷ་པ་དང་དུག་པའི་
སྐབས་བྱིང་གློད་ཀྱི་ཚུར་གཞོན་པའི་དོགས་པ་ཡོད་ལ། བདུན་པའི་སྐབས་འདིར་བྱིང་
གློད་བྱུང་ཡང་བཙུན་འགྲུས་ཀྱིས་བཀག་ཐུབ་པས་བྱིང་གློད་ཀྱིས་ཚུར་བར་དུ་ཆེར་
གཙོད་མི་རུས་གསུངས། སེམས་གནས་གསུམ་པ་ནས་བདུན་པའི་བར་གྱི་ལྷ་པོ་
འདིར་ཉིང་འཛིན་ཤས་ཆེ་ཡང་བྱིང་གློད་སོགས་ཀྱིས་བར་དུ་གཙོད་པས་ཆད་ཅིང་
འཇུག་པའི་ཡིད་བྱེད་ཀྱི་སྐབས་ཡིན།

By the time you reach the seventh state of meditation, which we call "pacifying the mind totally," your recollection and watchfulness are total, and so it is unlikely that dullness and agitation are going to occur. At this point you must bring your effort up to a powerful level; see how destructive even subtle forms of dullness and agitation are, and do whatever you can to eliminate them altogether. The difference between this state and the ones before it is whether or not you should worry much about slipping into subtle dullness or agitation. Although there is no great danger at this point that subtle dullness and agitation will occur, you must still make great effort to implement the various

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Reading Seven

methods for eliminating them. While you are in the fifth and sixth states of meditation, you still have to be concerned whether or not dullness and agitation are going to attack you. Here in the seventh state though you have the ability to initiate the effort necessary to block them; and so, said our Lama, dullness and agitation are unable to attack and create an obstacle. During these last five states of meditation—that is, from the third through to the seventh—the mind is for the most part in single-pointed meditation. Nonetheless, conditions such as dullness and agitation are interrupting ones concentration, and so we describe the mental mode during these periods as "engaging but interrupted."

བརྒྱད་པའི་སྐབས་སུ་ནི་ཐོག་མར་གཉིན་པོ་དྲན་འཛིན་གྱི་ཚུལ་བ་ཅུང་ཟད་བསྐྱེན་ན་
ཐུན་གྱི་རིང་བྱིང་གོད་ཕྱ་མོའང་མེད་པར་ཐུན་འབྲུངས་ཐུབ་པ་འབྱུང་ཞིང་། འདི་དག་
གི་སྐབས་རིམ་བཞིན་དཔེར་ན་དག་པོ་སྟོབས་དང་ལྷན་པ་དང་། སྟོབས་འགའ་ཞིག་
ཉམས་པ་དང་། སྟོབས་ཇོགས་པར་ཉམས་པ་ལྟར་བྱིང་གོད་གྱི་སྟོབས་རིམ་བཞིན་
ཉམས་པ་ཡིན་པས་བརྒྱད་པ་ནས་བཟུང་ཤེས་བཞིན་གྱི་ཚུལ་བ་བསྐྱེན་མི་དགོས་སོ།
།སེམས་གནས་བརྒྱད་པའི་སྐབས་འདིར་ཚུལ་བ་ཅུང་ཟད་བསྐྱེན་ན་ཐུན་གྱི་རིང་བྱིང་
གོད་སོགས་ཀྱིས་བར་དུ་གཅོད་པ་མེད་པས་ཆད་པ་མེད་པར་འཇུག་པའི་ཡིད་བྱེད་གྱི་
སྐབས་ཡིན། སེམས་གནས་བདུན་པ་དང་བརྒྱད་པ་བརྩོན་འགྲུས་ཀྱི་སྟོབས་ཀྱིས་
འགྲུབ།

Here is what happens when you reach the eighth state of meditation, called "making the mind single-pointed." When you begin a meditation session, you must still make a slight effort to bring up the various corrections. After that though you are able to go for an entire session without even the subtle forms of dullness and agitation coming up in the mind. These last few stages are like having an enemy who is at full strength, one who has lost part of his strength, and one whose strength is completely lost. Since these examples describe how dullness and agitation gradually lose their power, we can say that from the eighth state of meditation you no longer need to make any conscious effort to apply watchfulness. Because in this eighth state you can make a little effort at the opening of a meditation session and then pass the entire period without being interrupted by problems such as dullness and agitation, the mental mode at this point is described as "engaging without interruption." The seventh and eighth states of meditation are achieved through applying effort.

དགྲུ་པ་ནི་འབད་ཚེ་ལ་དང་བུ་ལ་བར་འཇུག་པ་སྟེ། དེ་ཡང་བརྒྱད་པའི་སྐབས་ཡང་
ཡང་འདྲིས་པ་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་འདིར་འབད་ཚེ་ལ་མེད་པར་ལྷན་གྱིས་གྲུབ་པ་ཡིན་པས་
ཚེ་ལ་བ་ཅུང་ཟད་ཀྱང་མི་དགོས་པར་ཁ་ཏོན་བྱང་བ་ཞིག་གིས་འདོན་པ་བཏོན་པ་ལྟར་
ཏིང་འཛིན་ལ་སྤིལ་གྱིས་འཇུག་།དེ་ནི་འདོད་སེམས་ཅུ་གཅིག་པའི་ཞི་གནས་རྗེས་
མཐུན་པ་ཡིན། དགྲུ་པ་འདི་ཡོངས་སུ་འདྲིས་པའི་སྟོབས་ཀྱིས་འགྲུབ།

Here is the ninth state of meditation, called "achieving equilibrium." Here your mind is engaging in the object without any conscious effort at all. This state comes about as a result of having repeated the eighth state over and over until you are completely accustomed to it, and then you can go into meditation spontaneously, effortlessly. This is similar to the point you reach in your recitations when you can read out a text from memory without any effort, since you have practiced reciting it repeatedly. You go into single-minded meditation in a single swoop. This state of mind is for all intents and purposes a desire-realm form of single-pointed quietude. The ninth state is achieved through being totally accustomed.

དེ་དག་གི་དང་པོའི་སྐབས་ནམ་ཏྟག་ངོས་ཟེན་པའི་ཉམས་དང་། གཉིས་པའི་སྐབས་
ནམ་ཏྟག་རིས་ངལ་བསོ་བའི་ཉམས། གསུམ་པའི་སྐབས་ནམ་ཏྟག་ཐང་ཆད་པའི་
ཉམས་འབྱུང་། མདོར་ན་སེམས་གནས་དང་པོ་དང་གཉིས་པ་གཉིས་ནི་གནས་པ་རྒྱུན་
རིང་བྱང་ཡོད་ལ། གཉིས་པ་དང་གསུམ་པ་ནི་ག་ཡིང་བ་རྒྱུན་རིང་བྱང་ཡོད། གསུམ་
པ་བཞི་པ་གཉིས་ནི་དམིགས་ཏེན་ཤོར་སྤིང་མི་སྤིང་གི་བྱེད་པར་ཡོད་ཅིང་། བཞི་པ་
དང་ལྷ་པ་ནི། བྱིང་བ་རགས་པ་སྐྱེ་མི་སྐྱེ་དང་། ལྷ་པ་རྒྱལ་པ་གཉིས་ནི་བྱིང་བ་ཕྱ་མོ་ལ་
དོགས་ཟོན་དགོས་མི་དགོས་དང་། དེར་མ་ཟད་རྒྱལ་པར་ཁོད་པ་ཕྱ་མོ་སྐྱེ་བའང་ལྷ་མ་
ལས་ཉུང་ངོ། རྒྱལ་པ་དང་བདུན་པ་གཉིས་ནི། བྱིང་ཁོད་ཕྱ་མོར་ཤོར་ཉན་གྱི་དོགས་
ཟོན་ཆེན་པོ་དགོས་མི་དགོས་དང་། བདུན་པ་དང་བརྒྱད་པ་ནི་བྱིང་ཁོད་ཡོད་མེད་དང་།

བརྒྱུད་པ་དང་དབྱུང་པ་ནི། འབད་ཚུལ་ལ་སྒྲུབ་མཆི་སྒྲུབ་གྱི་བྱུང་ཡོད་དོ། །བདུན་པའི་
སྐབས་བྱིང་རྒྱོད་འགོག་ཙམ་ལས། དེར་ཤོར་དྲགས་གྱི་ཉན་ཆེར་བྱེད་མི་དགོས་ལ།
དཔེར་ན་དབྱུང་དང་འཐབ་ན། དེ་སྒྲོབས་ཞེན་དུ་བཏང་ཟིན་ནས་དྲགས་ཟོན་ཆེར་མི་
དགོས་པར་བཀག་ཙམ་གྱིས་ཆོག་པ་བཞིན་ཡིན་པར་གསུངས།།

The impression you have during the first state is one of recognizing that you have too many thoughts. In the second state you have a feeling that they are making a resurgence. By the third state the impression is that the problem of too many thoughts has in a sense tired out. In brief then we can say that in the first two states there is a question of how long the mind can stay fixed on the object. What distinguishes the third and the fourth states is whether or not one can lose the object or not. The fourth and fifth states are differentiated by whether obvious dullness can arise or not. The fifth and sixth states are separated by whether or not you have to be worried about subtle dullness coming up. Moreover, there is the distinction that—although it is possible for subtle agitation to occur during the sixth state—it is much less likely than in the one before it. The sixth and seventh states are distinguished by whether or not you have to be very concerned about slipping into subtle agitation or dullness. States number seven and eight are separated by whether there is any agitation or dullness at all; and eight and nine are differentiated by whether or not you have to rely on any conscious effort. The seventh level is devoted to eliminating dullness and agitation, rather than having to think about any serious danger that you could slip into them. Our Lama said that at this point it was like having a fist-fight with an enemy who was already weakened to the point of exhaustion; it's not like you need to be on your guard especially, it's enough just to be thinking about how to finish him off.

The Asian Classics Institute
Course III: Applied Meditation

Reading

Eight: The Steps to Buddhahood, and Finding a Lama

༄༅། ཡོན་ཏན་གཞིར་གྱུར་མའི་འགྲོད་པའི་ས་བཅད་རྒྱས་པ།

*Expanded Outline to the Lam-Rim
Source of All My Good*

I. ལམ་གྱི་རྩ་བ་བཤེས་གཉིན་བསྟན་པའི་ཚུལ།

Root of the Path: How to Take a Lama

Root text verse: "The source..."

A. རྩ་བ་དད་པ་སྦྱང་པ།

The Root Practice: Developing Faith for Him/Her

1. བསམ་པས་བསྟན་ཚུལ།

How to Serve Him/Her in Your Thoughts

2. སྦྱོར་བས་བསྟན་ཚུལ་གཉིས་ཡོད།

How to Serve Him/Her in Your Deeds

B. བཀའ་ངོན་ཇེས་སུ་ངན་ཏི་གྲུས་པ་བསྦྱིད་པ།

Developing Reverence by Remembering His/Her Kindness

II. བསྐྱེད་ནས་སློང་ལྷུང་སྤང་བའི་ཚུལ།

How to Purify the Mind, Once You Have Taken a Lama

A. དལ་འགྱོར་ལ་སླིང་པོ་སྤང་བའི་ཕྱིར་བསྐྱལ་བ་དང་།

Urging by the Lama that We Should Take the Essence of this Life

Root text verse: "Bless me first..."

1. དལ་འགྱོར་ངོས་བཟུང་བ།

Recognizing our Leisure and Fortune

2. དེ་དོན་ཆེ་བ་བསམ་པ།

Contemplating How Very Important They Are

3. རྟོན་དཀའ་བ་བསམ་པ།

Contemplating How Hard They Are to Find

B. སླིང་པོ་ལྷུང་ལེན་པའི་ཚུལ་ལོ།

How to Take the Essence of this Life

1. སྐྱེས་བུ་རྩུང་དུ་དང་ཐུན་མོང་བའི་ལམ་གྱི་རིམ་པར་སློབ་སྦྱང་བ།

Training the Mind in the Steps of the Path Shared with
Practitioners of Lesser Scope

Root text verses: "My body and the life..."
"And help me to find..."

includes:

a. འཇིག་རྟེན་ཕྱི་མ་དོན་གཉིས་གྱི་སློབ་སྦྱོང་པ།

Developing a Concern for the Next Life

i. འཇིག་རྟེན་འདིར་རིང་དུ་མི་གནས་པའི་འཆི་བ་

རྗེས་སུ་དྲན་པ།

Course III: Applied Meditation
Reading Eight

Staying Aware of Death, the Fact that We
Will not be Here Long

includes:

a) ཇེས་པར་འཆི་བ་བསམ་པ།

Contemplating How Death is Certain

b) རྣམ་འཆི་ཇེས་པ་མེད་པ་བསམ་པ།

Contemplating How the Time of
Death is Uncertain

c) འཆི་བའི་ཆོ་ཆོས་མ་གཏོགས་པ་གང་

གིས་ཀྱང་མི་ཕན་པ་བསམ་པ།

Contemplating How, at Death,
Nothing At All but Dharma Can
Help Us

ii. འཇིག་རྟེན་སྤྱི་མར་ཇི་ལྟར་འགྱུར་བ་འགོ་བ་

གཉིས་ཀྱི་བདེ་སྤྱད་བསམ་པ།

Contemplating What Will Happen to Us
in the Next Life: the Sufferings of the
Two Divisions of Living Beings

includes:

a) དཔྱུལ་བའི་སྤྱད་བསམ་པ།

Contemplating the Suffering of Hell
Beings

b) དྲུག་འགོའི་སྤྱད་བསམ་པ།

Contemplating the Suffering of
Animals

c) ཡི་དྭགས་ཀྱི་སྤྱད་བསམ་པ།

Contemplating the Suffering of
Craving Spirits

b. འཇིག་རྟེན་གྱི་མར་བདེ་བའི་ཐབས་བསྟན་པ།

Using Methods of Achieving a Higher Birth
in the Next Life

i. བསྟན་པ་ལ་འདུག་པའི་སློ་དམ་པ་སྐབས་འགོ་

སྤང་བ།

Practicing How to Go for Refuge,
Which is the Door to Enter the Dharma

a) གང་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་སྐབས་སུ་འགོ་བའི་གྲུ།

The Reasons for Taking Refuge

b) དེ་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་སྐབས་སུ་འགོ་བའི་ཡུལ།

The Places in which then to Take
Refuge

c) ཇི་ཙམ་སྐབས་སུ་སོང་བའི་ཚུལ།

What Then You Must Do to Take
Refuge

d) སྐབས་སུ་སོང་ནས་བསྐབ་པར་བྱ་བའི་

རིམ་པ།

Various Advices on How to Act
After Taking Refuge

ii. བདེ་ལེགས་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་རྩ་བ་ཡིད་ཆེས་ཀྱི་

དད་པ་བསྐྱེད་པ།

Developing the Faith Which Believes,
for This is the Root of Every Goodness

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a) ལས་ངེས་པའི་ཚུལ།

Karma is Fixed (Good Karma must Cause Pleasure, Bad Karma must Cause Pain)

b) ལས་འཕེལ་ཆེ་བ།

Karma Expands

c) ལས་མ་བྱས་པ་དང་མི་ཕྱད་པ།

Karma not Committed Cannot Bring a Consequence

d) ལས་བྱས་པ་ཚུད་མི་བྱ་བ།

Karma when Committed Must Bring a Consequence

2. གླེས་བྱ་འབྲིང་དང་ཐུན་མོང་བའི་ལམ་གྱི་རིམ་པར་སློབ་སྦྱང་བ།

Training the Mind in the Steps of the Path Shared with Practitioners of the Medium Scope

a. ཐར་པ་དོན་དུ་གཉེར་བའི་སློབ་སྦྱང་བ།

Developing the Wish to Achieve Nirvana

Root text verse: "Bless me to perceive..."

b. ཐར་པར་བགྲོད་པའི་ལམ་གྱི་རང་བཞིན་གཏན་ལ་
དབབ་པ་ནི།

Establishing What Path Leads to Nirvana

Root text verse: "Grant that these pure thoughts..."

includes:

Nature of our suffering life:

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སྤྱག་བསྐྱེལ་བརྒྱུད་བསམ་པ།

Contemplate the Eight Sufferings

i. སྐྱེ་བའི་སྤྱག་བསྐྱེལ།

The Suffering of Being Born

ii. སྐྱབ་བའི་སྤྱག་བསྐྱེལ།

The Suffering of Getting Old

iii. རྒྱ་བའི་སྤྱག་བསྐྱེལ།

The Suffering of Getting Sick

iv. འཆི་བའི་སྤྱག་བསྐྱེལ།

The Suffering of Dying

v. མི་སྤྱག་པ་དང་ཕྱད་པའི་སྤྱག་བསྐྱེལ།

The Suffering of Having to Encounter
Things that We Don't Like

vi. སྤྱག་པ་དང་བྲལ་བའི་སྤྱག་བསྐྱེལ།

The Suffering of Having to Lose
Things that We Do Like

vii. འདོད་པ་བཙལ་ཏེ་མ་ཆེད་པའི་སྤྱག་བསྐྱེལ།

The Suffering of Trying to Get Things We
Want, and Not Being Able To

viii. མདོར་ན་ཉི་བར་ལེན་པའི་ཕུང་པོ་ལྟ་སྤྱག་

བསྐྱེལ་བ།

To Put it Briefly, the Suffering of the Fact
That We Have Taken On a Mind and
Body and Other Parts Which Must Suffer

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Cause of our suffering life:

ཉམ་མེད་ས་བཅུ།

The Ten Menal Afflictions

i. འདོད་ཆགས།

Desire

ii. ཁོང་ཁྲོ།

Anger

iii. ད་རྒྱལ།

Pride

iv. མ་རིག་པ།

Ignorance

v. ཐེ་ཚོམ།

Destructive Doubts

vi. འཇིག་ལྷ།

Ignorance about My Own Nature

vii. མཐར་འཛིན་གྱི་ལྷ་བ།

Belief in One of the Two Extremes

viii. ལྷ་བ་མཚོག་འཛིན།

Belief that One's Wrong Views are the Best

ix. རྩལ་བྲིམས་དང་བརྟལ་ཞུགས་མཚོག་འཛིན།

Belief in Excessive Spiritual Practices

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x. འོག་ལྷ།

Belief in a Wrong Worldview

How to get out of our suffering life:

i. རྩལ་སྒྲིམས་ཀྱི་བསྐྱབ་པ།

The Training of Morality

ii. ཏིང་ངེ་འཛིན་གྱི་བསྐྱབ་པ།

The Training of Meditative Concentration

iii. ཤེས་རབ་ཀྱི་བསྐྱབ་པ།

The Training of Wisdom

3. རྒྱ་བྱ་ཆེན་པོའི་ལམ་གྱི་རིམ་པར་སློབ་སྦྱང་བ།

Training the Mind in the Steps of the Path Shared with
Practitioners of Greater Scope

a. བྱང་རྩལ་ཏུ་སྒྲིམས་བསྐྱེད་པའི་རྩལ་ནི།

How to Develop the Wish for Enlightenment

Root text verse: "I have slipped and fallen..."

includes:

i. རྩོ་བོ་རྒྱུ་འཁྲུག་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་རྒྱུ་འབྲས་མཉན་

ངག་བདུན་གྱི་སློབ་ནས་སྦྱང་བ།

Practicing with the Seven-Step, Cause-and-
Effect Method found in the Books of the
Lord, Atisha

- ii. འཕགས་པ་ཞི་བ་ལྷན་གཞུང་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་
བདག་གཞན་བརྩི་བའི་སྒོ་ནས་སྤང་བ།

Practicing with the Method known as
"Exchanging Self and Others," which is
found in the Books of the Realized One,
Shantideva

- b. སེམས་བསྐྱེད་ནས་སྤྱོད་པ་ལ་སློབ་པའི་ཚུལ།

How to Train Oneself in the Deeds of a
Bodhisattva, Once One Has Developed the Wish
for Enlightenment

- i. མདོ་ཕྱོགས་ལ་སློབ་ཚུལ།

Training Oneself in the Open Ways

- a) སྤྱོད་པ་སྤྱི་ལ་སློབ་ཚུལ།

Training Oneself in All the Deeds of a
Bodhisattva

Root text verse: "Bless me to see clearly..."

includes:

- i) སྤྱན་པའི་ཕར་ཕྱིན་ལ་བསྐྱབ་པའི་
ཚུལ།

How to Train in the Perfection
of Giving

- ii) ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་ཀྱི་ཕར་ཕྱིན་ལ་
བསྐྱབ་པའི་ཚུལ།

How to Train in the Perfection
of Morality

iii) བཟོད་པའི་ཕར་ཕྱིན་ལ་བསྐྱབ་
པའི་ཚུལ།

How to Train in the Perfection
of Not Getting Angry

iv) བརྩོན་འགྲུས་ཀྱི་ཕར་ཕྱིན་ལ་
བསྐྱབ་པའི་ཚུལ།

How to Train in the Perfection
of Joyful Effort

v) བསམ་གཏན་གྱི་ཕར་ཕྱིན་ལ་
བསྐྱབ་པའི་ཚུལ།

How to Train in the
Perfection of Meditation

vi) ཤེས་རབ་ཀྱི་ཕར་ཕྱིན་ལ་བསྐྱབ་
པའི་ཚུལ།

How to Train in the Perfection
of Wisdom

b) ཕར་ཕྱིན་ཐ་མ་གཉིས་ལ་སློབ་ཚུལ།

Training Oneself Specifically in the
Final Two Perfections

Root text verse: "Grant that I may quickly..."

Includes teachings on ཞི་གནས། (*shamata*, or insight);
and ལྷག་མཐོང་། (*vipashyana*, or insight)

ii. ལྷགས་སྟོགས་ལ་སློབ་ཚུལ།

Training Oneself in the Secret Ways

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- a) གྱུད་སྒྲོན་རུང་དུ་བྱས་ནས་དབང་བཞི་
རྣམ་པར་དག་པ་ཞེས་ཏི་དེ་རྒྱུ་ཞེས་པ་
ལ་འཕྲུག་པ།

Entering the Diamond Path, Once
You Have Made Your Mind a
Worthy Vessel, and Have Taken the
Four Empowerments, in a Pure Form

Root text verse: "Grant that once I've practiced..."

- b) དབང་དུས་ཀྱི་ཁས་སྐྱངས་པའི་དམ་
ཚིག་དང་སྡོམ་པ་དག་པར་བྱ་རྒྱུ་ལ།

How to Keep Pure the Pledges and
Vows You Committed Yourself to
When You Took the Empowerment

- c) དམ་སྡོམ་ལ་གནས་ནས་ལམ་རིམ་པ་
གཉིས་བསྒྲེལ་པའི་རྒྱུ་ལོ།

How to Meditate Upon the Two
Levels, Now that You are Keeping
Your Pledges and Vows Pure

Root text verse: "Bless me next to realize..."

III. ལམ་སྐབ་པའི་མཐུན་ཀྱིན་འགྲུབ་པ་དང་འགལ་ཀྱིན་ཞི་བར་གསོལ་བ་འདེབས་པ།

Requesting that You Be Able to Find Those Conditions which Help You
Succeed in the Path, and that Those Conditions which Prevent this Come
to an End

Root text verse: "Bless me, grant that the spiritual Friend..."

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IV. སྐྱེ་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་དུ་ལྷ་མས་རྗེས་སུ་གཟུང་སྟེ་ས་ལམ་གྱི་འབྲེས་བྱ་མཛོན་དུ་
བྱེད་ཀྱས་པར་སྟོན་པ།

Making a Prayer that in All Your Lives Your Lama Will Come to Guide
You, and so Help You Reach the Path's Final Goal

**Root text verses: "In all my lives..."
"...The One who Holds the Diamond."**

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Reading Eight

The following selections are taken from *Preparing for Tantra: The Mountain of Blessings*. *The root text of this book was written by Je Tsongkapa Lobsang Drakpa (1357-1419), and the commentary by Pabonka Rinpoche (1878-1941). The book was translated by Khen Rinpoche Geshe Lobsang Tharchin (1921-) and Geshe Michael Roach (1952-), who also wrote the following introductory sections.*

FOREWORD

Before you start this little book, decide on your motivation for reading it. Think to yourself,

I want to reach enlightenment as soon as possible. I want to reach it in this very life. And when I do, I will free every living being from every pain of the suffering existence we all live now. Then I will take all these beings up to the level of a Buddha, which is the ultimate state of happiness. This is why I am going to read this book, which shows all the steps to enlightenment.

Take a moment now before you go on. Make sure you have this motivation.

This little book covers absolutely everything that the Buddha ever taught. In Tibet we have a hundred great volumes of the Buddhas' own teachings, translated into Tibetan from Sanskrit, the language of ancient India. And this small book covers all of them.

All the old, great books of Buddhism have but one main goal, and that is to show how any one of us can reach the state of perfect enlightenment. They tell us everything we have to do: how to reach the goal, how to practice, and how to learn. They show us how to begin, they show us how to finish. Everything we need is in those books.

Five hundred years ago in Tibet there came a master monk and teacher, whose name was Tsongkapa the Great. He took these ancient volumes and arranged them into a kind of book known as the *Lam Rim*, which means "Steps of the Path to Enlightenment." Here he laid out all the steps that any of us can go through, one by one in the proper order, if we truly wish to reach enlightenment. He took care to present the steps clearly and simply, yet covering everything that must be done, as we start on the path, and travel along it, and finally reach its end.

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The small book here is called the *Source of All My Good*. It is the absolute essence of all the *Lam Rims*, of all the books on the Steps to enlightenment. The text was written by Tsongkapa himself, and it is named from the opening lines, which read: "The source of all my good is my kind Lama, my Lord."

In the teachings on the Steps this work is also known by another name, something of a secret name, which is *Begging for a Mountain of Blessings*. The word "blessing" here refers to the blessings of all the Buddhas of the universe. "Mountain" comes from a Tibetan word which means a huge pile, a great mass of things all heaped together in one place. The word "begging" is meant to show how much we need and want these blessings.

When we recite this work out loud, then, it's as though we are begging the Buddhas to grant us their blessings, to help us achieve everything from the beginning up to final enlightenment. We are asking them to help us reach all the various paths, all the different levels of knowledge; we are asking for the power of their blessings, we are begging them for help.

Just whom are we asking for help? Normally when we perform the secret Ceremony of the Tenth, we begin with the Practice of Six, followed by the Thousand Angels. Just after that we start this *Source of All My Good*. Therefore we still have in front of us the same holy beings who were there during the Thousand Angels.

Sitting in the center, in mid-air before us, is Tsongkapa. Inside his heart is Gentle Voice, or Manjushri, who is the image of all the Buddhas' wisdom. In the heart of Gentle Voice is another holy being, Vajradhara—this is the Keeper of the Diamond, or the Buddha of the secret teachings. His body is blue, and within his own heart is the Sanskrit letter *huung*. This letter is marked with another letter, *mam*.

On Tsongkapa's own right is his disciple Gyaltsab Je, whose full name is Gyaltsab Darma Rinchen. Within this disciple's heart is Loving Eyes, whose Sanskrit name is Avalokiteshvara, and who is the embodiment of all the Buddhas' love. Inside the heart of Loving Eyes is again the Keeper of the Diamond, and in his heart the letter *huung*, marked with a *mam*.

On the other side, to Tsongkapa's left, is his disciple Kedrup Je, whose full name is Kedrup Je Gelek Pelsang. Inside of his heart is the Holder of the Diamond, or Vajrapani, and in the Holder's heart is the Keeper of the Diamond. Within the Keeper's heart is a letter *huung*, marked with a *mam*.

All of these beings are seated in the air in front of you, and they are the ones whom you are asking for their blessing. They are the ones that you are requesting to help you, to grant you every kind of knowledge, from the beginning of the path on up to final enlightenment.

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Now I want you to think about something. What is the difference between a Buddha and us? What is it that makes all the Buddhas different from us? And what about you, yourself? You are trying to reach Buddhahood; but what is the difference between all these Buddhas, and you? This is a question you must examine, and then the answer will come to you.

What are the Buddhas? First of all the places where they live are paradise. Pure paradise. The paradises where the Buddhas live are completely pure, they are pure by their very nature, and there is not a single thing about them which is not pure.

Inside themselves too the Buddhas are pure. They have no inner obstacles at all, no bad deeds stored up in them, no problems of any kind. They have none of the problems that are caused by any of the four elements of the physical world, either around them or within them. They have no sickness, no getting old, no death. They do not even have a word for these things where they live. This is why their paradises have names like the "Heaven of Bliss," for they live in the highest happiness that there is.

When we think about our own lives then we can see the big difference between Buddhas and us. In one sense we are very fortunate; we have all had the very great fortune to be born as a human being, and we can enjoy that small amount of happiness which human beings sometimes experience. And so sometimes we think we are happy.

But still we have problems, a lot of problems. We have problems all around us, and we have problems inside of us. We have problems that come with the very nature of the kind of life we live. The Buddhas have none of these problems.

Try to think about this difference between the Buddhas and you. Why did you get this book, why are you going to read this book? The main purpose is to reach enlightenment, to gain the highest state of happiness that exists. And to get there you must escape all the sufferings that come with our present kind of life.

To do all this you are going to have to follow some kind of practice. You are going to have to move up through certain levels, certain paths, one by one through a great many different Steps. You will have to go in order, gradually, through each of these Steps. Each higher Step you will have to reach by practicing, and to practice you must learn what to practice. If you never learn what to do, you will never be able to do it.

In this little book you are going to learn what to do. But this is only a preparation for something else.

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Generally speaking, this book is all you need. If this is all you ever learn, and if you practice what you learn here, then you will reach enlightenment. But it will take a long time to do so if you restrict yourself to this way, to the way of the open teachings of the Buddha. It will take a very, very long time.

But you want enlightenment, you need it, and you need it now. Why? Because the reason you are reading this book, the whole point of studying these things and reaching these goals, is to help each and every living being. All of them have been your own mother, and the purpose of everything is to help them.

Right now they are suffering, by the very nature of the life we live. Most of them are living in the three lower kinds of birth. Even those who live in one of the higher kinds of birth are suffering too; by the very nature of things, they are in some kind of pain, all the time. Your goal is to save them from this pain, your goal is to help them reach enlightenment, which is absolute happiness. This is why you are studying, this is why you are practicing.

If you only use the way of the open teachings, it will take a long time to reach the goal. But you want the goal now, you want to reach it quickly, because all these living beings around you, all who have been your mother during some lifetime in the past, are suffering in this kind of existence. You cannot stand to have their pain continue, you cannot let them go on suffering so long.

And so you will free them, and you will free them quickly, now. But is there any way to do it so fast? The answer is yes, there is a way, a path that works faster than any other, a path which is very deep and powerful and holy. This is the Tantric path, the secret path of the Diamond Queen: Vajra Yogini.

To practice this path you must receive an initiation to enter it, and then you must receive her teachings. But before you can do this you must first be granted another initiation, one which will qualify you to study and follow her path. There are four great groups of secret teachings, and to qualify to practice the path of this Angel you must be granted an initiation that belongs to the group which is called the "unsurpassed." Therefore the most important thing for you to do first is to seek an initiation of the "unsurpassed" group.

According to the tradition of the Diamond Queen, the best initiation to prepare yourself for her own initiation and path is the one we call the "Union of the Spheres," or Chakrasamvara. There are though other initiations of the unsurpassed group which you can seek if you cannot get this one; for example, there is the initiation of the being known as Frightener*, or Bhairava, which is much shorter and easier than the one for the Union of the Spheres, and still qualifies you to take her initiation later.

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There is another step you should take too before seeking her initiation. When you go to a college to get an advanced degree, or any degree at all, you must first enter the college. Then you go to classes, do your study, and finally after a number of years you complete all the requirements, and reach your goal. To reach the goal then it is very important that you study and learn, on a constant basis. But to study, and learn, you first have to gain entrance into the college.

It's all the same here. The first thing you have to do is to gain entrance into the unsurpassed group of the secret teachings of the Buddha. To enter these teachings you have to go through the gate, and this is the initiation. The initiation is the door.

When you take the initiation, you commit yourself to a number of vows. Keeping these vows is like doing your study on a daily basis once you've been allowed to enter the college. In a school you have to learn what to study, and then you have to maintain a regular schedule of study. Here in the secret teachings, the vows that you took when you received your initiation are what you have to study: these are what you have to maintain on a regular, daily basis.

To keep the vows, you have to learn all about them. This is why it's essential that after your first initiation you study, in detail, the secret vows, along with the regular vows of morality, and the bodhisattva vows. The very function of these vows, the result of these vows, is very simple. *If you keep them, they produce enlightenment in you.*

Aside from this main function, keeping the vows has another effect as well. In the short run—that is, while you are still on the path, from the very beginning on up to the day you reach the ultimate goal—they help you, they keep you, they preserve you. They make you sweeter and sweeter, more and more pure, every single day you keep them. Everything about you gets better and better: the way you act, the way you think, higher and higher, day by day, month by month.

The vows then are your dear companion, the vows are your devoted helpmate. Vows are not some kind of punishment; the Lama doesn't come to the sacred place of initiation, and say to you, "Well now that you've got the initiation, here are some vows to keep, as a punishment." You must understand all the great good which the vows do for you, and you must learn what they are.

Once you have learned the vows, you must keep them as your daily practice. You should reach a point where, as you look back after some time has passed, you can see progress, you can say to yourself, "A number of years ago, I used to act like that; I had a certain kind of attitude, certain ways of behaving, the limitations of my knowledge were such, and my ability too was only so. Now they have all changed, for the better. Even in the last two years I have

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changed; no, even in the last year I have changed." You should be able to see for yourself, you should be able to judge, by yourself, whether you are keeping the vows, and how it changes everything about you.

So we are working mainly towards the day when we can receive initiation into the practice of the Diamond Queen. This will allow us to receive her teachings, and then to carry them out. To do this, we will first have to seek any one of the preliminary initiations into the secret teachings of the unsurpassed group, the highest group of secret teachings.

A person who seeks to be granted an initiation into this highest group should himself be highest, in the sense that he is highly qualified to receive the initiation. Becoming highly qualified is something that you must do in the proper stages, in certain steps, one by one.

Above I asked you to think about what it was that made Buddhas different from us. In the beginning though all the beings who are Buddhas now were just the same as we are at present. They lived the same kind of suffering life that we pass our days in now, and they did so over millions and millions of years, over very many lifetimes.

At some point though these beings were able to achieve an excellent life as a human; the same kind that you have now. Within that human life they were able to meet with an excellent spiritual teacher as well. He or she gave them the proper training, and the necessary initiations, and as a result these beings began to get better and better. Finally they achieved enlightenment: they were able to stop all the problems within them and outside of them, everything. If they have been able to practice and achieve this goal, then why can't you? Why not?

And so it is possible for you to become someone who is highly qualified, who is qualified to an unsurpassed degree to take one of the initiations of the unsurpassed group of the secret teachings. To be qualified to take this initiation, to be a highly qualified practitioner in this sense, means that you must be a practitioner of what we call the *Mahayana*: the Greater Way. This is because all the secret teachings also belong to the greater way; they are in fact the highest teachings and practices of the greater way. You too then will have to be an unsurpassed practitioner, of the greater way. But how do you reach this point?

You must first prepare yourself, with what we call the "shared" practice. The word "shared" means that this preliminary practice is shared by the way of the open teachings, and the greater way, and the way of the secret teachings—all three. It is a practice which all three ways share in common.

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Suppose you are planning to construct a very high building, a building with many stories. The most important thing to do first is to build a good foundation, a very strong foundation. If the foundation is strong, then you can build as many stories as you like on top of it.

The little book you have here—*Begging for a Mountain of Blessings*, complete with the commentary of the great Pabongka Rinpoche—presents this foundation. It shows you the practice which is shared by all three ways, and which will prepare you for initiation into the secret teachings. This is the strong foundation upon which you will build your great, high house.

Think about it, and be happy. Take some joy now in what you are about to do. You must realize what a precious opportunity you have in your hands at this very moment, this one good time. Read, and learn, and try not to forget. Try to remember what you learn in this little book, and then try to put it into practice, in your daily life, in a regular way.

By the time you finish this book you should be a different person. The person who picks this book up to read, and the person who sets it down after finishing the last page, should be totally different people. On the inside. You must change: you must change in the way you think, you must change in what you know, in the way you behave all day, in everything about you. Try to change yourself. If you do, then you will win the result of reading this book, of picking it up, and of entering into what it stands for.

Khen Rinpoche Geshe Lobsang Tharchin

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Je Tsongkapa's Day
December 27, 1994

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

JE TSONGKAPA (1357-1419), also known as Je Rinpoche Lobsang Drakpa, was perhaps the single greatest commentator in the 2,500 year history of Buddhism. He was born in the district of Tsongka in eastern Tibet and took his first vows at a tender age. As a teenager he had already mastered much of the teachings of Buddhism and was sent by his tutors to the great monastic universities of central Tibet. Here he studied under the leading Buddhist scholars of his day; it is said as well that he enjoyed mystic visions in which he met and learned from different forms of the Buddha himself.

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The 18 volumes of Tsongkapa's collected works contain eloquent and incisive commentaries on virtually every major classic of ancient Buddhism, as well as his famed treatises on the "Steps of the Path to Buddhahood." His students, who included the first Dalai Lama of Tibet, contributed hundreds of their own expositions of Buddhist philosophy and practice.

Tsongkapa founded the Great Three monasteries of Tibet, where by custom nearly 25,000 monks have studied the scriptures of Buddhism over the centuries. He also instituted the great Monlam festival, a period of religious study and celebration for the entire Tibetan nation. Tsongkapa passed away in his 62nd year, at his home monastery of Ganden in Lhasa, the capital of Tibet.

PABONGKA RINPOCHE (1878-1941), also known as Jampa Tenzin Trinley Gyatso, was born into a leading family in the state of Tsang in north-central Tibet. As a boy he entered the Gyalrong House of Sera Mey, one of the colleges of the great Sera Monastic University, and attained the rank of *geshe*, or master of Buddhist philosophy. His powerful public teachings soon made him the leading spiritual figure of his day, and his collected works on every facet of Buddhist thought and practice comprise some 15 volumes. His most famous student was Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche (1901-1981), the junior tutor of the present Dalai Lama. Pabongka Rinpoche passed away at the age of 63 in the Hloka district of south Tibet.

༄༄། ཁྱེད་བདག་དྲེ་རྩེ་འཆང་པ་བོད་ཁ་པ་དཔལ་བཟང་པོས། བྱང་རྒྱལ་ལམ་གྱི་རིམ་
པའི་ཉིང་པོ་བསྐྱུས་པ་ཡོན་ཏན་གཞིར་གྱུར་མའི་ཟབ་བྲིད་གནང་སྐབས་ཀྱི་བཞུགས་བྱང་མདོར་
བསྐྱུས་སུ་བཀོད་པ་སྤང་དོར་ལྟ་བུའི་མིག་རྣམ་པར་འབྱེད་པ་ཞེས་བྱ་བ་བཞུགས་སོ།།

Herein contained is a book named *Opening Your Eyes to What You Should Keep, and What You Should Give Up*.¹ It consists of a brief series of notes that were taken at a teaching delivered by the Lord of the Secret World, Vajradhara, the Keeper of the Diamond, the Good and Glorious Pabongka.² The teaching was a profound explanation of the text known as the *Source of All My Good*,³ a work which is the distilled essence of the Steps of the path to Buddhahood.

ཁྲི་བཅུན་སྒྲ་མ་དམ་པ་སྒྲོ་བཟང་བྱུང་དབང་དྲེ་རྩེ་འཆང་ཆེན་པོ་བདེ་ཆེན་སྣིང་པོའི་
ཞབས་ཀྱི་ལྷམོར་སྒྲོ་གསུམ་གྲུས་པས་ཕྱག་འཆལ་ལོ།

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In deepest reverence, expressed through all three doors,⁴
I bow to the lotus feet of the person who is the Essence
of Great Bliss, the Venerated One, the Holy Lama,
Lobsang the Great, Lord of All Buddhas,
the One Who Keeps the Diamond.⁵

HOW THE TEACHING WAS GIVEN

།དེ་ལ་འདིར་བྱུང་བདག་འཁོར་ལོའི་མགོན་པོ་དོན་ཅེ་འཆང་པ་བོད་ཁ་པ་བཀའ་དྲིན་མཉམ་
མེད་དེ་ཉིད་གྱི་ཞལ་ལྷན་ནས། དུས་གསུམ་གྱི་རྒྱལ་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་གང་ནས་གཤེགས་པའི་
གཞུང་ལམ་གཅིག་ལྟ། བྱང་རྒྱལ་ལམ་གྱི་རིམ་པའི་སྤྲིང་པོ་བསྐྱུས་པ། ཡབ་ཅེ་རྒྱལ་བ་
གཉིས་པའི་གདམས་པའི་ཉིང་བྱ་གསུང་རབ་ཀྱན་གྱི་བཅུད་ལྷུང་བ་ལྷ་བྱ་ཡོན་ཏན་གཞིར་
གྱུར་མའམ་བྱིན་རྒྱལ་སྤྲུང་སྤྲུང་ཞུ་བྱ་གསུང་པའི་ཟབ་བྲིད་ལེགས་པར་ལོས་སྐབས་གྱི་ཟེན་
ཐོ་མདོ་ཙམ་བྲི་བ་ལ།

Here I will give just a brief account of a wonderful teaching bestowed upon us by the One, the Lord of the Secret World, the Savior of His Followers, and the Keeper of the Diamond: Pabongka Rinpoche, whose kindness knows no match.

His teaching was a profound clarification of the one and only highway used by each and every Victor of the past, present, and future to reach the highest goals; the Steps on the path to Buddhahood, its very essence distilled; the inner nectar of the instructions imparted by our Father, the Lord, the Buddha himself come again; and the ultimate elixir extracted from the highest of words, the Speech of the Enlightened Ones: that is to say, the work known to us as the Source of All My Good, also called Begging for a Mountain of Blessings.⁶

ཐོག་མར་ཅེ་ཉིད་ནས་དབུ་བསྐྱལ་གྱིས་ཤེར་སྤྲིང་དང་སང་གདོང་བསྐྱོག་པ་ནས། བདེ་
ལེགས་ཤོག་ཅེས་པའི་བར་སྤྱི་ལྷར་དང་།

As he began the teaching, the Lord himself led us in reciting the Essence of Wisdom, and then the prayer of Simhamukhi—the Angel with the Face of a Lion, from the part where we ward off any evil that might disrupt the teaching, all the way up to the words "May goodness come to be," in the way we usually do them.

ཡང་རེ་རེ་བཞིན་དབྱ་བསྐྱལ་ཏེ། ཡུན་ཚྲོགས་དགེ་ལེགས། བྱམས་པ་ཐོགས་མེད།
འཇམ་དབྱངས་ཡོད་མེད། ཐུགས་ཇེ་ཆེན་པོ། བཤད་སྐྱབ་གདམས་པའི། གངས་
ཅན་ཤིང་རྟའི། སྐྱབས་གསུམ་ཀུན་འདུས། རབ་འབྱམས་གསུང་རབ། སྐྱེ་བ་ཀུན་ཏུ་
རྣམས་སྟོ་ཀ་རེ་ལྟན་དུ་གསུངས།

Then in turns we took the lead, sounding out in unison the various verses that include the words "Virtues perfected finally," and "Loving One, Avalokiteshvara, with Asanga," and "Gentle Voice, Manjushri, with the one who destroyed the extremes of being and not," and "The one of great compassion," and "Teaching what to learn, to reach," and "Founder from the Land of Snows," and "All three places of refuge in one," and "The constellations of the highest of words," and "In all my lives."

དབྱ་མཛད་ཀྱིས་བསྐྱལ་ནས་མཐུལ་ས་གཞི་སྟོས་བྱུགས། མདུན་གྱི་རྣམ་མཁར་སིང་
ཁྲི། ཡུལ་བྱང་མཁུན་བཙུའི་རྒྱ་འཛིན། ཡི་དམ་གྱུ་རུ་བཅས་དང་།

The lead then went to the chanting master, who guided us in the offering of the mandala, beginning with "The great Earth, filled with the smell of incense," and on through "Atop a lion throne in the space before me," as well as "Sponges of the sky, made of most excellent knowledge and love," along with the lines that begin with idam guru.

ཡང་དོ་ཇེ་འཆང་མཆོག་ནས་དབྱ་བསྐྱལ་གནང་སྟེ། སངས་རྒྱས་ཆོས་ཆོགས་ལན་
གསུམ་སྟེ་བ་གསུངས་དང་། དེ་ནས། ལྷ་དང་ལྷ་མིན་སོགས་དང་། ལྷ་ཡི་སྐྱད་དང་
སོགས་སྟོ་ཀ་རེ་རེ་ཇེ་ཉིད་ནས་གནང་བའི་མཐར།

The lead returned to the Keeper of the Diamond, who deigned to direct us thrice through the prayer for taking refuge and developing the wish for enlightenment, the one that includes the words "To the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha." Here finally the Lord himself bespoke the verses containing the lines "Pleasure beings and those near so," along with "In the language of pleasure beings" and the rest.⁷

THE PRELIMINARIES

I. Why the Steps?

འོ་ལགས་སོ། དེ་ཡང་ནི་ཇི་སྐད་དུ་ཁམས་གསུམ་ཆོས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོ་ཙཱ་བ་ཆེན་པོའི་
གསུངས་ལས། དལ་བའི་རྟོན་འདི་ཡིད་བཞིན་རྟོར་ལས་ལྷག་ །ཅིས་སོགས་འདྲིན་
པར་མཇད་དེ། ཐར་འདོད་བྱེད་ཀྱང་དེ་བཞིན་བསྐྱང་འཆལ་ལོ། །ཞིས་གསུངས་པ་
ལྟར། རང་ཅག་རྣམས་འཁོར་བ་ཐོག་མེད་ནས་ད་ལྟ་པན་ཆད་ལ་འགོ་བ་རིགས་དུག་
ཏུ་སྐྱེ་བ་འདི་མ་སྤངས་བྱ་བ་གཅིག་ཀྱང་མེད་པར།

"And so we begin," said the Lama.

Let me remind you, he said, of those lines by the King of the Dharma of all three realms—Tsongkapa the Great; the ones that mention "This life of spiritual leisure, more precious than a jewel that can give you whatever you wish for."⁸ The refrain throughout these verses reads: "Those of you who wish for freedom should seek to master this, as I have done." You and I have lived in this circle of suffering life forever; and there is not a single form of life, in any of the six realms of pain, that we have not already lived.

འཕྲལ་གྱི་བདེ་བ་དང་སྤྱག་བསྐྱལ་སྒྲ་ཆོགས་པ་སྤྱོད་སྟེ་སྤྱིད་ཅི་ནས་མནར་མེད་གྱི་བར་
འབྱམས་འབྱམས་ནས་བསྐྱད་ཀྱང་སྤྱིང་པོ་གང་ཡང་མ་ལོན་པར་དོན་མེད་སྤྱོད་ཟད་དུ་
ཤོར་ནས་ད་དུང་ཡང་ཁམས་གསུམ་གྱི་འཁོར་བའི་ནང་དུ་འཁོར་དང་འཁོར་ངེས་པ་
འདི་ག་ཡིན།

In these lives we have suffered, and enjoyed the occasional short-lived pleasure, wandering aimlessly from that high level known as the "Peak of Existence," then down to the lowest hell, "Torment with No Respite," then back, and back again. We have lived this way for time with no beginning, and yet we have never gotten any meaning out of it; the time has slipped away from us useless, senseless, empty. And so still we are here, circling up and down in the three realms of the wheel of life, and certain we are to continue the round.

སྒྲིལ་ཆད་ང་རང་ཚོ་སྐབས་ལེགས་ཀྱི་དབང་གིས་ཐང་འགའ་ཙམ་ལ་སླ་མ་དགོན་
མཆོག་གི་སྤྱགས་རྒྱུ་བཟུངས་ཏེ་ལས་བཟང་པོ་སྒྲིབས་ལྷན་འགའ་བསགས་པའི་མཐུ་
ལས་ད་ལྟ་མི་ཁོམ་པའི་སྒྲིལ་དང་བྲལ་བའི་དལ་འབྱོར་གྱི་ཉིན་བཟང་པོ་འདི་ལན་ཅིག་
ཙམ་ཉིད་པ་རེད་མོད་དེ།

At some point in days gone by, you and I through sheer good luck were taken for some brief moments under the care of a Lama, or the Three Jewels, and so were able to gather together some bit of pure and powerful karma. The force of this karma, I will admit, has allowed us to gain, just this once, the present life we enjoy—full of the various pleasures and fortunes, free of the problems that come when we lack the conditions that allow a proper spiritual practice.

ད་རིས་ལུས་ཉིན་དང་། སླ་མ་དང་། ཆོས་སྤྱགས་མཐུན་ཀྱིན་ཐམས་ཅད་འཛོམས་ཏེ།
ཆོས་བྱེད་པའི་རྣམ་པ་རང་ལག་ན་ཡོད་པའི་དུས་འདིར་སྐྱེ་བ་གཏན་གྱི་འདུན་མ་སྐྱབ་
སྐྱབ་པ་ཞིག་མ་བྱུང་ན།

I will admit as well that everything we need has come together for us this time: we have a Lama, we have some Dharma to practice, we have every favorable condition that we need. And so the capability to follow the spiritual path is something we now hold in our own two hands. Yet suppose we fail; suppose that we find ourselves unable to achieve the ultimate goal of the infinite lives we have led.

སྐར་ཡང་མི་ཁོམ་པའི་གནས་སུ་ལྷུང་བར་འགྱུར་བ་ལ་ཐེ་ཚོམ་མེད། དེ་ལྟར་ལྷུང་ན་
མི་ཁོམ་པའི་གནས་ངན་ག་འདྲ་ཞིག་ཏུ་སྐྱེས་ཀྱང་སྤྱག་བསྐྱུལ་ཁོ་ན་ལས་མ་འདས་
ཤིང་།

Beyond a doubt then we will fall back again to the births where we have no chance for Dharma. And when we fall it matters not where we fall; wherever we fall in a birth without the Dharma, our life can never be anything but pain.

སྒྲིལ་ཆད་མི་ཁོམ་པའི་སྐྱེ་བ་བརྒྱུག་པའི་ཐབས་ནི་ད་རིས་ཆོས་རྣམ་དག་ཅིག་བསྐྱབ་པ་

ལས་ལྷག་པ་བྱར་མེད་ལ། ཆོས་དེ་ཡང་ད་ལྟ་ཉིད་ནས་མ་བསྐྱབས་ན། རང་ཉིད་འཆི་
བར་ངེས་ཤིང་ནས་འཆི་ཆ་མེད་པ་དང་། འཆི་བའི་འོག་ཏུ་ཇི་ལྟར་འགྱུར་སྐྱེ་ན།

The way to avoid ever taking another birth where we have no chance for Dharma is to practice the Dharma purely now; there is no better way at all. And our practice must start this minute; you will die, you must die, it is certain you will die. But you've no idea when. And what will happen after that?

བདེ་འགོ་དང་ངན་འགོ་སོ་སོར་འཕེན་པས། ཆོས་མ་འགྱུབ་པར་ད་ལྟ་བྱེད་སྐྱེངས་ངན་པ་
འདི་གའི་སྐྱེས་ནས་ཤི་ན་ཕྱི་མར་ངན་སོང་རང་དུ་འགོ་བ་ལས་འོས་མེད་པས།

Whatever we do now decides where we go then: if we do good, it will throw us forth into one of the better births; if we do wrong, it will throw us to a birth of misery. So suppose we fail to practice; suppose we die in the middle of our present evil way of life. It is only fitting then that we should go right where we belong: to these very births of misery.

རེ་ཞིག་ངན་འགོའི་སྐྱེ་བ་བསྐྱེད་པའི་སྐད་དུ་དཀོན་མཆོག་གསུམ་ལ་སྐྱབས་སུ་འགོ་
ཞིང་། སྡོན་བྱས་ཀྱི་སྒྲིག་པ་ལ་གཉིན་པོ་སྟོབས་བཞིའི་སྒོ་ནས་བཤགས་བསྐྱེམས་
ཤུགས་བྲག་དང་། དག་མི་དགའི་སྤང་དོར་ཕྱ་ཞིང་ཕྱ་བ་ལ་འབད།

We must then for the short term go for shelter to the Three Jewels, to keep ourselves from a birth in the lower realms. We must as well open up and admit the things we have done wrong before, and restrain ourselves in the future. To do so we must make strong and heartfelt use of the four forces⁹ that counteract the power of the wrong. We must too put all our effort into taking up even the smallest virtue, and giving up even the slightest harms we commit against others.

དེའི་སྟངས་དུ་ལས་ལྷག་པའི་བསྐྱབས་པ་གསུམ་ཉམས་སུ་སྤངས་ན། རང་ཉིད་འཁོར་
བའི་འཇིགས་པ་མཐའ་དག་ལས་གྲོལ་བར་འགྱུར་ལ། དེ་ལྟར་རང་གཅིག་ཕུ་འཁོར་
བ་ལས་ཐར་བ་ཙམ་གྱིས་ཀྱང་མི་ཆོག་པར། སྟོབ་དཔོན་ཙམ་གྱི་མིས།

If in addition to all this we are able to follow perfectly the path of the three extraordinary trainings,¹⁰ then we ourselves will come to be free of each and

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every fear of the circle of suffering life. But it's not enough if it is only you who escapes the circle, for we must recall the words of the Master Chandragomi:

ཤིན་ཏུ་རྩིད་སྒྲིའི་རྩ་ཁམ་འགའ་ལྟ་ཕྱགས་ཀྱང་རང་ཉིད་ཟ།

ཤིན་ཏུ་སྒྲོམ་པས་གདུངས་པའང་ཁུ་ཞིག་རྩིད་ན་དགའ་

མགུར་འཐུང་།

འདི་ན་སྐྱེས་བྱ་གཞན་དོན་བྱེད་པར་བརྩོན་པ་གང་ཡིན་པ།

འདི་འདིའི་བཟིད་བག་ཡིན་ཏེ་དེ་བདེ་སྐྱེས་ཕྱི་རྩ་ལ་དེ་

འཕགས།

Even a cow knows how
To take care of himself,
To eat a few clumps of grass
He easily comes across;

Even the beast can merrily drink
From a pool of water he finds
As bitter thirst Torments him.

But think now what it is
To put your whole heart
Into taking care of others;

This is glory,
This is a park of pleasure,
This is the ultimate.

ཉི་མ་རྒྱབས་ཆེན་ཏྲ་ཞོན་རྒྱ་བ་སྒྲུང་བྱེད་གང་ཡིན་དང་།

ཁྱུང་ལ་མི་རྩིག་ས་ཡིས་འཇིག་རྟེན་འདེགས་པ་གང་ཡིན་

དེ།

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།རང་དོན་འགའ་མེད་ཆེན་པོ་ནྟམས་གྱི་རང་བཞིན་དེ་འདྲ་

སྟེ།

།དེ་དག་འཇིག་རྟེན་ཡན་དང་བདེ་བའི་རོ་ལ་གཅིག་ཏུ་

གཞོལ།

The Sun
Climbs aboard his fantastic chariot,
Flies across the sky,
Lights up all the world.

The Earth
Raises up his mighty arms,
Bears the load,
Holds up all mankind.

And so is the way
Of those great beings
Who wish nothing
For themselves,

Their lives devoted
To a single song:
The well-being and the happiness
Of every living thing.¹¹

།ཞེས་གསུངས་པ་ལྟར་སྤྲིང་སྟོབས་ཆེན་པོའི་སྒོ་ནས་སེམས་ཅན་གཞན་གྱི་དོན་བསྐྱབ་
སྟེ་དུད་འགྲོ་དང་བྱད་ཐོན་པ་ཞིག་བྱ་དགོས། དེ་དགོས་པའི་རྒྱ་མཚན་ཡང་།

We must do as the verses say: we must distinguish ourselves from common animals, we must find that great courage of heart to accomplish the goals of all other sentient kind. And there is a good reason why we should.

སེམས་ཅན་ཐམས་ཅད་རང་གི་ཕ་མ་ལན་གྲངས་བབྲང་ལས་འདས་པར་བྱེད་སྟོང་བ་
ལ་སྟུག་ཡིན་ཅིང་། དེ་བྱས་པའི་དུས་སུ་དྲིན་ཆེན་པོའི་སྒོ་ནས་ཡང་ཡང་མ་བསྐྱངས་
པ་མེད།

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Every single creature in the universe has been our father, and been our mother, not once, but more times than numbers can count. And there is not a one who when they served as our parent did not shower us with every deep kindness, over and over again.

དེའི་ཕྱིར་དེ་དག་ལ་དྲིན་གཟེའི་བསམ་པ་མེད་ན། གླུའི་རྒྱལ་པོ་རྒྱུ་འཛིན་གས་སུ་
བཅད་པ་ལས།

Suppose then I were to forget their kindness, and give no thought to returning it. This would truly be an evil way to act, the way of a person without a conscience, of one who had no shame. For the *Verses of Drumsong, King of the Serpentes*, say as well:

།རྒྱ་མཚོ་དང་ནི་རི་རབ་དང་།
།ས་རྒྱམས་བདག་གི་ཁྱར་མིན་གྱི།
།བྱས་པ་མི་གཟོ་གང་ཡིན་པ།
།དེ་ནི་བདག་གི་ཁྱར་ཆེན་ཡིན།

།ཞིས་དང་།

The sea is not my problem,
My task is not the mountains,
My job is not the earth;
My calling's rather to attend
That I should never fail
Repaying kindness granted me.¹²

གཞན་ཡང་།

།དྲིན་ལ་ལན་ཡོད་བཟང་པོ་སྟེ།
།དྲིན་གཟོ་མེད་པ་ངན་པ་ཡིན།

So too say the lines,

A kindness returned is goodness,
And evil is kindness unreturned.¹³

ཁྱེས་པ་ལྟར་མ་རབས་བྲིལ་མེད་གྱི་ལྷགས་ངན་པ་ཡིན་པས། རང་རེས་སེམས་ཅན་
གྱི་དྲིན་ལས་ད་ལྟ་ལུས་ཏེན་བཟང་པོ་རྩྱུ་ཆད་རྟེན་སྐབས་འདིར་དྲིན་གཞོན་བ་དགོས།
དྲིན་ལན་བསབ་པའི་དུས་ཀྱང་ད་རེས་རང་གིས་ཆོས་ལུན་གྱི་ལུས་ཏེན་ཕུན་སུམ་
ཆོགས་པ་རྟེན་པའི་དུས་འདིར་མགོ་འཛུགས་བྱུང་པ་ཞིག་དགོས་ཀྱི།

Think: everything we have now, from this precious human body on up, has come to us through the kindness of other living beings. And so it is now that we must repay them. The repayment must begin here, in these circumstances, while I am able, while I possess this perfect form for the practice of the Dharma.

དེ་མིན་འདི་ནས་དོན་ཆེན་པོ་བསྐྱབ་རྒྱུ་མ་བྱུང་བར་སྟོང་ལོག་ཏུ་ཤོར་ན། སེམས་ཅན་
གྱི་དོན་བྱེད་པ་ལྟ་བཞག། རང་གིས་བདེ་འགྲོའི་ཏེན་རྟེན་པ་ཅམ་ཡང་དཀའ་བ་ཡོད།

If now I cannot accomplish this great goal, if all I have gained is wasted, then there is little point in claiming to work for every living being: it is little likely that I myself will be able even to reach the higher realms of suffering life again.

འོན་དྲིན་ཇི་ལྟར་གཞེས་ན། དྲིན་གཞོན་མཆོག་ཏུ་གྱུར་པ་ནི་བདེ་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་དང་
ལུན་པ་དང་། སྤྱག་བསྐྱེད་ཐམས་ཅད་དང་བྲལ་བར་བྱེད་པ་ཡིན་པས་དེ་ལྟར་བྱའོ་
སྟམ་དུ་བྱམས་པ་དང་སྟོང་ཇི་ལྷགས་དྲག་ཏུ་བསྐྱེད་ཅིང་།

What is the way then to pay this kindness back? No way would be higher than to see to it that every living creature has every happiness there is, and that every living creature is free of every pain which exists. And I will do it! Raise these thoughts of love and compassion up in your heart—bring them on fiercely.

སེམས་ཅན་ཐམས་ཅད་བདེ་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་དང་ལུན་པ་དང་སྤྱག་བསྐྱེད་ཐམས་ཅད་དང་
བྲལ་བ་དེ་ཡང་གཞན་ལ་རག་མ་ལས་པར་རང་ཉིད་གཅིག་ཕུས་བྱེད་སྟམ་པའི་བྱུང་དུ་
འབྱུང་བ་དགོས།

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And then you must resolve to take the load upon yourself: "I will rely on no one else in this work; it should be I, and I alone who brings every happiness to every being, and frees each one from every pain."

དེ་ལྟར་བྱེད་པའི་ནུས་པ་ཡོད་པ་སངས་རྒྱས་ཉག་གཅིག་ལས་གཞན་སྤྱི་ཡང་མི་འདུག
།སེམས་ཅན་ཁོ་ནའི་དོན་དུ་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་གོ་འཕང་ཞིག་ཐོབ་ན་དོན་གཉིས་ཡུན་སྤུས་
ཆོགས་པ་བརྟེན་ཏེ་རང་དོན་ཡང་མ་ཆང་བ་མེད་པ་ཞེས་ལ་འབྱུང་།

And yet the ability to perform this noble task is had only by a single being: only by a Buddha, there's no one else at all who can do it. If for the sole purpose of all other living creatures I can reach the state of a Buddha, then I can fulfill completely both of the ultimate goals,¹⁴ and so by the way achieve everything I ever needed as well.

གཞན་དུ་ན་ཉན་རང་དབྱ་བཅོམ་པ་ཡིན་ཡང་རང་དོན་ཡོངས་སུ་མ་ཚྱོགས་ལ།
གཞན་དོན་ཡང་ཉི་ཆོ་བ་ཅམ་ལས་མེད།

If this is not the way I go—if instead I achieve a lower nirvana, and become one of those foe destroyers they call a listener, or a "self-made buddha,"¹⁵ then I cannot achieve all that I need myself, and can accomplish no more than a shadow of what others need from me.

དེས་ན་དོན་གཉིས་མཐར་ཐྱིན་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་གོ་འཕང་དེ་སྦྱབ་དགོས། དེ་ལ་
བསྦྱབ་ཚུལ་ཤེས་དགོས། དེ་ལ་ཆོས་ཐོས་དགོས་པར་འདུག་པས་དེའི་ཕྱིར་བདག་
གིས་ཆོས་འདི་ལྟ་བུ་ཐོས་ནས་ཉམས་སུ་སྦངས་ཏེ་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་གོ་འཕང་སྦྱབ་སྟམ་
དུ་ཐེག་ཆེན་སེམས་བསྐྱེད་གསལ་འདེབས་པ་དང་། དམའ་མཐའང་སེམས་བསྐྱེད་
བཅོས་མ་ཚུན་ཆད་ཀྱི་ཕྱིས་ཟིན་པའི་སྟོན་པ་གསལ་དགོས་པ་ཡིན།

And so I must reach the state of a Buddha, the One who has come to the final end where his own and other's needs are perfectly filled. To do so, I must know how. To know how, I must learn how. I will begin with the Dharma of this very teaching, and others like it; I will follow these instructions well, and I will come to the state of Buddhahood itself. Think these thoughts to yourself, here as our teaching starts, for they are the greater way's Wish for

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Buddhahood. At the very least, you must try to imitate this line of thinking; even if you cannot do the real thing, let these thoughts dwell in your heart all through the teaching that you are about to hear.

གསུམ་པར་བྱ་བའི་ཆོས་ནི། འཇམ་མགོན་ལྷ་མ་ཙཱ་ཁ་པ་ཆེན་པོས་བྱང་རྩ་སྤྱིང་རྒྱལ་
བའི་དཔེན་གནས་ཀྱི་ཡང་དགོན་བྲག་སང་གི་འབྲུ་བའི་ཞོལ་དུ་བསྟན་འགྲོ་འབའ་ཞིག་
ལ་དགོངས་ནས་རྗེས་འཇུག་གི་གདུལ་བྱ་རྣམས་ལ་གདམས་པ་དོན་དང་ལྷན་པ་ཡོན་
ཏན་གཞིར་གྱུར་མའམ། བྱིན་རྒྱབས་སྤྲུངས་ཞུས་སུ་བྱངས་པའི་གཞུང་།

And what is the teaching that you are to hear? It was spoken by our Gentle Savior, by the Lama, the Great Tsongkapa, at Yangon—the hermitage of the Victor. This was at the monastery of Radreng, standing to the north, at the foot of a great crag of rock shaped like the mouth of a lion.¹⁶

The Lord imparted these vital instructions to his disciples there, acting only for the good of living beings and the Buddha's Word. The title of the text he spoke is the *Source of All My Good*; it is also known by another name, *Begging for a Mountain of Blessings*.

བྱང་རྒྱལ་ལམ་གྱི་རིམ་པ་མགོ་བཤེས་གཉིན་བསྟན་རྒྱལ་ནས། མཇུག་མི་སྟོབ་པའི་
བྱང་འཇུག་གི་བར་མདོ་ལྷགས་ཀྱན་གྱི་གནད་ཆང་ལ་མ་ནོར་བ།

This is a work of the kind we call the "Steps to Buddhahood"; books like this contain within themselves each and every crucial point in all the open and secret teachings of Buddhism. They present these points without the slightest error, from the very beginning to the very end: from finding and serving a spiritual guide on up to the perfect secret Union, where there is nothing more to learn.

རྒྱལ་བའི་གསུང་རབ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་སྤྱིང་པོ་གཅིག་ཏུ་བསྟུས་པའི་ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་
ཆོས་ཀྱི་ཡང་ཙེ་སྤྲོན་མེད་པ་འདོམས་པར་མཛད་པ་འདི་ཉིད་ཡིན་ཞིང་།

These teachings on the Steps are the pure essence of everything that all the victorious Buddhas have ever spoken, the sum rolled into one. They are the one and only form of the Teaching that embodies all of the greater way; they are the point of the tip of the highest, matchless peak.

ཇི་སྒྲ་མའི་ཉམས་མགུར་ལས།

།ལམ་མཆོག་གཉིས་ཀར་དགོས་པའི་ཐུན་མོང་ལམ།

།ཇི་བཞིན་བསྐྱེད་ནས་”

Our Lord Lama, in his work entitled *Songs of My Spiritual Life*, says,

When within yourself you've developed
The path that is shared,
The one that's needed
For both the highest paths...¹⁷

།ཞེས་པ་ལྟར་སྒྱུར་མདོ་སྒྲགས་གང་ཡིན་ཡང་ཆོས་བྱང་རྒྱུ་ལམ་གྱི་རིམ་པ་འདི་མེད་
ཐབས་མེད་ལ། ལྷག་པར་དུ་རྒྱལ་མཆོག་ལྷ་པ་ཆེན་པོས།

What he means is that, speaking in a general way, this instruction on the Steps to Buddhahood is one that you could never do without, whether you are practicing the open or the secret teachings of Buddhism. To put it more specifically, the Great Fifth of the Dalai Lamas has said,

།སྐྱེས་པུ་ཆེན་པོའི་ཆོས་ལུངས་སྤྱིང་པོའི་དོན།

།གང་དེར་རྒྱ་དང་འབྲས་བུའི་ཐེག་པ་ལས།

།ཆེས་ཟབ་གསང་བ་སྒྲགས་ཞེས་རབ་བྲགས་ཀྱང་།

།ཐུན་མོང་ལམ་གྱིས་རྒྱུད་སྤངས་མ་སོང་བ།

།མ་དུལ་སྤང་པོ་ཞོན་ལྟར་རང་ཉིད་ཡུང་།

Everybody talks of it,
The Secret Word, The Most Profound,
Essential thread
In the River of Dharma
For those of the great capacity;

But try it before
Your mind is trained
In the path that both them share,

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Climb atop a mighty elephant
Still wild, and not yet tamed;
You will only lose
Yourself.¹⁸

ཁྱེས་གསུངས་པ་ལྟར་གསང་སྔགས་གྱི་སྒྲོར་འཇུག་བར་འདོད་པ་ནམས་གྱིས་སྡོན་དུ་
ལམ་བུ་མོང་བས་རྒྱུད་སྤྱང་བ་འདི་ཏེ་ཅང་གལ་ཆེ་བ་ཡིད།

It is absolutely vital then, for anyone with hopes of entering the door that leads to the way of the Secret Word, that you train your mind first in this path shared by both the open and secret teachings.

གཞུང་འདི་ལ་བྱིན་རྒྱབས་སྤྱངས་ལྷུ་ཁྱེས་གསུངས་པའི་དོན་ཡང་བཤེས་གཉིན་བསྟན་
རྒྱུ་ནས་བྱང་འཇུག་གི་བར་གྱི་ཏོགས་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་གཅིག་ཏུ་སྤྱངས་ཏེ་བྱིན་རྒྱབས་
གྱི་རྒྱུ་དུ་ལྷུ་བས་ན་དེ་ལྟར་བཟོད་ལ།

Now there is a reason why this text is known as "Begging for a Mountain of Blessings." As we recite it we are *entreating* our Lama to grant us, in one big *pile* or mountain, each and every spiritual realization: from finding and following a spiritual guide as we should, on up to the perfect Union. And we are asking that he do so in the form of a *personal blessing* from himself.

དག་བཤེས་སྟོན་པའི་ཞལ་ནས། བསྟན་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་གྲུབ་བཞི་ལམ་གྱིས་འབྱེད་ཤེས་
པ་ངའི་སླ་མའི་བྱད་ཆོས་མིན་པ་ལ་མེད།

As the spiritual friend Tonpa has spoken,

The ability to wrap the totality of the teachings into one is a special skill of my Lama's—for the Father, nothing is not a teaching.¹⁹

ཁྱེས་གསུངས་པ་དང་།

འདྲི་མཚར་བཀའ་ནི་སྡེ་སྡོད་གསུམ་ཡིན་ཏེ།

འགདམས་པ་སྐྱེས་བུ་གསུམ་གྱིས་མཛོས་པ་ཡིན།

།བཀའ་གདམས་རིན་ཆེན་གསེར་གྱི་འཕྲིང་བ་འདི།
།འགྲོ་བ་གང་གིས་གྲངས་ཀྱང་དོན་ཡོད་འགྱུར།

He has said as well that:

His wondrous word is all three the collections,
Advice adorned by teachings of three scopes,
A gold and jewel rosary of the Keepers,
Meaningful to all who read its beads.²⁰

།ཅིས་པ་ལྟར། བྱང་ཆུབ་ལམ་གྱིས་རིམ་པ་འདི་ནི། རྩི་སླ་མས་ལམ་རིམ་ཆེ་ཆུང་ནས་
གསུངས་པ་ལྟར་བྱད་ཆོས་གསུམ་དང་ཆེ་བ་བཞི་འོ་སྒོ་ནས་ཆོས་གཞན་དང་གཞན་
ལས་བྱད་པར་དུ་འཕགས་ལ། རྒྱལ་བའི་བཀའ་སྡེ་སྟོན་གསུམ་གྱི་གནད་བསྟུས་པ།
ཆོས་ལུང་བརྒྱད་ཁྲི་བཞི་སྟོན་གི་འགག་མདོ་ལྟ་བུ། དུས་གསུམ་གྱི་རྒྱལ་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་
གང་ནས་གཤེགས་པའི་གཞུང་ལམ་གཅིག་ལྟ་ཡིན་ཏེ། ཡོན་ཏན་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་སྟུང་པ་ལས།

Geshe Tonpa is describing here what our Lord Lama has spoken in all his presentations of the Steps of the path, both the brief and more detailed: that these very Steps are far superior to every other form of instruction, by virtue of their three extraordinary qualities, and four different kinds of greatness.²¹

They contain each and every crucial point in the three collections, which are the entire teachings of the Buddha. They are the single crossroads where all the 84,000 massive stores of the Dharma intersect,²² they are the one single way by which each and every victorious Buddha has travelled, or travels now, or ever again will travel. As the shorter *Gem of Fine Qualities* says it,

།རྒྱལ་བ་འདས་དང་མ་བྱོན་ད་ལྟར་གང་བཞུགས་པ།
།ཀུན་ལམ་པ་རོལ་ཕྱིན་པ་འདི་ཡིན་གཞན་མ་ཡིན།

།ཞིས་གསུངས་པས་སོ།

It is this perfection, nothing else,
which is the path that's shared
By all the Victors, stay they in
the past, the present, or the future.²³

དེས་ན་རང་ཅག་སྤྲོ་མའི་བྱང་ནས་དབང་ལུང་བྲིད་སོགས་ལུ་བ་དང་། གཞུང་བཀའ་
བོད་ལྷ་ལ་ཐོས་པ་མཐེལ་ཕྱིན་བྱས་ཟེར་བསོགས་ཇི་འདྲ་ཞིག་ཡིན་ཡང་མཐར་མལ་
རིམ་རང་ལ་གཅིག་དུ་བྲིལ་ཏེ་ཉམས་སུ་ལེན་བྱལ་པ་མ་བྱུང་ན། ལྷ་པ་ཆེན་པོས།

People like you and I can go to great Lamas all we want, and receive from them high initiations, or special oral transmissions, and teachings on texts or the like. We can claim to have studied the five great classics,²⁴ and plumbed them to their depths, it doesn't matter. But if in the end we are unable to put these Steps into practice within our own lives, joining them all into one, then there's a risk that we'll end up as the Great Fifth described it:

།མི་ཤེས་སྤྱན་པོ་ཆེ་འདིའི་དོན་གྱི་ཆེད།
།མི་དགའི་ལས་ལ་འཇུག་པ་བདེན་མོད་ཀྱི།
།ཁོ་བོ་གསུང་རབ་མང་པོ་ཐོས་བཞིན་དུ།
།གཏན་འདུན་སྤྱང་ལ་བསྐྱར་བ་ངོ་རི་གཞོང་།

True we see fools
Who know no better,
Doing what's wrong
For things of this life.

But we err worse
Who've studied much
The holiest of words,

And yet still see
Our ultimate hopes
Swept away on the wind.²⁵

།ཞེས་གསུངས་པ་ལྟར་འགྲོ་ཉིན་ཡོད་པས། ཐོས་པ་བྱས་པ་ཁ་ནང་དུ་བསྐྱོར་ཏེ་ཆོས་
བྱང་རྒྱལ་ལམ་གྱི་རིམ་པའི་ཆེ་བ་བཞི་པོ་རང་རྒྱུད་ལ་འབྱོར་བ་ཞིག་བྱ་དགོས།

So you must turn your learning within, into Dharma: you must take those four great qualities of the Steps to Buddhahood and apply them to your own heart.

དེར་མ་ཟད་སྒྲག་ཚང་ལོ་ཙཱ་བས།

།གསུང་རབ་མཐའ་དག་བྱད་པར་དྲི་ཐེ་ཐེག་

།རྒྱད་ཐེ་མཐའ་དག་བྱད་པར་སྒྲ་མེད་དོན།

།རིམ་གཉིས་མཐའ་དག་བྱད་པར་སྒྲ་ལུས་ལ།

།སྒྲོན་མེད་ལེགས་བཤད་གཏིར་ཆེན་བྱོད་ལ་བསྟོད།

།ཅིས་སོགས་དང་།

And there is more you should know; verses like those of the Master Translator of Taktsang:

I sing Your praises,
Vast treasure house
Of fine explanation
We lacked before,

Elucidation of all
The highest of speech,
Especially the diamond way;

Teachings on all
The secret groups,
Especially the Unsurpassed;

On all the parts
Of both the levels,
Especially the magic body.

The lines beginning from "Diamond Way" refer to the secret teachings of Buddhism.²⁶

ཀམ་པ་མི་བསྐྱེད་དྲི་ཐེ།

།བྱང་གི་ཕྱོགས་འདིར་རྒྱལ་བའི་བསྐྱེད་པ་ལ།

།ཕལ་ཆེར་ལོག་པ་འབའ་ཞིག་སྒྲོད་པའི་སྐབས།

།འབྲུལ་མེད་བྱི་དོར་མཇེད་པའི་ཙོང་ཁ་པ།
།རི་བོ་དགའ་ལྷན་པ་ལ་བསྟོད་པར་བགྱ།
།ཞེས་སོགས་ལྟར་སྐྱ་ཆེན་སྒྲུབ་དུ་ཆེ་བླ་མ་ལ་དབང་རྣམ་ཆོས་རྗེས་འབྲངས་པའི་དད་པ་
མེད་དུ་བྱུང་བ་སྐྱེས་ནས་བསྟོད་པ་ཕུལ་བ་དང་།

There are as well the words of the Karmapa, Mikyu Dorje, who in the later part of his life developed for Lord Tsongkapa an extraordinary level of admiration, a kind that is found among those of high intelligence, who follow the Dharma not out of faith, but rather out of reason. The lines read in part:

I make this praise
To the tradition of
The Mount of the Heaven of Bliss;

To Tsongkapa,
For in these days
When the vast majority
Of those in our Northern Land

Act only wrong
With the teachings of the Victors,
He instead has wiped

And cleaned away the dirt on them,
Ever faultlessly.²⁷

རྒྱལ་མཆོག་བསྐལ་བཟང་རྒྱ་མཚོས་ཀྱང་།

།རྣམ་ཐར་གཙང་མ་དགའ་ལྷན་བཀའ་བརྒྱད།

།ཕྱོགས་རི་འཛིན་པའི་གྲུབ་མཐའ་མིན་ནོ།

།མདོ་སྒྲགས་ཐམས་ཅད་གདམས་པར་ཤར་བའི།

།བཤད་སྐབ་བསྟན་པའི་ཉིང་བྲུ་ལགས་སོ།

That highest of Victors, Kelsang Gyatso, has said too:

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It is a pure tradition,
The lineage of the Heaven of Bliss;
It is no biased
Or limited school of thought.
It is the essential nectar,
To learn and practice the Teaching
So all the open and secret Word
Seems personal instruction.²⁸

ཁྱེས་གསུངས་པ་ལྟར་རང་རེ་རི་པོ་དགའ་ལྡན་པའི་བཀའ་སློལ་འདི་ལ་མདོ་སྒྲགས་
གང་གི་ཐད་ནས་ཀྱང་གཞན་ལ་མེད་པའི་བསྟན་པ་ཆ་ཚང་ལ་དྲི་མ་དང་བུལ་བ། ཟབ་
ཅིང་སྦྱར་བ་སོགས་བྱུང་ཆོས་འབྲན་ལྷ་མེད་པ་མང་པོ་ཡོད་པས། འཇམ་མགོན་ཙཱ་
ཁ་པ་ཆེན་པོས་སློལ་བྱེ་བར་མཇུག་པའི་བྱང་རྒྱལ་ལམ་རིམ་འདི་ལའང་གྲུབ་མཐའ་
གཞན་སྒྲགས་པ་དང་། བཀའ་གདམས་གོང་མ་རྣམས་ལ་མེད་པའི་མན་ངག་མཐའ་
ཡས་པ་ལྟ་བུ་ཡོད་ལ།

And that's just the way it is: our scriptural tradition, that of the Mount of the Heaven of Bliss, is one that is totally complete and spotless, on both sides—in the open and the secret Word. It is a kind of teaching that is found nowhere else. And it possesses a multitude of unique and unrivalled qualities: its depth, the speed with which it works, and so on. Thus it is that this teaching on the Steps of the Path to Buddhahood, as it was inaugurated by the Gentle Protector, Tsongkapa, looks to contain a nearly limitless number of spiritual advices found in none of the other schools, nor even among the older Keepers of the Word.²⁹

ཆོས་བྱང་རྒྱལ་ལམ་གྱི་རིམ་པ་འདི་ལས་ཟབ་ཅིང་རྒྱ་ཆེ་བ་ནི། གཞན་དག་གི་ཆོས་
ཟབ་ཟབ་མོ་དང་། རྟོགས་པ་མཐོ་མཐོ་མོ་ཡིན་ཟེར་བ་ཚོ་ལའང་མེད་པས། གཙོད་
དང་བསྐྱེད་ཚྲོགས། ཙ་རླུང་ཐིག་ལེ། དུག་ཆེན་ཚྲོགས་ཆེན་སོགས་གསང་ཆེན་
སྒྲགས་གྱི་ཡང་ཅི་སྒྲོགས་པ་ཞིག་མངོན་དུ་བྱེད་པ་སྐད་ཟེར་གྱང་། བྱང་རྒྱལ་ལམ་
རིམ་འདི་ལ་མ་བརྟེན་ན། ལམ་ཡོངས་ཚྲོགས་རྒྱུད་ལ་སྦྱིབ་ལྟ་ཅི། བག་ཆགས་ཙམ་
ཡང་འཛོག་པར་མི་རུས།

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Could any system be more profound or far-reaching than this Dharma, the Steps of the Path? Certainly not those teachings that others claim are oh-so-deep, or oh-so-high and inscrutable. People chatter about attaining some realization, some supposed zenith of some very secret way: they talk of termination; they talk about the levels of creation and completion; about the channels and winds and drops; the great seal, or the great completion, whatever.³⁰ But if one never makes use of these very Steps, he can never even plant the seeds, much less bring the path in full to grow within his mind.

དེའི་ཕྱིར་འདི་ལ་ཐོས་བསམ་སྒོམ་གསུམ་གྱི་དཔ་གཤམ་ཆེ་བས། འདིར་བྱང་རྒྱལ་ལམ་
གྱི་རིམ་པའི་སྒྲིང་པོ་བསྟུས་པ་ཡོན་ཏན་གཞིར་གྱུར་མར་གྲགས་པའི་བཤད་ལུང་
མདོར་བསྟུས་ཙམ་ཞིག་འབུལ་བར་གྱིད་པ་ཡིན་གསུངས།

This then is why it is so very important to go through the Steps, in the three stages of learning, and contemplating, and meditating upon them. So it is too that I shall now present you, said our Lama, with just a very brief explanation and oral transmission of the work known as the "Source of All My Good," for it contains within it the complete heart of the Steps of the Path to Buddhahood.

II. How to Take a Lama

འདི་ལ་ས་བཅད་དུ་ཕྱེན། ལམ་གྱི་རྩ་བ་བཤེས་གཞིན་བསྟན་པའི་རྒྱལ། བསྟན་ནས་
སློཾ་ཇི་ལྟར་སྦྱང་བའི་རྒྱལ། ལམ་སྟུབ་པའི་མཐུན་རྒྱུན་འབྲུག་པ་དང་འགལ་རྒྱུན་ཞི་
བར་གསོལ་བ་འདེབས་པ། སྟེ་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་དུ་སྒྲ་མས་རྗེས་སུ་གཟུང་སྟེ་ས་ལམ་གྱི་
འབྲས་བུ་མདོན་དུ་གྱིད་ཅུས་པར་སྒོམ་པ་དང་བཅས་ཏེ་བཞི་ཡོད་པ་ལས།

The text of the *Source of All My Good* may be divided into four different parts:

- 1) the very root of the path, which is how to take a Lama and serve him or her properly;
- 2) how to train your mind, once you have taken a Lama;
- 3) a request so that you can attain all the favorable conditions for succeeding in the path, and stop all the circumstances that might prevent you from doing so; and then finally

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- 4) a prayer that in all your future lives you may be taken under the care of a Lama, and so gain the strength to reach the final end of the various levels and paths.

དང་པོ་ནི།

།ཡོན་ཏན་ཀུན་གཞིར་གྱུར་ངོན་ཅན་ཇེ།

།ཚུལ་བཞིན་བསྟེན་པ་ལམ་གྱི་རྩ་བ་རུ།

།ལེགས་པར་མཐོང་ནས་འབད་པ་དུ་མ་ཡིས།

།གུས་པ་ཆེན་པོས་བསྟེན་པར་བྱིན་གྱིས་སློབས།

།ཞེས་པའི་ཤཱོ་ཀ་གཅིག་གིས་བསྟེན།

The first of these is presented in a single verse, the first one of the work:

(1)

The source of all my good
Is my kind Lama, my Lord;
Bless me first to see
That taking myself to him
In the proper way
Is the very root
Of the path, and grant me then
To serve and follow him
With all my strength and reverence.

དེ་ལ་རྩ་བ་དད་པ་སྤང་བ་དང་། བཀའ་ངོན་ཇེས་སུ་ངན་ཏེ་གུས་པ་བསྟེན་པ་གཉིས།
དང་པོ་ལའང་བསམ་པས་བསྟེན་ཚུལ་དང་། སྦྱོར་བས་བསྟེན་ཚུལ་གཉིས་ཡོད།

This Step of taking a Lama is itself divided into two sections: developing clear faith in him, which is the very root of the Path; and then building up reverence for him, by considering the great kindness he has paid us. The instruction in developing faith comes in two stages: how to follow a Lama in one's thoughts, and then how to follow him in one's actions.

དེ་ཡང་སྐ་བྱ་ཏའི་གྲུང་ལས།

།སྐྱ་བ་འཇིན་པ་མེད་པར་ནི།

།གུ་ཡིས་པ་རོལ་ཕྱིན་མི་རུས།

།ཡོན་ཏན་ཐམས་ཅད་རབ་ཚྱེགས་ཀྱང་།

།ལྷ་མ་མེད་ན་སྲིད་ཐར་མིན།

།ཞེས་དང་།

Now the *Secret Teaching of Sambhuta* says,

You will never be able to take a boat
To the other side of the river
Unless you take the oars up in your hands.

You will never reach the end of suffering life
Without a Lama,
Even if you perfect yourself
In every other respect.³¹

ཤེར་ཕྱིན་མཛོ་སྤྱད་པ་ལས།

།སངས་རྒྱས་ཆོས་རྣམས་དགེ་བའི་བཤེས་ལ་བརྟེན་ཏེ་ཞེས།

།ཡོན་ཏན་ཀྱན་གྱི་མཆོག་མངའ་རྒྱལ་བ་དེ་སྐད་གསུངས།

The *Shorter Sutra on the Perfection of Wisdom* concurs:

The Victorious Buddhas,
Who possess the highest
Of all good qualities,
Speak as one when They say:
"Every single part of the Buddhist way
Depends on a Spiritual Guide."

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ཞེས་པ་དང་།

།དེ་ལྟ་བུ་ན་བྱང་རྒྱུ་དམ་པ་འཛོལ་བ་ཡི།
།བསམ་པ་དྲག་ལྡན་མཁས་པས་ང་རྒྱལ་ངེས་བཅོམ་ནས།
།ནད་པའི་ཚོགས་ཀྱིས་གསོ་ཕྱིར་སྒྲན་པ་བསྟེན་པ་ལྟར།
།གཡེལ་བ་མེད་པར་དག་བའི་བཤེས་གཉིན་བསྟེན་པར་བྱ།

It says as well:

And so the wise
Who seek the high state of enlightenment
With a fierce wish deep inside
Should smash all pride within them,

And like a mass of sick men
Who flock to medicine for a cure,
Take themselves to a spiritual guide
And serve him single-mindedly.

ཞེས་དང་། འཇམ་མགོན་ཙཱ་ཁ་པ་ཆེན་པོས་གྱུང་།
།འབྲུལ་དང་ཡུན་གྱི་བདེ་བ་ཡིད་བཞིན་དུ།
།ལེགས་པར་འབྲིགས་པའི་དྲིན་འབྲེལ་རྩ་བ་ནི།
།གསུང་རབ་ཀྱན་ལས་སྒྲ་མར་གསུངས་པས་ན།
།སྐྱབས་གསུམ་ངོ་བོར་བསྐྱོམས་ལ་གསོལ་བ་ཐོབ།

Our Gentle Savior, Tsongkapa the Great, has too spoken these words:

There is a single key
For finding a perfect start to reach
Your every wish, both happiness
In the short run and ultimately;

And the highest words ever spoken
Speak it always the same:
It is your Lama.

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And so you must devote yourself
To meditation upon him,
Upon the essence of all
The three different kinds of refuge;
Ask him, for all your goals.³²

ཁྱེས་གསུངས་པ་ལྟར་རང་གིས་ས་ལམ་གྱི་ཡོན་ཏན་ཞིག་འཐོབ་པར་འདོད་ན། ཐོག་
མར་དེ་བསྐྱབ་ཚུལ་སྟོན་པའི་སྤྲ་མ་ཞིག་ངས་པར་བསྟེན་དགོས།

All these lines are saying the same thing: if you have any hope of reaching up to the high spiritual qualities of the various levels and paths, then from the outset you must absolutely find and follow a Lama who can show you how to do so.

དེ་འདྲའི་སྤྲ་མའང་གང་བྱུང་བྱུང་གི་མིང་དུ་བཏགས་པས་མི་ཆོག་པར། མདོ་སྡེ་རྒྱན་
ལས་གསུངས་པ་ལྟར་སྟོན་གསུམ་དུལ་བ། ཞི་བ། ཉེ་བར་ཞི་བ་སྟེ་བསྐྱབ་གསུམ་དང་
ལྡན་པ། སྟོབ་མ་ལས་ཡོན་ཏན་ལྟག་པ། བརྩོན་འགྲུས་ཆེན་པོ་དང་ལྡན་པ། ལུང་གི་
ཡོན་ཏན་ཕུན་སུམ་ཆོགས་པ་མངའ་བ། དེ་ཁོ་ན་ཉིད་ཉོགས་པ། ཆོས་སྤྲོ་བ་ལ་
མཁས་པ། སྟོབ་མ་ལ་བརྩེ་བ་ཆེན་པོ་ཡོད་པ། ཆོས་ཇི་ཙམ་འཆད་ཀྱང་སྟོང་ལ་མེད་
པ་བཅས་ཡོན་ཏན་བརྩུ་དང་ལྡན་པ་ཞིག་དང་།

And the Lama that we are describing here is not just any one you might happen to come across; it's not just anyone they call a "Lama." Rather, he must have in him the ten high qualities described in the *Jewel of the Sutras*. He must first of all be subdued, at peace, and at high peace; that is to say, he must possess all three of the trainings.³³ He must display fine spiritual qualities that exceed those of his student, and exhibit exceptional effort. He should have a total mastery of the Dharma in the form of scripture, and should have realized suchness. He should be highly skilled in teaching the Dharma, he must have a great love for his disciples, and he must never become tired or discouraged in his teaching, no matter how much or how often he is called upon to do so.

ད་ལྟ་སྟོན་མའི་དུས་སུ་དེ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཆང་བ་རྟེན་དགའ་ན། ཇི་སྤྲ་མས།
།ཡོན་ལྟགས་ཁོང་དུ་རྒྱད་ཅིང་དབང་པོ་དུལ།

མཐོང་བ་ཙམ་གྱིས་གཞན་ཡིད་འཕྲོག་པར་བྱེད།
བསྟན་པ་ཙམ་གྱིས་དག་འཕེལ་སྟོན་འབྲིབ་པའི།
བཤེས་གཉིན་དམ་པ་སྟོན་དང་རྒྱལ་ཁམས་པ།

We are though now in the days of degeneration, and so perhaps it is difficult to find someone who possesses each and every one of these qualifications. In such a case, we must follow the advice of the Lord of Lamas:

If you take my advice,
Man of the land of Gyalkam,
Take yourself to the ultimate
Spiritual guide:
To one who grasps Reality,
To one who has controlled his senses,
Who takes your heart away
As soon as you lay your eyes on him;
To the one that,
When you follow what he teaches,
The good in you begins to flower,
And the bad begins to fade.³⁴

ཞེས་སོགས་ལྟར་བསྟན་པ་གསུམ་གྱིས་བླ་མ་རྒྱུད་དུལ་བ། དེ་ཉིད་རྟོགས་པ། བརྩེ་
བ་དང་ལྷན་པ་སྟེ་ལྷ་ཆང་བ་དགོས་ཤིང་།

These and other such lines are telling us that the Lama we seek must at least possess a complete set of five different qualities: He must have brought his mind under control, by following the three trainings; he must have realized thusness; and He must have love.

དམའ་མཐའ་དམའ་མཐའ་ང་ཆོས་དང་འཇིག་རྟེན་གཉིས་ལས་ཆོས་གཙོ་བོར་བྱེད་པ།
ཆོ་འདི་དང་བྱི་མ་གཉིས་ལས་བྱི་མ་གཙོ་བོར་བྱེད་པ། རང་དང་གཞན་གཉིས་ལས་
གཞན་གཙོ་བོར་བྱེད་པ། སྟོ་གསུམ་བག་མེད་དུ་མི་གཏོང་བ། སྟོ་བ་མ་ལམ་ལོག་
ལམ་གོལ་ལྟ་སྟོན་བྱིན་ཅི་ལོག་དུ་མི་འབྲིད་པ་སྟེ་ཡོན་ཏན་དེ་དག་དང་ལྷན་པ་ཞིག་
ངེས་པར་དགོས།

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As a bare minimum, the Lama must surely fit the following description. He must occupy himself more with the Dharma than with the things of the world. He must as well occupy himself more with the concerns of the future life, than with those of the present one. He must occupy himself more with helping others, than with helping himself. He is never careless in what he does, or says, or thinks. And, finally, he never leads his disciples along a path which is mistaken.

དེ་ལྟར་སྤྲོ་མ་མཚན་ལྷན་རྟེན་ནས་རྒྱལ་གཞིན་བསྟན་པའི་པན་ཡོན་འདི་ཕྱི་ལོ་ལེགས་
ཚོགས་ཐམས་ཅད་འབྱུང་བ་དང་། མ་བསྟན་པ་དང་བསྟན་རྒྱལ་ལོག་པའི་ཉེས་
དམིགས་འཕྲལ་དང་ཡུན་གྱི་སྤྱད་བསྐྱལ་མི་བཟད་པ་དུ་མ་འབྱུང་རྒྱལ་ནམས་ལེགས་
པར་ཤེས་པར་བྱས་ཏེ།

Suppose you are able to find a Lama like the one we have described above. What are the benefits you can expect from following him properly? Simply put, you will win each and every good thing in this and all your future lives. What are the dangers of refusing to follow him, or of following him less than properly? You will undergo a great mass of unendurable pain, in both the short term and the long. You must seek to grasp these facts fully.

རང་རྒྱུད་གྱི་སྦྱོར་སྒྲ་གཅིག་འབྲིབ་པ་དང་། ཡོན་ཏན་སྒྲ་གཅིག་སྦྱོབ་རྒྱུ་ནམ། ཟུང་
འཇུག་གི་གོ་འཕང་ནས་དག་བའི་སློ་སྤྲོད་ཅིག་ཙམ་སྦྱིས་པ་ཡན་གྱི་མདོ་སྤྲུགས་གཉི་
གའི་ས་ལམ་གྱི་ཡོན་ཏན་ཐམས་ཅད་འབྱུང་བའི་གཞི་འམ་རྩ་བ་ལྟ་བུར་གྱུར་བ་ནི་སྤྲོ་མ་
ཡིན་ཞིང་།

Your Lama is like the source, he is like the very root, from which every single good quality of all the different levels and paths of both the open and secret teachings spring. If you ever succeed in stopping a single personal fault, it will be because of him. If you ever manage to cultivate a single spiritual quality, any good at all, that too will come from him. The whole range of virtues, from the final attainment of secret Union on down to having a single wholesome thought, all flow from him.

རྒྱལ་བའི་སྒྲ་གསུང་བྱུགས་ཡོན་ཏན་འཕྲིན་ལས་ཀྱན་གྱི་དོ་བོའམ་བདག་ཉིད་གྱི་

གཞིར་གྱུར་པ་འད་སྤྲུལ་མཉིད་ཡིན་པར་བསམ་པ་ནི་རྩ་བ་དད་པ་སྤྱད་བ་སྟེ།

Your Lama is also the one and only "source" in the sense of being the embodiment or actuality of all the mighty deeds, all the great good, that all the victorious Buddhas perform in their holy actions, words, and thoughts. Try now to develop this root of the path—clear faith in him or her.

རང་གི་དད་པའི་ངོས་ནས་སྤྲུལ་ལ་སངས་རྒྱས་དངོས་ཀྱི་འདུ་ཤེས་བྱུང་ན་སངས་རྒྱས་
དངོས་ཀྱི་བྱིན་རླབས་འཕྲུག་པ་འོང་བས། ལམ་རིམ་ལས་གསུངས་པ་ལྟར་སྤྲུལ་
སངས་རྒྱས་སུ་བལྟ་དགོས་པའི་རྒྱ་མཚན། བལྟ་བུས་པའི་རྒྱ་མཚན། རྩལ་ཇི་ལྟར་
བལྟ་རྩལ་སོགས་ལ་སློ་སྤྱད་བ་གལ་ཆེ།

If with eyes made clear by this faith you begin to see your Lama as a real Buddha, then the blessing of a real Buddha will follow in your mind-stream. It's essential therefore that you train your mind in the relevant parts described in the texts on the Steps: the reasons why you should see that your Lama is a Buddha; the reasons why you can see that your Lama is a Buddha; how to see him, and so on.

དྲིན་ཅན་ཞེས་པས་བཀའ་དྲིན་ཇེས་བྱས་གྲུས་པ་བསྐྱེད་པ་བསྟན། ཇེ་ནི། རྒྱད་
དོད་སྤྲུལ་མི་ཞེས་པའི་སྟོང་ནས་འགོ་བ་ལྟ་དང་བཅས་པའི་བཙུག་གི་རོར་བུ་ལྟར་གྱུར་
པ་ལ་འཕྲུག་ཅིང་།

The word "kind" in the verse here is meant to convey the Step of building up reverence for your Lama by considering all the kind things he has done for you. The word "Lord" is a translation of the Sanskrit word *Svami*, a word that applies to someone who is like a crowning jewel which all the beings of the universe, including the great worldly beings of power, humbly place above their heads.

དེ་རྩལ་བཞིན་བསྟན་པ་རང་ཉིད་སྤྲུལ་མཉི་དབང་དུ་གཏོང་བར་ཡང་གོ་དགོས་པ་སྟོང་
བཀོད་ལས་བྱུང་བའི་བུ་མཛངས་པ་ལྟ་བུའི་སེམས་སོགས་སེམས་དགུས་བསྟན་རྩལ་
གསུནས་པ་ལྟར་དང་།

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What does it mean to "follow your Lama properly?" You must understand that it means to surrender yourself completely to him or her. Here you should take yourself to him in the way of an obedient child, and with the rest of the nine attitudes described in the *Arrangement of Trunks*.³⁵

མདོར་ན། བཤེས་གཉིན་བསྟན་ཚུལ་གྱི་ཆོས་སྐོར་ནམས་ནས་ཇི་སྐད་བཤད་པའི་སྒང་
དོར་མཐའ་དག་མ་ཉོར་བར་བྱེད་པ་ཞིག་དགོས་ཤིང་། དེ་ལྟར་ཚུལ་བཞིན་དུ་བསྟན་
པས་ནི་དཔེར་ན། ཁང་པའི་འགྲམ་རྩ་འམ་རྩིག་མང་བརྟན་ན་ཁང་པ་བརྟན་པོ་འོང་བ་
དང་། ཤིང་གི་རྩ་བ་བརྟན་ན་ཡལ་ག་ལོ་འབྲས་སོགས་འབྱུང་བ་བཞིན་དུ་

To put it briefly, you must absolutely conduct yourself correctly in this regard; you must follow precisely every one of the classical descriptions of how to find and follow a Lama. If the cornerstone of a house—the walls of its foundation—are solid, then the house itself is solid. If the roots of a tree are planted firmly in the soil, then the branches and fruit and all the rest grow strong.

“དལ་འབྱོར་ནས་བྱུང་འཇུག་བར་གྱི་ལམ་ཡོངས་རྫོགས་འབྱུང་བ་ལ་དཀའ་ཆོགས་
མེད་པར་ལེགས་པར་མཐོང་བའི་ངེས་ཤེས་བརྟན་པོ་རྟོག་པར་བྱས་ནས་”

What we hope to grow is the path, in its entirety: all the Steps from recognizing the importance of the spiritual leisure and fortune of our present circumstances, on up to the attainment of secret Union itself. We must find sure and solid knowledge, we must see, that taking ourselves to our Lama properly will bring all of this about, without any difficulty at all.

“བཤེས་གཉིན་བསམ་པས་བསྟན་ཚུལ་གྱི་སྐོར་ནམས་འདིར། ལེགས་པར་མཐོང་
ནས་ཞེས་པ་འདིས་བསྟན་པས། དག་བའི་བཤེས་གཉིན་ལ་སངས་རྒྱས་དངོས་སུ་
བརྟན་ཏེ། སྐོར་བའི་བསྟན་ཚུལ།

The entire subject of how to follow your Lama in your thoughts is revealed in the words "first to see." Thus you must come to see your spiritual Friend as a real Buddha; and this brings us to how you should follow him in your actions.

སྒྲ་མ་མཉེས་པའི་ཆ་ནམས་ལམ་ཐུན་མོང་བར་བཤེས་གཉེན་བསྟེན་ཚུལ་སྤྱིར་བཏང་
སྐབས་གསུངས་པ་བཞིན་དང་། གསང་སྒྲ་གས་ལྟར་ན་སྒྲ་མ་ལྟ་བུ་པ་ནས་བསྟེན་པ་
བཞིན་དུ་སྒྲོ་གསུམ་ཅི་རུས་ཀྱི་དཀའ་སྤྱད་ལྟར་སྒྲངས་ནས། འབད་པ་དུ་མ་ཞེས་པས་
ཉིད་པ་”

How can we please our Lama? Relative to the path which is shared, you should use the instructions found in the discussions on how to find and follow a Lama in general. Relative to the way of the secret Word, use the instructions in the *Fifty Verses on Lamas*.³⁶ Both of these describe how you should, to the very best of your ability, "with all your strength," gladly take up any difficult task in any of the three doors of expression—of body, speech, or mind—in order to please him or her.

”ཟང་ཟིང་དབུལ་བ། བཀའ་སྒྲི་རིམ་གྱོ་བྱེད་པ། ཐོས་དོན་སྒྲུབ་པ་ལ་གཞིལ་བ་བཅས་
སྒྲ་མ་སྒྲ་མ་ལས་བྱི་མ་བྱི་མ་ནམས་སྒྲ་མའི་ཞབས་ཏོག་མཆོག་ཡིན་པས།

There are different levels of how we pay homage to our Lama: to offer him or her gifts, material things; to give ourselves up to his service, his honor; and to take what he has taught us and put it into actual practice, accomplishing our spiritual goals. Each of these is higher than the one before it, and the last one is supreme.

སྒྲ་མས་ཆོས་བསྟེན་པ་ནམ་ལ་སྒྲུབ་པ་སྤྱིང་པོར་བྱེད་པ་སོགས་སོ་སོའི་སྒོ་རུས་དང་
བསྟེན་ཏེ་ཐབས་སྒྲ་ཆོགས་ཀྱིས་བསྟེན་དགོས་ཚུལ་གསུངས་པ་ཡིན་ལ།

The root text here then is saying that we must take ourselves to our Lama in a whole different number of ways, in keeping with our personal mental capacity.

བསྟེན་པའི་ཆོ་ཡང་། ཞིང་ས་ལ་ས་བོན་འདེབ་པ་ན། སོ་ནམ་གྱི་དཀའ་ལས་ཇི་ལྟར་
བྱུང་ཡང་རང་གི་དོན་ཁོ་ན་ལས་ཞིང་ལ་ཕར་བྱིན་གྱིས་བསྐྱངས་པའི་ཡུས་མི་བྱེད་པ་
ལྟར། བདག་ཉིད་ཐར་པ་དང་ཐམས་ཅད་མཁྱེན་པ་ཐོབ་ཐབས་སུ་སྒྲངས་དོར་བྱ་དགོས་

ཀྱང་ད་ལྟ་རང་ཉིད་སྤང་དོར་ལ་མྱོངས་པ་ལོང་བ་ལྟ་བུར་གྱུར་པའི་སྐབས་འདིར་

And as you serve your Lama, remember. When a farmer goes to plant his seeds, whatever work he does in the field, he does for his own sake. It's not as if he is doing the field a favor. Here I am the same. It's me who hopes to reach freedom from pain, and the state of knowing all things. To do so, I must take up certain things and give up others; but I am like a man who is blind—I am totally ignorant of which of these things are which.

་་་ལོང་འཁྲིད་དང་འདྲ་བའི་དགོ་བའི་བཤེས་གཉིན་བསྟེན་སྐབས་ཀྱང་སྡིག་དང་མ་
འདྲེས་པའི་ངལ་དུབ་ཀྱི་ངན་ལས་ཇི་འདྲ་ཞིག་བྱེད་དགོས་པ་བྱུང་ཡང་གཞན་ལ་དཀའ་
སྤྱད་བྱས་རབས་ཀྱི་ཡུས་མི་བདོ་བར་མ་ཟད།

My spiritual Friend is here to lead the blind; and in my service of him or her I am obliged to do anything required of me, no matter how exhausting, no matter how distasteful—so long as nothing morally wrong is involved.

ད་དུང་ཁྱུང་དུ་མ་སོང་བར་སྐྱོན་དུ་བབྱང་སྟེ་བདག་སྐལ་བ་དེ་བཟང་སྟམ་དུ་དད་ཅིང་
གྲུས་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་སྒོ་ནས་བསམ་སྦྱོར་གཉིས་ཀྱིས་ཚུལ་བཞིན་བསྟེན་ཏེ་བསྐྱབ་པ་
དགོས།

And I am not to view this service as if I were laboring for someone else; on the contrary, I should not even see it as a burden, but rather as a reward: it is my great good fortune to have the opportunity. And so I must succeed in serving him or her in both my thoughts and actions, with the deepest feelings of reverence.

དེ་ལྟར་བཤེས་གཉིན་བསྟེན་ཚུལ་འདི་བཟང་པོ་བྱུང་ན། ཆོ་རབས་ཐམས་ཅད་དུ་སྒྲ་
མས་རྗེས་སུ་འཛིན་པ་དང་། ད་རེས་ཀྱི་ལུས་ཏེན་འདི་ཨང་གི་དང་པོར་བརྟེན་ཏེ།
འདི་ནས་བབྱང་དལ་བརྒྱད་འབྱོར་བཅུ་ཆང་བའི་མིའི་ཏེན་བཟང་བར་མ་ཆད་པར་ཐོབ་
ནས་དལ་འབྱོར་གྱི་ཨང་གི་མ་འབྲུགས་པར་ཆོས་ཉམས་སུ་སྤངས་ཏེ་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་
གོ་འཕང་སྐྱབ་བྱུང་པ་ལོང་།

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If our service of our Lama is good, then in all our future lives we will find ourselves taken under the care of Lamas. Then too we can count the life we have found now as the first in a long and unbroken series of lives in which we enjoy each of the eight spiritual pleasures, and the ten fortunes. And there will never again be any mistake in this particular arithmetic: we will always enjoy the exact number of circumstances needed to follow our practice of the Dharma, and so finally reach the state of perfect enlightenment.

བྱིན་གྱིས་སྒྲོབས་ཞེས་པ་གཟེ་བྱིན་སྐྱུར་ཅེས་པ་སྟེ། རང་རྒྱུད་སྐད་ཅིག་སྒྲ་མ་ཉོན་
མོངས་དང་མཚུངས་ལྡན་དུ་སོང་བའི་སྟོ་བྱིན་ཅི་ལོག་ཏུ་ཡོད་པ་དེ་སྐད་ཅིག་བྱི་མར་སྒྲ་
མ་ལ་དད་གུས་ཆེན་པོའི་སྟོ་ནས་ཚུལ་བཞིན་དུ་བརྟེན་ལུས་པ་དང་། ལམ་ཡོངས་
ཇོགས་བྱིན་ཅི་མ་ལོག་པ་རྒྱུད་ལ་ལྡན་པའི་སྐལ་བ་ཅན་དུ་སྐྱུར་བར་མཛོད་ཅིག་ཅེས་
གསེལ་བ་བཏབ་པ་སྟེ། འདི་ལོག་མ་རྣམས་ལ་འང་འགྲེ་གསུངས།

The words "bless me" here mean "embellish me"; which is to say, "transform the condition of my mind." A minute ago my mind was twisted wrong, and joined with every kind of bad thought. Now, in the very next moment, may I be blessed with the good fortune of being able to find and follow my Lama properly, with every reverence; may my mind be straightened, and become filled with each and every Step of the path. This is the thing I ask, my Lama.

The explanation of the words "bless me" here applies as well to each of the other verses in which they appear.

Notes to Reading Eight

*The presence of an asterisk after a translated proper name indicates that the equivalent Asian-language form or forms may be found in a special appendix.

¹ *Opening Your Eyes*: The edition used for this translation is a woodblock print of 27 folios on handmade Tibetan paper held in the private collection of the venerable Geshe Lobsang Thardo, from the Gyalrong College of Sera Mey Tibetan Monastic University, South India. The copy was presented to him personally by the Third Pabongka Rinpoche, the Ven. Geshe Lobsang Tupten Trinley Kunkyang. Another copy is listed in the catalog to the library of His Holiness Trijang Rinpoche, the late tutor of the present Dalai Lama. The text is somewhat rare, and was not included in the standard edition of Pabongka Rinpoche's collected works.

² *the Good and Glorious Pabongka*: Refers to the first Pabongka Rinpoche (1878-1941), whose full monk's name was Jampa Tenzin Trinley Gyatso. He was the foremost Buddhist teacher of his era, and renowned for his ability to convey the deepest concepts of Buddhism to the common man in popular public teachings. For a full biography in English, refer to the introduction of *The Principal Teachings of Buddhism*.

³ *Source of All My Good*: Written by Tsongkapa the Great (1357-1419), perhaps the greatest commentator of Buddhism who ever lived, author of some 10,000 pages in explanation of the early classics of Buddhism, and teacher of many eminent disciples, including the First Dalai Lama. This brief work covers all the necessary stages of the entire path to Buddhahood and is often recited at the beginning of important teachings and high secret rituals. It also forms the final section of *Necklace for the Fortunate*, a popular text used in readying oneself for a Buddhist meditation session.

As will be explained in more detail further on, the text of the *Source of All My Good* is found within a longer work, entitled *Open Door to the Highest Path*. This piece is a supplication to the Lamas of the great lineages of Buddhism: the masters through whom concepts such as the Wish for enlightenment, and the vision of emptiness, have been passed down to us. The importance of the *Door* is indicated by the fact that it appears first in a compendium of 135 briefer titles within the Master's collected works.

The name and role of the work have evolved over the centuries. Je Tsongkapa composed the *Door* in 1402, and by the time of the famous *Path of Ease*, a presentation on the Steps of the path by His Holiness the First Panchen Lama (1567?-1662), it is recommended under its original name for a petition and visualization of the lineage Lamas.

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By the middle part of the 18th century the *Door's* central section, itself a concise yet complete presentation of the Steps, has become the subject of a number of philosophical commentaries, under the name of the *Source of All My Good* (a phrase taken from the first line of the text). By this time too, the work is being referred to by the name of *Begging for a Mountain of Blessings*. It is also recommended throughout this period as a component in the six standard practices used to prepare for a meditation session.

Other commentaries or works based on the *Source* include those of the following authors:

Akuching Drungchen Sherab Gyatso (b. 1803)
Gelong Yeshe Gyeltsen
Gushri Kachupa Mergen Kenpo Lobsang Tsepel (b.
about 1760)
Gyal Kenpo Drakpa Gyeltsen (1762-1837)
His Holiness the Sixth Panchen Lama, Lobsang
Tupten Chukyi Nyima (1883-1937)
Je Lodro Gyatso (1851-1930), ed. by Gyal Kentrul
Kelsang Drakpa Gyatso (b. 1880)
Jikme Samten (19th century)
Kalka Damtsik Dorje (18th century)
Kirti Lobsang Trinley (1849-1905)
Lumbum Sherab Gyatso (1884-1968)
Ngawang Yeshe Tupten Rabjampa (19th century)
Shangton Tenpa Gyatso Pel Sangpo (n.d.)
Shasana Dipam (n.d.), probably
Tsechokling Yeshe Gyeltsen (1713-1793)

Explanations of the six preliminary practices are also a rich source of commentary upon the *Source*. Pabongka Rinpoche himself gives a profound interpretation of the text in two such works. He includes all the original verses in a recitation text based on the Fifth Dalai Lama's text on the Steps. He also mentions using them as the basis of a review meditation in his masterpiece on the Steps to Buddhahood entitled *A Gift of Liberation, Placed into Our Hands*. And it was his own precious teacher, Dakpo Lama Jampel Hlundrup, who attached the work to the *Necklace* mentioned above.

Other commentaries on the six practices which include explanations of the *Source* have been written by the following masters:

Akya Yangchen Gaway Lodru (c. 1760)
Keutsang Lobsang Jamyang Monlam (b. 1689)
Tsechok Ling Yeshe Gyeltsen (1713-1793)
The Second Jamyang Shepa, Konchok Jikme
Wangpo (1728-1791)

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One very interesting additional work is another *Open Door to the Highest Path*, written by Tsechok Ling Yeshe Gyeltsen (1713-1793). The title is the same as that of Je Tsongkapa's original piece because the author undertakes to extend Tsongkapa's supplication to the lineage Lamas, in order to include the great teachers beginning from Je Tsongkapa himself.

Incidentally, the very expression "source of all my good" (in the Tibetan form of *yon-tan gyi gzhi-rten*) is used very early on in Buddhist literature. The phrase in Sanskrit appears in the *Letter to a Friend*, written by the realized being Nagarjuna some seventeen centuries ago. Here it refers to the practice of morality which, like proper reliance upon a Lama, acts to provide us with all good things.

⁴ *Three doors*: The three ways in which one can express himself—in action, speech, or thought. A typical presentation of the three appears in the works on Higher Knowledge (*Abhidharma*); see for example Chone Lama Drakpa Shedrup (1675-1748).

⁵ *The person who is the Essence of Great Bliss*: Another name for Pabongka Rinpoche, describing his mastery of the secret teachings of Buddhism. The additional names that follow indicate that the Rinpoche embodies Je Tsongkapa, Shakyamuni Buddha, and the form that Lord Buddha takes to deliver the secret Word.

⁶ *Mountain of Blessings*: The concept of a blessing in Buddhism refers to a specific process through which a disciple's ability to achieve spiritual goals is altered, enhanced, through a true request to a Lama for his or her blessing. Pabongka Rinpoche himself describes this in his famed *Gift of Liberation*.

⁷ *"Language of pleasure beings..."* These and the other lines belong to selected verses which recited by tradition at the start of a major teaching, in order for both teacher and listener to begin with the proper motivation; to formally request the teaching; to prevent obstacles that might disrupt the teaching; and so on.

The verses can be found in standard prayer books for Tibetan Buddhist monasteries. Their locations here are as follows: *Essence of Wisdom* (the famous *Heart Sutra*, for preventing obstacles); *Angel with the Face of a Lion* (also for preventing obstacles); "Virtues perfected" (opening lines of Je Tsongkapa's brief *Stages of the Path* and an obeisance to Lord Buddha); "Loving One" (these and following common verses of obeisance and the offering of bathing to the lineage Lamas); "Gentle Voice,"; "The one of great compassion,"; "Teaching what to learn, to reach,"; "Founder from the Land of Snows,"; "All three places" (these last two also common graces); "The constellations,"; "In all my lives" (also attached to the *Mountain of Blessings*); "The great Earth" (the shorter offering of the mandala); "Atop a lion throne" (from a prayer of devotion to Je

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Tsongkapa); "Sponges of the sky" (a request for teaching from the famous *Offering to Lamas*); "Idam guru" (final words of the mandala offering); "To the Buddha" (the well-known formula for taking refuge and developing the wish for enlightenment); "Pleasure beings" (an obeisance to Tara, the Angel of Liberation); and "Language of pleasure beings" (a prayer to teach in all the world's languages.)

⁸ *This life of spiritual leisure*: Found in the Master's *Songs of My Spiritual Life*.

⁹ *Four forces*: Buddhism teaches that there are four antidote forces, which together can remove the power or karma of any bad deed. The "basis" force consists of thinking who it is that was offended by your deed, and who it is you will rely on to clear yourself of it. The "destruction" force is an intense feeling of shame and regret for the deed, which will certainly return to hurt you. The "reverse" force is to turn yourself away from doing that kind of deed again. The "counteragent" force is to undertake some spiritual practice—confession, meditation, or any good deed—to offset the power of the wrong.

¹⁰ *Three extraordinary trainings*: That is, extraordinary morality, extraordinary concentration, and extraordinary wisdom. Each one acts as a support for the next. A thorough discussion of the three is found in the monastic textbooks on the perfection of wisdom; see for example the "Overview of the Perfection of Wisdom" by Kedrup Tenpa Dargye (1493-1568).

¹¹ *Even a cow knows how*: The quotation is from the *Letter to a Student*, written in the tenth century. It appears as well in Je Tsongkapa's greater *Steps to the Path* and the first Panchen Lama's *Path of Ease*.

¹² *The sea is not my problem*: The quotation is found in a teaching of the Buddha, where he recounts the story of a serpentine king, as an admonition to his monks for quarreling. The popular lines are also found in the *Greater Steps* of Je Tsongkapa; the *Path of Ease* by the First Panchen Lama (1567?-1662); the *Word of Gentle Voice* by the Fifth Dalai Lama (1617-1682); and the *Steps of the Teaching*, a massive prototype for the *Greater Steps* composed by Geshe Drolungpa (c. 1100).

¹³ *A kindness returned*: This appears to be a proverb rather than a scriptural reference; the *Steps of the Teaching* expresses a very similar sentiment.

¹⁴ *Both of the ultimate goals*: Refers to the final culmination of one's own goals and the ability to help others achieve theirs—two qualities possessed only by a Buddha. Several important discussions of the ultimate goals are found in treatises on Master Dharmakirti's *Commentary on Valid Perception*, composed in the 7th century. The first is included in the explanation of the opening lines of this work itself, where the Buddha's qualities are extolled. The second

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comes in the second chapter, as Master Dharmakirti explains the praise of the Buddha in Master Dignaga's original treatise.

¹⁵ *one of those foe destroyers*: "Foe destroyer" is a term used to refer to those who have achieved nirvana, since—as Geshe Drolungpa notes in his *Steps of the Teaching*—they have permanently destroyed the foe of the mental afflictions. "Listeners" and "self-made Buddhas" here refer to persons who have achieved nirvana but have not yet entered the higher way, the way of the bodhisattvas, where they work to become fully enlightened Buddhas in order to liberate all living beings.

"Listeners" are so called because they can listen to the teachings of the higher way, and even relate them to others, but do not actually put them into practice themselves. "Self-made buddhas" are not real Buddhas, but have only achieved nirvana, and are "self-made" only insofar as they have reached this state without relying on a spiritual teacher in the present life, although they have had countless such teachers in their past lives.

¹⁶ *The great monastery of Radreng*: The chain of events surrounding the composition of the *Mountain of Blessings* are extraordinary; they show how this brief supplication played a pivotal role in Je Tsongkapa's spiritual life, and in the history of Buddhist literature.

Much of what Je Tsongkapa wrote is said to have been dictated to him by Manjushri, Gentle Voice, who is the wisdom of all enlightened beings combined in the form of a single angel. Je Tsongkapa began to enjoy communication with Gentle Voice in his early thirties. At this point he was still incapable of seeing the angel directly himself, but was able to pose questions to him through a mediator, a lama named Umapa.

Je Tsongkapa's *Secret Biography*, a work by his close disciple Kedrup Je (1385-1438), describes important events of the Master's inner life. Here we read the details of an early exchange between Je Tsongkapa and Gentle Voice, with Lama Umapa acting as go-between. Je Rinpoche poses questions, and the angel begins his answer by clarifying a whole range of thorny issues concerning the subject of emptiness. Next he moves on to illuminate a number of difficult points in the secret teachings. Then he pauses, and Je Rinpoche says: "But wait, there are still more questions I must ask, more points I cannot grasp."

And Gentle Voice replies,

Do not forget the answers I have already given you today. Go now and write a record of them. There are three practices then you must undertake, all three together, and you must devote yourself to them with an unquenchable passion.

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First you must come to see that your Lama and your high secret Angel are one and the same. You must make supplication to them, and try to reach them.

Secondly you must make constant and perfect efforts in the two-fold practice of collecting the energy of good deeds, and purifying yourself of the force of evil deeds.

Thirdly you must use the power of your intellect to investigate the true meaning of the great books of Buddhism, and then you must contemplate this meaning deeply.

Follow these three practices, keep them up over a long period of time. There will come a day, it is not far off, when the seed I have planted within you in this hour will flower. And then you will understand all, perfectly.

Throughout his life Je Tsongkapa followed all three practices, but the particular attention he paid to supplication, to prayers for the blessings of perfected beings, Buddhas and Lamas, is strikingly evident in records of his writings, and throughout his various biographies.

It is one such supplication which leads to our present work, the *Mountain of Blessings*. The time is the summer of 1402, in the forty-sixth year of the Master's life. Having spent a fruitful summer at the Temple of Ar with his close teacher and disciple, the Sakya sage Jetsun Rendawa, Je Tsongkapa then travels to Radreng ("to the north" of Lhasa). He has been there once before, attracted to the great monastery so full of the history of two of Tibetan Buddhism's founding fathers: Atisha, the Lord, and his spiritual son Dromton Je (the "Victor" mentioned in the text). This connection is described by Kedrup Je in his longer biography.

At Radreng, Je Tsongkapa goes into solitude at the foot of the lion crag. Above his quarters is a statue of the Lord himself, Atisha. One day the Master kneels before the image, in keeping with the words of Gentle Voice himself, and makes a supplication to the Lamas of the past.

The prayer that Je Tsongkapa made that day is still extant, and can be found in his collected works under the name of *Door to the Highest Path*. The petition is directed to the Lamas of the instructions on the Steps to Buddhahood, and divides broadly into three parts.

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The first part is a request to the teachers of the lineage of the Wish for enlightenment, beginning with the Buddha himself, and continuing on through Loving One, the Indian master Asanga, and then on down to the great Tibetan lamas of Je Rinpoche's own time. The third part is a similar prayer, to the teachers of the lineage of the Realization of emptiness, again starting with Lord Buddha, and passing down through Gentle Voice, the incomparable Nagarjuna, and later generations. The second part, between these two, is none other than the *Mountain of Blessings*, the *Source of All My Good*.

Je Tsongkapa ends his prayer, and suddenly goes into a vision, one which, according to the *Great Biography* of Gyalwang Lobsang Trinley Namgyal (about 1830), continues on and off for an entire month. He sees all the lineage Lamas face-to-face, and receives a momentous boon from one in particular.

The scene is recorded in a standard set of fifteen scroll paintings of the Master's life known as *The Tsongkapa Eighty*. We find the following description of the event on the scroll in the works of the great Jamyang Shepay Dorje (1648-1721):

And the Lord Atisha came to the Master, and placed his hand on his head, and said to him, "Do mighty deeds on behalf of the Teachings, and then I myself will assist you in reaching the goal of Enlightenment, and filling the needs of every sentient being."

Immediately after the vision, Je Tsongkapa is approached by scores of learned disciples, who entreat him to write a detailed account of how to reach perfection. Flush with Lord Atisha's promise, the Master goes into retreat, and there at Radreng completes his masterwork—the *Lam Rim Chenmo*, or *Greater Steps of the Path to Buddhahood*—the most famous book in all of Tibetan Buddhism.

His understanding is now complete, and the seed planted by Gentle Voice has flowered as foretold, for Je Tsongkapa has heeded the angel's advice by composing this perfect supplication: the *Mountain of Blessings*. This power of the prayer has been recognized throughout generations of lamas since, and explains why it is used as a preparation for the secret practices. As the final lines of the present explanation of the work reveal, it too has been imparted by Pabongka Rinpoche as a preliminary to a tantric initiation.

¹⁷ *Both the highest paths*: Refers to the paths of the open and the secret teachings of Buddhism. The path which is "shared" by the two consists of the realizations of the Steps to Buddhahood, since these are necessary for success in both the open and the secret ways. The quotation is from Je Rinpoche's *Briefer Steps of the Path*.

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¹⁸ *You will only lose yourself*: Original source of quotation not found. The Fifth Dalai Lama, His Holiness Ngawang Lobsang Gyatso (1617-1682), was an extraordinary scholar and organizer of Buddhism, so much so that he is referred to in Tibet simply as the "Great Fifth." He is known for bringing the famous Potala Palace to its present form; for his writings on a broad range of philosophical and secular subjects; and for his special visions and mastery of the secret teachings.

¹⁹ *Nothing is not a teaching*: The line is found in a work entitled *Selections from Dromton Je*, which at this point is quoting single lines by Dromton Je that appear in the *Greater Steps* of Je Tsongkapa. Here and in the *Gift* of Pabongka Rinpoche the quotation is used to emphasize how practitioners at an advanced level see all the Buddhist teachings as being totally consistent internally.

None of these three occurrences of the line includes the part beginning with "for the Father," nor is it found in the quotation as found in the text on the Steps by the Great Fifth Dalai Lama. The sense though matches the context of the *Selections* and the standard use of the reference.

The words translated here as "wrapping the totality of the teachings into one" can be read in a number of different ways, as noted by Pabongka Rinpoche himself in the *Gift*," at the folios listed above. Literally the text speaks of "carrying all the teachings as a square," which the Rinpoche interprets finally as referring to how a square Tibetan carpet automatically comes with four corners. That is, any teaching on the Steps of the path automatically contains in it all the teachings of the Buddha, providing an abbreviated presentation that any one of us can use to achieve total enlightenment.

The great Drom Tonpa (1005-1064), full name Dromton Gyalway Jungne, was the most famed disciple of Lord Atisha (982-1052), himself the illustrious progenitor of the teaching on the Steps in Tibet. Drom Tonpa also founded the great monastery of Radreng, which is where Je Tsongkapa wrote the *Mountain of Blessings*.

²⁰ *A gold and jewel rosary*: Original source of quotation not found; it also occurs in Pabongka Rinpoche's commentary to the *Three Principal Paths*.

The "three scopes" refer to three levels of motivation for practicing the Steps of the path: to escape the three lower rebirths, to escape all suffering, and to achieve total enlightenment in order to help all living beings. The "three collections" are the three sections of the Buddha's word: the "collection of vowed morality," dedicated chiefly to the training of morality; the "collection of sutra," concerned primarily with the training of concentration; and the "collection of higher knowledge," devoted to the training of wisdom. See Pabongka Rinpoche's *Gift of Liberation*, and Kedrup Tenpa Dargye's *Overview of the Perfection of Wisdom*.

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The "Keepers" are explained below at note 29.

²¹ *These Steps are far superior:* Pabongka Rinpoche himself, in *A Gift of Liberation*, describes the "three extraordinary qualities" as follows. The works on the Steps to the path are (1) totally complete, with nothing left out, for they present in a concise way the entire contents of the teachings of the Buddha, both open and secret. They are (2) easily put into practice, for their main point is to explain the various steps for taming the mind. Finally, they are (3) vastly superior to other teachings, since they consist of the systems of the two great founders—Arya Nagarjuna and Master Asanga—enhanced by the instructions of Lama Vidyakokila and Lama Serlingpa, respectively.

Arya Nagarjuna (200 AD) is known as the founder of the teachings on emptiness, and Master Asanga (350 AD) as that of the teachings on bodhisattva activities. The lineages come down respectively to Lama Vidyakokila and Lama Serlingpa, and then combine in their illustrious student, Lord Atisha (982-1054). The Lord's full name is Dipamkara Shri Jnyana; it was he who brought the teachings of the Steps of the path to Tibet, and who authored the *Lamp for the Path*, a prototype text of this genre.

The "four kinds of greatness" also appear in Pabongka Rinpoche's *Gift*. The teachings on the Steps of the path are great in that (1) they allow a person to realize that every single teaching of Buddhism is consistent with every other one. They bring a person to a level where (2) he or she sees everything the Buddha taught as something that can be put into personal practice. They (3) help a person to discern with ease the true intention of the Buddha in each of his teachings, and thereby (4) automatically protect you from making the Great Mistake; that is, the error of thinking that some of the Buddha's instructions are better, and some worse.

²² *Massive stores of the Dharma:* By tradition the Buddha taught 84,000 huge collections of scripture, one collection for each of the different variants of our mental afflictions and harmful habits. There are a number of different positions on the exact quantity of the teachings contained in each of these collections; the view of the greater way is that each such collection consists of the number of pages one could write with the amount of ink that the great mythical elephant named Rabten could carry on his back. See the First Dalai Lama's commentary to the *Treasure House of Knowledge*.

²³ *It is this perfection:* The verse is found in the *Shorter Sutra on the Perfection of Wisdom*. It is generally considered the ultimate origin of the expression "Steps of the path", and is quoted by Je Tsongkapa in his *Greater Steps*, as well as in Pabongka Rinpoche's own masterpiece on the Steps, and commentary to the *Three Principal Paths*.

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²⁴ *The five great classics*: These are the five great books of early Indian Buddhism studied and debated in major Tibetan monasteries even in Je Tsongkapa's time. As mentioned throughout his *Great Biography*, they are the *Jewel of Realizations* brought from Loving One by Master Asanga (335 AD); *Entering the Middle Way*, by Master Chandrakirti (650 AD); *Treasure House of Knowledge*, by Master Vasubandhu (335 AD); *Abbreviation of Vowed Morality*, by Master Gunaprabha (500 AD?); and *Commentary on Valid Perception*, by Master Dharmakirti (630 AD).

²⁵ *Swept away on the wind*: Original source of quotation not found. The "Great Fifth", as mentioned above in note 18, refers to His Holiness the Fifth Dalai Lama.

²⁶ *Especially the magic body*: The Master Translator of Taktsang, Sherab Rinchen (b. 1405), was one of the foremost scholars of the Sakya tradition of Tibetan Buddhism. The lines appear as well in Pabongka Rinpoche's *Gift of Liberation*, and in the famed *Survey of the Schools of Philosophy* by Tuken Lobsang Chukyi Nyima (1737-1802).

The lines beginning from "diamond way" refer to the secret teachings of Buddhism.

²⁷ *Ever faultlessly*: Mikyu Dorje (1507-1554) was the Eighth Karmapa, spiritual head of the Karma Kagyu lineage of Tibetan Buddhism, and wrote on a wide range of topics.

²⁸ *It is a pure tradition*: Gyalwang Kelsang Gyatso (1708-1757) was the Seventh of the Dalai Lamas. The lines quoted here appear among a group of mental trainings found in his collected works.

²⁹ *The older Keepers of the Word*: Refers to the Kadampas, an inspired group of scholars and meditators from the early days of Buddhism in Tibet, dating from the eleventh century. Their name literally means "those for whom every single letter of the teachings (*ka*) turns to instructions (*dampa*) immediately relevant to personal practice." The followers of the tradition of Tsongkapa—the *Gelukpa* or Way of Virtue, lineage of the Heaven of Bliss—are sometimes called the "later Keepers of the Word."

³⁰ *The great completion*: This and some of the other practices mentioned are all details of the secret teachings of Buddhism.

³¹ *Perfect yourself*: Original quotation not found; neither does it appear to be in the secret teachings of *Samputa*, despite the similarity of the title.

³² *Ask Him, for all your goals*: The lines are found in a letter of advice from Je Tsongkapa to one Yonten Gyatso of the district of Tulung, Tibet.

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³³ *All three of the trainings*: These are the exceptional trainings of morality, concentration, and wisdom. The original quotation is from the *Jewel of Maitreya*. The importance of the qualifications of the Lama is indicated by the fact that the same words are quoted in works like the *Greater Steps* of Je Tsongkapa; the First Panchen Lama's *Path of Ease*; Pabongka Rinpoche's own *Gift of Liberation*, and his commentary to the *Three Principal Paths*.

³⁴ *The good begins to flower*: The lines are found in an extraordinary letter of advice written by Je Tsongkapa to himself, where he poses numbered questions, and then answers them in the form of profound instruction. It is interesting to note that this is the final work in a large collection of shorter pieces by the Master; the first title is the *Mountain of Blessings* itself, which brings us full circle.

³⁵ *The nine attitudes*: The nine are mentioned in Je Tsongkapa's *Greater Steps*, and are listed fully in the First Panchen Lama's *Path of Ease*. The original sutra subsumes two volumes of the canon and includes repeated, exquisite descriptions of these and similar attitudes to develop towards one's Lama.

The nine attitudes taught in the sutra are as follows:

- 1) Like an obedient child, give up your own will and submit yourself to your Lama.
- 2) Like a diamond, be solid in your devotion to Him or Her, and let no relative or friend come between you.
- 3) Like the earth itself, accept any task your Lama may load upon you.
- 4) Like the great mountains at the edge of the world, stay unshakable in your service, regardless of any troubles that come.
- 5) Like a handservant, carry out any task He or She gives you, never seeking to avoid it, no matter how distasteful it may seem.
- 6) Like the dust of the earth, seek the lowest position, giving up all pride, all pretension, all conceit.
- 7) Like a sturdy vehicle, undertake any burden your Lama may give you, however heavy.
- 8) Like a loyal dog, stay without anger, regardless of how

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your Lama might berate or scold you.

- 9) No matter how much you have to go here and there in
the service of your Lama, be willing to go, like a
boat that never complains.

³⁶ *Fifty Verses on Lamas*: A classic description of Lama devotion written by the
Indian Buddhist master Ashvagosha, circa 100 AD.

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Reading Nine: Getting the Essence of Life

III. Advice to Take the Essence of Life

གཉིས་པ་བསྐྱེད་ནས་སྒོ་ཇི་ལྟར་སྤང་བའི་ཚུལ་ལ་གཉིས། དལ་འབྱོར་ལ་སྣིང་པོ་སྤང་
བའི་ཕྱིར་བསྐྱེད་པ་དང་། སྣིང་པོ་ཇི་ལྟར་ལེན་པའི་ཚུལ་ལོ། དང་པོ་ནི།

This brings us to the second major part of the text itself, which describes how to train the mind, once you have properly taken a Lama. This part comes in two Steps: urgent advice to take the essence of the present life, with its spiritual leisure and fortune; and a description of just how to take this essence. The first step is contained in the single verse that follows next:

།ལམ་ཅིག་རྟོན་པའི་དལ་བའི་ཉེན་བཟང་འདི།
།ཤིན་ཏུ་རྟོན་དཀའ་དོན་ཆེན་ཤེས་གྱུར་ནས།
།ཉིན་མཚན་ཀུན་ཏུ་སྣིང་པོ་ལེན་པའི་སྒོ།
།རྒྱུ་ཆད་མེད་པར་སྐྱེ་བར་བྱིན་གྱིས་སྒོ་བས།
།ཞེས་པའི་སྒྲོ་ཀ་གཅིག་སྟེ།

(2)

Bless me first to realize
That the excellent life
Of leisure I've found
Just this once
Is ever so hard to find
And ever so valuable;

Grant me then
To wish, and never stop to wish,
That I could take
Its essence night and day.

ལན་ཅིག་རྟོག་ཅེས་པ་ཕྱིན་ཆད་ཡང་ཡང་མི་རྟོག་པའི་དོན་དང་།

The phrase about finding a life like this "just this once" is meant to indicate that we would never be able to find this kind of life on a regular basis in the future.

འདིར་དལ་འབྱོར་ངོས་བཟུང་བའི་སྐབས། དལ་འབྱོར་ཉིན་ཞེས་མ་གསུངས་བར་
དལ་བའི་ཉིན་ཞེས་གསུངས་པའི་རྒྱ་མཚན། ངན་སོང་གསུམ་དང་ལྷ་ཆོ་རིང་པོ། ལྷ་
ལྷོ། འོག་ལྷ་ཅན། ལྷག་པ། རྒྱལ་བ་འཛིག་ཉིན་དུ་མ་བྱོན་པའི་དུས་སུ་སྐྱེས་པ་སྟེ་མི་
ཁོམ་པ་བརྒྱད་དང་བྲལ་བའི་དལ་བ་བརྒྱད་དངོས་སུ་ཚང་ལ།

You may wonder too why, at a point where the concepts of spiritual leisure and fortune are being presented, the verse says only "life of leisure," and not "life of leisure and fortune." The point is that we actually do possess the entire set of eight spiritual leisures, which consist of being free of the eight ways that a person can lack opportunity. These lacks of opportunity are birth in the three lower realms,³⁷ or as a long-life being of pleasure; as a barbarian; as a person with a mistaken worldview; as someone who is handicapped; or in a period of history when the victorious Buddha has yet to appear in the world.

མི་ཉིད་དབུས་སྐྱེས་དབང་པོ་ཚང་།

ལས་མཐའ་མ་འོག་གནས་ལ་དད།

We do have all five of the spiritual fortunes that relate to one's self, as described in the following verse:

Born as a human,
In a central land,
And having one's faculties
All complete;
Not lost to the last of karma,
And feeling faith for the place.³⁸

ཁེས་པ་ལྟར་དག་སྤྱོད་པ་མ། དག་བསྟེན་པ་མ་བཅས་སྟོན་པའི་འཁོར་ནམ་བཞིའམ།
གཙོ་བོ་དག་སྤྱོད་པ་ཡོད་པའི་ཆོས་ཆོག་གི་ཡུལ་དབུས་སུ་སྐྱེས་ཤིང་།

Here "born in a central land" refers to a land where there exists the "core of the Dharma," meaning that there are people in the country who keep the vows of the "four attendants to the Buddha." This refers to the full ordinations for a man and a woman, along with the novice ordinations for the same. The main component of the core is the fully ordained monk.

ལས་མཐའ་མ་ལོག་པ་སྟེ་ཆོ་འདིར་མཚམས་མེད་ཀྱི་ལས་བསགས་ལ་མ་སྤངས་པ་
མིན་པ་དང་།

"Not lost to the last of karma" means not having collected, and then failed to clear from oneself, the karma that comes from committing one of the "immediate," heinous bad deeds.³⁹

དཀར་པོའི་ཆོས་ཀྱན་སྐྱེ་བའི་གནས་འདུལ་བ་སྟེ། རང་རྒྱུད་འདུལ་བྱིར་འདུལ་བའི་
སྒྲས་བཏགས་པ་སྟེ་སྟོན་གསུམ་ལ་དད་པ་སོགས་རང་འབྱོར་ལྟ་ཀ་ཚང་བ་ཡོད་ཀྱང་།

The *place* from where each and every white and good thing grows is the teaching on discipline; here the word "discipline" can by extension be applied to the entire contents of the canon—the three collections of scripture—since they all function to discipline one's mind.⁴⁰ We do then possess the fortune of having faith in the holy books.

།སང་རྒྱས་བྱོན་དང་དམ་ཆོས་སྟོན།

།བསྟེན་པ་གནས་དང་དེ་ཇེས་འཇུག།

།གཞན་བྱིར་སྟོང་ནི་བརྩི་བའོ།

།ཞེས་པའི་གཞན་འབྱོར་ལྟ་ནས།

Let us examine though whether we have the five fortunes that relate to what is outside ourselves. The classic reference here is:

Course III: Applied Meditation
Reading Nine

The Buddha is come,
And taught the holy Dharma.
The teaching remains,
As do the ones who follow.
There is compassion
For the sake of others.⁴¹

སངས་རྒྱལ་བྱོན་ཏེ་བཞུགས་བཞིན་པ་དང་། སངས་རྒྱལ་སམ་དེའི་ཉན་ཐོས་ཀྱིས་
ཆོས་གསུངས་པ། སངས་རྒྱལ་སྤྲུང་ན་ལས་མ་འདས་པར་འབྲས་བུའི་བསྟན་པ་
གནས་པ། ཆོས་བསྟན་པ་དེས་འབྲས་བུ་བཞི་དངོས་སུ་ཐོབ་པར་མཐོང་ནས་གདུལ་བྱ་
གཞན་མའང་དེའི་ཇེས་སུ་འདུག་པ་”

Here the Buddha must have come and still be present in the world. He or his direct disciples must be teaching the Dharma. The resulting teachings must also remain, and this during the period before his final passing beyond all sorrow. Certain of his disciples must observe other disciples actually achieve the four results,⁴² after he has taught them; and these disciples must undertake to follow the same practices too.

”བཞི་དགེ་སྤྲོད་འཆར་ཀ་ལྟ་བུ་ལ་ཆང་བ་ལས། མགོན་པོ་ཁྱ་སྤྱོད་ལའང་དངོས་
གནས་པ་མཆང་ལ། རང་རིས་ཀྱང་སངས་རྒྱལ་དང་བྱུང་མེད་པའི་སྤྲ་མ་མཇུག་ཏེ་
ཆོས་གསུངས་པ་སོགས་ཀྱིས་དེ་དག་དོན་ཐུབ་སྤྱོར་དུ་ཡོད་པ་ལས་དངོས་གནས་མ་
ཆང་ཡང་། དལ་བ་བརྒྱད་དངོས་སུ་ཆང་བ་ལ་གཙོ་བོར་དགོངས་ཏེ་གསུངས་པ་རེད།

All four of the fortunes just explained have been possessed even by the likes of the monk Udayi,⁴³ whereas the same cannot be said even for the Savior Nagarjuna, who lacked them in their literal form. We too have met our Lamas, who are no different from a Buddha, and they have spoken the Dharma and so on; these are a full substitute yes, but we cannot say that we have all those fortunes in their literal form. We do however enjoy all eight of the spiritual leisures; these then are our primary advantage, and it's with this fact in mind that the verse reads "life of leisure."

གཞན་ཕྱིར་སྤྲོད་བཅེ་ཞེས་པ། སྤྱིན་བདག་དང་སྤྲ་མ་སོགས་ཀྱིས་གང་ཟག་གཞན་

རང་ཉིད་གྱི་ཕྱིར་དུ་སྡིང་བཅེ་བས་ཆོས་གྱི་མཐུན་ཀྱིན་ཟས་གོས་སོགས་སྟོར་བའམ།
ཆོས་སྟོན་པ་སོགས་ཏེ། རང་གིས་ཆོས་སྐྱབ་པའི་མཐུན་ཀྱིན་སྟོན་མཁན་ཡོད་པ་ལ་བྱ་
དགོས།

What does it mean when the reference says, "There is compassion for the sake of others?" The "others" here refers to ourselves; our sponsors and Lamas and other such persons who act for our sake, motivated by compassion, to see that we are provided with all the conditions that will facilitate our practice of the Dharma: they give us food, or clothes, and other necessities; They teach us the Dharma; and so on. Therefore this phrase should be understood as describing the good fortune to have around us those who give us the things we need to practice.

རང་ཅག་མི་ཁོམ་པ་བརྒྱད་དང་བྲལ་ནས་ཆོས་སྐྱབ་ཏུ་ཡོད་པའི་དུས་འདིར་མི་སྐྱབ་
པར། ཆོ་འདི་པའི་འཆིང་ཐག་གིས་བཅིངས་ཏེ། རྟོན་བཀུར་སྟོན་གྲགས་དང་།
འཇིག་རྟེན་མཐུན་འཇུག་སྐྱབ་པ་སོགས་དོན་མིན་གྱི་ལས་མང་པོ་བརྩམ་སྟེ་བྲེལ་བ་
བྱེད་པ་འདི། མི་ཁོམ་པ་དགུ་པ་ཞིག་ཆེད་དུ་བཅའ་བ་ཡིན་ཞིང་།

So you and I are free of the eight ways in which a person can lack spiritual opportunity; and yet we fail to work here now, in the days when we do have a Dharma to practice. We find ourselves locked in the handcuffs of the present life; we throw ourselves into all sorts of meaningless activities aimed at gaining material things, or other people's approval, or a taste of fame; we want to fit into the world's way of life, and so on. These make us so busy that it's almost as if we have taken special care to invent a ninth way of lacking spiritual opportunity.

སྤར་གྱི་དམ་པ་ཆོས་སངས་རྒྱས་སྐྱབ་པར་མཇེད་པའི་རྟེན་བཟང་འདི་ལྟ་བུ་རང་རེས་
སྟོན་པ་བསགས་པའི་སྟོན་དུ་བཀོལ་ན། དལ་འབྱོར་འདི་སྟུག་འབྱོར་དུ་སོང་བ་ཡིན་
པས།

We have here a wonderful life and body of exactly the same kind that holy persons in the past have used to achieve enlightenment itself; we though use these things as a big pot in which to stock up our bad deeds. We have turned our spiritual leisure and fortune into a rich opportunity to suffer.

སྒྲིལ་ཆད་དེ་ལྟར་མ་ཤོར་བར་ད་རིས་མ་སྒྲུན་རྒྱུ་མ་ཚང་བ་མེད་པ་འཇོམས་པའི་ཉིན་
བཟང་ལན་ཅིག་ཙམ་ཉིད་པ་འདི་ལ་སྒྲིང་པོ་བྱུང་པར་ཅན་ལོན་པ་ཞིག་མ་བྱུང་ན། སྤྱིས་
ནས་དལ་འབྱོར་གྱི་ལུས་ཉིན་ཉིད་པར་ཤིན་ཏུ་དཀའ།

In order not to lose the good qualities of this life in our future lives, we must manage to take some special essence of the circumstances we have found, just this once; we must use this life-time where everything has come together, where there is not a single piece of the whole incomplete. If we fail in this endeavor, then it will be extremely difficult for us to find a life of spiritual leisure and fortune ever again.

དེ་ཉིད་མི་ཉིད་ད་ལྟ་རང་ལ་དལ་འབྱོར་གྱི་རྒྱ་ཚང་མ་ཚང་བལྟ་བ་ལས། མི་མང་ཉུང་
ལ་བལྟས་པས་མི་ཕན་ཏེ། འགྲོ་བ་རིགས་དྲུག་ནས་གཅིག་མི་ཡིན་པས་འཁོར་བའི་
སེམས་ཅན་རིགས་དྲུག་པོ་མ་ཟད་བར་དུ་མི་ཡང་རྫོགས་མཐའ་མེད་པར་མང་པོ་དེ་ག་
རང་འོང་ལ། དལ་འབྱོར་མ་ཚང་ན་མི་མང་ཡང་སྤྲིག་པ་མི་དགོ་བ་བསག་སྟོབས་ཆེ་
བས་འཁོར་བའི་ཚོང་ཉིན་མང་བ་ལ་དགའ་རྒྱ་མེད་གསུངས།

Whether you will be able to gain such a life again or not you must judge from looking within yourself, to see if all the causes of winning the various leisures and fortunes are there, or not. It's no use to look outside, to see whether or not there are a lot of human beings around. Humans are one of the six forms of suffering life, and until all six disappear you will see no end to humans. There will always be some good number around, but if they lack this complement of leisure and fortune, a big population will only mean an even more tremendous amassing of sins. You should take no comfort, said our Lama, in the fact that there is such an abundant supply of raw material for the circle of suffering life.

འོ་ན་དལ་འབྱོར་གྱི་རྒྱ་ཇི་འདྲ་དགོས་ཤི་ན། དལ་ཉིན་ནམ་དག་ཐོབ་པའི་རྒྱ་ལ་ཚུལ་
ཁྲིམས་ནམ་པར་དག་པས་གཞི་བཟུང་། སྤྱིན་སོགས་དྲུག་གིས་གྲོགས་བྱས། སྒྲོན་
ལམ་དྲི་མ་མེད་པས་མཚམས་སྐྱར་བ་བཅས་དགོས་པས་རྒྱུ་འོ་སྒྲོན་ཉིན་དཀའ་བ་
དང་།

Course III: Applied Meditation
Reading Nine

"Well then," you may ask, "just what is it that causes the leisures and fortunes to come about?" Attaining the good life, one of spiritual leisure, begins with morals kept very good. This morality must be joined with giving and the other five perfections; and the glue that holds it all together is to make the very purest of prayers. Therefore finding a life like ours is first of all something difficult because of the causes needed to bring it about.

རང་ཅག་གིས་སྒྲིག་པ་མི་དག་གི་ལ་དུས་རྟག་ཏུ་སྤྱད་པ་འདི་ཡང་དལ་འབྱོར་འཕྲོ་བ་
པའི་གོགས་སྤྱོད་ཤིག་ཡིན་པར་མ་ཟད། འདུལ་བ་ལྷུང་གཞི་སོགས་ནས་གསུངས་
པ་བཞིན་ངན་འགྲོ་གཞན་ལས་དྲན་འགྲོ་ཅུང་། དེ་ལས་མིའི་འགྲོ་བ་ཅུང་། མི་ཡང་
སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་སྒྲན་པ་དར་བའི་ཡུལ་དུ་སྤྱོད་བ་ཅུང་།

People like you and I are forever committing non-virtuous deeds, and this is the single greatest obstacle to our reaching the state of spiritual leisure and fortune ever again. Beyond this are statements from the *Foundation Word on Vowed Morality*, and other texts, which describe how those born as animals are fewer than those born in one of the other births of misery; those born as humans are fewer than the animals; and even among humans those born in a country where the Buddha's teachings have spread are fewer still.⁴⁴

དེ་སྤྱིས་ཀྱང་ཆོས་དང་མཇལ་བའི་རྟེན་བཟང་བྱད་པར་ཅན་ནི་རྟོན་མི་སྤྱད་པ་ལྟ་བུ་ཡིན་
པས་ན། ངོ་བོའི་སྒྲོ་ནས་རྟོན་དགའ།

To be born in such a land, and then go on to actually encounter the Dharma with a mind and body so very special as the one which we now possess, is an occurrence which borders on the impossible. This shows how a life like ours is difficult to find by its very nature as well.

བཞེས་སྤྱོད་ལས།

།རྒྱ་མཚོ་ཆེར་གཡེངས་གཉེན་ཤིང་བྱ་ག་དང་།

།རུས་སྤུལ་ཕྱད་པ་བས་ཀྱང་དྲན་འགྲོ་ལས།

།མི་ཉིད་ཆེས་ཐོབ་དགའ་བས་མི་དབང་གིས།

།དམ་ཆོས་སྤྱད་པས་དེ་འབྲས་མཆིས་པར་མཛོད།

ཁྱེས་སྐྱེས་ལྟར་དཔེ་སྒྲོན་ཀྱང་རྟོག་དཀའ་བས།

There is yet a third way to show how difficult it is to find a life so opportune as our own. This involves using a metaphor, such as the following from the *Letter to a Friend*:

Suppose a turtle in the sea were to rise
And poke his head right through the hole
Of a wooden ring as it drifted around
The surface of the great salt sea.

The odds of being born a human
As opposed to birth as an animal
Are even more remote; make it come,
Lord of Men, by living holy Dharma.⁴⁵

ད་རེས་ཆོས་སྐྱབ་པར་ཁོམ་ཞིང་། སྤྱི་རྒྱུ་སྒྲོ་མ་དགེ་བའི་བཤེས་གཉིན་སངས་རྒྱས་
དངོས་ལྟ་བུ་དང་ཕྱད། རང་གི་རྒྱུ་ཤེས་པ་ལ་སྒྲོན་མ་ཞུགས་ཤིང་ཐོས་བསམ་སྒྲོམ་
གསུམ་བྱར་རུང་བའི་ཤེས་རབ་དང་ལྷན།

Right now we have the time to practice religion. We possess the outer condition we need to succeed, for we have come into contact with a Lama, a spiritual Friend who is just like Lord Buddha himself. We also enjoy the inner condition, since our minds are not defective in any way, and we are endowed with the intelligence required to advance through the stages of learning, contemplation, and meditation.

རང་གིས་སྐྱབ་པར་བྱེད་ན་གནས་སྐབས་མངོན་མཐོ་ལྟ་མའི་རྟོག་བཟང་ནས་མཐར་
ཐུག་རྗེ་རྒྱུ་ཤེས་པ་ལ་ཁོ་འཕང་མན་ཆད་ངེས་པར་སྐྱབ་ལྟས་པའི་རྟོག་བཟང་བྱེད་པར་
ཅན་རྟོག་པ་འདི་ཉིད་དོན་ཆེན་པོ་དང་ལྷན་པར་ཤེས་ཤིང་ངོ་འཕྲོད་པར་གྱུར་ནས།

If I truly undertake to do so, it is certain that I can achieve everything from temporal goals, such as achieving a good and useful kind of birth in the higher forms of life—among humans or the beings of pleasure—on up to the ultimate goal of becoming the Keeper of the Diamond himself.⁴⁶

All this can be achieved because of the extraordinary kind of life I have now gained; seek to understand this fact, try to truly recognize how significant the one chance is.

དཔེར་ན་སེམས་ལ་དགའ་བ་དང་། སྤྱག་བསྐྱལ་ཆེན་པོ་ཡོད་པའི་མི་དེས་མཚན་མོར་
གཉིད་སད་རིས་ཀྱང་དགའ་སྤྱག་དེ་དང་དེ་ལྟར་ལྟར་དུ་འབྱུང་བ་བཞིན་དལ་འབྱོར་
ངོས་ཟེན་པའི་ལག་ཁྲེས་སུ།

Certain signs will come if you succeed in making yourself aware of your spiritual leisure and fortune. Think of a man who is completely engrossed, either in some great good luck, or in some great misfortune. Every time he wakes up at night these thoughts of happiness or unhappiness well up in him, vivid and automatic.

ཆེད་པར་དགའ་ཞིང་ཆེད་ན་དོན་ཆེ་བའི་དལ་འབྱོར་ཆང་བའི་དོ་རྗེའི་ལུས་ཉིན་འདི་ལྟ་
བུད་རིས་ཐངས་གཅིག་ཙམ་ཆེད་པའི་སྐབས་འདིར་འཁོར་བ་མཐའ་མེད་ཀྱི་ངང་རྒྱལ་
དང་། སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་གོ་འཕང་བསྐྱལ་པ་མང་པོར་སྐྱབ་དགོས་ལུགས་སོགས་
བསམས་ནས། ཉིན་མཚན་བར་མ་ཆད་པར་གནས་སྐབས་ཀྱན་ཏུ་དོན་མེད་སྟོང་ལོག་
ཏུ་མ་ཤོར་བར་སྟོང་པོ་ལེན་འདོད་ཀྱི་སྟོ་རྒྱན་ཆད་མེད་པར་སྐྱེ་བར་བྱིན་གྱིས་སྟོབས་
ཤིག་ཅིས་གསོལ་བ་བཏབ་པ་ཡིན།

What we are requesting from our Lama here is that he bless us to achieve this same level of obsession: *bless me first to realize that the excellent life I've found, complete with every spiritual leisure, is hard to find and—once found—is ever so valuable.* Now, in the one and only time I have ever managed to win this diamond body and life, let me think of how the circle of suffering has absolutely no beginning; how one must normally practice for many millions of years to reach the state of a Buddha; and other such truths. And *grant me then to wish, and never stop to wish, that I could take this life's essence night and day: that I could at every given moment keep this precious time from being lost to actions which are pointless, devoid of any meaning.*

STEPS SHARED WITH THOSE OF LESSER CAPACITY

IV. Steps Shared with Those of Lesser Capacity

གཉིས་པ་སྒྲིང་པོ་ཇི་ལྟར་ལེན་པའི་ཚུལ་ལ་གསུམ་ལས། དང་པོ་སྒྲིས་བྱ་ཚུང་དུ་དང་
བྱམ་མོང་བའི་ལམ་གྱི་རིམ་པར་སློ་སྤང་བ་ནི།

This brings us to our description of how actually to take the essence of this life. This part itself has three; the first is how to train one's mind in the Steps of the path which are shared with persons of lesser spiritual capacity, and is covered in the next two verses of the root text:

ལུས་སྒོག་གཡོ་བ་ཟུ་ཡིན་ཟུ་བྱར་བཞིན།

ལྟར་དུ་འཇིག་པའི་འཆི་བ་བྱན་པ་དང་།

ཤི་བའི་རྗེས་སུ་ལུས་དང་གྲིབ་མ་བཞིན།

འདྲམ་ནག་ལས་འབྲས་ཕྱི་བཞིན་འབྲང་བ་ལ།

འཇིག་པ་བྟན་པོ་རྟེན་ནས་ཉིས་པའི་ཚོགས།

ཤུ་ཞིང་ཤ་བ་རྣམས་ཀྱང་སྒྲོང་བ་དང་།

འདག་ཚོགས་མཐའ་དག་སྒྲུབ་པར་བྱེད་པ་ལ།

འདྲམ་ཏུ་བག་དང་ལྷན་པར་བྱིན་གྱིས་སྒྲོབས།

ཞེས་པའི་སློ་ཀ་གཉིས་ཀྱིས་བསྐྱོན་ཏེ།

(3,4)

My body and the life in it
Are fleeting as the bubbles
In the sea froth of a wave.
Bless me first thus to recall
The death that will destroy me soon;
And help me find sure knowledge

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That after I have died
The things I've done, the white or black,
And what these deeds will bring to me,
Follow always close behind,
As certain as my shadow.

Grant me then
Ever to be careful,
To stop the slightest
Wrong of many wrongs we do,
And try to carry out instead
Each and every good
Of the many that we may.

དེ་ལྟར་དལ་འབྱོར་གྱིས་ཏེན་བཟང་བྱད་པར་ཅན་ཐོབ་ཀྱང་ལུས་སྒོག་ཡུན་རིང་དུ་མི་
གནས་པར་གཡོ་ཞིང་འགྱུར་ནས་སྐད་ཅིག་མ་རེ་རེས་ཀྱང་འཆི་བ་ལ་ཇི་ཉར་འགྲོ་བར་
མ་ཟད།

And so we have attained this very special kind of life, with its spiritual leisure and fortune. But *my body and the life in it are fleeting*, forever changing, and every passing moment they move inexorably closer to my death.

འཆི་རྒྱུ་སྒོ་བྱར་བ་ནད་གདོན་བགོགས་རིགས་འབྱུང་བཞིའི་གཞོན་པ་སོགས་ཀྱིས་ཆོ་
སྒོག་འཕྲོག་པ་ལ་བྱིས་སྒྱུད་ལ་བརྒྱུས་པ་ལྟར་བསྐྱོར་ནས་བསྐྱད་ཡོད་ཅིང་།

But that's not all—there are conditions all around me that can strike and kill me in an instant: things like illness and harmful spirits, sudden disasters, attacks upon me by the very four elements that make up my own body. They stand around me ready to snatch away my life, like a pack of dogs circling around a piece of fresh meat, lusting after it.⁴⁷

རང་གི་ལུས་འདི་རྒྱུ་རྒྱ་བྱར་བཞིན་དུ་རྒྱུན་པ་མོ་ཙམ་ཡང་མི་ཐེག་པར་ཆོར་མ་བྱུག་པ་
ཙམ་གྱིས་ཀྱང་འཆི་བའི་རྒྱུ་དུ་བྱེད་རྒྱས་པ་མཐོང་ཆོས་སྤྱོད་བ་སོགས་ལྟར་”

Still more, my body is like a *bubble in the sea froth of a wave*; it has no power to resist even some very minor harm: we can see with our own two eyes that even the prick of a thorn can lead to a person's death.

“ཡིན་ཏུ་ཉམ་ཆུང་བས་ན། ལྷུང་དུ་འཇིག་པའི་འཆི་བ་འོང་ཚུལ་ཇེ་འཕྲི་ལམ་རིམ་ཆེ་
ཆུང་སོགས་ལས་གསུངས་པ་ལྟར་ཙུ་བ་གསུམ་དང་། རྒྱ་མཚན་དགུ། བཅུ་བཅུད་པ་
ནམ་པ་གསུམ་གྱི་སྒོ་ནས་འཆི་བར་ངེས་ཤིང་། ནམ་འཆི་ལ་ངེས་པ་མེད་ལྷགས།
འཆི་བའི་ཆེ་གཉིན་ནོར་འོངས་སྟོན་སོགས་དང་། བ་ན་ལུས་ཀྱིས་ཀྱང་མི་ཕན་པ་
ནམས་”

In sum, my body and life are fragile; so *death will destroy me soon*. Here you should use the instructions on your coming death that we find in works like the longer and briefer presentations of the Steps of the path by our Lord, Tsongkapa. These sections cover the three principles of death and the nine reasons for them, along with the three resolutions to be made.⁴⁸ They show how our death is certain, and how uncertain we are of when it will come. When it does, none of the people close to us, nor any of the things we own, nor anything else of the kind can help us. In the end, not even our body can be of any assistance.

“ཡང་དང་ཡང་དུ་བསམས་ཤིང་བློན་པ་དང་། དེ་ཡང་རང་དགར་འཆི་བ་ལ་སྐྱག་སྟེ་
བསྐྱད་པས་མི་འོང་ཞིང་། བྱ་སྟོན་བསམས་ཅད་མཁྱེན་པའི་ཞལ་ནས།

Think on these points, *recall* them, again and again. The object here is not to reach a point where you sit in some confused terror over the death that's coming to you. Rather you must come to see that, at the moment of death and as you take your future life, only the Dharma can help you: everything else turns useless. Remember the words of the omniscient Buton, who has spoken:

།ཆེ་འདི་འོང་མེད་ལྷུང་དུ་འཆི་འགྱུར་ཞིང་།
།གསོད་སར་ཁྱིད་པའི་དུད་འགྲོ་ཇི་བཞིན་དུ།
།སྐད་ཅིག་རེ་རེ་བཞིན་ཡང་འཆི་ལ་ཉི།
།དེང་བྱ་སང་བྱའི་བསམ་པ་མ་ཇོགས་པར།

།བསམ་པ་བརྒྱ་ཕྱག་མ་བསམས་གཅིག་འོག་ཚུད།
།གཤེན་ཇི་འཇིགས་རུང་ཉམ་པའི་མདུན་བསུས་ནས།
།མལ་གྱི་ཐ་མར་དབུགས་སྤུད་སློག་ཆད་ཆོ།
།ཆོས་ལས་གཞན་གྱིས་མི་པན་རིན་ཆེན་གྲུབ།

You are not long in this life
Death comes quick;
You step ever nearer to it
With every moment that passes,
Moving on like an animal
Dragged to the slaughterhouse.

Your plans for today
Your plans for tomorrow
Will never all be filled;
Let go all your thousand plans,
Devote yourself to one.

You will be summoned into
The awesome presence of Lord Death;
The end is lying on your bed,
The breathing stops, the life is gone.

And on this day,
My Rinchen Drup,
Nothing but the Dharma
Is any help to you.⁴⁹

།ཅིས་པ་དང་། པ་དམ་པ་སངས་གྲས་ཀྱིས།
།ལས་གྱི་ནམ་སྒྲིན་རྒྱ་འབྲས་བདེན་ངེས་པས།
།མི་དག་སྤྲིག་ལ་འཇོམས་ཤིག་དིང་རི་བ།

Pa Dampa Sangye too has said:

The results of deeds you've done,
The cause and consequence,
Are finally true and fixed.

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People of Dingri listen:
Avoid then any bad deed,
Any wrong at all.⁵⁰

ཁྱིམ་དང་།

ཕྱི་མའི་ཡུལ་ན་གཉིན་བཤེས་ཅུང་བ་ཡིན།

སློབ་གཏད་ཆོས་ལ་གྲིས་ཤིག་དིང་རི་བ།

And then he states:

In the land beyond us friends
And relatives are few;
People of Dingri listen:
Turn your thoughts to Dharma.⁵¹

ཁྱིམ་སོགས་དང་། བོ་དོང་པཌ་ཆེན་འཇིགས་བྱལ་ཕྱོགས་ལས་རྣམ་རྒྱལ་གྱིས་ཀྱང་།
སྐྱེ་བ་སྤྱི་ཕྱི་ཡོད་པར་རིགས་པས་ཀྱང་ཤེས་ཏེ། མི་ལུས་རྒྱ་མེད་ལས་ཡོང་ན་ཤེས་བྱ་
ཐམས་ཅད་མི་ལུས་ཀྱིས་གང་བའི་ཆོད་ཡིན། མི་ལུས་སེམས་སྤྲ་མ་སྤྲོན་དུ་མ་སོགས་
བར་བཅས་པོ་ཅམ་ལ་འོང་ན། ས་རྩོལ་ལུང་ཐམས་ཅད་མི་ལུས་ཀྱིས་གང་བའི་ཆོད་
ཡིན་གསུང་སྟེ་...

The master teacher of Bodong, whose name was Jikdrel Chokle Namgyal, has also said:

The existence of past and future lives can be understood as well through logical reasoning. If the human body could occur without any proper cause, then every existing object might just as well be stuffed full of human bodies. If the human body could occur without any involvement of previous consciousness if it could come from physical matter alone then every bit of dirt, every rock, every mountain and stream might just as well be stuffed full of human bodies.

“ཆད་ལྟ་བ་རྣམས་ལ་ཐོག་བབས་པ་དང་འདྲ་བ་ཡིན། གཞན་ཡང་མཁས་གྲུབ་མངོན་

ཤེས་ཅན་མང་པོས་གཟིགས་པས་ཀྱང་རང་གཞན་ཡི་བར་དོ་དང་སྐྱེ་བ་སྔ་ཕྱི་དྲན་པའི་
ནམ་ཐར་ཤིན་ཏུ་མང་ཞིང་། ཕྱི་རོལ་བའི་དྲང་སྟོང་མངོན་ཤེས་ཅན་ནམས་ཀྱིས་ཀྱང་
སྐྱེ་བ་བརྒྱད་ཅུ་དྲན་པ་ལ་སོགས་པ་བྱུང་བ་ཡིན།

For those who deny that life goes on, hearing these lines is like being struck by a bolt of lightning. There are moreover quite numerous accounts of many wise and accomplished practitioners who have used clairvoyance to perceive the past and future lives, as well as the state between death and rebirth, which they and others have passed through. There are also cases like those of the non-Buddhist adepts who attain clairvoyance that allows them to recall eighty of their different lives.⁵²

ཞེས་གསུངས་པ་ལྟར་འཆི་བའི་སྐབས་དང་ཕྱི་མའི་སྐྱེ་བ་ལོན་པའི་ཆེ་ཆོས་མ་
གཏོགས་གཞན་གང་གིས་ཀྱང་མི་པན་པས་ན། ཆེ་སྟོས་བཏང་གིས་ཕྱི་མར་པན་
ཐབས་ཀྱི་འཆི་ཆོས་གཤམ་མ་ཞིག་ངེས་པར་སྐྱབ་པ་གལ་ཆེ་སྟེ། རང་རེ་ནམས་ཤི་
བའི་རྗེས་སུ་རིག་པ་རྒྱན་ཆད་ནས་མེད་དེ་མི་འགོ་བར་སྐྱེ་བ་རེ་མ་སྤངས་ཐབས་མེད་
ལ། དེ་ལོན་ས་བདེ་འགོ་ངན་འགོ་གཉིས་ལས་མ་འདས།

Since nothing else can help then, it is essential that we give up on life and be sure to devote ourselves to death, by practicing some pure form of the Dharma, as a way to assist our future self. It's not as if, *after you and I have died*, the stream of our mind just stops and we turn into nothing. Rather we have no choice but to take another birth. And there are no more than two places where we can take that birth: in the higher realms of happiness, or the lower realms of misery.

དེ་གཉིས་གང་དུ་སྐྱེ་རང་ལ་རང་དབང་མེད་པར་འགོ་བ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་རྒྱུ་ལས་
དཀར་ནག་གི་རྗེས་སུ་འགོ་དགོས་ཤིང་།

We have absolutely no control over which of the two places we go; we must follow where we are sent by the separate causes for each place, and these causes are *the things we've done, the white and black*, respectively.

རང་རྒྱུད་ལ་བདེ་འགྲོའི་རྒྱ་ཤིན་ཏུ་ཉུང་ལ། ངན་འགྲོའི་རྒྱ་ནི་ཉ་ཅང་མང་བ་ཡོད།
ད་ལྟར་དག་སྒྲིག་གི་བྱ་བ་དཀར་ནག་ཇི་འདྲ་ཞིག་བྱས་ཀྱང་འཆི་ཁར་དེ་དང་མཐུན་པའི་
ལས་ཤིག་ལ་གསོས་བཏབ་ནས་ཉིང་མཚམས་སྒྲོར་དགོས་ལ།

Our mental streams contain very, very few of the causes that will take us to a higher birth; but we have a vast multitude of the causes that will lead us to one of the births of misery. Right now we are doing both white deeds, and black deeds: the good and the bad. At the moment of death, the power of one or the other will be activated, and force us over to our next birth. The seeds of the deeds which are more plentiful are the kind that are likely to be activated.

དེ་ནས་ཀྱང་སྤྱི་མར་དག་མི་དགའི་ལས་ཀྱི་འབྲས་བུ་བཟང་ངན་ཅུང་ཟད་ཀྱང་མི་
འཆོལ་བར་ནམ་ཤེས་གང་དུ་འགྲོ་བའི་སྤྱི་ཇེས་སུ་ལྷུས་དང་གྲིབ་མ་ཇི་བཞིན་འབྲང་
སྟེ་...

And after we cross over to our new birth, the fair or foul consequences of our virtue or our evil will *follow close behind*. These consequences can never go wrong; good must come from the good, and bad from the bad. They will attach themselves to my consciousness and pass on to wherever it goes, *as certain as my shadow*.

“བདེ་སྐྱབས་སོ་སོ་ནས་སྤྱིང་དགོས་ཚུལ་རྒྱལ་བའི་བཀའ་དྲི་མ་མེད་པ་མདོ་སྟེ་དང་
འདུལ་བ་སོགས་ནས་ལས་ངེས་པ་དང་། འཕེལ་ཆེ་བ། ལས་མ་བྱས་པ་དང་མི་
འཕྲད་པ། ལས་བྱས་པ་རྒྱུད་མི་ཟ་བ་སོགས་དང་།

This fact, that pleasure and pain are the respective results of good and evil, is spoken in the various collections of the immaculate Word of the victorious Buddhas: in the sutras, in the books of discipline, and so on. They describe things like how karma is certain to produce similar results; how it multiplies; how consequences of a karma not committed can never be experienced; and how the consequences of a karma committed can never just fade away on their own. It is spoken as well that:

ལུས་ཅན་དག་གི་ལས་ནམས་ནི།
བསལ་བ་བརྒྱར་ཡང་རྒྱད་མི་བ།
ཚོགས་ཤིང་དུས་ལ་བབ་པ་ན།
འབྲས་བུ་སྒྲིན་པ་ཉིད་དུ་འགྱུར།

ཞེས་གསུངས།

The karma of sentient kind
Never just fades away,
Even in hundreds
Of millions of years.

When the causes convene
And the time is come,
The consequences
Can do nothing but flower.⁵³

མཁས་པ་བོ་དོང་བས་ཀྱང་མདོ་ལུང་འདི་དྲངས་ནས། ཁོ་བོ་ནི་རྒྱ་བུར་གྱི་མིག་པས་
སྒྲིན་པའི་བཀའ་ལ་ཚད་མར་བྱེད་དེ། ཤི་སྒྲིབ་ཆད། སྐས་མ་ལེ་བོག་ཀྱང་སྒྲིན་པ་ཁོ་
ན་ལ་ཡིད་ཆེས་བྱེད་པ་ཡིན། ཞེས་གསུངས་ཡོད།

Master Bodongwa quotes these same lines from sutra and says,

People like you and I may have blurry eyes but we must look on
this Word of the Buddha as perfectly accurate. If you die, then
die; if you drop from old age, then drop; but if nothing else keep
your trust in the Teacher.⁵⁴

དེ་ལྟར་གསུངས་པའི་རྒྱ་མཚན་ཡང་། ཞི་བ་ལྷས།
ལས་རྒྱལ་བསམ་གྱིས་མི་བྱབ་སྟེ།
ཐམས་ཅད་མཐུན་པ་ཁོ་ནས་མཐུན།
ཞེས་གསུངས་པ་ལྟར་ཡིན་པས།

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The thinking behind these lines is expressed in a verse by the Master Shantideva:

The way karma works
Is beyond comprehension;
Only the All-Knowing
Know it.⁵⁵

སྒྲིན་པས་ལས་འབྲས་ཀྱི་རྣམ་གཞག་མཐའ་ཡས་པར་གསུང་བ་ལ་ངེས་པ་བརྟན་པོ་
སྟོན་ཐབས་བྱེད་ཅིང་། དེ་སྟོན་ནས་སྒྲིན་ཆད་སྡིག་པ་བསགས་པའི་འབྲས་བྱར་ཆོ་ཁྲིས་
མར་ངན་འགྲོར་འགྲོ་བར་ཤེས་ཏེ་

Because of these facts you and I must seek a way to *find sure knowledge*, where we recognize the truth of the simply limitless workings of karma and consequences described by the Teacher. Once we have found this knowledge, we then understand that the necessary consequence of all the harmful deeds we have amassed up to now will be for us to pass on to the births of misery in our next life.

“ངན་སོང་གསུམ་གྱི་གཙོ་སྡིག་ཆ་བྲང་། བཀའ་སྒྲོམ་ངལ་འཇིགས། སྒྲིན་ཞིང་གཏི་
ལྷག་པ་དང་། གཅིག་ལ་གཅིག་ཟ་ལ་སོགས་པའི་སྡིག་བསྐྱེད་ལྷགས་དྲག་ཏུ་
བསམས་པས་ཡིད་འཇིགས་ནས་དེ་ལས་སྦྱོབ་པའི་སྦྱབས་དཀོན་མཆོག་གསུམ་ལ་
སྟོན་ཐབས་པ་ནས་སྦྱབས་སུ་འགྲོ་ཤིང་།

And what of these three lower realms? Think fiercely on their sufferings: the heat of the molten steel, the cold; the hunger, the thirst, exhaustion and terror; being unable to talk, living in dark ignorance, eating each other to survive, and all the rest. It will bring you fear, and from the depths of your heart you will go for shelter to the ones who can protect you: to the three Jewels.⁵⁶

སྒྲིན་ཆད་ངན་སོང་དུ་སྦྱེ་བའི་རྒྱ་ཉིས་པར་སྦྱད་པ་སྡིག་པ་མི་དག་བའི་ཆོགས་ཤེས་སྒྲ་
བའི་རགས་པ་རྣམས་མི་བྱེད་པ་སྟོས་ཅི། ཏེ་ཅང་རིག་དཀའ་བའི་སྡིག་པ་ཕྲ་ཞིང་ཕྲ་བ་
རྣམས་ཀྱང་ངོས་ཟིན་པར་བྱས་ན་སྤང་བ་དང་།

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If harmful actions provide the causes that push us to these lower realms, then needless to say we must from this point on avoid doing any of *the many wrongs that we do*: those obvious non-virtues that anyone can see are mistaken. We must also though seek to recognize and abandon even *the very slightest* harms we commit; the ones we barely realize that we do.

ལྷག་པར་དུ་འབྲོམ་ཆོས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོས།
།ཆེ་ལ་ལོང་མེད་ཡུན་རིང་མི་སྤྲོད་ངེས།
།འཇིག་རྟེན་སྟོ་རྒྱབ་སྤྲངས་ཀྱང་ཕྱིད་དེ་མཆིས།
།ཆོས་དང་མཐུན་ན་སྟོགས་གྲིར་ཤི་དོགས་མེད།
།འཇིག་རྟེན་འདི་ཡི་བྱ་བ་རྒྱབ་ཏུ་བོར།
།འདི་དང་ཕྱི་མ་གཉིས་ཀ་མི་འགྲུབ་ཀྱི།
།ཕྱི་མ་གལ་ཆེ་ཆོས་ལ་འབད་པ་ཐོན།

The most important thing is for us to follow the words of that King of the Dharma, Dromton Je:

We have little time to live,
It's sure we'll not long be here.
Let the world pass the time
Working to feed themselves;
Even the poorest know how.

Those who follow the rules of Dharma
Need not worry,
The knife of hunger
Can never touch and kill them.

Leave this life behind;
You can't work for the future life
And for this one as well.
The next is the more important one;
Make effort in the Dharma.⁵⁷

ཞེས་དང་།

ཁོ་འདིའི་ལྷོ་རྒྱུ་ཐེ་ལྷར་བྱས་ཀྱང་ཕྱིད།

ཁོ་རབས་ཕྱི་མ་ཆོས་དང་འབྲད་པར་དགའ།

དེ་བས་ཆོ་འདིར་ཆོས་ལ་འབད་པར་གྱིས།

ད་ལྟ་དག་བའི་ལས་ལ་མ་འབད་ན།

ཕྱི་མར་སྤྲུག་བསྐྱེད་མྱོང་བར་འགྱུར་ཏེ།

He says as well,

Whether you fill your belly
In this life well or not,
Still you will live on.

What's difficult is
To meet the Dharma
In your future life;

For this life then
Put all your efforts
Only in the Dharma.

If now you cannot do your best
To do what's virtuous,

Be sure that in the life beyond
You will feel only pain.⁵⁸

ཞེས་གསུངས་པ་ལྷར་ཕྱི་མར་བདེ་འགྲོར་འགྲོ་བའི་རྒྱར་དག་སྤྲུག་གི་སྒྲུང་དོར་ན་མ་
པར་དག་པ་ཞིག་མ་བྱས་ཐབས་མེད། དེ་བྱ་རྒྱུ་ལ་ལ་སྤྱིར་མཐའ་ཡས་པ་ལྷ་བྱ་ཡོད་
ཀྱང་། ལྷོན་པ་ཐུགས་རྗེ་ཅན་གྱིས་རང་ཅག་གི་སྒྲུང་དོར་བྱ་སའི་གནས་ཆེ་ལོང་ཙམ་དུ་
བསྐྱེད་ནས་དག་མི་དགའི་ལས་ལ་མ་བཅུར་གསུངས།

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And so we have no other choice, if we hope to pass on to one of the better births in our next life, than to prepare the proper cause; that is, to do the things we should, and not do what we shouldn't. There are quite nearly a limitless number of instructions on how to carry this out—to make it easy for us, the compassionate Teacher provided a guide of what to take up and what to give up: this then is the list of ten good deeds and ten bad deeds, the broadest simplification.⁵⁹

དེས་ན། མི་དག་བཅུ་སྟོང་གི་ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་བསྐྱུང་བསམ་ཚོན་ཏེ་སྐྱབས་འགྲོའི་བསྐྱབ་
བྱ་ཕྱ་རགས་ཀྱིས་བསྐྱས་པའི་དག་བའི་ཚོགས་མཐའ་དག་ཚུལ་བཞིན་དུ་སྐྱབ་པར་བྱེད་
པ་ལ་དུས་ཏྲག་དུ་བློན་ཤེས་བག་ཡོད་དང་ལན་པའི་སྒོ་ནས་འཇུག་པ་ཞིག་དང་།

Keeping this morality, of avoiding the ten bad deeds, is just one typical example of *the many* different kinds of *good* that are contained within the broader and the more subtle instructions on how to go for refuge. We must engage in each and every one of these virtues by *being ever careful*—by acting with proper recollection and watchfulness in every moment of the day.

དེར་མ་ཟད། སྐྱེས་བུ་ཚུང་འབྲིང་དང་ཐུན་མོང་གི་བསམ་པ་སྐྱུང་བ་གང་གི་སྐྱབས་
ཀྱང་སྟོ་ཕྱགས་སུ་སྐྱེས་བུ་ཆེན་པོའི་ལམ་ལ་སྟོ་སྟོང་བ་གཞིར་བཅས་བྱས་ཏེ་བྱང་ཆུབ་
ཀྱི་སེམས་སྐྱེ་བའི་ཐབས་སུ་འབྱེན་ཤེས་པ་དགོས་པས། དེ་ལྟར་རུས་པར་གསོལ་བ་
བཏབ་པ་ཡིན་གསུངས།

And we must go further: on every occasion that we train ourselves in these thoughts, in the Steps which are shared with persons of lesser and medium capacity, we must do so with the ultimate intent of using them as a foundation for training ourselves in the path for those of great capacity.

In short, said our Lama, we must understand how to employ these Steps as a means for developing the Wish for enlightenment. And in these lines we are requesting our Lama to help us find the ability to do so.

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³⁷ *Three lower realms*: According to Buddhism there are six different types of rebirth. These are birth as a hell-being, a craving spirit, an animal, a human, one who is nearly a full pleasure being, and a full pleasure being. The first three types of birth are known as the three lower realms. Pleasure beings enjoy extremely long lives in a temporary paradise, and then normally fall to hell after exhausting their good karma. The classic presentation of the six rebirths is found in the third chapter of the *Treasure House of Knowledge*, by the 4th-century Buddhist philosopher Vasubandhu; a typical commentary would be that of the First Dalai Lama, Gyalwa Gendun Drup (1391-1474).

³⁸ *Born as a human*: The classic source for the description of spiritual fortunes is the *Levels of Listeners*, one of the major divisions of the *Levels of Practitioners*, written by the Indian Buddhist sage Asanga in the fourth century.

³⁹ *Immediate bad deeds*: Buddhism teaches that there are five misdeeds which are so evil that they are sure to lead one to a hellbirth in the very next life. The deeds are, from most serious to least, the following: causing a schism in the community of monks; attempting to kill a Buddha; killing someone who has reached nirvana; killing one's mother, and killing one's father. A full discussion of the five is found in the fourth chapter of Master Vasubandhu's *Treasure House of Wisdom*, and in commentaries such as the one by Jampay Yang of Chim (c. 1280).

⁴⁰ *Discipline one's mind*: The collection on discipline, or vowed morality, is actually only one of the three sections of the original Buddhist canon; the point is that all the scriptures though teach the absolute importance of moral behavior. For a description of the three collections see note 20.

⁴¹ *For the sake of others*: Again the original source in prose is Master Asanga's *Levels of Listeners*.

⁴² *The four results*: The four fruits of the "way of virtue," which in this case refers to the direct perception of selflessness. The four are to attain the state of a foe destroyer; of one who need never again take rebirth in this realm of desire; of one who must take one more rebirth in this realm; and of one who has "entered the stream"—one who, due to his realization of selflessness, is clearly headed for freedom. The four are presented for example in the second and sixth chapters of Master Vasubandhu's *Treasure House*, with its commentary by the First Dalai Lama.

⁴³ *Even by the likes of the monk Udayi*: The monk was one of the members of the Buddha's inner circle, but committed a series of misdeeds which actually led

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to the creation of a number of the rules for monks. See Professor Edgerton's *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary*, as well as the First Dalai Lama and Jampay Yang of Chim. This same concept of Udayi possessing spiritual fortunes that we lack is found as well in Pabongka Rinpoche's *Gift*.

⁴⁴ *Fewer still: The Foundation Word on Vowed Morality* is one of the four famed explanatory sutras on the subject of vowed morality. An exquisite passage found there begins as follows:

And then Lord Buddha touched the very tip of his precious fingernail to the ground, and raised it up, and showed it to the assembled monks. He said,

Monks! Which do you think are more: the atoms of dust here on the tip of my fingernail, or the atoms of dust contained in the entire planet of earth?

And the monks replied,

Oh Reverend One, Oh Conqueror, the atoms of dust there on the tip of Your precious fingernail are less, they are certainly less, they are most certainly less, they are infinitely less. If one compared them to the number of atoms of dust in this great orb they would not amount to a hundredth, nor even a thousandth, nor a hundred thousandth, nor any fraction at all, nor any part—no countable part, no comparison, no basis for a comparison.

The Conqueror spoke again:

Monks! Think of the number of atoms of dust in the entire planet: this stands for the number of beings who are in hell now and who, after they die, will migrate back to hell. Now think of the number of atoms of dust on my fingernail: this stands for the number of beings who are in hell now and who, after they die, will migrate to the world of humans.

The Buddha continues his description in a similar vein for all the other types of rebirths—including humans who are reborn as hell beings (as many as atoms of dust in the planet), as opposed to humans who are reborn as humans (as many as the atoms of dust on his fingernail).

This presentation appears throughout the various books on the Steps to

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Buddhahood: see those of Je Tsongkapa, Pabongka Rinpoche, and the First Panchen Lama.

⁴⁵ *A turtle in the sea*: These well known lines are found in a letter from the realized being Nagarjuna (c. 200 AD) to his friend, King Udayibhadra.

⁴⁶ *Keeper of the Diamond himself*: That is, tantric Buddhahood: enlightenment in one lifetime.

⁴⁷ *Like a pack of dogs circling*: The Tibetan original at this point actually refers to "dogs who circle the talisman." In certain cases of illness brought on by harmful spirits, a Lama will by tradition come to the house of the patient and prepare a small likeness or talisman representing the person. A ritual is held centered around the talisman to help remove the evil influence. The figurine is fashioned from a soft dough and, at the end of the ceremony, is carried outside and placed on the ground—where hungry Tibetan mastiffs are usually waiting to gulp it down. The image here then is of a pack of dogs crowded eagerly around the ritual attendant as he carries out the prize.

⁴⁸ *The three principles of death*: This presentation of death appears in many of the texts on the Steps to Buddhahood, and is summarized as follows in a note from the English translation of Je Tsongkapa's *Principal Teachings of Buddhism* (the text of his *Three Principal Paths*).

In his masterwork *A Gift of Liberation*, Pabongka Rinpoche lists six benefits of keeping your mind on death: your practice becomes really pure; it gains power; the thoughts help you start practice; they help you strive hard during your practice; they help bring your practice to a successful conclusion; and in the hour of death you go with satisfaction, for you know you have spent your life meaningfully.

The Rinpoche also lists six problems that come from not keeping your mind on death: you neglect your religious life, and spend all your days in thoughts of what to eat or wear—this life's distractions; you consider death occasionally but always think it will come later, and delay your practice; or you do practice, but for the wrong reason—with hopes of reputation; you practice but with no enthusiasm, and drop it after a while; you get deeper into this life, your attitude gets worse, and life begins to hurt you; and at death you naturally feel intense regret, for you have wasted all your efforts on this present life.

The three principles, for how actually to keep your mind on death, have three reasons each, making a total of nine. First of all, death is certain: no power in the universe can stop death when it arrives; there is no way to add time to your life, you come closer to death every minute; and even while you are alive, the free time available for your practice is extremely limited before you have to die.

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The second principle is that there is absolutely no certainty when you will die. We are in a time and realm where the length of life is uncertain; we can be sure we will never have enough time to defeat all our enemies, raise up all our friends, and still complete our religious practice before we die. The things that can kill us are many; the things that keep us alive are few. And in general the body we have is fragile, weak: a small splinter in the hand can give us an infection that kills us—we are like bubbles, like candles in a windstorm.

The third principle is that, at the moment of death, nothing at all can help us but our spiritual practice. None of your money or things can help you. None of your friends or family can help you—they can be holding you tightly by the arms and legs, but still you will slip away alone. And not even your own body can help you—you have to give up your most cherished possession, your beloved body, along with everything else.

The three principles call for three resolves on our part. Knowing that we shall have to die, we must resolve to begin our practice. Knowing that we could die any time, we must quit our worldly work immediately and start our practice today. And finally, since nothing else can help us, we must devote ourselves to our practice only. A man who is hiking many miles doesn't fill up his pack with a lot of junk that he won't be needing.

The above points are paraphrased from the works on the Steps of the path by Lord Tsongkapa and Pabongka Rinpoche. For the last point mentioned in the text, the meditation on what it's like to die, we quote the Rinpoche directly:

They try all different kinds of treatments and holy rituals but your condition gets worse and worse. The doctors start lying to you. Your friends and relatives say all sorts of cheery things to your face, but behind your back they start wrapping up your affairs, because everyone can see you're going to die.

Your body starts to lose its familiar warmth. It's hard to breathe. The nostrils collapse. The lips curl back. The color starts to drain from your face. All sorts of repulsive signs begin to show, inside and outside of you.

You think of all the wrong things you did in your life, and wish so badly you had never done them. You can't quite be sure if you ever really got rid of them all when you confessed; or that you really did any true good deed.

Then comes the final pain, the unspeakable searing pain that comes with death. The basic building blocks of your body begin their domino collapse, you are blinded by catastrophic images, hallucinations of pure terror crowd into your mind, and carry

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you away, and the whole world you have been living blinks out.

People take your corpse and wrap it up in a sheet and lay it in some corner. They hang up a curtain to hide it. Somebody lights up a smudgy little candle and leaves it there. If you're one of those reincarnated lamas, they dress you up in you fancy ritual robes and try to make you look good.

Right now we are all running around trying to arrange ourselves a nice house, soft clothes, cozy chairs. But you know the custom here in Tibet—when you die they'll tie your arms and legs up against your chest with a leather strap, carry the body far from town, and throw it naked out on the rocks.

Right now we all go home and try to cook ourselves up some delectable dish—but there will come a day when you stand there praying for a little taste of those cakes they offer the spirits of the dead. Right now we have the big name—they call us Doctor Professor, or Respected Sir, or Your Reverence. But there will come a day when they look at your body and call you nothing but "that stinking corpse." There will come a day when the title they put in front of your name is "the late," or "that guy they used to call..."

So now when you respected lamas out there in the audience look at your ritual robes, let it come into your thoughts that these are the robes they will dress your remains in after you have expired. And all the rest of us, when we look at our bedsheets before we go to sleep, should try to remember that these are what they will wrap our stinking corpse in when we die. As Milarepa said,

That frightful corpse they talk about
Is the very body you wear, meditator.

He means look at your own body now, and always see the future corpse.

⁴⁹ *Nothing but the Dharma*: Original source of quotation not found. The advice is to himself, for Master Buton's full name was Rinchen Drup (1290-1364). He was a consummate scholar of both the secret and open teachings, and Je Tsongkapa was much influenced by his writings and by his direct disciples. Buton Rinpoche also played a major role in the organization of the Buddhist canon in its Tibetan translation.

⁵⁰ *Avoid then any bad deed*: Pa Dampa Sangye (d. 1117?) was an Indian Buddhist master who helped bring the teachings to Tibet, and in particular began the

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lineage of a practice called the "Termination of Suffering." The lines here are found in a collection of advices to the Tibetans of an area called Dingri.

⁵¹ *Turn your thoughts to the Dharma*: This passage is from the same work as the preceding.

⁵² *Eighty of their different lives*: Original source of quotation not found. Bodong Rinpoche, full name Bodong Panchen Chokle Namgyal (1375-1450), was one of the most prolific writers in the history of Buddhism—his collected works subsume no less than 137 volumes.

⁵³ *Never just fades away*: These lines are some of the most famous in all of Buddhist literature. They were spoken by Lord Buddha himself and occur throughout the sutras on vowed morality as a sort of refrain—for example in the *Divisions of Vowed Morality*, and the *Foundation Word*. Their contents are alluded to also in the famed *Sutra of Cosmic Play*.

The importance of the concept that the power of an act cannot just fade away after we commit it is indicated by the fact that many of the earlier Indian masters include the lines in their philosophical commentaries. Master Nagarjuna (200 AD), for example, alludes to them in his *Root Text on Wisdom*, and *Beyond All Fear*. Master Bhavya (490-570 AD) speaks of them in his famous *Blaze of Reasoning*, as does Master Avalokitavrata in his *Extensive Commentary to the Lamp of Wisdom*. The renowned Chandrakirti (650 AD) refers to the quotation in his *Clarification of the Words*, his *Commentary to the 400 Verses*, and his *Commentary to the Seventy Verses on Emptiness*. It appears as well in Master Parahita's explanation of the same work.

In Tibet as well the verse and the idea behind it have been considered indispensable, and it is referred to in a great number of works on the Steps of the Path. See for example the treatises of Geshe Drolungpa, Je Tsongkapa, the First Panchen Lama, and Pabongka Rinpoche himself.

⁵⁴ *If nothing else keep your trust*: Original source of quotation not found; it is in a very old local dialect, but the meaning seems correct. For information about the author, see note 52.

⁵⁵ *Only the All-Knowing know it*: The lines are found in the fourth chapter of *The Bodhisattva's Life*, a famed manual for aspiring saints dating from the 8th century.

⁵⁶ *The ones who can protect you*: The three lower realms described here are—respectively—the worlds of hellbeings, craving spirits, and animals. The Three Jewels that can protect us from them are the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. The Buddha Jewel is defined as "That ultimate source of protection: the One who has reached the final end of his own goals, and the ability to

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achieve others' as well." The Dharma Jewel is "The pure side of existence, either in the form of the end of all suffering, or the path to that end." The Sangha Jewel, finally, consists of "All those who are realized"—that is, the Community of all people who have realized emptiness directly. For these and an illuminating discussion on the act of taking refuge, see Kedrup Tenpa Dargye, *Analysis of the Perfection of Wisdom*.

⁵⁷ *We have little time to live*: The lines by Lord Atisha's renowned disciple are found in a short exquisite work entitled *Second Epistle to Shangtrang Kaberchung*, itself a part of the famed *Collected Treasure of Beloved Jewels* from the teachings of the Kadampa Lamas. The quotation here appears to consist of two parts from different places in the text, but the intent is certainly the same.

⁵⁸ *You will feel only pain*: Quotation from the same source as the last.

⁵⁹ *The broadest simplification*: The list of ten bad deeds (their avoidance being the ten good deeds) are a very gross abbreviation of the multitude of harmful actions which we are capable of performing. They include three which we perform with our bodies: killing, stealing, and sexual misconduct. The next four are verbal: lying, divisive talk, harsh words, and idle speech. The final three are mental: coveting, ill will towards others, and wrong views. The classic presentation of the ten is found in the "Chapter on Deeds" from the *Treasure House of Knowledge*, composed by the 4th-century Indian sage Vasubandhu.

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Reading Ten: Steps for Those of Medium and Greater Capacity

STEPS SHARED WITH THOSE OF MEDIUM CAPACITY

V. Learning How to Want Freedom

གཉིས་པ་སྐྱེས་བུ་འབྲིང་དང་ཐུན་མོང་བའི་ལམ་གྱི་རིམ་པར་སློབ་སྦྱང་བ་ལ་གཉིས་ལ།
དང་པོ་ཐར་པ་དོན་དུ་གཉེར་བའི་སློབ་སྦྱོང་པ་ནི།

With this we have reached the second part in the advices on how to take the essence of this life; that is, how to train one's mind in the Steps of the path which are shared with persons of medium spiritual capacity. Here there are two divisions. The first is learning how to want freedom, and is presented in the single verse of the root text which follows:

།སྦྱང་པས་མི་ངོམས་སྤྱད་བསྐྱེད་ཀུན་གྱི་སློ།
།ཡིད་བདུན་མི་རུང་སྤྱད་པའི་ཕུན་ཚོགས་གྱི།
།ཉིས་དམིགས་རི་གནས་ཐར་པའི་བདེ་བ་ལ།
།དོན་གཉེར་ཆེན་པོ་སྐྱེ་བར་བྱིན་གྱིས་སློབས།
།ཞེས་པའི་སློབ་ཀྱི་གཅིག་གསུངས།

(5)

Bless me to perceive
All that's wrong
With the seemingly good things
Of this life.

I can never get enough of them.
They cannot be trusted.
They are the door
To every pain I have.
Grant me then
To strive instead
For the happiness of freedom.

དེ་ལྟར་འཆི་བའི་ངང་ཚུལ་དང་། ངན་སོང་གི་སྤྱག་བསྐལ་བསམ་ཞིང་། སྐྱབས་འགྲོ་
དང་ལས་འབྲས་ཀྱི་སྤང་དོར་ལ་ཚུལ་བཞིན་འབད་པས། གནས་སྐབས་མངོན་མཐོ་ལྟ་
མའི་དྲིན་བཟང་དང་དཔལ་འབྱོར་ལུན་སུམ་ཆོགས་པ་ལན་རེ་ལན་གཉིས་ཙམ་འཐོབ་
པ་སྤིད་མོད།

Suppose we are able to follow all the instructions above: we contemplate how death works, and think on the sufferings of the lower realms. Then we make all the effort we are supposed to in going for refuge, and in observing the laws of deeds and their consequences. Admittedly then we could manage, once or twice, to reach one of the better forms of life—as a pleasure being or human—and also acquire some incredible amount of wealth; at least for the time being.

འཁོར་བའི་བདེ་བ་ནི་ཇི་ཙམ་བྱུང་ཡང་ལོངས་སྤྱད་པས་མི་ངོམས་པར་ད་དུང་ཆགས་
པ་ལྟག་པར་འཕེལ་ཏེ་སྤྱག་བསྐལ་མི་བཟད་པ་དུ་མ་འདྲིན་པར་བྱེད་པས་སྤྱག་བསྐལ་
ཀུན་གྱི་སྒོར་གྱུར་པ་ཡིན་ཅིང་།

But the nature of all pleasant things in the circle of life is that, no matter how much we get, and no matter how much we enjoy what we get, we never feel as though we've had enough. It only makes us want more, it only increases our desire. And this then delivers to us a whole variety of unbearable pain. The pleasant things turn around, and become *the door to every pain I have*.

དེ་ཡང་རྒྱལ་མཆོག་ལྟ་བུ་ཆེན་པོས།
།སྒོར་ཐོག་མེད་དུས་ནས་རང་སེམས་དང་།
།དུས་སྐད་ཅིག་འབྲལ་བ་མེད་པ་ཡི།

།གོགས་ཉོན་མོངས་འདི་གོ་བསྟན་བསྟན་པས།
།མཐའ་མི་མངོན་འཁོར་བའི་རྒྱ་མཚོར་བསྐྱར།

།ལས་མི་འདོད་རྒྱུད་གིས་རབ་བསྐྱེད་ནས།
།ཡོངས་སྤྱད་བསྐྱེད་གསུམ་གྱི་བ་སྟོང་དུ།
།དུས་གཏན་དུ་མགལ་མི་ལྟར་འཁོར་བ།
།འདི་བསམས་གྱིན་ཉོན་མོངས་དྲངས་མའི་དགའ།

།ཆེ་འདི་སྤང་དག་ཞིག་བསད་པ་ལ།
།རང་གོ་ཆོད་དཔག་བོར་སྦྱོམ་བྱེད་ན།
།དུས་གཏན་གྱི་དག་པོ་ཉོན་མོངས་འདི།
།ད་གདུལ་པའི་དུས་ལ་ངེས་པར་བབ།

That highest of Victors, the Great Fifth of the Dalai Lamas, has said as well,

What happened before?
Someone has been in my mind for time with no beginning.

When was that?
There's never been a moment when they were gone.

Who are they?
I live, and live again, the mental afflictions.

And in the end?
They will leave me to rot in the ocean of suffering
life, without an end in sight.

And the karma?
It comes like the wind, with all the things I never
wanted.

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How far?

It whips around me everywhere, and stirs great waves,
the three forms of suffering.

How long?

I could wander around this sea forever; the torch would
spin, and the circle of light would blaze.

What should I see?

Think on this, and see that the afflictions of the mind
are the one true enemy.

What must be done?

The enemy of living for this life must die.

Who shall do it?

You will have to pretend that you are warrior enough to
be the one.

When will it come?

Your foes, the afflictions in your mind, have always
been there waiting, ready for the battle.

Now then?

The time has surely come: go forth now and defeat them.⁶⁰

ཅེས་གསུངས་པ་ལྟར་འཁོར་བ་འདིར་སྟག་བསྐལ་ཐམས་ཅད་འབྱུང་བའི་རྩ་བ་ནི།
རང་གིས་གཅིས་པར་བྱས་ཏེ་སྣིང་དབུས་སུ་བཅུག་པའི་ཉོན་མོངས་པའི་དབང་པོ་འདི་
ཉིད་ཡིན་ལ།

As the lines point out, there is one thing which acts as the very root of all our sufferings here in the circle of life. This is none other than the enemy of the mental afflictions, so dearly cherished by us, so close to our hearts.

འདིས་རང་ཅག་ནམས་སྟོན་ཆད་ཐོབ་མེད་ནས་ད་བར་སྟག་བསྐལ་མི་བཟད་པ་ལ་སྦྱར་
ཞིང་། ད་དུང་ཉོན་མོངས་འདི་གཏན་བརྟག་ཏུ་གཏོང་བྱབ་པ་ཞིག་མ་བྱུང་ན། དེའི་
དབང་གིས་ལས་བསགས། ལས་ཀྱི་དབང་གིས་འཁོར་བའི་གནས་སུ་ཉིང་མ་ཚམས་

སྐྱར། དེར་སྐྱར་ཡང་ཉོན་མོངས་པས་ལས་བསགས་ཏེ་དེའི་དབང་གིས་ཉེར་ལེན་གྱི་
ཡུང་པོར་ཉིང་མཚམས་སྐྱར་ནས་འགོ་བ་རིགས་དུག་ཏུ་ཡང་དང་ཡང་དུ་སྐྱེ་བ་ལེན་པ་
ཐག་ཚོད།

From time with no beginning up to the present moment, this enemy has led us by the hand to all kinds of unbearable pain. And if still we find ourselves unable to discard these bad thoughts once and for all, they will force us to collect karma. Then the karma will force us to take yet another birth in this house, in the circle of suffering life. And there once again the afflictions will start, and then we'll collect the karma anew. And so it is decided: this karma again will force us into the impure parts of a suffering being, in one of the six forms of life. We'll be born, and then again, and over again and again, wandering through these six.⁶¹

དེ་སྐྱངས་ན་འཁོར་བ་འདིར་མཐོང་མཁའ་གང་འདྲ་ཞིག་ཏུ་སྐྱེ་བ་སྐྱངས་ཀྱང་སྐྱུག་བསྐྱལ་
གསུམ་གྱིས་གོ་མཚམས་མེད་པར་མངར་བ་ལས། བདེ་བའི་སྐྱབས་ཅུང་ཟད་ཀྱང་མི་
འབྱུང་བས་གནས་གང་དུ་ཕྱིན་ཀྱང་སྐྱུག་བསྐྱལ་གྱི་གནས། གྲོགས་སུ་དང་འགྲོགས་
ཀྱང་སྐྱུག་བསྐྱལ་གྱི་གྲོགས། འོངས་སྟོད་གང་ལ་འོངས་སྟོད་ཀྱང་སྐྱུག་བསྐྱལ་གྱི་
འོངས་སྟོད་ཁོ་ན་ལས་མ་འདས།

Once we have taken a birth in the cycle, we'll find ourselves tormented by the three different kinds of suffering, without the slightest break.⁶² It doesn't matter at all whether we take a higher birth or a lower one; there exists no such thing as a pleasant moment here. Whatever place we go is a place that brings us pain. Whatever friend we go with is a friend who brings us pain. Whatever possession we have is a possession which brings us pain. They cannot and will not ever be anything else.

འོ་ན་དེ་ལྟའི་སྐྱུག་བསྐྱལ་དང་འབྲལ་བའི་ཐབས་ཇི་ལྟར་བྱ་དགོས་སྟུགས་ན། ལས་དང་
ཉོན་མོངས་པའི་རང་བཞིན་ཅན་གྱི་འཁོར་བའི་སྐྱེ་སྐྱུན་གཙོད་ཐུབ་པ་ཞིག་མ་བྱུང་བར་
དུ་སྐྱུག་བསྐྱལ་དང་བྲལ་བའི་གནས་མེད་ལ།

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"What way then," you may ask, "must I follow to escape this pain?" You must find a way to stop the stream of births, the circle of life that has karma and the mental afflictions as its very nature. Until you manage to do so, you will never find a place that is free of this suffering.

འཁོར་བའི་སྐྱེ་སྐྱུན་གཅོད་པ་ལ་ཇི་སྟེ་མའི་ལམ་གཅོད་ཅུ་ཆོག་ལས།
ལས་འབྲས་མི་སྟུ་འཁོར་བའི་སྟུག་བསྐྱལ་ནམས།
ཡང་ཡང་བསམས་པས་ཕྱི་མའི་སྣང་ཤས་ལྟོག་

The key to stopping the stream of suffering births is found in the root text of the *Three Principal Paths*, where the Lord of Lamas says,

Think over and over how deeds and their fruits
never fail,
And the cycle's suffering: stop desire
for the future.

ཁྱེས་པ་ལྟར་ཐོག་མར་འཁོར་བའི་ཕུན་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་མཐར་ཐུག་ཚངས་པ་བརྒྱ་བྱིན་
འཁོར་བསྐྱར་སོགས་ཀྱི་ལུས་དྲིན་དང་དཔལ་འབྱོར་ལྟ་བུ་རྟོན་ཀྱང་ཡིན་བདུན་མེད་
པར་སྡར་མི་དགོ་བ་བསགས་པའི་ལས་ཀྱི་འབྲས་བྱར་མཐར་དན་སོང་གསུམ་ལ་
སོགས་པར་སྐྱེས་ཏེ་འཁོར་བའི་སྟུག་བསྐྱལ་མཐར་མེད་དུ་སྒྲོང་དགོས་ཚུལ་དང་།

Suppose at first we are able to find the very highest of the supposed good things of this life: we attain the celestial form or fantastic wealth of a god-like being such as Pure One, or Hundred Gift, or one of those emperors who rules the world with a disk of power. None of these forms can be trusted though, for the inevitable end of each is that we meet the karmic *fruits of bad deeds* we collected before. These deeds throw us into births like those of the lower realms, where we are forced to go through the unlimited variety of pain here in the *cycle of suffering life*.

ཀུན་འབྱུང་ལས་དང་ཉོན་མོངས་པའི་ཉེས་དམིགས་ཡང་ཡང་བསམས་ནས་ཕྱི་མའི་
སྣང་ཤས་ལྟོག་པ་དགོས་ཤིང་།

We must understand this process, and think over and over about all the problems brought to us by the great source of all pain: ignorant deeds and the mental afflictions. We must *stop desire for any future lives*.

དེ་ལ་དང་པོར། སྤར་སྒྲིམ་བྱ་རྒྱུ་དུའི་སྐབས་བཤད་པ་བཞིན་དུ།
།དལ་འབྱོར་རྟོན་དཀའ་ཆོ་ལ་ལོང་མེད་པ།
།ཡིད་ལ་གོམས་པས་ཆོ་འདིའི་སྤང་ཤས་ལྡོག།

Before we can do this we need something else:

Leisure and fortune are hard to find, life's not long;
Think it constantly, stop desire for this life.⁶³

ས་པ་ལྟར་རྟོན་པར་དཀའ་བའི་དལ་འབྱོར་རྟོན་བཟང་པོ་ད་རིས་ལན་ཅིག་ཙམ་རྟོན་
ཀྱང་ཆོ་ལ་སྤོན་པ་བརྒྱུག་དུ་མེད་ཅིང་འབྲིད་བྱེད་པར་མ་ཆད་པ་ཡོད་པས་དུས་ཡུན་
རིང་པོར་མི་གནས་པར་འཆི་དགོས་པའི་རྒྱལ་བསམས་ནས་ཆོ་འདིའི་སྤང་ཤས་ལྡོག་
པ་དགོས་ཏེ།

As the verse says, we must *stop desire for this life first*. To do so, think how *hard it is to find this leisure and fortune*. And think too on the following: while you may have managed just this once to find a perfect body and life, still you must die. You cannot stay here long—there is no way to tack on any extra years to your life, and the years you do have leak away constantly, never pausing.

རང་རིས་ངན་འགྲོའི་སྒྲིབ་སྒྲོག་པ་དང་། ཐར་པ་དང་ཐམས་ཅད་མཐུན་པའི་གོ་འཕང་
བསྐྱབ་པ་གང་ལའང་ཆོ་འདི་སྤང་གི་ཞེན་པ་སྒྲོག་པ་འདི་ཐོག་མཐའ་བར་གསུམ་དུ་
གལ་ཆེ་ཞིང་།

Whatever you and I hope to accomplish—whether it be keeping ourselves out of the three lower realms, or attaining freedom and the state of All-Knowing—we must learn to stop this habit of hoping for the "good" things of this life. This is absolutely essential all through our Dharma career: from the very beginning, on through the middle, and up to the final end.

འདིའི་སྐོར་རྣམས་བཀའ་གདམས་གསུང་རྟོགས་དང་བཀའ་བརྒྱུད་གོང་མ་ཆོའི་གསུང་
ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་སྤོ་སྤྱངས་ན་རྣམས་པ་ཆེ་བ་ཡོད།

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These last few points are covered especially well in the works of the new and older schools of the Keepers of the Word, as well as in the texts of the original masters in the Lineage of the Word.⁶⁴ If you use these books for training your mind in these Steps, you will have powerful results.

དེ་ཡང་སྐྱལ་བ་ཡང་དགོན་པས།

།ཆེ་ངེས་མེད་ལ་ནམ་འཆིའི་དུས་བཏབ་མེད།

།བདུད་འཆི་བདག་ཁོ་བྲེལ་ཁོམ་གྱི་བྱས་མི་ཕྱི།

།དུས་དེ་རིང་འབྱུང་བཞི་དང་ནམ་ཤེས་འགྲེས་གྱུར་ན།

།གཏོང་དང་སློབ་དེ་ཆགས་སུ་ཚུད་དམ་སོམས།

Listen to these descriptions of suffering life, first from the lips of the Victor, Yang Gonpa:

You can't be sure you will live,
Nor fix the time you die;

This monster, the Lord of Death,
Has no interest
To come at your convenience.

The four elements of your physical body
And your mind
Could go today their separate ways;

Think about it:
Can you ever feel secure,
Can you ever feel at peace?⁶⁵

ཁྱིས་དང་། གཞན་ཡང་།

།བདེ་སྤྱད་གཏམ་ངན་བྱུང་བསད་ནས།

།ཕངས་སྤྱིས་བྱས་པའི་ཞོར་གྱིས་ཀྱང་།

།ཁམ་ཅིག་འབྱེད་དབང་མེད་པས་ན།

།དགོས་དུས་མེད་པའི་ཞོར་གྱིས་ཅི།

མཐུན་འདུག་དོ་སྤང་བྱེད་བྱེད་ནས།
སྤྱག་རོགས་བྱས་པའི་གཉིན་གྲིས་ཀྱང་།
གོམ་གང་སྐྱེལ་མཁན་མེད་པས་ན།
དགོས་དུས་མེད་པའི་གཉིན་གྲིས་ཅི།

སྒོ་གསུམ་རྩལ་དུ་རབ་བརྒྱགས་ཏེ།
འབད་པས་བརྩིགས་པའི་མཁར་གྲིས་ཀྱང་།
འཆི་བདག་ནངས་གཅིག་མི་ཐུན་ན།
དགོས་དུས་མེད་པའི་ཁང་པས་ཅི།

ཞེས་བྱ་བ་ལ་སོགས་པ་དང་།

He adds other lines including:

This devil, greed,
Collected money

Ignoring all comfort
And hardship to do so;

But we have no power
To carry even
A bit with us that day.

What's the use of money,
That's never there
When you need it?

Our friends and family
Stayed with us
Through thick and thin;

We won and kept them
By fitting in,
And maintaining our reputation.

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But there's not one
Who can take one step
Along with us that day.

What's the use of family, friends,
Who are never there
When you need them?

With toil and sweat
We built a great
And wonderful house for ourselves;

To do it we obliterated
Every rule
Of what to do, or say, or think.

But what happens when
Lord Death decides
He'll not sleep in one morning?

What's the use of a house
That's never there
When you need it?

།དབྱར་སྤྱིན་ཆེན་འབྲིགས་པའི་ནམ་མཁའ་ལ།
།སྒོག་ད་ལྷ་བྱང་བ་ད་ལྷ་ཡལ།
།ཆེ་མི་རྟག་པའི་སྤྱག་བསྐྱལ་བྱར་གྲིས་དྲན།
།རྟག་འཛིན་གྲབས་ཤོམས་ཀྱི་ཁོ་ཐག་དེ་ནས་ཆོད།

And then he says,

In the summer
Great clouds crowd the sky,

And lightning comes,
And lightning goes

The suffering called impermanence
Drags our life
Downhill;

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Dispense with the sense
Of permanence,
Of feeling prepared.

།རྒྱ་ཉི་ཆར་གྱི་ཉེན་འབྱེལ་ཚོགས་པ་ལས།

།འཇའ་ད་ལྷ་བྱུང་བ་ད་ལྷ་ཡལ།

།བདེ་སྐྱིད་མི་ཉག་པའི་སྤྲུག་བསྐྱེལ་བྱུང་གྱིས་བྲན།

།མཛེས་ཚོས་མཚར་སྐྱེག་གི་ཁོ་ཐག་དེ་ནས་ཚད།

The rain brings it on,
The fortuitous moment,
When everything is just right,

And a rainbow comes,
And a rainbow goes

The suffering called impermanence
Drags our happiness
Downhill;

Dispense with
Looking your best,
And strutting around.

།རྒྱ་ལྷངས་གྱིས་ཀྱུ་ཙེ་བཏབ་པ་ན།

།བྲག་ཅ་ད་ལྷ་བྱུང་བ་ད་ལྷ་ཡལ།

།སྤྲན་བྲགས་མི་ཉག་པའི་སྤྲུག་བསྐྱེལ་བྱུང་གྱིས་བྲན།

།ཆེ་འདོད་བྲགས་འདོད་གྱི་ཁོ་ཐག་དེ་ནས་ཚད།

A sudden sound
Brings it on,

And an echo comes,
And an echo goes

The suffering called impermanence
Drags our fame
Downhill;

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Dispense with
The hope for greatness,
The hope for a name.

ཡུལ་དབུས་ཀྱི་ཚོང་དུས་མགོན་ཁང་དུ།
མགོན་པོ་སྒྲོ་སྒྲིབ་པ་ཕྱི་དྲོ་བྱེད་པ།
གྲོགས་མི་རྟག་པའི་སྐྱུག་བསྐྱེལ་བྱར་གྱིས་དྲན།
གཉེན་མཐུན་འཇུག་གི་ཁོ་ཐག་དེ་ནས་ཚོད།

They travel to the big city
To sell their wares,
And stop in some hotel,

The guest comes in the morning,
The guest leaves in the eve

The suffering called impermanence
Drags our friends
Downhill;

Dispense with hoping
To fit in with your friends
And family.

དབྱར་དུས་སྒྲོང་མས་ཡང་ཡང་བསགས་པ་ཡི།
སྒྲོང་ཚང་གྲོ་བྱར་ཞིག་པ་མཐོང་ཅ་ན།
ཟས་ཀྱི་མི་རྟག་པའི་སྐྱུག་བསྐྱེལ་བྱར་གྱིས་དྲན།
ཟས་ཀྱི་གསོག་འཇུག་གི་ཁོ་ཐག་དེ་ནས་ཚོད།

ཅིས་དང་།

In the summertime the bees
Labor and build up
Their hives,

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But anyone can see
How they are wiped out
In an instant

The suffering called impermanence
Drags our food and money
Down the hill.

Dispense with trying
To gather together
All this money and food.

འབྲོམ་རྒྱལ་བའི་འབྲུང་གནས་ཀྱི་རང་རྒྱུད་བསྐྱེད་འདེབས་ལས་གསུངས་པ་སོགས་
ལྷན་ཡང་ནས་ཡང་དུ་བསམས་ཏེ་ཆོ་འདིའི་སྒྲུང་ཤས་ལྷོག་ཐབས་ལ་འབད་ཅིང་།

Contemplate on these quotations, and on works like the verses by Drom Gyalway Jungne, where he urges himself to perfect his practice.⁶⁶ Think them over constantly, and try your hardest to follow the instructions on how to give up living for this life.

དེས་ཀྱང་མི་ཆོག་པ་རྒྱལ་མཆོག་བསྐྱེད་བཟང་རྒྱ་མཚོས།
།ཁམས་གསུམ་འཁོར་བ་ཞེས་གྲགས་ལུགས་སྟེག་གི་ཁང་པ།
།ཕྱོགས་བཅུ་གང་དུ་ཕྱིན་ཀྱང་སྟུག་བསྐྱེད་གྱིས་བསྟེག་པའི།
།སྤྱིང་ལ་གཟན་ཀྱང་རང་གི་སྒྲུང་ཚུལ་དུ་འདུག་པ།
།གནས་ངན་འདི་འདྲར་འབྱམས་པའི་སྒྲུང་ཚུལ་འདི་སྟོབ།

This in itself though is not enough, as expressed in the following words of Kelsang Gyatso, the highest of all the Victors:

This thing they call
The three realms of cyclic life
Is a house of red-hot steel;

Wherever you go
In any of the ten directions,
The suffering will burn you.

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You wish so badly
That it weren't happening,
But this is its very nature.

How pitiful our life,
To wander aimlessly
In such a house of horrors.⁶⁷

ཞིམ་གསུངས་པ་ལྟར་ཁམས་གསུམ་གྱི་འཁོར་བ་འདིར་མཐོ་དམན་གང་འདྲ་ཞིག་ཏུ་
སྐྱེས་ཀྱང་སྐྱུག་བསྐྱེད་ཀྱི་རང་བཞིན་ཁོ་ན་ལས་མེད་ཚུལ་བསམས་ནས་འཁོར་བ་ལས་
ཐར་ཐབས་དང་། དབྱ་ཉོན་མོངས་པ་འཇོམས་ཐབས་ལ་འབད་དགོས།

This cycle of life, with its three different realms, is absolutely nothing but suffering, by its very nature. It doesn't matter at all whether you take a higher birth within it, or a lower—it's all the same. Consider carefully the truth of these words, then go and seek some way of finding freedom from the cycle, and a way to smash your enemy: the afflictions of the mind.

དེས་ན་རང་རིས་འཇོམ་གྱིང་འདིར་ལུས་ལོངས་སྟོད་སྟོབས་འབྱོར་སྒྲན་གཤམ་ཇི་ཙམ་
འཇོམས་པར་བསྐྱོམས་ཀྱང་། སོ་སོའི་འཁོར་ཀ་ལ་དཔགས་ན། དུད་འགོ་འབྲུ་སྟོན་
དང་བྱ་བྱེའུ་སོགས་ལས་བྱུང་པར་མ་ཐོན་པའི་རིག་ཅུལ་སྟོབས་འབྱོར་རྒྱ་རྒྱུང་རྒྱུང་
ཞིག་ལས་མེད་པ་”

You and I might have some delusions about getting it all together in this world; a good body, lots of things, power, fame. Regardless of how far we progress in these things though, let's be honest. If we judge ourselves properly, we can see that we aren't really much more advanced in our intellect or strength than common animals, than bugs or birds or whatever.

”འདི་ལ་ཤི་སྒྲར་འཐམ་སྟེ་ཆགས་སེམས་དང་ཡིད་བདུན་བྱར་མི་རུང་བ་ལྟ་ཅི།
འཁོར་བའི་བདེ་འབྱོར་གྱི་མཐར་ཐུག་ཚངས་པ་བརྒྱ་བྱིན་དང་འཁོར་སྒྱུར་གྱི་རྒྱལ་སྟོན་
ལ་ལོངས་སྟོད་པ་མང་པོ་ཡང་མཐར་དན་འགྲོའི་གནས་དན་མི་བཟད་པར་འབྲུམ་
དགོས་པར་བཤེས་སྟོང་སོགས་ནས་གསུངས་པ་ལྟར་”

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These things are hardly something worth getting attached to, nothing you would want to hang on to until your dying breath, nothing you could trust at all. Much less; for you can even attain the ultimate pleasures and possessions of all cyclic life—you could become the mighty being called Pure One, or Hundred Gifts, or else enjoy all the many riches in the kingdom of a world emperor. In the end though it always turns out the way that the *Letter to a Friend* and other such works describe it: wandering aimlessly around in a house of horrors, the three lower realms of life.

“སྲིད་པའི་ཡུན་ཚླགས་ཇི་འདྲ་ཞིག་ཐོབ་ཀྱང་མཐར་བསྐྱུ་བའི་ཚོས་ཅན་ལས་མ་འདས་
པའི་རང་མཚངས་སམ་ཉེས་དམིགས་ལེགས་པར་བསམས་པས། འཁོར་བ་མཐའ་
དག་སྐྱུག་བསྐྱུལ་གྱི་རང་བཞིན་ཅན་དུ་མཐོང་ཞིང་རིག་ནས།

It really doesn't matter what kind of so-called "good" thing you can get here in the world of suffering, eventually all it can do is deceive you. You must by yourself expose the lie; you must learn to think clearly about all the problems these things always bring to you. In time you will see, you will know, that every inch of this suffering cycle is in its essence pain.

གནས་སྐབས་ངན་སོང་དང་། མཐར་ཐུག་འཁོར་བའི་སྐྱུག་བསྐྱུལ་མཐའ་དག་ལས་
གྲོལ་བའི་ཐར་པ་མི་གནས་པའི་སྤང་འདས་གྱི་བདེ་བ་ཐོབ་པར་འདོད་པའི་ངེས་འབྱུང་
གི་བསམ་པ་བྱུང་པར་ཅན་གཞན་གྱི་ཟེར་ཇེས་འབྱུང་བ་དང་ཁ་ཅམ་ཆོག་ཅམ་གྱི་ཡམ་
མི་བ་ལྟ་བུ་མ་ཡིན་པར།

By then you will have renunciation, the kind that wants to reach the joy of the nirvana beyond both extremes,⁶⁸ freedom in the short run from the sufferings of the three lower births, and ultimately from each and every pain in the cycle of life. And it will be the extraordinary form of renunciation, not the rough kind that you get just from following whatever someone else tells you, not the one that stays in the mouth and not the heart, in words and not in truth.

ཐར་པའི་བདེ་བ་ལ་དོན་གཉེར་ཆེན་པོ་བཅོས་མ་མ་ཡིན་པའི་སློ་ཤུགས་དྲག་ཏུ་སྐྱེ་བར་
གསོལ་འདེབས་བྱེད་པ་ཡིན་གསུངས།

What we are requesting then here, said our Lama, is that our Lama grant us the strength to develop a very fierce desire, a strong and genuine wish to reach the happiness of freedom.

VI. Finding the Right Path to Freedom

གཉིས་པ་ཐར་པར་བགྱོད་པའི་ལམ་གྱི་རང་བཞིན་གཏན་ལ་དབབ་པ་ནི།

This brings us to the second division of how to train one's mind in the Steps of the path which are shared with persons of medium spiritual capacity; that is, defining just what kind of path can take us to this freedom. This point is covered in a single verse from the root text:

ནུམ་དག་བསམ་པ་དེ་ཡིས་བྱངས་པ་ཡི།
བྱན་དང་ཤེས་བཞིན་བག་ཡོད་ཆེན་པོ་ཡིས།
བསྟན་པའི་རྩ་བ་སོ་སོ་ཐར་པ་ལ།
སྐྱབ་པ་སྤྱིང་པོར་བྱེད་པར་བྱིན་གྱིས་སྟོབས།
ཞེས་པའི་སྟོོ་ཀ་གཅིག་སྟེ།

(6)

Grant that these pure thoughts
May lead me to be watchful
And to recall
What I should be doing,
Grant me to give
The greatest care
To make the vows of morality
The essence of my practice;
They are
The root of the Buddha's teaching.

སྐྱར་བཤད་པ་ལྟར་འཁོར་བའི་ཕུན་ཚོགས་ལའང་སྤྱིང་པོ་མེད་པར་མཐོང་ནས་འཁོར་
བ་མཐའ་དག་ལ་ཡིད་གཏིང་ནས་ལོག་སྟེ། ཐར་པ་དོན་གཉིར་གྱི་སྟོན་མ་པར་དག་བ་
ངས་འབྱུང་གི་བསམ་པ་ཤུགས་བྱུག་པོ་དེས་བྱངས་ནས། རྗེ་ཐམས་ཅད་མཁྱེན་པ་ཉིད་
གྱིས།

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Up to now we have explained how to truly see that even the supposed good things of the circle of life have no essence at all. When that happens, we begin to feel a total disgust for every corner of the cycle of life. These fierce feelings of renunciation, *these pure thoughts* where we wish to reach the happiness of freedom, will *lead us* on to something else, as described by the Omniscient One himself:

།རྒྱལ་བའི་གསུང་རབ་མ་ལུས་སྡེ་སྡོད་གསུམ།

།དེ་ཕྱིར་བསྟན་པའི་སྡིང་པོ་བསྐྱབ་པ་གསུམ།

།དེ་དག་ཐོག་མ་རྒྱལ་བྱིས་ས་བསྐྱབ་པ་སྟེ།

།དེ་ཡི་གནས་ནི་འདུལ་བ་ཡིན་པར་གསུངས།

The entire extent
Of the highest of spoken words,
The teaching of the Buddhas,
Is contained in the three collections.

This then is why
The three different trainings
Are the essence of the teachings.

These three start
With the training
Of morality,

And it's spoken that
It resides
In the collection on discipline.

།དེ་ཕྱིར་ལེགས་པར་གསུངས་པའི་དམ་པའི་ཆོས།

།འདུལ་བའི་རྒྱལ་ལ་མང་པོ་བཀོད་པ་ལ།

།བསྟན་པའི་གོ་རིམ་ཤེས་པའི་མཁས་པ་རྣམས།

།ཅི་ཡི་ཕྱིར་ན་དགའ་བ་སྟེ་མི་འགྱུར།

This explains why
So much of the holy Dharma,
Spoken so very well,

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Was set down in the form
Of the works On discipline.

Could it ever happen then
That those wise men
Who understand

The proper order
Of the teachings
Would not take joy in these?

།ལྷག་མཐོང་ཤེས་རབ་བསྐྱབ་པ་སྐྱེ་བ་ལ།

།ཞི་གནས་ཏིང་འཛིན་དགོས་པའི་མིང་ཙམ་སྒྲུང་།

།འདི་ན་རྣམ་དག་གཏིང་འཛིན་སྐྱེ་བ་ལ།

།རྒྱལ་བྲིམས་བསྐྱབ་པ་དགོས་པའི་གཏམ་ཡག་ཅུབ།

Nowhere does it say
Anything else but this:
If you hope to develop

Insight, the training
Of wisdom well,
You must find quietude,
That of concentration.

It says as well
That if you wish to develop
Pure single-pointed mind,

You must have the training
Of morality;
And this is fine advice.

།ཁས་ལེན་ཏམ་ལ་རབ་རྟུ་དཔའ་བ་ཡིས།

།དམ་བཅས་རབ་རྟུ་འདོར་བ་ཕལ་བའི་ཕལ།

།རང་གིས་ཅི་ཙམ་ཁས་ལེན་བྱས་པ་ཡི།

།རྒྱལ་བྲིམས་བསྐྱབ་པ་བཙོན་པ་དམ་པའི་རྒྱལ།

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Some brave souls
Claim they'll keep
A lot of different vows,

But it's oh so common
To see them smash
Whatever pledges they've made.

The way of the holy
Is to strive
To maintain their morality pure,

Exactly as
They have agreed
To do so.

།དེ་ལྟར་མཐོང་ནས་ཉེས་པའི་སྒོ་གསུམ་ལ།
།ཡང་དང་ཡང་དུ་རྟོག་པའི་ཤེས་བཞིན་དང་།
།བྱུང་དང་བག་ཡོད་ངོ་ཚ་བྲིལ་ཡོད་ཀྱིས།
།ལོག་པའི་ལམ་དུ་ཞུགས་པའི་དབང་པོའི་དྲ།

།འབད་པས་འདུ་བར་བྱེད་པ་དེ་ཡི་ཡིད།
།དག་བའི་དམིགས་པ་གང་གང་འདོད་དེ་ལ།
།དེ་ལྟ་དེ་ལྟར་རབ་རྟུ་གནས་པར་འགྱུར།
།དེ་ཕྱིར་རྩལ་བྲིམས་ཏིང་འཛིན་རྒྱ་རུ་བསྐྱགས།

Once you see
The truth in this,
Then use your watchfulness,

Constantly check
Your thoughts, words and deeds
To stop any wrong to come.

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Recollect yourself,
Take the greatest care,
Have a sense of shame,
And consideration;

Use them on
The horse of the senses
When he mistakes the way.
Use your strength
To rein him in,
For this is the state of mind

That you can bring
To focus and stay
On any virtuous object

Solidly,
Whatever you want,
However you wish it to be;

And this is why
They sing the praises
Of morality as the way

To reach one-pointedness of mind.⁶⁹

ཁྱེས་གསུངས་པ་ལྟར་བྱས་པས་དང་པོར་སྒྲང་དོར་གྱི་གནས་མ་བཟེད་པར་འཛིན།
ཤེས་བཞིན་གྱིས་བར་བར་དུ་སྒྲོ་གསུམ་གྱི་སྒྲོད་པ་ལེགས་ཉེས་གང་དང་གང་དུ་འགོ་
མི་འགོ་ལྟ་དྲིལ་བྱེད། བག་ཡོད་གྱིས་སྐབས་ཐམས་ཅད་དུ་མི་རུང་བའི་བསམ་སྒྲུབ་
མཐའ་དག་འགོག་ཅིང་། རུང་བྱི་ཀུན་སྒྲོད་ནམས་བསྟེན་པ་ལས་མི་འདའ་བར་བྱས་
ཏེ།

The process that Je Tsongkapa is describing goes like this. *Recollection* comes at the beginning, and keeps you from forgetting *what you should be doing*, and what you shouldn't be doing. *Watchfulness* then stops by from time to time to check whether or not the activities of your body, speech, and mind are tending towards right or wrong. One's ability to take *great care* in his life functions throughout; it prevents every sort of improper thought or action, and keeps one within the bounds of what is appropriate to undertake.

ཀྱུ་ལ་བའི་བསྐྱེད་པའི་གནད་ལུང་སྡེ་སྡོད་གསུམ་གྱི་བཟོད་བྱའི་དོན་རྣམས་ཀྱུ་ལ་བྲིམས་
དང་། ཏིང་ངེ་འཛིན་དང་། ཤེས་རབ་གྱི་བསྐྱེད་པ་སྡེ་ལྷག་པའི་སྐྱེད་པ་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་རྣམས་
པ་གསུམ་དུ་འདུ་ཞིང་། སྤྱི་མ་འདི་གཉིས་འབྱུང་མི་འབྱུང་གི་གནས་དང་། ཏེན་དང་།
རྩ་བའམ་ས་གཞི་ལྟ་བུ་ནི། གཙོ་བོར་སོ་སོར་ཐར་པའི་ཀྱུ་ལ་བྲིམས་ཉིད་ཡིན་ལ།

The essential points of the entire *teaching of the victorious Buddha*, the meaning of the contents of the three collections of the Word, all this is included within three precious, extraordinary forms of training: the trainings of morality, of meditative concentration, and wisdom. The crux on which the latter two trainings turn, their basis, *their root* and the ground they stand upon, is in the main a single item: morality, in the form of the various vows of freedom.⁷⁰ As the great Panchen Lama, Lobsang Chukyi Gyaltsen has said,

།སྡོན་ཆད་བཅས་ཀྱང་སྡོ་མོ་དུ་མ་ལ།
།འདི་ཙམ་འདས་ཀྱང་ཉིས་པ་རྩུང་སྟུང་དུ།
།བསམ་ཞིང་དེ་དང་འགལ་བ་དུ་མ་བྱས།
།ལེགས་པར་བརྟགས་ན་དེ་ལྟར་སེམས་པ་དེ།
།བདེ་འགྲོའི་སློག་རྩ་གཙོད་པའི་གཤེད་མར་འདུག།

It all begins
When you think to yourself
"It won't hurt much

If I break a few
Of these minor vows
In a minor way";

Before too long
You have gone against
A great many of your vows.

If you really think about it,
This kind of attitude
Is like a butcher

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Who comes to
Rip out the life
Of your future higher birth.⁷¹

ཅེས་གསུངས་པ་ལྟར་བཅས་རྒྱང་ཕྱ་མོ་ཞིག་གིས་ཀྱང་དེ་ལྟར་འགྱུར་ན། དེ་ལས་ཆེ་
བའི་ཉེས་པ་བསགས་པས་ནི་སྤྱག་བསྐལ་བཟོད་སྒྲགས་མེད་པའི་ངན་འགྲོ་ཁོ་ནར་
བརྒྱད་དེ་འགྲོ་བ་ལས་འོས་མེད་ཕྱིར་...

The point here is that, if something so small as breaking a single minor vow can escalate so far, then needless to say when we amass a collection of even greater transgressions it's only proper that it would eventually lead us precisely to one of the three lower realms—to a kind of pain which is totally beyond our ability to withstand it.

“བཅས་རྒྱང་རྩྱ་ཆོད་ལ་མནངས་རྒྱང་མི་བྱེད་པར་རྩྱ་ལ་བཞིན་དུ་སྤྱང་དགོས་པས་ན།
དག་བསྟེན་ནས་དག་སྟོང་གི་བར་གྱི་སོ་ཐར་རིས་བརྒྱད་པའི་བསྐྱབ་སྟོམ་གང་ཁས་
སྤངས་པ་རྣམས་ལ་མཁས་པར་བསྐྱབ་ཅིང་སྐྱབ་པ་སྟོང་པོར་བྱས་ཏེ་...

For this reason we must be sure never to think lightly of any transgression we might commit, even down to the minor vows; we must absolutely keep all our vows just so. And so you must become masters in understanding all the various vows and advices related to whichever one of the eight sets of the vows of freedom you have assented to follow. And once you have learned them perfectly, well then you must *make them the essence of your practice*.

“རང་རྒྱུད་གྱི་སྟོམ་པ་འདི་ནི་སྟོན་པའི་སྐྱ་ཆབ་ཡིན་སྟུང་དུ་བསམས་ནས་བསྐྱབ་བྱ་
རྣམས་གཅེས་སྤྱས་ཆེན་པོའི་སྟོན་པ་བསྤྱང་བ་སོགས་ལམ་ལྷག་པའི་བསྐྱབ་པ་གསུམ་
རྩྱ་ལ་བཞིན་ཉམས་སུ་ལེན་ནས་པར་བྱིན་གྱིས་སྟོབས་ཤིག་ཅེས་པ་ཡིན་གསུངས།

This is what you are requesting, said our Lama, from your Lama in this verse. You are asking that he or she help you gain the strength to keep your vows perfectly; that you learn to think of the vows contained within your being as the true representative of the Buddha himself, inside you; that you love and cherish your vows, and always hope to defend them. You are asking, he said, to be *granted* the ability to follow the way of this and the other extraordinary trainings, exactly as they were meant to be.

OPEN STEPS FOR THOSE OF GREATER CAPACITY

VII. Developing the Wish for Enlightenment

གསུམ་པ་སྐྱེ་བུ་ཆེན་པོའི་ལམ་གྱི་རིམ་པར་སློ་སྤང་བ་ལ་གཉིས་ལས། དང་པོ་བྱང་
ཆུབ་ཏུ་སེམས་བསྐྱེད་པའི་ཚུལ་ནི།

This brings us to the third and final part of the advices on how to take the essence of this life: how lastly to train one's mind in the Steps of the path for persons of greater spiritual capacity. Here too there are two divisions. The first is how to develop the Wish for enlightenment, and is presented in the single verse of the root text which follows.

།རང་ཉིད་སྤིད་མཆོར་ལྷུང་བ་ཇི་བཞིན་དུ།
།མར་གྱུར་འགོ་བ་ཀུན་ཀྱང་དེ་འདྲ་བར།
།མཐོང་ནས་འགོ་བ་སློལ་བའི་ཁུར་ཁྱར་བའི།
།བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་མཆོག་འབྱོངས་པར་བྱིན་གྱིས་སློབས།
།ཞེས་པའི་སློ་ཀ་གཅིག་གསུངས།

(7)

I have slipped and fallen
Into the sea
Of this suffering life;
Bless me to see
That every living being,
Every one my own mother,
Has fallen in too.
Grant me then
To practice this highest
Wish for enlightenment,
To take on myself
The task of freeing them all.

དེ་ཡང་དཔའ་བྱིན་གྱིས་ཞུས་པའི་མདོ་ལས།
།བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་ཀྱི་བསོད་ནམས་གང་།
།དེ་ལ་གལ་ཏེ་གཟུགས་མཆིས་ན།
།ནམ་མཁའི་ཁམས་ནི་ཀུན་བཀང་སྟེ།
།དེ་ནི་དེ་བས་ལྷག་པར་འགྱུར།

Now the *Sutra that Viradatta Requested* says,

Were the merit of the Wish for enlightenment
To take on some kind of physical form
It would fill the reaches of space itself
And then spill over farther still.⁷²

ཞེས་དང་། སྟོན་འཇུག་ལས།
།དགེ་བ་གཞན་ཀུན་ཆུ་ཤིང་བཞིན་དུ་ནི།
།འབྲས་བུ་བསྐྱེད་ནས་ཟད་པར་འགྱུར་བ་ཉིད།
།བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་ཀྱི་སྟོན་ཤིང་རྟག་པར་ཡང་།
།འབྲས་བུ་འབྱིན་པས་མི་ཟད་འཕེལ་བར་འགྱུར།

ཞེས་སོགས་དང་།

The book called *The Bodhisattva's Life* too has lines like the following:

All the other
Kinds of virtue
Are like a bamboo tree;

They give their fruits
And then they always
Die and go away.

But the Wish
For Buddhahood
Is an evergreen that always

Gives forth its fruits,
And instead of fading
Flourishes even more.⁷³

ཇི་བོ་ཆེན་པོས།

།ཐབས་གོམས་དབང་གིས་བདག་ཉིད་གྲིས།

།གང་གིས་ཤེས་རབ་རྣམས་བསྐྱོམས་པ།

།དེས་ནི་བྱང་ཆུབ་སྒྱུར་དུ་འཕྲོབ།

།བདག་མེད་གཅིག་ཏུ་བསྐྱོམས་པས་མིན།

The Great Lord has also spoken:

Those great beings
Who meditate
On the method,

And so upon
The various kinds
Of wisdom,

Achieve then
Enlightenment
With speed.

It cannot be done
By meditating
On no-self-nature alone.⁷⁴

།ཞེས་པ་དང་། ཇི་སྐྱེས་མ་རང་ཉིད་གྲིས་ཀྱང་།

།སེམས་བསྐྱེད་ཐེག་མཆོག་ལམ་གྱི་གཞུང་ཤིང་སྟེ།

Our Lord Lama himself says finally,

The Wish for enlightenment
Is the central beam
That holds up every path
Of the way which is supreme.⁷⁵

ཁྱེས་སོགས་པན་ཡོན་མཐའ་གྲས་པ་གསུངས་པ་ལྟར་རང་རེས་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་གོ་
འཕང་ཞིག་འདོད་ཕྱིན་ཆད་བྱང་རྒྱུ་གི་སེམས་བསྐྱེད་པ་འདི་མིད་ཐབས་མིད།

We can see from these and other works that the fine qualities of the Wish for enlightenment are limitless. From the first moment that you and I decide we are going to try to reach the state of a Buddha, this Wish for enlightenment is something we can never do without.

འདི་ཡོད་ན་ཡོན་ཏན་གཞན་གང་ཡང་མིད་ཀྱང་རྒྱལ་བའི་སྤྲས་ཞེས་བྱ་བའི་མིང་ཐོབ་
ཅིང་། ཐེག་ཆེན་པའི་གྲུ་ལྟ་བུ་རྒྱུ་རྟེན་ལ།

The minute we reach this state of mind, even if we have no other admirable qualities at all, we win the title of "Son (or Daughter) of the Buddha." We also then enter the ranks of people who live the greater way.

སེམས་འདི་མིད་པར་བདག་མིད་པའི་ལྟ་བ་བསྒྲུབ་པ་སོགས་ཡོན་ཏན་གཞན་ཇི་འདྲ་
ཡོད་ཀྱང་འཆང་རྒྱ་རྒྱུ་ལྟ་བུ་རྟེན་ལ། ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་གྲུ་ལྟ་བུ་འདྲ་མི་རྒྱུད་པས་ན། བྱང་རྒྱུ་
ཏུ་སེམས་བསྐྱེད་པ་གལ་ཆེ།

If though we lack this great Wish, then it doesn't matter how many great virtues we might possess—abilities like being able to meditate on the ultimate view, where we see that things have no nature of their own. We still won't be able to join the ranks of those on the greater way, much less reach enlightenment. And so the Wish is vital.

དེ་ལ་སྦྱོས་བྱ་རྒྱུ་འབྲིང་སྐབས་ངན་སོང་དང་འཁོར་བའི་སྤྲུག་བསྐྱེད་རང་སྤྱིང་དུ་
བསྒྲུབས་པས་ངེས་འབྱུང་སྦྱོས་ཡོད་ཆོ།

In the sections where we trained ourselves in the steps that are shared with practitioners of lesser and medium capacity, we meditated on the sufferings of the lower realms, and of the entire circle of life, but relative only to ourselves. In this way we developed the virtue of a healthy disgust for the kind of life we live.

འདིར་གཞན་སྤྱིང་དུ་ཁ་སྦྱོས་ཏེ་བསམས་ན་སྤྱིང་ཇི་སོགས་སྦྱོ་བ་འོང་བས། བྱང་རྒྱུ་

ལམ་རིམ་ལས་གསུངས་པ་ལྟར་གྱི་མན་ངག་རྒྱ་འབྲས་བདུན་མ་དང་། བདག་གཞན་
མཉམ་བཞེད་སྒོ་ནས་སྒོ་རིམ་གྱིས་སྤངས་ཏེ།

Here you take the same thoughts and transfer them—you try to feel them relative to the condition that others are in. Then compassion and the other attitudes will start to grow within you; train your mind thus in the proper progression, using either the "seven-part, cause-and-effect instruction," or else the practice called "exchanging self and others," following these methods as the books on the Steps of the path to Buddhahood describe them.⁷⁶

སེམས་བསྐྱེད་གྱི་སྤྱོད་བ་སྒྲ་ཟིན་ཅམ་སྐྱེས་པ་སོགས་ནས་སྒོན་འཇུག་གི་སེམས་ཆོ་
གས་བབྱང་བ་སོགས་ལ་སྒོ་བ་པ་དགོས།

You must train yourself in all the relevant details; an example would be committing yourself through formal rituals to the Wish as a prayer and to the Wish as actual action, once you had reached a point such as finding your first strong feelings of familiarity with the Wish.

དེས་ན་གཞུང་འདིས་བསྟན་པའི་དོན་ཡང་། རང་ཉིད་སྤྱིད་པ་སྒྲིལ་ཁོར་བ་སྤྱད་བསྐྱེད་
གྱི་རྒྱ་མཚོ་གཏིང་དང་མཐའ་མི་མངོན་ལ། ལས་ཉོན་དང་སྐྱེ་ག་ན་འཆི་བའི་བ་སྤྱོད་བྲག་
ཏུ་འབྲུགས་པའི་ནང་དུ་ལྷུང་ནས།

The meaning of the root text here then is as follows. *I myself have slipped and fallen into the sea of the pain of this suffering life; that is, I have dropped into the ocean of the circle of births. I cannot even guess how deep it is, nor how far its edges lie. The great sea-waves of my deeds and the afflictions of my mind, of birth and getting old and death, rage around me.*

སྤྱད་བསྐྱེད་གྱི་སྤྱད་བསྐྱེད་། འགྱུར་བའི་སྤྱད་བསྐྱེད་། བྱུང་པ་འདུ་བྱེད་གྱི་སྤྱད་
བསྐྱེད་གསུམ་གྱི་རྒྱ་སྤྱོད་གསུམ་པ་ཅན་དུ་མས་དུས་ཏུ་གཅོས་ཏེ་སྤྱད་བསྐྱེད་
བཟོད་དཀའ་བས་བར་མཚམས་མེད་པར་མནར་བ་ཇི་ལྟ་བུ་དེ་བཞིན་དུ།

A great host of ruthless creatures living in the water rise up and attack me constantly; these are the three sufferings—the suffering of outright pain, the suffering of pleasure that changes, and the suffering of simply being alive. They rip at me, they torture me, relentlessly, unceasingly.

ཆོ་རབས་ཐོག་མ་མེད་པའི་དུས་ནས་བློ་ཆེན་པོའི་སྒོ་ནས་ཡང་དང་ཡང་དུ་བསྐྱེད་ས་
པའི་མར་གྱུར་པའི་འགོ་བ་ཀུན་ཏེ་

And the same thing is happening to *every* other *living being*. *Every one* of them has in the past been *my own mother*; in the beginningless string of lives I have lived through, they cared for me and sheltered me, with incredible kindness.

“སེམས་ཅན་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱང་དེ་དང་འདྲ་བར་སྤྱག་བསྐྱེད་དུ་མས་ཉམས་ཐག་པའི་ཚུལ་
མཐོང་ནས། དེ་ལྟ་བུའི་འགོ་བ་རྣམས་གཞན་ལ་རག་མ་ལས་པར་རང་ཉིད་གཅིག་
ཕུས་སྤྱག་བསྐྱེད་ཀྱི་དང་བཅས་པ་ལས་སྒྲོལ། བདེ་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་དང་ལྡན་པར་བྱེད་
པའི་ཁྱུང་འབྱུང་ཞིང་། ལྷག་པར་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་གོ་འཕང་ལའང་བདག་རང་གིས་
དགོད་སྒྲུལ་དུ།

I must learn to *see* how all these fellow beings *have fallen in too*, how they have been thrown down into misery by this mass of suffering. And then I must resolve to *take upon myself the task of freeing them all* from every pain, and from every cause of pain. I must assure they reach every form of happiness. I will do it myself, alone, without waiting or depending on anyone else. Beyond everything, I myself will see to it that every one of them climbs to the state of a Buddha.

མ་ཁྱེད་སེམས་ཅན་རྣམས་བདེ་བས་ཐོངས་ཤིང་སྤྱག་བསྐྱེད་གྱིས་མནར་བ་ལ་ཆེས་མི་
བཟོད་པའི་བྱམས་པ་དང་སྙིང་ཇེ་ཤྲགས་དྲག་པོས་ཀུན་ནས་བསྐྱེད་ས་པའི་བྱང་ཆུབ་
སེམས་མཆོག་བཅོས་མ་མ་ཡིན་པར་གོམས་པ་ཡོངས་སུ་ཕྱོགས་པའི་སྒོ་སྤྲོད་ཐོག་
འདི་ག་རང་དུ་འགྱོད་ས་པའམ་སྐྱེ་རྒྱས་པར་གསོལ་བ་བཏབ་པ་ཡིན་གསུངས།

In short, said our Lama, we are asking our Lama for the ability to find fierce feelings of love and compassion, states of mind where we can bear not a moment longer to watch our fellow, mother beings live so bereft of happiness, and so plagued by suffering. We are asking that these feelings inspire in us the *highest* aspiration, the true and uncontrived *Wish for enlightenment*. And we are asking our Lama for the ability to meditate upon this Wish, and *practice* it, and make it totally perfect, right here, on this very seat, before we stand up again.

VIII. General Training in Bodhisattva Activities

གཉིས་པ་སེམས་བསྐྱེད་ནས་སྟོད་པ་ལ་སྟོབ་པའི་ཚུལ་ལ་གཉིས། མདོ་ཕྱོགས་ལ་
སྟོབ་ཚུལ་དང་། སྡགས་ཕྱོགས་ལ་སྟོབ་ཚུལ་ལོ། དང་པོ་མདོ་ཕྱོགས་ཀྱི་སྟོད་པ་ལ་
སྟོབ་པའི་ཚུལ་ལའང་གཉིས་ལས། དང་པོ་སྟོད་པ་སྟོབ་ཚུལ་ནི།

With this we have reached the second division to the instruction on how to train one's mind in the Steps of the path for persons of greater spiritual capacity. This division covers training yourself in the activities of a bodhisattva, once you have managed to achieve the Wish for enlightenment just described.

Our discussion proceeds in two parts: training in the open half of the bodhisattva activities, and training in the secret half of the bodhisattva activities. The former has two steps as well; the first of these explains how to train oneself in the activities as a whole, and is presented in a single verse of the root text.

།སེམས་ཅམ་བསྐྱེད་ཀྱང་ཚུལ་བྲིམས་ནམ་གསུམ་ལ།
།གོམས་པ་མེད་ན་བྱང་ཆུབ་མི་འགྲུབ་པར།
།ལེགས་པར་མཐོང་ནས་རྒྱལ་སྤྲུལ་སྟོམ་པ་ལ།
།བརྩོན་པ་དྲག་པོས་སྟོབ་པར་བྱིན་གྱིས་སྟོབས།
།ཞེས་པའི་སྟོོ་ཀ་གཅིག་སྟེ།

(8)

Bless me to see clearly
That the Wish itself
Is not enough,
For if I'm not well trained
In the three moralities,
I cannot become a Buddha.
Grant me then
A fierce resolve
To master the vows
For the children of the Victors.

དེ་ལྟར་སྒྲར་བཤད་པ་བཞིན་སེམས་ཅན་གྱི་དོན་དུ་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་གོ་འཕང་ཐོབ་པར་
བྱེད་སྒྲུལ་པའི་སེམས་ཅན་ཞིག་བསྐྱེད་པར་བྱས་ཀྱང་། སེམས་བསྐྱེད་ནས་རྒྱལ་སྤྲུལ་
ཀྱི་ཕྱོམ་པ་བཟུང་སྟེ་སྤྱིན་སོགས་པར་བྱིན་དུག་ལ་མ་བསྐྱབ་པར་འཆང་རྒྱ་བར་མི་
འགྱུར་ལ།

Suppose you are able, as described above, to reach *the Wish* for enlightenment, where you truly hope to achieve the state of a Buddha in order to help every living being. This *itself is not enough*. Once you do reach the Wish, you must still take on the vows of these bodhisattva princes and princesses, these sons and daughters of the victorious Buddhas. And then you must train yourself in giving and the other five perfections. Otherwise there is no way you could ever come to enlightenment.

དེས་ན་འདིར་པར་བྱིན་དུག་རྒྱལ་བླེམས་ནས་པ་གསུམ་དུ་བསྐྱས་ཏེ་གསུངས་པ་ཏེ་
ཅང་གནད་ཆེ་སྟེ།

This fact explains why it is so very important when holy beings have said that all six perfections⁷⁷ are covered in the three types of morality.

སྤྱིར་སེར་སྐྱ་གང་ཡིན་ཡང་ངེས་པར་བསྐྱང་དགོས་པའི་བསྐྱང་བྱ་བཅན་མོང་བ་མི་དག་གི་
བཅུ་སྟོང་གི་རྒྱལ་བླེམས་ལེགས་པར་བསྐྱང་བའི་ཐོག་

The first type is called the "morality of keeping oneself from committing wrong." Here you begin by being extremely careful to keep the morality of avoiding the ten bad deeds.⁷⁸ This type of good behavior is common to everyone, whether they wear the robes or not, and must absolutely be maintained.

བྱེ་བྲག་རྩ་རང་རང་གིས་སོ་ཐར། བྱང་སེམས། གསང་སྤྲུགས་ཏེ་ཕྱོམ་པ་གསུམ་
གང་ཁས་སྒྲངས་པ་དེ་དང་དེའི་བཅས་མཆོམས་དང་འགལ་བའི་ཉེས་པས་ནས་ཡང་མ་
གོས་པའི་ཐབས་ལ་ནན་ཏན་ཆེན་པོའི་སྒོ་ནས་འབད་པར་བྱེད་པ་ཉེས་སྟོན་ཕྱོམ་པའི་
རྒྱལ་བླེམས།

Course III: Applied Meditation
Reading Ten

More specifically, with this first type of morality, you must in addition exert yourself to the fullest, so to assure that your life is never sullied in the least by overstepping the bounds of any of the vows you have agreed to keep. Here we refer to vows that belong to any of the three traditional sets: the freedom vows, the bodhisattva vows, and the secret vows.⁷⁹

བསོད་ནམས་དང་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཏེ་ཚོགས་གཉིས་ཀྱིས་བསྐྱུས་པའི་དགེ་ཅུ་རྒྱུ་པ་པོ་ཆེ་
ནམས་ཐབས་སྒྲ་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་སྒོ་ནས་རང་རྒྱུད་ལ་སྤྱད་པར་བྱེད་པ་དགེ་བའི་ཚེས་སྤྱད་
པའི་ཚུལ་བྱིས་པ།

The second type of morality is known as the "morality of collecting goodness." This is where you use a great variety of means to gather or collect extremely potent stores of virtue into your being; these are the virtues of amassing merit and wisdom.⁸⁰

སྒྲར་བཤད་པའི་སྒྲུལ་པའི་ཚུལ་བྱིས་པ་དེ་ནམས་རང་དོན་ཡིད་བྱེད་ཀྱིས་མ་བསྐྱུད་པར་
སེམས་ཅན་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་ཕྱིར་རྫོགས་བྱུང་དོན་དུ་གཉེར་བ་ཁོ་ནའི་ཆེད་དུ་བསྐྱུང་བ་
སེམས་ཅན་དོན་བྱེད་ཀྱི་ཚུལ་བྱིས་པ་ཡིན་པས།

The third type of morality is the "morality that acts for every sentient being." Here you take care to keep the different varieties of morality mentioned above that involve restraining yourself from wrong; but instead of doing so with a motivation which is infected with any self-interest, you act only out of an intention to reach total Buddhahood for the sake of all living kind.

དེ་ལྟར་བྱའི་ཚུལ་བྱིས་པ་ནམ་པ་གསུམ་ལ་གོམས་ཤིང་འདྲིས་པར་བྱས་པའི་སྤྱོད་བ་ཆེན་
པོ་ཞིག་མེད་ན། སྒྲ་ན་མེད་པ་ཡང་དག་པར་རྫོགས་པའི་བྱུང་རྒྱུ་ཀྱི་གོ་འཕང་མི་
འགྲུབ་པར་ལེགས་པར་མཐོང་བའི་ངེས་པ་བརྟན་པོ་རྟོན་ནས།

You must find a sure kind of knowledge where you *see clearly* how—if you lack a total fluency in *these three types of morality*, if you are *not well trained* and completely accustomed to following them—then you *cannot become* one of those who has reached the fully enlightened state of *a Buddha*.

རྒྱལ་བའི་སྤྱོད་ཏེ་བྱུང་རྒྱུ་སེམས་དཔའི་སྒྲུལ་པ་བཟུང་ནས་ཚུལ་བྱིས་པ་ནམ་པ་

གསུམ་ལ་བརྩོན་པ་ཤུགས་དྲག་པོས་སློབ་རུས་པར་བྱིན་གྱིས་སློབས་ཞེས་པ་ཡིན་
གསུངས།

Once you have found this knowledge, you must take on *the vows for the "children of the Victors"* (that is, the bodhisattva vows), and then with a *resolve* of *fierce* intensity you must learn and *master* the three types of morality. What we are requesting of our Lama here, said our Lama, is that he or she *grant us* the ability to do so.

IX. Training in the Final Two Perfections

གཉིས་པ་པར་བྱིན་ཐ་མ་གཉིས་ལ་སློབ་ཚུལ་ནི།

Having presented the bodhisattva activities in general, we will now turn to the more particular description of how to train oneself in the final two perfections. This point is covered in the single verse of the root text which follows.

འཇོག་པའི་ཡུལ་ལ་གཡང་བ་ཞི་བྱེད་ཅིང་།
ཡང་དག་དོན་ལ་ཚུལ་བཞིན་དཔྱད་པ་ཡི།
ཞི་གནས་ལྷག་མཐོང་བྱང་དུ་འབྲེལ་བའི་ལམ།
སྦྱར་དུ་བྱུང་ལ་སྦྱོར་བར་བྱིན་གྱིས་སློབས།
ཞེས་པའི་སྒྲོ་ཀ་གཅིག་གིས་བསྟན།

(9)

Grant that I may quickly gain
The path where quietude
And insight join together;
One which quiets
My mind from being
Distracted to wrong objects,
The other which analyzes
The perfect meaning
In the correct way.

དེ་ཡང་ལོག་པའི་ཡུལ་ཞེས་པ་ཕྱིན་ཅི་ལོག་གི་ཡུལ་ལ་བྱ་དགོས་པ་དཔེར་ན། ཕྱི་
རོལ་པས་དེལ་ཤིང་སོགས་ལ་སེམས་བརྩུངས་ནས་ཏིང་ངེ་འཛིན་བསྒྲོམ་པ་ལྟ་བུ་སྟེ།
དེ་འདྲའི་སེམས་ཕྱི་རོལ་གྱི་ལོག་པའི་ཡུལ་ལ་རྣམ་པར་གཡེང་བ་ཞི་བའམ་མེད་པར་
བྱེད་ཅིང་།

The verse here speaks of objects which are "wrong"; this should be understood as referring to objects which are mistaken, in a particular sense. One example would be trying to develop meditative concentration by fixing the mind on a short stick of wood, as some non-Buddhists advocate. We must seek to "*quiet*" the mind—that is, stop the mind—from being distracted to these types of *wrong*, external objects.

བོད་ཁ་ཅིག་ལྟར་ཡིད་བྱེད་ཐམས་ཅད་བཀག་སྟེ་ནག་ཐོམ་མེ་བར་གནས་པ་ལ་ཞི་
གནས་དང་། དེ་ཐོག་ནས། སེམས་ཞེས་པ་དེ་དབྱིབས་དང་ཁ་དོག་གང་དུ་བྱུབ་
འདུག་བརྟགས་ནས་མ་རྟོག་པའི་སེམས་ཀྱི་ཀུན་རྫོབ་པའི་ངོ་བོ་སྟོང་སང་ཙམ་ལ་ལྟག་
མཐོང་དུ་བཤད་པ་ལྟ་བུ་མིན་པར།

There are Tibetan schools of the past too which have taught that meditative quietude consisted of not thinking about anything at all, just keeping the mind in some dark state of dullness. The high state of perfect insight then they explain as moving in this stupor to a realization of the pure and simple emptiness of the deceptive nature of the mind—except they describe this emptiness as what you come to when you analyze whether or not what we call the "mind" consists of any shape or color, and then fail to find that it's any such thing.

སྐུལ་ཚབ་བྱམས་པའི་དབུས་མཐའ་རྣམ་འབྱེད་ཀྱི་མན་ངག་ཇི་འཕམ་རིམ་ཆེ་ཆུང་
སོགས་ལས་གསུངས་པ་ལྟར་”

But none of these ideas is correct; rather, we must follow texts such as the briefer and more expanded explanations of the Steps to the path composed by the Lord himself, where he presents the instructions given by the Great Regent, Loving One, in his own work entitled *Separating the Middle and the Extremes*.

“ཉམས་པ་ལྷ་སྒྲོང་ཞིང་། གཉིན་པོ་འདུ་བྱེད་བརྒྱད་བསྟེན་པ་དང་། ཡིད་བྱེད་བཞི་དང་
ལྷན་པའི་སེམས་གནས་པ་དགུ་རིམ་བཞིན་བསྐྱབས་ཏེ།

These treatises describe how one progresses in steps by eliminating the five problems to meditation, taking the eight corrective actions, and achieving the nine mental states, complete with their four different modes.⁸¹

དགོ་བའི་དམིགས་རྣམ་གང་རུང་ཞིག་ལ་ཅེ་གཅིག་དུ་བཞག་པས་ལྷས་སེམས་ཤིན་
སྒྲུངས་ཀྱི་དགའ་བ་དེས་སྒྲུངས་པའི་ཞི་གནས་དང་།

One thus attains a kind of bliss, a total pliancy of body and mind, which comes from staying in one-pointed meditation on any virtuous object one chooses. This then leads to what we call meditative *quietude*.

ཡང་དག་སྟེ། བདག་མིད་པའི་དོན་ལ་སོ་སོར་རྟོག་པའི་ཤེས་རབ་ཀྱིས་ཚུལ་བཞིན་དུ་
དཔྱད་ཅིང་། དཔྱད་མཐར་ཆེད་པའི་ངེས་ཤེས་ཀྱི་དོན་ལ་མཉམ་པར་འཇོག་པའི་དཔྱད་
འཇོག་ཟུང་དུ་འབྲེལ་བ་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་བྱུང་བའི་ལྷས་སེམས་ཤིན་སྒྲུངས་ཀྱི་བདེ་བས་
ཟིན་པའི་ལྷག་མཐོང་བསྟོམ་པ་བཅས་”

The phrase “*perfect meaning*” here in the verse refers to a particular object: the fact that nothing has any nature of its own.⁸² A kind of wisdom used for examining the nature of something *analyzes* this object *in* a certain *correct way*, and by the end of its analysis comes to a definite conclusion. The mind stays in meditation upon this truth, such that the analysis and a fixation on this object *join* and work *together*. This brings on a feeling of bliss that fills the mind completely—and one has thus achieved what we call “*perfect insight*.”

“དེ་ལྷ་བྱའི་ཞི་གནས་དང་ལྷག་མཐོང་ཡ་མ་བྲལ་བར་ཉམས་སུ་སྒྲུངས་པ་ལ་བརྟེན་
ནས་ཞི་ལྷག་ཟུང་འབྲེལ་གྱི་རྟོགས་པ་བྱུང་པར་ཅན་སྒྱུར་བ་ཉིད་དུ་རྒྱུད་ལ་སྦྱི་བར་བྱིན་
གྱིས་སྒྲོབས་ཤིག་ཅེས་གསོལ་བ་བཏབ་པའོ།

We seek to practice this process, where quietude and insight are no longer separated one from the other. When we recite the verse we are asking our Lama to *grant that*, as a result, *we may quickly gain* within our minds that exceptional form of realization where meditative quietude and perfect insight join together.

SECRET STEPS FOR THOSE OF GREATER CAPACITY

X. Entering the Way of the Diamond

གཉིས་པ་སྒྲགས་ཕྱོགས་ཀྱི་སྟོད་པ་ལ་སྟོབ་པའི་ཚུལ་ལ་གསུམ། སྟོད་སྟོད་རུང་དུ་
བྱས་ནས་དབང་བཞི་རྣམ་པར་དག་པ་ནས་ཏེ་དེ་ཅེས་ཐེག་པ་ལ་འཇུག་པ། དབང་དུས་
ཀྱི་ཁས་སྒྲངས་པའི་དམ་ཚིག་དང་སྟོམ་པ་དག་པར་བྱ་ཚུལ། དམ་སྟོམ་ལ་གནས་ནས་
ལམ་རིམ་པ་གཉིས་བསྟོམ་པའི་ཚུལ་ལོ། དང་པོ་ནི།

This brings us to the second part of our discussion about the activities of a bodhisattva: training oneself in the secret half of these endeavors. Here there are three different Steps: how to enter into the Way of the Diamond by making oneself a worthy vessel and then receiving a pure form of the four empowerments; how to keep pure the pledges and vows that one took on when he received the empowerments; and how to meditate upon the two stages of this path, as one continues to maintain his pledges and vows. The first of these three is presented in the single verse of the root text which follows.

ལྷན་མོང་ལམ་སྒྲངས་སྟོད་དུ་གྱུར་པ་ན།
ཐེག་པ་ཀུན་གྱི་མཚོག་གྱུར་དེ་ཅེས་ཐེག
སྐལ་བཟང་སྐྱེ་བའི་འཇུག་ངོགས་དམ་པ་དེར།
ཁད་ལྷག་ཉིད་དུ་འཇུག་པར་བྱིན་གྱིས་སྟོབས།
ཞེས་པའི་སྟོན་ཀ་གཅིག་གསུངས་ཏེ།

(10)

Grant that once I've practiced well
The paths shared and become
A vessel that is worthy,
I enter with perfect ease
The Way of the Diamond,
Highest of all ways,
Holiest door to come inside
For the fortunate and the good.

དེ་ལྟར་མདོ་སྒྲགས་གཉིས་ཀ་ལ་མེད་དུ་མི་རུང་བའི་ཐུན་མོང་བའི་ལམ་གྱི་རིམ་པ་སྟེ་
དང་། བྱད་པར་དུ་ངེས་འབྱུང་བྱང་སེམས་ཡང་དག་པའི་ལྷ་བ་སྟེ་ལམ་གྱི་གཙོ་བོ་རྣམ་
གསུམ་གྱི་རྒྱུད་ལོགས་པར་སྦྱངས་ཏེ་བྱང་རྒྱུ་གྱི་སེམས་ལྷགས་དག་ཏུ་སྦྱོས་པ་སྟེ་ན་
དུ་མོང་ནས་གསང་སྒྲགས་ལ་འཇུག་རུང་གི་སྟོན་དུ་གྱུར་པ་དེའི་ཆོ་ན།

You must first have *practiced well* the general Steps of the *path* which are "shared" by both the open and the secret teachings; that is, which are so important for both that you could never succeed without them. More specifically, you must have trained your mind well in the three principal paths: renunciation, the Wish for enlightenment, and the correct view of reality.⁸³ On top of this you must have as your motivation a very fierce desire to reach enlightenment for the sake of every living being. These then make you a *vessel that is worthy to enter* the Way of the Secret Word.

འབྲས་བུ་ལམ་དུ་བྱེད་པ་སོགས་ཡོད་པའི་ཆ་ནས་ཉན་ཐོས་དང་རང་རྒྱལ་དང་བྱང་
རྒྱུ་སེམས་དཔའི་ཐེག་པ་ཀུན་གྱི་མཆོག་ཏུ་གྱུར་པ་གསང་སྒྲགས་རྟོ་རྟེན་ཐེག་པ་ལ་
འཇུག་དགོས་ཤིང་།

When this time has come you must surely enter the "Way of the Diamond"; which is to say, this Way of the Secret Word. It is the *highest of all* the "different ways"—the ways of the listeners, the self-made Buddhas, and the bodhisattvas.⁸⁴ What makes the Diamond Way higher is that it has certain unique features, such as using the goal of practice as a path to the goal.

རྟོ་རྟེན་སྐད་དོད་བཟླ་ཞེས་པ་དབྱེར་མི་བྱེད་པ་ལ་འཇུག་པས་ན། རྟོ་རྟེན་ངེས་དོན་གྱི་
ཐུགས་རྟོ་རྟེན་ལྷ་བུའི་ཏིང་ངེ་འཛིན་ནམ། ཐབས་བདེ་བ་ཆེན་པོ་དང་ཤེས་རབ་སྣང་བ་
ཉིད་གཉིས་དབྱེར་མི་བྱེད་པའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་དེ་ཉིད་ཡིན་ལ།

The Tibetan word for "diamond" here is *dorje*. This is a translation of the Sanskrit word *vajra*—a term that has the basic meaning of "inseparable." The "diamond" here is the actual diamond of the holy mind of the Buddha; that deep state of meditation which can only be compared to a diamond. You can also say it refers to that one type of wisdom which is the inseparable combination of what we call "method" (great bliss) and "wisdom" (emptiness).

ཐེག་པ་ཞེས་པ་བཞོན་པའི་མིང་སྟེ། རྗེ་མཆོའི་ཐེག་པ་ཞེས་པ་འང་རྗེ་མཆོའི་བཞོན་པ་ཞེས་པ་
ལྟ་བུར་ཡོད་པས། ཕར་ཕྱིན་ཐེག་པར་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་གོ་འཕང་གངས་མིད་གསུམ་གྱི་
ཡུན་ལ་སྐྱབ་དགོས་ཕྱིར་བཞོན་པ་མིད་པར་རྟེན་གྱིས་བགྲོད་པའི་ཚོད་ཙམ་དུ་
འགོར་བ་ཡིན་ཞིང་།

The word for "way" here has a meaning of "conveyance"—something you get on and ride to reach a destination. The "diamond way" mentioned here is thus a kind of "diamond conveyance" as well. In the way of the perfections, one must carry on his practice for three "countless" eons in order to reach Buddhahood.⁸⁵ This takes so long that it's almost as if you were walking on foot, rather than travelling on any sort of conveyance.

གསང་སྒྲགས་རྗེ་མཆོའི་ཐེག་པ་ལ་བཞེན་ན་དེ་ལྟར་མི་དགོས་པར་བྱང་འཇུག་གི་གོ་
འཕང་སྒྲིགས་དུས་ཀྱི་ཆོ་བུང་གཅིག་གསུམ། ལོ་གསུམ་ཕྱོགས་གསུམ་ཙམ་གྱི་རིང་ལ་
འཐོབ་པར་བྱེད་ཀྱིས་པས་ཏྲ་བཟང་པོ་བང་ཙམ་ཅན་ཞོན་པ་ལྟར་འཆང་བྱ་བའི་ཐབས་ཏྲ་
ཅང་ཟབ་ཅིང་སྒྱུར་ལ།

If though you use the Diamond Way, the Way of the Secret Word, no such length of time is needed: you can attain the state of secret Buddhahood, Union, in the length of but one lifetime—even in one of the very short kinds of life that we have here now, in the age of degeneration. In fact it's possible to reach Buddhahood in no more than three years and three months. This way then is a method which is incredibly deep and quick; more like riding a fine racehorse.

ཉན་ཐོས་དང་རང་སངས་རྒྱས་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་རང་ཉིད་གཅིག་པུའི་ཞི་བདེ་དོན་དུ་གཉིར་
བས་གཞན་དོན་ཁུར་དུ་འབྱེད་བའི་སྐལ་བ་དམན་པ་དང་། བྱང་རྒྱལ་སེམས་དཔའ་
རྣམས་ཀྱིས་ནི་རང་བདེ་ཡལ་བར་དོར་ནས། གཞན་དོན་འབའ་ཞིག་ལ་ཞུགས་ཏེ་དོན་
གཉིས་མཐར་ཕྱིན་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་གོ་འཕང་སྐྱབ་པའི་སྐལ་བ་བཟང་པོ་དང་ལྷན་པ་
ཡིན་པས།

The kinds of practitioners that we call "listeners" and "self-made Buddhas" aspire only to reach a state of blissful peace, and this too only for themselves. They are deficient therefore in that fortunate kind of good virtue that makes one want to take on the burden of helping others. Bodhisattvas, on the other hand, disregard completely their own comfort and work only for the good of others. They are full of the wonderful fortune and goodness that enables them to reach the state of a perfect Buddha, and the ability to fulfil, totally, the ultimate needs of both others and themselves.

དེ་ལྟའི་སྐལ་བཟང་སྐྱེ་བོ་བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་དཔའ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་འཇུག་དོགས་ཏེ་ལམ་ལ་
འཇུག་པའི་སྒོ་དམ་པའམ་མཆོག་ཏུ་གྱུར་པ་གསང་སྤྲུགས་དོ་ཇེ་ཐེག་པའི་དབང་བཞི་
ལེགས་པར་རྟོས་པས་སྐྱབ་ཞིའི་ས་བོན་ཐེབས་ངེས་སུ་བྱས་ཏེ་གསང་སྤྲུགས་སྤྲུ་མེད་དོ་
ཇེ་ཐེག་པའི་ལམ་ཟབ་མོ་དེ་ལྟ་བུར་བདེ་སྤྲུག་ཉིད་དུ་འཇུག་ལུས་པར་བྱིན་གྱིས་སྒྲོབས་
ཤིག་ཅེས་པ་ཡིན་གསུངས།

What is the "*holiest*" (meaning highest) *door*, or gateway, for bodhisattvas; for these people who are so *fortunate and good—to come inside* this path? It is receiving the four empowerments of the Diamond Way, the Way of the Secret Word, and receiving them perfectly, so that they are sure to plant the seeds for the four bodies of a Buddha.

What we are requesting in this verse then, said our Lama, is that our Lama grant us the ability to enter, *with perfect ease*, the profound path just described: the Way of the Diamond, the unsurpassed form of the Secret Word.

XI. Keeping Vows and Pledges Pure

གཉིས་པ་དབང་དུས་ཀྱི་ཁས་སྒྲངས་པའི་དམ་ཆོག་དང་སྡོམ་པ་དག་པར་བྱ་བའི་ཚུལ་
ནི།

With this we have reached the second Step to training oneself in the secret half of the bodhisattva activities; that is, how to keep pure the pledges and vows that one took on when he received his secret empowerment. This Step too is presented in a single verse of the root text:

།དེ་ཆོ་དངོས་གྲུབ་ནམ་གཉིས་འགྲུབ་པའི་གཞི།
།ནམ་ད་དམ་ཆོག་སྒྲུབ་པར་གསུངས་པ་ལ།
།བཅོས་མ་མིན་པའི་ངེས་པ་རྟེན་གྱུར་ནས།
།སྟོག་དང་བསྟོན་ཏེ་བསྐྱེད་བར་བྱིན་གྱིས་སྟོབས།
།ཞེས་པའི་སྟོོ་ཀ་གཅིག་གིས་བསྟན་ཅིང་།

(11)

Bless me to know
With genuine certainty
That when I've entered thus,
The cause that gives me
Both the attainments
Is keeping my pledges
And vows most pure.
Grant me then
To always keep them
Even if it costs my life.

དེ་ཡང་གསང་སྐྱབས་དོན་མེད་པའི་སྟོན་རུ་དུ་གྱུར་ནས་དབང་བཞི་ལགས་པར་ཐོབ་
པ་དེའི་ཆོ།

Now suppose *you have entered thus*—you have made yourself a vessel which is worthy of the Diamond Way, the Way of the Secret Word; and you have received, in the proper manner, the four different empowerments. If you then follow the correct method you can gain *both the attainments*: the one we call the "ultimate," and the one we describe as "shared."

མཆོག་གི་དངོས་གྲུབ་མི་སྟོབ་པའི་བྱང་འཇུག་སྐྱལ་བ་དོན་ཅེ་འཆང་གི་གོ་འཕང་དང་།

The ultimate attainment is reaching secret Union, where there is nothing more to be learned. This is the state of the Victorious One, the Keeper of the Diamond.

རལ་གྱི། མིག་སྒྲན། ཀླང་མགྲོགས། རི་ལུ། ས་འོག་མི་སྐྱང་བ། བཅུད་ལེན།

མཁའ་སྤྱོད་ཀྱི་དངོས་གྲུབ་བཅས་གྲུབ་པ་ཆེན་པོ་བརྒྱད་ལ་སོགས་པའི་ཐུན་མོངས་གི་
དངོས་གྲུབ་སྟེ་...

The shared attainments are those such as the "eight great attainments." These include the special powers known as the sword, the eye ointment, swift feet, the pill, passing underground, disappearing, taking essence, and sky walking.⁸⁶

...དངོས་གྲུབ་རྣམས་པ་གཉིས་གང་ལས་སྐྱབ་པའི་གཞིར་མ། བརྟེན་ས་ལྟ་བུ་ནི་དབང་གི་
དུས་སྟུགས་ཁས་ལེན་པའི་རྩ་བ་དང་ཡན་ལག་གི་དམ་ཆོག་དང་སྒྲིམ་པ་མཐའ་དག་
རྣམས་པར་དག་པར་བསྐྱུང་བ་ཉིད་ཡིན་པས།

What then is it that can *give* you these attainments? Their *cause* or foundation, the very support that holds them all up, is one thing, and only one: to *keep most pure* every one of the root and secondary *pledges and vows* which you took upon yourself when you were granted the empowerments.

བྱང་སེམས་ཀྱི་རྩ་ལྟུང་བཙོ་བརྒྱད་དང་། ཉེས་བྱས་ཞི་བུག །གསང་སྤྲགས་ཀྱི་རྩ་ལྟུང་
བཅུ་བཞི་དང་། སྒྲིམ་པོ་བརྒྱད། གཞན་ཡང་རིགས་ལྔ་སྟེ་བྱེ་བྲག་གི་དམ་ཆོག་རྣམས་
ཚུལ་བཞིན་བསྐྱུང་དགོས་ཤིང་།

We must therefore honor and keep, just as we are required, the various vows and pledges. For the bodhisattva vows, this means never committing any of the eighteen root downfalls, or the forty-six secondary violations. For the secret vows, it involves avoiding perfectly the fourteen root downfalls and the eight serious offenses, while being sure to honor the general and also the individual pledges of the Five Classes.

དེ་ཡང་། མི་ཤེས་པ། མ་གུས་པ། བག་མེད་པ། ཉོན་མོངས་མང་བ་སྟེ་ལྟུང་བ་
འབྱུང་བའི་སྒོ་བཞི་པོ་མ་བཀག་པར་བསྐྱུང་མི་རུས།

You will never be able to protect all your pledges and vows unless you manage to slam shut the four doors through which the downfalls make their appearance. These four are ignorance, disrespect, carelessness, and particularly severe mental afflictions.

དེ་དག་པ་འཛིན་ཆུང་ལ་ནི། ལྷུང་བ་འབྱུང་ཆུང་ལ་རྣམས་ཤེས་པ། ལས་འབྲས་བསམས་
ནས་བསྐྱབ་པ་ལ་གྲུས་པ། རྒྱུན་དུ་བྲན་པ་དང་ཤེས་བཞིན་ལ་གནས་པ། ཉོན་མོངས་
གང་ཤས་ཆེ་བའི་གཉེན་པོ་བསྐྱེན་པ་རྣམས་ཡིན་ཅིང་།

To keep these doors closed we must, respectively, learn and know when and how a downfall occurs. We must contemplate the laws of actions and their consequences, thereby gaining a deep respect for the various instructions on how to keep these commitments. We must remain in a constant state of recollection and watchfulness. Finally, we must employ the antidote that will work against the particular mental affliction that happens to be our own most serious problem.

བྱང་སེམས་དང་སྤྲགས་ཀྱི་བསྐྱབ་བྱའི་སྒྲོར་རྣམས་ཇེ་ཙོང་ཁ་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་གསུང་བྱང་
སེམས་བསྐྱབ་བྱ་བྱང་རྒྱུ་གཞུང་ལམ་དང་། གསང་སྤྲགས་ཀྱི་ཙུང་ལྷུང་རྣམ་པའདད་
དངོས་གྲུབ་སྒྲེ་མ་སོགས་དང་།

As for where to find instructions on the vows and pledges, you can use a number of works by the Lord, Tsongkapa. Some examples would be his treatise called *Highway to Buddhahood* for advice on the bodhisattva vows, or the *Golden Harvest of Attainments* for a complete explanation of the root downfalls in the secret vows.

ཉུང་མཐར་སྡོམ་གསུམ་བསྐྱབ་བྱ་རྟོར་བྱའི་འོད་འཕྲེང་དང་། སྤྲགས་བྱང་སེམས་ཀྱི་བསྐྱབ་
བྱའི་སྡོམས་ཆོག་ལྟ་བུ་བསྐྱབ་བྱ་རྒྱས་བསྐྱུས་ཅི་ལྟོགས་ལས་ངེས་པར་བྱས་ཏེ་བསྐྱུང་དགོས།

At the very least you should study the book of advices on the three sets of vows known as the *String of Shining Jewels*, or one of those summaries in verse that teach about the secret and bodhisattva vows.⁸⁷ Use any of these presentations, brief or long, according to the time you have available to you; come to a firm understanding of each of the vows and pledges, and then at all costs keep them.

དེ་ལྟར་བསྐྱུངས་ཏེ་དམ་སྡོམ་ལ་ཆུང་བཞིན་དུ་གནས་པ་ཞིག་བྱུང་སྟེན་ཆད་ལམ་
བསྐྱེད་ཇོགས་བསྐྱོམ་པ་སོགས་ལ་འབད་པ་ཆེན་པོ་མ་བྱུང་པར་ཆོ་འདིར་ས་ལམ་
མཐར་སྟེན་པ་མ་བྱུང་ཡང་།

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Let's say you are able to keep your vows and pledges as described—you live your life in proper accordance with them all. Certain results will follow then, even if you find yourself unable to make great efforts in practices such as meditation on the stages of creation and completion, and so therefore fail during this life to reach the final end of the various paths and levels.

དམ་ཆོག་དང་སྒྲིབ་པ་དག་པར་གྱུར་པའི་སྒྲོབས་ཀྱིས་སྐྱེ་བ་བརྒྱད་མར་སྤྲུགས་སྤྱོད་
པའི་རྟོན་བྱ་དཔར་ཅན་འཕྲོ་བ་ཅིང་། རྟོ་རྩེ་སྒྲོབ་དཔོན་མཚན་ལྡན་དང་མཇུག་གསང་
སྤྲུགས་ཀྱི་ལམ་ཉམས་སྤྱོད་ལེན་ནུས་པ་ཤ་སྟག་ཏུ་གྱུར་ཏེ་”

The immense power of the purity of your pledges and vows will lead you over the string of your future lives to attain a very special kind of life, where you can practice the secret teachings. You will always meet an authentic Diamond Master—one who teaches you the secret way. And you will always find yourself able to put the secret paths into actual practice.

”སྐྱེ་བ་བརྒྱན་ནམ། དམའ་མཐའ་དང་སྐྱེ་བ་བཅུ་དྲུག་ཚུན་ཆད་དུ་ངེས་པར་འཆང་བྱ་
བར་སྒྲོན་པ་རྟོ་རྩེ་འཆང་གིས་གསང་བའི་མཛོད་ཀྱི་རྒྱུད་ལས།

As such you will, without a doubt, be able to reach total enlightenment within seven lifetimes, or in sixteen at the very most. On this our Teacher, the Keeper of the Diamond, has spoken the following in the *Tantra of the Treasure of Secrets*:

།དབང་བསྐྱར་ཡང་དག་སྤྱོན་ལྡན་ན།

།སྐྱེ་དང་སྐྱེ་བར་དབང་བསྐྱར་འགྱུར།

།དེ་ཡིས་སྐྱེ་བ་བརྒྱན་ལ་ནི།

།མ་བསྐྱོམས་པར་ཡང་དངོས་གྲུབ་ཐོབ།

If the person is granted
A pure empowerment,

Then life after life
Will the power be given.

Within seven lives
The goal is reached,

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Even if the person
Does not meditate.

།གང་ལ་བསྒོམ་པ་དང་ལྷན་ཞིང་།
།གལ་ཏེ་དམ་ཚིག་སྒོམ་ལ་གནས།
།སླེ་འདིར་ལས་དབང་གིས་མ་འགྲུབ།
།སླེ་བ་གཞན་དུ་དངོས་གྲུབ་ཐོབ།

But those who keep
The meditation,

And further maintain
Their pledges and vows

Will reach the goal
Within this life or,

Past deeds preventing,
At least in the next.⁸⁸

ཅིས་དང་། རྣམ་གྲོལ་ལྷ་བས།
།མ་བསྒོམ་སྐྱུར་ཀྱང་ལྷང་མེད་ན།
།སླེ་བ་བཅུ་དྲུག་དག་ན་འགྲུབ།

Vibhuti Chandra says as well,

Even should he fail to meditate,
A person will reach the goal
Within the length of sixteen lives,
So long as a downfall has not occurred.⁸⁹

ཅིས་པ་དང་། དམ་ཚིག་ལྷ་པ་ལས་ཀྱང་།
།གལ་ཏེ་ལྷང་བ་མེད་གྱུར་ན།
།སླེ་བ་བཅུ་དྲུག་དག་ན་འགྲུབ།

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The *Book of the Five Pledges* concurs:

As long as there is no downfall,
The goal is reached in sixteen lives.⁹⁰

ཁྱེས་སོགས་གྲུད་དང་གྲུབ་ཆེན་དུ་མས་ལན་ཅིག་མ་ཡིན་པར་གསུངས་པས། དེ་
འདྲའི་བཀའ་བསྟུན་བ་མེད་པ་ལ་བཅོས་མ་མིན་པའི་ངེས་པའམ་ཡིད་ཆེས་བདུན་པོ་
གཞན་ཡིས་བསྐྱར་དུ་མི་བརྟུབ་པའི་གཏིང་ཕྱིན་པ་རྟེན་པར་གྱུར་ནས་སྟོག་དང་
བསྟོས་...

You must come to *know* these facts *with genuine certainty*—that is, you must seek a kind of firm belief in them that is deeply rooted within you, so much that no one else could ever change your mind. And because of this knowledge you must then protect your commitments, "*even if it costs your life.*"

“ཞེས་པ་དཔེར་ན། ལུ་སྟོགས་པ་དང་གྲ་གྲོ་ལྟ་བུ་མི་བསུན་པའི་སྐྱེ་བོ་སྟོག་པོ་ཆེ་ཞེས་
གིས། བྱོད་སྟོམ་པ་དམ་ཐིག་འདི་ཆོ་མི་བསུང་རྒྱུ་ཁས་མ་སྒྲངས་ན་ད་ལྟ་རང་གསོད་
ངེས་ཡིན་ཞེས་ཟེར་ཏེ་ཚུལ་བློམས་སྟོས་མ་བཏང་ན་གསོད་པར་ཐག་ཆོད་པ་ཞེས་ཏེ་
གྱུར་གྱུང་།

What would it be to cost your life? Imagine for example some follower of a non-Buddhist religion, or some kind of barbarian, who was really very cruel, very evil. And suppose he came up to you and said, "If you don't agree not to keep those pledges and vows of yours, then I swear I will kill you, this very instant." Suppose it were completely decided: either you reject this morality, or you die.

ངས་ཚུལ་བློམས་འདི་ལལ་བར་བོར་ན་ཁོས་མ་བསོད་ཀྱང་སྐྱེ་བ་གཏན་གྱི་འདུན་མ་གྱི་
ཆར་བ་ཡིན་པས་གསོན་གྱུང་གི་བ་དང་བྱུང་པར་མེད་ལ། ཚུལ་བློམས་བསུང་ན་ཆོ་
རབས་གཏན་དུ་བདེ་བར་འགྱུར་བས་དེ་བསུང་བའི་དོན་དུ་ད་ལྟ་ཁོས་གསུང་གྱུང་རུང་
སྟེ་...

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At the "cost of your life" then your choice would go like this. If I discard my morality now he will spare me; but the ultimate hope of my infinite lifetimes will be murdered instead. It's really the same as being killed myself. If though I can keep my morality I will reach the happiness that I've lived all these lives to find. So if to keep my morality now I must let him kill me, then let it be so. I will never give up these morals.

“ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་སྒོམ་མི་གཏོང་སྒྲིམ་དུ་སློག་འདོར་བ་དང་ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་ཉམས་པ་གཉིས་
སྒྲིམ་རང་ལ་འདམ་སྟེ། རང་གིས་ཆོ་འདིར་གཅིས་ཤོས་སུ་བྱེད་པའི་སློག་ལས་ཀྱང་
དམ་ཆོག་དང་སྒྲོམ་པ་ལ་གཅིས་སྒྲིམ་ལྟག་པར་དུ་ཆོ་བར་བྱས་ཏེ་དམ་སྒྲོམ་ཚུལ་བཞིན་
དུ་བསྐྱུང་རྒྱས་པར་བྱིན་གྱིས་སྒྲོབས་ཞེས་པའོ།

In short, if it comes down to choosing between giving up your life, and letting this morality degenerate, you had surely better choose the first. The one thing here in this birth that you cherish above all else is your own life. What you are requesting from your Lama is that he or she *grant you* the power to *always keep* your vows and pledges properly; that you reach a point where you cherish these commitments infinitely more than your own precious life.

XII. Meditating on the Two Secret Stages

གསུམ་པ་དམ་ཆོག་དང་སྒྲོམ་པ་ལ་གནས་ནས་ལམ་རིམ་པ་གཉིས་བསྒྲོམ་པའི་ཚུལ་
ནི།

This brings us to the third Step to training oneself in the secret half of the bodhisattva activities, which is how to meditate upon the two stages of this path, while one continues to maintain his pledges and vows. This Step too is presented in a single verse of the root text.

།དེ་ནས་སྐྱུད་སྒྲིའི་སྒྲིང་པོ་རིམ་གཉིས་ཀྱི།
།གནད་ནམས་ཇི་བཞིན་རྟོགས་ནས་བརྩོན་པ་ཡིས།
།ཐུན་བཞིའི་རྣལ་འབྱོར་མཆོག་ལས་མི་གཡིལ་བར།

།དམ་པའི་གསུང་བཞིན་སྐྱབ་པར་བྱིན་གྱིས་སྒྲོབས།
།ཞིས་པའི་སྒྲོ་ཀ་གཅིག་སྟེ།

(12)

Bless me next
To realize precisely
The crucial points
Of both the stages,
The essence of
The secret ways.
Grant me then
To practice as
The Holy One has spoken,
Putting all my effort in
And never leaving off
The Practice of the Four Times,
Highest that there is.

དེ་ལྟར་དམ་སྒྲོམ་ལ་གནས་པའི་འོག་ཏུ་ཇི་ལྟར་བྱ་དགོས་སྟུམ་ན། རྒྱལ་བའི་དབང་པོ་
བསྐྱལ་བཟང་རྒྱ་མཚོས།

།ལར་སྐྱེ་འཆི་བར་དོ་གང་ལ་ཡང་།

།དུས་ད་ལྟའི་བག་ཆགས་གཙོ་ཆེ་བས།

།དེ་སྟོད་བྱེད་བསྐྱེད་ཚྲོགས་ན་ལ་འབྱོར་གྱིས།

།སྐྱབས་སྐྱ་གསུམ་རང་ངོ་ཤེས་བར་མཛོད།

One may wonder, "Suppose I am able to maintain my vows and pledges; what must I do after that?" The highest of Victors, Kelsang Gyatso, has spoken the following:

The point
May be birth or death or the state between them.

The time
Most important for planting their seeds is now.

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The way

To transform them is the practice of creation and completion.

The refuge

You must learn is the three final bodies themselves.⁹¹

ཁྱེད་ཀྱི་ལྟོ་སྒྲིལ་ལ་བཞུགས་པའི་དེ་ལྟར་གསུངས་པའི་གསུང་གི་དམ་ཚིག་དང་སྒྲིལ་བ་
མཐའ་དག་ཚུལ་བཞིན་དུ་བསྐྱེད་བའི་ཐོག་ནས། རྒྱུད་སྡེ་རྒྱ་མཚོའི་སྤྱིང་པོ།

What's being said here is that, first of all, you must continue to keep each and every one of the secret vows and pledges, as explained above. Then you must practice the very *essence* of the great sea of the secret ways. Here first is the stage of creation, which is exemplified by a number of methods.

ཐ་མལ་གྱི་གནས་ལུས་ལོངས་སྤྱོད་ཕུང་ཁམས་སྐྱེ་མཆེད་སོགས་ལ་རང་ག་བར་
འཛིན་པའི་ཐ་མལ་གྱི་སྤྱང་ཞིན་དང་། སྐྱེ་ཤི་བར་དོ་ཐ་མལ་པ་རྣམས་ཀྱང་།

We tend to see things in an ordinary way, we take them to be no more than what they seem to us; we tend to grasp this way to the place where we live, to our own body, to the things we own and use, and to things like the parts that make up us, and the world: what we call the "heaps," the "categories," and the "doors of sense."⁹² We have also always had to undergo an ordinary birth, ordinary death, and ordinary passage between death and birth.

་་་རྒྱལ་བའི་སྐྱ་གསུམ་དུ་འབྱེད་བས་མཚོན་ཏེ། གང་ཤར་སྤྱང་གྲག་རིག་གསུམ་
གཞལ་ཡས་ཁང་དང་ལྷ་དང་སྤྱི་མའི་སྐྱ་འཕྱལ་དག་པ་རབ་འབྱམས་འབའ་ཞིག་དུ་
འཆར་བར་བྱེད་པའི་ལམ་བསྐྱེད་པའི་རིམ་པ་དང་།

In the stage of creation we transform all these seemingly ordinary things and events; we turn them into the three bodies of a victorious Buddha.⁹³ We take whatever presents itself to us: all that appears to our eyes, all that reaches our ears, and all that comes in our thoughts, and we make it show itself as total and absolute purity, as a galaxy of perfection, as great celestial mansions, as holy angels, as a magical dance put on by our Lamas.

ཙ་རྒྱུད་བསྐྱེད་པ་ཙམ་ལ་ཆེད་ཆེར་བྱས་ཏེ་གཏུམ་མོ་ཕལ་པ་འབར་བ་ཙམ་དང་།

སེམས་གསལ་རིག་གི་ངོ་བོ་མཐོང་བ་ཅུ་ལ་ལམ་མཐོན་བོར་འབྱུང་བ་ལྟ་བུ་”

As for the stage of completion, some mistakenly equate it with concentrating solely on a meditation that involves the various channels and winds, and which results in achieving a rather ordinary kind of inner heat. Others make the error of thinking it is some high spiritual path when you succeed in nothing more than perceiving how the essence of the mind is that it is aware and knowing.

”མ་ཡིན་པར། ཀུན་རྟོག་ལས་རྒྱུད་གི་རྒྱ་བ་མཐའ་དག་དབྱ་མའི་ནང་དུ་ཞུགས་གནས་ཐིམ་གསུམ་བྱས་པ་ལས་བྱུང་བའི་གཏུག་སེམས་འོད་གསལ་ལྷན་ཅིག་སྐྱེས་པའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཀྱི་མཐུས་གང་སྐྱང་བདེ་སྟོང་གི་རོལ་བར་འཆར་བའི་རྣལ་འབྱོར་”

The real stage of completion though is not like this; rather, you take the various winds which course through the body because of one's ordinary conceptual thinking, and redirect them all into the central channel—in a three-fold process of entrance, residence, and absorption. As a result a primal state of mind arises, the clear light, the wisdom which is simultaneous. And the power of this wisdom makes all of existence appear as the play of bliss and emptiness.

”སོགས་ཡང་དང་ཡང་དུ་གོམས་པའི་མཐར། སྐྱེ་བྱགས་ཟུང་འཇུག་བྱུང་བདག་དེ་ཇི་འཆར་གི་གོ་འཕང་མཛོན་དུ་བྱེད་པའི་ལམ་རྫོགས་པའི་རིམ་པ་སྟེ་”

In the path of the stage of completion then we meditate over and over on this and related practices, until finally we are able to bring about the Union of the holy body and holy mind: we reach the state of the Lord of the Secret World, the Keeper of the Diamond.

”རིམ་པ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་ལམ་ལ་ལེགས་པར་སྟོབ་པ་ཞིག་དགོས་པས། དེ་དག་ཇི་ལྟར་ཉམས་སྲུ་ལིན་ཚུལ་གྱི་གནད་དོན་རྣམས་ཕྱིན་ཅི་མ་ལོག་པར་རྒྱུད་དང་གྲུབ་ཆེན་གྱིས་བཀའ་བའི་དགོངས་པ་ཇི་ལྟར་བཞིན་དུ་ལེགས་པར་རྟོགས་ནས།

All this makes it clear why we must study, and study well, the path that includes *both the secret stages*. We will have to *realize* all the crucial points of how to actually carry out these two stages. Our understanding must be unerring; it must conform *precisely* with the true intent of Teacher, as revealed in the secret texts, and the explanations of great and accomplished masters.

བཙོན་པ་སྟེ་བཙོན་འགྲུས་ཐང་སྟོད་རན་པར་རྒྱན་མི་འཆད་དུ་བསྟེན་པ་ཡིས། མོ་
རངས་དང་། སྤྱོད་། སྤྱོད་། སྤྱོད་ཀྱི་ཐུན་ཏེ་ཐུན་བཞིའི་ནལ་འབྱོར་གྱི་ཉམས་ལེན་ལ་
མཆོག་དུ་སྟོད་པ་ཉིད་ལས་དུས་དྲག་དུ་མི་གཡེལ་བའམ་མི་འདེམ་བར་འབད་ཅིང་།

Then we must *put forth all our efforts*; that is, we must exert ourselves continually and steadily, to the proper degree—not overdoing it, and not underdoing it. These efforts should go towards following the Practice of the Four Times of the day: daybreak, morning, afternoon and the early night. We must make this practice the single *highest* activity *that there is* in our lives, and try *never to leave off* doing it.

དེ་ཡང་མྱོངས་ཞེན་གྱིས་བཅས་པའི་རང་བཟོའི་རྩོན་ཆས་དང་། ལམ་ལོག་ལམ་གོལ།
བོན་དང་མུ་སྟགས་སོགས་ཀྱི་བསྐྱད་པ་”

Now there are false teachings that some persons simply make up on their own, out of an ignorant desire for gain. There are paths that are absolutely backwards, and there are paths that will lead you astray. There are paths that are infected by mistaken concepts from an old local religion, or from some non-Buddhist faiths of ancient India, or anything of the like.

”མ་ཞུགས་པར། དམ་པ་ཞེས་པ། ཉམ་ཡང་མི་སྟེ་བའི་སྐྱེས་བུ་ཆད་མ། ཐུན་པ་
སངས་རྒྱས་བཅོམ་ལྡན་འདས་ལ་བྱེད་པས། དེའི་གསུང་རབ་ལས་བྱུང་བའི་མན་ངག་
ཇི་ལྟར་བཞེན་དུ་སྟེ་བ་རྣམས་པར་གསོལ་བ་བཏབ་པ་ཡིན་གསུངས།

What we are requesting of our Lama here, said our Lama, is that he or she *grant us* the power never to wander onto one of these paths. We are asking for the strength to practice, in exactly the proper way, the instructions found in the highest of *spoken* words. And these are the teachings of the “*Holy One*” mentioned in the verse. These words refer to a person who can never deceive us; a being who is incapable of lying; that ultimate meditator who keeps the practice of the times: they refer to the victorious, transcendent Buddha.

THE CONCLUSION

XIII. A Request for Good Circumstances

ཕྱི་བའི་གསུམ་པ་ལམ་སྐྱབ་པའི་མཐུན་ཀྱིན་འགྲུབ་པ་དང་འགལ་ཀྱིན་ཞི་བར་གསོལ་
བ་འདེབས་པ་ནི།

This brings us to the third major division of the text, which is a request so that we can attain all the favorable conditions for succeeding in the path, and also stop all those circumstances that might keep us from success. This request is contained in the single verse of the root text which follows.

།དེ་ལྟར་ལམ་བཟང་སྟོན་པའི་བཤེས་གཉིན་དང་།
།ཚུལ་བཞིན་སྐྱབ་པའི་གྲོགས་རྣམས་ཞབས་བདུན་ཅིང་།
།ཕྱི་དང་ནང་གི་བར་དུ་གཅོད་པའི་ཚྲིག་ས།
།ཞི་བར་ཞི་བར་བྱིན་གྱིས་བརྒྱབ་དུ་གསོལ།
།ཞེས་པའི་སྟོ་ཀ་གཅིག་གསུངས།

(13)

Bless me, grant me that
The spiritual Guide
Who shows me this good road,
And all my true
Companions in this quest
Live long and fruitful lives.
Bless and grant me that
The rain of obstacles,
Things within me
Or outside me
That could stop me now,
Stop and end forever.

དེ་ཡང་ལམ་ལ་བྱིན་ཅི་མ་འོག་པ་དང་། ལམ་གོལ་བ་དང་། ལམ་རྣོར་བར་ཤོར་བ་
སོགས་བཟང་ངན་སྒྲ་ཚྲིག་ས་ཡོད་ཅིང་། རང་ཅག་གིས་ཉམས་སུ་སྒྲང་བྱའི་ལམ་དེ་

ལམ་བཟང་པོ་མ་ཉོར་མ་འབྲུལ་བ་ཞིག་ལ་མ་ཞུགས་ན། འབྲུལ་བའི་ལམ་ཕྱིན་ཅི་
ལོག་ཅིག་ལ་ལོ་སྟོང་དུ་སྐྱབ་པ་བྱས་ཀྱང་འབྲས་བུ་བཟང་པོ་མ་འབྲུལ་བ་འབྱུང་བ་
གཏན་ནས་མི་སྲིད་ལ།

So there are these different sorts of spiritual paths, of widely varying quality: some are totally correct, some are totally wrong, some slide off from right to wrong, and on and on. You and I have access to a path which is pure, and unmistakable, and free of any error. We can either enter it now or go off on some wrong road that goes astray. If this second is our choice then we can try to follow such a way for a thousand years, but it is an absolute impossibility that we will derive from it any good or certain result.

དེ་དག་ཀྱང་རྒྱལ་མཆོག་ལྔ་པ་ཆེན་པོས།

།གྲུར་ཀྱམ་ཆོས་ཀྱིས་བཅོས་པའི་ལྷ་བའི་ཞུས།

།རང་རིགས་བསྐྱེད་པ་ཟེན་ན་ཆེས་ལེགས་ཀྱི།

།ཕ་མས་ལུང་དང་རྟོགས་པའི་བྱད་ལོར་ཆོགས།

།རྣམ་གཡིང་རྒྱན་པོར་ཤོར་བའི་ལག་སྟོང་མང་།

The Great Fifth Dalai Lama has said,

It's quite nice when you consider
A teaching to be of your school
When the Lama who teaches it wears
A silk cap with the saffron stain.

But remember many are robbed
By the thief of wandering thoughts,
Left empty-handed of riches,
The unique word and the realizations
Passed down the Family line.⁹⁴

།ཞེས་གསུངས་པ་ལྟར་བཀའ་རྟོག་སོགས་དང་དགེ་ལུགས་ཀྱི་བྱད་པར་ཞུ་དམར་སེར་
ཅམ་གྱིས་འབྱེད་ན་མ་གཏོགས། གཞན་མའི་ལུང་རྟོགས་ཀྱི་བསྐྱེད་པའི་ཟབ་བྱད་

འདོན་རྒྱ་མེད་ན། དག་ལྔ་པའི་ཞབས་བླ་པ་ཡིན་པས།

These lines describe people in our school whose knowledge is so little that the only difference they can see between followers of traditions such as the Lineage of the Word or the Ancient Ones, and the tradition of the Virtuous Way, is that some wear lama hats which are red and others wear caps of yellow. People like this are unable to cite a single one of the unique, profound features that distinguish the physical word and the mental realizations of our teachings from those of the other traditions. These people are a disgrace to our school.

བསྐྱེད་པ་བཅད་བཅར་བའི་གསེར་བཞིན་དུ་དག་ཐེར་ལེགས་པར་མཛད་པའི་རིང་
ལུགས་གསེར་ཞུ་མ་ལྟ་བུ་འདི་འདྲ་དང་ད་རིས་ལན་ཅིག་ཙམ་མཛུལ་བ་འདིར་
མཛུལ་གོ་ཆོད་པ་བྱེད་དགོས་པས་ན།

Don't let yourself be one of these. For once in your many lifetimes you have met up with a truly pure system, a school like purified gold. The beliefs that it teaches have been perfectly refined and assayed, like gold that has been through the fire, the shears, and the file. These tests have been carried out with endless hardships by our Gentle Protector, Tsongkapa the Great, who has delivered to us this precious essence of the teachings of the powerful beings of Enlightenment.

ལྟ་སྟོད་རྣམ་པར་དག་པའི་རང་ལུགས་ཀྱི་བཤེས་གཉིན་ཚད་ལྔ་བསྟན་ཅིང་། གཞུང་
ཆེན་བཀའ་པོད་ལྔ་ལ་ཐོས་བསམ་མཐེལ་ཕྱིན་པ་བྱས་ཏེ་བདེན་གཉིས་ཀྱི་རྣམ་གཞག་
ཕྱིན་ཅི་མ་ལོག་པར་གཏན་ལ་འབབ།

We have met with this system, and we must see that a real meeting takes place. We must find and take ourselves properly to a spiritual Guide, one who is truly qualified, and who follows our tradition perfectly in both his viewpoint and his practice. We should undertake to study the five great classics, the five great volumes of the Word, and bring this study to its final end, thereby coming to a firm and accurate understanding of how the two levels of reality work.⁹⁵

ལམ་ཐབས་ཤེས་ཡ་མ་བུལ་བར་ཉམས་སུ་ལིན་རྩལ་ལ་སྟོ་འདོགས་གཙོད་རྩལ་ཤིང་
ཏྲ་ཆེན་པོའི་བཞེད་སྟོལ་དྲི་མ་མེད་པར་རྩི་སྒྲ་མ་ཡབ་སྐུ་རྩེས་འབྲང་བཅས་ཀྱིས་

ལེགས་པར་བཀའ་བའི་གཞུང་ལུགས་སྒྲན་བརྒྱད་གི་མན་ངག་དང་བཅས་པ་ལེགས་
པར་རྟོས་ཏེ་ཐོས་བསམ་སྒྲོམ་གསུམ་ཡ་མ་བྲལ་བ་ཞིག་བྱུང་ན།

We must examine and resolve every question about how to put into practice within our own lives that path where method and wisdom are ever inseparable. We must, in short, ask for and receive teachings on the immaculate system of the greater way; we must learn the various clarifications of these teachings by our Lord Lama and his spiritual Sons, and by those who have come after them; and we must hear the private advices passed along in the oral tradition. And then finally we should use the traditional method to master these teachings, in the three steps of learning, contemplation, and meditation, each one always combined with the others.

འབྲས་བྱ་བཟང་པོ་སངས་རྒྱས་གི་སར་འབྲོ་བ་ལས་གཞན་དུ་འབྲུགས་མེད་པས་ལམ་
བཟང་པོ་ཞེས་པ་དེ་ལྟ་བུ་ལ་བྱ་དགོས།

If we do all this we will win a good goal, for we will have found what the verse calls the "good road": the path that leads to the land of Enlightenment, the path that never wanders someplace else.

དེས་ན་གོང་དུ་ཞུས་ཟིན་པ་ལྟར་གྱི་མདོ་ལྡན་གསུང་འབྲེལ་གྱི་ལམ་བཟང་པོ་ཉམས་སུ་
ལེན་པའི་མཐུན་རྒྱུན་སྒོ་ལས་སུ་རུང་བ་སོགས་དང་། བྱད་པར་ལམ་དེ་སྟོན་པར་
མཛད་པའི་སྤྲ་མ་དག་གི་བའི་བཤེས་གཞིན་དང་། དེས་ཇི་ལྟར་བསྟན་པའི་དོན་མཐའ་
དག་ཚུལ་བཞིན་སྒྲུབ་པའི་ཆོས་མཐུན་གྱི་གྲོགས་ཚད་ལྡན་རྣམས་་་

To succeed like this, to actually carry out the path described above—such a good road in the way it combines the open and secret teachings—we will first need to achieve the various conditions that are favorable for us. We'll need to reach the state where our mind is perfectly pliable, and other such qualities. Most of all we will need a *spiritual Guide who can show us this road, and companions in the quest*—genuine friends of a like mind, who are *true* in keeping each and every one of the Teacher's instructions.

་་ཞབས་བྱང་དོ་ཇེ་རང་བཞིན་དུ་བརྟན་ཅིང་།

Course III: Applied Meditation
Reading Ten

The first thing we are asking our Lama to grant us then is that these true friends *live long and fruitful lives*, that their two legs remain planted here on earth with the immutability of a diamond.

འགལ་རྒྱུ་གྱི་གཙོ་བོ་ཕྱི་ནི་བར་གཙོད་རྒྱལ་པོ་ཆོས་བཞིན་དུ་མི་སྤྱོད་ཅིང་། གཞན་
ཡང་ཆོས་བྱེད་ལ་དགའ་ལྡང་བ་སོགས་ཆོས་ལམ་དུ་མི་གཏོང་བ་དང་།

Secondly we are requesting our Lama to *bless and grant us*, that every last bit of the *rain of obstacles* which could ever appear might *stop and end forever*. The first kind of obstacles are those *things outside of us that could stop us now* from reaching our spiritual goals; the main ones would be living in a country where the leaders behave in contradiction to the Dharma—or where they refuse to allow people to enter the Way—by fighting against religion, or the like.

ནང་གི་བར་ཆད་ལུས་ལ་ནད་དང་གདོན་སོགས་ཀྱིས་གཙོས་ཤིང་། རང་གི་རྒྱུད་དག་
བ་ལ་བཀོལ་དུ་མི་རུང་བས་མཆོན་ཏེ་ཕྱི་ནང་གི་བར་དུ་གཙོད་པའི་ཆོགས་མཐའ་དག་
ཉེ་བར་ཉི་བར་བྱིན་གྱིས་བརྒྱབ་དུ་གསོལ། ཞེས་གསོལ་བ་བཏབ་པ་ཡིན།

The second type of obstacles are those that are *within*; examples here would be things like illnesses and harmful spirits that attack your body, or a mental inability to direct your thoughts towards virtuous objects any way you want.

འདི་དང་གོང་དུ་བཤད་པ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་དམིགས་རིམ་དང་། བདུད་ཅི་འབབ་སྤྱང་བྱ་ཚུལ་
སོགས་མན་ངག་གི་གནད་མང་དུ་ཡོད་པ་རྣམས་ལམ་རིམ་གྱི་དམར་ཁྲིད་རྒྱས་པའི་
སྐབས་ལྟར་ཞེས་དགོས་པ་ཡོད་གསུངས།

Our Lama noted lastly that for this and the preceding sections there were a good number of essential points covered in traditional advices: what visualizations to perform at each point, how to bring down a flow of nectar to purify oneself, and so on. He said that we should learn these by referring to descriptions found in the more detailed, practical presentations of the Steps of the path.

XIV. A Prayer for Future Care

བཞི་པ་སྐྱེ་བ་ཐམས་ཅད་དུ་སྒྲ་མས་རྩེས་སུ་གཟུང་སྟེ་ས་ལམ་གྱི་འབྲས་བུ་མངོན་དུ་བྱེད་
རྒྱས་པར་སྟོན་པ་ནི།

We have come now to the fourth and final section in the text of the "Source of All My Good." This is a prayer that, in all our future lives, we may be taken under the care of a Lama, and so gain the strength to reach the end of the various levels and paths. Here again the point is covered in a single verse of the root text:

སྐྱེ་བ་ཀུན་ཏུ་ཡང་དག་སྒྲ་མ་དང་།
འབྲལ་མེད་ཆོས་ཀྱི་དཔལ་ལ་ལོངས་སྤྱོད་ཅིང་།
ས་དང་ལམ་གྱི་ཡོན་ཏན་རབ་རྩེ་གས་ནས།
རྩི་རྩེ་འཆང་གི་གོ་འཕང་ཟུར་ཐོབ་ཤོག
ཅིས་པའི་སྟོོ་ཀ་གཅིག་གིས་བསྟན།

(14)

In all my lives
May I never live
Apart from my perfect Lamas,
May I bask
In the glory
Of the Dharma.

May I fulfill
Perfectly
Every good quality
Of every level and path,
And reach then quickly
The place where I
Become myself
The Keeper of the Diamond.

དེ་ཡང་སྐྱེ་བ་འདི་དང་སྐྱེ་བ་གཞན་ཀུན་ཏུ། ཡང་དག་པ་སྟེ་དག་བའི་བཤེས་གཉིན་

མཚན་ཉིད་དང་ལྷན་པ་སྤྲུལ་སྟོབ་བཟང་ཐུབ་དབང་དོན་རྩེ་འཆང་ཆེན་པོ་དང་དུས་སྐད་ཅིག་
ཀྱང་འབྲལ་བ་མེད་པར།

The verse says, *in all my lives*—that is, in this and in all my future lives to come—*may I never live apart from my Lamas*, may I never spend a moment without them. These Lamas are "perfect": they are spiritual Guides who have all the right qualifications; they are the great Lama Lobsang, Lord of the Powerful, who is the Keeper of the Diamond.

མདོ་ལྷགས་སམ། ལྷ་སྟོན་གྱི་གདམས་པ་ཟབ་ཅིང་རྒྱ་ཆེ་བའི་ཆོས་གྱི་དཔལ་འབྱོར་ལ་
ངོམས་པ་མེད་པར་ཡོངས་སྟོན་ཅིང་།

And in these lives *may I bask in the glory of the Dharma*: may I seek unceasingly to drink of the Dharma either in the sense of the open and secret teachings, or the teachings that are "deep" and "wide"—the instructions on correct view and living the life of a bodhisattva.

སྤྲུལ་སྟོབ་ཇི་ལྟར་བསྟན་པ་ལྟར་གྱི་ལམ་གྱི་རིམ་པ་རྣམས་ཉམས་སྲུ་སྤངས་པ་ལ་བརྟེན་
ནས་ས་བཅུ་དང་ལམ་ལྔའི་ཡོན་ཏན་མ་ལུས་པ་རབ་བམ་མཆོག་ཏུ་གྱུར་པ་སྟེ་ལེགས་
པར་རྫོགས་ནས།

*May I then put into actual practice all the Steps of the path, exactly as these Lamas have taught me to do. If I can do so then I will fulfil each and every good quality of the ten levels and the five paths.*⁹⁶ And I will fulfil them just right, which is to say *perfectly*, or to the highest degree which exists.

སྤྲུལ་སྟོབ་བཟང་ཐུབ་དབང་དོན་རྩེ་འཆང་གི་གོ་འཕང་ཆོ་འདི་ཉིད་དམ། དམའ་མཐའ་སྟེ་
བ་བདུན་ནམ། བཅུ་དྲུག་ནས་མ་འགྲངས་པར་སྟུར་དུ་ཐོབ་པའི་སྐལ་བ་ཅན་དུ་འགྱུར་
བར་ཤོག་ཅིག །ཅིས་སྟོན་ལམ་བཏབ་པ་སྟེ།

And may I reach then the place where I become myself the Lama, Lobsang, Lord of the Powerful Buddhas, *the Keeper of the Diamond*. May I do so *quickly*: in this very life, or at least within seven lifetimes, or no more than sixteen.

Make thus a prayer that you can have the virtuous fortune to make all this come true.

སྐྱེ་བ་ཀུན་ཏུ་སོགས་ཀྱི་ཆོགས་བཅད་འདི་ཡོན་ཏན་གཞིར་གྱུར་མའི་མཇུག་གི་བཀའ་
ཚུམ་མིན་ཡང་།

This verse, the one that begins with the words "In all my lives," does not appear at the end of the original text of the *Source of All My Good*. Nonetheless, said our Lama, there is a reason why it is added here in conclusion, and why I have given an explanation of it.⁹⁷

རང་རིས་བསྔོ་སྔོན་བྱ་སའི་ཡུལ་ལ། དགོ་བ་འདི་ཡིས་སྐྱེ་བོ་ཀུན། །ཞེས་སོགས་ལྟ་
བྱ་སངས་རྒྱས་འཕྲོ་བའི་རྒྱུར་བསྔོ་བ།

Generally speaking, there are three different objects that you and I can pray for: three goals towards which we can dedicate the power of a great good deed such as the practice we have just completed. The first is to dedicate our virtuous act so that it might turn into a cause for us to achieve Enlightenment. An example of this kind of dedication would be the verse which starts with the line, "By this virtue may all beings..."⁹⁸

རྒྱལ་སྐས་སྔོན་ལམ་གསུམ་གྱི་ཁྱད་རྣམས་ནི། །ཞེས་སོགས་ལྟ་བུ་བསྔོ་བ་རྒྱས་པའི་
རྒྱུར་བསྔོ་བ།

We can secondly dedicate our good deed to become a cause for the teachings to spread in the world. A typical verse here would be the one that starts with "The prayers of bodhisattva princes, as many as the drops of water in the Ganges..."⁹⁹

སྔོན་པ་སློན་མེད་པའི་བསྔོ་བ་དང་། །ཞེས་སོགས་ལྟ་བུ་སློན་མས་རྗེས་སུ་འཛིན་པའི་
རྒྱུར་བསྔོ་བ་སྟེ་གསུམ་ལས།

The third way to dedicate a great goodness is so that it brings ourselves and others to be taken under the care of a Lama. Here there are verses like the one with the line about the "matchless Word of the Teacher."¹⁰⁰

སློན་མས་རྗེས་སུ་བཟུང་ན་སྔ་མ་གཉིས་རང་ཤུགས་ཀྱིས་འོང་བས་ན། །འདིར་ཕྱི་མ་ལྟར་
བྱེད་པ་བསྔོ་སྔོན་གྱི་སྔོན་མས་ཆེན་པོ་ཡིན་པས། །རང་ཕྱོགས་ཀྱི་མཁས་གྲུབ་གོང་མ་

མང་པོའི་གསུང་རྒྱུན་ཕྱག་བཞེས་ལྟར་མཇུག་ཐོགས་འདིར་སྐྱར་ནས་བཤད་པ་ཡིན་
གསུངས།

Once a Lama has taken us into his or her care, the other two goals come then of their own accord. For this reason, any verse dedicated to the third kind of goal is a brief and powerful combination of both dedication and prayer. And this is why the custom prescribed by a great many wise and accomplished saints of our past lineage has been to attach this verse at the end of the work.

དེ་ལྟར་འཇམ་མགོན་ཙཱ་བ་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་ཕྱགས་བཅུད། ཆོས་ལུང་བརྒྱད་ཁྲི་བཞི་སྟོང་
གི་ཡང་སྟོང་རྩེན་པར་ཕྱུང་བ་ལྟ་བུ་ཆོག་ཉུང་ལ་དོན་འདུས་པའི་གདམས་པ་བྱུང་པར་
དུ་འཕགས་པ་བྱིན་རྒྱལ་སྐྱུང་སྐྱུང་སྐྱུང་སྐྱུང་གྲགས་པའི་བཤད་པ་ས་བཅད་མ་སྟོང་ས་ཙམ་
ལེགས་པར་ཕུལ་ཟིན་པ་ཡིན་པས། སྟོ་གྲོས་མཆོག་དམན་ཆང་མས།

And so I have finished fully offering up to you all this my explanation of the lines known as the *Begging for a Mountain of Blessings*. It is but a brief explanation, barely enough to avoid losing the basic outline.

This *Mountain of Blessings* contains the cream of the holy thoughts of our gentle protector, the great Tsongkapa. It is an extraordinary instruction; it packs a tremendous amount of meaning into but a very few words. In a sense it rips open and lays bare the innermost heart of all the 84,000 great masses of teachings delivered by the Buddhas.

སྐྱར་གོང་དུ་ཞུས་པ་ལྟར་རྩེ་སྒྲ་མས་བྱང་དུ་སྟོང་རྒྱལ་བའི་དབེན་གནས་ཀྱི་དགོན་པ་
གོང་དུ་ལམ་མཆོག་སྟོ་འབྱེད་དང་ཡོན་ཏན་གཞིར་གྱུར་མ་འདི་བཀའ་རྩོམ་དང་
གསལ་འདེབས་མཛད་པས་ལམ་རིམ་སྒྲ་མ་བརྒྱད་པ་ཡོངས་རྫོགས་ཀྱི་ཞལ་གཟིགས།
བྱང་རྒྱལ་ལམ་རིམ་གྱི་བསྟན་པ་ཉིན་མོ་ལྟར་གསལ་བར་མཛད་པ་སོགས་བསྟན་
འགྲོའི་དོན་རྒྱལ་པོ་ཆེ་གནང་རྒྱུ་ཉིན་འབྱེད་ཀྱི་སྟོ་མང་པོ་བྱེ་སྟེ་འཕྲིན་ལས་ནམ་

མཁའ་དང་མཉམ་པར་བྱང་བའི་རྣམ་ཐར་གྱི་རྗེས་སུ་འབྲངས་ནས་བྱང་ཐུབ་ལམ་གྱི་
རིམ་པའི་བསྟན་པ་རང་གཞན་གྱི་རྒྱུད་ལ་རྒྱས་པར་མཛད་པའི་ཕྱིར་དུ་

As I mentioned above, the works called *Open Door to the Highest Path* and the *Source of All My Good* were composed by our Lord Lama and delivered as a supplication above the hermitage of the Victor, near the monastery of Radreng, which stands to the north.¹⁰¹

Once he had made his supplication, the precious Tsongkapa found himself face to face with each and every Lama of the lineage of the teachings on the Steps on the path to Buddhahood. At the same moment many auspicious signs occurred which portended how the Lord would elucidate these same teachings, making them as clear to us as the Sun in the sky. These and other great deeds would he perform, deeds both powerful and effective in furthering the teachings and the needs of living beings.

Each and every one of us here, those of great intellect and those of lesser, must all emulate the life of the Lord Lama, whose mighty activities spread as far as space itself does. We must do whatever we can to see that these instructions on the Steps of the path to Buddhahood take root and flourish within the minds of ourselves and others.

་་་སྒྱུར་ཆོས་དང་དགའ་ལྷ་སོགས་ཀྱི་སྒྲོ་ནས་བསགས་སྤྱང་གསོལ་འདེབས་ནན་ཏན་
བྱེད་པ་སྒྲུན་དུ་བཏང་།

To accomplish this we must first carry out certain preliminaries: we must collect the power of great good deeds, clean ourselves of our past bad deeds, and make a request to our Lamas for strength. For this we will need a practice, something like the text called the *Preliminary Practices*, or else the *Thousand Angels*.¹⁰²

ཉུང་མཐའ་ཡང་གཞུང་འདི་ཙམ་གྱི་ཆོག་དོན་ལ་འདྲིས་པར་བྱས་ཏེ། བཤར་སྒྲོམ་
གྱིས་བག་ཆགས་འཛོག་པ་ཚུན་ལ་ནན་ཏན་དུ་འབད་པ་དང་།

At the very least we should acquaint ourselves thoroughly with the meaning of the verses of this very brief work. We must make great efforts in a wide variety of related practices, beginning with review meditation to plant desirable seeds in the stream of our mind.

ཐུའུ་བཀའ་ཆོས་ཀྱི་ཉི་མའི་གསུང་ལས། ཐོས་སྐྱའི་ཆོས་དེ་གང་། དེ་ཐོས་པའི་ཚུལ་
ཇི་ལྟར་ཞིན། ཆོས་ནི་སྤང་དོར་གྱི་གནད་ལ་ཚད་མར་གྱུར་པ་སངས་རྒྱལ་ཉག་གཅིག་
ཡིན་པས་”

Remember here the words of Tuken Chukyi Nyima:

What is the Dharma we should learn? And how are we to learn it? There is one and only one being who sees with perfect accuracy each and every crucial point of what we should take up and what we should abandon; this being is the Buddha.

”དེས་གསུངས་པའི་མདོ་རྒྱུད་ནས་བཤད་པའི་ཉམས་ལེན་གྱི་གནད་མ་ཚད་བ་མེད་
པར་སྟོན་པ་ཇི་བའི་ལམ་སྟོན་དང་། དེའི་དགོངས་འགྲེལ་ལམ་རིམ་ཆེ་རྒྱུད་ལྟ་བུ་
སོགས་ལ་ཐོས་པ་བྱ་ཡི།

Therefore the Dharma that we choose to learn should be the *Lamp of the Path* by Lord Atisha, and works like the longer and shorter presentations of the Steps which clarify his true intent. The reason is that these instructions present in their totality the keys which the Buddha himself taught in the open and secret teachings, for actually carrying out the Dharma in one's own life.

གཞན་དུ་ན་ས་ལས་ཐོན་པ་སྐད་དང་། གནམ་ལས་བབས་པ་སྐད་དང་། ཕ་མེས་ཀྱི་
སྟན་བརྒྱུད་ནས་བྱུང་བ་སྐད་པའི་ཤོག་དྲིལ་ཆང་རྒྱུད་ཙམ་འཕྲལ་དུ་ཐོས་ནས་ཤེས་
གྲུང་”

It's true that we could choose a different way and devote ourselves in the short term to learning all those weird little scraps of Dharma that somebody supposedly found under the ground, or supposedly fell out of the sky into somebody's lap, or supposedly got handed down by word of mouth from some ancestors of ancient times.

ཕྱགས་སུ་བསྐྱུ་བའི་ཆོས་ཅན་ལས་མ་འདས་པས་དེའི་རྒྱ་མཚན་གྱིས་མིད་ལ་དང་།

ཁྱུང་པོ་སོགས་ཚད་ལྡན་གྱི་སྐྱེས་བུ་དམ་པ་གོང་མ་འགའ་ཞིག་གིས་ཀྱང་དང་པོར་དེ་
ལྟ་བུའི་ཆོས་ལྟར་སྒྲུང་རིགས་ཀྱང་རྩིས་སྤྲི་ལུད་ལྟར་དོར་ནས་འཛང་རྒྱ་བའི་ཆོས་
ལོགས་སྤྱུ་འཛོལ་དགོས་བྱུང་བ་ཡིན་ནོ། །ཞེས་དང་།

In the long run though all these can only deceive us. This is precisely what happened with great holy beings of the past, authentic masters such as Milarepa and Kyungpo.¹⁰³ For a time they deigned to study such works, but later on they were forced to discard them like so much manure, and go on to seek a different Dharma, one that would actually make them enlightened.¹⁰⁴

ལྟར་སྒྲུ་རེལ་པའི་དོ་རྩེའི་ཞལ་ནས།

།སྟོན་བྱོན་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་བབྱང་ཡས་ཀྱིས།

།ཆོས་ཟབ་དགྲུ་མང་དུ་གསུངས་ལགས་ཀྱང་།

།རྩི་བྱབ་པའི་དབང་པོའི་གསུང་རབ་ཀྱན།

།དོན་མ་ཚང་མེད་པར་གཅིག་བསྐྱུས་པ།ལགས་ཀྱང་།

།རྩི་བྱབ་པའི་དབང་པོའི་གསུང་རབ་ཀྱན།

།དོན་མ་ཚང་མེད་པར་གཅིག་བསྐྱུས་པ།

This too we learn from the lips of Changkya Rolpay Dorje:

It's true that
In the past
Buddhas beyond all counting

Have spoken
Perfect Dharmas,
By the millions, in multitudes.

Yet where else
Is a book
Like the Steps to Buddhahood,

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The eloquent
Instructions
Of the Lord, Lobsang Drakpa,

Where he
Takes all
The highest of words, the teachings

Of Buddhas of Power
And combines their intent
Into one, with nothing left out at all.

།སྒོ་མཆོག་དམན་ཀུན་ལ་པན་པའི་ཆོས།
།ལྷ་སྒོམ་དང་སྒྲིད་པ་མ་འབྲུལ་བ།
།ཁོང་སྒོ་བཟང་གྲགས་པའི་ལེགས་པར་བཤད།
།གཞུང་བྱང་རྒྱལ་ལམ་རིམ་ལས་གཞན་གང་།
།དེ་ཉམས་ལེན་མཛོད་ཅིག་སྐལ་ལྷན་དག།

།ཅིས་པ་དང་།

His is a Dharma
That benefits all,
People of high intellect or lesser;

His is a Dharma
That never errs,
In its view, meditation, and activities too.

Let this then
Be your practice,
Those with the goodness to hear it.¹⁰⁵

གུང་ཐང་བསྐྱན་པའི་སྒྲོན་མེས་ཀྱང་།
།སེམས་དེ་ལྷར་ཆོས་ལ་འབྲུལ་བ་ན།
།ཆོས་ཟབ་མའི་སྒྲི་ཅན་མང་ན་ཡང་།

མགོན་དུས་གསུམ་རྒྱལ་བའི་ཐུགས་གྱི་བཅུད།

ཁྲི་སློ་བཟང་རྒྱལ་བའི་རིང་ལུགས་མཆོག།

And finally, Gungtang Tenpay Dronme has spoken too:

It may seem
There are many teachings they call "profound,"

But the mind
Settled down in the Dharma sees

That when you go
To take the essence of leisure and fortune,

Your savior will be
The cream of the thought of Victors of all three times:

The supreme tradition
Of the Lord, the Victor, Lobsang;

ཆོས་མདོ་ཐུགས་བཤད་སྐབ་ཟུང་འབྲེལ་གྱི།

ལམ་ངོ་བོ་གངས་དང་གོ་རིམ་སོགས།

གནད་ཆང་ལ་མ་ཉོར་ཡོངས་རྫོགས་ལ།

དུས་ཉིན་བཞིན་བག་ཆགས་ཅི་ཐེབས་གྱིས།

Where every crucial point
Is absolutely complete, and without any error

The definitions,
And divisions, and order, and all other details

Of the path
Where open and secret, teaching and practice combine.

འཤར་སློམ་ལ་ཉམས་ལེན་དངོས་གཞིར་བྱས།

དེའི་སྒྱུར་དང་མཇུག་གི་རིམ་པ་ཡང་།

།ཇི་སྒྲ་མའི་བཀའ་བཞིན་ལེགས་བསྐྱབ་སྟེ།

།དལ་འབྱོར་ལ་སྟིང་པོ་ལེན་པར་འཆ་ལ།

For the main stage
Follow review meditation on these,

Every day that goes by
It will plant many seeds in your mind.

Follow as well
For the stages of starting and ending

Just what
Our Lord Lama has taught us to do.¹⁰⁶

།ཞེས་སོགས་གསུངས་པ་ལྟར་རྗེ་ཡབ་སྐུ་རྗེས་འབྲང་དང་བཅས་པའི་གསུང་དུ་མདོ་

སྐགས་ལམ་གྱི་རིམ་པ་རྒྱས་འབྲང་བསྐྱས་གསུམ་ཇི་འདྲ་ཞིག་དགོས་ཀྱང་...

What these Lamas are telling us is that we have at our disposal whatever Dharma we need: we have the longer, and medium, and more brief presentations of the Steps to both the open and secret paths, all set out for us by the Lord, his spiritual Sons, and the various teachers who have followed them.

རིན་པོ་ཆའི་བླ་མ་ཏོག་ཁ་ཕྱེ་བ་ལྟར་ལག་མ་ཐོགས་པ་ཡོད་པས། གཞན་གྱིས་ཆོས་

སྐད་ཟབ་ཟབ་མོར་སྒྲོགས་པའི་སྟིང་པོ་མེད་པའི་སྟོང་ཁུར་ལ་འགྲམ་རྒྱ་མི་ལྡང་བར་...

You have thus in your own two hands a great basket; the lid is wide open, and the basket brims with precious jewels. So don't let your mouth start watering every time you hear somebody spout some meaningless chatter about some new and very oh-so-very "profound" Dharma they've discovered.

་་་རང་ལུགས་ཀྱི་མཁས་གྲུབ་དུ་མའི་གཞུང་མན་ངག་དང་བཅས་པར་ཐོས་བསམ་སྒྲོམ་

གསུམ་གྱི་སྒྲོ་ནས་ལམ་རིམ་ལ་རྩོལ་བཅས་རྩོལ་མེད་ཀྱི་སྟོང་བ་ལེགས་པར་བཏོན།

Rather take yourself through the great texts and special advices of the wise and accomplished masters of our own tradition, all in the proper order of learning, contemplation, and meditation. Get to a point where you are totally fluent in

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all the Steps of the path, first by making a conscious effort, and then later in an effortless flow.

ངེས་འབྱུང་བྱུང་སེམས་ཡང་དག་པའི་ལྷ་བ། ལམ་རིམ་པ་གཉིས་དང་བཅས་པའི་
ཉམས་སྒྲོལ་བྱུང་པར་ཅན་རང་རང་གི་སྐྱུད་ལ་རིམ་བཞིན་བསྐྱེད་ནས།

Plant and nurture within your own mind, one by one, the various realizations such as disgust with this suffering life, and the wish to reach enlightenment for every living being, and the ultimate view of reality. Along with these then develop the path of the two secret stages. Work at them until you achieve an extraordinary level of personal experience in each.

ད་རིས་དལ་འབྱོར་གྱི་ཉེན་བཟང་ལན་ཅིག་རྙེད་པའི་སྐབས་འདིར་དོན་མེད་དོན་རྒྱུང་
སྒྲོལ་ལོག་ཏུ་མ་ཤོར་བར་”

Right now you have found a body and life that have every spiritual leisure and fortune you could ever wish for. This is the only time all this could ever come together for you. Don't let it slip away. Don't waste it on things that are meaningless. Don't waste it on things that have only little meaning. Don't wait until you have lost it forever.

”མཁའ་ཁྲབ་གྱི་འགོ་བ་དྲིན་ཤིན་ཏུ་ཆེ་བའི་མ་ཀླན་ཉམ་ཐག་པའི་སེམས་ཅན་རྣམས་
གྱི་དོན་དུ་བྱུང་འཇུག་དོན་ཅེ་འཆང་གི་གོ་འཕང་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་དུས་རིང་པོར་མི་ཐོགས་པར་
འཐོབ་པའི་ཐབས་ལ་འབད་དེ”

As far as space itself reaches, there live sentient beings who have been your mother. They are old and feeble, they live lives of desperation, and over the reaches of time they have lavished every kindness upon you. For their sake then you must now go and attain this precious gem, the state of secret Union, the being of the One who Keeps the Diamond.

དལ་བའི་ཉེན་ལ་སྣིང་པོ་མཆོག་ཏུ་ལོན་པ་ཞིག་ངེས་པར་མཇུག་དགོས་པ་ཡིན་
གསུངས།

Make haste, give it all your strength, follow the path given here, reach your goal. You must go now, said our Lama, go, and take the ultimate essence of this one good life you have.

། རྒྱལ་ཀུན་བགོད་པ་གཅིག་གྱུར་ནི་མེད་ལམ།
། བྱ་རམ་ཤིང་པའི་གསུང་རབ་གཅིས་སྐྱའི་མཛོད།
། རྒྱལ་ཚབ་མི་ཡས་མགོན་དང་འཇམ་པའི་དབྱངས།
། ལས་འོངས་ཟབ་མེད་ལྷ་དང་རྒྱ་ཆེད་གཞུང་།

It is the one immaculate path
Travelled by each and every Victor;
It is a treasure of cherished jewels,
High words from the One of the Sugarcane.¹⁰⁷
It is the great book of teachings upon
Profound view and the far-reaching deeds
Come down to us from the royal Regent,
The Invincible Savior, and Gentle Voice.¹⁰⁸

། ལྷ་སྐྱབ་ཡབ་སྲས་ཐོགས་མེད་མཆེད་ལ་སོགས།
། སྡོན་མེད་ཤིང་རྟ་ཆེ་ལས་ལེགས་བརྒྱད་པ།
། ལྷ་གཅིག་ཕུལ་བྱང་ཞབས་དང་འབྲོམ་སྟོན་ཇིའི།
། འདྲིན་ལས་གངས་ཅན་འགྲོ་བའི་དཔལ་དུ་ཐོབ།

It descended in a perfect stream
From the Father, Nagarjuna, and his Son;
From Asanga, the Brother, and others too,
Unprecedented from great innovators.¹⁰⁹
Because of the kindness of one great God
Along with the Lord named Dromton Je,¹¹⁰
Those of the Land of Snow had the glorious
Fortune to obtain this teaching.

། འོ་པར་མཁས་གྲུབ་དུ་མའི་དཀའ་བ་བརྒྱས།
། འཕགས་ཡུལ་བཀའ་བསྟན་བྱེ་སྟོན་གངས་ལྗོངས་འདིར།

།དར་བའི་སྒྲོལ་བཟང་སྒྲེལ་བ་རིང་ཞིག་ནས།
།མི་མཁས་བསྐྱད་པས་འགྲིབ་ལ་མངོན་དུ་ཕྱོགས།

Tibetan translators and Indian masters,
A crowd of wise and accomplished saints,
Undertook thousands of hardships to find
Millions of scriptures and commentaries
In the Land of the Realized; then here in Tibet
A noble tradition spread and grew,
Till many years later some without wisdom
Began to corrupt it; the sun nearly set.

།དེ་ཆེ་འཇམ་དཔལ་དབྱངས་དངོས་ཅོང་ཁ་པས།
།ཐུབ་བསྟན་ཡོངས་ཕྱོགས་མདོ་སྒྲགས་ལམ་རིམ་གྱི།
།ཤིང་རྟའི་སྒྲོལ་ཆེན་གསར་དུ་ཕྱེ་བའི་ཆོ།
།ཐར་འདོད་སྐྱེ་གྱུ་ཡོངས་ལ་སྐྱལ་བཟང་བྱིན།

Then came Tsongkapa, who was in truth
The one called Soft and Glorious Voice.
He opened the way to a new innovation,
The magnificent system of teachings upon
The Steps to the path of all the open
And secret word of the Able Ones.
That day was a powerful blessing bestowed
On the fortunate masses who seek for freedom.

།བྱད་པར་གསུང་རབ་ཀུན་གྱི་སྒྲིང་པོ་ཞེས།
།བསྒྲགས་པ་དོན་ལྡན་མཆོག་འབྲིང་དམན་པའི་སྒོར།
།འཆམས་པ་དེ་གོ་ཡང་དག་ལམ་སྟོན་བཤེས།
།སྒང་དོར་མ་ཉོར་ལྷ་བའི་མིག་ཀྱང་ཡིན།

Especially when they call this teaching
The "essence of the highest of words,"
Their praise has a point, for only it fits
The sharpest and middle and dullest of minds.

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The Steps are too a spiritual Guide
Who shows the path that is totally pure,
They are eyes that let you see without fail
What things you should practice, and what to give up.

།ཟབ་རྒྱས་ལམ་གྱི་རིམ་པའི་གནད་བསྟུས་འདི།
།མདོ་རྒྱད་ཟླ་མེད་སྒྲ་བའི་བྲང་སྟོང་ཆེ།
།ཁྱབ་བདག་བདེ་ཆེན་སྙིང་པོ་ཕ་བོང་ཁའི།
།དྲུག་ཅུའི་དབྱངས་ལྡན་དཔལ་གྱི་མགུར་ལས་ཐོན།

This brief abridgement of the keys
Of the deep and widespread Steps of the path
Was drawn from a song of experience
Sung in sixty most glorious tones¹¹¹
By a highly accomplished Saint unmatched
In propounding the open and secret Word:
Pabongka, the Essence of Greatest Bliss,
Lord over all of his secret world.

།དེ་ཕྱིར་ལེགས་བཤད་ཟླ་བའི་མ་མ་འདིས།
།ཐུབ་བསྟན་དབང་གི་རྒྱལ་པོའི་མཛོད་བཟུང་སྟེ།
།དགའ་ལྡན་ལྷགས་འཛིན་གྲུ་དབང་གྱེ་བའི་ཤུགས།
།མཁའ་མཉམ་ཕན་བདེའི་དཔྱིད་དུ་དར་གྱུར་ཅིག

This excellent explanation then
Is like the mother of the moon,¹¹²
The treasure trove of a king of kings,
That holds in it all the Buddhas' Word.
By the strength of a trillion Lords of Serpents,
Who uphold the way of the Heaven of Bliss,¹¹³
May this teaching spread in a glorious spring
Bringing help and happiness far as space.

ཁུམ་ཡོན་ཏན་གཞིར་གྱུར་མའི་གསུང་བཤད་གྱི་བཟེང་བྱང་མདོར་བསྟུས་སུ་བཤོད་པ་
འདི་ཡང་། བྱུང་བདག་འཁོར་ལོའི་མགོན་པོ་བཀའ་བྱིན་མཉམ་མེད་ཟེ་ཕ་བོང་ཁ་པ་རོ་
ཟེ་འཆང་ཆེན་པོའི་ཞལ་སྒྲ་ནས་གྱིས། རྒྱ་སྤྱེལ་དོར་ལྷ་བཞི་པའི་ཆོས་ཉིད་གཉིས་ཉིད་
དབེན་གནས་བཀྲ་ཤིས་ཆོས་གྲིང་དུ། འགོ་ལོག་སྒྲ་མ་འཇམ་དཔལ་རོལ་པའི་སློ་གྲོས་
དཔལ་བཟང་པོ་དང་། ཞེལ་ཁང་སྤྲས་གངས་གིལ་སྤྱེལ་སྤྱི་རིན་པོ་ཆེ་སོགས་སྐལ་
ལྷན་གྱི་ཆོགས་པ་སུམ་ཅུ་སྟོར་ལ།

And so ends this very brief explanation of the *Source of All My Good*. It was compiled primarily from a series of notes taken on the 22nd day of the fourth month according to the Mongol system, in the year of the water monkey [1932], at the retreat house known as Tashi Chuling.¹¹⁴

The notes are of a teaching delivered by that God of a Secret World, the Protector of All Around Him, the Lord, the Magnificent Keeper of the Diamond: Pabongka, whose kindness knows no equal. At the time he had consented to confer a secret initiation upon a group of some thirty very fortunate disciples, including among them the good and glorious Lama of Golok, Jampel Rolpay Lodru, as well as Ganggiu Trulku Rinpoche, the son of Sholkang.¹¹⁵

བདེ་མཆོག་རིལ་བུ་ལུགས་སྤྱི་དགྲིལ་ལྷ་ལྷ་སོགས་ཀྱི་དབང་བཀའ་འགའ་ཤས་ཤིག་
གནང་བའི་སྡོན་རྒྱུ་འདིའི་བཤད་ལུང་ཉུས་སྦྱལ་དང་།

A number of empowerments and instructions upon them were given, centered on the Five Angels of the outer secret world, as well as other aspects of the secret practice of Highest Bliss, according to the tradition of Gantapada. The present explication was granted as the required preliminary to the initiation.

སྐབས་གཞན་དུ་དྲེ་རྩེ་འཆང་ཉིད་ཀྱི་དུང་ནས་ཟབ་བྲིད་མདོར་བསྡུས་འགའ་ཙམ་ནས་
 དའི་རང་ཉིད་ཀྱི་དྲན་གསའི་བརྗེད་ཐོ་ཉུང་དུ་རི་བཏབ་ཡོད་པ་རྣམས་སྤྲད་སྟོགས་
 གྲིགས་བཀྱིད་འདུན་ཐོག

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There were also a number of other occasions on which we received brief but very profound instructions on this teaching directly from this very Keeper of the Diamond. For my own benefit, so that I would be able to retain these advices, I had taken down some brief notes and kept several sets of them in my possession. It had always been my intention to organize them into a single work at some later point in time.

སློབ་མཆོད་རྒྱལ་བའི་དབང་པོའི་བསྟན་པ་བསྟན་འཛིན་སྤྲུལ་མ་སློབ་བརྒྱུད་དང་བཅས་པ་
ལ་མི་ཕྱེད་དད་དམ་ལྷ་མེད་དོ་རྗེའི་ལྷན་པོ་ལྟར་བཏན་པའི་ཡོན་གྱི་བདག་མོ་ཆེན་མོ་ལྷ་
ལྷམ་སྐྱོ་རྩེ་ཡང་འཛོམས་ཆོ་རིང་མཆོག་ནས། ལྷན་པོ་ལྟར་བཏན་པའི་ཡོན་གྱི་བདག་
མོ་ཆེན་མོ་ལྷ་ལྷམ་སྐྱོ་རྩེ་གཡང་འཛོམས་ཆོ་རིང་མཆོག་ནས།

The notes came to the attention of the esteemed Yangdzom Tsering, a high lady of noble family. She is one of the great religious sponsors of our land; her faith in the teachings of Lobsang, the King of Buddhas,¹¹⁶ and in the Lamas and disciples who keep these teachings, is totally unbreakable, unequalled, unshakable as the diamond mountain at the center of the universe.

ཟིན་བྱིས་འདི་ཉིད་སྤར་བཞོ་ཞུ་རྒྱུར་མ་དཔེ་འཕུལ་ཐོན་དགོས་ཚུལ་གྱི་བསྐྱེད་མ་ནན་
ཆེར་གནང་བར། གཞན་ལ་ཞུ་དག་གཟིགས་འབབ་སོགས་ཉི་འཕུལ་ལྷ་འཕུལ་གྱི་
ཡུན་བགྱངས་མ་སློབས་པར།

This noble lady insisted vehemently that I should with all haste come out with a manuscript of the notes which would immediately be carved onto woodblocks and printed. This duty I undertook, not daring to drag my feet or delay the project even so long as it would take to offer the text to others for proofing, editing, and other such tasks.

རང་མཉམ་སློ་དམན་དག་ལའང་པན་འདོད་གྱི་བསམ་པས་ཟིན་ཐོ་ཁག་དང་། རང་
སློར་རི་བྱང་ངེས་པ་ནམས་ལས་སྤྱིང་པོའི་ཆ་མཐའ་དག་བྲེལ་རྟུག་གིས་ལེགས་པར་
བརྟམ་ཏེ།

Along with this encouragement came a second motivation, which was my own desire to benefit fellow disciples whose intellect might be as feeble as the one I possess. And so in a great rush I have put together this treatise, combining

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together all my sets of notes, and the most essential points of whatever I myself was able to grasp with certainty from what he taught.

འདན་གྲ་དག་མིང་པ་སྟོ་བཟང་དོ་རྩེས་མ་སྟེལ་དབོ་ལྷ་འི་མར་གྱི་མཁའ་འགོ་འདུ་བའི་
དུས་བཟང་པོར་ཡབ་གཉིས་ལྷ་སྐྱ་དགའ་ཚལ་བའི་ཕོ་བྲང་དུ་མཇུག་གྲུབ་པར་བྱས་པ།

This labor was accomplished by myself, whose ordination name is Lobsang Dorje, and who hails from the monastery called Den. The writing took place at Ganden Palace, located on the estate of the family of Hlalu. The final pages were completed on the auspicious day of the Meeting of the Angels, during the waning of the moon in the month of wo, in the year of the fire monkey [1956].¹¹⁷

སྐུལ་བ་གཉིས་པ་ཙོང་ཁ་པ་ཆེན་པོའི་མདོ་སྔགས་ཀྱི་བསྟན་པའི་སྣང་པོ་དྲི་མ་མེད་པ་
རང་གཞན་ཡོངས་ཀྱི་སྐྱད་ལ་སྐྱས་པར་བྱེད་ཅུས་པའི་སྐྱར་གྱུར་ཅིག །།

I pray that this good deed may act as a cause that will give me the strength to further within my own and all other beings' minds the immaculate essence of the open and secret Word: the teachings of the Great Tsongkapa, the Buddha himself returned to us.

༺ །དད་གཏོང་རབ་ཡངས་སྒྲིན་པའི་བདག་མོ་ཆེ།
།གཡང་འཛོམས་ཆེ་རིང་གིས་བསྐྱུན་ནམ་དཀར་མཐུས།
།ས་ལམ་བབྲོད་པ་རབ་མུར་ཤིང་ཏའི་ཤུགས།
།ཟུང་འཇུག་གཏོད་མའི་རྒྱལ་སར་མུར་འགོད་ཤོག།

She is a sponsor of the Dharma
Whose gifts of faith spread far and wide,
And Yangdzom Tsering in the deed done here
Has given birth to a pure white force.
May this power send her across the spiritual
Levels and paths, with the speed of a carriage,
And bring her quickly to the capital city
Of secret Union, before and beyond all time.

།དགེ་ལེགས་འཕེལ།། །།

Let goodness grow forever!

Notes to Reading Ten

⁶⁰ *Go forth now and defeat them:* These lines are found in the Great Fifth's famous presentation on the Steps of the path, entitled "Word of the Gentle One." They occur as a poetic interlude between sections of the work's prose philosophical presentation, a device favored as well by His Holiness the First Dalai Lama.

"Mental afflictions" are essentially bad thoughts, and constitute a basic source of all our suffering. Their primary characteristic is to disturb our peace of mind, and linguistically as well their name in Sanskrit, *klesha*, comes from a verbal root meaning "to distress." Although the mental afflictions are nearly countless, the six primary ones are desire, anger, pride, ignorance, harmful doubt, and wrong views. See Prof. Whitney's *Roots of the Sanskrit Language*, and Kedrup Tenpa Dargye's "Overview of the Perfection of Wisdom."

⁶¹ *Six forms of life:* That is, the six different possible types of rebirth: as a hellbeing, a craving spirit, an animal, a human, someone nearly a pleasure being, or a full pleasure being. See also note 37.

⁶² *Three different kinds of suffering:* The illustrious Kedrup Tenpa Dargye explains them as follows in his *Overview of the Perfection of Wisdom*:

What we call "pervasive" suffering is the subtle condition of change, the fact that the physical, mental, and other parts of ourselves which we have taken on cannot remain, but begin to change from the moment after they come into existence. The suffering of change is typified by the pleasant sensation of the taste of a fine meal. The suffering of suffering, outright suffering, would be something like the painful sensation of a backache.

There is, by the way, a good reason for calling the first of these "pervasive" suffering: this is a kind of pain which pervades each and every thing produced by karma and mental afflictions, and pervades too all three realms of cyclic existence. Moreover, this particular suffering pervades each of the other two kinds.

⁶³ *Stop desire for this life:* Also found in the Master's *Three Principal Paths*.

⁶⁴ *Lineage of the Word:* The new and older schools of the Keepers of the Word, the Kadampas, are explained at note 29. "Lineage of the Word" is a translation of the word *Kagyü*, the name of one of the four great traditions of Tibetan Buddhism.

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⁶⁵ *You can't be sure you will live:* The Victor Yang Gonpa (1213-1258) was a famed early writer and practitioner of Tibetan Buddhism, and is known for a group of works called the "Hermit Cycle." He is one of the founding fathers of the "Drukpa" or "Dragon" lineage of the tradition of the Kagyu: the "Lineage of the Word." For a full account of his life, see Prof. George N. Roerich's translation of the *Blue Annals*, a history of Buddhism by Shunnu Pel, the Master Translator of Gu.

⁶⁶ *Urges himself to perfect his practice:* A catalog from the Kokonor region of Tibet contains two references to a book entitled *The Tree of Faith Aplenty: Urging Myself to Perfect My Practice*, and states that it was composed by Drom Gyalway Jungne, otherwise known as Dromton Je—Lord Atisha's foremost disciple.

⁶⁷ *Such a house of horrors:* The lines are found in a beautiful short piece entitled *A Song of Deep Despair*, from a collection of mental trainings by this seventh of the Dalai Lamas. The quotation is also found in Pabongka Rinpoche's *Gift of Liberation*.

⁶⁸ *Nirvana beyond both extremes:* Refers to the nirvana attained by a fully enlightened Buddha, who eliminates every form of spiritual obstacle, and is thus free of both the extreme of living in the cycle of suffering life, and the extreme of staying in a lower, personal nirvana. See the great Kedrup Tenpa Dargye's *Analysis of the Perfection of Wisdom*.

⁶⁹ *They sing the praises of morality:* The circumstances of the composition of these lines in praise of morality were especially joyful. Je Tsongkapa had sent one of his favorite disciples, Tsako Ngawang Drakpa, to eastern Tibet in order to teach and establish new monasteries. Upon the ordination of the first monks in the area of Gyalmo Rong, the disciple wrote a letter to the Master informing him of the event. These words are from an exquisite epistle which Je Tsongkapa sent in reply.

⁷⁰ *The various vows of freedom:* Refers to the eight sets of vows found in the Buddhist scriptures; three are for laymen, and five for the ordained. Generally speaking they are called "vows of freedom" because, by observing them carefully, one can reach the freedom of nirvana. Perhaps the clearest and most concise presentation of the eight is found in Je Tsongkapa's own *Essence of the Ocean of Discipline*.

⁷¹ *Comes to rip out the life:* Lobsang Chukyi Gyaltsen (1567?-1662) was the first of the great Panchen Lamas and a renowned philosopher, historian, and statesman—as well as teacher of the great Fifth Dalai Lama. The lines are found in a short piece entitled *Divine Nectar for Exposing the Harmful Things I Have Done in the Past, and for Restoring Myself to Spiritual Health, by Relying on the Antidotes to Bad Deeds, from the Present Moment On*.

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⁷² *Fill the reaches of space itself*: This quotation can be found in Pabongka Rinpoche's commentary to the *Three Principal Paths*, and in numerous other works on the Steps to the path.

⁷³ *Flourishes even more*: The lines are found in Master Shantideva's classic manual for bodhisattvas.

⁷⁴ *Those great beings who meditate*: The verses are from the *Lamp on the Path*, Lord Atisha's famed prototype for Tibetan texts on the Steps to Buddhahood. They are also quoted in the early *Steps of the Teaching* by Geshe Drolungpa.

⁷⁵ *The Wish for enlightenment is the central beam*: The verse appears in Je Tsongkapa's *Songs of My Spiritual Life*.

⁷⁶ *Train your mind in the proper progression*: The texts on the Steps to Buddhahood state that the great Wish for enlightenment can equally be developed by using either of the methods mentioned. The "seven-part, cause-and-effect instruction" comes down to us from Lord Buddha through masters such as Chandrakirti, Chandragomi, and Shantarakshita. It involves a preliminary step, developing neutrality towards all other beings, and then seven parts, the last being a result of the first six. The seven are:

- (1) Recognize that all beings have, in past lives, been your own mother.
- (2) Contemplate the kindness they showed you.
- (3) Develop a desire to repay them.
- (4) Find a kind of love where every other living being looks as lovely to you as a mother's only son.
- (5) Feel a strong compassion for them, a wish that they could escape every kind of pain.
- (6) Resolve to help them escape, through your own personal effort, by any means necessary.
- (7) This then brings you to the Wish to achieve enlightenment for the sake of every living being.

The practice of "exchanging self and others" comes down to us from the Buddha through Master Shantideva, and means to replace one's concern for his own welfare with a concern for the welfare of others. Both methods combine in the teachings of Lord Atisha, Je Tsongkapa, and the Lamas of their lineage. See Pabongka Rinpoche's *Gift of Liberation*.

⁷⁷ *All six perfections*: The six Buddhist perfections are giving, morality, controlling anger, enjoying good deeds, meditative concentration, and wisdom. One important source for the six is Master Chandrakirti's *Entering the Middle Way*, with chapters devoted to each.

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⁷⁸ *Avoiding the ten bad deeds:* See note 59 for the ten.

⁷⁹ *Three sets of vows:* The freedom vows have been discussed above; see note 70. The bodhisattva vows consist of 18 root vows and 46 secondary vows by which one commits him or herself to the service of other beings. The secret vows are undertaken for the purpose of attaining enlightenment in this life, in order to benefit all sentient kind. See Pabongka Rinpoche's *Gift of Liberation*.

⁸⁰ *Amassing merit and wisdom:* These two huge collections of good deeds and knowledge within one's mind stream act as the causes for the physical form and the omniscient state of a Buddha, respectively. See Pabongka Rinpoche's commentary to Je Tsongkapa's *Three Principal Paths*.

⁸¹ *Five problems to meditation:* The texts on the Steps to Buddhahood describe in detail the concept of five problems which occur as a person attempts to develop the perfect concentration known as meditative quietude. These five are countered by eight corrective measures, and lead the meditator through nine different states, with four modes. *Separating the Middle and the Extremes* is one of the works granted to Master Asanga in the 4th century by Maitreya, the future Buddha. It outlines these components of meditation in a very brief way and is used as the basis for later presentations.

The first of the five problems is called "laziness," a lack of motivation even to sit down and start trying to develop perfect concentration. It is countered by the first four of the corrective measures. Here one begins by developing (1) "faith," which means a clear understanding of the benefits of concentration. Once they are aware of these benefits, the meditator begins to (2) "aspire" to achieve them, which provides the impetus for (3) great "effort." The result of these three is (4) a kind of physical and mental "pliancy" which allows one to meditate easily. Practicing then becomes enjoyable, which is a natural antidote for the initial hesitation to begin meditating.

The second of the problems likely to arise in meditation is "forgetting the instruction," which here refers to losing the object which one has chosen to meditate upon. The correction for this is "remembering," which means trying to keep the mind on the object tightly, as you would hold a rope to keep it from slipping.

Only now, once the object is within one's mental grasp, can the third problem occur: dullness and agitation. Dullness is a heaviness of body and mind; in its gross form, one succeeds in fixing the mind but has no clarity—none of the bright, focussed feeling one gets for example while concentrating on a good book. With the subtle form of dullness one enjoys both fixation and clarity, but the clarity lacks intensity. This leads to perhaps the most common error in meditation, marked by long periods of dimly focussed dullness, a fuzzy good feeling easily mistaken for real concentration.

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Agitation, the second part of the third problem, occurs when the mind is distracted to an attractive object. The correction for both sides of the problem is known as "mindfulness," which simply means watching your own mind to catch yourself turning dull or agitated.

Although mindfulness may detect a problem occurring during meditation, one may fail to act upon the alarm, and this is the fourth problem. It is overcome by taking action, by tightening down on the meditation object in the case of subtle dullness, and by lightening up when this goes too far and causes a reaction of agitation. The idea is to maintain the proper tension, like tuning a guitar string: not too loose, and not too tight. The correction swings to either side of the problem, whichever necessary, as the driver of a car constantly corrects to left and right in order to keep a straight line.

At some point a straight line is achieved, and the concentration is running fine on its own. Now the fifth problem can occur: the fault of correcting when there is nothing to correct. This problem's natural antidote—the eighth—is to leave things alone.

The meditator passes through nine different states during the above process:

- 1) Fixing the mind: Moments of fixation on the object, with no continuity. Time off the object is more than time on the object.
- 2) Fixing the mind continuously: Some ability to keep the mind on the object for a continuous period.

During these two states the mind is in the first of the four modes: engaging only with a conscious effort to focus.

- 3) Fixing the mind with patches: Mind kept on the object for longer periods, with brief gaps which are quickly patched.
- 4) Fixing the mind closely: No longer possible to lose the object, but dullness and agitation still very strong.
- 5) Controlling the mind: Gross dullness and agitation are overcome. Special problems with subtle dullness due to excessive effort to focus the mind inward.
- 6) Stilling the mind: Special problems with subtle agitation due to steps taken to stop subtle dullness.
- 7) Stilling the mind completely: With few exceptions, all dullness and agitation stopped. Infrequent occurrences of the two are countered by application of effort.

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During these last five states the mind is in the second of the four modes: engaging but with interruptions, caused by dullness and agitation.

- 8) Focussing the mind single-pointedly: Slight initial effort is enough to prevent dullness and agitation for the entire remaining length of a meditation session.

During this eighth state the mind is in the third of the four modes: engaging without interruptions.

- 9) Balancing the mind: No effort at all required to start and remain in deep, single-pointed meditation.

During the ninth state the mind is in the last of the four modes: engaging effortlessly. This last state is also known as "approximate quietude"; it becomes true meditative quietude when one achieves true physical and mental pliancy.

The preceding discussion is based on Pabongka Rinpoche's *Gift of Liberation*, with additional material from Je Tsongkapa's *Greater Steps*.

⁸² *The fact that nothing has any nature of its own*: This refers to the Buddhist concept of emptiness, or voidness, and is easily misunderstood. For a full discussion, see Pabongka Rinpoche's own explanation in Je Tsongkapa's *Principal Teachings of Buddhism*.

⁸³ *The three principal paths*: These three constitute an essential background, without which the study of the *Mountain of Blessings* would be incomplete. They are presented fully in Pabongka Rinpoche's elucidation of Je Tsongkapa's work entitled the *Three Principal Paths*.

⁸⁴ *Listeners, self made Buddhas, and bodhisattvas*: See note 15.

⁸⁵ *Three "countless" periods of years*: The word "countless" here actually refers to a specific number—1,000. The length of an "eon" is variously described in Buddhist scripture, and is tied to cycles in the lifespans of beings; suffice to say it entails millions of years.

⁸⁶ *Eight great attainments*: These are to gain "the sword," which allows one to travel anywhere; "the pill," which enables you to become invisible or assume any outer form; "the eye ointment," which helps you see minute or very distant objects; "swift feet," the ability to travel at high speeds; "taking essence," an ability to live off nothing but tiny bits of sustenance; "sky walk," the ability to fly; "disappearing," or invisibility; and "underground," the power to pass through solid ground like a fish through water. The *Great Dictionary* describes

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each of the eight in a separate entry. An expanded presentation of these attainments is found in Lord Atisha's autocommentary to "Light on the Path."

⁸⁷ *The secret and bodhisattva vows*: Summaries of these higher vows are found in many of the texts for daily recitation, such as the *Practice for Six Times a Day*. The book of advice mentioned above, the *String of Shining Jewels*, is a concise, exquisite piece by Geshe Tsewang Samdrup of Drepung Monastery, probably from the 18th century.

⁸⁸ *Within seven lives this person will reach*: Je Tsongkapa, in the *Golden Harvest of Attainments* just mentioned, also uses this quotation. He mentions his source as a reference to the *Treasure* within Master Saraha's *Difficult Points on the Secret Teaching of the Skull*.

⁸⁹ *Within the length of sixteen lives*: The quotation is from the *String of Light for the Three Kinds of Vows*, a short piece by Master Vibhuti Chandra found in the Tengyur collection of early Indian commentaries. The lines just preceding those here, by the way, state that:

If he also does his meditation
A person will reach enlightenment
Here in the very same life.

Je Tsongkapa cites the lines on the sixteen lives in both his *Golden Harvest* and in an epistle sent to a disciple named Kashi Dzinpa, Sherab Pel Sangpo. The great scholar of the secret teachings, Shaluwa Rinchen Lobsang Kyenrab (late 19th century), also speaks of the maximum of sixteen lifetimes.

⁹⁰ *The goal is reached*: Je Tsongkapa again these lines on p. 471 of his *Golden Harvest*—the following words are included in the original:

By force of meditation and the like,
A person achieves the goal in this same life.

⁹¹ *Birth or death or the state between*: The lines by His Holiness the Seventh Dalai Lama are found in a letter of advice to one Rabjampa Gendun Drakpa.

⁹² *The "heaps," the "categories," and the "doors of sense"*: These are three ways of dividing the parts to ourselves and our world; the classic presentation of them is found throughout the first chapter of Master Vasubandhu's *Treasure House of Knowledge*.

The five "heaps" consist of our physical form, our feelings, our ability to discriminate, parts of us not covered in the other four heaps, and our consciousness. They are called "heaps" because each one consists of a large group of different things.

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The eighteen "categories" are our five physical senses and our mental sense, along with the corresponding six objects and six consciousnesses. (For example, the physical sense of the eye, visual objects, and consciousness of what we see.) They are called "categories" in the sense of "types."

The twelve "doors of sense" are the six senses and their six objects. They are "doors of sense" in that they provide a cause or doorway through which the six types of consciousness arise. These three different presentations of the divisions to us and our world are made to fit varying types of students.

⁹³ *Three bodies of a victorious Buddha:* The three bodies or parts of a Buddha are known as the Dharma Body, the Body of Enjoyment, and the Body of Emanation. The Dharma Body consists of the Buddha's omniscience, his state of having ended all impure qualities, and his or her emptiness. The Body of Enjoyment is the physical body of the Buddha in his paradise, and the Body of Emanation is the form which he projects to this and other planets to help living beings.

⁹⁴ *But remember many are robbed:* The lines are found in His famed work on the Steps to Buddhahood entitled *Word of the Gentle One*.

⁹⁵ *How the two levels of reality work:* The five great books have been described above at note 24. The "two levels of reality" refer to what are usually called "deceptive truth" and "ultimate truth." Both are valid, and all objects have both. The dependence of objects (especially in the sense of depending upon the names and concepts we apply to them) is their conventional or deceptive truth. Their appearance is "deceptive" because to the minds of normal people they appear to be something other than what they actually are. The "ultimate" truth of objects is their lack of non-dependence, and is first seen directly in the all-important meditative state known as the "path of seeing." Seeing this truth directly acts immediately to stop the process through which we suffer.

⁹⁶ *Ten levels and five paths:* The ten levels here refer to ten stages at which a bodhisattva attains an exceptional ability to perform the various perfections; they begin with the first direct perception of emptiness.

The five paths represent progressive stages towards the goal of nirvana and omniscience. The first, called the "path of accumulation," begins when a practitioner develops true renunciation for the suffering of life. For a person of the greater way this is accompanied by a full-fledged version of the Wish to gain enlightenment for the sake of others. The second path is called the "path of preparation," and is marked by increasingly refined intellectual understandings of emptiness.

The third path is the "path of seeing," named after the all-important initial direct perception of emptiness. During the subsequent stages of this path one

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also perceives directly what are called the Four Noble Truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the end of suffering, and the way to the end of suffering.

The fourth path is the "path of habituation," where one familiarizes himself repeatedly with the realizations of the previous path, in order to permanently remove all mental afflictions and their propensities. This state itself is known as the "path of no more learning," the fifth path. For a practitioner of the lower way this is nirvana, and for one of the greater way it represents the full enlightenment of a Buddha.

The subject of the ten levels and five paths is treated in detail in a standard type of textbook known as the "Presentation of the Levels and Paths."

⁹⁷ *Added here in conclusion:* In general the verse is attached to many prayers and rituals as a fitting conclusion. As for dating its first appearance, the verse is not found in the *Mountain* commentary of Tsechokling Yeshe Gyeltsen (1713-1793), nor in that of Akya Yangchen Gaway Lodru (c. 1760). It does though appear in the explanations of the Second Jamyang Shepa, Konchok Jikme Wangpo (1728-1791), and Keutsang Lobsang Jamyang Monlam (b. 1689).

⁹⁸ *By this virtue may all beings...* These are actually the final lines of Master Nagarjuna's *Sixty Verses of Reasoning*, and are often used nowadays as a prayer of dedication after the good deed of listening to a teaching. The entire verse reads:

By this virtue may all beings
Gather the masses of merit and wisdom.
May they achieve the ultimate two [bodies of a Buddha]
That the merit and the wisdom produce.

⁹⁹ *The prayers of bodhisattva princes:* The original lines are from the third part of a verse description of his spiritual life by Je Tsongkapa entitled *Noble Hopes*. This section is called the "Dedication of All that I Had Done, that the Word should Flourish in the World," and the entire verse reads as follows:

The prayers of bodhisattva princes,
As many as the drops of water in the Ganges,
Are all—it is spoken—included within
A prayer that the Dharma be preserved.

Thus I take the core of virtue
Created by the good I have done
And dedicate it to the spread
Of the Buddha's teaching in the world.

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I think of all I've done,
My hopes in life were noble;
Oh you have been kind to me,
Holy Treasure House of knowledge.

The *Treasure House* here, by the way, refers to Gentle Voice—Je Tsongkapa's tutor.

¹⁰⁰ *The teacher unsurpassed*: The lines are often appended to prayers and recitation texts; see for example the version of Je Tsongkapa's *Songs of My Spiritual Life*. The entire verse reads:

The fact that in my life I've been able
To meet with the matchless Word of the Teacher
Is my Lama's kindness, so this good I've done
I dedicate to the cause that every
Living being might find himself
Under a holy Lama's care.

¹⁰¹ *The hermitage of the Victor*: The "Victor" here is Dromton Je, founder of Radreng Monastery—which is located to the north of Lhasa city. See note 16 for details.

¹⁰² *The Thousand Angels*: The *Thousand Angels of the Heaven of Bliss* is an extremely important devotional work and meditation centered on Je Tsongkapa. The preliminary practices are a method to prepare oneself properly for a meditation session; a typical version would be that of Pabongka Rinpoche's root Lama, Jampel Hlundrup.

¹⁰³ *Milarepa and Kyungpo*: The great Milarepa (1040-1123) is perhaps the most famed meditator and writer of spiritual poetry in Tibet. In his early years he practiced black magic and used it to harm a great many people. Later he regretted this wrong path and became one of the greatest Buddhist masters of his time, spending a full nine years in intense meditation to achieve the ultimate goal. The sage Kedrup Kyungpo Neljor (b. 978) was originally a practitioner of the shamanistic Bon religion prevalent in Tibet prior to the arrival of Buddhism. Not reaching the goals he sought, Kedrup Kyungpo travelled to Nepal and India, mastering the Buddhist teachings. He founded numerous monasteries in Tibet and started the Shangpa school of the tradition known as the Kagyu: the Lineage of the Word. For thumbnail biographies see the *Great Dictionary*.

¹⁰⁴ *Actually make them enlightened*: Original source of quotation not found. Tuken Chukyi Nyima (1737-1802) was the third incarnation of the Tuken lineage. His studies were influenced by such eminent Lamas as the Seventh Dalai Lama, the Third Panchen Lama, the great historian and grammarian

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Sumpa Kenpo Yeshe Peljor, the philosopher Changkya Rolpay Dorje, and most importantly Purbuchok Ngawang Jampa, known for his writings on history and the secret teachings. Perhaps the most famous of Tuken's lucid treatises is his *Survey of the Schools of Philosophy*.

¹⁰⁵ *Those with the goodness to hear it:* Original source of quotation not found. Changkya Rolpay Dorje (1717-1786) was the second incarnation of the Line of the Changkya Lamas, and is said in fact to have been a former life of Pabongka Rinpoche himself. He was Lama to the Emperor of China and instrumental in the publication of the entire Buddhist canon in Mongolian.

¹⁰⁶ *Just what our Lord Lama has taught:* The lines are found in a short piece which describes how to meditate on the impermanence of life. Gungtang Tenpay Dronme (1762-1823) spent his early years at the monastery of Labrang Tashi Kyil in east Tibet, and then studied under leading masters of his day at the great Drepung Monastery in Lhasa. He displayed extraordinary talent and received the highest scholastic degree at the age of twenty-two. His collected works span a wide range of subjects including the open and secret teachings of Buddhism, the fine arts, medicine and astrology, and classical grammar.

¹⁰⁷ *One of the Sugarcane:* An epithet of the historical Buddha, who was born into a group of people called "Those of the Sugarcane."

¹⁰⁸ *The royal Regent, the Invincible Savior, and Gentle Voice:* The Regent and Savior mentioned here refer to Loving One, Maitreya, the future Buddha who has been put as regent of the Heaven of Bliss by the present Buddha, Shakyamuni. The lineage of far-reaching deeds motivated by the Wish for enlightenment has come down from Lord Buddha through him, and the lineage of the profound view of emptiness has been passed down to us through Gentle Voice, Manjushri.

¹⁰⁹ *Descended in a perfect stream:* The lines here are describing exactly the same lineages to which Je Tsongkapa made his original supplication when he wrote the text of the *Mountain of Blessings*. The third-century Indian masters Nagarjuna and Aryadeva are sometimes referred to as the "Father and Son," teacher and disciple for the philosophy of emptiness. Master Asanga is also known as the "Brother" since he and the illustrious Vasubandhu had the same mother. Both Nagarjuna and Asanga are spoken of as "innovators" in the sense that they were able to elucidate the scriptures without relying on a previous innovator, and were prophesied as such by the Buddha himself. This subject is treated at length in monastic presentations on the perfection of wisdom such as the *Analysis* of Kedrup Tenpa Dargye.

¹¹⁰ *The kindness of one great God:* The "God" here refers to Atisha, who with his principal disciple Dromton Je was chiefly responsible for introducing the teachings on the Steps into Tibet. See also note 19.

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¹¹¹ *Sixty most glorious tones*: Refers to sixty different remarkable traits of the speech of the Buddha. The most important of these, as Pabongka Rinpoche himself notes in his *Gift of Liberation*, is the spontaneous ability to speak in a single language, Sanskrit, which is heard by each disciple as his own native tongue.

¹¹² *The mother of the moon*: The image has a multitude of meanings but, most importantly here, refers to the great outer ocean of Buddhist cosmology. The floor of the ocean was believed in Tibet to be the source of precious jewels.

¹¹³ *Way of the Heaven of Bliss*: Refers to the teaching tradition of Je Tsongkapa. The "serpents" mentioned here are the mythical "nagas;" their home was in bodies of water, and it was believed that, so long as they remained in them, the water would never dry up. Here the mighty Lamas of the Lineage are the serpents; because of them, the ocean of the teachings like the present book remain.

¹¹⁴ *The retreat house known as Tashi Chuling*: A hermitage favored by Pabongka Rinpoche and located above an outcropping near Lhasa named "Pabongka Rock." This was the location of Pabongka Monastery, and as a child the Rinpoche was recognized as the reincarnation of this monastery's abbot.

¹¹⁵ *Son of Sholkang*: Sholkang was a powerful government official who assisted the regent of Tibet from the year 1907, and passed away in 1926.

¹¹⁶ *Lobsang, the King of Buddhas*: Meaning Je Tsongkapa, Lobsang Drakpa.

¹¹⁷ *The Meeting of the Angels*: A biweekly celebration of the Angel of Diamond. The monastery of Den is located in Kham, east Tibet. The Hlalu were a well-known aristocratic of old Tibet; their principal holdings were located to the northwest of Lhasa, on the road to Drepung Monastery.



The Stages of Meditation



Name:

Date:

Grade:

Homework, Class One

1) List the five parts for our study of the practice of meditation.

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

2) There are a number of words in Tibetan and Sanskrit for different forms of meditation. Some of the important ones are *gompa* (Sanskrit: *bhavana*), *samten* (*dhyana*), *nyomjuk* (*samapatti*), *nyamshak* (*samahita*), *shi-ne* (*shamata*), and *ting-ngen-dzin* (*samadhi*). Describe very briefly the general sense of each of these. (Tibetan track students write out the Tibetan for each.)

a) *gompa*:

b) *samten*:

c) *nyomjuk*:

d) *nyamshak*:

e) *shi-ne*:

f) *ting-nge-dzin*:

3) List just the names of the six preliminaries that should be performed before a meditation session. Be careful not to confuse them with the "seven ingredients" that we will study in the next class. (Tibetan track students answer in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

f)

Memorization assignment: Memorize the names of the six preliminaries.

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day at the same time of day on the six preliminaries

Dates and times meditated (homework without these will not be accepted):



Name:

Date:

Grade:

Homework, Class Two

1) Who wrote the text that we are studying for the six preliminaries and the seven ingredients used in preparing for a meditation session? What are his dates? What is the text called? (Tibetan track students answer in Tibetan.)

2) On what original Sanskrit work is this author's presentation of the seven ingredients based? (Tibetan track students answer in Tibetan.)

3) What are the seven ingredients? (Tibetan track students answer in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

f)

g)

4) These seven are part of which of the six preliminaries? Which of them act to gather the power of goodness, and how many to clean away obstacles for a successful meditation?

5) What are the three types of vows mentioned in the ingredient of confession? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

6) What is the difference between a prayer and a dedication? (Tibetan track give names for these two.)

7) What work will we be using for the practice of the seven ingredients?

Memorization assignment: Memorize the names of the seven ingredients. (Tibetan track in Tibetan).

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day at the same time of day on the seven ingredients.

Dates and times meditated (homework without these will not be accepted):



Name:

Date:

Grade:

Homework, Class Three

1) Name the six conditions that must be gathered together for meditation. Do not confuse these with the six preliminaries. (Tibetan track answer in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

f)

2) What book is Je Tsongkapa using for his explanation of the first of these? Who wrote it, and what are their dates? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

3) What is Je Tsongkapa using as his source for all six? Who wrote it, and what are his dates? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

4) What is an important source for the teaching on few wants, and easy satisfaction? Who wrote it, and when?

Memorization assignment: Memorize the names of the six conditions for meditation.

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day at the same time of day, on the six conditions.

Dates and times meditated (homework without these will not be accepted):



Name:

Date:

Grade:

Homework, Class Four

1) Briefly describe the eight characteristics of correct meditation posture. (Tibetan track students also give Tibetan for each.)

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

f)

g)

h)

2) What source is Je Tsongkapa using for these eight? Who wrote it? When did he live? (Tibetan track students answer in Tibetan.)

3) The eight characteristics have sometimes been called the eight-point posture of the Buddha named "Appearances" (*Vairochana*). How do they differ from the seven-point posture of the same Buddha? (Tibetan track students give Tibetan for the seven-point posture of Vairochana.)

Memorization assignment: Memorize the eight parts of proper meditation posture.

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day at the same time of day on the eight-point posture.

Dates and times meditated (homework without these will not be accepted):



Name:

Date:

Grade:

Homework, Class Five

1) Name the first of the five problems of meditation. Which four of the eight corrections are used to counteract it? (Tibetan track answer in Tibetan.)

a) *problem:*

b) *four corrections:*

(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

2) Name the second of the five problems of meditation, and explain why its name does not exactly describe it. (Tibetan track name in Tibetan, and explain in English.)

3) Give the name of the correction for this second problem. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

4) Name the third of the five problems of meditation. What is its correction? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

5) Give an example for the difference between fixation, clarity, and clarity with intensity. (Tibetan track give the names for these three in Tibetan.)

6) Explain the difference between gross and subtle dullness of meditation. (Tibetan track name the two in Tibetan, and explain in English.)

Memorization assignment: Memorize the names of the first three problems and the first six corrections.

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day at the same time of day on these nine.

Dates and times meditated (homework without these will not be accepted):



Name:

Date:

Grade:

Homework, Class Six

1) What is the fourth of the five problems of meditation? How do you know it has occurred? (Tibetan track give the name for the problem in Tibetan.)

2) What is the correction for this fourth problem? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

3) This correction can come in two different forms. Name them.

a)

b)

4) Name three methods for uplifting your state of mind in meditation. Which is the main one? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

5) Name three methods of bringing your mind down in meditation.

a)

b)

c)

6) What is the fifth and final problem of meditation? What is its correction? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

Memorization assignment: By the end of this week you should have memorized all five problems and all eight solutions.

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day at the same time of day on the last two problems and their corrections.

Dates and times meditated (homework without these will not be accepted):



Name:

Date:

Grade:

Homework, Class Seven

1) Name and describe the nine states of meditation. (Tibetan track give the names in Tibetan and describe in English.)

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

f)

g)

h)

i)

Memorization assignment: Memorize the names of the nine states of meditation.

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day at the same time of day on the nine states.

Dates and times meditated (homework without these will not be accepted):



Name:

Date:

Grade:

Homework, Class Eight

1) Name three different types of meditation. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

2) Give the meaning of the word "lam-rim." Where does the name come from?

3) Which of the five great texts, and the different levels of secret practice, are contained in this text?

4) Who wrote the *Source of All My Good*? Where, and when?

5) Name the four major parts of this lam-rim. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

d)

6) Name four parts to the practice of taking yourself to a Lama. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

d)

7) There are two sets of five qualities that a qualified Lama should, at the very minimum, possess. List either one of them. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

8) What is the meaning of "bless me" throughout this text?

Memorization assignment: Memorize the first three verses of *Source of All My Good*.

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day, at the same time of day, on the first verse.

Dates and times meditated (homework without these will not be accepted):



Name:

Date:

Grade:

Homework, Class Nine

1) The first part of the lam-rim ("steps of the path") we are studying concerned how to take a Lama. The second part concerns how to practice once one has taken a Lama. What are the two parts of how to do this practice? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

2) Name any five of the eight leasures.

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

3) Name any five of the ten fortunes.

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

4) Name the three parts to the subject of taking the essence of this life. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

5) What are the three principles of the death meditation? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

6) Name the four laws of karma. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

d)

Memorization assignment: Memorize up to the verse that starts with "Bless me to perceive all that's wrong with the seemingly good things of this life."

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day at the same time of day on the eight pleasures and the ten fortunes.

Dates and times meditated (homework without these will not be accepted):



Name:

Date:

Grade:

Homework, Class Ten

1) State briefly the difference between Buddhists of lesser, medium, and greater capacity.

2) Give two parts to the steps of the path which are shared with practitioners of medium capacity. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

3) Do you think it is true that every event in our present kind of life is suffering? Why or why not?

4) Of the three trainings, why is only the training of morality mentioned at this point?

5) What are recollection and watchfulness doing at this point, and towards what are they aimed? (Tibetan track give the names for the two in Tibetan.)

6) Give the two parts to the steps of the path which are shared with practitioners of the greater scope (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

7) The second of these two parts has two parts itself. Name them. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

8) The first of these two parts also has two parts. Name them. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

9) What are the three moralities mentioned here? (Warning: these are not the same as the three types of vows.) (Tibetan track answer in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

10) Give the definition of quietude (called *shamata* in Sanskrit and *shi-ne* in Tibetan).

11) Give the definition of insight (called *vipashyana* in Sanskrit and *hlak-tong* in Tibetan).

Memorization assignment: Memorize the verses from "Bless me to perceive all that's wrong with the seemingly good things of this life" up to "the perfect meaning in the correct way."

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day at the same time of day, on the entire outline of our lam-rim so far.

Dates and times meditated (homework without these will not be accepted):



Name:

Date:

Grade:

Quiz, Class One

1) List the five parts for our study of the practice of meditation.

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

2) List just the names of the six preliminaries that should be performed before a meditation session. Be careful not to confuse them with the "seven ingredients" that we will study in the next class. (Tibetan track students answer in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

f)



Name:

Date:

Grade:

Quiz, Class Two

1) Who wrote the text that we are studying for the six preliminaries and the seven ingredients used in preparing for a meditation session? What are his dates? What is the text called? (Tibetan track students answer in Tibetan.)

2) What are the seven ingredients? (Tibetan track students answer in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

f)

g)

3) These seven are part of which of the six preliminaries? Which of them act to gather the power of goodness, and how many to clean away obstacles for a successful meditation?

4) What work will we be using for the practice of the seven ingredients?



Name:

Date:

Grade:

Quiz, Class Three

1) Name the six conditions that must be gathered together for meditation. Do not confuse these with the six preliminaries. (Tibetan track answer in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

f)

2) What is an important source for the teaching on few wants, and easy satisfaction? Who wrote it, and when?



Name:

Date:

Grade:

Quiz, Class Four

1) Briefly describe the eight characteristics of correct meditation posture. (Tibetan track students also give Tibetan for each.)

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

f)

g)

h)



Name:

Date:

Grade:

Quiz, Class Five

1) Name the first of the five problems of meditation. Which four of the eight corrections are used to counteract it? (Tibetan track answer in Tibetan.)

a) *problem:*

b) *four corrections:*

(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

2) Name the third of the five problems of meditation. What is its correction? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

3) Explain the difference between gross and subtle dullness of meditation. (Tibetan track name the two in Tibetan, and explain in English.)



Name:

Date:

Grade:

Quiz, Class Six

1) What is the fourth of the five problems of meditation? How do you know it has occurred? (Tibetan track give the name for the problem in Tibetan.)

2) What is the correction for this fourth problem? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

3) This correction can come in two different forms. Name them.

a)

b)

4) What is the fifth and final problem of meditation? What is its correction? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)



Name:

Date:

Grade:

Quiz, Class Seven

1) Name and describe the nine states of meditation. (Tibetan track give the names in Tibetan and describe in English.)

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

f)

g)

h)

i)



Name:

Date:

Grade:

Quiz, Class Eight

1) Name three different types of meditation. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

2) Give the meaning of the word "lam-rim." Where does the name come from?

3) Which of the five great texts, and the different levels of secret practice, are contained in this text?

4) Name the four major parts of this lam-rim. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

d)



Name:

Date:

Grade:

Quiz, Class Nine

1) The first part of the lam-rim ("steps of the path") we are studying concerned how to take a Lama. The second part concerns how to practice once one has taken a Lama. What are the two parts of how to do this practice? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

2) Name the three parts to the subject of taking the essence of this life. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

3) What are the three principles of the death meditation? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

4) Name the four laws of karma. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

d)



Name:

Date:

Grade:

Quiz, Class Ten

- 1) State briefly the difference between Buddhists of lesser, medium, and greater capacity.
- 2) Do you think it is true that every event in our present kind of life is suffering? Why or why not?
- 3) Of the three trainings, why is only the training of morality mentioned at this point?
- 4) Give the two parts to the steps of the path which are shared with practitioners of the greater scope (Tibetan track in Tibetan).
 - a)
 - b)
- 5) Give the definition of quietude (called *shamata* in Sanskrit and *shi-ne* in Tibetan).
- 6) Give the definition of insight (called *vipashyana* in Sanskrit and *hlak-tong* in Tibetan).



Name:

Date:

Grade:

Final Examination

1) List the five parts for our study of the practice of meditation.

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

2) List just the names of the six preliminaries that should be performed before a meditation session. Be careful not to confuse them with the "seven ingredients". (Tibetan track students answer in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

f)

3) What are the seven ingredients? (Tibetan track answer in Tibetan.)

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)
- e)
- f)
- g)

4) These seven are part of which of the six preliminaries? Which of them act to gather the power of goodness, and how many to clean away obstacles for a successful meditation?

5) Name the six conditions that must be gathered together for meditation. Do not confuse these with the six preliminaries. (Tibetan track answer in Tibetan.)

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)
- e)
- f)

6) Briefly describe the eight characteristics of correct meditation posture. (Tibetan track students also give Tibetan for each.)

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

f)

g)

h)

7) Name the first of the five problems of meditation. Which four of the eight corrections are used to counteract it? (Tibetan track answer in Tibetan.)

a) *problem*:

b) *four corrections*:

(1)

(2)

(3)

(4)

8) Name the third of the five problems of meditation. What is its correction? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

9) Explain the difference between gross and subtle dullness of meditation. (Tibetan track name the two in Tibetan, and explain in English.)

10) What is the fourth of the five problems of meditation? How do you know it has occurred? (Tibetan track give the name for the problem in Tibetan.)

11) The correction to the fourth problem can come in two different forms. Name them.

a)

b)

12) Name and describe the nine states of meditation. (Tibetan track give the names in Tibetan and describe in English.)

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

f)

g)

h)

i)

13) Name three different types of meditation. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

14) Give the meaning of the word "lam-rim." Where does the name come from?

15) Which of the five great texts, and the different levels of secret practice, are contained in this text?

16) Name the four major parts of this lam-rim. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

d)

17) Name the three parts to the subject of taking the essence of this life. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

18) What are the three principles of the death meditation? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

19) Name the four laws of karma. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

d)

20) State briefly the difference between Buddhists of lesser, medium, and greater capacity.

21) Do you think it is true that every event in our present kind of life is suffering? Why or why not?

22) Of the three trainings, why is only the training of morality mentioned at this point?

23) Give the two parts to the steps of the path which are shared with practitioners of the greater scope (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

24) Give the definition of quietude (called *shamata* in Sanskrit and *shi-ne* in Tibetan).

25) Give the definition of insight (called *vipashyana* in Sanskrit and *hlak-tong* in Tibetan).

Please PRINT your name clearly, exactly as you would like it to appear on your certificate, and the address to which the certificate should be sent.

Please circle one or specify other: Mr. Ms. Mrs. Miss Venerable

Name as you would like it to appear on the certificate: _____

Mailing name, if different: _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip code _____

Country _____

These notes were taken by a student in class, and should be used for reference only. Please check them against the audio tapes for accuracy of content.

CLASS NOTES

Course III: Applied Meditation

Class One: Different Types of Meditation, Five Parts of Meditation Practice

Text used for class: *Prayer of Samantabhadra* - all teachings on how to prepare for meditation are based on this (taught by Buddha). We are also using Je Tsongkapa's (1357-1419) commentary from the **Lam Rim Chen Mo**.

Five parts to meditation practice:

- 1.) **Preparation to begin** - Six preliminary activities necessary - must have them to be successful in session. Shifts gears of the mind from external world to meditation.
- 2.) **Six conditions of the surrounding environment.**
- 3.) **Bodily posture** - Eight-point posture
- 4.) **Mental process** - Three steps: 1) five problems, 2) eight corrections, 3) nine mental stages.
- 5.) **Object of Meditation.**

Meditation is a tool; temporary pleasant side effects result from doing meditation. It is not an end, and does not have spiritual value unless focused upon a spiritual object. Mind is very influencible. Whatever the mind is around, it becomes like that, so if we focus it on a holy object, the mind becomes holy.

General Definitions of Meditation Types:

- 1.) **GOM-PA** (Sanskrit: *bhavana*): (most general description): Getting used to something by doing it over and over again. Bringing an object to your mind repeatedly until you get used to it - habituation. Burning something into the mind so that it is fixed within the mind.
- 2.) **SAM-TEN** (Sanskrit: *dhyana*): This is the name of the fifth perfection (concentration or meditation). It also refers to four levels of very deep meditation which result in being born in four levels of the form realm. The mind's concentration is in the first level of the form realm when you see emptiness.

Three realms of suffering beings:

- 1.) **Desire realm:** includes earth, bardos, hells, top of Mount Meru.
 - 2.) **Form realm:** we can't see it. Beings there live in a state of high pleasure, with beautiful bodies, rainbow bodies, etc.
 - 3.) **Formless realm:** no physical bodies - purely mental beings. Good deeds, great virtue (defined as avoiding bad habits) result in high rebirth. By being in deep meditation, you can't do any bad deeds, so you end up in a higher realm.
- 3.) **NYOM-JUK** (Sanskrit: *samapatti*): Called causal meditations (because they cause rebirth):
 - a.) meditation which will cause rebirth in the form realm, and
 - b.) meditation which will cause rebirth in the formless realm,
 - c.) cessation meditation, a state in which your gross mind is almost shut down. It is very blissful, but you still take rebirth.

CLASS NOTES

Course III: Applied Meditation

Class One, continued

4.) **SHI-NEY** (**SHI**=peace, **NEY**=stay) (Sanskrit: *shamatha*): This is always linked with **HLAK-TONG** (**HLAK**=exceptional, **TONG**=seeing) (Sanskrit: *vipashyana*): these two are always in union. **Shi-ney** is the highest evolution of meditation, and the most powerful. It should be merged with the perception of emptiness to be in its highest form. It is like a powerful gun, waiting to be pointed at something. **Shi-ney** is the instrument; the focus is wisdom (**hlak-tong**).

5.) **TING-NGE-DZIN** (Sanskrit: *samadhi*): One-pointed state of mind. One-pointed means you are able to keep your mind on one object. **Shi-ney** is the highest evolution of samadhi. In samadhi, one can hold the mind on one object briefly. In shi-ney, one can hold the mind on one object for a very long time.

6.) **NYAM-SHAK JE-TUP**: Meditation where you see emptiness directly. Contemplation about what you saw in emptiness as you come down (where you realize four Arya Truths).

Six things to do before meditation (Six Preliminaries):

- 1.) **NE-KANG TSANG-MA** - clean up and tidy the room.
- 2.) **CHU-PA** - offering. Set up the altar and make offerings.
- 3.) **KYAB-DRO SEM-KYE** - going for refuge and generating bodhichitta (implies taking proper meditation posture first.)
- 4.) **TSOK-SHING MIK-PA** - visualize the lamas of the two great lineages (emptiness and compassion.)
- 5.) **DRIP-JANG TSOK-SAK** - purifying obstacles and gathering together the power of goodness by the seven ingredients.
- 6.) **SOLN-DEP** - requesting blessings.

CLASS NOTES

Course III: Applied Meditation

Class Two: Six Preliminaries to Meditation

Six Preliminaries to Meditation:

- 1.) **Clean up and tidy the room** - this becomes the cause to help create a paradise later. Also helps to wake up and get the day going and to slow down the mind.
(Do three prostrations before sitting.)
- 2.) **Offerings** - Water bowl offerings to the five senses - Fill and empty bowls from the left. Empty bowls at night to signify ready to die now. Wipe bowls before filling.
- 3.) **Posture** - Put left foot up first, etc. Go for refuge (fear and faith needed), and generate bodhichitta.
- 4) **Visualize merit field**. Start simply, by visualizing the silhouette of the root lama, and then begin to add features, color, and details later. See as young and vibrant without physical defects.
- 5.) **Purify obstacles**. Gather goodness by seven steps: Confession acts to remove negative energy before meditation, and the other six act to accumulate positive energy. **Ganden hla-gya-ma** is the 7-ingredient practice focused upon Je Tsongkapa, and which will be used in this class.

Seven steps:

- 1.) **CHAK-TSEL**: (Prostration) Folded hands touch crown, mouth, and heart to wish for body, speech, and mind of a Buddha. Go slowly and wish not to go down to rebirth in hells. Get up quickly. Three prostrations for teacher, teaching, and for those who follow teaching.
 - 2.) **CHU-PA**: (Offerings)
 - 3.) **SHAK-PA**: (Open yourself) Confession, purification of broken freedom, bodhisattva, and secret vows (very important). You can't concentrate if something is in your conscience. Do something like Vajrasattva visualization.
 - 4.) **YI-RANG-WA**: (Rejoicing) Being glad about the good things which you and others have done. It is more powerful to rejoice about your own goodness than that of others. It multiplies your virtue and potential exponentially to be very happy about your own good deeds.
 - 5.) **CHU-KOR KOR-WA**: (Turn the Wheel of Dharma) Requesting the holy beings to teach.
 - 6.) **SOLN-DEP**: (Requesting) Asking the holy beings to stay and not to break your relationship or to die.
 - 7.) **NGO-WA**: (Dedication)
- 6.) **SOLN-DEP**: Requesting to give you **jīn-lap** (potential to gain high spiritual goals) - to enable your ability to increase. Request to change ability in every path from simplest beginning to the highest one. After requesting, absorb the being through your crown into your heart.

CLASS NOTES

Course III: Applied Meditation

Class Three: Six Conditions of the Environment

The Six Conditions of the Environment From Je Tsongkapa's commentary on **Dodey Gyen** (Sanskrit: *Sutralamkara*) by Asanga (c. 350 AD).

- 1.) **TUNPAY YUL**
harmony place
Stay in a conducive place.

Five parts:

- 1.) Everything you need to be comfortable physically should be there: enough clothing, heat, food prepared for you, etc.
- 2.) It should be a safe place.
- 3.) Should have a good environment, where you won't get sick, not too hot or cold or too noisy (sound is the worst distraction).
- 4.) Good friends: you should have an assistant in retreat with good morality, and similar values. Surrounding people support what you are doing. If people aren't supportive, you'll fail.
- 5.) Having goodness - not a lot of people around, and no noise. Don't go outside at all, and seal windows so you don't see anything, especially living creatures. No books, radio, or anything to do. Solitude should drive you into your mind.

(A note on **LUNG**: This is a condition caused by psychic energy imbalance. Symptoms include feeling bloated, anxiety, short quick breath, lightheadedness, getting giggly and silly, and not sleeping (very bad!). Eat heavy foods and protein to counteract it, and contact a lama. If you don't sleep for two days, and can't get a lama, get out of retreat.)

- 2.) **DU-PA CHUNG-WA: Attitude that you don't need much to be satisfied.** Few needs.

- 3.) **CHOK SHE-PA: Attitude of being satisfied with whatever you get.**

This and the prior point are very important. Once you go into meditation, let go of everything and be satisfied. Don't think you need something more or different to have a good retreat. (From *Abhidharmakosha* by Vasubandhu (C. 350 AD)).

- 4.) **JO MANG PANG**
activities many give them up
Give up doing a lot of things. Do only the minimum necessary.

- 5.) **TSUL-TRIM DAK-PA**
morality pure
Avoid harming (inflicting physical or mental suffering on) **any being**. If you go into retreat with any bad deeds on your conscience, you can not develop concentration. You must be trying to keep pure morality. Try to be especially good before going into retreat.

CLASS NOTES

Course III: Applied Meditation

Class Three, continued

6.) NAM - TOK PANG

fantasy, wrong thought give them up
(regarding senses)

Get rid of sense desires; get rid of desire for things your senses are attracted to. Withdraw from the senses on a subtle level; the mind doesn't register the senses - taste, sight, sound, etc.

GOM-RIM (The Stages of Meditation) by Kamalashila (750 AD) was the source for this text. Also used Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakosha*, and included #2 and #3 from that.)

Another set of conditions which help concentration are the first four perfections. Each of the perfections supports the next. Charity supports morality, which supports not getting angry which supports joyous effort, which supports concentration, which supports wisdom.

CLASS NOTES

Course III: Applied Meditation

Class Four: Eight-Point Posture of Vairochana

CHU - GYE LU - CHU

dharma eight body posture

Eight-point posture of Vairochana (sometimes called seven-point posture when they don't consider the last point - the breath).

1.) KANG-PA KYIL-TRUNG

kang lotus posture

Leg in full lotus with left leg up first and then right leg. Do a half lotus if you can't do a full one. Don't sit in a posture which will distract you from meditation.

2.) MIK MI - YE MI - SUM

eye not wide not far

Don't keep eyes open too wide, because that can be distracting, **and not closed**, because that might make you sleepy. Direct the eyes downward (about 45 degrees) on a point 6" in front of you. If you can't focus your mind because of distractions, just close the eyes for awhile. Have something plain in front of you, not colors, patterns, letters, etc., that will present a visual distraction. Focusing eyes on, or staring at, an object isn't meditating. The definition of meditation is to withdraw from the senses and focus the mind. It is very important for the eyes to be unfocused.

3.) LU DRANG-PO

body straight

It is very important to have the chest in one plane - not leaning forward or backward. When you catch yourself leaning, correct your posture slowly to not interfere with breathing and meditation. You shouldn't lean against anything (except in long retreat when meditating all day and it is necessary to rest the back occasionally).

4.) TRAK-PA NYAM

shoulders level

Shoulders level - left not higher than right, etc. Don't move for anything once in the posture, no matter what - itches, sleeping legs, etc. If you don't move, the feelings will go and you can then withdraw the senses.

5.) GO MITO MIMA

head not high not bent down

The head shouldn't be bent down or leaned backwards or to the right or left. It should be centered and straight.

6.) SO - CHU RANG - LUK

teeth lips natural position

Teeth and lips as they are naturally, not tight or clenched. If the mouth is closed, the corners get tight. If the mouth is open, it dries out. This position prevents excessive swallowing.

CLASS NOTES

Course III: Applied Meditation

Class Four, continued

7.) CHE YA-SOY RANG - LUK

tongue top teeth keep in that area

Keep tongue in the area of your upper teeth, where it is naturally. This will prevent thirst.

8.) UK (from *Abhidharmakosha*) breath

Count exhalation as one and inhalation as two, i.e., always start with exhalation. **Breath watching is meant to change gears and not as an object of meditation.** Should be very, very slow, so you don't hear your breath. Never force yourself to breathe slowly, and always breathe through the nose.

Seat is very important. The back of the seat should be higher than the front, to straighten the back, and there should be at least a thin mat on the ground to keep the legs warm and not falling asleep. Put kusha grass between the mat and the cushion.

The left hand is placed down first and the right palm rests on it. Thumbs touch and elbows out slightly, with palms resting on the pit of the ankle.

CLASS NOTES

Course III: Applied Meditation

Class Five: Five Problems within Meditation

Five Problems and Eight Corrections: (from Pabongka Rinpoche's Lam Rim)

NYEPA NGA

problem five

Five problems which arise in meditation.

NYENPO GYE

antidote eight

Eight corrections to the five problems.

Five Problems:

1.) LE-LO

laziness

Laziness: Not wanting to meditate, not feeling like it. When we do it even though we don't want to is when we will make the most progress and attain shamatha.

Corrections:

a.) TING-NGEN-DZIN LA DEPA

one pointed focus towards faith

Having attraction and admiration for the good qualities of meditation. These include knowledge that you can only move from one path (of the five paths to Buddhahood) in a state of deep meditation, that you can't be in deep meditation without practicing daily, that you must have one-pointed concentration to attain the good qualities of Buddhism, etc.

b.) DUN-PA

want it

You want shamata, because of understanding the good qualities described above.

c.) TSUN-DRU

effort

Trying hard to meditate, as a result of wanting shamata. Your wanting it causes you to try to get it, so that you are willing to sit to meditate when you are tired and don't feel like it.

d.) SHIN - JANG

practiced ease

By doing it over and over again, it becomes natural and easy, mentally and physically. The body becomes used to the posture. You must do it continually. If you only do it for a few weeks and then take a break, it won't work. The mind will do whatever you want. With **shin-jang** (practiced ease), you can force the mind to focus as long as you want. This is the actual correction for laziness. The other three lead up to this correction. When you get good at it and enjoy it, you'll want to do it regularly. Think about what you want to do instead of meditating. It is impermanent, and will be lost; it is suffering to get it and there will be suffering to keep it. Meditate instead.

2.) DAM - NGAK JE - PA

instruction/advice to forget

Forgetting the instruction: You lose the object of concentration. The object of meditation slips away completely.

CLASS NOTES

Course III: Applied Meditation

Class Five, continued

Antidote:

e.) **DREN - PA**

remembering

Recalling the object if you've lost it, or remembering the object before losing it. Habituate yourself to it so it's familiar and not lost. The greatest enemy to remembering is to change objects of meditation. Pick one and keep it a long time or until you attain shamata.

3.) **JING - GU**

mental dullness agitation

[**NE - CHA**

SEL - CHA

NGAR - ME

stay aspect: fixation clear aspect: clarity intensity, flexible strength]

Mental dullness and agitation:

Dullness: It can be obvious or subtle. **Obvious dullness** is when you have **fixation** on the object and it has lost its **clarity**. With **subtle dullness**, you have **fixation** and **clarity**, but no **intensity**. This kind of meditation makes you forgetful, and you lose intellect. Dullness or sinking is the worst enemy of meditators, because it can be mistaken for progress, while actually it is causing detriment.

Example of the cup: You can hold a cup firmly or loosely. Holding the cup is having fixation. Holding it loosely is fixation and clarity; holding it tightly is fixation, clarity and intensity. Clarity refers to the subject (the meditator), not to the object of meditation. It doesn't refer to how clear the picture is, but to how clear your mind is, how alert, bright, and fresh it is. Increasing clarity brings the mind back to an alert state. It doesn't mean trying to see the Buddha's fingers more clearly or with more detail. Intensity refers to the degree of clarity. Having intensity means having a greater degree of clarity.

Agitation is mental wandering toward a virtuous object, a desire, or an adverse object.

Antidote for agitation and dullness:

f.) **SHE-SHIN**

watchfulness

You watch your mind to see if dullness and agitation are present. Not continually watching mind (you wouldn't be able to meditate), but checking it occasionally, such as every five minutes.

The only way to completely eliminate or destroy anger and afflictive emotions is by seeing emptiness directly. Once you see emptiness directly, you will be totally enlightened within seven lifetimes at the most. **This is the main incentive to meditate.** It can only happen from daily meditation. Use common sense; if posture or a practice cause pain for months and prevent meditation or concentration, then change it.

Once you see emptiness directly, you will be totally enlightened within seven lives at most. This is the main incentive to meditate - seeing emptiness can only happen with daily meditation.

CLASS NOTES

Course III: Applied Meditation

Class Six: Five Problems within Meditation (cont.)

4.) DU MI-JE-PA

Not taking action: It takes effort to change the state of dullness and agitation.

Antidote:

g.) **DU JE-PA:** Taking action

Antidote for dullness: **DRIM-PA, tightening up on your concentration.** You can tighten concentration on the object of meditation, in order to return intensity and clarity. Loss of confidence or depression also results in loss of clarity and intensity, so you may need to **uplift and encourage yourself.** If you can't tighten concentration on the object of meditation, then **shift to another object** of concentration.

Objects to act as antidotes for dullness:

- * The best object is the thought of how lucky we are to be alive, healthy, and to have dharma and perfect human conditions in a joyful way. When uplifted, shift back to the original object.
- * The thought of the benefits of behaving well toward your lama will accumulate virtue while your focus is away from the original subject.
- * Focus on a bright light.
- * Think of the good qualities of Buddha.

If these don't work, then :

- * Break the meditation and stretch.
 - * Go to a cold place to get refreshed.
 - * Go to a wide open place to look at the sky or at wide vistas - something to uplift the spirit.
 - * Pace back and forth, get exercise.
 - * Splash face with water.
- Then go back to meditate.

Antidote for agitation: HLU-PA (loosen up).

When concentration is too tight, the mind will go off to other objects.

Agitation may be caused by ungrounded, giddy happiness. You need to come down.

- * Mentally loosen up on the object and bring the mind down.
- * If that doesn't work, shift to another object, such as the inevitability of death or the three types of suffering in my life.
- * Count your breaths. Counting breath meditation is used to shift the mind to neutral before going to an object of meditation, or to bring the mind down when it's holding too tightly to an object of meditation.

5.) DU JE-PA: Taking action when it's not necessary.

Antidote:

h.) Leave it alone.

CLASS NOTES

Course III: Applied Meditation

Class Seven: Nine Stages of Meditation

Nine Stages of Meditation:

SEM NE GU

mind state nine

As you encounter the five problems and apply the eight corrections, you attain **nine levels of progress**:

- 1.) SEM JOK PA➡ concentration
mind putting

Putting the mind on the object in meditation. Learning the object from your lama and putting your mind on it is the first step. You have very little ability to hold the object except for a brief moment now and then. (You'll think your mind is worse than it was before you meditated because of lack of focus. You're just seeing the mind clearly for the first time.)

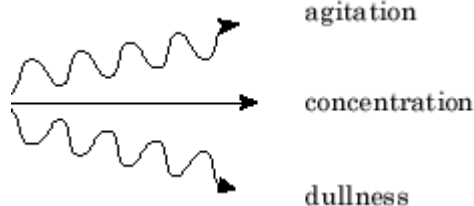
- 2.) GYUN-DU JOK PA - - - - - ➡ concentration
in a stream putting the mind on the object.

Putting the mind on an object in a stream. You can keep the mind on the object for a short while (like the amount of time needed to say a rosary of *OM MANI PADME HUM*). At this stage you keep the mind on the object a minute or two, and then it seems the distractions surge back to the mind in great force. The periods of distraction are longer than the periods of concentration. Dullness and agitation are predominant at this stage.

- 3.) LEN-TE JOK-PA — — — — — ➡ concentration
patch putting the mind on the object

Patch-like fixation or putting the mind on the object. You are patching your continuity. You have a stream of concentration, and it breaks, so you patch the break in concentration to continue the stream of concentration. Characterized by shorter breaks in concentration at this stage. You have gained pretty powerful **dren-pa** (recall, recollection) at this stage - a strong ability to go back to the object readily.

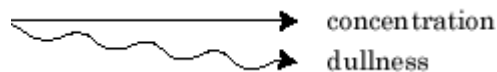
- 4.) NYEWAR JEK-PA
closely mind is placed on object



The mind is placed closely on the object.

Recollection is so strong that your mind can't lose the object completely. Can lose clarity or intensity, but not fixation. Still lots of coarse dullness and agitation. You no longer struggle to keep the object, but struggle with the quality of meditation. Your ability to recall at this point is completely matured and complete. The tendency at this stage is to bring the mind in too forcefully, and subtle dullness results.

- 5.) DUL - WAR JE-PA
bring under control to do it



Bringing the mind under control. You need very strong watchfulness to catch the subtle dullness. Watchfulness is powerful at this level. This level is different, because you have fixation and clarity, but not intensity.

CLASS NOTES

Course III: Applied Meditation

Class Seven, continued

- 6.) **SHI-WAR JE-PA**
peace make it



Make the mind calm by correcting subtle agitation which results from overcorrecting subtle dullness in step five. When correcting dullness, you may get too up, and need to bring yourself down. There isn't much subtle dullness at this level. You need very strong watchfulness to get to levels five and six. Watchfulness is complete at this stage.

- 7.) **NAM-PAR SHI-WAR JE-PA**
totally peace make mind



Here you make the mind totally calm. Because watchfulness and recollection are totally complete, it is difficult for dullness and agitation to occur. You must still make an effort to focus the mind, however. You don't have to be very concerned about subtle dullness and agitation occurring, but still it requires effort to wipe them out. They are no longer attacking you. You are attacking them.

- 8.) **TSE CHEK-TU JE-PA**
one-pointed make it

Bring the mind to one-pointedness. At the beginning of the session, you make a small effort to place the mind on the object, and then it remains there effortlessly.

- 9.) **NAM-PAR JOK-PA**
even place mind on object

Place the mind in deep meditation. There is effortless entering and abiding in deep meditation. Practicing meditation over and over again leads to this level. You can't perceive emptiness directly without this level of concentration.

In stages **one** and **two**, you are not concentrating very well.

In stages **three** through **seven**, meditation is pretty good, but you have dullness and agitation.

In stages **eight** and **nine**, you don't need watchfulness anymore.

CLASS NOTES

Course III: Applied Meditation Class Eight: Object of Meditation

Three kinds of Meditation (Each with a different object):

- 1.) **JOK-GOM: Putting the mind on an object**, such as a Buddha image. This is what people normally think of as meditation.
- 2.) **SHAR-GOM: Review meditation** - going along certain steps of an outline with one-pointed mind, so you know them backwards, forwards, in mixed order, etc. The steps of the outline are the object of meditation, which you review repeatedly in different ways.
- 3.) **CHE-GOM: Analytical meditation** - debating a concept with yourself. As a result of this, you will come to a conclusion, and then switch to **jok-gom** using that conclusion as an object.

Any of these can be done as shamata (**shi-ney**) meditation with single-pointed concentration. The class will use a lam-rim outline as an object of meditation. The teachings or an image of the Buddha are considered a part of the Buddha. These are the most virtuous objects of concentration.

YON - TEN SHIR GYURMA LAM-RIM

good quality source he who is path steps

This lam-rim is called *He who is the Source of all Good Qualities*, by Je Tsongkapa; taught at Ra-Dreng Monastery. This will be the object of meditation for the next six months. It contains all the stages necessary for attainment, so it is a complete path. The first lam-rim (in the *Prajnaparamita*), was spoken by Buddha.

The Five Great Texts (open teachings):

- 1.) Perfection of Wisdom (Sanskrit: *Prajnaparamita*)
- 2.) Middle Way (*Madhyamika*)
- 3.) Vowed Morality (*Vinaya*)
- 4.) Higher Knowledge (*Abhidharma*)
- 5.) Buddhist Logic and Perception (*Pramana*)

These teachings include the four great topics of Indian Buddhism, and represent all of Buddhist knowledge (apart from the secret teachings). Numbers three and four comprise the Theravada teachings, which are held in Thailand and elsewhere. Not all teachings reached every country. Numbers one, two, and five are Mahayana only.

None of these teachings include the full lam-rim individually. The lam-rim incorporates all of the information of the five topics.

Four Great Divisions of this Lam-Rim:

- 1.) Root of the path: Taking a lama, and lifetime behaviour in relationship with them.
 - 2.) How to practice and purify the mind after taking a lama.
 - 3.) Request for help in practice.
 - 4.) Prayer to meet lamas and to achieve goals.
- (these will be expanded one-by-one over the rest of this class)

CLASS NOTES

Course III: Applied Meditation

Class Eight, continued

1.) The Root of the Path: Taking a Lama

A.) Developing faith

- 1.) How to think about him/her
- 2.) How to act toward him/her

B.) Develop reverence for the Lama by remembering his or her kindness.

Ten Qualities of a Lama someone you can trust with your spirit and mind. (From Maitreya)

The first three are the three trainings:

- 1.) Practicing the ten moralities (not killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, slandering, harsh words, idle gossip, or creating ill will)
- 2.) Having mastered concentration.
- 3.) Having mastered wisdom (understanding or perceiving emptiness).
- 4.) Knowing more than the student.
- 5.) Willing to make great efforts on behalf of the students.
- 6.) Understanding the scriptures perfectly.
- 7.) Should have perceived emptiness (directly), i.e. the descriptions are internally consistent and lead you to some realization.
- 8.) Skillful teacher.
- 9.) Should love the students.
- 10.) Doesn't tire of teaching the same thing again and again.

or at least:

Five qualities of a good lama:

- 1-3.) Controls self with morality, concentration, and wisdom (three trainings).
- 4.) Has perceived emptiness intellectually or directly.
- 5.) Loves students.

Minimum, minimum five qualities of a good teacher:

- 1.) In the great division between worldly and dharma attitude, they should be devoted mainly to dharma (internally, not in externals such as job, etc.).
- 2.) In the division between this life and future life, they are working mainly toward future life (also in internal attitude).
- 3.) They take care of others before themselves.
- 4.) They are not careless in their physical, verbal, or mental actions.
- 5.) They doesn't teach their students a wrong path.

When the text says "bless me", it means to change my Dharma aptitude or ability to learn.

The main way to please a lama is to put into practice what they teach. This is the highest offering you can make.

There is a great danger to just learning information and wanting more without internalizing or putting it into practice. This causes your heart to become hardened to the Dharma.

CLASS NOTES

Course III, Level One

Class Nine: Object of Meditation; Lam-rim - Lesser Scope

How to practice to purify your mind (after taking a lama):

- 1.) **NYINGPO LENPAR KULWA**

essence get to or take to urge

Urge to take the essential meaning of your life; to get the most out of it.

- 2.) **NYINGPO LENPAY TSUL**

essence take how to

How to go about taking the essence from this life.

To develop the urge to get the most out of life, meditate on:

Eight ways of lacking opportunity:

- 1.) Having wrong view (the worst is denying karma)
- 2.) Born as an animal
- 3.) Born as a craving spirit
- 4.) Born in hells
- 5.) No teachings
- 6.) Uncivilized - no vowed morality (eight of them - lay persons' vows, ordained vows, etc.)
- 7.) Handicapped, retarded, etc. - no faculty to learn or practice
- 8.) Born as a pleasure being

Ten fortunes: (five relate to you; five relate to the outside world)

- 1.) Born as a **human**
- 2.) Born in a **civilized land** (where someone is keeping vowed morality)
- 3.) **Faculties intact** - can hear, see, think, etc.
- 4.) **Didn't commit the five heinous crimes** (killing mother, father, or an arhant, trying to harm the Buddha or to split up the Buddha's monks)
- 5.) Have **faith** in the teachings
- 6.) Living in a world where **Buddha has come**
- 7.) Living in a world where **Buddha has taught**
- 8.) Living where what Buddha has taught **has not been lost** from hearts and minds
- 9.) Living in a world where what Buddha has taught **is being practiced**
- 10.) Living in a world where **there is support of practitioners**

How to get the most out of life:

- 1.) Small capacity person's approach:

Death meditation - get up thinking "I'm going to die today."

- a.) I must die
- b.) No idea when
- c.) At death, nothing helps but my dharma practice

Principles of karma:

- a.) It is definite (i.e. good produces good and bad produces bad)
- b.) It expands (the results are vastly greater than the seed or causes)
- c.) If you don't do it, you won't get the result
- d.) Once created, karma won't just disappear

CLASS NOTES

Course III: Applied Meditation

Class Ten: Object of Meditation - Medium and Great Capacity

2.) Medium capacity person's practice:

- a.) **TAR N DU LO KYE**
 freedom what mind/idea develop

Develop the wish to achieve freedom.

- b.) **TAR LAM TENAB**
 freedom path determine what it is

Figure out how to gain the path to freedom. You get freedom by focusing on your morality.

3.) Great capacity person's practice:

- a.) **JANG-SEM KYE-TSUL**
 bodhichitta how to

Develop the wish to want to become enlightened to help all living beings.

- b.) **CHU - PA CAP - TSUL**
 activities of a bodhisattva learn how to

Learn how to act like a bodhisattva.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1.) DO
open (non-secret) | Non-secret bodhisattva activities. Six perfections:
giving, morality, not getting angry, being happy about
doing virtue, concentration (shamata), wisdom
(vipasyana) |
| 2.) NGAK
secret (tantra) | Tantric bodhisattva activities |

The last two perfections (repeat of the fifth and sixth perfections in their highest form):

1.) **Shamata:** (Quietude) That single-mindedness which is imbued with the exceptional bliss of practiced ease due to deep single-pointed meditation on its object.

2.) **Vipashyana:** (Insight) That wisdom which is full of exceptional bliss of practiced ease by power of the analysis of its object, and which is founded upon quietude (shamata).

Both insight and quietude look at the same thing: the things that are and the way things are. Both are shamata; the only difference is whether or not they are analyzing the object. One is analytical (**vipashyana**), and the other is non-analytical (**shamata**).

When you get focused on the object perfectly, the mind is perfectly fit to do its work. Based upon that, the psychic winds upon which the mind rides are all put into perfect order (because your mind is in perfect order). Based on that you start to feel bliss in your body, and because of that you feel happiness and mental bliss.

These four steps are what "exceptional bliss of practiced ease" means:

- 1.) Your **mind concentrates**, therefore
- 2.) the **winds straighten out**. This causes
- 3.) the **body to feel bliss**, which causes
- 4.) you **to feel happy mentally**.

CLASS NOTES

Course III: Applied Meditation

Class Ten, continued

When you meditate on the Lam Rim, you are doing single-pointed concentration. You focus on one object at a time. Similarly, with the image of a Buddha; you focus on one part at a time to see the whole image.

Shamata is the fixation on the object, and vipashyana is the analysis of the object which sits on the shamata. **Vipashyana's analysis is of the dependent origination or emptiness (positive or negative states of existence) of the object, using the tool of shamata.** Vipashyana always incorporates analysis of the object's emptiness or dependent origination. Both shamata and vipashyana are focused single-pointedly on their object. Vipashyana incorporates emptiness/dependent origination analysis and shamata doesn't.

Meditation isn't something you do someday in retreat; it's something which you do every day. Otherwise you will not see successful results.

Three types of morality:

- 1.) **Restraining self from bad deeds** (not breaking the three kinds of vows)
- 2.) **Collecting goodness**
- 3.) **Morality for the sake of all sentient beings** (This is the other two moralities done with the motivation to help others.)

CLASS NOTES

Course III: Applied Meditation

Class Eleven: Course Review

How to meditate on lam rim:

You meditate on lam rim by memorizing each section for a few days and "burning it in" so that you know it backwards, forwards, in mixed order, etc. First do **shar-gom** (review meditation). After that, take a section at a time and do **che-gom** (analytical meditation).

Tantra:

In order to practice, you must:

- * make your mind a worthy vessel by studying and **knowing lam rim**, as a **minimum** to have permission for an empowerment.
- * You must have taken **all four empowerments** within the initiation.
- * You must **keep all pledges and vows you commit to**. (A pledge is something you promise to do. A vow is something you promise not to do.)
- * You must keep your vows and pledges pure in order for meditation upon the two levels (generation and completion stages) to work.

Tantra is a secret practice because it will not work and you won't see any result if you don't keep your pledges and vows.

The worst thing that might occur in tantra is that nothing happens after taking initiation and practicing. Then you think it doesn't work, and you give up because you haven't had instruction to know how to practice properly in order to succeed. If you are practicing properly, then you should have more happiness relatively quickly.

There aren't some sentient beings out there somewhere else for you to practice toward. It's the people around you at work, family, etc. who will be the basis of your practice. Begin with small things like making them tea, etc. and then progress toward greater things.



COURSE III
Applied Meditation

Answer Key, Class One

- 1) List the five parts for our study of the practice of meditation.
 - a) How to prepare for meditation.
 - b) The six conditions for an ideal meditation environment.
 - c) The correct posture for meditation.
 - d) The actual mental process during meditation.
 - e) The object of meditation: what we meditate on.
- 2) There are a number of words in Tibetan and Sanskrit for different forms of meditation. Some of the important ones are *gompa* (Sanskrit: *bhavana*), *samten* (*dhyana*), *nyomjuk* (*samapatti*), *nyamshak* (*samahita*), *shi-ne* (*shamata*), and *ting-ngen-dzin* (*samadhi*). Describe very briefly the general sense of each of these. (Tibetan track students write out the Tibetan for each.)

- a) *gompa*: The most general word for meditation. The root of this word in Tibetan means "to habituate," and so it emphasizes the idea of bringing an object to mind repeatedly, in order to get used to it.

གོམ་པ།

gompa

- b) *samten*: This is the word for meditation used in the name of the fifth perfection. It also refers to four levels of deep meditation which result in a rebirth in the four form realms, and so these realms themselves are sometimes given this name. Your mind's concentration must be in the first level of the form-realm concentration in order to see emptiness. The Tibetan for this work has the connotation of "a stable state of mind."

བསམ་གཏན།

samten

- c) *nyomjuk*: Refers generally to deep meditation, and also to practices of meditation which will cause rebirth in the form or formless realm. It is also a name given to a "cessation meditation," where the mind is almost shut down. This last kind of meditation is sometimes mistaken for nirvana, but is not in itself a spiritual goal. This word is related to a root which connotes "equilibrium," meaning that in meditation one must learn to keep a balance free of the two extremes of mental dullness and mental agitation.

སྟོམ་ཇུག་

nyomjuk

- d) *nyamshak*: The Tibetan for this term is very close to that for the previous one, and again there is an emphasis on balancing between the two extremes of meditation. A common application of this term is in the explanation of the path of seeing, or the direct perception of meditation, to describe the concentrated state of mind during the actual brief period of the direct perception.

སྟམ་ཤ་གཞག་

nyamshak

- e) *shi-ne*: This is meditation in its most advanced form, and is a general name for the meditative platform one must be able to reach in order to see emptiness directly. This is a single-pointed concentration characterized by physical and mental bliss produced by one becoming completely used to meditating. The Tibetan term here literally means "to stay in a state of quietude or peace."

ཞི་གནས་།

shi-ne

- f) *ting-nge-dzin*: This is a word for meditation which emphasizes the ability to keep the mind on a single object, and this is the meaning of the term "single-pointed" concentration. As for the literal meaning of this term, *ting-nge* means "deep" in the sense of a vivid color, and *dzin* means to "hold" the object.

ཏིང་ངེ་འཛིན།

ting-ngen-dzin

- 3) List just the names of the six preliminaries that should be performed before a meditation session. Be careful not to confuse them with the "seven ingredients" that we will study in the next class. (Tibetan track students answer in Tibetan.)

- a) Create a clean and sacred space, with an altar.

གནས་ཁང་གྱི་དང་ཏེན་དབུ་མ།

ne kang chi dang ten dram

- b) Set forth beautiful offerings.

མཚོད་པ།

chupa

- c) Go for refuge, and think about the Wish for enlightenment (bodhichitta)

སྐྱབས་འགྲོ་སེམས་བསྐྱེད།

kyamdro semkye

- d) Visualize the collected Lamas and Holy Beings (the "garden for collecting good karma")

ཚོགས་ཞིང་གསལ་གདབ།

tsokshing seldeb

- e) Gather good energy and purify obstacles (through the seven ingredients)

ཚོགས་བསག་སྒྲིབ་སྤྱད་།

tsok-sak dripjang

- f) Request blessings from the Holy Beings

གསོལ་འདེབས།

sulndep



COURSE III
Applied Meditation

Answer Key, Class Two

1) Who wrote the text that we are studying for the six preliminaries and the seven ingredients used in preparing for a meditation session? What are his dates? What is the text called? (Tibetan track students answer in Tibetan.)

The author is Je Tsongkapa (1357-1419). The name of the text is *The Great Book on the Steps to Enlightenment (Lamrim Chenmo.)*

ཇེ་ཙོང་ཁ་པ་པ།

je tsongkapa

ལམ་རིམ་ཆེན་མོ།

lamrim chenmo

2) On what original Sanskrit work is this author's presentation of the seven ingredients based? (Tibetan track students answer in Tibetan.)

The Prayer of Samantabhadra.

བཟང་པོ་སྤྱད་པའི་སྒྲོན་ལམ།

sangpo chupay munlam

3) What are the seven ingredients? (Tibetan track students answer in Tibetan.)

a) Bowing down to the Holy Beings.

ཕྱག་འཆ་ལ།

chaktsel

b) Making offerings.

མཆོད་པ།
chupa

c) Confessing (purifying yourself of bad karma)

བཤགས་པ།
shakpa

d) Rejoicing in the good deeds of yourself and others.

ཡི་རང་བ།
yi-rangwa

e) Requesting teachings.

ཆོས་འཁོར་བསྐྱོར་བར་བསྐྱུལ།
chunkor korwar kul

f) Asking Holy Beings to stay near you.

གསོལ་འདེབས།
sulndep

g) Dedicating the goodness you have done to all beings.

བསྐྱེ་བ།
ngowa

4) These seven are part of which of the six preliminaries? Which of them act to gather the power of goodness, and how many to clean away obstacles for a successful meditation?

They are part of the fifth preliminary, which is called "purifying obstacles and gathering goodness." Confession clears obstacles and the rest help to accumulate virtue.

5) What are the three types of vows mentioned in the ingredient of confession? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

The vows of freedom, bodhisattva vows, and tantric vows.

སོ་བར་གྱི་སྒྲུལ་པ།

sotar gyi dompa

བྱང་སེམས་གྱི་སྒྲུལ་པ།

jangsem kyi dompa

གསང་སྒྲགས་གྱི་སྒྲུལ་པ།

sang-ngak kyi dompa

6) What is the difference between a prayer and a dedication? (Tibetan track give names for these two.)

A prayer is a general wish to achieve some spiritual good which does not involve having some karma that you have just performed and are now using for some good. In a dedication, you have a specific karma of some good deed which you take and dedicate to the higher purpose of becoming a Buddha for the sake of all living beings.

སྒྲོན་ལམ།

munlam

བསྒྲུབ།

ngowa

7) What work will we be using for the practice of the seven ingredients?

We will be using the *Thousand Angels of the Heaven of Bliss* (Ganden Hlagyama), a lama practice centering on Je Tsongkapa.



COURSE III
Applied Meditation

Answer Key, Class Three

1) What are the six conditions that must be gathered together for meditation? Do not confuse these with the six preliminaries. (Tibetan track answer in Tibetan.)

a) Stay in a place which is conducive to meditation.

མཐུན་པའི་ཡུལ།

tunpay yul

b) Live simply: don't need many things.

འདོད་པ་རྒྱང་བ།

dupa chungwa

c) Be satisfied with the things you have.

ཚོག་ཤེས་པ།

chok shepa

d) Give up being too busy.

བྱ་མང་སྤངས།

ja mang pang

e) Maintain a very ethical way of life.

ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་དག་པ།

tsultrim dakpa

f) Get rid of sense desires, and desire for worldly pleasures.

ནམ་རྟོག་པམ་

namtok pang

2) What book is Je Tsongkapa using for his explanation of the first of these? Who wrote it, and what are their dates? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

Je Tsongkapa uses the *Ornament of the Sutras (Sutralamkara)*, by Master Asanga, dated to about 350 AD.

མདོ་སྡི་རྒྱུ་

dode gyen

3) What is Je Tsongkapa using as his source for all six? Who wrote it, and what are his dates? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

As his source, Je Tsongkapa is using *The Stages of Meditation*, written by Master Kamalashila around 750 AD.

བསྒོམ་རིམ་

gomrim

4) What is an important source for the teaching on few wants, and easy satisfaction? Who wrote it, and when?

The *Treasure House of Higher Knowledge (Abhidharmakosha)*, by Master Vasubandhu, written around 350 AD.



COURSE III
Applied Meditation

Answer Key, Class Four

1) Briefly describe the eight characteristics of correct meditation posture. (Tibetan track students also give Tibetan for each.)

a) Put your legs in a full-lotus or half-lotus position.

ཀང་པ་དགྱིལ་གྱུང་།

kangpa kyiltrung

b) Don't keep your eyes open all the way, or closed all the way.

མིག་མི་དབྱེ་མི་བྱམ།

mik miye misum

c) Sit up very straight.

ལུས་དང་པོ།

lu drang po

d) Make your shoulders level: neither higher than the other.

སྒྲག་པ་མཉམ།

trakpa nyam

e) Make sure your head is neither tilted up nor down.

མགོ་མི་མཐོ་མི་དམའ།

go mito mima

f) Let your teeth and lips stay in their natural, loose position.

སོ་མཆུ་རང་ལྷགས།

so chu rangluk

g) Leave your tongue in a natural position up against the top of your mouth.

ལྷེ་ཡ་སེའི་རང་ལྷགས།

che yasoy rangluk

h) Make your breath completely quiet, and follow it for a count of ten.

དབྱགས་འབྱུང་རྩལ།

uk jung-ngup

2) What source is Je Tsongkapa using for these eight? Who wrote it? When did he live? (Tibetan track students answer in Tibetan.)

Je Tsongkapa's source is the *Stages of Meditation*, by Master Kamalashila, who lived about 750 AD.

གཏམ་རིམ།

gomrim

3) The eight characteristics have sometimes been called the eight-point posture of the Buddha named "Appearances" (*Vairochana*). How do they differ from the seven-point posture of the same Buddha? (Tibetan track students give Tibetan for the seven-point posture of Vairochana.)

In the seven-point posture, the breath is not listed.

ནམ་སྐྱང་གི་ཆོས་བདུན།

namnang gi chu dun



COURSE III
Applied Meditation

Answer Key, Class Five

1) Name the first of the five problems of meditation. Which four of the eight corrections are used to counteract it? (Tibetan track answer in Tibetan.)

a) problem: Laziness, or not feeling like meditating today.

ལེ་ལོ།

lelo

b) four corrections:

(1) Feel attracted towards meditation, by thinking about how great it is.

ཏིང་ངེ་འཇིན་ལ་དད་པ།

ting-ngen-dzin la depa

(2) Decide that you want to be a good meditator.

འདུན་པ།

dunpa

(3) Make the efforts needed to get good at meditation.

བརྩོན་འགུམ།

tsundru

- (4) Experience the physical and mental pleasure and ease that comes from meditating regularly.

ཤིན་ཤུངས།

shinjang

- 2) Name the second of the five problems of meditation, and explain why its name does not exactly describe it. (Tibetan track name in Tibetan, and explain in English.)

Forgetting the instructions. It doesn't mean that you have forgotten what you've been told; rather, it means that you have lost the object of meditation: it has slipped away from your mind completely.

གདམས་ངག་བརྗེད་པ།

dam-ngak jepa

- 3) Give the name of the correction for this second problem. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

The correction is called "remembering." This means that you recall the object to mind. By doing this repeatedly, you habituate yourself to the object of meditation, thereby making it familiar and less likely to be lost.

དྲན་པ།

drenpa

- 4) Name the third of the five problems of meditation. What is its correction? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

The third problem that occurs in meditation is mental dullness or mental agitation. The corresponding correction is watchfulness.

ཁྱིའུ་མོད།

jinggu

ཤེས་བཞིན།

sheshin

5) Give an example for the difference between fixation, fixation with clarity, and fixation with both clarity and intensity. (Tibetan track give the names for these three in Tibetan.)

"Fixation" is like holding a cup. "Fixation with clarity" corresponds to holding the cup loosely. And fixation with both clarity and intensity is like holding the cup firmly.

གནས་ཆ།

necha

གསལ་ཆ།

selcha

ངར་ཆ།

ngarcha

6) Explain the difference between gross and subtle dullness of meditation. (Tibetan track name the two in Tibetan, and explain in English.)

In a state of obvious dullness, you do have fixation on the object but the level of attention of the meditation has lost its clarity: meaning not the clearness of the colors or lines of a visualized object, but rather the alertness or brightness of your state of mind, how "bright and bushy-tailed it is: how free it is from mental dullness or agitation. With subtle dullness, you have fixation and clarity, but no intensity.

བྱིང་བ་རྒྱས་པ།

jinwa rakpa

བྱིང་བ་ཕྱ་མོ།

jingwa tramo



COURSE III
Applied Meditation

Answer Key, Class Six

1) What is the fourth of the five problems of meditation? How do you know it has occurred? (Tibetan track give the name for the problem in Tibetan.)

The fourth of the five problems which can occur during meditation is failing to take the action necessary to correct dullness or agitation. You know it has occurred when you have detected their arrival through your watchfulness.

འདུ་མི་བྱེད་པ།
du mijepa

2) What is the correction for this fourth problem? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

The correction is called "taking action."

འདུ་བྱེད་པ།
du jepa

3) This correction can come in two different forms. Name them.

a) Correcting for mental dullness.

b) Correcting for mental agitation.

4) Name three methods for uplifting your state of mind in meditation. Which is the main one? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

The following methods are in order, meaning that if the first one doesn't work, move on to the next, and then the next:

a) Tighten your concentration on the object of meditation; if you try but still have mental dullness, it may be due to focusing too strongly within, and it could help then to allow the mind to expand out a bit. This is the main method.

དམིགས་རྟེན་ལ་སེམས་བྱིམས།

mikten la sem drim

- b) Shift your concentration to another object for a while (an uplifting one, such as how full of spiritual opportunities your life is, or on the benefits of the wish for enlightenment).

གཞན་ལ་ཡིད་བྱེད།

shen la yije

- c) Break the meditation and stretch, walk around, go out to some cool place, or to a high place like a mountain top, splash water in your face, or something of the like.

རེ་ཞིག་སྤྱན་གྲོལ།

reshik tun drul

- 5) Name three methods of bringing your mind down in meditation.

Again, do the first of the following, and if it doesn't help then go to the next.

- a) Mentally loosen up on the object of meditation.
b) Shift your mind to another object of meditation for a while (to a sobering one, such as death or suffering).
c) Go back to counting your breaths.

- 6) What is the fifth and final problem of meditation? What is its correction? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

The final problem is unnecessarily correcting your meditation. The correction here is leave well enough alone, and to avoid making any changes or attempting any corrections.

འདུ་བྱེད་པ།

du jepa



COURSE III
Applied Meditation

Answer Key, Class Seven

1) Name and describe the nine states of meditation. (Tibetan track give the names in Tibetan and describe in English.)

- a) **Placing the mind on the object. You receive instructions from your teacher about what object to meditate upon, and can keep your mind on it for only very brief periods of time.**

སེམས་འཇོག་པ།

sem jokpa

- b) **Placing the mind on the object with some continuity. You are able to keep your mind on the object briefly, for the length of time it might take to do a single round of short mantras on a rosary. You have constant agitation and dullness during these first two stages.**

གྱུང་དུ་འཇོག་པ།

gyundu jokpa

- c) **Placing the mind on the object and patching the gaps. You are able to keep your mind on the object for a fairly long time, regaining continuity and "patching the gap" quickly whenever your focus breaks off.**

ལྷན་ཏེ་འཇོག་པ།

lente jokpa

- d) **Placing the mind on the object closely. You are able to keep your mind on the object without losing it, but still have agitation and dullness.**

ཉེ་བར་འཇོག་པ།

nyewar jokpa

- e) Controlling the mind. Watchfulness is developed to a high degree, detecting subtle dullness when the mind has been withdrawn inside too deeply. Obvious dullness can no longer occur.

དུལ་བར་བྱེད་པ།

dulwar jepa

- f) Pacifying the mind. Watchfulness by this point is powerful, detecting subtle agitation which may occur as a result of uplifting the mind as a correction in the previous stage. There is no longer any great danger of subtle dullness.

ཞི་བར་བྱེད་པ།

shiwar jepa

- g) Pacifying the mind totally. Recollection and watchfulness are total, and there is no great danger of either subtle agitation or subtle dullness.

ནུམ་པར་ཞི་བར་བྱེད་པ།

nampar shiwar jepa

- h) Making the mind single-pointed. Neither subtle agitation nor subtle dullness still occur at all; some effort is still needed at the beginning of the session to make minor corrections to the meditation.

ཅེ་གཅིག་རུ་བྱེད་པ།

tse chiktu jepa

- i) Achieving equilibrium (deep meditation). Your mind goes into deep meditation automatically, without any conscious effort.

མཉམ་པར་འཛོག་པ།

nyampar jokpa



COURSE III
Applied Meditation

Answer Key, Class Eight

1) Name three different types of meditation. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a) Fixation meditation, such as a visualization fixed on the image of your Lama.

འཇོག་སྒོམ།
jokgom

b) Review meditation, where you go over the same steps of a concept or principle again and again. An example would be going through the various parts of the outline of the death meditation until each succeeding step comes to you almost automatically.

ཤར་སྒོམ།
shargom

c) Analytical meditation, where you set a problem at the center stage of your mind and then solve it by thinking about it carefully, from many different angles.

དབུད་སྒོམ།
chegom

2) Give the meaning of the word "lam-rim." Where does the name come from?

The Tibetan word "lam-rim" means "steps of the path to Enlightenment." The name ultimately comes from the scriptures on the Perfection of Wisdom (the Prajnya Paramita).

3) Which of the five great texts, and the different levels of secret practice, are contained in this text?

The subject matter of all the five great texts is found in the *lam-rim*. These five are called the Perfection of Wisdom (*Prajnya Paramita*); the Middle Way (*Madhyamika*); Vowed Morality (*Vinaya*); Higher Knowledge (*Abhidharma*); and Logic and Perception (*Pramana*). The *lam-rim* is an open teaching, so the secret practices are mentioned but not explained in detail.

4) Who wrote the *Source of All My Good*? Where, and when?

The *Source of All My Good* was written by Je Tsongkapa, at the foot of a statue of Lord Atisha, at Radreng Monastery, in 1402.

5) Name the four major parts of this lam-rim. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a) The root of the path: taking a lama.

ལམ་གྱི་རྩ་བ་བཤེས་གཏིན་བསྟན་རྩལ།

lam gyi tsawa she-nyen ten tsul

b) How to practice and purify the mind, after taking a lama.

བསྟན་ནས་སློང་ལྷར་སྦྱང་བའི་རྩལ།

ten ne lo jitar jangway tsul

c) Requesting help in your practice.

གསོལ་བ་འདེབས་པ།

sulwan deppa

d) Prayers to meet teachers and to achieve your goals.

སླེམས་རྫེས་གཟུང་དང་ས་ལམ་ཐོབ་པའི་སྟོན་ལམ།

lame jesung dang salam toppay munlam

6) Name four parts to the practice of taking yourself to a Lama. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a) Developing faith and admiration in your Lama.

དད་པ་སྦྱང་བ།
depa jangwa

b) How to think about your Lama. (This and the next part are actually subdivisions of the first one.)

བསམ་པས་བསྟོན་པ།
sampe tenpa

c) How to act towards your Lama.

སྟོང་བས་བསྟོན་པ།
jorwe tenpa

d) Developing reverence for your Lama.

གུས་པ་བསྟོན་པ།
gupa kyepa

7) There are two sets of five qualities that a qualified Lama should, at the very minimum, possess. List either one of them. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a) He or she controls themselves with morality.

ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་ཀྱིས་སྤྲུགས་དུལ།
tsultrim gyi tuk dul

b) They control themselves with concentration.

ཏིང་ངེ་འཛིན་གྱིས་སྤྲུགས་དུལ།
ting-ngen-dzin gyi tuk dul

c) They control themselves with wisdom.

ཤེས་རབ་གྱིས་སྤྲུགས་དུལ།
sherab kyi tuk dul

d) They have perceived emptiness intellectually or directly.

དེ་ཉིད་ཚྭ་གས་པ།
de-nyi tokpa

e) They have love for their students.

བརྩེ་བ་དང་ལྷན་པ།
tsewa dang denpa

OR

a) In the great division between worldly and dharma attitude, they should be devoted mainly to dharma (internally, not in externals such as their occupation or the like).

ཆོས་དང་འཛིན་ཏེན་གཉིས་ལས་ཆོས་གཙོར་བྱེད།
chu dang jikten nyi le chu tsor je

- b) In the division between this life and future life, they are working mainly toward future life (also in internal attitude).

འདི་ཕྱི་གཉིས་ལས་ཕྱི་མ་གཙོར་བྱེད།

di chi nyi le chima tsor je

- c) They take care of others before themselves.

རང་གཞན་གཉིས་ལས་གཞན་གཙོར་བྱེད།

rang shen nyi le shen tsor je

- d) They are not careless in their physical, verbal, or mental actions.

སྒོ་གསུམ་བག་མེད་དུ་མི་གཏོང་།

go sum bakme du mitong

- e) They don't teach their students a wrong path.

ཕྱིན་ཅི་ལོག་དུ་མི་འབྲིད།

chinchilok tu mitri

- 8) What is the meaning of "bless me" throughout this text?

It means "help me to change my spiritual aptitude: my very ability to learn and to practice Dharma."



COURSE III
Applied Meditation

Answer Key, Class Nine

1) The first part of the lam-rim ("steps of the path") we are studying concerned how to take a Lama. The second part concerns how to practice once one has taken a Lama. What are the two parts of how to do this practice? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a) Je Tsongkapa urging us to get the most meaning out of this life.

སྙིང་པོ་ལེན་པར་སྐྱེལ་བ།

nyingpo lenpar kulwa

b) Learning how to get the most out of this life.

སྙིང་པོ་ལེན་པའི་ཚུལ།

nyingpo lenpay tsul

2) Name any five of the eight leisures.

The eight possible answers are:

- a) We have not been born as a hell being.
- b) We have not been born as a craving spirit (a *preta*).
- c) We have not been born as an animal.
- d) We have not been born as a being in the temporary realms of pleasure.
- e) We have not been born in an "uncivilized" place (meaning a place where no one follows vowed morality).
- f) We have not been born with serious wrong worldviews.
- g) We have not been born as someone who is retarded or otherwise physically incapable of studying the Dharma.

- h) We have not been born in an era when the teachings of the Buddha have not come to the world.**

3) Name any five of the ten fortunes.

The ten possible answers are:

- a) We have been born as a human.**
- b) We live in a "central land," meaning a place where the vows of morality are followed.**
- c) We have all our important faculties, the ones that allow us to study and practice the Dharma, intact.**
- d) We have never committed one of the "ultimate bad karmas," meaning one of the five immediate misdeeds.**
- e) We live in a world where the teachings are respected.**
- f) We live in a world where a Buddha has come.**
- g) We live in a world where a Buddha has taught**
- h) We live in a world where the teachings still remain, in the form of people having realizations such as seeing emptiness directly.**
- i) We live in a world where people are still actively following the teachings of Buddhism.**
- j) We live in a world where "people have compassion for others," which in this case refers to sympathetic people who are willing to assist Dharma practitioners and support them with what they need to keep practicing.**

4) Name the three parts to the subject of taking the essence of this life. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a) Steps shared with those of lesser capacity.

སྐྱེས་བུ་ཆུང་དྲ་དང་ཐུན་མོང་བའི་ལམ་གྱི་རིམ་པ།
kyebu chung-ngu dang tunmongway lam gyi rimpa

b) Steps shared with those of medium capacity.

སྐྱེས་བུ་འབྲིང་དང་ཐུན་མོང་བའི་ལམ་གྱི་རིམ་པ།
kyebu dring dang tunmongway lam gyi rimpa

c) Steps for those of great capacity.

སྐྱེས་བུ་ཆེན་པོའི་ལམ་གྱི་རིམ་པ།
kyebu chenpoy lam gyi rimpa

5) What are the three principles of the death meditation? (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a) Death is certain.

འདིས་པར་འཆི་བ།
ngepar chiwa

b) There is no certainty when you will die.

ནམ་འཆི་ངེས་མེད།
nam chi ngeme

c) When you do die, only the Dharma can help you.

འཆི་ཆོ་ཆོས་མ་གཏོགས་མི་ཡན།
chi tse chu matok mipen

6) Name the four laws of karma. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

- a) Actions are certain to produce consequences that resemble them in content (good can only lead to good, bad can only lead to bad).

ལས་ངེས་པ།

le ngepa

- b) The consequences are greater than the actions.

ལས་འཕྲིལ་ཆེ་བ།

le pel chewa

- c) One cannot meet a consequence if he or she has not committed an action.

ལས་མ་བྱས་པ་དང་མི་འཕྲད་པ།

le majepa dang mitrepa

- d) Once an action is committed, the consequence cannot be lost.

བྱས་པ་རྒྱུ་མི་ཟ་བ།

jepa chu misawa



COURSE III
Applied Meditation

Answer Key, Class Ten

1) State briefly the difference between Buddhists of lesser, medium, and greater capacity.

Buddhists of lesser capacity seek only to avoid being born themselves in the three lower realms after they die. Those of medium capacity seek to avoid any rebirth at all, but again only for their own sake. Those of the greater capacity (the Mahayana) seek to avoid the lower realms and any rebirth at all, but wish further that they could help every living being to do the same.

2) Give two parts to the steps of the path which are shared with practitioners of medium capacity. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a) Developing the wish to achieve freedom from suffering existence.

ཐར་འདོད་ལྷོ་བསྐྱེད།

tarndu lo kye

b) Learning how to gain the path to freedom.

ཐར་ལམ་གཏན་དབབ།

tarlam ten ap

3) Do you think it is true that every event in our present kind of life is suffering? Why or why not?

The outright pain, such as a bad back or grief over the loss of a loved one, is obviously suffering (the suffering of suffering). But even the good things—a good home, family, or job—must inevitably change and be ripped away from us (the suffering of change). We finally lose even our own bodies; our minds become senile; and even our names are forgotten. Since every event in our present kind of life is either suffering or inevitably degenerates into suffering (pervasive suffering), then it is true that all these events are suffering.

4) Of the three trainings, why is only the training of morality mentioned at this point?

Morality is the basis of the other two trainings; one must have morality to be able to concentrate deeply, and gain insight into wisdom. These other two trainings are implied since they follow only upon morality.

5) What are recollection and watchfulness doing at this point, and towards what are they aimed? (Tibetan track give the names for the two in Tibetan.)

They are aimed at one's morality. Recollection is, generally speaking, the ability to keep your mind on what you are doing, saying, or thinking. Awareness is the ability to "sound the alarm" or to become aware when you have a problem.

དྲན་པ།

drenpa

ཤེས་བཞིན།

she-shin

6) Give the two parts to the steps of the path which are shared with practitioners of the greater scope (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a) Learning how to think like a bodhisattva.

སེམས་བསྐྱེད་པའི་ཚུལ།

sem kyepay tsul

b) Learning how to act like a bodhisattva.

ཚུད་པ་ལ་སློབ་ཚུལ།

chupa la loptsul

7) The second of these two parts has two parts itself. Name them. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a) Bodhisattva activities which are open (not secret teachings).

མདོ།

do

b) Bodhisattva activities which are not open (which are secret teachings, or tantra).

སྔགས།

ngak

8) The first of these two parts also has two parts. Name them. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a) The general six perfections.

ཤུད་ཅི་ལ་སྒོའ་ཚུལ།

chupa chi la lob-tsul

b) The last two perfections.

པར་ཁྱིན་ཐ་མ་གཉིས་ལ་བསྐྱབ་ཚུལ།

parchin tama nyi la lab-tsul

9) What are the three moralities mentioned here? (Warning: these are not the same as the three types of vows.) (Tibetan track answer in Tibetan.)

- a) The morality of restraining yourself from bad deeds (mainly aimed at avoiding doing any deeds that hurt others, essential in reaching nirvana).

ཉེས་སྦྱོད་སྦྱོམ་པའི་ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས།

nyechu dompay tsultrim

- b) The morality of collecting good deeds (mainly aimed at gathering into oneself an extraordinary level of the collections of merit and wisdom, which create a Buddha).

དགེ་བའི་ཆོས་སྦྱོད་པའི་ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས།

geway chu dudpay tsultrim

- c) The morality of benefitting beings (mainly the prior two moralities, kept with nothing less than the motivation of a bodhisattva).

སེམས་ཅན་དོན་བྱེད་ཀྱི་ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས།

semchen dunje kyi tsultrim

10) Give the definition of quietude (called *shamata* in Sanskrit and *shi-ne* in Tibetan).

That single-mindedness which is imbued with the exceptional bliss of practiced ease due to deep, single-pointed meditation on its object.

11) Give the definition of insight (called *vipashyana* in Sanskrit and *hlak-tong* in Tibetan).

That wisdom which is full of the exceptional bliss of practiced ease by power of the analysis of its object, and which is founded upon quietude.



COURSE III
Applied Meditation

Tibetan Language Study Guide

Class One

གོམ་པ།
gompa

བསམ་གཏན།
samten

སྟོམས་འདུག
nyomjuk

སེམས་གཞིག
nyamshak

ཞི་གནས།
shi-ne

ཏིང་ངེ་འཛིན།
ting-ngen-dzin

གནས་ཁང་གི་དང་རྟེན་དབྱམས།
nekang chi dang ten dram

Course III, Applied Meditation
Language Study Guide

མཚོད་པ།

chupa

སྐྱའམ་འབྲོ་སེམས་བསྐྱེད།

kyamdro semkye

ཚོགས་ཞིང་གསལ་གདབ།

tsokshing seldeb

ཚོགས་བསག་སྒྲིབ་སྤྱང་།

tsok-sak dripjang

གསོལ་འདེབས།

sulndep

Class Two

ཇེ་ཙོང་ཁ་པ།

je tsongkapa

ལམ་རིམ་ཆེན་མོ།

lamrim chenmo

བཟང་པོ་སྤྱད་པའི་སྒྲོན་ལམ།

sangpo chupay munlam

ཕྱག་འཆ་ལ།

chaktsel

མཆོད་པ།

chupa

བཤགས་པ།

shakpa

ཡི་རང་བ།

yi-rangwa

ཆོས་འཁོར་བསྐྱོར་བར་བསྐྱུལ།

chunkor korwar kul

གསོལ་འདེབས།

sulndep

བསྟོ་བ།

ngowa

སོ་ཐར་གྱི་སྟོམ་པ།

sotar gyi dompa

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Language Study Guide

བྱང་སེམས་ཀྱི་སྒྲུལ་པ།

jangsem kyi dompa

གསང་སྤྲགས་ཀྱི་སྒྲུལ་པ།

sang-ngak kyi dompa

སྒྲོན་ལམ།

munlam

བསྒྲོ་བ།

ngowa

Class Three

མཐུན་པའི་ཡུལ།

tunpay yul

འདྲོད་པ་རྒྱུད་བ།

dupa chungwa

ཆོག་ཤེས་པ།

chok shepa

བྱ་མང་སྤངས།

ja mang pang

ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་དག་པ།

tsultrim dakpa

ནམ་རྟོག་སྤངས།

namtok pang

མདོ་ལྡི་གྲུ།

dode gyen

བསྒོམ་རིམ།

gomrim

Class Four

ཀང་པ་དཀྱིལ་གྱང་།

kangpa kyiltrung

མིག་མི་དབྱེ་མི་བུམ།

mik miye misum

ལུས་བྲང་པོ།

lu drang po

ཐྲཀ་པ་མཉམ།

trakpa nyam

མགོ་མི་མཐོ་མི་དམའ།

go mito mima

སོ་མཚུ་རང་ལྷགས།

so chu rangluk

ལྷེ་ཡ་སེའི་རང་ལྷགས།

che yasoy rangluk

དབུགས་འབྱུང་རྩལ།

uk jung-ngup

བསྒྲུལ་རིམ།

gomrim

ནམ་སྒྲུང་གི་ཆོས་བདུན།

namnang gi chu dun

Class Five

ལེ་ལོ།

lelo

ཏིང་ངེ་འཇིན་ལ་དད་པ།

ting-ngen-dzin la depa

འདུན་པ།

dunpa

བཙོན་འགྲུས།

tsundru

ཤིན་ཟུངས།

shinjang

གདམས་ངག་བཟུང་བ།

dam-ngak jepa

དྲན་པ།

drenpa

ཁྱིང་ཁྱོད།

jinggu

ཤེས་བཞིན།

sheshin

གནས་ཆ།

necha

གསལ་ཆ།

selcha

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ངར་ཆ།

ngarcha

བྱིང་བ་རགས་པ།

jinwa rakpa

བྱིང་བ་སྤྲ་མོ།

jingwa tramo

འདུ་མི་བྱིད་པ།

du mijepa

Class Six

འདུ་བྱིད་པ།

du jepa

དམིགས་རྟེན་ལ་སེམས་གྲིམས།

mikten la sem drim

གཞན་ལ་ཡིད་བྱིད།

shen la yije

རེ་ཞིག་སུན་གྲོལ།

reshik tun drul

འདུ་བྱེད་པ།

du jepa

Class Seven

སེམས་འཇོག་པ།

sem jokpa

རྒྱུན་དུ་འཇོག་པ།

gyundu jokpa

སྒྲན་ཏི་འཇོག་པ།

lente jokpa

ཉི་བར་འཇོག་པ།

nyewar jokpa

དུལ་བར་བྱེད་པ།

dulwar jepa

ཞི་བར་བྱེད་པ།

shiwar jepa

རྣམ་པར་ཞི་བར་བྱེད་པ།

nampar shiwar jepa

ཅི་གཅིག་དུ་བྱེད་པ།

tse chiktu jepa

མཉམ་པར་འཛོག་པ།

nyampar jokpa

Class Eight

འཛོག་སྒོམ།

jokgom

ཤར་སྒོམ།

shargom

དཔུང་སྒོམ།

chegom

ལམ་གྱི་རྩ་བ་བཤེས་གཉིན་བསྟན་ཚུལ།

lam gyi tsawa she-nyen ten tsul

བསྟན་ནས་སྟོ་ཇི་ལྟར་སྤང་བའི་ཚུལ།

ten ne lo jitar jangway tsul

གསོལ་བ་འདེབས་པ།

sulwan deppa

ལམ་ཇུང་དང་ས་ལམ་ཐོབ་པའི་སྒོན་ལམ།

lame jesung dang salam toppay munlam

དད་པ་སྐྱེད་བ།

depa jangwa

བསམ་པས་བསྐྱེད་པ།

sampe tenpa

སྒྱུར་བས་བསྐྱེད་པ།

jorwe tenpa

གུས་པ་བསྐྱེད་པ།

gupa kyepa

ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་གྲིས་བྱགས་དུལ།

tsultrim gyi tuk dul

ཏིང་ངེ་འཛིན་གྲིས་བྱགས་དུལ།

ting-ngen-dzin gyi tuk dul

ཤེས་རབ་གྲིས་བྱགས་དུལ།

sherab kyi tuk dul

དེ་ཉིད་རྟོགས་པ།

de-nyi tokpa

བརྩེ་བ་དང་ལྡན་པ།

tsewa dang denpa

ཆོས་དང་འཇིག་རྟེན་གཉིས་ལས་ཆོས་གཙོར་བྱེད།

chu dang jikten nyi le chu tsor je

འདི་ཕྱི་གཉིས་ལས་ཕྱི་མ་གཙོར་བྱེད།

di chi nyi le chima tsor je

རང་གཞན་གཉིས་ལས་གཞན་གཙོར་བྱེད།

rang shen nyi le shen tsor je

གློ་གསུམ་བག་མེད་དུ་མི་གཏོང་།

go sum bakme du mitong

ཕྱིན་ཅི་ལོག་ཏུ་མི་འབྲིད།

chinchilok tu mitri

Class Nine

སྟིང་པོ་ལེན་པར་སྐྱལ་བ།

nyingpo lenpar kulwa

སྙིང་པོ་ལེན་པའི་ཚུལ།

nyingpo lenpay tsul

རྒྱེས་བྱ་ཚུང་དུ་དང་ཐུན་མོང་བའི་ལམ་གྱི་རིམ་པ།

kyebu chung-ngu dang tunmongway lam gyi rimpa

རྒྱེས་བྱ་འབྲིང་དང་ཐུན་མོང་བའི་ལམ་གྱི་རིམ་པ།

kyebu dring dang tunmongway lam gyi rimpa

རྒྱེས་བྱ་ཆེན་པོའི་ལམ་གྱི་རིམ་པ།

kyebu chenpoy lam gyi rimpa

འངས་པར་འཆི་བ།

ngepar chiwa

ནམ་འཆི་ངས་མེད།

nam chi ngeme

འཆི་ཆོ་ཆོས་མ་གཏོགས་མི་ཕན།

chi tse chu matok mipen

ལས་ངས་པ།

le ngepa

ལས་འཕེལ་ཆེ་བ།

le pel chewa

ལས་མ་བྱས་པ་དང་མི་འཕྲད་པ།

le majepa dang mitrepa

བྱས་པ་ཕྱད་མི་ཟ་བ།

jepa chu misawa

Class Ten

ཐར་འདོད་ལློ་བ་སྐྱེད།

tarndu lo kye

ཐར་ལམ་གཏན་དབབ།

tarlam ten ap

དྲན་པ།

drenpa

ཤེས་བཞིན།

she-shin

སེམས་བསྐྱེད་པའི་རྩལ།

sem kyepay tsul

ལྷུང་པ་ལ་སློབ་ཚུལ།

chupa la loptsul

མདོ།

do

སྒྲགས།

ngak

ལྷུང་པ་སྤྱི་ལ་སློབ་ཚུལ།

chupa chi la lob-tsul

པར་བྱིན་བ་མ་གཉིས་ལ་བསླབ་ཚུལ།

parchin tama nyi la lab-tsul

ཉིས་སྤྱོད་སྤྲོམ་པའི་ཚུལ་བློམས།

nyechu dompay tsultrim

དགོ་བའི་ཆོས་སྤྱད་པའི་ཚུལ་བློམས།

geway chu dudpay tsultrim

སེམས་ཅན་དོན་བྱེད་ཀྱི་ཚུལ་བློམས།

semchen dunje kyi tsultrim



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