

The Progressive Stages of Meditation on Emptiness

Final Step—Stage V

LOOKING NAKEDLY



Online Program, October 2021

Teachings by Jim Scott

LOOKING NAKEDLY

SONGS

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SONGS

1. Light Offering

May the shining light of this candle flame we offer
To the ten directions' Victors and their Heirs
Remove the darkness of all beings' ignorance;
May the shining light of knowledge and wisdom blaze!

2. Giving Rise to Bodhicitta

The precious supreme bodhicitta
Where it has not arisen, may it arise
And where it has arisen, may it never decline
But continue increasing further, further and beyond

3. Arousing Bodhicitta

(An extract from *Thirty-seven Practices of a Bodhisattva*)

From beginning-less time, my mothers have cherished me.
What's the point of my happiness, if they are left suffering?
So, in order to liberate the countless numbers of sentient beings,
To arouse bodhicitta is a bodhisattva's practice.

4. Short Excerpt from *Eight Flashing Lances*

Self-concern's ambitions are exhausted
Uplifting waves of love without contention
Tireless, relentless, not self-seeking
These are three which make compassion fully free
Like a lance that flashes free in the open sky

5. Making the Bodhicitta Commitment

In the actual presence of the Guardians of the world
I resolve to accomplish complete enlightenment
I invite all you beings to come along as guests
And gain your liberation from the wheel of suffering.

6. Excerpt From *Twenty Seven Cases of Dissolution*

Objects seeming outside, a delusion of your mind
And through examination of appearances' traits
Appearance and its emptiness you realize are not two

7. Three Nails

SUNG AT TIGER CAVE LION FORTRESS IN YOLMO, NEPAL

Beloved lama, bless me to naturally rest
In the view, meditation and conduct you have lived

The nails to be driven related to view are three
The nails to be driven in meditation are three
The nails to be driven related to conduct are three
The nails to be driven in terms of result are three

To describe the nails that go with view, the three
Are life's appearances being a factor of mind
In luminosity's space is native mind
In that there is no discrimination at all

To describe the nails of meditation, the three
All thoughts in being dharmakaya are free
Awareness is luminous, in its depths is bliss
And resting without contrivance is equipoise

To describe the nails of conduct, there are three
The ten wholesome deeds are the natural expression of conduct
The ten unwholesome are naturally pure in their ground
And luminous emptiness strategies cannot create

To describe the nails that go with result, the three
Nirvana is nothing imported from somewhere else
Samsara is nothing deported to somewhere else
I've discovered for sure, the mind is the buddha, your mind

Now with all of these nails, there is one to be driven home
This nail is the nail of pure being's emptiness

A genuine lama knows how to drive it home
If you analyze too much, you won't get it in

Coemergent realization drives it home
These tools providing some teaching are meant to be shared
They occurred to the mind of the yogi, who put them to song
May they gladden the hearts of you son and daughter disciples
.

8. Longer Excerpt from *Eight Flashing Lances*

Decisive understanding of your basic being
No bias towards samsara or nirvana
Conviction reached, you change your mind no more
These are three which render view unhindered
Like a lance that flashes free in the open sky

Cutting through the root, it holds its own ground
Sixfold consciousness unspoiled by artifice
Free of effort aimed at recollection
These are three which make meditation fully free
Like a lance that flashes free in the open sky

Experiences just naturally unhindered
Free of fear, depression and anxiety
The triumph over all perceived / perceiver split
These are three which render conduct fully free
Like a lance that flashes free in the open sky

9. Look and See

Look nakedly and you will see the essence
The freedom from all complexity, empty like space
When your conduct is like this and you're resting like this
You will realize the abiding nature
Look and see the empty essence of all phenomena

Loosen up and relax in that and whatever arises will dissolve in spaciousness
Let the swirl of murkiness settle and the river of awareness will be clear and bright
Free of holding on to reference points, cut through the toil of discursive thought
In the gaping abyss of the six realms of beings, this the hidden practice supreme

10. Shamatha Verse from *Mahamudra Aspiration Prayer*

With the waves of thought, the coarse and the subtle, at peace in their own ground
Mind's river settles naturally in unmoving mind's expanse
With the mire of the murkiness of dullness and torpor gone
May the ocean of shamatha remain unmoving, undisturbed (16)

11. Guru Rinpoche Prayer

A PRAYER THAT APPEARANCES BE LIBERATED AS THE DEITY,
THAT SOUNDS BE LIBERATED AS MANTRA,
AND THAT THOUGHTS BE LIBERATED INTO PURE BEING

All these forms that appear to eyes that see
All things on the outside and the inside
The environment and its inhabitants
Appear, but let them rest where no self's found
Perceiver and perceived, when purified
Are the body of the deity, clear emptiness
To the guru, for whom desire frees itself
To Orgyen Pema Jungnay, I supplicate

All these sounds that appear for ears that hear
Taken as agreeable or not
Let them rest in the realm of sound and emptiness
Past all thought, beyond imagination
Sounds are empty, unarisen and unceasing
These are what make up the Victor's teaching
To the teachings of the Victor, sound and emptiness
To Orgyen Pema Jungnay, I supplicate

All these movements of mind towards its objects
These thoughts that make five poisons and afflictions
Leave thinking mind to rest without contrivances
Do not review the past nor guess the future
If you let such movement rest in its own place
It liberates into the dharmakaya
To the guru, for whom awareness frees itself
To Orgyen Pema Jungnay, I supplicate

Grant your blessing that purifies appearance
Of objects perceived as being outside
Grant your blessing that liberates perceiving mind

The mental operation seeming inside
Grant your blessing that, between the two of these

Clear light will come to recognize its own face
In your compassion, sugatas of all three times
Please bless me, that a mind like mine be freed

Sung by Guru Rinpoche to Namkhai Nyingpo

12. Appearance Emptiness Equality

Not to know the equality of appearance emptiness
And get attached to appearances alone is delusion
But to get attached to emptiness alone is delusion too
If you know the equality of appearance emptiness
There's no need to get caught up in or give up phenomena
Those appearances and emptiness
What you must do is to rest in the spaciousness
Of the equality of appearance emptiness

13. The Guru's Words to a Sleeping Student

Here in apparent reality, mind is confused by appearance,
Is disturbed by klesha, conditioned by karma, and wanders in suffering.
But in actual reality, mind is never confused,
No klesha, no karma, no suffering ever occurs.

Don't wait to get beyond confused appearances we think are reality.
Take heart right now, and do right now what needs to be done right now --
Rest in the untroubled realm of your troubled mind.
Settle naturally in natural reality, here is where you'll be able to benefit best.

14. A Song of No Attachment to This and That

Though shifting appearances ceaselessly rise
Just be unattached as a child at play

Though seeming joys, troubles, friends, enemies rise
All thoughts free themselves like the waves of the sea

What a wealth of thoughts—passion, aggression, praise, blame
Just look at their essence, the naked clear void

To walk, sit, eat, lie down and all you can do
Just empty forms shining in clear light's expanse

15. Song of Equality

All appearances are an equality of appearance emptiness
Each and every sound is an equality of sound and emptiness
Feelings, all of these, are an equality of bliss and emptiness
So, rest then evenly in the equality, free of thoughts' complexity
Go about the city, and do it like this, be open, spacious and relaxed
Resting evenly in the equality free of all complexity

16. The Profound Definitive Meaning

SUNG ON THE SNOWY RANGE

*Supreme guru, I bow down at your feet
The siddhis of blessings come straight from the dakinis
Samaya's nectar is the most nourishing drink
Your offering of faith has kept me so healthy
This way of gathering merit, it works quite well*

For the mind that masters view, the emptiness dawns
In the content seen, not even an atom exists
A seer and seen, refined until they're gone
This way of realizing view, it works quite well

When meditation is clear light river flow
There is no need to confine it to sessions and breaks
Meditator and object, refined until they're gone
This heart bone of meditation, it beats quite well

When you're sure that conduct's work is luminous light
And you're sure that interdependence is emptiness
A doer and deed, refined until they're gone
This way of working with conduct, it works quite well

When biased thinking has vanished into space
No phony facades, eight dharmas, nor hopes and fears,
A keeper and kept, refined until they're gone
This way of keeping samaya, it works quite well

When you've finally discovered your mind is dharmakaya
And you're really doing yourself and others good
A winner and won, refined until they're gone
This way of winning results, it works quite well

17. The Airport Song

In the empty space of sky with no centre or edge
On the globe of this world with no bottom or top
In the company of beings, empty forms like a dream
Mind knows clarity and emptiness unspeakable

This cannot be realized by knowing alone
But, if you know the natural way to naturally relax
This is meditation and non-meditation's best
In this non-meditation live, and do not stray from it.

18. Eight Kinds of Mastery

Not separating appearance and emptiness
This is view as mastered as it can be

Not seeing dreams and day as differing
This is as meditation as it can be

Not bliss and emptiness seen as differing
This is conduct as mastered as it can be

Not seeing the here and hereafter as differing
This is their nature as mastered as it can be

Not seeing mind and space as differing
This is as dharmakaya as it can be

When pleasure and pain are not two different things
This is instruction as mastered as it can be

Not seeing affliction and wisdom as differing
This is as full as realization can be

Not seeing your mind and buddha as differing
This is as full a fruition as it can be

19. The Seed

Mind itself alone is the seed of everything
Samsara and nirvana manifest from it
Homage to the mind, which is like a wishfulfilling jewel
Bestowing all desired results

20. Ultimate View, Meditation, Conduct and Fruition

The view is original wisdom, which is empty
Meditation, clear light free of fixation
Conduct, continual flow without attachment
Fruition is nakedness stripped of every stain

This view, the original wisdom which is empty
Risks getting lost in just being talk and no more
If certainty which is in touch with what's meant does not follow
The words will not manage to free you of clinging to self
And that's why definitive certainty means so much

The meditation, clear light free of fixation
Risks getting lost in just being settling
If original wisdom does not emerge from within you
You might settle steadily but this will not set you free
The wisdom does not come of dullness and agitation
And that's why non-wandering mindfulness means so much

This conduct, continual flow without attachment
Risks getting lost in only being a pretense
If the view and meditation are not included
The eight worldly dharmas may mix with your yogic pursuits
And that's why the freedom from clinging and veils means so much

Fruition as nakedness stripped of every defect

Risks getting clothed in the garments of attributes
If delusion is not overcome from its source on the inside
Your practice may aim very far, but fall very short
And that's why correcting delusion means so much

21. Song to a Pigeon Goddess Girl

E MA HO

Oh Marpa from Lhodrak, you are the one with that kindness, oh, so kind
By calling you up from my heart in my heart you are when I meditate
Again and again I pray that we never again will separate
The bliss is the bliss of the blending of minds when your own with the guru is fused.

AH LA LA what appearances are deep down in their basic being
They're the ever unborn, the dharmakaya when this is pointed out
They fuse in the depths of dharmakaya the ever uncontrived
I do not go checking on views to find out if my own is high and others' are low
This mind that's not tampered with, left uncontrived is when feeling good feels just right

The emptiness luminosity is mind in its basic being
Luminosity emptiness is awareness when this is pointed out
They fuse in the depths of the uncontrived mind you're home free in the native state
I do not go checking on meditation to see if mine is good and yours bad
This mind that's not tampered with, left uncontrived is when feeling good feels just right

The sixfold collection of consciousnesses is lucid right there in itself
This, the non-dual, perceived/perceiver not two when this is pointed out
The pleasure and pain duality too is two where one and one equals one
What's left is the depths of the uncontrived mind you're home free in the native state
I do not go checking on conduct to see if I got it and the others missed out
This mind that's not tampered with, left uncontrived is when feeling good feels just right

What the fruit of this is is dharmakaya what success is all about
What variety is is nirmanakaya when this is pointed out
They fuse in the depths where mind and object connect and liberation is remembering that
But to worry and wait for some result to come back is not the kind of life for me
This mind that's not tampered with, left uncontrived is when feeling good feels just right

22. Longer Excerpt from *Mahamudra Aspiration Prayer*

Great bliss, the freedom from attachment, flows in an uninterrupted flow
Clear light, not covered up by clinging to attributes, shines revealed
Beyond the thinking mind, the mind is spontaneously free of thought
May we effortlessly experience this in an unceasing flow (20)

Clutching at positive and clinging to experience is freed right on the spot
The confusion of negative thoughts is naturally pure in the expanse
In ordinary mind there is nothing to adopt, reject, eliminate, or gain
May we realize true reality beyond all fabrications (21)

Beings by nature have always been buddhas and yet, despite this fact
Not realizing this, they roam samsara endlessly
For sentient beings, whose suffering knows no bounds and just won't end
May unbearable compassion rise up as our stream of mind (22)

Unbearable compassion expresses itself as untiring great love
All the while shining nakedly as essential spaciousness
May we never stray from this undeviating path of union
But constantly rest in this meditation throughout the day and night (23)

23. Ground, Path and Fruition (*Mahamudra Aspiration Prayer*)

The base to be purified is mind itself, the union of luminosity emptiness
What purifies this, the great vajra yoga of mahamudra
And what is to be purified is all the stains of superficial confusion
The result of this, the state free of all stain, the dharmakaya, may this emerge directly (7)

24. The Rat Song

I came here through a dark and shining passage
Full of strange surprises all around
Things were not what they appeared to be at all
And what they were was nowhere to be found

: [I'm just a rat in from the fields
Looking for a little bite to eat
I am very very very hun-ge-ry
I'll eat it if it's sour or it's sweet]:

I felt to find my way I'd need a teacher
But to find one worth the trouble, where to start?
I travelled far, looked everywhere, then suddenly
There was one who said, "To learn means learn by heart"
:[*I'm just a rat...*]:

At first, I tried to show him how much I knew
But every time he turned it right around
And said "The self you think is knowing is not there
And the one who suffers -- nowhere to be found"
:[*I'm just a rat...*]:

I thought, "That's good, but at least there's something out there
Form and sound and smell and taste and touch"
But he said that these are nothing but the contents of your mind
Like the snakes in dreams, and now I know that much
:[*I'm just a rat...*]:

I thought, "That's good, now something's getting clearer,
That all is mind and mind is the real thing"
But then he said the mind itself is just as empty too
So, then I knew the mind's a funny thing

:[*I'm just a rat in from the fields
Looking for a little bite to eat
I am very very very hun-ge-ry
I'll eat it if it's sour or it's sweet*]:

And then he added, "All rests in its own flow,
A mere appearance caused by interplay;
It's not made out of anything that it appears to be"
So then I knew the mind's like empty space
:[*I'm just a rat...*]:

But then he said that empty is not empty
If it were nothing that were something too
Basic mind the thinking mind can never figure out
In simple open spaciousness relax!

: [I'm just a rat...]:

So then I thought, "The whole thing is quite clear now
There is no self and other is a hoax"
But then he asked, "If no one's there, who reaches Buddhahood?"
So now at least I know some dharma jokes
: [I'm just a rat...]:

That beings can know and love is buddhanature
The basic element, the "self" for real
Phenomena are clear light dancing playfully
So, get real and dance the clear light dance you feel
: [I'm just a rat...]:

*Composed under the guidance of Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche
At the Kagyu Center in Brussels, Belgium, by an unknown yogi in 1980*

25. Seven Delights

Namo Ratna Guru

When thoughts that there is something perceived and a perceiver
Lure my mind away and distract,
I don't close my senses' gateways to meditate without them
But plunge straight into their essential point.
They're like clouds in the sky, there's this shimmer where they fly;
Thoughts that rise, for me, sheer delight!

When kleshas get me going and their heat has got me burning,
I try no antidote to set them right;
Like an alchemistic potion turning metal into gold,
What lies in kleshas' power to bestow
Is bliss without contagion, completely undefiled;
Kleshas coming up, sheer delight!

When I'm plagued by god-like forces or demonic interference,
I do not drive them out with rites and spells;
The thing to chase away is the egoistic thinking,
Built up on the idea of a self.
This will turn those ranks of maras into your own special forces;
When obstacles arise, sheer delight!

When samsara with its anguish has me writhing in its torments,
Instead of wallowing in misery,
I take the greater burden down the greater path to travel
And let compassion set me up
To take upon myself the suffering of others;
When karmic consequences bloom, delight!

When my body has succumbed to attacks of painful illness,
I do not count on medical relief
But take that very illness as a path and, by its power,
Remove the obscurations blocking me,
And use it to encourage the qualities worthwhile;
When illness rears its head, sheer delight!

When it's time to leave this body, this illusionary tangle,
Don't cause yourself anxiety and grief;
The thing that you should train in and clear up for yourself—
There's no such thing as dying to be done.
It's just clear light, the mother, and child clear light uniting;
When mind forsakes the body, sheer delight!

When the whole thing's just not working, everything's lined up against you,
Don't try to find some way to change it all;
Here, the point to make your practice is reverse the way you see it,
Don't try to make it stop or to improve.
Adverse conditions happen, when they do, it's so delightful—
They make a little song of sheer delight!

26. Excerpt From Ten Things It's Like

When compassion wells up from within the depths of my heart
I see the three realms' beings like they're burning in a pit of fire

When great bliss is embraced by the view of emptiness
Everything appearing liberates itself like bubbles on the water

When you know the true nature of everything to be known
The wisdom that's aware of the true nature's like a cloud-free sky

When the mud settles down and mind's river is crystal clear
Self-arisen awareness is like a polished mirror's shine
Bright appearance, bright emptiness, and wisdom bright
Are like the blazing sun when it's shining in a cloud-free sky

Under the guidance of Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche, translated and arranged by Jim Scott and Ari Goldfield, June 17, 2000. Revised August 13, 2000.

27. Twelve Kinds of Yogic Joy

Like a criminal gaining his freedom from a dungeon hole
The yogi who gives up his native country knows bliss

Like a spirited horse that's freed of hobbling chains
The yogi who slips from perceived and perceiver knows bliss

Like a deer that has been wounded will lie low
The yogi who lives on his own all alone knows bliss

Like the king of birds that wings his way on high
The yogi who gains command over view knows bliss

Like the wild wind that's roaming through the sky
The yogi not blocked by any obstruction knows bliss

Like a shepherd tending his flock of white-fleeced sheep
The yogi tending his luminous/empty experience knows bliss

Like the massive bulk of the central king of mountains
The yogi unfazed by transition and change knows bliss

Like the constant flow of a great and mighty river
The unbroken-flow-of-experience-yogi knows bliss

Like a human corpse as it lies in a cemetery
The yogi who shuts all activity down knows bliss

Like a stone that's thrown into the deep blue sea
The yogi who never turns back again knows bliss

Like the sun that rises and lights up the whole sky
The yogi who lights up everything knows bliss

Like a palm tree when you strip it of its leaves
The yogi not needing to be reborn knows bliss

This melody on these twelve kinds of yogic happiness
Is a dharma gift to all of you, may it answer your question well

28. Eighteen Kinds of Yogic Joy

IN PRAISE OF YOLMO GANGRA, A SONG ON WAKENING THE HEART

| | |
|--|---|
| I bow at the feet | of the genuine guru |
| Because of merit gathered | I've met this lord |
| The guru with his prophecy | is what has brought me here |
| My comfortable castle | this wooded mountain range |
| This is a meadowland | so beautiful in bloom |
| The trees are dancing | in the midst of all the trees |
| This is a place of play | where the monkeys and the langurs play |
| A place where birds speak | in bird-like tongues |
| A land of flying bees | on gentle wings |
| Where day runs into night | and rainbow paintings shine |
| Summer runs into winter | a light drizzle falls |
| Autumn runs into springtime | the mist comes rolling in |
| In a solitary place like this | I, the yogi Milarepa |
| Am feeling very clear light well | meditating on emptiness mind |
| When I get a lot of stuff coming up | I feel extremely well |
| When the highs roll into lows | feels even better still |
| Feels so good to be a human being | without the karmic deeds |
| When confusion gets complicated | I feel extremely well |
| Fearsome visions getting worse and worse | feels even better still |
| Kleshas, birth and death, and freedom from those | is a good way to feel |
| With the bullies getting worse and worse | I feel extremely well |
| When there's not a painful illness in sight | feels even better still |
| The suffering being bliss | feels so good that feeling bad feels good |
| Since the trulkhor comes from what I am | it feels extremely good |
| To leap and run about is dance | feels even better still |
| To be a king of speech | with a treasury of song feels good |
| That the words are like the buzzing of bees | feels extremely good |
| That the sound it makes is merit collecting | feels even better still |
| The bliss is good in the expanse | of the confidence of strength of mind |
| What develops on its own by its own force | feels extremely good |

What comes out looking like a hodgepodge feels even better still
This happy experience song by a yogi carefree
Is for you who believe in what you're doing here
To take along with you when you go

29. Impartial Aspiration Prayer

All you sentient beings I have a good or bad connection with,
As soon as you have left this confused dimension,
May you be born in the West, in Sukhavati
And once you're born there, complete the bhumis and the paths.

30. Milarepa's Dedication

May we live long and be free of illness,
Enjoy freedom, great resources, and happiness.
Next life, may we meet in the pure realm,
May we always practice Dharma and benefit beings.

*Arranged from a song sung by Milarepa in Rag-ma to a benefactor proposing wood, tsampa and woolens to him.
Under the guidance of Dechen Rangdrol, translated by Ari Goldfield, Guayrapa Asociación Cultural, Tarragona, Spain, May 3, 2003. Translation copyright 2012,
Ari Goldfield.*

31. Friends

A SONG OF THOSE WHO ARE FULL OF LOVE BUT FREE OF ATTACHMENT

Friends are empty forms, like a water moon
To think of them as being truly real
Will only make your many sufferings increase

To know they're empty forms, like a water moon
Will make illusion-like samadhi increase
Compassion free of clinging will increase

And non-referential view will also increase
And meditation that's fixation-free
And conduct free of doer, deed increase

Of all the many marvels, this, by far the most marvelous!
Of all the many wonders, this, the most wonderful!

32. Self-Appearing Illusion

All these forms, appearance emptiness
Like a rainbow with its shining glow
In the reaches of appearance emptiness
Just let go and go where no mind goes

Every sound is sound and emptiness
Like the sound of an echo's roll
In the reaches of sound and emptiness
Just let go and go where no mind goes

Every feeling is bliss and emptiness
Way beyond what words can show
In the reaches of bliss and emptiness
Just let go and go where no mind goes

All awareness, awareness emptiness
Way beyond what thought can know
In the reaches of awareness emptiness
Let awareness go, oh, where no mind goes

33. Long Life Supplication for Khenchen Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche

You who shine with the radiance of intelligent skillful play
You who are a fertile field of excellent qualities
You manifest an ocean of Dharma, with each point clear and distinct
In all ten directions the melodious sound of your song reverberates
You sing the songs of the deep meaning of the view and meditation
Genuine spiritual friend, may your feet continue their playful dance
We beg you to always remain

This supplication for the long life of Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso, the unequaled spiritual friend, I make out of my own devotion to this genuine master, and also in response to the repeated requests of many groups of his Eastern disciples, who possess the jewel of faith. On the topmost floor of the Gyuto Ramoche Temple in the noble land of India, the one fortunate to receive the healing nectar of his excellent teachings, Karmapa Orgyen Trinle Palden Wangi Dorje, makes this supplication with a clear mind, and may its aspiration be realized in precisely the way it has been made.

34. Long Life Aspiration for Dechen Rangdrol

Namo Gurave!

Bhagavan Victor, protector Amitayus
And you whose activity is vast, O Mistress Ushnishavijaya
And mother of all the victors, You With the Wish-fulfilling Wheel
Three supreme deities of long life, by the power of your blessing
May the lotus feet of the guru beyond all comparison stand firm

The precious treasury of the Victor's teachings' excellent speech
You are our protector, the living teaching of vast and profound dharma
You reveal the very heart, the profound instructions, may you always remain

Though within your awareness, there is no clinging to appearances as real
All dualism's thinking, all clinging to characteristics is gone
We pray that in your heart of equality, great love, free of attachment
Please remember us, all of us sentient beings, please don't leave us behind

Empty form shining bright with the five lights Body of the guru
Unwavering wisdom, nadi prana Speech of the guru
Bindu of sparkling great bliss Mind of the guru
O guru, may your three kayas always remain

Dancer of vajra dances, singer of vajra songs
Your vajra wisdom is complete in the vajra expanse
Vajradhara in person, holder of vajra awareness
Please remain on the throne of the vajra expanse of phenomena

*On the auspicious occasion of Khenchen Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche's 80th birthday celebration,
Composed by Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche at Tekchok Ling, March 2014.
Translated and arranged for song by Jim and Birgit Scott in collaboration with Chris Stagg.*

35. Long Life Prayer of Amassed Blessing Clouds for Jim Scott

Great Amitayus, who leads us from samsara,
saving those suffering without protection,
Vanquisher of all untimely death,
we bow to the Buddha of Boundless Life.

Long mantra:

*Om namo bhagawate / aparamita ayurjana subinitsita tedzo radzaya / tathagataya / arhate
samyak sambudhaya / teyatha / Om punye punye mahapunye / aparimita punye / aparimita punye
jana sambharo patsite / Om sawa samskara parishuddha dharmate gagana samudgate sobhawa
bishuddhe mahanaya paiware svaha*

Brief mantra:

Om a mahrani dziwentiye svaha Recite as much as possible, then:

We supplicate to Protector Amitayus,
who bestows the siddhi of longevity:
Please grant your blessings for Jim's good steady life,
master of two tongues, eyes bright with insight.

Giver of life, eyes wide with compassion, goddess White Tara,
wish-fulfilling wheel, we pray to you:
Grant a kalpa's worth of life to Lotsawa,
who propagates the teachings.

Wisdom goddess who bestows supreme life,
we pray at your feet, victorious Namgyalma:
Please bless the speaker of Dharma in two tongues,
source of benefit and joy, Vajra essence.

With faithful minds of longing, we supplicate
the refuge of the Three Jewels and Vast Three Roots:
We welcome treasure of Dharma like the dawn
and ask for Lotsawa to stay healthy and firm.

By the blessings of refuge, ocean of compassion,
by the power of unchanging truth of pure being,
and by the power of our pure motivation;
may these aspirations without fail be quickly fulfilled.

Upon request by the students of the Rigpe Dorje Institute to write a long-life prayer for the revered senior translator Jim Scott, these supplication prayers and words of aspiration adorning the three deities of longevity were composed with virtue on February 27, 2011 by Lodrö Namgyal, who bears the title Khenpo in name only.

Shentong Teachings

Khenpo Tsültrim Gyamtso Rinpoche

Melbourne, 30 November, 1998

As before, please give rise to the precious attitude of Bodhichitta, as instructed in the Great Vehicle, the Mahayana, and listen.

In the tradition of Shentong, the Empty of Other School of the Great Middle Way, there are two traditions: there is the Shentong of the Sutras and the Shentong of the Vajrayana.

The Sutra[yana] tradition of Shentong is taught in the Sutras whose subject is the Buddha nature and in the Shastras mainly in the commentary on Buddha nature that in Tibetan is called the Gyu Lama. Literally this title means “the last and the highest in the line of the Mahayana teachings”. It is also taught by the protector Nagarjuna in his Collection of Praises, the main of which is the Praise of the Dharmadhatu.

First, in the sutras on Buddha nature, the Buddha said, “The Buddha nature pervades all sentient beings; therefore, all have the seed of enlightenment.” The Buddha nature, or Buddha essence—Rinpoche comments—is present equally in every single sentient being, in equal measure, and therefore all have the capability, the potential to attain the state of complete and perfect enlightenment.

Examples illustrating this point are formulated as follows: Since the essence of butter is present in milk, it is possible to obtain butter if you churn the milk. Since sesame seed oil is present in sesame seeds, it is possible, if you pound the sesame seeds, to get the oil out of them; and since gold and silver are present in gold ore and silver ore, it is possible to obtain gold and silver if the ore is refined. Similar to these examples, since the true nature of the mind of every single sentient being is Buddha, the actual, genuine, the ultimate Buddha, then it is possible for sentient beings to attain the fruition of complete and perfect enlightenment by training on the path.

If one wants to study about the Buddha nature in depth, then the thing to do is to study the Gyu Lama, the treatise on Buddha nature and specifically, that text’s fourth Vajra Point, which teaches about the 3 reasons why all sentient beings have the Buddha nature. In this text, you also find the presentation of the 10 aspects of the Buddha nature and the 9 examples of how the Buddha nature can be present but obscured from view by adventitious stains. So, to know more about these topics, one should study that text.

It has been translated into English under the title *The Changeless Nature*, translated by Ken and Katya Holmes from Samye Ling, and also there are commentaries on this, like the one by Thrangu Rinpoche that has been published under the title ‘Buddha nature’ and so forth.

To try to explain all of those in one night will not be of benefit, so instead Rinpoche wants to convey the essence of these teachings.

Rinpoche quotes here a verse from this text on Buddha nature, Gyu Lama:

“That which has the characteristic of being separable is adventitious stains; the potential is empty of those. That which has the characteristic of being inseparable is the unsurpassable qualities. The potential is not empty of those.”

So, in this verse we get a very clear statement of the meaning of this school’s name, Empty of Other, which in Tibetan is Shentong. This title expresses the fact that Buddha nature, also called the potential, is empty of what is separable from it, namely, adventitious stains. Anything that is a stain is not inherent in the Buddha nature, or in other words, Buddha nature is empty of any kind of stain or flaw. However, it is not empty of its own inherent qualities, these are inseparable from the Buddha nature; so, it is empty of what is other than itself, but it is not empty of its own qualities.

Therefore, the adventitious stains of confusion are said to be “rangtong” i.e., empty of themselves.

So what are these stains? They are the appearances of perceiver and perceived. Any type of appearances where there is something to perceive and something to perceive it, these are empty of their own essence. However, the Buddha nature, the radiant clarity, the clear light that is the true nature of mind, is not empty of its own qualities of radiance and awareness and so forth. Therefore, it is empty of other, it is empty of any imperfection or stain, but it is not empty of its own qualities. In this way we can see how the two schools, Empty of Self (Rangtong) and Empty of Other (Shentong) relate.

A verse that teaches by way of example how it is that the Buddha nature is by its own nature always free from any stain is as follows:

Like a precious jewel, like the sky, like water’s essence, Buddha nature is always free of afflictions. Here the Buddha nature is compared to a precious jewel that might be stuck inside a rock but in the essence of this jewel there is nothing obscuring anything, it is completely pure. Or like the essence of the sky, no matter how many clouds there might be, the essence of space is always completely pure. Water too, no matter how much mud there be, the essence of water is always completely clean. And like that, Buddha nature itself is always completely free of any type of affliction, any klesha.

And the example for how the Buddha nature could be free of or empty of stains but not empty of its own qualities is the example of light: because light is empty of darkness, but it is not empty of the remedy for darkness, which is the light itself.

The true nature of mind is in fact clarity and emptiness undifferentiable from each other and yet this is something that is difficult to realise.

And so, in the 2nd turning of the wheel of dharma, the focus is on emptiness, which is discovered through various types of reasoning, such as the analysis that demonstrates that phenomena are neither one nor many; or the analysis showing that the basic nature of things is that they never arise, they never happen. In both of these, emptiness is being emphasized.

In the 3rd turning of the wheel of dharma, what is emphasised is that the mind's basic nature is luminosity, clarity, brightness. And then in Mahamudra teachings one is introduced to the clarity and emptiness undifferentiable that is the mind's true nature.

To say that the mind's true nature is awareness, to say that it is clear light, to say that it is the Buddha nature, these are different ways of saying the same thing. These are different words, different terms, these are different isolates - meaning they appear to the conceptual mind to be different, but they are all inseparable in essence; essentially there is no difference.

If we were to connect this with a Vajrayana explanation, we would look at Milarepa's song called Three Nails and specifically we would look at the nail of meditation. This verse states: "Awareness is luminous, in its depths is bliss." This means awareness, luminosity (also called clarity), and bliss are all undifferentiable from each other.

Therefore, clarity emptiness, awareness emptiness and bliss emptiness are not different from the perspective of actual reality.

And in another Vajra song of the lord of yogi's Milarepa, Milarepa says:

"Inner awareness has no base and it is naked. Movement stilled and purified is confident view. Clear light is empty; of this I am sure. Let birth and death come now, I am not afraid."

We should sing this song together three times. In this way, we can get an idea of what the Lord Milarepa's description of the Buddha nature was like from the perspective of his wisdom that arose from meditation.

The melody goes something like this: (Sings the verse 3 times)

Inner awareness refers to self-arisen, self-aware primordial awareness, meaning that it has been inherent in the nature of mind since beginningless time. This awareness **has no base** meaning that it needs no support, it needs no foundation, we couldn't find one even if we tried, we couldn't locate any base, we couldn't locate this awareness for that matter, it doesn't rest anywhere. It is unfindable in that way.

And it is naked in the sense that it is completely free of any stains. It is not wearing the cloths of stains. So, it is completely naked, it is completely pure.

Movement in the second line refers to the movement of thoughts - these are like waves on the surface of a lake making things muddy. When these are **stilled**, the stillness has an aspect of bringing out the clarity, the limpidity that you get when the water is still: you can see right through it.

And purified, again referring to the water: this has an aspect of brightness to it, like light dispelling darkness. This is **confident view**; this is the confidence that comes from having the correct view or the ultimate view. It is this stilling of thoughts, this purifying of thoughts that reveals the clear, bright, true nature of mind.

This is the **clear light** referred to in the song. It is the true nature of mind, which as stated in the third line is **empty**, meaning it is not a thing or an entity, it is not something identifiable or locatable, it is clarity-emptiness undifferentiable.

Of this I am sure Milarepa sings. In this I have complete confidence, I don't have any doubts that the nature of mind is clarity-emptiness undifferentiable.

Now that Milarepa is sure of this, he can sing **let death and birth come, I am not afraid**. Not afraid or not discouraged by the thought of birth or the thought of death. This is a Vajra song of Milarepa that contains the best description of the Shentong view, Rinpoche says.

The way to meditate according to the Shentong view is to rest without effort or fabrication within clear light that is the true nature of mind.

The way Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Thaye explained this is as follows:

“In Shentong, one rests within the great non-conceptual clear light.”

The clear light nature of mind is empty of conceptual fabrication, and one simply rests naturally within that. As Lodro Thaye says it: “In Shentong one rests within the great non-conceptual clear light”.

Milarepa also teaches how to do such meditation in his song The Profound Definitive Meaning Sung on the Snowy Range:

When meditation is clear light river flow
There is no need to confine it to sessions and breaks
Meditator and object, refined until they're gone
This heart bone of meditation, it beats quite well

When one realises the true nature of mind, clear light, it's like the constant flow of a great and mighty river, there is no need to confine it to sessions and breaks. In other words, there is no need for it to be present at one time and not present at another time. It is always there.

What we should do now is look at the present moment of mind nakedly and, while resting relaxed within clear light, sing the verse on meditation from the song of the profound definitive meaning three times.

Q & A Session

This has been a brief presentation of the view of the Shentong school mainly from the perspective of its meditation aspect. The aspect that focuses mainly on study is presented in the treatise on Buddha nature and so forth. Here Rinpoche has emphasized the meditative aspect and has given a brief explanation of that.

Now he asks if you have any questions.

During the past few evenings Rinpoche has provided us with an explanation of the view of the Mind Only school, as well as the Rangtong, and tonight the Shentong, so wherever your question might be coming from is OK.

Q. Rinpoche, ‘movement stilled and purified is confident view’ and ‘when meditation is clear light river flow’, are those two the same?

A. Rinpoche says yes, these two are the same and the explanation of this meditation being a clear light river flow is from the perspective of there not needing to be any breaks in the experience of clear light. The explanation about ‘the movement of thoughts being stilled and purified’ is from the perspective of thoughts not being absent but being self-liberated. And so this quality of self-liberation of conceptual activity is present in both.

These two lines from Milarepa’s songs about meditation being clear light river flow and movement being stilled and purified are things that Milarepa is singing from his own experience. Since we are beginners and we don’t have that kind of experience, it is difficult for us to know exactly what Milarepa is talking about.

However, if it is the case that you practiced in previous lives and had some experience of the warmth of that experience Milarepa is singing about, then it would not be difficult at all to know exactly what Milarepa is talking about.

The way thoughts are stilled and purified (for example, thoughts of seeing demons or ghosts) is not that they are stopped or halted, rather that they are self-liberated.

Q.: Rinpoche, I thought at the beginning of the talk tonight you said that, in the Sutra[yana context], the Shentong view was also propounded by the great Protector Nagarjuna. And as I thought Nagarjuna was... I mean, he wrote treatises on emptiness and he seems to be the source of reference for the Prasangika Madhyamikas. If that’s the case, I wonder why they [i.e., the Prasangikas] also don’t seem to view that [i.e., the true nature of reality] from the Shentong point of view?

A: It is just like you say, that in texts such as “The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way”, “The 70 Stanzas on Emptiness”, “The 60 Stanzas on Reasoning”, “The Refutation of Criticism” and “The Collection of Advice”, these five mainly, the Protector Nagarjuna teaches from the perspective of the Empty of Itself school, the Rangtong, which means that he sets out to refute

every single assertion ever made, whether it's made from the perspective of a non-Buddhist school or a Buddhist school.

And, with this statement, we arrive at the view of the Consequence school, the Prasangika, ultimately, because the Prasangika is teaching that the true nature of reality is beyond all conceptual fabrications. And they won't even assert that. If you assert that, like the Autonomy school does, then they'll refute that too. So, they have no assertions from their own side. This is the ultimate position of the Rangtong.

So, from the perspective of that school, the Protector Nagarjuna is teaching about emptiness only; that's the emphasis basically.

But, in "The Praise of the Dharmadhatu" for example, he teaches using the example of the flame of a lamp burning inside a pot that has no holes in it. When the pot has no holes in it, you can't see the lamp, but if you poke some holes in the pot, then you can start to see some light shining. And, if you completely obliterate the pot, then you can see the light blazing.

He says that in order to illustrate the Buddha nature and the progressive way it is realized, namely, that it is always "burning bright", even though sometimes it is obscured, then partially obscured, then you can see it completely. And, from that perspective, he teaches about the clarity, or brightness, or luminosity that is the true nature of mind.

So, ultimately the true nature of mind is clarity-emptiness undifferentiable. But, if we heard that from the beginning, it would be difficult for us to understand. If the teacher says that the nature of mind is clarity-emptiness undifferentiable, well, what is that?

Well then, first we get the explanation of the emptiness side. And followers of that school [the Rangtong], follow that view of emptiness only.

But that's just one part of it. Because then there's the clarity part. And then, when we get to Mahamudra, we get the clarity and emptiness together.

So, it proceeds in stages that way. In the 2nd Turning of the Wheel of Dharma we get an explanation of emptiness; in the 3rd Turning, clarity; and then in Mahamudra we get an explanation of the true nature of mind as the clarity and emptiness together, yet undifferentiable from each other.

Take for example this song of Milarepa that Rinpoche had us sing tonight. Here Milarepa sings "Inner awareness has no base and is naked" and then after that he sings "Clear light is empty, of this I'm sure". There the terms "Rangtong" and "Shentong" are not used, but the view that's being taught is the same in the sense that it's the union of these two schools' views.

Therefore, when the emphasis is on refuting the views of others, the Rangtong view is very, very profound. However, when meditating, the Shentong view is necessary to have. So, we need both.

It's not the case though, that in the Consequence school's explanation of things the views of others are refuted but they keep their own views. It's not like that. All views of both others and Buddhists are refuted and the Prasangika school doesn't have any views of their own. So, whatever the view is, no matter who is asserting it, it is refuted.

As the Protector Nagarjuna said, "Since I make no assertion, I'm the only one without any flaw".

So, what he was saying was that to make some type of assertion or to have some type of position on things is to set up some target, and then it can be refuted. And therefore, you have to arrive at the place where you have no assertion at all, and that is perfection [from that school's perspective].

The view of the Shentong school is that the true nature of mind is empty of other, in other words, that it is empty of any stain, and *that* is its clear light nature. And this is very profound in terms of meditation, where we rest relaxed within this clear light.

When one is able to rest in the meditation in an unbroken way like Milarepa for example, then it's possible for the qualities of the path and fruition to arise within this luminosity, within this radiant clarity.

And if you think about this point, namely of the qualities of the path and fruition arising, either from within the freedom from all conceptual elaborations or from within radiant clarity and luminosity, then Rinpoche says he feels that the second is more profound, a more profound explanation.

For example, if you have a very clear pool of water, or a clean mirror, and you then shine light on it, you get a reflection; but, if you don't shine any light on it, then you don't. And so similarly, in the context of the qualities of the path and its fruition -- the kayas and the Buddha fields -- if there's radiant clarity, then they can manifest; but if not, if [the nature of mind] were just a mere freedom from elaborations, then it's tough to find out how that would happen.

Well, you might think, "There is also an example of qualities shining within emptiness, and the example for that is: It's like a rainbow that appears in space, in empty space." Well, Rinpoche says that too is just another example of needing the clarity, you need the brightness, you need some kind of luminosity, and that's the rainbow. And you need the emptiness too, you need both. But, besides the emptiness, there has to be some kind of "juice", some kind of brightness there. Within this luminosity, the qualities of the path and the fruition can arise.

The ways one meditates based on the views of Rangtong and Shentong are different.

The way to meditate according to the Rangtong Autonomy school is, you rest within mere emptiness, an emptiness that is like space. According to the Rangtong Consequence school, what you do is, you rest within the complete freedom from all conceptual elaborations, even

elaborations of emptiness. The true nature of reality transcends all conceptual notions, and you rest within that freedom from conceptual elaboration.

And in meditation as presented in Shentong, you rest within the true nature of this very present moment of mind, which is radiant clarity, clear light.

Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Thaye lays out the stages of meditation according to these different schools [... very briefly inaudible] in a section of his text “The Treasury of Knowledge” that focuses on the meditation according to the causal vehicle of characteristics. And so, the root verse reads:

In the Autonomy school, first analyze

And then rest within the non-affirming negation that is like space.

So, Rinpoche explains this a little bit. First, what you do is you analyze with the reasoning that searches for ultimacy, for ultimate truth, to determine that the nature of reality is emptiness, and this is what is meant here by “non-affirming negation”. It means a negation which merely indicates non-existence, where you are just saying “nothing exists truly”. And that is like space. So, you rest within that. That’s the Autonomy school, the Svatantrika.

Then the two lines of root verse that go with the Consequence school say:

For the Consequence school, the object of meditation, the Dharmadhatu, and the meditator, the mind

Are inseparable, like water poured into water.

Whereas in the Autonomy school’s meditation there is still a subtle focus on emptiness being like space, here all elaborations are completely pacified. And there is no focus on any object of meditation, it is the Dharmadhatu. And, regarding the mind, since the object is completely free from all conceptual elaborations, therefore the mind is also completely free from conceptual elaborations. And so these two are of the same nature, like for example water being poured into water. And all concepts are completely pacified, all reference points are completely pacified. That is the Consequence school’s style of meditation.

And then the line for the Shentong you wrote down before:

In Shentong, one rests within great non-conceptual clear light.

And then, the way to meditate according to Mahamudra is to rest in clarity-emptiness undifferentiable. Milarepa sang about this in the song where he says: “Clear light is empty, of this I’m sure”. Here we get the union of Rangtong and Shentong. They come down to be the same.

If you ask, “Which of these is the ultimate view?”, well, if you think the Rangtong style of explaining things is the ultimate way of explaining it, then you would say that the Consequence school, the Prasangika, is the best. If you think Shentong is the best, then you say Shentong is the best. So, that’s how it is.

Other questions?

Q. Rinpoche, does the Shentong assert anything about the conventional reality, or the phenomenal world?

A. The view of the Shentong school in regard to their explanation of the Two Truths is as follows. The imaginary nature and the dependent nature are the completely false truth, or the conventional truth, or relative truth, however you prefer to say that. And actual genuine truth is the perfectly existent nature, primordial awareness.

In other words, the Shentong explain things from the perspective of the three natures. The imaginary nature and the dependent nature they classify as being completely false truth: superficial, conventional, merely conventional. Whereas actual genuine reality is the perfectly existent nature, which is primordial awareness.

The easiest way to understand these three natures is as follows.

The imaginary nature consists of the objects that our thoughts imagine to exist. So, whatever our thoughts are thinking about, those objects comprise the imaginary nature.

The dependent nature is the conceptual mental activity itself. It is called “the dependent nature” because it arises in dependence upon habitual tendencies. In other words, we think in certain ways because of our habitual tendencies. So, it’s called the dependent nature, and it’s the thoughts themselves.

And the perfectly existent nature is the essence of those thoughts, mental activity’s basic reality, which is clear light, primordial awareness.

The way these three natures are empty is also different.

The imaginary nature, in other words, what our thoughts are thinking about, not only does this not exist actually, or genuinely, or ultimately, it doesn’t even exist conventionally. It doesn’t even exist in the relative truth. This is like in a dream: there is no real fire or real water in a dream about these; not only is there no fire or water ultimately, not even relatively is there any fire or water there. In other words, just as in a dream, what your thoughts are thinking about is just not there.

Then the next, the dependent nature, is empty in that it doesn’t exist actually, these thoughts don’t actually exist [as what they seem to be], but they do have a conventional existence. Take for example, thoughts in a dream where the dreaming mind thinks, “I’m being burned by fire”, or “I’m being carried away by water”. There is no water, there’s no real water, there is no real fire there at all, but there is at least the appearance of a thought that there is fire or water. So, that’s the

difference between this and the previous. The dependent nature is empty in that it doesn't exist actually, but it *does* have conventional existence.

Therefore, according to the Shentong school, it's very important to differentiate the ways that these three natures are empty, because the first two natures, the imaginary nature and the dependent nature are empty in the same way that the Rangtong school says everything is empty. Namely, that they are empty of their own nature, they are empty of their own essence.

But the perfectly existent nature is not empty of its own essence, so it's empty in a different way. The way that the perfectly existent nature is empty is that it is not empty of itself, it is empty of what is other than it. And the explanation of this is the same as Rinpoche gave earlier.

When it's explained that the perfectly existent nature is empty, what it is empty of is all conceptual fabrications about it. Since this perfectly existent nature, primordial awareness, transcends all conceptual terms, transcends all conventions, then it also transcends all conceptual fabrication. So, to say it transcends convention, to say it transcends description, to say it transcends conceptual fabrication – these are all saying the same thing.

So, let's again sing this verse from Milarepa, the verse on Shentong. And given Rinpoche's explanation of this, I prefer in the second line to say, "movement clear and purified" instead of "stilled".

The way that we should sing is: we should sing and meditate at the same time, which means that while we sing, we look at the true nature of mind nakedly and rest relaxed.

Inner awareness has no base and is naked

Movement clear and purified is confident view

Clear light is empty, of this I'm sure

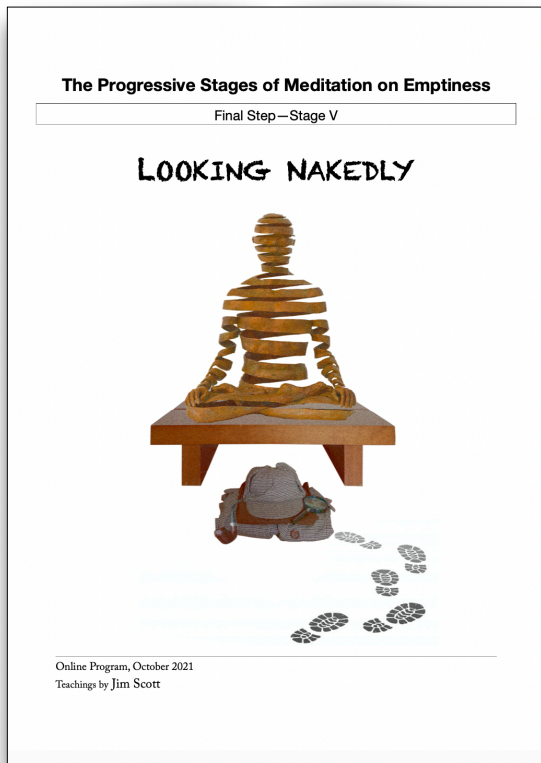
Let birth and death come now, I am not afraid

Now let's sing the "Song of the Profound Definitive Meaning Sung on the Snowy Range".

[Dedication of merit]

Part I was transcribed by Maria Pitsiou, Part II by Nikita Malinin

Credits



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The Progressive Stages of Meditation on Emptiness, Stage V: LOOKING NAKEDLY

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