

Heruka Chakrasamvara Teachings with Geshe Sonam Ngodrup

First Chakrasamvara Session: 8.10.2022

by Geshe Sonam Ngodrup - transl. Ven. Khedrup

Wherever you are, Geshela hopes you are well, and that you are happy.

Lama Tsong Khapa says in his teachings on tantra and elsewhere, that before one engages in a dharma activity, it is very important to reflect upon one's good fortune. And it is said that that joy should show on our face, Geshela said. So, when we are studying Dharma we want to have a happy and relaxed appearance.

And the last point that Lama Tsong Khapa makes is that while approaching and practicing the teachings

we need to be courageous, we need to have some confidence.

And the last one is that we must as much as possible dissipate or diminish any distractions.

With this feeling of being fortunate, of courage then we will engage in the preliminary prayers.

Explanation of the prayers – Beginning prayers.

So, whenever we gather together for Dharma activities we also want to make sure that that activity is proper and complete in the beginning, middle and end.

When we engage in virtuous activities, normally obstacles arise, and in order to stop these obstacles, if we make sure that we engage in all of the activities properly, in the beginning, in the middle and in the end we can reduce those obstacles that constrain us and we can be successful in the practice.

Geshela said, that because we are very limited for time, we want to get to the topic, he won't speak as extensively as he usually does, but we know the activities of the beginning and the end are important, so he will take a bit of time to speak about the activities at the beginning.

When we speak of the motivation = that which helps us distinguish the correct path (uncommon Mahayana refuge).

Most of you are familiar, we speak thus of refuge connected with 3 causes (Mahayana):

common refuge = fear and faith

uncommon = fear and faith + great compassion is what will allow us to bring forth this uncommon Mahayana refuge.

Narrow path vs. a wide path = mind generation = bodhicitta rooted in love and compassion.

Today we will only touch on these briefly.

Meditation 15:45 till 20:25

We understand that in the Buddhist teaching within the dispensation of Buddha Shakyamuni there are teachings on both sutra and tantra, and today's topics fall into the teachings on tantra, or secret mantra.

And so, within the tantra there are 4 classes of tantra. Today's teachings will be within the anuttara yoga, or the highest yoga tantra and they are also part of the teachings in our tradition of Guhyasamaja, Vajrabairava and Heruka; specifically, these are the teachings on Heruka, which is the principle mother tantra.

We could say that the teachings of Guhyasamaja, this is like the king of the father tantras, and similarly Heruka would be the king of the mother tantras.

Within the teachings on Chakrasamvara we have this text on the self-generation, but it is not merely a self-generation - it is all of the teachings included in it, necessary to complete the path.

Geshela said, normally we would speak a lot about the history of the Chakrasamvara and the history of this root tantra, as we are limited for time, we won't touch on those extensively today, but we may come to them in later sessions if there is interest.

Geshela said, you may hear something you heard before – we don't know everyone who is attending, so he said perhaps amongst you are more experienced practitioners of this system. But if you hear something you heard before, just try to listen to this in a relaxed way, with a way of thinking "I am refining this, let it help those who are beginners."

So, Geshela said, his idea is going through these sessions, we are not going to rush ourselves, we can take as many sessions as we need, so we will do this in a very relaxed way.

Geshela also said, that he considers himself a beginner, when it comes to these teachings on Heruka, but there were very ardent and sincere requests that he give these teachings on Chakrasamvara, so he felt as he had no choice but to fulfil the request.

If the points that he has known, if he is able to share them to all of you, and you are able to benefit from them, he does this with a mind to benefit all of you.

In terms of the different Heruka tantras. The main one is that of Heruka Chakrasamvara in 51 chapters, and Lama Tsong Khapa composed a commentary on this called the “Hidden Meanings”.

There is also said to be a tantra Chakrasamvara in a 100.000 lines and one in 300.000 lines; Geshela said, to his knowledge these did not reach Tibet.

If we were to speak about the way to engage in tantric practice, we can think that we are like a small child who is going to accumulate certain causes through study and practice; through accumulating these causes we are going to develop what is necessary for when we become a king: to be able to become a king and to know what to do when we become a king so that we can do things for the benefit of sentient beings.

In the first part of the sadhana there are many activities for the accumulation of merits and the purification of obscurations. Once we go through that accumulation and purification we then come to the self-generation, when we arise as the deity. And it is with that self-generation that we are arising as the king/queen to engage in the activities to benefit beings.

Also, if we take the analogy and think in another way, and think in terms of multiple lifetimes, we can think in the first lifetime we engage in the activities of accumulating merit, and on the basis of those meritorious causes, we achieve the causes of having a good rebirth into a good and noble family, and then continuing our journey we in that noble family we can eventually become the king/queen to benefit sentient beings.

We talked about the activities at the beginning, the middle and the end and we can understand that the sadhana is structured in the very same way. The activities at the beginning of the sessions, the activities of the actual session and those at the end.

So, Akhuchin Sherab-gyatso, who wrote a very important commentary on this practice, he said that if we want to practice this properly we need to have a very clear comprehension of the various outlines of the practice.

The outlines of the practice should appear like a map within our mind.

Just as a reminder, we are separating the parts: the activities at the beginning of the session, in the middle and at the end of the session.

That brings us to a discussion about the activities of the beginning of the session. These have 2 outlines:

- 1) The common, general preliminary practices
- 2) The uncommon, special preliminary practices (or extraordinary preliminary practices)

Geshela said that he wants to present the outlines in this way, because they are pretty much the same, whether we speak of the Luipa Heruka practice, the Ghantapa 5 deities practice or the Ghantapa body mandala. So, going through these outlines will let you proceed in your practice with a secure, happy mind.

It's important to understand that these 3 systems are distinguished mainly upon some slight differences in the number of deities in the mandala or their appearance, and whether they have a body mandala or lack a body mandala, but in terms of the rest of the practice they are very similar.

Geshela added the word common himself, because that was beneficial for him, but sometimes they are just called the general preliminaries. So, within these general preliminaries there are 7 points:

1. the supplication to the lineage lamas
2. the instantaneous arising
3. the blessing of the vajra and bell
4. the blessing of the inner offering
5. the way of offering the preliminary offering tormas
6. the blessing of the offering to the self-generation
7. the meditation/recitation of Vajrasattva

Geshela said that point 5 is actually a very vast section with many points, but none of them are particularly difficult, and we will come to those in future sessions.

These are known as the common, general preliminaries. What we will be covering today is within this section.

The main point that Geshela prepared: with the motivation of having all to be able to understand this clearly within your minds, we will be covering the inner offering practice.

Along with this main point of the inner offering there are branch things that are related – which are not the central focus, but there are things that we need to know, and we will cover as much as possible of these as well.

Before we have the inner offering, the first of these 7 is the supplication to the lineage lama's.

How to visualize the lineage lamas? Geshela would propose to visualize them one on top of the other. Much similar to the way you visualize the 8 tathagatas in the Medicine Buddha practice. So one on top of the other. It would be in the space in front of you, starting at eye level and going up into the sky.

The first is Dorje Chang, Vajradhara. And the next one is Heruka Chakrasamvara father and mother.

The next one down, is also in the form of a deity, the Lord of Secrets (Vajrapani). Geshela said, not to worry, he won't go through all the lineage lamas but he will cover the main ones.

Then the next, one of the most precious of the mahasiddas, mahasidda Saraha - so you visualize him in the aspect of a mahasidda. Then Arya Nagarjuna, then Choripa/Shavari, then the great Mahasidda Luipa, then after Luipa we have the king Darika, and then after that the Mahasidda Ghantapa.

Then the great Mahasidda Rubersha? and then Tilopa and Naropa. Especially important here are 2 Nepali lamas, the Phangtingpa brothers [names?] and it was from these 2 Nepali brothers that a lot of the lineage held by the Tibetans stem. So they are very important.

This is visualizing them one on top of the other. This is known as the ascending visualisation.

This is one of several ways that you can visualize the lineage lamas, and within those who are in the form of deities, mahasiddas and also those who are in the form of monks.

Geshela said, at the beginning of teachings like this, we would usually recite the prayers and requests to all of the lineage masters, however, because we are limited for

time, we won't do this, but Geshela will say a short verse related to Ghantapa just to establish an auspicious connection.

Geshela recited the beginning, so you find this in the Luipa sadhana, the praises and requests to the lineage gurus. Geshela went from Vajradhara all the way to Rubesha. Geshela said we can just imagine for our purposes that these lamas are in horizontal [checked] formation in the space in front of us.

And you can imagine, that at the end of this vertical construction is your own lama, in his or her ordinary aspect, and that is the lama that is at your eye level.

If you do this practice of prayers and requests to the lineage lamas extensively, one of the requests that you are supposed to add from your own side, it might not be in the words of the sadhana, is the request to that particular lama to be able to bring forth all of the realizations of the lamrim in your mind stream.

So, Akhuchin Sherab-gyatso, who composed one of the Heruka commentaries, said that that's not an easy thing, getting the realisations from the entire lamrim from each of the lamas in this list, but that is what is recommended.

The way this works, is there is a vertical configuration of the lineage lamas, so the preceding lineage lama you make your prayers and requests for blessing and then s/he dissolves into the lama underneath, which dissolves into the lama underneath, which dissolves into the lama underneath. They dissolve into each other in that descending order.

Then we imagine that all of them have dissolved one into the other, until they have dissolved into the lama that is at our eye level in front of us, and this is our root guru, our main lama of this life, and then he or she becomes pleased with us, and turns in the same direction as us, so that both our faces are facing the same way and then dissolves into our crown.

We make this last request to the last of the lamas in this configuration, our root lama, who is facing the same direction that they are facing, they are pleased with us, and because of being pleased with us, then they melt into the form of light, enter through the crown of our head and enter into our central channel.

Then the lama in the form of this light goes through our central channel, and they come to about our heart level, and we can imagine a configuration of like 2 tea cups, like those Tibetan tea cups that are fit together, and within this is our ordinary body, speech and mind, but we specifically think of it in the aspect of our extremely subtle

wind and mind. In this way, we imagine that our body, speech and mind become inseparable, become of one nature with the holy body, speech and mind of the lama.

When we talk about the subtle wind and mind, it is the mind in its most subtle aspect that travels on the mount of that extremely subtle wind.

And on the basis of understanding this, then our ordinary body, speech and mind becomes transformed, of one nature with the holy body, holy speech and holy mind of the guru.

Then on the basis of this, our mind becoming one with the lama's mind, understanding that the lama's mind is of one nature with the yidam. So, the lama is the yidam, and our minds become of one nature, and extraordinary bliss arises.

And on the basis of imagining this great bliss arising, then we imagine that we are focussing on emptiness

and on the basis of experiencing this bliss and using it to meditate on emptiness, then an extraordinary bliss or joy arises within us.

At that point we can think that in the same way that my lama's mind is experiencing the union of great bliss and emptiness, I am now experiencing this great union of bliss and emptiness.

And this is the actual meaning of guru yoga, and this is the most precious guru yoga of all.

At this point, from experiencing this great joy and bliss, from the single-pointed meditation on emptiness, we then imagine that our form now dissolves into the form of light.

Geshela says, "why are we going through these points?" Because before the inner offering we have the instantaneous self-generation, and that should actually include the 3 bringings very briefly, so for example, death into the path of the Dharmakaya, the truth body.

Geshela said that, of course most of you know that later on in the sadhana we will have a complete presentation of the bringings of the 3 bodies into the path, but the instantaneous self-generation should contain the essence of these 3 bringings, just in a very brief form.

So, from within that space of great bliss, then our mind, meditating single-pointedly on emptiness, this is what is this brief meditation acts as bringing death into the path of the Dharmakaya, or bringing death into the path of the Truth-body.

Geshela said, this is the most important point, because even as we move later on into the sadhana, it's from that moment of arising the Dharmakaya in that emptiness that all of the other activities in the sadhana will come out.

On the basis of that mind, which is realizing emptiness, we think of the fundamental innate clear light.

You have to have this thought when you are meditating here, that when you meditate on emptiness, that this is the fundamental innate clear light.

We have to think that this fundamental mind of innate clear light, this is really the resultant time great bliss exalted wisdom.

The resultant time = very important. The resultant time wisdom of great bliss is the svabhavakaya [svabhavivakaya?]

This is really important to contemplate and to meditate on, because it will help us bring forth divine pride.

Geshela said that we don't have much time, and we want to get to the other topics, but actually normally we would try to meditate on each of these points.

Thinking though, just this Dharmakaya is not able to be seen by any beings, so in order to bring benefit to sentient beings we need to go to the next step - we are beginning the meditation on the enjoyment body, the Sambhogakaya.

This starts with a cubit of light, like a rectangle or a pillar, so you imagine yourself in this cubit of light.

We imagine this aspect of that mind meditating on emptiness and the extremely subtle wind, they take on the form of that sort of rectangle of light about a cubit in size (ca. 45 cm).

Geshela said, it's not an actual body yet, and remember you dissolved your body into emptiness, and it's arising again, so you are existing as this cubit of blue light at this point.

And it is said that within this kind of pillar of the cubit of blue light, it's not actually Heruka in form, but you can see a rough outline of some of Heruka Charasamvara's features in that.

The colour of this blue light is actually a blue-black, almost like a monsoon rain cloud.

And this is taking the intermediate state into the path of the Enjoyment body. So, this is what we are doing instead of the bardo.

So, this meditation on this cubit of light etc. is the meditation of taking the bardo into the path of the Sambhogakaya or Enjoyment body.

This is facilitating the practice of transforming the bardo, not into experiencing that clear light of death in an ordinary way, and going back into samsara, but taking that clear light of death and transforming it the cause for the Enjoyment body.

We want to bring this bardo state into the path, and ultimately, we want to bring it to the final goal of the achievement of Buddhahood.

Going from the beginning again, taking death into the path of the Dharmakaya, so using the clear light of death not again to fall into samsara, but taking that clear light of death and transforming it into the path of the Dharmakaya, and also thinking of achieving Buddhahood.

When we say bringing the ordinary death into the path: bringing means to bring or to carry something and we can bring it into the path on a temporary level or on the ultimate level.

The first – bringing the bardo into the path on a temporary level, this is achieving the illusory body.

The bringing on the ultimate level is achieving the Enjoyment body of full enlightenment.

Bringing the ordinary bardo into the path means bringing it into the path of the Enjoyment body. This is a very beautiful understanding.

Geshela said, this is actually considered the beginning of the sadhana, the instantaneous self-generation.

We completed the praises and requests to the lineage lama's and now we have this instantaneous arising just like the beginning of the sadhana.

When we are taking the bardo into the path, we understand that once we have done that, even in the Sambhogakaya, in the enjoyment body, we are in a form that not all sentient beings are able to see us, so we are not able to act in a complete way to benefit all sentient beings.

So, we think in order to really be able to achieve the benefit of sentient beings I am going to manifest in the Nirmanakaya, in the emanation body.

And it is at that moment that we transform from that cubit of light, which is like a pillar, into that actual form of Heruka father and mother.

We come to the sadhana, we are on page 11:

Instantaneously, I arise as Heruka, blue, with one face and two arms,
Holding a vajra and bell, standing with my right leg extended.
I am embraced by my motherly partner Vajra-varahi,
Red, with one face and two arms, holding a cleaver and skullcup.

Geshela said, the instantaneous self-generation is instantaneous, it's momentary just like a cloud can suddenly appear in the sky.
That mind of great bliss realizing emptiness, it takes this form and then it appears as a deity, this is instantaneous, like a fish jumping out of the water.

There are different modes to generate as a deity, and they have this instantaneous generation, 3 steps, 5 steps etc, we come to the discussion of all of these in future sessions.

So, a question might arise, why? We understand that we actually do the bringing of the 3 bodies into the path in the self-generation in the main part of the sadhana, so why do we have to do this brief self-generation in the early part of the sadhana? That's because we need to accomplish many of the preliminary activities that are found within the sadhana in order to be able to engage in the actual session. In order to be successful in the actual session, like the 3 bringings etc. we need to be able to complete the preliminaries correctly, such as dispelling the hindrances, blessing the tormas, the outer offerings, etc.

In order for the tormas to be able to be presented as an offering, the hindrances to the tormas need to be dispelled, it needs to be purified and it needs to be blessed to be offered to the deity. So we need to do a bunch of steps to accomplish that.

In order to be able to purify the hindrances and the tormas etc. we need to accomplish the inner offering, because it is through sprinkling the inner offering that that all will be achieved.

And if we don't engage in the proper preliminaries to generate and bless the inner offering, but just sprinkle it willy-nilly it's not going to accomplish the purpose.

And we can't achieve that generation and blessing of the inner offering as our ordinary appearance, we don't have the capacity to bless it properly. So, for this reason we need to generate ourselves as the deity to bless the inner offering and

complete the other activities, and so that is why we have this instantaneous arising at the beginning of the sadhana.

Geshela said, when you engage in the practice of that instantaneous arising, of that instantaneous self-generation, be clear on the reason as to why we do that.

The next one is blessing the vajra and bell. This is very much connected with the 3 commitments.

These are the commitments of the vajra of body, the vajra of speech and the vajra of mind.

We have to have these commitments of body, speech and mind in place throughout our practice of the sadhana and so the blessing of the vajra and bell is connected with maintaining these 3 commitments.

Geshela said, we will just go over this very briefly, but there is actually lots to unpack here as well.

So turning to the words of the sadhana:

The vajra is the method and the bell is discriminating awareness. Both are in the functional nature of deepest bodhicitta.

The tradition of blessing the vajra and bell, when you take the vajra and bell into your hands, at some monasteries, you take the vajra and bell into your hands as you are doing that instantaneous self-generation. That's when you would take the vajra and bell into your hands.

Geshela said, this is at great monasteries, so an honoured tradition.

In other monasteries, the actual pick up the vajra and bell into their hands when they recite this verse:

The vajra is the method and the bell is discriminating awareness

The other thing that Geshela said is, while you are blessing the vajra and the bell, many recommend that you actually hold the vajra at about the heart level.

And you are not lifting up the bell, but Geshela said you are sort of holding it supported above your knee, if you can see what he is doing.

And then after the blessing, you can hold them normally, play them etc.

And as one lifts up the dorje into one's hand, one can contemplate the method side of the path from relating to the spiritual guide to the generation of bodhicitta.

And picking up the bell, one remembers the wisdom side of the path, the different sides of wisdom, in particular the wisdom realizing emptiness.

In terms of vajra and bell there are a lot of other things to be explained as well, and we can come to those again later.

Then we come to the next section of the practice, which is the consecration or blessing of the inner offering – page 12 of the sadhana.

Geshela said, that when we think of the blessing of the inner offering, if we think of it in terms of an outline of 4 points, this will help us to keep it in our mind:

Those 4 points of the inner offering are:

1. cleansing
2. purifying
3. generating
4. blessing

And all of the words of the sadhana related to the inner offering can fit into these 4 points.

And within the 4th one, blessing, there are a sub-outline of 3 points:

4) blessing 1) purify 2) attain 3) increase

These are important points, so now Geshela will explain the inner offering:

As we are blessing the inner offering, we imagine ourselves in the form of Heruka, father and mother.

The colour of the blue-black raincloud of Heruka's holy body, this symbolizes blue-black, stable colours; it's like an unwavering focus on emptiness. Heruka's holy mind never wavers from emptiness.

If we think of lighter colours, like white and red etc., it's easy for the colours to take on another hue, or to change; but the blue-black colour is very stable and this symbolizes Heruka's commitment to emptiness, specifically his unwavering meditative equipoise on emptiness from which he never wanders.

At the beginning of the inner offering we recite:

OM KHANDAROHI HUM HUM PHAT

This is the first of the 4, the cleansing.

The point is that you are doing the inner offering practice, if you have the implements, like a small table in front of you, in which your kapala, your metal skull cup and the implements of the inner offering are sitting.

As we imagine this, we imagine – as we recite OM KANDAROHİ HUM HUM PHAT, but from the HUM at our heart countless light rays emanate on the tip of which is the wrathful goddess Kandarohi and they chase away and dispel all of the hindrances to the inner offerings.

Geshela said that is the presentation of the first of the 4 parts – cleansing, cleansing hindrances, and we come to a more complete explanation later.

Ad 2) Purifying

Then we recite:

OM SVABHAVA SHUDDHAH SARVA DHARMAH SVABHAVA SHUDDHO
'HAM

Everything transforms into emptiness. So, everything dissolves into emptiness, that includes the metal skull cup etc. that we might have in front of us, we imagine that everything, including those implements dissolve into emptiness, everything is within the sphere of emptiness, as much as possible.

We have to do that on a mental level, don't focus on looking at the offering cup in front of you, there is one that is nominally there, but for the purpose of this purifying we have to imagine that all of those implements dissolve completely into emptiness.

And this helps us to stop grasping at ordinary appearances, and to stop clinging to ignorance.

So, we can stop clinging to ordinary appearances and clinging to ignorance.

So, the space is now completely empty.

Then we say: within the state of voidness Geshela said this isn't just within the state of voidness; it is that voidness or that emptiness which we have meditated on our mind infused with great bliss. That emptiness in our mind is infused with great bliss.

Then we go to the next part.

Ad 3) Generating the inner offering.

Generating has 2 parts:

- 1) generating the container
- 2) generating the contents

And we begin with the container.

We visualize a letter YAM and from that comes a mandala of wind, blue in colour. And where is this YAM appearing? We can imagine that this YAM is appearing in the space where our physical kapala is, but we should imagine that there is just a YAM there.

And with a shape like a bow, the back of the bow is like facing us. At the right and left are the victory banners.

Upon that is a mandala of fire, red and triangular.

And there are blazing flames, and we imagine that the fire is circling based on that very strong fire within, marked on the three corners with blazing flames. On top of that, from OM, AH, HUM, comes a grate of three human heads. From the OM AH HUM, we have 3 human heads, white, red and blue in colour.

So, you have the wind under the fire, and then upon this the heads. Upon this OM AH HUM, in the grate of 3 human heads, we have a letter A, which is a white skull cup.

It has a single fissure and it is white on the outside and red on the inside.

That is the container.

We have now generated the container within the inner offering.

Now we come to the contents of the inner offering.

We now visualize the content, in the east, and you imagine that the east is towards you.

In the east, from a white OM come feces, marked with an OM.

In the north, from a green KHAM comes a brain, marked with a KHAM.

In the west, from a red AM comes white bodhichitta, marked with an AM.

In the south, from a yellow TRAM comes urine marked with a TRAM.

And in the centre, from a dark blue HUM, comes urine marked with a HUM

Geshela said, you might be wondering, if you are doing other practices, why do we have the 5 nectars coming before the 5 meats?

This relates to the 5 nectars being particularly connected bringing forth the clear light, which is connected with mother tantra. Heruka is the main mother tantra, so that's the reason.

Geshela said that you imagine all of these substances within a circle within that skull cup.

And so, another interesting thing about these 5 nectars is that they are said to be representations of the 5 Buddha families.

In these 4 cardinal directions and in the centre we have visualized these 5 nectars. Because the 5 meats are more connected with the illusory body – father tantra – they are situated in the intermediate directions.

In the (southeast) “fire” corner, from a white LAM comes the flesh of a bull, marked with a LAM.

That is the fire corner, that is where the fire deity is said to abide.

In the (southwest) “truthless” corner, from a blue MAM comes the flesh of a dog, marked with a MAM

Truthless is a ghostly deity known as ...?

Known as truthless because this ghost-like deity only tells lies, he doesn't say a single truthful thing, so he's known as truthless.

In the (northwest) “wind” corner, from a red PAM comes the flesh of an elephant, marked with a PAM

This is the wind corner.

In the (northeast) “powerful” corner, from a green TAM comes the flesh of a horse, marked with a TAM

And there is a deity known as “powerful”.

And in the centre, from a red BAM comes the flesh of a human, marked with a BAM
For those of you who are practicing the 5 deities Heruka, you will notice that the human flesh in the centre is not mentioned in your sadhana. So, you can put it in there as an extra, you can add this one line with the BAM with the human flesh if you want, but it's not necessary.

So, a question might arise, from what Geshela said: in the 5 deities Heruka practice, you don't have 5 meats, you have 4 meats and the meat of a human being is missing. Why is that the case?

And the reason for this is actually because in the north we have the human brain as part of the 5 nectars in the inner offering. So, Geshela said, you will find some sadhanas that say that KAM is actually like a human brain, others will say that it's a liquid marrow. And so, in the 5 deities practice what's understood is that the brain is one of the main organs of a human being, so even though it is in liquid form, the human meat is already there, so you don't need to add the human meat for 5 meats, you can just have the 4.

In this form we have generated the 4(5) meats and the 5 nectars.

We completed the 3 stages of the blessing of the inner offering. This brings us to the 4th stage, of blessing the inner offering.

From oneself in the form of Heruka father and mother a wind blows, and to show how strong the wind is blowing those 2 victory banners on either side of the inner offering they start to furl out really strongly.

And on the basis of that, the fire blazes up and becomes stronger and stronger.

And everything inside starts to melt.

So, everything melts and becomes an orange coloured liquid and above that is a white HUM which transforms into a khatvanga, the implements that Heruka or Vajrayogini hold, this comes upside down and then descends into the skull cup and the contents cool and become like mercury.

And then, once this has happened and the contents become like the colour of mercury, we imagine that there are these letters of the vowels and consonants of the Sanskrit alphabet, and they are white, red and blue in colour.

And then we imagine that the white letters dissolve into an OM, the red letters dissolve into an AH and the blue letters dissolve into the HUM.

And from the OM, AH, HUM standing above each other, light rays radiate out and they call back the essence of the power of all the world's oceans etc., they call in all that essential power empowering the contents.

And then we also imagine that those nectars from the OM, AH and HUM that they gather from the seed syllables of those heroes and heroines of the 24 holy places; they grab the awareness nectar from the seed syllables at the heart of all those deities in the 24 holy places.

All of these light rays that gather the power of the deities of the 24 places, this then dissolves into the inner offering, and the inner offering nectar becomes completely empowered.

So, from the white khatvanga falling into the inner offering, it purifies the colour and takes on the colour of mercury. That is the purifying.

Then, after that khatvanga falls in and it transforms into that colour, it actually becomes the essence of amrit, of nectar.

Then we have to imagine that that nectar becomes extremely vast, able to fulfil the thirst of all.

And then at the end, when we have gone through all of these visualizations, we then recite OM, AH, HUM three times.

Geshela said, we haven't been able to go through a complete explanation, but we have gone through the general sections of these 4 sections of the inner offering: cleansing, purifying, generating and blessing.

And then within blessing, the 3 subheadings: we covered very briefly cleansing, purifying and generating.

Geshela said there are also some other important visualisations that are connected that we were not able to cover in our limited time, but we will cover those in our next session.

So, in this way we have touched on the common preliminaries and within those 7 preliminaries. We touched on the supplication to the lineage lamas, we touched upon the instantaneous arising, and on the blessing vajra and bell and we did the blessing of the inner offering very briefly.

So, a question might arise in a person practicing: this practice of the inner offering, is the practice of the generation stage, but how would this practice of the inner offering benefit my practice of the completion stage?

We can answer this by saying, we visualize that YAM and from the YAM letter those winds arose, and so those winds are the root winds of the central channel etc.

And so from imagining that wind, we then imagine that a fire blazes: so those winds are the inner winds, and the fire that is blazing represents the inner fire at the navel or the tummo.

And we know that once the inner fire blazes, this activates this wheel of white drops at the head and those drops start to drip down. And then, at that stage, when we have done that visualization, we imagine that we experience the white appearance, red increase and black near attainment.

So it's related to those practices.

Geshela said, also the 3 heads in the inner offering

- the white head represents white appearance
- the red head represents red increase
- the blue head represents black near attainment.

The white skull cup that appears on top of this represents great bliss – wisdom.

This skull cup arises from an AH. The AH represents emptiness.

In this way, the skull cup that arises from the AH represents the union of great bliss and wisdom.

Within the completion stage this is connected with the completion stage practices of example clear light and meaning clear light.

The white colour also represents the path of seeing, realisation of emptiness. Then the illusory body of the deity arises, and this is related to the 5 meats within the inner offering. So, the 5 meats which represent the 5 lords of the Buddha families etc.

If you are practicing the inner offering then, you can understand how the inner offering helps us accumulate the causes for success in the completion stage in this manner.

If you understand the meaning, the metaphorical representation of all the things in the inner offering, you see how the inner offering can be a practice of both the generation and the completion stage.

Geshela said, no rush to finish this, we will do as many future monthly sessions as we need. But anyway, we have given you a rough idea and we can also go over to any points that were presented briefly again.

Geshela said, the homework for next month – it's the first week of November: please prepare, look over the blessings of the vajra and bell, because we will discuss more about that.

We will also be looking at the 4 types of mantra in the next session: the root mantra, the mantras of the armour etc.

The root mantra is called the root mantra because it is said to be the root of all the common and supramundane attainments/siddhis. And it is said to be the very heart/root of Vajradhara and the Buddhas of the three times.

When we do this again and again it becomes the essence mantra. In order to help us overcome obstacles to our practice, we need the mantras of the armour.

Also, we will come to an explanation of these different types of mantras and how they relate to the activities to the practice.

Thank you very much, let us dedicate very briefly with a happy mind.

