

Karmapa's speech at KIBI about the demise of the 14th Shamar Rinpoche

The Passing of His Holiness 14th Kunzig Shamar Rinpoche, Mipham Chokyi Lodro: A Spiritual Message for the Karma Kagyü Lineage

Friends

The Buddhist world has been cast into darkness.

Tibetan Buddhism has lost, in this life, one of its greatest torchbearers and masters, His Holiness Kunzig Shamar Rinpoche.

The Karma Kagyü tradition has lost a supreme leader, and one of our lineage holders. And I have lost my teacher, my personal spiritual father.

I have practised the dharma all of my life, learned about what death means, and how we can use that understanding to do more in life.

However, the actual experience of losing Shamar Rinpoche, has affected me personally. I need - we all need - time to grieve, to focus on our practice, and to move on together in peace.

There is great wisdom and compassion in the Buddha dharma. The 49 days of mourning is just one example of this.

It is natural and understandable that everyone is deeply affected by the passing of Shamar Rinpoche. There is a lot of emotion. Many will be asking 'What now?' 'What next?' and have fear for the future. I am speaking to you today to say that there is no need to fear for the future.

In Shamar Rinpoche's final teaching he said 'You don't need to be afraid of death if you know how to practice in death.' And so it is in life.

As long as we focus on our practice, stay true to our core, our Inner Wealth, our innate values of compassion and wisdom, there is no need to be afraid.

For there is a great teaching in Shamar Rinpoche's passing. The teaching of impermanence. The lesson that all beings, even the Buddha himself, must pass.

Friends, it is very important that as practitioners we are not led by emotion. The 49 days is a time for grieving, for practice, for processing what has happened. This must be the focus for all of us - including for myself. During this time - and beyond - we must guard against thoughts, words and actions that are led by emotion, cause any harm, or lead to any unnecessary karma.

Therefore, this is a time for wisdom, a time for responsibility.

Right now, our focus must be on practice. On mourning the loss in this life of our great teacher. To learn from his wisdom and compassion, to cool our emotions, and move on together in peace.

On the 31st of July, Shamar Rinpoche's body will be cremated in Kathmandu. As Karmapa, I have the duty and honour to preside over the ceremony, along with many great masters of our time. We anticipate that there will be tens of thousands of practitioners in Nepal, and many more of you around the world who would like to be present, but are unable to do so. For you, I would like to assure you that, by focusing on your practice, staying true to yourselves, this will have great great benefit. In this way, by meditating together on the life, teachings and swift return of Shamar Rinpoche, we will all be connected, in ways that transcend boundaries of space and time.

As a superior Bodhisattva, Shamar Rinpoche will be reborn due to the power of his compassion for all beings, and his prayers to benefit others.

May we all pray and meditate together for the benefit of all beings, bound together by loving kindness and compassion.

- Then, His Holiness recited a short passage in Tibetan from the text 'Calling The Teacher From Afar' -

To watch this address by His Holiness, please click here: <https://www.facebook.com/17th.Karmapa>.