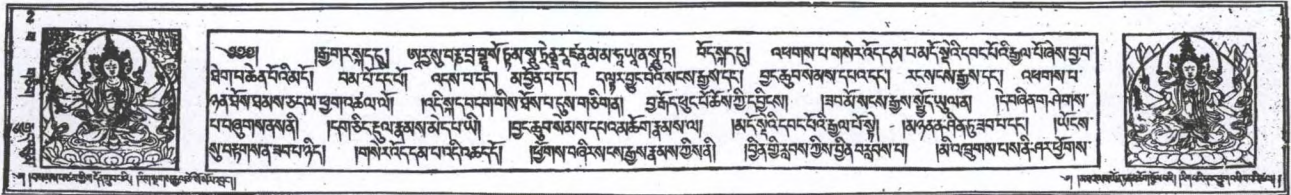


# Wheel-Turning Day World-Wide Recitation of the King of Glorious Sutras SUBLIME GOLDEN LIGHT

By Beth Simon



For the last two years, Lama Zopa Rinpoche has asked us all to recite the *Sutra of Golden Light*. He has said that where the *Golden Light Sutra* exists, Dharma exists: “Anyone who wants peace in the world should recite the *Golden Light Sutra*.”

With this motivation, and aware that the time beginning at Saka Dawa, commemorating the Buddha’s birth, enlightenment and parinirvana, and ending at **Chökhör Düchen, the day when the Buddha first turned the Wheel of Dharma**, was an opportunity to multiply merits immeasurably, we asked as many people as possible to participate in the Wheel-Turning Day World-Wide Recitation of this sublime sutra.

The result? Over 1,700 recitations of the *Sutra of Golden Light* have been offered and dedicated to the end of political and cultural violence, conflict, and oppression, to peace, to the Sangha world-wide, to the long and stable lives of our teachers, to removing obstacles to the fulfillment of their holy wishes and projects, and to the enlightenment of all sentient beings.

Recitations were reported from every continent, and from for than 40 nations, including Albania, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia, Bulgaria, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Panama, Poland, Portugal, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, United Kingdom, United States including Puerto Rico, and Vietnam.

Of those 1,700-plus recitations, a little more than half were generated in monastic institutions and Dharma centers and study groups, with people gathering together in one

place to recite. To achieve complete recitations, of course, some groups simply began at the beginning and went through to the end. Other groups used more creative methods. Some divided the sutra up in various ways. Langri Tangpa Centre [Australia], for instance, divided participants into four groups of seven people each. The program coordinator said, “The whole thing, complete with motivations, visualization, chai tea and dedications took 90 minutes – so very achievable for an evening class!” Jamyang Buddhist Centre [UK], which held a residential retreat during this period, had a loose-leaf copy of the sutra in the retreat gomba so retreatants could recite when they had a few minutes. They completed several recitations this way. At least two ongoing distance groups organized recitations by assigning chapters and reporting to a group leader through their yahoo group connection.

In terms of generating a great number of recitations, however, what became perhaps equally impressive was that half the total recitations were accomplished by individuals, many of whom sat down with generosity, patience, diligent enthusiasm and a focused mind, and each day recited one or two chapters.

During this Wheel-Turning Day World-Wide Recitation, there was an increase in the number of questions posted to the website. Some were personal. People asked whether reciting would help them find employment or affect the health of a loved one. Some wondered about the efficacy of reciting the sutra with the occurrence of conflict and violence in the world, and named Tibet, China, Myanmar/Burma, and Israel and Palestine, and the Balkans, in particular. Some asked about going directly to places experiencing conflict



and reciting there. There were also questions about the practice of the sutra itself, for instance, about reciting out loud versus reading silently, about the meaning of *dharmadhātu*, and about remembering past lives.

People reported a number of experiences they felt related to their practice of reciting the sutra. Some reported feeling very energized and happy after reciting the “Chapter on Confession”, and some reported that they are now using this as a part of their purification practice. Others were moved to offer incense. Others found a change in attitude toward their personal circumstances, and toward family or colleagues. Many, as in the sutra, found increased determination to work toward the goals of peace in the world and the development of renunciation, compassion and wisdom.

To download the *Sutra of Golden Light* in a number of languages, to read Rinpoche’s advice on motivation and benefits, to find the link to report your own recitations, questions and experiences, and to read about others’ experiences, go to [www.fpmt.org/golden\\_light\\_sutra/](http://www.fpmt.org/golden_light_sutra/) and join the practice of the *Sutra of Golden Light*.

Why? Of course, as the Buddha himself says in the sutra: “For beings without merit/ The store of their merit/ Will grow into a limitless, incalculable, inconceivable mass.” For us, however, at this time of conflict, violence, natural



Jamyang Buddhist Centre Leeds prepares for the recitation of the *Golden Light Sutra*. Ven. Mary Reavey, the center’s spiritual program coordinator, has also installed a copy on a music stand in the gumpa. People read a page, then turn it ready for the next person. In this way the sutra is always available when the center is open.

disaster, and so on, there is great need. Lama Zopa has asked everyone to recite this sutra which has a direct, explicit connection to this world system. ☸

*At Lama Zopa Rinpoche’s request, Beth Simon is currently translating the long version of the Sutra of Golden Light, and maintaining the web pages related to the sutra. She has a Ph.D. in South Asian Languages and Literatures from the University of Wisconsin, and is a professor of linguistics and creative writing at Indiana University-Purdue University.*

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Ani Jangsem, Manager

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