

**Friday evening, 13 May 2005**

Develop a good motivation wishing to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings and for this purpose listen to the teachings.

All sentient beings, all human beings, wish to have happiness and the causes of happiness. No one wants to experience suffering. In this sense we are all equal, we have the same idea and same feeling. For this reason we need to develop the wish in our mind that everyone have happiness, not just ourselves, but all sentient beings. For this, we need to strive to give up the self-cherishing mind and to develop the mind that cherishes others. This is important. For this purpose this text explains how to exchange self and other in order to develop the mind of enlightenment. It sets out the many disadvantages of cherishing ourselves and the many advantages of cherishing others. In other words, we try in many ways to see how self-cherishing is the source of all our sufferings and so forth, well as the suffering of our family members and so forth. Then, we try to understand the many advantages and benefits of cherishing and taking care of other sentient beings. It is said that all sentient beings have been our mothers. When they were our mothers they were kind to us. Due to this, we need to try to repay their kindness. To do this we need to develop attracted love toward mother sentient beings, including our father and mother of this life. We should strive to develop the loving-kind mind and the mind of compassion, and try to liberate our family members from suffering and the causes of suffering. We need to take upon ourselves the responsibility to set all mother sentient beings in the state of happiness and liberate them from suffering and problems. We need to make a promise to do this. Now we have promised to do this, but in reality we are not able to achieve this. Only if we achieve complete enlightenment, buddhahood, can we do this. Therefore, we generate the wish to attain enlightenment in order to be able to take care of all sentient beings. Okay, grazie!

*Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds* says:

Therefore, I shall never create an opportunity  
For the desires of the body to increase.  
For whatever I do not grasp as attractive.  
These are the best of all possessions.

(177)

To strive to separate from attachment to our body by way of meditation, this is very good. In other words, we should not be attached to our body. If we are attached to our body, our attachment will increase more and more and this will bring the result of many problems. The object of attachment can be our own body or others' bodies. When we are attached to someone else's body, if we are unable to obtain it we become mentally unhappy and this can even lead to physical problems. We need to avoid opening ourselves to this happening. If we think that something is attractive or beautiful, this will produce attachment. Therefore, we should try to think that it is not beautiful but is instead ugly whereby our mind will become more quiet. This is the best of qualities.

Before it was said that our body is not clean, and likewise others' bodies are not clean. Our body is in fact a collection of thirty-six impure or contaminated substances. If we cut our body open, what do we find inside? We do not find anything beautiful! Only the outer skin is attractive. For example, it is like a gold vase inside of which is dung. If we look at what is inside, we will see filth. We are similar. If we wash the outside of the vase it is like washing the outside of our body to make it look nice while in reality inside the vase and our body are full of filth. It is like a gold vase that outside is clean but inside is dung or urine. Would this be nice? Our body is similar. Therefore, we should try not to be attached to our body. However, we still need to take care of it. Why? Because if we wish to help other sentient beings we need to develop higher and higher realizations and to do this we need healthy body. For this reason, we need to take care of it.

We need to try our best.

*Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds* says:

In the end (my body) will turn to dust,  
Unable to move (by itself), it will be propelled by other (forces).  
Why do I grasp this unbearable

Our body is presently nice and good but one day we will have to die. When we die, our body will be cremated and become dust. Or it will be put, wearing ornaments, in a nice box and placed in the cemetery. If the coffin were opened some years later the body if touched would be found to have turned to dust. So why be so attached to our body?

Our body can also become unable to move, even before we die, for example, if we become sick or fall into a coma. We can become unable to do anything and must depend on other people assisting us. This would be difficult. “Other forces” include sickness, the collapsing of a building, a car accident. There are many conditions that can bring about our death. Therefore, why do we grasp at this body? Our body is unbearable, it experiences great suffering. It is also unclean, impure. Therefore, our body is the main source of all suffering and problems. If it is very hot, we experience problems. If it is very cold, we experience problems. If we are unable to find drink, we suffer from thirst. If we are unable to find food, we suffer from hunger. In this way, there are many sufferings based on our body. In the summer we experience the suffering of being bitten by mosquitoes and so forth. In a forest there is danger of poisonous snakes. Therefore, there are many things that in relation to our body can bring suffering. Therefore, we should try not to be so attached to our body, to grasp at our body. This can be dangerous. Why? Because attachment leads us to create many negativities such that, when we die, we will be reborn in the hell realm where we will be constantly tormented by strong suffering.

*Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds* says:

Whether it lives or whether it dies,  
 What use is this machine to me?  
 How is it different from a clod of earth?  
 O, why do I not dispel this pride (of it being “I” and “mine”)?

(179)

Our body, whether alive or dead, is suffering. It is like a magical wheel of suffering. Therefore, attachment to the body is not useful. It cannot help us achieve our aims. How is our body different from a clod of earth? There is no difference. Both are as unmoving as a rock. Therefore, what benefit is there to be attached to it? However, attachment to our body can bring us unbearable suffering. Therefore, we need to try to eliminate pride in relation to our body and mind thinking “I” and “mine.” We think “I am,” “my body.” We need to abandon this kind of pride. This pride grasps to an I and mine that is inherently existent or self-supporting substantially existent. It grasps in this way, whereas it does not exist in this way. Our body is a dependent-relation. It mainly comes from our kind mother and father, from the mixture of their blood and semen into which our consciousness enters and then we develop. Therefore, we are formed from part of our mother’s body and part of our father’s body. They do not come from ourselves. We should think in this way and try to understand.

In this way, we should try to understand that we make problems for ourselves, others do not make problems for us. We tend to think that others make problems for us, this is not right. No! We ourselves are the cause, although perhaps the conditions can be outside us. Perhaps it is like this, we need to check. If we are ignorant of what is excellent and what is faulty, many problems arise.

Having accumulated suffering for no purpose  
 Because of my honoring and serving this body,  
 What use is attachment and anger  
 For this thing that is similar to a piece of wood?

(180)

Whatever problems come, we ourselves created the cause. Trying to take care of our body, in reality we accumulated much suffering. Thinking that someone benefits us, we are attached to them. Thinking that others harm us, we generate anger. Our body is the basis for the arising of much attachment and hatred. We try to take care of our body, but our body does not think to repay our kindness to it. Our body does not recognize our kindness and try to return our kindness, it is like a piece of wood. In other words, from its side our body does not do anything for us. A piece of wood does not help us. It does not think to benefit us. Our body is similar. We strive to take care of it, but from its side it does not try to benefit us or give us happiness. It does not do this. Instead in relation to our body we experience many sufferings. It is like this. Therefore, we

should not be attached to our body. Although here we are talking about our body, it also refers to others' bodies. We human beings are mainly attached to other, men to woman and vice versa, like male and female animals. Our strongest attachment is for bodies. We are also attached to our own body. This attachment brings us suffering, for example, when we get old and our body becomes ugly, the skin becomes loose and covered in wrinkles, to make it better we undergo plastic surgery trying to make ourselves beautiful. Even if we have an ugly nose, we may undergo an operation to make it better. Even young men and women do this nowadays. We allow ourselves to be cut for this reason, experiencing the suffering of having our teeth pulled, wires put in our mouth, and so forth. However, sometimes it does not work and we become even uglier than before. It can happen that trying to become more beautiful, someone actually becomes more ugly!

Whether I am caring for my body in this way,  
Or whether it is being eaten by vultures,  
It has no attachment or hatred towards these things –  
Why then am I so attached to it? (181)

Presently we take great care of our body, however, one day it may be eaten by vultures. We are attached to that which helps or benefits our body and hate or become angry at that which harms it, however this is not right. If someone harms or benefits our body, we should not become attached or develop hatred. So why be so attached to this body? We should think like this.

I will stop here. Have a good sleep.

### Saturday morning, 14 May 2005

We will do a short breathing meditation. Try to develop compassion toward all sentient beings, wishing to take upon ourselves all their sufferings and problems. Visualize all sentient beings in human aspect in front of us. From their right nostril comes black smoke in the nature of their suffering and mental afflictions. It enters our left nostril and descends to our heart where we visualize a heap of black dust in the nature of the self-cherishing mind. When the black smoke touches the heap of black dust, it is completely destroyed and ceases to exist. When we exhale, motivated by love, imagine that all our good things, our precious human rebirth possessing the eighteen qualities, our knowledge, our virtuous energy, wealth, possessions, and so forth take on the aspect of white light and leave through our right nostril and enter the left nostrils of the sentient beings in front of us whereby they obtain whatever they need and are satisfied.

Develop a loving-kind mind toward all sentient beings and with this motivation generate the mind of enlightenment that wishes to take care of all sentient beings.

*Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds* says:

If (my body) knows no anger when derided  
And no pleasure when praised,  
For what reason  
Am I wearing myself out like this? (182)

If someone criticizes or derides our body saying that something is wrong with it, our mind becomes angry or hateful. If someone praises our body saying that it is attractive, our mind becomes contented. Why? Our body does not understand what others say. Whether they say that our body is ugly, crooked, and so forth or say that our body is handsome and attractive, the body does not understand. Therefore, why should the mind generate hatred or anger when the body is criticized? This would be senseless. It only makes problems for us. When someone says our body is ugly, crooked, too fat, or too thin, the body does not change. Also when someone says that our body is attractive, excellent, handsome, and so forth, our body does not become more beautiful. Therefore, it is only our mind that reacts by becoming angry or content. This is meaningless. Our body is ignorant of both criticism and praise.

*Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds* says:

“But I want this body of mine,  
Both it and I are friends.”  
But since all beings want their bodies,  
Why do I not find joy in theirs? (183)

This is like a reply to the previous verse. We want this body of ours. The body does not recognize “my body” and “others’ bodies.” It is our mind that thinks in this way. Then our mind wants our body to be beautiful. It wants it to be our friend. Thinking “our body” we like it. Why? All sentient beings like and desire their own bodies. Since their bodies are also nice and good, why do we not desire or want their bodies to be beautiful? Thinking “our body” we are attached to it and try to take care of it, while we deprecate others’ bodies. This is not right. We should think that our own and others’ bodies are the same. Therefore, we should not be so attached to our body and should not disparage others’ bodies.

From the point of view the bodhisattva conduct, it is more important to take care of others including their bodies as they too want an attractive and healthy body. Attachment to our body is the source of many faults and problems. However, we need to take care of and protect our body in order to take the essence of these pleasures and endowments – the precious human rebirth possessing the eighteen qualities – that we have presently obtained. On one hand this body is the source of many faults, and on the other it is the means by which we can obtain all our temporary and final aims. Temporarily by means of this human body endowed with an intelligent mind we can obtain whatever we want. Finally we can achieve nirvana or buddhahood by practicing in dependence on this body. We must try to understand this.

*Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds* says:

Therefore, in order to benefit all beings  
I shall give up this body without attachment,  
But although it may have many faults  
I should look after it while experiencing (the results of my previous actions) (184)

We should try not to be attached to our body, while thinking to give it away for the benefit of all sentient beings. In other words, we offer our body in the service of other sentient beings. However, our body brings many faults, we know this very well. The *Four Hundred Verses* by Aryadeva also says that even though our body is to be seen like an enemy, we need to take care of it and protect it. We should strive to keep good morality, whereby we will create a lot of merit and be able to benefit other sentient beings. But to do this, we need to take care of our body. We should make sure our body is healthy as in this way we can use it to help other sentient beings, that is, we can do many activities for their benefit. This body can do many good things to help and benefit others, although many faults arise in dependence on it. In short, we should try to keep our body healthy in order to use it to benefit other sentient beings. For example, like carrying other people’s luggage, our body will be able to bear the load of helping others. In brief, we need to think that others are more important than ourselves. We must try to do this.

*Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds* says:

So enough of this childish behavior!  
I shall follow in the steps of the wise,  
And having recalled the advice concerning conscientiousness,  
I shall turn away sleep and mental dullness. (185)

There are interferences to our virtuous actions such as meditation, we should wish to eliminate or avert them. Childish behavior is not right. What do we need to do? We should try to eliminate attachment, covetousness, malice, and that which opposes calm abiding. Such things are childish behavior, we need to give this up. Instead we should follow the advice of the wise, that is, the buddhas and bodhisattvas, and engage in virtuous actions with conscientiousness and mindfulness, while turning away sleep and dullness.

When we want to develop concentration many distractions arise. Sometimes excitement arises, sometimes dullness, sleep, or laxity (mental sinking). In this way our mind is made unclear. Therefore, we need to recognize and eliminate them. We need to apply conscientiousness and mindfulness. Our virtue can be taken away by excitement, regret, and so forth, just like a thief takes away our belongings. Also malice, dullness, sleep, attachment, and doubt obscure our mind and steal away our virtue. Doubt, for example, is an interference to accomplishing any activity since it stops us from engaging in something and prevents achieving success in it. Therefore, we must oppose it. On the other hand, we need concentration and wisdom. The main type of concentration to achieve is calm abiding. To do so we need to choose an object and then set our mind on it, striving to develop calm abiding. At the beginning we need to set or focus our mind on its object. Then we progress gradually through the nine stages of mental abiding. The second stage is to continually set our mind on the object. When our concentration is interrupted, we need to reset our mind on its object. In this way we should bring the object closer and closer by continually setting our mind on it. To do this, we need to apply the appropriate antidotes. When attachment, covetousness, malice, and so forth arise we need to apply their antidote.

*Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds* says:

Just like the compassionate Sons of the Conqueror,  
I shall patiently accept what I have to do;  
For if I do not make a constant effort day and night,  
When will my misery ever come to an end? (186)

Just as the compassionate conquerors and their children, the bodhisattvas, develop the antidotes strongly, so too should we generate the antidotes strongly. Like them, we should be patient and day and night we should practice. In this way, we will be able to put an end to our suffering. This is especially necessary when trying to develop calm abiding. When our calm abiding is stable, on this basis we will be able to quickly develop special insight, whereby we can achieve all good results. This is the uncommon calm abiding of the Mahayana. Buddhism and Hinduism have some meditations in common for developing calm abiding, they become the cause for rebirth in the form and formless realms. Thus, this is the common calm abiding meditation. The uncommon Mahayana calm abiding does not become the cause for taking rebirth in cyclic existence. We should try to do what is best.

*Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds* says:

Therefore, in order to dispel the obscurations  
I shall withdraw my mind from mistaken ways  
And constantly place it in equipoise  
Upon the perfect object. (187)

We should try to set our mind in single-pointed equipoise on a virtuous observed object. There are two types of obscurations that need to be dispelled: the afflictive obscurations and the obscurations to knowledge. The afflictive obscurations mainly interfere with the attainment of liberation or nirvana. The obscurations to knowledge mainly interfere with the attainment of omniscience, the state of perfectly complete enlightenment. Therefore, we need to eliminate these two types of obscurations. To do this what do we need to generate? We need to generate special insight, SPECIAL INSIGHT (!), to do this. However, before developing special insight we need to achieve concentration or calm abiding. To do so, we should choose a perfect observed object. To develop calm abiding we need to pacify many interferences. There are five obstacles or interferences to the achievement of calm abiding that are counteracted by eight antidotes. We need to apply the eight antidotes to eliminate the five faults or obstacles, whereby we will perfect our calm abiding. The first of the five faults is laziness which is abandoned by means of applying four antidotes. First we need to see the qualities of concentration whereby we will develop faith or confidence in them, just as by seeing the qualities of the Three Jewels we develop faith or confidence in them. Faith in the qualities of concentration is the first of the antidotes to laziness. The second antidote is the aspiration that wishes to achieve these qualities, which arises from faith in them. The third antidote to laziness is effort, that is, joyous effort in meditating. The fourth antidote is pliancy or suppleness.

The second fault is forgetfulness. Its antidote is mindfulness. The third fault is laxity and excitement. Its antidote is introspection.

### **Saturday afternoon, 14 May 2005**

Develop the good motivation wishing to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings and for this purpose to listen to the teachings and to put them into meditation practice.

We need to develop calm abiding. To do so, we need to overcome the five faults: (1) laziness, (2) forgetfulness, (3) laxity and excitement, (4) non-application of the antidote when it is necessary, and (5) over-application of the antidote which is the application of an antidote when is not necessary. We need to recognize them and abandon them. The most important fault is laziness. Laziness is the cause for nothing to go well. We must strive to eliminate laziness. When we meditate we need to choose a virtuous object of meditation and then focus on it. When we do this, sometimes we forget the object of meditation, this is the fault of forgetfulness. The antidote is mindfulness.

Also when we try to meditate, even if we do not forget the observed object, at times laxity or sinking mind can occur and at other times the mind wanders away due to excitement. These two, laxity and excitement, are one fault. The antidote to them is introspection or vigilance. When either of these two, laxity and excitement, arise if we do not apply the antidote, this is the fault of non-application. Its antidote is intention, which moves the mind toward the antidote. Also if neither laxity or excitement have arisen but we apply their antidote, this is the fault of over-application. Its antidote is equanimity.

In this way we should apply the eight antidotes or applications to the five faults that prevent the achievement of calm abiding. In this way, we should develop our concentration whereby at the end we will be able to achieve calm abiding. In addition, there are the assistants of the six powers and four mental engagements. We should strive in this way to attain calm abiding.

This concludes the eighth chapter on Concentration. Having developed concentration, we next need to develop wisdom. For this reason we need to study the ninth chapter on Wisdom. The main subject of this chapter is emptiness.

## CHAPTER 9 – WISDOM

(Provisional translation by Joan Nicell  
on the basis of Togme Sangpo's commentary)

What is emptiness? What are the two truths? Which emptiness? We need to think about this. In the eighth chapter calm abiding is discussed. On the basis of calm abiding, we need to develop wisdom or special insight. Thus, these two chapters are connected in this way.

If we wish to achieve liberation, we need to generate the wisdom realizing thusness or emptiness. therefore, the generation of the wisdom realizing emptiness is important. To do this, what do we need? We need method, which begins with the generation of the mind of enlightenment or bodhichitta. The mind of enlightenment is the primary mind that wishes to attain enlightenment for the welfare of all sentient beings. This mind is called “bodhichitta.” There are two types of mind of enlightenment: the aspiring mind of enlightenment and the engaging mind of enlightenment. The aspiring mind of enlightenment is the wish to attain enlightenment for the welfare of sentient beings. It does not include the practice of or engagement in the bodhisattva conduct such as the six perfections. It can be likened to the wish to go to India. For example, one thinks “I would like to go to Dharamsala to hear His Holiness's teachings.” It is a mere aspiration without any engagement in the action of going to India. The engaging mind of enlightenment is likened to actually engaging in buying a ticket, getting a visa, going to the airport, getting on the plane, and so forth. In the case of the engaging mind of enlightenment one actually engages in the bodhisattva conduct of the six perfections – generosity, morality, patience, joyous effort, concentration, and wisdom. All of these are included in method and are the collection of causes for developing the wisdom or special insight realizing emptiness.

*Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds* says:

1 Transition: the advice to generate wisdom

The Muni taught all these branches  
For the purpose of wisdom.  
Therefore, those who wish to pacify suffering  
Should generate wisdom.

(1)

Those who wish to pacify the sufferings of cyclic existence need to generate the wisdom realizing emptiness. All of us are suffering. We experience different types of suffering: the suffering of suffering, the suffering of change, pervasive suffering, and so forth. While it is not manifest everyone experiences pervasive suffering. It means that from the crown of our head to the soles of our feet our entire body is pervaded by suffering. We can examine this fact. Another way to think of pervasive suffering is that all the sentient beings from the Peak of Existence down to the hell of Unrelenting Torment are pervaded by suffering. Also all human beings, from the president or prime minister of a country down to the toilet cleaners or beggars wandering on the street, sleeping in railway stations, and so forth, are pervaded by suffering.

Manifest sufferings include, for example, pain and sickness in the body; this is the suffering of suffering. The suffering of change means that initially we experience happiness or pleasure but due to conditions it gradually transforms into suffering. For example, when a couple first meet they love each other and experience a good feeling when they are together, but then due to interfering conditions they may eventually come to separate and experience much suffering. First they were happy, then gradually they came to suffer.

The root is ignorance or the conception of a self or the view of the transitory collection. The root of cyclic existence is the ignorance that apprehends all phenomena to be inherently existent or apprehends persons to be inherently existent. In the drawing of the wheel of cyclic existence, among the twelve links the first is ignorance. This ignorance is a non-knowing of thusness, suchness, or emptiness. To counteract it we need the wisdom realizing the emptiness of inherent existence or true existence. This wisdom is the antidote to ignorance. It can eliminate the root of cyclic existence. It can also pacify all the different types of sufferings. This is mainly achieved by means of wisdom.

“All these branches” in this context means “all these causes.” Togme Sangpo's commentary says “The branches from the mind generation through concentration are the collection of causes for wisdom. All these are for the purpose of generating wisdom.”

2 The method by which to generate wisdom

A Identifying the nature of wisdom

1 Settling the two truths – the objects

A Presenting the nature of the two truths

1 Divisions

The conventional (“thoroughly obscuring”) and the ultimate (“highest meaning”)

Are asserted to be the two truths.

(2ab)

The Buddha taught two truths: the conventional truth and ultimate truth. We need to understand that there are two objects, one called “conventional truth” or “thoroughly obscuring” and one called “ultimate truth” or “highest meaning.” Omniscient mind knows both conventional truths and ultimate truths directly and simultaneously. These are what are realized by a Buddha Bhagavan or Muni.

Buddha in Tibetan is sang-gye. Sang, purified, means that a buddha is one who has completely purified all obscurations, both the afflictive obscurations and obscurations to knowledge. Gye, expanded, means that the mind of a buddha extends to or pervades all phenomena. What objects does the omniscient mind know? It knows conventional truths and ultimate truths.

Conventional in Tibetan is *kun rdzob*, thoroughly obscuring or, literally, obscuring all. That which obscures are the mental afflictions, especially ignorance. What they obscure is the seeing of the final nature of phenomena. Ultimate in Tibetan is *don dam pa*, highest meaning one, is that which knows emptiness directly. Therefore, it is a mind. In the perspective of meditative equipoise all that appears is emptiness, no other conventional phenomenon appears to it. In this way, the two truths are asserted.

2 Entity

The ultimate are not the sphere of activity of the intellect.

The intellect is said to be “thoroughly obscuring.”

(2cd)

The different schools have different views about the two truths. The ultimate truth is not the object of use of the mind or awareness because the awareness is conventional. The ultimate truth is not the object of a conventional mind, that is, a mind that only realizes conventionalities. There are two types of mind: a thoroughly obscuring or conventional mind and a mind realizing emptiness directly. An obscured mind does not realize emptiness. We can also understand this in terms of the five consciousness – eye, ear, nose, tongue, and body consciousnesses. Such minds cannot realize emptiness. Not only that, our eye consciousness, for example, also cannot see sounds, odors, and so forth. Therefore, it definitely is not able to see the final nature of all phenomena.

There are two truths from the point of view of the Vaibhashikas, Sautrantikas, Chittamatrins, Svatantrika Madhyamikas, and Prasangika Madhyamikas. From the point of view of the Vaibhashikas, for example, the definition of the two truths is gross. They assert that all functioning things are conventional truths. They assert only three ultimate truths: space, analytical cessations, and non-analytical cessations. They say that cessations are ultimate truths because they cannot be divided into parts either by the mind or other instruments. They continue to hold their identity. A cup, on the other hand, when unbroken is apprehended to be “cup,” but when broken the mind apprehending “cup” ceases. Therefore, cup is a conventional truth.

The Sautrantikas, on the other hand, say that a cup is an ultimate truth. Why? Because it is ultimately able to perform its function. They assert that all functioning things or impermanent phenomena are ultimate truths. Why? Because they are ultimately able to perform their function or activity. Thus, they assert that permanent phenomena, such as space, are conventional truths. This is because they are not ultimately able to perform a function, that is, they do not bring about the benefit of a result.

In this way, there are differences between the different Buddhist schools. In addition, there are the non-Buddhist schools such as the Samkyas. They assert that all phenomena are included in twenty-five categories. They would say that the ultimate truth is the primordial principal, whereas all other phenomena are conventional truths. Then there is the Christian faith, which would assert that the ultimate truth is God, whereas all other phenomena are conventional truths that are to be left behind. I heard Pope Benedetto say this today.

We need to understand the nature of phenomena. In the Prasangika Madhyamaka system ultimate truths are emptinesses, specifically the emptiness of inherent existence. The Svatantrika Madhyamaka system asserts the emptiness of true existence to be an ultimate truth. The Chittamatra system asserts the emptiness

of duality of the mind and its object or the emptiness of the mind and its object, for example, the eye consciousness and form, being different substances is ultimate truth.

Sunday morning, 15 May 2005

Develop a good motivation wishing to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings and for this purpose to develop loving-kindness toward all sentient beings. Then, with this motivation, listen to the teachings.

The above two lines give the definitions of the two truths: conventional truths and ultimate truths. The first line “The ultimate are not the sphere of activity of the intellect” sets out the definition of ultimate truth. The second line “The intellect is said to be ‘thoroughly obscuring’” sets out the definition of the conventional truth. What is an ultimate truth? Ultimate truth is the emptiness of inherent existence of the person or being and the aggregates; this is the illustration of ultimate truth. It is ultimate truth because it appears without duality to a direct perceiver, that is, it is the object of this mind. On the other hand, if something appears with duality to a mind, that mind is not perceiving an ultimate truth. When emptiness alone appears to a direct perceiver realizing the emptiness of inherent existence of persons and phenomena, ultimate truth is the object of such a mind.

Illustrations of conventional truths are the *being* and the *aggregates*. They are such because they appear with duality to a direct perceiver. In Lama Tsongkhapa’s commentary to the *Supplement to the Middle Way* and in Gyeltsab Je’s commentary to *Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds* this is explained clearly. The different tenets have different assertions. They will be explained later on.

*Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds* says:

3 The differences in the intellects that appraise the two truths

A The divisions of persons

With respect to them, worldly beings are seen  
To be of two types: yogis and common people. (3ab)

The two truths are seen by different beings in different ways. There are yogis and common people, that is, us. The person or being imputed on the basis that is the aggregates is of two types. Yogis are those who have a union of calm abiding and special insight, they see or realize that all phenomena are empty of true existence. Common people are the ordinary beings of the lower schools who assert that phenomena are inherently and truly existent. From the Prasangika Madhyamaka point of view phenomena do not exist inherently or truly, they exist merely by way of imputation.

B The stages of harm

Among them, worldly common people  
Are harmed by worldly yogis. (3cd)

How are worldly common people harmed by worldly yogis? The worldly common people assert partless particles and partless instants of consciousness without past and future are ultimate truths; this is what is harmed by yogis, that is, their existence is negated by yogis, that is, the existence of partless particles and partless instants of consciousness are harmed by the direct perceiver of a yogi. Yogis assert that whatever is an existent *has* parts. Yogis are beings who realize emptiness.

Also yogis, due to differences in their intellect,  
Are respectively harmed by the higher (4ab)

There are yogis of higher and lower intellect. “The higher” refer to the higher schools, for example, the Prasangika Madhyamaka. Beginning from the lowest to the highest there are five Buddhist schools: the Vaibhashika, Sautrantika, Chittamatra, Svatantrika Madhyamaka, and Prasangika Madhyamaka. The tenets of the each of the higher schools respectively harm or refute those of the lower schools. For example, the Madhyamikas refute the assertion of the Chittamatrins that consciousness is truly existent. The Chittamatrins

in turn refute the Sautrantika assertion of partless particles. In this way, the higher tenet systems refute the assertions of the lower tenet systems, and in this sense they harm them.

Even among yogis there are differences, for example, there are bodhisattvas on the first ground, Joyous, bodhisattvas on the second ground, Stainless, bodhisattvas on the third ground, Radiant, and so forth. The bodhisattvas on the higher grounds *harm* the bodhisattvas on the lower grounds, that is, the higher bodhisattvas outshine the lower bodhisattvas. The word “harm” is used in this sense. The higher have more knowledge than the lower.

Even with respect to the continuum of a single person, the baby Raffaello and the adult Raffaello, there is this in that they respectively have lesser and more knowledge. In this way, the knowledge of the adult outshines the knowledge of the baby. A small baby cannot even eat alone, then as it grows it learns to eat alone, to talk, and so forth, its knowledge increasing more and more while simultaneously eliminating more and more ignorance.

C The reasonings that harm

By way of the analogies that both accept. (4c)

Both the Madhyamikas and the lower tenets accept certain analogies, for example, the illusion created by a magician. Both schools accept that such an illusion is deceptive. They also accept that dreams are deceptive. When a magician creates illusions no one would accept that they are true, for example, when we see a magic show in TV. A magician behind glass who is able to put his hand through the glass and take objects although there is no hole in the glass. I have also seen a magician eat cards of a mixture of different colors after which he pulled them from his mouth with all the red cards together, all the white cards together, and so forth. Such analogies or examples are accepted as deceptive by both common people and yogis, people who have realized emptiness.

B Dispelling arguments regarding the two truths

1 Dispelling arguments regarding the conventional

A One would not engage in the path

Because unanalyzed, [one engages] for the sake of the result. (4d)

There is the debate: “If they do not exist inherently, to train in the six perfections of generosity, morality, and so forth would be meaningless or purposeless.” In other words, to practice generosity and so forth with the wish to attain the result of buddhahood would be meaningless. All such things are conventional truths or deceptive truths. The argument is that if they do not exist inherently then to train in the six perfections for the sake of achieving enlightenment would be meaningless. However, the Prasangika Madhyamikas set out logical reasons establishing the lack of inherent existence and give the analogies of illusions and dreams, which are accepted by both positions as not existing inherently although they do exist. Likewise, without analysis we engage in the six perfections of generosity and so forth for the purpose of achieving enlightenment. Although the six perfections do not exist truly, they do exist conventionally. From the Prasangika Madhyamaka point of view, if the wisdom realizing the emptiness of inherent existence is not held by the remaining perfections – generosity, morality, patience, joyous effort, concentration, it cannot be called “perfection.” “Perfection” is *pa rol du chin pa* in Tibetan, it means “to have gone much higher,” or it means “gone to the other side” or “gone to the other shore,” that is, gone beyond the extremes of cyclic existence and solitary peace. “Perfection” is paramita in Sanskrit, this too also means gone to the other side or gone higher (para means other side or higher, mita means gone.” In short, we need to go to the city of omniscience. This is the result that we need to achieve. For example, we need to go to the city of Sukhavati or the city of Kalachakra.

B There is **no** debate regarding objects

Since the worldly see things and  
Conceive them to be perfectly real,  
Not illusion-like; it is here  
That yogis and worldly beings debate. (5)

There is debate between the lower and higher schools. The lower schools say: “Fire burns things and also cooks food, this is its function. We can see this directly. It is established by a direct perceiver. Do you accept

this?" The Prasangika Madhyamaka would accept this. Therefore, the lower schools say "Since the I exists in the same way, it is useless to argue with us. The fact that fire functions to burn and cook indicates that it is truly existent. If you do not accept that fire burns and cooks, you would be directly contradicted by a direct perceiver. Therefore, it is not that we harm your assertion, you are harmed by the world, that is, by everyone." "If functioning things are not inherently existent then they become non-existent. This would contradict the two truths. Why would you do this?"

Try to meditate on the lack of inherent existence of all phenomena based on the fact that they are dependent-relations, that is, (i) they depend on parts, (ii) the partless does not exist, and (iii) *with parts* and *without parts* are directly contradictory. Because of this they do not inherently exist as one or as many. They are not an inherently existent one, therefore they are not an inherently existent many because many depends on one. Try to understand emptiness by way of such reasonings so as to increase your wisdom. In order to meditate on emptiness, we first need to accumulate merit. We can do this by visualizing the merit field. Visualize Buddha Shakyamuni in front of you and go for refuge and generate the mind of enlightenment, then do the brief seven-limb prayer of prostrating, offering, confessing, rejoicing, exhorting to turn the wheel of Dharma, requesting to not pass away but to remain as long as cyclic existence is not emptied, and dedicating the merit created by the practice of generosity and so forth to the attainment of enlightenment. Then offer mandala using the brief verse. Then meditate for a bit on the conventional mind of enlightenment. Then try to understand ultimate mind of enlightenment, emptiness. It is said that even if just the doubt arises that perhaps phenomena do not exist inherently, it has the power to destroy cyclic existence. Since an intellectual understanding of emptiness is even more powerful than this doubt, we should try to understand it by thinking about the fact that all phenomena are empty of inherent existence. If we do this before going to sleep, we will use the clear light of sleep to realize emptiness. In this way, even while we sleep we will collect merit and wisdom. Even in our busy daily life we should try to meditate briefly in this way on emptiness. Also while we work, we should try to understand that the photocopies we make, that typing in computer, and so forth are dependent-arising. When we walk, with each step we should remember dependent-arising, thinking that we will not return were we have been. While mindful of each step, we should recall dependent-arising. If walking were inherently existent, we could not move step by step. We should think about this.

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