
Sharing verses from '**Lamp for the Path to Enlightenment**' with a brief explanation written from Geshe Zopa for your reference.

Verses 48

**Something existent cannot be produced,
Nor something non-existent, like a sky flower.
These errors are both absurd and thus
Both of the [other] two will not occur either.**

Question of the Naga King Anavatapta:

“Whatever is produced from conditions is not produced; It is not intrinsically produced. Whatever depends upon conditions, I consider empty; One who knows emptiness is diligent.”

Verse 49

**A thing is not produced from itself,
Nor from another, also not from both,
Nor causelessly either, thus it does not
Exist inherently by way of its own entity.**

❖ Refutation of Production from Self

Nagarjuna's Fundamental Treatise says:

*“If cause and effect were the same,
Then the produced and the producer would be the same.”*

Also, Candrakirti's Commentary on the Middle Way says:

*“There is no advantage in its arising from itself;
There is no reason for something which has been produced to
be produced again.
If you suppose that something already produced is produced
Then the production of seedlings and such would not be
found.”*

And: Therefore, the imputation that things arise from themselves is reasonable neither in terms of reality nor in terms of the world.”

❖ **Refutation of Production from Another**

Nagärjuna's Fundamental Treatise says:

"If cause and effect were other, Then causes and non-causes would be just alike.

Also, **Candrakirti's Commentary on the Middle Way says:**

"If things arose in dependence upon what is other, Then thick darkness would arise even from a flame.

Everything would arise from everything. Why?

Because, in being other, all of the non-producers of something would be just like its producers."

❖ **Refutation of Production from Both Self and Another**

Candrakirti's Commentary on the Middle Way says:

"Production from both is also unreasonable. Why?

Because the fallacies already explained befall it.

Production from both together exists neither in terms of the world nor in terms of reality,

Because, individually, production from self and from another are not established."

❖ **Refutation of Causeless Production**

Candrakirti's Commentary on the Middle Way says:

"If it were the case that things are produced without any cause, then these worldly beings would not go through hundreds of hardships to collect seeds and such for growing crops."

Verse 50

**Moreover, when all phenomena are examined
As to whether they are one or many,
They are not seen to exist by way of their own entity,
And thus are ascertained as not inherently existent.**

Aryadeva's Four Hundred Stanzas says:

“That which arises dependently Does not exist autonomously; All of these things lack autonomous existence. Therefore, they have no self.”

And **Candrakirti's Commentary on the Four Hundred Stanzas says:**

“That which has its own essence, intrinsic nature, autonomy, or independence from others is self-existent and thus is not a dependent arising. All compounded phenomena are dependent arisings. Anything that is a dependent-arising is not autonomous because it is produced in dependence upon causes and conditions.

These things all lack autonomy. Therefore, there is no thing which has self, that is, intrinsic nature.”

Candrakirti's Commentary on the Four Hundred Stanzas says:

“Therefore, since in this Madhyamaka system to be a dependent-arising is to lack autonomy, lacking autonomy is what emptiness means; emptiness does not mean that nothing exists.”

Verse 57

**When Bodhisattvas non-conceptually contemplate
This excellent teaching, they will transcend
Conceptuality, so hard to overcome,
And eventually reach the non-conceptual state.**

Nagärjuna's Fundamental Treatise says:

“Because of the pacification of the self and that which the self owns, The conception “I” and the conception “mine” will be gone.

And:

When thoughts of the self and that which belongs to the self Are extinguished in regard to internal and external things, Grasping will stop; Through its extinction, birth will be extinguished.”

Nagarjuna's Fundamental Treatise says:

“Through extinguishing karma and afflictions, there is liberation. Karma and afflictions arise from misconceptions; These misconceptions arise from elaborations; These elaborations are stopped by emptiness.”

Candrakirti's Clear Words says:

“Emptiness-viewing all things as emptiness-stops all worldly elaborations. Why? Because when you see something as real, there are going to be elaborations such as those explained. Insofar as the daughter of a barren woman is not seen, the lustful will not engage in elaborations with her as the object. When elaborations are not operating, their object is not going to be misconceived.

As misconceptions are not operating, afflictions rooted in the reifying view of the perishing aggregates are not generated through clinging to “I” and “mine” as afflictions rooted in the reifying view of the perishing aggregates are not generated, actions are not performed. Those who do not perform actions will not experience”

Candrakirti's Clear Words also states:

“Why? It is like this: Emptiness is not elaborated insofar as it has the character of thoroughly quelling elaboration. Since it is not elaborated it stops misconceptions; through stopping misconceptions, it stops the afflictions. Stopping karma and afflictions stops birth. Therefore, since only emptiness has the character of stopping all elaborations, it is called “nirvana.”

Ascertaining the Non-existence of a Personal Self:

- Using the **4 Cornered Proof of Diamond Fragments Reasoning** to examine that there is no intrinsic, inherent, substantial, true, independent or findable production of "I"/self - "aggregates"/others

- 1) A thing is not produced from itself,
 - 2) Nor from another,
 - 3) also not from both,
 - 4) Nor causelessly either,
- thus it does not exist inherently by way of its own entity.

- Using the **7 Ways Analysis** to examine that there is no intrinsic, inherent, substantial, true, independent or findable production of "I"/self - "aggregates"/others

- 1) A chariot is neither asserted to be other than its parts,
- 2) nor to be non-other;
- 3) It does not possess them.
- 4) It does not depend on the parts
- 5) and the parts do not depend on it
- 6) It is neither the mere collection of the parts,
- 7) nor is it their shape.

- If the mere collection of the parts were a chariot, Then a chariot would exist even while its parts lie in pieces.

Without the whole, the parts do not exist.

Hence the mere shape also cannot be the chariot.

- Using the **4 Point Analysis** to examine that there is no intrinsic, inherent, substantial, true, independent or findable production of "I"/self - "aggregates"/others:

- 1) Identification of what is to be refuted/negated
- 2) Determining the modes in which "I" could exist
- 3) "I" as one with aggregates
- 4) "I" as different from the 5 aggregates

The Illusion-Like Practice of Emptiness During Post-Meditation

Lamp on the path Verse 53:

“Thus, whatever is meditation

On selflessness, in that it does not observe

An inherent nature in phenomena,

Is the cultivation of wisdom.”

Meaning:

First we investigate the fundamental nature of what we perceive, recognizing that all apprehended objects are like dreams in that they seem real but actually lack true existence. Then we turn our attention to the awareness which perceives their fundamental nature, establishing that it also lacks any inherent existence.

If the aggregates, constituents and sources had any existence in and of themselves by way of their own nature, it should be found when we analyze to discover whether they're truly existent or not. However, investigation of their ultimate or final nature does not reveal even an atom of such inherent existence. The absence of existence by way of their own nature with regard to persons and what is associated with them is the selflessness of persons and other phenomena. Meditation on their selflessness is the cultivation of wisdom.

“Understand and think all phenomena are like illusion or dreams.”

LC 107 *(from Lama Chopa text)*

I seek your blessings to perfect the samadhi on illusion

By realizing how outer and inner phenomena

Lack true existence but still appear -

Like an illusion, a dream, or the moon's image on a still lake.

The Space-Like Practice of Emptiness During the Meditation Session

Lamp on the path Verse 54:

***“Just as wisdom does not see
An inherent nature in phenomena,
Having analyzed wisdom itself by reasoning,
Non-conceptually meditate on that.”***

Meaning:

When the analytical wisdom which does not find any true existence in persons and other phenomena is likewise scrutinized by reasoning, it too is found not to have an inherently existent nature. Here analysis is made to see whether the awareness apprehending the emptiness of objects exists as it appears. Is it inherently one with or inherently different from its basis of attribution?

First we establish the nature of reality by hearing and reading about it. Next we induce a sound understanding by thinking about what we have learned and through analysis by reasoning. We then fix our attention on the lack of inherent existence of the awareness which understands the emptiness of other phenomena. When our certainty regarding its emptiness declines we induce it again through analysis. By meditating repeatedly on emptiness free from all conceptions of true existence, we eventually gain the non-conceptual exalted wisdom which directly perceives reality.

“Understand think and then get in absorption meditation of Space-Like”

LC 106 *(from Lama Chopa text)*

***I seek your blessings to complete the perfection of wisdom
Through the space-like yoga of single-minded placement upon
ultimate truth
Conjoined with the pliancy and great bliss induced
By the discriminating wisdom analyzing suchness.***