

Foundation of all Perfections

Je TsongKhapa (1357-1419)

Following a kind master, foundation of all perfections,
Is the very root and basis of the path.
Inspire me to see this clearly
And to make every effort to follow well.

Precious human life, gained but once,
Has great potential but is easily lost.
Inspire me to remember this constantly
And to think day and night of taking its essence.

I must remember that death is quick to strike,
For spirit quivers in flesh like a bubble in water,
And after death one's good and evil deeds
Trail after one like the shadow trails the body.

Understanding that this most certainly is true,
May I discard every level of wrong,
And generate an infinite mass of goodness;
Inspire me to be thus continually aware.

Sensual gluttony is a gate to suffering
And is not worthy of a lucid mind.
Inspire me to realize the shortcomings of samsara
And to give birth to the great wish for blissful freedom.

And inspire me that with mindfulness and alertness
Born from thoughts ultimately pure,
I may live in accord with the holy dharma,
The ways leading to personal liberation.

Just as I myself have fallen into samsara's waters,
So have all other sentient beings.
Inspire me to see this and really to practice
Bodhi-mind, that carries the weight of freeing them.

Yet without habituation in the three types of morality,
Thought-training accomplishes no enlightenment.
Inspire me to know this deeply, and to train intensely
In the various ways of the great bodhisattvas.

And inspire me to pacify distorted mental wanderings
And to decipher the ultimate meaning of life,
That I may give birth within my mindstream
To the path combining concentration and wisdom.

One who trains in these common Mahayana practices
Becomes a vessel worthy of the supreme vehicle, Vajrayana.
Inspire me that I may quickly and easily
Arrive at that portal of fortunate beings.

The foundation of what then produces the two powers
Is the guarding of the pledges and commitments of tantric
initiation.
Inspire me so that I may have uncontrived knowledge of this
And guard my discipline as I do my very life.

And inspire me so that I may gain realization of the main practices
Of the two stages of Vajrayana, essence of the tantric path;
And, by sitting relentlessly in four daily sessions of yoga,
Actualize just what the sages have taught.

Inspire me that the masters who have unfolded the sublime path within me
And the spiritual friends who have inspired me may live long;
And that the myriad inner and outer interferences
Be completely and utterly calmed forever.

In all future lives may I never be parted
From the perfect lamas or the pure ways of dharma.
May I gain every experience of the paths and stages
And quickly attain the stage of Vajradhara.

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