

Benefits of reciting the *Vajra Cutter Sutra*

The *Vajra Cutter Sutra* is unbelievable. It is one of the most profitable practices, because the root of all sufferings, yours and others, is the ignorance holding “I” as truly existent - even though it is empty of that; and the ignorance holding the aggregates as truly existent, even though they are empty of that. The only antidote to cut that, to get rid of that and through which to achieve liberation, the total cessation of the suffering causes - delusions and karma - is the wisdom realizing emptiness. This is the subject of the *Vajra Cutter Sutra*, emptiness. So, each time you read it, it leaves such a positive imprint. Without taking much time, without much difficulty, it is easy to actualize wisdom.

You also create a lot of merit, so it helps to actualize bodhichitta quickly, together with all the other realizations. That’s the business. That’s the deal with the *Vajra Cutter Sutra*. You create so much merit for whatever you wish. You help others and you achieve all your wishes easily. If you recite *Vajra Cutter Sutra*, many times, of course there is no worry for death at all. Good bye fear of death. Good bye fear of lower realms. Almost, you can say, “A *Vajra Cutter Sutra* a day, good bye lower realms,” like they say in the U.S. “An apple a day keeps the doctor away,” “Good bye doctor!” Also, you can say, “goodbye” to self-grasping that has cheated you, totally controlled you from beginningless rebirth, and made you suffer numberless times from beginningless rebirths - in the oceans of hell sufferings, the oceans of hungry ghost sufferings, the oceans of animal sufferings, the oceans of human being sufferings, the oceans of sura sufferings, the oceans of asura sufferings, the oceans of intermediate state beings sufferings, etc. Also, you know what an incredible source of collecting extensive merit reading it is. If, while you are reading it, while listening to or hearing the *Vajra Cutter Sutra*, or just hearing about it, if you continue with faith, just that, how much merit you collect is just mind blowing, amazing, incredible, wow! It makes you laugh.

By having heard the *Vajra Cutter Sutra*, if you don’t give up faith, merely with that, the merit that you collect is inconceivable, unbelievable, and unimaginable. It is far greater than, for example, giving your body in charity for one day to sentient beings in the morning – for how many times? – For the number of times equaling the sand grains of the River Ganga. This Ganga is not the river Ganga in India, it refers to the Pacific Ocean; and the sand grains are not what we usually think of. They are very tiny atoms, one of the seven types of subtle atoms. Then, again at noon you make charity of your body to sentient beings that many times. Then in the evening, again, you make charity of your body to sentient beings that many times, for the number of subtle atoms of sand grains in the Pacific Ocean. So, like that, every day for eons. It is simply unbelievable the merits of even for one day practicing that much charity to sentient beings, let alone three times a day, then on top of that for so many years, eons. That merit itself is unbelievable. Even giving just one body to sentient beings is unimaginable, unbelievable - just to be able to do that, and then the benefits are equally unimaginable, unbelievable.

Now here, even if you practiced charity like that each day for that many eons, it becomes a small amount of merit compared to hearing the *Vajra Cutter Sutra* and not giving up faith. That means if you keep it, read it, memorize it, study its meaning, then you collect

far, far greater merits than the previous one. Reading *Vajra Cutter Sutra* is an incredible source of unbelievably powerful purification of all previous negative karmas collected since beginningless rebirths - all those unbelievable heavy ones. This is in addition to the unbelievable, incredible merit you collect by reading it, or just by keeping it.

The most important thing is that each time we read it; it plants a seed, an imprint to realize emptiness. The more you read it, the more imprints it leaves on the mind. So it becomes easy to realize emptiness. It becomes quicker and quicker to realize emptiness in this life. If not in this life, then quickly in future lives. Then by developing this wisdom, you achieve the wisdom of great insight unified with shamatha. You can meditate on emptiness unified with shamatha and are able to derive rapturous ecstasy of the body and mind. Then through this, you are able to achieve the direct perception of emptiness that ceases the defilements and the disturbing thoughts; first, by ceasing the intellectual all obscuring thought, and then the simultaneously born one. That is how you achieve liberation, by ceasing that completely, including the imprint, the seed. Then, with bodhichitta the direct perception of wisdom ceases even the subtle defilements and you achieve omniscient mind. Then, you are able to do perfect work for sentient beings. You are able to bring all sentient beings to enlightenment. This is the goal of our life: to bring sentient beings to enlightenment. When that happens, when we are able to do that, our goal is achieved.

Advice for doing many recitations:

You can do some of your recitations in the form of retreat and other times, like when you are doing a job, then every day you can recite it one time, two times, three times, whatever. Then, again do some recitations in the form of retreat, for two days, three days, or seven days, a month, a few months, whatever. When you do it in the form of a retreat, do a half-hour or one hour lam-rim meditation and then spend the rest of the session reading the *Vajra Cutter Sutra*; say, for two hours. That is just one idea; the amount of time is up to you. It's not fixed. If you can combine it with lam-rim meditation, that is extremely good.

Colophon:

Benefits extracted from letters dictated by Lama Zopa Rinpoche at Buddha Amitabha Pure Land, April 2006. Scribed and edited by Kendall Magnussen.