

Calling the Guru From Afar: A Supplication to Pierce Your Heart with Devotion

by Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Thaye

Namo Guruve. This style of supplication called Calling the Guru from Afar is known by everyone. Nevertheless, the key point for invoking the guru's blessing is devotion inspired by disenchantment and renunciation, not as mere platitude but from the core of your heart, from the very marrow of your bones. Chant the song melodiously with the confidence of having resolved that your own guru is none other than the Awakened One.

Guru, think of me.
Kind root guru, think of me.
Essence of the Buddhas of the three times,
Source of the sublime Dharma of statements and realization,
Sovereign of the sangha, the assembly of noble ones,
Root guru think of me.

Great treasure of blessings and compassion,
Source of the two siddhis,
Enlightened activity that grants all wishes,
Root guru think of me.

Guru Boundless Light, think of me.
Regard me from the expanse of the unconstructed dharmakaya.
Lead me, wandering throughout samsara because of my evil actions,
To rebirth in your pure land of Great Bliss.

Guru mighty Avalokiteshvara, think of me.
Regard me from the expanse of luminous sambhogakaya.
Completely pacify the suffering of the six classes of beings
And churn the three realms of samsara from their depths.

Guru Padmasambhava, think of me.
Regard me from Chamara, the realm of Lotus Light.
As I am without refuge in this dark age,
Protect your helpless disciple with your swift compassion.

Guru Yeshe Tsogyal, think of me.
Regard me from the celestial city of great bliss.
Though I have done much evil,
Free me from the ocean of existence into the great city of liberation.

Lineage gurus of the Kama and Terma, think of me.
 Regard me from the expanse of the unified wakefulness,
 In my mind, a cave dark with confusion,
 Make the sun of realization dawn.

Omniscient Drimey Ozer, think of me.
 Regard me from the expanse of the five lights of spontaneous presence.
 Having perfected the great strength of realizing primordial purity
 Help me reach culmination in the four visions.

Peerless Lord Atisha, father and sons, think of me.
 Regard me from Tushita while surrounded by hundreds of deities.
 Cause bodhichitta, emptiness suffused with compassion,
 To arise within my mind.

Supreme siddhas, Marpa, Milarepa and Gampopa, think of me.
 Regard me from the basic space of indestructible great bliss.
 Help me to attain the supreme siddhi of Mahamudra, empty bliss,
 And awaken dharmakaya in the depths of my heart.

Mighty lord of this world, Karmapa, think of me.
 Regard me, from the basic space, taming beings to the reaches of space.
 Help me realize that all phenomena are false, mere illusions.
 Cause experiences to arise as the three kayas.

Masters of the four great and eight lesser Kagyu lineages, think of me.
 Regard me from the buddhafield of pure personal experience.
 Having dissolved the confusion of the four states,
 Lead me to the end of experience and realization.

Five Sakya forefathers, think of me.
 Regard me from the expanse of samsara and nirvana indivisible.
 Combining the pure view, meditation and conduct,
 Lead me along the supreme path of secrets.

Unequaled masters of the Shangpa Kagyu, think of me.
 Regard me from the buddha realm of total purity.
 By properly practicing means and liberation,
 Enable me to discover the unity beyond learning.

Mahasiddha Tangtong Gyalpo, think of me.
 Regard me from the expanse of effortless compassion.
 By practicing the discipline of realizing the absence of concrete reality,
 Enable me to master prana and mind.

Only father, Dampa Sangye, think of me.
 Regard me from the basic space which accomplishes the supreme activity.
 With the lineage blessings entering my heart,
 Cause auspicious connections to arise in all directions.

Only mother, Machik Labdron, think of me.
 Regard me from the expanse of prajnaparamita.
 Cutting through the subtle pretense of clinging to a self,
 May I see the truth of the simplicity beyond self.

Omniscient Dolpo Sangye, think of me.
 Regard me from the basic space endowed with the supreme of all aspects.
 Having stilled the breath of transference within the central channel,
 May I attain the vajra body beyond transference.

Jetsun Taranatha, think of me.
 Regard me from the basic space of the three companions.
 Having traveled the secret vajra path unimpeded,
 May I accomplish the celestial rainbow body.

Terchen Chokgyur Lingpa, think of me.
 Regard me from the all-pervasive realm of dharmakaya.
 Having let dualistic thought dissolve into the state of non-arising,
 May I re-assume the seat of natural awareness.

Orgyen Dechen Lingpa, think of me.
 Regard me from the self-luminous realm of sambhogakaya.
 Enable me to realize, beyond abandonment and attainment,
 The great spontaneous presence of the five kayas and wisdoms.

All-pervasive Shikpo Lingpa, think of me.
 Regard me from the compassionate state of taming beings.
 Discovering the jewel of mind within myself,
 May the fruition be perfected within the ground.

Sempa Padma Nyugu, think of me.
 Look upon me from the realm of the Magical Net.
 May I be inseparable from the supreme wisdom king,
 The sovereign of the four kayas.

Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, think of me.
 Regard me from the basic space of the wisdom of twofold knowledge.
 Dispelling the mental darkness of unknowing,
 May I spread the light of supreme knowledge.

Osel Trulpey Dorje, think of me.
 Regard me from the expanse of five-colored rainbow lights.
 Having purified the stains of essences, winds and perception,
 May I awaken within the youthful vase body.

Pema Do-Ngak Lingpa, think of me.
 Regard me from the expanse of unchanging empty bliss.
 Grant me the ability to completely fulfill
 All intentions of the victorious ones and their heirs.

Ngawang Yonten Gyatso, think of me.
 Regard me from the expanse of the unity of basic space and wisdom.
 Rending my clinging to an apparent reality,
 May I bring whatever arises onto the path.

Son of the victorious one, Lodro Thaye, think of me.
 Regard me from the expanse of loving-kindness and compassion.
 Knowing all beings to be my kind parents,
 May I acquire a pure, altruistic heart.

Pema Gargyi Wangchuk, think of me.
 Regard me from the basic space of luminous great bliss.
 Having liberated the five poisons into the five wisdoms,
 May I destroy the duality of loss and gain.

Tennyi Yungdrung Lingpa, think of me.
 Regard me from the basic space in which existence and peace are equal.
 Genuine devotion having grown in my mind,
 May the great realization and liberation be simultaneous.

Bokar, mighty Vajradhara, think of me.
 Regard me from the supreme realm of Akanishtha.
 Having realized all apparent phenomena as Mahamudra,
 May I attain non-meditation, the dharmakaya. ¹

Kind root guru, think of me.
 Regard me from the crown of my head, the abode of great bliss.
 Having met dharmakaya, natural awareness, face to face,
 May I accomplish buddhahood in a single lifetime.

Alas!
 Sentient beings like me, with negative karma and evil deeds,
 Have wandered in samsara from beginningless time.
 I continue to experience endless suffering,
 But I never feel even the briefest moment of regret.
 Guru think of me, regard me with compassion.
 Bless me that renunciation may arise from the depths of my heart.

Though having attained the freedoms and riches I squander my life,
 Always preoccupied by the pointless affairs of this world.
 When applying myself to the great pursuit of liberation, I am overcome by laziness.
 As I return from the island of jewels empty-handed,
 Guru think of me, regard me with compassion.
 Bless me that my human life may become meaningful.

Not a single life on earth escapes death,
Even now, they pass away one after the other.
Soon, I too must die. I am a fool, thinking I will remain forever.
Guru think of me, regard me with compassion.
Bless me so that with no time to waste, I will curtail my plans.

I will be separated from each of my loved ones.
All the valuables I have hoarded will be enjoyed by others.
Even this body I hold so dear will be left behind,
And, within the bardo, my consciousness will wander aimlessly throughout samsara.
Guru think of me, regard me with compassion.
Bless me that I may realize the futility of it all.

The black darkness of fear confronts me.
The fierce gale of karma pursues me.
The lord of death's hideous thugs club and beat me.
Having to endure the unbearable sufferings of negative rebirths,
Guru think of me, regard me with compassion.
Bless me that I may be liberated from the abyss of the lower realms.

Though my faults are as great as a mountain I keep them to myself.
Though others' faults are as small as a sesame seed I proclaim them far and wide.
Though I lack the least of qualities, I boast about how great I am.
I call myself a Dharma practitioner but behave to the contrary.
Guru think of me, regard me with compassion.
Bless me to pacify my selfish pride.

Within, I conceal my nemesis—the demon of ego-clinging.
All my thoughts only cause disturbing emotions to increase.
All my actions result in nonvirtue.
As I have not so much as turned towards the path of liberation,
Guru think of me, regard me with compassion.
Bless me that self-grasping be severed at the root.

With a little praise or blame comes that much joy or sorrow.
With a few harsh words I let down my armor of patience.
Although I see the afflicted, I feel no compassion.
When I have the chance to be generous, I am bound by the knot of greed.
Guru think of me, regard me with compassion.
Bless me to mingle my mind with the Dharma.

Though insubstantial, I ascribe substance to samsara.
For the sake of food and clothing I abandon what has lasting value.
Although I have all that is needed, I crave for more and more.
I deceive myself with unreal, illusory phenomena.
Guru think of me, regard me with compassion.
Bless me to abandon any interest in such a life as this.

Unable to bear the slightest physical or mental pain,
 With jaded heart, I don't hesitate to take inferior rebirths.
 Even though I directly perceive that cause and effect are unfailing,
 Instead of doing what is right, I only perpetuate harm.
 Guru think of me, regard me with compassion.
 Bless me that I gain conviction in the law of karma.

I hate my enemies and cling to my friends.
 Groping in dark delusion as to what to accept and reject,
 When practicing the Dharma, I fall prey to dullness and sleep.
 When involved in non-Dharma, my senses are clear and sharp.
 Guru think of me, regard me with compassion.
 Bless me that I destroy my enemy—disturbing emotions.

On the surface, I appear to be a pure practitioner;
 While inwardly my mind isn't mingled with the Dharma.
 Like a viper I hide my disturbing emotions within,
 But faced with trouble, my faults are exposed.
 Guru think of me, regard me with compassion.
 Bless me that I may tame my own mind.

Failing to notice my own shortcomings,
 Pretending to be spiritual, I am anything but.
 Naturally skilled in negative emotions and karma,
 Again and again good intentions arise, again and again they come to naught.
 Guru think of me, regard me with compassion.
 Bless me that I might see my own faults.

As each day passes, death approaches ever nearer.
 As each day passes, my heart becomes ever more callused.
 While following a teacher my devotion gradually fades,
 And my love and pure perception towards my Dharma friends diminish.
 Guru think of me, regard me with compassion.
 Bless me to tame my savage mind.

I take refuge, engender bodhichitta, and supplicate,
 But devotion and compassion are not felt deep within my heart
 These Dharma activities are mere lip service.
 I only go through the motions and am left untouched.
 Guru think of me, regard me with compassion.
 Bless me that whatever I do may lead to Dharma.

All suffering arises from wanting my own happiness.
 Although it is said that buddhahood is accomplished by wanting to help others,
 Though I engender bodhichitta, secretly my aims are selfish.
 On top of not benefiting others, I harm them.
 Guru think of me, regard me with compassion.
 Bless me that I am able to put myself in others' place.

Although my guru is the Buddha actually manifest, I think of him as
 simply human.
 I forget his kindness in imparting the profound instructions.
 If he doesn't give me what I want, I lose faith.
 I obscure myself by seeing his behavior through doubts and disdain.
 Guru think of me, regard me with compassion.
 Bless me that my devotion may not fade but grow.

Although my mind is the Buddha, I don't recognize it.
 Although my thinking is dharmakaya, I don't realize it.
 Although non-fabrication is the innate, I fail to sustain it.
 Although naturalness is the basic state, I am not convinced.
 Guru think of me, regard me with compassion.
 Bless me that natural awareness is liberated into itself.

Although death is sure to come, I am unable to take it to heart.
 Although applying the genuine Dharma is sure to help, I am unable to practice it.
 Although the law of karma is certainly true, I don't discriminate correctly.
 Although mindfulness is surely needed, I don't apply it and am carried
 away by distraction.
 Guru think of me, regard me with compassion.
 Bless me that I maintain undistracted mindfulness.

Through previous bad karma I was born at the end of this dark age.
 All I have done only results in suffering.
 The bad influence of others has cast its shadow upon me.
 My practice of virtue is overcome by the distractions of meaningless talk.
 Guru think of me, regard me with compassion.
 Bless me to be able to persevere in Dharma practice.

At first, I thought of nothing but the Dharma.
 But in the end, the results of my actions only cause further samsara and the
 lower realms.
 The harvest of liberation is ravaged by the frost of nonvirtue.
 Like a savage, I destroy what is of lasting value.
 Guru think of me, regard me with compassion.
 Bless me that I may perfect the sublime Dharma.

Bless me that disenchantment is felt from the bottom of my heart.
 Bless me that without wasting time I curtail my plans.
 Bless me that I take death to heart.
 Bless me that I feel conviction in the law of karma.

Bless me that the path is free of obstacles.
 Bless me that I am able to practice diligently.
 Bless me that difficulties are utilized as the path.
 Bless me that I may be steadfast in using the remedies.

Bless me that I feel genuine devotion.
 Bless me that I may come face to face with the natural state.
 Bless me that natural awareness is awakened within my heart.
 Bless me that confused experience is severed at the root.
 Bless me that I may accomplish buddhahood in a single lifetime.

Precious guru I supplicate you,
 Kind Dharma lord, I cry out with longing,
 Unfortunate though I am, my one hope is you.
 Bless me that we mingle our minds indivisibly.

Although several devoted practitioners have encouraged me to write something like this for a long time, I neglected to do so. Recently, at the request of both Samdrup Dronma, a noble female practitioner, and Deva Rakshita, this was written by Lodro Thaye, someone who merely maintains the image of a dark age lama, at the great practice center of Dzongsho Deshek Dupa. May virtuous goodness increase!

Note:

¹ This verse was composed by H.E. Gyaltsab Rinpoche for insertion during the rituals following Kyabje Bokar Rinpoche's parinirvana.

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