

## PREFACE

This is an edited transcript of teachings given by Venerable Lama Thubten Zopa Rinpoche and the late Venerable Lama Thubten Yeshe at Kopan Monastery, Nepal, during the annual meditation course, November/December 1983.

These teachings given by the immeasurably kind father Lama Yeshe were the last public teachings we received from Lama before his tragic passing away in March 1984, so they have a special significance.

According to the vajra instructions of Lama Zopa, the transcripts have been extensively edited to eliminate repetitions and to present the teachings in reasonable fluid English. However, I have attempted not to lose the characteristic qualities of the lamas' method of presentation entirely.

Due to incorrect hearing and interpretation there are doubtlessly many errors of meaning and the responsibility for these is borne solely by the editor.

It is hoped that this book will bring inspiration and a deeper understanding of the Dharma to those who were unable to attend the course and those of us fortunate enough to share that month on Kopan Hill.

Finally, I wish to thank the many kind people too, numerous to mention, for their dedicated work of transcribing and trying the manuscripts and for their suggestions and encouragement.

May whatever virtue created through the effort that has gone into this publication be dedicated to: the long life of Lama Zopa Rinpoche; the quick return of Lama Yeshe; the long life of His Holiness The Dalai Lama; the quick return of His Holiness Ling Rinpoche, His Holiness Serkong Rinpoche and His Holiness Song Rinpoche; the long life of all the teachers of the holy Dharma, their students and for the flourishing of all centers of study and practice. May every living being rapidly attain the sorrowless state.

Uldis Baldois  
Editor  
Boudha, Nepal  
June 30, 1985

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LECTURES BY THE VENERABLE LAMA THUBTEN YESHE

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LECTURE 1  
November 14 am

Firstly, I would like to say thank you very much to all of you for having discovered that only external material development does not stop life's problems, does not bring peace of mind. You felt that without cheating yourself, without closing the door to your own liberation, the door to your own peace of mind, and without closing your own mind or wisdom by thinking that there's a need to develop the mind in order to gain peace of mind to cease sufferings and problems. Not only peace of mind for this life which lasts for only a few years, a few months—or maybe less than that! But furthermore you have the wish to seek an infallible path through which you can accomplish ultimate and everlasting happiness. It may not be correct English, but, “ever-release” from suffering—liberation— and “ever-release” from the confused mind on the stream of this mind which at this moment is confused, ignorant, and suffering. When I think that you are opening your own mind, opening the door of your own peace, I rejoice greatly.

You came to Nepal, to Kopan, to do this meditation course; here I'm supposed to give teachings on meditation. For the teaching to become beneficial for others, for the teacher to be able to guide others, to subdue others' minds, first of all his own mind should be subdued. Otherwise, without he himself having those qualities, there is no way to guide and subdue the minds of others correctly. My qualities are not just empty by way of inherent existence, but also empty by name! I think you heard a little bit last night about inherent existence. So, my qualities are not empty in regard to inherent existence, but empty in regard to name. They don't exist, you know! So, I'm not sure whether it can benefit you or not. However, I have been fortunate enough to be able to hear, with this precious human body, extensive sutra and tantra—various infallible teachings of the Buddha—from many accomplished, highly realized, well—experienced teachers. It planted many impressions on my mind. I was fortunate enough to plant the seed. So, the one or two words of Dharma—the Buddha's teachings—that I know, I will try to speak of. I hope there might be some benefit.

Generally how much the teaching is beneficial is dependent on both sides—not only the teacher, but also the listeners. The accomplishment, the realization, the subduing of the confused mind—the ignorant, dissatisfied, angry mind—by listening to the teachings, is dependent on both sides. The teacher having all the necessary qualities is not sufficient; there are also qualities for the listener to have in order to make the teachings effective for his mind.

I think this morning I will do question-answer, if there is something that I know, that I can tell you. Normally, in every course, I start with a subject, but I thought maybe this time we could begin the course with question-answer. Can you hear my voice? I think slowly you might hear! Day by day, you know!

Audience member: How to purify mind and body?

Lama Zopa: By purifying the mind, the body also becomes purified.

A.M: How to purify the mind?

L.Z: How to purify the mind? Practicing and generating the whole graduated path to enlightenment is purifying the mind. You see, that ceases the wrong conceptions. It removes the obscurations. All these teachings that were revealed by Buddha are included in sutra and tantra, or, in the three vehicles—the lesser vehicle path, the Paramitayana path and the Vajrayana, the secret vehicle, path.

By practicing the teachings of the lesser vehicle path and generating the path that is revealed, one accomplishes the Eightfold Noble Path. That is contained in short in the three higher trainings—moral conduct, concentration, and higher seeing, or great insight. All these are included in method and wisdom. Even to achieve the mere cessation of true suffering and the true cause of suffering—the disturbing thoughts—even to achieve liberation for oneself, one should practice this path. However all of this path is included in these two: method and wisdom.

Wisdom is the wisdom realizing shunyata, or wisdom realizing emptiness. That is the direct remedy for eliminating the root of suffering, the root of the confused mind—being ignorant of the meaning of the absolute nature of “I.” Although the way “I” exists is by being merely labeled on these aggregates, it appears that it exists from its own side, not labeled. The “I” appears completely in the wrong way, is perceived in the wrong way, and one completely clings or grasps onto that: that one hundred percent is true, that “I” exists from its own side, that it is not labeled on these aggregates. Being ignorant is not perceiving the absolute nature of the “I:” that it’s empty of independence; not realizing that the “I” that is empty of independence is in fact empty; not realizing that that which is dependent is dependent. So, being ignorant is not realizing how the “I” exists. The wisdom realizing voidness is the direct remedy. That’s the main thing that cuts off, which purifies, which cuts off the true suffering and the true cause of suffering.

Now, even in this lesser vehicle path, just having the wisdom realizing voidness is not sufficient, even though that is the direct remedy to cut off the disturbing thoughts, the root of all the sufferings, the ignorance. One should develop this wisdom realizing voidness together with method: the thought of renouncing samsara—the suffering realms—by realizing how they have the nature of suffering; how these aggregates—mind and body—are in the nature of suffering. A simple way of saying it: method is the thought of renouncing samsara. Also, there is the method of moral conduct. You see, with these fundamental methods, by practicing wisdom and method together, one generates, or, one is able to accomplish, the cessation of suffering—nirvana, or liberation. It’s the same in the Paramitayana, the great vehicle. The wisdom is the same—wisdom realizing voidness. Again, the whole path is included in method and wisdom. Here the method is much more skillful and extensive than in the lesser vehicle path. The method is bodhicitta—the altruistic mind of enlightenment—which is derived by generating the thought of loving kindness and great compassion. That is not taught in the teachings of the lesser vehicle path. With this attitude, the paramitas, the “gone beyond” of charity, patience, perseverance and concentration are practiced. These are the method. It’s like this: even when you take old food with a very bad smell out of a cup, there is still a bad smell left. Likewise, by completing the lesser vehicle path one can eliminate the true cause of suffering, the disturbing thoughts, and even the seed of those, but not completely purifying the subtle obscurations, the impression that is left by the disturbing thoughts, the wrong conception of true existence, like the smell in the cup.

That’s why there are differences between the arhat and the fully enlightened Buddha. Arhats don’t have the disturbing thoughts; they have completely eliminated, or, purified them by completing the method and wisdom of the lesser vehicle path. They are completely free of the true cause of suffering but they haven’t practiced the skillful method that is revealed in the teachings of the greater vehicle path, so the subtle obscurations, like the smell, are not removed. The arhat hasn’t accomplished the great liberation, the great nirvana, the perfect cessation of the stains. Because of that, the understanding is not complete—still there are limitations in regard to guiding by revealing the means to the sentient beings. So, by practicing the wisdom realizing voidness and developing that in conjunction with the skillful, extensive method revealed in the Mahayana path, one is able to

eliminate even the subtle obscurations, which are like the smell that is left in the container. So, you see, when there's not the slightest obscuration left, the understanding is complete; the realization is complete. Like a mirror that is covered by dust—the more you clean it, the more clear the reflection becomes.

Now, because we are incredibly impatient, it looks like it's hopeless—that this stream of consciousness cannot be separated from anger. It appears that one's mind is oneness with anger. It looks like it's impossible to separate it from anger and the dissatisfied mind and ignorance. It's kind of like consciousness itself is anger, consciousness itself is pride, consciousness itself is jealousy. It appears impossible to live without a jealous mind, pride, or anger and so on. However, although it now looks like that—very confused—the mind is not oneness with anger, not oneness with pride, jealousy, the selfish attitude, or ignorance. It's not only that it's not oneness with them, but the mind can be developed if one trains in the path.

So, even though the practice of the greater vehicle path, the wisdom and method, looks hopeless now, after some time the stream of this consciousness will be completely separated away from, or purified of, the disturbing thoughts. Not only that, but even the smell—the subtle stains, impressions, the dualistic views, the hallucinated views, the views of true existence get purified with not the slightest stain left and because of that all the realizations are completed. At that time, the stream of consciousness becomes what is called omniscient mind. This is what is called dharmakaya, this is what is called enlightenment.

At that time the nature of this consciousness is separated away from all the stains and obscuration. That is the great liberation. When we achieve this we are enlightened. When one's stream of consciousness becomes an omniscient mind there are no mistakes at all. Every single being's different level of karma—or, another way of saying it, fortune—their level of intelligence and different personality are seen. So, there is not the slightest mistake—there is complete understanding of the various methods to reveal in order to suit different sentient beings who have different levels of mind. Then one can guide the sentient beings by using various means: the holy body, the holy speech, and the holy mind. The paramita path or the bodhisattva path contains five paths: the path of merit, the path of preparation, the path of right seeing, the path of meditation, and the path of no-need-of-training. All of these, as I explained before, are included in method and wisdom.

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Then one should practice the Vajrayana path, the path of the secret vehicle. In this third path the wisdom realizing voidness is much finer. *shunyata*, the object, is the same; it is not transcended. However, the subject, the wisdom realizing voidness, is finer, much more subtle. Again that is developed in conjunction with method, much more skillful than the method that is taught in the paramita teachings. One is able to stop the disturbing thoughts and even the subtle stains—the impressions, the dualistic, hallucinated, impure views—much quicker than in the paramita path. So, these three vehicles are the actual path in order to purify. Generating, actualizing them in the mind is the main purification. The stream of consciousness which is temporarily obscured is separated away from, purified of, those obscurations. In order to generate this path in the mind one has to create the cause: merit, or, good luck. One has to create good luck in order to generate the actual body of the path, to purify the obstacles which disturb one from generating the realizations. In the teachings it is explained that in order to purify the obstacles, to quickly develop the mind, or, another way of saying it—to quickly generate the path to enlightenment in our mind—reading the

scriptures on Prajnaparamita and meditating on shunyata are strong methods. Meditating on emptiness is explained by Buddha as being a very powerful method to purify the obstacles. Then, practicing bodhicitta is the best means to accumulate merit in order to generate the path to enlightenment, and for purifying obstacles.

Obscurations are created by doing unskillful, unwholesome actions with body, speech and mind. The mind is polluted by wrong attitudes, bad thoughts, or actions of body and speech done with bad thoughts. This disturbs the mind, so that even if we try to meditate, the mind cannot concentrate, cannot focus on the meditation object; the meditation object does not become clear. Even if one tries to visualize Buddha, it does not become clear and the concentration does not last. One cannot concentrate for even one minute, even for half a minute. The mind is so unclear, so foggy, so many causes arise, so many distracting thoughts; one cannot control the mind. Even if one wishes to develop the mind, to train the mind in the path, in the altruistic mind of enlightenment—the thought of loving kindness and compassion—and patience, to be content, satisfied, one finds it very difficult to control it because of these pollutions—the wrong attitudes. Actions of the body and speech done with a wrong attitude pollute the mind.

There are powerful deities for quickly purifying obstacles, such as Vajrasattva. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha manifested in different aspects, different buddhas to guide the sentient beings, particularly to purify the obscurations, the pollutions of the mind, the negative karmas. You are reciting Chenrezig mantra—that is also one very powerful method to purify. If you recite this mantra as many times as possible, meditating on the Compassionate Buddha, this is one of the best methods to quickly transform the mind, to develop the mind, to purify obstacles such as the selfish attitude. The self-centered mind is the greatest enemy to the immediate success of the work to gain temporal happiness and ultimate happiness for oneself and others. Reciting Chenrezig mantra is the best. This is one method which is extremely important. If the mantras are recited in conjunction with the practice of the four powers, it becomes perfect purification. There are various practices of purification; very profound, very powerful methods such as prostrations to Buddha, to purify the obstacles to quickly generating the path of enlightenment, to quickly generating the realizations of the meditations.

I think one of the best things is not getting angry in daily life when you are in situations, with somebody who treated you badly or criticized you, when you are in a situation where there is danger of anger, jealous mind or dissatisfied mind arising. If in your everyday life you don't make your mind confused by yourself, you won't pollute your mind. In this way you won't create negative karma of body, speech, and mind which pollutes the mind and disturbs the realizations of your meditations, of the path, and which brings problems in this life and problems in future lives. So you see, even in our everyday life we can protect ourselves in this way. We ourselves are a guide, a protector, protecting our own mind.

Practice mindfulness; always watch the mind. Watch what is happening while one is in the house, while one is outside, while one is alone, while one is with other people. Always watch the mind; look at the mind all the time. Spy on the mind all the time. Then, when there is danger of these disturbing thoughts arising and disturbing your peace, destroying your happiness, and the happiness of the surrounding people, bringing disharmony, great difficulty and danger in this life and also the future lives, do not let them arise. Do not allow these dissatisfactory minds to arise. One of the worst is anger. If we don't protect our mind, if we let the mind be overwhelmed by the disturbing thoughts, we become an enemy to ourselves; we destroy our peace by ourselves; we make ourselves confused.

So, as the Buddha said in the teachings, “Oneself is the guide, oneself is also the enemy.” Practice with memory and mindfulness. Remember, watch the mind for whether the disturbing thoughts are controlling the mind or not. When there is danger of being overwhelmed, protect yourself from them. Instead of them controlling you, control them. Instead of giving liberation to the disturbing thoughts such as anger, dissatisfied mind or jealousy, give liberation to yourself. I think watching the mind, controlling the mind in everyday life itself is what it means to practice the holy Dharma, Buddha’s teaching; this is what it means to practice the spiritual path. It’s the best meditation, the best purification. By doing this one doesn’t pollute any more. Even if one doesn’t know other very profound meditations in order to purify, such as the very profound tantra meditations; even if one does not know what shunyata means, if one protects the mind in everyday life, one doesn’t pollute one’s own mind any more. In this way one doesn’t create more work of purification. If one doesn’t create negative karma, if one doesn’t pollute the mind, there is nothing to purify!

Doing Chenrezig meditation itself is very purifying. White Tara meditation is very purifying. Each meditation that you have been doing now is a process, a way of purifying. That’s all, I think. How to purify? That is a very extensive question! That answer contains the whole thing.

A.M. It’s very simple, sir! Just with the name of God, and doing the duty also. One’s consciousness is busy in the name of God, and the other’s are busy washing the floor or doing all the duties: cleaning the bedroom, cleaning the toilet, kitchen and doing an eight hours job. While doing all the duties, one side ... the name of God. That is sufficient.

L.Z. Good! Yes, very good! That’s right! doing! Doing all these things for the God.

A.M: Doing all the duties with the name of God!

L.Z: With the name of God!

A.M: Yes!

L.Z: That’s good. Yes, good.

A.M: You cannot spend all the time in a forest, on the mountains. We have to live in the world.

L.Z: That’s right.

A.M: Yes! Yes!

L.Z: That’s right! I agree!

A.M: If we leave the world and go to a mountain then God is not happy. Yes! Yes! We are here just to gain something, then we go back into the world. We join them.

L.Z: We are living in the world. Right! If you don’t have to live in the world, then it is excellent, no problem!

A.M: God gives us all the things if we are doing our duties. If we do the duty, that is karma. Doing the karma!

L.Z: That’s right! Good!

A.M: If we do wrong, if we expect more, the other things, that’s not right! We must think about the future! And the future is in our hands. With that doing, that’s karma. If we do right, that’s karma.

L.Z: That’s right!

A.M: We must be honest to ourselves, only then are we honest to others. If we are truthful to ourselves then we are truthful to others and we get truth for living in the name of God. That is the philosophy of living! This is all the religious main philosophy of living. All the religions say “live like good people.” The difference is the philosophy. This is the best religion where I am sitting. I give more respect because the best people of the world are sitting here and they need it now!

L.Z: Of course! I think I will stop now, okay.

LECTURE 2

November 14 pm

Before mentioning the actual subject, I would like to mention what Guru Shakyamuni Buddha said in the teachings. “Bhikshus,”—monks, the learned ones—“examine well my teachings, like gold is examined by burning, cutting and rubbing, then practice; not by blind faith.” Guru Shakyamuni Buddha himself said this. Buddhadharma is something that the more one studies, the more one practices, the more one examines, the understanding becomes deeper and clearer. It is the quality of the Buddha’s teaching. This is the experience of the previous learned ones, the great pandits and realized ones, meditators, attainers, and the present practitioners of the Buddha’s teachings. In the East and also in the West.

Even the scientists who have made the finest, most subtle discoveries about the nature of external phenomena such as atoms, even those most highly intelligent ones are coming closer to Buddhism. The more they examine instead of moving further away from Buddhism they find they are closer to what is explained in the Buddha’s philosophical teachings on reality: the two truths—the absolute truth, the reality of how things exist, and the conventional truth. As they examine external phenomena more their understanding becomes more and more correct. As they continue their examination they find that which they used to believe in the past is mistaken. The teaching is more acceptable, more agreeable as they continue their examination. When they discuss with the learned lamas, when they hear and study, it helps them so much. It opens a door for their knowledge, for science, to that which for so many years they were unable to understand.

So, the conclusion is that as you are expecting to learn new methods and to practice these in order to pacify your suffering, there will come many things that you will find you do not understand right away. Those can be clarified by discussion. One doesn’t have to become crazy, feeling, “I don’t understand this subject, this point.” Keep it as a subject to study. The more you study, the more you hear, that which you cannot understand through study comes through practice. Through meditation, through training the mind in the path, it becomes a realization and a clear understanding comes.

(end of tape)

However, if we had actualized this path already, by now we wouldn’t be suffering; we wouldn’t have a confused life; we wouldn’t have such a suffering body and mind. That shows that we haven’t had the experience of generating the path to liberation, the cessation of the sufferings. Therefore, we are hearing about a path that our mind has never been trained in or which has never been actualized in past years, in past lives. From the beginningless rebirths until now we haven’t accomplished the path to liberation. So, with this precious human body we are trying to listen, reflect and meditate and to train the mind to become the path, to transform the mind to a state of liberation. So, of course it’s not easy.

Even for one’s own happiness there’s nothing more important than to train the mind in the path to achieve everlasting liberation. Once the disturbing thoughts, the cause of suffering are ceased, by accomplishing the remedial path in one’s mind it is impossible to again experience suffering and to be reborn in the cycle of rebirth, old age, sickness and death, because there’s no cause, once the disturbing thoughts and their seeds are completely ceased there is, there is no way for them to arise again in this mind. As one cannot get apples from the cement floor, without a cause the result cannot be experienced, whether it is happiness or suffering. So, even concerning happiness for oneself there is nothing more important than this. It is so worthwhile to experiment or even to study in order to check whether it is true or not, even if one doesn’t practice. To guide other suffering

beings, oneself should be liberated from suffering first. If one's own mind is confused and ignorant one cannot liberate others from ignorance, confusion and suffering. Like, for example, an armless being cannot help another being who is in danger of falling down a precipice or drowning in the water.

During my lecture, because my English is so perfect—accent and everything!—you might have trouble to understand! If there is something that is not clear to you, you can ask somebody who is familiar with my noise, with my voice!

One should not be satisfied with one or two meditation techniques. I don't know why the number of diseases is counted in the west, but generally they say there are about four hundred and twenty-four diseases. If one person gets sick with various diseases there is a need for different medicines. One medicine cannot stop all diseases, such as taking aspirins cannot cure toothache, diarrhea, cancer, T.B, heart-attacks, cuts, and infections! Being satisfied with one or two simple meditations in life is like this; thinking that there is no need to study the other meditations of the graduated path, that it is too much for oneself, is similar to the example of being satisfied with aspirin for all those diseases. As there are various remedies for various diseases, there is a need to understand the various meditations in order to recover from the worst disease that we have—the various disturbing thoughts. The diseases of the mind are from where the various undesirable, terrifying physical sicknesses and mental problems come. To study and understand the various graduated meditation practices is extremely important.

Buddha said in the teachings, “Not creating any non-virtue, enjoying perfect virtue and subduing one's own mind is the teaching of the Buddha.” This reveals the Four Noble Truths, the first teaching that Buddha gave at Sarnath for lower intelligent people. The person who normally doesn't control his mind and always lets himself be under the control of anger, the selfish attitude and dissatisfied mind—those disturbing thoughts—who is concerned all the time only with himself or herself, who is so impatient and easily disturbed, in each day of the life experiences many problems, confusion, and disharmony. If we think of the life of even one couple, without thinking about the whole world, we can see so clearly what Buddha was saying.

Even if we just watch our own minds we see that while we have anger there is no peace. If we remember past experiences in our life, those times when we had anger and strong selfish attitude or while there was strong pride, or jealous mind, was there peace? Because of strong jealousy, ill-will, dissatisfied mind or anger, not only is mind unhappy but even physically there is pain, such as pain in the physical heart. We can see even from a simple thing like this how in each day happiness and peace of mind, or unhappiness, depends on our own mind of that hour, of that day. There is no peace or happiness when we allow our mind to be under the control of disturbing thoughts. But when we don't allow it to be under their control there is peace and relaxation. Even physically there is comfort, even if we don't have the enjoyment of a luxurious place, because the mind is subdued and not under the control of disturbing thoughts. When the mind is virtuous, when it has the nature of patience, there is much peace, relaxation, and tranquility. When the mind is under the control of anger, even if someone is living in a rich apartment which costs thousands of dollars each day, eating luxurious foods which cost hundreds of thousands of dollars each day, spending thousands of dollars for clothes from the head down to the feet, if he doesn't subdue his mind, take care of his mind there is no peace or happiness in his life. His life is always lived in suffering and problems, even if he is rich. His mental suffering is greater than if he was a beggar!

When the mind is in virtue, in the nature of loving kindness and compassion, there is much peace and contentment. Immediately there is an incredible realization of peace. When one has much suffering in the mind it is not so much due to starvation and so on. Even if one finds an apartment, the mind thinks of getting a better apartment. It is similar with things inside the house. For example, television: first one has one and after one has used it for some time one wishes to get a better one. Similarly with cars. If one follows the selfish attitude it is always like this—there is no end. One wants more and better all the time. When one doesn't get it, there is the worry of being unable to get it or of not having enough money. The dissatisfied mind brings so many other problems. Much fighting happens in the family and with friends over materials. It brings disharmony to a harmonious family or friendship-quarreling, killing and much fear and worry. One feels a need for so many hundreds of things in the house. Even if one gets old one is still not happy. The dissatisfied mind wanting better and more, continues without end. As long as we don't stop this great disease, the dissatisfied mind, from our side the suffering continues all the time bringing thousands of other problems.

Check your mind while there is much confusion and the various problems which come from the dissatisfied mind not being happy due to not getting better and more things that you desire. If you simply think, "This is the dissatisfied mind and this has no end. As long as I follow this it never ends. It's not sure that I will live for a long time—thirty or forty years—as the wrong conception of permanence believes. This thought that I will live long will continue until the moment death comes, therefore it cannot be trusted. Therefore, that's enough for me. Because of following the dissatisfied mind, I get so many problems." The pain in the mind caused by the dissatisfied mind is immediately pacified, there is great peace and liberation from problems. The mind being satisfied is itself what is called "practicing Dharma." The benefit of practicing Dharma is immediate peace. I will stop here.

### LECTURE 3

November 15 am

If one wishes to benefit other sentient beings, to perfectly guide them from suffering to peerless happiness, one needs to attain omniscient mind; there is no other way. By practicing the remedial path one should remove all the stains completely and complete all realizations. The state of enlightenment needs to be achieved—this is the only solution, the only method. Like the seed of the fruit, the principal seed of enlightenment is bodhicitta: renouncing oneself completely and cherishing others one-pointedly, all the time, cherishing all other sentient beings. The thought of only benefiting others. One should try to transform the mind into bodhicitta, the path to enlightenment. One way to continuously and quickly generate bodhicitta, the ultimate good heart, is to listen to the various teachings on bodhicitta such as this extensive teaching, the *Bodhicharyavatara*, written by the great bodhisattva, the great attainer, the highly-accomplished saint, Shantideva. This text contains detailed explanations, meditations on how to transform the mind into the ultimate good heart, bodhicitta, through the practice of the six paramitas, the Mahayana path—such as the paramita of patience. Then there are the extensive sutra teachings taught by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha: the benefits of bodhicitta, the practice of bodhicitta, and the way of transforming the mind into bodhicitta. There are various texts such as *The Admiration of Bodhicitta*, written by the great saint, Kuntu Lama Tenzin Gyaltzen and also lamrim, the graduated path to enlightenment, in particular those texts written by Lama Tsong Khapa. Then there are others such as that written by the great saint, the bodhisattva Togme Sangpo, *The Thirty-Seven Practices of All Bodhisattvas*. Listening extensively, reflecting, trying to understand the meaning, and meditating help to transform the mind into bodhicitta. Preventing obstacles to the quick realization of bodhicitta and successful

accomplishment in meditation, and accumulating merit, is achieved by reciting the Compassionate Buddha's mantra—the mantra that you are now reciting. Doing the practice of the Compassionate Buddha, Chenrezig, is a way to develop the mind; to generate the ultimate good heart, bodhicitta, to establish the root of the Mahayana path to enlightenment quickly, within one's mind and this present human body. OM MANI PADME HUM ... OM MANI PADME HUM ...

I briefly mentioned yesterday, but not the details, of the meaning of OM MANI PADME HUM. MANI is method and PADME is wisdom. As I mentioned, the whole path as revealed by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is contained in these two words: MANI PADME. The graduated path to enlightenment is contained in this. The whole path to achieve Nirvana, the liberation from suffering and the true cause of suffering, the lesser vehicle paths—all those are included in method and wisdom, therefore they are contained in MANI PADME. Then, all of the Paramitayana path, the bodhicitta path to achieve enlightenment, is contained in the method and wisdom, and again, all is contained in MANI PADME.

Also, all the Vajrayana path—the path of the inseparable vehicle, the path of tantra, or, the path of secret mantra. Tantra has four divisions or levels. The first one is *kriya tantra*—this is divided into that having the sign and that not having the sign. Having the sign is method; not having the sign is the path of wisdom. Again, the whole path of *kriya tantra* is included in MANI PADME. Similarly with the other tantras. The highest, the fourth is *maha-anuttara yoga tantra*, through the practice of which one can achieve enlightenment in this degenerate time, in a very brief life time. One is able to attain enlightenment, the state of omniscient mind, the transcendental state which is complete in all realizations and which is purified of every stain, in this very brief lifetime. The *maha-anuttara yoga tantra* path has two stages: generation and accomplishment. These are included in MANI PADME, method and wisdom. The second stage, that of accomplishment has four stages: the seclusion of mind; the illusory body; clear light; unification. Clear light is the path of wisdom; the illusory body is the path of method. Illusory body is contained in MANI and the clear light, wisdom, is contained in PADME. There are two types of clear light: the clear light of meaning and clear light of example.

In order to turn the mind into the path one should first lay the foundation, the three principal paths.

The thought of renouncing samsara is having strong aversion through realizing that samsara is only in the nature of suffering; that these aggregates—body and mind—are in the nature of suffering, being under the control of the disturbing thoughts and karma. We are not aware of its nature, we are hallucinating that which has the nature of impermanence we hallucinate as permanent; that which is dirty we hallucinate as clean; that which has the nature of suffering, we hallucinate as pleasant; that which has no existence at all from its own side, which is labeled, we completely hallucinate as existing from its own side. Renunciation is realizing the fact, the reality, of how this is in the nature of suffering.

It is like butterflies [moths] seeing a fire as a beautiful lantern, not realizing what happens when they get inside it—completely hallucinating. Even if it has a cover they still try to get inside, as much as possible! Even though they feel hot they still try to get inside. They think that inside the white part there is incredible bliss. So what happens when they really get inside? That's it! It's not what they expected before! It's completely contrary. As long as we are in samsara, it's like this all the time—having a confused life all the time, not knowing that it's the nature of suffering, following the hallucinating mind as if it's right, as if the wrong conceptions are perfect! Completely trusting the projection, the hallucination believing the views of the wrong conception as if they are completely

true. Like seeing a burning environment as a beautiful park and trying to live inside it, not realizing that it burns. Like seeing this suffering realm as a beautiful park. Renunciation is realizing your own samsara is only in the nature of suffering, seeing it as like being in the center of a fire and not being able to stand being in this realm of suffering for even a minute or a second without having achieved your own liberation.

After having the strong realization, or thought, to renounce samsara—feeling one's own suffering as unbearable and the thought to seek liberation spontaneously and continuously arising—when you change the object—thinking of others instead of yourself—it becomes compassion. Because of having such a strong thought of renunciation of your own samsara, when you think of others being caught in samsara, suffering, it becomes incredible, unbearably strong compassion, feeling it as unbearable that others are in samsara, under the control of the disturbing thoughts and karma. When you see others caught in samsara it feels so unbearable—like having a spear put in your heart. It's like how the mother feels when her beloved only child falls in a fire—it's so unbearable. Like this, there arises such unbearably strong compassion wishing other sentient beings to be free from suffering. You cannot relax without doing something. There is no way to think of yourself, your own happiness. No way. There is no way for the thought of self-concern to arise. You can't stand without doing something to free the sentient beings. You can't stand them being in samsara even for an hour or a minute. Like before, you could not stand not having achieved your own liberation, could not wait for even a minute, so it is now in regard to others. When you have this wish arising, you have the realization of great compassion—wishing all sentient beings to be freed from all sufferings, and to do that by oneself. Bodhicitta comes from this.

So what's the solution now? What shall I do? What's the best method? There is no other method for yourself to be able to perfectly guide the sentient beings from suffering but by achieving omniscient mind. The wish to achieve omniscient mind comes from the root which is compassion. Then the altruistic mind of enlightenment, bodhicitta, is generated. Like I explained it is the compassion which spontaneously arises for all sentient beings without discriminating the enemy, friend and stranger—one who treats you badly, who criticizes, one who helps, and one who gives neither help nor harm—for all the sentient beings who are suffering. Wishing to be free ... of all obscurations those who are devoid of the peerless happiness, the state of omniscient mind, who are obscured, and to do it by oneself. The spontaneously arising bodhicitta is like how the mother feels towards her one beloved child who has fallen in the fire. One can't stand it; day and night, all the time, the altruistic mind of enlightenment arises without effort. Then one has the realization of bodhicitta. That person is the one who is called 'fortunate', that person is wise, that person is skillful, compassionate. The one who has the ultimate good heart, bodhicitta, in his mind is the person who is really competent.

In the world a person who can earn a lot of money, who can kill his enemies, who has lots of apartments everywhere, is called clever, skilful, wise. Someone who can cheat others for his own reputation or happiness is called wise, clever, self-supporting. Those ideas are completely wrong. Even if one was able to liberate oneself from samsara, still one hasn't finished the work for self and the work for others. Accordingly the bodhisattva is not necessarily skillful or compassionate even if he can liberate himself from samsara, thus the wisdom of realizing voidness is practiced after the realization of bodhicitta.

Then after one's mind is trained well in the general path, one takes initiation from a qualified vajra guru, who can give maha-anuttara yoga tantra initiations. Then with one's mind having been ripened

by receiving the four types of maha-anuttara yoga tantra initiations, one trains the mind by meditating on the maha-anuttara yoga tantra path: the gradual path of generation and the gradual path of accomplishment. When one's mind has reached the state of the clear light of example there is no danger of death. One is free—there's no uncontrollable death, no dying without choice.

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... If you are able to approach this stage. The clear light is signified by PADME and the illusory body by MANI, the method. If not, then right after death in the intermediate stage like many of the high lamas and great yogis, such as Milarepa, who became enlightenment in one lifetime.

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All the merit that takes three countless eons to accumulate in the paramita, or, bodhisattva path, is completely accumulated in one brief lifetime by meditating on the illusory body. The clear light is the remedy to the dual view. The disturbing thoughts, even the subtle dual view, are completely ceased with the support of the illusory body which accumulates extensive merit. Through these, being the cause, one achieves the unification of completely pure holy body and the holy mind of the buddha, or the deity, in the aspect that one has been practicing through the yoga. Then one becomes a buddha.

When the moon rises it doesn't require effort for its reflection to appear, "Now I'm going to manifest in all the waters on the earth—in all the ponds and dew drops." When the moon rises wherever there is water on the earth the reflection comes without effort. Like this, after one has become a buddha, after one has achieved the deity that one has been practicing, one does the work of benefiting the sentient beings—continually doing the work with the holy body, speech and mind for the sentient beings who equal infinite space. Continually doing the work to lead them to peerless happiness, the state of omniscient mind.

So you see, MANI PADME contains the whole graduated path to enlightenment: method and wisdom. This is briefly explaining the meaning of the mantra OM MANI. You see, if the mind is like rock it is the same as the soil which is not fertilized, not well prepared. Even if you plant crops they cannot grow. Like this, if the mind is so selfish, so solid—anger and dissatisfied mind like iron, like a rocky mountain, so solid, a vicious mind—even though you wish to achieve liberation, to achieve complete enlightenment, the path which is contained in MANI PADME cannot grow in the field of our mind. Soil should have minerals, it should be fertilized, it should have water—then it is possible to grow things. Similarly, this mind needs to change from the solid, the vicious, ugly mind; to be transformed from that, to be made soft. It needs to receive the blessings of the Guru Buddha.

So in OM MANI PADME HUM, MANI PADME is the name of Chenrezig, the Great Compassionate One. It's like calling one's mother. You call mother to get her attention and then you ask whether you want ice cream or whether you want chocolate, or whatever you want! So you call MANI PADME, Chenrezig's holy name. HUM persuades Chenrezig's holy mind. So what one is asking is for Him to bless the mind—your own mind, and also the minds of other sentient beings, to plant the root of the path to enlightenment, the method and wisdom which is contained in MANI PADME.

What is left is OM. Practicing and completing the path of method and wisdom in the mind is signified by MANI PADME, the purification of all the obscurations of body, speech and mind; the negative karma of the body, speech and mind. The impure conception or view, of body, speech and mind, is purified. Then, this body, speech and mind becomes Guru Chenrezig's vajra holy body, vajra holy speech, and vajra holy mind. OM has three letters—Tibetan letters, not English! The letter AH—the mother syllable—a nara or “O” vowel, and a zero on top. These three signify the three kayas, or, the vajra body, speech and mind. Your impure conceptions of body, speech, and mind become completely pure, vajra holy body, speech and mind of Chenrezig, the Compassionate One. Therefore, OM means enlightenment. So, OM MANI PADME HUM contains this meaning: the beginning of the path—the cause—the path itself and the result. Like a tree, the root, the trunk and the fruit.

OM MANI PADME HUM ... OM MANI PADME HUM ...All existence is included in OM MANI PADME HUM. Dependent arising and emptiness—MANI PADME. All existence is contained in the two truths; all this is contained in MANI PADME. Absolute truth in PADME, and conventional truth, the truth of the all-obscurating mind, in MANI.

This is just a very brief explanation of the Chenrezig mantra. However, all the 84,000 teachings of Buddha; the *Prajnaparamita* teachings—all those hundreds of volumes of the Tengyur and Kangyur are included in OM MANI PADME HUM. All the five great treatises on the sutras that they study in the monasteries which are an explanation of the logic which identifies that Buddha is a valid, or true, holy being—unbetraying, not misguiding, logical. Buddha's teaching is true because when a sentient being practices it, it works; it contains the experience so the result comes. When it is practiced even the simplest everyday life problem gets solved, so this is a small proof that one can be liberated from the true cause of suffering; that one can become enlightened is proved; that the teachings are valid, true, unbetraying, is proved.

They study the teachings of logic for many years in the great monasteries. They usually study and debate Madhyamaka, about the two truths, for three years. Then they study the wisdom-gone-beyond, the *Prajnaparamita* teachings, for five years or something like that. Then Vinaya teachings about moral conduct: subduing the body, speech, and mind. Then they study the *Abhidharmakosha* for many years. They study these sutra teachings and the five great treatises for thirty or forty years in the monasteries, memorizing, debating and taking examinations. Then for many years they study tantric teachings and practice all those extensive, complete paths. A whole lifetime of study is contained in this OM MANI PADME HUM.

So then, together we will recite some mantra. Somehow there is a difference in this particular buddha, the embodiment of compassionate of all Buddhas—the great compassion not being able to bear the sentient beings' suffering and guiding sentient beings from suffering. It is 100,000 times greater than the compassion that we have towards ourselves. There is no compassion. You see, all the buddhas' compassion is manifested in this particular aspect called Chenrezig, the Compassionate-Eye-looking Buddha.

Because of his compassion, Buddha himself achieved the great nirvana, the sphere of the great peace. Without choice, being bound by compassion. We, being bound by selfish thoughts, without choice give harm to other sentient beings and even to ourselves. Buddhas, being bound by compassion manifest as higher bodhisattvas in sambhogakaya aspect, and ordinary bodhisattvas in nirmanakaya aspect. For ordinary beings they manifest in the form of a monk or as a king like His

Holiness the Dalai Lama—various forms, whatever is necessary. If there is a way to subdue the sentient beings by being manifested, they manifest—as a judge, even as a butcher, as a general or even as a crazy person; as a blind person or a beggar to cause others to accumulate merit by practicing charity and so to create the cause of happiness. Also, as a wealthy person if some sentient beings need to be guided in that way. As a prostitute if sentient beings need to be guided in such a special aspect, it being the only method to subdue their minds, because of their strong attachment. The Buddha said in the teachings, “I will manifest as all these things.” Shakyamuni Buddha himself said, “I don’t have attachment but I manifest as having attachment. I’m not blind but I manifest as being blind. I’m not crippled, but I manifest as crippled. I’m not crazy, but I manifest as crazy. I have no anger in the slightest, but I manifest as having anger. If I manifest in the future like this, all those sentient beings will not recognize this.” He has manifested to guide us as the thousand-armed, thousand-eyed one. This is the mantra of the Compassionate Buddha. Somehow it is different from other mantras; other mantras are very powerful but has some particular personality or particular effect—the mind is naturally more compassionate during the time of reciting this mantra. The thought to benefit others naturally arises and one is less self-centered. Naturally the mind is very calm. Normally, ordinary people who are reciting this mantra have very good hearts even if they don’t know the teachings and don’t meditate on the graduated path to enlightenment. Just through having faith in the Compassionate Buddha, the Great Compassionate One; just through reciting the mantra. Even for the happiness of this life you need to have a good heart. In everyday life for peace of mind you need a good heart. It is the utmost need; this is the only way. It is so helpful to recite this mantra. It is very effective for the mind.

What we should feel is not so much the form but the essence, the nature of Chenrezig. If having Chenrezig above your crown is not comfortable, then you can visualize him in front, in the thousand-armed-eyed aspect. That great compassion towards all sentient beings manifests in this aspect. The nature of the holy body is light. Compassionate, loving eyes looking at oneself, the suffering sentient being who is confused, as well as all other sentient beings. Him smiling and the nectar flowing down from his heart. If you can think of it, in his heart there is a syllable HRIH on a moon disc which is on a lotus having eight petals. However, think that nectar beams purifying all the obscurations, particularly the selfish attitude, the obstacle to generating bodhicitta, comes from his heart.

Maybe I will do the *lung* the oral transmission of this mantra. Think, “I am going to take the oral transmission of this mantra in order to achieve the enlightenment of the Great Compassionate One in order to quickly enlighten, to quickly lead, to quickly free, all the sentient beings from suffering and lead them into the Compassionate One’s enlightenment.” Please generate this motivation of bodhicitta then listen to the mantra. OM MANI PADME HUM ... OM MANI PADME HUM ...Also the long mantra: NAMO RATNA TRAY AYA ...

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Today I did not start to talk about karma—this morning didn’t happen as I planned! However, just hearing about karma and leaving it at that is not sufficient. Try to relate it to your own experience. We can see in our daily life, even during one day, that we meet many desirable and undesirable things. Maybe we experience many discomforts, undesirable sense objects—forms, sounds, smells, touchables. Even with thoughts, when some memory comes you become unhappy. Try to relate to

what Buddha explained in the teachings. It is talking about your own life, try to realize that your own life is explaining karma. Everyday life's different experiences—happiness, suffering, whatever we experience, bad or good things—every minute, every hour, are themselves explaining karma. Your life is explaining karma—your life is giving you yourself a teaching. For example, when you eat delicious food, think that this is the result of past virtuous thoughts and good actions. Then, when you suddenly find something with a bad taste, think that it is the result of non-virtue. When you eat bad food think that this is the result of covetousness. Practice awareness and karma, relating it to your own experience. Now I'm speaking more about karma, but you can also relate it to the present mind. So, practice awareness of karma like this.

When you are working outside and see a beautiful flower that pleases you, that is your karmic view. That view comes from your own mind, from virtuous thoughts. Anything which is disagreeable and disturbing to you is the result of bad thoughts in the past—negative karma. Whenever you experience sense objects—good smells, bad smells, when eating food, when looking around at views, practice awareness. When you see people or animals: when you see one person it makes you happy, another makes you unhappy. If one person is helping you, think, "This is the result of my good karma, of having the right attitude." If somebody makes you unhappy, think, "This is the result of my negative karma, the bad thoughts." It is so obvious, so clear, how liking or not liking, seeing something as nice or not nice, is dependent on your mind. When some people look at a particular person, they find him so nice, beautiful, good and so on; at the same time when others look at him they find him completely ugly, not worth being attached to! They see the one person in different ways. Let's say you're in prison and somebody unknown helps you get free. You see that person afterwards but you don't see him as kind, you don't have a warm feeling; but when you hear that he is the one that helped when you had troubles, suddenly you see him in a different way. You see him as having a warm beauty, as kind. For your mind, the person becomes nearer. Similarly, when a person is disturbing you, you see him as ugly, very bad, negative, black; but if you think of his kindness in destroying your selfish attitude, your bad thoughts, the view changes. He becomes closer and you feel warmth and kindness from the heart. Now you can see how it's dependent on the mind. When you change your way of thinking, you will see things in a different way. With one way of thinking you see in one way, with another way of thinking you see in a different way. Some people see one place as very beautiful and like it, some see it as very ugly and undesirable.

Like this, practice awareness of karma when you walk outside. When pleasure turns into suffering think that is the result of wrong attitudes, of negative karma. Also, you can maybe do meditations on all your past lives. Sometimes you had a good life, sometimes a horrible, terrifying, suffocating life, wanting to kill yourself. Then think, "All this came from the wrong attitude in my own mind." We should use this awareness for something, for progressing the mind. We should use this awareness for more happiness, to decrease suffering, to lessen confusion. So, make the decision frequently, "This is the result of right attitudes. Therefore, what I should do from now on is renounce the non-virtuous mind as much as possible and practice the right attitude, a good heart, as much as possible." Renounce anger, pride, jealous mind, dissatisfied mind. When you meet suffering, think, "This is the result of wrong attitudes. What I don't want is suffering, what I want is happiness. This suffering means from now on I should renounce the wrong attitudes, those disturbing thoughts; renounce ill-will and practice the thought of loving-kindness; renounce the selfish attitude and cherish others. I should protect karma—practice avoiding negative karma and practice virtue. This is telling me this." So, use this awareness for practice, for the development of your happiness, for the development of your mind, for generating the right attitude. It's very good. I think that's all.

## LECTURE 4

November 16 am

We're going to recite together one round of Chenrezig, the Compassionate Buddha mantra. Visualize all the Buddhas' compassion—it doesn't matter if it's not clear—in the form of light, in the thousand-armed and thousand-eyed aspect. If you cannot manage that, then the four-armed is sufficient—on your own crown and on the crown of each of the Dharma friends who are here, and on the crown of each sentient being. Starting from here, all the human beings. Then above the crowns of all the animal beings, then other sentient beings called pretas, and sentient beings called narak beings who have heavy sufferings, and the other sentient beings—devas, or worldly gods, who have greater enjoyment than human beings, who are living on different planets. The idea is that whether you know all the sentient beings or not, there are just so many, uncountable suffering sentient beings. Just as human beings have different problems, there are many other types of sentient beings who have different problems. Basically we, the human beings, are the same, being under the control of disturbing thoughts and karma. This is basic suffering; but then on the basis of that there are different problems. Whatever kind of life they live in the world, humans have problems; farmers have problems, business people have problems, beggars have problems, rich people have their problems. Likewise many other sentient beings have different problems. Being in samsara is their fundamental suffering and whatever problems they have is on that basis.

Visualize the Compassionate Buddha on their crowns. Then nectar rays flow from the Compassionate Buddha's heart and purify all the obscurations, the mental pollutions, the negative karma, problems, confusions. While you are reciting the mantra be aware of the whole world's problems. Even if you can't think of them all, just think of what you know of other beings' sufferings—the true cause of suffering and the confusion and all those problems: couples' problems, families' and countries' and the world's problems—the fear of atomic danger and so on. All those fears are pacified. You see, by purifying the unsubdued mind, the vicious thoughts, the selfish attitude, by pacifying the true suffering, all is purified and pacified.

Before reciting the mantra we are going to offer the mandala. One powerful method by which one can accumulate extensive merit is the mandala offering practice. By doing this we are creating the extensive cause to quickly generate the whole path to enlightenment and complete the works for others—freeing every sentient being from suffering by reaching the state of omniscient mind; creating the cause to accomplish the work for oneself and the work for other sentient beings. This practice is the remedy to separate the consciousness from the mental diseases of miserliness and attachment—the dissatisfied mind—which is the root of the biggest problems of our life; to purify, to liberate us from this disease of the disturbing thoughts. This is the particular medicine or remedy: the attachment and miserliness that we have is for desirable objects—for undesirable objects we don't have attachment. So, we offer, dedicate, give away these desirable objects to the Compassionate Buddha to accumulate extensive merit. Think that in your hands you are holding all the planets that the scientists describe, without mentioning what is described in the teachings—all those worlds containing desirable sense objects. For example, on this earth there are many beautiful islands like Hawaii or places like Kashmir in India—those beautiful places for which people earn money for many years in order to be able to go to and enjoy, either from the East going to the West or from the West going to the East! Or it could even be a piece of bone that you like very much—an antique! Broken antiques that you like very much, that you can't give away, that you can't separate from! Especially any object that you like very much. Think that all the planets are in your hands,

then think of all the best things—the beautiful places, islands, ponds, beautiful houses, the sun and moon. All the supermarkets! Think of all there is, things that belong to you and those not owned by you; actually existing or mentally transformed. Also offer the objects of your anger, and strangers and friends. Offer in order to liberate all beings from ignorance, anger and attachment. Offer to the Compassionate Buddha without any clinging.

There are detailed teachings on the preliminary practices, particularly on the power of the methods of purification and accumulation of merit. After one has got some idea of the main practice, the lamrim path, if one has the wish to practice these, one should study and receive teachings.

SA.ZHI POE.KYI JUNG.SHING ME.TOG.TRAM  
RI.RAB LING.ZHI NYI.DAE GYEN.PA.DI  
SANG.GYE ZHING.DU MIG.TE UL.WA.YI  
DRO.KUN NAM.DAG ZHING.LA CHOE. PAR.SHOG.

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG RIN.PO.CH  
MA.KYA PA.NAM KYE.GYUR.CHIG  
KYE.PA NYAM.PA ME.PAR.YANG  
GONG.NAE GONG.DU PEL.BAR.SHOG.

Now we can recite the mantra for one round. All the wrong, impure conceptions preventing one from realizing the guru as a Buddha and having disrespect through to the subtle dual view are pacified—your own and other sentient beings'. The obstacles to generating the path from realizing the guru as a Buddha, up to enlightenment are purified.

OM MANI PADME HUM ... OM MANI PADME HUM...

(end of tape)

All the obscurations, one's own and other's are completely purified. True suffering and the true cause of suffering are completely purified. Think, "I have generated all the realizations from beginning to the end—from respect to the guru up to enlightenment—in my mind and the minds of all the sentient beings. Especially bodhicitta." Chenrezig is absorbed into your heart and the Compassionate Buddha, who is on the crown of each sentient being, is absorbed into their hearts. Now feel the lightness. Your mind is completely transformed, oneness with Chenrezig's holy mind in the nature of compassion. Feel unbearable compassion towards each sentient being.

SA.ZHI POE.KYI ...

SANG.GYE CHOE.DANG TSO.KYI CHOG.NAM.LA  
JUNG.CHUB BAR. DU DAG.NI KYAB.SU.CHI  
DAG.GYI JIN.TSOG KYI PAE SO.NAM.KYI  
DRO.LA PAN.CHIR SANG.GYE DRUB.PAR.SHOG.

The particular text that I'm going to try to explain is the basic text on the graduated path to enlightenment. It is by Lama Tsong Khapa, who is the crown jewel of the learned, highly realized yogis of Tibet; whose holy mind has approached the highest state of attainment; who did complete, extensive listening and perfect meditation on the whole teaching of Buddha, both sutra and tantra;

who did correct listening, reflection and meditation practice and found infallible realizations of the whole graduated path to enlightenment; who did extensive works for the teachings and did extensive works for uncountable numbers of sentient beings. Like when the sun rises and gives much happiness to the human beings, animals—all sentient beings—by dispelling the darkness, this teaching is like the rising sun dispelling the ignorance of uncountable numbers of sentient beings. It dispelled numberless sentient beings' ignorance of the path to liberation; it guided them to temporal and ultimate happiness. Even though nowadays present meditators and practitioners cannot see and receive teachings from Lama Tsong Khapa, by listening to, studying, reflecting, and meditating on them, they find it incredible. They are able to have correct understanding of the path, do correct practice and gain correct realization.

Especially these days, not only Eastern, but so many Western people are receiving benefit from Lama Tsong Khapa's teachings. They were able to have so many teachings in these last few years, especially since Tibet was overtaken by the Chinese. The teachings have been of so much benefit, particularly Lama Tsong Khapa's essential teaching of the graduated path to enlightenment, which summarizes all the teachings and which is so practical. It explains how to live everyday life in order to make the actions of body, speech, and mind meaningful, in order to benefit oneself and other sentient beings. Not only to obtain temporal happiness for oneself and others, but to obtain the state of omniscient mind. It planted so many seeds for enlightenment in so many people's, even Western peoples' minds—seeds of liberation and seeds of enlightenment. So much preparation was able to be done for liberation from the sufferings of samsara—not only dispelling the ignorance of not knowing what is the cause of happiness and what the cause of suffering, but planting the seeds for the whole path—sutra and tantra. It is so incredibly beneficial for gaining immediate peace especially when there are problems and sufferings in everyday life. I was going to tell the life story of Lama Tsong Khapa. Maybe one brief life story can be read out—what incredible attainments he had, how he practiced Dharma and did incredibly beneficial work for sentient beings.

Those who have received many teachings on lamrim and thought-training, but from their side did not practice, did not put it into action, of course, that's something else. But for those who have received many teachings, who have understood, who know the meditation techniques, there is no question that as long as it's put into action it does stop the problems. No question; no doubt. After one has understanding of the meditation techniques from receiving teachings, it depends on whether one puts the advice into practice or not, especially in everyday life, especially in circumstances where problems are nearly arising or when one is already caught in the problems. It is said in the teachings: the beginning of the meditation is the motivation; the beginning of the practice of the graduated path to enlightenment is meditating on the perfect human rebirth—the freedoms and richness of the human body, how the human body is precious, the qualities this human body has. The beginning of the practice of holy Dharma is karma. One should start meditating with pure motivation. When training the mind in the graduated path to enlightenment, one should start from the perfect human rebirth. Practice of the holy Dharma should start from karma.

In regards the different levels of virtuous motivation, this example is very beneficial for the mind. There are four people who are saying prayers or doing meditation such as watching the breath or the stomach moving, or concentrating on sensations. For this example it doesn't matter whether the person has one-pointed concentration without distractions on the breath or on sensations or the movement of the abdomen or on some other object that is not a holy object such as Buddha. It can be just on a light or something that is not Buddha's holy body. One person does concentration with only the motive to get some psychic powers to show off, or to be able to do something incredible.

No power to benefit other sentient beings, but to be able to do something or be famous; for example, so I can have some experience, some attainment; so that I can become a guru and be famous; so I can get a lot of laughs, so I will have many followers,' whatever the person thinks. Maybe the person is doing meditation in order to have a long life, to recover from a disease, or to be happy. However, the essential motive arises from being attached to the happiness of this life.

Another person does concentration for the happiness of future lives, to find a good rebirth—the body of a happy transmigrating being—to be wealthy, to have perfect surroundings and so on, in future lives. The third person does concentration with the motive to achieve liberation for himself. The fourth person does concentration with a higher attitude than the third person—to achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings. So, the fourth person's concentration—watching the breath or sensations or movement of the abdomen, whether concentrating on an external or internal object—becomes the cause to achieve enlightenment for the sake of other sentient beings. This attitude, the motivation of bodhicitta to achieve the omniscient mind of enlightenment, in order to free all sentient beings from suffering, is the highest among the pure attitudes. The motivation of bodhicitta is the most pure attitude, even if there's no actual realization of, no uncreated bodhicitta, the altruistic mind of enlightenment. If the action of concentration is done even with created bodhicitta, it is done with the most pure motivation, bodhicitta unstained by a selfish attitude, this becomes the cause to achieve the greatest liberation—enlightenment.

The third practitioner's concentration is done with only the motive to himself achieve liberation from samsara, from this bondage—the disturbing thoughts and karma binding himself to these aggregates. This person's concentration does not become the cause of enlightenment as it is not possessed by the purest motivation, but is stained with the selfish attitude. This concentration becomes the cause to achieve only liberation for himself.

The second person's concentration does not have the purest motivation of bodhicitta nor renunciation of samsara—the wish to achieve liberation. His concentration does not become the cause of enlightenment nor does it become the cause of liberation. His practice of concentration is done with the motivation of only seeking the happiness of future lives, so his concentration becomes the cause only to achieve the happiness of future lives.

The first person's practice of concentration does not have the purest motivation of bodhicitta so it does not become the cause of enlightenment for the sake of other sentient beings. As it doesn't have the pure motive of having aversion to samsara and having the wish to achieve liberation for himself, and as it does not even have the pure motive of seeking happiness of future lives, his action does not become the cause of enlightenment, liberation or even the happiness of future lives. His practice of concentration or reciting or prayers and so on is done only with the motive of seeking happiness for this life; he is attached to this life. The rest of these four persons' motives, starting with the second, who is seeking the happiness of future lives, are pure and virtuous. The first person's motivation ...

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is not Buddhadharma it is the fault of worldly dharma, his practice of concentration is worldly dharma, not holy Dharma. It is non-virtuous.

(tape faulty)

Drom.ton.ba, who was the translator for Lama Atisha and who was the embodiment of the Compassionate Buddha, Chenrezig, asked Lama Atisha: “Would the result of any actions done for this life, actions done with anger, ignorance or attachment, be rebirth in the narak realm?” Narak beings are those who have the heaviest suffering; they have heavier suffering than humans and other sentient beings—that is the general definition. Those who pass their life in great desire are preta beings. Then there are animal belief in great desire are preta beings. Then there are animal beings. Lama Atisha replied that the result would be these rebirths.

The motive of the first person is non-virtuous and the result is these suffering rebirths, the worlds of these suffering transmigratory beings. You see, with this attitude, this worldly, non-virtuous thought, not having even the thought to make preparation for the happiness of future lives, having only an attitude with respect to this life, even if he does a lifetime retreat concentrating on the breath, or sensation or light and so on; even if he fasts, even keeps silence for a lifetime; lives in the rocky mountains, living as an ascetic, all this becomes non-virtuous negative karma. It does not become holy Dharma.

You see, all those practices of concentration starting from the motive of seeking happiness of future lives up to the motive of achieving enlightenment for the sake of other sentient beings, become Buddhadharma. The second person practices concentration with the motive of seeking happiness of future lives, making preparation for the happiness of future lives—that is virtue. It is pure because the motive is not stained by attachment, the clinging to this life. It is not sufficient that a mantra or a prayer or words of a text are holy Dharma. Your action has to be holy Dharma. For your action to become the cause of happiness, it's not enough that the mantra, or the prayer or the subject of a text is holy Dharma—it depends on the attitude. It is not enough that you are concentrating on something. For your action to become the cause of happiness, it is not enough that your mind is concentrating on one object without being distracted. Without pure motivation the concentration becomes the cause of a suffering rebirth. Another way of saying it: when you think of an object of attachment—either material or a person—when you think, “He or she is so good—good hair, good nose,” your mind is one-pointed on that—thinking of this or that quality, labeling on that. You can spend hours on that object without the mind being distracted. This is training the mind in attachment and disturbing thoughts—training the mind in the causes of samsara. Meditation for suffering! The mind becoming familiar with attachment in order to have continual confusion. Similarly, with a person who is an enemy you spend hours thinking, “How bad he is,” and of the bad behavior and the words that he spoke to you. We spend hours and hours meditating on anger, making the mind familiar with anger, instead of separating it from anger. Then also you are focusing on that object. Generally, when talking about concentration, meditation, meditation means focusing on one object. That means these are objects of meditation! But it is not the concentration or meditation that's needed to pacify problems or to liberate oneself from the sufferings.

So far, since we were born this time, and from beginningless rebirths, until now, we have been confused and suffering, under the control of the disturbing thoughts and karma. Even now we are not liberated from confusion and from being under the control of disturbing thoughts and karma. That is because from beginningless rebirths until now we have been doing the wrong meditation, meditating on ignorance and attachment. Making the mind familiar with, instead of making it distant from, the true cause of suffering, those disturbing thoughts. So you see, from morning when we get up until the last action of going to bed and sleeping—eating, sitting, walking, whatever actions we do that day—if all these are done with the pure motivation, bodhicitta, then all these actions of body,

speech and mind become the cause of enlightenment. If the actions are done with aversion to samsara—the wish to achieve liberation—they become the cause to achieve liberation. If these actions are done with the motive of seeking happiness for the future lives, they become the cause of happiness for future lives. All this becomes holy Dharma if possessed by any of these pure motives. If, from morning until night the actions of body, speech and mind, whatever one does, are done with the motive of clinging to this life, then, as I mentioned before, even if one stops working and does concentration or prayers, it becomes non-virtue. That person is creating the cause of suffering from morning until night, the cause of confusion in this life and in future lives. There is no realization or peace of not having clinging thoughts in the mind of that person; no freedom from this dissatisfied mind.

Now you can see how incredibly important the attitude is. Your happiness comes from the right attitude in your own mind. All sufferings come from the wrong attitude, the wrong way of thinking, from wrong conceptions. By knowing this you can see now how incredibly important it is to protect the mind, to guide the mind. Even if a person wishes to be pure, to be a good human being, to have a good heart, he should protect his own mind. To protect karma and to protect the mind are the same thing. Even if a person wishes to be learned or famous—since he desires happiness and doesn't wish for suffering—this is it, there is no other way than to protect karma, to protect the mind. If the person wishes to be strict, not seeing anybody, remaining in silence in a solitary place, living in any number of precepts or vows, this is it—protecting his own mind and karma. Otherwise one loses one's happiness, the desirable happiness that one is seeking. Even if the person is poor, this is it. Since he wants happiness and not suffering the key is to protect the mind. Even if he is a rich person it's the same. It's so important.

The great bodhisattva Shantideva said in the *Bodhicharyavatara*—this quotation has great meaning—“If the person has tamed or pacified whatever he thinks is wrong and needs to be pacified, and has entered into whatever he believes is right, what is the need of many practices except protecting the mind?” Another way of saying it—in the world there are so many different philosophies, and doctrines, so many different ways of reasoning and modes of conduct of body, speech and mind; different propounders and followers, beliefs that this is right and this is wrong, so many disciplines. The conclusion from what he is saying is that as long as you don't do the practice of subduing the wrong attitudes and entering into the right attitude—protecting the mind—what is the need of so many other practices? This is the essential advice. Another way of saying it is—without protecting your mind, no matter how much you study in universities, schools, colleges, no matter how many different languages you speak, or how much power you have, as long as you don't protect the mind, it is of no use.

I think I will stop here. Again I didn't make it to the text! I think it is very useful to practice continually, during break times, and perhaps in one of the meditation sessions, on the basis of what I spoke of yesterday. For example, if you see somebody, like your friend during the day, it leaves an impression on your mind and then that night in the dream you may see the friend that you met. It can be the same with an enemy whom you met or with whom you fought—you see the impression that is left on the mind in the dream, maybe fighting or something. In everyday life, even in one day, we experience various sufferings—the suffering of suffering and problems. That shows, that explains to you that you have accumulated various karmas in the past, in this life and other lifetimes. Actions done with the right or wrong attitudes planted impressions on the consciousness—the consciousness that continued from past lives to this life, and the consciousness that continued from yesterday to today.

As there are various flower seeds from which various flowers grow, likewise there are various impressions on the consciousness. So, even in one day we sometimes experience comfort, sometimes discomfort due to the impressions that were planted. Anything that is desirable in our view—sense objects—is the result of the good impressions. That which gives comfort to you comes from the impressions. Like the things which you met before that you see in dreams, as in the example, come from the impressions. For example, you see even parents or someone who died a long time ago in dreams. All these comforts and desirable sense objects come from impressions planted by virtue. All the bad or undesirable things come from impressions planted by non-virtue.

There's nothing that exists or which you experience, which does not depend on the impressions in your mind.

So, on the basis of what I spoke of yesterday, practice awareness of this. Any sense object that you see or hear, practice awareness, thinking, "They exist depending on my mind. They came from my mind." The impression that was planted is created by your own past attitudes. Your mind sees your parents or an enemy or a friend and that leaves an impression on your mind, and because of the impression you see them in a dream. It is not only that the way you see things depends on the present perceiver, the mind, the present wrong conception. If you can think further of course it's excellent. But in relation to the impression left by the attitude, the perceptions come from your own attitude. Everything, good and bad. So practice awareness. Then the mind gets a clearer understanding in regard to karma. "It's reminding me, persuading me, 'It's right because I have created the cause!'" When you have some comfort or someone says some nice words, that pleasure is persuading me, "If you want happiness then create the cause of happiness in regards to the objects sentient beings and the holy objects." Create the cause of merit by practicing compassion, generosity and so forth. "Listening to the teachings and doing meditation for the sake of sentient beings I will create some merit."

(end of tape)

## LECTURE 5

November 17 am

We're going to recite one rosary of Chenrezig mantra with the same meditation that we did yesterday. First of all offer a mandala to the Great Compassionate One. For those who have met him or received teachings from him, it is very good to visualize His Holiness the Dalai Lama on your crown and also on the crowns of other sentient beings. Either looking the same as Chenrezig, or with Chenrezig at the heart of His Holiness. Either way it becomes guru yoga practice. Also if you received teachings or made a connection think of that and make requests to quickly attain the graduated path. Then we will recite a prayer of request—this is translated into English, so it can be copied later on:

NAM.DAK CHO.KUI LHA.LAM RAB.YANG.DOE  
MIG.ME THUG.JEI CHU.ZIN BUM.TRIG.TE  
THA.YE DO.LA PHEN.DAN NGO.DUB.CHAR  
BEB.KHE CHAR.NA PE.MOR SOL.WA.DEB

So, strongly concentrate, being aware of all the sentient beings' sufferings, as much as you understand. Be aware of the whole world's problems. Nectar flows from the Chenrezig that you visualized on the crown of each sentient being, purifying the true cause of suffering, all the confusion, the true sufferings, all the wrong conceptions which disturb, from faulting the guru through to the subtle dual view which disturbs the achievement of the state of omniscient mind. All those wrong conceptions are completely purified—your own and all other sentient beings' Think of your own parents and any particular person that you want to comfort; somebody who is very confused, somebody who has many problems or who is very sick. We can think of them, and all the rest of the humans, or the sentient beings.

OM MANI PADME HUM ... OM MANI PADME HUM ...

The nectar rays that flow enter the body and mind of oneself and all sentient beings and completely pacify and purify all the wrong conceptions, all the defilements—true suffering and the true cause of suffering. Think that your own and other sentient beings' bodies become like crystal or well cleaned glass—not having any spots—becoming very calm and clear. Then Guru Chenrezig melts into light, and is absorbed at one's heart as well as at the hearts of all sentient beings. Feel oneness, and that you have generated the whole path. The mind completely becomes oneness with Chenrezig's holy mind, the great compassion towards every living being without discrimination. Feel this.

SA.ZHI POE.KYL..

SANG.GYE CHO.DANG...

I mentioned yesterday which way of thinking becomes holy Dharma or virtue, and which way of thinking becomes non-virtue, the worldly thought. The virtuous and non-virtuous attitudes transform actions into virtue and non-virtue. From those various actions the result of happiness or suffering arises. So you see, the whole thing is dependent on attitude, on one's own mind. All the sufferings and confusions come from non-virtuous thoughts, the wrong attitudes; all the happiness and all perfections come from virtuous thoughts, the right attitudes. The most important thing is our everyday life, the first thing to be concerned about—as suffering is that which we do not wish for oneself and for others and happiness is that which we wish for oneself and for others—is protecting the mind, not letting the mind become non-virtuous and as much as possible keeping it in the nature of virtue all the time. This is what protecting karma means. In our everyday life out of all projects and plans to be concerned about, to check, this is the first thing. Otherwise, we wish for happiness, yet the result is suffering and confusion. We mean to be working for happiness but in reality we are working for suffering.

In reality, if we don't know Dharma, if we don't know what the causes of suffering and happiness are, those secret aspects of the mind—that all the good and bad things come from the mind, that all our future happiness and suffering, from now until enlightenment depends on our way of thinking—it looks like we have taken the precious human body especially to create more and heavier negative karma, more causes of suffering. It looks like we are not born as animals—as fleas, mosquitoes, or tigers—because they cannot create sufficient negative karma, and that we are born as human being to create more sufferings! It depends on how we think in every minute, every hour, of our everyday life. So, it is extremely important to study about these things and to understand Dharma. Dharma means protecting oneself from the sufferings. If you understand refuge well—Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, the Triple Gem—how, by taking refuge in Dharma, Dharma guides oneself, then you understand the meaning of Dharma. It means protecting or guiding.

Relating to how Dharma guides us in everyday life—practicing Dharma, such as practicing patience, is in itself taking refuge in Dharma. Like when we train our mind in the path to enlightenment: in bodhicitta, in the six paramitas—generosity, moral conduct, and so on—when there’s much confusion or great fear and we cut the clinging thought by remembering impermanence and death, or the shortcomings of attachment, or by remembering the nature of the object to which we are clinging—such as it is impermanence, how it changes in each second, and the absolute nature of it, how it exists by being merely labeled. When we attain a contained, satisfied mind, there’s protection against present and future problems. When you practice Dharma like this you are immediately content, satisfied, and the unbelievable fear, depression, aggression—the huge problems—are completely cut off, become non-existent. You are immediately protected from that day’s problems that you have experienced since that morning, or the previous years, or, from birth, or since living with a particular person. Your Dharma practice, the pure mind and good heart, immediately protects you from problems that you may have suffered from for months or years. And because you have stopped the wrong attitude you don’t create negative karma, so it protects you from the rebirths of the suffering transmigratory beings. As it protects you from creating the cause of samsara you don’t need to be in samsara any longer. So, it protects you from the fear of samsara.

For example when we are sick we have to take refuge in, or rely on, medicine and treatment. What medicine does is cure us of disease. To have this treatment and medicine we have to rely upon the doctor to give it. We ourselves cannot recognize all diseases and know all the treatments. We don’t have the medicine needed to recover from the disease. We have to rely on a doctor who knows about all diseases, who can make a diagnosis—you have such and such disease caused by such and such and you should have such and such treatment. You shouldn’t do such and such harmful actions and you should eat such and such food in your diet. He gives us advice to not do harmful actions—if you do such and such action it will help your health. That is taking refuge in, or relying on the doctor. The doctor gives treatment and advice and that is the way he guides us. Then we also need the help of a nurse to care for us and to give us medicine. We rely on the helper, the nurse, in order to follow the advice and treatment that the doctor prescribed. The nurse is also guiding us.

Lama Tsong Khapa explained in the *Great Commentary to the Graduated Path to Enlightenment* that the actual Dharma refuge starts from avoiding, renouncing each mistake and accumulating each quality. Then, the qualities become more and more transcendental. That is the actual Dharma refuge. That means giving up, for example, the mistaken, non-virtuous action of killing. Starting from this—avoiding each mistake and attaining each quality—the qualities, the realizations, become more and more transcendental. Later on, those become the cause and then you generate the true path which causes the achievement of the true cessation of suffering and the true cause of suffering. The actual refuge, the Dharma, is the true path ...

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You can’t achieve this all of a sudden just by going on a mountain thinking, “I want nirvana, I want liberation.” Some leave the city and go into the forest where there’s nobody, or go into the mountains and stay there and hope something happens in the mind. Nirvana doesn’t happen like that. It has to be achieved from a small beginning, by avoiding each mistake of body, speech, and mind. Obtaining the ten virtues gradually and eliminating the ten non-virtues. Then the realization becomes transcendental, higher and infallible. Then one achieves the actual refuge Dharma, the true path, the true cessation of suffering. One should go to liberation by avoiding these ten non-virtuous

actions and practicing the ten virtues—this Dharma protects. This is taking refuge whether you use the words “taking refuge” or not, whether you like the word or not. This is the “Dharma” whether one likes the word or not. However, if one is practicing virtue one is actually taking refuge even though one does not level it “taking refuge.” If we practice this Dharma it protects us from the sufferings of the bodies of the suffering transmigratory beings: the narak, preta and animal beings. The whole graduated path to enlightenment is divided into three: the graduated path of the lower capability being, medium capability being, and higher capability being. This one is the lower capability beings’ Dharma. The lower capability beings’ Dharma protects one from the suffering of the lower realms. Practicing the medium capability beings’ Dharma, such as the three higher trainings protects from the fear of samsara, from the disturbing, unsubdued mind and obscurations. Practicing the higher capability beings’ path—bodhicitta and the six Paramitas—protects one even from the subtle obscurations. The higher capability beings’ path, including the path of the secret mantra, protects, guides one from the impure conception or view, the subtle obscuration which disturbs the achievement of the fully enlightened mind. Taking refuge in the holy Dharma, or another way of saying it, practicing Dharma, is how Dharma guides and protects oneself. The practice of the lower capability beings’ path offers happiness in the future lives—the body of the happy transmigratory beings, wealth, perfect surroundings and things like that. The practice of the medium capability beings’ path offers liberation from samsara; and the practice of the higher capability beings’ path offers the great liberation or enlightenment.

So, you see, to have this actual Dharma refuge, to be free from all the fears and to receive all the happiness and perfections, one has to rely upon somebody who reveals this path—the Dharma refuge. Just as we rely on a doctor and his treatment. Buddha is the one who reveals this. So, that’s how Buddha guides oneself. In order to actualize this actual Dharma refuge, which frees us from suffering, which leads us to liberation and to enlightenment, we have to rely upon that which is shown by Buddha. Then, accomplishing all this in our mind depends on the Sangha, those who are practitioners and attainers of the path. We need to depend on their support, like we depend on a nurse. This is how Sangha guides oneself from suffering. Buddha said in the teaching called *Tsom*, “I have shown you the path which cuts off the samsaric pain. The Tathagata, the Gone to Bliss One is the Founder and you should do it.” That means, “I have shown the actual refuge, the Dharma, which cuts off the pain, the unbearable samsaric suffering. I have revealed the true path to the cessation of suffering to you already and left it for you”—which means for us. The gone-to-bliss-one, the Tathagata, Buddha, is the founder and the Sangha is the supporter, the helper. “You should do it,” means I have done what I am supposed to do, now it’s your work, your responsibility. “I have shown the path, I have left the teachings—now it’s up to you to free yourself from suffering, to achieve liberation. If you practice there’s liberation; if you don’t practice, there’s suffering.” This is Guru Shakyamuni’s basic, essential advice.

Dharma refuge is not just a mere relief. Even if we cannot understand liberation or enlightenment, by not letting the mind come under the control of the wrong attitudes—anger, ignorance, dissatisfied mind—in our everyday life there will always be great peace and happiness. It is extremely important to always watch the mind, day and night, all the time. We have the opportunity to cause the mind to become non-virtuous or to become virtuous. We can transform the mind that is non-virtuous into virtue. As I explained, there are different levels of pure motive. Not only when we recite mantra or do meditation, but from morning until night, whatever actions we do, we should try to make everything become Dharma. Because of understanding what is a virtuous motive and non-virtuous motive, there’s an opportunity, great freedom to create a cause for the happiness of a future life, to create a cause for liberation or to create a cause for enlightenment. We have freedom for the

actions in our everyday life to become the cause to achieve whatever we wish. So by knowing this, we have great freedom to accomplish not only temporal but ultimate happiness. What I'm saying is we shouldn't live just by knowing the words, just intellectual understanding of what is the cause of suffering and what is the cause of happiness. We should put it into practice. Just knowing the words alone, without practice, cannot liberate oneself from the undesirable sufferings.

Are there any questions? Something bothering you?

A.M: (A question about whether practices to benefit this life are beneficial or not.)

L.Z: I don't remember that I said there's no benefit exactly. It actually depends on which of the methods you're talking about. The different methods have different benefits. Regarding mantra, if the person recites it to have a long life or recover from a disease just for this life, that does not become holy Dharma—the opposite to worldly Dharma. Mantra is very powerful. It contains very profound meanings about the qualities of Buddha. It depends on the methods, in regard to small benefits, like karmic impressions, there are those benefits.

A.M: Yesterday, during the meditation on everyone being your mother, as I was reflecting on the thought of the infinite lives that we had to create that situation, I thought perhaps we've experienced every life. In that case, we've been our own mothers. I didn't know whether that was right or not, but it seems to fit very well with my understanding of the laws of karma, because if I do something rotten to you, I'm going to be you, and so I get all the karma.

L.Z: I didn't understand. How do you feel that you are your own mother?

A.M: And then there's the logic that we are all one and it's like...

L.Z: But how do you feel that you are your mother?

A.M: How do I feel?

L.Z: What makes you think that?

A.M. Because we become the same.

L.Z: The same? You become the same with your mother? I don't know. You are oneness with everyone? Because you feel you are one with everybody? This is good. When somebody criticizes you, when somebody steals your precious things, or maybe you are having incredible comfort of sleep and somebody comes and makes a noise, somebody comes along and screams, okay, at those times when you really want to continue that sleep and somebody disturbs, if you can think oneness with that person that is good! If you can feel oneness at that times, then great, worthwhile! If you feel the other person is you, or you think, "I am him." When somebody steals, "I am him." So there's no problem! "I am him," so actually you haven't lost anything! It is like putting a tape recorder in your right hand and taking it from your right into your left hand—the left hand takes it from the right hand! If when somebody criticizes or puts you down you can think oneness, great! It helps very much if you can think like that during those times. Then there is no problem and there is peace in the mind.

The great bodhisattva Shantideva said in the *Bodhicharyavatara* teaching, "Sometimes be like a rock." There are many other techniques of course, but this suggestion is to be like a rock when there are problems. It saves a lot of confusion! You're not a rock of course, but it helps! Similarly, to think, the other person is me, is helpful. Actually it is very good, even if you don't feel it, to think, "That person is me"—even to meditate on it while the person's standing right in front of you screaming rude words like hailstones coming on your head—that person is you and you are others.

When you have a very strong thought of cherishing others, seeing them as precious and important, then think, "What the other person actually needs is the same as what I need." Then transform:

what he needs is what I need. Not as a separate person, because that is how the problem comes, but feeling that you yourself have disappeared. It should be like when a mother is terribly sick, almost dying, starving or something, her only thought is for her child to have a good life.

(remainder of tape faulty)

L.Z: But you think that from human to animal is possible? You think so?

A.M: I think, if I imagine animals like dogs or horses I can see a progression, but I can't see ...

L.Z: What animals? Dolphins?

A.M: A dog.

L.Z: A Dog, ah yes! Possible what?

A.M: Some kind of fish, dolphins, which are supposed to be very intelligent—then I can see how you can do something for your karma. But if you are a mosquito, I can't see how ...

L.Z: I see! We can't say no; there is a possibility. Generally speaking it is almost impossible, but individually there is a possibility for even flies and mosquitoes to accumulate merit. There's a story about one fly in India, somewhere, I don't remember where exactly. There was a very precious holy stupa and this fly—I think there was cow dung around—followed the smell of the dung and somehow did a circumambulation of the stupa.

You see, it's like I explained yesterday about the motives—virtuous and non-virtuous actions: most become virtuous or non-virtuous depending on the attitude. Generally it's like this; if your question is, "Does that cover every action?"—then it's not like that. There are certain exceptional actions that do not necessarily depend on motive or attitude—whether they are virtuous or non-virtuous. There are holy objects such as precious, blessed stupas, like for example this stupa built by an incredible transformation of Chenrezig, which so many great yogis blessed at different times. There are so many incredible stories about those precious stupas. If one makes circumambulations, prostrations or offerings, or even looks at it, any action—even if the attitude is just worldly, or even anger—becomes virtue by the power of the holy object. Such as Buddha or even statues of Buddha. These certain specific actions are not dependent on attitude. Of course, if one can form the right attitude it is better, it is pure Dharma. But those actions become virtuous by the power of the holy objects.

What happened was that afterwards this fly, because of the merit of the circumambulation it did by following the smell of kaka, when he was reborn as a human being and was over eighty, he left his home and lived in a monastery. He met Guru Shakyamuni Buddha who put him in the hands of one arhat, I think Mudgalypu. In that life the old man became an arhat. Although he was over eighty he practiced Dharma, generated the thought to renounce samsara and became an arhat. There are many stories like that. Yes?

A.M: I think it's the same question, because when we are always dedicating our energies to the benefit of all the sentient beings, so in the same way this energy can maybe come to this life and help us? I don't know.

L.Z: Yes, it can help.

A.M: I don't know. Because we are sending it, no?

L.Z: Yes. Send more! It can definitely benefit, yes!

A.M: How can the object have power from its side?

L.Z: How? How does this flame (pointing to a candle) have the power to burn? Do you know. This has power to burn?

A.M: (Because of the wax, wick, air, etc.)

L.Z: So those give the flame, the power, is it right? Similarly those objects have the power, by Buddha having ceased His obscurations and having completed all realizations—like you explained about the wax and all that, put together it can burn. It is similar. I think I should stop here, okay?

## LECTURE 6

November 17 pm

Particularly for listening to the lamrim teachings, the graduated path to enlightenment, it is not sufficient to have just the motivation of seeking happiness for this life. Of course, the action of listening to the teachings should not be possessed by worldly concern, a non-virtuous motive, because what we're doing here, what we're attempting, is to gain happiness. Our action of listening to Dharma should become a cause for happiness, so it should not be possessed by worldly concerns, non-virtuous attitudes. But even if it's virtuous—seeking happiness for future lives—that's not sufficient. Even the motivation of seeking liberation for oneself is not right. With what motivation should one listen to this teaching on the graduated path to enlightenment? The motivation of bodhicitta.

As you meditated this morning, all sentient beings have been one's mother and have been kind. Bring up the feeling of the kindness of others using that reasoning—others having been kind to you numberless times. Think, "At any rate I must achieve the state of omniscient mind in order to free all the sentient beings from all their suffering, and to lead them to the state of omniscient mind. Therefore, I'm going to listen to the teaching on the graduated path to enlightenment." In this way you actually, sincerely generate pure motivation. As you are repeating and thinking about these worlds I say at the same time you should feel it in the heart—a connection between the words and the heart. It's not that the words are for others or something like that, so you are listening to the teaching but with the heart feeling something completely different—having a completely self-centered attitude. In that case it is not sincere. There's a gap between the words that we say and what is in our hearts. No connection, no link. However, when you have a sincere attitude, when you generate a strong motivation of bodhicitta, you are listening purely; doing the action of listening to the teachings not for your own happiness but for the happiness of others. The most important thing is to have the happiness of others in your heart—that others are most precious; others' happiness is most important. Then listen to the teachings for the sake of happiness of others—to eliminate their suffering.

So I thought to talk in detail from Lama Tsong Khapa's *The Great Commentary of the Teaching of the Graduated Path to Enlightenment*. It's actually the great commentary to the *Lamp to the Path to Enlightenment*, containing all the teachings, all three vehicles that Buddha taught. All that is set out in the graduated path for one person to achieve enlightenment. So you see, the person who studies and practices this doesn't get confused. It contains various teachings—sutra and tantra—of the three vehicles. A person who has understanding of the *Lamp of the Path to Enlightenment*, the graduated path to enlightenment, doesn't get confused in regards to his practice. The teachings of the graduated path to enlightenment are set up mainly to subdue the mind. The way the teaching is presented is not as a subject to study, as are for example the studies of the various existences, but mainly to subdue the minds of the disciples. If, by studying those extensive philosophical teachings and tantra teachings, the mind cannot be subdued, cannot be changed, if one cannot make progress, even though one has very extensive understanding of the five great treatises, and extensive teachings on tantra, having studied for maybe thirty or forty years and become a great scholar or geshe, if one studies and practices lamrim, the graduated path of enlightenment, definitely one does make progress.

This teaching, written by Lama Tsong Khapa, the *Great Graduated Path to Enlightenment*, is the most elaborate commentary to the *Lamp of the Path to Enlightenment* written by the fully accomplished pandit Lama Atisha, who re-established Buddhadharma in Tibet. The Tibetan king, Yeshe-wo, himself invited Lama Atisha. In order to invite Lama Atisha he wanted to make gold offerings, so he went to find gold. He felt so sorry that the teachings had degenerated in Tibet. People were so confused—those who practiced tantra, secret mantra, didn't practice Vinaya, the discipline of subduing the body, speech, and mind, moral conduct. They thought that living in moral conduct is contrary to the practice of the secret mantra. They were doing the outer forms without having reached the level of tantra—depending on women, things like that. Not understanding how to practice sutra and tantra in order for one person to achieve enlightenment. Finding sutra and tantra practice like hot and cold—that if you do one thing you can't do the other. Some pandits who expressed wrong views and wrong conduct came to Tibet and spread their wrong views so there was much degeneration. The king was feeling so sad that it had become degenerated, so he invited Lama Atisha. Anyway this is a very long story!

In order to revive the Buddhadharma in Tibet, the king chose and sent, I think, twenty-one intelligent boys to India to Nalanda in order to educate them. Because of the heat, of all those only one, I think, survived; the rest of them died. However, in brief, the king heard Lama Atisha's name and heard the message that in all the monasteries when there were thousands of pandits, everybody was saying if Lama Atisha goes to Tibet it will be highly beneficial for Tibet. As soon as he heard the name of Lama Atisha, incredible devotion, unbelievable devotion arose; his hairs kind of stood up. So then he decided to invite Atisha. He went to find gold to make offerings to Lama Atisha, and somewhere at an upper place of Tibet or Nepal, one king captured him, confiscated all his gold, and put him in prison. I think the other king didn't want to spread Dharma in Tibet. I think he was probably an irreligious king. Then his nephew Jang.chub tried to free the king from prison. He was told by the irreligious king, whose name was Kalo Gyalpo, that if he brought gold of a quantity such that if it was piled up it would come up to the neck of the Dharma king, he would be released. The nephew tried to find the gold in order to liberate the Dharma king from the prison. When he had collected it the irreligious king Kalo Gyalpo told the nephew, "Still it is not enough, the amount the size of the head is missing. As much gold as can be piled up to the neck you got, but not as much as reaches up to the head." He asked the nephew to bring that much more gold. The nephew explained this to the Dharma king in the prison, and the Dharma king said to him, "Please don't give any gold to this king; besides the size of my head, not even one handful. Take this gold and go and invite Lama Atisha; and I will die, I will give up my life in prison for the Tibetans, for the teachings. To invite Lama Atisha to spread the Dharma in Tibet, I will give up my life in prison." Then he gave a message to his nephew Jang.chub.wo, "Please tell Lama Atisha when you meet him, that I have nothing else in my mind except to invite Lama Atisha to Tibet and spread Dharma in Tibet. That's all that I have in my mind; and I give up my life. And to please pray, please help me to be able to see Lama Atisha in the next life."

So, the king's nephew invited Lama Atisha to Tibet. When Lama Atisha arrived there the nephew asked him, "The Tibetan people are very very ignorant, so please write a teaching, a very simple teaching," I don't remember exactly, word by word, but I think, "on refuge and karma!" A simple teaching to practice. Lama Atisha was sent the message by the king, explaining all the confusion that the Tibetan people had in regard to practicing the various teachings. Then, accordingly Lama Atisha wrote the *Lamp of the Path to Enlightenment*. It contains the essence of the whole path, all the teachings that Buddha taught; how all that is a graduated practice for one person to achieve enlightenment. So

this teaching, the *Great Graduated Path to Enlightenment*, by Lama Tsong Khapa is the most elaborate commentary to that text written by Lama Atisha.

In the past I used to begin the lamrim teachings as it is set up in the outlines: all the qualities of the author, Lama Atisha, because the title, the *Graduated Path to Enlightenment*, came from Lama Atisha and the way the subject is set up in this particular text came from Lama Atisha. In other words, integrating all the Buddha's teachings so that it is easy for one person to practice in order to achieve enlightenment. Then come the qualities of the lamrim teaching and like this, many things. There's a whole lot before it reaches the meditation subjects! Many of the courses have started like that. Now, this time, we start from karma! Probably this time we are quicker attainers on the path to enlightenment!

As I mentioned the other day, Dharma practice should start from karma: action and result. So it's very good to know details, the basics, such as that the non-virtuous action of killing has four suffering results and the virtuous action of abstaining from killing has the opposite—four good results. Also, details of things such as the ten non-virtuous actions.

Usually in the world for those who do not understand the Buddhadharma, especially karma, when there's suffering, when there's trouble, when bad things happen, the cause, or blame, is seen as coming from outside. No matter what other subjects they have studied—science or whatever other education they have: biology or science or whatever it is—nothing is related to the person who experiences the trouble. If it's good, if it's happiness, if it's enjoyment—it is not related to the person's mind. It is always explained by pointing outside. Then, if you ask them some questions, there are no more answers. The answers are exhausted. If you ask further, the answers become more and more false. At first the person can go back and back regarding the evolution of the external things, but after some time he gets kind-of stuck because there's limited understanding. He doesn't understand the mind. In the first place there is a complete block, a big darkness, in regards to understanding the mind. Without talking about the absolute nature of the mind but in regard to just the truth of the all-obscuring mind. He can't understand even the nature of that, how it functions. He has no understanding of karma. Just a simple example that I often give at courses: one family has ten children and one was born with a handicap—the others are okay. When you ask the first time, of course the answer can be genetics—some hormones or something, or the genes. Something was missing, or was damaged, or part of an atom is missing. If the person doesn't have legs, that part of the atom or genes or something like that, is missing. Something is wrong. But why? When the others were born it didn't happen. They didn't get these genes ... genes or chromosomes? The same? I don't know; I just mentioned all the names! Amongst them there might be something right! Chromosomes or whatever. Why not for the others? Why did this particular child receive this body, this imperfect egg? Why? Why did he get this? Why? I think the answer would be, "Time." Then I can ask the question: Why did this particular child have to be at this particular time? What made it? What caused it? Why did it happen in this time? You can ask and the person will repeat the same answer—and that's it. His answers are blocked there. There's no further explanation!

A similar example: there's an avalanche when you're trekking on the snow mountains. There are many people crossing and one stone falls down, or as they are going over the snow an avalanche happens. Some people die; some people are okay. It is similar. Why those people? Other people are going on the same day on that same trail. But why did some people die on that day and not the others? Because those people are there at the time when the avalanche happened. So, now, why did those people have to be there at that time? Why? What caused it? The person would say, "It just

happened.” The people did not plan to die, but they just happened to be there. That’s it! There are no more answers.

I think, the more one understands the mind, the more one can understand about the external phenomena. So, by understanding karma one has a clear answer, an understanding of all the evolution, whether it’s of happiness or suffering, whatever it is ...

(end of tape)

To be in such a time, for the consciousness to be conceived on the imperfect egg, that is due to the inner cause. The problem’s to do with genes, chromosomes, something being imperfect, is talking about the external conditions, external causes. But now, talking about the inner cause, what caused that particular child to have a handicapped body? By understanding karma, not only do you understand evolution and all these things, but you have incredible freedom. Not understanding inner causes of happiness and suffering, only knowing the external causes—the conditions for a hard life or a comfortable life—you don’t have freedom to create the cause of happiness or to eliminate the cause of suffering. You don’t have freedom. If you don’t understand the external causes so much, even if you haven’t studied external phenomena, if you’ve studied the mind, if you’ve studied and understood karma, the inner cause, then you understand the inner cause of suffering and happiness. So then you have great freedom to not create the inner causes of suffering from now on, and to purify those which have been accumulated. One has as much freedom as one wishes. However many causes of happiness one wishes to accumulate one has great freedom to do so.

Even in the countries where there’s the highest technology, highest material development, you hear of so much suicide and so many heart attacks. People die of heart attacks so much. You hear of them killing each other so much. And for those who have everything, who tried to do whatever they could in the world, in the way of material enjoyments, who have everything that one can get on this earth, after some time, because they don’t have an understanding of Dharma, there’s nothing of interest left of this earth. Then they become completely depressed. Even if they are so rich, they are so depressed. They see life as having no meaning. For them being alive as a human being is no advantage at all; being alive is the problem! Instead of knowing that this is the body which can accomplish so many happinesses, whatever one wishes—temporal, ultimate, anything one wishes—seeing it completely the other way. So, having all this unbelievable mental suffering in countries which have the highest material development as I mentioned before, is a lack of understanding. Even though they study all the external phenomena—evolution, the conditions, the outside causes—they never study the inner cause of happiness. It’s the lack of understanding, the inner cause of happiness and suffering. So they have no freedom and things don’t work. Relying only on outside material alone doesn’t work, it doesn’t bring peace of mind. So then there’s nothing. The result is that they live their life in depression and aggression. The quickest solution is committing suicide! That’s all!

That’s why for people who practice Dharma, even if this life has problems because of the past lives’ karma—sickness and many troubles happening—their mind is happy. Happy because they’re making preparation for the happiness of future lives, and purifying. So, just temporarily having some problems—some sickness in this life or fear of the future—doesn’t matter so much for their minds. There are big differences regarding their peace of mind. If a person knows that it’s a result of his own karma. It’s better. The mind is more peaceful because he doesn’t blame the outside much. A practitioner who has understanding of Dharma, of karma, thinks that it’s mainly due to his own

karma. That trouble—disease or whatever he is experiencing—inspires him to not create more negative karma! It inspires or helps him to create more understanding about karma; to do strong practice to purify; to accumulate merit. It helps him to have a stronger renunciation of samsara because these troubles—shortage of means of living, disease, all these things, whatever—are shortcomings of samsara.

Then, in regard to the ten non-virtuous actions: the heaviest ones cause one to be born in the narak realm; lighter ones than that cause one to be born in the preta realm; then ones lighter than that causes one to be born in the animal realm.

The complete non-virtuous action of killing has four suffering results. The ripening aspect result of killing is rebirth in the lower realms. Experiencing the result similar to the cause is that even if one is born as a human being in future life, because of accumulating the non-virtuous action of killing in this life one has a shortage of life. For example, even if we become a human being in our mother's womb we are unable to live long, not having a life long enough to come out as a human being—dead by being aborted or some kind of wrong conditions. Other people killing one and so causing a shorter life. Also, having so many diseases. Those are experiencing the result similar to the cause of the non-virtuous action of killing.

Creating the result similar to the cause is that after some time when we are born as human beings, again we do the act of killing. It's what the scientists in the west might call instinctive. Because there is no explanation of karma so the term that they use is "instinctive." For example, even a child sometimes likes to hunt or to kill so much. Some, even from childhood, have a very compassionate, very loving nature; they don't want to give harm to others, and don't like others to receive harm. They feel so sad when somebody harms another being—human being or animal. The child cries and is so sad. That is because there are many impressions—the mind was much tamed or trained in the thought of loving kindness or compassion. Because of the impression that is left on the consciousness this time the child is like that, having a good personality, being very generous. Even from childhood being very happy to give things to others. Some children are so stingy and so unbelievably impatient. When you see such a child you think: "Oh, this person won't have a good life, won't have happiness even when he's grown up." Similarly, in the past the mind was trained, was accustomed to, impatience and miserliness. It is due to the previous karma that this happens, even children having the wish to kill and doing the action of killing. Creating the result similar to the cause: when we are born as human beings again we continue the same negative karma of killing because of the previous impression.

The fourth one, the possessed result: that is always to do with the place—the outside where we live, the food, drink, medicine. The food and drink that is prepared and the crops—fruit and those things—have very little protein, not so much nourishment! How do you say it? Very weak? Not having so much nutrition, so much power, and being difficult to digest. Even if the food is mixed it doesn't have much nutrition, much power. Even the crops don't have much nourishment. They become a cause of disease. Then, even though your karma is to live, even though your life is not finished according to karma, untimely death happens. So these are the four suffering results of the negative karma of killing.

By knowing the inner cause, of why there's so much trouble in the world, if you do not wish to have problems any longer and wish for only happiness, you should purify the inner cause, the negative karma of killing that you have accumulated in the past, and renounce the non-virtuous action of

killing, of harming others. Then practice the virtue of abstaining from killing. Through that you will experience the opposite—the four good results, such as a long life when you get reborn as a human being. Again in that life you will create the virtue of abstaining from killing and again create the cause of happiness and will again be able to be born in a place where there are not all these problems. We would create the inner cause of happiness while we have the opportunity.

## LECTURE 7

November 18 am

All the time train the mind like this: particularly practice having a good heart towards that person whom you regard as an enemy. Then later, when the mind gets more and more trained in the thought of loving kindness, compassion, bodhicitta, patience, it's easy to think of others with kindness. In the beginning it's very difficult, almost impossible to think with kindness of the person who always puts you down in so many ways—who puts you down directly in front of you or indirectly by criticizing from behind. It's almost impossible, it's very difficult. You don't want to think of the kindness of that person. Somehow the selfish attitude doesn't allow it. You might know the words for how to think with kindness of that person, but it doesn't allow you. Because it is against the selfish attitude to think of kindness, to benefit the person who hurt us. It is against the worldly concern.

However, what I am saying is this: in the beginning it's like this but later—by day, year, month, as you practice—the mind will be completely different from how it is in the beginning. Then when somebody treats you badly, when somebody gives you a hard time, you feel him to be most kind. The ones which you used to think of as kind before become secondary. Now the one who gives you a very hard time, who treats you badly becomes extremely important. So precious! So precious; the most unbelievably kind; the most dear one. You see that he's actually the one who gives you liberation and enlightenment, the omniscient mind. That's why whenever you do meditation on bodhicitta you start from equanimity: father on the right side, mother on the left side—it doesn't matter so much where you put the friend and enemy. In the teachings it says 'enemy behind, friend in front.' However, I think whichever is most effective for your mind, can be done. So meditation is always started by visualizing like this.

Then, being aware of the true causes of suffering and the true sufferings of other sentient beings, do the visualization of purifying them with nectar beams flowing from Chenrezig. If there's no anger then there is no war, no fighting on this earth; there's no fear, no danger. If there are no three poisonous minds, there's also no need for spies! No need of intelligence agents! All those dangerous works, expenses—there's no need of it if there's no three poisonous minds. You can see from this how important it is to purify. Not only for yourself but how it's beneficial for others to not have this anger and attachment. How much incredible peace it offers others. You can see how having the three poisonous minds is harmful, how it disturbs the world. Not just for yourself but for the world, for others, for the sentient beings. Therefore we need to practice Dharma. We need to protect karma.

OM MANI PADME HUM ... OM MANI PADME HUM ...

Think that it has purified all the wrong conceptions, the true cause of suffering and true suffering. Now the Chenrezig above your crown melts into light and is absorbed to your own and other sentient beings' hearts; become oneness. It has generated the whole realization from beginning to the end, from guru devotion up to enlightenment, particularly bodhicitta. The definite, stable

understanding of karma and bodhicitta. The mind becomes completely in the nature of the great compassion, the Chenrezig holy mind; compassion towards every living being. Everyone. Wishing everyone to be free from suffering and to do that by oneself.

SA.ZHI PO.KYE.....

SANG.GYE CHO.DANG ...

What one calls “I,” that is one person. Just one person. How many problems there are, how much comfort there is, how much luxury, happiness there is—it is just for one person. Then, what is called “others,” even considering just the human beings, there is an uncountable number. Then, preta beings, narak beings, as well as the devas—worldly gods living on different planets. So many. Those who are suffering are so many. Others there are so many. Unbelievable. Other sentient beings who are suffering equal infinite space.

(end of tape)

Always thinking day and night I, I, I, my happiness, my problem. I have this problem, that problem; I don't have happiness. Working only for the self, the I, and forgetting all these other suffering sentient beings, who are equal to infinite space, is childish. Forgetting, not having concern for those from whom we receive all our comfort and perfections—all the good things, the comfort that we like, even the pleasure of having a good reputation, which we desire. Even these things depend on the kindness of other sentient beings. Anyway, without talking about other things, just small things like this, what nonsense it is to just work for these and ignore all the kind mother sentient beings. Day and night, all the time being concerned with I and my. You don't see other sentient beings' incredible, unbelievable sufferings—you see only your own sufferings, your own problems. “I have this problem,” nothing else to think about. Nothing else to think about except your own comfort, your own pleasure. It's very sad; a very sad life. A very sad life. It's a very sad attitude: every single thing, all enjoyments, everything, is done just for the self, nothing else. It's not dedicated for others. It's a very sad life, a very poor attitude.

Another way of saying it: when you think of all this you see that others have unbelievably greater suffering than you have. We are born as human beings, having many opportunities to help others—to free others from suffering, to lead them not only to temporal, but ultimate happiness. But we are not attempting to lead others to temporal and ultimate happiness. We have concern only for ourselves, just one person; all the time, all these twenty-four hours, day and night. This is nonsense; it is childish. Being a human being, we have an incredible opportunity to benefit others. Not attempting to work for the kind suffering sentient beings who equal infinite space, seems kind of crazy, like not having a heart or not having a human mind. It's sort-of like having a human body but not having a human mind.

Think, “At any rate, I must achieve the state of omniscient mind for the benefit of all the kind mother sentient beings, therefore, I am going to listen to these teachings of the graduated path to enlightenment.” So please listen to the teaching by generating at least the effortful bodhicitta.

The non-virtuous action of stealing. This non-virtuous action has four suffering results. The ripening aspect is rebirth in the lower realms. Experiencing the result similar to the cause, stealing, is that even if we are born as human beings we are born in poverty. Even though we wish to be wealthy we always have shortages of means of living. There are many examples and stories. Some

people, some families, try so hard. Some people make so much business; they try so hard in all the ten directions! Almost in every moment they try to make some profit! In the mind there is always the thought of how to make more money; through every single action they try to make even five paise! There are many people like this. No matter for how many years the person works, for even the whole of his life, with whatever intelligence and capacity he has, somehow it fails.

The Dharma practitioner who has realization of impermanence and death, or realization of the usefulness of the perfect human rebirth and its rarity, puts all his capacity, whatever intelligence and ability he has, into this life to get some realization of bodhicitta, shunyata, renunciation of samsara or tantra realization. He tries to put whatever perseverance and ability he has into taking the essence of this perfect human rebirth. Like the businessman who in every moment thinks about how to make more money, the Dharma practitioner concentrates on development of bodhicitta and lamrim realization. Dharma practitioners try to have the profit of merit with every action of body, speech and mind, concentrating on that in every hour, every minute. Some people try so hard to make business but nothing grows. No matter how much he does, how much he bears hardships, and tries in so many ways, nothing happens, nothing grows. There is always difficulty in life, always a hard time. However, a life of poverty is experiencing the results similar to the cause of stealing. Also you yourself don't have many belongings, and your possessions are always with others. This is also experiencing the result similar to the cause of stealing. A person who always loses his things is experiencing the result of the past karma of stealing. Some persons, wherever they travel in the East or West have hundreds of stories such as other people robbing them. Things like that. That shows they have a very strong karma of stealing in the past.

You should try to remember this when having such an experience and think, "I am experiencing the result similar to the cause. It is my own mistake, having created the karma of stealing." You should try to control anger towards the person who steals things by thinking: "It's my own mistake." There should be some reason why that particular person steals from you: he is stealing from you because you yourself made some connection in the past with him, such as having stolen from him in the past. There's a karmic link that you created with the person. So, there is a cause for why that particular person steals your things. By thinking of these things you should try to not get angry.

Then, creating the result similar to the cause is, even when we are born as human beings, doing the action of stealing again. Some people, no matter how many times they are put in prison and punished, somehow uncontrollably they steal again. What causes them to steal again even if they have had a lot of trouble? It is because of being addicted, habituated in the past to the negative karma of stealing. Then, the possessed result: even if one is born as a human being, one gets born in a place where there are very few crops growing. Even if one plants them they don't give fruit. Even if the fruit does come, it changes. Fruit comes from the trees that you plant but it is rotten. If the fruit or crops start to grow drought happens. Much drought, or too much rain, so we can't get a chance to enjoy it. All the time we hear about drought in many places—in India and also in the West. Some years ago in Wales, in England, there was much drought. In Wales I met the owner of a hotel. The people who stayed at the hotel couldn't have showers because then there was no water left for food! I heard the water there had to be transported by truck from another country. Like that, much drought happens; then, much famine. For example, in the villages when the rice in the paddy fields starts to grow and there's hail storm, there's incredible worry and fear because it destroys the crops completely. All those experiences are the possessed result of stealing.

You see, problems like this are happening, the result is being experienced, because of not protecting karma. The people in the world experience all these problems—starvation, all these things—but nothing is done for the cause, the negative karma of stealing. The ones who can, try so hard: they make societies or something. They try to do something externally, to get help from outside countries. However, it is very difficult. Nothing is done for the cause—the negative karma of stealing that has been accumulated already. And, you see, in practice they are continually stealing, creating the cause for drought and famine and these problems again. So you can see how the sentient beings are ignorant. They don't want suffering, but, you see, being under the control of ignorance, they don't understand karma. By not practicing they make it difficult for themselves by creating the cause.

In earlier times, I think in most countries, there was no money. They bought by giving materials—bartering. I think it was like that in Tibet and it may have been the same in the rest of the world. Even now, some countries are cheaper but most countries are very expensive. Have you ever heard of the cost of things going down on this earth compared to before? It never happened?

A.M: It can't, because people are eating more and more!

L.Z: Their stomachs are bigger?! Now people have bigger stomachs than people one thousand years ago? I'm joking! I think the economic problems in the world will become more and more difficult. If you think about karma, there's an answer—I think it shows degeneration. That is the result.

However, in short, human beings on this earth are increasingly experiencing the negative karma of stealing. More and stronger negative karma is being accumulated. In the minds of human beings on this earth the disturbing thoughts, the dissatisfied mind, are becoming more and more gross. Life on this earth is becoming more and more difficult. There are more and more economic problems. It comes from the mind, from the disturbing thoughts. It is a result of the degenerated delusions, degenerated disturbing thoughts, which are becoming much grosser instead of becoming less. So, instead of creating less negative karma, instead of harming other sentient beings less, the mind is becoming more degenerated. By understanding Buddha's teaching you can predict the state of the world. You see the situation.

I think I will stop here.

What was the meditation this morning?

Course leader: Cherishing oneself.

L.Z: I think this time do meditation as I mentioned, about killing and stealing. After that the suffering of others, being aware of the four results, the various sufferings that they are experiencing. Generate strong compassion. First of all, watch the sentient beings as extensively as possible. Starting from the human beings on this earth, be aware of their sufferings, their problems, how they themselves do not have freedom, being under the control of ignorance. Generate strong compassion, "As I have met the Buddhadharma I have the opportunity to free them from suffering. I will!" After you've thought about their problems, then think, "How wonderful it would be if all the kind mother sentient beings were free of all these sufferings." Generate immeasurable happiness, and then generate great compassion, "I have the opportunity, and I will cause them to be free from suffering by myself." Then start reciting the mantra and purify with Chenrezig.

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG RINPOCHE ...

LECTURE 8

November 18 pm

SA.ZHI POE.KYL..

Please generate the pure motivation of bodhicitta, thinking, “I’m going to listen to the teaching of the graduated path to enlightenment in order to receive enlightenment for the benefit of all kind mother sentient beings.”

There are three non-virtuous actions of body; the third one is sexual misconduct. The ripening aspect result is rebirth in the lower realms. Even if one is born in the realm of the happy transmigratory beings, one experiences the result similar to the cause: the surrounding people with whom one lives, such as servants, always disturb one, give one no peace. Some people, even if they live with many surrounding people such as servants or family, have much peace and less disturbance to cause unhappiness or anger. For some people it’s the opposite. You know how it is: even if it’s one person, a wife or a husband, they are always bothering, always disturbing you. So many fights—twenty or thirty fights in one day! Fights within each hour, no peace. And the same with friends or servants. Also, you can’t trust anybody, whether it’s the servant, husband, wife or friend. You always meet persons whom you can’t trust. You can’t control the person with whom you stay. Your servant or friend, or the person with whom you stay, becomes an enemy or you lose them to another person. Things like this are experiencing the result similar to the cause of negative karma of sexual misconduct done in the past. This is one of the biggest problems in the world. I think that’s enough!

Then, even if one is born as a human being, in that life one again does sexual misconduct. Even if one wishes to renounce it, to avoid it, one finds it very difficult. Even if one is living in the precepts one finds it very difficult to avoid. It happens uncontrollably because in past lives one was habituated to the non-virtuous action of sexual misconduct. So, when one gets born as a human being, repeating this non-virtuous action again, is creating the result similar to the cause.

Then, the possessed result is that even when one gets born as a human being, one gets born in undesirable places, such as very dirty places having a lot of excrement, or very muddy places. Wherever one moves, wherever one lives, it is always in a muddy place! Or a place which has many bad smells, or having many upsetting, undesirable, ugly, unpleasant things.

There are four non-virtuous actions of speech. The first one is telling lies. The ripening aspect result is rebirth in the lower realms. Then, even if one gets born in the human realm one experiences the result similar to the cause—many people criticize or put one down. Even if one doesn’t make a mistake other people blame or criticize one.

At one time, it might have been in India, there was a king. In that area one family’s cow was lost. The king put the blame on a follower of the lesser vehicle path, a self-conqueror. There are two types of arhats—the “hearer-listener” and the “self-conqueror.” The king accused this practitioner of having stolen the cow and put him in prison for six days. He hadn’t stolen the cow but he was accused by the king. Later this king was born as a monk. One day he was dyeing his robe in a pot. One family’s cow was lost in that area and three people who lived in the area who were searching to find who had stolen the cow came. They saw that he was cooking meat in a big pot and accused the monk, saying, “You have stolen the cow and now you are cooking it.” The monk didn’t see meat in

the pot—for him, he's dyeing cloth. But those three people saw it as real meat in the pot. So, no matter how much the monk said, "I'm not cooking meat!" it didn't help! So, without choice he had to go to prison for six months. I think he was lucky that it wasn't for six years! No matter how much he tried to say that it wasn't meat, it didn't help because they saw it as real meat. So that was the result of his previous action when he was a king, of wrongly accusing the self-conqueror. Many times we hear that people get accused, put in prison or somehow punished even though the action was done by someone else. Somehow there is no choice. It is similar to this karmic story of the king who was later born as the monk. All these probably have a similar cause.

Also, other people criticize, blame or cheat you. Some people, wherever they travel always find someone cheating them! They always tell: "Oh, I went there; those people are so terrible, they cheated me! I went to Nepal and they did this and that! I went to the mountains, this and that! I went to India and they did this and that. They cheat so badly. These people are so bad! I went to Pakistan, this and that. I went to Afghanistan, this and that. I went to Greece, I went to ..." What else? Some people, wherever they go—East or West—always meet many people who cheat them. Those people are experiencing results similar to the cause of the negative karma of telling lies.

Creating the result similar to the cause: even when one is born as a human being, again one does the same non-virtuous action of telling lies thus creating the cause to again experience these four suffering results.

The possessed result. This is interesting. Normally we say that a person who is doing business is kind of clever or something. We think it is just up to that—cleverness. And of the person who is not successful. "Oh, he doesn't have intelligence" or something. But we don't refer to karma. Sometimes when land is owned by one person a lot of crops grow. The fruit or whatever is planted, grows well. Then, when this land is owned by another person things don't grow well. Sometimes when a taxi is owned and used by one person many passengers are found, but when this car is owned by another person, few passengers come. It's the same car but very few passengers come! Similarly, when a restaurant is run by one person it goes very well, but when it belongs to another person people no longer come, even though it's the same place. Similarly, when one person becomes ... say, head of a city—what is it? Mayor? Head of the city?

A.M: Lord Mayor

L.Z: Lord of the Mayor

A.M: Just Lord Mayor!

L.Z: When one person is Lord Mayor, there's much material progress, more peace for people, things are much easier. With another mayor people have a very hard time – no development and much, degeneration. Similarly with monasteries: when one particular monk becomes abbot there's much trouble. They're also like this. This kind of unsuccess is the possessed result of the negative karma of telling lies. Not only that, but also being in a place where there isn't much harmony, and having most things turn out as betraying. Also, having much cause of fear. I think this means having much fear of something happening in the present. Also having the cause of fear, which means fear of something dangerous happening in the future.

Then, the negative karma of slandering. The ripening aspect result is rebirth in the lower realms. Experiencing the result similar to the cause is not having harmony in the family, the surrounding people with whom one is living. And the surrounding people become mean, bad. The people with whom one stays always treat one badly and dislike one. Like, for example, the people with whom

you work in a office—there is always somebody who is slandering, creating disharmony between you and other people. In schools, among friends, among the family, among sisters; disunity between oneself and the surrounding people.

Creating the result similar to the cause is when we are born as human beings, again we create the negative karma of slandering, which means creating again the cause for the four suffering results. The possessed result is that even the place where we live is not flat. The place has many hills, and is kind of uncomfortable, having many high mountains and things. You have to climb very high or very low—a kind of difficult place to live and work. Also having many frightening things in that place: diseases, or people, or creatures, or even non-living things which frighten you.

The non-virtuous action of speaking harshly; the ripening aspect result is rebirth in the lower realms. Then, even when we are born as human beings, we experience the result similar to the cause: one always hears nasty things—undesirable, hurting words.

(end of tape)

There are people who somehow always get scolded by other people; they find many people speak to them harshly. Other people around them do not receive harsh words. This person doesn't mean to fight or to get angry at other people, but when he speaks somehow his thoughts become words that cause a fight. He doesn't mean to say something which hurts other people, but somehow his talk appears hurtful to other people and becomes the cause of fighting.

Then, creating results similar to the cause is again speaking harshly, so creating the negative karma again for another four suffering results. The possessed result of harsh speech is that even the place where one lives does not have beautiful trees and so on. Some countries have uninteresting trees, all rotten or burned; the place is undesirable, uninteresting, with a lot of thorns and covered with undesirable bushes. It is very rough, it doesn't have attractive colors—a kind of dusty place, not having beautiful things, such as lakes, water ponds or waterfalls. It's kind of dry and hot, like a desert where there is no water. It has mountains that are not green and has many rock slides, that kind of thing—an uninteresting place! Not a large comfortable plain. It is a place where there are a lot of negative karmas accumulated. There are many things which frighten one. You might think that what I'm describing now is in the East and not the West! Especially those people who have traveled in the mountains in the East must think that!

In the West there are many areas that are green, mountains with many flowers, many beautiful gardens, islands, lakes, and so on. Now, in the West, we're enjoying the result of the past good karma of abstaining from speaking harshly. Now this life is good. But in this life, if we don't create the cause again, we can't be sure of what will happen in the next life, what kind of place we will be living in—whether we will again get a place that's nice, beautiful, where there's a lot of enjoyment and it's easy going, where there's physical comfort. It's not sure, maybe the people who are living on this planet in these undesirable places, experiencing the result similar to the cause of previous harsh speech—but who are now practicing Dharma, living in moral conduct—will change places in the next life with the people from the West! So, we should be aware, we should know that all these good things are the result—as I mentioned on other days—of past good karma of abstaining from speaking harshly, slandering and sexual misconduct.

We are living in such a beautiful place now. But, you see, it's like this: if you have one hundred dollars and you don't do something with this to get more money, if you don't use this skillfully, but you just live on it, if you don't try anything, then you will struggle, you will experience a difficult life. It's the same if we just live on a little result of past good karma and we don't create any more, don't practice any moral conduct, don't accumulate any more virtue. Regarding the opposite, the negative karmas, the non-virtuous actions—so much, so much was created in this life and in the past lives. What's left is to experience the result of negative karmas. That's all. What's left to be experienced in the next life is that. The nature of life is like this. If you live in the West, now it's very good—in this life there's a lot of enjoyment, a luxurious life like having a luxurious apartment, swimming pools and beautiful gardens. Very easy going—but there's no understanding of karma.

I think the Christian monks and nuns who abstain from killing and telling lies and so on, making vows with the object as sentient beings, practice moral conduct and have good results. Some priests and some nuns are incredible, very inspiring—they are dedicated to others, renouncing themselves and cherishing others, completely dedicating themselves to offer services to others, and are content and satisfied. Until this year I thought that in the West there hasn't been anyone who lived in caves and solitary places and who had great attainments as was done in India and Tibet. Living a simple life, wearing rags for clothes, like the great yogis and meditators. Living life even without food, living on pills; having great determination to practice self-containment and satisfaction, an ascetic life. I thought that it never happened in the West—because if somebody lives like this in the West he is regarded as being completely crazy! He doesn't know how to live life! He doesn't know the meaning of life! I thought that living like those Kadampa geshe didn't happen in the West.

But this year, when we went to Italy, I didn't, but Lama Yeshe saw the movie about this great saint, San Francisco—St. Francis not San Francisco! Sorry! That's very correct! Lama saw the movie in America and knew everything about him and had incredible devotion to him. I didn't know the story, so there was nothing in my mind! Some students from Lama Tsong Khapa Institute in Pomaia stay there where this great saint lived and passed away, where his cave is. They came for initiation and they asked—they were staying with a friend at his house—if we wanted to come to that person's place. I didn't know the story but Lama really wanted to go there, so we went. It's a very interesting place. You could see his caves—small caves, same as the caves in Tibet, Nepal or India. There are several caves including his disciples' caves. These caves and his life story are very inspiring. I don't think anybody in Italy, whether he's a capitalist or a communist, would dislike this great saint. There is nothing about him to blame. Also there is a cemetery and we did a little bit of meditation there. Usually if one does retreat or meditates at those caves and places where there have been great yogis who had great attainments—such as places where Buddha put his holy feet or people such as Milarepa, Naropa, Tilopa, or Nagarjuna, those fine pandits—one very quickly transforms the mind and achieves realizations by the power of the place. Yogis have been to and lived at those places and it has blessed them and the places bless the minds of the practitioners who go there. Meditation is more effective there, even if it's not so effective at one's house or other places. One feels it more from the heart, rather than it just being intellectual.

Somehow that place was very beneficial to meditate in. There was one very wealthy woman who became a nun and St. Francis' disciple. I think her body can be seen. She started a nunnery and I think there were a lot of nuns. He had many disciples—we even got a piece of one disciple's clothes—I don't know his name. I think the clothes were kept by some person inside that disciple's church. This Italian man had been given this piece of the priest's robe. If people who are very sick or something take a small piece of this they suddenly vomit and completely recover. They say if

you've done evil works then after eating this you vomit! I asked about the way this great saint lived life. His main practice was having great satisfaction and contentment, and incredibly loving kindness and compassion—as incredible as the Kadampa geshe. St. Francis asked one disciple to criticize him. The disciple promised to say exactly what he asked. “Then you should tell me: ‘You have done many evil things and after this life you will go to hell,’” said St. Francis. The disciple accepted, in the beginning. But later, when he was told to say this, he could not, and said instead, “You did only good actions and after this life you will go to heaven.” It was very interesting that they practiced thought training, the same type as in the Mahayana lamrim teachings. I asked if he wrote down any meditations or a graduated path, or something like that, which he had practiced. There was only a book of his life story telling what happened to him and what he spoke, but no set meditations. I will stop here.

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG...

LECTURE 8

November 18 pm

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JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG...

LECTURE 9

November 19 am

NAM.DAK CHO.KUI...

Do the purification with the recitation of mantra, by being aware of how the kind mother sentient beings don't have freedom at all; how they are completely overwhelmed by anger, ignorance, dissatisfied mind; tied to jealousy. Be aware that they are completely crazy through being possessed by this devil, the disturbing thoughts, the selfish attitude. You see, the sentient beings don't have peace at all. Be aware of this. Then purify all the problems that they're experiencing through being under the control of those disturbing thoughts.

OM MANI PADME HUM ... OM MANI PADME HUM ...

All of the obscurations are completely purified from your own and other sentient beings' bodies and minds. Due to the nectar and rays, your and others' bodies becomes like crystal, very calm, clear. Not having even the slightest stain. The crown Chenrezig melts into light and is absorbed into one's own heart and the hearts of all sentient beings. Think that this has generated all the realizations, especially bodhicitta. Feel oneness with your mind completely in the nature of Chenrezig's holy mind: great compassion towards enemy, friend and stranger—every living being.

SA.ZHI POE.KYL..

SANG.GYE CHO.DANG....

“I will generate the state of omniscient mind for the benefit of all the kind mother sentient beings. Therefore, I’m going to listen to the teachings of the graduated path to enlightenment.”

(end of tape)

The fourth non-virtuous action is gossiping. The ripening aspect result is rebirth in the lower realms. Experiencing the result similar to the cause is experienced when one gets born as a human being—when one speaks to other person the words do not have power to inspire or to achieve whatever one needs or wishes to be done, such as getting help from other people. Other people don’t listen easily. Also, there is no discipline in one’s speech. Other people find it difficult to trust one. Also, one doesn’t feel confidence in one’s own words. Some people’s speech is very powerful: there is much discipline and trustworthiness and they themselves have confidence that what they are saying is definite.

Creating the result similar to the cause is even if you are born as a human being, again you gossip and accumulate non-virtuous actions and create the cause for another four suffering results.

The possessed result is that in place where one lives things happen such as the trees from which one normally gets fruit do not bear fruit. Even if the fruit trees grow, they do not bear fruits or do not bear fruit at the time when it is needed. Maybe it grows in a time when it cannot be sold. Also, even if the fruit comes, that which is unripe appears to the person as ripe—like when we go shopping and some fruit looks nice and ripe, but when we actually cut and eat it, it is unripe. Things like that are the result of this karma, or, the roots and the stems of the crops are weak and the crop dies or it does not last for a long time, or, the place does not have any beautiful forests, parks or ponds. Also, there may be many causes of fear in that place. Then, out of the three non-virtuous actions committed with the mind: covetousness. The ripening aspect result is rebirth in the lower realms. Experiencing the result similar to the cause: It is said in Lama Tsong Khapa’s teaching, the *Great Graduated Path to Enlightenment*, that it is having great desire and not having satisfaction. Probably this might have to be interpreted, because creating the result similar to the cause is again creating the negative karma of having great desire, covetousness, when you’re born as a human. So it looks quite similar to experiencing the result similar to the cause. This is just my own opinion: it might mean other people having much covetousness, wanting to have one’s possessions. Maybe being attached to oneself or one’s belongings. Because of that other problems come such as people stealing, confiscating or taking one’s things in various ways: also harming oneself, or whatever—experiencing undesirable things that one doesn’t wish for.

Creating the result similar to the cause: even though the person is born as a human being, not seeking or working for something which is beneficial; instead seeking something which is nonsense, which is not beneficial. The possessed result is the place where one is born: the perfections, the enjoyments decrease year by year, month by month, week by week, even day by day. In that place the enjoyments become less and less instead of increasing.

The second non-virtue of mind is ill-will. The ripening aspect result is the same: rebirth in the lower realms. Experiencing the result similar to the cause is that one receives much harm from others.

Also, it says 'harming others.' Probably this might mean—otherwise it might get mixed up with creating the result—one doesn't have intention to harm, one means to benefit, but it turns out as harmful to others. It might be like this. If a person says bad words, or if a mosquito bites, even the harm from non-living things, the elements—all these are experiencing the result similar to the cause, the non-virtuous action of ill-will, which was created by oneself.

Creating the result similar to the cause: even if one is born as a human being, again one accumulates the non-virtuous action of ill-will, which brings four suffering results. The possessed result is that in the place where one is born there is always a lot of 'cold' disease, many epidemics, diseases which we get from others. Also, much fighting, attacks from other countries and civil wars within one's own country, in the different parts or districts—like India has. Also, having many fears and dangers from animals such as lions and tigers; many mosquitoes and fleas! Lama Tsong Khapa did not say 'fleas and mosquitoes', but it mentions lions, tigers and so on. It mentions leeches! Then, poisonous snakes and spiders. One gets many spiders in one's room—in the corners, many coming out, dropping on one's head! Also scorpions! Some people don't get these frightening creatures in their room. Some find a lot! Many disturbing, frightening creatures—on the bed; inside the bed! In the daytime and in the night-time! Also kind-of harmful spirits disturb one; also robbers.

It is not necessary that all these things are at one place. We should be aware when we get harm like this that this is the result of our own karma of ill-will. You see, it's helpful. Each time we remember that it is the result of our own karma, it's effective. The things that are happening around, the harms that you're receiving from others, become a teaching explaining karma. It is explaining your life—whether it is happy or suffering—explaining your own karma. It is explaining to oneself what kind of negative or good karma one has accumulated in the past. So, it becomes beneficial; it is effective for the mind. When we use this for meditation it makes us be more careful with karma; otherwise, if we just get depressed, do a lot of screaming, have a lot of anger, kill these pitiful creatures, our kind mother sentient beings, at that moment we create a lot of negative karma of ill-will and killing. A lot of negative karma is accumulated in such a short time. That is not useful, that doesn't bring peace to the mind. That doesn't help others and it doesn't help oneself.

By being aware of your own negative karma—that it came from your own mind, that it is your own creation—you protect your karma. It makes you protect karma better than you did in the past. Protecting your own karma, not giving harm to others, also benefits other sentient beings. By living in moral conduct you are able to benefit other sentient beings more. That's what the Kadampa geshe advised. The more purely the person is living in moral conduct the more that person can benefit other sentient beings. I think that's completely true. You can see how those living in pure moral conduct can offer great benefit to others—how much they can bring happiness into the minds of other sentient beings. Even seeing their holy body brings calmness and fearlessness.

I used to find a lot of things in my food—hairs and tiny creatures, worms, many things! I think it is definitely a result of my own karma. We eat from the same pot, Lama and many other people, but others don't find these undesirable things! Then the food becomes kind of disgusting and one doesn't want to eat! But other people do not find these. So, sometimes I have hard times when I go to other people's houses and find a lot! Then it's difficult to tell the people that their food has this because they enjoy it very much! I don't want to disturb their happiness. I just leave it. That's okay! I think it is the result of the negative karma of covetousness. Other people might think it is part of the food!

Then, wrong view, or, heresy. I don't think the ripening aspect result is to be an animal or preta. It's to be checked, but I think the ripening aspect result might be to be reborn as a narak. Saying that there's no such things as the Four Noble Truths—that from the true path one achieves the cessation of suffering -is heresy. Also heresy can be denying that true suffering arises from the true cause of suffering. Also, saying that it is not true that from non-virtue suffering arises and that from virtuous actions the result is happiness. This is heresy or wrong view. The reason why I'm saying this is that even if one has degenerated all the one's moral conduct—such as the two hundred and fifty vows or thirty-six vows or five precepts or eight precepts or whatever, even if one has completely degenerated the root vows—if one has faith in karma, one gets born as an animal, not in the narak.

In the lamrim, Lama Tsong Khapa's teaching of the graduated path to enlightenment, it is said that even if one has degenerated the precepts, if one hasn't lost his faith one gets born in the animal realm, such as a naga. I'm not sure one hundred percent sure that one won't be born in the narak if one has faith but breaks root vows. I don't remember precisely. However for one who has lost faith, or has heresy, such as in karma, it is said that the ripening aspect result is rebirth in the naraks. Then, there is nihilism, the view that nothing exists. It is said, I think, by one great pandit, Aryadeva, in the teaching 'Four Hundred Stanzas', that for a person who falls into the extreme of thinking, 'I don't exist, others don't exist', the negative karma of this is heavier than killing one hundred million human beings. The reason why Lama Tsong Khapa, in the teachings on shunyata, is so careful in emphasizing that things exist by being dependent arisings—that the "I" does exist, that things do exist—is so that we do not fall into nihilism—the view that nothing exists.

Experiencing the result of heresy similar to the cause: even when we are born as human beings we have very strong, very deep ignorance. Not only that, but very strong anger and dissatisfied mind. Having heresy towards Buddha's teachings creates the cause not to meet Buddha's teachings in future lives even if one is born as a human being. In the West, the whole country puts effort into material development. In such countries as Tibet, the main effort is for the development of Dharma.

(end of tape)

So in regard to material development nothing was done. I'm not sure whether they even made needles in Tibet! The king himself is the Compassionate Buddha, Chenrezig, and has been for many reincarnations. Except for a few irreligious kings, mostly they were dharma kings, embodiments of Chenrezig. The whole teaching taught by Buddha—sutra and tantra—the complete understanding of the meaning of the words and realization of the path was alive in the minds of many meditators, yogis and lamas. They were innumerable; the country was full of so many attainments. If someone wanted to practice dharma there was no difficulty in finding a perfect guru who could reveal the whole path without mistakes. There was so much dharma to see and hear just in the city. The whole environment was like this. But still there were people in Tibet, even there were so many lamas giving teachings, who had their own kind of religion; they didn't even try to check out Buddhadharm.

It is similar in India. Western people are coming to the East after working for many years collecting money to meet Dharma, to meet a guru who can liberate them from their undesirable sufferings and lead them to happiness, to what they need, what they are seeking for. Most times His Holiness lives in India and so many realized beings, so many lamas who are holders of the whole teachings of the Buddhadharm. The Indians see so many educated Western people coming to learn Buddhism; they see that they are getting much peace, that they are more happy, joyful, that they get something for their life; that they want to stay longer, want to study more even though finding it difficult, having

worries, unable to stay and study longer due to various circumstances. The Indians live in the same places where there are these lamas, but they never come, they never bother. Like, for example, at the Tibetan library: there is a Library at Dharamsala founded some several years ago, but the people who listen to the teachings are mostly Western people. Maybe sometimes one or two Indians come; sometimes, but very rarely. That shows karma. They don't have trouble—they are staying in the same place; they don't have problems with visas or problems of running out of money. Their families are there.

Hardly anybody comes to ask for teachings from the lamas even though Buddhism was founded in their country. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha himself took birth there and revealed the holy Dharma by showing the twelve events. People come to study and after meeting lamas they receive sutra and tantra teachings and then practice, do many retreats and make their lives so meaningful. They make so much preparation for achieving liberation and enlightenment. But the Indians, even though they have been living in the same place for thirty, forty, fifty, sixty or seventy years, have done nothing. They are still just as ignorant. All the time they see the Dharma activities and they see the high lamas, but somehow no question of seeking something, of learning something from them, of checking whether they can get something for their life from them, arises.

Heresy causes one not to meet Dharma even though one is in the right place. Even though there is everything, all the conditions, something blocks the mind from meeting Dharma. That is due to past lives' karma of heresy. Even if one does listen to teachings on karma, even if one does listen to Buddha's teachings, one finds it very difficult to understand or to accept them. People may come from the same country, the same culture—for example, from the West but only some of the people understand right away. They find it very true, very much connected to reality, not like it's a fairy tale but that it's talking about facts—such as the nature of the Four Noble Truths, the true path and the true cessation of suffering. They recognize very easily as a fact that if they practice they will accomplish the goal.

At the same time some people find it very difficult to feel that such things as reincarnation are reality, are a fact. It kind of doesn't fit with their mind. When they hear about reincarnation, it doesn't fit, they can't comprehend. They may find it very difficult to understand when they hear shunyata teachings, no matter how many times. Or, if the qualities of Buddha are explained they find it difficult to arouse faith that there are such things such as the Triple Gem.

Creating the result similar to the cause is that having been born as a human being, again one continues the same negative karma of heresy which prepares one for another four suffering results.

The possessed result is the place where we are born. Like at Atisha Center: even though the best gold production in the country was at that place, even though there used to be a lot of gold coming from the earth, now there is no more gold to be found. When oneself is born there is no more gold! Also, the place where one lives being unclean and things which are dirty appearing as clean is due to heresy. Probably you might think when I say dirty things appearing to be clean—"That's good, that's O.K. What we need is to have that view. It doesn't matter what it is as long as it appears to be clean." But I think Lama Tsong Khapa was not saying just that, but that if it appears clean and if we cling to that, then also suffering appears as happiness and we cling to that. The problem is that it appears as happiness, so then we cling and then problems arise. For example, the body which is the container of the thirty six dirty things, kind of garbage, appearing as clean; samsaric suffering

appearing as happiness. By clinging, one continuously cycles through death and rebirth in samsara and one continually suffers like this. I think I will stop here.

### Meditation Instruction

First check back as much as you can; remember back to childhood. Also past lives. Check whether you have accumulated any of these negative karma that I spoke of this morning. Then, how many times from beginningless rebirths the various negative karmas have been accumulated. If you don't remember, you can read if you made any notes. Be aware of the four suffering results of each one. Then, think about whether you like these results or not. See if it's something you hate or that you like.

Then think of others you know, other kind mother sentient beings. So many others have accumulated these negative karmas. So many, uncountable. Then think, "How wonderful it would be if I could experience all the suffering results of these ten negative karmas by myself alone, so that the others could become free of them." Then take all these negative karmas and all four sufferings in the form of pollution on to the self-cherishing thought and destroy the self-cherishing thought and the object, the "I" that the self cherishing thought cherishes so much. Also, at the same time, if possible, destroy this "I" which appears truly existent, so precious, so important among all sentient beings, so it becomes non-existent.

Then at the end dedicate all the good things for all sentient beings. Offer, give to each sentient being. First of all give to each person here all the good things—your body, everything; all merits of all three times, everything. Give completely to each person here. Then to all the rest of the human beings, especially your enemies. First start here, on this hill. Then, the rest of the world. All sentient beings. Think they have received happiness and whatever they need. Then think that they generate the whole path and become enlightened. I think that's all. Thank you.

### LECTURE 10

November 21 am

SA.ZHI.POE.KYI...

Purifying nectar flows from Chenrezig, the Great Compassionate One, who is above one's own crown, purifying all the wrong conceptions from seeing the guru as an ordinary person to the subtle dual view. Particularly the selfish attitude and the ignorance of karma—action and result. We are completely purified. This is where we say the prayer requesting blessings in order to generate the bodhicitta.

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG RINPOCHE...

As you requested, think that you have generated the realizations of seeing the guru in the essence of Buddha, through to the unified state of Vajradhara, enlightenment; that you have generated especially the realization of bodhicitta—the realization, the stable, definite understanding of karma and bodhicitta. Also at this time you can think that a replica of Chenrezig is absorbed to your own heart which generates all these realizations.

OM IDAM GURU RATNA MANDALAKAM...

OM MANI PADME HUM...

Think strongly of purifying the true cause of suffering, the three poisonous minds: ignorance, anger and attachment—the disturbing thoughts. Particularly think of all the fighting, the worries and great fears and people killing each other such as in Lebanon. Then the many criminal people under the control of disturbing thoughts, the dissatisfied mind, and so harming others and accumulating various negative karmas. They get punished, even hung. What is it called? They are executed or punished in so many different ways. They get many beatings in prison. They did not wish to have these problems, they don't like what they are experiencing, but without choice they have to experience the result of their own karma which was created due to being under the control of the disturbing thoughts.

Even today so many people get killed, punished or tortured because of being under the control of other people. In Tibet and in many other countries many young people, young children get killed. They want independence. Their minds are very strong, so many of them get killed. Their parents don't know and they go to the grave where the children' bodies are buried, and they remove the soil because they want to see the child. Then they scream. There is nothing that they can do, but they are just so upset, wanting to see their child.

Many other countries have unbelievable suffering and so much fear. Some are experiencing the result, such as punishment, torture. At the same time some are creating negative karma by doing that. Some are killing; some are doing other non-virtuous actions. They are creating the cause to experience those problems later, some are creating causes, some are experiencing results now. Be aware of this and by cherishing these kind sentient beings, by thinking of them as important, as precious, like oneself, then purify. Feel the unbearable problems that they have, then purify by taking refuge or by relying on the Compassionate Buddha, Chenrezig, above your crown.

OM MANI PADME HUM ... OM MANI PADME HUM ...

The light is absorbed into one's own heart which generates all the realizations, especially bodhicitta and the stable, definite understanding of karma. Think that this realization is generated. The mind becomes completely oneness with Chenrezig's mind feeling unbearable compassion towards the enemy, friend and stranger, in regard to every living being. Wishing each of the sentient beings to be free of suffering, and to cause that by oneself.

Regarding the last immoral action, heresy—when we hear teachings on karma from the scriptures which Buddha explained, we hear many frightening things, strange and unexpected things which don't fit to our conceptions. We hear of and see many strange things happening nowadays. Like this, even during Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's time there were the different problems and sufferings of sentient beings.

(end of tape)

Why is it like this? What's the cause? Either the disciples or other people asked Guru Shakyamuni Buddha to explain why there are such problems that sentient beings have to experience. So Guru Shakyamuni Buddha explained details without the slightest mistake—the cause of whatever good things or suffering that some person was experiencing. How long it has been, how many eons since

the cause was created. Whatever the cause, gross or subtle, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha clearly explained without the slightest mistake, without confusion.

Many of these explanations or stories about karma were later recorded by the disciples. There are many karmic stories in the sutra teachings. There are several sutra texts which are full of detailed stories about the karma of either one person, or a group of people, or a family—explaining the cause of the trouble: that in the past such and such was done. These teachings expounded by Buddha give great inspiration to give up even the smallest negative karmas. Besides then being unable to create the heavy negative karmas one become unable to create even the slightest, the very small negative karmas.

(section missing)

The result of suffering coming from virtue and happiness resulting from non-virtue is impossible. But you cannot say that karma has to be such-and-such a way. Let's take a problem that is very common in the west, that everybody knows, a problem like not finding a job, or a problem of disharmony in the family, or problems of old age, things like that. If it's something that is unusual, something unexpected, that's most people's life experience; if it's only a few people's particular problem among the thousand or millions of people, one cannot say that particular karma or life problem cannot be experienced. One cannot say that it is not possible to experience unusual problems that are not common to most people. It cannot be said that karma has to be a particular way. In short, it is wrong to think, "Because I did not see it I cannot believe in unusual problems that other people in the world have." "I didn't see it with my own eyes, so I cannot accept it," is not a logical reason. That cannot prove anything. Just because your eyes did not see them cannot prove that things such as these unusual problems, or such things as incredible bliss, realization, the experiences which come through meditation, don't exist. Like the qualities of the bodhisattvas, those who are proceeding on the ten bhumis—the first bhumi bodhisattva can transform into one hundred bodies; he is able to go to one hundred buddhas' pure realms; each one is able to accumulate merit by making so many offerings to buddhas and is able to give sentient beings hundreds of teachings and ripen the minds of hundreds of sentient beings at the same time. They can remember hundreds and hundreds of past lives. Also they can see many things in the future. There are above twelve things in regard to which they have power. Then I think on the second bhumi it increases to a thousand-fold. They are able to transform into one thousand bodies; they can see one thousand past lives, their own and others. Also they can see the future for one thousand lifetimes. So there are about twelve powers like this—everything one thousand-fold. As the arya, the higher bodhisattvas gradually progress to the higher bhumis, their incredible qualities increase, not just nine or ten-fold! I don't remember exactly, millions and millions or billions and billions-fold. It's inconceivable at the moment.

Without talking about the buddhas' qualities of holy speech, holy body, and holy mind, even just those higher bodhisattvas' qualities, their realizations and powers are inconceivable to our minds. By generating bodhicitta and entering the Mahayana path, if we practice, it will be our own experience—all these unbelievable qualities of the bodhisattvas. Those higher bodhisattvas can be of such benefit to sentient beings. When we have generated the path in our mind, when those bhumis are our own experience and we have completed the Mahayana path, all the buddhas' qualities, the inconceivable holy actions of buddhas, will be our own experience -if we practice, if we turn our minds to the bodhisattvas' path.

At the moment we can't. We do not recognize even the diseases that we have; we have to depend on X-rays and analysis of the blood. We don't have even that much power, understanding or clairvoyance. We cannot see everything that's going to happen tomorrow, or even tonight. We cannot see the minds of other people. We are incredibly limited in understanding.

The incredible qualities powers and actions of those higher bodhisattvas are inconceivable to us. Even those of the bodhisattva who has accomplished the first bhumis are inconceivable to our minds. We cannot say that, because it is not our own experience, because we haven't achieved the path and we don't see others as having these qualities that it does not exist. Just this reason alone, that it is not one's own experience, or one hasn't seen it, is not sufficient. Aren't there jewels ... how does the pearl come?

A.M: Oyster, a shell fish called oyster.

A.M: An irritation caused by sand.

A.M: It's an irritation to the oyster that causes the pearl.

L.Z: What's the irritation? It's the shell?

A.M: It's a disturbance.

A.M: Oyster is a shell fish. So, a grain of sand gets inside, which irritates. So it puts layers of...

L.Z: The shell meets the sand?

A.M: The sand comes inside the ...

L.Z: Inside the shell, then?

A.M: It irritates.

L.Z: Irritates? Then?

A.M: So it covers the sand with layers of material.

A.M: With liquid.

L.Z: What liquid?

A.M: It's like saliva.

L.Z: From where?

A.M: From the animal.

L.Z: Then?

L.Z: Then?

A.M: Then it hardens. Then it's a pearl.

L.Z: Saliva comes from where?

A.M: The animal in the shell produces it.

L.Z: What part of the body?

A.M: It's like saliva!

L.Z: And then connected with sand?

A.M: Yes, that's how they produce artificial pearls—they induce the sand into the animal.

L.Z: What about the real one's?! Could artificially induce the sand into the animal itself.

L.Z: You mean artificial, the people purposely put these things together?

A.M: It's cultured pearl. But rather than just finding the pearls where the sand has accidentally gotten into the oyster, they insert it with an instrument. It's the same thing, the animal still produces the result.

L.Z: Then what about gold! I'm not talking about the big pieces, I'm talking about the gold you get from sand. What is the evolution of this?

A.M: They say gold is a metal, it doesn't change.

L.Z: What is the evolution of that? It is not explained in the West?

A.M: The earth is made up of different minerals in combinations and gold is just one of those that occurs.

L.Z: When there was no earth there was no gold? Was there gold when the earth was empty?

A.M: Yes, there was gold.

L.Z: When there's no earth, when there was no ...

A.M: No people, no sentient beings?

L.Z: When it was space, when there was no earth, at that time was there no gold? What happened?

A.M: They say that actually in nuclear reactors they can transform lead into gold, so at these very high temperatures ...

L.Z: Is this the original evolution or a modern discovery?

A.M: It's just an example. But at these very high temperatures, they say, when the earth was formed from these very hot gases, it became more and more solid, so at that time different metals formed.

L.Z: Volcanoes?

A.M: No, before volcanoes, when the earth was forming from the other planets, from gases, then at that time because of the incredible high temperatures various reactions were happening, the gases were becoming solid.

L.Z: Gasses from other planets?

A.M: No, I think they say the whole galaxy, whole universe, started like this, from clouds of gas.

L.Z: Clouds of gas! Then?

A.M: Then they become more solid—the gas compresses together, becomes more solid. Then the different elements form. Gold is one of the elements.

L.Z: Yes, then, what else? Besides gold. Is there any other jewel that is formed in the water? Before it was different material and later on by mixing things together then it becomes a jewel, a precious stone?

A.M: I think the Tibetans wear that yellow material, amber.

A.M: It comes from trees.

A.M: Originally it comes from the sap, from trees. It goes into the ocean and transforms into amber. The sap comes from trees, and it goes into the ocean, and then because of pressure, whatever, it transforms into amber.

L.Z: So amber comes from connecting with water?

A.M: Trees.

A.M: Pressure. Diamonds, they say, comes from coal from much heat and pressure. The same material but transformed into a different form.

L.Z: Pressure, coal and heat?

A.M: It comes from coal, but it's heat and pressure on the coal that makes it into diamonds.

L.Z: Coal is the black stuff? By meeting the pressure it turns into diamonds?!

A.M: The coal, from where the diamonds comes is made from plants that died—trees—and were packed together.

A.M: Is that sort of transformation process, the plant to the coal and then into the diamond, is that governed by some law of karma?

L.Z: This is evolution? Yes, without karma that evolution cannot happen. The karma is the first cause which causes the physical impression. So, why is golden ka-ka not possible?! This animal—pearl—by mixing saliva and sand together it becomes a precious stone, a pearl. So, that pearl doesn't exist!

A.M. In what way doesn't it exist?

L.Z: First, that pearl doesn't exist. The pearl you described doesn't exist!

A.M: I disagree! There's a whole industry based on it in Australia and Japan!

L.Z: Actually your conclusion is that it is common knowledge of people.

A.M: Yes! It's common knowledge. They make millions of dollars!

L.Z: I'm very happy people make a million dollars out of that! But the family who got the elephant making golden kaka, that is also common knowledge to the buddhas and the bodhisattvas! Even though on the earth it's not a usual event for many human beings, and even though they don't understand this evolution, it's common for those who have the knowledge to see.

A.M: Doesn't that seem to deny the law of dependent arising and karma? What is labeled as gold by worldly people is a certain thing that is produced by certain causes, dependent on certain causes and conditions.

L.Z: Okay, okay! Why is it not possible? What's your proof that that the elephant could not make golden ka-ka at all!? Somebody else has something to say?

A.M: That doesn't follow the law of cause and effect as we know it. The production of gold from ka-ka doesn't follow from cause and effect.

L.Z: Why doesn't it follow the law of cause and effect?

A.M: I guess from our perspective it would be that it's not replicable, we can't see how it's done. We cannot look at its components or its constituents. We can't see how it would evolve from that—gold from hay transformed by an elephant!

L.Z: okay Now, you don't see the pearl evolving from saliva, which is completely something else, and the sand which is completely something else, so why is this possible? Why is a pearl possible? Why does it become a pearl?

A.M: "Pearl" is simply a label put on a substance that an animal makes. That's all it is; it's just a hardened liquid.

L.Z: That does not answer my question. I wasn't asking whether it was labeled or not.

A.M: It's just a chemical reaction. When this liquid dries and becomes very hard, that's what a pearl is. And that operates. It's kind of an observable phenomenon that people can see.

L.Z: Why do those things make pearl?

A.M: It's a protection. It's to protect itself from irritation.

L.Z: The pearl?

A.M: The liquid! It's the same thing.

L.Z.: Are you trying to imply that the pearl is some inherently existing precious thing. It's not! It's something that a ... this fish ... that human beings then call a "pearl" and say it's valuable. But it's just some stuff that an animal produces to stop suffering.

L.Z: okay Jack, why does this pearl come from this evolution? Why does that follow the law of cause and effect? Why that and not this?

A.M: Well, we can see with the pearl that the constituents, the base of the pearl are present before. We can see a process happening, and we see a result. We may not understand all of what happens in the process, but we begin with something, and we end with something that is essentially the same, only modified. With an elephant...

L.Z: What you are saying, your essential answer is that people on earth now see it, isn't it?

A.M? Yes!

L.Z: That's right. The common people see this so that's according to the law of cause and effect, yes? That's right? So, your conclusion is that whether a thing exists or not is up to the common people and their knowledge. It comes to that conclusion! If you put forward the reason that because the common people see this now—if that's the only reason—that means that whether things exist or not is dependent on whether it's common to the people or not. So, that means that things that aren't common...

(end of tape)

Is it like that?

A.M: Yes, there are many things that people think don't exist because they can't see them. That doesn't mean they don't exist.

L.Z: Is that true?

A.M: I agree with that. Yes.

L.Z: Is that true? But what about your own way of thinking?

A.M: I will take what I consider a valid authority and I will believe in things existing by reason or by authority or by direct experience and sometimes by intuition. That is how I deal...

L.Z: Yes, yes ... that's okay But does it have to be common or ordinary people's knowledge for something to exist?

A.M: No, no...

L.Z: Then it doesn't have to be?

A.M: No, no, it doesn't.

L.Z: There are things which exist which are not common to ordinary people?

A.M: Yes, yes.

L.Z: So you do agree that things exist; that common, ordinary people don't know, which is not obtainable knowledge? Then this elephant making golden ka-ka—that and the golden coins coming out of the hand, which is explained in the teachings—that exists even though it's not common knowledge to the ordinary people?

A.M: I would have to call that a most unusual miracle!

L.Z: okay, okay That's good! There can be some very unusual miracles happening in the world, can't there?

A.M: Yes, I agree there are things I cannot explain.

L.Z: In the teachings of Tsong Khapa, the child with golden coins coming out of his hands and the elephant making golden ka-ka are mentioned. So, can that happen? Can very unusual miracles happen? What about Neil? Would you accept there are miracles which happen in the world? Do you accept that or not?

Neil: Yes, unusual things happen.

L.Z: Do you accept or not? Do you accept unusual, miraculous things happening?

A.M: Yes.

L.Z: No contradictions? Okay But you cannot accept the golden elephant ka-ka and the gold coming out of the hand?

A.M: But it doesn't seem to fit in with the teachings. Even these unusual things do not necessarily...

L.Z: Why can't this be a miracle? An unusual miracle?

A.M: Because it's totally contrary to how observable phenomena work—that gold comes from a certain process and a certain place.

L.Z: Yes, so why is it not possible from an elephant? There are certain ingredients that it has, physical conditions, and the family has the karma. There's a physical cause, the conditions, the ingredients, and there's gold! same as saliva and sand combined together make a pearl.

A.M: That's different, because an elephant and grass coming together doesn't produce gold! Gold occurs in a certain way.

L.Z: Why doesn't it produce gold? He eats grains ... why can't it produce gold?

A.M: Because gold is not made up of that. Gold is a separate element.

L.Z: Why are there no other ingredients which can produce gold?

A.M: Because that's how it's observed from scientific investigation.

L.Z: So, what you're saying is it's common, ordinary people's knowledge—so you have come to the conclusion: "If it's something common to the ordinary people then I accept it exists. If it's not common to the ordinary people on this earth, then it doesn't exist."

A.M: Then that's contrary to the law of dependent arising, which is unfailing: that certain conditions produce certain results.

L.Z: Yes. I am saying that there are also physical conditions.

A.M: But there have to be right conditions, not just any conditions, otherwise it means that if you cook some milk you can get a hard-boiled egg! That's against the law of dependent arising. How certain things...

L.Z: An egg from milk is something I haven't heard yet from the teachings! So, to that one I cannot say yes or no. I haven't an omniscient mind, so I cannot say. I cannot predict the past or predict the future.

A.M: (to Neil) I want to say to you that as you told us yesterday that buddhas can manifest as stones and bridges, maybe buddhas can change milk into an egg?

Neil: I can believe the Buddha changed it, but just an elephant's ... if it's the work of the Buddha then that's completely different; but if it's just an ordinary elephant...

A.M: Rinpoche, there is something about the idea of an elephant making golden ka-ka that feels intuitively like the sort of story someone would make up so naive people would believe. It feels like the kind of story ... like Father Christmas ... that people make up to tell someone who has not much understanding and they believe. That is what pride would say.

L.Z: I will put one question to you, okay? Do you think all those great pandits and great yogis—Milarepa, Marpa, Naropa, Thog.me Zang.po—who gave all those teachings that you have practiced, who have taught with experience; do you think they are foolish because they practiced karma, and read these sutra teachings as a main subject? Lama Tsong Khapa didn't say these things are wrong. All those great pandits—Nagarjuna, Asanga, Chandrakirti, all the followers, the great pandits and great yogis—nobody wrote that these sutra teachings, these stories are wrong. In lamrim teachings everybody emphasized how important it is to think about karma. They always refer us to the sutra teachings which talk about karma. It is always emphasized in the teachings that that which we practice to reach liberation and enlightenment should be founded on the teachings of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and the pandits. Many pandits have examined, and many great yogis have practiced the path, with realization. If we study a teaching, we should practice it only if it is another's experience, then there is no betrayal. But if it is no one's experience and no one checked it, and no one practiced it, then one is not sure whether it leads to enlightenment or to the narak, to hell.

Just to close—in Lama Tsong Khapa's lamrim it mentions all the wrong conceptions that people have in regard to practicing. In regard to shunyata, Lama Tsong Khapa negated many things. There are quotations from Guru Shakyamuni Buddha which the pandits refer to, but there is nobody—no great yogi nor pandit, nor attainer of the lamrim path—who said that these kinds of stories are wrong. When they gave these teachings, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Trijang Rinpoche, Song Rinpoche—the ones who are holders of all the Buddha's teachings, who are experienced on the path—didn't say that they might be mistaken.

The main reason why I started to talk about these stories is that if you don't hear them that's one thing, but I am trying to block the future dangers regarding heresy, which I explained: how heresy is a great obstacle to meeting Dharma and generating realizations on the path. The reason why I raised these stories for discussion, even though I didn't actually explain them, is because most people here have heard them. If one hears these stories and one wants to practice a bit of Dharma, then it is essential for one to protect karma. Protecting karma is creating the causes for happiness and renouncing the causes of suffering, which has the label "Buddhadharma."

Lama Tsong Khapa said in the lamrim teaching, one should renounce each mistake and obtain each quality, then, when one's qualities have become transcendental, that is the actual Dharma refuge. When you have the actual Dharma refuge you are liberated from suffering and you are fearless. Then Lama Tsong Khapa said ... I don't remember exactly word for word, but basically it's: When one understands well details of true actions of virtue and non-virtue and their results and one does the practice of renouncing non-virtue and practicing virtue correctly, this is what is called Holy Dharma. After that Lama Tsong Khapa said: one should think for a long time about action and result. If one doesn't do this, one cannot change the causes one has created for the sufferings of transmigratory beings in the lower realms. If one doesn't believe in the realms of the suffering transmigratory beings, one cannot be liberated from the fear of the suffering of the transmigratory beings since one doesn't create the cause.

The conclusion is that it is extremely important to have a definite understanding of karma—cause and result. If one doesn't have faith in the teachings of Lord Buddha it means one doesn't have pure refuge in the mind. This is what one great attainer, one Tibetan Lama, Yongdzin Yeshe Gyaltsen, said in his great thought training teaching. The sutra teachings came orally, directly from Buddha. They were translated by great Tibetan pandits. No Tibetan Lama wrote them down all of a sudden or just recently. Buddha gave these explanations of karma to his disciples and they recorded them as sutra teachings. To say these are wrong becomes strange. If I say it frankly, it looks like this: so far all these great yogi pandits with omniscient minds did not see these mistakes, but nowadays Western people see the mistakes. These yogis were incredible; you can see from studying the texts of their teachings, and from their life stories. That's how it appears. I'm not talking about everybody, I'm just speaking generally. In many places such as Dharma centers they speak like this. I know. They say the pandits cannot be correct, that they look kind of blind, but that the Western people have wisdom. Others don't have wisdom—only Western people know these things are wrong. But if one checks the level of one's mind—where is one's level of mind? Where is the level of mind of whoever said this? Is there even bodhicitta, is there even one bhumi received? It turns out very funny. That's my conclusion. It becomes ridiculous, you know. That's it!

Anyway, why I brought up these things is that if we know this ahead of time, when we hear these stories, before the flood of heresy comes, we can make plans and some protection so that it won't destroy our happiness. If we know these things, later when we read or hear about the unusual experiences of sentient beings in Buddha's teachings, then we should remember not to allow heresy to arise. Heresy is a great obstacle to one's own enlightenment and liberation. Anger and heresy destroys the merits and even the ripening of the dedicated ones gets postponed.

When you find difficulty in understanding how something is possible, think, "I don't have any clairvoyance; I have very little understanding, my mind is very obscured." Be aware of all the ignorance that those who contradict Buddha's teachings have of Dharma, of shunyata and all these things, then think: "It can be like this but it's just that my understanding is so polluted, so limited. Buddha said that there are such things, but it's just that my mind is too deluded, so I cannot see." Think like that and also pray. When obstacles like heresy towards the Buddha's teachings come, recognize this and pray to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha for obstacles to one's enlightenment such as heresy to not arise and for the definite understanding of karma to develop. Pray and accumulate merit and dedicate it for that understanding. I think I will stop here.

Lama Tsong Khapa emphasized this in the *Lamrim Chenmo*. Other lamas talk details of explanations of karma from sutras. Lama Tsong Khapa just mentioned the names of the stories from the sutras

or just the names of the persons and then mentions the sutra text where they can be found. There's one text called "The Sutra of the Wise and Foolish" which contains elaborate explanations of karma. Lama Tsong Khapa advises one to read that. There's another text called *Lungshuwa*. Lama Tsong Khapa refers to this sutra text and says that it should be read. He mentions the name of the text with the stories about golden coins coming from the hand and the elephant and those things. He just mentioned the names of the persons. Lama Tsong Khapa's particular way of presenting the teaching is so wise in putting together all the important points of the practice—clearly explaining and emphasizing all the important points and where people can easily make mistakes by having wrong conceptions. He elaborately clarified those important points so that there's no misguiding. So, if it is not what Buddha said, Lama Tsong Khapa, instead of saying to read these, would have said to not read them. I have more stories, modern examples, that happened in the West. Maybe this afternoon...

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG...

LECTURE 11

November 22 am

The last few days you heard a little bit about the objects of refuge—Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha—and also a little bit about how it is not blind faith that one should have; how Buddha is a worthy object of refuge in different ways; that the Buddha himself is completely free from all fears, or in other words, all the obscurations. Also how Buddha is highly skillful in guiding others. One way to understand the supreme qualities that only Buddha has is from the stories of when Buddha was in India showing the aspect of the nirmanakaya, the supreme transformation; how skillfully he guided other sentient beings. There are many stories. The understanding and power that the arhats, who have completely ceased even the seeds of disturbing thoughts, don't have, that only the Buddha has. How Buddha subdued other sentient beings, deeply ignorant ones, who had incredible dissatisfied mind and attachment and unbelievable pride.

There is one elaborate text by Buddha Maitreya—the *Abhisamayalankarika*. There are eight chapters and the last one contains detailed explanations about the four kayas and the qualities of a Buddha. Those who have studied this scripture and understand it think that it's the best "pilgrimage." When you study these things you start to discover the incredible understanding, the powers, the compassion, the six great actions which even the higher bodhisattvas and arhats cannot comprehend. Going to see the holy places alone doesn't cause one to discover the qualities, but by studying the teachings one understands them extensively and deeply. So this is the best, most effective pilgrimage.

"I go for refuge to Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha." As we are visualizing Chenrezig, the Compassionate Buddha, above our own crown ... if one can't think much, then one can think like this: the Compassionate Buddha, Guru Chenrezig, is the embodiment of all the buddhas, all the Dharma and Sangha. Guru Chenrezig's holy mind is Buddha, the dharmakaya, and his holy body is Sangha, and his holy speech is Dharma. You can think like that when we say this prayer. If you want to think a little more elaborately then think of the absolute Buddha, and the truth of the all-obscuring mind—the sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya aspect. Then think of absolute Dharma and the truth of the all-obscuring mind. The absolute Dharma is the true path to the true cessation of sufferings; the relative Dharma is the truth of all-obscuring mind, the teachings of the graduated path to enlightenment that we are practicing and trying to actualize now. It is the teachings which contain all the essence of Buddha's teachings. The absolute Sangha is the attainers of the actual

Dharma refuge, the true path to the cessation of sufferings. It doesn't matter if he's a lay person or a monk. If one has actual refuge, realization of the true path and true cessation of suffering in the mind, directly seeing Shunyata, one is absolute Sangha. The relative Sangha, the truth of the all-obscuring mind, does not have the actual refuge, this realization, in the mind. It is four members of the ordinary Sangha. There might be a reason for the number four, but we need not worry about that at the moment. So, if you want to think more elaborately, then think like this. This contains all of the objects.

This is my own idea. When taking refuge in the ordinary Sangha one might have to think that in essence they are the absolute Sangha and then take refuge, even if the ordinary Sangha don't have the actual Dharma refuge. If you have some difficulty in your mind, like having a lot of superstition, if you think this way it is helpful for the progress of your practice. For example, Milarepa achieved enlightenment in a brief lifetime through incredible dedication and offering of service to his guru, doing incredibly great purification by bearing many hardships and by following his guru, Marpa's, advice. His biography is incredibly inspiring, not only for Tibetans, but so many people in Western countries—who start with drugs, with LSD! Anyway, it's incredibly inspiring and it benefits so many people. I met many students who before they come to the East got this book in the shops or from a friend and got incredible blessings and inspiration. It gave them inspiration go get to know and practice Buddhadharma. They wanted to practice what great yogis Milarepa, Naropa, Gampopa, and other great yogis practiced and to have the same incredible realizations. They want to have those inconceivable, supreme qualities.

Particularly Milarepa's life gives incredible inspiration to renounce—to see that samsara has no essence, that the worldly perfections have no essence, and especially to generate the thought of renouncing the disturbing thoughts, the dissatisfied mind. It is especially effective for cutting off the confused mind, the clinging thoughts of samsaric perfection in this life. Then many Western people come to the East and find gurus, to receive the teachings that those yogis have practiced. So, you see, this is how absolute Sangha is guiding. Then they receive lamrim teachings, tantra teachings, maha-anuttara yoga teachings. They receive initiations; they are able to hear all the teachings of the complete path from the experienced high lamas on what caused those great yogis to reach enlightenment, to complete the whole tantra path in one brief lifetime in this time of degeneration. Then they are able to practice, to meditate. Somehow, even though unable to have realizations, they are able to make such preparation in the mind, to come near to realization, to become as fortunate as those great yogis, and be able to offer extensive benefits to all the sentient beings. So, this is how the absolute Sangha is guiding.

When we read Lama Je Tsong Khapa's biography it is an incredible inspiration to study, to listen, to reflect and practice meditation on the profound tantra and sutra teachings taught by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and by Indian pandits. They are the example for us, inspiring us to practice. They explain their experience of the path clearly—how to practice lamrim and the tantric path—and there are many teachings and autobiographies of their great experiences of the path: all the wrong conceptions, the dangers, where one should be careful, have been explained. That's how the absolute Sangha is guiding us.

So, if you study more of these teachings, the absolute Sangha is guiding you. Like this, Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha are guiding. Similarly, ordinary Sangha are guiding us. From this we should be able to figure out how: they are living in a practice themselves. They are giving inspiration, or an example, for us to follow. They even become an object of merit, for as we make offerings we

accumulate merit. Even that is an example of how Sangha guides. Without having created the cause—merit—we cannot close the door of the lower realms and cannot be free from samsara, cannot be free from the two obscurations. So these are the various ways we should think about how they're guiding and giving help in Dharma practice.

The first two lines are: "I'm going to take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha." Relying upon the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha in order not to be born in lower realms and to find a body of the happy transmigratory being in the next life is the refuge of lower capability beings. Relying upon Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha for oneself to be freed from samsara, to reach liberation, is the middle capability beings' way of taking refuge. Then, relying upon Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha in order to achieve enlightenment, to be free from the two obscurations, to free all the sentient beings from all their sufferings and to lead them to omniscient mind is the Mahayana way of taking refuge—the way the higher capability beings take refuge.

When we say this refuge prayer we should do the higher capability beings' way of taking refuge. This is a Mahayana teaching so the ultimate goal should be to achieve an omniscient mind for the benefit of all the sentient beings. So when we practice refuge we should practice the refuge of the higher capability beings.

SANG.GYE CHO.DANG ...

"To Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha I go for refuge. Due to the merits of charity, moral conduct and so on ..."—"so on" means the practice of patience, perseverance, concentration and wisdom. It means any merit that we accumulate in relation to holy objects or in relation to sentient beings—"... accumulated by me, may I achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all the sentient beings."

The next prayer is generating bodhicitta and dedicating the merits to achieve enlightenment for the sake of all the sentient beings; to be able to practice the graduated path to enlightenment, especially bodhicitta—renouncing oneself and cherishing other sentient beings; renouncing the thought of giving harm to others and practicing the thought of benefiting them. Instead of giving harm to others with body, speech and mind, offering benefit with body, speech and mind to other sentient beings. That's what it means when we say this prayer.

I will say it and you just meditate. Try to remember that meaning which I explained. Visualize Chenrezig, the Great Compassionate One, above one's own crown.

TO BUDDHA, DHARMA, AND THE SUPREME ASSEMBLY I GO FOR REFUGE UNTIL I BECOME ENLIGHTENED. DUE TO THE MERITS OF CHARITY AND SO ON, ACCUMULATED BY ME, MAY I ACHIEVE ENLIGHTENMENT IN ORDER TO BENEFIT ALL THE TRANSMIGRATORY BEINGS.

You should remember what I mentioned before and practice bodhicitta. Without bodhicitta, enlightenment cannot be achieved. Think, "I'm going to practice bodhicitta and avoid giving harm to others with my body, speech and mind and practice benefiting others with my body, speech and mind. Then recite one round of Chenrezig mantra. Today in particular, we must be aware of the general true cause of suffering that all the sentient beings are experiencing. So many are suffering of starvation. Also remember all the sick people in the hospitals. Right now, so many of them are dying, their breath stopping this minute. The doctors don't know what to do; relatives and friends all

round—there's nothing that can be done. Nothing. It's sad; there's no freedom. So much screaming; so much pain. Just watch all the hospitals on this earth. Just be aware. I don't mean the buildings, but the people! When you go to hospitals and see all these patients, it's another world. You see the shortcomings of being in samsara. Even if they take medicines it does not help. It's so difficult. You should think about it.

Cherish them as yourself by remembering their kindness, seeing how precious they are. At least you know the kindness received from your mother, even if you don't know other extensive ways of their being kind. Their suffering then seems like I'm suffering. Their having heart attacks is like I'm having a heart attack.

Visualize Guru Chenrezig and think all sentient beings are purified...

“OM MANI PADME HUM ... OM MANI PADME HUM ...”

The nectar rays flow and purify all the wrong conceptions—one's own and all other sentient beings”—and the obstacles to achieving the complete path to enlightenment. All the wrong conceptions are completely purified, from seeing the guru as ordinary or with disrespect up to the subtle dual views at the times of the white vision, red vision and dark vision. All those wrong conceptions are completely purified.

Then Chenrezig melts into light, absorbs to one's own heart, and that generates the whole path, especially the stable, definite understanding of karma and bodhicitta. Think that all the sentient beings are oneness with Chenrezig and have generated all the realizations. Feel the great compassion of the Chenrezig holy mind, feeling an unbearable wish that everyone be free from suffering and to cause that by oneself.

SANG.GYE CHO.DANG...

There is a story about Seri.ig, one who becomes an Arhat in that life. I don't remember the full story of that. However, after he was born from his mother's womb, golden coins came unceasingly. This is more difficult to understand than golden ka-ka coming from the elephant! Can you say that it is impossible that the energy which makes gold by melting things together never occurs at all inside an elephant's stomach? That the physical conditions one hundred percent, absolutely, cannot happen inside an elephant? There are many karmic stories that were explained in the sutra teachings that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha explained to His disciples. Many of those karmic stories were about something we don't normally expect, something which cannot be imagined. Many of those stories that Buddha Shakyamuni explained were purposely included. What Guru Shakyamuni explained was put in the sutras. The point was to give a definite understanding that even small negative karmas and even small virtues are important. To not feel careless, but to think of virtuous actions as being extensive, not thinking, “This is a small virtue, it doesn't matter.” To see how important it is to practice them because they have an incredible result of happiness. And to feel that even the small non-virtues are as great and important to renounce as the heavy ones. To discover that from small non-virtuous causes there is an unbelievable continual suffering result. Then a person who has inspiration causing him to renounce even the small non-virtues. That is the point.

Do you think there's karma like a horn growing from a human head? What do you think? Mark, what do you think?

Mark: I really don't know, Rinpoche.

L.Z: Do you think there's a karma of a horn growing from a human head? Is somebody saying yes?

A.M. I know a story like this but I don't know if it's true.

(end of tape)

My sister has a tail! She's alright now, but she had this much tail! Do you think it's possible or not possible?

A.M: There are people who have been born with strange mutations, like three arms. I haven't seen, but I've heard these stories. But I haven't heard of people growing tails after they're thirty years old!

L.Z: If you hear a story, will you change your conception? So, actually your reasoning is: whether there are horns growing or not, tails growing or not, is dependent on whether somebody has told the story. It's not so much that there is a story of something that happened in the world, but it's up to whether you heard it or not! It's good to ask questions. It's actually a good point to think on when we meditate on karma. For example, for myself, I cannot say one hundred percent that no horns will grow on my head, I cannot say no tails, because various karmas have been accumulated in this life and in past lives. One can never say absolutely yes or no, because there are various karmas. These things such as tails are common and now becoming more common. Because these are degenerated times, more strange things happen! One can't really say.

Now I'm just asking the questions, but when one actually meditates individually on karma, it's good to put the question to oneself. It's very effective; it inspires one to purify these negative karmas. Because various karmas are created, we can't really say how life will turn out. Even regarding tomorrow we cannot say. Even about tonight we cannot say. Now we are comfortable, but tonight? We are not sure. Maybe a sudden heart attack. Friends around, doctors around, pressing on our chest, going to the hospital. Not sure whether the person can make it from here to the hospital. We can't say if he will continue being alive. We can't really say since we cannot see every single karma from beginningless rebirths. We don't have clairvoyance even to see each karma created in one day, and the details of what kind of result they have, whether it's a good result or not. We can't see these details clearly.

I still have the photograph: in Calcutta one child was born with a tail—like the tail of a goat. I think it was maybe two inches long. The nurse was holding up the tail. It was tied with thread, and they were thinking of cutting it off. Also, in one country, in a hospital there was one child who was over two years old who had a tail six inches long. They cut it off. So, there are many things happening all the time. That's just what I have heard about!

In China, I'm not sure of the district, one farmer who was over eighty-eight had two-inch long horns growing, exactly like ox horns—two horns, pointed! Those who came to check said it was exactly like seeing an ox horn! I still have a picture of one child who has already experienced old age. This child has glasses; she was a girl, I think. The body was small, but looking exactly like an old person's with veins showing. She was with her mother. I don't know in which country. So, as Jack said, miracles can happen in the world.

A.M: Rinpoche, can I respond to that?

L.Z: Yes, yes.

A.M: The disease plegoria which is premature aging, is being studied, and it fits consistently with our model of the way nature may work and work incorrectly. And the idea of someone having a horn that looks like a goat horn may be accurate, but, I would bet anything that it's made of human tissue, and that it's consistent with something in the growth process. And having tails is something that occurs as a birth deformity and it's not a monkey tail or a goat tail—it's a human tail.

L.Z: I'm not saying it's a goat tail, I'm saying it's like a goat tail.

A.M: I just want to clarify that the difference is that these are unusual events, they're not miraculous events, in that ...

L.Z: I'm not saying it's a good thing.

A.M: No, no. I agree. It's not a good thing. They're inside the realm of causal phenomena, as we experience it. As we gain more and more knowledge about the way the world works and it seems that if something happens outside of that, it defies karma. In other words, if it was a goat horn on a human head, that would be outside the law of karma. That would disprove karma rather than support it.

L.Z: No, I didn't say a goat horn on a human head. I didn't say an ox horn on a human head. Even the hospital people said it's exactly like seeing an ox horn! You're right! There's no goat! If a horn grows it's not a goat horn, it's a human horn. It's a human tail, not a goat tail. If there's hair growing, it's human hair if it's connected to the body.

Just to finish yesterday's talk about those particular stories. Last night I showed Neil where in the text Lama Tsong Khapa mentioned the gold coming from the hands, and the elephant. It's from the text called "The Sutra of the Wise and Foolish." The names are mentioned there. One should try to understand karma, how karma is expandable, by reading those sutra scriptures. So, if you say, "Somebody put this story about such and such karma into the teachings," it means that Lama Tsong Khapa is foolish. It kind of looks like those great yogis became enlightened and gained the definite understanding of karma by studying wrong things. It appears like this: we believe only factual things—that's why we are still in samsara, still confused. If it's made clear it turns out like this.

In Tibet if you wrote something which is against the Buddha's teaching, something not correct, the great pandits and the great lamas contradicted it. Many people who were practicing contradicted such teachings—they said such and such is a wrong concept and explained how it is wrong.

Normally how the great lamas, yogis and pandits in Tibet and India practiced it is: if it's taught by Buddha then it's practiced; if it's not taught by Buddha, if it's against Buddha's teaching, they don't practice it. This is how it is because in the teachings of Buddha there's nothing missing from the path to achieve enlightenment, if that is the goal. Lama Tsong Khapa's teaching is the same. The teachings of the great highly attained lamas are the same.

Also, to say that the teachings of the Buddha are not Buddha's teaching is criticizing the Buddha's teaching. This is avoiding Dharma and one receives negative karma. Avoiding Dharma is much more heavy than destroying all the stupas on this earth. I heard this but I'm not sure. Similarly, many Theravadin people think that the Mahayana teachings were not taught by Buddha and that Vajrayana is not Buddha's teachings. They believed that what the Buddha taught is only the lesser vehicle path, only that which is common for them, which suits their minds. But something which doesn't fit their level of mind, like the tantra teachings, they say was not taught by the Buddha. So that is avoiding Dharma which creates much negative karma. It's the same thing for a person who thinks, "I am a Mahayanist," and says that the Theravadin teaching is a bad practice. It is Buddha's teaching, so saying that is avoiding Dharma.

Also, we may not say there's so karma, but when it comes to a particular point like this—something we haven't seen by eye—if we say, “There's no such thing,” about something which happened, which Buddha explained—that is heresy. Even if normally we don't say there's no karma, no triple gem, things like that. If one is not aware of what one is doing when one hears the Buddha's teachings, there is danger of creating negative karma, of destroying one's own temporal and ultimate peace. Then, you see, even if one hears the stories mentioned by Lama Tsong Khapa and those great yogis, one feels uncomfortable, one finds it difficult. Logically it is impossible to prove that such and such things are impossible. You cannot prove it, but inside you, you find it difficult to have faith in karma as Buddha taught it. The answer to that is purification. Even if you cannot say with logical reasons that it's impossible for it to happen, but from the heart you cannot find faith, that is an obstacle, so it needs purification.

Karma is definite and karma is expandable. Without creating the cause, the result cannot be experienced. The cause which has been created cannot be lost at all. Before mentioning these I would add that this karma subject is the most difficult to discover of all the subjects. The way to discover existence is explained in three points:

The first is things that can be directly perceived like planting a seed and seeing it grow by eye. By making fire, smoke comes and it can be identified, or discovered by seeing it with one's eyes. These are things that can be seen by eye and can be discovered by seeing.

Secondly, there are things such as subtle impermanence which have to be realized by depending on reason. For example, how the body is in the nature of change in each second, due to causes. By reasoning one realizes how the aggregates are by nature impermanent. The same thing with Shunyata: how the “I” is empty of true existence, how the “I” exists by being merely labeled on the aggregates is seen by depending on logic—the absolute nature of “I” is a dependent arising, which identifies that “I” is empty of true existence. So you see, these things are more difficult to understand than those other things which be discovered through seeing them by eye. They are realized by depending on reason, or logic.

Then thirdly, more difficult than these, is karma: such as that by practicing charity, wealth and enjoyment is received; by practicing moral conduct, the body of a happy transmigratory being is received. Things such as creating that negative karma results in suffering.

One doesn't have clairvoyance to see all this, doesn't have power to understand one's own various karmas, the various results being experienced. Also one doesn't have an omniscient mind, doesn't have the power to see other's karma. The way to discover this is by having faith, or depending on the true quotations of the Omniscient One, the Fully-Knowing-One. In the second category, by meditating, by reflecting on them, one can realize shunyata, impermanence, and those things.

You may say, “Just because Buddha said it alone does not prove that it is true.” O.K, in that case, why do you believe geography and the past history spanning many thousands of years? Why do you believe these? You yourself don't have clairvoyance, you don't see those past stories that you believe which occurred a thousand or even a hundred years back. Why do you believe that you come out of your mother's womb; you don't you remember living in your mother's womb; you don't see, you can't remember how you came out. You are told that you were born from her, so you believe those words. So why do you trust this and those past histories?

There are many scientific explanations from biologists, psychologists and so on; why do you believe those explanations? You are relying on their explanations, their discoveries, what they say. Even though they have degrees they still have to learn because now there are new discoveries. Each year as they do experiments they find mistakes, previous explanations that are wrong. As they make further examinations, research, they have to change their explanations. Regarding Buddha's path, no-one says: "What I told you before about the path is wrong—now it should be like this." Or, in regards to the explanation of the mind, "Oh, this was wrong!" In Buddha's explanation of biology, the evolution of this earth and the evolution of beings and things, Buddha does not say, "The previous time I explained this, but now it is wrong." This is because there is no change in Buddha's knowledge. It is a sign that there is not the slightest obscuration left, and the understanding is complete. No defilement is left so the understanding, the realization, is complete. So you see, as Buddha's omniscient mind sees everything—absolute nature and the conventional truth, exactly as it is—the nature of the minds of sentient beings is correctly explained. There are no changes such as, "The previous one was wrong; now this is correct." You see, if Buddha does not see exactly then the teachings would have to be changed.

That the Buddha is the true founder, that he is reliable and unbetraying, was proved by the pandits and great yogis who practiced the teachings. They found the infallible realizations. Just as the Buddha explained, they were able to approach enlightenment. They were able to be freed from true suffering and the true cause of suffering. That Buddha's teaching is unbetraying is proved by the practitioners' experience. You can see now, it's not just blind faith.

When you check which teaching is betraying and which is unbetraying, you should check like this: are there many followers who achieved liberation from samsara by practicing as the founder taught the path? Did his followers achieve liberation and then did those followers also achieved the same thought? If there have been many examples like this, and if it is the experience of others, not only of the founder who teaches, "If you do this and that there's liberation," then that is a reliable path. If there is no one, just the founder, the one who reveals the path saying, "Blah-blah-blah, this and this," and there are no other followers, then there is no proof. If many of the followers died having achieved nothing, there is no proof.

Such teachings as, "If you jump onto a trident and points come through the left and right shoulders, and the middle point comes through the head, then you will receive liberation"—there are many...

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.....beat yourself, holding very heavy things in your hand, punishing yourself. There are many things which are regarded as having the power of purification. If you are dead, then that's it! There is nothing to be heard about whether you achieved liberation or not!

Karma, in the third category, is the most difficult to understand. The arhats see shunyata directly and clearly. Shunyata is very subtle, difficult to realize, but even an arhat sees it perfectly. But only a Buddha sees details of karma perfectly, especially subtle karmas. It's the most difficult. The whole point is that you need purification. Without that we cannot develop realizations of the path.

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG RINPOCHE...

LECTURE 12  
November 23 am

Yesterday I briefly explained the way of taking refuge and how it frees one of different fears, and how to rely upon the guru, the Great Compassionate One: practicing refuge, then practicing bodhicitta, generating the altruistic mind of enlightenment. Remember the Mahayana way, the higher capability beings' way, of taking refuge. Remember that and meditate as I say the prayer in English.

“To the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Supreme Assembly I go for refuge until I become enlightened. Due to the merits of charity and so on accumulated by me, may I achieve the buddhahood stage for the benefit of all the sentient beings.”

Think of all three refuge objects; Chenrezig himself embodies all three. Remember, whichever way you think, the meaning of “I go for refuge.” One does not have the power to free oneself from samsara and doesn't have power to free others, therefore we have to rely on someone who has that perfect power. Who can free or guide oneself from the samsaric suffering, from all the obscurations? Who is able to free oneself and all other sentient beings from suffering, and also make it possible that oneself can become the perfect guide to free all others from suffering? Buddha—such as the Great Compassionate One—Dharma and the supreme assembly. “I take refuge, I rely upon them, until I become enlightened.”

Also, it's good to think: the same as when relying on, asking for help from the doctor, he gives some medicine and advice, by asking for help and guidance from the Buddha he gives you advice to protect karma. Protection karma is the actual refuge. That's the main one. By protecting karma, practicing Dharma, that's how Buddha, Dharma and Sangha guide oneself from sufferings. We should remember this. Without taking medicine, without putting into action the advice from the doctor, the doctor cannot help; the same thing: without practicing Dharma, without protecting karma, Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha cannot guide.

“Due to the merits of charity ...”: at this time you should remember all the three times merit accumulated by oneself and by all other sentient beings. Put together all the merits, making one thing, and dedicate. Make a total, then dedicate. “May I achieve enlightenment for the benefit of kind mother sentient beings.” Not just dedicating, not just saying, “May it happen like this.” Not just praying. One should feel in one's heart. “I am going to take the whole responsibility to free each narak beings, each preta being, each animal being, each human beings, each sura and asura, each sentient beings, from all the obscurity, from all the sufferings, by myself alone. Take the whole responsibility to free each being from all the sufferings. One should feel this in the heart when one says this prayer; not just praying for something to happen from outside—that God will help. You shouldn't think this way. Think, “I'm going to do it, therefore I should develop bodhicitta and practice not giving harm to others with my body, speech and mind; instead, only offering benefit to others.” As it is said in the tantra teaching *Guru Puja*, “Even if all sentient beings in the three realms”—those sentient beings who get born and who die, all of them—“get angry towards me, even if they provoke me, even if they insult me, threaten, beat, even kill me, I won't make my mind disturbed. I won't get angry, I won't become violent.”

“Instead of harming back, I will offer benefit. May I be able to practice such patience.” Then, regarding the true cause of suffering and true suffering, think particularly of couples' problems, all the relationship problems in the world. Even though born as a human being, but experiencing something kind-of like being born in hell. Be aware; remember your own experience, then be aware

of how others are suffering. Use your own experience as the cause to renounce samsara. Like you yourself suffer, others suffer likewise. Generate compassion by being aware of others' problems.

OM MANI PADME HUM ... OM MANI PADME HUM ...

Chenrezig melts into light, absorbs into one's own heart, and the Chenrezigs who are on the crown of each sentient being absorb to their hearts. This generates the whole graduated path to enlightenment, from guru devotion up to the unified state of no-more-learning, especially a stable understanding of karma and bodhicitta. Then, feel also that the mind becomes completely in the nature of great compassion, Chenrezig's holy mind. Feel as unbearable the sufferings of others, wishing everyone to be free from all the sufferings, and to cause that by oneself. Especially one should remember the person whom one dislikes. Feel the great compassion, particularly for that person.

Then, thinking the same as in the beginning:

"I go for refuge to Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha until I become enlightened..."

"Due to the merits of listening to the teachings"—from the listeners' side, the merits of listening, and from the lama's side, he should think of the merits of explaining Dharma. When you say it in Tibetan, instead of *dag.gi jin.so* you should say *dag.gi cho.nyen*—listening to Dharma.

Please listen to the teaching by generating at least the effortful bodhicitta. It's not sufficient to just help others recover from a headache, or just to stop their hunger. That's not enough. Just to be able to help for temporal happiness, temporal pleasures, just to stop starvation, or headaches or diarrhea is not sufficient. That doesn't really solve the problem. Giving material possessions, things like that, is not sufficient. They themselves have been millionaires, they themselves have been kings numberless times in past lives. They had everything numberless times in past lives. If material possessions could free sentient beings from the root of the problem, then there wouldn't be any sentient being left.

As long as nothing is done, as long as you don't help others to be free from the cause of suffering—the obscurations, the disturbing thoughts—as long as you don't make some change, as long as they are not eliminated, even if you give them medicine when they have headaches, diarrhea, cancer or whatever it is, or food when there is starvation, nothing is done for the cause. So the causes of the problems are continuously created. If no change is made to the disturbing thoughts, the sentient beings easily create karma. Even if there was no past karma they would easily, uncontrollably create new karma to experience true suffering, the cycle of rebirth and death, all those problems—starvation, cancer, headaches, relationship problems, all those things. There's no end. Karma is created because there are disturbing thoughts all the time, and so the problem, the result is experienced again and again. There is no end. So probably you might feel, "What's the point of sitting in the tent just reciting mantra and meditating on compassion? Doing nothing, just sitting on a cushion not moving? Not running into a city, not running to a hospital, not running to the wars to stop the danger?" Probably you might be thinking it's silly. That is actually a lack of understanding Dharma, a lack of study, of thinking well about the evolution of suffering. It's because of not having understood the samsaric evolution well. It's thinking, but not thinking further. It's only thinking about a person's hunger. You are not thinking beyond that. You are not thinking about where that starvation, that headache, that relationship problem came from. Not checking beyond that, just the

surface. That is not understanding the true cause of suffering. So therefore, your only solution is to give food or to give medicine. That's all. You see, there is no thought of how to really benefit others, to cease the cause of their problems. That's because of lack of understanding the true cause of suffering. There's no question arising of how to cease your own and others' true cause of suffering. Also there's no understanding the different levels of the path, the graduated path which frees, which purifies, which ceases the different levels of disturbing thoughts. You can understand whether you have compassion towards all beings or not: when a relationship problem comes you can see whether you have compassion towards that person or not. Not whether you have compassion towards all beings or not, but just to that person with whom you are staying, with whom you are living. Just the person who is sitting next to you, whom you always see everyday; when someone comes along and disturbs the relationship, disturbs the pleasure that you are seeking for, then you see if you have compassion or not towards all beings. If you have compassion towards that person there is no problem in your mind. You want to offer everything to that person: belongings, husband, wife, children, whatever. If one really feels compassion, there is no problem. We have incredible, unbelievable confusion, disharmony, all these problems. Everyday you hear about it in the West. Actually, that's because of not having generated compassion for every living being. Especially the closer ones. We can experiment to see whether we have got compassion or not when somebody disturbs our pleasure.

You see, the sentient beings themselves have been millionaires, having everything numberless times in the past. So therefore, this is not the ultimate solution. What they need to be free from is true suffering. There is no other way other than being free from the true cause of suffering. The question is, how does Buddha liberate the sentient beings from suffering. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha said: "The Mighty Ones do not wash the negative karma by water." This is very effective: negative karma cannot be washed by water, so that is not the way the Mighty Ones liberate sentient beings from suffering. Also, for example, when you get cancer, or leprosy disease—even if you cut out that piece of the body it doesn't mean you are now completely free from leprosy disease or cancer for a life time. If you get a thorn in the foot, taking that out doesn't mean that from now on you won't ever get pain from a thorn. These things never stop the true cause of suffering. They don't do anything for the disturbing thoughts or the hallucinating ignorance. This doesn't do anything to the hallucination in regards to the absolute nature of the "I," the reality of the "I," which is the root of samsara.

Therefore the Mighty Ones do not eliminate suffering by using their hands like when taking a thorn out of the flesh. You see, it doesn't change anything, it does no harm at all to the cause. So that's not the way the Buddhas liberate the sentient beings from suffering. It's not the way to cease the sufferings of sentient beings. Also, it's not done by transplanting the realizations, like transplanting a monkey brain into a human or something like that, or like transplanting the heart. The way Buddhas liberate, ceases the sufferings of the sentient beings is not by transplanting realizations ...

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You see, if the cause of our sufferings is not created by us, if it is created by somebody else, then we don't need to create the cause of happiness by ourselves. If our suffering and happiness is created by, or given by somebody else, by a separate being, it doesn't make any sense. We don't have freedom at all: we don't have freedom to be free from suffering, we don't have freedom to obtain happiness. We don't have choice. Whether we are going to be happy or unhappy is up to the other beings, whatever he is called. That would be depressing because we wouldn't have the freedom at all

to make it impossible to experience suffering it's up to whatever that other being does. So, there would be no reason why we should try to have a good heart. It doesn't make reason why we should try to have a good heart. It doesn't make much difference; it doesn't makes much sense. Even speaking generally, if happiness and suffering come from a separate being there is no need for laws to stop violence, there's no reason to educate; no reason to change ungenerous conduct into generous conduct; no purpose for practicing good conduct and for renouncing non-virtuous conduct and ill-will. If it's created by somebody else, we don't have any freedom. It's up to the other person, the other being. I'm just talking, as this subject came up.

First of all, if the beings and the whole world are created by somebody else, why? Why was it created in the first place? Wouldn't it be better if nothing was created? If there was nothing, no beings, no places, there wouldn't be all this violence, famine and fighting of wars. There wouldn't be all these meetings to stop the atomic danger, the many meetings for peace! It wouldn't need to be done. Doesn't the person who created this know these faults? He is very ignorant, he created it blindly. It looks like the conclusion must be that the one who created this world, the beings, everything, is completely ignorant; that he has no compassion because he created suffering. It almost becomes like this: the one who created the whole thing looks to be like some kind of element, not a being. If you question or research to trace back to the root, you come to a terrible explanation.

It is proved even by this example: if a person takes medicine he recovers, if he doesn't take medicines he does not recover. If you eat food, you don't starve; if you don't eat food, you starve! That is in your hands. But, if you think of food but don't go shopping, don't do a job, just sit in a chair and think, "Somebody will give me food when I'm hungry—it's not up to me, it's up to somebody else," or stay in bed all day and night and say, "Somebody will bring food, cook and do my job to earn money for me, even put the food in my stomach!, you can do this only if it is somebody else's creation, not yours.

It is the same if one attempts to practice Dharma. If you don't know so well what it means, just concentrate on protecting karma, avoiding the cause of suffering and practicing the cause of happiness. That is an infallible, unmistakable, basic understanding of Dharma, even if you don't know so much about the path. If one practices Dharma, one can be liberated—one can cease the true cause of suffering, the disturbing thoughts. If one doesn't practice Dharma, one cannot stop the disturbing thoughts. If one doesn't practice Dharma, liberation doesn't happen. If you eat food, you stop hunger. If you take medicine you stop the pain. If you don't do it, it doesn't stop. It becomes kind of funny when you check, when you think that the creator wants only happiness yet the sentient beings' suffering is not created by them but is created by this separate being. When you check further, the one who created the whole thing is not a being who has great compassion. It comes to the point that it's no longer a being, but is a power which doesn't have a mind, doesn't have consciousness! If you check further it's not a being, but an element. But doesn't science say that all beings come from the water, from the ocean?

A.M: From small organisms.

L.A: I heard something but I don't remember exactly. Came from inside the water? I think I heard a bubble. Not a sort-of bubble? That's why we have all the suffering? Does it explain how the beings came and animals came?

Audience: (Explanations from the audience referring to biologists' explanation of the various causes and conditions and elements necessary for the creation of life.)

L.Z: By getting all these things together it creates life? What do you mean by life? What's the definition of that life?

A.M: They can reproduce.

L.Z: They can reproduce! Those lives reproduce? No, I'm talking about the first one when those conditions gathered and made life. What's the definition of that life?

A.M: (gives definition of life as "anything that reproduces itself.")

L.Z: So that is the first living being?

A.M: That's what they say.

L.Z: What's the difference between that living being and an orange? Or a potato? What is the difference between the potato and that life?

A.M: A potato is more complicated. It has more cells.

L.Z: Potato has a more complicated life! That other one reproduced and the potato reproduces—the same. So I wonder what is the difference between that life and potatoes' or peanuts'. So in that case, has a potato got mind? Has a potato consciousness? The first has consciousness, right?

A.M: No.

L.Z: It doesn't have consciousness? Doesn't have sensations, feeling?

A.M: It doesn't have a nervous system. That evolved later. It's just a single cell, a single-celled organism. There's a distinction made between a nimal and vegetable life. A single-celled animal is called an amoeba.

L.Z: The first one is a single cell? An animal?

A.M: Before that there were things like viruses which are not cells.

L.Z: The first life is an animal?

A.M: Plants have a more simple structure than animals.

L.Z: That was the first life? The first life was a plant? Then they became animal? Developed and became animals?

A.M: Different chemicals made animal cells.

L.Z: Animals do not have consciousness, is that right? What do they say?

A.M: I don't think they discussed that.

L.Z: So do they accept that animals have ignorance?

A.M: They say they have limited knowledge. They say that they only respond to stimulation in a very basic way.

L.Z: Animals have no understanding of phenomena. Scientists don't think that's ignorant?

A.M: It's called limited wisdom, Rinpoche.

L.Z: I just wondered—you may have to say that ignorance came from water and all those conditions. Do they accept that the disturbing thoughts can cease, to never arise again? Do they ever say that it can be ended? Even without accepting reincarnation, that consciousness can be separated from anger, from pride, jealousy, all those things?

A.M: Most scientists don't make a separation between consciousness and brain. The brain is kind-of limited, so the mind can never be perfected.

L.Z: That means to cease anger and those things, to cease dissatisfaction and ignorance, you have to cease your mind? The mind has to become non-existent because it's oneness? Yes? They think in this way?

A.M: They think it can be improved but not perfected.

A.M: I think they think that maybe through evolution the brain will become bigger. Maybe like this they can imagine.

L.Z: Brain become bigger? What about an elephant's brain? It must be the biggest, no?!

A.M: The ratio of the size of the brain to the size of the body, that's important.

L.Z: I don't follow.

A.M: The relationship between the size of the brain and the size of the body is important.

L.Z: I think as long as there are more and more discoveries that mind can be freed from disturbing thoughts, it is good, even if they accept that it has a beginning, as long as they understand, as long as more discoveries come, that the mind can be controlled, that disturbing thoughts can be controlled, that it can be separated from those.

A.M: Small organisms, single-celled organisms, seem to have consciousness. They are self cherishing, they do respond to negative feedback—they still preserve themselves.

L.Z: The cell itself is not conscious. It is covered, pervaded, but that does not mean the cell itself has consciousness. It's similar: we have got mind, but that doesn't mean we are mind; we have got a body but that doesn't mean we are the body. We're sentient.

A.M: It seems that small organisms, then, are sentient also.

L.Z: No. No!

A.M: What is the beginning of sentience? What is the first sentient being? Where is the line drawn? Coming down the scale into the lower realms. Is it a mosquito? Or a fly?

L.Z: It must be a mosquito! I don't know which of the animals is the first. I have no idea. You'll have to ask somebody else!

Anyway, in the *Abhidharmakosha* it is explained the other way. The scientists explain it as animals then human beings. The Buddha's explanation of the beings is that the very original beings came from the deva realms, the beings who are on the higher planets—the world of form. They finished their karma to be in that realm and they had accumulated the karma to be born as human beings from past times. Earth was evolved according to the collective karma of those who were to be born there. Particularly the richness of the earth, whatever exists now, depends on those particular human beings. Consciousness came from the deva realms, the world of form. The physical condition on earth was light, some kind of sparkling light, then consciousness entered into the light. The original human beings didn't have a body like this, made of flesh and bone and which came from the mother's womb. It was a different birth, I think it's called 'entering' birth. The consciousness took place in the light, that was the physical condition. They had a body made of light.

There's a whole explanation of how they reached the world of form. It is explained in the Tibetan philosophical texts that the young boys are studying now. However, in a simple way of speaking, they were born there through the development of mind, through virtuous thoughts. They had stable concentration, having aversion towards sense pleasures, thus seeking the inner pleasures derived from meditation. Through the development of concentration one gets born in the realm of form. Those in the form and formless realms don't have such things as old age and sickness. They don't have suffering of suffering. They accumulated various karmas created in the past times, both virtuous and non-virtuous—virtue to be born as human beings. When their karma to be in the form realm was finished, the karma to be born as human beings became stronger. That was their cause to be born on this earth as human beings.

Why were they born again as humans even though they were in a realm where there's much inner bliss derived from concentration, without these problems that we have? They had achieved single-pointed concentration, tranquil abiding, by doing tranquil abiding meditation. There are four levels of stable concentration. They reached the highest, the deva realm, which is called the very peak of samsara. However, not having practiced the wisdom path, not having realized voidness, they were unable to eliminate the root of samsara, the ignorance holding the "I" as truly existent. So, from that, anger, attachment and various disturbing thoughts arose, and then they created karma.

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.....even though they had a body of light. They didn't need to depend on sun, they had their own light. Because of the impressions from past times, the disturbing thoughts and karma – gradually the mind became more gross, those disturbing thoughts gradually became stronger and stronger, therefore the body had less light. Even those beings degenerated. The main evolution was the mind becoming more gross, the disturbing thoughts arising more strongly, so becoming more and more physical. Then the body gradually degenerated. The physical condition was that they ate something with attachment. I don't remember exactly, you can find that out. Then came sex. Before, they didn't have sex, but later on the sex organs developed. Do you remember? Have you heard the explanation? They ate impure food. Fruit? Something like that. They ate one impure food with attachment so the sex organs came out. But what food? That's the question.

A.M: Some kind of fruit tree.

A.M: Apple tree.

L.Z: They ate this with attachment. Then, because it was an impure thing, that physical condition made the sex organs come out. But the main cause was disturbing thoughts and karma from past lives. Chok Dorje (in the audience) said that in Sanskrit salt and chili is the cause of attachment!

A.M: In the Bible it's an apple.

A.M: The apple's in Milton. The apple's not in the Bible!

L.Z: I heard apple too! You see, because of strong impressions from past times, it's experienced now. Then, by seeing sex organs attachment kind of developed, the physical contact then others felt and they threw dust over the ones who had physical contact. Then they built houses in order not to be seen by others! That's the evolution! But I can't remember all the details. There are very many details in the explanation about the evolution of the earth – plants, human beings, everything. So you see, human, then animal. From up, down. Anyway that's enough!

A.M: Was the next animal a monkey then? From human did it go to a monkey?

L.Z: Of that I have no clue at all. It's not that a human's body turned into a monkey's. Which animal started first I have no idea. Anyway, the conversation just went, but what I'm saying is if you're really searching back it looks like what one thinks is the creator—whatever you call it, God or whatever—doesn't have mind, that it is a kind of element, but having the power to create suffering. Wouldn't it be better not to have that power which gives suffering to beings?

Anyway, the conclusion is that the sentient beings' suffering is not without a cause. Is not created by a separate being. Nothing is caused by a separate being. If buddhas could transplant realizations then they would liberate sentient beings. However, the conclusion is that without us, the sentient beings, attempting to train the mind in the path, the remedy which eliminates the disturbing thoughts and karma—the cause of suffering—no other being can free us. Without sentient beings doing anything for their own liberation, no separate being can give liberation or realizations. There are uncountable numbers of bodhisattvas and buddhas—the most commonly known one for practitioners of the lesser vehicle path is Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. If, without doing anything, without the need to practice Dharma from the side of sentient beings, a separate being can do something, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha alone would have enlightened every sentient being already and there wouldn't be one sentient being left by now. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha trained the mind in compassion, great compassion for all sentient beings, for eons, so there wouldn't be any sentient beings left.

Similarly, as long as the patient doesn't take medicine and doesn't follow the instructions of the doctor, doesn't make any effort from his side, then the doctor cannot help. You see, the way that the Mighty Ones want to liberate the sentient beings is by revealing the true path. Sentient beings get liberated from samsara if they follow the true path which actually eradicates the true cause of

suffering. The Mighty Ones, the buddhas, liberate the sentient beings by revealing the meaning of selflessness—the absolute nature of “I,” the aggregates and phenomena. Through listening, reflecting and meditation practice, they generate the true path that leads their mind to the cessation of sufferings.

Therefore, if you wish to really benefit, to liberate the sentient beings from the two obscurations, to lead them to the peerless happiness, the state of omniscient mind, to completely liberate them from true suffering and the true cause of suffering and to do that by oneself, I think that first oneself should know every single sentient beings’ different wishes, their different capabilities, their different karmas. One should know this clearly without the slightest mistake. You see, as there are very different levels of mind, in terms of karma, there is a need for various methods to teach them. So, one should know every single different method to reveal which will suit them. To guide one sentient being, as his wish, as his karma changes at different times, one should know every single method of guiding each sentient being to enlightenment gradually.

So, that which knows everything is only an omniscient mind. Nothing else, only an omniscient mind. Therefore, as long as you don’t have an omniscient mind there’s no way that you can perfectly guide other sentient beings without mistake. Even arhats, who are completely free of even the seed of the disturbing thoughts, although they have incredible psychic powers and clairvoyance, cannot perfectly guide because they are not completely purified of obscurations and their realizations are not completed. So you see, there is no other method, no other way except achieving an omniscient mind. So, one should achieve that omniscient mind.

Omniscient mind does not come like this: you sleep tonight and tomorrow morning without the need to meditate or do anything, just say, “I want to help others.” It’s not that you get up the next morning and the omniscient mind is there, without studying and training the mind in the graduated path. To attain the omniscient mind one should train the mind in the graduated path of the higher capacity being, the root of which is bodhicitta. That depends on the graduated path of the medium capacity being. The renunciation of samsara which the medium capacity being practices depends on training the mind on the graduated path of the lower capacity being, renunciation of this life. So, training the mind from the beginning of the path, guru devotion, up to the unified stage. According to tantra, one should train the mind in the unified stage, the path of no more learning—the clear light and the illusory body which become the cause of dharmakaya and rupakaya.

That’s why the meditators who live an ascetic life, who are experimenting on the graduated path to enlightenment, cut off that which keeps one busy, which interferes with the quick success of actualizing the path—such as astrology, giving medicines, and other activities which offer only temporal benefits. Because if they only concentrate on the temporal benefits, even though they can do a lot of things such as curing people by mantras and various methods of concentration and medicines, that gives only temporal benefit. As I mentioned before, that doesn’t bring the cessation of suffering. They think, “If I can achieve bodhicitta then I can offer benefit, I can reveal teachings on shunyata to others which can liberate them from ignorance, the root of samsara. By achieving an omniscient mind I can perfectly guide others.” This is the most important, the ultimate benefit. So, other actions are not skillful. Leaving out that which offers only temporary benefits is not skillful, is not wise. They give up those activities and take on the most important ones. They use their life to accomplish the graduated path to enlightenment. Once sentient beings are free from samsara they don’t need medicines and they don’t need to go to hospitals, they don’t need astrologers to tell them

things. They get freed from the true cause of starvation, then there's no need of food. When they become free of the true cause of hunger and thirst they don't need to depend on food and drink.

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG...

LECTURE 13  
November 23 pm

SA.ZHI POE.KYL...

Please generate the motivation of bodhicitta, thinking, "At any rate I must achieve enlightenment for the benefit of all the kindly mother sentient beings. Therefore, I'm going to listen to the teaching on the graduated path to enlightenment.

Maybe first there are one or two questions? Anything which I know ...There's a question?

A.M: Yes, Rinpoche. Could you explain a little bit the difference "merely labeled" and "labeled"?

L.Z: You didn't find any difference between these two? Did you find that "merely labeled" and "labeled" are the same?

A.M, "Labeled" was something I imposed on some object that "merely labeled" was just the concept of no object.

L.Z: Labeled? I missed out the first one.

A.M, "Labeled" was a name imposed upon an object and "merely labeled" was just the name without a substantiating object.

L.Z: Without a substantial object. What do you mean by "substantial object"?

A.M: Having permanent, inherent existence. I have a question about that.

L.Z: You said that "labeled" is something that puts a name on an object. Then "merely labeled"?

A.M: No object; just a label.

L.Z: Merely labeled, without an object. That's like saying that you have Queen Elizabeth's hat on your head! Is it like that? Do you have Queen Elizabeth's hat? the jeweled hat?

A.M: Crown.

L.Z: Crown, that's right; it's not a hat, sorry! Do you have that crown on your head?

A.M: No.

L.Z: So if you say, "I have Queen Elizabeth's crown on my head," is it labeling?

A.M: Yes, it's fantasy.

L.Z: It's labeling?

A.M: Merely labeling.

L.Z: So you see, you don't have the object. You don't have that jewel with that particular shape that Queen Elizabeth wears on your head. But you label it Queen Elizabeth's crown. So you're "merely labeling." Do you mean "merely labeling" is like that? Labeling without an object? Without a base? Without a substantial base?

A.M: Either it can be with misperception, or like with feelings that I have, or projections. I can see the conspicuous projections, but I can't ...For instance, when I say something is beautiful that strikes me as mere labeling.

L.Z: That's defined as mere labeling? When you say, "That's something beautiful"? You find that that's merely labeling? Well, that's very good. Congratulations! Do you find it the same for the ugly objects?

A.M: Yes.

L.Z: You find "ugly" is merely labeled?

A.M: I don't know that that's...

L.Z: You don't find things ugly? You don't see ugliness? I think that's excellent! Excellent. One problem stopped! I don't know about the beautiful things, but the problems about meeting the ugly ones are stopped! okay So, for you, there is no beautiful object.

A.M: No, I often make that mistake! No, I often think that there is!

L.Z: Do you see beautiful objects or not?

A.M: I consider that a projection, a judgment.

L.Z: Projection, judgment. So, you don't see beautiful objects?

A.M: I still have appreciation.

L.Z: O.K, you have appreciation. Isn't appreciation the same as seeing a beautiful thing? Isn't appreciation also projection?

A.M: It's an internalized projection, if it is a projection. As opposed to being externalized.

L.Z: You said the beautiful object you see is also a projection?

A.M: It's an Internalized projection. If it's a projection, as opposed to being internalized.

L.Z: Internalized projection?

A.M: okay When I feel that something gives me a sense of beauty when I consider it and appreciate it, then I'm owning that experience. I'm saying that that's my response to something. I'm not saying that it is something inherent in what is out there. For instance, it would be easy to say that's a beautiful tree in bloom over by the side of Norbulingka. But, in my more lucid moments I can recognize that the concept of beauty is a projection from my mind, and it is a tree at best. Perhaps not even a tree according to Buddhist philosophy!

L.Z: But then, the tree that you see is maybe not a tree, eh? This may not be Nepal! This may not be Kopan! This may not be the Kopan meditation course! No, I think what you're saying makes sense to me—that you see a tree which may not be a tree.

What you are saying is that on that base—that tree which we can see, and which we can burn, and with which we can cook food, and from which we can eat fruit—the way it exists is by being merely labeled on that particular nature and form. The way that it's existing is nothing more than that. In fact the tree exists as nothing more than what is merely labeled on that base—that particular nature and shape on which we put the name, the label, "tree." First of all you see the tree or stone, or person. You look at the base. When we look at him ... what's your name?

A.M: Jack.

L.Z: Jack. When we look at him, whenever he's speaking, we see his aggregates first ... the particular face. If it's somebody name we don't know, we would think "one injie" because of the eyes and the hair—mostly the hair. Moustache probably! I'm joking! The color of the hair. Is there any black person having yellow hair?

A.M: Aborigines.

L.Z: Aborigines. Black color? Normally it's white people. Then you say "injie." When we look at him, first we see the aggregates, then right after we say "Jack." First we have to recognize a particular shape. But when the base is not so clear, we can't decide what to label. When we can't see the base, the particular shape of the body we can't decide.

(end of tape)

There are different ways to understand it. As long as the base on which you label is not clear, you don't know what to label. An example: you see a person coming from a distance, but you can't really decide who it is. Do you see how labeling is dependent on the base? Afterwards as the person comes nearer, and the particular base, the shape is seen—the way his nose is, the way his mouth is,

the eyes, everything—and as you know what Jack looks like, you think, “Oh, that’s Jack! It’s not Jock!”

From this example you can understand how Jack is a dependent arising; Jack exists dependent upon his aggregates. First you see his base, his aggregates, and when they are clear you label, you say, “It’s Jack.” The way Jack exists is in dependence upon the aggregates and your thought which labels. The Jack which is dependent on the aggregates and the thought which labels—a dependent arising—that exists. Jack is dependent on the aggregates, not only the body. If it were only the body, then when Jack’s body is in the coffin with flowers around, you wouldn’t say “Jack is there.” You say “Jack’s body,” you don’t call it “Jack.” The aggregates are the grouping of body and consciousness. Even though there is a body, if Jack’s consciousness has separated from it, it’s Jack’s body, it is not Jack. Now you have been seeing Jack for a long time. You labeled that particular person with that particular shape as “Jack” some time ago. It has become familiar to your mind, so you don’t examine each time when you see him. First you don’t see Jack; first you see the aggregates, then you label “Jack.” One who has understanding of the teachings on dependent arising and voidness would know this for our mind, whenever we see him, it is as if Jack exists from his own side according to the appearance. If we put how Jack appears to us into words: Jack is existing from his own side. There is no question of seeing Jack as merely labeled—we don’t even see Jack as labeled! There are many different levels hallucinations with respect to how Jack appears. When we look at Jack, even though we know that Jack is dependent on our mind labeling, still we believe that there is some existence from Jack’s side. At that time there is the appearance that there’s Jack existing from his own side only, without depending on my mind, without depending on thought labeling. That is one type of appearance. Then another is that Jack is existing without depending on the impression. Remember some days ago I asked that you meditate intensively, practice awareness on how everything that exists comes from the mind, comes from the impression that is planted on the past consciousness. It appears that there is Jack existing without dependence on my experience or impressions, and that there is Jack existing alone, without depending on the continuum of his aggregates. And then the more gross hallucinations; that Jack is permanent and not dependent on causes, and even not dependent on parts, or the group of aggregates—not dependent at all on the existence of the aggregates. These are very gross hallucinations. So there are many different levels of hallucination. That’s why there are four Buddhist schools or doctrines.

Out of the eighteen groups there is one particular school called *ni.ma poe.pa*. Those who follow this school are Buddhists. The first school’s view is deeper than that of this *ni.ma poe.pa* school. The first and second schools’ views are the same. The third, the “mind only” school’s right view—their views of voidness, or reality is a little more pure than the first and second schools. Within the fourth, the “middle way” school there are two divisions: Svatantrika and Prasangika. The Svatantrika view is more pure, more correct than that of the third school. The most correct, most pure, unmistakable, infallible right view of reality, or the absolute nature of the “I” and phenomena, as they actually exist, is that nothing has the slightest existence from its own side, but exists by being merely labeled. I and objects are empty of existing from their own side. Not only empty of existing only from their own side, but empty of existing from their own side at all. That is the meaning of “labeled” and “merely labeled.” “Labeled” cuts off the view that I and the aggregates and phenomena exist only from their own side. “Merely labeled” cuts off the view that I and phenomena exist from their own side at all, cuts off the view that something exists from its own side.

Even though we agree that I and things are labeled—that Jack is labeled by people who see him—at the same time there is something existing from their own side. When you look at Jack, do you agree that Jack is merely labeled?

Jack: I'm not here?

L.Z: Do you wish you were somewhere else? Do you wish to be nowhere?!

Jack: I would like to understand. This is very difficult to understand. Do I wish to be somewhere else?

L.Z: Do you wish to be somewhere else or do you wish to be nowhere? I'm just joking! But do you agree, when you see Jack, that he is labeled—everybody?

A.M: There seems to be something there. It's different from seeing an image of Jack with my eyes closed.

L.Z: When you see the image, you don't think it's labeled?

A.M: When I close my eyes and see an image of Jack it isn't labeled, the quality is there. I'm creating a memory of Jack's face. Then when I look at Jack, although I'm labeling qualities on to him, saying he has certain characteristics, but I still think that that's a different image than what I see when my eyes are closed.

L.Z: I see. But the point is this—even if you see an image of Jack, even when you are not physically seeing him with your eyes and you remember Jack, do you see that that it is labeled? But isn't it the same, don't you find that something exists from his own side, whether it's a memory or whether you actually see him?

A.M: When I see him? When I see him, whether his name is Jack or whatever, I know that that's a label, but that it's not only a label, but that it's a body, and I recognize it's impermanent because there's a time when Jack's body didn't exist and there's a time when Jack's body will not exist, but now he seems to exist. The thing that's being labeled exists.

L.Z: That's right. But my question is do you agree that Jack is labeled?

A.M: Yes.

L.Z: Do you agree that he is merely labeled?

A.M: Merely labeled? What does that mean? If I say "I'm merely labeled," what does that mean?

L.Z: Do you agree that he is merely labeled on his aggregates? Do you agree or not?

A.M: I'm not sure what that really means.

L.Z: O.K, okay If you don't know what it means, okay Do you agree that Jack is labeled? Even though you agree that he is labeled, do you still see that without there being some existence from Jack's side Jack cannot exist? Don't you feel this?

A.M: I think that there is something existing. The space ...

L.Z: There's something existing from its own side?

A.M: Yes, the air right around Jack's body is different, is different from the matter that is within that area. Whatever you want to call it, atoms or whatever, the space that Jack's body is occupying seems to be different from the space that's right around him. Whether I call the air the body or the body air is irrelevant, but there seems to be a difference.

L.Z: I think even though we agree one hundred percent that Jack is labeled by his parents, or when we see Jack, labeled by our mind, but we still think that there is some existence from his own side—that without some existence from his own side, Jack cannot exist at all. Do you feel that?

A.M: Yes, but I can call it the memory or image. I can close my eyes and see Jack.

L.Z: No, I'm just talking about when you see Jack.

A.M: There's something there.

L.Z: No, not just that something is there, but something from his own side—that Jack is labeled but that there is some existence from the side of Jack. There is nothing wrong with understanding that Jack is there. Jack is there!

A.M: But in terms of Buddhist philosophy there seems to be something incorrect about me thinking that there's an actual, independently existing quality or matter.

L.Z: So, I'm trying to come to a conclusion, okay?! So, you have agreed with "labeled"; okay, but now you see that there is something existing from its own side. For our mind, if there is no existence from Jack's own side, then he doesn't exist at all. That's the idea in our mind: Jack is not merely labeled—there should be some existence from his own side. We think there is some existence from its own side, not only that there should be, because that is how it appears to us. So in "merely labeled," the "merely" negates any existence from its own side—not only the Jack that is completely existent from his own side, but that he is existent from his own side at all.

Just concentrate. This way you may not understand much. If you get the idea through "dependent arising" clearly, then it makes sense that "merely" cuts off even what you believe exists from its own side. I have the example before. Now, just concentrate on this point, I will repeat the same thing: when you don't see the base clearly, you can't label "Jack," you can't decide. Once a base—the aggregates, the body with its characteristic shape—is clear, if you know that particular person is named "Jack," then you say, "It's Jack." That's all; there's nothing more to Jack's existence than that. There's nothing more than just the mere appearance of his particular figure and your thought labeling "Jack" on that. There's no more Jack than that existing. Do you get the idea?

A.M: If I see Jack's body in a coffin, I see the aggregates, and I recognize the aggregates as Jack, but I don't think he exists. For some reason when I see him now I think he exists with that body and mind, and if I see him in the coffin I don't think he...

L.Z: Do you believe he's Jack?

A.M: You don't label on his body, you label on his aggregates, and you cannot see the aggregates in the coffin because they are no longer together, complete. The aggregates are not the body, the aggregates are all the aggregates together...

L.Z: Yes, yes, good! What she is saying is this—Jack's body in the coffin is not Jack because consciousness is not there. That's what she is trying to tell you! Anyway, we won't talk about that subject, O.K?! Anyway, Jack's body isn't Jack; Jack's mind is not Jack. Even the mere group of aggregates is not Jack. Jack depends on being merely labeled on the group of aggregates. The point to concentrate on is this: when you see Jack's particular aggregates—the body associated with consciousness—clearly, then, as you are familiar with that particular shape as being Jack, you label "Jack"—"Oh, here's Jack coming." Jack exists by depending on the particular aggregates and your thought merely labeling on them; that's all. Because his body is coming near to you, you think, "Jack's coming." You are satisfied by that—as the body is coming, Jack is coming. That's all. Jack is nothing more than the thought merely labeling dependent on the base. There is no Jack which is something more than, something else than that. That's all there is to Jack's existence. That Jack is existing is satisfied by just seeing this mere appearance of the aggregates, nothing more than that. Now another example this is also good, since we have come to this point. Now just concentrate. Think of your own name, whatever it is. I will mention one name, but you should relate it to your own name while thinking of this other person's name. This might give you a little bit of an idea of subtle dependent arising. This way you might get a bit of an idea of what "merely labeled" or "only labeled" means.

(end of tape)

There's a person called Peter, okay? First of all think of your own name. Now, before Peter's base for labeling, his aggregates were actualized, even if there was a thought which labels "Peter," Peter did not exist. Similarly, before your present aggregates were actualized, either inside your mother's womb or outside, even if your parents had the thought to label whatever your name is, Thubten Zopa or whatever—you didn't exist. As Peter didn't exist, Jack or Jeff Nye, or whatever, didn't exist. Whatever the name—Robin or Linda or George, Ken or Uldis or whatever your name is, before these aggregates were actualized, even if there was a thought which labeled "Peter," "Jack"—all these—they did not exist at all. First of all, think of that: before these human aggregates are actualized, even if there is a thought which labels, Peter or whatever doesn't exist.

If there are the aggregates—the body associated with the consciousness—but there's no thought which labels "Peter" on that, Peter doesn't exist. Think: does Peter exist before the thought which labels on those aggregates? Relate it to yourself, whatever your name is. Even though there were aggregates, before the abbot gave the name "Thubten Zopa," Thubten Zopa didn't exist. Think about this in relation to yourself. Concentrate on this. Check deeply—not just intellectually suddenly saying, "Oh, how can it be possible without the thought labeling?" Think how it doesn't exist—even if there are aggregates but no thought labeling, there is no Thubten Zopa or Peter.

Now, think: the parents label on the actualized aggregates, checking in books to find the best name! Think that this minute they are going to label "Peter" on those aggregates. Before this should relate it to yourself. You should imagine that your parent are deciding right now what to call you. Maybe they asked many people or read books. They are going to label in the next minute! At this minute Peter or Jack or whatever does not exist. Now, the next minute comes and the parents decided, "We are going to call him Peter." That's all—that's how Peter or Jack or Thubten Zopa exist. Relate it to your own name. When you think about this, is there Peter existing from his own side? Now you understand: the parents label on those aggregates after checking books and so on. Don't you feel now that Peter is merely labeled? Relate it to your own name.

A.M: Peter is a name.

L.Z: Peter is a name. Peter is not a person? Is Peter a word?

A.M: I think a name.

L.Z: What's your name? Ubdesh Singh? okay Ubdesh Singh, do you know dal bhat? (Nepalese food). Is dal bhat a word?

A.M: Dinner, lunch, breakfast!

L.Z: Dinner, lunch, breakfast are words? Is dal bhat a word? Isn't dal bhat a name? Coffee, chocolate—are they names?

A.M: I don't know; my English is not so good!

L.Z: Your English is perfect! That's my question—is lunch a word? Is coffee a word? Then my question would be: "Are we eating a name?" That's a word, so when we eat lunch we eat a name! You see, Ubdesh Singh, Peter is not a name. The word "Peter" is a name, but Peter is not a name. If we say this person is only a name, that's a mistake. There is a difference. When you don't concentrate on the words, you might think that you are speaking correctly. I heard somebody say in some lectures, I think in Delhi, at a conference, "It's only a name." "Only labeled," is correct. That it is "only a name" is not right. You see, when you don't think about the words it seems correct, but "it's only labeled" is correct. If you say "Peter is only a name," then Peter wouldn't be a living being.

Do you understand the point?

There are the aggregates, the parents agree and label “Peter,” so there is Peter. You should concentrate on that point. Now you can see that nothing exists from its own side. There is not the slightest existence from the side of Peter. Peter exists only by being labeled. If you understand that, you should relate it to the “I”—oneself. Then you are able to recognize the infallibly right object of refutation—that which is existing from its own side. Then it only takes a second to recognize the right view, that the “I” is empty of existence from its own side. Then you see clearly, and there is the definite understanding of how “I” exists by being merely labeled. Definite, unshakable realization comes. Then you have a weapon like an atom bomb to destroy the root of samsara. Okay?

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG...

## LECTURE 14

November 24 am

There is no object, no existence that Chenrezig’s omniscient mind does not cover. There is no existence that is not the object of Chenrezig’s knowledge, or an object of Chenrezig’s understanding.

Just to give an ordinary example: on this earth some people have great knowledge and understand ten or fifteen languages. They have studied various subjects and know all the different religions in the world. Whether something is right or whether it is wrong, it is different peoples’ concepts. Whether these things really exist as they believe or whether the things do not exist as they believe, there are all the different beliefs. Some people have traveled everywhere, especially where other tourists cannot go! Places which are called secret, places which are difficult for other Western people to go to! They know the histories of each country. There are some who know a lot; there are some who don’t know even one language well! I don’t know even the Tibetan language well, you know! To understand all the Tibetan language you have to understand the whole Dharma. Some people can remember so much, some remember very little. You see, there are different capabilities of mind on this earth, just talking about ordinary people. Some have great intelligence, can remember every topic, can remember everything they study. There are some who can remember very little. Besides common knowledge—such as understanding biology, science, history, geography, this and that, the common knowledge that is taught in universities, schools or colleges—some people have higher knowledge which common people do not have—such as clairvoyance, being able to remember the past, to see the future—which is not as common as that other knowledge. Even clairvoyance has different levels. There is very limited clairvoyance and there is very deep, profound clairvoyance, being able to see much further, even past lives or far into the future for many lifetimes, or the ability to see very distant objects, or being able to read very distant people’s minds, even as far as from here to the West! They have different levels of power and understanding. Particularly, by generating the path which eliminates the unsubdued mind’s obscurations, powers such as the incredible psychic powers and clairvoyance that arhats have are achieved. They can make even huge rocky mountains small like atoms.

One arhat, called Nerbe, I think, was giving teachings. Some maras, evil doers saw that if he revealed teachings many of the disciples would realize the true path. The evil doers, because of their negative nature, always disturbed the sentient beings trying to accumulate merit and increase their virtue. They came to disturb while he was giving teachings. They caused rainfalls of food while the arhat was giving teachings! I am not sure what kind of food - I don’t remember whether it was hamburger

or cheese! I don't remember exactly, maybe the arhat transformed it into the form of flowers. Some evil doers came in the form of very beautiful girls and danced while he was giving teachings. The arhat transformed their bodies so they appeared completely ugly and no longer were a distraction. Higher bodhisattvas are incredibly greater in psychic powers and have greater understanding than that. Such as the bodhisattvas of the ten bhumis, who have immeasurable qualities. With ordinary clairvoyance one can see the past and future of this life, and the earlier and later lives of other people. Through mantra, through the power of materials, one can achieve ordinary clairvoyance which can predict the length of lives or see past and future lives of other people, whether a person will recover from a disease or what needs to be done for a disease or things like that. Their clairvoyance is deeper and much more reliable through their having achieved tranquil abiding, samatha meditation, which has nine stages. And that is without having realized Shunyata, without having renunciation of samsara, without having entered the path. By developing bodhicitta and the wisdom realizing voidness, which is the direct remedy, the different levels of obscurations are ceased, the understanding gets more and more developed, supported by the accumulation of much merit through the practice of bodhicitta. Like this one is able to accomplish the all understanding omniscient mind.

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There's nothing Chenrezig's omniscient mind does not see. Everything, all existence is covered by Chenrezig's omniscient mind. So, there is Chenrezig above your own crown. There is Chenrezig wherever you are: in your room, at your altar, in front of you, above your head. How is that? For example, we see Katmandu or we see Boudha from here. We are not there, we are here in Kopan, but we see Boudha. We can't compare our own experience to the Buddhas. You see, our aggregates come from an impure cause: karma and disturbing thoughts and from ignorance, which we were talking about last night: the ignorance not understanding that the "I" is existing by being merely labeled. Among the ignorances this one is the very root of samsara.

Each of the six consciousnesses is defined. These are the very first subjects that these young boys here study; the very first things they debate and memorize. The sound "Peter" is a name, but Peter is not a name. If Peter is a name, then Peter has to be a sound. Peter would be only an object of the ear consciousness! That's just to clarify a little bit.

The point is this: our aggregates come from karma and the disturbing thoughts and ignorance. Being ignorant is not understanding that the "I" is existing by being merely labeled on the aggregates and thinking that there is existence from its own side. These aggregates, this samsara, are created by, or caused by, our own disturbing thoughts and karma. This samsara continues to the next life and one again experiences the suffering of birth, death, etcetera. It's continuous except if we are able to eliminate the seed of the disturbing thoughts in this life. If we can realize the true path, directly perceiving Shunyata, or emptiness, then the samsara will not circle to the next life. If we can't make it to this stage we have to continue in samsara and our aggregates will continue circling to the next life. On and on, like this. On and on, continuously suffering in samsara. All of the problems of the six realms over and over. It says in the teachings, "For the one who sees the truth, there's no throwing karma. One doesn't accumulate new karma to cause one to circle in samsara." Therefore, it is extremely important to practice Dharma: to develop the thought of renunciation of samsara, which is the door of liberation. Our aggregates are so bound, contaminated by the seed of disturbing thoughts, and are caused by karma and disturbing thoughts. The arhats have achieved Nirvana, the complete cessation of the true cause of suffering and true suffering. Buddhas, having

completely ceased all the obscurations, do not have a gross body. You see, even the subtle obscurations, the subtle dual view, are completely purified, especially by the tantra path, particularly by the second stage, that of accomplishment. Buddhas don't have a gross body but they have a subtle body.

Even now we have a gross body and subtle body, and gross consciousness and subtle consciousness. What are the subtle consciousness and subtle body? The subtle wind is the vehicle of the subtle consciousness. The subtle wind is the subtle body. At the moment we have this but it's not pure. It's completely polluted like a filthy cloth, like the night time - no moon, no stars, completely foggy, completely obscured and polluted. The graduated path, from guru devotion to enlightenment - the fundamental lamrim path: the three principle paths and the tantra path especially the stage of accomplishment - is actually the thing which does the work of purifying. As I mentioned before, it's the second stage, that of accomplishment, the tantra mahamudra realization. I'm not going to clarify what that is.

There's no need to clarify the particular points of tantra, especially to reveal Maha-anuttara yoga tantra. Without the listener having faith in tantra and faith in karma, without his mind being ripe and ready, without him having received the initiation, the one who reveals it receives the vice of breaking a Vajrayana vow. Also, sometimes it is of no benefit. Certain things instead of helping, cause the listener to have bad thoughts. Because his mind is not ready to understand, to hear, it could create bad ideas about tantra practice. Instead of faith to practice arising, wrong ideas and heresy arise. Through the second stage - that of accomplishment, the tantra Mahamudra realization - one reaches the tantra stage of clear light. Through this, one is able to achieve the illusory body. Then, by developing the clear light of meaning, wisdom directly seeing voidness, and the pure illusory body, (the previous one was impure) the path of unification is achieved. The illusory body is related to subtle body. If we practice tantra in this life on the basis of lamrim we will achieve the illusory body and the clear light. That is the continuation of the present subtle body.

People in the West like to talk so much about astral trips! When we achieve these tantra stages of the impure illusory body, the clear light, the pure illusory body and the clear light of meaning, we can really do these astral trips! Then we achieve the path of unification: unified clear light and illusory body. By developing this path of unification of clear light and illusory body, the subtle dual view completely ceases and the subtle obscurations are completely ceased. Then one has achieved the unified state of no-more learning, the Vajradhara state. Then one has achieved the unified Chenrezig state.

The clear light—the subtle mind—and the illusory body—the pure and impure subtle wind or subtle body—is the graduated path which leads to the Buddha's or Chenrezig's unification of holy mind and holy body, to the unified state of no-more-learning which is completely pure, unstained even by subtle obscurations. You should not think of the holy body as being gross like our body which is contaminated by disturbing thoughts. What I'm saying is that our polluted and obscured body and mind shouldn't be thought of as similar to a Buddha's.

This is to give you some idea, don't you sometimes feel like this: even though you're sleeping at Kopan, your body of flesh and bone is in bed inside a sleeping bag, yet there's a very strong feeling that you are in America? Sometimes it is so strong, as if it is real, as if you have gone to some new place where you haven't been before. Your mind is not just consciousness going without a body, but it is a body not having resistance and able to go very far, like, to America, seeing many fearful or

amazing things like in a dream. Even now, while we are not free but polluted with the three poisonous minds and the two obscurations, the subtle consciousness and subtle body are together, during dreams and ordinary times.

When we become enlightened, the vehicle of subtle consciousness - the subtle mind - and the subtle consciousness are together. The difference is that now they are completely obscured by the two obscurations.

When we are enlightened the subtle mind and subtle body are completely free of the two obscurations. So then there's no gross body such as we have now, which we are bound to by karma and disturbing thoughts. One example is: in a dream you think that it is your experience that you go very far, but the great practitioners of tantra can actually go to the pure realms. It might help a little bit if you think about going very far in your dreams and experiencing either something very enjoyable or very fearful. Some people have dreamed that they go to the narak and suffered so much. The person might have slept for several hours, but in the dream he experiences burning hot iron ground or a hell having a ground of swords wherever he steps as incredibly, so unbelievably real. Before that experience they didn't have feeling or faith about the narak. The story I'm telling is about one Tibetan - I don't know for sure if he's a monk or not. After he had a very real, very vivid dream experiencing incredible fear of the suffering of a narak being, he got unbelievable faith in karma. He said the narak really exists.

So you see, the holy mind and the holy body of subtle wind are unified, inseparable. As they are unified while we are ordinary beings, so they are unified when we become enlightened. The difference is that they become completely purified, even of subtle obscurations. If you got some idea from what I mentioned in the example, you will understand that wherever there is a Buddha's holy mind, it's unified with the vehicle, the holy body. There is no object that the Buddha's or Chenrezig's omniscient mind doesn't cover. Whatever object the omniscient mind sees, the subtle mind is there, the subtle mind is on that object. So you see, there is the subtle consciousness of Chenrezig on our crown wherever we are. Or, it is in front of us all the time. In our heart, in our palm, on our head, at the altar. There's always the subtle mind, and as it is unified, so there is the holy body, the vehicle, there.

So, it's not like when we look from this mountain towards Boudha or Katmandu. We see Boudha, but we are not there. For us it cannot be the object of understanding, as we are not free from obscuration.

(end of tape)

We don't have freedom to be there. We cannot compare our limited experience, limited power, limited understanding, to the buddhas'. That would only block the development of our Dharma understanding. It only blocks the achievement of enlightenment and the understanding of the inconceivable qualities of the buddhas. The subtle wind, the holy body of Chenrezig, and the consciousness, is there. Chenrezig is there, only our mind is so obscured that we cannot see Him. I didn't mean to speak like this; it just happened, without freedom! I meant to recite mantra and to talk of karma!

Being able to see the buddhas is dependent on purification. Just taking one example, Kadampa Geshe Cha.yur.wa. Those geshe had achievement of bodhicitta. Their minds had approached a very

high tantra path but they never showed outside that they were tantric practitioners with great attainment. On the outside they looked like very simple monks who don't know anything, who are very foolish, living an ascetic life. They were the holders of Lama Atisha's teachings. After Lama Atisha came to Tibet, they heard teachings and studied and practiced the graduated path to enlightenment. The Kadampa geshe called Cha.yur.wa used to offer service to his guru, the Kadampa geshe Tha.long.pa. He was so obedient, offering incredibly good service, so Tha.long.pa offered Cha.yur.wa to his guru, whose name I don't remember. Cha.yur.wa correctly did the practice in relation to the guru, offering much service such as cleaning the rooms every day and doing whatever needed to be done. Even if he was offering a mandala or doing meditation on lamrim, if his guru called, he stopped immediately and went to offer service. So, every day he cleaned the room, taking all the garbage in the room onto his robe then taking it outside. In Tibet there were no vacuum cleaners! One day he was doing the guru practice correctly, with thought and action, as it's explained in the lamrim, as he was going down I guess the house had two stories - carrying the garbage, and he reached the third step, he suddenly saw many Buddhas in nirmanakaya aspect. Normally, there was nothing to be seen in the house.

Maybe you have read the biography of the great pandit and yogi Naropa? Likewise, the Guru Marpa purified all the negative karmas that Milarepa had. Milarepa was given the job of building a nine storied house three times. He had to build it up then destroy it and put the stones back where they were before, then again built it. There were no porters! Marpa made him build it by himself. Milarepa's back was completely worn from carrying the stones. It was wounded and turned completely blue, with toughened skin. This was to purify all the obstacles to generating the path to enlightenment: the karmas that Milarepa had accumulated during past lives and during that life by practicing black magic. He killed thirty people and some animals by black magic during a marriage party happening at his uncle's place.

Similarly with Tilopa. I'm not going to start from the beginning of these stories! Maybe there are books people can read if they want to hear more stories about those great yogis Marpa, Milarepa and Naropa, and how they correctly practiced with respect to the guru; how they performed great purification; how they practiced Dharma. This you can understand from the biographies. Tilopa led Naropa through twelve small hardships, like putting Naropa in fire—putting firewood all around him and burning him. Tilopa made Naropa jump off a roof onto the ground. He asked Naropa to steal a family's food while it was cooking and bring it; the people saw Naropa and beat him very much. Then, also, a princess was getting married ... I don't remember the story exactly. She was being taken in a carriage to her wedding. I think there were policemen or body guards around her. Tilopa asked Naropa to grab her and fondle her breasts. Naropa went without hesitation, as he was correctly doing the practice with thought and action as explained in the lamrim. He grabbed the princess and fondled her breasts. The police beat him so much that he almost died! He didn't die but it almost came to that! Many times it almost came to his death through such things as being burnt in the fire. Somehow, due to the blessing of Tilopa, I think, although he was completely burnt in the fire he suddenly recovered. He jumped off the roof, got very badly hurt, but suddenly recovered due to the blessing of Tilopa. Tilopa was actually Buddha Vajradhara, having found the unified state of Vajradhara, but in the aspect of what ordinary people saw as an old, very simple Indian man, nothing special.

Earlier, Naropa used to think, "I'm a great pandita. I know all the Buddhist teachings, both sutra and tantra; there are no teachings which I don't know." He appeared to have a little bit of pride. One night in a dream dakinis showed him many teachings which he had not seen - many texts, I

think, on tantra. The dakinis advised Naropa to go to see Tilopa. He went to the place where Tilopa was supposed to be. Although Tilopa was a great yogi, very famous, he looked like an ordinary person, nothing particular. Not shining or having a long beard or being well dressed, just very simple, ordinary, like anyone seen in the streets or working in the fields; wearing a simple cloth. He didn't know whether to believe that it was Tilopa or not. He couldn't tell from the outside appearance as it didn't fit his reputation. He was roasting live little fish in a fire and eating them. The actions appeared kind-of non-virtuous, so Naropa thought maybe he's not Tilopa because he's behaving like this. Although Tilopa was doing non-virtuous actions, still Naropa continuously followed him. He didn't give up following Tilopa and checking if it was really Tilopa or not. When Naropa asked Tilopa, "Are you Tilopa?," sometimes Tilopa answered by moving his hand to say, "Yes." Sometimes when Naropa asked "Are you Tilopa?" he answered by shaking his head. When Naropa had more faith then Tilopa said that he is Tilopa. When Naropa saw Tilopa's actions as non-virtuous and thought, "Maybe this is not Tilopa," his faith decreasing a little, and he asked, "Are you Tilopa," Tilopa shook his head. Tilopa answered according to Naropa's mind.

Likewise, if one practices with pure view, one sees the guru like that. If one looks at the guru with impure view one sees him as impure—whichever way the mind is more trained or more habituated. The conclusion is this: Tilopa obliged Naropa to experience twelve small hardships and twelve great hardships. Many times it came to the point of dying, but Naropa didn't die due to the blessings of Tilopa. He immediately recovered from the injuries, whatever they were. So, after all this, Naropa continuously followed Tilopa, even though he gave him so much hardship and never gave teachings for many years. Then one day they stopped on some sandy ground. Naropa was always following behind although he was given so much hardship. Tilopa asked, "What is it that you want?" Naropa answered that he wanted teachings. Tilopa asked Naropa to offer a mandala. There was no water at that sandy place so Naropa made pee-pee, mixed it with sand and offered it to Tilopa as the mandala offering. Tilopa suddenly threw this sand mixed with pee-pee into Naropa's face and asked Naropa to look into space. Naropa saw a Hevajra deity with complete mandala. Tilopa had transformed it in space. Then he initiated Naropa because he could see it was the right time for Naropa. All the obstacles were purified, so Tilopa transformed the mandala and Naropa could see it.

One or two years ago, one old mother who came from Tibet and lives in Katmandu was making pilgrimage to Nalanda, where there were many thousands of panditas such as Chandrakirti and Nagarjuna. Now there are only a few small ruins such as a small meditation room. It has been completely destroyed; only a few piles of stones could be seen. When this old mother was making pilgrimage to where there used to be a Buddha statue before, but now there is only a platform, she saw Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, life-sized, for one or two minutes. Afterwards it disappeared. She is unbelievably devoted. She has daughters in Tibet who are regarded as dakinis. Sometimes, when she was taking teachings from His Holiness the Dalai Lama, she could see Guru Shakyamuni Buddha in her hand.

This morning the conclusion is this: Chenrezig's omniscient mind, Chenrezig's compassion, sees us all the time. Chenrezig is always above one's crown or in front of oneself wherever one is. The problem is that from our side we don't see Him because of obscurations. The mind is so polluted by karma and disturbing thoughts. Those who have thin obscurations, who have done great purification, can see Him. So, if you practice like those great yogis, if you do as explained in the lamrim; if you accumulate much merit; if you do powerful purification for a long time as those great yogis the Kadampa Geshes did, you can meet buddhas in nirmanakaya aspect and hear teachings directly from them. As we become higher bodhisattvas we see the buddhas in sambhogakaya aspect.

When all the subtle obscurations and subtle dual view are purified, you will actually meet the guru Buddha mentally. When the subtle dual view is purified and you achieve dharmakaya, you meet the absolute guru buddha mentally.

So, I think I will stop here. This morning we didn't even get to recite the mantra! There's no time to explain all these things, but traditionally, according to the lineage lamas, before they give lamrim teachings, preparations, purification practices and accumulation of merit are done. They start with refuge, then the disciples prostrate. The guru prostrates before getting on the throne, visualizing all the merit field, the lineage lamas of the path. There are many practices to stop negative karma from the side of both disciple and guru. There are many preparations to do before the teachings are given, to create the cause to understand, to generate the path, to stop the obstacles. It didn't get done exactly that way this time. In the past courses we tried to do it this way, as much as possible doing those various practices such as the mandala offering, the seven limb practice, refuge, then making prayers on the complete path every morning. This time it's much shorter, almost nothing, no prayers. So it didn't happen exactly according to the lineage lamas' way of doing it. Those practices have great purpose. There is a whole way of doing each of the practices from the start to the end of the session. However, the main thing is to subdue the mind. So I just talk whatever comes to my mind.

(end of tape)

Not all the Western people can do the same as the Tibetans, or somebody who already has faith in karma and reincarnation and has refuge in the mind. The main thing is to subdue the mind, to benefit the mind with the teaching. I won't follow the text much, with the hope that whatever comes in the time might benefit. Probably there might be some purpose why those particular thoughts come. That's all. Thank you.

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG RINPOCHE...

It means, "May I quickly achieve the Great Compassionate One's enlightenment and lead each and every sentient being to the Great Compassionate One's enlightenment rapidly."

LECTURE 15  
November 24 pm

"At any rate I must achieve the state of omniscient mind for the benefit of all the kind mother sentient beings, therefore I am going to listen to the teachings of the graduated path to enlightenment."

I left out some words from Lama Tsong Khapa's teaching regarding the result of heresy. There is also, I think, not having the opportunity to practice Dharma in order to be freed from samsara. Even when one is born as a human being, not having a guide when one has problems; not finding anyone to protect one from danger and problems. The third one is not having refuge to dispel, to prevent the true cause of the suffering: the disturbing thoughts come and one does not have refuge to prevent this, the true cause of the sufferings.

I think the first one makes great sense—not finding the circumstances or opportunities to practice Dharma in order to be freed from samsara. Not meeting the virtuous friend who reveals the teachings to liberate one from suffering. Even if one meets the virtuous friend one has difficulty

receiving teachings. There are many conditions which need to be gathered, including a means of living—I think without that, one cannot practice. Also health: if one is sick, one cannot practice. Then, on to that we can add passport! We cannot do without that! Even if there is a lama, the perfect guide, a virtuous friend who reveals the complete, infallible teachings, the complete path to liberate oneself from samsara, there are many other obstacles. One cannot receive teachings and cannot practice. Not only these things, but there are many other obstacles which I don't need to mention. Even when one is born in the upper realms, one is guideless. No one helps.

Then, the third one, not having refuge. Understanding Dharma but not having refuge in Dharma practice which separates one from all the disturbing thoughts, the true cause of suffering. Not having this refuge causes so many problems. There is a lack of bodhicitta, a lack of shunyata realization. Just talking about refuge in the lamrim, the fundamental graduated path to enlightenment: renunciation is the actual refuge and these two realizations are the fruits. The actual Dharma refuge is the true path and true cessation of suffering. It means not having this Dharma refuge, the renunciation of samsara. Also, not having refuge in moral conduct: not living in the practice of the ten virtues or keeping the five, the eight, the thirty-six or the two hundred and fifty precepts. Those things are moral conduct. Not having the refuge of abstaining from negative karma. Not having the refuge of concentration and samatha and penetrative insight. So it is difficult to prevent the true cause of suffering. Even though the life is transferred from a lower realm to the human realm, so many problems are created and experienced. Lack of Dharma refuge is not removing or preventing the true cause of suffering. In Lama Tsong Khapa's root lamrim text are only the words, "Not having circumstances; not having a guide; not having refuge." That's all—I think the meaning might be what I just said.

First of all the mind should see the shortcomings of non-virtuous actions—how they cause suffering results. Instead of seeing non-virtuous actions as a kind of quality, seeing them as a mistake. Then comes the attempt to abstain from the non-virtuous actions, and then making a complete determination to abstain from the non-virtuous actions. Virtue is to make a complete determination to practice the three virtues and are connected with the body, the four virtues of speech and the three virtues of mind as I described at the beginning.

Each of these ten has the completion of virtuous actions—each of them has four good results. Through doing the opposite to the non-virtuous action of killing, one will experience the opposite to the four suffering results. The opposite is all the good results—that which we want, which we are longing for. There are four results for each of these virtuous actions that are opposite to the four suffering results of each of the non-virtuous actions. We should know and meditate on not only the non-virtuous and the four suffering results, but also that each virtuous action has four good results. Virtuous actions should be generated like this: firstly seeing the non-virtuous actions as mistakes, the cause of suffering; then, because of that, attempting to abstain from the non-virtuous actions. Make a complete determination to abstain from non-virtuous actions. Make a vow in front of your actual living guru or in front of an altar or statue of Buddha. At least think of Buddha and make the vow, the determination. You see, if a person makes a vow to not kill he actually practices the virtue of abstaining from killing, from then until death. It depends on whether the vow is for one day, seven days, one month or until death time. If these ten virtuous actions are practiced for one day, each has four good results.

Taking vows such as the eight Mahayana precepts purifies the negative karma and restores and increases merit. To talk of these four good results is only talking about temporal happiness, but also

they become the cause of each quality of Buddha. For details there might be some notes about how each precept becomes a cause of each quality of a Buddha for the benefit of sentient beings. If even just one vow—to practice the virtuous action of non killing from now until the end of one's life—is made, then continuously there is good karma created, even if one is sleeping, unconscious, or working, or eating. The cause of happiness for many lifetimes, not just for one life, is continuously created. Karma is expandable, so the result is not just happiness in one life, but for many lives. There is a big difference between having made a vow and not having made a vow in front of a holy object. A person not actually killing doesn't mean the person is always practicing the virtue of non-killing. The person who hasn't made a vow doesn't have that merit, that profit, the whole time. For example, the armless or those not having legs don't kill even if they live for a hundred years. How can they kill? I'm just giving you an idea, you know! Since there's no determination, since a vow not to harm others is not taken in front of a holy object, there's no merit, even if they live for a hundred years. There isn't the virtue of renouncing the non-virtuous action of killing. It has to come through mental determination. So you see, there is a big difference. Merely not actually killing because there didn't arise the condition to kill, doesn't mean the person is practicing virtue.

Karma is definite. You see, it's extremely important to get a definite, stable understanding of this. Then it's easy to gain a stable, definite understanding that it's expandable, that without a cause the result cannot be experienced and that the karma that has been created doesn't get lost.

It is said in the lamrim teachings, in the outline of the meditation on karma, "Action and result is the root of all happiness and goodness." That is regarded as extremely important. Lama Tsong Khapa said, "It's extremely important to find the stable, definite understanding of action and result, which is the root of all happiness and goodness. Without finding faith in karma one cannot find refuge. One doesn't think of the future lives. One can't make preparations for the happiness of future lives. Also one doesn't practice Dharma in order to be free from samsara. One doesn't fear samsara and one doesn't try to liberate oneself from samsara. If one doesn't understand karma, doesn't have faith, one doesn't protect karma and also doesn't correctly do the practice of devotion to the guru. That means one cannot achieve enlightenment and thus cannot do the perfect extensive work for others. The two fundamental Dharma practices of refuge and karma are regarded as extremely important.

Just talking further, even if one does not think of past and future lives or liberation from samsara, but is thinking to benefit others, one has got to protect karma. If one doesn't protect karma, one gives harm to others. If one gives harm to others, that's not benefiting them! So, one's mind making the determination to stop harming others is protecting karma. In order to benefit the health and happiness of others, to bring peace to the world, the essential thing is to protect karma. The Buddha said, "If there's no faith in karma there is no way to have pure refuge in the mind. Without refuge there's no foundation for the levels of moral conduct, the vows or ordinations." There's no foundation for the eight Mahayana precepts; for five upasika precepts or even for one, two or three or four of them; the eight pratimoksha precepts; the thirty-six or two hundred and fifty-three precepts; or the bikshuni precepts, because they are all based on refuge. Without refuge, the practice of moral conduct by taking ordination cannot happen.

"Buddhist" does not mean somebody who can speak about the Dharma very well, even all the sutra and tantra teachings. Some people might know this story of Du.hle.jin who always competed with and tried to harm Guru Shakyamuni Buddha by throwing rocks and so on. I don't remember

exactly, but he could say by heart as many texts as fifteen, or five thousand or something, elephants can carry! That is amazing. So, you see, just being able to speak well, or having a shaved head or wearing robes does not mean a person is Buddhist, or “inner being.” It’s defined not by how one looks outside, but by whether there’s refuge in the mind of the person or not

(end of tape)

By planting beans in the field you can’t get papaya. Do you know papaya? O.K. By planting papaya seeds you can’t get beans—it’s separate. If you plant papaya seeds you get papaya. By planting beans you got beans. It brings its own result, not something else. So, if there’s a chili plant growing and you plant raisins and sweet things around it, or if you put honey or sugar there, still the chili cannot become sweet. When one eats it, it is hot. Because you planted the seed of chili, the result is hot. It’s the same thing if you plant raisins or whatever and put chilies around it—the raisins won’t have the burning taste of chili. If what you plant is sweet, it brings its result of a sweet fruit.

So, accumulating non-virtue brings its own result of suffering, and accumulating virtue brings its own result of happiness. As Guru Shakyamuni Buddha said in the sutra teachings, “Whatever action was done, a similar result will arise.” It will not be mixed. Even though there are so many non-virtuous karmas accumulated, they will not get mixed. Happiness coming from non-virtue or suffering results being experienced from virtue does not happen. Karma is definite to bring its own result.

Buddha explained one story about this. One person had a good, sweet voice. In one of his past lives he was a worker. I don’t remember the name of the king exactly, but the king was building a stupa and this person was one of the laborers carrying the stones, or whatever. He had bad thoughts in regard to the stupa, thinking, “The stupa is so big. Why? It will never be finished. Why should he build such a big stupa?” Later on, the stupa was completed and then he felt very sad and repentant about the bad thoughts he had had before. So he made an offering to the stupa of one very sweet-sounding bell. Because of that karma, in his next life he was born with an incredibly ugly body. No one desired to see him. I think maybe it was a her, not him! When she sang, her voice was incredible—so charming, so attractive, so unbelievably sweet. But her body was terribly ugly. Her name was Nyempa.Sang.Den—“having a good sweet sound.” Having such a terribly ugly body was because of the karma that he had created by criticizing the stupa. She had an incredibly sweet voice because of the karma that during the same life he offered a sweet-sounding bell to the stupa. Like this, you see, it’s not mixed.

The results are experienced separately. Even small pleasures such as when you feel very hot, and cool air blows; or even having a nice dream after which your mind is happy and comfortable, are from virtue. Even small discomforts, such as being terrified in a fearful dream and your mind feeling a little bit uncomfortable after you wake up; even the little bit of discomfort when we sit on a cushion or a bed, come from non-virtue.

There are many ordinary narak beings that one can see sometimes in the forest or inside water or in deserts. They can be like a pillar or a broom or long, thin leather things, like something to bind a load. They can have various forms like this, or like a wall. In the teachings Buddha has explained the causes for some of these. As there were various-shaped animals the disciples asked Guru Shakyamuni Buddha why. Then Guru Shakyamuni explained the causes of those ordinary narak beings. Some are like walls. I think maybe in a monastery the person attended teachings or pujas

with a disrespectful mind or had negative, disturbing thoughts. Perhaps the person was lying against the wall during pujas or teachings, things like that. Then the person is born as an ordinary narak being having a body like a wall. Then, I think a broom or something belonging to a monastery or the Sangha was not returned back or was used without permission, or something like that—that being reborn as an ordinary narak being with a body in the form of a broom. Then the strings, with some parts fat and some parts thin—it was explained that one person in his past life was the manager of a monastery and he didn't give to the monks all the offerings that were given by people. During the summer retreat times the monks stay inside and they don't go out for alms, and he didn't give the offerings he was supposed to give them. After he died he was born as an ordinary narak with a body like string.

His Holiness Serkong Rinpoche is one of my unbearably kind gurus who always gave so much advice about practices, who practiced so much and who this year passed away when I was in Italy. He was also His Holiness the Dalai Lama's guru. Rinpoche told me that in Tibet he saw this. One of the monks from that monastery who used to travel sometimes to distant places was preparing to travel. The leather thong for tying the luggage had become very dry because he had not used it for a long time. He put it in the water stream for seven days so that it would become soft and could be used to bind things. When he went back after seven days it had become an animal. There was a ring at the end of the leather which was in the mouth of the animal. So he couldn't use it!

Perhaps a person who makes business has theoretically very good plans, but when he puts them into action it doesn't work. The business people would know! His experience is an explanation of his own karma to himself. No matter how intelligent he is, thinking up plans to make money that other people cannot easily think of, when it's put into practice it turns out completely opposite. He doesn't make any profit, but gets a loss. People make some plans, "It should be like this," but it turns out completely the other way round. All this is a very good illustration of the four outlines of karma. Not having a profit that time shows that karma is definite. He has created the cause to be unsuccessful through covetousness or ill-will or whatever. He didn't do anything to eliminate the cause, that non-virtuous action which has the result of non-success, so it's definite that he will experience the result of non-success. He hasn't created the cause to have a profit at that time; that explains that without having the cause, the result is not experienced. He didn't do anything to change the cause, the non-virtue which brings the result of non-success, so it's not lost. Also, the non-virtuous action is expandable so not just one time but many times there is non-success.

It is similar with disease. Disease comes from non-virtuous actions. I think I mentioned this many times when I was talking about the results of non-virtuous actions. Receiving the wrong medicine and getting worse is the result of non-virtuous actions. Receiving the right medicine and recovering it from a separate cause—virtue. A person having a disease and even though there is medicine for this disease, never recovering, is because of a very strong non-virtuous action. Karma is definite and expandable, so he gets sick many times and in many lifetimes. Even in this life, although taking so many medicines one after another, because of not having created the cause, he doesn't experience the result. The cause doesn't get lost and because the person didn't do any purification of the non-virtuous action, the cause of the disease—cancer, heart attack, all those fearful things—so it's definite to bring the result. Nothing was done before the result was experienced, so when he starts to actually experience the result of very heavy karma normal things don't help. Even if puja is done or mantra is recited, it doesn't do anything. Neither doctors nor anybody else can help. The person may be sick for years and years. He may die after being tortured by sickness for years and years.

When the actual result comes it's very difficult to practice Dharma. Before the result ripens one should hear and read the teachings on karma taught by Buddha, then practice the profound methods of accumulating merit and purifying. If one does not do anything, doesn't do any purification when there's the opportunity to practice Dharma, when the result comes it's very difficult. After meditating on the fact that karma is definite to bring its own result, you should make a determination, a conclusion, otherwise it doesn't make much sense. Why do we meditate on karma? It doesn't make much sense if we don't make a conclusion. Then it's something just to keep us in fear. It would be like just knowing the evolution of some existence or other. However, when you think how karma is definite to bring its own result—virtuous action is definite to bring its own result of temporal and ultimate happiness and non-virtuous action is definite to bring its own result of suffering—you should decide, "I will purify non-virtuous actions that I have accumulated in the past, and I will abstain from non-virtuous actions and practice virtuous actions." You should make such a conclusion or determination about what to do. I think I will stop here.

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG RINPOCHE...

LECTURE 16  
MAHAYANA ORDINATION  
November 26

GURU IS BUDDHA, GURU IS DHARMA, GURU IS SANGHA ALSO; GURU IS THE  
CREATOR OF ALL HAPPINESS.

You might find this a little strange, especially this last part. It might seem very strange after I spoke for one or two days saying that there's no separate creator, then suddenly finding here that there is a creator! This has a very deep explanation. This can actually be understood from the explanation of refuge if it is given, based on the outlines of lamrim where it talks about a Buddha's different qualities and different actions—action possessed by a Buddha himself and a Buddha's actions in the minds of the sentient beings. The virtue which sentient beings accumulate is the action of Buddha. There are two actions: one that is possessed by Buddha himself and one generated in the minds of the sentient beings. It also means that the creator is Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, all three. The thing to concentrate on when you recite is this: the Absolute Guru, the Dharmakaya, the holy mind of all the Buddhas, the fully enlightened beings; then there will be less confusion.

GURU IS BUDDHA, GURU IS DHARMA, GURU IS SANGHA ALSO; GURU IS THE  
CREATOR OF ALL HAPPINESS. TO ALL GURUS I GO FOR REFUGE.

The last time we will chant it in Tibetan as we have been doing normally during courses.

LA.MA SANG.GYE...

Generating bodhicitta.

I WILL GENERATE THE ENLIGHTENMENT THOUGHT IN ORDER TO OBTAIN  
SUCCESS FOR MYSELF AND THE ALL OTHER LIVING BEINGS.

DAG.DANG ZHA.DOEN...

Purifying the place.

MAY ALL THE REALMS WHERE SENTIENT BEINGS ARE BE PURIFIED AND DEVOID OF THORNS AND IMPURE OBJECTS AND MAY THEY BE TRANSFORMED INTO THE SMOOTH FLEXIBLE NATURE OF LAPIS-LAZULI, AS PLAIN AS THE HAND'S PALM.

We visualize a beautiful place as an offering to invoke Buddha, like we clean the house when there's an important guest like a king or someone coming. It's an offering to Buddha to accumulate merit. One should think not just of lapis-lazuli ground, but very beautiful flowers, like a beautiful park, with many water ponds; huge lotus petals, the size of a house, many beautiful trees and many beautiful flowers and fruits, beautiful birds making sounds of Dharma, flying around; even all of space scented, not smelling of ka-ka.

Offerings.

MAY THE ENTIRE REALM OF SPACE BE FILLED WITH THE OFFERINGS OF GODS AND MEN, BOTH THOSE THAT ARE PHYSICALLY OFFERED AND THOSE VISUALIZED, WITH THE SUPREME CLOUDS OF OFFERINGS OF SAMANTABHADRA.

Think that the whole of the space is covered by offerings. These light offerings actually performed here and visualized ones. "Samantabhadra's offering" has different meanings.

(end of tape)

The lineage lamas give advice on one particular way of doing the offering of Samantabhadra. Also it might be a term for many offerings, visualizing that the whole space is filled with offerings. This mantra is very powerful; it blesses the offerings and multiplies them in front of the buddhas. Due to the power of this mantra each Buddha in the ten directions receives a rainfall of offerings. It blesses the offerings which are performed. If the offerings are not blessed with the mantra there are interferers who take the essence, or the potential of them. They take the essence of water, food or light offerings. It becomes a distraction to the development of the realizations of the graduated path to enlightenment. The mind becomes very forgetful and also concentration is disturbed. One cannot concentrate at all because there are various distractions. So that's why this mantra is regarded as a very powerful mantra to bless and also to multiply the offerings.

OM NAMO BAGAWATE...

MAY MY OFFERINGS BECOME LIKE THESE BY THE POWER OF THE TRUTH OF THE THREE GEMS"—BUDDHA, DHARMA AND SANGHA—"AND BY THE BLESSINGS OF ALL THE BUDDHAS AND BODHISATTVAS, THEIR SPIRITUAL ENERGY IN THE NATURE OF THE INCONCEIVABLE DHARMADHATU, THE ULTIMATE REALITY.

The other mantra to be recited is for doing prostrations. If one begins the prostrations with this mantra it multiplies the prostrations a thousand times. It is a powerful mantra for increasing merit. Actually this Mahayana ordination of eight precepts is taken in the presence of all buddhas and bodhisattvas.

As I mentioned, the route of the graduated path to enlightenment, the route to temporal and ultimate happiness and perfections is correctly doing the practice with respect to the guru with mind

and action. From my side, I dare not mention it. To think of me as Buddha, to visualize me in the aspect of Buddha, is not something to mention. I'm not trying to tell you that I'm a Buddha. You see, the point is this—according to the sutra, this guru practice is a practice of the mind—always looking at the guru as being in the nature of a Buddha. In tantra it is visualizing him in the aspect of a Buddha. In the Paramitayana teachings the practice of the guru is to think of him as being in the essence of a Buddha. In tantra, one always has to practice the external practice of pure view—pure thought, pure view, pure conceptions. One also has to practice to purify impure view, the impure conceptions. So, not only seeing the guru in the essence of Buddha but visualizing him in the aspect of a Buddha. This is pure view.

Why does the guru have to be visualized as Buddha in the Mahayana ordination ceremony? Because this ordination is Mahayana ordination, not the Pratimoksha ordination which also has eight precepts. This came from Kriya Tantra, and that is why the lama who gives ordination has to be visualized in the aspect of, not only in the essence of, Buddha. Also that is why the Pratimoksha ordination of eight precepts does not have the precepts to not eat black foods, which pollute body and mind. This one has the branch precept to not eat black food but to eat white food to keep the body clean.

If a disciple practices properly it does not matter whether the guru is a buddha or a bodhisattva or an ordinary person. Doing the practice correctly means doing it as Buddha taught, so that means first of all one has to understand what Buddha taught, then to practice with correct devotion to the guru as in the commentaries by Tibetan Lamas. However, it is not following the guru without checking at all and without knowing at all the level of one's mind. One should follow the guru according to how Buddha taught. If you practice according to what Buddha taught about how to practice with the guru, you will have achievements.

One shouldn't follow the guru without checking at all or by ignoring the level of one's mind or without understanding how to practice with the guru. If one does the practice as Buddha explained, with mind and action, seeing him in the essence of a Buddha, then even if the guru himself is not a Buddha, the disciple becomes enlightened. The disciple receives the profit. If he doesn't do the practice as Buddha taught, he doesn't make a profit, only loss. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha himself, and all the pandits, the great yogis, every lineage lama of the lamrim who accomplished realizations, all practiced with the guru correctly and accomplished the whole path. They achieved profit from that practice.

A person like me who didn't do practice in past lives still lives in samsara. If one wishes for profit one should practice as Buddha taught, and as Lama Tsong Khapa taught in the lamrim. If one doesn't want profit then one doesn't need to do this. If one doesn't care or doesn't need the profit of temporal and ultimate happiness and the realizations of the graduated path to enlightenment, then one doesn't need to do these practices. It comes to that.

This time visualize the lama as Chenrezig as you have been meditating on Chenrezig. Think of him in the essence of Chenrezig and visualize him as Chenrezig. With the holy object, the merit field, practice the essential method of purifying and accumulating extensive merit:

I PROSTRATE WITH BODY, SPEECH AND MIND IN FAITH.

Even not doing the action of prostrating but just keeping one's palms together becomes prostration.

EACH AND EVERY OFFERING, INCLUDING THOSE REALLY PERFORMED AND THOSE MENTALLY TRANSFORMED, COLLECTED FROM BEGINNINGLESS ...I REJOICE IN ALL ORDINARY BEINGS' AND NOBLE BEINGS' ACTIONS. REVEAL THE TEACHINGS TO SENTIENT BEINGS. I DEDICATE MY OWN VIRTUES AND THOSE OF ALL OTHERS TO THE GREAT ENLIGHTENMENT.

Tomorrow I'll mention a little about this practice. Then make a short mandala offering:

“THE GROUND WITH SCENT...”

You see, because of the wrong conceptions we believe that that which has an impermanent nature—the phenomena, such as the “I” and the aggregates—are permanent. As Nagarjuna explained in detail in the teaching “The Jewel Garland,” the body is the container of thirty-six impurities. However, that which has an impure nature we believe to be completely pure. You can prove whether this body is by nature impure or not by the things which come out of it through the holes. There are two or three holes in this body. It's things which come from the ears, the nose, the mouth, and the lower doors. We do not want to touch those things. If they drop on the ground it even makes the place dirty and disgusting. That which makes a place disgusting, filled with smells, dirty, comes from the body. So that proves how samsara, this body is impure.

So, if you check like this, you can understand. These temporal samsaric pleasures not only change, but the base on which we label pleasure is only suffering. By analyzing our own feelings with a sharp mind we can understand. The nature is suffering but we are hallucinating it as pleasure. The “I” which exists, the “I” which has thoughts and which takes ordination, which meditates, is only what is merely labeled on the aggregates. That's it—only that. That which does all these various activities, which suffers or is happy, is merely labeled on the aggregates. In fact it's like this, but you are hallucinating, not being aware of, not realizing this. Hallucinating that there is an ‘I’ on these aggregates. “I,” existing only from its own side, without depending on anything; existing alone, by itself. That which has an impermanent nature you hallucinate as permanent; that which has an impure nature is hallucinated as pure.

Due to these wrong conceptions oneself and all sentient beings have been suffering in samsara without beginning and experiencing so much suffering, particularly in the lower realms so much; it makes tears come out if one thinks back to beginningless rebirths and how one has been experiencing the sufferings of samsara, particularly in the lower realms. But we cannot remember all the past lives and the suffering from beginningless rebirths. If we could remember it would be unbelievable—knowing it makes tears come out! If one doesn't eliminate these wrong conceptions, if one keeps and continuously follows these wrong conceptions, samsara has no end. We have been experiencing suffering in samsara continuously. If one thinks of all the endless suffering of samsara, especially those which one will experience in the future, it makes one unable to sleep and unable to eat food.

Guru Shakyamuni Buddha himself took Mahayana ordination, practiced and generated the path, become enlightened and enlightened numberless sentient beings. Even now Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is guiding us by having left the teachings for us. This method, the Mahayana ordination, was left for us to practice in order to accumulate merit for the happiness of this life and future lives, up to enlightenment. To create a cause, teachings on karma and this ordination was shown. We also

have the same potential to become enlightened and to enlighten numberless sentient beings as Guru Shakyamuni Buddha had. We have the same potential but we continuously follow the selfish attitudes, the wrong conceptions—no different from animals. They use the enjoyment of eating, drinking, everything, for themselves. So, if we have such a selfish attitude we are no different to them.

(end of tape)

Even achieving enlightenment is dependent on the kindness of the sentient beings. Practicing Dharma, the cause of enlightenment, depends on the kindness of sentient beings. Even to be able to continue to practice the path depends on the kindness of sentient beings. What the kind mother sentient beings want is temporal and ultimate happiness but they are devoid of it. What they do not want is suffering but they continuously suffer.

“I have the opportunity. I have met the Dharma. I have the wisdom to understand what is the cause of happiness and what is the cause of suffering. I have the opportunity to help them, to liberate them from samsara and to lead them to omniscience. I have the opportunity, therefore this is my responsibility. To do that there is no method except to achieve an omniscient mind myself. Therefore, I must achieve an omniscient mind. That’s dependent on the very root of the path, protecting karma by methods such as living in the eight Mahayana precepts. Therefore, I’m going to take the eight Mahayana precepts from now until sunrise tomorrow.”

Visualize the lama who gives ordination in the essence or aspect of Chenrezig, surrounded by numberless Buddhas and bodhisattvas. Then, please do three prostrations, okay? Please kneel down. Those who can’t sit that way, who have pain, don’t need to kneel down. Those who can, please do so. Then, put both palms together at the heart in the mudra of prostration. Please repeat the prayer thinking that you are repeating the prayer as Chenrezig is saying it.

PLEASE GURU PAY ATTENTION TO ME...

ALL THE BUDDHAS AND BODHISATTVAS OF THE TEN DIRECTIONS...AS THE PREVIOUS TATHAGATAS, THE ARHATS, THE FULLY ENLIGHTENED BUDDHAS, LIKE A SKILLFUL HORSE, THE GREAT ELEPHANT, DID WHAT HAD TO BE DONE...

You may find this a little strange, but these particular animal are used to express the qualities of Buddhas. This has an extensive commentary.

I WHOM AM NAMED....

Please mention your name, okay? It’s like registering for enlightenment! I think the purpose of mentioning your name is to show that you’re not taking the vow for the sake of other sentient beings like just playing a game.

FOR THE SAKE OF ALL THAT LIVES; IN ORDER TO BENEFIT ALL...  
Here you might remember all the six realms beings.

IN ORDER TO PREVENT FAMINE ...

Remember the problems of South Africa, India and all over—many refugees dying of starvation. Think, “I’m taking this ordination today for those sentient beings not to have these sufferings in the future. For those who are sick now to recover and not to have problems in the future.”

I SHALL TAKE THE EIGHT MAHAYANA PRECEPTS JUST AS YOU HAVE DONE.

PLEASE GURU PAY ATTENTION ...IN ORDER TO BENEFIT ALL...

When you think “In order to benefit all,” you should remember your parents or anybody whom you are concerned for, whom you want to benefit, somebody who’s in trouble, especially your enemy—one who has criticized you, one who doesn’t think that you are a good person. Think: “I’m also taking ordination to liberate them from sufferings, to lead them to enlightenment.”

JUST AS YOU HAVE DONE.....PLEASE GURU PAY ATTENTION.....AND TO RECEIVE THE STAGE OF FULLY COMPLETED BUDDHAHOOD...

Then, when I have finished, please think: “I have received the eight precepts of Mahayana ordination purely. Mahayana ordination purifies the negative karma, the vices of degenerated precepts and restores them and develops merit. One should make the determination: “Today I have received the pure Mahayana ordination.”

I SHALL TAKE THE EIGHT MAHAYANA PRECEPTS JUST AS YOU HAVE DONE.

Whenever we take the Mahayana ordination, we should remember the four suffering results from the ten non-virtuous actions and the opposite, the four good results from these eight virtuous actions that we made determination to abide I, to practice today. Remember not only those temporal four good results but also that each of these precepts is the cause of various qualities of Buddha. Feel great happiness through knowing the benefits of the precepts: “I’m so fortunate today, I’m not sure whether I will have more opportunities to practice and accumulate this merit of taking vows. Maybe today is the last. I’m not sure. I’m so fortunate.” Feel great happiness. Then think, “As the arhats and tathagatas keep these precepts from now until the sun rises tomorrow I’m going to keep these eight precepts in order to free each sentient being from all sufferings and to lead them to enlightenment.” Please repeat the prayers.

FROM NOW ON I SHALL NOT KILL...

When I say, *ta.wa yi.no*, you answer *lek.so*—“This is the method,” then you are kind-of responding, “yes.” When you take ordination in front of an altar, if the statue speaks then you can say *lek.so!* But otherwise don’t! If the painting or statue speaks to you, then ...

A.M: I am a sinner, Sir; I am a sinner! You read the right line and I caught on. I am a sinner—I was dancing, I was taking intoxicating things. This punishment that I am here, but I am not a liar. Please read it again! I was living myself in a hotel and enjoying my life in different ways. I spent a lot of money like this. I wasted money. It’s not wise. We are good people, we need comforts also, but we should not misuse the money.

L.Z: Yes, right! That’s perfect, what you say. Right!

I SHALL NOT SIT ON HIGH EXPENSIVE BEDS....

A.M: Please carry on.

L.Z: I don't know if my bed is expensive or not!

A.M: I just want to tell others my experiences.

L.Z: Okay! This refers to sitting on something high not for Dharma reasons. This throne is to respect the teachings. I think it was like this in India, also in Tibet. The main point is that when the lama gives teachings he sits on a throne, not so much because other people cannot see, but mainly out of respect for the Buddhadharma.

I SHALL NOT EAT FOOD AT THE WRONG TIMES. I SHALL AVOID SINGING,  
DANCING, AND PLAYING MUSIC...

A.M: Yes! Please, this is what I want to tell you. Drinking, dancing is good when you are actually perfect and a man of character—inside there is the name of God and you are dancing with your only wife, whom you love, real love. I think only few people ...We have love for fifteen days, we have love for a month, for a few months, for years. No! There should be one and only one.

L.Z: Yes, that's right! Thank you very much.

A.M: I mean, we must laugh also, we must enjoy it. But this is the truth!

L.Z: Yes, that's right. I agree. I agree with what you're saying.

BE RELEASED FROM THE OCEAN OF SAMSAARA...

Enough?

A.M: Thank you very much! I'm your friend!

L.Z: No, you don't have to feel bad. Even if you have been a sinner, now you don't have to be a sinner.

A.M: Now, I think this is the right place where I am. I told the people when I came here this is my home. This is my home. Refuge means refuge. Yes, you cannot kick me out! I will live with the name of God. This is the teaching of the gurus.

L.Z: Then, please repeat the mantra three times.

OM AH MO GA SHI LA...

Then, please dedicate the merit.

DUE TO THE MERITS ACCUMULATED BY ME AND BY OTHERS IN THE THREE  
TIMES, MAY THE PARAMITA OF MORAL CONDUCT BE COMPLETED BY KEEPING IT  
WITHOUT MISTAKES, PURELY, WITHOUT PRIDE.

The reason why it says "without pride" is because if you have too much pride, because of that negative mind, I think it causes the virtue to have less power. Then, of course, there are many other shortcomings, but just to mention this particular thing. I think I heard something like that. Now please dedicate like this:

DUE TO ALL THESE MERITS MAY THE BODHICITTA WHICH IS NOT GENERATED  
IN MY MIND AND IN THE MINDS OF OTHERS BE GENERATED, AND WHICH HAS  
BEEN GENERATED IN THE MINDS OF OTHERS BE INCREASED.

I think this bodhicitta prayer is very important. Not matter how many meetings for peace are held to stop the fighting and bring harmony, still there is so much fighting, so much war, atomic danger. All this is because there is no bodhicitta in the minds of the human beings on this earth. If they all had bodhicitta there would be no problem. Then there would not be this fighting and these problems—one country taking another, killing each other. People see terrible things in their life which they never expected to see happening. His Holiness the Dalai Lama had one guru, a great bodhisattva, a great pandita, Khunnu Lama Tenzin Gyaltzen. His Holiness asked this great bodhisattva, “Please pray for Tibet to get independence.” So this great bodhisattva, who was an ascetic, a great pandit, answered, “We should pray that in Mao’s mind, bodhicitta will be generated. Then we can get independence.” (At that time Chairman Mao was the Chinese leader).

Then please dedicate the merit for all the holy beings to have a long life, including His Holiness and Lama Yeshe, who is extremely kind, particularly by spreading Dharma in the West, and all the rest of the holy beings who work for the sentient beings. Not necessarily just Buddhists, not necessarily only Tibetan lamas! Any priests, and all the holy beings who work to prevent and eliminate others’ suffering and bring happiness to others. Dedicate that all their wishes for the sentient beings be accomplished immediately and to free all the sentient beings from all their suffering and to lead them to omniscient mind by oneself as quickly as possible. Please dedicate the merits of having taken the ordination like this.

In the break times think again and again, “How fortunate I am, how happy I am. Think that, as Ubdesch Singh was saying before, “So far my life has been wasted. Today I’m doing something meaningful, something beneficial. Today I’m doing something, making my life beneficial for every sentient being, until sunrise tomorrow. Every sentient being—those who are now in wars, those who have great fear now; for everyone.” Think this again and again when you see creatures in the forest—birds, worms, human beings. Any types of human being, any type of creatures attacking each other and suffering. Think, “I’m taking these vows to benefit them.” Then think, “I don’t live for myself. My life belongs to the sentient beings. I’m not living for myself, I’m living for others. So, my body, speech and mind don’t belong to me but belong to others, so what to do is to eliminate others’ suffering, to obtain happiness for others.” This should be remembered frequently during meditations and even break times, as it helps one very much not to break the precepts.

When there’s danger of breaking precepts because of careless thoughts coming, think, “Oh, I have taken a vow for the benefit of all sentient beings and if I break this I will be cheating or lying to all the sentient beings and also the buddhas and bodhisattvas.” Think, “How dare I break them for just my own happiness. How dare I give up the sentient beings’ happiness and cherish my own happiness. So far I have been seeking happiness for myself—that’s why I’m still caught in and not liberated from samsara, still having a confused life.”

A.M: If I have hurt the feelings of anybody, please forgive me. I think I’ve done the right thing what God brought me for that purpose. Please accept my apology if I have done anything wrong, if a single word, because...

L.Z: I’m not sure. I ‘m not sure. Thank you.

(end of tape)

LECTURE 17  
November 26 am

Visualize the Great Compassionate One on your own crown and on the crown of each sentient being.

I GO FOR REFUGE TO BUDDHA, DHARMA AND THE SUPREME ASSEMBLY ...

That means, “I am going to practice bodhicitta, I will avoid giving harm to other sentient beings with body, speech and mind, and I will benefit them with all three doors, as much as possible.”

THE GROUND WITH SCENT IS BLESSED AND WITH FLOWERS STREWN, ADORNED WITH MT.MERU, THE FOUR LANDS, THE SUN AND MOON, TRANSFORMED AS A PURE LAND AND THEN OFFERED; MAY ALL WANDERING BEINGS ENJOY THIS BUDDHA REALM.

Please make a request to Guru Chenrezig to immediately pacify all the wrong conceptions towards the guru; from there to the subtle dual view of the white vision, red vision and dark vision, and to generate the right realizations immediately in one’s mind from seeing the guru in the essence of, and in the aspect of, a Buddha, through to the unified state of no-more-learning and the minds of all sentient beings. Especially to generate the stable definite understanding of karma and bodhicitta and immediately pacify all the obstacles and the hindrances to the practice of the graduated path to enlightenment.

As I mentioned this morning during the general motivation for the ordination: we should think of others’ suffering because of their hallucinations. While the “I” doesn’t exist from its own side, they completely hallucinate that it exists from its own side. While the temporal, samsaric pleasures are in the nature of suffering, believing them to be completely pure pleasure. Completely hallucinating the body which is impure as pure. While the aggregates are impermanent, completely hallucinating them as permanent. Try to be aware of how they are suffering with all these confusions, how they create many problems. Then purify—

OM MANI PADME HUM ... OM MANI PADME HUM ...

Leaving aside the lower realm beings and how they are hallucinating, just observe what you can about whichever country you came from. If you came from America, just think of Los Angeles. Or, if you came from New York, then you can think of New York City. All the people, their life, their way of thinking. How their life passes—with happiness or with problems? From wherever you came, just watch the human life in that city. If you came from Japan, then think about Tokyo. Look at the Katmandu valley and the many people. Just watch. Remember these four types of hallucinations that they have and how many incredible problems come into their lives. They themselves create problems for themselves through completely hallucinating in these four ways. You may not understand so well how pleasure is suffering; you may not feel much if you haven’t meditated and haven’t analyzed. Compassion has to arise without choice when you see how other sentient beings are suffering because of so much hallucination. It’s unbelievable. They are destroyed by their wrong conceptions. On top of one hallucination, another hallucination. On the hallucination of the truly existent “I,” hallucinating it as permanent, seeing suffering as pure pleasure. These are basic hallucinations. They create their problems for themselves. When you meditate like this, compassion has to arise without choice, except that you don’t know it well. Like I mentioned this morning, if one doesn’t know it well, one doesn’t get much feeling in the mind.

OM MANI PADME HUM ... OM MANI PADME HUM...

Then the light enters the body and the mind of each sentient being, and they are completely purified. Your own and other sentient beings' bodies become like crystal. Like dirty glass that has been washed, it becomes light and clear, like crystal. Then Chenrezig melts into light and absorbs into one's own heart and generates all the realizations and the stable, definite understanding of karma. Then the mind becomes completely oneness with Chenrezig's great compassion. Feel the suffering of every sentient being as unbearable; then wish every sentient being to be freed from suffering and to cause that by oneself.

SANG.GYE CHOE.DANG...

Please listen to the teaching by generating at least the effortful bodhicitta by thinking: "I must achieve the omniscient mind for the benefit of all the kind mother sentient beings, therefore I'm going to listen to the teachings on the graduated path to enlightenment."

Understanding that karma is definite to bring its results is understanding this: if no obstacles happens to the virtue, it's definite to bring its own result of happiness; if no obstacles happens to the non-virtue, it's definite to bring its own result of suffering. So you see, by understanding this, the result is more happiness. If karma were not definite it would be more difficult to have a happy mind because then even if one tried to be pure, one could not be sure of the result. There would be nothing to trust. That would only make one more depressed and hopeless. However, by understanding firstly that it is definite—if I create virtue it will definitely bring its own result of happiness—the result is more inspiration. It makes one happier as there's definite hope. If nothing is done to non-virtue it is definite to bring its own result. So one gains inspiration and energy to do something about that which has been accumulated in the past and also to not accumulate more non-virtue. So, naturally the person practices. Naturally more understanding, more faith comes. Karma is expandable. These are some external examples to get an idea of how it is expandable: by planting one corn seed the result is that you get many. By planting one date, from the resulting tree you can get many dates for many years. When Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was going for alms on day, I think at a place called Niatoda in India, one girl offered one handful of beans to him. Usually Guru Shakyamuni Buddha immediately predicted the result of making an offering. Buddha predicted that because of that karma in the future life she would become a self-conqueror, a self-Buddha. This doesn't mean a fully enlightened being, simply an arhat. This girl couldn't believe that such a small action as offering one handful of beans to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha would have such an incredible result, so she told Buddha, "You shouldn't tell lies about small offerings like this. Because of having received a small offering you shouldn't tell lies."

In one lamrim teaching, I think it started like this: a person who made a small offering says, "I don't believe karma is expandable." Then Guru Shakyamuni Buddha said, "The seed of the tree called nyajoda is the size of the mustard seed. By planting that a tree grows which has so many branches." The other person said, "Yes, there is such a tree." Guru Shakyamuni Buddha said, "There is no such tree." The other person said, "Yes, there is such a tree. In my experience there is a tree like this. It is my experience." So then Guru Shakyamuni told him, "Oh, then, karma is expandable. Even though it's not your experience, it is my experience. From such a small merit comes an incredible result." The person's doubt was destroyed! The seed of the nyajoda tree is so small, the size of a mustard seed, but by planting one seed the branches of the resulting tree can cover five hundred horse

carriages without their touching each other! Without being piled up! I think you can often see huge trees in India, especially in the hot places.

Inner phenomena—action and result—are much more expandable than external phenomena. Here is one story: A gelongma, or bikshuni, Gelongma Pa Dorje had two children. One was drowned in the river and one was eaten by a wolf; the husband was killed by a snake; the house burned by a fire. Then she remarried. This second husband one day went to another family's house, had too much alcohol to drink and became drunk, came back and killed their only child and gave the flesh to her to eat. She ran away! Then, I think, she married one thief, the head of a gang. Then the king of that area came and executed the thief. I think that that country had a custom that when the husband dies, even if the wife is not dead, she has to go—they're buried together. Then at night thieves came and removed the soil and she married another thief! That's right! Then that thief was executed and buried and she was also buried. After all that, I think she had the thought of renunciation! No problem with renunciation! She became a bikshuni, a fully ordained nun, with three hundred and sixty-something vows.

Why did she have incredible trouble like this? So much suffering? In one of her past lives when she was a princess, I think she killed maybe a serving maid. I'm not a hundred percent sure—maybe the maid's child. Then she told many lies. Maybe she said she didn't kill. All that set of problems is the result of killing one child and telling lies.

We don't have power like clairvoyance or an omniscient mind to see the causes of the many problems people are having nowadays. An example: I don't know in which country, but one Western person who was over seventy married twenty-three times. After that, he married one twenty year old girl! That was his last. He had ninety-three children. The shortest relationship was twenty-eight days! You can see—it's similar. In Indonesia, Java, a city of Sumatra there is a person named Dakamuli. He's over twenty-seven. He married one hundred and twenty times! Right after he divorced from one he immediately married another. I think that there are many things like this, even nowadays!

The conclusion is that one should purify even the small non-virtues, and accumulate even the smallest virtues, because they are expandable. That should be the conclusion.

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG...

LECTURE 18  
November 27 pm

SA.ZHI POE.KYI...

Please listen to the teachings by generating at least the effortful bodhicitta, thinking, "I must achieve an omniscient mind for the benefit of all the kind mother sentient beings. Therefore, I'm going to listen to the teaching on the graduated path to enlightenment.

Yesterday, I mentioned untimely death. It may not be your problem so much at the moment! That is when a person's karma to live a certain number of years is not finished, but an obstacle happens. Then the person dies because he doesn't have any more merit to live as a human being and has the conditions for an untimely death. So, for untimely death, if medicine doesn't help, there should be a puja or some meditation practice from the Buddha's profound methods performed. Things such as

the profound mantras can prevent untimely death, or, if the person has finished his merit, he can accumulate merit by making offerings to holy objects such as the Triple Gem—Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. As it is explained in Buddha's teaching, in the lamrim, this merit field is most powerful and with it one accumulates most merit by doing the practice of offering.

The other object of accumulating merit is the sentient beings. One of the ways of accumulating extensive merit is by practicing bodhicitta by means of the very essential Mahayana thought training: taking other sentient beings' suffering onto oneself and dedicating all the good things that belong to one—the three times merits, surrounds, everything—by generating the great thought of loving kindness. This tonglen, taking and giving, is one of the very profound meditations. As you breathe out, as you breathe in, with each breath you accumulate infinite merit.

Another method is the practice of rejoicing. Through this, infinite merit can be accumulated in such a short time. Rejoicing in one's own three times' merit and in all other beings' merit is one of the important, and is the simplest, easiest of methods to accumulate merit in a short time. There are two objects: one is the merit field, the other is sentient beings. Actually we can also call sentient beings a merit field, like when taking these eight precepts: as we take the ordination with the motivation of bodhicitta, we accumulate infinite merit. Also these four root vows: not killing, not stealing and so on—you see, we practice, we keep these vows, in regard to sentient beings. So, you see, our merit comes from the sentient beings. The sentient beings are the precious field on which we cultivate or create our cause of happiness. As it is explained in the lamrim teachings, the most powerful objects in order to skillfully accumulate merit are sentient beings and the holy objects, the merit field. Not only those practices, but there are many others such as physically making charity and so on. Sometimes it appears, even astrologically, that it is beneficial to give food and things to beggars. Sometimes to fix a bridge or road or cleaning where it's uncomfortable. Also making charity to the pretas. There is a certain practice of making charity by using mantras. Also, I think, a method that works for preventing untimely death is liberating animals who are going to be killed. One buys them and liberates them, either taking care of them or putting them somewhere. Like buying fish from the people who are selling them alive, for example, then liberating them in water where it is impossible for people to catch them or where one thinks there is at least less danger! That's very important for postponing untimely death. A person creates the cause that postpones death and prevents dangers by liberating others from danger, by causing others to have a long life.

Also it has been shown many times that a person living in a certain number of precepts will live long yet without taking the ordination of renunciation he will not live. There are various methods. I think that my sister was supposed to die soon. She asked, probably, one of my gurus who lives on the mountain Solo Khumbu, I don't know what made her ask. Tulshig Rinpoche made the observation and told her that if she didn't take ordination she would die. So, sometimes it's like this.

Doing a retreat on White Tara is regarded as a very powerful method in order to have a longer life to create more merit and accomplish the realization of the graduated path to enlightenment. There are different aspects of long-life buddhas—this aspect is White Tara. Also, there is a special method where one makes pills and eats them and does meditation on that to prevent untimely death. Tibetans, if they can't do retreat themselves, asks a lama to do this meditation, to bless the pills and then they just eat the pills when the lama has finished the retreat!

Then, there's a particular, very powerful tantric puja in which the practitioners train in death. It doesn't mean it makes it impossible for the person to die! For that, you have to eliminate the true

cause of suffering. If you want suffering, rebirth and death to be impossible, then you have to eliminate the true cause of suffering completely. Until you've eliminated the true cause of suffering—karma and disturbing thoughts—there's no way to prevent the cycle of death and rebirth. The best puja, the best treatment, is that—one's own practice eliminating the true cause of suffering. Not letting the disturbing thoughts increase and by practicing lamrim trying to diminish them year by year, month by month.

By ceasing the true cause of suffering, the eight types of human suffering that you have meditated on will be ended. Otherwise, no matter how many times we're born as a human, there's no end; no matter how much we wish not to get sick, sickness comes; no matter how much we hate to become old, how much we hate to have white hair, how much we hate wrinkles and ugly skin—there's no end. For example, take America: American life is a very good example of karma. It's regarded as the country which has the highest material development and comfort. They try to make life as easy and comfortable as possible. Whatever they can think of they try. Whatever they are capable of they try. They try and try, without seeing the need for purification; without seeing the need for practice in order to accumulate merit; without seeing the need to understand karma. Anyway, there's an organization researching the cause of cancer. I heard that they found that cancer comes from cigarettes. They found many different causes, and one is cigarettes. So, I guess the government has to accept what this special organization says in order to stop the problem of cancer. I heard that on cigarettes there is a label "Smoking is injurious to health", hazardous. You've got this label in the shop, so I think the person has to decide whether he prefers cancer or to smoke the cigarettes. That small comfort—the smoke and flame—or cancer!

I went to see one of our gurus, His Holiness Song Rinpoche, a guru from whom I have received so many initiations and teachings and meditations, one of the present living holders of the whole path, a great pandit and yogi. This was during Rinpoche's first visit to America, to the West, in Santa Cruz.

(end of tape)

So I suggested to the organizers of the meditation course at Vajrapani Center that we take Rinpoche for some sightseeing. I explained to Rinpoche, because I had seen the old folks' home and the place where the dead bodies are kept before. Very interesting places! So Rinpoche said, yes, he'd like to see it, so they arranged it. It was quite close to the place where we did the course.

There were only two bodies, not as many as I saw the first time. The place was quite smelly. I think they must use some medicines because there was some kind of very strong smell. Not such an interesting smell! One was a lady who had died six months before. Quite old, I think; she had white hair. With us was a Tibetan lady doctor from Dharamsala, a very good doctor. She cured several people from cancer. I think even when she was in America she cured some people. She was with us to give courses in Tibetan medicine. People enjoyed it very much. Also she mixes in a little bit of Dharma. Of course Tibetan medicine is very much connected—it talks about the three poisonous minds as being the root of disease, so of course Dharma subjects into it. She was with us to see these things. She put her hand inside the body—you know, I think you can take pieces that you are interested to see and put them back! So, she put her hand somewhere here (chest region) and took out something and it was completely black and blue, and she said, "She died of cancer". She said this is due to smoking cigarettes. I think it was the lung. The woman had offered her body to that place for the students to study.

There was another body; I think that person might have died one year before. Maybe an aboriginal person. Red Indian? One black person, but very thick skin. You could see the brain; you could take the skin off and see. I don't remember the old folks home where I went with Rinpoche very well. I guess that didn't have any strong impression on me. There wasn't any particularly strong thing that caused the mind to freak out! It wasn't very clear in my mind; I think maybe we went to a small place.

Then, there's one meditation for having a longer life called "Eating the Sky as Food." There are different methods that one can use, such as taking long-life initiations of the long-life deities and things like that. However, if one has finished one's life fortune, if the previously accumulated karma to live a certain length of life is finished, one can do nothing. Otherwise, there are other things to try. When all things are finished, then nothing. Death definitely happens due to karma and disturbing thoughts. There are diseases where the person has the karma to be cured by medicine, but there is some kind of interference from different types of spirits which do not allow medicine to be effective for the patient. The medicine is the same, but after doing pujas the medicine benefits. There are some diseases that no medicine can help, only puja; only the Buddha's methods, the meditation practices can prevent and cure these sicknesses. Pujas done by others, by lamas, can cure some diseases. Then there are very heavy diseases that the person himself has to purify. Without he himself doing the practice of purifying negative karma there is no way he can recover from that disease.

My uncle—there are several uncles, the younger one—got sick. I wasn't at Solu Khumbu at that time, I was in Tibet. He was sick for many years and went to see many doctors in Tibet and took many medicines, but nothing cured his disease. I think he had pain all the time, much pain and infection. He couldn't sleep or anything. It was a very heavy disease, I think all over his body. Finally he went to see one meditator whose cave is close to where we built the first school—the Everest School, the monastery for young monks. He was a very good old monk—I remember when I was a very small child I used to get very good feelings from him. This meditator made an observation and said this is not something that treatment and medicine can cure easily. It is due to karmic obscurations, so you need to practice *ngondros*, the preliminary practices—prostrations, recitations of mantras—those things. Then he received the preliminary practice meditations from one other lama. He did 600,000—something like that—full-length prostrations. Some he did in the cave that I used to go to sometimes to eat potatoes! It was extremely cold weather, snow and the ice outside, so that his heels got cracked while doing prostrations: when one does the practice one doesn't wear shoes.

He did many prostrations there in the cave, then he built one very small hermitage close by. It's a kind-of very quiet, very isolated place. He built it with stones, without much shape, just stones piled on stones, then bamboo on the roof to stop storms. Meanwhile he was taking care of my grandmother. She became blind—I don't think while I was there, but after I left for Tibet. There were no other people taking care of her. She was my uncle's mother. He was cooking food during break times for both of them. Also he was carrying my grandmother out for pee-pee and ka-ka, then bringing her inside. At other times he did prostrations. Then as he was doing prostrations gradually the disease that had lasted for years, which no medicine helped, became well.

Many of the people here who received Chenrezig initiation may have heard this story: one full nun, Gelongma Palmo, got leprosy in her hand. I don't know exactly what broke or fell off, or was getting thinner, due to the disease. However, she did much Chenrezig practice, much purification. First she went to Nepal, to a few places. One place was where there is an intuitive OM MANI

PADME HUM appearing from rock—I don't remember the name of the place. The second place was where King Indrabodhi became enlightened within three years, I think. King Indrabodhi advised her to go from that holy place of Chenrezig where she was, to another place. She did much practice there—prostrations and the mantra. Then she actually saw Chenrezig. Chenrezig initiated her and gave her teachings. So now there is a Chenrezig practice called *nyung.ne*—abiding in retreat of body, speech and mind—an incredibly powerful Chenrezig practice which is only for two days. It involves taking Mahayana ordination, a lot of prostrations, a lot of Chenrezig meditation and recitation of mantra. It's only a two day retreat, but very intensive, extremely great purification. Due to leprosy her body had been completely undesirable, not nice looking. Then her body became completely young and she became an extremely, unbelievably beautiful nun. Leprosy disease and cancer is from harm by nagas. One of the most powerful remedies to cure those diseases is Chenrezig practice, such as *nyung.ne*.

Then Gelongma Palmo came into the city after she attained Chenrezig, with this completely new, extremely beautiful body. People criticized her, saying that she doesn't live in her vows. Maybe they saw her coming from a monastery—I don't remember one hundred percent. It's in her biography. So, many people had heresy and created much negative karma by criticizing her. She wanted to change their minds, to stop them creating negative karma. She put her head on a trident—or a spear, I don't remember. Then she danced between the clouds in the sky and showed psychic powers. The head came back. I think she might have said, "If what you are saying is true, then the head should not come. If what you are saying is not true, the head should come back." Then the head naturally came back and she became as before. She showed many psychic powers to the people, and completely changed people's minds from heresy, and everybody felt much repentance, much sorrow that they had criticized her. Then they offered many prayers to her and generated great devotion. By having faith and understanding karma through meeting Buddhadharma, there are advantages, more methods, even in regards to solving temporal problems. When medicine doesn't work, there are many other ways to prevent diseases. You see, in the places where there is no understanding of karma, where there is no understanding of these methods, where there is no teaching, the methods are very limited. If the medicine works, that's it; if it doesn't, that's it. The only refuge for the people is the doctor and the medicine, that is all—nothing else. If that works, that's it; if it doesn't work, then finished!

Sometimes the person himself can't do a powerful practice of purification—he didn't do it before and then couldn't do it later. The karmic obscuration, the negative karma of the disease is so heavy, so great. So, other people doing some pujas and things cannot easily and immediately cure it. If there's much heavy karmic obscuration, negative karma, there should also be a very strong remedy—accumulating merit and purification. If the person is making offerings to the Triple Gem in order to recover from a disease, I think that even if his disease does not get cured immediately, the practice always has merit, depending on how perfectly and powerfully that merit is created. If it's powerful he starts to experience the result in the same life; definitely in future lives. There is always a result of happiness. Always. Maybe not enough to receive the result, to pacify the great hindrance that he has, because the merit that is accumulated is not powerful enough. I think I'll stop here.

JANG.CHUB SEM. CHOG...

I didn't get to the actual subject—just making conversation on something, but it was something about karma! At other courses there hasn't been much detailed explanation of karma. Protecting karma is the beginning of Dharma practice. Even if one has accomplished the tantric stage of

generation, the first stage, having very stable, clear concentration of oneself as a deity; even if one can visualize all the mandala deities, the whole thing as very tiny like inside a sesame or mustard seed, however much one can generate siddhis, generate attainments, clairvoyance and psychic powers—if one does not protect karma, no happiness, only suffering is created. One cannot close the door of the lower realms in order not to be born in the lower realms after this life. However stable concentration one has, even if it lasts for 100 years, even one eon without distraction, if one does not protect karma, besides achieving liberation, one cannot even guarantee that if death happens now one will not be born in a lower realm. I think that understanding this is the essence of Dharma. I think that it is extremely important.

(end of tape)

(discussion on spirit phenomena)

A.M: That time it was at the dentist.

L.Z: Oh, at the dentist—where they spit, where they clean the mouth? Then?

A.M: Yes. And afterwards they found out it was a girl who had done it. She made fun of the patients. They made a lot of examinations of where the voices were coming from. She did it with a tape.

L.Z: Yes? I heard one story somewhere—somebody seemed to speak from a toilet. When people came and sat, there was someone speaking!

A.M: ... at the bottom of the toilet.

L.Z: Did it? And then they checked the wire which is under the ground?

A.M: After, they found out. After a long while they found out that it was the girl...

L.Z: She put a wire inside?

A.M: I don't remember exactly how she did it.

L.Z: I heard once—speaking from toilets. They checked for wires—they could not find a wire. I met one mother in Italy who had a problem for some years. Her husband had died, I think some years ago, and the telephone was ringing all the time and she never answered it. Again and again it made that noise for a long time—I think it might have been years. When she listened it seemed like her husband speaking. Not very loud, but like someone whispering. Each time it rang and she picked it up there was this whispering. So, afterwards she just let it ring—she never bothered to pick it up. So she came to Lama Tsong Khapa Center, to ask what to do. At that time His Holiness Song Rinpoche was there. She came to see me—she was brought by one student—about what to do about these problems. Not only this, she also had other problems! The apartment belonged to her and I think she also had a little problem with the people staying upstairs.

Anyway, I told her maybe she should ask Rinpoche. So, we went to see Rinpoche and I explained the problem to Rinpoche. Rinpoche said: "What should I do?" I asked Rinpoche to maybe bless a string with which to tie to the telephone. Then, some blessed rice or some sesame seed to throw in the room to dispel the spirits. Maybe the problem decreased, I'm not sure. The next year she came again. She said it was still the same, maybe sometimes better, I don't know. Then, we did a puja here. I don't know which one. The next year when I went the noise of the telephone had stopped. I don't know what the scientists would say, how they would describe these kinds of things! Excuse me!

LECTURE 19

November 28 PM

Please listen to the teaching by generating at least the effortful bodhicitta, thinking, “At any rate I must achieve the state of omniscient mind for the benefit of all the kind mother sentient beings. Therefore, I’m going to listen to the teaching of the graduated path to enlightenment.”

Generally, whatever karma, whatever action or cause is created—virtue or non-virtue, whatever it is—the result is always bigger and is experienced longer. Such as in this story about one minister in Darjeeling. His mother Sadampa had thirty-two children. Some ministers slandered this minister, Ritagsin, and turned the king, called Sangyal, against him. The king punished this minister. He killed all thirty-two children by cutting off their heads and made the mother carry all thirty-two heads back home. Why did she have to experience such unimaginably heavy karma, to have such a terrifying life? In one of her past lives there were thirty-two people—I don’t know one hundred per cent if they were thieves—who killed one cow. She was the owner of the house and she let them stay. They killed the cow, and, I think, sort-of made a party! I think she felt joyful that these thirty-two people had killed the cow and were eating it. She was not involved in killing but she felt happy which is wrong rejoicing. The cause to experience such a heavy karmic result was just that—wrong rejoicing. You see, it was only a mental action, but the result was great, very heavy. So, even one karma is expandable. The cause was just her mind having wrong rejoicing at what they did. It didn’t need any big physical performance in order to experience that result.

It’s just mental action, very simple to create, but one can create incredibly heavy karma. One can also create unbelievable merit by the mental action of rejoicing, if one knows how to practice lamrim and the preliminary practices. If somebody in a country that you don’t like kills a million people and you feel, “How good it is!,” even if you didn’t go to war and actually fight physically, you create incredibly heavy negative karma. Let’s say millions of Chinese get killed by Tibetans or Russians or whoever and you feel, “How fantastic!”; you are sitting on the meditation cushion or reciting mantra or reading Dharma books and you hear the information and think, “Oh, how fantastic!”—you get the negative karma as if you had actually killed a million people. As you have rejoiced in a million people getting killed, you get as much heavy negative karma as if you had actually killed a million people. You can get a little bit of an idea from the karmic stories that Buddha explained in the teachings, of how incredible results come from wrong rejoicing in non-virtuous actions.

Usually lamas who give lamrim teachings emphasize this very much. So you see, in Dharma practice the whole key is to watch the mind all the time. Watch the mind. To understand first you have to study; you have to receive teachings and listen extensively. Not just the small texts, but the whole lamrim and all texts possible. Then, practice constantly. Watch the mind. If an obstacle arises which disturbs your temporal and ultimate happiness and disturbs your path to enlightenment for the sake of other sentient beings, stop that. With awareness and memory always keep the mind in virtue. Use awareness to know whether any obstacle, any disturbing thought is arising or not, whether you are creating any negative karmas or not.

When there is danger, try not to let it arise. If it’s a disturbing thought that has already arisen, stop it as quickly as possible. If you are late, if the disturbing thoughts come before you have a chance to protect yourself from them, if they are already occupying your mind, controlling your mind, do not let them increase or continue even for a second. Do not give freedom to the delusions to destroy your temporal and ultimate happiness, that which you are looking for. Be aware of the shortcomings of disturbing thoughts—that they gave incredible harm in the past, are giving harm now at the present, and will continuously give harm in the future. Be aware that you are obliging yourself to experience all the samsaric problems that arise from these disturbing thoughts.

Harbor the harms of the disturbing thoughts; keep them in the heart like we do with outside enemies. We keep all the harms that a person is doing or did, in the heart. We remember them, again and again—while we're eating, while we're walking, even when we wake up from our dreams at night. We speak to other people as much as possible about how that person is bad, what terrible faults he has. As we react to the outside enemy, harboring all the harms, if we wish to practice Dharma we should react to the disturbing thoughts. The real enemy, the inner enemy is the disturbing thoughts.

Actually, if you know how to think, if you know the thought training teachings, and if you are practicing, that outer person is not an enemy at all. Completely the opposite—he's a great helper—a practical, virtuous friend; a practical guru who gives one temporal and ultimate peace of mind in the hand, immediately, as it is said in the *Eight Verses of Thought Transformation* written by Kadampa Geshe Langri Tangpa Dorje Senge. These eight verses and other thought training teachings are for transforming suffering into happiness. Those thought-training teachings transform whatever you are experiencing—happiness or suffering—so that you can utilize it in the path to enlightenment for the sake of sentient beings. The various thought training teachings are condensed into these eight stanzas—so effective for the mind. (The sound of a dog howling)—I think the dogs are giving teachings to us, saying, "If you live in samsara there is suffering." That's why he's crying.

Actually, for all the problems for which they don't have answers in the West, the answers are in the lamrim, especially in the thought training teachings such as *The Eight Verses of Thought Transformation*. However many problems, and however many fears there are in the world, if one knows just this thought-training teaching and if one practices there is not one problem which cannot be solved. For somebody who knows how to do even just the *tonglen* practice—taking and giving, which is contained in the seventh stanza—there's not one single problem that cannot be solved.

I think this might be the third stanza, "In all actions I will examine well, watching the mind. As soon as a disturbing thought arises and makes evil for myself and others, I will practice to avert it immediately." This third stanza tells us how to practice Dharma—that's the very essential advice. If somebody asks the question, how to protect karma?—this is the answer. It shows how one should act to stop creating negative karma, to make non-virtuous actions less and virtuous actions greater; how one should act from morning to night, all twenty-four hours, in actions of body, speech and mind; how to make all the actions become Dharma, the cause of happiness. The answer is in this third stanza. In all actions such as the major actions like sitting, sleeping, eating, and all the rest—always watch the mind continuously.

I usually say this in the courses—"watch the mind." But watching the mind alone is not sufficient. After watching the mind, what one should do is not to let the mind which is virtuous become non-virtuous and transform the mind which one recognizes as non-virtuous into virtue. Not letting the mind be under the control of disturbing thoughts, and if disturbing thoughts arise, preventing them by practicing the remedy of the lamrim meditations on thought training. If, on the basis of watching the mind, you don't do any practice of virtue, and don't renounce non-virtue, then there's not too much sense in it. What is the use of watching the mind if you don't do something after watching the actions of speech, body and mind—particularly watching the mind, the sensations? If you don't renounce something which gives harm to you and practice something which gives benefit to you, there's no purpose in practicing awareness. What's the purpose? We can practice our awareness on any object, on ka-ka! I think I mentioned that already. If a person gets angry...

(end of tape)

...at first he doesn't do anything, doesn't do the practice of protecting karma so his problem doesn't get solved – the anger gets bigger and bigger, his actions of giving harm to others, his enemies, happen more and more. He is kind of one-pointedly concentrating on his view that the other person is giving harm, that the person is terrible. Because he doesn't do anything to renounce non-virtue and practice virtue, his problem doesn't get solved but gets bigger and bigger. I should give this example: A person who goes to rob a bank has to be very careful, has to have a lot of awareness—knowing how to get inside, how to get through the window, how to get from the roof! He has to have all the equipment. A lot of awareness is needed. And he knows “I am stealing.”

(A dog starts howling)

A.M: He is also saying “God.”

L.Z: I will ask the dog to cry every session, even in the meditation sessions!

You see, the person who is stealing is aware that he is stealing—he knows that he is not supposed to, that it does not belong to him. That's why he is scared! After he recognizes the thought to steal, after he recognizes that “I am stealing,” “I am taking,” if he doesn't do something, some Dharma practice, that is the problem. Not protecting karma is the problem. That is what gives trouble to other people and problems for oneself.

One example: one Kadampa Geshe—those who have heard lamrim many times must be familiar with this story!—named Gen Kungyal, a great yogi, in his early life was a robber during the daytime and a thief in the night-time! He had a field and he reaped forty big sacks of wheat, but he was not satisfied even with that much. So he became a robber and a thief. He carried many weapons, such as arrows and knives, tied with his belt. His nickname was “Forty-Evil.” “Forty” because he got forty big sacks of wheat from his field and “Evil” because he did a lot of robbing and thieving. After he met Dharma there was still a very strong impression from the past karma of stealing. When he first started to practice, one day he went to his benefactor's house. Normally he lived in a cave and came down to his benefactor's house to get food. Somehow the thought came to steal tea from the tea sack. His hand went inside the tea sack, then suddenly he remembered that he was stealing. He screamed, “Oh, there is a thief in the house! Please come!” He screamed very loudly so the people working in the field would hear! When the owner rushed inside he showed him that his right hand was inside the tea sack and said, “Oh, here is the thief!” That is practicing Dharma! When he remembered that he was stealing, he wanted to do the complete opposite.

The self-cherishing thought wanted to steal the tea for himself, for his own comfort. As soon as he recognized this he acted completely against the self-cherishing thought; he did completely what the self-cherishing thought didn't want. Of course the self-cherishing thought didn't want other people to know that he is a thief, so he went completely against the self-cherishing thought. So this is pure actual Dharma practice. This is hurting and destroying the selfish attitude by putting the thought training practice into action. His recognition “I am stealing” had meaning and brought a result. Not only did he stop stealing, but he did an incredible brave practice to destroy the selfish attitude. This is Mahayana thought training. He exposed himself to the benefactor. I think that instead of making the benefactor angry, it would have caused him to laugh! I think there is another example about wine, but I don't remember that clearly.

So that is the practice of renouncing this life, renouncing worldly concern. Holy Dharma is against worldly concern and the self-cherishing thought. He also did this—in one temple—I don't remember the name—everybody lined up and he was sitting at the end of the line. An offering of curd was being served—I don't know, maybe they were monks. He could see the curd from the end of the line. In Tibet they have very good curd, very thick curd! Anyway, it doesn't matter! So, he was watching the people in the line who were being served the curd, and he saw that a lot of curd was going into other peoples' bowls. He became very concerned that he wouldn't get enough, or any! Suddenly he became aware that he was having much worldly concern and practicing the eight worldly Dharmas. As soon as he became aware of that he put his bowl upside down and when the person serving the curd came by he didn't accept any. Again, this is completely against the worldly concern. Again he became aware of the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas arising, the attachment clinging to this life, the selfish attitude. He didn't give the curd to the selfish attitude; he didn't give the curd to the worldly concern, but completely renounced worldly concern and the selfish attitude. An ascetic, simple life doesn't refer so much to the outside -whether one is wearing red cloth, living with a naked body, not keeping possessions, living in a forest or living in a cave. A simple, ascetic life means a life such as this practitioner lived: cutting-off or separating from worldly concern. One who is living a pure life separated from the selfish attitude of clinging to this life is a greater ascetic, is more simple. Many great lamas such as His Holiness the Dalai Lama, His Holiness's gurus, many great yogis who passed away and who have gone to very high realization of the tantric path, and many bodhisattva kings, although well dressed, having many possessions, having many attendants, many things, their minds are unstained by worldly concern, unstained by selfish attitudes, unstained by ignorance holding true existence, and especially unstained by impure conceptions and views. So you see, the life they live is the purest, simplest life—but having everything. So the definition of a simple life is this. Being a simple monk, or a simple ascetic Dharma practitioner does not depend on external appearance.

The bodhisattva kings had to have many possessions in order to work for others. They had to have power and wealth in order to make charity to others and to guide others. Some, who find it more beneficial for others, even though they have great attainments, live simply, even physically. Those great lamas and great yogis live in different styles of life according to whatever is more beneficial for others. Some are very rich; some do not keep any possessions. If one practices by watching the mind, like this Kadampa Geshe Gen Kungyal, once one is aware of disturbing thoughts arising and of creating negative karma, there is a great meaning. Otherwise one will never understand and protect karma by practicing virtue and renouncing non-virtue. In that case, even if one does meditation for one hundred years—watching the mind, watching sensation, watching the stomach moving up and down, watching the breath—it doesn't make much sense. It is very hard to see any virtue there, any cause for happiness. Besides not purifying previous negative karmas, it becomes non-virtue because it is motivated by worldly concern.

Perhaps some, maybe a very few, even though they don't know karma, would gain something if they didn't do it for their own happiness, but for the happiness of others—perhaps to be able to solve other people's very simple problems, or something very simple like that. Having a motivation like: "I am practicing this meditation of watching sensation so that if I develop something, some concentration, maybe I can help someone who has problems." Without any expectation for himself, for reputation or anything, but just simply having a very sincere heart to help others. Because meditation done with that motive is possessed by the thought to benefit others, it is virtue. That's different. It's quite rare to have this pure thought for the happiness of others without any

expectation for one's own happiness. That is difficult for most people. For somebody who naturally has a very good heart from a past life, this may arise and then if the person does a meditation retreat on awareness of sensation, for example, there is a possibility for his action to become virtue. If you know shunyata—"labeled" and "merely labeled" then it is very interesting. Even if you do the meditation for one minute or one second, it is very powerful—it shakes the root of samsara even to do one minute of meditation, concentrating on or being aware of the sensations and meditating on emptiness, or how the sensations are a dependent arising. Then, the different levels of dependent arising—"labeled" and "merely labeled." There is so much to meditate on just in these two words! It is not an easy subject. One can meditate for a month or years and years, even the whole life, just on this. It is so unbelievably worthwhile. It is a complete remedy. This is the actual weapon, like an atomic bomb. Then each time you meditate you plant a seed to realize shunyata. Even if you don't actually know what shunyata is, it plants a seed, prepares one for the realization.

There's incredible benefit from meditating on shunyata. It is said in the teachings that even just questions, even doubts, arising about shunyata—whether something is empty of true existence, inherent existence, of independence, or not—and doing analytical meditation on that, breaks samsara into pieces. Even a minute of meditation or concentration on, or just remembering emptiness has much greater benefit than making charity to all the sentient beings in the three realms. The many benefits of meditating on shunyata are explained.

Now I'm going back to the conclusion! There is no question of whether or not meditation is virtue if it is the remedy to the ignorance which is the root of samsara. Of course it is virtue if it harms the ignorance holding true existence. Remember these words from the stanza: "Whenever a disturbing thought arises, it makes evil for oneself and others."

Watch your mind, remembering that disturbing thoughts have harmed you from beginningless samsaric rebirths until now and do so even now by having these deluded aggregates formed by karma and disturbing thoughts. Being caught in samsara is harm given by karma and disturbing thoughts. They are giving harm now and will continue to give harm to oneself. Disturbing thoughts oblige one to create negative karma—that is how the disturbing thoughts make evil for oneself and for others. One becomes a condition for disturbing thoughts to arise in the minds of others, obliging others to create negative karma, so it makes others evil. Anger makes oneself evil, then because of getting angry at others, it makes them unhappy and angry and one obliges other people to create negative karma.

When a thief enters your house, or when you know that a thief has stolen many of your possessions in the past and so far you haven't been able to catch him, you want to stop that harm now...

(end of tape)

If you are late by one second to control anger, the undedicated merits get destroyed and even the results of dedicated merits get postponed. If you're going to generate the realization of shunyata tomorrow, say, it gets postponed for one hundred eons or a thousand eons, depending on whom you get angry at, even if it is for one second. It depends on the level of the mind of the person you get angry with—if it is higher than yours, it postpones the realization, the result of the virtue, for one thousand eons. You see, that's why it is so important. the danger is incredible.

So, one should catch the disturbing thoughts with the practice of awareness and memory and then destroy them with method and wisdom. Without memory and awareness, that can never be done. The wisdom of shunyata and dependent arising is wisdom, and method is the rest of the lamrim meditations such as patience, loving kindness, compassion and so on. This is the answer, the essential advice as to how to practice Dharma. We started from wrong rejoicing, remember? He emphasizes how the mind is so dangerous even in its way of thinking if one is not careful, if one doesn't know Dharma, and if one does not practice.

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG RINPOCHE...

Dedicate the merits of taking ordination, together with the merits accumulated by other sentient beings—all the three times' merits accumulated by me, and by other sentient beings, "May I quickly achieve the Great Compassionate One's enlightenment, and lead each and every sentient being to the Great Compassionate One's enlightenment."

LECTURE 20  
November 29 pm

SA.ZHI POE.KYL...

I GO FOR REFUGE TO THE BUDDHA, DHARMA, AND SANGHA...

Please generate at least the effortful bodhicitta, then listen to the lamrim teaching, "At any rate, I must achieve an omniscient mind for the benefit of all kind mother sentient beings, therefore I'm going to listen to the teachings on the graduated path to enlightenment."

In regard to karma being expandable, Guru Shakyamuni also explained this in the sutra teachings: somebody with non-virtuous, negative thoughts criticized a monk as he was crossing over, or jumping over water. The person said the monk was jumping like a monkey—not like a monk! I'm not sure about the karma, the virtue of being a monk like a monkey! Just because of criticizing like this, just simply saying this, the person had to be born five hundred times as a monkey with a voice like a barking dog.

At one place in India there's a great river—I don't know the name of it. However, one day five hundred fishermen were catching fish and they put out a huge net. Somehow they caught an incredibly heavy fish which even all five hundred fishermen couldn't pull up! So they had to ask for help from some nomad shepherds nearby. It was huge—I think it was a kind of—what is the largest animal? A whale! But having eighteen different heads. There were also founders of the "inner beings" gathered there to watch this animal. It was during the time when Guru Shakyamuni was in the aspect of the sublime transformation. The omniscient mind sees every single existence wherever there are sentient beings, and what is the right time to guide, to benefit them. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha saw that it was the right time to benefit other sentient beings by revealing teachings of karma.

Suddenly Buddha appeared there with his psychic power. Then those other inner beings thought, "Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is supposed to not have any attachment to sight." They were thinking that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is supposed to be an ascetic so should not have any attachment to seeing what is happening, for his own pleasure. Like, for example, going to a football match! Then some people told them, "No, Guru Shakyamuni's omniscient mind sees all the time how to benefit

sentient beings, so usually Guru Shakyamuni Buddha gives teachings, starting from karma. That is why Guru Shakyamuni Buddha came here.” Then Guru Shakyamuni Buddha blessed the animal so it could remember past and future lives and be able to speak in human language. I think Guru Shakyamuni Buddha asked him, “What is your name?” The animal answered, “Shiva Sakya.” “Do you remember the negative karma accumulated by body, speech and mind?” He said, “Yes.” “Who is your non-virtuous friend?” He said, “My mother.” Then, “Where is she? Where was she born?” “In the narak” “Now you are born as an animal, but after this, where will you be born?” Then the animal answered, “I will be born in the narak.” Then the animal cried.

The fishermen were amazed that he was able to remember past and future lives like that. So then they asked Kungawo, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s attendant, to request Guru Shakyamuni to explain more about how this happened. Then Guru Shakyamuni explained the karma of this animal. In the time of the king Triti, some brahmins came to that country to debate. One brahmin called Selge Shiva completely defeated those other brahmins. So the king gave him gifts of treasures—hidden treasures buried in rocky mountains. This brahmin Selge Shiva had one child, and this one child had yellow-white hair so he was called Shiva Seto. They had these possessions that were given by the king and received from the father. The mother was worried that the possessions might be taken by force by somebody. She wanted the son to become like the father, to defeat others, so she asked him, “Can you destroy all others in debate?” The son answered, “I can, except for Guru Shakyamuni’s followers. Those monks I can’t destroy in debate.” She said to the son, “You should also be able to destroy those monk followers of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha in debate.” He respected his mother very much and he always did what she asked.

Then he met one monk. The monk asked the son some questions but he couldn’t answer. The mother asked, “Did you destroy him?” The son said, “Actually, if I tell you frankly, I was completely defeated!” Then the mother suggested to him, “Don’t reveal teachings to many people. You just become a monk and study, and after studying a while you can go back to being a lay person. You should be an expert in the teachings of the Buddha.” So he became a monk, and he became expert in his studies. Then, again the mother asked, “Did you destroy them?” The son answered, “I can’t. I only have the words of Buddha’s teachings; I don’t have realization. They not only have the quality of understanding the words of Buddha’s teachings, but they also have realizations.” So the mother suggested, “You speak Dharma as much as possible, then after some time the monks will start to debate with you. Then you call them nicknames. You see, they will be afraid to rave back because they will try to protect karma.” She said, “If you call them nicknames when they start to debate, they will be scared to rave back at you, and so other people who will be watching will think that now you are winning because they are quiet!”

Then he started to talk Dharma. After some time the monks started to debate with him. Then he called each of them nicknames such as “Elephant Head” and “Tiger Head.” He called them by eighteen different names. Because of that karma of having called monks eighteen different nicknames with negative thought he was born as this huge whale with eighteen different heads. One was an elephant’s, one a tiger’s, then dog’s, monkey’s, donkey’s—maybe not yak’s! You see, the object is powerful—monks—so the karma is heavier. Because of the power of the object if it’s good karma, more powerful; if it’s negative karma, more powerful.

In order of increasing non-virtue it is this life’s mother, then the ordinary monks, then Arhats, then bodhisattvas, then Buddhas, then gurus. If one does good actions in relation to the very powerful objects one starts to experience the result even in this life.

There is one story of a clay-maker girl. This story which Guru Shakyamuni explained is the sutra reference for the practice of exchanging oneself for others. This story is about the negative karma that is created with a powerful object such as the mother and how one starts to experience it even in the same life. Those who have heard the Mahayana thought-training teachings might have heard this story. Her father, I think, used to be in business as a gold trader. He used to go over the ocean by boat to get gold. I think her father drowned when his boat sank. They had many children but all of them died.

I don't know if they have this custom in the West that when many children die you call the last one some special name so he or she lives. No such custom? Now you can create the custom! I'm joking! They had many children. Similarly, my mother had many children and many of them died. Her last child had something like a Buddha's pinnacle. It came out of the womb but it didn't last a long time. I don't know what happened. When my sister was born she was called "Blacksmith," a name regarded as lower-caste. By calling her that name it kind-of stopped the obstacle. Somehow the method is a dependent arising. There are many examples where after being called a nick-name the person does not die.

Anyway, this mother had many children but most of them died. So one child, actually not a girl but a son, they called "Clay." Clay is also regarded as referring to a lower caste according to Indian custom or kind-of law. One day he told the mother, "I want to do exactly what my father did." She didn't want him to go across the ocean to do gold business because she thought he would die as did the father. So she told him, "Your father used to make business in grass." So he tried to sell grass. Then I think again he asked, and she said fire-wood. Then he made business in firewood. Then, I think, he asked again and his mother said grain. Then, somehow he heard from other people that his father used to do gold business. His mother asked him very much not to go to get gold. She even grabbed his feet. He did not listen and he kicked his mother's head and left.

As he was going across the ocean, he saw a kind-of island. He reached this island and there were incredible entertainments and enjoyments: five hundred beautiful palaces, incredibly beautiful five hundred-storied mansions, clothing, food, and many beautiful goddesses. And everybody asked him to stay there. They gave him so many different kinds of food, but he did not listen. I think he went away from there, over the ocean, and then came to another island.

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I think after the third or something like that, island, he reached one area where there was a person whose head was being cut into by a karmic wheel—a wheel of swords. He was experiencing incredible, unbelievable pain. Then there came a karmic voice from the sky: "Those who created negative karma such as this will have this wheel moved onto their head." He felt so much compassion for the other person who was suffering so much. Then he remembered having treated his mother badly by kicking her head and then the wheel came onto his head from the other person's head. Then he generated incredible compassion, thinking, "Any sentient being who has created karma to have to experience a suffering result such as this, may they be free from that and may I experience all their karma, all their suffering, by myself." As soon as he generated this thought renouncing himself and cherishing others, the wheel which was turning on his head suddenly went up, his consciousness was transferred and he was born in a deva realm—Tushita, or something.

Experiencing his head being cut by a sharp wheel of swords was the result of the negative karma of kicking his mother's head. Seeing those islands with five-hundred storied mansions and much clothing and food and many beautiful goddesses was a result of gaining money earned by doing the business of selling grass or roots or branches—I'm not sure whether it's two or three; if I remember I'll tell you—and giving his earnings to his mother. I think on the first day he gave her two coins, the second day four coins, and then more and more like that. The result of those karmas was not experienced in his next life, but experienced in that same life. You see, there are three different types of karma. There is karma the result of which one experiences in this life. That's called action karma because it can be seen by eye. Then there is karma experienced in the next life; then that experienced in other lifetimes. So this was karma which is seen in the same life.

This story is to show that any karma, even if small, that one creates with powerful objects such as the mother, one starts to experience in this life. Also from this you can understand that karma is expandable—because he gave two coins, then four coins, then eight coins and so on, the result was a beautiful island with five-hundred storied houses, many beautiful goddesses, being given clothing and many hundreds of different foods. You can see, the result is so great yet the cause was so small.

You can learn from this how karma is expandable.

I think this next story is in the very beginning of the book "The Wish-Fulfilling Golden Sun." One great yogi, Lopon Sangye Yeshe was giving teachings to many disciples, when his guru when his guru Pasangba walked by. Sangye Yeshe pretended to not see his guru. You see, what he should actually do whenever he sees his guru is stand up to show respect. I think this is probably what is called "kurti"—the particular term used in "the Great lamrim," Lama Tsong Khapa's lamrim teaching—the offering of respect. His Guru Pasangba later asked him, "Didn't you see me before?" Sangye Yeshe said that he hadn't seen him. As he said this, suddenly both eyes dropped onto the floor. The object to whom he was telling lies to is the most powerful object amongst all the merit field, the Triple Gem—the guru. His guru Pasangba blessed him and he was able to adjust and keep one eye; the other eye would not stay in. Then he had to do great purification and confession. If you are able to read the life stories of the lineage lamas of the nyung.ne, the Chenrezig practice which comes from the fully-ordained nun Gelongma Palmo, who attained Chenrezig enlightenment, you will see there are many stories like this about other lineage lamas. One yogi had leprosy disease of the eye and no treatment helped him. He had so much pain in his eyes. Even hot spring didn't help. I think he did the retreat of Red Yamantaka but even that didn't help. Afterwards, he did the part of the retreat where he had to make confession of the negative karmas related to the guru. No treatment except this confession practice helped. There are several of these stories. If you read the life stories it is very inspiring, very effective, for the mind. Again, this is receiving guidance from Sangha.

Then, as I have come to this point of talking about how negative karmas connected with powerful objects are so powerful; nowadays there are a lot of stories that come from Tibet about people who previously destroyed the monasteries and precious statues. Of course, people themselves didn't have freedom—the Chinese forced them to destroy these things. One lama was tortured by the Chinese in public. They asked one woman to torture the lama. The lama had given no harm to her, but they made her ride on the lama. The lama had to crawl over the ground like a horse, like an animal. Sooner or later this woman who rode on the lama went completely crazy. Many people destroyed precious holy objects and statues—I don't remember the particular names. They took them from

the altar and threw them onto the floor and things like that. Many people are telling about these things being taken to China; this summer they are returning them back, broken.

One person who broke statues at a temple later had both his legs slowly go up like this, completely stuck to the skin. His palms went completely backwards, like that. Is there any case of this in the West? Where a person was born perfect but changed later on? Have you heard? Hands becoming shorter and sticking to the arms?

A.M: Muscle atrophy through lack of usage—shriveled.

L.Z: Even becoming stuck!? You don't like the part about them sticking? I'm joking! It turned out very funny.

Also, one monk that I knew at Darjeeling—studied Dharma for many years in Sera College and knows Dharma very well. Tomo Geshe Rinpoche, Lama Govinda's Guru—you know Lama Govinda?—a great yogi, passed away and reincarnated. This monk used to be Rinpoche's servant. His name is Tashi. He was a Tibetan school teacher for some time. He wasn't serving Rinpoche then. Anyway, what happened was that his leg or hand got stuck to his body. Then they did a lot of pujas and he had to do a lot of purification. Now he has recovered. I didn't see him, but I heard that he has recovered. I heard he was very sick before, in a very bad situation.

Those who did many of these things under the force of the Chinese—such as the care-takers of the monasteries destroying the very precious statues and other holy objects—many of them are becoming crazy. Before that time they didn't have strong faith in karma, that there can be such a result. So, many people who used to say there is no karma, that there is no such thing as the Triple Gem—following the Chinese idea—because they themselves went through a lot of fears, now have unshakable faith in karma. They even ask other people, "Definitely there is karma, so please don't destroy the holy objects." There are many stories like this.

There are reference experience or stories in the tantric teachings taught by guru Shakyamuni Buddha about how the mandala offering practice is a way of accumulating extensive merits. One visualizes the four continents, the eight small continents, Mt. Meru, many enjoyments, golden mountains and many offerings including as many universes as one can visualize or think of. When one does the mandala offering to the merit field one receives as extensive merit as if one had actually offered all those continents, the whole universe, all those devas' enjoyments. However many universes one can visualize when one makes offerings, one receives as much extensive merit as if one had actually offered them. These karmic stories are the main references to illustrate the benefits of the mandala offering practice.

It is very good to remember them again and again because then, you see, inspiration comes to create merit. Even if one doesn't have good quality offerings such as gold, silver or jewels, even if one doesn't have better possessions to offer, even if one doesn't have anything, one can still accumulate extensive merit. You can get an idea from this following story.

When Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was going for alms along a road, three children were playing on the sandy ground. The children saw that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was coming along the path and they thought to make some offering, but they didn't have anything to offer. As they were playing in the sand one child thought to offer sand grains. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's holy body is very tall—I think twelve times a common person's height! So they could not reach the begging bowl. They planned that one child stand, then another stands on his shoulders and the third one on that one's

shoulders, like a circus! Then the third child visualized the sand as gold and offered it to Guru Shakyamuni's offering bowl. That is all that the action was—sand visualized as gold—but as a result after that life he was born as King Ashoka. As that king, even in one day he was able to build one million stupas in many different places. He became a religious king and had much wealth and power; he was able to build many monasteries and able to make many offerings to the Sangha, creating so much unbelievably good karma in that life. Even though it wasn't gold, but just sand visualized as gold, he received benefits as if he had offered gold.

That is the reference story for understanding the mandala offering practice, how one can accumulate as extensive merits as by offering the actual universe.

Virtuous karma is expandable. By using this story as an example of how to skillfully accumulate extensive merit, even if we are offering just a few paisa, we should visualize gold or diamonds or something like that. You can even visualize this money as the whole universe. If you are throwing rice or sand grains to a holy object, an actual living holy object or even a statue or stupa, you can visualize each of the grains as a wish-granting jewel, the whole space filled up with wish-granting jewels and you can think that they are granting the essence from guru devotion up to enlightenment. That creates the cause to rapidly generate the realization of the path to enlightenment. It is similar to how we do the mandala offering practice. If one understands lamrim, even if one is penniless, a beggar, there are so many skillful ways to create extensive merit.

I think it was in Washington, quite some years ago: one lady wanted to commit suicide off one very high tower—I don't know how many stories. She was not staying in the tower; I don't think people stay in this tower. She especially went right up to the roof. She thought that if she jumped off the low buildings she may not die; so to make sure of dying, she especially went up the highest tower and she jumped. But what happened was that there was a strong wind and she didn't succeed in what she wanted. This illustrates that karma is definite! Expandable? I cannot predict that yet! There may be other things to come! Without having created the cause, the result doesn't get experienced: she wanted to die immediately, but she didn't have the karma to die at that time. Then, karma that is created doesn't get lost: she had the karma to remain alive.

Another similar example—some people might know this event. In New York, I think two years ago, one huge airplane—I don't know where it came from—right after it landed at the airport the pilot's cabin was becoming hot and he was screaming for help. I read it in the newspapers when I was in the West, but I don't remember it clearly now. Normally there shouldn't be any problem because the hostesses were well-trained in how to open the door and all those things. Theoretically, there should not have been any problem. There were maybe three hundred people. You may remember—they went to open the door, but they couldn't open it at all, and they couldn't understand why. Then the plane became completely wet and even though they screamed, nobody could help. People outside came to open the door but they could not as it was completely stuck. Many people tried to open the door and after some time—I think it took quite a while—when it opened, the people inside were piled up dead from suffocation. The roof was completely burned. Then they could figure out what really happened. Maybe the pilot forgot to do something. Again there is the whole set: karma is definite, so it was definite for those people to experience such a result that day at that airport. You see, it was group karma, collective karma. Then, karma is expandable: the cause was smaller...

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...those negative karmas were not purified before, nothing was done so it was not lost. Then, another story. I didn't get to know details of this story, but you may get to know them from Australian people. I think some people were eaten by a shark. They went fishing? Three people went for entertainment.

A.M: Two men and one woman.

L.Z: Yes, in a boat. I don't know the details, but the essence of the story is, I think, that while they were in the boat...

A.M: Surf-board.

L.Z: Surf-board, yes. I think the shark came and he had bitten one man's leg. Not just bitten, but completely broken!

A.M: Bitten off.

L.Z: Yes, bitten off! I think the whole ocean around there became bloody. Much blood came from his knee, you see. Actually this man is incredible. A bodhisattva; it is fantastic what he did, the attitude that he had. Anyway, the one whose leg was bitten off told the other man and the girl, "I will give up myself to the shark to save you two." So he himself followed where the shark went. The shark came back and took the girl and shook her in the air. Theoretically it was supposed to catch the man, but actually it passed in front of the man and caught the girl and shook her in the air. Again, the four aspects of karma are illustrated. One man was not eaten by the shark, and the girl and the other man were eaten. That explains the four outlines of karma. I think I will stop here. Regarding karma being expandable: you will get more of an idea particularly when you study those virtuous actions like the various types of offerings—how from each offering one can attain various results. From the actual explanation of this part of the seven limb practice—that of making offerings—you will get a little bit more of an idea regarding how good karma is expandable. By meditating on how karma is expandable, how without the cause being created the result cannot be experienced, how the cause that is created cannot be lost, one should make a conclusion. Since it's like this—a small non-virtue having a great suffering resulting for a long time and a small virtue having a great result of happiness for a long time—one should renounce even small non-virtues and practice every single small virtue that one has the opportunity to practice. For example, trying to help the other person with pure motivation while one is talking to him, instead of saying something which is confusing to the person or makes him angry or to suffer, or causes him to create negative karma. Trying to create virtue while one is walking, sitting, eating and so on. Making offerings to the merit field when one eats or drinks. In every manner, whatever you are doing, it is always possible to accumulate virtue, to practice even a small virtue.

Since without creating the cause one cannot experience the result, think, "If I don't create non-virtues I won't experience the result at all. Therefore, I must purify and renounce creating non-virtue." Also, "The result of happiness cannot be experienced without creating the cause so I must create it, and the cause which is created cannot be lost so I must attempt to renounce negative karma, to purify, and practice virtue'. You see, as you think about each outline, stronger and stronger determination to practice karma gradually comes. The more one understands that karma is expandable, one naturally feels that even small virtues like making charity, giving even one small piece of food to an ant, are very important; it is as important as giving food to the starving or to beggars. Making offerings to the Triple Gem is important. Saving that life is there is an insect which has got into water is as important as the great virtuous actions. Even to make a gesture of prostration upon seeing a holy object is incredibly important. Even to recite a mantra in the ear of an animal, to benefit it by planting an impression of the path to enlightenment is so unbelievably

important. The more one understands and has faith in the four aspects of karma, the more one doesn't feel careless—one naturally practices even very small virtues and renounces even the small non-virtues. Understanding, realization and faith depend on purifying and praying, or making requests to the holy object, the Compassionate Buddha, the lineage lamas, the merit field. Much requesting and much purification are needed to develop the realization of the graduated path to enlightenment. I will stop here.

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG RINPOCHE...

LECTURE 21

November 30 am

Generate bodhicitta while visualizing the merit field, the Great Compassionate One, above one's crown and the crown of each sentient being.

I GO FOR REFUGE TO BUDDHA, DHARMA AND SANGHA...

Also remember when you say this, "The purpose of my being alive and having a human body today and each day, is to renounce giving harm to other sentient beings and to offer benefit to all other sentient beings." As you have meditated about the perfect human rebirth, rejoice at not being a narak being, not being a preta or an animal like a snake, a crocodile or a tiger, scorpion or ring-worm or the long worm that's given to the fish, you know? Not merely being alive, but having a body which is able to practice Dharma, which can practice not giving harm and giving benefit to every living being. Not merely being alive, but having a body which is able to practice Dharma, which can practice not giving harm and giving benefit to every living being. Not only being alive, but having received a precious human body. Not just a human body, but one having all the qualities, the necessary conditions in order to practice Dharma, to practice the graduated path to enlightenment. Think, "My not only being alive, but my having a human body, each day, is to be used to stop giving harm to others and to benefit every living being." Remember this and practice bodhicitta to become enlightened for the sake of other sentient beings.

How much opportunity there is with this perfect human rebirth! How many suffering sentient beings one can help to become liberated—not just preventing a few problems temporarily, but eliminating their true suffering and even the root of suffering completely. What I'm talking about is not a short-term benefit but a long-term, deep, benefit. Not just temporal comfort but an omniscient mind, ultimate happiness. "I'm living each day to obtain the greatest benefit, the most important thing that the sentient beings need. Today I am alive and have this body which has the opportunity to accomplish this." So make a very strong determination in the depth of your heart that, "I must do this while I have this precious perfect human rebirth.

THE GROUND WITH SCENT IS BLESSED...

Request that you and all other sentient beings' negativities be purified immediately and all the right realizations related to the guru and up to the unified stage of no-more learning, enlightenment, be generated immediately in one's mind and in the minds of all the sentient beings. And that all the outer and inner hindrances be pacified.

OM IDAM GURU RATNA...

NAM.DAK CHO.KUL...

OM MANI PADME HUM.... OM MANI PADME HUM...

Chenrezig's mantra and the light is absorbed into one's own heart, generating the whole path, especially the stable understanding of karma and bodhicitta. The same thing happens to all the sentient beings. The mind has become completely oneness with, is completely transformed into great compassion, feeling it as so unbearable that the kind mother sentient beings have obscurations and are suffering in samsara, and wishing to liberate them immediately from the suffering by oneself.

SA.ZHI POE.KYL...

I GO FOR REFUGE TO BUDDHA, DHARMA AND SANGHA...

I say, "Due to the merits of giving teachings and so forth accumulated by me, may I become enlightened for the benefit of all sentient beings."

Please listen to the teachings by generating at least the effortful bodhicitta, thinking, "At any rate I must achieve the state of omniscient mind for the benefit of all the kind mother sentient beings, therefore I'm going to listen to the teachings of the graduated path to enlightenment."

The great bodhisattva Shantideva said in the *Bodhicharyavatara*, "From non-virtue all the sufferings arise. How can I be definitely liberated from this? It is worthwhile to think only of this." What the great bodhisattva Shantideva is saying is, since non-virtuous karma is definite and it's expandable, the result cannot be experienced without the cause, and it cannot be lost, it is worthwhile always to be thinking, "How can I be definitely liberated from this?" "This" actually means true suffering and the true cause of suffering. If from understanding the lamrim teachings one all the time has the wish to be free of suffering and the true cause of suffering, this is renunciation. Also, recognizing karma and disturbing thoughts, the cause of the problems, the true suffering, as poison, one will have the strong wish to be liberated from this.

If you hear that there is actually poison in your food, of course you immediately throw it away; you don't leave it around. As soon as you discover it, you stop eating and you throw it very far because you are scared—even if you have doubt that there may be poison—say if a pot where there was poison is not washed, one dares not eat the food. If there's a poisonous snake around your place whose bite you can die from immediately, you are so aware, so careful, and you try to find the snake. You can't stand it, can't relax, can't wait to remove the snake; it's so uncomfortable. Similarly, when there's a contagious disease around, you try to be so careful in order to not get it. You try to get injections ahead of time, even though it has not reached that area.

(end of tape)

It shows our ignorance. We don't feel anything for the actual cause of those problems—the disturbing thoughts, anger and dissatisfied mind. We are friends with them, as much as possible. We keep them in the mind and heart as much as possible and take the best care of them. We completely dedicate our body, speech and mind for the true cause of suffering—the disturbing thoughts—and don't have any fear of karma and disturbing thoughts. We gladly, happily follow them, with much joy. Only when the results, the problems come do we have much fear. You see, that is showing

ignorance; not having an understanding of Dharma; not having found the stable understanding of karma, a strong, stable faith in karma.

Even if one has some understanding and accepts that life's problems come from the true cause—karma and disturbing thoughts—even if one has ... kind of faith, but it is just words—only in the mouth and not in the heart. Like a flower which doesn't sink in water, but stays on the surface of the water. You know, the green flower? I'm not talking about flour—you know, *tsampa*! When you throw that flower in the water it doesn't sink, but stays on the surface. One doesn't have deep understanding or faith in one's heart. One doesn't feel much even if one accepts it. That is due to not having thought well and extensively about the subject of karma in various ways such as about the teachings of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and the karmic stories in the sutras. It is also due to not having done purification and having not accumulated extensive merit.

What Shantideva is saying is that one should feel that the true cause of suffering is like a poisonous snake, or poison that is in one's food, or like a contagious disease. Then, because of understanding all the harms, one should eliminate the cause and purify what has been accumulated in the past. If one accepts, has understanding and has fear of karma and disturbing thoughts, as one has towards those other things, then naturally, without much hardship, much practice of purification of the negative karmas that have been accumulated is done and even small virtues are practiced. If one is always thinking, "How can I be free of the true cause of suffering?" one has the thought of leaving samsara, aversion to the true cause of suffering. Such a person has entered the path to liberation. He sees that the true cause of suffering is so dangerous, like a poison. The person who has strong renunciation of his own true cause of suffering will have unbelievably strong compassion when he thinks of others' true cause of suffering. That person has established the root of the Mahayana path—the great compassion—and has the possibility to achieve enlightenment.

Also, the very distinguished great propagator of the Mahayana teachings, the great pandit Nagarjuna, said, "If you wish for the body of the happy transmigratory beings and for the liberation, then please train your mind in the right view." If what you're seeking for after this life is to have the body of the happy transmigratory beings, that is, happiness after this life, and not only that but even liberation—the lower liberation, or the great liberation of enlightenment—train in the right view. This right view is not only shunyata; it also means karma. Karma is called the worldly beings' right view. You see, this is the main thing that ordinary beings have to be careful of and which they should think about and always practice awareness of. The main fundamental practice should be awareness of karma—actions of body, speech and mind—and then renunciation and bodhicitta. This is understanding virtue.

You see, we should plan our enlightenment, our liberation from samsara; we should plan to have those very high tantric realizations such as the Six Yogas of Naropa—the stage of accomplishment, which is the second stage of tantra—but most importantly, if we are not careful about today's karma, this hour's karma, there's a danger that we might fall into the lower realms before we achieve those realizations! Before we achieve the Six Yogas, or the *kundalini*, or whatever we're expecting! The 'Very close one' is death. We are not sure when those other realizations will come, but death can happen at any moment—today, in any hour—if there's karma. If we check, if we watch our mind, watch the nature of our thoughts and actions even in one day, then we will see that the lower realms are very close. That's what's in front of us! So you see, for us ordinary beings, the first thing is to pay attention, to be careful of this. We should make preparations not to have danger or fear at the time of death—our death which is very close, which will definitely happen. Those realizations

are not sure to happen, but death is definite to happen. If we're not careful we will be born in the lower realms. You can see whether it is easy or not for those beings to practice and create the cause of the realms of the happy transmigratory beings by practicing moral conduct. You can see whether the animals can practice moral conduct or not: how long it will take them to be born again as human beings having an opportunity to practice Dharma.

You can see how long it would take just to be born as a human being. You can see by just watching the buffaloes, the dogs, the birds and what they do, the nature of their lives, their attitudes. Because of having taken such bodies they are limited and have no opportunity to practice moral conduct, charity and patience—the causes for the body of a happy transmigratory being and the necessary conditions. Such perfect enjoyments and perfect surroundings and helpers. Even we, as human beings having met the Dharma, cannot transform our thoughts and actions from morning until night into Dharma; so how can these animals transform their actions into Dharma? Even we who can listen, reflect and meditate, who are trying to practice, find it difficult.

If we check our own minds, how many times in one day is the mind not under the control of disturbing thoughts. Is there any mind that becomes virtuous in one day? If there is, how many? Are there more times when the mind is under the control of disturbing thoughts or more time when it is being virtuous, not under the control of disturbing thoughts? By checking our own minds we can understand others and how pitiful they are. Because of hallucinations such as "I am good," "I am honest," "I always do good things," kind of pride comes and we don't really feel how those sentient beings have great suffering and are devoid of the freedom to practice Dharma. We don't have a feeling in our hearts. Also, we don't rejoice, don't feel happiness in having the opportunity to practice Dharma, having the opportunity to listen to the incredible teachings of Buddha. By practicing, by putting them into action, there's no betrayal—definitely one will achieve the results. They lead to the liberation that one is seeking. Instead of feeling happiness, some people even feel depressed, which is because of not understanding the perfect human birth, it's usefulness, the difficulty of gaining it, and that it has a very short span. Because of not thinking well about the freedoms that we have, we can make ourselves depressed by knowing others' sufferings, instead of rejoicing and being happy. Instead we should meditate on the eight freedoms and ten riches and how those who do not have the riches and freedom are suffering.

We ordinary beings should plan to realize shunyata, to achieve the tantra stages of the graduated paths of generation and accomplishment, and to achieve enlightenment, but if we don't try to have a stable definite understanding of karma by studying these teachings, if we don't protect karma itself, don't renounce non-virtue and practice virtue, that itself becomes an obstacle to generating bodhicitta and realizing shunyata. You may be meditating on shunyata; you may like shunyata meditation very much: emptiness, voidness, nothingness—however you interpret it, perhaps as having a blank mind, like meditating on space—however, you see, not protecting karma itself becomes an interference to really generating realizations of emptiness or realizations of the three principal paths. Not being careful of karma, but hoping to realize something like shunyata, or something about astral trips, or clairvoyance, or kundalini or something like that; but before that happens some contagious disease or heavy problem comes, difficulties come, and one finds it very difficult and when death happens nothing has been done. No change was made in regards to the causes for the lower realms. No change in one's actions was made; nothing was done to protect karma.

However, what I'm saying is that death and the lower realms are close; definite and very close. Therefore, the first thing that we ordinary people have to be careful of is karma. It's very important to meditate on the perfect human rebirth, its usefulness and all those things.

I didn't get to expand on each meditation. It's very important after you've done each analyzing meditation, to do one-pointedness meditation on the understanding and the feeling. This kind of realization, the recognition that life is precious, is not strong yet. This has to be gradually developed until you feel the perfect human birth so spontaneously. You see, when attachment arises when you're working, or eating, or sleeping, it comes spontaneously, without effort. Having a realization of these meditations—that this life is so precious, the difficulty of finding it and all those things—is continuously, naturally feeling it without effort. That's the sign.

So, after generating the feeling do one-pointed meditation on that; thinking how precious the eight freedoms and ten richnesses are. How precious they are. Just this, over and over—"How precious this is. How precious this is ..." Like if you've found a million dollar diamond, you take best care of it—you put it in a safe place where it won't get lost. Naturally you think, "How expensive, how precious it is." Like that one should think of the perfect human body.

JANG. CHUB SEM.CHOG...

LECTURE 22  
November 30 pm

We're going to do a meditation together, okay? visualize Chenrezig about your own crown.

I GO FOR REFUGE TO BUDDHA, DHARMA, SANGHA....

For those who are going to practice, when you are going to meditate on lamrim visualizing Guru Chenrezig about your own crown, you should think that he is the embodiment of all the gurus with whom one has had Dharma contact. As I mentioned before, he encompasses the three objects of refuge—Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Then generate the particular motivation of bodhicitta in order for the meditation to become the cause of enlightenment for the sake of all the sentient beings.

Because of not having generated the realization of the graduated path of the lower capability being—the precious human body qualified with eight freedoms and ten richnesses, that it is highly meaningful and will be difficult to find again, and that it's definite for death to happen and the actual time of death is indefinite—myself and other sentient beings have been suffering from beginningless rebirths until now. You should feel this first of all. If you don't feel the suffering of samsara much, at least you should try to remember your own past experiences—all the problems that you have gone through since you were born until now. You should feel at least that which is your own experience, even if you cannot see or feel others' experiences. These problems that you did not like, the samsaric sufferings, came from the deluded aggregates caused by karma and disturbing thoughts. You should think of the mistake—that oneself and all sentient beings are suffering in samsara because of the mistake of not having generated these realizations.

It is not sufficient that oneself wants to be freed from samsara. All the sufferings come from the selfish attitude—not being concerned at all for others, only concerned with one's own happiness

and comfort. All the time thinking about “I,” “I,” “I,” with nothing else to think about. No space for the thought of concern for others, to think about works to benefit other sentient beings. One doesn’t, one is completely occupied by the selfish attitude thinking, “When can I be happy?” All the problems and sufferings come from this. All of one’s happiness and perfections, all the good things are caused by other sentient beings. “Therefore, I must attain enlightenment, at any rate. No matter how difficult it is, even if it takes billions and billions of eons.” “At any rate” means no matter how hard it is to achieve enlightenment in order to free sentient beings from samsaric sufferings and to lead them to the state of omniscient mind; one should have a great mind, a great will.

One can even think like this: we can label the time from beginningless rebirths until now as “one second.” There are so many seconds in a minute, so many minutes in an hour, so many hours in a day, so many days in a month, so many months in a year and so many years in an eon. Even if it takes as many of these eons composed of these seconds as there are atoms of this earth to complete the works for other sentient beings, one should feel, “I’m going to do it. I’m going to do it!” One should have a long range plan, a strong determination. A bodhisattva, one who has the altruistic mind of enlightenment is this brave. No matter how hard it is, no matter how long it takes; even if one has to be born to suffer in the narak—in the heaviest hot suffering narak, the worst that exists—for that many eons, in order to guide one sentient being from suffering and to lead him into happiness. As it is said in the *Guru Puja*, “Eons equaling the drops in the Atlantic Ocean.” A person having that quality of mind, that strong determination to dedicate himself for others is called a “bodhisattva.” They have incredible determination, no matter how hard, how long it takes to reach enlightenment for the sake of other sentient beings. Like this, you should think, “At any rate I must reach enlightenment!” So, “at any rate” contains this meaning. “I must reach enlightenment for the benefit of all the sentient beings.” Particularly remember your enemies—it is also for them.

THEREFORE I’M GOING TO MEDITATE ON THE GRADUATED PATH TO ENLIGHTENMENT.

Offer the mandala to Chenrezig.

THE GROUND WITH SCENT...

Request Guru Chenrezig, remembering that he is the embodiment of the Guru, Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, “I’m requesting you to pacify immediately all the wrong conceptions, from disrespect to the guru, to the subtle dual view of the white, red and dark visions—my own and all the sentient beings—and particular obstacles such as the conception of permanence; and to generate the realizations of the perfect human rebirth—its usefulness, difficulty, impermanence and death—aversion to the sufferings of the lower realms and stable indestructible faith in refuge and in karma—the graduated path of the lower capability beings. I’m requesting you to generate all the right realizations from guru devotion up to enlightenment—the unified state of no-more-learning; particularly the realizations of the lower capability beings’ graduated path, and to pacify all the outer and inner hindrances to this path. To generate this realization right this session, right this minute, in my mind and in the minds of all sentient beings.”

Then think that nectar beams are emitted from Guru Chenrezig, purifying all one’s, as well as other sentient beings’, obstacles. You can think a replica is absorbed which generates all the realizations, particularly the realizations of the lower capability beings’ path.

OM IDAM GURU RATNA...

First think like this: this time the human body that I have received is qualified with eight freedoms and ten richness. All eight; all ten—eighteen things are gathered. Without having created eighteen causes I could not achieve a precious human body having eighteen qualities. At other times I received some, but some were missing. I was born in a human realm but born deaf, or a fool. Or born in the naraks. Even if I was born with perfect organs, I did not meet the teachings; I was born in a place where there were no teachings, where Buddha did not descend. Or born in a place where there were teachings but did not follow the teachings; I received some, but missed some. But now, this time, the human body is perfect with all the eighteen necessary qualities needed to practice the holy Dharma; to accomplish the great meanings or purposes. How precious it is having the eighteen things gathering that are needed to complete the great purposes. If you have no idea in your mind, think of the happiness of having the body of a happy transmigrator in future lives, and of liberation, enlightenment—how precious that is. Just keep on thinking this; one-pointedly concentrate on this and recite the Chenrezig mantra. Your mind should not wander. One-pointedly concentrate on how this is so precious—on and on—by being aware of all the eighteen things. Nectar flows from Chenrezig, purifying oneself and other sentient beings and generating the realizations.

OM MANI PADME HUM... OM MANI PADME HUM...

At these times you should not concentrate so much on the words, on the recitation of the mantra, but mainly concentrate on the precious human rebirth and just how it is so precious. Just keep on thinking, “This is so precious ... this is so precious,” like that. If you continuously, one-pointedly concentrate on its preciousness, the result that comes into your mind will be the thought, every minute, every hour; “I’m not going to waste my life. I’m going to use my life for whatever is the most important, the most beneficial for other sentient beings.” If that determination comes automatically while you’re one-pointed concentrating on “This is so precious, so precious, so precious,” that is good—then your mind has a hope! That means there’s a possibility that the mind can generate realizations of the lamrim, the graduated lower capability beings’ path, and also the rest. Make a determination, a conclusion like this.

“The most beneficial, most important work”—that is just a general idea; you have to know what it is. What’s the most beneficial thing? You have to make it clear. It’s so precious, so what are you going to do with it? “What am I going to do with it? How am I going to use it? It’s something that I cannot waste but have to make most meaningful.” Think with determination, “Whatever actions I do I’m going to try to make them oppose the disturbing thoughts.” Thinking this way is good instead of saying, “I’m going to practice Dharma.” Because if you say, “I’m going to practice Dharma,” probably it might mean to recite mantra of just keep on doing something. You might get an idea that practicing Dharma is doing something else—not sleeping or not eating. But, you see, we should cause whatever action we are doing to become Dharma. That’s the most important thing. Rather than vaguely saying, “I’m going to practice Dharma,” think of the actual meaning of “Dharma” and remind yourself by thinking, “Every action that I’m going to do will become a remedy to the disturbing thoughts.” If from morning until night all our actions become remedies to the disturbing thoughts, everything we do becomes Dharma. You shouldn’t think it is just like during the course. You should also think it is life in the West—you know, when you work in the office from morning till night, living in the family. The whole thing, from morning until night should

become Dharma, so that whatever actions are done they become a remedy to the disturbing thoughts.

Make a conclusion, “Whatever actions I do I’m going to make them become a remedy to the disturbing thoughts and I’m not going to separate away from the practice of the two bodhicittas.” This is the decision that has to be made in the life by those who practice thought training—to never separate away from the practice of the two bodhicittas. It doesn’t matter so much if you do meditation on Shunyata or not. One should try to practice that, but the most important thing is to keep the altruistic mind of enlightenment, bodhicitta, in one’s heart, and to never separate away from this practice. In every single moment, in every single action having the thought to benefit others. Doing it for others.

Now think this, “With this perfect human rebirth, if I wish to achieve the body of the happy transmigratory beings in my future lives and even the necessary conditions—the perfect enjoyments, the perfect surroundings and helpers—I can accomplish it. How? With this body I can create the cause by the practice of moral conduct, the practice of charity, and the practice of patience. Charity, for enjoyments; patience, in order to have perfect helpers.” Think, “This perfect human rebirth is highly meaningful, so precious...

(end of tape)

The wish-granting jewel is the most valuable among the material possessions. By praying to it you can get any enjoyment, any material possession, any wealth. Whatever you need you can get without effort due to the power of that object. In the lamrim teachings the wish-granting jewel is used to give an idea of how this human body is precious. Actually, there is nothing among material possessions which has the same value as the perfect human rebirth; but to give some idea of how precious the human rebirth is, it is compared to the most precious among possessions, the wish-granting jewel. However, I’m not going to mention the story of that. If that gives you some feeling, then think of the whole of space filled with those. If that doesn’t make sense, you can think of all space filled with diamonds or dollars, okay? The whole of space filled with dollars!

Now think, “Without having this perfect human rebirth, even if I own the whole of space filled with diamonds, dollars and wish granting jewels, does this alone stop me from being born in the lower realms? Does it help? This alone? No, it doesn’t help me to not be born in the lower realms. Does it help me to receive the body of a happy transmigratory being in the next life?—at least this, with all the enjoyments and perfect surroundings? No, it doesn’t.” You cannot get this from the wish-granting jewel alone.

First of all, you should get the idea that you own the whole of space filled with dollars. From this alone you can’t get happiness in future lives. Now, after thinking that you own that many dollars, and how precious they are, think about the perfect human rebirth, “Even if I don’t own one wish-granting jewel, one diamond, or even one dollar, with this perfect human rebirth alone I can stop myself from going to the lower realms, and I can receive the body of a happy transmigratory being and perfect enjoyments and surroundings.” Now you see that all space filled with jewels, diamonds, or dollars is nothing, but this perfect human rebirth is incredibly precious. Just by checking this point those other materials go down in value, in contrast this perfect human rebirth is so precious.

OM MANI PADME HUM... OM MANI PADME HUM...

We should meditate that we can achieve temporal happiness in future lives—a perfect human rebirth—and also the ultimate result—liberation and enlightenment. Then, like we did with the temporal result, compare the value of the jewels and the value of the perfect human rebirth for achieving the ultimate result. After you discover that the human rebirth is more precious than those materials, again do one-pointed concentration for a long time, very strongly, without a wandering mind. After this, think that while this perfect human rebirth is so meaningful for one to achieve the great purposes, it has been wasted.

Then again go through the three steps, one by one. Think of how it has been wasted, ending like this, “Since I was born until now much of this perfect human rebirth has been wasted because of not practicing moral conduct, not practicing charity and not practicing patience, so not creating the cause for temporal happiness in future lives.” Think, “By following the evil thought of the worldly Dharma, the worldly concerns, my actions did not become Dharma. They did not become the cause of happiness in future lives. How much this perfect human rebirth has been wasted!”

How much has it been wasted? You saw that it is much more precious than the wish-granting jewel. Now think about wasting it for even one minute or one second by not practicing Dharma, letting your mind follow worldly concerns and using it to create non-virtue. By following worldly concerns actions become non-virtuous. We waste this precious human rebirth in order to commit non-virtue. Wasting it for one minute is a much greater loss than losing all space filled with wish-granting jewels, diamonds, or dollars. Wasting it for even a minute is a greater loss than losing all those possessions. While there is an incredible opportunity to accomplish whatever happiness one wishes in future lives, not making life meaningful by practicing Dharma in each minute is a great loss.

After this, think, “Since I was born until now my mind has been following worldly concerns, has been in a state of non-virtue, not Dharma. This is how it has been wasted. This precious human rebirth is being used to create the cause of suffering in the lower realms instead of the cause of happiness in future lives.” By being aware of the past and the mind that has been following the worldly concerns, we see that the life, the precious human body, has been wasted. We will recite the mantra concentrating one-pointedly on this.

OM MANI PADME HUM... OM MANI PADME HUM...

We should try to discover how this life has been wasted by recollecting all the past years and all the past lives.

OM MANI PADME HUM... OM MANI PADME HUM...

Then, after you have meditated on each one of the three great purposes, meditate on how you’ve been wasting the opportunity regarding the second great purpose. Clinging to samsaric perfection is the opposite to renunciation, to creating the cause for liberation. How much that opportunity has been wasted! It is a greater loss than losing all those possessions. Try to feel that while feeling that there is this incredibly opportunity to create the cause for enlightenment, the ultimate goal. Especially think how precious it is to be born on the southern continent and having the physical body which has three things received from the father. On this particular planet, this southern continent, there is the existence of the complete tantra teachings, including Maha-anuttara tantra which grants enlightenment even in this very brief life in this degenerate time, even within a few years; or within three or sixteen lifetimes. So, when you think of this, it is incredibly, unbelievably

precious. There is nothing more precious. This perfect human rebirth is unbelievably important. While there is this incredible opportunity, it is wasted. By not making this life meaningful such as by practicing tantra, the quickest path to enlightenment, there is an incredible, unbelievable loss. Come to that decision and do one-pointed concentration on it.

The third advice regarding the three meanings is that even in an hour, a minute or a second, whatever happiness you wish for—happiness in a future life, liberation from samsara, or enlightenment—you can create so many causes for it. This perfect human rebirth is so precious even within each hour. As it has come to this point, I will mention this—those who have heard and who know the unbelievable, incredible benefits of doing even one prostration should remember these things: how, within an hour or minute, by doing even one prostration one can create unbelievable merit with this body. I'm not going to mention it now. Within a minute you can do so many prostrations.

Unbelievable merit can be created with this perfect human rebirth. By generating the motivation of bodhicitta even for a second, infinite merit is created. Practicing rejoicing can create infinite merit, as can making offerings to the Triple Gem and guru. Most of you have not got the detailed explanation of the result of each of the offerings. There are some stories that I mentioned about karma being expandable; it is unbelievable what you can do within each minute for the cause of happiness. Just the one or two stories that I have mentioned illustrate how karma does unbelievable things. It's just that in our mind we have formed a lot of obstacles. Even when somebody explains how, we don't want to practice. We don't want to know and we don't want to practice. If someone explains, it doesn't do anything, it doesn't reach anything. So many obstacles. Even if we hear the Buddha's teaching, it doesn't mean anything and we have no thought to put it into action. It doesn't mean as much to us as when we hear "chocolate," or when we see ice cream. We don't even get the feeling that is something that is needed, something that is important. But there are incredible benefits and one can be so happy. By knowing the lamrim teachings, even just the usefulness of the perfect human rebirth and understanding other preliminary teachings, especially karma, instead of being depressed, one will only be happy. You should think extensively on this. After thinking how precious this life is even in each hour or minute, make one-pointed concentration on this. Then think how much it has been wasted. Then one should make a conclusion the same as before, "Whatever I do, I will make my actions become the remedy to the disturbing thoughts."

For those who have already taken tantric initiations and are practicing tantra and the tantra vows, I think it's very good to make a strong determination not to separate from the tantra practice and not to break the tantric vows. Making a determination helps one to remember to be conscious of tantric practice and the vows during working time. For those who have taken Maha-anuttara initiation there are vows related to activity such as the mother tantra vow of doing actions with the left side. It makes one more conscious. These vows are the root of the method to quickly achieve enlightenment, therefore it is helpful to have awareness of one's tantra practice and the vows. Then, those who haven't received them generally should think of bodhicitta and create the cause. If one wishes to practice this incredible profound path, the secret, quickest path to enlightenment like those great yogis who achieved enlightenment in a brief lifetime or even within a few years, one should create the cause. Dedicate the merits for that—to create the cause to be able to receive teachings and practice the path.

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG...

Then Guru Chenrezig melts into light and absorbs into one's own heart. Feel oneness with great compassion.

DUE TO THE MERITS OF HAVING LISTENED TO THE TEACHINGS AND ALL THE THREE TIMES MERITS OF MYSELF AND OTHER SENTIENT BEINGS, MAY I QUICKLY, QUICKLY ACHIEVE THE GREAT COMPASSIONATE BUDDHA'S ENLIGHTENMENT AND LEAD EVERY SENTIENT BEINGS TO THE GREAT COMPASSIONATE ONE'S ENLIGHTENMENT.

Thank you.

LECTURE 23  
December 1 am

The unification of the Great Compassionate Buddha Chenrezig's holy body and mind is upon one's own crown and on the crown of each sentient being. Visualize him in the one thousand-armed, one thousand-eyed aspect—the particular aspect for subduing the unpeaceful mind, the vicious harmful thoughts which harm other sentient beings, which give no peace to other sentient beings, and which give harm to oneself. Also, to subdue the ignorance holding true existence, believing things to be existing from their own side as if they were inherently existent; and ignorance of karma, and to subdue this dissatisfied mind, attachment and anger—there are six root disturbing thoughts. However, this aspect is to pacify all of these and to lead sentient beings from true sufferings to temporal happiness, and even from the cause of suffering by guiding them to the state of liberation; even from the subtle dual view, the subtle obscurations. If one finds this very difficult, if somehow it doesn't fit one's mind, one can visualize the compassionate Buddha in four-armed aspect. Now we will do the practice of refuge and generating bodhicitta, the altruistic mind of enlightenment. Remember, as I explained before, the meaning of these prayers:

I GO FOR REFUGE TO THE BUDDHA, DHARMA, AND THE SUBLIME ASSEMBLY UNTIL I BECOME ENLIGHTENED.

You should know why one has to rely on Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha and remember these things while doing this meditation, otherwise it doesn't make sense. When we have some disease, we have to rely on the doctor, even for simple things. We cannot recognize the disease and cannot recover by ourselves. We have to depend on the doctor. If we didn't have to depend on others we wouldn't need a teacher to teach us A B C D. If you think we don't need to practice refuge in order to be free from samsara—true suffering and the true cause of suffering—then there should also be no need to depend on others to teach us A B C D! We shouldn't need to go to school, to university or to college and to depend on a teacher.

Generally it is like this: even to know the methods of earning food or money depends on a teacher, depends upon relying on somebody. Then why not for the path to achieve the ever-release from samsara and enlightenment? Examine this from your heart. Think carefully, in order not to waste this one time that you have received the perfect, precious human rebirth, but to make it highly meaningful. One cannot guide oneself from samsara, from all the obscurations, by oneself alone. One cannot guide oneself without depending on Buddha who revealed the path; without depending on the path; without depending on the helper, the Sangha—like the patient has to rely on a doctor, medicine and nurses for his disease to be cured. As you have some understanding of, and can remember what is meant by Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, meditate with a strong feeling then rely

on Buddha, Dharma and Sangha in order to free all the sentient beings from suffering and to lead them to enlightenment.

### I GO FOR REFUGE TO THE BUDDHA, THE DHARMA AND THE SUBLIME ASSEMBLY...

Remember, “My being alive each day is not for my happiness, but to eliminate all other sentient beings’ sufferings and to obtain happiness for them. The purpose of my being a human being, my being alive in each hour, each minute, is completely for others. I exist for others, not for myself; for each of the narak beings with their sufferings as we meditated this morning; preta beings; animal beings; for each of the human beings, including the enemy whom I dislike, to liberate him from suffering and to lead him to enlightenment. Like this with each and every sentient being. I’m not living my life to harm others; the purpose of living my life is to benefit other sentient beings. Not only to offer temporal benefits, but also ultimate benefits. The actual thing that is needed, the most important thing, is ultimate benefit—not short-term benefits, but long-term benefits. To cease all the obscuration and stains and to cause them to attain a state of peerless happiness, the greatest liberation.”

Think, “My life is not to confuse others, but to help others, to free others from confusion. The purpose of my life, my existing is to be used by other sentient beings, to be a means of their living, whatever they need. To be used by other sentient beings in whichever way they want, for their happiness; like they use the four elements: water, earth, fire and air, for living, for their pleasure. They use these in many different ways, however they want; likewise may my life, my suffering, my body, speech and mind be beneficial in whichever way they want. It’s up to them—it’s not up to me. I’m owned by others; I belong to others, I don’t belong to myself.”

It is very important to practice the bodhisattva’s attitude and the bodhisattva’s conduct, “I belong to others, each of the sentient beings. When I do *tonglen* practice—giving and taking kindness, I am actually already giving myself, my possessions and my merits—even merit, the cause of temporal and ultimate happiness—to each sentient being. Charity has already been made to each sentient being, so nothing belongs to me. It belongs completely to other sentient beings, including my enemy, the one whom I dislike; the whole thing completely belongs to him. I exist only to make charity, to give it to him. So how can I think of this body, speech and mind, these possessions, their merits as mine? How can I use these for my own happiness?” While these belong to others, how can we use them for our own happiness? We should practice like this.

As it is said in one practice called *Slaying the Ego*, “While thinking that one’s possessions, and body, speech and mind are one’s own, one used them freely, however one wants to for one’s own happiness. Like that, let others use one’s own body, speech and mind, everything, freely, as one uses one’s things normally.” By thinking, “This is mine,” one uses it freely for one’s own happiness. Exchange; let others use it freely, however they want, for their happiness. You should develop the practice of the bodhisattvas. Try to practice the bodhisattva’s attitude or conduct. Please offer the mandala.

### THE GROUND WITH SCENT...

Please make the request for the three great purposes, “I prostrate to and take refuge in the guru and the Triple Gem. I am requesting you to transform my mind. Please, immediately pacify all the wrong

conceptions from disrespect to the guru to the subtle dual view of the white, red, and dark visions, of myself and all sentient beings. I'm requesting you to immediately grant all the right realizations from devotion to the guru up to the unified state of no-more-learning, in my mind and in the minds of all sentient beings. I'm requesting you to pacify completely all the outer and inner hindrances and to complete the realizations of the Graduated Path to enlightenment." Particularly request the stable understanding of karma and bodhicitta.

OM IDAM GURU RATNA...

NAM.DAK CHO.KUI...

We are going to recite one round of the mantra. Even if you don't understand at the moment that "I" and things are merely labeled, at least try to understand "labeled." Generate compassion for other sentient beings; try to realize how other sentient beings are suffering. In fact, there is no "I" that is not labeled existing on these aggregates. In fact there is no such thing as the body existing without being labeled on the parts, or the gathering, the groups, the particles, of the body. There is no such thing as the mind existing which is not labeled on the continuation of the mental particles in each hour and each minute. Today's consciousness or mind depends on the mind on the mind of each of the twenty-four hours and that depends on the minutes of consciousness, and that on seconds of consciousness, and that on so many split-seconds of consciousness. This continuity from one second to another is labeled "today's mind." However, there is no such thing as much existing which is not labeled on those particles.

As we already discussed, and which is easy to understand—without the parents labeling the aggregates there would be no person whose name is "Paul"; no Paul existing from his own side on those aggregates. Without anybody labeling "Paul" on those aggregates there would be no Paul. Paul exists by merely labeling the aggregates. So this "I" and aggregates, everything, all the sense objects and the sense consciousness, as I mentioned before, do not exist without being merely labeled. Actually, if one has a bit of merit and has pacified obstacles and thinks well on the fact that nothing exists without being labeled, then without the need to say "merely" but just by saying "labeled" one would get the idea of merely labeled. Things exist by being merely labeled, like the name "Paul" cannot exist without somebody labeling those aggregates. The Paul appearing to exist on those aggregates without being labeled is completely non-existent. There is not even the slightest atom; it's a completely hallucination.

Like this, for all kind mother sentient beings, their own "I," aggregates, everything, appear as if they exist without being labeled, exist completely from their own side. While there are no such "I" and aggregates, body and mind—or six senses and sense objects—form, tastes, smells, sounds, contactables—existing from their own side, it appears to them that everything is existing from its own side. In reality they are empty of existing from their own side without being labeled. They completely cling to this as one-hundred percent true: that the consciousness, the "I," the aggregates, the sense objects, everything are as they are appearing. For a person who has taken LSD, the earth is turned into moving worms although actually there are no worms. Or, a person who instead of seeing one dollar sees it as one thousand or whatever the biggest bill is—one million or ...

(end of tape)

In reality it doesn't exist, but because the mind is hallucinating due to mantra or certain substances like drugs, or defective consciousness or senses, it appears like it is one hundred percent true. In fact there's not even an atom of the one billion dollars which appears to the person's senses and which he clings to.

Like this, the kind mother sentient beings are completely hallucinating about the way I and the aggregates, they themselves are existing. They believe something other than what exists in reality. This is the greatest disease, the greatest suffering and confusion. Because of this, anger, ignorance and karma—the cause of happiness and suffering—the dissatisfied mind, and all the disturbing thoughts arise, and they become more confused.

Then by generating much compassion purify the cause of suffering, the ignorance holding true existence, and all true sufferings and obscuration which interferes, with quickly achieving enlightenment.

OM MANI PADME HUM... OM MANI PADME HUM...

When you think of all beings at the same time, it may not be clear, it may not be that effective, so think that you first purify the narak beings, then the preta beings, then the animals—gradually, then its more effective. Nectar beams enter and purify them and their bodies become like crystal, calm and clear. As I mentioned, be aware of their particular sufferings, and as you finish each realm think that this is happening to yourself also.

OM MANI PADME HUM... OM MANI PADME HUM...

Preta beings suffer mainly from hunger and thirst. The main suffering of animals is that they are food, are eaten by other sentient beings. Also they suffer from heat and cold. Human beings have the eight sufferings. Then there are the sufferings of the suras and asuras. Purify them, being aware not only of the cause, but of their true suffering.

Maybe you have watched television all your life—now you should make it useful! Or maybe you did much sightseeing—now you should make it useful! I think there are many creatures that make children and then the children eat the father. There is one huge fish like that which eats the mother or father, I don't know which. Scorpions lay thousands of eggs and I heard they eat the mother. She gets completely covered by the children and they eat her. Think about this. There are many other examples such as the mother eating her children. Besides being attacked by others, even the family eats each other! There are many other examples which I haven't seen but have heard about. All animals are food for each other. Every animal is always looking for another animal to eat—those in the oceans, snakes, everything. Even tiny ones have other creatures which they eat. Those small conch shells which stick to the rocks at the beach—they are brought on to the beach by waves and as soon as the water goes away birds with long beaks come to eat them. They can't fly away! Just think about being a shellfish and a bird with a long beak is coming and you can't fly, can't escape. It's just unbelievable! It makes tears come to think of what they are suffering; just the true suffering, without talking about the true cause of suffering.

Then think about the true cause of suffering. They have a mind and feelings; they all have suffering and don't have happiness. It's the same thing for birds. After the birds eat, ants come to eat what is left over; many tiny ants completely fill the insides of the conch shells. I heard that when the turtles

come up to lay eggs in the sand and then return to the water, the eagles eat them. Unbelievable. The big animals have other small animals attacking them and eating them. You should think about this extensively. Now you should remember so that the sightseeing you have done in the past and the television that you have watched become useful. They are useful because they can be used to subdue and control your own mind and to develop bodhicitta for the sake of sentient beings. Then it makes sense to go on tours; otherwise it is a waste of money! In this way however much money is spent you get the essence out of that which is essenceless!

It is very effective to go to the zoo or the beach. There are variously-shaped creatures quite similar to what was explained in the teachings. There are unimaginable creatures in the oceans which look like flowers or plants. Some can be seen at the beach in the sand or where there are rocks. Growing on the rocks there is one thing which looks kind-of like green grass, but actually it is an animal. It opens its mouth, which is red inside, just before the waves come. When I was watching them some were a little bit open and some were closed. What they do is, they open when the waves come and many creatures go inside and then they close. Unbelievable! In India I used to find some leaves which had the complete face of a human, very small and white—eyes, nose, mouth. Very strange! There are also some creatures which are completely like a stick. So it's very useful to see the creatures in the zoo. One of the reasons I used to go is that it is the same as reading a text on karma. It is another way to think about karma.

Then, there are books about animals. Some animals which are seen through microscopes are like water bubbles. There are so many unbelievable things. All those are teachings on karma if one knows how to think. This is not like in those stories from the sutra texts which I mentioned which are about things you don't see now. Now you don't see the animal with eighteen heads or the golden ka-ka or whatever it is. At these places there is something which one can understand now. You can see those things by going into the water, to the zoo, and so on.

(break in tape)

The mind is completely transformed, becoming oneness with Chenrezig's great compassion towards all; feeling the sufferings of each sentient being as unbearable; wishing to free them from all the sufferings and obscurations by oneself.

MAY THE ALTRUISTIC MIND OF ENLIGHTENMENT BE GENERATED WITHIN MY MIND AND THE MINDS OF ALL SENTIENT BEINGS WHERE IT HAS NOT BEEN GENERATED; AND WHERE IT HAS BEEN GENERATED, MAY IT INCREASE.

LECTURE 24  
December 1 pm

SA.ZHI POE.KYL..

Please listen to the teaching...

(end of tape)

Guru Shakyamuni Buddha explained in the teaching called *Tsom*... I think the entire text was recently translated into English by one student who lived here a long time, a Canadian monk. It is very

effective for the mind. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha said, “About even a very small non-virtuous action, negative karma, one shouldn’t think, “Oh, it doesn’t matter. This is so small it won’t harm me,” actions such as saying one or two nasty words which hurt another’s mind, or kicking dogs, or beating people. Also, disrespect for holy objects. The precepts of taking refuge in Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, and what one should practice and what one should renounce, wasn’t finished yet. Those small things are very important.

If we want to practice we need to hear more. We need to listen and study many and various teachings, all the lamrim subjects. Otherwise we will always have a limited understanding, knowing some karma subjects but not understanding others. Understanding karma is not easy, you know. It is very extensive. We should know as much as possible in order to practice.

Whether an action is virtuous or non-virtuous mostly depends on the motive, but there are many which depend on a holy object, not on the motive—whether they become the cause of suffering or of happiness depends on the powerful objects. So there are many things to learn; even if we have heard some lamrim teachings and we think we might know about karma, there are many details to understand.

Guru Shakyamuni Buddha said, “Even by collecting drops of water a large pot gets filled.” He used this as an example for negative karma, how by the collection of many small negative karmas the effect becomes great. That is one way for it to become great. I think I will mention it at the end, when the main part of the explanation is finished. The different small negative karmas are collected and become huge, like mountains are composed of atoms. Not only that, but unless the small karmas that are accumulated each day are purified that day, they multiply by the next day; day by day, month by month, year by year. Even if one small negative karma is not purified, it multiplies, it increases. So there are different ways to understand the collection of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s teachings.

There are two ways to understand the increase of karma. One shouldn’t be careless of even an extremely small negative karma, thinking, “It won’t give harm,” because in one way it multiplies, and the other way, by accumulating many small ones they become like mountains. Even by killing one tiny creature—a mosquito, a flea, or any tiny creature—if one does not purify that negative karma on that day it increases. Doing the meditation practice of confession the downfalls to the Thirty-five Buddhas, or the mantra practice of one very powerful deity, Vajrasattva, which has the particular function of purifying the sentient beings’ negative karmas, their obstacles to generating the realizations of the graduated path to enlightenment; or perfect confession with the four powers—I think this topic came on the very first day of the course—and purification practice, are methods of purification. If one does purification together with the confessions practice—the four powers—it is the most powerful, the most perfect method.

If one doesn’t get any purification done by the next day the negative karma has doubled; then tripled the third day. After fifteen days, through multiplying, the negative karma becomes as heavy as having killed a human being. After eighteen days the negative karma of having killed a mosquito or a flea multiplies by 100,000, then another 30,000 then another 1,000—I don’t remember the 100’s. It has increased like this after eighteen days. I will explain the four powers at the end of the basic subject, when some more details of karma are finished. Then maybe I will give the oral transmission of the mantras of these meditation practices.

Also Guru Shakyamuni Buddha said, “Don’t think that the small negative karma that was accumulated won’t ripen in the future,” which means, “Don’t think it won’t be experienced in the future.” “Just as a great pot gets filled by water drops, by collecting the small negative karmas the child gets extremely filled.” He is saying “child,” but it actually means “ordinary being.” Normally in the teachings they are called “child.” The way we ordinary, worldly people act through body, speech and mind is childish. So, in the teachings they are always called “child.” When the higher beings—the bodhisattvas, the arhats, those beings who have entered in the path—look at how we live life, they see us as kind of very ignorant, kind of crazy, very foolish or childish. Then, it makes big sense! “The child gets extremely filled,” doesn’t mean the child gets filled with happiness or bliss! The child gets extremely filled with the collection of small negative karmas. “Gets extremely filled” also means doesn’t do any practice of purification; doesn’t know how important it is to purify; doesn’t know the meditation techniques to purify. Even if he knows he doesn’t practice. Then the mind of that “child,” of that ordinary being, gets completely filled by negative karmas. Instead of being completely filled with good karmas, it is filled with negative karmas.

Also it is said in the teachings, “Even if the skilled, wise person’s negative karma is great, it is easy; even if the foolish person’s negative karma is small, it becomes great.” That is very true; “the skillful, wise person” means wise in Dharma—it doesn’t mean wise in worldly politics, or wise in fighting wars, or wise in writing books or speaking languages, but wise in Dharma. Especially wise in karma—what is to be practiced and what is to be renounced. The wise are wise in the profound methods of purification, wise in practicing bodhicitta, wise in meditating on shunyata, wise in meditating on renunciation. For the person who is wise in the meditation techniques to purify, even if he has created much heavy negative karma, his negative karma becomes small because it gets completely purified. It becomes very weak, very small. So that is why it is said, “Even if a wise person’s negative karma is great, it is easy.” “Easy” because it gets immediately purified and becomes small.

Even by reciting Chenrezig’s mantra just one time the wise person can purify even very heavy negative karma such as the five immeasurable negative karmas—causing disunity among the Sangha, killing one’s mother or father, causing blood to flow from a Tathagata or killing an arhat. Among the heavy negative karmas, some of the heaviest are the immeasurable karmas. Why are these karmas called “immeasurable”? “Immeasurable” also has another meaning, but actually “immeasurable” suffering, or “immeasurable” karma means the unbearable suffering state, the heaviest hot suffering in the narak. It is immeasurable, the greatest among the narak sufferings. That makes sense. I think the actual translation of this is “uninterrupted karma.” Why it is called “uninterrupted” is because if this negative karma has been accumulated and no purification is done before death, then the next rebirth is definitely in the narak. With other negative karmas, even if they are not yet purified, maybe some good karma is more powerful than that at the time of death, so there is a possibility one might be born in the upper realms, the realms of the happy transmigrating beings, in the next life. But this uninterrupted negative karma is very heavy, so if nothing is done before death, there is no other rebirth before the narak.

Even such a heavy negative karma as this can be purified by the wise ones, even by reciting a mantra just one time. A person who has bodhicitta realization or who has realization of shunyata can purify even such heavy negative karma by reciting Chenrezig’s long mantra, or even the short one, just one time. Even if one doesn’t have the realization of bodhicitta, but has at least some correct understanding, the recitation of mantra, making prostrations and such things, is perfect—it has

much power. Just prostration itself has power due to the holy object, the merit field. Doing these practices with the thought of bodhicitta and shunyata is very powerful.

Even if one does not finish 100,000 recitations, or a big number like 400,000 but one does several thousand, or even several hundred, how much purification is done is dependent mainly on how skillfully it is done, not on the number. As I mentioned before, even by reciting one mantra heavy negative karma can get purified. In some teachings the benefits of the Chenrezig mantra, the history of Chenrezig practice and the biographies of great yogis who attained Chenrezig are explained. There are stories about some practitioners who didn't even finish the number they planned but already had many signs in their dreams. Some, even though they finished the number they planned, did not have so many signs of being purified. That is why even if the wise ones' negative karma is great, it is easy; and even if the foolish ones' negative karma is small, it is great. As I mentioned before, for one who doesn't know, who doesn't understand, or hasn't met the Dharma—especially the teachings about karma—who doesn't know the method to purify, who doesn't practice, even though the negative karma is very small it is a great hindrance. There are two ways in which it becomes great, like a mountain: one way is like Guru Shakyamuni Buddha said about the drops of water—one by one it becomes great if purification is not done. The other way is that one small negative karma increases.

Even if one has taken Vajrayana vows with Maha-anuttara yoga initiations and broken the root vows, the heaviest karma, or has received a downfall out of the root vows of the Paramitayana—the bodhisattva vows—by reciting the long Vajrasattva mantra, of one hundred syllables 100,000 times that gets completely purified. If one recites the long mantra twenty-one times or the short mantra of four syllables twenty-eight times at the end of the day, the negative karma that has been collected during that day doesn't increase and it also gets purified. Not only that, but all the past negative karmas that have been accumulated since beginningless rebirths—those which we may have started to experience, but which are not yet finished, or those which we have not started to experience—are purified by this practice.

The small negative karmas give great harm like even a small amount of poison that has gone inside the stomach. Even a small flame, like the flame of candle, can destroy a city, or all of a forest or a whole mountain-side. Even though the negative karma was so small, the harm is great. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha also explained, “Don't think that the small good that was accumulated won't be experienced later. Like drops of water falling into a great vase, sentient beings' minds get filled with the collection of the small virtues.”

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He said in the sutra teachings, “The karmas don't get lost even throughout hundreds of eons.” The reason is that when the conditions are gathered, when the right time comes, samsaric beings will experience the result. Hundreds of eons is just to give a general idea, but no matter how long it takes, even billions of eons, it doesn't get lost—whether it is virtue or non-virtue as long as no obstacles happen.

An example: we plant seeds of crops in a field and then as long as nothing happens, as long as no birds eat it or dig it out, as long as it does not rot, when the conditions gather it brings a result. But if obstacles happen like rotting or birds eating it or something, the seed cannot bring its own result. Otherwise it is definite to bring its own result. So, virtue and non-virtue is similar to this. Regarding

virtue, if anger or heresy do not arise, these obstacles which destroy virtue, it is definite to bring its own result when conditions are gathered. When it becomes powerful it brings its own result. Now non-virtue: the obstacles are shunyata and bodhicitta! If somebody wants to practice the true cause of suffering, then he should not practice shunyata and bodhicitta, as these become obstacles to that! He shouldn't do purification practices because then he will not get the chance to suffer! Anyway, if no obstacles happen it is definite to bring its own result when the conditions are gathered. No matter how long it takes, in time, it doesn't get lost.

Guru Shakyamuni Buddha explained this in the teaching *Lung.nam.je*, "If one protects one's own speech, doesn't do non-virtue with the body and conscientiously abstains from the non-virtuous actions of mind; if one trains, if one practices these three karmic paths, then one will achieve the path that is taught by the Sage." This means if one trains well in the three virtues, the karmic path of body, speech and mind, the path which was taught by Buddha, "the Sage," one will achieve the path. It is also told in the sutra teachings how one naga called "Gyatso," or "Ocean," asked Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, "What is the root of this?" Guru Shakyamuni Buddha gave this answer to the naga, "These virtues"—which means virtues such as the ten virtuous actions ...All the virtues and all the non-virtues are not contained in these ten, but in order to get some idea, for it to be easy to protect karma, some of the heavy actions were condensed into ten by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. These ten virtuous actions are the root. "These are the root of all the devas" and human beings" - those who are born and die in samsara—"perfection and happiness, that which they are seeking for."

That is in regard to temporal happiness. It is also the base, the root of ultimate happiness. There are two liberations or lower enlightenments within the lesser vehicle path: the "hearer- listener" and the "self-conqueror," the arhats. This is the root of their enlightenment—the mere cessation of true suffering and the cause of suffering.

So, what is the root? Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is saying that these ten virtues are the root. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha further explained to the naga, "For example, the cities, the villages—the places where there are gatherings—the valleys, and the king's palace; the grass, trees, medicinal plants, and all the woods; all the means of travel—the roads, the ships; the shops that are making business—the whole thing, planting the seeds, growing the crops, plowing," and the other things that I don't know, I'm not sure about—all those things are dependent on the earth. "So like this, naga, the path of the ten virtuous actions is the root of being born as a deva or a human being."

Having entered the Lesser Vehicle path or the Mahayana path and training, nirvana or the great nirvana, or enlightenment, the no-need-of-training, is achieved. For those who are training in virtue, the result is this. The "no-need of training"—both the hearer-listeners' and the self-conquerors' liberation, all the bodhisattvas' conduct, and enlightenment—having all the qualities of a Buddha—the whole thing, comes from these ten virtues.

Now, we have to understand details in order to practice. In regards to killing, for example, we have to understand the details of how it becomes the complete action of killing. The completion of each of these actions has base, thought, action and goal. The base is a being having a mind which is the object. It depends on how you interpret it: it doesn't mean just anything that people call having "life." Even plants are regarded as having "life," but there is a difference of "life" for beings having a mind and what we call the life of plants and things like that. Generally if something is able to perform functions, and has the power to grow, it is called "alive." When it doesn't have any power

to grow, when there is no power for it to stay in that nature, when it is completely degenerated, it is said that a plant is “dead.” But it doesn’t mean that a plant has mind and that now the mind is separated from the plant. One shouldn’t make a mistake. In the oceans, and even in the forests, there are many things which look like plants, beings having plant shape, but it doesn’t mean they are plants. If it was a plant before and didn’t have mind, and consciousness entered into that plant later, it is no longer a plant; it is a living being even though it has that shape. Before, it was a plant. Then, the second one, the thought, has three things: recognition, motivation and disturbing thoughts. Recognition is this: the base is a sentient being and the recognition is that it is a sentient being, like an animal or human being—things that we know are living beings. Things may be sentient beings but we recognize them as not being sentient beings. There are many creatures which are actually sentient beings but we don’t know that they are sentient beings. Scientists discovered many creatures that are actually sentient beings, but we recognize them as not being sentient beings. Or, for example, if it is distant or near but you can’t see clearly that it is a living being, there is no recognition and you kill it. You didn’t see clearly or maybe you hallucinated.

Then, there is the recognition of that which is not a sentient being as not being a sentient being. Then, recognition of that which is not a sentient being as a sentient being. For example, many people believe plants are sentient beings. They regard the flowers we see as sentient beings. You see, to receive the actual complete negative karma of killing, one needs unmistakable recognition. For example you want to kill someone called Demon or somebody whose name is “Evil” or “Selfish Attitude”! But due to not seeing clearly or something, you kill someone who is called “Wish-Granting Jewel”! This is mistaken recognition, so the negative karma of killing is not complete. There is no actual recognition missing. This is not the complete non-virtuous action of killing. I think I will stop here.

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG...

“Due to the merit of listening to the teachings, doing meditation, doing prayers, all that—the three times merits accumulated by me and other sentient beings—may I achieve the Great Compassionate One’s enlightenment and lead every sentient being to that state.”

Thank you.

LECTURE 25  
December 2 am

Please remember Guru Chenrezig, the Great Compassionate One, who is all the time above one’s own crown and on the crown of sentient beings. We visualize the manifestation that he has taken in order to lead us to enlightenment, to subdue our unsubdued mind.

Then, practice refuge and generate bodhicitta:

“I GO FOR REFUGE TO THE SUBLIME ASSEMBLY...”

“THE GROUND IS BLESSED...”

Please make the request to achieve the three great purposes, “I prostrate and go for refuge to the guru and the three sublime ones; I’m requesting you to bless my mind; I’m requesting you to immediately pacify all the wrong conceptions from disrespect to the virtuous friend up to the subtle

dual view -the white, red and dark visions—mine and other sentient beings. I'm requesting you to immediately grant all the right realizations from respect to the guru up to the unified state of no-more-learning—within my mind and the minds of all sentient beings. I'm requesting you to pacify all the outer and inner obstacles”—the outer obstacles to generating the realizations of the graduated path to enlightenment. I think these are things like living beings, or the place, which disturb, and do not let one practice Dharma. I think it is also physical problems which hinders the practice of Dharma. Inner obstacles are the disturbing thoughts hindering the generation of the realizations of the graduated path to enlightenment. Due to the inner obstacles, the disturbing thought, the outer obstacles arise. Also, because of the conditions—the outer obstacles—the inner obstacles develop. They kind of become friends to each other. Together they oblige one to suffer in samsara and don't allow one to receive enlightenment by blocking the realizations of the path. There are outer, inner and secret obstacles. There are different ways that lamas explain it.

Think especially that the stable understanding of karma is generated in one's mind and the minds of all sentient beings.

OM IDAM GURU RATNA...

(end of tape)

NAM.DAK CHO.KUL..

In the previous courses, with the Lama Tsong Khapa Guru Yoga we have read the direct meditation on the complete path to enlightenment in order to plant the seed of the whole path, every day. On the basis of planting the seed every day by doing this direct meditation, we train our mind in the path, doing analytical meditation and fixed one-pointed concentration in order to transform the mind into the graduated path to enlightenment. When there is need of analytical meditation, doing that, and when there is need of fixed meditation, practicing that, thus making preparations for quickly generating the realizations of the graduated path to enlightenment in this life and in the near future lives. During this course somehow these practices didn't get done. Somehow I didn't particularly feel to do it this time.

Please concentrate on the meaning of the teachings of the complete path to enlightenment. If one does not pay attention when one does this prayer, if one is not mindful of the meaning, then it doesn't accomplish the purpose of planting seeds on the mind in order to generate the path. This is making requests to Guru Chenrezig. Concentrate on the meaning, then from the heart request Chenrezig to grant the realizations. Then, think that they are generated. You can think that white nectar rays flow from Guru Chenrezig and purify all the obstacles to the whole path to enlightenment—one's own and other sentient beings! Then, yellow nectar rays continuously flow from Guru Chenrezig. After each stanza think, "I have received this realization," after the request.

**“THE FOUNDATION OF ALL KNOWLEDGE IS THE KIND AND VENERABLE GURU. PLEASE BLESS ME TO SEE CLEARLY THAT TRUST IN HIM IS THE ROOT OF THE PATH, AND TO FOLLOW HIM CORRECTLY WITH GREAT DEVOTION AND UNFALTERING EFFORT.”**

Think that the realization of the correct devotion to the guru is generated in one's mind and in minds of all sentient beings. When you do this, you should also think of the Dharma friend's here,

and of all the six realms' sentient beings. You should think of your own parents and any particular person whom you want to benefit—one's enemy, and all the sentient beings. You should think like that each time, in order to generate the realizations. This is what they need so this is the best thing for them. The sentient beings are suffering because of a lack of these realizations, so this is what is needed. If you pray in this way, such meditation practice becomes a great puja, the best preparation to free them from suffering, and to lead them to enlightenment.

“PLEASE GRANT ME BLESSINGS TO REALIZE THAT THIS PRECIOUS BODY WITH FREEDOM IS FOUND ONLY ONCE, TO UNDERSTAND ITS GREAT MEANING AND RARITY AND TO CULTIVATE STEADILY, BOTH DAY AND NIGHT, THE MIND THAT TAKES HOLD OF ITS ESSENCE.”

Think that the realization of perfect human rebirth, its usefulness, and the difficulty in receiving it, is generated in one's mind and in the minds of all sentient beings.

“PLEASE GRANT ME BLESSINGS TO REALIZE THAT MY BODY AND LIFE ARE LIKE A WATER-BUBBLE, TO REMEMBER HOW QUICKLY THEY DECAY AND DEATH COMES; AND TO GAIN FIRM, UNCHANGEABLE UNDERSTANDING THAT AFTER DEATH I MUST FOLLOW BLACK AND WHITE KARMA, LIKE A SHADOW FOLLOWS THE BODY. AND BLESS ME ALWAYS TO BE CAREFUL TO AVOID THE SLIGHTEST NEGATIVE KARMA AND TO COMPLETE THE ACCUMULATION OF MERIT.”

Think that one has generated the realization of impermanence and death, and also the realization of aversion to the lower realms of suffering; and stable faith, effortless devotion, to the Triple Gem and then the stable, definite understanding of karma.

“PLEASE GRANT ME BLESSINGS TO UNDERSTAND THAT THERE IS NO SATISFACTION IN ENJOYING SAMSARIC PLEASURES AND THEIR SHORTCOMING IS THAT THEY CANNOT BE TRUSTED. BLESS ME TO CULTIVATE THE WISH TO STRIVE INTENTLY FOR THE BLISS OF THE BOUNDLESS STATE OF NIRVANA.”

From this pure thought arises remembrance, awareness and great caution.

“MAY I MAKE THE ESSENTIAL PRACTICE WHICH IS THE ROOT OF THE TEACHINGS THE KEEPING OF THE VOWS OF INDIVIDUAL LIBERATION.”

Think that the uncreated, or effortless realization, the thought of renouncing samsara, is generated within one's own mind and in the minds of all sentient beings.

“PLEASE GRANT ME BLESSINGS TO SEE THAT ALL MOTHER SENTIENT BEINGS HAVE FALLEN INTO THE OCEAN OF SAMSARA JUST AS I HAVE, AND TO TRAIN MY MIND IN SUPREME BODHICITTA—TO CARRY THE BURDEN OF RELEASING ALL TRANSMIGRATING BEINGS.”

Think, “The realization of bodhicitta is generated in my mind and in the minds of all sentient beings.”

“PLEASE GRANT ME BLESSINGS TO SEE CLEARLY THAT WITH BODHICITTA ALONE I CANNOT ACHIEVE ENLIGHTENMENT WITHOUT TRAINING IN THE THREE PRACTICES OF MORALITY, AND THEREFORE TO FOLLOW WITH INTENSIVE EFFORT THE ORDINATIONS OF THE SONS OF THE VICTORIOUS ONES.”

Think that oneself and other sentient beings have received the capability, the merit to keep the bodhisattva vows purely.

“PLEASE GRANT ME BLESSINGS TO PACIFY DISTRACTION BROUGHT ON BY WRONG OBJECTS, AND BY ANALYZING THE MEANING OF REALITY TO QUICKLY PERFECT THE CO-OPERATIVE PATHS OF TRANQUILITY AND HIGHER SEEING.”

Think, “I have generated the realizations of tranquil abiding—samatha and penetrative insight, the great higher seeing.

“HAVING BECOME A PURE VESSEL THROUGH THE GENERAL PATH, PLEASE GRANT ME BLESSINGS TO INSTANTLY ENTER THE SUPREME, INSEPERABLE PATH, THE HOLY GATEWAY OF THE FORTUNATE ONES.”

Think, I have received the fortune, the capability, to receiving initiation and enter the path of the secret mantra.

“PLEASE GRANT ME BLESSINGS TO GAIN FIRM UNDERSTANDING THAT THE BASIS OF THE TWO ATTAINMENTS IS THE IMMACULATE WORD OF HONOR THAT I HAVE PLEDGED, AND TO PROTECT THESE PLEDGES AT THE COST OF MY LIFE.”

Think that one has received the merits, the capability, to be able to keep the tantra vows even at the cost of one’s life. To be able to guard them, to be able to practice them, is more precious than life.

“PLEASE GRANT ME BLESSINGS TO RECOGNIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE TWO STAGES WHICH ARE THE HEART OF THE TANTRA PATH; TO PRACTICE WITHOUT INDOLENCE THE FOUR SESSIONS OF MEDITATION AND TO REALIZE THE TEACHINGS OF THE HOLY BEINGS.”

One should think that one has received the merit, the capability, to be able to do four sessions of the sublime yoga practice, and to be able to accomplish the teachings of the holy beings in one’s own mind and in the minds of all sentient beings.

“MAY THE VIRTUOUS GUIDES WHO LEAD ME ON THE SECRET PATH, AND MY SPIRITUAL FRIENDS WHO PRACTICE IT, HAVE LONG LIVES. BLESS ME TO COMPLETELY PACIFY ALL OUTER AND INNER HINDRANCES TO DHARMA PRACTICE.”

Then, as requested, all those obstacles are pacified, become empty.

“IN ALL MY REBIRTHS MAY I ALWAYS BE UNITED WITH PERFECT GURUS AND ENJOY THE MAGNIFICENT DHARMA. MAY I PERFECTLY COMPLETE THE STAGES AND PATHS, AND QUICKLY ACHIEVE THE VAJRADHARA STAGE.”

“Vajradhara’s state” is enlightenment, the unification of the holy body and holy mind. This last stanza is kind of the shortest prayer of the graduated path to enlightenment. To achieve the unified state, the stage which is the union of the holy body and the holy mind, depends on generating the graduated path to enlightenment, and that is dependent on not separating from the virtuous friend. If one separates from the virtuous friend, then in this life and future lives one will not hear the teachings completely, nor understand the meaning nor do meditation practice.

Making this prayer of the graduated path to enlightenment precisely is in order to generate the realizations of the graduated path. If the lamrim realizations are not generated in this life, even though one tries to practice, then due to praying precisely one will be able to generate them in future lives.

Then, we will recite the mantra with the same meditation as was done at other times.

OM MANI PADME HUM... OM MANI PADME HUM...

Now I think it is about time to have lunch, so if there are any questions? Yes?

A.M: I have a question about karma. If we make an effort to achieve one day, this going out of samsara, I have the impression that somewhere...

L.Z: If you what?

A.M: If without effort one day maybe we can overcome coming back to samsaric life...

L.Z: Come back to the samsaric life?

A.M: Then I have the impression that somewhere very far in the beginningless time, maybe there also was a state...

L.Z: Who says that after becoming enlightened one comes back to this life?

A.M: I mean if it is possible with effort to come to a state where we are not coming back to this. So probably I imagine that there must have been such a stage before, a very very long time ago, when this stage was once attained.

L.Z: Before?

A.M: Yes. What is the reason that we are reborn and exist in these samsaric realms? Like, for example, in the Christian religion there is the original sin that makes it that we have to come to earth. So in the Buddhist teachings what is the reason that the form and the life starts?

L.Z: I think I emphasized some days ago—actually quite a lot of times—the advantages of practicing Dharma. It is said in the *Bodhicharyavatara* by the great bodhisattva Shantideva—if we think of this, then it is very useful for our mind, even in our everyday life, even though we have not entered in the path, and even though we are not higher beings....

(end of tape)

I don’t remember the details word by word in the quotation about the advantages of practicing Dharma and destroying the inner enemy compared to the opposite to Dharma practice, trying to destroy the outside enemies. That is what the worldly people normally do and what they think is the solution. They think that to kill, to destroy, the outside enemy who gives harm is the way to make

one not have enemies. In essence Shantideva said: no matter how much we kill, how much we destroy the outside enemy—even if we kill all of the enemies in this country, even if we deport them from this country—they will come back after some time. Once we eliminate this inner enemy, the disturbing thoughts, from the mind; once we completely subdue the true cause of suffering so even the seed is non-existent, it is impossible for it to come back or to arise again.

Why is Shantideva saying that it is impossible? Because there is no cause for it to arise again. If you understand the meaning of samsara you will understand. Our deluded aggregates are caused by past karma and disturbing thoughts. Now, there are two ways to think of the deluded aggregates. One way to think is that these aggregates are contaminated by the seeds of the disturbing thoughts, the impressions. The seeds are there today because they were not eliminated in the past lives. The seed of the ignorance holding true existence was not ceased, the consciousness was not separated from that before, so that is why today there is this seed and the ignorance holding the truly existent “I.” At this moment there is no strong anger arising, but it doesn’t mean we are completely free of anger. Actually, if we think now of a person whom we dislike, how terrible he is, how he gave us harm, anger may arise even now. Or, in regard to somebody of whom you are jealous, jealousy or anger might arise, even though at this moment you don’t have it. Even though there is no strong attachment arising now at this moment, but sooner or later when we meet a desirable object suddenly attachment will arise strongly, without effort. That is because these aggregates are contaminated by the seeds of disturbing thoughts, because the seeds were not ceased by the remedy, the path. That is why our experience today, in this life, we have delusions, the disturbing thoughts, arising.

We are born with the seeds because in past lives we didn’t cease them. We didn’t achieve the liberation of separating the seeds of the disturbing thoughts from the consciousness, by generating the path. So, because of that, in this life when we meet different desirable objects attachment arises; or not meeting undesirable objects anger, jealous mind and those things arise; and ignorance arises in regard to the objects of indifference. What Shantideva is saying is that once even the seeds of the disturbing thoughts are completely eliminated by the remedy—the path—the true cause of suffering—the delusions—never arises because there is no seed, no cause, no reason at all. You see, in a place where a poisonous tree is growing we take out all the soil and the poisonous seeds, completely. As long as we don’t take out the seed it will grow again and again, even if we cut down the tree. So if you completely take out the seed and clean the place completely, don’t leave any poisonous seeds there, then the poisonous tree can’t grow because there is no seed. Similarly, once even the seeds of the disturbing thoughts are completely eliminated it is impossible for them to arise again. If it is possible for them to come into existence again, without seeds, without a cause then there is no point in practicing Dharma at all. No point at all, because then there is no solution to stop suffering. The true cause of suffering would be truly existent, without a cause, existing without depending on anything; and true suffering would also be truly existent, independent, without depending on anything. That means there would be no solution at all. We couldn’t even stop disease by medicine because disease, for example a headache, is a dependent arising, dependent on many causes and conditions, and dependent on the base and the thought labeling “headache.” It is empty of independence. So, that is why by taking medicine it can be cured. The medicine is also empty of independence, of true existence. Otherwise, if the true causes of suffering were truly existent, there would be no cure.

Consider this simple example: when you feel hungry, eating food stops the hunger. That wouldn’t happen if this hunger were independent, if it didn’t depend on not having food in the stomach! If

hunger came by itself without depending on causes and conditions, then eating food would not be the solution to stop hunger now after twenty-four hours!

The conclusion is that: if we practice Dharma, generating the path which is the remedy to the disturbing thoughts, it is one time work. Once the disturbing thoughts are ceased completely by generating the path, the work is finished. You don't need to practice again, starting from guru devotion, the perfect human rebirth, impermanence and death, renunciation of samsara and bodhicitta! One doesn't need to repeat it because there is no reason—there is no obstacle, there is no obscuration.

So, you see, even if you kick out, deport the outside enemy, it comes back again and again. Also particularly if you kill an enemy, enemies increase instead of decreasing. Anyway, there is no end because harming others is itself karma creating the cause to have more enemies. However much you continue to harm others, there is no end. However, in regards to Dharma practice, by doing it one time it has an end. I think I will stop here.

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG...

LECTURE 26  
December 2 pm

SA.ZHI POE.KYL..

Please listen to the teaching well by generating at least the effortful bodhicitta, thinking, “At any rate I must achieve the state of omniscient mind for the benefit of all the kind mother sentient beings, therefore I am going to listen to the commentary of the Graduated Path to Enlightenment.” There should be unmistakable recognition in regard to the complete action of killing. There are four things in order to complete the actual body of the karma of killing: base, thought, action and completion. Thought has three aspects: recognition, motive and the disturbing thought. Recognition: unmistakable recognition of whom one kills. But when one does the action of killing, if one has the thought, “Whoever I meet I will kill,” that doesn't need unmistakable recognition! It is similar with the rest of the ten non-virtuous actions in regard to recognition. The motive is the wish to kill. The disturbing thought is what makes the action of killing non-virtuous.

In the Mahayana teachings there are three non-virtuous actions of mind specified: ill-will, covetousness and heresy. There is no way to transform those into virtue. It is like trying to transform the black darkness into light. You can eliminate the darkness by having light, but you can't transform darkness into light! Similarly, cloth which is dirty can be made clean, but dirtiness, the dirt itself, cannot be transformed. But it is said in the Mahayana teachings that the three actions of body—killing, stealing and sexual misconduct—and those of speech—telling lies, slandering, gossiping and speaking harshly—can be transformed into virtue, depending on the motive.

In the Mahayana teachings the main emphasis is on the attitude of mind, not so much the external actions. Between outside and inside, the main emphasis is on the inside, the mind. If you keep in the mind what I am going to mention you might have a lot of questions arising.

When Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was a bodhisattva in a previous life, following the Mahayana path, he was the leader or guide for five hundred business people on a ship crossing the ocean. There was one person—a black man, I don't know, but maybe carrying a short spear in his hand—in Tibetan

he is called *Ma.na.ten due.chen*—who suddenly has a bad thought to kill them all. The “great-minded”—it means brave—guide, the bodhisattva understood that this black man was having bad thoughts arising in his mind, so he thought, “If I let him kill these five hundred people they will suffer greatly and he will create incredibly heavy negative karma and will have to experience suffering in the naraks for many eons.” So, unbelievable compassion for *Ma.na.ten due.chen* arose, that he is creating such unbelievable, heavy negative karma. Then he thought, “Instead of him creating negative karma and being born in the narak, how wonderful if I got born in the narak in his place. I will kill him and get born in the narak. Thinking, “I am going to kill this person,” he completely renounced himself in order to create the negative karma to be born in the naraks to save those other sentient beings. That bodhisattva’s action of killing became virtuous. It not only became virtuous, but it became incredible purification. You see, the action of killing done with unbearable compassion, with bodhicitta, completely renouncing himself and cherishing the others, instead of causing him to be born in the narak, caused him to be born in Samsara for 100,000 eons less in regard to time.

I think when Maitreya was a bodhisattva following the path, he met one girl who was kind-of completely crazy, in danger of committing suicide because of being completely intoxicated by desire, I think because of not finding a husband. Maitreya Buddha, the bodhisattva, felt unbelievable compassion that she was creating negative karma which would cause her great suffering. So he completely gave himself up to suffer in order to save the girl, for twelve years, renouncing himself completely to suffer for the sake of this girl. That action, instead of being a cause to be born in the narak, became the cause to be in samsara a shorter time.

So you see, the great-minded bodhisattvas are like this. Even though those actions done with the speech or body look like non-virtue from the outside, they were a great purification. Those actions have recognition and motive but are not done with disturbing thoughts. The non-virtuous actions of killing are done with disturbing thoughts—either ignorance or anger or attachment.

Then, in regard to actions of killing, doing it by oneself or letting others do, it is the same. If one asks others to do it, even if one asks the butcher to do it, it’s the same. A general is not in the war killing millions of people himself, but he gives a few words—“Attack those people,” or “Destroy that city.” Just by giving orders in two or three words, perhaps a thousand or million people get killed, even though he is not there carrying guns or anything, but staying on his bed all the time.

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When the armies get orders, they kill.

There are different ways the action can be done—using weapons, gentle ways like poison, or black magic and using the power of mantras and things like that. Then, if a person shoots or somehow harms another person but himself died before the victim, who died afterwards, the actual body of the non-virtuous action of killing is not completed. Perhaps the killer is already in the intermediate state when the victim dies! To complete the action, the victim has to die before the killer. It is the same if they die at the same time. If the victim dies first, even if the killer dies after one hour, the negative karma of killing is completed.

Then, regarding stealing: the base has to be something that is possessed or kept by, or belongs to others. The thought is the same as before: the recognition, the motive—wanting to steal—and the

disturbing thought, “I want it,” is one of the poisonous minds of ignorance, attachment or anger. Here ignorance is not only the ignorance of holding true existence—any of these non-virtuous actions might be covered by the ignorance holding true existence, but in particular, it might be ignorance of karma, or not knowing that this action is stealing. The action is the same. There is robbing by force, confiscation, or stealing by hiding. For example, you put down a deposit to the person when you borrow something so that the person has trust that you will return it. Security. Say you borrow money or you borrow a book, then after some time, many years, you think, “Maybe it is O.K. now! I’ve had this book in my room for many years.” Of course, if the person is dead, you don’t have an object to return it back to. Unless you want to return it back to the reincarnation! Send it by post to the naraks. Or send a telegram to the person, “Please quickly be reborn in the human realm so I can give it back”! As soon as you decide not to return it the actual body of the non-virtuous action of stealing is completed. Also there are other ways: if one gets the material by cheating or by cunning and thinks “I’ve got it; it belongs to me,” the action is completed. Even if oneself doesn’t go to steal but asks others to steal, it’s the same thing and one receives the actual body of the non-virtuous action of stealing. But if one actually asks somebody to steal, and before the thought “Now I’ve got it; now this is mine, I won’t return it back” arises, if one’s mind changes and the thought to give it back comes, even if the person has the object, one doesn’t receive the actual body of the non-virtuous action of stealing because it was not completed.

This is the general explanation, but now we have to think about many particular things. For example; if you are going by train or by airplane it may be a bit more difficult—even if the conductor didn’t ask whether you have a ticket or not but after you came out of the train, if you think, “Oh, today I have been very successful, very lucky, very clever, I didn’t buy a ticket, nobody bothered me, so I have been very lucky,” it is stealing. Actually it is more lucky if you pay, because it doesn’t create negative karma. But you think the other way, not thinking of the burdens that will come in the future lives, the extra sufferings to be experienced later, only thinking of the money. Not thinking of the good karma of abstaining from stealing. Whenever the thought comes, “I didn’t need to give and I have got the cost of the ticket,” the actual body of the non-virtuous action of stealing is complete.

Then another example: even if the stealing is not done for oneself, but for one’s relatives or one’s friend, the attitude is the disturbing thoughts, kind-of attachment or something like that.

Sexual misconduct has four things to be gathered to complete the action. First is the object, which is not an object to be entered, which is not a limb to be entered. Then the wrong place is a place where if one has sexual intercourse it becomes sexual misconduct then, the wrong time – if one has sexual intercourse at certain times it becomes sexual misconduct.

Now to look at details. The objects not to be entered are such as another’s wife—if one has sexual intercourse it becomes sexual misconduct. Then, one who is living in the ordination of the eight Mahayana precepts, the Pratimoksha eight precepts, the thirty-six precepts, the two hundred and fifty-four or whatever it is, or the three hundred and sixty-five or something, which the full nun has. Also it should be understood to be vice-versa having intercourse with the wife owned by another husband, or a husband owned by another wife. Also having sexual intercourse with blood relatives becomes sexual misconduct. Not so many have guards outside their door, but anyone who is kind of possessed by, protected by, or belongs to parents or guards. Guardians? Guardians, yes! Guardians, people who guard the door, same as a body-guard. A guard who stands at the door, like at the Nepalese king’s palace. All the palaces and offices have them.

A.M: Does it mean that you are not allowed to have sex with the body-guard?

L.Z: The body-guard that belongs to one's own parents or even oneself. Yes! Who stands, like the guard—that the officials have outside their doors. That is mentioned in the teachings—it's the same thing as a body-guard.

A.M: Rinpoche, what if he is off-duty?

L.Z: I think it is different! When he is no longer working for the parents, protecting the parents, or no longer belongs to the parents, then, I think, in regards to that object, it does not become sexual misconduct. There is kind-of punishment for having sexual contact with someone who is guarded by the king or by the body-guards. According to the country's laws, there is punishment, or the king punishes such contact. Which means it is not allowed by the king, and if one has physical contact with a person who belongs to the king or is protected by guardians, then the king punishes.

(end of tape)

If one has paid a prostitute whom other people pay, who does business, that doesn't become sexual misconduct. Objects not to be entered: women and also men who don't have sex, celibates, are not objects to be entered. Then regarding "limbs" which are not to be entered, that is the rest of the "limbs" except the sex organs. I think I will stop here.

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG...

LECTURE 27

December 3 am

"SANG.GYE CHO.DANG..."

"I MUST ACHIEVE QUICKLY, MORE QUICKLY..."

The purpose of making the prayers, the preliminary practices, before the teachings, longer, is that although I didn't like doing many things at the beginning, I decided to do it just to give you an idea if you want to do some practice, some longer meditation, in everyday life. Then you will know how to start with the methods for purifying and accumulating merit, of creating the cause. This is a very short, simple practice just to get some idea. If I do it, it makes me speak a lot, so that is why I asked Neil to do it! I took refuge in him!

"I PROSTRATE WITH BODY, SPEECH AND MIND IN FAITH..."

"THE GROUND WITH SCENT..."

Please make the request for the great purpose to Guru Chenrezig:

"I PROSTRATE TO AND TAKE REFUGE IN THE GURU AND TRIPLE GEM AND I AM REQUESTING YOU TO TRANSFORM MY MIND. I AM REQUESTING YOU TO IMMEDIATELY PACIFY ALL THE WRONG CONCEPTIONS WHICH ARE IN THE MINDS OF MYSELF AND ALL SENTIENT BEINGS, FROM DISRESPECT TOWARDS THE VIRTUOUS FRIEND, UP TO THE SUBTLE DUAL VIEW OF THE WHITE, RED AND DARK VISIONS. I AM REQUESTING YOU TO IMMEDIATELY GENERATE THE RIGHT REALIZATIONS, STARRING FROM RESPECT AND DEVOTION TOWARDS THE

VIRTUOUS FRIEND, UP TO THE UNIFIED STATE OF NO-MORE-LEARNING, WITHIN MY MIND AND WITHIN THE MINDS OF ALL SENTIENT BEINGS.”

If you are doing meditation on a particular subject, then you should make the request to generate that realization in particular, and to purify the particular obstacles to generating that realization. Here the teaching subject is karma, so to purify the obstacles of ignorance and heresy and to generate the particular realization, the stable understanding of karma. Also request that particularly the self-cherishing thoughts, the obstacles to generating bodhicitta, be pacified.

“I AM REQUESTING YOU TO IMMEDIATELY PACIFY ALL THE OUTER AND INNER OBSTACLES, OF MYSELF AND OTHER SENTIENT BEINGS, TO COMPLETING THE PRACTICE AND GENERATING THE GRADUATED PATH TO ENLIGHTENMENT.”

Then think that Guru Chenrezig has accepted what you have requested.

OM IDAM GURU RATNA...

NAM.DAK CHO.KUI...

The English translation of this prayer to Chenrezig can be received later. After this request white nectar rays are emitted, purifying all the obstacles, yours and other sentient beings’, and generating the realizations that you requested during the mandala offering. Now visualize that all the wrong conceptions, particularly those obstacles to whichever meditation you are doing—such as teachings on karma—are purified. Then, the stable understanding of karma and bodhicitta, and all the realizations, are generated. Then a replica of Chenrezig is absorbed to one’s own heart. Think that that has generated all the realizations.

“THE FOUNDATIONS OF...”

“PLEASE BLESS ME TO SEE CLEARLY...”

OM MANI PADME HUM.... OM MANI PADME HUM...

Chenrezig melts into light, absorbs into one’s own heart, and the same thing happens to all the sentient beings. Then the mind becomes complete oneness with the great compassion of Chenrezig’s holy mind. It is very important to strongly feel as unbearable how the other sentient beings are suffering and are obscured, and to wish that each one be liberated from the obscurations and sufferings by oneself.

“DUE TO THESE MERITS MAY I ACHIEVE THE GREAT COMPASSIONATE ONE’S ENLIGHTENMENT AND THEN LEAD EACH AND EVERY SENTIENT BEING TO THE GREAT COMPASSIONATE ONE’S ENLIGHTENMENT RAPIDLY.”

Then please generate the motivation for the teaching:

“I GO FOR REFUGE TO THE BUDDHA, DHARMA AND SANGHA UNTIL I BECOME ENLIGHTENED. DUE TO THE MERITS OF LISTENING...”

You should think, “The merits of my listening.”

“DUE TO THE MERITS OF LISTENING TO THE TEACHING AND SO ON,  
ACCUMULATED BY ME...”

You should think this, while I say, “Due to the merits of giving Dharma accumulated by me.”

“MAY I ACHIEVE ENLIGHTENMENT FOR THE BENEFIT OF ALL THE SENTIENT  
BEINGS.”

The following quotation is from the holy speech of Guru Tsong Khapa—the guide, the great leader of the sentient beings of the three realms. In the lines of the lamrim teaching *Hymns of the Experience of the Graduated Path to Enlightenment* is described that which has actually been the experience of Lama Tsong Khapa. It is about Lama Tsong Khapa’s complete experience of sutra and tantra, the complete path to enlightenment. “The body which has freedom is much more excellent”—which means much more precious, much higher—“than a wish-granting jewel.” I think in previous times bodhisattvas who had much fortune could go under the oceans to get these most precious jewels, the wish-granting jewels, on special days such as the 15th, the full moon day.

In the Tibetan calendar the day when there is a full moon normally becomes the 15th, or sometimes the 14th. I don’t know the reasons why the 8th, the 15th and the 30th are special days. On the days when there is a full moon, lay people and even monks take the eight Mahayana precepts. Even the monks, who have taken higher precepts, also take Mahayana precepts on these days to accumulate more merit even though normally they accumulate much merit. There is more merit on special days such as Guru Shakyamuni’s day of enlightenment, or of performing the twelve deeds—such as birth, descending from the deva realm Tushita to the southern continent, turning the Dharma wheel and so on. There are many special days. If one accumulates merit on those days it increases.

In the past times the bodhisattvas picked up the wish-granting jewels which were completely covered by mud. Then they cleared the mud in three different ways—the final time with cotton, after the dirt was completely off. Then, by putting banners on the roof on those special days, whatever temporal things they asked for—enjoyments and possessions—they received by the power of the jewel. Of course, it is mainly due to the person’s good karma. The other factor is the co-operative condition—that material has its own power, just as matches can produce fire. There are many things: atoms can produce energy like atomic bombs that have so much material power that they can destroy the world; like the Swami Sai Baba produces white powder from a clay pot. He puts his hand in there and he can produce white powder unceasingly. There is also the wish-granting vase and things like that. Of course, all that is dependent on the person having the karma. Similarly, for a person who has other people doing work for him or who is receiving much wealth from material objects such as his houses, it is basically dependent on the person’s own merit.

When I was in America—not exactly in Los Angeles, but outside the city—most of that place is a kind-of desert, not green but kind-of rocky, but it is a very nice place for retreats or meditation courses. There is one kind of institute there—psychedelic? Some kind of name like that! Anyway, it was a very nice place, very quiet, very isolated. I think since we did that course there many other courses have been done there at different times when lamas come. Vajrapani Center arranged it there because it’s a nice place for a course or for group retreats. The facilities are very comfortable, very luxurious, very quiet, with a of space around. Some student manifested ashes, or dust, by

praying to the picture of, I think, Sai Baba—or some other baba. I don't know which baba it is! Because of praying to the picture ashes feel from the picture. Not hashish—ashes! If it was hashish maybe it would have been more successful! Anyway, I am joking! Whenever he prays, the person gets quite a lot of ashes from the picture. The person gave me quite a bit in a bottle! Of course, it is dependent on the person who is praying, but it is also dependent on the power of the object. So, that is why in the teachings the wish-granting jewel is mentioned so much—to give some idea of how precious things are, such as the perfect human body, or how kind, how precious sentient beings are. Among the most precious human possessions one cannot find an equivalent, something which has the same value as the perfect human rebirth. An equivalent doesn't exist—that is the only thing that we can use to get an idea.

As we meditated that night—remember? This perfect human body which is qualified with eight freedoms and ten richnesses is highly meaningful because we can accomplish the three great purposes or whatever we wish for with it. Without this, however many wish-granting jewels one owns—the whole of space filled with diamonds—one cannot achieve any of the great purposes. So, you see, this is much more precious. The value of a wish-granting is insignificant when we think of the value of the perfect human rebirth. Normally, leaving aside realizing that this perfect human rebirth qualified with eight freedoms and ten richnesses is much more precious than as many diamonds or dollars as fill all space, we don't even feel it to be equally as precious as those diamonds or dollars. We don't feel it to be as precious as one hundred dollars. When we see one hundred dollars we see them as being so precious. Even with one dollar we can have a cup of coffee, or some chocolates, or some candies. We feel this is worthwhile having, that it is worth keeping, that we should not lose it. If one hundred dollars is lost we feel a great loss. However, the precious human rebirth has been wasted since one was born.

(end of tape)

If somebody steals one dollar or five dollars we get so angry. If somebody takes that away without our permission how angry we will get! But, you see, besides not feeling a great loss from wasting one minute, one hour, one day, one month or one year, we don't feel even the slightest loss even if thirty or forty years—since one was born until now—is completely wasted. We don't have the feeling of loss in regard to the perfect human rebirth. We keep one dollar, five dollars, or one hundred dollars, in a safe place, taking the best care, because we see the value of that. We don't see the value of this perfect human rebirth because we are ignorant. Even if it is explained, one doesn't have the feeling that this is so precious, due to the thick obscurations. One doesn't feel this is so precious because of not having created the cause, or merit.

In the world, a person who has cancer, or a person who took poison and is going to have much trouble and die soon would immediately try to do something to stop the danger in order to have a longer life. But if he doesn't know, he doesn't do anything to stop the danger. So you see, we take the best care of one hundred or a million dollars, or a precious diamond and we try not to lose it when we discover the value of it. We never try to not waste the perfect human rebirth and make it meaningful by attempting to achieve these great purposes.

As Lama Tsong Khapa explained, “The body which has freedom is much more precious than the wish-granting jewel. One will find such a body only this time. This is difficult to find and it easily decays, like lightening in the sky. By thinking of the nature of this life”—which was just explained—“One should realize that all the works of this life are like husk and should take the essence all the

time, day and night. The venerable guru practiced like this; you who are wishing for liberation, I am requesting you to practice like that.” Lama Tsong Khapa said this in the *Hymns of Experience of the Graduated Path to Enlightenment*, which is a very effective teaching and effective meditation practice.

I want to emphasize again the point that I mentioned little bit before. Especially when you think about this, you feel this perfect human body to be incredibly more precious. I don't know whether you have read or heard details about the perfect human rebirth regarding eons when there are teachings. It is also effective to think about this—it helps to see how incredibly precious the perfect human rebirth is.

I mentioned one morning during a discussion that the consciousness of the original human beings on this earth came from the world of form such as the deva realms. There are categories of stable concentration—first, second, third, fourth, form and formless. So, their consciousnesses came from the realms of the first level of stable concentration. Those original human beings of the first eon after this universe and this earth had evolved had bodies of light and they lived for such incredibly long times—not just a thousand or 10,000 years. I don't know exactly, but it is not something that is uncountable; if it is uncountable, then they should be living now! It is a term that is used for some incredible, unbelievable number—something which cannot be guessed and doesn't fit normal peoples' minds. I think it is called “immeasurable life.” Then, gradually the life degenerated. It becomes shorter, shorter, shorter, down to the age of ten. Then again the lifespan gets longer and longer. All that is from karma.

As I mentioned the other day about trying to meditate on how everything comes from the mind, the whole evolution – outside, inside, everything—basically comes from the beings. For example, this planet, this “southern continent,” came from their minds. The different countries, for example, are very different places—some are rich, some are poor; some don't have much gold, but some have so much. A place can be different at different times; things change because of the karma of the people who are living in that place at that time. This earth came from the karma, the minds, of all animals, human beings and holy beings who use it.

Then the life span goes up to 80,000 years and then gradually degenerates, comes down again. Because of previous impressions, the disturbing thoughts become more and more gross, stronger and stronger, and the life becomes shorter and shorter, down to ten years again. Did I mention the five degenerations before? There are five degenerations. First is the degeneration of disturbing thoughts. As I mentioned before, the very first human beings, whose consciousness came from deva realms, at the very beginning may not have had very strong anger, dissatisfied mind, pride or jealous mind—all these strong disturbing thoughts—arising, but they hadn't ceased the impressions by practicing the remedial path. It is like this: perhaps you were very angry then went to bed, and during sleep the anger became kind-of invisible; then, next morning when you got up and again remembered how bad the person is, very strong anger arose again. During sleep strong anger did not arise but because anger was not ceased by practicing the remedy, the path, the seed is left and anger manifests again. Anger and so on gradually increases, becomes more and more visible, becomes stronger and stronger and stronger—that is the degeneration of the disturbing thoughts. Because of that, the degeneration of the life becoming shorter and shorter happens. The original human beings were able to live for much longer than 80,000 years, but nowadays even those who live to be over one hundred are becoming few and fewer. Mostly the length of life nowadays is around sixty or seventy. The degeneration of life comes from the degeneration of the disturbing thoughts.

Also, there is the degeneration of sentient beings; it is becoming more and more difficult to subdue the mind by means of holy Dharma. The mind is becoming more and more “thick-skulled” stubborn, like iron or rock. So it’s difficult for the mind to be subdued even if the infallible teachings of Buddha are explained although they are profound, pure and infallible—by practicing them one will definitely achieve the result. Even with all the scriptural quotations, explanations and proofs using pure logic it is difficult to understand. Even if it’s pure logic, it is difficult to understand that it’s pure logic. Even if shunyata teachings on how to destroy the root of samsara are given, the mind is like a rock and one cannot understand, it doesn’t make any sense. Even if the explanation is excellent, one gets a completely wrong idea of the teachings on shunyata, interpreting it completely the other way—as nihilism, that nothing exists.

Actually it doesn’t mean that—it is proving how things exist—but one misinterprets it as meaning that things don’t exist. The mind so solid, so thick-skulled, that it doesn’t make sense. Also it is having fear of listening to teachings about the cause of happiness and suffering. One gets frightened of listening, of trying to understand, and of practicing. The degeneration of sentient beings is like this. It comes from the degeneration of the disturbing thoughts.

Then, the degeneration of time: there is more and more fighting, more and more famine—there are more and more problems happening in the world; there is more and more fear. Things like atomic danger. Instead of becoming more peaceful, less violent, the world becomes worse and worse. That comes from the degeneration of the disturbing thoughts; it comes from the mind.

Then, there is the degeneration of view. I think I already explained it: not agreeing with what is said in the teachings. Sentient beings’ minds becoming more unsubdued, more and more difficult, more thick-skulled, is called the degeneration of sentient beings. The degeneration of view is fewer people having faith and understanding. The origin is the disturbing thoughts getting stronger and stronger. From ten the lifespan goes up to 80,000 years, and again it degenerates down to ten, and again it goes up to 80,000. Like a curve it goes up, then falls down, goes up and falls down. Twenty of these cycles or curves is called one eon; not the great eon, the small eon. Twenty small eons is the definition of one great eon. It takes one great eon for the entire deva realms, the different planets, the earth and the whole sentient beings’ environment to be completed. The earth exists for one great eon. When it and all these planets, the devas’ realms and all the realms degenerate, or finish, it takes one great eon. Then, in this space where this planet is now another planet does not evolve for one great eon. Then the different planets, the sentient beings’ worlds, evolve again.

The point is this: while the lifespan increases from ten up to 80,000 there are no teachings. Those times are called dark eons. During those times no buddha descends. There are teachings only when life is degenerating from 80,000 to ten years. During this present eon different buddhas descended to give teachings. When the life span was 40,000 years I think the buddha was called Se.drup—I don’t know the Sanskrit names.

(end of tape)

I think there was another one, Buddha Shak.tu at that time—I am not sure. Three buddhas descended to reveal the teachings before Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. Then, when the lifespan was one hundred, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha descended to reveal the teachings. After this it gradually goes down to ten years. Regarding Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s teachings, they are now like the sun setting down behind the mountains, or like a flame that is about to stop and the room is about to become completely dark. We are just lucky enough to catch them—we just made it! Not too late!

Even if a buddha descends when the lifespan is ten, he doesn't give teachings. There is a whole detailed explanation of this evolution. So, a buddha does not descend all the time, only during the last part of the age, when the lifespan is around 40,000, 2,000 and 10 years.

First of all, there are more dark times than times when there are teachings on this earth. Therefore, this precious human rebirth in which one met Dharma and is able to practice Dharma is so precious. In this, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's time, there are tantra teachings, the extremely profound and quick path to enlightenment. Then after this an embodiment of Lama Tsong Khapa, "The Roaring Sound of the Lion," will descend due to prayers—I don't remember exactly, due to some prayers or some prediction or something. There might be tantra teachings at that time. Then the very last buddha might reveal tantra teachings because he prayed, "Whatever works for sentient beings that the previous buddhas did, I will do." So there is a belief, a hope, that there might be tantra teachings at the very end, at the time of the very last buddha. Those two are sort of beliefs. However, those teachings are actually existing now, during Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's time. On this, the southern continent, we have a body with three things received from the mother and three things received from the father. Only this particular body can practice and accomplish tantra. Using these reasons we should think how precious it is. It is more precious than perfect human rebirths at other items—when other buddhas are descending there are no tantra teaching.

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG...

LECTURE 28  
December 3 pm

SA.ZHI POE.KYL...

Being born in this southern continent, one sees various sufferings—the suffering of suffering—and various problems. Also one sees and experiences temporal pleasures. There are other continents or planets where human beings exist, such as the western continent. Everyone there lives for a thousand years—they have fixed lifespans—and they have great enjoyments. They don't have the various problems we have on this southern continent. So it is difficult for them to generate the thought renouncing samsara. Having great wealth and great enjoyments becomes an obstacle. They can't see the various problems, so it is difficult to realize how samsara is in the nature of suffering.

I think it might be said in the teachings that it is not possible to generate the thought of renouncing samsara on that continent, and to directly see shunyata and so become an arya being. I don't remember clearly from the teachings, but I think even in the deva realms, the realm of desire, or even as human beings on those other continents, one can't directly see shunyata because of the karmic obscurations. It is very difficult for them to generate the lamrim realizations. I think it is more difficult on the western continent than on other continents. For those humans there is no tantra teaching, and there is no way to achieve enlightenment by practicing tantra. Also in the deva realms of desire, form and formlessness there is no way, no opportunity.

In the realm of desire, in a realm called the "Thirty-Three Realm," on the top of Mount Meru, those devas have a little bit of karma to hear Dharma because of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's holy actions. They have a big drum and they beat it on special days and somehow they hear the sound of the Dharma, which is a teaching for them. It is Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's holy action of giving teachings. Instead of having the karma to receive teachings directly from a various friend, as we can, their little karma to hear teachings is just to hear the sound of the drum.

In the realm of desire those devas are incredibly wealthy: if all the precious possessions on this earth were piled up, even just one of their ornaments is much more precious than that. The lives of the gods in the realm of desire are spent constantly having entertainment. They have great sense pleasures, so they live their lives always distracted by sense pleasures; therefore it is very difficult to practice Dharma. Even when somebody comes to give teachings, it is very difficult for the wish to listen to the teachings to arise. They pass the time playing music, enjoying the beautiful parks, the beautiful swimming pools, with many friends, with many, many girlfriends, with many, many boyfriends! They pass their whole life like this, until the death signs come.

Seven days before they are going to die, a karmic voice tells that person he is going to die. Then everything decays. Normally, water doesn't stay on their body, but then it does, and the body gets dirty. Normally there is no dirt, the body is extremely beautiful, very handsome. At the time the death signs happen, the body gets dirty. Even the flowers that they are wearing at that time become old, and decayed; normally they don't get old. Due to their karma they are able to remember past lives, from where they came, and they are able to see their future lives. When they see that their karma to be in the deva realm with its great sense pleasures is finished, and see that they are going to be born in the lower realms after seven days, they experience unbelievable mental suffering. It is like this: poor people may have more physical problems but wealthy people who have fewer physical problems have greater mental problems. The devas have incredible mental suffering, worry and fear—like hell. So they are called *kab.sum.pa*—maybe “three types”—they see how they have great pleasure in the present, they remember their past lives, and they can see the future heavy suffering. So, when they die, they finish their life like this. Earlier in that life the mind was completely distracted by sense pleasures.

Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's disciples, two arhats, shown in the tangkas—in the center is Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and then there are two disciples standing, two arhats: one is Sharipu, the other is Mongalipu. Sharipu had one disciple when he was in India, I think he was a doctor. After this disciple died he was born in the deva realm, the realm of desire. Sharipu with his psychic powers checked where this disciple was born. Then Sharipu using his psychic powers went to this deva's planet—I think it might have been the Thirty-three Realm or Tushita. Sharipu met his disciple, the doctor, who was going to the park for entertainment with his girl-friend. In his previous life in India, whenever he saw his Guru Sharipu, the arhat, even if he was riding on an elephant, the doctor immediately came down onto the ground to show respect. But there in the deva realm, even though he saw his guru Sharipu, because of being so distracted by sense pleasures he just raised up his fingers like this, and just continued on his way. There was even no wish to talk to or see his guru.

How deluded they are; they have very little karma to practice Dharma or to listen to the teachings. Some worldly gods have a little karma to listen to teachings occasionally, as in the Thirty-three Realm, and that is on the drum. They don't have great fortune like we human beings have. Because of the various sufferings we can see in the world it is very easy to generate the thought of renouncing samsara. Therefore the bodhicitta that we generate through having this human body and being on the southern continent is much stronger—because the renunciation is much stronger—than bodhicitta generated in those other realms, such as the deva realms, and on those other human continents. Without having a body such as this—with three things received from the father: bone, the seed and marrow, the white stuff that is inside the bones; and the skin, blood and flesh which are developed from the mother's seed—it is not possible to practice tantra. The three white things are developed from the father's seed. We need this foundation, this body with the white and red seed, in

order to practice. The maha-anuttara yoga tantra has to be practiced on this body. You see, without this body, the subtle mind realizing shunyata .... I don't need to mention it since we are not sure of the fundamental teachings, but anyway, there are particular terms for the tantra path—subtle mind and subtle wisdom realizing shunyata. These are the causes for the achievement of things such as the illusory body and clear light, or the path of unification, or the path of the unified state of no-more-learning, or the unification of the completely pure holy body and holy mind, the Vajradhara state, that is, enlightenment. All this has to come from subtle clear light or subtle mind vision that is realizing shunyata. There is no way to accomplish the mind which is unified with that wisdom without having this type of body.

Now, in Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's time, the teachings of the secret mantra are complete. This is the most definite time for tantra teachings. Not only were the teachings of the lesser vehicle path and the bodhisattva path given, Guru Shakyamuni gave the complete tantra teaching. The understanding of the infallible meanings of the tantra teaching. The understanding of the infallible meanings of the tantra teachings and also the realizations of the tantra path exist in the holy minds of the present great yogis, the high Tibetan lamas. This great, complete Mahayana path, from the beginning up to enlightenment, is their experience. Now it is not degenerated, as the complete teachings exist. So, even if we haven't met them, there is a great opportunity to make it possible to listen, reflect, and do meditation practices on this extremely profound, secret, and extremely quick path to achieve enlightenment. By practicing tantra, especially maha-anuttara yoga tantra, one achieves enlightenment more quickly. In that way one can accomplish the extensive work of freeing sentient beings from all their sufferings and leading them to peerless happiness, the state of omniscient mind, much more quickly. The whole purpose of practicing tantra is to quickly accomplish the work for other sentient beings.

So, you see how this present perfect human rebirth that we have is so incredibly precious. Not just precious for being able to practice the Mahayana path, but also the extremely quick path to enlightenment, the tantric path. When you think of this you will feel it is incredibly, unbelievably important not to waste this life. It is much easier to generate the thought of renunciation and bodhicitta more strongly. As Lama Tsong Khapa said in the quotation, it is only one time that we have, therefore, without wasting this, without utilizing this precious perfect human rebirth to create the cause for lower realms, it should be used all the time.

(end of tape)

The complete teachings on the path to enlightenment exist and there is the opportunity to meet many perfect virtuous friends who can reveal the complete path without missing anything. The first thing you should think is this: it is difficult to find again. This perfect human rebirth that we have now is incredibly precious—it doesn't last for a thousand years or even for one hundred. Probably you might have meditated on this morning: this perfect human rebirth that we have now, even if we live for, let's say, one hundred years, or half, fifty years—is finished by sleeping every night. Are we able to practice Dharma while we are sleeping? Are we able to transform sleep into virtue? Since we were born until now, however much we have slept, has that sleep been virtuous or not? It's very difficult; you can't find even one time where the sleep has become virtue. It is non-virtuous because of the motive, so it is difficult for it to become Dharma.

Now, what is left is the daytime, the other fifty years. Fifteen years of that fifty are finished during childhood—by playing. Then one can't listen to teachings, can't understand. Another fifteen years

goes when one becomes old and can't hear and can't see clearly—all these problems. Then it is difficult to listen, reflect, and meditate. Memory is lost and so on. Even if one wishes to do it, it is difficult, because there is no power, no freedom. It looks like the person is just waiting for death, gradually decaying. One can't practice, there is no memory; it is very difficult. Fifteen years go like that.

Thirty years have gone like that, so what is left now is twenty years. Out of this twenty years, so much goes for eating and drinking! Then, gossiping and talking wastes so much time. Then, the other time goes for quarreling and fighting. We spend so much time fighting! Then, we also sleep in the day time; we get sick and then we can't practice Dharma. So we have to count those days or years of sickness or other problems when we can't practice Dharma even though we are not sick. Even if we live for one hundred years, if all the time that we practice Dharma is totaled, it may come to five years or maybe one year. We won't live for one hundred years—it is lucky if we live eighty-five or sixty years!

So, as I said before, thirty years is gone by sleeping; now there is another thirty years left. Then there is childhood, no opportunity to practice for about fifteen years. Then another fifteen go for many other things, as I explained before—for sickness, for eating and sleeping or quarreling. Many times one can't practice due to those other problems. If our work, our jobs become Dharma, or, virtue, that is one thing; but, you see, it is very difficult for work to become Dharma. So much time goes on other things—if we put together the time that we practice Dharma, it may be five years, it may be three years, maybe one year, maybe just a few months. It is so little!

The lifespan is very short; the lifespan on this continent is not fixed—that we will live for one hundred years is not fixed. The actual time of death is uncertain—we are not sure when it will happen. Sixty years is just an average. It is not fixed that everybody will live to be sixty. So, you see, the opportunity to practice Dharma, to make preparation for happiness in future lives, is small. Now, the conclusion which comes is that it is not sure whether death will happen next year, next month, tomorrow, tonight, maybe even after one hour. Maybe one will be suddenly paralyzed—epilepsy disease could strike and suddenly one could become unconscious. That happened here at one meditation course, I think. One girl suddenly became unconscious. Probably she was on the way to the hospital, that's what I guess. Maybe died on the way, or when the doctors were taking her from the bus or car. But the decision that she was dead was made after having given the big electric shock. Normally in the West, I think, if the patient doesn't come back, doesn't breathe, if the heart doesn't move after having been given an electric shock, that is the definition that the person is dead. If there is no heart movement after an electric shock, that is regarded as death.

One Australian man, a young boy, did a course—I don't know how many years ago. He was going to become a monk. He was sent by Lama Yeshe to explain to his parents and to get their permission. I think he didn't even get to Australia. He did the course the first time I went to Australia in a place called Diamond Valley. After that he came here. He prepared completely new robes, he bought everything to wear; then I think something happened. He went to Bombay, or it might have been another place, I don't know. Something happened to his mind, some obstacle to continuing his Dharma practice. I think he jumped from the roof of a building and killed himself. We heard this during or after the lamrim course. There were, I think, people doing lamrim retreat...

(break in tape)

...I think there was a big revolution in Russia so they escaped to France and now live there. I think in her later life she married and lived in America. She had a very interesting life. She had, I think, almost every kind of life that it is possible to have in the West, except she didn't become president or governor! But otherwise, those other kinds of lives.....(break in tape)

.....relationships, so many things—being worldly in many ways. However, she took ordination in Dharamsala. Just before she died, Lama sent her to the mountains to do a long retreat on one deity. I didn't get to see her but I received many long letters talking about her experiences during meditation. I think she had a very good time there. Also my guru, Tushig Rinpoche, is in this monastery, so she received initiations and did retreat there. Lama Yeshe went up to the mountains especially to see her. When we went to Dharamsala she was planning to come to India and I think to do retreat, to study or receive teachings. She wrote us a letter in pencil. That was her last letter, where she said she would like to come back to Dharamsala to study and to see Lama. Her last letter didn't even have a signature although normally she would put her signature. She was definitely planning to come to Dharamsala. After we got that letter, we got a telegram that she had died. But she did a long retreat, and we heard she died in the meditation state, sitting up, perhaps, and reciting mantra. Her head fell down. I think her condition was a heart attack. She also had a stomach problem due to some food, but that was better. She couldn't sit up a few days earlier, but before dying she could sit up. Then she realized she was having a heart attack. There was one Tibetan nun serving her, but she didn't want to do anything so she ran away as she was scared. I think she said "I am dying, having a heart attack!" The Tibetan nun was scared, then good signs happened.

They did much puja for two or three days while the body was there; and when the body was brought outside, again the monks did puja. There was, I think, good weather and other good signs happened. Also I checked with one very old high lama—who is really like the precious Kadampa geshe, those great yogis, great bodhisattvas—who is a holder of all the teachings, living in the south of India. I asked this lama about her, and he checked. He said that the realm that she is in is a very good realm. She had received the initiation of one female aspect of Buddha from this lama. She always made paintings of this female aspect—it is not Tara. She always had much interest in the practice of this female aspect of Buddha. Then, the lama Tushig Rinpoche mentioned that she was born in the pure realm of that female aspect of Buddha. So, it seemed similar to what I heard when I asked that lama in India.

I have a friend, one old mother, in England. I have never met her, but she took care of me when I was in India, in Buxa, a place which used to be a concentration camp when India was under the control of the British. At that time it was used as a concentration camp to put Mahatma Gandhi and Nehru. After the Tibetan monks fled from Lhasa those monks from all the four sects who wanted to continue their studies lived together in that place. So, when I was there studying I got T.B. The place was extremely hot, unbelievably hot, and the conditions were terribly bad—mosquitoes, leeches, bugs, bed-bugs, all over. Many monks died. Each week I could see through the door the dead monks' bodies being carried out. Because they came from Tibet and the climate wasn't suitable and they didn't know how to eat Indian food Indian style, many monks died. For many years she took care of me—I think for six or seven years. She was my pen-friend, arranged by I think maybe the first or second Western nun. Her name was Frieda Bailey. It is by her kindness that so far I am doing courses and speaking something about Dharma—a little bit, a few words in broken English! She opened a school for young lamas for some years. But I went only twice. She wanted me to come very much. The second school was a little bit helpful, but the first one didn't help much because I was very young and didn't really study! And because at that time it was just sight—seeing, you know,

I didn't really learn, and after class we came back to the room and played! We just filled the papers with long handwriting so that we could get another new notebook! That was unnecessary. Actually, the school itself didn't help for language because I couldn't understand what the teacher was explaining at all because our language had not reached a level where we could understand grammar! So, it was a complete waste. I didn't understand one single thing for months and months! Nobody suggested how to do it to us. They were voluntary teachers who didn't speak Tibetan. Eventually I found one Tibetan book with English grammar, so that helped a little. Anyway, this extra story just happened!

So, I never saw that mother, but she took care of me for many years while I was in hospital, providing the medicine and everything. I think she had quite a good life, a very good heart. She was Jewish. Later she also had much faith in the Buddhadharma. She read and she met Tibetan lamas, such as lama Trungpa. She died some years ago. Why I am talking about this story is that when I asked this lama about the nun, I asked what happened to this mother. The lama said, "Now she is okay, in a good realm; but sooner or later it will turn out bad." I think her consciousness will transmigrate to the lower realms. About the other one, the nun, the lama said, "Very good." He kind of emphasized that one doesn't need to worry.

You see, it's not sure. Every morning when we get up we feel: "I am going to live for many years—thirty or forty years." Even on the day we die—by car accident, by airplane crash, by falling off a mountain, by whatever condition—that morning we have the conception, "I am going to live a long time." So, you see, that conception is nothing to trust. Even just before we meet the condition of death, there is the conception, "I am going to live a long time." Since the time of death is not sure—it can happen any moment, today, this hour, this minute—it is so important that while we are presently living we practice Dharma in every moment. This precious and perfect human body is incredible because it can accomplish any great purpose, whatever we wish, as I mentioned before. How long we are going to live depends on the breath, which is nothing solid. It depends on how long it will continue to move, going out, coming in, going out, coming in. How long one is going to live is up to that. How long we are going to breathe in and out is not up to oneself. If it depends on our wish we could live forever on this earth. There is nobody since beginningless time who lived forever on this earth. We die whether we think, "I am a very strong person," whether we think we are going to live long or not. While the breath does the function of coming in and out we are alive; when this stops, that's it—dead. You breathe out and there is no breathe coming in, that's all—that's what is called "death." That's all—our being alive is dependent on this. So, you see how fragile it is: the movement of this breath can stop at any time, like a water bubble that can be popped at any time.

So, you can see that death is just there. Death is not far, it is just there. Similarly, what is called the narak or lower realm is not far. Just right after the breath has stopped, there is the narak. Between the narak and now is just the breath going out and coming in. Whenever this weak breath stops, what is called narak is just there. You should think, from the depth of your heart, "If this breath stopped now..."

(end of tape)

Are you sure that when the breath stops, consciousness definitely stops—one hundred percent? You should check from the depths of your heart. If you feel there's not the slightest logical reason to prove that there is beginningless continuity of consciousness before this life and continuity after this

life, first you should check that. However, there are uncountable logical reasons; but there is not the slightest pure logic to prove that there is no consciousness at all after this life. A person can give reasonings for what he believes but that doesn't mean his belief is correct according to reality. So, you cannot say one hundred percent that consciousness does not continue after this. You cannot say one hundred percent yes. You can't decide completely yes or no. I think that that is fortunate. Rather than completely ignoring the reality of consciousness existing after this life, it is more fortunate if you at least have doubt. If a person doesn't know, or finds it difficult to understand logic, and does not understand that that is experience, it is better if he can't decide completely no or yes.

If there is continuity of consciousness, the consciousness has to take a body. It has to migrate, and migrating to which body depends on karma. When people come to Nepal they carry medicine in case they get sick with hepatitis—happy-titis?! If they are trekking in the mountains they are not sure what they will get, so they carry as many medicines as possible. They buy medicine for heart-attack in case they get a heart-attack. Rich people keep important medicines in the house in case they get sick. A person cannot see one hundred percent that he won't get cancer or get a heart-attack, so he buys medicine.

The same thing—in case there is a future life, in case there is negative karma and a narak, in case you can be born as an animal or preta, isn't it more skillful to practice Dharma ahead of time? Practicing Dharma even in this life pacifies all the anger, all the dissatisfied, painful minds, the mental diseases. It makes them weaker and weaker, more and more difficult for them to arise, and brings greater peace and happiness. As in the other examples, it is more skillful to practice Dharma before the danger comes. It only brings more peace and harmony even in this life, even in each day. So, in case there is negative karma and lower realms, isn't it more skillful to prepare while one has the opportunity of this perfect human rebirth which can practice Dharma?

Even if there is no future life, there is great tranquility in this life if one practices Dharma. You can't say one hundred percent no; you can't prove that there is no future life. When you travel you prepare by buying medicine for headaches, diarrhea and things like that. You prepare ahead of time for even small problems like that, even though it's not sure if you will experience them. Now we are talking about lifetimes, not just talking about headaches or diarrhea. To practice Dharma or not is a big decision; there's nothing more important than this. Not practicing Dharma, not creating virtuous actions, is creating the cause to not have happiness in all of one's future lives, but to have continuous suffering such as being in the lower realms. The determination to practice Dharma at this moment is incredible because the decision affects billions and billions of lifetimes. Practicing Dharma, without talking about this life, creates happiness in future lives, up to enlightenment, and brings temporal and ultimate benefits to all the sentient beings. Not practicing Dharma is completely the opposite of that. When you think in this way, there's no decision more important than this. So now you can see how incredibly important it is to practice in every moment—today, each hour, each minute.

In America there is one lady whose life-story is in a book, which might be in our library. She died and she could see her family. She had not finished some things, so her consciousness entered back into the body. She realized that consciousness exists after this life, that there is a life after this. She discovered that whatever she had done from the time she was born until then was completely meaningless because nothing was done for the happiness of the future life. I don't remember what her final decision about what to do to change from meaningless to meaningful works was.

I mentioned one day about the different levels of knowledge and power. Some people have greater knowledge and more power than us to see very distant things through clairvoyance—to see one, two, three hundred, or uncountable past and future lives. One can't say that those mental powers don't exist. There are many objects that we can't see now, but the more our minds get developed we will see more and more. Now, for example, we don't see voidness. If you say, "I don't remember my past life therefore it doesn't exist", since realizing voidness is also not yet experienced, how can you realize voidness if that is not an object to practice but an object to abandon? That follows the reasoning that if it is not your experience now, it's not possible, the same as with past and future lives. If we become more developed we will directly see shunyata. By cutting off the subtle dual view one becomes completely oneness with shunyata, one becomes enlightened. Our minds are obscured, that's all. Those other beings' minds are not obscured and past and future lives, shunyata and those things become the object of their knowledge.

The conclusion is this: if death suddenly happens, the consciousness after this will migrate within the different realms. Now think: "In case there are realms of happy transmigratory beings and suffering realms, since I was born have I been creating more karma for the lower realms or for the realms of the happy transmigrators? Check by checking your attitude—how much has been done with the attitude of worldly concern? Be aware of your own life: whether virtuous actions were done or not, and if they were done, how much? You have come to this course and the thought might come later, "Oh, I took Mahayana ordination, I did meditation and this and that, and so accumulated more virtuous actions after coming here!" However, this is just a few weeks. The virtue that was done during these weeks is nothing compared to all the non-virtuous actions done in the past years. There's no comparison—the virtuous actions are insignificant. Then think, "This is how I lived my life. Now what? If there's consciousness after death, if there is karma, it is more definite that I will go to a lower realm according to what the Omniscient One explained in regard to karma." You should examine like that.

This is incredibly more worthwhile than making a rocket. Many people put effort into that for years and years—creating so many ideas about how to fly, how to land on the moon and so on. I think sometimes there are also dangers. I watched the rocket landing on the moon. They made a film which I saw in Katmandu at the British Library. Watching it did not make me interested in space travel; instead it gave the inspiration to practice Dharma. It was very useful! Watching that didn't give me the slightest wish to want to learn to make a rocket or to go inside one! I had one friend many years ago who was on the mountain doing his Ph.D. research on tormas, the Tibetan ritual offering cakes used in puja! Now my story is getting very long! He used to ask the monastery to bring all the offering cakes, colored with lots of butter, after they finished puja! He used to collect what the monks gave him and set them up in his room because he wanted to study them! He told me if I want to go in a rocket he would get me a ticket! In the newspaper it said it would take some time, but you can get a ticket!

First of all people spend so much time on ideas. Then so many people put many years into actualizing them. So many lifespans are put into that effort. I'm not saying it's bad, but I'm comparing which has more value: dedicating the life to practice Dharma, or not practicing Dharma and making a rocket? When these people landed on the moon that didn't provide a solution to eliminate ignorance, anger, and attachment. It doesn't happen that when they come back they have no ignorance, anger or attachment! There's no change in their minds. They come back with a mental picture of a desert with some rocks—that's all! The main thing is that unbelievable lifetimes of time and energy are put into that. If one had put that much energy into Dharma practice by now one

would have accomplished so much. It's work for one life-time; it's not that it has to be repeated over and over. We could have made so much progress and reached a high level path. It's better to think, "I am foolish that I did not put in enough effort. The Buddhadharma is incredible even in each day it is amazing for solving problems".

The problem is not from the side of the teachings; they are a pure, complete and correct path to enlightenment. The only problem is from one's own side—whether one practices or not. However, one has not put it into action, did not try, otherwise there is no reason at all why results have not been achieved as explained in the life-stories of those uncountable numbers of great yogis. "They are an incredible inspiration. They make me see myself as foolish for not practicing harder."

Firstly, there is moral conduct: just to get the body of a happy transmigrator—without talking about a perfect human rebirth—the cause is perfect moral conduct. Then, to achieve wealth or enjoyment the necessary condition is the practice of charity. That's just to be born as a deva or human being—it's not talking about meeting and being able to practice Buddhadharma. Then think, "Have I been practicing moral conduct until I came here to take Mahayana ordination? Have I been practicing charity?" We have created so much non-virtue that even what we did in three weeks is insignificant in comparison. If death happens now will we be born with a body of the happy transmigrators or of the suffering transmigrators—there is no third way.

Especially when we think about the perfect human rebirth, not just a human rebirth, each hour of our life is incredibly important. Therefore, as Lama Tsong Khapa says, in order to not cheat oneself it is so important to be careful each day, each hour, each minute. Every bit of intelligence that one has should be put towards generating the path of happiness after this life up to enlightenment, in every hour of every day—to realize bodhicitta and shunyata every effort should be put into this during this one time that we have this perfect human rebirth, which might last for one day or maybe only a few hours. If you are intelligent make yourself realize shunyata. When you hear "merely labeled" you should realize it immediately if you are intelligent and fortunate! I'm talking about useful intelligence, not useless intelligence, which becomes an obstacle to Dharma practice. Useful intelligence subdues one's mind.

Did somebody tell the story about the blind person riding the animal? I shall mention this now and then I will stop! The Kadampa geshe used this story to show how this perfect human rebirth comes only one time and how one must practice lamrim. I don't know the very beginning—one animal, I think a deer, called a *kyang* was sleeping, and one blind person somehow bumped it. It woke and was scared and ran away. Somehow the blind person was riding on the body of the *kyang* by holding its ear! He sang, "For me, a blind person, to get the chance to ride on this *kyang* come only one time!" He was so happy that he sang while riding on the animal which was running away!

One man in Tibet—in Tibet fish might be quite rare—got a fish to eat. He ate a lot because he found it very delicious, and he vomited.

(end of tape)

"It is only this one time that I have the chance to eat fish". Then another one—I think these are in the lamrim and you might have listened to them many times! I think in one place called Pembo a family made special food called *marsen*. It is like cake—flour mixed with lots of butter. The whole family was having this *marsen*, this special food. I think the young son hid has *marsen* behind him so

that he could get another piece. He got another one, maybe the father's. After some time he was crying but the parents couldn't figure out why, so then they asked him. The reason he was crying was that his first *marsen* which he hid behind him was eaten by a dog. He wouldn't say, "The dog has eaten my *marsen*," otherwise he wouldn't get more. The one time that he got extra *marsen* it was eaten by a dog! So it was a great waste!

Try to transform actions, as much as possible, into Dharma; try to generate realizations of lamrim as quickly as possible. We should use every care, every effort, all intelligence and skill there is, for this opportunity which is only for one time. As Lama Tsong Khapa said at the end of that, "By thinking of all the works of this life as husk,"—it means essenceless—"you should take the essence, all the time, day and night." "Should take the essence" means that while there is an opportunity to achieve the great purpose one should try to accomplish it day and night, all the time. To not separate away from the practice of bodhicitta, day and night, every hour, is taking the essence. Through that there is a possibility to achieve enlightenment. Without bodhicitta in the mind there is no enlightenment and one cannot do the perfect work for all the sentient beings who equal infinite space.

So, among all these, one should see as the essence the practice of bodhicitta. I meant to mention about how you should do lamrim practice when you go back to the West, in normal, everyday life, but something else happened! I hope you haven't got much pain after sitting for this long time! Or anger!

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG...

LECTURE 29  
December 4

MAHAYANA ORDINATION

GURU IS BUDDHA, GURU IS DHARMA...  
SANG.GYE CHO.DANG...

I thought to mention a little bit about the benefits of the precepts during these last few days, hopefully so you get some understanding of how this is so precious, how this has great profit, how this is extremely important. That means—how these precepts bring all the temporal happiness and perfections, and ultimate happiness and perfections. The more we understand the profits or the benefits of the precepts, the more faith arises. The more we understand what Buddha explained in the teachings, there will be less difficulties. Even though normally in the world it is very difficult to practice, but for you it is easy. Much happiness comes when one keeps the precepts, and a strong wish to take them again and again arises, even when one is working. Even while one is doing a job in the office or working in the family. This is not like retreating for one month, or three months, or three years, which needs a lot of understanding, a lot of things to be gathered. Even if one does retreat for so many years, reciting mantra and so on, if the mind is distracted it doesn't have much of a result. It is said in the teachings, "Doing the recitation of mantra with the mind distracted by other things, even for eons, it doesn't bring the result."

There are three general benefits of taking the Mahayana precepts, in these times, in this age. First are the benefits according to time. It is said by Buddha in the sutra teaching called *The King of Concentration*, "Even if one makes offerings to many millions of buddhas"—offerings of food, drink,

umbrellas, light offerings, various offerings such as *padyam*—I don't know how to translate that—“Many offerings equaling the number of sand grains in the Ganges”—the Indian river Ganga and also the Atlantic ocean—“When the holy Dharma is extremely degenerated”—when there is less and less practice of the holy Dharma—“at the time of the ending of the teaching of the Gone-to-Bliss-One”—means Buddha—“if one practices even one precept, day and night, the merit is much greater.” That means compared with making offerings to millions of buddhas for that many eons in the previous times when the time was not degenerated, keeping even one precept for one day nowadays, which is a time of extreme degeneration of the teachings of Buddha, is of much greater advantage. There are greater benefits of making offerings now than during good times when the teaching wasn't degenerated. So of course, if keeping even one precept for just one day is that advantageous, then no question if we take the eight Mahayana precepts for even just one day, let alone two weeks. The merit we get automatically equals the sky. We receive that much merit and we gradually experience the perfect happiness, temporal and ultimate, that we are desiring.

As you heard during the introduction, each precept has temporal benefits and ultimate benefits, and becomes the cause to achieve buddhahood. To take this ordination even for one day has much meaning and one is extremely fortunate. To have the opportunity, to receive the chance to take this ordination for even just one day in these bad, degenerate times, when there are more and more incredible problems in the world, when the life of sentient beings is getting harder and harder, has greater meaning than finding many millions of mountains of wish-granting jewels, or mountains of diamonds. If you look at the life of the millionaires, the rich people on this earth who haven't got the Buddhadharma, who don't practice, who don't live even in one vow, who do not make any preparations for the happiness of future lives, even this life is terribly, terribly confused. You always see and hear that. They have much greater mental problems than the beggars in India or Nepal. The mind has so much more fear and worry, much more confusion than the beggars that beg in the street have.

Mahayana ordination should be taken with the motivation of bodhicitta, as Lama Tsong Khapa explained in the *Hymns of the Experience of the Graduated Path to Enlightenment*. I am not sure, but hopefully during these few weeks or few days maybe I will be able to talk a little bit about thought training, the *Eight Verses of Thought Training*, which explains how to train the mind to deal with problems. However, the whole lamrim is an answer to what to do when there is a problem. It has all the answers, all the methods, if you can recognize them. From the beginning to the end, it's all solutions to the problems. If it eliminates the cause then there is no question about the result. So, as a preparation for the thought training I thought maybe during the mornings, or at some time, to do a little bit; because at other times I am trying to finish the explanations of karma; to give more details.

Then, as Lama Tsong Khapa explained in the *Experience of the Graduated Path to Enlightenment*, “If one doesn't attempt to think of the shortcomings of true suffering, the thought wishing to achieve liberation will arise exactly. If one does not reflect well on the evolution of the true cause of suffering, the graduated entering into samsara, then one doesn't know how to cut off the root of samsara.” Then Lama Tsong Khapa said, “It is important to practice the thought to renounce samsara”—aversion to samsara—“and to understand what has bound oneself to samsara.” You see, in the scriptures it says “which binds the samsara;” that means “which binds me to samsara.” Then, “The venerable guru did the practice like this. You who are wishing for liberation, I am requesting you to practice like that.” If one doesn't understand, if one doesn't reflect well on the shortcomings of samsara, the true suffering, then the wish to achieve liberation will not arise exactly, unmistakably,

uncreated, powerfully. That means not just saying these words with the mouth, “I want to achieve liberation, I want to be free from samsara”. The wish to achieve liberation arising uncreated from the depth of the heart, day and night, all the time, would not happen.

When Guru Shakyamuni Buddha turned the Dharma wheel he first taught the Four Noble Truths, and first among those was true suffering. After that it came to the question, “What is the cause?” Then Guru Shakyamuni Buddha revealed the true cause of suffering. Then comes the understanding: the cause needs to be ceased. This is the main liberation. Then the question comes, “What is the path to achieve cessation?” Then the true path is revealed.

All the true sufferings of samsara are abbreviated into the three types of suffering: suffering of suffering; the suffering of changes; the pervasive compounding suffering. The narak beings’ suffering of heat and cold; the preta beings’ major suffering, hunger and thirst; for the animals being extremely foolish is their major suffering; human beings have the eight sufferings; the devas who are in the realm of desire have sufferings such as signs of death and also fighting and killing each other; the asuras being jealous of the suras—those are suffering of suffering. Even the dogs have aversion to the suffering of suffering—such as pain, wounds, and infections.

Now, the suffering of change. Most of the samsaric pleasures are suffering of change. It is not saying suffering of suffering—there are differences. Most of the samsaric pleasures, our everyday life pleasures, are suffering. It is not that while we are experiencing pleasure it is ultimate pleasure, pure happiness and afterwards it becomes suffering. Just that feeling that we label “pleasure” itself is in the nature of suffering. That is what we should understand, what we should realize, we should be aware of. In reality it is only suffering; that is what we should be aware of so we don’t create the cause of the suffering of samsara; so that we don’t bind ourselves to samsara all the time by attachment and other disturbing thoughts and karma.

I think you might have meditated on the suffering of birth. Guru Shakyamuni explained this elaborately in the sutra called *Entering the Womb*. *Entering the Womb* was taught to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s—I think—younger brother Chung.gä.wo, “Gawo, you should understand that each of the actions—sitting, eating, walking and sleeping are in the nature of suffering. You should understand them individually. When a meditator examines, say, doing only the action of eating—not the actions of sitting, walking or sleeping—eating all the time, the person gets suffering—extremely rough, strong, very painful discomfort.” I think if you concentrate on the strong discomfort of eating a lot of food, you will see it is so unpeaceful, the opposite to comfortable and peaceful. Then it says, “Also, Gawo, like this with the other actions ...”

(end of tape)

When pleasure arises, that which you label pleasure, which you believe is pleasure or comfort, it is only that one suffering has stopped and another suffering has started. If you sit for one hour, then longer and longer, gradually the tiredness of sitting comes. Then, when you stand up, because of being exhausted from sitting for a long time immediately there is pleasure and comfort. As Guru Shakyamuni Buddha explained, as soon as you stand up the tiredness, the suffering of sitting, starts to decrease from being heavy, from being great; but immediately, the second you stand up, as you created the condition, the tiredness of stand up, as you created the condition, the tiredness of standing has already started. Now, on that feeling, on that base, the tiredness of sitting decreasing

from being great and the tiredness of standing starting from being small, we label “comfort,” “pleasure.” It is only that. That is the base.

Now you can see that the base on which we label “comfort” is only suffering. There is no base, no feeling, which is not suffering. On this feeling we label “pleasure.” We are not aware of when the tiredness of sitting starts from its being small, like a disease that starts from small symptoms. Gradually, as we keep on standing this tiredness of standing increases. It is not that we stand for five minutes and then suddenly the tiredness of standing comes just like that [snap of fingers]. It is not our experience that it happens all of a sudden. The same thing, the discomfort of the stomach from eating a lot happens gradually. It’s not that there wasn’t a small discomfort at the beginning, when you started to eat, and only after eating one plate it suddenly starts. When it becomes more and more gross, then we feel it, then we are aware of it. It is heavy enough to make us aware.

Actually, it looks like while we are not aware that it is suffering, it is pleasure. Once we come to know, when we start to recognize the suffering, then it is suffering! It is sort of like that! This we can understand by analyzing, by examining; it is not just mere belief. So, when the tiredness of standing becomes bigger and bigger, the previous feeling of tiredness of sitting starts to decrease from being great and the tiredness of standing starts by being very tiny—on that feeling we label pleasure. That’s why that which we label pleasure doesn’t last. What makes it not last is that when we change from one suffering action to another, another suffering starts. Now if this happiness, this pleasure were pure pleasure, pure happiness; if it were ultimate, not depending on the base, the feeling, which is suffering—then the longer we stand the more the happiness should increase. The longer we stand, for weeks, months, years and years, the happiness should become greater and greater. After one year there should be unbelievable happiness from standing! But we get bored with standing in one place, so we walk. As we become bored with being in one place we travel. Continuously standing for many years, there should be such unbelievable pleasure that one can’t imagine! The same with eating for days and days, months and months, years and years—after five years there should be unbelievable bliss if that is a pure happiness which does not depend on labeling on the feeling, which is suffering! The same thing—after feeling cold then being burnt by the sun or a fire, the pleasure should increase the longer and nearer the fire or the longer you stay in the hot sun. It shouldn’t decrease, it should only increase.

That is why Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is saying, “When it comes,”—the pleasure that we label—“it comes in the nature of compounding. When it stops, it always stops in the nature of compounding.” When the suffering arises it is compounding and when it stops it is compounding. You see, when we stand up after the tiredness of sitting, the action of sitting which compounds the pain, the suffering, is stopped. The suffering of sitting has stopped because the compounding action of sitting is stopped. Now, when another suffering arises—the compounding action of standing, the action of standing which compounds another suffering—it feels like pleasure because one compounding suffering has stopped while another compounding one has risen. You see, it makes great sense. From this example you can understand that until we are free from this samsara, even when we are eating it is suffering; even when we are walking it is suffering; even when we are sitting it is suffering; even when we sleep it is suffering. Whatever we do, whatever life we live—“Wouldn’t it be better to live a farmer’s life?”—it is suffering, so many problems. “Now I am tired of being a farmer; wouldn’t it be better to live a business life?” Again it is suffering. “Wouldn’t it be better to trek in the mountains?” Again, it is suffering. A lot of problems! Even though one thinks it is pleasure it is only suffering. Even if one plays football, it is suffering; even if one has gone to watch football, it is

suffering!; even if one acts in the theater it is suffering, there is much worry; then even those who do the job of making people laugh, on television, the people who make fun—what are they called?

A.M: Comedians

L.Z: Yes I heard they also have problems and worries about becoming successful in the laughs, the jokes! Anyway, until we are not free from samsara whatever we do is in the nature of suffering. So, we are suffering like this. Even what we label pleasure, which we believe in, is suffering.

It is like this for all kind mother sentient beings who are in samsara. Many other sentient beings, such as lower realm beings, are devoid of temporal pleasures. Even those who have temporal pleasures are actually only suffering. The sentient beings who are kind in all past, present and future times, from whom we receive all our happiness and perfections, are devoid of ultimate happiness.

“While I have the perfect human rebirth, as I have the opportunity, I must free them from all suffering and lead them to enlightenment. To do that is dependent on the cause; without a cause enlightenment cannot be achieved. Therefore, I am going to take the Mahayana precepts for the benefit of all kind mother sentient beings.”

## ORDINATION CEREMONY

Feel great happiness to be taking and living in the eight precepts. Each of them is more important, more precious than as many dollars as there are atoms composing this earth, or that many wish granting jewels. Taking and living in these precepts is like receiving more than eight times these piles of dollars or wish granting jewels. Remember the temporal and ultimate happiness that comes from this.

Think for His Holiness the Dalai Lama, and also Lama Yeshe and all the rest of the holy beings to have long lives; all the sentient beings who equal the space, the sky, to receive happiness and comfort; and for oneself and all other sentient beings to be able to accumulate merit and purify all the obscurations completely and quickly achieve enlightenment.

“May I achieve Chenrezig, the Great Compassionate One, and lead every being in the Great Compassionate One’s enlightenment rapidly.”

## LECTURE 30

December 4 am

SANG.GYE CHO.DANG...

Please make the request for the three great purposes:

I PROSTRATE AND TAKE REFUGE TO THE GURU AND TRIPLE GEM...

OM IDAM GURU RATNA...

NAM.DAK CHO.KUI...

Think that the nectar purifies all the wrong conceptions. Then a replica of Chenrezig is absorbed at one’s heart, generating all the realizations, especially bodhicitta. You can think bodhicitta, the truth of the all-obscuring mind, and the absolute bodhicitta, the wisdom realizing voidness. You can think both bodhicittas are generated—the very essence of the wisdom and the actual method, the bodhicitta—are generated in your mind and in the minds of all sentient beings.

OM MANI PADME HUM.... OM MANI PADME HUM...

Guru Chenrezig melts into light and is absorbed into one's own heart. Feel the oneness—one's own mind being completely transformed into Guru Chenrezig's great compassion: feeling as so unbearable that other sentient beings are suffering because of being obscured and wishing to liberate them from the obscurations and sufferings immediately, by oneself.

“DUE TO THIS MERIT MAY I ACCOMPLISH THE GREAT COMPASSIONATE ONE AND LEAD EVERY SENTIENT BEING INTO THE GREAT COMPASSIONATE ONE'S ENLIGHTENMENT RAPIDLY.”

SA.ZHI POE.KYL..

“I FOR REFUGE TO THE BUDDHA, DHARMA AND THE SUBLIME ASSEMBLY...

The great bodhisattva Shantideva completely renounced the self, was one-pointedly concerned with working only for other sentient beings; was both highly-learned and highly attained—not just learned in the words, not just learned in general, common knowledge. I think, those pandits who lived at Nalanda, the great monastery, were not just learned in Dharma, but also in other knowledge such as the four different types of knowledge—poetry, handicrafts, hygiene and astrology. Lama Atisha and those great pandits were learned in logic and things like that, and expert in general knowledge. Just to get some idea about the great bodhisattva Shantideva, this is a small story of his holy actions, one of the essential stories about him. I don't remember his time of birth exactly and those details. Shantideva was at Nalanda, the great monastic university in India. The external appearance of how Shantideva lived his life was very peculiar, different to the other monks and pandits. Normally other monks did work for the monastery, or they read scriptures in their own rooms or did various virtuous actions such as making offerings, prostrations, recitations and meditation practices. The monks of the monastery saw Shantideva as a kind of very lazy monk, doing nothing, always lying down; they didn't see him reading scriptures or doing any virtuous actions. So, the monks thought that his being in Nalanda monastery was just wasting the monastery's offerings and money. What they could see him doing was only sleeping, eating food and making ka-ka. So he was called “Busuku”—“The One Having Three Recognitions.” He didn't appear to do anything except these three. So, they thought to kick him out of the monastery. They couldn't kick him out without some reason, so they wanted to make some excuse. The monks thought if they asked him to give teachings he wouldn't be able to and then there would be a lot of reason to kick him out!

(end of tape)

The monks put up a very high throne so that when Shantideva came to give teachings he wouldn't be able to even climb on to it. When Shantideva came, then people somehow.... if I don't get it mixed up with another story of the arhat “Small Path”! Those who have heard lamrim many times must know this story.

“Small Path” was sent by Guru Shakyamuni Buddha to give teachings to the nuns. He was quite famous at that time where he lived in India. For three months he could not memorize even one stanza, one verse, of the teachings. He had great difficulty memorizing even two words. When he

was able to memorize “om” he forgot “bhu”, when he memorized “bhu” he forgot “om.” First of all he went to learn letters—maybe from Buddha—trying to memorize. He was taught two words but he couldn’t memorize even those. Then he was kicked out of the school by the teacher. He went to his elder brother, an arhat named “Great Path.”. Again he was taught two words; again he could not memorize them. I think “sidam” may be the first, “om bhu” the second phrase that was taught by his elder brother. However, the essence of the story is that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha let him clean the monk’s shoes outside the monastery. He was told to say “dhul.pang tri.ma.pang”, “avoid dust, abandon the stains.” “Stains” probably might be “smell” in the translation of “dhul.pang tri.ma.pang.” The first part refers the unsubdued mind, the obscurations. The second part means “she.drib,” the subtle obscurations which disturb one from achieving the fully-knowing mind. “Avoid dust, abandon the smell,” has two meanings. It includes all the obscurations which are the obstacles to generating the complete path to enlightenment. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha asked the monks to say this in his ear loudly whenever “Little Path” came in and went out, so that he would remember. Cleaning the shoes for the monks outside the monastery became purification. First of all, the monks are a higher object of devotion. Cleaning their shoes purified the obscurations, they became thinner, and then he was able to memorize these two words. Then Guru Shakyamuni Buddha asked him to clean the outside of the monastery. While he was cleaning one day he realized shunyata. After he finished cleaning the right side of the monastery he went to clean the left side. When he started cleaning the left side due to Guru Shakyamuni’s blessings, suddenly dust settled over the right side. Then, after he finished the left side and started cleaning the right side, suddenly dust came on the left side. So, like this, he cleaned all day. This is an example of the skillful way Guru Shakyamuni Buddha subdues, guides, the sentient beings. Then, while he was cleaning he realized the meaning of the four stanzas which he had great difficulty in learning over three months. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha had to send a monk to give teachings at a nunnery. One time Guru Shakyamuni Buddha sent “Small Path.” The nuns had requested Guru Shakyamuni Buddha to send Kun.ta.wo, a great pandit, to give teachings. The nuns completely freaked out because they knew very well that this Small Path was very ignorant! The nuns thought that they were insulted, put down—“We are insulted; sending him, such a person, to our monastery to teach us!” The nuns put up a very high throne to teach him a lesson. Then “Small Path” the arhat came. I think this story might be where he stretched out his right arm and with his psychic power lowered it. Then he sat on the throne and gave teachings for six months on the stanzas that he had such difficulty in learning. Before he came the nuns announced all over that area, “If you don’t come tomorrow you won’t realize shunyata, you won’t receive the truth.” So 100,000 people had gathered the next day. The nuns wanted to tease him, thinking that he would not be able to give teachings. Anyway, 100,000 people gathered and he gave this teaching, and many of them even achieved the arya path, the higher path, the wisdom of directly seeing shunyata. So many entered the path, generated the thought of renunciation of samsara, generated refuge, and so many generated realizations. This is not the main point, but the story happened!

I think with Shantideva people couldn’t figure out how, although the throne was very high, he got onto the throne. I don’t remember one hundred percent—he sat without touching the throne or something. Shantideva asked the monks, “Do you want to receive teachings on something Guru Shakyamuni Buddha taught or on something Guru Shakyamuni Buddha did not teach?” The Monks said, “Something which Guru Shakyamuni Buddha did not teach.” Of course they would ask for something which Guru Shakyamuni Buddha did not teach! Then, from the heart, without any hesitation, without any effort, he taught the *Bodhicharyavatara* to the monks. When he reached the chapter on wisdom—I don’t remember the particular word—Shantideva flew away, getting higher and higher above the throne. He went higher and higher and became smaller and smaller, the size of

a fly, then completely disappeared. Still the monks could hear the teachings as if he were still sitting on the throne.

In fact he was a hidden yogi. These kind of practitioners never show anything of their Dharma practice on the outside—on the outside they look very ignorant, knowing nothing, doing nothing. Inside they are very learned, having great realizations equaling the whole of space. These holy beings are called “hidden yogis.” Inside they have incredible knowledge—not only learned in all the teachings, but having realizations equaling the sky. In outer actions they appear very ignorant, not knowing anything, not doing any virtuous actions. There are many like this. Not only in India, but even in Tibet. Outside looking kind of crazy. Their behavior, their actions are outside the general peoples’ behavior. Sometimes they wear very torn, ragged clothes, with many holes, just piles of patches. Even living on ka-ka or eating outside in the dirty places where people make ka-ka. Carrying garbage—nothing very useful to other people. Sometimes they do things that ordinary people cannot do, showing incredible psychic powers, things like that. They do holy actions that ordinary people cannot do. Normally other people do not know, they believe that they are as they appear – completely ordinary, not knowing anything, crazy, sort-of foolish, not suiting the way common people live.

When they pass away, the people who believe that they are ordinary, not practicing Dharma, being foolish or crazy, get incredible devotion on seeing the incredible control and power that these yogis have. They have incredible control over the mind, especially at the time of death. They do amazing things and many wonderful signs appear. They go to pure realms; dakinis from the pure realms invite them and they go to the pure realms. The dakinis make prostrations to those holy beings. There are various stories. Sometimes their bodies completely disappear when the time comes to pass away. There are so many amazing life stories of great hidden yogis.

This great bodhisattva Shantideva said in the *Bodhicharyavatara*, “With actions such as these I won’t achieve even the human body.” “With actions such as these” means actions done with worldly concern; actions done with anger, with the three poisonous minds. It is very difficult to find actions that were not done with worldly concern from birth-time until now. It is very hard to find actions which were pure Dharma, which really became Dharma.

After I lived for many years in India in that place I mentioned yesterday, Buxa, I returned back to the mountains where I was born, where there is a cave, where the monastery school was built. Not the first time, but the second time, I found one text there. I think most of the scriptures that were kept there were hand-written because in the past it was very difficult to get texts in that area. The one who lived there previously was called the “Lawudo Lama.” I think he had a lot of energy—he got all the initiations of many practices, and teachings on the methods to achieve deities. So many scriptures were written by hand with much effort. I found one text among those normally practiced in the Nyingma sect, the collection of the Kadampa geshe’s advice, from their experiences, on how to practice Dharma—like those Kadampa geshe’s whose life stories I mentioned. That text put together their life stories and their advice—mainly about what the holy Dharma is; differentiating worldly dharma and holy Dharma—what we should give up and what we should practice.

It mainly talks about practicing holy Dharma—renouncing the eight worldly Dharmas: attachment to four desirable things—happiness, interesting sounds, praise and materials—and aversion to four undesirable things—unhappiness, uninteresting sounds, criticism and not receiving materials. In the West and in the East, all the confusion, all the nervous breakdowns, people becoming crazy, all the

problems, the because of not having cut off the worldly concerns, not having equalized the four desirable and four undesirable things. Because of not having equalized these, the life is like a hell—not being born in hell, but hell experienced with a human body. That teaching explains what incredible peace and tranquility one receives by renouncing concern for the eight worldly Dharmas; how all progress in the practice, the lamrim realizations, start from that. How that practice of equalizing the four desirable and the four undesirable things is great purification.

It is not saying that one should not have comfort, shouldn't have happiness, shouldn't have materials, shouldn't have admiration or shouldn't hear interesting sounds. The problem is not so much the object—the problem is having worldly concern. The problem is clinging to those objects. Renouncing this life shouldn't mean that one doesn't have those, because that is not the problem. The problem is having clinging to those objects.

For those Kadampa geshe and ascetics like the great yogi Milarepa—the pure Dharma practitioners—there is no clinging. They have cut off the worldly concern, the evil thoughts of the eight worldly Dharmas, the clinging to the object. They have equalized comfort and discomfort. Whatever happens it doesn't matter. An interesting sound or an uninteresting sound—whatever comes it doesn't make a difference for their mind. They don't care. The same thing with receiving materials or not receiving materials, admiration or criticism—whatever happens it doesn't make any difference to their mind. So, wherever they go, wherever they stay, there are no obstacles for their Dharma practice. They are always able to continue their Dharma practice and they always have much happiness; there is no confusion because the evil thought of the eight worldly Dharmas is cut off.

Even if a person has leprosy disease it can get cured by pure Dharma practice, cutting off the evil thoughts of the eight worldly Dharmas. One Kadampa geshe got leprosy disease at the beginning of his Dharma practice. He was living in the family, but somehow he got leprosy disease and then none of the family looked after him. He got so upset. Then he thought, "Anyway, it doesn't matter if the family doesn't look after me. I will sit in the road and recite Chenrezig mantra. It doesn't matter what happens with my life. I will just live as a beggar in the road and recite Chenrezig mantra!" So he gave up the worldly concern, the evil thoughts of the eight Dharmas, and left home. He stayed in the road and at night time he slept on a rock. He had a dream that night—again I got mixed up with another story! I think it probably might be this: he had a dream that much strong rain came, and his body and clothes became completely wet. When he awoke from the dream all the pus was coming out of the infections on his body and he became wet. His leprosy disease started to recover from that time. The water and pus came out on the night of the day that he cut off worldly concern. There are many stories in this scripture called...

(end of tape)

"Opening the Door to Dharma." The whole teaching is very effective, so useful for the mind. It gives a lot of encouragement to practice Dharma, to defeat and cut off the worldly concern, the confused mind. So, when I saw that text I checked back—this many years ago. I had read and memorized many scriptures but I couldn't find any Dharma to practice. After I read this, I saw what is Dharma and what is not Dharma. After I saw this scripture, after I read these Kadampa Geshe life stories, I checked back on my life. I had done many things—saying prayers, reading texts and all these things—in the monasteries. I checked back but it was very hard to find anything being dharma. I was kind of shocked! Before that I just believed, without checking, "Oh, I am practicing

Dharma.” Anyway, this text is very beneficial for the mind. After I came from the mountains I did the sixth meditation course. I think the people who attended that course would understand! Anyway, like this, “With a mind and actions such as this I cannot find even a human body. If I can’t find a human body there is no creation of virtue, only non-virtue. I haven’t been accumulating virtue and have been accumulating non-virtue for millions of millions of eons, so I won’t hear even the sound “the body of the happy transmigratory beings.” What Shantideva is saying is this: having accumulated much non-virtue for millions and millions of eons, he will be born in the lower realms, not even getting born in a place where one can hear a human voice. I think “even the sounds of the body of the happy transmigratory beings” might have this meaning. Besides not hearing teachings, not hearing even a human voice for that many eons.

It’s very difficult to find a human body. Like in the example of the wooden ring which is floating on the surface of the ocean, that is moved about, and a turtle comes from underneath once after a hundred years—I think the turtle is blind. This ring is taken over the ocean by the wind so it is very difficult for the ring to go on his neck. Like this, it is difficult to find a human body.

Because of just the negative karma accumulated in one second, one has to be in the unbearable heaviest narak suffering state for eons. No question that one will not go to the realms of the happy transmigratory beings. It means that because of just one negative karma created in one second one has to be in the heaviest, unbearable suffering states of the naraks for eons; for example, because of the anger that arises for one second. Even if a new bodhisattva gets angry for one second with a higher bodhisattva, one who has received the prediction, then the experiencing of his merit is postponed and he will be in the naraks for one thousand eons.

Shantideva also said—the straight translation is, “After having found such a body having freedom, if I don’t train in virtue, when I experience suffering in the lower realms I will be always ignorant.” “Always ignorant” might have a different meaning. “Always ignorant” means how, for example—what is the lowest animal? It doesn’t matter, turtles or pigs or chickens—they have much suffering no matter how long they live—a thousand years or a hundred years—always ignorant with no way to be liberated from that while having that body. Not only unable to understand Dharma, they cannot understand even a language, even just general things like that that human beings can learn. I think “in many ways ignorant” might also have that meaning. So, at that time, what can I do? At that time when I don’t like suffering because of that body, ignorant all the time, no opportunity to be free from that body – what can I do? No opportunity to purify even with the recitation of just one mantra. No way to understand Dharma. At that time what I can do? Nothing. The last sentence, “At that time what can I do?” implies there is nothing that one can do.

While we have this perfect human rebirth, whichever great purpose that we wish to accomplish we can accomplish in one day, within one hour, a minute, even one second. Even in a second we can create the cause for happiness beyond this life, up to enlightenment. We should not waste it but make it highly meaningful. Even if we live in the west doing jobs, by remembering before going to bed to get up a little bit earlier in the morning, in the morning we can plan to practice Dharma, to practice lamrim, to make the perfect human rebirth highly meaningful by practicing for the benefit of all sentient beings. One should plan this at night-time. If you plan to sleep until the time of work, until breakfast time, then get up, have breakfast and go to work, then only that happens—nothing else happens, only that.

Thinking from the heart about death and its uncertainty—that it can happen tomorrow, can happen even tonight—is very useful. Many times during the day we hear about and see lots of dying, in various ways. You hear those machines to stop fire—fire-engines. Every day on television you see people dying in various ways—in car accidents and many different ways. You see it in the newspapers. We should always relate this to ourselves. Using that information, one should make it into lamrim teachings on impermanence and death. When we see all those sufferings on television, or hear about it or see it by eye, or in the newspaper, we should think about the Kopan course where we meditated on lamrim, the suffering of samsara, impermanence and death and all those things.

I am talking about impermanence and death at this point. Generally, you can utilize anything in any of the lamrim practices. When you see others' sufferings, it becomes a teaching on compassion for others. It emphasizes, it tells you, that you must practice bodhicitta to help others, to free others from suffering, to lead them to enlightenment. It is a teaching telling you that you should hurry up to generate the realization of bodhicitta, hurry up to develop your mind to help others. You can actually relate it to shunyata. It becomes advice to practice lamrim—any part of the lamrim: shunyata, bodhicitta, renunciation of samsara, perfect human rebirth and its difficulty, impermanence and death, karma and refuge. One can relate it to any of the teachings, any of the meditations.

However, the point I am talking about is death. So, always, when you hear somebody is dead, when you see or when you hear, you should relate it. Same thing in regard to time—"I might also die this year, this month, even today. At the moment, this time, it is my turn to hear about others dying; but not sure, even today it might be others' turn to hear that I am dead!" You should think all the time like this. Impermanence should be related to not only death, but related to karma. Otherwise just to be aware of dying doesn't mean much. When you think of death and relate it to karma, then it makes sense. Then it stops laziness and one gets encouraged to practice Dharma. Think like this all the time, as much as possible.

The Kadampa geshe, those who actually practiced Dharma, their everyday attitude is determined by completely deciding, "I am going to die this year; I am going to die this month; I am going to die even today." This is their everyday attitude, every day thought, the fundamental thought. You see, the reason why is that actually there is much more happiness, even in each day's life, if one lives life with this thought of death, "I am going to die today." So much worry and fear are cut off. It is said by Lama Tsong Khapa in the lamrim teachings, "If I decide that I am going to die today, if death happens it is excellent, it is the best thing if I die on that day." Why? Because, you see, by thinking "I am going to die to-day", the person gets so much preparation done for the happiness of future lives. He is able to practice much Dharma. If death happens he has got so much practice done and much preparation done for future happiness. He doesn't die with an empty life. He didn't become a failure. Lama Tsong Khapa didn't say this last thing, but I am just clarifying, emphasizing. It is best if death happens because he dies having done Dharma practice. Even if he doesn't die that day it is good because then he can make many preparations for the happiness of future lives. If one can do like this it is the best thing to control, to stop, the distractions.

Having the thought "I am going to die today" stops the distractions to Dharma practice. Otherwise the mind gets distracted so much by sense pleasures. Even if one doesn't have a job, it can be like this. If one doesn't have this thought, but the thought, "I am going to live long", many distractions come. Even though there are no other people distracting one, even if one is alone at the house, so

many distractions come from one's own mind. Then even though there is time to practice Dharma, even if one doesn't need to be busy, unnecessarily one makes oneself busy. So it is important to practice the way Lama Tsong Khapa explained.

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG...

LECTURE 31  
December 6 pm

SA.ZHI POE.KYI...

I mentioned this morning, as Lama Tsong Khapa said in the commentary on the graduated path to enlightenment, the advantage of having a complete determination of dying. In the morning in everyday life, getting up with this determination—instead of rejecting death which is definitely going to happen. Actually it is more definite to happen than not to happen this year. It is more definite to happen this year, this month, this week, to happen even today. So, if you live life with this practice impermanence and death, each day deciding, “I am going to die today,” for your mind you are not a person who is going to stay, who is going to live for a long time at this place, in this city, and within this body. Automatically you make preparation for departure for the next life! When you make the determination that “I am definitely going to die today,” naturally there is the thought to make preparation for the happiness of future lives; there is thought for the preparation for death. What to think to not have obstacles when death comes—to have success with the meditation at the time of death, whatever the meditation technique? There are five powers to practice explained in the *Seven Points of Thought Transformation*. This integrates the various practices, the various meditations, to be done in one life. All these are integrated in five. That is good to know if you are wishing to practice, wishing to really make life meaningful. If you want to know some kind of integrated practice, these five are very important: the power of attitude, the power of training, the power of blaming—blaming the selfish attitude. Whatever trouble happens, whatever problems you meet in the life, always use that to blame the selfish attitude. As these various problems came from the selfish attitude put all the blame on the selfish attitude.

Those who do not practice the thought training of the great vehicle, the worldly people, whenever there is a problem they point out or blame the kind sentient beings from whom one receives all happiness and perfections, all the desirable things. They put all the blame on that, the originator of happiness. Practitioners of the thought training of the great vehicles put all the blame, all the problems, whatever confusion happens—by knowing that it came from the selfish attitude—onto the selfish attitude. They give back all the problems to the selfish attitude, put all the blame on the selfish attitude. This is an essential method to stop creating negative karma which harms oneself and harms other sentient beings. A very profound method. In this way so much negative karma gets stopped. When there is a problem, various negative karmas are created—this is one practical, essential method to stop the negative karma.

(end of tape)

Maybe I should mention the power of the attitude. In the morning, as the very first thing when one wakes up from sleep, instead of the thought of coffee, or the thought, “Today I'm going to work: If I don't go I won't have happiness” suddenly arising, one should think, “I'm going to die; I'm going to die this year; I'm going to die this month.” Make the determination, “I'm going to die this week—

I'm definitely going to die this week; I'm going to die today—I'm definitely going to die today.” When you make the determination like this you automatically don't see any purpose in working for this life. It's meaningless. To your mind works for this life are meaningless—it doesn't make sense. So, automatically, the thought to practice Dharma arises, to prepare for the happiness of future lives up to enlightenment. For a practitioner of lamrim, the graduated path to enlightenment, that thought comes automatically. You see, the thing which benefits the future life, which benefits at death time, which benefits one's happiness beyond this life up to enlightenment, is only Dharma—nothing else. So, automatically, the thought to practice Dharma comes powerfully. You feel the work of this life to be essenceless, meaningless.

The lineage lamas of lamrim often give this example: a person who won't be staying—in our case who is going back to the West tomorrow or the day after tomorrow—wouldn't make much arrangement at the house where he is staying. He wouldn't see the point of making a huge garden, building a kitchen, swimming pools, making many decorations outside and inside the house—doing much work fixing it for comfort. If it's definite that you will soon go back to the West, within one or two days, what you would do is only make preparation to go back! Buying things you need there in the West—those broken antiques from the curio shops! What you do is that you only make preparations. You don't think to live here, and therefore you don't make preparations to live here. If you make the determination, or if you have realization of impermanence and death, especially the indefinite time of death, then it is like this example—like you are going to the West within a few days. You don't do so much in the place where you are staying. If there is something wrong, something that you don't like, something bothering you, it doesn't matter, you are going. It's not so important. Even if the room is very uncomfortable, in bad condition, even if the toilet is bad, it doesn't matter. “I'm leaving. It doesn't matter for one or two days!”

If you are able to make a strong determination, “I am going to die today,” if you keep on thinking that the lifespan is very short, for your mind the appearance of this life is very short. Maybe you will live for one hour, maybe a minute, that's all. So, you see, there is no time to get angry, not time to cling to this life. You don't see any point in clinging to this life. Same as in the example you don't see any point. Even when you see other persons working so hard, making much preparation for this life, you see it as kind of funny. If you have realization of impermanence and death, especially the indefinite time of death, when you look at others they seem kind of childish, having nothing else to think about except this life.

Even if they accept, have faith, or understand that there is a future life, they think the happiness of this life is so much more important than the happiness of the next life. So, thinking only of the happiness of this life they put all their effort, spend all their life, just working for the happiness of this life—for food, clothing and reputation. Especially reputation. The most difficult one to give up is reputation, then food and clothing. It might depend upon individuals, but generally the most difficult to give up out of these is the worldly concern for reputation. That is the most important thing to cut off. A person can fast without eating food for many days for reputation; a person can wear ragged clothes and even have a naked body for reputation—“The other people might think that I'm a yogi or I'm this and that ...” People do some peculiar things for reputation. One can live in a cave, in an isolated place, where there is nothing, to have a good reputation.

Anyway, it doesn't make sense for you. For you, people who are seeking only the happiness of this life, putting all their effort and time, their whole life, into only this life are foolish, completely childish. You even feel uncomfortable when you see others not practicing Dharma, not doing any

preparation for the happiness of future lives, having nothing else to think about except the happiness of this life which lasts only a few years or months, or even a few days. You even find it uncomfortable to see this—they not knowing what is going to happen after this life, what is in the long run, in future lives. It's like knowing that somebody is climbing or skiing on a very dangerous mountain, for example. Some fall down, get damaged, get broken legs. It's very steep on the ice mountains and so you feel kind-of uncomfortable about the danger of them falling down and damaging themselves. Even if you are just watching it is very painful for your mind, even though you yourself are not falling down, are not in danger, but that person is. Like the people in the circus walking on the rope; I heard that sometimes they fall down! I guess that is why there are people down below, maybe to help. Even though you are not walking on the dangerous rope, you yourself are not falling down, when the other person is in danger of falling you feel very uncomfortable. Like that, when others are creating negative karma, having nothing else to think about except this life, no thought for the next life, no thought to make preparation for the happiness of future lives, it is very uncomfortable. All those actions done with worldly concern are negative karma, all non-virtue. So, when you look at others it's very uncomfortable. They don't know what is going to happen after death. They only believe in the period from birth until death, just this one life. That's what they have in their minds. That's all.

I'm a very lazy practitioner, not a good practitioner—the thought of Dharma comes very rarely in the mind—but when I think a little bit about the next life... Sometimes the thought comes in airplanes; when I was flying in the West—when the thought of future lives sometimes comes in the mind, when I become a little aware of the future life—I see the business people on the airplane, who have nothing to think about but this life. When they talk, when they think, when they eat, whatever they do, there is nothing else—everything is just for the happiness of this life. That's all, nothing else to think about while they are talking, drinking, smoking, calculating, dieting!

For themselves it looks kind of comfortable, because they don't know that there is a life after this. Now it's okay; they're well-dressed, they drink and eat well. They themselves feel comfortable. But I kind-of feel a bit uncomfortable: after this life, what's going to happen to them, what kind of life are they going to have after this? It's kind-of uncomfortable.

Also, they are very much an object of compassion—they don't understand Dharma, they are completely ignorant, their mind is completely dark, having no understanding of karma at all. Even if someone has a little bit of faith in karma and reincarnation, he is unable to practice. They finish their life doing only works for this life, unable to practice Dharma. Without choice, compassion has got to arise.

First of all think of death, then make the determination, "I will practice Dharma until I become enlightened, until death." Generate an attitude like this, even if you cannot make the decision to practice true bodhicitta. Before saying this it is good to think: "Dharma is the only thing which can benefit at the time of death, which can benefit beyond this life up to enlightenment. The greatest benefit for myself and for sentient beings is the dharma." Then think: "Whatever I do today I'm going to make it become the remedy to the disturbing thoughts." That itself means, "I'm going to transform all my activities into Dharma." The definition of Dharma, the meaning of holy Dharma is: if it becomes the remedy to the disturbing thoughts, it is Dharma; if it does not become the remedy to the disturbing thoughts, if it becomes supportive to the disturbing thoughts, it's not holy Dharma. That's the definition. Something which develops the disturbing thoughts is not the holy Dharma which we should practice; that is what we should abandon.

If you have some understanding of shunyata, and if you wish all the activity that you do—jobs, everything, the work that you do in one day—to become the remedy to cut the root of samsara, you should think, firstly, that ignorance is the root of samsara. That while the “I” is empty of existing from its own side, ignorance believes that it exists from its own side. Look at the ignorance that you have, now, here, and the object of refutation, the “I,” the object of ignorance, and think: “This is it—the root of samsara which causes me to be born in the narak to suffer; in the preta realm to suffer; in the deva realms to suffer—that is this one. From this moment, in every type of activity I do, I’m going to practice seeing everything as being like a dream. Whatever happens—happiness, entertainment, confusion, any problem, whatever activity I do—I’ll see it like my last night’s dream. I’m going to look at the whole thing as a dream.” While you are experiencing happiness or problems such as starvation, confusion with other people; while the confusion is going on, while the trouble is happening; while hundreds of people may be shouting at you or scolding you, whatever. Make a determination in the morning like this, then during the day, at the actual time, in circumstances where there’s need of the meditation—in circumstances where there is danger of anger or depression arising, danger to create negative karma; when you have entertainment, pleasures and the mind gets confused, clinging so much, again becoming a cause of samsara; especially in those serious dangerous circumstances—meditate without the mind being distracted. While you are receiving all these scoldings, beatings, bothers...

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...as a dream.

However, if this doesn’t make much sense don’t think it. In reality it is like this, but it does not appear to us that way. It appears that the whole thing is existing from its own side without being merely labeled. You see, it appears to us that the whole thing here and now—living beings, non-living beings, everything – exists from its own side only. In fact the whole thing is completely empty, like in that dream of the Kopan course when you go back to the West. Exactly like that, completely empty, empty as is the Kopan meditation course in the dream.

Thinking this might not make much sense to you; you might not get a clear idea of what I’m talking about. So, you see, on this point, if you meditate, “I’m dreaming; all this is a dream,” when there is a problem, even now here, what comes in the mind automatically is the understanding that actually all this appearance—yourself, the subject, and the object, action, everything—which appears to exist from its own side, is empty. When you recognize this precisely that the whole thing is a dream the result that comes to the mind is that it is empty. You recognize all this appearance of existence as a dream. I’m not saying it’s actually a dream, but that if you think, “I am dreaming,” the result that comes is seeing all this as empty. It hurts, it harms, the root of samsara, the ignorance holding the true existence of things.

Think, “I’m going to practice emptiness of true existence.” If that doesn’t make much sense to you, think, “I’m going to look at everything as merely labeled. I’m going to look at everything’—subject, object action, everything—’from this moment on, in whatever activity I do, as merely labeled.” Make this determination. If one practices awareness as much as possible every activity becomes the remedy to cut the root of samsara. As the whole thing—subject, object, action—is in reality merely labeled, when you look at it as merely labeled all the activities that you do—eating, working, sitting, sleeping, all that—cut the root of samsara.

One should make a determination in the morning like this, but one should not be satisfied with just having done the motivation and then not doing the practice—relaxing comfortably and completely forgetting the practice! Not just generating the motive in the morning then not being aware of the practice for the whole day! One should remember it again and again. If one can, and if one has the wish for all activities to become the remedy cutting the root of samsara, one should practice like this. Other people giving you a hard time—scolding and beating, whatever—is not a dream. It is not that yourself, the object, and the others who are giving you a hard time, the subject, are a dream. It is not a dream. If it is a dream it doesn't exist. If it's a dream, then there's no subject, other people; there is no action of giving you, the object, a hard time; there's no object, you yourself. The dreamed human being is not a human being. The dreamed car is not a car. If the child you get in the dream is a child, you should have it in the daytime. If the beautiful, expensive care that you've got in the dream is real, you should be able to go inside it in the daytime. If thinking, "I'm dreaming," doesn't make sense, then don't think it. It's not a dream, but think, "I'm dreaming", to yourself when people give you a hard time. "The whole thing is a dream"—meditate like this. If you understand, you don't need to sit with crossed legs!

You see, we cannot say, "I'm dreaming here, now, during the course," but actually it's like that. You see, when you go back home, if you have dreams about doing the course at Kopan, it comes from your hallucinating mind, it doesn't exist. But you see, in the dream you're not aware of that; in the dream you see the Kopan course and that Kopan exists completely from its own side, the people there exist from their own side. Then, what do you call it? Lama Zopa exists from its own side; the meditation place exists from its own side, the voice giving the teachings exists from its own side, the voice giving the teachings exists from its own side. In the dream, you see, it appears like that and we believe it completely. There is no Kopan existing on this hill—house, trees, dogs, people, mountains—without labeling "Kopan" on this. Without labeling "Kopan" on this, there's no Kopan. The Kopan that exists is only what's merely labeled on the houses, mountains and all these things. Also, without labeling "Lama Zopa," there's no Lama Zopa on the aggregates of Lama Zopa that you see. You see, the Lama Zopa that exists on these aggregates is only that which is merely labeled. There is no other Lama Zopa.

It is similar in regard to yourself doing the course, listening to teachings, "I'm doing the course, I'm listening to the teachings." Without your thoughts labeling this I, there's no I that exists on the aggregates. So, the I that exists on the aggregates is only that which is merely labeled. The ear consciousness is paying attention to the words of the meditation subjects that are being taught, paying attention to the different sounds; on that is labeled "listening to teachings." There is nothing other than what is merely labeled "listening to teachings." In fact the whole thing that we see, that we hear, everything—the sense objects, the subject, the whole thing—is nothing else, or nothing more, than what is merely labeled.

The most important thing is to remember death and the next most important is to think, "I won't let myself come under the control of selfish attitudes. Without being under the control of a selfish attitude I'm going to practice bodhicitta, from this moment up to enlightenment. Especially from this moment until my death. Especially in this year; especially this month, this week; especially today." Make it stronger, stronger and stronger in order not to let yourself come under the control of the selfish attitude and to continuously practice bodhicitta. Make the stronger decision especially for today. That's the power of attitude.

Then, the power of blame. Before talking further, a little about the details of this. It's good to think about this because of our own power of blaming. It's good to pacify our attitude by practicing bodhicitta. It's the attitude which makes one's life meaningful. This is the way to dedicate one's life to make it more peaceful; one thinks: "All the undesirable things, all my non-successes came from the selfish attitude." Think this way: "All this came from me, from following the selfish attitude. All the undesirable things, all the non-successes, came from me. How? By following the selfish attitude. Think: "All the desirable things, all successes, all good things—temporal and ultimate happiness, everything—comes from other sentient beings. Every good thing comes from other sentient beings. So, all the three times happiness, past, present and future, everything, comes from other sentient beings. What is for "I" is the object to be renounced forever. What is for others is the object to cherish forever."

Make a complete determination like this, "What is to be cherished is all others. How I'm going to practice bodhicitta, how my life should be lived is by cherishing nothing but others, the sentient beings. There's nothing else to cherish but all the other sentient beings. Also, my activities, the work that I have to do, is for nothing else but for others. In my mind I'll cherish, think of, be concerned with, nothing else, only others. In work that I have to do—nothing else, only others. This is how I'm going to live my life."

One should make a determination like this in the morning. Otherwise, just to say, "I'm going to practice bodhicitta," is maybe not so clear. For a person such as me, just saying, "I'm going to practice bodhicitta," is not so clear. So, to make a determination like this is particularly good. I'm emphasizing that one should not live only on the motivation, the decision of the morning, but that it should be put into practice in the rest of one's life, the rest of one's days.

Practicing the power of the white seed is as much as possible accumulating extensive merit by depending on the merit field, the holy objects, and by depending on the field of the sentient beings. Knowing the preliminary teachings, the lamrim well is the most skillful method. The quick way of accumulating extensive merit is by practicing the merit of transcendental wisdom and the merit of fortune. Merit of transcendental wisdom is meditating on emptiness, such as in the example I mentioned before: looking at all activities as merely labeled, as only a dream. Accumulating merit to generate and develop bodhicitta is called the "power of the white seed." With the practice of the power of the white seed you should practice the power of attitude—the attitude generated in the morning to do with how one is dedicating one's life. As one creates the cause of the power of the white seed, the mind has no choice—it's got to change, got to develop. It doesn't have freedom, the power, to always be like that, you know.

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..the minerals, the heat, everything. If you plant a seed and the conditions are together, without choice the seed has to grow, it doesn't always stay like that. Like this, mind is a causative phenomena, it cannot stay the same, it cannot change, to transform. The realizations have to be generated when the conditions are right. When you have skillfully perfected the cause, the mind has no power to remain in the same nature; it's got to change. One Kadampa Geshe To.ro.wa, said—the advice of his experience is very inspiring—"While one is training the mind in the actual body of the path, the lamrim, and also during the break times, if one strongly attempts to accumulate the necessary conditions"—accumulating merit and purifying obstacles—"because causative phenomena cannot always remain in the same nature, it is possible to achieve realizations within seven years."

What he is saying is that that which we think might take a hundred years, or is not possible even in a hundred years because of thinking, “My mind is so selfish, how can it be transformed into exchanging myself with others, into bodhicitta? I cannot understand even the meaning of the word ‘shunyata,’ so how can I realize it?” is possible. He is saying if one attempts to train the mind in the body of the path—in the break times, as much as possible; day and night, while one is eating, while one is walking, at every single possibility that one can think of; while one is speaking, any time—and to accumulate the necessary conditions, accumulate merit and purify the obstacles to generating the path, the realizations come. Without taking even a hundred years, the realizations come quickly. This is the experience of the Kadampa geshe and the lineage lamas of the lamrim. If we try like this for one day, two days, three days, four days—with nothing else to think about except sentient beings; nothing else to keep busy about except to be busy for sentient beings; nothing else to work for except for sentient beings—as much as possible day and night, then sooner or later it happens. If we practice as the Kadampa Geshe To.ro.wa said, then without effort it happens naturally that one is able to generate bodhicitta. Every single action, even breathing in and out, every single movement, becomes work beneficial for sentient beings.

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG...

LECTURE 32

December 5

MAHAYANA ORDINATION

In regard to time, taking ordination in such extremely degenerate times as these has much more merit than keeping many precepts in the previous, fortunate times. Keeping even one precept in these extremely degenerate times has greater merit.

Then, regarding place: in an impure realm such as this, the merit of accumulating virtue, such as by keeping one vow for even the shortest time like a snap of the fingers, is so much greater than practicing pure virtue for eons in the pure realms. This place where we have been born, where we have taken the precepts, is much more degenerate, is much more impure. So, by taking the eight Mahayana precepts and keeping them for even such a short time as the duration of a finger snap has infinite, immeasurable merit. If that merit were materialized it would be kind of difficult to fit even in the three realms. This second point was the benefit of keeping them in an extremely impure place. The third is the incredible benefit in regard to the nature of the precepts. One doesn't get harmed by spirits. Without talking about the story that is mentioned in this text, here is just one simple example: here the boys at night go to a river down there. Before, for some months there was a Nepalese man who was watering the gardens here. He and his children went there to sleep in order to look after that house where there is the pump. When they were sleeping there it was not quiet; there was lots of noise at night, a lot of talk outside. In the middle of the night there were sounds of stones being thrown into the water and of people coming to wash, and the sound of the Nepalese way of cleaning clothes. They were all frightening noises, very scary, disturbing the quiet. I think they slept there for three months. Now there are two boys who go to guard the pump at night. I think they go alternately, one night one boy, the other night another boy. One boy is called Namgyal, the other boy is Thubten Dorje. When they go they don't hear anything—no talk, no throwing of stones, nothing—completely peaceful. There are no frightening things. The difference is their having refuge in their minds and living in the precepts. The other person was not living in the

precepts. Those two boys are gelongs, having full monk's precepts and also having refuge in their minds. Their having refuge in their minds, and the precepts themselves, are protection from spirit harms. There are uncountable stories of how spirits are unable to give harm to one who is living purely in the precepts.

One way that the precepts are the best protection for the life is because keeping the precepts is itself abstaining from creating that number of negative karmas. Creating negative karma with the disturbing thoughts, with one of the three poisonous minds, also harms other sentient beings. The nagas and different types of spirits such as "day-stars," the different types of planets, at times cause harm such as epilepsy or paralysis. Such beings as the spirit kings. There are different types and they find ways to bring harm. The negative karma allows one to receive harm. Receiving harm from others is also the result of negative karma. Such as the harm from a spirit king—falling unconscious with saliva bubbling from the mouth.

Some people get sick on certain days; for example, when Sunday or Monday comes, they get sick. When the person is doing something he suddenly falls down unconscious. Nagas and different types of spirits find ways to give harm, such as internal infections, leprosy disease, contagious and other types of infections, pains in the bones—many things. Also there are female spirits called "mamo"—I heard this story—who send poisonous breath and then the person who has the karma receives it. The poisonous breath goes inside and pollutes them, and cancer or T.B. or something comes. But the person living in the precepts from his side hasn't created the karma, the cause, so even if others are harmed, he doesn't receive harm. Also, as it is said in the sutra teaching "having Pure Moral Conduct," even the most dangerous poisonous snake, called the Great Black Naga, cannot harm a person who is living in the precepts. Even if it is there it is unable to give harm.

The person who is living in the precepts will meet the descending buddha. Living in the precepts is the best, most beautiful ornament. When one looks at the Tibetan or the Theravadin monks and nuns who are living in the precepts, among a bunch of many other people, even who have a religion, they are kind-of different. In a gathering you can see the differences from Hindus. You can see many differences even in outside magnificence or power. Even on the outside the power, magnificence, the glory, is different. That is the power of the precepts—the best ornament. Material ornaments aren't suitable for some people such as small children. Moral conduct, the precepts, are like cooling water when one is feeling hot and having much suffering of heat—when tortured by many disturbing thoughts, by strong flames of anger as well as other disturbing thoughts, torturing, burning oneself. Even physically the precepts are like cooling water.

One who is living in the precepts is admired by all other worldly beings; devas and other worldly beings admire and respect such a person. Even though one does not expect a good reputation, by living in the precepts one receives that happiness. If one lives in the precepts, wherever one goes, wherever one stays, there are always white devas who guard one. The white devas, such as the protectors, protect one all the time without being distracted. Wherever one travels, without choice they have got to protect—their commitment is to protect those who practice Dharma by correctly living in the precepts.

Living in the pure precepts is the best ornament, the best perfume. The scented smell of living in pure moral conduct reaches very far; it covers many countries. Even though no perfume has been put on by the person, there is a naturally very scented smell from him. I have met many like this,

even very small boys, reincarnated lamas—nothing was applied but there was a natural scented smell.

Also the place where one is in this life is happy because there is no confusion. The more one is living in pure morality, the less confusion. If one is always creating the cause for enlightenment, always making preparation for the happiness of future lives, one has much trust, confidence. Even when death comes there is trust and confidence that one won't be born in the lower realms. There is trust and confidence, so that makes the mind very happy, without fear.

To take these eight Mahayana precepts which have incredible benefits, one should have the motive of bodhicitta. Even the Hindus generally see this samsaric pleasure as being in the nature of suffering. Generally people have aversion to old age, sickness and things like that. When difficulties come they have aversion for the suffering of suffering, but they cannot see how the samsaric pleasures are in the nature of suffering. It is difficult to see. So, aversion to samsaric happiness and perfections does not come; renunciation does not come.

Still, even if one has renunciation of the samsaric pleasures, that is not complete renunciation of samsara. Even Hindus, who don't have refuge in the Triple Gem, practice samatha, tranquil abiding, the nine stages of meditation. This meditation of the nine stages, tranquil abiding, is not particularly Buddhist—it is also Hindu, it is a general thing. Even the Hindus get bored by and get aversion to the sense pleasures. They get renunciation and they seek inner pleasure derived from meditation, such as the first stage of stable concentration and then from there....

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Even they get bored. ....they get renunciation of even the inner pleasure. They get born in the formless realm called "Infinite Consciousness." Probably it is like thinking that everything is made of consciousness. "Infinite Sky," "Infinite Consciousness"—it might be similar—everything is kind of empty, everything looks like the nature of space. Maybe nothingness, nothing exists. It is the very peak of samsara. At that time they don't have visible disturbing thoughts—anger and dissatisfied mind—arising; for a while they don't have the suffering of suffering; they don't have a lot of problems. Because they have not realized shunyata the root of samsara is not eliminated, so there are still disturbing thoughts and karma. The disturbing thoughts are latent; they are stopped from visibly arising for a while. When they have finished their karma there, they again have to be born in the lower realms. That is a lack of renunciation of the whole of samsara—not having renunciation of the samsara of the form and formless realms.

They have renunciation of the samsaric pleasures but they don't have renunciation of the third suffering, pervasive suffering. That can be translated another way—I think translations have a meaning—as either pervasive compounding suffering, or pervasive suffering of karmic formation. Because of not having much realization of shunyata they lack renunciation of this third, the main, fundamental suffering and because of that they do not enter the path of liberation, even though they have reached the formless realm and don't have visible disturbing thoughts arising, don't have suffering of suffering. They have pervasive compounding suffering.

First try to understand this, then it makes it clear: ignorance is that while the "I" is empty of existing from its own side, one is holding that the "I" is existing from its own side. Because of this ignorance,

these disturbing thoughts arise—attachment, ignorance of karma, anger. Particularly ignorance of karma; thus they accumulate non-virtue.

Now, just talking about our present human body: out of attachment, the desire to have this perfect human body, we accumulated good karma and planted the seed on the consciousness. Then, during the life before this, at the time of death, the craving and grasping of wishing to receive a human body was the strongest. Like when we go to a shop; first of all we wish to buy, afterwards there arises the very strong determination, then the actual decision to buy is made. So there is strong determination, grasping, to receive a human body. There might also be other ways to explain the difference between craving and grasping. However, at the time of death in the previous life, out of the twelve links related to this present human body, the link of craving and grasping, which comes from ignorance, arose. The karma to be born as a human being was created and craving and grasping met the seed which was planted on the consciousness before by the compounding karma. “Compounding” means creating the seed of samsara. What compounding action or karma does is compound the seed of samsara, the next life’s deluded aggregates which are caused by that karma and the disturbing thoughts. The craving and grasping arose and met the seed when we were near to death, near to the time of the breath stopping. That made the seed that was planted before by ignorance and karma ready to be experienced.

That karma to be born as a human being was the strongest karma among all other virtuous and non-virtuous karma. That karma was the most powerful, closest, most familiar or was accumulated first, before other karmas. Then consciousness took place on the fertilized egg in our mother’s womb. Then name and form arose. Name is the mental factors; form is the physical part. Then the six sense bases; then contact; then feelings were actualized in the mother’s womb. When the consciousness took place on the fertilized egg, rebirth happened. Now what is left of the seven results that have to be experienced in this life, is death.

You can see from this how these aggregates, body and mind, are created. The mind came from the past life and joined to this body, beginning with the fertilized egg, due to ignorance. The very root is ignorance. The disturbing thoughts, craving and grasping, arose at death-time and caused the seed on the consciousness planted by karma to become strong, ready to give birth, which is called “becoming.” So that is how these aggregates are under the control of karma and disturbing thoughts. That is how karma and disturbing thoughts have bound one to samsara.

So, it is not only that these aggregates are caused by karma and disturbing thoughts, but they are the contaminated seed of disturbing thoughts. Therefore, even if we want to practice virtue, even if we want to meditate for two hours, even if we want to do many prostrations, it is difficult to use the body to practice virtue. It gets exhausted soon and many other obstacles happen physically. Pain and many obstacles arise so one is unable to persuade it to practice virtue. The same thing with the mind; we can’t keep it continuously in virtue. It does not stay one-pointed—even though we wish to concentrate, we cannot. We cannot keep the mind in the nature of patience or in the nature of compassion continuously. We can’t keep the thought of loving kindness continuously. It is difficult to transform the mind—that is because of having the seed of disturbing thoughts. Because the seed of the disturbing thoughts has contaminated the aggregates, even if we don’t have any anger now, anger suddenly arises on meeting an undesirable object; and by meeting desirable objects suddenly attachment arises; ignorance arises suddenly on meeting an indifferent object. Like this we create karma.

With these aggregates, when there is a suffering feeling—hunger, thirst, feeling hot and cold, the suffering of suffering—or even a pleasant feeling, even that is in the nature of suffering. With these aggregates, not only suffering feelings or pleasant feelings, but even indifferent feelings, are suffering because these aggregates are contaminated by the seed of disturbing thoughts.

As long as we don't stop the continuation we will circle because of the previous deluded aggregates caused by karma and disturbing thoughts—which created the karma of this, today's, present samsara. The past life's aggregates joined with this present life's aggregates. With this present life, this samsara—these deluded aggregates caused by karma and disturbing thoughts—we again create karma each day. Because we create karma with ignorance and disturbing thoughts, these aggregates again circle to the next life. These then circle to the next life and the next—like this, without end. As long as we don't eliminate the disturbing thoughts and karma there is a continuous cycle: aggregates from this life join to the next life, next life's join to the next life and so on, without end. Like this one continuously suffers in samsara. The base on which we label "I," especially the consciousness, joins from this life to the next life, and that joins to the next life and from that life to another life. I'm not talking so much about this physical body circling—this cannot circle, cannot join. Until we stop the continual circling in samsara by eliminating the disturbing thoughts and karma we will suffer continuously, wherever we are born, in whichever realm. Whichever aggregates we take—devas' aggregates, human beings' aggregates, lower beings' aggregates—they are deluded aggregates caused by karma and disturbing thoughts, and are always suffering. Feeling is one of these, so all feelings are in the nature of suffering.

Because of this samsara—the deluded aggregates caused by karma and disturbing thoughts—the suffering of change arises, and the suffering feeling—the suffering of suffering. Without these aggregates, this samsara, there is no way to experience the suffering of change and the suffering of suffering. So that's why these aggregates, this samsara, are called "pervasive"—because they become the foundation of the two other sufferings. "Pervasive compounding" suffering: "compounding" because with this we again create karma for the next life's samsara and aggregates. It is called "pervasive suffering of formation" because this present samsara is formed by past life's karma and disturbing thoughts. So, this is pervasive suffering of formation—this is the fundamental suffering of samsara. This is the main suffering that we should keep in mind, the fundamental suffering that we should be liberated from.

As oneself is suffering like this continuously, so other sentient beings are suffering. There is not even one minute, one second, that one does not suffer because of having this samsara, these aggregates. There is no break, not for one hour or one minute. Like this, from beginningless rebirths until now, there has not been one single break from samsaric suffering. One has to continuously experience suffering. Like this, all the kind sentient beings equaling the sky, from whom one has received all the happiness and perfections in the past, present and future, who are extremely kind all the time, are suffering in samsara without a break for even a minute or a second.

"As I have the opportunity, it is my responsibility to free them from all the suffering and cause of suffering, and lead them to enlightenment. Therefore I must achieve enlightenment. Without creating the cause I cannot achieve it, therefore I am going to practice virtue; I am going to take the Mahayana precepts." It became quite long! It you have difficulty you can go for pee-pee; otherwise we can start!

LECTURE 33  
December 5 am

SANG.GYE CHO.DANG...

I MUST ACHIEVE ENLIGHTENMENT QUICKLY...  
THE GROUND WITH SCENT...

Please make the request for the three great purposes to the Great Compassionate One:

I PROSTRATE AND TAKE REFUGE TO THE GURU AND THE TRIPLE GEM...

Request to be able to pacify the particular obstacles—ignorance of heresy, the obstacles to having a stable understanding of karma, and the selfish attitude—the obstacle to generating bodhicitta.

I AM REQUESTING YOU TO IMMEDIATELY GENERATE...

Particularly the stable understanding of karma and bodhicitta.

NAM.DAK CHO.KUI...

Nectar rays flow from Guru Chenrezig and purify all the wrong conceptions—yours and all the sentient beings. Then a replica of Chenrezig, the Great Compassionate One, is absorbed to one's own heart, generating all the realizations of the path to enlightenment; especially the stable understanding of karma and bodhicitta: the two types of bodhicitta—the wisdom realizing shunyata and the altruistic mind of enlightenment—the very essential wisdom and method.

THE FOUNDATION OF ALL KNOWLEDGE IS THE KIND AND VENERABLE GURU...

(end of tape)

OM MANI PADME HUM.... OM MANI PADME HU....

The Great Compassionate One melts into light and is absorbed to one's own heart. One's mind becomes completely in the nature of great compassion, feeling as so unbearable other sentient beings' suffering and their being obscured, and wishing to liberate them immediately, by oneself. Also the Great Compassionate Ones that are visualized above the crowns of each sentient being melt into light and are absorbed into their hearts and they are combined into complete oneness with great compassion, the holy mind of Chenrezig.

DUE TO THE MERITS ACCUMULATED BY ME AND OTHER SENTIENT BEINGS...  
SA.ZHI POE.KYI...

Please generate at least the effortful bodhicitta, thinking, "It is not sufficient that the teaching being listened to is a Mahayana teaching; the motivation should be bodhicitta for the action of listening to become the cause of enlightenment."

This morning I thought to go straight into karma, to try to finish it! If there is time we can do the five powers for integrating the practice into the life and the thought training practices this afternoon.

Yesterday I meant to mention the five powers at the time of death—just to give the titles. But without choice, my talk got longer! Also the five powers for integrating all of the practice into five points.

As I mentioned another time, if you are going to America from here, without watching the road for precipices and thorns, without being careful, just thinking, “I’m going to America,” you may not make it to America! Similarly, the first thing to watch in Dharma practice is karma. If we are not careful in this, even if we wish to achieve enlightenment, to generate the realization of the generation and accomplishment stages of tantra, it will not be possible. There have been unskillful practitioners who, even though they did retreat on deities, were born in the narak. When Lama Atisha was going to Tibet, I think as he was going over a bridge, he suddenly turned back and told his servant who was accompanying him, “Even a meditator on the deity Hevajra was now born in the narak.” Also one meditator on Vajrabhairava was born as a very terrifying and mischievous preta—hungry ghost—having so many hands and heads, and came to Tibet from India. Lama Atisha said that if it is allowed to stay it will give a lot of harm, so he gave a gift to the spirit and ordered it to return back to India. The spirit returned back.

You see, their being born as a spirit or even in the naraks was because of trying to practice tantra but not being careful of karma and not controlling anger. What the mind wants is to be suddenly very highly realized by practicing tantra meditations without the need to follow the steps, the fundamental lamrim realizations, the essential Dharma, which is karma. Somewhere in Pembo, in Tibet, there were three meditators who did many years of deity retreat. I think one of them died and was born as a very powerful preta because he had been visualizing a powerful wrathful-aspect deity. There is a practice of making charity to the pretas, who live on the small of food—such as by burning food like tsampa flour in a fire with maybe some special ingredients, and reciting prayers. His friends, who hadn’t died, were doing this practice every day in the evenings. He came in the evenings to eat the smell of the offerings. There are so many stories.

A person may be careless, thinking, “I only like shunyata; I’m going to meditate on shunyata,” without knowing how to practice, not knowing how important the practice of karma is. Not knowing the details of, for example, the ten non-virtuous actions, not knowing this classification which is to make it easy for ordinary people to practice. The heavy negative karmas have been roughly classified into ten to make it easy for people to practice karma by pointing out what one should and should not do. Without knowing these one cannot protect karma. The person wants to meditate on shunyata, but never tries to protect karma by controlling the dissatisfied mind and anger, ignorance, jealousy and pride—all those things. He does not try to stop creating negative karma in relation to sentient beings as an object, or in relation to the merit field, the Triple Gem. His not protecting karma is itself an interference to realizing shunyata, bodhicitta, renunciation, and the graduated path to enlightenment, as well as the tantra path.

That’s why there are so many vows of different levels. It is Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s psychology for sentient beings to practice according to their capability. He made five refuge precepts of which one can take any number; the eight precepts; the two hundred and fifty; the three hundred and sixty-five; and the eight Mahayana precepts for one day, which are very easy to keep and have incredible benefits. This was Guru Shakyamuni Buddha’s skillful method to guide the sentient beings. So, that’s how Guru Shakyamuni Buddha guides them from happiness to happiness, by showing them how to protect karma—from this life to better next life, from there to a better following life, up to enlightenment. Firstly, to create temporal happiness, then ultimate happiness. That’s why there are

bodhisattva vows and tantra vows. All this is to achieve enlightenment. The bodhisattva vows are to accomplish extensive works for other sentient beings. Why? Because by taking and living in the bodhisattva vows all the obstacles which disturb the achievement of enlightenment are stopped. By living in the tantra vows, all the obstacles which prevent the achievement of enlightenment in this life—or within sixteen, or three, lifetimes—are stopped. Enlightenment can be achieved in this brief lifetime, which is sixty or seventy years long, in these degenerate times. The purpose of living in vows such as tantric vows is that it is a method to prevent the obstacles to the achievement of enlightenment quickly.

When you receive vows—bodhisattva vows or tantra vows—you can see why that? Why this? When you check each vow. If you check like this you can see that the root vows are to not do actions which are the heaviest obstacles. Otherwise, no matter how much meditation we do, even if we spend eons and eons, there is no attainment. We don't stop these obstacles, so there is no attainment, no success, no progress.

Negative karmas are an obstacles to our happiness. That's why if one can transform these three non-virtuous actions of killing, stealing and sexual misconduct and the four of speech—telling lies, speaking harshly, slandering and gossiping—into virtue, they should be transformed. If not, one should abstain from them. One should try to protect oneself in this way. Therefore, in order to protect karma, one should understand how they become non-virtue. Like, for example, the details in regard to sexual misconduct, which I mentioned before and which are explained in the teachings—such as the object not to be entered, the “limbs” not to be entered, the places and times when it should not be done.

There are many details such as not having sexual contact with one's own parents, or even bodyguards or guardians—if they are police! If one has sexual intercourse with the wife's or husband's parents it becomes sexual misconduct. For example, the wife having sexual intercourse with the husband's father, or the husband having intercourse with the wife's father or mother—both! Woman-to-woman is not specifically mentioned here, but man-to-man is mentioned, it comes later. I think it would be the same thing for woman-to-woman. One time when we were in Spain, I think the second time, with His Holiness Song Rinpoche, Rinpoche gave the refuge precepts. There were a lot of people. I don't remember that anybody gave an explanation, and right after Rinpoche finished we came out of the dome they had built. It was very nicely made! It looked a little bit like something on the moon! One girl came outside and she mentioned this. In Tibet it was not something one hears about. I couldn't ask Rinpoche when were getting in the car, so I thought to ask Rinpoche later. I don't remember exactly if I asked Rinpoche or not! However, here is the teaching there are many points like this.

The whole thing is Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's method, or psychology. Many of these things mentioned here, such as having physical contact with a wife belonging to somebody else, create a lot of confusion. It is not only that the action becomes negative karma because it is done with attachment and disturbing thoughts, but it brings a lot of confusion and creates disharmony between the husband and wife, jealousy and anger between oneself and that couple. It can even become a basis for killing each other. Also, from that come many negative karma such as telling lies. From this one thing many other negative karmas come—anger, jealousy, lying, harsh speech, slandering, ill-will and physical harm, covetousness—wishing that one could have him or her for oneself. Then, if one can't accomplish what one wants, one kills oneself. The final solution is that! One can't control them, so one kills oneself. That's what happens—one becomes completely crazy and wild and

destroys one's life. You can see from this example that unbelievable problems come. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is so skillful at guiding sentient beings to stop them from creating negative karmas and so much confusion. Many of these points are those actions from which confusion comes—they make life very complicated, with many problems. To lessen the confusion those details are mentioned in the teachings. This is just talking about confusion and problems in this life, without talking about the suffering result of negative karma experienced in the following lives. So many of the unbelievable problems in the West would be stopped if everybody practiced the ten virtues, even if just sexual misconduct were abstained from. So much of the violence and the need to go to court and pay a lot of money for lawyers! The dissatisfied mind makes life very expensive! It makes a lot of unnecessary expenses—even if you don't have money, you've got to make money because you are in debt. That causes you to keep more busy and be more worried—if there's not enough time to work in the day, you have to work at night also! You have to make money because you owe a lot because you needed to spend so much!

The 'limbs' not to be entered were explained by Lama Atisha as these: the mouth, the anus, the front and rear holes of the legs of a boy or girl and one's own hand—masturbation. If these limbs are entered it becomes sexual misconduct. Then, there are places where if one has sexual intercourse with one's own wife it becomes sexual misconduct. That is where there is....

(end of tape)

.....Like that place where there is a stupa down there—a place near a stupa such as Swayambhu or Bodhgaya where there are precious stupas. It doesn't mean just on the stupa! Disrespect at these holy places, where the guru is, or where there is a stupa, is negative because of the power of the object making the karma much heavier. The karma is heavier, that's why Buddha gave this method: so sentient beings create less heavy negative karma. Then, also, where many people can see! Doing it in front of many people would cause social confusion, that's why! I'm not quite sure about this—it doesn't come clear in my mind, I don't remember from when I was listening to the teaching: also on kind of hills, uncomfortable, pointed hills! There's another one I'm not quite sure of: certain places which harm the country! If one has sexual intercourse even with a person that one owns, or is married to, it becomes sexual misconduct at these places. The purpose is not clear in my mind. One pandit, an Indian, was very learned in the Hindu religion. I don't remember what caused him to change, but later he became an "inner being," and took refuge in Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. I don't remember the story, but later on he became a learned Buddhist pandit and wrote a scripture in admiration of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha called "Exalting Guru Shakyamuni Buddha." This text is very interesting. Before, he was a great follower of the Madyara. He wrote about the differences between the propounders of Madyara and Guru Shakyamuni Buddha—that Guru Shakyamuni has no stains of attachment or so many other things which those others had. This text of admiration is very beneficial for the mind. It makes one see Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's qualities clearly and it causes faith to arise without choice. He also said, "One shouldn't have sexual intercourse near Dharma scriptures, stupas, statues of Buddha, near bodhisattvas, abbots, virtuous friends and parents." If one has sexual intercourse in front of an altar it is sexual misconduct.

There are certain times when sexual intercourse becomes misconduct. When the woman is having a period or is pregnant. Also, it is said, right after the child is born—here it says, "Milk coming and having a child." It doesn't specify, but it might be that sexual intercourse right after the child comes out becomes misconduct. Then, Lama Tsong Khapa says those times when the husband or wife is living in the eight precepts. Then, one shouldn't have sex when there is disease. Probably that might

cause a problem for health—it doesn't specify, but maybe that, and also because it can spread the disease to each other. Then, also, more than five times! I cannot say one hundred percent. But I think it might be the action of intercourse itself more than five times in one day. Probably it might be on the first occasion but I couldn't say for sure. Also this great pandit says, "When the person doesn't not have the wish or their mind is not happy because that makes them more unhappy." Lama Atisha's explanations are also similar to this pandit's. One extra thing that Lama Atisha mentions is that having sex in the day time is sexual misconduct, but I think Lama Atisha is more strict—others didn't mention about the day time. Even having sexual contact with one's own wife's other limbs becomes sexual misconduct. It's the same thing with other people.

Regarding the thought, the recognition has to be unmistakable. If it is mistaken, if it's not the person one thought it was, whom one planned, the recognition is missing so the action is not complete! For those who are living in celibacy there is no question of recognition or non-recognition! In the *Abhidharmakosha* commentary there are two explanations: it says that if another person's husband or wife is recognized wrongly as "my husband" or "my wife," it does not become the path of sexual misconduct. What it is saying is if the object is not correctly recognized. Then, recognizing another's wife as somebody else is again mistaken recognition. Actually it's another's wife, but due to not having seen clearly the recognition is that it's somebody else—I think it might mean somebody who doesn't have a husband! There are two ways for this happen explained, that it does and does not become misconduct. However, as was mentioned above, I think it means mistakenly thinking it is somebody who doesn't have an "owner."

The disturbing thoughts are one of the three poisonous minds. The motivation is wishing to have sexual intercourse. The action is the two persons' sexual organs meeting. Completion is when one experiences sexual pleasure.

Also one example regarding stealing, I remember, is this: if I bought fruit from the market and paid five paise for it and I tell a person, "Oh, I paid ten rupees," of course there is no question that it is telling a lie! But I think if I do actually get ten rupees it might become stealing, because the way I got ten rupees is kind-of by cunning. If I say, "I paid five paise but I want ten rupees," it is up to whether the person wants to pay or not! That's straight!

If one borrowed money from another person many years ago and he doesn't ask for it, but he has not given it up, and one makes the decision: "I'm not going to return it back," then stealing is completed. But if before one thinks this the other person gives it up, even if one thought to not return it back, I think it does not become the complete action of stealing. Lama Tsong Khapa says, "By cunning, and also other cunning." It could be by means such as loans, when people give their possessions into your care, and you don't return those because of cunning. Other cunning ways could be as in the example of saying you paid ten rupees for the goods—when one thinks, "I've got it," and, "I will not give it away," the action of stealing is completed. I think I will stop here.

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG...

LECTURE 34  
December 5 pm

Please listen to the teachings, generating again the motivation of bodhicitta, thinking, "At any rate I must achieve enlightenment..."

I mentioned before a little about the power of blaming, but I want to emphasize a bit more the various ways to think about the selfish attitude, in order for you to get some basic idea. Then, on this basis you can amplify, thinking of more details. You see, the essence is this: relating what is appearing and which we now believe to be the real “I”—if it is expressed in words the “I” appears to be, and we believe that it is, existing from its own side. We believe that is the real “I.” While the “I” is empty of existing from its own side, our connotation is that the “I” is existing from its own side, and we cling to that. This is the ignorance holding true existence—that there is an “I” existing absolutely, one hundred percent from its own side. In fact, in reality, it is merely labeled, but being ignorant of that, we see that which is merely labeled as existing from its own side, and believe that this is one hundred percent true or real. Because of this, the selfish attitude cherishes this “I.” That’s the evolution. You can see from this that the “I” which the selfish attitude cherishes is something which doesn’t exist.

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This ignorance holds that this “I” which appears to exist is one hundred percent true. Then the selfish attitude holding that it’s the most important, the most precious, arises. In fact it is completely non-existent. Actually, if we watch, if we are able to recognize the object of refutation, the “I” that we are cherishing right now as the most important, more important than anything or any living being, is completely a dream because it doesn’t exist. Believing in it is completely childish. I think as a child I played in the sand with other children. We used to stretch out our feet and put sand around them and then take them out so there remained a kind-of house! I don’t remember if this house collapsed and whether I cried!

It is said in the teachings, maybe the *Bodhicharyavatara*, “Worldly people completely cling to the “I” which is empty of existing from its own side, believing that it exists from its own side.” Then comes much worry and fear that something is going to happen to the unlabeled “I” existing from its own side. There arises much expectation, doubt, much worry and fear about the “I.” It is just like children crying when their house made of sand collapses. In the teachings that is used as an example. It is kind-of childish, sort-of crazy, or nonsensical. When people talk about things which do not exist in reality, other people regard them as crazy, as having lost their mind!

Those who have realized shunyata see the unity of emptiness and dependent arising in regard to this “I.” They see the “I” as illusory as well as existing. When buddhas, who see things as illusory, look at us, they see us as completely crazy, completely hallucinating, childish. Before one realizes that the “I” is a dependent arising, at the time one realizes that the “I” to be refuted—the truly existent “I”—is non-existent, one gets shocked, “For so long, until now, what I have been believing doesn’t exist at all. Even the slightest atom of what I have been believing about how I am doesn’t exist.” I think one gets a great surprise, a great shock, at that time.

Before that one has no idea at all that the “I” is like that; that this which one believes is actually doesn’t exist. Even if one says the words “non-truly existent,” “empty of existing by itself,” one is thinking something else; the two are never related. One does not even suspect what “truly existent” means. There is not even the suspicion that the “I” that one believes is now might be what it is called “truly existent.” One believes that of course the truly existent “I” is not there, however, the appearance of it is still there. The appearance of true existence exists—something that one doesn’t have! Even though one speaks the words, but to oneself it seems like one is not talking about one’s

own wrong conception, the simultaneously-born ignorance holding true existence. In one's own mind one feels that the truly existent object is not something that one is believing in now, but that it is something else. However, I don't want to speak on this point—I think I have wandered! The selfish attitude cherishes a truly existent "I" which ignorance believes to be absolutely true. It believes that this "I" is the most precious, more important than anybody. Because of this selfish attitude other disturbing thoughts arise and we create negative karma. That is like the stem, and the result is the fruit, a suffering rebirth in the narak realm; a suffering rebirth in the human realm; or suffering in the sura and asura realms. As a human being, at present relating to this realm, there are hundreds and hundreds of problems. So, you see how the selfish attitude tortures oneself like this at present in the human realm and at other times in each realm. It is that which brings disharmony to relationships; it is so clear how that comes from the selfish attitude.

The whole problem is the selfish attitude. What the selfish attitude does is it cherishes oneself and renounces other sentient beings, and that is how all the problems come. Because of it whenever one's parents, or virtuous friend, or friend, or one's own companion—wife or husband—do something like say even one or two words such as, "You are so selfish," "You are not nice," or, "You are ugly!" There is an incredible disturbance in one's mind. Even if a person whom one met before passes with his nose on the sky—nose in the air!—with a kind-of unpleasant face, or an undesirable way of walking—his steps a little heavier – or walks by without talking, without saying hello, there is a great disturbance—incredible, unbelievable pain!

Whenever some undesirable thing happens, it hurts you; you feel incredible pain in the heart. It is very obvious how this comes from the selfish attitude. The selfish attitude clings; it thinks this "I" is most precious. "What I want, my happiness," is the most important. What one wants and what one doesn't want are so important to this "I." The pain comes when something undesirable disturbs the happiness of the "I," when there is some disturbance to what the selfish attitude is expecting for the "I." The small, so tiny, nothing, it brings greater pain. What the selfish attitude wants for the "I" is peace and quiet. Anger comes while one is sitting on the meditation cushion. One is supposed to control anger at least while one is sitting on the meditation cushion! Or, even if a dog barks anger arises although he on patience, anger can suddenly come when there is even a small distraction! The mind becomes unhappy so easily. Even if it is a small thing great anger comes. Even because of a flea moving around under your legs and biting, in your warm sleeping bag! He is not even biting, just moving around, and incredible anger comes! He is so tiny! Not even the size of an apple, not even the size of your finger, but your anger is as great as the mountains or like a house on fire! Or, if you help some person such as by giving one rupee to a beggar and he does not say thank you—keeps a serious face, doesn't smile—again there arises great pain in the heart! I think the more one cherishes oneself, the more one expects happiness for the "I," the greater the pain.

From this it is obvious how much self-cherishing disturbs oneself, and how great pain comes when an undesirable thing happens. It depends on how strong the selfish attitude is. Just the pain coming into your heart itself is a shortcoming of the selfish attitude. Then, you see, anger comes from that. The stronger one cherishes the "I," the stronger and longer in duration is the anger. When it arises, it doesn't stop immediately, but lasts longer. The dissatisfied mind is greater and lasts a longer time; also the jealous mind is greater; also pride is stronger.

So now you understand that all the disharmony, all the fighting, all the quarrels—beating each other, all these things that we have suffered so far in this life—come from the selfish attitude. One is obliged to experience all these problems by the selfish attitude. One is obliged to experience all these

problems by the selfish attitude. We should think of the shortcomings of by the selfish attitude. We should think of the shortcomings of the selfish attitude like this. Also we should think that if we really want mental peace, really want happiness in everyday life, the best solution is to be aware of the shortcomings of the selfish attitude and keep away from this inner enemy, not be friendly with it. Separate yourself from the selfish attitude instead of living your life in oneness with the selfish attitude like you keep away from a bad person who always cheats you, who always gives you problems. Also you should think, all unhappiness and distractions come from the selfish attitude. It's so clear.

(end of tape)

Instead of all the time giving freedom to the selfish attitude, allowing yourself to be under its control, the selfish attitude should be under your control. Give yourself liberation, freedom. If you really want peace in your everyday life, that's the most essential method. If you want to accomplish all desired things, all your wishes, to have harmonious relationships, this is the only way. You should think like this to control the selfish attitude.

So many times the dissatisfied mind has arisen from the selfish attitude. Not only the problems of dissatisfaction with the present wife or husband with whom one is living, but the selfish attitude wants somebody else; "I might be happier if I live with this other person." Then the selfish attitude causes so much expense preparing to be with the other person, and much fear and worry because of being unable to leave one's wife or husband. Then one day he or she finds out, and then there is hell! One receives a scolding or is beaten. There is even the danger of being killed! Again, much fear and worry for the wife and husband that their possessions will be taken away, not leaving anything for themselves! Also, much confusion is created for the other couple. The other wife or husband gets angry at oneself and at one's wife or husband, and they get angry at the person one wants to go to. You see, besides one's own disturbing thoughts arising, one's selfish attitude obliges many other people to create the negative karma of the ten non-virtuous actions through anger, jealousy and other disturbing thoughts. Even after one leaves or kicks out one's present companion and lives with the other person, after a few days or months again the selfish attitude is not happy, and things, "I might be more happy if I stay with this other person." What the selfish attitude does again is what it did before, and the same set of problems start! Like this, on and on, on and on!

Now you see, by cherishing the "I," one leads other people to create negative karma and makes even this life so unhappy and disharmonious for so many people, without talking about the future results of negative karma. We were born to help others, to stop their problems, but as long as we follow the selfish attitude it looks like we were born only to confuse others and to throw them into the lower realms! It comes to this, which is a very sad life. We should know this, then we can control the selfish attitude.

Also you should think that first of all cherishing oneself creates disharmony between other persons and between yourself and your companion. You should remember the many problems experienced everywhere, in all the ten directions! You can't breathe, you feel suffocated. Because of following the selfish attitude so much disharmony and confusion is created all around for so many people. Many times one almost becomes crazy and feels suffocated like one can't breathe or move. You should remember those things. Also you should think that many times one almost came to the point of killing oneself—because of the problems, fears and worries, thinking, "It may be best if I kill

myself.” One is even prepared to commit suicide! To remember those things is very good for controlling the selfish attitude.

When one sees somebody who has more wealth, more success or more knowledge, jealousy arises. What the selfish attitude wants is that oneself be the most rich, the most famous—not infamous! Having the best reputation, the best education. That oneself should have everything that is possible, everything that exists. So, if somebody has a better car, better apartment, more swimming pools, a more luxurious life, more knowledge, is better looking, the jealous mind arises and there is much pain in one’s heart. If the person has the same status and equal wealth there is competition. When one sees somebody who is poor or poorly educated, or even looks more ugly, pride arises. Whether we meet someone who is higher or lower, there is pain. All these are the shortcoming of the selfish attitude. I think I will stop here.

So you see, it is very good to think about this. This is still without talking about the shortcoming of the selfish attitude of interfering with the practice of Dharma. Even somebody who hasn’t met Buddhadharma, who doesn’t have the practice of refuge and has no interest in it, wants happiness, but, having no idea of what Dharma is, he may think, “I don’t like religion; I don’t need to practice Buddhadharma. I have no interest in the Buddhist religion.” He wants the happiness of peace of mind in everyday life, but there is no way to gain it without doing the practice of controlling the selfish attitude. There is no way to have harmony in relationships or in the family; no way to have success without he himself turning against the selfish attitude.

So, to control the selfish attitude, the person should know how the selfish attitude is harmful. Even if the person is not interested in reincarnation and the happiness of future lives—cannot understand or accept this—he has to see that the selfish attitude is harmful. Even if he believes in only one life and thins only of this one life’s problems, if his mind turns inside instead of being always concerned with the outside, and watches the mind and its attitudes in relation to the life’s problems—checking whether the problems come from the selfish attitude or not—it is so beneficial and powerful to control and destroy the selfish attitude. Thought this practice there will be much success fewer obstacles to his happiness the more he can control the selfish attitude—wherever he lives or goes, whatever work he does, with whomever he lives. I will stop here. Hopefully tomorrow I can finish some of the five powers!

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG...

LECTURE 35  
December 6

MAHAYANA ORDINATION

SANG.GYE CHO.DANG...

By taking precepts and living in ordination, any merit that one accumulates is much greater than that accumulated when not living in ordination. There is a great difference; that is one benefit. Not living in ordination and offering as much butter as would equal the Atlantic Ocean to the Triple Gem, and living in ordination and offering one drop of butter like the tip of a needle—the second has much greater merit than the former. By taking this ordination even for one hour, or even 15 minutes one purifies negative karma and restores virtue—or, putting it another way, purifies vices that have been received by degenerating vows, and revives the vows, *tek.chen so.jong*, revival and purification by

Mahayana ordination—and this has greater merit than one would accumulate in eons by other practices. If you are going to do more virtuous action, especially in retreat, take Mahayana ordination that day. Normally it is very rare to accumulate merit, so on those days when we especially try to accumulate merit, when we try to give ourselves time to accumulate merit by making offerings, or in other ways, with respect to the object sentient beings, it is very skillful to take the Mahayana ordination.

You see, if one is living on vows such as the refuge precepts which involve not killing, even by living in that one upasika vow to not kill, to not accumulate this non-virtuous action until death, the merit that is accumulated is much greater than accumulating such merit without living in ordination. When taking refuge there are three things to practice and three things to abandon, such as the precept which applies to killing—as I described, the action of the body of the path of killing. If one is living in the five precepts, the merit is much greater than if one lives in one vow. If one is living in the eight precepts, the merit which is accumulated is much greater and more powerful still. If one is living in the thirty-six vows it is more powerful. Likewise for the two hundred and fifty-three or three hundred and sixty-five precepts. Also with the bodhisattva vows or the tantric vows, there's incredible advantage compared with accumulating merit when not living in the vows. The higher the ordination in which one is living, the merit that one accumulates is much more powerful.

(end of tape)

The fourth benefit is that by living in ordination whatever prayers one makes get accomplished. It is said in the teachings that generally, by living purely in moral conduct, without doubt all the prayers that the person makes get accomplished. Mahayana ordination is just for one day, not a lifetime, so it is easy to keep and to keep purely. As it is not for a lifetime, there's more energy to keep it purely. Having taken the Mahayana ordination the revival and purification—during those times that the precepts are not being degenerated whatever prayers one makes definitely get accomplished. This Mahayana ordination should be taken with the motivation of bodhicitta, remembering the kindness of other sentient beings. Others are so precious; each sentient being gives us all three great purposes into our hands. All the past happiness and perfections were received from sentient beings, but even without thinking of that kindness, just thinking of the happiness and perfections of this life, it's unbelievable how extremely kind and precious the sentient beings are. As I often say during courses, there's not one single happiness or perfection that we receive without depending on the kindness of the sentient beings. There is not one single perfection received from them without them having suffered. This rice that we are eating today came from the fields. The fields were fertilized and plowed and during those times so many ants, mice, worms, so many creatures in the ground were killed. So many had to die and had to suffer for this each time work was done. There are many stages in order to get the fruit. After the seedlings are grown they have to be replanted, and then there is weeding and many jobs at different times as it is growing. Each time so many creatures have to die or suffer.

In the West it is mostly done by people with machines. Here in the East it is mostly by animals. The buffaloes and other animals get beaten so much by the people when plowing the land. The human beings and animals worked so hard, experiencing heat and cold. They were burned by the sun and experienced much tiredness. Sentient beings created negative karma by killing other sentient beings just for this one serving of rice. So many sentient beings had to die or had to suffer. This rice came from other rice, other seeds. The same thing for that—so many sentient beings had to suffer or had to die, and others had to accumulate negative karma. And that came from other rice and again it was

the same thing. If you think back it's unbelievable—this rice came from previous rice, that from previous rice and so on. By thinking about the continuity of even this one meal of rice you can see that an unbelievable number of sentient beings accumulated negative karma and so many others suffered and died. For one plate of rice uncountable sentient beings suffered and had to die and created much negative karma. When you think of this, to eat even one plate of rice unconsciously without the thought to benefit at least those who suffered to provide this—if not all the sentient beings—is something unbearable. You dare not put even one spoonful of rice easily in your mouth without making some determination to do something for them, to benefit them. To eat that one bit of rice without the slightest concern for offering benefit to others, with only the selfish attitude concerned with one's own happiness, is very unsuitable, very upsetting.

We should meditate like this: consider yourself as “others” and think of those who suffered and created much negative karma as “yourself.” Then look at your old self, who eats this rice only for the happiness of himself, and think, “He is eating this rice which came from me, for which I created much negative karma and went through much hardship and suffering. He is eating it for his own happiness without one single thought of concern for me.” Look at it this way, from the point of view of yourself being those other beings. It is very painful and upsetting if you think in this way. It is similar for even one piece of vegetable—so many suffered and created negative karma. Even for one cup of tea or even for one mouthful of water when you are thirsty. There are many tiny creatures in the water that you cannot see with your eyes, but you can see with a microscope. When you enjoy the water they die—when it is boiled or when you drink it. So there is no way to have the pleasure of even a mouthful of water or one plate of rice, one bowl of soup, or vegetable, without harming some sentient beings and other sentient beings, creating negative karma. Even by just thinking of food and how it came from sentient beings, one cannot spend one's life completely working for one's own happiness. One has got to do something, to think and plan to benefit them—one can't relax. One can't be satisfied by thinking, “If I am happy, not sick, that's enough.”

It's the same thing with your house. In order to have the comfort of living in a house protected from rain, the heat of the sun, from dangers, so many human beings created negative karma by killing others, and so many other creatures have suffered much injury or died. So much of the clothing that we wear comes from the bodies of animals, and is taken by force. For example, silk comes from silk worms which are controlled by human beings and killed in hot water or whatever. We take the things which keep animals warm, like the hair of their body, by force, for our own happiness and comfort. Many sentient beings suffered, including human beings, in order to for us to have clothing. Think of the whole process: in the beginning those creatures suffered so much and the human beings experienced much hardship to make the clothes. Even if the cloth is made by machines, human beings put much effort into making the machines. Some people bought the cloth from others, made a shop, tailored the clothes and so on. Everything is made by sentient beings to be ready to wear and easy to get.

Now you can see there is not a single comfort that we do not receive from other sentient beings. Even this body that we have now, which has the opportunity to have more comfort than the lower realm beings, even without talking about Dharma, was given by our parents and is due to the karma they created to give it. If they hadn't created the karma we would not have this human body. Some couples, no matter how much they want a child and try to have one, don't get a child. That oneself is alive as a human being today and each day, is due to these sentient beings. It is completely due to the kindness of sentient beings. Being alive today, having the opportunity to practice Dharma, to listen to teachings, to accumulate merit by taking the eight Mahayana precepts, is completely given by the

sentient beings. Therefore one cannot just relax all the time with the thought of only one's own happiness, thinking, "When will I be free from this problem?" If one thinks of suffering, it is only one's own suffering; if one thinks of happiness, it is only one's own happiness. Now one has got to do something to benefit at least those sentient beings who are kind now, from whom one received the present comforts and happiness, even if not all sentient beings, who are kind in past and future lives.

What is needed is to free them from true suffering and the true cause of suffering, for them to have ultimate happiness. This is the best way to benefit them. To complete that work there is no method except practicing Dharma and achieving enlightenment. Therefore, think, "Today I must achieve enlightenment for the sake of all these kind sentient beings; therefore I'm going to take Mahayana ordination."

Please repeat the prayer visualizing Guru Chenrezig surrounded by numberless buddhas and bodhisattvas.

(Ordination ceremony)

So if the precepts are not degenerated from now until sunrise tomorrow, every single merit that we create will be so much more powerful because, as it was mentioned in the teaching, there is a big difference between living in and not living in the precepts. Whatever prayer is made will definitely be accomplished. Feel great joy about this. Think, "How fortunate I am." Also, by knowing the benefits as taught this morning, you should think, "Today might be the last day of my living in the precepts, so while I am living in the precepts I'm going to accumulate merit as much as possible." Like the business person who is in a country where there is a lot of profit to be made, tries to buy or sell as much as possible; like this, as you can make as much profit of merit as possible by living in ordination for one day, this is the action of a really wise person. In business, even if there is material profit, that itself is not the cause of happiness—the happiness of future of negative karma, but this profit of merit is completely the opposite—it is abandoning negative karma.

"As I have taken these eight precepts, I'm going to keep them until sunrise tomorrow in order to free each sentient being from suffering and to lead them to enlightenment."

FROM NOW ON, I SHALL NOT KILL...

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG...

LECTURE 36  
December 6 am

I PROSTRATE WITH BODY SPEECH AND MIND IN FAITH...  
THE GROUND WITH SCENT IS BLESSED...

The nectar rays from Guru Chenrezig enter one's body and mind as well as all other sentient beings, and completely purify all the wrong conceptions, particularly those preventing the stable understanding of karma and bodhicitta. The selfish attitude is completely purified. A replica of Chenrezig is absorbed to one's heart and the hearts of all sentient beings. The complete realization, from guru devotion to enlightenment, is generated, especially the stable understanding of karma and

bodhicitta. The same thing happens for all sentient beings. Feel this very strongly, the two bodhicittas—the essence of wisdom and the method, the altruistic mind of enlightenment—are generated. One can also think that the method and wisdom of maha-anuttara yoga tantra—wisdom, clear light and method, the illusory body—is generated in one's own mind and the minds of all sentient beings.

THE FOUNDATION OF ALL KNOWLEDGE...  
OM MANI PADME HUM..... OM MANI PADME HUM..

Guru Chenrezig melts into light and absorbs to one's heart. Feel that the mind is completely oneness with Chenrezig's holy mind—the great compassion feeling as so unbearable that other sentient beings are suffering and obscured, and wishing to immediately liberate them from all their sufferings and obscurations, by oneself. Feel this very strongly. The same thing happens to all sentient beings. Chenrezig melts into light and absorbs into their hearts and they become completely oneness with great compassion.

DUE TO ALL THESE MERITS ACCUMULATED BY ME..

SANG.GYE CHO.DANG...

Please listen to the teachings by generating at least the effortful bodhicitta, thinking, “At any rate I must achieve an omniscient mind for the benefit of all the kind mother sentient beings; therefore, I'm going to listen to the commentary on the graduated path to enlightenment.”

The non-virtuous action of telling lies. If a particular object is experienced with the consciousnesses of body, of tongue, of ears, or eyes, and then one says that one didn't experience this, it is telling a lie. Also it can be the other way—saying that one did see or experience something which one did not. The base is the other person who has understood the meaning of what you are saying. I think not only having heard, but having understood the meaning of what you are saying. The thought is that although you have seen it, you change your recognition to not having seen it. For example, you have seen a person but you change the recognition around into not having seen them. Also, it can be that one did not see, but changes the recognition around into having seen. For example, even though one did not see deities or the Buddha, because one wants to be recognized by others as a special person, wants to have a good reputation, one changes the recognition into having seen Buddha.

The disturbing thought is one of the three poisonous minds—either anger, attachment, or ignorance. The motivation is wishing to tell the false recognition. The action is actually verbally saying this, or remaining silent, or making some movement of the body. For example, while one does not have bodhicitta, because of having some small compassion one verbally says, “I have bodhicitta realization’. But if one doesn't know the definition of bodhicitta, or doesn't know what realization of shunyata means but has meditated on what one believes shunyata is—such as when the mind becomes blank thinking that is shunyata; or seeing the relative nature of mind, the truth of all-obscuring mind, that it is formless and colorless, and believing that this is the emptiness of true existence and that one has realized shunyata—then tells others with “visible” pride, “I have realized shunyata,” for one's own mind one is telling the truth so one is not changing of the recognition. But, for example, if one knows that one has not realized shunyata but changes the recognition, thinking,

“I should say that I have realized shunyata’, this is telling a lie. The four things, the base, thought, action and completion are there, so the path of the non-virtuous actions of telling a lie is completed. One should understand that there are four things to each action. If one has taken the precept, whenever the four things are completed, it is completely broken. Otherwise, one does not receive the actual body of the path of the non-virtuous action. But, you see, even if it is not completed, such as in regard to sexual misconduct if the sexual emission did not happen—there is still a small vice received; although lighter than if the thought and action were complete. Each complete non-virtuous action has four suffering results, as you heard before. If, however, it is incomplete—either there is no action, or disturbing thought, or recognition—the four suffering results are not experienced, but one might experience one or two out of the four.

I asked His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s Guru, His Holiness Trijang Rinpoche, from whose holy speech I received lamrim teachings for the very first time in my life, about this. While Rinpoche, along with many other learned geshe and high lamas and many Tibetan people was taking teachings from His Holiness Trijang Rinpoche’s root guru, whose holy name is Pabongka Dechen Nyingpo, who was combining four different lamrim commentaries, I asked Rinpoche whether each of these actions, even if not complete, has all four suffering results, or not. Rinpoche replied to the letter: “The complete non-virtuous actions have all four results; the incomplete ones might have some, but not all four. That’s why when you do perfect purification by confession there are four powers. The function of each power is to stop one of the four suffering results.

One has “visible” pride if one doesn’t know that one has broken precepts, for example if one has received the negative karma of the complete non-virtuous action of stealing, but one doesn’t know that one has received it. The Tibetan word for stealing is *ma.chel.den*, which means “taking that which is not given.” That makes it very clear what is stealing and what is not. What I’m saying is that if one doesn’t know that one has not given, but one believes that...

(end of tape)

While he knows he has, telling or showing others that he hasn’t stolen—that is, changing the recognition on purpose. But in this example the person doesn’t know, so then there’s a kind-of pride because of his believing that he didn’t receive the negative karma of having taken that which was not given. So, even if he says that he didn’t receive that negative karma, it doesn’t become the actual body of the path to the non-virtuous action of telling a lie.

If somebody asks a person whether he broke any of the four root precepts—not killing, not telling lies, not engaging in sexual misconduct or not stealing—and he has, and yet he keeps quiet without giving a particular answer, and so shows the aspect of not having committed an action, the motive is wishing to tell a lie by changing the recognition. If the other person understands what it means, the non-virtuous action of telling a lie is complete and the person receives the actual body of the path of the non-virtuous action of telling a lie. If somebody is praising oneself, saying, “Oh, you are a great bodhisattva; you have such a pure mind! You don’t have worldly concern; you are a pure Dharma practitioner,” and if one doesn’t say no, or show a physical sign of denial, but kind-of smiles and keeps quiet, kind-of accepting the praise, the four things are gathered, so one receives the actual body of the path to the non-virtuous action of telling a lie.

Whether the motive, the disturbing thoughts, are for the benefit of others or of oneself, it is the same. I mentioned a little about the actions of those great bodhisattvas who completely renounced

themselves to suffer in the narak in order to save others from creating negative. Their actions don't have the disturbing thoughts. Their attitude is one of only cherishing others. That is a different thing—it is virtue. It is said in the teachings that if someone is coming to kill a person named, say, George, and you know where George has gone, and the person asks you whether you have seen George, you should tell him, “Oh, today I am very busy and I have to go to the office!” or, “I'm very sick today!”—something in order to not answer the question!

One can also indirectly receive the actual body of the non-virtuous actions of killing, stealing and telling lies. Sexual misconduct is an exception. For example, lying can be by telling one person to tell something to another person, so that one doesn't speak directly to that person. The completion is the other person understanding the meaning. If he does not understand the meaning, it becomes gossiping, not lying!

Next is the non-virtuous action of slandering. The base is harmonious sentient beings or disharmonious sentient beings. I think the meaning of this comes later in the text. The thought is the disturbing thoughts. The motivation is wishing to cause a split when some sentient beings are harmonious or if they are already disharmonious, wishing that they remain disharmonious. From this you can understand that the base can be harmonious or disharmonious sentient beings. For example, praying to God that those who are disharmonious not be harmonious! The action is speaking true or untrue words either in a way that is interesting or uninteresting for oneself or for others. What you're saying may be true, for example that the wife criticized the husband, or has a lover, but your goal is for them to be disharmonious so you tell the husband. Or, if she did not criticize her husband or does not have a lover, you make it up, in which case it is untrue, and tell the husband in order to create disharmony. “Interesting” might mean—this is my guess—saying something close to being an untruth in order to create disharmony. For example, even if the wife did not talk about the husband in such an interesting way, you make it interesting so that they will split up. Or, if another person talked about the wife or husband about a subject which is interesting or uninteresting, and you tell what the other person actually mentioned in order to create up, but telling people something that another actually said in order to create disharmony. The completion is when they become disharmonious or they have the words which create disharmony. “Uninteresting” might refer to words spoken with the intention of causing disharmony but which do not actually cause disharmony because they are not believed, or are ignored.

Then, speaking harshly. The base is a sentient being. When we speak harshly to a person there is the thought to hurt the person because of the disturbing thoughts of anger or ignorance. It could also be attachment—not necessarily attachment to that person: it could be attachment to the possessions belonging to that person and speaking harshly in order to get them. The motive is wishing to speak harshly. The action is pointing out faults of the person, whether they are true or not. It could be in regard to their education, caste, their body or their general or moral conduct.

The words don't necessarily have to be violent, they may be very polite, but they hurt the other person. Just one example; say one person says to another, “You are a great practitioner of tantra, so when you drink wine you won't become intoxicated or violent—it won't break precepts and you won't receive vices.” The words are nice, but actually the person has the motive to hurt, and the words are sarcastic. If it hurts the other person it becomes harsh speech. The text says the completion is the other person hearing and understanding the meaning. As with sarcasm, it seems that the main completion is that it hurts the other person's mind. Maybe one has a bad motive but if it doesn't hurt the other person, if it becomes beneficial, an incredible teaching, and brings kind-of

happiness, then perhaps it doesn't become the actual body of the path of the non-virtuous action of speaking harshly. There Lama Tsong Khapa is saying that if the person understands the meaning of what one is saying, the action is complete.

Then, gossiping: speaking something which doesn't have any real purpose. The base is sentient beings. The purpose is to say something which is not necessary. The thought has three sections: first is the recognition of what one is gossiping about. I think it is not necessary to recognize that one is gossiping, but the recognition is recognizing whatever subject or meaning one wishes to express. I think the base is not necessarily sentient beings—you could be speaking alone, no-one listening to you talking! Or they are not paying attention or perhaps are deaf!

(end of tape)

The disturbing thought is ignorance or anger or attachment. The motivation is wishing to tell whatever comes into one's mind and which doesn't have any purpose. The action is attempting to gossip. The completion is having finished gossiping.

For example, talking about fighting or debating or quarreling. Not talking about Buddhadharma but about something which only appears to be Dharma such as scriptures written by outer beings, or reading and reciting and giving oral transmissions of the Hindu Brahmin tantras. Talking about life's difficulties and problems. The motive of these actions is attachment or ignorance, perhaps sometimes also anger. The main thing to check is the motivation. It could be the pleasure of speaking proudly to show others what a difficult life one has had or what incredible things one has done. Or, talking about things for fun, to make laughter; talking about parties and entertainments without any Dharma reason. Whether this is gossip or not depends on the motive.

When bodhisattvas or Dharma practitioners speak about suffering it is so that either themselves or the person listening will get renunciation of samsara. Or, if they talk about entertainment, it is to show the result of good karma. Even if they are talking to make others laugh the motive is different. Gossiping is also talking about the lives of kings or ministers, or about different countries, or about thieves and robbers. I think also reading books such as are found at airports and train stations and all over is included: books from beginning to end about terrible things somebody did! Or relationship problems and so on. According to what Lama Tsong Khapa is saying here, it is gossip if the motive is attachment. Talking about wars or, as he said, reading or reciting or giving oral transmissions of the Brahmins' tantra. Reading all those books with attachment, with no thought that it will help one have strong realization of samsara, or to generate bodhicitta or compassion, or to help with one's lamrim practice.

One of the main things that is necessary to transform these three actions of body and four of speech into virtue is the great thought to benefit others. Otherwise all this—reading books and so on—is gossiping. If they are not read verbally, it may not become the actual action of gossiping; probably one might have to be verbally saying it. Gossiping could mean speaking like a crazy person, as if one is kind-of intoxicated; also speaking with wrong livelihood. Lama Tsong Khapa did not elaborate, but it might mean this: even though one is not a pure Dharma practitioner, speaking to others as if one is—this is not one hundred percent sure; it is my guess. For instance, if one doesn't in fact do lamrim meditation all the time but speaks to others as though one does. This is my guess; it can be checked. Also, showing the true cause of suffering. Probably that means talking about attachment and things like that as if they are positive—I think Lama Tsong Khapa might be saying that. Then,

talking about movies and songs, actors and so on which are only amusements. I think I will stop here.

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG...

LECTURE 37  
December 6 pm

SANG.GYE CHO.DANG...

Yesterday's topic was about the general shortcomings of the selfish attitude, how the selfish attitude is harmful, but just thinking only about the problems of this life. That was from the point of view of one who doesn't know the practice of buddha-dharma, just talking about this one life. For one who practices Buddhadharma there are many more shortcomings of the selfish attitude to think about. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was an ordinary being like us, suffering and circling in samsara under the control of karma and disturbing thoughts, before he entered in the Mahayana path. The same as oneself he had the selfish attitude. But Guru Shakyamuni Buddha gave up the selfish attitude, cherished others and generated bodhicitta. He practiced renouncing the selfish attitude and practiced cherishing others, and by this entered the Mahayana path. He accumulated merit for three countless great eons, became enlightened an inconceivable length of time ago and revealed the teachings of the lesser vehicle and of the greater vehicle—both the Paramitayana and Tantrayana—to subdue the minds of sentient beings and gradually lead them to enlightenment. Guru Shakyamuni showed the Twelve Events. Because Guru Shakyamuni Buddha gave teachings, uncountable numbers of sentient beings achieved the arhat stage and enlightenment; such as Nagarjuna, Asanga, Chandrakirti, Aryadeva, Shantideva, the two Sublime Disciples, the Six Pandits and so on. There were eighty great siddhas, yogis such as the great Saraha, Tilopa and Naropa, and the lineage lamas of the different aspect buddhas that some of us are practicing. All those lineage lamas of India and Nepal, innumerable numbers, like stars in the sky, became enlightened. They were enlightened much earlier than us.

Then there were the great Tibetan yogis Marpa and Milarepa. Milarepa led thousands of disciples along the path to Enlightenment by revealing the teachings. Among these thousands, eight became enlightened in one brief lifetime, like Milarepa himself. Also, the great yogi Padmasambhava purified the land of Tibet in order to establish Buddhadharma and revealed teachings. At one holy place called Takyeba he taught the twenty-five main disciples. Then they gave teachings. I heard that this place is incredible, with so many caves. One high incarnate lama who came from Tibet recently went to see this holy place and said it has incredible power and is very beneficial for the mind. Many great yogis meditated at that place. So many are enlightened already.

Then, many Kadampa geshees such as Lama Atisha who, after the Dharma gradually degenerated, transmitted the Kadam teachings. This particular one, the Lamrim, is such a clear, condensed essence of the Buddhadharma and is easy to practice. After Lama Atisha revealed this teaching so many Kadampa geshees became enlightened by giving up the selfish attitude and one-pointedly practicing bodhicitta. So did disciples of the Kadampa geshees, such as Lama Tsong Khapa. Then many of his disciples achieved the rainbow body and achieved enlightenment in one brief lifetime; such as Ensawa who achieved enlightenment within twelve years or so. From all four sects: such as the five great Sakya pandits, many great yogis in the Kagyu sect such as Gampopa, and in the Nyingma sect. Before, they were the same as us—completely deluded and having a selfish attitude.

By renouncing the selfish attitude and practicing bodhicitta they became enlightened much earlier, a long time ago.

We may have met Buddhadharmas fifteen, twenty, or ten or seven years ago, but even during this time other Dharma practitioners, by practicing lamrim, by understanding the shortcomings of the selfish attitude, by meditating on this and realizing that the selfish attitude is the enemy, generated bodhicitta and became bodhisattvas. Many others who attempted it already generated bodhicitta, and became objects for accumulating much merit by other sentient beings. For oneself, from beginningless rebirths until now, the mind has been completely empty of the realization of bodhicitta, the root of the Mahayana path; leaving aside becoming enlightened, not having a single realization of lamrim.

(end of tape)

.....Not looking at the selfish attitude as an enemy, not realizing how the selfish attitude is harmful. Not renouncing, not giving up, the selfish attitude. You see, because of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha so many great yogis in India, Nepal, in Tibet, became enlightened and did incredible extensive benefit for the teachings for the sake of sentient beings. Just think of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha – after he became enlightened and revealed the teachings, uncountable numbers of sentient beings were led into temporal and ultimate happiness, enlightenment. You see, they not only completed works for themselves, but they completed works for others by giving up the selfish attitude and practicing bodhicitta, cherishing others. They put themselves aside and completely involved themselves in doing works for other sentient beings, even if the works for themselves were not completed, even if liberation, the release from samsara for themselves, had not been achieved.

You see, in this life we have received the perfect human rebirth qualified with eight freedoms and ten riches and have met the perfect virtuous friend who can reveal the complete path to enlightenment without missing anything. We have met and received the teachings, both sutra and tantra—even the most profound, secret, quickest path to enlightenment achievable in this brief lifetime. Even if we saw the actual Buddha, there is nothing better, more profound than He could teach than the teachings we receive now from the virtuous friend. But from our own side we haven't done any practice. Even though we may have heard teachings such as thought-training so many times, but practice never gets done when problems arise. I'm just talking about myself I'm using myself as an example, telling the story of my life! When somebody gives one a hard time, shows anger to oneself, one doesn't even remember the teachings. It looks like one hasn't received the teachings on thought-training, patience or bodhicitta, at all! These are shortcomings of the selfish attitude; the self-cherishing thought doesn't let one practice. Because of that there has been no progress in the mind, even though one met the Buddha dharma three, five, seven, ten or fifteen dharmas—I can't remember! I think I have never thought about it! One makes no progress and is still the same as before one met the Buddhadharmas. One didn't have any experience or lamrim realization. At least one should be able to say, "I had much anger three or four years ago; I met the Buddhadharmas and now I have less anger." Or, "Before, I was very selfish, but now, after these years, less so." If one has the thought of the selfish attitude all the time, it doesn't let the mind progress.

Then even after we have met the Buddhadharmas, even if we understand the words, those teachings of the graduated path for the lower capacity beings—perfect human rebirth, its usefulness, the difficulty of finding it, impermanence and death; then those of the middling and higher capability

beings, but our actions, whatever we do, do not become dharma. If we do not follow the selfish attitude our actions become the cause of enlightenment, whatever we do. But following the selfish attitude they do not become even the cause of liberation or even the happiness of future lives. It is incredible how harmful the selfish attitude is.

Even if there's an opportunity to practice moral conduct and accumulate merit continuously from now until death time by taking precepts, we have much fear of taking even one precept. The self-cherishing thought will not allow us to accumulate merit, from now until the time of death. Even if we live in moral conduct by having taken vows, the self-cherishing thought doesn't allow us to keep them purely. Even if we try to practice samatha, tranquil abiding, it doesn't work. Even if we try for months, nothing happens, except obstacles! Even if we try to meditate, try to concentrate on Buddha, try to do fixed or analytical lamrim meditation, again the self-cherishing thought doesn't allow it. Distracted mind harms the meditation. Even if we listen to the teachings and even though the teachings are infallible and we can without a doubt achieve the result if we practice, it does not benefit our minds. One's mind is not subdued. Again, that is because of following the selfish attitude. The self-cherishing thought doesn't allow the teachings to be effective for one's mind. It causes superstition to arise that the teachings are not true, thinking that they are not connected with reality, that they are just made up to make us afraid! Even if one tries to reflect on the meaning of the teachings, no matter how profound and clear they are, there is no benefit for the mind. The mind remains solid, like iron. It's like a parrot reciting OM MANI PADME HUM! There's no feeling, it doesn't make sense. It's just words.

A.M: There's no merit for the parrot?

L.Z: I'm not talking about merit. I appreciate what you are saying! But it's not enough! We cannot be satisfied with only leaving a seed from this life! There's an opportunity for greater things than leaving an impression on the mind!

Even if we meet a perfect virtuous friend, which is the root of the path to enlightenment, we are unable to accomplish his advice and criticism and heresy arise and we receive all negative karmas that you meditated on before—those eight shortcomings of not having correct devotion to the virtuous friend. Again, this is because of the selfish attitude. If one follows the selfish attitude, the selfish attitude gives rise to all the degeneration and negative karma of mistakenly practicing with respect to the guru. The mistake is that one lets oneself fall under the control of the selfish attitude and one doesn't let oneself be under the control of the virtuous friend. This is my observation: by breaking one advice, somehow, due to dependent arising, many other advices get broken. One disturbs the holy mind of the virtuous friend and the result is that one's own mind becomes unhappy and there is a danger of becoming crazy.

Even if one tries to practice Dharma, tries to do retreat—makes the time and sets up the conditions—disease comes or some other problem comes and one can't retreat. One can see that all these obstacles are related to the selfish attitude one has at that time. One can see the shortcomings of the selfish attitude in that way and also as karma created by the selfish attitude in past lives. Even if one actually has plenty of time to meditate, in the East or the West, one does not find time for lamrim meditation or for the six preliminary practices such as prostrations and mandala offerings to the merit field to accumulate good karma. It appears that there is no time at all for meditation, but a lot of time for sleeping and other works of this life! Definitely there is time, but the life slips by like that, month by month, year by year. If one checks, it is so clear that it is allowing oneself to come under the control of the selfish attitude which does not allow one to practice Dharma. The selfish

attitude all the time says, “Your happiness is much more important than others.” Your happiness of this life is much more important than the happiness in future lives.

Actually, when one is practicing Dharma, when there is a wish to practice bodhicitta and one is meditating on the lamrim—the perfect human rebirth, its usefulness, impermanence and death and so on up to karma, then true suffering and the true cause of suffering, the four Noble Truths, then bodhicitta—that is what taking refuge really means. One is then relying on the actual refuge, the Dharma. Training the mind in bodhicitta is the best way of taking refuge. As one has taken refuge in Buddha’s teachings, one has taken refuge in Buddha and in the helper, Sangha, by the way. But one may think that refuge is something truly existent, something else, and be scared of the word “refuge,” scared that one may lose something, some part of oneself, if one takes refuge! Even the fear of taking refuge or precepts is because of the selfish attitude.

In short, the conclusion about the selfish attitude!—until we don’t do something to change, while we follow the selfish attitude, even if all the ten directions buddhas and bodhisattvas come in front of us and give teachings, it cannot benefit our minds. It cannot subdue the mind as long as we don’t do something about the selfish attitude from our own side.

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If one cherishes oneself, there is the heaviest suffering, the narak; if one renounces oneself and cherishes others, there is the peerless happiness of enlightenment. So, there is an incredible difference! As long as we follow the selfish attitude there isn’t any peace, even for a second. Even one’s own wishes don’t get accomplished. It interferes even with one’s temporal wishes. Like this, think about the details of the shortcomings of the selfish attitude in many ways.

If you want to control the selfish attitude, the most effective way is to think of your own problems that you experience, because you can see clearly how they come from the selfish attitude. As I mentioned yesterday, we think over and over again about the person who is mean and harms us with body and speech. We even keep a diarrhea... sorry, diary! That he did this and this! Actually we should keep a diary to write down what the selfish attitude does and all the troubles that it causes us, and read it again and again! That is the best meditation. It would even be of benefit for other people who see it! We don’t forget the external person who gives harm; we remember each harm and point out in what ways the person is bad, like reciting a mantra—bad ... bad... bad...—many times a day, for hours and hours. Even if we are alone we recite it silently in our mind! Depending on the length of time, so much negative karma is created. We should think of the self-cherishing attitude exactly in this way, and each time point out how terribly harmful to oneself it is.

If you get sick with cancer or a heart attack or something, or have some other trouble, thinking like this helps very much. You should think, “Of course I deserve to have this trouble. It is not something unreasonable, that should not happen to me, because by following the selfish attitude I created so much negative karma.” One can practice thought training in this way when one has problems. If you created the karma because of wrong conceptions, who should experience the result? Should Buddha experience the result? Or other sentient beings? That is unsuitable. If one is always friendly towards the selfish attitude it is difficult to practice thought training and to have a happy mind when one has troubles. If there is a relationship problem, it is so good to see it in this way because then one has nothing to complain about, which is very good because it stops one creating negative karma. The only object to complain about is the self-cherishing thought, nothing

else. That is attempting to give up the selfish attitude. That is the power of blame. I still didn't make it to the other powers!

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG...

LECTURE 38

December 7

MAHAYANA ORDINATION

LAMA SANG.GYE LAMA CHO...

The fifth benefit of taking the eight Mahayana precepts is that by having taken them even one time one is able to find the special body of a deva—worldly god—or a human being. The special deva body might be one which has the opportunity to practice Dharma; and it is not just any human body, but a perfect human body qualified by the eight freedoms and ten riches. Just being born as a human being is not so much of a prize because there are many who have received a human body but not a perfect human body. If one does not create the cause to receive a human body which has the opportunity to practice Dharma, it is not much advantage. It is the same as being born as these dogs. Perhaps there is a little less suffering than that which the lower realm beings experience. Sometimes a person with a human body has more suffering than an animal—unbelievable problems for his whole life then, because of having not met the Dharma and so not understanding, again he creates negative karma and returns to lower realms, perhaps as a buffalo, chicken or dog. To accumulate virtue is as rare as a star in the daytime, so one again returns to the animal realm or the realms of the suffering transmigrators.

Therefore, to create the cause to receive a perfect human rebirth is extremely important; not just praying to be born as a human. Actually, human beings create more negative karma than animals. Even tigers or poisonous snakes cannot kill thousands or millions of people, but one human can, thus creating unbelievably heavy negative karma. By taking a human body we can do incredible things—we can achieve enlightenment or we can create uncountable eons of negative karma. We can give much more harm to other sentient beings than can a poisonous snake or a tiger. If one protects one's own mind from negative karma and disturbing thoughts by taking Mahayana ordination, for example, one can achieve the peerless happiness of enlightenment. If one does not perfect one's mind at all but allows it to come under the control of the disturbing thoughts and karma, one will be reborn in the heaviest suffering, the unbearable state of the narak, where one has to experience suffering for eons. If one has very heavy negative karma one stays there for an eon, again dies and again is born into that suffering state for another eon. If that karma still is not finished, it goes on and on until it is. There are many stories of persons who received a body of a happy transmigratory being by taking the eight precepts. The sixth benefit is being able to meet Maitreya Buddha's teaching when he descends. It is said in a text by Maitreya Buddha, "One who listens to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's teaching with devotion and who keeps the eight precepts will be born as one of my closest disciples." If one wishes to meet and receive teachings from Maitreya Buddha when he descends on this earth the cause is taking the Mahayana precepts. Therefore, it is extremely worthwhile, no matter how difficult it is.

The seventh benefit is that if a person whose attitude and conduct towards others is poor, like a dog's, takes the precepts on the special days like the full-moon, the eight or thirtieth days of the

lunar calendar, and if the vows haven't been degenerated, he becomes an object of humans' and devas' respect and making offerings—similar to a buddha.

The eighth benefit is that protecting the eight Mahayana precepts is very easy to do. It is said in the teachings, “Even if one recites mantras for eons with a distracted mind, it doesn't bring a result”. If one retreats for three years, for a hundred years or for eons, but one's mind is distracted, it doesn't bring much a result, because it is not perfect virtue. For that practice to be beneficial the mind should not be distracted at the beginning, in the middle or at the end, otherwise it just becomes exhausting.

But in regard to Mahayana ordination, if one can concentrate at the beginning when one recites the prayers, even if afterwards one is distracted or unconscious, even asleep, for the whole twenty-four hours, it doesn't disturb the benefits of the ordination. One accumulates merit throughout the twenty-four hours as long as the precepts are kept. Therefore, compared to other practices of virtue, this is very easy to do. The precepts are much fewer and of shorter duration than tantric, bodhicitta, or pratimoksha vows. They are taken for a short time so are easy to keep purely. Also, as this is done with the motivation of bodhicitta, there is unbelievable benefit. Without talking about the precepts, just to generate the bodhicitta motivation for taking the precepts creates incredible merit.

It is said in the sutra teachings, “If a person simply puts palms together and thinks, ‘In order to receive enlightenment to be able to lead all sentient beings to enlightenment, I'm going to practice bodhicitta’, this merit is much greater than making offerings of the seven precious jewels in volume equaling the earth for as many eons as there are sand grains in the Pacific Ocean to as many buddhas as there are sand grains in the Pacific Ocean.” The merit of generating bodhicitta is much greater than that of making this unbelievable offering.

Remember what I spoke of last night about the shortcomings of the selfish attitude, “All the undesirable, unsuccessful things, all the degenerations, come from me, come from “I.” All my past, present and future happiness and perfections both temporal and ultimate, come from other sentient beings—each of the narak, preta, animal, human, asura and sura beings. Therefore, from now on, if I want success, if I want to accomplish whatever I wish, if I want progress without degeneration, what I should give up is “I” and what I should cherish is other sentient beings.” But just having the thought to cherish them but doing nothing is not sufficient. What they do not want is suffering and what they want is happiness, so cherishing them means to free them from suffering and cause them to have the happiness that they desire—the ultimate, peerless happiness of enlightenment. As I mentioned during the motivation for ordination yesterday, if the sentient beings...

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One's own happiness and comfort are received from, and are completely dependent on, the sentient beings and also sentient beings are dependent on oneself. Sentient beings receiving happiness is dependent on you helping them. If they help oneself throughout the three times, why doesn't one help them? Sentient beings help oneself to be liberated from suffering and to receive ultimate happiness. Why shouldn't one help them? There's no reason not to help them.

The best method to accomplish the work for sentient beings is for oneself to achieve enlightenment. Without creating the cause one cannot achieve enlightenment. Think, “Therefore I am going to take the eight Mahayana precepts to receive enlightenment for the benefit of all the kind, precious

sentient beings.” Think, “I am taking the ordination in the presence of Guru Chenrezig surrounded by numberless buddhas and bodhisattvas.” Now read the prayer:

LAB.PON GON.SO.SOEL...

“Since beginningless rebirths until now I have taken so many bodies, also I have taken human bodies so many times, but wasted them. I didn’t take the essence of having those bodies. I didn’t do anything to make them beneficial for other sentient beings. Now, in this life, especially today, this one time, I am able to use my body, speech and mind to benefit; to make them highly meaningful, and to stop giving harm to every sentient being, by living in the precepts. I’m not sure for how long—I might die today. I am so fortunate that I have found this opportunity.” You should think like this. Also think, “I have always been using the sentient beings. Today I am using myself for the happiness of the sentient beings. I am dedicating myself for sentient beings.

As the arhats kept the precepts...  
From now on I shall not kill...

LECTURE 39  
December 7 am

I GO FOR REFUGE...

Please listen to the teaching by generating at least the effortful bodhicitta...

The next one is covetousness. The base is others’ possessions. It can be, for example, their animals such as horses, cows or dogs! The recognition is recognizing the base, such as seeing another’s beautiful horse, cat or cow! I think it’s like that. Also puppies! The thought has three divisions. The disturbing thought can be either ignorance, anger or attachment. The motive is wishing that the object belong to oneself—“How wonderful it would be if I would have it!” I think I have created a lot of covetousness with koalas, the special Australian animals! Not so much before, but during the last tour! I came back from Australia with huge mountains of covetousness! Instead of returning with more good karma, I returned with more bad karma! It even made the airplane heavy! I guess they didn’t realize that they should overcharge! If they had felt it I’m sure there would have been an incredible overcharge!

There are five points to be gathered in order for the actual body of the negative karma of covetousness to be complete. First, having great attachment to the possessions which one already has. Second, having the painful mind of attachment that wishes to collect more possessions. Third, seeing or tasting, or so on, a good possession belonging to another. Fourth, having attachment to that. Fifth, having the thought to have it for oneself, thinking, “May I have it.” Because of covetous there is no shame, one doesn’t know that one should have aversion to the shortcomings of covetousness, thus shame does not arise. It is having a mind completely overwhelmed by covetousness.

These five aspects do not include having attachment so strong that it causes one to decide to go about acquiring the object. It’s possible that one can’t get the object. For example, one might wish to have a white palace, or to own the whole of New York, including the banks! One might wish or pray, but at the moment one can’t own it, yet one can create the negative karma of covetousness

with regard to that object. If any of these five aspects are missing the definition of covetousness is not fulfilled.

Next is ill-will. The base is another sentient being. The recognition and disturbing thoughts are the same as for harsh speech. The motive is the wish to hurt or kill. It could be wishing to bind someone with ropes and chains, for example. It can also be the wish that others' possessions degenerate, wishing a person whom one dislikes to have nothing. If he is doing business, wishing him to not have success. Action is putting the thought to give harm into practice. I think it means that when the thought of ill-will arises, one continues on with that thought to give harm. It may be thinking of a way to give harm. The completion is having completely decided to harm or to kill or to take another's possessions, for example.

This also has five points to be gathered in order that the actual body of the path of the non-virtue of ill-will be complete. First, holding oneself and the cause of harm to oneself as truly existent, such as believing that a beating or criticism is truly existent. Second, having the thought of anger towards that cause. Third, having the unbearable thought, resentment, that the other person is causing one harm. Fourth, harboring thoughts about the cause of anger, that is, remembering the cause, the reason one uses to get angry, over and over again. It could be, for example, the person spoke harshly or was disrespectful to oneself, stole from oneself or criticized oneself. This does not mean that the cause of anger is the ignorance holding true existence! It's not remembering one's own ignorance holding true existence and so not getting angry at that! It is one's own connotation which is the cause of anger: that the person didn't respect, or criticized oneself and that therefore one should get angry. Feeling it is kind-of worthwhile to get angry, to harm the other person. Also thinking, for example, "How good it would be if I beat or killed him." Fifth, having no shame about ill-will arising and not being aware of the shortcomings of having ill-will; the mind being completely overwhelmed by ill-will.

The actual body of the non-virtuous action of mind of ill-will is completed with these five aspects. If any of these is missing it is not the actual body of ill-will. It is similar to the previous one, covetousness—not having shame in regard to allowing covetousness to arise...

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...Thinking this person will give, is giving and did give harm. Any thought to harm that person which arises is ill-will. Wishing that his relatives die, that he lose or not receive possessions or that his virtues degenerate, or wishing that he will be born in a lower realm, generally any of these thoughts are ill-will. It is ill-will, but it is not the complete actual body of this non-virtuous action of mind. Having the determination to actually harm is missing. Thus, by definition, it is not complete. The next one is heresy. The base is something which exists. Any heresy, to be one of the ten non-virtues, has to be a nihilistic view, that is, regarding or believing something which denying the existence of the Four Noble Truths, the Triple Gem, reincarnation of karma—holding something which does exist as non-existent, and believing that is true. Do you say "minimizing" if you are saying these don't exist? "Negating"? It's not exact! The founders of the "outer" tenets criticized Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, saying that He is a liar and that He does not have bodhicitta or an omniscient mind. Saying that a person who has a realization or quality does not have it is heresy. What is the term? You don't say "criticizing"—I think it's different in English! Those things—karma, the Triple Gem, reincarnation—exist but one believes that they don't exist. It can be holding that what one is saying is true, or that the person criticizing Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, for example,

is saying the truth. Many people, through a wrong doctrine or by having met a wrong teacher—a non-virtuous friend—believe that the Four Noble Truths, karma and so on, do not exist. The “recognition,” or conviction, is, “What I am believing or what I’m seeing, is true.”

The disturbing thoughts are ignorance, attachment or anger. Attachment can be like this: in India there was a Brahmin called Ta.ming.ba—I don’t know why he was called Ta.ming.ba. He was very much attached to his wife, or maybe his daughter, I’m not sure! He wanted that other people would not criticize him and not create obstacles for him to have a relationship with his daughter, or wife. He had strong attachment to have physical contact with her. To fulfill his own desires he wrote hundreds and thousands of scriptures saying that reincarnation does not exist. That made it easy for him to avoid criticism because of people thinking that he was involved in a wrong path, or practice. He wrote texts such as *Sixty Wrong Views*. He made it up himself! That kind of heavy heresy comes from attachment.

The motive is wishing to deny the existence of a thing which does exist. Then, action is that once the thought comes, the person continuously thinks of that and speaks of it. The action might be like this. There are four things in regard to the action. First, ‘denying the cause’; saying that there is no creation of good or bad karma. Second, “denying the result”: saying that there is no suffering or happy result from the cause. Third, “denying the doing.” Lama Tsong Khapa said, “Denying the planting of the seed”—that there is a holder of the seed, that there is father and mother. This may not be planting external seed, but is probably inner seed. I don’t think it’s the seed of crops, or the physical seed of the father and mother. Probably it relates to some stories of things that happened in India. Maybe somebody made a philosophy for his own happiness, like in the previous story. Then, fourth, “Denying the actions of coming and going”: saying there are no past or future lives. Fifth, denying that which will be born: there is no sentient being which has an “entering” birth, like the birth of bugs. For instance, when fruit becomes old and sentient beings have karma to be reborn there, then consciousness enters into that fruit and a worm appears. Similarly with rotten meat. When the conditions are there and sentient beings have created the karma, consciousness enters into that and worms appears. Also inside rocks, inside wood and so forth. Consciousness enters even flowers and tiny creatures get born having the same color as the flower.

The completion of the actual body of the non-virtuous action of heresy is having the definite determination to deny existent things. There are five things which make heresy complete. I will stop here.

## LECTURE 40

December 7 pm

Please listen to the teaching by generating at least the effortful bodhicitta, thinking, “At any rate I must achieve the state of omniscient mind in order to benefit all the kind sentient beings. Therefore I am going to listen to the commentary on the graduated path to enlightenment.”

The next of the five powers is the power of prayer. You may have been doing that: first totaling all the merits of the three times accumulated by sentient beings, enlightened beings and oneself, then dedicating, saying that the bodhicitta which is not generated be generated in all sentient beings’ minds, particularly in one’s own mind, and that which is generated be increased. If one has bodhicitta, then one should dedicate that it be generated and increased in the mind of others. We always do the prayer “JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG RINPOCHE...” at the end. If we do not only say the words, but rather, without a wandering mind, total all the merit and dedicate it in this way, it

becomes, of the five powers, the practice of the power of prayer. The five powers integrate the whole lifetime of practice.

I mentioned the other night about the power of the white seed. In order to generate bodhicitta and to increase that which is generated, one should accumulate all merit—large and small—as much as possible, to achieve that goal. One should take every possible opportunity to generate bodhicitta. Whenever one accumulates merit, be it great or small, it should always be dedicated to the generation of bodhicitta. Dedication is like the reins wishes to go, and arrive there. How is dedication important? Generally if one dedicates for the happiness of future lives one achieves that result; if one dedicates merits to receive liberation it becomes the cause of that; if one dedicates the merits to receive enlightenment then all that merit becomes the cause of enlightenment on dedication. Dedication practice should be done as skillfully, as perfectly, as possible.

If one is practicing the Mahayana thought trainings it is very good for the mind because one is able to accumulate merit and dedicate it to generate bodhicitta. Whenever one offers even one bowl of water as nectar, or flowers, or one stick of incense, or strews grain as an offering to the merit field—either visualized holy objects such as the figure of Buddha, or to a statue or painting; or offers a handful of food or a piece of bread to a dog; even if one makes charity by speaking Dharma to a sentient being: Whatever merit one has accumulated, since all temporal happiness and perfections, and all ultimate happiness and perfections, even enlightenment, the whole lamrim path come from that merit...

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“... May sentient beings receive it; may I not receive it. May the cause, the merit, and the entire result from that, be received and experienced by sentient beings.” This is very effective. This becomes a pure practice of the Mahayana teachings. It is completely against the selfish attitude. The selfish attitude wants everything—cause and result—for oneself. Also, one should say the prayers of dedication which are in the thought training teachings. Dedicate the merits in this way, “Due to all these merits may I experience whatever sufferings sentient beings have; may whatever merit or happiness I have meaning, or commentary, pray that in your mind all the true causes of suffering and the true sufferings be experienced by yourself. Then, any merit created in the three times and the result—happiness, everything including enlightenment—should be dedicated for sentient beings by saying this prayer. We should practice the Mahayana thought training as a remedy to the selfish attitude by even just saying the words of the prayers. Pure dedication causes the merit to not be mixed with poison. That is one of the thought training commitments—I think it might be one of the twenty-two advices of the Mahayana thought training. I think the advice is worded “abandon poison,” or something like that.

Whenever one accumulates and dedicates merit, it should be sealed with the right view, in whichever way is more effective grouping of body and mind—is doing the action of dedicating enlightenment is labeled dedicating. “Dharmakaya”, or, “enlightenment”, is merely labeled on the state of omniscient mind and the pure, absolute, nature of that. “Sentient being” is merely labeled on the base of those who are obscured. Even if one does not say the words, “They do not exist from their own side; they exist by being merely labeled”, but thinks well on the words “merely labeled”, the understanding comes that all the things—the dedicator, the action of dedicating, enlightenment, sentient beings—do not exist from their own side. It depends on how sharply intelligent one is. It depends on how near to subtle dependent arising one’s understanding is. A person who has

recognized the object of refutation—the dedicator, dedication, enlightenment and sentient beings which exist from their own side—that is appearing on these phenomena, will understand that it does not exist. That which is appearing as existing from its own side does not exist. These phenomena are completely empty of that which is appearing. By thinking that these phenomena are completely empty, the result, the definite understanding that they are merely labeled, automatically comes into one's heart without the need to say that they are merely labeled. By thinking about this object of refutation—things existing from their own side—and that that which is appearing is empty, automatically the definite understanding of the consequence of that—that they are merely labeled—comes.

One who has this experience has realization of the essential subject of the *Heart Sutra*, or, the *Essence of Wisdom*—that form is empty and emptiness is form. This is because the person has an infallible, or pure, understanding of emptiness of true existence—the object of refutation. The unmistakable object of refutation is recognized, and because of that the person has an unmistakable, pure, understanding of subtle dependent arising. This meditator can see that on the dedicator, the dedication, the action, enlightenment and sentient beings, emptiness and dependent arising are unified.

If “merely labeled” is difficult to understand, then, as Pabongka Dechen Nyingpo, who is the root guru of myself and many high lamas who are alive now, advised in the lamrim teachings, “He who has no idea of this subtle dependent arising and emptiness should think in terms of dreaming.” While you are dedicating, think, “I am dedicating in a dream.” When you think like this it automatically helps because it gives the idea of labeling and that things do not exist from their own side. It brings the mind nearer to the right view, even if you don't see it exactly. You recognize the dream object—the merit—that you are dedicating as being like in a dream. When you recognize the dream as a dream, even if there is a sharp stone or piece of wood, you have no fear because you know that it won't hurt. You get an understanding that it is not real, “This is a dream, so even if I jump in a fire it will not burn; if I touch sharp objects it will not hurt.” You can experiment, or play, in a dream. If you practice like this at least it brings you nearer the understanding that things do not exist from their own side but are merely labeled.

Then, the fifth one is the power of training. As I mentioned in regard to blaming the self-cherishing attitude: remember all the shortcomings of the selfish attitude and then think, “If I follow this selfish attitude I don't receive a single benefit.” Then, in regard to cherishing others, always remember: one's own and all sentient beings' happiness and perfections, everything, come from the thought of cherishing others. Guru Shakyamuni Buddha generated the whole Mahayana path to enlightenment; He completely purified, or ceased, all the obscurations and achieved omniscient mind. His mind training in compassion was completed, there is nothing more to train in or to develop. He has perfect power to guide sentient beings with the holy body, holy speech, and holy mind.

Guru Shakyamuni Buddha was born in hell, a hot narak, in a previous life, pulling a carriage alongside another being. He felt much suffering of heat and unbelievable compassion arose for the other narak being who was with him on the red-hot burning iron ground. The thought arose, “Since I have experienced so much suffering anyway, how wonderful it would be if I pulled the carriage by myself without my companion needing to suffer.” I don't remember one hundred percent, he might have prayed that any sentient beings born in the narak need not experience all their negative karma and that these sufferings be experienced by himself. However, this was the very first time that Guru Shakyamuni Buddha in a previous life generated compassion. When He generated that compassion

the karmic ally created guardians hit him on the head with a hammer and immediately his consciousness transferred to Tushita heaven.

Think about Guru Shakyamuni Buddha: He revealed the teachings of the three vehicles and uncountable sentient beings were led to enlightenment and liberation...

(end of tape)

Even now, Guru Shakyamuni Buddha is benefiting and enlightening so many sentient beings. He is guiding us now. Many western people, by having met his teaching, are purifying all their accumulated negative karmas and are practicing virtue, generating many causes of happiness in future lives, and liberation and enlightenment, in each day. As well as all these great advantages, they are having less problems and more mental happiness, an easier life. All these benefits are from Guru Shakyamuni Buddha having revealed the teachings. This is how he is guiding us. All these advantages came from that great compassionate act of renouncing himself and cherishing others when in the narak realm. We should think in various ways how the thought of cherishing others has incredible advantages. Guru Shakyamuni is doing the work of leading every single sentient being to enlightenment. One should think this: one's own and all the sentient beings' happiness comes from good karma. Good karma is the action of buddha. Good karma is accumulated by knowing the teachings of buddha. Merit accumulating in the minds of sentient beings is itself the action of buddha. Buddha comes from bodhisattva; bodhisattva comes from bodhicitta. A being who has bodhicitta is called a bodhisattva. Now you can see in a broad way how every single happiness of oneself and of all sentient beings comes from bodhicitta, renouncing oneself and cherishing other sentient beings. The happiness of the sentient beings before Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, in the present and in the future, comes completely from bodhicitta.

Also one should think in an extensive way on the ten benefits of bodhicitta mentioned in the lamrim: 1) without bodhicitta one cannot enter into the Mahayana path, cannot receive the name "bodhisattva", or, "Son of the Victorious One"; 2) By being in the bodhisattva caste one controls even arhats; 3) The bodhisattva becomes a supreme object of offering for sentient beings; sentient beings accumulate so much merit by making offerings to a bodhisattva 4) the two accumulations of merit – of fortune and transcendental wisdom—are completed immediately; 5) All the negative karmas quickly get purified; 6) Any wish that one has is accomplished without obstacles; 7) One cannot be harmed by living beings or by fire, water, air or earth; 8) One will quickly achieve enlightenment; 9) Because of bodhicitta, the bhūmis—bodhisattva levels or realizations -are quickly developed. Like this, there are about ten benefits. One should remember these benefits of bodhicitta, of cherishing others.

So, you see, every single happiness comes from bodhicitta, the thought of cherishing others. There is no single benefit or profit to be received from the selfish attitude of cherishing oneself. There is only loss. When there is a very strong selfish attitude, it is very good to examine which gives more profit – the thought of cherishing oneself or others? If one follows self-cherishing one gains not a single profit. By following the thought of cherishing others there is not a single loss, only profit. Then you should ask yourself, "Which one should I follow? To which one should I dedicate my life? The thought of cherishing myself or the thought of cherishing others?" What one wants is profit, what one doesn't want is loss, so one has to follow the thought of cherishing others, and one has to renounce the thought of cherishing oneself. When there is laziness—no energy to do

lamrim meditation, to accumulate merit or to do purification practices—one should question oneself and make a determination. Determination comes automatically when one examines like this and asks oneself how one wants to dedicate one's life. You should be aware of these shortcomings and benefits all the time, then train the mind in bodhicitta at all times and in all circumstances. At all times means every day, whether you are sleeping, eating, walking or sitting.

I received my first commentary on the *Bodhicharyavatara*, and the teachings on the admiration of bodhicitta, the *Precious Lamp*, from Khunu Lama Tenzin Gyatso, the great bodhisattva and pandit. Rinpoche passed away some years ago in the same area where he had been born before. He was not a monk, but when he was giving teachings to Tibetans he said he lived in eight precepts, but actually in practice he kept the two hundred and fifty-three precepts. He lived an ascetic life all the time, not keeping any possessions no matter how much people offered. He kept just enough money to travel, enough for a few months. Whatever people offered was all returned, he never accepted it. Rinpoche always gave anyone who came to see him Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's mantra to recite. When Rinpoche lived at Bodhgaya and went to circumambulate the stupa, he used to pick up bodhi seeds and give them as a blessing to the people. Also His Holiness the Dalai Lama took many teachings from Rinpoche, including the commentary on the *Bodhicharyavatara*. Rinpoche wrote the *Precious Lamp*. In that teaching Rinpoche said, "Even when you eat, eat with bodhicitta; even when you sit, sit with bodhicitta; even when you stand up, stand with bodhicitta; even when you sleep, sleep with bodhicitta." Like this, as much as possible, we should train and do every action with the motivation of bodhicitta.

In the lamrim there are particular meditations for when one enters a house, when one closes a door, when one washes, when one walks—what to think in order to dedicate these actions for sentient beings. I didn't have time to talk about how to make food offerings, how to transform the eating of food into virtue. To train the mind in bodhicitta in all circumstances means especially when there is danger of anger, jealousy and those disturbing thoughts arising, and even at the time that they are arising; under the circumstance when others give you a hard time or when you get into trouble; in any circumstances, whatever you meet with. By, for example, practicing *tong.len*—taking and giving—the very essential Mahayana thought training practice. As much as possible relate the practice to whatever problem you have. In this way all troubles, disease, everything, are transformed into happiness so there is no interference to your Dharma practice even when you have trouble. Even when delusions arise one is able to continuously practice Dharma. When one experiences sufferings, or much comfort and happiness, one should practice *tong.len*. Thus all happiness and suffering becomes the cause of enlightenment; it becomes worth experiencing.

I thought to talk here a little bit on how to meditate on lamrim, whether you are in the East or the West. That I will mention tomorrow. Remember what the great bodhisattva Khunu Lama Rinpoche mentioned in his teachings, "When you are happy, remember bodhicitta; when you are suffering, remember bodhicitta; even when you are sick, remember bodhicitta; even when death comes, remember bodhicitta." In all circumstances train the mind—in the East or West, wherever you are. Even if you go to work, go with bodhicitta. You get money from the employer who gives you a job and from that money you receive comfort. Also you are able to practice Dharma, to meditate on the lamrim, because he offered a job. So, remember, "Each day my being alive and having the opportunity to practice Dharma comes from these sentient beings"—this company or organization, these people.

By remembering their kindness you should think, “They are helping me to have happiness and to prevent difficulties. Without having a job I cannot do retreat and other things—there would be obstacles.” Remember their kindness and go to your job thinking, “Today I got to eliminate their problems and fulfill their wishes for happiness. What they don’t want is problems and what they want is happiness, so I am going to prevent their difficulties and to help them attain their desire for happiness. Instead of thinking, I’m going to work for my happiness. I want money because I want to go sightseeing; I want to go camping and to tour the different countries which I haven’t seen.” Instead of going to the office with the feeling, “I am going for my happiness,” in your heart. That makes for a very upsetting, poor life. Dedicate yourself completely with this attitude, even though you get money from that employer. Then you are offering yourself as if you are a servant. You are renouncing yourself to the other being. Even if your job is hard, with many problems, you feel more happiness bearing hardships while working for other sentient beings. The more difficult it is, the more problems there are, the happier the mind is because one is bearing the hardships for the sake of other sentient beings. This is very important because we spend so much time working. Then the job becomes Dharma the whole day. Thought training practice is the cause of bodhicitta and enlightenment.

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG...

LECTURE 41

December 9

MAHAYANA ORDINATION

SANG.GYE CHO.DANG...

The benefits of the Mahayana ordination that we are going to take are explained in the sutra teaching that was requested from Guru Shakyamuni Buddha by Lhayu Wangpo. By keeping these precepts on such days as the 8th and 15th—the full moon day—and the anniversary of Lord Buddha’s Enlightenment and turning of the wheel of Dharma, one becomes enlightened.

There are eight benefits from practicing these eight abandonments:

By giving up taking life one will have a long life free of disease in many future lives.

By giving up stealing one will receive perfect enjoyments in future lives and enjoy them without interferences, as one wishes. By giving up sexual misconduct one will receive a good body. That might mean having a complete, unhandicapped body, and being born in a good caste like Lama Atisha was.

By giving up lying one will not be betrayed by others and one’s words will have power, and one will not gossip much. Giving up alcohol—there are some differences between the eight pratimoksha precepts and the eight Mahayana precepts. For the eight Mahayana precepts smoking cigarettes, or doing anything which pollutes the body—like eating black foods such as onions, garlic meat and radish – and therefore affects the mind, perhaps causing unclear concentration or some other interference, is prohibited. Also things such as polluting holy objects or the environment by cigarette smoke which affects and harms other sentient beings such as nagas. In the eight pratimoksha precepts wine is prohibited, but not cigarettes or black foods.

(end of tape)

.....Not only that but very violent so there is a danger of killing oneself or others. The main thing to think about is the result – if it is something which has the same power as wine to put one's life in danger in might be included in this precept.. By giving up wine one will have a stable memory, awareness, clear senses and perfect wisdom in future lives.

One of the eight pratimoksha precepts is sexual misconduct but when taking the eight Mahayana precepts it is broader than that—one shouldn't lose one's seed; so any action that causes that is sexual misconduct. This precept and having to avoid black foods are there because Mahayana ordination is purifying negative karmas and reviving virtue, and this came from kriya tantra. The emphasis on kriya tantra is to keep the body clean. If one takes Mahayana ordination one has to keep clean.

By giving up sitting on large, high or expensive beds or seats, in future lives other sentient beings will admire and respect oneself and one will enjoy much comfort and have an easier life. Also one will have good vehicles—animals, perhaps cars and airplanes!

By giving up eating food at the wrong times one will receive perfect foods and drinks, and have good crops.

By giving up wearing perfumes and ornaments with attachment, in all future lives one's body will have a naturally scented smell and have a good complexion.

By giving up singing and dancing one will have a subdued body and mind in future lifetimes, as well as virtuous speech. One will be able to continuously make sounds of Dharma.

It is also to do with motivation: what we are abstaining from is doing these actions with disturbing thoughts. If these actions such as singing, sitting on high places or wearing ornaments and perfumes are not done because of disturbing thoughts or a selfish attitude, they become pure works for other sentient beings. These cases are exceptions. For example, saying the prayers of the graduated path to enlightenment with nice chanting; there are certain chants which come from highly realized yogis who had great attainments of secret mantra, in order to subdue the solid, unsubdued minds of sentient beings. If these chants and the words are performed together properly, it makes it more effort in subduing the mind, so that the realizations come from easily. Many prayers such as the Seven-limb practice, if chanted with a sweet sound, become an offering of speech to the merit field. All these benefits are for all future lifetimes. Then, there are eight ultimate benefits:

By giving up killing one will achieve the vajra holy body of a buddha.

By giving up stealing one will achieve the holy signs of buddha- like wheels on the hands and feet. These holy signs are needed in order to guide sentient beings from suffering to enlightenment. Therefore one has to create the cause, starting from now, by at least taking the eight Mahayana precepts.

By giving up sexual intercourse one will have perfect senses and a well-developed holy body.

By giving up lying, the ultimate result is that when one becomes enlightened one has a tongue which can cover one's whole face, and one will accomplish the holy speech which has sixty qualities. It is

said that it is so unbelievably sweet, like Brahma's tune. By giving up wine one will have a holy body that others never tire of looking at, with clear senses.

By giving up eating food at the wrong times one will have forty holy teeth of a nice color and shape. Giving up wearing ornaments and so on with attachment: I think strictly, as the precept is taken with bodhicitta, it's not enough to be free of attachment, but for the pratimoksha vow to not have attachment is enough. Either one should continuously have the idea that everything belongs to other sentient beings or one should sue them purely for the sake of others. The ultimate benefit is that when one becomes enlightened the holy body will have the perfect scented smell of moral conduct with will pervade the environment.

By giving up singing and dancing, when one becomes enlightened one will have a holy body adorned with all the holy signs—there are thirty—two holy, or major, signs and eighty holy exemplifications, or minor signs.

By giving up sitting on large, high or expensive beds one will enjoy the “three Dharma seats.” I think it might mean the lotus, sun and moon discs you see in paintings. It might also have other benefits.

These benefits are explained in the sutra teaching which was requested by Kuntugyu Tsenring from Guru Shakyamuni Buddha.

If one of the four major precepts is broken, is there a purpose in keeping the rest or not? One shouldn't think that there is not much point in keeping the branch precepts. In previous times there were two people, two Kuntugyu—I think the name Kuntugyu is probably to do with their religion, Hindu. One kept all the eight precepts and after his death was born as a king in a human country. The other person was pushed by his wife to eat food in the afternoon, so was unable to be born as a human being. But he kept the rest of the precepts so he was born as a naga king. Both of them became arhats.

So, the shortcomings and benefits are experienced separately. If one degenerates one precept, such as eating food at the wrong time, one should still try to keep the rest of the precepts as much as possible. Even if one finds it difficult to keep a particular precept one should not decide to not take the eight precepts. One should definitely take them and keep them for whatever time one thinks one can keep them. Making a vow before the Triple Gem, or in front of the living guru, and then keeping one precept for only one second, or minute, or hour, in these degenerate times has unbelievable benefit. Therefore, one should feel great happiness about the times one has taken them so far. Some people may have taken them once, twice or more often since the taking of ordination started because of knowing these benefits. Even if they were taken for one day, one should feel great joy.

In order to take this Mahayana ordination which has immeasurable benefits even if kept only in the day time or even for only one hour, one should have the motivation of bodhicitta. If all the benefits were materialized they could not fit in the sky. Think of the kindness of just even one sentient being, the enemy. This present perfect human rebirth came from practicing moral conduct such as not taking other's lives. This was practiced with respect to every sentient being. One made a vow that one is not going to kill with respect to every sentient being. In past lives one didn't make the vow, “I'm not going to kill” with respect to every sentient being except one's enemy! The object was

every single sentient being, so one also practiced moral conduct with respect to the enemy. So, that's how the virtuous cause, moral conduct, and the result, the perfect human rebirth, was received from the enemy, this person who is presently treating oneself badly or disliking oneself.

Also you can think that the cause, charity, and the result—the present enjoyments—and also the cause, patience, and the result—having conducive surroundings and helpers—were received from other sentient beings. You see, we received our merit, the cause of which was moral conduct, from this enemy who now dislikes us, and the future perfect human rebirth will be received from him. By practicing patience with him we will receive perfect surroundings and helpers in coming lives. By practicing charity to him we will receive perfect enjoyments in coming lives. The whole thing, cause and result, is received from the enemy and other sentient beings. The enemy is so extremely kind. This present rebirth as well as its cause, was received from him; the future perfect human rebirth and its cause, and future temporal enjoyments and their causes, will be received from him and other sentient beings. The ultimate result of achieving liberation, and its cause, the three higher trainings, is received in dependence on this enemy. The first of these three is moral conduct—to not steal or lie and so on—and the vows are made with respect to the enemy and other sentient beings. It's the same thing with the ultimate happiness, enlightenment. The root of the Mahayana path to enlightenment is great compassion, wishing every sentient being to be free of suffering and to cause that by oneself. If one has left out this enemy, even if one has generated compassion with respect to the rest of the sentient beings, it does not become the Mahayana great compassion. So you see, the cause, great compassion, is generated in one's mind in dependence on this enemy, this suffering sentient being. The cause, the Mahayana path and the ultimate result, enlightenment, completely come from this enemy. We receive the whole thing, the three great purposes, in dependence on the kindness of the Dharma friends who are here, the other creatures like the dogs outside, the birds, buffaloes and chickens—from each of the sentient beings. What the sentient beings offer oneself is the three great purposes.

“What they wish for is happiness and what they don't wish for is suffering, so therefore, as I have the opportunity, it is my responsibility while my mothers are suffering to guide them from suffering and to lead them to the peerless happiness of enlightenment. To lead them to enlightenment I must achieve the state of omniscient mind, therefore in order to create the cause I'm going to take the eight Mahayana precepts.”

(end of tape)

... I SHALL NOT EAT FOOD AT THE WRONG TIME...

If one is taking the Mahayana ordination of eight precepts continuously for fifteen days or one month, one can eat breakfast in the morning. In that case the vow is not to eat after twelve o'clock. I asked the incomparably kind His Holiness Trijang Rinpoche about eating breakfast or not when one takes this ordination. Rinpoche answered, by letter, that if it's publicly taken then it should be kept strictly, otherwise it becomes very lax. You see, it is not taken publicly all the time. If one is doing it strictly, when one takes ordination in front of an altar or in the presence of the guru, if the vow is being kept as one meal only, after one has eaten one plateful and decided to not eat more and again changes one's mind and eats more, even if it's before twelve o'clock, that is not regarded as one meal. One should eat well, then make a clear decision to fast for the sake of sentient beings.

I SHALL AVOID SINGING...

LECTURE 42  
December 8 pm

SA.ZHI POE.KYL..

SANG.GYE CHO.DANG...

Please listen to the teaching by generating at least the effortful bodhicitta, thinking, “At any rate I must achieve the state of omniscient mind for the benefit of all the kind mother sentient beings. Therefore I’m going to listen to the commentary of the graduated path to enlightenment. If one has a very luxurious life and great enjoyments or even if one sees a beautiful garden, for example, that should be dedicated to every sentient being; “May all sentient beings have this enjoyment.” Give the enjoyment from the beautiful object that is in one’s view to each sentient being. By remembering Chenrezig, the Great Compassionate One, either above one’s crown or in front of oneself, make an offering of the enjoyment. Even if you stay in a very luxurious hotel or apartment, think, “May the many sentient beings who are devoid of this comfort, receive it.” Practice dedicating in this way, “How wonderful it would be if all sentient beings were to have this pleasure.” Dedicate the merit for others to have the enjoyment of a luxurious apartment. When you have some success which brings great happiness, think, “How wonderful it would be if all the sentient beings who have many problems and poverty had good success and happiness.” Dedicate for them by saying the prayer which I mentioned last night.

If one trains in taking and giving according to the Mahayana thought training—giving one’s own body, surroundings and surrounding people, both family and friends, and one’s possessions—one should remember all these things. If one’s mind is well-trained in this practice, when something happens in one’s life, like a separation—somebody taking one’s possessions or friend or helpers or those around one—one should think, “I’ve been practicing dedicating my body, merits, possessions, people around me, to others. I’ve been praying and dedicating by practicing taking and giving. How wonderful it is that what I’ve been praying for and practicing is accomplished!” If one trains well in this essential Mahayana thought training, in giving and taking, there is not so much clinging and craving when some separation happens; one feels, “Now I have accomplished the practice,” and happiness comes naturally. Depending on how much the thought training practice is done from the heart, how serious one is when saying the words or doing the visualization, when the actual separation happens, when others use one’s body or one’s possessions, much happiness, instead of anger, comes into one’s mind.

We’ve been praying this way, saying different prayers like the Guru Puja, or the lamrim prayer or the thought training prayer when we do lamrim meditation. You see, when others actually take away and use one’s possessions or friends, if worry, anger or fear arises it shows that thought training was not practiced sincerely; it did not become a strong remedy to the selfish attitude. Usually thought training such as taking and giving is a strong remedy to the selfish attitude, so if one has been praying or wishing or even doing the visualization, when the situation actually comes there is only happiness instead of fear, worry anger or jealousy. Then one should remember the kindness of that person, “This person who took away my friend (or my possessions) is helping me accomplish that which I’ve been praying and wishing for. He’s so kind that he especially came and took this away; this way I don’t need to visualize it! If I physically share my possessions in order to make charity to each sentient being, there will not be enough. Every sentient being does not get the opportunity to

use my body or my possessions or people around one. His taking away or using these things, using me, for his happiness is extremely kind. He is the practical virtuous friend who allows me to put the thought training teachings that I've received into actual practice."

Also think like this, "If I die now while I'm clinging to the friends and family surrounding me and to my body and possessions, I will be reborn in a lower realm for sure. If he doesn't take away these possessions and relatives and helpers, I will definitely be born in a lower realm. He is a great practical virtuous friend helping me to not have objects to cling to. If I die now, there will be no worries about separating from this friend or these possessions. Death can happen today, in any hour." You should keep on thinking, "How greatly kind he is. How greatly kind he is..." on and on, thinking of all these reasons. Then there will be no breakdown or one's mind becoming crazy; one will not have to go to a psychiatrist. One becomes one's own psychiatrist, one's own doctor, guide or protector. Actually if one does the thought training practice it makes life much cheaper and simpler. It save going to a mental institute or a psychiatrist who charges a lot of dollars for a few minutes! Then one can use that money in a better way, to create greater merit. I'm not only talking about paying a psychiatrist or doctor, there are so many expenses because of the selfish attitude ad dissatisfied mind. Then there is much worry about not getting enough money from one's job to meet these expenses of getting the comforts that the selfish attitude wants in the hope of making the dissatisfied mind satisfied. One gets into debt throughout the ten directions! Then, even if one works at night, going without sleep, it's not enough. Then a time can come when one thinks one should maybe rob a bank or something like that!

I mentioned before something Lama Tsong Khapa explained in the lamrim teaching that is completely true and so clear: everything that sentient beings are doing is in the hope of satisfying the dissatisfied mind. No matter how much they attempt it by following their desires, there is no end at all. As long as one follows desire, the result is problems and suffering over an extensive time, and no satisfaction. From beginningless rebirths we have been working so hard to get satisfaction by following desire, but so far we didn't get any satisfaction. That's why our samsaric suffering has not stopped. That's why Buddha revealed the Buddhadharma, such as the Four Noble Truths.

Also think, "The person who gives me problems is my virtuous friend who is examining me to see how pure a Dharma practitioner I am. He is checking my capability for practicing the thought training." It is also very good to think, "How can I say absolutely that this person who is criticizing me, taking away my possessions and friends, is an ordinary person, just because he appears to be ordinary? My mind is heavily obscured by karma; I am not a buddha. If I had an omniscient mind I could judge without the slightest mistake because I would see things exactly as they exist; I'm not even a bodhisattva or an arhat. I have no reliable clairvoyance achieved from tranquil abiding. My mind is completely overwhelmed by mountains of delusions..."

(end of tape)

... Completely dark, covered by fog. My mind is like this, overwhelmed by disturbing thoughts one after another as numerous as hailstones. So how can I say that this person is just an ordinary person as he appears to be? That is not a logical reason. He could be a transformation of Guru Chenrezig. If you practice, say Tara, you should think, "He may be Tara;" similarly for any deity you practice – he could be a transformation of that guru-deity. Think, "He could be a transformation who has come to help me, to persuade me to practice thought-training, to practice patience, the thought of

loving-kindness and compassion; to destroy my selfish attitude. I cherish myself so much, therefore I can't practice Dharma purely." It's very effective to think this sometimes.

Milarepa had a disciple, Rechungpa—I think there were two Rechungpas—whose life story is in Milarepa's biography. Those who have read this might remember that when Milarepa's holy body was in a place called Chuwa, his disciples performed the mandala of the deity to offer fire to Milarepa's holy body. Milarepa did not accept the fire until his disciple Rechungpa came. No matter how many times people offered fire, the fire did not catch. For ordinary people it appeared that Milarepa had passed away. Rechungpa was very far away—a distance it would take three months to travel on foot. He had an attainment of the accomplishment stage of tantra, so, by the power of concentrating the winds he covered that distance in three days when he heard that Milarepa had passed away. I don't think he needed to walk on the ground. When Rechungpa arrived, Milarepa came back from the clear-light state, as he had complete freedom to do, although to ordinary people Milarepa appeared to be a corpse. After that he accepted fire. Milarepa showed that he had accomplishment of Dharma practice as an inspiring example to us, the sentient beings still caught in samsara.

The point of this story is that Rechungpa asked Milarepa three times if he could make a pilgrimage to Lhasa. Milarepa advised him not to go, but Rechungpa went. He met one girl, perhaps selling wine, I'm not sure—I don't think she was a prostitute, but perhaps she was selling wine. Rechungpa got caught up and had to stay with her and she became his wife. She beat Rechungpa. One day they were boiling soup in a pot and she took out the vegetables with the ladle and threw that over Rechungpa. In the verses of Mila's biography, Rechungpa said, "I have received many initiations but I have never before received the initiation of the ladle!" And, "I have experienced wearing different ornaments but I have never before experienced wearing fragments of vegetable!" She gave Rechungpa a blue turquoise. One day a beggar came and asked specially for the turquoise. Rechungpa gave the beggar the turquoise. Eventually he returned to Milarepa's place. I don't remember what Milarepa asked, but he showed Rechungpa the turquoise. I think Rechungpa hadn't told Milarepa everything that happened, but Milarepa knew because he was actually that beggar. The point was to show Rechungpa that he knew everything that happened. Rechungpa felt great shock! Many of the monks from all four sects who escaped from Lhasa wanted to continue their studies. They stayed at Buxa, a place where I lived for some years. They needed to be moved from that place to South India, because it was so bad for their health. It used to be used as a concentration camp and at one time held Nehru and Gandhi. Many of them died from T.B. One governor who used to work in the parliament in Tibet lived in Delhi for three years trying to see the Indian official with the power to grant the land in South India. For three years he didn't get to see him and nothing was done. He returned back to Dharamsala and went to see His Holiness the Dalai Lama and explained how he could not even get an appointment. His Holiness asked him to immediately go back to Delhi, the same day.

He did get an appointment with the official, who said, "If you can find one Tibetan Apso puppy—I need one for my son—I will grant you the land." The Tibetan governor came out of the building and after some time he saw one sadhu with a nice Apso dog on a lead. He asked the sadhu if he would sell it, and so bought it. The next day, feeling so happy that the official's wishes were accomplished, with the dog well-groomed, he went to see him at his home. The dog immediately went to the son and licked him. The governor got the land in South India! Now the monks have built many large monasteries down there and continue their studies very intensively, and their

numbers are increasing. There are many other stories like this. Actually the dog was an embodiment of His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

If one's wife or husband or friend runs off with somebody, one can't manage, can't do anything. It's the same if one gets a disease that medicine doesn't help, such as leprosy or missing limbs or actual death. As the great bodhisattva Shantideva said in the *Bodhicharyavatara*—we should remember this—“If it can be managed, what's the benefit of disliking it? If it cannot be managed, what's the use of disliking it?” What Shantideva is saying is that if the problem that one is experiencing is something that can be managed, what's the point of getting angry, fighting and so on, and so creating much negative karma? If it is something that cannot be managed at all—I think in the commentary the example of the sky is used: you cannot make the sky become earth, so what's the use of disliking the fact that the sky is not the earth? There's no single benefit at all. If it's a problem that cannot be managed, there's no use at all in being upset by it.

One should think, “I'm not the only person who is suffering from this problem of separation, and there are uncountable sentient beings who have much more suffering than this—not only of separation, but not having a place to live, not having means of living, having leprosy or other dangerous diseases and who are in danger of dying. I'm not like this. There are many others who are in danger of being killed, who are in danger of being burnt in fires, of being executed and so on, who have incredible fears and worries. I'm not like that. I don't have any of these problems. Actually, I'm much more fortunate, much happier than these sentient beings.” It's very good to think of others who have much more and greater problems. It becomes a cause of compassion. Normally when we have problems we think, “I'm the only one who is experiencing problems.” One thinks only of one's own problem and not of others' problems, so the problem gets bigger and bigger.

Also think, “Unaccountable numbers of sentient beings are suffering and having these problems that I have. Anyway, as I'm experiencing this, how wonderful it would be if I could receive all their sufferings—true suffering and the true cause of suffering—all their diseases, problems of separation and disharmony. May I receive all this on me, so that I experience it by myself so that other sentient beings become free of it—especially of this particular problem of separation.” Think, “I who am suffering am just one. But the other sentient beings experiencing this problem are so many, uncountable. So it's more worthwhile that they be free of those problems and that I experience them instead. They are greater in number so they are more important than me. No matter how happy I am or how much I suffer, there is nothing to be surprised about. What's so important about whether I have great suffering or am surrounded by wealth and luxury and friends? It is only one person. The other sentient beings who have suffering, who have this particular problem of separation, are uncountable in number.” Then think, “How wonderful it would be if they were all free.” Then pray and dedicate the merits by saying those prayers that I mentioned last night.

**DUE TO THE MERITS ACCUMULATED BY ME AND OTHER SENTIENT BEINGS, MAY ALL SENTIENT BEINGS' SUFFERINGS AND TRUE CAUSES OF SUFFERING, THIS PARTICULAR PROBLEM OF BEING SEPARATED FROM ONE'S SPOUSE (OR FRIEND), BE RECEIVED BY ME TO BE EXPERIENCED ONLY BY MYSELF.**

Pray like that. This prayer can be recited like a mantra, on a rosary. If one just keeps reciting this prayer it is incredibly effective for subduing the selfish attitude in one's mind. It is very direct. You see, we may recite the mantra OM MANI PADME HUM while there is anger, but if we recite this

prayer, “MAY I RECEIVE WHATEVER SUFFERING THEY HAVE,” There’s no place for anger or jealous mind. This more directly opposes anger than does a mantra. Whether you are lying down or working or whatever, you can mentally say this thought training prayer and your mind will become calm. It is the best for destroying the selfish attitude. You can even say it verbally—it is fantastic! Pray like this and do the visualization.

Like a thorn that has entered one’s flesh, when it is inside there is much pain, and when it’s taken out there is immediate comfort; while a fire spark is on one’s body there is pain, but as soon as one throws it off there’s comfort. Now sentient beings are suffering as if from a thorn or spark, but after removing this there is much comfort. Whether you relate this practice with the breath or not, take on all their obscurations, their true cause of suffering, and then their suffering, particularly their relationship problems.

I don’t know whether you have experienced this or not, but in the morning Boudha is covered by fog. Actually it’s very dirty because the vapor from the pee-pee and those things which are on the ground comes up...

(end of tape)

Before, when I was living down there, in the early morning when there was this fog—which also has a very bad smell because of the pollution—as I breathed in a used to feel very uncomfortable in the chest and heart. We should visualize like that. If anyone has been to Calcutta, they will remember the terribly bad smell in the streets! However, we should visualize that like when a fire spark is removed suddenly all their problems and sufferings and their causes are separated from them and both their minds and their bodies experience incredible bliss. One can think that they all become Chenrezig, free from all their obscurations. Their suffering comes from all directions, very powerfully, and is absorbed into one’s selfish attitude.

Also one should think of the conditions of their suffering such as the huge expanse of red-hot burning iron ground filled with swords that the narak beings experience. There are trees in the narak whose leaves turn into weapons that pierce the narak beings’ bodies as they climb the trees the karmic vision of someone the being was attached to before. When they climb up the sharp branches point downwards due to karma, just as those flowers close up when an insect goes inside due to the karma of that insect. All those things you heard about in the lamrim meditation on the sufferings of the lower realms—the narak ice-mountains; the preta beings’ ugly environments, like deserts with not even a drop of water; human beings’ ugly environments—are transformed into the form of pollution and taken onto the selfish attitude, all at once. This is completely absorbed into the selfish attitude.

You can feel “I” somewhere here (inside the chest). Definitely there is an “I” inside there—one-hundred percent, without a doubt. Not somewhere outside the skin, or in the stomach or the legs or nose or mouth or brain. Depending on their way of thinking some persons might feel that the “I” is inside the brain, but that’s not the normal way of thinking. Inside the chest, inside the ribs, there is something so precious, so important, all the time. There’s not even a second that it’s not important! Take all this pollution and absorb it into this “I.” Like snow falling in the ocean doesn’t stay on the ocean, it sinks and dissolves. Think that the self-cherishing thought and the object that it thinks is so precious, the most important, become completely non-existent.

Concentrate on that emptiness for a while—as long as you can, until the mind becomes distracted. If you feel that this real “I” becomes less real, weaker—without necessarily completely disappearing, but close to that—you are that much nearer to realizing the absolute nature of the “I.” Absorb and as much as possible let it become empty of existence, with not the slightest atom remaining. Put as much energy as you can into that. Even if that fear, “I’m losing myself,” arises, let it arise. Without we ordinary beings who have not studied and understood shunyata going through the fear, there is no way to realize shunyata or the conventional truth of how the “I” really exists. Then it’s easy. After the precious “I” existing from its own side becomes empty, what exists then is just that which is merely labeled on the practice of dedication—merely labeled dedication—of merely labeled body and possessions for merely labeled sentient beings.

Whether you are outside or inside the house, even if you are lying down, while you are eating, whatever problem you are having—now we are talking particularly of a relationship problem—think, “I am experiencing this problem on behalf of all the sentient beings.” Like reciting a mantra, you should keep on thinking this again and again, whatever you are doing; then there is no place for worry and fear or nervous breakdowns. In this way you see yourself as being beneficial and the problem as worth having because it obliges you to dedicate yourself to suffering for others. When the relationship problem stops, you have no more opportunity to practice thought training! No more opportunity to accumulate infinite merit with each breath by taking on the sufferings of infinite sentient beings, or to do incredible purification.

Tara advised one lama, Gonpo Rinpoche, “If one practices giving and taking well, one accumulates extensive merit and will realize the middle way which is devoid of the two extremes and one will become enlightened in a short time.” That means that a person has to have so much merit, has to be incredibly fortunate, and has to have done much purification in order to be able to realize shunyata. This practice of *tonglen* is the best and quickest method to accumulate infinite merit and to purify so much karmic obscuration; that’s why Tara advised that by doing this one will realize shunyata. Realizing the wisdom of shunyata ceases all the obscurations, so that’s how one quickly becomes enlightened.

A person whose mind is well-trained in thought training is kind-of happy to have more trouble so he can do much dedication for others. When there’s no trouble like sickness, the opportunity has kind-of stopped, so there can be no success. His wish is to experience trouble for the sake of other sentient beings. I mentioned relationship problems in particular, but it is the same if one has disease like cancer. This is the best meditation if one has cancer, a heart attack or something like leprosy. It is the best way of recovering, the best puja—instead of being scared and shocked and crying when the doctor tells you what you’ve got—actually it’s fantastic if a doctor tells you have this or that! I’m normally very lazy, I don’t practice. I just speak, but don’t practice! I just talk a lot. But from my side when I have sickness it’s actually more effective for the mind because I find the opportunity to practice thought-training. When there’s no problem the mind is so distracted and no practice gets done. If you want protection, *tonglen* is the best protection, the best meditation, the best puja. I will stop here.

I want to mention just one story! About the doctor. In Bodhgaya there was one monk called Tenba in Bodhgaya monastery. He had some disease but he didn’t realize that it was so serious. He went to see a doctor in Gaya who told him, “Your disease is very dangerous; you can die at any moment.” He came back and planned what to do with all his possessions. He gave all his texts to others—to whichever monks wanted them. He even gave me some of his texts to give to the monastery. Then,

he sold whatever goods he had and offered the money to the monks. At that time His Holiness the Dalai Lama's guru, His Holiness Ling Rinpoche, was giving teachings—I think a commentary on the Guru Puja or on the gradual path to enlightenment. He made an offering to all the monks and Rinpoche, and even sponsored one teaching I think. He did it several times, but he's still alive! I didn't hear that he is dead. This was several years ago and he was there when I went at other times since then. I haven't heard this year that he is either dead or living. So, you see, what the doctor told him was very beneficial! All that he did after that became completely Dharma because of his wanting to make preparation for future lives. He has to prostrate to his doctor for all the kindness, for all the merit that he accumulated! Then, I will stop here.

JANG.CHUB SEM.CHOG...

Be aware of each realms' sufferings, "Whatever suffering other sentient beings have, may all those be experienced by me." You should include all their causes and results and all their obscurations. "May I experience all the pretas' sufferings; all the naraks' sufferings; all the animals' suffering; all the human beings' and suras' and asuras' sufferings—all the obscurations of sentient beings." You can think that at the same time they become free of these and that these are absorbed to one's selfish attitude. "May all the merits and happiness accumulated by me, all the three times merits and all the results, the happiness—everything—be experienced by others—each narak, preta, animal and human being; even the enemy. Each sura being and each asura being—each sentient being, including the arhats and the bodhisattvas. And may I not experience that happiness myself. May every single merit and happiness be experienced only by others." I think I will stop here.

I'm not sure yet, I have to fix a time for those initiations or whatever. If there's time either during the afternoon or evening we will continue the five powers and also the five powers of the preparation for dying.

### **Advice on daily practice**

For those of you who want to practice lamrim continuously when you go back to the West, I would suggest you do so, if you can, on the basis of the *Essence of Nectar*—which you can get here or in Delhi at Tushita Centre. This is not so long—but is not too short—and it contains stories and so on! The way it is written is very effective. It is written by the root Guru of His Holiness the Dalai Lama's gurus. It contains all the preliminary practices to create the cause for developing realization of the path, and to purify the obstacles. If you can practice on the basis of that, it's excellent. Then, regarding actual lamrim meditation, depending on how much time you have, the *Hymns of Experience of the Gradual Path to Enlightenment* by Lama Tsong Khapa is very good. It is short but the words are very effective for the mind. You can use that as the root outline when you do analytical and fixed meditation on the lamrim. Then, on the basis of that you can amplify your understanding as you read commentaries and various lamrim teachings, and develop clear meditation. Then, as a short motivation you can use that in the *Wishfulfilling Golden Sun*, which is not yet published! In the beginning of this there is a motivation containing the four levels of motivation, which is very effective. It is a short but complete meditation on the lamrim. It is very good to use as a motivation. Then, the preliminary practices—those who will be doing the lamrim retreat may have a chance to receive teachings on that. Preliminary practices are extremely important—they allow one to have realization of the lamrim.

One suggestion is that the most skillful way to quickly generate the realizations of the path to enlightenment is, on the basis of the preliminary practices, to do lamrim practices in the morning.

First the meditation on guru devotion each morning, then one meditation on the perfect human rebirth and its usefulness and so on, up to impermanence and death, whatever you can do; if you haven't generated those realizations, one meditation from the path of the lower capability being. Then, in the evening, perhaps one meditation on shunyata could be done. In this way, by training in three meditations each day on the basis of the short direct meditation prayer that was used during the course, which daily plants the seed of the complete path, within five or ten years, if you don't achieve guru devotion realization, you may achieve shunyata realization! If you don't realize shunyata, you may realize impermanence and death or perfect human rebirth. Anyway, within ten years, or before death, something! There would be some attainment in the mind so one's life would not have been completely empty. That is my suggestion for somebody who really wants to practice. It's a skillful way. If the person is fortunate enough, then all three principal paths, the whole lamrim, can be realized in one life—even tantra.

Even more important than actual meditation on lamrim is purification, because without that no matter how much one tries to meditate, it doesn't change the mind and a lot of obstacles come. Purification is the main practice for us ordinary beings. Then everything works. Then, when you meet obstacles, things come, even if you don't have the wish!

Remember the meditation that you did in the morning while you are working in the office, or airport, or train station, or wherever. Especially when there's a danger of anger or dissatisfied mind arising. That is the real time to practice Dharma. Make the meditation session useful for the rest of the day, especially when you meet the circumstances where you can create negative karma. Do preliminary practices, make offerings to the Triple Gem, as much as possible every day, at every opportunity you can find. Practice with respect to sentient beings—try to live your life for others, doing everything that you do for others.

Then I would like to say thank you very, very much for bearing much hardship, especially during ordination time. In the morning it is extremely cold—I know! So much negative karma that we created to be born in the cold hell was purified! It has become more difficult to be born in the cold narak! You took ordination on many days and with much hardship followed the schedule and discipline. You put in much effort studying and practicing as much as possible. I greatly rejoice and I would like to offer thanks from my heart, and I will continuously pray. I think that's all. Thank you very much.