

Introduction to Manjushri Practise

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Vesak Day, 24 May 2013

Good afternoon. On this special day of Vesak, I wish you happy, healthy longevity that always flow on you.

Vesak is a very special day for all the Buddhists. This day Buddha has been born, attained enlightenment and parinirvana. So this day can be multiplication of accumulation of merits. For the whole of this month, Tibetans try to do many good things like 8 pairs of nyungne fasting, animal liberation, charities etc. We dedicate the entire month for accumulation of merits and purification of Karma.

KKBC also has many dharma activities that comprises of prayers like recitation of Manjushri mantra. Tomorrow we also have a programme on Manjushri recitation.

Today according to Western calendar is Vesak day. Tomorrow according to Tibetan calendar is full moon day. It doesn't matter. So tomorrow try to observe good things.

I am supposed to give you oral transmission of Manjushri sadhana. So now, does everybody have this text named Jamyang Drodug – Sadhana of praise of Manjushri? It was composed by Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo who is non-sectarian. There is a composition on the praise of Manjushri which is very well-known. It was not composed by Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo. In the past, one famous sangha gathered 500 saints or scholars (panditas) were given a task to compose a praise to Manjushri. When the verses were collected, they found that all of them had written the same praise. So it is believed that the verses were transmitted to the panditas. In that way, it is believed to be a very special praise of Manjushri. It became popular in India and Tibet. This is recited every morning for wisdom regardless of the schools.

When I was a little boy, I used to be less attentive and as a result missed out on the learning of some important texts. Then one of my teachers Tenga Rinpoche gave me this text and advised me to practice it daily. I did a short Manjushri retreat as well. I observed a stark difference before and after practicing Manjushri. I noticed improvements in terms of attention and inner focusing. So in that way, it benefitted me a lot when I was young. Since then, I have lots of devotion towards Manjushri and to this praise. I have many inspirations on this as well. Many years ago I have given the oral transmission of Manjushri before. Since KKBC decided to do this text, I felt that we should do this Manjushri sadhana based on this text.

You can take this as a daily practice. It will be very good for increase of inner wisdom. You should recite this praise daily in the morning at least 3 times and Manjushri mantra one mala. You can also recite the text 9 times and the mantra three times or more.

Worldly wisdom, that is wisdom with stains and beyond worldly wisdom that is pure. This text is referring to immaculate wisdom which is the main course of enlightenment and truth. Related to this is worldly wisdom such as intellectual knowledge and any field of knowledge. Stainless wisdom is for the cause of enlightenment. That is the root of all qualities worldly or non-worldly. So for that purpose we practice the sadhana of the praise. First we receive the oral transmission of Manjushri.

With empowerment and oral transmission, the impact is very strong. With only oral transmission, the impact is less albeit still strong. Today, I am giving oral transmission only. In future, I will give the empowerment.

First you need to start with renunciation of samsara. Whatever that you practice, you must start with renunciation. Thinking in this way "I do not wish to be in samsara". That is renunciation. Next is compassion that is applied to sentient beings. Renunciation is applied to oneself only. So both renunciation and compassion must be very strong in you. For our liberation, I want to practice Manjushri.

This sadhana has three parts, preliminary, actual practice and conclusion.

Preliminary is the same as in taking refuge in Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. In Vajrayana, the guru is also added. Guru itself is equivalent to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.

Body = Sangha

Speech = Dharma

Mind = Buddha

Or, you should see that the Guru is the bridge to Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. Thus, Guru is not found in Theravada and Mahayana. It is only found in Vajrayana practices.

Sometimes, we think of Manjushri as unification of Guru, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. We take refuge in Manjushri.

Second line in the text (page 3) is on the development of bodhicitta and enlightenment attitude. You practice Manjushri for the benefit of all sentient beings. This is bodhicitta.

Page 4 of the text refers to the four immeasurable thoughts of love, compassion, joy and equanimity. Within these four sentences completes taking refuge, enlightenment attitude and bodhicitta. So we recite thrice.

Then we come to the main practice. We do not have time to elaborate so I am giving you a summary. Most Vajrayana sadhana starts with the understanding of emptiness nature. If not everything becomes solid and true existence. There is no difference between the mundane and supramundane.

This mantra is emptiness mantra – *Om svabhava shuddasarva dharma svabhava shuddo hang*.

Everything is pure in nature, lacking of self and existence, non-existence. You have to develop yourself in that realization. Phenomena cannot be found. Similarly skandhas or aggregates cannot be found. All these are beyond elaboration and description. We cannot say they exist and do not exist. This is to understand the nature of emptiness.

So though it is emptiness, interdependently, without obstruction, everything appears illusory. In that way, interdependently arising emptiness nature. Your visualization of yidam is also in that manner. The mandala of the yidam is also in that manner. Your samsara and nirvana is also in that manner. Then you elaborate your visualization.

Om - forehead, white colour Om syllable

Ah - throat, red colour Ah syllable

Hung – slightly below heart, blue Hung syllable

Exactly at the heart centre is the moon disc with the seed syllable Dhi that is orange in colour.

All lights go to Manjushri, unified into Manjushri and absorbing essence of all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. Then you invoke the Manjushri in front of you in sambhogakaya attributes.

Again the light radiates from oneself and this time the light invites the five Buddhas that symbolize the five wisdom. They bestow empowerment to the Manjushri who in front of you. Nectar fills up his entire body. On top of Manjushri is Akshobya Buddha, the crown Buddha of Manjushri. That completes the wisdom aspect of Manjushri. This completes the wisdom aspect in front of oneself.

After that from the Dhi syllable, the praised in orange colour start appearing. Along with Om Ah Ra Pa Tsa Na Dhi in bright light like sunshine comes from Manjushri and enters the Dhi seed syllable in our heart. That bright wisdom clears away all darkness of ignorance. The brightness of wisdom and knowledge open up and actualize. Eventually, the whole wisdom of Manjushri is being accomplished by oneself or dissolved into oneself so that we achieve the state of Manjushri. You need to do this visualization when reciting Manjushri

sadhana and mantra. This part of the visualization is the most important and you have to do it without missing out on anything.

One of the important purposes of practising Manjushri is to understand the sutra and tantra more. We wish to know the deeper meaning of the dharma.

Normally we lack of confidence and think we may not attain enlightenment. That confidence is not present and so we ask Manjushri for that confidence or blessing or supplication to fulfill that purpose.

Finally, Manjushri is dissolved into light and into oneself. Or, you can visualize Manjushri dissolve into light and dissipate into emptiness. After that you can do meditation of shamatha or whatever meditation that you are comfortable with.

Then you remain in the non-conceptual state. After that, when concepts or thoughts come in, you can go for post-meditation state and return to normal state and dedicate merits.

In your daily activities, be aware or be in the emptiness state. Then invoke loving-kindness and compassion to all sentient beings. Whatever you do, do it meaningfully. Do meaningful things.

With understanding and only one recitation of the Manjushri mantra is more powerful than reciting the mantra countless times without any understanding.

