

Aspirations for Mahamudra

Rangjung Dorje, Karmapa III

Namo guru.

Gurus and yidams, deities of the mandala,
Buddhas of the three times and ten directions and your children,
Consider me with kindness,
Grant your blessing that all my wishes be realized.

Sprung from the snow mountain of the pure actions and intentions,
Mine and those of all sentient beings without limit,
May the river of virtue undefiled by the three spheres
Flow into the ocean of the four bodies of buddha.

As long as I have not realized this,
Through all my lifetimes, birth after birth,
May not even the words for defilement and suffering be heard
And may I enjoy the prosperity of oceans of happiness and virtue.

Having obtained this excellent free and well-favored life
Along with faith, energy and intelligence,
Having attended a worthy master and received the pith of the sacred instructions,
May I practice the sacred dharma properly in all my lives without interruption.

The study of scriptures frees one from the veil of ignorance.
The contemplation of oral instructions overcomes the darkness of doubt.
Light born of meditation illuminates the way things are.
May the radiance of the three wisdoms increase.

The significance of the ground is the two truths,
free from the extremes of eternalism and nihilism.
The excellent path, the two accumulations
free from the extremes of assumption and denial.
The result obtained is the two benefits,
free from the extremes of existence and peace.
May I meet the dharma which is free from error.

The ground of refinement is mind itself, indivisible luminosity and emptiness.
The refining, the great vajra composure of mahamudra.
What is to be refined, the incidental stains of confusion.
The result of refining, the unstained dharmakaya, may I realize it.

Confidence in outlook is cutting assumptions about the ground.
The key to meditation is maintaining that without distraction.
The supreme activity is to exercise the sense of meditation in everything.
May I have confidence in outlook, meditation and activity.

All dharmas are projections of the mind.
As for mind, there is no mind; mind's nature is empty.
Empty and immediate, mind appears as everything.
Investigating it well, may I settle the basic points.

Appearances, which never existed in themselves, have been confused as objects.
Awareness itself, because of ignorance, has been confused as a self.
Through the power of dualistic fixation I wander in the realm of existence.
May ignorance and confusion be completely resolved.

It doesn't exist; even buddhas do not see it.
It doesn't not exist; it is the origin of samsara and nirvana.
No contradiction; conjunction, the middle way.
May I realize the pure being of mind, free of extremes.

If one says, "it is this," nothing has been posited.
If one says, "It is not this," nothing has been denied.
Unconditioned pure being transcends intellect.
May I gain conviction in the ultimate position.

Not realizing it, one circles in the ocean of samsara.
Realizing it, buddha isn't anywhere else.
"It is everything." "It isn't anything." None of this.
Pure being, the basis of everything, may I see any misunderstanding here.

Since appearance is mind and emptiness is mind,
Since realization is mind and delusion is mind,
Since arising is mind and cessation is mind,
May all assumptions about mind be eliminated.

Unpolluted by meditation with intellectual efforts,
Undisturbed by the winds of everyday affairs,
Not manipulating, knowing how to let what is true be itself,
May I become skilled in this practice of mind and maintain it.

The waves of subtle and coarse thoughts calm down in their own ground.
Motionless, the river of mind abides naturally.
Free from the contaminations of dullness and torpor,
May I establish the still ocean of shamata.
When one looks again and again at the mind which cannot be looked at,
And sees vividly for what it is, the meaning of not seeing,
Doubts about the meaning of "is" and "is not" are resolved.
Without confusion, may my own face know itself.

Looking at objects, there is no object, one sees mind.
Looking at mind, there is no mind, it is empty of nature.
Looking at both of these, dualistic clinging subsides on its own.
May I realize sheer clarity, the way mind is.

Free from mental constructions, it is called mahamudra.
Free from extremes, it is called madhyamika.
Everything complete here, it is also called maha ati.
May I attain the confidence that, in understanding one, all are realized.

The great bliss of non-attachment is continuous.
Sheer clarity without fixations is free of obscurations.
Passing beyond intellect, non-thought is naturally present.
May these experiences continually arise without effort.

Attachment to good and fixation on experience subside on their own.
Confusion and evil concepts are cleared away in the realm of ultimate nature.
In the ordinary mind, there is no rejection or acceptance, no separation or attainment.
May I realize the truth of pure being, complete simplicity.

While the nature of beings has always been full enlightenment,
Not realizing this, they wander in endless samsara.
For the boundless suffering of sentient beings
May overwhelming compassion be born in my being.

While such compassion is active and immediate,
In the moment of compassion, its essential emptiness is nakedly clear.
This conjunction is the undeviating supreme path.
Inseparable from it, may I meditate day and night.

From the power of meditation come eyes and actual knowledge,
Sentient beings are ripened, and domains of enlightenment refined.
Aspirations for the realization of all aspects of buddhahood are fulfilled.
May I complete these three—fulfillment, ripening and refinement—and become buddha.

By the compassion of the buddhas and bodhisattvas of the ten directions
And the power of whatever pure virtue there may be,
May my wishes and those of all beings
Be fulfilled as we ask in this way.¹

¹ *Aspirations for Mahamudra, the definite point of the teachings, was composed by Lord Rangjung Dorje, Karmapa III. This translation was made by Ken McLeod with reference to earlier translations by Denis Eysseric and the Nalanda Translation Committee.*