

**ADVICE FROM
KYABJE ZOPA
RINPOCHE ON
HOW TO MAKE
WATER BOWL
OFFERINGS AS
A PRELIMINARY
PRACTICE**

1. MOTIVATION FOR OFFERING WATER BOWLS

Normally one has seven bowls on the altar, but you can have any amount, less or more, even 100, or more; it is really up to what you can do. You could have even just one, a crystal bowl, let's say.

You would offer water in the bowls in front of a statue or image of any deity you like, with whom you feel a connection, such as Tara or Buddha.

WHETHER OUR ACTIONS ARE VIRTUOUS OR NONVIRTUOUS DEPENDS ON THE MOTIVATION

But first the motivation. Whether one's actions become virtue or nonvirtue depends on the motivation.

THE BEST MOTIVATION: BODHICITTA

Think: The purpose of my life is to free the numberless sentient beings – including worms, insects, animals, etc. – from the oceans of samsaric suffering and bring them to full enlightenment, by myself alone.

To do this I need to achieve full enlightenment, therefore I need to actualize the whole path, from correctly following the Virtuous Friend up to the unified state of Vajradhara.

To actualize that, I need all the conditions to collect merit, purify negative karma, and receive the blessings of the guru in my heart; then I can get realizations.

Therefore, I will offer water to the Guru, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, for sentient beings.

ACTIONS DONE WITH ATTACHMENT TO THIS LIFE ARE NOT VIRTUOUS

Making offerings because we are looking for happiness now in this life, simply attachment to this life's happiness, is actually a pure *nonvirtue*. Attachment to this life is pure *nonvirtue*, and any action done from that mind becomes *nonvirtue*; any action of one's body, speech and mind becomes *nonvirtue* when it is done with this motivation.

The motivation should not be stained by attachment to this life, clinging to this life.

When our motivation is free from this, when our mind is free from attachment to this life, the actions become pure virtue. Then every action of one's body, speech and mind becomes virtue, pure Dharma.

ACTIONS DONE WITH ATTACHMENT TO THE NEXT LIFE ARE NOT RENUNCIATION

Nor should actions be done with the motivation seeking future life happiness; they should not be stained by attachment to seeking future life happiness.

Even though with this motivation our actions are not stained by the attachment to this life, still the actions of one's body, speech and mind don't become the cause of liberation from oceans of *samsara*, that is, *nirvana*.

If our actions are done with this motivation, it is not renunciation of future lives' *samsara*.

ACTIONS DONE WITH RENUNCIATION OF SAMSARA ARE THE CAUSE OF LIBERATION

Actions that are unstained by, free from, the attachment clinging to next life happiness are actions done with renunciation of *samsara*. Actions of one's body, speech and mind done with this motivation become the cause of liberation, *nirvana*.

ACTIONS DONE WITH BODHICITTA ARE THE CAUSE OF ENLIGHTENMENT

Actions of one's body, speech that are done with a motivation unstained by self-cherishing thought, with bodhicitta – the thought of cherishing others who are numberless – all become the cause of enlightenment, the cessation of all one's obscurations and the completion of all the realizations.

Actions done with self-cherishing thought do not become the cause of enlightenment, full enlightenment, the great liberation, full enlightenment.

ACTIONS DONE WITH THE THOUGHT OF EMPTINESS ARE THE CAUSE OF CUTTING THE ROOT OF SAMSARA

Also, you should make the offerings with the mindfulness of the ultimate wisdom realizing emptiness. Meditating on emptiness is the only thing that directly eliminates the root of samsara, ignorance.

There are different ignorances. Here, the ignorance referred to is the ignorance of believing that the self, the I, totally exists from its own side; that there is an existent self, or existent nature.

In fact, the I is not there; you can look for it, from the tip of your hairs down to your toes, but it's not there, that real I is not there.

In reality, relating to the aggregates, the I exists in mere name; it is merely labelled. That's the reality. But the self is projected, it is decorated on top of the aggregates by the hallucinated mind. This ignorance causes your I to appear real.

OFFER THE WATER BOWLS WITH THE VIEW OF EMPTINESS

Making the offerings such as water bowls in this way – seeing them as empty – becomes the best Dharma; this actually becomes the antidote to samsara, the suffering realm. It becomes the antidote to ignorance, the root of samsara; this is the antidote that directly eradicates ignorance.

Think the real action of offering is not there. It's similar with the Buddha, Dharma Sangha: they are not there; they are not truly existent, not existent from their own side. What we think as real Buddha, Dharma and Sangha are not there.

With this mindfulness, this recognition – thinking that all of this is empty – you make the offerings.

MAKE THE OFFERINGS AS IF IN A DREAM

You can think that you are making the offerings as if you were in a dream; as if making the offerings is being done in a dream. But you recognize the dream as a dream; while you are dreaming you are making the offerings, and you recognize this as a dream.

So, nothing is real, nothing is existing from its own side.

2. HOW TO MAKE THE OFFERINGS

COVER YOUR MOUTH

In order to not pollute the water with impure, dirty breath, and to keep the bowls clean, you must cover your mouth with a white cloth, such as an offering scarf (*kata*). If you don't have a white scarf, you can use a face mask, this is also possible.

EMPTY THE BOWLS

Before setting up new offerings, you have to take down the old offerings. This water should be treated with great respect because it has been blessed and offered to all the buddhas. You should empty it in a clean place where people or animals don't step on it.

CLEAN THE BOWLS

Wipe the bowls with clean towels. It's best to use two towels: with one in one hand you hold the outside of the bowl, and with the second towel in the other hand you dry the inside of the bowl. You could use just one towel for wiping the inside of the bowl, but best is to use two towels.

It is important to use towels that don't leave fluff or hairs on the bowls.

HOW TO THINK WHEN YOU CLEAN THE BOWLS

When you dry the inside and outside of the bowl, clean well and at that time you can think you are cleaning away all your obscurations and all sentient beings' obscurations, all the negative karma.

Think that the towels are the whole path to enlightenment, the essence of method and wisdom.

STACK THE BOWLS

As you clean each bowl, pile them up one on top of the other, facing upwards. If you are not going to fill the bowls right away – if you can't offer water immediately or you don't have water right there – you should put a towel on top of the stack so that the top bowl is not facing up empty on the altar.

PURIFY THE BOWLS WITH INCENSE

Before you fill the bowls you should purify each bowl with incense while reciting OM AH HUM.

PREPARE THE BOWLS FOR THE OFFERING

With a clean jug filled with clean saffron water you pour some water into the top bowl of the stack.

As you pour the water, recite OM AH HUM. You can visualize these three syllables stacked above each bowl. White OM symbolizes the blessings of the Buddha's holy body. Red AH symbolizes the blessings of the Buddha's holy speech. Blue HUM symbolizes the blessings of the Buddha's holy mind.

Think the blessings of all the buddhas' holy body, speech, and mind absorb to these three syllables and they absorb into the water, blessing and transforming it.

Then, from the first bowl you pour most of the water into the second bowl, leaving a small amount in the first bowl.

Next, you place the first bowl on the altar.

Then, from the second bowl again you pour most of the water into the third bowl, leaving some in the second bowl.

Now you place the second bowl on the altar.

Like this, pouring most of the water into the next bowl and placing the preceding bowl on the altar with a small amount of water in it, so that none of them are ever empty.

DO NOT OFFER EMPTY BOWLS

The reason you don't put empty bowls on the altar at any time – in other words, offering bowls without anything inside – is because it causes poverty.

Poverty is referring to two things: outside poverty and inside poverty. Outer poverty refers to having no means of living and inner poverty refers to having no realizations.

In the same way that you first put a little water in the bowl before you put it on the altar, when you make mandala offerings you hold the mandala base with a little grain in your hand so that you're not offering it while it is empty; and you also put a little grain on the base.

Also, Kyabje Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche, who is one of my gurus, explained to me that if you put an empty bowl on the altar even for a moment, smell-eaters build a city inside the bowl.

PLACE THE BOWLS WITH THE WIDTH OF A RICE GRAIN BETWEEN THEM

You place each bowl on the altar one by one, lined up beautifully, about the width of a rice grain apart.

Make sure that they are not touching each other: this creates the cause for your mind to become dull.

Nor should they be too far away from each other, as this creates the karma to be separated from the gurus, to be distant from or to not meet the gurus.

PERFORM THE OFFERINGS BEAUTIFULLY

Now you pour the rest of the water respectfully and beautifully into each bowl, reciting OM AH HUM.

Performing the offerings beautifully has two meanings: the main one is to make pure offerings, which means not doing them with the five wrong livelihoods (see chapter 5, page 16); and the second meaning is for them to be beautiful on the outside.

You fill each one with the saffron water, starting from the right [from the perspective] of the holy objects.

You should not fill the bowls to the very top. Often water bowls from Nepal have a line around the top of the inside of the bowl that indicates where you fill the water up to. If you don't have a bowl like this, make sure you leave a little space below the rim of the bowl.

The stream of water in the beginning should be a small stream, in the middle a bigger stream, and the end again a small stream.

And you should pour without violence or any big noise. The pouring of the water should not make a lot of noise because it disturbs your mind, creating the cause for your mind to not be peaceful.

Making the water bowl offerings very softly and gently causes your mind to become subdued and gentle; it has that effect. If the water offering is not made in a soft and gentle way then I think it causes you to become very hardened, thick-skulled; hard, not a soft, not a subdued mind. By offering in a soft way your mind becomes more compassionate, more of a loving nature, not tough.

Also, offering with renunciation causes one to become more content.

Making offerings like this has all these benefits in particular; and then generally also it causes the good heart and, ultimately, bodhicitta.

RECITE THE *CLOUDS OF OFFERINGS* MANTRA

Next you can recite the *Clouds of Offerings* mantra.

OM NAMO BHAGAVATE VAJRA SARA PRAMARDANE /
TATHAGATAYA / ARHATE SAMYAKSAM BUDDHAYA /
TADYATHA / OM VAJRE VAJRE / MAHA VAJRE / MAHA TEJA
VAJRE / MAHA VIDYA VAJRE / MAHA BODHICHITTA VAJRE /
MAHA BODHI MÄNDÖ PASAM KRAMANA VAJRE / SARVA
KARMA AVARANA VISHO DHANA VAJRE SVAHA

As you recite this mantra you visualize the water bowl offerings as oceans of nectar and they are numberless. Then it appears this way to the Buddhas.

(See chapter 3, page 11 for the benefits of this mantra.)

RECITE *THE POWER OF TRUTH*

Then you can recite The Extensive Power of the Truth.

By the power of truth of the Three Rare Sublime Ones,
The blessings of all the buddhas and bodhisattvas,
The great wealth of the completed two collections,
And the sphere of phenomena being pure and
 inconceivable;
May these piles of clouds of offerings arising through
 transformation
By the bodhisattvas Arya Samantabhadra, Manjushri,
 and so forth –
Unimaginable and inexhaustible, equaling the sky –
Arise and, in the eyes of the buddhas and bodhisattvas of
 the ten directions, be received.

The benefit of reciting *The Power of Truth* when making offerings is that it causes the buddhas and bodhisattvas to actually receive as many offerings as you visualize. In other words, by reciting this prayer, if you visualize whatever offerings you are making have filled the whole sky, then it appears to the buddhas as that much.

That means no matter how poor you are, even if you can offer only a small bottle of water; or even if you can offer only your own bowl that you eat your food from or your own cup that you drink your tea from, as long as you clean them very well and then fill them up with water and visualize them as ocean of nectar offerings, by reciting the Power of Truth they become just as you visualized.

This extended version of the prayer elaborates upon the last line, which usually reads, “May all these offerings become just so.” The benefit [of reciting this extensive version of *The Power of Truth*] is that by describing the vast offerings equaling the sky it helps you visualize them better and then this is what the buddhas and bodhisattvas actually receive.

3. THE BENEFITS OF RECITING THE CLOUDS OF OFFERINGS MANTRA

THIS MANTRA NOT ONLY BLESSES BUT ALSO MULTIPLIES THE OFFERINGS

There are numberless buddhas and by reciting this mantra each buddha receives skies of offerings. That's why it's called the the *Clouds of Offerings* mantra.

This mantra has two functions: blessing and increasing. Therefore, it is not only for blessing the offerings; it also has the power to multiply them.

OM NAMO BHAGAVATE VAJRA SARA PRAMARDANE /
TATHAGATAYA / ARHATE SAMYAKSAM BUDDHAYA /
TADYATHA / OM VAJRE VAJRE / MAHA VAJRE / MAHA TEJA
VAJRE / MAHA VIDYA VAJRE / MAHA BODHICHITTA VAJRE /
MAHA BODHI MÄNDO PASAM KRAMANA VAJRE / SARVA
KARMA AVARANA VISHO DHANA VAJRE SVAHA

By reciting this mantra as you make the offerings, each water bowl you offer becomes [vast] like clouds gathered in the sky. When you go by plane the whole sky is covered by clouds, so it is like that: numberless offerings. Therefore, just one water bowl becomes numberless offerings.

If you offer even one stick of incense with that mantra it becomes numberless sticks of incense; if you offer one light with that mantra it becomes numberless light offerings.

So you can recite this mantra for any offering: flowers, food etc.

THE EIGHT BENEFITS OF RECITING *THE CLOUDS OF OFFERINGS* MANTRA

There are eight benefits of reciting this mantra explained in the Buddha's teachings, the *Kangyur*.

1. The minute you remember this mantra, you gain the benefit of having made offerings to all the buddhas abiding in the ten directions equaling the number of the atoms of the sand grains of the Pacific Ocean.

Can you imagine? It means that whether you offer just one stick of incense, one light offering, one fruit or one biscuit, you get the benefit of offering to all these buddhas.

Not just to as many buddhas as there are grains of sand in the Pacific Ocean, but as many buddhas as there are *atoms* in each these grains of sand! That means we gain unimaginable, inconceivable merit!

And by doing so, we create that many causes of enlightenment and, by the way, liberation from samsara, happiness of future lives, and so on.

2. You get the benefit of having prostrated to the holy feet of all those buddhas. You can see that the benefits of this mantra are beyond our imagination!

3. You receive the benefit of having made offering of flowers, incense, garlands of flowers, ornaments, ointments, Dharma robes, umbrellas, banners, flags, animals (these are offered to the protectors) sitting cloths (such as the *ding-wa* that the monastics sit on), divine dress, food, various ornaments and so forth to all the buddhas abiding in the ten directions.

4. You are freed from all negative karmas (in other words, reciting the mantra becomes great purification).

5. You gain all the merits.

6. You will see all the buddhas and bodhisattvas and they will "give you breath."

This means that due to all this merit and purification sooner or later you will be able to see all the buddhas and bodhisattvas and they will liberate you – "give breath" or

“free the breath”: it’s like when someone is suffocating because they can’t breathe so you give them breath. That is like giving them life or freedom, liberating them.

When we take the tantric vows it talks about “liberating those who are not yet liberated from their delusions,” “liberating those who are not yet liberated from the subtle defilements,” and “liberating those who are still suffering in samsara.”

Particularly those in the lower realms who are suffocated by all that suffering. To these beings who are experiencing the heaviest suffering of the lower realms, “I will give breath,” which means I will liberate them from the sufferings of the lower realm, the hell realms.

So “giving breath” means liberating or giving freedom.

7. You will be protected by *nagas, devas, nöjin* –

Nöjin is literally “harm-giver,” but in this context it doesn’t actually mean giving harm, but giving protection from harm.

For example, the Medicine Buddha has twelve great groups of nöjin in his entourage. Simply by making offerings every day to the Medicine Buddha you are protected by those twelve great groups of nöjin, and they are surrounded by seven hundred protectors who also protect you.

Also, Namthosé’s entourage has nöjin. There are many types of nöjin, maybe some give harm; but here they are protecting you from harm.

You will also be protected from smell-eaters (those who have died and been reborn in the intermediate state, whom we give food to in the *sur* – burnt offering – practice), *asuras, garudas, myemchi* (not clear what these are), *dorje chenpo* (maybe the name of a naga), *Vajrapani the Owner of the Secrecy* (Vajrapani’s

name), and the Four Guardians (who are visualized at the bottom of the *Lama Chöpa* merit field). They will always follow you perfectly, protect you and guide you. If others try to inflict harm, they will hide you from it.

8. When you die, your consciousness will transfer from this world to Amitabha Buddha's pure land, the Blissful Realm, where there is no suffering and where you can get enlightened.

You receive all these qualities and benefits just by remembering this mantra once, without any need to do retreat.

Sometimes you might wonder how it is possible that there could be such a mantra that can bring all these benefits. The reason is because Buddha has inconceivable qualities. Buddha is free from all the defilements, gross and subtle, and complete in all the qualities. Because of this, Buddha has inconceivable power and quality. Buddha can endow this mantra with power and dedicate it for us sentient beings to have an easy way to get extensive benefit and receive all the happiness. This is what we have to understand.

YOU CAN RECITE THE MANTRA BEFORE EATING

I often recite this mantra. I even try to recite it before eating, although it is not commonly recited as a food offering prayer. After the food is blessed using the highest yoga tantra blessing, I try to recite this mantra.

4. MEDITATE THAT YOU ARE OFFERING THE PUREST NECTAR TO THE GURU

In the view of us humans the offering is water; in the view of pretas, the hungry ghosts, it is pus and blood; and in the view of *devas* it is nectar.

However, in the view of Buddha it is the purest nectar. Because Buddha has totally purified all the gross and subtle obscurations, even the subtle negative imprints, and has completed all the realizations, for him everything appears the purest. The water appears as nectar in the nature of the greatest bliss non-dual with emptiness.

So think that what you are offering is what appears to the Buddha.

Then think that however many holy objects you have are all the manifestation of your root guru. One picture of the *Lama Chöpa* merit field, for instance, has so many holy beings in it – all the different lineage lamas, the deities of the four classes of tantra, so many bodhisattvas, arhats, dakas, dakinis and dharma protectors.

As you are pouring water in each bowl, think that you are offering to them as your guru, and that it generates infinite bliss non-dual with emptiness within them.

This is what you think when you fill up each bowl. This is the most important meditation. In this way you create not just merit but the highest merit. The merit you create by offering all the universes filled with jewels to Buddha, Dharma and Sangha is nothing compared with the merit you create by making offerings to the guru. You create the cause to achieve full enlightenment in the quickest way possible.

5. MAKE OFFERINGS BEAUTIFULLY

There are six preparations of practice, then there is the actual body of meditation, and then the completion, the dedication of merits to achieve enlightenment for sentient beings.

The second of the six preparations of practice is to offer without being crooked, to perform beautifully. This has two meanings: the first is to not offer with a crooked motivation, which is when making the offerings causes mistakes.

For example, a monk or nun living in the ordination of renunciation but trying to make the offerings through the five wrong livelihoods; or even a lay person doing that.

Or if you obtain the offerings from killing animals and things like that; or by cheating others by measurement, which means you cheat others with wrong measurements.

Or one makes the offering by harming or cheating sentient beings.

It is better to not make the offering than to offer in this way, as it is very negative.

The meaning of offering is *pūja* and *pūja* means to please all the victorious buddhas and bodhisattvas with the offerings. If the offerings come from negative causes, then how can the buddhas and bodhisattvas be pleased? There is no way.

However, if you have already done the offering, then you need to purify [for] yourself and others.

THE FIVE WRONG LIVELIHOODS

What are the five wrong livelihoods?

1. Flattery (“collecting from the mouth”). This means making offerings with the hope that the benefactor will give you something; you flatter or play with words and then the benefactor gives the material.

That is the first wrong livelihood. Kyabje Pabongka Dechen Nyingpo, the great enlightened Heruka yogi said: “Without such a motivation, with a straight mind, being skillful and talking to the benefactor and then the benefactor gives the material, then it doesn’t become wrong livelihood.”

I think what that means is if the motivation is not to cheat the benefactor, especially without self-cherishing thought.

2. Hinting (“begging by the way with desire”). This means receiving material offerings from the benefactor and then telling the benefactor, “I have the tea and the butter (for Tibetan tea) but I have less grain, I have a scarcity of grain and the grain you gave me in the past was extremely beneficial.”

So this is “begging by the way.” Begging for grain, for *tsampa* flour, “by the way.” It means trying to get something and not saying it directly.

Kyabje Dechen Pabongka said: “If without the motivation of desiring the offering you say directly, rather than indirectly, and then the benefactor gives you offerings, then it doesn’t become the second wrong livelihood of “begging by the way.”

3. Giving in order to receive (“seeking material things by giving material things”). Kyabje Dechen Pabongka said this means: “If you give something small to others in the hope of getting some much bigger material from them.”

For example, you give your benefactor your scarf or tea pot of tea (this is talking about Tibetan culture) but your main aim in your heart is to receive something huge in return.

Nowadays we do that a lot; we put a very good strong hook in, precisely to get something better. So this is wrong livelihood.

But without such a motivation, making an offering with a straight mind to the benefactor doesn’t become wrong livelihood.

4. Exerting pressure on others (“paying by receiving”). This refers to while others desire it, you beg precisely for that.

Or something you planned to offer to others, then you change what you are offering and give to yourself.

Or you tell the benefactor that this person or benefactor gave you food and it was so beneficial. You are trying to beg indirectly, trying to get something indirectly. This is “paying by receiving.”

But doing this without the motivation of desiring to receive material doesn’t become a wrong livelihood. Without that, and with a straight mind, expressing to the other person doesn’t become the wrong livelihood of “paying by receiving.”

5. Being on one’s best behavior (“acting like it is taught”). An example of this is acting at your own house, like you do something in front of others a certain way, like benefactors and so forth, and you pretend or show pure moral conduct, show a very subdued mind, thinking that others will give you some material because of it.

But without such a motivation, instead thinking that if I do a certain action a lay person will get upset or lose faith so I can’t do it, and then trying to be pure in conduct – this doesn’t become the wrong livelihood of “acting like it is taught.”

The sublime object of refuge precious guru Kyabje Pabongka Dechen Nyingpo mentioned: “Those of us who are living in ordination of renunciation, if we break the pratimoksha, bodhisattva, or tantra vows and we do business, we create the cause of offerings by doing business, then making offerings creates more shortcomings than benefits.

THE EIGHT WORLDLY DHARMAS

A crooked motivation for offering means it is done with attachment to this life; making offerings so that other people can see, so that they will praise me.

Or thinking that making this offering will cause me to have a long life, to not have disease: that means it is for the happiness of this life.

These motivations are from the eight worldly dharmas, which means the action is impure, non-virtuous, and creates the cause of rebirth in the lower realms, and so forth. And it doesn’t become holy dharma.

For example, in his early life Kadampa Geshe Bengyul was a very famous thief in the night time and robber in the day time. He would wear many weapons around his waist; he robbed forty sacks of grain, for example, and created so much negative karmas. Later he began to practice dharma.

One day in his hermitage he heard that his benefactor was coming to see him, so in the morning he cleaned his room and beautifully performed many nice offerings, setting up more than usual, thinking, "Today my benefactor is going to come."

Then he sat down on his bed and checked his motivation. He found that everything was done with a crooked motivation. He suddenly recognized that these beautifully performed offerings had been done for appearances, for the benefactor. He recognized that it was not become holy dharma, it was worldly dharma, pure non virtue.

Then he immediately got up and took the ashes from the fire place and sprinkled them all over the beautifully set up offerings. He made the altar totally dusty with ashes heaped up. He told himself: "Bhikshu, don't be false!"

That day in the upper place of Tingre in Tibet a great yogi, who had come from India, called Padmapa Sangay heard what Kadampa Geshe Bengyul had done and said: "Today among all the people who are making offerings in Tibet, the offering from Bengyul is the best. Why? Because he put dust and ashes in the mouth of the eight worldly dharmas, the attachment, he was able to do that."

He was extremely, extremely pleased. The admiration was not for the first beautiful performed offerings, the admiration was for the second one, putting dust on the offerings.

So Kadampa Geshe Bengyul had renounced the eight worldly dharmas, the attachment clinging to this life.

MAKE OFFERINGS WITH THE ULTIMATE GOOD HEART, BODHICITTA

When you make offerings it should not be for just oneself to achieve happiness of this life or next lives, not even liberation

from samsara, nirvana for oneself. It should be done as much as possible with the ultimate good heart – bodhicitta for all the sentient beings.

It is said that Buddha doesn't need beautifully performed offerings; that making beautifully performed offerings is for you. So do however you want; you just need to perform them as beautifully as you can.

Making beautifully performed offerings creates the cause to have all the holy signs and exemplifications of the holy body of a Buddha, to achieve that.

MAKE THE OFFERINGS YOURSELF

It is best is to make the offerings with your own hands. If you let your housekeepers or servants do the offerings, then you don't get the merit of having made the offerings with your own hands. When Lama Atisha was showing the aspect of old age, still, with his own shaking hands he made all the water offerings.

Lama Atisha said: "If I offer the food and eat it, then do you also feel full? Do you get the same benefit when I eat the food? So it is the same when someone else does the offerings for you.

6. THESE INSTRUCTIONS APPLY TO ALL OFFERINGS

This explanation is not only in regards to water bowl offerings; this is for any offering, all other offerings.

THE BENEFITS OF OTHER OFFERINGS

The benefit of making **flower offerings** is to have beautiful bodies while one is in samsara, attractive to others. Then one can benefit many sentient beings. Also in the future lives; as well as liberation and full enlightenment.

The benefits of making **incense offerings** is to have morality, an ethical life, a pure life, and to cause to achieve that in future lives.

The benefits of making **light offerings** is while in samsara to not be in darkness, to always have light. It also creates the cause for inner wisdom, dharma wisdom to develop.

It also creates the cause to have clairvoyance in order to benefit other sentient beings by knowing their past, present and future lives; and to develop the six clairvoyances.

Hindus can develop the five clairvoyance's but only Buddha can develop the six clairvoyances, by ceasing all the defilements. And also, of course, liberation and full enlightenment.

The benefit of offering **torma cake** is that in lay life you will have wealth, inner and outer wealth, and a long life.

The benefits of making **music offerings** is while in samsara to be extremely famous to millions of people in the whole world. For example, the famous singers.

Also to have a sweet voice, sweet chanting, sweet talk and to be able to attract many millions of people.

Then when one achieves enlightenment one will have all the qualities of Buddha's holy speech, the sixty holy tunes of Buddha, and so forth.

COLOPHON

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