

Dear Dharma Friends,

Below are parts of the teaching excerpted from H.E. IX Kyabje Drukpa Choegon Rinpoche's Dharma Book – Cloudless Clarity, Volume I.

The full contents of the book are as the Table of Contents stated as follow:

- I) *Understanding the Foundation of Tibetan Buddhism*
 - a) *On Dharma – the Teachings of Buddha*
 - b) *On Vajrayana - the Secret Mantrayana*
 - c) *On Vajrayana Lineages – the different schools of Vajrayana*
 - d) *On some common “title” - the salutation in Vajrayana*
 - e) *On some common terms in Vajrayana - Boddhisattva, Daka, Dakini and Dharma Protector*
 - f) *On Refuge - the Doorway to Buddhism*
 - g) *On Guru - the Guide to Your Vajrayana Practices*
 - h) *On Samaya - the Vows of Vajrayana:*
- II) *On Proper Conduct – the right attitudes during Dharma related activities*
- III) *On Buddhist practices – The 6 Paramitas*
 - a) *Transcendent Generosity (dana)*
 - b) *Transcendent Discipline/Morality (shila)*

Choegon Rinpoche's Dharma Q&A – Part 8

On Samaya - the Vows of Vajrayana:

- 1) **I remember one master saying “Vajrayana is very fast, but it’s also very dangerous.” I did not clarify with him at that time. Can Rinpoche please explain why he said this?**

A: Vajrayana is fast because most of the time, you're not linked to ordinary beings, but you're linked to the enlightened beings in the form of your master, with the blessings of the pure unbroken lineage.

The master gives you empowerment, which means a powerful transformation of blessing, and also pointing out instructions. That is very precious and direct. But you also have to diligently practice and keep the samayas. If you are disrespectful and you break the samaya, that of course creates a lot of negative karma, particularly if you abandon the master and feel hatred toward the Dharma and the master. The master was the one who gave you such precious teachings, even more precious than his own soul. So, it is called breaking samaya and it creates very heavy karma.

That's what it is. It has blessings, it's a fast lane, the path that has speed, but you have to be trained and always require full attention to stay on the right track. Otherwise you create problems. That's what the teacher meant I guess.

2) Every time we attend a Vajrayana's initiation or empowerment, the master always mentions the word "Samaya." Can Rinpoche please tell us more about that?

A: Samaya here means that in every empowerment there are things to practice, things to do and not to do. If you follow those instructions, the blessings remain intact and they continue. When you practice, you'll feel increasing blessings and improvement.

But if you do not keep the practices, the blessings will disappear, there is no improvement, and there is no understanding of true nature of mind. It's like homework; samaya is like homework that needs to be done. Every practice has samaya. In Theravada it's called the vows, those are samaya. In Mahayana, there are vows to be kept, those are samaya. These are Vajrayana's vows, and keeping them is called samaya. It's the same thing, the vows, but with different names.

3) How many types of Samaya are there in Vajrayana?

A: There are many, but those most commonly known are the fourteen main ones and eight branches. And in the lesser one, there is the 3 samaya, "Ku Sung Tug," body, speech and mind samaya. Then, if you go to the much shorter one, like Dzogpa Chenpo or Mahamudra, there is only one samaya -- the master, keeping the master, that's it. This also answers your earlier question of why a master is so important. Just as in the teaching of Dzogchen and Mahamudra keeping the master and the devotion is a very important samaya; the unbroken devotion to the master and must not be broken. Keeping the unbroken, unshakable devotion is the last final samaya of Dzogpa Chenpo.

Twenty five, Fourteen, Five, Three, or One, there are many different types of samaya. But most common, generally speaking, after an empowerment, in the deity practice, is whatever appearances, are in the form of deity; whatever sound is not the mundane sound, but the sound of the mantra, you have to keep reciting the mantra of the deity; whatever discursive thoughts that arise, it's not the normal discursive thoughts, but you need to always remain in a meditative or awareness state. These discursive thoughts are known as the Dharmakaya mind.

So we have Vajrabody, which is the Deity; Vajraspeech is the Mantra; and Vajramind is the Meditation, Samadhi. These are the 3 samaya of Vajrayana.