

# *On the Meaning of Chimed Sok Tig*

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Hey, I want to tell you something. I hear you have been practicing Chimed Sok Tig. That is wonderful! Thank you! That is not some shallow, little practice. That is the path to deathlessness. That means the end of suffering, the end of ignorance. "Deathless" means dharmakaya. Samantabhadra is deathless. Vajradhara is deathless. Guru Rinpoche is deathless. Amitabha is deathless. And not just the guys! If you need ladies, Yeshe Tsogyal is deathless. For Mandarava, too, there is no death. That "deathless" is the "chimed" in "Chimed Sok Tig." Then "Sok Tig" means essence drop, the heart essence, the life force bindu. What is the real heart essence, the real life force bindu? It is the nature of your own awareness. Your rigpa. Does that die? Is there death for your rigpa?

Hey, I'm asking a question! You have to answer. That means you have to check for yourself. Check! Look! Don't answer like a scholar. Check carefully through your own practice. Your rigpa is your own, right? You should be able to check what is your own!

There is no death for awareness. Your rigpa does not die.

It is the same with pure faith. The nature of pure faith, genuine faith, is also deathless. If you have pure faith in all the buddhas, faith in all the dharma, faith in all the sangha, that real faith is beyond any movement or change, so of course it is beyond death. That nature is the fundamental nature of all phenomena of samsara and enlightenment. That nature is Samantabhadra. There is not some other, real death somewhere else. There is only the deathlessness of the ultimate nature. When we talk about faith, that is the real, pure, genuine one.

You can also say that the nature of all phenomena is deathless because it is empty. If you realize the emptiness nature of all phenomena, that is Guru Rinpoche. That is Chimed Sok Tig, the Heart Essence of Deathlessness. That is what "chimed," "deathless," means.

Or look at Amitayus's name. It is Tsepakmed in Tibetan. "Tse" means longevity; "pak" means measure; "med" means without. So, "Longevity Without Measure," or "Boundless Life." The idea of being "without measure" means you can't put a

number to it. Guru Rinpoche achieved realization of deathlessness, so his lifespan cannot be given a number. Mandarava and Yeshe Tsogyal, same thing. They achieved boundless life, which is the same as Amitayus's name.

The nature of your own awareness, rigpa itself, is principal. Don't ignore that. Even look at the life stories of Guru Rinpoche, Mandarava, Yeshe Tsogyal, and other great masters. The whole thing is rigpa! You think they are talking about ordinary men and women, ordinary places? If you go deeply into the meaning of those stories, there is not a hair's worth of ordinary phenomena in them, according to their inner meaning. Even to say, "Mandarava met Guru Rinpoche." That is not like meeting an ordinary person. The real Guru Rinpoche is the nature of the wisdom mind of all the buddhas. To say Mandarava met him is to say that she encountered her own wisdom mind.

Or even just look at the names. For example, Tso Pema, Lake of the Lotus, is in the land where Mandarava's father was king and where she first met and practiced with Guru Rinpoche. Actually what is that "tso" or lake? To perfectly realize dharmadhatu, the space of phenomena, is the "lake." "Lotus" here doesn't mean an ordinary lotus flower. That "lotus" means to be free of transition and change. That is the flower of the dharmakaya nature. That is how to understand that "lake" and that "lotus." That is your Tso Pema: the dharmakaya nature of awareness. To realize that is to see Tso Pema. That is to meet Guru Rinpoche. That is to meet Mandarava.

If you realize the nature of awareness, you encounter Guru Rinpoche. You encounter Mandarava. You encounter the wisdom mind of all buddhas. To know Guru Rinpoche is to know your own awareness. What does that mean? If you know the nature of your own awareness, you know the heart or the essence of all phenomena. That means to know the way all phenomena abide. You know their fundamental nature. That heart, that essence, that nature, is the body, speech, mind, qualities, and activities of all buddhas. Everything is included in that. That is Guru Rinpoche's own heart. That is Guru Rinpoche's essence. That is the nature of Guru Rinpoche's wisdom mind.

Where is that? If it were to take form, you could say that it is Maratika cave. It is there that Mandarava and Guru Rinpoche met again. They were blessed by Amitayus and many others, and attained realization there—you can read the stories about them. What is that place, the place where realization is attained?

That is the nature of rigpa. That is the real Maratika, the real sacred place of blessing and accomplishment. If you realize the way the nature of phenomena, or dharmata, abides, that is your Maratika. That is Mandarava herself. That is Guru Rinpoche. That is Chimed Sok Tig. If there is no such realization, then you can talk of this or that cave in this or that location in the east or south or wherever, but those are all just concepts.

The cave in Nepal called Maratika, in one way it is just a rocky place. In one way, though, it really holds the blessings of Guru Rinpoche, Mandarava, and Amitayus, and to go there for an hour or two will really change you. It has something special in that way. But even if you can't go there, if you do Chimed Sok Tig practice, that is the same, it looks like. So recognize your chance, now: practicing Chimed Sok Tig, you are connecting to Maratika. What is that? It is where Guru Rinpoche and Mandarava achieved realization. What kind of place is that? It is rigpa, the nature of your own mind. That "cave" is the cave of the space of phenomena. That cave is itself Guru Rinpoche.

Have faith that way, through that kind of understanding, little by little. Faith is so important! If you have faith, then doing Chimed Sok Tig practice is like being in Maratika, the place of accomplishment, the place of Amitayus's blessings, which are the blessings of deathlessness. If you just have curiosity and no faith, then I don't know. I think it's extremely difficult to accomplish Amitayus through curiosity, but the masters say there is no question you can accomplish him through faith. So have faith, and practice well. If you do this Chimed Sok Tig practice, then everything is included here: Amitayus, Guru Rinpoche and Mandarava, Vairochana, Maratika, Tso Pema, Mandarava's father and his kingdom, every place and every master, all the wisdom phenomena is here with nothing missing.

So have faith, starting small and slowly, step by step, building it firmly, stage by stage. This is true for any practice. If your faith is firm, then it is like the sun, and the rays of the sun of faith will have the power to dispel the clouds of doubt. When the sun of faith is blazing, the clouds of doubt cannot gather. Otherwise, it's extremely difficult. Faith is the key to any practice, so always check to see if you have it or not. Without faith, even if you were to go to Guru Rinpoche's pure land itself, it would mean nothing.

With faith, on the other hand, then even ordinary things and places become for you the pure land. Since appearances are the same nature as enlightened form, sounds are the same nature as enlightened speech, and thoughts are the same nature as enlightened mind, then with pure faith it is even appropriate to have faith in an ordinary place or even in this chair! There is no difference from the deity's body or the pure land.

You might ask, "Where do I get my enlightened body, enlightened speech, and enlightened mind? Can I buy them somewhere? Are they for sale?" No. Already they are here. Already you have them. Where are you keeping them? They are your rigpa. Nothing different than that. Nothing is far away! You have your rigpa. Therefore, Guru Rinpoche is not far away, Mandarava is not far away, Chimed Sok Tig is not far away, Maratika is not far away. What does Chimed Sok Tig mean? Your own rigpa. Rather than complaining, recognize that.

Everybody, thank you for practicing. I am so happy. This Chimed Sok Tig, there is nothing beyond that. Happy practice, and happy long life!

Tashi delek!

*-Gyatrul*