

## **Preface**

*Homage to the teacher!  
Fortunate practitioners gathered here in Tingri, listen!*

*Just as worn-out clothes can never again be made as new,  
It's no use seeing a doctor once you're terminally ill;  
You'll have to go. We humans living on this earth  
Are like streams and rivers flowing toward the ocean -  
All living beings are heading for that single destination.*

*Now, like a small bird flying off from a treetop,  
I, too, will not be here much longer; soon I must move on.*

### **1**

*If you spend the present meaninglessly and leave with empty hands,  
People of Tingri, a human life in the future will be very hard to find.*

### **2**

*To apply yourselves with body, speech and mind to the sacred Teachings,  
People of Tingri, is the best thing that you can do.*

### **3**

*Give your very life, heart and soul to the Three Jewels [the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha],  
People of Tingri, and their blessings cannot but arise.*

### **4**

*Forget your goals for this life - concentrate instead on lives to come.  
People of Tingri, that is the highest goal.*

### **5**

*Families are as fleeting as a crowd on market day;  
People of Tingri, don't bicker or fight.*

### **6**

*Wealth and poverty, like a magic show, just seduce and deceive;  
People of Tingri, don't let the knot of avarice bind you.*

### **7**

*This body's just a bag containing various kinds of filth;  
People of Tingri, don't pamper it and spruce it up so.*

**8**

*Family and friends are no more real than a magic show;  
People of Tingri, in your fondness for them don't tie yourself down.*

**9**

*Country and land are like a nomad's pastures  
People of Tingri, don't cling sentimentally to them.*

**10**

*As parents, all beings in the six realms have cared for you;  
People of Tingri, don't relate to them with your ideas of "I" and "mine".*

**11**

*The day you were born, your death began approaching;  
People of Tingri, remember: there is never any time to spare.*

**12**

*Fundamentally there's no delusion, it's an ephemeral occurrence;  
People of Tingri, look at the nature of what it produces.*

**13**

*Without distraction apply yourselves to the sacred Dharma;  
People of Tingri, after death it will guide you on the path.*

**14**

*The truth of cause and effect ensures that actions yield their full result;  
People of Tingri, avoid all actions that are negative and evil.*

**15**

*Leave all your activities behind like a country in a dream;  
People of Tingri, just put non-action into practice.*

**16**

*The very thing you feel attached to, let go of it, whatever -  
People of Tingri, there isn't anything that you need.*

**17**

*Since you won't be staying in this world forever,  
People of Tingri, make your preparations for the journey now.*

**18**

*If you first finish what you have to do, you'll never get to Dharma;  
People of Tingri, while you're thinking about it, practice straight away.*

**19**

*Inside the forest, monkeys may be living happily at ease,  
People of Tingri - but at the edges forest fires are closing in all round.*

**20**

*Birth, sickness, ageing and death flow on, a river without ford or bridge;  
People of Tingri, have you prepared yourselves a boat?*

**21**

*In the narrow defiles of birth, death and the intermediate state  
Bandits await - the five poisonous emotions - sure to ambush you;  
People of Tingri, avail yourselves of the teacher as your escort.*

**22**

*Your never-failing source of refuge is the teacher;  
People of Tingri, carry him constantly on the crown of your head.*

**23**

*If your protection is the teacher, you'll reach wherever you aspire to go;  
People of Tingri, cultivate devotion as the fare you pay for the journey.*

**24**

*Those who get wealthy get miserly too;  
People of Tingri, give generously without being partial.*

**25**

*Whoever gets power acts sinfully, too;  
People of Tingri, abandon all desire for rank and power.*

**26**

*Those with rank and riches are never happy and at ease;  
People of Tingri, get ready to claw at your chest in anguish.*

**27**

*In the next world, there are neither family nor friends;  
People of Tingri, place your confidence in the Dharma.*

**28**

*If you wander in distraction, you'll waste the freedoms and advantages of human life;  
People of Tingri, make a resolute decision now.*

**29**

*While you're busy being distracted, the demon of Death will catch you;  
People of Tingri, practice from this very moment onwards.*

**30**

*When will the demon of Death appear? There is no easy way to tell;  
People of Tingri, right now be always on your guard.*

**31**

*The day you die, there's no one who'll protect you;  
People of Tingri, be ready to have yourselves alone to count on.*

**32**

*If you reflect on death, there's nothing you will need;  
People of Tingri, always keep your death in mind.*

**33**

*Like lengthening shadows as the sun sinks low,  
The demon of Death relentlessly draws nearer;  
People of Tingri, quickly! Get away from him!*

**34**

*The morning's ravishing flower will wither by nightfall;  
People of Tingri, don't put your hopes in your body.*

**35**

*Even if resembling, while alive, the children of the gods,  
Once dead they are more frightful than a demon horde;  
People of Tingri, you've been deceived by these illusory bodies.*

**36**

*Visitors to market day, their trading finished, on the morrow have dispersed;  
People of Tingri, your friends will part from you, be certain.*

**37**

*Since the scarecrow conjured up by magic is sure to tumble down;  
People of Tingri, act now according to the linking of effect with cause.*

**38**

*For sure, the vulture of your mind will one day fly away;  
People of Tingri, now is the time to soar up to the heights.*

**39**

*All beings of the six realms have cared for you as parents;  
People of Tingri, towards them cultivate your love and compassion.*

**40**

*Hate for enemies is samsara's hallucination, caused by actions;  
People of Tingri, transmute your hatred and your hostile mind.*

**41**

*Prostration and circumambulation purify obscuration of the body;  
People of Tingri, abandon all your worldly physical work.*

**42**

*Recitation and taking refuge purify obscuration of the speech;  
People of Tingri, abandon all your ordinary conversation.*

**43**

*Fervent devotion purifies habitual tendencies of the mind;  
People of Tingri, meditate on the teacher above your head.*

**44**

*Your flesh and bones took form together, but in the end are sure to separate;  
People of Tingri, do not believe that you will live forever.*

**45**

*Capture that most sublime of countries, the constant land of the natural state;  
People of Tingri, where there is no transition or change.*

**46**

*Enjoy that most sublime of riches, the treasure of the nature of mind;  
People of Tingri, which cannot ever be depleted.*

**47**

*Savor that most sublime of foods, the exquisite taste of meditation,  
People of Tingri, which abolishes the pangs of hunger.*

**48**

*Imbibe that most sublime of drinks, the ambrosia of mindfulness,  
People of Tingri, whose flow is never interrupted.*

**49**

*Rely upon that most sublime companion, primordial awareness wisdom,  
People of Tingri, from which you never can be parted.*

**50**

*Seek for that most sublime of progeny, the young child pure awareness,  
People of Tingri, for which there is no birth or death.*

**51**

*In a state of emptiness, whirl the spear of pure awareness;  
People of Tingri, the view is free of being caught by anything at all.*

**52**

*In a state without thoughts, without distraction, abandon the watcher;  
People of Tingri, the meditation is free of any torpor or excitement.*

**53**

*In a state of natural spontaneity, train in being free of any holding back;  
People of Tingri, in the action there is nothing to abandon or adopt.*

**54**

*The four bodies, indivisible, are complete in your mind;  
People of Tingri, the fruit is beyond all hope and doubt.*

**55**

*The root of both samsara and nirvana is to be found within your mind;  
People of Tingri, the mind is free of any true reality.*

**56**

*Desire and hate appear, but like birds in flight, should leave no trace behind;  
People of Tingri, in meditation be free of clinging to experiences.*

**57**

*The unborn absolute body is like the very heart of the sun -  
People of Tingri, there is no waxing or waning of its radiant clarity.*

**58**

*Thoughts come and go like a thief in an empty house -  
People of Tingri, in fact there is nothing to be gained or lost.*

**59**

*Sensations leave no imprints, like drawings made on water;  
People of Tingri, don't perpetuate deluded appearances.*

**60**

*Thoughts of attachment and aversion are like rainbows in the sky;  
People of Tingri, there is nothing in them to be grasped or apprehended.*

**61**

*Mind's movements dissolve by themselves, like clouds in the sky;  
People of Tingri, in the mind there are no reference points.*

**62**

*Without fixation, thoughts are freed by themselves, like the wind,  
People of Tingri, which never clings to any object.*

**63**

*Pure awareness is without fixation, like a rainbow in the sky;  
People of Tingri, experiences arise quite unimpededly.*

**64**

*Realization of the absolute nature is like the dream of a mute;  
People of Tingri, there are no words to express it.*

**65**

*Realization is like a youthful maiden's pleasure;  
People of Tingri, the joy and bliss cannot be described.*

**66**

*Clarity and emptiness united are like the moon reflecting in water;  
People of Tingri, there is nothing to be attached to and nothing to impede.*

**67**

*Appearances and emptiness inseparable are like the empty sky;  
People of Tingri, the mind is without either center or periphery.*

**68**

*The mind with no thought and no distraction is like the mirror of a beauty;  
People of Tingri, it is free of any theoretical tenets.*

**69**

*Awareness and emptiness inseparable are like reflections in a mirror;  
People of Tingri, nothing is born there and nothing ceases.*

**70**



*Bliss and emptiness inseparable are like the sun lighting up the snows;  
People of Tingri, there is nothing there to apprehend.*

**71**

*Deluded talk will fade without a trace, like echoes;  
People of Tingri, in sound there is nothing to be grasped.*

**72**

*Happiness and suffering, through a mechanism like the sounding of a lute's body and strings,  
People of Tingri, are produced when actions are combined with necessary conditions.*

**73**

*The natural freedom of samsara and nirvana is like a children's game;  
People of Tingri, have a mind without any aims.*

**74**

*Your notions of the outer world derive from the mind within;  
People of Tingri, let the solid ice be melted into liquid.*

**75**

*The mechanism of ignorance is like the gush of a meadow spring;  
People of Tingri, it cannot be halted by obstructing it.*

**76**

*The delusions of samsara and nirvana are like coming face to face with an enemy;  
People of Tingri, as your ally practice virtue.*

**77**

*The natural clarity of the five kayas [aspects of enlightenment] is like the expanse of a continent  
of gold;  
People of Tingri, there is no hope or doubt, attachment or aversion.*

**78**

*With its freedoms and advantages, human life is like a treasure island;  
People of Tingri, do not come back an empty-handed failure.*

**79**

*The practice of the Great Vehicle is like a wish-fulfilling gem;  
People of Tingri, however hard you search, it would be difficult to find again.*

**80**

*For this life, come what may, you'll have enough to eat and clothe yourself;  
People of Tingri, put everything you have into practicing the Dharma.*

**81**

*While you are young, practice hard and with austerities;  
People of Tingri, once you're old your constitution won't withstand it.*

**82**

*When emotions arise, bring antidotes to bear on them;  
People of Tingri, let free all concepts in their very nature.*

**83**

*Think from time to time of all the defects of samsara;  
People of Tingri, that will make your faith become much clearer.*

**84**

*Right now, develop diligence and stand your ground;  
People of Tingri, when you die it will guide you on the path.*

**85**

*If you're not free now, when will you ever get to be free?  
People of Tingri, your chance to eat comes only one time in a hundred.*

**86**

*Life is so ephemeral, like the dew on the grass;  
People of Tingri, don't yield to laziness and indifference.*

**87**

*From where you are now, should you lose your footing,  
People of Tingri, it will be hard to find a human life again.*

**88**

*The Buddha's teaching is like the sun shining through the clouds;  
People of Tingri, now is the one time that it is present.*

**89**

*You say such clever things to people, but don't apply them to yourself;  
People of Tingri, the faults within you are the ones to be exposed.*

**90**

*That faith succumbs to circumstance is only a short step away;  
People of Tingri, contemplate samsara's imperfections.*

**91**

*Frequenting evil friends is bound to make your own behavior evil;  
People of Tingri, abandon any friendships that are negative.*

**92**

*Frequenting virtuous friends is bound to make your own good qualities arise;  
People of Tingri, follow your spiritual teachers.*

**93**

*Deception and lies deceive not only others, but yourself as well;  
People of Tingri, as witness take your own conscience.*

**94**

*Delusion born from ignorance is the worst disaster-bearing demon;  
People of Tingri, hold fast to your vigilance and mindfulness.*

**95**

*If you don't hold on to the three or five poisons [desire, hatred, ignorance, jealousy, pride], the  
path is near;  
People of Tingri, generate powerful antidotes against them.*

**96**

*If your perseverance has no strength, you will not reach Buddhahood;  
People of Tingri, make sure that you don that Armor.*

**97**

*Habitual tendencies, being old acquaintances, keep on coming back;  
People of Tingri, don't go on following the past.*

**98**

*If your understanding and realization are weak, pray to your lord teacher;  
People of Tingri, and deep meditation will be born in you.*

**99**

*If you aspire to happiness in future, accept your present trials;  
People of Tingri - then Buddhahood is right here just beside you.*

**100**

*This old Indian master will not stay in Tingri, he will go away;  
People of Tingri, it is now that you must clarify your doubts.*

**101**

*I myself have practiced without distraction;  
People of Tingri, you too should follow this example.*

**Note:**

If you have enjoyed these excerpts or would like to read the detailed verse-by-verse commentary by Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, please purchase the complete book:

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