

# 2008 SPIRITUAL PROGRAMME

## LOSANG DRAGPA BUDDHIST SOCIETY

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Buddhist Foundation Course      Semester 1 (7/8)

### **Meditating on the Precious Human Rebirth**

*By Geshe Tenzin Zopa on 12<sup>th</sup> March 2008 @ Losang Dragpa Buddhist Society, PJ*

With right motivation to attend the course, we motivate that the purpose of our life is to bring benefit to numberless beings, including ourselves to be liberated from entire suffering and the causes of suffering and reach the state of full enlightenment. To remember the qualities of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, at the same time also remember His kindness that it is completely due to the kindness of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha that today we have the opportunity to cultivate virtue practice which make ourselves have the opportunity to be liberated from suffering. It is not only that, by the blessing of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, we have the opportunity to practice bodhicitta and great compassion, so that our purpose of practice become the cause of liberation of all other living beings, therefore by remembering the kindness of Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, we recite Guru Shakyamuni Buddha's mantra together:

Tayatha Om Muni Muni Maha Muniye Soha

#### **The most essential practice in Buddha dharma**

Today subject is about 'How to Meditate on Precious Human Rebirth'? The meditation on precious human rebirth is regarded as one of the essential, powerful, important and necessary practice. If one's purpose of learning Buddha Dharma is for liberation, without the practice of meditation on precious human rebirth, one will not be able to bring the sincerity and engaged in the practice of Buddha Dharma whole heartedly, sincerely and in most meaningful way.

In various teaching by Indian Pandits, as well as the great Tibetan Kadampa Masters, all the time they emphasized that in order to practice in the most meaningful way, one has to remind the practice by cultivating or meditating on the preciousness of one's human life. If that also unable to introduce or courage oneself to get into serious practice of Buddha Dharma, then there is only one more chance left. There are two tools to inspire oneself to get into the practice of Buddha Dharma innately, sincerely and whole heartedly. They regard the meditation on precious human rebirth is one of the most powerful. If even

meditation on precious human rebirth can't inspire, that mean either one's mind is so heavily dominated by negative karma or one's inspiration is completely directed by the influence of ignorance. Then it is recommended to meditate on Death and Impermanent. So these two are the important points recommended by the great practitioner, the great Indian pandits, and great Kadampa Masters of Tibet. If one wishes to practice seriously, the cultivation and meditation on precious human rebirth is one of the essential meditation.

### **How to meditate on Precious Human Rebirth?**

If it is so important to meditate on precious human rebirth, how to do the meditation? Just by thinking that my life is very precious, can that alone able to inspire oneself to take the practice seriously? Just by recalling the name of my rebirth is precious and my precious human rebirth, just that alone is not enough, so how to inspire and meditate? First is to remind yourself on what sort of opportunity and freedom you had obtained base on this human rebirth, we called the Eight Leisure and Ten Endowments, also what sort of obstacle is overcome and free on this human rebirth? By meditating on these, one will be able to treasure the preciousness on this human rebirth, and one will engage into practice because it will be great fool for oneself if one is not using this precious human rebirth for the purpose of actualizing the greatest meaning in life.

What is the greatest meaning in life? The greatest meaning in life is to actualize the full enlightenment in one very life time. If that is unable to do, at least one should extract the meaning in life by actualizing the realization on *Three Principal Aspect of Path* which is 1) renunciation 2) bodhicitta and 3) emptiness. If that is also unable to do, at least oneself cultivate the teaching on *The Four Noble Truths* and try to actualize the causes to liberate oneself from samsara. If that also unable to manage, at least one should secure oneself to not fall into the *Three Lower Realms* such as hell realm, hungry ghost realm and animal realm by engaging the practice of antidote such as cultivating the *Ten Virtues* action, that's how one should secure one's precious human rebirth which one has obtained.

As like Shantideva stated here,

***Leisure and endowment are very hard to find;  
And since they accomplish what is meaningful for man,  
If I do not take advantage of them now,  
How will such a perfect opportunity come about again?***

The Eight ***Leisure and Ten Endowments are very hard to find***, even one happened to take rebirth of a human being, it is not necessary that one will obtain the Eight Leisure and Ten Endowments. Therefore there is no way that one can able to attain the Eight Leisure and Ten Endowment if one happened to take

rebirth even in god realm, or the three unfavorable rebirth such as the three lower realms, therefore it is very hard to find.

***And since they accomplish what is meaningful for man***, so since we have accomplished this Eight Leisure and Ten Endowments which is one of the most meaningful to actualize the purpose of ourselves, so if we do not take advantage of them now, even though we have obtained it, but if we don't use the advantage of Eight Leisure and Ten Endowments right now, we might ever lost this opportunity. Because the opportunity of having this Eight Leisure and Ten Endowments is like a day star, once in ever, we might not ever obtain again in ever future life time because the state of who we are right now is that we are completely dominated and overwhelmed by the two causes of endless circle of samsara such as karma and ignorance. Without abandoning and eradicating them, one will have to ever experience the suffering of cyclic existence or samsara.

Also ***if I don't take the advantage right now***, there is no guarantee that we might ever take the advantage of Eight Leisure and Ten Endowments tomorrow, or maybe later moment, or one minute after, or ten years later. The reason is that the time of departure of this very life is uncertain. Death is certain but the time of death is uncertain. Even through the example up to today, including Shakyamuni Buddha, the Fortunate Buddhas of the past, our great enlightened master, Nagarjuna who live 500 over years by practicing great Long Life Deity, but today none of them alive. Shakyamuni Buddha who has obtained the indestructible vajra body, even him is not alive today. Therefore our human rebirth on what we have obtained now, it is definitely going to cease, it is definitely going to end, this mean it is definitely going to die, it is definite. But the time of ending this life is uncertain, it can be hundred years later, or 80 years later, or 20 years later, or tomorrow, or the very next moment of this moment, there is no single person or doctor can guarantee and for sure that oneself can definitely live alive up to next moment, therefore we must take the advantage of this Eight Leisure and Ten Endowments accomplishment as a precious human rebirth right now.

***How will such a perfect opportunity come about again?*** This is a big question. It is an indirect comment that there won't be such an opportunity again. Therefore how to meditate about? First of all one needs to think and meditate and look into oneself that life is very fragile, death is certain but the time of death is uncertain. At the same time the opportunity on what I had obtained is definitely all the opportunity, such as the Eight Leisure and Ten Endowments. Therefore the advantage of taking the opportunity of this precious human rebirth is to practice Dharma.

The reason is that at the time of death, none of the outer phenomena, including your family members, the holy object on the altar in front of you, the fire fence, the vajra fence, dharmapalas, dearest son, husband, father or mother, none of these related phenomena will be able to assist you or save you from not dying

and from not falling into lower realm. The only thing that can assist you, or save you, or direct the right direction, or choosing the right rebirth without suffering in intermediate state and suffering in death, and without experiencing great suffering on your own rebirth, it is your own imprint.

What is this imprint? It is the imprint on Dharma. What does it mean on imprint on Dharma? It is the mind which is in the state of subdue, the mind which totally subdue in the aspect of loving, kindness, compassion, bodhicitta and emptiness. So this mind, this imprint, this consciousness is the only thing can able to assist, guide, accompany yourself alone when you are dying, in the intermediate state, and at the time of taking rebirth to next life. Therefore I must practice Dharma because I have obtained such Eight Leisure and Ten Endowments, then you get into meditation step by step.

### **1) Freedom from being born in the hell realms**

First you meditate on the freedom from being born in hell realm. You sit on meditation posture or you can lie down on bed or sofa, and reflect on who you are? The life that you have obtained now is very fragile, it is definitely in the nature of ceasing, but the time of death is uncertain, yet I have obtained the precious human rebirth, and at the time of dying, only dharma can help, only by subduing my mind it can assist me, guide me and help me, therefore I have all the reasons, including the Eight Leisure and Ten Endowments are the reasons to encourage myself must practice Dharma.

Now think about hell being, in this moment if I have taken rebirth in hell realm, and experiencing either one of the hot hell or one of the eight cold hell, or vajra hell, or general suffering of hell which are unbearable, which are in total lack of freedom to practice Dharma, loving, kindness, compassion and bodhicitta, so you should feel that how fortunate that you have not born there yet. Now look into yourself, even though you have not born there, but if you don't actualize the meaning of this precious human rebirth by practicing Dharma and purify past negative karma, and actualize the merit and virtue causes by engaging your life, your body, speech and mind in the practice of loving, kindness, compassion, bodhicitta and emptiness, it is just a matter on time, maybe 20 years later you might born there because you have all the fruitful causes to be born in the hell.

You have committed immense negative karma from beginningless life time, you are completely overwhelm by the heaviest ignorant mind, you are completely directed into the act of three poisons, completely directing your life in creating negative karma by the force of attachment, anger and hatred. So by the result of great anger, great attachment and great ignorance, it is the fruitful cause for you to be born in the hell, so the matter is only in 20 years time, the longest matter is 100 years later, and you can guarantee yourself that you won't live longer than 100 years. If you don't purify this karma to be born in hell, you will definitely born in hell. And if you born in hell, you are completely dominated by unbearable suffering, there is not even a single moment for you to have the awaken mind or

inspiration to practice Dharma, therefore if you don't practice now, you will be the number one foolish, you will be the one who is the greatest deceiver of yourself while you obtained this precious human rebirth.

At this time one should try to generate some fear for death, try to generate some fear to be born in hell realm, generate the mind, the enthusiastic mind of rushing toward the practice. If you are not able to generate in this way, then you visualize Guru Shakyamuni Buddha above your forehead, about 4 feet away, visualize He is in live form, looking toward you, radiating various light and nectar entering toward your crown, gradually enter toward the throat chakra, then center channel, and the light and nectar touch to your subconscious mind which is the clear light mind. At the moment the light rays and nectar touch the clear light mind, instantly you should remind yourself that you are total awaken – “yes! I do really feel the help. I do see all my past negative karma which has the fruitful cause to bring me into the hell, now by the blessing of Buddha, I truly inspired to practice Dharma!”

Again here, you should recall that death is certain but the time of death is uncertain, therefore you must practice Dharma. Then you sit there and recite Guru Shakyamuni Buddha mantra: Tayatha Om Muni Muni Maha Muniye Soha. Or you can meditate on your guru or whatever Buddha you have the closest affinity, then you recite the name mantra and receive the blessing through light rays or nectar and visualizing purify the negative karma accumulated by ignorance, anger, hatred, attachment, pride etc, including the negative karma created by the 20 afflicted emotion. It is not just the negative karma of this very life, but the negative karma created in all the past life time, you feel completely purifying. Then sit there and recite until you feel satisfied and delightful that “Yes! I have definitely purified the heaviest negative karma which will bring me into the suffering of hell realm, it is completely purified!” Then you express rejoice, happiness, and supplication prayer to Guru Shakyamuni Buddha. If you are visualizing Guru Shakyamuni Buddha, and if you remember any quality of Shakyamuni Buddha, then you express here, if not, then at least you express that Shakyamuni Buddha is your ultimate supreme object of refuge, Shakyamuni Buddha save your life to be born in hell realm, so you meditate like this.

## **2) Freedom from being born as a hungry ghost**

Although you have purified the negative karma to be born in hell realm, but you still have so many negative karma left, you have negative karma which will bring you to hungry ghost realm. So first reflect the suffering of hungry ghost, then visualize yourself right now in the manner of hungry ghost which is totally torture, completely dominated by the unbearable suffering of hunger and thirst.

You are desperate for liquid because you are totally dominated by the suffering of thirst. If you don't meet liquid within 1 second, you feel like you are definitely dying. You rush and run to search water, then you see a very beautiful lake with lot of water and beautiful water fall and river, and very clean, but at the moment

you reach there, the moment you want to scoop water by your hand or put your mouth there, every single liquid turn into either thorn or iron liquid. The moment you put one single drop into your mouth, it completely burn up, or thousand of zillion of very sharp and fine needles' tips spread in ten direction corner, at the moment you put your mouth there and try to swallow, everything stuck there, how much suffering you will get? So here we have to make sure that we don't waste food and drink otherwise this karma will be born in hungry ghost realm.

You are totally torture by the suffering of hunger, at the same time you can see a lot of beautiful food. But the moment you reach there to grab the food, they all turn into thorn, needle or iron liquid. In case if you happen to find a liquid and try to swallow one drop, the moment you put inside your mouth, your tube in the throat is much much more finer than the thinnest needle, there is no hole for the liquid to go in. Because of that, through your karma to be born in hungry ghost realm, your stomach is so big, and because of no liquid, in the stomach is all heat, and it form into fire flame burning, but you still alive and have to experience the suffering. It is because you created the karma to be born in hungry ghost realm, so now imagine that you are there. This is not a fairy tale story, this is real.

If you are in hungry ghost realm, how are you going to manage? It is so unbearable. Do you think you can recite Om Mani Padme Hung at that time? I don't think so. Do you think you can put your palm together to Buddha and request to bless you to purify your suffering and karma? There is no way. All there are unbearable suffering, and it is constant suffering, there is no pause, there is no one minute that you will not suffer. The life there is to suffer for eons, so you put yourself there.

Now you reflect on yourself, at the moment you are still a human being, you have not born there yet. But look into your attitude, your account of past karma, it is completely rich, your bank is totally full of karma to be born in hungry ghost realm, especially you have created so much karma on miserliness, so much karma of not giving, so much karma of grasping our loved one and possession, including grasping on our own physical body, name, fame, color, every single form of grasping, in our every single aspect of life, all the time we are grasping. If we reflect on all the past lives time, without break for even one life, we are totally overwhelm by grasping mind, especially the self grasping mind, it is so strong and so heavy, very deep in imprint, that is the fruitful karma for us to be born in preta or hungry ghost realm. Again the matter is only 100 years, for sure it is not more than 100 years, we will die, and the next rebirth is to be born there, because we have the fruitful cause. The soonest maybe the next moment we will be born there, so therefore I must purify.

Again visualize Guru Shakyamuni Buddha in front, recite His name mantra and derive His blessing through nectar and light, enter through crown, throat and heart chakra, it hit to the subtlest mind where the imprint and karma remain, hit the karma, and it completely purified. You should feel that you are completely

purify by the blessing of Shakyamuni Buddha, then make praises and thankful prayer to Guru Shakyamuni. Then reflect yourself that you have not born in hungry ghost, you have the opportunity to really purify all those negative karma because the potential is that you have not born there yet, this is the first reason. At the same time, you have all the potential to purify your negative karma to be born in hungry ghost. Here again you purify the negative karma to be born in hell and hungry ghost, but you still have negative karma to be born in animal realm.

### **3) Freedom from being born in the animal realm**

Now you are put in the position of a form of a shark in Pacific Ocean, you visualize yourself as a biggest shark in Pacific Ocean, a huge one. In order to fill your stomach, you need to open your mouth and let thousand of thousand of small fishes go into your mouth, and the moment you closed the mouth, thousand of thousand of others' lives are at cost by this one big shark, so constantly creating this karma.

Look at this shark, can this shark remember to chant Om Mani Padme Hung? And to do purification practice? No way! Even all ten direction Buddhas surround this ocean and pray for this shark to chant Om Mani Padme Hung, there is no way, in this life there is 100% sure of no way it can do any purification practice.

At the same time, through the ignorant mind, even though there is consciousness and there is mind, but there is no inspiration to differentiate on what is good and what is bad, or what is negative karma and what is virtue karma. Therefore for this shark to eat other fish, it is a normal routine, so constantly create karma by ignorance.

Here you reflect that you have not born as the shark yet, you are still a human being. Look into yourself, your ignorance is so thick and heavy, and this ignorant mind is the fruitful cause to be born as the same as the shark, or worse than the shark and those animal, and the fishes in animal realm, then you visualize Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and do the same technique on meditation and purify negative karma of past and present, particularly negative karma on ignorance. Now I must practice Dharma because I have the freedom of being born in animal realm.

### **4) Freedom from being born as a long life god**

In case I born in god realm, even though it is a higher rebirth, but supposing you are born as long life god, this is not the Chinese long life god, we are not talking about that one, this is the long life god in god realm, all the god are in the category of long life god. Why do we call them long life god? Because their lifespan is very long, they can live for thousand of thousand of years. The next rebirth for god realm being most probably is in the hell realm, if not, in hungry ghost realm, if not, in animal realm, that is the three choices. It is depends on the heaviness on how much exhaustion on the past merit.

To be born in god realm, even though it is higher rebirth, but it is in the state of exhausting the past good karma and entire past merit. You might live there for thousand years, let say a thousand year and a week, within the thousand years, every single moment you are totally and completely overwhelm by the sense pleasure, pleasure of good sound, good taste, good sight, good vision, good feeling, and pleasure on mental satisfaction. The moment they wish to have a beautiful flower in front, the beautiful flower just ripen there. The moment you wish to have thousand of goddess perform dance for you, thousand of goddess just manifest in front of you and perform dance for you. The moment you wish to eat corn or the moment you think on corn, the unplant corn and crops are there for you. There is not even single moment of suffering on senses, every single moment is pleasure, completely numb your senses by the pleasure.

Unfortunately you will never ever remember even a single moment of Dharma, never ever remember loving, kindness, compassion, bodhicitta and emptiness. All those luxury and pleasure of the five senses in god realm are the result of past merit and past good karma which could be accumulated in numberless live times in the past. So within the period of yourself in the god realm, you will completely exhaust the good karma.

When is the time that you will see the exhaustion on good karma? One week before you take the next rebirth, one week before you depart from god realm, suddenly everything within a moment all the brightness turn into darkness; all beautiful goddess turn into mara or ghost, appear like ghost; all beautiful flower that you enjoyed are death and smelly and full of thorn; all grass get rotten and death; all beautiful waterfall, river, pond completely dry and bring filthy smell.

When you born in god realm, either is male or female, you are born in very beautiful perfect figure, even your ear and eye senses are so good, your five senses are perfect, your figure are perfect in number one. But in the one week before you depart, in that very moment, your skin start to fall, the smoothness completely turn into wrinkle, just like the old lady and old man, when you look at them it can be scarely, it is like the skin fold on one after another, that kind of look is also like a witch, isn't it? It is scarely. The things is that they obtained the smoothness of their body, that smoothness is due to past good karma, and the sign of the exhaustion of the merit of that is it completely turn into opposite of that, like skin disease start to fall in, and wrinkle rotten, then smell come. You have all the time showering the fragrant, or saffron water, but now everything become most filthy and disgusting liquid, and when you need to shower, the moment you pour, it is very filthy and dirty.

The food on whatever you eat, all are rotten and completely disgusting. Whatever you drink, it is completely disgusting. All the clothes you wear, the color and the smoothness, everything completely become opposite, all these are the sign of exhaustion on merit. So whatever obtained there in the first day or within the thousand years, you know and you can see that every single thing turn into

complete opposite and complete disgusting. These are the few examples just to give an idea. In short, everything turn into complete opposite. Then you start to see your next life, if you are in the state of the heaviest exhaustion on past good karma, then you will be born into hell, and you will start to see that you are going to be born in hot hell, you will start to see that your body is already there and experiencing the suffering. The same act that you will experience in hell is demonstrating to you, the fear and suffering that the god being has is the equal unbearable suffering as in the hell. You see? It is like that.

In Tibeatan we said, “Lha-chi poh-way dug-ngel.”

“Lha” is god;

“chi-poh-way” is the transaction from god realm to other realm;

“dug-ngel” mean suffering, this mean as suffering as equal in hell.

Even though everything is perfect but there is not even a single moment you will remember Dharma, which is the only way to restore merit and good karma, but there is not even one single moment to remember that, so it is complete exhaustion. When you fall into hell realm, there is eons of eons life times you have to experience the unbearable suffering. So you meditate yourself in that state, if you are in god realm, at the end during the transaction period, think about yourself there, it is such terrifying.

Now look into yourself that you have not born in god realm, you are still a human being, on top of that, you have precious human rebirth, you are totally qualify by the fourth leisure, the fourth qualification which is the freedom from being born in long life god. Therefore if you don't practice now, if you don't make sure by now to create the cause not to be born there, it is just a matter on time, you will be born there. If you are born there, it is the same thing.

Then again, in order to receive the blessing and make your practice stronger, sincere and whole hearted, you visualize Guru Shakyamuni Buddha in front, dissolve nectar and light, and visualize that you are purifying all negative karma in past, in particular the ignorant mind which mistaken to discriminate the temporary pleasure is suffering.

In our life, we experience temporary happiness, samsara happiness and senses pleasure all the time isn't it? When we are hungry, we eat food, then we feel good, this is temporary happiness, this is samsara happiness and senses happiness. When you go to movie, you enjoy beautiful show for your mind, eye senses, your ear, the good sound, good music, good drama for eye, and good story for your mind, then comfortable seat for your feeling in theater, these are the total fulfillment of your five senses, these suppose to be *Suffering of Change*,

but instead of reflecting on the *Suffering of Change*, we grasp it is a wonderful happiness, and must create more karma to enjoy it.

Living a life of admiring myself and others having such a wonderful karma to watch movie all the time, this is called the ignorant mind which is unable to discriminate the *Suffering of Change* as suffering, and the temporary happiness in samsara is *Suffering of Change*. I don't know how to put it in English word nicely, so you edit yourself. What I want to say is that the mind which cannot differentiate *Suffering of Change* as suffering is due to our ignorant mind, and constantly living a life in that is the fruitful cause to be born in god realm. We have accumulated such karma in infinite past lives times, therefore now I must realize that this is the fruitful karma to be born in god realm, and if I happened to be born in god realm, I just meditate on it, it is terrifying, therefore I must purify, I must live a life practicing Dharma.

But what is that Dharma? Dharma is recognizing *Suffering of Change* as suffering, recognizing samsara pleasure as suffering. By knowing that and not engaging yourself in that kind of manner, that mean all the time cultivating renunciation, the best solution is practicing renunciation. By practicing renunciation and living a life with renunciation, one will not attach to the samsara pleasure. Once you don't attach, you gain detachment, once you gain detachment, oneself eradicating creating the causes to be born in god realm. Then you do the same way of meditation, visualizing Guru Shakyamuni Buddha and purifying. After you purify the karma to be born in hell realm, ghost realm, animal realm and god realm, there are so much reason to practice Dharma because you have obtained the freedom of a founder Buddha has not appeared.

#### **5) Freedom from being born at a time when a founder Buddha has not appeared**

Even though I realize I have not born in the three unfavorable rebirths, but still I have no excuse to not practicing Dharma. First of all it is that I didn't born in unfavorable rebirth, on top of that I have obtained the freedom of not born in the time when the Buddha has not appeared because Buddha did appeared in this world therefore I cannot excuse that how to practice Dharma because the Buddha haven't appeared? So I must practice Dharma because Buddha had appeared in this world and definitely Buddha's blessing is still remain in this world, and I am so fortunate to be born in this time.

Even though I am born in the stage of five degenerated rebirth, the five degenerated time, our delusion is much more stubborn than the beings of thousand years ago, our delusion is more stubborn than the delusion in the past. Thousand years ago the human being also has delusion but their one is very easy to remove, our delusion is very tuff and stubborn. So even though we are born in the completely trapped five degenerated times, but still it is fortunate because Buddha has appeared and Buddha's blessing is still there, therefore I must practice. If your mind is not inspired by that strongly, again you visualize

Guru Shakyamuni Buddha in front, and receive the same sequence of blessing, after that inspire yourself to engage into the practice right now.

### **6) Freedom from being born in a place with no Dharma**

It is not only that, you also obtained the freedom from being born in the place with no Dharma. Even though free from unfavorable rebirth and Buddha has appeared, but in case if you took a rebirth where there is no Dharma, again you will have excuse on how to practice Dharma because you are born in the place where there is no Dharma. But as far as concern for all of us here, there is no excuse, we have born in the place where there is Dharma that we can practice freely and we have all the opportunity. You have the karmic link with Guru to receive all blessing, you have teacher for you to relate and discuss, and valuable and reliable books on Buddha's teaching, all the conditions are available, so you have born in the place where there is Dharma, and not only that, you have the freedom from being born with defective senses.

### **7) Freedom from being born with defective senses**

In case if you are born as deaf, mute or blind, even with problem on nose senses, feeling sense and mental senses, or defective senses and non-mature senses or useless senses, but now you are completely free from that. If you don't have eye faculty, many opportunity to practice Dharma will not be there. For an example, the opportunity of making beautiful flower offering to Buddha which has so much opportunity to accumulate extensive merit and extensive purification, if you don't have eye senses, you loose the chance. Now because you have eye senses, so you can choose all the beautiful objects which pleases the eye senses. You can either actualize it as real offering or through visualization you offer to the Buddhas. It is the same thing to ear, if you don't have ear senses, there are so many opportunity will be loose, so you have all the five senses in perfect. If you want, you can accumulate so much merit through the object of eye senses, ear senses, nose senses and feeling senses, that also mean entire phenomena by the force of one of your perception, they can be actualize as one of the infinite offering, and offer to Buddha and purify negative karma.

Now you might arise a question that if no eye senses, it is never mind, you can use your finger to read the letter and even go to school without eye senses, it is alright. But you have to think on the other side that you will lose so many other opportunity. Now we have obtained the entire opportunity to practice Dharma, even from the senses, even that if you are not inspire to practice Dharma, then try to do the visualization on Shakyamuni Buddha to receive blessing, and to inspire you to engage in the practice especially making use of the five senses to actualize extensive two types of merit and purification on two types of obscuration – 1) obscuration to nirvana 2) obscuration to enlightenment or omniscience mind. By using the perfect five senses as a tool to accumulate the greatest cause to enlightenment, which is the accumulation of two types of merit – 1) Merit of Method 2) Merit of Wisdom.

## **8) Freedom from holding wrong views**

It is not only that, we also have freedom from holding wrong view. Even though we have all those opportunity but if we are holding wrong view - oh my goodness! Our precious human rebirth will be completely wasted. The wrong view such as not having faith, trust or believe in past, present and future live, having a mind of not accepting, believing and convincing that there is past lives, present life and future life. Another wrong view is not accepting, not convincing yourself the karmic law of cause and effect, this is also wrong view. Or one is not convincing, not having faith in The Four Noble Truth, or The Two Truth – 1) Conventional Truth and 2) Ultimate Truth. Or one is not convincing and not having faith that one's own suffering and happiness is from the creator of one's own mind, this mean that if one believes and convinces that the creator is outside or a god, that means it is wrong view from Buddhist point of view. As not holding wrong view in Buddha dharma, one needs to convince and believe that the creator is inside which is one's own mind. Also if one is not convincing or not having faith that the Triple Gems – 1) Buddha, 2) Dharma and 3) Sangha are not the sole refuge, as a Buddhist and as teaching from Buddha Dharma, if you are not convinced and don't have the mind of believe, then you are holding wrong view. These are the few categories.

If we are in one of the category, we are holding wrong view, that's why we have to be free from that. It is very important to educate ourselves that we are not in these categories. Here all of us are 100% convinced and sure that we are in right view, we have taken refuge. But why do we take refuge? It is because we see Buddha, Dharma and Sangha is the sole refuge, so we took refuge. The first step to become Buddhist is to take refuge so you have the refuge.

And also you definitely accept karmic law of cause and effect - Do good action, good ethic, and accumulate good karma which will be happiness result; if accumulate negative karma, it will bring suffering result. We have totally convinced and have total faith. We definitely convinced and have faith in *The Four Noble Truth* that there is suffering, therefore there is cause of suffering; there is nirvana therefore there is causes of nirvana which is the Path. And because there are causes of suffering, therefore there is result of suffering; because there is a Path therefore the result of the Path is nirvana, so this is *The Four Noble Truths*.

We can see that we are total convinced and have full faith that there is past lives, present life and future life, isn't it? Although we say "yes" here, but if we check carefully, it is questionable that we are not 100% convinced about past lives, because how do we prove it? Anyway, there will be another session to do debate about past live and future life, so we will talk about it on that time. This mean that we need to study, we need to learn, we need to explore the scripture and teaching of Buddha, then we will not just convince by faith, we will be totally convinced in philosophy way, and convince by reason. So you see, we have obtained all these Eight Leisure, therefore we must practice Dharma. If not, death

is certain but the time of death is uncertain, so we must practice right now. But what do we practice? The Three Principals Aspect of the Path.

### **The Ten Endowments – Five Personal Endowments**

Here the Ten Endowments which has Five Personal Endowments such as 1) being born as a human being, 2) being born in the center of a religious country, 3) being born with a well-functioning body and mind, 4) not having committed any of the five heinous crime 5) having faith in the Dharma.

We need to know the *Five Heinous Crimes* which we also label as *Five Uninterrupted Karma*. The reason why we call them the uninterrupted karma is because once we created one of the *Five Heinous Crimes*, there is no interruption on the next rebirth between to be born in hell realm. This mean that you committed the *Five Heinous Crimes*, your next rebirth is definitely in hell realm. Even by inviting lama to do powa practice, or putting relic on your crown, or chanting prayer for 49 days, nothing will help. Other than the *Five Heinous Crimes*, even how heavy other karma you have, by putting relics on crown, or swallowing relic during the time of dying, or by doing powa practice or prayer, even if you have such heavy karma to be born in hell, but this immediate condition which is also karma will interrupt you to be born in hell in next life, rather it will pull you into the human realm or god realm, or at least into the hungry ghost realm, the best is to pull you into pure realm, if not, at least in human realm, if not, then in god realm, if not, then animal realm, if not, then hungry ghost realm, and not directly born into hell realm. This mean that the karma is interrupted.

For the *Five Heinous Crimes*, they are uninterrupted karma, which mean that once you committed these five actions, nothing can handle you, you will be directly born into hell. So what are the *Five Heinous Crimes*? 1) the karma of killing father 2) the karma of killing mother 3) the karma of killing an Arhat 4) the karma of drawing blood from Buddha and Bodhisattva with evil and harmful intention 5) splitting the community of Sangha.

As for ***the karma of drawing blood from Buddha***, if that person is bodhisattva, even if you jab once, saying that you want to do donation for somebody else but with evil thought, then you draw the blood out from bodhisattva, or if you have bad intention to cost the life of bodhisattva by drawing the blood, or weaken the body, or because he/ she is great Buddha and bodhisattva so you would like to draw one drop of blood because you have very unhealthy cell and contaminated blood which you will offer back to him/ her as an exchange, this is drawing blood from Buddha and Bodhisattva, it is heinous crime.

As for ***splitting the community of Sangha***, I had mentioned in many classes before that Sangha is not necessary have to be monk or nun community, as long as there are four Arya beings, it can be lay community also. Let say group A and group B, the rest of the people maybe ordinary being, but there are four of you

who are Arya Bodhisattva but manifested as ordinary person. Over there also the same having the rest of the people as ordinary but four people is Arya Bodhisattva, then I came in between and gossip about you two groups by saying, "Do you know that this group always hate your group? So you should make sure that whenever this group come to LDC, you people don't come. And whenever you come, I will make sure that they never come, because these people hate you." So I split these two groups, even entering to my own house, or wherever. Whenever we have puja or class, all of you used to come together, but from today onward I split into two different groups. This means that because there are four Bodhisattva there, four Arya beings there, this is the Sangha community, it is not necessary to be monks or nuns, because Arya beings are Sangha. If I spit this into two groups, then I committed the heinous crime, and the result is the uninterrupted karma to be born in hell realm, and most probably is the vajra hell which is the lowest hell.

So you see, in our community, we have to be very careful with our mouth, very careful with our intention, we cannot say these people are good and that people are not good, or this is my group and that is your group, we can't guarantee there is no Bodhisattva, if in case there is Bodhisattva, then how? Even in this small society, if we are not careful, there is high potential and high chance to create heinous crime because we really don't know who is Bodhisattva. Therefore we never ever say this group click with me, this means that we are saying these are my groups, and that people click with those people, this mean that we are already discriminating people are belong to them, then gossip about all the wrong things. The moment each party senses the creation of disliking between these two groups, it is already complete the karma, no need to become separated, even if you come together, but the heart is already separated. In Tibetan we say,

"par-rol-pey-don goh-wa"

This is the direct word stated in Vinaya, this is the moment when the karma is complete in creating the crime, we have to be so careful, it can be so dangerous. Therefore, although it is not nice to talk about election, but have to be careful, whoever you like, you just go, don't say this is no good and that is no good. Who knows that within this parliament group maybe there might have Bodhisattva? Then how? In Malaysia, maybe there are thousand of thousand of Bodhisattva exists, and thousand of thousand of Buddhas might be exist, so how? If in case Buddha and Bodhisattva exist, then maybe there are thousand of thousand of Buddhas and Bodhisattva exist in the Chinese, Indian and Malay community. This is just an example, so we have to be very careful in every aspect. This is one of the most essential point within the Vinaya rule.

Vinaya is not necessary just for monk or nun, Vinaya is the richest commentary, root text, root advice and teaching from the Buddha about the vows. In the Center, for those who has the karma to learn about bodhicitta, Mahayana Buddhism, Sutrayana and Tantrayana, I am quite sure there are Bodhisattva,

and Arya Bodhisattva, otherwise you will not meet this kind of Dharma. I am sure there are lots of Bodhisattva here, of course people will not show as Bodhisattva but just as an ordinary people and sometime show getting angry, and with lots of attachment, but maybe that is just a form of an act, but who knows maybe he/ she is already Arya Bodhisattva.

The best reason is that you don't have clairvoyant mind and omniscience mind therefore there is Bodhisattva, and how can you say that there is no Bodhisattva? If you want to say that it is definitely there is no Bodhisattva, then you have to convince yourself that you are somebody that possess if possible omniscience mind, if not at least clairvoyant mind. There is a saying,

“kang-sa gyi kang-sa-la tsoe-sung-war mi-jia-de nyam-par gyur-dar-rey”

Here 'kang-sa' means a 'being',

another 'kang-sa' means another 'being';

'tsoe-sung-war mi-jia-de' means 'cannot judge';

'nyam-par gyur-dar-rey' means 'will be a total failure'.

If you happened to judge, you will be failed. Because as an ordinary being, we will most probably judge other through either the projection of our illusion or superstitious mind, or the worse is to judge through our delusion, and then we will be fail, but fail to where? Fail to lower realm. This is a very famous quote. During the philosophy debate, sometime we say 'you don't have good answer, you are very bad, and this and that.', then straight away they can say, 'what about kang-sa gyi kang-sa la tsoe-sung-war mi-jia-de nyam-par gyur-dar-rey?'

So the *Five Heinous Crimes* is very dangerous, even our guru cannot save us at the time of death, even our guru is in front of us trying to do powa, it can't save us, we have to go in to hell realm.

Also there are two quotes from the Buddha's own words, one quote stated that there is not even a single karma cannot be purified by applying the *Four Opponent Power*. This mean that by applying *Four Opponent Power*, even the *Five Heinous Crimes* can be purified. But there is another quote saying that except *Five Heinous Crimes*, the rest by applying *Four Opponent Power* can be purified. Both are Buddha's words, and you need to merge them together. So the answer is a very flexible and nice answer, which is in the middle of both, and both are correct. How?

By applying the *Four Opponent Power*, all karma can be purified in the manner of purifying the duration, shrinking the duration of pain, and subside the suffering of pain. Let say you have accumulated *Five Heinous Crimes* and you are sure to be

born in hell realm, and your karma is to experience there for 1000 eons, so now you know that you have committed the crime, and now you do the *Four Opponent Power* purification, you will definitely born in the hell realm, but instead of 1000 eons, maybe you will stay there for 1 day, so the duration is shrunk, and you definitely have to experience the vajra hell, but instead of experiencing for thousand eons, you will experience for one day only. So the quote is saying that it is not just heinous crime, all definite karma have to experience the result, that's why in Buddha's teaching, there is a word called definite karma.

What does it mean by definite karma? It is definite in experiencing the result. If you create any form of negative karma, you have to experience the negative result, it is definite. But how about applying the *Four Opponent Power*? How about the other quote saying that it can be purified everything by applying *Four Opponent Power*? Here the meaning of the quote is that by applying *Four Opponent Power*, it will shrink the duration and subside the pain, but definitely have to experience the result.

If it is indefinite karma, by applying the *Four Opponent Power*, you can purify without experience the result, this is what is called as indefinite karma.

So the above are the Five Personal Endowments. Now there are Five Circumstances Endowments. It is not just the personal endowments are there, even the circumstances endowments are necessary for us to practice Dharma.

### **Five Circumstantial Endowments**

So here 6) Being born in the fortunate period when a Buddha has appeared, which we have now the Shakyamuni Buddha's teaching period, and we are born in this same world where Shakyamuni Buddha was born. 7) Being born in the fortunate period when a Buddha has taught the Dharma. There are certain Buddha appeared but they don't teach Dharma, or certain Buddha appeared but they don't teach all aspect of Dharma, there are many different Buddhas. In our time, we are so fortunate that we have the Buddha who taught complete teaching on Sutrayana and Tantrayana. All Sutra and Tantra, everything the Buddha has taught.

In early Buddha time, or in future many Buddha times, most of the time they only teach Sutra, but not Tantra. Up to today, Shakyamuni Buddha is number 4 Buddha only among the Thousand Buddhas. There are Thousand Fortunate Buddhas within this era before this world distinguish, so Shakyamuni Buddha is number 4 Buddha, and Lama Tzong Khapa is one of the Thousand Fortunate Buddha.

The number four Shakyamuni Buddha taught the complete set of teaching – Sutra and Tantra. When Lama Tzong Khapa comes to this world to turn the Wheel of Dharma, Lama Tzong Khapa will also teach both Sutra and Tantra. This is almost saying that there is only 2 opportunity to even received and

actualized the complete set of Buddha's teaching. During other Buddha's time, there is only Sutra teaching, therefore we are so fortunate! So the Buddha has taught the complete set of teaching, at the same time we are here to meet the complete set of teaching.

Some people just appreciate Hinayana teaching and totally neglect and avoid Mahayana teaching, some practitioner even criticize Mahayana teaching. There is a criticism that Mahayana teaching is like a flower in space. In the space there is no flower, flower doesn't born in space, this mean that Mahayana teaching is just like bla bla, there is no such teaching, there is such criticism. In fact Mahayana teaching is Buddha's teaching. You know why? Because Buddha taught the Heart Sutra which is Mahayana teaching at Vulture Peak.

Tantrayana, they said is Lamaism, it is not Buddhism, it is Tibetan Lama practice, nothing to do with Buddha Dharma. Buddha Dharma should come from India, taught by Buddha Shakyamuni and preserved by the Indian Pandit like Nagarjuna, Lama Atisha etc., and this Tantra is from Tibet, so there is such criticism! But Tantra is from India, it is taught by the Buddha. Where? It is at Amaravati. Buddha had taught the Kalachakra Tantra. And there were well practitioner appeared during the Buddha's time, but only in the later part, they have to practice hiddenly because the Hinayana practice was well flourished, and the community of Mahayana and Tantrayana practitioner were very limit. And because of practitioner human being's problem and politic in criticizing each other, so they have to hide, and in the end it is almost like they had disappeared. Another prove is that Nagarjuna is one of the stunning Indian scholar, who is also called as second Buddha, who practice all teaching of Tantra, especially he is a great practitioner on Guyasamaja, and Lama Atisha for sure too. So it is not Lamaism, it is Buddhism, and in our time, we have receive all set of teaching.

We have faith in Sutra, and many of you have went through the practice of Hinayana earlier, in Tibetan we say 'tog-pa ngon-sum', but we don't have to explain here. Anyway, you have enter into the Hinayana practice, you went to some Theravadan temple in earlier time, then you actualized all knowledge in Theravadan teaching. And because you have the knowledge, you see, you know, and you want to be upgraded, and you see the value of Mahayana teaching. So you take Hinayana teaching as foundation, as preliminary, because without that, Mahayana teaching has no value, so now you want to upgrade yourself, you engage into Bodhisattva practice, then you practice Six Perfection, Great Compassion, Bodhicitta, and after practice all these, you are inspired.

When you practice Hinayana, you realized that just for your own liberation, it is not enough, there are so many other beings are suffering, and you can see that every living beings is related to you, so you have the full responsibility to liberate them, so you better practice Bodhicitta, then you get into Bodhisattvayana practice. But without understanding on the *Four Noble Truths*, which is the common Hinayana practice, you will not be matured to learn the Bodhisattvayana

practice. So now you see you are mature by practicing *Four Noble Truth* which is the common Hinayana practice, from here you upgrade to Bodhisattvayana practice and engage into the Six Perfection.

Now you see that if you practice Hinayana practice and Bodhisattva practice, but the duration for your enlightenment is three countless eons time, this is so long and too much! If you delay for three countless eons time, how about your karmic link mother sentient being, there are numberless of them waiting for your enlightenment, they will be suffering for three countless eons time, therefore you must find a way to achieve enlightenment in this very lifetime. There is Buddha taught on Tantra which talk about Deity Yoga, Causal Enlightenment and Resultant Enlightenment, Four Kayas, so now you are inspired to practice Tantrayana practice. Then you get into Tantrayana practice, but even to practice that for three years or the duration of one whole life, let say 80 years, you also feel is too long, you want to practice and achieve enlightenment right now, so you engage into three years great retreat. But even for three years great retreat also too long, you want to achieve in this very cushion, then you meditate on the union of great bliss and emptiness, then you become Buddha. So all of us have this potential and we have achieved this opportunity.

8) Being born in the fortunate period when Dharma exists and flourishes. It is definitely that Dharma is exists now and is flourishing, and is overwhelming, especially the complete teaching which preserve in Tibet. We say in India, Thailand, Sri Lanka and Burma, the Hinayana teaching is so flourish and overwhelm; then in Mongolia, earlier time in Japan, Korea, Tantra was flourished there; in China the Mahayana teaching is so flourished. Later the great Tibetan masters grabbed all different scatter teaching together and form the practice which can practice within one single person, which is using as one single tool for enlightenment, that's why today time people see the value in Tibetan Buddhism which is very complete, relevant and is the path for every single individual's enlightenment. And today it is flourishing in Malaysia, Europe and America, everywhere this Tibetan Buddhism is booming up so fast, so we are in such kind of environment and circumstances.

9) Being born in the fortunate period when we are able to meet with pure followers of Buddha's teachings. Pure followers can refer to meeting with pure, qualified, realized Guru, and Dharma brothers and sisters who inspire to accomplish the realization on practices.

10) Being born in the fortunate period when practitioners can enjoy kind support to each other with the feeling of kind and compassion. All Dharma brothers and sisters knowing the important of enlightenment, because we practice Bodhisattvayana practice, we should inspire each other with the thought or feeling of kind and compassion - "I have so much compassion to you, and kind feeling toward you, all the time what I want on you is to please practice, live a life with practicing, please take the meaning of your life, please don't waste your life,

please don't go to pop, drink or smoke, and wasting time in watching TV, please come to learn, to study and to meditate." Like that, with kind and compassionate thought, you can call each other to find out,

"Are you coming to class or not? Are you coming to meditation or not?"

"Oh no... today I have a dinner party."

"What about dinner party? You can have party any time a week, but having class is only 1 or 2 times a week, so come for class, must come to leave an imprint."

Having very kind and compassionate manner to inspire you, helping you to courage you to come and leave an imprint on Dharma.

"Oh today traffic is very bad, normally Saturday traffic is very bad, at the same time very heavy rain, so I don't feel like going."

"No, no... there are so good karma, don't waste the opportunity, death is certain but the time of death is uncertain, so better come and take the opportunity."

So with kind and compassion to inspire each other, some people might say want to go for holiday, you can tell them to go for holiday on another time. So we must inspire each other with kind and compassionate feeling. If somebody say,

"If I go to class, I don't understand". Then you can reply that,

"No... the understanding is not the main point. The main point is leaving an imprint of your faith and conviction. What faith and conviction? The faith and conviction on just go to listen to Dharma, this is enough. When you are there, whether you understand or not, just having your faith, it is enough. Even if you totally not understand, it is also enough. As long as you have faith in Dharma, you are inspired by Dharma that's why you go there, otherwise you will not go, that's why the faith is good enough. So you should go."

"No.. no... no... I don't understand, I think better not...."

Then you should asked a question, "If you stay at home, what are you going to do? Cooking? Watching TV? Or go to massage? There are 24 hours but the class is only 1 hour, and also once a week, so do you think is too much for you? I don't think so, so you better come" Even that if he/ she cannot listen, then "After class, I will bring you for good dinner." Then he/ she will say "Ok.". Even this is a kind of compassion, or you can say,

"Next day I will sponsor massage for you. I will pay for your two hours fare of massage." All these are feeling of kind and compassion.

When you go back to home if you summarize yourself and put the above Eight Leisures and Ten Endowments into your mind in every day to day life, you think about it, you will feel inspired to practice, that's why it is very powerful tool to inspire us to practice. If this cannot inspire, then we must meditate on Death and Impermanence, strictly on Death and Impermanence, then we will be awake and rush to practice. But first try not to use that tool, better use this one the very pleasant tool first.

Many westerners in Kopan when we do course, most of the time when they study meditation on Death and Impermanence, they try to skip because they feel scary and too much! They already have a lot of tension, come all the way to Nepal, and again you talk about Death and Impermanence, they don't want any more, because it is very frightening.

For Dharma, it has to be frightening, but frighten in the sense that it is not like you are totally brought into suffering but to inspire to secure yourself, that's the whole purpose.

### **Question & Answer**

**Question:** *On the Eight Leisures, Geshe la explained that every time we meditate on one leisure and one visualization, can we not do all at once?"*

**Geshe la:** Can... can... definitely can. You can first do whole thing, then in the end you do the Shakyamuni Buddha visualization. But if you have time and wish, it was just a recommendation to do one by one. Because sometime it is more effective if you can specify certain karma. Even today if you want to purify some negative karma, and if you remember the negative karma, and do the purification with remembering the negative karma, it is more effective. But if you don't, then you can do in overall.

**Question:** *Just now you mention there are Buddhas and Bodhisattvas among us, I was wonder why don't they stay up there in pure land?*

**Geshe la:** I don't have clairvoyant to see the pure land, the real thing is right in front, the real challenge is in front of us. If there is pure land, pure land should be within us; if there is Buddha, Buddha should be within us; if there is Bodhisattva, Bodhisattva should be within us!

If we cannot challenge to whom we face, most of our practice become bit bla bla. Our mind very easy to fly because there is no challenge. Because Buddha don't directly come to us and take all offering, that's why we say we offer everything. I offer all my money, all my jewel, including my house and my car, I offer to

Buddha. But in your subconscious mind, what are you thinking? Because the car and money are still with me, that's why I dare to offer. You think about it.

Now if I visualize you as Buddha and offer, and if you come and really take my car, if I can able to practice, that is the true practice!

At the moment we are ordinary being, we are building up the strength, that's why we are practicing, making our mind stronger, but the main thing is to face the being in front of us.

For generosity, you must start with the being in front of you, you cannot say you will make sure to make generosity in Africa, but in front of you, people are suffering and you cannot do anything, this is more likely an illusion. First of all, the air ticket and visa are difficult, so if you go there you will get scared on this and that, also their food, and most probably you might not go, that's why you say 'if I go, I will do this and that', but it doesn't really happened. If you can do certain percentage in front of you, then you can talk about Africa, and you might be able to go there.

So pure land is here, it is within the being. Why? For me, I am not enlightened, it is definite, 100% sure and 1000% guarantee, I am ordinary in everything, every single thing make my mind up and down and with all sort of judgement, like a boiling water. But if you are enlightened, every single aspect of being you see are so beautiful and so compassionate. Even they scream at you, you see them as Buddha, scolding at you, also is Buddha enlightened being. You see the Buddha in them because you only see the perfection in them, and because I am ordinary that's why I only see the imperfect in them. Maybe she is serious, but her heart is very compassionate, she must be a Bodhisattva, but my own delusion and disturbance mind reflect on her and exaggerate to say that she is not happy with me. If you are enlightened, nothing can bother you, that mean this is your own pure land, there is no extra pure land some where that can be travel by rocket.

Like Milarepa, his cave is terrible, for sure there is no bed and dusty and poke and rocky. I went to Milarepa's cave, it is terrible! If you ask me to sit there for one hour, I don't want, the wind is so harsh, so cold, but Milarepa attained enlightenment there, that is his pure land. For him, it is like as smooth as silk, the wind is so wonderful, all tree are like wish fulfilling gems, everything is like pure land. But for me as ordinary being, it is so harsh, everything is harsh.

Even the Buddha said that your best practice is able to manage to see every single living being as Buddha. But how to bring this realization? Start with your Guru, especially good to start with your ordinary Guru, he maybe ordinary or maybe Buddha. Buddha Vajradhara quoted by himself that in degenerated time, the ordinary being will not have enough karma to perceive him directly, therefore he will manifest in ordinary form in Guru. Guru Vajradhara will manifest in degenerate time the ordinary form who is your Guru. So Guru Vajradhara has to

appear in ordinary form as you so that you can communicate with him, that mean the Guru have to show the aspect of having attachment, anger, hatred but without having anger inside, so that you can challenge, and show you the aspect that you can improve, while normally you are very pampered, but as time go by, you can see that you have improved, and you can refer this to your own Guru.

Ten years ago, your Guru maybe a bit funny, but now you can see the Guru is very calm, very subdue, you can see the changes. But Buddha Vajradhara said that it could be him, so it is his manifestation. That means anyone of us could be the manifestation of Buddha. So first thing is to start the practice with Guru, seeing Guru as Buddha, seeing Guru in Buddha, that's why in *Lam Rim*, one of the most crucial practice, in *Foundation of all Good Qualities*, the first paragraph is Guru Devotion.

The realization on Guru Devotion is able to see Guru in Buddha, as long as one is unable to see Guru in Buddha, that mean your Guru Devotion practice is not complete. Within the whole Lam Rim, the Stages of the Path, from the first chapter to last chapter, from the first point up to enlightenment, the most difficult and hardest practice but at the same time the most essential practice, there is only one, what is that? Guru Devotion. Even in the teaching, it is advice that even if it takes 10, 20 and 30 years or whole life to actualize the realization on Guru Devotion, you must take the time. Once you realize the realization on Guru Devotion which mean seeing your Guru as Buddha, the rest of the realization is like a moment of snap. Once you have Guru Devotion realization, once you have the mind of spontaneous seeing Guru in Buddha, then the realization on Bodhicitta, emptiness, realization on Six Perfection, realization on giving and taking, realization on Five Paths and Ten Grounds and realization on enlightenment, all just come! It is stated in the teaching, so the most crucial is Guru Devotion - Guru seeing by you as Buddha.

If you want to relate to Guru, even it takes 10, 20 or 30 years, you learned from him but you still check. Or even at the very first meeting, if you feel you have the affinity, and you feel that this is your guru, your enlightenment, then that is the moment you should always practice and see him in Buddha, inseparable from Buddha. This mean that even if Guru happened to act like a street dog, maybe one day somebody throw the Guru into the state of street dog, even in that moment, you are able to see and respect and pay homage and devote him as Buddha, that mean you have gain the realization on Guru Devotion. Once you have that, all the rest of realization is like a moment of snap, everything will naturally come.

It is the same thing as the training on bodhicitta, the six causes and one result. In order to gain bodhicitta realization, you have to train in six causes, for example, seeing all being as mother, remembering their kindness, repaying their kindness, special love, special compassion and great compassion, there are six causes, so within all of them, what is the most important? People will say either it is the great

compassion or bodhicitta. In fact, the most important is seeing every living beings as mother. As Kadampa Master said that if you wish to gain bodhicitta realization, the thing you have to focus and spend time to actualize is to see all living beings as mother, that's the point. Once you gained the spontaneous realization on seeing every single living being as mother, the rest of realization on great compassion is just a moment of snap, even bodhicitta is just in a moment of snap, everything will come.

So our challenge and practice is with our Dharma brothers and sisters, start from there, and then see them as Buddha.

**Question:** *Many of us here have more than one Guru, we may not see all Gurus as Buddhas, maybe can see only one or two....*

**Geshe la:** WRONG! That mean your Guru Devotion fail. It is said that even if Guru is thrown into the state of street dog, even the Guru is completely criticize by the whole world in the worse nasty way, but for you and for your own enlightenment, he is Buddha. It has nothing matter with male or female, sangha or lay person, poor or rich, whether has knowledge or no knowledge, for your practice, your purpose, your enlightenment, your benefit, you have to see as Buddha. But of course this is individual choice, if you don't want to see, then you delay your practice, so this is individual's choice. But if you really want, that is the best practice, that's why it is so difficult, it is not easy.

**Question:** *How do we know which is the right Guru? Does the Guru find you? Or you suddenly realize this is your Guru?*

**Geshe la:** Oh! This is very difficult question. Sometime Guru finds you, sometime you find Guru, sometime it just happened, so all three are possible. But most importantly you should go to find. The initial stage is that you regard as the ordinary teacher, because Guru is somebody that from whom you can learn. There are a lot of qualification to be a Guru, it has to be more compassionate than you, higher knowledge than you, all sort of qualification. But in short, it is somebody who can inspire you to be a better person, bring along into the Path of liberation. Even you see that but you are not convince he/ she is your Guru, then what you can do is that to regards he/ she as a respected teacher, then you learn and study from the person, then you will see the rest of quality and rest of qualification. There are ten over qualification on Guru, and you will start to see that this person is an object of your respect, is your liberator, is the one who can guide you, bringing you along to liberation, and whenever you see, you think, you hear the name, it is also inspire in your mind. One day when you are convinced, then you regards him/ her as your Guru.

It is not necessary for Guru to say that 'I accept you as disciple', it is not necessary. Your heart is the principal to regard that person as Guru, then you devote, then that is your Buddha. It doesn't matter that person is ordinary person

or enlightened being, female or male, poor or rich, but for you, is the Buddha. You devote to him/ her as Buddha, that will definitely bring you to enlightenment.

It is good to check, sometime on the first meeting, maybe you find very interesting, or introduce through your friend that this Guru is very good and very wonderful, then you commit, but rather you should learn, it is very necessary to learn. Therefore those very short time visiting Guru are very dangerous, because most of the time they do initiation, anyway there will be one subject talking about initiation, vows, oral transmission, and how do you come into conclusion on the commitment of Guru and disciple, there will be one day lecture talking about that.

Here it is a very serious matter for new student to meet with new Guru, and especially following the rumor that this Guru is very high and respected, but who know that you might not have the karmic affinity, and if you happen to commit but later on see fault and criticize, it is a huge heavy negative karma. So the best thing is that you live a life together, and best way is to learn from that person, then observe for 10 or 20 years, the moment you convinced that this is your Guru, from that day, even people say that you make a worse decision in the whole world, it cannot be destructed, this is your Buddha, then your enlightenment is 100% guarantee, this poor little Guru will be able to bring you to enlightenment, even if it is really ordinary. In fact, this is the first step, it is so important. I can see that many people criticize their Guru, they don't devote properly, and this is not healthy, and I can also say that it is not their fault, most of the time is their friend's fault, because the friends themselves is not mature, they don't know how to choose Guru, and they just throw everybody into that kind of category.

In Malaysia I didn't meet much, but in Singapore at one stage it is like a transit airport for Lamas, so when Lamas go to Taiwan, they also go through Singapore, go to Europe, also go through Singapore, go to America also go through Singapore, all the Lamas from Tibet, India, everybody transit there. Then Singapore there also request initiation, so the Lamas give, and many Lamas don't have time to explain, they are so busy. Also many lamas are bla bla lama, they are also there, they just want to collect many disciples for different purposes. So we have to be very careful, this is the root, this is the foundation of all good qualities, if this is mistaken, very dangerous. If you want to be a serious practitioner, this is very important.

Therefore I can say that Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche's center is very lucky because we try to educate, for me, I am just an ordinary person who come here to lead discussion, if I go back after 3 years and you forget me... but I hope I don't forget you, because it is like going to college, after you learn you forget about your teacher, it happened! But for this it is ok. At least there are time to educate yourself. Like Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche don't just send any monk to do puja, He didn't send me here to lead puja, He asked me to go educate people in Dharma, educate Lam Rim and Buddha's teaching, He didn't ask me to lead

puja, sleep and stay, He didn't say that. But many Center maybe somehow due to collective karma, is difficult to get teacher, even though FPMT Centers are under Rinpoche's guidance, His focus is to educate, and He select the people whom He wants to send, you can say that there is a reliable person in whom can bring about your connection with you and your Guru, but even for that, you need to observe.

Let put myself as an example, you need to observe me, my speech, if possible even my mind, my physical action, whether this person can trust or not, you observe for 1 or 2 years, even whatever I say, you don't have to make conclusion, but whatever Dharma advice I give, you have to accept. But such as like if I ask you that because Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche is my Guru so you have to be Rinpoche's disciple, so next year when Rinpoche comes, you have to be his disciple, in fact I cannot simply say like that. What I have to do is that I have to educate you on who Kyabje Lama Zopa Rinpoche is, who His Holiness the Dalai Lama is, and if you see they have the qualification and you are convinced with that, then when they come, you can devote to them, so I am kind of like a bridge.

But sometime in between, your Dharma brother or sister is too kind, they take you so fast to here and there and end up with ten Gurus when you come back. Then commented that this Guru come here for fundraising, making you headache so you give up, then another guru sitting on high throne but in fact it is not like that. All the blames come to me, then I asked how does this things happened? And the replied come that it is because of your dear friend. So what can I said? You committed the cause so you have to experience the result.

As I said, in Singapore in previous time, many people get difficult, in certain case it ends up so much disappointment and people even give up refuge, it happened. You know Buddha, Dharma, Sangha is the sole refuge, so you give your heart completely to the person but the person completely disappointed you, of course you will be ready to give up everything, it happened!

Rinpoche said that His main purpose to set up Center is to educate people in Dharma, it is for education. Even His Holiness the Dalai Lama praises Lama Zopa Rinpoche that His Center is not really fancy, like big house and big temple, it is simple but He is putting so much effort to educate. Rinpoche has to get about 200 over teachers because He has 200 over Centers. He has to go and find, and it is very difficult to find. I think this is very good.

For you people, you should feel very comfortable, I am just a discussion leader, I am not your Guru. My responsibility is that I have to make sure that I tell you the right motivation, but sometime my English problem it may come into mistake, also to have sincere heart to serve you people, and to have confident on what I say, and every single word I need to have back support and quote from Buddha, so I need to have a source for every single thing, because this is Dharma, this is

not a normal language study. And if I happen to do a mistake, your whole map will be in wrong direction. You suppose to go to Amitabha pure land, but you totally being lead to Nepal, end up with such a poor country, it is dangerous. I have a very heavy responsibility, it is terrible, it is big and huge, if one single mistake, I can spoil somebody precious human life. This Dharma is about precious human life, one single mistake can lead you to completely wasting life. And it is say that it is only once precious human life, next time there is no chance, so you see, I can be creating the heaviest negative karma especially in Dharma lecture. If giving Dharma lecture is not careful, and not educated enough, I can be creating the heaviest negative karma, spoiling other's precious human life, it is dangerous.

**Question:** *Sometime the Guru doesn't even know the disciple because there are so many disciples?*

**Geshe la:** That's why you need to practice Guru Devotion. If you practice Guru Devotion, you should see Guru as omniscience, isn't it? Omniscience mind see every single existence, for a handful of disciple, sure He can see, sure no problem, that's not our worry.

Also it doesn't matter whether Guru knows you or not, your purpose of devoting to Guru is to practice. Who practice? Not him! You have to practice! Practice what? To develop your heart. Guru is to inspire you to be more compassionate. For example, you meet the Guru two days ago and now you become much more compassionate, every day to day, step by step developing your heart, that's the whole purpose.

Today we have a lot of questions, that is very good!

*Transcript and lightly edited by Ven.Osel of Losang Dragpa Center, Malaysia on 19<sup>th</sup> March, 2008*