

A Mirror Revealing the Crucial Points: Advice on the Ultimate Meaning

by Longchen Rabjam

*Single embodiment of the compassion, power and activity
Of the infinite mandalas of victorious buddhas, beyond measure,
Glorious lama, supreme sovereign lord of a hundred buddha families,
At your feet, now and forever, I pay homage!*

Ema! Fortunate yogins, listen now:

We have gained a perfect human form with its freedoms and advantages, we have met the precious teachings of the Mahāyāna, and we have the freedom to practice the sacred Dharma authentically. So, at this time, let us not waste our lives in meaningless pursuits, but work towards the genuine, lasting goal.

There are infinite categories of teaching and countless are the ways to enter the vehicles. Explanations can involve a great many words and expressions. Unless we can take to heart the essence of the genuine meaning, then even committing many hundreds of thousands of volumes to memory will not decidedly bring benefit at the moment of death.

Seemingly, we might have boundless knowledge, all derived from study and reflection, but if our fundamental character is not attuned to the Dharma, we will not tame the enemy, the destructive emotions.

Unless we limit our desires from within by adopting an attitude of not needing anything at all, then even mastery over a thousand worlds will bring no real satisfaction.

Should we fail to prepare for the uncertainty of the time of death, we will not accomplish the great purpose, that which we will surely need when we die.

If we don't overcome our own faults and train in impartial pure perception, then having attachment and aversion will prevent us entering the ranks of the Mahāyāna.

Unless we make pure prayers of aspiration with unceasing compassion and bodhicitta, in the knowledge that there is not a single being among the three realms or the six classes who has not been our mother or father in the past, we will not unlock the treasury of altruism.

Unless we have such devotion for our kind teachers that we consider them as greater than the Buddha, we will not receive even a single portion of their blessings.

Without genuinely receiving blessings, the tender shoots of experience and realization will not grow.

If realization does not dawn from within, dry explanations and theoretical understanding will not bring the fruit of awakening.

To put it simply, unless we blend our own mind with the Dharma, it is pointless merely to adopt the guise of a practitioner.

Restricting ourselves to only basic sustenance and shelter, let us regard everything else as unnecessary.

Practice guru yoga, pray with single-minded attention, and direct all virtuous actions to the benefit of all beings, your very own parents.

Whatever you encounter—be it happiness or sorrow, good or bad—regard it as the kindness of the lama.

In the expanse in which self-knowing rigpa arises spontaneously, free of all grasping, rest and relax, without contrivance or fabrication. Whatever thoughts arise, recognizing their essence, allow them all to be liberated as the display of your own intrinsic nature.

Without the slightest trace of anything to cultivate or focus upon in meditation, don't allow yourself to drift even for a single instant into ordinary confusion. Instead, remain aware and undistracted during all activities, and train to recognize all sights and sounds and sensory experience as the play of illusion. In so doing, you will gain experience for the *bardo* state.

In short, at all times and in all situations, let whatever you do accord with the sacred Dharma and dedicate all virtue towards enlightenment. If you do so, you will fulfill the vision of your lamas and be of service to the teachings. You will repay the kindness of your parents and spontaneously benefit yourself and others. Please keep this in mind.

Even if we were to meet in person, I would have no greater instruction to give you than this. So take it to heart, all the time, and in any situation.

Lord of the victorious ones, Longchen Rabjam Zangpo, wrote this on the slopes of Gangri Tökar. May virtue abound!

| Translated by Adam Pearcey, 2011. Revised 2012.



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