

## **GREEN TARA INITIATION BACKGROUND**

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Good afternoon. Before I give the initiation on Green Tara, I would like to give you some background on this initiation.

There are many types of deities in various forms such as peaceful, wrathful, in union, etc. These are not beings that are karmically developed into forms and figures. In fact, these are the enlightenment great qualities of manifestation to lead beings onto the path of enlightenment.

Lord Buddha conferred all these methods in many different occasions and many fortunate disciples. So, altogether these practices are the leading path and they are very profound paths towards attaining enlightenment.

One example is today's initiation of Green Tara. We should understand Green Tara both as the Ultimate way and as the Relative way. In Ultimate essence, Tara is regarded as mother of all the noble ones. There are four different types of nobles namely Sravekabuddhas, Pratekhyabuddha, Bodhisattvas and Samyaksambuddhas. Tara is regarded as the mother of these four nobles.

All these qualities come from wisdom. Without this wisdom, we cannot achieve the four nobles. It is solely due to wisdom that these four nobles are achieved. Thus, mother Tara is the result of these four qualities. Wisdom is like the feminine body who gives birth. In that regard, Tara or any wisdom related embodiment is in the female form.

In enlightenment, when you reach the state of Dharmakhaya, there is the accomplishment of Sambhogakhaya and Dharmakhaya spontaneously. Also it manifests Nirmanakhaya like Buddha Shakaymuni. Thus benefitting countless sentient beings wherever they exist.

Relatively, Tara developed her enlightened attitude and achieved the state of enlightenment. There is a legend that she was a princess of a king. Her name was Wisdom Moon. One day, she chanced upon the Buddha. In front of the Buddha, she developed her enlightened attitude. From then onwards, she constantly practiced and attained various realisations and meditation. She liberated countless sentient beings daily. With diligence, she liberated many sentient beings in this world. Thus, she was declared by all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas as Tara, which means savior. At the same time, she made her enlightened attitude and aspiration that she will be in the form of female to liberate all sentient beings and she will attain enlightenment in the female form. So her Sambhogakahaya appears as Green Tara and the 21 forms of Tara, all female forms.

Tara developed her enlightened attitude until she attains complete enlightenment. She liberates sentient beings and subjugates negative forces. These are incomparable to all Buddhas of past, present and future. So the fame of Tara is pervaded to all Buddhas' fields. All Buddhas then praise her as Tara. Thus her name Tara is announced by all Buddhas.

And due to this, the lord Buddha has also spoken about Tara under many different levels of Sutras. Actually, there are few hundred thousand versions of methods of Tara that have been conferred by Lord Buddha. Similarly, there are also, due to her popularity, many great practitioners of Tara from India and Tibet. Many siddhas accomplished the siddhis through the practice of Tara. The practice of Tara is found in Karma Kagyud tradition. It is also a very popular practice in other traditions. The first Karmapa Dusum Khyenpa has 25 personal yidam practices, of which Green Tara is one of them. Later, all our lineage masters too practice Tara is their personal yidam. So this particular or today's empowerment is the source from a new treasure revealed text. Originally, it was given by Guru Rinpoche himself. The hidden treasure of this text was discovered by Chogyur Lingpa.

Under this empowerment, there are three different types of empowerment – outer, inner and secret. Today, I am giving you outer empowerment under the Kiriya Tantra and Charya Tantra. It is best not to consume meat and alcohol as you need to be clean to receive this empowerment. Also, this empowerment is very good especially if you are practicing Green Tara puja. We have this Green Tara puja every week at the centre. Both are Chogyur Lingpa's treasure revealed. So it is very appropriate that the same practice method and treasure. In conjunction with the recitation of the Tara mantra. This past week, every body has been reciting the Tara mantra. It is partly for the accumulation of merits and dedication for my longevity. This is very touching and considerate. Generally, Tara mantra recitation is for the well-being of all sentient beings. So for various noble reasons for your recitation, there is a connection so that is why I am giving you this empowerment.

This empowerment does not involve many physical substances placement onto you. It is just one single vase. This single vase represents the body of Tara. The Speech empowerment is transmission of Tara mantra and 21 Homages to the Noble Tara. As for the Mind empowerment, I will give some instructions and you will mediate on that.

For the Speech empowerment, you need to recite 21 Homages to the Noble Tara. So please get the book ready with you.

Earlier I have prepared the main initiation myself. Preparation from your side is to symbolically bathe your body to eradicate gross defilements. I have also called for and completed the local deities protection. Later, you need to make mandala offering and supplication and request the master and from the shrine of the Tara to bestow the empowerment.

After that to lay the foundation of the empowerment, we need to take refuge and develop bodhicitta. Then in order to accumulate more merits, we make the 7 branch prayers. So these are the preparation part of the initiation.

So I will start with the preparation. Later during the main initiation, I will give a bit of explanation.

You must visualise in front of yourself Green Tara and the assembly of all the enlightened ones surrounding you. In front of oneself and all sentient beings, make the wish that I will take refuge in the Triple Gem until I attain enlightenment.

Next is the 7 branch prayers. They are the form of accumulation of merits. Without merits, one is unable to receive the initiation. The 7 branches are paying homage, making offerings, confessing, rejoicing, requesting to turn the wheel of dharma, requesting to live long and dedication of merits. So this will make you a perfect vessel for Vajrayana's empowerment.

Now the actual initiation starts with body empowerment. You need to visualise in front of you a mandala of Tara. In the mandala of this Tara, there is a precious vase containing the Tara and mantras in the form of nectar or the wisdom amrita. This vase is placed onto your head and nectar poured over your head, eradicating all defilements and ignorance and karma. That is the first body empowerment.

After eradication of defilements and karmic forces, instantly transform yourself into the form of Tara. She is emerald green in colour, very beautiful and smiling. Her right hand is in a giving posture placed her on right knee. Her left hand is holding the utpala flower. She is adorned with various ornaments and clothed in divine garments on both upper and lower parts of her body. There is blazing light emitting from her in all ten directions. So you should visualise as such when you receive body empowerment. That completes the body empowerment.

Next is the speech empowerment or Vidhya or knowledge. It comprises the mantra and 21 homages. Visualise the front mandala of Tara, her mouth radiates the mantra and the 21 homage in brilliant lapis lazuli like colour. A constant chain of syllables emit from Tara and it enters into your mouth and is absorbed into your heart. You thus receive the blessings of Tara. You repeat the mantra and the 21 homage with me. So this completes the speech empowerment.

The third empowerment is the mind empowerment. To receive this empowerment, you develop very strong devotion to the Tara mandala. The mandala starts to melt into the light and the light is absorbed into yourself. Eventually you also dissolve into the light that is absorbed into the space. The state of mind of Tara and state of mind of oneself is inseparable without any fabrication or making up or any elaboration. Just emptiness and clarity state of your mind and of Tara is primordially in the state of non-duality. Within that state of mind, you meditate for a while.

Thus, you have received the body, speech and mind of Tara. So you are allowed to meditate on the form of Tara. You are also allowed to recite the mantra and Tantra of 21 homage. You are also allowed to meditate on the essence of Tara, which is the non-conceptual state of Tara. From on onwards, you can be a great practitioner of Tara if you can practice every time.

So with this, the outer empowerment is completely received by you. Whatever commitment and practice that you wish to do, you should take up that kind of commitment. Basically commitment is something that you inspire to practice and sort of like make a wish to practice daily, monthly or whichever modes of practise that is comfortable to you. Preferably daily recitation of the mantra or 21 homages 1x, 3x, 7x

or 21x. Whatever is suitable to your timetable. If you can't recite, at least just think of Tara once a day. This will allow you to sustain the progress of your practice towards this Tara.

So the conclusion part of this initiation is taking commitment and offering of mandala. We are left with dedication of merits. So make the dedication through receiving the Tara initiation that you will fulfill your own purpose and the purposes of all sentient beings.

So now that we have ended, you can leave, I have to complete the conclusion part of this initiation. Thank you.