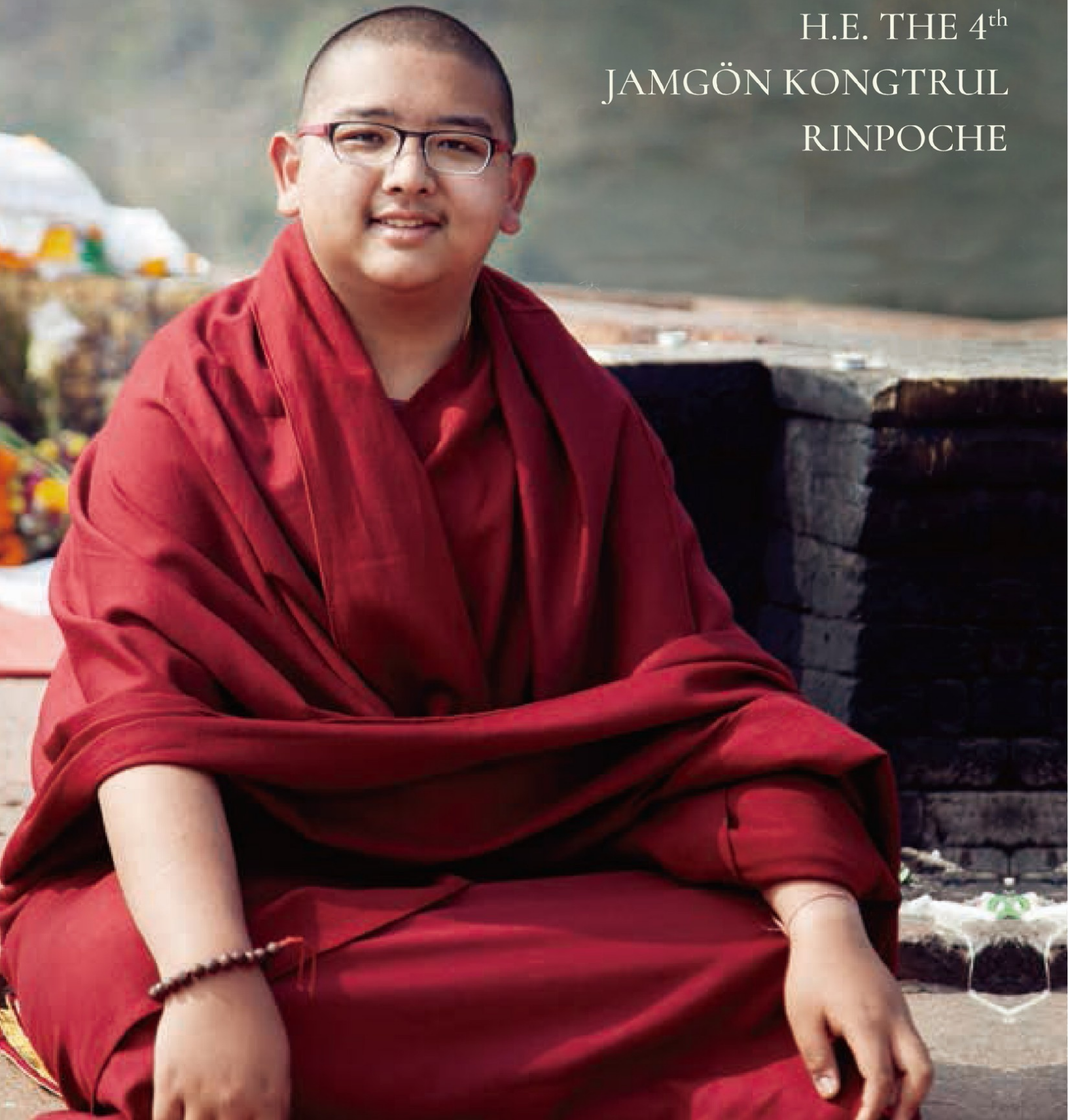


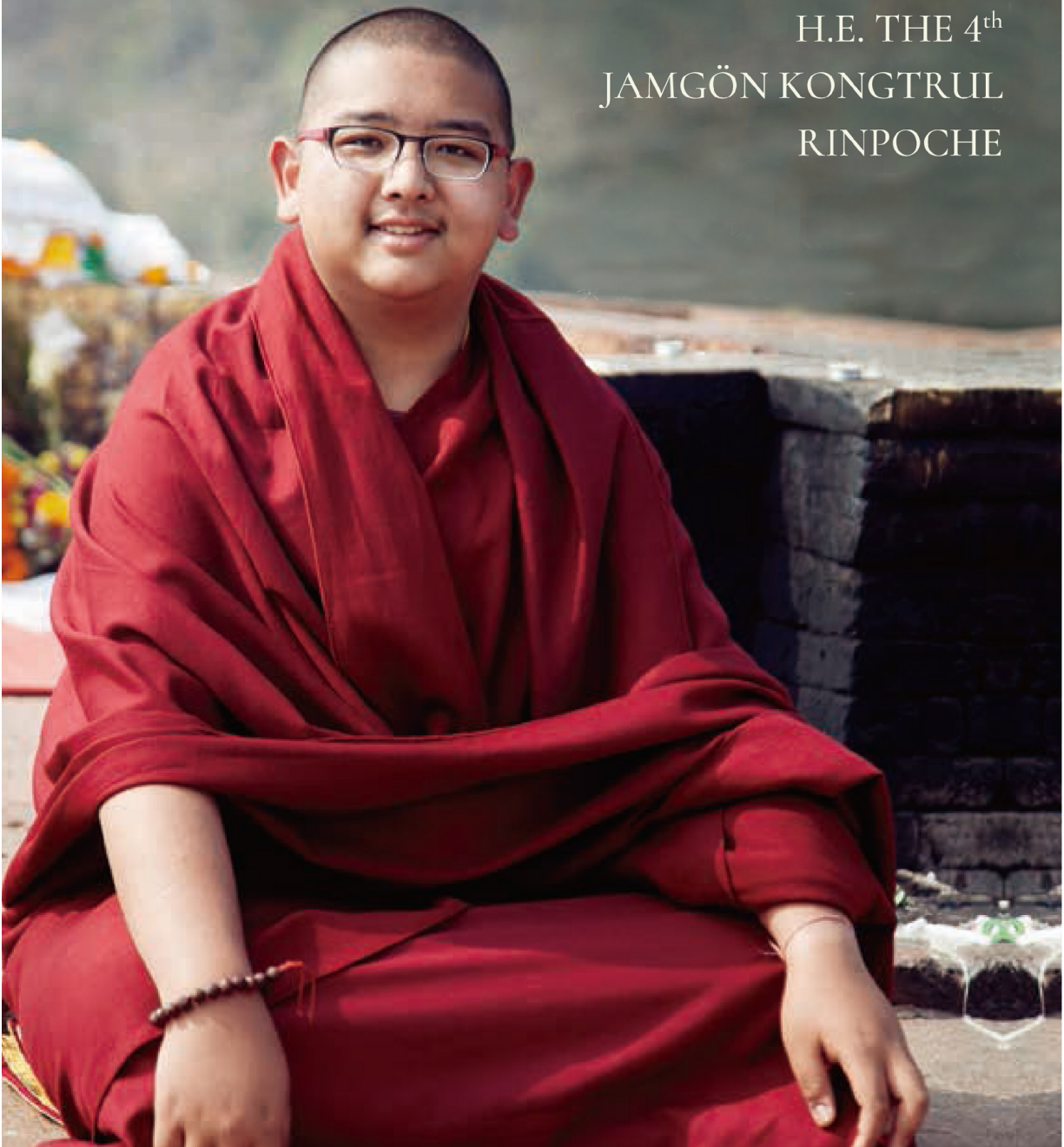
PARTING FROM THE FOUR ATTACHMENTS

H.E. THE 4th
JAMGÖN KONGTRUL
RINPOCHE



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TEACHINGS ON

PARTING FROM THE FOUR ATTACHMENTS

THE 4th JAMGÖN KONGTRUL RINPOCHE

32nd Kagyu Monlam, Bodhgaya, India
December 2014–January 2015



DHARMA EBOOKS

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Jamgön Kongtrul Rinpoche in front of the Mahabodhi Stupa, Bodhgaya, India. Just before teaching on *Parting from the Four Attachments*, Rinpoche paid a special visit here to make prayers.





On a pilgrimage to Vulture Peak Mountain, Rinpoche offered incense while he circumambulated the Vishwa Shanti Stupa three times.



With the blessings of the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa (left), the 4th Jamgön Kongtrul Rinpoche ascended the throne and led his very first formal Dharma teaching.



At the end of December 2014, Rinpoche gave teachings during the Kagyu Monlam on the four-line instruction, *Parting from the Four Attachments*, originally bestowed by Manjushri to the Sakya master Kunga Nyingpo.



Early in the morning on the first teaching day, Rinpoche visited the Mahabodhi Stupa to pay homage and make aspirations.



Rinpoche making offerings to the golden Buddha and requesting blessings in the main shrine room of the Mahabodhi Stupa.



Father and son lineage holders of the Karma Kamtsang Kagyu tradition: His Holiness the 17th Gyalwang Karmapa (center), His Eminence the 4th Jamgön Kongtrul Rinpoche (left), and His Eminence the 12th Goshir Gyaltsap Rinpoche (right).



An historic moment of passing on the torch: in Bodhgaya, the holy place where the Buddha achieved enlightenment, more than ten thousand disciples gathered at the Monlam Pavilion to listen to Jamgön Kongtrul Rinpoche's teaching on *Parting from the Four Attachments*.

THE ROOT TEXT

INSTRUCTIONS ON PARTING FROM THE FOUR ATTACHMENTS

by Jetsun Drakpa Gyaltsen

I go for refuge from my heart
To the kind spiritual master
And compassionate yidam deity.
I pray you grant me blessings.

There is no need for non-Dharmic conduct.
To accomplish Dharma properly,
I'll teach the instructions on the parting
From the four attachments. I ask that you please listen.

If you cling to this life, you aren't a practitioner.
If you cling to samsara, you don't have renunciation.
If you cling to your own aims, you don't have bodhichitta.
If you have grasping, you don't have the view.

The first is discipline, listening, contemplation,
And meditation without attachment to this life.
If you practice those with a focus on this life,
You are not a practitioner, so give that up.

To begin by discussing discipline,
It is the basis for gaining the higher realms,
The stairway to accomplishing liberation,
The remedy that eliminates suffering.

Discipline is indispensable.

But discipline that is attached to this life
Is the basis for accomplishing the eight concerns.
You criticize those with poor discipline,
And are jealous of those with discipline.
Your own discipline is hypocritical.
It is the seed of accomplishing the lower realms.
Give up such fictitious discipline.

Someone who listens and contemplates
Has the riches of accomplishing knowledge,
The lamp that dispels ignorance,
The knowledge of the path that guides beings,
And the seed of the dharmakaya.
Listening and contemplation are indispensable.

But someone whose studies are focused on this life
Has the wealth of accomplishing pride,
Scorn for those with little study,
And jealousy for those who have studied.
They seek followers and possessions.
It is the basis for accomplishing the lower realms.
Give up study that has the eight concerns.

All those individuals who meditate
Have the antidote that eliminates afflictions,
The basis for achieving the path to freedom,
The seed for accomplishing buddhahood.

Meditation is indispensable.

But meditators focused on this life,
Have distractions even in solitude.
Their recitations are meaningless talk.
They denigrate those who study,
Are jealous of other meditators,
And are distracted in their own meditation.
Give up meditation that has the eight concerns.

This passage explicitly teaches the meaning of the citation “With conduct, listening, and contemplation / Completely train in meditation” from the Treasury of Abhidharma, distinguishing the actual from the fake. Meditation on the precious human life and death and impermanence are taught implicitly.

To achieve liberation, one must give up
Attachment to the three realms.
To give up attachment to the three realms,
Recall the faults of samsara.

First, the suffering of suffering
Is the suffering of the three lower realms.
Contemplating it deeply will give you goose bumps.
When it happens to you, there is no way to bear it.

There are those who, without the virtue of keeping vows,
Sow the crops of the lower realms.
No matter where they are—how unfortunate!

To contemplate the suffering of change,
Beings fall from high realms to the low.
Indra will be reborn an ordinary being.
The sun and moon will go dark.
Emperors will be born slaves.
Though one can believe this from the scriptures,
Ordinary folk are unable to realize it.
So look at the changes among humans whom you see.
There are rich people who become beggars,
Haughty people who become weak,
Many people decrease to one,
And so on, beyond comprehension.

To contemplate the suffering of formation,
There is no end of things to do.
There is suffering if there are many people or few.
The wealthy suffer, as do the starving.
We spend our entire lives preparing,
And at the end of preparing, everyone dies.
Even dead, there is no end to preparations—
We begin preparing for the next life.
How unfortunate those who are attached
To the mass of samsaric suffering!

This passage teaches the faults of samsara explicitly and what to adopt and reject for karma and result implicitly.

When free of attachment, you pass to nirvana.

Passing to nirvana, you gain happiness.
The melody of experience free of the four attachments!
To liberate myself alone is no help.
The beings of the three realms are my parents.
How pitiful to want to be happy myself
And leave my parents in the thick of suffering!
May the suffering of the three realms ripen on me.
May sentient beings take my merit.
Through the blessings of this merit,
May all beings awaken to buddhahood.

This passage implicitly teaches meditating on the cause, loving-kindness and compassion, and explicitly teaches the result, exchanging self for other.

Whatever the self is like, if there is grasping
At the nature of phenomena, there is no liberation.
To explain this in detail,
If you grasp at existence, there's no liberation.
If you grasp at nonexistence, there are no higher realms.
Grasping both is ignorance,
So rest as best you can in the nondual nature.

This passage teaches giving up eternalist and nihilist views and resting the mind in unified nonduality in general.

All phenomena are the sphere of mind.
Without searching for a creator of
The four elements, such as Cha or Indra,
Rest as best you can in the nature of mind itself.

This passage teaches the gradual path common with Mind Only bodhisattvas. Next is the particular path of Mahayana Middle Way:

Appearances, whose essence is illusion,
And the nature that arises
Interdependently are ineffable.
So rest in the ineffable nature.

This passage implicitly teaches the methods of calm abiding meditation and explicitly teaches as the method of insight meditation establishing appearances of the object as mind, establishing those to be illusions, establishing those to have no nature and to be interdependent and ineffable.

By the merit of this virtue of explaining
The Parting from the Four Attachments,
May all seven types of beings
Be brought to buddhahood.

This completes the Instructions on Parting from the Four Attachments written by the yogi Drakpa Gyaltsen at Sakya Monastery, with notes added by the Sakya Pandita.

THE TEACHING

All beings throughout space must be brought to completely perfect buddhahood, the unified state of Vajradhara. Please listen to the True Dharma for that purpose and with pure motivation and conduct.

HISTORY

When the Sakya master Kunga Nyingpo was twelve years old, his lama Bari Lotsawa told him, “You are the son of Khon Konchok Gyalpo ^[1], so it is very important for you to study. To study, you absolutely must have prajna, and since Manjushri is the deity of prajna, you must practice Lord Manjushri. ”

He practiced as instructed, with his lama joining him in the practice, but after a while, he encountered a minor obstacle, which he averted through the practice of Achala and the Dharma protectors. After practicing for six months, he saw Lord Manjushri in person—Manjushri was in the center with the bodhisattvas Aksayamati and Pratibhākūta on his right and left. Manjushri gave Sakya Kunga Nyingpo these instructions:

If you cling to this life, you aren’t a practitioner.

If you cling to samsara, you don’t have renunciation.

If you cling to your own aims, you don’t have bodhichitta.

If you have grasping, you don’t have the view.

After receiving the instructions, Sakya Kunga Nyingpo realized that this *Parting from the Four Attachments* contains the essential points of the entire practice of the path of prajnaparamita taught by the Buddha. He gave the instructions to his son, Jetsun Drakpa Gyaltsen, from whom the lineage has been passed down.

In the Sakya tradition, *Parting from the Four Attachments* is a common preliminary and mind training practice. It is renowned and undisputed among many other traditions of Tibetan Buddhism. *Parting from the Four Attachments* is taught first in the quintessential instructions of the Jonang tradition. Dolpo Sangye, recognizing that these instructions had great blessings and that they were the quintessence of all the Buddha's sutras, also taught them first. Among all the commentaries on this verse, the one by Jetsun Drakpa Gyaltsen is neither too short nor too long, so I will use it as the basis for this teaching.

HOMAGE & PLEDGE TO COMPOSE

Jetsun Drakpa Gyaltsen's commentary, *Instructions on Parting from the Four Attachments*, begins with an homage and a pledge to compose.

The homage reads:

I go for refuge from my heart
To the kind spiritual master
And the compassionate yidam deity.
I pray you grant me blessings.

First, to explain the homage: The source of all accomplishment is the lama. The lama may be equal to the buddhas in qualities, but he is greater than the buddhas in his kindness. Thus it says, “To the kind spiritual master.” The compassionate yidam deity” refers to Lord Manjushri. “I go for refuge from my heart” means that I go for refuge from my heart to the kind lama and the compassionate yidam deity, Manjushri.

He says, please grant me your blessings so that my mind turns to the Dharma, the Dharma becomes the path, the path dispels confusion, and confusion arises as wisdom.

This first stanza is the homage. There are three reasons to have an homage: to dispel obstacles to writing the text, to emulate the conduct of great beings, and to teach disciples by setting an example.

Next, the pledge to compose:

There is no need for non-Dharmic conduct.

To accomplish Dharma properly,

I'll teach the instructions on the parting

From the four attachments. I ask that you please listen.

“There is no need for non-Dharmic conduct” means worldly activities such as business and farming or else subduing enemies and taking care of friends. There is no need for any such worldly activities. This should be understood as saying that these four partings from attachment are critically important for practicing the Dharma properly. Therefore please listen.

That was the pledge to compose. The reason for a pledge to compose is to be able to complete writing the text. That is enough of

an explanation of the homage and pledge to compose.

REFUGE & BODHICITTA

There is no verse of refuge or bodhichitta in this commentary, but whenever we are teaching or listening to the Dharma, refuge and bodhichitta should be present as a matter of course.

Regarding bodhichitta and refuge, there are many types of refuge, including those of the listeners, self-buddhas, bodhisattvas, and the secret mantra. The Mahayana refuge has four distinctions: the cause, the source, the duration, and the purpose.

The general causes necessary for going for refuge are fear and faith. But the Mahayana refuge is superior because its primary cause is compassion.

The sources of refuge are the same for all vehicles: the three Jewels. In the Mahayana, the jewel of the Buddha is asserted to be the three kayas, but in the vehicles of listeners and self-buddhas, the three kayas are not accepted. In the Mahayana, the Dharma refers to the truths of cessation and of the path, and the Sangha refers to irreversible bodhisattvas. Thus sources of refuge in the Mahayana are superior.

The duration of going for refuge is until we reach the essence of enlightenment. The purpose of going for refuge in the Mahayana is that, just as there is no limit to space, there is no limit to the number of sentient beings; thus we go for refuge so that all limitless sentient beings attain perfect enlightenment.

That explains the Mahayana refuge with its four distinctions. Bodhichitta is described in *The Ornament of Clear Realization*:

Bodhichitta is the wish for perfect,
Complete enlightenment for others' sake.

Bodhichitta is a primary mental awareness that is concurrent with the wish to achieve completely perfect enlightenment for the sake of all beings, and that is the gateway to the Mahayana path. ^[2] It is not necessary to say much about bodhichitta now; I will discuss it with the third instruction.

We have completed refuge and bodhichitta.

THE FIRST INSTRUCTION:

IF YOU CLING TO THIS LIFE, YOU AREN'T A PRACTITIONER

Reversing Attachment to This Life—Turning Your Mind toward the Dharma

Continuing with the commentary, the root text reads:

If you cling to this life, you aren't a practitioner.
If you cling to samsara, you don't have renunciation.
If you cling to your own aims, you don't have bodhichitta.
If you have grasping, you don't have the view.

To explain the first instruction, "If you cling to this life, you aren't a practitioner," the commentary reads:

The first is discipline, listening, contemplation,
And meditation without attachment to this life.

If you practice those with a focus on this life,
You are not a practitioner, so give that up.

The basic framework of the Foundation and Great Vehicles as well as of tantra is discipline, listening, and contemplation. As the master Vasubandhu said:

With conduct, listening, and contemplation
Completely train in meditation.

However, if we focus on this life while practicing discipline or while engaged in listening, contemplation, and meditation, our practice is only ostensibly Dharma; it is not true Dharma practice. Thus we should “give that up.”

The text begins by discussing discipline:

To begin by discussing discipline,
It is the basis for gaining the higher realms,
The stairway to accomplishing liberation,
The remedy that eliminates suffering.
Discipline is indispensable.

Nagarjuna’s *Letter to a Friend* says:

Discipline is said to be the basis of all qualities,
Just as the earth is the basis for the animate and inanimate.

This praises discipline as the basis for developing all qualities and therefore bringing untold benefits. Furthermore, there is a sutra that says:

Discipline is the greatest happiness.

Discipline is the path to freedom.

Discipline is the field for qualities.

Discipline is the cause of buddhahood.

This describes the benefits of discipline. Similarly, the root text says:

It is the basis for gaining the higher realms,

The stairway to accomplishing liberation,

The remedy that eliminates suffering.

“The basis for gaining the higher realms” means that the higher realms are accomplished on the basis of discipline—primarily the discipline of vowing to refrain from negative actions—so discipline is the basis for gaining the higher realms.

“The stairway to gaining liberation” means that enlightenment is accomplished over the course of many lifetimes on the support of bodies in the higher realms. The higher stages of clear realization of the path must be accomplished on the basis of discipline, so they are like the steps on a stairway.

“The remedy that eliminates suffering” means that is the primary method to block the suffering of suffering—birth in the lower realms—and is thus called the remedy for suffering. For these reasons, “discipline is indispensable,” meaning that it is extremely important.

But discipline that is attached to this life

Is the basis for accomplishing the eight concerns.

You criticize those with poor discipline,

And are jealous of those with discipline.

Your own discipline is hypocritical.

It is the seed of accomplishing the lower realms.

Give up such fictitious discipline.

If your discipline is attached to this life, it is the basis for the eight worldly concerns. ^[3] It also becomes a cause of looking down on those who are unable to keep discipline and being jealous of those who practice discipline. You will pretend to be careful of keeping your own discipline when there are many people around, but when you are alone, you will not really pay any attention to it.

It is the seed of accomplishing the lower realms.

Give up such fictitious discipline.

Because discipline focused on this life is the seed of the lower realms, such fictitious discipline should be given up. This describes the faults of discipline that is focused on this life and the benefits of true discipline.

Next the commentary describes the difference between true and fictitious study:

Someone who listens and contemplates
Has the riches of accomplishing knowledge,
The lamp that dispels ignorance,
The knowledge of the path that guides beings,
And the seed of the dharmakaya.
Listening and contemplation are indispensable.

Proper, true listening and contemplation bring the riches of gaining knowledge. They are the lamp that dispels ignorance, the knowledge

of the path that guides beings, and the seed of the result, the dharmakaya.

But someone whose studies are focused on this life
Has the wealth of accomplishing pride,
Scorn for those with little study,
And jealousy for those who have studied.
They seek followers and possessions.
This is the basis for accomplishing the lower realms.
Give up study that has the eight concerns.

All those individuals who meditate
Have the antidote that eliminates afflictions,
The basis for achieving the path to freedom,
The seed for accomplishing buddhahood.
Meditation is indispensable.

But meditators focused on this life,
Have distractions even in solitude.
Their recitations are meaningless talk.
They denigrate those who study,
Are jealous of other meditators,
And are distracted in their own meditation.
Give up meditation that has the eight concerns.

In brief, these verses describe the difference between true and fake Dharma practitioners. Thus no matter what Dharma activity we do, if we do it with attachment to this life, we merely say we are

practitioners, but we are not true Dharma practitioners—we are fake practitioners.

As Dharma practitioners, we should at least fit within one of the three categories of individuals. But if we are attached to this life, we do not even meet the characteristics of the lesser individual, who is described by Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Thaye as:

Someone who does not do much for the sake of this life but instead seeks the bounties of the higher realms in their next life and engages in their causes.

A lesser individual must have revulsion for this life. But, if we are attached to this life and still call ourselves practitioners, we aren't even included among the lowest type of individuals, so we are not true practitioners—we are merely fakes.

I usually go to the Mahabodhi Temple in the morning or evening. There are many people around it who wear monastic robes but seem not to be monks, though I don't know for certain. They recite OM MANI PADME HÜM or other prayers loudly. I have noticed that whenever someone comes close or gives them money, they pretend to be a true practitioner, closing their eyes and reciting even louder. But when no one is giving any money some of them sleep, some of them chat, and many even count their money, calculating exactly how much they got. As I walk around and see them, I think how strange they are.

But if we really examine it, we see that we practice Dharma the same way they do: when there are many people around—when there are sponsors and such people around—we close our eyes as if

we were true practitioners, and we recite every- thing, including maṇis. When we are observed by people who do not know the Dharma well, we act as if we actually are true Dharma practitioners. When there is no one around and no donors, some of us fall asleep, some chat. I don't know whether anyone is counting money, but it is possible, right? That is what happens. If we do not think carefully about this, there is the danger that we will be exactly like those people wearing robes at the Mahabodhi temple.

It is not necessary to say too much. But if we say we are practitioners while practicing Dharma with attachment to this life, then we are not true practitioners; we are fake practitioners. It is very important to contemplate this.

To curtail attachment to this life, we need to meditate on the precious human life and on death and impermanence. The precious human life means having the leisures and resources; being free of the eight states that lack leisure—hells, hungry ghosts, animals, barbarians, wrong views, long-lived gods, places without a buddha, or being dumb. Being free of these eight states is called leisure. Resources means having both the five internal and five external resources. The five internal resources are being human, born in a central land, having all the faculties, right livelihood, and faith. The five external resources are a buddha appearing and teaching Dharma, the teachings remaining, there being followers of the teachings, and there being sympathetic patrons. The precious human body with its eight leisures and ten resources is far superior to even a wish-fulfilling jewel, but it is hundreds of thousands of times more difficult to achieve and brings far greater benefits.

Thoroughly meditating on this is an excellent basis for meditating on death and impermanence, but then meditating on impermanence will bring even greater benefits in taming our being. There are many contemplations of impermanence such as contemplating the impermanence of the external world and the impermanence of the beings who inhabit it, but to explain it simply, impermanence means having the nature of perishing in every single moment.

So this human body, with its eight pleasures and ten resources that are difficult to find and that have a great purpose, will eventually die. There are many causes of death, so we do not know when we will die. Not only that, as soon as we are born, in every moment we grow closer and closer to our death. Meditating on this is extremely important.

MEDITATION 1:

PRECIOUS HUMAN LIFE & DEATH AND IMPERMANENCE— PARTING FROM ATTACHMENT TO THIS LIFE

Before doing the meditation, please place your hands on your knees and rest evenly for a few moments. The reason for asking you to do this is that now our monkey minds are so frenetic that if we immediately try to meditate, it will not be clear, just as a reflection does not appear in murky water. Thus I ask you to rest in equipoise with your hands on your knees in order to separate the pure from the pollutants in your mind.

First, calm your mind:

- Place your hands on your knees and rest evenly.
- Relax for a few minutes.

Next, the meditation:

- Sit in the Vairochana 7-point posture.
- Contemplate that you have gained a meaningful, precious human life with the eight pleasures and ten resources that are so difficult to obtain.
- But this life is impermanent by nature.
- There are many causes of death and few circumstances for living.
- There is no knowing when we will die.
- There is no point in being attached to this life.

- Contemplate this without distraction.

THE SECOND INSTRUCTION:

IF YOU CLING TO SAMSARA, YOU DON'T HAVE RENUNCIATION

Reversing Attachment to Samsara—Dharma Becoming the Path

Next I will explain the commentary on the second instruction, “If you cling to samsara, you don’t have renunciation.” The commentary says:

To achieve liberation, one must give up
Attachment to the three realms.

To give up attachment to the three realms,
Recall the faults of samsara.

To achieve nirvana, we need true renunciation for samsara. To develop true renunciation for samsara, we need to give up attachment to the three realms. To give up attachment to the three realms, it is important to remember the faults of samsara.

The defects of samsara are described in a sutra:

Beings in hell are brought down by the flames of hell.

The hungry ghosts are brought down by hunger.

Animals are brought down by eating each other.

Humans are brought down by short lives.

The gods are brought down by carelessness.

In samsara, there is not even

A pinprick’s worth of happiness.

From the Incessant Hell to the Peak of Existence, there is not even the slightest bit of happiness. It is all suffering by nature. There are three types of suffering: the suffering of suffering, the suffering of change, and the pervasive suffering of formation.

For the first, the suffering of suffering, the second word suffering means that merely acquiring the aggregates due to past actions and afflictions is suffering. This is the pervasive suffering of formation. The first word suffering indicates the additional sufferings that occur on top of that, painful feelings such as the suffering of heat, cold, and so forth. Gampopa's *Jewel Ornament of Liberation* says:

The suffering of suffering means that the other, strong sufferings that occur in addition to one's own suffering that is due to merely acquiring the five aggregates.

The commentary explains the suffering of suffering as:

First, the suffering of suffering
Is the suffering of the three lower realms.
Contemplating it deeply will give you goose bumps.
When it happens to you, there is no way to bear it.
There are those who, without the virtue of keeping vows,
Sow the crops of the lower realms.
No matter where they are—how unfortunate!

The suffering of suffering is the suffering of the three lower realms. Consider the hells: if we experienced the suffering of the hells in our current body, there would be no way we could bear it. Not only that, the sufferings of the hells are such that if we just see a drawing of it

or are told about its nature and duration, we would feel such great fear that it is as if our hearts would shudder. In the Incessant Hell, there is such immeasurable pain that it seems our bodies are indistinguishable from fire.

Some people will experience such suffering and others will not, but there are more who will. Looking at people's behavior we can see why: most of their behavior is unvirtuous and hardly any is virtuous. Unvirtuous actions definitely result in suffering. Karma is infallible. Thus it says,

There are those who, without the virtue of keeping vows,
Sow the crops of the lower realms.
No matter where they are—how unfortunate!

“How unfortunate” is a disparaging term meaning pitiful or unfortunate. That passage was about the suffering of suffering.

Beings fall from high realms to the low.
Indra will be reborn an ordinary being.
The sun and moon will go dark.
Emperors will be born slaves.
Though one can believe this from the scriptures,
Ordinary folk are unable to realize it.
So look at the changes among humans whom you see.
There are rich people who become beggars,
Haughty people who become weak,
Many people decrease to one,
And so on, beyond comprehension.

This passage teaches the suffering of change. *The Jewel Ornament* describes the suffering of change:

The suffering of change: All the various pleasures of samsara will eventually change and become suffering, so they are called the suffering of change.

To explain the commentary on the suffering of change, “Beings fall from high realms to the low” means that there are many who fall from the higher realms to the lower realms. They are as numerous as the atoms in the earth, but those who go from lower to higher realms are as many as the atoms in a pea.

Indra will be reborn an ordinary being.

Even someone such as the majestic lord of gods, Indra, will be reborn as an ordinary being after dying.

The sun and moon will go dark.

The sun and moon dispel all the darkness in this world, but even they are subject to change. There are those who after passing away become unable see their own fingers or see themselves stretch out and bend their own arm.

Emperors will be born slaves.

In the end, even universal emperors will die and be born as servants to their retainers.

Though one can believe this from the scriptures,

Ordinary folk are unable to realize it.
So look at the changes among humans whom you can see.
There are rich people who become beggars,
Haughty people who become weak,
Many people decrease to one,
And so on, beyond comprehension.

If we look at the situation of people from the higher classes, they may be rich early in life but become beggars later in life. There are those who are powerful, strong, and influential early in life but who lose all their power and influence later in life.

Many people decrease to one,
And so on, beyond comprehension.

If there is a family with many members, in the end it will change, and there will be only one left, and so on. It is inconceivable. That completes the explanation of the suffering of change.

Now to explain the passage from the commentary on the suffering of formation:

To contemplate the suffering of formation,
There is no end of things to do.
There is suffering if there are many people or few.
The wealthy suffer, as do the starving.
We spend our entire lives preparing,
And at the end of preparing, everyone dies.
Even dead, there is no end to preparations—
We begin preparing for the next life.

How unfortunate are those who are attached
To the mass of samsaric suffering!

The Jewel Ornament says of the suffering of formation:

The suffering of formation is the suffering one has due merely to
acquiring these aggregates of grasping. ^[4]

From the lowest Incessant Hell to the Peak of Existence, there is not even an iota of happiness. Since it is everything suffering by nature, being attached to samsara definitely has no benefit and causes many faults.

To develop true renunciation for samsara, we must recognize that the pervasive suffering of formation is suffering. Yet we ordinary sentient beings can't recognize it, we can't feel it—this is something only noble beings can know. Though ordinary individuals have the suffering of formation, they do not experience it as suffering. But that suffering is great for noble beings, as it is said in *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation*. As it says in the auto-commentary on *The Treasury of Abhidharma*:

Human beings do not perceive
A single hair on their palm,
But if it gets into their eye,
It brings discomfort and pain.

The childish—like the palm—don't feel
The hair of the suffering of formation.
The nobles, who are like an eye,
View formation as pain.

Just as we ordinary individuals are unable to feel a hair on our palm, we have the suffering of formation but are unable to feel it. Noble beings are like our eyes: if hair gets into the eyes, it is uncomfortable and unpleasant—we have to scratch our eyes. Similarly, noble beings see the suffering of formation as great suffering.

In brief, we experience so much suffering because we do not properly understand or act upon what should and should not be done karmically.

There are three types of actions: virtuous, unvirtuous, and neutral. Virtuous actions, such as the ten virtues, are free of the afflictions. Unvirtuous actions, such as the ten nonvirtues, are motivated by desire, aversion, or delusion. Neutral actions are neither virtuous nor unvirtuous. It is important that we use whatever method and prajna we can to direct neutral actions toward virtue.

In brief, to reverse our attachment to samsara, it is very important for us to contemplate the sufferings of samsara.

MEDITATION 2:

THE SUFFERINGS OF SAMSARA—PARTING FROM ATTACHMENT TO SAMSARA

First, calm your mind:

- Place your hands on your knees and rest evenly.
- Relax for a few minutes.

Next, the meditation:

- Sit in the Vairochana 7-point posture.
- Focus on the fact that from the Incessant Hell to the Peak of Existence there is not even an iota of happiness.
- Its nature is suffering.
- It is possible that such suffering will happen to you.
- Whether or not it happens to you depends on whether you properly do what should be done and give up what should be given up.
- Contemplate this without distraction.

THE THIRD INSTRUCTION:

IF YOU CLING TO YOUR OWN AIMS, YOU DON'T HAVE BODHICHITTA

Reversing Attachment to One's Own Aims—The First Mistake on the Path

To explain the meaning of “If you cling to your own aims, you don’t have bodhichitta” from the root text, the commentary reads:

When free of attachment, you pass to nirvana.

Passing to nirvana, you gain happiness.

The melody of experience free of the four attachments!

If you are free of all attachment, you can achieve nirvana; if you achieve actual nirvana, you gain the ultimate happiness, and thus it says “the melody of experience.” In the vehicles of listeners and self-buddhas, one does not eliminate even this third attachment and thus seeks merely the partial liberation of peace. But because we are Mahayana practitioners, we need to practice the path of the greater individual, who is described in *The Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment* as:

Those persons who, from the suffering
In their own being, truly wish
To fully end all miseries
Of others are supreme.

Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Thaye characterizes them as

Those who, compelled by great compassion, seek unexcelled enlightenment in order to eliminate the suffering of all sentient beings, and train in its causes, the six paramitas, two phases, and so forth.

Since we are Mahayana practitioners, it is very important for us to practice the path of the greater individual. We should not seek the partial peace of nirvana. Instead, we must have the wish to achieve true and perfect enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings.

To continue with the text:

To liberate myself alone is no help.

The beings of the three realms are my parents.

How pitiful to want to be happy myself

And leave my parents in the thick of suffering!

Since we accept past and future lives as well as karmic cause and effect, we also assert that there is not even a single being in the three realms of samsara who has not been our parent. When they were our parents, they nurtured us with great kindness. *The Prajnaparamita Sutra in Eight Thousand Verses* says:

Why is this? you ask. Our mother gave us birth, then underwent hardship, gave us life, and showed us the entire world. Among all beings as limitless as space, there is not a single one who has not been our parent. When they were our parents, they did everything they could to nurture us with immeasurable kindness and to protect us from innumerable dangers. Therefore they have been extremely kind to us.

If we were to leave such extraordinarily kind parents in the thick of suffering and only wish for our own happiness—how pitiful or terrible that would be! Even in worldly terms, if someone left their parents in a dreadful place and went alone to a really nice place, everyone would consider them a shameless person with no conscience, as a result of which they would be unhappy themselves and suffer dreadfully.

Just as there is no end to space, there is no end to the number of sentient beings. Every one of those beings has been our parent and nurtured us many times with tremendous kindness. When we die and take rebirth, we will see some of them as enemies and some of them as friends. Actually there's not even a single one who hasn't been our father or mother. It would be terrible to want to leave all those sentient beings throughout space—who have all been our parents—in the thick of suffering. Briefly, that is what this means.

May the suffering of the three realms ripen on me.

May sentient beings take my merit.

Through the blessings of this merit,

May all beings awaken to buddhahood.

Basically, may all the suffering of the three realms—everything undesirable including curses, slander, and such—ripen upon myself, and may I be able to wholeheartedly give away all the merit or goodness I have gathered in this life and all my beginningless lifetimes. Such a thought merely occurring in the mind has infinite merit. Through the blessings of this merit, may all sentient beings awaken to buddhahood. This implicitly teaches meditation on the

cause—loving-kindness and compassion—and explicitly teaches the result—exchanging self for other.

First, when we say loving-kindness, we should understand this as a mind that wishes all sentient beings be happy. The qualities of loving-kindness are discussed in the *Garland of Jewels*:

You will be loved by gods and humans
And guarded by them as well.
You'll have happiness and many pleasures,
Not be harmed by poisons or weapons,
Achieve your aims without effort,
And be reborn in Brahma's realm.
Even if you aren't liberated,
You'll gain the eight qualities of love.

Compassion is a mind that wishes to free all sentient beings from suffering and its causes. Meditating on such compassion has innumerable benefits. As is said in *The Story of Avalokiteshvara's Realization*:

There is one quality that, if you have it, will bring all the qualities of a buddha into the palm of your hand. What is it? It is this—great compassion.

If you meditate intensively on loving-kindness and compassion to the point of eliciting experience, you will naturally develop bodhichitta. There are two types of bodhichitta: aspirational bodhichitta and engaged bodhichitta. The most important practice of

engaged bodhichitta is exchanging self with others. Bodhichitta is described in *The Ornament of Clear Realization* as

Bodhichitta is the wish for perfect,
Complete enlightenment for others' sake.

This teaches that the characteristic of bodhichitta is a primary mental awareness that is concurrent with the wish to achieve completely perfect enlightenment for the sake of all beings, and that is the gateway to the Mahayana path.

Bodhichitta can be classified in three ways: in terms of analogies, in terms of stages of the path, and in terms of characteristics. In classifying it in terms of analogies, *The Ornament of Clear Realization* says:

Then there are its twenty-two aspects:
Similar to the earth, gold, the moon, and fire,
A treasure, jewel mine, and the ocean,
A vajra, mountain, medicine, and guide,
A wishing jewel, the sun, and a song,
A king, a treasury, and a great highway,
An excellent horse, and a spring of water,
Sweet-sounding music, a river, and a cloud.

In terms of the stages of the path, there are four types: the bodhichitta of interest, the bodhichitta of pure intention, fully ripened bodhichitta, and the bodhichitta of eliminating obscurations.

In terms of its characteristics, there are two types: ultimate bodhichitta and relative bodhichitta.

Ultimate bodhichitta should be understood as having the essence of emptiness and compassion, being unmoving like the earth, and being free of all conceptual elaborations. A sutra says,

Ultimate bodhichitta transcends the world. It is free of the extremes of conceptual elaborations. It is extremely clear. It is the subject of the ultimate. It is stainless, unmoving, and extremely bright, like the continuum of a lamp where there is no breeze.

Relative bodhichitta generally means, as described above:

Bodhichitta is the wish for perfect,
Complete enlightenment for others' sake.

Bodhichitta is a primary mental awareness that is concurrent with the wish to achieve completely perfect enlightenment for the sake of all beings, and that is the gateway to the Mahayana path.

There are two types of relative bodhichitta: aspirational and engaged. *The Way of the Bodhisattva* says:

To summarize, that bodhichitta
Is understood to have two types:
The mind aspiring for awakening
And the engagement in awakening.

There are different ways to explain the difference between aspirational and engaged bodhichitta: the tradition of Shantideva that was passed down from Manjushri and Nagarjuna; and the tradition of Lord Serlingpa that was passed down from Maitreya and Asanga.

Shantideva's tradition states that aspirational bodhichitta is like the wish to go—it is the intention to achieve perfect buddhahood. Engaged bodhichitta is like actually going—it is the training in achieving buddhahood.

Serlingpa's tradition states that aspirational bodhichitta is committing to the result, thinking, "I shall achieve perfect buddhahood for the sake of all sentient beings." Engaged bodhichitta is committing to the cause, thinking, "I shall train in the paramitas as the cause of buddhahood." That completes a brief discussion of bodhichitta.

Basically, there is not a single one of all beings, whose numbers are as limitless as space, who has not been our parent. Wanting to leave them in the midst of suffering and achieve happiness only for ourselves would be wrong and pitiful. Knowing this, it is extremely important to develop bodhichitta, which is the thought that "I shall achieve completely perfect enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings."

It is said the distinction between Buddhists and non-Buddhists is refuge, and the distinction between the Foundation and Great Vehicles is bodhichitta. Bodhichitta is the gateway to the Mahayana, so I think it is extremely important.

There are four causes for developing such bodhichitta, which is so critically important. *The Levels of the Bodhisattva* says:

What are the four causes? you ask. Perfect capacity is the first cause of developing the resolve of a bodhisattva. Being cared for by a buddha, bodhisattva, and spiritual master is the second

cause of developing the resolve of a bodhisattva. Having compassion for sentient beings is the third cause of developing the resolve of a bodhisattva. Not being afraid, even though the sufferings of samsara and the sufferings from undergoing hardship are long, varied, severe, and uninterrupted, is the fourth cause of developing the resolve of a bodhisattva.

It is thus very important for us to do all we can to have all these four causes and then to develop bodhichitta.

MEDITATION 3:

BODHICHITTA—PARTING FROM ATTACHMENT TO YOUR OWN AIMS

First, calm your mind:

- Place your hands on your knees and rest evenly.
- Relax for a few minutes.

Next, the meditation:

- Sit in the Vairochana 7-point posture.
- Contemplate that there is not a single sentient being among all the beings as limitless as space who has not been your parent.
- They have been extremely kind to you.
- Recognize that wanting only your own happiness while leaving them in the thick of suffering would be horrible, and abandon any such wish as if it were poison.
- Then rouse bodhichitta, thinking that for the sake of all sentient beings, you want to achieve completely perfect enlightenment.
- Think that you will train properly in its precepts with fervent longing.
- Contemplate this without distraction.

THE FOURTH INSTRUCTION:

IF YOU HAVE GRASPING, YOU DON'T HAVE THE VIEW

Reversing Attachment to True Existence—The Second Mistake on the Path

We have covered the first three instructions of the *Parting from the Four Attachments*. They are the aspect of means. The final instruction, “If you have grasping, you don’t have the view,” is the aspect of prajna, which is indispensable.

Whatever the self is like, if there is grasping

At the nature of phenomena, there is no liberation.

Whatever the self is like, if you grasp at the nature of phenomena, when you study, you will not be able to realize the intended meaning, and you will not be able to liberate yourself from all confusion. *The Three Principals of the Path* says:

Appearance, the unfailing dependent origination,
And emptiness, understanding beyond statements—
As long as these two seem to be separate,
You have still not realized the intent of Shakyamuni.

With regard to grasping:

To explain this in detail,

If you grasp at existence, there’s no liberation.

If you grasp at nonexistence, there are no higher realms.

Grasping at both is ignorance,

So rest as best you can in the nondual nature.

If you grasp the one extreme of holding things to exist fully or truly, you might achieve higher states because this view accords with the relative truth. But, because it contradicts how things are in the ultimate truth, you will be snared by the net of hopes, fears, and thoughts, and there will be no liberation.

If you grasp at nonexistence, there are no higher realms.

If you hold the other extreme of there being nothing at all or of grasping at that as true, that contradicts the manner in which things appear relatively—it mistakes a nihilist view for emptiness. That wrong view of denying karmic results severs the roots of virtue, so there are no higher realms.

Grasping at both is ignorance,

Existence and nonexistence are completely mutually exclusive, so it is impossible for there to be any other alternative of being either both or being neither. When you recognize this point of their exclusivity, it is impossible to grasp at a third alternative of both or neither.

So rest as best you can in the nondual nature.

The nature of an object is that it has neither existence nor nonexistence, and that it is free of the two extremes of eternalism and nihilism—it is free of all conceptual elaborations. Thus you should rest mind that is the conscious subject within the nature of that way things are. To explain it clearly, this is saying that we should rest in the freedom from elaboration that is accords with the object, like pouring water into water.

This passage taught in general how to give up views and rest in nondual unity. The sequence for entering that is taught next:

All phenomena are the sphere of mind.
Without searching for a creator of
The four elements, such as Cha or Indra,
Rest as best you can in the nature of mind itself.

The meaning of this is that one should not search for a creator of, or causes and conditions for, the four elements (external things) such as Cha ^[5] or Indra as do the non-Buddhists. Similarly, one should also not search for conditions that produce the truly existent partless particles as do the Buddhist Exposition and Sutra schools. “Not search” means one should not assert these. The reason is that all phenomena arise from the mind essence as its object due to the power of imprints being awakened. Like the appearance of objects in a dream, for example, all one should establish that all appearances are mind or that their character is mind, and one determine this through logic.

In this way, this passage says that since all appearances of objects are not different in substance from the mind, one must rest in the nature of emptiness. The manner we should rest is “as best you can.” To clearly explain what that means, it means to rest in harmony with the nature of the object, which is empty of any apprehended object and apprehending mind that are different in substance, without grasping at the apprehended and apprehender as if they were different in substance. This passage teaches the stages of the path common with Mind Only bodhisattvas.

Appearances, whose essence is illusion,
And the nature that arises
Interdependently are ineffable.
So rest in the ineffable nature.

This teaches the particular path of the Mahayana Middle Way in this manner: All the phenomena that we perceive are merely appearances due to causes and conditions, like the appearance of a horse or cow in an illusion. Furthermore, due to the power of imprints being awakened, appearances arise from the mind like a dream, but they are not truly established by their nature. As it says in *The King of Samadhi Sutra*:

The forms created by illusionists
Are varied—horses, cows, and chariots.
They appear as such but are not anything.
Know all phenomena are similar.

In brief, this says that all phenomena that appear and are agreed upon arise interdependently. For that reason, in truth, they do not exist; they are like illusions and dreams. Whatever is interdependent is emptiness, as Nagarjuna said:

Since there's no phenomenon at all
That is not interdependent,
There's no phenomenon at all
That is not emptiness.

Thus in the ultimate nature all phenomena that arise interdependently do not exist—they are empty of reality. In order to

gradually guide students, emptiness that is a mere refutation of reality is described with the word emptiness due to its similarity to emptiness. That is described as the categorized ultimate. But such nonexistence is interdependence presented in relation to refuting what must be blocked and is thus the mere relative; it is not established as the final nature. The final nature is free of all elaborations and extremes of existence and nonexistence, and that is the actual uncategorized ultimate. This is why the text says that the nature is ineffable.

When, after investigation, the view that concludes that the nature is unelaborate arises within your being, you should, as the text says, rest in the ineffable nature. The conscious subject, in harmony with its object, should rest in nonelaboration. It is also that you should rest as long as you are able. This passage implicitly teaches the methods of shamatha meditation and explicitly teaches the methods of insight meditation.

MEDITATION 4:

THE EMPTINESS OF ALL INTERDEPENDENT PHENOMENA— PARTING FROM GRASPING

First, calm your mind:

- Place your hands on your knees and rest evenly.
- Relax for a few minutes.

Next, the meditation:

- Sit in the Vairochana 7-point posture.
- Relax your mind.
- Contemplate that, from the perspective of the ultimate nature all interdependent phenomena cannot be established as having a true nature.
- Determine that interdependence is indescribable.
- Meditate on the unity free of elaboration of subject and object, like water poured into water.
- Contemplate this without distraction.

DEDICATION

As I mentioned on the first day, whatever we do, whether teaching or listening to the Dharma, first we must go for refuge and rouse bodhichitta, and, at the end, we must conclude with dedication. This is very important.

The dedication in the commentary reads:

By the merit of this virtue of explaining
The Parting from the Four Attachments,
May all seven types of beings
Be brought to buddhahood.

Regarding the meaning of this, generally there are six classes of beings. By adding beings in the bardo, we can count seven types of beings. We should think primarily of bringing all of them, with none left out, to buddhahood and disregard ourselves. With this attitude, we should give up any attachment and clinging to our aims and pray from our hearts that all of the merits of teaching the *Parting from the Four Attachments* become the cause of enlightenment for all those beings, who are our mothers. The line from the text, “Be brought to buddhahood,” also teaches the result of practicing the *Parting from the Four Attachments*.

The colophon to the commentary reads:

This completes the *Instructions on Parting from the Four Attachments*, written by the yogi Drakpa Gyaltsen at Sakya

Monastery. This completes the explanation of the commentary by Jetsun Drakpa Gyaltsen.

At the end of any activity of teaching or listening to the Dharma, it is extremely important for us to seal it with a dedication. If you do not dedicate all the roots of virtue, they will go to waste. Thus, no matter what Dharma activity or virtue you have done, such as teaching and listening to the Dharma, it is critical that you seal it with a dedication at the end. They must be imbued with a dedication as a method for them to increase without ever getting depleted.

Here we are all practitioners, so our primary aim and what we need to accomplish is for our minds to become the Dharma, the Dharma to become the path, the path to dispel confusion, and confusion to arise as wisdom. Thus I would ask that you recite dedications and aspirations such as *The Aspiration for Mind Training* with great fervor and aspiration.

FINAL REMARKS

There are a few things I would like to say in conclusion. Whether you look at my knowledge from study, my experience in meditation, my confidence, and so forth, I am at a low level, so I am not able to give a detailed explanation of such profound Dharma as this. However, because of compassionate blessings of my root guru as well the kindness and compassion of my khenpos and spiritual masters, I have taught just enough that no point remains unmentioned. I have done my best to teach this, trying to have a good motivation that what I say benefits sentient beings and keeping

in mind my hope that this can be a cloud of offerings that will please my root guru. Not only that, because His Holiness the Sakya Trizin was kind enough to give me the teaching and transmission, I have taught with the wholehearted wish that you also may receive the blessings of the lineage.

Likewise, I also pray that, due to all these roots of virtue from teaching and listening to the Dharma, the teachings of Buddhism in general, and the Practice Lineage of the Karma Kagyu in particular, may spread and flourish. Also, may His Holiness the Dalai Lama, leader for world peace; His Holiness the Gyalwang Karmapa, the master of the Kagyu teachings; and all the living masters who uphold the teachings live for aeons and may all their wishes be spontaneously accomplished.

The most important thing for our aspirations to be accomplished as we desire is that we ordinary individuals not be obscured by any doubts or wrong views about the wondrous activity of these great beings and that we greatly increase our pure perception.

In brief, I am praying that devotion increase without obscuration in a manner that does not damage our faith or samaya commitments, and I see it as critically important that you as well accept whatever direction your root guru gives you and practice it with unblemished faith and samaya. I ask you to please do this without fail.

Thank you and *tashi delek*.

1. The first Sakya Trizin and founder of Sakya Monastery in Tibet.—Trans.

2. This characterization of bodhichitta is found in many philosophical texts.

Primary mental awareness means that, between mind (that is, the bare awareness

of the essence of an object) and mental factors (which focus on the features of an object), this is mind, and it is in the sixth, mental consciousness. Concurrent means that simultaneous with and associated with this awareness, there is a wish to achieve buddhahood. The reason to specify this is to settle debates over whether bodhichitta itself is considered to be mind or a mental factor.—Trans.

3. The eight worldly concerns are being pleased with gain, fame, praise, and pleasure; and being displeased with loss, obscurity, criticism, and discomfort.

4. The aggregates of grasping are the five aggregates of form and so forth. Grasping refers to the afflictions; the aggregates are called this because they are created by our afflictions and karma.

5. A creator god in the shamanistic Bon tradition that predates Buddhism in Tibet.
—Trans.

APPENDIX
THE ASPIRATION FOR MIND TRAINING

by Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö Thaye

By the truth of Noble Lokeshvara,
The buddhas, and the bodhisattvas
Having perfected bodhichitta,
May supreme bodhichitta arise
In all beings throughout space, myself and others.

May the cause, beings engaging in hatred,
And result, the suffering of experiencing
The hot and cold hells, dissolve into me.
I give all beings throughout space
My roots of virtue from the attitude
Of loving-kindness and nonhatred.
May they, freed of hatred and the hells,
Achieve the Vajra family Lokeshvara,
And the supreme mirror-like wisdom.

May the cause, acting from desire and stinginess,
And result, the suffering of experiencing
The hungry ghosts' hunger and thirst, dissolve into me.
I give all beings throughout space
My roots of virtue from the attitude
Of relinquishing and nondesire.
May they, freed from stinginess and the hungry ghosts,

Achieve the Padma family Lokeshvara,
And the supreme discriminating wisdom.

May the cause, engaging in ignorant acts,
And result, the suffering of experiencing
The animals' stupidity, dissolve into me.
I give all beings throughout space
My roots of virtue from wisdom,
Both innate and from training, and nondelusion.
May they, freed from ignorance and animal births,
Achieve the Sugata family Lokeshvara,
And the supreme dharmadhatu wisdom.

May the cause, being disturbed by envy,
And result, the suffering of experiencing
The demigods' strife and conflict, dissolve into me.
I give all beings throughout space
My roots of virtue from the patience
Of the three gates and from lacking envy.
May they, freed from the demigods' strife,
Achieve the Karma family Lokeshvara,
And the supreme accomplishing wisdom.

May the cause, being overcome by pride,
And result, the suffering of experiencing
The gods' defeat and falling, dissolve into me.
I give all beings throughout space
My roots of virtue from being diligent

As well as from lacking pride.

May they, freed from the falling of the gods,
Achieve the Ratna family Lokeshvara,
And the supreme wisdom of equality.

May the cause, all the beginningless karmic obscurations
And result, the samsaric suffering of
Birth, aging, sickness, and death, dissolve into me.

I give all beings throughout space
The roots of virtue I have gathered
From beginningless time with body, speech, and mind.
May they, freed from human destitution,
Achieve the stainless dharmakaya Lokeshvara,
And the supreme self-arisen wisdom.

May all violations of the pratimoksha,
Bodhisattva, and Vajrayana vows dissolve into me.
I give all beings throughout space
My virtue from keeping the three types of vows.
May they, their three vows become pure,
Without the slightest stain of violation,
Achieve Vajrasattva, lord of all families.

May karmic obscurations that cause short life,
Such as destroying sacred objects and killing, dissolve into me.
I give all beings throughout space my virtue
From making sacred objects and protecting life.
May untimely death be unheard of

And all attain Vajra Amitayus.

May all the illnesses of sentient beings
From wind, bile, phlegm, and their combination dissolve into me.
I give all beings throughout space
The virtuous roots of good health and happiness—
Abandoning violence, giving medicine, and so forth.
May they gain the body of the Light of Vaidurya,
The Medicine Buddha, who cures the illnesses of the three poisons.

May destitution, hunger, and thirst
Due to thieving and robbery dissolve into me.
I give all beings throughout space
The results of giving Dharma and wealth.
May they enjoy the treasury of space,
Spontaneously and effortlessly filled with all they wish.

May all karma obscurations of being born
In impure realms due to committing
Only unvirtuous acts dissolve into me.
I give all beings throughout space
The ten practices of bodhichitta and so forth.
May all be born only in pure realms
Such as Sukhavati or Abhirati.

May all the karmic obscurations
That displease the Jewels due to cultivating
Only wrong views dissolve into me.
I give all beings throughout space

My roots of virtue from the three types of faith and so forth.

Belief in the infallibility

Of karma and result welling up from within,

May they act virtuously and give up misdeeds.

May all the greed and hatred of viewing

One's own perceptions as an enemy

From being solely habituated

To ego-clinging dissolve into me.

I give all beings throughout space

My roots of virtue of the four immeasurables.

May all have attitudes of loving-kindness,

Compassion, joy, and equanimity.

May clinging to confused appearances as true,

The source of suffering, dissolve into me.

I give all beings throughout space

The realization of emptiness and selflessness.

May they develop profound emptiness in their beings

And achieve perfect buddhahood.

In brief, all the sufferings of change—

Encountering the undesired

Such as the sixteen types of fear;

Separation from the desired, such as

Family, food, wealth, places, and friends;

Not enjoying what you have due to guarding it

By subduing foes, protecting friends, farming, and such;

Not getting, though you seek it, what you lack

Such as power, prosperity, and fame;
Obstacles and sudden misfortune—
I take upon my ego-clinging.
I unconditionally give to wandering beings
All my virtues of the three times,
My fortune, power, body, and life.
May all sentient being be happy
And engage in the conduct of enlightenment.

May those I've taught Dharma or encouraged in virtue;
Who's flesh I've eaten or milk I've drunk or backs I've ridden;
Who've given me faith, respect, food, or wealth;
Who lack faith, have wrong views, or disparage me;
Who have robbed or beaten me or harbor malice for me;
And all those with whom I have good or bad connections—

In brief, may all who see my body,
Hear my name, recall my qualities or faults,
Or even smell my scent in the air—
Exhaust their beginningless misdeeds and obscurations
And be brought by the Noble Great Compassion
To the realm of Sukhavati.

May everything from my acts of the three gates
Down to the odor of my body
Be able to solely benefit beings.

May the malicious humans and nonhumans
Who are hostile toward my body and life

Awaken to buddhahood before me.
May never even the slightest result
Of misdeeds occur because of me.
Although if examined, it's not proven true,
Like dreams, moons in water, or mirages,
This ego-clinging has deceived everyone.
I and all beings throughout space,
Döns, obstructors, and nonhuman spirits,
Are ultimately equal in emptiness.
Clinging to the empty as real is confused.
Relatively, there is no-one who has not been my parents,
And is there anyone in the world
Who has been kinder than my parents?
A mother harboring malice for her child is confused.

Therefore recalling my parent sentient beings
With unbiased gratitude,
I give profit and victory to others
And take loss and defeat upon myself.

Through the power of my pure intentions,
May all purify the obscurations and perfect the accumulations.
May supreme and precious bodhichitta,
Whose essence is emptiness and compassion,
The victors' unmistakable path,
Easily arise, and may they swiftly
Achieve omniscient buddhahood.

*Taking longing for mind training as the path, Jamgön Kongtrul Lodrö
Thaye made this prayer from his heart on an isolated mountainside. Virtue!
Mangalam.*



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