

# The Songs of Milarepa - Session 4

## Song 1 - Sahle O's Offering and Request to Milarepa

E MA! Great Repa Yogi,  
Great siddha, now please kindly listen.  
When I look at my body that was born,  
I see it is impermanent like dew on grass  
And that makes this girl uneasy.

When I look at the friends who accompany me,  
I see they're impermanent, like the guests at a gathering.  
That too makes this girl uneasy.

When I look at wealth that's been amassed,  
I see it's impermanent, like the honey of a bee.  
That too makes this girl uneasy.

When I look at the land where I was born,  
I see it's like the prison of an evil king.  
That too makes this girl uneasy.

In the day, I investigate with intellect,  
And at night, without sleeping, I ponder and think.  
By the power of my previously gathered merit,  
This one time I've attained a human body.  
Months and years follow at my back;  
But only days and hours lead on in front.  
With every moment that passes, my death comes closer.  
Like a rotting tree trunk, my body's soon to collapse.  
My breath, like mist, will soon dissolve.

When I think of these things, I feel uneasy.  
With my mind in a tussle, I can never sleep.  
Lord Father, Great Jetsun, at your feet I supplicate:  
May my mind stay focused on the genuine dharma.  
Now, Lord, Great Jetsun, please be my refuge!  
With your kindness, please grant me the sublime dharma.

## **Song 2 - Milarepa's Song of Realisation to Test Sahle O's Resolve**

Glorious Chakravartin King, Nirmanakaya!  
I bow at the feet of Marpa, so kind.

Up in the wondrous palace, the divine garden  
Of the heavenly realm of Tushita  
Are wondrous divine flowers  
With sweet fragrance and luster.  
But common bees can never find them.  
Even if they find them, they cannot draw the nectar.

In Jambudvipa, to the south of Mount Meru,  
Is a bathing pool with the eight good qualities  
That cleanses all negativities, obscurations, and latent tendencies.  
Ordinary birds are not able to find it.  
Even if they find it, they will not stay.

To the north of Bodhgaya  
Are medicinal trees of sandalwood  
That clear away all bodily illness.  
But no sick man can ever find them.  
Even if they are found, they won't know how to use them.

In the north, in the land of snows  
At the border of Nepal and Tibet,  
There lies a protector of all miserable beings,  
The self-arisen image of Wati Sangpo.  
But unfortunate ones can never encounter it.  
Even if they encounter it, they won't have faith.

In this limitless ocean of samsara,  
Are the miserable beings lacking in confidence.  
They wander throughout the three lower realms.  
Though it's possible they attain the freedoms and resources,  
They cannot consistently accumulate merit.  
Even if they accumulate some, they are carried by delusion.

Though one gains a human birth with the freedoms and resources  
That is like a shining daytime star,  
Feeling comfort, they travel that path of comfort  
And don't enter the path of the genuine dharma.  
Even if they enter the gate of dharma,  
Those who correctly keep samaya are few.

By the kindness of the father Jetsun,  
All appearances are made of gold;  
I have no need for your little treasures.  
This song with five examples and their meaning, making six,  
I have sung for a faithful student.  
But your faith right now is merely passing,  
And it is difficult for it to become constant and unchanging.  
Therefore, young girl, it is best that you go.  
In the future, you can focus one-pointedly on dharma.  
Care for your spouse as though he were divine.  
Care for your children to whom you're karmically indebted.  
Restore the ruins of the fortress on high.  
Work vigorously in the fields and cultivate them fully.  
Care for your livestock just like your own child.  
Above, make offerings to the three jewels and the guru.  
Below, care with kindness for the suffering and poor.

In between, have respect for your parents-in-law.  
Be friendly with the neighbors in your own land,  
And make supplications to this old man.  
Aspire to meet the dharma in the future.  
I aspire that your life be auspicious and long.

### **Song 3 - Sahle O's Determination to Practice the Dharma**

I bow at the feet of the Jetsun who is so kind.  
Grant your blessings that my wishes may be fulfilled;  
Lord, Great Repa, please kindly listen.  
These words that I offer you with devotion,  
You'll know if they are sincere or not.

I have such great sadness and despair.  
And pondering over what can be done,  
I remember impermanence and death from deep within.  
Since I was born to my mother, up until now,  
I've seen many die, both old and young.  
Life is impermanent like a dewdrop on grass;  
Days and hours go by unnoticed.  
There is no place, anywhere,  
Where death will not come; this I understand.  
That I will die is completely certain,  
And once I die, there'll be no control over where I'm born.  
When I contemplate the sufferings of the lower realms,  
I'm terrified, thinking, "I could suffer like that."

Contemplating the other modes of samsara,  
I'll engage in the bad karma of getting married.  
When doing the work of samsara,  
You leave your kind parents behind;  
You are yoked, and then taken to an unkind man.  
It's a foundation laid out near the three lower realms,  
Where the tree of the higher realms and liberation is felled.

He carries away your parents' food and wealth,  
And meaninglessly, you work as his slave.  
This companion who jumps with you into samsara:  
First, he's a divine prince, with a sweet smile;  
In the middle, he's a demon, with an angry black face;  
In the end, he's a young bull, always ready to beat you.  
Thinking this, weariness has arisen within.  
Therefore, this girl will practice sublime dharma.  
For companions, I'll stay with vajra brothers and sisters.

Then, as for corporeal sons you give birth to:  
Very few are endowed with any merit.  
Though it's possible that a few do have good karma,  
Most are just after karmic debts to be repaid.

First, they plunder your body's beauty;  
In the middle, they plunder food from your mouth;  
In the end, they plunder wealth from your hands.  
Thinking this, weariness has arisen within.  
Therefore, this girl will practice sublime dharma.  
For a son, I'll care for the child of awareness.

As for temples, guesthouses, and so on,  
Very few were built with any real meaning.  
All of these prisons of samsara  
First bring suffering to your mind;  
In the middle, they torment your body;  
In the end, they send you to utter ruin.  
Thinking this, weariness has arisen within.  
Therefore this girl will practice sublime dharma  
And will build the castle of fearless meditation.

Besides the stream of virtue of the faithful -  
The forms and teachings of the Tathagata -  
All field and farm work is meaningless.  
First you fight over empty land;  
In the middle, you fight over getting water;  
In the end, you fight with other people.  
Thinking this, weariness has arisen within.  
Therefore this girl will practice sublime dharma;  
I'll tame the field of my savage mind-stream.

If you seize the mind with the bodhichitta intention,  
Then it will be possible for merit to come.  
If not, then through focusing on the gathering of wealth -  
Raising sheep and cattle - you'll have negative karma.  
First, mere covetousness will be thrown over by strong desire;  
In the middle, pride and jealousy grow;  
In the end, it will be a signal for enemies to come.  
Thinking this, weariness has arisen within.  
Therefore this girl will practice sublime dharma;  
With compassion I'll care for cattle, sheep, and the six classes of beings.

Not taking hold of your own faults,  
You will always see faults in others.  
How can you ever be harmonious with everyone?  
Even the Buddha, our omniscient teacher,  
Who is free of the stains of such flaws,  
Was seen to have a heap of faults

By unwholesome and non-virtuous ones.  
Thus, you'll never be harmonious with everyone  
And will never be able to please them.  
Thinking this, weariness has arisen within.  
Therefore this girl will practice sublime dharma;  
Now I'll look at the face of my own mind.

For you, an emanation of the Buddha,  
All appearances have dawned as gold.  
Even if they do not dawn in this way,  
There is no existence or nonexistence.  
Since I have abandoned attachment,  
I must offer my worldly, mundane piece of gold.

All the Victorious Ones have said,  
"Abandon those things that generate great attachment."  
All the buddhas, too, have said,  
"If you use illusion-like food and wealth  
Toward virtue, they will become meritorious."  
Thus I have heard with my ears.

On that account, I offer this to you,  
And having received this sign of my devotion,  
Please kindly teach the sublime dharma, I pray.