

Story and Introduction to the Khandro Nyingthig

Extracted from the

Spacious Expanse of Illuminating Primordial Wisdom
A Commentary on the Liberating Instructions of the Heart Bindu of the Dakinis

By Drigung Rinchen Phüntshog Namchag Mebar (1509-1557)

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www.buddhavisions.com

contact@buddhavisions.com

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Namo Guru Deva Dakiniye

To the one with mastery over the treasury of the secrets of the body, speech, and mind of all the supreme victorious ones without exception in the ten directions and four times, whose great enlightened activities of the powerful energy of enlightened qualities fully blossomed, who has an enlightened mind of equally pervading love for all wandering beings throughout the limits of endless space, to the great abiding Oddiyana master Padmasambhava, with our bodies, I and all embodied beings devotedly prostrate to you. With longing speech we praise you. With minds of faith we take refuge in you again and again.

The Audience for these Instructions

Suitable vessels for these instructions are those who have minds that aspire to follow after Padmasambhava with great faith, diligence, and wisdom. They make respectful offerings to their Gurus. They have few attachments and minds with few distractions. Their minds are tamed, they shun negative deeds, they can keep secrets, and they have great capacities to withstand the hardships of practice. They possess great disillusionment with the world and protect their samayas like their own eyeballs. For such individuals who have accumulated previous merit and have awakened to the fruits of their aspirations, there is the enlightened intent of the great awareness holder himself, the bindu in the depths of the hearts of all the dakinis, this profound path that appeared from the profound treasure.

The Ripening Empowerments

One must begin by meeting a vajra master who can teach these instructions. Then, there are the stages of empowerments to ripen the mind. There is the outer elaborate vase empowerment. There is the inner unelaborated secret empowerment. There is the extremely unelaborate primordial wisdom-knowledge empowerment. There is the most secret extremely unelaborate precious word empowerment. In particular, there is the absolutely unelaborate energy of awareness empowerment (*rig pa'i rtsal dbang*) of direct transcendence (*thod rgal*). These five particular empowerments and all the instructions should be transmitted and received according to the treasure catalog.

The Liberating Instructions

Some do not have the leisure to receive all the stages of the liberating instructions in the manner of experiential instruction. In composing this, I want to help all individuals in the future who wish to enter into the meaning of these instructions. Thus, composing this to establish the manner of experiential instruction, I pray that the assemblies of dharma lords and dakinis will grant their forbearance and permission for this endeavor. Furthermore, I pray to the oath endowed protectors, treasure lords, and their retinues who abide by the words and the samaya of the great master, that the stream of these great secret teachings are illuminated and blossom like the light of the sun and moon. In particular, please guard against all obstacles to this composition without exception!

Here is the king of all the tantras. Here is the grandmother of all the transmissions. Here is the innermost essence of all the gathered pith instructions. Here is the teaching on how to actualize the meaning of the vajra essence of luminosity. Within the practice of the *Profound Path of Heart bindu of the Dakinis* there are four parts: the preliminaries, the main part, the subsequent part, and the final supporting instructions.

1. Preliminaries

The preliminaries have sixteen parts: (1) generating certainty in the dharma of the tantras, (2) the nature of the instructions, (3) the proper abode, (4) proper companions, (5) characteristics of the torma offering, ganachakra, and other items, (6-7) developing determination and courage, (8) meditation on impermanence, (9) meditation on compassion, (10) meditation on the bodhichitta of aspiration and taking action. (11) In the special preliminaries of separating samsara and nirvana (*khor 'das ru shan*): for the body there are the six realms, peaceful and wrathful deities, and the vajra posture of the body, (12) for the speech there is the *Hung* seal of sound, exercises, seeking the approach, and taking to the road, (13) for the mind there are the investigations of suffering, happiness, coming, abiding, and going. These are the divisions of outer separation. (14) The inner divisions consist of purifying the six syllables of the six realms or six families through the mental exercise of the three syllables. Then, there is (15) resting in naturalness and (16) dwelling in freshness.

1.1. Generating Certainty in the Dharma of the Tantras

It says in the *Luminous Expanse Tantra*:

In order to generate certainty in fortunate ones,
The history of the tantras should be explained.

Furthermore, the method to explain and practice such is as follows. It says in the same source:

Since the tantras have a close and profound authentic source,
The history should be successively explained from Samantabhadra on.

1.1.1. The Story of These Instructions

Within the completely pure palace of the expanse of reality, there is the dharmakaya, the completely unestablished primordial purity. Without wavering from that state, there is the unceasing self-radiance of spontaneous presence. From that, the form of the father and mother Samantabhadra arises with faces and hands. Their retinue is not different from themselves. These instructions were thus taught to the sambhogakaya Vajradhara, appearing in enlightened form with fully complete marks and signs. These instructions were transmitted through their self-essence by him within Akanishta to the nirmanakaya Vajrasattva. Within the ‘Blazing Fire Mountain Charnel Ground’, these instructions were taught to the nirmanakaya Garab Dorje as just words. He taught these to the master Shri Simha. Shri Simha taught these to the great awareness holder Padmakara.

In the upper cave of ‘Slate Mountain’, Padmakara practiced these instructions from the depths of his heart. Thus, his conditioned physical form was transformed into the unconditioned illusory body, appearing yet without any substantial nature. He attained the mastery of a deathless awareness holder, free from birth and death. At that very place, he set these instructions down in words.

Although he was invited to Tibet, at that time the period for him to teach the heart bindu instructions had not come to pass. He also knew that the Pandita Vimilamitra would be coming. At the abode of Zhotö Terdrom, Padmakara taught these to the enlightened female Kharchenza Tsogyal. She realized the essence of five-fold primordial wisdom free from any confusion, mental contrivance, dullness, or stupor. She then compiled these words as the *Instructions of the Heart bindu of the Dakinis*, arranging them with a catalogue including all the mother and child teachings. Then, these were sealed with a seal of secrecy.

At that time, the king Trisong Detsen had just completed a fully complete consecration and festival for the unchanging spontaneously present glorious Samye temple. He then went to the great Chimpu Ge'u Gong Cave charnel ground to perform one hundred and eight ganachakra feast offerings in the presence of the master [Padmakara]. At this time, the king, with the queen Dromza Jangchub Drön, had a daughter named Lhacham Pema Sal, who passed away at the age of eight years old. When this occurred, the master [Padmakara] drew a syllable *Nri* with vermillion upon her heart center and summoned her consciousness back into her body so that she could speak and comprehend.

He gave her the secret name Padma Ledrel Tsal. He explained to the king and the rest of the retinue that the princess was experiencing the fruition of previous karma. Afterwards, he explained that in the future during the time of the rampant five degenerations, one of her own incarnations would have the dharma fortune of the *Heart bindu of the Dakinis*, and in order to instill faith, the history of these instructions would be hidden along with them. Placing these on the crown of the princess of Terdrom, he made the following aspiration:

For the benefit of fortunate ones in future generations
Hide these in the Danglung Cave.
Deities of Dang, protect these words of the victorious ones.
In the south of the Salje Mountains
There is a place like a blazing iron box
And a hill that is like a sleeping wild yak.
At the top of such there is one
Blessed by Vajradakini,

Who will be born in the Dragon, Monkey, or Rabbit year.
He will have good temperament and devotion to the great vehicle dharma.
For the method aspect *Heart bindu of the Dakinis*
He will have a sign that you can actually see.
On the inside of his right thigh,
Like the eye of the Ratnadakini,
There will be a mole that is like a dakini's eye.
To the one who has all such characteristics,
The birth of the karmically connected one, give these instructions.
If someone else gets them, take their life.

Seal of Profundity
Seal of Treasure
Seal of Concealment
Seal of Commandment
Seal of Entrustment
Seal of Dakinis

Thus, he entrusted and sealed the instructions. Again, the princess passed on. The master Padmakara himself explained how her corpse should be cremated, and instantaneously she was transferred to a ganachakra in the land of Oddiyana.

When the prophesized time came to pass, at the dharma source of Dridang, one named Rinchen Tsüldor was born, who was prophesized by the treasure lords. He was handed over the key catalogue. On the twenty-seventh day of the last of the autumn months of the water female ox year, he extracted these instructions from the Tramo Cave. That nirmanakaya had twenty-one fortunate disciples as prophesized by Orgyen Rinpoche himself. As for the lineage of successive generations of accomplished ones, it has been marvelous and uninterrupted by samaya breaking demons.

1.2. The Instructions that Were Revealed

It says in the *Heart bindu of the Dakinis* itself:

Ema! Fortunate children,
If you do not realize these key points,
Even if you perform the ten virtues, you will not be freed from samsara.
Even though you might perform the five acts of immediate consequence,
By meeting with these, it is impossible for you to fall to the lower realms.
If you engage with these and the *Liberation by Wearing Tantras*
You will be liberated without any remaining body in six years.
If you are not such an individual, and you do other things,
Though you might study, contemplate, meditate, and accomplish things for aeons,
There is no hope for Buddhahood in aeons.
Why? You do not realize the key points of actual reality.
Through the dharma of the three baskets and nine vehicles,

You do not touch the meaning of this.
These are superior to everything else.
In the ground, wisdom is spontaneously present.
The single instant that you see actual reality through these methods
You will be liberated without a doubt.
Why? This is what that actual dakinis have taught.
Those beings who practice this
Can not be separate from the father and mother Samantabhadra.
The forms of dakinis will accompany you like a shadow.
Even if you meet with just these words,
You will be liberated without obstruction in three lifetimes.
Even if you merely hear these in your ears,
Your ordinary lives will cease to exist.

This and other infinite benefits of these instructions were taught by the great awareness holder himself. In such a way, it is difficult to find these instructions anywhere in the four times. When you meet with such actual instructions here, abandon doubts and second guessing. You must practice these!

1.3. Characteristics of the [Meditation] Abode

It says in the *Luminous Expanse*:

A snowy retreat, an empty valley, a mountain peak, or a charnel ground,
In an extremely remote place, at a place that is bright and elevated,
These are the practice abodes of the fortunate ones.

To explain the need and purpose behind such words, one abides at snowy retreats or in empty valleys, because it causes virtuous activities to blossom. At the peak of mountains, the mind is clear. In charnel grounds, disillusionment with the world is born. In solitary places, practice is without obstacles. At bright and high places, the expanse and awareness are clear.

1.4. Characteristics of Companions

In all such places that were just explained, as one cultivates enlightenment the best is to meditate alone. It is average to practice with other retreatants. At the least, your companions should be companions who have the following qualities. It is said:

One possessing the characteristics of samaya, great pure perception,
Weak force of the five poisons, great mind, great patience,
Stable disposition, a friend of love, should be befriended.

Thus, if one has pure samayas, faults and downfalls will not occur. If one has great pure perception, one is harmonious with all. If the force of the five poisons is weak, afflictive emotions will not arise. If one's mind is stable and one is forbearing, one will not be overpowered by circumstances. If one has a stable disposition and love, it can be beneficial to be inseparable at all times with such a person.

1.5. Provisions

One should have the characteristics of all the necessary provisions including the torma, ganachakra substances, and other items. Furthermore, it is taught in the tantras:

With all the provisions, the accomplishments of the dharma arise.

Since it has been taught as such, by having a fine torma, viras and dakinis will gather easily. By persevering in ganachakra offerings, transgressions and downfalls will be appeased and accomplishments will swiftly manifest. Thus, these are necessities.

1.6-7. Developing Determination and Courage

The manner to accomplish these instructions through the gateways of determination and courage, is as follows. When one has the proper place, companions, and provisions as explained above, if one continues to dwell in ordinary circumstances of body, speech, and mind, afflictive emotions will merely increase. By staying in isolation, it is certain that one will attain the view of Buddhahood without any bodily remainder. The wheel of samsara does not have the capacity to free itself. Therefore, develop the confidence that even at the cost of your life, you will not give up the practice of this profound secret teaching. Think,

I must not accomplish the activities of fabricating the menace of the ordinary world. If I should get caught up in business and the material world, and if I just toss aside these instructions, may the dharma protectors punish me!

Thus, no matter if we renege upon our commitments, now matter what obstacles of good or bad circumstances come our way, with a longing true determination, in the end we with prevail through our courage.

1.8. Meditation on Impermanence

As for the way to practice the common preliminaries, it is taught in the *Testaments*:

Train in impermanence, compassion, and bodhichitta.

By investigating the way that everything, oneself and others, the vessel and the contents of samsara and nirvana abides, one realizes everything is entirely impermanent. It is not established at all aside from representing the machinations of illusion. Practice reflecting upon impermanence, until you generate certainty about it.

1.9. Meditation on Compassion

Thus perceiving impermanence, furthermore, reflect that all sentient beings are caught up in the experience of suffering within it. Thus, generate the mind of compassion.

1.10. Meditation on the Bodhichitta of Aspiration and Taking Action

To liberate such beings from suffering together with the cause of suffering, if one does not reach the expanse of the primordial protector Samantabhadra, be sure that conditioned activities of the dharma will not reach an ultimate fruition. With a longing desire to attain liberation, practice the path with a mind to liberate oneself and all other beings equally. This is the bodhichitta of aspiration and taking action.