

Precious Human Rebirth

Buddhist Foundation Course 2/8

Teaching by Geshe Tenzin Zopa @ Losang Dragpa Buddhist Society on 29th April 2008

Teaching Outline:

1. The identification of what is the leisure and endowment or opportunity.
 1. Eight Leisure & Ten Endowments
2. Contemplating the difficulty in obtaining the leisure and opportunity.
 1. difficult to obtain base on the cause to actualize this precious human rebirth
 2. difficult to obtain by the nature of this precious human rebirth
 3. difficult to obtain even when you look at the example
3. Contemplating the great importance of leisure and opportunity and then engaging into the four important cultivation of thought which bring about extracting the true meaning of life by engaging into the practice of Buddha dharma.
 1. The need to practice the teachings, because all living beings only want happiness and do not want suffering, and because achieving happiness and alleviating suffering depend only on practicing the teachings.
 2. The ability to practice, because you are endowed with the external condition, a teacher, and the internal conditions, leisure and opportunity;
 3. The need to practice in this lifetime, because if you do not practice, it will be very difficult to obtain leisure and opportunity again for many lifetimes; and
 4. The need to practice right now, because there is no certainty when you will die.

Please kindly set a right motivation: the purpose of our life is to actualize the full enlightenment which is just for the benefit of numberless beings. For that purpose, one needs to accumulate extensive two types of merit, and in order to do that, one has to understand how to accumulate the merit by engaging into different stages of practices, therefore one has to understand the different advices that Buddha provided to us. For that purpose, today we are going to learn, or to contemplate, at the same time to habituate the understanding on the stage of the path – Lam Rim, which even just by merely holding discussion, it has the power to accumulate extensive merit and purification of past negative karma, therefore one should feel how fortunate we are to have this opportunity to do discussion on the holy speech of Buddha, in particularly the complete teaching on the stages of the path - from guru devotion up to enlightenment. One should cultivate that I will try my very best to understand the innate meaning of Lam Rim teaching, in particular today teaching - the innate meaning of precious human

rebirth, then one will put full effort to actualize the meaning of precious human rebirth.

In our previous discussion class, it covered the topic on guru devotion, so after understand how to search for the right guru, and after obtained the right teacher or right guru, then one should engage into the cultivation of different stages of the practices. So first, here it comes the practice of engaging into the understanding on precious human rebirth, the stages on how the student should train their mind after they have relied on the correct teacher.

This subject covered very important point such as an exhortation to take full advantage of a life of leisure and opportunity from which we are qualified of having this precious human rebirth. This is subcategorized into three main important points:

1. The identification of what is the leisure and endowment or opportunity.
2. Contemplating the difficulty in obtaining the leisure and opportunity.
3. Contemplating the great importance of leisure and opportunity and then engaging into the four important cultivation of thought which bring about extracting the true meaning of life by engaging into the practice of Buddha dharma.

In order to cover this, today here I would like to use the text on *Foundation of All Good Qualities* which is one of the most condense, compress, complete, well expressed on the complete stages on the path composed by Lama Tzong Khapa which contain very limit words, the most is one page, but it cover entire stage on the path. So please refer to the 2nd paragraph on the text:

**Understanding that the precious freedom of this rebirth is found only once,
Is greatly meaningful, and is difficult to find again,
Please bless me to generate the mind that unceasingly,
Day and night, takes its essence.**

These four lines cover the whole explanation on the few points that I just expressed.

Understanding that the precious freedom of this rebirth is found only once, here '**found only once**' doesn't mean that this precious human rebirth is only one time achievement, it doesn't mean that, here the meaning we have to interpret is that it is almost like we **found only once**.

When we reflect back on our past rebirth from beginningless life times, so far we have taken the rebirth mostly in three lower realms. Within the three lower realms, mostly in hell realm, then hungry ghost, animal, god, demi-god, even we happen to take human rebirth, it is most likely we took the unfavorable human rebirth which is in total lost of freedom, leisure and endowments.

Also when we look at our present attitude of our mind which bring all the creation on karma which is the fruitful cause for our next destination, when we look inside of us, and look how we perform day to day life action, within 24 hours, most likely we are totally overwhelm by ignorance, on top of that overwhelm by anger, hatred, attachment, pride, jealousy, including depression, fear, anxiety, then the 20 different negative afflictions, we are completely overwhelm by that. As long as our action is introduced by these negative emotions, our action is committing negative karma. And this negative karma, if it is great negative karma, it will bring about the fruitful result of rebirth in hell realm in our next life, then there is hungry ghost, animal, god, demi-god and human realm, then there is ordinary human who totally lack of freedom to practice, knowing and learning dharma, totally miss the favorable environment condition. So from this point of view, we have only one time, only this time obtained this precious human rebirth. When we look in this way, we are like that, otherwise it doesn't mean it **found only once**, because if it is **only once**, then if we don't attain enlightenment in this life, then almost like there is no opportunity at all.

Since we have obtain this precious human rebirth which is almost **only once**, so what do we obtained the freedom on this precious human rebirth with the opportunity and endowment? Here it comes the Eight Leisure and Ten Endowments which we have already covered in past class, but I will just go through once here.

The first is the **freedom of being born in hell realm**. It is definite that we are not born in hell realm right now, we are in precious human rebirth whether we like it or not. And we have this rebirth which is qualified by the first qualification that is the freedom from being born in hell realm. Because of that it makes sense that we must practice dharma, must extract the meaning of this life, because if we born in hell realm, there is no opportunity for us to even to have a wish to practice, even if happen to have a wish, there is total lack of opportunity because of the experience of unbearable suffering.

The second qualification is the **freedom from being born as hungry ghost**. Again when we look at the freedom from second qualification, we deserve and are necessary to practice dharma because if we happen to born as hungry ghost, due to unbearable suffering, there is no opportunity for us to practice.

The third leisure is **freedom from being born in animal realm**, again we gained the freedom, we are not born as animal, we are born as human being, so we are already qualified by the first two qualifications, on top of that we are qualified by the third qualification, so we must practice dharma.

The fourth freedom is the **freedom from being born as long life god**. Here the long life god refer to the god of formless realm and the god of desire realm which completely distracted by the object of desire. The freedom of being born in long

life god is not necessary refer to all the desire realm god, form realm god or formless realm god, this one is refer to particularly those desire realm god who are totally overwhelm by the distraction on desire object, not all gods are like that, there are gods who particularly overwhelm by the object of desire.

In formless realm, there is one type of god who is in meditative absorption without discrimination. The moment they are born there, up to the last day depart from that realm, they are totally in meditative absorption without discrimination. Because of that they remain in concentration in total peace, but there is no discrimination on virtue and non-virtue. The lifespan there is very long, but whatever the blissful experience in life, let say 1000 years in formless god realm in meditative absorption without discrimination, is the moment of exhaustion of past merit. The moment the merit is completely exhaust, this god awake from single pointed meditation. The moment the god woke up from the meditation, he already at the throwing stage on his karma to lower realm such as hell. All the way they enjoy in meditation in bliss, no bodhicitta, no compassion, no loving kindness, they either meditate on light or whatever, they single pointed meditate for 1000 years or 2000 years or for eons, they meditate until they reach the edge of hell, then the moment they woke up, they fall down. This is so unfortunate realm. So we are not born like that, we are free from such kind of life. Therefore before we born there, we better escape, and we better liberate because who knows we try to do calm abiding meditation but with so many desire, we do calm abiding meditation and single pointed meditation wanting to obtain power to fly, so that we don't have to pay air ticket and can go all country for enjoying holiday without spending money, or just want to be away from world and live in total peace, away from the disturbance on gross distraction. Just like some of the sadhu, they do like that, in whatever lifespan they have, 80 or 90 years, they totally get away from world, live in mountain or in jungle. And because of the concentration they have, all the time they experience bliss, they can overcome the distraction on element, like wind, fire, rain etc, they achieve up to 9th level of concentration, they get into this kind of achievement. Or whatever single pointed meditation we try to do, it is lack of positive motivation, just watch our mind, concentrate our mind, or light, through the training we are able to achieve single pointed concentration, and we start to feel bliss and contentment, and free from disturbance of the world, then you continue, let say you start at the age of 7, and you gained the concentration six months later, then for the rest of year up to 90 years old, you remain in that, but the moment you die, since this concentration either is virtue or neutral karma, it is somehow able to bring us to the state of long life god. And if we happen to born as long life god, we are going to experience exactly like what I have just said - you will be there for hundred years or thousand years. Therefore even great master strongly mention that even you train in concentration, you have to involve the practice of *Three Principal Aspect of the Path*, otherwise it will become the fruitful cause for samsara. Even though we take a slightly favorable rebirth than the hell realm, but the final destiny is come back to the lower realm. Even though concentration is so important, but if we don't have the proper motivation, there is danger of obtaining such kind of

rebirth, so whatever meditation we do, we should conjoin the bodhicitta motivation. At least we should say it, although whether we feel it or not that today we want to train our mind in concentration which is to actualize the realization on the *Three Principal Aspect of the Path*, which is to obtain full enlightenment for the benefit of numberless sentient beings. Then you meditate silence for one hour or two hour or one minute or two minute, so at least this is meaningful practice to actualize liberation, if not at least to bring about precious human rebirth and continue our practice.

The fifth is the **freedom from being born when the founder Buddha had not appeared**. We called the black era, such as Shakyamuni Buddha came into this world 2,500 years ago, now is already coming to very near the black era. A few decade ago, our human being's lifespan is about 100 years old, now majority of human lifespan is about 80. Now after one or two decade, human being's lifespan most probably 50, then after 5 to 6 decades, human beings' lifespan maybe up to 20, then there will be lifespan up to only 10. The longest human being's life is only 10 years old, and the size of human being is like about 1 foot height.

From there around that time when human being's lifespan is about 10 years old, it is very rare to see Sangha community who have responsibility to preserve dharma. It is only with Sangha community, the existence of dharma is there. Gradually after a few decade later, we call it the era of sign, that time even the color of cloth is mostly black. In fact even now you start to see mostly black, and to see saffron color is very limit and very rare. So if you happen to see the saffron color like a thumb nail size, that would be the respect to Sangha refuge, even this kind of state will come. From here, after a few decade, then come the black era, before Maitreya Buddha come, so if we happen to born in between, we lost the freedom of fifth qualification. So we are so fortunate, we are free from being born when the founder Buddha had not appeared.

The founder Buddha had appeared, and his teaching still remain. In fact the founder Buddha are still appear to us as prophesize by Buddha Vajradhara that during degenerate time, especially during the five degenerate time which is our time now, the Buddha will come into the beings in the aspect of ordinary guru, ordinary teacher to reveal the teaching and dharma. That's why as we discuss in earlier subject, the guru who come in ordinary aspect, we have to respect as Buddha because the reason is that Buddha Vajradhara stated the reason that he prophesized he will come in the aspect of ordinary guru, that's the main reason we have to respect ordinary guru as Buddha. This mean the founder Buddha has appeared everyday in our life. Everyone of you have your own guru, your guru's advice, courage, comfort in spiritual path, everything in everyday, including doing sadhana you reflect your guru, you have this karma to reflect your guru and inspire you, it is like your founder of Buddha is everyday with you. So we don't have to refer to Shakyamuni Buddha alone, when we talk about the founder Buddha not appeared, we cannot just talk about Shakyamuni Buddha who came

into world 2500 years ago, now he is not here, we don't know where he went. Therefore we have the freedom from being born at the time when founder Buddha had not appeared.

The sixth qualification is the **freedom from being born in the place where there is no dharma, no spiritual path**. If you want to practice dharma, there is opportunity to learn dharma, there is guidance to guide you on how to contemplate on dharma, meditate on dharma, even guide you on the way to the realization on the stages on the path, therefore we have freedom from being born in the place where there is no dharma.

The seventh qualification on leisure is the **freedom from being born with defective senses**. Here the defective senses is not just refer to outer senses such as eye senses, we also need to be perfected with mental senses, speech sense, hearing senses as well, so we cannot be mute or deaf. After perfecting the mental faculty as stable mental faculty, the mind which has the potential to differentiate virtue or non-virtue, at the same time the rest of the senses function on their own respect, especially not deaf and mute, when we look into ourselves, we are totally perfect, we obtained this freedom.

The eighth is the **freedom of holding wrong view**. Holding wrong view such as not believing in refuge, karmic cause and effect, past and future live, four noble truth, all these are holding wrong views, holding wrong concepts. We have not only believe in refuge, but we have taken refuge, and we have not just taken refuge, we are practicing refuge, we try our very best not to harm other, and try our best to benefit others, we are really fabulous, we have obtained the total freedom.

So we have totally obtained these eight leisure completely. When we reflect these qualities in us, if we don't practice dharma, we are deceiving ourselves. Deceiving other is very bad, but deceiving oneself is the worse, and is the most foolish person in the whole world. So while having these freedom, if we don't practice dharma, it is equal that we are deceiving ourselves, because this chance could be only once, otherwise we lost all the opportunity.

The Ten Endowments are the Five Personal Endowments and Five Circumstances Endowments. The first of the Five Personal Endowments is **being born as human being**, this is for sure. Then **being born in the central of religious country**. **Being born with the well functioning body and mind**. The fourth one is **not having committed any of the five heinous crimes such as killing father, mother, arhat, drawing blood from tataagata or bodhisattva, splitting the Sangha community**. As I mentioned early, splitting Sangha community is not necessary have to be the community of ordained Sangha. As long as anyone in a group of people possess the direct realization on emptiness, then you split into two groups, that regard as splitting the Sangha community. That's why in dharma center, even in ordinary community, the act of splitting the

group is very scary, it is one of the heinous crime. Heinous crime there is no interruption of taking higher rebirth in between by the blessing of guru, Buddha or by purification, it is directly have to go down to hell.

The fifth one is **having faith in dharma**. Here is refer to having faith in the three basket of the teaching of Buddha. When we talk about having faith in dharma, it means having faith in the teaching of morality, in Vinaya teaching, then having faith in the teaching of concentration and wisdom, these three are the three baskets of the teaching of Buddha. All 84,000 teachings are contained in this category – teaching on Vinaya or morality, concentration and wisdom. Having faith in dharma means it is not just having faith in the teaching on moral discipline or Vinaya, here we have to have the faith in all three aspects of teaching. It is stated in Lam Rim Chen Mo that having faith in dharma, certain beings interpret that only to have faith in the moral teaching of the Buddha, but Lama Tzong Khapa stated that the meaning is to have faith in all 84,000 teachings which mean respect the three baskets of teaching. These are the five personal endowments.

The five circumstances endowments are **being born in the fortunate period when Buddha has appeared**. The world where we are is the world where Buddha has appeared, it is in the fortunate period. The seventh endowments is that **the Buddha has taught Dharma**. It is not just Buddha had appeared, but Buddha has taught Dharma. Such as after the Buddha obtained enlightenment, he lived in jungle for 49 days without teaching Dharma, that's the period for those beings who born at that time or leave the human rebirth before Buddha turned the wheel of dharma, those beings obtained being born in the fortunate period when Buddha has appeared but didn't obtained the seventh qualification which is being born in the fortunate period that the Buddha has taught Dharma, because at that time Buddha hasn't taught Dharma yet. For us, even though we are born in the five degeneration time, but not just Buddha had appeared, but Buddha has taught Dharma, not just taught Dharma, he taught the complete teaching – 84,000 teaching, therefore being born in the fortunate period when the Buddha has taught Dharma. Again here, the Dharma refer to the Three Baskets of teaching of Buddha.

The eighth qualification is **being born in the fortunate period where Dharma exists and flourished**. Today in our time, whatever Buddha taught 2500 years ago, the dharma exists, all three aspects of Dharma exists, not just that, it flourished. Here flourished doesn't mean the growing in number of practitioner or the outer aspect of teaching, here has to interpret as the flourished of inner teaching and outer teaching.

Inner teaching refer to the realization, applying dharma in our mental continuum and actualizing the result, this is inner flourishing the Dharma. Actualizing the teaching in outer material such as the opportunity to teach dharma in the world, this is also flourishing. It is like early on the teaching is in India, Tibet and Eastern

country, now it goes to Western country. Over thousand years ago, Tibet is overwhelmed with the teaching on Buddha Dharma, but in the West, I am not 100% sure, but most probably Dharma hasn't brought to the West yet. Lama Tzong Khapa came into Tibet about thousand years ago to well spread Dharma, the complete teaching on Dharma, but in the West, at that time seem like there is no Buddha Dharma. So now here we are born in the time when the inner and outer aspect of Dharma is flourishing.

The ninth qualification is that **being born in the fortunate period where we are able to meet with pure follower of Buddha's teaching**. The pure follower of Buddha's teaching can refer to Dharma teacher, as well as can refer to virtuous friends such as Dharma brother and sister who courage us. For example, today here, if in the previous class happen to come only 1 person, and another 3-4 of you, I guaranteed you will not come again for today class. We have to be very realistic, when we see more people, then we like to come. When we see less people, then we don't like to come. Even the energy, when there is more people, you feel more energy, when less people you feel no energy, so this is human being's problem, what to do? Therefore the pure follower refer to the dharma follower such as dharma brother and sister who courage you. When one person come, another also come. When one person doesn't come, another also doesn't come. I am sure within all of you here, you called each other,

"Are you going to class or not?"

"Is very boring... but ok lah... we go..."

"ok.. ok.. then I will also go..."

But if you said, "oh.. today I am very tire, I don't want to go.."

"Oh yah... I also very tire... I don't want to go..."

So it is so much depend on each other, am I right? Here we are so fortunate to be born in the fortunate period where we are able to meet with the pure follower of Buddha's teaching, it is so precious and wonderful. Even for me to actualize some meaning of my precious human rebirth, to get some merit to share dharma, if you don't listen, there is no place for me to share. So we have to make sure we don't influence our family member or loved one, or to whom you call as friend, or object of benefit, not to influence the number nine opportunity, even you don't like to go, it is good to courage other to practice, you cannot influence other not to do that. If you happen to do that, and if next life you happen to be born as human being but miss this ninth favorable condition, then is gone, there is no opportunity. So therefore every single aspect in family, you have to find a way to courage them to learn Dharma. If you truly love your friend, you should courage them to practice Dharma, influence them, inspire them, then you become the pure follower of Buddha's teaching, otherwise it is impure follower of Buddha's

teaching, especially after we took refuge, we become impure follower of Buddha's teaching, it is dangerous. Another meaning is the pure follower of Buddha's teaching refer to Guru, virtuous friends. In certain text, Guru refers to virtuous friend, those are the pure follower of Buddha's teaching. Being born in fortunate period where we are able to meet with the pure follower of Buddha's teaching.

Then the tenth circumstance endowments is that **the practitioner can enjoy the kind support to each other with the feeling of kind and compassion**. Here even though you want to learn Dharma so much, you heard LDC is providing Dharma teaching, so you desperately come to LDC, but first thing is LDC gate is locked, so whoever is in responsible become the cause to bring about unfavorable circumstances of the tenth endowment to that person, then the karma has to be experienced by whoever is in responsible. But if the gate is open but the red door is locked, again you cannot hear the Dharma even though it is being taught with loud speaker, you can't hear. Or even you have come in, but here it said with kind and compassion support to each other, but if people here look very serious, very angry and not welcome you, more than that, even scold you or look down on you or chase you out, then it becomes a total failure on precious human rebirth. Or even after you sit down, some people are very new, they are not used to sitting cross leg, so they have to move here and there, and you feel agitated and disturbed, then you show them black face, sometime there is even danger on banging the text on table, or even scolding, if that happens, then we are causing the unfavorable 10th condition here. Therefore we have to be very kind and compassionate support to each other, then we become real Buddhist practitioner, very sweet, nice, wonderful Buddhist practitioner, otherwise even if we study volumes after volumes, it doesn't work and it doesn't help, it just feeding the brain like computer, you just put everything inside, then one day burst out and gone. So this teaching is very powerful. We cannot just say this is the responsible on one person. All of us here, if there is one very disturbed person come in here knowing that his disturbed mind can help by the Buddha, we all have to show compassion, respect and care to this person, we cannot look at the person as crazy and think how he can come into the Center.

"You are crazy, you suppose to live in street! Why do you come in here with Buddha? To be with Buddha has to be perfect!"

We cannot think like that. Here some people are too perfect that's why they come in here, some people are too disturbed that's why they come in here, some people are half/half, 50/50, that's why they come here, some people's life are so good, they understand the kindness of Buddha, they appreciate the kindness of Buddha, they understand accumulation of merit so they come to attend puja, learn dharma and pay respect. You know to come to Dharma Center doesn't mean you have problem. There are people start to think that because you have problem that's why you come to Dharma Center, this is wrong concept, holding total wrong view.

You can see that the greater the scholar you are, the greater the realization you have, the more you attend the teaching. Our Guru all the time advice us to not feel lazy in attending classes or doing sadhana, even for Lam Rim teaching if you hear it 10 times, you should hope and pray to hear it 20 times. If you already heard it 30 times, you should pray and hope to hear it 60 times. If you hear compassion, compassion and compassion for 100 times, you should pray to hear 200 times. If you already know this particular knowledge, you should again hope and pray that you should go deeper, that must contain the deepest meaning of entire 84,000 teaching. Because of that, in every aspect, including the syllable "NA", it contains 84,000 teaching, that's why all Kadampa Master, they are so called as Kadampa, the name was given as Kadampa is because they treasure even one syllable "NA". If their teacher is only explaining the meaning on syllable "NA", they will totally devote with proper motivation to understand the entire 84,000 teaching from that syllable "NA", because of that, they are label as Kadampa Master. Kadampa name come from there because every single aspect of teaching, their urge is to understand from there the 84,000 teaching. So when we talk about precious human rebirth, we have to master all the term, only me get confuse, I have to look at the paper otherwise I get confuse. Last time when everybody did the exam, everybody scroll full mark, but the thing is, it is not for that, when you come to second round to listen to the teaching, you have to reflect into yourself – do you get deeper understanding on this of 84,000 teaching?

This is the explanation on ***understanding the precious freedom of this rebirth is found only once.***

Another clarification is that the central land - to be born in the central of religious country, there are a few points need to clarify on being born in the central land of religious country. This interpret in two ways, one is base on the central environment of land, as far as concern for that, Bodhgaya in India is regarded as the central land within the whole world, the whole Southern Continent. From scientific point of view, I don't know how they calculate, but from the scripture, Bodhgaya is calculated as the central land. On that earth exist the most powerful central holy respected object which is Bodhgaya stupa itself, which is the land that all past and future Buddha will get enlighten there. But down beneath Bodhgaya also resided the Vajra hell. The Vajra hell is down beneath at the central of that. At the tip of the central land, it is the most holy object which is Bodhgaya itself. This is base on the calculation on the environment way, from the land.

Another explanation on the central land refer to the conducive condition which is the place or the country where there is fully ordained bhikshu or bhikshuni, or fully ordained monk or nun, or novice monk or nun who possess 36 vows, also there is pre-novice monk and pre-novice nun, wherever the country or place resided by this four beings is regarded as central land. This mean that when there is these four beings resided, there is preserved on Vinaya vow, the

complete set of Vinaya vow. As long as you preserve the complete set of Vinaya vow, it is regarded as preserving the Buddha's teaching. So here in Malaysia sure have, not only four Sangha but many many novices monks like me.

As for being born with well function body and mind, its specific condition is to be free from being mute and deaf.

Number ninth which is that we are able to meet the pure follower of Buddha's teaching, as what I explained before, but on top of that, the follower of Buddha's teaching who obtained within her or himself the full knowledge of Buddha's teaching, and on the process of actualizing the stages of realization, and having the confident to provide that knowledge to others, to share the knowledge to others. This is also in the category of pure follower of Buddha's teaching.

Now we go to the second line: ***is greatly meaningful and is difficult to find again***. This precious human rebirth is qualified with Eight Leisure and Ten Endowments, it is so difficult to obtain in three different ways;

1. difficult to obtain base on the cause to actualize this precious human rebirth
2. difficult to obtain by the nature of this precious human rebirth
3. difficult to obtain even when you look at the example

The reason that this precious human rebirth is so difficult obtain even when we refer to the cause is that in order to obtain this precious human rebirth, one have to actualize or practice or remain in vow. We have to remain in vow. At least we have to preserve 1 vow as condition for us to actualize precious human rebirth for next life.

Why do we obtain precious human rebirth in this life? Because we have definitely cultivated the cause to preserve the vow in the past as well as the nature and condition, due to that we obtained precious human rebirth now. The best is to cultivate 253 vows. If not, at least 36 vows, if not, at least the practice of 10 virtues vows, if not, at least 5 lay vows, if not, at least 4 root vows, if not, at least refuge vow in order for us to make sure to obtain precious human rebirth. Without any of this, the causal state is not complete. Now look into ourselves, to protect the vow or to preserve the vow, even for refuge vow, it is so difficult, so tough, don't talk about 5 lay vow, or ten virtue vow, or fully ordained Sangha vow, even refuge vow, it is so difficult. Do not harm other, even we don't harm directly but we do harm indirectly. Because we are not mindful, the thing is that in order to practice pure refuge vow, we have to remain full mindfulness in every single moment, total mindfulness in every single moment. Now you look at this, it is so difficult, so now when we relate to the cause to actualize precious human rebirth, even for the cause, it is so difficult. In our past life, we worked so hard and now actualized this precious human rebirth. And if we don't take this opportunity, look at ourselves right now on how we preserve the vow, it is quite sure that we will go

down, it is quite sure. Therefore now we have to courage ourselves on how important to preserve our vow, courage ourselves on how important to actualizing the meaning on precious human rebirth when you relate to the cause.

Difficult to obtain by the nature of this precious human rebirth

From the nature of rebirth, when we look at the nature of rebirth, in the nature of samsaric being is more likely we engage into negative action, negative creation. In the past life time up to today, our real nature always like to create negative karma because of that we most probably actualize unfavorable rebirth, not precious human rebirth. When we look at ourselves in the present nature, we most likely creating the fruitful cause for the unfavorable rebirth next time. From here, it really make sense that this precious human rebirth is really precious, unbelievable precious, it really sound like that this is the only chance. From here again, build up your courage, not to waste time, just practice dharma.

Difficult to obtain even when you look at the example

When we look at the example, it sound like really this rebirth is only once. The example given is that in a BIIIIIGGG ocean.. a HUUUUGGGEEE ocean, the wave in ocean is like crazy, even in one second, the wave go this side, then flip back and hit back, so unstable wave... constant unstable wave. And in this big ocean, there is one big tortoise, body very big tortoise, but the head very small, they have big body, big shell, but very small neck. Then there is one wooden ring, and this ring is just nice to fit into the small tortoise head. And this wooden ring is floating on the very unstable wave in the big ocean. At one moment, the ring is at South, another moment it is at the end of East, then the next moment is in the central, and this tortoise is trying so hard to put his head into the ring in the unstable wave. Do u think is possible? It is possible but it is very rare. So our opportunity to take human rebirth is something like that, the example is like that. It is almost like it is no way, but you cannot say it is not possible at all, it is possible but the tortoise have to be very smart, not only that, it has to be very fast, not only that, it has to be very accurate otherwise there is no chance. So even from the example that we relate, our opportunity to obtain precious human rebirth is almost like impossible, it is very discouraging isn't it? But now it is so couraging because we already obtained it, again we inspired ourselves must practice Dharma, and only practice Dharma. I have no choice to say this, isn't it? We must practice Dharma and only practice Dharma. I cannot ask you to go do business and not practice Dharma, must practice Dharma and only practice Dharma. If we trust this teaching, it really mean it, isn't it?

Greatly meaningful is meaningful base on this precious human rebirth, it is so meaningful that you can able to actualize all the both mundane achievement and spiritual attainment, all the temporary happiness and all the ultimate happiness base on this precious human rebirth.

Because of that, this present precious human rebirth is like the wish fulfilling gem, more than wish fulfilling gem. The wish fulfilling gem which exist in this

existence continent is only to bring the fulfillment of mundane wishes such as good life, good business, good money, good health etc., but it does not possess the value of actualizing the wish of obtaining full enlightenment. But this precious human rebirth has the potential and value to actualize the greatest wish which is to perfect ourselves into everlasting happiness, actualizing all the happiness, inexhaustible happiness, and all the qualities, no question about obtaining all the temporary happiness. All the past Buddhas such as Shakyamuni Buddha, Buddha Kashapa, all the rest of Buddhas, and all the past Bodhisattvas, such as Bodhisattva Maitreya, Bodhisattva Manjushri, Bodhisattva Chenrezig, and all the past great Arhats such as 16 Arhats and all the past Indian great pandit who obtained very high stage realization on path, and obtain total freedom from samsara, who actualize the realization on the *Three Principals Aspect of the Path*, who are about to gain enlightenment such as Nagarjuna, Lama Atisha, Asanga etc, such as past great Tibetan Mahasiddha such as Marpa, Milarepa, Lama Tzong Khapa, Tilopa, Naropa, those who have already obtained the high Arya bodhisattva path, such as the great Tibetan contemporary Mahasiddha such as Dechen Nyingpo, First Dalai Lama, the different rebirth of Dalai Lama, many other practitioner, in our time contemporary practitioner those who have obtained full enlightenment such as Geshe Lama Konchog, many those late great masters of Indian and Tibetan and living great master in our time, today times, such as His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche and so and so, your personal enlightened Guru who are already obtained enlightenment, and came into being to benefit by manifestation in the form body to guide us, there are also many other today time practitioner like you people, many of you people.. who know is already obtained enlightenment, many of you people... who knows already obtained Arya bodhisattva path.

Now here, look at myself, how can I give up this dharma? How can I live without practicing dharma? How can I not convince myself to dharma? How can I not to convince there is no enlightenment base on practicing this dharma? How can I not to generate faith and believe that there is stage of development of realization on the path to actualize ordinary bodhisattva, then gradually actualizing aryabodhisattva, then gradually actualizing enlightenment? After showing all these true examples who prove to me, from the past Buddhas up until now prove to me that they have obtained using the same body, same rebirth – the precious human rebirth, what I am trying to say is this one, they use the same precious human rebirth, exactly what I possessed. At the beginning until right now, we totally empty of conventional knowledge, totally empty of realization, so how can we give up? Why can't we trust ourselves? Because all the past who has obtained it used the same body, same quality of rebirth, started from zero and empty, they actualize all those stages of realization, so why I cannot do that? Therefore from here now it is 100% prove and guarantee and make sure never ask further question on whether there is enlightenment or not, or whether practicing Buddha dharma can get enlightenment or not? Or are you sure this practice can lead you to enlightenment? Or are you sure this can obtain temporary happiness or not?

Are you sure can obtain everlasting happiness? Now don't ever ever ask these questions, it is already proved. Now I totally convince, 100% convince, then ok!

The thing is that if you are late to be convinced, the lesser the faith, the lesser the inspiration, the weaker the inspiration, the further the realization. So even if we waste one moment of total conviction, we wasted that moment of precious human rebirth. If something happen at that time, if you have to transfer to your next life, then how? Finished! You will lost everything, total lost.. because this is only once. From here now we confirm ourselves, if any of you is exactly like me, then think exactly like me on just now what I expressed, but if you already up there, then I rejoice, I hope to be like you also, I want to be like the past Buddha, Bodhisattva, great Indian master, great Tibetan master, and great being, but in case if any of you is exactly like me, then think like me, total stamp and confirm, otherwise who know you might be too late? If you are too late, then it is totally wasted, completely wasted, I don't mean Western country.. I mean completely wasted.

So now here, if you want to sleep, sleep with Dharma, if you want to wake up, wake up with Dharma, if you want to carry any bag, carry with Dharma, if you want to walk, walk with Dharma. Now here it means that I have to carry this book everywhere, and I think I have been carrying this book every where, look at here, these were following me everywhere until it is eaten by somebody else, it is a very nice book you know? Because I am not working hard to study, so the termite or cockroaches, in Sera Monastery, in my room, the cockroaches come and eat. All my books are like that, that means that I didn't touch the book, only put on altar, and put water bowl offerings and pray pray, but at least now I am using it. Anyway, to live with Dharma, sleep with Dharma, go with Dharma, walk with Dharma, eat with Dharma, whatever it is, it means transform the mind into Dharma.

When bad things come, think of renunciation, emptiness and bodhicitta, good thing happen also think of renunciation, bodhicitta and emptiness. Don't be too excited, don't be too depress, be contented, be like a vajra, unshakable. If somebody praise you, it is almost like the whole world is given to you, if somebody scold you – my goodness! It is like entire thing went into apart. So our life have to transform into contentment, satisfaction, detachment, then when we have contentment and detachment, then renunciation come, for the purpose of bodhicitta, then enlightenment come, for the purpose of transformation, then emptiness come, so apply these *Three Principal Aspect of the Path* into your mind, so now everything and every aspect of your life become okay, not too bad. Even the worse thing – death come, you will feel okay to leave, otherwise we have to survive in the total torture of contamination, total torture of anxiety, fear, then what is the meaning of life? If we live our life with that kind of practice, it can overcome spirit harm, enemy, bad influence, whatever aspect of life you have, it will be very stunning, fruitful, virtuous, ethical life, then you will engage into the

practice of Six Perfection such as generosity etc, then you will always pray to get enlightenment.

In order to obtain precious human rebirth in next life time, we need three causes:

1. preserve morality – vow, at least refuge vow
2. engage in the practice of generosity and Six Perfection
3. making constant prayer or supplication to be able to born in precious human rebirth with motivation of stainless

In Tibetan language it said, “mon-lam dri-ma mey-pey tsam-jar”.

“mon-lam” means “supplication or prayer or wish”.

“dri-ma mey-pa” means “stainless”.

“tsam-jar” means “connect it”.

“tsul-trim nam-par dak-pey shi-sung”

“tsul-trim” means “morality or vow”.

“nam-par dak-pey shi-sung” means to set the foundation of pure morality is to at least preserve refuge vow.

“jin-sok par-chin-druk-gyi drog-je”

“jin” means “generosity”

“sok” means “etcetera”

“par-chin-druk” means “Six Perfection”

“drog-je” means “get help”

So to get conditional help of practicing Six Perfection and to enhance pure vow, then to become a proper cause for the precious human rebirth, the third causes is “mon-lam dri-ma mey-pey tsam-jar”. With these two bases of causes and conditions, then connect to the next life with supplication and prayer, these three things you need.

As I mentioned earlier, if we live a life like that, then all these three things will come in place. When these three things come in place, we are quite confident, even at the time of dying, we can die happily. Therefore those past great beings live a life like that, live a life with dharma means like what I mentioned earlier. The greatest practitioner when death comes, they over joy, it is like a birthday party coming tomorrow, or new year coming tomorrow. When new year coming tomorrow, tonight you set all the new clothes, and sometime you even don't sleep. From the new year eve already wear all the nice clothes in the monastery, we do like that in monastery because we wear whole year, 12 months one set of robe without even washing, so tomorrow new year, tonight open up the box, take out the fresh robe, wear for one day for tomorrow only, then again put it back, and wait until next year to wear again if it is still okay to wear and if not too

smelly. When I was little, not only me, all my dharma brothers, whole night even though there is no light but we jump with total brightness, it is almost like we have the wisdom eye to see the color of our clothes,

“Ah...my robe better or your robe better?”

For whole night we just wear and take off, and then wear again and take off again, then in the morning at about 3am, we wear the robe then go to puja and showing to each other. We were so happy that whole night we were overwhelmed. The greatest and most hard working practitioner, when death come, it is like that, they are so happy because it is just for the moment of changing new robe, just to change the skin because this is already too old and too smelly, then fresh bone and new baby has everything new and fresh isn't it? So they are so happy when they realize their death is tomorrow, they even can see that, tomorrow they are dying, but today so happy.

So the first one is over joy and confident, the second one is not regret to die, not regret your life to face the death, anyway, that's how Dharma help, very happy, almost like a fruitful life, taking a new journey with so much confident. The third one is not hesitate to die.

Some of the lama used to use the example that our body is like a company where you can produce one of the most expensive material such as every hour produce one million biggest karat diamond, but instead of producing that, you produce small needle, you use the company to produce the small needle, so if we don't practice dharma whole heartedly and full time dharma, and we are totally distract to actualize and focus to earn money, here I am not discourage you to earn money okay? From morning to night, total dedication of your precious human rebirth to earn money, or just to save your relationship, put full time and effort for that, or just to comfort yourself for temporary happiness, almost 24 hours you work for that instead of practicing stages of the path, or instead of subduing the mind, or instead of enjoy to subdue the mind, or enjoy to engage into the stages of the path, or learning the Dharma the stages of the path, or contemplating the understanding on dharma on what you have, or meditating on the contemplation that you have, but overwhelm with the worldly concern, then it become like the company which in every hour can produce zillion of diamonds but now don't want to produce diamond, rather producing needle, the needle that use to sew clothes, so instead of producing one million diamond, you produce one million needle, then send to market, but what you can gain? So it is exactly like that.

Last time they didn't use diamond, there was one very great master who tried to give this example in our ordinary life, so he use as airplane, he used our precious human rebirth like a company which can produce hundred of hundred of airplane in a day with so much profit, but instead of producing that, the company produce small needle. So the way on how we are, we are almost like that. So if we don't

practice dharma, we are like that. The thing is that we suppose to get everlasting happiness but we just get one temporary happiness but that also is in the nature of Suffering of Change, so this is what example they use, it is similar.

After that, the forth & fifth line:

Please bless me to generate the mind that unceasingly day and night take its essence.

If you really doing meditation on precious human rebirth, by understanding that one of the greatest courage for oneself to engage into dharma practice is the meditation on precious human rebirth, by knowing that, then you visualize your Guru, or Buddha, or any scripture, relic, stupa or any holy object on your crown, or you visualize the merit field or refuge field, in front of them you convince yourself to practice dharma day and night, and in order to actualize that you request the blessing from Triple Gems or your guru to bless your mind not to distract from this enthusiastic inspiration. Because if we happen to lose the inspiration for one moment, we wasted great benefit. If we lose one hour, one day, we lost the great benefit. Therefore we have to make the prayer that may I be able to engage into the full practice of dharma in every single moment of my day and night.

If possible, at least in the morning when you wake up, you think of your precious human rebirth, then request the blessing. In day time, you are quite influence to engage in negative karma, then straight away you recall the precious human rebirth, if your mind is still difficult to tame, then you visualize and request Buddha or Guru to bless your mind, then try your best to actualize the purpose of precious human rebirth in order to practice Dharma again. At the end of the day before going to bed, you should rejoice by the blessing of Triple Gems, Buddha, or Guru that you are still alive, accident didn't occur, untimely death didn't occur, timely death also didn't occur, my precious human rebirth is still remain up to now, then you make strong prayer that may I be able to pass through the night and not losing the precious human rebirth, and actualize the next day to be able to continue the full time serious practice in Dharma until actualize full enlightenment, so everyday you do this practice.

Then one will be so inspire, and one's mind will be so lifted, so much inspire, and you will feel proud, and this proud is necessary because this is the best method, best medicine, best consultation for depression, long face, unhappy. Thinking of precious human rebirth – my goodness, it is like a gem, it is more than a precious gem, and I have now. If I want, I can get anything I like, including inexhaustible happiness, so then your mind naturally lifted up, this is the instant benefit to lose the depression, and let depression gone. When depression gone, then you will be happy isn't it? When you are happy, then you will have good aura. Having this good aura, things will start to draw in, everything start to come in place, good aura draw all the good things, bad aura draw all the bad things. It is like that.

So this precious human rebirth is so powerful, all the lamas, all the great practitioner who has already obtained realization, all the time they use this precious human rebirth to courage and guide us to get into serious practice in dharma with so much happiness, confident, proud. This proud is not the bad one, it is the good one, it is like confident, very lifted, light, pure, virtue, contented, kind, I have no choice to use all these words because I know no more than these words, so is like that. If you have more word, you can insert here, whatever good word you want to insert, you can insert here, for me it is only this much limit, but you can insert all the good things and good words here. Otherwise pray, pray, pray, sometime is very depressing, pray too much, don't know is happy or making more depress?

Pray inside, change this one, stir the unhappiness and depression and take them out, if you feel it is not going out, then you should do some action to take out, it will help, remember about generosity? If you cannot make generosity, then you start with giving from your left hand to right hand, and right hand to left hand, I give to you, and you give to me, both say thank you very much, like that! It is the same thing, whether prayer really work or not, whether you receive the actual blessing or not, it is here (pointed to the heart). It is like a leather, in Tibet, when they want to make leather shoes, they have to smash it, smash... smash... so it will become very flexible. If we leave the concrete and unhappy mind there, and pray and offer how many candle light, it doesn't work, until when it has too much candle light, then it makes dirty because of the smoke, we look into ourselves, it is like that. When we want to pray, here has to do some grinding, then put palm together, otherwise it doesn't work 100%, just pray... pray... it is not enough.

Day and night take its essence... here there are 4 points:

First we need to practice the teaching and dharma because myself and all living beings only want happiness, and do not want suffering. Because of achieving happiness and abandoning suffering is only depend on practicing the teaching, practicing all the methods that I explained before, including this transformation on the mind, understanding letting go, and not grasping. All these are the teaching, including remembering the precious human rebirth and engage into the practice. Why we need to practice those teaching because all living beings including yourself want only happiness, and do not want suffering. And all these things can only actualize by practicing Dharma only. That's the one reason.

Secondly you think: do I have the ability to practice or not? Yes! Because you are endowed with the external condition like your guru, your teacher who guide you onto the unmistaken path, like your dharma brother and sister... this is the external condition which you already possess, you already have.

And the internal condition is the Eight Leisure and Ten Endowments or Ten Opportunity which you do possessed, this is your internal condition. You have

outer condition and internal condition, so there is no way to excuse, you have everything, therefore – YES! You have the ability to practice Dharma. After confirming yourself that it is necessary and must ... as long as you wish happiness and do not wish suffering... and confirming that only by practicing Dharma can able to bring that, then secondly you asked – do I have the ability or not? YES! I DO HAVE ABILITY!! Because I possess the inner and outer condition. After convincing by these two points to practice Dharma, then remember the third points:

Since it is like that, I must practice Dharma, and since I have the ability, do I need to practice it in this life time? Why not I practice next life? Anyway, there is rebirth, maybe next life I go to hell, but never mind, maybe I first go to hell, second go to hungry ghost, when I go to hell, maybe I will remain there for one eons, then go to hungry ghost maybe remain there for half an eon, then go to animal realm, then maybe after three countless eons later I can practice Dharma, why do I need to force myself to practice now? Let me enjoy this samsara.

Now you ask yourself, do you need to practice in this life time? YES! Because if you do not practice, it will be very difficult to obtain the leisure and opportunity again for many life time, or may not obtain for ever. Everybody enlightened, you only stay in samsara. Every single living being, except you, some have obtain Amitabha Pure Land, some attain Tara Pure Land, some attain Shakyamuni Buddha Pure Land, everybody so busy go up but you are down here biting finger, it become like that. Therefore because if you do not practice this life time, it will be very difficult to obtain this opportunity and this freedom – the Eight Freedom and Ten Opportunity, to obtain again is very difficult, it is almost like no chance, therefore you must practice Dharma in this life. After convincing this third statement, then you have to remember the fourth statement.

I understand Dharma is very important because I truly wish happiness and do not wish suffering, therefore Dharma is the only one that help so I need to practice Dharma, and yes, I do have the ability, and I need to practice in this life, I am just 32 years old, I might live up to 60, but as auspicious, let say live up to 80 years old, but I already suffer so much.. almost 20 years of study, this is too much! I must enjoy my life in samsara right now.

Before I get into study, I was suffered in my family, there was no shoes, no cloth, in the snow shivering and feel cold, no food, at the time of birth I am sure there are lots of suffering but I don't remember, anyway I assume I am very suffered there, so after that, as a small boy I also suffer, after that in teenage life, from morning until night time, have to squeeze the brain up to 32 years old, study... study... study and squeeze brain... wao... until cannot put on weight.. this is torturing! So if I don't enjoy now in such a comfortable life in Malaysia, in LDC, I can practice later when I go to cave in the age of 80. If I happen to think like that, it is wrong! I need to practice RIGHT NOW!!! Because there is no certainty on when I will die? I know my bed is so comfortable, so if before I reach my bed I

finish, then how? This seat is so comfortable, but is already over because it is already over 9:30pm, so even that is not certain, so there is nothing to guarantee.

Therefore if we don't practice right now, right this moment, then finish, who knows maybe this moment we will be transfer to next life, then how? The transaction is very fast, so now have to practice Dharma mean... if we know, it is so simple in one way, no need book, no need vajra and bell, just to grin our mind, grin all those disturbance thought, those afflictive thought, afflictive emotion, and at least bring some happiness for ourselves, some contentment, letting go, no grasping, renunciation, think on some good thing about other, bodhicitta, think that everything is like illusion, why need to attach so much? So this is so easy, no need book, no need vajra, no need bell, nothing, just this, just the mind, it is so easy to take the opportunity of precious human rebirth. But if I want to make complicated, then I have all the excuses. If I need to practice tantra, I need vajra first, bell first, damaru first, so I need to wait until I go to Nepal, then one year wasted, or I need to practice meditation until my Buddha come to my altar, then wasted, we are like that. Without Buddha image on altar, we cannot do practice. Without vajra and bell in front of you, we cannot practice, we make ourselves so much restriction, excuses, so you see, if you think in that way, if you don't have Lam Rim text in front of you, you cannot practice Lam Rim, it is the same thing like that. So you see, now if you want to make it complicated, it is very complicated, if you want to make it easy, then just take care of one thing – the mind.

Actually the subject on precious human rebirth is already covered before, but today is slightly different. This is solely base on Lam Rim concept, previous one is more general, so actually I thought to do more on question and answer, that was my plan, but anyway, there were too many bla bla, so it must be too tire for you all, so we stop here.

So we dedicate for actualizing the meaning on precious human rebirth from whatever good karma that we accumulated during this session.

So when you go back, what you need to carry with you is to practice dharma with over joy and happiness. When we think of precious human rebirth, it courage us to practice with so much happiness, that's why Buddha dharma is really enlightening, there is so much happiness there, we have to keep in that. Because if we don't keep this now in our heart, next time when it comes about death and impermanent, it will be depression part. If you cannot be so obedient to practice Dharma with so much joy, then now you have to practice with so much depression – have to think of death, think of impermanent, it is very tiring, it is no good. Normally it said to courage us to practice Dharma, there are two solutions, one is happy solution, another one is quite serious solution. Happy solution is to think of precious human rebirth, if this cannot handle us, then we have to handle by meditating on death and impermanent. So why not we choose this one? Enjoy

your life with transformation on your mind, whether you are old, you are young, female or male, white or black, just transform your mind, then is enough.

Thank you very much!

Teaching transcribed and lightly edited by Ven.Osel on 11th June 2008