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Lecture 1

GREETING STUDENTS

So first I want to say good morning to everybody. I must apologize that I was unable to come earlier, because there were some difficulties, some karma experienced the night I came to Bombay from Nasik. Nasik is a big city which is few hours from Bombay, Nasik. Last year, a policeman who is Buddhist, an Indian Buddhist man, invited to come to his place, when I was at Root Institute, one of the FPMT centers. It's not the place where we aim to build the five-hundred foot, fifty-story Maitreya Buddha statue, not that one. There's another center which was started much earlier. I didn't have enough time to go at that time, but he's very dedicated, very devoted, a very dedicated person. I wasn't sure what help he needed—I thought maybe a school or something, maybe he needed some financial help—I wasn't sure what exactly. I thought it might be very simple, I didn't know that he had a big project.

So, I went to this city, Nasik, around twelve o'clock. He had built a temple already, with the Buddha Shakyamuni statue inside, I think maybe at least three stories. He showed me that in the middle of the night, and then, the next day, even at that place there's a huge mountain, a huge mountain, rocks, in the inside there's a cave, maybe two thousand years ago. Inside the rock—not this size, but smaller—people carved statues. That's what I saw there, there are quite a few statues of Maitreya Buddha, the future coming Buddha, so I think there might be some Mahayana teaching be spread in that area, probably during Nagarjuna's time. Maybe it happened then. There's statue of Maitreya Buddha in which the aspect is descending, showing that Maitreya Buddha will descend from Tushita to this world, after Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's teachings have stopped. There is a very beautiful statue, and the two bodhisattvas, which come in our meditation, in the initiation, so it is there.

There are many of the statues, I think either of the enlightened Maitreya Buddha—seated on the throne, hands like this, but there's no stupa there—and I think maybe Buddha Vairochana. There are many statues like that and this was really amazing.

Then in the hall, there are many caves. At that time the monks retreated in those caves, inside the hall. So, there are the caves and the statues and it's dark. The people don't see the statues because there's no light, it's all dark, unless they come with a torch, or unless they come with their inner light, they come with their inner light. [Rinpoche laughs]

There's a letter written by King Ashoka, who happened after the time period. There was writing by him outside the cave. I think there were many caves but I didn't have time to go to see all the caves. It's very interesting. In those time people had this unbelievable energy, to make a huge hole inside the rock, carved. It's amazing, the power of mind.

There is not so much of this now. There's Ajanta, near Bombay, a few hours from Bombay. I think it's maybe four hours from Nasik, this city.

We visited the caves and we did a puja there, because it was special day. We did commitments, vows, to offer tsog. It was the tenth so we did commitment from Mother

Tantra initiations, having received that, there's commitment to do that. We went to see the cave in the afternoon. It got late, and somehow we didn't make it in the morning.

He had a huge piece of land, drove quite a few hours and I think we arrived there, I'm not sure, eleven o'clock or ten thirty, something around then, anyway. He said there were three or four hundred people waiting. That's what he said in the afternoon, when we were doing puja. Anyway, [Rinpoche laughs] some people came to bless the land or do prayers, puja, meditation.

He brought a Bodhi tree, maybe from Bodhgaya where the Buddha meditated and achieved enlightenment. I think he got a Bodhi tree there. He asked me to plant it, so we did prayers, we did many prayers for that place to be beneficial for sentient beings, and to develop compassion, wisdom, and in particular to meet Lama Tsongkhapa's teachings and for them to spread. After planting the Bodhi tree, we prayed for the people there to be able to actualize bodhicitta and to cause bodhicitta to be actualized in the hearts of everybody, in the hearts of all sentient beings, and particular the sentient beings who are in this world, to generate bodhicitta, the ultimate good heart, letting go of the I, cherishing others. Letting go of the I, from where all problems come, all suffering comes, and cherishing others, from whom we receive all our happiness, all the past, present and future happiness.

We think the money is so important. That's why we cherish money, because we know the benefits, what we can do with money. We can buy chocolate or we can buy ice cream or how to say, I forgot—hot dogs! [Rinpoche laughs] We get to get hot dogs. We know very well what the benefits of money are, so I think that's why we cherish the money.

It's the same with gold or diamonds. We cherish them so much, because we know what we can get from them is expensive. Of course that is nothing compared to how precious one sentient being is, whether it's an insect, whether it's a mosquito or one person. One sentient being, how precious it is, how kind it is to us, how precious it is to us in our life is inexpressible. It is kinder than the Buddha, kinder than the Dharma, kinder than the Sangha.

Because the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha come from sentient beings. The Buddha, Dharma and Sangha who liberate us from the oceans of samsaric sufferings. It's probably easier to understand what samsara is. Even though it's a Sanskrit term, the cycle of existence, circling in the oceans of samsaric suffering, the oceans of sufferings of human beings, problems, and then suras, asuras, those sentient beings, and hell beings, hungry ghosts, animals, those oceans of each realm, the oceans of sufferings of each realm. We can get liberated from all this and achieve ultimate liberation, everlasting happiness, and not only that, we can also achieve full enlightenment, the cessation of all the mistakes of mind, the completion of all the realizations, by taking refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, but then Buddha, Dharma and Sangha came from sentient beings.

DHARMA IS THE CURE TO OUR BEGINNINGLESS DELUSIONS

Since I've mentioned this, it's very important. There are so many ways to meditate on the kindness of other sentient beings, but the deepest one on the kindness of others is how others are so precious, sentient beings are so precious, by seeing how all our past happiness,

our happiness from beginningless rebirths comes from them. Not just this one, not just a few lifetimes, but numberless. The continuity of the mind has no beginning, the continuity of the mind has no beginning. So, it's good to analyze if there was beginning, what would happen. That's a very important analysis, what would happen, what mistakes would happen.

It's contradictory to what the life is, to what we experience, it's contradictory to that. If the previous continuity of consciousness, the continuity of this present life's consciousness, the continuity of that is from past life. Before it took place on the fertilized egg and was conceived, there's a continuity of the consciousness. There's a continuity of that consciousness that was conceived in the fertilized egg. The consciousness existed before taking the birth, before conception. So, there was a past life.

Therefore, the continuity of consciousness or continuity of mind doesn't have a beginning, it's beginningless.

Similarly, the continuity of the delusions is beginningless. It's the same thing. It is very important. If there was a beginning of delusions, what would happen? What mistakes would arise? How would this be contradictory to experience, to reality.

What I'm saying, there's happiness we have experienced in past lives, from beginningless rebirths, the happiness is experienced from beginningless rebirths, the present happiness and all the future happiness, the happiness of future lives, while we are in samsara, in cyclic existence, all those temporary pleasures, are all from the kindness of sentient beings.

Then, when we are *totally* liberated from the oceans of samsaric suffering, by ceasing completely the cause of the suffering, karma and delusion, the action, the karma, and delusions, and the cause of delusion, the negative imprint, the seed, which is carried on the mental continuum, when we completely cease that, by actualizing the remedy, the path, it's like the medicine that heals the sicknesses. In the four noble truths, true suffering, which is to be known; the cause of suffering, which is to be abandoned. Since we don't like suffering, what we have to do is abandon the cause of suffering, to actualize the cessation of the sufferings, so that means including the cause, karma and delusion.

To actualize that on our own mental continuum, to actualize that, for the success of that, we must meditate on the path, the true path. We need to actualize the true path. The true path, as the Buddha mentioned, the remedy, the true path, needs to be actualized.

In particular, the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness, which is the only one that directly ceases the defilements, the disturbing thought obscurations. There are two types of obscurations, the gross ones, the disturbing-thought obscurations, the main deep disturbing-thought obscurations, which function to obscure our mental continuum. Instead of awakening or enlightening, bringing peace, it obscures, it causes disturbances. By ceasing the cause completely, by actualizing the true path, okay.

Sorry, I've forgotten what I'm saying! [Rinpoche laughs] Like a cloud in the sky disappeared.

[Student says something]

Thank you very much. [Rinpoche laughs] Actualizing the path is by the kindness of sentient beings.

THERE IS NOWHERE IN SAMSA RA THAT IS NOT SUFFERING

So, anyway, I've forgotten. Oh, that's right. The happiness we received, we have experienced from beginningless rebirths and all the happiness now, in the present, and all the happiness, pleasure, we will experience in the future, while we are in samsara, as well as ultimate happiness, the total liberation from the oceans of samsaric suffering and the cause, karma and delusions. It's very important, the happiness to be achieved, what we should look for.

If we don't achieve that, if we don't look for that, if we don't attempt to achieve that, then all the samsaric happiness or all pleasures are only suffering. As you have gone through this meditation, explanation, this one is very important to realize, to meditate on, it's very important.

This is not particularly Buddhist. It is not special about Buddhism; this is also with Hindus, they can realize this through meditation, through analysis, they can realize desire realm pleasure. We are in the desire realm, having desires, sense objects as pleasure.

Even Hindus, through meditation, through analysis, can discover the desire realm is only in the nature of suffering and whatever they think is great happiness is only in the nature of suffering. By analyzing the nature of pleasure, we discover it is only suffering.

For ordinary people, those who don't do the analysis, who don't check the nature of that, with attachment, they believe this is real happiness. But it's not, when we analyze it we discover it's only in the nature of suffering.

The other realm, the form realm, has seventeen levels, all come within the four firm contemplations, the four levels. Even they have total renunciation, they have no interest at all in the desire realm, in our realm. The devas, suras, asuras, have many hundreds of thousands—millions of times—much greater sense pleasure than us. It is said that compared to all the human beings' wealth put together, even one ornament, or one earring is much more expensive than all the human beings' wealth put together. So, it's like that, they have far greater sense pleasure than human beings.

However, even those devas in the desire realm, their pleasure is only in the nature of suffering. To those devas who in the world of form, I guess it would seem like some country or some place where people are very poor, with a lot of contagious disease, very filthy, and a lot of disease. A place like that is very scary or very dirty, and we don't go want to be there even for one hour. I'm just using an example. Even the sentient beings, the devas in the world of form, they achieved shamatha, calm abiding, which has nine levels, they achieved that through meditation to be born there. They achieved those levels and so were born in the form realm.

There are six types of analysis, analyzing the desire realm, how it is totally in the nature of suffering. There are so many problems and even the pleasure is only in the nature of

suffering. They look at the form realm, and see there is more peace and happiness, and so they're born there.

There are four levels of firm contemplation, through six analyses. Maybe comprehension, maybe six types of comprehension, or six analyses. Anyway, they go through that.

So the first one, firm contemplation, when they reach that level, so they look at that as nature of suffering, they look at the second level as having more peace. Then, by going through these six analyses, they reach that level, and then again they use the six analyses, looking at the second level of firm contemplation, to see it too is in the nature of suffering. Then, the third level seems to have more peace and happiness.

Then they reach that level, and again they use the six analyses for the third one, seeing it's in the nature of suffering, and how the fourth one has more peace, and so then they reach that.

Then, after they reach the fourth one, again they use the six analyses, and they see that the formless realm is better than the fourth level of the form realm, so they get born in the formless realm, on the first level, limitless space. Then again they do the six analyses, they look at that nature of suffering, then see the second one, limitless consciousness, is better, with more peace. When they reach that, again they do six analyses, seeing limitless consciousness is in the nature of suffering and that the next level, nothingness, is better, with more peace. They reach that level, and then they look at the third level of the formless realm, nothingness, and through analysis, comparing to the tip of samsara, the fourth one, then nothingness look to be in the nature of suffering. The tip of samsara has more peace.

So, after they went through the six analyses, they reach the highest realm of samsara, the tip of samsara.

I'm explaining this according to the Hindu religion. They reach the highest realm of samsara, formless realm, and among the four levels they reach the fourth, the tip of samsara. There's nothing higher in samsara to compare it to, to realize that the tip of samsara is in the nature of suffering. There's no higher samsara realm to compare it to.

They've discovered this in all those previous levels. The first one, the desire realm is only in the nature of suffering—the pleasure there is only in the nature of suffering—and then the form realm is only in the nature of suffering, and then the other three levels in the formless realm—the three before the tip of samsara—are only the nature of suffering. They've discovered all these are only in the nature of suffering. Then there's no other higher samsara realm to compare, that shows the tip of samsara is only in the nature of suffering, to realize that.

So, they have always attachment. They've abandoned attachment to the pleasures of those other realms by discovering how they are all in the nature of suffering, but they are unable to renounce this tip of samsara. There's no antidote to that, to their attachment, there's no antidote.

In Buddhism, we meditate, we generate, we realize even *that* is only in the nature of suffering, without the great compassion towards sentient beings. Only with renunciation of

all of samsara, we enter in the Lesser Vehicle path, that is the door or gateway of the path to nirvana, the sorrowless state.

BODHICITTA AND RENUNCIATION

On the basis of that, if we then meditate, looking at the other sentient beings, how they are unbelievably suffering in samsara, when we think of others, how they are suffering in samsara, we are able to develop great compassion. By realizing how we have been experiencing the oceans of samsaric sufferings, realizing how our own samsara is only in the nature of suffering, then, after fully discovering that, when we look at the other sentient beings, they're numberless. Before it was just our own suffering, but now, when we look at others, numberless in each realm, and their suffering, it's most unbearable.

Like that, we are able to develop great compassion. By having actualized that, that leads to actualizing bodhicitta, the thought to liberate others from the oceans of samsaric suffering and bring them to full enlightenment, the peerless happiness, full enlightenment, the thought of working for others. Then, for the success of that, we ourselves need to be enlightened.

There's a principal consciousness which is special, extraordinary, a principal consciousness which is similar in five ways, with these two intentions. With that we can generate bodhicitta, on the basis of the root, the great compassion for every sentient being.

Then, of course, we enter the Mahayana path. When you actualize bodhicitta we enter the Mahayana path, the path to enlightenment, full enlightenment, great liberation. The liberation we achieved before was the liberation of the lower path, the Lesser Vehicle path.

So, anyway, what I'm saying here, Buddhism it explains how not only the desire realm, but the form realm and even the formless realm, and the tip of samsara, all this is only in the nature of suffering. This is explained.

By meditating, we discover that our mind is totally free from the attachment, grasping at those realms, whether they have peace or they have pleasure. That's the beginning, how we liberate ourselves by actualizing that renunciation, then we enter into the path, then remove the disturbing thought obscurations, the path of merit, the preparation path, right-seeing path, path of meditation, no-more learning, the five paths to achieve liberation.

We are totally able to cease the cause of suffering, karma and delusion, including the seed of delusion, the cause of delusion, the seed, the negative imprint, and we are able to achieve total liberation from samsara on this mental continuum, on our mental continuum.

The other thing is the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness. By achieving that, we're able to directly cease delusion. That's how we can be liberated from samsara. Not just the wisdom realizing emptiness but by developing that then you achieve the wisdom *directly perceiving* emptiness, that's the only one which *directly* ceases the defilements, disturbing thought obscuration, and the subtle defilements, the defilements which mainly obscure us from achieving the fully-knowing mind, the obscuration which mainly obscures the mind directly able to see all the past phenomena, all the present phenomena, and at the same time directly

seeing all the future phenomena. Our mind can see all the numberless past phenomena, at the same time, present, at the same time, all the future phenomena.

The only realization that can directly see the gross defilements—the disturbing-thought obscurations—and the subtle defilements is the wisdom directly seeing emptiness, the ultimate nature.

To remove the subtle defilements by the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness, it needs support. That happens by collecting inconceivable merit—inconceivable, inconceivable, inconceivable, *so* much merit, with the support of that. That can happen only by actualizing bodhicitta.

If we're unable to actualize bodhicitta, if it is not there, with that wisdom we can't cease the subtle defilements. By actualizing bodhicitta, we're able to collect inconceivable, inconceivable, inconceivable merit, and then engage in the bodhisattvas' holy deeds, the six paramitas: the paramita of charity, morality, patience, perseverance, concentration and wisdom. The, unbelievable, unbelievable merit we collect with bodhicitta, with all this support, we enter the Mahayana path, the path of merit, preparation path, then the Mahayana right-seeing path.

When we achieve the Mahayana right-seeing path, we become an exalted bodhisattva. At that time, we have abandoned the suffering of rebirth, the suffering of old age, and sicknesses and death, those sufferings. Those are completely abandoned. From the time we actualize the Mahayana third path, we never experience those sufferings; they are completely abandoned. The bodhisattva has a spiritual body, the body has changed, he doesn't have this ordinary body that has bones and flesh, blood, all these things, but a spiritual body.

So, with the support of bodhicitta and engaging in the six paramitas, with that unbelievable, unbelievable merit, all that power of merit, with wisdom directly perceiving emptiness, we are able to cease the subtle defilements. The path of wisdom is developed, possessed by the method, such as the great compassion, bodhicitta and so forth.

Then, we are able to complete merits of wisdom and the merits of virtue and achieve the two kayas, the dharmakaya and the rupakaya, the holy mind of a buddha and the holy body of a buddha. We are able to achieve that. That happens by ceasing the subtle defilements.

The foundation or the of the whole of Buddhism is the two truths, conventional truth and ultimate truth, the truth for the all obscuring mind and the truth for the wisdom realizing the ultimate nature—these are the two types of truth. They relate to the two paths of method and wisdom and the goal of those paths, what can be achieved, the rupakaya and the dharmakaya, the holy body and the holy mind of a buddha.

So, the base is the two truths, conventional and ultimate truth, the path is method and wisdom and the goal is the rupakaya and the dharmakaya. That is the whole entire substance of Buddhism, what it reveals, what we learn.

BECOMING ENLIGHTENED TO GUIDE EVERY SENTIENT BEING

So anyway, going back! [Rinpoche laughs] How sentient beings are kind, how all our happiness comes from every single sentient beings. I got a little bit sidetracked.

While we are in samsara all samsaric pleasures, all comforts, everything, even the small comfort in a dream, even the cool air passing through when we feel hot making us feel good, every single thing we have received from every sentient being. Not just from one sentient being, but from numberless hell beings, numberless hungry ghosts, numberless animals, numberless human beings, numberless suras, numberless asuras, numberless intermediate state beings, from everybody. From everybody who is here, gathered in this gompa, whatever pleasure we experience comes from everybody here.

Then we can expand to all the rest. When we achieve ultimate happiness, liberation, the cessation of suffering, that everlasting happiness is by the kindness of every single sentient being. We can start from here, or we can start from our family, from everybody here, then include all the rest, the numberless hell beings, hungry ghosts, animals, human beings, suras, asuras, intermediate state beings.

That means all the realizations, the five paths to achieve liberation, the foundation higher training of the morality, the higher training of concentration, the higher training of wisdom, great insight. That's the basis, the basic path to cause us to achieve liberation from all the karma and delusion and from the oceans of samsaric sufferings. When we achieve liberation it is by the kindness of every single sentient being, that means all the realizations we receive are by kindness of every single sentient being.

Then, full enlightenment, the great liberation we receive by kindness of numberless hell beings, numberless hungry ghosts, numberless animals, by depending on the kindness of every ant, every single ant, not only in this universe. There are numberless universes, scientifically mentioned, and also mentioned in Dharma, in the teachings, numberless universes, and so not only the ants in this universe, I don't mean this world—this is just one continent, this is not a universe, this is not a complete universe.

There are numberless universes, there are different continents, east, west, north, south, human continents, then deva realms, and each universe has that.

From every mosquito we receive this happiness, not only liberation from samsara, but full enlightenment. We receive this peerless happiness, cessation of all the mistakes of mind, gross, subtle mistakes of mind and completion of all the qualities. The cessation of all the mistakes of mind, the completion of all the qualities of the mind, full enlightenment, we receive by kindness of every single of those lower realm beings, every single mosquito, every single ant, every single cockroach, by kindness of every single elephant, tiger, kangaroo—Australian kangaroos and there are New Zealand birds, kiwis—so every single rat, from every single sentient being, every single animal, from every single human being.

We receive our enlightenment from everybody here, then everybody in Nepal, all the people we see in the shops, all the people we see in cars, buses, in airplanes, every person who is in the restaurant, we receive our enlightenment from them. Everybody we see walking in the

road, in the shops, everybody who is traveling, from everybody, from rich people, from poor people, from young people, old people, we receive our enlightenment from everybody.

That means, the whole path, the whole five Mahayana paths and the ten bhumis, including the tantric path, which means cause to achieve enlightenment, we receive from everybody, from every person, from every sentient being, from their kindness.

Then after we achieve enlightenment, we become perfectly qualified guide, with skies of qualities of the holy body, and holy speech and holy mind, all the qualities, with nothing missing, nothing more to learn. Then we are able to liberate numberless sentient beings who are in the hell realm, who are in the hungry ghost realm, who are in the animal realm, who are in the human realm, who are in the sura, asura realms, who are intermediate state beings. We are this one person, one living being, but after we've achieved enlightenment, then we're able to liberate numberless of sentient beings from each realm, numberless. We're able to liberate them from the oceans of samsaric suffering and bring them in full enlightenment. It's just amazing, all those unimaginable numbers, but that's what we can do, that's the benefit we can offer other sentient beings. Even one sentient being, with our omniscience, knowing that one sentient being, whether it's in the animal realm or the human realm, we reveal methods of the path that fit exactly to that sentient being. Even in one life, there are various methods that fit to that sentient being, to develop on the path.

A buddha can bring them from happiness to happiness, for many lifetimes, to meet Dharma and then leave an imprint, even a buddha revealing teachings with the various forms. For beings whose minds are impure, the buddha manifests as impure, having mistakes, showing mistakes, That is the only way sentient being who have an impure mind can see, with impure karma, only then can a buddha guide them. Even though from the buddha's side, he is fully enlightened, with no mistakes, but they can't see, so a buddha showing the aspect of having no mistakes can't be seen by them. Therefore, a buddha has to manifest as having mistakes to allow sentient beings with impure minds to see them.

For those who have pure minds, a buddha shows a pure form, then guides them that way. That reveals the methods buddhas use. There are various methods that fit to sentient beings exactly, to take them from life to life, life to life, from happiness to happiness, gradually developing the mind.

By actualizing the path, they are able to remove the defilements, the cause of suffering, then bring them to liberation, then full enlightenment, gradually like that, liberated from samsara, then gradually bring to full enlightenment.

This is what we do after we become a buddha. Not only do we have omniscience, complete wisdom, knowing everything directly: all the sentient beings, their minds, their wishes, their level of their intelligence, karma, all those details, not only that, we have the unbelievable method, even to guide one sentient being, to reveal the right method at the right time gradually bringing them to full enlightenment.

What I was saying before, since I mentioned this, this is our goal, this is our goal to be achieved.

Why we meditate, why we practice Dharma, why we do something extra in life, why we practice, why we renounce delusion, the immediate thing is to liberate ourselves from suffering, the immediate thinking is for our own ultimate happiness, not just temporary happiness but ultimate happiness, long term happiness, everlasting happiness. But the real goal, the real purpose of life, why we have taken this human body is to benefit others. This is the real purpose of life, real purpose of living, why we sleep, why we eat, why we spend money, why we make money. I mean, the whole thing, once you realize, is for this. This is the ultimate goal, to benefit numberless sentient beings: to benefit numberless hell beings, hungry ghosts, animals, human beings, suras, asuras, intermediate state beings, to free them from the oceans of samsaric suffering and bring them in full enlightenment, bring them in full enlightenment, this is it. Everything we do is for this success. That's what life is for. That is the very essence, the very, very essence, how we should live life, or what we should try. This is what we should live life, what we should do for is this one, to achieve this goal.

This is what we should have in our heart, this we should have in our heart, deep in your heart. If we have this in our heart, not only meditating, not only studying Dharma, not only praying, but even eating, walking, sitting, sleeping, doing our job—all these other things are done for that. What we have done in the past, even as a non-believer in the sense of karma, reincarnation, cause and effect, but we are compassionate, whatever action we do with our speech, body and mind, that has a result, every action has an effect, a result, happiness or suffering, depending on what motivation we did the act with, whether it was virtue or nonvirtue. Whether it's done with attachment or nonattachment, with an obscured, disturbing mind, with attachment, or with a positive, non-attached mind, a renounced mind, whether it is done with anger or with patience, with non-anger, or done with ignorance of karma, ignorance of Dharma. The highest, the most special one is whether it's done with the thought of cherishing others rather than with egotism, with the selfish mind.

The attitude makes a huge difference to the action, depending on whether the motivation is pure or impure. Our action changes, depending on that. With those positive thoughts, the action becomes virtuous, pure, and the result is happiness. Those other thoughts, those other wrong concepts that hold the object, the delusion which is a wrong view, which doesn't exist. This is against reality. This transforms the action into nonvirtue, and then the result is suffering, not only suffering in this life but we have to experience suffering beyond this life.

I'm lost again. What did I say? [Student brings Rinpoche up to date with the subject.]

Yeah, what I was saying, even non-believer, not believing in reincarnation, negative karma and the cause and effect of the action. Whatever action we do, it has an effect, a result, happiness or suffering, depending on the motivation, how we did the action, with what kind of mind. That's it, karma, cause and effect. So, we don't believe in reincarnation, in karma, we won't have great compassion for all sentient beings, because we can't understand all sentient beings, but, just compassion for sick animals or poor people, people who need help. What was I saying? I've forgotten the connection now. I remember, I mentioned that, but I don't know. Anyway, it doesn't matter.

A non-believer who has compassion for the people and animals with sickness or problems that they encounter in daily life, compassion arises, that is virtue. That's sincere help; there's no expectation to get something in return. I forgot the continuity. Anyway, it doesn't matter.

So now, the happiness, I'll finish that. That's right, so I said, I emphasized, the *very* important thing, the *very* essential thing in our life, what we should have in our heart is to benefit others, to live life with that, with thought to benefit others, living life to help, to benefit others. There is so much to explain, how to benefit to others.

THE GRADUAL PATH OF THE THREE CAPABLE BEINGS

The Kadampa eshes explained that the whole of Buddhism comes down to these two advices: to not harm others and benefit others. The whole of Buddhism comes down to these two advices.

The Buddha taught 84,000 teachings, and all that is included in the three baskets of the teachings. The lam-rim, the stages of the path to enlightenment comes in three: the graduated path of the lower capable beings, the graduated path of the middle capable being and the graduated path of the higher capable being. That includes the whole path to enlightenment, not just a whole path to liberation from samsara.

The gradual path of the lower capable being you have gone through already, the beginning of the path, the perfect human rebirth: its usefulness, how it is difficult to find again, then impermanence and death, and then the lower realms' sufferings, then refuge, protecting us from that, and then karma. All that, the graduated path of the lower capable being, is contained in the first advice, not to harm others.

Then, on top of that, the graduated path of the middle capable being, is meditating on all the general sufferings of samsara, the six types, the three types, the four types, the sufferings of the human realm and the deva realm, showing why we're circling in samsara, with the twelve dependent related limbs, the shortcomings of delusions, and then practicing the antidotes to all that, the three higher trainings. That's in the graduated path of the middle capable being, that's also included in the first advice: to not harm others.

The third one, the graduated path of the higher capable being, includes all the Mahayana teachings, including tantra, the whole, vast Mahayana teachings, the five paths, ten bhumis, including the tantric teachings, the quick path to achieve enlightenment in one lifetime, and even quicker than that to achieve enlightenment in a brief lifetime of degenerate times. All that is contained in the graduated path of the higher capable being is the second advice: to benefit others.

So, to not harm others, to abandon harm to others, and benefit others, in these two advices the entire Buddhadharma is there.

In the monasteries here, and in Sera, Ganden, Drepung—the great Gelug Lama Tsongkhapa teaching monasteries—from very young, monks and now nuns study those extensive philosophical subjects of the Buddhadharma, not only the root Buddha's teachings, but

many pandits' commentaries, their root teachings and commentaries. Lama Tsongkhapa and many great scholars, highly attained beings—so many enlightened beings in Tibet—wrote many commentaries, and the monks and nuns study all that and put it into practice, integrating it. They study all those extensive teachings, the five treatises of sutra, then tantra, then integrate into the lam-rim. They study extensively, but integrate everything into the stages of the path to enlightenment, this teaching, lam-rim. Putting it into practice is how you go to enlightenment.

The basic thing is this. If we live our life with this attitude, what I just explained now, to benefit everybody, without sectarianism or without thought of nationality, whether a sentient being looks ugly or beautiful or looks weird—everybody—we need to free everyone from the oceans of samsaric suffering and bring them to full enlightenment.

If we have this goal, this is the main purpose of our living, of everything we do. Then in the life, so many of the problems disappear; they're gone, they doesn't exist. Why? Because in the past, so many problem come from the selfish mind, our motivation, the way of thinking about our life, the root, the way we think is only cherishing the I, only cherishing this one being, and even that one being is ourselves, not some other being but this I.

THE I IS IMPOSSIBLE TO FIND

This I we believe in is not inside this body, not in the head, not in the hands, the fingers, not in the toes, not in the belly, not in the throat, not in the belly—well, *maybe* in the belly! [Group laughs]—not in the chest. We have done everything for this I, after we're born studying at kindergarten, at primary school, at high school, at college, at university, whatever, and then all the activity we do—eating, walking, sitting, sleeping, doing our job, whatever—*everything, everything* is done for this I, for this I, for this I, but not the labeled one, the I that is inside this body, but that we can't find when we look for it, this I we assume is inside this body, somewhere in the chest. Always when we talk, we point here, all the time. When we're happy or unhappy, we always point to the chest. I heard in Japan they point to the nose or something, but I didn't see this. But anyway, when they say I, they point to the nose, but I'm not sure.

But it's not there. If we look for it, we can't find, we can't find *at all*. The minute we look for it, we can't find, it's not there. That's proof. This is another, most important subject in life to discover.

If we meditate, looking for the I but can't find it, it's not there. But by that it doesn't mean the I doesn't exist. I exists, but the way the I exists is not that. *That* way is totally false.

The I exists. The I experiences happiness and suffering. The I creates cause of suffering, the I creates the cause of happiness. Every day I experience happiness and suffering. The I experience liberation, enlightenment, and hell. The I exists, the I can help others, the I can harm others. When somebody harms us, hurts us, we say, "Oh, he harmed me, he did something bad to *me, me* who is inside this body, who is living inside this body," but it's not there, *at all*, not even in name, it doesn't exist even in name there in this body.

So what I'm saying is, this is how it is in reality. From birth, in kindergarten, believing this, we have been living life like this, doing *everything* for this I that is inside this body, but if we look for it, if we analyze, our discovery is that it doesn't exist, it's not there.

But that doesn't mean the I doesn't exist. The I exists, okay? The I experiences suffering in samsara; the I can abandon suffering, it can be liberated from that, it can achieve liberation and enlightenment. We need to do meditations on this. This is very important, very important.

All the happiness we have experienced in the past, from beginningless rebirths to the present, as well as all the future happiness, then liberation from samsara and enlightenment, all this happiness we have received is by kindness of numberless hell beings, numberless hungry ghosts, numberless animals, human beings, suras, asuras, intermediate state beings. From everybody, from each single sentient being, we have received all our past, present and future happiness, up to enlightenment. Everything, everything comes from every person, every insect, every sentient being. Therefore what I'm saying, all these three times' happiness came from our good karma, our virtue. Our virtue is the action of the buddhas.

There are two actions of the buddhas: one is possessed by their own mind, and one is within the minds of us sentient beings. These are the two actions of the buddhas.

All these virtuous thoughts, all these virtuous actions, the buddhas' actions, basically speaking, came from the Dharma. The Dharma came from the Buddha, and the Buddha came from a bodhisattva. A bodhisattva came from bodhicitta, bodhicitta came from great compassion, and great compassion is generated by depending on the existence of suffering sentient beings. Without suffering sentient beings we cannot generate compassion, we cannot have realization of compassion. So, great compassion is generated by depending on the kindness of each and every single obscured suffering sentient being.

Therefore, all the collection of goodness, everything, all the past, present and future, we receive by kindness of each and every single sentient being, from everybody, completely. That is how they're the most kind and most precious ones in this life.

FOOD OFFERING AND DEDICATION

So, now the food offering.

We can visualize all the food in the kitchen as nectar, oceans of nectar, then think, "I'm going to offer this for myself to achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings."

Lama sang gye...

Due to all the three time merits collected by oneself, three time merits collected by others, that which exists but which is empty, may the I who exists but who is empty, achieve the Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's enlightenment which exists but which is empty, and lead all sentient beings who exist but who are empty, to that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's enlightenment which exists but which is empty, from its own side, empty from one's own

side—that's very important—empty from its own side, by myself alone, who exists but who is totally empty from its own side.

Okay, so thank you very much.

Lecture 2

THE BENEFITS OF THE BODHICITTA PRAYER

Maybe in this session we'll go through the bodhicitta prayer. The refuge and bodhicitta prayer is not just a prayer, it is a meditation. We must know this. It is meditation. Sometimes when you say a prayer, probably many young people might think it's like Christian prayers, like in church, something like that, just praying. Many young people who grew up in these past years, about twenty or thirty years ago, hate to pray, hate to do prayers, they are against praying in church or things like that. So many people are against all that.

However, here, it's not just a prayer, it's a meditation, it is a meditation. Every word has meaning, oceans of meaning, deep, very deep meaning, like limitless sky. Each word has very deep meaning. We need to meditate on each word to understand. If we doesn't understand, then, of course, it just becomes a prayer.

Because the meaning, what it talks about, what it contains, what it expresses, the meaning is totally different. It affects the mind, even if we don't understand the meaning, it leaves a positive imprint on the mental continuum, by reading, by thinking, by reciting. It leaves a positive imprint on the mind, like planting seeds, like planting beneficial seeds, like planting seed in the garden, in the field to get food. To survive in life, we plant seeds in the ground, in order to grow crops. Here, we're planting seeds in our mental continuum, like the field from which crops grow, where we plant seeds of those fruits, rice, whatever it is. We plant that, then it grows, so we and other people can enjoy life or survive.

Here, it's within the mind. This leaves a positive imprint, a positive seed, on our mental continuum, exactly like the external phenomenon where we plant a seed then it grows. When the conditions come together, one tiny seed like this brings a sprout and then it grows into a Bodhi tree. There's one name, I don't remember, there's a name of a tree in India. When you travel in India, when you go by train, in those hot countries, there's a tree with a huge trunk. [*Student*: Banyan tree.] It's huge, with thousands of branches that spread out, and cover five hundred horse carriages, underneath, under the shade of the branches. The seed is so small, but the tree is so big, unbelievable.

The inner plantation is even so much bigger than that. What we plant, the seed, the imprint on the mind, what comes out from that is far greater than an external see, the external projection. What comes from the internal seed is far greater, so much more than that.

So, anyway, without talking too much, in short, in the future, in our next lives, we will meet the Dharma again and be able to understand words, the meaning, what we heard before, in the past lives, much easier, so much easier. We will be able to understand it so much easier because we heard in a past life. Because of that having planted the seed, the imprint, it is so

much easier than to practice. Then, we can actualize realizations, cease those paths as I mentioned this morning, the defilements, the disturbing thought obscuration, and then, by entering the Mahayana path, by actualizing the Mahayana path, taking universal responsibility, ceasing even the subtle defilements.

When we enter the Lesser Vehicle path, the Hinayana path first, we complete that path and become an arhat, liberated from all the oceans of samsaric suffering and the causes and cause, the karma and delusion, then, later, when that karma ripens, we enter the Mahayana path and cease the subtle defilements, and then achieve enlightenment. That's one way. Or from the beginning we straight away enter in the Mahayana path, and remove both the delusions, disturbing thought obscurations and the subtle defilements, and achieve full enlightenment.

After we become enlightened, it doesn't stop there, as I mentioned this morning. We are then fully qualified to liberate numberless sentient beings from the oceans of samsaric sufferings and the cause of those sufferings, and not only that, to bring each and every single sentient being to full enlightenment. That's what needs to be achieved; that's what we should be looking to achieve.

This is the effect that happens to your mental continuum. I'm not saying just any prayer, but what we are going to recite, these teachings of the Buddha. I'm talking related to this. I'm not talking as if this is the benefit of any prayer.

It's because of the subject it contains, I think, because of that. Even the animals, if they are able to hear this meditation prayer which contains the path, as I mentioned before this morning, the whole entire Buddhism—the base: two truths; the path: method and wisdom; and the goal to be achieved: the rupakaya and dharmakaya, the holy body and holy mind of a buddha. That was revealed by the Omniscient One, who has not only realized omniscience, but also who has fully developed compassion, trained the mind in compassion towards every single sentient being, which includes us.

There's nothing more to develop: compassion and having perfect power to benefit us sentient beings, being able to reveal *any* method that fits to us exactly, at different times. Even this present, various methods are revealed to us, ultimately to guide, to bring us to liberation from samsara and full enlightenment. So, anyway, there are skies of qualities, not just omniscience, knowing directly all the past phenomena at the same time as all the present and all the future.

WE CAN'T HAVE COMPASSION AND HARM SOMEBODY AT THE SAME TIME

For us, while we are thinking about the nature of the ice cream, the conventional nature of ice cream and the ultimate nature of the ice cream, when we are thinking about this phenomenon, at the same time we cannot discover, we cannot think about pizza, whatever, pizza or steak or whatever. While we're thinking about ice cream, discovering the nature of ice cream, at the same time we can't discover another object, pizza or whatever, cake or something. We can't do it at the same time. We can't think about the nature of cake at the same time. Our capacity is unbelievably, unbelievably limited.

But for the Buddha, who has removed even the subtle defilements, the subtle dualistic view, there's no obstacles, so the holy mind became omniscient and can see all the past, present, and future phenomena directly, at the same time.

With all those inconceivable qualities of the holy body, holy speech and holy mind, then he has compassion for us, for each and every single sentient being, who believes or who doesn't believe in the Buddha's teachings, without depending on that, for every single sentient being, with fully developed compassion. He revealed his teachings, with all those qualities. Here I'm emphasizing one particular one, compassion, fully developed, towards every one of us sentient beings.

So, there's not one single danger that he might cheat us, mislead us. Compassion does not allow that. There can be possibility. I mean, if there's no compassion, maybe it's possible, if there's no compassion, if there's perfect power, and then omniscience.

But because of compassion, relating to us, when we feel compassion to somebody, to a person or an animal, at that time there's no thought to cheat that being. Compassion doesn't allow us to cheat person or that animal. Compassion is the label, the mental factor wishing that sentient being to be free from suffering and cause of suffering, and when compassion becomes stronger, we take responsibility on ourselves to free that sentient being from suffering, by ourselves. When compassion is stronger, we take responsibility on ourselves, so we don't have the thought to cheat that being, to harm them, only to benefit, to protect from suffering, from problems. We can understand by using ourselves as an example. When we feel compassion for somebody, during that time, the thought to cheat them doesn't arise. Compassion doesn't cheat, because that is the nature of compassion, to protect that being from suffering.

From that you can understand how the Buddha, who has fully developed compassion, has nothing more to develop, towards every one of us sentient beings. There's no misleading or deceiving at all; it's impossible. So that's one thing. That's the main reason so many beings, numberless beings, numberless beings who correctly followed the Buddha's instructions, the Buddha's teachings, put it into practice, learned, listened, reflected, meditated on the path, and put into practice, by doing that correctly, they have been able to actualize the path. What it's talking about is experience in that being's heart, that meditator's heart, the complete path to liberation and path to enlightenment.

THE INFALLIBLE PATH

The Buddha showed the twelve deeds and revealed the Dharma in India. He turned the Dharma wheel, first, second and third turnings of the Dharma wheel in those different places, Sarnath for first turning of the Dharma wheel, and for the middle one, near Bodhgaya, at Rajgir, then another one in *Yangpelchen*, I think, the last one.

When he revealed the tantric teachings revealed, there's a place where His Holiness gave us the Kalachakra initiation, where the Buddha gave Kalachakra initiation, that place, huh?

Amravati, Amravati, I'm not sure if it's in U.P. [Uttar Pradesh] I was asking what state. So anyway, it doesn't matter, so where he gave Kalachakra initiations.

He manifested into different deities, like Heruka, to give Heruka teachings and initiations on the top of Mt. Meru, by manifesting the mandala to special disciple, requested by Vajrapani. And then the Yamantaka initiation, this highest tantric deity's initiation, Yamantaka, the Buddha himself manifested in that place called Orgyen. I think it's either near Pakistan or it might be in Pakistan. There's a place called Orgyen. Maybe there are some holy objects left, it's an unbelievable long time ago, so I think it's kind of empty, but there are some lamas who can travel, who went there to see those places.

So, the Buddha himself manifested as different deities and gave teachings at different places, according to the history of the tantric teachings. It's not Hindu tantra; it came directly from the Buddha, manifesting into the deity, then granted it to special disciples.

I don't remember now the place where he gave Guhyasamaja, that place name I don't remember. He manifested into the deity and then gave it to a king—I don't remember the name of the king—and then the king practiced and achieved enlightenment in that life. And in the town where the king lived, everybody practiced and achieved enlightenment, so the whole town became empty. [Student speaks.] Yes, King Indrabodhi.

So many yogis from India, and so many from Tibet and Nepal as well as China, so many who correctly practiced, who followed the footsteps of the Buddha, they all achieved the path to liberation, the path to enlightenment, and achieved exactly the same qualities as the Buddha, the inexpressible, unimaginable qualities that Buddha achieved, those who were able to follow the footsteps of the Buddha correctly, the teachings of the Buddha. Numberless beings achieved this.

That is the proof that the path that the Buddha has shown, the teachings the Buddha taught, that this is reliable, this is correct. Also the pandits, the great scholars... Recently someone told me that pandits in India aren't so much respected. I heard that. Some people like "scholar" and some people like "pandit." For example, the Six Ornaments, the pandits, Nagarjuna, Asanga, Aryadeva and so forth, those pandits analyzed the Buddha's teachings, they did so much examination, and proved that it's the pure path. The yogis put all into practice, and numberless of them achieved full enlightenment, not only from India, but from different countries where the Buddhadharma spread, as well as the Mahayana teachings, and not just Mahayana Paramitayana teachings, but Mahayana Secret Mantra Vajrayana teachings, they spread. They happened like so many stars in the sky at nighttime. Numberless happened who achieved full enlightenment.

Not only the Buddha explained how he practiced, how he followed the path to enlightenment, but later all those followers of the Buddha, all those pandits, the yogis, so many of those as they completed the path, they explained how they practiced and how they achieved realizations. They explained it, they wrote it down. Then their disciples did the same thing. They correctly followed the path to enlightenment and completed their realizations, then they explained their experience, how they practiced, how they bore hardships, how they achieved realizations.

Like that, up to the present lineage lamas, who have actualized the stages of the path to enlightenment, how they practiced, how they bore hardships and achieved the attainments, up to the present lineage lamas. All this is proof. All this means that the Buddha's teachings are reliable. We can trust them. So many beings achieved enlightenment.

The philosophical text, the *Pramanavartika*, the text of logic and philosophy—maybe there's a second, and I think first—proves how the Buddha is reliable, how we can rely on the Buddha, how we can trust the Buddha. The reason his teaching is reliable is proved by many logical reasonings. However, the simple explanation is what I've just said. Even the present meditators who are correctly practicing, who understand, who listen, who receive the teachings from the guru, and reflect and meditate on the path, even now there are many meditators who are actualizing the path, even now, in Dharamsala, where His Holiness resides. There are many other places where there are meditators, even now, experimenting with the path. Those are the inner scientists.

By discovering our mind, our life, from there we have realizations, actualizing the path, so inner scientist is somebody who is experimenting, experiencing the path to enlightenment. By actualizing the path as the Buddha explained, by practicing it, and we are able to cease the suffering and the cause of suffering, the delusions, all the wrong concepts, negative thoughts, we are able to cease them. By ceasing anger we get liberated from all the problems caused by anger. So many of the problems in our life come from attachment, clinging to this life, so many unbelievable problems, not just an individual person's life problems, but even a group, a family group, a country fighting each other to have power, not caring about their happiness. Because of attachment, country to country it happens like this. So much came due to the attachment. By totally ceasing attachment, we are liberated from all the sufferings. And it's the same with the ignorance, with all those delusions and wrong concepts.

Those meditators or those inner scientists, those Buddhist scientists, the inner scientists work on inner development, inner discovery. By discovering, by understanding the mind, we understand more about external phenomena, the correct way. The more we understand the mind, the easier to understand external phenomena.

If we don't understand the mind, we always have problems, so there are always problems to discover external phenomena. We get stuck, blocked when our discovery of the mind is very limited. If we don't know what the mind is, then it takes *a lot* of time. It takes so many years to learn about external phenomena, when we haven't discovered the mind, we have a very limited knowledge of mind, there's so much hallucination, we have so many piles of hallucination we have in our life, so many wrong concepts, piles of hallucinations, and each wrong concept has its own view, its own wrong view, projection. Ignorance has its own view; anger has its own view.

Since I'm talking this, as it is mentioned in the teachings, this is very important advice, or instructions. Related to the teachings of Aryadeva, the great Indian scholar, the highly attained one, the great scholar, highly attained one, Lama Tsongkhapa mentioned at the beginning, ignorance, grasping at true existence, exaggerates the object. On the basis of that, discrimination comes: this is beautiful, this is ugly. Then from there, by discriminating, anger and attachment arise. Therefore, we can see we need to abandon what anger believes, what attachment believes. Why? Because we can abandon what this particular ignorance, this

ignorance grasping true existence believes, what it apprehends, and then we can realize it doesn't exist, we discover it doesn't exist.

That is the logical reason, or faith, how it's possible to achieve liberation, how we can be liberated from the oceans of samsaric suffering. This is according to the teachings of Aryadeva, the great scholar, the highly attained being, as Lama Tsongkhapa mentioned. So this is a very important discovery in our life, an extremely important discovery.

THE LABEL DEPENDS ON THE BASE

I mentioned that to give some idea, when we encounter a person, how that person comes into existence. When we see the person, how does the person come into existence? The person didn't exist before we saw it. It doesn't exist before we see their aggregates, before we see the association of the body and mind. Before we see that, the person doesn't exist. Also, when we see the aggregates, the person doesn't happen at the same time. It doesn't exist, it doesn't happen at the same time.

We label "person." We don't label "person" when we see a pillar. When we see a table we don't label "person," we don't label "person" to a car, to a bicycle or tree. We have to see a particular phenomenon that can receive the name "person," that can receive the label "person." We have to see that particular phenomenon, otherwise, any other phenomenon we see doesn't cause our mind to make up the label "person."

Something has to cause our mind to make up the label "person," to impute the person, the particular phenomena. We have to see that first, that which causes our mind to make up the label "person," for our mind to impute "person." It is the association of body and mind. When the person is dead, there's no mind. , you see, there's no mind, so you don't call that, you see, your mind don't label "person" to that, see, because it's only body, so like that. It's the association of body and mind, except the formless realm beings, which don't have a body, only the mind. Other than that, you receive the label "living being" based on that.

In Tibetan the word is *kangsa*, which refers to the person, but in English I think it might only refer to a human being. I think, I'm not sure. Is that right? Is that right or not? A person is a human being, having ears and eyes, having a small nose? Anyway, I'm joking.

A human being is the association of body and mind. Maybe we're blind, we can't see but you hear the voice, the existing aggregates, by hearing the voice, but anyway, first we see that, then by seeing that, it causes the mind to merely impute, to make up the label, "person." "I am seeing a person." It's the same if we're using that particular person's name, or whatever. It's same thing we're analyzing.

We see those particular aggregates, the association of body and mind, then, by seeing that first, the next second the mind makes up, the mind merely imputes "person." It creates the name. It makes up the label "person," but even that is merely imputed, even that is merely imputed.

So, what is person now? What is person? Is nothing except what is merely imputed by the mind. If we analyze, we understand what person means, what is person, how the person exists, what it is exactly. It's nothing except what is merely imputed by the mind.

The person does exist. The person does exist but it doesn't exist from its own side. The person does exist, but doesn't exist from its own side, *at all*. The person does exist, but it doesn't exist from its own side, *at all*; it's *totally* empty, it doesn't exist from its own side; it's *totally* empty.

Why? Here, you can see what I explained before. In the reality, what it is, first, you see this particular phenomenon, the aggregates. In the next second, it causes your mind to merely *impute* "person." It is merely imputed from the side of the mind. So, there's no person *at all* existing from its own side. That one is *totally* non-existent, totally empty. In short, the body is not the truly existent person, existing from its own side, existing by its nature.

Putting it into ordinary language, a real person, meaning of "real" in the sense of existing from its own side, a real person, in the language that is used in ordinary conversation—the body is not that one. Now, analyze whether it's really existing or not. The body is not that one, the mind is not that one. Or we can analyze the five aggregates and see the same thing. Nothing is that real person, neither the body is that real person, nor the mind is that real person, nothing.

That real person that is existing from its own, when we use the word "real," at the same time we believe it, we have the belief, the notion, the concept, that it exists from its own side. The meaning of "real" is existing from its own side, existing by nature.

We can't find it. If we look for it, we can't *find* that real person, from the tip of his hair down to the toes. There is no way we can find it, if you look for where the person is. We can't find it from the tip of the hair down to the toes. There is no way we can find that real person, we can't find it *at all*.

Not only can't we find the real person, the person that *exists* that is merely labeled by mind, because there are aggregates exist, you know, which can receive the label, not only that, we can't even find that base, if you look for it. We can't even find what exists there, on those aggregates. It's exactly the same.

We can't find the false person, the one we normally believe to be the real person, the inherently existent person. We can't find that anywhere, it's neither on the aggregates nor anywhere. Where it exists, we can't find it. But even the merely labeled person, that which does exist—we can't find that one *there*, on those aggregates. We can't find it in this world, and in this country where there are these aggregates. In this country we can find where there are these aggregates. In the house, or outside, in whatever place, wherever there's that aggregates, we can find the merely labeled person. But the merely labeled person, we can't find on that aggregates. We have to know this. This is a subtle point. We have to know the differences. The other false person, which always appears to us, which we always believe we can't find that either on that aggregates or anywhere. That is the emptiness, the ultimate nature of the person.

If we're able to find the merely labeled person, if we think that we are able to find the merely labeled one on that base, that means it exists from its own side, so it carries that contradiction. It is findable on the base, when there's a base, these aggregates, but if we look for it, we can't find it. The reality is that simple. If you look for it, we can't find it, so there's proof. It's unfindable.

This is the Prasangika School's view. Of the four schools of Buddhist philosophy, this is the fourth. The first is Sautrantika, then Vaibashika, then Cittamatra School, the Mind Only School. Finally, there is the Madhyamaka School, with the first [subschool] Svatantrika then the second, Prasangika.

So, according to Prasangika school, if we look for it, we can't find it. The reality is, if we look for it, can't find it. Even though the merely labeled one exists, we can't find on the base, but of course we can find it in the universe, in the world, in the country, in the house, wherever the aggregates are—there we can find it—but not *on* the aggregates. It's unfindable, unfindable. It is *merely* existing from the mind, *merely* existing from the mind, as related to that base.

Now, here we can see that the person is totally empty. That is the conclusion, it's totally empty. That doesn't mean it doesn't exist. I'm not saying that the person is empty of person. I'm not talking about that. That's ordinary emptiness. In the prayer called *Tok ma dangwar dang ta mar ge vä mön lam, A Prayer for the Beginning, Middle and End*, Lama Tsongkhapa talks about ordinary emptiness. You see the empty of the person. I'm not talking about the emptiness of the person, I'm talking about empty of the *false* person, the one that always appears to us, that we hundred percent believe as true.

So, anyway, you've got some idea of the reality, what the person is, you see, it's *totally* something else than so far what we have been believing person, so far what we have, what has been appearing to your mind, and what you have been believing so far. That's totally false, totally false. As I have mentioned already, it doesn't exist, even the slightest of atom of that doesn't exist anywhere. Now, through analysis, we understand that, as I already explained.

The reality is that the person does exist but how, what it is, it is totally empty from existing from its own side, but while it is like that, it exists merely imputed by mind. That way, emptiness and dependent arising are unified; they are not contradictory. That's the correct understanding of emptiness, the ultimate nature of the person.

So what the person *is*, is unbelievably subtle, unbelievably, unbelievably, unbelievably, unbelievably subtle. It is not at all what has appeared to us and we've been believing up to now.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama said that after he studied the commentary to Nagarjuna's teaching, the Root Wisdom of the Middle Way, after he read the *U ma tsa wa she rab*—that's what the teaching is called—after he had been reading and studying this, he realized that when we see a phenomenon, it's not this, it's something else. It means when we see the person, it's not that the person is something else, not this. So, it makes great sense. His Holiness said that since he had been reading that, his understanding that whatever the

phenomenon, whether I or whatever it is, it's not this then there's something else, there's something else.

Remember, I gave the example now, the false person and the person that really exists. It is totally something else, but something which is extremely subtle, an unbelievably subtle phenomenon.

THE SUBTLE OBJECT OF REFUTATION

This unification of emptiness and dependent arising is where it is devoid of the two extremes: of nihilism, where it doesn't exist at all, and devoid of the other extreme, inherent existence. It's free from the extreme of nihilism, that there's no person at all, and then it's devoid of the other extreme, that the person exists from its own side.

If you got the idea I was talking about, what the person is, how it exists, it is something that we can't find on those aggregates, it doesn't exist from its own side, we can't find there, but it exists in mere name, merely imputed by our mind.

If you get some rough idea of this, then you know what the hallucination is. In our life, with everything, there is reality and there's a false view that we hold. How it exists, what it is—that's the reality, then the appearance, how it appears—that's the hallucination. So, there are two things, with everything, with the I, with everything. When the appearance is according to reality, then that's the correct one. When the appearance is against the reality, then that's hallucination. So, I hope you got some idea of the person.

It's the same, a person or Peter, or George or whatever. It's the same analysis. Tony, or whatever, Mr. Yee or Mr. Wang or Mr. Woon. It doesn't matter, it's the same, if you know how to meditate in this way, how to do the scientific analysis, being the inner scientist or the Dharma scientist.

I'll tell you one thing. When somebody accuses us, somebody blames us, he's just blaming this merely labeled I. [Group laughs] At that time, if we're able to meditate, if we're able to think that there's not that real I manifesting from its own side, expressing from its own side.

Usually I say this is the mudra, this is the mudra of introducing the object to be reputed, the false I, the I manifest or the I appearing from its own side, the mudra introducing the false I. [Rinpoche laughs]

As I told you, the person, even the merely labeled I, we can't find, from the tip of the hair down to the toes—even that which exists can't be found from the tip of the hair down to the toes. It exists nowhere; if we look for it, we can't find it. We can't even find the merely labeled I which exists on this base.

It exists relating to the base. Because the base exists, so it exists. The I exists in mere name, merely imputed by mind, but we can't find even that; we can't find it from the tip of the hair down to the toes.

To put it in a subtle way, to express it in a subtle way, it is not merely labeled by mind, not merely labeled by mind. So, it means there is something *extra*, something additional. It's not just merely imputed by mind but something extra, something more than that, something that is not merely imputed by mind.

That is the subtle Prasangika school view, the subtle object to be reputed, *gag-cha*, appearing and believed. We let our mind *believe*, hold on to that, as if it's true, a hundred percent. Also, in the very gross way it is as if it can be found in this body, in the chest. We believe it's inside the chest or inside the body.

It's the same when we do the meditation on the chakras, when we go into the head or there are different chakras, down inside the feet, we believe we're there; we believe the real I is down there in the feet, or in the different chakras. It's like there's a real I there, going through the chakras and the channels. This is an example of the object to be reputed, the false I. There is no thought of mere imputation, but there's a real I there in that spot, in that part of the body. This is the *gag-cha*, the object to be reputed.

So, it's the same here. Normally, when we don't analyze, it's inside this chest, inside this body. That one is the false I. When we analyze, logically when we check, we cannot find it at all, we can't find at all. We can't find exactly where it is.

We discover that it is totally non-existent, that is totally empty, right there. From where it is appearing to us, it is totally empty right there; from where it is appearing, it is totally empty right there.

Anyway, what I was saying is that, so now I've forgotten....

Anyway what I was saying, it is exactly the same as the person before. I'm talking about the continuation of before. This is totally non-existent right *there*, okay, totally empty right *there*. When we discover the I appearing to us and believed in our mind that it is not merely labeled by mind, that it exists not merely labeled by mind, when we realize that, that it is totally empty, totally empty right there, at that time there's no separation, with our wisdom seeing emptiness and our mind. I can't remember... It's non-dual, kind of like that. It's mentioned in the three texts, that's the realization of the ultimate nature of the I.

That doesn't mean the I doesn't exist. The I that exists, what is that? That is the merely imputed I. There was something else I was going to mention but I've forgotten now.

Anyway, we're running out of time, so we'll stop here. I didn't complete it. So, you see, the person is merely imputed by mind, that's the reality.

To our hallucinated mind, right after the mind merely imputes "person" [snaps fingers], the next second it doesn't appear back merely labeled by mind. It appears back totally false, totally opposite to the reality. What before was merely imputed the next second appears totally the opposite. When it appears back, it does not appear back according to reality, merely imputed by mind. It appears back to us *not* merely imputed by the mind, totally the opposite. So, it's a total hallucination, a total hallucination, when it appears back. What our

mind merely imputed, the next second, when it appears back, it appears *not* merely imputed by the mind, but existing from its own side.

We have that hallucination. We're born with it, but it doesn't mean we can't see that. We're born with it, we have this hallucination. Why are we born with this hallucination? Because in our past lives we had this hallucination, and it wasn't ceased by actualizing the path.

From beginningless rebirth, we've had this hallucination. That shows we haven't actualized the remedy, the path, which removes the hallucination. That shows we haven't done it so far.

In samsara, we die and we are reborn in the six realms, in all three realms: desire realm, form realm, formless realm. We die and we're reborn, and we've done all sorts of unbelievable things; we've experienced pleasure, we've experienced suffering, *everything*. We have gone through everything, all the pleasures, all the sufferings; nothing is new. We have gone through *everything*, okay, *everything*, whatever we see how people suffer, whatever we see how the animals suffer, we have gone through this numberless times.

As I said before, we are born in the form realm and formless realm, through meditation, numberless times. Any pleasure, any suffering we are going through now, there is nothing new in samsara; we have been through it numberless times. But, actualizing the path, removing this hallucination, *that* we have not done.

The wisdom directly perceiving emptiness, which is supported by bodhicitta and the six paramitas, collects inconceivable merit. With all that, we are able to cease the subtle negative imprints, those on the mental continuum, which project this hallucination.

When we hear sounds, even though it's totally dependent, but we experience it as an independent sound, existing from its own side. If somebody lights incense, if we check how we experience the smell, even though the reality is that it is merely labeled, how we experience it is *not* a merely-labeled smell, that means existing from its own side. So, that's false, a false smell, a hallucination.

Somebody makes not incense but the other one, a fart. Either we do, or the person next to us makes a fart, Oh this is *real* one! This is not merely labeled by mind, but something real, existing from its own side, even though in reality it is merely labeled by mind, like I mentioned before with the person. We totally have the hallucination, which is a projection by this subtle negative imprint.

Therefore, it shows so far we haven't actualized the path. We have done so much in samsara, all the suffering, all the pleasure, we created the cause, we have gone through it numberless times, but this one, this one we haven't done, actualizing this path to remove this subtle negative imprint which projects all this dualistic view, this hallucination.

After the mere imputation, what makes everything real, from this subtle negative imprint, the hallucination covers over the merely labeled one, the reality, then we think it exists from its own side, not merely labeled by mind.

So, now you can see it's completely a world of hallucination. We're living in the world of hallucination, not created by god but by your own mind, not having removed the subtle negative imprints. We are completely living in the world of hallucination, produced by our mind, coming from our mind, our negative imprint.

So, now I'm going to conclude. Only after we remove this negative imprint will we be free from that hallucination, and see things as existing merely labeled by mind. As long as we have this subtle negative imprint which projects hallucination—not buddhas, just us sentient beings—this is the sentient beings' hallucination all the time, *except* when arya beings with wisdom directly perceiving emptiness are in equipoise meditation in emptiness.

So therefore, the meditation on emptiness, the realization of emptiness is *unbelievable*. It *can't wait*, it can't wait even a second, because how much we have been suffering, how much we have been suffering, not from birth until now, but from beginningless rebirth. Therefore, we can't wait even a second without realizing this.

Every day we need to meditate, to think of the reality, to look at the hallucination as a hallucination, not looking at it as the reality, not looking at it as true, but looking at it as a hallucination that we have been wrongly thinking of as reality.

It helps to think, in our heart, how all these things are in reality dependent arising, merely imputed by mind, the Prasangika School view, the subtle dependent arising. Then, the conclusion in your heart comes emptiness.

Or looking at everything as empty. Looking at subject I, action, object as empty. In daily life, this is how we can meditate, seeing things as empty or as dependent arising or look at them as a hallucination. What is false, what is a hallucination, being aware of the hallucination. So we don't deceive ourselves, we're not cheated by ourselves. Otherwise, in our life, we cheat ourselves, we are *always* deceived by ourselves. From beginningless rebirths, we have been cheated by ourselves, believing this hallucination, believing all this hallucination is real. Then, we get into so much trouble in life, developing anger, attachment and so forth. Now you've got some idea of the hallucination, okay.

On this basis, we see this body, this person as so beautiful, then attachment arises, grasping, attachment arises, and it has its own view, its hallucination. Attachment has its own hallucination, its view, projection. Seeing something as ugly, thinking of the reasons, then anger arises. It projects its own wrong view, because there is a wrong concept, the wrong view. When we put on red glasses, we see red; when we put on blue glasses, we see white things as blue. Like that, it depends on which of these wrong concepts arises, then, it has its own projection, wrong view. It doesn't exist, it doesn't exist. That's what we need to realize, the object that is apprehended by the view of the ignorance, anger or attachment, anger.

We can realize the object of ignorance, the concept of true existence, believing that it exists from its own side, not merely labeled by mind. We can realize that is false. Through analysis, we can recognize the object to be reputed, realizing it is totally non-existent, empty. That's how we can find full confidence that we can achieve our liberation.

Sorry, this wasn't planned. My plan was something else, but we still have some days here, so I wanted to do this. You went through the renunciation, bodhicitta, but I think, very important the mindfulness practice in daily life, our conduct. I think this is a very important thing to do, but I went some other way, in some other direction. So, I think I'll stop here.

DEDICATION

So please, this is just a very short dedication. Due to all the past, present and future merits collected by me, the three times' merits collected by others—when it says others, it doesn't mean a few people, or your family, or a few friends, it's not that, this is not saying a few people around you, others means numberless sentient beings including bodhisattvas, all their merits. Then on top of that all the buddhas, numberless buddhas, all their merits. We have to remember that when we say "others." It means everybody.

Due to all the three times' merits collected by me and the three times' merits collected by others, the numberless sentient beings, including buddhas, may the bodhicitta, which is the source of success and happiness for myself and the source of all the happiness and success of all sentient beings, including liberation and enlightenment, may it be actualized within my heart, in the hearts of my own family members, in the hearts of friends, strangers, enemies—if you have an enemy, then include the enemy—and in the hearts of all sentient beings, without the delay of even a second.

We pray like this, and in whose heart the bodhicitta is actualized may it be increased.

Jang chub...

We should realize that when we do this prayer, we're praying for all sentient beings, like the whales in the ocean, as large as mountains as well as those animals, so small we can't see with the eye but only with microscope, these are numberless beings in the water. And all the fish, millions and millions and millions, they go together like this, what's it called, what's the name of that? [*Student*: School of fish.] School of fish. They go like this, wow. I heard the sharks eat so many unbelievable millions and millions. So, here, when we pray, we have to remember to include those millions and millions of fish; they have no peace, so much suffering. We pray that just that type of fish generate bodhicitta in all their hearts, unbelievable what they experience.

I was saying, when we fly, when we go by airplane, the sea looks, very nice, very peaceful, very nice, but we think only on the outside. If we look inside, if we go deeper, all those bodies like mountains, or those small creatures, they're all eating each other, the small ones eaten by the big ones. We can't imagine life in the sea, everyone has an enemy. They eat each other. We don't have that kind of life, always having to run away, always have the fear of meeting the enemy, being eaten by the enemy, at the same time having to find food. We can't imagine it. Compared to those beings' suffering, it's unbelievable, it's like we are liberated. Compared to them, we're liberated.

Of course, we're not a human being all the time; we're not in the human realm forever. It's a very short time. We never know when this life will end. It can happen at any time, the

appearance of this life can stop. We have a human body, we have all this, a beautiful house, all the comforts, a family, a car and all these things, all this comfort can be stopped at any time. This appearance can be stopped at any time.

Until that unimaginable suffering happens, it's good to think, so we can realize how we're so fortunate. We don't have those problems, we have the opportunity to look for a better life, a meaningful life. I was going to thank you, but I forgot yesterday, but maybe I thank you today.

So what I'm saying is, with Dharma, we abandon the negative thoughts that harm us and harm others, and others means not just one or a few, but numberless sentient beings.

These negative thoughts that harm us, one person, and harm numberless others, have been happening from beginningless rebirth, these negative thoughts, this selfish mind, harming numberless sentient beings. We need to understand that this is how it goes if we don't change our minds. If we don't do something in this life now, at this moment, if we don't make it better, this selfish mind will harm numberless sentient beings also in the future.

Therefore, while we have this human body, as His Holiness the Dalai Lama says, with so much intelligence, so much capacity, we can do unbelievable things, things animals can't do. We can learn so much; we can abandon these negative thoughts and develop positive thoughts that benefit us and benefit numberless sentient beings, bringing all the happiness up to enlightenment, not just this life, not just temporary pleasure, but all the future lives' happiness, then liberation and enlightenment, to us and to bring the cause to numberless sentient beings. That's what we can do. Having this human body, now, for this short time, this is what we can do, this is what we can use it for. Compared to the animals, we are so unbelievably lucky, we're so fortunate, so unbelievably, unbelievably fortunate.

If we don't do something meaningful in this life, while we can learn meditation, Buddhadharma, the complete path to enlightenment, when will we have the opportunity again? Therefore, we are fortunate that we take this opportunity now. It's very important now, because how the future life turns out depends on this life; it depends on today, on what we do every moment, how we think every moment, how we live life, which way we think, a mistaken way or a positive way, a healthy way or an unhealthy way.

So, we pray to generate bodhicitta in everyone's heart, so all those beings in the ocean and all those beings inside the earth, under the ground, in the sky, then human beings and devas in the numberless universes we pray to generate bodhicitta, the source of all the happiness, for success in all their hearts. When we do this prayer, it's not an easy thing, you pray, to achieve enlightenment for everybody, so it's a very important prayer.

In the road, when we see worms, when we see birds flying around, when we do practice, then we do prayers and dedicate merits to every one of those, it's great to rejoice.

So, now we pray, we dedicate all our merits to actualize bodhicitta.

Due to all the three time merits collected by myself, the three times' merits collected by others, may the bodhicitta be actualized in the hearts of all the leaders of the world,

including the leaders of Mainland China, so that the millions of people in the country will have perfect peace, and they will live in the correct path to peace. It's very, very important.

Jang chub...

Then third one, may the bodhicitta be actualized in the hearts of all the people who follow the different religions. May the bodhicitta be actualized in the hearts of all the different people who follow the many thousands of different religions.

Due to all the three times' merits collected by me, the three time merits' collected by others, may the bodhicitta be actualized in the hearts of everybody who follows religion, not only Buddhist, but Christians and all the rest, so they have perfect peace and happiness in this world, in their hearts. So, there is no religious fighting, or killing.

We dedicate the merits for that.

Jang chub...

[Long-life prayer to His Holiness the Dalai Lama]

Please dedicate the merits also that we have this incredible opportunity to meet the Buddhadharma, to develop our wisdom and compassion, the whole path to enlightenment, to be able to make our lives meaningful by taking the eight Mahayana precepts. It's unbelievable, unbelievable, if done with bodhicitta, skies of merit, unbelievable, unbelievable, unbelievable, with each vow, unbelievable merit. We are so unbelievably fortunate, that brings happiness for hundred thousands of lifetimes, then enlightenment. While we're in samsara, we have all that happiness, then we attain ultimate happiness, liberation and enlightenment.

Every practice we do and generate bodhicitta, all this is by the kindness of His Holiness, and the next one, for him to have a stable life and all his holy wishes to be actualized.

Then, the next one is Lama Yeshe's kindness, for this organization and those who offer service, founded by Lama Yeshe's kindness, with his compassion. Therefore, we're receiving guidance, help from Lama Yeshe, bringing our heart to enlightenment, liberating us from the suffering of samsara.

May all Lama's holy wishes be actualized, and then Lama Ösel Rinpoche, his incarnation, become like Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, like His Holiness the Dalai Lama, like Lama Tsongkhapa, and be able to offer extensive benefit to sentient beings, and the teachings of Buddha, in this life.

Due to all the past, present and future merits collected by me, the three times' merits collected by others, which exist, but do not exist from their own side, which are totally empty from their own side, may the I, who exists, but does not exist from its own side, who is totally empty, achieve Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's enlightenment (or you can think of your own deity if you are practicing a deity) which exists, but doesn't exist from its own side, which is totally empty, and lead all the sentient beings, who exist, but do not exist from their

own side, who are totally empty, to that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's enlightenment, which exists, but doesn't exist from its own side, which is totally empty, by myself alone, who exists, but who doesn't exist from its own side, who is totally empty.

[Chanting in Tibetan]

Good night.

Lecture 3

MEDITATION IS NOT ENOUGH, WE NEED PURIFICATION, MERIT AND DEVOTION

The mirror which is covered by dust can't give a clear reflection. We need to clean away the dust, and the more we clean, the more it is able to give a clear reflection. It becomes clearer, then afterwards, after the last covering of dust is removed it's able to give a very clear, complete reflection. It's the same thing with our mind

Also, when we grow the crops in a field, we need to plant the seed first, and then we need the right soil, and the land plowed to make the land soft. It can be hard, with rocks, difficult to plant, difficult to grow, so, in order to plant, it needs to be soft. Then we also need water.

So, having the seed alone is not enough, we also need the conditions: the water, the sun to heat, warmth, and so forth, depending on the plant.

There are many conditions that need to be organized, to be put together, along with the seed, *then* it can grow, then it can produce a stem. That is exactly the same for our inner growth, having attainments, realizations, on the path to liberation and enlightenment. The seed, the imprint left by the teachings, by meditating, by listening to the teachings, is planted on our mental continuum, which is like the field.

As I mentioned before, a plant needs many other conditions, so it's similar here. For instance, devotion is like the water, guru devotion and devotion to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. It is like putting water on your mental continuum field, where there's the seed planted. From there, understanding of the Dharma comes, the words and meanings as well as the realizations of the path.

Like that, it pacifies obstacles. We need to collect the necessary conditions, the merits, so altogether developing devotion is like putting water in our heart, in the mental continuum, which is like the field, to be able to produce, to develop, to actualize, to manifest, the realizations.

Lama Tsongkhapa asked the question of Manjushri, who is the embodiment of all the Buddha's wisdom: what is the means for quick enlightenment? Manjushri gave this answer: collecting merit—which is the necessary condition—and purifying the obstacles, the defilements, the obstacles to achieve realizations on the path to enlightenment. Then, the next one is, with a one-pointed mind, devoting to the guru, making prayers, with that *heart*, doing the prayer to the guru. With a one-pointed mind, with that devotional mind, making

prayers to the guru is to bless our heart. Then, we receive blessings from the guru, and that blesses our heart, and from that realizations come. So, devotion is the cause of realizations.

Then next is the actual body of the practice, that's meditating on the path, the steps of the path to enlightenment. That's the actual body.

So, Manjushri, who is the embodiment of all the Buddhas' wisdom, gave this answer to Lama Tsongkhapa. In our daily life, we have to remember that.

Without the practice of purification, collecting merits and with a one-pointed devotional mind, making requests to the guru, sitting with crossed legs and closing our eyes doesn't lead anywhere; it's not sufficient. Only doing the meditation on the path, the realization cannot happen without blessing our heart with bodhicitta, with devotion, with the blessing of the guru, which comes from our own side, the disciple's devotion.

It's like the rock which is under the ocean. It's been down below the ocean for so long, but it still doesn't become soft. For so many years, thousands and thousands, millions of years but it is still hard. The mind becomes like that. It doesn't get softened, it doesn't get changed, it doesn't get better, it doesn't get transformed into the path. Then, many obstacles arise, obstacles from outside, under the control of others, as well as many obstacles from inside, delusions, ignorance, anger, attachment, jealousy, pride, doubts, so forth, those things, and the self-cherishing thought. Without going into tantra, these are the fundamental obstacles, the disturbing thoughts. No matter how many years we have been meditating on the actual path, nothing happens in our heart; it doesn't go inside our heart. When we meditate it becomes outside, it doesn't go in our heart, our heart doesn't get transformed into that, so it becomes very difficult. The mind becomes very stubborn or very berserk.

We know the words by heart, intellectually, but it doesn't go in our heart. We don't feel it in our heart. What's that expression? Our lips and our heart become contradictory, become the opposite. What you recite and what's in the heart are opposite. Then, so many obstacles can arise.

Depending on which meditation, you sometimes get wind disease, *lung*. In Tibetan it's *lung*. Probably those who came to the last course will be familiar with lung, the education of lung. But I think maybe those who are attending for the first time don't know lung, the wind disease.

Depending on which meditation, because of mental disturbances, we experience sicknesses of the mind, additional sicknesses of the mind. Instead of the mind, the heart becoming softened, a warm heart, developing patience, compassion, loving-kindness, bodhicitta, understanding emptiness, able to see the truth, able to see the truth, *our* truth, our truth, the truth of our I, the truth of our mind, the truth of our aggregates—anyway, instead of that, there is a block. For example, with emptiness, no matter how many years we try to meditate nothing happens, we are blocked because of the obscurations. The mind becomes very hard like the stone under the ocean I explained, very hard, not becoming soft. No matter how long we try, no discovery happens, we experience nothing, it just becomes words. We recite the words, but our heart cannot see it, so these things happen.

When there's not enough merit, when we didn't do strong purification, we didn't collect extensive merits, sometimes obstacles manifest, and the mind can become even less normal, it can lead to craziness. Many obstacles can arise with that because, what we're doing, we are meditating on the lam-rim, the stages on the path to enlightenment, but that is something that we never achieved, we have never had this experience. The attainment of these realizations never happened in the past; they never happened from beginningless rebirths up to now. This is what we're trying to achieve, to actualize, to experience. Can you imagine something that never happened, something that we never experienced from beginningless rebirths, the mind becoming that?

For example, by having the realization of guru devotion, by seeing the guru as a buddha from our own side, so that helps by bringing the blessing of the guru, entering into our heart, and from that, realizations come, from the beginning of the path, the graduated path of the lower capable being, starting with the realization of the perfect human rebirth. We have received this perfect human rebirth, and we realize how unbelievably precious this human body we have received, with its eighteen qualities. This body is really, really, unbelievably wish-fulfilling, which us gives unbelievable opportunities to practice Dharma, whatever we wish, the Lesser Vehicle teaching and the Great Vehicle, the Mahayana teaching, the Paramitayana, then, the Mahayana, secret mantra Vajrayana.

This perfect human rebirth gives us unbelievable, unbelievable opportunity to end this suffering of samsara, which continuation has no beginning, which continuation has *no beginning*. We have been experiencing it, tormented by it, from beginningless rebirths. This gives us the opportunity to practice the path, then you can end that. It's amazing, it's really amazing. We have gone through the general suffering of samsara: the three types, the six types and so forth—all those unimaginable sufferings of each realm. You went through the meditation, so you've got some idea.

We can cease this completely by ceasing the cause, *never* have to experience it in the future. We never have to experience in the future, forever, because there is no cause of suffering in our mental continuum; it has totally ceased by actualizing the path, by completing the remedy, the path, even the cause of delusion, the negative imprint, the seed, has been totally ceased. So, there's no reason, no cause to return again. It's impossible to happen again, impossible to suffer again.

It's unbelievable we can attain that, without talking enlightenment or the bodhisattva paths. Just attaining the Lesser Vehicle path, it's just amazing, it's just unbelievable; it's most amazing that you can do this.

The Buddha has explained the five paths to achieve liberation, all the details of each, and within that then there are categories, those realizations. This has all been clearly explained.

ENLIGHTENED, WE CAN DO PERFECT WORK FOR OTHERS

By practicing the Mahayana Paramitayana path, we can achieve enlightenment to help all sentient beings, to free them from the oceans of samsaric sufferings and bring them to full enlightenment, so that's the most amazing opportunity. That's what this body, this perfect

human rebirth gives us. We can achieve the complete qualities of the cessation of the gross and subtle defilements, all the mistakes of the mind, and the completion of all the realizations of the path, and then, we're able to do *perfect* work, without the slightest mistakes, understanding the mind of every single sentient being, every single human being, who are in numberless universes, and every single sura, asura being's mind, every single hell being, hungry ghosts, animals, intermediate state beings—every single sentient being's mind, as well as those arhats, the higher bodhisattvas who are free from samsara. We can read everyone's mind, the numberless beings in each realm, at the same time.

We can read, we can see the hearts or minds of the numberless the animals living in the ocean—we can read, we can see everyone's mind at the same time, without the slightest mistake. We can read, we can see the hearts or minds of the numberless ants, who are on this Earth, this world, this continent at the same time. There is no question, even animals, ants, who are in numberless universes, we can clearly read their minds at the same time.

Right now, numberless buddhas are looking, they're seeing every one of us, reading what we think in our heart, every moment, every moment, every moment they see what we think. The numberless buddhas directly see with their omniscience what is needed. There's not one second that they cannot see our mind, our thoughts, our heart. There's not even one split second that they cannot see. This is the same with all the phenomena, past, present and future.

They are able to do perfect work without the slightest mistake. Whenever the karma of a sentient being ripens, there's no delay even a second, there's no delay of even a second, immediately, the second when the karma ripens to receive help, the buddha is there, in whatever form is needed, in order to benefit that sentient being, guiding, revealing the methods, whether in pure, or impure form. That's the special quality, the special thing about the buddhas. The minute when the karma of a sentient being ripens to receive help, whatever it is, a buddha is there, and reveals the methods, and guides that sentient being, exactly as is needed. That way, they are able to this bring them to the cessation of the suffering, liberation, and bring them to full enlightenment, by revealing the various methods, the unconceivable, the unimaginable, the numberless methods, even to guide one sentient being from happiness to happiness, to enlightenment.

Not only that, without practicing tantra, the Mahayana Secret Mantra Vajrayana, only by practicing the sutra, the Mahayana Paramitayana teaching, we have to collect merits for three countless eons. Only then can we achieve full enlightenment. We can do achieve enlightenment in this way with this perfect human body. By practicing the Paramita path, we have to collect merits for three countless great eons, and unbelievable length of time.

That means that the sentient beings who have a karmic connection with us have to suffer in samsara until they meet us and we reveal Dharma to them. Until they meet us and they receive teachings from us, we reveal path to them, until they achieve the exalted path, the arya path, until we liberate them from oceans of samsaric suffering, they have to suffer in samsara, continuously dying and being reborn, and experiencing sufferings, the hell realms, hungry ghosts, animals, human realms, all this—on and on, like that.

Practicing only the Paramitayana path, we have to collect merits for three countless great eons. Therefore, because of that, sentient beings have to spent an unbelievable, unbelievable time suffering. The longer it takes for us to achieve enlightenment, the longer they have to suffer, an unbelievable length of time. To complete the path sooner, we need to practice tantra.

TANTRA IS THE QUICK PATH

Here comes the reason why you have to practice tantra. By practicing even the lower tantra, we can achieve enlightenment even within one life, so there is an unbelievable, huge difference. Only practicing the Paramitayana path takes an unbelievable, unbelievable time to achieve enlightenment, and we have to collect merits for three countless great eons. But even practicing lower tantra, we are able to achieve enlightenment within one life, and that means we are able to liberate the sentient beings from oceans of samsaric suffering much quicker. It is so much quicker to enlighten them, so much quicker.

There are four classes of tantra: Kriya Tantra, Charya Tantra, Yoga Tantra and Maha-anuttara Tantra.¹ Now, by practicing the fourth one, Maha-anuttara Yoga Tantra, we're able to achieve full enlightenment in one brief lifetime of these degenerated times, so it is unbelievably quicker.

In the lower tantras, we do long life practice, and can prolong the life for hundreds, even hundreds of thousands of years, then we achieve enlightenment within that one life, but that's by prolonging our life to hundreds of thousands years. With the Highest Yoga Tantra, without needing to do that, we are able to achieve enlightenment in a brief lifetime of these degenerate times. It is so much shorter. Even shorter than that, in a very brief lifetime.

This perfect human body gives us all that opportunity to be able to practice tantra. This is because we have been born as a human being in this southern continent, where the tantra teachings exist at the moment. They haven't stopped; they haven't yet degenerated. There's still Buddhadharma existing; it has not degenerated yet, although it's about to. It's like the sun about to set.

Like that, the teachings of the Buddha in this world now are just like sun setting. Just before it's degenerated, just before it stopped, we have met the tantric teaching. It's really amazing, really amazing, that it has happened, amazing, unbelievable! It's like we made it, we made it! Just before it has degenerated.

Therefore, we have this unbelievable opportunity to achieve enlightenment in the quickest time, and then to be able to liberate numberless sentient beings from whom we have received all the past, present and future happiness, those beings who are the most precious ones, most kind ones—to liberate them from the oceans of samsaric suffering and bring them to enlightenment, much quicker, much quicker.

So, I don't know, I lost my journey. What I was talking about? Oh, I see.

¹ Rinpoche says Anuttara Tantra for the third, which I've taken as a slip of the tongue. The fourth is usually stated as Anuttara Yoga Tantra, but Rinpoche often adds the "maha."

What I was emphasizing was that we are receiving all this because of the blessings of the guru, right from the beginning of the path, perfect human rebirth, up to enlightenment, we are able to experience it all. What I was saying before, the graduated path to enlightenment is something which we never experienced in the past, from beginningless rebirths. We have completely never experienced it. So, what I was saying is that this is something totally new, this is a realization we have never achieved before.

REALIZATIONS WILL TAKE TIME

Our mind has been habituated to delusion, our mind has been habituated to delusion from beginningless rebirth. Can you imagine? Our mind has been habituated, under the control of that, from beginningless rebirth—can you imagine?—from beginningless rebirths. Can you imagine? We have been unable to overcome that, being under the control of that, our mind has been under the control of that.

We've been living with ignorance, anger, attachment, and all these delusions from beginningless rebirths. The example used in the teachings is that when we plant chili, chili—hot pepper, not paper, the page, chili—if we put honey in order to make it sweet, from hot into sweet, it doesn't transform immediately into sweet.

Using that as an example, from beginningless rebirths, the mind has been under the control of karma and delusions, habituated like that, from beginningless rebirths, so habituated. So, practicing for a few weeks, a few months, a few years, like putting some honey can't make the chili into sweet, we can't transform the mind into the path, our heart into the path to enlightenment so easily.

It needs practice, it needs practice, many lifetimes. Like His Holiness the Dalai Lama often says to Western students, after finishing a few weeks teachings to the Tibetans, very extensive teachings, a whole entire text of many hundreds of pages—at the end, His Holiness quite often says to Western students that you shouldn't expect to achieve enlightenment in a short time; you must plan to practice more—I don't remember exactly—but something like for many hundreds of lifetimes, thousands, so many lifetimes. I remember His Holiness said eons. We must think, we must plan, we must have the courage to practice for a long time, to bear hardships. We should think a very long time, not to achieve enlightenment within a month, or year, a very short time.

His Holiness says, if we think, "I'm going to practice for a long time, for many hundreds and thousands of lifetimes, or eons, I'm going to practice." If we have the courage that we can do it, it can happen, we can achieve enlightenment. But if we're expecting too much, if we have no plans to practice for a long time, thinking we can achieve enlightenment within a month or a year, something so soon, then we'll be disappointed and lose courage, we'll be unable to continue, unable to continue to practice Dharma. Then, we can't achieve realizations. So often His Holiness gives this advice to Western students. Sometimes, in the past, he has said a few words like that at the very end of the teachings.

If we have the courage, if we plan to practice for many eons, then it's possible to achieve enlightenment within a few lifetimes, within brief lifetime of these degenerate times, or within a few lifetimes, within seven lifetimes, within sixteen lifetimes.

But if we don't have much patience, much courage or patience, but instead have much expectation to achieve full enlightenment in a very short time, within a few years or within some months, the mind becomes disappointed after some time, and then we lose courage, we are unable to continue to practice the Dharma, and then it can take many eons to achieve realizations. *Then*, we take many lifetimes, many eons [Rinpoche laughs] to achieve realizations, if we think this way.

So, as Kadampa Geshe Tarawa said, if we practice correctly, training the mind in the path, meditating on the lam-rim, the stages of the path to enlightenment, as Manjushri said, we can purify defilements—the obstacles to realizations—and collect extensive merits, which means developing the necessary conditions by a one-pointed devotional mind requesting the guru, to receive blessings from the guru. And then, thirdly, the actual body of meditating on the path, if we continuously put effort into it, correctly practicing, according to the state of our mind, it only looks very difficult to the totally selfish mind, the self-cherishing thought, day and night, all the time, every moment.

WITH BODHICITTA WE ONLY CHERISH OTHERS

By having actualized bodhicitta, where we let go of the I, never cherishing the I even for one second, we only cherish others. From beginningless rebirths, we have cherished the I, but now, after we actualize bodhicitta, for not even a second we cherish the I. Instead of cherishing sentient beings, from beginningless rebirths, we have been renouncing them. This is what has happened; this state of mind; this is how nature of the mind has been. From beginningless rebirths, the goal of our life has been only for ourselves, for our own happiness; everything has been done for that. Now, after having actualized bodhicitta, we only cherish the numberless sentient beings, every single sentient being. There are numberless in each realm, and we cherish every single sentient being. With that heart, cherishing each and every single sentient being, nobody is left out.

But now, by actualizing bodhicitta, whatever action we do with body, speech and mind, the goal is others, the goal of every single action of body, speech, and mind we do— besides the listening, reflecting meditation practice, eating, walking, sitting, sleeping, doing work, whatever, even just normal activities—every single thing we do is for others. From beginningless rebirth until now, it's all been done for us, for our own happiness, but now we do it for others, who are numberless. We are totally focused, whatever we do, everything is for numberless sentient beings, to free them from the suffering, to achieve happiness for them.

This is most amazing, *most amazing!* Every single one of our actions is for others, done with a heart cherishing others. All our actions are dedicated, done for others, who are numberless. This is bodhicitta. I'm using this as an example. At the moment, day and night, all the time, we have the self-cherishing thought. When we eat, sleep, when we go to bed, it is all the self-cherishing thought, done with a selfish motivation, whatever we do.

Therefore, all this not possible for me, the mind takes so many lifetimes, eons, so how is it possible? It's not possible. In past courses, I remember discussing with somebody, not so much in the East but mainly in the West, because of the mental state, people can't believe how it's possible to change, to change from this person's state of mind into that, which is unbelievable.

Anyway, Kadampa Geshe Tarawa said, if we think like that, if we believe it's not possible but if we practice anyway—something which we believe will never happen—it will happen within seven years, which means that even in a short time it can happen. The realization can happen even in a short time, like seven years. I think Kadampa Geshe Tarawa was using his own experience. So, even if at the moment we think it's not possible, if we really practice, really engage, then will happen in a few years.

So, I'll stop there.

Sorry, again I didn't get to finish the prayer, so I think maybe to finish the prayer the next time, maybe, next year, anyway.

So, what I was saying, according to what Manjushri explained to Lama Tsongkhapa, it is not enough to only meditate, just thinking we are on the actual path, forcing ourselves to only meditate, sitting cross legged and closing our eyes. Just doing that alone, see, it's extremely difficult, we can't make it with just that. We need all these other practices, what is contained in this preliminary prayer, that we are going to do. [Rinpoche laughs] That's what it contains. So anyway, so that's the idea.

FOOD OFFERING AND DEDICATION

The purpose of my life is to free all sentient beings from all the suffering and causes and bring them to enlightenment, therefore I must achieve enlightenment, therefore, I'm going to make the food offering.

I'm going to mention three things here.

For the people who have received tantric initiations, you need to practice like this: "Therefore I'm going to make food offering," that's one thing; "Therefore I'm going to practice the yoga of eating," that's the particular thing, who those who have received the great, who has received the tantric initiations, you need to practice while eating.

Then, the other one is charity, charity to the sentient beings, including the sentient beings who are living in my body, all the creatures, all the sentient beings living in my body—the texts mention 22,000 and a thousand creatures. The number is not important but scientifically it's shown there are so many beings living in our body. I saw a movie in an airplane, how machines have scanned and shown all the sentient beings inside, living inside the body. It's like highways, so many of those tiny beings, they're going down, so many coming up, it's something like this [shows them] anyway, I'm just showing.

So, make charity to them, including the sentient beings living in the body. “I will bring them to enlightenment, revealing the Dharma to them when they become a human being.” How we can do that is through the connection, by making a connection to them, by making the charity of the food to them when we are eating. That’s the bodhisattva’s attitude of eating.

So then, transform the food in the kitchen into nectar, then offer to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and the numberless buddhas, the Dharmas. That’s the guru. His Holiness the Dalai Lama and everything the root guru, that means all the gurus.

That’s the guru yoga meditation. To the numberless buddhas, the numberless Dharmas, the numberless Sangha, the numberless statues, stupas, scriptures—everything—we offer to them all oceans of nectar food, which is in the nature of great bliss, generating great bliss in the holy mind. You put your palms together and prostrate.

Now dedicate, “*La ma sang gyä...*”

The meaning of the offering prayer is extremely deep.

Due to all the past, present and future merits collected by me, the three times’ merits collected by others, may the bodhicitta be actualized in my own heart and the hearts of all sentient beings without delay of even a second.

May the bodhicitta that has been generated be increased. Think like that.

What I’m saying, you think that, then it’s done.

Due to all the past, present and future merits collected by me, the three times’ merits collected by others, that which exists, but which is empty from its own side, may the I who exists, but which is empty from its own side, achieve Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s enlightenment, which exists, but which is empty from its own side, and lead all the sentient beings, who exist, but who are empty from their own side, to that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s enlightenment, which exists, but which is empty from its own side, by myself alone, who exists but who is empty from its own side.

That’s it! So, the quick way, the quick way. [Rinpoche laughs] The quick way of going through it—that’s for quick enlightenment.

So, thank you very much. Enjoy the nectar.

Lecture 4

THE BENEFITTING OF CHERISHING OTHERS: TONG-LEN

I think a great thing to do is to do tong-len for somebody who is sick. That doesn’t necessarily mean that it can immediately heal everybody’s sicknesses, but it definitely can happen to some people.

I think it has great benefit to us and to the other person as well. I would say there is no question of we who take the sufferings of others, there is no question the benefit to us is just unimaginable, like limitless skies of benefit. We collect limitless skies of merits, or we can say good luck—that’s another term used that common people use, people who don’t use the term “merit” use “good luck.” Even nonbelievers use good luck.

But I think the good luck may have some sense of independence, or inherent existence. Luck, merit, people might think of it as independent, not dependent arising, inherently existent, existing from its own side. It’s possible people might take it that way.

I think this practice is amazing; we collect limitless skies of benefit. That’s one thing. The other thing is it purifies. Not just years of negative karma, but many lifetimes of negative karma get purified, many lifetimes, depending how strong the compassion is that we generate to that person, to that sentient being. The stronger the compassion we generate to that sentient being, so many eons of negative karma get purified, defilements get purified. That’s *unbelievable*, that’s unbelievable practice.

We collect merit, limitless skies of merit taking on one person’s sicknesses, right? We can do that but taking not only sicknesses but the whole entire sufferings, but the whole entire sufferings of sentient beings. Sickness is just one small thing, but there’s many other problems, many other sufferings, all the mental and physical sufferings of numberless hell beings, numberless hungry ghosts, numberless animals, numberless human beings, suras, asuras, intermediate state beings. We collect numberless merits, numberless merits, six times or seven times, because in each realm, there’s numberless sentient beings, including intermediate state beings, we collect six times’ numberless merits. It’s just unimaginable. What we gain from that is unimaginable.

It purifies our defilements, our negative; it’s unimaginable. Depending on how strong the compassion we generate is, even to one sentient being, many lifetimes, eons of negative karma get purified, when we generate compassion to even one sentient being We collect inconceivable merits, become closer to enlightenment each time we do that, when we take on the suffering of one sentient being. And especially when we take on as many as possible, we become closer to enlightenment.

THE BENEFITTING OF CHERISHING OTHERS: GESHE CHEKAWA PRAYS TO BE REBORN IN HELL

It seems you have heard about Lama Atisha. The teachings we are receiving and meditation we’re doing is what was advised by Lama Atisha, his *Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment*. Many others who attained the path, including Lama Tsongkhapa, revealed the commentary, so there are many teachings on lam-rim, the stages of the path to enlightenment, from Lama Atisha, Lama Atisha’s followers, and the Kadampa geshe, those great practitioners, highly attained great scholars.

Kadampa Geshe Chekawa did this meditation, taking other sentient beings’ sufferings on oneself, and giving all of one’s own happiness, all the merits to all sentient beings, taking and giving. He prayed to be born in the hells for all sentient beings.

What happened was, even though he always done this tong-len practice, praying all his life to be born in the hell realm to benefit for sentient being, the day he was passing away he had a vision of a buddha's pure land, and so he said he hadn't succeeded in his prayer. He actually wanted to be born in the hells to benefit others, but he said he didn't succeed because of the vision of pure land. He asked his attendant to immediately make offerings, something like that.

From his vision, he saw he would be born in the pure land of a buddha, where there's no suffering, *at all*, and in some of the buddhas' pure lands, like Heruka, Vajrayogini, these enlightened beings, you can be enlightened. If you happen to be born there, you definitely become enlightened.

If you are reborn in Amitabha Buddha's pure land, many lamas say there's no opportunity to practice tantra there, but once you're born there, it is definite that you never get reborn in the hells, hungry ghosts or animals, again. That's definite.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama's younger tutor, Trijang Rinpoche, so, from here I wrote a letter about this to His Holiness Trijang Rinpoche, who was the Dalai Lama's younger tutor and my root guru. He replied that, yes, you can practice tantra in Amitabha's pure land. Rinpoche answered that. So, that means you can achieve enlightenment there. So, anyway, that's just to give you some idea.

So, Kadampa Geshe Chekawa prayed to be born in the hells to benefit other sentient beings, but then when he passed away [Rinpoche laughs] the appearance of the buddha's pure land happened wherever he was, at the hermitage or whatever. It is the power of the good heart. Why this is happening is because of the power of the good heart, cherishing others.

It's very important to understand the power of the good heart, cherishing others. Giving up ourselves to the other sentient beings, sacrificing ourselves to benefit, to cherish even one sentient being, has unimaginable benefit, *unimaginable* benefit.

THE BENEFITTING OF CHERISHING OTHERS: TSIMBULWA CARRIES THE LEPER

In Western Bengal or it might be that direction, there was a river and there was a lady, on one side, waiting for somebody to carry her across. She was totally filthy with pus, with leprosy disease, pus coming out and unbelievable, totally black and pus coming out, and something like that, covered by leprosy sores.

Usually, of course, that sickness is very contagious. If you touch it you get it, so nobody dares to touch somebody with leprosy. While she was waiting, a great yogi called Ngagpa Chöpawa, came through and she asked him to help, to carry her to the other side of the river, but Ngagpa Chöpawa didn't help. He just passed straight to the river, and didn't carry her. He was going to a place called Ogi [?] to do the last practice of tantric conduct.

Later, his disciple, a monk called Getsul Tsimbulwa, came. He was a yogi but also a monk. He saw this lady, and when she asked if he can carry her to the other side of the river, he felt

unbearable compassion, unbearable compassion. Even though a monk cannot touch a woman, he felt unbearable compassion, and so, without any hesitation, without any thought of leprosy and all the sicknesses, he immediately carried her on his back.

Then, without needing to cross the river, just middle of the river, that monk's negative karma was purified by carrying her with unbearable compassion. When he reached middle of the river his negative karma was purified. The impure mind, seeing her ordinary, as very dirty and sick, that impure mind was purified, the negative karma that projects that being as ordinary, which makes you to see that ordinary being with all the sicknesses was purified.

This lady was actually the enlightened being, the deity, Dorje Pag-mo or Vajravarahi. Dorje Pag-mo is not that old, sick woman, filled with leprosy, with sickness, not that; she is a deity, an enlightened being, in female aspect. Then, she took him to the pure land.

That means, in that life, so even though here you are very old, with lots of wrinkles, when you are born in a pure land, you become very young, sixteen years old, very youthful, very beautiful, very young. So, Dorje Pag-mo, the deity, the female enlightened being, took him to the pure land, with that same body, meaning he became enlightened there.

This is one story that makes it very clear. If we cherish one sentient being, if we generate compassion, unbelievable negative karma gets purified. Before that, seeing just an ordinary lady, totally covered in leprosy disease, kind of disgusting, but the monk felt unbearable compassion and sacrificed his life, totally dedicated himself by carrying her on his back. Without even crossing the whole river, just in the middle, all the negative karma was purified, and he saw the deity, and then the deity took him to the pure land.

Normally, when we die, through powerful meditation, our consciousness can be transfer the body to the pure land of the deity. But here, the other thing is, if we have unbelievable merit, unbelievable merit, and correctly devote to the guru, with no mistakes made with the relationship of the guru, such as with this practice, instead of cherishing the I, cherishing others; instead of giving away others, cherishing others, we don't need a pure land.

It needs this total change of the mind, doing this practice of tong-len—*tong* is giving, *len* is taking, giving all our own merits, our happiness, body, possessions, even our surrounding people, who are helping us, we make charity of everything to others. Then we take other sentient beings' suffering, and its cause, karma and delusion.

Those who have correctly devoted to the virtuous friend, and have made no mistakes, along with the bodhicitta practice, then, without going to a pure land, without the need to die, without the need to leave this body, then consciousness goes with same body to a pure land, or the deity takes us to the pure land, and then we become enlightened there. So that happens. There have been many stories like that of great practitioners in the past.

What I'm saying is, that is enlightened being, but he could not see her as an enlightened being because his mind was obscured. What he saw was ordinary, she appeared to him as an ordinary sentient being, and then he had strong compassion towards that sentient being, and sacrificed himself to her, then even while he was carrying her, while he was in the middle of the river, he purified all that. So many lifetimes, eons of negative karma was purified which

projected the concept of that's being as ordinary, including being dirty and diseased. All that was purified and he saw an enlightened being.

This is similar, in our life. The same thing has happened many times to us. There is a buddha, but what we see, what we meet, seems ordinary. We don't recognize that being as a buddha. This has happened many times to us; we cannot recognize it because the mind is not purified. Therefore, there's a projection of impurity. There's a projection, the ordinary view, the mistaken view, like the disease. We see beings, having delusion, having mistakes, sufferings, we have the projection of that, and the strong belief, the strong belief that it's true, the strong belief holding on that, that it's true, that this is reality. But it's not reality. That strong belief, that unbelievably fixed idea, becomes an obstacle to seeing a being as a buddha.

Like that, Getsul Tsimbulwa, Ngagpa Chöpawa, that has happened many, many times to us, this, holding this projection, this ordinary view, and then believing what we have seen, thinking it is a hundred percent like this. We have such a strong belief, that we cannot recognize the being as a buddha, and then it becomes an obstacle.

This especially happens with any place, especially holy places, like the twenty-four holy places of Nepal, the holy places of Vajrayogini or Heruka, the holy places that are in Nepal, Tibet and India. These are so special; they are very special holy places, and definitely in those places, but, the problem we encounter is because of our superstition. What we see is ordinary and we believe this is true, that everything in reality is like this. We have very fixed ideas that become obstacles, very heavy obstacles. We cannot see enlightened beings, we cannot see dakinis, the deities, and because of that we don't follow that. We don't see the signs, those holy places, the dakinis—there are different levels of dakinis—and the enlightened beings.

Superstition believes this, thinking “What I see is ordinary, so it's definitely ordinary.” We believe that, we trust that. We hold on to our own projection so strongly, and then that becomes an obstacle.

So anyway, the conclusion is, with the bodhicitta practice, cherishing others, it's unimaginable how it becomes a quick path, how it brings us to enlightenment quicker—even cherishing one sentient being, even cherishing one living being, like this example of Getsul Tsimbulwa. That's same, whether it's a person or an animal, an insect—it's the same, any type of living being, it doesn't have to be only human being.

THE BENEFITING OF CHERISHING OTHERS: ASANGA SEES MAITREYA

Since I'm talking about this, there is another story, about Asanga, one of the Six Ornaments, who wrote many basic Buddha's teachings, explaining the path to enlightenment, one of those six great scholars or pandits, highly attained beings. Asanga tried to achieve Maitreya Buddha, the future coming Buddha.

He tried for twelve years to achieve Maitreya Buddha, tried to see Maitreya Buddha. In the hermitage, the cave, he tried for three years but nothing happened. Then he left, he came

down and there was a sign. I don't know which one was first of the signs, I'm not sure which one was first, anyway, to get a general idea.

In the road, one time he saw somebody cutting the rock with thread. Cutting rock is very hard, but to do it with a thread, the rock had got a mark, worn out by a thread passing back and forth.

He had given up doing the retreat because nothing had happened, nothing, but on the road he watched this thread, even though the rock so hard, but by doing this [Rinpoche shows] the man was able to cut, able to wear out the rock, so, he thought, "If he can do that, why not, why can't I achieve Maitreya Buddha" That energized him, so he went back to do retreat again. He did another three years, but still nothing happened, and again he gave up and came down.

Then he saw in the road, birds going to their nest inside a cave or a hole. Every time it flew out, its wing touched the rock, and he saw how even though the wing was so soft and the rock was hard, it could be worn out by the wing. He thought, "Why not, why can't I achieve Maitreya Buddha?"

Then, he went back to the retreat place for another three years, but again nothing happened, so he left, he gave up, then he come down.

This time he saw water dripping on the rock, one drop, two drops, three drops, making a hole. The water was very wet, but by continuity the drops made a hole in the rock. When he saw this, he thought, "Why can't I see Maitreya Buddha?" By seeing that, he became inspired, and he went back to the cave to continue the retreat.

So, anyway, he was there a total of twelve years, but still nothing happened, so he left. He gave up.

Then on the road, the final thing he saw was a wounded dog, its body totally filled with infection in the wound, and totally filled with maggots, part of the body, completely filled with maggots. He felt unbelievable compassion, unbelievable compassion. Then, he cut his flesh, I don't know what it's called, from his thigh. [Rinpoche laughs] Anyway, he cut his flesh. He spread it out on the ground for the worms to live on, for the maggots to eat, to live on.

He thought if he picked the maggots up with the finger he might crush them, so, he went to pick them up with the tip of his tongue. He went to pick them up with the tip of his tongue, by closing his eyes, to pick them up.

Closing his eyes, he found he could not touch them, so he opened the eyes and he saw Maitreya Buddha. [Rinpoche laughs] So, *only now* was he able to see Maitreya Buddha, only after he generated this unbearable compassion to this wounded dog.

So, you see, it's the same. This being was Maitreya Buddha, but before, due to his obscured mind, his impure karma or impure mind, the deep karmic defilements, he couldn't see

Maitreya Buddha. It was Maitreya Buddha but he didn't see it, he only saw a dog, suffering so much, very poor.

But he generated unbearable compassion, he sacrificed his life to help the dog, cutting the thigh. What do you call it? I don't remember exactly from the text, I think it might have been his calf. [Rinpoche laughs] It can't have been from the toes. Anyway, he generated this unbelievable compassion, so that all that negative karma, all the impure karma, the obscuration that interfered with him seeing Maitreya Buddha, blocking him from seeing Maitreya Buddha, were purified. Because of his projections he didn't even see Maitreya as a human being, but as a dog, with unbelievable suffering, with infected wounds, filled with maggots.

Can you imagine? It's completely purified in that time, just there. He did twelve years retreat; he lived in a cave for twelve years, he tried so hard, but nothing happened, nothing happened. Only now, after he generated this unbearable compassion for that sentient being, purifying all his defilements, was he able to see Maitreya Buddha.

Immediately he grabbed Maitreya Buddha, and he kind of complained a little bit, saying, "Why didn't I see you earlier? I tried so hard."

Maitreya Buddha said, "I was there. I was there with you all the time." Maitreya Buddha proved this. When he was in the hermitage, doing retreat, Asanga would spit on the ground. So what happened, on the Maitreya Buddha's robe, there was a mark of spit. He showed that to Asanga, saying "I was there with you, see."

When Maitreya Buddha asked him what he needed, he asked Maitreya to please give him teachings. Maitreya Buddha took him to Tushita pure land, Maitreya Buddha's pure land. Fifty years for a human being is one morning there, one morning there but for human beings, fifty years, so gave teachings, *Jang chub deng na*.

The teachings Maitreya Buddha gave have five divisions. The *Abhisamayalamkara* explains the whole path to enlightenment, the extensive qualities of the Buddha, the four kayas. That's very common. Then *Do de gyen*. I don't remember the whole, but there are five divisions of teachings of Maitreya Buddha. There is also *Uttaratantra*, talking about nature of the mind, which proves that with tantra we can become a buddha, that your mind can be enlightened.

So, Asanga received all those teachings from Maitreya Buddha, and then after Asanga came back to the world, he wrote the five commentaries, *Tsa den nga*, to the teachings. Because of that, since Asanga brought Maitreya Buddha's teachings into this world, these teachings have been studied, and *Abhisamayalamkara* and so forth have been the main subject to study in the great monastic universities in the Lama Tsongkhapa tradition, like Sera, Ganden, Drepung, the Panchen Rinpoche Monastery, Tashi Lhunpo and so forth. These are the main monasteries, then there are other smaller monasteries.

It's a very important subject that's studied for many years, memorizing root text and the many commentaries by Indians and also by the great Tibetans, those holy beings, those great scholars, including Lama Tsongkhapa and so forth. It's been an important main subject to

study, like the *Prajnaparamita* teachings. Up to now, these root texts and commentaries have been studied.

So many sentient beings who have studied this and put it into practice, have attained the path, the stages of the path to enlightenment. This has happened so often, since Asanga brought these teachings of Maitreya Buddha into this world. There have been an unimaginable number, numberless beings who have become enlightened by studying the *Abhisamayalamkara* and so forth, those Maitreya Buddha teachings. It's unimaginable how many there have been up to now who attained the path to enlightenment.

And the whole entire benefit is due to Asanga sacrificing himself to this wounded dog, generated inconceivable compassion. That is the benefit of Asanga cherishing that dog. Inconceivable numbers of beings have become bodhisattvas and become buddhas; sentient beings of this world up to now have received unimaginable, unimaginable benefit. Even now, in those monastic universities this is the main subject studied; it is very important.

What I'm saying is here, from his compassion there has been the extensive benefit, not only for himself but for so many other sentient beings. So many have become bodhisattvas; so many have become enlightened beings. It's unimaginable how this has happened because one person generated compassion to that worldly dog. It's so powerful, unbelievable. So as I said before, this is how it brings us to enlightenment quickly.

THE BENEFITING OF CHERISHING OTHERS: THE BUDDHA PULLS THE CHARIOT IN HELL

It is said that the first time the Buddha generated compassion was in a past life in the hell realm. That's what's said. He has been born in the hell and had to pull like a horse carriage on the red-hot iron ground, where the iron was oneness with the fire, with the karmic guardians sitting on it. He and another hell being had to pull this carriage.

I guess carrying this heavy load like the carriage or things like that could be the karma of the causing suffering to the animals, of torturing them, letting them to suffer. I think the result of that could be birth in the hell realm where you have to carry this heavy carriage.

Then he thought, "Since I have to pull this myself, why not let him free, and I can pull it by myself." He thought that.

The minute he thought that, to take the other's suffering on himself, to let him go free, when he generated that thought, immediately the karmic guardian who was sitting on the carriage hit him on his head with a hammer. Probably this acted as a kind of condition, and his consciousness transferred into the Thirty-three Realm, the deva realm. I think it might be the Thirty-three Realm or Tushita, I'm not sure, maybe Thirty-three Realm. Otherwise, if he didn't generate this compassion for the other hell being, to take that suffering on *himself* and let him go free, if he didn't do that, he would have had to suffer for what could be an unimaginable length, I don't know how many eons, maybe many billions and billions of years, he would have to suffer, pulling that carriage on the ground which is oneness with fire. But because he generated compassion for the other being, wishing to let him go free, he

purified the negative karma that caused him to have to pull that carriage for however many billions of years. All that negative karma was purified, doing that, just from that. Then the karma to be in the hell finished and his consciousness transferred into the deva realm.

There are so many stories about the benefits that happened to those who practiced compassion, those who practiced cherishing others.

THE BENEFITING OF CHERISHING OTHERS: TONG-LEN CURES DISEASES

Cherishing even one sentient being brings unbelievable, unbelievable, unbelievable benefit. Whether it's a human being, whether it's an insect, even just one sentient being, it's so unbelievable, it brings to enlightenment quicker.

What I was saying before, a geshe who has the same as me, Thubten Zopa [Rinpoche laughs], who recently returned from United States told me somebody who has diabetes did tong-len practice and recovered. This geshe told me, so he knew this person or something. Anyway, he did tong-len practice for the person he knew who had diabetes, and that person recovered. I have diabetes but I have been a very lazy person, an extremely lazy person [Rinpoche laughs] so I didn't do tong-len.

Then, in Colorado, there was a lady who joined the Dharma center there, who had cancer in the blood, very dangerous. The doctors were unable to operate because they were very scared, because it was very dangerous. So, she did tong-len practice, the bodhicitta practice, taking other sentient beings' sufferings on oneself and giving one's own happiness and merits to others, she did this meditation very much. Then, she went to the hospital, they could not find cancer. This is some years ago. She completely recovered, completely recovered, for about a year, then again the cancer came back, I think because of her karma. She has very strong karma, so she was completely recovered for one year, then it came back again and she passed away.

I don't recollect but there are many stories about tong-len practice, about somebody who has cancer or other sicknesses and recovers. There are many stories but I don't recollect them now. However, this has happened to many people.

Then, AIDS. There was a Chinese student, he was in Dharamsala, and I think it was probably the first time he met Tibetan Mahayana Buddhism, from a great Lama, Kyabje Rato Rinpoche. He spent some time there, studying, receiving teachings, then went back to Singapore, and when he went to the hospital, he found he had AIDS. He wrote to his guru in Dharamsala and then his guru, Rato Rinpoche, took some sickness. What do you call the shaking one? [*Student*: Parkinson's.] Parkinson's, yeah. He took this sickness. When he was doing that, he dictated to his secretary, the tong-len meditation sending light from the heart, going to everything, taking their sufferings and the cause, the cause, karma and delusion, on yourself, you see, on your self-cherishing thought, and destroying the self-cherishing thought.

He got the meditation, so he did the meditation. When he was doing this meditation, thinking of others' sufferings, and taking other sentient beings' sufferings on himself, he couldn't stand it. Unbelievable tears were coming out. Unbearable compassion arose, unbelievable. He did this practice for four days and then went to the hospital. They could not find the AIDS.

I thought he must have meditated for many hours, but he said for four minutes, only four minutes every day. He did tong-len practice just for four minutes. [Rinpoche laughs] I was shocked, I was very surprised. I thought he did it for many, many hours, but he only did it for four minutes each day. Each time he did it, he got unbelievable compassion, so many tears flowed, there was no worry, nothing, no thought of his own AIDS, only other sentient beings' suffering. He couldn't bear it. Because of the power of that compassion, it purified so many lifetimes, unimaginable lifetimes, so much past negative karma was purified. The cause of the cancer, the negative karma, was purified. It affects the cause, causes it to be purified. You cannot do that in the hospital. Hospitals cannot take it away. [Rinpoche laughs] Hospitals cannot operate with the machines and take the negative karma out. It affected the AIDS because it affected the negative karma. It purified the negative karma, so he recovered from that disease.

I think I've also heard of other people with AIDS who recovered by doing this meditation.

What I'm going to say is that if a doctor says we have cancer, we're a most fortunate person. Any other time we are too lazy to practice tong-len, with not enough renunciation for our suffering, unable to see how our own samsara is in nature of suffering, not having compassion for others, seeing how they are suffering. We are so lazy we don't do practice, or if we do, we do it very little.

Now the doctor says we have cancer, and we suddenly realize what it means to have a life-threatening disease. That reminds us of death, that we have to die. Without talking much, it really gives us an incredible opportunity to think it's not only us in this world who have cancer, it's not only us in this world; there are numberless other beings, sentient beings, not only this universe, there are numberless universes, there are human beings in other universes who have these sicknesses.

It's amazing. It makes us understand our situation, when we think of the numberless other human beings who have cancer, how they have to suffer. It's not only us who suffers, not only us who have this disease. It makes us think of others who have this suffering, this disease.

That inspires us to do the practice, the tong-len, bodhicitta practice, the brave-hearted practice, giving up ourselves for other sentient beings, giving up ourselves for numberless sentient beings, to experience their sufferings, and for them to have all the happiness up to enlightenment, all the temporary happiness, liberation from oceans of samsaric suffering and full enlightenment. To let them to have that, to take all their sufferings, that's the best practice, the most beneficial practice. It collects the most extensive merit and purifies many lifetimes, many eons of negative karma, and we become closer to enlightenment each time.

I want to say this. When we give away our body to sentient beings, we're giving it away to numberless sentient beings. We give it to numberless hell beings, creating numberless merit. Then, we give it to numberless hungry ghosts, creating numberless merit. Then we give it to numberless animals, creating numberless merit. Then, we give it to numberless human beings, creating numberless merit. Then the same with suras, asuras and intermediate state beings. So we collect seven times numberless merits.

Then all the past merits we collected from beginningless rebirth, the present merits and all the future merits, and all the result happiness, up to enlightenment—we give away everything to numberless hell beings, numberless hungry ghosts, animals, human beings, asuras, suras, so everyone. Again, when we give all merit like this, with all this merit, we collect so many times, so many times numberless merit, unbelievable times numberless merit. Then the result is happiness.

When we give our wealth away to those numberless sentient beings and the surrounding people also, it's unbelievable, we collect so many times numberless merit. That's a most amazing practice.

In conclusion, what I want to say is that this purification and the merits that I have explained are always this. For example, in business, with the stock market, gold goes up and down, up and down. The value of the money is always going up and down; it's uncertain. But these benefits, the unbelievable purification and inconceivable merits, are nothing like the stock market, the value of gold—this month it goes down, the next month it will be higher—there's no such thing; it's always the same, it's always like this.

This is the most wonderful practice, whenever, not only when we find out we have cancer. This is the best thing to do, the greatest. Doctor tells us we have cancer, but when we do this meditation, it brings us to enlightenment, it makes us quickly reach the *end* of samsara, the cessation of the oceans of samsaric suffering, *all* the diseases, all the sicknesses, and not only sicknesses, the cessation of *all* the sufferings. We quickly reach that end, the end of suffering, not only cessation of the sicknesses, but *all* the sicknesses and sufferings of samsara. This is unbelievable; this is what causes us to quickly achieve enlightenment. Our life becomes most meaningful, most wonderful, the happiest, happiest life, with inner happiness, with great peace in our heart.

THE BENEFITTING OF CHERISHING OTHERS: NO SATISFACTION UNLESS WE CHERISH OTHERS

As I mentioned the other day, when we have the goal, the purpose of our life, to free the numberless sentient beings from all the suffering and causes and bring them to full enlightenment, when we have this attitude, when we're living our life with this attitude, we just don't have the unbelievable problems in the life. I've mentioned that.

Before was because of self-cherishing thought, cherishing the I. Because we have the unbelievable thought of cherishing the I, this self-cherishing thought, this selfish mind, then there's those delusions like attachment, anger, jealousy, pride and so forth, and with these emotional thoughts, so many unbelievable problems arise in our life.

Suffering doesn't come from outside, suffering comes from our mind. With these negative emotional thoughts, we torture ourselves, constantly bringing all these problems and torturing ourselves. Because of that, we find so many problems in life.

With the good heart, cherishing others, thinking of others, seeking happiness for others, working for them, dedicating what we do for them, with this motivation, everything we do might be the same as we were doing before, but now everything we do—everything we do with the body, everything we do with the speech, everything we do with the mind—everything is for others, for the numberless sentient beings, to free them from the oceans of samsaric suffering, and for them to achieve happiness, not only temporary, but ultimate happiness, liberation from samsara and full enlightenment.

Because of that, there's so much inner satisfaction. We, immediately, immediately achieve satisfaction. We find satisfaction. It's what the Rolling Stones said. The Rolling Stones? Rolling Stones?

Student: Mick Jagger?

Rinpoche: What did you say? Mick Jagger? So, the Rolling Stones, he made a song with his guitar, saying, "I can't get no satisfaction, and I tried and I tried, I tried and I tried." [Rinpoche laughs] I cannot get no satisfaction. [Group laughs]

I think that's a great teaching, you know. [Group laughs] That's a great teaching. I think it's great advice, a great teaching in the West. West, East—it's a great, it's true, it's exactly true, it's exactly like that.

If we're not practicing Dharma, whatever we try we never get. If we're not practicing Dharma, we try to get pleasure, we try and try, we try and try, and we try and try, but we never get satisfaction. Then, due to attachment, many problems arise in life, and due to attachment, anger arises. If there were no attachment, there would be no reason for anger to arise. Many negative emotional thoughts arise like that.

There are many hundreds of problems, and it goes on and on. One finishes and then we start another one. We finish another one, one package of life problems, of relationship problems finishes, then we start another one. The next one finishes so we start another one. For example, in relationships, as soon as we give up one, we start another, we start a new one. Whatever we have tried and tried, we never get satisfaction, there are always many other problems in life.

If we don't practice Dharma, this is how life is, constantly suffering. Then when life suddenly ends, ended by death, life becomes totally, totally empty, totally empty, totally meaningless. Life becomes totally meaningless, totally empty.

Not only that, because our whole life we didn't practice Dharma, our motivation has always been because of attachment, sometimes anger, jealousy, pride, and all those things are due to ignorance, the ignorance of not knowing Dharma, not knowing what's right and wrong.

We experience so many problems in the life as result of past negative karma, such as the ten nonvirtuous actions. Those are basic, the suffering result of those negative karmas, such as the *possessed result*, the suffering to do with the place. There are so much problems with the place, many contagious disease or many types of harm—wars, fighting, so many problems—and there are so many insects or other things that harm us. Not even just animals, even the elements, cause health problems.

That's the possessed result, and then *experiencing the result similar to the cause*. How we harmed others, in this life we receive similar harm from others. Then, *creating the result similar to the cause*, then we do the same negative action in this life we did in the past. We engage again in negative karmas, such as killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, if we did it in that life, then we do it again, because of the imprint left on the mental continuum by the past, our negative karma.

These are the three major types of sufferings we experience in the human realm, as a result of past negative karma. That's why, even if we are born as a human being, there are so many problems, problems we see others experiencing, and also we ourselves experience. We need to understand the root. If we don't practice Dharma, this is what happens. If we don't practice Dharma, what happens is exactly like the Rolling Stones said.

So, maybe, we'll have a break. Maybe you have to go pipi?

REQUESTING PRAYER TO THE LINEAGE LAMAS

We stopped the prayer this morning, so maybe we'll continue with that. I interfered with this morning prayer. We started the *requesting prayer to the lineage lamas*, then I started to explain so we didn't continue with the prayer.

So, we continue with the requesting prayer to the lineage lamas. To pacify obstacles, to attain the path to enlightenment, to make our lives most meaningful, to achieve the realizations, I am requesting to the lineage lamas, the stages of the path to enlightenment.

You have the translation there in English, so, the first request is to the root guru. From the merit field a replica of the guru sits on your crown, with the first request. [Rinpoche chants the Tibetan] The translation is there in your prayer book. It should be there in English. Then, nectar beams are emitted, white nectar beams are emitted purifying all the defilements, all the obstacles to achieving the realization from guru devotion, root of the path to enlightenment, up to enlightenment.

Then, the second request. [Rinpoche chants the Tibetan] The replica of the root guru absorbs into you. Think you have achieved all the attainments on the whole path to enlightenment, all the blessings, all the qualities of the guru's holy body, holy speech, holy mind, you have received that.

Then, the first request to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, then Maitreya Buddha, Asanga and so forth, all of this section. The next prayer is the requesting prayer to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, then Manjushri, Nagarjuna and so forth, until that comes, then, the lineage lamas of

the path of extensiveness, the method. To achieve enlightenment there's the path of method and wisdom, and this is the method.

The last request is done twice. The first one is purifying all the obstacles to achieve the path of extensiveness, to actualize it within your heart, from the root, guru devotion, up to enlightenment, to actualize the extensive path, the method. From the sutras, the common path, loving kindness, compassion, bodhicitta, and then the tantric path, such as the illusory body, and achieving the result, rupakaya.

You repeat twice. With the first request you purify, with the second request, you receive those attainments within yourself. So, everyone think like that, okay.

The purpose of my life is to purify the sentient beings, to liberate them from the oceans of samsaric suffering and bring them to enlightenment. Therefore, I must achieve enlightenment, therefore, I'm going to make the tea offering. Okay, think like that.

And then the tea is not ordinary. You collect unbelievable merit if you visualize it as nectar, by purifying it in emptiness, by looking at it as empty. In reality, what appears to us is a hallucination, in the sense of real tea existing from its own side, the way it appears there and how we believe that appearance is true, that's a total hallucination; it's false. That is the object to be refuted. That's totally non-existent there, totally non-existent there, not even an atom of that exists.

So, then you label, jeweled container, and then the nectar. What you label, it appears as nectar, and what the Buddha tastes, what appears to Buddha, is that nectar, the most pure, highest quality, the purest nectar. But that is like oceans, even that's numberless. It's a way to collect the most extensive merit, unbelievably extensive merit. By visualizing bigger and numberless is a way to collect extensive merit.

Then, the simple way. Those who are familiar with the Guru Puja merit field, you can do that, and those who aren't familiar, then visualize Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, or if you are practicing Chenrezig, Tara, or Medicine Buddha, whichever deity, you can think that, but that's everything. It's one aspect, but it's *all* into one, the root guru, whose holy mind—this is the guru yoga meditation—whose holy mind is all the buddhas' holy mind, the dharmakaya, in the aspect of Shakyamuni Buddha or whichever deity you use. This one aspect is numberless buddhas, numberless Dharma, this is all the buddhas, this is all the Dharma, Sangha, this is all the statues, stupas, scriptures. Then you make offerings.

OM AH HUM, OM AH HUM, OM AH HUM.

La ma sang gyä...

In Manjushri's reply to Lama Tsongkhapa, the second one, one-pointedly devoting to the guru, the one-pointed mind requesting the guru, that's what this is.

So there's a whole lineage. Starting with Shakyamuni Buddha, there are all the lineage lamas of the *path of extensiveness*, and *path of profundity*, up to the present guru and then, behind, the *lineage lamas of blessings*. In front, around the Buddha there are all the direct gurus, with whom

you have made a relationship, a Dharma connection, and then there are the other lineage lamas. On the petals, in the center, is Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, and then there are the direct gurus around, then there are the deities of the four classes of tantra, the thousand buddhas of this fortunate eon, those who have already descended, up to Shakyamuni Buddha, who is number four, but there's still the rest, from the thousand, who will descend to this world to show the holy deeds of achieving enlightenment in Bodhgaya, the same place.

Then, the Thirty-five Buddhas and the Seven Medicine Master Buddhas, and then, after that, the Eight Bodhisattvas, and the arhats, then the dakas, dakinis and Dharma protectors.

HOW THE GURU MANIFESTS TO GUIDE US

Of the numberless buddhas, there are so many, in different aspects, doing different activities, doing those particular activities, manifesting in those aspects, such as protectors, the dakas and dakinis, the deities. However, the reality is, there is just one. There are so many but it's actually just one, just one, it is just the guru. These is just one. Who is that? That's the guru.

The guru has absolute guru and conventional guru, and the absolute guru is the dharmakaya, non-dual bliss and voidness, that pervades all the phenomena. There's no place where there's no guru. It pervades all phenomena and is bound with infinite compassion that embraces us, every single sentient being.

That absolute guru manifests into forms, into various impure forms, various pure forms, to suit all the needs of sentient beings. There are all kinds of pure forms, manifesting as nirmanakaya, and sambhogakaya and dharmakaya.

When we achieve the dharmakaya, when our mind becomes the dharmakaya, at that time we have achieved the guru, we have become the guru. At that time, we have achieved numberless buddhas as well. That manifests in all kinds of, all sorts of ordinary forms, to guide ordinary beings who have ordinary minds, impure minds with impure karma.

While our mind is ordinary and obscured, we do not have pure appearance; we only have mistaken ordinary appearance, and so the only way they can guide us directly is by manifesting in an ordinary form, which means showing the aspect of having delusions, and showing the aspect of making mistakes in actions, having sufferings, old age, sicknesses, death and so forth, showing samsaric suffering.

Only with this aspect, only then can they directly guide us, by revealing the Dharma, the commentaries, the oral transmissions and the initiations, and giving tantric commentaries—all that—then granting the vows: the pratimoksha vows, the bodhisattva vows and the tantric vows. In this ordinary form, which is the only one that we can see, they can guide us by granting this directly, revealing the teachings on the graduated path of the lower capable being, the middle capable being and the higher capable being, thus bringing us to liberation, the cessation of the suffering of samsara, and its cause, and then to enlightenment.

So, anyway, what I'm saying is that this dharmakaya, which I mentioned before, there are so many aspects, but actually it's just one, one manifesting into many. You can also say there are many manifest into one, but here I'm saying one manifesting into many.

The conventional root guru is only that which I described just now, taking an ordinary form suitable for our ordinary mind, manifesting as ordinary, then guiding us to liberation and to enlightenment.

When you do this practice, requesting to the lineage lamas, in your heart, the key understanding is that all this is the guru. There are so many, but all these, you should have the deep understanding in your heart that all this is just one, it's the guru. It's all the same, the root guru, the holy mind, the absolute guru, the transcendental wisdom, voidness. Then it becomes perfect if you do this practice, the requesting prayer to the lineage lamas, with this understanding to receive blessings, to receive their qualities.

There's no guru other than the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. What I'm saying, the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha is all an embodiment of the guru. The guru is manifested in all, and all are embodied into one.

You do this request for yourself, but also for all sentient beings, not only praying for yourself, to purify obstacles, but also for all sentient beings, then with the second recitation, to achieve all the qualities. You can receive the replica within yourself, you receive all the qualities of the lineage lama, who is the guru. Then, you can do that as well for all sentient beings.

REQUESTING PRAYER TO THE LINEAGE LAMAS (CONT)

Those who like to read in English, you can do it in English. It's your choice. You have total freedom. [Rinpoche laughs]

[Rinpoche chants the *Requesting Prayer to the Lineage Lamas* in Tibetan]

So from here we are making requests to the lineage lamas, from Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, Manjushri, Nagarjuna and so forth, the lineage lamas of the path of profundity and the path of wisdom.

With the first request, nectar beams are emitted, purified all defilements to actualizing the path of wisdom. What is purified is the self-cherishing thought. The opposite of wisdom, the obstacles to the wisdom is ignorance, grasping, holding onto inherent existence, independent existence. Holding onto that which is not there, which doesn't exist. If you look for it, you can't find it. When you're not examining it, it looks like it's there, but if you look for it, you can't find that real thing anywhere. How ordinary people relate to the world, the terms they use in conversation, it seems to exist, but in reality, the object, or *gag-cha*, the object to be reputed doesn't exist at all—the inherently existent object or the independent object or the object existing from its own side, existing by nature, all the different ways of expressing the same thing. Ignorance is the mind holding onto that, believing that this is true and holding onto that. So, with this first request, you purify this.

In tantra, before the generation stage was the impure appearance, ordinary thought. Now, purified, what is needed is to actualize the clear light, the extremely subtle mind, which is the only one that goes to enlightenment. The gross mind doesn't go to enlightenment.

You purify the impure mind, the gross mind, and achieve the result, the dharmakaya. What I am saying is purifying that is achieved is from sutra, the wisdom realizing emptiness, and then from the tantra, the clear light and the result, the dharmakaya, is achieved. That happens for yourself and then for other sentient beings.

Until it comes to Lama Atisha, then that's the meditation.

[Rinpoche continues chanting the requesting prayer in Tibetan]

So, from Lama Atisha, then, it's the same, so purified both obstacles, actualized the path of wisdom [Rinpoche corrects himself] say, Path of Extensive Means/Deeds and the Profundity, so, purified the obstacles, and then, with the second request, achieved both paths, method and wisdom, the Path of the Extensive Means/Deeds, Path of the Profundity. So, the common one, and the uncommon, the tantra, so, the result, dharmakaya, rupakaya, within your heart, as well as all sentient beings, so as much as possible.

[Rinpoche continues chanting the requesting prayer in Tibetan]

The last one can be just one, the last requesting.

Then, you can recite the *Foundation of All Good Qualities* in English.

[Students recite in English, Rinpoche chants in Tibetan]

When you recite the meditation prayer on the stages of the path to enlightenment, at the time you make the request, that realization is achieved within you. Whichever verse, you have that realization on the path, that path is actualized within you, as well as actualized in the hearts of all sentient beings. That's the meditation, to do that.

Then, the root guru above your crown absorbs into you, and you become a buddha, and at your heart is the mantra, which send beams of light to all sentient beings, to numberless hell beings, hungry ghosts, animals, suras, asuras—all the six realms' sentient beings, and intermediate state beings— and they're all purified. So, while chanting the mantra, you purify them and they all become enlightened. Numberless hell beings become enlightened, numberless hungry ghosts become enlightened, all the animals become enlightened in the aspect of Shakyamuni Buddha. And as well, all the human beings become enlightened, all the sura, asura beings become enlightened, all the intermediate state beings become enlightened.

Due to all the three times' merits collected by me and collected by others, that which is merely labeled by mind. Merely labeled doesn't mean it doesn't exist. There's great danger when you hear "merely labeled" that you think it doesn't exist. It's very easy to think that and it's a great danger. As I already explained yesterday, it's merely labeled but it exists. For

anything which exists, any phenomenon which exists, there's no other way of existing, except merely labeled by mind, there's no other way it's existing.

If you believe there's something additional, there's something more than that, then that's a hallucination. This should be known, this should be kept in mind. This should be written down, and kept in the mind.

THREE CRITERIA OF HOW THINGS EXIST

Whatever exists, exists in mere name, merely imputed by mind, there's no other way existing. Something slight, something slight, something slight, anything more than that, then it's the object to be reputed, *gag-cha*. Even something slight, anything more than that, not just merely labeled by mind, but something slightly more than that, if it goes a little bit beyond that, that is the *gag-cha*, the object to be reputed. That's the false object; it doesn't exist.

Anything slightly more than what's merely labeled, that does not exist, that's the hallucination. The concept which believes, which holds onto that is a wrong concept, because the object doesn't exist. What it believes is true, it's *not* true, it doesn't exist.

I'm not saying anything that is merely labeled by mind exists, I'm not saying that. I'm saying, whatever exists is merely imputed by mind. What they are and how they exist is merely imputed by mind.

If, in a dream, you had a wedding with a billionaire, a zillionaire, a trillionaire, and then had many children, and all those expensive buildings, because all those many things happened in the dream, they are also merely labeled by mind, but that doesn't mean they exist. When you wake up, even by your own valid mind, you can discover that's not true, that doesn't exist. When you wake up, you don't have it, so you know it doesn't exist.

In a dream you bought a lottery ticket and you win a billion, zillion dollars. It's the same, merely labeled by mind, in the dream, but when you wake up, even your valid mind can see, can discover it doesn't exist. You don't have it. What you see with your valid mind, five dollars, ten dollars, or one hundred dollars, whatever you have in your purse, *that* one can function, with *that* one you can go to the shop, you can buy ice cream or buy chocolate, you can get a cup of coffee. That one your valid mind discovers can function. But the things you see in a dream, all those things, even when you wake up, even your own mind, your own valid mind sees they are non-existent.

There are many things merely imputed by mind, but doesn't exist. When we have the hallucination, we don't realize it's a hallucination. It's the same, merely labeled by mind, but it doesn't exist.

Therefore, things which do exist should be free from three mistakes.

If a thing does exist, it should have a valid base. If it has a valid base, then the label exists. I think that's the main one, that's the main reason.

Secondly, it doesn't receive harm from the conventional mind or the valid mind. If it receives harm from that, then it doesn't exist.

Then, the next one is not receiving harm from absolute wisdom, from the wisdom perceiving emptiness. For example, inherent existence, this I which is inside this body, which appears and which is projected there by our mind, basically from ignorance, holding things as truly, inherently existent, by leaving the negative imprint on the mental continuum, projecting it is inherently existent. Right after your mind merely imputes the I, the next second it projects this inherent existence, existing by nature, seeming real in the sense of appearing from its own side, projected onto the merely labeled I. That makes the I real to you. That's the hallucination, projected onto these aggregates, relating to our present incorrect concept of true existence.

Put it this way. The I which is merely labeled by our own mind is decorated with inherent existence, like you put carpets over a bare floor. We decorate this inherent existence on to the merely labeled I. That's what I'm saying. I lost what I'm talking about. What did I say?

[Student reminds Rinpoche]

Yes, that's right. This hallucination is projected this by the superstitious mind, the king of superstition. Ignorance is the king of the superstitious mind, the main one, making it real. This is the one that receives harm from absolute wisdom. [Rinpoche laughs] This one receives harm from absolute wisdom, the wisdom realizing emptiness. By analyzing, absolute wisdom sees this is totally non-existent, it discovers this is totally non-existent. Through analysis, it discovers there's not even an atom of that true existence there. So this receives harm from absolute wisdom. It does not exist at all; it does not exist *at all*.

I'll just mention it here—it is very good to go for a walk with this awareness, to go around the stupa, to go around the temple, and you also collect a lot of merit. It's unbelievable purification, just that. Then, at the same time, you meditate like this, on the emptiness of the I, the truth of yourself; you meditate on the ultimate truth with the full awareness that there's nothing there, not even an atom of true existence. With this full awareness, it's very good to sit somewhere, or even when you're walking—I don't mean, very slowly going like this, I'm not talking about that—just normal walking, but the most important thing, the meditation is the awareness. With that awareness, there's no slightest of that real I. While you're talking you do that. You can do various activities, talking with people, all the things, but at the same time, do the meditation. While you're having meetings, discussions, it's very good in the meetings, sometimes. [Rinpoche laughs] If somebody accuses you, somebody blames you, somebody talks against your wishes, it's very good, at the same time you're aware, you're fully aware, so there's nothing to hurt, because you know that, what you believe is the real I is not there. So there's nothing to hurt, there's nothing that you get hurt from others. Whenever, while you're eating, while you're doing normal activities, you can have this awareness, this awareness meditation.

Anyway, I'll mention it here. Do this while you're walking. You're now in the East, but especially in the West, *so many* people going for a walk. Because of cancer, because of diabetes, because of so many health problems, getting fat, getting bigger, getting bigger this way, bigger this way, different directions getting bigger, so many people go for a walk. So

much time is spent walking, but if you do this mindfulness while walking, then that walking could become the antidote to samsara. It becomes pure Dharma and the antidote to samsara, the antidote to ignorance, the root of samsara, to eliminate root of samsara. Your walking can become this, with this meditation on emptiness. As I mentioned yesterday, there are three ways you can look at it as empty: you, the action of walking and the road you are walking on. There are always three things whatever, for everything that appears real to your mind, which is projection of the hallucinated mind.

Then you're meditating, keeping your mind in the awareness of this, that all this appears as something real, which is hallucination, a projection by your mind, by your ignorance, by the negative imprint on the mind. When you think that, looking at hallucination as it is a hallucination, then emptiness comes in your heart. All these three are merely imputed by mind: the I, the action of walking and the road. Everything is merely imputed by the mind, everything exists in mere name. So, you're walking with this meditation, then again comes emptiness in your heart. Nothing exists from their own side: no I exists, no action exists, no road exists from its own side. Every step appears as empty.

I forgot again. I've lost my road. Anyway, it doesn't matter.

So I was talking about what exists being free from those. It should have a valid base, and it should not be harmed from a valid conventional mind, and it should not receive harm from the absolute wisdom. If it has all three of these, then it exists.

ORAL TRANSMISSION OF LAMP FOR THE PATH

I'm going to do the oral transmission—just one or two pages—of the *Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment*, in English.

If I read in English, you'll understand the main parts and even if you don't understand the meaning, it leaves a positive imprint on the mind, it becomes an oral transmission.

If you understand the meaning, then it becomes a commentary. When you hear and understand the meaning, it becomes a commentary; if you don't understand, it becomes an oral transmission. You receive the blessing, you receive the lineage of the blessing from Lama Atisha.

So I'll read one or two pages. I received the lineage from Kyabje Khunu Lama Rinpoche, who is a great bodhisattva. He is like those Indian pandits, like the Six Ornaments or like those great pandits. It's unbelievable. His holy mind is like a library. He knows the entire Buddha's teachings, about a hundred volumes of the *Kangyur* and the *Tengyur*. He can quote all of them. His holy mind is like a library; he knows everything.

There was a teacher training study center in Mussoorie in India, where His Holiness lived at the beginning, before Dharamsala. There were so many great teachers and many abbots there, including His Holiness Song Rinpoche, and Khunu Lama Rinpoche was giving teachings to them on very profound texts. So, it was teacher training. His Holiness the Dalai

Lama received extensive commentaries on *Bodhicaryavatara* from Khunu Lama Rinpoche. He was a great bodhisattva in lay aspect.

[Mandala offering and refuge]

I go for refuge to Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, until enlightenment is achieved. Think like that.

Due to the three times' merits collected by me, the three times' merits collected by others, all the sentient beings and buddhas, may I achieve enlightenment in order to benefit the transmigrator beings.

That means liberating the numberless sentient beings from the oceans of samsaric suffering: the numberless hell beings, the numberless hungry ghosts, the numberless animals, the numberless human beings, the numberless suras, the numberless asuras, the numberless intermediate state beings—all those sentient beings—freeing them from the oceans of samsaric suffering and bringing them to full enlightenment, by ceasing the cause of suffering.

That is what is contained in the word “benefit”—in order to benefit. In order to benefit is not just giving home to the homeless, giving money to those without money, or giving food to those without food, it's not just that benefit. It's extremely deep, it's kind of full benefit, bringing all transmigratory beings to enlightenment.

“Transmigrate” here means transmigrating between all six realms: the hells, hungry ghosts, animals, human beings, suras, asuras, all these realms. All beings die and are reborn and die again, experiencing all those sufferings in between, and are reborn and die, experiencing all the sufferings again, and so on, continuously, from beginningless rebirths, from beginningless rebirths being under the control of karma and delusion. Therefore, they themselves have no freedom at all. They are totally overwhelmed by karma and delusion. That's the main suffering.

As I said before, by cherishing one sentient being, we are able to achieve enlightenment, like Getsul Tsimbulwa, by cherishing that being filled with leprosy, with pus coming out, with so much suffering, by cherishing that being he was able to go to a pure land with that body, without needing to die, and become enlightened there. So, by cherishing even one sentient being, by the kindness of sentient beings, we are able to achieve enlightenment. That sentient being gives us enlightenment.

Arya Asanga and so many others say this. By generating bodhicitta to sentient beings, we achieve enlightenment, so it is by the kindness of sentient beings; it comes from that sentient being. If we don't cherish that sentient being, there's no enlightenment, attaining all that path. But if we cherish that sentient being, we achieve all that.

Therefore, we can see that, on the path up to enlightenment, that sentient being is the most precious, the most precious, the kindest, the kindest, the most precious. Every sentient being is the most precious: the numberless hell beings, the numberless hungry ghosts, the numberless animals, the numberless human beings, all the suras, asuras, the intermediate

state beings, everyone, every insect, every person, every deva, sura, asura, everybody is the most kind, the most precious one, the kindest, the most precious one in our life.

They give us all these realizations, these cessations of all the defilements, both gross and subtle, and the completion of all the qualities up to enlightenment. It's most unimaginable, unimaginable. They're the most kind, the most precious ones in our life. All the past happiness from beginningless rebirths, the present happiness and all the future happiness while we're in samsara, then liberation and enlightenment, all this comes from each and every single sentient being, so they are the most kind, most precious ones.

Therefore, the most happy thing is if we're able to serve them, if we're able to serve others, even one sentient being. Even if it's a very small help we offer, this is the most happy thing, the most happy thing in life, the most meaningful thing, the most happy thing in the life. Even a small help we can offer somebody, to sentient beings, even a small service we can offer, it's the greatest joy, the happiest thing in life, because that being is the most kind, the most precious one in our life.

For example, if somebody is carrying a very heavy load and we offer to carry something for them, we help to cut down that person's difficulties, their suffering. Even offering a seat on a bus, offer that seat to somebody, we are offering our comfort to somebody. Even small things, just small things, it's great because who we offer to is the most precious and kindest one, so we should take every opportunity, even something small like that. It's a great joy; it's the happiest thing in life. Even saving insects that have fallen in the water, that aren't dead, we are freeing them from that problem.

So, you see, like that, you know, in the daily life, in the daily life, wherever you are, whatever you are doing, you know, whatever you are doing, you see, you see, there are things you can help, you see, always you can see things you can help, you know, so that, so as much as possible, even if it's such a small thing to help, you know, it's the greatest joy and happiest thing to do in the life, so that, so, besides, no question, if you have big responsibility, big responsibility to really, to dedicate your life to others, you know, you know, you have great responsibility, no question that, it's, you know, it's unbelievable thing to offer. I told you those few stories before, the benefits of cherishing others.

Then all the time our life is filled with happiness. There's no depression; our life is always filled with joy, with happiness. When we always focus on others like this, in our daily life, whether we are touring, doing a world tour [Rinpoche laughs] or whatever, we should always keep in our mind that our life is for others, to serve others, to benefit others. We should think, "This is what my life is, to help others."

This is so good. It brings so much happiness to others. In everyday life we bring so much happiness to others, and then at the same time, we also bring happiness in our heart. So, we bring happiness to this person and we bring happiness to ourselves. When we're able to bring happiness to the person, to help this person, our mind is happy. So with one act there are two successes, one act, two successes.

By following the selfish mind, we harm the other person, and then even our own happiness may not succeed, it may not get obtained well. Then, that brings many problems, and it doesn't give inner happiness.

Two pages, or one page, or half page? [Talking to student]

So, we should think, "I'm not sure how long I can live in this very short life, therefore I must make every opportunity, I must make the best use of my life, the most beneficial, not only to stop rebirth in the lower realms and achieve higher rebirth, not only that, not even for myself to be liberated from samsara, not just that—that's not the real meaning, not really the purpose of being born a human being, not real meaning of life—but to really benefit others.

"The real purpose is to benefit others, to liberate numberless sentient beings from the oceans of samsaric suffering and bring them to enlightenment, the numberless sentient beings who are the source of all our own past, present and future happiness, therefore, I must achieve enlightenment, therefore, I need to actualize the path, therefore I'm going to take the oral transmission of the very precious teachings, Lama Atisha's *Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment*."

You may have heard the story, perhaps. Anyway, I'll just do it, so this way you receive the complete essence of the 84,000 teachings of the Buddha, setting up as graduated practice for one person to achieve enlightenment. It leaves a positive imprint of the whole path to enlightenment.

[Rinpoche begins the oral transmission]

The root text, *The Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment*, by Atisha Dipamkara. What does it say? 1982? 1, 0, 5, 4. [Rinpoche laughs] I think this means when the teaching happened.

Homage to the Bodhisattva, the youthful Manjushri.

I pay homage with great respect
To the conquerors of the three times,
To their teaching and to those who aspire to virtue.
Urged by the good disciple Jangchub Ö
I shall illuminate the lamp
For the path to enlightenment.²

Rinpoche: Sorry, I said eliminate the lamp. "I shall illuminate" not eliminate. [Rinpoche laughs; group laughs] Sorry! Total contradiction. You eliminate the ignorance, but "I shall illuminate the path."

Understand that there are three kinds of persons
Because of their small, middling and supreme capacities.

² V. 1 The full text is available at <http://www.lamrim.com/atishalamp/LampForThePath.PDF>.

I shall write clearly distinguishing
Their individual characteristics.

Know that those who by whatever means
Seek for themselves no more
Than the pleasures of cyclic existence
Are persons of the least capacity.³

The word used here, *capacity*, is correct. I haven't heard the exact term used much, but *gyu-sum*, *gyu* means "capable." When we say, lower scope, middle scope, higher scope, I think "scope" means the object, scope is the object. Scope is the object? I think that translation is not very clear. It's used so much now, and people who have studied for a long time understand what it really means, but the translation of *gyu-sum*, *gyu* is capable being, the graduated path of the three capable beings, that's exactly what it is. So she used capacity, that's a good, a correct translation, *gyu sum keyi lam keyi rim pa*.

Tibetan Buddhism was translated from Sanskrit language. It was done by great pandits, great scholars, not just scholars but they were holy beings, like Lotsawa Rinchen Zangbo, those great holy beings, those highly attained beings. Then those previous ones, there's new ones, and then the ones before were translating, they are great holy beings, not just ordinary people, great holy beings, great scholars, very learned, holy beings, not only learned, but holy beings, highly attained beings.

When they translated, they concentrated so much on how they put it into the Tibetan language. This is not what happens with the English translations at the beginning. Now, of course, there are many who understand both sides, the Dharma very well, as well as English, so now more books are coming out. But back earlier, translators who didn't have great knowledge of Dharma translated into English, so some translations are not complete; the terms didn't come exactly from Tibetan into English, only some parts, only half parts or something close, but not exactly. Then, that term became very commonly used. But I think now, there are many more learned people who translate more correctly.

I'm just talking a little bit about the difference between early translations and now, the present, translating Dharma into English. But, of course, it's not easy, it's not an easy job. Even if you're very good in English, and have studied debate and subjects well, but just to translate from the beginning to the end, exactly, without missing anything, that's very difficult. There's always something missing or not exact.

So I think a translator needs, first of all, a good understanding the subject, the language and the Dharma, and a very good memory, wisdom, memory, they need a very good memory to remember exactly to put into English, without missing anything. Of course, the major thing comes out. But I think it's very difficult to not miss anything.

To continue.

³ Vv. 2 and 3.

Understand that there are three kinds of persons
Because of their small, middling and supreme capacities.
I shall write clearly distinguishing
Their individual characteristics.

Know that those who by whatever means
Seek for themselves no more
Than the pleasures of cyclic existence
Are persons of the least capacity.

Those who seek peace for themselves alone,
Turning away from worldly pleasures
And avoiding destructive actions
Are said to be of middling capacity.

Those who, through their personal suffering,
Truly want to end completely
All the suffering of others
Are persons of supreme capacity.

For those excellent living beings,
Who desire supreme enlightenment,
I shall explain the perfect methods
Taught by the spiritual teachers.

Facing paintings, statues and so forth
Of the completely enlightened one,
Reliquaries and the excellent teaching,
Offer flowers, incense—whatever you have.

With the seven-part offering
From the *[Prayer of] Noble Conduct*,
With the thought never to turn back
Till you gain ultimate enlightenment,

And with strong faith in the Three Jewels,
Kneeling with one knee on the ground
And your hands pressed together,
First of all take refuge three times.

Next, beginning with an attitude
Of love for all living creatures,
Consider beings, excluding none,
Suffering in the three bad rebirths,
Suffering birth, death and so forth.

Then, since you want to free these beings
From the suffering of pain,

From suffering and the cause of suffering,
Arouse immutably the resolve
To attain enlightenment.

The qualities of developing
Such an aspiration are
Fully explained by Maitreya
In the *Array of Trunks Sutra*.

Having learned about the infinite benefits
Of the intention to gain full enlightenment
By reading this sutra or listening to a teacher,
Arouse it repeatedly to make it steadfast.

The *Sutra Requested by Viradatta*
Fully explains the merit therein.
At this point, in summary,
I will cite just three verses.

If it possessed physical form,
The merit of the altruistic intention
Would completely fill the whole of space
And exceed even that.

If someone were to fill with jewels
As many buddha fields as there are grains
Of sand in the Ganges
To offer to the Protector of the World,

This would be surpassed by
The gift of folding one's hands
And inclining one's mind to enlightenment,
For such is limitless.

Having developed the aspiration for enlightenment,
Constantly enhance it through concerted effort.
To remember it in this and also in other lives,
Keep the precepts properly as explained.

Without the vow of the engaged intention,
Perfect aspiration will not grow.
Make effort definitely to take it,
Since you want the wish for enlightenment to grow.

Those who maintain any of the seven kinds
Of individual liberation vow
Have the ideal [prerequisite] for
The bodhisattva vow, not others.

The Tathagata spoke of seven kinds
Of individual liberation vow.
The best of these is glorious pure conduct,
Said to be the vow of a fully ordained person.⁴

So, maybe we'll break. I think that's enough, otherwise we might get enlightened tonight.
[Group laughs]

Okay, so thank you very much.

DEDICATION

[Students offer thanksgiving mandala]

Due to all the past, present and future merits collected by me, the three times' merits collected by others, all the sentient beings and the buddhas, may the bodhicitta which is the source of all the success, all happiness, for me and success and happiness of all sentient beings, may it be actualized within my own heart, in the hearts of my own family members, in the hearts of all the students in this organization, in the hearts of all the benefactors. There are so many people in this world bearing hardships, offering service to this organization, preserving the Mahayana teachings, the FPMT, so many people in different parts of the world, they bear so many hardships, serving the organization, to benefit for sentient beings and the teachings of the Buddha. So, in all their hearts, as well as those who rely upon me, whom I promised to pray for, whose names were given to me, in their hearts, as well as in the hearts of everybody in this world, and in the hearts of all sentient beings, may bodhicitta be generated, may it be increased.

Jang chub...

Due to all the threes' time merits collected by myself, the three times' merits collected by others, all the sentient beings including bodhisattvas and buddhas, may the bodhicitta be actualized in the hearts of all the leaders of the world, especially the leaders of Mainland China—in each country there are so many millions of people—so may they all be brought to the correct path to peace, they will have perfect peace and happiness.

Jang chub...

Third. Due to all the past, present and future merits collected by me, the three times' merits collected by others, may the bodhicitta be actualized in the hearts of all the people who follow all the various different religions; may the bodhicitta be actualized in all their hearts. This is extremely important.

Jang chub...

⁴ Vv. 2–21.

And due to all the three time merits collected by me, three time merits collected by others,
[Long life prayer to His Holiness the Dalai Lama.]

Then we do this prayer that all His Holiness's wishes immediately be successful. Without His Holiness in this world, the world would become dark. With no leader of peace, it would become dark, like a body without a head, it becomes like that.

In short, all this unbelievable opportunity we've received, by meeting the Buddhadharma and so forth, meeting with Dharma, all this unbelievable precious opportunity we have received to achieve enlightenment, to liberate numberless sentient beings, to bring them to enlightenment, all this is by His Holiness's kindness. It is by His Holiness's kindness that we have received all this opportunity, therefore, we have responsibility to pray for His Holiness's long life and for all his holy wishes to be successful, and the happiness of all sentient beings, not only temporary happiness but ultimate happiness, liberation and enlightenment, to be achieved. That's what His Holiness's holy wishes are, the happiness of all us sentient beings. If His Holiness the Dalai Lama's holy wishes are fulfilled, then all our wishes are fulfilled, achieving happiness and liberation from samsara, enlightenment, all those, they are fulfilled.

So, this last prayer is for fulfilling his holy wishes.

[Rinpoche chants the prayer for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's holy wishes to be successful]

Due to all the past, present and future merits collected by me, the three times' merits collected by others, that which exists, but which is empty from its own side, may the I, who exists, but who do not exist from its own side, who is totally empty, achieve Guru Buddha Shakyamuni Buddha's enlightenment, which exists, but does not exist from its own side, which is totally empty from its own side, lead all the sentient beings, who exist, but do not exist from their own side, who are totally empty, to that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's enlightenment, which exists, but doesn't exist from its own side, that which is totally empty, by myself alone, who exists, but who does not exist from its side, who is totally empty.

Due to all the past, present and future merits, collected by myself, the three times' merits collected by others, may Lama Tsongkhapa teachings be actualized in my heart, in the hearts of my own family members, in all of us here, in the hearts of all the students, all the benefactors, in the hearts of all those people who are bearing so many hardships, offering service to the organization to benefit sentient beings and the teachings of Buddha, and those who rely upon me, who I promised to pray for, whose names were given to me, as well as in the hearts of everybody in this world, and that Lama Tsongkhapa's teachings flourish forever. May it spread in all the directions.

[Rinpoche chants in Tibetan]

DO TONG-LEN WHEREVER YOU SEE SUFFERING

So, you asked before for a conclusion about tong-len. From this practice, we are able to purify all the defilements and achieve enlightenment very quickly, and then we are able to

liberate numberless sentient beings from the oceans of samsara's sufferings and bring them to enlightenment.

From this, we are able to be successful in working for ourselves, working for all sentient beings. This is the most powerful. It happens many times, many times that a person recovers, and it also happens that we get sick, but that person recovers. For some people, that is what happens, it just depends on the karma.

I think, many times there can be possibility, if we do one mala for somebody who is sick, or one mala every day, or something more, just not one time, many people can help. I think it's very important to do that, very important to do that, so there can be possibility to help somebody. Medicine cannot help, it is very difficult for medicine to help. Doctors cannot understand very well. They give medicine, but it has side effects, or it doesn't work—there are so many problems. If the patient has the karma to meet the right doctor, then he can see exactly. To see exactly that's one thing, but then able to cure is another thing. So, you see, a lot depends on the karma.

So, anyway, I think this is the best thing to do if we want to help somebody, even on the road, when we see animals, those buffaloes carrying very heavy loads, unbelievable heavy loads.

In India, in Bombay or somewhere, maybe not in Bombay, somewhere, on the road, I saw a carriage pulled by a buffalo, loaded with iron bars, very long iron bars, many on the carriage, and there's only one animal pulling. And the person was beating it, pulling on the ring through its nostrils. The animal could not walk properly and went like this. It was *amaaaazing*.

Anyway, when we see things like that on the road, it's very good to do tong-len. People, animals, what we see on the road, the suffering, we do tong-len, we take their suffering and the cause. The suffering is one thing but the cause, karma and delusion, we take it in, absorb it, take it in, give it to selfish mind, who gives us all the problems, who never allowed us to reach enlightenment, and even liberation from samsara, who doesn't allow us to have past, present and future happiness. By following the self-cherishing thought, I denies us all that, so we give all that suffering to it, and destroy it like that.

I mean, I didn't explain the actual tong-len meditation, but this is talking about the importance.

If, on the road, there's somebody who has missing limbs, or somebody who is suffering, we do tong-len while we're walking there, taking all their sufferings and the cause, and giving them all our three times' merits and all the result, all the happiness up to enlightenment, everything, we give it to that person, who receives everything and becomes enlightened.

Our body is wish-fulfilling. We give perfect possessions, all the merits, all the happiness, so it becomes a pure land, a buddha's pure land, the perfect place. Then, there is no suffering, they receive the perfect body, the perfect surroundings, all the wealth, everything, then the realizations, then they cease all the defilements and become enlightened.

You can do that for each realm. That's to make the prayer, and to do tong-len it's very good, even though physically, it's something we can't really do, to really solve that immediately. That's very good. When we see anybody suffering, we do tong-len, on the road, while we're shopping or while we're doing a world tour. [Rinpoche laughs] It's very, very good.

If we go outside in the city or something, when we come back, we've spent one or two hours, or whatever, and we become that much closer to enlightenment by doing tong-len, by seeing that much suffering. It's very, very good, with a sincere heart. People can get recovered like that. It also depends on the karma of the other person.

This is the best puja, because we do your best. [Rinpoche laughs] It's the most powerful puja, in our mind, and it doesn't cost even one penny.

So anyway, I think that's it. So goodnight, thank you.

Lecture 5

RECITATION OF THE HEART SUTRA AND REQUESTING PRAYER TO THE LINEAGE LAMAS

[Rinpoche and students chant]

[Ven. Dondrub leads the chanting]

I prostrate to the Arya Triple Gem, Thus I have heard,

[There is recitation of the *Heart Sutra* together, followed by the short prayer that follows the *Heart Sutra*, and other prayers before teachings]

So, it's the same meditation as I explained yesterday, with one-pointed devoted mind requesting the guru to receive blessing, which means the realizations from guru devotion up to enlightenment.

[Chanting of *Requesting Prayer to Lineage Lamas*]

Causative phenomena are like stars in the daytime. We can't see the stars, and similarly, these phenomena appear as something real, in the sense, existing from its own side, so the Omniscience One and even the arya beings who directly perceive emptiness see them as totally non-existent.

Causative phenomena are also like the vision of the defected eye. All these things which appear existing from their own side are like the vision of defected eye. This is talking about dependent arising. And like a butter-lamp, in that it depends on many causes and conditions. We can look at causative phenomena like that.

And then, like an illusion. Again, all these appear as something real, existing from its own side, a real one, in the sense of existing from its own side, like an illusion does not exist from its own side.

Then, like a water bubble, showing the transitory nature, like water bubble. Things can be stopped at any time; they can perish at any time, like dew, like a water bubble.

Then again, like a dream. They appear real, existing from their own side, appearing like that, but in reality, there's no such thing there. In reality, it's totally empty, like a dream, like a dream.

Like clouds, they are transitory. When we look at the sky, there's a cloud there, but the next thing it's not there. Or, while we're looking at a cloud, it's constantly changing. Likewise, causative phenomena are constantly changing; they are under the control of causes and conditions.

So, the conclusion is, by meditating like this, looking at phenomena, their nature, like this, how the way they appear is permanent, or independent, then believing that way, this is totally opposite to the reality. Believing the concept, believing those hallucinations, ties us to samsara.

Meditate on the nature of phenomena, [how disbelieving the hallucination frees us] from the oceans of samsara and the cause, karma and delusion, and then allows us to achieve liberation.

DEDICATION

Due to the past, present and future merits collected by me, the three times' merits collected by others, may I be guided by Lama Tsongkhapa, in all the lifetimes, may I be directly guided by Lama Tsongkhapa, being the Mahayana guru in all the lifetimes, myself, my family and all sentient beings. May we never be separated from the pure path, which is admired by all the buddhas. So, we do this dedication.

[Rinpoche chants in Tibetan]

And then, due to all the past, present and future merits collected by me, the three times' merits collected by others, may I actualize Lama Tsongkhapa's teachings, unified sutra and tantra, living in pure morality, with a brave heart, and doing the extensive deeds of the bodhisattva for the sentient beings, and the yoga of the two stages which is in essence the transcendental wisdom, non-dual bliss and voidness. May it be actualized in my heart, in the hearts of my family members, and everybody who has a connection to myself, then, everybody in this world.

[Rinpoche chants in Tibetan]

As the three time buddhas dedicate their merits, I also dedicate all my merits in the same way.

Due to all the past, present and future merits collected by me, the three times' merits collected by others, may I be like Lama Tsongkhapa, having the same qualities of the holy body, holy speech, holy mind, in all the lifetimes, and offer skies of benefits to all sentient beings and the teachings of the Buddha, skies of benefit to the teachings of the Buddha, offering skies of benefit to sentient beings and the teachings of Buddha, in all lifetimes, from now on and in all the lifetimes. Pray very strongly like that.

Okay, that's it.

Lecture 6

SUTRAYANA AND MAHAYANA FIVE PATHS

The Dharma has absolute Dharma and conventional Dharma. So, when we have actualized the absolute Dharma, the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness, at that time we become the absolute Sangha—not only the conventional Sangha, but absolute Sangha.

Then, by completing the truth of the path, we not only cease the disturbing thought obscurations [but also cognitive obscurations]. This is according to one school, the Sautrantika school. There are five paths: the path of merit, the path of preparation, the right-seeing path, the path of meditation, and the path of no more learning. Within those paths, there are many details, many levels of attainment to be achieved.

By actualizing the right-seeing path, the third path, we are able to remove the hundred and sixteen disturbing thought obscurations, maybe a hundred and twelve, then by actualizing the path of meditation, the fourth path, we remove the final defilements of the disturbing thought obscurations and we achieve the path of no more learning, which is the Sorrowless State. We can abide in this Sorrowless State, this blissful state of peace for ourselves, for unimaginable, unimaginable eons.

Then, after some time the karma is ripened, and the Buddha sends beams to a being in that state. Then there's teachings, an instruction that inspires the being to enter the Mahayana path, to achieve enlightenment. Then, by generating the root, great compassion towards sentient beings, then actualizing bodhicitta, we enter the Mahayana path to enlightenment.

So, according to that, there are five stages in the Mahayana path: the Mahayana path of the merit, the Mahayana path of preparation, the Mahayana path of right-seeing path, the Mahayana path of meditation and the Mahayana path of no more learning.

For that meditator, the disturbing thought obscurations are already purified, now what is left is the *she-drib*, the subtle [cognitive] obstacles or the obscuration to free in our mind. These need to be purified as well. By actualizing the right-seeing path [we remove some of the] subtle defilements and by actualizing the path of meditation, we remove the rest.

If we have entered the Mahayana path directly, without going through the Lesser Vehicle Path, by actualizing the right-seeing path, we remove the hundred and sixteen disturbing

thought obscurations, then by actualizing the Mahayana path of meditation we remove the rest of disturbing thought obscurations and also the subtle defilements, as I mentioned before.

What I am saying is when we actualize the right-seeing path, with the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness, here in the Mahayana path, developing bodhicitta, possessed with the wisdom, we're then able to complete the merit of wisdom, and merit of virtue, which is the cause of the dharmakaya, and the merit of virtue, which is the cause of the rupakaya—a buddha's holy body and mind. We are able to complete that with the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness ceasing both the gross and subtle defilements possessed with bodhicitta.

By completing the two types of merits, our mind becomes the dharmakaya and our body becomes the rupakaya. In reality, it's not this gross body. The complete, full explanation, the subtle explanation, the way to achieve the dharmakaya and rupakaya, comes into Highest Yoga Tantra. There's a gross body, a subtle body and an extremely subtle body, and there's a gross mind, a subtle mind and an extremely subtle mind. What goes to enlightenment is only subtle mind, the subtle wind, subtle body. The gross mind doesn't go to enlightenment.

So, anyway, at that time then we become a buddha. This is the result time refuge. The Buddha has conventional Buddha and absolute Buddha. So absolute Buddha is the dharmakaya. Our mind becomes the dharmakaya, the mind of omniscience.

A BUDDHA MANIFESTS IN WHATEVER WAY MOST BENEFITS SENTIENT BEINGS

The absolute Buddha is that mind. The conventional Buddha is what manifests: the sambhogakaya or the nirmanakaya. The sambhogakaya is the aspect for the higher bodhisattvas, those pure beings. For the higher bodhisattvas, a buddha manifests in a sambhogakaya aspect. For ordinary bodhisattvas, a buddha manifests in the nirmanakaya aspect of a buddha. That's still an aspect of buddhahood, the pure aspect for the ordinary bodhisattvas.

Then, for ordinary beings who do not have pure minds, who have impure karma, who cannot see the dharmakaya and can't see a buddha in aspect of sambhogakaya and the nirmanakaya aspect, what they can see is only ordinary aspect, only ordinary form. Then a buddha manifests into ordinary form for them, even as an the animal in the form of animals to guide them.

As is mentioned in the *Arya Sanghata Sutra*—those who have read it may remember—the Buddha manifests as a preta, a hungry ghost, to the hungry ghosts to benefit for them. The Buddha manifests as an animal to the animals, in the form of a text, of Dharma scriptures, to help sentient beings.

I don't remember where, but quite soon the explanation comes in the text, and it appears many times, how a buddha manifests differently for different beings. It's very interesting. It's mentioned in the *Arya Sanghata Sutra* and other scriptures how a buddha manifests in the form of Dharma texts.

A buddha manifests in the form of nagas to the nagas, manifests as hungry ghosts for the hungry ghosts, manifests as spirits for the spirits—in all kinds of aspects—in the ordinary form to benefit for the sentient being whose karma is impure, who can't see a buddha in the aspect of a buddha.

There is no question about buddhas, but it's mentioned by Nagarjuna that even bodhisattvas manifest as conch shell animals for seven lifetimes, intentionally, to protect other shell animals, to benefit many other shell animals. It is said that the shell has anticlockwise spirals, unlike the conchs we normally buy which are clockwise, and that is how to tell if the body is that of a bodhisattva, that mind has bodhicitta. Bodhisattvas will take on this conch shell life for seven lifetimes, intentionally—I don't want to use the term “free will”—to protect or to benefit so many other shell animals.

Nagarjuna explained that if we keep this shell, where the spiral starts from outside and goes in, in the house and blow it, it brings harmony in the family as well as good health and maybe prosperity.

Even those higher bodhisattvas who have achieved the right-seeing path, who has achieved the path of meditation, who has achieved the bhumis, can do such unbelievable benefit. There are bodhisattvas who have achieved eighth bhumi, ninth bhumi, tenth bhumi—it's just unimaginable how they can benefit sentient beings. We can't figure it out; it's difficult to understand the extensive benefit they can give to sentient beings.

Even their pores, the realms covered by them, is just unimaginable. It doesn't fit to our minds. Their incredible capacity to benefit sentient beings is just unimaginable. So even *they* manifest, like atoms of the mountains, atoms of *mountains*, like that many they can manifest, to benefit to sentient beings. It's just unimaginable, unimaginable.

They manifest in mountains or the bridge or water or things that are beneficial for sentient beings. Even in those forms they manifest, to be beneficial for sentient beings. If those great bodhisattvas manifest like that for sentient beings, then there is no question that the buddhas' work for sentient beings is also unimaginable.

The buddhas have ceased even the subtle defilements, and completed all the qualities and realizations. Can you imagine that there's no limit to their activities, the skies of activities that benefit us sentient beings in all kinds of forms, in all kinds of ways. It's most unimaginable.

So, it is explained in the commentary of the Madhyamaka, the philosophical, in the Madhyamaka teachings, the last chapters, it's explained how buddhas, bodhisattvas, [manifest] unimaginable aspects to benefit sentient beings, unimaginable, so it's very inspiring.

Learning about this, understanding this, helps our guru devotion very much, to have that realization. I'm not saying I have that realization, I'm not saying that at all, but what I'm saying is that, it's very, very helpful to understand this. It's very helpful for the lam-rim guru devotion realization.

As I mentioned yesterday, if it's definitely a hundred percent certain that the buddhas manifest to even help animals, then of course they will definitely guide us, as human beings, who can communicate, who can understand, who have a much greater capacity to learn and are much easier to guide than animals. They even guide animals by manifesting as dogs in their form, as pigs, in all kinds of forms, in order to benefit other animals.

This happened in China, at Wutai Shan, which I think means Five Pointed Mountain.⁵ It's Manjushri's holy place. Normally, anyone who makes a pilgrimage at Wutai Shan, sees Manjushri, who is embodiment of all the buddhas' wisdom, the special deity to grant wisdom to the sentient beings. Sentient beings can develop wisdom by reciting the mantras, by doing meditations on Manjushri.

Anybody who goes to Wutai Shan sees Manjushri. I think that's definite. But of course, the question is whether we can recognize him or not. As I mentioned the other day, anybody can see a buddha but the question is, since we are ordinary beings, whether we can recognize him or not.

There are so many stories. Sometimes, something happens that is not ordinary and if we watch, we can get some special feeling. There is the story of a Chinese person who was given a letter with the instruction to give it to a bodhisattva in a town. The town was described as having five peaks. So, the person knocked on a door and asked the person if there was somebody like that in town. The person said that they had a pig with that name and called the pig over. When he read the letter to the pig, the pig made a huge noise and then passed away immediately.

What did the letter say? It said, "Now your karma to benefit this world is finished. You should go to another realm to benefit the sentient beings of that realm." That was the message.

The Chinese man who gave the letter was Manjushri and the pig was a bodhisattva. What this pig did was always let all the other pigs go first. This pig who got the letter, who got the message from Manjushri always went last, in order to protect the others. But after the letter was read, it made a *big* noise and passed away. That meant it left for another world, to benefit sentient beings there.

There are storybooks full of stories about pilgrimages and stories about Wutai Shan in China that are about Manjushri manifesting to children or old people. There are so many stories.

So, *definitely* the buddhas guide us, no question, definitely. Not only revealing path to us but also, in our life, manifesting as a woman, as a man, as children, as beggars, helping us collect merit, to practice charity, helping us to collect merit by doing charity, in all kinds of ways, all kinds of unbelievable ways.

⁵ Wutai Shan literally means "five plateau mountain" and is considered by Chinese Buddhists as the most sacred place in China.

Sometimes we are having problems and somebody comes along and gives us advice, showing the way, so many things. For us, this is just an ordinary person, maybe “this is a nice guy” or something, but still ordinary. Definitely, buddhas can guide humans. They even guide animals by manifesting as animals. They help animals, so no question they can guide us human beings.

Just a few words, then we’ll go back to the subject of last night.

WE BELIEVE IN APPEARANCE, THE OMNISCIENT ONE DOESN’T

Anyway, just to mention it a little bit here, our own appearance is nothing definite. Our own appearance is nothing definite. Whether what appears to us, what we see, is reality is not, that is uncertain.

As I mentioned the day before yesterday, it’s easy to understand. There’s no I there inside the body. If we look for it, we can’t find it. We discover it doesn’t exist.

But then there’s the appearance. Then there’s the hallucination, there’s the appearance. We believe it, we hold on to that, thinking a hundred percent it’s true. We have been believing this from beginningless rebirth—not from this morning, not from the birth, but from beginningless rebirths, thinking there’s a real I, existing, an independent one, existing from its own side, not merely labeled by mind.

But, you see, it doesn’t exist. The omniscient mind sees this view, but the omniscient mind realizes this is totally non-existent. What we have been believing from beginningless rebirths, this independent I, the arhats and those arya bodhisattvas with their wisdom see is total non-existent. Of course, they see our hallucination, the appearance and the way it is believed by us. The omniscient ones see it’s totally non-existent, totally non-existent, it doesn’t exist. They realize there’s no such thing at all. What we’ve been believing from beginningless rebirths, and what we hold onto it a hundred percent there, it’s true, all those arhats and higher bodhisattvas, even a buddha’s omniscience, of course, sees there’s no such thing there, it’s totally non-existent.

Not only the I, even for the aggregates, it’s *exactly* the same, exactly the same. We think of the body as something real, independent; we think of the mind as a real mind, independent, not merely labeled by thought—an independent mind and an independent body, and *inherently* existent, real body and real mind, in the sense we ordinary people use the term. When we use the word “real” that is what we believe: something independent, existing from its own side.

But those realized beings, those inner scientists, those fully accomplished inner scientists, the arhats and arya bodhisattvas, with their wisdom [Rinpoche laughs] see there’s no such thing at all; it’s totally non-existent. There’s no such body and mind. They see they are totally non-existent, empty, *totally*. The way they appear and what we believe, this mind, this body, these aggregates, there’s no such thing, they are totally empty, What they see is *totally* empty, completely empty.

They see our mind, our body are totally empty, but of course, as I mentioned the other day, they are *not* non-existent; they see that they exist, but not in the way that they appear to us and that we believe they exist.

It's exactly the same with all form, with all these buildings, pillars, all these lights, all these forms. This sense of I, this form, for us here, everything seems real, meaning independent, existing from its own side, not merely labeled by mind. Wherever you look at form—these pillars, these lights, these thangkas, these carpets—everything seems real, in the sense existing from their own side. When we look at the sky, the sky exists; it's real sky, existing from its own side. The trees are real trees, existing from their own side; when we look at a car, it's a real car, existing from its own side; and the same with people, road, birds, pigs, dogs, cats, butterflies, whatever—everything is real, existing from its own side.

Unless we are a buddha, whatever appears to us is completely a hallucination. Nothing appears to us that is merely labeled by mind. And on top of that, for us ordinary beings, we not only see nothing as merely labeled by mind, but we think that what we do see is reality. What appears to us is totally opposite to how things exist, the opposite to reality.

The reality is what is merely imputed by mind. Therefore, it's totally empty of existing from its own side. Nothing exists from its own side; it's totally empty, empty of existing from their own side. Not empty of the thing, but empty of existing from their own side.

To make it short, anyway, our own view, sentient beings' view is a complete hallucination. Whatever appears to us, to this eye sense, whatever it sees, the arhats, the higher bodhisattvas, the buddhas see, they discover with their valid mind, their wisdom sees all these things in our daily life that we see appearing to exist from its own side and believed it a hundred percent, all of these are totally non-existent, totally non-existent. There is no such thing, not even an atom of that, not even an atom of existing from its own side, not even an *atom* of that; it's totally empty.

Whatever sound we hear, when we hear it, that sound appears not merely labeled. Whereas, the sound exists in mere name, merely imputed by mind and therefore it's totally empty of existing from its own side. We can analyze that way. Whenever we hear a sound, like somebody coughing or my voice, we can analyze that, we can meditate on emptiness of that sound, that coughing or my voice.

Whatever sound we experience—somebody coughing, the clock making a noise, ding ding ding ding, dogs barking—whatever sound appears, it has nothing to do with the reality; it's not connected with the reality, it's totally false. It appears as existing from its own side, not merely labeled by my mind, and we hold onto that as true, as a hundred percent true. That's a total hallucination, total false. The sound we believe in is a totally false sound.

The numberless arhats, higher bodhisattvas and buddhas with their wisdom discover this is totally non-existent; what we believe, what appears to us and we believe, there's no such thing at all.

All the smells I mentioned yesterday, the incense smell, the exciting smell, the smell of the fart, the toilet smell, the smell of perfume—the reality is that there is a smell existing which

is merely labeled by mind. There's the base, which we label "smell." It exists in mere name, merely imputed by mind, therefore the smell is empty of existing from its own side. Because it's merely labeled, it's empty of existing from its own side, okay? That's not contradictory, the existing smell and the smell is empty is unified, is not contradictory.

Anyway, again, whatever appears to us has nothing to do with the reality; it's something totally against reality, totally something else. The smell is totally something else, not according to reality, to how it actually exists. But we believe it and hold on to it, thinking this is a hundred percent true.

The numberless arhats, bodhisattvas and buddhas with their wisdom see what we believe, what appears to us is total non-existent, totally empty.

It's the same thing with taste. When you eat chili pepper, when you eat sugar, it appears very hot from its own side, or really sweet from its own side. When you take sugar, you don't think it's merely-labeled sugar, merely-labeled sweet. When we're in the shop, we don't think that. When we eat sweet sugar, it appears real sweet from its own side, and likewise chili's heat appears real hot, existing from its own side.

All the tastes appears as something real, independent, existing from its own side, and then we believe, we a hundred percent hold on to it as true.

Actually, in reality, we're eating something that doesn't exist; we're hearing something that doesn't exist; we're seeing something that doesn't exist.

Whatever body contact we have—soft, rough, soft, heavy, light, all these objects of the body sense—all appears real, independent, existing from its own side, not merely labeled by mind. When we walk, it feels truly hard or soft—I mean the shoes or the place—it feels something real soft, real hard, existing from its own side; it appears like that. We believe this is a hundred percent true. The sense of the body, the contact, being soft or hard—that merely labeled one exists, but it doesn't exist in this way. The merely labeled one exists but doesn't exist in this way. We experience the merely-labeled soft, the merely-labeled hard, that's the reality but it doesn't appear that way, we don't experience it that way. How we experience it is something that doesn't exist.

The numberless arhats, arya bodhisattvas, higher bodhisattvas and the buddhas, this smell, the way it appears, that we believe, this sense of contact, all this, is totally non-existent, totally non-existent, not even an atom of that exists.

This is the same with all the rest of the phenomena, permanent, impermanent, the object of the mind, of the six senses, all that. All phenomena come into two: permanent and impermanent. The emptiness is permanent, space is permanent. However, all this—impermanent phenomena, permanent phenomena—all this, for us, when we talk about permanent, impermanent, while we are talking about it, mentioning the name, how we believe it, how it appears to us, how you believe it, is something permanent, independent, not merely labeled by mind. Impermanent also appears not merely labeled by mind, independent impermanence.

It appears that way, and we hold onto that, independent, inherently existent. This has nothing to do with the reality, being merely labeled by mind, existing in mere name; it is totally something else. Even when we think of permanent and impermanent, even when we think of enlightenment and hell, while we are saying hell, while we are saying enlightenment, how do we believe it exists? How does it appear to us? Not according to reality.

The reality is it is merely-labeled enlightenment, merely-labeled hell, which means it is empty of existing from its own side. Clear? It is merely imputed by the mind. But to our appearance and belief, it exists from its own side, not from the mind; it exists from its own side, independent.

The numberless arhats, higher bodhisattvas and buddhas see all this is completely, totally non-existent, completely totally non-existent.

SEEING THINGS AS LIKE A MIRAGE

Especially buddhas see merely things are labeled by the mind, okay. Even the bodhisattvas and arhats have this hallucination. When they think of hell and enlightenment, all this, it appears as existing from its own side, but of course they realize it's not true. Their wisdom realizes it's not true. It appears to then like for us when we are aware while we're dreaming. We are aware "I'm dreaming." At that time, we have all these appearances but we don't believe they are true. Because when we recognize the dream is dream, we have all these appearances but there's no belief they are true. We realize it's not true, it doesn't exist.

This is similar to a mirage. After crossing the desert, we look back and it looks like there's water, we have vision of water, the mirage, but we know because we have just come from there that there's no water there, despite our vision of water. This is similar to how the arhats and bodhisattvas see things. Because there's still a subtle negative mind which projects, which decorates the hallucination, truly existent, they see it that way, but there's no belief in that, holding onto that as true, that doesn't happen.

Unlike the arhats and those higher bodhisattvas, for those who haven't realized emptiness, like us, not only do we have the hallucination, but we believe it's true. That's the biggest problem in our life; that's the biggest suffering. Then all the other sufferings are based on that, all the other negative emotional thoughts are based on that.

What I am saying, for us, even enlightenment appears as independent, as existing from its own side, not merely labeled. And when we think of hell, again, it is an independent hell, almost like a permanent hell, independent, not only independent but a permanent hell. On top of that, we let our mind hold onto that as a hundred percent true, so it's a total hallucination.

There is enlightenment, that exists, but it's nothing else except what's merely imputed by mind. There's a hell, that exists, but it's nothing else, except what is merely imputed by mind. This is the enlightenment that we achieve; this is the hell that we experience, not other than this, not other than what is merely labeled by the mind.

The other hell, the other enlightenment doesn't exist, the way it appears to us, what we believe. Besides hell, even in daily life, when we think of problems, happiness in our daily life, "Today I have problems," "Today I'm happy," "Today I'm really sad." Here, it's the same, if we analyze it even the problem that we think, that we believe we have, doesn't exist, doesn't exist at all. The problem that we believe, the way it appears to us, the way that we believe, it doesn't exist, even in mere name, even in mere name it doesn't exist, it doesn't exist.

And the same with happiness, the way it appears to us, and the way we believe, it doesn't exist, it doesn't exist at all, even in mere name.

The numberless arhats, arya bodhisattvas and buddhas, with their wisdom see all this. So, what I want to tell you is this—sorry, it got expanded—everything we see in twenty-four hours, day and night, from birth until death in this life—I said death, but anyway, just approximately include the future. [Rinpoche laughs] I mean, it depends on what future we're going to have. We could develop the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness, and in this life or the future we become a buddha. It's different those who become a buddha.

However, what I was saying, from birth until death, whatever appears to our mind, we believe, we have a fixed idea that it's true—all this is totally non-existent. The numberless arhats, bodhisattvas and buddhas with their wisdom see this is totally non-existent.

The way the things have appeared to us from beginningless rebirths, and how we've held on to that, as a hundred percent true, the arhats, those higher bodhisattvas and the buddhas with their wisdom see, they realize all that totally non-existent, totally non-existent, totally empty.

LOOK AT CAUSATIVE PHENOMENA AS STARS

Therefore, in the verse that we're reciting: "look at causative phenomena like stars," it has that meaning. In the daytime, we don't see stars, in the daytime we don't see stars.

"Look at causative phenomena like stars," the star is related to the object of ignorance, inherent existence, independence, existing from its own side, existing by nature, or in ordinary language "real." It is what ignorance holds on to as a hundred percent true. Like the stars in daytime, when the sun shines, they disappear, they are empty, they do not exist. This is what the omniscient mind sees. All causative phenomena do not have any inherent existence; they are totally empty. That's what the omniscient mind sees, and also the higher bodhisattvas and the arhats, when they realize emptiness. So that's the meaning of "star" related to causative phenomena. That's the first thing.

It's good to think at that time, when we meditate, this is what the omniscient mind sees, what even the higher bodhisattvas and the arhats see. All the phenomena appear to us as real, as existing from its own side and we hold onto it, the ignorance holds onto it as a hundred percent true.

These causative phenomena, appearing real one, what we hold onto as true: they don't exist at all, not even an atom of that. So, we need to meditate to see how they are *totally* empty of that. It's very effective, It's a good empty meditation, going through these words—there's about six or seven—and looking at the nature of causative phenomena, meditating on the ultimate nature and the conventional nature. The ultimate nature is emptiness and the conventional nature is the impermanence, that it doesn't last.

Anyway, since I brought up this issue, I'm going to just finish this one.

For those who are able to understand this, then you can meditate on it. It's *extremely* powerful.

In our daily life when there's some emotional thought arising, some attachment or anger, some negative emotional thought arising, this is an excellent meditation to do this. Even when there's no particular such heavy emotional thought arising, at anytime, it's incredible, it's a great meditation, this one; it's very, very good.

“Look at causative phenomena like a star.” Here, this is also example of the hallucination, *gag-cha*, the object to be refuted. We can think of causative phenomena in general, or in specific causative phenomena such as in our life, the I, our aggregates of body and mind, all this, our possessions, family, surrounding people, friend, enemy, stranger—these causative phenomena. We can relate to these particular things, these objects whenever strong attachment or strong anger arises in us. It is very effective to particularly remember this when specific causative phenomena cause very heavy negative emotional thoughts to arise.

During the Bush father's time, when the United States was fighting, making a war with Iraq, there was a missile that came from very far away, from many thousands of miles, and it aimed *exactly* on its target. The missiles came and blew up exactly what the soldiers wanted. That's outside, but here we shoot the same thing to our real enemy, delusion. With wisdom, we eliminate delusion and we achieve liberation as well as enlightenment.

What I'm saying, we look at causative phenomena, this and this, at that time we can think of general causative phenomena but particularly in our life, our body and mind, surrounding people, families, friend, enemy, stranger, material possessions—whatever objects we get angry with or have strong desire for, strong attachment for or ignorance, indifference—those particular objects, it's very good to use those. Then it's like a bomb hitting just the right target, this meditation on our enemy, our inner enemy.

DON'T GET ANGRY AT THE STICK

Actually, there's no outside enemy. There's a reason for everybody who gives harm to us, everybody who gets angry with us, everybody who criticizes us. There's a reason, there's a cause for that, and the cause is our mind. *Anybody*, *any* situation, even the mosquito biting us, the cause is our mind, attachment, anger, and of course no question about the root, ignorance. There's no question, that's the root. Ignorance, the concept holding things, holding the I, the aggregates as truly existent—that's the real root, which means the self-cherishing thought.

In the past with these negative thoughts we harmed others, we made mistakes, did unrighteous actions, harmed others. What is happening now is the result. This mosquito biting us, that person who doesn't like us, even from the first time he saw us, that person who scolds us, even that unknown person who gets angry at us—someone we've never met before—all these things are just results, just creations of this mind, caused by this mind, by these negative thoughts, especially the self-cherishing thought.

Actually, these are just like tools used by a person. All these things, people who are angry at us, people who are criticizing us, all these things are like tools. But the enemy, the real enemy is this one, our own self-cherishing thought, this ego, this self-cherishing thought, this ignorance, causing anger, attachment and these delusions. These other things are like tools, like the stick that an angry person beats us with. The real reason is our own negative thought.

It is very helpful to remember this, while somebody is angry with us, scolding us, talking about our mistakes. If we can remember this at that time; that this is the situation is a tool, used by these negative thoughts. This is happening now because in the past we harmed that person, we did some wrong action to that person. The harm they are doing now is just a tool. The main one, the enemy is there, our own negative mind.

It's very good to remember this. We can meditate on this while the other person is shouting at us and getting really angry, while even the nose is very angry. (I'm joking.) The person totally changes, even the face, becoming angrier at us and insulting us. At that time, we can meditate, sitting cross-legged, like this. [Group laughs] Then, we can open our eyes and look at the person, like this, you know. [Rinpoche demonstrates] At that time if we do that, it's very good.

At other times, no how much we do this, we can't do this. [Rinpoche laughs] We forget completely. For so many years we do this [Rinpoche strikes a pose] only at that time you can't do this, we forget.

Anyway, what I'm saying is, the main thing is to remember this. It's our mind that caused that person to do this. It comes back to us; it's caused by this self-cherishing thought, this negative thought. Remembering that is so good, so good; it's unbelievable.

So, there's no need to get angry, there's no need to get upset with the person. The only solution is to take care of our own mind, to take care of our own life. As I mentioned, the United States sends missiles exactly to its target—they aim and it goes exactly. That's like applying the lam-rim meditation, emptiness, renunciation, karma. Within the renunciation meditation there's karma and impermanence, how life is in the nature of impermanence. Even going through this, looking at how causative phenomena are like a star, even that makes it so powerful.

There's no reason at all to get angry with the outside condition like we feel obliged to. Really, it's caused by this ignorance or this self-cherishing thought. What I am talking about here is the solution to that—the bomb to explode all that [Rinpoche laughs] to eliminate these negative thoughts.

We should feel pity for our harmers because they're creating negative karma. By harming us they create negative karma and they get reborn in the lower realms. Even in this life there is no peace, no happiness, no peace; they suffer. So, they're only an object of compassion, only an object of compassion. Even if they have cheated us, they have also created negative karma, and so they are suffering now and they will suffer in future, for so many lifetimes.

It is mentioned in the teachings, if we cheat one person, if we cheat one sentient being, we get cheated for one thousand lifetimes. If we cheat one sentient being, as a *result* of that, we get cheated in the future lives, for one thousand lifetimes we get cheated by others. I think this is mentioned in a commentary of Aryadeva's teachings. If we cheat one sentient being, we get cheated by others for one thousand lifetimes. Why is it like this? Because karma is expandable. When we create the karma we will definitely experience it, whether it is virtue or nonvirtue, we will definitely experience the result, happiness or suffering.

We will definitely experience the suffering result of a nonvirtue as long as we don't do anything, as long as we don't purify that negative karma. If we actualize the exalted path, the Hinayana or Mahayana exalted path, the arya path, then we don't experience suffering. Like the bodhisattva, if we achieve the bodhisattva's exalted path, we have abandoned suffering: birth, old age, sickness, and death, all this, we don't experience.

Until our mind becomes pure like the arya beings, the arya bodhisattvas, however, we have to experience the result of our negative karma, the suffering. It comes back to us, it gives us harm. But when our mind becomes pure, we don't experience harm, we don't experience suffering. Whether we receive harm or not is totally dependent on our mind.

A buddha, who has removed all the gross and subtle defilements, never receives harm. The Buddha achieved enlightenment at dawn, but before that, at dusk on the day before, those millions of maras attacked, throwing all kinds of things, but when they came close to the Buddha, they became flowers, they were all transformed into flowers, like a flower offering, so nothing was able to harm him.

Whether we can receive harm or not totally depends to our mind. As our mind becomes purer it doesn't happen, like those arya beings, those bodhisattvas, so especially there is no question that the Buddha, even before enlightenment, could not receive harm.

THE HARMER IS ONLY THE OBJECT OF COMPASSION

What I'm saying is those who harm us are only objects of compassion. They are only objects of compassion. Even somebody who cheats us is only an object of compassion, because it is a result of our past negative karma. It is a result of our past negative karma when we harmed that being in the past, we cheated that being, so now the result is being paid back. The karma has circled around, because of our self-cherishing thought, the inner harmer that has harmed others in the past. The karma has circled back; it is the wheel of the sharp weapons, turned towards us, the wheel of karma turned towards us.

So listen here, listen here. We caused this. In reality, we caused those beings to do this, we caused them to cheat us, we caused them to kill us, we caused them to do all those things. So, really, how is it possible to get angry with them? How is it possible to get angry with because we caused them to do that, making them create negative karma, causing them to have to suffer so much in the future in the lower realms. Even in this life, even in the next life as a human being, in the future, they have to experience the suffering result. They have to suffer so much, life to life, not just one time in a human life, but they have to suffer so much, just for that negative action they did to us. It's unbelievable.

Therefore, they are only objects of compassion. Even if somebody cheats us of billions of dollars, there is no reason to get angry with him. He is only an object of compassion, and we should only benefit him, only help him. We should help him, pray for him to be liberated from the oceans of samsaric suffering and the cause of suffering, karma and delusion, and to achieve enlightenment, to meet the Dharma, to actualize the path. We should pray like that.

We should never harm him back. If we harm him back, then we start again. We harm him back and we start the karma again. We're experiencing the previous karma, but now we harm back and we start the circle again, to receive harm back again from him in the future. Whatever you do in retaliation, insulting or a court case or whatever, we receive harm now, by getting angry, but we also create the karma, we perpetuate the cycle of karma, and so again we will receive suffering result, to be harmed by him in the future.

And because karma is expandable, from that one negative karma, the result we experience will be for hundreds of thousands of lifetimes. To retaliate is to start it all over again, to start all those problems over again, to have to experience those problems again. We are starting again. Actually, it's totally foolish. What worldly people think is the correct response, getting angry, is totally foolish. When we understand karma, Dharma, we see it's totally foolish, *totally* foolish.

Normally, if somebody harms us, we harm them back. By doing that, we're creating that again, we are making our suffering endless. We are ensuring we experience the suffering of the lower realms, and even in the human realm in future lives we will experience unbelievable, unbelievable suffering.

Therefore, if we don't want to receive harm, the smartest thing to do is to never get angry. To control our negative thoughts means we stop receiving harm, so we should stop harming others, and if possible, on top of that, we should benefit them.

That way, we start a good karma circle. From that good karma, we receive help from others, we receive help from that sentient being in the future, for hundreds of thousands lifetimes. We receive help, benefit from that person. If we did something good for that person or for that animal—whatever the sentient being—if we created that good karma, the result is happiness, for hundreds of thousands of lifetimes. This happens from that one good karma, because the second outline of karma is that karma is expandable. From one act of negative karma, the result of suffering is experienced so much in one life and in so many lifetimes. In the same way, from one act of positive karma, the result of happiness is experiences, so much in one life, as well as for hundreds of thousands of lifetimes.

Then, of course, depending on the karma, there's also liberation and enlightenment. What we achieve, what we get from that one action, doing that good action for that sentient being, besides all the unbelievable benefits and samsaric happiness we receive—long life, wealth and many things—while we're in samsara, we achieve the result of liberation and enlightenment.

So, the smartest person, the cleverest person is the one who, instead of giving harm, stops giving harm and practices patience, and then, on top of that, if it's possible, benefits others. Then, instead of receiving harm for so many hundreds of thousands of lifetimes, by living in morality, by taking vow of morality not to harm others, and by benefitting others, wow, we receive so much happiness, now and in the future lives, for hundreds of thousands of lifetimes. And then, depending on the karma, we can achieve liberation and enlightenment.

Then, even if somebody cheats us of millions of dollars, if we are practicing compassion, that makes us achieve enlightenment. If we practice compassion to that other being, if we cherish them, that makes us achieve enlightenment, and makes us liberate that sentient beings and all sentient beings from the oceans of samsaric suffering, and bring them to enlightenment. This is what we get if we practice compassion. But if we harm them, we sue them, we harm them, then we're continuously caught in samsara, continuously experiencing suffering, now and in the future, on and on, endlessly.

So, anyway, [Rinpoche laughs] I have to go back to refuge.

CAUSATIVE PHENOMENA ARE LIKE AN ILLUSION

So, anyway, as I mentioned, look at all causative phenomena as like a star. The next one is *rab-rib*, look at it, the illusion caused by defective vision, unclear vision, the vision of defective senses. The example you see in the texts, our vision while we're eating food, dropping hairs in the food. We have all kinds of visions, but they're not true. Because of defective senses we have this vision, dropping hair in food or hairs coming down in front of our eyes. The actual sense is defective, and then we have wrong vision.

Causative phenomena are like this. Our life, our body and mind, our family, material pleasure, friends, enemies, strangers—all these things appear real, not merely labeled by the mind. What they are is what is merely labeled by my mind, but they don't appear that way. They appear totally opposite, as real, as existing independently. On top of that, not only is there that hallucination, but on top of that, we hold onto this, we *hold* onto this, our mind holds onto this, our ignorance sees this as true.

All this is like defective vision, it's exactly the same as defective vision, it's a hallucination caused by defective senses. This is the same, *rab-rib*. It's very clear, this is a total hallucination, like a defective vision of the senses.

The next one is *Rab ma-nai tang*. [?] Causative phenomena are like a butter lamp. A butter lamp needs butter, wick and so forth, it needs many causes and conditions in order to be lit. The light depends on many causes and conditions to make this exist. Similarly, by depending on many causes and conditions, all these things exist.

I think, maybe this is the gross way of meditating on dependent arising. Like a butter lamp, looking at it like this, how they are dependent arising. When you meditate on that, it destroys the concept of things as permanent, long-lasting; it bombs that concept of permanence, by looking at them as impermanent.

Then there is *Rab rib man me tang gyu ma*. [?] Looking at causative phenomena as like an illusion. That's easy. It's like the magician person, who can illusion you. I think it happened in India from time to time, the magician person gives you a big bundle of money, a huge bundle of money, and you really believe you've got it. Then after some time, you go back home, you find you didn't have it at all. I heard this. It seems it happens from time to time, how the magician person illusions you, maybe with some business, or I'm not sure what, then you get home and it's not there. This illusion.

All causative phenomena—all this life, all these things, family, property, possessions, all this—appear as something real, existing from its own side, independent, then we hold onto that, we believe it, like that person believed they got that huge amount of money and he really trusted that, he believed that; he didn't recognize it was an illusion. Even his own body and mind doesn't exist like that. So anyway, look at causative phenomena as like an illusion

Next, look at causative phenomena as like a drop of dew. A dew drop can fall down at any time, any time it can fall down, so showing impermanence. All causative phenomena—our life, all these things—at any time can perish, at any time. It's *so* good to know that. If we meditate normally on this, if we think this way, that this is the nature of things, then one day, when something happens—our house is burnt down, we lost our bed, we lose our car, we lose our money, whatever—when something like this happens, because we have been thinking about the reality, that this can happen, it doesn't surprise us, it doesn't shock us. We know it is the nature of phenomena to happen this way.

Somebody who never thinks like this, who thinks things are long lasting, permanent, then it's the *opposite*. That person gets an unbelievable shock and becomes so anger. It makes his life so unhappy, so *unhappy* and *so sad*. It makes a huge difference in his life, if that person doesn't meditate. He holds the opposite view, that things are permanent, long lasting, thinking he'll have this all the time. Then, when something happens, when reality happens, it comes as an unbelievable shock; there is such sadness, even a nervous breakdown or maybe he even commits suicide. When a family member is lost, when somebody is killed, whatever happens, he loses money or something, he's so sad, he doesn't know what to do then he wants to jump off a bridge, like in Sydney there's a bridge where you can jump, and San Francisco there's a bridge, there's Golden Gate Bridge where you can jump. I think probably each country has some place where you can do these things. Some people, even though their house is very little, they climb some high tower and then jump. Because of this ignorance, seeing things as permanent, people can commit suicide. Nobody kills them; they kill themselves.

CAUSATIVE PHENOMENA ARE LIKE A WATER BUBBLE

Then, next one: *Gyu ma sil wai chu da*. [?] Look at all causative phenomena as like a water bubble. Look at all causative phenomena as like a water bubble. I don't know, there's different ways to explain this. The object of attachment can look beautiful, it looks beautiful, but it can be popped at any time.

This can be related to the object of anger, to all this, but generally to the object of attachment. It is something very beautiful, very attractive, but it can perish, like a water bubble can be popped anytime, so, so fragile, you see, say, nature impermanence, you see. So like this can be perished anytime, something can happen to this anytime.

This is a very, very good, very good way to prepare the mind, psychologically, to help ourselves prepare the mind in this way, which is the reality. This is the reality of phenomena. These things can happen, so we prepare our mind, and not get completely caught in the view of attachment, in the view of ignorance, in the view of attachment, not get completely caught in that. Without that, we can get a huge shock when some change happens, we get a huge shock, we can even become crazy. Then we need to rely on medicine, big piles of medicine, we have to take so much medicine but it still doesn't get better.

So anyway, like a water bubble, this is impermanence.

CAUSATIVE PHENOMENA ARE LIKE A DREAM

Then the next: look at all causative phenomena as like a dream. Like dream here again is related to the hallucination. So, all these things—our life, our possessions, the people surrounding us, friends, enemies, strangers, family members, ourselves and our actions, the object, the view—all this is like a dream.

In a dream, everything appears real. In a dream everything appears real—ourselves, a real I, a real action, a real object, whatever we do. In the dream we become a millionaire, a billionaire, a zillionaire, a trillionaire; we become the king of the country, we become the president of the country, in the dream. [Rinpoche laughs] In the dream we have a house filled with gold, filled with diamonds. We have a dream, and everything appeared real, real, in the sense independent, existing from their own side, every single thing—ourselves, the I, the action—everything in the dream, but, not the slightest even atom of it exists. Like that, it is *exactly* the same, even when we're not sleeping, not dreaming. In our life, everything appears like this. What everything is, is merely labeled by mind, but nothing appears that way; everything appears existing from its own side, something real, everything.

Then we believe, then we let our mind believe that all this is true, which is ignorance. So, this is exactly like a dream. Everything appears real, existing from its own side, and then we believe, we let our mind believe, we hold onto it a hundred percent, like in a dream. This is exactly the same. What is in the dream look like this, but it doesn't exist at all. Here, it's *exactly* the same, it does not exist. Exactly, all this, the way it appears, we're holding onto this so strongly, but it's not true, not even the slightest. So, we should look at all causative phenomena as like a dream.

CAUSATIVE PHENOMENA ARE LIKE LIGHTNING

Then, *Min la lob sang*. [?] Look at all causative phenomena as like lightning. That's the impermanence. While there's a flash lightning at night time, we have a human body, we see the phenomena around, the people, the house, whatever possessions around, in nighttime, if there's lightning. In the flash of lightning, we saw all these things—they appeared and then they are gone; they appeared but then were gone. That appearance: something appears and then is gone.

It's the same here. When we die, the day we die, we see that we had this human body, and all the family, all the property, possessions, all these cars, all these possessions, we had all this appearance, but now it's gone. We had all this appearance, but it's gone, stopped. So, it's *exactly* like lightning, it appears and it's gone. [Rinpoche snaps his fingers.] When we die, it happens exactly like that. We had all this appearance, this vision, this appearance of this life, of being a human being, all these possessions, these people surrounding us, our family, but it's gone. [Rinpoche snaps his fingers.] Now, it's stopped.

Lightning happens so briefly and then it's gone. That is to remind us that all causative phenomena have this nature, that the nature of life is impermanent. What it's saying is, therefore, that we must practice Dharma, we *must* practice Dharma. That's the emphasis.

This is not just to make us upset, it's not just to make us depressed [Rinpoche laughs] to bring our mind into an upset nature, into depression, it's not that. This is the reality. Life is like lightning. We should look at the causative phenomena like lightning. Therefore, what it's saying is we should not cling, that's what it's saying. Don't cling. There's nothing to get angry about, there's nothing to get attached to, there's nothing to get jealous about. There is no reason for any of the three poisonous minds to arise. There's no reason to get attached to this I. So, basically this is the antidote.

When we think how this is the reality of causative phenomena, looking at life, our things, then we don't see any purpose, any reason to be attached to these things, to hold on to them, to grasp on to them. We don't see any reason. Our mind is free, our mind is free from attachment, from these negative emotional thoughts, anger and all this. This freedom helps us to overcome delusions, to overcome delusion and karma, to achieve liberation, then, with bodhicitta, to achieve enlightenment.

CAUSATIVE PHENOMENA ARE LIKE A CLOUD

Then the next one is: look at all causative phenomena as like a cloud. That means, it is good to mainly concentrate on the causative phenomena in our life in this way. That includes everything, the objects of anger, of attachment, our family members, the possessions—the whole thing, our whole life. It's more useful this way. On the basis of this we can expand to include all other causative phenomena.

While we are looking at a cloud, we can see it now, but the next minute we look it's not there. Or while we're looking at the clouds, they are constantly changing, in every second, in every split second, second by second, even within a second, they are changing. Not only hour by hour, minute by minute, even second by second, even within second they are

changing, because they are under the control of causes and conditions. They do not last, even within a second. Like that, all these causative phenomena in our life, all these things, they can perish at any time. Now it's there, but the next minute it can change, it can perish.

And also, all these causative phenomena, while they exist, they are constantly, constantly, changing. This body, we can see the change from even a few years before, how it looks. How it looked a few years before to now, there have been changes. There were no wrinkles before, but now there are wrinkles; there was no white hair before, but now there's white hair. We see the change, we see we are becoming older. This change is very gross change. What we see is very gross—becoming older, maybe the colors, walking, whatever.

Anyway, this change didn't just happen today [Rinpoche snaps his fingers] this hour; it didn't happen just today. This change didn't just happen this week, or today—not like that. How it happened was, it has been changing year by year. It has changed year by year, it happened because it changed by the decay, changed in sense of decay. It has been decaying year by year. The year-by-year decay happens because of the month-by-month decay; The month-by-month decay happens due to the week-by-week decay. The week-by-week decay happens due to the day-by-day decay. The day-by-day decay—how we change, how we get older—happens due to the hour-by-hour decay, and that happened due to the minute-by-minute decay, and that minute-by-minute decay happened due to the second-by-second change.

Even *that* subtle state, that impermanence, even within a second it changes, even within a second it decays. It does not last, even within a second, it decays, even within each second it doesn't last, it decays. Constantly, second by second, even within each second, it changes, it decays. That's the nature of the causative phenomena.

Here, I'm talking specifically about our body. But when we think about anything, it's the same. Whether it's our own body or somebody else's body, even a flower, or something, when we think like this, at this detailed impermanence, this subtle impermanence, we see that it doesn't last, even within a minute, even within a second. That makes us think there's nothing to cling on to, there's nothing to be attached to. And it's the same thing with anger.

This makes the mind be free, to have renunciation, to be detached to this, to not get angry or to have ignorance arise, all these things. It makes us overcome delusion and karma, to be liberated from suffering, and of course, with renunciation and bodhicitta, then to achieve enlightenment.

So this meditation is *very* important. That's why I recite it at the beginning of the teachings. Just to meditate on this is great.

I think maybe I'll stop here. [Rinpoche laughs]

So, sorry I didn't finish the refuge and bodhicitta prayer, but maybe we'll try tomorrow. I went somewhere else. I think took another road.

So anyway, I think we'll do Vajrasattva.

DEDICATION

Due to all the past, present and future merits collected by me, the threes' time merits collected by others, may the bodhicitta be actualized in my own heart, and in the hearts of all sentient beings, my own family members, in the hearts of all the students and all the benefactors. There are so many people in different parts of the world who bear so many hardships, offering service to the organization, to benefit sentient beings, and the teachings of the Buddha. As well as those who rely upon me, whom I promised to pray for, whose names were given to me.

Then, what's the name of the person? Malaysia, Triang? The monk Sonam's father died today, maybe more than an hour ago, just before I came down, some minutes before I came down. So, can we also pray for him to actualize bodhicitta.

In Malaysia there's the center in the city, Columbia, Kuala Lumpur, not Columbia—sorry, Kuala Lumpur—there is center. There's a center in Penang, then a few hours' drive from Losang Drakpa Center, on the hill—what's the name of that area? Huh? Triang. There's a hill, then there's a temple built, so the idea is to build more retreat houses. When you're there, it's so good, so good; it's a little bit like Kopan Hill. From there, you get a very wide view; it gives a very good feeling.

Geshe Lama Konchog was there to bless the land and, maybe in a dream or something, he highly recommended the place; he said that the people who meditated there would achieve realizations, will achieve enlightenment or will achieve realizations, or Mahamudra realizations, I'm not sure. He had a high recommendation of that place.

So, anyway, one monk, Sonam, lived near the land. I think he was from Malaysia, but he lived near the land, Dorje Chang Center, in Auckland. He served there for many years. Anyway, I asked him to live there, to take care of it. His father died just before I came down. So, may the bodhicitta also be generated within him, okay, in the hearts of everybody in this world, and in the hearts of all the sentient beings, in the hearts of all the sentient beings.

Jang chub...

Due to all the past, present and future merits collected by me, the three times' merits collected by others, may the bodhicitta be actualized in the hearts of all the leaders of the world, especially the leaders in Mainland China.

Jang chub...

Due to all the threes' time merits collected by me, the threes' time merits collected by others, may the bodhicitta be actualized in the hearts of all the people who follow all the different religions, and every one of their hearts, may the bodhicitta be actualized in their hearts. In whose heart bodhicitta is generated, may it be increased.

Jang chub...

Then we have received this perfect human rebirth which has eighteen qualities, and all the opportunity to practice Dharma, this is most amazing, most amazing, this is an incredible opportunity that we can practice, not only Lesser Vehicle teachings, but Mahayana teachings, sutra, Mahayana teachings Tantra. We have an incredible opportunity, by the kindness of Chenrezig, Avalokiteshvara, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, so we pray for his long life, and for all his holy wishes to succeed immediately.

[Prayers for His Holiness the Dalai Lama's long life and the success of all the holy projects]

[Students chant the long life prayer for Lama Zopa Rinpoche]

Maybe, when you do Vajrasattva, at your heart you can visualize the lotus and moon disc there, and then think all the sentient beings are there, and then you think that Sonam, this monk's father, is there.

When you purify, nectar beams emitted from Guru Vajrasattva not only purify you, but purify all the sentient beings, and Sonam's father is there in the heart, okay, and he is also purified. His name is Win, Wey, Wang, but I don't remember exactly, so anyway just say Sonam's father, the person who takes care of the retreat place in Triang, his father, okay. So, purify at the same time. Then you do purifying down, purifying up, then it is powerful purification.

The room is dark but when you switch on the light then the darkness suddenly becomes nonexistent there. Like the darkness, all the delusions, all the defilements suddenly become nonexistent, or, with the nectar, the light, the powerful light, all the mountains of garbage, all the defilements, are suddenly gone, washed out.

With Vajrasattva, you can do like this for people who have died, for whoever you want to, for somebody who is very, very sick. You want to purify, you want to help, so you can do that with the Vajrasattva meditation, purifying the negative karma of the person, the disease, the sicknesses, the spirit harm, the negative karma, the defilements—that's four things—get purified. This is how you can benefit others.

Due to all the past, present and future merits collected by me, the three times' merits collected by others, may I myself and my own family members, all of us here, all the students, all the benefactors, all those many people who sacrifice their lives for the organization, to serve others, to serve the teachings of the Buddha, and those who rely upon me, whose names are given to me, and may all others, in all the lifetimes, always to be guided by Lama Tsongkhapa, being the Mahayana guru, directly guided by Lama Tsongkhapa, and never be separated away from the pure path, that which is highly admired by all the buddhas.

Do the same with Sonam's father. You can think in all his lifetimes may he always be guided by Lama Tsongkhapa, his direct guru, this is Sonam's father. Due to all the three times' merits collected by me, the past, present and future merits collected by others—others means all sentient beings, including bodhisattvas and buddhas—may Sonam's father be born immediately in the pure land of Buddha, where he can become enlightened or the other thing is may he receive a perfect human body and meet the perfectly qualified Mahayana guru, the Mahayana teachings, may he achieve enlightenment as soon as possible. May he

receive a perfect human body, and may Lama Tsongkhapa be his direct guru in all the lifetimes, and never to be separated away from the pure path that is highly admired by all the buddhas.

So everybody meditate, everybody do this prayer and dedicate for him.

As the three times' buddhas dedicated their merits, I dedicate all my merits in the same way. Then think:

Due to all the past, present and future merits collected by me, the threes' time merits collected by others, that which exists, but does not exist from its own side, which is totally empty, may the I, who exists, but does not exist from its own side, which is totally empty, achieve Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's enlightenment, which exists, but doesn't exist from its own side, which is totally empty, and lead all sentient beings, who exist, but who do not exist from their own side, who are totally empty, who are *totally* empty, and bring them to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's enlightenment, which exists, but which doesn't exist from its own side, which is totally empty, by myself alone, who exists, but who do not exist from its own side, who is totally empty.

Please dedicate to actualize Lama Tsongkhapa's teachings, the unified sutra and tantra in this very lifetime, within one's heart and one's family members, in the hearts of all the students, all the benefactors, so many people who sacrifice their lives to the organization, to serve, to benefit continuously to the sentient beings, the teachings of Buddha, in all their hearts as well as those whom I promised to pray, whose names were given to me, and in the hearts of everybody in this world.

[Chanting]

Good night, thank you.

Lecture 7

[A short lecture not audible due to taping problems]

Lecture 8

REQUESTING PRAYER TO THE LINEAGE LAMAS: THE THREE KADAMPA GESHE GROUPS

[Rinpoche chants the *Requesting Prayer to the Lineage Lamas*]

From here, receive blessings from Lama Atisha, then receive from all the three lineages, the lineage of the path of extensiveness and the path of profundity both from Lama Atisha. Then Drontömpa, from there then both the lineages from Lama Atisha and Osel Tenda Sampa, Lama Atisha, then Drompa Rinpoche, Drontömpa, who is the embodiment of

Compassion Buddha. His Holiness Dalai Lama is the incarnation of that, Drontömpa who was the translator for Lama Atisha in Tibet. After Lama Atisha came to Tibet, Drontömpa translated for Lama Atisha, when Lama Atisha was giving teachings. So His Holiness is manifestation or embodiment of Drontömpa, the present time existing and benefiting us sentient beings in this world.

From there, we receive both the lineages, pacifying obstacles to achieve both paths and then actualize within you the paths of both extensiveness and profundity.

[Rinpoche chanting]

From here, we are making requests to the Kadampa Shombawa, the Kadampa lamas, the Extensive Scriptures.

[Rinpoche chanting]

From here, the lineage lamas, the Kadampa geshes, *man-ngapa*, the instructions, the Kadampa lamas of the instruction of the path to enlightenment.

There are three different groups of Kadampa geshes. Lama Atisha is in the first group, *man-ngapa*, Lamrimpa. How these Kadampa geshes achieved enlightenment, the way they attempted to achieve enlightenment is by studying the lam-rim and practicing the advice of the path, which is the heart of the 84,000 teachings of the Buddha. The three baskets of teachings are condensed into the lam-rim, the stages of the path to enlightenment. By studying that, putting it into practice, they attain path to enlightenment.

The next group, Kadampa Geshe Potawa, studied deeper the extensive scriptures of Buddhadharma, by putting them into practice, then actualizing it, achieving enlightenment. Now this one, this Kadampa geshe group is from supreme Tsultrim Bar, the great yogi Tsultrim Bar. They received instructions, teachings from the lama, and then they put it into practice and actualized the path, trying to achieve enlightenment. That group is called *man-ngapa*.

If you have intelligence, opportunity and intelligence, then you too can study the extensive teachings of Buddha, extensive scriptures of Buddha, the philosophy. There are five great treatises: the sutra, Abhisamayalamkara, and then, Madhyamaka, then there's the Pramanavarttika, logician teachings, and then the Vinaya teachings, the Abhidharmakosha teachings. So there's the root, composed on the basis of Buddha's teachings, the root text which is normally memorized in the monasteries, written by those great scholars, the Six Ornaments, those great pandits, you see, Six Ornaments. The treatises composed by them, on the basis of the Buddha's teachings, and then the commentaries. Then also, the commentaries by Lama Tsongkhapa, by great scholar, and by the highly attained lamas from Tibet. Scholars memorize the root texts and commentaries, then study the details, and through debate, and achieve a very deep, clear, explanation of the Buddhadharma, the path to enlightenment. They do extensive study about the Buddha, the Buddha's qualities and the path and all that, then about samsara and the mind.

You don't get from full explanation of those subtle subjects from the Sutrayana, you get it from Vajrayana. You don't get everything about the mind, the study of mind from Sutrayana, even though there's extensive explanations, but all the subtle explanations, the full explanation, you get from tantra.

His Holiness has mentioned this many times at the scientific meetings that His Holiness started many years ago. Every year there's a meeting, a dialogue, talking from the Buddhist philosophy side, Buddhist science, explaining about the mind.

Buddhism has a very clear explanation of all the different thoughts, the six principal consciousnesses and the fifty-one mental factors, whereas there doesn't seem to be a clear explanation in Western science, which is much more focused on the outside, much is focused on outside phenomena, what is to be known, and not so much the knower—the knower means the person—not so much the mind, that which perceives the external. The Western study about it doesn't go into details very clearly, but investigates the brain. There's no particular emphasis on anything non-physical, the mind, as in Buddhism. The only study of the mind is through the brain, the different atoms or cells or the different sides of the brain. But, studying the brain can't really explain the details of each thought.

Even from His Holiness's talks each year in the dialogues or meetings, you can see how the mind is very clearly explained by Buddha, and then by those great yogis, those pandits, the great Indian and then Tibetan scholars.

All those subtle definitions of the different mental processes can't be found from a study of the brain; they can't be expressed, they can't be shown clearly from analysis of the brain. The five senses, and the non-conceptual mental sense, as well as all the types of conceptual minds, all the minute details, cannot be identified from the brain. The brain seems just some sort of shell. There are so many things that can't be explained from the brain that was explained by His Holiness, during the many years of the dialogues with the experts, when he explained it from the viewpoint of Buddhist science.

His Holiness emphasized many times that there's a support from Western science, the analysis of the external objects. So much analysis has been done on external objects, and that helps Buddhist scholars understand some things, and conversely they help the scientists from the Buddhist side, about mind, all the specific details, such clear explanations. Of course, the Sutrayana explanation is one thing, but then there is tantric explanations which are very subtle. There are many details in tantra which you can't find from Western science, so they export it from Buddhist science.

So, it's made very clear, it's emphasized very much to the Western science how important it is to do more study of the mind, that perceiver, the mind. His Holiness says that at the moment the understanding of the mind is still developing in Western science, it's still developing, it's still like a child compared to inner science, Buddhist philosophy. Western neuroscience, about the mind, is like a baby at the moment. This is what His Holiness has discovered from the many years of meetings, of dialogues, with the experts, the Western scientists.

So, anyway, what I was saying is that those who have intelligence, I'm relating it to Kadampa geshe, if you have intelligence and opportunity, then study the extensive philosophy, and then above that, these five great treatises. These are the sutras and then there are the tantras—unbelievable, unbelievable, mind blowing, mind blowing. Not nose blowing, but mind blowing, not ear blowing—anyway, it's unbelievable knowledge, the clarity about the mind, as well as the path that can be achieved. There are unbelievable details, all those subtle points. You can do that, you can try to achieve enlightenment by studying the extensive scriptures. We can relate this to how these Kadampa geshe studied.

Those who don't have that degree of intelligence and merit can try to achieve enlightenment by hearing the teachings, the teachings, the instructions, you have heard from the guru, and then put them into practice. In that way, you can try to achieve enlightenment.

Like the three Kadampa groups, it's same thing with us, we study according to the level of our intelligence in order to achieve enlightenment. All three levels can lead us to achieve enlightenment: studying the extensive scriptures, studying some of the lam-rim teachings or studying the instructions received from the guru and putting them into practice. In that way, we can attain the path to enlightenment.

If we have no opportunity or no intelligence to learn the whole extensive philosophy and the teachings of Buddha, there's a way to achieve enlightenment, even if we don't have the opportunity or intelligence. Even if we don't have the capacity, there are other ways.

We can achieve enlightenment by studying that and meditating on the heart of the Buddhadharma, the lam-rim, or otherwise following the instructions, the teachings we receive from the guru and putting it into practice. That way we can achieve enlightenment. This is just to give you an idea—even if we can't study extensive philosophy, that doesn't mean we can't achieve enlightenment. Even among the three groups of Kadampas this happened, trying to achieve enlightenment.

From here starts the new Kadampa lineage, we'll do the stanza for Lama Tsongkhapa.

[Rinpoche chants *Migtsema*]

[Offering of mandala]

WE CAN HELP BUT OTHERS MUST CREATE THE CAUSE OF THEIR OWN HAPPINESS

When I was talking, say, just to mention, during this tong-len practice, we need to be brave hearted, with bodhicitta, giving up ourselves for numberless sentient beings, taking their sufferings on ourselves, including the cause, disturbing thought obscurations and the subtle obscurations, taking it all on ourselves, on the self-cherishing thought and destroying that. Doing that with compassion, then generating loving kindness towards all sentient beings. We do that practice with compassion, not only wishing sentient beings free from all the suffering and its causes, but to do that by ourselves.

And then the giving, the practice of giving, we're doing this with loving kindness in the same way, not only wishing them happiness, but taking responsibility on ourselves to cause all that happiness.

It's not that we wish happiness to others—"Oh, I wish you have happiness"—then nothing happens. We wish them have happiness and then doing nothing. It's not like that, wishing happiness for others but then we live our life for ourselves. [Rinpoche laughs] We offer good words to others and then we live our own life, dedicating our life for ourselves. It's not like that. [Rinpoche laughs]

When we meet somebody who is about to travel somewhere, we naturally say, "I wish you happiness. I wish you have success." It's not like that, just saying the words. Loving kindness is also taking responsibility, ourselves, to cause them happiness, to cause them happiness, for them to experience happiness, then from their side they have to create the cause of the happiness. That involves us actually having to educate the other sentient beings to create the cause of happiness, to learn about the cause of happiness.

Why I bring this up, to cause them happiness, they have to create the cause of the happiness, so we're taking the responsibility to cause that, to educate them, to inspire them to create the cause.

For example, quite a few years ago, in Africa, many millions of people died of hunger, in a famine, I think it was Africa. There was a drought happening in the country and nothing grew. When things grew, floods came and destroyed the crops, so even if it grew, there were obstacles. When there was food, the floods destroyed much of it, but generally no rain came, no crops grew, and many people died, including children. So many people died, I think probably millions of people, including children.

I was in Adelaide doing a retreat. Actually, I was doing retreat of watching TV. I was doing watching-TV retreat, a TV retreat. [Group laughs] At that time, the thought came, what we can manage is sending some Sangha, inviting some Sangha or some Tibetan lamas or monks, maybe some incarnate lamas there to make rain. There are some good monks or lamas that are able to do puja and make it rain. The thought came that we could do that.

But, of course, they have to have the karma to receive rain. From their side, they have to have the karma to receive the rain, otherwise the rain doesn't happen, even if you do pujas. First of all, the people have to have the karma, from their side they have to collect merits, to receive the rain, to receive the rain to grow crops. From their side, if there's no karma, no merits to receive the rain and to raise crops, nothing happens.

So, that thought came, even if I invited somebody to sponsor this, even if I invited some lamas there, some good ones to do that puja, but I was still not sure—if the people don't have karma then it can't happen. The foundation, from their side, they need to have good karma, merits.

We have a student who has already used the text. He went to the mountains and read it in order to make the nagas happy. Nagas are in the realm of animals, but you can make nagas happy by giving gifts to them and then you teach them the Dharma, to not harm others. It

says, “If you want happiness and do not want suffering, then you don’t harm others, and you benefit others,” and Dharma advice like that. It’s a short text, the practice is only a few minutes, but it’s very effective if you do correctly.

This translation was done in Dharamsala many years ago by a Tibetan man—I’ve forgotten his name—who used to translate for Tara Rinpoche, a great lama, a great scholar, a highly attained being from Drepung Monastery, in Tibet.

He gave teachings in Bodhgaya in the early days, many years ago. He used to give teachings during the pilgrimage time in Bodhgaya. Bodhgaya is the place where Buddha, Shakyamuni Buddha, has shown holy deeds, achieved enlightenment, as well as three other buddhas. There will a thousand buddhas and all will descend there, showing the holy deeds, achieving enlightenment, so Bodhgaya is a great place, the most holy place in the world.

As His Holiness mentioned, whatever practice you do there, its power is increased eight times. If you do one prostration, then it becomes eight prostrations; if you do one mantra, it becomes eight mantras. It’s a great holy place.

Anyway, Tara Rinpoche used to go there during the pilgrimage time and give teachings to Western students and a young Tibetan man translated for Rinpoche, so I asked him to translate this text.

The text was found many years ago in Vajrapani, but I forgot it completely. Vajrapani Center is the retreat center in the forest near Santa Cruz in America, where the holy body of Lama Yeshe, the founder of this organization, was offered to the fire. It was our first Dharma center in the United States.

A student found this text there in the office, and she went to Colorado with it, into the mountains—Colorado or Seattle, I’m not sure, maybe Colorado—and she did this practice, exactly as it’s explained, and the rain came. There was scarcity of rain there, and then the rain came.

At that time she wasn’t a nun, now she is nun, called Nyingjema [Paula Chichester, Ven Lhundrup Nyingje] because there was Nyingjepa, another man called Nyingje, who used to be a monk, who stayed in the house where I lived, in Aptos house in California, so, Nyingjepa and Nyingjema, male and female. Anyway, her Western name is Paula.

So, I thought that both of them could go to do the rain puja. It’s maybe three or four minutes, just short. The person who does it has to be devoted, somebody who has faith in the practice and somebody who is devoted to Buddha, Dharma and Sangha and who practices morality. So that person needs some quality, not just anybody who reads it can do it successfully. But if the person who does it has some truth, has some quality, then it has so much power, the words they say are much more valid; they have more power, more heaviness. Others listen to you.

This is the subject of karma. So there it happened, there was no water and so many people were dying. Some organization or country tried to take water in by airplane. I don’t know which country tried to support them, to help them. The water was clean fresh water before

the airplane took off, but then when they landed in Africa, when they opened the containers the water had become very smelly, very dirty, undrinkable, undrinkable. Because of their negative karma, even if somebody brings water in by airplane, they don't have the karma to get it; they don't have the karma to receive healthy water.

We have to think about this. This proves what the Buddha said in the lam-rim teachings, in the teachings of karma. From the sentient beings' side, in order to receive happiness, from *their* side they have to have the *cause* to receive the water, to be able to have healthy water to drink, they have to have collected the cause from their side. The drinking water, that pleasure is a result, so that depends on the cause. The cause has to exist before the result, so from their side they have to have created the cause, then they would get the healthy water, water they could get drink, to help them.

And of course that cause of happiness, of pleasure, is virtue, not nonvirtue, not indifferent actions, the cause *has* to be virtue. If it's pleasure, then cause has to be virtue, so they have to collect virtue, Dharma. They should have the cause, virtue or Dharma practice, to receive the healthy water. They hadn't done that, however, and that's why even though somebody brought the water all the way there, the condition, the water is undrinkable, it's very filthy, very dirty, smelly. Therefore, what you need to do, you need to cause them to create the cause, you see, you need to educate them to collect virtue.

So, my idea at the time was to send somebody there. I didn't go there, sorry, I didn't go there, but my thought was, the thought came out for somebody to go there and talk about compassion. It is not necessary to talk about devoting oneself to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha at the beginning. You don't need to do that, but, without talking about that, which is not easy, even though that is the easiest way to collect extensive merits. You need to talk in something universal and compassion is the universal language, the universal language or the universal thing. It doesn't involve particularly presenting a religion. This is the universal thing—love, compassion, patience, kindness, practicing kindness, all this—that is universal. These are the common things. So, I thought to ask somebody to go there and talk about compassion. Giving an education about compassion even to one person—there may be so many millions of people—but, to educate even one person about compassion, having made a friend, by making friends, then you talk about compassion, and give education of compassion. You teach the need to help to others, how it is most important, how it is the most important thing in the life to give that education

At the same time, your whole entire life is just dedicated to one sentient being, even if that is yourself, you live your life for yourself, but there is a big question there, there is a huge question. To have happiness, you have to create virtue, all your actions of body, speech and mind, whatever you do—eating, walking, sitting, sleeping, doing a job, whatever—all has to become Dharma, all has to become virtue, then you can achieve success, happiness, now and in future lives. As I mentioned yesterday, with karma, if you do one positive action, something good for somebody, an animal or a person, then you experience happiness, the result of happiness for hundreds, thousands, hundreds of thousands of lifetimes. For one act, one good act, one positive act, one action that you did with a good heart for somebody, even for an animal, or an insect or a human being, the result is happiness. You experience that because karma is expandable.

I'm forgetting my talk now. It's disappearing.

NONVIRTUOUS MOTIVATION CAN NEVER BRING PEACE

So, the big question is, even if we really want to cause happiness for ourselves, our actions have to become virtue, positive, pure actions, *Dharma*, otherwise it can't happen. As Nagarjuna explained in the *Jeweled Garland*, maybe *Letter to a Friend*, I'm not sure, "Actions born from ignorance, anger, attachment, that is nonvirtue, result in birth in all the suffering migratory realms."

That means action we do motivated by ignorance, the ignorance of karma, not knowing the Dharma, not knowing what is right and wrong, what benefits us and others, we can't discriminate, we have no idea at all whether what we're doing is right or wrong—right which benefits or wrong which harms. We have no idea at all because we expect happiness from this action, but it doesn't mean it brings happiness. Because we expect happiness from this, that doesn't prove that our actions bring happiness.

In our lives we do many things to achieve happiness but there are many things that don't work. Many actions bring terrible problems, terrible problems, a huge mess. We make a mess of life, we make life very messy, bringing so many problems, so much unhappiness. But we still expect happiness, our wish is happiness. So, that shows that an action we expect will bring happiness doesn't necessarily do that.

Nagarjuna explained that any action done with a negative motivation only brings suffering. That was what Nagarjuna said. He was like a second Buddha; he happened in this world and propagated the Buddha's teachings, wisdom, the subject of emptiness, the truth. He wrote six very profound texts giving elaborate explanation of this truth, emptiness, to liberate sentient beings from the oceans of samsaric suffering, by ceasing the cause, karma and delusion, and the root, ignorance. He did unbelievable benefit for sentient beings and the teachings of Buddha.

Here it's said, if the motivation is ignorance, anger, attachment, and the self-cherishing thought, if we analyze, our own experience will show us whether our mind is peaceful or not. When we check we can see that we don't have peace. Analyzing whether any action motivated by ignorance or anger, attachment, by selfish mind to see whether it gives us peace, gives us tranquility, peace, inner peace to our heart, we can see that it doesn't; peace doesn't happen. Anger doesn't give us this—this is clear—but also attachment doesn't. Attachment is a very cheating mind, a very deceiving mind. It looks like it's helping us, but in reality, if we really understand it, we get no peace from it; it just brings disturbances. There's just disturbances, no peace.

Then that act obscures our own mind from realizing the truth. It even becomes an obstacle to developing compassion; it obstructs us from developing compassion for sentient beings. It doesn't allow compassion to arise with a sincere heart, compassion to free others from suffering, to do that by ourselves. Our mind becomes so sticky, like glue, bringing so much suffering. The nature of the mind is painful, making it painful to separate away from the

object. It is so sticky. It holds the total hallucination, as I mentioned the other night. Ignorance has its own wrong view, that things truly existing from their own side.

Now, on the basis of that, attachment arises—this is good, this is beautiful—attachment arises, and attachment has its own projection; it has its own wrong view, on top of that.

The object that attachment grasps onto is built on the basis of the view of ignorance, seeing it as independent, inherently existent, so that doesn't exist at all, not even an atom. So, how is it possible for the object of attachment to sit there, when the view that is projected doesn't exist? That's what I was trying to say that night, with the Lama Tsongkhapa's teachings.

It's the same thing with anger. Ignorance projects the sense of true existence on top of the merely labeled enemy. Ignorance projects this inherent existence, making it real, then on the basis of that, we think what this person does is harmful, bad, whatever, blah, blah, blah, then anger arises, and anger has its own wrong view. It has its own wrong view, seeing it as undesirable, projected on to something that doesn't exist. It's built on the basis of the wrong view of the ignorance—of an independent, inherently existent object, existing from its own side, by nature, not merely labeled by mind. That is not there at all.

Any other delusion that arises—jealousy, pride and so forth—is built, arising on the basis of the ignorance, *projecting* the inherent existence onto the merely labeled object. So, all those delusions are wrong concepts. There's no such thing as their own view projected that exists.

It's like if we put on blue glasses and see the white snow mountains as blue. There are no such things as those blue mountains. The wrong concept is projected, and each wrong concept has its own view, its own wrong view projected that is done on the basis of the wrong view of ignorance.

The inner scientist, the Buddhist scientist, knows the reality. This is discovered by the inner scientist.

Anyway, I'm lost! But it doesn't matter. Now, we first need to liberate, to enlighten our stomach. [Rinpoche laughs; group laughs] So, I'll stop here.

DEDICATION

[Short mandala offering]

Due to all the three times' merits collected by me, the three times' merits collected by others, may the bodhicitta be actualized within my own heart and in the hearts of all the sentient beings without delay of even a second.

Jang chub...

Due to all the three times' merits collected by me, the three times' merits collected by others, that which exists but which is empty from its own side, may the I who exists, but who does

not exist from its own side, who is totally empty, achieve Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's enlightenment, which exists, but which doesn't exist from its own side, which is totally empty, and lead all the sentient beings, who exist, but who do not exist from their own side, who are totally empty, to that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's enlightenment, which exists, but which doesn't exist from its own side, which is totally empty, by myself alone, who exists, but who doesn't exist from its own side, who is totally empty.

Okay, so I think that's it. [Group laughs]. So, thank you very much. Do the offering before you eat food, then generate the bodhicitta motivation. Visualize it as nectar and offer it.

Lecture 9

THE IMPORTANCE OF A GOOD HEART

I was talking this morning about how the thought came into my mind during the time that millions of people were dying of starvation in Africa, to go there and talk to the people, or maybe send one person at the beginning, talking about compassion.

I was talking about this because from their side, for them to achieve happiness, to get success in their means of living, it depends on the preliminaries, whether they have created good karma, virtue, Dharma, pure actions of body, speech, and mind. Whatever their religion is, Christian or whatever, it must start with compassion, it must communicate with them about compassion.

This is how important it is to generate compassion in life, to practice compassion. We have a responsibility to cause happiness to other sentient beings, to free them from suffering. How important that help *is* to others.

If we do that, then we get happiness as an effect of our action, our positive action. When we have compassion, that action becomes a Dharma, a pure action, a virtuous action. When we do something like that for others, with our body, speech and mind, then we create good karma. That becomes the cause of the success in our life, happiness, long life and health all those things, wealth, success in business, whatever. We collect all the things, whatever happiness we are looking for.

Happiness actually has to come from ourselves, from our heart, from our actions. That's the evolution of happiness. It has to come from the heart. People can pray but that's not the main thing. People can pray for the people of Africa, and perhaps things can change if they have collected the merit in the past. If they have collected the merit in the past, then maybe it can manifest in this life. Maybe the imprint of something good they did in the past will be experienced in this life, and that can remove their difficulties.

Of course, it's very important to pray, but to have power in the prayer, then that person's prayer has to have compassion for other sentient beings. The more compassion that person has, the more the prayer's power. Somebody who is living purely in their life, abstaining from immoral actions, abstaining from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, telling lies—those ten nonvirtuous actions—as much as possible, living a pure life, abstaining from those

negative actions which cause all the problems, which bring suffering and problem in life and to others, to others, to the family, to the world, the more that person lives in morality, it makes life purer. Then, prayer has more power, more power to change, to succeed for others.

That's what I was trying say, to finish the story, about how important compassion is. By cherishing others, by serving others from the heart, all those actions become good karma, and by the way all our wishes get fulfilled, all our wishes for happiness get fulfilled.

The actual act is serving others, but even if we don't think about our own happiness, even if we don't cling, grasp, onto our own happiness this life, even though we're totally detached from this life's happiness, since our action is especially benefiting others, cherishing others and serving others, it's so powerful, the good karma is so powerful, and we collect so much merit. Therefore, naturally, because of the nature of the action, the result is that we experience happiness. Before life was very poor, very difficult, then suddenly there's prosperity, suddenly there's change, like a lotus opening, blossoming, there is happiness. With a good heart, and happiness, all the positive thoughts, even the needs in our life just happen. They just come. It works like that.

BEN GUNGYAL AND HOLY DHARMA AND WORLDLY DHARMA

There was a Kadampa geshe, Ben Gungyal who had been a robber in the daytime and a thief in the nighttime. In the daytime he took things away from the people with a horse and at nighttime, people didn't know so he went to steal things. [Rinpoche laughs] He became a very famous thief in a place called Pembo, in Tibet, like the famous gangsters you have in the West.

He had many weapons around his belt; he carried around knives and many things around his belt, tied up and then he pulled them out. People called him *Shi-chu dig* which means "forty big sacks" referring to a big barley field he owned that yielded forty sacks of barley, but *dik* not *dig* means "negative karma" so his name could also mean "forty negative karmas."

Then, he began to practice Dharma. However, his mind is so habituated of stealing that one time he was at the home of an old mother, and when mother went out, he went to steal some tea, some Tibetan tea—not tea already in a cup but the tea leaves from a bag.

When he saw that his hand was inside the tea bag, because he was beginning to practice Dharma, he shouted, "Oh, there's thief in the house!" He shouted this very loudly, and when the mother came to see, he pointed to his hand in the tea bag saying, "There's a thief here."

So he began to practice Dharma, but because of his habituation he went to steal, but then he remembered he to practice Dharma he had to abandon stealing, and to stop himself he showed the mother his hand which was in the tea bag, and shouted that this was the thief.

There are many stories like that about him. Once, at a temple, he was at one temple, he was sitting with many other lamas while somebody was offering yoghurt, curd, but he was right at the end of the line. As the person offered the curd from the bucket, he saw so much going

into other people's bowls, whether they were looking or not, and he was worried that there would be none left for him. Then he realized this was due to his attachment, the thought of the eight worldly dharmas. We might have gone through this before. Attachment, grasping at this life's pleasures, this worldly thought, is a nonvirtuous thought. So, he realized this was a nonvirtuous thought, being worried about seeing a lot of curd going into other people's bowls and that he might not get any because he was sitting way down the line. [Rinpoche laughs]

He recognized this as the thought of the eight worldly dharmas, creating nonvirtue, and he thought to abandon it because that's the pure Dharma practice, abandoning the thought of the eight worldly dharmas. So, when he realized that, when the person serving the curd came to him, he placed his bowl upside down, indicating he didn't want any. He used this as an antidote to abandon the thought of the eight worldly dharmas, the attachment, grasping to this life. He saw that if he followed that thought, and accepted that curd, then it wouldn't become Dharma, it would become a nonvirtuous action, because the motivation was nonvirtue, pure nonvirtue, the attachment clinging to this life.

Due to ignorance and then attachment, it wouldn't become non-attachment so it wouldn't become virtue, it wouldn't become Dharma. His action of accepting and eating the yogurt wouldn't become Dharma but a cause of suffering, of negative karma. So he didn't accept it. To renounce the thought of eight worldly dharmas, he put his bowl upside down when the yogurt came nearby. At the beginning, when he practiced Dharma, he practiced like this in his daily life. Then later, gradually that thought of the eight worldly dharmas became less and less.

Attachment, clinging, grasping to this life, is a painful mind if we analyze it. It is not peaceful, it is pain; the nature of attachment is painful, if we analyze its nature. There's a lot of worry we can't get what we want and so we can't achieve real inner peace, happiness, in our heart.

Anyway, at the end of the day, before he went to bed, he always checked, from morning to then, how many actions had been Dharma and how many had been worldly dharma, nonvirtue. He checked everything—eating, walking, sitting, sleeping, meditating, everything from morning to night. At the beginning, there was hardly any virtue; it was mostly nonvirtue. Each time he found the action was nonvirtue, he put a black stone on the table; each time he found a virtue, he put a white stone. At the beginning, creating hardly any virtue, there were very few white stones, mostly black. Then, as he continued practicing, as the months went by, as the years went by, gradually there were more and more white stones and less and less black ones. His daily actions became more virtuous, less negative karma, less nonvirtue. More actions became Dharma, good karma, virtue.

Then, after some time of nonvirtue becoming less and less and less, there were no nonvirtuous actions, and there were only white stones on the table. This happened through continual practice, through putting effort. I think continuity seems extremely important, whether it's meditation in daily life. Even if we only do it for a short time, continuity is extremely important. This is what I think, from my analysis. Even if the meditation is short, not many hours, even if we do it for a short time, continuity is extremely important. Then, progress comes.

Otherwise, if we don't have continuity, if we try for one month then drop it, give it up, if our mind gets distracted by other things, like the mind of attachment, thinking the activities of this life are more important, more pleasurable, then the effort we put into practicing Dharma becomes less and less, weaker and weaker and then after some time we stop.

It's so important to constantly think of the benefits of Dharma and the shortcomings of non-Dharma activities, worldly activities, nonvirtuous activities. Seeing the shortcomings of those and the benefit of practicing Dharma, reflecting the depth of those, we'll see the need for continuity. If we don't try, or try it for one month, a few months or a few years, then nothing, we stop it completely, we will be totally taken over with the mind totally distracted or engaged, taken over by the wrong concept, ignorance, and especially the attachment, grasping this life's comforts or pleasures, completely overtaken by that.

Then, there's no continuity of Dharma practice. Then, if we try to practice again for a short time and stop again, then nothing, we can't achieve realizations, we can't make progress in our mind. Therefore, we need continuity. Even if we're only doing a little each day, the continuity is there. I think it's extremely important, *extremely* important. Then, progress can come. That's very, very important.

Knowing karma, knowing the shortcomings of worldly activities, activities done with the evil thought of the eight worldly dharmas, the pleasures of this life, remember that again and again, I think it's very, very important. This is how we can continue to practice Dharma. At the same time, we should also read Dharma texts to inspire us, the lam-rim, the stages of the path.

There are so many books now in English, even just His Holiness's teachings, His Holiness's public talks. There are so many. When we read, they inspire us, we learn, even if where we live there is no teacher to learn from. Now we have an incredible opportunity because there are so many Dharma books. It is very good to read books by His Holiness and other great teachers. I think it's a great opportunity.

ZINA, RINPOCHE AND BUXA

Many years ago, before we first came to Nepal, we met our first Western student, a Russian lady, Princess Zina Rachevsky. Her father was a king in Russia, but when the revolution happened, her family left Russia and moved to France. She must have been born in France, I think, and then lived in the United States, where she married. Her first husband was Conrad Rooks, a very wealthy person. She had one daughter, Rhea, with another husband.

She lived in Greece and many different parts of the world. She lived a very poor life, and very rich life; she had all kinds of lives for quite a number of years. Probably she was also a fashion lady, something like that, maybe in the United States when she was young.

Anyway, I'm not going into details, just to say how we met her. I got sick many times, in Buxa, this place where I lived for eight years, which was a concentration camp when India was under the British, where Mahatma Gandhi-ji, and the Prime Minister Nehru were

imprisoned. Many people were killed there. There's a forest and in the mountains there's a huge building where they fought.

Later, when His Holiness escaped from Tibet, all these monks came from Lhasa, from Sera, Ganden, Drepung—those very large, monastic universities of Lama Tsongkhapa's teachings, where the extensive philosophy of Buddhadharma is studied. There were also the other traditions, Sakya, Kagyü, Nyingma. Many went to work, making the roads in India, at the borders, and there were about 1,500 allowed to stay there to study, those who wanted to continue their studies of the Dharma. I was there for eight years, but of course I didn't study. My study was just play, just play, so some imprint was left during that time, receiving some teachings, a little bit debate and some teachings.

Back in Tibet, I just memorized some texts in Domo Geshe's monastery. This was where Lama Govinda, the German professor, the author of *The Way of the White Clouds*, met Domo Geshe, the great lama. In his monastery, we took our examinations, and I became a monk there. I became a monk in Tibet, not in Solu Khumbu.

For three years I lived in Pagri, a great business place, where goods came from Kalimpong, from India—tomatoes and crops—and goods came from Lhasa, from Panchen Rinpoche's monastery at Shigatse, Tashi Lhunpo. Goods came from there, so it's a very big business place. Also, chilies, nuts, puffed rice, things like that came from Bhutan in bamboo containers.

So, anyway, I was there for three years, almost every day going to people's houses doing puja with my teacher and some monks. In the morning I memorized texts to offer examination in the monastery, and in the evening I had to recite by heart the texts I'd memorized in the morning. I did this for three years.

Then, I offered the examination to the geshe in the monastery in the puja. All the monks were there, and the leader of the puja sat on the throne while I sat on the floor. Then, when we had chanted, he asked me to chant by heart from one place in the text to another. I did the first volume, but the second volume didn't happen because we escaped from Tibet through Bhutan to India.

There was only one or two days, maybe at New Year, we didn't have puja. Those days felt very strange, they felt very wrong, kind of a little bit strange, just short, anyway.

I got sick. I got TB in India in Buxa and had to go to Darjeeling for treatment. I stayed there many times, not in Darjeeling but in Ghoom, about five miles from Darjeeling, where there was a monastery. You couldn't see it because it was below the road that goes to Darjeeling. I stayed there many times. There are branches of Domo Geshe's monastery in Tibet. I was there for a long time, maybe nine months.

One afternoon, a monk called Drukta, "the sound of the dragon,"—that's his name—met this Russian lady, a princess called Zina Rachevsky, but he didn't understand her well. He thought that she was my friend. He didn't understand well. She was looking for Domo Geshe Rinpoche, Lama Govinda's guru. She has this karma somehow. She saw Lama Govinda's book and got so inspired, so she wanted to meet his lama, Domo Geshe Rinpoche. She came to Darjeeling, to Ghoom Monastery, and met this monk. Because I

spoke a little bit of broken English, just a few words, this monk thought that maybe we knew her, that we had met, so he opened the door to our room and said, “Oh, this is your friend.”

She came inside, with long hair and wearing a Tibetan sweater like you can buy at the bus station or something. My teacher was there. He took care of me in Tibet and helped me become monk at Domo Geshe’s monastery, to make offerings in the monastery. He offered a very big gong, to invite the monks for puja. I think he offered one in the Domo Geshe’s monastery in Tibet when I entered in the monastery.

Zina had brought Tibetan tea, a big pot of Tibetan tea, so she was given a big mug, and he poured the Tibetan tea, normal Tibetan tea, nothing special, totally filling the mug full. I think that day she drank it completely. After that, wherever she went she never drank Tibetan tea! I don’t know what happened. [Group laughs]

After that, every morning for one month, she came and discussed for an hour. She had a small baby that she left with a Nepalese lady in a car on the road above the monastery. So, we discussed, and I tried to translate for Lama with just some broken English.

After about a month, she invited us to come down, to move down to Darjeeling. So we moved down from the monastery to Darjeeling.

ZINA AND DARJEELING

There were two movie places in Darjeeling. If you go up a bit from the movie house in the upper area, there’s a house where His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s brother lived at that time. He’s the external minister for the exiled government. He lived there, upstairs in a house belonging to some Tibetan people who lived in Bombay. Then you go still a little bit farther up, then there’s a big building that belonged to some raja. I think in India before there were many rajas, many kings, and I think the house belonged to some maharaja. Upstairs there, the owner of the Darjeeling zoo and his family lived. Zina lived downstairs in a big room with a bathroom and a kitchen.

Lama and I lived outside in the garden, in a tiny house—not very tiny like this but tiny—with glass all around. I think it was a small house because the previous owner used it for having tea and enjoying the garden.

So, the door is here, then my bed is here and Lama’s bed is there, and between there’s a small table, no bigger than this between Lama’s and my bed. So, a door and then glass around.

We lived there for nine months. During that time Lama Yeshe studied English from a Christian lady whose body was already bent. She was already very old, with a bent body like this. There were two ladies, learning Tibetan to spread Christianity. Even though their bodies were like this, it was an amazing inspiration, seeing they were still learning Tibetan language to spread Christianity.

They were teaching English. They spoke very good English. It was many miles, many miles from the house, and there was a lot of rain. It was very foggy. Darjeeling is usually very, very foggy, and it gets lots of rain. So, Lama would go out with an umbrella and shoes called chapels, the same material as the car wheels, black and very thick. Lama had a pair of these too in Buxa. Many monks wear these to walk in the rain.

As well as English, he studied astrology from a famous Sherpa, Sherpa Ngawang Yinde. He never wasted a moment. For Lama, there was never a waste of time. If you looked at Lama as an ordinary person, there was no waste of time at all. Within those nine months Lama finished studying astrology and could produce calendar with all the details.

Anyway, getting back to Zina, in the early morning she looked sixty, seventy years old! Then she spent an hour or two in the bathroom and came out looking twenty-five or sixteen! I think she did retreats in the bathroom. [Group laughs] She did retreat in the bathroom for two hours, then came out looking twenty-five or sixteen years old.

She would arrive about ten o'clock, something like that, and have some teachings for one or two hours, although much of the time it was stories about her life, and then Lama Yeshe explained things.

Later, we went to see His Holiness the Dalai Lama and she went back to Sri Lanka. Then we went back to Buxa, where we lived for a year. Then, she wrote to us with the idea to start a Mahayana center in Sri Lanka. That was the idea, that we all go to Sri Lanka, but first we met her in Calcutta. It was the first time I had been to Calcutta. We stayed in a Theravadin Buddhist guest house.

I'm not going to explain the details, but at that time there were problems between India and Russia and there were many spies traveling with us. She was not a spy but you could very easily suspect her of being a spy because of the way she behaved. She wasn't a spy, not at all, but it was very easy for outside people to judge her like that, because of the way she behaved, how she appeared.

There were maybe six of us on the train from Calcutta to Delhi, on the train, and in the same compartment was an Indian spy, and then another spy took over when we changed from Delhi to Dharamsala. We spent some time in Delhi, and outside the hotel there were cars and motorcycles whenever we went out, to see Domo Geshe Rinpoche or some lamas or something. They were following her not us, but wherever we went, they followed.

Usually, when we went to Delhi, at the train station, there would be the head of the spies, a very big man, with a mustache like that. His name was Tsering; it looks like a Tibetan name, but I don't think he was Tibetan.

Anyway, we went to Dharamsala and requested His Holiness to ordain Zina. His Holiness didn't have time but he asked Lati Rinpoche, a great Lama from Ganden Monastery who was living at Dharamsala.

He ordained her at the house that would become Tushita retreat center, Dharamsala, one of our places and a very good place for a retreat center. Then, it was called Nowrojee Koti

because the family who owned that building was, way back, Naropa, the great Indian yogi. He was the guru of Marpa, who was the guru of Milarepa, the one who achieved enlightenment in a brief lifetime of degenerate times by practicing tantra. He was lay, not an ordained person. Marpa was also a lay person.

So, the house was called Nowrojee Koti because the family who owned that—the grandfather and grandmother—there was a continuity from the great yogi, Naropa, who achieved enlightenment.

There's still the continuity of the family there. They have a shop at the bus station. So, we bought that place with the help of some students. Jon Landaw was a main person who helped. Anyway, there may be other people.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama's tutor, His Holiness Trijang Rinpoche, who is Lama Yeshe's and my own root guru, lived there for seven years, and when he moved out, the house was empty. So, the monks from Namgyal Monastery came there to create their tormas and to do activities.

When she was ordained there, while she was being ordained, the head of the spies was walking below, going back and forth, back and forth, waiting. [Rinpoche laughs]

THE FOUNDING OF KOPAN

Anyway, [Rinpoche laughs] the very first time we received an interview with His Holiness the Dalai Lama, as we were sitting in his room, having the interview, we were thinking about Sri Lanka.

In the end, we didn't get a permit from Indian government, or something. Anyway, there were problems. So then Lama Yeshe thought to go to Nepal because I was born near Mt. Everest. He totally changed his mind, and thought it was better to go to Nepal.

The year we came to Nepal was a special year. There are twelve years in the zodiac and each year has an animal's name. This was the year of the bird, and that is a special year to make a pilgrimage to Nepal, so many people came from all over, from mountains, from very far, to make a pilgrimage to Kathmandu. It was a special year to visit many holy places. I guess it's more benefit or something. So, there were so many people coming from the mountains, from very far, to make pilgrimage and to receive teachings.

At that time, the head lama of the Nyingma, Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, was giving an oral transmission of the Kangyur in a Kagyü Monastery near the Boudhanath stupa. At that time, there was a lot of space in Boudhanath. There were maybe only a couple of monasteries near the stupa, the Kagyü one and, a little bit behind, a Gelug one. Maybe there were only those two, and there was a lot of empty space. Now, there are so many.

Anyway, my mother and all the family members came down because they heard that I had come. When Tibet was overtaken by Mainland China, she sent a person to look for me in

Tibet. When she heard I had come out of Tibet, she said she was happy. Even if there was only water to drink in life, she was very happy after she heard I was out of Tibet.

I have no idea about my past life. I could have been cockroach or brown mouse stealing tormas, stealing the ritual offerings. But anyway, there was a lama called Lawudo Lama, who lived in the cave where Guru Padmasambhava lived. Padmasambhava was a very powerful yogi, who subdued the Snow Land of Tibet, and who blessed it and built the first monastery, Samye. When it was being built, in the daytime people and at night spirits would tear down. This happened many times, so then this powerful yogi was invited from India, and he hooked all the spirits. Three ran away, but they couldn't escape Tibet, so he subdued them, by arising himself as wrathful deity. He subdued them and gave them a commitment, a vow, to protect the Buddhadharma in Tibet. There were many evil beings who didn't allow the spread of Dharma in Tibet but Padmasambhava went to many places and subdued them and blessed the land of Tibet for spreading Dharma. He was so unbelievably kind. Because of that, Buddhadharma was able to be preserved and spread in Tibet.

Tibet developed without any influence from the outside, without influence of the materialistic life, without allowing companies to start, developing material things from the West, from outside countries. The government didn't allow that, only just the Dharma. They just lived life just to preserve Dharma and spread it, to practice it and actualize it in order to achieve enlightenment, to liberate sentient beings from the oceans of samsaric suffering.

The people and the government all concentrated on that. Therefore, there were many monasteries where people could do extensive study and actualize the path, living in the vows, and not only that but also so many caves in the mountains. The mountains were full of caves, like ants' nests. Now, so many mountains have been destroyed and I couldn't see this at all. There are probably still some kind of hidden away, and I didn't see the whole of Tibet, I just saw the main road to Lhasa, just some parts.

Many people renounced life and went to solitary places to actualize the path, to meditate on what the Buddha had explained, the very vast teachings, as explained and practiced by the great Indian scholars, the highly attained beings, then the Tibetans, the great scholars, the highly attained beings, then the yogis and so forth.

They are the real scientists, the scientists of mind, removing the cause of suffering. Not trying to remove suffering externally, but removing the cause of suffering. Suffering comes from the mind, so they developed their minds in order to cease that, to cease the karma and delusion. They are the real scientists of mind, practicing the path revealed by Buddha and all those many other great enlightened beings, the numberless other holy beings—what they have studied, explained, practiced and actualized.

So many became bodhisattvas or buddhas, in Tibet, an unbelievable, unbelievable number. It looks like even the land itself has received so much blessing, because an unbelievable number of practitioners have attained realizations. The land itself is really amazing, so blessed.

But then, what happened after twenty years, all this unbelievable destruction, so many killed, so many died in prisons, in monasteries, and so many of the scriptures that the monasteries had, burned in the fields, piled in the fields and burned for many days.

There's a place where they keep wooden block prints called Na-thang. I heard that when the Dharma texts were put in a field and burned, they burned for seven days, and a rainbow came from these holy objects. That's what I heard.

So anyway, so what I was saying?

[Someone reminds Rinpoche what he was saying]

I see. Thank you very much.

So, this cave in Lawudo was where Padmasambhava came.

[Break in taping]

... There's a story about those holy places.

The son wasn't a monk, that lama, his name was Lama Yeshe, the same as Lama Yeshe, my teacher. He wasn't a monk, he was a lay practitioner. The other lamas around all had sincere, high praise, great respect for him. He led a very simple life, a very, very simple life. He sometimes gave many initiations and teachings and sometimes just did his practice. He came from Tibet and maybe practiced the Sakya and Nyingma lineages. He had many teachings and deity practices written by hand, many texts, very rare, and monks from other monasteries came to borrow texts from Lawudo. I heard this from other lamas.

His son told me when I went back to Solu Khumbu he will hand over all the Lawudo Lama's ritual things and Dharma texts, all the things in his cave, to me. It wasn't done before, when I went to Tibet, but he told me, when I come back, he would hand them over.

So, anyway, we went back to Solu Khumbu and I stayed there maybe one or two months, but Lama Yeshe stayed much longer. We came down to Lukla, the only airport at that time, and we waited for many weeks but didn't get a flight, so Lama went up and then I came down, to buy glasses and things, to build a kitchen up there, next to the cave.

An old man, maybe a disciple of the Lawudo Lama, asked me to build a monastery, although he didn't mention this I had the idea of a school and monastery together, a school combined with a monastery and school. It meant there would be monks, but they would have a school where they could learn not just the language but many other things besides Tibetan. So, I got this idea.

When I asked Lama, he said if I thought it was okay I can do that, I can start. So, this monastery actually started, the monks studied there, from Solu Khumbu, from Lawudo.

Lawudo is 14,000 feet, above Namche Bazaar, close to Mt. Everest.

It started and the monks studied there. We invited one geshe from Sera Je, Geshe Tsultrim [?] Tashi, who became the abbot and ordained the very first monks up there.

Then, they moved down here. In the summertime they were up there but in the wintertime they moved down because it was very cold up there, and there were a lot of expenses because everything had to be transported by airplane. And then, when we do that, many young monks went back home, and didn't come back in time. So, because of that and the expenses, we just decided for it to be here.

So anyway, I think it has been great benefit, great benefit in Nepal, not only Nepal but there are many Tibetans here. The original ones were from Solu Khumbu, Sherpas, but after some time, many Tibetans came from Tibet or the India monasteries, so the monks here are from different places—not just Solu Khumbu, but different parts of Nepal—and that has been highly beneficial. They have studied the five great treatises, the major sutras, the root texts and commentaries written by those great pandits, the highly attained beings, and also by Lama Tsongkhapa and other great scholars, highly attained beings, Tibetan lamas. This is due to Lama Yeshe's kindness, and also His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Then, Lama Yeshe invited Lama Lhundrup, the abbot of Kopan Monastery, and Lama Pasang from India. Lama Pasang did the external works, the buildings and all the things, and Lama Lhundrup looked after the discipline, the monastery and education. Lama Pasang, Lama Yeshe's disciple from Tibet, did a very important part, the buildings.

After Lama Yeshe, Lama Lhundrup, the abbot of Kopan Monastery and the nunnery, by living here, by looking after the discipline and education, the whole thing, has been the guru, like a father and a mother to the monks and nuns here. He has been immeasurably, limitlessly, immeasurably kind, enabling the monastery to benefit greater and greater, and develop the Dharma education, as well as external needs. Anyway, since I'm talking about here, there is also Kopan's manager, Tenpa Choden, who has served for so many years, worked so hard for so many years, taking responsibility. That's why it has been able to develop, due to his perseverance, devotion and compassion.

Some of the monks from here were sent to South India, to Sera Je Monastery, so they received very good education, the extensive scripture, the Buddhist philosophy, from the great teachers who studied in Tibet for so many years and became expertly learned. From those great teachers they received education for more than fifteen years. They have done very extensive study and debate—as you have seen here—with many other learned monks.

When they have completed their study, they do an examination and get a degree, becoming a Lharampa Geshe, if they have done the study well. Geshe Chonyi is the first geshe from Kopan Monastery, who went there, studied and completed the study to become a Lharampa Geshe. Then there is Geshe Sherab there. Who else?

Geshe Chonyi, he has been teaching for many years. He has been the resident teacher at the Amitabha Buddhist Centre in Singapore for many years. He has been excellent, very beneficial there.

Geshe Sherab, who takes the responsibility for the studies, the extensive Buddhist studies, and looks after the development here, taught Buddhadharma in New Mexico for quite a number of years.

There have been quite a few who have attained a Lharampa Geshe degree, who have completed the study of extensive Buddhadharma from Sera Monastery. and who are able to go to the centers in the West and Taiwan, and those different places, and are able to educate and give teachings, and also give teachings here. So, it is very beneficial.

Of course, there are many other monks unable to gain a Lharampa degree. You need so much merit to complete these extensive studies, these five treatises, so there are many who, of course, cannot complete it.

For how many years they live in the monastery, becoming a monk and studying, they get a lot of benefit, even though unable to complete the extensive studies, a lot of merit, a lot of imprints, even if they didn't achieve realizations. Then, in their next life they become much better; it becomes so much easier to understand the very extensive words, the very extensive meaning of Buddhadharma, and to be able to memorize the words. Then, they are able to practice, to cease the defilements and able to achieve liberation and enlightenment quickly. So, even if that doesn't happen in this life, in the future, in the near future, these things can happen.

There is unbelievable benefit in learning the Buddhadharma, the path to liberation and enlightenment, it's unimaginable, unimaginable, the benefit to yourself and to other sentient beings. At Kopan Monastery, every year there are many courses happening besides the one-month course, seven-day courses, weekend courses. These are of great benefit, to the Tibetan and Nepalese here and also for us Western people.

In the past, we used to do the one-month course twice a year, and then, because more centers happened, Lama Yeshe and I were invited to go to the West to give teachings, so we cut it down to only one one-month course a year. It has been unbelievably beneficial for the world, unbelievably beneficial for the world, because people come from all over the world. For many years we didn't have Chinese students from Taiwan, Hong Kong and Singapore because I didn't go there. But after I went to Singapore, Malaysia, and then Taiwan and Hong Kong, students from those countries started coming here to do retreat or to learn, to take courses.

It's been great benefit for the world, for the world peace. This is not world peace, not the world peace by gun, by fighting, but the world peace through compassion, world peace from your compassion. Here, the peace is that, from a five-day course or a two-week or weekend course, if you understand at least enough Dharma to stop killing insects, to stop fishing and things like that, no matter what you do.

At least, here you heard about karma, about compassion, about the need to have compassion for others, how important it is, and then you stop killing, at least that. That's unbelievable! That's so beneficial. Even just to stop fishing. If one person stops fishing, can you imagine. Say, a person lives sixty, seventy or one hundred years. Before, he went fishing quite often, trying to eat fresh fish—that's regarded as very good, eating fresh fish from the water. So

anyway, it's amazing, that one person coming to a course here, understanding karma and the need for compassion for others. Then, he stops fishing, stops giving harm to so many fish. Just that one person, in his life, that is unbelievable, unbelievable benefit to stop fishing. By coming here, by attending the course, and to stop stepping on insects, that's so good, that's unbelievable. It brings so much peace and happiness. That person gives so much peace and happiness to so many sentient beings by not stepping on insects, due to having come here, attending even a five-day course or seven-day course.

Not only giving less harm to insects, he can give less harm to other people. That person abandons, as much as possible, giving harm to other people. Perhaps he can't stop giving any harm at all, but even if he gives people less harm, that's amazing. That brings world peace. It brings peace to his family and to so many beings.

For each person who comes to the course here, without talking about leaving an imprint by listening to teachings and practicing bodhicitta, the skies of merit you collect or by meditating on emptiness, where you can eliminate the root of samsara, cut the root of samsara—without talking about all that, or even about tantra, for quick enlightenment in a brief lifetime of degenerate times. Without talking about all that, by coming here, if you just reduce the harm you do to others, with your body, speech and mind, you give that much peace to numberless living beings. Then, by developing compassion, by praying, collecting merits, from life to life, from life to life, then you do not harm others, and you develop realizations, from life to life, and you are able to offer greater, deeper, and deeper benefit, like oceans of skies, up to becoming bodhisattva and achieving enlightenment. It's unbelievable.

Then, you can become a buddha, and every second you enlighten numberless sentient beings, every second. With each beam emitting from the holy body, each beam liberates numberless sentient beings in every minute, every second, you see.

So here, Ani Karin, she's the main person. She came from Sweden. Normally not that many people come from Sweden, but this time she came. She's been the person for the courses here for so many years. How many years? Twenty years? Twenty-five years? Thirty? Anyway, she just lives here, not traveling much of the time, just doing her practice and leading meditations, whether it's the one-month course or all the other ones. We're here by kindness of the all people I mentioned before, but particularly Karin. I think she must have done a lot of prayers in the past to be able to benefit so many people from all over the world.

I think must be tea time now. Chai time.

OM AH HUM. [Tea offering]

It has been one monastery in Nepal that is known to the people to have a very good education, in learning extensive Buddhadharma, Buddhist philosophy, through debate. I also want to mention that there's Anila Fran, who has also been here for many years. I don't know how many, but for many years she has offered service to the monastery, and also the German nun. She has offered service for so many years. By so many people's dedication, serving, helping people, I think Kopan therefore has been able to benefit to the world, the people coming from all over the different parts of the world, as I mentioned this morning,

giving a Dharma education, causing them to achieve liberation from the oceans of samsaric suffering, then enlightenment.

What was my original thought that this came from? [Rinpoche laughs; group laughs]

For so many years Kopan Monastery has been able to benefit the world, and educate people in the Dharma, giving them the method, the path, to achieve the cessation of suffering and its causes, and to achieve full enlightenment, the great liberation.

I think that now there are maybe a hundred and sixty centers, mostly meditation centers, and then some hospices. There are different things, such as schools, but it's mostly meditation centers, around a hundred and sixty or something.

All this great benefit for the different parts of the world, all this is by having met Zina, the first Western student, the Russian lady; it all started from that. It all started from there, but of course it started because of His Holiness's kindness, particularly, and then Lama Yeshe's kindness. If we hadn't met the Russian lady, the first student, if that didn't happen, maybe all this up to now wouldn't have happened, spreading Dharma to the rest of the world, by traveling there and spreading Dharma to the world from Kopan, that wouldn't have happened.

I'm just talking the evolution, you see, from where it started. I think it's a great joy, an unbelievable joy. This is what happened, what we were able to do. I think this is the greatest joy in the life.

THE EDUCATION OF COMPASSION

Basically, the education of compassion, how to develop compassion for all the sentient beings, bodhicitta, so that one. Although there's emptiness and many other things, I think one person's bodhicitta becomes the cause of the happiness of all sentient beings, of numberless sentient beings. One person's bodhicitta, the altruistic mind to achieve enlightenment for sentient beings, cherishing other sentient beings, this becomes the source of peace and happiness of numberless sentient beings; of numberless hell beings, numberless hungry ghosts, numberless animals, numberless human beings, numberless sura beings, numberless asura beings, numberless intermediate state beings—not only numberless people in your country, not only those millions of people in your country, not only that.

You learn that from here, from all the people who came here, attending the course. That's great. There are so many others benefits, but this is the best, the most amazing thing, this attitude to bring, to pacify, to free sentient beings from suffering and its causes, and then bring them all the happiness, including enlightenment, to bring the sentient beings to enlightenment.

So, even if there's no actual realization, by generating this thought many times in one day, whatever actions you do, are dedicated for all sentient beings to achieve enlightenment, for all sentient beings to especially achieve enlightenment, that's *amazing!* That is amazing, that is really amazing!

Now I'll go back. I think I went for a walk for quite some time. Now I'm going back, I'm going back.

So, just a few things. What I was thinking before was, I thought that to give the education of compassion, the good heart, to even one person, then more and more people are educated this way; they put it in the practice, generating compassion for others, offering service to others. In this way, they naturally collect merit, so much good karma; their life becomes better, there is more meaning in their life, bringing peace and happiness to more people, to more and more people. Like this, it can be spread, such as to those countries. It makes life really, *really* happy, bringing so much inner peace and happiness, so much satisfaction. It makes life *really* happy, really fulfilling, unbelievable.

If we can educate people like that, then we do many good things for others, and by the way, as I mentioned before, all our actions become good karma, pure Dharma, even without thinking of our own happiness of this life. Happiness just comes by the way, naturally; all our needs come naturally. When we help others, when we fulfill other sentient beings' wishes, as a result, naturally, even if we're not looking for it, without attachment, our own happiness comes, all the needs for us just come naturally, our wishes get fulfilled. Our wishes for happiness get fulfilled naturally.

That's very important to keep in the mind, very important to keep in the mind. This is how to have success in life, how to have success in life, how to have our wishes, our happiness fulfilled. How to do that is by fulfilling the wishes of others, the wishes of other sentient beings to have happiness.

If you can do that in daily life, if we can put effort into that, fulfilling the wishes of other sentient beings for happiness, the more we can do that, as I repeated many times, for many hundreds of thousands of lifetimes, our wishes get fulfilled, our wishes of happiness, from each act, because karma is expandable.

THE FOUR OUTLINES OF KARMA

The four outlines of karma are: karma is definite, karma is expandable, we can't experience the result if we haven't created the cause and when we create the cause the result can't get lost. One small karma, one positive action, then result is happiness for many hundreds of lifetimes, many thousands of lifetimes because karma is expandable.

Then, the next one, if we create the karma we won't experience the result, whether it's happiness or suffering. And then, the karma which we have created, it never gets lost. No matter how many billions, or zillions, trillions of eons, it never gets lost, we definite experience the result in time. There are the four major outlines of karma.

Because of that, we just need to come to this conclusion. Like His Holiness the Dalai Lama says: if you want to be selfish, you should be intelligently selfish. If you want to live a selfish life, then live an intelligent selfish life, with intelligent selfishness. That means, if what we want is our own happiness, if we fulfill the wishes of other sentient beings, whether it's

animal or person, it doesn't matter, each time we do that, that becomes a great source of fulfilling our own wishes, our own success in the life, now and in the future, for so many hundreds and thousands of lifetimes. This comes from each act of fulfilling happiness, giving happiness, causing happiness to each sentient being. That's what should be kept in life; that's what should be kept in the heart.

That means if we harm somebody, through jealousy or a garbage mind, if we interfere with somebody's happiness, with their wishes, what happens is that *then*, for hundreds of thousands of lifetimes, we experience obstacles to our success. For hundreds of thousands of lifetimes, we experience obstacles to our life, when we fulfill our own wishes, our own happiness.

We can see, in life, there are many people who dedicate their life to others, they live their life for others. In daily life they live their life for others, they fulfill the wishes of so many people. Those people have so much happiness in life; they have such a calm mind. They are held in such high esteem. In the West, you talk about high esteem and low esteem. Not high steamer and low steamer rice, not the high steamer or the low steamer that cooks rice, this cooking pot, or momos. [Rinpoche laughs] High esteem and low esteem.

If we live our life like this every day, as I have mentioned already, if that is our motivation for life, to live our life for others, to free them from suffering, to obtain happiness for them, we bring them so much happiness, and wherever we are—East or West—our life is really full of so much inner happiness and peace. We are held in high esteem. Our actions become virtue, because from the heart we offer service to others. If we want high esteem, this is how we get it, by living in morality, by living as morally as possible, with a good heart. That's how we can make high esteem. [Rinpoche laughs] Otherwise, there would be low esteem, depression and such things.

If we analyze it we can see this is very logical. It's very logical—if we live our life always helping others, always seeking happiness for others, seeking happiness, obtaining happiness to others—if that is the main purpose, the main job of your life, then everybody will be happy with us, anywhere in the world, wherever we are. Everybody will be happy with us, everybody will naturally love us, and also all our wishes will naturally get fulfilled.

We have to remember this all the time, every day. Fulfilling our own wishes and fulfilling the wishes of happiness for other sentient beings, all has to come from creating the cause. First, attempting every day to fulfilling the wishes of other sentient beings' happiness, that is so essential, that is so essential.

What I was saying, without talking about future lives, just in this life, a person who lives her life in that way is liked by everybody, her family, everybody. Everybody likes that person, everybody praises that person, everybody wants to help that person. She leads a very happy life, with nothing to regret, nothing to be depressed about.

The day death comes, her mind is extremely happy, so happy; she is totally confident. There is no suffering up to this moment and no suffering in the future. She will either be born in a pure land or have better rebirth, with better conditions to attain enlightenment. So, even if she doesn't believe in reincarnation or karma, if she has lived with a sincere heart, always

helping people and animals, then the day she dies she will be so happy. Usually in her life there will be no fear of death, and even when death comes it's like changing dresses. Because she did good actions in this life, she will have a better rebirth in the next life. Even if she's a non-believer, but she has good heart and compassion, there's no fear, she is full of confidence. There's continuity of happiness that your heart tells you.

Another person, however, who is also a non-believer, not believing in reincarnation or karma, but who has lived his life with many a lot of negative karma, harming himself and harming others, if he didn't confess, if he didn't purify, didn't change his attitude, his heart tells him something bad is going to happen. I asked some people to tell me what their heart told them would happen when they die, even though intellectually they might not believe in reincarnation, and many told me they had some premonition, some feeling, of something very heavy happening, something terrible. I've met people like this, even though intellectually they didn't believe in reincarnation or karma.

Therefore, we should not think that reincarnation is only for Buddhists or maybe Hindus but not for people of other religion. If we become a Buddhist and then believe in reincarnation, we have to suffering in our next life in the lower suffering realms, but if we don't believe then we don't have to suffer. It's not like that.

I just give this example. A non-believer who doesn't believe but has good compassion, who lives a sincere life with compassion, helping others, that person has so much happiness and no fear of death. But another non-believer who did a lot of negative karma, with a very selfish mind and a lot of anger, who created so much harm, even though intellectually he doesn't believe, but his heart tells him something terrible is going to happen, and he feels insecure. So, understand that.

MORE ON TONG-LEN

I was talking about tong-len, but my talk got carried away. Sorry about that, I got carried out, like water running all over the place. When you do tong-len, it's very good. When somebody is sick, there's always a spirit connected. The main cause is that person's negative karma, in the past. That karma is the main cause, along with delusion. But then there's the condition, a spirit, another being, connected, harming that person. The proof of that the Buddha taught or revealed many methods, many practices, many meditations, prayers, to stop the harm from different spirits, for a person not to receive harm from those different spirits. There are many different prayers and mantras, many things the Buddha has revealed.

When we do that practice, that spirit is unable to do any harm and we get better. So those are conditions. The spirit is not the main cause of our sickness. If we think that's the main cause, if we think that the main cause is outside, it's mistaken, it's a wrong concept. If we think the main cause of our sickness, whatever the problem, is external, it is not. The main cause is our own mind, the negative karma. Our negative thoughts, our delusion is the main cause, and because of that there is the outside condition, so by doing these pujas or these meditation prayers, or mantras, it helps us to recover by stopping the spirits from giving harm. That's how we can recover, and that's the proof. If it's done properly, of course, with some qualification, then it can happen.

What I was saying was this. When we do tong-len, we give ourselves those harms the other person has, we give ourselves to the spirits on behalf of the person. In other words, the spirits are giving harm to this person, and then we give ourselves to the spirits, in the place of that person. We give ourselves to the spirits.

There is a puja where we make figures with dough. We make a figure of the person, and then you put some substances, if possible, even gold or silver, substances, enjoyments, food, and things around. There is actually only a little, but in the prayer, when we chant the mantra, it makes them to see cities, all the enjoyments actually appear to them like cities. The mantra has that power; they see unbelievable limitless enjoyments, and that makes them happy, so satisfied. We have to think that. As much as we can think like that, mantra has that much power, to give them all the things they need, like cities, an unbelievable, unbelievable number.

Then, we give them the Dharma, saying things like, “Do not engage in any harmful action, engage in perfect wholesome actions, subdue one’s own mind, this is the teaching of the Buddha.”

By planting chilies, hot substances, then what grows is hot, the result is hot. By planting sweet things, like raisins, the result is sweet. Similarly, if we harm others, we receive harm back; if we benefit others, then we receive help from others. That is the evolution of the karma, evolution of the action.

So, we give advice to them, giving them Dharma teachings. There’s a practice like this to help, but then here what I’m saying is, with tong-len, we give ourselves to the spirits for that person to recover from that sickness, to be free from suffering. We give ourselves to the spirits on behalf of that patient.

That can be very helpful. It’s called *LM*. Instead of making this figure, we use ourselves as a *LM*, to give to the spirits; we give that to the spirits on behalf of that patient.

It is the same, even if we are doing it while doing a massage or some healing, same. If we’re touching the body, it’s a very effective practice for our own mind, to develop a brave heart; it’s a bodhicitta practice, letting go of the I and cherishing others. That’s a very special practice.

It seems more beneficial to our own mind, from the merits or the wish-fulfilling body. The place become a pure land, there is no suffering, the trees are all wish-fulfilling trees, whatever sound we hear from the birds, from the trees, wind—everything—is all the sound of the Dharma, receiving teachings from the deity. It is unbelievable, unbelievable; it has all this beauty.

One way is manifesting the result or another, but what I find more beneficial is we *ourselves* become the pure land, we *ourselves* become the realization, we become all needs, rather than manifesting them, we ourselves become everything for them, food, nectar, we ourselves yourself become everything. I find that more beneficial than manifesting. We become everything there for their needs, like limitless skies, like the nighttime when we are on an

airplane and we look down on a city and see all those lights. I mean, just the idea of numberless, even to give one sentient being all he needs. This way is more effective.

Panchen Shakya Shri [?] mentioned this. I don't remember exactly the Tibetan, but the essence is, "May I experience the suffering of sentient beings on me, and may the oceans of samsaric suffering be dried out." It means the numberless sentient beings. So, when we encounter problems, we pray, "May the suffering of sentient beings ripen on me," and "May the oceans of suffering of samsara be dried out," which means ceased.

I didn't remember exactly but Shakya Shri also mentioned, "If you're suffering, take the suffering of all. Take the suffering of all sentient beings: the numberless hell beings, the numberless hungry ghosts, the numberless animals, the numberless human beings, the suras, the asuras, the intermediate state beings—take everyone's sufferings. "If you're suffering, take the sufferings of all." That means take it on ourselves, on the selfish mind.

In the tong-len practice, we give it all to the self-cherishing thought, to the selfish mind and it is totally destroyed, totally destroyed. What the selfish mind cherishes is the I, not the merely-labeled I that exists, but the I that is *not* merely labeled by mind, that one. Not the I that is merely labeled by the mind, not that one. What our selfish mind cherishes is the I *not* merely labeled by mind, the false I, the "real" I, in the sense of existing from its own side. With tong-len, this selfish mind is destroyed.

The object that the selfish mind cherishes is this "real" I, real in the sense that this is the term we ordinary, common people use all the time, the real I, which means the independent I, the independent I, the inherently-existent I, the I that exists from its own side.

This also becomes completely non-existent, becomes completely non-existent, then we meditate on that a little bit. Within tong-len, we then do the meditation on emptiness. While we are doing the bodhicitta practice, this way we get to meditate on emptiness as well. With a little bit of concentration, we one-pointedly concentrate on that, on the absence of the real I, the emptiness of that. If we can stay there a little bit, it's very good.

When we encounter problems, sufferings, in the family, with our wife or husband, or with our children, whether it's with a friend or with an enemy, this is your practice.

Then, by generating loving-kindness to others, we do the giving part.

So this is Panchen Shakya Shri's quote: *Do na kun nya*—"When you suffer, take the suffering of all." And then, *Kyi ne dai wa so so na*—"When you encounter happiness, dedicate your happiness to collect merits." This is very, very important and extremely beneficial, so write down Panchen Shakya Shri's tong-len prayer.

Kye ne dai wa so so na. Even just reciting these words, it's very good, psychologically it's very good, even just reciting these words while we're walking on the road, while we're doing our job. Even just reciting this is so good for the mind.

It's very good, while we are reciting this, if some problem comes up. [Rinpoche laughs] Then, whether we practice or not is in our hands. We can choose whether we bring peace in

our heart by applying this or whether we want suffering. We choose which one: we want the suffering and so we don't practice but just follow the delusion, the self-cherishing thought, or we don't want suffering and so we apply this and then we're free from the selfish mind, we have peace.

So, *Kye ne dai wa so so na*. For example, when we stay in a five-star hotel, something like that, there's so much comfort. Whether you spend so much money or somebody else pays for it, we give it away to all sentient beings, that five-star or six-star or seven-star hotel, whatever, that twenty-star hotel. All these comforts, so much comfort, of the very rich we give away to all sentient beings, we give away to all sentient beings.

Our happiness, our pleasure, all this, the rich house, we give away to all sentient beings, it's so great, so good. Then, as I mentioned yesterday, we collect limitless skies of merit, limitless skies of merit, because we dedicate it to all sentient beings. There are so many things there, and we dedicate them all to the numberless sentient beings. That means you, with each of those possessions—whatever comforts, pleasures and so forth—we collect so many times limitless skies of merit, good luck. It's amazing. We create numberless causes of happiness.

While we are eating food, enjoying the pleasure of eating food, if there's some delicious food that we are enjoying, we make charity of that to all sentient beings.

I led the other day the three things of eating yoga. After we generate bodhicitta, we can do the eating yoga and offer charity to all sentient beings, and then make offerings to the Guru, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha—those three things—to collect extensive merits. There are those three things we can do.

So this is the example. With *Kye na dai wa so so na* when we are happy we dedicate our merits to others to collect extensive merits. Then, even the pleasure, by giving it away to sentient beings, we collect numberless merits, we collect the cause of happiness.

It means, whatever happens in our life, whatever problems, whatever happiness, whatever suffering, you see, whatever happens in our life, our life always becomes meaningful. It is never wasted, never empty; it is always so meaningful, so rich in merits, so beneficial. Every time, happiness or suffering, whatever we experience is made so beneficial, made so useful for all sentient beings.

After, *Kye na dai wa so so na* there's *Pen de nag wa ka wa sho*. What it's saying is, "May all sentient beings receive limitless skies of peace and happiness." Maybe I'll use a different word, panacea and happiness, okay? Panacea and happiness. *Pen de nag wa ka wa sho*, "May every sentient being receive skies of panacea and happiness." Here the prayer itself looks like "May the sky be filled with peace and happiness." That's what it says. But anyway, the reality is that every sentient being receives peace and happiness, panacea and happiness, like limitless skies.

This prayer from Panchen Sakya Shri, this great holy being, is a very good instruction, from the tong-len prayer, to meditate on tong-len, because this tong-len is a very important subject. So, I've just mentioned here some of this.

It's extremely good, if somebody is sick, if we do tong-len, it's so good, that's the best practice, if even we only do one mala, like that, not just one time, but we count, a half mala, one mala, like that, there is the possibility the other person will recover.

TRANSFORMING SUFFERING INTO HAPPINESS

Even if we get sick, in case we get sick, then we must rejoice. We should feel, "I really succeeded!" We really succeeded and we should feel great happiness. That means we're actually able to experience all the sufferings of sentient beings. That's something to rejoice in, to make us unbelievably happy.

I just want to tell you one thing about Geshe Lama Konchog. In the summertime, there was a lot of rain here, I think, after building the monastery. In the old time, I don't remember, after come down the steps—not here, not this one, but before, in the old gumpa, the one before this. There were steps, then a flat, cement patio, where we have the Tara statue.

So, there was a lot of rain and as Geshe Lama Konchok went down the stairs, he fell down very heavily on the cement. *Immediately*, he felt unbelievable happiness. [Group laughs] He felt unbelievable happiness, immediately. Why? Because he thought the obstacles to my life were experienced on him. He thought that the obstacles to my life were experienced on him, so he felt unbelievable happiness. He fell down so heavily but his mind was so happy, *so happy*.

This is an example of somebody who has trained well; it is the definition of somebody well trained in thought transformation. Immediately feeling incredible happiness means his mind is already trained in thought transformation, transforming suffering into happiness, transforming the problem into happiness. His mind is already trained in thought transformation. When it's already trained like this, whatever problem happens, there is unbelievable happiness, because we are experiencing this for sentient beings, you understand, experiencing this for sentient beings. We get the opportunity to receive all sentient beings' sufferings, and also because we cherish the sentient beings, we think they are so kind, we think they are most unbelievable, kind, precious ones. We already realize that, *see* that, so, when you experience suffering, this is sentient beings' suffering, so we get unbelievable happiness.

There's also the tong-len meditation we do with the breath, where when we breathe out, we give everything to sentient beings and when we breathe in, we take all their sufferings. So, this is related with the breath, to the wind and mind. I'm not talking about the wind like this, not talking about that wind, but the wind, the vehicle of the mind, one in essence with it but which functions differently. Wherever the mind focuses, the wind is also concentrated there, or it comes there. Therefore, the bodhicitta becomes stronger, the thought of cherishing others becomes stronger.

This meditation is to train the mind, but also to help in daily life. Doing this meditation is actually to encourage the mind in daily life, to actually get involved in taking other sentient beings' problems and suffering on ourselves and giving our happiness to others.

So it's to develop the mind, to encourage the mind, so that in daily life we actually do it. For example, a mistake was done by somebody else, but we get blamed. That's one example. When you do that, we take that on ourselves, we don't cause problems to that person to have happiness. Actually, the mistake was done by the other person, but the person complained to us, blamed us. We don't sue that person; we don't become *mad*, trying to prove we're not to blame, spending hours explaining how we're innocent. To protect that person from suffering and give him happiness, we take that blame on ourselves. That's one example.

In the daily life, whatever the difficulty, if there's something difficult, something to do, whatever it is we take it on ourselves so the other person doesn't have those problems; he is free from problems, able to have happiness. If we are doing this tong-len meditation in our daily life we are actually able to that. That's one thing.

It's not only just meditation, but actually the reality in the life, then you stay, live your life selfishly, so it's not like this. It's actually to *help* in the daily life, so that.

I mentioned one thing just before. To achieve enlightenment we don't need to study Buddhadharma extensively. I mentioned the three groups, depending on their level of intelligence: by studying the lam-rim, by studying the extensive scriptures and by studying the guru's instructions, putting them into practice, and then, by that, achieving enlightenment. This is how the Kadampas happened. This is also an example for us, depending on our level of intelligence. If we have no opportunity, if we're unable to study extensively, this is what we can do, the lam-rim or the guru's instructions.

Basically, it's very important to learn as much as possible, otherwise, we'll make many mistakes, we'll have a lot of ignorance. If we don't understand we make many mistakes in the practice, and we won't achieve realizations. Then, this is difficult, this is what happens, and we can't benefit other sentient beings. Or maybe we'll also have wrong ideas, maybe we'll practice wrong ideas and teach wrong ideas to others. This can happen.

Therefore, we need to learn as much as possible. Even though, like others can, we can't learn the extensive philosophy, but we need to learn as much as possible. That's very important.

So, maybe, we'll take a short break.

[Dedication and mandala offering]

That's it.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE MOTIVATION (FOUR PEOPLE RECITE THE TARA PRAISES)

There's the meditation session and then there's the break time. That doesn't mean it's the break time from the Dharma. It's not the break time from the Dharma. We can put it this way, there is the practice of the meditation session, and the practice of the break time. That way we're not saying it's a break from Dharma practice; it's not saying it's a holiday from

Dharma practice, a holiday from virtue, a holiday from creating the cause of happiness, that the meditation session is for virtue and the other times are for nonvirtue, for creating the cause of suffering. It's not saying that.

The practice of the meditation session and the practice of the break time, or, the yoga of the meditation session and the yoga of the break time. Whether it's the yoga of the meditation session or the yoga of the break time from the meditation session, basically what it's saying is the break time is the break from the sitting meditation. So, the break time is when we are not doing sitting meditation, but it's still not a break from meditation.

In one day in our life, there are the sessions of meditation, the yoga of the session of meditation, and the yoga of the break time, the break from sitting meditation. Who attends the course, we have gone through this already, from the beginning of the lam-rim, during the gradual path of the lower capable being. Whether it's session time or the break time, when we're not in sitting meditation, whether it's making our life meaningful or not all depends on the motivation. Whichever it is, session or the break time from the sitting meditation, what makes life meaningful or meaningless is the motivation.

This has been explained by Pabongka Dechen Nyingpo, this great, enlightened Tibetan lama, who benefited sentient beings and teaching of the Buddha, like the sun shining in this world, who wrote many unbelievable scriptures, with his experience of both sutra and tantra.

This example he gives is always very good. If you didn't understand it, then I will repeat again, also to remind others and for those who haven't understood. It's so important.

From this, you come to know what is Dharma, what is not Dharma, what is holy Dharma, what is worldly dharma, what is virtue, what is nonvirtue—what action of your body, speech, and mind becomes the cause of happiness and what becomes the cause of suffering.

His example is this. Four people recite the Tara prayer. Tara is a female enlightened being who is the embodiment of all the numberless buddhas' holy actions, doing work for sentient beings, to grant temporary and ultimate happiness to all sentient beings, to bring them from happiness to happiness to liberation from samsara and enlightenment.

By praying like this, by practicing Tara, we are able to have attainment and pacify obstacles and to offer extensive benefit to the sentient beings and the teachings of the Buddha, like what Lama Atisha accomplished. Even though that aspect of Lama Atisha has passed away, he is still benefiting us. The lam-rim teaching that we have been studying and meditating on is basically from Lama Atisha. It's Lama Atisha's teaching, that he put together based on the 84,000 teachings of the Buddha, which revealed the teachings of the Lesser Vehicle, the Greater Vehicle—the Mahayana—and the Secret Mantra, Vajrayana.

The Lesser Vehicle teachings are to achieve liberation from the oceans of samsaric suffering for oneself, the blissful state of peace for oneself. To achieve enlightenment, we practice the Mahayana Paramitayana teaching, achieving enlightenment for sentient beings. Then, by practicing Mahayana Secret Mantra Vajrayana, we can achieve enlightenment even within one life, or in a brief lifetime of degenerate times. In that way, sentient beings don't have to

suffer for a long time, we are able to bring them to enlightenment so much quicker. All that is condensed in the lam-rim, the stages of the path to enlightenment, which comes from Lama Atisha's first lam-rim teaching, the *Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment*.

So now, as Pabongka Dechen Nyingpo explained, there are four people reciting the Tara prayer, the *Praises to the Twenty-one Taras*. That's a special prayer, praising to the twenty-one aspects of Tara. Each Tara has a different function or benefit for sentient beings.

Whenever we have any problem in life, whatever problem we have, there's one Tara there that we can practice and can heal that problem. She can prevent that problem, whether it's black magic, whether it's danger, a court case or prison—anything. In the *Twenty-one Taras* there's one Tara for pacifying all these problems. Whether it's a shortage of life, if we have some life danger, there's a long-life Tara that grants long life. To develop wisdom. If we are suffering from poverty, from external poverty, there's a Tara who rescues us, who gives us wealth, who help us have external prosperity. So, it's very common to recite the *Twenty-one Taras* prayer.

Here, four people recite the *Praises to the Twenty-one Taras*.

The first person recites the praise with the thought to achieve enlightenment, for himself to achieve enlightenment for the benefit of sentient beings. That person's action of reciting the prayer becomes the cause to achieve enlightenment for sentient beings.

The next person recites *Praises to the Twenty-one Taras* with the motivation, not to achieve enlightenment, but to achieve the blissful state of peace for himself, liberation from samsaric suffering and the cause, karma and delusion, for himself. That person's actions of reciting the prayer don't become the cause of enlightenment but it becomes the cause to achieve liberation for himself.

The third person recites *Praises to the Twenty-one Taras* not with the motivation to achieve enlightenment for sentient beings, not with the motivation to achieve liberation from samsara, but to achieve happiness in future lives. That's it. That third person's action of reciting the prayer becomes only the cause to achieve happiness in future lives. It doesn't become the cause to achieve enlightenment or liberation from samsara, only the cause of happiness in future lives. That means it is only the cause of samsaric happiness, the happiness of future lives, the happiness of future *lives*.

These three people's actions of reciting the prayer, up to the third one, become Dharma; the great one, the middle one and then the lowest one, reciting the prayer with the motivation seeking the happiness of future lives. These actions become Dharma because of the motivation. Even the last motivation is still Dharma, even though it's done with attachment, attachment—not attachment seeking the happiness of this life, but attachment seeking the happiness of future lives. It is still Dharma, that motivation is pure Dharma, because it is unstained by attachment clinging to this life.

The fourth person recites *Praises to the Twenty-one Taras* with the motivation only seeking the happiness of this life, just only happiness of this life. That's what common people in the world do, all their activities, eating, walking, sitting, sleeping, working—there's no

motivation to achieve enlightenment for sentient beings, there's no motivation to achieve liberation from samsara for oneself, there's not even the motivation to seek the happiness of future lives. They do not understand the point, the existence of future lives, so the motivation is only seeking happiness of this life. This is how they spend their lives.

For the fourth one who recites *Praises to the Twenty-one Taras* with this motivation, seeking only the happiness of this life, the motivation is attachment clinging to this life, that is *pure* nonvirtue. Even if the action looks spiritual, it looks like Dharma, reciting the prayer, but the motivation is nothing special.

THIS PERFECT HUMAN REBIRTH IS MORE PRECIOUS THAN A WISH-FULFILLING JEWEL

An ordinary capable being's motivation is nothing higher, nothing more special than the animals, than those other sentient beings, the animals. They live their lives with the motivation seeking happiness for this life, so there is nothing special in that.

Living the life with that motivation, nothing becomes anything more special than an animal's life. Even animals expect to obtain the happiness of this life. Even in those very high towers in New York, the ants can climb up from bottom to get in the kitchen so they get into the honey or whatever it is

I think maybe I told the story of Kadampa Geshe Ben Gungyal but now I remember what I was trying to say. I told the elaborate story but I didn't get to complete what I wanted to say. I remembered just now. I told this story before, but I didn't remember until now that I did not finish. Maybe I'll mention it tomorrow.

There is the story of Kadampa Geshe Kangyunpa [?] who smiled only three times in his life. Once, when he was meditating in the hermitage, some mice were making a lot of noise. One mouse was transporting a large piece of turquoise—what they use to make ornaments out of—across the floor, to a crack in the wall. The single mouse wasn't able to push the stolen turquoise through the crack. So what happened was one mouse sat on another one and made a bridge and then the first mouse pushed the turquoise onto the back of the other mouse and so was able to lift it up and into the crack. They had to work so hard to do this. When the geshe saw this, he laughed. That was one of the three times he smiled.

Another story is about a child from Pembo who got this special food called *too*. It's dry powdered cheese but with a lot of butter mixed with it. So this *too*, no, *tree*, in Tibetan it's called *tree*,⁶ is regarded as very precious, very delicious, so this was a big thing for the boy. The family were eating theirs, but this child, even though this was just this one opportunity he would have to eat this, he didn't eat it, but hid it behind his back in order to get another piece. Because this was the one time he would get to eat it because it was so precious, he hid it behind himself. But what happened was a dog came up behind him and completely ate it, so the boy never got a chance to taste it. He was so upset he cried. Anyway, this was another story that made the geshe laugh.

⁶ In other teachings Rinpoche has called it *mar-zen*. See his book on perfect human rebirth.

He used that example to show that we have this human rebirth which has eighteen precious qualities just this one time, so we must not waste it, not only every day of it, but even one hour, one minute, one second. We must make every second beneficial, to create the cause of the happiness of future lives, to achieve liberation from samsara and to achieve great liberation, full enlightenment. Even each second, we must make this human body highly meaningful like this by creating the cause to achieve enlightenment.

It's an unbelievable loss, the greatest possible loss, if we don't practice Dharma, creating the cause for future happiness, especially to achieve enlightenment, in that second, to achieve enlightenment. If we are not practicing bodhicitta, in order to achieve enlightenment, in every second, if that is missing, that's the greatest loss. It's a greater loss than having lost billions of dollars, having lost mountains of gold the size of this earth, a greater loss even than the whole sky filled with the wish-granting jewels. How many wish-granting jewels? Wish-granting jewels filling the whole sky.

This might be quite a new thing. The wheel-turning kings in the past, those who had a lot of merit, would go to the ocean and find these jewels. They were completely covered with mud, so they cleaned them in three ways, the mud, the last time with cotton or something, and then they put them on the top of the banner on the roof.

Then, on the fifteenth day of the month, the full moon day, if people prayed, whatever material possessions and external needs they prayed would be actualized. Whatever material needs they prayed they would get. Of course, you can't stop rebirth in the lower realms and the jewels can't help you achieve higher rebirth.

Therefore, even though among all material possessions the wish-granting jewel is the most valuable, compared to our human rebirth, it's nothing. Compared to the value of our human rebirth, this wish-granting jewel is nothing, because we can use this precious human body to achieve liberation. We can achieve higher rebirth, then liberation from samsara, then ultimate happiness, full enlightenment, but from a wish-granting jewel, we can't achieve that. So the perfect human rebirth is much more precious than this external wish-fulfilling jewel.

So, even within one second, if we didn't get to practice Dharma, if we didn't get to live in bodhicitta and so we are unable to create the cause of enlightenment it's a greater loss than the sky filled with wish-granting jewels. This human body is most unbelievably precious.

So, anyway, this is introduction.

PERFECT HUMAN REBIRTH: HOLY DHARMA AND WORLDLY DHARMA

The fourth person who was reciting *Praises to the Twenty-one Taras* with the motivation seeking only the happiness of this life, that motivation is pure nonvirtue, pure nonvirtue. Because of the motivation that action is transformed into nonvirtue, and the result is only suffering. Even though the subject is a Dharma subject, the action of reciting the prayer does not become Dharma, it becomes cause of suffering.

This example is very good to understand. It is very beneficial, in everyday life. By listening to this, we can discriminate, we can have discerning wisdom, we can tell whether our action—doing meditation or reciting a prayer, whatever we’re doing—becomes Dharma or not. We know, we can tell, whether it’s going to become negative karma, whether it’s going to become holy Dharma, we can tell.

And we can also tell whether our action of eating, walking, sitting, sleeping, doing our job and so forth becomes Dharma or whether it becomes negative karma, we can tell.

If we don’t understand this, there’s great danger, there’s a great danger. We can think, “I’ve been meditating for thirty years, forty years, fifty years,” or “I’ve been doing this prayer for this many years,” and we have a kind of a pride. “I’ve done a lot of practice,” but actually, if we analyze, nothing becomes Dharma. We did it for so many years but nothing becomes Dharma, because the motivation is done only for the happiness of this life—to have a long life, to be healthy, to not get sick, to have success in business, all that—only the happiness of this life, so the motivation is attachment.

We have to understand, we have to have a long life so we can benefit others sentient beings. We need to have wealth so that we can benefit for other sentient beings. We have to stay healthy so that we can help other sentient beings. All that becomes Dharma. Because our motivation is to benefit other sentient beings, that becomes very pure Dharma, very pure Dharma, unstained by the self-cherishing thought.

We’re trying to have a long life in order to benefit other sentient beings; we’re trying to have wealth so that we can help other people who need wealth, who need material help. To those who need money, we give money; to those who need a house, we give a house. That’s a very pure motivation.

We need to know the different levels of motivation to become Dharma, what make the action become Dharma. We need to know the clear distinction: what is Dharma, what is not Dharma; what is holy Dharma, what is worldly Dharma; what is virtue, what is nonvirtue. This is all due to different motivation. We can discover if it’s Dharma or not by the motivation, not from the action itself but from the motivation, by examining the motivation. Only then can we tell.

It’s the same with normal actions. Not only doing prayers and meditation, but eating, walking, sitting, sleeping, doing many hours of job, if this is done with a motivation to achieve enlightenment, then all these activities we are doing become the cause of enlightenment. That means they become the cause of happiness of other sentient beings. If these actions of eating, walking, sitting, sleeping, doing a job and so forth are all done with the motivation to achieve the blissful state of peace for oneself, liberation from samsara, then they become the cause to achieve that. If they are done with the motivation seeking the happiness of future lives, then they become the cause for the happiness of future lives. They don’t become negative karma.

But if all these activities are done with a motivation seeking only the happiness of this life, if we live the *whole* life from birth to death with this motivation, seeking only the happiness of this life, then eating, walking, sitting, sleeping, even doing prayers and meditation, whatever,

everything becomes negative karma, everything becomes negative karma. Even meditating, even the actions of meditating, of reciting prayers, those actions, as I mentioned before, everything becomes the cause of suffering, nothing becomes cause of happiness.

Even though by chanting mantra, the *Praises to the Twenty-one Taras*, even though it can heal our sicknesses, even though it causes a long life, or brings wealth in this life or whatever, even though they help these things, it doesn't become Dharma. All this is negative karma, because it's done with the motivation of attachment, only seeking happiness in this life. It is pure nonvirtue, pure nonvirtue. If we examine it we can see it doesn't bring peace in our heart. Its effect is to disturb us; there is no peace in our heart. We can tell from that.

This is extremely important. It is the very, very, very first thing to be known if we are going to practice Dharma. This is the very first thing to be known, to discover, otherwise, we can cheat our life, we can cheat our whole life. We think we can do our meditation, we have been practicing Dharma for so many years, we think we're good but there's a great danger, without knowing this point, without knowing the clear definition of Dharma. If it's not Dharma, we've cheated ourselves our whole life, not only making it meaningless and empty, but using it to create only negative karma, the cause of the lower realms—not only the cause of problems in the human realm in the future, but the cause of the lower realms, the most unbearable sufferings.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MINDFULNESS

It becomes so important to always practice mindfulness in our daily life and always watch our mind, our motivation to always keep in virtue and to not allow ourselves to go under the delusions.

There's a quotation from Shantideva,

Whether something becomes virtue or nonvirtue depends on the motivation, so therefore you always need to attend to the mind, to keep the mind in virtue.

In *Letter to a Friend*, Nagarjuna says,

There isn't much to say, who are free from suffering? Subduing your heart is the essential instruction to benefit beings. The Buddha said this mind is the root of the Dharma.

In *Bodhicaryavatara*, the great bodhisattva says,

If you don't protect your mind, you won't be able to protect your vow. If you don't protect your mind, then you cannot protect your morality, your vow.

There might be better English but this is the essence. This last part is very important, it is something to remember in daily life, so it's very useful to write down this, to make note of

this and put it in your room. I mean, not only in your meditation room but even in different parts of the house, for you to remember.

Sem kyi lang bo yen da rai. What it is saying is that, “If you let go of the elephant mind.” It means if we don’t protect the mind, which is like an elephant, the elephant of the mind, if we don’t protect it, if we don’t take care with it, whatever it does, wherever it goes, whatever it does, there’s danger, like an elephant, harming us and harming others, causing difficulties, troubles. This is the same with the mind. If we don’t take care of the mind, if we let it go freely, it can cause us to be reborn in the hot hells, in the lowest hot hell which is inexhaustible hell realm.

Nye wan na me refers to the heaviest in samsara, and for the longest time. The length of life that we have to experience is one intermediate eon, and the suffering is the heaviest in samsara. If we don’t take care of the mind, if we let it go, it creates negative karma, which can cause us to reincarnate in the *nye wan nag me*, the inexhaustible hot hell realm. That harm can happen to us. So, here he uses the elephant as example of the mind.

The next line says *lang chen*...[Tib]

An untamed elephant that is unsubdued and crazy, that becomes crazy, cannot cause you to be born in the lowest hot hell, which has the heaviest suffering and the longest time. With the rope of continual remembrance tied fast to the elephant of the mind, you can always keep the mind in virtue.

Then next line says *Chik pa tan che* [?]....[Tib]

This way, you’ll be free from all fears and all dangers, and all the virtue will come in your hand.

So that means all the realizations, all the virtuous thoughts will arise, when we keep our mind in virtue. Then, when we do walking, we do sitting, we do sleeping, we do our job—so many things, whatever we do—it all becomes Dharma. Even doing business becomes Dharma. All activities—whatever we do with the body, speech, and mind—become Dharma. *Ge wa tam che* [?]....[Tib] All the virtue comes in our hand, and then that includes all the realizations.

One way to think is, all the activities, whatever we do with the body, speech, and mind, all the eating, walking, sitting, sleeping, doing our job, everything becomes virtue. And the other thing is that all the realizations come, up to enlightenment. From guru devotion, and realizing the perfect human rebirth, all graduated path of the lower capable being, the middle capable being and the higher capable being, up to enlightenment, everything comes.

All virtue comes in our hand, and all the fears and dangers of the lower realms, the sufferings of the devas, of the human beings, all the suffering of samsara, even getting caught into the lower nirvana for so many eons, none of that happens, we are free from that, and then we enter the Mahayana path and achieve enlightenment. We are not only free from

disturbing thought obscurations, but also free from even the subtle defilements, and we achieve enlightenment. We attain the whole path to enlightenment.

THE YOGA OF GOING TO SLEEP

I'll just mention this. For example, when you go to bed, when you go to sleep. This is what you are about to do when you get back to your room. Or maybe here! [Group laughs] Maybe, if I continue a little bit, then maybe here! [Rinpoche laughs] Sleeping yoga.

It is mentioned by Lama Tsongkhapa, his advice, when you go to bed, first wash your feet. I think washing the feet helps the mind to be fresh, to be not heavy, not sleepy, where you can't wake up. Like that, the mind is clearer.

Then, you go to bed, with the position like Buddha explained, when the Buddha was passing away, on the right side in the position of lion laying down. Not sleeping flat like this on the bed. Then your two legs stretched out, the left leg put on the right, laying down in the position of a snow lion.

It is said, with the method, you wake up easily, so as to not waste your life, to not have a very drowsy, very heavy sleep, kind of like that, and it is very easy to wake up, to do the practice.

When you go to bed, you think of light. Generate virtuous thoughts until you fall asleep, generate virtuous thoughts in meditation, keep the mind in that, in the meditation of virtuous thoughts.

Then also, when you're about to fall sleep, have to have the intention, the motivation, not to be overwhelmed by sleep, and without the delay of the time, getting up. That is mentioned that in the teachings. It is also mentioned in the teachings, there are three parts of the night: the upper part of the night, the middle part of the night and the lower part of the night. So, for those two parts of the night, practice Dharma, virtue, don't sleep, and in the middle part of the night, then sleep. That also helps with your health situation. In the early part of the night, practice Dharma, and also in the lower part of the night, in the early morning, get up and do practice, then in the middle part sleep. That way, you don't waste your life.

For example, I'm not making this definite, I'm just using an example, say you want to get up at four o'clock to begin your practice, to not be overwhelmed by sleep, to be able to get up at that time in the early morning to begin the practice, you have to have that kind of motivation, to wake up at that time, to have that kind of energy, of inspiration.

That's what mentioned in the lam-rim teachings. It's said that it should be like a deer living in the forest. It doesn't have a house and there are many enemies, so when it sleeps it is a very light sleep, it keeps its ears up. It is a very light sleep because it has to be careful. It's explained in the teachings like that. It means to not waste your life, to get up early in the morning to be able to begin your practice.

Because you went to bed remembering the Buddha's position, even when you go to bed, you don't forget the Buddha. That helps. When you do that every night, that helps when you die. One day when you are in the situation where you suddenly die, or even if you are gradually dying, because you have done this all the time, it is easy to remember the Buddha at that time, and you don't get reborn in lower realms. You're totally safe if you remember the Buddha at that time. The mind is always in virtue, it is never separated from virtue, from Dharma, so it helps with that.

Then also, the sleep doesn't become very heavy, so you're not completely covered by heavy sleep, unable to get up early in the morning, then be unable to practice. Then, a week goes, a month goes, a year goes, and you waste your whole life totally. This precious human body only happens once and it gets totally wasted. So this helps you to not waste your life.

Then, if you sleep like this, not separating from virtuous thoughts, not being possessed by heavy sleep, in your dreams you don't dream of engaging in negative karma, killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, all these examples, engaging in many negative karmas in your dreams. It doesn't happen.

And then, even during sleep you are able to practice virtue, even in your dreams you practice virtue. Those yogis, those people who are practicing tantra, practicing what is called "utilizing ignorance in the path to enlightenment," for them sleeping becomes a meditation, and dreams become a meditation. They meditate on the tantric path, whatever the person's level of mind is.

So, I think I'll stop there. I won't continue with that.

So, think, "May sentient beings achieve a state of dharmakaya, in sleep, dedicate that sentient beings achieve the state of dharmakaya."

So, go to sleep with the mind in a virtuous thought, bodhicitta, compassion to sentient beings, loving-kindness, with the meditation in emptiness. Do that until you fall asleep.

So you can generate, at the beginning, you can generate the motivation, bodhicitta, "The purpose of my life is to benefit for sentient beings, free them from all the suffering causes, and bring them to enlightenment, therefore, I must achieve enlightenment, therefore I'm going to practice the sleeping yoga, continue like that, sleeping yoga."

The actual yoga is that. In tantric practice, there is sleeping in the *to-men* [?] *sleeping in the state of non-creativity* and *sleeping in the state of creativity*. Creativity is yourself, the mandala, then the deity, the practice of the deity, thinking with devotion, think like that. And the sleeping yoga in state of non-creativity is basically emptiness, but it's Highest Yoga Tantra. Then, of course, there's experiences to develop besides emptiness, with the emptiness.

Then, there is also *rising up from the state of creativity*, *du-jen* [?] [Tib], or *rising up from the state of non-creativity*. Depending on how you went to bed, you also rise up in that. That's according to tantra. So, you visualize the virtuous friend there, then with devotion you go to sleep, with bodhicitta and emptiness.

Anyway, at the beginning, generate the motivation of bodhicitta and think, “Therefore, I am going to do the yoga of sleeping.” That way, however many hours you sleep, it becomes Dharma, virtue.

The other thing is you can take sleeping as sort of like a medicine, for your health, in order to benefit for sentient beings, in order to serve sentient beings. You can think also like that. Sleep is something that you need for your body and mind, but it is not for your own happiness, it is to benefit all sentient beings. Then you collect extensive merits.

I’ll continue tomorrow. I’ll just stop there.

Now, those who are taking refuge, Ven. Neil has already gone through those meditations, the explanations, so just to go over the outline to remind you or for those who haven’t heard.

REFUGE IS THE DOOR TO BUDDHADHARMA

The definition of whether we have entered the Buddhadharma or not is not defined by our having an intellectual understanding; it’s not defined by our having intellectual understanding.

Even if we can explain by heart the entire teachings of the Buddha, all 84,000 teachings, all the *Kangyur*, and all commentaries of the pandits, all the *Tengyur*, those yogis, pandits, the great Indian scholars, those Six Ornaments, all those commentaries; then there are commentaries by great Tibetan scholars, highly attained beings like Lama Tsongkhapa and so forth. Even if we know all those teachings by heart, you can explain them, if we don’t have refuge in the mind, we are not an inner being, we haven’t entered the Buddhadharma. Even though we can explain them so well, we know all those teachings by heart, our mind becomes like a library, if we don’t have refuge in our heart we have not entered the Buddhadharma, we’re outside, we haven’t entered the Buddhadharma.

Whether we have entered the Buddhadharma or not is defined by refuge, whether we have refuge in our heart or not. So, it becomes extremely important.

By having refuge in our heart we enter into the Buddhadharma. The Hinayana refuge is if our mind is qualified by the two cause of refuge: the useful fear of samsara and respect for the Three Jewels. By discovering how samsara is in the nature of suffering, the path of the continuity of the contaminated aggregates, the contaminated seed of delusion, the imprint, and caused by karma and delusion. This is direct from Kyabje Denmo Locho Rinpoche, or some other teachings, the path, maybe *gyu gyum* [?] [Tib], the continuity of birth of the contaminated aggregates.

What is contaminated? Contaminated is the seed of delusion, and caused by karma and delusion, caused by impure cause, karma and delusion, wrong concepts. That is samsara, cyclic existence.

We need to understand that our circling existence is totally in the nature of suffering. With wisdom, we realize that this is only in the nature of suffering, and then useful fear arises, the fear of our samsara that makes us engage in the path, to study and reflect, to meditate on the path. It makes us actualize the path, the five paths to liberation, especially the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness. Then we're able to cease the defilements, the disturbing thought obscurations, including the cause, and we achieve total liberation, everlasting happiness. That's why I say this fear is useful, this fear of our own samsara.

That's one cause, our mind qualified in that. Then, the other one is faith in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, understanding that they have the qualities, the power to guide us, to liberate us from the oceans of samsaric suffering and its causes. With these two causes, when our mind is qualified with these two causes, totally relying upon the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, that's going for refuge. This mental factor is refuge.

If we have this refuge in our heart, we enter into the Buddhadharmā; we become an inner being, not an outer being.

Having refuge in your heart is the foundation for the pratimoksha vows, which allows us to achieve liberation from samsara. Then, we achieve perfect meditation, shamatha, calm abiding, and that allows us to achieve the great insight, wisdom. Then we are able to actualize the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness, cease the defilements and achieve the sorrowless state, liberation.

Having refuge in the heart, the foundation for the pratimoksha vows, then the foundation for the bodhisattva vows, to achieve enlightenment for sentient beings, and the foundation for the tantric vows, to quickly achieve enlightenment, so that we can quickly liberate and enlighten sentient beings.

Then, it purifies all the negative karmas. By having refuge in the heart, we purify all the negative karmas collected from beginningless rebirths. We collect extensive merits, unimaginable merits. I'm not going to talk about more details just to take refuge.

We collect extensive merits, unbelievable merits, every day, so many times every day, so many times, so easily; it's amazing. While we're eating, while we are doing activities, we immediately collect extensive merits. And we don't get harmed by human beings or spirits. Because of the refuge we have in our heart, we cannot be harmed.

THE THIEF WHO HAS REFUGE BEATEN INTO HIM

There's a very common story. In Tibet, a thief went to a hermitage and looked through a window, a small hole in the wall. Many meditators live in mud dwellings they dig into the mountain and then they get covered by wall, only leaving one small hole where people can pass food through. The thief looked through the small hole into the meditation room and saw a shirt made of special material called *burri*. It's wool—[student speaks] silk?—silk, hanging there in the room.

The thief could see it through the hole for passing food through, and he wanted to steal it, so he stretched his hand out through the hole to take it. But the meditator saw this and he grabbed the thief's hands and tied them with robes.

Then he came out and he beat the thief with a pole, saying, *Lama la kyab su chi wo*, "I go for refuge to the Guru, I go for refuge to the Buddha, I go for refuge to the Dharma, I go for refuge to the Sangha." Each time he said a line he hit the thief very heavily—"I go for refuge to the Guru, I go for refuge to the Buddha, I go for refuge to the Dharma, I go for refuge to the Sangha." It was very painful.

So, the thief didn't get to steal this shirt of special material. He went down the hill and it was near dusk, just on sunset. There was a bridge there and at nighttime, so many spirits usually went to the area around the bridge. What happened was it became dark, and so he stayed under the bridge, where there were some rocks or something, because it became dark.

He was so scared that he said the refuge lines over and over again. Actually, when the meditator beat him, maybe he only said the three-line refuge, he didn't say the Guru line, I don't remember. So *Sang gyä kyab su chi wo*, *Cho kyab su chi wo*, *Gen den kyab su chi wo*, I go for refuge to Buddha, I go for refuge to the Dharma, I go for refuge to the Sangha.

Anyway, he thought, "It's so good there were only three refuges, otherwise I'll be finished. It's good there's only three and no more, or else I'll be beaten so much more."

So, he spent the night under the bridge, chanting this. He kept chanting the verse he heard while he was being beaten, that the meditator was repeating, he kept chanting that. What happened that night, usually there's crowds of spirits on the bridge, but nothing happened. No spirits went there that night because he was chanting, he was reciting the refuge lines.

This is just one example; there are so many stories. So, by having refuge, we don't receive harm from human beings and from non-human beings, from spirits and all our wishes are fulfilled. By having refuge, all our wishes are fulfilled.

Because we're praying to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, we make offerings, and there are so many things involved, constantly, every day, all the time, by having refuge in our heart, all the time we collect merit, every time we drink or eat during our life. Therefore, I think, you can understand, we collect so much good karma, unbelievable karma. All our wishes become true, that happens as a result. We don't get reborn in the lower realms, and we achieve enlightenment quickly, we become enlightened.

This is just the outline, just to get an idea of how so powerful this is.

EVEN REFUGE IN ONE REFUGE OBJECT SAVES FROM THE LOWER REALMS

To not get reborn in the lower realms, we don't have to rely on all three of the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. Even refuge in one can save us.

For example, if we have learned some mantra in our life, even one mantra, so when you remember, when you are dying, if you remember it, such as TADYA THA OM MUNÉ MUNÉ MAHAMUNA-YE SVAHA, [Rinpoche snaps his fingers], it's a hundred percent sure we don't get reborn in the lower realms. If we remember TADYA THA OM MUNÉ MUNÉ MAHAMUNA-YE SVAHA when we are dying we are totally saved. Or if we remember the *Heart Sutra* we are saved. I'm just using as an example.

If we remember a member of the Sangha, a monk or nun, somebody we have devotion to, we'll never get reborn in the lower realms, we're totally saved from this heaviest suffering, how many billions, zillions, billions, zillions of eons, no matter how long, depending on our karma we would have had to suffer, we don't have to do that.

Then, there's no question about remembering the Buddha, no question. So even *one* refuge object, if we remember at the time of death, we are saved.

I was using this as an example, I was saying that. You have all the scientific knowledge, all the Western science you have studied for many years, but with all this knowledge, when you are dying there's no connection. All that education and there's no connection to your death, there's nothing it can do to help you when you are dying, at this most critical time in your life. There's nothing to get benefit from that, there's no connection. Scientific education is all about external phenomena, so here, at the most critical time of your life, when you are dying, it has nothing to offer you that is of any benefit. It can't bring you happiness; it can't save you from the lower realms. There's nothing, you see.

On the other hand, remembering TADYA THA OM MUNÉ MUNÉ MAHAMUNA-YE SVAHA or OM MANI PADME HUM—[Rinpoche snaps his fingers] a hundred percent you can be saved from the lower realms, even if you don't know the meaning of OM MANI PADME HUM, it makes a huge difference. That, or remembering a monk or nun for whom you have devotion, that will completely save you.

ONLY BUDDHISM RESCUES FROM PERVASIVE COMPOUNDING SUFFERING

Why we take refuge with the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha—all three—is because it is not just the lower realms we need to be liberated from, but the oceans of samsaric suffering, the whole of samsara. We need to be liberated from the karma and delusion. Put it this way, we need to be liberated not only from suffering of suffering, or from suffering of change—all the temporary samsaric pleasure which is in the nature of suffering—not only that, we need to be liberated from the pervasive compounding suffering, from where those two other sufferings arise, like water bubbles coming, waves coming from the water or the ocean.

That is the very special thing about Buddhism. Everybody wants to be liberated from the suffering of suffering. Even animals can recognize when they're hot and cold, and all this hunger, thirst, or if somebody is going to beat them. All that is unbearable so animals run away, because they know the suffering of suffering is unbearable.

Then, the suffering of change—temporary samsaric pleasures—even through Hindu practices, by seeing the desire realm pleasures and form realm pleasures as only in the nature

of suffering, people can achieve the formless realm. And they can even see all the three realms in the nature of suffering except for the highest level of the formless realm. For them, that is happiness. That's the problem. Because of that, again they have to reincarnate in the lower realms continuously.

Those two sufferings come from the basis, pervasive compounding suffering. Ceasing pervasive compounding suffering, that is what's special about Buddhism. Ceasing the other two is not unique to Buddhism but this one is special only to Buddhism. It is only mentioned, explained, in Buddhist teachings how to get rid of this third suffering, how to be liberated from this.

To attain the liberation we are looking, we should achieve this one, pervasive compounded suffering. This is what we need to look for. This is what liberation means. Then, we are liberated forever from those other two sufferings.

His Holiness says this is created by karma and delusion, so it's under the control of karma and delusion—this is the meaning of “pervasive.” The second meaning of “pervasive” is what is mentioned in the lam-rim texts, these aggregates are contaminated seed of delusions. This is pervasive. The desire realm, the form realm and the formless realm are all pervaded with this suffering, so that is why it's called *pervasive suffering*.

Now, *compounding* in pervasive compounding suffering, the second one, because the aggregates are contaminated with the seed of delusion, we react negatively to what we experience. Because this seed is there, when we don't meditate in our daily life on the lam-rim—there's all the tantras but also, even in the lam-rim, there's bodhicitta, renunciation, emptiness—just to give you an example, when we don't meditate, when our mind is not in that realization, what happens is when we're not watching our mind, when we're not protecting our mind, we're not protecting our life, we see beautiful, ugly or indifferent objects and attachment, anger or ignorance arises to them.

Whatever karma we create in connection with that object leaves a karmic imprint on the mind, and that throws us into a future rebirth. So that's the meaning of *compounded*.

Even though we don't have any mental problems manifesting at the moment—depression, unhappiness, the suffering of loneliness, whatever—because the seed is there, it compounds the mental problems. Even there's no such thing now, sooner or later, all the physical and mental problems will arise, they're compounded, otherwise, it compounds the future lives' sufferings.

Because of the seed, these aggregates compound the suffering in this life and in future lives. That is pervasive compounding suffering. This is a special term in Buddhism. As I mentioned, it's in no other religion. Only if we are liberated from this, we're liberated. That's the meaning of liberation, otherwise we're not. There are verses by Panchen Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen that explain this. His Holiness often quotes them, but I don't remember.

So, here, the reason we are taking refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha is to be liberated from pervasive compounding suffering, forever. If we are able to cease this, then

it's *impossible* to experience suffering, *impossible* to experience suffering; we are free forever from suffering. We achieve this on the mental continuum.

Therefore, to be able to liberate other sentient beings, we need to be liberated. If we want to liberate other sentient beings, if we want to help other sentient beings, first we need to be liberated from this suffering. For that we need the root, the fundamental method: taking refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.

Then, of course, as I mentioned, the real purpose of life is to liberate other sentient beings and bring them to enlightenment, therefore, for that purpose, we take refuge. Then, that meditation becomes the Mahayana refuge.

So, anyway, the motivation is this.

REFUGE CEREMONY

In the texts on granting refuge, enlightenment is mentioned about, even though bodhicitta doesn't come in because this is the Lesser Vehicle, but enlightenment is mentioned in that ceremony prayer, in the motivation.

Therefore, those who are taking refuge, first make three prostrations to the Guru Shakyamuni Buddha statue—there is also the Guru Shakyamuni Buddha statue there. Think it's the actual living Shakyamuni Buddha. Stand up and make three prostrations.

[Students prepare for taking refuge]

Three prostrations, not backside. I'm joking.

[Pause while students prostrate]

Then, make three prostrations to the lama giving refuge.

The first ones are to Shakyamuni Buddha and then to the lama who gives refuge. Make three prostrations. Perhaps not the llama from Africa, the animal llama. [Group laughs]

Now, kneel down if you can, like taking the eight Mahayana precepts. If you can't do that, you can relax down, okay.

Then think, "If I don't get liberated from the oceans of samsaric suffering this time, then I will have to experience suffering of samsara endlessly. I must achieve enlightenment, the great liberation, so therefore, I go for refuge to Buddha, the founder of the refuge, and I go for refuge to the Dharma, as the actual refuge, and the Sangha as the ones who help me to actualize the refuge within myself.

Those who are taking refuge, put your hands together like this—not like this, but like this—for offering a wish-granting jewel, at your heart. Then, please repeat the prayer.

[Rinpoche chants in Tibetan. The students repeat.]

With *da ming*, please mention your name, *da* means “I,” then mention your name, “what is called I, such and such, go for refuge to the Buddha,” okay, the sublime one among those who have two legs, the sublime one of the human beings.

Anyway, think “I’m going for refuge to the Buddha.” With “I go for refuge” think of the meaning of the Buddha, *sang gyä*, in Tibetan. *Sang* means eliminating all the gross and subtle mistakes of the mind, and *gyä* means complete all the qualities of realizations, so *sang gyä*. *Sang* is eliminated, and *gyä* is fully developed. All the mistakes, all the obscurations are gone, *sang*, and all the qualities are fully developed, *gyä—sang gyä*.

With your whole heart rely upon that.

Da, then you mention your name, okay

[Rinpoche and students continue in Tibetan]

What it’s saying, from now on until death time.

[Rinpoche and students continue in Tibetan]

I’m going for refuge to the Buddha.

The Sublime One, the cessation of the attachment. I think the attachment is the big problem. Normally we aren’t angry all the time, day and night, our whole life. We get angry sometimes. I mean, some people may be angry for weeks and months, but that’s not everybody. The motivation is with the attachment. That’s the biggest problem we suffer from. It has basically to do with attachment in our life, and attachment becomes the main cause of samsara, something that continuously arises. We live our life with that. I think that’s why it only mentions attachment, it doesn’t mention ignorance, anger and other delusions. I think Buddha mentions seeing the nature of our life, the cessation of attachment, the cessation of the delusions, and karma, that is cessation and also the true path; that is going for refuge.

[Rinpoche and students continue in Tibetan]

So, totally rely upon the Dharma.

The next one is taking refuge in the Sangha, in Tibetan *ge-dün*. *Ge* refers to the liberation, *dün* means having the wish, seeking the liberation. So, one who has that intention is called Sangha. Living in the vows, that’s called “abandoning the lay signs” where monks wear the signs and marks of renunciation of the household life, so that’s Sangha, *gelong* or *getsul*, this *ge*. *Gelong* means “virtuous beggar” which is liberation.

We totally rely upon the Sangha. Somebody who has obtained the absolute Dharma is the absolute Sangha. The conventional Sangha refers to four fully ordained nuns or monks, those living purely in full ordination, but not having achieved the absolute Dharma, the true

path, the true cessation of suffering. Therefore, for ordinary Sangha there has to be four members, then they have a Sangha—it can't just be one. Whoever has the realization of the true cessation of the suffering, the true path, is absolute Sangha, whether they are on the Lesser Vehicle path or the Mahayana path, whether the Mahayana true path or Hinayana true path. The absolute Sangha can even be a lay person, any sentient being who has that realization, absolute Dharma, and it doesn't have to be four, it can be one. So, you rely upon the Sangha completely, those who help you to actualize the Dharma. We have refuge in our heart, okay.

[Rinpoche and students continue in Tibetan]

You went over four results of karma? Okay. Ven. Neil says he went over the four results of the karma, of negative karma and good karma, so I guess you should already have an idea of karma. Each completed negative karma—killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lies and so forth—each completed negative karma has four suffering results. The *ripening aspect* is rebirth in the lower realms, with unbelievable suffering. Then, the three other aspects we experience in the human realm, the *possessed result* is to do with the place, so many problems with the place. The possessed result of each negative karma is to do with the place, all the sufferings, all the problems so harmful to the life, so many problems.

Or we're born in a country where there's lots of droughts all the time, with so much rain coming and floods that wash away the crops. So, then there's no food. That's a possessed result of stealing, to do with the place. Also where there are a lot of insects that harm us or people who have contagious diseases, places like that, dirty, unhealthy.

Then *experiencing the result similar to the cause*: how we harmed to others, we experience that suffering from others, what we did to others. As I mentioned yesterday, due to our delusions, we harm others, and now, as a result, in this life we receive harm from them.

As I mentioned yesterday, actually there's no enemy. The only enemy is delusion. I remember, I mentioned yesterday, enemies are creation of our delusions, caused by these delusions, so therefore, it doesn't make sense to get angry with that or it doesn't make sense to get attached to whatever it is. So, experiencing the result similar to the cause, those negative karmas.

Then there's *creating the result similar to the cause*. We create those negative karmas, and when after some time we are born again as a human being through some other good karma we created, we do those same negative karmas again—killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, taking alcohol, all these things, whatever—due to our past habit, due to the imprints.

When we create the result similar to the cause, that again puts these four suffering results, it again puts these four suffering results, okay. One of those suffering results is to create the result similar to the cause, so then that produces another four sufferings, then that produces another creating the result similar to the cause, and *that* produces another four sufferings. In this way, creating the result similar to the cause makes the suffering of samsara endless.

This result of this one negative karma—whether it's killing, sexual misconduct, telling lies or whatever—this one negative karma produces four suffering results, one of which is creating

the result similar to the cause, which means we will kill or lie again in a future life, and that produces the four suffering results again and again, and again and again. So, it makes suffering endless. If we don't purify the negative karma, if we don't do anything, then, this *one* negative karma, this *one* negative karma, makes us to experience endless suffering. That one is so important. This one negative karma, causes us *endless* suffering in samsara. That's so important.

Therefore now, we must live in morality, abstaining from telling lies, abstaining from killing—even just one, abstaining from killing—abstaining from sexual misconduct, whatever it is, stopping creating result similar to the cause, and creating virtue, which produces another four results, happiness. That way, creating virtue has four happy results, and one is creating the cause similar to the result, and that means endless happiness.

Depending with what motivation we take the vow, if there's renunciation, we achieve liberation, if it's bodhicitta, we achieve enlightenment. So, it has all these. Then, we enlighten all sentient beings.

The Buddha is so compassionate to us sentient beings so he gave us many choices. If you can't take any of the five lay vows, but you can take only refuge vow, then you think, "I'm only going to take the refuge vow, the upasika vow."

But if, from the five lay vows, you're taking any of them or all the five, then you think. "I'm going to take one lay vow," or two or three or four lay upasika vows, or five upasika lay vows. Then, like that, you're called upasika.

Even if you only take one vow, and hold it with complete morality, and you attain the four result of happiness, wow! You have endless happiness. That's amazing, just amazing! Therefore, it's *sooooo* important, from the five lay vows, to take as many as possible, and at least one, it's so essential. But if you cannot do that, then still you can just take refuge, upasika, only refuge.

Now, think whichever number of vows you are taking, think in your heart, and you decide, okay.

[Rinpoche and students continue in Tibetan]

So if it's complete one then you also *gen-yin*; if it's not complete, then you think of the number of vows.

[Rinpoche and students continue in Tibetan]

Da, please say your name.

[Rinpoche and students continue in Tibetan]

Rely completely to Buddha.

[Rinpoche and students continue in Tibetan]

Taking refuge with Dharma and Sangha.

[Rinpoche and students continue in Tibetan]

Please repeat the third time. At the end of the third repetition, when I say *gen-yin so* loudly then at that time you, without a wandering mind, you must generate the very strong thought that you have received the vow. If it's only refuge, you have received the refuge vow, but if it's any number of vows you have taken, the upasika one vow, two vows, three vows, whatever it is, four, or five, you must think you have received that number of vows, you must generate that strong thought. If you don't do that, then you don't receive the upasika vows or refuge.

Then, I become your *lo-pön*, the leader, leading the disciple on the path to liberation. That's the meaning of *lo-pön*. So, you make that Dharma connection. If you have made that Dharma connection before, then it's already done. Now here, when you take refuge and get the vows, I become your *lo-pön*.

[Rinpoche and students continue in Tibetan]

Da, please repeat your name.

Taking refuge with Buddha, now Dharma,

[Rinpoche and students continue in Tibetan]

Without a wandering mind, you must generate the strong thought that you have received, either only refuge or, if you've taken the vows, the upasika vows.

Sorry, I didn't mention, those who have taken getsul vows, actually they are same when you take the upasika vows, you begin with the refuge.

What I was going to say is those who have taken the getsul vows, the higher vows, the thirty-six vows, or 253, whatever, then, if you have taken the lower vows, then you lose the higher vows. I think you all understand but in case some didn't understand. I did it already so in case, but nobody took it, because if you have taken getsul vows, if you then take lower vows, then you lose the higher vow. The eight Mahayana precepts are the one exceptional, that doesn't have that problem.

But otherwise, if you take the eight precepts of the Lesser Vehicle you lose the higher vows. But the eight Mahayana precepts, if it's done with bodhicitta, then it doesn't do that.

Because it's not common in the very large monasteries, some geshe don't have groups taking the eight Mahayana precepts. That practice is not done except some monks who do it individually, but there's no group taking these precepts. So it seems, many times the eight Mahayana precepts are unknown, and then when a question comes up about your higher vows, even though they are learned in the studying of philosophy, when it comes to practice or language, those things, in some things the geshe are mistaken.

I don't remember, but I think we have taken the eight Mahayana precepts from the very first course, for five days. I don't remember whether we did the eight Mahayana precepts at that time or not, for so many years since then during the last two weeks of the course we have done them at Kopan. This has spread well in the organization, FPMT. It is very common to do this; this is an unbelievable, great source of happiness to achieve enlightenment, to benefit the world, and for ourselves to achieve enlightenment quickly. It's just unimaginable.

That's also done very commonly in Dharamsala by His Holiness. In the past, many years ago, His Holiness gave it in a group, all the Tibetans, all the monks. So, in Dharamsala it's very common.

But in Sera, Ganden, Drepung, those large monasteries, there are no groups taking them, although there are some of the individual monks, but in the big monasteries, even though many geshe are learned in philosophy, sometimes, when it comes to practice, they don't understand these and some other things.

Those who are taking the precepts, think in your heart, whatever number of precepts you have taken, you have received the upasika five vows, two, three, whatever you are taking, think that. Think you are taking refuge and the precepts. You heard the prayer, then whatever number of vows you are taking, think that you have received them.

The last one is this. Think in your heart, you are going for refuge to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, then, taking the upasika vows, this number, five or four or three, two, whatever you take, decide that, think you have taken that.

Then, those who have taken the vows, repeat this.

I'm going to mention all the things. "As the previous arhats have abandoned these negative karmas, and taken these vows, then I'm also going to take these vows." That's what it says in the prayer.

[Rinpoche and students continue in Tibetan]

Please mention your name.

[Rinpoche and students continue in Tibetan]

Then when I stop you say, *le~~ks~~o*, this is the method, *le~~ks~~o* means yes.

[Rinpoche and students continue in Tibetan]

So, you learnt one Tibetan word tonight, *le~~ks~~o*, "yes". [Rinpoche laughs] So, anyway, some additional education. [Group laughs]

So, that's it. Neil went through taking refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, how there are three precepts to be abandoned and three precepts to be practiced. He has gone through

that, and also the six, lam-rim outlines, the six general pieces of advice, although some of the teachings list eight, something like that. Ven. Neil definitely went through that.

You have to understand, the Buddha is so compassionate. In our daily life, even if we eat food, if we first make offerings, we collect unbelievable, unbelievable merit. The Buddha has skillful ways, prostrations, all these things that are specific practices to protect us from suffering, to collect extensive merit, to guide us, things, like that. The Buddha gave these different advices, to protect us from oceans of samsaric suffering and bring to liberation and enlightenment.

Okay, so now, do three prostrations.

Now, dedications. You don't have to sit down, you can stand, it's okay. You don't have to sit down, you can stand. [Rinpoche laughs] Just to freshen up or exercise.

Now dedicate: "Due to all the past, present, future merits collected by me, the three times' merits collected by all the sentient beings, including all the bodhisattvas, all the buddhas, may I complete the paramita of morality by keeping it without mistake, without pride, and keeping it purely." So, dedicate like this.

[Rinpoche and students continue in Tibetan]

So, feel great happiness in your heart.

THE FOUR HARMONIOUS BROTHERS

There is a story that happened in India in the past, maybe in a place called Gashika, I'm not sure. There, there were four harmonious brothers. In this country, there was so much prosperity, the crops grew well, the rains came at the right time, and the economy flourished. The king thought he was responsible for all this, and the ministers thought they were. Everybody thought they had caused this. Then, one day, a minister suggested to the king that they should ask a sage who had clairvoyance.

When they went to the sage, he told them that the prosperity of the country was not due to the king or the ministers, but due to four harmonious brothers who were living in the forest. One was an elephant, and then a monkey, and a rabbit, and a bird, the four harmonious brothers.

The elephant spread the five lay vows to other elephants, the monkey spread the five lay vows to other monkeys, then the rabbit did the same thing to other rabbits and the bird did it to other birds. They all lived like this, respecting each other, the younger ones respecting the elder ones. Because of that, in that country, the economy boomed. Boomed? [Rinpoche laughs] We need that now because the economy has gone down, so we need that now in the United States. [Group laughs]

Actually the bird was Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, and the Buddha's brother Ananda was another animal as were two other disciples, all in the form of animals in order to spread the

five precepts to other animals. That's why the country had such an unbelievably developed economy.

So today you can think, "By my taking these vows, I will benefit the world and all sentient beings, bringing their happiness." It becomes unbelievably important, unbelievably important, for the happiness of this world, for the peace of this world, for the economy, all this. So, you can think of the benefits like this.

Making the vow to not harm all sentient beings, however many vows you have made to not harm them, that brings that much happiness to all sentient beings. So, you should feel great happiness, great joy. And this gives you the opportunity for yourself to achieve liberation and enlightenment, as I mentioned before, and to benefit other sentient beings.

DEDICATION

Now, please pray like this. "Due to all the past, present and future merits collected by me, the three times' merits collected by others, may I myself, my own family (think of yourself, and then your family members) as well as all the students and all the benefactors, all those many people on this earth who bear hardships serving the organization to benefit sentient beings, and those who rely upon me, who I promised to pray for, whose names were given to me, and all the sentient beings, *all* the sentient beings in this world, that we all be guided by Lama Tsongkhapa, being the direct Mahayana Guru, and never be separated away from the path admired by all the buddhas."

Everybody can do that, not only those who took the refuge vows, but everybody, everybody. This prayer is very important. Every day must do that.

[Rinpoche chants]

And then to actualize Lama Tsongkhapa's teachings, the unification of sutra and tantra, and to live in pure morality, with a brave heart doing the extensive deeds of the bodhisattvas, and yoga of the two stages which is the essence of the transcendental wisdom of non-dual bliss and voidness, to actualize this in this very lifetime. So, pray like this for yourself, your family members, everybody here and all the students, for all the benefactors, all those people sacrificing their lives to others, then everybody in this world.

[Rinpoche chants]

Then dedicate the merits, that all the three time merits collected by you, by all the sentient beings, all the holy actions and prayers of the buddhas and bodhisattvas may be actualized, may succeed immediately.

"I dedicate the merits to preserve the oral transmission, preserve the teachings of the Buddha, the scriptures, and the realizations." Dedicate in this way.

[Rinpoche chants]

Then: “Due to this, in all my lifetimes, may I never be separated away from the Four Mahayana Dharma Wheels, by relying upon the holy beings and the virtuous friend.” That’s very good. And to be able to practice Dharma, being born in the place, in a family that supports you to practice Dharma, a Buddhist family or who are devoted, not causing obstacles to the practice that you do, allowing you to practice, supporting you so you are able to practice Dharma.

Then finding a place which is harmonious to your practice, not harmful, with water, earth and so forth, having done the prayers, having collected the merit, without separation from the Four Mahayana Dharma Wheels in all the lifetimes, to be able to complete, to actualize the three principal aspects of the path to enlightenment and the two stages of tantra.

[Rinpoche chants]

“Due to all the past, present and future merits collected by me, the three times’ merits collected by others which exists, but which is merely labeled by mind, may the I who exists, but who is merely labeled by mind, achieve Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s enlightenment, which exists, but which is merely labeled by mind, and lead all the sentient beings who exist, but who are merely labeled by mind, to that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s enlightenment, which exists but which is merely labeled by mind, by myself alone, who exists but who is merely labeled by mind.

“Then, just as the three times’ buddhas dedicate their merits, I dedicate the merits to be able to follow as the bodhisattva Manjugosha and Samantabhadra followed all those bodhisattvas. As three times’ buddhas dedicated their merits, I dedicate all my merits in the same way.”

[Rinpoche chants]

Then to actualize the Lama Tsongkhapa teachings in this life, in your heart and in your family, and in the hearts of all the students and supporters and all those people, those so many people in this world who sacrifice their lives to this organization to benefit all sentient beings, to the teachings of the Buddha, those who rely upon me, who I promised to pray for, then in the hearts of everybody in this world, to actualize Lama Tsongkhapa’s teachings, and for them to be spread in all the directions and prosper.

[Rinpoche chants]

Okay, that’s it.

Lecture 10

THE BASIC PHILOSOPHY OF BUDDHISM

If there are some pujas or something you have to read many times, like many hundreds or thousands of times, you can read them fast. But, of course, even as a puja, if you can think of the meaning as you are reading, then it's more effective.

Here, it's good to read slowly because it is for meditation, to have opportunity to meditate on it, to read one word, then have a space, then read one word, then a little space. Because the subject is very profound, very profound; it is a very powerful antidote to the delusions that our mind has been habituated to or accustomed to, not only from birth but from beginningless rebirths. Our mind has been so unbelievably habituated with that from beginningless rebirths. That's why even if we know the teaching intellectually very well, it doesn't mean we are able to practice all the time. It doesn't mean we are able to practice the antidote, able to use that all the time, it doesn't mean that. When the delusion arises, it is even difficult to remember the teachings, the meditation techniques, the medicine for the mind, the teachings of Buddha, especially the lam-rim teachings. It is even difficult to be able to remember them in daily life, but when it's for practice... [Rinpoche laughs]

Our mind is so habituated, it's almost like we don't exist without the delusions, kind of like that. We don't exist without the delusions, almost like our mind doesn't exist without the delusions. We are unbelievably habituated; our life has been lived under the control of the delusions from beginningless rebirths. [Rinpoche laughs] We have been a disciple of delusion, we have been a disciple. Delusion is the guru and we have been a disciple of delusion from beginningless rebirths. From beginningless rebirths we have been a student of delusion, a very obedient student of delusion, a very, very obedient student of delusion. [Rinpoche laughs] A very obedient student of the guru delusion. So, that's why it's not easy.

It needs training, it needs training. It needs continual training. For example, as soldiers have more training, more watching, more remembrance, more awareness, in using weapons, they are much more prepared when the actual enemy comes. They are much more prepared to fight, to know exactly how to fight—all the different techniques and how the enemy functions, how they fight. And then they can fight back exactly according to that, whether it's in the sky, under the water, on the ground, all the many different ways. They know exactly how to overcome the enemy.

It's similar here. The more we listen to the teachings, the more we meditate, the more we apply the techniques, the more chance we have of overcoming the enemy delusion. At the beginning we will miss out many times, even if we know the meditation techniques well intellectually. We will miss out many times, our mind will be overtaken by delusion, controlled by delusion. As time goes by, if we always try, every day try, we'll be able to overcome once, twice, and then more and more.

It's like the story of Kadampa Geshe Ben Gungyal I mentioned, beginning only with black stones, and then later more and more white stones, and less and less black ones. As he continued each day there was more and more virtue and less nonvirtues, and then, after

some time, there was only virtue and no nonvirtue. But this definitely needs a lot of effort; it's a long-term training.

Our mind has been habituated, under the control of delusion from beginningless rebirths. Can you imagine that? Can you imagine that? We are trying to overcome something that we have been habituated from beginningless rebirths. Now here, we are trying to overcome that, can you imagine? Of course it's not easy, so it takes time.

Therefore, what I was saying—going back—it's good, rather than reading fast, especially the one as I explained the other day, looking at the nature of causative phenomena, but particularly related to our life, our body and mind, material possessions, the surrounding people, friend, enemy, strangers, all the things—particularly related to this, these objects of delusion, the strong objects of delusion, attachment and anger and so forth.

So, say one word, then have a little space, say one word, and a little space. It gives time for everybody to meditate. Then, the prayer becomes so meaningful, like an atomic bomb, like an atomic bomb dropped on the delusions, on the self-cherishing thought, on ignorance, on attachment, on anger. This is what we need to pacify them. From there, we achieve the cessation of the suffering and the cause, karma and delusion. This is what we achieve, what we get by doing this meditation. It's amazing; it's unimaginable.

Then, with the realization of impermanence and renunciation, then the wisdom realizing emptiness, with bodhicitta, we complete the Mahayana path and cease the subtle defilements and achieve full enlightenment. Then we are able to liberate numberless sentient beings from the oceans of samsaric suffering and bring them in full enlightenment, by *ourselves*, this one person. This is the benefit we're able to offer all sentient beings. It's limitless, unimaginable, like the limitless sky, unimaginable. Even for one sentient being, the benefit we can offer one sentient being, up to enlightenment—first liberation from samsara, then enlightenment. This is what we can offer one sentient being, gradually revealing the different levels to them, the methods to bring them from happiness to happiness, then to the cessation of the suffering, and then even to the great liberation, enlightenment, the non-abiding sorrowless state.

So, it's really amazing, it's unimaginable how we can benefit others with this mind, which has all the potential. Especially having this precious human body, where whatever wish the mind has, we can actualize it. Having this precious human body gives us the unbelievable opportunity to realize whatever the mind wishes. It has all the potential, and then we are able to actualize it, and then on top of that, to attain highest enlightenment.

So, if we can make this habituation to meditate, each time we are planting positive imprints to have realizations of the path and to achieve liberation, enlightenment, each time that. If you meditate, if you meditate in this particular subject, in the prayers if you meditate, because it's much more powerful, even just by hearing the prayer, of course you have that.

As far as the Buddha's teachings, we have this special benefit. The first thing is, by listening, even if we don't understand it at all, not even one word, but the special benefit is that our negative karma gets purified and we get a higher rebirth in the next life. Even if we don't understand the meaning, even if we don't understand the teaching, just hearing it purifies our negative karma and we get a higher rebirth.

Shakyamuni Buddha gave teachings to five hundred swans that were in a field. In the next life, those five hundred swans all become human beings and they all become the Sangha. I don't know if anybody became a nun but anyway they all not only became human beings in the next life, they all become Sangha. [Rinpoche laughs] They all became Sangha and not only became just Sangha, they actualized the five paths in the next life: the path of merit, the preparatory path, the right-seeing path, the path of meditation and the path of no more learning. They actualized the exalted path, right-seeing path, the path of meditation, in the next life. They not only became Sangha, living in the very high number of vows, so many, 253, so many number of vows, every second they collected inconceivable, inconceivable, inconceivable merits, creating good karma, the basic cause of liberation. When that was done with bodhicitta, for enlightenment, on that basis they actualized the path, these five paths to liberation: the path of merit, the preparatory path, the right-seeing path, the path of meditation and the path of no more learning. So, in the next life they achieved the arya path, the right-seeing path, the path of meditation, where they attained the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness, which can directly cease the delusions.

This was what happened in their next life. They were swans, birds, animals but just by hearing the words from Buddha, in the next life it made an unbelievable difference. What happened in the next life is just unimaginable, the benefits, the achievement from just hearing the Buddhadharma, it's just incredible.

I think maybe I mentioned, there were three monks in Tibet—I'm not sure where—and also a dog. There was a dog with them. They were reciting many prayers which the dog heard and when the dog died, the dog consciousness transferred and was born in the higher deva realm, the Realm of the Thirty-three. It didn't understand the words the monks were reciting, but just by hearing them its mind was purified and it got a higher rebirth in the next life, a total change from the lower realms. It's amazing!

We just analyze. The discoveries made by scientific knowledge are greatly needed, of course, but they are the discovery of the external factors, how they function, what they are, but I think, as long as we don't understand the mind, I don't think you can understand really external phenomena, because they all came from mind, they all came from mind. Therefore, I don't think we can understand the object, what is perceived by the mind, completely without understanding the mind. I don't think we can understand all the details completely. We can understand them partially, but only to a certain limit, I don't think completely, without understanding the mind.

Yes, scientific knowledge is a great need but I think if we just analyze, with all that knowledge Western scientists have, is there something that purifies the mind? Is there something that purifies the mind, the defilements, negative karma? Is there something that purifies the mind, the cause of the problems, wrong concepts, the defilements, the obscurations? Is there something that can purify that? Is there something that allows us to get to a higher rebirth after we die? Is there something there that can do that?

It's interesting to check like that. Even though the scientific knowledge is needed, especially also studying Dharma, analyzing Dharma, because we get a deeper understanding there about the mind, the more we understand the mind, the better we understand the external

phenomena. I think so. It's best just to analyze whether there is anything that can purify the mind there in Western science, anything that can cause higher rebirth after death, that brings happiness to our life and to the life after this. That's good to check. [Rinpoche laughs]

I say the same thing, just compare all the scientific knowledge and OM MANI PADME HUM. I'm not talking about actualizing the extensive meaning of OM MANI PADME HUM, that which is the entire Dharma, I'm not talking about that, but just being able to know and chant it, the benefit it has, the unbelievable, unbelievable purification it does, the skies of merit we collect, what it does. What it does to your mind, to our mental continuum, is just unimaginable, unimaginable. It is so easy to recite, especially for Tibetans who are here. Even children, after they're born, after some time they're able to chant OM MANI PADME HUM. It's unbelievable.

I'm just comparing it this way, without talking about understanding the whole meaning, the extensive meaning, which is the whole entire Buddhadharma. The Buddha explained the 84,000 teachings, and OM MANI PADME HUM is all that. All three levels, the Lesser Vehicle teachings, the Great Vehicle Sutra teachings and the Great Vehicle Tantra teachings are all contained in, all condensed into OM MANI PADME HUM. Here, I'm just talking about being able to recite OM MANI PADME HUM, and its benefits, and comparing that with the benefits to the mind that comes from all the Western scientific knowledge. The difference is like an atom and the Earth. Even though it is useful to have some knowledge but compared to OM MANI PADME HUM, even OM AH HUM there is no comparison.

AH in Sanskrit means negative. In *The Heart Sutra* it says, "no nose, no tongue," what else? "No eye, no tongue, no nose, no body, no mind, no ice cream, no chocolate." [Rinpoche laughs] The AH negates all the false views, all the hallucinations, of the true existence, projected from the mind, from ignorance, by leaving the negative imprint on the mind and projecting.

Like, for example, when we make a movie, with a camera we record images of mountains and people, sad, happy, virtue, nonvirtue, enjoying, so many things. By taking imprint or recording the images on the negative roll and, the whole story's there. Then, by putting the film in a projector, with electricity, it can be projected onto a wall or a screen. It's exactly the same as the way we project true existence onto objects.

This has two meanings. So far I didn't get to speak about this. It has two meanings. One is in our daily life: how what we do with our speech, with our mind, with our body, our actions, always leaves an imprint. The object of the six senses and the action—what we do with the body, speech and mind—always plants a seed, leaves imprint on the mind, on the mental continuum, constantly.

The wrong concept, delusion, the superstitious mind, delusion, wrong concept—this means what we believe is not true. Attachment is a superstitious mind—we have to understand that. Anger is a superstitious mind. Ignorance is a superstitious mind, the king of the superstitious minds, the king of delusions, the root of samsara. Ignorance is the concept of true existence, the concept of holding objects as truly existent.

What the I, the self, is, is what is merely imputed by the mind. How the I exists is that way, in mere name, merely imputed by the mind, and the same with the aggregates.

As I mentioned before that, there is an I that exists, and that is the I that exists in mere name, merely imputed by mind. But then, ignorance, by leaving a negative imprint on the mind... my mind has become messy. Before mentioning that part, I'll mention this.

Whatever action we do with the body, speech and mind, seeing forms, hearing sounds, smelling smells and so forth, all this to do with senses, it leaves an imprint on the mind, on the mental continuum, like taking a picture leaves an image on the negative roll. When the cause and conditions come together, that is something like putting the film in the projector and turning on the electricity and putting up the screen in order for the images to be projected there. Similarly, causes and conditions are needed for what is imprinted on the mental continuum. When they all come together, what is imprinted there by your karma, all that [sounds like horns or something in the background] including that. [Rinpoche laughs; group laughs] That's also what comes from our mind, from the imprint, even that noise. Otherwise, there is no reason to hear that—even that sound—there is no reason to hear if it didn't come from our mind, if it didn't come from the imprint left on the mind.

When the causes and conditions come together, out of so many imprints left on the mental continuum, one manifests. So there's the base, and then our mind labels it, imputes the name. The label exists, from the negative actions of body, speech and mind, whatever, by leaving imprint on the mind, then by making all the causes and conditions together, it manifests. There is the base, and then our mind makes up the negative label, bad, so then it comes into existence that way, and we encounter the problems.

From positive actions, good karma, virtuous actions, Dharma, positive imprints are left on the mind, then today, when causes and conditions come together, positive experiences manifest, like suddenly seeing beautiful flowers that we enjoy. They contact the senses and we enjoy them. We are hungry, looking for food, and we suddenly find a very good restaurant, with food we want to eat. This result, happiness, pleasure, ripened at this time from the positive imprint, the imprint left by positive actions, by virtue in the past, in this life or a past life, maybe from many billion, zillion eons, numberless eons ago. Today, those causes and condition have becomes ready, and they allow the imprint to be experienced, and we are able to enjoy the delicious food or to find a kind person, a good person, who gives us money. We're traveling or we need money for food or whatever, and then we meet somebody who helps us by giving us money. Or we get sick and we find a doctor who exactly knows our sicknesses and can give us the right medicine, and not only the right medicine but it can cure our sicknesses.

A doctor might know our sicknesses and give us the right medicine, but even though it's the right medicine, many times there's an obstacle to benefit us because there are spirits— this is not known yet in Western education—there are spirits that interfere, that don't allow the medicine to be effective.

That's why it is our common experience, if it's the correct medicine but it is not benefiting, and the sickness continues or increases, by knowing what kind of spirits are harming us and so forth we can recite mantras that can help. The Buddha gave various mantras and various

practices we can do. By counting on that, we do the prayers and recite those mantras to the different deities, to protect sentient beings from those different beings' harm, then after that the medicine works. It's the correct medicine, but it doesn't necessarily always benefit. That's quite common. But then we do some two or three minutes' puja, those that the Buddha explained, communicating, contacting those beings who are interfering and making them happy. Then they release the patient and the medicine works. That's quite common. Then we are able to find the right doctor who gives right medicine and is able to cure our sicknesses.

Similarly, if we are doing business and we have success, getting what you want, or more than we want, or less, that pleasure comes from the mind, that success, how much money we are able to make, it comes from the mind, from the imprints left on the mind by past positive karma. Because it's pleasure, it has to come from good karma, that action which has left an imprint, planted a seed, on the mind in the past.

So, it's very, very important, very important, extremely important, in our daily life to live our life with this awareness. This is the basic Buddhist philosophy, that everything comes from our mind, from karma, from our intention.

Karma is not body, it's mind. Of body and mind, it's the mind.

There are six principal consciousnesses and sixty-five mental factors.⁷ There are the five always-present mental factors [Tib: *kon-dro ba'i sem-yong*]. They are: feeling, contact, intention, cognition, attention, *sem-pa*, attention. Do you remember the last one? Apprehension, comprehension, maybe apprehension? Does anybody remember? Any holy beings remember? *Id-le che-pa*? What English word? Mental attention. [Rinpoche laughs]

Intention makes the principal consciousness focus on the object, to pay attention. *Id-le che-pa* is the same, but there is something extra. *Che-pa* is that which makes the mind contact the object. The example used is a magnet, how a magnet makes contact with iron. That's an example used for intention. *Id-le che-pa* causes the principal consciousness to pay attention to the object, but not only that, not only contact, not only to focus on the object, but there is a little bit extra function, huh? [Student discussion] I was talking about *Id-le che-pa*, you said what?

Mental attention, attention, what about the *sems-pa*? So I forgot, there's a little extra function. I'll let you know next year. [Rinpoche laughs; group laughs] Maybe after you've achieved enlightenment.

So anyway, *sems-pa* is intention, the motivation before you act. *Sems-pa*, while we are doing the action, the motivation, the thought of the act, while the action is happening.

Karma is from the always-present mental factors, the *kon-dro ba'i sem-yong*, the five that are always accompanying the principal consciousness: feeling, cognition, contact, attention and intention. These five mental factors work on the same object with the principal consciousness in five similarities.

⁷ Traditionally the mental factors are listed as 51. I'm not sure where Rinpoche has taken this number from.

So, what is karma? From body and mind, karma is mind, and from the six principal consciousnesses and the fifty-one mental factors, it is a mental factor. Which mental factor? From the five always-present mental factors, *kon-dro ba'i sem-yong*, always accompanying the principal consciousness, from that, it is the intention. What is karma? Karma is intention.

So, everything comes from your mind, from our mind, okay? It comes from the karma, from the intention.

This is *very basic* Buddhist philosophy. The other one is reality. If you don't say the word philosophy—Buddhist philosophy is the actual reality, how things work, how things are created by mind.

Pleasure and suffering, forms, sounds, smells, tastes, tangible objects, everything, our world, all comes from our mind. Our world comes from our mind. So, the less negative karma produced brings the result of less suffering. The more positive karma produced brings the result of more happiness. Then, after some time, no more negative karma; we don't create it when our mind is advanced. Then, the mind always lives always in virtue, so there is no negative karma.

As I mentioned the other day, when we become an arya being, like those bodhisattva arya beings, we cannot receive any harm because there is no negative, impure mind that causes us to receive harm, it's not *there*. We don't need to talk about a buddha, even for a sentient being bodhisattva, an arya bodhisattva, this is true.

Receiving harm or not depends on our mind. If we have an impure mind, it happens; if we don't have an impure mind, it doesn't happen.

This is the basic Buddhist philosophy. It doesn't accept an external being created our life, our suffering, our happiness, that somebody else created everything. Everything comes from our mind.

That means we have total freedom in our hands. Happiness or suffering, what we want, whatever we want to experience—liberation, enlightenment, suffering in the lower realms or higher rebirth—whatever we want, it's in our hands. We have the choice, we have freedom to choose what happens after this life, whether we have a higher rebirth or suffering as a hell being, a hungry ghost or an animal.

If we don't want to be born in the lower realms and experience those sufferings, we need to purify the cause. We don't create the cause of the lower realms, we purify the cause, and then we get a higher rebirth. If we want a higher rebirth, as a deva or a human rebirth, we create the cause of that, and then we achieve it. That's in our hands. Whatever we want, suffering or happiness, samsara or liberation, it is in our hands. It depends on what we do with our mind, how we use our mind. Whether we use our mind for samsara, whether we use our mind to achieve liberation, it depends on that, on learning the path, on actualizing the path. There is no question about that.

It's the same. Whether we want to be born in hell or whether we want to achieve enlightenment, it's in our hands. It depends on what we do with our mind. If we don't want to be reborn in the hell realm, we purify the cause that we have created in the past that makes us reincarnate in the hell realm. Then we learn and practice the path to enlightenment, we develop that. When we wish enlightenment, we transform the mind into that.

Pabongka Dechen Nyingpo, the great Tibetan enlightened being, the author of *Liberation in the Palm of Your Hand*, mentions the “three great meanings” in the prayer he composed called *Calling the Guru From Afar*. It is a very effective teaching, containing both sutra and tantra: *Nye-ga* is this human body, which is extremely difficult to find again, because it is not easy to create the cause. Living in morality is the main cause, and then practicing charity, and making prayers, dedicating the merits to achieve this perfect human body which is qualified with eighteen precious qualities.

THE THREE GREAT MEANINGS: HAPPINESS IN FUTURE LIVES

This perfect human rebirth, which is extremely difficult to find again, if it's found, it has great meaning, *tun-che teng sang*, therefore the human rebirth is good. With it we can achieve the three great meanings. “Which has great meaning” means with this body we can achieve the three great meanings: we can achieve the happiness of future lives, we can achieve complete liberation from all suffering and we can achieve great liberation, enlightenment.

The first great meaning is that we can achieve any happiness of future lives, such as being born in a pure land. If we wish to achieve a human body which has the seven qualities that allows us to practice Dharma, we can achieve that.

We can achieve a higher caste. Not all the countries have a caste system but like India and Nepal. In this world, certain countries have a culture of castes, lower castes, higher castes, all that, but that is according to that culture, according to the country.

If you are higher caste then people respect you and you can benefit many people. People listen to you, and you can benefit many people by helping to spread the Dharma and then they create cause of happiness, virtue. This way, they can achieve happiness in future lives, liberation from samsara and enlightenment.

THE EIGHT RIPENING ASPECTS OF A PRECIOUS HUMAN BODY

With a good rebirth, a good human body, there are seven benefits that make easy to practice Dharma—I don't remember the whole thing—but it's things like a long life, no sicknesses, wealth and so forth. There's about seven.

A higher rebirth also has the eight ripening aspects. Lama Tsongkhapa emphasized how they are so important to have quick development, to actualize the path to enlightenment. We can have quick realizations on the path to enlightenment if we achieve this human body which has these eight qualities, so he then explained how to create the cause of each one: long life, a perfect body, a higher caste, wealth, power, having powerful words and so forth.

Wonderful words comes from abstaining from gossiping or negative actions of the speech, so our speech is so powerful, it has so much power. Abstaining from those, our speech has so much power. Then, when we explain the Dharma to other sentient beings or when we advise them to refrain from any negative karma they are doing and what positive actions to do, they will listen to us.

The next is having a man's body, not in every case, but it's general. Even today, if we look at the leaders of the world, there are more men and less women, so men still have more influence. Even if we think in a worldly way it's like that, but now it's becoming more female.

However, in this context, generally there are less obstacles for men, less danger for men. This is generally speaking, I'm not talking everybody. Men have more opportunity to practice Dharma. But, of course, there are many women who can it, who can attain the path, who can achieve enlightenment. There are many holy beings, there are many holy women. But this is related to the world situation. It doesn't mean forever and it's not in every universe. It's related to this world, to this world's people.

Next is having a powerful body and mind, a powerful body and mind like Milarepa, a body that can bear so much hardship to constantly practice Dharma, no matter what difficulties arise.

HAVING A POWERFUL BODY AND MIND: THE STORY OF MILAREPA

Milarepa followed his mother's advice and performed black magic on his relations because they had given his mother a hard time, with torture and things. Milarepa's mother advised him to learn black magic, which he did from a lama, and then he did retreat on the mountain for seven days, by digging a hole in the ground. After that he used the black magic on the whole family, making his auntie and uncle's house completely collapse, killing the people and all the animals. I think this was while they were having a wedding, so there were many horses under the house when it collapsed and they were all killed. Thirty or sixty people were killed. So many people were upstairs dancing or having wedding party when it collapsed.

I think, after that, Milarepa was unhappy, so the lama who taught him black magic told him that if he wanted to practice Dharma he should go to see Marpa to guide him.

When Milarepa went to see Marpa, he had nothing to offer him so he offered his body, speech and mind to his guru. As he had no offerings, he offered his body, speech and mind to his guru. Then also he asked for food and Dharma and a place to stay. [Rinpoche laughs]

So Marpa asked Milarepa to build the three nine-story towers by himself. He was not allowed to get anybody to help him. Milarepa built a nine-storied tower by himself, alone. After he completed it Marpa asked him to tear it down and then take the stones back to where he had collected them. When he had done that, Marpa asked him to rebuild the tower again, and so again he rebuilt it and again Marpa asked him to tear it down, so again he tore it down and replaced the stones. Then, *again*, for the third time, Marpa asked him to build a tower.

It still might be existing in Tibet, the *tor-keba*. I haven't seen it, I haven't been to that place, but maybe it's somewhere where there are many caves of the Kadampa geshe. I'm not sure. Maybe that nine-storied tower still exists somewhere in Tibet. When the uprising happened in Tibet and mainland China took over Tibet, when monks and lay people escaped, I think at that time that tower still existed.

There are two great lamas, Serkong Dorje Chang and Serkong Tsenshab Rinpoche, "Tsenshab" is not the actual guru of His Holiness the Dalai Lama but kind of a substitute guru, sort of like helping him to learn extensive philosophy. This is what the title "Tsenshab" means. When they escaped from Ganden Monastery in Lhasa, they passed the nine-storied tower. They were surrounded by the Chinese army and had nowhere else to go, so they climbed up the tower built by Milarepa.

There were statues of Marpa, Milarepa's guru, and Marpa's wisdom mother, his wife. Marpa was not a monk, he was in the aspect of a lay person but he was an enlightened being. So, the two great lamas went there.

Then, His Holiness Serkong Tsenshab Rinpoche offered a damaru to the Marpa and said, "Father"—he called Marpa father—and offered a crystal mala to the wisdom mother—that's what I heard—and said, "Mother, please help us find a way to get out."

This Serkong Dorje Chang is the incarnation of Serkong Tsenshab Rinpoche's father, the other lama's father. The father was a monk who studied in Ganden Monastery, became expert and then, after that, went to an isolated place to do retreat, to actualize the path for many years. Then, because he achieved very high level of tantric path, he was allowed by His Holiness the Thirteenth Dalai Lama to have a wisdom mother to complete the tantric path.

So, His Holiness Serkong Tsenshab Rinpoche, this great lama, was the son of the Serkong Dorje Chang's past life and in this life he became the teacher of the incarnation of his father. Actually he's an enlightened being.

Why he called Marpa "father" and the wisdom mother "mother" was, I think, His Holiness Serkong Tsenshab Rinpoche, he's the son of Milarepa's guru, Marpa, called Darma Dodé. That's why he called Marpa's statue "father" and the wisdom mother's statue, "mother." Serkong Dorje Chang, the embodiment, the incarnation of, Marpa, came to live in Nepal but he passed away. Now a reincarnation exists. The incarnation of Serkong Tsenshab Rinpoche also passed away, and there's a reincarnation.

This is quite an elaborate story.

There is also an incarnate lama who's incarnation of Milarepa, *Tse Chog Ling*.

So, anyway, Marpa asked Milarepa to build the tower on his own three times. Through carrying so many stones, Milarepa's the skin on back became like thick and kind of blue or black.

Marpa never gave Milarepa teachings or initiations, nothing, only demanding hard work, and only scolding him, beating him. He didn't receive teachings for a long time. One day he went with Marpa's other disciples for teachings, but when Marpa saw Milarepa, he immediately scolded him and told to leave immediately. For years and years, it went on like that. Then, after some time, Marpa's wisdom mother insisted that Marpa give Milarepa teachings and initiations, so then he did.

Then, of course, Marpa was an enlightened being, so he manifested in the mandala and the deity. For Milarepa, so many defilements and negative karmas were purified by building the tower three times by himself alone and through all the beatings and scoldings for years, unbelievable defilements and negative karmas were purified because of that. Marpa could see this, so then he gave initiations and all the teachings, and instructed Milarepa which mountain holy place to go to do retreat. So, Milarepa was sent away to the mountain to do retreat.

Following teaching given by Marpa, in those isolated places Milarepa actualized, completed, the whole path to enlightenment, including the whole tantric path. He just lived on nettles as the only food, without sugar, chili, pepper, nothing—he just cooked nettles in the water. That's how he lived. He lived in retreat for years and years like that; he bore so many hardships in order to practice Dharma and complete the path to enlightenment. For the benefit of sentient beings, he bore so much hardship.

One day a thief came to Milarepa's cave to steal something and Milarepa offered him some food. When he saw the cooked nettles, he asked, "Where's the chili? Where's the salt?" So, Milarepa added a nettle to the container and said, "This is chili, this is pepper, this is salt." Nettles were all he had, he didn't have anything else.

Anyway, he completed the whole path to enlightenment in that very brief lifetime of degenerated time. Milarepa's life is the most inspiring, the most unbelievable story. There are two sources for this. One is all the hymns he sang from his realizations, from his experiences, and the other is his life story, and the different advice he gave students.

Due to his prayers and his bodhicitta motivation he achieved full enlightenment in a brief lifetime of degenerated times. Not only Milarepa did this; there are many others in the various traditions, such as Gyalwa Ensapa. Even in Lama Tsongkhapa's tradition, the Gelugpa, there are many others. In the four traditions of Tibetan Mahayana Buddhism, there are many others who achieved enlightenment in a brief lifetime of degenerate times.

Due to correctly devoting to his virtuous friend, Milarepa never felt anger or heresy even one time, no matter how much he was scolded or beaten or how hard the work was that he was given for years and years. Because of the power of body and mind, heresy and anger towards his guru never arose. That was his unbelievable devotion.

Milarepa's name even became known in the West, not only the East. It is commonly known in the East but now it is also known in the West. Even though there have been many beings who achieved enlightenment in a brief lifetime of degenerate times, somehow Milarepa has become known also in the West.

If we chant Milarepa's mantra every day, that helps us when we die get reborn in Milarepa's pure land, and then we're able to see Milarepa and receive teachings from him directly.

According to Marpa, he wanted Milarepa to bear hardships even longer so that he could achieve enlightenment even earlier, but his wife, his wisdom mother pushed him so much to give initiations and teachings earlier. If Marpa had been able to complete his wish, Milarepa could have achieved enlightenment sooner than what happened.

Marpa was an enlightened being and saw what Milarepa needed to do to purify all that negative karma he had created, killing many animals and many human beings through his black magic, as well as the negative karma collected in the past lives. Marpa was an incredibly skillful master, and each time he scolded or beat Milarepa, many obstacles were purified, many lifetimes' negative karma was purified. Building the towers purified negative karma collected from beginningless rebirths. That's why Milarepa achieved enlightenment in that brief lifetime of degenerate times.

What I'm talking about here is what "powerful body and mind" means, using Milarepa as an example.

This fits into the subject of the first great meaning, attaining the happiness of future lives. As far as perfect human rebirth is concerned, as I mentioned before, there are seven results that allow us to practice Dharma.

And then, what Lama Tsongkhapa highly admired and emphasized was how the precious human body has eight ripening qualities that, if we have, enable us to achieve the realizations of the path to enlightenment.

Then, the human rebirth which I mentioned last night has Four Mahayana Dharma Wheels: relying upon a holy being and somebody who is a virtuous friend; being born in the right environment or to a supportive family, who do not cause obstacles to practicing Dharma, to achieving realizations, who have devotion to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha and faith in reincarnation and karma; living in a place that is harmonious for the body with good water and soil, that is not harmful and becomes an obstacle to achieve realizations; then, having done prayers and collected the merits. With the Four Mahayana Dharma Wheels, again we are able to practice Dharma and achieve enlightenment.

Then, with the perfect human rebirth, which has the eighteen qualities, we can achieve all this happiness in future lives, which allows us to practice Dharma and then achieve liberation and enlightenment.

That's the first great meaning.

THE THREE GREAT MEANINGS: ACHIEVING LIBERATION, ENLIGHTENMENT
AND NEVER WASTING A SECOND OF THIS LIFE

The second great meaning is to be able to achieve ultimate happiness, liberation from samsara, liberation from samsara and full enlightenment, great liberation. That's the second great meaning of life.

The third great meaning is that even each second, if we have this perfect human body, we can achieve any of those happinesses because we can create the cause. This is third great meaning of the perfect human life.

So, what Pabongka Dechen Nyingpo is saying, *nyen-ka tün-che ten-sang*. *Tün-che* is “great meaning.” A human rebirth with a perfect human body, which is extremely difficult to find again if it is found has great meaning; “great meaning” being *ten-sang*, which is a “good body.”

We have the choice of happiness and suffering in our life. What it's saying is what I mentioned before, we have choice, not only choice, but choice today, now, whether we want happiness or we want problems, because it depends on how we think. If we think in a mistaken way, we have problems. If we think in correct way, we don't. If we think the thought cherishing the I, if we think that way, the mistaken way, that this I is more important than others, we have problems in the life, we find problems, we have problems in our mind.

If we cherish others, that problem goes away and we have happiness, peace; we have inner peace and happiness, we have fulfillment in our life—not only satisfaction but we have fulfillment in your life. Because if we cherish others we do actions to benefit others, we do actions for others, and from that we get not only satisfaction but fulfillment. The minute when we stop attachment, the minute when we stop following desire, we have satisfaction, and not only that, even something higher, fulfillment in our life, right here and now.

If we let our mind get attached to something real, independent, existing from its own side, we look at it in a totally false way, a totally wrong way. On that basis, the mind exaggerates, seeing this as so nice, so beautiful, and then attachment arises. After we rationalize, “Oh how beautiful this is,” attachment arises, then it has its own false view on the object we get attached to.

I think mentioned yesterday, basically what it means is, it's built on the object of ignorance, on the view of the ignorance, the object of ignorance, the view of ignorance holding things as truly existent. It's built on that. The object of attachment is built on that, the view of the object, before the foundation, the view of the ignorance. That doesn't exist. That object of ignorance doesn't exist, so the object of attachment cannot exist. This is an extremely essential point.

Thinking in this way, with attachment, we have problems, we have suffering; now our mind becomes painful.

As I mentioned the other day, the nature of causative phenomena is like an illusion and so forth, the wrong view of the defective senses, like stars. If we look at that nature of impermanence then our attachment doesn't arise, we have peace, we have inner peace, we have peace right now. We achieve satisfaction, inner peace. It's totally in our hands. Whether

we want happiness, whether we want suffering, it's in our hands right now. It depends on how we think.

Not only that, not only the slightest suffering problem now but also the kind of future we have is in your hands, what kind of future life we want in our next life. Whether we want the lower realms or the higher realms as a deva or human—it's completely in our hands. We have a choice, which you want to achieve.

Then it's the same with samsara or liberation. Which one do we want to achieve? Do we want to be samsara or achieve liberation? It is in our hands, we have a choice, we have a choice. If we want to achieve liberation, then we actualize the path, renunciation, the three higher trainings, then we have freedom, whether we want to achieve lower nirvana or we want to achieve enlightenment. We have a choice.

If we practice bodhicitta, then we're able to achieve enlightenment and we don't have to be stuck in lower nirvana for so many eons. It's totally in your hands. We have a choice. *Nye ka don chi tang sang* [?]; *kye nyi don tuk dang ga* [?]; *ma la nying bo sangya* [?]; *ma la nying bo* means without mistakes, *nying bodhicitta*, wishing to take the essence of this body without mistakes, *ma nying ma* [?] without mistakes, *ma na* [?] by choice—with the thought of taking the essence of this body, without making mistake, by choice.

While we're thinking this, we say, *Lama chen-no*, “it reminds me of the guru,” because everything has to come from the guru, everything depends on the kindness of the guru, so *Lama chen-no*—“it reminds me of the guru.”

I don't know why I'm talking like this, I don't know. [Group laughs]

Generate bodhicitta. “The purpose of my life is to free all sentient beings from all the suffering and causes and bring them to enlightenment. Therefore, I must achieve enlightenment, therefore I'm going to offer this nectar.” Don't think you are offering tea, think it is nectar. Then you visualize oceans of nectar in a jeweled container, purified into emptiness, oceans of nectar, numberless, even that, numberless. Then you offer to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha or whichever deity that you are praying normally, Tara, Chenrezig, this is one, is all the Guru, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, all the numberless buddhas, all the numberless Dharma, the numberless Sangha, the numberless statues, the numberless stupas, the numberless statues of the Buddha, the numberless scriptures, everything, you offer.

OM AH HUM, OM AH HUM, OM AH HUM.

La ma sang gyä... [Rinpoche makes offerings.]

Then after you offer, generate infinite bliss. That's the essence of the offering. In the holy mind, the merit field, generated infinite bliss.

The next one, generating infinite bliss within you. [Rinpoche laughs]

BECAUSE EVERYTHING COMES FROM THE MIND WE HAVE INFINITE FREEDOM

So, going back. I was talking about the very heart or the basic philosophy of Buddhism, about life, how everything in our world comes from our mind. I mentioned that already, how our world came from our mind. Everything—the forms we see, the sounds we hear, the smells we smell, the tastes we experience, any contact, the whole thing, including our concepts, the perceiver, the object—everything comes from us, comes from our mind, our thought. We have created it. That's what I was talking about, the root of I was talking about.

The view of Buddhism is *totally* different to how we generally perceive things. If something was created by somebody else, somebody who has separate mind, whose mental continuum is separate from our mind, if a separate being created our life, then we don't have freedom, we don't have freedom. It's all in the other being's hands; it's not in our hands. We don't have freedom.

Here, Buddhism shows that we have freedom, as I mentioned before. So, there's nothing to be depressed about, there's no reason to feel down. Our life is full of hope because we have choice to develop. We can take courage ourselves because we can completely purify whatever mistake we have done in the past. We can purify them and accomplish anything.

I was talking about karma before. Our world comes from our mind—that is talking about karma. So you see, whatever action of body, speech and mind—perceiving form, sound, smell, taste—we have done in the past, these all leave negative imprints or positive imprints on the mindstream. Then later, we experience the result, the result of happiness or suffering, of beautiful or ugly, all that. So, the world comes from our mind; the world we are experiencing comes from your mind, whether it's bad or good.

Therefore, if we can live our life with this understanding, when somebody suddenly criticizes us, when somebody suddenly behaves strangely—screwing their nose up at us, not looking at us, not bowing to us or whatever—there's no problem. Living life with this Buddhist philosophy, that everything comes from our mind there are no problems at all in our mind, in our heart, no problem at all because it comes from us. It comes from our mind, from our past. If it's something unpleasant, it comes from our past mistaken thoughts, our negative karma.

Similarly, when somebody who respects us, praises us, saying we're a good guy, we're a good guy, praising our good-guyness [Rinpoche laughs; group laughs] we're aware that this praising or whatever all comes from our mind, this happiness comes from our own mind, from the positive imprints left by positive actions done in the past, that is our own karma.

So, it doesn't bother us, it doesn't get us angry, it doesn't upset our mind. We don't get angry with that person, we don't get upset with that person. What it does do, however, what it does is make us think, "Oh, I must be careful." It reminds us to practice Dharma. It reminds us to practice Dharma continuously, to not create negative karma, to be careful that our actions don't become negative karma. It makes us purify past negative karma and collect virtue. It only inspires us to practice Dharma whenever we see these things happening in our life.

It only encourages us; it doesn't discourage us. It only encourages us to develop our life to the highest, to achieve enlightenment and to liberate numberless sentient beings from suffering, to bring them to enlightenment.

That's what I was saying, that's one thing—how everything, our world, everything comes from our mind.

Now, the second thing I was saying before, the other explanation, how everything comes from the mind. To put it into a package by saying the world, the whole thing—enemy, friend, stranger, objects of enjoyments, of pleasure, objects of suffering, our body and mind, our senses, even the self, even our own I—everything comes from our mind. All this is a mere imputation of our mind. All this is a mere imputation of our mind. The mind decorates, and the next minute, the next second, we see this decorated thing as the real thing, we decorate this thing with inherent existence, independent of all this merely labeled existence, including our I, the self, body and mind, the aggregates, everything, which is merely imputed by our thought.

So, this inherent existence is decorated, is projected, it covers all this, like a floor carpet, like a painting covering the wall. Everything is covered by this hallucination. You understand? I already mentioned this a few days ago.

Our own I, our merely-labeled I, is covered by this hallucination, and then everything. It creates a false world, a false world, like in Nepal or Dharamsala, when you go to buy fruit, things, sometimes they have some fruit there but a mirror so there seems to be so much more. There's the fruit and there's the reflected fruit. It's a little bit like that.

So, this hallucination completely covers everything, making it real. It comes from our mind, that comes from our mind, from the ignorance, that view. Because of ignorance, everything appears as real, everything—tastes, tangible objects, chili, sweet, everything—as something real, even though they are merely imputed by mind. All these “real” things come from our mind, from ignorance, by leaving an imprint on the mental continuum, then that is experienced, that projects this decoration, this hallucination.

So that's another one, our world. There's another one, a specific one, the greatest hallucination. I was talking about the greatest, the king of the delusions, the king of the superstitious thoughts. That's how it started.

When we let our mind hold onto all these hallucinations as true, that they are really true. On top of the merely labeled I, this truly-existent, decorated, made-real I is placed, and then mind completely holds on to it as a hundred percent true. This is the king of the superstitions, the king of the superstitious mind, the king of the delusion.

The other one is karma, how everything comes from our karma.

This one is, this one is extremely important to learn, to discover, how it comes from our own superstitious thought, the king of the superstitious mind. All this is the view of our superstitious mind, all this is the view of the king of the superstition, ignorance. So that's another specific example.

The antidote is looking at the opposite. Ignorance holds onto the object as true, and so the antidote is the opposite of that. For us to get liberated from the oceans of samsaric suffering and not only that but also to achieve enlightenment, with bodhicitta, the antidote is to look at the total opposite of this, seeing the hallucination, all this hallucination, looking at it totally the opposite. All this—ourselves, action, object—is all a hallucination. To always practice mindfulness of the hallucination. While we are going, whatever we are doing, the mind is constantly in meditation. Whatever activity we are doing—while we are cleaning, while we are sweeping or while we are making food, while we are writing, whatever—part of our mind is practicing mindfulness in the daily activities. Whatever we are doing, we think, “All this is a hallucination.” This real I, this real action, this real object, all this—we look at it as a hallucination.

Then, in our heart we get the idea, we hold the non-existence, we look at it as empty. Or, that all these are existing in mere name, merely imputed by mind, they are a dependent arising. So again, I, action, object, everything is a dependent arising. That’s the same thing, the understanding of emptiness, looking at it in two ways.

After we recognize the hallucination, the false object, we see this is the object to be refuted, and because of that it is “empty.” That’s the antidote to eliminate the root of samsara, the king of the delusion. That way we get liberated from karma and delusion, from suffering, and then we are able to liberate numberless sentient beings from the oceans of samsara and bring them to enlightenment.

I’ll stop there.

There will be teachings, the other place, before the Twenty-one Taras’ *jenang*, there will be teachings. We won’t just immediately do the Tara *jenang*, there will be teachings before that.

I got distracted from the prayers. I think I went for a walk; I got distracted.

So, here is one thing. What happens if we think or live the Buddhist philosophy in our worldly life, the benefit we get, the benefit we get is learning how we can overcome problems, just, *just* our mind just living this in daily life, how everything comes from the mind, we know that. All the problems that come with the selfish mind, with attachment, don’t happen, don’t arise. Everything is controlled. Living with the mind in this philosophy, which is reality, not making anything up, where we create something new, it’s not like that. This is reality, and we live in that, so none of the problems of the life happen.

DEDICATION

[Rinpoche says the dedication in Tibetan]

[Short mandala]

Due to all the past, present and future merits collected by me, the three times’ merits collected by others, by all sentient beings and all the buddhas, may the bodhicitta, the source

of all the happiness and success, for myself and for all sentient beings... So, your bodhicitta, your good heart, is the source of all the happiness and peace, temporary and ultimate happiness, liberation and enlightenment, of all sentient beings.

May this bodhicitta be actualized within our hearts, and in the hearts of my own family members, in the hearts of everybody here and all the students, all the benefactors in the organization, and in the hearts of everybody, in the hearts of so many people in this earth, and different worlds, who offer service to the organization, and to benefit all sentient beings and the teachings of the Buddha, and there are so many of those who rely upon me, whom I promised to pray for, whose names were given to me, those other people, and as well as numberless sentient beings living in this world, and numberless sentient beings who are living in numberless universes.

May the bodhicitta be generated in the hearts of everybody, myself and all these sentient beings, every single sentient being's heart, and in whose heart bodhicitta has been generated, may it be increased.

Jang chub...

[Rinpoche and students recite the long life prayer for His Holiness the Dalai Lama.]

[Students chant the long life prayer for Lama Zopa Rinpoche.]

Due to all the past, present and future merits collected by me, the three times' merits collected by others, which exist, but which is merely labeled by mind, may the I who exists, but which is merely labeled by mind, achieve Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's enlightenment, which exists, but which is merely labeled by mind, and lead all sentient beings, who exist, but who are merely labeled by mind, to that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's enlightenment, which exists, but which is also merely labeled by mind, by myself alone, who also exists, but who is merely labeled by mind.

[Rinpoche recites the dedication in Tibetan.]

Okay, thank you.

Lecture 11

TEA OFFERING

[Rinpoche and students chant protector prayers.]

Blessing the offering tea.

[Rinpoche does the tea offering]

Offering tormas and tea offering to them is most important to complete His Holiness the Dalai Lama's holy wishes, for them to be actualized. The very first important thing to be

completed is that. If that happens, then it benefits everybody including yourself, and all your wishes for happiness or attaining the path to enlightenment, everything happens, including all your own needs. If His Holiness the Dalai Lama's holy wishes succeed, then the happiness of all sentient beings, not only for Tibetans, happens.

The next one is your own success, attaining the lam-rim, the stages of the path to enlightenment, from the root of the path, guru devotion, up to enlightenment, and especially bodhicitta. From the common path, bodhicitta and then the uncommon path, the clear light, wisdom, from the highest tantras, to be able to actualize that in this very lifetime. I think that's a most important prayer for yourself.

Why it's the most important prayer is because if you are able to actualize it, then benefiting other sentient beings, that happens deeper and deeper, more and more extensively. The more you are able to attain the realizations of the path to enlightenment, higher and higher, the more you can benefit other sentient beings. It is like oceans, like skies, deeper and greater, you able to benefit other sentient beings. That's why I say this is the most important prayer for yourself for attaining the path to enlightenment.

THE THREE PRINCIPAL ASPECTS OF THE PATH

We should know that, sometimes perhaps there are difficulties, so what prayers do we do for ourselves? We might wonder what the most important thing is; we might become confused, it might become a problem. If we don't understand, it becomes a problem, it becomes unclear, then we need to know what's the best. So in case somebody doesn't know, I just mentioned that this is the most important prayer. As we have gone through the meditation on the kindness of the mother, the present-life mother, if we haven't gone through the meditation, even repaying the kindness of parents, the kindness to all sentient beings, attaining the lam-rim, attaining the path to enlightenment, attaining guru devotion, renunciation, bodhicitta, the right view, that's the most important thing, and of course, on top of that, the two stages of tantra. This is the best way to repay the kindness of sentient beings, by our attainment, the more we attain the path.

First is renunciation, the renunciation to this life, the renunciation of future lives, of samsara. We abandon so much negative karma just by attaining that, by having realized the usefulness of the perfect human body, which is difficult to find again, and impermanence and death, the lower realm sufferings, then refuge, karma, all that, then we are able to abandon so much negative karma just from that, by understanding this, and by having realizations of this.

Then realizing how the future lives' samsara is also in the nature of suffering, and so we are able to abandon so much negative karma, the actions which harm to others. And then, with bodhicitta, every single your movement, even if we are just breathing in and out, it benefits all sentient beings, it benefits numberless sentient beings, even just breathing in and out, besides other activities, it becomes only cause of happiness of numberless sentient beings. Even each in and out breath, without talking about the other activities of life.

It's an unbelievable life, whatever activity we do becomes the cause of happiness for numberless sentient beings: not only the numberless hell beings and hungry ghosts, but even

human beings and asuras. The amount we can benefit increases as we attain the higher path and then bodhisattva path. Then the five Mahayana paths—the path of merit, the preparatory path, the right-seeing path, the path of meditation and so forth—when we start actualizing the bhumis on the right-seeing path, then our benefit to sentient beings becomes unbelievably, unbelievably greater and greater.

For example, by attaining the first bhumi we are able to manifest in a hundred pure lands of a buddha, and to manifest a hundred bodies and be able to do prostrations to the buddhas in the pure land. With a hundred bodies, by manifesting, we are able to give different teachings to sentient beings. I think there is something similar to this, I don't know exactly, for each one we do a hundred different things, maybe meditation.

Then, I think at the next level, it is maybe a thousand times. We are able to manifest a thousand bodies, and then also able to go to the pure land, there are many numbers of pure lands, also able to give many number of different teachings to sentient beings. So it's unimaginable, so unimaginable, unimaginable. Then, eighth, ninth, tenth bhumis, I don't remember exactly, but anyway we are able to manifest billions and zillions of different bodies, and that many different bodies can give teachings to the sentient beings, each of those bodies can do prostrations and make offerings to the buddhas, then go to a pure land. So, it's most, most amazing, to be able to manifest in the numbers mentioned there but I don't remember how many—uncountable numbers, billions and zillions, trillions, an unbelievable number of bodies we are able to manifest.

We are able to offer deeper and deeper extensive benefit to sentient beings by actualizing the path. Otherwise, otherwise, otherwise, if we don't actualize the path our benefit to sentient beings is very limited, extremely limited, almost like nothing.

Even if we're involved in doing social service or something, of course we must do it, of course it's very important, but because our mind is not subdued, we don't have the realizations of renunciation, bodhicitta and right view, when we're working for others, when we're dealing with other sentient beings, anger arises, attachment arises, jealousy arises, pride arises, all those negative minds arise. Without the stability of mind, without realizations, this is what happens. Then we encounter many problems in life, with people.

Of course, in the beginning the motivation is to benefit others, but then, because we don't have realizations, even lam-rim ones, without thinking about tantra, even just the lam-rim ones—renunciation, bodhicitta and right view—then there's all this garbage, there's all this garbage. Delusions are there, the seeds of delusions are there; they have not ceased, and so then the selfish mind arises, then we encounter many problems in the work.

Sometimes, at the beginning it is good. At the beginning there is a lot of inspiration, but then after some time there are a lot of difficulties, problems, and then, after some time, the purity of the motivation kind of degenerates. Then, because we face so many hardships, so many difficulties, our mind is always occupied with the difficulties, and somehow there is not much time to think of the positive attitude, the good heart, the motivation of bodhicitta, even if we know the Dharma. When the mind is occupied by many problems, then what we see in our life is only problems.

I don't mean this is what everybody experiences, but this is true for many people. I think I see it like that. Because we have no time or we are unable to give time to ourselves to our continuity, for our pure motivation to develop, then there are so many problems and difficulties. The problems are kind of like drowning in mud. When we're drowning in mud it's so difficult to come out. Similarly, we are drowning in problems, it's like that.

Therefore, what I'm saying is, the best benefit to ourselves and other sentient beings is meditating on the lam-rim and attaining the path. It brings incredible benefit and it pacifies the delusions, not allowing them to arise. Then, we have great peace and happiness now, and also others don't receive harm from us because our mind is living in virtue.

Even renunciation to this life, detachment from this life—even if it's just that, it's unbelievable, unbelievable the help it brings to others. They don't receive harm from us. Just from that, even without talking about bodhicitta, they don't receive harm. So many types of harm they don't receive from us; it's just incredible the peace they receive. Then, of course, there is no question if there is bodhicitta.

PROTECTOR PRAYER

Now, we'll do the protector prayer. The meditation is, your own guru is in the form of protectors. That's the best way how to meditate when you recite the prayer. It's not something separate from the guru. If so, that doesn't have taste; it has lost the taste of the meditation or the practice. That way you can receive blessings or protection.

There's a particular reason to manifest as a protector, to pacify obstacles. Even Tara, the Twenty-one Taras, it's one being, it's one being but manifesting in twenty-one aspects. One aspect is not enough. Just the green aspect is not enough, so there are twenty-one Taras, there are twenty-one different aspects. Each one has a different function, a different way to benefit sentient beings, to protect sentient beings from different sufferings, to pacify them and cause happiness and ultimately, to bring to liberation and enlightenment. That's the ultimate. Tara manifests as the Twenty-one Taras, not just only for some mundane problems—it can be done for that, but it's not just that—ultimately it's to bring us sentient beings to liberation and to full enlightenment.

Then, the next one is for the success of all the projects in the organization, you can think like that. Then, for the Sangha in this organization, FPMT, to be able to complete their scriptural understanding and the realizations of the path to enlightenment in this very lifetime. Then, to receive all their needs, to live in the pure vinaya and all the protection in their lives, that's extremely essential, very important, because the real existing Buddhadharma in the West depends on having Sangha, so that means living in vinaya and also somebody receiving perfect human rebirth, the eight freedoms to practice Dharma and eight endowments or ten richnesses: five from one's own side, five from the other's side.

The second one, the first is for human being, and the next one is the opportunity to practice Dharma, being born in the center of the religious country. There are two ways of thinking of that. One is a place like Bodhgaya or like some center of a holy place, the other one is defined by having the vinaya lineage, of having Sangha living in the vinaya practice: *getsul*,

male and female, the thirty-six vows, male and female, then *gelong*, the “virtuous beggars,” the seekers of liberation.

In a book, I think from India or Thailand or something, somebody translated *gelong* as “beggar of food” because, of course, externally, that is what you see is, in the early morning, at six o’clock, when the sun rises, the monks go into the street begging for alms.

One time Lama Yeshe and I were in Australia or somewhere, when we left our hotel at six o’clock we saw the monks outside, on the street—what do you call where people walk? [*Student*: Footpath.] Foot path, foot path. [Rinpoche laughs] I thought you were saying football, football, anyway, footpath.

So early in the morning, but one lady was kneeling down, carrying a tray full of food as the monks passed by with their begging bowls. She was showing great respect for the Sangha, it’s like seeing the Buddha when they see a monk, it’s like you see the Buddha. From some distance they knelt down and were unbelievably respectful. That way, they created so much good karma.

It’s a very good example, very good example for the West, maybe for some Tibetans as well. Some are very respectful, because it’s all to do with the understanding of karma and how much merit you collect if you respect a powerful object who is living in the higher number of vows. You have to understand all these things, it’s benefit for yourself, you collect unbelievable merit. And then, if you disrespect then you also create very heavy negative karma, if you disrespect or the manner is disrespectful, you also create heavy negative karma because the Sangha is very powerful object, and the more powerful the higher number of vows they are living in. Therefore, it’s for your own benefit not to disrespect them. In the West many people don’t know what disrespect means, don’t have any idea how to respect them. I mean, maybe some know but some don’t.

This happens in Thailand and Sri Lanka. I haven’t been in Burma. I was in Sri Lanka for a short time to see the Buddha’s tooth. I didn’t see the Buddha’s tooth but I went there to prostrate, in Kandy. It’s very good, it’s very nice. If you are traveling, to go to those places is very good, where there are holy objects of the Buddha’s. That’s very good if you are traveling, to make your expenses worthwhile, to make it beneficial, to go to those holy places rather than famous beaches.

I don’t mean everybody. For some people there’s great benefit going to the beach. You can benefit all the animals living in the ocean. For example, even if you recite ten malas of OM MANI PADME HUM, doing the Chenrezig practice, then you enter into the water. Your body is blessed, so once you get into the water, the water that touches your body all gets blessed. This has such power to purify all the creatures living in the water, from the largest like a mountain to the tiniest you can see only through a microscope. It’s unbelievable benefit, even if you’re just practicing Chenrezig, the Compassion Buddha, Avalokiteshvara. It’s just amazing, just that. Then, anybody who touches the water, even other human beings playing in the water, enjoying the water, they also get purified, besides the animals.

When bodhisattvas bless the land, bless the people, it’s of unbelievable benefit wherever they are. It’s amazing.

Whether you are a bodhisattva or not, with a bodhisattva motivation, there's a special practice you can do at the beach. You bless the water with a special mantra taught by Buddha, then the numberless hungry ghosts are able to drink the water; that becomes nectar and they are able to see the nectar. It is not just water but nectar, and they purify their negative karma to be born as the preta, and suffer unimaginable suffering, they get purified. Receiving the drink not only stops the hunger and thirst but their negative karma gets purified and they get a higher rebirth. That's the great gift you can give them, the great gift you can give to them. They get higher rebirth, they get liberated from that suffering and they get a higher rebirth. Their negative karma gets purified.

There's a special practice like that, you can do at the beach, which is unbelievable benefit to numberless preta beings. There are preta beings like a forest, like grass growing on the mountain, on the land; there are numberless hungry ghosts, so unbelievable; it seems like that to those who can see. Anyway, they get unbelievable benefit, unbelievable benefit. If you're going to those places, this is how to make your life most beneficial, the best use. If you can do like that, it's very good.

You're going there for enjoyment, but then if you do those Dharma practices there, giving charity to the pretas, the different types of practices, they get purified and liberated, so it's unimaginable.

Anyway, so this is Kandy. Many years ago I was going back to Nepal from Australia. At that time, a Western nun was helping me, Thubten Yeshe. She's not a nun now. She had been there before so she took me. She asked me if I wanted to go and I said yes. I think it's on the way from Australia so it doesn't cost much. We stayed in an old British hotel, and from there the temple was quite close.

I spent a day in the temple doing prostrations, reading the *Bodhicaryavatara* text loudly. Every five minutes tourists came. One tourist came and then went, then another one came and went. So, I just chant loudly so that they can hear, then did full-length prostrations. Then, the Theravadin monks who were watching came down and did the full-length prostrations too. This was when all the tourists had gone, after five.

After I finished, when it was time to go, there was an Indian or Sri Lankan man watching. He called "come," so I was wondered why he was calling me. The thought came in my mind how in India, sometimes they catch a person and hang them upside down above a fire. It is said it produces oil from the body. I heard this. So I thought maybe this is what's going to happen. [Rinpoche laughs; group laughs] That thought came, somehow, at that time. Then I followed the Indian man, and he took me upstairs to the room of the caretaker monk, who was very happy to see me and he offered me milk or tea.

My understanding of tea was black tea mixed with milk, that's the way it comes. That's very common. I don't drink black tea, not commonly; I mix it with milk, so I said, tea. I think it was so good that I said tea, I realized that after. The monks don't drink milk in the afternoon. I don't know if they do in the morning but in the afternoon they don't drink milk, they don't drink milk tea, they are very strict. So, if I had said I drink milk then I think I wouldn't have fitted in with them because they are very strict with their vows, not drinking

milk, which is not like apple juice which is transparent. After they have taken their one meal, they fast in the afternoon.

They brought black tea because I said tea. I thought it was mixed with milk, that's what I drink, so I said tea, so they brought, for them the black tea. So anyway, it was good, it fitted in with them, with their practice, so it was good. Anyway, he was very happy to meet me and he gave me Sri Lankan tea as a present.

It was very good. There is the Buddha's tooth inside the stupa, then there is another stupa and then another stupa. You can only see the tooth if you are member of the country or a president, somebody very high up in the country. I don't know whether they can, but maybe they can see it.

Every morning the monks made a bath offering, offering water to the tooth. During that time there were four men downstairs, not upstairs but downstairs, there were four men dressed in white, beating a drum. The Buddha's relics were upstairs, so they beat the drum for one hour as an offering. They do this morning and evening.

You don't see the Buddha's tooth but the stupa has a very strong feeling. The vibration of this, the very strong feeling the stupa has, is a sign of having the tooth inside.

I think there are maybe four teeth in the world. There is maybe one in China but I didn't see it when I went there. I saw a long Buddha's relic, but I didn't see the tooth, inside a stupa like I had planned. I saw the picture, so I thought to see the tooth, but there was some very long Buddha's relic. We didn't see the tooth. I don't know what happened.

I think there are maybe two in Tibet, besides the one in Sri Lanka. One is buried in the monastery of Gyalwa Ensapa, Lama Tsongkhapa's disciple who achieved enlightenment in a brief lifetime of degenerate times. I think there's a tooth there. Maybe it's Buddha Kashyapa or Shakyamuni Buddha's tooth. I think there are four. That is buried in the mountain. When the destruction in Tibet was happening, they buried it in the mountain and then a shepherd, a person looking after animals, found it. He was carrying it on his body, then I think he was shooting animals, then one day I think the bullet come back to him and he died. Then somebody found him and found the Buddha's tooth on his body.

I was wishing very much to get that tooth to put in the fifty-story Maitreya Buddha statue.

Then, many years ago I met a monk at Dharamsala who wanted to go to France. When he was in Lhasa, he was buried under the ground, maybe for doing some political work. He was captured with a German person and buried underground for some months. They liberated the German person but he was kept there for a long, and I think there was electrical torture. When he asked me to help him he asked if I wanted anything, so I mentioned I was collecting relics for the Maitreya statue. He told me his family had a Buddha's tooth from this monastery and his brother would bring it. First, he said maybe I could get it, but later he said he would like to offer it to His Holiness the Dalai Lama. I don't know what happened.

In Sri Lanka, while I was doing prayers there, many young people came, young boys and girls, to do prostrations. One girl came with a baby—it must have been her first—and put it

on the ground while she kneeled down for maybe twenty-five minutes or something, Then she picked her baby up. In front of the Buddha's stupa there were containers of rice, all lined up. I think people left them there in the morning to get blessed and then took them away at midday or something, to share with their family. Some people came and meditated. I think it's very good, especially, to see young people come with devotion.

Anyway, I'm not going to go over the success of all the different projects, projects which already started.

So, to be most beneficial for all sentient beings, to bring the sentient beings to enlightenment as quickly as possible, that's the essence.

[Chanting]

Lecture 13

THE MEANING OF TARA

The meaning of Tara. There is the definitive meaning of Tara and the interpretive meaning of Tara, the mother of all the buddhas, mother of the Victorious Ones. "Victory" means victory over the disturbing thought obscurations and the subtle defilements, having totally ceased them, to have total victory over the four maras: the mara of the delusions, the mara of the samsaric aggregates, the mara of the lord of death and the mara of the deva's son.

There are two types of maras: the four gross maras and the four subtle maras. I don't remember the four subtle maras, I've seen the explanation in the text of the *Abhisamayalamkara* but I don't remember now.

The mara of the deva's son makes us grab onto or something, shoot the five arrows of delusion, five arrows of delusion. When we are trying to live a pure life by taking vows, the mara of the deva's son shoots the five arrows of delusion, causing attachment to arise or something, discouraging us from taking the vows: the lay vows, the upasika vows or the nun's or monk's vows—the thirty-six vows renouncing the household life—or the higher vows, the 253 or 365 bhikshu and bhikshuni vows. When we wish to take those vows, to live a pure life, this mara causes delusion to arise, discouraging us.

Or, after we have taken the vow, they cause us to break the vows. Or when we are trying to practice things such as generosity, giving to others, they cause miserliness to arise, interrupting our practice of generosity. They cause to other delusions to arise—ignorance, anger, attachment, pride, jealousy, doubts, all these things—not allowing us to practice Dharma, to achieve realizations.

A buddha has totally overcome these four maras, is liberated from this, so has victory over these four maras, so, Tara, as the Mother of the Victorious Ones, means mother of the buddhas.

Tara is called “Mother,” so it’s good to understand the meaning of that. The very meaning of the Mother has nothing to do with giving birth to the children; it’s not that sort of mother. The ultimate meaning, the real meaning of Mother is the guru, that means guru. What it *really* is guru. The guru, who is that? What really is that? That is the dharmakaya, the transcendental wisdom, voidness, which pervades all phenomena, so it’s everywhere. There’s no place where there’s no guru. In the debating subjects or when the philosophy is mentioned, it is emphasized that there’s no place where there’s no Buddha, so you can say there’s no place where there’s no guru. This wisdom, the dharmakaya, pervades all the phenomena, whether on our crown, in our hand, in our heart, everywhere, it pervades all the phenomena.

This is the primordial mind, which has no beginning and no end, no cessation, no end, no beginning and no end. When I say “primordial,” I’m going into highest, tantric explanation, when it’s labeled that; not the gross mind.

Bound with infinite compassion to us sentient beings, this manifests in any form, in pure form for the pure beings, in impure form for the impure beings who have delusion, who have impure karma. It manifests in an impure form for them.

By understanding every single sentient being’s mind directly, their level of intelligence, what karma they have, the elements, by seeing everything directly, the dharmakaya then reveals the appropriate method. Even to guide one sentient being, there are infinite, numberless methods revealed to that one sentient being, to guide him from happiness to happiness, to liberation, to the cessation of the samsaric suffering, then to bring him to full enlightenment.

Without effort, it naturally does the work for sentient beings. We can say infinite, as it covers all the phenomena. So, it benefits the numberless sentient beings, naturally, including every one of us, including every one of us. We should understand this. I’m talking about others but it includes every one of us.

I think that’s why we’re here. [Rinpoche laughs] That’s why we’re here, at Kopan Monastery in Nepal, at Kopan Monastery.

DR NICK MEETS THE DHARMA

For example, in the past it happened, Lama asked Dr. Nick, an Australian doctor, to start printing Dharma books, and this is how Wisdom Publications started.

He was on the third course, after we had built the small monastery. In the fourth course, he came with his mother and his friend, who is now called Yeshe Khadro and is the director of the hospice in Queensland. I would say it is the most successful hospice. It was started a long time ago. Maybe this hospice is also supported by the government. She is the director there now.

They were both on the third course and then for the fourth course, Dr. Nick’s mother came. I think she passed away, this year or last year. [*Ven. Roger: This year. (2008)*] This year she

passed away. She was a very good-hearted person, a very loving mother. Anyway, I'm just giving you an idea.

Dr. Nick and his girlfriend had started to go on a world tour, to see the world. They were lying down on the beach in Thailand—I don't know which beach—when a person came along selling coconuts, so they cut open a coconut and ate it. At that moment, somebody came along and told them there was the Kopan course happening. I don't think it was the coconut seller, but somebody else, a Western person. So they suddenly decided, while they were lying down drinking the Coca-Cola [?], they decided. [Group laughs] They decided to come to do the Kopan course. If that person hadn't mentioned it, then maybe it would never have happened.

Like I told you yesterday, if we hadn't meet this first Russian lady, the first student, then all these things might not have happened: so many years of busy activity, the hundred and sixty projects, centers, mostly Dharma centers but also social service projects, spreading the Dharma in the West, which has been a land of darkness, bringing the light of Dharma. As I mentioned yesterday, that includes all these courses that have happened, starting from the very first Kopan course up to now, from the short courses to the one-month courses, none of that would have happened.

And then from here, people got benefit and students started centers in their own countries. None of those things would have happened.

There are many people with similar stories. They're in a market or somewhere, traveling or something, then somebody comes along and talks about Kopan, gives them the message, and they decide to come. It's very interesting. You can be in many different places, doing something very different.

In the case of Dr. Nick, he was laying down at the beach, drinking Coca-Cola. There could be very interesting other places, other people, when it begins, when you got the message, when somebody passed the message.

Of course, there's karma. You have karma from the past, there's karma from the past to meet the Buddhadharma. Maybe there's also karma from past lives not only to meet the Buddhadharma but also to come to Kopan.

So, anyway, what was I saying?

THE MEANING OF TARA (CONT)

With Tara, the Mother of the Victorious Ones, *gyal-yum*, the Victorious Ones means all the buddhas, so she is the mother of all the buddhas. What's the real name? That's the guru. What is the real guru? I've mentioned already, so I'm not going to repeat it.

Here, Mother has incredible meaning, unimaginable. That's the ultimate guru, by taking form and then guiding us. For example, my gurus. There's a danger that I'm telling you that I'm a buddha, but I'm not talking like that. There's a danger of that but I'm not talking about that.

My gurus who took this form, manifesting in this form and then guiding me, they're the conventional gurus. The holy mind is absolute guru, that which I introduced before. This absolute guru, as I mentioned before, is primordial, pervading all the phenomena, all the existence, bound with infinite compassion.

In order to guide us sentient beings, it manifested as Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, the founder of the Buddhadharma in this world, and then manifested into Maitreya Buddha, Manjushri, all those great Six Ornaments, the great scholars, the highly attained beings, Nagarjuna, Asanga, Chandrakirti, Dignaga and so forth, all those holy beings in the merit field.

It also manifested as Lama Atisha and all the Kadampa geshe, then manifested in the New Kadampa tradition lamas, as Lama Tsongkhapa and all those other great masters, up to present gurus, such as His Holiness the Dalai Lama, all in order to guide us. Then, it manifests into all the tantric deities, the four classes of tantric deities, and it manifests into Tara.

There are four classes of tantric deities, like in Highest Yoga Tantra, Yamantaka, Heruka Chakrasambhava, Kalachakra and so forth, and it manifests in the form of Tara, the female aspect, whose particular function is to accomplish the wishes of sentient beings, seeking happiness, for them to succeed in all their activities and achieve happiness.

There are twenty-one Taras according to Phari Lotsawa, the holy being and great translator. Maybe the twenty-one Taras appeared to him. These twenty-one Taras have many arms according to Phari Lotsawa. There's an initiation for that, which comes in the Rinjung Gyatsa.

And then there's the twenty-one Taras according to Lama Atisha. That is the *jenang*—the blessing to be able to practice—I'm going to grant tonight. Here each of the twenty-one Taras has one face and two arms. But, according to Lama Atisha, there's one very wrathful one and one slightly wrathful, not all are the same and there are different colors, depending on their function. There's one wrathful one, with hair standing up, and then one is slightly wrathful, having wrinkles here, I think might be that. There's one very wrathful one, definitely.

Many people think that as you have twenty-one Taras you have twenty-one identical Taras, but it's not quite like that, according to Lama Atisha. It doesn't mean you can't have hundreds, billions, hundreds and billions of Taras, naturally you can, but I'm just saying according to Lama Atisha there are these twenty-one aspects.

There is another Twenty-one Taras statue I asked to be made in three sizes, one life size, then the ones I have in the room, this size, and then one small one. I think that a Tibetan lady who lives at the hotel in Darjeeling that Lama bought for the monastery, asked for one so I gave it to her.

I made the three statues to collect the merits to build the fifty-story Maitreya Buddha statue. Even though there's no place to put it in the statue yet, because the statue is not built, but

we made these Tara statues in three sizes, to collect merits for building the fifty-story Maitreya Buddha statue.

The Twenty-one Taras statues, this size, I had in the room but then Geshe Sopa Rinpoche came. He is Lama Yeshe's teacher, as well as my teacher. When he came here to the monastery, he was very happy, so I offered the statue for his center in Deer Park, Madison. It's there now in the new building. But this one, sponsored by Lillian Too from Malaysia, is the same size.

There's a third Twenty-one Taras from Taiwan. I have seen cards, all the implements are in the upali flower here, and this hand is empty, so that's one Twenty-one Tara that I don't know, I haven't found out the lineage.

I thought maybe there are other traditions of this Twenty-one Taras aspect, so I asked Geshe Lama Konchog, who lived here for a long time. I thought maybe he knew. He said maybe Kachen Yeshe Gyaltzen's text explains it. He was a great lama, unbelievable, unbelievable, like the sun shining in the world, like that. There is one sun, but it shines on the whole world. Kachen Yeshe Gyaltzen, wrote so many volumes of teachings and he has established a monastery in Kyidong, very pure, not so much focused on the extensive learning, but more focused on the the monks following the vinaya practice.

I checked in that text but I did not find about the lineage of that aspect of Twenty-one Taras, but I found an unbelievable explanation about the Sixteen Arhats. There's a short and an extensive story about each one. It's unbelievable. I thought to translate it into English, but I haven't started yet. The benefit of having their statues, their pictures, is unbelievable. The Kadampa geshe say if you don't have the Sixteen Arhats then it's not a monastery, and Geshe Lama Konchog used to say that.

So, anyway, then I thought to start to make different size statues so that the centers can have them. It seems extremely important to have the Sixteen Arhats statues, to make offerings, to pray for success of Dharma practice. All the Kadampa geshe emphasize very much to have pictures or thangkas. Kadampa Geshe Potowa practiced and then got so much benefit from this, benefitting others and having realizations, and he advised his disciples to do the same. The Kadampa geshe practiced this way and got so much benefit, then he advised to other disciples. So Kadampa geshe emphasize this very much.

The statues haven't happened yet, but there are small statues in the Hong Kong center. Our center there ordered it. The Sixteen Arhat statues or the Thirty-five Buddhas statues haven't been available, but you can order them. Now they are available about this size.

So, anyway, there's another Twenty-one Taras. I have seen it but there are four different Twenty-one Taras. I've seen the thangka, a very beautiful thangka. There's another Twenty-one Taras, but I don't know which lineage it is from. I saw a thangka of the fourth one in New Zealand and different places, but I haven't found yet clearly which Lama's vision or lineage.

Even with manifestations of Tara, there are many Twenty-one Taras, many different aspects, all Twenty-one Taras but different. Because there are different needs for certain sentient

beings—this Twenty-one Taras suits this sentient being, that Twenty-one Taras suits that one. Even with the Compassion Buddha, there are a hundred different Compassion Buddhas, because there's that need from sentient beings. There are different aspects for different sentient beings.

They manifest into the Buddhas of Fortunate Eon, the one thousand Buddhas, including Shakyamuni Buddha and all the previous, Buddha Kashyapa and so forth, then the future Maitreya Buddha and the rest of the Buddhas, then the Thirty-five Buddhas, the Medicine Buddhas, all these manifestations. I mentioned what the guru is, how it takes all these forms, it manifests in these ways. Then, they manifest into also bodhisattvas, the Eight Bodhisattvas, then arhats, the Sixteen Arhats and then as the guru. They manifest into dakas, dakinis, into protectors. The guru manifests into protectors. This is what you have in the Guru Puja merit field, in all the lam-rim merit fields. In the center is Lama Losang Tub Wang Dorje Chang, the originator, the *root* of all this, of all these many billions of buddhas—however many there are, but the very root is that guru. Then the lama, that's the very root, *originator* of everything, how many numberless buddhas there are, deities, the lama. Losang means Tsongkhapa, manifesting as Tsongkhapa.

Then Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, then Vajradhara, then there's a HUM syllable at the heart. Tsongkhapa, at his heart, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha; at his heart, Vajradhara; at his heart, HUM. So that is that guru. As I mentioned at the very beginning, it has the meaning of mother, the mother of all the buddhas.

However many there are, there are just in reality two different aspects, two different functions, to guide us sentient beings and to bring us to enlightenment. But actually it's all one. In reality it's just one, that guru, that guru I mentioned before.

So I just mention this and that's it, I'm not going to go over, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah or blah, blah, blah or blee, blee, blee, or whatever.

THE BUDDHA MANIFESTS IN WHATEVER FORM IS BENEFICIAL

I thought, since I'm talking here, I thought to mention some quotations. These are very helpful, so you can write them down. They are very beneficial, very useful to help us find more faith in the Buddha by knowing more of the activities, as well as helping the guru devotion, to understand more.

This is from the sutra, *Meeting the Father and Son*. [Rinpoche quotes extensively in Tibetan.] , In that sutra, the Buddha explains that a buddha manifests into what the Hindus worship, Indra, Brahma, Gachen—what the Hindu religion worships—and even manifests into maras, sometimes also manifests into maras.

The manifestation doesn't have to be all the time something radiating, beautiful. If we have a pure mind, we see the pure aspect of Buddha but that's not the case at the moment for many of us. Anyway, I won't to go any further.

So, the quotation says a buddha sometimes even manifests as mara to do the work for sentient beings, *sem-chen*. *Tri ken nam ke dor me* means worldly beings don't understand, they don't realize. They think because they see as mara, then believe mara. They see Indra, then they believe it's Indra. They see Brahma and believe it's Brahma. Whatever appears to them, they believe; they don't see beyond that, they don't realize.

Po me che tse cho pa dze means the Buddha can also manifest as a woman, wearing female dress and manifesting female the conduct.

Tro be gen ne na yan da. In the animal realm, the Buddha manifests as animal.

Do cha men na cha. Although there's no attachment, the Buddha can manifest as having attachment.

[Tibetan quote] Similarly, the Buddha doesn't have fear. He has removed all the cause of fear, delusion and karma, and even subtle defilements, so how the Buddha can have fear? The cause of fear is delusion, karma and delusion. He has removed that so Buddha doesn't have fear. Buddha has no fear but he can show the aspect of fear.

[Tibetan quote] The Buddha is not crazy but he can show the aspect of being crazy.

[Tibetan quote] Buddha is not *sha-wa*. This could be the blind if related to the eye or a limp if related to the leg, so we can read this two ways. The Buddha is not blind but can show the aspect of blindness, or the Buddha is not crippled with a limp but he can show that aspect.

[Tibetan quote] The Buddha subdues sentient beings by manifesting in various forms, even manifesting as an insect, as a tiger, as a snake, as a cockroach, as a rat. The Buddha can manifest in any form that benefits the sentient being, that is needed at that time.

So, anyway, the continuation of the quotation, wheel-turning kings reveal Dharma, so the Buddha manifests as a wheel-turning king and reveals Dharma.

Then, the Buddha manifests into the *nyen tö*, followers of the Lesser Vehicle Path, who listen to the teachings, and attainers. The Buddha also manifests in those forms, as *nyen tö*, as a follower of the Lesser Vehicle path, and reveals the Dharma.

Then Buddha manifests in the form of animals—I'm following the quotation—the Buddha manifests in the form of animals. The Buddha manifests as an asura; the Buddha manifests as a statue; the Buddha manifests as relics.

In these degenerate times, we sentient beings who have impure karma don't have karma to see the Buddha in the aspect of the Buddha, only in the form of relics. So then the Buddha manifests in the form of relics for our devotional object, so we can collect merits, and to plant the seeds of enlightenment.

It is said in the teachings that each time you see the Buddha's relics, it purifies a thousand eons negative karma, it mentions that. So, like that, even though it doesn't give teachings,

communicate, but just, collect extensive merits, causes us sentient beings to collect extensive merits and purify the defilements.

To continue the quotation: In order to liberate the king from ignorance, then Buddha manifests as Brahma. It's talking about the stories that happened in the past.

In order to liberate the king from the anger, then Buddha manifests as what Hindus follow, *kam-chu* [?] What's that? [There is some discussion in Tibetan.] Krishna, maybe Krishna, I'm not sure.

It's very useful to know this. In order to liberate the king from anger. There must be some story that happened in the past; it might be in the Buddha's life story, where the Buddha manifests as *kam-chu*, maybe Krishna.

In order to liberate the owner of the attachment, in order to subdue the owner of the attachment, that is the Ganesh, what the Hindus worship, Ganesh, the owner of the attachment, the Buddha manifests in the wrathful form.

I don't remember very clearly but one of my gurus, Kyabje Ribur Rinpoche, explained that there's a Ganesh related to the attachment. Sorry, I made a mistake. This could be *wang-chuk*, Mahadeva, I'm not sure. To liberate the owner of the attachment the Buddha manifests into the wrathful form.

To liberate the owner of the pride, the Buddha manifests into Ganapati.

Rinpoche told me the story of Ganapati and pride. Ganesh is a worldly being. Ganesh went for outing. [Group laughs] Maybe there are some large, five star restaurants in the deva realm, I'm not sure, anyway, he went out. So Chenrezig took the form of Ganapati, took his form and he sat on the throne.

I think Ganesh said, with pride, "I'm the only one in the universe," or something, proud of his own qualities or whatever. So then Chenrezig manifested as Ganapati and took a similar form but, of course, one is ordinary and the other one is an enlightened being, unbelievably glorious, radiating, there's no question, and he sat on the throne. He was sitting on the throne when Ganesh came in from outside. So then I don't know what happened. [Group laughs] I forgot the story! I'm very sorry, maybe next time. I only remember the middle part. [Rinpoche laughs]

I think he subdued, he tamed the worldly being, the deva, Ganesh, what Hindus worship.

It's kind of a similar aspect, what we take that initiation but Ganapati is the embodiment of Compassion Buddha; it's not the Hindu Ganesh. There's the worldly being and then there's the enlightened being, Ganesh. The initiation that we have, to practice, to worship, that is Ganapati, the actual Compassion Buddha.

To release the sentient beings from the poverty, for their wishes to succeed.

Then it says, in order to liberate the king from jealousy, the Buddha manifests as *Wang-go*. I'm not sure what the last one is. [Rinpoche laughs] Maybe Indra, maybe Indra. It says *Wang-go*. I'm not sure; it could be Indra. It can be checked.

Anyway, the idea is that the Buddha manifests into all these forms, even into the various beings the Hindus worship, in order to subdue those different sentient beings, because they need to see that aspect. Because those beings have faith to Indra, Brahma, all these things, they worship that, so the Buddha manifests in those forms to subdue those sentient beings. That way he can benefit them.

THE MEANING OF TARA (CONT)

So here, with the Mother of the Victorious Ones, Mother, as I explained before, means guru, what is guru.

Now, “bound with infinite compassion.” So this, you have to understand, guide us, she has guided us from beginningless rebirths, caused us to have all the happiness from beginningless rebirths by letting us create virtue, the cause of those happinesses that we have experienced from beginningless rebirth. That all came from the guru. All the present happiness comes from the guru; while we are in samsara all the future happiness comes from the guru, because following the guru lets us to create virtue, the cause of happiness.

You remember I mentioned that every single virtuous thought or action is an action of a buddha. I mentioned that before. A buddha has two actions: one is within us sentient beings and one within is themselves, possessed by their own mind, so two types of actions.

From this comes all the happiness. That's how we can relate to the guru. All the present happiness, all the future happiness comes from the guru. Then now, liberation from samsara comes from the guru, and of course enlightenment, full enlightenment, comes from the guru, as well as all the realizations to achieve liberation and enlightenment. It all comes from the guru.

Whenever our life has difficulties, in certain forms the guru guides us, protects us from those sufferings, those dangers, even though we do not know it, we do not recognize it, we do not realize it. All our own numberless past lives' happiness from beginningless rebirth up to now, all our future lives' happiness and liberation and enlightenment, everything, every single thing comes from the guru's kindness.

So, that is the *Mother* of all the Buddhas.

We can also think we are always receiving guidance from Tara. But, you see, what is Tara? The Mother of all the Buddhas. Now you understand what “Mother of all the Buddhas” means.

The guru manifested in all this merit field. I went through that before.

Now here, we can understand why the guru is called mother. All the numberless buddhas come from that, all are manifestations of that, all are manifestations of that. The Buddha, Dharma and Sangha come from that, from the guru. That's why it's called the mother.

If we can understand that, we can understand how all our happiness, everything, comes from Tara. But if you separate Tara and the guru, then it doesn't make sense. We have to understand it's all one; it's just a different label but it's one. Then, we understand we're connected with Tara, you understand? We are connected with Tara; we are always guided by Tara. It is said that praying to Tara is very powerful, that we very quickly receive guidance.

It is said by one of my gurus, His Holiness Serkong Tsenshab Rinpoche, it's quicker to be born in the Chenrezig's, in Avalokiteshvara's pure land, Potala if you pray to Tara. That's not the Potala, the one in Tibet, it's called Potala, and there's also Potala in China, with the same name, but this is talking about the pure land, Potala. His Holiness Serkong Tsenshab Rinpoche, who is an incarnation of Marpa's son, Darma Dodé, said that. Rinpoche used to tell me that.

Generally, it is very quick to receive help and guidance from Tara, if we pray to Tara, if we meditate on Tara. In particular to be born in a pure land, praying to Chenrezig and praying to Tara, if you pray to Tara it's quicker to be born in the pure land. Think like that.

Rinpoche used to say that, he used to say that if you want to see the lama, if you know the attendant, if you have good connection with the attendant, then you'll be able to see the lama quickly. Rinpoche used that example about the importance of praying to Tara.

In the essence, we must know that we are always guided by Tara. Tara is always looking after us; we must know that.

So, this time we have received perfect human rebirth, we have met the Buddhadharma, the most amazing, the most amazing Buddhadharma. We can meet many great teachers in this life, such as His Holiness the Dalai Lama, to receive initiations, teachings, to learn Dharma and to actualize them, so it's most *amazing*. This life is most *amazing*; it's unbelievable.

As I mentioned before, we can achieve all those different of happiness of future lives, from this human body that has seven results, this human body that has eight ripening aspects, this human body that has eighteen precious qualities, this perfect human rebirth.

We can be born in a pure land, where we can become enlightened. We can achieve liberation, the cessation of the oceans of samsaric suffering and the causes, and then also achieve the great liberation, full enlightenment.

Not only that, not only that, not just that, we're only one living being. After we achieve enlightenment we can liberate numberless hell beings from the oceans of samsaric suffering and bring them to enlightenment. We can liberate numberless hungry ghosts from the oceans of samsaric suffering and bring them to enlightenment. We can liberate numberless animals from the oceans of samsara's suffering and bring them to enlightenment. We can liberate numberless human beings from the oceans of samsara's sufferings and bring them to enlightenment. We can liberate numberless suras and asuras from oceans of samsara's

sufferings and bring them to enlightenment. We can liberate numberless intermediate state beings from oceans of samsara's sufferings and bring them to enlightenment. So, what we can do is even more amazing; it's most amazing.

And this perfect human rebirth that we have now, which has all this unbelievable opportunity now, doesn't last long, this doesn't last long. Because the nature of impermanence, it can soon be ended. That we have this appearance, having this precious human body and all these comforts, wealth, all this, surrounding people to help, this can be ended, this can be stopped any day. This appearance can be stopped any day, any year, any month, week, any day, any moment; it can happen. Therefore, therefore, we *must* practice Dharma right away, without the delay of even a second, without the delay of even a second.

That's the lam-rim, following the lam-rim, the path of the lower capable being, the middle capable being and the higher capable being, following it for the benefit of all sentient beings.

Now, for the success of this, take the blessing of Tara, the permission to practice, to recite the mantra of Tara. For the success of all this, take the Tara *jenang*, the permission to practice and then to have realizations, to have success in that and then to achieve enlightenment for sentient beings, then to be able to have success in benefiting sentient beings, and offering service to the teachings of Buddha—to be able to have all this success. It's very important. Tara is the manifestation of all the buddhas' holy actions, to grant success for sentient beings, for their happiness, so it becomes very powerful.

What is the best thing, what is it that really makes us close to Tara? What really makes us close to Tara is bodhicitta, and especially the tong-len practice, taking other sentient beings' sufferings on ourselves and giving our happiness and merits to others. The bodhicitta practice and meditation and especially tong-len, that's what pleases Tara. When we sacrifice our life for others, that's what brings us closer to Tara, what pleases Tara.

That's why Lama Atisha was able to offer extensive benefit to the teachings of the Buddha and sentient beings, unbelievable benefit to sentient beings. In Tibet, when there was degeneration, there were a lot of misconceptions about tantra and about Dharma. People assumed you were unable to put sutra and tantra together; they regarded them like as hot and cold, two separate things. Because of the degeneration there were a lot of misunderstandings happening in Tibet, so Lama Atisha was invited to Tibet by Trison Genzen(?)⁸ from Nalanda, the great monastic university in India. I think there were three hundred great scholars there, all those highly attained beings, like Shantideva and so forth, and Lama Atisha was the crown of them.

So, he was invited to Tibet, and then he wrote *The Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment*. From that came the lam-rim, which integrated the entire meaning of the 84,000 teachings the Buddha taught, set up in the gradual path of the lower capable being, the middle capable being and higher capable being, in these three stages. All the Buddha's teachings were integrated into stages of the path to enlightenment by Lama Atisha as *The Lamp for the Path to*

⁸ I'm not sure where this name comes from. It might be a mishearing in the transcription. Traditionally, it is said that the Dharma king Yeshe Ö invited Atisha after he heard about him from the two translators, Rinchen Zangpa and Legshe.

Enlightenment, and the title “lam-rim” came from that. After that, many commentaries happened, the most essential one being by Lama Tsongkhapa.

Lama Atisha was of unbelievable benefit, teaching the sentient beings in India and Tibet. So many beings became enlightened by practicing *The Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment*, the lam-rim. So many beings became bodhisattvas and then enlightened. Since Lama Atisha wrote this, showing how to go to enlightenment, it has become so easy to practice Dharma.

Lama Atisha was able to offer extensive benefit to sentient beings and to the teachings of Buddha, such unbelievable, unbelievable benefit, due to Tara. Lama Atisha always prayed to Tara and relied on Tara, whatever activity he did.

So, it’s the same for us; the same as Lama Atisha. We can have attainments on the path and offer extensive benefits by praying to Tara. It’s the experience of many people that by praying to Tara they received help. This has been the experience of many common people, not only highly attained beings.

Therefore, now we will take the *jenang*.

The preparation was done, generating oneself into deity and then the front generation.

[Rinpoche gives the *jenang*]

Lecture 14

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE FPMT BY VEN ROGER

[This is a talk by Ven. Roger Kunsang on the beginnings of FPMT with Lama Yeshe, through to the time when Lama Zopa Rinpoche became Spiritual Head of FPMT.]

So good afternoon. Sorry we’re so far apart. So I’m to give a little introduction to FPMT. You can’t hear? You can’t hear? Can you hear okay at the back?

Okay, if you can’t hear then you’ll just have to come a little closer.

So, FPMT officially began around 1975, when Lama Yeshe, here at Kopan, had the idea for an organization to look after the activities that he was starting.

I arrived in Kopan, I think, end of 1973 or beginning of ’74 to do a meditation course here, six meditation courses, it was, I think, in March or April, 1974.

In those days there was nothing really on the hill, actually. There was very little here at that time and the conditions were very interesting. I think people were given accommodation in different places, and I stayed just down at the bottom of the hill where there was a little stream. It was in a Nepalese person’s loft. They had a lot of straw in the loft, and there were, I don’t know, maybe fifteen or twenty of us in one room. We were on the straw and there

were a lot of little insects and things like that, so we were constantly scratching, itching all day.

Prior to that, Lama Yeshe met Lama Zopa Rinpoche in Buxa, which is a camp that was set up for the Tibetan refugees when they came out of Tibet. Rinpoche's often told the story of what it was like. Before they came it used to be a prison and I think Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi were imprisoned there. The two houses they had were transformed into a place for about 1,500 monks, so it was a bit tight.

Anyway, that was the place Rinpoche went to when he escaped from Tibet. He was in a small monastery in Tibet, a small monastery that belonged to Domo Geshe Rinpoche. People may have heard of Domo Geshe Rinpoche because Lama Govinda wrote this book called *The Way of the White Clouds*, and that was about Domo Geshe Rinpoche.

So Rinpoche took *getsul* ordination, his novice ordination, in his monastery in Tibet. That's where he was when the Chinese came and then Rinpoche escaped with some other monks into India and then into Buxa.

Rinpoche actually wasn't going to Buxa. In his mind he was going to Domo Geshe Rinpoche's place in Darjeeling, but I think on the border there was one policeman who somehow insisted or influenced Rinpoche to go to Sera Monastery—I shouldn't say that—where the other monks were, and the monks from Sera Je were going to Buxa.

Rinpoche thinks that maybe he was somebody interesting because he changed his life, because then Rinpoche spent about eight years in Buxa before he left with Lama Yeshe. And then eventually Rinpoche and Lama Yeshe founded this place, on the top of the hill, here.

Before it belonged to the king's astrologer. He had a small house here, just a very small house. Gradually over time, this place has changed a lot.

But the real beginnings of FPMT as a sort of global organization, actually started to happen from the very beginning. The courses that Rinpoche were teaching, Lama Yeshe used to always come at the end. But those courses would happen. A lot of Westerners in those days mostly, maybe like hippies or something, would end up in Nepal, and they would end up coming from Kathmandu up onto the mountain here, and take this course. There were some very interesting characters in those days, and they didn't always agree with what Rinpoche had to say, so there was often some lively debate from lawyers and doctors about this and that.

What would happen is that the course would have a huge effect on people's lives. For me it had a huge effect when I arrived. I was sort of like at the end of the road in the sense that life didn't have any meaning or didn't seem to have any purpose at all, and I spent a long time traveling, years, actually, several years, from here to there, all over the place trying to figure out what was worthwhile to do.

And I'd sort of come to the end of my path. So, I hitchhiked from Europe through the Middle East, and I ended up in Rishikesh, and then I went up into the mountains to live with some of the Hindu yogis, because somebody advised me to study with Hindu yogis. I

spent a little time up there with them, and particularly with one Hindu yogi whose name was Tatwala Baba.

He'd been in his cave for about twenty-three years and never came out, and he was quite large, very large. Before he went in, he was in the Indian army, or the British Indian army, he was a colonel. When he was about twenty-three, he renounced his life and had lived in this cave ever since and never came out. He was very large, completely naked, and had this long, thick, matted hair that went down to the ground and just along the ground. He'd drag it behind him.

So, there were a lot of interesting gentlemen I met up there, and eventually one or two of them advised me that maybe Buddhist meditation was better. So I went down the mountains and then, seeing a poster advertising two lamas in Kathmandu giving a one-month meditation course, I went there.

By that time, I was really probably like many people who come to the course, I just didn't know what was the purpose of life, what was meaningful, what was I supposed to do. I didn't have any idea. Nothing made sense, really. Everything people were doing didn't seem to really have any value to it, or didn't really make me happy. I'd already made a commitment that if something didn't make me happy, then why should I do it, right? So everything fell apart.

Anyway, so I ended up at the course, and the course was quite strict in those days. Lama Zopa Rinpoche led everything from five or five-thirty in the morning up to ten, eleven o'clock at night, and he was there all the time. And he talked a lot about suffering and a lot about the self-cherishing mind and eight worldly dharmas, and I was having an extremely difficult time trying to handle all that.

But at the same time, it made sense, you know. But it was also very difficult to handle, and I wanted to leave the hill. Probably every day I had the thought to leave the hill. But I couldn't leave the hill because there was this lama sitting on this throne in front of me and what he was saying made an awful lot of sense, for the first time in my life.

It not only made a lot of sense, but it was the *only* thing that made sense, and if I walked down the hill, there was nothing to do, nowhere to go. Although my mind kept thinking about cake and everything else—there was all sorts of excuses to go down the hill—but in fact, I knew that if I left this course, that would be the end of my only chance to try and do something with what Rinpoche was saying. So it made an awful lot of sense.

I think that happens for a lot of people, and it's been going on for like forty years. People come to this hill, they hear Dharma, they hear the lam-rim for the first time, and your life, *our* lives, completely change. What we were doing before and what we do after we leave the hill are completely different. You know, right?

Maybe not for everybody but I think a lot of people, it makes a huge difference. After one month, things start to make sense, you start to see what you can do to be really happy, to help others, to make a difference. That's been going on for a long time now, up here, and so

thousands of young people and old people have come through Kopan and left quite different.

When they went back to their countries, there was probably nothing there for them, there was nobody else like them. They were alone. So, what people started to do, some of the first people in Australia, they started to think, “We need to do something, we need to invite the Lamas here, because we can’t always go to Nepal and get teachings.”

So they invited Lama Yeshe and Lama Zopa Rinpoche to Australia. I think actually before they went to Australia, they had a visit to New York. They flew from Kathmandu to New York, and Rinpoche always comments what a difference it was from living in Kathmandu, and then suddenly arriving in New York City, quite a difference.

Anyway, students started to go back to their countries, and they wanted to invite Rinpoche and Lama back there to teach, so that started to happen. Then, the next thing that started to happen was that Lama Yeshe and Rinpoche just couldn’t keep up with the requests to different countries and different places, and eventually, people starting to do something with their friends in their lounge rooms. Meetings started, and more people started to come. They needed more room, so they’d rent a house, and then they’d think about even buying a house. And then they needed a teacher in residence, so Lama Yeshe would work out some arrangement with one of the geshees, and ask him or request him to go to this place and that place.

So, centers started to spring up all over the world with no particular plan to do so. It just naturally, organically, started to happen because students would go back to their homes and want to share what they had found in Nepal, and they needed the support and they wanted to continue studying. Eventually, centers just started to spring up everywhere, just sort of nicely, naturally, without any plan, without any organization.

Then, around 1975, then Lama thought that we needed some kind of organization to somehow try to manage all this. Lama came up with the name: Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition, and everybody, all the Westerners in the room, said it’s too long. [Group laughs]

Lama Yeshe said it wasn’t too long. And so there was a debate and then Lama made it very clear at the end, that, that’s who we are. We’re the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition. Soon the Westerners got FPMT, so there was some compromise.

Anyway, where FPMT is today, there is so much going on in thirty-five countries in the world. There is so much activity. It’s quite amazing. And to think, forty years ago, if you met Rinpoche and Lama Yeshe, who didn’t have a penny, literally didn’t have a penny, and if they had told us, we want this and we want that, and we want a hundred and sixty centers, we want this kind of project—I think, if in 1972 or 1973 we had heard that, we would have thought it impossible.

But, now, if you look around the world, there is so much activity, so much going on, because of these two Lamas. And all of it, all of it, is all activity to benefit others. In some way, it’s to do with teaching Dharma, doing retreats, living as monks and nuns, doing different kinds of

social work, hospices, schools for children. We even do non-religious activities, an idea of Lama Yeshe that he originally called Universal Education. Now we call it Essential Education, but that's where we have taken it, from the idea that Lama Yeshe had to what it's evolved to today, through Rinpoche.

Buddhism explains reality, explains how to be a good, kind, honest, compassionate person. Lama Yeshe thought, you can do that without talking religion, without using the Buddhist terms. Because the understanding of the mind in Buddhism is extremely deep, so it is possible to just use non-religious terms, talking about the reality of a human being, and how that human being can be a better, more compassionate, kinder person. Lama had this idea and slowly it has developed up to today where there's a lot of activity around the world that's focused on balancing education.

Normal education that we get in the world, that more or less just helps us earn some money, right. But it doesn't do too much to developing a human being who is kind and compassionate, having wisdom, patience, tolerance, who is forgiving and able to rejoice in the good things that other people do. A human being needs those kind of basic, good human qualities, regardless of whether you're religious or non-religious.

That was the birth of what we now call Essential Education that we are trying to get into schools, and in different ways into mainstream society.

Lama Yeshe said it's not just for young kids, it's not just for old ones, it's for human beings, from birth to death, where you can explain or help people to have a better understanding of themselves and be better human beings, without talking religion.

So, there is a lot of activity around the world, all just there, just trying to help people in many different ways. Also, Rinpoche has many projects amongst the monastic community, the Tibetan monastic community, particularly in South India.

When Lama Ösel first entered Sera Je Monastery, Rinpoche wanted to do something that was quite practical to help the monastery. The abbot at that time was Khen Rinpoche Losang Tsering, and he thought that maybe the most practical thing for the monks—at that time there were 1,300 monks—was for Rinpoche to establish a food fund where the monks didn't have to pay for their food. Rinpoche accepted that very soon, from that time, 1990 I think it was, 1990 or 1991, he would offer the food to the monastery.

Now there are more than 2,600 monks, and for the past fifteen or sixteen years, Rinpoche's been offering food. At the beginning it was just lunch, but now it's breakfast, lunch and dinner, to every monk every day. He has that commitment, so that's more or less, close to 3,000 monks that he's offering food to. Rinpoche's main point is that he's extremely happy to do it, he really enjoys doing it because it's supporting something very, very special. The education the monks get in those monasteries is really very, very unique. They get to study the entire teachings of the Buddha, and when they're finished, they're able to then offer it to others, to teach others. So, Rinpoche thinks that's an incredible opportunity.

Another thing that Rinpoche does is, at the request of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, he started a fund we call the Lama Tsongkhapa Teachers' Fund, where we offer small—well,

not a salary—but like an allowance to all the main teachers in Sera, Ganden, Drepung, Tashi Lhunpo, Gyuto, Gyume, and I think now, Rato Monastery, so all the main teachers get a salary, each month, from this fund that Rinpoche started and continues with.

So there are quite a few things that Rinpoche does that helps support the monastic community, to preserve the teachings of Lama Tsongkhapa.

Maybe I'll just tell one story of Lama Yeshe.

In the mid-seventies, I think, I traveled with Lama Yeshe once. Both Lamas would tour in the West for six months of the year and the other six months of the year they were mainly in Kopan, sometimes Dharamsala. So one time I traveled with Rinpoche and Lama Yeshe to Tushita, Dharamsala, the center we have in Northern India.

And that time Lama Yeshe was having a lot of health problems—he would often have difficulties with his heart—and we had taken the train from Delhi to Pathankot and were taking a taxi up from Pathankot, Dharamsala. Halfway up, we had to stop the car because Lama Yeshe was vomiting a lot of blood and it was quite difficult. We had to wait for a while, and then Lama Yeshe got back in the car, and he didn't look very healthy at all.

Finally we arrived in Dharamsala, at Tushita, and then Lama Yeshe went to have a rest in the afternoon. My job was sort of like his attendant, so I became very, very serious because of what I'd just seen. There was no way I was going to let anybody in to see Lama Yeshe while he was resting. I sort of stood guard outside the door, and nobody was going to budge me.

Anyway, up the hill came a whole family of Tibetan people, and relatives. I think there must have been nearly twenty people, and they wanted to see Lama Yeshe.

My attitude was, “No! No way!” I was very clear, and they were very persistent but I was very clear. So after a little bit of discussion, they started to walk back down the hill. And then the door opened, and there was Lama Yeshe standing there, not looking very well, and he said, “What's going on?”

I was quite confident that I could say what happened, and feel I did the right thing. So I slowly started to explain to Lama Yeshe what had happened, that I turned these people away. He cried, “Go and get them!” I sort of hesitated, and Lama was really wrathful. He said, “My life is about benefiting sentient beings. I've got nothing else to live for, I just live to benefit sentient beings. Go and get those people.”

So, I had to go down the hill and bring them back up. And Lama Yeshe really didn't look very well. He'd lost a lot of blood, but he insisted that they come back, and that he would see them, spend a little time with them. So, I blew it! But that's sort of how Lama Yeshe was.

There was another time when the first of the Western Sangha got ordained and we lived where you were doing the beginning part of the retreat. There was a little house there before that. So there were about twenty-five, thirty Western Sangha living there, and we had our schedule set up by Lama Yeshe. It was quite a good schedule, but there was a bit of a problem because the idea was that we do puja from five in the morning, and then we'd go

out about eleven o'clock at night. It was very structured, very good, but some of the Western Sangha were having some difficulty because we also had to cook for ourselves, and then we had to serve ourselves. So all the meals were done in puja, and we'd take turns of serving each other. So some of the Sangha were sort of grumbling about having to do all the work.

And then we had a *ge-kyö*, a disciplinarian, an American monk who didn't last very long. I shouldn't say that. [Rinpoche laughs] He's in Chicago, on the stock market. [Group laughs] I don't know where he is now but anyway he went up and explained to Lama Yeshe what was happening, that some of the Sangha were grumbling, or not happy with having to serve the other Sangha.

And then Lama Yeshe sort of grabbed hold of his robes and he actually started to cry. He said, "The meaning of these robes is to serve sentient beings. The real meaning of the robes is to serve others, to serve sentient beings. And if you can't serve your brother or your sister," he said, "It's very sad, very sad." Lama Yeshe was like that.

In those days Lama Zopa Rinpoche was quite different, because Lama Zopa Rinpoche was Lama Yeshe's student, and so whenever you'd seen them together, Rinpoche was like the perfect example of a perfect student, and not just any student, he was like in the category of a special student.

I think often His Holiness the Dalai Lama explains it like this because the whole thing with guru devotion sometimes gets a little bit complicated, and maybe especially for Westerners. You hear stories of Marpa and Milarepa, and Tilopa and Naropa, and some of the things they do, as soon as something is said by the guru, there is absolutely no doubt, you just do it, whether it's jump off a cliff, whatever, you just do it.

I guess because His Holiness was scared that some Westerners would be jumping off cliffs or something, I think His Holiness would make the point that that happens just in a very special guru-disciple relationship, and the guru is special, and the disciple is special. Probably many of you, we take a different approach.

Anyway, Rinpoche was like that, where whatever the guru said, instantly, it would happen, he would just do it.

I remember one time Rinpoche and Lama went to see His Holiness. In those days it was relatively easy. Rinpoche and Lama were walking into His Holiness's room, and they were just about near the door when His Holiness came in view. He said, "Sit," so both of them just sat. As soon as His Holiness said that, they sat exactly right there, right on the edge of the doorway, not quite in the room, they just sat down there, and that was it. And His Holiness laughed and told them to come in.

So, Rinpoche was like that with Lama Yeshe; he was just a perfect example of a student, of a disciple.

Then, around 1984 Lama Yeshe passed away. At that time there were about thirty-five centers around the world. Lama passed away and of course, Rinpoche was supposed to be the person to take over the organization, but Rinpoche went to a number of his gurus and

kept offering the organization to them. Anyway after that, Rinpoche talked to His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and His Holiness said that Rinpoche should keep the organization. [Rinpoche laughs] So, Rinpoche started his work as the head of the organization. That time there were thirty-five centers, and then a lot of traveling, a lot of teaching, but now there was only one Lama.

That time I was with Rinpoche, so for twelve, maybe fifteen years, Rinpoche was on the road 365 days a year, going from one center to another, talking to students. I think this was partly because when Lama Yeshe passed away a lot of students, especially Westerners, had felt a really big loss, and I think Rinpoche really wanted to make sure that people could see that everything would continue, and everything would be okay.

I think for the next twelve years, fourteen years, something like that, he didn't stop, he just simply didn't stop. He just went from one center to another. And in those days, Rinpoche didn't have diabetes or blood pressure, so, two weeks with Rinpoche and I think everybody was exhausted, and it was probably good that Rinpoche moved to another center.

And, anyway, it was quite incredible. I mean, for many days Rinpoche wouldn't sleep, he would just go non-stop, non-stop.

And I remember, one time after ten, twelve, fifteen years on the road, I thought it was interesting because I had still not heard Rinpoche say, "Well let's take a break, let's have the day off." I've not even heard Rinpoche ask for a cup of tea. I always bring the tea, but he wouldn't even ask for a cup of tea, he wouldn't even just say, "Okay, let's take an hour and drink the tea quietly, alone." It sounds strange, doesn't it? [Rinpoche laughs]

I don't think Rinpoche ever had the slightest thought for himself, ever. That's the way it appeared to me. And even though there have been a lot of obstacles, a lot of difficulties, et cetera, I've never seen a minute of anger, never seen him getting frustrated, never getting impatient, never saying anything unkind. It's amazing. I mean, you get into some really intense situations, and if you don't sleep for days you get very irritable. I do, and I was always having to deal with falling asleep at the dinner table. I'd fall asleep standing up.

One time, it was a long time ago, I went to the bank in Nepal. Because Rinpoche kept me on this sort of strict daily schedule, when I went to the bank—a Nepal bank or something—and I went up to the counter to talk to the teller, to do my thing, I fell asleep! [Group laughs] I just sort of fell asleep on top of the table there at the teller's counter. The Nepalese are very easy-going, so they just went around me and everybody just continued the work while this monk was sleeping on the teller's desk. I don't know how long it was, but anyway, after a while I woke up, and then I finished doing the work, and I started moving because that's the best way to stay awake.

At that time in Kathmandu we had a little workshop where we did things to help support the monastery, and so I sat down there, to have lunch. Lunch was quite good, so I picked up the food, like that, and then went to eat it, and then I'd go again. I never thought I'd ever be in a situation where I couldn't get the food on a spoon. I was attached to food, but I couldn't get it into my mouth because I kept falling asleep. Then I thought about the big cup of tea they have, so I got the tea and went to drink it, and then went this way [Roger

demonstrates—seems like he fell over to the side or something.] Then I woke up, for a little while, anyway. [Group laughs]

It was very, very difficult to keep up with Rinpoche, because none of this would be an issue. Sometimes I would leave Rinpoche after the day had finished, which might be like four o'clock in the morning, and I was just completely exhausted, but then Rinpoche would just be sitting bolt upright, meditating.

There was one time in Europe when we were flying into Spain, and it was only a short trip, I think, like an hour and a half. The hostess had given everybody their food. I was sitting there beside Rinpoche—he had his food and I had my food—and I was a little anxious to get the food because it was only an hour and a half, and you have to land, right, so I was timing it wondering what the very last minute I could start eating it was, so I could finish before we landed. Rinpoche was doing the offering prayer, the food prayer, and was going on for a long time, and I thought, well it's gone on long enough, if I don't start eating I'm not going to get my lunch.

So, I started eating lunch, and then the hostess came and took my plate and she wanted to take Rinpoche's plate away, but I asked her to please wait a little bit longer. She came back again, I said, no, please wait, please wait. And then finally we were starting to coming into land and she said, "I'm sorry, I have to take the food," and she took Rinpoche's food away. Rinpoche hadn't touched it; he was still offering the food. I sort of went to Rinpoche and apologized, saying I couldn't help it, and Rinpoche said, "Oh, no, I got the main benefit, I offered the food." He said, "It's okay, I offered the food," that was the main benefit. So it's like that. He's not an easy person to move around with. [Rinpoche laughs]

Anyway, so, they were just a couple of stories.

So now, FPMT exists in something like thirty-five countries around the world doing a range of activities, and there is a lot going on, and a lot does happen because so many people help. Rinpoche always accepts help, so that's how we exist today. We can do what we're doing because so many people help, so many people offer service in different ways. People help in all sorts of ways; they help with money, they help with their energy, their expertise, in every different way. The organization exists because so many people work very hard and make incredible sacrifices.

A lot of centers started because of people with their own jobs, who had their families. Still, after going to work, they'd go home and look after their family, and then they'd go to the center. And sometimes you'd find people working there until two o'clock in the morning, three o'clock in the morning, doing the accounts or this or that, people making an incredible effort to support the Dharma, to help others make a connection with the Dharma.

If you look at the history of all the centers around the world, they were started because we didn't have much karma with money, but people just worked very hard. So many people made such an effort to establish the centers, and then once they were established, then, in different ways helped them grow and develop.

So that's one thing that Lama Yeshe would always make clear. He didn't do this. This didn't happen just because of Lama Yeshe or just because of Lama Zopa Rinpoche. It happened because thousands of students helped. So many people helped in so many different ways.

And for us to continue, we need so many people helping in so many different ways.

If you are interested in helping—because we do need help—there are many things that you could do, or you can offer, and if you are interested in some way to help, then you could see me later, or you could go to our website, FPMT.org and make yourself known.

Also, if you go to that website you'll see a lot of things on the website that will help you understand what we offer people all around the world, like the education programs we have, that are happening in many different centers in many different countries.

We have education programs like *Buddhism in a Nutshell*, or *Buddhism 101* that are just basic introductions to Buddhism. And then we have an education program called *Discovering Buddhism*. Originally we put that together for Mongolia because of the situation in Mongolia, which was—it's a bit of a long story to tell now, but—to help revive Tibetan Buddhism in Mongolia, especially amongst young people. So that program is on DVD also, and then you have people like Richard Gere and Keanu Reeves, sort of movie stars, introducing different subjects, just to make it interesting.

And then we have *Foundation of Buddhist Thought*, then we have two programs, *Basic Program* and *Master's Program* where Buddhist philosophy is taught. These are available in centers we have around the world, so when you leave here, I'm almost sure whichever country you go to, there will be an FPMT center with a resident teacher that you could visit and continue your studies, and practice.

And also, now we have programs that are going on, online, so that you can actually do some of these programs online. You can do them from home.

Are there any questions?

I think Rinpoche is coming down soon to sign books. Yes?

Student: You had talked a little about the Maitreya Project [rest of his question inaudible]

Ven. Roger: One of Rinpoche's projects, which is probably the biggest, is the Maitreya Project, which is a statue. It's actually two statues now. It was Lama Yeshe's wish. I think it was in a will that Lama Yeshe left that he wanted a very large statue of Maitreya built, which is not unusual in monasteries in Tibet. There's often a large statue of Maitreya. So Lama Yeshe wanted a large statue of Maitreya built, and that was one of the things that Rinpoche took up. Because it was Lama Yeshe's wish, Rinpoche wanted to complete that.

I think Lama Yeshe's idea was that the statue would be about the same height as Boudhanath stupa which is a 170 feet. But over time, the statue grew to 500 feet. Rinpoche thought it would be more inspiring to have the largest statue in the world, and many other benefits.

So that became quite an interesting project. It's been going on for a long time and there have been a lot of difficulties and obstacles in trying to achieve that statue, I mean unbelievable obstacles and difficulties. Sometimes I think, when I look at some of the people who are involved in that project and what they've gone through, to try and make it happen, in some ways, Milarepa didn't have such a difficult time. It's hard to imagine, but there are a lot of incredible obstacles.

There's a long history to it but as of now, we have moved. It was supposed to be in Bodhgaya and now it's in Kushinagar where the Buddha passed away.

It was the UP government that actually pushed quite a bit for Maitreya Project to come to UP, and they offered this land, 750 acres in Kushinagar, for the statue. It was the government's job to relocate the farmers from the land so the land could be used in that way, and that became quite a complicated job, but, and it still is. The government said they would do that in three to six months, now it's four years, and still hasn't happened, and there have been a lot of complications, but now it seems to be quite close to happening in the sense that the land will be passed over to Maitreya.

But, in the meantime we had land in Bodhgaya, which was originally for the Maitreya Project but, because we moved, we didn't use it. Rinpoche now wants to build a 150-foot Maitreya statue there on that land, and so that statue is actually starting in 2009.

Student: That's happening in Bodhgaya?

Ven. Roger: That's happening in Bodhgaya, yeah. So there are two statues now.

Are there any other questions?

So maybe we'll just take a break. I'll just go up and see. I think Rinpoche will come down in a few minutes. Thank you very much.

[Students applaud]

Lecture 15

[Rinpoche's entire talk is in Tibetan]

Lecture 16

RINPOCHE SIGNS HIS BOOK

[During the short book signing, the recording microphone was switched off, so the tape has only picked up the public microphone, therefore the quality is very poor and transcription errors and missed words are certain.]

And then sometimes maybe it's possible, I'm just a bridge, I'm just the container, the mug, I'm just the vessel, like train, like a truck.

As I've been saying this past week about a buddha's actions—this is what I think, but I'm not saying that doesn't happen—as I mentioned before, like a train, like a truck, like a donkey, like a rickshaw, these things carry people, but I think it depends on the karma of the person, and then certain things are done, they make it possible. There's a possibility.

So, anyway, what this book contains is the very, very gross, very gross. To achieve happiness for yourself, don't forget, the very essence, the very essential meaning, how to get there, it is very, very essential to transform the mind from the selfish mind into the good heart, the pure heart, cherishing others. That's very important, very essential; that's the main key point.

You practice, you apply it to yourself, and then you experience the Dharma, transforming suffering into happiness, using the problems in the path to enlightenment. This is what it means deeper, transforming suffering into happiness, this is what it means really. The deep meaning is that you transform your problems, you use your problems to transform your mind, you use your problems as the path to achieve happiness for numberless sentient beings, and that is not just temporary happiness but ultimate happiness, enlightenment. You liberate them from oceans of samsaric suffering and bring them to full enlightenment. The deeper meaning of transforming suffering is that.

What is contained is that very deep meaning, very vast, like limitless sky, like oceans, very deep meaning.

If you don't practice thought transformation, you can't do the practice, right view or conventional bodhicitta and ultimate bodhicitta. The main key technique is transforming suffering into happiness.

The bodhicitta motivation is cherishing others, letting go of the I. The minute you cherish the I, your mind becomes problems. You have problems, your mind has problems in life. The minute when you cherish others, all the problems are gone. The minute you cherish others, the problems stop.

So, there are skies of happiness, up to enlightenment, and then you cause happiness to numberless sentient beings and bring them to enlightenment.

This way is giving you real holidays, real holidays. When you live your life cherishing yourself, that's giving trouble to yourself, problems to yourself, cherishing yourself. Living the life cherishing others, there's release, it releases all the tension, like you're getting out of prison.

Real happiness comes when you cherish others. There's real happiness, inner peace and happiness. You not only achieve satisfaction, but you get fulfillment, real happiness.

Otherwise, when you go to Tahiti or you go to Goa, go to Burma, Thailand, to a beach, you spend six thousand dollars for lunch, but in your heart there's no happiness, there's no inner happiness, there's no satisfaction, because of the self-cherishing thought. The thought of attachment arises, and that means you're tortured by the self-cherishing thought. If attachment arises, you constantly are tortured by the selfish mind, the self-cherishing thought, and by ignorance, the concept of permanence. It's a trap. Your life is trapped in that, like a mouse trapped in an iron cage. You are trapped in the iron cage of ignorance, like Lama Tsongkhapa mentioned [in *The Three Principal Aspects of the Path*],

Swept away by the current of the four powerful rivers,
Tied by the tight bonds of karma, so hard to undo,
Caught in the iron net of self-grasping,
Completely enveloped by the total darkness of ignorance,

So, the next evil thought forces you into the iron cage of ignorance, believing in true existence, which is totally a hallucination.

The next thing, you should think that in ignorance there is no light, there are not even stars or a moon. Ignorance is like a mountain [blocking the light] causing sentient beings to suffer endlessly. Thinking like that, you can develop compassion.

There should be more books coming in the future.

So that's it.

Lecture 17

[Oral transmission in Tibetan, untranscribed]

Lecture 18

THE MERITS OF DOING ANY PRACTICE WITH REFUGE

We always begin the practice by reciting refuge and bodhicitta, this prayer. If we begin the practice with refuge, the merits increase a hundred times. It is mentioned in the sutra that the merits we collect by beginning the practice with refuge, then it increases a hundred times. Kyabje Kirti Tsenshab Rinpoche also mentioned it increases the merit a hundred times. But

it is also mentioned in *Kabson Sonam Su* [sounds like, unable to determine] that if the benefits of taking refuge materialized, even the three thousand galaxies would not be able to contain them.

[A power cut happens] I think it's time to shine the light by the mind, not by the bulb!
[Rinpoche laughs]

If the merits of taking refuge materialized, then even the three thousand galaxies would become too small a container.

This is not just one entire universe, but three thousand. I don't know how it's counted in the West, but I count one universe like this. Just this earth, I don't know if it's a universe, I think it is one small part. There are four human continents, then eight small ones, then Mt. Meru, the sun and the moon, so that one whole collection is one universe. This is what I think.

I don't know how a universe is seen in the West. Kathmandu, Nepal is part of the universe, it's part of the universe, but I'm not sure that you call that a universe. It's like the part of the table is not table. The small pieces of the tables [points to the table's parts] are parts of the table, but they are not the table. So, there are one, two, three, four thousand, then, like that in thousands, that makes a great thousand of three thousand galaxies.

Anyway, It might be that. If the benefits of taking refuge materialized, then even these three thousand galaxies will become a small container. [*Student*: Too small.] *Rinpoche*: Will be too small, *too* small. [Rinpoche laughs]

It's mentioned like that. So anyway, it makes a big difference, it makes a big difference whether we're doing a practice without refuge or with refuge. Of course, then it becomes Buddhadharma. If it's done with refuge then it becomes Buddhadharma.

For example, there are Christians or people of other religions who live in morality, abstaining from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct and so forth, who are living in the morality. They live in morality, not exactly the same as living in all the ten virtues, not exactly the same, but similar. Not everything is exactly the same as the Buddhist [idea of holding the ten virtues and abstaining from] the ten nonvirtues.

Particularly, the last one, it can be other, it doesn't pervade. For example, the Christian scriptures say that pigs and chickens and things are given by God for the people to eat.

LIFE IN BUXA

I remember a long time ago, in Buxa, India, the concentration camp that became a monastery where Tibetan monks and nuns stayed when we fled Tibet. Because I had TB, I used to go a few miles from the monastery to a missionary from Finland, on a high mountain. I used to go there for injections, myself and another monk. I was supposed to study Dharma texts, I was supposed to study Dharma texts. That's an unbelievable place, because at that time there were the monks who have become the present educators in the Sera, Ganden and Drepung Monasteries. They are now very elder, senior monks, who are

educating the many young ones. Among their disciples now there are many learned ones already who have already become qualified to teach. Of these top elderly monks who are in the monasteries now, there are a few from Buxa where I lived eight years. They have become the top teachers now, and they have many disciples who are learned and are able to educate the young ones.

So what I say, I forgot. [*Ven. Roger: Injection, Rinpoche.*] *Rinpoche: Injection, that's right. No, they didn't come for injection. I'm joking.*

I mean that was an unbelievable place to study Dharma. The place itself was most terrible, unbelievably hot. There were so many monks. After you washed you again got unbelievably hot, unbelievably hot. Then there were the mosquitoes and bugs, especially the bedbugs living in your bed. The monks went into the forest and cut the bamboo, crushing it and making a bed with it. They would make four legs, then put some material on top. The bedbugs lived in the bed. You had a mosquito net, and the corners were the safest place for the bedbugs. They stayed inside. Then, when the light were turned off, they would run down. [*Rinpoche laughs; group laughs*] During the summertime, when you went out, to go to the toilet, then you get leeches, leeches, leeches. Whenever you went out for pipi, you get leeches.

There were even sometimes snakes living between the ceiling and the wall, where there was some space. Snakes lived there and they would sometimes fall down on the monks' beds, like this. There was a ditch outside the door, and when you opened the door sometimes a snake came into the house.

So, the place was a very unhealthy place. On Sundays or during the holidays, there was some green flat area somewhere outside, where the monks would sit down and rest, but even this was small.

THE LARGE MONASTERIES EMPHASIZE BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY

But the monks there who escaped from Tibet did unbelievable study there, unbelievable study, day and night. They memorized so many hundreds of thousands of texts, pages of texts, and they took classes and debated, even after midnight. It was unbelievable, unbelievable.

And then also, the extra thing they had to learn was the Tibetan writing. In the monastery, you weren't allowed to learn Tibetan writing. It's very interesting because if you start to learn writing or grammar, Tibetan grammar, it's not another language, it's just Tibetan letters, Tibetan grammar. If you start to learn, then it is recognized you are getting involved in worldly activities, in worldly manner. They recognize it like that. Even if you take an interest in arranging flowers in the house, you're regarded as taking an interest in worldly activities.

At these monasteries, the main focus is to learn extensive philosophy to offer. The main purpose is to have realizations, to integrate into the lam-rim. By learning extensive philosophy and integrating it into the lam-rim, they put it into practice and actualize the realizations. That's what is supposed to happen, that's what many monks do. It's very, very

interesting. Even the texts that you keep on your bed, you're supposed to not have sadhanas or things like that, only philosophical texts to study. So in these monasteries, main emphasis is on extensive learning, on Buddhist philosophy. Of course, individually, monks learn and practice tantra, but officially it's not that. Individually, of course, you can do that, you develop the path, actualize the path, but not officially.

Officially, after you complete all that, *then* you become a geshe, and then you enter the tantric college. There are the upper and lower tantric colleges and the idea is to study the extensive meaning of tantric texts. You memorize specific tantric texts, you learn those extensive meanings, the quick tantric path to enlightenment, as well as all the ritual art, the mandalas and so forth. There are so many things to learn, so many different practices, like chanting and the meaning, all that. Then after you become fully qualified, you become the lama or abbot of the college, then afterwards you become the Sharpa Cho-je and Jangse Cho-je. There are two positions, and then after that you become the Ganden Tripa, the regent of Lama Tsongkhapa's lineage. If you have the merit and you have a long enough life, then that's what you reach, if you are qualified and learned—you become the Ganden Tripa, the regent of Lama Tsongkhapa's lineage.

Additionally, you not only learn the extensive major root texts and the commentaries of the Buddhadharma, there are many other things as well. There are five major texts, unbelievable, unbelievable texts. There is not only debate but also all these root texts and commentaries to be memorized. And each year there's an examination you offer to the abbot, which is mentioned in the puja. The abbot gives you a number, how successful you have been in reciting by heart. Many monks, those who have very good intelligence, learn many hundreds of thousands of pages and can recite them by heart. Whatever the abbot asks, you have to recite. He writes down how much you have succeeded, then it's revealed in the puja, with all the monks. Then, maybe there's some sort of offering, I'm not sure, maybe there's something, but I don't remember a hundred percent.

There is not only this extensive Buddhadharma, but there are also subjects like Tibetan writing, learning letters, learning languages, drama, poetry, those things. In some school, the monks also learn English or Hindi or things like that. So, there are many extra things to learn. Lama Yeshe didn't study writing in Tibet but just in India, in Buxa. Lama learned writing from one Drepung Loseling monk.

LIFE IN BUXA (CONT.)

When I came to Buxa none of the monks had no robes, just *chu-bas*, just the Tibetan lay dress, the *chu-ba*. When I went with monks to the puja, there was a lot of sound, woo woo woo, like this, because it was my first time, doing puja with them, woooo. Later in the puja, I don't see nearby me, people sitting around me, reciting prayers, I couldn't them but the majority were reciting prayers and there was a lot of noise. At that time, there were so many monks, and only one monk was wearing robes. So many were wearing *chu-bas*.

When they debated, they debated with *chu-bas*. It has two sleeves, put like this; then they put on the zen and they debated. [Rinpoche laughs] And only one monk, who was the

disciplinary, the person reading the petitions of the monks—what to pray for, who died or who lived—he was wearing robes. He was from Drepung Monastery, a very tall monk.

There was the teacher who Lama studied Tibetan handwriting from. Many monks didn't learn this in Tibet because Tibetans regard it like this, but they received advice from His Holiness, saying they must learn all these things. Then Lama learned poetry and grammar from another monk, another very good geshe from Drepung Gomang.

It was a very harmful place for health. So many monks died, mostly from tuberculosis. There were many sicknesses. At the beginning [they] didn't know how to live because they didn't know how to copy from Indians, to copy how the Indians ate and lived their life. If they had, many of them could have lived longer; it was a very hot place.

They didn't look at how Indians lived. I don't mean life, but the food. If they had copied the way Indians ate, many would have lived longer, but many didn't do that. They did similar to Tibet. I remember because eating meat is very common in Tibet. From early times, that was the way life was lived; that's how it started. In Tibet, I saw them, even monks. In Tibet it's very cold, so they could eat red meat, uncooked, but when they did the same thing in India where it's so hot, they got sick with diarrhea and they were sick for a long time.

The place itself is actually a very intense place, an excellent place to study Dharma, but I didn't do that. [Rinpoche laughs] Sometimes, I just made drawings instead of studying Dharma. I made drawings, like of Christmas-time things or ships, things Christians think are maybe important. I used to give her my drawings, at least I remember one time.

There was a Finland lady, a Christian, who lived on the mountain in this Bhutanese village, teaching Christianity to the Bhutanese people, I mean those local people. She gave me this big piece of meat, a *big* piece of meat, because they killed animals, pigs or whatever it was, so, I remember, [Rinpoche laughs] as a present, she gave me some.

She had a bamboo church, a small church made of bamboo. I went there one Sunday. She had started the Sunday church, so she didn't have time to give me medicine, so I myself went into the bamboo church; I went there to pray. There was one time during the service where you have to turn back to the wall. Everybody was sitting like this, then at one time you had to turn back to the wall for confession, something like that, but maybe I didn't do that. [Rinpoche laughs]

The person who taught had a small box, and you put some money in that. The one time I went there I did that, but I don't remember ever going back again.

Anyway, it doesn't matter.

THE REFUGE VOW NOT TO KILL

I was talking about the benefits of refuge, wasn't I?

What I was saying, in Christianity, particularly, but maybe other religions, there are people who are living in morality, abstaining from killing. The difference in Buddhism is that killing includes any sentient being, the object of the vow is all sentient beings. You make a vow to not harm, to not kill, so it means any type of sentient being, any creature.

But in Christianity, it's not like that. I'm not sure, but I think that the Finland lady said that pigs and chickens are given by God for the people to eat. For her, abstaining from killing is maybe just human beings; it doesn't cover all sentient beings. So, there are some similarities there but also huge differences. Even the first vow, abstaining from killing, has huge differences.

When you go into details, in some part there are great differences. Heresy especially has a totally different meaning.

Anyway, what I was trying to say is, abstaining from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct and so forth, without refuge in the heart of the person, refuge to Buddha, Dharma, Sangha. Here I'm talking about refuge. I mean, Christians have refuge. Is it refuge to three, or refuge to one? I'm not sure. Refuge to one? To God? To one?

Student: Three.

Student: The father, the son, and the holy spirit.

Rinpoche: Father, son ...

Student: Father, son, and the holy spirit.

Student: Holy ghost.

Rinpoche: Holy ghost, I see, yeah. So, you see. That person's practice is not Buddhism, but they still take refuge to, how did you say?

Student: Father, son, and holy spirit.

Rinpoche: Father, son, holy ghost, holy spirit, okay.

I think the person who lives in the vow to not harm others, I would say is practicing Dharma but not necessarily Buddhadharma. It's Dharma, but not necessarily Buddhadharma.

But by having refuge in Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, and then living in morality, abstaining from killing, stealing, whatever, the five lay vows or the eight lay vows, then chanting mantras and prayers—that becomes Buddhadharma. By having refuge in your heart, in the sense of living in morality, Buddhadharma, I think that refers to having refuge in Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.

The other one becomes Dharma but not actually Buddhadharma. You have to understand that.

Then, of course, there is no question about the benefits of refuge, what is explained in the lam-rim, which I went over before giving refuge the other night. You get all those benefits.

DEVELOPING SPECIAL ATTITUDE

Did I mention to you that “I go for refuge to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha” is causal refuge, and “until enlightenment is received” is resultant refuge?

I already mentioned what resultant refuge is. Our mind becomes Dharma and then we become absolute Sangha when we actualize the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness. When we achieve that, we become the Sangha. There are two types of Sangha: conventional Sangha and ultimate Sangha, so we become the ultimate Sangha by having actualized the refuge, Dharma, the true path, in our heart.

Then, by developing the true path, we cease the defilements, not only the gross defilements but even subtle defilements, and with bodhicitta we complete the Mahayana path. There are two aspects of the path: the method side and the wisdom side. By completing them we achieve a buddha’s holy body and a buddha’s holy mind, the rupakaya and dharmakaya. At that time, when we become a buddha, we have completed, actualized the resultant refuge.

Why do we do that? Because the purpose of life is to free sentient beings. By realizing how sentient beings are most kind, most precious, most kind to us, and how much they are suffering, when we understand this Dharma, this subject—realizing how sentient beings are the most kind, the most precious ones to us and how unbelievably much they are suffering—when we discover this, of course, naturally, *naturally* we’ll dedicate our life to free sentient beings. We want to benefit others.

What benefit? Because we realize how much they are suffering. Constantly they are tormented by the suffering of suffering, the suffering of change—temporary samsaric pleasures—and pervasive compounding suffering. Putting all the sufferings together, we can see that they are constantly tormented by suffering, being under the control of karma and delusion.

When we realize how they are so precious, so kind, and how much they are suffering, of course, naturally, naturally, without thinking, we want to take the responsibility on ourselves to free them from all the suffering and causes and bring them to enlightenment. This is what they need, this is what they need, otherwise they constantly suffer. So naturally, of course, naturally we decide this. Even though the sentient beings don’t ask us to do that, but the more we realize this, the more we naturally want to do it.

For example, because we generated great compassion and loving kindness towards sentient beings, we have the compassion to free them from suffering and its causes, to do that by ourselves, and also to cause them happiness. That’s compassion. Then, great compassion is wishing sentient beings to have happiness, but to cause that by ourselves. Not only that, it doesn’t just mean temporary happiness but ultimate happiness, liberation from samsara, full enlightenment. That’s the main thing, that’s what to cause.

They've had temporary happiness numberless times; they've had all the samsaric pleasures numberless times. There's nothing left that's new.

So we decide, by ourselves, to do all that, to free them from the suffering and its causes and to bring them to enlightenment by ourselves, alone, *alone*. This comes naturally; it's a kind of natural process. That's the thought, the special attitude.

To succeed at that, of course we, yourself, need to achieve enlightenment, through bodhicitta. So, basically everything becomes the reason for the next realization.

Then if we haven't ceased the disturbing thought obscurations before, by following the Mahayana path we remove both defilements, and we achieve enlightenment. Then we liberate numberless sentient beings from the oceans of samsaric sufferings and bring them to enlightenment.

WHY DO WE HAVE TO HEAR ABOUT SUFFERING?

Of course, at the beginning we haven't heard any of this before, it's first time, so we have difficulties when we hear about the suffering of samsara. Now we can look back. We have gone through [all the lam-rim subjects] to bodhicitta, and since we have reached bodhicitta, now we can look back on the subjects, knowing about sufferings of the lower realms and so forth. Before, maybe we'd think that knowing about human beings' problems was quite okay, but perhaps the difficulty was with the rest. "Why do I have to know about the sufferings of the hells? Why do I have to know about the sufferings of the hungry ghosts or the animals?" Maybe, because we are a human being, we think hearing about the suffering of human beings is suitable. But then, because it's the first time to hear it, it has very deep reasons, and we cannot see the reasons, so it becomes a problem to the mind. We regard it as a problem, we label it a problem. We hear about the sufferings of those other realms and it becomes a problem for us.

The conclusion is this. The first purpose is that by knowing their suffering, by discovering their suffering which we were not aware of before, that helps us to develop the renunciation of samsara, to be detached from samsara, not only the lower realms but even the upper realms, the deva and human realms. It helps to make our mind free from attachment, grasping on to samsaric pleasure, to samsaric rebirth and the pleasure, grasping onto that. That attachment is what causes us to reincarnate continuously in samsara, to take rebirth and then experience all the sufferings, and then die. Now in this human realm, then the next one is hell realm or hungry ghost realm or animal realm or whatever it is. It goes on like this, on and on and on and on and on and on from beginningless rebirth, on and on like this, because of attachment, of your clinging, grasping at samsaric pleasure.

That's why with refuge, when we take refuge, we attain the cessation of attachment when we take refuge in the Dharma, "the sublime one which is the cessation of the attachment," *Cho la kyab su chi wo* "to Dharma I go for refuge."

There are so many delusions, but why is attachment a problem? We can now see why attachment is specified, we can now understand. It's because it's attachment that ties us to samsara all the time. It doesn't liberate us, it doesn't give us the freedom to be free from samsara.

Discovering their suffering encourages us to renounce the cause of the lower realms. We don't want to experience even the tiny problems of human life, even small problems we don't want to experience. Then, of course, if we are born in the lower realms, there is no way, no way to bear the sufferings. Karma and the lower realms' sufferings is a new subject in this life.

About karma, the very first thing is to protect ourselves from the lower realms, to save ourselves. There's danger, because of the negative karma we create with ignorance, anger or attachment, those specific subjects, those we have been collecting one day, from morning, twenty-four hours, is such an unbelievable, unbelievable number. And then each week, month, year, from birth, the actions done with ignorance, anger and attachment, the negative karma, which causes all the many suffering results we experience in this life, and especially in future lives. When we are born a human being by doing another good karma, then we experience so many problems in that life, but the heaviest suffering is the lower realms, rebirth in the lower realms.

That is not something only done a few times in our life, not like [that]. Maybe for some people it's possible, but for us we are unable to keep the mind in virtue, with non-ignorance, non-anger, non-attachment—this is without even talking about the selfish mind—for one day of our life. If we examine our motivations, even us who are trying to practice Dharma, there could be some time when the motivation becomes pure, with non-ignorance, non-anger, non-attachment, but much of the time, the rest of the time it is attachment, ignorance, or maybe anger sometimes, depending on the person.

For some people, it's very easy to get angry often but generally speaking anger is less of a problem than attachment. Attachment is the one that we live probably most.

Then, there's also ignorance. This is without talking about the root of samsara, ignorance, which is always there. We make our minds like that. We create our minds, we make our minds become root of samsara, ignorance, by holding on to the hallucination, the truly existent phenomena. Things appear real to us—the I, the aggregates—then we grasp on to that.

Now you can see the cause of the lower realms, you can see now how it is. I'm talking about one day, then there's weeks, months, years, from birth. And not only that, from our past life, from beginningless rebirth, from beginningless rebirth. There's so much negative karma that we've created. There's negative karma where we've completed the result, we've experienced the result, the suffering, there are so many, but there are so *many* which are not finished yet, which we haven't yet started experiencing the suffering result, there are numberless.

Therefore, because death can happen at any time—any day, any hour or any minute—the very first thing is to protect ourselves from the lower realms. In the lower realms we can't practice Dharma, there is no opportunity, no freedom.

That's the first thing to do, the immediate thing to do, to guarantee we receive higher rebirth. By receiving higher rebirth then we meet Dharma. The idea is to create the cause to receive a perfect human rebirth, to meet Dharma and then again to practice and to actualize the path. Then we can remove the defilements and achieve liberation and enlightenment. The plan is life to life, to develop the mind on the path.

Now you can see why the meditation on the suffering of the lower realms needs to be done. It's unbelievably important, unbelievably. As well as the sufferings of the deva, human realms, you have to understand, this is the first rescue. If somebody is in danger of falling down from a cliff, instead of going the wrong way, immediately we go there, we run there and protect that person. We have to explain to the person, "This is the wrong way, it's easy to fall down here and you will die, you will suffer." We have to explain it to the person because the person has no understanding, no idea.

Now you can understand this point but at the beginning I think almost everyone couldn't. Some people could because there were so many imprints from a past life. They feel at home with the Buddhadharmā, they feel like they are coming home when they hear it. They feel there is nothing new, it's familiar, there is nothing contradictory there.

But for many, it is difficult to understand. You think, "Why this? Why do we have to hear about suffering?" Do you understand? This is the first thing, this is the first thing we need to do, to free ourselves from attachment, from samsaric pleasure, from the total hallucination believing this is real happiness that brings attachment, clinging. With that attachment, all the actions become the cause of nonvirtue, the cause of the lower realms, then also later the sufferings in the human realm. So, it's to protect ourselves from that.

Then, the other thing, the next thing, if we don't understand the sufferings of the lower realms, those other beings, those other non-human beings, how can we develop compassion to them? It's impossible; there's no way to develop compassion. If we don't get to develop compassion for them, they don't receive our help. There are many sentient beings there, and they don't get liberated from samsara, they don't get enlightened until *we*, until we help them. Until we meet them and help them, it doesn't happen.

In our life, older students, I mean those of us who have studied Buddhadharmā, know this but if you haven't had much experience you still can tell. Even if it's not related with Dharma, if there's somebody who is very hungry, until we meet that person to give help, until we give them money so they can buy lunch and get food, until that person meets *us*, that person doesn't get help. We met them and give them money to buy food or whatever, or if they are sick, we're able to take them to the hospital. This is an example. I'm not particularly speaking about bringing them the Dharma but even just like that, until we met that person, the person can't get our help. There are many examples like this.

Even though there are numberless buddhas and bodhisattvas, and many sentient beings, but that particular person, until *we* met that person, only after *we* have met them can they receive help. Do you understand? Even before you have met the Buddhadharmā there are many examples how many sentient beings have a particular connection, even with this life's

temporary problems, and until that person, that sentient being meets *you*, it doesn't get solved.

For many elder students, it happens many times in life. Even though there are numberless buddhas and bodhisattvas, but until we meet that person, he doesn't get the answer or the help in Dharma. We teach something or we explain where he can learn Dharma, where to go to learn Dharma and so forth, we are able to give that direction, able to teach. Only after the person meets us does he get help, you understand? This is the proof, to understand that even in the lower realms there are numberless sentient beings who are connected to us, who are waiting to receive our help.

If we don't develop compassion for them, then they don't receive help from us, they don't get liberated by us. They don't get liberated from samsara and they're not brought to cessation of the suffering and its causes; they're not brought to enlightenment. So, you understand, there's a huge, unbelievable, unbelievable need.

Therefore, we need to develop compassion for all the living beings. For that we have to understand their suffering. Now, you can see how it's so important to discover all the different sentient beings' sufferings. We have all the opportunity, we have potential to actualize the path, to become enlightened. We also have the opportunity to help, and if we don't do that, especially at this time while we have this perfect human rebirth to help others, to actualize the path, then we don't like to share the sufferings of others, we stop developing compassion, we stop helping them, and that means we've wasted our perfect human rebirth. We've wasted this precious human body we have taken; this time is wasted. That's what it means, it's wasted. It's just been borrowed for this one time, it's wasted.

Then our actions, living our life, are not for these things, but for the only selfish mind, and with a selfish mind we can't achieve enlightenment, we can't enlighten sentient beings, we can't do perfect work for sentient beings. Even to achieve liberation from samsara for ourselves is difficult.

So, anyway, to finish this one today took a long time.

CAUSAL REFUGE LEADS TO RESULTANT REFUGE

To be able to achieve the resultant refuge, the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, we need to rely upon the cause, we need to practice the causal refuge. The Dharma is the path, but the causal refuge of the Buddha and Sangha refer to others' minds. These are separate beings, separate from our mental continuum. So, we rely on the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. Taking refuge in that way is causal refuge.

For example, to become expert doctor, physician, just wishing to be physician in order to help patients, just wishing is not enough. We have to study from an expert doctor, from a physician. We have to follow that person, we have to study with that person, we have to rely on that person. *Then* we can become a physician and help patients. Do you understand the example, why we need to take the causal refuge in order to achieve resultant refuge?

A university professor teaches others, helps others. We have to rely on a university professor, learning from that person, then we become a professor and we are able to teach others. Do you understand? That's why we need to take the causal refuge, otherwise resultant refuge can't happen.

Now, okay, you want to take Mahayana refuge, all those things? [Rinpoche laughs] Mahayana refuge has one extra condition than Hinayana refuge. I've explained that already, so I'm not going to repeat it. It's compassion for other living beings.

With Hinayana refuge there are two causes: the useful fear of our own samsara and faith in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, that they have the capacity, the qualities to save us from the oceans of samsaric suffering, particularly lower realms. Then we totally rely upon the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. That mental factor is Hinayana refuge.

Why I call it *useful* fear is because, through understanding our own samsaric nature of suffering that arouses a fear that makes us abandon the cause of samsara, abandon the cause of suffering, and practice the cause of happiness, liberation, and then peerless full enlightenment. That fear makes us engage in the higher training of morality, the higher training of concentration and higher training of the great insight. It makes us engage in the path to liberation or the path to enlightenment. It makes us enter into the path to liberation, and then, higher than that, it makes us engage in the path to enlightenment.

Then because of that, because of our discovery of how our samsara is in nature of suffering, with that fear of being in samsara, when you look at other sentient beings, we see directly how unbelievably much they are suffering, and that generates compassion, to free them from suffering and its causes, and that develops into greater compassion when we take responsibility on ourselves.

So now here, with Mahayana refuge there is one more cause after that, compassion, compassion for sentient beings, wishing them to be free from suffering, then the faith in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, devotion to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, to totally rely on the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. That makes it Mahayana refuge. Then there's the tantra refuge.

MAHAYANA REFUGE

So, when we take refuge, that's what we need to practice.

I'm just going through it briefly. Before we begin refuge, before we say the prayer, first we transform our mind into that, otherwise it just becomes words. Otherwise taking refuge, bodhicitta, it just becomes like a tape recorder, the same as a tape recorder. The mind is nothing, it becomes a tape recorder and the prayer becomes a recording. We become like a TV or a tape recorder.

Therefore, before we begin the prayer, it is very important that the mind first transforms into refuge, the mind transforms into bodhicitta, *then* we do prayer. After our mind is transformed then we do the prayer. Then what we say and our heart are in harmony. Then,

what we receive is very meaningful, otherwise it is just a prayer, it becomes sort of like a custom. I mean, of course it leaves a positive imprint to achieve enlightenment, but there's so much more we can do.

So now, thinking like this, how to meditate, by remembering the cause of taking refuge, how we ourselves have been experiencing the general sufferings of samsara. You have already done the various meditation [during the course]: the six types of suffering and three types, the four types, the general sufferings of samsara, the evolution of samsara, the twelve dependent-related limbs and all that.

All the sufferings of samsara come into the three sufferings: the suffering of suffering, the suffering of change—samsaric pleasure—and pervasive compounded suffering. We need to feel that first. “I've been experiencing the general suffering of samsara, particularly the sufferings of the three lower realms from beginningless rebirth, from *beginningless* rebirths.”

On top of that, numberless hell beings have been experiencing the general sufferings of samsara, particularly the sufferings of the lower realms, numberless times, from *beginningless* rebirths. That's the reality.

Then, numberless hungry ghosts have been experiencing the general sufferings of samsara, particularly the sufferings of the lower realms, numberless times from beginningless rebirths. Think like that, first the depth of your suffering, then the depth of their sufferings.

And then, the animals, the numberless animals—all these insects—have been experiencing the general sufferings of samsara, particularly the sufferings of the lower realms, numberless times. Okay? Feel that.

Then, human beings have been experiencing the general sufferings, particularly the sufferings of the lower realms, numberless times, from *beginningless* rebirths. Feel that.

Then, numberless suras and asuras have been experiencing the general sufferings of samsara, particularly the sufferings of the lower realms, numberless times, from beginningless rebirths. So, feel that.

Here you see, this is reality, this is life, how we have been hell beings. This is most frightening. Even for just ourselves, we have experienced the particular sufferings of the lower realms numberless times from beginningless rebirths. It's most, most frightening. I mean, when we really think like that, when we really discover that, we can't sleep, we can't even eat food, but have to vomit. It's most unbearable, most unbearable.

So now, on top of that, when we think of the numberless other beings in each realm, numberless, numberless, who have been experiencing the hell realms, we can't even count. First there is ourselves, but that's nothing; we're completely lost, completely nothing, lost in all those numberless other beings, whose suffering is most unimaginable. There is no question that compassion has to arise when we think like that. Compassion just naturally compassion arises, their state is most unbearable, most unbearable. We've *got* to do something right away to help them, *right away*.

As I mentioned before, at this time we have received a perfect human rebirth, and we have the heart, the mind and all the potential to actualize the path, to achieve enlightenment, to liberate ourselves and to achieve enlightenment, and then to liberate numberless sentient beings from the suffering realms and bring them to enlightenment. Our mind has all the potential to do that, and then at this time we can utilize that potential because we've got this perfect human rebirth. We can utilize it to attain the path. The perfect human rebirth we've got this time allows us to practice, to listen and reflect, to meditate, and to actualize the path to help others. So, we've got to do that. There is no way to ignore this, when we think that all beings are not only suffering like that at present but they go through it numberless times.

I have no words left. How to say... We've got to do that, we've got to help others, to liberate them from oceans of samsaric sufferings, the general sufferings of samsara, the sufferings of the three lower realms. There is no choice.

When we discover suffering, there is no choice. Naturally, naturally our wish will be to help others, naturally. That's naturally our wish and that's the best thing in our life, what we should do with our life. The best thing is that.

To free them from the oceans of samsaric suffering, we ourselves need to go for refuge. To free all other beings from the general sufferings of samsara and the particular sufferings of the lower realms, to liberate numberless hell beings, numberless hungry ghosts, numberless animals, human beings, numberless asuras and suras, we need to go for refuge, to save, to rescue all these numberless sentient beings. Refuge is not only ourselves to be free from the general sufferings of samsara and the particular sufferings of lower realms but for numberless sentient beings to be free from samsara—the general sufferings of samsara and the particular sufferings of the lower realms. For that, we should go for refuge with our whole heart to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, whether there's *Guru*, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, or just Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. We should go for refuge with our *whole heart*, to free them from all the suffering causes, those beings who are numberless in each realm. The Buddha, Dharma and Sangha are the only ones who have all the qualities, the power to liberate us and all sentient beings from suffering and its cause. With our *whole heart*, we should go for refuge, feeling how unbearable others' suffering is.

Similarly, if there's somebody who is very sick or somebody who is dying, when we take refuge we can remember that person. We take refuge for all sentient beings but now we remember this particular person who is sick or dying.

Even with the very profound practices in tantra, everything is done on the basis of refuge, *everything* is done—*poma*, the transfer of consciousness—it is all done on the basis of refuge. Refuge is the first thing we start with, the foundation. On that basis, we do the different meditation practices, whatever it is, even very secret or profound tantra.

So, this mental factor is refuge, totally relying on the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. With that, we can ask them to help a person who is dying to get higher rebirth or a person who is sick to get recovered immediately. We can ask about general sicknesses and particular ones. We can include the prayer in the refuge, it's very good.

Next, we generate bodhicitta. Before I mention that, in our heart, we totally rely upon the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. We went through the essential subjects in the lam-rim, including refuge, how the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha guide us. The essence is explained, if we take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, the qualities, how they guide us. With the philosophical texts about refuge, it is a very elaborate subject, but those things are *very* important. All the time they [?] see the buddhas, and also the Sanghas, those who are very high, the arya Sangha, the arhats or the arya bodhisattvas.

THE SUFFERINGS OF TRANSMIGRATORY BEINGS

Then the next: due to all the three times' merits, all the past merits, the merits collected from beginningless rebirths, the past merits, the present merits, the future merits collected by me, the three time merits collected by others—that means all sentient beings including the bodhisattvas who collect limitless skies of merit in every second, with many activities, and then the buddhas. "Others" means numberless sentient beings, bodhisattvas, buddhas, who collected merits from beginningless rebirth, now and in the future.

Due to the three times' merits collected by me, the three times' merits collected by others, the merit of wisdom, the merit of virtue, which is the cause of the dharmakaya and the rupakaya. *Dro la panchir sangye drub par sbog*. The next one says, "in order to benefit all the transmigratory beings, may I achieve enlightenment."

Here, "in order to benefit for all the transmigratory beings," we have to meditate on the meaning, it's *very* extensive meaning. These sentient beings are under the control of karma and delusion, the sentient beings; they're *totally* under the control of karma and delusion.

We can understand that from the twelve dependent-related limbs, the evolution of samsara. We can understand that all sentient beings are totally under the control of karma and delusion, so they themselves have no freedom at all. Because of that, they reincarnate in the six realms, continuously. When they die they must reincarnate in one of them and then experience all the sufferings, such as the sufferings of the hell realms, the eight major hot sufferings, the eight major cold sufferings, then the six neighboring sufferings, then the ordinary hell realm. Even in the human realm there's an ordinary hell realm.

Then transmigratory beings experience the sufferings of the hungry ghosts, whose physical condition is to have a stomach like mountains, like a huge mountain, but with a neck that is so unbelievably tiny, and limbs that are tiny. Just from the physical conditions, there are unbelievable sufferings. Their major suffering is hunger and thirst; they can't find a drop of water, even a mouthful of water on the ground, for hundreds of years, for thousand years. This suffering is due to miserliness, miserliness which is attachment, not practicing giving. It's unbelievable. They don't die but suffer for such a long time.

They walk like a very old person where there is so much difficulty in walking that he has to rely on sticks. But when even getting old becomes so difficult he can't do it any more, that's nothing in comparison. And a hungry ghost's stomach is like a mountain. Unbelievable. Their physical condition has so much suffering.

Even if they see food very far away, waterfalls, water, and food, but then on the road there are karmic guardians who stop them and then there are also unbelievably, unbelievably exhaustion. There are so many obstacles.

Then finally, even the hungry ghost reaches where there is food and water, the food is no longer there, or the food and water is totally pus and blood and even garbage, so he feels so much disappointment; there is unbelievable suffering, because he's been suffering, not getting a drop of water, even a spoon of food for hundreds of thousands of years. Can you imagine? Such unbelievable heavy suffering, unbelievable suffering. Then even if the food is not this way, his mouth is like the eye of a needle, so very difficult, even if a tiny bit goes inside, it becomes cause of flames, it burns the body.

Then the pretas who have more suffering, there are knots, their necks are knotted up, two knots, three knots, four knots, so no food can go inside the stomach, or just hardly anything, so tiny and the stomach is like mountain. I mean, it's just unbelievable. Theirs is the obscuration of food, outer obscuration of food, inner obscuration.

Then, for the animals, their major suffering is ignorance. Because of that, they suffer by being eaten by another one. Their major suffering is that—unbelievable—being eaten by another one, just to go quickly. Then the suffering of hot and cold, hunger and thirst, all this is there. Then they are tortured, even if the human beings have them, they're tortured, they have unimaginable, most unimaginable suffering.

It's very good to see the animals' suffering. I saw a video in the West, on TV. An Englishman made a video showing the unbelievable, unbelievable different types animals' sufferings. One is the animals mating, but even then there's unbelievable suffering. I tried to get it to bring here to watch during the course when we talk about the animals, lower realms' sufferings. That's another way, that's unbelievable, I mean, the real thing.

Quite a number of years ago it was watched but people were unable to watch. They could only watch a half, but they couldn't bear the suffering of animals, so they didn't finish.

So that's very, very good, very good, then you get the actual idea.

Then, the human beings' suffering: the eight types of suffering, the six types of sufferings, there are five types of suffering rebirth, all the other sufferings integrated into five for us to see how extensive it is.

And then the eight types of suffering: the suffering of sicknesses, the suffering of old age, because we are born, because of birth, there's the suffering of sickness, the suffering of old age. Then, there are five outlines for each of these. This is to get the broader idea.

Then, the suffering of aggregates. Before that, there's the suffering of being unable to find the object of desire. All those unbelievable sufferings, whether it's a friend or material place, business, I mean, after we've found that, another suffering begins. The fundamental suffering of that is still could not get satisfaction, so it goes on and on.

Then, there are the five sufferings of the aggregates, and then the five sufferings of death, so the eight types of suffering. That meditation is very important.

Then, the suffering of the devas. Their major sufferings are the five near signs of death. When they experience the five signs of death, their mental suffering is heavier than the hell beings. Kyabje Trijang Rinpoche mentioned that their mental suffering is greater, heavier than the hell beings' suffering.

Sentient beings, being under the control of karma and delusion, are born in one of the six realms, then experience all the sufferings, including the suffering of death, continuously. We have to think that this is from beginningless rebirths, from *beginningless* rebirths. Not from now, but from beginningless rebirths it's been like this—the most unbelievable suffering, and it will be like this into the future.

So, it's good with refuge to think of the future. I mentioned only the past but there are also the continuous sufferings of the future. If we don't practice Dharma, if we don't actualize the path, there will only be continuous suffering.

So, we take refuge in order to benefit all the transmigratory beings of the six realms, who continuously experience suffering, all this from beginningless rebirths. This is what happens. Thinking like that, and then, how it continues into the future, we just *can't* stand it!

The meaning of “transmigratory being” is suffering. One meaning of transmigratory being is in the nature of impermanence. After birth, the transmigratory being *constantly* runs towards the death, constantly—not only day by day, hour by hour, minute by minute, even second by second, even within seconds continuously run towards the death, going towards death continuously. That's another meaning of transmigratory being.

Think: “In order to benefit them, to liberate them totally from the oceans of all this sufferings and its cause, by seeing the cause, karma and delusion, in order to benefit, cease the karma and delusion and bring them to enlightenment, in order to benefit them—(in your mind you should get all that idea)—I need to achieve enlightenment. Therefore, may I achieve enlightenment.”

I was going to explain this a few days ago but then other things happened. I think that's it.
[Rinpoche laughs]

[Rinpoche chants refuge prayer in Tibetan]

At the end generate bodhicitta. Then, according to Kyabje Dukam Rinpoche, a Sera lama who is an unbelievable, unbelievable great bodhisattva, a great holy being, according to his instructions, after having generated bodhicitta you seal it with emptiness.

You, who seek enlightenment, are empty; the action of seeking enlightenment is empty; the enlightenment is empty; what to be achieved is empty and for whom the enlightenment is achieved—all sentient beings and you yourself—are empty.

Of course, as we understand emptiness doesn't mean empty of that, but empty of falsity—false action, false enlightenment, false sentient beings, things that are independent, things that appear independent and that we hold onto as something independent, something real. We looking at them empty.

In emptiness there's no I, there's no enlightenment, there's no sentient beings—only one taste.

When you do this, when you meditate like this, the *heart* of lam-rim is already being practiced, the very beginning is already being practiced, and so there is refuge. Within that, there's renunciation, then there's bodhicitta, then there's right view—three principal aspects to enlightenment. The heart of the 84,000 teachings of Buddha, the heart of the three baskets, the heart of the gradual path of the lower, middle capable beings is already practiced, already perfected.

So, put your palms together at that time, when you do this, when you generate bodhicitta, put your palms together and take refuge.

I'll mention this quotation, then we'll finish.

In *The Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment*, Lama Atisha explained by quoting *The Sutra Requested by Viradatta*:

If it possessed physical form,
The merit of the altruistic intention
Would completely fill the whole of space
And exceed even that.

If someone were to fill with jewels
As many buddha fields as there are grains
Of sand in the Ganges
To offer to the Protector of the World,

This would be surpassed by
The gift of folding one's hands
And inclining one's mind to enlightenment,
For such is limitless.⁹

If the merit of having bodhicitta could somehow materialize, if it took form, it would fill up the whole of the sky, even more than the sky. If all the buddha fields equaling the numbers of grains of sand in the River Ganga were filled with jewels and is offered to all the buddhas, the merit of just putting our palms together with bodhicitta surpasses all that. This is not the River Ganga but the Pacific Ocean, and not grains of sand but extremely subtle atoms.

⁹ *Lamp for the Path*, vv. 15–17.

If we were to offer all these jewels to all the buddhas, to the Guides of the World, the Protectors of the World, that is nothing compared to putting our palms together and generating bodhicitta. That is far, far more sublime than the previous.

All that, unbelievable, unbelievable, unimaginable offering, then now you put your palms together then think, “In order to benefit for all the sentient beings, I’m going to generate bodhicitta.” The merit of this offering is special, sublime, I mean extraordinary, sublime; it has no limit. This merit, bodhicitta, has no limit. How much merit you collect is what Lama Atisha mentions here. You have to remember this when you do this prayer. If you think like this, you collect limitless merit each time.

[Rinpoche and the students, chant the dedication, the mandala offering and the long life prayer for His Holiness the Dalai Lama.]

Due to all the past, present and future merits collected by me, the three times’ merits collected by others, that which exists but is merely labeled by the mind, may the I, who exists but is merely labeled by the mind, achieve Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s enlightenment, which exists but which is merely labeled by the mind, and lead all the sentient beings, who exist but who are merely labeled by mind, then bring them to Shakyamuni Buddha’s enlightenment, which exists but which is merely labeled by the mind, by myself alone, who exists but who is also merely labeled by the mind.

Okay, that’s it, so please enjoy your lunch.

Lecture 19

[Rinpoche and students chant Shakyamuni Buddha’s mantra.]

PEOPLE WHO UNDERSTAND THE CAUSE OF FREEDOM HAVE FREEDOM IN THIS LIFE

When we seeing holy objects and make offerings, prostrations and circumambulations, we shouldn’t just be like tourists, like nonbelievers. What I’m saying is we *must* see, we *should* see them, but what I’m talking more about here is that there is the most unimaginable benefit from just even seeing the holy objects. Then, circumambulating, making prostrations, making offerings, something that we have come to do in this life, most human beings do not understand the importance and don’t engage in this. Therefore, it is the most precious thing, the rarest thing.

For us, at this time, we are not only born a human being, but somehow, somehow, somehow the life turned out to be that we have met the Buddhadharma and understood these things, that which has limitless skies of benefit, where it is unbelievably easy to collect happiness. I mean temporal happiness, I mean all the happiness—it’s so easy—and especially liberation from samsara and enlightenment, those everlasting happinesses, ultimate happiness.

That we have met the Buddhadharma this time and have the unbelievable opportunity to create the cause of happiness, especially to achieve liberation from samsara, to end the suffering of samsara and to achieve enlightenment, is so unbelievable. For common people in the world, if you look, it is so difficult to even to create the cause of ignorant samsaric happiness, not even liberation, or enlightenment, even just to create the cause of temporary happiness, success in business, wealth, comfort and so forth. Doing business and getting external objects of the senses, they are just conditions, they're not the main cause, they're just conditions. The main cause is our own mind, our good intention, the good karma we create.

What worldly people regard as the main causes of their happiness are only conditions. They're just conditions and so obtaining them does not necessarily mean they have achieved happiness. They achieve happiness only if there is a cause. Without cause we can't achieve happiness, even if all the conditions are there.

This is just a general introduction. What people believe in the world, the more common people, those who doesn't have the Dharma, what they believe is that the cause of happiness is external: the five sense objects and external things together. But achieving that doesn't mean they always achieve happiness, it doesn't mean that. Only if the cause of happiness is there, then they will experience happiness. Therefore, they have a totally wrong belief, a totally wrong understanding of the cause of happiness. There are very few who actually know that the actual cause of happiness is our own mind, the positive mind and positive actions.

People who understand the cause of freedom have freedom in everyday life. For us, this time we have met the Buddhadharma and we understand, so we have freedom. By knowing karma and the mind, how happiness and suffering both have to come from the mind, we are able to stop creating suffering from the mind and to achieve the happiness from our mind, from our heart.

If we understand karma, we have freedom. We have freedom by understanding the four types of motivation. Remember, when I read the Tara prayer, what makes Dharma, how an action becomes either Dharma not Dharma, either virtue or nonvirtue. By understanding that, we have freedom every day. No matter what activities we do with our body, speech, and mind, they become the cause of enlightenment, they become the cause to achieve the happiness of future lives and then the cause to achieve liberation from samsara and the cause to achieve enlightenment for sentient beings.

We have a choice at which level of happiness we create the cause for. The only other choice is to choose suffering, where our actions become only suffering. But we have total freedom for our actions to become happiness, and not only to become the cause of samsaric happiness or freedom from lower realms but right the way up to enlightenment. So, we have *unbelievable* freedom.

Once we have understood karma, we have full freedom in our life. Whatever happiness we want to achieve is in your hand. So, we are unbelievably fortunate. We must realize how fortunate we are, how unbelievably fortunate, how unimaginably fortunate, having this

wisdom, this Dharma wisdom. We are unbelievably, unbelievably fortunate. For most human beings in the world, it's not like that.

So that's introduction. First I wanted to mention these two things, so then you understand.

THE POWER OF SEEING A HOLY OBJECT

After meeting the Buddhadharmā, our life becomes so meaningful, most unbelievably meaningful, most productive. It's just amazing how we can be of benefit. I mean, our liberation and enlightenment is one thing, ending the oceans of samsaric sufferings, that's unbelievable, then to achieve enlightenment is unbelievable. But here, I'm talking about liberating numberless sentient beings from the oceans of samsaric sufferings and bringing them to enlightenment, doing this for numberless beings from each realm: from the hell realms, from the hungry ghosts', from the animals', to bring to cessation of suffering and to bring them to enlightenment.

It's just by meeting the Mahayana teachings that we come to understand this. This is most amazing, this is most amazing, that we know we can practice the Mahayana teachings to achieve enlightenment for sentient beings. This is most amazing, most amazing. It gives us the happiest life, the most amazing, the most fortunate, the happiest life. Before, we didn't have any idea what we could do with our life, no idea at all. Maybe we thought to help somebody, such as giving some money to somebody who doesn't have any or some medicine to somebody who needs some medicine, but not this. *This* [level of help] is most amazing. We should realize that.

As the Buddha explained in the *Sutra of the Mudra, Developing the Power of Devotion*, to really understand the benefits of following the Mahayana, the first thing we should realize is—this is very important—that we don't just become a tourist. We don't just become a tourist, taking pictures so we can say that we've been there. We've been there, and so we have lot of stories we can tell our friends, telling them about all our life with and how we've been there and we've been there and we've been there, this and this and that.

In the sutra, the Buddha talks about somebody making offerings. What offerings? Every day making offerings of ten divine foods—meaning nectar—and ten divine dresses. Ten divine foods means nectar, something very, very precious. To give you an idea of ten divine dresses, one necklace or one ornament, one earring that a sura owns is worth more than all the human beings' wealth put together. If you put together all the human beings' wealth, one deva's necklace is far more valuable. Even all the human beings' wealth put together could not pay for it. It's unbelievable.

So, this person offers all these things every day, the hundred divine dress and so on to whom? To the arhats, who completed the five paths to liberation, who ceased all the oceans of samsaric suffering and their causes, karma and delusion, the seed of delusion, all the arhats who have destroyed the enemy, the delusions. These offerings are not just to one arhat. How many arhats? Equaling the number of atoms of the universes.

There are unimaginable, unimaginable, unimaginable, uncountable atoms in all the universes, unimaginable. To that many arhats this person offer all those offerings every day. For how long? I think it might be eons equaling... I think it might be confused with the benefits another mantra brings. How long? Eons. How many eons? Eons, I think it might be according to the sand grains of the Ganga. I think I mentioned this before. But, how many eons? That many number of eons.

This time I'll check particularly, but I thought it might be that. But even just for *one* eon is unimaginable and this is for many eons.

The sutra says that somebody merely seeing a statue of a buddha or a drawing of a buddha creates numberless times greater merit than that person having made that many offerings.

All those previous merits themselves are just unimaginable. Those many offerings, every day, hundreds and hundreds of offerings every day to an unimaginable number of arhats for not just one eon but many, many eons, so you can imagine the unbelievable merit itself there is. But compared to merely seeing a statue, a painting or a drawing of a buddha, all those merits become small. The merits collecting by seeing a holy object are far greater; they are most unimaginable.

It is mentioned that even if we look at a painting or drawing of a buddha with a disturbed mind, an angry mind—not with a virtuous mind—it causes us to gradually see tens of millions of buddhas. It is said that drawings done on a stone wall, even if they look at them with a disturbed mind, an angry mind, those people will gradually see tens of millions of buddhas.

What it's saying is that the minute we see a statue or a drawing of a buddha, it immediately plants a seed of enlightenment. We should understand that, it immediately plants a seed of enlightenment in our mental continuum. That means from the beginning of the path, from the root, from guru devotion, the three principal of the path, the whole Mahayana path, the five paths, ten bhumis, all that, the whole tantric path, seeing pictures or statues of buddhas plants the seed of enlightenment, allowing us to achieve all these realizations. We've *got* to understand that.

When we achieve the Mahayana path of merit, that has three levels: small, middle, great. The minute we achieve that great Mahayana path of merit, at that time, when our mind reaches that level, we see numberless buddhas, even in this very first path, numberless buddhas but in the nirmanakaya aspect. Wherever you are, even in the toilet or bathroom, shopping or wherever it is, the minute our mind reaches that level, we see numberless buddhas right there, right there. It doesn't have to only be in a gompa or something.

So, here, when it talks about the benefits of looking at a drawing of a buddha, even one drawn on a stone wall, even with disturbed angry mind, how by that we will gradually see tens of millions of buddhas, I think it's referring to this path, the first of the five paths to achieve enlightenment.

That's just giving an idea but it shows what unbelievable, unbelievable qualities we experience on all the other paths. When we achieve the third path, the Mahayana right-

seeing path, we see the buddhas in the sambhogakaya aspect, then, of course, after we complete the path, when we cease all the subtle defilements, then we meet the buddhas in the dharmakaya state. It means that at that time our mind becomes one with all the buddhas' holy minds, the dharmakaya, we become one with all the buddhas, our mind, our heart becomes one with all the buddhas' holy minds. This happens through the seed planted through seeing a drawing or statue of a buddha.

Therefore, when we go on a pilgrimage or even at our own home, it becomes unbelievably important to have many holy objects—to have paintings or statues of buddhas—and of course to respect them. If we know how to respect them but don't, if disrespect happens, because they are such powerful objects, we create heavy negative karma; it pollutes the mind. If we don't respect statues, stupas and scriptures, if we disrespect them, it pollutes the mind, and then it is difficult to achieve realizations, to realize emptiness, to actualize bodhicitta and so forth. Those things become obstacles for that. So, we should have many holy objects but then we should know how to respect them. That's very important.

Except in the bathroom. Maybe having holy objects in the bathroom is disrespectful. Otherwise in most rooms in our home, having many holy objects makes us look at them so many times every day, and each time we look at them, we collect unbelievable merit, much greater merit than all the virtues of offering the ten divine foods and dresses as in that story. In comparison, that becomes very small.

It brings us to enlightenment quickly. We achieve such unbelievable, unbelievable merit, so it brings us to enlightenment quickly. That means we can liberate numberless sentient beings from the oceans of samsara suffering and bring them to enlightenment. That's the benefit we get.

In the lam-rim it mentions that there was a very poor person in India who had nothing else to offer four monks but a medicinal drink. It doesn't say they were arhats or highly realized, who had achieved the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness, just four ordinary monks. He offered them a medicine drink and then in his next life, he was born a very powerful king in India, the most powerful king, with unbelievable wealth.

That is why we have to understand karma, how for even a small negative karma the result is unbelievable suffering for hundreds of thousands of lifetimes and for even a small virtue, the result, wow! is so powerful, like that person who became that very powerful king with all that wealth. Therefore, we must collect even a small good karma and not abandon it. But even a small negative karma we *must* abandon because the result is great suffering. It's unbelievable, so we must abandon it. This story illustrates this.

So, compared to somebody making unbelievable offerings of a hundred divine foods and a hundred divine dresses to as many arhats as the number of atoms of the universes, for as many eons as the sand grains in the Ganga, it's much more precious to merely see a statue or painting of a buddha. It creates far more merit.

Now, now, on top of this, if we make offerings and prostrate to a holy object, even using one hand to prostrate like this, [Rinpoche demonstrates] even if we just bend our head like this to the holy object, immediately we create the cause of enlightenment, immediately we create

the cause for the highest success. If we see a statue and just bend our head with respect, or if we prostrate like this, then make offerings of flowers and so forth, the merit is far greater, it's double, it's greater than the numberless merit we receive from merely seeing a statue or stupa.

When we actually make a prostration, even just putting our palms together, or we make offerings, we create much greater merit than before, numberless greater merit than just seeing a holy object. It's just amazing, just amazing.

So like this, we are so fortunate. We are unbelievably, inexpressibly fortunate to have met the Buddhadharma. It's so unbelievably easy how we can get out of suffering, out of samsara, and achieve enlightenment. It's unbelievably easy.

That's one thing—seeing statues, stupas and scriptures. That's the foundation.

THE POWER OF OFFERING AND PROSTRATING TO HOLY OBJECTS

The next one I've mentioned many times in the past, of course. Anyway, it's mentioned in *The Sutra of Heaped Flowers*, that when we offer a grain of rice or a tiny flower to a statue of a buddha or a picture of buddha, a drawing of buddha, the merit isn't complete, it doesn't finish until we achieve liberation. This is what it says; it's quite simple.

But first we have to understand, if we even do this with ignorance, with anger or attachment, even if you look at the paintings with anger it purifies the mind and causes us to see tens of millions of buddhas. That's what it says. It just gives a little bit idea but it contains the whole path, all the experiences we achieve, we attain on each path, including achieving enlightenment. So, first we should understand that when we do circumambulations or prostrations or make offerings to the statues, stupas and scriptures, even if our motivation is ignorance, anger, or attachment, we still gain unbelievable merit.

For example, when her parents make prostrations and offerings to the statues, stupas, scriptures of the Buddha, and the child merely imitates them, just does what the parents do, even though she doesn't generate the bodhicitta motivation or even the motivation to achieve liberation from samsara or the happiness in future lives—even though there's no virtuous motivation, the motivation is ignorance, anger or attachment—by imitating the parents and thinking of the statue, stupas or scriptures or making prostrations or offerings to them, what that child does becomes cause of enlightenment.

Normally, actions become the cause of happiness only if the motivation is virtue but here, with the holy objects, even if the motivation is nonvirtue, actions still become virtue, even the cause of enlightenment, because of the power of the holy object.

For us ordinary beings, it is so difficult for our mind to become virtuous. We need to put a lot of effort for it to become virtuous, by remembering impermanence or how samsaric pleasure is in the nature of suffering. These things are so difficult for us to see. And it's so difficult to generate a bodhicitta motivation by thinking of the kindness of sentient beings and how precious they are, how they are suffering and so forth. For us ordinary beings, us

beginners in Dharma practice, it's very easy for attachment or something to arise—the kind of opposite nature of the Dharma—but it is extremely difficult for virtuous thoughts to arise, to generate bodhicitta, renunciation and all that.

So, therefore, therefore, therefore, these practices—circumambulation, making offerings, prostrations and so forth—doing these things towards the holy objects, towards statues, stupas and scriptures is very important. Of course we can't see buddhas, but we can see these holy objects, so it's very important to do these actions as much as possible, because even if our motivation is not pure our actions become the cause of enlightenment. That's incredible! It is so easy to create the cause of happiness.

Therefore, it is so important for us sentient beings that these holy objects exist. It is unbelievably important, for liberation, for enlightenment, to not get reborn in the lower realms, for success. It is so important that these holy objects exist in this world, to help us make life so easy.

That shows why it is important to build holy objects in the world, not only for our benefit but to liberate numberless sentient beings from the oceans of samsaric suffering and bring them to enlightenment. Building stupas and things like that is of unbelievable, unbelievable benefit to the sentient beings.

I forgot one thing. What I was saying before, the action of doing circumambulations, prostrations, making offerings, all this, towards the holy objects, statues, stupas and scriptures, everything becomes the cause of enlightenment, even if the motivation is nonvirtuous.

On the basis of that understanding, when we offer one tiny grain of rice or one tiny flower to a statue, stupa or scripture, what it says in the texts is that the happiness we get from that action is equal to all the happiness we have experienced from beginningless rebirths up to now, *that* much will be experienced in the future, from now on. *That* is the benefit contained in one grain of rice or one tiny flower offered to a holy object.

On top of that, because all this is temporary happiness, we achieve liberation from samsara, liberation from the oceans of samsara's suffering, including the cause. We get this benefit from this one grain of rice or one tiny flower offered to a statue, stupa or scripture.

On top of *that*, we attain great liberation, full enlightenment, cessation of all the gross and subtle mistakes of mind and the completion of all the qualities and realizations. We achieve all these benefits from offering this one grain of rice or this one tiny flower.

Even though the text says until we achieve liberation, it says “great liberation,” so the benefits don't stop until we liberate numberless sentient beings from each realm from the oceans of samsaric suffering and not only that, we bring each sentient being from each realm to enlightenment. When we, this one person, have brought every single sentient being to enlightenment, at *that* time, the benefits of offering this one grain of rice or this tiny flower to a picture of buddha are completed. *Only* at that time are the benefits completed.

So you see, now, how much benefit offering this one grain of rice or one tiny flower to a statue or stupa or scripture has. It's unimaginable, unimaginable! What we get from this is limitless skies.

These two things mentioned before, seeing holy objects and, here, but now here, offering to them, even tiny offerings, the benefit is limitless skies, so it's very important. So, we can see how going on pilgrimage is important, or even having holy objects in our own home. Having as many as possible is unbelievably important.

ADVICE ABOUT GOING ON PILGRIMAGE

You have been given this mantra now, so first you should generate the bodhicitta motivation before you circumambulate the holy objects. You can do that even before you go, before you leave here, you can generate the bodhicitta motivation from here. That's very good when you are going on a pilgrimage. So you can do that, you should do that now.

So, think: "The purpose of my life is to benefit for other sentient beings, to free the numberless sentient beings—to free the numberless hell beings, the hungry ghosts, the animals, the human beings, the suras and asuras—to free them from all the suffering and its causes and bring them to enlightenment. Therefore, I must achieve enlightenment. Therefore I need to purify defilements and collect extensive merits, in order to actualize the path. Therefore today I'm going on the pilgrimage." Think like that.

First you're going to Swayambunath. When you arrive at the stupa, generate the bodhicitta motivation again, and think, "Therefore I'm going to circumambulate and make offerings, and rejoice. I'm going to do this practice, making offerings and doing circumambulations." So you're going to make prostrations, then do offerings and rejoice.

Then you chant this mantra, but in your heart you need to think of sentient beings, not your own happiness. In your heart think of the numberless sentient beings: the hell realms, hungry ghosts, animals with the sufferings. Remember the hell beings with all their sufferings, the hungry ghosts with all their sufferings, the animals with all their sufferings, the human beings with all their sufferings, the suras and asuras, and in your heart think how they are so precious, how they are most precious, most kind to you, and how much they are suffering. That should be in your heart.

Instead of thinking of *my* happiness, instead of your heart overtaken by the selfish mind, my happiness, instead of that, you should think of the numberless beings' happiness, by knowing their suffering. If you make your heart like that, then your circumambulations and making offerings, all this, becomes for them.

So, having generated the bodhicitta motivation, then you chant this mantra. I don't remember a hundred percent, I have received the oral transmission of this mantra. I may have received it but I can't remember exactly. In recent times, I have taken many, many oral transmissions. You've got the paper. It's not the first one, the first one you know.

CHOM DÄN DÄ DE ZHIN SHEG PA DRA CHOM PA YANG DAG PAR DZOG PÄI SANG GYÄ
RINCHHEN GYÄLTSHAN LA CHHAG TSHÄL LO

That's oral transmission for you. Okay, seven times. Then you have received the oral transmission. I don't remember specifically where, but I may have received it.

OM NAMO BHAGAVATE RATNA KETU RAJAYA TATHAGATAYA ARHATE SAMYAK
SAMBUDDHAYA TADYATHA OM RATNE RATNE MAHA RATNE RATNA BIJA YE SVAHA

That's the oral transmission. You recite this seven times, or you can already start walking, then you chant, beginning with this mantra.

During the circumambulation the meditation is this. You can think you're leading numberless sentient beings in circumambulating this stupa. Think that this holy object, this stupa, this is all the guru, this is all your guru. However many gurus you have—one thousand, one billion—this is all the guru. These statues are the guru, then the numberless buddhas, the numberless Dharma, the numberless Sangha, the numberless statues, the numberless stupas, the numberless scriptures.

Thinking this way, if you circumambulate the stupa, you are circumambulating every single holy object that exists, not only in this universe but in numberless other universes. By circumambulating like that you create the cause of enlightenment, the numberless causes of enlightenment, because of the numberless holy objects: the statues, stupas, scriptures, and numberless buddhas. Because you have thought of these numberless buddhas, numberless Dharma, numberless Sangha, and made offering, you create cause of enlightenment numberless times—not only this one time but many times, then liberation from samsara and the happiness of future lives. That's how to recognize the holy objects. Then you circumambulate any holy object, like any of the stupas here or even if you have a small stupa or something like that in your house. I'm just using this as an example. If your house has a small stupa, then when you circumambulate this is how to think. Even if you're not in Nepal, you're at your house in the West, by meditating this way, that this is all the gurus, all the numberless buddhas, the Dharma, the Sangha, the numberless statues, stupas, everything, then you are circumambulating all the holy objects that exist. It's unbelievable! Can you imagine the merits, as I mentioned before?

That's the meditation we can do while you are circumambulating. Don't talk. Meditate during that time, meditate, don't talk. Do not waste other people's time, life, and your life, do meditation.

Here, there are many prayer wheels, many stupas around, so you can prostrate, if you want, but however, you keep your hands like this, prostrating, at least, as much as possible when you see statues, paintings of buddhas, prayer wheel or whatever.

Now you are seeing stupa there, so at least at this one, you can do this, prostration; that may be excellent. So, do three prostrations, then use this one mudra. [Rinpoche demonstrates the mudras]

This stupa is all the gurus, the numberless buddhas, the numberless Dharma, the numberless Sangha, the numberless statues, stupas, everything, that which exists in numberless universes, everything.

With that, this is what you think when you make offerings. With that meditation then you offer: flowers, khatags, scarfs. When you offer scarfs or grain you visualize wish-granting jewels. This way, you made offerings to every single holy object existing in numberless universes, not only this universe but numberless universes. Do you understand? Even if you are not in Tibet here you have already offered to all the holy objects in Tibet or India, China, wherever. So, you have already collected many times the numberless causes of enlightenment and all the other happinesses, liberation and enlightenment.

When you offer, also, if possible, think of sentient beings in your heart. Always, as much as possible, remember when you are offering, it is for sentient beings. So with that meditation, you offer the scarf. When you offer the scarf, normally what I advise is, first you make charity of the scarf, charity to numberless hell beings, numberless hungry ghosts, numberless animals, numberless human beings, numberless suras, numberless asuras, numberless intermediate state beings—to everybody you make charity, so you make numberless causes of enlightenment already. Then, this belongs to them, this belongs to everybody. It comes by the way that this belongs to everybody, besides your parents and your family.

It belongs to everybody, then, with yourself as a representative of everybody, you offer. With that meditation, you offer. This way, numberless hell beings collect merit, creating the cause for enlightenment; numberless hungry ghosts, numberless animals, insects, ants, those small ants, those tiny, tiny, insects in moist wood—everybody collects merit. So, you are helping all sentient beings collect merit. Then your family and all your friends come by the way.

This is so unbelievable, so good. Then you offer, to achieve enlightenment for sentient beings. On behalf of all sentient beings just offering to holy objects, already becomes the cause of enlightenment.

After you've offered, then do this prayer from the offering bath practice: "I offer this soft, thin, divine scarf to the vajra holy body with my inseparable devotion. May I and all sentient beings achieve your vajra holy body."

If it's a scripture, then it's same, "May I and all sentient beings achieve the vajra holy speech." Think like that.

Then a stupa represents the buddha's holy mind, so think, "May I and all sentient beings achieve the vajra holy mind." At the end you can do that.

The next dedication is to Palden Lhamo. "Due to all the three time merits collected by me, collected by others, may I become like you, glorified guru, Palden Lhamo. May I become only like your glorified guru's holy body. Then, the holy surrounding of the guru. Then, your lifespan. Then, your holy field, like a pure land or a holy field. Then, like your holy name, to become *only* Shakyamuni Buddha. Here, the idea is there is no separation between Shakyamuni Buddha and the guru, it's one. You should pray like this.

If it's Amitabha Buddha, it's the same. Whichever deity, it's oneness with the guru, there's no separation. That one is the guru, guru is that one. [Rinpoche snaps his fingers] With that mind, with that heart, that devotional heart, you do this prayer.

Then the last one, ...[Tib] “Due to having praised to you, requested ...[Tib] myself and so forth”—that means your family members or people who have a connection to you. “Wherever we are,”—you shouldn't only think like Kopan when you are there, or Swayambunath, not only the place you are, where you and others are, that means you should think the universe, world, country and then area, the place, your house, or wherever. ...[Tib] “To pacify all the sicknesses, poverty and spirit harm”—poverty has two levels, material poverty and poverty of the Dharma, so here it's to pacify both poverties. ...[Tib] “May the Dharma and auspiciousness be increased.” This is the prayer.

In the heart what you should think that yourself and your family or people with connection to you, the beings in this universe, the world, the country, the place, the house, just merely being, then you are able to help the numberless sentient beings who are in this universe, this world, this country, this house, to purify all their negative karmas collected from beginningless rebirths up to now. They completely get purified, they never get reborn in the lower realms, and they find faith in the karma, cause and effect, the results of their actions. Then they find devotion in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, and actualize bodhicitta and achieve enlightenment as quickly as possible.

Then also, war, famine, disease, torture, poverty, sicknesses, dangers of fire and water, earthquakes, all these things, wherever is happening, may it be stopped immediately. And may nobody in this world experience any of these problems. So this prayer is very important.

After the last of these three dedications, you offer the scarf. This is what I normally advise, so you can do that.

Then the rice. Venerable Neil has already explained about the wish-granting jewel, the highest one, the most rare, how each one is a wish-granting jewel, so how many grains you have, they are all wish-granting jewels.

With that meditation you make this offering. Then in the mind, the whole sky is filled with wish-granting jewels. You make offerings to the holy objects like that, using the rice grains.

So, it's unimaginable! I've already mentioned the benefits. Only after you have brought everybody to enlightenment, only at that time, will the merit of each grain finish. But *here* you have visualized wish-granting jewels. Wow! So it's the most merit, from each grain or from each wish-granting jewel, you get all this benefit which I've explained before. Then there's so much result, happiness, now and in future lives.

So then at the stupa, if you have a khatag you can offer it. You can offer a khatag on behalf of everybody, or if each individual person has a scarf you can all offer like that.

The other thing I always say is, the next thing is you rejoice, you rejoice.

The person who had the idea of making these holy objects—the stupa, temple, the statue—who had the idea to build them, and all the benefactors who funded the money, who gave money for this, they all collect inconceivable, inconceivable merits, unbelievable merits. Then, thirdly, all the people who built them, who actually worked on them, collect inconceivable, inconceivable merits. So then you rejoice from the heart. The person who had the idea, the benefactors and then workers who built them collect inconceivable merits, unbelievable, so rejoice, feeling happiness.

When you do that, if your level of mind is higher than them you collect double merits. You collect more merit than all those people who built this unbelievably large stupa or statue or temple. If your level of mind is higher than them, you create double merits. You just came here and rejoiced, but they put unbelievable effort, months or years, into it, but you create double merit if your level of mind is higher.

If your level of mind is same as them you collect the same amount of merit. If your level of mind is lower than them, by rejoicing you get half of the merit they collected, so, it's unimaginable.

So last thing is to rejoice. If you see a stupa, temple, whatever it is, the last thing is to rejoice.

If you rejoice, while you are in samsara you are still able to build a temple or stupa like this, hundreds, thousands of times. You are able to do that just from rejoicing in this. By rejoicing in this, you create the cause to be able to build hundreds of thousands, so many, like King Asoka built ten million stupas one day. Rejoicing is a very important practice you can do to collect extensive merits so easily. So same thing, when you go to temples, then rejoice. It's unbelievable.

I think, as you walk around you should always chant the mantra. With that meditation, to purify the mind, you can always chant the mantra. Not only do you create physical virtue, creating cause of enlightenment, but also with speech, if you chant mantra, you create cause of enlightenment as well, the happiness in future life, all that. The Vajrasattva mantra or OM MANI PADME HUM, the Medicine Buddha mantra, whatever, you can chant those mantras.

After you've finished the circumambulation then you do the dedications. Individually you can dedicate or whatever, or as a group, to generate, to actualize bodhicitta, to achieve enlightenment for sentient beings. Dedicate like this. "As the three times' buddhas dedicated their merits, I dedicate all my merits." Do the dedications in the Lama Tsongkhapa tradition, and then the other dedications. It's very important to do the Lama Tsongkhapa ones. "Due to all the three times' merits collected by me, collected by others, may Lama Tsongkhapa be my direct Mahayana guru in all my lifetimes, to guide me and those who are connected to me"—then can think like this—"and all the students, the supporters, all those people working for the organization, may they never to be separated from the pure path that is admired by all the buddhas."

So you see, if you're doing one circumambulation, it not only purifies you. Beams emitted from the stupa or statues purify all six realms' sentient beings. They not only purify you but purify six realms' sentient beings, so that's very good.

Then, at the end, you give away all your past, present and future merits, and the results, up to enlightenment—everything, the merits and results up to enlightenment, you give to every hell being, every hungry ghost, every animal, every human being, every sura being, every asura being, every intermediate state being. You completely give all the merits up to enlightenment to them, completely, so they can attain a pure land and a perfect human rebirth, with perfect surroundings, wealth and so forth, then, actualize the complete path in their hearts, and be liberated from all the gross and subtle defilements. Then they all get enlightened: every hell being becomes enlightened, every hungry ghost becomes enlightened, every animal, sura and asura being—everyone becomes enlightened. This is what you do at the end of the circumambulation.

But if you are doing more circumambulations, for example seven times, the first circumambulation is for all sentient beings but particularly the hell beings. When you finish that, you give all the merits, including enlightenment, everything to others, but especially the hell beings, and they become enlightened.

Then you circumambulate for the preta beings, for all sentient beings, but especially the preta beings, and at the end you give everything, all the merits up to enlightenment, to the pretas, to all sentient beings but especially the preta, and they become enlightened.

Then you circumambulate to liberate sentient beings, but especially the animals, then at the end, you give everything, all the results, all the merits, up all the enlightenment, to all sentient beings but especially the animals. So do like that for the human beings, the suras and the asuras. After you finish that, for the seven intermediate state beings.

You can do also circumambulations to the long life of the Guru. You can do that, and then for the Dharma to exist for a long time. Then, you can also circumambulate for the Sangha, dedicating for the Sangha to attain the path. And then also for the benefactors, the supporters, who help the teachings of the Buddha, the Sangha, for their long life, for their success.

Then, at the end, at the very end, when you finish the preliminaries, then you can multiply the merits one hundred thousand times, today's merit, whatever you collected, increased one hundred thousand times by doing the multiplying mantra.

[Rinpoche chants the multiplying mantras as found in the FPMT texts.]

Recite the mantra seven times.

Then at the end. [Rinpoche chants the last mantra of the multiplying mantras.]

Medicine Buddha. [Rinpoche recites the Medicine Buddha mantra.]

By reciting these two, whatever prayer you do gets actualized.

That's it, anyway. It's part of the subject of the course.

Jang chub...

[The students offer a short mandala.]

So very important to do this one, prostration, when you see a holy object, always. Pray, and prostrate to all paintings. Do like that. Then, if there's a billion images, you create a billion causes of enlightenment. Think in the mind, I'm prostrating to all of them.

Then, if possible, think guru, all these are guru—that's guru yoga—and then you collect the most merit.

Thank you very much. Thank you.

Lecture 20

BUDDHISM AND THE BRITISH COME TO TIBET

In the different parts of Tibet, Padmasambhava subdued many spirits, the owners of the land. I don't know the exact word, not owning the land. Padmasambhava advised to build a temple on the heart, and then on the important parts of the body, on the head, to control them.

Due to that, he was able to preserve the complete Buddhism, not just only Hinayana or only Paramitayana, Mahayana Paramitayana, without tantra, not only that but complete Buddhism. In some other countries, there is only Hinayana, in some countries there is only the Paramitayana, Mahayana sutras. But in Tibet, the entire teachings came from India.

After some time degeneration happened, so then Lama Atisha was invited and made it pure, by writing *The Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment*, which I did not finish the oral transmission, which I started.

So anyway, in Tibet the main goal of the government and the population was just to spread Dharma, to preserve it. There were the monasteries for learning. There were also nunneries, but maybe not so much developing philosophical education, and then caves, hermitages, full of hermits, unbelievable, unbelievable. Due to listening, reflecting and then meditating, numberless beings attained the path, becoming bodhisattvas and buddhas. It happened like that to so many in Tibet. Unbelievable.

They didn't have influence over companies from the outside world, building business there and developing companies. That didn't happen; they didn't do that, they didn't pay attention, spreading Dharma. [Rinpoche is laughing while he's talking] It's very interesting, it never came there.

The ambassador of the British people came. I don't know what it was called—a son, a member—I'm not sure, but he came into Tibet, and things like that, but not much. So anyway, one time there a war was happening with British. They travelled to Tibet. The British army went there and the Ganden Tripa and his attendant went to see the army from Tibetan side.

Geshe Sopa Rinpoche's guru was the Ganden Tripa. Geshe Sopa Rinpoche was Lama Yeshe's and my teacher. He is an outstanding teacher, known in Tibet, learned in Sera, Ganden, Drepung, all the monasteries. He has lived in America for maybe thirty years, I'm not sure. That is due to his attendant, whom he met at the airport for the very first time, called John. John helped him receive a job at the University of Wisconsin, in Madison, Wisconsin, to teach Buddhism and Tibetan letters. I think he worked for a long time, and then retired quite some time ago.

Geshe Sopa Rinpoche's guru, the Ganden Tripa, was regent of Lama Tsongkhapa's lineage. He completed everything, he was most expert, he had special way of teaching, a very clear way of teaching Dharma, the philosophy. There is a special lineage from there to Geshe Sopa Rinpoche, and I think to Lama Yeshe, a special lineage.

There were no Tibetan armies to meet the British, so Ganden Tripa, this regent of Lama Tsongkhapa, this great teacher, he and his attendant, went. There was no Tibetan army. Tibet didn't have an army so he went alone to the British army. The attendant was carrying a big gong—you saw the gong here, in Kopan Monastery, the gong to call the monks for puja—so he had a big gong. The attendant was ringing the gong and the old Ganden Tripa went together, nobody, no armies. That's how they went to see the British army. They went there, like this. [Rinpoche laughs] From far, they were ringing the gong, then Ganden Tripa talked to the British and it was resolved.

That may be explained by Geshe Sopa Rinpoche, I think.

So, it's very wonderful, Buddhism was able to be purely preserved for a long time, becoming so strong, with so many actualized beings. Even the whole land was so blessed until recently, when there have been twenty years of so much destruction.

RINPOCHE VISITS THE HOLY LAKES OF TIBET

When I was going through the main road to Lhasa, you see the land, something, the essence is gone. Even the land is very sad, kind of like that. You feel it, the essence is gone. But then there's some part of the land that doesn't have that feeling.

We went from Takpa Shedup Ling, the monastery of the root guru Pabongka Dechen Nyingpo, the great teacher of the lam-rim, up to the Palden Lhamo Lake. There's a special lake where Palden Lhamo resides, situated in the area, capable of predictions. The lake itself is something like TV, like Tibetan TV. For those who can see very clear, it shows things, depending what question you have. It's like TV, very clear for those who can see. I think there are two aspects, one a little bit unclear, one like TV, becoming clear.

Not only that, but in the area it's a very holy place, an unbelievable holy place. There's a Mahakala lake—a different Mahakala, this is the four-armed Mahakala lake. You see the mountain, but you don't see the lake, but you have to go. There are many, many lakes there, with different protectors. There's one called Rahula [Tib] a protector who you see in

thangkas, with many, many eyes on the body, many, many eyes, and the bottom part is a snake, there is one lake for that protector. I didn't see that protector. You see the mountain of that protector, where it's situated, totally black, a totally different color. The protector is a sort of black color, and the mountain is like that. You cross the mountain and there's a lake. Not so many people go there.

Then there's a Twenty-one Taras Lake, with very low water, but a kind of green or blue color. Some of the water's shallow, but some people receive also their predictions from there, so there are many people.

Every mountain has a name. There's a huge mountain for Maitreya Buddha. I think that means the holy mind is habituated with that or something to do with that.

We were going through there, going up to see the Palden Lhamo Lake or the Hayagriva Lake. We were going up like this, we went to the nomads and had food, and then, going up like this, there's the Maitreya Buddha mountain, then we were going up like that. There's a mountain like this, filled with flowers, on top there's a rock where dakinis dance, so we did tsog offering there on the stone. It's filled with flowers.

There's Dorje Palmo, a female enlightened being, at the peak, and on top of that is a cemetery, where people bring the bodies, when the people die. They bring the bodies there and offer charity for the birds, the vultures, who eat them.

When we were going up, then from the mountain, down below, water came. Of course, those who have pure karma, they see deities, there are protectors and things. There was Geshe Lama Konchog. He was someone who could see, a great yogi. Then there was Lama Yeshe's brother, whose face is exactly the same, and a monk from Tantric College who did a Guhyasamaja three year retreat at Dharamsala, he was there. Then there was Gelek Gyatso, the young incarnate lama who built all these buildings here at Kopan. He's now in the United States. He was there, and Tsen-la, a Tibetan nun who translates for many centers, who is from Kopan, the very first. There were three nuns at the very, very beginning, and she was one of them. Somebody like myself cannot see, but it shows signs that there are deities existing there, protectors. You see the signs.

At the Hayagriva Lake, we went there to do tsog. During the puja the water that was coming down from the mountain became very strong, but when the puja finished, the water becomes low again. And then very, very fine snowfalls came during the tsog.

Also the Palden Lhamo Lake, on the second day we did Palden Lhamo protector puja. This is the Tibetan government's protector, His Holiness the Dalai Lama's protector. Palden Lhamo is the wrathful protector of the Yangchenma, the female enlightened wisdom being, the same as Tara.

There was snow, very fine snowflakes or something, in the shape sort of like a tent, like this, went around during the tsog, during the Palden Lhamo puja. The shape came and went around. You see the signs, whatever you see, even if you don't see the actual deity, the protector or things like that.

So, it is a quite amazing place. There was a monastery before the destruction, before it was taken over by the Mainland China government. Gyalwa Thubten Gyatso, the second Dalai Lama, built this monastery. The first one built was Tashi Lhunpo Monastery, the Panchen Lama's monastery, Gyalwa Gedun Trukpa.

They totally destroyed this monastery right there, so they just built a few rooms, and then the mud is just dried mud, this is the very first time people gathered there and having some Dharma, very first time, after twenty years. This is the very, very first time.

So it happened, our going there, it happened that at the same time, there was a Palden Lhamo statue made in Lhasa. They made it quite high, and they were bringing it by truck. It was very, very nicely made, like the pearls, with the shell, teeth, very, very beautiful. It happened at the same time as we were at the monastery, they were doing the Palden Lhamo puja. It was very wonderful, the monastery, their own style, very wonderful, and then the people offered yaks for the protector, so outside the temple there were yaks, offered to the protector. They put them on the mountains. You can sometimes see the yaks they offer to the protector on the mountains; they become very big.

There was the abbot from the old time at that monastery. Geshe Lama Konchog said that this abbot had a blowing-shell shape [conch?] under his feet. I guess he was born with that or maybe it came later. He didn't suffer much during those twenty years of total destruction in Tibet under the mainland government. He became a shepherd, looking after the sheep, during those years, so nothing really difficult happened to him and he was able to come back. Then a few monks returned. They were already disrobed and it was difficult during those times to be monk, but they came back to help.

While we were there, about five hundred Tibetan people came, mostly nomads in the area, to attend the long life initiation. The abbot was going to do it but then they asked me to do.

For more than twenty years, nothing had happened there, there was so much destruction, so much unbelievable killing. During the initiation, however, some light rain came, which was somehow a sign of the protectors being there, that they were happy. I think that it happened.

So, anyway, from Takpa Shedup Ling, Pabongka Dechen Nyingpo's guru's monastery, from there up to this Palden Lhamo Lake, the power of the place had not degenerated. It's very glorious, very green and very glorious area. I saw a letter explaining that in all the holy places, where all those beings there, when they die, they don't get reborn in the lower realms because of the blessing of the holy place. It's mentioned there.

I thought maybe it was because people who are born there have a good heart. I thought this because we met a boy when we were going up to the lake. He was helping us, explaining things, guiding us, so just from seeing him I thought maybe the people in that area might have good heart. That's why, and also by the blessing received from the place, they are able to die with a virtuous thought. That's what I thought, maybe they have a good heart and so they don't get reborn in the lower realms.

When all the destruction happened for more than twenty years—unbelievable, unbelievable destruction—quite a number of monks and some high lamas came to India, but not all were

able to come. Mainly because His Holiness was able to come out, those who did were able to establish monasteries there, to restore and revive the tradition again. I'm talking here about the Lama Tsongkhapa tradition: Sera, Ganden and Drepung, each with two divisions: Sera Je, Mey and Ganden has two monastic universities and Drepung has two monastic universities. Then there is Tashi Lungpo, the Panchen Lama's monastery.

Then also the Kagyü, Nyingma and Shakya traditions were also able to rebuild many of their monasteries, and so they have been able to continue the education, to educate the young monks and also many lamas.

Because of that Tibetan Buddhism is now able to spread even in the West—I guess to most of the Western world—which has been dark and now is able to have the light of Dharma spread there. Every year, tens of thousands are able to make their lives meaningful by meeting the Buddhadharma, have the opportunity to follow the path to enlightenment. They are able to find answers in their lives, which they could not find from Western culture or the education. They are able to find it here by meeting the Buddhadharma. That includes us, it includes you yourself, it includes me myself. We are able to meet the Buddhadharma because of that stupa, it's from the Boudhanath Stupa. You've heard the story.

The mother and her four children built it, but the mother passed away when they reached the vase of the stupa, so her four sons completed the stupa and each one made a prayer. The first one made prayer to be Dharma king in Tibet; and the next one made prayer to be a minister, to help; next one made prayer to be the abbot, to pass the lineage of ordination; next one made prayer to be a powerful yogi to pacify obstacles. There were also others.

So that's what I'm saying. Then all that happened in Tibet and why you met Buddhadharma, including myself, is from that stupa. After building the stupa they made prayers to spread Dharma in Tibet. It's very important to understand that.

SWAYAMBHUNATH

You mentioned about Swayambhunath? [Rinpoche may be asking Ven. Neil.] Have you mentioned about Swayambhunath?

The Buddha came to this high mountain, not Swayambhunath but other side, and made a prediction. I think at that time, the whole Kathmandu valley was filled with water. You can see the mountains around. So, it was a lake, completely filled. The Buddha predicted that in the future, there would be crystal stupa, not made by hand, but a manifestation of all the buddhas' holy mind, the dharmakaya, which would naturally appear on this lake, and this would be covered by earth.

That crystal stupa is the most amazing, the most precious, the holiest object. It's inside the mountain, not on top. I thought before it was at the top, the stupa, but later I read the stories. It's inside the mountain, and because of that most people circumambulate the mountain. Instead of circumambulating on top, most people get up and go there. Some people get up three o'clock in the morning, some get up four o'clock, lay people and those older mothers, they go there and circumambulate in the morning and they circumambulate

in the evening time. Really, just that is unbelievable, unbelievable, unbelievable powerful purification. It purifies so many eons. In the lifetime so many negative karmas and defilements get purified, and they collect inconceivable merits, amazing, unbelievable, most fortunate. Whether you have Dharma education or not, but just because of the existence of that holy object, if you take the opportunity to do this, to do circumambulation and prostrations, it is said it makes unbelievable preparation in your mind to quickly achieve enlightenment.

So many lay people go and do that in the morning, and while they are doing that, they do their prayers at the same time, collecting extensive merit of body, speech, and mind.

That's something other countries don't have, something like Swayambunath, where all the buddhas' holy mind manifests in the stupa, inside the mountain. That mountain has got deity Heruka's mandala, that's also one thing. So, to circumambulate is very beneficial. I think the number of circumambulations to accomplish is supposed to be a hundred and thirteen or something like that.

Anyway, I started the oral transmission, so we should continue with that, as soon as possible.

THE BENEFITS OF THE PROSTRATION MUDRA

Remember I told you yesterday that it's very important when you see holy objects to keep your hands like this. [Rinpoche demonstrates the prostration mudra.] I emphasized this yesterday. It has eight very important benefits. The minute you see a stupa or a statue, a picture or a painting of a buddha, when you do this, you get the eight very important benefits immediately.

In your next life you receive a perfect body, a deva or a human body, with perfect senses, perfect limbs, which allows you to practice Dharma to benefit others.

The next result is to have perfect people surrounding you so that your Dharma wishes get fulfilled. Whatever wishes you have for practicing Dharma, for benefiting other sentient beings, for serving the teachings of the Buddha, you're able to get done when you have perfect people surrounding you.

Then next one is to be able to live in pure morality. It becomes cause to live in pure morality. Without pure morality, you can't achieve perfect meditation, samadhi or shamatha. Samadhi is the concentration, shamatha is calm abiding. You can't achieve perfect meditation and without that you can't achieve great insight, deriving the rapturous ecstasy of the body and mind, by analyzing, doing meditation on emptiness, unified with the calm abiding, shamatha. You can't have that realization, great insight, the higher training of wisdom; you can't have the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness. Without that, you can't cease the defilements, you can't cease the disturbing thought obscurations directly.

Without the wisdom directly perceiving emptiness, you cannot cease the subtle defilements, so that means you can't achieve either liberation or enlightenment. So that means, of course, you can't liberate numberless sentient beings from the oceans of samsaric suffering and

bring them to enlightenment. Therefore, when you prostrate like this to a statue or painting of a buddha you create the cause to live in pure morality. That's unbelievably important.

Then, the next one is devotion, to create cause to achieve devotion. Again it's the same thing. Without devotion, you can't receive the blessings of the Guru, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. Without that, you can't achieve realizations of the path to liberation and enlightenment.

So, devotion is an extremely important foundation. Even if a person doesn't have much understanding, doesn't have the intellect, but has strong devotion, he or she is a very lucky person. Conversely, a person who has intellect but no devotion, is not a lucky person, is not a fortunate person. The person with so much devotion to the Guru, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, even without much intellect, is a lucky person, he or she can achieve realizations, even if there's not much intellect.

It is said in the lam-rim teachings that somebody who has devotion, who correctly devotes to the Virtuous Friend, even if he is as foolish as a dog or a pig, there's no hardships, no difficulties, to become like Manjushri, the Buddha of Wisdom, and Chenrezig, the embodiment of all the buddhas' compassion. Kadampa Geshe Chengawa mentioned that. One who correctly devotes to the Virtuous Friend, even if he is a fool—F.O.O.L.—like a dog and pig, has no difficulties to become like Manjushri.

Normally I think anybody who has great devotion is a very lucky person, a very lucky person. Somebody it's very hard to generate this, to develop this is because there are many blockage in the mind. You can be very intellectual but have many blockages, many superstitious thoughts, and that blocks it. But some people of very high intelligence also have a lot of merit, a lot of good karma, and they are able to achieve realizations quickly. So this is devotion.

Then, the next result is to have courage, a brave heart. This is the courage to be a leader of the people, to lead them in having a kind, generous life, to lead in Dharma, to lead in the path to liberation and enlightenment, to lead people for good. So courage has two aspects: the courage to offer service, and to bring other sentient beings to courage.

Then, the next one is you get reborn in deva or human realm. You create the cause to be born in deva or human realm.

The last two are very important ones. The next is to create the cause to achieve the arya path, the exalted path. You no longer create negative karma, the cause of samsara, by achieving this arya path, and then of course if it's the bodhisattva's arya path then you don't get reborn into the suffering of rebirth, old age, sickness, and death. You don't experience all that if you achieve the arya path of bodhisattva.

Number eight is enlightenment.

So you get these eight benefits the minute you put your palms together to a statue of a buddha, or picture or painting of a buddha, or a scripture, besides actually prostrating to the Triple Gem.

I thought to mention that. It's very important to write this down and to actually know yourself.

Normally I say, when you go on pilgrimage or when you're in a temple, as I mentioned, there are many paintings and statues of the Buddha, and paintings of the Buddha's life stories, so in your mind you should think, "I'm prostrating." Even though you don't have time to look at every single buddha in the paintings, but in the heart you can think, "I'm going to prostrate to all these holy objects," to all the statues, stupas, scriptures, paintings of buddhas, in your heart think, this is for the benefit of all sentient beings. You think that, then you put your palms together, and you think in mind, "I'm prostrating." You turn around like this.

If you don't have time to prostrate to each single one, think in the mind, "I'm prostrating to all," and then just turn around. It doesn't even take a minute, it doesn't even take a minute, but if there are a billion holy objects there, then you have created a billion causes for enlightenment, and by the way, a billion causes for liberation from samsara and a billion causes for happiness in future lives. You create that if there are a billion holy objects there—statues, paintings of buddhas, Dharma scriptures, stupas. It doesn't even take a minute to go like this, it doesn't even take a minute.

It's same at your own house. If there are many Buddhist statues, many buddha pictures in your shrine room or in the house, but because you have so many it's not possible every time you enter, to put your palms like this, each time you enter the room. If possible, let yourself become habituated like that, create the habit of good karma, create the habit of the cause of enlightenment, of liberation from samsara. Let yourself be habituated in that. Then every time that happens, it's unbelievable. Every time you enter the room, you make your life unbelievably, unbelievably, most meaningful. However many holy objects are there, statues, stupas, scriptures, pictures of buddhas—even in one photo there can be so many—think, "I'm prostrating to all these holy objects," so that gets done if you think that when you enter the room.

At least, even one time a day, you do this for all the house. It doesn't even take a minute, just a few seconds, and it's unbelievable, unbelievable, what you can do with your life. However many thousands or millions of holy objects there are, you create that many causes to achieve all those happinesses. It's unbelievable.

Before you went to the holy place yesterday I explained the purpose of going for pilgrimage. Now you understand the importance, what a pilgrimage means, , what it means, pilgrimage, you understand from that, by knowing the benefits, even just the putting palms together, the benefits of that, very important eight benefits, by the way, unimaginable merits you collect, purified.

THE ORAL TRANSMISSION OF *LAMP FOR THE PATH*

I think I maybe stopped at the third page.

Okay, I'll start from this book. Geshe Sonam Rinchen, the very learned teacher from the Library in Dharamsala, his translator Ruth translated this text, Lama Atisha's teaching, *The Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment*. This is the root of all the lam-rim teachings.

I'm going to read from the back of the second page, the back side. I may have done that already, I'm not sure, but just to make sure.

So, think, "The purpose of my life is to benefit all sentient beings, to free them from all the suffering causes, and bring them to enlightenment. Therefore, I must achieve enlightenment. Therefore, I'm going to take the oral transmission of *The Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment*, in order to actualize the path."

This is to benefit every hell being, every hungry ghost, every animal, every insect, every mosquito, every cockroach, every tiger, every snake, and every human being, every sura being, every asura being, every intermediate state being—to benefit everyone, to bring them to enlightenment.

If possible think, feel in your heart, instead of me, my happiness, filling up the heart, you can feel more the sentient beings, their happiness, that's very good.

Then think that the lama who is giving the *lung* as the deity. From your side, normally when you receive teachings, it's good to think something like "Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is giving me lung through this form, to me. Manjushri is giving me lung, Maitreya Buddha is giving me lung, Tara is giving me lung, giving me teachings, all the numberless buddhas, in this form, are giving me this teaching, this oral transmission." It is very good to remember this when you do this meditation, so that you feel guided by all the buddhas. That's the reality, that you are guided by all the buddhas. It's good to think like that.

And it's good to think, "Each word I listen to liberates me from the oceans of samsaric suffering and brings me to enlightenment." So, each word is like a light, the Dharma light, in that it illuminates and it eliminates ignorance. When you turn the light on in a dark room, the darkness is gone. Each word does this to your heart, to your mind.

And then dedicate each word then this way. You know that each word is so precious, so unbelievably precious for your life, to benefit you. That helps you to pay attention to every single word as much as possible, and to not miss any.

Then also, pray, "May each word I listen to be most beneficial for all the sentient beings. When I reveal this word to sentient beings, may they achieve all the realizations immediately." You must pray, dedicate like that, so that gradually it can happen that. And also to receive realizations within you while you are listening. That's good.

[Rinpoche gives the *lung* of the text.]

According to the ritual described in
The chapter on discipline in the *Bodhisattva Stages*,

Take the vow from a good
And well-qualified spiritual teacher.

Understand that a good spiritual teacher
Is one skilled in the vow ceremony,
Who lives by the vow and has
The confidence and compassion to bestow it.

However, in case you try but cannot
Find such a spiritual teacher,
I shall explain another
Correct procedure for taking the vow.

I shall write here very clearly, as explained
In the *Ornament of Manjushri's Buddha Land Sutra*,
How, long ago, when Manjushri was Ambaraja,
He aroused the intention to become enlightened.

“In the presence of the protectors,
I arouse the intention to gain full enlightenment.
I invite all beings as my guests
And shall free them from cyclic existence.

“From this moment onwards
Until I attain enlightenment,
I shall not harbor harmful thoughts,
Anger, avarice or envy.

“I shall cultivate pure conduct,
Give up wrong-doing and desire
And with joy in the vow of discipline
Train myself to follow the buddhas.

“I shall not be eager to reach
Enlightenment in the quickest way,
But shall stay behind till the very end,
For the sake of a single being.

“I shall purify limitless
Inconceivable lands
And remain in the ten directions
For all those who call my name.

“I shall purify all my bodily
And verbal forms of activity.
My mental activities, too, I shall purify
And do nothing that is non-virtuous.”

When those observing the vow
Of the active altruistic intention have trained well
In the three forms of discipline, their respect
For these three forms of discipline grows,
Which causes purity of body, speech and mind.

Therefore, through effort in the vow made by
Bodhisattvas for pure, full enlightenment,
The collections for complete enlightenment
Will be thoroughly accomplished.

All buddhas say the cause for the completion
Of the collections, whose nature is
Merit and exalted wisdom,
Is the development of higher perception.

Just as a bird with undeveloped
Wings cannot fly in the sky,
Those without the power of higher perception
Cannot work for the good of living beings.

The merit gained in a single day
By one who possesses higher perception
Cannot be gained even in a hundred lifetimes
By one without such higher perception.

Those who want swiftly to complete
The collections for full enlightenment
Will accomplish higher perception
Through effort, not through laziness.

Without the attainment of calm abiding,
Higher perception will not occur.
Therefore make repeated effort
To accomplish calm abiding.

While the conditions for calm abiding
Are incomplete, meditative stabilization
Will not be accomplished, even if one meditates
Strenuously for thousands of years.

Thus maintaining well the conditions mentioned
In the *Collection for Meditative Stabilization Chapter*,
Place the mind on any one
Virtuous focal object.

When the practitioner has gained calm abiding,
Higher perception will also be gained,

But without practice of the perfection of wisdom,
The obstructions will not come to an end.

Thus, to eliminate all obstructions
To liberation and omniscience,
The practitioner should continually cultivate
The perfection of wisdom with skillful means.

Wisdom without skillful means
And skillful means, too, without wisdom
Are referred to as bondage.
Therefore do not give up either.

To eliminate doubts concerning
What is called wisdom and what skillful means,
I shall make clear the difference
Between skillful means and wisdom.

Apart from the perfection of wisdom,
All virtuous practices such as
The perfection of giving are described
As skillful means by the Victorious Ones.

Whoever, under the influence of familiarity
With skillful means, cultivates wisdom
Will quickly attain enlightenment—
Not just by meditating on selflessness.

Understanding emptiness of inherent existence
Through realizing that the aggregates, constituents
And sources are not produced
Is described as wisdom.

Something existent cannot be produced,
Nor something non-existent, like a sky flower.
These errors are both absurd and thus
Both of the two will not occur either.

A thing is not produced from itself,
Nor from another, also not from both,
Nor causelessly either, thus it does not
Exist inherently by way of its own entity.

Moreover, when all phenomena are examined
As to whether they are one or many,
They are not seen to exist by way of their own entity,
And thus are ascertained as not inherently existent.

The reasoning of the *Seventy Stanzas on Emptiness*,
The *Treatise on the Middle Way* and so forth
Explain that the nature of all things
Is established as emptiness.

Since there are a great many passages,
I have not cited them here,
But have explained just their conclusions
For the purpose of meditation.

Thus, whatever is meditation
On selflessness, in that it does not observe
An inherent nature in phenomena,
Is the cultivation of wisdom.¹⁰

Rinpoche: I'm not sure what it's saying. I don't remember the Tibetan, it sounds like the inherent nature in phenomena is the cultivation of wisdom. [Rinpoche laughs]

Just as wisdom does not see
An inherent nature in phenomena,
Having analyzed wisdom itself by reasoning,
Non-conceptually meditate on that.

The nature of this worldly existence,
Which has come from conceptualization,
Is conceptuality. Thus the elimination of
Conceptuality is the highest state of nirvana.¹¹

Rinpoche: Even on the perfume, that's called nirvana. On the perfume?

The great ignorance of conceptuality
Makes us fall into the ocean of cyclic existence.
Resting in non-conceptual stabilization,
Space-like non-conceptuality manifests clearly.

When bodhisattvas non-conceptually contemplate
This excellent teaching, they will transcend
Conceptuality, so hard to overcome,
And eventually reach the non-conceptual state.¹²

Rinpoche: Oh, we're finishing. I thought it would take a long time. When it came to emptiness I thought it was near the end.

¹⁰ Vv. 22–53.

¹¹ Vv. 54 & 55

¹² Vv. 56 & 57.

Having ascertained through scripture
And through reasoning that phenomena
Are not produced nor inherently existent,
Meditate without conceptuality.

Having thus meditated on suchness,
Eventually, after reaching “heat” and so forth.
The “very joyful” and the others are attained
And, before long, the enlightened state of buddhahood.

If you wish to create with ease
The collections for enlightenment
Through activities of pacification,
Increase and so forth, gained by the power of mantra,

And also through the force of the eight
And other great attainments like the “good pot”—
If you want to practice secret mantra,
As explained in the action and performance tantras,

Then, to receive the preceptor initiation,
You must please an excellent spiritual teacher
Through service, valuable gifts and the like
As well as through obedience.¹³

Rinpoche: Through valuable gifts, like ice cream! [Rinpoche laughs] Steaks, ice cream, American steaks! I’m joking! Milkshakes, chocolate drinks.

Through the full bestowing of the preceptor initiation,
By a spiritual teacher who is pleased,
You are purified of all wrong-doing
And become fit to gain powerful attainments.¹⁴

Rinpoche: There’s a story, I don’t remember, exactly, but just gives you an idea, rough, I think the Thirteenth Dalai Lama or the Seventh Dalai Lama, I’m not sure. This one geshe from Drepung, I think, the geshe has one nickname, he was kind of a friend to the Dalai Lama, he was somebody who talks straight and that His Holiness meets. I don’t remember his name, I think some nickname, I think.

There’s a very useful, very inspiring story for our daily life, for our practice. Panchen Palden Yeshe is the Panchen Lama’s very, very early incarnation. It happened early, I don’t know, maybe the fourth or fifth, I’m not sure, maybe the seventh or some beginning path of the incarnations of Panchen Lama, and his disciple, Avi Geshe Chenmo.

¹³ Vv. 58–62.

¹⁴ V. 63.

They have a direct disciple, Shenzhan Pandita, Lobsing Targyey Gyatso. He did a commentary on the *Interpretive and Definitive Meaning: The Good Explanations of Lama Tsongkhapa's Teachings*, a very important teaching. During the teaching, it sort mentions a disciple of the seventh Dalai Lama, the Omniscient One, Kelsang Gyatso. The geshe's name is Sam-lo Mi-tung-wa. I think maybe it's a nick name because *tung-wa* means "short" and so *mi-tung-wa* means "non-short," therefore his is "Geshe whose mind is non-short." His Holiness the Dalai Lama was extremely happy with him normally. He once went to see His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Kelsang Gyatso and asked, "In the next life, where will I be reborn?" He asked for a prediction. His Holiness the Dalai Lama replied, "Oh, the minute you die you will be born as an ox with blue horns." Geshe Mi-tung-wa just laughed when he heard this. He didn't get upset at all; he only laughed. So the Omniscient One, the seventh Dalai Lama asked, "What do you think? What made you just laugh?"

Geshe Mi-tung-wa replied, "Oh *leksa*, oh yes, I'm a debater, I'm the *Tsen-nyi-ba* who analyzes the nature of phenomena in debate. " I think a *tsen-nyi-ba* debater is like a scientist, a teacher. "Oh, yes, according to *tsen-nyi-pa*, even if you get born as an ox in the next life, first you have to be born in the intermediate state. You don't get born *immediately* as an ox, first you have to be in the intermediate state."

Unless you're going to be born in the formless realm, you have to be born in the intermediate stage, then you are born into either the desire realm or the form realm, in any of those six realms.

The geshe said, "In the intermediate state, before you get born you have to meet the female ox, then you have to enter the womb, then gradually you have to develop. You get hairs on the body, then the horns come out." So, he said, "The minute the consciousness transfers from this life, there is no chance to do all these things, to *immediately* become an ox with blue horns coming out. The thought that this could happen in such a short time is what makes me laugh." He said this to His Holiness.

When he heard what the geshe had said, the Victorious One, the Omniscient One, His Holiness laughed and laughed. It made him laugh and laugh.

Then His Holiness said, "Oh, now, you'll be born as a gelong, you will be born as a fully ordained monk in the next life, then you become my disciple and be part of my entourage."

To that the geshe replied, "Your explanation especially doesn't fit my superstitious mind, my reasoning mind. Because you just mentioned that I was going to be reborn as an ox, and now I'm going to be born as a fully ordained monk, a gelong. I haven't done confession."

You see, between being told that he was going to be reborn as an ox and that he was going to reborn as a monk, he hadn't done any confession, so he was asking His Holiness how this was possible. He hadn't changed; he hadn't made confession in between that, the practice to purify negative karma.

So the geshe said, "I didn't collect the merit so how is it possible to become a gelong, a fully ordained monk?" His Holiness explained why his future life changed from an ox to a fully ordained monk. He said, "Because I'm a special object, in this life I have the blessings of

Chenrezig. Therefore, you did a good play with me and you made me happy and made me laugh. Therefore, your karma to be born as an ox was purified just by that. And you have already made preparations to be born as a gelong, a fully ordained monk.”

So, you understand, what it is saying here is that he was not joking, he was not telling a lie. You might be thinking he was joking, but it was not joking.

His Holiness predicted that he was going to be born as an ox, but then what happened was because the way the geshe debated back that it cannot happen immediately, that it takes time, entering the intermediate stage, finding the female ox and entering into the womb for however many months and then developing hairs and horns, that made His Holiness laugh so much, it made him happy. Then he told the geshe he would be reborn as a monk, because of course His Holiness is the embodiment of Chenrezig, enlightened Buddha of Compassion, because he is a holy object. The monk made His Holiness very happy, made him laugh, so that purified his negative karma, it purified his negative karma to be born as ox. And it created the karma to become a monk in the next life. Just the way he said that, that made His Holiness very, very happy, and that purified the negative karma to be born an ox and created the karma to become a monk. This is by the blessings of Chenrezig. What he means is that he's Chenrezig, the Compassion Buddha.

The reason I'm bringing up this story is that the Guru, the Virtuous Friend, is the most powerful object, the fastest method to collect merit. The parents are more powerful objects than outside people. More powerful than them is the Sangha, the monks and nuns. Then, even more powerful, is of course the aryan beings, the arhats. One bodhisattva is more powerful object to collect merit than all the countless arhats. It's unbelievable, unbelievable.

This is very important in your daily life so that we don't create heavy negative karma but instead collect extensive merits by knowing this. If you peer with your eyes, like this. [Rinpoche demonstrates] How do you say, peer? Peer, when you get angry, when you're jealous of somebody, how you look, peer, anyway, peer with the eyes.

If you look at a bodhisattva like that, the negative karma is the same as take out the eyes of all the beings in the three realms: the desire realm, the form realm and the formless realm. I think it mentioned the three realms. If you take the eyes of everybody, if you take the eyeballs out, the negative karma of looking at a bodhisattva like this is much heavier, by showing the whites of the eyes, by peering. The negative karma is heavier than taking out the eyeballs of all the desire realm beings, the form realm beings. If you disrespect a bodhisattva, the negative karma is much heavier than that.

Now, if you look at a bodhisattva with devotion, if you look at a bodhisattva correctly, you create unbelievable good karma. It's like putting the eyeballs back in all the desire realm beings and the form realm beings. You collect greater merit than putting the eyeballs back of that number of sentient beings, all the desire and form realm beings. You create greater merit if you look at a bodhisattva correctly with a devotional mind.

So, bodhicitta is unbelievably powerful, because bodhisattvas renounce the I and cherish all sentient beings and they are totally dedicated, only doing work for sentient beings. It's very

important to get the idea from lam-rim subjects. This is all about karma, it's very, very important.

There are numberless bodhisattvas, but one buddha is more powerful than the numberless bodhisattvas. So, even a small service, whatever it is, showing respect, is unbelievably powerful good karma; and a small disrespect is unbelievably negative karma.

This one guru is a more powerful object than all the numberless buddhas. With the guru you would not have heard the teachings, received the Dharma connection. You would not have received even a few words of teachings, even two or three words of teachings, even the oral transmission of OM AH HUM or OM MANI PADME HUM or whatever. You've received the Dharma connection, with the recognition that you are the disciple and that one is the guru. With that recognition, you have received the Dharma connection, even OM MANI PADME HUM, even a few words, an oral transmission or commentary.

So, the guru is the most powerful object of merit, and even a small disrespect becomes the most powerful negative karma among all those.

So that's one thing contained in the story. By making the holy mind happy, like this, by telling something that pleases the guru. I'm just using an example, that's not the only one but I'm just using this as an example.

Pleasing the guru totally changes your life. You're going to be born as an animal, a hungry ghost or a hell being, but just saying something pleasing to him, having done some action with the body, speech, and mind, making the guru's holy mind happy, you purify the past negative karma that meant you were going to be born in the lower realms. You get a higher rebirth, within that minute. That's because the guru is the most powerful object.

The reason I put effort into explaining this story is that gives an idea what the quickest way to purify negative karma is in our life, what is the quickest way to have success in the life is, not only a good rebirth next life but to achieve enlightenment. We should get the whole idea, not just rebirth.

In *The Fifty Verses of Guru Devotion*, it says,

Whatever pleases the guru should be done.
Whatever displeases the guru, should be abandoned.
If we do that, common and sublime siddhis
Will be achieved in this life.

Why we do that? Basically, because we want happiness, we don't want suffering, we don't want loss, we want only profit, so, from here, the eight types of realizations come.

Then, there's the sublime realization, the mahamudra, enlightenment, the clear light. With Highest Yoga Tantra in this life we can achieve the clear light realization, which is cause of the dharmakaya, the mahamudra realization, enlightenment. So, this is the most important advice in our daily life. This is what we should keep in mind all the time. This is basically, for

ourselves to be quickly liberated from the oceans of samsaric suffering, and to benefit others, to liberate others.

I got lost.

[Rinpoche continues the oral transmission]

Having ascertained through scripture
And through reasoning that phenomena
Are not produced nor inherently existent,
Meditate without conceptuality.

Having thus meditated on suchness,
Eventually, after reaching “heat” and so forth.
The “very joyful” and the others are attained
And, before long, the enlightened state of buddhahood.

If you wish to create with ease
The collections for enlightenment
Through activities of pacification,
Increase and so forth, gained by the power of mantra,

And also through the force of the eight
And other great attainments like the “good pot”—
If you want to practice secret mantra,
As explained in the action and performance tantras,

Then, to receive the preceptor initiation,
You must please an excellent spiritual teacher
Through service, valuable gifts and the like
As well as through obedience.¹⁵

Rinpoche: So, with less obedience, it’s most difficult to attain the realizations and enlightenment. That becomes an obstacle.

If there’s an opportunity to do service, then of course that’s unbelievable. Every minute, every second, every second we purify negative karmas collected from beginningless rebirths, and every minute, every second, we get closer to enlightenment, collecting extensive merits, and we have the opportunity to practice most extensive merits every minute, every second we are doing service to the guru.

Then the last one, if one has gifts, if one has possessions, by making offering, we collect most extensive merits.

Through the full bestowing of the preceptor initiation
By a spiritual teacher who is pleased,

¹⁵ Vv. 58–62.

You are purified of all wrong-doing
And become fit to gain powerful attainments.

Because the *Great Tantra of the Primordial Buddha*
Forbids it emphatically,
Those observing pure conduct should not
Take the secret and wisdom initiations.¹⁶

Rinpoche repeats: “Those observing pure conduct should not take the secret and wisdom initiation.”

What is emphatically? [Rinpoche asks the students. A student explains.]

[Rinpoche re-reads this last passage] I don’t understand. I do not understand.

If those observing the austere practice of pure conduct
Were to hold these initiations,
Their vow of austerity would be impaired
Through doing that which is proscribed.

This creates transgressions that are a defeat
For those observing discipline.
Since they are certain to fall to a bad rebirth,
They will never gain accomplishments.

There is no fault if one who has received
The preceptor initiation and has knowledge
Of suchness listens to or explains the tantras
And performs burnt offering rituals,
Or makes offering of gifts and so forth.

I, the Elder Dipamkarashri, having seen it
Explained in sutra and in other teachings,
Have made this concise explanation
At the request of Jangchub Ö.

This concludes *The Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment* by the Great Master Dipamkarashrijnana. It was translated, revised and finalized by the eminent Indian abbot, himself, and by the great reviser, translator, and fully ordained monk, Gaway Lodrö. This teaching was written in the temple of Thöling in Zhang Zhung.¹⁷

I’m very happy to have done this. I could have read it in Tibetan, quicker, but in English you get some understanding also, by the way. So I’m very happy to complete this *Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment*.

¹⁶ Vv. 63 and 64.

¹⁷ Vv. 65–68 and colophon.

The Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment leaves imprint of the complete lam-rim. This is the root of all the other lam-rims, so it leaves something like that, makes preparation in the mind to have realizations and this definitely brings to enlightenment. It makes it easier to meet the Buddhadharmā in future lives, and much easier in future lives to understand the words and meanings and to have the practice, to have realizations, to gradually cease the defilements and achieve enlightenment.

ADVICE ON PRACTICE AT HOME

There must be some of you leaving today. So the conclusion is that it is very, very important every day, to put effort, to continue the practice.

Here is one very important thing, one basic practice, to do every day, if you can. This is the advice you should try, your everyday practice, at home. You can do it like this here in the morning, at home or even on the airplane, in a vehicle, wherever.

Begin with the preliminaries, like we do in the morning in the course here. Begin with refuge, *La ma sang gyä*. All that, you can do that, then the Thirty-five Buddhas and those things. They are most unbelievably powerful purification, and when you actually do prostrations, they are an unbelievable means of collecting extensive merits, unbelievable, unbelievable. So it's good to do all that.

Then what I advise is the guru yoga practice. You should have one guru yoga practice, in order to meditate on lam-rim. You should begin with the guru yoga, and not just go straight to meditating on the lam-rim without any guru yoga, nothing, straight, just meditation.

Without guru yoga, without the preliminary practice, purification, collecting merits, receiving the blessings of guru, through guru yoga, without those things, you won't have much result in development. Then, after some time, the mind becomes harder and harder, and then you even get wrong views, heresy, and so you lose interest. The mind becomes, how to say, your practice fades away like clouds disappearing in the sky. Or the devotion, the inspiration, fades away like clouds disappear in the sky. It happens. Then nothing happens for a long time and it is very difficult for the mind to come back.

And also, "I know this, I know that, I know this," and then there is no interest at all. The mind becomes especially very thick-skulled, with no interest, and so there is no attainment, no change, and so no benefit to other sentient beings, no benefit even to yourself. Life becomes like that. Then all the negative karma.

So you must practice one guru yoga every day. One is Lama Tsongkhapa Guru Yoga. That's one thing. That has the complete practice, with the lam-rim prayer inside.

Each day when you do Lama Tsongkhapa Guru Yoga there's a lam-rim prayer, there's a prayer of the whole path to enlightenment. Each day when you do that, you plant the seed of enlightenment, you make preparations to achieve the realizations, the path to enlightenment. Each time you read this lam-rim prayer, you become closer to liberation and

enlightenment. Whether you read one time, whether you read two or three times or you read different lam-rim prayers, how many times you do that, you become that much closer to enlightenment; it's that much easier to make preparation to achieve realizations of the path to enlightenment.

So, each day when you do guru yoga, the lam-rim prayer, each time the lam-rim prayer gets done you become closer to enlightenment, each day. That means each day you become closer to liberating numberless sentient beings from the oceans of samsaric sufferings and bringing them to enlightenment, so you become closer to fulfilling that unbelievable, most important aim—the purpose of your life—to liberate numberless sentient beings from the oceans of samsaric sufferings and bring them to enlightenment. Each day you become closer to that goal by reading the meditation prayer, the *Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*, that one.

To do this and to meditate on lam-rim, you must do it on the basis of the field or the ground, the guru yoga, so that you develop devotion, you receive blessings of the guru, and then realizations come.

Lama Tsongkhapa Guru Yoga, that's one thing. The other one is the Guru Shakyamuni Buddha daily meditation that I have put together. That's one thing. That book was made for people who complete the course and want to practice every day, who want to know what to do. This daily meditation book is the answer.

That has also a lam-rim prayer inside, with the preliminaries, a mandala offering and so forth and a little bit explanation why this practice is done.

There's also the Tara practice. That should have a lam-rim prayer. I'm not sure.

Anyway, basically these two. You want to do some meditation every day, so the daily meditation, guru yoga, is made for people who complete the course and want to do a practice every day. This is the one.

For people who didn't do the course, but who are really serious, who want to meditate every day, this is also for that.

On the basis of that, you meditate on the lam-rim, either Lama Tsongkhapa Guru Yoga, or the daily meditation of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. On the basis of that, there's a complete lam-rim prayer there, *The Foundation of All Good Qualities*. You can also change it; there are different lam-rim prayers, so you can do one one day and another then next. Lama Tsongkhapa's *Hymns of the Experience of the Path to Enlightenment, Lam-rim Nyam-gur*¹⁸ it's called in Tibetan. Or there are other different lam-rim prayers, like *The Three Principal Aspects of the Paths*, that have the essence of the whole path of sutra and tantra. So, you can change, can also do that.

When you do the lam-rim prayer, the important thing is to make sure your mind is not distracted; it's very important to keep concentration while you are going through the prayer.

¹⁸ Also called Songs of Experience, or Hymns of Spiritual Experience. See www.tibetanclassics.org/html-assets/Songs%20of%20Experience.pdf

Even if you don't understand the meaning, but it's still incredible benefit, if you keep the mind in it, then it leaves a positive imprint on the mind and that brings you to enlightenment. If you don't concentrate, even if you are chanting loudly but you don't hear, it's difficult to leave a positive imprint on the mind.

These prayers cause you to achieve enlightenment by leaving imprints on the mind, planting seeds, that's the thing. That becomes the direct meditation, going over it straight, right through the path, doing that meditation. That one is extremely important; it is one thing you must do.

If you wish to achieve enlightenment, if you want to benefit all sentient beings, if you want to liberate them from the oceans of samsaric suffering and bring them to enlightenment, if you want to do that, then you must do this lam-rim prayer, this direct meditation, going over it straight, without mind being distracted. You must do that, and that plants the seed to the whole path of enlightenment.

Then in the future, sooner or later, you will achieve realizations, and then cease defilements and achieve enlightenment, so you can benefit others. So, if you want to achieve enlightenment, do that. If you want to free from suffering, do that.

The direct meditation is the first. That's the one you must do, if possible, with guru yoga.

Then, after you finish the lam-rim prayer, before the guru absorbs, those who have received a great initiation of the Highest Yoga Tantra are allowed to do the guru entering into the heart. Lama Tsongkhapa, the guru, enters into the heart. There is a special meditation those with a Highest Yoga Tantra initiation can do.

If you haven't received a great initiation, you cannot receive that commentary and you cannot do that meditation. But what you do is this. The merit field descends to your crown, melts into light, and then light absorbs here, at the center of the two eyebrows, then absorbs in and blesses your body, speech and mind. That's it. So if you haven't received a great initiation, that's the absorption you do.

This is where to do the elaborate meditation, where you can expand the actual meditation and do analytical and fixed meditation. You can do that after finishing the lam-rim prayer, before the guru absorbs, then you do the lam-rim meditation. You can do like that, doing analytical and fixed meditation. Every lam-rim meditation is like this except shamatha. Every meditation is an analytical meditation.

Then, after you finish the analytical meditation, your mind is transformed, seeing the guru as buddha, this life is impermanence, in the nature of death and impermanence. After you think of all the reasons how sentient beings are kind, you generate the loving kindness to all sentient beings, wishing them to have happiness. You want to cause them to have happiness. When you generate that thought, seeing sentient beings are so precious, so kind, then, with great compassion, you see how they are suffering, then you generate the thought wishing all sentient beings to be free from the cause of suffering, and you want to do that, you want to do that.

Through analysis, at the end, your mind is transformed into the path, then you do a fixed meditation. You keep your mind in that experience for a while, for some time. That's a fixed meditation. You need to do that. You do an analytical meditation, and then, when your mind is transformed into that, you do a fixed meditation, keeping the mind on that experience.

You can do these things: the analytical meditation, the guru devotion, you can expand from the section of guru devotion, or meditate on the perfect human rebirth—its usefulness, how it is difficult to find—and on impermanence, on the lower realms' sufferings. Whatever point is reached, from there you can expand the meditation that is explained in the lam-rim teachings.

Or, you can finish the whole prayer, then you do the meditation on lam-rim. You can do that.

It is so important doing the direct meditation of the lam-rim, even just going straight through with the awareness. That's unbelievably, most unbelievably important, as Kyabje Pabongka Dechen Nyingpo mentioned.

Before mentioning that, a Kadampa geshe, I think Pulchungna or Chengawa mentioned how he preferred even wondering about the lam-rim to having all five clairvoyant powers. Just to keep it short, having five clairvoyances, being able to read others' minds and understand past and future, the karma, the lives of countless sentient beings, then firm contemplation, so that even if a big drum is beaten by your the ear, it cannot disturb the concentration, and the concentration can last for many years or eons. Even though you have accomplished those attainments and those psychic powers, flying and so forth—I don't mean with hands tied with the wings, then you run. In the West, people jump from the cliffs, what's it called? Huh? Glider.

Anyway, I'm not talking about that. [Group laughs] Don't misunderstand me.

There are a few more, I don't remember them all. But even if you are able to concentrate like that, and have all those attainments, even if you have psychic powers and you can fly—all that—Kadampa Geshe Chengawa said that even just wondering what the lam-rim is, just questioning what the lam-rim is, is preferable, is much more meaningful than having achieved all those attainments, those five types of clairvoyance and so forth, and then all the psychic powers. He preferred even just questioning what the lam-rim is, because it is more meaningful than all that clairvoyance.

He said that we achieved those types of clairvoyance numberless times in the past, but we haven't achieve the lam-rim, the stages of the path to enlightenment, the three principal aspects of the path, these things. Even the foundation of tantra that we need, we didn't achieve before, so this is new experience. All those other things, those mundane siddhis, we achieved before. That's what he said.

Then, Kyabje Pabongka Dechen Nyingpo mentions that just doing a direct meditation on lam-rim is more meaningful than reciting many hundreds of millions of mantras and all those preliminary practices. Pabongka Rinpoche said it is more meaningful than chanting

hundreds of millions of mantra, collecting many numbers of preliminary practices, spending our whole life doing it, but not doing even the direct meditation on the lam-rim.

I think it's mentioned that a direct meditation on the lam-rim is more meaningful than even seeing a buddha. Pabongka Dechen Nyingpo said that all those direct meditations on the lam-rim, even where you recite the prayer mindfully, that is like the trunk of the tree. Then all the other practices, the many hundreds of millions of mantra and the preliminaries are like branches. So Pabongka Dechen Nyingpo is saying that even just the direct meditation on the lam-rim, without counting the elaborate lam-rim meditations, the expansions on this, this is much more meaningful than many hundreds of millions of mantras or the preliminary practices, or even seeing a buddha.

Just by seeing a buddha we don't become enlightened. It doesn't happen that the minute you see a buddha you become enlightened. To achieve enlightenment you have to actualize the gradual path of the lower capable being, the middle capable being and the higher capable being. You have to actualize the whole path to enlightenment, even if you see a buddha.

Even amongst students, it's happened that some people saw Maitreya Buddha or Chenrezig. It has happened, but by seeing a buddha you don't become enlightened like that. [Rinpoche snaps his fingers] You *have* to actualize the whole path. Therefore it is said that a direct meditation on the lam-rim is more meaningful than many hundreds of millions of those other preliminary practices.

That's from Pabongka Dechen Nyingpo who completed the path to enlightenment and from his own experience knows what is important in the life, and not to waste life.

If you don't meditate on the lam-rim, if you miss even direct meditation on the lam-rim, then no matter how many other preliminary practices you do all day long, you actually still didn't make your life really meaningful. It doesn't happen.

The correct way to make life meaningful is, on the basis of the preliminary practices which purify the defilements and collect extensive merits, and with receiving the blessings of the guru, along with this you then do the lam-rim meditation. Then you can achieve realizations with this support. Pabongka Dechen Nyingpo explained it like this, showing how important the lam-rim is.

For the direct meditation, there are two types: the direct meditation on the lam-rim and the direct meditation tantra, on your own deity. There is a short prayer that explains the whole path to enlightenment, of tantra, so you should recite these two prayers every day to plant the seed. This is the very, very essential thing. Then on the basis of that, you meditate on the lam-rim to have realizations of guru devotion, renunciation, bodhicitta, right view, and then there's also tantra. If you can do all that, that's the best.

I mentioned the very essence of practice in daily life, what's the most important thing, what really makes life most meaningful. Then on the basis of that then you meditate on the lam-rim. The essence is like this. I'll mention this and then I'll finish.

The advice is this. Every day, do a guru devotion meditation for ten or fifteen minutes, whatever—or more—by following the outline of the guru devotion meditation. You can do one week on the benefits of devoting to the guru, one week on the shortcomings of making mistakes in devoting to the guru, then the four basic outlines of how to see the guru as a buddha. Then you can spend one week on the kindness of the guru, and then come back again and do it like that, continuing until you see the one guru as all the buddhas and one buddha as all the gurus, you feel the inseparability in your mind. In your mind it is one. When you call the guru or when you think of or see the guru, you see the buddhas; when you see the buddhas, it's the guru. So, it's all oneness.

Like that you have stable realization, not just for a few hours or a few days, but stable. It doesn't only last a few hours or a few days and then disappears; it's not that one. That's what is called "the guru blessing your mind," or "blessing your heart," and this is an experience that only lasts a short time. But this is very stable, it lasts forever. It should be like that.

Once you have completed the realization of guru devotion, at that time, you still need continuity for stabilizing, that's something to be done every day but you don't need to spend that much time.

And the other advice is that you should keep your project to have a realization of bodhicitta in this life. That is a very important project. Then for this you put all your effort into collecting merits and purifying. There are five powers, all the Dharma practice can be integrated in the five powers, and this is the first one. You dedicate the merits at the end in future to actualize bodhicitta.

To have that realization, you need the realization of the renunciation of samsara. For that, first you need to generate renunciation to this life and then the renunciation to future lives' samsara. Therefore, then you need to have the realization of the perfect human rebirth—its usefulness, how difficult it is to find—as well as of impermanence and death, the suffering of the lower realms, and then refuge and karma. You need those realizations.

So, the next meditation is training the mind in this. First, you need to read the lam-rim maybe two to three times if possible, to make yourself familiar with it. Then, after you do that, meditate on it and try to have realizations, especially on impermanence and death. If you have more of this experience, then the other realizations come more easily. This has been explained by the meditators, the great lamas who have lived their life experiencing the path to enlightenment. No matter how long it takes, how many months or years, try to achieve this realization first.

Then you achieve realization of the general sufferings of samsara, all those sufferings of deva and human realms, all that, shortcomings of delusions, and the twelve limbs of dependent origination. After you have achieved the renunciation of future lives, of samsara, only then you can train in the mind in bodhicitta, the extensive meditation on bodhicitta, either Asanga's technique, the seven techniques of Mahayana cause and effect, which came from Arya Shantideva, from the one from Nagarjuna, equalizing and exchanging oneself for others. This bodhicitta is a very brave attitude. So as far as bodhicitta, it's like that.

Then you should do a little bit of meditation in emptiness. Every day you should do some meditation on emptiness if you can, and also at break time, between sitting meditations, you also practice mindfulness, as I mentioned before. However, you should do some meditation on emptiness. You can use different techniques, different quotations.

Because, for those who have many imprints from past lives, if you meditate on emptiness, if you collect merit and purify many defilements, you can have realization on emptiness even before realizing bodhicitta. For some people it's easier to realize emptiness. It depends on the merits.

Then you need to continue the familiarity, to develop the wisdom realizing emptiness. Then, later you take the great initiation of Highest Yoga Tantra, and then you can do some practice of tantra.

But you should put the main effort in the lam-rim, to have realizations of the three principal aspects of the path. This helps, this takes care of your life, this helps unbelievably to protect you from delusion and negative karma. It makes life so meaningful.

Then, secondly, after you've taken a Highest Yoga Tantra initiation, you put your main effort in tantra. But if you haven't put your main effort in the lam-rim beforehand, if you don't complete the tantric path, you have nothing. That danger can happen, so there is not much you can do without the lam-rim realization.

What makes life *most* meaningful is to train your mind in bodhicitta.

Then the other thing is, one year you train the mind in the gradual path of the lower capable being; the next year you train the mind in the middle capable being; the next year you train the mind in the higher capable being, bodhicitta. Then, whichever realizations you haven't achieved, you go back again, and again you train the mind. So goes on like that. That's also a very good way.

Maybe for some people, later on you can put effort to learn about shamatha and to practice it. For some people to attempt to actualize shamatha is also good.

I think, this is the most important in the life.

The break time between sessions, when you're walking or whatever, it's not break time from Dharma but break time from sitting meditation. How you should live your life, with meditation and break time, in meditation you do bodhicitta, and then in break time, whatever activity you do—working, life, whatever, everything—as much as possible is with a bodhicitta motivation. That is how to live life.

This way, the sitting meditation session, break time, your busy life, everything is harmonized with Dharma, everything becomes Dharma, and not only Dharma, but it is done with bodhicitta so everything becomes the cause of enlightenment. Your many hours of very hard work might be very tiring, but if it's done with bodhicitta, then everything becomes purification, no matter how hard it is, because you're doing the work for sentient beings. No matter how hard the work is, it all becomes purification, because you are doing it for sentient

beings. It all becomes great purification and collects extensive merits. Without bodhicitta, of course, the work can be very hard and very boring, very tiring, if done with a selfish mind.

When you do your work with bodhicitta, doing many hours, working very hard, it all becomes great purification, purifying all the negative karma and collecting extensive merits, numberless merits, because you're doing this work for the benefit of all sentient beings.

To begin the work, when you leave home you generate bodhicitta: "The purpose of my life is to free sentient beings from the oceans of samsaric suffering and bring them to enlightenment, therefore I must achieve enlightenment, therefore I'm going to work for others." You generate this bodhicitta, then you leave home, wearing shoes and a jacket. What I'm saying is ties, jacket, shoes... Anyway, I'm joking!

If you generate this bodhicitta from home, before you get in the car, it's so good. Then, the mind is so happy, you benefit all sentient beings, you purify all defilements, all negative karmas, and collect extensive merits. Your world becomes another happy world. Otherwise, it's very depressing, very tiring.

Anyway, that's it, I think. Whatever you do, do with the motivation of bodhicitta as much as possible. You do it like that. That's how to live in the break time. I thought of "breaking news," you know, breaking news, when there's war, sometimes, like in Iraq, breaking news.

So, try to live life like this. What you did in the morning during meditation and in the break time, you continue to get the experience. If for example you do your activities with guru devotion or compassion, with loving kindness, bodhicitta or impermanence—whatever the morning meditation, then you do the work with that continual experience, with what you generated in the morning. That's very helpful. That helps generate realizations, and for sitting meditation it helps. Sitting meditation helps break time and break time helps sitting meditation; each helps the other.

What Lama Tsongkhapa says, taking the essence day and night like this is making life most meaningful, more beneficial.

So, that's it.

THE ORAL TRANSMISSION OF THE EIGHT VERSES

I do the lung, the oral transmission of the *Eight Verses*. Where is it? The beginning or end? Where is the paper mark? Thank you.

Who translated?

Then I think this might be good translation.

The Eight Verses of Thought Transformation is something that should be kept with you all the time. This is what to apply in daily life, when you encounter problems. This is the same for Nagarjuna's thought transformation. This is the short one, and the shortest one is *tong-len*,

the richest heart. With tong-len, when you encounter problems, you take other sentient beings' sufferings and the causes on yourself, and you give your own happiness and merit to other sentient beings, and then you enlighten all sentient beings.

There were some mistakes in the *Eight Verses* translation commonly used in the past, but I think this may be better. I'm not sure.

Determined to obtain the greatest possible benefit
From all sentient beings, who are more precious
Than a wish-fulfilling jewel,
I shall hold them most dear at all times.

When in the company of others,
I shall always consider myself the lowest of all,
And from the depths of my heart,
Hold others dear and supreme.¹⁹

Rinpoche: *Gang du su dang drog pai tshe*. I thought *gang du* was “where” and so *su dang drog pai tshe* would mean “with whom” but here it is related to time, so it’s “when in the company of others.” But where, where and with whom, of course, that can include time as well. So, *gang du su dang drog pai tshe* “where and with whom, you are in company with.”

When in the company of others,
I shall always consider myself the lowest of all,
And from the depths of my heart,
Hold others dear and supreme

Vigilant, the moment a delusion appears in my mind,
Endangering myself and others,
I shall confront
And avert it without delay.²⁰

Rinpoche: The practices of the first two verses help the third practice. The first one becomes the basis for all the practice. The second one, as well, helps delusion to not arise, so that helps with the third.

Whenever I see beings who are wicked in nature
And overwhelmed by violent negative actions and suffering,
I shall hold such rare ones dear,
As if I had found a precious treasure.

When, out of envy,
Others mistreat me with abuse, insults or the like,
I shall accept defeat
And offer the victory to others.

¹⁹ Vv. 1 & 2.

²⁰ Vv. 2 & 3.

When someone whom I have benefited
And in whom I have great hopes
Gives me terrible harm,
I shall regard that person as my holy guru.

In short, both directly and indirectly,
Do I offer every happiness and benefit to all my mothers.
I shall secretly take upon myself
All their harmful actions and sufferings.

Undeiled by the stains of superstitions
Of the eight worldly concerns
May I, by perceiving all phenomena as illusory,
Be released from the bondage of attachment.²¹

Rinpoche: Of course, that's a very important one, but also from the bondage, from like an iron cage—the term Lama Tsongkhapa uses—of ignorance, grasping at true existence, holding true existence. By perceiving all phenomena as illusory, you can be released from that.

So that's it, that's it. We've finished the *Eight Verses*. When you encounter problems in daily life, that is how to deal with them, using that in the path to enlightenment.

As I mentioned before, the very key is the tong-len. So that's about it.

DAILY PRACTICE AND PURIFICATION

At the end of the day, if you can do whatever you can, that's very good. In the morning, you can do prostrations by reciting the Thirty-five Buddhas. There are some people who do a hundred in the morning. If you can do that in the early morning, that's unbelievable, that's so good. And then, if not a hundred, then whatever you can do, by reciting the Thirty-five Buddhas, it purifies, even by doing it once, by reciting the Thirty-five Buddhas prayer, by prostrating, it purifies the very heavy negative karma of having killed your father and mother in this life, and then killed an arhat, or even harmed the Buddha, causing blood of the Buddha to flow, and caused disharmony among the Sangha—all that gets purified, if you do one Thirty-five Buddhas correctly, with the remedy of the four powers. If you meditate well, then it has that power to purify.

This negative karma is very heavy so right after death you get reborn in the lowest hot hell, the inexhaustible hot hell realm, where you experience the heaviest suffering in samsara, and for longest time, for one intermediate eon. This gets purified, even if you did not collect it in this life, but collected in the past lives. That means there is no question about the ten nonvirtuous actions that have been done, those get purified. So it's just an unimaginably powerful practice.

²¹ Vv. 4–8.

In Lama Tsongkhapa's life story, you don't see much about big numbers of Vajrasattva, many hundreds of thousands, but you do see how he did so many Thirty-five Buddhas. He did many hundreds of thousands of prostrations, seven hundred thousand prostrations or something, by reciting the Thirty-five Buddhas, then he got so much realizations after that.

Then at night time, before going to bed, if you can do just one Thirty-five Buddhas prostrations, then twenty-one of the long Vajrasattva mantra or twenty-eight of the short one: OM VAJRASATTVA HUM. Of course, the more you make, the better.

If you do that, it stops that day's negative karma increasing the next day and becoming double and that doubling the day after and so forth. For example, if you don't purify with Vajrasattva, the negative karma of killing one tiny insect today becomes double tomorrow, and increase fourfold the next day and then eightfold and sixteenfold and so forth. By the time you die, that one small negative karma, killing one insect or whatever, becomes like the size of this Earth. One negative karma multiplying like that, without purification, becomes the size of this Earth by the time you die.

When there are so many other negative karmas and every negative karma becomes like that, can you imagine it? It's unbelievably heavy.

It is said in the teachings,

To the wise man, even a great negativity becomes small;
To the fool, even a small negativity becomes huge.

For wise ones, even though their negative karma is heavy, because they know the Vajrasattva practice and they know they can purify, using skillful means, they purify their negative karma, and so even though it was heavy when they created it, it becomes small. But the foolish ones, on the other hand, do not know such practices as Vajrasattva, they do not know the skillful means and so, even though their negative karma is very small but by multiplying day by day, it becomes heavy. It's mentioned there.

Therefore, practicing Vajrasattva is so important, not only for those who receive the initiation but even those who don't receive the initiation.

So, at nighttime, do that and then do the dedications. If you can do the *King of Prayers*, the bodhisattva's excellent prayer, that's unbelievable, that's so good to train the mind. By doing the *King of Prayers* you again collect extensive merits and purify defilements.

It's another powerful way to decrease whatever negative karma you have, making it much less; purifying and making the negative karma very small. That allows you to be born in a pure land when you die, such as Amitabha's pure land, where you never get reborn in lower realms and quickly achieve enlightenment.

Then, dedicate the merits to actualize bodhicitta in the hearts of all sentient beings, who have same potential to be developed, and then do the prayer to meet Lama Tsongkhapa's teachings. Then dedicate to achieve enlightenment for sentient beings by sealing it with emptiness.

That is the dedication which contains the *King of Prayers*. The *King of Prayers* contains ten times of numberless great prayers of bodhisattvas, the excellent prayer, including the *King of Prayers*. It is contained in this stanza [Rinpoche reads the Tibetan: *Jampal pa wo...*] “As the three times’ buddhas dedicated the merits, I too dedicate all my merits.’

Then the last one is for Lama Tsongkhapa’s teachings to be completely to actualize in your own heart, and in the hearts of your own family and of all the students, all the benefactors, those who sacrifice their lives for the organization—there are so many people in the world—in their hearts and in the hearts of everybody in this world.

So, that’s about it.

We need to recite the *King of Prayers* but I think maybe it’s the lunch time, the stomach will suffer. The mind will suffer and the stomach will suffer, so we’ll do short dedication.

Maybe tonight, Vajrasattva, then those who are there, then an extensive dedication, for all the extensive merits collected during the course.

DEDICATIONS AND MORE ADVICE

Due to all the three times’ merits collected by me, collected by others, may I and my own family members, and all the people who have connection to me, and all the students, all the benefactors of the organization, and so many people in different parts of the world who bear so much hardships offering service to the organization, to benefit sentient beings and the teachings of Buddha, and those who rely upon me, whom I promised to pray for, whose names were given to me, and here, at Kopan Monastery, all the staff who organized, who put effort into, who work for the monastery, generally, all those who did work, who offered service to make this course happen, including the cooks and everybody who did work for this course, and then everybody who attended the course here, and even those who left, who didn’t complete the course, everybody. So, all the friends, enemies and parents, everybody, may we be directly guided by Lama Tsongkhapa and the Mahayana gurus in all the lifetimes, and never be separated from the pure path which is admired by all the buddhas. That’s very important, it means completely actualize Lama Tsongkhapa’s path within ourselves.

[Rinpoche chants the prayers.]

[The students recite the long life prayer for Lama Zopa Rinpoche.]

You have the prayer to actualize the lam-rim within yourself and to benefit for all sentient beings and the teachings of Buddha, that contains that. That’s always recited at the end of the lam-rim teachings, so do that today. You can read the English translation, and then you can do that prayer.

Due to all the past, present, and future merits collected by me, the three times’ merits collected by others, and dedicate.

[Rinpoche chants the lam-rim prayer.]

Also, we dedicated for His Holiness, but it didn't get done. This unbelievable, precious opportunity that we have. We have met the Buddhadharm and the opportunity to practice all this: renunciation, bodhicitta. Renunciation, that which causes us to achieve liberation, and then bodhicitta, that which causes us to achieve enlightenment. Then right view, to be liberated from samsara, to eliminate the root of samsara, all that, then on top of that, the two stages of tantra. Reciting the lam-rim prayer becomes the cause for all this unbelievable, unbelievable opportunity we have to collect merits, to purify defilements, to become enlightened, all that is first by His Holiness's kindness, and second by Lama Yeshe's, who is kinder than all the three times' buddhas, by Lama Yeshe's kindness.

Even though we don't see Lama Yeshe, even those who haven't met Lama Yeshe, we are receiving his kindness all the time, coming to Kopan Monastery. The existence of Kopan Monastery is by Lama Yeshe's kindness, so all the people who come to Kopan are able to learn Dharma, able to practice, to collect merit, to purify defilements, obstacles, every single opportunity is by Lama Yeshe's kindness. That's very clear.

And so we pray, we dedicate our merits, that whatever holy wishes Lama had be actualized, everything, then all the organization, all the centers, all the students, are able to do whatever Lama wished, that it happens to all the students.

Then for Lama Ösel, his incarnation, to have a long life, to be healthy, then to become like the sun rising in this world, to be able to eliminate the suffering of sentient beings and bring them to enlightenment. I forgot the English word. In this world to become like the sun shining, to benefit sentient beings and the teachings of Buddha.

So we pray like this.

Then, I want to thank Ven. Neil. You've led the course how many times?

Ven. Neil: Six times.

Rinpoche: Oh, six times. Six times, he led the one-month Kopan course. This is the sixth time. So, we hope he can lead many more. [Students laugh and applaud for a long time]. So, long life.

So, please dedicate: Due to all the three times' merits collected by myself, the three times' merits collected by others, may Ven. Neil have a long life and be healthy, and actualize the lam-rim, as well as the foundation, the lam-rim, then the common and uncommon, the two stages of tantra in this lifetime, and to be most beneficial for sentient beings. So pray like that.

The abbot here, Lama Lhundrup, told me when I arrived, when I was coming from the airport and asked about the course, that there were more than two hundred people here. Because Lama Lhundrup came here to do the question and answer a few times, he said that the people are very, very serious in Dharma and they are all very humble, that they always

ask questions, which came from their heart, really thinking of practice, really thinking Dharma. It was a very joyful thing to hear that.

I heard that for everybody, there was no half-meditating, half-following the session, half-hanging around Kopan it didn't happen like that. What I heard a few times was that everybody followed the sessions, the meditation sessions, so I think it's great. You can see the result in your heart, now, you can rejoice all the time that you put effort in this. The unbelievable merits, the skies of merits you've done, so many times in one day, then unbelievable purification is done, no matter how cold or hot you felt or whatever, bearing hardships, being hungry, taking the Mahayana precepts.

Sorry, one more thing. To make the life very meaningful in your life, since you have already received the lineage, the eight Mahayana precepts, in your life, on buddhas' days, if you take the eight Mahayana precepts, whatever practice you do, it increases one hundred million times. If you chant one mantra, it increases one hundred million; if you do one prostration, it increases one hundred million; if you make one light offering, it increases one hundred million. If you can take the Eight Mahayana Precepts every day, if you're able to do that, it's of unbelievable benefit for sentient beings, and it benefits world peace, and the peace of your country, like that story of the four harmonious brothers.

Even at other times, on the eighth and the fifteenth [of the Tibetan calendar], the full moon and half-moon nights, and what's the other one—there are three? The one at the end of the Tibetan month, on the thirtieth. On those days or any other time, whenever you feel it's convenient, depending on your job, you can take the eight Mahayana precepts, wherever you are, even while you are traveling or wherever, when you are in the West and doing job. This is another one that makes life so meaningful and benefits all sentient beings and this world. You must realize that.

The Buddha has mentioned making extensive offerings to the billions of buddhas of the universe filled with jewels, according to number of sand grains in the Ganga—but this is the Pacific Ocean—you fill up with jewels and offer to billions of buddhas. The merit of keeping one precept for one day is far greater than offering all these things, unbelievable, unbelievable—far greater merit than that many offerings, the universe filled with jewels, equaling the number of sand grains in River Ganga—I mean the Pacific Ocean, not the River Ganga in India—offering to billions of buddhas. In these degenerate times, these very difficult times of war, famine and so many difficulties, all that merit is small compared to keeping one precept for one day. This creates more merit. So remember this, and enjoy your life.

This is all I have said about how to enjoy life, how to achieve happiness, how to create happiness in life. So that's it. Thank you very much.

[Students applaud.]

Lecture 21

THE LUNG OF SHANTIDEVA'S *CONDENSED ADVICE* (POSSIBLY)

[Rinpoche is reading from an unspecified Tibetan text²² to a mixture of Tibetans and Westerners, teaching in Tibetan and in English.]

I thought to go through a few of the details. I think in the course you have gone through the ten nonvirtuous actions. There are four results of karma; the ten nonvirtuous actions produce four suffering results. You have gone through that, doing the meditations, so you've got some idea.

I'll just read in Tibetan first, then a little bit in English. I think maybe I'll a few things mention from this.

[Rinpoche reads in Tibetan, giving the name of the text to the Tibetans (unclear).]

The negative karma of killing becomes heavy by thought, by thought, it is generated by a very strong, intense poisonous mind of ignorance, anger or attachment, then wishing or desiring to kill. That's how the killing becomes heavy by thought.

The next one is how killing becomes heavy by action. The person kills and is so happy, always very happy to kill, always having the thought to kill. With that, being heavy by action means the killer is always very happy to kill. Even if the killing is done only one time, but it is done with a continuously happy mind, the killing becomes heavy by action.

Heavy by action. And while you are doing the action of killing, you also let other people get involved in it. You praise how good it is to kill and making other people's minds harmonious to it.

There is also killing because you think sentient being have so much unbelievable suffering. In the West, even farmers who have animals who are very sick, who cannot function anymore, the farmers cut the head, probably thinking that they suffer so much, so it's better to kill them than let them suffer a long time. It seems many farmers do that.

You are thinking of the animal, but only thinking of this life, you're not thinking what happens after this life. You kill the animal but then what happens. That animal could well be reborn in the lower realms, which is million times heavier suffering [than the pain it is currently in.] If the animal is going to be reborn in the hell realm it gets worse. You kill to save it from this pain, but in the life after this, if that animal is going to be reborn in the lower realms, such as hell realm, the pain is much worse. That's what I think.

If the animal is going to be born in a pure land, or in the deva or human realm, for that animal, maybe it's better. But if the animal is going to be born in the hell realm, whatever pain the animal suffers from is hardly anything compared to the hell beings' suffering.

I think this is similar to a human being. That person doesn't get better so then you give him an injection to stop the pain or something. If the person is going to be born in a better realm after this, with more happiness, then thinking of the benefit the other person in that way is good, otherwise, if the person is going to be born in the lower realms, whatever pain he is

²² From the content, it is possibly Shantideva's *Condensed Advice* [Skt: *Shiksha-samuccaya*].

suffering now is nothing. Even though it's regarded as the human worst suffering, the heaviest suffering of the human being, compared to the lower realms' suffering, this human being's problem is comfort! It's so small, it's comfort compared to the unimaginable suffering of the hell realm, the suffering of the lower realms. If it seems the person is going to be born in the lower realms, then it's better to stay even one day as a human being, in coma or whatever. I think like that.

There was a student in California who worked in a hospital. She was involved in deciding whether to take sick patients off the oxygen, or something. I've forgotten the details. She had to decide whether the person dies or was kept alive longer. There's nothing much you can do. You do divination to Tara, you totally rely upon Tara to give advice whether the person should be kept alive or not. You make prayers and have total reliance on Tara. You make strong prayers or mandala offerings. I don't remember here. Then write down all the possible answers on paper, the same size of paper, roll it up and make strong prayers to Tara, whether to keep the person alive or let them die.

She had to decide. I don't remember very clearly but it was some kind of job like that. There was also the experience of the family to consider. I told to make strong prayers to Tara, give the responsibility to the hand of Tara. You are not making the decision, Tara is making the decision.

Another form of killing is sacrificing animals or human beings, to worship, which is not Dharma. In many places animal sacrifice happens, although sacrificing human beings is in the past, I think. Now it's much less, but animal sacrifice is still widespread.

Then, relating to non-Dharma activities, killing the sentient being, while it's unbelievably screaming.

[Rinpoche continues with the text.]

Then quite a lot of details follow.

The action of killing becomes heavy without an antidote. The highest one is without having achieved the realization of the path of merit. The middle one is not having achieved the actual body of the firm contemplation. There are four firm contemplations so not having achieved that actual body of the firm contemplation, then engaging in action of killing, is the middle level. The last one is one who has never does even one virtue, who has never done even one prostration or any practice, doesn't do anything, and then engages in killing. That kind of killing becomes heavier.

[Rinpoche continues with the text.]

I think that the killing becomes extremely heavy if you think this way, this is not ordinary sentient being, this is *wangchuk*, Mahadeva. In Hindu worship, worshippers of Mahadeva or Shiva think animals have manifested for human beings' use, so therefore there's no harm if you kill them. If you kill with that kind of belief, then it is very heavy negative karma.

The animal is an ordinary sentient being, but you want to make offering to Shiva, so you kill believing that the animal being killed collects merit and you who are killing get also benefit because you are making Mahadeva happy, therefore you won't receive negative karma by killing. If you kill with that kind of belief, then the negative karma of killing is very heavy, extremely heavy.

[Rinpoche continues with the text.]

Then when you do the action of killing, negative karma becomes heavy because of the base, if the body is bigger. The bigger the body is, the heavier the killing is, because there's more pain, it takes longer and more pain. I think it might be that.

Then, killing so many creatures at one time.

Then, killing the sentient being who rely upon you. I guess this refers to pigs and chickens and so forth, who are fed and taken care of by the family, and then a family member kills them. That's a very heavy killing.

Then of course a very heavy one is killing your own parents, an abbot, a preceptor, and arhats.

[Rinpoche continues with the text.]

There are different results, the ripening aspect of the result, then experiencing the result similar to the cause, where you experiencing the same kind of harm as you did to others, how you created negative karma, how you harmed others, you are experiencing back on yourself, similar to how you harmed others in the past. And, [creating the result similar to the cause] where because you killed in the past, you kill again now.

The ripening aspect result has two aspects, that which throws and that which obtains. The one which is throwing is, by having done small killing, it throws you into a rebirth in the preta realm. With a middle killing, you get reborn as an animal. With a great, heavy killing, it throws your rebirth into the hell realm. This is mentioned in the Buddha's teaching, *The Ten Bhumis Sutra*.

[Rinpoche continues with the text.]

The ripening aspect result in the hell realm is described, the karma of killing creatures. Your body gets eaten by the creatures, called ...[Rinpoche uses the Tibetan] I'm not sure what. Many of those creatures eat you with vajra beaks, like some of those fish that have very long beaks or bird that have very, very long beaks. They eat you.

Then there are lions and tigers and so forth that have iron beaks. They eat your body from the outside. It's said in the *Mindful Sutra*, this is in the hell realm you experience as the result of killing.

[Rinpoche continues with the text.]

The result which is similar to the cause, that is when you are born a human being due to another good karma, but, because of having killed, you experience shorter life. Even when you're in the human mother's womb, your life is in danger. You don't survive, you die or there's spirit harm or other dangers such as abortion. You experience a short life, you get killed, or even after you are born you don't live long, you experience a short life.

Then, even if you manage to live a long life, you experience many sicknesses, one after another, so many sicknesses. Even if you live longer, there are always health problems, one after the other. You finish experiencing one sickness, then you get another; your whole life goes on like that, You see many people like that, with many sicknesses.

[Rinpoche continues with the text.]

What it's saying here, the possessed result of killing is you don't have the means the live, to survive. You're born like that.

Even if you have means of living, such as food and so forth, it doesn't help to be healthy for long life, it causes disease, it becomes the opposite, it becomes opposite to your health or your long life, it becomes obstacle for that.

I think I am a very good example of that. I have diabetes. Because of diabetes, I can't eat many things, I can't eat many things. [Rinpoche laughs] Anything that has the nature of sweet, many things, fruit, many things. Basmati rice is ok. I didn't discover by myself the difference between basmati rice or brown rice, but what it's says is other white rice harms, because that's naturally sweet. There are many things that harm.

I know by eating some fruit, I immediately feel that it affects me by increasing the diabetes. Many years ago if I had two oranges, which had a lot of water inside, then I could feel it affecting me. You feel something there not comfortable. Then, two grapefruits, which have a lot of water, I ate and felt something not good. It increased the diabetes.

But quite a number of years ago it happened, but not all the time. Now it doesn't happen, so it changes. The doctors explained this to me, but that is my own experience and I think it's maybe different for other diabetic people. My own experience is what affects my body. There are certain things that you can tell by yourself, besides what the doctors say in general. So, anyway, something like this becomes an obstacle to your life.

With the possessed result, even medicine, supposedly the cause of health, can become a cause of illness and death. Medicine is supposed to help regain health and have a long life, but even if it's the correct medicine, prescribed by a doctor for that illness, because of the possessed result of killing, but when the patient actually takes it, it has side effect to make him sicker or even die. People who have digestion problems are experiencing the possessed result, the negative karma of killing. They are unable to digest food properly. *The Ten Bhumis Sutra* explains that the food and the medicine that are supposed to help with health become the cause of sicknesses.

[Rinpoche speaks in Tibetan and then reads from the text.]

For the karma of stealing, for an object to be stolen it has to be something that has value and an owner; it has to belong to others.

The example it gives here is a substance, like a bean from inside this cupboard. I don't know how many beans there are. It's used in tormas and it's sweet, but not a raisin. It comes from Tibet and goes in rice and mice collect it for their food at three different times in winter, storing it under the ground, very nicely, very clean. But humans take it. When they are walking they see where the ground is soft and they know the mice have stored this substance there and they dig it up, collect it, putting it aside for the winter.

The text talks about the earth on top, so I presume it's referring to this, the earth the mice pile on top of their horde, and not a mountain or cliffs. It's the earth that is on top of the toorma. I'm not sure.

[Rinpoche continues with the text.]

The essence of the action of stealing is either taking something away with force, confiscating or taking it with force, or stealing in very gentle way, not appearing to steal, not taking with force but in a kind of very gentle way stealing.

For example, you borrowed something from others but you don't give it back, or you don't pay back what you owe. Other people have left things with you to keep, but you don't give them back, or you don't pay debts, one of the five wrong livelihoods.

When you do business, you force the person to give you more than he wishes, he has no choice to give more. Similarly, if you're selling, you giving less to others than what is needed.

The completion of stealing is whenever you generate the thought, "I have received it." At that time the action of stealing is completed.

[Rinpoche continues with the text.]

Now the text is talking about what makes the action of stealing heavy negative karma. If you steal many things that makes it heavy. From an object of good or bad quality, if you steal the object of good quality, the stealing is heavier.

When the victim is either somebody who is poor or somebody who is rich, if you steal from the poor, the stealing is heavier. Then from the enemy and friend, if you steal from the friend it's heavier.

From somebody who has taken ordination with renunciation, and who hasn't take ordination with renunciation, the lay people I mean—in other words, an ordained person or non-ordained person—to steal from an ordained person, it's heavier. Similarly, it's heavier to steal from a Buddhist ordained person, and heavier still to steal from your parents and from an abbot and the preceptor.

[Rinpoche continues with the text.]

The ripening aspect result of stealing has throwing karma and obtaining karma. The obtaining is, when you get born in the hell realm, you see the wealth, you have illusion, you see material possessions, and you run to steal that. But when you do that, you are caught by the hell protectors, the karmic guardians, who catch you and cut you up into pieces with weapons, splitting you like cutting up fruit.

With the result similar to the cause of stealing, you get born into a poor family. You are born poor from the beginning, or your possessions don't belong to you but to others; your possessions not only belong to you but also belong to other people, so you don't have complete freedom to use that.

[Rinpoche continues with the text.]

The possessed result you experience in the human realm is that there's no rain, there's so much drought, and the crops don't grow. Either that or there is unbelievably heavy rain. The trees don't give actual fruit; they stopped growing and just the buds came out but no actual fruit, nothing to eat. Then, even it grows it is destroyed by hail storms or destroyed by floods. There are many obstacles, such as hail storms and also crops or seeds being eaten by animals. Maybe the crops grew but then rabbits, worms and other animals eat either the roots below or the plants on top.

In New Zealand there are an unbelievable number of rabbits, an unbelievable number of rabbits, covering whole fields, covering forests and mountains. What happened was the government sent airplanes to drop poison on them. What do you call it? Is it poison?

It's similar like when there's a fire, the airplane comes to dump water, but here it sprayed poison on them. However, it didn't stop them coming at all. The planes killed them but again another group came. And the planes killed them but then the next group came, and again the fields filled up. That's because the person who owned the field, their karma was not finished, so even though the planes came spraying poison and one lot of rabbits was killed, the next group came. This is because nothing was done to alter that karma. The farmers, the people who owned the fields, didn't do anything with their karma.

Then, whether it's done by the farmer or the government in the area, they are creating negative karma again, to experience the same result. They kill these present animals to get rid of the problem but they are creating extra negative karma to receive harm from others. So, in the future, not just one time, so many times, for hundreds of thousand lifetimes, that one negative karma affects the person, because karma is expandable. For many hundreds of thousands of lifetimes, he receives harm. From that one negative karma he receive harm to be killed, for many hundreds of thousands of lifetimes—from that one act, that one negative karma. So, that becomes unbelievably dangerous, unbelievably dangerous.

They interfered with them. The rabbits came to eat food, their needs, their living, but the farmers interfered with them, so of course that causes poverty in their future lives.

Because they do not have the education of karma, they do not have education of mind that the action has these results that affect back to you, the only thought is to harm back, but you

are creating extra negative karma to experience harm for hundreds of thousands of lifetimes, to be killed and to experience poverty.

The text talks about the hell realm, the karma of stealing: you see the possessions, you have illusion of seeing the possession, then you run to steal them, and the hell beings catch you, and then they slice up your body and then cut you to pieces.

[Rinpoche continues with the text.]

So here, with sexual misconduct, the conclusion is that the other person can be man or a woman “possessed” by somebody else, like being protected by the king, or a prostitute possessed by others, or could be a relative. These are not appropriate objects of physical contact, of sexual contact. Then, it is sexual misconduct if the object is the mouth, the non-limbs or the hands. Then time must not [be inappropriate] and there are places where you can’t do the sexual act, such as in front of holy objects, stupas, scriptures and statues, or where there’s a bodhisattva abiding, or a guru, an abbot or preceptor, in front of them, or in the front of the parents. Those are non-places, places where doing the sexual act is sexual misconduct. If you engage in it in these circumstances then it becomes sexual misconduct.

Then there’s about time, such as doing at the time of the month when a period is coming, or when your wife is pregnant, because it could cause harm to the child and then cause much suffering, bringing unhappiness to the person.

Having sex with somebody who is living in the eight Mahayana precepts or the pratimoksha vows is also sexual misconduct.

[Rinpoche continues with the text.]

The ripening aspect result of sexual misconduct is that you get born in the hell realms, and you get eaten by a woman of iron, in Tibetan, *nyal wa gye*.

I’m not a hundred percent sure whether they fly and go in your mouth, something like that, and you get caught in an iron house. I think maybe it’s a sort of iron house, where there’s a fire inside, with sparks, and you get burned by sparks, and then the male sex organ gets pulled out with... what do you call it? Two irons things that come together to pick things up? What do you call? [*Students*: Prongs? Tweezers?] Tweezers? To take out the penis? Then it is crushed by hammers. A *purba*, a pointed thing, is put down on the penis and the penis is hit by the hammer.

You also see your object of attachment taken by water, and you run after it and you also get taken away by a river.

This is to give you some idea. You have lots of suffering visions, due to the ripening aspect result of sexual misconduct. You experience various sufferings.

Then, the experience which is similar to the cause, if, due to another good karma you’re born as a human being, in that life you experience problems, the way your husband or your wife thinks is totally opposite, he or she goes totally against to your wish. Whether it’s a husband

or whether it's a wife, he or she is against you. So you don't get along, there's no real no harmony. Your partner is totally opposed to your wishes. Even if you're living physically together, you always fight, so your wishes are never fulfilled.

This also applies to the people you work with in an office, when you are doing job. All the people in the office or in the family, their way of thinking is against your wishes, so there's no real happiness. You fight or there are many problems arising in the office or in the family. It could be in a school if you're working in a school. The other teachers or the students are not happy with you.

The possessed result of sexual misconduct is that the place where you live has a lot of mud, like a quagmire. It's very muddy place, and lot of kaka, excrement, and many bad smells, filled with bad smells, with unpleasant smells, with many dirty things.

Even though we live in a clean place, with nice, beautiful gardens, but in our life, many times we have to go through such places, terrible, dirty, smelly, very muddy, a place with a lot of junk or excrement. Even if we have to experience something terrible like that for five minutes, that's a result of past negative karma, the possessed result of past sexual misconduct.

[Rinpoche continues with the text.]

So, when you're passing through that kind of a place, it's very good to remember, "I'm experiencing the results of my past negative karma of sexual misconduct." It's very helpful, it inspires you to abandon negativity, to not engage in that. It encourages the mind.

[Rinpoche continues with the text.]

The ripening aspect result of telling lies is the hell realms. What you experience in the hell realm is your tongue being taken out and then stretched out on the ground, and then eight purbas, sharp stake are driven through it and it is spread like an animal skin being dried in the sun.

Then, on top of that, what do you call the thing you plow the land with? When you plow the land you use a very sharp thing, what do you call it? [*Student*: Plow.] A plow, a very sharp plow, but it's blazing with fire, and there are many thousands like that. They plow the tongue like that.

This just gives some idea, this is not the only thing, this is just giving a drop of an idea what you experience as a hell being.

Then, when due to another good karma ripening, you're born in the human realm, you get born as a piece of flesh, without organs, without organs, I think like the meat that you buy in the store, you get born just as a piece of meat.

The result similar to the cause is that, just as you cheated others, you get cheated by others, you get criticized by others.

In the commentary of Aryadeva it's mentioned that, if you cheat one sentient being, then you will be cheated by other sentient beings in thousand lifetimes. How many lifetimes will you be cheated by others? A thousand lifetimes. This is from the one negative karma of cheating one sentient being. This is mentioned by Aryadeva in his commentary, *The Four Hundred Stanzas*.

[Rinpoche continue *lung* until its completion, then (it seems) he does an initiation solely in Tibetan.]

VAJRASATTVA INITIATION

Sorry I didn't get to speak into broken English, I didn't get to explain.

So, please generate a bodhicitta motivation. You've probably already done that while I was talking in Tibetan. [Rinpoche laughs]

As Shantideva, great bodhisattva mentioned, in the *Bodhicaryavatara*:

As long as you don't drop the fire,
The burning cannot be stopped.
Like that, in order to pacify the suffering of oneself and pacify the
suffering of others,
Give up cherishing oneself and cherish others as oneself.

This is an unbelievable teaching by Shantideva. If you're holding some fire in your hand, as long as you don't drop it the burning cannot be stopped. Whatever other thing you do, externally, the burning cannot be stopped if you don't drop the fire.

Like that, what causes problems to you and others, to the world, to other sentient beings is your self-cherishing thought. What harms you, what has been harming you from beginningless rebirth up to now, what hasn't allowed you to achieve enlightenment, or even liberation from samsara up to now, and what doesn't even allow you to achieve a good rebirth, is cherishing the I. It becomes an obstacle to achieving even the happiness of this life.

If you don't exchange yourself with others, if you don't exchange your happiness and others' suffering there's no happiness in samsara you can experience. Leave aside future lives, even the happiness of this life won't be achieved. The selfish mind disturbs, it doesn't allow you even to achieve happiness in this life.

Shantideva is saying that this is what harms others and yourself. There are numberless sentient beings and then there is you yourself, one person, and in order to pacify the suffering of yourself and in order to pacify the sufferings of others, you give up yourself to others and cherish others.

All the sufferings come from the I; all the happiness, every day, every moment, all the collections of goodness, including the happiness of future lives, liberation and enlightenment, everything you receive from others.

All the sufferings, the problems, come from the self-cherishing thought, come from the I. All the happiness, the collection of goodness, everything comes from bodhicitta, cherishing others.

Therefore, it is not enough that you are born in the human realm, that you receive a good rebirth in next life. That's not enough. Even achieving liberation for yourself is not sufficient, is not enough. That's not the real meaning of life. The real meaning of life is to give up yourself for other sentient beings, and cherish other sentient beings, to free them from all their sufferings and bring them to enlightenment.

This is what they need, and you need to cause it. To do that, first you yourself must achieve full enlightenment, and for that you must actualize the path. For that, you need to purify the defilements. Therefore think, "I'm going to take the Vajrasattva initiation for the benefit of all sentient beings."

[Rinpoche speaks in Tibetan to monks and nuns, then gives initiation]

[Rinpoche completes the initiation]

Finally it's done. Then, please do a short mandala, a thanking mandala.

[Students offer a mandala]

So thank you very much. Good night, good morning.