

# Madhyamakavatara — Part 1

Chandrakirti · Chandrakirti

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The Entrance into the Middle Way (Madhyamakavatara)

By Chandrakirti

-- EXCLUDING CHAPTER 6 --

[see other file for chapter 6]

(A commentary on Nagarjuna's root text, explaining the identitylessness of self (using the sevenfold reasoning) and phenomena (using the reasoning of the diamond fragments) and discussing the progressively refined view of emptiness on the ten bhumis (Bodhisattva levels) in relation to the ten paramitas (perfections).)

[Note: the core of this text is taken from Shenpen Osel, Issue 13, Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche's commentary on Chandrakirti's The Entrance Into the Middle Way and from Shenpen Osel, Issue 6, A Commentary on the Twenty Emptinesses, by The Venerable Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche. Some titles of sections, and another version of the verses, have been taken from the book "Ocean of Nectar" by Geshe Kelsang Gyatso, 1995.]

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L1: [Abbreviated Contents]

ABBREVIATED CONTENTS

A PRAISE OF COMPASSION

A PRESENTATION OF CAUSAL GROUNDS

A PRESENTATION OF THE INDIVIDUAL GROUNDS

CHAPTER 1. VERY JOYFUL - Perfection of giving (17 verses, including those on compassion)

CHAPTER 2. STAINLESS - Perfection of moral discipline (10 verses: 18-27)

CHAPTER 3. LUMINOUS - Perfection of patience (13 verses: 28:40)

CHAPTER 4. RADIANT - Perfection of effort (2 verses: 41-42)

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CHAPTER 6. APPROACHING - Perfection of wisdom (226 verses: 44-269)

== ESTABLISHING THE MEANING OF THE SCRIPTURES BY REASONING (2.3.5.3)

== SELFLESSNESS OF PHENOMENA [VI.8.ab] (2.3.5.3.1) (VI.008 – 051)

Refuting the Four Extremes of Production within both Truths (reasoning of the diamond fragments)

- Refuting production from self (VI.008c – 051c)
- Refuting production from other (VI.014 – 057)
- The Two Truths \* (VI.022 – 065)
- A refutation of the Chittamatra system \* in particular (VI.045 – 088)
- Refuting production from both (VI.098 – 141)
- Refuting production without a cause (neither) (VI.099 – 142)

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== THE SELFLESSNESS OF PERSONS [VI.120] (2.3.5.3.2)

-- The way to negate inherently existent self and mine (the sevenfold reasoning applied to the self) (VI.120 – 163)

- Negating inherently existent self
- Negating a self that is a different entity from the aggregates as fabricated by other traditions. (VI.121 – 164)
- Refuting the assertion fabricated within our own tradition that the aggregates are (the same as) the self. (VI.126 – 169)
- Refuting the three positions of dependent, basis, and possession that remain after these two (both). (VI.142 – 185)
- Negating a substantially existent self that is neither identical nor different. (VI.146 – 189)

----- Explaining with an analogy (the sevenfold reasoning applied to the chariot) how the self is merely a dependent imputation (VI.150 – 193)

----- Usefulness - This presentation has the good quality of allowing us easily to abandon conceptions grasping at extremes (VI.160 – 203)

- Negating inherently existent mine (VI.165 – 208)
- The analysis of the self and the cart also applies to other things (VI.166 – 209)
- Applying it to cause and effect (VI.166 – 209)
- Rejecting the argument against it (VI.168 – 211)

== THE DIVISIONS OF EMPTINESS (2.3.5.4) (VI.179 – 222)

- The division of emptiness into sixteen (VI.181 – 224)
- The division of emptiness into four (VI.219 – 262-266)

== CONCLUSION BY WAY OF EXPRESSING THE GOOD QUALITIES OF THE GROUND (VI.224 – 267-269)

CHAPTER 7. GONE AFAR - a surpassing perfection of means (1 verse: 270)

CHAPTER 8. IMMOVABLE - prayers become extremely pure (3 verses: 271-273)

CHAPTER 9. GOOD INTELLIGENCE - forces become completely pure (1 verse: 274)

CHAPTER 10. CLOUD OF DHARMA - a supreme, surpassing exalted awareness (1 verse: 275)

THE GOOD QUALITIES OF THE TEN GROUNDS [XI.1] \* (9 verses: 276-284)

A PRESENTATION OF RESULTANT GROUNDS \*

-- A. HOW BUDDHAHOOD IS FIRST ATTAINED [XI.10] (7 verses: 285-291)

-- B. A PRESENTATION OF BUDDHA'S BODIES AND GOOD QUALITIES

----- BUDDHA'S BODIES [XI.17] \* (11 verses: 292-302)

----- THE GOOD QUALITIES OF THE FORCES [XI.28] \* (16 verses: 303-318)

-- C. EXPLAINING EMANATION BODIES [XI.44] (1 verse: 319)  
-- D. PROVING THAT THERE IS ONE FINAL VEHICLE [XI.45] (3 verses: 320-322)  
-- E. EXPLAINING THE DURATION OF ENLIGHTENMENT AND REMAINING [XI.48] (4 verses: 323-326)  
CONCLUSION [XI.52] \* (5 verses: 327-331)

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L1: [Introduction [down-playing conceptualization, and then saying that we don't have to abandon it]

L3: [Part 1 – The context for the madhyamaka rangton view as taught here – the second turning of the wheel]

This double issue of Shenpen Osel contains Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche's teachings on Chandrakirti's Entrance to the Middle Way, which is a commentary on Nagarjuna's Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way, which again is a commentary on the Prajnaparamita Sutras of the Buddha Shakyamuni's second turning of the wheel of dharma. It contains teachings on both absolute truth (the way things really are) and relative truth (the way things appear to be), which can be better understood by placing Chandrakirti's text in the larger framework of the Buddha's teachings.

In Buddhism, "Absolute Truth or Absolute Reality means the end point of one's analysis, in other words, the most basic or fundamental element of existence or experience.

"For example, if one takes a clay pot, a potter might say that in absolute terms it was clay, but a scientist might say it was a collection of atoms. If he were being more precise he might say the atoms themselves consisted of atomic particles moving in space, but even this would be a rough approximation to reality. In absolute terms atomic particles can no longer be defined precisely these days. They cannot be said to be this or that or here or there; they have to be expressed in terms of probability. No doubt scientists will express it differently again in a few years' time.

"In the same way Absolute Truth presents itself differently to practitioners at the various levels of their practice. Just as this emerges in the experience of an individual practitioner, it occurs historically in the way that the Buddhist Scriptures emerged as a progression of increasingly subtle teachings.

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L4: [The five schools of Tenets]

"The key stages in the Buddhist experience of the Absolute Truth of Emptiness . . . [are] five-fold:

- 1. the Shravaka stage,
- 2. the Cittamatra stage,
- 3. the Svatantrika-Madhyamaka stage,
- 4. the Prasangika-Madhyamaka stage,
- 5. the Shentong Madhyamaka stage."

Thus writes Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche as interpreted and arranged by Shenpen Hookham in the introduction to Rinpoche's Progressive Stages of Meditation on Emptiness.



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#### L4: [The three turnings of the Wheel]

These increasingly subtle stages of meditative understanding and experience are first described in our historical epoch by the Buddha Shakyamuni in three major cycles of teachings that unfolded during his forty-five years of post-enlightenment teachings. These three major cycles of teachings are referred to in Buddhist literature as the three turnings of the wheel of dharma or the three dharmachakras. The writings of the various philosophical schools of Buddhism and the views of the nature of reality that they represent all emerge as commentaries on one or more of these three turnings.

- 1. The shravaka teachings on not-self or one-and-a-half-fold egolessness (selflessness) represent the hinayana view of the first dharmachakra.
- 2. The madhyamaka rangtong teachings on the emptiness of self-nature of all phenomena, including both the svatantrika madhyamaka and prasangika madhyamaka, represent the mahayana view of the second dharmachakra taught in the Prajnaparamita Sutras and further developed in the commentaries of Nagarjuna, Buddhapalita, Bhavaviveka, and Chandrakirti.
- 3. And the shentong teachings on the clear light nature of mind—that all things, including what we now see as external and solid sources of pleasure and pain, are mere appearances that are in reality the display or radiance or light of the mind which experiences them—represent the mahayana view of the third dharmachakra as developed by Maitreya in the Mahayana Uttara Tantra Sastra, and further developed in the vajrayana.

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#### L4: [The four divisions]

This vast and profound complex of Buddhist teachings, sutras, commentaries, philosophical schools, viewpoints, methods, and stages of practice Khenpo Rinpoche often divides into four:

- 1. Teachings on the way things appear to be, including the teachings on suffering, impermanence, rebirth, karmic cause and effect, atoms, and moments of consciousness, corresponding to the hinayana;
- 2. Teachings on the way all things are fundamentally mind and that there is no real distinction between mind and matter, corresponding to the doctrine of the Cittamatra;
- 3. Teachings on the way things really are—empty of true existence or self-nature, corresponding to the sutras of the second dharmachakra;
- 4. Teachings on the ultimate reality of the way things really are merely the play, the display, the radiance, or the light of the clear light nature of mind, corresponding to the sutras of the third dharmachakra, the shentong, and the vajrayana, including the teachings of tantra, mahamudra, and dzogchen.

It is important to realize that none of these teachings are worthy of being discarded simply because more subtle and profound teachings were subsequently taught. Even in the Buddhist lineages that hold and practice the most advanced vajrayana practices, the teachings of these various other levels of understanding are also still presented, because they are all useful according to the various levels of meditative understanding of students. Furthermore,

while it is important during one's meditation to see the emptiness of all relative dharmas—including the emptiness of the teachings of the Buddha on karmic cause and effect, klesha, rebirth, suffering, impermanence, etc.—it is equally important to live one's life in accordance with these teachings on relative truth when one is not meditating and therefore not free of grasping and fixation, and not free of attachment, aggression, and ignorance.

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#### L4: [The four Reliances]

Because the teachings of the Buddha are presented at so many different levels, it is important to have a set of guidelines that will enable one to understand how to go about sorting them out. These guidelines were presented by the Buddha in what have come to be known as the four reliances.

As set forth by His Holiness the XIV Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyamtso, the four reliances are:

- 1. "Do not rely on the person but on the doctrine.
- 2. Then, with respect to the doctrine, rely not on the word [or words] but on the meaning.
- 3. Then, with respect to the meaning, rely not on the interpretable meaning but on the definitive meaning.
- 4. And with respect to the definitive meaning, rely not on ordinary consciousness but on an exalted wisdom consciousness." If one understands consciousness always to be dualistic and awareness to be non-dualistic, then this last reliance should read "exalted wisdom awareness."

The first reliance is not to rely on the person teaching, but on the doctrine being taught. The Buddha enjoined his followers to apply this standard even to himself when he said, "Oh monks and scholars, you should not accept my word out of respect for me but rather upon analyzing and investigating it in the way that a gold-smith analyses gold by scorching, cutting, and rubbing it." This means that regardless of the greater experience or perceived level of realization of the teacher, one should still rely on the teachings, ascertaining for oneself their truthfulness or lack thereof, rather than accept them simply because of the profound impression the teacher may have made on one or because of his or her reputation or hierarchical status.

The second reliance is, with respect to the doctrine or teaching, not to rely on the words of the teaching, but on the meaning. One should not, for instance, accept a teaching simply because the words are eloquent— as we know even the devil can quote scriptures and charm the birds out of the trees—but because the meaning is truthful and conducive to happiness, personal liberation, and the benefit and liberation of others. This second injunction is very important when it comes to translating the teachings from one language into another. Oftentimes, for example, there does not seem to be any word in the recipient language exactly equivalent to the word used in the language from which the teachings are being translated. In determining whether the Tibetan word *dampa* should be translated as genuine or as holy or even as venerable; whether the Tibetan word *se* should be translated as sons and daughters, daughters and sons, children, offspring, progeny, heirs, spiritual heirs, heirs apprentice, or whatever; or whether the term *dharmakaya*, which is given eight different meanings in the Mahayana Uttara Tantra Shastra, should be translated at all, translators and students alike must rely on the meaning of the teaching rather than exclusively on the words themselves. Similarly, when we pray that Karmapa remain forever in the vajra nature, we have



to understand that we are not praying for him magically to transform himself into a five-pronged iron ritual instrument, similar to what is used in advanced vajrayana practice, and remain that way in perpetuity.

The third reliance is, with respect to the meaning, not to rely on the interpretable meaning, but on the definitive meaning. This injunction is very important when it comes to distinguishing the various levels of the Buddhist teachings, understanding which teachings supersede which other teachings when it comes to understanding absolute truth, and understanding when certain teachings should be applied and when they should not. For example, the Buddha's teachings on karma—that good and bad actions as causes invariably lead to the results of happiness and suffering—must be interpreted in the light of his subsequent teachings in the Heart Sutra that all dharmas (phenomena) are emptiness and his teaching that there is "no suffering, no origin of suffering, no cessation of suffering, no path, no wisdom, no attainment, and no non-attainment." The teachings on karma are thus interpreted to mean that, given the rather coarse, common-place level of understanding of things that we have at the beginning of our path, it is important to understand and live in accordance with the law of cause and effect. It may be all well and good to understand that suffering is empty of true nature or of inherent existence, but if you have not realized that, the "you" that does not truly exist will still experience the immense suffering which also does not truly exist, and will take it all to be very real. Therefore, when one has not realized emptiness, and even after one has developed the ability skillfully to meditate on emptiness but not the ability to maintain that realization when not meditating, it is still important to accept such an interpretable meaning in one's post-meditation or between-meditations experience. But in meditation, because it is the realization of emptiness or the true nature that liberates one from suffering and its causes, one should try to understand, meditate upon, and realize the definitive meaning, which in this example is that all phenomena, including suffering and its causes, are empty of true existence.

-- 1. From the standpoint of the shentong madhyamaka teachings, the definitive meaning is that all things are merely the radiance of the clear light nature of mind, which can only be known non-dualistically by this non-conceptual wisdom mind itself.

-- 2. From this point of view, the teachings of the cittamatra that all things are fundamentally mind, that there is no real distinction between mind and matter—which point of view reflects the Buddha's statement that "The three realms are merely mind"—must be interpreted in light of his subsequent teachings that all dharmas, including mind, are emptiness, a point of view developed by the svatantrika madhyamaka.

-- 3. The teachings that all dharmas are emptiness, however, from the standpoint of the prasangika madhyamaka (rangtong), is still subtly conceptual, implying that emptiness in some way exists. Their doctrine, i.e. the rangtong doctrine, which is taught in this commentary by Chandrakirti, therefore, is concerned with destroying any sort of conceptual formulation, fabrication, or elaboration of the nature of things.

-- 4. But from the standpoint of the shentong madhyamaka, the rangtongpas are thereby implying, though adamantly refusing to assert, that absolute truth is simply the absence of conceptual fabrication or the absolute freedom from concepts. This formulation, however, can not account for the existence of things, which are accounted for in the shentong philosophy as the radiance of the clear light nature of mind, which can only be realized non-conceptually and non-dualistically by the clear light nature of mind itself—which means that it is beyond the comprehension of the conceptual mind dualistically involved in the

effort to refute any and all conceptual notions or understandings of reality.

-- 5. All of these points of view were taught by the Buddha, and their meanings are applicable under different circumstances and at different levels of understanding and practice. But how can one truly know for oneself which of these truths is the definitive truth?

This question brings us to the fourth reliance, which is, with respect to the definitive meaning, not to rely upon ordinary consciousness, but on an exalted wisdom awareness. This means that in order to understand the definitive truth, in order to understand beyond the need to interpret the true nature of things and which of the Buddha's many teachings lead directly to that understanding, one must rely ultimately on the wisdom that arises in meditation and not on any of the workings of conceptual mind. At the ultimate level, words and concepts are at best very useful lies; they are the finger pointing at the moon, not the moon itself.

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L3: [Part 2 – The shentong view – the third turning of the wheel]

Also included in this issue is Khenpo Rinpoche's commentary on Gyalwa Gotsangpa's song, The Eight Cases of Basic Goodness Not to be Shunned (i.e. Which basically says that we don't have to abandon conceptualization), a wonderful song, direct from the heart of the practice lineage, that gives extremely practical and efficacious advice to all practitioners for whom the intensity of practice is met with the intensification of obstacles.

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L3: [Acknowledgments]

As always we would like to thank Khenpo Rinpoche for the great generosity and clarity of his teachings. In addition, we would like to thank his translator Ari Goldfield for his continual and prompt willingness to clarify various aspects of the original transcripts of his translation. We would also like to thank Shenpen Hookham, a long-time student of the dharma and of Khenpo Rinpoche, and one of the earliest, if not the earliest, of his translators in the West, for her masterful presentation of Khenpo Rinpoche's teachings in Progressive Stages of Meditation on Emptiness, from which much of the information in this introduction is drawn.

Finally, we would like to thank Michael Barraclough and Zhyisil Chokyi Ghatsal Publications in New Zealand for their gracious permission to use their graphic for the cover of our last issue of Shenpen Osel.

—Lama Tashi Namgyal

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L1: [A PRAISE OF COMPASSION]

A very warm tashi delek\* to Lama Tashi and all of you gathered here this evening. May your wisdom which arises from listening to, reflecting on, and meditating upon the teachings of

the genuine dharma increase and increase, and as a result, may you perform great benefit for all the limitless number of sentient beings. Last year there shone a dependently arisen appearance of our meeting here, and again tonight, there shines another dependently arisen appearance of our meeting all together here. This is like the appearance of the moon in a pool of water.\*\*

~ \*Editor's note: Tashi delek is a Tibetan greeting that literally means, "May everything be auspicious, blissful, and good."

~ \*\*Editor's note: The Tibetan word shar, which literally means "to shine," is the same word that is used when the sun comes out or comes up and begins to shine. In English it is sometimes translated as "to appear," and is often used in conjunction with nangwa, which, as a verb, also literally means "to emit light" or "to shine," and as a noun means variously "light" or "brightness," "an appearance or thing seen," "an apparition," "a visual seeing," or "a concept," "an idea," or "a thought." The use of these two words together gives the understanding that the world we experience is really nothing more than a kind of ever-changing projection of mind, something like a light-show in space to which we falsely impute objective reality, thereby taking it to be "real" and solidifying it.

If we begin by singing A Song of Meaningful Connections by the lord of yogins, Milarepa, that will create a very good and auspicious connection amongst us.

[Students sing.]

Before listening to the teachings, please give rise to the precious attitude of bodhicitta, which means, for the benefit of all sentient beings who are as limitless in number as the sky is vast in extent, please aspire to attain the state of complete and perfect enlightenment. In order to do that we must listen to, reflect upon, and meditate upon the teachings of the genuine dharma with all of the enthusiasm we can muster in our hearts. This is the precious attitude of bodhicitta, please give rise to it and listen.

Tonight, from everything that comprises what is known as the genuine dharma the topic to be explained is the text composed by the one who was able to milk the painting of a cow and thereby effectively reverse everyone's clinging to things as being real. This was none other than the glorious Chandrakirti. His text is called Entrance to the Middle Way. The name of this commentary in Sanskrit, the language of India at the time, is the Madhyamakavatara. In Tibetan it is called dbU.ma 'jug.pa' and in English, Entrance to the Middle Way. This text is an explanation of an earlier text by the protector Nagarjuna known as The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way, and so this text, Entrance to the Middle Way, is entering into the middle way in the sense that it is explaining this earlier text by Nagarjuna. Nagarjuna's text called The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way, Mulamadhyamakakarika in Sanskrit, is a commentary on the Buddha's intention when teaching the sutras of the middle turning of the wheel of dharma. These are known as the extensive, middle, and short versions of the great mother, the Prajnaparamita Sutras.

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L4: [A. Praising great compassion without distinguishing its types]

L5: [Showing great compassion to be the principal cause of a bodhisattva]

The first verse explains the causes of the three different levels of awakening:

\ ###

\ Shravakas and intermediate Buddhas arise from the Mighty Ones.  
 \ Buddhas are born from the bodhisattvas.  
 \ And compassionate mind, non-dual awareness,  
 \ And bodhicitta are the causes of these heirs of the Victors. (1)  
 \  
 \ ///  
 \ [I.1] (verse id. in Ocean of Nectar)  
 \ 1. (verse id. in L'entrée du milieu)  
 \ Hearers and Middling Buddhas [i.e. Solitary Realizers] are born from the Powerful  
 Able Ones;  
 \ Buddhas are born from Bodhisattvas;  
 \ And the mind of compassion, the wisdom of non-duality,  
 \ And Bodhicitta are the [three] causes of Conquerors Sons.

The commentary on this text that Rinpoche will be explaining was composed by Mipam Rinpoche.

-- 1. It begins by describing those who are known as shravakas, a Sanskrit term translated literally into Tibetan as nyan.thos, meaning "those who listen and hear." The commentary explains that, "Those who listen to the teachings given by an authentic spiritual teacher and then explain them to others are shravakas." That is the first type of realized being that is being described.

-- 2. Then the commentary continues, "Those who, because of their greater merit and wisdom, are superior to the shravakas and realize things more quickly, and, on the other hand, are inferior to the Buddhas, are called pratyekaBuddhas," solitary realizers or solitary sages. Here in the verse they are described as being intermediate. Why? Because they are between the shravakas and the Buddhas. They are superior to the shravakas but inferior to the Buddhas. So they are called intermediate Buddhas. Shravakas and pratyekaBuddhas are born from or arise from the speech of the Mighty Ones,\* from listening to the teachings of the Buddhas.

~ \*Editor's note: An epithet for Buddhas

The Buddhas themselves arise or are born from bodhisattvas, because at the time they are practicing the path they have to be bodhisattvas. The stage of bodhisattva comes first. That is one reason, and the second reason is that they have to rely on bodhisattvas as their teachers when they are practicing on the path.

So for these two reasons the cause of being a Buddha is the bodhisattvas.

Then one might ask, "What are the causes of being a bodhisattva?" There are three given here.

- 1. The first is the mind of compassion, which means the mind that wishes to protect all sentient beings from suffering.
- 2. The second is non-dual awareness, meaning the wisdom or the intelligence that does not fall into either the extreme of existence or non-existence.
- 3. And finally, bodhicitta.

These three are the causes of the Heirs of the Victors, which is another name for bodhisattvas.\* So in this verse are pointed out the causes of being a shravaka, an intermediate Buddha or solitary realizer, a Buddha, and a bodhisattva. Therefore, compassion, wisdom, and bodhicitta are very important.

~ \*Editor's note: The Victors or the Victorious Ones are the Buddhas. The Tibetan word *se*, here translated as *heir*, literally means the offspring of nobility or of exalted individuals, and is used to refer to enlightened bodhisattvas. For those who are familiar with languages that have parallel sets of terminology employed for ordinary people and for people who are honored, it is an honorific term for son or daughter. It has been difficult over the years to arrive at a suitable translation of this term. At first it was unthinkingly translated as "son," but since the term *se* is not gender specific and bodhisattvas come in both female and male form, "son" is inaccurate. The use of sons and daughters is often employed, but it is a bit long, does not convey the honorific sense of the word, and by its word order conveys a cultural bias favoring males, not implied by the text, which cannot be avoided without adopting the artificial alternation of word order. Sometimes the word children or child is used, but this rendering of the term implies dependence and the need for care and looking after. Enlightened bodhisattvas do depend upon Buddhas for teachings and guidance, but their status is much more akin to an adolescent apprentice than to a toddler or small child, which is the sense one gets from the word child or children. Enlightened bodhisattvas are already engaged in bringing great benefit to sentient beings in a great many different ways. Though their post-meditation experience is vastly inferior, their realization of the true nature of mind and reality when they meditate is said to be the same as the Buddha's. If a Buddha's realization is like the whole expanse of the sky, a first-bhumi bodhisattva's realization is said to be like looking at the same sky through a hole in a sesame seed. So "children" does not seem an adequate translation. The term *heir* recommends itself because of its non-specificity of gender and because it implies that sometime in the future the bodhisattva will have the status of a Buddha. But an *heir* is basically someone waiting around for their parents to die so that they can inherit lands, money, and titles. No Buddha must die for a bodhisattva to come into their "inheritance," and there is in fact no inheritance to come into. Nothing is transferred from a Buddha to a bodhisattva at the time of the death of a Buddha that will make the bodhisattva a Buddha. And the term is inappropriate also because it focuses on an entirely passive relationship between two individuals, the meaning of which is that by virtue of no effort on their own part, the younger is going to come into a lot of wealth. Enlightened bodhisattvas are very hardworking, energetic individuals, who are in effect apprenticed to the Buddhas, but at the same time are doing the same work as a Buddha, though on a lesser scale. There are of course some heirs of large fortunes who go into the family business before the progenitor of it dies in order to learn the business and to lend a helping hand, but none of that is implied by the term "heir." For all of these reasons "heir" seems an unfortunate choice of words, though it is a popular one these days. Even the term "spiritual heir" conveys the unfortunate implication that if one could just get close enough to the guru, one might inherit some spiritual goodies at the time of his or her passing. Perhaps progeny would be a better choice of words, though it also does not convey the honorific sense. However, since the English language does not have any recognizable honorific language, this is a deficiency that will be difficult to make up in any case.

L5: [Showing great compassion to be the root of the other two causes of bodhisattva]

Next comes a praise of compassion, a praise of compassion in general wherein the different kinds of compassion are not differentiated:

\        ###

\        Since I assert that loving kindness itself is the seed of the Victors' abundant harvest,

\ Is the water which causes it to flourish,  
 \ And is its ripening that allows it to be enjoyed for a long time,  
 \ I therefore praise compassion at the very outset. (2)  
  
 \ ///  
 \ [I.2]  
 \ 2.  
 \ Because for this bountiful harvest of the Conquerors  
 \ Compassion itself is like the seed, like water for growth,  
 \ And like ripening remaining for long enjoyment,  
 \ At the beginning I praise compassion.

Why is loving kindness, great compassion, so important? It is important in the beginning of the practice because it is like the seed of the Victors' abundant harvest, of the abundant harvest of the fruition of the Buddhas. Compassion is the seed. It is important in the middle because it is like the water and the fertilizer that causes that harvest to flourish. Along the path one comes to realize that the sentient beings that one has set out to help are limitless in number, and that they do all kinds of bad things to oneself, and are sometimes not very grateful for the good things one does for them. It is because one has compassion that these different things do not cause us to regress on the path.\*\* Finally, it is important at the end of the path because compassion is like the ripening of the harvest, which then can be enjoyed for a very long time. So, since compassion is important in these ways in the beginning, the middle, and the end [of the path], the venerable Chandrakirti begins this text by praising compassion.

~ \*\*Editor's note: Without great compassion, the vast number of sentient beings and their manifest confusion would easily cause a bodhisattva to become dispirited, to despair, and to give up on sentient beings.

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 L4: [B. An homage to the great compassion distinguishing its three types]

And then come praises of the different kinds of compassion.

¢(i.e. THREE TYPES OF COMPASSION:

¢-- 1. compassion observing mere living beings without considering their impermanence or emptiness,

¢-- 2. compassion observing phenomena / observing living beings who are realized as impermanent),

¢-- 3. compassion observing the unobservable / observing living beings who are realized as empty of inherent existence.

¢-- It is when we really understand samsara - impermanence, conditioning, emptiness - that we feel compassion for all sentient beings. So it is a direct consequence of wisdom. It is also a great tool to develop wisdom because, when we exchange self-for-others, we let go of all the hindrances associated with the fear about the ego, all the discriminations, etc, and we bring great calm to the mind. This calm is necessary to develop concentration and then insights.)

L5: [1. An homage to compassion observing mere living beings]

The first of these is compassion that has sentient beings as its focus:



\     ###  
 \     First thinking "me", they fixate on "self,"  
 \     Then, thinking, "This is mine," attachment to things develops.  
 \     Beings are powerless, like a rambling water mill—  
 \     I bow to compassion for these wanderers. (3)  
  
 \     ///  
 \     L.3  
 \     3.  
 \     I bow down to that compassion for living beings  
 \     Who from first conceiving 'I' with respect to the self,  
 \     Then thinking 'This is mine' and generating attachment for things,  
 \     Are without self-control like the spinning of a well.

¶(i.e. The meditation that ends with having compassion for all other sentient beings in samsara. It is by understanding the conditions of samsara that we finally have compassion for all sentient beings in the same situation. Without control, out of ignorance, all sentient beings turn and turn in samsara, creating the causes of their own suffering. And they are totally clueless about it and about how to stop it. If we reflect on this then we generate strong compassion. And if we think about the specific sufferings that they constantly experience, our compassion will grow even stronger.)

The commentary reads: "Before they cling to the idea of possessiveness, of something being mine, there comes the mode of perception that focuses on the self, the belief that the self exists." So first thinking "me", they fixate on self. After that they think, "This is mine." For example, "These are my eyes." So after you believe in self, then you start to believe in things in relation to the self with the idea of possessiveness, and you develop attachment to these outer things as being real. "Beings are powerless like a rambling water mill, like a bucket in a well that keeps going around and around. This well [or mill pond] that beings go around in is the cycle of existence, samsara, that stretches from what is called the very peak of existence down to the worst hell. I bow to compassion for these wandering beings who wander in this cycle of samsara."

And so compassion is the mind that beholds all sentient beings, including even our enemies, and feels love towards them because they suffer first from clinging to the thought that there is a "me" and second from clinging to things as being "mine." This compassion is something that is incredibly important. It is also difficult to give rise to it, and if one is able to do so, it is an incredibly important and wonderful thing. For this reason, Chandrakirti begins his text by prostrating to this incredibly important mind of compassion.

L5: [2. A homage to compassion observing phenomena and the unobservable]

Next comes the praise of the second specific kind of compassion, which in this case has the dharma—in the sense of the basic nature of sentient beings—as its focus.

The third specific kind of compassion is non-referential compassion. These latter two go together in the first two lines of the fourth verse which read:

\     ###  
 \     Beings are like the moon on the surface of rippling water—  
 \     They move and are empty of any self nature. (4ab)  
  
 \     ///

- \ I.4
- \ 4ab.
- \ Living beings are seen to be transient and empty of inherent existence,
- \ Like a moon in rippling water.

What are beings like? They are like the moon that appears on the surface of water that is being blown about by the wind. They do not remain the same even from one instant to the next. Therefore, they are of the nature of impermanence. This is the second type of compassion, seeing that beings are impermanent. And not only are they impermanent, but they are empty of any self nature. So the second type of compassion sees the quality of their impermanence, and the third type of compassion sees the quality of sentient beings' emptiness.

In short, beings are completely impermanent. There is nothing remaining from one moment to the next in terms of the beings' basic nature. However, because beings think that they are permanent and think that there is something there which remains and continues, they suffer. They suffer because they cling to their belief in permanence.

Moreover, not only are they impermanent, but also they are just like the moon's reflection in a pool of water; there is nothing really there.

They are completely empty of any self nature. They are empty of any inherent existence, and yet because they think that things are real, they suffer. So there are two kinds of compassion here. One focuses on their impermanence, and one sees their emptiness; and both of them see that because beings do not realize these two things, they suffer.\*

~ \*Editor's note: These three types of compassion—compassion with reference to sentient beings, compassion with reference to phenomena (dharma), and non-referential compassion—are described by Kalu Rinpoche in experiential terms in the context of the practice of tong len in the following way: "One method for developing bodhicitta is called tong len [gtong len], which literally means 'sending [and] taking.' The attitude here is that each of us is only one being, while the number of beings in the universe is infinite. Would it not be a worthy goal if this one being could take on all the pain of every other being in the universe and free each and every one of them from suffering? We therefore resolve to take on ourselves all this suffering, to take it away from all other beings, even their incipient or potential suffering, and all of its causes. At the same time we develop the attitude of sending all our virtue, happiness, health, wealth and potential for long life to other beings. Anything that we enjoy, anything noble or worthy, positive or happy in our situation we send selflessly to every other being. Thus the meditation is one of willingly taking on all that is negative and willingly giving away all that is positive. We reverse our usual tendency to cling to what we want for ourselves and to ignore others. We develop a deep empathy with everything that lives. The method of sending and taking is a most effective way of developing the bodhisattva's motivation. "The kind of compassion we have described so far is called 'compassion with reference to sentient beings' (sem chen la mik pay nying je [sems can ladmigspa'i snying rje]). A dualism lingers here, however, because we are still caught by the threefold idea of (1) ourselves experiencing the compassion, (2) other beings as the objects of compassion, and (3) the actual act of feeling compassion through understanding or perceiving the suffering of others. This framework prepares our path in the mahayana. Once this kind of compassion has been established, we arrive at a second. The realization begins to grow that the self which is feeling the compassion, the objects of the compassion, and the compassion itself are all in a certain sense illusory. We see that these three aspects

belong to a conventional, not ultimate, reality. They are nothing in themselves, but simply illusions that create the appearance of a dualistic framework. Perceiving these illusions and thereby understanding the true emptiness of all phenomena and experience is what we call 'compassion with reference to all phenomena' (cho la mik pay nying je [chos la dmigspa'i snying rje]). This is the main path of mahayana practice. "From this second kind of compassion a third develops, 'non-referential compassion' (mik me nying je [dmigs med snying rje]). Here we entirely transcend any concern with subject/object reference. It is the ultimate experience that results in Buddhahood. All these three levels of compassion are connected, so if we begin with the basic level by developing loving kindness and compassion towards all beings, we lay a foundation which guarantees that our path will lead directly to enlightenment." THE DHARMA That Illuminates all Beings Impartially Like the Light of the Sun and the Moon, by Kyabje Dorje Chang Kalu Rinpoche, State University of New York Press, copyright 1986, Kagyu Thubten Choling, pages 46-47.

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## L1: [GROUNDS AND PATHS]

¢(i.e. Spiritual grounds and spiritual paths are synonymous. The definition of spiritual ground is a clear realization that acts as the foundation of many good qualities. The definition of spiritual path is an exalted awareness conjoined with spontaneous renunciation. Renunciation is a strong which to escape samsara.

¢-- Two types of ground: Hinayana grounds (without great compassion) and Mahayana grounds (motivated by Bodhicitta).

¢-- The Mahayana paths:

¢---- Ordinary grounds:

¢----- A Mahayana trainee trains in the three Dharmas - great compassion, the wisdom of non-duality related to Bodhicitta, and Bodhicitta - until he or she generates spontaneous Bodhicitta. The moment he generates spontaneous Bodhicitta he enters the Mahayana path of accumulation.

¢----- Accumulation: a realization of a Bodhisattva who principally accumulates a collection of merit that is a method for attaining the Mahayana path of preparation. -- While on the path of accumulation the Bodhisattva meditates on emptiness with a concentration of tranquil abiding until he or she attains the realization of tranquil abiding observing emptiness. With the attainment of the union of tranquil abiding and superior seeing he advances to the path of preparation and becomes a Bodhisattva of the path of preparation. -- Bodhisattvas on the paths of accumulation and preparation are called 'ordinary Bodhisattvas' because they have not attained ultimate Bodhicitta.

¢----- Preparation: a realization of a Bodhisattva who has attained superior seeing observing emptiness that serves as the preparation for attaining the Mahayana path of seeing. -- At this stage the Bodhisattva's meditation on emptiness is still conceptual, that is emptiness still appears to his mind mixed with a generic image. Because of this he still has dualistic appearance. To remove the generic image and overcome dualistic appearance he meditates repeatedly on emptiness with a union of tranquil abiding and superior seeing.

¢---- Superior grounds:

¢----- Through the force of this meditation the generic image gradually fades until it

disappears altogether and emptiness appears clearly and directly to his mind. All dualistic appearances subside into emptiness and his mind mixed with emptiness like water mixing with water. He now is a Superior Bodhisattva of the first ground (Very Joyful).

¢----- Seeing: a realization of a Bodhisattva who sees emptiness directly that is a method for attaining the Mahayana path of meditation. -- The first moment of the non-conceptual wisdom directly realizing emptiness is the uninterrupted path of the path of seeing. This mind functions as the direct antidote to intellectually-formed true-grasping and its seeds. It is called an 'uninterrupted path' because the Bodhisattva passes without interruption into the released path of the first ground, which is a mind that has completely abandoned intellectually-formed true-grasping and its seeds. -- Bodhisattvas on the paths of seeing and meditation are called 'Superior Bodhisattvas' because they have attained ultimate Bodhicitta.

¢----- Meditation: a realization of a Bodhisattva who is either abandoning or has abandoned innate true-grasping by practicing meditation.

¢----- No More Learning, or Buddhahood: is an ultimate realization that has abandoned completely the two obstructions.

¢-- Causal grounds are grounds that cause the attainment of Buddhahood.

¢---- Conventional causal grounds:

¢---- Ultimate causal grounds -- the ten explained here --: an uncontaminated (not polluted by either the ignorance of true-grasping or its imprints) mind of a Superior Bodhisattva in single-pointed meditative equipoise on emptiness that is maintained by great compassion.

¢-- Resultant grounds are the actual Buddha grounds. A Buddha never conceives phenomena to be truly existent, and they never appear to him or her to be so.)

L1: [A PRESENTATION OF CAUSAL GROUNDS]

L2: [A PRESENTATION OF THE INDIVIDUAL GROUNDS]

Next we get to the main body of Mipam Rinpoche's commentary. First he gives an outline of how the text is divided.

There are two main sections.

-- 1. The first is an explanation of the temporary state, which refers to the ten grounds or bhumis of the bodhisattvas. The first section, the explanation of the temporary state, is again divided into two sections—

-- -- a. an explanation of the ten bodhisattva grounds -- The ten bodhisattva grounds is in turn divided into three main sections.

-- -- -- i. The first is the explanation of the first five of these grounds, beginning with the ground of Perfect Joy, and so on.

-- -- -- ii. The second is an explanation of the sixth ground, called The Manifest.

-- -- -- iii. And the third is an explanation of the last four grounds, starting with the seventh, called Gone Far Beyond.

-- -- b. and then the qualities of these grounds

-- 2. The second is an explanation of the ultimate state, meaning the state of enlightenment.

In the explanation of the first five bodhisattva grounds there is a section for each ground. These first five grounds are called in order Perfect Joy, The Stainless, The Luminous, The Radiant, and Difficult to Overcome.

¢(i.e. The first chapters of the Guide (up to "6. wisdom") present the stages of the vast path principally according to Nagarjuna's Precious Garland.)

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### L3: [The First Mind Generation: Perfect Joy (17 verses) – Giving]

¢(i.e. The joy of being free from miserliness and strong attachments to samsaric traps; the joy of having the opportunity to give; the joy of getting rid of the ego and working for the benefits of all sentient beings without discrimination. Giving while seeing the emptiness of the three. Combining method (creating good conditions) and wisdom (letting go of the self).

¢-- By letting go of the strong obsessions and fears about the self by exchanging self for all others without discrimination, one immediately feel bliss - the absence of hindrances and fears - and this permits to calm the mind in order to develop insights about the real nature of the mind and of everything.)

¢ (From other sources: "Everything has to go anyway" - "Giving is the sharpest sword to cut through the knot of miserliness" - "the causes and conditions of all wisdom and merit all come from giving" - "It is wise, isn't it, to let go?" - "Dana is the wisdom of openness, internally, externally, and innately." - "The finest and only lasting richness one may bring beings is an insight into their unconditioned nature - to show others their innate perfection." - "The three beautiful roots are: non-attachment or generosity, non-aversion or kindness, and understanding or wisdom. ... The purpose of all kinds of wholesomeness should be to eliminate defilements, to get rid of selfishness.")

¢ (The definition of the first ground is a Superior Bodhisattva's path that abandons or has abandoned intellectually-formed true-grasping (but still has innate true-grasping), its principal object of abandonment, and that has attained a surpassing practice of the perfection of giving from within the ten perfections.)

¢-- In the section on the ground called Perfect Joy, there is the explanation of the ground itself, what it actually is, and an extensive explanation of the ground's qualities. Finally, by way of an expression of the ground's qualities, there is a one-sentence summary. So there are three sections.

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### L4: [A. Briefly showing the entity of the ground, the basis of characteristics]

The description of the essence of the entity of the ground itself is found in the last two lines of the fourth verse and the first two of the fifth:

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\    ###  
\    The Victors' heirs see this and in order to free beings completely  
\    Their minds come under the power of compassion, (4cd)  
\    And perfectly dedicating their virtue with Samantrabhadra's prayer,  
\    They perfectly abide in joy—this is called "the first". (5ab)  
  
\    ///  
\    [I.4.cd]  
\    4c 5b.  
\    The mind of this Conquerors' Son,  
\    Governed by compassion to liberate living beings completely,
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\     ///  
\     Thoroughly dedicated with Samantabhadra's prayers,  
\     And always abiding in joy, is called the first.

-----  
L4: [B. An extensive explanation of the good qualities that characterize the ground]

L5: [B.1 The good qualities that beautify one's own continuum]

L6: [B.1.1 Enumerating the good qualities/ Benefits of Bodhicitta]

The extensive explanation of the qualities of the ground is divided into three subsections: an explanation of the qualities that make the bodhisattva's mind-stream beautiful, an explanation of the qualities that cause the bodhisattva to outshine the mind-streams of others, and an explanation of the superior qualities of the first ground. In the description of the good qualities that beautify the bodhisattva's mind-stream, there is an explanation of why they are called bodhisattvas; an explanation of the qualities they gain on this ground, such as being born into the family of the tatagathas, the Buddhas; and an explanation of the qualities of this ground from the perspective of what is abandoned, meaning that they abandon ever being born in the lower realms\* and so forth.

Why they get the name bodhisattva is explained in the last two lines of the fifth verse, which read,

\     ###  
\     Having attained this ground  
\     They are called by the name "bodhisattva". (5cd)  
  
\     ///  
\     5cd.  
\     From then on, because he has attained this,  
\     He is addressed by the very name 'Bodhisattva' (1).

~ \*Editor's note: Bodhisattvas, beginning with the first ground, are no longer impelled by the ripening of karma to take birth in the lower realms; for the benefit of beings, however, it is said that bodhisattvas often take birth voluntarily in the lower realms.

The commentary to this reads: "After attaining this first ground, since they have attained ultimate bodhicitta, the actual genuine mind of enlightenment, they are called actual genuine bodhisattvas." It is at this point that they get the name or are praised with the name "actual genuine bodhisattvas." They are noble beings.

The traditional Tibetan way of formulating and presenting the major commentaries always includes an extensive outline of all the different sections in the text. In India there was no tradition of these outlines in the commentaries. They would just give the verses and give little introductions to each verse explaining what they were about.

In the description of the qualities of bodhisattvas that cause them to outshine others, there are five different parts, five different ways in which they outshine others.

-- [a. The good quality of attaining a meaningful name]  
-- [b. The good quality of birth into Buddha's family]  
-- [c. The good quality of abandoning the three bonds: the intellectually-formed view of the transitory collection, deluded doubt, and holding wrong moral disciplines and conduct as supreme.]



- [d. The good quality of abiding in great joy]
- [e. The good quality of being able to cause a hundred worlds to shake]
- [f. The good quality of mastering higher grounds]
- [g. The good quality of destroying the causes of lower rebirth]
- [h. The good quality of exhausting the grounds of ordinary beings]

First, they have the quality of the family, in this sense, the family of the Buddhas. Additionally they have the quality of abandoning three things, the quality of what they realize, the quality of their power, and the quality of constant improvement. These five qualities are referred to in the four lines of verse number six and the first line of verse number seven:

```

\      ###
\      They are born into the family of the tatagathas.
\      They abandon all three that entangle sothoroughly.
\      These bodhisattvas possess extraordinary happiness,
\      And can cause a hundred worlds to quake. (6)

\      ###
\      Advancing from ground to ground, they fully progress upwards— (7a)

\      ///
\      6.
\      He is also born into the lineage of the Tathagatas (2)
\      And has [completely] abandoned all three bonds (3).

```

☿(i.e. Delusions such as attachment and ignorance are sometimes called 'bonds' because they bind us tightly to samsara. The three bonds referred here are the intellectually-formed view of the transitory collection, deluded doubt, and holding wrong moral disciplines and conduct as supreme.)

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\      This Bodhisattva possesses a supreme joy (4)

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☿(i.e. He attains a non-conceptual realization of emptiness, seeing emptiness with his mental awareness as clearly and vividly as he sees something with his eye awareness. He also abandons all intellectually-formed delusions and attains many special qualities and powers, and as a result abides in eternal joy.)

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\      And is able to cause a hundred worlds to shake (5).

\      ///
\      7.
\      Mastering ground after ground, he advances higher (6).

```

☿(i.e. The great peace and happiness is not enough ... one should not get attached to those either.)

The commentary reads: "Since they have transcended or have gone beyond the levels of ordinary beings, of shravakas, and of solitary sages, they are born into the family of tatagathas, of Buddhas, of thus-gone ones. They do not go on any other paths. It is certain that this is their level. Their potential places them in the family of the Buddhas."

Since they directly realize selflessness, they abandon the three which entangle so thoroughly. These three are the view of the transitory collection, meaning belief in the

self;\*\* the belief that their own conduct is what makes them superior; and doubt. These are all given up on the path of seeing, the path on which one becomes a noble bodhisattva.\*

~ \*\*Editor's note: i.e. taking the five skandhas—the transitory collection—to be a truly existent self rather than a mere dependently arisen ever-changing appearance.

~ \*Editor's note: The stages of the path to enlightenment are traditionally enumerated as five: (1) the path of accumulation—the preliminary path of a beginner on which one is gathering the accumulations of merit and wisdom through study, through eschewing the ten unvirtuous actions and adopting the ten virtuous ones while practicing the paramitas, and through learning to practice and to meditate, all of which leads to the heat of wisdom or the spiritual awareness that comes with the experience of meditative heat; (2) the path of junction or application, an intensive, highly concentrated, and patient stage of practice, which leads to; (3) the path of seeing or insight, corresponding to the first bodhisattva bhumi, on which one realizes beyond mere conceptuality the Four Noble Truths and for the first time has direct, non-conceptual insight into emptiness; (4) the path of meditation or practice, corresponding to the second through the tenth bhumis, and so called because during this stage one meditates on or practices what has been seen on the path of seeing; and finally (5) the path of perfection or fulfillment, corresponding to the stage of Buddhahood.

Next it is stated that, since the realization of the bodhisattva of the first ground is so extraordinary—since they have given up so many faults and have so many good qualities—they have extraordinary happiness, which is why this ground is called Perfect Joy, Utter Joy.

Fourth is an explanation of their power, one example of which is given in the line that says that through their miraculous abilities they can cause a hundred different world systems to quake. This is one of twelve qualities common to all the bodhisattva grounds, each of which qualities the bodhisattvas on the first ground have one-hundred fold.\*\*

Finally, in terms of their progressing upwards, they move with incredible happiness from ground to ground. This happiness is what propels them further and further upward through the bhumis.

~ \*\*Editor's note: In an instant they can enter one hundred meditative absorptions, emanate one hundred emanations, see all the karma of one hundred previous lives, make a hundred worlds move, etc. For more on the twelve qualities or powers of bodhisattvas of the ten grounds, see Shenpen Osel, Volume 3, Number 1, pages 30-31. (see the next box)

The text continues:

\ ###  
\ At that time, all paths to the lower realms are sealed off.  
\ At that time, all grounds of ordinary beings evaporate—  
\ They are taught to be like the eighth ground of the noble ones. (7bcd)

\ ///  
\ 7.  
\ At that time for him all paths to lower rebirths have ceased (7);

¢(i.e. He has destroyed the causes of a lower rebirth with the antidote of his non-conceptual realization of emptiness. Like if the Wheel of life had stopped for him. He takes rebirth in samsara only out of compassion.)

\ At that time for him all grounds of ordinary beings are exhausted (8).

¢(i.e. He will never regress to the state of an ordinary being.)

At the time the bodhisattva reaches this first ground, the ground of Perfect Joy, all paths to the lower realms—meaning birth in the hells or as a hungry ghost or as an animal—are completely cut off. Actually, at the time they attain what is called the level of patience, which is on the preceding path, the path of junction, the conditions for their being born in the lower realms can no longer gather or come together. But here what happens is that as a result of the remedy of reaching the first bodhisattva ground, even the tiniest cause or seed of being born in the lower realms is wiped out. Furthermore, when bodhisattvas gain this ground, then all of the grounds of ordinary beings, which they were on before, just dissolve; they evaporate, because they are now noble beings and will no longer revert to being ordinary. They are described as being like the eighth of the noble ones, which refers to the path of the arhats. On the arhat's path there are eight stages—four levels, each of which is divided into two. For instance, there are arhats who are beginning arhats, and arhats who have actually gained the result of an arhat. If you count the stages of the hinayana path backwards, you get to the stream enterers and those who have attained the result of the stream enterer, which is the eighth down the line. Here Chandrakirti is comparing the bodhisattva path to the arhat's path, saying that the first-bhumi bodhisattva is like the noble beings who have attained the result of the stream enterers on the path of the arhats. (Please see the boxed note on page 19.)

¢(i.e. The reference to "the eighth noble one" by Chandrakirti in the Madhyamakavatara may be explained as follows:

¢-- When he composed his commentary, Chandrakirti's audience was primarily composed of hinayana practitioners plus many mahayana students who were familiar with the hinayana path. The term "eighth noble one" refers to the hinayana path of seeing and specifically refers to the stage of "stream-enterer."

¢-- There are four levels of attainment on the hinayana path, each of which is subdivided into two. The first is called "stream-enterer," the second "once-returner," the third "non-returner," and the fourth is termed the "foe-destroyer" or arhat. ("Arhat" means "foe-destroyer," and the terms are synonyms.) By dividing each of these four levels into two, there are eight levels.

¢-- Chandrakirti's reference to "the eighth noble one" refers to this eight-fold division of the hinayana. The reference to the levels of the hinayana path is complicated by the fact that they are numbered in a different way than are the bodhisattva bhumis. In counting the bhumis, we count upward from the first up to the tenth level, which is followed by Buddhahood. The levels of the hinayana path, by contrast, are counted from the top down. The arhat levels are counted as numbers one and two, the non-returner as three and four, the once-returner as five and six, and the stream-enterer as seven and eight.

¢—The Venerable Dzogchen Ponlop Rinpoche)

L6: [B.1.2 Showing the good qualities in brief]

\     ///

\     He is shown to be similar to an eighth Superior [of the Hinayana].

L5: [B.2. The good qualities that outshine others' continuums / emptiness and liberation]

L6: [B.2.1 Outshining Hearers and Solitary Realizers by way of lineage on this ground]

Then the first three lines of the eighth verse read:

\     ###

\ Even those abiding on the first ground of perfect bodhicitta,  
 \ Through the power of their merit, outshine  
 \ Both those born of the Mighty One's speech and the solitary sages.  
 \ On the ground Gone Far Beyond, their minds also become superior. (8)

\ ///

\ 8.

\ Even when abiding on the first view of the mind of complete enlightenment,  
 \ He defeats those born from the speech of the  
 \ Powerful Able One [Hearer Superiors] and the Solitary Buddhas [Solitary Realizer  
 Superiors] [i.e. Hinayana Superiors]  
 \ Through the power of his greatly increased merit;

¢(i.e. He is superior because, in addition to equivalent wisdom, he has accumulated the merit of his great compassion. He has both method and wisdom. So he surpasses only in merit until the seventh ground.)

The commentary reads: "Even those abiding on the first ground which leads eventually to perfect enlightenment—and this mind which is going to lead to perfect enlightenment is bodhicitta—because of their relative bodhicitta and because of their non-referential compassion, outshine even those who have attained the level of fruition in a different vehicle, which refers to the shravakas, who are born of the Buddha's speech, and the solitary sages, who are the intermediate Buddhas, the pratyekaBuddhas or solitary realizers. So even the bodhisattvas on the first ground are superior to them, because of these two things, their relative bodhicitta and their non-referential compassion. The pure merit that comes from these two causes them to outshine realized beings of the hinayana path.

Moreover, on the ground Gone Far Beyond their minds also become superior. When bodhi-sattvas finally get to the seventh ground, Gone Far Beyond, their minds, realizing ultimate bodhicitta, also become superior to the shravakas and the solitary sages. So on the earlier bodhisattva grounds they are superior because of their merit, but when they get to the seventh ground they are also superior because of their wisdom.

L6: [B.2.2 Outshining Hearers and Solitary Realizers by way of wisdom on the seventh ground]

\ ///

\ And on Gone Afar (7) he surpasses them in wisdom.

¢(i.e. But he will surpass them in wisdom also at the seventh ground. There he will have both superior method and wisdom.

¢-- Like, the real nature of everything is not existence, and not non-existence. We need both; that is the Union of the Two Truths. Realizing emptiness is only half of it. The Mahayana path cultivate both together, method and wisdom, right from the start. That is why it is superior in method at this ground, and then superior in wisdom at the seventh.

¢-- This is also linked to the fact that not only the person is empty, but also all phenomena, that all dharmas are empty of inherent existence. So it is not just the gross self-grasping (grasping at a self-supporting, substantially existent person) that is the problem (as stated in the Hinayana) but also the subtle self-grasping conceiving an inherently existing self. The only way to attain the real liberation is by realizing lack of inherent existence. Moreover, to abandon self-grasping of persons and attain liberation we need to abandon not only grasping at an inherently existent self, but also grasping existent aggregated (As long as we grasp at inherently existent aggregates we also grasp at an

inherently existent I.). Thus we need to realize the lack of inherent existence of both persons, and phenomena other than persons. In other words, we must realize the lack of inherent existence of all phenomena.

☿-- It looks like it is superior wisdom in two ways: 1. combining emptiness with method or dependent origination, 2. realizing the emptiness of not only the self, but of all phenomena. Those two must be linked somehow. But, in conclusion, the view of the real nature of everything (self, aggregates and all phenomena) is better: the Middle Way away from all extremes.

☿-- So, instead of having no-self of the persons, but real components making up the five aggregates. We have emptiness of all dharmas: not existence, not non-existence. Only then is everything logically sound. This is superior wisdom.)

L6: [B.2.3 An explanation of the meaning established by this teaching]

☿[i.e. The teaching of Sutra on the Ten grounds that Hearer and Solitary Realizers have the realizations of the lack of inherent existence of all phenomena]

☿-- [ii. The sources that proves this]

☿---- [a. Mahayana Sutras that prove this]

☿---- [b. Treatises and Hinayana Sutras that prove this]

☿-- [iii. Rejecting arguments against this teaching]

L5: [B.3 The surpassing good quality of the first ground / the perfection of giving]

L6: [B.3.1 An explanation of the giving of one who abides on the first ground]

The next verse reads:

\     ###  
\     At that time, the first cause of complete enlightenment,  
\     Generosity, becomes preeminent.  
\     When one is enthusiastic even about giving away one's own flesh,  
\     This is a sign of something that normally cannot be seen. (9)  
  
\     ///  
\     9.  
\     At that time giving, the first cause of the enlightenment of complete Buddhahood,  
\     Becomes surpassing for him.  
\     That he acts gracefully even when giving his own flesh  
\     Is a reason for inferring the non-apparent.

☿(i.e. He has abandoned all stains of miserliness and attachment that are discordant with the perfection of giving ... and feels no sense of loss when giving away his wealth, his possessions, or even his body.

☿-- Three types of giving: giving material things, giving Dharma, and giving fearlessness. The definition of perfection of giving is any giving maintained by Bodhicitta. There are two types of perfection of giving: the transcending perfection of giving (of Bodhisattvas) and the transcendent perfection of giving (of Buddhas.)

The commentary reads that on the first ground, at that time, the cause of gaining the enlightenment of the Buddha that becomes preeminent [in the life and activity of] the bodhisattva is the first of the ten transcendent perfections, the first of the ten paramitas, the paramita of generosity. It comes to the fore in the sense that the other ones are not so important here as this one. In this regard, when you see somebody who is giving

away their own flesh without the slightest manifestation of clinging to it—not only are they not unhappy to give it away, not only do they not have any misgivings about giving it away, but they give it away enthusiastically—then, even though as ordinary beings we cannot really tell that they are on the first bhumi, this is a sign that they are. We can make this inference, just as we can infer that, when we see smoke somewhere, there is fire, even if we can not see the fire directly.

L6: [B.3.2 An explanation of the giving of lower bases - giving practiced by ordinary beings who are not Bodhisattvas]

L7: [i. Attaining samsaric happiness through giving]

The next verse reads:

\     ###  
\     All beings strongly desire happiness  
\     But human happiness does not occur without objects of enjoyment.  
\     Knowing that these objects arise from generosity,  
\     The Mighty One taught generosity first. (10)  
  
\     ///  
\     10.  
\     All these beings strongly desire happiness,  
\     And [ordinary] humans cannot be happy without enjoyments [basic enjoyments like food, drink, clothing, and shelter].  
\     Knowing that these enjoyments [in this life] come from giving [in former lives],  
\     The Able One taught giving first [of the ten paramitas].

So why, given all the different transcendent perfections, did the Buddha first teach generosity? Ordinary beings, above all, want to be happy. That is, in fact, all they want. If we take people as an example, what makes them happy is the reversing of states in which they feel that they are lacking something. When you feel that you are lacking something, you are unhappy. If you are hungry or thirsty, happiness is the ending of those states. In order to end those states you need objects of enjoyment. In this case it is food and drink, and generosity is the provision of those objects to enjoy. Knowing this, the perfect Buddha, the Mighty One, out of all the different practices of virtue, like discipline, and so forth, first taught and praised generosity. Another reason that he taught it first is that it is the easiest virtue to practice.

The next verse reads:

\     ###  
\     Even for those without much compassion  
\     Who are extremely hot-tempered and self-concerned,  
\     The objects of enjoyment they desire  
\     And that pacify their suffering come from generosity. (11)  
  
\     ///  
\     11.  
\     Even for those with little compassion and very rough minds,  
\     Who pursue only their own interests,  
\     Desired enjoyments [in future lives] that cause the alleviation of suffering  
\     Arise from giving [in this life].



¢(i.e. The ordinary motivation of working for a good rebirth, not in the three lower realms, having a human rebirth with good attributes. So it could be materialistically / egoistically motivated, in order to receive benefits in this life, or in the next life.) .

This verse teaches that even the happiness you get in samsara comes from generosity. Someone who is a giver, who does not have much faith or compassion, who is extremely hot-tempered and gets angry easily, and who is really only concerned with their own benefit—even for them, everything that they want in terms of objects of enjoyment that can pacify their suffering, all of it, comes from generosity. If anybody gets any of those things, it is because they have been generous in the past. Therefore, generosity is also the cause of samsaric happiness.

L7: [ii. Attaining the happiness of nirvana through giving]

\     ###  
\     Even they, through an occasion of giving,  
\     Will meet a noble being, receive their counsel,  
\     And soon after, completely cutting the stream of cyclic existence,  
\     They will progress to peace, the result of that. (12)

\     ///  
\     12.  
\     Even they, on some occasion of giving,  
\     Will soon come to meet a Superior being  
\     Then, having severed the continuum of samsara completely,  
\     Those who possess this cause will go to peace.

¢(i.e. Even if the initial motivation is superficial, it can lead to meeting someone who will teach us the way to Nirvana.)

So even the givers of things who have no compassion, even they at some time will give something away, and when they do, they will meet a noble being rather suddenly. Why? Because the way things work in the world is that when somebody is giving something away, it attracts noble beings, who then show up. A noble being will come and then will teach the giver the dharma. As a result, such givers will turn their backs on samsara, meditate on the path, perfectly cut the stream of cyclic existence—the round of continuous birth and death—and proceed to the peace that is the result of this meeting with a genuine noble being.

L6: [B.3.3 An explanation of Bodhisattvas' giving]

L7: [i. The uncommon benefits of Bodhisattvas' giving]

The first two lines of the thirteenth verse read:

\     ###  
\     Those whose minds vow to benefit beings  
\     Quickly gain happiness from their acts of generosity. (13ab)  
  
\     ///  
\     13.  
\     Those who hold in their mind a promise to help living beings  
\     Immediately experience joy from giving.

¢(i.e. They don't have to wait to experience the benefits. They have no sense of loss or regret as ordinary beings. He takes great delight doing it.)

Bodhisattvas, who have the mind that has vowed to benefit others in ways that give them both short-term and long-term happiness—both temporary happiness and a deeper ultimate happiness—themselves gain happiness quickly as a result of their generosity. This happiness comes from seeing the satisfaction of the recipients of their generosity—for example, the satisfaction of beggars as a result of giving to them. This is what causes bodhisattvas to be happy; they always delight in giving. They love to give, because they love to see the satisfaction of others.

L7: [ii. The instructions on giving are fundamental for both bases]

And finally the next two lines of the verse summarize all of this by way of a praise of generosity:

```
\    ###  
\    It is for those who are loving and those who are not—  
\    Therefore, generosity is foremost. (13cd)  
  
\    ///  
\    Therefore whether one is compassionate or not,  
\    The instructions on giving are fundamental.
```

¢(i.e. Because it lead to temporary happiness of samsara and the ultimate happiness of liberation.)

The commentary to this reads: "It is for those who are loving, meaning the noble bodhisattvas, and for those who are not, meaning everybody else—all ordinary individuals, shravakas, and solitary sages. For all of these beings, and therefore for everyone, it is the source of all samsaric happiness and of all completely excellent happiness, referring to the happiness of liberation— the realization of the arhats—and the happiness of the omniscience of enlightenment of the Buddhas. Therefore, the teachings on generosity are foremost, meaning that they are incredibly important."

L7: [iii. The great joy a Bodhisattva obtains from giving]

The fourteenth verse reads:

```
\    ###  
\    The happiness of an arhat attaining peace  
\    Cannot match the joy experienced by a bodhisattva  
\    Upon merely hearing the words, "Please give to me."  
\    So what need to mention their joy when they give away everything? (14)  
  
\    ///  
\    14.  
\    If from hearing and contemplating the word 'Give (1)',  
\    The Conquerors' Son develops a bliss  
\    The like of which is not aroused in the Able Ones through experiencing peace,  
\    What can be said about giving everything?
```

¢(i.e. Just being asked to give, and contemplating the meaning he experiences bliss; how much more in giving everything, including his body.)

A bodhisattva experiences great happiness just by hearing a beggar ask to be given something—just by that mere thought and the mere thought, "Now I have the chance to help

this beggar who has come to me to ask for something." Even the happiness of an arhat at their highest level of realization, when they enter into the expanse of nirvana, cannot compare to the happiness of a bodhisattva under those conditions. And if that is the case, then what need is there to mention the level of happiness the bodhisattva experiences when they are actually able to give away everything inner and outer to this supplicating beggar and see the beggar satisfied as a result. Is that not something quite good?

L7: [iv. Whether a Bodhisattva experiences pain when giving away his body]

```
\    ###
\    The pain one feels from cutting one's own flesh to give it away
\    Brings the suffering of others in the hell realms and so forth
\    Directly into one's own experience,
\    And awakens one's vigor in striving to cut that suffering off. (15)

\    ///
\    15.
\    Through the pain from cutting and giving his body,
\    He sees from his own experience
\    The suffering of others in the hells and elsewhere,
\    And strives with great effort to eliminate it quickly.
```

¶(i.e. A Superior Bodhisattva will experience no pain and no sense of loss when parting with his body. He would feel only joy at having the opportunity to give away his body for the sake of others. an ordinary Bodhisattva, on the other hand, does experience pain when his body is cut. However, he is able to use this experience to strengthen his practice. To develop compassion for all sentient beings who are suffering much more. This give a boost to his motivation.)

The commentary reads: "When the mind arises that is incredibly happy to give, then even when one is still an ordinary individual, one will cut one's own flesh and give it away, and because one is still an ordinary individual, when one does that, one will experience pain. But the consequence of this pain is to bring into one's own experience the suffering of those in the hell realms and other lower realms, and one realizes that their suffering is thousands of times worse than the suffering we feel just by cutting off part of our hand and giving it away." So we do suffer as a result of cutting off our flesh, but the suffering of beings in lower realms is thousands of times worse than that. And realizing this, one realizes that one's own suffering is insignificant. It is really nothing in comparison. This realization awakens one's vigor in striving, to eliminate the suffering of others, which one now realizes is so much greater than what we ourselves are going through.

L6: [B.3.4 The divisions of the perfection of giving]

The sixteenth verse describes the different ways of giving:

```
\    ###
\    Giving empty of gift, giver, and recipient
\    Is a transcendent perfection beyond the world.
\    When attachment to these three arises,
\    That is a mundane transcendent perfection. (16)

\    ///
\    16.
```

\ Giving with emptiness of giver, gift, and receiver  
 \ Is called a supramundane perfection.  
 \ Where attachment to these three is generated  
 \ It is explained as a mundane perfection.

Generosity that is empty of generosity—in the sense that one realizes that there is no gift, there is no one giving, and there is no one receiving—is called the wisdom that has no focus on any of the three spheres. The three spheres are the gift, the giver, and the recipient. Such giving is called, "undefiled generosity," and it is a transcendent perfection, a paramita, which transcends the world, which transcends the mundane and the ordinary. On the other hand, when there is attachment to these three spheres as being real, then that is still a paramita, a transcendent perfection, but it is called a worldly or mundane transcendent perfection, for the very reason there is still a focus on these three spheres as being real.

-----  
 L4: [C. Conclusion by way of expressing the good qualities of the ground]

The last verse, which is a concluding summary, reads:

\ ###  
 \ Like that, the Victors' heirs utterly abide in the mind of bodhicitta  
 \ And from their excellent support, joy's light beautifully shines.  
 \ This joy, like the jewel of the water crystal,  
 \ Completely dispels the thick darkness—it is victorious! (17)  
 \  
 \ ///  
 \ 17.  
 \ Thus, abiding high in the mind of the Conquerors' Son,  
 \ Beautifying with light this holy base,  
 \ This Joyful (1) is like a water crystal jewel [i.e. the moon];  
 \ For having dispelled all heavy darkness it is victorious.

¢(i.e. 1. Just like the moon abides in a high place, so the first ground abides in the mind of the highly-realized Bodhisattva. 2. Just as the moon beautifies sky with light, so the first ground beautifies the holy mind of the Conqueror's Son with the light of wisdom. 3. Just as the moon dispels the darkness of the night, so the first ground dispels the thick darkness of confusion obscuring the view of emptiness, and is victorious over the intellectually-formed delusions. )

Here the bodhisattva is being compared to the moon resting high in the sky. The bodhisattva, the heir of the Victorious Ones, utterly abides in the mind of bodhicitta that has developed on this first ground, because this bodhicitta is now a part of their mind. That is why they can abide in it perfectly. And from the genuine and supreme support that is this mind of bodhicitta of the first ground shines the light of perfect joy. This beautiful light is the radiance of their primordial wisdom. It is like the light of the jewel known as the water crystal, which is another name for the moon. And so the bodhisattva and their wisdom and joy are like the beautiful light of the moon, and everything that they abandon on the path of seeing, which corresponds to this first ground, is compared to thick darkness. The remedy that completely dispels this thick darkness is their primordial awareness, by virtue of which they emerge victorious, meaning completely free.

The concluding line of the chapter states that this is the first ultimate mind generation in the text known as the Entrance to the Middle Way. Each succeeding chapter explains a different level of the generation of the mind of bodhicitta. Now let us recite the verses from this chapter.

[Students recite.]

\*\*\*\*\*

L4: [Now are there any questions?]

QUESTION: The second to last verse makes reference to a "mundane transcendent perfection," and I'm wondering what is the distinction between a mundane transcendent perfection, for instance of generosity, and just the mundane virtue of generosity. What is the distinction? The second part of the question is, is it in fact the fact of seeing gift, giver, and recipient as being empty that makes a virtue or perfection transcendent? And if one is not seeing them as empty, then how can it be a transcendent perfection if it is in fact mundane?

Translator: So, the question is about the sixteenth verse. The first part of the question is, what is the difference between a mundane transcendent perfection, the mundane transcendent perfection of generosity, and the mundane virtue of generosity or the worldly virtue of generosity? And secondly, if there is fixation on gift, giver, and recipient as being real, then what is it that causes it to be a transcendent perfection?

RINPOCHE: The difference between the virtue of generosity and the worldly paramita of generosity is that the virtue of generosity's result is samsaric happiness and the worldly paramita's result is eventually the transcendence of samsara through the attainment of enlightenment. And that is what makes the distinction and that is why this is called a paramita and not just an ordinary virtue or something else.

QUESTION: What is the difference in the manner of practicing generosity in these two cases?

RINPOCHE: The difference is that when beginners practice generosity, it is the virtue of generosity, which leads to samsaric happiness. Eventually this becomes the practice of the paramita of generosity, which will eventually lead to the attainment of enlightenment. The way this progression works is that first somebody practices generosity; they do not have a lot of compassion, but they practice generosity, as a result of which they get rich. Then they practice more generosity, and in time a noble being appears to receive their generosity. Then the noble being gives the beginning giver teachings, and then the giver starts to practice the dharma, and then they go on from there. That is one way it works. We can also see a distinction between the ordinary virtue of generosity and the worldly paramita of generosity based on whether there is a dedication of merit of the generosity to the enlightenment of all sentient beings, on how much compassion is involved, and on how much wisdom is involved. So these things also help to distinguish. Does that answer the question?

QUESTION: Yes, though I'm still a little confused. Is it because of their compassionate motivation, even though they are not transcending the three spheres, that it is still called a transcendent perfection?

RINPOCHE: That is a good explanation. Because of the giver's motivation, even though they do not transcend focus on the three spheres, their action is still given the name transcendent perfection. It is a transcendent perfection as practiced by ordinary mundane beings.\*

~ \*Editor's note: Any casual observation of generosity reveals that it in time endows the giver with some sort of additional energy and power due to the appreciation of the recipient of the gift. If one looks at generosity from the standpoint of karma as it might ripen over the course of lifetimes, one will see that when generosity is practiced consistently over a significant period of time, it will result in one's being increasingly surrounded by beneficiaries of one's generosity who harbor a great deal of appreciation for one, even if they do not know why. As a result, surrounded by such good will, the giver will be increasingly successful in their endeavors, and as a consequence will find it easier to amass wealth. They will be born as a rich human being, or in the god's realms, etc. But the difficulty of this type of generosity—practiced either without any specific motivation or motivated by the desire simply to make another happy or to curry favor, to fulfill one's duty as a parent, or for some other samsaric motivation—is that when the merit accumulated by such generosity exhausts itself, if such generosity has not been continued, the giver will fall in samsaric status and will once again know poverty, etc. Furthermore, if in one's relationship to wealth—whether one is gaining it or losing it— one begins to be fearful of losing wealth or never gaining wealth, and as a consequence begins to grasp at it, becomes miserly and ungenerous, or even begins to practice financial fraud or theft in order to gain wealth, then one will sooner or later be reborn in the lower realms. Thus, this type of generosity, which is being referred to here as the ordinary virtue of generosity, while leading temporarily at some time in the future to the higher realms, in no way endows one with permanent happiness, nor does it prevent one from constant and unending wandering in conditioned existence fraught with suffering. The karmic consequence of one's generosity, however, can be conditioned by changing the motivation with which it is practiced and by dedicating the merit or virtue or energy and power arising from it. Thus the bodhisattva path teaches that we should practice generosity out of compassion for sentient beings with the motivation to establish all sentient beings in liberation from suffering and in the enlightenment of Buddhahood. It also teaches that following any act of generosity we should dedicate the merit arising from that generosity to the liberation and enlightenment of all sentient beings. By so doing, we gradually increase our impulse to dharma practice, our concern and compassion for sentient beings, the strength of our intention to attain Buddhahood for the benefit of beings, and the energy and power with which we are able to practice the path leading to Buddhahood. This is what is called the worldly or mundane paramita of generosity, or in the language of the translator, the worldly or mundane "transcendent perfection" of generosity, and it leads eventually to Buddhahood.

The worldly paramita of generosity leads to the transcendent paramita of generosity, or the transcendent "transcendent perfection" of generosity, when we come to understand that sunyata, the wisdom realizing emptiness and the true nature, is what ultimately liberates one from samsara altogether and is the cause of Buddhahood. When one comes to understand that, one comes to understand that for generosity to lead to Buddhahood, it must be practiced within the context of the view of emptiness, which means without reference to, attachment to, or fixation on the three spheres—the giver, the gift or act or giving, and the recipient—which is often called three-fold purity. Three-fold purity can also be one-hundred fold purity, in the sense that the term implies ultimately seeing the emptiness of all things interdependent with any particular act of generosity: the giver, the gift, the giving, the recipient, the attitudes and thoughts and remarks of others with respect to the act, the motivations of giver and recipient, the results of such giving, etc. Such generosity—the transcendent paramita of generosity— and the practice of the other transcendent paramitas or perfections—discipline, patience, exertion, meditative



concentration, and prajna—are the direct cause of Buddhahood. One can begin to practice the transcendent paramitas effectively after one has had decisive insight into emptiness.

Thus we can see that the ordinary virtue of generosity with a little luck leads to the practice of the worldly or mundane paramita of generosity, which in turn leads to the practice of the transcendent paramita of generosity, which in turn is one of the causes of Buddhahood.

QUESTION: What is non-referential compassion, the third type of compassion, and how is it different from the second type, compassion with reference to phenomena, which was translated as being the reality of the situation, referring to impermanence?

RINPOCHE: If one looks at this second type of compassion, *cho la mikpay nyingje* in Tibetan, etymologically, one finds the word *cho* in Tibetan or *dharma* in Sanskrit, which has a lot of different meanings, [including the meaning "phenomena,"] but here it is better translated as "quality," the quality of the situation. Here the quality of the situation refers to the sentient being's quality and the sentient being's quality is of the nature of impermanence. Sentient beings completely change from moment to moment, but they do not know that, they do not realize that, and so they think that things are permanent and as a result of that they suffer. So, if we see sentient beings and wish that they be free of the suffering of thinking that things are permanent when in fact they are not, then that is compassion that focuses on the quality of the nature of sentient beings. In fact, beings suffer greatly because they think things, particularly suffering, are permanent. But suffering is also of the nature of impermanence; it completely disappears in the next instant. If we suffer and think that this suffering is real, in the sense that it is permanent, and that it is going to last and just get greater and greater, then that causes even more suffering. The alternative is just to realize that the suffering is completely momentary and that it vanishes instant by instant.

Non-referential compassion describes the compassion that knows and understands the analogy of the water moon.\* Not only is the water moon constantly moving around, changing, and thus impermanent, but because it is just a water moon, there is really nothing there. Sentient beings, like the water moon, are empty of any real existence, they are just like a reflection. There is nothing really there, but they do not realize that. And so, because they think that they are real and that other things are real, they suffer. The compassion that focuses on this absence of real existence and makes the aspiration, "Would it not be wonderful if beings were free from the suffering which they experience because they think that they themselves and everything around them are real!" This suffering is just like the suffering one experiences in a dream when one does not know one is dreaming. For example, you could dream of being burned in a fire, and the fact is that the fire and the body being burned in it are just mere dependently arisen appearances. But if you do not know you are dreaming, then you will think that the fire is real and that you are really being burned in it. Not only that, you will think that this burning is something that is going to go on until you die. This confusion creates great suffering, great fear, and great pain. Non-referential compassion is the aspiration that beings be free of this type of suffering, which they experience only because they think things, which are not real, are real. This type of compassion understands that the only reason that beings suffer is that their thoughts are confused.

~ \*Editor's note: The reflection of the moon in water.

QUESTION: In the beginning, when Chandrakirti is describing the causes of being a bodhisattva, he says that the first one is the mind of compassion, the second is non-dual awareness, and the third is bodhicitta. I couldn't tell from your brief explanation what the difference was, if any, between compassion and bodhicitta. And then, where the text describes bodhisattvas as superior to shravakas and pratyekaBuddhas, you explained that until they reach the seventh bhumi, their superiority is based on their greater merit, after which it is based on their greater wisdom. How do you reconcile this with the notion of the inseparability of compassion and emptiness as the essence of the bodhisattva path?

RINPOCHE: The compassion which wants to free all beings from suffering is the cause of bodhicitta. Compassion is something that one can experience even before one becomes a mahayana practitioner. What determines becoming a mahayana practitioner is giving rise to the mind of bodhicitta, which is the desire to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings. That is the difference. When we see the suffering of sentient beings, and the wish for them to be free from all their suffering arises, that is compassion. When we actually aspire to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings, in order to be able to liberate them from their suffering, that is bodhicitta. With regard to the second question—if it is the case that compassion and wisdom are inseparable on the bodhisattva path, then why is it that the first-bhumi bodhisattvas because of their merit and their compassion outshine the shravaka and arhats, but it is not until the seventh bhumi that they are able to outshine them with their wisdom?—the way it is explained here is that this is in essence a great praise of the arhat's realization of selflessness. Since their realization of the selflessness of the individual is so great, it is comparable to the bodhisattva's realization of emptiness on the seventh bhumi. The arhat's realization of selflessness completely wipes out all of their mental afflictions,\* which does not occur for the bodhisattva until the seventh bhumi.

~ \*Editor's note: but not all of their cognitive obscurations.

QUESTION: The text states that when one becomes a bodhisattva, all the paths to the lower realms are sealed off. And Rinpoche further explained that the commentary says that when you reach the level of patience on the path of junction, which is the path that leads to the first ground of the bodhisattva, then the conditions for being reborn in the lower realms do not assemble, and that subsequently, when you reach this level of realization on the first bhumi, then the seed of being reborn in the lower realms is also destroyed. But it is stated in the eighth chapter of The Jewel Ornament of Liberation as one of the eight benefits of going for refuge that merely going for refuge prevents rebirth in the lower realms again. What does this latter statement mean in light of the explanation you have just given?

RINPOCHE: If you take the refuge vow and practice properly in accordance with it, then you will not be reborn in the lower realms. Merely taking the refuge vow is not enough. You also have to practice in accordance with the vow. When you go for refuge in the dharma, then one of the things you vow is to give up harming other beings, and if you never harm another being then you will not be reborn in the lower realms. Also when you go for refuge in the dharma, you vow to listen, reflect, and meditate on the dharma well, and if you do that, you will not be born in the lower realms.

We should know that, though bodhisattvas are not constrained by their karma to be reborn in the lower realms, out of compassion they often willingly take rebirth in the lower realms to be of benefit to others. When the Buddha was not yet a Buddha, but was a bodhisattva practicing the bodhisattva path, he was born as a turtle, as a fish, as a rabbit, and as a

special kind of deer called a rooroo.\*\* In order to benefit beings, bodhisattvas take birth as many different kinds of animals. Bodhisattvas need to be willing to take birth in the hells, as hungry ghosts, and as animals to benefit others, and there are many stories of bodhisattvas doing so just to be of benefit to a single sentient being. There are actually prayers to take birth in the lower realms that go something like, "In order to benefit other beings, may I be born as a fish, as a deer, as a beggar in a city." So that is how we have to pray. Any other questions?

~ \*\*Editor's note: The Buddha is said to have related the stories of some 500 of his previous lives as a bodhisattva, which are said to be contained in the Jataka Tales.

QUESTION: Rinpoche, is it sometimes more compassionate not to give if by giving we encourage the recipient to be lazy or dependent on us?

RINPOCHE: It is better to give, actually. For example, if we see poor people who are hungry or thirsty, then our concern should be for the alleviation of their hunger or thirst; we should not be thinking about any sort of consequence other than just alleviating their hunger and thirst.

At the same time, we should make aspiration prayers that this act of generosity will be the cause of their proceeding on the path to enlightenment. In the text called The Ornament of the Mahayana Sutras, the Mahayanasutralankara, there are listed the characteristics of generosity as practiced by bodhisattvas. First the generosity of bodhisattvas causes the opposite of generosity to decrease, the opposite of generosity being avarice and miserliness. Second, the generosity of bodhisattvas is embraced by non-conceptual primordial wisdom. Third, it fulfills the wishes of beings, both their temporary and their ultimate ones and makes them happy. And finally, it causes beings to be ripened in one of the three ways, either along the path of the arhats as shravakas or solitary sages, or on the bodhisattva path leading to Buddhahood. The bodhisattvas' practice of generosity has these four characteristics.

We can distinguish three kinds of generosity: the generosity of bodhisattvas, the generosity of ordinary individuals on the path, and the generosity of ordinary individuals who are not on the path of dharma. So for example, the Buddha, when he was a bodhisattva, was once born as a sea tortoise and was attacked by 80,000 bugs, who sucked out his blood. At the time he made an aspiration prayer, and later, after he had become enlightened as the Buddha, he taught the dharma to these same 80,000 bugs, who had been reborn as 80,000 worldly deities who had come to listen to his teachings. In another of his lives as a bodhisattva, he was born as a prince and gave his body to five tiger cubs to eat. Those tiger cubs were reborn as the first five students of the Buddha because at the time of his generosity he made aspiration prayers that his generosity would cause them to proceed on the path to enlightenment. Ordinary beings do not do that. When ordinary people who are not on the path give they do not make such noble aspiration prayers. This is the distinguishing feature of generosity as it is practiced on the path.

What is not appropriate is to give things which are harmful to others, like poison or weapons. It is not appropriate to give those things because they are harmful to others. But if you can give in a way that pacifies people's suffering, that alleviates their thirst and hunger, and so forth, and that does not harm others, then it is good to give. And at the same time, we should make aspiration prayers in the following way. We should think, "Now I'm giving materially. I pray that in the future I can give this person the dharma that allows

them to be liberated from the suffering of samsara."

So now we should meditate on compassion—on compassion that focuses on sentient beings, on compassion that focuses on the quality of sentient beings, and on compassion that is without reference. "First thinking 'me,' they fixate on 'self.' Then thinking, 'This is mine,' attachment to things develops. Beings are powerless, like a rambling water mill—I bow to compassion for these wanderers. Beings are like the moon on the surface of rippling water—they move and are empty of any self nature."

[Students meditate, and Rinpoche and students recite dedication prayers.]

Now let's sing the prayer for all sentient beings with whom we have good and bad connections. There are those with whom we have good connections, those with whom we have bad connections, and those with whom the connections are changing from one to the other so that we have both good and bad connections.

\ All you sentient beings I have a good or bad connection with  
\ As soon as you have left this confused dimension  
\ May you be born in the west in Sukhavati  
\ And once you're born there, complete the bhumis and the paths

[Students sing.]

RINPOCHE: Goodnight.

Sarva Mangalam!

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L3: [The Second Mind Generation The Stainless (10 verses) - Moral discipline]

¢(i.e. Resume: The stainless of being free from the stains of immorality; free from the obsession of trying to benefit the ego at the disadvantage of others; free from remorse and retaliation or punishment; with peace of mind favorable to develop concentration. Moral discipline while seeing the emptiness of the three - no grasping at rules of right and wrong, not thinking some are pure and some impure. Guarding the mind, checking the motivation, taking the side of others, trying not to hurt them. Combining method (creating peace) and wisdom (relativity of point of view).

¢-- Moral discipline is the conditions necessary to create the proper environment and mental peace in order to develop concentration, and then wisdom. The three trainings: first moral discipline, then concentration, then wisdom.)

¢(i.e. From other sources: "The best definition of the second liberating action is probably living meaningfully and for the benefit of others." - "what lies behind the rules of good conduct -- namely, the principles of equality and reciprocity. The principle of equality holds that all living beings are the same in their basic orientation and outlook.

Reciprocity means that, just as we would not like to be abused, robbed, injured, or killed, so all other living beings are unwilling to have such things happen to them. We can put this principle of reciprocity quite simply by saying, 'Do not act toward others in a way you would not want them to act toward you.' Once we are aware of these principles of equality and reciprocity, it is not hard to see how they form the foundation of the rules of good conduct in Buddhism. " - "Moral discipline is not hurting others. The continuation of exchanging self for others started with giving." -- "In upholding the precepts there are no

considerations of gain or loss. If one leaves behind the home life, upholds the precepts, desists from engaging in worldly endeavors and constantly contemplates that the reality mark of all dharmas is devoid of any mark, although one may have formerly possessed dull faculties, they gradually become sharp. All sorts of other such circumstances constitute instances of the upholding of precepts bringing forth praj~naa paaramitaa. The upholding of precepts is carried out only for the sake of all beings, for the sake of succeeding in the way of the Buddha, and for the sake of realizing the Dharma of all Buddhas. Such characteristics as these demonstrate what is meant by shiila paaramitaa. Then again, if the bodhisattva finds that there is nothing which can be gotten at in either offense or non-offense, it is at this time that his practice constitutes shiila paaramitaa." - "It is the maintenance and guarding of this mind that constitutes the true observation of moral discipline." -- "There is no point in engaging in the many different practices of dharma if we do not guard our mind well. But what exactly is to be guarded? It is the consciousness of each of our physical and mental senses : the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind. For example, by preventing our attention from wandering to those visual objects that cause attachment, anger or other delusions to arise. ... from distracting sounds that foster delusions ... all should be kept in check and prevented from wandering towards what is unwholesome. The most important one is the mind itself." - "It is far better to let our body, honor, livelihood, wealth and other virtues decline than to let our practice of guarding the mind decrease." - "At the very beginning of any action - whether it be thought, word or physical deed - we should examine our motivation and check to see whether it is wholesome or unwholesome." - "If we do not reduce our attachment to our own body it will be impossible for us to keep pure moral discipline." -- "following the rules of good conduct creates a social environment characterized by harmony and peace. All our social goals can be achieved within the rules of good conduct based on the fundamental principles of equality and reciprocity. In addition, each person benefits from the practice of good conduct. The practice of morality creates an inner sense of tranquility, stability, security, and strength. Once you have created that inner peace, you can successfully follow the other steps of the path. You can cultivate and perfect the various aspects of mental development. You can then achieve wisdom -- but only after you have created the necessary foundation of morality both within and without, both in yourself and in your relationships with others.")

¢(i.e. The definition of the second ground is a Superior Bodhisattva's path that has abandoned big-big, innate true grasping, its principal object of abandonment, and that has attained a surpassing practice of the perfection of moral discipline from within the ten perfections.

¢--- The second ground is called "Stainless" because a Bodhisattva on this ground is completely free from stains of degenerate moral discipline and uncommon Hinayana attitudes.)

Let us begin with the Song of Meaningful Connections.

[Students sing. See page 12.]

Before listening to the teachings, please give rise to the precious attitude of bodhicitta, aspiring for the benefit of all sentient beings, who are as limitless in number as the sky is vast in extent, to attain the state of complete and perfect Buddhahood. In order to do that, we must listen to, reflect upon, and meditate upon the teachings of the genuine dharma with all of the enthusiasm we can muster in our hearts. This is the precious attitude of bodhicitta. Please give rise to it and listen.

Tonight Rinpoche will explain the second mind generation, meaning the second generation of

the mind of bodhicitta, which is the second chapter in this text. It is connected with the second of the ten paramitas or transcendent perfections, the paramita of discipline, and is the principal practice of the bodhisattva on the second bodhisattva bhumi.

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L4: [A. The completely pure moral discipline on this ground]

L5: [A.1 The excellent moral discipline on this ground]

L5: [A.2 The completely pure qualities that depend upon this]

The first verse reads:

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\     Because the bodhisattvas' discipline has such excellent qualities,  
\     They abandon the stains of faulty discipline even in their dreams.  
\     Since their movements of body, speech and mind are pure,  
\     They gather the ten types of virtue on the path of the genuine ones. (1)

\     ///  
\     [II.1.ab]  
\     18.  
\     Because he possesses excellent moral discipline (2) and pure qualities,  
\     He has abandoned the stains of degenerate discipline even in his dreams.  
\     Because his conduct of body, speech, and mind is pure,  
\     He accumulates all ten paths of holy actions.

¢(i.e. Three types of moral discipline:

¢-- 1. the moral discipline of restraint (Pratimoksha vows),

¢-- 2. the moral discipline of gathering virtuous Dharmas (Bodhisattva vows), and

¢-- 3. the moral discipline of benefiting living beings (Tantric vows).

¢The definition of perfection of moral discipline is any moral discipline maintained by Bodhicitta.

It has two divisions:

¢-- 1. the transcending perfection of moral discipline (Bodhisattvas),

¢-- 2. and the transcendent perfection of moral discipline (of Buddhas).)

¢(i.e. The moral discipline of abandoning the ten non-virtuous actions permits to purify our conduct of body, speech and mind.)

The commentary reads: "For those who have reached the second ground, the second bodhisattva bhumi, their discipline is excellent and their qualities are completely pure. Therefore, not only when they are awake, but even in their dreams, they give up all the stains of faulty discipline." They do not commit any transgression of their vows or any transgression of their discipline, even in their dreams. "Since their conduct of body, speech, and mind—the movement of their body, speech, and mind—is free of even the slightest flaw or most subtle transgression, it is pure. Therefore, they gather the ten types of virtue, including the seven of body and speech, which are considered to be karma." There are seven types of conduct of body and speech that one must abandon. These are called karmic activities, and then there are three activities of mind, which are considered to be the motivations for these activities. They are motivational in nature because they are mental activities. And so, adding these together, you get ten. Bodhisattvas on the second ground gather those on the path of the genuine ones.



The quality of discipline in the great vehicle of the mahayana is that it is conduct motivated by loving kindness, love for others. With this motivation of love, one conducts oneself in a way that is of benefit to others; that is one's discipline. Bodhisattvas on this bhumi conduct themselves in this way even in their dreams, and there is no degeneration from that.

L5: [A.3 This moral discipline surpasses that of the first ground]

Next, in the second verse, comes a presentation of how it is that the transcendent perfection or the paramita of discipline is the one that comes to the fore on this particular bodhisattva ground:

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\    ###
\    These ten types of virtue have been practiced before,
\    But here they are superior because they have become so pure.
\    Like an autumn moon, the bodhisattvas are always pure,
\    Beautified by their serenity and radiance. (2)

\    ///
\    19.
\    For him all these ten virtuous paths
\    Are perfected, and so extremely pure.
\    Like the autumn moon he is always completely pure.
\    Pacified and radiant, he is beautified by these.
```

And the commentary reads: "This path of virtue, which is comprised first of the three positive motivations of mind and then the seven positive activities of body and speech, making ten, has been practiced before. These ten virtues were present and practiced by the bodhisattvas on the first ground, but here they are superior. They outshine what the bodhisattvas had practiced before in an incredible way because they have become so pure, so excellent, and glorious." The example that demonstrates this is the autumn moon, a harvest moon in the sky that is completely free of clouds. Like that, the bodhisattva's discipline is always completely pure and is endowed with two qualities that are compared to the way that the light of this moon is said to cool the heat. The light of a pure autumn moon is very soothing and cooling, and like that, the bodhisattvas on this ground have the serenity of their sense doors' being bound by their discipline and the radiance of a beautiful white light. These two make the bodhisattvas quite beautiful.

L5: [A.4 Another cause of completely pure moral discipline]

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\    ###
\    But if they thought their pure discipline had an inherent nature,
\    Their discipline would not be pure at all.
\    Therefore, they are at all times completely free
\    Of dualistic mind's movement towards the three spheres. (3)

\    ///
\    20.
\    If we keep pure moral discipline with the view of inherent existence,
\    Then because of that our moral discipline is not pure.
\    Therefore he is always completely free from the wanderings
\    Of the dualistic mind towards the three.
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¢(i.e. According to the Madhyamika-Prasangika school, moral discipline is completely pure only when it is conjoined with the realization of lack of inherent existence. There are many cause of the complete purification of moral discipline, but realizing the emptiness of the three spheres is the main cause. The complete purification of moral discipline is given as a quality of the second ground.

¢-- i.e. Seeing emptiness does not make moral discipline meaningless. Seeing dependent origination, understanding samsara, makes us feel equality with others, compassion, brings the desire not to hurt them, but instead to help them all.)

The commentary reads: "If it were the case that the bodhisattvas had incredibly pure conduct of their pratimoksha vows, the vows of individual liberation, and yet were arrogant in the sense that they conceptualized themselves as having pure discipline—if they thought, 'Wow, I keep my discipline very well'—then they would be taking their discipline to be truly existent, to have an inherent nature. If that were the case, then their discipline would not be pure at all. Therefore, bodhisattvas on this ground do not conceptualize either the flawed conduct which they are abandoning, the antidote they use to give it up, or the person who is giving it up. They do not conceptualize any of these three to be real. They are free of the movements of dualistic mind, which perceives some things to be existent and other things to be non-existent. They are completely free of the movements of dualistic mind towards these three spheres."

To put this in the form of a logical reasoning, we would say, "Given the individual who has pure conduct of their pratimoksha vows, the vows of individual liberation, but takes their conduct to be real, their discipline is not pure at all, because they believe that their conduct has an inherently existent nature." The discipline of the bodhisattva on the second ground is completely pure because they do not conceive any of the three spheres to be real. In short, so long as a person believes that the three spheres related to discipline are real, their discipline will never be pure. But when the individual is free of attachment to these three spheres as being real, then their discipline is pure. When one has attachment to the three spheres of discipline as being real, then that is like discipline conducted in a dream when we do not know that we are dreaming. But when one is free from attachment to these three spheres as being real, that is like the conduct of discipline in a dream when one knows that it is just a dream. Thus, if one wants to have a pure practice of the transcendent perfection of discipline, one must also realize emptiness.

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L4: [B. A praise of moral discipline]

L5: [B.1 Enjoying the fruits of giving in fortunate realms depends upon moral discipline]

L5: [B.2 Enjoying the fruits of giving continuously depends upon moral discipline]

\     ###

\     Generosity can result in wealth gained in the lower realms

\     When an individual has lost their legs of discipline.

\     Once the wealth's principal and interest are completely spent, Material enjoyments will not come again. (4)

\     ///

\     21.

\     If enjoyments [in the next life] that result from giving [in this life] arise in a lower rebirth [in the next life],

\ It is because that being broke his legs of moral discipline [in this life].  
\ (To have a rebirth with enjoyments in a precious human life we need both giving and moral discipline.)

\ ///  
\ If both the interest and the capital are spent,  
\ No enjoyments will arise for him in the future.

¢(i.e. If the fruits of giving ripen in lower rebirths they are consumed without fresh seeds being sown because beings in the lower realms have no opportunity to practice giving. Thus practicing giving and moral discipline together creates the cause to enjoy the fruits of giving continuously in life after life.)

The material enjoyment that is the result of the practice of generosity in previous lives can come to fruition in the lower realms if the individual had lost the legs of discipline at the same time the individual was practicing generosity. Discipline is said to be like legs, because discipline is what allows you to progress to the higher realms. If you do not have those legs, you fall into the lower realms, where you can experience life as, for instance, a very wealthy naga, a very wealthy sea serpent, or as other kinds of beings in the lower realms who have material enjoyments. The problem with that is that, when you are born in the lower realms, you are naturally quite stupid in that state, and so you do not practice generosity again and as a consequence, do not accumulate the causes of having material enjoyments in the future. The example given here is that of money. When you have money, once you spend all the interest and all the principal, there is nothing left to produce anything more. Therefore, material enjoyments do not come again, because there is no cause for them to be reproduced. You have exhausted all of your profit from before and there is nothing left to replace it. So this verse teaches the disadvantage of having generosity without the right conduct of discipline. The fifth verse reads:

L5: [B.3 It is extremely difficult for those who lack moral discipline to escape from the lower realms]

\ ###  
\ If when independent and enjoying favorable circumstances,  
\ One does not protect oneself from falling into the lower realms,  
\ Once one has fallen into the abyss and has no power to escape,  
\ What will be able to lift one up and out of that? (5)

\ ///  
\ 22.  
\ If, when living in good conditions and acting with freedom,  
\ We do not act to hold ourself back [in this life],  
\ Once we have fallen into the abyss and lost our freedom [in the next life],  
\ How shall we raise ourself from there in the future [in subsequent lives]?

¢(i.e. We should not waste this precious opportunity and freedom we have, otherwise we will be in the lower realms for long.)

The example here is that of a warrior who has entered a friendly land where he is able to move about freely. If, when one is independent— not needing to rely on anyone else and enjoying favorable circumstances of being born as either a human being or a deity—and one does not protect oneself from the conduct that would cause one to fall into the lower

realms, then one becomes like a warrior in an unfriendly land who is bound up and thrown off a mountain. When one falls into the abyss of the lower realms, one loses one's independence. One comes under the power of others and is powerless to do anything about it. What method will there be to lift one up and out of that? Once you have fallen into the abyss, how can you possibly get out?

L5: [B.4 Why the instructions on moral discipline were given after the instructions on giving]

\ ###  
\ Therefore, after giving his advice on generosity,  
\ The Victor taught about accompanying it with discipline.  
\ When good qualities thrive in discipline's field,  
\ The enjoyment of their fruits is unceasing. (6)

\ ///  
\ 23.  
\ Therefore the Conqueror taught moral discipline  
\ After he had taught giving.  
\ When qualities grow in the field of moral discipline,  
\ The fruits will be enjoyed unceasingly.

¢(i.e. It is a multiplier of the fruits of giving; practicing giving without moral discipline is unwise.)

For the reasons given in the above verses, the Victor, the completely perfect Buddha, after first giving teachings and advice on the practice of generosity, taught that the practice of generosity should be accompanied by the practice of discipline. The reason for this is that when the good qualities that come as a result of practicing generosity thrive in the field of discipline, then the result or the fruits of those practices of generosity, like attaining a precious human body, material enjoyments, and so forth, can be enjoyed in an ever increasing and uninterrupted way.

L5: [B.5 Praising moral discipline as a cause of both high status and definite goodness]

The seventh verse reads:

\ ###  
\ For ordinary individuals, those born of the Buddha's speech,  
\ Those set on solitary enlightenment,  
\ And heirs of the Victor,  
\ The cause of the higher realms and of true excellence is nothing other than discipline. (7)

\ ///  
\ 24.  
\ There is no cause other than moral discipline [in this life]  
\ For the high status [happiness in the next life] and definite goodness [i.e. happiness of liberation and enlightenment]  
\ Of ordinary beings, those born from the speech,  
\ Those definite in self-enlightenment, and Conquerors' Sons. [for all beings whatever their goal is]

For ordinary beings, those who do not see the true nature of reality; for those born of the Buddha's speech, which refers to the shravakas, the hearers; for those set on solitary enlightenment, which refers to the solitary sages, the pratyekaBuddhas; and for the heirs of the Victors, which refers to the bodhisattvas, both the cause of the higher realms—being born as a god or a human—and of true excellence—which refers to the various stages of realization on the path—is nothing other than discipline. When it says that it is nothing other than discipline, it means that if there is no discipline, then these results cannot be attained. This statement is not excluding the importance of other causes. It is just saying that if you do not have discipline, you definitely will not attain these results.

-----

L4: [C. An illustration of separation from that which is incompatible with moral discipline]

\     ###  
\     Like the ocean with a corpse,  
\     And auspiciousness with misfortune,  
\     When great beings come under discipline's power,  
\     They do not abide together with its decay. (8)  
  
\     ///  
\     25.  
\     As with an ocean and a corpse together,  
\     And auspiciousness and misfortune together,  
\     So too this great being controlled by moral discipline  
\     Has no desire to remain with that which is degenerate.

¢(i.e. showing that immorality is completely non existent on the second ground)

The ocean is said to be inhabited by nagas. Nagas are sea serpents and are incredibly clean creatures, which is why, if a corpse ever falls into the ocean, it always washes up on the shore. The nagas will not allow it to stay in the ocean. Similarly, when you have auspicious circumstances, you will not have the opposite of that at the same time. Auspiciousness and misfortune do not coexist. Similarly, when great beings—referring here to those who have reached the second bodhisattva ground— come under the power of discipline, they do not abide together with the decay of that discipline. Here the commentary says that this means that those around them, their retinue and friends, will also have pure discipline. They will not be together with those who do not have pure discipline.

-----

L4: [D. The divisions of the perfection of moral discipline]

The ninth verse teaches the different kinds of discipline:

\     ###  
\     If there be any focus on these three—  
\     The one who abandons, the abandoned act, and the one with regard to whom it is  
abandoned—  
\     Such discipline is explained to be a worldly transcendent perfection.  
\     Discipline empty of attachment to these three has gone beyond the world. (9)  
  
\     ///  
\     26.

\ If there is observation of the three-  
\ What is abandoned, by whom, and with respect to whom -  
\ That moral discipline is explained as a mundane perfection.  
\ That which is empty of attachment to the three is supramundane.

-----

L4: [E. Conclusion by way of expressing the good qualities of the ground]

Finally:

\ ###  
\ Free from stains, The Stainless, the bodhisattvas arising from the moon  
\ Are not of the world, yet are the world's glory.  
\ Like the light of the moon in autumn  
\ They assuage the torment in the minds of beings. (10)  
  
\ ///  
\ 27.  
\ This Stainless (2), free from stains, arises from the moon, the Conquerors' Son,  
\ Who although not of samsara is the glory of samsara;  
\ And just like the light of the autumn moon,  
\ It relieves the mental torment of living beings.

¢(i.e. Although he is no longer in samsara, out of great compassion he continues to take rebirth in the abodes of samsara, where he is the source of all happiness and good fortune.)

Bodhisattvas, the heirs of the victors, arising from the moon of the second ground, even though they are not included among those who are still stuck in worldly existence, are the glory of worldly existence.\* Since they are free of the stains of faulty discipline, this second ground is called The Stainless. Just like the soothing light of the harvest moon, bodhisattvas on this ground assuage the torment of faulty discipline that exists in the minds of wandering sentient beings. It is not taught that these bodhisattvas have brought the practice of discipline to its highest degree; they have not completely perfected it. But it does become their foremost or most important practice on this ground.

~ \*Editor's note: Meaning that because they are in the world but not of the world, they are the glory of the world.

The summarizing line states that this completes the second mind generation from the text called Entrance to the Middle Way. So let us recite this section together.

[Students recite]

-----

L4: [Now are there any questions?]

QUESTION: Can Rinpoche tell us in some detail about the virtues?

RINPOCHE: The ten virtues are the three positive activities of body, the four positive activities of speech, and the three positive activities of the mind. Is that okay?

QUESTION: What are they?

RINPOCHE: There are three virtuous activities of body and four of speech, which consist of



giving up the three unvirtuous activities of body and the four unvirtuous activities of speech and practicing their opposites. With respect to body, first you give up killing others and engage in the activity of protecting lives. Then you give up stealing and engage in the activity of giving to sentient beings. Instead of taking things from them you give them things. And third you give up improper sexual activity and protect proper sexual conduct from degenerating.

With respect to speech, first you give up lying and speak honestly, telling the truth. Second, you give up speech that is divisive, that causes people to become enemies with each other, and speak in a way that brings people together. Third, you give up harsh speech towards others and adopt a pleasant way of speaking, a soft way of speaking that makes people happy. Finally, you give up gossiping and engaging in meaningless chatter—which distracts others from listening, reflecting, and meditating on the dharma—and adopt speech that encourages them to engage in dharma practices, such as recitation of mantras, and so forth.

With respect to mind, first you give up covet-ousness, reduce attachment, and develop contentment. Second, you give up maliciousness and adopt an attitude of loving kindness. Third, you abandon wrong views concerning cause and effect, the truth of cessation and the path, and the three jewels and abide in the authentic or correct view.

The seven types of conduct of body and speech are considered to be karma, and the three of mind are the motivation with which you act.

There are extensive explanations of the ten unvirtuous actions and the ten virtuous actions in *The Words of My Perfect Teacher* and in *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation*, and a briefer description in the *Torch of Certainty*.

QUESTION: In the third verse it mentions the three spheres. What are they?

RINPOCHE: The three spheres, with regard to the practice of discipline, are, first, the person, the self who is practicing the discipline. The second sphere is the way in which you conduct yourself, the discipline or conduct itself, and the third is the one with regard to whom you are practicing such conduct or discipline. If there is attachment to these three as being real, then it is still a worldly practice. If there is no attachment to these as being real, then you have transcended the world. Connected with generosity, the three spheres would be the one who is giving, the one to whom you give, and the act of generosity itself.

QUESTION: I would appreciate a further explanation of the ninth verse, particularly the part, "the one who abandons, the act of abandoning, and the one with regard to whom it is abandoned."

RINPOCHE: If we look at the discipline of not killing, the one who abandons would be the one who abandons the activity of killing. The abandoned act is the killing, and the one with regard to whom it is abandoned is the one you do not kill. So, if there is realization that these three do not really exist, that they are just mere dependently arisen appearances, then that is called a paramita, a transcendent perfection which has gone beyond the mundane. If, however, there is still fixation on these three as being real, when the same activity is practiced, it is a worldly transcendent perfection. Other questions?

QUESTION: Are there still beings who are progressing along these paths, following the mahayana path exclusively, when we have the vajrayana now, and if there are, what does that mean for us? Could you put that into context for us? What causes a being to choose the

vajrayana over the mahayana, and what are the results of that choice?

RINPOCHE: It is possible to attain these bhumis by practicing the mahayana path of cultivating loving kindness and compassion, and by meditating on emptiness—doing these two practices together. This approach is summed up in the two practices of relative and ultimate bodhicitta. By practicing ultimate bodhicitta, you gain the realization of the nature of reality, which leads to the attainment of the bodhisattva grounds. The loving kindness and compassion and the desire to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings that serve as your motivation for doing that is relative bodhicitta. If you do not have ultimate bodhicitta, the mind of awakening, you cannot realize the nature of genuine reality, nor can you cleanse your own mind of its confusion. Therefore, we need to practice the stages of meditation that allow us to gain realization.

If you do not have relative bodhicitta, then you will neither want to benefit anyone else nor will you benefit anyone else. Thus you need both ultimate and relative bodhicitta to attain the state of enlightenment; both practices are necessary. In order to progress along the entire mahayana path from the beginning through all of the ten grounds to the level of enlightenment, it is explained variously that it takes either 3 times 10 to the 59th eons, 7 times 10 to the 59th eons, or 37 times 10 to the 59th eons. So it takes quite a long time.

QUESTION: How long is an eon?

RINPOCHE: An eon is the period of time it takes for a universe to come into being and then disintegrate again. But the point is that at the same time one is progressing on this path, one has great loving kindness and compassion for others and is doing wonderful things to benefit others. It is explained that it takes a very long time to progress along the mahayana path [in a mahayana way without the benefit of vajrayana], but the fact is time does not really exist; it is not real. There is no such thing as time. In the explanation of the sixteen emptinesses,\* this is called the emptiness of that which is imperceivable, the emptiness of the three times. It was to assuage people's discouragement at thinking that it would take such a long time as 3 times 10 to the 59th eons to attain enlightenment that the emptiness of time was taught.

~ \*Editor's note: See Shenpen Osel, Volume 3, Number 1, pages 55-62, for commentary on the twenty emptinesses, which includes commentary on the sixteen emptinesses. (see sections included bellow)

When people realize that there is really no such thing as time anyway, they do not get discouraged. In fact, a short period of time and a long period of time are fundamentally the same. They are just like time in a dream. In a dream it does not matter if you think it is a long time or a short time; there is really no difference at all between them. None of these conceptual notions have any reality. The Buddha said that an eon and an instant are of the nature of equality. A particle and a planet are of the nature of equality. If you think of a dream, you can understand how this is true. The tiniest particle of dust and the biggest mountain that appear to you in a dream are fundamentally the same. Whether it is your finger or the king of all mountains, Mount Sumeru, does not matter; there is really no difference in their size when they appear in dreams, because both are just dependently arisen mere appearances.

Bodhisattva, which is the name given to a mahayana practitioner, whether man or woman, is a heroic name. Part of the term in Tibetan is pawo, which means a warrior or hero, someone who is brave. Their bravery consists of three types of fearlessness. Bodhisattvas are not

discouraged by the fact that the beings whom they vow to liberate are limitless in number. They are not discouraged by the fact that it will take them an incredibly long time to attain enlightenment. And they are also not afraid to give away their head and their limbs, if that is what they need to do to benefit others. They have these three types of fearlessness.

The vajrayana practices of the generation and completion stages are very profound methods that can cause one to advance on this path quickly. In fact, if one has practiced on the path in previous lifetimes and is of very sharp faculties, like Milarepa, then one can attain Buddhahood in a single life.

In short, the tradition of the mahayana explains that samsara is just a mistake. It is a mere error in perception, and if you ask what enlightenment is, it is just the elimination of that mistake. Nothing more; that is all. Does that answer the second part of your question?

QUESTION: What happens when you clear away this mistaken perception?

RINPOCHE: When you clear away this mistake, what appears is the infinite expanse of purity.

QUESTION: Does the infinite expanse appear to be permanent in its essence?

Translator: When people who do not know how to speak Tibetan [very well] ask questions, then they can confuse the Tibetan terms for purity and permanence, which, coming from an English speaking tongue, sound quite the same in Tibetan. So we got a little bit of unexpected explanation because I did not pronounce the Tibetan for permanence properly. Instead of asking Rinpoche about permanence, I asked him about the purity aspect of this infinite expanse of purity.

RINPOCHE: Here\* to say that it is an expanse of purity means that there is nothing impure. As in a dream, you can dream of seeing different kinds of things which look very dirty and repulsive, but none of these things exist, because it is just a dream. From the perspective that there is no impurity it is called the infinite expanse of purity.

~ \*Editor's note: In the context of the teachings of the second turning of the wheel of dharma, to which the commentaries of Chandrakirti and Nagarjuna pertain.

As to the second aspect of the question, whether or not what is left when one clears away all mistaken perception is permanent in essence, the answer is that it transcends both permanence and impermanence. Sometimes it might be explained with the word permanent, but what this means is not the permanence that is the opposite of impermanence; it is the permanence which transcends both concepts of impermanence and permanence. In the tradition of the mahayana it is explained that clean and unclean, permanent and impermanent, and so forth exist only in dependence upon each other. You can only have one if you have the other. Therefore, they are just mere appearances that are dependently arisen; they have no inherent existence. The nature of all of them is undifferentiated appearance/emptiness. For example, you could have a dream of a big rock mountain and think, "Wow this is something very stable and permanent," and in dependence upon that you could have a notion of something else being impermanent. But we have to understand also that our notion of permanence in the first place depends upon first having a notion of something impermanent. You cannot have one without the other. But since it is just a dream, neither of them is real; they are just mere appearance.

QUESTION: What is a shravaka, and is there a path to being a shravaka? And do they not have

some qualities of being of the mahayana in that they listen to the dharma and explain it to others?

RINPOCHE: There are shravakas, those who listen and hear, and according to the description of them they have very little compassion, certainly less compassion than mahayana practitioners. They have great disgust for and renunciation of samsara. Of the two kinds of selflessness, they believe that there is no self in the individual, but they do not believe in the selflessness of phenomena. So they practice according to the selflessness of the individual alone, and follow this path exclusively. In places like Thailand, Burma and Sri Lanka, they practice only the shravaka path without accepting or practicing the mahayana or the vajrayana teachings. They do not believe in the mahayana, and do not practice it.

QUESTION: What is an arhat?

Translator: An arhat is the highest level of realization attained by both pratyekaBuddhas and shravakas.

RINPOCHE: Arhat, as it was translated into Tibetan, literally means "destroyer of the enemy." Here the enemy is your mental afflictions, your kleshas. The way you destroy that enemy is by realizing selflessness, because when you realize that there is no self, then there is nobody to have any mental afflictions. When you first attain that state, you are still alive, so you are called an arhat with remainder, because you still have a body. When you die, you are called an arhat without remainder. When that happens, it is described as being like a candle flame that just goes out, or water that completely evaporates. There is no more rebirth in samsara. There is just the expanse of peace. There is no more rebirth, because there is nothing left. That is how they describe it.

The Tibetan tradition is to practice the paths of the shravakas, of the mahayana, and of the vajrayana altogether. In Tibetan monasteries the conduct is the conduct of the shravakayana, what the monks and nuns study is the mahayana, and what they practice is the vajrayana. It is like that.

QUESTION: Is there an eternal soul, and if there is not, how do we explain rebirth and karma?

RINPOCHE: In Buddhism there is no such thing as a self or a soul, whatever you want to call it. That which is pointed to by all of these terms that imply a truly existent, permanent self-entity does not really exist. What there is is a mere appearance of a self, an illusory being, just like the self that appears in a dream. So when we talk about going from past lives to future lives, it is this dream-like self, this mere appearance of a self, that is held to go from one life to the next. But really there is no self at all. Since actually there is no self or soul, then there is no permanent self or soul either. This recognition prevents one from falling into the extreme of permanence or realism. But since no one denies the mere appearance of a self, just as you cannot deny the appearance of a self in a dream, then that prevents one from falling into the extreme of nihilism or annihilation. We dream, and in dreams we do all kinds of different things, but really there is nothing happening. There are no actions being performed. When we dream and we do not know that we are dreaming, then it appears that this activity is real. When we know that we are dreaming, we see that the dream is just a mere appearance, and we see that the ultimate nature of the dream is that there is no self and that there is no activity. The nature of reality transcends the existence of self, phenomena, and activity in the same way. This is a good way to think about it.

Another way to understand these three levels of thinking about it is that if you dream and you do not know you are dreaming, then that is like the one that thinks things are real. If you dream and you know you are dreaming, then that is like understanding that this reality is just a mere appearance; there is nothing more to it than that. And then there is the stage of waking up in the morning and knowing that there is really no difference between knowing you are dreaming and not knowing you are dreaming. Where is this person who did not know they were dreaming? Where is the person in the dream who knew they were dreaming? There is really no difference, and that describes the nature of ultimate reality. So it is like that.

QUESTION: Can Rinpoche talk a little bit or explain a little bit about the idea of the second mind generation? What does that really mean? Is that just another name for the second bhumis?

RINPOCHE: The second mind generation and the second bhumis mean the same thing. Mind generation is a condensed way of saying generating the mind of bodhicitta. Generally you could say that there are many different ways to generate the mind of bodhicitta, which also includes relative bodhicitta. But here we are not talking about relative bodhicitta, because we are talking about beings who have reached the noble grounds. On each successive ground, as bodhisattvas progress in development through the ten bodhisattva grounds, they give rise to ultimate bodhicitta in a progressively more subtle and profound way.

These ten bodhisattva grounds or bhumis are stages in the realization of the genuine nature of reality. The first bodhisattva ground is called the path of seeing because you see something that you never saw before, namely emptiness. The second through the tenth grounds are called the path of meditation, on which you become accustomed to what you have seen and your realization of it grows. Then at the end of the tenth bhumis you reach the ground of enlightenment. Now we will recite the verses one more time and then meditate.

[Students recite the verses and meditate.

Rinpoche and the students dedicate the merit.]

Good night.

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

L3: [The Third Mind Generation: The Luminous (13 verses) – Patience]

☿(i.e. Resume: The luminosity of being free from all elaborations of dualistic appearance and anger; always understanding others, their conditioned situation, having compassion for them; never creating more troubles and bad karma; with great peace of mind favorable to develop superior concentration. Patience while seeing the emptiness of the three. Combining method (never reacting negatively) and wisdom (non-duality, dependent origination).

☿-- Patience is based on understanding the conditioning of samsara (the cause of anger), and the need to stop this conditioning in us and in others (starting with patience, not retaliating because it will only perpetuate it). Developing wisdom instead of reacting. Realizing the emptiness of the three, the role of ignorance as the root of all unwholesome actions, the need to stop this cycle.)

☿(i.e. The definition of the third ground is a Superior Bodhisattva's path that has abandoned middling-big, innate true grasping, its principal object of abandonment, and that

has attained a surpassing practice of the perfection of patience from within the ten perfections.)

Sarva Mangalam!

Let us sing The Song of Meaningful Connections.

[Students sing. See page 12.]

Before listening to the teachings, please give rise to the precious attitude of bodhicitta, which means that for the benefit of all sentient beings who are as limitless in number as the sky is vast in its extent, please aspire to attain the state of enlightenment, which abides neither in existence nor in peace. In order to do that we must listen to, reflect upon, and meditate on the teachings of the genuine dharma with all of the enthusiasm we can muster in our hearts. This is the precious attitude of bodhicitta; please give rise to it and listen.

Tonight we will look at the third bodhisattva ground, The Luminous. There are three sections to the explanation of this ground. The first looks at the etymology of the name for this particular ground, which is based on the qualities of this ground. Then there is an explanation of the qualities themselves that distinguish this ground. And finally, through a praise of these qualities, there is the conclusion.

-----  
L4: [A. The etymology of the ground, the basis of characteristics]

The first verse reads:

\     ###  
\     Here the kindling of all objects of knowledge is consumed in a fire  
\     Whose light is the reason this third ground is called The Luminous.  
\     At this time, an appearance like the copper sun  
\     Dawns for the heirs of the sugatas. (1)  
  
\     ///  
\     [III.1]  
\     28.  
\     Because there arises the light of the fire  
\     That consumes all the fuel of objects of knowledge, this third ground is Luminous  
(3).  
\     At this time there arises for the Sugatas' Son  
\     A copper-like appearance similar to the sun.

☿(i.e. The Bodhisattva on the third ground attains a powerful wisdom, which is like a fire whose light eradicates all elaborations of dualistic appearance during meditative equipoise; and when he rises from meditation he experiences a coppery glow pervading the whole environment, rather like the appearance of the sky before sunrise. For this reason the third ground is called 'Luminous'.)

Here all objects of knowledge are compared to kindling, and primordial awareness—the wisdom, the mind of the bodhisat-tvas—is compared to a fire which consumes these objects of knowledge. It is said to burn them up because all objects of knowledge are perceived dualistically, and all dualistic fabrications of something to perceive and a perceiver are



completely pacified in the meditative equipoise of the bodhisattva on this bhumi. Because there is a light which comes from this fire of the bodhisattva's wisdom in meditative equipoise, this third ground is called The Luminous.

In post-meditation, the stage of subsequent attainment of the bodhisattva on the third ground, there is an appearance like the copper light of the sun before it rises. This is described in Tibetan with an experiential word, marlamewa, which refers to the light in the sky of a beautiful sunrise; everything is a beautiful copper color. That is how the bodhisattvas on this ground experience their post-meditation.

-----  
L4: [B. The good qualities that characterize this ground]

The next section is an explanation of the qualities of the ground itself, and has two parts. The first is an explanation of how the practice of the perfection of patience becomes superior here, how it comes to the fore. And then there is an explanation of the other good qualities that come on this ground. First, in the description of patience, there is a description of how patience itself becomes superior. Then there is a description of how patience is meditated upon, and finally, there is a description of the different types of patience.

L5: [B.1 The surpassing patience on this ground - of bodhisattvas]

As to the description of how patience becomes superior, the second verse reads:

\     ###  
\     Even if someone becomes enraged with a bodhisattva, who is not an appropriate  
object of anger,  
\     And cuts the flesh and bone from their body  
\     Ounce by ounce over a long period of time,  
\     The bodhisattva's patience with the one who is cutting grows even greater. (2)  
  
\     ///  
\     29.  
\     Even if someone inappropriately angered  
\     Were to cut flesh and bone from his body,  
\     Piece by piece for a long time,  
\     He would generate a superior patience (3) towards the mutilator.

¢(i.e. Out of compassion for the mutilator)

The commentary reads: "If it should happen that even though there is no good reason why anybody should get angry at this bodhisattva on the third ground, this bodhisattva who is not an appropriate object of anger, if some angry person wants to fight with them and cuts the bodhisattva's flesh down deep to the bones in their body, cutting off parts of their body, and, in order to make it really hurt, cutting them off piece by piece and ounce by ounce in different sections, slowly over a long period of time, even if that should happen, since the bodhisattva has such great patience, their patience with the one who is cutting them into little pieces will grow even greater."

Then there is a description of the way in which the bodhisattvas cultivate and meditate on patience. This has two parts. The first is how they meditate from the perspective of the genuine nature of reality, and the second is how they meditate on it from the perspective of

relative reality, from the perspective of superficial appearances or conventional reality.

From the perspective of ultimate or genuine reality, the third verse reads:

\     ###  
\     For the bodhisattvas who see selflessness,  
\     The flesh cut off of them, the one who is cutting, the length of time cut, and  
the manner in which it is done—  
\     All these phenomena they see are like reflections,  
\     And for this reason as well they are patient. (3)  
  
\     ///  
\     30.  
\     Furthermore, for the Bodhisattva who has seen selflessness,  
\     What is cut, by whom, at what time and in what manner - (i.e. the three)  
\     All these phenomena are seen to be like reflections;  
\     Therefore he is patient.

¢(i.e. Realizing the emptiness of the three.)

The commentary reads: "And not only this, which refers to what just came before, but the bodhisattvas who see selflessness see that the flesh that is cut off them, the person who is cutting them, the length of time during which it is being cut, and the way in which the person is cutting them, their style, all of these phenomena, the bodhisattvas see are just like reflections and nothing more than that. And it is for this reason as well that the bodhisattvas are able to be so incredibly patient."

L5: [B.2 The way to rely upon other patience - for ordinary beings]

From the perspective of relative truth, there are three main subdivisions.

1. The first is that one meditates on patience after having thought about the faults of anger, about what is wrong with anger.
2. The second is to meditate on patience after thinking about the good qualities or the benefits that patience brings. These are the two main points,
3. and the third section, which is a concluding verse, brings these two ideas together, the faults of anger and the good qualities of patience.

L6: [B.2.1 The unsuitability of getting angry]

Concerning the faults of anger, there are four different parts.

1. The first is that anger is illogical because it brings no benefit.
2. The second is that anger is illogical because it turns something good into something bad.
3. The third is that one thinks about what an incredibly powerful negative state of mind anger is.
4. And finally, one thinks of the great variety of faults that come about due to anger.

For each of these reasons one meditates on patience. Anger brings no benefits, turns something good into something bad, is an incredibly powerful state of negativity, and has many flaws.

L7: [i. Anger is unsuitable because it is unnecessary and very faulty]

The fourth verse, stating that anger brings no benefit, reads:

\ ###  
 \ Once the harm is done, if one becomes angry,  
 \ Does that anger reverse what has happened?  
 \ Therefore, anger certainly brings no benefit here,  
 \ And will be of detriment in future lives as well. (4)

\ ///  
 \ 31.  
 \ If someone harms us and we become angry,  
 \ Does our anger undo what was done?  
 \ Thus getting angry is certainly senseless here,  
 \ And contradictory with the world beyond.

¢(i.e. Anger never brings redress, but only adds to our present troubles; and because it causes suffering in future lives it is also contradictory with our wish for future happiness.)

The commentary reads: "If someone does one harm, and then one gets angry at the person who has committed this harm, then the question is, 'Does that anger change anything? Does it reverse what has already happened?'" This is a rhetorical question, because the text goes on to say, "Therefore, getting angry definitely brings no benefit; it does not accomplish anything and does cause one suffering, because anger is not a very pleasant state to be in. It does not bring any benefit here in this life, and also after death, in future lives, it will bring suffering, because the result of being angry is the experience of unpleasant karma in the future."

L7: [ii. Not wishing future suffering and retaliating harmfully are contradictory]

The second way to meditate on patience is to think about how anger is illogical because when you get angry, it turns something good into something bad. This is explained in the fifth verse, which reads:

\ ###  
 \ The harm one experiences is said to be the very thing  
 \ That exhausts whatever wrong deeds one performed in the past.  
 \ So why would the bodhisattva, through anger and harming another,  
 \ Again plant the seeds for future suffering to be endured? (5)

\ ///  
 \ 32.  
 \ How can one who wants to assert that he is eradicating  
 \ The effects of non-virtuous actions committed in the past  
 \ Sow the seeds of future suffering  
 \ Through anger and harm towards others?

¢(i.e. It is due to our accumulated karma. We should try to stop the cycle, not to create more bad karma. We should accept patiently with a positive mind gradually purifying non-virtue and sowing the seeds of future happiness.)

And the commentary reads: "When somebody harms us now, that is the result of some negative action that we did to them in the past. So we are just getting that harm in return. And when we experience that harm in return, then that eliminates the debt; it exhausts the negative deeds we performed in the past. It is the harm we experience that causes this exhaustion of

negative deeds. So if that is the case, then why would bodhisattvas get angry at the person who is doing them harm? Why would they bring suffering to themselves through further anger? When you get angry, you only plant again the seeds for future suffering. So why would you turn something good, which is the exhaustion of negative deeds, into something bad, which would be the seed of experiencing suffering in the future? It makes no sense, which is why bodhisattvas do not get angry, but instead practice patience."

L7: [iii. Anger is unsuitable because it destroys virtues previously accumulated over a long time]

The sixth verse explains how bodhisattvas meditate on patience, contemplating what an incredibly powerful negativity anger is:

```
\    ###
\    Since getting angry with bodhisattvas
\    Instantly destroys all the virtue
\    That generosity and discipline have accumulated over a hundred eons,
\    There is no greater negativity than impatience. (6)

\    ///
\    33.
\    Through getting angry with Conquerors' Sons [i.e. a Bodhisattva]
\    Virtues accumulated from giving and moral discipline
\    Over a hundred aeons are destroyed in an instant;
\    Therefore there is no evil greater than anger.
```

¢(i.e. We never know who the other is.)

So the commentary here reads: "If one gets angry at a bodhisattva—bodhisattvas who have only great loving kindness and compassion— then in an instant this anger destroys all the virtue, generosity, right conduct or discipline that one has accumulated over the course of a hundred eons. Therefore, there is no more powerful, no stronger or greater negativity than impatience." To explain this further it says, "If it is a bodhisattva who gets angry at a bodhisattva—if they are equal bodhisattvas— then one instant of anger destroys a hundred eons [of accumulated merit and virtue,] but if it is an ordinary person who gets angry at a bodhisattva, then it destroys a thousand eons' worth." And if a bodhisattva gets angry at a bodhisattva in a way that does not even manifest as actions of body and speech, but just as a mental state, then for however many instances of angry mind they have, for that many kalpas do they have to continue to wear their armor [of patience]. For that many kalpas do they have to continue to practice. For example, if the bodhisattva is on the great path of accumulation, on the highest level of the first of the five paths leading to Buddhahood, and they are ready to progress to the path of junction, but they get angry at a bodhisattva who has already received a prophecy of enlightenment,\* then for as many instances as they had that angry mind, for that many eons will they not be able to progress to the next path, the path of junction. For that many eons they will have to continue training where they are.\*\* The reason that this is so is that the bodhisattva's vow is to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings. Getting angry with somebody is contradictory to that vow, [and so it has grave consequences.]

~ \*Editor's note: It is taught that when a bodhisattva attains the eighth bodhisattva ground—after which they experience no further kleshas and therefore no longer create karma—they receive a prophecy directly from the Buddhas or from their yidam predicting

precisely when they will attain Buddhahood and bestowing on them a new name.

~ \*\*Editor's note: In 1982, when teaching the paramita of patience, Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche taught that one instance of anger destroys kalpas and kalpas of accumulated merit, but added that one should also know that one instance of patience in the face of great anger accumulates many kalpas of merit.

L7: [iv. Stopping anger having contemplated the many faults of impatience]

The first three lines of the seventh verse explains how bodhisattvas meditate on patience, contemplating the many flaws of impatience:

```
\    ###
\    It makes one ugly, brings one close to those not genuine,
\    And robs one of the ability to discriminate right from wrong.
\    Impatience quickly hurls one into the lower realms— (7abc)

\    ///
\    34ac.
\    Impatience creates unattractive forms, leads to the unholy,
\    Robs us of our discrimination that knows right from wrong,
\    And soon throws us into lower realms.
```

The first fault of anger mentioned here is that it makes one look ugly. You may be a very beautiful looking person, but anger instantly makes your face into something repulsive. Anger also leads you into the company of those who are not genuine beings. This could also be read to mean that it causes you to be reborn as someone who is not a genuine being.\*\*\* Anger also robs one of the ability to discriminate right from wrong. It agitates the mind, makes us blind, covering over our intelligence or prajna. Thus, we no longer make good decisions. These flaws of anger affect us in this life, but anger and impatience can also affect us in our next life, because they can quickly hurl us into the lower realms. So, thinking about all of these faults of anger, one meditates on patience.

~ \*\*\*Editor's note: The word genuine is very often now being used to translate the Tibetan word *dampa*, which previously had been translated as holy. Whether genuine is being used here in this sense, or in the ordinary sense of being sincere, straightforward, and non-deceptive is not clear.

L6: [B.2.2 The suitability of relying upon patience]

L7: [i. Contemplating the many benefits of patience]

Having examined the faults of anger, the text in the last line of the seventh verse and in the eighth verse examines the good qualities of patience:

```
\    ###
\    Patience brings out the good qualities opposite to these. (7d)

\    ###
\    Patience makes one beautiful and endears one to the genuine beings.
\    It brings one skill in knowing what is appropriate and what is not.
\    Later it brings birth as a human or a god
\    And exhaustion of negative deeds as well. (8)

\    ///
```

\ 34d.  
 \ Patience produces qualities opposite to what has been explained .  
 \ ///  
 \ 35.  
 \ From patience come beauty, closeness to holy beings,  
 \ Skill in knowing the suitable and unsuitable;  
 \ And after this, birth as a human or god;  
 \ And the eradication of negativity.

The good qualities that patience brings out, which are the opposites of the faults of anger, are listed in the eighth verse. Patience gives one a beautiful appearance. The practice of patience endears one to the genuine beings. Furthermore, the practice of patience protects one's intelligence from degeneration; in fact one's intelligence will grow stronger, enabling one to know even more clearly what is and is not appropriate to do. A further good consequence of patience is that its practice brings one birth as a god or as a human being in the future, as well as the exhaustion of negative actions and negative mental states such as anger.

L7: [ii. In summary, an exhortation to rely upon patience]

The concluding verse of this particular subsection states both the faults of anger and the good qualities of patience:

\ ###  
 \ Ordinary beings and heirs of the Victor  
 \ Should realize the faults of anger and the good qualities of patience,  
 \ Abandon impatience, and always quickly rely  
 \ On the patience praised by the noble ones. (9)  
 \ ///  
 \ 36.  
 \ Knowing the faults of anger and the good qualities of patience  
 \ In ordinary beings and Conquerors' Sons,  
 \ We should quickly abandon impatience  
 \ And always rely upon patience praised by Superior beings.

The commentary reads that, "Ordinary individuals, meaning those who do not realize the truth, and the spiritual heirs of the Victor, the bodhisattvas who do, should both know the faults of ordinary beings' anger and the good qualities of the patience practiced by bodhisattvas, and knowing that, should abandon impatience and always quickly and closely rely on the patience praised by noble beings."

L5: [B.3 The divisions of the perfection of patience]

Next there is a discussion of the different types of patience. Verse ten reads:

\ ###  
 \ Even though dedicated to the enlightenment of perfect Buddhahood,  
 \ If it focuses on the three spheres, it is worldly.  
 \ When there is no focus, the Buddha taught,  
 \ This is a transcendent perfection beyond the world. (10)  
 \ ///



\ 37.  
 \ Although dedicated to the enlightenment of complete Buddhahood,  
 \ If there is observation of the three, it is mundane.  
 \ Buddha taught that if there is no observation,  
 \ That is a supramundane perfection.

When one practices patience, meaning that one refrains from being angry at the person who does one harm, even if one practices this patience as a means to attain the enlightenment of perfect Buddhahood and dedicates the merit arising out of one's practice of patience to that attainment, still, if while practicing patience one focuses on the three spheres as being real, then one's practice is still worldly. However, if there is no such focus on these three spheres as being real, then the Buddha taught that one's practice of the paramita is a transcendent perfection which goes beyond the world. Therefore, it would be better if we did not take these three spheres to be real.

L5: [B.4 The other pure qualities that arise on this ground]

Next is a praise of the other qualities that come on this third ground:

\ ###  
 \ On this ground the Victor's heirs gain the samadhis and clairvoyances,  
 \ Desire and aversion are completely exhausted,  
 \ And they are ever able to vanquish  
 \ The desire experienced by worldly beings. (11)  
 \ ///  
 \ 38.  
 \ The Conquerors' Son on this ground  
 \ Has the mental stabilizations and clairvoyance  
 \ Attachment and hatred are completely extinguished,  
 \ And he is always able to overcome the desirous attachment of worldly beings.

¶(i.e. He or she attains extraordinary concentration and so special realizations of the four absorptions of the form realm, the four absorptions of the formless realm, the four immeasurables, and the five clairvoyances. Bodhisattvas understand that there is no lasting benefit in being reborn in the form and formless realms. However, they still strive to attain the form and formless realm absorptions. These are powerful, blissful minds that are always conjoined with mental suppleness. Meditation on emptiness with a form or formless realm absorption is much more powerful than it is with a desire realm mind because these minds readily mix with emptiness, making it much easier to overcome dualistic appearance. When used in this way these absorptions are not mundane paths that lead to rebirth as a samsaric god, but supramundane paths that lead to liberation and enlightenment.)

The commentary reads: "On this third ground, The Luminous, the heirs of the Victor gain four formless samadhis or states of meditative concentration, the four immeasurables, as well as the five types of clairvoyance." They gain these special meditative and mental abilities, as well as seeing, according to the root verse, that desire and aversion are completely exhausted.\* According to the commentary, desire, aversion, and ignorance—which are the three root mental afflictions—are completely exhausted, meaning that everything which they give up on this particular ground they give up completely. The reason that they are able to realize these qualities and to give up what they need to give up is that they have the patience which is not afraid of profound emptiness. This particular type of patience is able to bear

patiently and without being afraid the profundity of the true nature of reality. Therefore, these bodhisattvas are always able to vanquish the desire experienced by ordinary beings in the desire realm, and in this way they become like Indra\*\* in the sense that they are able to lead beings out of the mud of their desire. Indra is just an example here. It is not particularly clear why he is used, but the main point is that bodhisattvas on this ground are able to lead beings out of the mud of desire and attachment in which they are stuck.

~ \*Editor's note: As translator Ari Goldfield explained, the root text explicitly mentions desire and aversion as completely exhausted; the commentary also mentions ignorance as being exhausted. This is definitely the case—on each bhumi, the bodhisattvas eliminate more and more of the cognitive obscurations as their realization of emptiness gets clearer and clearer. These cognitive obscurations come under the heading of ignorance.

~ \*\*Editor's note: Indra is one of the gods in the Hindu pantheon.

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#### L4: [C. The characteristics of the first three perfections]

The concluding two verses of this chapter are a common summary of the three paramitas discussed this far in the text and a further particular summary of this third ground. The common summary, contained in verse twelve, reads:

\ ###  
\ Generosity and so forth—these three dharmas  
\ The Sugata particularly praised to lay people.  
\ They are also the accumulation of merit  
\ And the causes of the Buddha's form body. (12)

\ ///  
\ 39.  
\ These three Dharmas, giving [moral discipline and patience] and so forth,  
\ Are especially praised by the Sugatas for lay people.  
\ They are known as the 'collection of merit',  
\ The cause of a Buddha's Body that is the nature of form.

¢(i.e. The two collections: 1. the collection of merit, for the Form Body of a Buddha we need the three first perfections (generosity, moral discipline and patience); 2. the collection of wisdom, for the Truth Body of a Buddha we need the two last perfection (mental stabilization and wisdom). The fourth perfection, effort, is equally a cause of both bodies. Not the last four perfections of the set of ten are included in the sixth, wisdom.)

The commentary reads: "Generosity and so forth—meaning generosity, discipline, and patience—the Buddha in his teachings particularly praised to lay bodhisattvas. Their practice also generates the accumulation of merit, and at the time of the fruition of Buddhahood, these accumulations of merit become the cause of the Buddha's form kaya, form body.

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#### L4: [D. Conclusion by way of expressing the good qualities of the ground]

The thirteenth verse is a particular summary of the third ground:

\ ###  
 \ The heirs of the Victor, abiding in the sun, these luminous ones,  
 \ First perfectly dispel the darkness present in themselves,  
 \ And then fervently yearn to vanquish the darkness in others.  
 \ On this ground, though incredibly sharp, they do not become angry. (13)  
  
 \ ///  
 \ 40.  
 \ This Luminous (3), abiding in the sun, the Conquerors' Son,  
 \ First completely removes the darkness within himself,  
 \ And then strongly wishes to eliminate the darkness of living beings.  
 \ Being very sharp on this ground, he never gets angry.

¢(i.e. Because the Bodhisattva's wisdom is very sharp and as clear as the sun, it is impossible for him to lose his patience with faulty beings, and so he never gets angry.)

The commentary reads that, because of the brilliance of their luminosity, it is as though the heirs of the Victor who have reached the third ground abide in the sun. Their brilliance first perfectly dispels the darkness of ignorance in their own mind-stream; the darkness, which was the obstacle to their reaching the third ground, is dispelled by their brilliance the moment they take birth on it. Thereafter, they fervently yearn to remove the darkness in the mind-streams of other beings, which darkness prevents these other beings from reaching the same level of attainment, and through teaching the dharma the luminous bodhisattvas are able to cause them to do so. Since they have been able to eliminate the darkness and the faults that had prevented them from reaching this ground, the faculties of these bodhisattvas are incredibly sharp, like the brilliance of the rays of the sun. Even so, they do not get frustrated with people who are not so sharp. They do not get angry at beings who still have lots of faults, because the bodhisattvas' mind-streams are oiled by the good qualities of their compassion. They are made soft by the quality of their compassion and because they practice patience.

Next comes the name of the chapter from the text called Entrance to the Middle Way, The Third Generation of the Mind of Ultimate Bodhicitta. Now let's recite the root verses together.

[Students recite.]

Now let's sing The Anger Cooling Song. (See page 43.)

Milarepa sang this song to Rechungpa when he was about to beat Dharlo. After hearing it, Rechungpa calmed down, so it is a very good song. It gives instructions on how to meditate on patience by remembering the profound view, how to meditate on patience by remembering the profound meditation, how to meditate on patience by remembering the profound conduct, and how to meditate on patience by remembering the profound fruition or result. Having heard the song, Rechungpa thought about the profound view, meditation, conduct, and fruition, and this helped him to practice patience. If you do not meditate on and practice patience, your view, meditation, conduct, and fruition may all be very profound, but they will still fall apart. But if you do meditate on patience, they will get better and better.

[Students sing.]

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L4: [Now are there any questions?]

QUESTION: In verses 7 and 8, there is a reference to bringing one close to those not genuine. Does that refer to those who have an understanding of the genuine nature of reality?

Translator: The Tibetan for a genuine being, or as Rinpoche prefers, a holy person, used to be translated as saint.

RINPOCHE: Genuine beings are those one will become close to or by whom one will be well regarded. There is some quality of being good here, of having a quality of genuineness. Those who do not have this good quality will regard an angry person as being good. So, if you get angry, you will find yourself attracting the company of those who do not have this quality of goodness or genuineness.\*

~ \*Editor's note: Translators into the English language have for some time struggled with how to translate the Tibetan term *dampa*. Originally it was generally translated as "holy," but because in our daily western experience there was very little objective frame of reference for the term holy, and because the frame of reference that came from the interface with Tibetan Buddhism—the many extraordinary beings who were so direct, down to earth, humorous, unpretentious, and genuine, and yet were able to show one profound dimensions of experience and awareness that one had never seen before and could never have imagined existed before meeting them— because these interfaces had so little to do with the notions of holiness that we had imagined in the absence of genuine examples of it, an effort has been made to find an alternative translation to the term "holy" that would avoid all the theistic overtones of perfect conventional goodness and righteousness and any notions of elevated status that had accreted in our ignorance to the term "holy." One alternative to "holy" is the term genuine. In this regard, Rinpoche's translator Ari Goldfield writes: "The Tibetan for 'genuine being' is 'skyes bu dam pa.' 'Holy being' is how it used to be translated, which is how Rinpoche picked up on "holy man." But most translators these days avoid the word 'holy,' not only because of its theistic religious connotations, but also because 'genuine' seems more accurate. 'sKyes bu' means person. The adjective 'dam pa' is used in 'don dam bden pa,' frequently translated as 'ultimate truth,' but better translated, I think, as 'genuine reality.' 'Dam pa' is also found in 'yi dam' where, Ponlop Rinpoche says, it means 'close,' as in this case, close to your 'yid' or mind. So it seems there to have the sense of 'genuine' and 'true.' According to the Great Tibetan Dictionary (tshig mdzod chen mo) a 'skyes bu dam pa' is a 'pags pa,' meaning, someone who has realized 'don dam bden pa.' In English, this would be: A 'genuine being' is someone who has realized 'genuine reality,' and therefore is genuine and true, undeceiving and totally dedicated to helping others to realize the same thing." However, if one returns to the Old English root of the word "holy," which is *halig*, we find that it is a cognate of the Old English *hal*, meaning whole. Here, one gets back to the notion of whole, to the notion of being undivided in any sense, undivided against oneself in the sense of not engaging in actions of body, speech, and mind that one does not thoroughly believe in, and, more fundamentally, undivided in the sense of not still being subject to dualistic perception and the fundamental samsaric split between a self, to whose falsely imagined self interest we cling, and others, on whom we fixate as being desirable, threatening, and/or irrelevant, and whom we strive to manipulate to fulfill our most current samsaric agenda for personal happiness. If we understand holy as that fundamental non-conceptual absence of dualistic clinging and fixation, not only as it pertains to behavior, but more importantly, as it pertains to the very root of perception, then holy might seem to be quite a good translation for *dampa*. It is, after all, that very

absence of dualistic clinging and fixation that makes great beings so totally present, so down to earth, so alive, friendly, humorous, and affectionate, and at the same time makes them the embodiment of primordial, undeluded, transcendent knowing and compassionate skillful means.

If you get angry at somebody, then\*\* we can tell that you are not a genuine being. Whether or not someone is a genuine being is not something that we can know directly. We can only know it through inference, through watching what happens. If somebody practices patience very well, even though they are experiencing a lot of harm, that is a sign that they are such a genuine being.

~ \*\*Editor's note: Bodhisattvas sometimes manifest anger or wrath, as Rinpoche indicates in the question and answer period, because it is either the only way or the most effective way of benefiting a particular student.

Even worldly good qualities diminish through anger. People in the world like to look beautiful, but when they get angry, their beautiful faces turn ugly. Also, when people get angry, their intelligence and common sense go away, and they are no longer able to know what is right to do and what is not right to do.

QUESTION: Could you talk a little more about patience when you are listening to the dharma, patience with your own mind in practice, and patience and fearlessness with regard to emptiness?

RINPOCHE: It is possible to be afraid of the profundity of emptiness, so we need to develop the patience that is not afraid of that profundity. If we do, then we will be able to realize the emptiness that is the nature of reality, and then meditating on and practicing patience will be even easier.

If you have this patience which is not afraid of emptiness, then you can also see that the person who is doing us harm is just a mere dependently arisen appearance, that the harm they are doing is just a mere dependently arisen appearance, and that we who are experiencing the harm are just a mere dependently arisen appearance, too. None of these three spheres is real, and realizing this enables us more easily to meditate on and practice patience. If we dream but do not know we are dreaming, we will not be able to practice patience because we will think that the one who is doing us harm, the harm we are experiencing, and we ourselves who are the one experiencing harm are all real. On the other hand, if we dream and we know we are dreaming, then when somebody comes along and treats us badly, we know it is just a dream and, therefore, no big deal. The harm we are experiencing and we ourselves are also just dream appearances. It is very easy to meditate on and to practice patience when you know that it is all just a dream. That is the difference.

QUESTION: Can Rinpoche expand on what constitutes a god and when do humans, for instance, become gods?

RINPOCHE: The type of god or deity referred to here is not a yidam deity. These are samsaric gods living in samsaric realms. There are gods in the desire realm, the form realm and the formless realm. Here in particular, Chandrakirti is talking about gods in the desire realm who still like to enjoy material pleasures. One can be reborn in any one of six levels of god realms in the desire realm. But these are samsaric beings, not yidam deities. Of these six types of gods, two of them live on the earth and four live in the clouds in the sky, and they all have a great amount of attachment to material things. They are attached to objects

of pleasure, so they are just like people in this regard, and that is why they are in the desire realm. The bodies of these gods are very subtle, so normally we cannot see them. Our bodies are coarse, so the gods can see us, but ordinarily we cannot see them. There are some human beings who can see them, but if we do not have the eyes of wisdom that can see that sort of thing, we will not be able to see them.

The bodies of deities are similar to our body in a dream. Our body in a dream is something subtle that other people cannot see and bodies of deities are just like that. If there are gods, there are also demons. If you exist in a system that believes in these things, you have gods on the one hand and demons on the other. And if there can be gods that you cannot see and demons that you cannot see, then there can also be yidam deities on which we can meditate. So everything works out well. Most religious traditions, in fact, assert the existence of beings you cannot see, assert that there exist beings, gods and demons, who have subtle bodies. We just cannot see them. Of course nowadays there are also a lot of people who think that if you cannot see it, it does not exist. But once you think a bit about how sentient beings appear in dreams with subtle bodies that others cannot see, then slowly one will begin to accept the possibility that there might be sentient beings who exist even though we cannot see their subtle bodies. In the tradition of the mahayana, the great vehicle of Buddhism, beings with coarse bodies and beings with subtle ones are the same in that neither of them are real; neither of them really exist. They are all equally like dreams, like illusions, like the reflection of the moon in a pool of water.

As the bodhisattva Shantideva said in his wisdom chapter of The Guide to the Bodhisattva's Conduct,

- ~ Then wanderers, these dream like beings, what are they?
- ~ If analyzed they're like a banana tree.
- ~ One cannot make definitive distinctions
- ~ Between transcending misery and not.

The comparison of beings to a banana tree has to do with their bodies. If you cut open a banana tree, there is nothing on the inside, and it is similar with sentient beings. If you analyze their bodies, you only find smaller and smaller particles that in the final analysis, or under more and more subtle investigation, do not themselves exist. It turns out that there is nothing really there. This is an analysis of the bodies of sentient beings, not an analysis of their minds. If you analyze beings' minds in contrast to their bodies, what you find is that the nature of mind transcends all conceptual fabrication as to what it might be, and that therefore it is of the nature of great openness and spaciousness and relaxedness. If it is luminosity, it is not like a banana tree. If you realize the nature of mind, then everything becomes open, spacious, and relaxed. Just let go and rest very naturally and loosely. If you do so, sooner or later you will see why the mahasiddhas, the great men and women who realized and still realize the nature of mind have sung a lot of songs about how wonderfully open and spacious and easy an experience it is. This verse by Shantideva has been put to song and it goes like this:

[Translator sings, then students sing.]

QUESTION: When the text talks about a transcendent perfection's being either worldly or beyond the world, what is the world being talked about here, and what does it mean to say that something is beyond it?

RINPOCHE: Here, world and beyond the world refers to the individuals or beings, both human



and non-human, in question. Worldly beings are beings whose minds are confused and therefore have no independence. They are completely under the power of their karma and experience a vast array of different kinds of suffering as a result. Beings who have gone beyond the world are defined as those whose minds are not confused and are therefore completely open and spacious and relaxed, and do not have the same kinds of difficulties. In short, if a person is confused and mistaken with regard to the way they perceive things, then they are a worldly person. On the other hand, if someone is not confused, is not mistaken, then they realize the nature of reality and are on the path of greater and greater realization. These latter beings are said to be beyond the world.\* The unmistaken and unconfused path starts when someone gains the first bodhisattva ground. At that point, one is called a noble or an exalted being, though there is still a lot of confusion left to be purified on the ten bodhisattva grounds. When one reaches the level of enlightenment, then all confusion is completely erased or eliminated. At that point there is no confusion left at all, which is the definition of enlightenment. Ordinary or worldly beings are like those who do not know that they are dreaming. Noble bodhisattvas are like those who know they are dreaming, and Buddhas are like those who have awakened completely.

~ \*Editor's note: In this regard it is important to understand that ordinary beings can have glimpses, momentary experiences (nyam in Tibetan) of the enlightened state, but that these always dissolve, leaving one with memories but still living in a samsaric world replete with anxiety, frustration, and various types of suffering. Beginning with the first bodhisattva ground, the bodhisattva's awareness during meditation is said to be essentially the same as a Buddha's, but different at other times. When not meditating, the bodhisattva sees the world like a dream, or like the reflection of the moon in water, like an illusion, like a magical display, like a hallucination, like a rainbow, a flash of lightning, or an echo, etc. A Buddha's awareness is said to be totally unobscured, the same during meditation and post-meditation.

QUESTION: What is the form body of a Buddha, and what are its causes?

RINPOCHE: This term body comes from the Sanskrit *kaya*, which is an honorific term for body. You could also call it a dimension of enlightenment. The ultimate or actual dimension or body of the enlightenment of the Buddha is the *dharmakaya*, which refers to the enlightened mind itself. As sentient beings the enlightened mind is something we cannot see. So how is a Buddha going to relate to us? A Buddha relates to us through the form dimension of their enlightenment, through their form body, which is two-fold. There is the *sambhogakaya*, which is translated as the enjoyment body, and the *nirmanakaya*, which is the emanation body. The *sambhogakaya* is like the five Buddha families, which only bodhisattvas on the ten *bhumi*s can see. What are ordinary beings able to see? We see the *nirmanakaya*, the emanation body, of which there are three different types. The first is called the supreme emanation body, which is like Shakyamuni Buddha, like the emanation body of a Buddha as it appears to ordinary beings. Then there is also the born emanation body. That is its literal translation. This refers to a Buddha's body when the Buddha takes birth as a fish, a bird, or some other animal or ordinary being to be of benefit to beings in that way. And then there is also what is called the skilled emanation body. At a time when a world is in a particular state of darkness and people in that particular place are not really ready for a Buddha, then Buddhas take birth there as persons skilled in crafts, or art, or literature, or something like that, and are able to make brilliant contributions and develop and invent things that no one was able to invent before. This does not refer to the people who made the atom bomb, because skilled emanations do not make things that are harmful to people; they make only things that

are helpful to people. In India, for example, there was a king named Bishokarma. His name means "great variety of activity," signifying that this particular king invented lots of things that no one had ever heard of or seen before. That king was said to be an emanation of the Buddha.

QUESTION: Sometimes getting angry seems to lead to a good result, maybe not directly because of the anger, but it seems that sometimes as an indirect result something good happens. An example might be when people are experiencing injustice. Can Rinpoche please comment on anger in the context of social movements and human rights movements?

RINPOCHE: When you are talking about human rights [and movements to secure human rights], then the root motivation to benefit others— wanting people to have freedom and a decent life—is very good. In such situations there may temporarily be a bit of anger, but that is something different. It is not the same type of anger as that which is being talked about here, which is necessary to avoid and in reference to which it is necessary to practice patience, because the root motivation is to do good for others. So it can be like that, too.

QUESTION: Thank you. Why were generosity, discipline, and patience praised to lay people in particular?

RINPOCHE: The reason is that householder bodhisattvas have something to give away. They have possessions with which they can practice generosity. That is why generosity was taught to them. Along with generosity they need right conduct, discipline, and patience. On the bodhisattva path, out of loving kindness and compassion, one acts in order to be of benefit to others. Thus, it is taught that it is good to accumulate wealth so that one can give it away to benefit others. That is why there were bodhisattvas who were monarchs, ministers, business tycoons, and great land owners who accumulated wealth and then gave it away for the benefit of others. That is the path of the householder bodhisattva, and that is how it was taught. When bodhisattvas are in such positions of power and wealth, they need to practice generosity, right conduct and discipline, and patience. Similarly bodhisattvas can assume the roles of doctors, nurses, and a wide variety of other professions and occupations, and in all cases they need generosity, discipline, and patience. So, for example, if you are a doctor or a nurse, then you need generosity in the sense of wanting to give medicines and medical attention to people. You need good conduct, and you also need to be patient with those who might do you harm. So those three are important for lay people.

QUESTION: I have a lot of difficulty with the mahayana in general. Before an ordinary being has direct experience of emptiness of self and phenomena then it seems that trying to follow the paramitas up to that point does not diminish suffering but in fact increases suffering. On the one hand, you have the actual fact, "I am angry, I am jealous, I have all of these faults that I am not supposed to have," and on the other hand, there is an ideal presented to us about the way things should be, and there is a tremendous gap between the two of them, which creates terrible suffering. It seems like the same kind of gap that is taught in all the other religions that I usually do not associate with Buddhism. Is this the profound requirement of patience you are referring to, to be able to endure, to be able to persevere through these experiences of inadequacy and all of the other things that we feel?

RINPOCHE: There are stages in the presentation of the teachings that we need to be aware of. First, things are explained to us from the perspective of our faults, the faults of being in samsara, and what is wrong with our status as a samsaric being. And then we do get frustrated; we do feel inadequate and inferior and think, "I am a lousy person and I have

all sorts of faults." Then when we are totally convinced of all the faults we have, it is explained to us that faults do not really exist: First it is explained that there is no one to have any faults, because there is no self in the individual; and then it is explained that the faults themselves do not really exist, because phenomena do not really exist. So we learn about the two types of selflessness just when we are feeling really bad about ourselves as a result of the original explanation of ourselves as defective samsaric beings, and so everything turns out very well.

Another way to explain things is that first we have great attachment to our own existence and to what we perceive as the good things about it. Then it is explained to us that samsara is of the nature of suffering and that nirvana, the state of liberation, is something wonderful. Finally, when we gain certainty in that, that it is really true, then it is explained to us that samsara does not really exist and that nirvana does not really exist either. They are explained as being of the nature of equality.

To explain how the stages of the path work from the perspective of the middle way, the madhyamaka, first, in order to get people to give up negative activity, the cause and result of karma are explained. The causes and results of different karmic acts are explained in detail so that you know that engaging in virtuous activity leads to happiness and engaging in unvirtuous activity leads to suffering. This is all explained as if it were real. Then, when you have gained confidence in the law of karma and have given up negative activity, then it is explained that none of it is real, that there is no self, no action, [no cause and affect,] no phenomena. And then finally, when you are certain nothing is real, that in fact there is no real or true existence in anything, including cause and affect, then it is explained that the nature of reality transcends all conceptual fabrications about what it might or might not be. All experience and all phenomena are of the nature of simplicity in the sense that they are free of any conceptual fabrication about their nature, that they are of the nature of equality. This is how the noble Aryadeva, the student and heart son of the protector Nagarjuna, explained things. First you reverse your tendency towards having no merit, which is the explanation of karma. Having started accumulating merit, you then reverse the belief in the self. Finally, you reverse all views altogether through training in freedom from conceptual fabrications. Those who understand and have accomplished all of these are wise. This is how Aryadeva explained it.

This is an age when people are very smart; they study a lot and have a lot of analytical ability. At such a time it is permissible to put the second stage first. First you learn about selflessness, then you learn about virtuous activity, and finally you learn about the freedom from all conceptual fabrications.\* First you use reason—for example the logic which proves that things do not exist because they are neither one nor many—to prove that there is no self and no phenomena,\*\* that they are not real. Then you can ask, "Well then, what about all of these relative superficial appearances of happiness and suffering? Where do they come from?" They come from karma, they come from good deeds and bad deeds, which is the explanation that reverses the tendency towards not having any merit. Finally, you explain that the nature of reality lies beyond all conceptual fabrications.

It is possible that if you explain the first stage first—that if you explain that engaging in negative actions leads to suffering not only in the human realm but also to birth in the hell realms and hungry ghost realms—people might get too frightened.\*\*\* So it is better to explain things that reasoning can accept, things that have logical proofs. For example, you can prove that there is no self. You can prove that things do not really exist. So you start there and then go on from there. That is a good way proceed.

~ \*Editor's note: Traditionally it was held in the Buddhist tradition to be very dangerous to teach emptiness to beginners, because they might as a consequence conclude nihilistically that since nothing exists, then nothing matters and one may do whatever one wants. Such a conclusion could lead them to engage in negative actions which would lead them into hellish states, which would certainly be empty of inherent existence, but would be experienced by the equally non-existent beings as being very real and immensely painful. Since a great many people in this day and age already hold a nihilistic point of view, it turns out to be very skillful to teach emptiness first, but then to explain to them that emptiness is simply the true nature of karmic interdependence and cause and effect, which all seem very real and potentially very painful if one misbehaves, until one actually attains stable "realization" of emptiness in a direct, non-conceptual, valid way.

~ \*\*Editor's note: See Shenpen Osel, Vol. 2, No. 2, page 20 (footnote) and page 28. (see sections copied here:) [To be "truly existent" something must be unitary, i.e. indivisible, unchanging, and independent of causes and conditions for its existence. Any particle of substantial matter, regardless of how small it is, can theoretically be made to touch another particle of matter. When these two particles touch each other, the right side of one touches the left side of the other. Therefore, each of them has both a left and a right side and, consequently, each can be divided in half. In fact, they are infinitely divisible. By this logic it is demonstrated that matter cannot, in fact, exist substantially as we know it.] // [A dependently arisen entity, anything that has arisen in dependence on other things, has no characteristics, which means that it has no substantial essence. It is not something that truly exists because it is neither one unitary thing nor is it the coming together of many things. We can take this flower as an example of something that is neither one nor many, like all phenomena. This flower is clearly not one, unitary, indivisible thing, because it has many parts. On the other hand it is not many indivisible things because each of these parts in turn has many parts. Since it is not one, unitary, substantial, indivisible thing and since it is also not many unitary, substantial, indivisible things, it does not truly exist. All dependently occurring appearances have no substantial essences because they are beyond being either one indivisible thing or many indivisible things. For examples we have the dependently occurring appearances that we see in dreams. All of the things that we see in dreams are appearances. At the time we are dreaming, they look real, but in fact they have no substantial essence. They have no inherent nature, because they are neither one thing, nor are they many.]

~ \*\*\*Editor's note: It is also possible that the student might have the rather common modern-day notion that dimensions of experience like the hells and the realms of disembodied spirits do not actually exist, but are simply the paranoid fantasies of unsophisticated superstitious minds, in which case they may cease to take any further explanation of Buddhist thought seriously.

QUESTION: I am having a hard time with the notion of a succession of lifetimes and reincarnation, which seems to be central to the Buddhist way of thinking, as far as improving your karma is concerned. Would Rinpoche comment on this question?

RINPOCHE: From the perspective of the great vehicle, past and future lives are not real. If you posit them as being real, then you cannot prove that they happen with reasoning. But on the other hand, if you posit them as just being like dream appearances, illusions like the movement of the moon in a pool of water, then you can prove with reasoning that they exist. You can prove that they have that quality. If you try to prove that they are real, you run into a logical contradiction. To be a sentient being you have to have five aggregates, both

in the last life and in this life. Well if the five aggregates of this life are the same five aggregates as in the previous life, then the five aggregates of the last life must be permanent. But if, on the other hand, the aggregates of this life are different from those of the last life, then the five aggregates from the last life must have been cut; they must have ceased. If so, then where did these five aggregates of this life come from? From space? Did they come without any cause? You cannot posit any relationship between the five aggregates of this life and those of the last that makes any sense. Therefore, what else could it be, other than just a mere appearance, like the movement of the moon in a pool of water? It is just a mere appearance of a succession of lives that is not really happening but appears to be happening.

On the other hand, if you posit past and future lives as being like a moon moving in a pool of water, then there is no logical flaw in that, and it can be proven to be like that with reasoning. The protector Nagarjuna said, "Know that everything is just like the moon's appearance in a pool of water; it is neither real nor false. If you know that, your mind will not be stolen by extreme views." For example, our body that appears in a dream is not the same as our body during the day. And our body during the day is not the same as the body that appears in a dream. Nevertheless, they both appear. They are just mere dependently arisen appearances. As the protector Nagarjuna said in his text *The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way*,

- ~ Like a dream, like an illusion,
- ~ Like a city of gandharvas,
- ~ That's how birth and that's how living,
- ~ That's how dying are taught to be.

[Students sing.]

That is how the protector Nagarjuna expressed it. If you then ask, "How did the Buddha teach it," look at the teachings of the second turning of the wheel of dharma. In the Sutra of the Noble Collection, the Buddha said,

- ~ Know the five skandhas are like an illusion.
- ~ Don't separate the illusion from the skandhas.
- ~ Free of thinking that anything is real—
- ~ This is perfect wisdom's conduct at its best!

[Students sing.]

When we recall again and again our certainty in this way, then this is called, in the mahayana, the practice of post-meditation samadhi of illusion. In the state of meditative equipoise we remember again and again the nature of appearances, and then we meditate in emptiness.

Now, relax and let go within your own basic nature,

[pause for meditation]

[Dedication prayers]

We should sing the aspiration prayer for all beings with whom we have a good or bad connection.

- ~ All you sentient beings I have a good or bad connection with,

- ~ As soon as you have left this confused dimension,
- ~ May you be born in the west in Sukhavati,
- ~ And once you're born there, complete the bhumis and the paths.

Good night.

Sarva Mangalam.

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L3: [The Fourth Mind Generation: The Radiant (2 verses) – Effort]

☿(i.e. The definition of the fourth ground is a Superior Bodhisattva's path that has abandoned small-big, innate true grasping, its principal object of abandonment, and that has attained a surpassing practice of the perfection of effort from within the ten perfections.)

Let's sing The Song of Meaningful Connections.

[Students sing. See page 12.]

Before listening to the teachings please give rise to the precious attitude of bodhicitta, which means that for the benefit of all sentient beings who are as limitless in number as the sky is vast in extent, please aspire to attain the state of complete and perfect enlightenment. In order to do that, we must listen to, reflect upon, and meditate on the teachings of the genuine dharma with great diligence. This is the precious attitude of bodhicitta; please give rise to it and listen.

From among all the topics which comprise the genuine dharma, Rinpoche will explain to us the fourth chapter from the text by the glorious Chandrakirti, called Entrance to The Middle Way. This chapter discusses the fourth bodhisattva bhumi, called The Radiant. In this explanation of the fourth bodhisattva ground, the fourth mind generation in the generation of the ultimate mind of bodhicitta, there are three parts. The first explains how the practice of diligence becomes especially prominent here. The second explains the reason behind this specific name of this particular bodhisattva ground. And the third explains the extraordinary abandonment that occurs on this bhumi.

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L4: [A. The surpassing effort on this ground]

The first verse reads:

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\    ###
\    All good qualities follow after diligence—
\    It is the cause of both the accumulations of merit and wisdom.
\    The ground where diligence blazes
\    Is the fourth, The Radiant. (1)

\    ///
\    [IV.1]
\    41.
\    All good qualities follow upon effort,
\    The cause of the two collections of merit and wisdom.
\    The ground on which effort blazes (4)
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\ Is the fourth, Radiant (4).

¶(i.e. The definition of effort is a virtuous mind that delights in virtue. The opposite, laziness, closes the door to spiritual attainments. -- Listening to teachings, understanding their meaning, and gaining experience of them in meditation all depend upon effort. The definition of perfection of effort is any effort maintained by Bodhicitta. it has two divisions: the transcending perfection of effort (of Bodhisattvas) and the transcendent perfection of effort (of Buddha).)

All good qualities basically fall into two categories. The first, called the category of the higher states, consists of the good qualities of the happy states in samsara, principally the good qualities of gods and of human beings. In order to be born in one of those realms and acquire the good things that come with such a rebirth, one needs to practice virtuous activities that benefits others. The second category, called the category of true excellence, referring to the three types of enlightenment—the enlightenment of shravakas, of pratyekaBuddhas, and of Buddhas—consists of the good qualities, whether they be samsaric or transcend samsara, that follow upon diligence, which means that if you have diligence you can produce these qualities and if you do not, you cannot. Without diligence it is impossible. Any good qualities we experience arise because of our diligence. Diligence is the cause of both the accumulations of merit, which has a focus, and the accumulation of wisdom, which is without any focal reference. The ground on which diligence blazes, meaning where laziness has been completely eradicated, is the fourth bodhisattva ground or bhumi called The Radiant.

The definition of diligence is to delight in virtuous activity. When someone enjoys and is enthusiastic about doing good things, then that is diligence. Four characteristics of diligence are enumerated in the text called the Mahayana Sutra Lankara or the Ornament of the Mahayana Sutras:

- 1. Diligence is defined by the disappearance of its opposite;
- 2. it is embraced by non-conceptual primordial wisdom;
- 3. it fulfills all the needs of sentient beings;
- 4. and it makes them happy and causes them to be ripened along one of the three paths.

For it to be considered a transcendent perfection, a paramita, it has to have these four characteristics.

First, it is able to dispel its opposite. The opposite of diligence is laziness. The paramita, the transcendent perfection, of diligence dispels laziness. It can be so strong that there is no opportunity for laziness to remain anywhere. It can take such firm root in the mind that there is no place in the mind for laziness; the mind becomes completely inoculated with diligence. And so that is the first defining characteristic.

The definition of laziness is to be faint-hearted, to think, "I cannot really do it; I cannot attain the state of liberation; I cannot become enlightened; I am not good enough. I cannot begin by listening a little and reflecting a little and meditating a little and moving on the path from there. It is just not going to work." If we have this feeling of being inferior and being discouraged, then we cannot accomplish the goal of the path, and that is laziness. We need to realize that all of the Buddhas who have come before us started in exactly the same place we are now. They all started as ordinary beings. They all had to listen, reflect, meditate, and progress in stages on the path. They all had to go through the bodhisattvas' stages before they became Buddhas. So, if we think, "I can do it; they did

it, I can do it," then that is the type of mental fortitude, courage, and confidence we need.

We can, in fact, accomplish the ultimate fruition of enlightenment because every single sentient being has Buddha nature. The basic nature of every sentient being is fundamentally awake and enlightened. Therefore, all we need do is uncover this enlightened potential through the process of listening, reflecting, and meditating on the path, and then we will realize our basic nature, which has been there all along. It is not the case that only good sentient beings have Buddha nature and bad ones do not. Every sentient being, no matter who they are—whether an animal or any other type of sentient being—has Buddha nature in exactly the same way. No sentient being has less of it or more of it; no sentient being is lacking it while others have it. The enlightened potential pervades every sentient being equally. Buddha nature is undifferentiated. It is not differentiated among people according to cast, blood line, gender, wealth, religious tradition, philosophy, profundity of view, the absence or presence or degree of faith, or intelligence. It pervades every single sentient being equally and in the exact same way. It is all pervasive in the same way that butter pervades milk, as sesame oil pervades sesame seeds, as pure gold and pure silver pervade gold and silver ore. Buddha nature is completely and fully present in every sentient being; the basic nature of every being's mind is enlightenment. Is that not wonderful? It does not matter what degree of faith in the dharma a person has. If you have faith, you have Buddha nature; if you do not have faith, you have Buddha nature. You cannot get rid of it; no matter what you do, you always have it.

There are two classifications of Buddha nature. One is the Buddha nature which is the basic essence of sentient beings, and the other is the Buddha nature that is developed on the path, during which the qualities seem to appear greater and greater as one progresses on the path. With regard to the first, which is the Buddha nature that is the basic essence of sentient beings, there is absolutely no difference among sentient beings, no matter who they are or what they are doing.

You can be somebody who hates the dharma, who calls it all different kinds of names. You can completely denigrate it. It does not matter; you still have Buddha nature. You cannot do anything to your Buddha nature. You can cause the appearance of qualities to diminish, referring to the second classification of Buddha nature. But you cannot alter your basic Buddha nature, the basic Buddha essence, no matter what you do. Even if a person is in a state of intense degeneration, when the appropriate time comes, they will again give rise to faith in the mahayana and follow the path. There is no ultimate danger [of any being ever being eternally lost], no matter what they do. What about beings in the lower realms, who are experiencing immense suffering? Is there any hope for them? Do they have any way out of their horrible state? Definitely they do. Because of his bad deeds, the Buddha, when he was still an ordinary sentient being, once took rebirth in a hell realm. He found himself with a rope tied around his waist pulling a wagon. There was another hell being next to him who was pulling the same wagon, which was very difficult to pull because it was made out of fire and kept burning them. At that time the Buddha thought, "Why do we both have to go through this? It makes no sense; I could do it by myself."

So he asked the next guard he saw, "Excuse me, Sir, would it be all right if I pulled my friend's load so that he could have a rest?"

The guard looked down at him and got really angry. He raised his hammer and exclaimed, "You idiot! Do you not know that every sentient being has to experience the result of their own

karma?"

So saying, he struck this sentient being who was later to become the Buddha on the head and killed him. But because his last thought was a virtuous thought, he was reborn in the god realms. When the Buddha was telling the story of his life, he said, "This was the first altruistic thought I ever had." So even beings in the hell realms will eventually give rise to altruism, be reborn in a higher state, and begin to progress gradually on the path of dharma.

Since every sentient being has as their fundamental nature this Buddha essence, then when the potential for them to practice dharma awakens, they will begin to practice and can then begin to progress on the way to attaining the state of complete enlightenment. Buddha nature contains the seeds of both compassion and wisdom, and therefore, there is no limit to the potential growth of our compassion. It can become completely immeasurable like the compassion of the Buddha. In the same way our intelligence, our prajna or wisdom, can grow until it too becomes completely limitless, the omniscience of a Buddha. When we have taken our loving kindness and compassion to its complete perfection and our wisdom to its complete perfection, then that is the definition of Buddhahood. When these two qualities have grown to their ultimate extent, one manifests complete awakening.

Then, because of one's great compassion one is able to manifest limitless numbers of emanations and perform the benefit of others in a limitless number of ways, and because one's wisdom is infinite and unlimited, one becomes unimaginably, even incredibly, skilled, knowing precisely how to benefit all sentient beings in precise and complete detail.

This explanation is of the first quality of diligence, which is that it defeats laziness. How do we defeat laziness? By thinking about this and allowing it to fill us with fortitude and courage and self-confidence that we can, in fact, do it. Then, when there is no doubt that we can do it, there is no room for laziness, and we become very diligent.

The second quality of diligence is that, when it is a transcendent perfection, it possesses non-conceptual primordial wisdom. How do we develop non-conceptual primordial wisdom? By continuing to develop a deeper and deeper understanding of the two types of selflessness, the selflessness of individuals and the selflessness of phenomena.

How do we come to understand the selflessness of individuals? First we look, one by one, at our five aggregates, the five skandhas. Individually these five aggregates are not the self. If you isolate and examine each one at them, you cannot find the self anywhere. If you consider the aggregates all together as a group, you cannot find the self anywhere.\*

~ \*Editor's note: It is important to remember that the appearance of a self is not being referred to here. All sentient beings experience the appearance of a self, which gives them the mistaken impression that there is, in fact, a true self in reality. But for a self to be truly existent it must be unitary, independent of causes and conditions, and permanent. For beginners, the aggregate of form appears as matter, material things—our body and the external objects we encounter, which appear to be made up of matter. But all of these material things are made up of smaller units, so they cannot be regarded as unitary. They all come into "existence" by virtue of the coming together of causes and conditions, so they cannot be considered as independent of causes and conditions. And they all are subject to decay, so they cannot be considered permanent. Even the smallest particle of matter, since logically matter is infinitely divisible, cannot be considered unitary, and so disappears under analysis. Modern science, after 2,500 years, is now just catching up with this

fundamental teaching of the Buddha. Each of the remaining four aggregates—the aggregates of feelings, perceptions, mental formations, and consciousnesses—consists of a continuum of mental experiences experienced in time. As groups, the aggregates cannot be considered unitary, and each moment of mental experience arises dependent upon causes and conditions, and so cannot be considered independent of causes and conditions. Since each aggregate is an ever-changing continuum of different mental experiences, none of them can be considered permanent. And finally, even the smallest or shortest moment of experience has a beginning, middle, and end, so none of them can be said to be either unitary or permanent. Therefore, while sentient beings experience the mistaken impression of an individual self and of material objects and other selves, in reality, there is no truly existent self anywhere.

~ For further discussions of selflessness and emptiness, see Shenpen Osel, Vol. 2, No. 2 (MADHYAMIKA TEACHINGS); Vol. 3, No. 1 (Two Articles by Kalu Rinpoche); Vol. 3, No. 2 (A Commentary on In Praise of the Dharmadhātu, by Arya Nagarjuna); and Vol. 4, No. 2 (a series of teachings on the Medicine Buddha Sutra).

So there is no self in the aggregates taken either individually or together. Furthermore, the mind which believes in a self is not a self. The thought which thinks there is an I, is not the I. So if we can understand these two things, then we can understand that there is no self in the individual. This is an inferential beginning of an understanding of selflessness, an understanding inferred on the basis of valid reasoning with logical conclusions.

Then how do we understand the selflessness of phenomena? First we look at all of the forms or objects that appear to the eyes, at all of the great variety of sounds that appear to our ears, at all of the odors that appear to our noses, at all of the tastes that appear to our tongues, at all of the physical sensations which appear to our bodies, and at all of the things we think about. Looking at every single thing we experience—forms, sounds, smells, tastes, things to touch, and the phenomena we think about—we can see that they are all just mere appearances. They are merely dependently arisen appearances, dependent upon causes and conditions just like things in dreams, just like illusions. Understanding this, we understand that they are all of the nature of emptiness, which is the understanding of the selflessness of phenomena.

Understanding conceptually that there is no self in the individual and no self entity or inherent existence in phenomena is the beginning approach to gaining non-conceptual primordial awareness, which is the second quality of the transcendent perfection of diligence. But how can we begin to bring this wisdom into our practice of diligence? We begin by thinking at the time that we are being diligent that it is just like being diligent in a dream. The person who appears to be diligent is not real; the activity in which we are diligent is not real; and the object upon which this activity is focused is not real. In this way, developmentally we cut through clinging to the belief in the reality of the three spheres. When we are diligent in a dream and do not know we are dreaming, then we believe in the reality of the three spheres and focus on the three spheres. But if we know we are dreaming and are diligent in our dream, then there is no focus on things as being real. Because we know that everything is just a dream appearance, it is impossible to have any type of focus on things as being real, as being truly existent. That is the model of the practice of diligence.

The third quality of the transcendent perfection of diligence is that it makes people happy. It makes beings happy because it fulfills their wishes. The basis of mahayana practice is to help others, to do things that benefit others. That requires diligence. If we practice

diligence, we will be of benefit to others and they will be pleased and made happy by our practice. One just follows naturally from the other. The commentary further instructs that in being diligent, we should not at the same time be very harsh and critical towards others. While striving to accomplish their benefit, we should not cut them down or speak harshly to them. Instead we should treat them gently and be nice to them. If we do treat them gently and nicely at the same time we are working hard to benefit them, they will actually be made happy by what we do.\*

~ \*Editor's note: In this regard, when commenting on the practice of the bodhisattva path through the various bhumis, the Vidyadhara Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche taught that on the first seven grounds of the bodhisattva path, the bodhisattva's conduct was characterized by great gentleness, but that beginning with the eighth ground of actual bodhisattva attainment, the bodhisattva discovers that it is not necessary always to be so polite to samsara. Beginning with this ground, the bodhisattva no longer gives rise to kleshas, to any form of emotional affliction or conflict. Therefore, in all circumstances, the bodhisattva's motivation will be totally pure and not self-interested, and as a consequence, their conduct can afford to be much more direct. Under certain particular circumstances then, such a bodhisattva might display anger, or speak and act harshly, if it would be of benefit in that particular situation. This being said, however, it should be noted that in general the bodhisattva continues to behave gently and nicely.

So for example, if we are a teacher, a doctor, a nurse, or anyone else involved in a profession beneficial to others, and at the time we are working with people, we are harsh with them and display a displeasing demeanor unpleasant to be around, then our work will be self-contradictory. On the one hand, we are trying to help people, while on the other, when we come into contact with them, we only make them miserable. So, we need to conduct ourselves in a manner opposite to that. We need to act and appear in ways pleasing to others and make them happy.

The fourth and final characteristic of the transcendent perfection of diligence discussed in this commentary is that it ripens beings in one of the three different ways. If somebody displays the [comparatively limited] potential to follow the shravaka path [— the path of the "listener-hearers" leading to individual liberation—] then the bodhisattva's diligence is able to lead them to that fruition. If someone is more suited to following the pratyekaBuddha path, the path of the solitary sages, [leading also to individual liberation], then the bodhisattva's diligence leads them in that direction. And if somebody is more suited to follow the mahayana [path, leading to the liberation of all sentient beings], then the bodhisattva's diligence leads them in that direction. The bodhisattva's diligence is able to ripen beings appropriately according to their particular potential and interest.

Whatever virtue one is practicing, if it has these four characteristics, then it is the practice of a transcendent perfection or paramita in the practice of the mahayana. In particular, we have been looking at the fourth bodhisattva ground, on which, among the ten paramitas, the practice of diligence becomes predominant, and so we have explained these four characteristics, which pertain to all the paramitas, from the perspective of diligence.

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L4: [B. The etymology of this ground]

The second section (contained in the first three lines of the second verse) discusses the

etymology behind or the reason that the fourth ground is given the name The Radiant:

\ ###  
\ Here for the heirs of the Sugatas there dawns an appearance  
\ Even better than the copper light —  
\ It arises from an even greater cultivation of the branches of perfect enlightenment. (2abc)

\ ///  
\ 42abc.  
\ There, for the Sugatas' Son,  
\ There arises an appearance superior to the copper light  
\ That is produced from superior meditation on the realizations conducive to complete enlightenment;

¢(i.e. The 37 realizations, in seven groups. See the emptiness of definitions bellow.)

The commentary reads, "On this ground, for the heirs of the sugatas—the heart sons and daughters of the Buddhas—because they have cultivated to an even greater degree what are known as the thirty-seven branches of perfect enlightenment, the appearance of their wisdom is even better than the copper light that was the metaphor that described its appearance on the third ground. On the third ground the appearance of wisdom experienced by the bodhisattva is like the copper light that appears before the sun comes up. On the fourth ground it is superior to that, and so this ground is called The Radiant. The third ground is called The Luminous, but this ground is called The Radiant, like shooting-out light.

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L4: [C. The characteristics of abandonment]

And finally, in the third section, contained in the last line of the chapter, is a description of the extraordinary way in which the bodhisattva here is able to abandon self and self-entity:

\ ###  
\ Everything connected with the views of self and self-entity is completely exhausted. (2d)

\ ///  
\ 42d.  
\ And what is related to the view of self is completely eradicated.

In describing what it means to say that everything connected with the views of self and self-entity is exhausted, the commentary literally states, "On this ground, 'the view of self is thoroughly exhausted.' This means that the coarse views of the self of the individual and the self of phenomena—that are related to the more subtle views of these two, including the beliefs that the self is independent and so forth—are abandoned. In short, what is to be abandoned on this ground, the seeds of believing in the two kinds of self, is vanquished."

So let us recite these verses together three times.

[Students recite verses.]



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\*\*\*\*\*

### L3: [The Fifth Mind Generation: The Difficult to Overcome (1 verse) – Concentration]

¢(i.e. The definition of the fourth ground is a Superior Bodhisattva's path that has abandoned big-middling, innate true grasping, its principal object of abandonment, and that has attained a surpassing practice of the perfection of mental stabilization from within the ten perfections.)

### L4: [A. The etymology of the fifth ground]

Next we move on to the fifth bodhisattva ground and the fifth mind generation, called The Difficult To Overcome:

```
\    ###  
\    The great beings on the ground that is Difficult toOvercome  
\    Cannot be defeated even by all the maras.  
  
\    ///  
\    [V.1.ab]  
\    43ab.  
\    This great being on the ground Difficult to Overcome (5)  
\    Cannot be defeated even by all the maras.
```

¢(i.e. A mara or demon, is anything that obstructs the attainment of liberation or enlightenment. There are four types: the mara of the delusions, the mara of the aggregates, the mara of the Lord of Death, and the Devaputra maras. Of these, only the last are actual living beings.)

This ground gets its name because "The great beings on the ground that is Difficult to Overcome"—referring to bodhisattvas on the fifth ground "cannot be defeated even by all the maras."\*

Even if all of the maras gang up on them at once, they are not strong enough at that point [to overcome the bodhisattva's wisdom]; the bodhisattva is stronger.

~ \*Editor's note: According to the story of the Buddha Shakyamuni's enlightenment, Mara was a great demon that appeared to the Buddha just before he attained enlightenment, and in various seductive and fearsome manifestations tried first to seduce and then to frighten the Buddha out of his attainment. In less anthropomorphic terms, the maras are seen as any negative influences that obstruct spiritual development. Traditionally they are enumerated as skandhamara, the misperception of that which is not a self, the aggregates, to be a self; kleshamara, being overpowered by, putting up with, or "buying into" the emotional afflictions, rather than seeing them and relating to them as vehicles for attaining enlightenment; mrtyumara, death or the fear of death, which interrupts one's practice unless the practitioner knows how to make death part of his or her path; and devaputramara, literally the "child of the gods," which refers to the tendency to be seduced by, absorbed dualistically in, and attached to the pleasures and bliss of the gods' realms, specifically the subtle pleasures or bliss of meditation. In the chöd tradition, the four maras are enumerated in a way very useful for meditation as the substantial mara, the insubstantial mara, the mara of elation, and the mara of fixation.

~ See Shenpen Osel, Vol. 3, No. 1, pages 36-38 (Chöd: Cutting Through the Four Maras, by

The Venerable Tenga Rinpoche) (see next box); Vol. 3, No. 1, page 26 (Mahamudra: the Essence of All the Buddha's Teachings, by His Holiness Kyabje Kalu Rinpoche).

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L4: [B. The surpassing mental stabilization and skill in the truths]

\     ###  
\     Their meditative stability becomes superior and their excellent minds  
\     Become incredibly skilled in subtle realization of the nature of the truths.  
  
\     ///  
\     43cd.  
\     His mental stabilization is surpassing (5),  
\     and he also attains great skill in realizing  
\     The [gross and] subtle nature of the [noble] truths of a good mind [i.e. they are  
truths for Superior Beings].

¢(i.e. See the detailed discussion about the Four Noble truths, the sixteen aspects, the sixteen misconceptions, the two types of self-grasping, the two types of delusion, and their links with the two truths

¢-- The attainment of actual true paths and actual true cessation come from an understanding of the emptiness, or the lack of inherent existence, revealed by the Madhyamika-Prasangika school. This is the main subject of the present work, and it will now be explained extensively in the following chapters.)

Commenting on the last two lines of the verse describing the qualities of this ground, the commentary reads, "On this ground the transcendent perfection of meditative stability, the fifth paramita, becomes superior and wonderfully great, and, as a result, with the excellent prajna of their excellent minds, these noble and exalted beings become incredibly skilled in subtle realization of the nature of the truths. The truths here refers either to the four noble truths—the truth of suffering, the truth of the origin of suffering, the truth of the cessation of suffering and the truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering—or, as explained in the mahayana tradition, to the two truths, the relative superficial truth and the truth of the nature of genuine reality. Bodhisattvas on this ground become incredibly skilled in the subtle realization of these truths.

Let's recite this verse three times.

[Students recite.]

When we realize the emptiness that is the nature of genuine reality, all relative superficial appearances are realized as appearance-emptiness, like things in dreams, like illusions. So it would be good to sing a verse about this from the Sutra of the Noble Collection.

[Students sing three times. See page 59.]

From the Sutra of the Noble Collection:

- ~ Know the five skandhas are like an illusion.
- ~ Don't separate the illusion from the skandhas.
- ~ Free of thinking that anything is real—
- ~ This is perfect wisdom's conduct at its best!

And we should sing from the King of Samadhi Sutra.

[Students sing three times. See page 59.]

From the King of Samadhi Sutra:

- ~ All the images conjured up by a magician,
- ~ The horses, elephants, and chariots in his illusions,
- ~ Whatever may appear there, know that none of it is real,
- ~ And it is just like that with everything there is.

These two verses contain the speech of the Buddha Shakyamuni. Since we also need to know what the commentaries on the Buddha's teachings said, we should first look at the verse by the protector Nagarjuna from the Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way.

[Students sing three times. See page 59.]

From Nagarjuna's Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way:

- ~ Like a dream, like an illusion,
- ~ Like a city of gandharvas,
- ~ That's how birth, and that's how living,
- ~ That's how dying are taught to be.

And next, the verses by the glorious Chandrakirti from the Entrance to the Middle Way.

[Students sing three times. See page 59.]

From Chandrakirti's Entrance to the Middle Way;

- ~ There are two ways of seeing every thing,
- ~ The perfect way and the false way.
- ~ So each and every thing that can ever be found
- ~ Holds two natures within.
- ~ And what does perfect seeing see?
- ~ It sees the suchness of all things.
- ~ And false seeing sees the relative truth—
- ~ This is what the perfect Buddha said

And now a verse by the bodhisattva Shantideva from the wisdom chapter of the Guide to the Bodhisattva's Conduct.

[Students sing three times. See page 59.]

From Shantideva's Guide to the Bodhisattva's Conduct:

- ~ Then wanderers, these dream-like beings, what are they?
- ~ If analyzed, they are like a banana tree.
- ~ One cannot make definitive distinctions
- ~ Between transcending misery and not.
- ~ Under the guidance of Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche, translated by Jim Scott and Ari Goldfield, August, 1999.

To understand what it means to say that beings are like banana trees, we need to think of the bodies of sentient beings. When we analyze the body, it breaks down into parts. Those parts break down into their component parts and finally into particles. And if we look at the particles, we cannot find anything substantial there at all. So, there is really nothing

there—no pith, no substance. That is what is intended here. Shantideva is talking about the bodies of beings' being like banana trees. The minds of beings are not like banana trees. According to the second turning of the wheel of dharma, the mind's nature transcends all conceptual fabrications; it is not an object of conceptual mind. According to the third turning of the wheel of dharma the basic nature of mind is luminosity, clear light. So it is like that.

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L4: [Now are there any questions?]

QUESTION: Rinpoche stated that there is no distinction in Buddha nature between male and female, that they equally have Buddha nature. If that is the case, then why is there a hierarchy between nuns and monks, which is sexist?

Translator: So the question is, "If it is true that Buddha nature pervades everyone equally, why is there a sexist discrimination in the hierarchy between monks and nuns in Buddhism?"

RINPOCHE: That hierarchy exists only in the shravaka tradition; it is not a mahayana tradition, and it is certainly not a vajrayana tradition. In both of the latter two, men and women are regarded as equal. There is no difference. This is particularly so in the vajrayana, where in several tantras women are praised as being of the nature of wisdom. They are not denigrated; on the contrary, they are praised for being of the nature of wisdom. In the shravaka tradition, in which the tradition of the Buddhist monastic sangha originates, there is no talk about Buddha nature. If you ask, "What defines a noble being," the shravaka traditions answer is that they have less attachment, less passion, less desire, more contentment. In the mahayana it is explained differently, that the nature of every single sentient being is Buddha nature.

QUESTION: I am confused about how to answer people who look to you for knowledge or leadership, and you can give them answers from the point of view of relative truth, but at the same time, while recognizing that people learn in stages, you know that ultimately they will need to understand these same things from the point of view of ultimate truth. So I am wondering how to bridge the gap between these two levels of truth in such practical situations. An example would be in the provision of health care.

Translator: So, can I ask the question in this way: "When we are in a position where people come to us for help in our work and we are not in a position where we can explain to them the nature of genuine reality and we have to stay in the relative, then how do we benefit people given that those are the parameters of the situation?"

QUESTION: Yes, how do you go over that bridge knowing that it might cross your values, because I suspect that if I speak the truth, they are not going to understand it, but not to talk about it seems wrong, because they are asking.

RINPOCHE: If somebody comes to you for advice and they have the ability to understand the teachings on the nature of genuine reality, then you can explain those teachings to them. If they have the prajna to be able to understand the teachings about ultimate truth, then explain it to them, and if they do not, then do not worry about it. It would not benefit them to hear about the nature of ultimate reality if they would not be able to understand it. So that is okay.

These days at the end of the twentieth century, most people have very advanced educations

and have used their reasoning abilities their whole lives. Therefore, it is actually better to reverse the order in which the teachings are given. It is good first to explain the nature of genuine reality, then to explain the nature of relative reality, and finally to talk about cause and effect and karma at the end. If you talk about karma at the beginning, people will not be interested. So it is better to start with the most profound teachings, and gradually work back to the more basic ones. This is how I think about things, my opinion. Buddha nature is the nature of all beings, the nature of genuine reality. The nature of everything is that it is all fundamentally the same, which is a teaching about the nature of genuine reality, a teaching about equality. If people can come to understand that, if they hear such very profound teachings and like them, then they will develop confidence in the dharma. Then they can be given teachings on the cause and result of karmic acts, on past and future lives, etc, all following the profounder teachings on the nature of genuine reality. In my opinion, that is a better way to present the teachings these days.

If first people are able to develop confidence in the profound teachings, then they will also want to hear more about the way that relative truth is explained. Otherwise, if the teachings are presented in the more traditional way, first explaining that if you do this and that you will be reborn in the hell realms and if you engage in such and such activities you can avoid birth in the lower realms, then people will think, "Oh, this is just another one of those religions that try to scare you into doing things, as was the case with certain brands of Christianity in the old days." In that case, then, people will just think of Buddhism as another tradition of blind faith that tries to accomplish its ends with scare tactics, and so it is better not to proceed that way. That is why it is perfectly permissible to tell people about the nature of genuine reality, but we all have to make the judgment to do so based on the person's intelligence and their ability and capacity to understand those types of things. So it is okay to begin with teachings on the nature of ultimate truth and then teach about relative truth.

QUESTION: Regarding the two types of egolessness or selflessness—the egolessness of the individual self and the egolessness or emptiness of phenomena—is one realized before the other? Or are both realized at the same time, or does it depend and vary from individual to individual?

RINPOCHE: The different vehicles give different answers to that question. The mahayana says that in order to gain the most subtle understanding of the selflessness of the individual you have to have a coarse understanding of the emptiness of phenomena. You have to have that first, actually, to have the most subtle understanding of the emptiness of the individual. But the shravaka tradition does not say that; they say you can realize the selflessness of the individual 100 percent [without realizing the complete emptiness of phenomena]. In the shravakayana, you realize that there is no self; you give up your kleshas, and you attain nirvana. That is it. You do not ever have to deal with phenomena. The way that selflessness is presented in this text, Entrance to the Middle Way, is that first the emptiness of phenomena is explained and then the emptiness of the individual. In other texts, though, it is different; the emptiness of the self is explained first and then the emptiness of phenomena. In short, in order to gain a subtle understanding or realization of the emptiness of individuals, we need to have a coarse understanding of the emptiness of phenomena, because, in order to understand why it is that the aggregates are not the self, you have to examine the aggregates and see that they do not really exist, that when you examine them their existence breaks down, and that is the emptiness of phenomena. You see that the aggregates have many internal subdivisions and that they can be broken down into their

component parts, and so you can conclude that there is really nothing there. Since there is nothing real there, there cannot be a self.

From these different realizations [or ways of realizing] come different results that we can understand more clearly by looking at the example of a dream. If we dream that we are being burned by fire and know that we are dreaming, then one way to look at it is to say, "Well, I am not really here. This is just a dream; there is no real body here, so there is no reason to suffer." That reasoning reflects the realization of the emptiness of the self. Another way to look at it is to say, "This fire is not real; it is just a dream fire." That is a metaphor of the emptiness of phenomena. And sometimes you can think about both at the same time: "This is just a dream. There is no one here to burn. There is nothing here to burn anyone. And there is no burning." This reasoning reflects both the realization of the emptiness of the self and the realization of the emptiness of phenomena at the same time. So it is like that.

QUESTION: My question is about the earlier question about anger that is motivated by some kind of pure motivation that is beneficial. This prompted me to consider how, with my limited wisdom, to judge when anger is appropriate and when it is not, and how to judge whether my motivation is appropriate or not. I would like Rinpoche to speak a little bit about how to tell when anger is appropriate. For instance, is there a difference in the way anger is experienced in the two different cases?

RINPOCHE: The way to know whether the expression of anger is appropriate is to check our initial motivation. For example, if a mother who really loves her child gets angry in order to teach the child something, then that is okay, because the anger is motivated by this love. But on the other hand, if we feel malicious and angry towards somebody and do not like them and are motivated to harm them, then that is a different story. It all depends upon our motivation. In fact, in the mahayana it is even permissible to kill somebody out of compassion. For example, if a person is going to kill lots of other people, and one realizes that if they do, it will not be good for them, then if you have to kill that person to prevent them from killing others, it actually benefits. In such a case you would kill them, not out of hatred for them, but out of compassion for them, and also to protect the intended victims who would thus be saved from being killed. Killing would be the appropriate conduct in that situation.

It is written in the sutras that our teacher, the perfect Buddha Shakyamuni, in one of his previous lives as a bodhisattva, was a ship captain, piloting a ship carrying five hundred bodhisattva business tycoons. They were beset by a pirate who was going to kill all of them, so the Buddha, out of great compassion for the bodhisattvas and great compassion for the pirate, killed the pirate to prevent that from happening. Normally five hundred people would not have a problem if there were only one person attacking them, but these were five hundred bodhisattvas and they were not going to defend themselves.

QUESTION: What are the maras that are referred to here in the fifth chapter.

RINPOCHE: There are four different kinds of maras or you could say demons. The first one is the demon of the aggregates, the five skandhas. This is a demon, in the sense that they create obstacles, when we think that these five aggregates are real. So when we take the five skandhas to be real, that is the first demon. The second is the demon of our kleshas, which are obstacles when we do not apply the antidote. The kleshas themselves become demons if we do not deal with them appropriately. The third is called the demon of the child of the



gods. When we have attachment to the happiness of this life, when we want something good to happen in this lifetime, then that is a demon. And the fourth is the demon that is the lord of death. When we have a concept that death exists, then that is a demon. This last one is a very subtle demon, but if we are able to dispel from ourselves the thought that death is something real, then we have defeated the demon of death and there will no longer be any fear of death. These appearances of demons or maras, according to the words that are used to describe them, seem as though they are something outside of ourselves, but this is why the lord of yogins, Milarepa, sang:

\     What appears as, is perceived as, and is thought of as a ghost,  
\     Whenever these appear, from the yogi they appear,  
\     And when they dissolve, into the yogi they dissolve.

Milarepa, in fact, sang this to a demoness, but even while he was singing to her, he was singing, "You are just a confused appearance of my own mind." Sing a song.

[Students sing verse three times.]

QUESTION: In our tradition we have a lot of concern for the benefit of sentient beings. Does that imply that there are non-sentient beings? If so, what would be an example of such a being, and who is looking out for the non-sentient beings?

Translator: I don't know if I have any way to ask that questions, because there is no separation in Tibetan between sentient and being. It is all one word. Translated into English it sounds as though there were two words, sentient and being, but in Tibetan the word being translated just means "having mind." That is the whole term. Does that make it clear? There is no such thing as a non-sentient being.

QUESTION: I have a question from last night as well. If the bodhisattva has no focus or fixation on the three spheres, but instead understands their emptiness, how can it be said that they experience harm as something good because it eliminates their bad karma? Does that not imply some fixation on the karmic act?

RINPOCHE: Actually, the ones who have no focus on the three spheres are noble bodhisattvas,\* not ordinary beings. The meditation or contemplation of something harmful being seen as something good, is intended to be done by ordinary beings. For example, in the teachings on the Seven Points of Mind Training, we are taught to think that when we experience harm, we should think of it as something good and pray that all other sentient beings be freed from the harm they experience and that it instead come down on us individually. May all the harm and all the suffering that everyone else experiences come down on us and be all contained within this one harm we are now experiencing. Thinking and meditating in this way, we use adverse situations as a chance to develop compassion.

~ \*Editor's note: i.e. enlightened bodhisattvas.

In the Seven Points of Mind Training, there are also instructions on how to use suffering as a chance to fight ego-clinging. When you experience suffering of any kind, you address your ego, saying, "You, ego-clinging! This is what you deserve. You need this suffering, because we have been meditating on the dharma and on selflessness for a long time and it hasn't done you any good at all. You are still there and you are still spoiled, so you need this suffering. It is the best thing that could ever have happened to you. Look at you, you miserable ego-clinging! If things go well for you, you just get bigger and bigger; you do not go away, you just get prouder and more arrogant. You need suffering. This is the best

thing that can ever happen to you, so I am glad this is happening to you. You deserve it." This is a teaching on how to use all dharma [and all adverse circumstances] to smack ego-clinging on the head. You smack it, and just keep smacking it. If you do that, it is very beneficial.

QUESTION: Would Rinpoche explain the tradition of long life prayers in Tibet. They don't seem to exist in any of the other traditions. Who writes a prayer for whom? How does it come about that they get written? And how did this tradition get started?

RINPOCHE: Long life prayers come about as an outgrowth of the students' devotion, because the students want to have them. From the lama's perspective, it is summed up by Patrul Rinpoche, "If I die now, who cares? It is just samsaric phenomena disintegrating. If I live to be a hundred, what's the big deal? I will be an old man. What's so good about that? So let whatever is going to happen, happen. If I die now, it is no problem, I do not really feel like living to be an old man anyway. I do not want to be an old man. There is nothing great in old age." That is how lamas think about it. Lamas' students might think differently.

If we want to live long, we also have to be unafraid of being old. If you wish to live a long time, but do not want to be old, you have an internal contradiction in your thinking that will cause you suffering. On the other hand, if you do not want to be old, then you have to give up attachment to living a long life. The great Tibetan scholar Sakya Pandita said, "When people are afraid to be old and yet want to live long, they have a foolish inconsistency in their thinking."

QUESTION: I have a question about the idea of expressing anger with a good motivation and I am having a hard time reconciling that idea with what Rinpoche said earlier. If one of the characteristics of the paramitas is that you make people happy, then how could it be beneficial to demonstrate anger in a way that makes people unhappy? I can understand the example of a mother in a situation dangerous to her children, when they might not pay attention otherwise. But under what other circumstances would anger be beneficial?

RINPOCHE: Some beings are not benefited by being treated nicely. If you are nice to them it does not help. They are more benefited by manifesting a wrathful appearance, and knowing when that is the case is what skillful means is all about. Skillful means, or the perfection of skill in means, is actually the seventh transcendent perfection—knowing when something is appropriate and something else might not be. Bodhisattvas do not have any selfishness, so whatever they do, it is not out of their own concern; it is out of the concern for others. If that is the case, then what is normally the non-virtue of speaking harshly is permissible under certain circumstances. A bodhisattva may encounter someone under certain circumstances in which speaking kindly to them would not help them, whereas speaking in a harsher, more critical manner would. In such a case, speaking harshly and critically would be acceptable conduct. What actually happens in such cases is that the person hears a great deal of criticism of their bad qualities, and then they become pacified, and then they become happy. So in those circumstances it is permissible to speak harshly to others. Having pure motivation, bodhisattvas will sometimes manifest the conduct of the seven non-virtuous actions,\* and there are good reasons for their doing so. It is like that on the bodhisattva path.

~ \*Editor's note: Here Rinpoche is referring to the three misdeeds of body—killing, stealing, and sexual misconduct— and the three misdeeds of speech—lying, speaking

slanderosly or divisively, speaking harshly, and speaking idly and meaninglessly. Rinpoche does not mention the remaining three unvirtuous deeds because they are negative motivational factors of mind—maliciousness, covetousness, and erroneous views—and it has already been established that the bodhisattva's motivation is pure.

In the vajrayana, mahamudra yogins or yoginis sometimes try to make anger come up by speaking harshly. They cause the anger to manifest and then meditate on its essential nature. So that is something different. In the province of Kham in Tibet, there once lived a very famous couple, a yogini and a yogin, who lived together but always fought. Whenever people went to see them, they would be fighting bitterly with each other. Sometimes the woman would go up to the top of a nearby cliff and shout back to her man, "I hate you so much I am going to jump off this cliff." And the man would sit below and shout back, "Jump, jump, I can't wait." They would fight in this way all the time, and in the end they both attained the rainbow body, because all along they had been meditating on the essential nature of their anger. That was their practice. Nobody knew they were practicing in that way, but that is what they were doing, and they attained great accomplishment as a result. That is how it happened.

Then there is the story of the mahasiddha Lavapa. He attained realization by sleeping on the side of the road for twelve years while meditating on clear light. When people saw him, they would say, "Look at this lazy bum. He is just sitting here sleeping." But in fact, he was being incredibly diligent. It is not easy to sleep for twelve years continuously, but he did it, and in the process he attained great realization because he was meditating on the essential nature of sleep, which is luminosity. There is no one else in history who has been able to sleep for twelve years; it is incredibly difficult to do and requires great diligence to sleep that long. So it is like that. Now we will meditate.

If you look nakedly at the essential nature of the thought that thinks, "I am going to meditate now," and you let go and relax within that, then that is mahamudra. If you practice with a focus in mind, then that is shamatha meditation as practiced in all the vehicles. If you just rest relaxed within your own basic nature, that is called essential shamatha, and that is the supreme form of calm-abiding meditation. In the vajrayana, the best way to practice shamatha meditation is to visualize your yidam. You can do this in two different ways. You can visualize the different aspects of the yidam and its ornaments individually and focus on one at a time, or you can focus on the entire body of the deity all at once. This is the best form of shamatha in the vajrayana. You can also focus on your breath, on feelings that you are experiencing, on bodily sensations, on different parts of the body, on the body's being of the nature of clear light. You can meditate in any one of these ways.

[Rinpoche and students recite dedication prayers and long life prayers.]

Tomorrow we will explain the sixth mind generation. This is a teaching on emptiness, and we will explain a few reasons why the nature of reality is emptiness.

Let's sing the song that is a prayer for all sentient beings with whom we have a good or bad connection.

[Students sing. See page 50.]

This prayer is something that is in harmony with most of the religious traditions of the world, because most religious traditions pray that people will go to a pure realm after death. But there is a difference in the Buddhist conception of this aspiration. According to

the Buddhist tradition, after you are born in a pure realm and have rested, you come back to an impure realm when it is time again to practice the difficult practices of developing patience, giving generously to people who are in need, and so forth. When the time is right to help people in the impure realms, then you come back. In Sukhavati, in the pure realm of Dewachen or Great Bliss, no one hurts you, and so you have no opportunity to practice patience. There are no poor people in Sukhavati, so there is no opportunity to practice generosity. So in order to perfect these two practices of patience and generosity, you have to come back to the impure realms. After you are born in Dewachen, then it is okay to come back here. Is that not good?

Goodnight.

Sarva Mangalam.

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L3: [The Sixth Mind Generation: The Approach (226 verses) – Wisdom]

[see the other file for chapter 6]

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L3: [The Seventh Mind Generation Gone Far Beyond (1 verse) - Means]

L4: [The good qualities of the seventh ground]

We will begin by reciting the verses from the Sixth Mind Generation from yesterday's teaching.

[Students recite.]

As before, please give rise to the precious attitude of bodhicitta as is instructed in the mahayana, and listen.

The third main section in the commentary looks at the last four bodhisattva grounds, the seventh through the tenth, called Gone Far Beyond, Unshakable, Excellent Mind, and Cloud of Dharma.

The three lines of verse that comprise the seventh chapter are:

\     ###  
\     Here on the ground Gone Far Beyond,  
\     Instant by instant, they can enter cessation,  
\     And the transcendent perfection of method excellently blazes.  
  
\     ///  
\     [VII.1]  
\     270.  
\     Here, on Gone Afar (7), he can enter into cessation  
\     Instant by instant.  
\     And he has also attained a surpassing perfection of means (7).

The bodhisattva on the seventh ground, called Gone Far Beyond, can, instant by instant, enter into and arise out of the meditative equipoise of cessation. This cessation is not a

mere cessation, because here also the transcendent perfection of method excellently blazes.

From among the ten transcendent perfections, here what the bodhisattva masters, or what comes to the fore in terms of the bodhisattva's main practice, is the transcendent perfection of method, of skillful means.

It is important to understand that the last four transcendent perfections—method, aspiration prayers, power, and primordial awareness— are all divisions or aspects of the sixth, the transcendent perfection of wisdom. There is nothing separate from that. After prajnaparamita has been mastered, there is nothing you could say that exists apart from that. Everything then is just a manifestation or a different aspect of wisdom's display.

Bodhisattvas on the seventh ground master the great variety of methods through which they can be of benefit to others. They become incredibly skillful in the different means and ways of benefiting others.

At the time of the ground, [at the onset of their interest in and practice of a spiritual path,] sentient beings have a wide variety of personalities. Some of them are very passionate; some of them are more angry; some of them are principally stuck in bewilderment and ignorance. Their kleshas differ. At the time of engaging in the path, they have a wide variety of interests in different religious and philosophical traditions and paths that they can follow. And at the time of the result, therefore, they achieve many different levels of fruition. Since there is this great variety of sentient beings with a great variety of mental dispositions and interests, one needs to be incredibly skillful in means or methods if one wishes to be of benefit to them.

When following a path, some beings will be interested in Buddhism, and following the Buddhist path; there will also be people with differing interests. Some will feel very strong renunciation of samsara and want to follow either the shravaka path or the path of the solitary sages. Some will want to follow the bodhisattva path, the mahayana, and some will want to follow the vajrayana. People will have differing interests and want to do different things.

For some people, compassion will be their strongest quality. They will be very interested in helping others and not so interested in what happens to themselves. For others, intelligence, prajna, will be the strongest quality, and they will like to study. Still others will be very diligent and will prefer to meditate. Because there are so many different kinds of beings who have so many different kinds of interests and abilities, bodhisattvas need to develop great skillfulness in a great variety of methods or means to lead sentient beings in accordance with their abilities and interests. On the seventh ground they do just that.

Because some people will prefer non-Buddhist traditions and will want to follow other religious paths, bodhisattvas will emanate not only as teachers in the Buddhadharma, but also as teachers in other religious traditions that appear to be contradictory to Buddhism. They will appear as teachers, as masters, as people with great learning in those traditions, in order to lead beings whose interests draw them to those traditions. Sometimes it is possible to perform great benefit as a teacher in another tradition. When that is the case, bodhisattvas will send an emanation or emanations to teach in that tradition. They will perform that benefit. There is only one verse in this chapter, The Seventh Mind Generation: Gone Far Beyond.

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L2: [THE THREE PURE GROUNDS]

L3: [The Eighth Mind Generation: Unshakable (3 verses) – Aspiration Prayers]

L4: [The good qualities of the eight ground]

L5: [A. The surpassing prayer on this ground, and how he is raised from cessation]

The eighth chapter teaches the eighth mind generation. This bodhisattva ground is named Unshakable. The first three lines of the first verse describe the way in which bodhisattvas gain this ground:

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\      ###
\      In order again and again to attain virtue even greater than before
\      Here the bodhisattvas become irreversible.
\      The great beings enter the Unshakable ground . . . (1abc)

\      ///
\      [VIII.1]
\      271.
\      To attain virtues superior to those of before,
\      This great being strives repeatedly for Immovable (8)
\      On which they never return.
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The commentary reads, "In order again and again to attain virtue even greater than before, even greater than that which has been achieved up to and including the seventh bhumi or ground, by virtue of having patience with the unborn nature of reality, meaning emptiness, bodhisattvas become irreversible in that they are definitely on the path to enlightenment. There is no turning back.\* This is also known as the unshakable. The great beings, the bodhisattvas, engage here in the unshakable ground.

~ \*Editor's note: According to Gampopa's Jewel Ornament of Liberation, the bodhicitta of the aspiring bodhisattva on the first two paths, the paths of preparation and juncture, is characterized by devoted interest. The aspirant has taken the bodhisattva vow and has great interest in and devotion to the path leading to Buddhahood but has not yet reached the first bhumi, the beginning of the path of seeing. The beginning of the path of seeing commences with a definitive experience of emptiness, after which the bodhisattva—now called "exalted," "enlightened," or "noble"—can enter the samadhi of emptiness at will. Some commentaries suggest that that first moment of seeing is the path of seeing and the remainder of the ten bhumis of the bodhisattva path are included in the path of cultivation, so called because the bodhisattva is principally concerned with cultivating what has been seen. The Vidyadhara Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche states that the path of seeing roughly includes the first five bhumis and the path of cultivation the second five, while Khenpo Konchog Gyaltsen Rinpoche states that the path of seeing includes the first seven bhumis while the path of cultivation includes the last three bhumis. In any event, reaching the path of seeing or the first bodhisattva bhumi is a kind of watershed event, inasmuch as the bodhisattva now will never have to be reborn unwillingly in the lower realms. At this point, the bodhisattva begins to understand all the various approaches to traveling the path presented in the Buddha's



teachings, and develops great confidence that he or she will be able to complete the path successfully. Trungpa Rinpoche taught that this is not birth, but similar to the onset of labor pains; one knows that one is going to have a baby, and fueled by this new confidence and inspiration, the bodhisattva becomes very hard-working and his or her bodhicitta can be said to be characterized by strong intention. This stage continues until the bodhisattva reaches the eighth bhumi, which is another major watershed on the bodhisattva path. From this point until Buddhahood, the bodhisattva's bodhicitta is characterized by maturation. Just as one does not have to make any effort to grow, from the eighth bhumi until Buddhahood, the bodhisattva does not have to make any effort to develop bodhicitta or progress along the path to Buddhahood. When Buddhahood is finally reached, bodhicitta is characterized by the total elimination of all veils that obscure the mind, obstruct the full realization of the true nature of everything, and block omniscience. Buddhahood is known as the path of complete perfection, of fulfillment, or of complete accomplishment.

Unshakable here means that not only are the bodhisattvas on this ground not moved or shaken by clinging to the characteristics of things, they are also not shaken or moved by thoughts which cling to an absence of characteristics. They do not believe there is any need for characteristics, but they also do not believe there is any need for an absence of characteristics. And is that not something really great?\*

~ \*\*Editor's note: Clinging to any notion or experience of the characteristics of any perceptual situation is fixation, and disrupts the "clear light river flow" of the meditative state. The moment there is "that person," for example, as distinct from "this person," or that as distinct from this, the veil of dualistic clinging—the habitual tendency to perceive dualistically—is present, and the moment there is any fixation on the intelligent nature, the beauty, the humorousness or obnoxiousness of "that" person or "this" person, even in a non-discursive way that does not apply a name or label, then there is clinging to characteristics. When meditators experience emptiness or, in this language, experience the absence of characteristics, there is also a tendency to cling to these experiences or the memory of these experiences, which also disrupts the "clear light river flow" of the meditative state and solidifies and blocks one's experience. Once one has truly experienced the emptiness of self and phenomena and the absence of characteristics, one recognizes that there is no need to remind oneself of emptiness or even to cling in the subtlest way to the experience of emptiness. Things are just as empty whether or not one is thinking that they are empty, or whether or not one is fixated on or fascinated by any particular experience of emptiness. What the text and Rinpoche are teaching here is that both the inveterate tendency to fixate on characteristics and the tendency to fixate on the absence of characteristics, both during meditation and during post-meditation, have been completely removed by the eighth bhumi, and thus an eighth-bhumi bodhisattva's awareness becomes unshakable. It is this unshakable awareness that intercepts the arising of kleshas, thereby causing them to arise as wisdom and putting an end once and for all to the creation of new karma, and it is out of this unshakable awareness that all the miraculous powers of the eighth bodhisattva bhumi arise.

Next, in the last line of the first verse, comes the description of how the practice of the transcendent perfection of aspiration prayers comes to the fore here:

\ ###  
\ And their aspiration prayers become incredibly pure. (1d)  
\ ///

\ His prayers become extremely pure (8),

The commentary reads that on this ground everything that was somehow contrary to the aspiration prayers that these bodhisattvas have been making from the first ground on up has now been completely purified, so there is nothing left that could contradict these aspiration prayers or stand in their way. Everything that could obstruct these prayers has been purified. The aspiration prayers that they make on this ground, which number 100,000 times 10 to the 60th power, are all completely pure. Therefore their practice of aspiration prayers is incredible.

They make aspiration prayers to go to the Buddha realms, the pure realms, to make offerings to the Buddhas, but mostly they make aspiration prayers to be of benefit to others. They aspire to be able to benefit others both in a temporary way, meaning to make people happy in whatever way they can in terms of samsaric existence, and also to lead them to the ultimate fruition of Buddhahood. Since beings need help in so many different ways, the number of ways in which bodhi-sattvas aspire to help them is inconceivable. They aspire to be able to send out emanations in all different forms—as animals like rabbits, turtles, deer, wild asses, and as all the different kinds of animals that live in the mountains, as all the different kinds of animals too many to name; as teachers and as students in other traditions; as people with lots of wealth who can provide others with food, clothing, and things to drink if they are thirsty, and so forth. They make an inconceivable number of aspiration prayers to be able to emanate and be of benefit to others in an inconceivable number of ways.

There are a number of very good aspiration prayers, extensive ones, that have been translated into English, like Samantabhadra's Aspiration Prayer for Excellent Conduct, the bodhisattva's aspiration prayer from the tenth chapter of Shantideva's Guide to the Bodhisattva's Conduct,\* and also the aspiration prayer of Maitreya. We should recite these aspiration prayers because the best and most efficacious way to prepare for the future is to make aspiration prayers. If we make good aspiration prayers, then in all future lifetimes we will be born in situations with the appropriate capabilities that will enable us to benefit others, and we will in fact perform the benefit of others.

~ \*Editor's note: Published under the titles *The Way of the Bodhisattva* and *A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*.

The bodhisattva on the eighth ground is called the Youth or the Youthful one. On the ninth, they are called the Victor's Regent, and on the tenth they are called the Chakravartin, the Universal Monarch.

Next the commentary teaches the extraordinary qualities of this ground. It has two main parts.

1. The first good quality is the cessation of cyclic existence for bodhisattvas on this ground on which all stains have been completely abandoned.
2. And the second is the ability of these bodhisattvas to display emanations in cyclic existence for the benefit of others, even though cyclic existence has stopped for themselves. Because the necessity to remain in cyclic existence has ended for eighth-bhumi bodhisattvas, the tathagatas, the Buddhas, urge them here not to remain simply in the cessation or complete abandonment of cyclic existence, but to rise up and display their creative power for the benefit of others.

With respect to the first good quality, the first line of the second verse reads,

\ ###  
 \ The victors cause them to rise from cessation. (2a)  
 \ ///  
 \ 272a.  
 \ And he is raised from cessation by the Conquerors.

The commentary reads that bodhisattvas on this ground abide in cessation, but since they have previously made aspiration prayers, and since they are abiding in the continuum of the gateway to the dharma, all the victors cause them to arise from their cessation. How do they do that? Well, these Buddhas say something like this: "Noble child, you have done well. Excellent. You are approaching the attainment of the qualities of the perfect Buddha, and you have achieved patience with the nature of genuine reality. You have achieved the actual genuine patience. But, noble child, what you do not have are my ten powers, my four types of fearlessness, everything that makes me different from you, everything that comprises the glorious and unique qualities of a Buddha. You do not have these qualities. So, in order to strive to gain these most glorious qualities of the Buddha, apply yourself. Put some diligence into it. Do not abandon the door or the gateway of your patience with suchness. Noble child, you have gained this complete liberation of peace and you are resting there, but think of all of the beings who are still afflicted, who are still under the power of their kleshas. Remember all the aspiration prayers you have made in the past to benefit them; remember how important it is to accomplish their benefit. Remember the inconceivable nature of the gateway of primordial awareness. And know that what you have realized so far, the dharmata, the nature of reality, the arhats and arhatis have also. You are still there."

The dharmata, or the nature of reality that the Buddha is urging the bodhisattvas to strive for here, is consonant with their aspiration prayers. What the bodhisattvas are going to attain on this ground is primordial awareness, which they can get without any effort, and which is inherently effortless. It is of the same taste as [the] cessation [which arhats and arhatis experience], but it is not simply the mere cessation of the appearances of outer and inner entities.

L5: [B. Showing that he has extinguished all delusions]

The text continues,

\ ###  
 \ The various flaws do not remain in the mind free of attachment;  
 \ Therefore, on the eighth ground, those stains together with their roots are completely pacified.  
 \ Their kleshas are exhausted and in the three realms they become superior, and yet (2bcd)

\ ###  
 \ They cannot attain all the Buddhas' endowments, which are limitless as the sky.  
 (3a)

\ ///  
 \ 272bd.  
 \ Because his mind of non-attachment does not remain with faults,  
 \ The eighth-grounder has thoroughly pacified those stains together with their roots;

\ But although his delusions are extinguished and he is the highest of the three grounds,  
\ 273a.  
\ He cannot yet attain all the qualities of the Buddhas, which are as endless as space.

From the very fact that they have risen from this cessation, [we can know that] they have the mind of original wisdom or primordial awareness, which is free of attachment. And, since this primordial awareness can not coexist with the faults of the kleshas, then, when on the eighth ground the sun of non-conceptual primordial awareness shines, all of the stains of the afflicted conduct of the three realms are uprooted and completely pacified. This means that all the kleshas are exhausted. Since thereby the bodhisattvas have transcended the three realms of existence, they are superior to anyone who is still bound in those three realms. They are superior in the three realms, but still, with regard to the qualities of the Buddhas, which are as limitless as the sky, they have not yet gained them all. This is very good, because it shows how unbelievable the qualities of enlightenment really are.

L5: [C. Showing that he has attained the ten powers]

The last two lines of the chapter and the next section of the commentary describe how even though bodhisattvas on this ground have put an end to existence for themselves, they still demonstrate many emanations for the benefit of those stuck in existence:

\ ###  
\ Although samsara has stopped, they gain the ten powers,  
\ And demonstrate many emanations to the beings in cyclic existence. (3bc)  
  
\ ///  
\ 273bc.  
\ Although samsara has ceased, he attains the ten powers;  
\ And with these, causes his nature to be displayed as various beings within samsara.

The commentary reads, "Well, if they have stopped taking birth in samsara, then how do they continue to perfect their realization of the qualities of the enlightenment of a Buddha?" The answer to that is that even though for them samsara has stopped, they gain the ten powers. As is explained in the Sutra of the Glorious Garland, the bodhisattva on this ground has a body that is of the nature of mind, and they can send this ["mental body"] out in a great variety of displays of different kinds of bodies to benefit beings still bound in samsaric existence.

1. The first of these ten powers is power over life, which means that, from gaining the blessing of their realization, they can live for an inconceivable number of kalpas. They have gained the blessing which allows them never to die if they do not want to. They can live for as long as they like.
2. The next is the power of mind, which means that they can engage in the primordial wisdom of an inconceivable number of states of meditative absorption. They do not find some meditations easy and other ones difficult. They can engage in a great variety of meditations with ease. \*(1)
3. The third is power over material possessions, which means that they are able to give to all the realms of existence [whatever is needed in these realms]. They are able, for instance, to cover them with precious gems. They have limitless power over material

objects.\*<sup>(2)</sup>

4. The fourth is power over karma, which means that they can cause karma to transform and ripen whenever they want it to.\*<sup>(3)</sup>

5. They have the power of birth, meaning that they can take birth at any time anywhere in any realm they want without any hindrance for the purpose of benefiting others.\*<sup>(4)</sup>

6. The sixth is the power over aspiration, which means they are able to demonstrate enlightenment in whatever Buddha realm they may desire at whatever time.\*<sup>(5)</sup>

7. The seventh is the power over aspiration prayers, which means that they are able to display, should they desire, the entire universe filled with Buddhas.\*<sup>(6)</sup>

8. The eighth is power over miracles, which means that they can display creatively their miraculous powers throughout all the realms of the universe.\*<sup>(7)</sup>

9. The ninth is power over primordial wisdom, which means they are able to completely display the perfect enlightenment of the Buddhas, which are the ten powers and the fearlessnesses, the unshared or unique qualities of the Buddhas, along with the signs and marks.\*<sup>(8)</sup>

10. And finally, the tenth is power over dharma, which means that they are able to fully display all of the different portals into the dharma, which has no center and no end.\*\*

To speak of them as having a body that is of the nature of mind means that, wherever they desire in their minds to go, then they just show up there. And they can pass through things without any obstruction. It is like that.

This has been a brief explanation of the seventh and eighth mind generations. Let's recite these together. [Students recite verses.]

~ \*Editor's note: These ten powers of an eighth-bhumi bodhisattva are described in the third chapter of Gampopa's Jewel Ornament of Liberation.

[1] Khenpo Konchok Gyaltzen Rinpoche's translation of this text (KKGR) describes the power of mind as "the ability to maintain meditative concentration as long as one wishes." Ken and Katia Holmes' translation, based on the commentaries of Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche, Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche, Tai Situ Rinpoche, and Goshir Gyaltsab Rinpoche (KKH) describes the power of mind as "the ability to enter stably into profound absorption, just as is wished." Herbert Guenther's translation (HG) describes it as the ability "to enter a state of meditative absorption at will."

[2] KKGR: "'Power over provision of necessities' means one can shower down a rain of limitless necessities on sentient beings."

[3] KKGR: "'Power over birth' means one can shift the effects of karma from one particular life to another sphere, world, realm, or birth." KKH: "The power over action is the ability to re-program (results of) of action (karma)—in terms of dimension, state, type of existence and mode of birth—so that they are experienced in other more useful ways."

[4] KKH: "Power over birth is the ability to take birth in the sense dimension yet always to maintain profound meditative absorption and not experience any form of degeneration, remaining completely unsullied by the evils of that state." The sense dimension is the same as the desire realm.

[5] KKH: "Power to fulfill aspiration is the ability to transform the elements—earth, water, etc.—into one another as wished." KKGR: "'Power over intentions' means that one can change whatever one wishes into earth, water, fire, and so forth." HG describes the power "over creative imagination" as "to be able to turn water into earth and to accomplish similar phenomena."

[6] KKH: "Power of prayer is the ability to pray and make prayers in a way that will

most properly accomplish the well-being of oneself and others; also the power to make prayers come true." KKGR: " 'Power over aspiration prayers' means that if one aspires to perfectly benefit oneself and others, it will be accomplished." HG: " 'Power over resolution' means to be able to determine to fulfill one's own and others' interests perfectly and also to accomplish this resolution."

[7] KKH: "Power over miracles is the ability to demonstrate countless miracles and supernormal feats in order to kindle aspiration in beings." KKGR: " 'Power over miracles' means one can exhibit innumerable manifestations in order to cause sentient beings to be interested in the spiritual path."

[8] KKGR: " 'Power over wisdom awareness' means one has perfected the understanding of phenomena, their meaning, the definition of words, and confidence." KKH: "Power of primordial awareness is knowledge that encompasses the ultimate meaning, in the very best possible way, of dharma, of meanings, of terminology, of the true sense of words and of bodhisattva prowess." To this latter, the authors add the following note: "A few pages would be needed to explain this sentence. Through primordial wisdom, one understands the very nature of things (dharma), the significance of each thing (meanings), how the significance is expressed through language (terminology), how that language is best expressed to individuals (words) and how to persist skillfully until it is understood (prowess)."

~ \*\*Editor's note: KKGR: " 'Power over dharma' means that, in an instant, bodhisattvas can fully satisfy all the sentient beings according to their dispositions and in their different languages through words and groupings of letters based on many different types of sutras and so forth." KKH: "Power over dharma is the ability to teach beings that which is suited to them, in just the right amount. This is achieved by presenting all the different nouns, terms and characters of dharma, in the various sutra and other teachings, in such a way that their sole speech is understood by each individual in his or her own language and in a totally satisfying way that makes sense to his or her own mentality." HG: " 'Power over presentation' means to be able fully to satisfy the minds of all sentient beings by a single discourse on the dharma in their respective languages, expounding it as in the sutras and other works in various words, inflections and grouping of letters, just giving them what and how much is necessary." The citations in the above footnotes are from *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation: The Wish-fulfilling Gem of the Noble Teachings* by Gampopa, translated by Khenpo Konchog Gyaltzen Rinpoche, Snow Lion Publications, Ithaca, New York, 1998; *Gems of Dharma, Jewels of Freedom* by Je Gampopa, translated by Ken and Katia Holmes, Altea Publishing, Forres, Scotland, 1995; and *The Jewel Ornament of Liberation* by sGam.po.pa, Translated and Annotated by Herbert V. Guenther, Shambhala Publications, Inc., Boston, Massachusetts, 1986.

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L4: [Now are there any questions?]

QUESTION: Portals to the dharma, is that ways of getting into the dharma?

Translator: Literally, door.

QUESTION: Please explain the sixth power a little bit more?

Translator: So Rinpoche asked me to explain it. Well, with all of these there is not an extensive description given. And they are not easy to understand because they are talking about describing abilities which are completely inconceivable to us. But what it literally says in the commentary is that the power of aspiration prayer means that you are able to



demonstrate enlightenment in whatever Buddha realm you want to. So, for instance, the Buddha Shakyamuni, according to one explanation, became enlightened first in the pure realm of Akanishtha, Ogmin in Tibetan, and then he came down to the earth and demonstrated the twelve deeds of the Buddha for everybody's benefit. But he had already become enlightened in the Buddha realm. In whatever realm you like, you can attain enlightenment.

QUESTION: [Unintelligible.]

Translator: There are different fruitions, like the fruition of the shravakas, the fruition of the pratyekyabuddhas, the fruition of the bodhisattvas.

QUESTION: The question is about cessation, and about how it is that the arhat's cessation is described as kind of a nothingness—like a lamp's going out, or water's drying up—and then the bodhisattvas' cessation is described as being different from that, and yet, they still have to arise from this cessation. How does that all come together?

Translator: Throughout the whole presentation of these bhūmis or grounds, there is language saying something to the effect that at this point everything is completely finished. But then you get to the next stage, and there is still something left to accomplish, right? So we have to understand these statements in that way, that they are always made from a certain perspective. Compared to what came before, it seems that the bodhisattva is completely finished, but then you arrive at the next stage and you find out that you still have more to accomplish. All of this is incredibly subtle. When bodhisattvas get to the eighth ground, it is said that there are no longer any appearances of signs, of characteristics of things. But they still have dualistic appearances. To understand that is very difficult for us. How you could have one without the other is something we are probably not going to know until we get there. Again, based on the cessation reached on the eighth ground, bodhisattvas are said no longer to need to make effort. Their path to Buddhahood is said to be automatic and irreversible; they are definitely going to attain enlightenment. But then, when they enter this samādhi, the Buddhas tell them to put more effort into it. So it is all depends upon perspective. The eighth-bhūmi bodhisattva's cessation is different from the arhat's or arhāt's, because the bodhisattva's cessation is combined with the powers of bodhisattvic aspiration and is based upon the full realization of the nature of mind. Their cessation is not just like a light's going out; it is a very radiant type of samādhi, from one perspective. But from the Buddha's perspective, there is still a danger that they could stay in that state and not completely perfect their compassion, because it is said that, however great the bodhisattva's qualities are, even on the tenth bhūmi, they are like a puddle compared to the ocean of the Buddha's qualities. So when a text is describing the eighth-bhūmi bodhisattva's having to arise from their cessation or any fault in their cessation, you can know that the text is viewing the situation from the Buddha's perspective. But from our perspective, their realization is inconceivable cessation that is endowed with fantastic qualities. So the different descriptions just depend on whether you are looking up at this particular cessation or down at it. Does that make sense?

QUESTION: Do we ever mean to describe the cessation of the arhats as being something that is like, you know, if you kick an arhat they won't feel it?

Translator: There are two types of arhats—the arhats with remainder and arhats without remainder, right? The ones with remainder still have their body. As described, they regard their skandhas as like carrying a pot of boiling oil, because the skandhas are so dangerous. But then once they die, arhats and arhātis are thought by practitioners of the hinayana path

to go into a state of nothingness, and for them, existence is finished. The way they describe this state, which is the state of an arhat without remainder is that there is nothing left. But there is something left, actually, because, as is said in this commentary, the seven consciousnesses stop, but the eighth consciousness, the alaya, is still there. [Then, when they have been sufficiently rested in their state of "partial" cessation,] the Buddhas come along and say, "wake up, wake up," so there is still some subtle mind-stream left. According to their vehicle there is no mind-stream left, but from the mahayana perspective there is. They still have to arise from their samadhi and keep practicing.\*

~ \*Editor's note: The realization of arhats or arhatis, which is the highest level of fruition in the shravakayana and the pratyekabuddhayana (together known as the hinayana), is limited by their limited aspiration and commensurate lack of merit. Since their goal is individual liberation, their realization consists principally of the emptiness of self and of only a partial understanding of the emptiness of phenomena. Since the bodhisattva's aspiration is the liberation of all suffering sentient beings, and since their vow includes not rejecting, even mentally, even one sentient being from that aspiration, and since they work tirelessly for the liberation of others, their meditation develops great force, which enables them to realize completely the emptiness of phenomena and the emptiness of consciousness.

QUESTION: How do you meet the dharma if you have never met it before? And, when all sentient beings become enlightened, what happens after that?

RINPOCHE: In my opinion, since samsara has no beginning, since it has been going on for an infinite period of time, and therefore, since we have had an infinite number of lives, then it is impossible not to have had some previous contact with the dharma and impossible not to have some habitual tendencies towards the dharma. You will meet something that will connect with these habitual tendencies.

In the Buddhist tradition it is said that it is enough just to see an image of a temple or a teacher to plant the seeds of an interest in dharma. So that is going to happen to everyone.

In Tibet, the tradition was to build stupas and to put mani stones, stones with mantras written on them, close to the side of the road so that people could see them. People who had faith already would circumambulate them and make aspiration prayers, and those who did not would at least see them with their eyes, and thus the seeds of virtue would be planted. We plant the seeds in that way, and then, when an extraordinary set of conditions come together, then these positive tendencies or habits wake up, and one begins to practice.

With regard to the second question about what happens after all sentient beings attain enlightenment, we need to know that there is no increase and there is no decrease; there is no getting any better, and there is no getting any worse. As it says in the Heart Sutra, things do not get bigger and they do not get smaller; there is no increase and there is no decrease; there are no stains and no freedom from stains. There is no difference between Buddhas and sentient beings. There are just mere dependently arisen appearances.

If everything were truly existent, then sentient beings would become enlightened and become Buddhas, and the Buddhas would go to the Buddha realms, and the Buddha realms would be filled up. There would be no vacancy. But it is not like that, because they are not real.

And then, if all the sentient beings became enlightened, everybody would be a Buddha and there would be no way for the Buddhas to perform the benefit of others. But it does not

happen like that. So what we have to know is that the nature of reality is the fundamental sameness of everything, fundamental equality. There is no increasing and no decreasing, no gain, no loss.

We can see this absence of increase or decrease if we look at our own planet. There are mighty rivers which dump millions of gallons of water into the oceans every instant, but the oceans do not overflow. And, similarly, even though so much water has passed and continues to pass through these rivers, they do not dry up. This is an example of mere dependently arisen appearance.

The water in these great rivers flowing into the ocean did not just appear from out of nowhere. It does not need to come from anywhere else. This just shows us that in fact there is really no increase and no decrease.

Think about the sentient beings in a dream. They do not come from anywhere to the dream, and when the dream is over they do not go anywhere. They never get any greater in number, and they never get any fewer in number. It is all just a mere appearance. The dream example helps us to understand that.

In the opening praise of Nagarjuna's text the Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way, he teaches how reality is free from eight types of extremes. He says that whatever is dependently arisen does not arise, does not cease, is not permanent, nor is it completely nonexistent. It does not come, and it does not go. And it is not one thing, nor a lot of different things.

So think about the appearances in a dream. They never really arise, and they never really cease. They are not real, and they are not completely nothing. They do not come from anywhere, and they do not go anywhere. And they are not one thing, nor are they lots of different things.

So we should sing from time to time. Let's sing this verse by Nagarjuna. [Students sing.]

Ultimately, samsara and nirvana are fundamentally the same. As the protector Nagarjuna said in his text, "Samsara is not the slightest bit different from nirvana. Nirvana is not the slightest bit different from samsara."\*

~ \*Editor's note: From time to time one might wonder what the point of all these Buddhist metaphysics is. The answer lies in Buddhism's very practical intent. If one can truly experience that samsara and nirvana are not different, then one will no longer be totally upset by the misperception that the world's samsara or one's own personal samsara falls short of nirvana. If nothing is real and permanent, if everything is merely dependently arisen appearances, "such stuff as dreams are made on," then there is no reason to get so totally worked up and exercised by every little thing that seems to go wrong, or even over the big things. On the other hand, since everything is not unreal and non-existent, and since sentient beings are deeply involved in the misperception of things as real and therefore suffer, there still exists the basis for generating compassion for them and trying to alleviate their condition. But this compassion then is based in the correct apprehension of the nature of reality, and is inseparable from the equanimity that arises from that correct apprehension. Therefore the actions that arise out of such compassion are accurate and unmistakable.

If it were the case that sentient beings could all become enlightened and leave samsara empty, and that then all the Buddha realms would be filled, then samsara and nirvana would

be different things. They would not be of the nature of equality. But this is not the case, because samsara is just a concept. It does not really exist. Thus, the Ornament of the Mahayana Sutras, the Mahayana Sutralankara says, "Liberation is just the elimination of this mistake."

Samsara and nirvana are just like a dream. The only difference between them is the difference between not knowing you are dreaming and knowing you are dreaming. Samsara is like a dream, and a Buddha's attaining enlightenment is like when one wakes up from a dream.

QUESTION: Are the ten powers linked with the ten transcendent perfections? And my second question is about the seventh in particular, the power of interest, and how that fits in with the description of what it is.

RINPOCHE: The answer to the first question is that they are not taught to be so linked. The ten grounds are linked with the ten transcendent perfections, but it is not the case that the ten transcendent perfections or paramitas are linked with the ten powers one by one.

QUESTION: But they are both linked to the ten bhumis, right?

Translator: You perfect the ten powers on the eighth bhumi.

QUESTION: They are all connected with the eighth bhumi?

Translator: That's right.

RINPOCHE: It is certainly not the case that you perfect all ten one by one. As a group they are described as being important in relation to the eighth ground, but they are still present as qualities on the previous grounds, just to a lesser extent. And they grow more extensive on the subsequent grounds.

QUESTION: What if you looked from the top down? Would you have all those qualities?

Translator: Yes.

QUESTION: When you do it that way, would you link the powers with the ten bhumis?

Translator: As Rinpoche is saying, they are a group of ten that go together. They are especially connected with the eighth bhumi, but they grow stronger and more extensive on the ninth and the tenth bhumis and also upon enlightenment. And they are present all the way along the bodhisattva bhumis, but not as extensively as on the eighth.

RINPOCHE: With respect to your second question concerning the seventh power, which has been translated here as the power of aspiration prayers, the Tibetan word, mopa, being translated here as aspiration prayers, is somewhat difficult to translate into English, because it means different things in different cases. Here it means something like "wish," in the sense that if you want to see the whole universe filled with Buddhas, you can. For example, through perfecting generation stage practice, you can see all of the deities and Buddha realms directly just by wanting to. You do not really even have to want to; they just naturally appear in your perception or vision. And so here it reads that if you want to see the whole universe filled with Buddhas, you can. .

In the next sentence the word, mopa, has a slightly different meaning. It is not that these Buddhas' forms actually exist. They do not. They are just projections of the interest or the wish, of the mopa, of the person who wants to see them. Bodhisattvas on the eighth ground have very pure vision connected with their wish or their longing or their interest, and so

they can see all these different Buddhas, just as, if you want to see somebody, all you have to do is turn on the TV, and it looks as if their form were really there. Millions of people can see their form at the same time— just by wanting to. But it does not mean that these forms are something real; they are just a reflection, a projection of that person's interest. That is the analogy. On millions of television sets the image of the President of the United States can appear, and everybody thinks that the image is the President. But it is just an image.

So here mopa or interest means that it is just the projection of the bodhisattva's interest that they see this form of the Buddha. The Buddha does not exist from its own perspective. And this is because the real Buddha is the dharmakaya, which nobody can see. And the form kayas are just things which appear due to the projections of the disciples' pure vision and their interest.

The same thing can be said of sentient beings. Sentient here means "having mind;" the mind is what sentient beings are really all about. But ordinary beings cannot see their minds. What they see is the body and how the body appears. So it is like that.

QUESTION: When you listen to the teachings on emptiness and you contemplate emptiness, what are the signs that you have gained certainty in the view?

RINPOCHE: The sign of certainty is that you do not have its opposite, which is doubt. So if you still have any doubt about whether or not things are empty, then you have not yet developed certainty. On the other hand, if you are sure that everything is empty—"this is really empty; it is just like a dream; I know that for sure"—then you have certainty.

None of us has any doubt that we are human beings. We all know that for sure. That is certainty. On the other hand, if we said we were deities, then we would have doubts about that, because we seem to be human beings. That is how it is.

QUESTION: If bodhisattvas have the ability to transform karma and to cause it to change and ripen differently, and they have the wish to help others, then why have they allowed things to happen as they have, in this century, for example? And do the second turning and the third turning of the wheel of dharma answer this question differently?

RINPOCHE: The answer is that it is possible that the beings who died in all the atrocities in this century were reborn in the pure realms. We have no idea what the final consequence of these events was. And there is not really much difference between the ways in which the second and the third turning would answer this question.

The changes that can be brought about in karma are not so great. For example, it is said that when the Buddhas rest in samadhi, then all of the hell realms and the hungry ghost realms are free of suffering. But just temporarily. So, for instance, when Chandrakirti milked the painting of the cow to stave off famine, then he only did that once. It did not happen over and over again. If it had, that would have been great, but it did not and does not.

It all depends upon interdependence. It is said, for example, that through the power of the blessing of the Buddha, when a Buddha teaches, it causes all six realms to rumble, and the hell realms and the hungry ghost realms are free of suffering temporarily, and they gain temporary happiness, but then for them confused appearances appear again.

It is similar to when people in the world have a party. It is fun if it does not last too

long. But if it lasts too long, if the party just drags on and on, then it is not very much fun anymore. When it is just a dependently arisen appearance, it is better if it lasts just for a short period of time.

It is also similar to when the lama gives you an empowerment. When they put the vase on top of your head, you get some feeling; but if they left it there for a long time, it would hurt. So for some people it is better for them just to get a taste of something for a short period of time.

But in the true nature of reality, the three times are equality. There is no difference between long time and short time. This we have to know; it is very important. Sometimes we need to think of the three times, and other times we need to know that they do not really exist. We need to know that they are equality. There are a lot of different ways of thinking about it.

In the middle turning of the wheel, everything is explained to be mere appearance that is dependently arisen, and therefore it is all just illusory. There is not a single phenomenon that is not dependently arisen, and therefore there is not a single phenomenon that is not empty. That needs to be said again and again.

The great siddha Gotsangpa, in his song *The Eight Flashing Lances*, says,

\ The murkiness of clinging clarified,  
\ Causes and conditions, like reflections,  
\ Knowing what to do and not, that subtle art—  
\ These are three which make relations fully free,  
\ Like a lance that flashes free in the open sky.

So we should sing this and know that all appearances are just like reflections in a mirror, like reflections in the water. They have no more reality than that.

[Students sing.]

When we want to understand what it means to say that something is just a dependently arisen appearance, what its quality is, then we should think about reflections shining in very clear water, or in a mirror. All things are just like that. And, even though these appearances have no substantial nature, we can still use them to eliminate faults and bring about good qualities, just as we can use the face that appears in a mirror to clean off all the dirt from our face, to comb our hair, and to make ourselves look nice, even though that face has no essence. So it is like that.

If you want to meditate on selflessness, you can do that by seeing how it is that none of the five aggregates is the self; that their coming together, the whole accumulation of them, is not the self; that ego-clinging mind is not the self. Since there is no self, we can just rest in selflessness.

If you like meditating according to the mind only school—that reality is empty of the duality of perceiver and perceived—then you first look at outer appearances and know that they are just confused appearances that are projections of habitual tendencies, just like appearances in dreams. Since there is nothing real on the outside, there can be no inner mind to perceive anything either. And so there is no duality of perceiver and perceived. What is left is the ground of mind itself, which is mere consciousness, mere luminous clarity. Rest in that, which is empty of duality.



If you like to meditate according to the middle way autonomy school, the svatantrika madhyamika, then you analyze everything in samsara and nirvana and see that nothing is just one indivisible thing, because whatever it is, it is divisible into its constituent parts. It is divisible into hundreds of thousands of millions of parts. So nothing is just one thing. Nor are there many things; because each one of those parts is divisible into its parts, you cannot find anything to begin counting in order to find many. This applies as well to the self-aware, luminous mind which was posited by the mind only school as being the nature of genuine reality. We can see that that does not exist either. And having cut through everything that needs to be refuted, we rest in the emptiness that is like the sky, that is like space. That is the way to meditate according to the middle way autonomy school.

The way to meditate according to the middle way consequence school, the prasangika madhyamika, is to realize that the nature of reality cannot be described by any conceptual fabrication. It cannot be said to be existent or nonexistent, real or something that ceases, something or nothing. None of these apply. This is the nature of reality—freedom from all conceptual fabrications. Since that is its nature, then the mind that meditates upon it has nothing to focus upon. So reality transcends conceptual fabrications, and the mind meditating on it is free from any focus or reference point. Resting in that is the way to meditate according to the middle way consequence school.

In the Entrance to the Middle Way, there is a verse which says, "There is no arising, remaining, or ceasing, and the mind meditating on that does not arise either." So the object meditated upon is free from conceptual fabrications, and the mind meditating on it transcends all conceptual fabrications too. The freedom from fabrications rests within the freedom from fabrications. The result is also free from any conceptual fabrications. So however many layers you want to put into it, or however many aspects of it you wish to describe, it does not matter. They are all undifferentable within the freedom from conceptual fabrications.

As the bodhisattva Shantideva says in the wisdom chapter of the Guide to the Bodhisattva's Conduct, "At the time when there is neither thing nor non-thing to occupy a place before the mind, at that point there is no projected image. This lack of reference point is perfect peace."

What the mind looks at in meditation is the dharmadhatu. The dharmadhatu is neither something existent nor non-existent. Neither a thing, nor nothing. It cannot be described by any conceptual fabrication. Therefore the mind meditating upon it has no reference point. And these two—the meditating mind and the dharmadhatu—are undifferentiable.

The lord of yogins, Milarepa, sang in his song called The Profound Definitive Meaning Sung on the Snowy Range:

\ For the mind that masters view, the emptiness dawns.  
\ In the content seen, not even an atom exists.  
\ A seer and seen, refined until they're gone,  
\ This way of realizing view, it works quite well.

This description of view is in harmony with that of the middle way consequence school. Let's sing this together.

[Students sing. Dedication of merit.]

Sarva Mangalam!

## The Ninth Mind Generation: Excellent Mind (1 verse) – Forces]

[Students begin by singing the Song of Meaningful Connections and by reciting the verses from the Seventh and Eighth Mind Generations.]

L3: [The Ninth Mind Generation: Excellent Mind (1 verse) – Forces]

L4: [The good qualities of the ninth ground]

As before, please give rise to the precious attitude of bodhicitta, as is instructed in the great vehicle, and listen. We have come to the Ninth Mind Generation, describing the ninth bhumi or ground:

\     ###  
\     What need to mention the strengths they gain on the ninth ground.  
\     They all become perfectly pure.  
\     Similarly, their own qualities,  
\     the dharmas of perfect awareness, become completely pure.  
  
\     ///  
\     [IX.1]  
\     274.  
\     On the ninth (i.e. Good Intelligence (9)) all his forces become completely pure (9).  
\     Likewise he also attains the completely pure qualities of the correct cognizers of phenomena.

The commentary reads, "On the ninth ground, what need to mention the strengths of the bodhisattvas. Here the practice of the paramita or transcendent perfection of strength comes to the fore and becomes completely perfect. All the strengths of the bodhisattvas are completely pure, and furthermore, they develop the qualities of the four dharmas of perfect awareness."

These four dharmas of perfect awareness are described as follows:

1. The first is called the awareness of phenomena, which means that they know the individual, specific characteristics of every single phenomenon.
2. The next is called the awareness of meaning, which means that they have perfect knowledge of all of the distinctions between different types of phenomena, and different types of dharma teachings.
3. The third, literally called the awareness of etymology, means that they are perfectly able to teach everything in the dharma distinctly and clearly without confusing any dharma teaching with another.
4. And finally there is the awareness that is the quality of courage. They are courageous in teaching because they never forget anything that they have learned. They have no fear of forgetting something because they remember everything.

These are the four qualities of perfect awareness that are perfected on the ninth bhumi.

Of the ten strengths,

1. the first one is the strength of will, which is the absence of any conduct influenced by the kleshas, the mental afflictions.
2. The second is the strength of perfect resource or resourcefulness, which means that one

is skilled in all the limitless numbers of different types of conduct which worldly beings present or display.

3. The third is the strength of power, literally, because it means that all of the bodhisattvas' wishes are perfectly fulfilled.

4. The fourth is the strength of learning because one is skilled and expert in all of the different divisions of the dharma taught by the Buddha. In order to know so much, you have to study and learn a lot.

5. The fifth is the strength of aspiration prayers. Bodhisattvas on the ninth ground must apply themselves to practicing the conduct of all the Buddhas, and they do not give up any aspect of that conduct.

6. The sixth is the strength of the paramitas, or literally, of having crossed to the far shore, which means that the qualities of the Buddhas become perfectly ripened in the mind stream of the bodhisattva.

7. The seventh is the strength of love, which means that they do not abandon in the slightest way the conduct of protecting all sentient beings.

8. The eighth is the strength of compassion, which means they clear away the suffering of all sentient being.

9. The ninth is the power or the strength of pure being, the dharmata, which means they manifest the nature of reality, which is like an illusion.

10. Finally, the tenth is the strength of having received the blessing of all of the tathagatas, which means that they are approaching or on the verge of the omniscient, primordial wisdom.

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L3: [The Tenth Mind Generation: Cloud of Dharma (1 verse) – Primordial Awareness]

L4: [The good qualities of the tenth ground]

We have arrived at the tenth ground, and there are three sections to the commentary outlined here.

1. The first describes the extraordinary quality particular to the tenth ground.
2. The second describes the way in which the transcendent perfection of primordial wisdom becomes pure.
3. And the third describes the qualities that are the reason for giving this ground its particular name, which is Cloud of Dharma.

The first is about the particular quality of this ground, which is described in the first part of the verse:

\     ###  
\     On the tenth ground they receive the genuine empowerment from all the Buddhas.  
(1a)

\     ///  
\     [X.1]  
\     275.  
\     On the tenth ground (i.e. Cloud of Dharma (10)), he receives holy empowerments from Buddhas in all directions,

The commentary reads: "The bodhisattvas abiding on the tenth ground, the Cloud of Dharma, receive the genuine empowerment from all the Buddhas of the ten directions. It is an

empowerment of great rays of light, which they receive at the end of having resided in 100,000 times 10 to the 59th samadhis, which causes them to be undifferentiable from the omniscient primordial wisdom of the Buddhas."

This empowerment is described in the Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi, which says that there are one hundred-thousand billion precious lotuses—a gazillion lotuses. The sutra further explains that surrounding each of these ten gazillion main lotuses\* there are additional lotuses circling the main lotuses equal in number to the combined number of atoms in all of original ten gazillion main lotuses. There are ten gazillion main lotuses, each of which is surrounded by an even vaster retinue of [subsidiary] lotuses, and on each of the main lotuses sits a tenth-bhumi bodhisattva. So the tenth-bhumi bodhisattva does not get this empowerment alone, but in the company of a vast assembly of tenth-bhumi bodhisattvas who receive empowerment at the same time. On the subsidiary, smaller lotuses sit bodhisattvas from the seventh, eighth, and ninth bhumis. Each lotus is as big as the body of the bodhisattva seated upon it, so you do not have a little bodhisattva on a big lotus, or a big bodhisattva on a little lotus. They all fit just right. At the end of this particular samadhi, what has just been described appears. Since all of these bodhisattvas and lotuses are merely empty forms, there is no reason why this cannot happen. So all these bodhisattvas are seated in the way described, and then from all of the Buddha realms—from the white curled hair in the middle of each Buddha's forehead—come rays of light. And all of this light enters into the mind-streams of these bodhisattvas, and in that way they receive the empowerment.

~ \*Editor's note: The translator seems to have become confused here between one gazillion and ten gazillion.

In Praise of the Dharmadatu it is explained in a similar way, with the main bodhisattvas sitting on the anthers of the lotuses and an inconceivable number of bodhisattvas sitting on the outer petals.

These flowers, we have to understand, are not ordinary flowers that grow from a seed in the ground. They are flowers made out of light and they are empty forms. The bodhisattvas do not need to do anything to set up this particular arrangement. They do not make any preparations; the whole thing just appears, and they take part in it and receive this empowerment. All these bodhisattvas have the power of clairvoyance and other extraordinary mental abilities.

The next section in the commentary describes the transcendent perfection of primordial wisdom, which is described in the second line of the root verse:

\     ###  
\     And their primordial wisdom becomes supreme. (lb)  
  
\     ///  
\     [X.1]  
\     275.b  
\     And he also attains a supreme, surpassing exalted awareness (10).

One might ask, "What is the difference between wisdom, which is the sixth transcendent perfection, and primordial wisdom, which is the tenth transcendent perfection?"\* The commentary explains that in some places it is explained that wisdom (prajna) faces outward and primordial wisdom (jnana) faces inward, that for wisdom there is still dualistic

appearance and for primordial wisdom there is not. But this commentary does not really like that explanation. It quotes the Sutra of the Bodhisattva Bhūmis in saying that primordial wisdom is the wisdom that knows all phenomena just as they are. So what does that mean? Well, prajna or wisdom, sherab, only perceives the nature of genuine reality, whereas primordial wisdom perceives genuine reality and relative reality both together. So the ultimate cognition, which is this primordial wisdom, does not merely perceive the nature of genuine reality, but perceives genuine reality as being of the same taste as relative reality. And furthermore, where there is primordial wisdom, dualistic appearances have dissolved, and there is no longer any distinction at all between the two truths.\*\* They are of the same taste. This primordial wisdom is the result of the practice of wisdom, the result of the practice of prajna.

~ \*Editor's note: Here the translator is translating the Sanskrit prajna, which is sherab in Tibetan, as "wisdom." Trungpa Rinpoche and the Nalanda Translation Committee (NTC) have translated this term as "knowledge." The Sanskrit jnana, which is yeshe in Tibetan, the translator is translating as "primordial wisdom." This term Trungpa Rinpoche and the NTC have translated as "wisdom" or "primordial awareness." Again, according to the NTC, "Prajna is the natural sharpness of awareness that sees, discriminates, and also sees through conceptual discrimination." Sherab, the Tibetan for prajna, literally means the best knowledge or the best knowing, and it is traditionally divided into lower or worldly knowledge—which would include everything from cookery or how to sweep a street properly to brain surgery, nuclear physics, etc.—and higher or spiritual knowledge, which includes two levels: one that, in accordance with the hinayana teachings of the Buddha, sees the self and external physical phenomena as impermanent, without a self, and of the nature of suffering; and at a higher level, one that, in accordance with the mahayana teachings, sees or experiences emptiness, the direct knowledge of the true nature of things. Yeshe, the Tibetan for jnana, literally means primordial knowing, and is the "wisdom-activity of enlightenment, transcending all dualistic conceptualization." (NTC) Trungpa Rinpoche has also said that the difference between what is being translated here as wisdom and primordial wisdom is the difference between "being wise and being wisdom."

~ \*\*Editor's note: relative truth and absolute truth.

And finally, in the last two lines of the verse, there is the description of the qualities that give this ground its name:

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\      ###
\      Just as rain falls from clouds, from the bodhisattvas falls a spontaneous rain of
dharma
\      So that the harvest of beings' virtue may flourish. (1cd)

\      ///
\      [X.1]
\      275.cd
\      Just as rain falls from rain clouds, so for the sake of living beings' virtuous
crops,
\      A rain of Dharma spontaneously falls from the Conquerors' Son.
```

The commentary reads: "For example, just as in the world gentle rain falls from clouds, so it is that, in order to produce within the mind-streams of beings the excellent harvest of virtue—the fruit which yields temporary and ultimate benefit and happiness—from the great

beings, the bodhisattvas on the tenth ground, there spontaneously—which means here without any effort or contrivance—falls the rain of the genuine dharma. Thus, this ground is called the Cloud of Dharma."

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\*\*\*\*\*  
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## L2: [THE GOOD QUALITIES OF THE TEN GROUNDS]

Next the text describes the twelve qualities shared by all bodhisattvas that increase exponentially as they progress from ground to ground.

Translator: Rinpoche has composed some verses, called summarizing verses, to make this easier for us to understand.

RINPOCHE: The verses in the text of the Entrance to the Middle Way are more difficult to understand and to memorize. These are much easier. [See box on this page.] These verses describe what happens on the first bodhisattva bhumi. On the first bhumi the bodhisattva has these twelve qualities a hundred fold, or twelve hundred altogether. There is a tune that goes along with these verses, which would be good for us to sing and to memorize. When we sing all together, it makes a very good connection. Then when you reach the first bodhisattva ground, you will know all the things you can do, because you will have recited this verse and you will say, "Oh yes, I remember I can do this and this and this."

And you will not have to ask people, "What does it mean that I can meet a hundred Buddhas?" You will know exactly what that means.

[Students sing verses.]

\ They can meet a hundred Buddhas and receive their blessings.  
\ They can stay for a hundred eons, know the past hundred, future hundred too!  
\ They can enter a hundred samadhis and move a hundred worlds.  
\ They can fill those hundred worlds with light and ripen a hundred beings.  
\ They can travel to a hundred pure lands, open a hundred doors of dharma.  
\ They can emanate a hundred bodies with a hundred in each beautiful retinue!  
  
\ —Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche Under the guidance of Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche, translated by Ari Goldfield, October 31, 1999.

[copied from another file:]

## L4: [A. The good qualities of the first ground]

\ ///  
\ [XI.1]  
\ 276.  
\ At that time he can see a hundred Buddhas  
\ And realize their blessings.  
\ He remains alive for a hundred aeons  
\ And engages perfectly in the ends of the former and the later.



\ ///  
\ 277.  
\ This Wise One can enter into and rise from the absorptions of a hundred concentrations.  
\ He can cause a hundred worlds to shake, and illuminate them.  
\ Likewise, through his magical emanations he can cause a hundred living beings to ripen,  
\ And visit a hundred Pure Lands.

\ ///  
\ 278.  
\ He can completely open the doors of Dharma, and this Son of the Powerful Able One  
\ Can cause bodies to be displayed throughout his body,  
\ He can completely open the doors of Dharma, and this Son of the Powerful Able One  
\ Can cause bodies to be displayed throughout his body,  
\ Each body being endowed with and beautified by its retinue,  
\ And revealing a hundred Conquerors' Sons.

\ ///  
\ [XI.4.a]  
\ 279a.  
\ These qualities are attained by the Wise One abiding on Very Joyful (1),

L4: [B. The good qualities of the second to the seventh grounds]

\ ///  
\ [XI.4.bcd]  
\ 279bcd.  
\ And in just the same way they are perfectly attained in thousands  
\ By the abider on Stainless (2).  
\ On the next five grounds, the Bodhisattva attains

\ ///  
\ 280.  
\ A hundred thousand of these, a hundred ten million,  
\ a thousand ten million,  
\ Then a hundred, thousand ten million,  
\ And then ten million one hundred thousand million multiplied by a hundred, and further multiplied by a thousand.

L4: [C. The good qualities of the three pure grounds]

\ ///  
\ [XI.6]  
\ 281.  
\ Abiding on the ground, Immovable (8), free from conceptions,  
\ He attains qualities equal in number  
\ To however many atoms there are  
\ In a hundred thousand of the three thousand worlds.

\ ///  
\ 282.

\ The Bodhisattva abiding on the ground Good Intelligence (9)  
\ Attains the previously mentioned qualities  
\ Equal in number to the atoms in a hundred thousand countless  
\ Perfectly increased by ten.

\ ///

\ 283.

\ Briefly, the qualities of the tenth (i.e. Cloud of Dharma (10))  
\ Have passed beyond what can be expressed in words,  
\ There being as many as there are atoms  
\ In all the inexpressible

\ ///

\ 284.

\ Moment by moment he can display in his hair pores  
\ Perfect Buddhas beyond number  
\ Together with Bodhisattvas,  
\ And likewise gods, demi-gods, and humans.

---

L4: [Now are there any questions?]

Translator: Maybe I can just say a few things about what we just heard. They can meet a hundred Buddhas and receive their blessings. They stay for a hundred eons, meaning that if they want to stay for that long on this bhumi they can. They can stay for that long. They can know everything that happened in the past hundred eons and everything that will happen in the future hundred eons. In the last line, "They can emanate a hundred bodies," means that they can send out a hundred emanations of themselves, each surrounded by a hundred of whomever they like.

QUESTION: And open a hundred doors? What is a door of dharma?

Translator: It means they can teach in a hundred different ways.

QUESTION: Are you translating dampa when you say genuine?

Translator: Yes, dampa.

QUESTION: If they know the next hundred lives and they know the past hundred eons, but they neither happen or will happen, what is the point in knowing the next hundred eons if nothing is going to happen anyway?

Translator: Rinpoche says it would be better if I answered the question. It is very helpful to remember the examples of a dream or a water moon, because they "teach" the nature of appearance. The image of the moon appears in the water and events appear in a dream, but there is nothing real there in either case. So to say that something has no inherent existence or to say that nothing ever happens means that just as events in a dream do not really happen, nothing in any other dimension of existence really happens. They appear to happen, but they do not really happen. Both the past and the future are like that. They are just mere appearances. That is what bodhisattvas know. To say that nothing happens does not mean that they are nothingness; it means that they are just mere appearances.

RINPOCHE: The many qualities ascribed to the various bodhisattva bhumis are not real either.

They too are just appearance-emptiness, like a water moon. If they were real, if things were solid, inherently existent, it would be impossible for such things as described in these verses to happen. But it is precisely because they are empty of inherent existence, because they are appearance-emptiness, that they can happen. For example, you can have as many reflections of the moon as you have different containers filled with water. The moon will shine in all of them effortlessly. It can do so because it is all just appearance-emptiness. Similarly, bodhisattvas can aid as many disciples. When all the causes and conditions come together, a mere appearance of emanations for the benefit of students appears.

If you ask why they emanate a retinue around them, the reason is that often times they want to go to places where the dharma has not been taught before. But if they were just to go to such a place alone, there would be nobody to listen to them; so they emanate a hundred students to listen to them. Then people say, "Oh, yes, I want to go too." In that way more people come and listen. Bodhisattvas need somebody initially to listen to the teachings to get the whole thing rolling. They eliminate the problem of getting the whole thing off the ground by emanating their own students to come and start showing other people how to be a student, how to listen, and how to practice on the path. And then everybody else who is not an emanation can see how it is done and do the same thing. Since the original hundred students are all emanations, they give a very good example of how to be good students. Everybody else watches them and thinks, "Oh, that is how we should do it." And so everybody else can enter into the dharma in the same way. That is a very good reason to send out emanations of students.

QUESTION: What are the four fearlessnesses?

RINPOCHE: The commentary just mentions the four fearlessnesses without explaining what they are. But, for example, there is no fear of whether or not one has gained realization as a Buddha. There is no fear of being able or not able to lead disciples, and so forth. There are four such divisions.\*

~ \*Editor's note: Amongst the various qualities of Buddhahood, the Mahayana Uttara Tantra Sastra enumerates "four kinds of fearlessness: 1. knowledge of their perfect enlightenment with respect to every phenomenal domain. 2. in teaching the obstacles and how to stop them. 3. in teaching the path and 4. in stating their achievement of cessation." The translators, Ken and Katia Holmes further comment on the first fearlessness that "When enlightenment is reached, everything to be purified has been purified and everything to be realised is realised." The shastra further comments on "the function of these fearlessnesses. 1. Because they themselves know and help others know every aspect of the knowable. 2. because they themselves have relinquished and help others relinquish those things which must be relinquished. 3. because they teach and make taught what ought to be taught and 4. because they have attained and help others attain the utterly stainless highest attainment." The translators further comment on these four last points: "These four points refer to the four sublime truths, taught by the Buddha in the first turning of the wheel of dharma. The truth of suffering is 'what is to be known'. The truth of the origination of suffering, 'what is to be given up'— karma and the defilements. The truth of the path—'what is to be relied upon', and the truth of cessation—'the goal to be achieved'. The terms [sublime truths] literally mean 'the truths' (bDen.Pa) 'of the realised' ('Phags. Pa'i). 'Sublime' means 'aloof from and raised far above the ordinary' (Oxford Diet.) since these truths are only perceived by realised beings. Sometimes called "Four Noble Truths." From The Changeless Nature.-Mahayana Uttara Tantra Sastra by Arya Maitreya and Acarya Asanga, translated from the Tibetan under the guidance of Khenchen the IX Thrangu Rinpoche and Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso

Rinpoche by Ken and Katia Holmes, Karma Drubgyud Darjay Ling, Eskdalemuir, Dumfriesshire, Scotland, 1985.

QUESTION: I was curious about these emanations of the students. Are they real? Are they sentient beings? Or are they just simply empty emanations? And do they know that they are emanations or do they think they are sentient beings?

RINPOCHE: These emanations are not ordinary sentient beings, because they are emanations of the bodhisattva. Some know that they are emanations and some do not, but it is better if they do not know. If they knew that they were emanations from the beginning, then they would not want to go through all of [what is entailed in following the path and being a good student, etc.]. They would look at their teacher and think, "We are both emanations of the same bodhisattva. Why should I listen to him? Why should I listen to her?" If they did know, it would just be like a movie; everybody would just be playing a role. And so it is probably not like that; they probably do not know, and they probably have the thoughts of ordinary beings.

There is a story about the siddha Gotsangpa. He had among his many students an attendant called the siddha Orgenpa. He was in charge of making various arrangements, such as determining who could come to the teachings, how many people would fit, and things like that. Among the students there were many emanations, not necessarily emanations of Gotsangpa, but just emanations in general. But the story recounts that the students did not necessarily know that they were emanations. That is probably how it is, and there is probably a good reason for that.

And Milarepa sang in a song called The Eight Wonderful Forms of Happiness, "To gather emanations as a retinue is E Ma Ho! He was singing about his own experience, but he did not go around saying to his students, "Oh, you are this emanation, and you are that emanation." He did not tell them that.

QUESTION: If I may follow up on his questions, were these emanations which are not now ordinary sentient beings ever at one time ordinary sentient beings? Or were they like a movie that is projected? I think a lot of Westerners have the notion that emanations are sort of holograms that are produced in space.

RINPOCHE: It is in fact like television, or like the reflections in water of the moon in the sky, in that these emanations are not their own separate beings. They are just emanations. They are literally emanations of the basis or ground for the emanation, which is a particular bodhisattva abiding in the pure realms. If somebody puts a television camera in front of somebody else, then that somebody else's image can show up on countless television sets. That is how emanations are. When a person is talking on television and showing up on millions of television sets, the images of this person on all these television sets are not the same as the actual person talking; but they are not different either. They are just mere dependently arisen appearances.

When we turn on our television and see a person's image there, this image is not the same as the person; it is not different from the person; it's just a mere dependently arisen appearance. But the way we think about it is that the image is the person; we think it is the same. So we look at the image of the person and say, "Oh, there he is; there she is."

Emanations are just mere dependently arisen appearances, they do not have any inherent existence.

So given the bodhisattva on the first bhumi and their hundred emanations, they are all emanations which lack inherent existence, because they are just mere dependently arisen appearances like images on television screens, like the reflections of the moon in many pools of water.

In order to tame beings, in order to benefit them, bodhisattvas take birth as rabbits, fish, turtles, deer, antelope, and all different kinds of animals. Whatever is necessary. The Buddha told very specific stories of such bodhisattvic incarnations. He said that at such and such a time I took birth as that animal and had my head cut off by that person, or I gave my flesh to that animal. He told these stories in great detail, exactly what happened in a great many lives.

QUESTION: Incidentally this seems a little strange, because we are all mere dependently arisen illusory beings, so somehow to try to distinguish us from emanations by saying emanations are mere dependently arisen beings is a little confusing. If we look at it from the standpoint of their birth, they get the white tigli (bindhu) from their father, they get their red tigli from their mother, what is there in place of a namshe, which is also present when we are born?\*

~ \*Editor's note: According to the Buddha's teachings, three constituents must be come together in the womb for the conception of an ordinary being to occur: the white element or bindu from the father, the red element or bindu from the mother, and the namshe or consciousness of the individual being in the intermediate state between death and rebirth who is being impelled by karma towards conception and rebirth.

RINPOCHE: To answer the first question, from the perspective of genuine reality, there is no difference between us and emanations. There is no difference between samsara and nirvana. There is no difference between Buddhas and sentient beings. There is no difference between friends and enemies, and therefore it is explained that all appearances are the display of the three kayas.

Since samsara and nirvana are fundamentally the same, then sentient beings and Buddhas are fundamentally the same. Ordinary beings and noble bodhisattvas are fundamentally the same. Friends and enemies, clean and dirty, are fundamentally the same. So this is an expression or an example of the ten types of equality, which we discussed earlier in the course, and we need to use these ten types of equality in our practice and in our post-meditation experience.

As Gyalwa Gotsangpa sang in his Melody of the Eight Types of Non-Duality,

\ Wonderful visions of yidam deities and  
\ Fearsome apparitions of obstructing demons,  
\ These distinctions do not exist in the pure expanse—  
\ So how joyful! How happy! Sudden Victory!

Sing a song!

[Students sing verse.]

If we can understand that deities, yidam deities, and demons are fundamentally the same, it is easy to understand how sentient beings and Buddhas are fundamentally the same, too.

The way that demons and deities are the same is that ultimately the nature of both of them transcends all conceptual fabrications about what they might be. And relatively the

appearance of the two is just like a dream, they are both equally like dream appearances, like illusions, and like water moons.

Singing about the ways in which ordinary beings and bodhisattvas and Buddhas are the same, Gotsangpa sang:

\ Obtaining high rebirth or liberation and  
\ Falling into the three unhappy destinations,  
\ These distinctions don't exist in the pure expanse—  
\ So how joyful! How happy! Sudden Victory! \*

~ \*Editor's note: See Shenpen Osel, Vol. 2, No. 2 (MADHYAMIKA TEACHINGS -- Melody of the Eight Types of NonDuality), page 10 (see next box).

So let's sing that verse.

[Students sing.]

You might dream of meeting the noble Tara; you might dream of meeting Manjushri; or you might dream of meeting some horrible demon, but all of these are just mere appearances. The appearances of the deities are not real; the appearances of the demons are not real. Fundamentally their nature is equality. So it is like that.

So we need to know the way in which, from the perspective of their genuine nature, things are fundamentally the same, which is that the nature of everything transcends all conceptual fabrications. It is beyond conceptuality. And we also need to know the way in which, from the perspective of their relative appearances, things are also the same, which is that they are equally like dream appearances, like water moons and illusions. The example that helps us to understand this form of equality is the example of things and occurrences in dreams.

As to your second question—What is the substitute for the consciousness in an emanated being?—whereas ordinarily we are born with the white bindu from the father, the red bindu from the mother, and the consciousness from the previous life, for an emanation, the substitute for the consciousness is the samadhi, the aspiration prayers, and the compassion of the emanating bodhisattva. It is mainly the samadhi of the bodhisattva. Accompanying the samadhi is the power of the compassion and aspiration prayers of the bodhisattva. From those you get something like consciousness, something that serves as a substitute for what we have as consciousness. It is like that.

[Refuting production from others -- again]

QUESTION: I would appreciate hearing again the reasoning that refutes the notion that things can arise from other than themselves.

Translator: So could Rinpoche please go over again the reasoning that refutes arising from other?

RINPOCHE: The root of it, which is the best way to understand it, is that, given an entity, it does not arise from something other than itself, because at the time of the result, the cause does not exist as something different from the result.\*\* Why? Because that cause has gone out of existence. It is just not there. And at the time of the cause, the result does not exist as something different from the cause, because the result has not arisen yet. So since you only have one at a time, cause and then result—since cause and result do not exist at the same time—then you cannot say that something arises from something other than itself, because the other is not there. There is nothing to be other from.



~ \*\*Editor's note: The structure of this sentence, beginning with "... given an entity," since it appears frequently in the translator's syntax, must reflect a structure of logical reasoning in Tibetan philosophy or debate. For that reason, though it seems a bit awkward in English, we have left it in this form.

For example, when you have a seed, there is no flower. By the time the flower has arisen, there is no seed. The seed and the flower do not exist at the same time. So since you only have one at a time, you cannot say that the flower arises from the seed, which is other to it, because they do not coexist. If they do not coexist, how could they be different from each other? You have to have two things existing at the same time for them to be different from each other.

QUESTION: But then where does process come into . . . How do you account for process then?

RINPOCHE: Actually there is no such thing as process. This is something very important for us to understand, that there is no such thing as the process of birth [or arising]. If you examine, you will see that in between the time when birth has not yet happened and the time after birth has happened, there is nothing. Something is either born or it is not. In between, there is nothing; in between, there is no process of birth; there is no half way. You cannot posit something as being born because it is either born or it is not. When you examine subtly, this is what you find out. Since there is no process of birth, there is no arising. It just does not happen.

In the chapter called the Examination of Coming and Going, the protector Nagarjuna looked at process. He looked at "ing,"—going and coming—and he proved that this "ing" state does not exist. The way he looked at it in this chapter was that, if you are walking on a path, then in between the part of the path that you have already walked on and the part you have not walked on yet, there is nothing. And so there is no process of going; he refuted process.

You might then say, "Well, yes, there is going, because somebody's legs are moving on this path, and that is the going." But somebody's leg can only be in one place at one time, not two, so there is no movement. In between the time that all past movement has finished, and all future movement has yet to happen, there is nothing there. There is actually no movement happening.

Another way to look at it is to look at the individual and see that when they are moving one leg, the other leg is staying still. And then when that leg is staying still, the first leg is moving. Therefore, if you ask whether that person is moving or staying still, you find yourself in a contradiction: one person is both moving and staying still.

So then you must ask, "Is this person a mover or a stayer?" And you cannot answer that question, because part of them is moving and part is not. So the whole notion of moving breaks down.

It is the same with death. You are either alive, or you are dead. There is no in between. There is no point of death. There is all the time when you are alive, and then after that you are dead. So there is no point where death happens, which is why Milarepa sang,

\ I've gained confidence that there is no arising.  
\ This swept away my taking past and future lives as two,  
\ Exposed all six realms' appearances as false,  
\ And cut right through believing all too much in birth and death.

Since Milarepa examined and saw that there is nothing in between the time before you die and the time after you die, the time before you are born and the time after you are born, and thereby saw that there is no point of birth or death, Milarepa knew that there was no such thing as birth and death. He had confidence that there was no birth and no death.

We can see that the songs of Milarepa and the reasonings of Nagarjuna are completely in harmony with each other in this regard. When we join these two together, they makes our understanding very profound. So we should sing the song we sang yesterday.

[Students sing Three Kinds of Confidence in Genuine Reality, imitating the translator's periodic yelping during the song. See page 116.]

Since this is the way that heroes sing, we need to yelp a little bit as heroes do, with a hero's confidence. If we did not have that type of confidence there would be no reason to yelp like that. Sentient beings normally are not very heroic. Why? Because we are afraid of death. That is the main reason why we are not heroic.

The logic is the same with sickness. In between the moment when all the pain you have experienced in the past has elapsed, and the moment when all the pain you are going to experience in the future begins, there is nothing, and there is no time there for you to experience any pain, so there is no experience of pain happening.

"No, you are wrong; I really am sick," you might say. "I feel it myself. I really am sick." But that does not prove that your sickness is real; you could be sick in a dream. Just to have the experience does not prove anything.

This is why Gyalwa Gotsangpa sang,

\ The illness and its painfulness have neither base nor root.  
\ Relax into it, fresh and uncontrived,  
\ Revealing dharmakaya way beyond all speech and thought.  
\ Don't shun them; pain and illness are basically good.\*

~ \*Editor's note: See Eight Cases of Basic Goodness Not to be Shunned, page 128.)

So let's sing that together.

[Students sing.]

You should sing that song a lot.

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L4: [Other questions ?]

QUESTION: Speaking to an infant, how would you describe Buddhism? How would you define Buddhism to an infant?

Translator: You mean a small child at least capable of understanding your speech?

QUESTION: Like a young child.

RINPOCHE: If it is a small child with exceptional intelligence, you should explain to them the true nature of reality. Explain that things neither come nor go. If it is a child with great faith, teach them how to meditate on Chenrezig or Manjushri.

These days, in the last part of the twentieth century, children study a lot, and they are

taught in school that small particles do not really exist. So if they know that small particles do not really exist, then understanding the rest about emptiness will not be so difficult. It is also pretty easy to understand how it is that space has no center or end, how this planet has no top or bottom, and how beings are the equality of self and other. Those are easy reasonings to understand.

Children can also come to understand easily how it is that difficulty is just a creation of our own mind, when we find things difficult we can understand that it is just our own thoughts that are creating this difficulty, nothing else. They can understand this easily, because when they play and are happy, then time goes by very fast, but when they are having a tough time, then time seems to go very slowly, and the whole perspective of the world changes. And so, they can see from that that it is just an imputation of thoughts creating one situation or another.

Children can look at their minds and see how that sometimes feelings of hunger or bodily discomfort cause them to lose their patience with, and to get angry with their teacher or with their father and mother, and in that way they can see that it all just comes from thoughts.

And other times when they are feeling happy, then everything seems to go very easily. They can study well. They have a lot of diligence. They have a lot of friends, and so they can see that everything just depends upon their own frame of mind.

Among the eighty-four mahasiddhas of India, there were two children. They heard only a couple of verses of dharma and gained liberation. And then they just took off and went up into the trees and played in the trees. Their names were Tonglopa and Singlopa. They could attain siddhi as young children because they were incredibly smart. These days children are also very smart.

But do not be discouraged because you think you are too old; it does not matter if you are old either. Sukha Siddhi, the wisdom dakini of the Shangpa Kagyu lineage, was sixty years old when she was kicked out of her house by her husband and son. She developed great renunciation for samsara. She met her teacher, practiced, attained siddhi, and transformed herself into a sixteen-year-old girl. She is still sixteen, even today. Some siddhas are able to see her directly, and she is still sixteen-years-old.

So the fact is that being old or young just depends on thoughts. If there are no thoughts of being old or young, then there is no difference between old and young; it is just like being old or young in a dream.

There was a student of the translator Barotsana, whose name was Mipham Gompo. He was an eighty-year-old beggar when Barotsana met him on the side of the road. He could barely see, he had no teeth, and his hair was all white, but he requested Barotsana for instructions. Barotsana taught him to meditate on guru yoga, which he did. He recognized the nature of mind and attained the rainbow body.

In the old days there were no false teeth, so when you lost all your teeth your mouth looked like a big cave. And when you chewed you had to chew like this. [Rinpoche imitates chewing without teeth.] Nowadays people get false teeth and go around smiling to show everybody. So it is like that.

The point is that the more hardship we have when practicing dharma, the more feeling we have that samsara really is not worth it after all, the more renunciation we develop for samsara.

So that is good; the more hardship the better. All the great siddhas first experienced great suffering, which then impelled them to practice the dharma. So it is like that.

QUESTION: Rinpoche talked a little bit about the dharma path and the presence of the human experience of sexual energy, and that seems pretty strong. We spend a lot of time either being caught up in it or trying not to be caught up in it. Could Rinpoche speak a little bit about the right effort or use of sex and sexual energy as it pertains to meditative equipoise?

Translator: The question is about sex and sexual energy in the human experience and how to take it to the path. What is the connection between sex or sexual energy and right conduct?

RINPOCHE: Actually, passion is something very good. On the path of the shravakas, you try to get rid of passion. And when you do that, you can attain the state of arhatship. But you do not try to get rid of passion as a mahayana practitioner, because passion is very close to loving kindness. So these two are related to each other. In the vajrayana there are a number of different means to use passion and sexual energy on the path and one is the method of mahamudra, where you meditate on the essential nature of the experience of passion.

In the mahamudra meditation of the vajrayana, you meditate on the essential nature of passion, the essential nature of aggression, and the essential nature of stupidity.

So if you look at anger specifically, then anger has a very brilliant and clear aspect to it. It is very sharp. So if you arouse yourself in anger [Rinpoche demonstrates the appearance of anger], and then look at the nature of that angry mind, then you will have a beautifully luminous experience.

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L1: [A PRESENTATION OF RESULTANT GROUNDS -- not covered here, but copied from another file]

[Not covered by Rinpoche's commentary, copied from another file.]

L4: [A. HOW BUDDHAHOOD IS FIRST ATTAINED]

L5: [A.1 The actual meaning]

\     ///  
\     [XI.10]  
\     285.  
\     Just as the moon in a stainless sky illuminates clearly,  
\     Previously you strove again for the ground that generates the ten forces.  
\     In Akanishta you accomplished the aim for which you strove-  
\     All those unequalled, ultimate good qualities of the supreme state of  
pacification.

\     ///  
\     286.  
\     Just as space has no divisions due to the divisions of vessels,  
\     So thatness has no divisions made by things.  
\     Therefore, perfectly realizing them to be of one taste,

\ O Good Knower, you realize all objects of knowledge in an instant.

¢(i.e. Enlightenment is not caused, it is sudden. Beyond any description, beyond causality space & time, beyond any view, beyond any marks and discrimination, beyond any conceptualization, beyond any duality. The Union of The Two Truths. Always knowing the real nature of everything as they arise. Free from any attachment, any uncontrolled karma formation, any view, any concept, any perception.)

L5: [A.2 Rejecting an argument]

L6: [A.2.1 Stating the other position]

\ ///

\ 287.

\ 'If pacification is thatness, wisdom does not engage in it;

\ And with no mind engaging, certainly an object-possessor of the object of knowledge is not possible.

\ Without knowing anything, how can it be a knower?

\ That is a contradiction.

\ If there is no one who knows, how can you teach others 'It is like this'?

¢(i.e. Thinking emptiness means non-existence, no action, rejecting everything. So how could a Buddha teach others ?)

L6: [A.2.2 Refuting this position]

L7: [i. Rejecting the argument that a knower of thatness is unacceptable]

\ ///

\ 288.

\ Since non-production is thatness, and the mind has freedom from production,

\ By depending upon that aspect it realizes thatness.

\ For example, when a mind possesses any aspect it knows that object thoroughly.

\ In just the same way, this knows by depending upon a nominality.

¢(i.e. Emptiness of inherent existence doesn't deny dependent origination; it doesn't mean complete non-existence. There is dependent origination, functionality, inter-dependence, but nothing is really produced. The Buddha is empty of inherent existence, free from any uncontrolled karma formation, free from any attachment, but he is not non-existent completely, and has not rejected anything at all because everything is already pure, self-liberating.)

L7: [ii. Rejecting the argument that a person knowing thatness is unacceptable]

\ ///

\ 289.

\ Through the power of his Complete Enjoyment Body maintained by merit,

\ And of its Emanations,

\ Sounds that reveal the Dharma of thatness arise from space and others.

\ Due to these, worldly beings can also realize thatness.

\ ///

\ 290.

\ Just as here a potter with great strength

\ Expends much energy for a long time turning the wheel,

\ And then while he is not generating effort  
\ It turns and is seen to be a cause of a pot,  
  
\ ///  
\ 291.  
\ So like that, is he who resides in a body with the nature of Dharma.  
\ Without generating any effort now  
\ He engages in deeds that are completely beyond thought  
\ Due to the special qualities of his prayers and the virtues of beings.

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L4: [B. A PRESENTATION OF BUDDHA'S BODIES AND GOOD QUALITIES]

L5: [B.1 A Presentation of Buddha's bodies]

L6: [B.1.1. An explanation of the truth body]

\ ///  
\ [XI.17]  
\ 292.  
\ That pacification that comes from the burning of all the dry tinder of objects of  
knowledge  
\ Is the Truth Body of the Conquerors.  
\ At that time there is no production and no disintegration .  
\ Since minds have ceased, it is experienced directly by the body.

L6: [B.1.2. An explanation of the complete enjoyment body]

\ ///  
\ 293.  
\ This pacified body is resplendent, like a wish-granting tree  
\ And without conception, like a wish-fulfilling jewel.  
\ It will remain always until living beings are liberated, for the fortune of the  
world,  
\ And appear to those who are free from elaboration.

L6: [B.1.3. An explanation of the body corresponding to its cause] [emanation bodies]

L7: [B.1.3.1 How he displays all his deeds in one pore of his body]

\ ///  
\ 294.  
\ The Powerful Able One, at one time, in one Form Body  
\ Corresponding to that cause, clearly and without disorder  
\ Makes a complete and exquisite display  
\ Of everything that happened during his previous lives now ceased.

\ ///  
\ 295.  
\ What the Buddha Lands and their Powerful Able Ones were like;  
\ What their bodies, deeds, and powers were like;  
\ How many assemblies of I fearers there were, and what they were like;  
\ What forms the Bodhisattvas took there;

\ ///



\ 296.  
 \ What the Dharma was like, and what he was like then;  
 \ What deeds were performed from listening to Dharma;  
 \ How much giving was practiced towards them -  
 \ All these he displays in one body.  
  
 \ ///  
 \ 297.  
 \ Likewise what moral discipline, patience, effort, concentration, and wisdom  
 \ He practiced during previous lives;  
 \ He displays clearly all these deeds without leaving anything out,  
 \ In just one hair pore of his body.

L7: [B.1.3.2 How he displays all the deeds of others there]

\ ///  
 \ 298.  
 \ Buddhas who have passed away, those who are yet to come,  
 \ And those of the present dwelling in the world,  
 \ Revealing Dharma in a loud voice carrying to the ends of space  
 \ And bestowing breath on living beings tormented by suffering;  
  
 \ ///  
 \ 299.  
 \ All their deeds from first generating the mind  
 \ Through to the essence of enlightenment,  
 \ Knowing these things to be the nature of illusions,  
 \ He displays them all clearly at one time in one hair pore.  
  
 \ ///  
 \ 300.  
 \ Likewise the deeds of all Superior Bodhisattvas,  
 \ Solitary Realizers, and Hearers of the three times,  
 \ And all the activities of the remaining beings;  
 \ He displays all of these at one time in one pore.

L7: [B.1.3.3 An explanation of his completely excellent mastery of his wishes]

\ ///  
 \ 301.  
 \ This Pure One, by enacting his wishes,  
 \ Displays the worlds throughout space on a single atom,  
 \ And an atom filling the directions of infinite worlds,  
 \ Without the atom becoming larger or the worlds becoming smaller.  
  
 \ ///  
 \ 302.  
 \ Not being governed by conception, you will show in each instant,  
 \ Until the end of samsara,  
 \ As many countless different deeds  
 \ As there are atoms in all the worlds.

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L5: [B.2 A PRESENTATION OF THE GOOD QUALITIES OF THE FORCES]

L6: [B.2.1 Briefly presenting the ten forces]

\ ///  
\ [XI.28]  
\ 303.  
\ The force knowing source and non-source (1),  
\ Likewise knowing full ripening of actions (2),  
\ Understanding the various desires (5),  
\ And the force knowing the various elements (4),  
  
\ ///  
\ 304.  
\ Likewise knowing supreme and non-supreme powers (6),  
\ Going everywhere (7),  
\ And the force knowing the mental stabilizations (3),  
\ [Concentrations of] perfect liberation, concentrations, absorptions, and so forth,  
  
\ ///  
\ 305.  
\ Knowing recollections of previous places (8),  
\ Likewise knowing death and birth (9),  
\ And the force knowing the cessation of contaminations (10) -  
\ These are the ten forces.

L6: [B.2.2 An extensive explanation of the ten forces]

\ ///  
\ [XI.31]  
\ 306.  
\ Any cause from which something is definitely produced  
\ Is said by the Omniscient Ones to be the source of that.  
\ The opposite of what is explained is not a source.  
\ The knower of infinite objects of knowledge that has abandoned obstructions is said to be a force (1).  
  
\ ///  
\ 307.  
\ The desirable, the undesirable, the reverse of these, actions of abandonment,  
\ And their full ripening - a great variety -  
\ The powerful, able, unobstructed knower engaging individually,  
\ That encompasses objects of knowledge of the three times is said to be a force (2).  
  
\ ///  
\ 308.  
\ Desires arising through the force of attachment and so forth -  
\ A great variety of inferior, middling, and especially superior desires -  
\ The knower of these and others besides them  
\ Encompassing all living beings of the three times is known as a force (5).

\ ///  
\ 309.  
\ Through their skill in perfectly distinguishing the elements,  
\ Buddhas say that whatever is the nature of eyes and so forth is an element.  
\ The limitless knower of complete Buddhas  
\ Realizing the distinctions of all types of element is said to be a force (4).

\ ///  
\ 310.  
\ Of conceptualization and so forth, only the very sharp are accepted as supreme;  
\ Middling types and the dull being explained as non-supreme.  
\ The knower of all aspects free from attachment  
\ That understands the eyes and so forth, and their ability to support each other,  
is said to be a force (6).

\ ///  
\ 311.  
\ Some paths lead to the very state of a Conqueror,  
\ Some to the enlightenment of a Solitary Realizer or the enlightenment of a  
Hearer,  
\ Others to hungry ghosts, animals, hell beings, gods, humans, and so forth;  
\ The knower of these that is free from attachment is said to be the force going  
everywhere (7).

\ ///  
\ 312.  
\ The different types of Yogi throughout limitless worlds  
\ Have the mental stabilizations, the eight [concentrations of] perfect liberation,  
\ Those that are tranquil abiding, and the nine that are absorptions;  
\ The unobstructed knower of these is said to be a force (3).

\ ///  
\ 313.  
\ For as long as there is confusion, there is abiding in samsara.  
\ Oneself and each and every living being of samsara now past,  
\ However many there are, a limitless number, their origins and places of birth -  
\ The knower of these is said to be a force (8).

\ ///  
\ 314.  
\ The many varieties of death and birth of every single living being  
\ Inhabiting the worlds as extensive as space -  
\ The limitless knower without attachment and completely pure  
\ That apprehends all aspects of these at one time is said to be a force (9).

\ ///  
\ 315.  
\ The Conquerors' swift destruction of delusions together with their imprints  
\ Through the force of the knower of all aspects,  
\ And the cessation of delusions by wisdom in the disciples and so forth-  
\ The limitless knower of these that is free from attachment is said to be a force

(10).

L6: [B.2.3 Why all the qualities cannot be described]

\     ///  
\     [XI.41]  
\     316.  
\     Just as a bird does not turn back due to lack of space,  
\     But returns when its strength is consumed,  
\     So the disciples and Sons of the Buddhas  
\     Turn back when describing the good qualities of  
\     Buddha, which are as limitless as space.  
  
\     ///  
\     317.  
\     So how could one such as I  
\     Understand or explain your good qualities?  
\     However, since they were explained by Superior Nagarjuna,  
\     I have overcome my apprehension and mentioned just a few.

L6: [B.2.4 The benefits of understanding the two good qualities]

\     ///  
\     318.  
\     The profound is emptiness,  
\     And the vast are the other good qualities.  
\     Through understanding the ways of the profound and the vast  
\     These good qualities will be attained.

-----

L4: [C. EXPLAINING EMANATION BODIES]

\     ///  
\     [XI.44]  
\     319.  
\     You who possess an immovable Body visit the three worlds again with your  
Emanations,  
\     And show descent, birth, enlightenment, and the wheel of peace  
\     In this way, out of compassion, you lead to a state beyond sorrow  
\     All worldly beings who have deceitful behavior, and who are bound by the many  
nooses of attachment.

-----

L4: [D. PROVING THAT THERE IS ONE FINAL VEHICLE]

\     ///  
\     [XI.45]  
\     320.  
\     Because, here, apart from understanding thatness, there is no principal  
eliminator of all stains,  
\     Because phenomena do not depend upon different types of thatness,  
\     And because there are not different wisdoms that are the object-possession of

thatness,

\ You revealed to living beings an unequalled and undivided vehicle.

\ ///

\ 321.

\ Because there are these impurities that give rise to faults in living beings,

\ The worldly cannot engage in the extremely profound object experienced by  
Buddhas.

\ Therefore O Sugata, since you possess both wisdom and the methods of compassion,

\ And since you have promised 'I shall liberate living beings',

\ ///

\ 322.

\ Just like the skilful one traveling to a jewel island

\ Who relieved the fatigue of his company by emanating a beautiful city on the way,

\ You presented this vehicle to the minds of disciples as a means of peace;

\ But you taught separately those who have attained isolation and trained minds.

-----  
L4: [E. EXPLAINING THE DURATION OF ENLIGHTENMENT AND REMAINING]

L5: [E.1 The duration of enlightenment]

\ ///

\ [XI.48]

\ 323.

\ O Sugata, however many atoms there are among the tiniest atoms

\ In all the Buddha Lands in all directions,

\ For that many aeons you enter into the most supreme, holy enlightenment;

\ But these secrets of yours should not be explained.

L5: [E.2 The duration of remaining]

\ ///

\ [XI.49]

\ 324.

\ O Conqueror, for as long as all worldly beings have not gone to the most sublime  
peace,

\ And for as long as space has not been destroyed,

\ You who are born from the mother of wisdom and nourished by compassion will  
perform your deeds;

\ So how could you have a solitary peace?

\ ///

\ 325.

\ The distress of a mother for her child pained by eating poison

\ Does not compare to your mercy for your family,

\ The worldly beings who through the faults of confusion eat poisonous food.

\ Therefore O Protector, you will never go to the most sublime peace.

\ ///

\ 326.

\ Because the unskilled who have minds conceiving things and non-things

\ Experience suffering at the time of birth and death, and when separated from the pleasant and meeting the unpleasant,  
\ And because the evil experience rebirths, these worldly beings are objects of compassion.  
\ Therefore, O Blessed One, out of compassion you have turned your mind away from peace and do not possess a nirvana.

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*  
\*\*\*\*\*

L1: [CONCLUSION]

L4: [How the treatise was composed]

\ ///  
\ [XI.52]  
\ 327.  
\ This system has been extracted from the treatises on the middle way,  
\ By the monk Chandrakirti;  
\ And has been presented exactly according to  
\ The scriptures and the oral teachings.

\ ///  
\ 328.  
\ A Dharma such as this is not found elsewhere.  
\ Likewise the system presented here  
\ Is not found elsewhere.  
\ The wise should understand this clearly.

\ ///  
\ 329.  
\ Frightened by the colour of the great ocean of Nagarjuna's wisdom,  
\ Some beings have kept this excellent system at a great distance.  
\ Now, due to the nectar from the opening of the kumuta which came from the unfolding of these verses,  
\ The hopes of Chandrakirti have been completely fulfilled.

\ ///  
\ 330.  
\ This profound and frightening thatness just explained will be realized by those with previous familiarity;  
\ But it will not be comprehended by others, even though they may have listened extensively.  
\ Therefore, having seen these other systems made up by one's own mind,  
\ You should abandon the mind that likes their treatises as you would systems that assert a self.

-----  
L4: [Dedicating merit from composing the treatise]



\     ///  
 \     [XI.56]  
 \     331.  
 \     Through the merit encompassing all directions that I have received from  
 explaining the excellent system of Master Nagarjuna,  
 \     That is as white as autumn stars in the sky of my mind darkened by delusions,  
 \     And that is like a jewel on the hood of the snake of my mind,  
 \     May all worldly beings realize thatness, and quickly attain the grounds of the  
 Sugatas.

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L4: [The meaning of the conclusion]

RINPOCHE: From this text, Entrance to the Middle Way, which was composed by the glorious Chandrakirti, we have explained all of the verses from nine of the ten mind generations. The sixth mind generation is very long, so we selected the most important verses to explain. It would be very good for us to recite all of these verses again and again.

The sixth chapter is quite long. There is a lot to it. If I come here again, it will be easy for me to explain more of it. The sixth chapter contains many logical reasonings which are difficult to study all the way through in one sitting, so it is better to study them piece by piece by piece.

In a previous visit, we explained the sixteen emptinesses, which have now been published in Shenpen Osel, and so it would be very good to recite those verses again and again.\*

~ \*Editor's note: See Shenpen Osel, Vol. 3, No. 1, pages 55-62.

The sixteen emptinesses are explained from the perspective of the sixteen things to which we are most attached. Each one of those is explained to be empty, and that helps us really to understand emptiness. Emptiness is difficult to understand if we just lump everything together and say everything is empty. It is easier to understand if we break it down into these sixteen things to which we have a lot of attachment.

We sang two verses about the twelve qualities of the bodhisattvas to heighten our interest. If we know about the bodhisattvas' good qualities, then we will be more enthusiastic about attaining those states ourselves. The protector Nagarjuna attained the first bhumi, Perfect Joy, so he had these 1,200 qualities.

Similarly, the eight mahayana heart disciples of the Buddha Shakyamuni are all bodhisattvas on the tenth ground, so the number of emanations they have is inconceivable.

Knowing about the qualities of Buddhas and bodhisattvas is a means of heightening our interest in dharma and also of causing us to have even greater respect for and be in greater awe of the bodhisattvas on these grounds.

When the madhyamika, the middle way, is explained, the two phrases heard most often are, "It does not exist," and "It is not real." We hear these again and again because we have such great attachment to the things in this life as being real, and as existing, so we need to hear that they aren't real again and again to reverse our attachment to them.

Then there are other dharma explanations that presume the existence of things, such as the explanation that wherever there is space there are more sentient beings, and wherever there

are sentient beings there is suffering. These explanations, which teach from the perspective of existence and things existing, are made in order to inspire us to accumulate merit.

The king of swans has two wings: one—the wing of knowing that things are not real, that they do not exist—is the wing of suchness; the other—the wing that posits the existence of things existing in a certain way—is the wing of the relative. Flying on these two wings he can soar to the far side of the ocean of the Victors' qualities.\*\* With his broad white wings of the relative and suchness, the king of swans soars ahead to lead the flock. By the power of virtue's wind, he crosses to the far shore of the ocean of the Victor's perfect qualities.

~ \*\*Editor's note: i.e., he can attain the enlightenment of Buddhahood.

In short, as Milarepa sang, "I see this life to be like a dream and an illusion, and I have compassion for those who do not realize that." He was singing from his own experience, and it should be our practice as well to train in the realization that all the appearances of this life are just like appearances in a dream, just like appearances in an illusion, and to develop compassion for those who suffer because they do not realize that.

This life is not real; it is not false. Reality and falsity are fundamentally the same. It is not long, it is not short. Long and short are fundamentally the same. Thinking this, understanding this, we can see how important it is to practice the dharma.

Long exists only in dependence upon short. Short exists only in dependence upon long. Where is the thing that is only long, and not short? Where is the thing that is only short and not long? When we realize we cannot find any such thing, then we see the equality of long and short.

Suffering and happiness exist only in dependence upon each other. We can only know happiness in dependence upon suffering. We can only know suffering in dependence upon happiness. When we have a great feeling of joy, that exists only in dependence upon an idea of what great suffering is. When we have great suffering, that can exist only because we have a notion of what great joy is. And when we try to think or conceive of what the greatest joy possible could be, or what the greatest suffering possible could be, we have no idea. And this shows that suffering and happiness are of the nature of equality.

We have explained the ten equalities from the Sutra of the Tenth Bhumi. Of these equalities, the most important are the way that everything is the same from the perspective of its genuine nature—freedom from all conceptual fabrications—and the way everything is the same from the perspective of its relative nature—that everything is equally just like a dream, an illusion, and a water moon. These are what we have to think about again and again and again.

To sum it all up, practice emptiness and compassion in union. Everything is complete within that.

[Rinpoche, translator, and students dedicate merit.]

Sarva Mangalam!

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[End]

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