

The Appeal of Sherab Lama

Composed by Sherab Lama and Dolpopa Sherab Gyaltzen

Translated by Cyrus Stearns

Great Vajradhara in human form,
you carry out the enlightened actions
of the conquerors of the three times
and have appeared for the glory
of sentient beings in the age of strife.

I bow at the feet of the master
who cares for living beings
and clears away the darkness
of unknowing with the thunder
of profound Dharma.

Bless me to reach
the culmination of attainment.

I appeal to you,
unequaled in kindness.

Such things as this
have clearly occurred
in my experience,
which is that of a beggar monk.

These have been clearly

arising without interruption:
the signs such as smoke,
the appearance of various beings
of the six realms, and, in particular,
birds, wild animals, trees,
fruits, and flowers,
as well as various white and red drops,
and various nirmāṇakāya emanated bodies
and sambhogakāya enjoyment bodies,
and, in particular,
deities of unexcelled yogatantra,
with many faces and arms,
together with consorts,
as well as the shapes of mountains,
plains, and valleys,
just as seen in the daytime,
and while I am walking, sitting,
sleeping, and eating,
figures such Avalokiteśvara appear.

Sometimes they even appear
when I'm not meditating.
Sometimes I can't stop the thoughts.
Sometimes a feeling of slight bliss arises.
Sometimes I'm depressed and want to leave.
Sometimes laughter escapes my mouth.
Sometimes the wish for food doesn't arise.
Sometimes I'm not satisfied even when I eat.

Are these points of deviation or not?
What are they?

What are the ground, path and result
according to the intention of the *Kālacakra*?

Please grant a teaching of few words
that is easy to understand.

Not daring to actually ask you,
I have placed my appeal in writing.

May the male and female practitioners, led by the glorious master, have good health, and
may each of your meditation practices expand like the waxing moon. Thus I, Sherab Lama,
offer an appeal.

Good fortune!

(Dolpopa's Reply to Sherab Lama)

Having prostrated and taken refuge in glorious Kālacakra, who is indivisible from the glorious and excellent master, this is sent to Sherab Lama.

I rejoice and am pleased about those profound meditative experiences that have surfaced. The various experiences that have arisen before, and the arising of many more than those, are taught [in the scriptures]. Various physical experiences, vocal experiences, mental experiences, dream experiences, and experiences of clear light are said to arise for people who are able to practice. To allow the natural expression of whatever arises, without preventing or cultivating them, is the great king of oral instructions. If you take [the physical experiences] that naturally surface in relation to the various six channels of the body, the various yogic exercises, and the various leaps and movements to be faults and prevent or hold them in check, you will be carried away by impediments. Viewing as faults the various self-arisen vocal expressions of speech, and suppressing them, you will also be carried away by the māras. If you take as totally true the mental pleasures and pains, highs and lows, and manifestations of clear light that arise in various ways, and prevent or cultivate them, accept or reject them, and treat them as good or bad, you will doubtlessly fall under the power of impediments and obstacles.

Therefore, you must completely let go of physical experiences and vocal experiences that occur, without holding them in check. If depression, the wish to leave, and distractions arise in the mind in various ways, you must intensely look at precisely what arises, clearly recognize it, and look for what is established as its essence, identity, or nature. If you look, you will find no nature, and, if you realize that it is simply a name, utterly empty, self-quieting, self-liberating, and not at all established, like the sky, that is realization of the natural state of the mind. So it is important for the mind to look at the mind. It is important for the mind to seek the mind. It is important for the mind to advise the mind.

The infinite and inconceivable manifestations of clear light that primordially exist in the ground [of reality] are manifold, without definite end, without definite extent, and also without definite form. So whatever arises should be left free from conceptual elaboration, without being taken as good or bad, desirable or undesirable, pleasant or unpleasant, and

without any accepting or rejecting, preventing or cultivating, and hopes or fears. Notice them and allow their natural expression.

Sometimes not needing food for many days and sometimes not being satisfied no matter how much food is eaten are also [experiences] that come to most beginning practitioners, and it is also taught [in the scriptures] that they will come, so do not look at them as faults or qualities. When you wish to eat, eat as much as you want. If your food supply runs out, I will give you more, so send a message.

You asked in brief about the natural state of the ground, path, and result. Detailed explanation and repeated listening is necessary for a thorough comprehension of the natural state. Just in brief, "buddha" is ultimately the dharmakāya reality body. That has all the aspects of nonconceptual great bliss and clear light, which is causeless, self-arisen, omnipresent, spontaneous, partless, pervasive, and all-powerful, a basic space that is inexpressible in words or thought, and inconceivable like a prognostic image. It is precisely the self-arisen, discriminating, reflexive awareness of the practitioner, the self-manifestation of primordial awareness. Furthermore, it is the ground that permanently exists, originally pervading everything like space. It is like a great treasure that exists beneath the home of a pauper. The actualizing of the dharmakāya reality body of clear light, the primordially existing buddha, after the natural cessation of the circulation of the vital winds and mind, is like the actualizing of the great treasure through the removal of earth and stone. If all the earth and stone is removed, the great treasure is attained and poverty is removed. Likewise, for the attainment of buddhahood, it is necessary to stop all the vital winds and mind. Energetic perseverance is necessary to achieve that goal.

The ultimate ground
is reality with stains,
like a wish-fulfilling jewel
covered by mud.

The ultimate path
is the six-branch yoga,

like the clearing away
of that mud on the jewel.

The ultimate result
is freed reality,
like attaining the jewel
after freeing it from the stains.

The ultimate ground
is the dharmakāya
reality body with stains,
like a lamp flame abiding
inside a vase.

The ultimate path
is the vajrayoga,
like the hammer
that shatters that vase.

The ultimate result
is the freed result
of the dharmakāya reality body,
like reaching the lamp flame
by shattering the vase.

The ultimate ground
is buddhahood with stains,
like the sun and moon
covered by clouds in the sky.

The ultimate path

is the yoga of Kālacakra,
like the wind that scatters
the mass of clouds.

The ultimate result
is buddhahood free from stains,
like the clear sun and moon
when the clouds
have been removed.

The ultimate ground
is reality with stains,
like pure water and sediment
mixed together.

The ultimate path
is the completion stage
without characteristics,
like the *ketaka* jewel that separates
the pure and the residue.

The ultimate result
is primordial awareness
free from stains,
like getting pure water when
the sediment has been removed.

The ground and result
do not have two essences.
Obscured and not obscured
by incidental stain

are just referred to
as ground and result,
as though they were different.
In reality they do not
have two essences.

Effort on the path
to achieve buddhahood
is not effort to produce
the dharmakāya reality body,
but effort to erase the obscuring
and covering stains that prevent
seeing and attaining
the dharmakāya reality body.

The attainment of the resultant
dharmakāya reality body
free from stain
is also not the new birth
of a previously nonexistent
dharmakāya reality body,
but merely the actualizing
of what is primordially present
without beginning,
the same as impure sky becoming pure.

There are three conditions
in regard to the sky itself:
the condition of clouds in the sky,
the condition of gathered
clouds scattered by the wind,

and the pure condition
after their scattering.

Likewise, there are also
three conditions in regard
to the dharmakāya reality body:
the condition of the ground
obscured by stains,
the condition of the path
that clears away stains,
and the condition of the result
free from stains.

These days, this procedure
is not known by most
who are famed as scholars,
who claim good meditation
and high realization,
and who are conceited great adepts.

But I have discovered it
by the kindness of the Kalkī.

If you want to know it in detail,
meditate again and again
on the yoga of the buddhanature,
the ultimate teaching,
the summit of all the vehicles,
and listen when the rain
of exceptional Dharma falls.

Practice again and again
the single-minded yoga
of the nature of ground,
path, and result free from extreme,
without characteristic,
without conceptual elaboration,
and without hope and fear,
and listen when the thunder
of emptiness is proclaimed.

Without fabrication,
rest single-mindedly
again and again
in the genuine natural state
of nonconceptual,
unfabricated prajñāpāramita,
which is inexpressible
in words or thought,
and listen when the profound
secret words are proclaimed.

By the unmistaken and
undisturbed essential physical
points and gazes,
which are the techniques
for resting pure awareness,
and by abandoning the faults
of dullness and agitation,
become accustomed again
and again to lucid emptiness
without clinging,

and listen when the great drum
of Dharma is struck.

The conduct of post-meditation
at the time of arising from
uncultivated and undistracted
profound meditative equipoise
is to generate compassion
again and again for living beings
who lack realization,
and to listen when the great rain
of Dharma falls.

To remove the sufferings
of infinite sentient beings
who have been your mother
over and over,
repeatedly make potent prayers
again and again with love
and compassion,
and listen when the great conch shell
of Dharma is blown.

No matter what forms
of impediments and obstacles occur,
such as distractions of joy and sadness,
or feeling high or low,
make intense prayers
with single-minded fervor
to the sublime wish-fulfilling jewels
of the master and the Three Jewels.

Or else mentally investigate
the source of whatever arises.
Like pursuing an enemy
wherever he goes,
and then killing him,
if you investigate the source
of the circulating [thoughts],
they will be freed into
total nonexistence,
a natural state of mind.

In that way, although you
are healthy and free from illness
for the time being,
since you are impermanent
like dew on a blade of grass
or a lamp in the wind,
and don't know when death will come,
you must reject procrastination
and laziness,
and develop diligence.

Wandering in saṃsāra
is always suffering,
and it is extremely difficult
to meet the excellent Dharma,
so at this time when auspicious
connections have come
into alignment right now,
you must fulfill your

long-range aspirations.

Reflect again and again
on the abyss of the evil destinies
and the benefits of the pleasant destinies,
the defects of the intermediate state
and the benefits of liberation,
the defects of turmoil
and the benefits of solitude,
and strive to take things in hand.

With pure moral discipline
and unimpaired sacred commitments,
after practicing by turns listening,
reflection, and the cultivation
of meditation on a nectar-like
sublime Dharma such as this,
before long you will become
a king of Dharma.

After accumulating the assembly
of primordial awareness
during meditative equipoise,
and accumulating the assembly
of merit during post-meditation,
you will achieve the dharmakāya
reality body and perfectly benefit yourself,
and achieve the rūpakāya form bodies
and bring benefit to others.

The stains of the dharmakāya

reality body will be cleansed
by the assembly of primordial awareness,
and the excellence of the rūpakāya
form bodies will be produced
by the assembly of merit.

By the force of prayer,
the enlightened actions
to benefit others will be vast,
effortless, and spontaneous.

The absolute sublime lamp
that removes the darkness
of unknowing has permanently
entered your heart,
my fortunate child,
and you must make the experience
of the primordial awareness
of blissful emptiness blaze!

This is sealed in secret
from those who are not receptive.

An instruction by the monk Dolpopa Sherab Gyaltzen Palsangpo to Sherab Lama.

Maṅgalaṃ bhavantu śubhaṃ