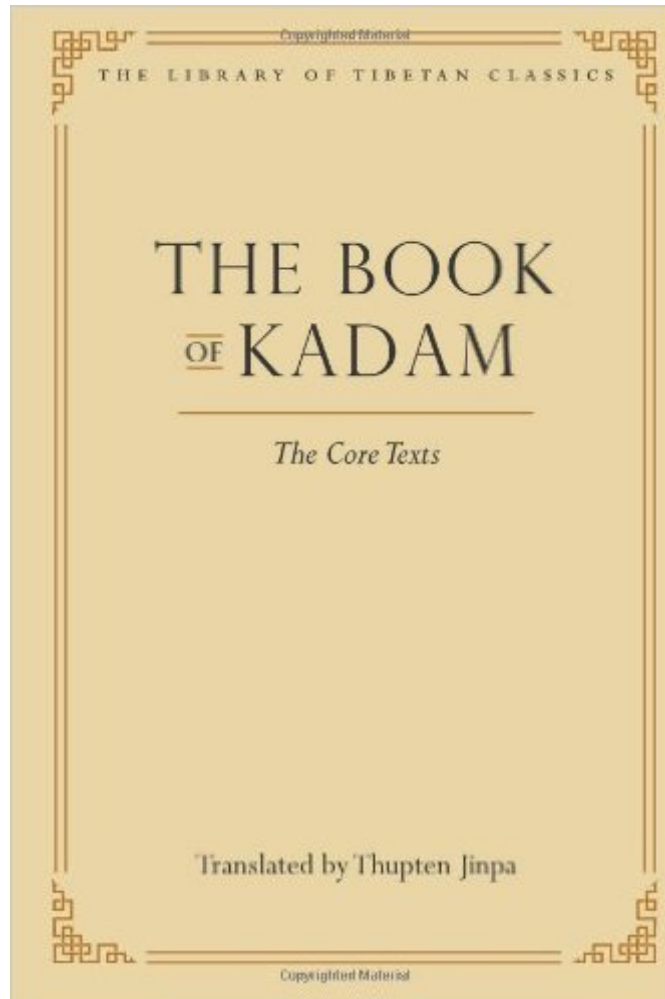


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The Book Of Kadam: The Core Texts (Library Of Tibetan Classics)



Synopsis

The Kadam school of Tibetan Buddhism emerged in the eleventh century from the teachings of the Indian master Atisa and his principal Tibetan student, Dromtonpa. Although it no longer exists as an independent school, Kadam's teachings were incorporated into the four major schools of Tibetan Buddhism and are still prized today for their unique practical application of the bodhisattva's altruistic ideal in everyday life. One of the most cherished teachings stemming from Atisa and Dromtonpa is the collection of esoteric oral transmissions enshrined in The Book of Kadam. This volume includes the core texts of the Book of Kadam, notably the twenty-three-chapter dialogue between Atisa and Dromtonpa that is woven around Atisa's Bodhisattva's Jewel Garland, as well as complementary texts that illuminate the history and practices of the Kadam tradition.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a book to treasure. I have not read all of it, but I have tried to meditate on what I have read. The Kadampa school is associated with the Lam Rim texts (The Graded or Gradual Path). This book provides the back story for that. Publicly push the scriptures, we are advised, and privately pursue the secret mantra path. Nothing in tantra, Atisha says, is not found in the collections of scripture. The four deities of Kadam are Buddha, Avalokita, Tara & Acala. The last is not known to me but seems to be an analogue to Akshobya in the form of a protector. The other chief teaching is the tripitaka (three collections of scripture - Vinaya or Monastic Discipline, Sutra, and Abhidharma or

philosophical view). This is pretty basic stuff and then it is not. A poem by Atisha is the root text and the largest part of the work is a series of dialogs between Atisha and his main disciple Drom commenting on the root text, passage by passage. The last portion of the book is a collection of teachings by various hands. The first two lines of the body of the poem tell us to discard lingering doubts and to practice with dedication. I could spend a few years practicing just that teaching. Doing so would be a great benefit to me. In chapter 15 Atisha teaches exchanging self and other, the basic Mind Training practice. That's another teaching to follow throughout life. I found one typo which was surprising in a book this well produced. This is a book to treasure if you practice Tibetan Buddhist meditation.

Excellent Dharma beautifully translated, introduced and annotated. Thupten Jinpa consistently impresses me in his tireless work bringing Tibetan Buddhism to life in English. The Q&A "conversational" format of the Book proper lends a personal touch that often delights as well as instructs and inspires. Where else could one read "That was a joke Drom" being spoken by Atisha? Jinpa captures the flavor and tone of the exchange superbly, and provides the cultural, geographic and "religious" background to help one understand the various "inside" references throughout. The humanity and compassion of the speakers as well as the message itself comes through loud and clear. It's not an introductory text but if you know who Atisha is, and have some idea about the Tibetan Buddhist tenets and practices, then this is one book you should not miss.

By collecting, translating and editing the key works of Tibetan culture and religion into a comprehensive library accessible to the general public, this series is a genuine gift to humanity and world civilization. This particular volume, along with the previous volume "Mind Training," will be especially accessible and valuable to students of Buddhism or those interested in learning more about Tibetan Buddhism. This particular book chronicles the exchanges between Lord Atisha, who was one of the key Indian masters to bring Buddhism to Tibet (in the second wave) and revive Buddhist practice there, and his chief disciple, the layman Dromtonpa (said to be an earlier incarnation of the Dalai Lamas). Geshe Thupten Jinpa, who edited and translated this work, and is the editor in chief of the series, told me he considers the works of the Kadam masters (as collected in this volume) to be some of the most direct, practical, and helpful Buddhist teachings. This is a great text that will surely be valuable to both newcomers and experienced students alike. I am so pleased that it is now available, and cannot recommend it highly enough.

Over a thousand years ago, on the highland desert of Tibet, the Land of Snows, Lord Atisha and his spiritual Son, Dromtonpa, sat and discussed the Dharma for posterity. These versified conversations were somehow recorded and passed down through generations of realized Masters to us... The book is basically an extended discussion of a sort poem called "The Jewel Ornament of the Bodhisattvas" by Lord Atisha, with approximately one chapter per verse. The book also contains a succinct description of a practice of Highest Yoga Tantra called the 16 Drops. The Jewel Ornament and the 16 Drops Initiation form the core and quintessential heart of Tantric Buddhism in our age. The book is literally an almost complete transmission of what until recently was Top Secret step-by-step instructions on how to become a Bodhisattva and how to become the Buddha. This being the case, the book must be read as the prophetic and visionary text that it is: open up the wheel that lies at our inner-most heart and come inside the Rainbow Tent of the Dharma!

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