

KURUKULLE GIVES SENTIENT BEINGS POWER TO OVERCOME FEAR¹

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So, today the program is about Red Tara – The Empowerment of Red Tara. And we believe that Red Tara is very popular. A lot of people practice Tara. So, I think, it is familiar to you. But, Tara means someone who can save people from different dangers, from different fears. That is the meaning of the name of Tara.

The story of Tara. Buddha tell story of Tara and also Buddha pray to Tara, and then, Sutra, in Buddha teaching of Tara. So, Tara is the main figure, main deity that is recognized by everyone in Sutrayana, Tantrayana, and everyone. And, Tara is a female [deity] that everyone accepts. Everyone think Tara is someone who really protects, someone who can save people from danger. So, people have a nature understanding in their mind. So, that is the quality of Tara.

There are 4 levels of Tantra. Tara is a deity that belongs to Action Tantra, which means Tara is a Being who very much likes to be clean, does not like eating meat. Tara is someone being very vegetarian. So, the quality of Tantra is about pure, about clean. That in Action Tantra is described a lot.

And also, there is a story that our Avalokiteshvara emptied 3 times samsara. Then, he thought was able to empty samsara. So, there were no sentient being in it. Yet, he looked at samsara again and he saw the same way. So, he was very sad and he

¹ The title is created by the translator for the convenience of the reader.

dropped two tears. And the two tears become 2 Taras: The White Tara, and The Green Tara. And also, Tara belongs to the Lotus family. Tara is an emanation of Amitabha, and Tara is same family as Amitabha, Guru Rinpoche, and Avalokiteshvara. In the Amitabha Sutra it is mentioned that Amitabha emanate millions of Avalokiteshvara by his right arm, he also emanate millions of Tara by his left arm, and he also emanate millions of Guru Rinpoche by his mind, wisdom.

As described earlier, the quality of Tara means to save all sentient beings from fears, from different 16 kinds of fears, dangers. And this particular Red Tara has power to protect people from being weak. So, She destroys weakness of people, and She brings power into people's lives. Also, if that people practice Red Tara then Red Tara gives some opportunities to get prosperity. So, there are 2 particular qualities: one is power, and one is prosperity.

People understand differently. I think, we should understand [properly] when we say about power of a Deity. It's because, as a sentient being, we are powerless; it's because we do not have power to be actually free. We are under the control of karma, the power of karma, therefore, we are powerless. Of course, we want to be happy. We want to be free from many things, but somehow we are always stuck. Somehow we attached to too many things [due to which] we are not able to be free. Therefore, we are powerless. To practice Red Tara, Kurukulle, or other deities of power, means to really want to build that kind of natural power that destroys all our obscurations, attachment to many things. That is the kind of power described here.

Today I am using a short text from treasures of Do Khyentse Yeshe Dorje, who is one of the reincarnations of Jigme Lingpa, who is a very high accomplished Master, a Mahasiddha in Tibet, and who discovered many treasures, many many blissful powerful teachings. So, I am using one of His short texts on Red Tara.

Initiation or empowerment – there are few ways of doing that. There are so-called ‘Formal’, ‘Informal’, and ‘Very Informal’ [ones]. So, there are types, three levels, three ways of doing empowerment. So, a very formal way of doing empowerment is such as Kalachakra, which is very formal. And there are other deities or other empowerments that can be like that. And today this one is informal, because I really wasn’t prepared too much, but we have enough substances to do this today. So, I am going to do it in a very short, informal way of doing empowerment of Red Tara.

‘Formal’ means to have many substances so-called substantial Mandala, means there is probably sand mandala, and many other tormas, many many other material things. That is called ‘very formal’ way of doing an initiation. And ‘informal’ means there are still substantial things but not as much. Then, a ‘very informal’ – this is a transmission from mind to mind – that is a way of doing very informal empowerment.

People naturally like to receive empowerments a lot. But, I think, it is okay in some way, but it is not okay in many ways. Without having preparation, without understanding the requirements and necessary things, to just go there and receive empowerment is not a very good idea. It is not very appropriate way to receive empowerments. Therefore, to receive empowerments one has to be a good person and a good Dharma practitioner. That is the best thing. And then, someone has been already familiar with the Master who giving the empowerment. That is something important. This is the way of making Dharma connection. Receiving an empowerment from someone means accepting that Master as one’s own Dharma teacher. So, to know that is important.

So, now set the empowerment. [Take refuge]: First of all, we are going to take refuge in the Mandala of Red Tara. So, saying that:” You Tara, You’re the

emanation of activities of all Buddhas, You're Tathagata who has the power to save all sentient beings from danger of being in samsara and lower realms. So, I take refuge in You from the bottom of my heart." Please repeat after me. [reciting]

[Develop Bodhicitta]: And then second is to develop bodhicitta by the Mandala of Red Tara, saying: "Tara, please give me blessings, so that I am able to develop my bodhicitta". That's one thing. And our wish, our goal is that:" All sentient beings will be able to reach the potentials of Tara, that enlightenment, become like Tara. For that reason, I am going to develop Bodhicitta." [reciting]

Whenever people receive empowerment, there is the part of Taking Refuge, and Develop Bodhicitta. So, at that time develop Bodhicitta or taking Bodhicitta Vow means to develop one's Bodhicitta through the particular deity or Mandala. For example, today we have said "I am going to develop my Bodhicitta through practicing Red Tara". This is the meaning here. Repeat again. [reciting].

Now there are 4 empowerments: One is empowerment of the body of Tara, and speech, and wisdom, and activities. Usually we have two bonpa. Bonpa on the table is bonpa of activity which purifies negative activities of the materials. And the one being on the altar is called the main bonpa which is the mandala of the deity. So, when the lama is doing the preparation, then, [all] that is included in the visualization. The lama visualizes the whole mandala being in that bonpa, the bonpa is the mandala – the Pure land of Tara. And when the lama is ready to give the empowerment, then the mandala dissolves and becomes the nectar, water that is inside the bonpa. That is how we give an empowerment.

Before receiving the 4 empowerments, one should think oneself visualized as Red Tara. And because of one's own visualization and motivation, and the rituals being done by the lama and blessing of the mandala, the wisdom deity is transformed

into to you and dissolved into you. That is the part you need to think right now.
[reciting]

So now is the Empowerment of Body. [reciting]

Now we are using the Text of Red Tara that symbolizes the speech of Red Tara,
and give the Empowerment of Speech. [reciting]

Syllable TAM is heart syllable of Red Tara and that symbolizes the heart, wisdom,
the mind of Red Tara. And using this, it gives the Empowerment of Wisdom.
[reciting]

(Holding dorje and bell) So, this symbolizes the activities of Tara. Tara, as I have
said, is the emanation of all Buddha activities. And the activities of Tara are to save
people from danger. [reciting]

So, that is the short empowerment of Red Tara.

Receiving empowerment is accepting that one will be a real Buddhist person, a very
genuine dharma practitioner. Therefore, we need to be careful with our actions
which are related to bad, negative things. We need to be aware of all actions what
we do and what we should not do. If we are not aware of our actions, then it is easy
for us to make mistakes. Therefore, always have the awareness of one own action.
It is very very important and it is a very practical way of protecting oneself from
making mistakes.

One of the main commitments when we receive empowerment is never lose the
believing in Vajrayana system, Vajrayana tradition. “No matter, under any
circumstances, I am not going to lose my belief in the Mantrayana, in Tantrayana.”

The Vajrayana tradition is called supreme yana, supreme tradition. It can be also
called the highest yana. Therefore, sometimes we really have difficulty to

understand the meaning, the secret part of that highest yana. [Say] that no matter I will have a very unchangeable and stable faith in that tradition. That is very very important commitment.

I am not going to lose my faith in the Mandala that I received empowerment, and the Lama who performed empowerment to me. I am going to recite the Mantra of that Deity that I have karmic connection, and I am going to practice related to that Mandala everyday. And I am going to be respectful, very kind, very compassionate to people who are in the same tradition, and who practice Vajrayana.

We need to understand that all sentient beings are in the Buddha Nature. Everything, everyone is related to each other because of that nature thing. And also all of Buddhist people on the earth, because we share the same religion, we are connected to each other, especially people who are in the same Mandala and same Guru. We are related to each other in a deep way, very strong way. “Therefore, I will respect all sentient beings. I will not be harmful to any sentient beings, and I will be helpful and useful to all sentient beings. And especially I will keep the harmony in the community that shares the same Mandala and the same Guru.”

Those things that I have just told are so-called ‘samaya’ [commitment]. We should keep them as long as we have this human knowledge, human consciousness. It’s because we know what we are doing is not ordered by others, no one forcing us to do that, but “I am willing to do that”. Therefore, we should keep this commitment as a requirement. We should do it nicely. For that reason, we are going to say a few words of commitment: “I will keep the samaya. I will listen to the instructions of the Guru until whenever I have this knowledge, human awareness”. [reciting]

End of Hungkar Forje Rinpoche’s teaching

on Kurukulle in October 2019, Tu Quang Pagoda

Transcript by Menlha Kyid (Kieu Oanh).

MP3 of the teaching:
https://lienhoaquang.com/thu-vien-anh_Vi%E1%BB%87t-Nam_qdclgl_nghe-MP3_hungkar.html