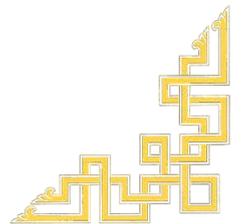
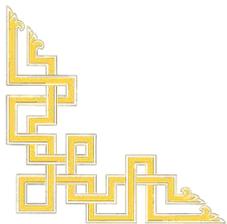


*Verses of Encouragement
to Achieve the Full
Potential of this Life*

by *Lama Tsongkhapa*



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Homage to my lama, Mañjugosha.

1.

Bestowing abundant bliss and happiness
To all migrators under her protective care.
To exalted Tara who has taken responsibility
To aid those who are suffering, I respectfully prostrate.

2.

“Whomever has fallen into the great ocean of suffering,
I shall liberate them all from their pain and discontent.”
– this vast oath subsequently fulfilled.

Loving-compassionate mother, at your lotus feet I bow my head,
Sincerely revering you with respect and devotion.

3.

Having attained this auspicious basis of leisure, you of fine features,
If you follow me who speaks to help others,
Listen receptively and attentively to this concise explanation!

4.

It will definitely come, and it will swiftly come.
It is also certain that if you fail to train through repeatedly reflecting on death,
Virtuous thoughts will not arise, and even when they do,
They will just amount to concerns for the delights of this life.

5.

Thus, upon seeing or hearing of the death of others,
Reflect that this will happen to you!

Similarly, yours is undeniably rapidly approaching and will arrive without
warning.

At that moment, you will separate from your body,
Each and every possession, friend and loved one.

However, virtuous and non-virtuous karma will follow you like a shadow.

6.

From non-virtuous karma comes the incessant, intense
Suffering and misery of the three lower realms.

From the paths of the conquerors come the higher realms,
Wherein progressive levels of virtue are quickly attained.

Understand this and reflect on it daily!

Having contemplated that, go for refuge earnestly.

7.

The Buddha praised as the foundation for the non-ordained
To train your mind to be in accord with the five lifelong vows
And take the eight daylong Mahayana precepts periodically.
Receiving them with sincerity, guard them dearly!

8.

Your body and mind, both now and in the future, are particularly harmed
By drunkenness which is viewed with contempt by the wise.

Therefore, you of fine features, it would be welcome

If you were to turn completely from such despised behaviour.

9.

Whatever conduct eventually leads to suffering,

Even if, at first glance, it appears to be pleasurable, do not do it!

After all, is it not understood that deliciously cooked food

Which is mixed with poison, is to be thoroughly discarded?

10.

Every day, in addition to the above, make offerings to the Three Jewels,
Strive in virtue and the confession of past non-virtue.

Henceforth, strengthen your vows and dedicate this complete accumulation
Of virtue to be a cause of enlightenment.

11.

In brief, at the time of each of your births and deaths,
You were born alone, and you died alone.
Thus, friends, loved ones and so forth, all fail you
The holy Dharma, solely, is unfailing.

12.

This life is so brief, like a flash of lightning.
With whatever you do, today is the time to accomplish your
Future everlasting happiness. Reflect on this well!
Do not leave this precious opportunity, this human life, empty-handed.

13.

Due to whatever merit has been gained through this advice,
May beings not be arrogant about pleasures nor discouraged at hardships,
May minds be turned from the relentless activities of this one life,
And may all migrators be nourished by delight in Dharma.

Translated by Venerable Lobsang Dorje in a literal style so as to complement the oral teaching of Geshe Thubten Rabten, at Atisha Centre 2022.

