

WISDOM ROOT GURU YOGA TEACHING

Given by *KHENCHEN PRACHHIMBA DORJEE RINPOCHE*
On the anniversary of His Holiness Jigmed Phuntsok Rinpoche

As you know today is the anniversary of my root guru His Holiness Jigmed Phuntsok Rinpoche, so I will give you a short heart teaching at this occasion. I will not talk about the biography of my root guru because you can all read it if you like. I will just say that H. H. Jigmed Phuntsok was really a wisdom Buddha who came to this world to help sentient beings.

Often I see that even long time practitioners don't exactly understand what is meant by the Buddha nature and what is meant by the guru yoga practice. This saddens me, thus I will give you a short teaching with the hope that you can grasp these concepts more deeply. There are two major problems that practitioners face: First, there are those who do not understand exactly what the teachings are about and keep on collecting empowerments, teachings and blessings from different lamas without knowing what it all means. They focus more on the outer aspects of the practice such as lineage, ritual etc. without calming the discursive thoughts of their mind and understanding the true nature of all those aspects of practice. Second, there are practitioners that have some understanding of the real meaning of practices and the Buddha nature but are, simply said, too lazy to actually engage in the practice and bring it to fruition. Examine your practice and try to determine whether any of these problems pertain to you. How can we overcome these problems? If you experience problems of the first kind, you should have good motivation, exactly grasp the meaning of one guru yoga practice not only through your intellectual understanding but inside of you through your experience (feeling) and practice it until you achieve the ultimate result – enlightenment. If you think your problems are closer to those in the second group, you should think of impermanence and contemplate your own death. You may have excuses such as 'I don't have enough time for practice' but you should not think that. The guru yoga that I will teach you today is very short and if you practice only that practice and bring it to fruition you do not have to practice anything else. Why should you do this practice? My guru H. H. Jigmed Phuntsok said that if his students practice this guru yoga sincerely, he will be with them and help them on the path in this life and future lifetimes until they achieve enlightenment. So, if you have full faith in H. H. Jigmed Phuntsok and do not achieve enlightenment in this lifetime, the thought of the guru being on your side helping you should comfort you even if you die today.

This guru yoga is very special in a sense that it is presented as a Dzogchen meditation. As you will see when you read the sadhana to this guru yoga practice, it puts emphasis on pristine awareness (rigpa) which is your guru at the deepest level. First, you should be able to develop the pristine awareness (rigpa) without concepts within you and experientially understand that this is your guru. When you exactly grasp this experience you should be able to see all real nature of all phenomena. For example, if the five poisons arise in your mind, you should not be bothered by them since you would exactly discern their nature as your guru – rigpa. The pristine awareness within you is like a clear sky and all the concepts and emotions that arise in your mind can be viewed as different changes that we can observe on the surface of the sky such as clouds, rain, snow etc. Just like the clear sky itself is not bothered by those changes, your mind resting in rigpa would not be bothered by thoughts, emotions and whatever arises in your mind. (Those of

you who attended the ‘Six Bardos Teachings’ may already have some understanding of this.) You may think that this is very difficult – well, if you don’t practice, you are right it is very difficult. But if you put effort into your practice, you will soon make progress on the path.

If you practice the guru yoga in the context of tantra it encompasses all the essential parts of practice such as refuge, bodhicitta and the ten paramitas. When you engage in guru yoga, your guru represents all the different kinds of refuge (outer, inner and secret refuge). Bodhicitta is in your practice represented in the motivation with which you enter the guru yoga practice. You can ask yourself why you are doing the guru yoga practice. If your sincere answer is for the benefit of all sentient beings then this is the bodhicitta aspect in your guru yoga practice. Finally, when you translate the guru yoga into your activity you gradually engage in the practice of the ten paramitas: you start by practicing generosity towards sentient beings; to maintain your guru yoga samaya you engage in the practice of moral ethics; you practice patience towards whatever good or bad arises on your path; you practice vigorously with perseverance without slipping into laziness; you practice and deepen your meditative concentration and as a result of these activities bodhisattva wisdom or wisdom awareness (sherab) arises; subsequently the wisdom guides your activity so that you are able to help sentient beings through skillful means; at the next step your virtuous aspirations are swiftly accomplished in your activity; then your ability to help becomes more powerful; and finally, the highest level of wisdom – primordial wisdom (yeshe) is perfected. At this point you will reach the tenth bodhisattva level (bhumi) and proceed to the final step of enlightenment on the eleventh bodhisattva level.

My sincere wish is that you do this guru yoga practice in every moment, as a result exactly grasp the meaning of these teachings – pristine awareness and develop the ability to help sentient beings with the highest wisdom and compassion. I hope that as a result of this practice you will be able to meet my guru in your practice, achieve enlightenment and guided by your bodhicitta come back to samsara to help sentient beings.

If you have any questions about the practice please e-mail to Khenchen Prachhimba Dorjee Rinpoche:

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