

# The Three Statements of Garab Dorje, the First Human Teacher of Dzogchen, together with a Commentary by Patrul Rinpoche

*Excerpted from "Golden Letters" Translation, Introduction and commentaries by John Myrdhin Reynolds*

## Prologue

Homage to my benevolent Root Guru, he who possesses unequalled compassion. Here I shall explain a little of the method of practice associated with the essential points represented by the view, the meditation, and the conduct.

First, since my own Guru in his essence fully embodies and unifies within himself the totality of the Three Jewels, so by doing homage to him alone, one is actually paying homage to all of the sources of refuge simultaneously. Thus it says (in the root text): "Homage to the Guru".

Moreover, as for the real meaning, which I shall explain here (regarding the following lines): If one practices wholeheartedly, having first become aware that all of one's Gurus, both one's own Root Guru as well as the Gurus belonging to all of the lineages of transmission which one has received, are, in fact, inseparable from one's own mind, then all three- the view, the meditation, and the conduct--are combined and included within the practice. Hence, I must explain here that the view, the meditation, and the conduct correspond precisely to the real meaning of the names of my own personal masters, both my Root Guru and the Gurus of my lineage of transmission.

First, the view is one's own awareness that all of the infinity of appearances occurring in both Samsara and Nirvana, however many there may be, are wholly perfected (from the very beginning) within the vast expanse of the Tathagatagarbha, which is the Dharmadhatu itself, free of all conceptual elaborations. Thus, since there exists an awareness of this real meaning, it says (in the root text): "The view is Longchen Rabjampa" (where this name literally means "the infinite great vast expanse").

Then, with respect to this view, which in its own nature is free of all conceptual elaborations: (On the one hand, the view) is systematically established by means of discriminating wisdom (Skt. *prajñā*) and insight (Skt. *vipaśyanā*) on the side of wisdom and emptiness. And then, (on the other hand,) it abides (and continues) evenly and one-pointedly in contemplation, where it is inseparably united with the skillful means of concentrated peaceful calm (Skt. *samatha*), and therefore, (this represents the side) of great loving compassion. Since there exists here this meditation that links together both emptiness and

compassion in this way, therefore it says in the text: "The meditation is Khyentse Odzer" (which literally means "the light rays of wisdom and love").

Then, while in a state where one possesses equally such a view and such a meditation, one comes to practice wholeheartedly the six perfections for the benefit of others in accordance with the proper method of the Bodhisattvas, who represent the fresh sprouts (that will grow into) future Buddhas. Since this is the conduct and behavior (in question), it says in the text: "The conduct is Gyalwe Nyugu" (which literally means "the fresh sprouts of future Buddhas").

The individual who practices wholeheartedly, having a view and a meditation and a conduct such as this, is described as one who truly possesses good fortune, Hence it says (in the root text): "Anyone who practices wholeheartedly in this way ...".

And furthermore, having relied upon a secluded hermitage (as the site of retreat practice), if one is able to renounce the activities of this world and practice one-pointedly, then in this present life one will become liberated into the original Base, which has been primordially pure from the very beginning. Thus, it says in the text: "... will surely attain Buddhahood within a single lifetime without striving after it."

Similarly, even though one may not accomplish this, still if one turns the mind toward a view, a meditation, and a conduct such as this, then, even in this present life, one will become aware of all negative conditions (being transformed, so as to) carry one farther along the path; and although remaining preoccupied with the activities of everyday life, one will not produce so many expectations and anxieties, while thereafter (in future rebirths) one will go from one happy existence to another. Hence, it says in the text: "And even if one does not (accomplish the results of practice), one's mind will enjoy happiness. A-la-la!"

### **The First Essential Point**

Now I shall explain step by step the view, the meditation, and the conduct that possess such benefits as those (cited above). First, I want to explain extensively the method for practicing the view. Thus, it says in the text: "As for the view of Longchen Rabjampa (the infinite great vast expanse)".

Furthermore, by way of the actual secret instructions that pertain to these three statements that strike the essential points of the practice, one cuts off (at the root) the very vitality possessed by delusions. Hence, it says in the text: "There are three statements that strike the actual essential points of the practice."

First there is the method for introducing the individual to the view that had not been introduced previously. In general, according to the Lakshanayana, one systematically establishes the view by means of various authoritative scriptural traditions and by reasoning. Again, according to the usual approach of the Secret Mantra system, having relied upon the knowledge of the example which is indicated during the third initiation, one is introduced to actual knowledge of primal awareness in the fourth initiation. There exist many systems for this. However, here the method of the Holy Gurus of the Siddha Lineage is to introduce directly (the nature of mind) by way of the dissolving of all mental activities.

Furthermore, at those times when the confused and turbulent waves of deluded thoughts (overwhelm the individual), gross discursive thoughts that pursue and follow after their objects will come to obscure the true face of the nature of mind, Thus, even though one has been introduced previously to it, one will not recognize (the nature of mind), For that reason, one must first allow those gross discursive thoughts (to settle down and the mind) to become clear. So, it says in the text: "First, allow one's own mind to settle into a relaxed state...".

Nevertheless, one's own mind, when it is allowed simply to settle down without making any attempt to modify it, becomes in itself just that knowledge or primal awareness which is the Clear Light. Since one's natural condition cannot be understood by way of a process of conceptual fabrications, in order that one may indicate to oneself this spontaneously born primal awareness that is in no way fabricated or contrived, it says in the text (that one shall remain) "without thoughts, neither diffusing nor concentrating them."

When the individual is only a beginner, even though the mind may continue in a natural self-settled state, still, as part of this calm state, it will not be possible to transcend a condition of attachment to experiences (arising in meditation), such as pleasurable sensations, clarity, and the absence of thoughts. Thus, it says in the text (that one should proceed) "while in this condition, a state of equanimity and complete relaxation...."

In order to free oneself from envelopment by attachments to experiences such as these (cited above), and in order to reveal the unadorned natural condition of naked intrinsic Awareness which is in no way obstructed by anything that arises, it says in the text that one should "Suddenly utter *PHAT!* which strikes the thought (that has arisen)".

This interrupts the flow of thoughts, and, since it is critically important to shatter one's meditation, which has been deliberately created by mental activity, it is necessary to utter the sound *PHAT!* forcefully and abruptly, So, it says in the text: "... forcefully and abruptly. How marvelous!"

And it is at the moment when one is freed from all conceptions, such as thinking, "This is a thought" or "This is mind," that one in fact becomes liberated. Hence, it says in the text, "There remains nothing but a sharp startled awareness."

In this state of the Dharmakaya, which is freed from all such conceptual thoughts, the directly penetrating naked Awareness remains just as it is, a knowledge or primal awareness that has transcended the mind (that is to say, it has transcended all mental activity). So it says in the text: "This startled awareness is directly penetrating."

Moreover, it is directly penetrating in this way because it transcends all limitations (and dualities), such as creation and cessation, existence and nonexistence, and so on. This self-existent state that transcends all objects of thought and all efforts of speech and mind represents the essential point of an indescribable primal awareness or knowledge. Therefore, it says in the text: "Nothing arises that impedes it; it is indescribable."

The real meaning of this essential point is that this immediate intrinsic Awareness that remains as the Base is in fact the Dharmakaya itself. And since primordial purity devoid of all conceptual elaborations is the real view properly belonging to the Path of the Yogins, until one has recognized just this (immediate intrinsic Awareness), even though one may meditate and practice continually, one will not pass beyond a view and a meditation that has been merely fabricated by one's own intellectual activities. Therefore, (one's view and one's meditation) will be as distant from the actual path of the natural Great Perfection as the earth is from the sky. And in them (this view and this meditation,) there will exist nothing of the essential point of the cycle of practice of the Clear Light, which is, in fact, non-meditation. So, it is crucially important to first recognize just this (point of intrinsic Awareness), Therefore, it says in the text: "One should recognize this as the immediate intrinsic Awareness which is the Dharmakaya itself".

The real meaning of this is the first of the three statements that strike the essential points. If there were no direct introduction (to immediate intrinsic Awareness) by means of the view, there would exist no cause for continuing in the state (of Awareness) by means of meditation. Therefore, it is very important to be introduced to the view at the very beginning. Furthermore, once the individual is introduced to this primal awareness (this knowledge or gnosis) which is self-existing and present within oneself (from the very beginning), it will no longer be something that must be sought after somewhere else (outside of oneself). Since this is not a matter of producing something in the mind that had not existed there previously, it says in the text: "This direct introduction to one's own nature is the first essential point."

## **The Second Essential Point**

Now I shall explain extensively the method of practicing the meditation. If one settles oneself into a state of meditation that is like the continuous flowing of a river, and at all times remains without attempting to create or stop anything or trying to develop thoughts or to calm them down, then this represents the real nature of the Dharmakaya. When thoughts begin to proliferate and develop, one should just continue in this condition of inherent creative energy or potentiality of primal awareness. Therefore, it says in the text: "Whether (thoughts) are proliferating or remaining in a calm state, this is perfectly all right."

Moreover, from the power of the creative energy or potentiality of thoughts in the mind arise the various passions, such as anger and desire, which represent the Truth of Origination, as well as reactive feelings, such as happiness and sorrow, which represent the Truth of Suffering. Yet if one is aware that the inherent nature of all of these discursive thoughts is just the Dharmata itself, then they will be transformed into the state of the Dharmakaya. Therefore, it says in the text (that one should remain in this awareness continuously,) "Whether there arises desire or anger, happiness or sorrow."

Moreover, in general, even though one is directly introduced (to immediate intrinsic Awareness) by means of the view, when one falls again (into distraction) into the ordinary profusion of erroneous delusory (thoughts), without being able to sustain oneself in the state by means of meditation, then one will become fettered once more to Samsara by this arising of discursive thoughts in one's own stream of consciousness. Thus, the Dharma and one's own mind-stream having gone (their own separate ways), one will become no different than an ordinary (deluded) individual. Thus, it is necessary that one never become separated from this totally self-settled state of non-meditation. Hence, it says in the text: "At all times and on all occasions ..."

Similarly, whether thoughts are developing or remaining quiet and still, it should not be the case that one is trying to subjugate each individual thought (as it arises) by means of a particular antidote. Rather, whenever thoughts and passions arise, the unique and sufficient antidote to liberate each one of them is the mere recognition of that singular view which was introduced previously. Hence, it says in the text: "One should hold to the recognition of the Dharmakaya which was recognized previously."

Furthermore, even though some thoughts and passions may be produced, when one comes to recognize that they (these thoughts and passions) are not in any way different from the primal awareness of the Dharmakaya (the gnoses or knowledges emanating from it) and that the inherent nature of these discursive thoughts is in actuality the Clear Light of the

Dharmakaya, then that (condition) is known as the Mother Clear Light, which abides as the Base. Recognizing it by means of the view, the Clear Light of one's own awareness, which has been directly introduced by the Guru previously, is then known as the Clear Light of the Path of practice. Remaining in this self-same state where the Clear Light of the Base and the Clear Light of the Path become inseparable is known as the meeting of the Clear Light of the Son with the Clear Light of the Mother. Hence, the text refers to "reuniting the Clear Lights of the Mother and of the Son".

In this fashion, having recollected the Clear Light that was recognized by means of the view, one settles into the state (of contemplation), trying neither to create nor to stop anything, neither accepting nor rejecting anything with respect to the thoughts and passions that arise from the play of the creative energy (of the mind). Since this is the principal essential point here, it says in the text; "One should allow oneself to settle into a state of indescribable Awareness."

When beginners continue for a long time in the state (of contemplation) in that way, their true and natural face will become obscured and concealed by experiences of pleasurable sensation, clarity, and non-discursiveness, or the absence of thoughts. Therefore, having freed oneself from those veils represented by experiences such as these, one uncovers the naked face of one's (original) awareness, so that the knowledge will become visible within oneself. And somewhere it was said: "The Yogin becomes better by destroying his meditation, just as the mountain stream becomes better by falling steeply from above." Hence, it says here in the text: "(Whether there arise experiences) of the calm state, or of pleasurable sensation, or of clarity, or of thoughts proliferating, shatter them again and again."

Furthermore, if one inquires into how one is to destroy them in this way, then at the time when these experiences of calmness or of pleasurable sensation or of clarity are produced, like a bolt of lightning (striking them from the sky), one must shatter into fragments these layers of attachment with the ferocious sound of *PHAT!* This forceful sound *PHAT!* unites *PHA*, the letter of skillful means that represents the accumulating of merit, and *TA*, the letter of discriminating wisdom that cuts through (all delusions). Therefore, it says in the text (to shatter them) "with the sudden explosive uttering of this syllable *PHAT!* which unites skillful means and wisdom" .

Similarly, without being separated from the essential point of these experiences, at all times and in every way, one continues in this indescribable directly penetrating Awareness. And because of this, there is no difference in the condition of meditation between the state of

even contemplation and the period of subsequent realization. Therefore, it says in the text: "Thereupon there will be no difference between the state of even contemplation and what is realized subsequently".

For this reason, there do not exist different meditations for the period of the actual meditation session and for the period of activity that follows afterwards. Thus it says in the text: "And there will be no difference between the meditation session and the non-session (afterwards)."

That great meditator who is actually not meditating is the Yogin in whom effulgent and self-existent primal awareness or knowledge is like the continuous flowing of a river. Moreover, in that individual there exists not even so much as a hair-tip of a cause for meditation, nor is he or she for any moment distracted. As it was said somewhere: "Neither have I ever meditated, nor have I ever been separated from meditation. Thus I have never departed from the real meaning of non-meditation." Since this is the actual meaning here, it says in the text: "One should continuously remain in this state where they are inseparable."

Similarly, if one has become a pure container for the real significance of the path of the natural Great Perfection, that is to say, the type of individual who is capable of being liberated instantly upon merely hearing (the teaching), then all thoughts and appearances are totally liberated into the Base, and whatever arises is immediately transformed into the state of the Dharmakaya. Thus, there exists no meditator and no meditation (when the individual is in that condition). However, those less fortunate individuals who pursue the gradual approach and who fall under the power of deluded thoughts must meditate until they are able to realize some stability (in the practice). Thus, it says in the text (that one must practice) "nevertheless, if one is unable to attain stability in this."

Moreover, with respect to this meditation, when one has perfected the accumulation of the causes of concentration (Skt. *dhyāna*), experiences (in meditation certainly) will be produced. But (on the other hand), no matter how long a time one may meditate in the midst of worldly entertainments and distractions, no experiences (in meditation) will be produced. Thus it says in the text: "Having renounced worldly entertainments, it is important to meditate."

Also with regard to this meditation, even though there exists no actual difference in terms of practice between the state of even contemplation and the period of subsequent realization, nevertheless, if one has not gotten hold of the state of contemplation first, one will not be able to integrate the primal awareness of one's experiences in meditation with what is subsequently realized. Thus, even though one may try to make one's daily activities

into the path itself, the deviations of falling away from one's innate disposition and of irregular habits will arise. Hence, it says in the text: "And divide one's practice into discrete sessions."

Similarly, having divided one's practice into discrete sessions, one should practice in a way that relies upon fixating the mind (upon some object of meditation), so as to continue in the essence of contemplation. However, when one comes to integrate this with the ordinary daily activities during the period subsequent to meditation, if one does not know how to preserve (the state of contemplation) continuously, one will not be capable of controlling secondary conditions by means of this antidote. Rather, one will be led astray by these secondary causes, including (any distracting) thoughts that may arise, and so one will fall back again into being merely an ordinary (confused) individual. Therefore, it is very important to maintain and continue in this directly penetrating primal awareness or knowledge during the period that follows (the meditation session). Hence, it says in the text: "At all times and on every occasion ..."

Moreover, at such a time, it is not necessary for the individual to search about for any other meditation. While in the state of contemplation, a condition that is inseparable from the view of the Dharmakaya, all of one's thoughts and actions continue as usual without any deliberate calculations on one's part or any attempts at creating or stopping anything. Thus, it says in the text: "One should continue in the state of this single Dharmakaya".

Practicing in this way represents the yoga that is both natural and free from conceptual elaborations; it is the yoga where peaceful calm (Skt. *śamatha*) and higher insight (Skt. *vipaśyanā*) are inseparably united. Thus, one can continue in the spontaneously born and unfabricated state of the Dharmata. This is at the heart of every practice found in the Tantras belonging to the Secret Mantra Vajrayana. It is the actual gnosis or knowledge indicated in the fourth initiation. It is the special teaching which is the wish-granting gem of the Siddha Lineage. And because it is the unexcelled state of every individual included within the lineages of the Mahasiddhas who have previously attained realization in India and in Tibet, whether they belong to the Old School (Nyingmapa) or to the New Schools (Sarmapa), we should decide definitively (upon this single point) with absolute conviction. However, if one thirsts after the water of other secret instructions, it is like having an elephant at home, but searching for its tracks elsewhere in the dense forest. Having let oneself become trapped in a cage of mind-made fabrications, one will find that one has no time for liberation. So, it is absolutely necessary for the individual to decide definitively with intelligence (upon this

single essential point) with respect to the practice. Hence, it says in the text: "And one should discover that there is nothing other than this."

Similarly, having discovered that the Dharmakaya is Buddhahood itself experienced as naked primal awareness, which is self-existing and never deluded, one continues in just that way. This is the second secret statement relating to the essential points of practice. Since this is extremely important, it says in the text: "Thus, directly discovering this single state is the second essential point."

### **The Third Essential Point**

Now, at those times, if one does not have confidence in the method of (self-)liberation and merely lets oneself meditate, relaxing into a calm state of mind, then one will not transcend that deviation represented by rebirth in the higher worlds. Therefore, one will not be able to control the secondary causes of anger and desire, the activities of our samskaras (impulses) will not be interrupted, and the mind will lack confidence in one's discovery. Therefore, (confidence in the method of self-liberation) is very important.

Furthermore, whether there arises strong desire for an object that one wants or strong aversion toward an object that one does not want; or delight over acquiring riches, harmonious conditions, and enjoyments; or feelings of sorrow over disharmonious conditions, evils, illnesses, and so on, since whatever arises at that time merely represents the manifestations of the creative energy of intrinsic Awareness, it is very important to recognize primal awareness (gnosis or knowledge) as the very basis of liberation. Hence it says in the text: "At that time, whatever desires or aversions, whatever happiness or sorrow..."

Otherwise, if the liberation of thoughts as soon as they arise is not made the essential point of practice, then whatever is produced (in the mind), including the entire undercurrent of thoughts deriving (unnoticed) from the mind, will accumulate (endless) future karma for the individual in Samsara. Since one should continue liberating any thoughts that are produced without a trace remaining behind, whether they are gross or subtle, this being the essential point (of the practice), the text refers to "whatever discursive thoughts may suddenly arise."

Therefore, with respect to whatever discursive thoughts may be produced, without letting them become an undercurrent of proliferating delusions or letting them become a tangled net of memories created by mind, we should recognize the nature of those thoughts that arise while remaining in a state that is inseparable from self-occurring natural mindfulness. It is necessary to continue in this state, where one allows them to liberate as

soon as they arise without following after them. This is just like drawing pictures on (the surface) of the water. Hence, it says in the text: "(While remaining) in the state of recognizing them, one does not follow after them".

However, at that time, if one does not purify discursive thoughts by way of self-liberation, then merely recognizing these discursive thoughts as such will not interrupt the current of erroneous delusory activities (of the mind). But, having previously recognized primal awareness and continuing in that state, these discursive thoughts are purified without leaving a trace behind, since, simultaneous with their recognition, one beholds their faces (or natures) nakedly. Thus, with respect to the importance of this essential point, the text says; "Since one holds to the recognition of the Dharmakaya on the side of liberation..."

For example, just as at the very moment when one draws a picture on the water, the drawing itself disintegrates - the drawing (of the picture) and its dissolving being simultaneous - so the producing of a discursive thought and its (self-)liberating become simultaneous. There exists neither an interruption nor a discontinuity between its self-arising and its self-liberation. Thus, it says in the text: "as, for example, like drawing a picture on the water."

Therefore, the essential point of the practice is that, no matter what thoughts arise, they be allowed to enter (freely) into their arising without trying to suppress them or prevent them from arising in any way, and also that whatever thoughts may arise be carried along through the process of purifying them into their natural state, (by allowing them to freely dissolve back into the empty state out of which they originally arose). Hence, it says in the text: "There is no discontinuity between the self-arising (of thoughts) and their self-liberation."

In that way, discursive thoughts are purified through the creative energy of the Dharmakaya. Thus, whenever thoughts arise, they arise (inherently) purified by way of the inherent potentiality of the presence of intrinsic Awareness. However gross may be the thoughts produced (in the mind) giving expression to the five passions, that much stronger and clearer will be the awareness present at their liberation. Thus, it says in the text: "Whatever arises (in the mind) becomes the food for naked empty Awareness."

Any discursive thoughts that may occur will arise as the inherent potentiality of the directly penetrating nature of immediate intrinsic Awareness itself. Because one continues (in that state) without accepting or rejecting anything (that arises as thought), the very moment thoughts arise, they become liberated and they do not proceed anywhere beyond the state of

the Dharmakaya. Thus, it says in the text: "Whenever movements of thought occur, they represent the creative energy of the king who is the Dharmakaya."

Because thoughts in the mind, being but forms of ignorance and delusion, are purified within the vast expanse of the Dharmakaya, any movements of thoughts that do occur (afterwards) arise in the same vast expanse of the unceasing Clear Light and are devoid of any inherent existence. Hence, it says in the text: "Without leaving a trace, these thoughts are self-purified. A-la-la!".

When one habitually practices for a long time, continually carrying on along the path in this way, then discursive thoughts will arise as the meditation itself; and since the boundaries between the calm state and the movements of thought have collapsed, no harm or injury will come to the calm state. Therefore, it says in the text: "The way of arising will be the same as previously".

Discursive thoughts in themselves represent the potentiality or play of creative energy (of the mind), whether as happiness or sorrow, or as hope or fear. And even though, (for the Yogin,) the way in which these thoughts arise is similar to (the process) found in the minds of ordinary (deluded) individuals, still, (for the Yogin,) this is not the same as the experience of ordinary individuals where the latter attempt either to create or to suppress (thoughts); and in consequence, by accumulating the activities of the samskaras, they come under the external domination of anger and greed. (In contrast to this,) the Yogin achieves the liberation (of thoughts precisely) at the very moment of their arising. (Here there are three degrees of liberation.) First liberation is by means of recognizing thoughts (as soon as they arise), which is like encountering a person whom one has met before. Second, thoughts are liberated by themselves (as soon as they arise), which is like a snake unknitting itself. And finally, thoughts are liberated without benefit or harm (occurring to one's state of contemplation), which is like a thief entering an empty house. Because the Yogin possesses this very essential point with respect to the way of liberating thoughts, it says in the text: "But the particularly crucial essential point is the way in which thoughts are liberated".

Somewhere it was said: "Although one may know how to meditate, but does not know how to liberate thoughts, why is this not like the levels of absorption (Skt. *dhyāna*) of the Devas?" If one's meditation lacks this very essential point of the method of liberating thoughts, and one places confidence only in concentration (Skt. *dhyāna*) within a calm state of mind, this will represent the deviation of dwelling in the dhyanas, or levels of absorption, which comprise the higher worlds.

Those who consider merely recognizing the calm state or the movement of thought as being sufficient are no different from the ordinary person afflicted with erroneous and delusory thoughts. And even though such an individual may entertain various notions such as "emptiness" and "Dharmakaya," which are confirmed by way of conceptual fabrications created by the intellect, when he or she encounters adverse circumstances, this individual will not be capable of maintaining his or her composure because the inherent ineffectiveness of such antidotes becomes plainly evident. Therefore, it says in the text: "Without this latter, meditation merely represents a path of erroneous delusions."

As for "liberation through bare attention," or "liberation upon arising," or "self-liberation," or whatever other name may be applied to it, this method of liberation, which purifies discursive thoughts through self-liberation without leaving even a trace behind, is the singular and unique essential point that was revealed as the extraordinary special teaching of the natural Great Perfection. If one possesses (in the practice) this essential point, then no matter what passions and discursive thoughts are produced, they arise solely within the Dharmakaya. Thus, deluded erroneous thoughts are purified into primal awareness or knowledge, and adverse circumstances now arise as one's helpful friends. The passions are transformed into the path itself, and having purified them into a calm state without abandoning Samsara, the individual is liberated from bondage to both Samsara and Nirvana. One goes beyond (all limitations) into a state where there is nothing left to do, where one is free from all efforts to accomplish anything whatsoever, Hence, it says in the text: "But if one possesses this (essential point), then non-meditation is truly the state of the Dharmakaya".

But if one does not have confidence in such a procedure for liberating thoughts, then, even though one may proclaim proudly that one's view is higher and that one's meditation is deeper, there will truly be no benefit to one's mind, nor will (one's view and meditation) serve as antidotes to the passions. Consequently, this is not the correct path. But if one possesses the essential point of (the simultaneity of) the self-arising and the self-liberation of thoughts, then it will be impossible not to liberate one's stream of consciousness from the bonds of dualism, even if one does not have so much as a handful of the higher view or so much as a dust speck's worth of the deeper meditation. It is as if one were to go to an island of gold and, once there, even though one searched for ordinary rock and soil, one did not find any; so in the same way, whenever discursive thoughts are produced, whether one is in a calm state or in a condition of the movement of thoughts, even though one searches for one's delusions with their inherent characteristics, one shall not find them. This alone is the measure which determines whether or not one's practice is proceeding in accordance with the essential point.

That is why it says in the text: "Hence, directly continuing with confidence in (self-) liberation is the third essential point".

### **Conclusion**

These three points are the unerring essentials that alone are sufficient to carry the individual into the state of directly penetrating Awareness, which represents (the unification of) the view, the meditation, the conduct, and the fruit of the natural Great Perfection. Therefore, (this pertains not only to the view) this is also the Upadesha or the secret instruction relating to the meditation and to the conduct. Nevertheless, according to the general Dharma methodology of those who follow the scriptural systems, the objects of the intellect which are knowable are evaluated in terms of the criteria of the various traditions. However, I do not want to consider this matter systematically here, because when one understands (in direct personal experience) this manifest naked primal awareness, that experience itself will become the view, namely, the gnosis or primordial knowledge that is immediate intrinsic Awareness. Thus, the view and the meditation become identical (in essence) and have a single taste. Nor would it be a contradiction to say that all three essential points represent the practice of the view. Hence, the text says, "With regard to this view which embraces these three essential points...".

This practice, being the summit of the Nine Vehicles (to enlightenment), is the unerring essential point of the path of the state of primordial purity which is the natural Great Perfection. Just as when a king goes forth it is not possible that the hosts of his entourage fail to follow him, so, in the same way, the essential points of the paths of all the (lower) vehicles will accompany Dzogchen as its loyal helpers and attendants who support it in every way. Moreover, at the time when one encounters directly the true face of the self-originated light of discriminating wisdom as primordially pure awareness, this discriminating wisdom (Skt. (Skt. *prajñā*), which is born of the power of meditation, will blaze up, becoming a vast expanse of wisdom like (the mountain-born) rivers rushing forth in the spring season. And as well, the innate disposition of emptiness, having arisen as the great compassion, becomes a compassion which loves all beings universally and impartially. Since this refers to the Dharmata, it speaks in the text of "the meditation which links together wisdom and compassion".

In the same way, at the time when the essential point of the Path, wherein emptiness and compassion are united, becomes manifest, then the oceanlike activities of the Sons of the Victorious One included within the path of the six perfections will arise as one's own

inherent potentiality or energy, just as is the case with the sun and its rays. As such activities are related to the accumulation of merit, then whatever one does will become of benefit to others. And, moreover, one's actions will become loyal friends who help (intrinsic Awareness) without their deviating from the correct view and falling into some selfish pursuit of their own personal peace and happiness. Thus, it says in the text: "As well as the conduct in general of the Sons of the Victorious One, act as friends (to the view and support it)".

These three then - the view, the meditation, and the conduct - represent (in their unity) the principal state of all the Buddhas who have come forth in the past, who are present here and now, and who will come forth in the future. Thus, it says in the text: "Even if all the Buddhas of the three times deliberated together..."

(This unification of the view, the meditation, and the conduct) is truly the victorious summit of all of the vehicles (to enlightenment), as well as the essential point of the path of the Nyingtik Dorje Nyingpo, "the diamondlike heart of the essence of the mind." Because there exists nothing higher than this quintessence of the fruit, it says in the text: "There would exist no higher teaching than this".

Moreover, since the actual meaning expressed in this teaching represents the very nectar of the Upadesha (the secret oral instructions) of the transmission lineage, this composition expressed in a few words here must surely arise through the creative energy of my own intrinsic Awareness. This being the case, it refers in the text to "the creative energy of intrinsic Awareness which is the treasure master of the Dharmakaya."

Even though I myself have not personally had any experience of real meaning of these teachings by means of discriminating wisdom in meditation, nevertheless, all of my doubts have been thoroughly annihilated by means of discriminating wisdom through hearing the inerrant oral teachings of my own Holy Guru. Having set these down systematically by means of the discriminating wisdom that reflects upon things, I have arranged this composition accordingly. Thus the text indicates that it has "brought forth this treasure from out of the vast expanse of wisdom." But since these teachings are not like some common worldly treasure that merely removes our poverty temporarily, it says in the text: "But this is not like extracting ore from the rocks of the earth".

These three essential points relating to the view are known as "The Three Statements That Strike the Essential Points." At the time when he was passing into Nirvana, from the center of a great mass of light in the sky, the Nirmanakaya Prahevajra (Garab Dorje) transmitted (these secret instructions) to the Arya Manjushrimitra. Because this was the very

Upadesha wherein their states of contemplation became inseparably united, it says in the text: "It represents the last testament of Garab Dorje himself."

By virtue of having practiced the essential point of the real meaning of these three instructions here, the omniscient King of the Dharma (Longchen Rabjampa), having manifested the state where all phenomena are extinguished in the primordial purity, attained manifest perfect Buddhahood. (He had received in full the direct mind-to-mind transmission of the Victorious Ones.) Then, having manifested his Wisdom Body (Skt. *jñānakāya*) to the Vidyadhara Jigmed Lingpa (Khyentse Odzer), in the manner of the symbolic transmission of the Vidyadharas, he (Longchenpa) bestowed upon him his blessings. Then, the latter (Jigmed Lingpa) bestowed upon my own benevolent Root Guru (Gyalwe Nyugu) the oral transmission from mouth to ear. Having received in full this direct introduction to the instructions, he then actually encountered (in his personal experience) the Dharmata. And so, here above are the instructions which I heard in the actual presence of this glorious protector of beings, (my precious Root Guru). Hence, it says in the text: "It is the spiritual essence of the three transmission lineages".

This Upadesha, which is like highly refined melted gold, is in truth the essence of the mind. I am reluctant to reveal it to persons who do not practice; but to those individuals who would cherish these teachings as much as their own lives and who, having practiced the essential points, might attain Buddhahood within a single lifetime, I would not hesitate to reveal them. Hence, it says in the text, "and should be given to the sons of one's heart and sealed."

"Its meaning is profound and spoken from the heart. It represents my heartfelt advice, being the essential point of the real meaning. This essential point of the real meaning should not be allowed to disappear, nor should one allow this secret instruction to be profaned!".

This completes my brief treatise, which elucidates some of the special teaching of the Wise and Glorious King. May this represent meritorious karma!

*This translation of the mKhas-pa shri rgyal-po'i khyad-chos, together with its auto-commentary by Dza Patrul Ri npoche, was made by Vajranatha at the great stupa of Baudhnath in Nepal in the spring season of 1978 and subsequently revised in 1985.*

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