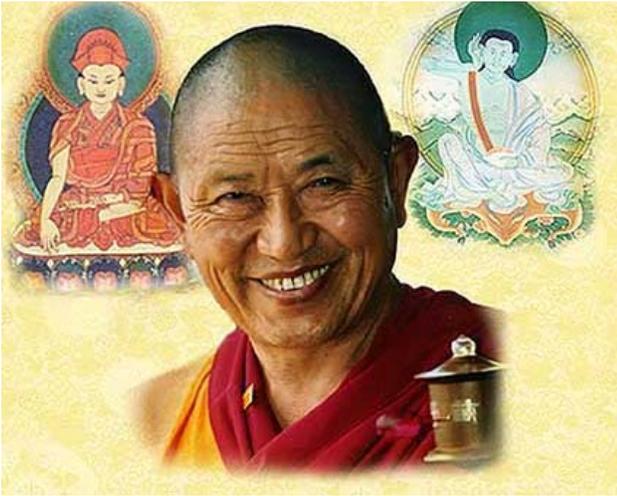


## H.E. Garchen Rinpoche's Commentary on *The Aspiration Prayer of Kuntuzangpo*

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Oral Translation by Ina Dhargye

Transcribed by Ratnashri Meditation Center, Sweden



*Ho! Everything - appearance and existence, samsara and nirvana - has a single Ground, yet two paths and two fruitions, and magically displays as awareness or unawareness. Through Kuntuzangpo's prayer, may all beings become Buddhas, completely perfected in the abode of the Dharmadhatu.*

*Appearance* refers to whatever appears on the conventional level, that is, all appearances that appear in this billion-fold limitless universe. The billion-fold universe, in terms of number, is the third order thousand-fold universe, which is very vast. But actually the universe is limitless. Limitless universe is what the Buddha have already seen and mentioned in the ancient texts. Actually nowadays even scientists after much investigation find that universe (with countless stars and planets) is really endless, in accordance with the ancient words of the Buddha. So why do they all come into *existence*? Conventional universe comes into existence due to the clinging, fixation and grasping of beings. It is the grasping attachment to the self which creates this manifestation of self and others, the outer limitless universe and inner sentient beings. That is what creates all of *samsara and nirvana*. On the pure level, it creates the pure state of Buddha's forms, the countless Purelands and so on. On the impure level, there are the three realms of samsaric existence – desire, form and formless realms. It creates both *samsara and nirvana* that appear limitlessly. Buddha has realized the great varieties of beings. If you take animals as an example, there are beings that are as large as a mountain and there are beings as small as an atomic particle (a subtle life form in water). Then there are also beings without a body. Even though they have no body, they experience

suffering. They still possess the four aggregates – feeling, conception, karmic formations and consciousness. They just do not have the physical substantial form. It is just like when a person is sleeping, there is still a sense of “I” grasping and attachment to “I”. Even in our dreams without a body, we experience all sorts of sufferings and fears that appears based on the sense of an “I” and “self”. As long as we do not separate from the grasping of “I” and “self”, even if we separate from our physical body, we will never be free from suffering. This is what Buddha has realized. Buddha said, “These three realms of existence have the nature of suffering and the root of that suffering is self-grasping.” It says in the 37 Bodhisattva Practices: “All suffering without exception comes from wishing for our own happiness.” Until we become free from our self-grasping, we will never become free from fear. Even though beings have no body, they are like worldly gods, not like wisdom pure gods. These worldly gods are still sentient beings. On the impure level, their bodies are like rainbow in the sky, but they experience suffering and great fear. They are not free from suffering and they cannot grant us any protection. The wisdom gods, on the other hand, are able to grant us temporary and ultimate protection, but the worldly gods are just like criminals. We are making friends with criminals. Sometimes they benefit us and sometimes they harm us. If we please them, they might give us some benefits but if we displease them, they may harm us right away. They cannot ultimately benefit us. Therefore His Holiness the Dalai Lama advised us not to supplicate to the worldly gods. There are two types of gods – the worldly gods and the wisdom gods. Some people call those worldly gods evil spirits or demons. It is proper to say that because they have an evil intension, a competitive mind. Therefore they cannot really benefit us. If you think about all these sentient beings in these three realms: some being as large as a mountain while other being as small as a particle in water, you gain an understanding of the vastness of beings. Yet they all share the same wish, that is, they all want to be happy and they all do not want to suffer. For example, even a tiny little creature with a subtle tiny body in water has a mind and therefore it wants to experience happiness and it does not want to suffer, just like a person. So no matter in which form and size we appear, we all have perfectly same wishes and the same feelings.

*Has a single Ground, yet two paths and two fruitions.* The single Ground (basis) can be understood from the outer, inner and secret aspects. Regarding the outer

aspect of the single basis, first all the appearances and existence including the infinite universes and sentient beings has a single basis, that is, it consists of the five elements – earth, water, fire, wind and space. Within space, other elements arise and the universe appears. No matter what appears in the universe, it all consists of these five elements. For example, a person's body consists of the five elements (flesh and bone are the earth elements, blood is the water element, breath is the wind element, warmth/heat is the fire element and the mind is the space element). So the outer five elements and the inner five elements of a person's body and the afflictions of the person's mind are all related to each other. The essence of all beings is the same even though the outer bodies appear in different ways, e.g. a person, an animal or a living creature all possess a body that consists of the five elements. The inner aspect of the single basis is that within the mind, all sentient beings even animals possess the five afflictions. They all share the same wish to experience happiness and not experience suffering. Scientists nowadays spend lots of time and money to try to figure out in the world the behavior of animals, what they are doing, eating, how they are behaving themselves etc. They are driven by the same desire as human beings. The body and mind of a human being and of an animal are exactly the same regarding the basis. The outer basis is the same and consists of the five elements. The inner basis is the same that we all share the same wish to experience happiness and not to suffer. In that case, the outer and inner forms are the same, but why do they still appear in so many different forms? That is due to the diversity of karma. The secret single basis is what the Buddha explained as the basic nature of the mind itself. That mind is the basis of all samsara and nirvana. It is like light energy. This secret single basis is shared commonly by all beings. Our body has five elements and on the single basis of the mind itself is the space element. Actually space element is also a part of the other five elements. The mind which is like space is the basis of samsara and nirvana. Buddha has realized that within that single basis (the mind), Buddha and sentient beings are one. They do not exist separately.

Buddha has realized that although everything that appears and exists in samsara and nirvana is limitless and vast as space, it has a single basis, yet two paths and two fruitions. Buddha has attained three qualities – all-knowing wisdom, loving compassion and power to protect others. Through the all-knowing wisdom, Buddha has realized that although there is a single basis, the extent of suffering of sentient beings is endless. With great love and compassion, Buddha tried to find a way to liberate sentient beings from suffering. Through Buddha's power to protect beings, he found that although this universe's suffering is endless, it comes down to a single cause which is self-grasping. Self-

grasping cannot be easily destroyed even if you attack it with an atomic bomb. Buddha has realized that if you only give rise to a wish to benefit others – the altruistic mind – at that moment, there is no self-grasping. Therefore in the 37 Bodhisattva Practices it says “The perfect Buddha arises from the altruistic mind”. So there is a single basis and there are two paths and two fruitions. The path of accomplishing other's benefits that leads to the fruition of happiness and the path of self-cherishing that leads to the fruition of suffering. Two paths here do not refer to the physical paths that we walk on, rather they refer to different ways of thinking in our mind depending on knowing and not knowing the working of karma (karma and its fruition).

There are two fruitions. This can be seen by looking at e.g. the difference between happiness and suffering human beings and animals experience or the difference between the happiness experiences of the bodhisattvas of the bhumis and the sufferings of those human beings that grasp at the self. Within that, among beings, there are different degrees of suffering. What is most important to understand here is that it is not the outer appearances or the outer conditions of happiness that matter, but rather the experience of the mind is most important. To illustrate this point, I refer to my own personal experience at the time of imprisonment. Many people were imprisoned at that time, so the outer circumstances were the same for all the people. We were in the same prison and we wore the same clothes and ate the same food and so on. Still there was a great variety of different experiences. In general there were two sections in the prison: one section held all the lamas and the monks and the other section held the rest of the people. The lamas and monks were kept separately since they were considered to have committed greater faults and thus got greater sentences than the others. But apart from that, everything was the same. Every Sunday, lamas and monks would get together and have a good time. Together we would laugh and enjoy ourselves. Sometimes the prison guard would come and say, “Do you know that this is a prison? Why are you enjoying so much? Don't you know that you had a sentence to sit here? This is not a place where you should enjoy yourself in the prison.” This is important to mention because at the same time, there were other prisoners who committed suicide all the time. I was really amazed by the difference between knowing and not knowing the working of karma (karma and its fruition) and thus how the mind views things. This is what determines our happiness and suffering. We can see a big contrast in experiences between humans and animals, but even among humans, you can see great varieties of happiness and suffering. This is due to a great variety of different karma that people have previously created. Therefore there are different fruitions. This example shows that it is really

not the outer circumstances that make the difference, but really the inner mind, the way the mind views things.

*Magically displays as Awareness or unawareness,* awareness or unawareness means knowing or not knowing the single Ground, the paths and the working of karma (karma and its fruition). One path is to transform suffering into happiness; the other one is to transform happiness into suffering. In samsara, first we may find some happiness, e.g. we get rich, we get married and we get very happy. Then it gets worse and worse, we fight all the time and both are miserable so happiness turns into suffering. So we have transformed happiness into suffering. It is a different way of thinking. Our state of mind is the key to determine whether or not we transform happiness into suffering or suffering into happiness. So how should we think in order to transform suffering into happiness? In any Buddhist tradition, in the beginning of the prayer “May all mother sentient beings, boundless as the sky, have happiness and the causes of happiness...” So what is your happiness? Why are you happy? Happiness is something for which you created the causes yourself in your past lives. In your past lives, you have done something through your body and speech that came with the motivation of love in your mind. That is why you now experience such happiness. If you understand that you will think, if I want to experience some small happiness later on, I must cultivate more love in my mind. The prayer continues, “May they be free from suffering and the causes of suffering...”. So what is your suffering or your difficulties? Who did that? You created it yourself. How? In the past, you did that with the mind of anger and jealousy. How did that come about? It came from self-grasping. In the 37 Practices it says “All sufferings come from wishing for one’s own happiness and the perfect Buddha arises from the altruistic mind.” The cause of happiness of the three realms is just that, it is the single mind of altruism, love. This is what the Buddha has shown us. Buddha said, “This is the cause of happiness and you should practice it. These are the causes of suffering and you should give them up.” If you understand all that, you will open your eyes to karma, you will be aware and know what to do and what not to do. For example when I was in prison, at that time, I also recognized that it was my own karma for which I had created the causes in the past. Not everyone ended up in prison, e.g. His Holiness the Dalai Lama was able to successfully escape to India. Some other people like me were not able to do that. I realized that I myself had created that cause. Where is the cause right now? The cause is within my own mind. My own actual real enemy is my own anger, my own jealousy. If I would get angry at anyone at all, it would not be at that regime but it would be at my own affliction within my own mind. Also by this experience, I recognized that I paid off my karmic debt. By experiencing suffering, I purified some negative

karma. So I find it very beneficial. It is very useful just like doing a surgery, that is painful but it is good for you. It is a useful suffering. You see it in a positive way although it is temporarily painful. This is just a different way of viewing it and thinking about it. The reason why I did not experience suffering was because I understood karma. If you understand karma, you too can abandon the causes of suffering and create the causes of happiness.

*Through Kuntuzangpo's prayer, may all beings become Buddhas, completely perfected in the abode of the Dharmadhatu.* In other words, may all beings attain Enlightenment. Who is Kuntuzangpo (Primordial Buddha of Samantabhadra)? Actually it is the nature of your own mind, your Buddha nature. It is also known as “the one gone to bliss” which means that the nature of your own mind is inherently blissful. Buddha has said, “All sentient beings are Buddha because they have the mind. The mind is the Buddha.” Therefore when people say, “I am a Buddhist or I am not a Buddhist.” These are all temporary concepts of the mind. Actually because they have a mind, the nature of the mind is the Buddha. The nature of the mind itself primordially has always been the Buddha. Therefore it says “The Buddha nature pervades all beings because all beings possess the cause of Enlightenment.” They all can attain the state of Enlightenment if they understand the karma that they created in the past. If you do not understand the workings of the karma and you are not aware, then you are transforming happiness into suffering. You are transforming friends into enemies. Our fortune and riches may become the cause of miseries. We can only find suffering. This is one path and the other path is to understand karma, change the way of thinking and find happiness within suffering. Kuntuzangpo is your own mind and in order to realize that mind, we need awareness that means we need to understand the workings of karma. May they all attain Enlightenment means may they all be free from suffering, may they resolve their own suffering by understanding the workings of the karma.

Regarding *the abode of the Dharmadhatu*, there are also outer, inner and secret aspects. The outer abode of the Dharmadhatu is the countless, vast Purelands in Sambhogakaya forms, e.g. the Pureland of Dewachen. The inner abode of Dharmadhatu is that in order to get to the Purelands, we have to let go of the grasping and cultivate loving kindness and compassion. In the 37 Buddhisattva practices it says, “The Six Paramitas (generosity, moral ethics, patience, perseverance, concentration and wisdom) are the antidotes to the six afflictions. If you cultivate lots of compassion even in this life, you will be able to stay in the state of great equanimity, without bias between enemies and friends,

and be happy this life. You experience temporary happiness in the higher realms continuously. Ultimately you will attain the state of Enlightenment. The inner abode of Dharmadhatu is to abide in the state of love and compassion continuously. The secret abode of Dharmadhatu is the Buddha nature, the ultimate truth of the union of emptiness and compassion that creates countless Purelands and Buddha manifestations. The order of moving through the three aspects is to begin with the inner aspect by first cultivating love and compassion continuously without diminishing, like ice melting. Then when it melts, it becomes one with the vast ocean water, then you attain the secret abode of Dharmadhatu which then creates the outer forms of the Dharmadhatu, palaces, Purelands and Buddha manifestations. May all beings attain all these aspects of the abode of Dharmadhatu.

Some people may have doubts regarding the abode of Dharmadhatu. They wonder where those Purelands are and whether or not they exist. Some people say that they do not actually exist because they are just mind. It is true that they arise from the mind. How? They arise from the mind by actualizing the two-fold bodhicitta – relative and ultimate. E.g. if you are in Dewachen, all the outer appearances arise from bodhicitta. In fact, all the Purelands are of Sambhogakaya and each is endowed with Five Certainties of Sambhogakaya. First, certainty of place – the place is the Akanishta Pureland (Dharmakaya Akanishta palace). Dharmadhatu is Akanishta. Second, the certainty of time – ongoing continuously, eternally. Third, certainty of the teacher – Vajradhara. Fourth, certainty of Dharma – Mahayana teaching. Fifth, certainty of retinue – bodhisattvas of high bhūmis. These are the five certainties of all those Sambhogakaya Purelands. Therefore if we set our aspiration to go there, we can certainly go there. It really only depends on if we have set our aspiration or not. Though I do not really have good qualities, nevertheless, I can resolve your doubts and assure you that they really exist.

*The Ground of all is uncompounded, and the self-arising Great Expanse, beyond expression, has neither the name 'samsara' nor 'nirvana'. Realizing just this you are a Buddha; not realizing this, you are a being wandering in samsara.*

*The Ground of all is uncompounded*

The ultimate ground of all here refers to the mind. If you look at the person, not the body of the person but the mind of the person, that mind is uncompounded. All the phenomena that appear in samsara and nirvana (including the body) are compounded (lack any inherent existence) phenomena because they appear in a dualistic way. Whatever appears in a dualistic way – subject and

object – is compounded. Whatever is compounded is by nature impermanent. But the mind itself is uncompounded. The outer example of that is space. Space is uncompounded since it is not being created by any causes and it cannot be destroyed by any conditions. When you look at the mind, the mind is just like space. For example, you have received instructions on mahamudra or Dzogchen and you meditated looking at your mind, you cannot say that it is there, it exists, because it is like space. But you cannot say that it is not there, it does not exist, because it is also very clear that there is a clear knowing awareness that knows its own empty-space-like nature and no one has made the mind, so the mind is uncompounded.

*And the self-arising Great Expanse, beyond expression*

The space is self-arising since it exists on its own naturally; it is not created by any causes. If you look at the mind, it is just like space. Viewing it like space you can develop confidence that that is the nature of the mind. The mind is beyond expression. Buddha said, 'The nature of mind is inexpressible, beyond words and thoughts. That is the perfection of wisdom.' Whoever realizes the nature of the mind attains this perfection of wisdom.

*Has neither the name 'samsara' nor 'nirvana'*

It cannot be given any name, neither samsara nor nirvana. When we are introduced to mahamudra, often there is an example of a large tree, with trunk and many branches, leaves and fruits. If you cut through the trunk of the tree, all these thousands of branches and leaves will wither. Mind is like the trunk of the tree. That is the essence from which samsara and nirvana, everything arises. It cannot be given the name samsara or nirvana. It cannot be called samsara since ultimately there is no real samsara because the mind itself, the basis, is the Buddha. It cannot be called nirvana since for the time being, all the sentient beings who do not see the nature of the mind, temporarily, they are like blocks of ice wandering in the six realms of samsara.

*Realizing just this you are a Buddha; not realizing this, you are a being wandering in samsara.*

The only difference between Buddha and sentient beings is seeing or not seeing the nature of the mind. For example it is like a big tree, those who do not see the nature of the mind are like the lower part, the root of the tree. Those who realize the nature of the mind in addition to have cultivated bodhicitta (altruistic mind of enlightenment) are in the higher realms temporarily and they are like the branches of the same tree. Those who attain the ultimate enlightenment, see the ultimate truth, they are like the flowers on the same tree and the countless seeds that emerge from these flowers. For example when one person attains enlightenment, that

person, Buddha, can manifest countless emanations of nirmanakaya (form body) and sambhogakaya (enjoyment body) to benefit sentient beings. Just like when one flower blossoms, from this one flower, countless seeds can emerge. Actually the entire universe and all beings are of the nature of nirmanakaya according to the Vajrayana view. It is said that all phenomena have the nature of the three kayas, but those who cannot see that, they may even see faults in an actual nirmanakaya. For example, there are some people in this world who see faults in His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

#### *Realizing just this you are a Buddha*

Realizing this (the nature of your mind), the mind becomes vast, just like space. When you attain enlightenment, you become a Buddha, Sang-ge. Sang-ge means clear away so ultimately what is cleared when you attain enlightenment? What is cleared away is the dualistic perception of self and others. When that is cleared away, the mind is just like space, the mind can prevail anywhere. It is just that our dualistic perception of self and others keeps us confined in this non-pervasive state and we wander in samsara. When you realize non-duality, that the mind is like space, it is all pervasive. Milarepa said, 'Realizing that the mind is not different than space is to actualize the dharmakaya.' By looking at the mind like space, you can understand how there is no duality within space or within the mind. If you understand that, even though you might see a lot of people, you still understand that it is only a separation of different forms, different bodies, but the mind is a single one. There is no difference at all. There is no duality within the mind. That is the seeing of the ultimate truth. Even though you see various forms, you will not follow any thoughts or any kind of afflictions e.g. attachment, hatred, jealousy, pride etc. that arise. You will not hold anything to be substantially, truly existent separate from yourself. You see things but see them as illusory displays just like waves appearing on the ocean. If you see everything like that, the mind becomes very relaxed. Only within that state can you resolve all your suffering, all your afflictions that arise – by recognizing that they are only mental arising, only concepts in your mind.

#### *Not realizing this, you are a being wandering in samsara*

When suffering is cleared away, you realize and you are a Buddha. You realize by first cultivating the relative bodhicitta and on the basis of that cultivate ultimate bodhicitta. When you realize ultimate bodhicitta, you realize that your true nature is never born and never dies, so there is no more fear. What is true for most beings is that they do not realize this and they wander in samsara. Even if they are born as human beings of the six realms for example, their conduct often more resembles that of an animal, therefore they experience incredible suffering. When one attains enlightenment, one realizes

that all sentient beings are actually the same. This is a very profound point that by realizing the nature of the mind only, you are a Buddha and only not being aware of it, not realizing this, makes you a sentient being wandering in samsara.

#### *Realizing just this you are a Buddha; not realizing this, you are a being wandering in samsara.*

This marks the line between being a Buddha or a sentient being, between wandering or not wandering in samsara. Where does this difference come about? For example, according to the Vajrayana practice, you habituate yourself with the practice of the generation and completion stages, dream yoga, mahamudra and Dzogchen. When you realize this view, you may recognize the luminosity of the deep sleep state, that is, you recognize the nature of your mind. If you habituate that while you are alive and later when you die, right after you have died, first you come to the nature of the mind, the basis, the ground of all, naturally by the virtue of the Buddha nature. This is when all the eighty thoughts/afflictions have stopped. The mind comes to its natural state. The mind is very clear, the luminosity of the basic nature of mind becomes manifest. For example, there were students who asked a question about this: they have a perception of this blue light appearing behind their eyes. There is an appearance of a blue light. Actually that is the light that appears when you come to the natural state of the mind after death. There is this blue luminosity that appears. It is mahamudra. When you recognize the luminosity, it is like mother meeting with her child. So when you recognize this and not allow any other thought to arise and no other thought arises before that, you attain enlightenment in the dharmakaya. Also somebody else asked what the meaning of attaining enlightenment in a single life time is. It really means that you attain enlightenment in the first bardo recognizing the dharmakaya. Those who have practiced will understand that. There is this blue luminosity that arises. If you recognize it and not allow other thought to arise and you merge indivisibly with your dharmakaya nature. Also during your life time, sleeping for example, if you do not recognize it, upon waking up from sleeping, the first thing that comes is the sense of an 'I', you think something like, I have slept and so on. This 'I' also comes back when you have died. It is that idea of an 'I' to which you have habituated since beginningless time in samsara. All our karma and habitual imprints are stored within an 'I'. All arise from that 'I'. All come back when the 'I' come back. It is just like putting back your old dirty clothes. You took it off but then you put the old dirty clothes back on. Again you wander anywhere in the six realms of samsara. Not realizing this, you are a being wandering in samsara. If you do not realize the nature of your mind, you will not attain enlightenment in the dharmakaya when the 'I' comes back. Therefore, you

continue to wander in samsara. These two lines are actually very significant. If you recognize it, this line refers to when you recognize in the first bardo after death, your true nature, you come to the basic true nature of the mind, you attain enlightenment in the dharmakaya or if you do not recognize that and if you have habituated to the deity yoga the creation stage during your life time, you may remember your yidam deity, then you attain enlightenment in the sambhogakaya form in the second bardo. Or you attain enlightenment in the third bardo as the nirmanakaya, that is, if you have cultivated bodhicitta. These two lines here really show the difference between Buddhas and sentient beings. So after we have died, the crucial point comes in and it will determine whether we are a Buddha or a sentient being. This is when all the appearances of the entire life settle down and the appearances of the next life have not appeared yet. So there is a state in between and that is like a junction, this marks the line between becoming a Buddha or becoming a sentient being wandering in samsara. Therefore, this is an extremely important point. This is why now when we are alive, we must train ourselves.

*I pray that all you beings of the three realms may realize the true meaning of the inexpressible Ground. I, Kuntuzangpo, have realized the truth of this Ground free from cause and condition, which is just this self-arising awareness.*

*I pray that all you beings of the three realms may realize the true meaning of the inexpressible Ground.*  
Inexpressible Ground: It is inexpressible because it can neither be said to be existing nor non-existing. We try to figure it out and want to express it as this or as that, as existing or non-existing, but it cannot be understood in such terms. We cannot say that there is really something that exists since we cannot find it anywhere. It is like space, we cannot say whether it exists or not exists. There is nothing substantial or tangible to be found. But at the same time, we cannot say that it does not exist because it also engages in various activities. So it is empty like space. At the same time, like within space, within emptiness, it is performing its space-like functions. For example, if there would be no space, no emptiness, then nobody could move anywhere. Space creates possibility for movement. There is this consciousness that engages in all those things within this space-like nature of the mind. That is, the mind itself – the discriminating awareness that engages itself in different activities of the world or the dharma and so on. So it is a union of clarity and emptiness that neither can be said to be existing nor non-existing. It is something that must be realized by viewing it oneself; otherwise, it is hard to understand. The question that often comes up is: How can we know this inexpressible ground? We can

only really know it by looking at our own mind, so you must look at your own mind. When you look at your own mind with clarity, there is a clear knowing awareness that knows whatever thought and concept arises in the mind. What is that awareness? Where is it? How does it look like? Does it have a color or shape? We cannot identify it in such terms at all. It is just something that we know, but it cannot be put into words, cannot be expressed to others, but whoever knows it, whoever understands it, knows this inexpressible ground, knows that it is inexpressible. So until we know that, until we realize that, there will always be questions in our mind regarding that. This is a sign that we do not actually know our true nature. This inexpressible single ground in terms of outer, inner and secret is actually the utmost secret single basis. Again, we have said before that the outer single basis is the body whereas the inner single basis is our mind with afflictions and thoughts and the inner secret basis is the mind itself, that is, the Buddha. As Buddha has said, ‘Within all sentient beings is the Buddha.’ If you realize that, you understand that we are all like a single manifold continuum. Jigten Sumgön said, ‘I am a yogi who has realized that my own mind, the guru’s mind and the Buddha’s mind are one.’ They are not different even in the slightest. It is just like a mala string, a string of a mala garland, it is one single continuum. Sentient beings have not realized that the mind actually is one. That is why the Buddha said, ‘Within all sentient beings is the Buddha.’ Whoever understands that sees no difference. For example, you see a little insect or a creature, but you know that it is not really just a creature since it has a mind and that mind on its basis is the Buddha even though it appears in this way temporarily. All beings who have not actually realized that will always see faults. They will even see faults in the Buddha. They investigate what other people do. For example, there are people who criticize and look at the faults of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

*I, Kuntuzangpo, have realized the truth of this Ground free from cause and condition, which is just this self-arising awareness.*

The truth of this Ground is free from cause and condition. Kuntuzangpo, the Ground, the basis of mind is never created from causes so it does not arise from a cause, therefore it cannot be destroyed by any condition, just like space. Space never arises from any cause and it cannot be destroyed by any condition. That which does not arise and cannot be destroyed is what is called this ‘self-arising awareness’ here. This self-arising awareness exists on its own naturally without relying on causes and conditions. So the nature of this self-arising awareness is empty like space because it does not arise from causes and cannot be destroyed by conditions. However, it is not just empty, nothingness, there is a knowing factor to it. That is, this self-arising awareness

where self-arising here refers to the space-like empty nature, and awareness here refers to the knowing aspect of this nature. It is non-dual at the expanse of space, naturally self-exists but then it also knows. The moment you look at this nature, there is a knowing capacity that knows things. Everything that we talk about here is about the mind. Therefore when you hear the instructions, you should apply them to your mind, face inward and look inside your own mind. We cannot understand it by projecting outward and investigating the outer conditions, the outer world. Because then you would not be able to understand anything.

This is really about the nature of one's own mind. When you look at your own mind, it has not arisen from causes, so it is never born or established. But then where is it? You may think that it is nowhere, it does not exist, it is not there. But then there is this consciousness that knows, the one that thinks that I cannot find it, it is not there. There is a clear conscious mind that knows that it cannot be found. So we cannot say that there is nothing at all. The one that thinks that I cannot find it, it exists or does not exist, it is not there and so on is the one we should look at. There is this clear knowing mind, clear consciousness that knows that there is nothing there. This is the quality of awareness. It knows that it is self-arisen like space. That is the one that we need to look at. This clear conscious mind is always there. It is just that normally we do not look at it. We do not notice its presence, but it is actually always there. Normally it is projected outward. This awareness, this mind is the mind that all beings have in the three realms (desire, form and formless realms) in samsara. There is no being that does not have this rigpa, awareness. They have this mind and therefore they have this awareness and they are aware of things. However, even though all beings possess awareness, this awareness turns into the awareness of 'self' and everything revolves around the 'I'. Everything is somehow related to me, these are my things, my child, my spouse and so on, all those things that we possess and own. This awareness pervades all those things that are around us, the things that we own or identify with. That is what we are aware of. We know those things that we claim to be ours. But then we never actually see this rigpa awareness, the one that knows that it is mine; the one that takes ownership of those things or identify with those things. We actually never look at that one. Not looking at that one is unawareness or ignorance. In that context of being ignorant, we call this mind the rational consciousness. Milarepa said, 'In the context of being a sentient being, we are referred to as the rational consciousness that faces outward. If we know the nature of this consciousness, that itself is wisdom.' When we project outward, this consciousness discerns objects, which is called the rational consciousness. But when it faces inward, it looks at itself; then it is called wisdom.

When awareness sees its own face (just like seeing your own face), that is, when you see yourself, that is what we call primordial wisdom. Therefore Milarepa who had realized the view said, 'I do not see ordinary or rational consciousness, I only see primordial wisdom. There is no real rational consciousness, there is only wisdom.' It is said, 'Within the expanse of primordial wisdom, all the Buddhas are one.' That is the quality of primordial wisdom on the ultimate level, the quality of this 'self-arising awareness'. Whenever you see the true mind awareness within yourself, you can refer to that as rigpa, awareness. The nature of it is clear and empty. Whoever sees it, it is called primordial wisdom or rigpa awareness. Whoever is unaware of it, whoever does not see it, such a one is ignorant, then we refer to the same mind as the rational consciousness. But it is that quality of mind, the mind itself from where the Buddha arises. When you hear these words, you should really look inside your own mind and apply that to your own mind. Since you come here and endure many hardships to receive these instructions, you must really face inward and see how that really is in your own mind. From the perspective of logical reasoning and scriptures, that is referred to as the Madhyamaka or the Middle Way view. However, what is explained here is actually complete within many countless scriptures and volumes of the Middle Way, the Madhyamaka and through many years of study and explanations. But then it is also explained in the practice lineage of blessings – in the old tantric system, it is referred to as Dzogchen or in the new tantric system as Mahamudra. But it is all the same thing. Jigten Sumgön said that it is like given three different names to one single person. Actually it cannot be given a name, it cannot be called anything. It has no name. Therefore Jigten Sumgön said, 'Being untouched by the three great ones (three views Madhyamaka, Dzogchen and Mahamudra) is the supreme realization.' Untouched means it cannot be given a name.

In the beginning of the Samantabhadra Prayer it says that there is a single Ground, single basis; there is no duality and that the single basis is the primordial wisdom. Once there is duality or dualistic perception, that becomes samsara. This single basis is referred to as Madhyamaka or Dzogchen or Mahamudra. But all refers to the same single basis. In order to recognize rigpa or awareness, first we need to recognize our rational consciousness. We need to observe the one who is, e.g. eating the food and then labels it as tasting good or tasting not good or the one who always labels things as good or bad. So the one who is engaging all these activities, including labelling, even the slightest thing or even when you do not do anything at all. You are thinking, the one who has all those thoughts, making plans as, I will do this, I will not do that and so on. So that is the one that is doing all these things. That is the one who is doing everything in

samsara and nirvana. That one is rigpa, awareness. First we need to recognize the one who is engaging in all those activities. In order to recognize rigpa we first we need to recognize the self. In the past, there was a beginning practitioner who requested from his guru the pointing out the nature of the mind instructions. That lama said to him, 'First you need to find the self, only if you can find the self can I give you instructions.' This student was looking all day and night and tried to find the self but could not find it. In the morning he went back to the guru who asked. 'Where is the self? Have you found it?' The student replied, 'I was looking everywhere but I could not find the self.' The guru said, 'What are you doing here then? Why do you come here at all then?' The student replied, 'I came here to receive the Dharma teachings.' The guru said, "This is where it is. 'I am here to listen to the Dharma teachings'," so that 'I' cannot be seen, but it is doing things. The one that thinks 'I am', the one that thinks there is an 'I' that is listening to the Dharma teachings, that is the 'I' that is engaging in all the activities in samsara and nirvana. It is doing all the various things. You come here to receive the teachings. We think that there is an 'I' that comes to receive the teachings, 'I' practice the Dharma and so on. This is how we first recognize the 'I'. The 'I' that we need to see is the one that is thinking 'I am doing all these things. I am going here and there', so the one who is thinking that, is the one that we need to recognize, the one that is doing all kinds of things. Therefore look at the one who is engaging in various activities, that is just like seeing your own face, seeing yourself. So that is one method to recognize the awareness according to the introduction instructions that this beginning student received from his master.

*It is unstained by outer expression and inner thought, affirmation or denial*

Previously we have recognized this awareness, rigpa, but then where is it actually? Is it outside or inside? Does it exist (affirmation) or not exist (denial)? This is the next investigation here. You might think that the mind goes outward, for example, when we think about India or China, or whatever we think of according to our habitual imprints in our mind, it seems that the mind or consciousness goes out there. Or when we meditate, people often say that the mind does not stay, it always wanders outside, goes somewhere else. We think that the mind can go outside. But actually all those things that we think of and different places where the mind wanders are actually things that appear back to the mind. The mind actually does not go there, but you are thinking about them within your own mind. When you think that it is outer, the mind goes outside; actually it is not outside, but you come back to the inside, it is the thoughts within your own mind. The one who thinks that is the

perception of 'I'. You think the mind goes outward but actually it is inside. Once you have confirmed that it cannot be outside because everything that you think of is actually thought inside the mind, not elsewhere. Then you think, if it is not outside, it is inside. But then if it is inside, where is it inside? For example, scientists might say that it is in the brain or some people say that it is in the heart. But it is in none of those places, actually it is all pervasive. It pervades your entire body. Your feelings like pleasure or pain pervade all over the body. For example when you poke yourself with a needle in the body, you immediately have a sensation wherever you poke yourself with a needle, there is a feeling. So you feel pleasure or pain in the body, even if it is just a very subtle sensation. It is everywhere in your body, all pervasive. We cannot say that it is somewhere inside. It is everywhere. If we think that it is inside then again it seems to be outside everywhere. When you think that it is outside, then it seems that it is actually inside, not outside. This shows that the mind is not an object of such investigation in terms of outer or inner.

Regarding affirmation and denial, some people say when you look at the mind, it becomes like space and there is really no self, it does not really exist, just like space. Therefore they say that nothing really exists. Karma also does not really exist. Karma is a made-up lie, not true, therefore I can do whatever I want. They think for example when we die, we just go out of existence like a withering flower. That is a view of nihilism – when we think that nothing exist at all. But then it is not tenable because if we think that nothing exists, what happens for example when we are sleeping at night. When you are sleeping at night, your body just lies there, nothing happen to the body but you are dreaming. In your dream, you are engaging in all sorts of activities and you experience fear, happiness and suffering and so on and you do all kinds of things in your dream. So at that time, you have not disappeared, you are still there, just your body has disappeared, your body just lying there in the bed sleeping, but the day-time appearances and perceptions are all gone, all disappeared, but you still exist in your own experience. Therefore there is a sign that there is a bardo, something after we have died. There is something after this life. So we can understand that when we observe our perceptions of daytime and nighttime in our dreams.

Some people on the other hand think that things do actually exist. This is an eternalistic view and they would say that it is foolish when the Buddhists say that nothing exists since everything is clearly there. "We can see this world, this universe, so many people, how can you say that it is not there? It is clearly there and you can see it." However, even though things appear to us in this way now, the outer universe for example this planet one day will turn into dust and then it is all gone and within that

there is not a single being who do not have to die. So whatever appears now will perish later, it therefore appears just like an illusory display. We cannot say that things really exist because things are compounded and therefore they are impermanent. When we argue that things really exist, we will not be able to hold this argument. But also if we say things do not really exist, we also cannot hold this argument because there is still karma that is ripening. If we engage in various actions of virtues or non-virtues, there will be an actual experience of happiness and suffering. So that is why we cannot say that nothing exists at all. Both of these can be refuted. So affirmation is basically an eternalistic view and denial is a nihilistic view. Both cannot withstand any scrutiny that the Buddha has applied. So when you look at your own mind, your consciousness, it therefore says that it is free from defect. It is a self-manifesting display free from defect. Nothing really exists nor not exists, it is also neither outer nor inner. It is free from the four extremes according to how it is explained in the scriptures. Those four extremes are summarized by the two extremes of eternalism or nihilism. All kinds of mistaken views gathered together within those two. Ultimately all of these views cannot hold. For example when a person thinks it is 'me' pointing at their body, in the *Thirty-Seven Bodhisattva Practices* says that everything: your own body, wealth and possessions are all impermanent. It does not really exist. This is something that we need to investigate inside our own mind. When we look inside our own mind, we can see that it transcends these four extremes. Awareness, self-manifesting awareness is free from any defect because it cannot be investigated in terms of existence, non-existence, outer or inner.

*... and is not defiled by the darkness of unmindfulness.  
Thus this self-manifesting display is free from defects.*

Samantabhadra's mind or Buddha nature is not defiled by the darkness of unmindfulness. Buddha nature is always present, it is our true nature. Often the mind becomes very clear, very undefiled, for example, when emotions such as fear or anger arises, the mind is very clear, very precise and we can engage in any kind of activity even in a samsaric sense. There is a state of very clear mind in certain circumstances. This clear mind in this moment is not defiled by the darkness of unmindfulness. On the ultimate level, that is the mind of Samantabhadra which is not defiled, not obscured. There is no sense of unmindfulness. Actually that mind is always there in the mind of all sentient beings but their mind is obscured by their afflictions. They have many emotions in their mind that make it unclear. It is like water, for example, vast ocean water that is completely undefiled. There is no mud in the water even though the ocean might be very deep. You can see all the animals in the water very clearly because it is undefiled. But if you

only have a small puddle of water, if it is much defiled and you cannot see anything. For example, if you pour milk into tea, then it becomes completely obscured. You cannot see anything at the bottom. So that is obscuration. Although all sentient beings possess this mind of Samantabhadra, the spaces of mind, they are obscured by this unmindfulness. Samantabhadra Kuntuzangpo himself is never obscured by this unmindfulness, by ignorance. Thus he is free from defects, always free from any defect. The nature of mind is always free from defect.

*I, Kuntuzangpo, abide as Intrinsic Awareness.  
Even though the three realms were to be destroyed,  
there is no fear. There is no attachment to the five  
desirable qualities of sense objects.*

Even if this world were to be destroyed, there would be no fear and it would not affect awareness at all because it always continues to abide like space and space does not arise and it never dies. It is never destroyed, so there is no fear.

*In self-arising consciousness, free of thoughts,*

Free of thoughts means whatever arises, there is no grasping, no thought of this is real or this is unreal and so on. Things do appear but there is no grasping at them, no holding them to be true at all. There is no dualistic grasping seeing them as separate objects. This is consciousness free of thought.

*there is neither solid form nor the five poisons.*

From self-grasping arises afflictions and with an afflicted mind, we engage in actions and we accumulate karma. These actions leave an imprint in the mind and this imprint leads to the creation of any form in the six realms of samsara. Now we have this body of flesh, blood and bones. Because we have this body, we can see that it is there and we think that it is real and it is actually there. But ultimately, there is no solid form and therefore there are no five poisons. It is only when we follow our afflictions, engage in actions and accumulate karma that we will have real experience of suffering in the three lower realms. It is called five 'poisons' because these afflictions create suffering, a suffering body, since we engage in actions and as a result suffering will ripen.

*In the unceasing clarity of awareness, singular in  
essence, there yet arises the display of the five wisdoms.*

The unceasing clarity of awareness, the singular essence, that is, the empty essence of the mind, is like a pure clear crystal. It possesses five qualities. This is like when the sun shines on the crystal, five colors rainbow lights fill up the room. In the empowerment, for example, when we

are introduced to the nature of the mind, this is the example that is given: the crystal and the rainbow lights emerging from it. To those who are intelligent, they understand what is meant and shown here. So when the sun shines on the crystal and the rainbow colors emerging from the crystal, sentient beings who have not realized the nature of the mind, they will just look at the rainbow and they see just the rainbow. They see the rainbow completely detached from the crystal. They will not understand that the rainbow actually emerges from the crystal. They will see it as separate phenomenon. This is how when we perceive things in a dualistic manner in the six realms of samsara. Due to our various karma imprints, we experience various types of happiness and suffering. Whatever appears, we think that it is real, appear separately from us, just like looking at those rainbows, not recognizing that they are actually the reflections of our own mind. Therefore dualistic perception of self and others is what creates samsara. Samantabhadra's mind, the actual nature of mind, somebody who has realized the mind will understand that all that appears is the reflections of one's own mind. That is the difference between Buddha and sentient beings. Buddha recognizes that all appearances are the reflections of one's own mind. Milarepa has said, "First we must resolve that all appearances are mind and mind itself is emptiness." This is when we are introduced to the view of mahamudra. We say that all outer appearances samsara and nirvana are all the reflections of the mind. If you understand the nature of the mind, you have realized the nature of all of samsara and nirvana by only knowing your own mind because all appearances are the reflections of your own mind just like the rainbow lights are the reflections coming from the crystals. Everything is created by the mind. Everything arises from the mind, all of samsara and nirvana. Some people have difficulty in understanding that because of their own self-grasping, they relate all to the 'I's. How is it that 'I', that my mind has created all of samsara and nirvana. That seems to be quite foolish to say and so on. They relate that only to 'my' mind from the self-grasping perspective. But ultimately when we recognize the nature of the mind, we can understand that all appearances that are made by the mind and that mind is empty, like a crystal ball, the single essence, from which arise the five qualities just like rainbow lights.

*In the unceasing clarity of Awareness, singular in essence, there yet arises the display of the five wisdoms.*

*The five wisdoms:* The first of the five wisdoms is the *dharmadhatu wisdom*, that is, this space-like, all-pervasive nature of the mind. It pervades everything, samsara and nirvana. There is nothing that is not pervaded by it. So it is boundless, limitless, all-pervasive. Therefore it pervades everything, samsara and

nirvana. In samsara, it pervades the animate and the inanimate, that is, the universe and all the sentient beings. This space-like, all-pervasive quality of the mind is called the *dharmadhatu wisdom*. From this nature, from the quality of *bodhicitta*, countless purelands and Buddha-manifestations arise. From the impure perspective, the six realms of samsara, the three lower realms and so on appear. These are the reflections or appearances that arise from self-grasping and the various afflictions. Whatever appears then is like a reflection in the mirror. Anything can be reflected in a mirror. The mind is like a mirror, anything can be reflected, samsara and nirvana. This is the second wisdom, the *mirror-like wisdom*, anything appears within the mirror. From the perspective of the mirror, there is no thought about the reflections being good or bad and anything can appear. There is actually no concept of good and bad in the mirror. The mirror does not think I want this kind of reflection, but I do not want that kind of reflection. There is no such dualistic perception from the side of the mirror. Thus anything can be reflected within that mirror. That is the mirror-like wisdom. Then third, there is the non-dual wisdom of having no grasping of positive or negative and so on. In samsara, we have preferences. We are attached to what we call good and we have an aversion against what we call bad. So we have many thoughts of attachment and aversion towards many things because we see them as actually truly existing. But from the perspective of somebody who has seen the true nature of the mind, there is no such perception. Because there is no grasping and no thought about whatever appears to it; there is great equanimity with regard to whatever appears, that is the *wisdom of equanimity*. So things appear but there is no grasping to whatever appears. It is all the same. Yet, there is also clear discerning awareness, although it is all the same. It clearly knows that virtuous thoughts and non-virtuous thoughts lead to the precise ripening of happiness and suffering. This is the *discriminating wisdom* that sees clearly the karmic results, the consequences of various thoughts that arise, although there is equanimity. Whatever arises then, whatever ripens, exists only temporarily just like a bubble in water. So temporarily the six realms of samsara manifest on the impure level. From the pure perspective, the purelands and Buddha forms appear. The purelands appear naturally. Nobody creates them or makes them appear. These natural appearances appear from the interdependence of causes and conditions and this is what we call the *all-accomplishing wisdom*. These five wisdoms are complete within awareness, the nature of the mind. From a pure perspective, they are referred to as the five wisdoms. From the impure perspective in the mind of sentient beings who hold things to be true as truly existing, they manifest as the five afflictions. On the impure level, we have the five afflictions in the mind of

sentient beings as well as the five elements on the outer level. They are all related to one another. The elements and the afflictions are related. Therefore, for example, when the afflictions arise, the mind of sentient beings become disturbed by the three poisons (attachment, hatred, jealousy). Then naturally, it affects the outer five elements in this world. The elements can cause harm to the elements of one's body, for example, anger/hatred has a quality of heat and that creates illnesses related to heat or attachment creates illnesses related to cold and so on. These are real experiences that come from the disturbed inner mind that negatively affect the outer five elements. These are related to the pure aspects, the five wisdoms of the Buddhas and bodhisattvas. That is, gradually when the mind matures and ripens, those five afflictions ripens into the five wisdoms. So these two group of five are all related to one another, that is because they are all arise from the single ground, the single basis.

*From the ripening of these five wisdoms, the five original Buddha families emerge, and through the expanse of their wisdom, the forty-two peaceful Buddhas appear. Through the arising power of the five wisdoms, the sixty wrathful Herukas manifest.*

When these five wisdoms ripen, that is, when the afflictions have transformed into wisdoms, the five Dhyani Buddhas, the five Buddha families emerge and then they multiply. There appear countless purelands and Buddha manifestations or the various deities. From each of the five wisdoms, it can be combined with all of the five wisdoms and the five wisdoms emerge. This is easier to understand when we look at it from the impure perspective of sentient beings – it happens also with the afflictions. From one affliction, all the other five afflictions arise. They mix with one another. For example when one has strong desire to possess certain thing, one will have jealousy towards those who possess more than one and pride towards those who possess less than one. Moreover, one hates those who prevent one from obtaining it. They are all supported by ignorance. Ignorance thinks that it is fine to have afflictions; it is good to have these afflictions because we think that we must defeat our enemies and we must protect our friends. According to the 37 Bodhisattva Practices, these are thoughts of attachment to friends and aversion to enemies. So we think that it is alright to have those afflictions or emotions. But it is not alright because by following them, we are creating the karma of much suffering in many future lifetimes in the three lower realms, that is, when these afflictions begin to ripen. So from each of these five afflictions, from one affliction, the other five afflictions can arise. They all can combine with each other from the impure perspective. The same is true from the pure perspective. Each of the five

wisdoms can be combined with each other. The five wisdoms become the enlightened body, speech, mind, the qualities and activities of the five Dhyani Buddhas, the five Buddha families emerge and then they multiply. There are 42 peaceful Buddhas appear. Then they multiply as they combine with each other, we have the 100 peaceful and wrathful deities and so on. They multiply. There are countless purelands and Buddha manifestations. So that is from a pure perspective. From an impure perspective of the six realms of samsara, manifests in many infinite ways depending on whichever of the afflictions arise. In general, it says that ignorance leads to the birth of an animal or desire leads to birth as a human being. Each subtle affliction or emotion manifests into a certain manifestation of samsara in various different forms. For example a poisonous snake and a human being, their mind is still exactly the same. But why are their bodies separate? It is because the poisonous snake is the natural reflection or the embodiment of anger/hatred. So each of the affliction manifests in a certain way and this is the way how we should understand how the causes ripen into results when they encounter certain conditions. We can understand from a pure perspective and also from an impure perspective. But first we look at it from the impure perspective how they are combined and then looking at our own mind, we can finally understand how the same principle is applied to the pure perspective.

*Thus the Ground Awareness is never mistaken or wrong. I, Kuntuzangpo, am the original Buddha of all, and through this prayer of mine, may all you beings who wander in the three realms of samsara realize this self-arising Awareness, and may your great wisdom spontaneously increase!*

This ground awareness has never been mistaken or wrong, it has never been confused or deluded. That is, the mind of Buddhas and bodhisattvas does not grasp at duality, it does not perceive duality. Therefore it is undeluded and never mistaken or wrong. But they also see that those sentient beings who have not realized that and they experience actual manifestation of suffering. Therefore they feel great compassion, so this is a prayer of great compassion. All those beings in all the three realms (desire, form and formless) have a single basis of mind. They only must recognize their own self-arising awareness and when they recognize that, their great wisdoms will spontaneously increase. Then they will be able to enjoy countless purelands in the form of sambhogakayas. Here we talk about the ultimate intent of the enlightened mind of the Buddha, but also from a practical perspective, for the practitioners, they can gain an experience in that. First we need to understand the working of karma and then cultivate love and compassion, and we meditate, looking at the nature of

our mind. When we do that, we can gain an experience to transform all the afflictions that arise into wisdom. So the afflictions still arise, the way they arise is still the same, that is, the afflictions that arise in the mind of a yogin, a normal practitioner, or any sentient being is still the same. They do arise, but then a yogin or practitioner will recognize that these afflictions lack any true self-existence, any inherent true existence. They recognize that they are nondual from the mind, that is, there is no dualistic perception of self and other in their mind. They recognize that whatever arises, whatever affliction or thought arises, it is just a temporary arising due to some temporary conditions. For example, when anger or jealousy arises, they understand that it only arises in this moment momentarily due to some conditions and that only if they hold onto it and accumulate karma will that be result of suffering ripening. Therefore, they understand how they can let them go and liberate them just like waves dissolving back into the ocean. This is how they transform afflictions into wisdom. For example if you have a heap of wood and you light fire, in an instant, no matter how much wood there is it all transform into fire. That is the quality of engaging in actual practice. So by practice we can transform all negative circumstances into a positive circumstance into support to our practice or we can transform all suffering into happiness, we can transform all afflictions, all problems that arise into happiness.

*My emanations will continuously manifest in billions of unimaginable ways, appearing in forms to help you beings who can be trained.*

From this space-like nature which is dharmakaya, appears sambhogakaya which is like clouds and rainbow, then nirmanakaya which is like raindrops which appear in the human world. Nirmanakaya appears in the human world, for example, beings like H.H. the Dalai Lama or other bodhisattvas that we know by name or those that are unknown. There are actually countless bodhisattvas appearing anywhere in all of the realms of samsara. So here there is a measure of billions of ways, but actually it is measureless or incalculable appearances/manifestations of the Buddha. Basically wherever there are sentient beings, there are manifestations of the Buddha to tame those to be tamed. So what is the difference between those who train and those to be trained? Those who train are our teachers or spiritual teachers and they are also human beings. So the difference lies within the mind. For example, H.H. the Dalai Lama is also a human being but his mind is different than the mind of an ordinary sentient being. An ordinary sentient being, for example, they cannot even care for themselves, they drink and smoke and when they encounter just a slightest problem, they are overwhelmed and they have no way to free themselves from it or deal

with it. Sometimes, they even commit suicide. So it comes ultimately down to ignorance, the karma of unmindfulness which is the difference between those who train and those to be trained. So on the human level, they are the same but their mind is different. They appear not only in the human realm but they appear anywhere in the six realms of samsara. For example we talk about the six forms of Shakyamunis appearing in the six realms of samsara, but then it is not even a countable number of Shakyamuni, they appear actually countless. Wherever there are sentient beings, there are emanations of the Buddhas, there are countless emanations of the Buddhas. How do the Buddhas see sentient beings? Actually, Buddhas see sentient beings, those to be trained, also in nirmanakayas because all phenomena have the nature of the three kayas. Those who have realized the view of enlightenment, that is, those who have realized the nature of the mind, to them, there is no distinction between those who train and those to be trained, they are all nirmanakayas. Like the Buddha has said, beings are only temporarily obscured. So this temporary obscuration is only due to self-grasping which is like a block of ice floating on the ocean. This is what makes us temporarily sentient beings which do not really ultimately exist. So for the time being when we are in the state of being an ice block for example we think that I am a Buddhist or I am not a Buddhist, I am this and I am that, I am something. Actually to the Buddha, all beings are nirmanakayas because all beings have a mind and that mind is the same, not one is better or one is worse, that mind is Buddha nature and all beings have that mind. Also beings without a body have that mind, the Buddha nature. Buddha said that within all sentient beings is the Buddha, that is, the mind of the Buddha. So from the perspective of samsaric sentient beings, they do not recognize that. So due to this I, the perception of I, this I have to be something we label ourselves as I am this and I am that, which is due to our dualistic perception of self and others and our grasping at the concrete actual reality of various appearances. If you understand that this is not the reality, this I does not exist, then the mind just naturally calm down and relaxes. Otherwise we cling to the idea of I, once there is this I, it always has to be something, it labels itself and that separates and divides more and more, for example, within religions, I am a Muslim and he is a Christian, that separates us. And even within Buddhism, we separate ourselves by saying I am a sakyas follower and he is a gelupa. And then within one lineage, we separate and so on. The more we grasp onto I, the more separation we create and then this makes us smaller and smaller, subtler and subtler, so the more we grasp to the self, the more subtle our body will become, for example we are like a little creature. This is all created by this dualistic grasping to self and others that is what creates all appearances of samsara. So from the perspective of the Buddha manifestations within their

mind, there is no such dualistic perception. So understanding that, there is no such thought as I am a Buddhist or this or that. All of that falls apart. In order for that to be accomplished, first we must let go of our self-clinging and that we do by cultivating an altruistic mind – always having the wish to benefit other sentient beings. Actually when you have a wish to benefit others, that is actually your own greatest benefit. So somebody who really understand their Buddhist view correctly knows that if I want to benefit myself, I really must have a wish to benefit others because for as long as I am wishing for my own benefit, I will actually never get that benefit. For as long as I only want to protect myself, I can never be protected because negative karma will always come back to me, for example, our house catches fire and there is nothing we can do about it or we fall down the cliff, we drown in water and so on. Karma comes back to us, in order to clear away, we must clear away self-grasping, so those who train and those who are to be trained sentient beings are all actually nirmanakayas, the only difference is the slight difference of the mind. Some has self-grasping and others have an altruistic mind but they all are nirmanakayas. Those who train appear in forms to help you beings who can be trained in various different ways in the six realms of samsara in many different manifestations of nirmanakayas. For example, there is the created nirmanakaya, there is the incarnated nirmanakaya and there is the manifold nirmanakaya. For example the created nirmanakaya is the creation of a thangka or a statue for example. It is a nirmanakaya because when we see that we understand something about them, for example when we see the image of a thangka or deity, we know what this Buddha has done in his lifetime for sentient beings and so on. So when we look at their stories, we understand what this particular Buddha has done and will surely be to our benefit. So in this sense, they are also nirmanakaya manifestations. What they do to help us beings who can be trained is that they open our eyes to the workings of karma, they give eyes to those who do not have eyesight. They clear away our ignorance and they give legs to those who cannot walk and so forth.

*My emanations will continuously manifest  
in billions of unimaginable ways,  
appearing in forms to help you beings who can be  
trained.*

Those who train appear in forms to help us beings who can be trained in various different ways in the six realms of samsara, in many different manifestations of nirmanakayas. For example, there are the created nirmanakaya, the incarnated nirmanakaya and the manifold nirmanakaya. The created nirmanakaya like thankas, statues and so on, it is actually very beneficial

to understand the meaning of all that because often when people see them, they think that they are unreal, just something that are made out of copper and so on, not the real Buddha. This is actually not true because these Buddha forms also benefit beings and they perform a function. They appear in many ways out of the all-knowing wisdom of the Buddha to tame beings. If you really understand what they really are, you see them as Buddha and the qualities that come from that; then all the blessings and power of Buddha will also come to you because it is an activity of the mind which depends on the way you view things, that is, the arising of all phenomena depends on causes and conditions and depends on one's own way of viewing it and one's own aspiration. For those who do not understand, they will also not receive their blessings and power. So the blessings cannot enter their mind. Therefore if you view them as the actual emanation of the form of the Buddha, the nirmanakaya, the thankha or a statue will really become that. For example, I really see them as the deity – I feel great love, the love of the deity. For example, there are stories about Atisha or other great bodhisattvas who actually saw the form of the deity and then the deity spoke to them and gave them a prophecy. They actually perform a function. Or for example, the Tara image that Sogyal Rinpoche distributed, that particular Tara image was said to have directly spoken to great masters like Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo Kunga Rinpoche, the previous Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche and also Dehra Dun Chokyi Lingpa and so on. This is an example of a thankha, an image which also perform the activity of a deity. Or if you have a small Buddha statue in your home, it can actually perform a Buddha's activity because whenever you see it, you think of the Buddha, think of the qualities of the Buddha. When you think of the Buddha, you think of the Dharma, you remember what the Buddha taught – karma, cause and effect, and so on. So you begin to think about that. That can then place the mind of bodhicitta into your mind which again is the antidote to self-grasping. So it is not just a statue made of metal like gold or so, but rather it performs a function, an activity. Later when you die, you will die without any self-grasping. So the benefit is really inconceivable.

Then there is the incarnated nirmanakaya that appear for example in form of a guru, the spiritual teacher. Not only that, they can also appear in any form, like the form of animals. Scientists nowadays also observe the behavior of little animals, for example ants or insects. They have a whole system just like humans. For instance, they have the king, ministers, retinue and servants and so on. They fight wars, they make a living and so on. These are the things that we did not know before. But they do things just like we do things. So for them according to their capacity, Buddha can appear and show them an

appropriate path, a method to them on the relative level. In brief, there is no place where there is no Buddha. The Buddha really pervades everywhere. Buddha's mind is vast. Some people when they see an animal, they see the animal from an impure perspective as a poor suffering being, so they cultivate compassion when they see the suffering of the animal. But then they are also pure by nature, whenever their karma and imprints are purified, they also will become liberated. Right now they are the manifestation or reflections of their own afflictions – hatred, ignorance and so on. But when those afflictions and karma are purified, the Buddha nature is still the same; it has not changed in the slightest. If you see it in this way, you will see all beings – those to be trained and those who train in a pure way as nirmanakayas. You have to understand that nirmanakayas, Buddha forms, can appear in many different ways to benefit sentient beings and can perform actual activities on different levels. Then there is the manifold nirmanakaya that appears in many different ways, for example, the clouds, the rain and the sun and the moon, the five elements. All of these natural occurrences naturally exist, nobody creates them. That is the all-accomplishing wisdom, the natural creation of bodhicitta that appears to benefit sentient beings. Then of course, because they are related to our own mind, so if we are afflicted, those elements can also cause harm, for example, as earthquakes or as harm caused by water and fire and so on. That harm is experienced as the collective karma of beings. However, on the basis, by nature, they are actually pure; the five elements by nature are pure. Everything that appears has the nature of nirmanakaya and that is all shown in the line “*Appearing in forms to help you beings who can be trained in billions of unimaginable ways.*” So just this line has actually a very profound meaning.

*Through my compassionate prayer,  
may all of you beings who wander in the three realms of  
samsara escape from the six life forms!*

*Through this compassionate prayer,* in the Buddhist practice, anything is accomplished through this aspiration. Actually we have the virtue of three powers. Our aspirations, our prayers are accomplished through first of all, the power of one's own way of thinking, our own thought. That is, our trust in karma, especially in the cause of bodhicitta and also one's own faith and devotion, so that is the power of your own mind. Then secondly, through the power of all the Buddhas of the three times. What is their power? There are countless Buddhas that have appeared in the three times. It is said in the *Great Liberation Sutra* that there are as many as there are sand grains in the River Ganges that have appeared. Even though they are not here anymore, their mind is always there, their Buddha nature, their love and compassion for beings are never lost; it is always there.

So their mind of love always prevails, so we bring to mind all the Buddha's love. Then the third power is the power of Dharmadhatu. That is that only temporarily, beings experience various forms of happiness and suffering due to their individual karma, afflictions, so temporarily, they appear separately, but they have a single basis, so temporarily they appear like ice blocks in the water.

Through these three great powers, I cultivated great trust in the blessings of the Buddhas and their power to protect us. I personally have great trust and therefore, I can really access and connect to the love of the Buddhas. Actually everyone who have entered into Buddha's teachings, we all made the same prayer, *may all mother sentient beings, limitless as space have happiness and the causes of happiness...* When we take the refuge vow, for example, we say those words. It is not just something that we say but we also remember the meaning. Even if we cannot always remember the meaning, at the moment when we read this prayer, we remember the meaning of that. And then we might think that I have taken the refuge vow, so I am a Buddhist, therefore I must give love and compassion to all sentient beings. I really found that through those three great powers, the deity really has the power to protect us. It has protected my own life many times, and therefore I have great trust in that. So temporarily we will be liberated from temporary suffering in the six realms of samsara and ultimately we attain enlightenment. Because I have seen the actual benefit, I supplicate to the deity, and then I trust that the deity will protect me. For example, when I was in war, I experienced the fears of war, my life was protected. For example, there are many veterans from the First and Second World War who were bombarded by weapons from the air and also guns on the ground and so on. Many of them did not die, they survived, for example, I myself at the time in war, I wondered what happened to me, why I did not die. It is because I was protected by Tara. Or, I wondered why I was thrown into prison, at that time we were seven people in our home, but it was only me who actually was arrested and I was the youngest one. However, out of many hundreds of people, I was again protected and I was liberated, I did not die. For example, I felt very ill at that time and I was cured from the illness, I did not die. Or, I did not die from starvation when there was a famine. There were eight times when Tara protected my life. It is important to mention that if you really trust in the deity, for example supplicate to Tara, it has really power that can protect you. That is why I tell my disciples to pray to Tara, practice Tara, because I have found from personal experience that if you do that, she can actually protect you. Therefore I tell anyone, for example, if you have no job, I tell you to practice Tara or if you want to have a child, I tell you to practice Tara. I do that because I really trust in that because she

protected me many times. Also I have the image of Tara above the pillow and it really gives me the feeling that she is really there to protect me. Also once, I had the experience that she actually touched my head with her hand from that image. So this is the vision of the image, the image that I have created to place above my bed. So it is when you really trust that the power of the deity, the blessing will enter your mind. It is not only something that we recite verbally, but we also need to understand the qualities of the deity, of the nirmanakaya, for example, appearing in the form of a thanka, a picture. So when we hear these stories, it might benefit us to cultivate trust. If you trust in that, the deity will really come to protect you, to benefit you. Because if you do not really understand and there is no trust, no real faith, then the deity cannot help you much even though the deity is very compassionate. So it is also necessary from our part to cultivate faith and trust in the deity. In order to cultivate that, it is necessary to understand the qualities of nirmanakaya.

We may wonder what actually the enlightened activities of the Buddhas are and what they actually do. Buddha emanations appear in the six realms of samsara in many unimaginable ways, for example in the human world, one of the things that they do for human beings is that they benefit those of fortunate karma, by first introducing them to the working of karma, and then leading them on the path to bodhicitta. These beings gradually enter the three levels of the path – pratimoksha, bodhisattva and Vajrayana. In this way, the Buddhas benefit beings of fortunate karma, who attain enlightenment for their own purpose and then are able to benefit other sentient beings. For those who do not have the fortunate karma, those who are unable to cultivate faith and devotion, Buddha has given them other skillful means such as liberation by seeing, so only by seeing certain syllable for instance, the seed of liberation is planted in the mind; or there is liberation by hearing, for example we hear the sound of Dharma or the mantra and the seed of liberation is planted; or there is liberation by tasting, for example, the blessing pills, the mani pills that we eat. The benefits of these are explained in the *Forceful Waterfall Sutra*. Also there is the liberation by touching, by the sand of the sand mandala, for instance; for example when somebody has died and their bones are touched with this sand, that also plant the seed of liberation for them. There are many other different forms, for example, liberation by smell, the incense for instance, also liberate from suffering and plant the seed of liberation. So there are various different forms of liberation. And how do they become liberated? Those who lack the karmic fortune to cultivate faith to enter the path, for example, when they see liberation upon seeing or taste the liberation upon tasting, as a result of that, first they are born in the worldly god realm, that is, they are

released from the lower realms and they spend many years, a long time in the god realm, and after that they are born in the human realm where they slowly enter the path, take refuge, enter the dharma and ultimately they attain enlightenment. The purpose of these various forms of liberation – upon seeing, hearing, touching, tasting and so on – is to benefit not only beings with a body but also beings without a body, humans and nonhumans. It plants a seed of liberation in their mind. First those sentient beings of the three lower realms, they are caused to take birth in the three higher realms, so they are liberated from the lower realms. Those who are already in the higher realms, they will have the fortune to be brought onto the Path of Pratimoksha. All those who have already entered the Pratimoksha Path, they are led to the Path of Bodhisattva. Those who have entered the Bodhisattva's Path, they are shown the Path of Vajrayana which has a method to attain enlightenment in a single lifetime. During the empowerment, there are five sets of vows in relation to the five Dhyani Buddhas, thereafter comes the three levels of commitment: to release those who are not released, to liberate those who are not liberated and give breath to those without breath. These are the gradual ways that Buddhas benefit sentient beings.

Often people ask this question: where do all sentient beings actually come from? Here it says: ***From the beginning, you beings are deluded because you do not recognize the awareness of the ground. Being thus unmindful of what occurs is delusion – the very state of unawareness and the cause of going astray.*** So it is the non-recognition of the awareness of the ground. We do not recognize our own awareness and due to that we become unmindful, unconscious. Then with unmindfulness, even when we have some empty time, we want to use this time to rest or to sleep. We do not want to do anything else, so we are unconscious and unmindful. Then it says: ***From this delusive state comes a sudden fainting away and then a subtle consciousness of wavering fear.*** From that state, we consider our own activity as the most important and therefore fear arises and we always wonder what I am going to do. We are afraid and we try to find a way not to experience difficulties. For example, we think that I must work so that I don't get hungry or I must build a house or I must work so that I can care for my family, my wife/husband, my children and so on. I have to do it and it would not be okay not to do it. Of course we have to do that, but we are concerned about that all the time. Then when it comes to our own activities that we have to do, we consider ourselves as most important, so we do whatever it takes to benefit ourselves and we care little about how others are affected by that. If others are harmed by that, it does not bother and affect us much. So we consider ourselves as most important. Even between

two friends, the self is always most important. However, that will never lead to the desired happiness and well-being, rather it always ends in suffering. That is because there is no one who does not consider themselves as most important. Everyone sees it in this way. So that is unmindfulness, that is ignorance. Ignorance considers the self as most important. And then it says: ***From that wavering there arises a separation of self and the perception of others as enemies. Gradually the tendency of separation strengthens, and from this, the circle of samsara begins.*** So this tendency begins with the perception of a self and then there is an attachment to the self and naturally an aversion to all the others. Even when we are sleeping, we always worry about what I am going to do. So this ignorance is collected in our mind like snowflakes falling down day and night. It always accumulates in our mind. It accumulates when we are unmindful, when we are ignorant, so it is just like leaving this block of ice in the freezer and slowly it becomes harder and harder. It tightens up and solidifies more and more. So how this tendency strengthens is that it begins with not realizing the nature of your mind. Not seeing that nature, you perceive the self and then you perceive the self and others and then there is an attachment to the self and an aversion against the others and this is where samsara begins. In terms of timing, when it begins, it has been since beginningless time. Since beginningless time until now, we have been ignorant, have accumulated ignorance and this tendency gets stronger and stronger.

Then it says: ***Then the emotions of the five poisons develop. The actions of these emotions are endless.*** So how do the emotions of the five poisons develop? For example, when people think about the five poisons, they mostly look at their very coarse forms; for example they see attachment as just the coarse form of desire or they see hatred as just hatred. Then people say that I am not like that. I do not have a lot of hatred. I am not aggressive. I do not have a lot of desire and so on. So I am not much affected by these afflictions. But this is not really true because all of the afflictions have subtle versions of themselves. So the subtle form of attachment is our hopes and expectations to accomplish something. I want to accomplish this. This is a subtle form of attachment and desire. Then a subtle form of hatred for example is fear – what if I do not accomplish that. And then the subtle form of ignorance is doubt in our mind. These subtle forms are always in our mind continuously. As a practitioner, we can pay attention to how these subtle forms of afflictions develop into the coarse form. How hopes or expectations develop into desire, attachment and how fear develops into hatred and so on in the end. We talk about eighty different thoughts of afflictions, the coarse forms of afflictions, and then there are more subtle ones. So there are seven forms of ignorance, there are thirty-three forms of hatred or

aggression and there are forty forms of attachment. These are just the coarse forms of afflictions. One may think that I do not have that. I do not have this powerful hatred or anger in my mind. But you should not think about it in this way because the subtle forms are always continuously in our mind, always arise in our mind. So whenever they arise, you should recognize that this has the essence of attachment, this has the essence of aggression/hatred, each of those afflictions. So in a coarser form, we talk about the eighty thoughts of afflictions, but then in the subtler form, we talk about the eighty-four thousand different afflictions and then many more. There are countless afflictions.

Then it says: ***You beings lack awareness because you are unmindful, and this is the basis of your going astray. Through my prayer, may all you beings recognize your intrinsic awareness.*** So this basis of going astray, basis of delusion is unmindfulness, it is being unconscious of the nature of one's own mind, not seeing one's own true nature and due to that there arises perception of self and others, a dualistic perception. ***May all you beings recognize your intrinsic awareness, rigpa.*** So what is the quality of seeing your own true nature? Those who know how to meditate and who practice, they gain the experience of when a thought arises, whatever thought arise, first of all, they know that self and others do not exist and it is indivisible. They discern whatever arises, whatever thought arises, whatever affliction arises and recognize it – if I follow this, I accumulate karma and karma will ripen. Those who know how to practice, they have a trust, a faith in the workings of karma, so they first understand the causes of suffering, that is their Pratimosa Path that abandons the afflictions, understanding that they are causes of suffering and gradually understanding that the actual root of all sufferings is self-grasping, the only antidote to that is love and compassion, so they enter the Bodhisattva Path where they transform the afflictions. They recognize that all beings have been one's parents and therefore they are not our objects of afflictions, so it is not appropriate to get angry at them and so on. Then they recognize that even though anger still arises, but there is mindfulness, so it goes away and that is the entering of the Vajrayana Path. Mindfulness is just like a watch-guard that watches what arises and when it arises, it clearly discerns between virtue and nonvirtue and by recognizing it and not following those thoughts, they disappear just like waves dissolving into the ocean, that is when they gain the experience that afflictions become wisdom. So we called that the view of mahamudra or Dzogchen, but here we are only calling that ***recognizing intrinsic awareness, rigpa.*** If you recognize this awareness, whatever arises, those thoughts and emotions will naturally dissolve and they will not cause any feeling or reaction in your mind. They will naturally dissolve by being recognized.

So these ongoing actions of these emotions are endless. For example, we mentioned that there is this subtle form of desire, there is hope and there is fear and so on. That actually is endless. It is always there in our mind. For example, in a subtle form regarding food, we hope that we get something good to eat and then we want to first eat what we like, and what we do not like, we put it aside, we do not eat it. So in this way, we always accumulate these subtle forms of attachment and aversion. Of course, to recognize all of these subtle forms is very difficult. What is most important in all our activities is to generally understand that whatever happens, it is up to my karma, so this thought of attachment and aversion of hopes and fears are always in our mind, whether we engage in Dharma practice or in our worldly activities. We all have hopes and fears in our mind and then they develop into attachment and resentment, anger and so on. Then we are always ignorant because we do not recognize the fault in that, we do not recognize them, but they are always there in our mind. Since they are always there in our mind, they always leave an imprint in our mind. So the tendency becomes stronger and strengthens. So if we understand this view that it is our karma, actually only by trusting in that, we can overcome our difficulties of following our subtle forms of hopes and fears. So even though we have not recognized the nature of our mind, we can still overcome these tendencies by only trusting in karma. That is actually one of the good qualities of the Tibetan people, for example, they really naturally have this view. The Tibetan proverb says: If I am happy, it is the kindness of the Three Jewels and if I am miserable, it is my karma. When I am miserable and suffer, there is nothing that I can do about it, so they just let it be and recognize that this difficulty is my karma that I did. Knowing that, they do not think about it further, they just let it be, so it is just how it is. If I am happy, it is the kindness of the Three Jewels. So how is my happiness given to me by the Three Jewels? It is because what the Three Jewels teach us is that we should cultivate and cherish love and compassion, so if you are happy, you must have created the causes of happiness in the past life. The cause of happiness is love and this is what the Three Jewels teach us. So in the past life, you have done something with your body and speech that came from the mind of love and now you experience some happiness, for example, if you were generous and now you experience you have wealth, you are rich, or because you have observed ethical discipline, you have a precious human body, or because you have practiced patience, you have a long life, harmonious companion and a beautiful appearance. All the qualities of the higher realms come from love and the one who gave that to us are the Three Jewels. They taught us to cultivate love and then we followed that advice and cultivated love and with a loving mind, we engaged in actions of body and

speech and now we experience happiness as a result. Therefore we say: When I am happy, it is the kindness given to me by the Three Jewels. Also we say: When I suffer, I recognize it to be the force of my own karma, for example, if you lend a lot of money to your friend to run a business, but then that business goes down and your friend cannot pay you back, so normally you might think that now he took all my money and I lost all my money, it is his fault and you might sue him, fight with him; but if you understand karma, then you understand that this is just my own karma, there is nothing I can do about it, even if I fight, there is nothing that can be done because it is my karma. So somebody who does not understand that will get angry, get jealous and think that I have given all my money and by all means, he must pay me back, must give it back to me whether or not he can, he must give it back to me and if he cannot, we go to court and we sue them and so on. Actually, this is when we do not understand the workings of karma. For example when I was in prison, I also recognized that I did that myself with my own afflictions. Therefore when I am happy, it is the kindness of the Three Jewels and when I am suffering, it is my own karma. So when we think about karma, there is really no point of having many hopes, expectations or fears because we do not have so much choice, not so much freedom, it is our karma. We want to accomplish something but whether or not we will be successful depends on our karma. If we do not have the karma, we will not accomplish it even if we hope we will, even if we expect we will. And if we have the karma, even if we do not hope for it, we will accomplish it. We want to accomplish something, but we should not think much about it and just let it be. Let the thought be and do not think much about it because it will be determined by our karma. That goes for our worldly as well as dharma activities, for example, in our dharma activities, we may have hope, I want to serve the Three Jewels, I want to benefit sentient beings, but whether or not we can do that also depends on our karma. If I am able to, if it is my karma and I am able to do that, I rejoice, but if I am unable to do that, then it was my karma, so I just let the thought be and do not think much about it. So if you think about it from this perspective, it is actually quite easy and very beneficial because otherwise if you cannot think in this way, our subtle hopes and fears and expectations develop into great afflictions. When our hopes are not accomplished, oftentimes people even commit suicide, so only to understand the workings of karma is very beneficial. It is because we do not recognize our own awareness that we follow our afflictions and accumulate karma and experience suffering as a result. So, *through my prayer, may all you beings recognize your intrinsic awareness.* What is the distinction between awareness and unawareness? Previously we have said that when you recognize it, you are a Buddha and not recognizing it,

you are a sentient being wandering in samsara. Although there is a single basis of mind, when you recognize this basic nature of mind, the natural state of mind, that itself is the Buddha. In the Kagyu Lineage, it is said: sentient beings have not recognized that their own mind is the Buddha. When you recognize the nature of your own mind, your intrinsic awareness, that itself is the Buddha. Whenever you recognize that, you attain enlightenment.

***Innate unawareness means unmindfulness and distraction. Imputing unawareness means dualistic thoughts towards self and others. Both kinds of unawareness are the basis for the delusion of all beings.***

There are two forms of ignorance: the innate unawareness and the imputing unawareness. First, *innate unawareness means unmindfulness and distraction*. It is when you do not know how to properly look at your mind, the nature of your mind. You cannot properly see the nature of your mind. For example, some people say that when you meditate, you might go crazy, so maybe it is better not to meditate. But that is just the fault of not knowing how to actually look at the nature of the mind, how to meditate. That is mainly due to self-grasping. So for this reason, the preliminary of what we actually need to cultivate before we begin to meditate is bodhicitta and that is what all our lamas, our teachers in any center really tell us. The preliminaries are very important. When we look at the preliminaries, people are often overwhelmed and they think about all these numbers that they have to accumulate – 100,000 prostrations, the Hundred Syllable Mantra and so on – and thinking about that, they get tired. They think that it is so difficult to practice the preliminaries. But what is the actual preliminary that have to precede all of that before we engage in any practice? It is the wish to benefit others. That is most important. So bodhicitta is the preliminary to all different Dharma practices. Then on the basis of that, first we cultivate bodhicitta where it has not arisen. We have a wish to benefit others and we contemplate the Four Thoughts that Turn the Mind. First we understand what suffering is. We must understand the suffering nature of all sentient beings. It is not just now in our case, our own suffering, but the suffering of all beings. It is necessary to recognize that first because if we do not recognize suffering, we do not understand what suffering is, we will never find a proper method to eliminate suffering. That is why the Buddha first taught that first we must recognize and understand suffering. Then we must abandon the origins of suffering. First you need to recognize that you have an illness. If you do not recognize that, you also do not know what kind of medicine, what kind of method you need. Only when you know what illness you have do you know what kind of medicine you should take. Otherwise, if you do not

understand that, very quickly we grow tired of all the study, practice and the accumulations. You need to identify suffering and what causes suffering. For that we need to recognize that it all originate from within the mind, that is, the afflictions and thoughts that arise in our mind are those causes that we need to eliminate. With our body and our speech, we engage in actions that come from motivation within the mind. For example, when we are in a negative state of mind, we say harsh words to someone or we gossip and so on. All the non-virtuous actions that we engage in actually come from this negative state of mind. That ultimately comes from self-grasping. Therefore the actual, ultimate preliminary that we must first cultivate is an altruistic mind, the bodhicitta. In that sense, the preliminaries are indeed very important. But if we do not see that point, we may grow tired from and being overwhelmed by so many accumulations of the preliminaries. The actual preliminary in brief is the altruistic mind. If you feel that I do have a wish to benefit others; for example, I want that this country turns out well. I want the people here experience well-being and so on. That is an altruistic mind. An altruistic mind is the mind of wisdom. When there is an altruistic mind, self-grasping diminishes. So in whatever practice we do, we need to develop the preliminary of bodhicitta. Innate unawareness means unmindfulness and distraction. That is, we are unable to properly look at our mind. We are unmindful of our true nature. For example, if you cultivate an altruistic mind, you should investigate that mind, look at that mind, recognize it, what kind of mind is that. For example, if you have a friend that you love or you have a cat or a dog, a pet and so on, then just naturally, the nature of that is happiness. They want to be around you, stay next to you because this mind of altruism is a vast mind. Otherwise if we do not cultivate such a mind, if we are always angry and frustrated, then our mind solidifies more and more like a block of ice, ice of self-grasping. Then we cannot recognize anything. We are unmindful of anything. Then everything is about us. Then everyone appears as an enemy, a threat, even one's own family and friends, parents and children, we think that they do not like me because we cling to a self, we are selfish. Then we do not want to look at the nature of that because we are solidified by self-grasping. That is really the nature of the first kind of ignorance, the innate unawareness. We are unmindful because we do not actually look at our mind. The second ignorance, it says *Imputing unawareness means dualistic thoughts towards self and others*. Since we do not look at our mind, do not properly investigate and examine the actual nature of our mind, then that unawareness leads to the imputing unawareness which means we are labelling. For example, we are saying: this is how it is or this is not how it is; or it exists or it doesn't exist; or this is me and this is him; this is what it really is or this is what it really not is. When we

look at the outer universe, we see this world and we think that it is always there, it has been there for millions of years. It is there. So the outer universe and the sentient beings are all there. So the imputing unawareness or ignorance is that dualistic perception of self and other. We perceive countless sentient beings on the outer level and the outer universe, we see everything as duality separate from us. There is on the outer level the universe, on the inner level, you see self and other. Whatever we perceive, we think this is how it is, it is true. So we hold something to be true that actually isn't true. Actually, everything is compounded and therefore impermanent. But if we do not really investigate and look at it clearly, then it seems to be real. So imputing unawareness means dualistic thoughts towards self and others.

When did these two forms of ignorance arise? They always arise and have arisen since beginningless time in samsara. *Both kinds of unawareness are the basis for the delusion of all beings.* So the basis for the delusion of all beings is holding true something that isn't true, does not exist in that way. This grasping to reality becomes more and more solidified just like water freezing into ice. Actually the nature of all sentient beings' mind is Buddha nature which is like a vast ocean. Due to the two types of ignorance, the mind of sentient beings have become like ice, so ice blocks floating in the ocean that occasionally bump into each other and that create conflict. Although they are ice, and ice has the nature of water, they appear just like a stone, a rock. Although it is water, if you hit somebody on the head with an ice block, they will also bleed. Beings think that it is a rock even though it actually is ice, but they call it a rock. So that is ignorance because it does perform the function of a rock when you hit somebody on the head with ice, they also will bleed. Therefore, they think it is a rock. That is the ignorant view.

***Through Kuntuzangpo prayer, may all you beings wandering in samsara clear away the dark fog of unmindfulness, clear away the clinging thoughts of duality!***

*All the beings wandering in samsara, samsara here means the three realms of samsara. Clear away the dark fog of unmindfulness* means to clarify your mind and look at your mind as it is. The nature of the mind is clarity actually. Clarity means there is awareness, conscious awareness that recognizes whatever arises in the mind, whatever thought and so on that arises in the mind. What is the nature of this clarity then? When you look at the nature of this clarity that recognizes it, then all thoughts of the past might stop and the future thoughts have not yet arisen. Within that, between the thoughts, it all becomes like space. Mind becomes like space. When you look at the nature of this clear consciousness, it

becomes like space. When you investigate space, when you look at the space-like nature, what is the nature of that, how can we draw a line within space? There is no two, no duality in space. When you understand that there is no two in space, no duality within space, then all dualistic grasping, all unmindfulness, this dark fog of unmindfulness will be cleared away. The clinging thought of duality will be cleared away. Then you understand that because the mind is like space, there cannot be a duality within space. For example, it is like one tree, it seems that there is duality in the tree because it has one root but many branches, but for example when you are introduced to mahamudra, it says: when you cut the root of the tree, the entire tree withers, it dries out because it is actually one with many branches. Likewise in this way, you should look at your mind. On the outer level, you see forms, bodies, different beings, but they actually are compounded, and because they are compounded, they are impermanent and in the end, they will become dust, a heap of ashes. Therefore whatever appears, it only appears momentarily like an illusion or like a TV show. In the end, after we have died, this body turns into ashes. When you investigate yourself what is more important then, the body or the mind? The mind is actually more important. In order to understand the mind of all beings, you should look at your own mind. When you look at your own mind, you cannot say that there is something that is really there, that exists, because it is empty. But also it is clear, the nature of clarity is empty. The nature of emptiness is clear. That is the space-like union of clarity and emptiness. Within space, there is no division, no duality. When you understand that, the clinging thoughts of duality are cleared away. That is when you understand that there is no duality within the mind. That is the actual nature of the mind. Thus, *May you recognize your own Intrinsic Awareness!* This intrinsic awareness is the nature of your innate awareness, your natural awareness is this space-like nature that is empty and clear. So *clear away the clinging thought of duality!* We mentioned yesterday this single basis, we tried to understand the single basis, one might think that there is a single basis of mind but there is a duality in bodies, for example, in forms, there are two or more bodies. But yesterday when we talked about the single basis of all, on the outer level too, then we have actually resolved that there are not even two bodies and there is no duality in visible forms either. So that is because our body consists of the five elements and wherever you go in the material world, everything consists of that; earth, water, fire, wind and space. There is nothing in the material world that does not consist of these five elements. So they all consist of the same matter. Therefore, there is also no duality in the physical form in the body. We actually are not separated in body either, the single basis of the body. For this reason, it is only temporarily different names that we label different

shapes of the same thing, different heaps of earth and so on, giving it different names, but in reality, there is no real distinction in material form either. It has a single basis. Then we have also resolved that within the mind that there is no duality because the mind is like space. When you look at the mind, the first thing that you should understand is that there is no division within space, there can be no duality within space. Then when you understand that, within that state of nonduality, you should recognize the clear awareness that this nature is. When you recognize that, all doubts, ignorance, unawareness will be cleared away. When you ultimately attain the state of enlightenment, all dualistic perception is completely cleared away and nondual primordial wisdom expands like the sky. Within the sky, there is no duality. The nature is always the same. When you attain enlightenment, it has not got any better. Right now when you only glimpse it for one moment, it is still the same. It is not any worse, it is exactly the same. Therefore, we call it Vajradhara, it has an unchanging nature. That is the characteristic or the special quality of our own mind, the Buddha nature.

#### ***Dualistic thoughts create doubt.***

Not recognizing one's own intrinsic awareness, when we do not recognize nonduality, dualistic mind creates doubts. Of the seven forms of ignorance, doubt is the principal one, the ultimate form of ignorance. In the context of not looking at the nature of our mind, sometimes a doubtful mind can be of some help but what the doubtful mind does, it divides between good and bad. It investigates and then it labels anything as good and bad. This discriminating consciousness that discriminates the different aspects of objects. This is what a dualistic mind does, it creates doubts. It comes from a very subtle clinging, a clinging thought that creates the doubt. For example, you want to drink a cup of tea, then the doubtful mind in the subtle form of clinging, it labels that as either delicious or not tasting very good, not delicious; and it does the same thing for any of the five sense pleasures. It divides between good and bad, it labels. As mentioned previously, the subtle form of attachment or clinging is hope. The subtle form of aggression or hatred is fear. Then these develop into coarse attachment, then aversion. Not recognizing the fault in these afflictions is ignorance.

#### ***From subtle attachment to this dualistic turn of mind, dualistic tendencies become stronger and thicker.***

We keep habituating to these thoughts, cling to these thoughts of attachment and aversion, self and others, and then we are attached to ourselves. Actually there is no being, that is not attached to themselves. Animals for example, cherish their own lives the most because they have a perception of self and therefore they are afraid. In

order to understand how from the subtle attachment of this dualistic mind, dualistic tendencies become stronger and thicker, we investigate that by looking at an easy example. For example, thinking about food, we can understand how we label and divide between good tasting and bad tasting or we divide our perception of friends or companion out of people, we call them good or bad and so on. So that is what the doubtful mind does, if we do not look at our mind directly, the doubtful mind is dualistic and divides, investigates people in this dualistic, divisive way.

***Food, wealth, clothes, home, and friends, the five objects of the senses, and your beloved family—all these things cause torment by creating longing and desire. These are all worldly delusions, the activities of grasping and clinging are endless.***

These words are quite clear. We are attached to something, an object that we find pleasing, that we like. We think that we actually need those things because we think that when we have those things, they will bring us pleasure, they will make us happy. But the Buddha said that everything that is contaminated [or compounded, which means being created by the coming together of causes and conditions] has the nature of suffering. This samsaric happiness and pleasure appear to be pleasurable now, but in the end, it turns into suffering and that is why we call it a worldly delusion. We should investigate the faults that happen when we become attached and pursue these objects of our desire. For example, when we pursue objects like food or alcohol, or smoke, or take drugs and so on. For example, people say that "I like to do that, I like to drink, I like to smoke. It is my choice. I have the freedom to do whatever I wish. I need that freedom to do whatever I wish. I need that freedom to smoke if I wish." So many people say that, but then they do not really investigate that with some intelligence. So what actually happens then when we smoke for example: of the six realms of samsara, we become the most severely ignorant, that is because we are spoiling, wasting away our precious human body that possesses those eighteen freedoms and fortunes. We might look like a human but we really act like an animal. So you think that it will bring you pleasure, happiness but actually it is the cause of suffering, and therefore, it is a worldly delusion. If it would actually bring you happiness, real joy, real happiness, then nobody would call that a worldly delusion. The Buddha does not call a delusion what is actually happiness. If it really brings you happiness, there is nothing wrong with it. But it does not really bring you happiness; it is a temporary small pleasure that actually leads to great suffering later on. That is why the Buddha calls that a worldly delusion. So the same is true for the other five sense pleasures, for example, food, clothing and so on. For example, clothing, one might be

very attached to a nice dress and one really wants that. One thinks that it is really special. Then one is very careful with this dress and one does not want to give it to anyone. One is very stingy with that dress. That actually creates a lot of suffering. It binds the mind. It keeps the mind in fetters, in bondage. That is what is harming you. Later when you die, some people, they still die with an attachment to their special precious object, so they die with the mind being bound by these objects. Then the bardo consciousness is still bound by the attachment to this object. Although the object is not here anymore, their consciousness strives towards these objects in this and future lives. It is the same for all the five sense pleasures. They bind the mind of samsaric sentient beings and as a result they are deluded, confused. Confusion here means that they have lost their freedom. They are controlled by their worldly delusions. Therefore, it says, *these are all worldly delusions, the activities of grasping and clinging are endless*. We really have to investigate the faults and qualities of all these sense objects, for example, food, clothing, alcohol, smoking and so on. Is it actually of any benefit or is it harmful? The Buddha also said “You should not fall into both extremes.” Of course we need food, we need to eat food to sustain our body and we also need clothes; but that is why for example the monks are told not to wear many precious objects and clothing and so on because it actually does not help or benefit them really; it causes great harm. If it would actually benefit, if it would really bring lasting happiness, then there would be nothing wrong with it. The Buddha with his wisdom therefore recognized the attachment to those sense pleasures as the worldly delusions. *The activities of grasping and clinging to these five sense objects are endless*, first there is an attachment to an object and once we become attached to the object, we begin to cling to this object and if we cling, it will lead to suffering and as a result, one is born as a hungry spirit/ghost.

***When the fruition of attachment ripens, you are born as a hungry ghost, tormented by coveting and desiring, miserable, starving and thirsty.***

Actually not to mention being born as a hungry ghost, even in this life, attachment already creates a lot of suffering. For human beings, what is the greatest difficulty or problem that they have? It is the interpersonal problem between companions, especially loving relations are the greatest torment of humans. In general, this love is a good quality, but then what happens is that this love is also mixed with selfishness, so it becomes a great fault. When love is mixed with selfishness, the self-grasping mind turns it into jealousy. Love is too strong, attachment is too strong, so we

become jealous. In the end, we separate from our companions. First there is love, but then, that turns into jealousy and jealousy turns into resentment and then the other partner/companion does not want to stay with you and people separate. That happens anywhere between partners, friends or between disciples and lamas, for example, we say “This is my friend. This is my lama. This is my sponsor and so on.” We try to own/possess them. We become jealous when somebody else talks to one that we consider as ours. So jealousy arises and the nature of this jealousy is actually resentment. One considers oneself to be most important, one’s own happiness is most important and if that is in your mind and you are resentful and jealous, even if you do not say anything, but keep that in your mind, the other person will feel that and naturally will not want to stay next to you, so the love then turns into anger and people separate. So ultimately, that is the fault of self-grasping. It is actual love but it is defiled with selfishness. So how does a pure love then look like? For example, if you have a loving friend, lama and so on, any kind of companion, then you would think: I love this other person and I want him to be happy, to be well; for as long as he is well, it is fine. If you think in this way, your mind will be relaxed. Then you do not worry about what he is doing. He does whatever he wants or whatever makes him happy. That will also make the other person’s mind feel relaxed. Such people can spend their entire life together. When there is true altruism—I wish to benefit the other, people can really stay together for the rest of their lives. Even in the worldly sense, people hold this commitment and stay together until they die. Actually that is the love we talk about in the Dharma. That is actually Dharma. Through this bodhicitta, they will become companion and friend in future lives. Even if somebody who does not understand the quality of bodhicitta, only the quality of love itself would already lead to a better rebirth. For example, there are birds that do not hurt others, that are kind to one another. That is the quality of even the slightest love. If that is not present, then we encounter difficulty already in this life. People separate from each other. They cling and after they pass away from this life, they are born as a hungry ghost. So the more we cling, the narrower and smaller mind becomes and it gradually evolves. First there is love and we are attached, it turns into jealousy, stinginess, ownership and then it turns into resentment. This then leads to the birth of a hungry ghost. Talking about hungry ghosts, people might wonder if they really exist. Actually we can see them right here how they exist. For example, if you put a little food here, then very small insects like flies will come. You can hardly see them, they are tiny and they will circle around the food. Why? Because they are hungry, but they cannot

really get the food. They circle around the food but they cannot really get it. Then after one day, again they die. So it is like hell realm or hungry ghost realm. Some people do not really believe in those hungry ghost or hell realms; but if you really look close and carefully, you can actually see them around us too. What can we do for that not to happen, to be born as a hungry ghost? We must cultivate pure love that is undefiled by selfishness. It will already create happiness in this life and also plants the seed of liberation for future lives. Otherwise, in this life, we become jealous, out of jealousy and attachment, we engage in various negative actions, for example, we steal from others, we engage in sexual misconduct, various actions of body and speech. We separate from our friends in this life. We end up having no money, no house and so on, so karma already begins to ripen now. So in the different explanations, there are different ways for karma to ripen. It can already ripen right now.

Therefore it is important to recognize the subtle form of clinging attachment arises. When the subtle thought of clinging attachment arises, you should recognize that here is this attachment, clinging arising. I have to be careful. If I do not let it go now, it will turn into greater attachment. For example, it begins with very small attachment. For example you like to eat sweet things, but then when that develops and you give way to it, it can turn into diabetes. You want to eat it because it tastes nice, but you also possess wisdom, you let it be and you do not eat it. Those without wisdom will just eat it. So it is very important for our Dharma practice to often clearly discriminate between the qualities and the faults of those things that we are doing.

***Through Kuntuzangpo's prayer may all you desirous and lustful beings who have attachments, neither reject longing desires, nor accept attachment to desires.***

Neither reject nor accept means that if there is mindfulness, recognition, one does not have to reject the sense objects, one can enjoy them. But one must clearly see whether or not clinging attachment arises and one must investigate and think about the benefit and the fault of enjoying this sense object. If somebody with wisdom recognizes that there could be harm for example if one eats sweets which can cause illness, then with a wisdom mind, one would refrain from eating that for example. So on the relative level, one gives up clinging attachment by investigating the faults and the qualities of enjoying a given sense object. From the ultimate perspective, when one has recognized the nature of mind, intrinsic awareness, the moment clinging attachment arises, one recognizes it. There is mindfulness and awareness. From that perspective, it is okay to enjoy any of the five sense

pleasures. But from that perspective also, there is no attachment at all. If the object is present, it is fine; if it is not present, it is also just as fine. So whatever appears, whatever is there, that is sufficient, nothing else is needed. When Milarepa taught the view, meditation and conduct, that is the conduct that needs to be applied. Whatever is there is sufficient and if things are not there, it is also just as fine. So whatever is there will not harm one, affect one in any way. That is the ultimate conduct of the Vajrayana. Also the omniscient Longchen Rabjam said, "When thoughts settle into the natural state, there is no need to abandon samsara. When thoughts have dissolved, there is no harm in partaking of or enjoying any of the sense pleasures because there is no clinging to them. Milarepa said that if there is no clinging, eating food for example becomes feast offering of ganachakra. There is no attachment. The point is that there is no attachment, then there is no need to reject.

***Let your consciousness relax in its own natural state, then your Awareness will be able to hold its own. May you achieve the wisdom of perfect discernment!***

This perfect discernment is to investigate, to not allow the mind to become attached. Ideally, from the highest perspective, one does not become attached only through the view of sustaining mindfulness. Or else, one investigates with discerning awareness, their benefits and the faults caused by enjoying a given sense object. For example, many people who possess wisdom do not eat meat and they are very careful in their activities. So if we possess wisdom, we also have the ability to apply some discernment in all our activities and be heedful in whatever we do. In that way, we eliminate clinging attachment. Even in this life, in a worldly sense, for example, if one does not eat meat because it harms one's physical health. It is wisdom because we know that it harms our body and our health and that is why we do not do it. Even if we are only careful for health reason, it is still beneficial, at least we will obtain the quality of birth in the higher realms in future lifetimes. But then if we do it for all sentient beings, for example, if we take a vow/samaya that we do not eat meat for the benefit of all sentient beings, then the merit is incredible. This is the wisdom of perfect discernment. This wisdom of perfect discernment is also often called the individual discriminating wisdom that has the nature of purified attachment. That is when you abide within the actual nature of intrinsic awareness, all the afflictions become liberated as wisdom. So clinging attachment becomes liberated into discriminating wisdom—the wisdom of perfect discernment. This wisdom of perfect discernment can discriminate clearly and accurately between faults and qualities. It knows the very subtle working of karma cause and effect. It is the wisdom that knows what to do and what not to do. The 84 000 afflictions are destroyed only by this one awareness. It is just like an apocalyptic

fire that incinerates everything that appears and exists. It can overcome anything. This awareness has the power to overcome and destroy all afflictions and turns them into primordial wisdom.

***When external objects appear, the subtle consciousness of fear will arise. From this fear, the habit of anger becomes stronger and stronger.***

This subtle consciousness of fear slowly turns into powerful anger. It begins in a very subtle way, a subtle consciousness, for example, you see a mosquito flying around, it is very small but the moment you see it, you are afraid. You think that it will bite you, cause itching and will even hurt you. So, you follow it and see where it goes. You have an aversion to it. That is the subtle form of resentment and it arises anywhere. For example, you do not like particular kind of food and that becomes stronger and stronger. From this fear, this habit of anger becomes stronger and stronger. Then it leads to conflicts, fighting, between people, between religions, between countries. All conflicts actually come from this subtle consciousness of fear and that comes from an attachment to oneself and an aversion towards others. One only cares for one's own well being and have little concern about others. This imprint becomes stronger and stronger. It all starts out from a subtle consciousness and turns into a strong habit of anger. So, it is really important then to recognize these thoughts arise in their subtle form, for example, a very subtle anger/aggression arises in the mind. It is because if you do not recognize it, it grows stronger and stronger. Recognizing it, then you should think about its results that it leads to. If resentment/anger stays in your mind, how does this karma ripen? What is the nature of it? For example, when we get angry, nothing agrees with us. We think, "It does not agree with me." "They are not nice to me..." So it all comes from the 'I'. Actually, there is no affliction which does not arise from the 'I'. For example, the relationship between parents and their children. Parents and children should have love for one another and see each other with love. However, due to self-grasping, they lose this perception of love for one another. For example, the parent thinks, "I have cared so much for this child but the child does not listen." But actually, the child also has his/her own karma. We cannot actually have much control over that. Then the child thinks, "I am their child. I have the right that they care for me. They must take care of me, but they are not properly taking care of me." So the child gets angry. They fight and do not get along, and they are angry with each other. When the parents get very angry, they turn into monsters and the children do not want to stay close to them and they do not want to look at their faces. Then the parent thinks, "The child does not love me." Then all the care that the parent has

given to the child is all spoiled. All their love has transformed into anger. That is the nature of hatred. The nature of hatred itself is hellish. Nobody has created hell, but hatred or resentment naturally is a seed for the hell realm. Therefore, Milarepa said, "The root of the lower realms is hatred, therefore practice patience even at the cost of your life." That goes for any relation, for example between partners and friends. Their love turns into jealousy, then because of jealousy, you think that he/she does not love me, he/she does not like me. Then we should think about what happens if we let anger and jealousy to go on. We may spend our entire life, even in this life, fighting. Even if we are rich, have many possessions, all that will not give us any happiness; for example, there are very rich families that actually suffer much inwardly, even though they are very rich, because they are not harmonious with each other, often they even commit suicide. All of that is the fault of jealousy and anger. That is why we called the afflictions or poisons. So it is important to understand that.

We mentioned that each karma ripens in four different ways. For example, in the context of hatred and anger, the first way that karma ripens is the result of *full maturation*. As the nature of hatred, of aggressive mind is hell, it naturally creates the hell realm. What is the nature of hell? The nature of hell is that everything appears as a threat, an enemy. That is basically the perception that we bring from this life to the next. In this life, if we perceive even our children, husband/wife, our family as an enemy, so if everything appears as an enemy, a threat to us in this life; then after we die, everything will continue to appear as an enemy or a threat also beyond this life. It is this kind of perception that creates the hell realm. It says: ***Finally, hostility comes causing violence and murder. When the fruition of this anger ripens, you will suffer in hell by boiling and burning.*** Coming back to the four results, first, is the result of full maturation. The full maturation of hatred is to be born in the hell realm. Then secondly, when that comes to an end and if we have some slight virtue left, we might be born into human realm again. The second result that comes into effect is called *the dominating result*. That means that we are born in a certain environment in this world without having any control over it. As a result of hatred, the dominating result will be to be born in a war zone, a war country in this world for example. Sometimes, even if some people are not born in a war country, they enter a war country driven by the force of their karma. Without being born in a war country, some people nowadays, for example, join terrorist groups and then they go there and they are killed there. In a way, they are really killing themselves. They are driven by the force of their karma to go to a certain

place. So, in a way without much control, they end up there. So that is also the dominating result. The third result is *the result similar to the cause* which means that once we are born in the war zone, again we will engage in similar actions. Again we will kill others, hurt others, that is, the activities similar to the cause. And then there is the experience similar to the cause. Again when we kill others, again we will be killed. It goes in circles like a wheel. The fourth result is called *the proliferating result which* means that as we continue to kill and be killed, it creates an endless proliferation of karma. So, one karma multiplies more and more, just like from one flower, countless seeds emerge. It becomes more and more. For example, when we look at a war-torn country in this world, what is the karma of that? We feel great compassion for them. They are so poor in that country. What is the cause of that? It comes down to hatred and jealousy and that comes from self-grasping. Even in the human world, we are born in such a place as a result of self-grasping. Now when we look inside our own mind, even though I am not born in such a place, but if I have these tendencies of hatred, anger and aggression in my own mind; for sure, 100% sure, I will also be born in such a place in the future. It is because the nature of aggression is the seed for hellish abodes. Knowing that you will be able to let go of these negative thoughts. It is really important therefore to understand the suffering of the three lower realms that we learned from *the Four Thoughts that Turn the Mind*. Therefore, Buddha taught that it is important to think about the suffering of the lower realms in order to be able to recognize the causes that lead to such a birth. So, the Four Thoughts, the preliminaries are indeed very important. We must recognize the faults in our afflictions, the moment they arise. For example, we know that there are dangers, therefore we are able to recognize them and therefore we are more careful because we know the danger involved. In the same way, we must recognize the danger of our own afflictions. The worst of the 84000 different afflictions is hatred or aggression. Especially according to the bodhisattva and the Vajrayana vehicle, hatred is really the greatest fault. We can see that this is really what causes the greatest suffering in this world. In general, the suffering of poverty, hunger and thirst is caused by greed, stinginess and desire; whereas the suffering of fighting and killing, really hurtful suffering is all caused by jealousy and hatred. It is very important to recognize that and then to look into your own mind to see whether or not these tendencies are present in my own mind and to eliminate them.

***Through Kuntuzangpo's prayer, you beings of the six realms, when strong anger arises for you, neither reject***

***nor accept it. Instead relax in the natural state and achieve the wisdom of clarity!***

First there is the outer Kuntuzangpo (Samantabhadra) which is the all-pervasive dharmakaya like space according to Kuntuzangpo's Prayer. The inner Samantabhadra is that when strong anger arises, neither reject nor accept it, instead relax in the natural state. You rest within a state of self-knowing, nondual awareness. Milarepa had said, "Actually the afflictions and wisdoms are coemergent, they arise together." How does that happen? For a practitioner, for example, when anger arises, the moment it arises, there is recognition, you recognize that anger is arising. So coemergent with the anger, there is also a clear knowing awareness that recognizes it. They are not separate from each other. For those who do not practice, for them this wisdom becomes self-grasping. The self-grasping is so strong that the moment anger arises, there is no awareness at all because the "I" is most important, and they become controlled by the anger and then many faults come from that. When we engage in practice, when anger arises, you recognize the fault in anger. We recognize it with mindfulness. If you hold this mindfulness, the moment it arises, it will dissipate just like a wave on water the moment it arises. That is the inner Samantabhadra—the innately clear, the self-knowing awareness. That is the wisdom of clarity. Especially when anger arises, and anger dissolves within mindfulness, it has a clear quality. When anger dissolves, the mind remains particularly clear and your meditation has even more clarity and you find that the anger actually enhances and benefits your meditation. Therefore, in the Kagyu lineage, it is also said that, "Let the afflictions arise, the more the better." Also, in Drukpa Kagyu, Song of Realization says, "When you recognize the nature of afflictions, all sufferings become an ocean of nectar." That means that all poisons have transformed into medicine. For example, like the Tibetan medicine pills called the precious pills, actually the ingredients are poisons, consists of all kinds of heavy metals and mercury and so on. But actually even though it is made of poisons, it is a supreme medicine. It is powerful like a diamond. It is said that it can even turn away black magic, spells and so on and nothing can affect it. So, from the ultimate perspective, the inner Samantabhadra is an example of such a diamond or a precious medicine. It is a diamond because it can destroy, can overcome anything, but nothing can destroy it. Nothing can affect its diamond-like nature. That is the nature of Samantabhadra. It destroys whatever afflictions and thoughts that arise, it is like an apocalyptic fire that burns away anything. Especially here, this clarity of wisdom is related to anger; when anger dissolves or liberated in meditation, the mind remains very clear. Just like the nature of attachment is the discriminating wisdom or the union of bliss and emptiness, the nature of hatred or anger is the mirror-liked wisdom, the nature of clarity

and emptiness, the mind is very clear. Again, the five afflictions coemerge and they arise together with the five wisdoms. Those who have not recognized the view, they should practice the bodhisattva vehicle, the conventional bodhicitta according to the 37 Bodhisattva Practices in order to eliminate anger in that way. It is because there are only a few who have truly recognized the view. Here, first we need to recognize and understand the view, the nature of the mind, then we must habituate it and then we realize it. That is actually very difficult. There are not many who have realized the nature of the mind in this way. If you have not accomplished that, it is more difficult to eliminate anger only through the view. In that case, we should resolve it with the conventional development of relative bodhicitta. How do we do that? All those enemies who hate one, obstructers who harm, human or non-human, evil spirits and so on, all of them without exception have been our parents. If you get angry at them, you are really only harming yourself, not them. They all have been our parents. In past lives, they had been someone who had been very kind to you, someone who had been helping you a lot, but you have not properly repaid their kindnesses, rather you have hurt them. For example, parents who have cared for the child, but the child only hurts the parents all the time. In that way, we have created a karmic debt. In that case, instead of getting angry at them, the antidote to anger is to practice patience. That would be an excellent practice to follow that path of the relative bodhicitta. Or if one really has realized the view, the view itself is sufficient. There is nothing else needed. The view itself is the single sufficient method to overcome the 84 000 different afflictions. But that is a bit difficult.

What is the greatest fault for cultivating anger or hatred? For example, when we take the refuge vow, we want to be protected by the three Jewels. Out of the Three Jewels, the most precious one to us is the Sangha. From the Buddha appears the Dharma and from the Dharma appears the Sangha. Sangha is the one who shows us the path starting from the four thoughts that turn the mind, relative and ultimate bodhicitta, and so on. Sangha is also the one who has become liberated from suffering and therefore can show the path to liberation to others. The Sangha comes from having practiced the Dharma. The Dharma is the words of the Buddha, the teachings of the Buddha. There are many countless teachings, many scriptures. You can pile hundreds of scriptures up like a mountain. What is the benefit of all these? Ultimately, it is so that you to give rise to love and compassion. If you give rise to love and compassion, temporarily, you will be born in the higher realms as a human being and so on; ultimately, you attain enlightenment. The ultimate protection that really protect and rescue you is love and compassion that the Sangha introduces us to. What destroys that? It is hatred and anger. When we get angry,

we lose our love. It is said that “Hatred and anger cut through the life force or rope of liberation and as a result, you fall into the lower realms for many lifetimes without any chance for liberation. For example, it is like you have fallen into the ocean water and you are just held by a rope to be pulled out, but then the rope is cut and thus you drown in the ocean and cannot be rescued. When you get angry, anger or hatred cuts this rope of liberation. It is very important to again and again contemplate the faults of anger and hatred. However, through recognition, the poisons of hatred and anger can be transformed into medicine because then, our mind becomes very clear; in that sense it becomes like medicine.

***When your mind becomes full of pride, there will arise thoughts of competition and humiliation. As this pride becomes stronger and stronger, you will experience the suffering of quarrels and abuse.***

Pride, literally means a sense of full of self, an inflated view of self. For example, we are wealthy, then we think that we are so rich and we take pride in that or if you are highly educated and you think that you are a great scholar and we take pride in our good qualities. We all have that, even animals do that. Actually, pride is based on underlying ignorance. Because there is ignorance, pride is always naturally present in our mind. For as long as there is the sense of the existence of an ‘I’, self, naturally the nature of the ‘I’ is prideful. It’s egocentric, it is just its nature. Sakya Pandita had said, “If your qualities are small, your pride is great. If your pride is small, you will respect others. A wise person shows respect to others.” This is really true. The lesser are our qualities, the greater is our pride. A sign of having greater qualities is actually a lack of pride, a sense of respect towards others. Any being has pride, even if it is a just a thumb-sized tiny little creature. When a person walks along a road and meets this little creature, the creature builds itself up, very prideful, very magnificent; even though it is very tiny, has no power at all, it does not even have the power to protect itself. Actually, we do not have any power to protect ourselves, and have no trust in karma, just like this little animal. We are prideful because we do not look for another refuge for protection. We think that we are all powerful ourselves. That is why the nature of pride is ignorance. When there is pride, since we take pride in our qualities, naturally when we meet someone with similar or higher qualities, we become competitive with them. Actually, even a very subtle form of pride is always present, we are somehow always prideful in our mind. For example, young people take pride in their youth and Dharma practitioners take pride in their practice. Siblings of the same parent are competitive with each other and so on. It happens between friends and companions and that is very harmful, for example, if it happens between two partners who live together. One thinks that ‘I am the one who is

doing all the work,' and takes pride in that and criticizes the other one, 'he/she is not doing anything.' When we keep thinking about this pride, eventually, this pride turns into resentment. As a result, we are harsh, and we say unkind things to the other person. We grow disharmonious. Therefore, it is important to recognize when subtle pride arises. What is the antidote to that when it arises? Dzogchen Patrul Rinpoche said, "Do not look at the fault of your companions and do not look at your own good qualities." This is because if you look at the faults of others, pride arises, and when you look at your own qualities, pride arises. It is necessary to recognize the subtle form of pride as it comes up. For example, we do a good thing, actually it is a small thing, but we think that we did that great thing, we take pride in our virtuous action, actually that may lead us to lose our virtue. This is one of the four causes that lead us to lose our virtue. Actually, we are not really losing the virtue when we take pride in it, but the merit is significantly reduced, so this is a great fault. When we look at the qualities of others, there is no room for pride, no pride can arise in that state of mind. When we look at the qualities of others, for example, we think about how I actually love this person, how this person works really hard, he/she does everything to help me and how this person really loves me. If you look at their qualities, love for them arises and this is to your own advantage. This applies anywhere. For example, people often do not look at all the good qualities of the lamas and the teachers, but they criticize them and look at their faults. If you have this critical mind that always looks at the faults of others, all you will see is just a heap of faults. That is the nature of this critical mind. From a bodhisattva's perspective, we must see all beings as our parents, thus there is no room for pride to arise since everyone becomes an object of respect and patience. According to the Vajrayana, we see all, self and others, as deities. The five elements are deities and seeing everything pure in this way, makes your mind become very vast. The vaster your mind, the more powerful your mind will be. According to the view of the Vajrayana, everything that exists, the universe and the beings are completely pure, there is nothing that is actually impure. That is according to the higher vehicle—the bodhisattva and Vajrayana vehicle. What determines the size of the vehicle, greater or lower vehicle, depends on the degree of mind generation, how great of a mind we can develop. For example, we say that when someone follows the hinayana, the lower vehicle, this is somebody with a lower intention, thinking: I practice virtue because I want to be liberated. This is a lower, inferior motivation. The Great Liberation Sutra says: "The Mahayana intention (of attaining enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings) is like water in the vast ocean whereas the intention of the lower, lesser vehicle is like the pool of water gathered in a cow footprint." A cow leaves a footprint on the Earth

and a little bit of water accumulated there; it is very little water compared to the vast ocean water. That is the difference between the higher and lower vehicles. Therefore, it is not a matter of what we call ourselves, only calling ourselves a Mahayana practitioner or follower does not make us one, whether or not we are one we can only see for ourselves by looking at our own mind, our own intention. Often people when they have the slightest qualities, they take great pride in that. It is something to consider and to see for yourself. The antidote to pride is to first look at the good qualities of others, then according to the bodhisattva vehicle, to see all beings as our parents and according to the Vajrayana vehicle to see everything including the five elements as completely pure. Ultimately everything is completely pure, self and others do not exist. So, the ultimate method or antidote is to recognize the nondual primordial wisdom. To attain that recognition, we must first cultivate the mind of love and compassion.

***When the fruition of this karma ripens, you will be born in the God Realms and experience the suffering of change and falling to lower rebirths.***

If it is just pride on its own, the result of the ripening of karma is lighter. Some pride is always present in our mind. As a result of pride, we are temporarily born in the God Realms where we experience happiness only for the time being. However, one experiences the suffering of change and falling into the lower realms. Happiness in the God Realms, the pleasures there are temporary, and suffering does not disappear since it is not beyond the six realms of samsara; again, there will be change and falling into the lower realms. Pride on its own has a bit lighter consequence. But often pride develops into different afflictions, because of pride, we also get jealous, get angry and so on and that accumulate karma and based on that we engage in actions, then again it has negative consequences.

***Through Kuntuzangpo's prayer, may you beings who develop pride, let your consciousness relax in the natural state. Then your Awareness will be able to hold its own. May you achieve the wisdom of equanimity!***

Recognize the pride before you act out on it, before engaging in action. We do that by looking into our mind constantly, am I prideful? Is there pride? Checking our own mind. If there is

pride, we should be aware of it. Sustain mindfulness and thereby recognize if pride arises, that is also the discriminating wisdom that recognizes what always arises in the mind, for example, you recognize a subtle form of anger, a subtle form of pride or attachment and so on. If you recognize it, then you achieve the wisdom of equanimity. Ideally by sustaining mindfulness, awareness holding its own. If you are not able to liberate the thought arising, then the thought of pride that arises must be liberated through the relative bodhicitta. That is why we have to see how things really are. Equanimity is also significant since everyone possesses both faults and qualities and there is no one who only possesses faults, even animals have some qualities, for example, they look nice or they have a good voice etc. Certainly, all humans have some qualities and there is no one who does not have any quality at all and no one who only has qualities and no faults at all. If you look carefully because everyone has both faults and qualities, we are really all the same and there is no difference. Therefore, if you look at the qualities of others, that is only to your own benefit since your own qualities will increase because you will not cultivate anger and resentment against them if you think that everyone is the same, having both faults and qualities. Ideally if you have awareness and if awareness holds its own, you are able to liberate all afflictions that arise, seeing them as illusions arising and they dissipate back into the mind like a wave in the ocean and transform into wisdom—the wisdom of equanimity. Earlier we mentioned the example of a mirror, the mirror-liked wisdom, and within the mirror, everything can be reflected. From mirror's perspective, the mirror has no preferences, it does not think I like certain things to be reflected but not others. Everything is reflected in the same way in the mirror, anything can arise. This is another way to liberate pride.

***By increasing the habit of duality, by praising yourself and denigrating others, your competitive mind will lead you to jealousy and fighting, and you will be born in the Jealous God Realm, where there is much killing and injury. From the result of that killing, you will fall into the Hell Realm.***

“Increasing the habit of duality”, that is what we call samsara. What we do in this samsaric world is to increase the habit of dualistic grasping in whatever we do. This is not only what worldly beings do, but also happens when we practice the Dharma, for instance; a lot of dualistic grasping and biased thinking occur when you practice the Dharma. For example, many questions arise around the way in which the teachers teach the Dharma and the way in which the disciples receive the Dharma. Conflicts around that often arise. The Dharma consists of two teachings—the teachings of the scriptures and the teachings of realization. The

teachings of the scriptures are like the support to the teachings of realization. There is much debate and disagreement, which is necessary for those scholars in order to refine, train and enhance their own understanding. It is like a mutual polishing of their own understanding of the Dharma. It is like two friends helping each other to clean each other's face. Two people are debating and pointing out each other's faults in order to bring it all up to the surface and then through the debate to clear it away. There are many tools used for that in a debate. Something that is actually good, they would say that it is bad and vice versa. That is all just to train one's mind and one's own understanding of the matter in order to really understand and uphold the Buddha's teachings. If we hear that as a practitioner and we misunderstand this debate as some quarrel happening between different lineages, and if we then tell a practitioner who has no idea about these things, that debate may actually turn into pride in the mind of that practitioner. They would think, for example: we are Gelugpa practitioners and clearly, we can see based on this debate that we are much better than the other; we are really the upholders of the teachings through the Vinaya whereas the other really do not know it that well and they are really nothing. Those who debate, who uphold the different lineages, the tenant systems, must debate those things because they want to refine their own understanding and not really point out each other's faults. But if we take this debate into our sphere of practitioners, it is actually very harmful to us because when normal practitioners hear that, they may misunderstand that. For example, they may think all the Nyimapas and Kagyupas are like demons, they are really evil. When you meet somebody and you ask your friend who they are; when your friend says they are from the Nyimapas, you will feel scared of them right away. That goes of course with other religions too. There is a lot of fear. For example, we do not even know where a person is actually from but already when we see somebody different, somebody else, and the other person just approaches us, laughing and just want to shake our hand, immediately you feel afraid because you think that that person is this other and therefore cannot be so good. Thinking in this way is really harmful to ourselves, therefore it is necessary to recognize this feeling of grasping when that arises because that gets thicker and thicker and solidifies. First, one thing is bad, then second one, and the third one, then in the end only oneself is good and this pride develops into many other afflictions, seeing everything else as bad and we only see faults. Within that state of seeing faults, many other afflictions arise; we develop resentment, we become prideful, jealous and so on. For us practitioners, how should we approach that? Especially when we think from the perspective of Mahayana, we must develop a vast intention of

bodhicitta, that means, we should see all sentient beings without exception as our parents, like our real family. If you see everyone as a family, where can there be a difference between enemies and friends if everyone is your parent or your family, each person that you meet? Often disciples do not really hear that and they come and say: "I would really like to come to your teaching today but there is this one other disciple that I don't like and he does not like me, that is why I cannot come. If he comes, I would not come." Then they ask, "is it okay to listen to your teaching on the internet and not come?" Many people actually say things like that. Only because there is a temporary thought of dislike, they grasp at that and hold on to that for a long time. Actually, it is just a momentary thought, not always like that for the entire life. But this grasping becomes stronger and stronger and this increases the harm and causes the mind to become narrower and narrower and uptight. Actually, as a Mahayana practitioner, we should have a vast mind. If our mind is so narrow, there is no need to mention that we are distancing ourselves from Mahayana. We see everything as a fault, so we are not really practicing Mahayana. When we see the fault in everything, naturally the nature of that is aversion, resentment, competitiveness, dislike of others. Then when we see the person that we dislike experiencing some misfortune, problem, we rejoice in that. That is a subtle form of jealousy too. That jealousy is a principal cause that destroys our merit. It is always there. This subtle form of jealousy remains for the most part unrecognized. It is necessary to realize that they are there and take notice of it. Otherwise, if you do not engage in practice, this jealousy develops into other afflictions—our afflictions develop from pride into jealousy and then to hatred and it only gets worse and worse. What should we do as buddhist practitioners? We should think that although I am a buddhist practitioner, actually all the religions, let alone lineages, all religions in the world are good and all are necessary and that all the religious practitioners are Sangha. I personally see all religions as good because all religions have some qualities, for example, morality, discipline. They all have a way of helping sentient beings, for example, practicing generosity. Basically, once you have a religion, a spiritual path, you know where you are at and where you are going to. If you do not have a religion or path at all, you are like being in a wasteland, not knowing where to go just like an animal. Actually, we should think that all religions are necessary, and they are all the Sangha and then we practice our own religion without any conflict, thinking that all religions are good. Whenever you see a temple from a different religion, you think that they are good, for example a Christian church or a Muslim temple. Religion is always good; of course, there are different types of practitioners of that religion, but the religion itself is always good. If you see

in this way, your mind will become much more open and you will see everyone as your parent. This is the way to practice in this context. This is the way we should direct our mind. If we discriminate and look at the faults, we can really observe how one fault/affliction develops into another. So, it is necessary to recognize each of these subtle versions of afflictions; when they are all combined with each other, various afflictions arise in different combinations, jealousy, pride, hatred and so on, all arise in some kind of combination. Ideally, you recognize them with mindfulness without distraction, and then the afflictions naturally transform into wisdom; like according to this realization of Samantabhadra which is the single medicine that cures a hundred illnesses. This is the ideal practice.

***Through Kuntuzangpo's prayer, when jealousy and com-petitive thoughts arise, do not grasp them as enemies. Just relax in ease, then consciousness can hold its own natural state. May you achieve the wisdom of unobstructed action!***

You recognize on the ultimate level, in a state of ease, awareness holding its own—mindfulness holding itself with stability and recognizing when afflictions arise. When you recognize it, it will dissolve just like a wave in the water. The liberation of this thought of jealousy and competitiveness relates to one of the five wisdoms, the wisdom of unobstructed action. First, buddha nature is the same, a single basis, from that basis, when bodhicitta arises, the natural expression of bodhicitta temporarily is the happiness of the three higher realms and ultimately the attainment of enlightenment. From that, the manifestation of the countless purelands, and forms of dharmakaya and sambhogakaya will appear. But all of these appearances lack any true inherent substantial existence—the dharmakaya is like space and the sambhogakaya is like a rainbow in space. Temporarily, six different realms of samsara appear because based on buddha nature, self-grasping arises and the temporary condition of the six afflictions leads to the manifestation of the six realms of samsara naturally. Nobody actually creates those six realms, they arise naturally from the six afflictions, a natural expression of these six afflictions. Not understanding the ultimate truth, therefore temporarily, beings experience a real experience of suffering—a physical pain and mental sufferings and so on. That is because they hold all the appearances as real, and do not understand how things really are, therefore they have a real experience of suffering. But someone who realizes the actual way things are, will see all of the six realms of samsara like a dream, like an illusion. They understand the causes that lead to that. On the relative level, we say karma is infallible, that is when you do not recognize the afflictions that arise and you follow them, then temporarily, illusion-like or illusory karma will ripen into an illusory experience that seems to be real.

Ultimately, the ultimate truth is emptiness, that is, when you do recognize the afflictions, then they are actually empty. When you realize their nature, they cannot do anything anymore, for example, when anger arises, immediately you see the nature of this anger, at that moment, it becomes this wisdom of clarity. There is no more anger actually, where is the anger when you directly look at its nature? It is actually nowhere, there is actually no anger. Then anger becomes empty, then there is also no karma ripening; therefore, ultimately karma is also empty. But often people do not know how to understand that right, they do not listen properly, and they do not really understand the meaning of that, so many doubts arise because they do not really grasp the meaning of that. They see a contradiction: they say on the one hand, you say that karma is infallible and on the other hand, you say that karma does not exist and it is empty. It seems to be some kind of deceptive talk that does not make any sense at all. For those who really practice, the practitioners really understand what it means. On the relative level, karma is really infallible, that is, for example anger arises and we act out on the anger, it will come back to us in this life but also in future lifetimes, it will ripen. But if you recognize the nature of this anger, then it is actually not really there, then it dissolves like a wave in the water, then it is gone. When you look at it, where actually is it? There is actually no separate anger that exists from your own mind, it just dissolves back into your own mind, it is just nowhere. When you really think about this, the relative and the ultimate truth, the buddhist view is quite amazing, we can really get a very deep understanding just from that—the relative truth is karma and the ultimate truth is emptiness. That is the most special quality of the buddhist intent.

***By being distracted, careless and unmindful, you beings will become dull, foggy and forgetful. by being unconscious and lazy, you will increase your ignorance and the fruition of this ignorance will be to wander helplessly in the animal realm.***

When we are distracted and unmindful, whether we engage in worldly or dharma activity, we do not want to do anything, we get lazy. Those who are unmindful, do not cultivate mindfulness and are unconscious, within those people, all the seven forms of ignorance that mentioned in this verse are complete. It manifests in whatever we do in should do today, we put it off for tomorrow. We do not feel like doing it now, now we feel like we want to relax, sleep, drink alcohol and so on. All of that is ignorance, the result of ignorance is to be born as an animal. Of the six afflictions, the worse is ignorance. Ultimately ignorance is the self-grasping mind that perceives duality. The ultimate fault of ignorance is the ignorance of the working of karma cause and effect, that is, even though we want to be happy, we

do not know what causes to create to achieve happiness. Although we do not want to suffer, we do not know what causes to abandon to avoid suffering. So, we are ignorant of karma and that is really the actual, the ultimate form of ignorance. Even though we may know how to accomplish something in this life, still because we do not understand karma, we are ultimately ignorant. What is our protection when we take for example the refuge vow? What will ultimately protect us is our own wisdom and compassion. But if we do not recognize our own wisdom and if we are not mindful, our mind becomes the self and then we can never become protected from suffering. So, the ultimate ignorance is the self and if we accumulate actions with a self, as a result of that we are born as an animal because that is the ultimate ignorance.

***Through Kuntuzangpo's Prayer, may you beings who have fallen into the dark pit of ignorance shine the light of mindfulness and thereby achieve wisdom free from thought.***

For example, when you engage in a mundane activity, a very important activity, often our mind is very clear; we are very present in the moment when we are doing these things. In such a moment, even in the mundane context, we can know our own awareness. At the time when our mind is very clear, there is a mental presence, that is, this naturally clear self-knowing awareness. When you know that, you understand the nature of all of samsara and nirvana simultaneously; you understand the nature of karma and so on. This “wisdom free from thought” is that when thoughts arise, this wisdom recognizes that these thoughts do not actually inherently exist, so the mind does not at all grasp at these thoughts as having reality, true existence; rather see them just like an illusory play. “Free from thought” actually does not mean that there is no thought. Thoughts do arise; however, one sees them as empty, that is the union of appearance and emptiness—things do appear, but they are empty, which means there is no grasping and no belief that they really exist. Ultimately, all conceptualization comes down to one, the dualistic perception of self and others and all other thinking comes from that. Therefore, when you realize the nature of your own mind, all dualistic grasping and perception will be cleared away at that moment. You see that everything ultimately is indivisible. Things appear in a dualistic way, but actually within the mind there is no duality. That is the first thing that we must understand.

***All you beings of the three realms are actually identical to Buddhas, the Ground of all.***

How are we all identical? It is because there is no duality of self and other, so on that ultimate level, buddhas and sentient beings are actually equal. This is where the real understanding of the view begins.

***But your misunderstanding of the Ground causes you to go astray, so you act without aim.***

Because the mind is unclear, we are unmindful, we do not recognize our own true nature and due to that, we become deluded, confused by dualistic grasping. We are distracted by only the perceptions of this very life and we continue to accumulate afflictions. First, it begins with not seeing one's own nature therefore we perceive the duality of self and others. As a result of that, we have ordinary afflictions. With these afflictions, we engage in actions and accumulate karma and these actions are acted without aim, they are aimless or meaningless actions. Meaningless because day and night, like an ever-turning wheel, we work hard but only for the purposes of this life. We combine our body, speech and mind to work very hard to accomplish our purposes of this life, but actually what happens in this life follows the karma that we have accumulated in previous lives. Whether or not we will be successful in our activities is determined by our karma. Because we do not understand karma and, therefore we do not understand the actual causes to create happiness; so we spend our entire life working very hard, then all become meaningless because when we die, all of our actions have been done for nothing. When we die, we may have earned millions of dollars, a house, our body, our friends, all that we have, we will have to leave behind keeping nothing with us. Just as it says in the *37 Bodhisattva Practices* that after we have died, all is gone and becomes meaningless. Whatever action we engage in, whether it is Dharma or worldly activity, what actually makes an activity meaningful or meaningless? It really comes down to whether or not we know or understand karma. This is what really determines the meaning of our activity. For example, if you do know karma, you know that the actual cause of happiness is the precious bodhicitta. Thus, you cultivate love and patience. If you do that, even if you engage in worldly activity, it becomes actual virtue. On the other hand, if you do not trust in karma, do not trust in bodhicitta as a cause of happiness, even if you practice virtue on the outer level, it only becomes half virtue, the other half is non-virtue. It is because knowing the karma is like having opened eyes. The outer actions of body and speech are not principal, more important is to understand karma - cause and effect. If we do understand it, all samsaric activities actually become a practice of the six paramitas. What gives action meaning is whether or not we understand the working of karma.

***The six karmic actions are a delusion, like a dream.***

[The six karmic actions refer to the karmic actions performed in the six realms.] Viewed from the eyes of a bodhisattva for instance, all these actions are like a

dream. Milarepa said, "I am a yogi who has realized this life, the future lives and bardo to be one." That means that you always (wherever you go), you follow the path of your own karma. Therefore, if you wish to experience happiness, you should walk that path of bodhicitta. Wherever you go, whether you are in this life, in the bardo or next life, it is the same. If you do not cultivate bodhicitta, wherever you are in this life, in the bardo or in the next life, you will only encounter difficulties. Karmic actions are like a dream. One may think that if everything is like a dream, it is not so bad because dreams are not real. You think that this life is reality, the dreams are unreal. If it is just like a dream, it is better. But this is actually not true because later, after this life, when we die, we go on just like in a dream, just like leaving behind this dreamlike life. This entire past life appears just like a fading dream and it becomes just like a dream. Now for as long as we have the karma and imprint of this body, we are in this life, but whenever it comes to an end, when we die, we will move on and leave this life behind just like a dream. This entire past life appears just like a fading dream and it becomes just like a dream. Now for as long as we have the karma and imprint of this body, we are in this life, but whenever it comes to an end, when we die, we will move on and leave this life behind just like a dream. We will bring with us our karma. Knowing that you should see that this is the karma that I will bring with me after this life. This life and a dream are actually identical. In both a dream and in this lifetime, we experience some actual experiences of suffering.

***I am the Primordial Buddha here to train the six kinds of beings through all my manifestations.***

***Through Kuntuzangpo's prayer may all you beings without exception attain enlightenment in the state of Dharmadhatu.***

Attaining the state of dharmadhatu is that when you recognize the nature of your own awareness, all dualistic grasping is cleared away and you come directly to see the state of dharmadhatu, then having seen the dharmadhatu, the dharmakaya nature of your mind, you gain power over countless sambhogakaya purelands, so you realize or attain the power over dharmakaya and sambhogakaya.

***Ah Ho!***

***Hereafter, whenever a very powerful yogin with his or her Awareness radiant and free from delusion recites this very powerful prayer, then all who hear it will achieve enlightenment within three lifetimes.***

So ideally, one reads this prayer, with awareness radiant and free from delusion, from within the view and without any dualistic grasping or at least we should do so with

great compassion. It says “all who hear it”, actually anybody should hear it, for example, those who are unable to read it themselves, someone should read it to them so that they can hear it. For example, read for somebody who are old, sick. A human or even a non-human for example an animal can hear it. Any being who hear it will benefit from it. This is because all beings possess buddha nature, only hearing these words will greatly benefit them.

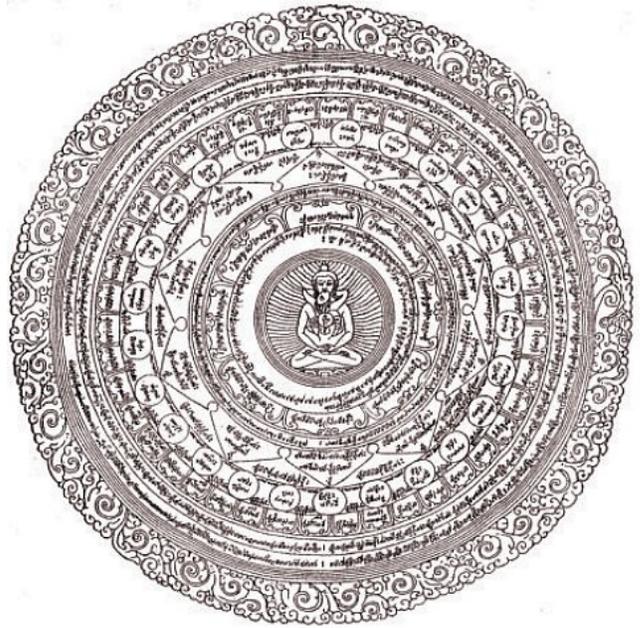
When should we read this prayer? It says:

***During a solar or lunar eclipse, during an earthquake, or when the earth rumbles, at the solstices or the New Year, you should visualize Kuntuzangpo.***

At solar or lunar eclipse when the sun or the moon are changing colors; during solstices, for example the day when summer ends or when winter ends; during the change of a year, on New Year day, reading the prayer during those days will have even greater benefit. Then “visualize Kuntuzangpo” is when you visualize yourselves as Kuntuzangpo, you do not just think that I am Kuntuzangpo. Actually, your own buddha nature is Kuntuzangpo. Therefore, you actualize this if you cultivate a wish to benefit sentient beings. The moment you have that wish, your mind is Kuntuzangpo since Kuntuzangpo is only embodiment of emptiness and compassion, and not just the outer form of Kuntuzangpo. It is emptiness that has compassion at its core that pervades all of samsara and nirvana. That union of emptiness and compassion is what creates all the purelands and brings benefits to all sentient beings in the six realms. Because we all have buddha nature, the empty mind, the moment you give rise to great compassion, you really are Kuntuzangpo for as long as there is compassion in your mind. So you can decide to resolve that: when I am compassionate, at that moment, I am really Kuntuzangpo.

***And if you pray loudly so all can hear, then beings of the three realms will be gradually liberated from suffering, through the prayer of the yogin and will finally achieve enlightenment.***

These words are quite easy to understand, so we do not explain more. [End of teaching]



**Mantra Mandala of Kuntuzangpo**