

Milarepa Songs for NDF Milarepa Retreat

Song of the Yogin's Galloping Horse

I replied, "You look at me and think I seem so miserable. But you don't realize that there's no one in the world happier, wiser, or more clear-minded than me. This is my way of being happy, equal to the best among you. So listen to this song of the yogin's galloping horse:

I bow at the feet of Marpa the Kind.

Within the mountain hermitage, my body,
Inside the temple, my breast,
At the top of a triangle, my heart,
The stallion of mind rides like the wind.

To catch him, what lasso will catch him?
To tether him to what stake will I tether him?
If hungry, what food will I give him?
If thirsty, what drink will I give him?
If cold, in what corral will I board him?
To catch him, catch with the lasso of non-duality.
To tether him, tether with the stake of meditative absorption.
If hungry, feed him the lama's oral instructions.
If thirsty, water him at the river of mindfulness.
If cold, board him at the corral of emptiness.

For saddle and bit I use method and wisdom.
For crupper and girth I strap changeless stability.
I fasten the reins of the life-force subtle winds.
Upon him rides the young child of pristine awareness.

For a helmet he wears the Great Vehicle mind generation.
And dons armor of study, contemplation, and meditation.
On his back he carries the shield of patience.
In his hands he wields the long spear of the view.
Fixed at his side is the sword of wisdom.
The smooth arrow shaft of the all-basis.
Has the warp of non-anger straightened out.
It is fletched with feathers of the Four Immeasurables
And tipped with the arrowhead of sharp wisdom.
Nocked with the profound path of means
In the bow of emptiness,
I draw back an arm span, the expanse of union,
And fire the arrow across the land.
For targets I hit the faithful.
My prey is the demon of clinging to “I.”
Thus I slay enemies, the mental afflictions
And protect my friends, the six kinds of beings.
My galloping horse gallops the plains of great bliss.
My hunt is the hunt for the Victor’s high state.
Racing up, I sever the root of life’s round.
Racing back, I arrive at the line of enlightenment.
Racing such a horse, I win buddhahood.
See if your happiness compares with this.
I’ve no wish for worldly happiness.

*—The Life of Milarepa
compiled and arranged by Tsangnyon Heruka
translated by Andrew Quintman*

Six Happy Ways of Being Resolved

Padampa Sangye said, "You don't have any reason at all to be like that. Just giving out examples does not do any good. If you are a genuine yogi, you must have resolve about this very present moment of awareness." Then the Jetsun sang this song of realization on the six happy ways of being resolved.

In solitary places where dakinis naturally gather
I contemplate dharma alone, as I please.
I prostrate to the daka that cuts ego by the root.

Deathlessness soars in the birthless state of mind.
The signs of birth and death are freed in their own place.
When the view is resolved, my mind is blissful.
If you want such happiness, Dampa, you should do it too!

In the state of nonmeditation, meditation soars with nondistraction.
Signs of meditation and postmeditation are freed in their own place.
When meditation is resolved, the mind is blissful.
If you want such happiness, Dampa, you should do it too!

In the state of effortless conduct, conduct soars unimpeded.
All signs of hypocrisy are freed in their own place.
When conduct is resolved, the mind is blissful.
If you want such happiness, Dampa, you should do it too!

In the state of abhishekas not bestowed soars nonattainment.
The signs of the deity's form are freed in their own place.
When abhishekas are resolved, the mind is blissful.
If you want such happiness, Dampa, you should do it too!

In the state without keeping samaya soars the immaculate.
Signs of vows to keep are freed in their own place.
When samaya's resolved, the mind is blissful.
If you want such happiness, Dampa, you should do it too!

Without hope of fruition, fearlessness soars.
Signs of hope and fear are freed in their own place.
When fruition is resolved, the mind is blissful.
If you want such happiness, Dampa, you should do it too!

Thus he sang. Then Dampa Sangye said, "I have already experienced all that you have just said. Of the dharma practitioners of Tibet, you don't need any correcting! Even in India, it is rare to find a practitioner such as you. I do not need you, and you do not need me."

*—The Hundred Thousand Songs of Milarepa
compiled and arranged by Tsangnyon Heruka
translated by Christopher Stagg*

*

Milarepa's sister Peta said, "Brother, you have performed the weekly rites in this way for the dead here, but you did not do anything for our very own parents."

The Jetsun took his sister's hand and said, "Peta, you do not need to cry. To repay the kindness of both of our parents, I acted in this way." Then he sang this song of realization.

I supplicate the guru lords.
Accept me with your compassion, that I may repay my parents' kindness.

The amulet of my mother's body,
And the king of kindness of my ancestors,
When left behind their illusory bodies,
They mixed their consciousnesses with my own mind.

They dissolved into the heart of the Victorious One, mind itself.
Through compassion, a pure realm of rainbow light dawned.
Their bodies, appearance-emptiness, dissolved into the deity's form.
To attain the self-arisen deity—how wondrous!
Their speech, sound-emptiness, mixed with ineffable mantra.
To merge their voices with mantra—how wondrous!
Their minds, wandering in the bardo, were summoned through samadhi.
Awareness, clarity-emptiness, was naturally pointed out.
Mind's own place was seized, so they are without confusion.
To be free of movement and change—how wondrous!
Throughout the period I engage in practice,
The fierce mantra of love and compassion
Purified their obscurations, day and night:
The gateway of birth in samsara's six realms was cut.
They were placed among the assemblies in the blissful pure realms.
Their enjoyment of delight and joy expand
In the pure realm of Sukhavati.
A retinue of dakas and dakinis surrounds them.
You don't need to worry, my dear sister Peta.

*—The Hundred Thousand Songs of Milarepa
compiled and arranged by Tsangnyon Heruka
translated by Christopher Stagg*

Meeting Padampa Sangye, Mila Sings

To lama, personal deity, and dakinis

I pray—grant me blessings.

In the great lion of boundless mind

The three fearless skills are complete,

And he sleeps in snow without melting the ice.

Let death come to this holder of vision—

When I die, I'll rejoice in death;

When death comes, I'll blissfully die.

My mind's a vulture without hope or fear

Who spreads his wings of method and wisdom united

And sleeps on the rock of natural reality.

Let death come to this meditator—

When I die, I'll rejoice in death;

When death comes, I'll arrive at bliss.

I'm a young tiger free from acceptance or rejection,

Smiling the smile of nonaction,

At rest, at ease in the forest of gnosis.

Let death come to this practitioner—

When I die, I'll rejoice in death;

When death comes; I'll arrive at bliss.

I'm the little fish of natural state of awareness

Swimming the depths of reality's ocean,

Abiding in the dharmakaya's changeless state.

Let death come to this possessor of results—

When I die, I'll rejoice in death;

When death comes, I'll arrive at bliss.

At my right warriors stand like lions,

To my left heroines dance.

Dharma protectors wait before me like servants,

And practitioners follow me.

The Lineage of Oral Instruction*arches above like a roof,

And below it dakinis hover like a cloud.

Such a yogi-repa

Does not fear the passing of judgment.

—*Milarepa*
Drinking the Mountain Stream
translated by Lama Kunga Rinpoche &
Brian Cutillo

*Kagyu lineage