

On the Blessings of Chimed Sok Tig Practice

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Has anyone seen the one called Naughty? We have lost our number one naughty, Ila. She went to Tashi Choling for the Chimed Sok Tig practice. She always has to go to prepare and be the chopon (ritual assistant). How come one girl has to go everywhere to work and be the chopon? How come the naughtiest one is doing all the work? Strange. Doesn't anybody else know how to do it? Doesn't anybody else help and work? I think everybody should help her. I did hear that a few people are there helping her, and learning, and supporting the practice. Thank you! But how come people come from far away to learn and help, and the people who live there, in Ashland and other places, with the temple right on their doorstep, they ignore it, or if they come they just sit with open mouths rather than learning and helping and trying?

One way, if Ila has to do all the work, we say, "Poor thing!" One way, yes, poor thing—one girl and so much work! But one way, not poor thing, because she is just using her opportunity to accumulate merit and purify negativity. If more people recognized what is going on, I think they would come and help—either to help her, because there is so much to do and they are decent people who want to help, or to benefit themselves, recognizing their chance, knowing that is the way to accumulate merit and purify obscurations.

Anyway, I hope everybody comes and helps her, and practices, and keeps harmony, and tries to focus. Focus on what? On the practice! Not checking on which ladies are pretty and if the gentlemen are handsome. But anyway, I don't think we have pretty and handsome ones anymore. Some of them used to be okay, but now it looks like everybody is pretty much finished. Just potatoes and dried mushrooms. Nothing special to look at. So just focus on the practice, anyway!

One way, people say they don't understand. They don't understand what Chimed Sok Tig is, and what the practice means, and so it's difficult to believe in it. That's true. But what is blocking you? What has blocked your understanding? You block yourself. You don't believe or don't accept what the practice really is and what the practice really means. One way, we don't accept or believe in our

own buddhanature, either, so of course that's a problem. Of course we don't want to accept the idea of our own buddha qualities, or the buddhas' buddha qualities, or the masters' buddha qualities. We don't understand them, we don't accept them, we don't trust them. That is our lack of faith. Our lack of understanding is our lack of faith. We hold our own stubbornness and our own ideas, and we don't want to give them up.

Regarding the practice, we don't want to check or learn, "What is this practice? What does it mean? What are its qualities? Why do it? Is there any benefit?" We don't want to think about that. That is why we don't have faith. If we slowly open up and check, and learn a little bit about it, we will see the practice's qualities for ourselves. Then faith will be there. We don't need to do something extra to make faith, or buy faith, or steal faith, or cheat someone to get their faith for ourselves. If we understand a little, then faith will sprout and grow.

People say, "I don't understand!" complaining, like it is somebody else's fault. Actually, whose fault is it? Yours. You are the one who has faith or not, who improves your own understanding or not, who takes the time to examine the qualities of the deity or the lineage or the practice, or not. You don't understand? Then why don't you look? You don't look! Why? Because you have your own bunch of naughty garbage. Yes, I'm going to actually say "garbage!" The reason? Because if my mouth is nasty and dirty, that will hit people's minds a little bit and then wake them up. They might think, "Oh! What is this nasty thing he said!?" Then they can ask others, "What did that nasty thing mean?" Then they check for themselves. Maybe they don't want to accept it because of the nasty sound, but still it pinches them. That makes them pay attention. That way they can learn and think a little bit.

Everybody, if you want to practice, if you want a long life, Chimed Sok Tig is for long life. It is for accomplishing Guru Rinpoche's own level of long life — *that* kind of long life. "Chimed" means "deathless." "Sok Tig" means "the essence of life." Who is that? Guru Rinpoche. The "Tig" means drop or bindu. When you practice, you receive that blessing. You can get a longer life, extend your life, stretch your life, and your obstacles will go away a little bit, or get smaller. Step by step, stage by stage, we can get that kind of blessing from this practice.

The tertön, the master who revealed this treasure, was called Namkhai Dorje. He himself said this practice contains that kind of blessing, and other great masters

have said the same. Dudjom Rinpoche, Jigdral Yeshe Dorje, he was our lama directly, and he also said this. These masters, they have no reason to lie to us. They have no reason to cheat people.

If we want to really practice, or if we want long life, then we need to learn. Try to learn, and try to practice. That's all. It is nothing to do with what you particularly like or have interest in, that kind of "I want to do it MY WAY" stuff. That is like something for sale. The dharma is not about that. The dharma is about what is of benefit. The dharma is about what works. The dharma is the functioning one. Sentient beings, we are not functioning. Isn't that true? Check for yourself. The important thing isn't your MY WAY. It isn't just blindly following what you want and like. The important thing is what will benefit you. It is not like shopping: "I want to buy this one! I don't want to buy that one! I like this! I don't like that!" No, no, no. We don't need more of that kind of phenomena. We don't need that stuff about the dharma. Enough's enough. Nobody's selling anything, nobody's buying anything. Just benefit yourself, okay? Just have faith and trust and practice.

Even if you don't have everything that you want perfectly, even if you don't have a perfect situation, and perfect this and that, perfect riches and perfect girlfriend or boyfriend or husband or wife, so what? Just shut up and practice. All those things won't benefit you. Practice will benefit you. So which one's important? Check for yourself!

Any practice is the same in how it can be of benefit. Buddhism is not for playing games or for selling something. Look for yourself at the qualities of the masters, the qualities of the practices. Then practice with faith, knowing those qualities. Then you will get blessings, Guru Rinpoche's blessings particularly with this practice. It is so simple, and we make it so complicated with our "I want! I don't want!"

If you have the empowerment, transmission, and instruction for the practice, then you have everything; if not, at least you should have the empowerment; and if not that, at least faith! That is our business! Focus on that, rather than spreading your blah-blah-blah to the east and west and in all ten directions, into everything that is not your business! We don't need a whole bunch of garbage like that! Rather than spreading your mouth in the ten directions, spread your mind into the direction of faith. That means focus. One direction.

When teachers give teachings, we need to listen carefully. And then we not only need to listen, we need to have faith. That is going to support our practice and push it along. You have faith, and then with the teachings you know how to visualize everything as the body, speech, and mind of Guru Rinpoche. Then the blessings can enter your mindstream. And there are blessings, there is no question!

If you go to Maratika, it's just a funky cave in Nepal! But it is an amazing blessing place—Guru Rinpoche and his consort, Mandarava, blessed that cave, just like their blessings at Tso Pema. You can read their life stories, about how they practiced, how they overcame obstacles, how they achieved realization, what they did. Read everything, stage by stage, how they did each thing, piece by piece. That is the real story of Guru Rinpoche—not that he was the enemy of the Gelugpas or Sakyapas. Guru Rinpoche was Buddha, Mandarava was the same. Why would they need to disturb sentient beings with politics or sectarianism? They never did that kind of thing. They only would guard and protect sentient beings, that was their job or their blessing or their enlightened activity or whatever. Just read, and you will see. I don't know how to explain, because I don't know English. But I know that at that cave, Maratika, the blessings of Chimed Sog Tig exist. I feel that, without any doubt!

So if you have interest in Guru Rinpoche's blessing, practice Chimed Sok Tig. If you have interest in having a long life and dispelling obstacles, practice Chimed Sok Tig. And don't be sleepy! Wherever you go, you can practice. You can just recite the Chimed Sok Tig mantra, or Guru Rinpoche's mantra, or Vajrasattva's, or whatever you practice—just practice with faith. Not with your mind thinking east and south and a hundred million directions. Just go one direction: faith.

What do you guys need the most when you are practicing? You need to recognize the meaning of the practice. Try to grab the essence of it. And then have faith, and practice! You don't need big practices or long practices, you don't need many different kinds. Just one or two, whatever you know, practice that without cheating yourself. Then I think that's enough. Stage by stage, that way. Guru Rinpoche won't cheat you in anything. Yeshe Tsogyal won't cheat you in anything. Tara, same thing. Vajrakilaya, same thing. All the deities, same thing. They don't cheat you, so you shouldn't cheat yourself, either.

Right now you are practicing Chimed Sok Tig. Mostly what do you need to practice Chimed Sok Tig? Honesty. Truthfulness. That is how you develop sincere faith. Then the mantras, the generation stage practice, everything comes from that, from faith and trust. That is important. The rest, I don't know.

Everybody try, okay?

Tashi delek!

-Gyatral