
The Middle Length Lamrim

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Commentary by the Venerable Geshe Doga

Translated by Sandup Tsering

15 October 2024

We do the Medicine Buddha prayers tonight for the quick recovery of Jo Kupertoff, who has been hospitalised, as well as for the sake of all other students and people who have been ill. We should also include ourselves, praying for our own good health and so on.

It is important that when we recite prayers, it's not just a reading ritual. Rather, it is to build a connection with the Medicine Buddha. We really do need some sort of protection in terms of this current life and also when we leave this life, in the intermediate bardo state, and the life after that. There is no more reliable protector than the Medicine Buddha. So, as we do this prayer we should think of this.

There are a lot of benefits to be derived from reciting the Medicine Buddha prayer. In fact, if you refer to the longer version of the Medicine Buddha, you can find a list of all the benefits we can receive from doing the practice. It is said that simply saying the Medicine Buddha's name for yourself or for the sake of others has tremendous benefits in terms of purifying negativities, removing all obstacles in life and enhancing peace.

I have many stories to share of the effect that this Medicine Buddha prayer can have. To mention one, Ross Moore's art teacher, who was about 85 years old, was sick in bed and, at Ross' request, I visited his friend and recited the Medicine Buddha prayers. We let him know what prayers we recited and he replied 'Yes, I knew it' although I doubt whether he did know what the prayers were. Nevertheless, he did say how much hearing this prayer had benefited him. After that, I got a very nice letter from his partner who acknowledged the prayers I had recited and told me that afterwards his mental state changed and he was very peaceful. He passed away very peacefully.

Therefore, it is really important to recognise and have faith in the prayers that we recite, such as this Medicine Buddha practice. Sometimes, when we get sick, or when we face some sort of threat to our lives, we get lost and confused about what to do. However, what we have to do is very clear if we remember all the teachings we have heard, such as this Medicine Buddha practice.

Another example was when we did the Medicine Buddha puja in this gumpa for the health of someone named Caroline. She didn't survive, but afterwards, the family organised a huge gathering of over 200 people here in this gumpa and a lot of them were not even Buddhists. Her sister made a speech where she acknowledged the direct effect of the puja and prayers that had been recited. Not only had her sister benefited, but she also acknowledged that she benefitted herself tremendously because, after the prayers, she had a very good night's sleep.

Sometimes we wonder what benefit we can derive from reciting prayers and doing certain practices because all the holy images and deities that we are praying to can seem so esoteric. However, the benefit we are talking about is something we can all experience. I'm saying this because I

have directly witnessed these benefits. Therefore, it is important to understand the benefits and also have faith in our practice.

We do know that reciting prayers and doing certain practices will benefit all sentient beings. We can see how the practice of prayer that we do extends benefit even to all others, including non-Buddhists as well.

We then recited *The Concise Essence Sutra Ritual of Bhagavan Medicine Buddha called The Wish-Fulfilling Jewel*

*Transcript prepared by Gaye Lewis
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