

INTENSIFYING DEVOTION IN ONE'S HEART:

The Supplication "Crying to the Gurus from Afar"

by Jamgön Kongtrül Lodrö Thaye

NAMO GURAVE

The practice of crying to the gurus from afar is well known to everyone. The key to invoking blessings is devotion, which is aroused by sadness and renunciation. This is not a mere platitude, but is born in the center of one's heart and in the depths of one's bones. With decisive conviction that there is no other buddha who is greater than the guru, recite this melodic tune.

Guru, think of me.
Kind root guru, think of me.

Essence of the buddhas of the three times,
Source of the holy dharma—what has been told and what has been experienced—
Master of the saṅgha, the noble assembly,
Root guru, think of me.

Great treasure of blessings and compassion,
Source of the two siddhis,¹
Buddha activity that bestows whatever is desired,
Root guru, think of me.

Guru Amitābha,² think of me.
Look upon me from the realm of dharmakāya, simplicity.
Lead us of evil karma who wander in saṃsāra
To the pure land of great bliss.³

Guru Avalokiteshvara, think of me.
Look upon me from the realm of sambhogakāya, luminosity.
Pacify completely the suffering of the six realms.
Shake us from the depths of the three realms of saṃsāra.

Guru Padmākara, think of me.
Look upon me from the Lotus Light of Chāmara.⁴
The wretched Tibetan people who are without refuge in this dark age,
Quickly protect with your compassion.

Guru Yeshe Tsogyal,⁵ think of me.
Look upon me from the celestial realm, the city of great bliss.
Help us who commit evil deeds to cross the ocean of saṃsāra
To the great city of liberation.

Gurus of the kama and terma lineages,⁶ think of me.
Look upon me from the wisdom realm of unity.
Break through the dark dungeon of my confused mind.
Make the sun of realization arise.

Omniscient Trime Öser,⁷ think of me.
Look upon me from the realm of the five spontaneous wisdom lights.
Help me to strengthen my primordially pure mind
And master the four stages of ati yoga.⁸

Incomparable Lord Atīsha, father and son,⁹ think of me.
Look upon me from amidst one hundred devas in Tuṣhita.¹⁰
Arouse in me bodhichitta,
The essence of emptiness and compassion.

Three supreme siddhas—Marpa, Mila, and Gampopa—think of me.
Look upon me from the vajra realm of great bliss.
May I attain the supreme siddhi of mahāmudrā, bliss and emptiness,
And awaken dharmakāya in my heart.

Karmapa,¹¹ lord of the world, think of me.
Look upon me from the space which tames all beings everywhere.
Help me to realize that all dharmas are insubstantial and illusory.
Make appearance and mind dawn as the three kāyas.

Kagyüs of the four great and eight lesser lineages,¹² think of me.
Look upon me from the land of sacred outlook.
Help me to clear away my confusion in the fourth moment¹³
And perfect my experience and realization.

Five Sakya forefathers,¹⁴ jetsüns, think of me.
Look upon me from the realm of inseparable saṃsāra and nirvāṇa.
Help me to unite the completely pure view, meditation, and action
And walk upon the supreme secret path.

Incomparable Shangpa Kagyü,¹⁵ think of me.
Look upon me from the completely pure buddha land.
Help me to learn properly the practice that liberates through skillful means
And attain the unity of nonlearning.¹⁶

Great siddha, Thangtong Gyalpo,¹⁷ think of me.
Look upon me from the realm of effortless compassion.
Help me to practice the yogic action of realizing insubstantiality.
Help me to master prāṇa¹⁸ and mind.

Only father, Phadampa Sanggye,¹⁹ think of me.
Look upon me from the realm of accomplishing the highest action.

May the blessings of your lineage enter my heart
And may auspicious coincidence arise in all directions.

Only mother, Machik Lapkyi Drönma,²⁰ think of me.
Look upon me from the realm of prajñāpāramitā.
Help me to uproot ego-fixation, the cause of pride,
And realize the truth of egolessness beyond conception.

Omniscient enlightened one of Tölpo,²¹ think of me.
Look upon me from the realm endowed with all the supreme aspects.
Help me to still the shifting breaths in the central channel
And attain the immovable vajra body.

Jetsün Tāranātha,²² think of me.
Look upon me from the realm of the three mudrās.
May I tread the secret vajra path unhindered
And attain the rainbow body in the celestial realm.

Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo,²³ think of me.
Look upon me from the wisdom realm of the two kinds of knowing.²⁴
Help me to remove the obscurations of my ignorance
And expand the vision of supreme knowledge.

Ösel Trülpe Dorje, think of me.
Look upon me from the realm of the five rainbow light rays.
Help me to cleanse the impurities of bindu, prāṇa, and mind
And attain enlightenment of this youthful kāya in the vase.²⁵

Padma Do Ngak Lingpa, think of me.
Look upon me from the unchanging realm of bliss and emptiness.
Enable me to completely fulfill
All the intentions of the victorious ones and their sons.

Ngakwang Yönten Gyatso,²⁶ think of me.
Look upon me from the realm of the union of space and wisdom.
May the habit of solidifying reality fall apart,
And may I bring whatever occurs to the path.

Son of the victorious ones, Lodrö Thaye, think of me.
Look upon me from your nature of maitrī and compassion.
Enable me to realize that all beings are my kind parents
And wholeheartedly accomplish the benefit of others.

Padma Kargyi Wangchuk, think of me.
Look upon me from the realm of great bliss and luminosity.
Help me to liberate the five poisons into the five wisdoms
And destroy my clinging to loss and gain.

Tennyi Yungtrung Lingpa, think of me.
Look upon me from the realm in which saṃsāra and nirvāṇa are equal.
May natural devotion be born in my being.
May realization and liberation simultaneously increase.

Kind root guru, think of me.
Look upon me from the top of my head, the place of great bliss.
May I meet my own mind, the face of dharmakāya,
And attain buddhahood in one lifetime.

Alas!
Sentient beings like myself, evildoers with bad karma,
Have wandered in saṃsāra from beginningless time.
Even now we experience endless suffering,
And yet not even an instant of remorse has occurred.
Guru, think of me; look upon me quickly with compassion.
Grant your blessings so that I give rise to renunciation from my depths.

Although I have obtained a free and well-favored human birth,²⁷
I have wasted it in vain.
I am constantly distracted by the activities of this futile life.
Unable to accomplish the great objective of liberation and overcome by laziness,
I return empty-handed from a land of jewels.
Guru, think of me; look upon me quickly with compassion.
Grant your blessings so that I fulfill the purpose of human birth.

There is no one on earth who will not die.
Even now, one after another they pass away.
I also will die very soon,
And yet like an idiot, I prepare to live for a long time.
Guru, think of me; look upon me quickly with compassion.
Grant your blessings so that I curtail my worthless schemes.

I will become separated from my lovers and friends.
The wealth and food which I hoarded in miserliness will be enjoyed by others.
Even this body I hold so dear will be left behind.
My consciousness will wander in the unknown bardos of saṃsāra.
Guru, think of me; look upon me quickly with compassion.
Grant your blessings so that I realize the futility of life.

The black darkness of fear escorts me along.
The fierce red wind of karma chases after me.
Yama's²⁸ hideous messengers beat and hack me.
Thus, I experience the unbearable suffering of the lower realms.
Guru, think of me; look upon me quickly with compassion.
Grant your blessings so that I free myself from the chasms of the lower realms.

My faults are as large as a mountain, but I conceal them within me.
Others' faults are as minute as a sesame seed, but I proclaim and condemn them.
I boast about my virtues, though I don't even have a few.
I call myself a dharma practitioner and practice only nondharma.
Guru, think of me; look upon me quickly with compassion.
Grant your blessings so that I subdue my selfishness and pride.

I hide the demon of ego-fixation within, which will ruin me permanently.
All of my thoughts are the cause of perpetuating kleshas.
All of my actions have unvirtuous results.
I have not even gone toward the path of liberation.
Guru, think of me; look upon me quickly with compassion.
Grant your blessings so that I uproot my selfishness.

Just a little praise or blame makes me happy or sad.
A mere harsh word causes me to lose my armor of patience.
Even when I see helpless ones, compassion does not arise.
When needy people come to me, I am tied up by a knot of miserliness.
Guru, think of me; look upon me quickly with compassion.
Grant your blessings so that my mind is mixed with the dharma.

I hold on dearly to futile saṃsāra.
For the sake of food and clothing, I completely abandon permanent objectives.
Though I have everything I need, I constantly want more and more.
My mind is duped by insubstantial and illusory things.
Guru, think of me; look upon me quickly with compassion.
Grant your blessings so that I am not attached to this life.

I cannot endure even the slightest physical or mental pain,
Yet I am so stubborn that I have no fear of falling into the lower realms.
Though I actually see unerring cause and effect,
Still I do not act virtuously, but perpetuate evil.
Guru, think of me; look upon me quickly with compassion.
Grant your blessings so that conviction in karma arises in me.

I am hateful toward enemies and attached to friends.
I am stupefied in darkness as to what should be accepted and rejected.
When practicing the dharma, I fall under the influence of discursiveness,
sloth, and sleep.
When acting against the dharma, I am clever and my senses are alert.
Guru, think of me; look upon me quickly with compassion.
Grant your blessings so that I conquer my enemy, the kleshas.

My outer appearance is that of an authentic dharma practitioner,
But inside, my mind is not mixed with the dharma.
Like a poisonous snake, the kleshas are concealed within me.

When I encounter bad circumstances, my hidden faults as a bad practitioner are revealed.

Guru, think of me; look upon me quickly with compassion.

Grant your blessings so that I can tame my own mind.

I don't realize my own bad faults.

I maintain the form of a practitioner while engaging in various nondharmic pursuits.

Because of the kleshas, I am naturally accustomed to unvirtuous actions.

Again and again I give birth to a mind of virtue, but again and again it falls apart.

Guru, think of me; look upon me quickly with compassion.

Grant your blessings so that I see my own faults.

As each day passes, my death is nearer and nearer.

As each day passes, my being is harsher and harsher.

Though I attend my guru, my devotion becomes gradually obscured.

Love, affection, and sacred outlook toward my dharma companions grow smaller and smaller.

Guru, think of me; look upon me quickly with compassion.

Grant your blessings so that I tame my stubborn nature.

I've taken refuge, aroused bodhichitta, and made supplications,

But devotion and compassion are not born in the depths of my heart.

I give lip service to dharmic action and spiritual practice,

But they become routine and I'm not touched by them.

Guru, think of me; look upon me quickly with compassion.

Grant your blessings so that I may be one with the dharma.

All suffering comes from desiring happiness for oneself.

Although it is said that buddhahood is attained by considering the welfare of others,

I arouse supreme bodhichitta but secretly cherish selfishness.

Not only do I not benefit others, I casually cause them harm.

Guru, think of me; look upon me quickly with compassion.

Grant your blessings so that I exchange myself for others.

The guru is buddha in person, but I regard him as an ordinary man.

I forget his kindness in giving profound instructions.

When he doesn't do what I want, I lose heart.

His actions and behavior are clouded over by my doubts and disbelief.

Guru, think of me; look upon me quickly with compassion.

Grant your blessings so that unobscured devotion will increase.

My own mind is the Buddha, but I never realize this.

Discursive thoughts are dharmakāya, but I don't realize this.

This is the unfabricated, innate state, but I cannot keep to this.

Naturalness is things as they really are, but I have no conviction in this.

Guru, think of me; look upon me quickly with compassion.
Grant your blessings so that my mind will be spontaneously liberated.

Death is certain to come, but I am unable to take this to heart.
The holy dharma truly benefits, but I am unable to practice it properly.
Karma and its result are certainly true, but I do not properly discriminate what to
accept or reject.
Mindfulness and awareness are certainly necessary, but not stabilizing them, I am
swept away by distractions.
Guru, think of me; look upon me quickly with compassion.
Grant your blessings so that I maintain undistracted mindfulness.

Because of my former evil actions, I was born at the end of the dark age.
All that I have previously done has caused me suffering.
Because of evil friends, I am darkened by the shadow of evil deeds.
My dharma practice has been sidetracked by my meaningless chatter.
Guru, think of me; look upon me quickly with compassion.
Grant your blessings to enable me to persevere in practice.

In the beginning I had no other thought but dharma.
But in the end what I have achieved will cause me to go to the lower realms of
saṃsāra.
The harvest of freedom is destroyed by an unvirtuous frost.
Stubborn people like me have achieved bad consequences.
Guru, think of me; look upon me quickly with compassion.
Grant your blessings so that I will completely accomplish the holy dharma.

Grant your blessings so that I give birth to deep sadness.
Grant your blessings so that my worthless schemes are curtailed.
Grant your blessings so that I take to heart the certainty of death.
Grant your blessings so that conviction in karma arises in me.
Grant your blessings so that the path is free from obstacles.
Grant your blessings so that I am able to exert myself in practice.
Grant your blessings so that unfortunate circumstances are brought to the path.
Grant your blessings so that I continually apply my antidotes.
Grant your blessings so that genuine devotion arises in me.
Grant your blessings so that I glimpse the natural state.
Grant your blessings so that insight is awakened in my heart.
Grant your blessings so that I uproot confusion.
Grant your blessings so that I attain buddhahood in one lifetime.

Precious guru, I supplicate you.
Kind lord of the dharma, I cry to you with longing.
I am an unworthy person who relies on no one but you.
Grant your blessings so that my mind mixes inseparably with yours.

I was first requested by some devoted monks to compose a supplication, but I was delayed in fulfilling their request. Recently, Samdrup Drönma, a lady practitioner of noble family, and Deva Rakṣhita earnestly urged me. Therefore, I, Lodrö Thaye, who merely hold the appearance of a guru in this dark age, wrote this at the great meditation center, Dzongshö Deshek Düpa.²⁹ May virtue increase.

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NOTES

1. The siddhis (“accomplishments”) are either ordinary or supreme. The eight ordinary siddhis involve mastery over the phenomenal world; the supreme siddhi is enlightenment.
2. With this stanza, Jamgön Kongtrül begins a supplication to the first seven of the eight great practice lineages of Tibet:
 - Nyingma, founded by Padmākara (or Padmasambhava); six stanzas
 - Kadam, founded by Atīsha (982-1054); one stanza
 - Marpa Kagyü, founded by Marpa the Translator (1012-1097); three stanzas
 - Sakya, founded by Khön Könchok Gyalpo (1034-1102); one stanza
 - Shangpa Kagyü, founded by Barapa Gyaltsen Palzang (1310-1391); two stanzas
 - Shije and chö (“pacification” and “cutting”), founded by Phadampa Sanggye and Machik Labdrön (1031-1129); two stanzas
 - Jonang, founded by Tölpopa Sherap Gyaltsen (1292-1361); two stanzas
 - Ugyen Nyendrup, founded by Ugyenpa Rinchen Pal (1230-1309).
3. Sukhāvātī (“endowed with bliss”) is the pure land, or buddha field, of Amitābha in the west. Buddhists aspire to take birth in Sukhāvātī after this lifetime, because it is a realm where it is easy to practice the dharma and to attain ultimate liberation.
4. Chāmara is one of the two islands next to the southern continent of Jambudvīpa. On this island, Padmākara is said now to reside on the Copper Colored Mountain in Lotus Light palace.
5. Yeshe Tsogyal is one of the two chief consorts and disciples of Padmākara, the other being Mandāravā. She is the author of a biography of Padmākara (*Padma thang yig*).
6. The kama lineage is the unbroken oral tradition passed down from Vajradhara Buddha to one’s present root guru. The terma lineage consists of sacred objects and teachings hidden by Padmākara and other teachers until the time was right for their unveiling. They were discovered and promulgated by teachers known as tertöns (“terma discoverers”).
7. This is the name that was conferred on the famous Nyingma teacher, Longchen Rabjam (1308-1364), by Padmākara in a vision.

8. The four stages (Tib. nangshi; snang bzhi) are revelation of dharmatā, increasing experience, maturation of insight, and exhausting dharmatā.
9. Atīsha's (982-1054) spiritual son here is Dromtön (1004-1063), his main Tibetan disciple and the founder of the Kadampa school.
10. Tuṣhita is a god realm within the realm of desire. It is said that Shākyamuni Buddha left Tuṣhita heaven to come to the human world and teach the dharma.
11. The Karmapa ("one who performs buddha activity"), head of the Karma Kagyü lineage, is considered an emanation of Avalokiteshvara, the bodhisattva of compassion.
12. The four "great" lineages (referring to the first generation of disciples) derive from students of Gampopa (1079-1153) and his nephew Takpo Gomtsül (1116-1169): Karma Kagyü or Karma Kamtsang, Tsalpa Kagyü, Baram Kagyü, and Phagmo Drupa Kagyü. The eight "lesser" lineages (the second generation) developed from the disciples of Phagmo Drupa (1110-1170): Drikung, Taklung, Trophu, Drukpa, Martsang, Yelpa, Shuksep, and Yamsang.
13. In vajrayāna, the fourth moment refers to the naked simplicity of things as they are, which cuts through the concepts of past, present, and future.
14. These are five great and early teachers in the Sakya lineage: Künga Nyingpo (1092-1158), Sönam Tsemo (1142-1182), Trakpa Gyaltsen (1147-1216), Sakya Paṇḍita (1182-1251), and Phakpa (1235-1280).
15. The Shangpa Kagyü, founded by Barapa Gyaltsen Palsang (1310-1391), traces its origin to Shang Khyungpo Naljorpa (990-1139?), a follower of Bön who converted to Buddhism. He had many Indian gurus, one of whom was Niguma, Nāropa's wife and disciple.
16. The path of nonlearning, or "no more learning," is the fifth and final path of the five Buddhist paths, on which the meditator enters the eleventh bhūmi—buddhahood.
17. Thangtong Gyalpo (ca. 1361-1485) is famed throughout Tibet as a great Shangpa siddha and a builder of iron suspension bridges.
18. Nāḍī ("channels"), prāṇa ("wind"), and bindu are the psychic components of the illusory body. Prāṇa is the energy that moves through the nāḍīs. Bindu is the quintessence secreted within the body. As is said, "Mind consciousness rides the horse of prāṇa on the pathways of the nāḍīs. The bindu is mind's nourishment." Through yogic practice, prāṇa is brought into the avadhūti, or central channel, and is transformed into wisdom-prāṇa. Then the mind can recognize its funda-mental nature.
19. Phadampa Sanggye (d. 1117) is a South Indian teacher who brought the practices of shije and chö ("pacifying" and "cutting") to Tibet.
20. Machik Labdrön (1055-1149), the main disciple and consort of Phadampa Sanggye, is the great female siddha who spread the teachings of the chö lineage in Tibet.

21. Tölpopa Sherap Gyaltzen (1292-1361) is the founder of the Jonang school, which emphasized the *Kālachakra Tantra* and the teaching of tathāgatagarbha, or buddha nature.

22. Tāranātha (b. 1575), a famous teacher of the Jonang school, wrote a well-known history of Buddhism in India, as well as several important texts on the *Kālachakra Tantra*.

23. Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo (1820-1892) is one of the leaders of the nineteenth-century Rime (“unbiased”) movement in Tibet. He was a root guru of Jamgön Kongtrül Lodrö Thaye. In the following two stanzas, Ösel Trülpe Dorje and Padma Do Ngak Lingpa are names given to Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo from a prophecy of Thangtong Gyalpo.

24. The two types of knowing are knowledge of ultimate and relative phenomena: (1) knowing the true nature just as it is (Tib. *jitawa; ji lta ba*) and (2) knowing all phenomena to their full extent (Tib. *jinyepa; ji snyed pa*).

25. This image is used in ati teachings to describe the nature of primordial enlightenment. The “youthful kāya” is enlightenment, which is always present. The “vase” contains all dharmas and gives rise to all phenomena.

26. The names in the next four stanzas belong to the author of the text, Jamgön Kongtrül Lodrö Thaye. Jamgön Kongtrül includes himself in this guru supplication, because he composed this text for his disciples’ practice at their request. He received the first name when he took the vinaya vows, the second when he took the bodhisattva vow, the third when he received abhiṣheka, and the last when he was recognized as a tertön.

27. This and the following three verses present the four reminders: (1) the preciousness of having attained a human birth, (2) the impermanence of everything in the world, (3) the unsatisfactory nature of saṃsāric existence, and (4) the certainty of karmic cause and effect.

28. Yama is the lord of death, who presides over the suffering of the hell realms.

29. Dzongshö is in the kingdom of Dege in Kham, East Tibet, near Palpung Monastery. Deshek Düpa is the name of the main retreat center at Palpung, built by Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo and Jamgön Kongtrül Lodrö Thaye, where the latter wrote many of his works.