

An edited version of an oral teaching given by

Khenpo Thubten Lodrö Nyima

as a word-by-word commentary on the practice entitled

༄༅། །ཚེ་དཔག་མེད་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་སྒྲིང་པོ་བཞུགས་སོ།།

The Heart Essence of All the Tsepames of Limitless Life

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The Heart Essence of All the Tsepames of Limitless Life

a practice which has been arranged by the Khenpo, and

is being practiced by the Dzogchen Centres Sangha

to coincide with the inaugural

Six-Year Dzogchen Practitioners' Course

of the Zangdok Palri Institute,

between the years 2005 and 2011

in order to accumulate one billion Tsepame dharani mantras

for the good health, and long and stable life of

Dzogchen Ranyak Dza Patrul Rinpoche

THE TITLE

ཇུ་གར་ཀེ་དུ། ལྷུར་ཡ་ཨ་པ་རི་མི་ཏ་ཨ་ཡུར་ཉ་ས་འཇ་མྱི་ད་ཡ།

ja gar ke du ar ya a pa ri mee ta a yur jna na sar wa hri da ya

In Sanskrit: arya-aparimita-ayurjnana-sarwa-hridaya

The title of the text *in Sanskrit* is *arya-aparimita-ayurjnana-sarwa-hridaya*.

There are said to be about three-hundred-and-sixty languages in all, of which the most important number four, and of which Sanskrit is pre-eminent. Also known as the divine language of Brahma, the titles of Dharma texts are generally written in Sanskrit first, and then translated into Tibetan. One reason for this is that we may remember the great kindness of the lotsawas, who translated teachings from Sanskrit into Tibetan. Without their translations we would not have the Dharma today. Another reason is that blessings come into our mindstream through Sanskrit because of its great particularity, its superiority to other languages, and being a divine language, its great importance.

The introductory words of the title are **ja gar ke du**, which mean *in Sanskrit*. Ja gar means India and ke du means language. Together they mean Sanskrit. Ja means large, and refers to the vastness of India. Gar means dance, and can be understood to mean that the people of India like to dance a lot and to amuse themselves. It can also be understood to mean white, which refers to the fact that Indians were known to wear white clothing. The actual word for white in Tibetan is kar (dkar), but depending on the way of putting syllables together, there can be a change in the internal spelling of a word.

བོ་ཀེ་དུ། །འཕགས་པ་ཚེ་དཔག་ཏུ་མེད་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཀྱི་སྣོད་པོ།

bö ke du phak pa tshe pak tu me pa tham che chi nying po

In Tibetan: phakpa tshepaktu mepa thamchechi nyingpo,

The Heart Essence of All The Noble Tsepames of Limitless Life.

Then there is the title *in Tibetan: phakpa tshepaktu mepa thamchechi nyingpo*, which is translated as *The Heart Essence of All The Noble Tsepames of Limitless Life*.

The first word in the Tibetan title, **phak pa**, which refers to individuals who have moved on from an inferior level and attained a superior level, means *noble*, and **tshe phak tu me pa** means *limitless life*. In general, human life is limited to a span of 80, 90 or 100 years. *Limitless life*, in this context, means that the concepts of limit and of life are incompatible with each other. There is no way of measuring this particular kind of life. It goes beyond our ordinary concepts. **Tham che** means *all*, and **nying po** means *heart essence*.

The Sanskrit title is written phonetically in Tibetan. The first word of the title in Sanskrit, *arya*, which means noble, or **phak pa** in Tibetan, is not written correctly in the Tibetan script, above, due to a glitch in the computer. (The letter ‘ra’ should be a superscript to the letter ‘ya’.) The next word, *aparimita*, means limitless, or **phak tu me pa** in Tibetan. *Ayurjnana* is made up of two words: ayu and jnana (the letter r being added when the two words are put together). Ayu is usually translated as tshe (tshe) in Tibetan, and as life in English, and jnana is usually translated as yeshee (ye shes) in Tibetan, and as primordial awareness in English. However, when the original Tibetan translation was made, it was decided that both ayu and jnana together would be translated as tshe. Then, *sarwa* means all, or **tham che** in Tibetan. The meaning of the last word, *hridaya*, is not clear, but was originally translated as **nying po**, which illustrates that which is of principal importance.

THE TEXT

The Introductory Prayer

བདེ་གཤེགས་རྒྱལ་བ་རྣམས་ལ་ཕྱག་འཚལ་ལོ།

de shek jal wa nam la shak tshal lo

I prostrate to the Buddhas Gone to Bliss.

De shek, which means sugata in Sanskrit, or *Gone to Bliss* in English, actually means to go from bliss to greater bliss. In relation to going on an important path, *de* means that the path is an easy path to travel, or that it is the best path to take. In relation to our practice of the Dharma, it means that we go (*shek*) on the best path, which leads to that which is even better. Whichever path the buddhas of the past took was the best path, and so the buddhas who follow them also take the same path.

Jal wa, which is translated as *the Buddhas*, literally means conquerors, and refers to the conquerors, or buddhas, of the past who are followed by all the conquerors. The conquerors are completely perfect buddhas, which means that they have conquered the enemy hosts, the disturbing emotions. The next word is **nam**, which denotes the plural, and then there is **la**, the grammatical particle *to*.

Shak tshal means to pay homage, or to *prostrate*, a respectful gesture of body, speech and mind, the three doors. The word *shaktshal* is made up of two syllables, the first of which, *shak*, means to wipe away that which is dirty, and the second of which, *tshal*, means to search for that which has been lost. This means that we are wiping away our obscurations, and searching for ultimate happiness, which is buddhahood.

ཚེ་དང་བསོད་ནམས་འཕེལ་འགྱུར་ཞིང་།

tshe dang sö nam phel jur shing

Increasing both lifespan and merit and

We prostrate to all the sugatas, the buddhas gone to bliss, the conquerors, and in particular, to Tsepame (*Amitayus* in Sanskrit) in order to increase both our lifespan, through avoiding obstacles, and our merit. **Tshe** means *lifespan*, **sö nam** means *merit*, **phel jur** means *increasing* and **zhing** means *and*. We may wonder then, if the only result of this practice is in relation to life and merit, or if it could also bring about the attainment of the ultimate state of buddhahood, and the next line answers that question.

ཚོགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་ལྷུང་ཐོབ་པའི།

dzok pi sang jee nyur thop pi

Bringing about the swift attainment of perfect buddhahood,

Dzok pi means *perfect*, and refers to both the perfection of the clearing away, or the destruction of, the disturbing emotions, and to the perfection of all the qualities of buddhahood.

Sang jee means *buddhahood*. It is also the word for buddha, and it is made up of two syllables: *sang* and *jee*. *Sang* refers to waking up from a sleep, in which we are ignorant and unknowing, into a state in which we are no longer ignorant and where everything is known and understood. *Jee* means development, increase, or expansion, and refers to all the qualities of understanding and intelligence. *Sangjee* means that instead of ignorance there is knowing and all the qualities of knowing.

Nyur thop pi means *bringing about swift attainment*. This is the attainment of completely perfect buddhahood, the buddhahood of the Buddhas Gone to Bliss, but in particular, it is the realisation of the buddhahood of Tsepame.

བདེ་གཤེགས་ཀུན་གྱི་སྣང་པོ་གསུངས།

de shek kün ji nying po sung

This is the heart essence of all those gone to bliss:

This is the last line of the first prayer. It is the culmination of all the reasons given for the title of the practice: the increase of lifespan and merit, and the swift attainment of completely perfect buddhahood. **De shek** means *those gone to bliss*. **Kün** means *all*, which was rendered

as *tham che* in the title. Then, there is **ji**, which means *of*, **nying po**, which means *the heart essence*, and **sung**, which means *this is*.

This concludes the first part of the practice, which is a homage to those who have gone to bliss, the conquerors or buddhas, and an explanation about the significance of the qualities that come from paying that homage. It also introduces the dharani mantra which is the heart essence of the buddhas, the recitation of which brings about these qualities.

The Dharani Mantra

The importance of the Lama

After the introductory prayer, there is the recitation of the principal part of the practice, the dharani mantra. First of all, we should consider the reason why we are doing the practice, and we should also understand its visualisation.

In general, when one does such a practice for the long life of a lama, one does it because one wants the lama to stay for a long time and not to encounter any obstacles. Praying for a lama to stay for a long time means that one does not want him to go into nirvana, but instead, to stay so that he can benefit all beings. One also make a particular request to the buddhas, the sugatas, the conquerors, those who have gone to bliss, supplicating them with faith and devotion so that through their blessing the life of the lama may be maintained stably and for a long time for the benefit of all beings.

The reason why the lama is very important and why it is important that he has a long and stable life is that during it he can give the teachings of the Buddha. The teachings of the Buddha are peaceful and loving, and through giving them, beings receive peace and love, and have happy and joyful lives. Since it is that through hearing the teachings of the Buddha beings eventually attain the ultimate state of buddhahood, they also become happy and joyful in future lives. This is the principal reason for praying for the long and stable life of a lama.

Within the context of this teaching, it is indeed appropriate to mention the importance of the lama. In general, he is important, as we have just seen, with regard to the temporal and ultimate happiness of beings, but he is even more important within the context of the secret mantrayana because it is through him, and through him alone, that we can attain the state of ultimate buddhahood. In this practice, the request for his long and stable life, the lama is the most important element. It is with a devoted mind that we are doing this practice for the long and stable life of Patrul Rinpoche.

The visualisation

There is no particular visualisation for this practice, but in *Küncho Shindü*, a practice on Guru Rinpoche, there is a long life practice for the lama, in which he is visualised as being

inseparable from Guru Rinpoche and from Tsepame. We can use this practice as a basis for our own. It is not an elaborate visualisation because it is not a ritual practice like, for instance, Rigdzin Dupa, which includes the ritual elements of offerings, a mandala, various deities, and so on.

Here, we visualise Tsepame in front of us in space as a sambhogakaya buddha, red in colour, and adorned with sambhogakaya ornaments and clothing. His two hands are joined and hold a long life vase. We visualise the lama as being inseparable from Tsepame, so that although his form is that of Tsepame, in essence he is our lama.

The recitation of the dharani mantra

While maintaining the visualisation, we recite the dharani mantra, and pray to the lama to remain for a long time and to accomplish the benefit of beings, and make them happy. We supplicate him to bestow on them temporal joy and happiness as well as the ultimate bliss of perfect buddhahood. 'Please stay. Please have a long life. Please have a stable life. Please stay for a long time to bless all beings, to teach all beings, and to bring all beings to ultimate buddhahood.' It is important that we remain aware of the visualisation for the practice and of the attitude with which we are making the prayer.

As regards the dharani mantra itself, it would be very difficult indeed to translate it from Sanskrit into Tibetan and then into English, because there are no equivalent words. However, it is possible to explain the meaning, section by section. It is not that it is impossible to translate it word-for-word from Sanskrit into Tibetan and then into English, but that there is a certain way of composing a mantra in Sanskrit, so that the internal spelling of combined words changes. This gives a particular value and significance to these words, which is not replicated when they are translated into Tibetan, or into any other language. It is not of great importance that we do not understand the meaning of each word in the dharani mantra. It is sufficient that we have a general understanding of their meaning.

The first section -The initial homage

ན་མོ་རཱ་ན་ཏཱ་ཡ་ཡ།

na mo rat na tra ya ya

Na mo means *I prostrate*, **rat na** means *jewel*, and **tra ya** means *three*, and refers to the three jewels, which in Tibetan are known as *künchosum* (dkon mchog gsum), the three rare and sublime jewels. The **ya** at the end of the line is used in mantras as a grammatical particle, and means *to*.

The second section -Epithets of the Buddha

This is the principal part of the dharani mantra.

ཨོཾ་ནམོ་བླ་ག་པ་ཏེ།

om na mo bha ga wa te

ཨ་པ་རི་མེ་ཏ་ཨུ་ཡུ་རྫོག་སུ་བི་ནི་ཕྱི་ཏ་ཏེ་རྩོ་རྩོ་ཡ།

a pa ri mee ta a yur jna na su bi ni shee tsi ta ten dzo ra dza ya

ཏ་ཐ་ག་ཏ་ཡ།

ta tha ga ta ya

ཨ་ར་ཏེ་སམ་ཕྱ་སྒྲི་བུ་རྫོག་ཡ།

ar ha te sam yak sam bud dha ya

This section is a list of epithets of the Buddha, and we will go through the list as it is rendered in Tibetan: *chomdendee dezhin shekpa drachompa yangdakpar dzokpi sangjee tshepaktu mepa shintu nampar ngeepa zijitchi jalpo la shaktshallo* (bcom ldan 'das de bzhin gshegs pa dgra bcom pa yang dag par rdzogs pi sangs rgyas tshe dpag tu med pa shin tu rnam par nges pa gzi brjid kyi rgyal po la phyag 'tshal lo), which means *I prostrate to the Bhagawan, Tathagata, Arhat, Completely Perfect Buddha Tsepame, the completely conquering magnificent king.*

The first epithet is *Chomdendee*, Skt. bhagawan, of which there is no equivalent in English. The Tibetan word has three syllables, which explain its meaning. The first of these is **Chom** and means *to destroy*. It refers to the destruction of the four maras, or the host of enemies, which are the disturbing emotions. **Den** means *to be endowed with*, and refers to the attainment of all excellent qualities. **Dee** means *beyond*, and refers to going beyond both samsara and nirvana.

The second epithet is **Dezhin shekpa**, Skt. tathagata, which can be understood as a synonym of *deshek*, explained above as *gone to bliss*, and here, literally, *gone like that*. The third epithet is *Drachompa*, Skt. arhat. To be an *arhat* means to be a *foe destroyer*, **Dra** meaning *foe*, or enemy, **chom** meaning *to destroy*, a destroyer of the host of enemies, the disturbing emotions. **Pa** indicates an individual.

The meaning of these first three epithets, Chomdendee, Dezhin shekpa and Drachompa, are included in the fourth, **Yangdakpar Dzokpi Sangjee**, which is translated as *Completely Perfect Buddha*. The fifth epithet is **Tshepaktu Mepa**, which is the full name of *Tsepame*, the completely perfect Buddha *of Limitless Life*.

These various epithets do not refer to separate, individual buddhas, but all of them are the epithets of each buddha, and here of Tsepame, the Buddha of Limitless Life, the Buddha of this particular practice. He is *Chomdendee Dezhin Shekpa Drachompa Yangdakpar Dzokpi Sangjee Tshepaktu Mepa, Gone to Bliss Foe Destroyer, the Completely Perfect Buddha of Limitless Life, Tsepame*. Tsepame is the embodiment of our own lama, our own root teacher, who is the assembly of all the buddhas, and it is in the form of Tsepame that we visualise him in space in front of us.

ཏེཤ།

te ya tha

After that there is **te ya ta** which means, *like that*.

The third section - Merit

ཨོཾ་ཕུ་ལྷེ་ཕུ་ལྷེ།

om pu nye pu nye

མཎ་ཕུ་ལྷེ།

ma ha pu nye

ཨ་པ་རི་མེ་ཏ་ཕུ་ལྷེ།

a pa ri mee ta pu nye

ཨ་ཡུ་ཕུ་ལྷེ།

a yu pu nye

མཎ་ཕུ་ལྷེ།

ma ha pu nye

ཨ་ཡུ་རྣམ་འཇུག་ལྷེ་ལྷེ།

a yur jna na sar wa ru bha sid dhi

Pu nye means *merit*, which is what this section is all about. It can refer to the lineages of merit in general, or to both the male and female lineages of merit. **Ma ha pu nye** means *great merit*, and this line is followed by an explanation of what great merit signifies. **A pa ri mee ta pu nye** means *limitless*, or immeasurable, *merit*. Once merit is great and limitless, there is **a yu pu nye**, which means *life merit*, and *life* here should be understood to refer to limitless lifetimes of limitless merit. The second **ma ha pu nye** refers again to that life merit and means *great life merit*. The last line, **a yur jna na sar wa ru bha sid dhi** means *the merit of*

all the siddhis of life, or of long life, and of primordial awareness, so that a whole panoply of merit is envisioned.

The fourth section - The seed syllables of the deities

ཨ་ཡུ་རྫོག་ཀེ་མེ་བློ་ཨ་བློ་སྣ་བློ་དུ་བློ་ཀེ་བློ།

a yur jna na khe tshe drum a drum so drum ha drum tshe drum

The next line contains seed syllables, the meaning of which can be explained, but not translated syllable-by-syllable. It signifies the pacification of all negative influences, obstacles, and bad circumstances in life from within the state of non-conceptual primordial awareness.

The fifth section - The names of the long life deities

ཨོ་སར་སྐྱ་ར་བ་འི་བློ་རྣམ་ཏེ་ག་ག་ན་ས་མུ་ཏེ་སྣ་བློ་མ་བེ་བློ།

**om sar wa sang ka ra pa ree zhud dha dhar ma te ga ga na sa
mud ga te so bha wa bi zhud dhe**

མ་ཧ་ན་ཨ་པ་འི་མ་རེ་སྣ་བློ།

ma ha na ya pa ree wa re so ha

The last two lines of the dharani mantra are the names of various long life deities, of whom the protector Tsepame is principal though not unique. For instance, there is one grouping which is known as the five long life deities, and another which is known as the nine Tsepames. This is a recitation of the names of the other long life deities who form Tsepame's entourage, and so, we supplicate them all together.

By reciting this dharani mantra, we are supplicating all the buddhas, while being aware that all the buddhas are embodied in the form of Tsepame, who is, in essence, our own lama, our own root teacher. We ask our root teacher to stay here with us for a long time, and at the same time, we pray that his life may be stable. As part of the supplication, we ask all the buddhas, all the long life deities, to bestow blessings on our root teacher to make his life stable for a long time. We also ask our root teacher to make a commitment to stay here with us for a long time. In this way, we supplicate the power of the blessings and compassion of all the buddhas as well as the compassion of our own root teacher. We are aware that he will respect his commitment to remain for our benefit. We make these requests in an attitude of complete and utter respectful devotion.

The Concluding Prayer

The rest of the practice is in the form of a prayer, which is an explanation of the benefits and qualities of the dharani mantra we have just been reciting and illustrates its importance.

སྟོང་གསུམ་འཛིན་རྟེན་འདི་དག་ཀུན།

tong sum jik ten di dak kün

The whole three-thousandfold world,

གསེར་དངུལ་བྱངས་ལྷགས་རིན་ཆེན་དང་།

ser ngul sang chak rin chen dang

All its precious gold and silver, copper and iron, and

ནོར་བུ་རིན་ཆེན་ལས་བྱས་པའི།

nor bu rin chen lee shee pi

All its precious jewels used for making

བདེ་གཤེགས་སྐྱེ་གཟུགས་བྱས་པ་བས།

de shek ku zuk shee pa wee

Statues of those gone to bliss – rather than that

སྟེན་འདི་ཚར་གཅིག་བསྟེན་པས་མཚོན།

ngak di tsar chik dee pee chok

Reciting this mantra just once is best.

བསོད་ནམས་བརྒྱ་ཡི་ཚར་མི་ཤོད།

sö nam ja yi char mi phöt

Even great merit does not match it.

The first line of this section presents *the whole three-thousandfold world*, which is this world system, made up of a billion of our worlds, but it also refers, in the word, *jikten*, world, to the three realms of our world, that is, above the earth, on the earth and under the earth. The second line, *all its precious gold and silver, copper and iron*, refers to the various precious substances which can be found in the world. *And all its precious jewels used for making statues of those gone to bliss*, in the third and fourth lines, refers to the jewels of various kinds which are used for making statues of those gone to bliss. However, *rather than that*, rather than using all these precious substances to make statues, *reciting this mantra just once is best*. We consider the macrocosm, that which is biggest, and we consider its best components, and we are aware that reciting this mantra just once is better than making statues from them. *Even great merit does not match it* means that there is no other merit which can rival the merit of reciting this dharani mantra just once.

བསྐལ་པ་སྟོང་དུ་བདེ་གཤེགས་གྱི།

kal pa tong du de shek chi

For a thousand kalpas

རིང་བསྐལ་སྐྱ་གཟུགས་བྱས་པ་བས།

ring sel ku zuk shee pa wee

Filling statues of those gone to bliss with relics – rather than that

སྒྲགས་འདི་ཚང་གཅིག་བཞུས་པས་མཚོག།

ngak di tshar chik dee pee chok

Reciting this mantra just once is best.

A kalpa is a very long time and here it says *for a thousand kalpas*, so this is indeed an incredibly long period of time. The Tibetan word for relics in the phrase, *filling statues of those gone to bliss with relics*, is *ringtsel*, a particular kind of relic, which is very important and incredibly difficult to come by. Even so, *rather than that*, rather than filling statues of those gone to bliss with priceless relics for a thousand kalpas, *reciting this mantra just once is best*.

བདེ་གཤེགས་ཞལ་ནས་གསུངས་པ་ཡི།

de shek shal nee sung pa yi

Reading the teachings of those gone to bliss,

སྡེ་སྟོན་ཚོས་རྣམས་སྒྲགས་པ་བས།

de nöt chö nam lak pa wee

The collected scriptures – rather than that

སྒྲགས་འདི་ཚང་གཅིག་བཞུས་པས་མཚོག།

ngak di tshar chik dee pee chok

Reciting this mantra just once is best.

Rather than *reading all the teachings of those gone to bliss*, which are *the collected scriptures*, *rather than that*, *reciting this mantra just once is best*.

མི་རྟོག་ཡི་ཤེས་སྒྲོམ་པ་ཡིན།

mi tok ye shee gom pa yin

It is the meditation of non-conceptual primordial awareness.

The next line says that *it*, that is, one recitation of the dharani mantra, *is the meditation of non-conceptual primordial awareness*. One recitation is the same as non-conceptual primordial awareness. The reason for saying this is that once one has realised non-conceptual primordial awareness, one has attained perfect buddhahood. The line refers back to what was said previously, that the recitation of this dharani mantra not only increases both lifespan and merit, but also brings about the swift attainment of perfect buddhahood.

ཡོན་ཏན་རྒྱ་མཚོ་མ་རྟོགས་པ།

yön ten jam tsho ma tok pa

Not having realised the ocean of qualities,

འདུས་བྱས་དག་སྦྱོང་མཐའ་དག་ཀུན།

dü shee ge shöt tha dak kün

The compounded practices of virtue

རྣམ་འབྱོར་གཅིག་གིས་བྱས་པ་བས།

nal jor chik gee shee pa wee

Practised by a yogi – rather than them

སྔགས་འདི་ཚར་གཅིག་བསྒྲས་པས་མཚོག

ngak di tshar chik dee pee chok

Reciting this mantra just once is best.

Buddhas, who meditate on non-conceptual primordial awareness are special and apart. *Not having realised the ocean of qualities*, means, not to have realised the ocean of qualities of non-conceptual primordial awareness, in other words, not to have attained buddhahood. Compounded merit is accumulated by those who have not realised the ocean of qualities that is buddhahood, whereas the merit of meditation on non-conceptual primordial awareness, the meditation of the buddhas, is uncompounded. Here, we are considering compounded merit accumulated through *the compounded practices of virtue*, which are *practised by a yogi*. Therefore, *rather than them, reciting this mantra just once is best*.

སྔགས་འདི་བསྒྲས་པའི་རྣམ་འབྱོར་ལ།

ngak di dee pi nal jor la

The yogi who recites this mantra

འཚི་བ་རྣམ་པ་བརྒྱད་མི་འབྱུང་།

chi wa nam pa jet min jung

Does not have the eight aspects of death.

The yogi who recites this mantra does not have the eight aspects of death, means that such a yogi does not have the eight great fears. These fears include, for instance, the fear of wild animals, such as lions, as well as being killed by such animals. They also include fire and death by fire, or water and death by water.

The point here is not to list a precise number of fears or possibilities of death that the yogi who recites this dharani mantra is free from, but rather to show that such a yogi is free from untimely death. The life of each being has a certain possible length, during which he can stay alive unless he meets with untimely death. Once that period has come to an end, he must die. If he dies before that period has come to an end, it is due to bad circumstances or obstacles. However, the yogi who recites this mantra does not meet with such bad circumstances or obstacles, and can live out his full span of years.

སྐྱུག་བསྐྱུལ་གསུམ་གྱིས་སེམས་མི་གཡེང་།

dug ngal sum jee sem mi yeng

The three sufferings do not distract his mind.

It is clear from the next line, *the three suffering do not distract his mind*, that such a yogi is not distracted because he is free from these sufferings: the suffering of change, suffering upon suffering, and all-pervading suffering in formation.

ལྷ་ས་ངན་མཚན་མ་ངན་པ་བཟློག་

tee ngen tshen ma ngen pa dok

This mantra dispels bad omens,

ངན་སྐྱུགས་མཐུ་དང་རྣམ་པ་མཐའ་དག་བཟློག་

ngen ngak thu dang nü pa tha dak dok

Disables all bad spells, power and strength,

འཚི་བ་རྣམ་པ་བརྒྱད་པོ་བསྐྱུ་བའི་མཚོག་

chi wa nam pa je po lu wi chok

And supremely ransoms the eight aspects of death.

The bad omens in the line, *this mantra dispels bad omens*, are the signs we often get that things will turn out badly. Bad omens can appear in our dreams, as for instance, when we dream that we will have a problem the next day, if we go ahead with our intention of, for instance, visiting a particular place.

The line after that says that this mantra *disables all bad spells, power and strength*. Various means, such as bad spells, can be used by those who want to harm others. Power can be the

power of bad spells, or it can be just power, in and of itself, which is used directly to hurt another, or indirectly to force a third person to get involved in hurting another. Strength can be used to harm others through any means, such as the use of weapons or one's own body. Bad spells, power and strength are useless against such a yogi.

And supremely ransoms the eight aspects of death means that all uncertainty about death is completely eliminated, and that there is no way that untimely death has the power to take the life of such a yogi. Because of that, if one practices this recitation, the result one will achieve is explained as follows:

དུས་གསུམ་བདེ་གཤེགས་ཐམས་ཅད་གྱིས།

dü sum de shek tham che chee

Once those gone to bliss in the three times

སྐྱེ་ཐོབ་གཟི་བརྗིད་བྱིན་གྱིས་རྣོ་བས།

ku thop zi jit shin jee lop

Attain the kayas, in splendour they bestow blessings.

Once those gone to bliss in the three times attain the kayas, in splendour they bestow blessings, refers to all the buddhas. Once one becomes a buddha, one attains the kayas, which are their very special qualities. The splendour of these kayas, literally, the enlightened bodies of the buddhas, is different from any splendour we could have because it is the splendour of the light of primordial awareness and of the thirty-two major marks and the eighty minor signs of buddhahood. In the splendour of these kayas they bestow blessings.

བརྩུ་མི་སྤུབ་པས་བརྒྱ་སྤུབ་འགྲུར།

chu mi thup pee ja thup jur

Lifespans of ten years increase to a hundred.

The next line gives an example of the qualities that result from such attainment, as *lifespans of ten years increase to a hundred*. Since bad circumstances and obstacles can no longer cut life short, its span increases.

གཞུངས་འདི་སྐྱོགས་པའི་བྱིན་བརྒྱབས་གྱིས།

zung di drok pi shin lap chee

Through the blessings of reciting this dharani,

ཡུལ་དང་ས་ཕྱོགས་གམས་ཅད་དུ།

yul dang sa shok tham che du

In all places and in all directions,

བགོགས་མེད་ནད་མེད་བགྲ་གིས་འབྱུང་།

gek me ne me tra shee jung

There are no obstacles or sicknesses and all is auspicious.

The next three lines refer to other qualities of reciting this dharani mantra, as well as the benefit for others from its recitation. ***Through the blessings of reciting this dharani mantra, in all places and in all directions, there are no obstacles or sicknesses and all is auspicious.*** Through the recitation of this dharani mantra, there is not only benefit for oneself, but the benefit also spreads out in all directions from the place where it has been recited, so that there are no obstacles or sicknesses and everything is auspicious

གཟུངས་འདིའི་ཡོན་ཏན་བསམ་མི་བྱུབ།

zung dee yön ten sam mi chap

The qualities of this dharani are inconceivable.

སངས་རྒྱས་སྤྲུལ་དང་བཅས་པས་ཀྱང་།

sang jee see dang chee pee chang

Even buddhas and bodhisattvas

འདི་ཡི་ཡོན་ཏན་བཟོད་མི་རུས།

di yi yön ten jöt mi nü

Cannot describe them.

The qualities of this dharani mantra are inconceivable, so it is impossible for us to conceive of all of them, even though there has been mention of some of them. How is it that we cannot conceive of them? The answer comes in the next two lines. ***Even buddhas and bodhisattvas cannot describe them.*** Even if they wanted to, there is no way that buddhas and bodhisattvas, their heart sons, could describe the qualities of reciting this dharani mantra.

འདི་ནི་ཚོས་ཉིད་རང་སྤྲུལ་ཡིན།

di ni chö nyit rang dra yin

It is the self-sound of true nature.

Each phenomenon has true nature, which is indescribable, and ***it***, this dharani mantra, ***is the self-sound of that true nature***, which is indescribable. Even though the prayer mentions some

of its qualities, it only does so in a coarse and superficial way, and does not really describe them. That would be impossible.

Whether one believes or not in the benefits and qualities of this dharani mantra, whether one believes or not that through just one recitation of it one could attain the state of ultimate buddhahood, is a question of confidence and trust. Of course, if one has practised during many former lifetimes, it is very easy to have confidence and to accept that it so. If one has not practised and has doubts, one can listen to a lama's explanation of the practice, and come to an understanding of it in that way. One should know that it is the words of the Buddha, the Bhagawan.

The most important part of this practice is the recitation of the dharani mantra, and if one does not have enough time to do the complete practice, it is sufficient just to recite the dharani manta itself. Besides the homage in the introductory prayer, the rest of the practice is just an explanation of the qualities of the recitation. This explanation is but a brief guide to the words of this long life practice, which we are doing for the long and stable life of Patrul Rinpoche.