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Resting in the Twofold Purpose: A Prayer of Aspiration for the Three Vows

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KHYENTSE VISION
PROJECT

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Khyentse Vision Project: Translating the Works of
Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo

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TRANSLATOR'S INTRODUCTION

In this short, lyrical prayer of aspiration, Khyentse Wangpo explains the three levels of vows as gradually cultivated on the path of a Vajrayāna practitioner. The three vows are those found in Tibetan and Himalayan Buddhism, namely, the *prātimokṣa* vows of self-liberation, the bodhisattva vows of universal enlightenment, and the tantric vows of secret mantra. These three vows are not explicit in the prayer, but they are implied in Khyentse Wangpo's explanation of the disciplines and accomplishments entailing each. As ever within the Dzogchen view of the path that characterizes Khyentse Wangpo's teachings, all of these vows and their associated disciplines are understood to function together and to interdepend as a whole. The twofold purpose referred to in the title is the benefit of oneself and others, which is fulfilled through cultivation of these disciplines and the three levels of vows that are upheld through them.

Khyentse Wangpo uses richly poetic imagery to convey the development of the three trainings and vows, likening their cultivation to events in the natural world like the growth of plants and gardens. Poetic expression is itself very natural in Khyentse Wangpo's style of discourse and reveals a Buddhist language where there is no bold division between knowledge and creative vision.

This prayer comes from the volume 22 of Khyentse Wangpo's Seven Transmissions (Kabab Dun) and is included as well in his Collected Writings (Kabum).

དོན་གཉིས་ངལ་བསོ།

Resting in the Twofold Purpose

Namo!

In the spacious expanse of all the buddhas' kindness,
From the center of a cloud canopy of joyful benefit,
A rain of nectar of the three vows falls—
May the sprout of supreme liberation burst forth!

Shaving off thick black locks of plaited hair
Cuts through all the fetters of existence.
May the radiant appearance of fresh saffron robes
Fill the entire three realms with the light of benefit and joy!

Firmly planting the root with the three rites of purification,
The stems of moral engagement and avoidance unfurl
Into exquisite flowers subduing the enemy of existence—
May hundreds of gardens of Dharma discipline flourish!

Friendship that exudes from the cool moonlight of kindness
Opens the *kumuda* flower of joy for all beings,
At once clearing the thick shadows of saṃsāra—
May we live with abundance of such untainted nectar!

May the great jeweled vine of generosity, morality, and patience
As well as joyous effort, concentration, and wisdom
Follow the path of the transcendent perfections
To the abundant wealth of supreme enlightenment!

On the immense ocean of Dharma scriptures and experience
Sways the boat of the three kinds of knowledge,
Crossing over on the reliable path of the Buddha's words—
May we arrive at the island of omniscience! [735]

The pristine radiance of the sun of lucid explanations
Unfolds the lotus of intelligence in the fortunate,
Simultaneously clearing the fog of mistaken paths—
May the light of the Buddha's teachings be all pervading!

In a place of solitude, wholly released from the eight worldly concerns,
With all distracting activities left far behind,
And with unwavering focus in supreme concentration,
May the two purposes be utterly and spontaneously fulfilled!

Sprinkled with the drops of ripening nectar
From the excellent vase holding the Vajrayāna lineage,
May the ground of liberation be perfectly moistened,
And the seed of unfaltering samaya be sown!

Fully seizing the vajras of body, speech, and mind,
With discernment in mind of the subtle and coarse,
Liberated in space beyond the boundaries of preservation,
May the true nature of the path of secret mantra be realized!

Consecrated by the sublime waters¹ of generation and completion,
Fully mastered in the channels, winds, and drops,
May I become a dwelling place for all beings
In the shade of the opened white lotus of the four kāyas!

The ultimate mind of timeless wisdom resides nowhere;
May we delight in celebration of spontaneous joy!
In the great sphere of total freedom from self-referential vision,
May we forever abide in the essence of the magical display!

Constantly partaking of the nectar of the three trainings, [736]
Enraptured in the union of bliss and emptiness,
May the order of gathered saṅgha of indivisible knowledge and liberation
Vanquish all the realms of conditioned existence!

By this, the spring air of the two accumulations
Ushers in the fullness of summer to enjoy.
May all beings be fully pacified of deluded emotions
And live in harmonious glory of Dharma goodness!

Like this, on these fragrant winds of pure aspiration,
Propelled by a canopy of clouds of the three trainings,
Extracting the glorious nectar of higher and ultimate good,
May all beings overcome the torments of saṃsāra!

Holding tightly to the precious trainings, with a mind determined for liberation from saṃsāra, appears to be a defining characteristic of all aspirations for the teachings. This was written, therefore, as a mere aspiration for such by the ignorant one named Abhaya ("Fearless One"). [737]

NOTES

1. Literally, “mouth waters.” This is a poetic reference to the Indian Bakula flower, which is said to blossom by the saliva of a beautiful girl.

GLOSSARY

three rites of purification

གཞི་གསུམ་ཚེ་ག། • *gzhi gsum cho ga* • poṣadha

Three practices of *poṣadha*, a monastic observance of confession, purifying, and restoring prātimokṣa vows.

three trainings

བསྐྱབ་པ་གསུམ། • *bslab pa gsum* • triśikṣā

Three moral disciplines of the Buddhist path: morality (*śīla*), concentration (*śamādhi*), and wisdom (*prajñā*), based on the Tripiṭaka.

three vows

ཐྲིམ་གསུམ། ཐྲིམ་པ་གསུམ། • *sdom gsum; sdom pa gsum*

The *prātimokṣa* vows of self-liberation, the bodhisattva vows of universal enlightenment, and the tantric vows of secret mantra.

twofold purpose

དོན་གཉིས། • *don gnyis*

Two objectives of benefiting oneself and others.