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**Dam Chö Gonpa Yangzab**

**Holy Dharma of Profound Vision**

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A Dharma teaching transmitted by Guru Padmasambhava to King Mutik Tsenpo, concealed as Dharma treasure (terma) in the 8<sup>th</sup> century by Yeshe Tsogyal and revealed again by the very same incarnation of King Mutik Tsenpo named Gyalwang Rinchen Phuntsog. Most Ven. 3rd Drikung Ontül Rinpoche is now transmitting this teaching in the 21st century to fortunate students.

# Drikung Kagyu Maha Ati (Dzogchen) Lineage

## The Lineage Transmission

Guru Rinpoche to King Mutik Tsenpo (son of King Tsirong Deutsen) to Drikung Tertön Rinchen Phuntsog (17th lineage holder of Drikung Kagyu & YangZab gTerma Revealer) until the present day lineage holders Chokyi Jungne (Present Holiness Chuntsang Rinpoche) and Thinley Lhundrub (Present Holiness Chetsang Rinpoche).

## Brief Introduction

The Yang Zab (The Practices of the Very Profound Vision) is regarded as supreme among all the Yanas--it embodies the very essence of the tantric teachings. As a Dzogchen practice, it is unique within the Drikung lineage, as it was revealed by the Drikung Tertön (hidden treasure revealer), Rinchen Phuntsog, who is also the 17<sup>th</sup> throne-holder of the Glorious Drikung Kagyu Order.

During the eighth century, King Trisong Deutsen of Tibet, an emanation of Manjushri, invited Guru Rinpoche to the Land of Snows in order to subdue demonic forces hostile to the Dharma. Having accomplished his wishes and having founded Samye Monastery, the king showed signs of approaching death, and soon passed away. The king's son, Prince Mutik Tsenpo (also known as Sena Lek) became king, and received the Yang Zab empowerments and instructions from Guru Rinpoche.

The youthful king found that his father's duties were so numerous that he had little time to practice Dharma. Guru Rinpoche instructed him to put the practice into text form and prepare six copies on durable sheets of gold, turquoise, copper and other materials.

These were then wrapped in precious materials and hidden by Yeshe Tsogyal in Zhoto Terdrom on the limestone massif to the north, in the Great Assembly Hall of the Sky Dancers' cave (Khandro Tsok Khang Kiri Yang Zong Namkha Phug) located in a towering peak.

Drikung Tertön Rinchen Phuntsog revealed the terma himself an emanation of King Mutik Tsenpo, during the first half of the sixteenth century. The Yang Zab has been transmitted uninterruptedly down through the Drikung lineage to the present.

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Transcribed from the teachings given by Drikung Ontül Rinpoche at Manjushri Vihara Centre in Penang State, Malaysia on 15 - 17 June, 2001.

## The Yangzab-Dzogchen Terma Introduction

Tonight we have the great opportunity to gather here again to receive the precious Dharma teachings entitled "Dam Chö Gonpa Yangzab," the Holy Dharma of Profound Vision. There will be a series of topics from the Yangzab Cycle of Dharma Collection and path, the purpose being to put the teachings into practice.

In Tibetan Buddhism, there are three great Dharma paths that are well known, namely the Maha Ati (Dzogpa Chenpo or Dzogchen), Maha Mudra (Chakgya Chenpo or Chakchen) and the Madhyamika (Middle View). All three of these great Dharmas are essentially one and the same without difference. However, there are differences in the methods used on each of the great paths. As for the Yangzab, which is basically from the Dzogchen category, it is extremely profound and swift in achieving the final goal of full realization, or Buddhahood.

There is a saying with regard to Dzogchen practices, after receiving the teachings:

- If one practices Dzogchen in the morning, one will attain Enlightenment in the morning.
- If one practices Dzogchen in the evening, one will attain Enlightenment in the evening.
- If one who practices Dzogchen has great positive merit and karma, one will attain Enlightenment immediately.

The teaching we are going to receive is called the Drikung Dzogchen practice. It was called this for the reason that Gyalwang Rinchen Phuntsog revealed it from hidden treasure. The Drikung Dzogchen compilation is arranged according to the methods used in Dzogchen collections.

During his reign, the Tibetan King Trisong Deutsen started constructing the Samye Monastery. The local demonic forces were very hostile to the Dharma and created many obstacles in the process of constructing Samye. As progress was therefore hindered, the demonic forces were successful in keeping the Dharma from flourishing. In order to subdue all these demonic forces, the King invited

Guru Padmasambhava from India. Upon the arrival of Guru Padmasambhava, all the demonic forces were subdued and the Dharma thus began to flourish.

Guru Padmasambhava taught and transmitted many teachings to Prince Mutik Tsenpo (the son of King Trisong Deutsen), one of which was the Profound Vision (Yangzab) teaching. These teachings were concealed as Dharma treasures (Tib: *gTerma*) in specific locations for the benefit of future generations. Gyalwang Rinchen Phuntsog, who was the incarnation of Prince Mutik Tsenpo, revealed the Hidden Dharma Treasure from the White Limestone Massif, at its concealment place called Zhoto Terdrom in Tibet.

Dzogchen is a system of gradual practice and one of its requirements is that one has to start from the preliminary practices (ngondro). The Vajra Master will transmit the Preliminary Teachings and the students will put it into practice. This method of transmission and practice will prepare the student for the next schedule of teachings and practice on meditation on the Deity Hayagriva. Prior to that, fortunate students will receive the Empowerment of the Wrathful and Peaceful Deities (Shithro Lhatsho). This gradual system of teaching and practice will pave the way toward the completion stages of the practice.

### Motivation, Reason and Understanding

In general, beings from all walks of life have something to practice in life that is called Dharma. Whether they are Buddhist or from other religions is of no concern, the major goal is to achieve happiness and to eliminate all suffering. Dharma practice is the method applied to achieve happiness and eliminate suffering. Although this is the common wish in practicing the Dharma, there are different views and various methods of achieving happiness and eliminating suffering.

All of us here are Buddhist and follow the teachings of the Buddha. Buddhism is called "Nangpa" in Tibetan, which means "those who look inside." Where do we look inside? We look inside our mind, with the hope of being able to find Buddha Nature in our very own mind. It is said that all sentient beings possess the same nature as that of the Buddha. If one is unable to find this nature, it means that this nature is temporarily covered with defilements. The very

moment these defilements are removed, one becomes one with the Buddha. We all have a common wish to achieve lasting happiness and are constantly trying to acquire it through methods taught by the Buddha. Sometimes we are able to accomplish it, for we all have the seed of attaining Buddhahood or Buddha Nature. This seed of Enlightenment exists in every being in the same nature and quality. Even if we compare the seed of Enlightenment in a human with that in an animal, it will still be the same. There is no living being that lacks Buddha Nature.

The reason we are not able to realize this nature is that it is covered with the dirt of obscurations and defilements, but these are transient, not lasting. They are sometimes classified into three different kinds of defilement, namely:

- The defilement of Karma,
- The defilement of Afflictive Emotions and
- The defilement of Knowledge.

All these defilements obscure or cloud our mind and prevent us from seeing reality as it is. These defilements are also called co-emergent ignorance. "As it is-ness" means Ultimate Reality, and Ultimate Reality is that all-sentient beings are Buddhas. This co-emergent ignorance prevents us from perceiving Ultimate Reality directly. That is called the obscuration of afflictive emotions.

Because of these afflictive emotions, we come to label everything with different names, which obscures the nature of things. For example we have a very strong sense of "I" or "Self" which actually does not exist. This kind of labeling confusion is called "Labeling Ignorance."

The Ignorance of Karma is our ignorance towards cause and effect (karma). This defilement prevents us from being able to see the kind of causes that bring about the related kind of effects. This is due to our afflictive emotions such as ignorance, attachment, anger, pride and jealousy, which are normally summarized under the three root poisons—Ignorance, Attachment and Anger. We constantly create negative karma because of the activities and functioning of these three root poisons in our mind. That is the relationship of afflictive emotions and karma.

The Wheel of Cyclic Existence or Samsara stems from “Co-emergent Ignorance.” It is like not knowing “As it is-ness” or the “Nature of Reality.” For this reason, we create a sense of discrimination between self, others and things, which gives rise to labeling. This labeling itself is a false perception, as it does not portray the nature of things as they are. Because of our belief in the labels, different afflictive emotions contaminate and thus cloud our minds. This is how karma evolves and how the wheel of cyclic existence is created that binds us within.

The practice of Dharma is like a kind of medicine that can cure all the causes and conditions that create suffering through to the very last root poison, which is ignorance. The causes and conditions of suffering are a by-product of all the afflictive emotions. The method taught in the Vajrayana tradition is first to get rid of all the afflictive emotions, second to transform the afflictive emotions and third to realize the nature of afflictive emotions. These are the three gradual methods used in the Vajrayana tradition.

This is the single purpose of all Dharma practices. For example, when we have a particular bodily sickness we should then take the correct medicine in order to heal that sickness. Similarly in the practice of Dharma, the medicine should cure the sickness of afflictive emotions. We do not need to bring any changes in the essential nature of our mind life. What we have to do is remove all defilements from the mind by Dharma methods. We have since beginningless time believed that there is a self. In reality this self does not exist at all. Whether it is inside or outside of oneself, there is no such thing called the self. We have mistakenly and blindly believed that it exists. This is a very strong sense of belief that has become firmly established in our minds.

This fundamental ignorance causes suffering to arise. When we have the concept of self or I, we will automatically perceive others as different. This concept of self and other automatically gives rise to attachment to self and aversion to others. This gives rise to different karmas and thus to different forms of suffering, which is what we call the Wheel of Samsara. The self seems to exist somewhere, but the moment we examine ourselves, in our body and outside our body, we arrive at an understanding of the reality that there is no place the self could exist. It is our continual habit to mistakenly believe in the self. If we do not examine this, then the projection of self seems to exist and we believe in it as a true entity of existence. As Dharma practitioners, we ought to investigate the non-existence of self and thereby uproot the causes of suffering.

In worldly life, worldly sentient beings have a very strong tendency to believe that the self actually exists—which is caused by ignorance. To them, the self that experiences feelings does exist and they become horrified when they learn that the self does not exist. As Dharma practitioners we have to view it in a slightly different manner. We have to continually examine the non-existence of self and with great endeavor try to eliminate it gradually. This is the method that you should apply to end suffering. You can judge whether the methods used are fruitful or not by reflecting on your present self. See if you have become a better person or not, whether the belief in the self has weakened. If so, then you can say your Dharma practice is correct and capable of helping you put an end to suffering.

Whenever we practice Dharma, it is important to direct our practice toward other suffering beings—that is, to alleviate all their sufferings and to benefit all sentient beings. When we are very ignorant, we are very self-centered and whatever we do is solely for our own benefit. In Dharma practice one does the opposite, which is to benefit others in order to eliminate the strong perception of self.

There are three kinds of Dharma practitioners, who can be categorized as follows:

1. Ordinary kind of practitioners—they practice the Dharma in order to achieve happiness in this life. Such a practitioner still has the confidence that there is indeed happiness in samsara.
2. Medium kind of practitioners—they practice the Dharma in order to attain Arhat-hood for their own release from samsara, while there are still many sentient beings suffering in samsara.
3. Excellent kind of practitioners—they are the ones who practice for the sake of helping all sentient beings attain enlightenment. They practice not only for their own liberation but also for that of others.

Depending on the vastness of the individual level of motivation, these three kinds of practitioners appear. For instance, if a practitioner recites the Avalokiteshvara mantra “Om Mani Padme Hung” for his own happiness, he thus falls into the category of “Ordinary Practitioner.” Similarly, a “Medium Practitioner” will recite the mantra for his own liberation and an “Excellent Practitioner” will recite the mantra for the liberation of all sentient beings.

Mahayana followers need to have Altruistic Motivation in their manner of practice, with the intention of attaining Enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings. The method of doing so begins with the development of compassionate mind within oneself. This will help one understand the nature of suffering and its causes. In order to help others, compassion alone is not enough. We need to acquire more Dharma knowledge and put it into practice along the path.

In receiving Dharma teachings this is the Altruistic Motivation one needs to generate in accordance with the Mahayana path and the Yangzab-Dzogchen teachings we are going to receive.

Before one begins with the Yangzab practices, one needs to observe the Seven Meditation Postures of Buddha Vairocana:

1. sit cross-legged in a full lotus position;
2. right hand on the left palm, hands resting on the legs;
3. back straight like an arrow;
4. shoulders straight like the wings of a gliding vulture;
5. neck bent slightly forward;
6. vision at the tip of the nose;
7. tongue curled upwards, touching the upper palate.

In the course of performing all these activities, one needs to constantly generate the Compassionate Mind as explained earlier. The compassion has to be accompanied by the wisdom that arises from the practice and contemplation of the Dharma.

## Exhaling Stale Air

The next exercise to follow is the exhaling of stale or rotten air from the lungs. First we press the thumb against the ring finger of each hand and rest the hands on the knees. This is followed by a series of exercises as below:

1. Raise your right hand (using your first finger) to block the left nostril and inhale through the right nostril. Then remove the hand from the left nostril to block the right nostril and exhale from the left nostril. Repeat this exercise for three times before resting again on the right knee.
2. Raise the left hand (using your first finger) to block the right nostril and inhale through the left nostril. Then remove the hand from the right nostril to block the left nostril and exhale from the right nostril. Repeat this exercise for three times before resting again on the left knee.
3. After having done this with both hands, repeat the breathing exercise without hands. In a similar fashion, inhale through both nostrils then exhale. Repeat this exercise three times.

All the above exercises should be done with the first inhalation-exhalation long and strong. The second should be strong and short, whereas the third should be long and smooth. During all the inhalations, we should visualize breathing in all the blessings of the Buddhas of the ten directions and of the three times. During the exhalations, we should visualize as follows:

1. First exhalation – a Cock (male chicken) leaves our body through the air we breathe out. This symbolizes the afflictive emotion of Attachment.
2. Second exhalation – a Snake leaves our body through the air we breathe out. This symbolizes the afflictive emotion of Anger.
3. Third exhalation – a Pig leaves our body through the air we breathe out. This symbolizes the afflictive emotion of Ignorance.

## Preliminary Practices

In accordance with the Tibetan system of Dharma practice, before one proceeds to higher meditation practices, one needs to begin with the Preliminary Practices (Tib. *Ngondro*). *Ngondro* means “the one (practice) that goes before (other practices).” There are two kinds of preliminary practices, one being the Common and the other being the Uncommon.

For example when a farmer plans to plant some vegetation, first he needs to clear the land of unwanted elements such as stones, etc., that will obstruct the growth of vegetation. With similar intention, the Dharma practitioner begins with the Common Preliminary practices in order to build a strong foundation to sustain higher practices in the future. This method of cultivation will fertilize or ripen the mind so that interest in the Dharma will grow ever stronger.

The second part of the Preliminary practice is called the Uncommon. This involves the practice of Refuge, Vajrasattva, Mandala and Guru Yoga. It is compared to the sprouting or ripening of the Dharma mind of the student, which has been made fertile by the Common Preliminary practices. These Uncommon practices will prepare a student for higher practices, just as crops are harvested in the field of vegetation made fertile by both Preliminary practices.

The reason the first Preliminary Practices are called Common is attributed to the similarity in practice of all the Buddhist traditions—Theravada or Hinayana (Lesser Vehicle), Maha-yana (Great Vehicle) and Vajra-yana (Diamond Vehicle). In the Common Preliminaries, one is taught the “Four Ways of Turning the Mind.” The main intention of this practice is to turn our minds from Samsara (Cyclic Existence) and engage them in the process of attaining Nirvana (Enlightenment). Our minds are constantly attached to worldly concerns, worldly thoughts, worldly attitudes, etc., and this causes us to wander endlessly in Cyclic Existence over and over again. In order to turn away from the Cycle of Existence, we need a medium or method that will help us to achieve that. This is the medium or method of practice found in the practice of the Common Preliminaries. With this practice, we not only turn our mind away from samsara in this life but also in our future lives. For example, in the practice of contemplation on Impermanence, we are able to turn our mind away from Attachment.

## PRECIOUS HUMAN LIFE

Referring to the text in the section on “Precious Human Life” the translation says,

*Now I have this precious life of leisure and endowments, which will be difficult to attain in the future. Therefore, today may I achieve the supreme state of Kuntuzangpo in order to benefit others.*

This means to say that our present life is very precious and we should appreciate the achievement of this human form. It is already very difficult to achieve it in this present life and it is more difficult to achieve it again in our future lives. Attaining it can mainly be attributed to our past good deeds or merits that we have accumulated. Great merit is difficult to accumulate and we can therefore not guarantee that we will ever have the same precious human life in our future rebirths. The rarity of this form and difficulty in obtaining it is so vast. Without it one cannot practice the Dharma to lead one out from the realms of Cyclic Existence. A human life is essential for one to practice the precious Dharma.

Another main cause of attaining a precious human life is attributed to the practice of Morality or Discipline, the first of the “Six Perfections (Paramitas).” The supporting conditions are the practice of the other five paramitas—Generosity, Patience, Enthusiastic Effort, Meditation and Wisdom. There is another condition for these causes and conditions to generate results, as attaining human form is the result of Aspiration made in the past. These three factors (Discipline, Five Paramitas and Aspiration) are the conditions necessary for one to obtain a precious human life. Precious here refers not simply to human form, but to all eighteen qualities of the Leisures and Endowments (eight Leisures/Freedoms + ten Endowments), which are extremely difficult to obtain. This is comparable to a very good ship that we could utilize to cross the ocean of samsara. When one achieves this precious human body, it isn’t wise to waste it by indulging in non-beneficial activities.

One should try to find out whether one has all these eighteen qualities or not. One should rejoice and delight if one does have them all. If any of the qualities

are missing, one can try to acquire them. The Ten Endowments are divided into two categories, five Individual (inner) and five Environmental (outer).

### The Ten Endowments.

#### The Five Individual (inner) Endowments.

1. Human life
2. Born in a land where Dharma is flourishing.
3. All sense faculties properly functioning.
4. Did not commit any of the 5 Heinous Crimes:

##### Five Heinous Crimes

- a. killing one's mother (matricide);
  - b. killing one's father (patricide);
  - c. causing bodily injury to an arhat;
  - d. creating disharmony in the Sangha community;
  - e. with negative motivation to injure a tathagata.
5. Confidence and devotion in the Triple Gem.

#### The Five Environmental (outer) Endowments.

1. The Buddha appeared in this world.
2. The Buddha turned the Dharma wheel.
3. The Dharma is still preserved, taught and practiced even today.
4. We are followers of the Buddha's teachings.
5. We are guided by kind and compassionate teachers (lamas).

### The Eight Leisures or Freedoms.

1. We are not born in the Hell realm.
2. We are not born in the Hungry Ghost realm.
3. We are not born in the Animal realm.
4. We are not born in the Demi-God realm.

5. We are not born in the God realm.
6. We are not born as a Human being with perverted or wrong view.
7. We are not born in a period when there is no Buddha.
8. We are not born handicapped.

If we lack in any of these Eight Freedoms, then we have no leisure for practicing the Dharma. We therefore consider ourselves Precious when we possess all Ten Endowments and Eight Freedoms. Similarly, it is going to be difficult in future lives. It is extremely important for the practitioner to meditate on Precious Human Life and thoroughly contemplate the above points. Once we are confident that all these eighteen qualities are with us, we can consider ourselves to possess the Precious Human Life that is indispensable for the practice of Dharma. One should be happy and take delight in having such a wonderful human life that is the foundation or vehicle for Dharma practice. We should then make a commitment to practice the Dharma and not waste this precious life, as it will be extremely difficult to achieve again.

Since even to have obtained a Precious Human Life one needs such a great quantity of merit, there can therefore be no doubt that the merits required to attain Buddhahood are vast and immeasurable. Considering this difficulty in obtaining a human life, we should therefore resolve to utilize our life for the purpose of attaining the state of Samantabhadra (Kuntuzangpo). In the Dzogchen system, the ultimate state of enlightenment is to achieve the state of Buddha Samantabhadra, whereas in the Mahamudra system it is Buddha Vajradhara; they are all one and the same on the level of realization.

This meditation on Precious Human Life requires one to thoroughly investigate one's own life. Understanding the truth of how precious this human life is will motivate the student to continuously pursue the path to Enlightenment in order to cross the ocean of samsara. It is normal that we cherish our body in a worldly manner, but when we truly know its benefit as a vehicle to attain Enlightenment we will maximize its usage solely for this purpose in the path of Dharma. In the worldly manner, we often take good care to feed, clothe, clean this body of ours without knowing the great benefits it could reap. Therefore with the method expounded in the Yangzab preliminary common foundation concerning precious human life, we now know the method that will fixate our focus toward Enlightenment. Whatever we do for this body is motivated toward the

achievement of Enlightenment, like using a boat to cross the ocean of samsara. We can consider this body as a wish-fulfilling gem that we do not want to waste with other worldly concerns. If we waste it, then it is like losing a precious wish-fulfilling jewel and we will regret this when death approaches. This human body can serve as a vehicle to attain Nirvana and it can also serve another purpose to plunge into the lower realms of unending suffering and torment. Therefore, it is our decision now as to which path we wish to pursue. It is a matter that we must contemplate and decide for ourselves.

The mind is considered the master, whereas the body is the slave. A positive state of mind is the determining factor for virtuous bodily action and speech. Non-virtuous action and speech will occur during a negative state of mind, therefore the mind is the predominant factor. Without any doubt, we can say that virtuous or non-virtuous bodily action and speech is a reflection of our own state of mind as the source of origination.

Buddhist teaching is all about taming the mind so that negativities and non-virtuousness can be eliminated, like a car driver (referring to the mind aspect) who steers the car until it arrives at its destination safe and sound. Similarly, on the Buddhist path one learns to drive in a proper manner with progressive sets of instructions.

It is important for a student to generate a virtuous state of mind before receiving Dharma teachings. Virtuous motivation will determine whether the student is on the spiritual or worldly path. If the motivation of student or teacher is non-virtuous or afflicted by self-interest, this will result in a non-virtuous state.

The unequalled Dagpo Rinpoche (Gampopa) has a famous saying.

*If the Dharma is not practiced according to the Dharma, the Dharma can serve as a means for one to take rebirth in the lower realms.*

It is said, all Dharma is conditional upon the motivation of the practitioner. It is of the utmost importance to generate this motivation, especially in the Vajrayana tradition.

It is necessary for the student to know what is the correct motivation in receiving Dharma teachings. Up to now most of us have considered ourselves more important than other beings. This selfish idea needs to be abandoned and in return we need to act in the opposite manner, placing the welfare of others before ourselves. One's concern should be for the happiness and joy of others. This is the way of the Dharma. The reason we should consider others first is due to our understanding of their kindness and compassion in this or previous lives. They are to be treated as we would treat our own kind mother, and the fact is they have been our mothers in one (or more) of our former lives during our migration through samsara since beginningless time. These mother sentient beings have provided us with the best food, clothing and so on, and have shown us great affection, compassion and love in the same way as our present mothers. They took care of us when we were still helpless infants and educated us during our growing-up process – until we were fully-grown and big as a yak!

All these mother sentient beings have one interest in common – they want happiness and joy and do not welcome suffering and torment. Because of their intense ignorance, they do not know how to differentiate between what brings about happiness or suffering. With the hope of more happiness they end up creating more causes for suffering. This is indeed a discrepancy, that they receive negative effects while only wishing for positive ones. This is due to their intense ignorance as the saying goes: beings wish for every happiness but happiness keeps retreating and what comes forth is only suffering, as if happiness is their worst enemy.

There are, in fact, infinite numbers of sentient beings and to count them is an impossible task. The Buddha classified all of them into six categories based on the dimension of existence (or realm) in which they abide within this very samsara. Samsara is also commonly referred to as “vast as space” since it contains countless numbers of beings. These are the beings who have been our past mothers, not only once but countless times, as explained earlier. They are constantly engaged in suffering in samsara or in the process of creating more suffering for themselves and others. As practitioners of Buddha-Dharma, we need to have genuine concern for this confusion and we need to generate the wish and aspiration to alleviate all their suffering and its causes. That is what is known as compassion for all mother sentient beings.

What is suffering? It refers to the pain, frustrations, death, fear, uncomfortable feelings, etc. experienced by these beings. We, as Dharma practitioners have only one purpose, which is to be free from suffering and sorrow and to achieve everlasting happiness. The root cause for achieving this happiness is through meritorious or virtuous deeds that are free from the defilements of afflictive emotions. How do we feel the suffering of other beings? We should visualize them as being just the same as our own present mothers who have been reborn in the lower or higher realms within samsara where they will never be able to achieve everlasting happiness. By this means we will progressively be able to generate more virtue and strength. For example, if our present mother were trapped in a burning situation, we as her child would immediately try to rescue her without any hesitation. This is the natural loving-kindness and compassion within us, and in similar manner we should extend this to all mother sentient beings as long as they are not all free from suffering. We need to utilize all methods and knowledge known to us in order to assist and help free all mother sentient beings from their suffering. The only method to repay their kindness is by practicing the Dharma oneself. It is this motivation that all Yangzab-Dzogchen students need to generate for the sake of all mother sentient beings.

It is with this essential motivation that one should listen to the Dharma and after listening one should contemplate until all doubt is resolved and, hence, full confidence developed within. Once we've developed full confidence and faith in the Dharma, we should put all the teachings into practice and live by the Dharma experientially. Simply being knowledgeable in the Dharma is not sufficient. We need to blend our mind with the Dharma for it to take effect in developing our mind to its fullest. There are no differences between the Dharma and us. It is basically embodied within us, but due to our intense ignorance our minds rarely perceive these wonderful Dharma qualities. This is the real way to practice Dharma. It is senseless to only know the Dharma and not live by it. Embodying even a single aspect of the Dharma and practicing it routinely in our daily lives will eventually reap tremendous beneficial effects and pave the way for further virtue and deepening of Dharma development. Then slowly and steadily we develop the second, third, fourth aspects and so on until we are fully developed and ripened Dharma practitioners.

## IMPERMANENCE

*Now this precious life is subject to the enemy, the Maras of the Lord of Death. Since there is no certainty of the time of death, regard others and myself as impermanent.*

As we all already know, the main purpose for gathering here today is to receive the teachings of the Dam Chö Gonpa Yangzab (Holy Dharma of Profound Vision). The teachings will be transmitted gradually and will be followed by practices that will ripen a student's mind before receiving the next set of teachings. In the long run students will benefit most by gradual, concise teachings and hopefully will be able to master them completely by the end of the course. As you already know, the Yangzab preliminary consists of the Four Common and Four Uncommon Preliminaries. The first two common teachings (precious human life and impermanence) are meant to clear out the craving for this life, which we mistakenly believe to be true and real.

Having great craving and attachment to temporary happiness in this life is very destructive in terms of achieving true happiness. When a person is too attached, he will eventually become a slave to attachment and waste all of his time pursuing temporary happiness. As we already know, positive virtue is necessary for one to achieve happiness, but it is hindered by the strong afflictive emotion of attachment, which in turn creates more non-virtuous actions that sow the seeds of sorrow for this and future lives. There are many people who perform many negative actions in order to live comfortably and gain fame and wealth in this life. And these non-virtuous activities of the past will be the cause of their suffering in the future.

We can easily find examples of others who acted in this manner just to gain temporary happiness and during the process created more suffering to themselves as well as to others. Even though they are able to achieve temporary happiness it will not last very long. Their greed will be further rooted in their minds and very soon they will plunge into a state of misery as soon as all their good merit is depleted. Every sentient being in this samsara creates a certain amount of negative karma depending on individual capacity.

A robber or con man may achieve what he pursues but will eventually suffer, if not in this life surely in his next. These misfortunes are of one's own making and no other is to be blamed for the suffering one endures. Every sentient being deserves to be happy, but it is very destructive if one is so overly engrossed with attachment to this life and cares nothing for future lives. Let alone future lives, even in this present life one become miserable. Therefore, in the Yangzab preliminaries we concentrate in the first two sections on the elimination of attachment in this life. If this short-term happiness is used in a virtuous manner it will in turn generate more good merit that one will enjoy in present and future lives.

In human society there are certain basic requirements we must have in order to survive. These are items such as clothing, medicine, food, transportation, and so on. Even in the days of Buddha Shakyamuni, He allowed the monks to possess certain items that would enable them to survive. Similarly, monks and laypersons of today have basic requirements that will enable them to carry on with their lives and Dharma practices. To be detached from this life doesn't mean that we have nothing to sustain life. It refers to non-craving for such things. We need to be content and less desirous, and that is the most excellent wealth we could ever possess in this life. Exalted beings such as the Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and Arhats have seven kinds of wealth, and contentment is one of them. When there is contentment there is happiness, whereas when there is no contentment there is no end to desire. And when there is no end to desire, it is logical that suffering will not fail to follow, just as one's own shadow follows. There is no true satisfaction for one who has no contentment, even if he were to possess the whole world. He is still bound to suffer. But for a person who has contentment, even with the tiniest amount he has he will be full of joy.

As already explained, this precious human life is difficult to achieve, like achieving an almost impossible thing. But one should not forget that even this precious human life would one day die. Therefore it is necessary for one to constantly meditate and contemplate on impermanence. One should keep in mind that all compounded things are subject to impermanence. The tendency to believe that the world outside us is permanent prevails in all human beings, but the reality is that this world we live in is also a compounded item. This world is made up of many different parts and its essential nature is impermanent. Everything that we are able to see and feel is in the compounded items category, existing because of many causes and conditions. All these compounded items

come into existence in a gradual manner. The Buddhist does not believe in a creator.

Before the world comes into existence, there is a gap of 20 aeons (kalpas) where there is only empty space. Before this 20-aeon gap, a world system existed that was damaged and destroyed. After the period of empty space, there develops a wind element foundation that arises from the movement of space, and from the clashes of wind heat is produced. Together wind and heat cause condensation that gives rise to water element. From the heat (or fire element) that is generated matter hardens and develops into earth element; in this manner the earth gradually comes into existence. This is a result of the collective karma of each and every sentient being. Then follows the birth of sentient beings in this world and other world systems, according to their level of afflictive emotions and discursive thought. They thus take birth in different realms within this samsara from the highest plane of existence in the God realm to the lowest plane of existence in the Hell realm. Gradually, through the aeons, sentient beings decay in their moral and mental aspect and this shortens their life span to only ten years. Then comes a time when their virtuous actions increase, until they are able to live for 80 thousand years. This process continues for 18 cycles. After the 18 cycles, their life span increases to uncountable years, and then follows a decaying period during which their life span shortens again. This is the time when Buddha Mopha Thaye (Limitless Motivation) appears. All this happens in the duration of 20 intermediate aeons.

After the 20 intermediate aeons, destruction starts realm by realm from Hell upward to the peak of samsara, or the God realm, until only empty space prevails. There are various stages of concentration, i.e., 1<sup>st</sup> stage of concentration, 2<sup>nd</sup> stage, 3<sup>rd</sup> and so forth. During this time seven suns will appear and shine forth burning rays of destruction. All compounded matter will be burnt down into a heap of ash. This happens in the form and formless realms. All the beings that abide beyond the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of concentration will disappear, only beings in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of concentration remain. Then rainfalls during the 2<sup>nd</sup> stage of concentration and washes off all the ashes, followed by a huge hurricane that blows off all the remaining ashes until empty space prevails.

There will be a period of 20 intermediate aeons when there is only empty space. In summary, there are altogether 80 intermediate aeons, 20 aeons each for the world to develop, remain, be destroyed and become void or empty space.

Together it makes one great eon of world system. From this illustration, we can conclude that all compounded things or phenomena are subject to impermanence. The aim of explaining this nature of world system is to provide a clearer picture of the nature of impermanence that may aid in our practice on this subject. This may differ from how other traditions or religions view all phenomena.

We normally take the notion of real and permanently existing things for granted. This is indeed a great mistake, which we should abandon. The explanation of how the world develops and is destroyed is not meant to scare or dishearten the student, but is expounded in order for us to understand the true nature of the impermanence of the world.

There are other Buddhist scriptures that have different views pertaining to the end of the world. Some scholars hold the view that during the destruction of the world only Bodhgaya would remain as it is the center of the world. Bodhgaya is situated at the center of the Vajra (the universe, in this case) and forms the base for the wind element. There are many great, wealthy, intelligent and courageous beings living in this world but as soon as the end of the world arrives, they will all cease to exist. Not only ordinary sentient beings in the six realms, even Buddhas and Bodhisattvas will appear then disappear from this world and reside only in their Purelands.

As we all know very well, even enlightened beings like the Lord of Refuge, Buddha Shakyamuni, are not above the law of impermanence as their bodies are made from compounded things. These are all reflections on the impermanent nature of all living beings. The difference between enlightened and samsaric beings is that the former are no longer in the bondage of cyclic existence but are constantly in a state of bliss and no longer governed by the law of karma.

It is impossible to find even one living being who can live forever, from the day the world began until today. The rarity of seeing a person who lived more than a hundred years is already a fact. Even to live a hundred years will be of no help if one does not live according to the Dharma. Simply take, for example, our own family members and forefathers to see how many have passed away. The time of death is uncertain but sooner or later it will be our turn. There are many possibilities and opportunities for death to arrive at our doorstep—it comes

without warning. A wise person may prepare for the moment of death from a very young age by meditating on impermanence.

All of us know very well that death will arrive but none of us accepts this fact. Let us remind ourselves that the future is beyond our comprehension and there are many possibilities of being killed. It may suddenly happen in a freak accident, from chronic illnesses or those of old age, in fights, or situations of conflict and so forth. While a person who is prepared for death does not fear dying, there are some who have such intense fear that they wouldn't even want to mention the word death. There are those who don't even dare to meditate on impermanence because of their fear of death, but the truth is we are not able to avoid death. If we keep on trying to avoid it, when the moment arrives we will have the greatest fear of our life and will be too late to react to it. Our only recourse at the time of death is to be prepared for it by meditating on impermanence.

If we have great fear in our mind at the time of death, no being can help even if we call upon God, other heavenly beings or even our own parents in seeking some kind of miracle. The only help available is one's own Dharma skills, which can only be acquired when one is still breathing. Meditation upon impermanence is the only skill one can equip oneself with at the time of death. Another example is that when we are well armored for battle we will develop full confidence to fight a winning battle. But if we are not armored at all then we can be sure that death will prevail at any time.

It is very important to permeate our minds with Dharma practice. During the time of death our consciousness will be separated from our body. This is the time when the physical body becomes worn out or exhausted after many years of continuous usage. The mind will leave the body, bringing with it all its knowledge on both worldly and spiritual levels. When a person is spiritually well trained, then this is the best possible moment for us to utilize all the training we have been through experientially to find our direction or to be reborn in the Buddha's Pureland.

Due to laziness, we leave spiritual practice to be done at the very last moment or when we find the time. It is like a kind of non-essential that can be done last. But make sure we are well prepared when it is needed experientially. It is important

to practice meditation on impermanence constantly, so that we are so well acquainted with it that it can be utilized at any moment, whenever death strikes. Meditation will help a practitioner rid himself of fear and on top of that give him the motivation and encouragement to progress into higher learning speedily. There are persons who claim to be fearless, but in reality there is hardly anyone who is not afraid of death. The only thing one can rely upon at that time is the Dharma. In other words, Dharma is to be practiced immediately and not at the last moment.

For a good practitioner, taking rebirth is like shifting from one room to the next. They face no obstacles and terrors in the Bardo (intermediate stage between death and rebirth) process, or very few. If one is an excellent practitioner, it will be effortless for him to be reborn in the Buddha's Pureland. In the Dharma scriptures, it is said that the body is like a room in a guesthouse and the mind is like the guest—very soon the guest will vacate the room, leaving it empty. In a similar way, our mind resides in this body but as soon as the body is exhausted it will re-enter another body. Since this body is like a guesthouse, we should not develop strong attachment to the body or to materialistic things in this world. An effective Dharma practitioner has no craving for this life. In short, all Dharma practitioners should contemplate and meditate on precious human life and impermanence in its minute details and develop a strong sense of renunciation of worldly concerns. Every present event becomes the past every second of the day and the future has yet to arrive, nothing remains still even for a moment. Like the summer changing to autumn, winter and spring, the cycle of change is endless and no one can do anything about it. The things we thought about yesterday are already a memory, and very soon this memory will fade and we will not be able to recall it again. What we are thinking at this present moment will suffer similar consequences of fading away. Our family members are like delegations who attend meetings for a certain duration of time before they disintegrate. Even the memories of loved ones will fade eventually when we take a new rebirth. We must realize that nothing this world offers is permanent. Accepting impermanence is like facing reality head on and not turning away from it. We should not force ourselves to accept reality; but through proper understanding of this reality we should be able to accept it as fact. We shouldn't turn something impermanent into something permanent. Being Dharma practitioners, we should live with the facts of reality and not go against the nature of phenomena.

Some even think that meditation on impermanence will shorten one's life. But the truth is one will be able to transcend all fears, alleviate all sufferings and

accumulate a great deal of merit in the course of practicing and understanding impermanence as a way of life.

### Faults of the Cyclic Existence - SAMSARA

*Wherever we take rebirth is within samsara, where there is no chance for peace. Therefore, don't turn to samsara for happiness. Enter the path of Enlightenment.*

The small doses of happiness we get from this samsara are very brief and eventually will turn into suffering. Generally the conditions in any realm within samsara give no freedom from suffering. Samsara is called *Khor-wa* in Tibetan, which literally means Cycle. There is no beginning and neither is there an end to this Cycle of Samsara. We sentient beings keep on migrating in samsara, unable to find a way out from the cycle. In this life we are fortunate to be born as human beings. This doesn't mean that we were human in our past lives—we could have migrated from any of the lower or higher realms. Similarly, depending on our positive and negative karmas, we could be reborn in any lower or higher realm within samsara.

### Hell Realm

Teachings found in the Buddhist scriptures say that when beings are born in samsara, they are bound to suffer. For example, when we stay in a house full of filth and excrement, there is not a single moment we can smell anything good. In one level of the Hell realm, beings suffer from constant burning in the hell fire. We could read from the Buddhist scriptures that there are 18 levels of hell: eight cold hells, eight hot hells and two intermediate neighboring hells. They suffer **constantly**, depending on the level of hell they are in.

### Hungry Ghost Realm

As for beings in the Hungry Ghost (preta) realm, they suffer from constant hunger and thirst. Let alone finding something to eat, even the word food or water is almost unheard of.

## **Animal Realm**

In the animal realm, they suffer from stupidity and constant fear of being eaten by large animals, and the smaller ones make nests in the larger animals and kill them slowly by consuming them bit-by-bit.

## **Human Realm**

Human beings suffer from birth, old age, sickness and death. They also suffer from the frustration of not getting what they wish for but receive the opposite, which is suffering. Humans have the suffering of physical and mental pain, and all-pervasive suffering. As for old people, they suffer so much from old age and sickness. Their exhausted bodies become a foundation for ailments, they cannot taste, see or hear, and they become so miserable that they prefer to die rather than continue to live.

Humans suffer from the day they are conceived. The consciousness enters the mother's womb and becomes trapped between the seed of mother and father. The experience is like being trapped in an enclosure of foul and filthy substances. In a slow process the fetus develops sense organs and is able to feel sensations. During times when the mother does not eat, the fetus feels as if it has been thrown into a bottomless abyss. And when the mother eats too much, the fetus feels squeezed between two rocks. The fetus is extraordinarily sensitive to sensations of heat and cold. It feels extremely hot when the mother consumes something hot, and extremely cold when she consumes something cold. Human suffering continues immediately after leaving the womb. When a baby is being born, it feels as if it is being pulled out from a tiny pipe. When the baby is washed and cleaned for the first time, it feels as much pain as if its skin were being peeled off.

When we are healthy we look great but as soon as we are sick we feel low down and weak, and need assistance even to take our medicine. It is like a bird that falls to the ground helplessly after being hit by a stone. We sometimes get the fear of death when we are ill and worry that our sickness might kill us. When the time of death comes, we have to leave all our possessions and loved ones behind against our will. There is absolutely nothing we can do about it and not even a needle we could bring along, let alone this beloved body, which we have cherished throughout our life. The horrors and fears at the time of dying are so immense that one is not able to explain or describe them.

## Demi-God Realm

The demi-gods suffer from losing combats with the long-life gods. The reason they engage in combat proceeds from jealousy because the roots of the wish-fulfilling tree grow in their realm but its trunks, branches and leaves sprout into the god realm—so the gods enjoy the fruits from the tree. The physical qualities of demi-gods and human beings are quite similar as both are able to suffer pain and be killed in combats. The demi-god does not have the ability to kill the gods; even if gods are wounded they can be healed immediately as they have special healing nectar. Once battle is engaged, the gods will kill off all the demi-gods until the ocean becomes tainted red with blood. The gods have no anger, but in order to engage in battle they purposely drink from a spring that will make them angry enough to fight. On top of that the gods feed the elephants with this spring water and armor the elephants with lethal weapons then send them to destroy and kill the demi-gods. This is the suffering endured by the demi-gods.

## God Realm

The long-life gods suffer from falling into the lower realms after death. They are so very absorbed in their worldly happiness because of their former good merit. For this reason they do not know what is virtue and non-virtue, and do not have the sense to practice the Dharma. Before death approaches, they are able to perceive the lower realm that they will be reborn in and this causes them great fear. There are a few other signs that surface such as sweating, foul clothes, uneasiness, etc., and during this moment they have no peace of mind and do not feel like resting on their comfortable thrones as they used to when death was still at a distance. With these signs, they feel shock and fear for their life. Their friends throw flowers and keep a distance from them. They recite prayers for the ailing god so that he or she may be reborn in the human realm and accumulate a great deal of merit to be reborn in the god realm again. These gods have clairvoyant powers to see their future rebirths and normally, having consumed all their good merit, will be reborn in the hell realm. They feel unhappy and full of fear for a duration of seven days, which in the god realm is equivalent to 700 human years.

Therefore we should not have too high an expectation of achieving happiness within samsara. There might be some form of happiness such as that experienced by the long-life gods, but it is not going to last as it is not the ultimate happiness. We should not be confused by the slight happiness found in samsara and believe that it is ultimate; in reality it is only temporary and will fade as soon as our good merit is consumed. Therefore, whatever sentient beings experience in

samsara is not free from causes and conditions and is subject to the law of karma. It is too transient and impermanent, like morning dewdrops on the leaves. Rather than being attached to these worldly concerns, we should sacrifice it and enter on the path of the ultimate enlightenment.

### Cause and Effect of KARMA

*Use this life of leisure and endowment meaningfully. Abandon afflictive emotions, the three poisons (attachment, anger and ignorance) and non-virtue. Increase efforts toward virtuous activities. Protect the three doors (body, speech & mind) by keeping the samaya vows (Vinaya, Bodhisattva and Tantric).*

If we want to live our precious human life meaningfully, we should abandon the three root poisons (attachment, anger and ignorance). When we are in the bond of these poisons, whatever we think and do will be non-virtuous or negative and result in suffering. There are many different kinds of afflictive emotions and all these arise from the three root poisons that generate negative karma. If a person generates negative karma from the afflictive emotion of aversion or hatred, the person will be reborn in the hell realm. If it is out of lust or craving, then the person will be reborn in the hungry ghost realm and if it is out of ignorance, he will be reborn in the animal realm.

The opposites of the three root poisons are detachment, calmness and wisdom. It takes great effort to subdue the three poisons by application of these three antidotes. The purpose of abiding by the law of karma is to get rid of the poisons of afflictive emotions. When a person is able to practice detachment, calmness and wisdom, he is said to be abiding by the law of karma. Every precious human body is comprised of the three doors—body, speech and mind. And it is important to guard each one of these doors in order to protect the samaya vows, as well as not to indulge in non-virtuous activity. Taking and guarding these samaya vows is of the utmost importance in any kind of Buddhist practice and in order to practice the law of karma one should guard the vows even at the risk of one's life.

There are basically three kinds of samaya vows, namely, Vinaya or Monastic vows, Bodhisattva vows and Tantric or Vajrayana vows. In the Vinaya system,

there are seven categories of vows, depending on the individual practitioner. They serve as a foundation for Bodhisattva and Vajrayana vows. Among the seven Vinaya vows, there are certain precepts specially designed for laypersons (upasaka and upasika). The vows for individual practitioners are essentially based on renunciation, to free oneself from the cycle of samsara.

**The Seven Vinaya vows** are categorized as follows;

1. Upasaka vows (male lay-practitioner – includes taking Refuge)
2. Upasika vows (female lay-practitioner – includes taking Refuge)
3. Novice monk vows
4. Novice nun vows
5. Fully ordained monk (Gelong) vows
6. Gelubma vows (for nuns prior to ordination)
7. Fully ordained nun vows

The four kinds of lay-practitioners with vows are as follows;

- a. Those with only one precept
- b. Those with few precepts
- c. Those with most of the precepts
- d. Those with all the precepts.

### **Bodhisattva vows**

The vow of no harming starts from the fundamental level to benefit all sentient beings. The Bodhisattva vows are classified into Relative and Ultimate Bodhicitta. Relative Bodhicitta is again classified into Aspiration and Action Bodhicitta. The precepts of Aspiration Bodhicitta are to train the mind in the Four Immeasurables (love, compassion, joy & equanimity) and Action Bodhicitta is to train oneself in the Six Paramitas (generosity, morality, patience, enthusiastic effort, meditation & wisdom).

## Vajrayana vows

These are the vows we receive after an initiation of a certain deity. Their essence is to train our mind in pure or sacred visions. There are several categories of samaya, summarized as three, namely, samaya of the body, speech and mind of the disciple and Vajra master. All these three samayas are in good harmony and interconnected with each other and will progressively increase in quality.

### REFUGE in Three Roots & Triple Gem

We will now start with the Four Uncommon Preliminary foundation teachings.

This is the sphere of visualization of the refuge tree.

*In front of me is the wish-fulfilling tree. Above that is a lion throne with a lotus and moon disc seat, upon which sits Guru Rinpoche, clear, illuminated, wearing the ornaments and costumes. In front of Guru Rinpoche is the Yidam Hayagriva. On the right is Buddha Shakyamuni. Behind are the Holy Dharma texts. On the left are the Bodhisattvas, the Lords of the Three Families. Above and in all directions are the lineage disciples. In front of the throne are the Dharma Protectors, Oath-bound Protectors, Treasure Owners and their retinues, filling the sky like clouds raining down.*

The difference between a Buddhist and Non-Buddhist is in taking refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. In Tibetan, refuge is called *Kyab-do*, which literally means seeking or going for refuge or protection. We go for refuge after observing the many kinds of suffering in samsara. The best motivation in taking refuge is to have faith and devotion in oneself toward the objects of refuge.

There are three kinds of faith and these normally refer to faith based on unmistakable confidence. They are clear faith, longing faith and trusting faith.

Clear faith refers to the faith one experiences upon seeing the statue of the Buddha or upon hearing chants that cause one to develop a certain calmness that motivates one to either bow down in reverence or listen to the teachings. It is like some sort of clarity and openness blooming within oneself.

Longing faith is developed after observing the good qualities of the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha that encourage one to follow their path in order to embody them and become a Buddha.

Trusting faith is to have adamantine faith and confidence in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. It is also called irreversible faith that will never change and this is the most excellent of all three faiths. It is said if one has trusting faith, he or she can receive all the blessings and achieve all one wishes if one has no doubts.

Before one takes refuge, one needs to develop firm and concrete faith and confidence in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. There are many great benefits in having this kind of faith and this true story illustrates this kind of faith, well-known all over Tibet. It is about an old lady who took the tooth of a dog as that of the Buddha. With great faith and devotion she prayed and supplicated the tooth as the representation of the Buddha and finally she attained enlightenment.

### **The old lady and the tooth of a dog**

This happened in Tibet and the old lady had great faith and devotion to the Buddha. She had a son who was a businessman that traveled to India very often. Every time the son traveled to India she requested that he bring back some object or relic belonging to Buddha Shakyamuni so that she could make it an object of devotion for offerings, prayer and supplication. On many occasions the son forgot to bring back the items his mother requested. Finally she threatened to commit suicide if he forgot one more time to bring back an object belonging to the Buddha.

Soon after that, the son again traveled to India on a business trip and realized when nearing home that once more he had forgotten. He was so distressed that he started to look around to find some replacement. Nearby were the skeletal remains of a dog, so he dismembered one of its teeth—which are quite similar to those of humans—and substituted it for the tooth of the Buddha. He presented it to his mother who immediately developed great joy and devotion upon seeing it. Believing it to be real, she then placed it on her altar and made daily offerings and prayers. After some period of making offerings and prayers with great devotion, the tooth began to radiate light and produce relics. And the day when the old lady died, the whole area and its surroundings were filled with rainbows.

It was this faith and devotion that transformed the tooth of a dog into that of the Buddha.

### **The talking Buddha Shakyamuni statue**

There is another inspiring story of devotion about a man named Ben from the region of Kongpo in Tibet. He was a very naïve man who did not have much knowledge or intelligence. Even though he had little knowledge or intelligence, he had unshakeable devotion, faith and confidence in the Buddha Shakyamuni statue (Tib: *Jowo*) in Lhasa. The faith he had was so strong that he truly believed the statue was really Buddha himself. One day he decided to visit this statue and upon arrival proceeded to circumambulate the holy temple. After a few circumambulations, he felt hungry so went inside. On the altar of the *Jowo* statue he saw some torma offerings and butter lamps. He cut off a piece of torma, soaked it in the butter lamp to moisten it, and then ate it. While eating, he looked up to the *Jowo* statue and saw the statue smiling at him. Upon seeing the smiling statue, his faith and devotion grew stronger. He then said to the statue, "You are a great lama but how come you still smile even though I eat your offerings? You are indeed a very kind lama." On top of that he removed his shoes in the temple hall where it is not permitted. When the temple caretaker monk saw him eat the offerings and leave his shoes in the temple, he immediately admonished him and went to kick him out of the temple. At that moment the commotion was interrupted when the statue spoke these words to the caretaker monk, "Do not kick him out, he is a person with true devotion and faith." Kongpo Ben then replied to the miraculous speaking statue of Buddha Shakyamuni; "I invite you to come to my house for a feast; I have a pig and some barley that I will prepare with wine. Rest assured that it would be a good meal." Kongpo Ben was a poor peasant but he offered the best food when inviting the Buddha to his house and the Buddha accepted his invitation.

He went happily home to prepare the food and wine for the Buddha and sent his wife outside to await his arrival. They waited a few days and one day when his wife was fetching water from the river, she saw the Buddha in the water. She ran quickly home to inform Ben that there was someone in the water, maybe the guest he was waiting for. Ben immediately ran to the riverbank and saw Buddha Shakyamuni sinking in the river. Without hesitation he jumped in to rescue the Buddha. After rescuing the Buddha, Ben invited him to his house for the meal. The Buddha then replied, "I have to need to go into your house; just being here is the same as entering and feasting in your house." After saying those words, the

Buddha transformed into a huge boulder that resembles the Buddha Shakyamuni and can still be seen today. The place still exists today and the river water is known as Jowo or Shakyamuni Water and the boulder as Shakyamuni Boulder.

By the power of devotion, faith and confidence we can receive all blessings, as in the case of the old lady and Kongpo Ben. It is important that all students develop this unwavering faith in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. It all depends on the level of faith one has: we will receive little if we have little faith, similarly middling blessings for the medium level and the most excellent blessings for the highest level of faith. If one has no faith at all, then no blessings will be transmitted.

In the Yangzab practice, the object of refuge has to be visualized as per the text. After having visualized the refuge tree, we need to perform prostrations with our body, recite the prayers with our speech and develop unwavering devotion and faith in our mind.

### **Refuge prayers**

*NAMO, I and all sentient beings, as vast as space,  
from now until we attain Supreme Enlightenment.  
We go for refuge in all the blessings bestowed by the Lama.  
We go for refuge in the Yidam that bestows Excellent Siddhis.  
We go for refuge in the Dakinis, which dispels all obstacles.  
We go for refuge in the Buddha, Lord of all beings.  
We go for refuge in the Holy Dharma, to become free of attachment and to  
become peaceful.  
We go for refuge in the excellent field of the gathering of the Sanghas.  
We go for refuge in the activities of the Lord Dharma Protectors.*

One recites the above after having visualized the field of refuge. We can read in whom we are taking refuge—which is for the sake of all mother sentient beings.

For how long does one take refuge? From today until we achieve enlightenment. We must physically prostrate, verbally recite the prayers and mentally generate faith and devotion towards the field of refuge.

Prostration should be done in this fashion:

- stand upright on both legs, back straight like an arrow and hands clasped together at the level of the heart;
- the palms should be expanded like the bud of a lotus with fingers touching each other except the middle fingers, which remain slightly apart;
- maintain the lotus bud shape and raise the clasped hands to the crown of the head with fingers pointing upwards;
- lower them to the throat level;
- then to the heart level;
- kneel down to the ground;
- move the hands forward to lie flat on the ground with forehead, both palms and knees touching the ground in the “five-point prostration.”

The visualization during the prostrations is as follows:

1. When we place both our palms above the crown, we should visualize paying homage and taking refuge in the body of the Three Roots, which clears away all defilements of our body. Three Roots means the Lama, Yidam and Dakini.
2. When we place both our palms at the throat level, we should visualize paying homage and taking refuge in the speech of the Three Roots, which clears away all defilements of our speech.
3. When we place both our palms at the heart level, we should visualize paying homage and taking refuge in the mind of the Three Roots, which clears away all defilements of our mind.
4. When on the ground during the five-point prostration, we should visualize suppressing the five afflictive emotions (ignorance, anger, attachment, pride and jealousy). With legs stretched out to the rear, slightly apart, we visualize closing the doors of the six realms of samsara,

and with the hands stretched forward and slightly apart we visualize opening the doors to nirvana.

Through this activity we accumulate the numbers for refuge, and in the Yangzab tradition it is common to perform refuge 400,000 times. Counting is based on the number of repetitions of the prayer, not on the number of prostrations, although one may do more prostrations than prayers. According to tradition, it is common to complete refuge before one proceeds to the Vajrasattva and other practices. But this is not necessary in the progressive study courses we have planned, as we could perform all four Uncommon Preliminaries concurrently and not stress the number of accumulations. Rinpoche says that numbers are less important than motivation, faith, devotion and confidence, which are of the utmost importance and one should perform these practices as many times as possible before the next teachings in 2002. If some students could not find time or do not have the interest to practice, Rinpoche states that there are no obligations attached. It is like requesting from someone something they do not have, or like asking someone dead to wake up. Therefore, quality of motivation is more important than quantity, numbers being traditional and secondary to the practice. If the teaching and practice become part of our daily life, then it will serve its purpose of achieving good results and that is what all students should seek to achieve.

The entire plan for the Yangzab study group is to go through all the subjects and practices in a few years' time. In the first year students will receive the preliminary teachings and empowerment of the Three Roots. The second year is associated with the elaborated empowerments from the Yangzab collection of meditation and pith instructions, direct from master to disciple. In this progressive manner, the student will have the opportunity to complete the Yangzab studies in a few years. If the traditional system is applied, then it will take a student many years to complete the Yangzab studies and practices. For example, if a student needed to dress up, he or she would require the essentials such as shirt, pants, skirts, socks, etc., no matter what quality they were. Similarly, in the Yangzab we are taught all the essentials so we can grasp the Yangzab teachings in a short duration of time.

In the practice of refuge, it is important to integrate the doors of body, speech and mind and become one-pointed in the practice of Dharma. The merit generated is immeasurable if the refuge is performed in a one-pointed manner. The primary importance is faith, devotion and confidence in the objects of

refuge. Without these qualities no matter how many recitations or prostrations one performs, it will not mean anything other than hurting and tiring oneself. Therefore, development of one's mind comes before accumulation of numbers. In the practice of refuge, the student wholeheartedly offers his body, speech and mind in the service of the Three Roots. The action of prostration is the student's physical acknowledgment of his feeling by demonstrating it before the objects of refuge. Refuge is the basis or foundation of all sutra and tantra practices.

### Bodhicitta - The Four Immeasurables

*May all sentient beings be free from suffering.  
May they experience perfect joy and happiness.  
May they all have equanimity, the Supreme Mind.  
I generate the mind of Enlightenment.*

Supplementary to the refuge practice, the students need to train themselves in the field of developing Bodhicitta, the altruistic mind of enlightenment. The manner of practice is the training in the Four Immeasurables (compassion, love, joy and equanimity).

The compassion factor is contained in the first line, wishing all sentient beings to be free from suffering and the causes of suffering. The second line is the development of loving-kindness toward all sentient beings, wishing them to have unconditional happiness. This is followed by joy and delight in the action of wishing all sentient beings to be free from suffering and rejoicing in the happiness of others. Non-discrimination is the practice of equanimity, in which one's mind is free from attachment and aversion. We develop equal love and compassion for all sentient beings.

We should develop this love and compassion in the same way that a bird attends to its newborn chicks. Affection and concern is undiminished but grows stronger and stronger, and this we channel to all sentient beings. Another example is a mother with no hands giving birth to a baby. Just imagine the desperation of this mother in her feat of feeding, caring for and defending the baby. This is the feeling students should develop in the field of love and compassion for all. The

practice of joy is similar to how camels—which have very strong affection for their young—express great joy upon finding any of their offspring that may have been lost. For the practice of equanimity one should be like the Rishis in India distributing food equally to all those present. The same kind of food is offered to beggars and everyone alike, without discrimination or regard as to differences of caste, position, standards or lifestyle.

### **Aspiration and Action Bodhicitta**

*For the benefit of myself and all beings in the six realms,  
I will achieve Buddha's enlightenment in this life.  
I will make the great effort to follow the path  
of the indestructible clear light essence, which is the supreme Dharma.*

After having trained our mind in the Four Immeasurables, next comes the practice of Aspiration and Action Bodhicitta. Aspiration means the strong wish and determination to work for the welfare of all sentient beings. The first two lines are related to Aspiration Bodhicitta and the next two lines are connected to Action Bodhicitta. After generating great aspiration, the student must embark on the path of making it a reality by performing as he aspires. The “indestructible clear light essence” is specially related to the Yangzab Dzogchen teachings we are receiving.

It is not necessary to count the numbers of prayers that we recite on the Four Immeasurables or Aspiration and Action Bodhicitta. They serve as a reminder and means for the student to contemplate and practice every time we say them.

## VAJRASATTVA - Purification of Defilements and Karmas

*From emptiness arises Vajrasattva in the complete Sambhogakaya form, holding a Vajra and Bell, and seated on a lotus and moon seat disc. In his heart is Padmasambhava with the essence of Vajradhara. At Padmasambhava's heart level is a moon disc seat with the syllable HUNG in its centre and the mantra (Om Vajra Sattwa Ah) circling around it. While reciting the mantra, visualize that my body becomes filled with nectar and is purified. See all outer and inner appearances as Vajrasattva radiating light, and recite the mantra to purify all sentient beings of obstacles.*

The practice of Vajrasattva is necessary to get rid of all eventualities, circumstances and obstacles that are destructive to our Dharma practice. The process of visualization is as outlined above. In the generation stage of the practice, we should visualize ourselves as the deity Vajrasattva. The purpose of this visualization method is to rid ourselves of thinking that the body is ordinary and to relate our body, speech and mind directly to the divine nature of the deity.

Our Buddha nature is temporarily covered by the defilements of afflictive emotions and this practice will clear away these defilements or negative karma. Negative karma does not possess good qualities and Vajrasattva practice is a means to purify. It is necessary to incorporate the Four Powers during this practice of purification. The Four Powers are remorse, resolve, antidote and reliance. A student should feel remorse for all negative actions and thoughts accumulated since beginningless time. Without this sense of remorse or regret, the practice will not help the student. The sense of regret is similar to that of drinking poison.

The second power is to make the conviction and resolve not to repeat in the future any actions that lead to negative karma. Without this power of resolve, negative karma cannot be fully purified. With these two powers, all negative karma can be purified. There are many inspirational stories related to these two powers and the story of Angulimala ("Garland of Fingers") is one of them.

### The story of Angulimala

Angulimala was a person who killed many people during the time of the Buddha—until one day he came face to face with the Buddha, who pacified him. Angulimala thus generated great remorse and resolve never to perform negative karma again. He took refuge under the Buddha and finally attained the state of Arhat-hood. Angulimala was misguided by his guru and promised to kill one hundred people, retrieve the fingers of each victim and present them to the guru. Lord Buddha was supposed to be the last victim after he had killed 99 others and that was the moment he was tamed by the Buddha himself. He attempted to kill the Buddha but was unable to do so and in return the Buddha turned his mind to the Dharma. He confessed all the negative actions he had committed and promised not to commit them again.

Simply being remorseful and resolute will not help the student much. It is undoubtedly true that all those defilements that cause negative karma bring about sorrow and suffering. What exactly is defilement? Basically it is whatever defiles Buddha nature and prevents it from arising. Buddha nature is explained in different words and meanings in different religions and traditions. All sentient beings possess this Buddha nature and there is no superiority of any Buddha nature. Defilements obscure this nature and make us ordinary sentient beings with no special qualities. There are different kinds of defilements such as those of negative karma and those of afflictive emotions. The first are due to the failure to understand the laws of karma so that we go on producing more negative or non-virtuous karma. In other words, they are commonly known as karmic defilements.

The second, the defilements of afflictive emotions, are related to the labels and names we give to a subject and object we perceive or know. Out of ignorance we label them and thus drown ourselves in a state of confusion. The third is the defilement of knowledge, known as congenital or co-emergent ignorance, which is the fundamental basis of all confusion. It is so subtle that it is difficult to perceive, like a dirty mirror that does not reflect images clearly. This is the reason why we cannot perceive Buddha nature even though we possess it all the while.

In Dzogchen literature, Buddha nature is called Essential Nature, the Mandala of Compassion and the Spontaneously Arising Three Kayas. The three kayas are already primordial Buddha nature, the quality of which is always there and

cannot be contaminated. But this nature cannot be revealed if there are defilements. The purpose of Dharma practice is to purify all defilements and non-virtuous karma in order for Buddha nature to shine forth. That is why we purify it through the practice of Vajrasattva and in fact all Buddhist practices are intended to purify these defilements and negative karmas.

When you are reciting and counting the short Vajrasattva mantra, OM VAJRA SATTVA AH (*Note: mistake during the talk and in recording where Rinpoche said the mantra ends with HUNG when it should be AH – after reconfirming with the original Yangzab practice text*). According to tradition, either this short mantra should be recited for a total of 1.6 million times, or the long form of mantra should be recited 400 thousand times. As earlier explained by Rinpoche, the number is insignificant but the quality of the recitation is most important.

### MANDALA Offering for Amassing Merit

*Meditate that I become Vajrasattva.*

*In front of me is the wish-fulfilling tree. Above that is a lion throne with a lotus and moon disc seat, upon which sits Guru Rinpoche, clear, illuminated, wearing the ornaments and costumes. In front of Guru Rinpoche is the Yidam Hayagriva. On the right is Buddha Shakyamuni. Behind (Guru Rinpoche's throne) are the holy Dharma texts. On the left are the (Sanghas) Bodhisattvas, the Lords of the Three Families (Manjushri, Vajrapani and Chenrezig). Above and in all directions are the lineage disciples. In front of the throne are the Dharma Protectors, Oath-bound Protectors, Treasure Owners and their retinues, filling the sky like clouds raining down.*

The next Uncommon Preliminary practice is the Mandala offering. We start with generating the similar refuge field of the Three Roots and Triple Gem to whom we will be making this mandala offering. The students have to visualize themselves in the form of Vajrasattva, with the clear and illuminating field of refuge in front of them.

## Long Mandala Offering

After visualizing this, the student proceeds with the long mandala offering. Purification of all offering substances begins with the recitation of the long Vajrasattva mantra once.

*Om Bazra Bhumi Ah Hung/ The base is the completely pure golden ground.*

*Om Bazra Rekhe Ah Hung/ A wall of iron mountains forms a circle.*

- (1). *At the centre stands Mount Meru, the king mountain,*
- (2). *To the east is Superior Body*
- (3). *To the south is Dzambudvipa,*
- (4). *To the west is Wish-granting Cow,*
- (5). *To the north is Unpleasant Sound,*
- (6&7). *To the SE is the Body and to the NE is Superior Body,*
- (8&9). *To the SW is the Tail; to the SE is the Other Tail,*
- (10&11) *to the NW is Possessing Movement; to the SW is Walk in the Supreme Path,*
- (12&13) *to the NE is Unpleasant Sound; to the NW is Parallel Unpleasant Sound,*
- (14) *The precious mountain of jewels,*
- (15) *The wish-fulfilling tree,*
- (16) *The holy cow that grants wishes,*
- (17) *The grain that needs no toil,*
- (18) *Precious wheel,*
- (19) *Precious jewel,*
- (20) *Precious queen,*
- (21) *Precious minister,*
- (22) *Precious elephant,*
- (23) *Precious steed,*
- (24) *Precious general,*
- (25) *A vase of many treasures,*
- (26) *The graceful Goddess,*
- (27) *The Goddess of garland,*
- (28) *The Goddess of song,*

- (29) *The Goddess of dance,*
- (30) *The Goddess of flowers,*
- (31) *The Goddess with incense,*
- (32) *The Goddess of radiant light,*
- (33) *The Goddess with fragrant water,*
- (34) *The Sun,*
- (35) *The Moon,*
- (36) *The precious parasol,*
- (37) *The victory banner triumphant in every direction.*

Students exercising this practice should have their own set of mandala offering plates and rings. The best kinds of offerings are precious metals and stones such as gold, silver, diamond, ruby and so forth. Medicinal herbs could represent the offerings. Flowers, grains and so forth and all the offering substances should be clean and pure. Normally when we make the offering, we fix our hands in the mandala offering mudra, representing the five continents and all its wealth. But in this practice the student will use mandala plate, rings and precious materials. Basically, the principle is to offer all we possess and as well as that the whole universe with all its wealth to the object of refuge for the accumulation of great merit.

The 37 heaps offering is the elaborated form, which the student will arrange according to the recitation. Simply follow the diagram illustrating the heaps and rings and end with the following stanzas to complete the 37 Mandala offerings, then place it on the altar.

*To the Precious Nirmanakaya and their retinues within the joyous three thousand Nirmanakaya Purelands, please accept these one hundred million beautifully arranged material offerings. To the Precious Sambhogakaya and their retinues within the beautifully ornamented Purelands please accept this offering of the self-manifested Sambhogakaya Mandala whose nature is the inseparable Five*

*Wisdoms. To the Precious Dharmakaya and their retinues, please accept this Dharmakaya offering Mandala, whose unborn nature is that of boundless space, intrinsic awareness and emptiness, from which arises samsara and nirvana, ornamented with uncontrived wisdom. To the Lamas who possess the three kayas, I offer the outer, inner and secret offerings with my body, wealth and all that is visible. Please grant me the supreme realization – enlightenment.*

In the Yangzab practice, it is necessary to collaborate and discuss with other students from this and other centers in order to perform the same practice style and tune. Then comes a time when the students can easily participate in any center one visits.

The Mandala offering is one skillful method to amass merit in the spiritual development of students. Merit is necessary and conducive to the path of attaining Buddhahood and without merit and wisdom, there will be no Siddhis or attainment. Accumulation of merit and wisdom will transform the student's body to that of the Buddha's, which has two form bodies of Nirmanakaya (manifest body) and Sambhogakaya (enjoyment body). Nirmanakaya is the result of the accumulation of merit and Sambhogakaya is the result of wisdom. Tilopa advised Naropa as follows, "Until you attain the ultimate liberation, never separate the two wheels of merit and wisdom". These two wheels are similar to the wheels of a chariot and without either one of them the chariot will not move.

### **Short Mandala Offering**

Then follow with the short 7-point Mandala offering for numbers accumulation as follows:

*By virtue of offering to you, assembly of Buddhas visualized before me.*

*This Mandala built on a base, resplendent with flowers, saffron water and incense*

*Adorned with Mount Meru and the four continents as well as the sun and moon*

*May all share in its good effects. (Do as many accumulations as possible)*

*OM GURU DEWA DAKINI RATNA MANDALA PRATITSA SWAHA*

According to the tradition, 400 thousand accumulations are necessary. As Rinpoche already explained, the quality of practice is more important than numbers and the student should strive for as many times as possible. In this practice, the student has to do three things at the same time, like physically arranging the Mandala, verbally reciting and mentally visualizing during the offerings. One repetition of the mantra is counted as one. Repeating it as many times as possible will be beneficial. (The offering arrangement, recitation and visualization are outlined in the Yangzab preliminary practice book.) This applies to all of the practices in order to train the student's mind. The students finish this part of the practice by dissolving the refuge visualization into oneself and rest in the vast open, space-like condition. The process of dissolving is explained in the text.

## GURU YOGA - Generating Ultimate Cognition

The last Uncommon Preliminary Practice is generating Ultimate Cognition or Guru Yoga. First the student starts with the visualization below.

*In the space in front of myself as Vajrasattva arises a Palace radiating five-colored rainbow light. In the Palace is the Precious Lion Throne, lotus, and moon disc seat, upon which sits the Root Lama in the form of Guru Padmasambhava. His color is white tinged with red; he has one face, two arms and is seated in the lotus posture. In his right hand he holds a Vajra, in his left a lotus bowl. In his left arm stands a katvanga staff. He is wearing a hat and robes made of fine brocade. He is surrounded by all the Lamas, Yidams, Dakinis, Dharma Protectors and Treasure Owners like a vast ocean.*

After having a clear, illuminating visualization, the student recites the prayers to achieve the body of rainbow light with one-pointed faith and devotion. In the Vajrayana system of practice, the Lama is considered to the most important teacher, who guides the student toward liberation. Developing great faith and devotion in the Lama is extremely important because the Lama embodies all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the three times. Normally we take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha but in the Vajrayana we take refuge in four entities, which include the Lama placed before the Triple Gem. Tibetan Buddhism is a combination of Sutrayana and Tantrayana transmissions, and refuge is influenced by both systems. Schools and traditions other than the

Vajrayana systems take refuge in the Triple Gem only. This is the uniqueness of the Vajrayana School, which places great importance on the Lama as the source of all future Buddhas.

The Three Roots are the Lama, Yidam and Dakini and in the Guru Yoga practice, the student is trying to emulate and accomplish the blessings of the Lama. The most important factor in tapping the Lama's blessings is faith and devotion in him or her. A student without faith and devotion will receive no blessings. Devotion is the head of meditation and detachment is its legs. The loving kindness and compassion of the Lama are like the earring, while our devotion is like the hook of the earring. Without the devotion (hook), we could not bond with the Lama. This means if devotion is absent, there is no other means for the student to communicate with the loving kindness and compassion of the Lama. Devotion in a student enables him or her to communicate with the Lama's love and compassion and to receive his wisdom and realization. In this case the Lama is none other than Guru Padmasambhava and in the Yangzab practice, the students will try to accomplish Guru Padmasambhava.

With great devotion and pure vision of body, speech and mind, recite the following supplication prayers to all the lineage masters to help us attain the rainbow body.

### Prayers to achieve the RAINBOW BODY

**OM AH HUNG Kuntuzangpo** (*Dharmakaya-Samantabhadra*), who resides in the Palace of Great Bliss within the Dharmadhatu, pure from the very beginning, with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.

To the gathering of the three roots (*Guru, Yidam & Dakini*), the **100 peaceful and wrathful deities** (*Sambhogakaya - Shithro Lhatsho*), who reside in the Palace which radiates with the five lights within the spontaneously encompassing Purelands, with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.

To the **Noble Padma Thod Tring** (*Nirmanakaya - Guru Padmasambhava*) who resides in the pure, self-illuminated Palace within the Pureland (Copper

Mountain) of all-encompassing compassion; with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.

To **Prince Mutik Tsepola**, residing in the Palace above Samye in the spontaneously unchanged Pureland, with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.

To **Noble Natsok Rangtrol** who resides in the self manifested Palace at the summit of the Blissful Pureland, with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.

To the incomparable **Chögyal Phuntsog** who resides in the center of a Palace in which appears myriad Dharmadhatu Purelands, with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.

To the great accomplished **Mangyay Tsenchen**, who resides in the Palace of knowledge of the essence of all things within the Pureland of boundless samsara and nirvana, with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.

Dharmadhatu all-encompassing space self-liberated wisdom sun fortunate (blessing) blossom to make to **Noble Konchog Ratna** with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.

To **Rigdzin Chokyi Dragpa** (Drikung Dharmakirti) who resides in the Palace where all appearances are liberated in the Pureland of the self-awareness, which dispels mistaken view, with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.

To **Konchog Trinlay Namgyal** who resides in the self manifested Palace whose nature is of emptiness within the Pureland of great spontaneous bliss, with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.

To **Konchog Trinlay Zangpo**, residing in the Palace where the four kayas manifest within the Pureland, which fully realizes the Four Spontaneous Visions with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.

To **Dondrup Chokyi Gyalpo** residing in the Palace of unchanged great bliss within the Pureland of uncontrived simplicity, with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.

To **Konchog Tenzin Drodul** who resides in the heart of Kuntuzangpo's Palace within the Pureland of boundless wisdom, with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.

To **Garchen Dharma Surya**, who resides in the Palace of Jangchub Dorje within the Pureland of spontaneous wisdom, with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.

To **Tenzin Chokyi Nyima**, who resides in the Palace of great blissful wisdom within the stainless Dharmadhatu Pureland, with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.

To the **Noble Padmey Gyaltsen**, who resides in the Palace of the Youthful Vase Body within the Pureland of the Four Spontaneous Visions Beyond Mind, with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.

To **Chokyi Gyaltsen**, form of the Nirmanakaya, who resides in the unobstructed Sambhogakaya Palace within the Pureland of the unborn Dharmakaya, with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.

To the incomparable **Tenzin Jangchub**, who holds the profound secret treasury of the spontaneously vast and self-illuminating Dzogchen, with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.

To **Rinchen Tenpay Tsegyin** whose original purity is as vast as space; the Great Protector benefiting beings, with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.

To the great **Guru Nyima**, who abides in the Pureland of uncontaminated emptiness, and who is inseparable from the original purity of the Great Protector, Kuntuzangpo, with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.

To **Garchen Tenpay Dzejyin**, inseparable from the original purity of Kuntuzangpo, abiding in the Pureland of all-encompassing apparent phenomena, With great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.

To **Ögyan Nüden Dorje**, inseparable from Kuntuzangpo, abiding in the spontaneously unobstructed palace within the Pureland of deep awareness, with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.

To the all-knowing **Chokyi Lodro**, abiding in the palace of blissful self-awareness, within the Pureland of the true nature of mind itself, with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.

To the self-liberated **Shiway Lodro** abiding in the Palace of spontaneous transcendence (Tödgal) which cuts through attachment (Trekchö), with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.

*To Noble Dharmakara (Chungtang) abiding in the Pureland of apparent phenomena where the constituent aggregates are transformed into the form of the deity, with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.*

After having recited the supplication prayers up to this section, the student will now recite the following stanzas for the Guru Yoga accumulations. As already known, 400 thousand times is necessary according to the tradition but most important is the quality rather than the numbers. It is necessary to fully understand the meaning of the prayers and to recite mindfully with great longing faith and fervent devotion to the Root Lama. Without mindfulness and awareness, realization of the full meaning of the prayer is impossible. This is applicable in the whole Yangzab practice physically, verbally and mentally. The student should constantly generate this kind of faith and devotion to the Root Lama for the continuous stream of blessings to accomplish the Lama.

*To the self-empowered Root Lama, abiding in the unobstructed, self-illuminating Palace within the Pureland of self-aware primordial purity, with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.*

Then the student continues the rest of the supplication prayers through to the end of the Guru Yoga practice.

*Within the Pureland of the achievement of wrathful activity in the Palace of Zhero Terdrom, is the sacred place of the treasury, With great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.*

*To the Yang Zab; meditation on the Holy, Profound Dharma, in the fully enlightened Palace within the Pureland of the Three Vajras, with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.*

*To the blue-black brother and sister Dharma Protectors (Muknak Mingsing) abiding in the Palace of wrathful power in the Pureland of fully realized activities, with great longing I pray; please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.*

*To the Three Roots, the 100 peaceful and wrathful deities of intrinsic awareness abiding in the Palace of the Tsa Lung Thigle within my body as the Buddha-field, with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.*

*To the Vajra brothers and sisters in the Palace of various methods within the Pureland of the ten directions, with great longing I pray, please grant me blessings so that I may achieve the rainbow body.*

*By the power of supplicating the lama, the embodiment of the Kagyu, with the profound yearning of unshakable faith, may myself and others, not one sentient being left behind, realize primordial self-awareness and attain Buddhahood!*

## DEDICATION Prayers

By this virtue, may I achieve the all-knowing state and may all who travel on the waves of birth, old age, sickness and death cross the ocean of samsara by defeating all enemies—confusion (the cause of suffering).

Bodhicitta, the most excellent and precious mind. Where it is unborn, may it arise.

Where it is born, may it not decline, but ever increase, higher and higher.

I pray that the Lama may have good health and long life. I pray that your Dharma activities spread far and wide. I pray that I may not be separated from you.

As Manjushri and likewise Samantabhadra realized the ultimate state, Buddhahood, I will follow in their path and share the merit for all sentient beings.

By the blessing of the Buddha who attained the three kayas, by the blessing of the truth of the unchanging Dharma-as-such, by the blessing of the indivisible Sangha order, may the merit I share bear fruit.

By this virtue, may all beings perfectly accumulate merit and wisdom and attain the two sublime Kayas (Rupakaya and Dharmakaya), which arise from merit and wisdom. By the virtues collected in the three times by myself and all beings in samsara and nirvana, and by the innate root of virtue, may I and all sentient beings quickly attain unsurpassed, perfect, complete, precious Enlightenment.

End... End... End... End... End... End... End... End... End... End...

**The Uninterrupted Transmission from Master to Disciple of the  
YANGZAB DZOGCHEN TERMA  
to the present 3<sup>rd</sup> Ontül Tulku**

Kuntuzangpo (Dharmakaya - Samantabhadra)  
Shitro Latsho (Sambhogakaya - Peaceful & Wrathful Deities)  
Padma Thod Tring (Nirmanakaya - Padmasambhava)

King Mutik Tsenpo  
Tertön Gyalwang Rinchen Phuntsog  
Rigdzin Chögyal Phuntsog  
Naro Tashi Phuntsog  
Chetsang Konchog Rinchen  
Chuntsang Chökyi Dragpa  
Lhochen Thrinle Namgyal  
Chetsang Thrinle Zangpo  
Chuntsang Dondrub Chögyal  
Chetsang Tendzin Drodul  
Garchen Chökyi Nyima  
Chuntsang Chökyi Nyima  
Chetsang Padme Gyaltsen  
Chökyi Gyaltsen

Trichen Chökyi Lodro Gyaltsen  
Chuntsang Chonyi Norbu  
Gar Tenpei Gyaltsen  
Lhochen Chowang Lodro  
Tertön Ögyen Nüden Dorje  
Chuntsang Chökyi Lodro  
Konchog Tendzin Thrinle  
Gyabra Konchog Tendzin Chökyi Wangpo

Trichen Chökyi Lodro Gyaltsen  
Matrul Tendzin Chodrak  
Chuntsang Chökyi Lodro  
Ngedon Gyamtso Gyaltso  
Tseptül Konchog Thrinle Chögyal  
Konchog Tendzin Thubten Wangpo

Togden Konchog Tendzin Thubten Tenpei Gyaltsen  
**Ontül Konchog Tendzin Thrinle Rabgye Palzangpo**  
(Present 3<sup>rd</sup> Ontül Rinpoche)

**Note:** Another two transmissions where Drikung Ontül Rinpoche receives is from: **H.E. 8th Garchen Rinpoche** and **Ven. Khenpo Konchog Ngedon** (Yangzab specialist from Drikung Katsel Monastery).

## Note from transcriber & editor;

This is the initial transcription of the Yangzab Teachings transmitted by Ven. Drikung Ontül Rinpoche at Manjushri Vihara Penang, Malaysia. The intention is to produce a booklet combining the teachings given by Ontül Rinpoche at both Ratnashri Centre Selangor and Manjushri Vihara Penang.

There is minor editing done during the transcribing process to offer some degree of readability and minimize repetitions. All this is subject to further sessions of editing and proof reading, including approval from Ontül Rinpoche and Arcaya Konchok Tamphel, who translated the teachings on the fly from Tibetan to English.

This is the first study course in the 10-year study program. There will be a series of projects undertaken by the Yangzab students and the Drikung Dzogchen Community, of which the transcribing, editing and compilation of the teachings is one. The other projects include digitizing and editing of the teachings in Audio for compilation into CD Audio format, printing of Thangkas, revising the Yangzab practice text and translation of texts for future learning and practice.

May the Lama live long!  
May he continuously turn the Dharma wheel!  
May this practice ripen the student's mind!  
May the Lama bestow blessings!  
May the Yidam bestow siddhis!  
May the Dakinis and Protectors ward off obstacles!  
May the Dam Chö Gonpa Yangzab prevail for many Kalpas!

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## Transcribing, Editing & Proof Reading records

Transcribed by Kenny K.K.Tham.  
First phase editing by Kenny K.K.Tham.  
First phase proof reading by DDC, Selangor, Malaysia.  
Second phase editing by Sheila Adamson.  
Third phase editing by Sheila Adamson together with Drikung Ontül Rinpoche.  
Third phase proof reading by Drikung Ontül Rinpoche.