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**Chariot of Benefit and Happiness:
A Song That Summarizes the Content of
All the Authoritative Treatises, Essential
Instructions, and Pith Instructions of
Jowo Atiśa's Kadam Tradition**

Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo



KHYENTSE VISION
PROJECT

*jo bo bka'gdams pa'i gzhung gdams man ngag mtha'dag gi brjod bya mdor bsdus pa'i glu dbyangs
phan bde'i shing rta*

B1533, D35

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INTRODUCTION

In the *Chariot of Benefit and Happiness*, Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo presents the teachings of the Kadam tradition stemming from Atiśa. In a condensed way, in the form of an experiential song,¹ Khyentse Wangpo skillfully incorporates the central elements of the path as described by the Kadam masters, including the approaches for the three scopes of motivation² as defined in the lamrim literature, the main treatises of the Kadampas, and Chekawa Yeshe Dorje's (1101–1175) *Seven-Point Mind Training*.³

In the colophon, Khyentse Wangpo mentions that he composed his song of realization at Radreng Monastery, the first Kadam monastery and the center of this tradition, which he visited on four occasions during his two visits to Central Tibet.⁴ During his last visit in the fall of 1851, he had a vision, in which he received a direct lineage transmission⁵ of the teachings of the Kadam tradition, one of the “eight great chariots of the practice lineage,”⁶ from Dromtönpa himself. In his vision, he beheld Dromtönpa seated in the shade of a juniper tree in the vicinity of Radreng, surrounded by his disciples. This vision is depicted in the lower right corner of the first thangka in the related materials for this translation.⁷ The transmission Khyentse Wangpo received from Dromtönpa included the three classes of teachings in the Kadam tradition mentioned in the text title: the authoritative treatises, the essential instructions, and the pith instructions.⁸ The present text was inspired by this visionary transmission. It can be found in Khyentse Wangpo's collected works as part of the volume containing his songs of realization as well as in the first section of the oral transmissions⁹ representing the Kadam lineage in the Kabab Dun collection.

The particular meter in the Tibetan original creates an atmosphere of naturalness and immediacy. It differs from more orthodox poetic forms, which usually end with three syllables in the last foot of a line (--/--/-- or --/--/---) and

employs a specific format for experiential songs with two syllables at the end of each foot (--/--/--/--), thus breaking the insistence on regularity found in *kāvya*-inspired poetry and introducing elements of Tibetan folk song.¹⁰

ཕན་བདེའི་ཞིང་རྟ།

Chariot of Benefit and Happiness

Lion of the Śākya, supreme teacher of the three classes of disciples;
Ajita and Mañjughoṣa, his foremost bodhisattva heirs;
Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga, the world's great charioteers;
Tilopa and Nāropa, crown ornaments of a million siddhas; [71]

Jowo Atiśa, embodiment of their traditions—profound view, vast conduct, and
practice—and of their blessings,¹¹
Along with your disciples and lineage holders,
Remembering your exemplary lives from deep within my heart, I offer this
supplication.
Bless me with your compassion, O Kadam masters!

Bless me that I may have the fortune to correctly hear and teach
The graded path to enlightenment with its four great aspects,
The heart practice of the One Divine Lord, who perfected the activities of
scripture and realization,
To accomplish the welfare of myself and others.

Bless me that, having understood that a fully qualified spiritual mentor of the
Supreme Vehicle
Is an ocean-like source of every goodness there is,
I may follow him properly in thought and deed
So that the root of my path becomes firmly established.

Bless me that, having reflected on my freedoms and advantages,
So hard to find and easy to lose, and on the sufferings of the lower realms,
I may rely on the threefold refuge and strive to act according to the ethics of
 karma,
The common way of people of small scope, who work to attain the higher realms.

Bless me that, having contemplated the truth of the origin of all the suffering
In saṃsāra's three planes—karma and afflictions—and the truth of their cessation,
I may tread the path of the three trainings, [72]
The common way of people of intermediate scope, who work to attain liberation.

Bless me that, by recognizing all beings as my mothers, remembering their
 kindness, benefitting them,
And by putting into practice immeasurable love, compassion, and the pure
 intention,
I may become accomplished in twofold bodhicitta,
The supreme path of people of great scope, who work to attain omniscience.¹²

Bless me that your authoritative treatises dawn as instructions:
The Jātakamālā and Udānavarga, which teach the ground, faith in the Triple Gem
 and karma;
The Śikṣāsamuccaya and Bodhicaryāvatāra, which teach the excellent path,
 bringing benefit and happiness to oneself and others;
The Bodhisattvabhūmi and Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra, which teach the result, the
 concentration that unites śamatha and vipaśyanā.¹³

Bless me that I may integrate your essential instructions:
Training in the preliminaries, the basis, and the main practice, bodhicitta;
Taking adverse conditions onto the path and bringing one's entire life into the
 practice
To reach perfection in mind training with its precepts and commitments.¹⁴

Bless me that your pith instructions become effective:
Remembering the lama, source of refuge, is the fertile ground for experience and
 realization;
Meditating on the yoga of deity and mantra is the skillful means of the Great
 Secret;
The union of compassion and emptiness is the main path of the Supreme
 Vehicle.¹⁵

In short, O Kadam masters, your body maṇḍala is ornamented with the perfect
accomplishment of the four deities;
Your speech is adorned with the Tripiṭaka's excellent teachings, the medium of
expression; [73]
And your mind is beautified by the pure three trainings, the object of
expression—
I pray that I may emulate your exemplary lives!

This was composed by the carefree yogi Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, who has a deep admiration for the exemplary lives of the masters of the precious Kadam tradition and has extensively studied their scriptural system. It came to his mind spontaneously when he arrived at Radreng in the North, the Conqueror's Hermitage.¹⁶ Remembering also the words of the one bearing the name Jñāna,¹⁷ a monk and spiritual mentor at Gyume,¹⁸ who had asked him earlier to write something of this kind, he offered this supplication with single-minded devotion. May it bring virtue and excellence!

NOTES

1. In its title, the text is referred to as a “song” (*glu dbyangs*). Other common Tibetan terms for this genre are *glu*, *mgur*, *nyams mgur*, and the honorific term *gsung mgur*.
2. *skyes bu gsum*.
3. *blo sbyong don bdun ma*.
4. Akester, *Khyentsé Wangpo’s Guide*, 27, and Akester, *Life of Jamyang Khyentsé*, 183.
5. *nye brgyud*.
6. *sgrub brgyud shing rta chen po brgyad*.
7. For another depiction of this visionary transmission, see Akester, *Life of Jamyang Khyentsé*, 260–61.
8. *gzhung*, *gdams ngag*, and *man ngag*. The lineage of authoritative instructions of the Kadam tradition (*bka’ gdams gzhung pa*) focuses on the “six authoritative treatises of Kadam” (*bka’ gdams gzhung drug*), which are mentioned in this text; the lineage of essential instructions (*bka’ gdams gdams ngag pa*) focuses on Atiśa’s essential instructions, rather than the classical treatises, as the basis for practice; and the core of the pith instruction lineage (*bka’ gdams man ngag pa*) are the secret teachings of the *Book of Kadam* (*bka’ gdams glegs bam*). The entrusted custodians of these three lineages were the three Kadam brothers (*bka’ gdams sku mched gsum*) Potowa Rinchen Sal (1027–1105), Chengawa Tsultrim Bar (1033–1103), and Puchungwa Zhönu Gyaltzen (1031–1106), respectively; see Jinpa, *Book of Kadam*, 8–9; Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, *Deathless Nectar of Meditation*, 364.4–366.4; Akester, *Life of Jamyang Khyentsé*, 309n336; and Akester, *Khyentsé Wangpo’s Guide*, 27n2.
9. *bka’ ma*.
10. Jinpa, *Songs of Spiritual Experience*, 13–15.
11. This line alludes to the three lineages (*brgyud pa gsum*) of the previously mentioned masters and bodhisattvas: (1) the lineage of profound view (*zab mo lta ba’i brgyud pa*) stemming from Mañjuśrī and Nāgārjuna, (2) the lineage of vast conduct (*rgya chen spyod pa’i brgyud pa*) stemming from Maitreya and Asaṅga, and (3) the blessing lineage of meditative practice (*nyams len byin rlabs kyi brgyud pa*) here represented by the Indian siddhas Tilopa and Nāropa.

12. This verse alludes to the “seven cause-and-effect pith instructions” (*rgyu ’bras man ngag bdun*) derived from Asaṅga’s *Bodhisattvabhūmi*. Moreover, in this and the previous two verses, Khyentse Wangpo mentions the three scopes or levels of motivation (*skyes bu gsum*) of a practitioner stemming from the teachings of Atiśa. “Atiśa’s *Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment* presents the entire Buddhist path to enlightenment in terms of meditative practices appropriate to these three differing capacities—the initial, who seeks only a refuge from the fears of rebirth in the lower realms; the intermediate, who principally seeks freedom from cyclic existence; and the advanced, who seeks full awakening for the benefit of all beings” (Jinpa, *Book of Kadam*, 676).
13. These are the “six authoritative treatises of Kadam” (*bka’ gdams gzhung drug*), the core teachings of the scriptural lineage of the Kadam tradition (*bka’ gdams gzhung pa*).
14. These are the seven points of the *Seven-Point Mind Training* by Chekawa Yeshe Dorje, custodian of the essential instructions lineage of the Kadam tradition (*bka’ gdams gdams ngag pa*).
15. This verse alludes to the five recollections (*rjes dran lnga*) attributed to Tārā as presented in the Father Teachings (*pha chos*) of the *Book of Kadam*, which embodies the pith instructions lineage of the Kadam tradition (*bka’ gdams man ngag pa*); see Jinpa, *Book of Kadam*, 12–13 and 93.
16. See Akester, *Khyentse Wangpo’s Guide*, 26–34.
17. This refers to Geshe Yeshe Gongpel, who served as the abbot of the Gyume college in Lhasa and was a disciple of Jamgön Kongtrul (1813–1899). Khyentse Wangpo received transmissions of several Kadam teachings from him; see Akester, *Life of Jamyang Khyentsé*, 91.
18. See Berzin, *Gelug Monasteries*.

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