



MILAREPA AT JUNPAN NANKA TSANG

Obeisance to all Gurus

From Ragma, Milarepa went to Junpan Nanka Tsang and remained there for some time. One day a monkey came to Milarepa's hut riding on a rabbit, wearing mushroom armor and carrying a bow and arrow made from stalks. [His appearance was so ludicrous that] Milarepa could not help laughing. The demon said to the Jetsun, "You came here through fear. If you are no longer afraid, you can go away." Milarepa replied, "I realize fully that manifestation is Mind itself; also, I see that Mind-Essence is identical with the Dharmakaya. You pitiable wraith! Whatever apparitions you may conjure, they are a mere laughing matter to me." Thereupon, the demon made his offering and took an oath before Milarepa. Then, like a rainbow, he disappeared into the sky. He was the demon king of Oro Tang. One day, Milarepa's patrons from Oro Tang came to visit him. They asked him what benefits Junpan Nanka Tsang had to offer. In reply, Milarepa sang:

*I pray to my Guru, the Holy One.
Listen, my patrons, and I will tell you
the merits of this place.*

*In the goodly quiet of this Sky Castle of Junpan
High above, dark clouds gather;
Deep blue and far below flows the River Tsang.*

*At my back the Red Rock of Heaven rises;
At my feet, wild flowers bloom, vibrant and profuse;*

*At my cave's edge [wild] beasts roam, roar, and grunt;
In the sky vultures and eagles circle freely,*

While from heaven drifts the drizzling rain.

*Bees hum and buzz with their chanting;
Mares and foals gambol and gallop wildly;
The brook chatters past pebbles and rocks;
Through the trees monkeys leap and swing;
And larks carol in sweet song.*

*The timely sounds I hear are all my fellows.
The merits of this place are inconceivable-
I now relate them to you in this song.*

*Oh, good patrons,
Pray follow my Path and my example;
Abandon evil, and practice good deeds.
Spontaneously from my heart
I give you this instruction.*

There was a Tantric yogi among the patrons who said to Milarepa, "We would be deeply grateful if you would graciously give us the essential instructions on the View, Meditation, and Action, as a greeting or a gift of welcome."

Milarepa sang in reply:

*The grace of my Guru enters my heart;
Pray help me to realize the truth of the Void!*

*In answer to my faithful patrons,
I sing to please the Deities and Buddhas:*

*Manifestation, the Void, and Non-differentiation,
These three are the quintessence of the View.*

*Illumination, Non-thought, and Non-distraction
Are the quintessence of the Meditation.*

*Non-clinging, Non-attachment, and complete Indifference
Are the quintessence of the Action.*

*No Hope, no Fear, and no Confusion
Are the quintessence of Accomplishment.*

*Non-attempt, Non-hiding, and Non-discrimination,
These three are the quintessence of the Precept.*

Having heard Milarepa's song, the patrons all returned home. A few days later, many disciples came again to visit the Jetsun, asking after his health and welfare, and giving their best wishes. Milarepa sang in response:

I bow down at the feet of my Guru.

*Deep in the forest by man untrod,
I, Milarepa, happily practice meditation.*

*With no attachment and no clinging,
Walking and tranquility are both pleasing.*

*Free from sickness and disorder, I willingly
sustain this body of illusion;
Never sleeping, I sit in the comfort of quietude.*

*Abiding in the Samadhi of Non-permanence,
I taste enjoyment.
Continuance in Heat-Yoga without cold is
indeed felicitous.*

*With no cowardliness or dismay,
Joyfully I follow the Tantric practice;
With no effort I perfect the cultivation;
With no distraction whatsoever,
Remaining in solitude, I am truly happy. T
hese are the pleasures of the body.*

*Happy is the path of both Wisdom and Means!
Happy the Yoga of Arising and Perfecting;
the meditation of the Two-in-One.
Happy the Prajna; the awareness of no-
coming-and-going!*

*Happy the absence of talk; no friends and
no chatting!*

These are the pleasures of words.

*Happy is the understanding of Non-grasping;
Happy the meditation without interruption;
Happy the accomplishment without hope or fear;
Happy the action done without defilement.*

These are the pleasures of Mind.

Happy is the illumination with no thought and no mutation!

Happy the great bliss in the purity of Dharmadhatu!

Happy the Non-ceasing Realm of Form!

*This little song of great happiness
That flows freely from my heart,
Is inspired by meditation,
By the merging of act and knowledge.
Those who aim at the fruit of Bodhi
May follow this way of yogic practice.*

The disciples said to Milarepa, "Wonderful indeed are the joys of Body, Word, and Mind, as you have just said. Pray tell us, how were they brought about?" Milarepa replied, "By the realization of Mind." The disciples then said, "Although we shall never be able to acquire such happiness and pleasures as you have enjoyed, we hope that we can win a small portion; we beg you, therefore, to give us a clear teaching, easy to understand and simple to practice, by which we may realize the Essence of Mind." Whereupon the Jetsun sang "The Twelve Meanings of Mind":

I bow down at the feet of my Guru.

*Oh good patrons! If you wish to realize
the Essence of Mind,
You should practice the following teachings:
Faith, knowledge, and discipline,
These three are the Life-Tree of Mind.
This is the tree you should plant and foster.*

Non-attachment, non-clinging, and non-blindness,

*These three are the shields of Mind;
They are light to wear, strong for defense,
And the shields you should seek.*

*Meditation, diligence, and perseverance,
These three are the horses of Mind;
They run fast and quickly flee!
If you look for horses, these are the right ones.
Self-awareness, self-illumination, and self-rapture,
These three are the fruits of Mind;
Sow the seeds, ripen the fruit,
Refine the fluid, and the essence emerges.
If you look for fruit, these are the fruit
you should seek.*

*Sprung from yogic intuition,
This song of the Twelve Meanings of Mind is sung.
Inspired by your faith, continue with your
practice, my good patrons!*

Henceforth, the patrons placed even more faith in Milarepa, and brought him excellent offerings. Milarepa then decided to go to Yolmo Snow Range.

This is the story of Milarepa at Junpan Nanka Tsang (The Sky Castle of Junpan).



THE SONG OF A YOGI'S JOY

Obeisance to all Gurus

The Master of Yoga, the Jetsun Milarepa, in obedience to his Guru's orders, went from Junpan to Yolmo Snow Range, where he dwelt at the Tiger Cave of Senge Tson in the woods of Singalin. The local goddess of Yolmo appeared in a gracious form, obeying the Jetsun's orders and rendering her best service to him. Milarepa remained there for some time in a deeply inspired mood.

One day, five young nuns came from Mon to visit him. They addressed him thus: "It is said that this place is full of terror, and an ideal place in which to attain great improvement in meditation. Can this be true? Have you found it so?" Milarepa then sang in praise of the place:

*Obeisance to you, my Guru!
I met you through having accumulated great merits,
And now stay at the place you prophesied.*

*This is a delightful place, a place of hills and forests.
In the mountain-meadows, flowers bloom;
In the woods dance the swaying trees!
For monkeys it is a playground.*

*Birds sing tunefully,
Bees fly and buzz,
And from day until night the rainbows come and go.
In summer and winter falls the sweet rain,
And mist and fog roll up in fall and spring.
At such a pleasant place, in solitude,
I, Milarepa, happily abide,
Meditating upon the void-illuminating Mind.*

*Oh, happy are the myriad manifestations!
The more ups-and-downs, the more joy I feel.
Happy is the body with no sinful Karma,
Happy indeed are the countless confusions!
The greater the fear, the greater the
happiness I feel.
Oh, happy is the death of sensations and passions!*

*The greater the distress and passions,
The more can one be blithe and gay!
What happiness to feel no ailment or illness;
What happiness to feel that joy and suffering are one;
What happiness to play in bodily movement
With the power aroused by Yoga.
To jump and run, to dance and leap, is
more joyful still.*

*What happiness to sing the victorious song,
What happiness to chant and hum,
More joyful still to talk and loudly sing!
Happy is the mind, powerful and confident,
Steeped in the realm of Totality.*

*The most extreme happiness
Is the self-emanation of self-power;
Happy are the myriad forms, the myriad revelations.
As a welcoming gift to my faithful pupils,
I sing of yogic happiness.*

Thereupon, Milarepa initiated the five young nun-novices and gave them the verbal instructions. After practicing these teachings for some time, the light of inner Realization was born within them. Milarepa was overjoyed and sang the "Nectar of Instruction":

*Oh, my Guru, he who shows
The unmistakable path to Liberation,
The Perfect Savior, the great Compassionate One,
Pray, never leave me, ever remain
Above my head as my crest-jewel!*

*Hearken, followers of the Dharma,
Ye meditators seated here,
Though the teachings of Buddha are most numerous,
He who can practice this Profound Path
Is gifted indeed!*

*If you wish to become a Buddha in one lifetime,
You should not crave the things of this life,
Nor intensify your self-longing,
Else you will be entangled between good and evil,
And you may fall into the realm of misery.*

*When you give service to your Guru,
Refrain from thinking, "I am the one who works,
He is the one who enjoys."
Should you have this kind of feeling,
Quarrel and discord will surely follow,
And your wish can never be fulfilled.*

*When you observe the Tantric Precepts,
Cease association with the vicious,
Else you will be contaminated by evil influences,
And you may risk breaking the Precepts.*

*When you engage in study and learning,
Do not attach yourself to words with pride,
Else the dormant fire of the Five
Poisonous Passions will blaze,
And virtuous thoughts and deeds will be consumed.
When you meditate with friends in retreat,*

*Do not attempt too many things,
Else your virtuous deeds will cease,
And your devotion will be distracted.*

*When you practice the Path with Form
of the Whispered Transmission,
Do not exorcise demons, nor curse ghosts for others,
Lest demons rise within your mind
And a longing for worldly aims will blaze.*

*When you have acquired Experience and Realization,
Do not display your miraculous powers, nor prophesy,
Lest the secret words and symbols slip away
And merits and spiritual insight will diminish.*

*Beware of these pitfalls and avoid them.
Commit not evil deeds. Eat not beguiling food.
Take not the burden of the corpse.
Utter not sweet words to please others.
Be humble and modest, and you will find your way.*

The nuns then asked Milarepa how they might find their own way, beseeching him for further instruction. In reply, Milarepa sang:

*I pay homage to my Guru, the gracious one.
I pray you to vouchsafe me your grace-waves.
Pray help me, the mendicant, happily to meditate.*

*Though you children of the new generation
Dwell in towns infested with deceitful Karma,
The link of Dharma still remains.
Because you have heard the Buddha's teaching
You now come to me,
And thus avoid going astray.*

*By constant practice of the Accumulation- of-Merits
You will foster an aptitude for devotion.
The grace-waves will then enter you,
While the corresponding and actual
Realization will grow.*

*But even if you do all this, it will help but little
If you cannot reach full mastery.
Having pity on you, I now give you this instruction.
Listen closely, my young friends!*

*When you remain in solitude,
Think not of the amusements in the town,
Else the evil one will rise up in your heart;
Turn inward your mind,
And you will find your way.*

*When you meditate with perseverance and determination,
You should think upon the evils of Samsara
And the uncertainty of death.
Shun the craving for worldly pleasures;
Courage and patience then will grow in you,
And you will find your way.*

*When you solicit the deep teachings of the Practice,
Do not long for learning, nor to become a scholar,
Else worldly actions and desires will dominate;
Then this very life will be thrown away.
Be humble and modest,
And you will find your way.*

*When the various experiences come to you in meditation,
Do not be proud and anxious to tell people,
Else you will disturb the Goddesses and Mothers.
Meditate without distractions,
And you will find your way.*

*When you accompany your Guru,
Do not look upon his merits or demerits,
Else you will find mountains of faults.
Only with faith and loyalty
Will you find your way.*

*When you attend holy meetings
With brothers and sisters in the Dharma,*

*Do not think of heading the row,
Else you will arouse both hate and craving,
And offend against the Precepts.
Adjust yourselves, understand each other,
And you will find your way.*

*When you beg for alms in the village,
Do not use the Dharma for deceit and exploitation,
Else you will force yourself down to the lower Path.
Be honest and sincere,
And you will find your way.*

*Beyond all else remember, at all times and places,
Never be overweening, nor of yourself be proud,
Else you will be overbearing in your self-esteem
And overloaded with hypocrisy.
If you abandon deceit and pretense,
You will find your way.*

*The person who has found the way
Can pass on the gracious teachings to others;
Thus he aids himself and helps the others, too.
To give is then the only thought
Remaining in his heart.*

The disciples were all greatly inspired with the determination to practice diligently and to renounce the world. An unalterable faith in the Jetsun was established in them. They said, "We want to offer you a golden Mandala. Pray accept it, and give us the practical teaching of the View, Practice, and Action."

Milarepa replied, "I do not need the gold; you may use it to maintain your meditation. As for the teaching of the View, Practice, and Action, I shall tell you. Pray hearken to my song":

*Oh, my Guru! The Exemplar of the View,
Practice, and Action,
Pray vouchsafe me your grace, and enable me
To be absorbed in the realm of Self-nature!*

*For the View, Practice, Action, and Accomplishment
There are three Key-points you should know:*

*All the manifestation, the Universe itself,
is contained in the mind;
The nature of Mind is the realm of illumination
Which can neither be conceived nor touched.
These are the Key-points of the View.*

*Errant thoughts are liberated in the Dharmakaya;
The awareness, the illumination, is always
blissful;
Meditate in a manner of non-doing and non-effort.
These are the Key-points of Practice.*

*In the action of naturalness
The Ten Virtues spontaneously grow;
All the Ten Vices are thus purified.
By corrections or remedies
The Illuminating Void is ne'er disturbed.
These are the Key-points of Action.*

*There is no Nirvana to attain beyond;
There is no Samsara here to renounce;
Truly to know the Self-mind
It is to be the Buddha Himself.
These are the Key-points of Accomplishment.*

*Reduce inwardly the Three Key-points to One.
This One is the Void Nature of Being,
Which only a wondrous Guru
Can clearly illustrate.*

*Much activity is of no avail;
If one sees the Simultaneously Born Wisdom,
He reaches his goal.*

*For all practitioners of Dharma
This preaching is a precious gem;
It is my direct experience from yogic meditation.
Think carefully and bear it in your minds,
Oh, my children and disciples.*

The disciples then asked Milarepa, "As we understood you, the unmistakable guide along the Path of Practice is to pray to one's Guru with great earnestness. Is there anything else beyond this?" Milarepa smiled and answered, "The Tree of Guidance has also many branches." In explaining this to them, he sang:

*The Guru, the disciple, and the secret teachings;
Endurance, perseverance, and the faith;
Wisdom, compassion, and the human form;
All these are ever guides upon the Path.*

*Solitude with no commotion and disturbance
Is the guide protecting meditation.
The accomplished Guru, the Jetsun,
Is the guide dispelling ignorance and darkness.
Faith without sorrow and weariness
Is the guide which leads you safely to happiness.*

*The sensations of the five organs
Are the guides which lead you to freedom
from "contact."
The verbal teachings of the Lineage Gurus
Are the guides which illustrate the Three
Bodies of Buddha.
The protectors, the Three Precious Ones,
Are the guides with no faults or mistakes.
Led by these six guides,
One will reach the happy plane of Yoga-
Abiding in the realm of Non-differentiation
In which all views and sophisms are no more.*

*Remaining in the realm of self-knowledge
and self-liberation
Is indeed happy and joyful;
Abiding in the valley where no men dwell,
With confidence and knowledge, one lives
in his own way.
With a thundering voice,
He sings the happy song of Yoga.
Falling in the Ten Directions is the rain of fame;
Brought to blooming are the flowers and*

*leaves of Compassion.
The enterprise of Bodhi encompasses the Universe;
The pure fruit of the Bodhi-Heart thus
attains perfection.*

The disciples thought, "It makes no difference now to the Jetsun where he stays. We will invite him to our village." Thereupon they said to Milarepa, "Revered One, since your mind no longer changes, there is no need for you to practice meditation. Therefore, for the sake of sentient beings please come to our village and preach the Dharma for us." Milarepa replied, "Practicing meditation in solitude is, in itself, a service to the people. Although my mind no longer changes, it is still a good tradition for a great yogi to remain in solitude." He then sang:

*Through the practice [of meditation]
I show gratitude to my Guru.
Pray grant me your grace, ripen and liberate me.*

*You, gifted disciples, the followers of Dharma,
Heed carefully, with all attention
While I sing of the profound Essential Teaching.*

*The great lioness in the upper snow mountain
Poses proudly on the summit of the peak;
She is not afraid-
Proudly dwelling on the mountain
Is the snow lion's way.*

*The queen vulture on Red Rock
Stretches her wings in the wide sky;
She is not afraid of falling-
Flying through the sky is the vulture's way.*

*In the depths of the great ocean
Darts the Queen of fish, glittering;
She is not afraid-
Swimming is the fish's way.*

*On the branches of the oak trees,
Agile monkeys swing and leap;
They are not afraid of falling-*

Such is the wild monkey's way.

*Under the leafy canopy of the dense wood,
The striped tiger roams and swiftly runs,
Not because of fear or worry-
This shows her haughty pride,
And is the mighty tiger's way.*

*In the wood on Singa Mountain,
I, Milarepa, meditate on Voidness,
Not because I fear to lose my understanding-
Constant meditation is the yogi's way.*

*Without distraction, the yogi meditates absorbed
Upon the pure Mandala of Dharmadhatu,
Not because he fears to go astray-
But to hold to Self-quintessence is the yogi's way.*

*When he works on the Nadis, Prana, and Bindu
He avoids hindrances and errors,
Not that the teaching has faults in itself-
But it is a good way to improve true Realization.*

*With natural and spontaneous behavior
One surely meets with countless ups-and-downs,
Not because there is discrimination and
dualistic thought-
But because to manifest all, is causation's nature.*

*When he develops other beings by
demonstrating the power of Karma,
Though seemingly he sees as real both good and evil,
It is not because he has gone astray in his practice,
But because, to explain the truth to different people,
He must use appropriate illustrations.*

*Those great yogis who have mastered the Practice,
Never desire anything in this world.
It is not because they want fame that*

*they remain in solitude;
It is the natural sign springing from their hearts-
The true feeling of non-attachment and renunciation.*

*Yogis who practice the teaching of the Path Profound,
Dwell always in caves and mountains;
Not that they are cynical or pompous,
But to concentrate on meditation is their self-willing.*

*I, the cotton-clad, have sung many songs,
Not to amuse myself by singing sophistries,
But for your sake, faithful followers who assemble here,
From my heart I have spoken words helpful and profound.*

The disciples then said to Milarepa, "One may live alone in solitude, but it is necessary to have food and a suitable dwelling in which he can meditate properly." The Jetsun replied, "I have my own food and dwelling which I will illustrate to you."

*I bow down at the feet of the wish-fulfilling Guru.
Pray vouchsafe me your grace in bestowing
beneficial food,
Pray make me realize my own body as the
house of Buddha,
Pray grant me this sure knowledge.*

*I built the house through fear,
The house of Siinyata, the void nature of being;
Now I have no fear of its collapsing.
I, the Yogi with the wish-fulfilling gem,
Feel happiness and joy where'er I stay.*

*Because of the fear of cold, I sought for clothes;
The clothing I found is the Ah Shea Vital Heat.
Now I have no fear of coldness.*

*Because of the fear of poverty, I sought for riches;
The riches I found are the inexhaustible
Seven Holy Jewels
Now I have no fear of poverty.*

*Because of the fear of hunger, I sought for food;
The food I found is the Samadhi of Suchness.
Now I have no fear of hunger.*

*Because of the fear of thirst, I sought for drink;
The heavenly drink I found is the wine
of mindfulness.
Now I have no fear of thirst.*

*Because of the fear of loneliness, I searched
for a friend;
The friend I found is the bliss of
perpetual Sunyata.
Now I have no fear of loneliness.*

*Because of the fear of going astray,
I sought for the right path to follow.
The wide path I found is the Path of
Two-in-One.
Now I do not fear to lose my way.*

*I am a yogi with all desirable possessions,
A man always happy where'er he stays.*

*Here at Yolmo Tagpu Senge Tson,
The tigress howling with a pathetic, trembling cry,
Reminds me that her helpless cubs are
innocently playing.
I cannot help but feel a great compassion for them,
I cannot help but practice more diligently,
I cannot help but augment thus my Bodhi-Mind.*

*The touching cry of the monkey,
So impressive and so moving,
Cannot help but raise in me deep pity.
The little monkey's chattering is amusing
and pathetic;
As I hear it, I cannot but think of it with
compassion.*

*The voice of the cuckoo is so moving,
And so tuneful is the lark's sweet singing,
That when I hear them I cannot help but listen-
When I listen to them,
I cannot help but shed my tears.*

*The varied cries and cawing of the crow,
Are a good and helpful friend unto the yogi.
Even without a single friend,
To remain here is a pleasure.
With joy flowing from my heart, I sing this happy song;
May the dark shadow of all men's sorrows
Be dispelled by my joyful singing.*

The disciples were all deeply moved, and a feeling of weariness with Samsara overwhelmed them. They swore to Milarepa that they would never leave the mountain. Afterwards, through the practice of meditation, they all reached the state of perfection.

One day, Milarepa's patron Buddha told him the time had come for him to go to Tibet proper and there meditate in solitude to help sentient beings. The patron Buddha also prophesied the success of his career in helping people and in spreading the Dharma. Hence, about this time, Milarepa decided to go to Tibet.

This is the story of Yolmo Snow Mountain.



MILAREPA AND THE PIGEON

Obeisance to all Gurus

In accordance with the prophecy [of his Patron Buddha], Milrepa went to Tibet proper from Yolmo. He arrived at Gu Tang and lived in a cave, absorbing himself in the Meditation of the Great Illumination.

One day a pigeon wearing golden ornaments came to Milarepa. The bird nodded, bowed, and circled him many times. Then it flew away in the direction of the Immaculate Rock. Milarepa understood

that this must be a spell of the Non-men to make him welcome. So he followed the pigeon and went up to the hill, where he found a heap of white rice. The bird pecked the rice with its bill and brought some to Milarepa as if showing him hospitality and welcome. Milarepa, [surprised and delighted], broke into song:

*Oh! My gracious Guru, Marpa Lho Draug Wa,
From the depth of my heart I think of you.
In deepest earnestness I meditate on you.
That I never be separated from you, is my prayer.*

*Merging the Self-mind with the Guru is indeed a happy thing.
Manifestation itself is the essence of Reality.
Through the realization of this unborn Dharmakaya,*

*I merge myself in the Realm of Non-effort,
To both the high and low Views am I indifferent.
In the mind of Non-effort I feel happiness and joy.*

*The nature of Mind is the Light and the Void.
By realizing the awareness of Light-Void,
I merge myself in the original state of Non-effort.
To good and bad experiences am I indifferent.
With a mind of Non-effort, I feel happiness and joy.*

*The Six Senses and Sense Objects of themselves
dissolve [into the Dharmadhatu].
Where the Non-differentiation of subject
and object is realized.
I merge happiness and sorrow into one;
I enter the original state of Non-effort.
To right and wrong actions, am I indifferent.
Happy indeed is the Non-effort mind.*

*The very nature of the Dharmakaya
Is identified through its myriad forms;
The myriad forms are the Nirmanakaya of Buddha.
With this understanding in mind,
Whatever circumstance I may encounter,
I am free in the happy realm of Liberation!
To return to the home of Buddha
I have no longing!
Happy indeed is this mind of Non-effort.*

Whereupon the pigeon, with seven companions, came nearer to Milarepa. They all bowed to him and circled him many times, as the first bird had done before. Milarepa thought, "These pigeons must be Non-men. I shall ask them and see whether they will tell the truth." So he said, "Who are you, and why do you come here?" The pigeons then broke the spell and displayed their real forms as female Devas. Their leader said, "We are the angel-maidens of Heaven. Because we have great faith in you, we come here to learn the Dharma from you. We beseech you to give us the instructions."

In response, Milarepa sang:

*Oh! The wondrous Transformation Body of my Guru!
Pray, kindly grant me your grace-wave.*

*You eight charming maidens. of Heaven,
Who appeared just now in pigeon form,
Your spell was fine, and in conformity
with the Dharma!*

*If you, the eight beautiful maidens of Heaven,
Wish to practice the white Dharma of Buddha,
Pray remember the meaning of this song.*

*Though worldly happiness and pleasure
Seem delightful and pleasing,
They soon will pass away.*

*Though high-ranking ladies are proud and exultant
In their lofty dignity,
What refuge and shelter do they have?*

*To dwell in the fiery home of Samsara
Sometimes seems pleasant, but is mostly misery.*

*If a well-endowed and well-loved son
Has no self-respect and makes no self-effort,
His father will meet nothing but distress.*

*If a disciple commits evil deeds,
He must fall into Samsara,
No matter how superb his Guru may be.*

*You maidens of Heaven, the conjurers of the pigeons!
It is easy for you to ask for Dharma,
But hard to have deep faith in it.
You should remind yourselves
Of the inevitable misfortunes
Connected with worldly joys.
The pains and miseries of this life,
You should regard as friends leading
you toward Nirvana.
As for me, I am very grateful for*

*The misfortunes I have met.
Oh, my friends, bear this in mind, and do the same!*

The Devas smiled at Milarepa and said, "We shall do so." Then they made obeisance and circumambulated him many times. The Jetsun then asked the angels, "Why did you come here in pigeon form?" They replied, "You are a yogi who has not the slightest attachment to yourself, nor any desire for this worldly life. It is only for the sake of Bodhi and the welfare of sentient beings that you have remained in solitude and meditated without distraction. With our heavenly eyes, we have been able to see you; and with respect and faith we now come to you for Dharma. But in order to [conceal our real form from] sinful beings, we have transformed ourselves into pigeons. We pray that your Reverence will now be kind enough to go up into Heaven with us to preach the righteous Dharma for us." But Milarepa replied, "As long as life lasts, I shall remain in this world to benefit sentient beings here. You must know that Heaven is far from dependable; it is not eternal, and one should not rely on it. To be born in Heaven is not necessarily a wonderful thing. You should pay heed and follow these instructions":

*I bow down at the feet of Marpa Lho Draug.
Oh, Father Guru! Pray grant me your
grace-wave and accomplishment.*

*You, eight beauties of the Deva-realm,
Have offered me white rice, the wondrous
fruit of Dhyana.*

*Eating it my body is strengthened, and my
mind enlivened.*

*As a token of my gratitude, I sing this
song of Dharma to you.*

Now, lift up your ears, and listen to me carefully.

*Even though one reaches the highest Heaven
of the White Devas,*

*It has no permanent value and meaning!
Lovable and touching are those flowers of
youth in Heaven.*

*But however pleasant it may seem to be,
In the end comes separation.*

*Although the bliss in Heaven seems to be very great,
It is merely a deceitful mirage, a
bewildering hallucination;
In fact, it is the very cause of the
return to suffering!*

*Thinking of the miseries of the Six Realms in Samsara,
I cannot help but have a feeling of disgust
and aversion -
A feeling of anguish and distressed emotion!
Should you intend to practice the teaching of Buddha,
You must take refuge in the Three Precious
Ones and pray to them.*

*Sentient beings in the Six Realms
You should consider as your parents.*

*Give to the poor, and offer to the Guru!
For the benefit of all, dedicate your merits.
Always remember that death may come at any moment.*

*Identify your body with Buddha's body!
Identify your own voice with Buddha's Mantra.
Contemplate the Sunyata of self-awakening Wisdom,
And always try to be master of your mind!*

The Devas of Heaven said, "In ignorant beings like us, the Klesas always follow the mind. Pray give us a teaching with which we can correct this fault, so we may depend upon it and practice it frequently." In response to their request, Milarepa sang:

*Obeisance to Marpa, the gracious one!
Pray grant me the blessing of virtuous remedy.*

*Should you, oh faithful lady Devas, intend
to practice the Dharma often,
Inwardly you should practice concentration
and contemplation.
The renunciation of external affairs is
your adornment.*

Oh, bear in mind this remedy for external involvement!

*With self-composure and mindfulness, you
should remain serene.*

Glory is the equanimity of mind and speech!

Glory is the resignation from many actions!

Should you meet disagreeable conditions,

Disturbing to your mind,

Keep watch upon yourself and be alert;

Keep warning yourself:

"The danger of anger is on its way."

When you meet with enticing wealth,

Keep watch upon yourself and be alert;

Keep a check upon yourself:

"The danger of craving is on its way."

Should hurtful, insulting words come to your ears,

Keep watch upon yourself and be alert,

And so remind yourself:

"Hurtful sounds are but delusions of the ear."

When you associate with your friends,

Watch carefully and warn yourself:

"Let not jealousy in my heart arise."

When you are plied with services and offerings,

Be alert and warn yourself:

*"Let me beware, lest pride should spring up
in my heart."*

At all times, in every way, keep watch upon yourself.

At all times try to conquer the evil thoughts within you!

Whatever you may meet in your daily doings,

*You should contemplate its void and
illusory nature.*

*Were even one hundred saints and scholars
gathered here,*

More than this they could not say.

May you all be happy and prosperous!

*May you all, with joyful hearts,
Devote yourselves to the practice of the Dharma!*

The maidens of Heaven were all very happy, and in their delight and satisfaction they again turned their bodies into pigeons, and flew up toward Heaven. Milarepa then ate the offered rice, and set out for the Gray Rock Vajra Enclosure.

This is the story of the angel-maidens [in pigeon form) and their offerings.

All the preceding stories have dealt with the accounts of Milarepa's subjugation and conversion of demons.