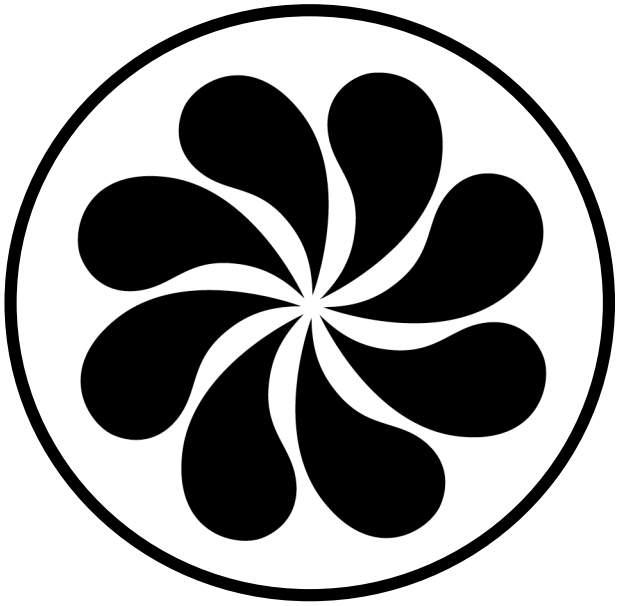

BUDDHA-NATURE

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MAHAYANA-UTTARATANTRA-SHASTRA

By Arya Maitreya
With Commentary by

DZONGSAR JAMYANG KHYENTSE RINPOCHE

BUDDHA-NATURE

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Mahayana-Uttaratantra-Shastra

By Arya Maitreya
With Commentary by

Dzongsar Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche

Given at the Centre d'Études de Chanteloube
Dordogne, France
2003-2004

Edited by Alex Trisoglio

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Maitreya

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

Arya Maitreya's Mahayana-Uttaratantra-Shastra is one of the most important teachings on Buddha-nature and enlightenment. It is revered by Buddhist masters as a very special text, one of the five great teachings given by Lord Maitreya to Asanga, and part of the third turning of the wheel of the Dharma. Within the traditional Buddhist *shedras* for monastic education, it is often taught as the final text in the curriculum, and many masters say it can be considered a bridge between the sutras and tantra. It provides an important philosophical foundation for understanding the workings of the Buddhist path, particularly for Vajrayana practitioners. We are particularly fortunate to have these teachings by Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche, rich with his usual clarity, warmth, humour and wisdom because, despite its beauty and profundity, this text is rarely taught in the West, and there are few translations.

Rinpoche gave these teachings on the Uttaratantra at the Centre d'Études de Chanteloube in Dordogne, France during the summers of 2003 and 2004, after completing a four-year teaching cycle on Chandrakirti's Madhyamakavatara. He has often emphasised the value of a grounding in the Madhyamika or 'Middle Way' philosophy of emptiness, as without this foundation beginners can easily misunderstand Buddha's teaching that all sentient beings have Buddha-nature. For example, many of us who have grown up in a Western cultural context can easily confuse Buddha-nature with ideas like God or a personal soul or essence. These teachings allow us to dispel these kinds of misunderstanding. And despite their very different presentations, both the Madhyamika and Uttaratantra are teachings on the Buddhist view of emptiness. As Rinpoche says, "You could say that when Nagarjuna explains the Prajñaparamita, he concentrates more on its 'empty' aspect ("form is emptiness" in the Heart Sutra), whereas when Maitreya explains the same thing, he concentrates more on the 'ness' aspect ("emptiness is form")." In showing us how emptiness and Buddha-nature are different ways of talking about the same thing, this text gives us the grounding we need to understand Buddha-nature.

In this way, the Uttaratantra gives us another way to understand the Four Seals that comprise the Buddhist view, which Rinpoche teaches in his book "*What Makes You Not a Buddhist*". It also offers a way to make sense of what modern physics has discovered about the magically "full" quality of "empty" space (e.g. vacuum particles and quantum optics). But like all Buddhist philosophy, it is not intended simply to provoke an academic discussion that we leave behind as we return to our everyday lives. It is taught as a path for us to attain liberation. For practitioners, the Uttaratantra clearly explains what it means to accumulate merit and purify defilements, and it offers a safety net to protect our path from falling into all-too-common eternalist or nihilist extremes. It also tackles many of the

basic questions that practitioners ask as they consider the nature of the path, questions like: What is the ultimate destination of this path? Who is this person travelling on the path? What are the defilements that are eliminated on the path? What is experience of enlightenment like? Rinpoche answers these questions and many others in this commentary on the Uttaratantra-Shastra.

Contents

For ease of study and reference, Rinpoche's commentary on the text is presented in its entirety in the first part of this book, followed by questions & answers that are grouped into thematic categories. There is also a glossary with a list of Tibetan words and phrases, and an index. The book has the following structure:

- Table of contents
- Root text & Rinpoche's commentary
- Questions and Answers
- Glossary: Tibetan and Sanskrit words & phrases
- Index

Translations

Rinpoche's commentary is presented together with the verses of the Tibetan root text and two different translations into English, respectively by Ken & Katia Holmes (first) and Rosemarie Fuchs (second, in italics). Having both translations offers the opportunity to explore contrasting interpretations, which will provide valuable insights for non-Tibetan speakers. These translations may be found in:

- "*The Changeless Nature: The Ultimate Mahayana Treatise on the Changeless Continuity of the True Nature*", translated by Ken & Katia Holmes, (Karma Drubgyud Darjay Ling, Second edition, 1985), Copyright K. & C.M.S.A. Holmes.

- "*Buddha-nature: The Mahayana Uttaratantra Shastra with Commentary*", with explanations by Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche, translated by Rosemarie Fuchs (Snow Lion Publications, Ithaca NY, 2000), Copyright Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso Rinpoche and Rosemarie Fuchs.

Tibetan terms

In these teachings, Rinpoche frequently uses Tibetan terms, not least because there is often no straightforward English equivalent. These terms are included in the main body of the text, where the first occurrence of a Tibetan term includes

an approximate English pronunciation (e.g. *draldrey*). To accommodate readers with some knowledge of Tibetan, there is a glossary listing Tibetan and Sanskrit words and phrases, including Tibetan script (*dbu can*) and Wylie transliterations. For Sanskrit terms, a modified transliteration has been used that omits the diacritical marks adopted by scholars; however the entries in the glossary provide full diacritical marks

Comments & feedback

I would very much appreciate your comments and feedback on this text, and your suggestions for how it might be improved and made more valuable. Please email me at: alex@khyentsefoundation.org

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Finally, I would like to express my deep gratitude to Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche for his teachings.

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The objective of the Foundation's Publication Fund is to make precious texts such as this one readily available to all those who wish to study the Buddhadharma. The Publication Fund also supports both text-preservation efforts and translation initiatives that aim to improve translation standards of Buddhist texts.

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In addition to this publication, Khyentse Foundation has published "Introduction to the Middle Way: Chandrakirti's Madhyamakavatara with Commentary by Dzongsar Jamyang Khyentse Rinpoche" (2003), and "Longchen Nyingtik Practice Manual: Advice on How to Practice" (2004).

Digital versions of these texts are available free of charge to those who send a formal request to publications@khyentsefoundation.org. Please include your name, the city and country you live in, and, for the Ngöndro commentary, the name of the lama from whom you received transmission to do the practice.

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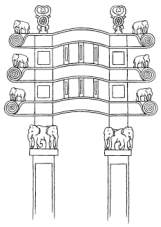

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Each independent SI organization strives to fulfil Rinpoche's intentions in a unique way. SI International, in Canada, produces and distributes Rinpoche's recorded teachings, maintains written archives of his talks, and provides support for Sea to Sky Retreat Centre. SI Southern Door supports Vajradhara Gonpa, publishes the Gentle Voice newsletter, and is affiliated with Buddha Down Under, a newly formed Buddhist group in New Zealand. SI Taipei coordinates Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche's teachings in Taiwan and maintains a practice centre for the sangha. SI India operates Deer Park Institute, a non-monastic college following the Nalanda University tradition, designed to re-create the spirit of classical Indian wisdom studies.

The SI organizations are bound together by their intent to actively participate in the study and practice of the Buddhadharma to achieve enlightenment. This was Siddhartha's intent. The achievement of this aim will increase the awareness and understanding of Buddhist principles, surpassing the limits of cultures and traditions.

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INTRODUCTION AND PRELIMINARIES

Day 1 – Introduction

Motivation and attitude: compassion and renunciation

Nagarjuna and Maitreya: the two traditions of commentary on wisdom and the Prajñaparamita

Since you are listening to a Mahayana shastra or commentary, it is important that you should also do so with the Mahayana motivation and attitude, which is principally having compassion towards all sentient beings and revulsion towards samsara. And to generate some kind of revulsion towards samsara, you must realise the value of Buddha and his wisdom, and the futility of samsaric life. This is a very important text for Mahayana students, a very important commentary on the Prajñaparamita. Some of us have heard teachings on the Madhyamika in the past, which come from Nagarjuna's tradition. By contrast, this text comes from Maitreya's tradition. Both commentators are elucidating wisdom or prajña in their commentaries – primordial or transcendental wisdom. And if you are a serious Buddhist student, you will know that wisdom is the most important thing in Buddhism, especially in the Mahayana.

In Buddhism, wisdom is the foundation for all action

In his prayers, Maitreya says that even when we talk about things like ethics and morality, they should always be accompanied by or based on wisdom. We often hear such things in Mahayana texts. For instance, in the ninth chapter of his Bodhicharyavatara, Shantideva writes that the Buddha teaches all the branches of Bodhisattva activity such as generosity and the rest for wisdom. Similarly, in Chandrakirti's Madhyamakavatara, we read that a so-called act of generosity can only be called the perfection of generosity when is based on wisdom. Therefore actions such as generosity, discipline and morality are all secondary in Buddhism. This is a very important statement. It's because of this that you will not find any Buddhist text saying that as a Buddhist your practice is that you must visit Bodh Gaya once during your lifetime. Likewise, Buddhists don't single out a particular kind of meat like chicken that you cannot eat as a Buddhist. You won't find anything like that. We don't say that a Buddhist man can have four wives. There's no Buddhist marriage ceremony or divorce ceremony. There may be some auspicious verses and some mantras here and there, but you won't find anything like this as an ultimate teaching in the sutras. Having said this, we're not denying or negating morality and so forth. In fact, the Buddha is the embodiment of the morally perfect being. But moral actions must always be based on wisdom. So, what exactly is this important wisdom that we are talking about here? We can study it intellectually like this to a certain extent, but true recognition or achievement of this wisdom only comes as a result of the accumulation of merit and purification of defilements.

For Nagarjuna, wisdom is the state beyond all extremes, i.e. emptiness

If we seek to explain it with a greater emphasis on Nagarjuna's tradition, which is quite popular, then wisdom is referred to as a kind of 'mind'. Maybe I shouldn't use the word 'mind', but rather a state that is beyond all kinds of extremes. So

we are talking about going beyond extremes, becoming non-extremist. But this is not that easy! When we talk about going beyond extremes, we're not just talking about things like abandoning suicide bombing, for instance. According to Nagarjuna's tradition, that doesn't necessarily mean you've gone beyond extremes. According to Nagarjuna, if your mind is engrossed – when it has a strong grip or fixation (*dzinpa*) towards something as a truly existent phenomenon – then you have already become an extremist. This is why, if you study the followers of Nagarjuna's tradition like Chandrakirti and Aryadeva, you will hear a lot of information about emptiness. Let's save Maitreya for later! Since there are many Nyingmapas present, I should behave here – I should be careful! Anyway, this year all you Nyingmapas should be quite well disposed towards me, as I'm going to use Mipham Rinpoche's commentary, and also hopefully, if I have the capacity to understand and explain it to you, I will extract some of the teachings from the commentary, the *sengey naro* or "Lion's Roar", so I guess you will be hearing a lot of Shentongpa stuff!

For Garab Dorje, wisdom is a mind or cognizer without object, a completely unfabricated mind

Garab Dorje's 'unfabricated mind' and Nagarjuna's 'emptiness' are referring to the same thing

Now what is wisdom according to Garab Dorje? I don't know much about this – just a little. It's mostly guesswork. All these masters are talking about the same thing, but they talk about it in a different way. Their way or style of approaching the subject is different. Garab Dorje identifies wisdom as the mind without an object. Again, it's not really the 'mind', but a state – 'cognition', or we could say a 'cognizer' without an object. Anyway, for now, for the sake of communication, we can call it the mind at its height of absolute normality, a mind that is completely unfabricated. I guess that's the way that Garab Dorje points it out. And he's referring to the same thing as Nagarjuna. But this 'normality' – now that's a very big word! Throughout the mahasandhi teachings, there are endless teachings on this word. It is one of the most important words. In our human world, we actually don't have a good definition of 'normality'. We are usually talking about abnormality slightly reduced. I'm just telling you about all these different approaches in order to beautify Lord Maitreya's approach.

A path seems to imply a goal, but in Mahayana, there is no goal

The path is like peeling layers of skins, and finding there is no seed inside

We need liberation from all the skins that bind us, but we love these skins!

How the 16-year old is liberated from the child's skin of 'sandcastle', etc.

So let's go back to emptiness now. Usually in our human mind, as soon as we talk about a path, it's inevitable that we have to think about its finishing line – some kind of result or goal. And now we are talking about Buddhism, so naturally we are talking about a path. But you know, in the Mahayana there is no goal. In the Prajñaparamita-sutra for instance, we hear that "Form is emptiness, emptiness is form. No eyes, no nose…" and all that. This is common to the Mahayana teachings. There's nothing to obtain. And there's no "no nothing" to obtain. The Mahayana path is more like peeling layers of skin and then finally finding that there is no seed inside. But this isn't a disappointment at all. You know why? It's because these layers of skins are what bind us. We have to obtain liberation from the skins! But this is difficult because we love our skins! When we are children, a sandcastle is very important to us. Then when we're about 16, a skateboard is very important, and by then the sandcastle is a rotten skin. There is no need for any teachings on meditation, as the sandcastle has

The path is an inner skin that we use to peel away outer skins

already been renounced automatically! Then when we're in our 30s and 40s, money, cars and relationships replace the skateboard. And then when we're about 60, these things are replaced by tablecloths and saltcellars! These are all layers of skins. And more importantly, even the path is a skin. The paths that we practice are all layers of skin that we use to help us in the process of peeling the other skins. The inner skin helps us to think about the outer skin and motivates us to peel it. But ultimately in the Mahayana path, you have to be free from all systems, all skins.

When all skins are peeled, we obtain the 'result of absence or elimination' (*draldrey*). This is the subject of this text

So, now we must ask what happens when all the skins have been peeled off. What is left? Are we talking about a total negation like the exhaustion of a fire or the evaporation of moisture? Is it something like that? No, we're talking about a 'result of elimination' or 'result of freedom' (*draldrey*). Here we will be influenced by Kunkhyen Mipham Rinpoche, and this *draldrey* is going to be our main subject for the next two years: the 'result of freedom' or 'result of elimination'. Let me give you some really bad examples of what this means, as it might help. For instance – I'll give you a really bad example – don't take it too literally. At the moment, this tent is filled with all of us. Then if we all go out, the tent becomes absent of us. But that absence is not a non-entity, like an evaporation of moisture or the exhaustion of fire. It has a quality (*yönten*), and because of this quality, we can come back and sit inside the tent again. This is a difficult one to understand! Let me give you another example. Imagine that your window is dirty and then you clean it. You wash the dirt, and the absence of dirt is labelled as the clean window. There's nothing else. This phenomenon that we are calling a 'clean window', the quality that is the absence of dirt (*drima dralwey yönten*) is not something that we produced by cleaning the dirt. This is a very Shentongpa way of explaining things. I don't think we should even call it a 'clean window', because the window in its original state has never been stained by the extremes of either dirt or clean. But nevertheless, the process of getting rid of the dirt can be labelled as the emergence of the clean window.

This absence is not nothingness, like the exhaustion of a fire. It has qualities (*yönten*)

When we wash a window, we label the absence of dirt as 'clean window', but this isn't something we produced by cleaning the dirt

We establish Buddha-nature as the 'quality that is the absence of defilement'. Otherwise it might end up becoming a truly existing soul or atman

Basically we're talking about Buddha-nature. We have to be really careful when establishing the idea of this Buddha-nature, otherwise it might end up becoming something like atman or a truly existing soul and so on. That's why we talk about it as a quality that is the absence of the dirt. I'm telling you to be careful because the Mahayana shastras talk about the qualities of this 'result of freedom': the ten powers, the four fearlessnesses, the 32 major marks, the 80 minor marks, and so on. If you're not careful, then you might start to think more theistically again. But all these are qualities of the absence of dirt (*drima dralwey yönten*).

In explaining emptiness, Nagarjuna emphasises the aspect of 'empty' and Maitreya emphasises the 'ness'

Let me make a very simplistic and rather bad summary. You could say that when Nagarjuna explains the Prajñaparamita, he concentrates more on its 'empty' aspect, whereas when Maitreya explains the same thing, he concentrates more on the 'ness' aspect – the 'empty' and the 'ness'. And this 'ness' is what we are

going to talk about for two years. It's very important, because if we miss out this 'ness' bit, we cannot establish the enlightened qualities such as the 32 major marks, 80 minor marks and so on. Now I think that I am really talking like a Shentongpa!

Thus we understand that the Buddha's enlightened qualities are uncompounded without falling into the theistic extreme

If you are able to understand this a little, then you will not be shocked when you hear that the enlightened qualities (*sangyey gyi yönten*) are uncompounded, whereas if you don't know that the qualities are the result of freedom (*drima dralwey yönten*), then it becomes very theistic when you hear that the Buddha's qualities are uncompounded (*dumajey*). When we talk about something being 'compounded', then we're talking about extremes. Nagarjuna and Chandrakirti talk about going beyond extremes, such as the four extremes, and they use terms like 'free from extremes or fabrications' (*trödral*). Maitreya uses words like 'uncompounded' (*dumajey*). For me, they have the same meaning.

Buddha-nature is the main subject of this text

It might seem simpler than emptiness, but it's just as easily misunderstood

Buddha-nature is the main subject of this text. Basically, if you want to know about Buddha-nature, then this is the text that you have to study. I get the sense that people think that emptiness is difficult to understand, but they somehow overlook Buddha-nature, thinking that it's easier to understand. But it's easily misunderstood, just as emptiness is easily misunderstood. People who have a nihilist habit – right wingers, those who wear berets, chew cigars and enthusiastically adopt an attitude that's impossible to fit into society, those who consider themselves intellectuals – might pretend that they love Nagarjuna and his words. But they can completely miss the point and become useless. And then there are people who have eternalist habitual patterns – leftists, who have lots of wind chimes in their homes, who try all kinds of essential oils, avoid wearing fur, and look down on smokers – they might pretend that they understand Maitreya. Buddha-nature is very good for touchy-feely people like Californians! But they can completely miss the point of Buddha-nature.

In the Madhyamika, emptiness is also the result of elimination, of notions of self in that case. But it is not like the exhaustion of fire or evaporation of water

'Elimination' implies having something to eliminate, but the big elimination is realising that there is nothing to eliminate

Let's return to *draldrey*, where *dral* means freedom, absence, liberation or elimination – 'elimination' is a good word – and *dreybu* is the effect or the result. In the Madhyamika you also hear a lot about *dral* or elimination, because we have to deconstruct the aggregates and the notion of self. But this elimination is not like an exhaustion of fire or evaporation of moisture or water. It's like the clean window that we were talking about earlier. This effect of eliminating the extremes (*dreybu*) will be taught extensively in the Uttaratantra. But there's one thing we have to understand. When we talk about the result of elimination (*draldrey*), then automatically our human mind thinks we are talking about something that comes afterwards – first there is elimination and then its effect, so to speak. But here we are not talking about that at all, because then again we would fall into the eternalist or theistic extreme. This is difficult. When we talk about 'elimination', we are talking about having something to eliminate. But in the Prajñaparamita, we understand that there's nothing to eliminate, and that is the big elimination. The result of that elimination isn't obtained later, as it's

The result of elimination is always there, so it is called continuum or *gyü*

always there. This is why it's called *gyü*, as in *gyü lama*, where *gyü* means 'continuum' or tantra in Sanskrit. That's the best word the translators have been able to come up with.

This quality continues during ground, path and result. The window continues, free from the concepts of 'dirt' and 'freedom from dirt'

This quality continues during the ground, during the path, and during the result. The window continues – before the dirt, while the dirt is being washed away, and after the cleaning is complete. The window continues, and it has always been free from the concept of 'dirt' and therefore also from the concept of 'freedom from dirt'. For those of you who are hearing the Mahayana teachings for the first time, you may already be getting a little frustrated! But if you want to continue, don't worry too much because the text will explain all these ideas gradually. Today I'm just giving you everything as an introduction.

The Mahayana result is 'beyond aspiration'. It is there already, so there is no need to aspire for it

In the Mahayana, one of the big slogans is that the result is beyond aspiration (*möpa*). You cannot aspire for it. You cannot wish or pray for the result. And this is because the result of elimination (*draldrey*) continues all the time. It's there already, so there's no need to aspire for it. The Mahayana sutras also have quotations like "whether the Buddhas come or not, the true nature of phenomena never changes". It has always been like that. It's not as though things have only been emptiness since Siddhartha said "everything is emptiness" in Varanasi after years of meditation! It's not like that!

ཨཱཿ། ཐེག་པར་སྐད་དུ། མ་হ་ཡ་ན་ཨུ་ཏ་ར་ཏན্ཏ্ར་ཤཱསྟ্ར།
བོད་སྐད་དུ། ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོ་རྒྱུད་བླ་མའི་བསྟན་བཅོས། །
སངས་རྒྱས་དང་བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་དཔའ་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ་ཕྱག་འཚལ་ལོ། །

In Sanskrit, *mahāyanottaratantrashastra,*
In Tibetan, *tekpa chenpo gyü lamey ten chö.*
Homage to all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

The title: "The Mahayana commentary on the most sublime continuum"

So, in the Indian language this is referred to as Mahayana-uttara-tantra-shastra, and in Tibetan, *tekpa chenpo gyü lamey ten chö*. Mahayana is the great vehicle, 'uttara' means sublime, 'tantra' means continuum and 'shastra' means commentary. There are many different kinds of continuum, but this is the most sublime continuum. The problem is that when we talk about a continuum, our ordinary minds end up thinking that it is something permanent. And it certainly doesn't help when Maitreya tells us that it is uncompounded, because then we really think that this continuum is something permanent! There's a lot of discussion about the definition of 'continuum', which we'll talk about in the future, maybe next year.

This is a Mahayana text because it has a greater view, method and action

Why does this text belong to the Mahayana, the great vehicle? Because it has a greater view. The view is not only the selflessness of the person. It is the selflessness of both the person and phenomena. The action is not only renouncing samsara but renouncing both samsara and nirvana and also helping

sentient beings. And the method is not limited to mere discipline and morality and so forth, but it's infinite. The activity is not only to liberate oneself but aimed to liberate all sentient beings.

The translator's homage indicates that this text belongs to the sutras

Before the text begins we have the translator's homage, which is a prostration to the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas, indicating that this text belongs to the sutras (*dodey*). Among the three baskets, this is the basket that emphasises meditation.

1 སངས་རྒྱས་ཆོས་ཚོགས་འཕགས་དང་བྱང་ཆུབ་དང་། །
ཡོན་ཏན་སངས་རྒྱས་ཕྲིན་ལས་ཐ་མ་སྟེ། །
བསྟན་བཅོས་ཀུན་གྱི་ལུས་ནི་མདོར་བསྡུ་ན། །
རྡོ་རྗེ་ཡི་ནི་གནས་བདུན་འདི་དག་གོ ། །

The entire body of this treatise can be condensed into the following seven vajra points: Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, Buddha-nature, enlightenment, qualities and activity.

If condensed, the body of the entire commentary [consists of] the following seven vajra points: Buddha, Dharma, the Assembly, the element, enlightenment, qualities and then Buddha activity.

General summary – the text contains seven topics, the seven vajra points

Now we begin the actual text. First there is a general summary to give us a general idea of the subject, so that we will not get confused with the different topics later on. There are seven subjects that will be taught in this text, the seven vajra points or the seven indestructible points (*dorjey nedün*). These are:

1. Buddha

2. Dharma

3. Sangha

4. *Kham* (the element)

1. Buddha

2. Dharma

3. Sangha

4. *Kham*. How should we translate this word? We were talking about *rig* and *kham* earlier. Perhaps the best word is 'family', like the different Buddha families. The word *rig* is a little bit like 'race', 'type' or 'species', a little like the different kinds of animals like mammals, marsupials, fish, insects and so on. But by the way, if it is a species, you have to know that it's definitely not an endangered species! Everybody has it! Tantric people prefer to use the word 'element' as the translation of *kham*, as it really works very well in tantric practice.

   This idea of *kham* or 'element' is quite a big one. Perhaps this isn't the right time to talk about the five Buddha families – the Buddha family, *padma* family, *vajra* family, *ratna* family and *karma* family – as we're not going to talk about tantra. But recently my teacher Khenpo Appey Rinpoche said something quite important to me. He said that only the Buddha is considered the supreme

The Buddha is considered the supreme teacher, as all others can only relate to people through indirect perception, which is all guesswork and generalisation

teacher, and there is a good reason. Every single sentient being has a slightly different kind of *kham* or element, although of course all are based on one main *kham*, which is the tathagatagarbha (*dewar shekpey nyingpo*). And as long as we have even the slightest defilement, then we can only relate to people with guesswork, with indirect perception. And as soon as we talk, we can only ever generalise. Our entire system of communication is only generalisation. Only the Buddha is able to communicate without generalisation, and therefore only the Buddha can teach someone without any guesswork.

All concepts, including all Buddhist teachings like the 9 yanas and 5 buddha families are generalisations, but they are profound ones!

So all these concepts like 3 yanas, 9 yanas, 5 emotions, 5 buddha families – they're actually all generalisations. There may be millions of buddha families, but we never know. We cannot comprehend. So for all of us who are not yet tenth bhumi Bodhisattvas, what are we doing now when we teach or when we practice? Are we only ever guessing? Yes. But we can guess well, by making good generalisations. So when we talk about these 5 emotions and 5 Buddha families – all these are like very profound guesses! Because after all, there is only one *kham*, one element or one family, and that is the Buddha-nature. For instance, if you are inviting some French guests for dinner, and if you serve a little red wine and some smelly cheese, then nothing can go drastically wrong. You will be all right – a good host! And if you have Americans as your guests, then you need food in large quantities. If there are two American guests, then if you have at least 40 plates and a few things to waste, then you will be safe – you'll be OK! So anyway, I guess you now have some kind of strange or general idea of what this *kham* is about. It's a big subject that we will talk about a lot.

5. Enlightenment

5. The fifth subject is enlightenment, which is when this *kham*, this *rig* or family, is absent of defilement.

6. Quality

6. Sixth is the quality of that enlightenment.

7. Activity

7. And finally the Buddha activity.

These are called 'vajra' points as they cannot be understood through ordinary means, only by self-awareness wisdom

These are the seven vajra points that will be discussed in this text. Why are they called 'vajra' points? Because ultimately they cannot be understood by ordinary hearing and contemplation and must be realised by self-awareness wisdom (*so so rang rigpey yeshey*).

2 འདི་དག་རང་མཚན་ཉིད་ཀྱི་རྟེས་འཇུག་བ། །
གོ་རིམས་ཇི་བཞིན་གཟུངས་ཀྱི་རྒྱལ་པོའི་མདོར། །
གླེང་གཞི་ལས་ནི་གནས་གསུམ་རིག་བྱ་སྟེ། །
བཞི་ནི་བློ་ལྡན་རྒྱལ་ཆོས་དབྱེ་བ་ལས། །

These are in a natural order, and one should know the first three as deriving from the introductory and the latter four from the "Wise and Victors' Qualities" chapters of the *Dharanishvararajasutra*.

In the above order, which presents them in a logical sequence, these [vajra points] should be known to be derived from the Sutra Requested by King Dharanishvara. The [first] three stem from its introductory chapter and the [latter] four from [its chapters] on the properties of those who possess understanding and the Victorious One.

The seven vajra points are taught in the Dharanishvararaja Sutra

The seven vajra points are not something made up by Lord Maitreya, Arya Maitreya. They were taught in the sutras, particularly the Dharanishvararaja-sutra, which is also known as the Sutra Requested by King Dharanishvara (*zungkyi gyelpö*). The first three vajra points are taught in the introduction of this sutra, and the remaining four vajra points are taught in the subsequent chapters. Now some of you may have the text "Buddha Nature", Rosemarie Fuchs' translation of the Uttaratantra and commentary. I'm won't be teaching from this text, but it may nevertheless help you, although it may also confuse you a little bit, because it contains Jamgön Kongtrül Lodrö Thayé's commentary on the Uttaratantra, which is taught from the point of view of tantra or Vajrayana. I won't be doing that. I will be only be giving a commentary in the sutra way. But in future, you should study this in a tantric way.

This teaching is being given according to the sutra way, not the tantric way

Day 2 – Introduction

The Uttaratantra is the last of Lord Maitreya's five major texts (taught to Asanga)

The *gyü lama*, the Uttaratantra, is the last of the five major texts that was taught by Lord Maitreya to the great Asanga. It was taught in heaven, by the way – Maitreya is a heavenly creature, a being from the god realm. He received the crown when Shakyamuni Buddha descended to earth. Some people say that if you know what to look for, you can tell that that his words are composed in a slightly beyond-human way.

Only the first of these five texts has a homage, and only the last has a dedication

Buddhist texts usually begin with the author's homage to his or her masters or deities, which is the traditional homage that comes before writing or teaching anything. For example, Chandrakirti's Madhyamakavatara pays homage to compassion. However, in this case, only the first of these five texts contains homage, the Abhisamaya-alamkara, which is a commentary on the Prajñaparamita. The other four texts don't have a homage and similarly only the

Uttaratantra, which is the last of the five tests, has a dedication. Some people think that the word *uttara* also means 'last' in Sanskrit.

Apart from the Abhisamaya-alamkara and Uttaratantra, many scholars think the other three of Maitreya's five texts are Chittamatrin rather than Madhyamika

Since many of you have received Madhyamika teachings, you will know that the Madhyamika has two schools – Svatantrika and Prasangika. The Abhisamaya-alamkara and most of the commentaries from India and Tibet are very much influenced by the Svatantrika Madhyamika. Only Gorampa, I think, has a commentary that explains the Abhisamaya-alamkara in the Prasangika style. Now, out of these five texts – if we exclude the Abhisamaya-alamkara and the Uttaratantra – many scholars, especially Rangtongpas, think that the other three texts aren't even Madhyamika texts. They think they are more Chittamatrin. But Shentongpa masters such as Dolpopa Sherab Gyaltsen say they are actually the real Madhyamika, or what they call the *shentong uma chenpo*. Everyone more or less accepts the Uttaratantra as a Madhyamika text, but not everyone agrees on its status. Buddhist teachings are divided into two categories: teachings of definitive or ultimate meaning (*nyeydön*) and teachings of expedient meaning (*drangdön*). These two are basically the teachings that you can take literally and those you can't. Many scholars accept the Uttaratantra as *nyeydön*, but Sakya Pandita thinks this teaching cannot be taken literally, so it's only expedient or *drangdön*. This is a little bit shocking! But he thinks that words like 'uncompounded' and 'permanent' all need to be interpreted – they can't be taken literally, otherwise there would be no difference between Buddha-nature and Hindu concepts like atman, prakriti, purusha and all that.

The Uttaratantra is accepted as Madhyamika, but scholars disagree about whether it is a provisional or definitive teaching

Sakya Pandita thinks it is provisional, as words like 'uncompounded' need interpretation

The Uttaratantra is often taught as the last text in the Buddhist curriculum, almost as a bridge between sutra and tantra

I don't know if this applies to all Buddhist schools, but the general rule or tradition in schools of Buddhist philosophy is that students study Madhyamika first, because it really helps to deconstruct all kinds of concepts. Madhyamika is followed by vinaya, metaphysics and all that. And *gyü lama*, the Uttaratantra, is taught at a later stage, often as the last text in the Buddhist curriculum, and many masters of the past say that the Uttaratantra is like a bridge between the sutras and tantra. For instance, in the Kagyu tradition, the three most important texts are *zab*, *tak* and *gyü*: first is the Profound Inner Sense (*zabmo nangdön*), second is the Hevajra-tantra (*takpa nyipa*), and finally comes the *gyü lama*. It's very nice to see the great efforts that have been made by Khenchen Thrangu Rinpoche and Khenpo Tsultrim Gyamtso on the great Uttaratantra.

Since I was trained in the Sakya philosophical system, I will have to suppress my doubts about words like 'uncompounded' and my sarcasm. But the Sakyapas also have a big burden, because when they talk about space (*ying*) and luminosity (*ösel*), they have to contend with the consequence that luminosity is a compounded phenomenon (*dujey*). Sakyapa scholars have to deal with this question, even though they might not admit it openly. The hardest thing for students to break through is their misunderstanding of the word 'union', because the union of truth (*denpa*) and non-truth (*dzünpa*) is difficult to understand. But if you think about it logically, you cannot really separate them. You cannot

Students typically misunderstand 'union'. Even the union of truth and non-truth is hard to understand, let alone ideas like the union of space and luminosity

extract or separate the truth and then find the false. And it's even more difficult to understand the union of space and luminosity. And of course, we still have to define the words 'space' and 'luminosity'.

The seven vajra points are taught in several different sutras

We briefly discussed the seven vajra points in the first stanza, and in the second stanza Maitreya is saying that they are not something that he made up. The seven vajra points are actually taught in many sutras. For instance, the three gems – Buddha, Dharma and Sangha – are taught in *lhakpey sampa tenpey do*, which can roughly be translated as the Sutra Exposing the Superior Mind. And *kham*, the *rig* or element, is taught in the *teldrip mepa*, which can be translated as the Sutra of No Increasing and No Decreasing. The fifth vajra point, which is enlightenment (*changchub*), is taught in the Shrimaladevisimhanada-sutra (*paltreng gi do*). And the sixth vajra point, quality, is also taught in the Sutra of No Increasing and No Decreasing. Finally, activity is taught in the Sutra of Approaching the Infinite and Inexpressible Qualities of the Tathagata *(de bzhin bshegs pa'i yon tan dang ye shes bsam gyis my khyab pa'i yul la 'jug pa bstan pa'i mdo*), something like that.

The seven vajra points are also taught within a single sutra, the Dharanishvararaja- sutra

So the seven vajra points are taught in different sutras, and they are also taught within one sutra: the Sutra Requested by King Dharanishvara (*zungkyi gyelpö*), also known as the "The Explanation of the Great Compassion of the Tathagata". In the prologue of that sutra, the Buddha taught Buddha, Dharma and Sangha. He said that the Buddha, Bhagawan, is totally enlightened in the state of the equanimity of all phenomena. And then he turned the wheel of the Dharma, and gathered an assembly of students. This is not just a historical account, by the way. This is very similar to what Shakyamuni Buddha told his followers when he passed away. When they asked him what to should do, among many other things he said that followers of Gautama must let people know four things:

Buddha Shakyamuni said the followers of Gautama must let people know four things

- Siddhartha, a normal ordinary human being came to the earth.
- He achieved enlightenment.
- He taught others how he achieved enlightenment.
- He passed into parinirvana.

Buddhists aren't evangelical. We pray "may all beings become Buddha", not "may all become Buddhists"

Now you should not assume that the Buddha is trying to print a pamphlet in order to increase the population of Buddhists or something! In our ordinary prayers, we pray "may all sentient beings become Buddha" but we don't pray, "May all sentient beings become Buddhists".

The first message, that an ordinary human being called Siddhartha came, is very important because it indicates that he was an ordinary man just like us before he achieved enlightenment. This second message is a very important message, as it indicates that an ordinary human being can achieve enlightenment. The third message tells us that it's not as though only the Buddha can achieve enlightenment, and the rest of us have to somehow try our best and remain

Enlightenment is not like a god realm, a permanent and unchanging state

secondary. It's not like that. He taught the path through which everyone can achieve enlightenment equally, just like him. The fourth message is very important – it's not as though enlightenment is something like becoming a god, or attaining a state that is unchanging, ultimate and permanent like some kind of god realm, despite what we might think. The Buddha actually passed into the parinirvana. This last message is very important. I think it is taught in the Mahaparinirvana-sutra. This is also why he said that Buddhists, those who wish to follow him in the future, must go to four places: Lumbini, where an ordinary man was born; Bodh Gaya, where this ordinary person achieved enlightenment, and so forth. We should do this to remind us that ordinary beings like us can do it.

The seven vajra points set out a path. The Uttaratantra teaches that if we follow this path, we will attain the result, because we have the element

It's similar here, because when we talk about the seven vajra points, we're talking about a path or a method. So, to return to the scriptural sources: *kham*, the element, is also taught in the main body of the Sutra Requested by King Dharanishvara. Because we have this element or potential – maybe the right word here is 'potential' – if we follow the path, then we will attain the result. The last three vajra points – enlightenment, qualities and Buddha activity – are also taught in the same sutra. For instance, these include the ten powers, the four fearlessnesses, the eighteen uncommon qualities of the Buddha, and so forth.

3 སངས་རྒྱས་ལས་སྟོན་ཆོས་ལས་འཕགས་པའི་ཚོགས། །
ཚོགས་ལས་སྨྲིང་པོ་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཁམས་ཐོབ་མཐར། །
ཡེ་ཤེས་དེ་ཐོབ་བྱང་ཆུབ་མཆོག་ཐོབ་སོགས། །
སེམས་ཅན་ཀུན་དོན་བྱེད་ཆོས་རྣམས་དང་ལྡན། །

From the Buddha, the Dharma; from the Dharma, the realized Sangha; from the Sangha, the presence of the jñana-nature – the essence; when this jñana is ultimately made manifest there is supreme enlightenment, powers and so on, endowed with every ability to accomplish the good of each and everyone.

From the Buddha [stems] the Dharma, from the Dharma the Assembly of noble ones, from the Assembly the attainment of Buddha-nature, the element of primordial wisdom. This wisdom finally attained is supreme enlightenment, the powers and so on, [thus] possessing the properties that fulfil the benefit of all sentient beings.

An explanation of the order of the seven vajra points

This stanza explains the order of the seven points. By understanding that everything is equal, Buddha is enlightened. From the enlightened Buddha comes the turning of the wheel of Dharma. By following this Dharma, there comes the assembly of the Sangha. The assembly of the Sangha then works with the *kham* or element. For example, they can do things like accumulating merit and purifying defilements because of the element. A member of the Sangha is someone who works with this *kham*, this element. And by working with the element, then the Sangha achieves enlightenment. Although it might sound from the word 'achieve' that this enlightenment is something new, the practitioner has

not attained anything new. And as the practitioner achieves enlightenment, then all the infinite qualities of enlightenment are achieved. And once you achieve these infinite qualities of enlightenment, then you benefit sentient beings with your activity.

Their order can also be explained in other ways

The order of the seven vajra points can be taught in many other ways. For example, the three gems – Buddha, Dharma and Sangha – can be understood as a result. And the other four can be understood as a cause. All this will be explained very thoroughly, so there's no need to worry. As you will see, this text begins each subject with a summary, and then gives a slightly more detailed explanation, and then a really extensive explanation. In many cases, it's almost like going over the subject three times.

The First Three Vajra Points: The Three Jewels

The First Vajra Point: Buddha

4 གང་ཞིག་ཐོག་མ་དབུས་མཐའ་མེད་ཞི་སངས་རྒྱས་ཉིད་རང་རྒྱལ་སངས་རྒྱས། །
སངས་རྒྱས་ནས་ནི་མ་རྟོགས་རྟོགས་ཕྱིར་འཇིགས་མེད་རྒྱག་པའི་ལམ་སྟོན་པ། །
མཁྱེན་བརྩེའི་རལ་གྲི་རྡོ་རྗེ་མཆོག་བསྟན་སྡུག་བསྔལ་མྱུ་གུ་གཅོད་མཛད་ཅིང་། །
སྙོ་ཚོགས་ལྟ་ཕྱིས་ཀྱིས་བསྐོར་ཞེ་ཚོམ་རྩིག་པ་འཇིག་མཛད་དེ་ལ་འདུད། །

I bow down to the beginningless, to the centreless and infinite, to peace, to Buddhahood, fully self-awakened and self-blossomed which, once purified and made manifest, shows the fearless, permanent path which will bring realization to those with no realization and which, wielding the supreme sword and vajra of knowledge and compassionate love hews down the seedlings of sufferings and destroys the walls of doubt surrounded by dense mistaken views.

Buddha is without beginning, middle or end. He is peace itself, fully self-awakened and self-expanded in Buddhahood. Having reached this state, he shows the indestructible, permanent path so that those who have no realization may realize. Wielding the supreme sword and vajra of knowledge and compassionate love, he cuts the seedling of suffering and destroys the wall of doubts along with its surrounding thicket of various views. I bow down to this Buddha.

The state of Buddha has no beginning, middle or end, so Buddha is uncompounded

Here we are talking about the absolute Buddha, not the historical or manifestation Buddha

The state of Buddha is one in which all concepts and extremes are pacified

Buddha can only be understood through self-awareness wisdom, *so so rang rigpey yeshey*, but the Buddha nevertheless teaches sentient beings out of his compassion

Now you will learn very extensively what Buddha, Dharma and Sangha mean. First, we'll talk about the Buddha. The Buddha has no beginning, and therefore no birth (*kyewa*). Buddha has no middle, and therefore there is no dwelling of the Buddha. Buddha is beyond end, and therefore Buddha has no exhaustion or cessation. So therefore, Buddha is uncompounded. One has to listen to these words with a well-trained ear! The Buddha has pacified (*shiwa*). What has he pacified? All extremes and conceptions. Wait, I made a mistake – when I say, "Buddha has pacified", it's not a good way to say this. I have the feeling that when we say, "Buddha has", it sounds like we are talking about something historical. But we are talking about the real Buddha here – the absolute Buddha, not the manifestation Buddha or historical Buddha. So I think we should say, "Buddha is", in other words, the state of the Buddha is where all concepts and extremes are pacified. Who understands this kind of state? Who found or noticed such a state? No other beings found it, only the jñana or wisdom of self-awareness (*so so rang rigpey yeshey*). So one can never attain or understand the state of the Buddha with external conditions. Hearing this, we might think that the Buddha is somehow unreachable or beyond us. Our limited mind automatically asks how he functions. Now, although Buddha is enlightened, he nevertheless has compassion towards those who haven't reached this kind of realisation. So, in order to let sentient beings understand and not fear the suffering of samsara, Buddha teaches the path that is without any fear of

samsara. With wisdom that is like a sword, he cuts the shoot of suffering, and with compassion that is like a vajra, he destroys the variety of views that are like a wall. This is explained more extensively in the next stanza.

5 འདུས་མ་བྱས་ཤིང་ལྷུན་གྱིས་གྲུབ། །
གཞན་གྱི་རྒྱུན་གྱིས་རྟོགས་མིན་པ། །
མཁྱེན་དང་བརྩེ་དང་ནུས་པར་ལྡན། །
དོན་གཉིས་ལྡན་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་ཉིད། །

Buddhahood is endowed with two-fold value. It is uncreated and spontaneous – not to be realized through external causes. It is possessed of knowledge, compassionate love and ability.

Being uncreated and spontaneously present, not a realization due to extraneous conditions, wielding knowledge, compassionate love and ability, Buddhahood has [the qualities of] the two benefits.

Compassion defined: it is not mere sympathy. It is the wish for others to reach the state of wisdom that is uncompounded and spontaneously accomplished, and which cannot be realised by external means

Buddha is uncompounded. Since there is no effort, Buddha is spontaneously accomplished. Because Buddha can be understood only by the wisdom of self-awareness, it cannot be comprehended through any other means or conditions. Wisdom (*khyenpa*) or jñana is something that is uncompounded and spontaneously accomplished, and that does not rely on other conditions. Compassion is the wish for others to reach this state that is uncompounded and spontaneously accomplished, and which cannot be realised by other conditions or means. This is a very important definition of compassion, because compassion is usually understood as some kind of sympathy, but Lord Maitreya is saying that compassion is ultimately this. And it's not as though the wisdom and compassion have no power. They have the power to dispel the suffering of others. So Buddha has two meanings: for himself, Buddha has the meaning of uncompounded, spontaneously accomplished and incomprehensible by others. For others, he is equipped with wisdom, compassion and power. I will explain this again, but first I would like to go through all of the section that describes Buddha.

This wisdom is the meaning of Buddha for himself

For others, Buddha has wisdom, compassion and power (to dispel suffering)

6 ཐོག་མ་དབུས་མཐའ་མེད་པ་ཡི། །
རང་བཞིན་ཡིན་ཕྱིར་འདུས་མ་བྱས། །
ཞི་བ་ཆོས་ཀྱི་སྐུ་ཅན་ཕྱིར། །
ལྷུན་གྱིས་གྲུབ་ཅེས་བྱ་བར་བརྗོད། །

It is uncreated because its nature is without beginning, middle or end. It is said to be spontaneity since it is peace, holder of dharmakaya.

Its nature is without beginning, middle or end; hence [the state of a Buddha] is uncreated. Since it possesses the peaceful dharmakaya, it is described as being "spontaneously present."

7 སོ་སོ་རང་གིས་རྟོགས་བྱའི་ཕྱིར། །
གཞན་གྱི་རྒྱུན་གྱིས་རྟོགས་མིན་པ། །
དེ་ལྟར་རྣམ་གསུམ་རྟོགས་ཕྱིར་མཁྱེན། །
ལམ་སྟོན་ཕྱིར་ན་ཐུགས་བརྩེ་བ། །

Its realization is not due to any external cause since it has to be realized through one's pure apperceptive cognition. It is knowledge since it is realization of these three. It is great compassionate love because it shows the way.

Since it must be realized through self-awareness, it is not a realization due to extraneous conditions. These three aspects being realized, there is knowledge. Since the path is shown, there is compassionate love.

8 ནུས་པ་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཐུགས་རྗེ་ཡིས། །
སྡུག་བསྔལ་ཉོན་མོངས་སྤོང་ཕྱིར་རོ། །
དང་པོ་གསུམ་གྱིས་རང་དོན་ཏེ། །
ཕྱི་མ་གསུམ་གྱིས་གཞན་དོན་ཡིན། །

It is ability because it removes suffering and defilements by jñana and compassion. Through these first three there is value for oneself and through the latter three there is value for others.

There is ability since the mental poisons and suffering are relinquished by primordial wisdom and compassion. Through the first three there is benefit for oneself. Through the latter three there is benefit for others.

The state of Buddha is free from extremes. This is referred to as dharmakaya

This is explained again, extensively, with reasoning. Since Buddha has no beginning, middle and end, the nature of the Buddha is uncompounded. Since Buddha is beyond all the extremes of body, speech and conception, the Buddha is freedom (*shiwa*), free from all these extremes and conceptions, and that freedom is what we call the dharmakaya (*chökyi ku*).

There are three qualities of Buddha for himself and three qualities of Buddha concerning others

Because there are no extremes of body, speech and mind, we call it spontaneously accomplished. There is no effort. And because this is something that can only be understood by the wisdom of self-awareness, it cannot be understood by others' words and training methods. Having these three qualities is what we call 'wisdom', and in order to lead sentient beings onto the path to achieve these three qualities, the Buddha has compassion. And the power of the Buddha is none other than wisdom and compassion combined, because with compassion and wisdom, Buddha can completely dispel the suffering of the aggregates and their cause, the kleshas or negative emotions, from the root. The

first three qualities concern the Buddha himself – they are his own qualities, for his own purpose. And the second set of three qualities concern others. That's the end of the introduction to the Buddha.

It's easy to misunderstand 'Buddha', because we tend to think of a person

It's difficult to talk about Buddha because you cannot understand it through mundane, ordinary methods such as words and language. That's why it is so difficult. For example, when we say 'Buddha', our habitual mind immediately thinks of a person. And there are many reasons for this. From an ordinary point of view, we put statues of the Buddha on our shrine as objects of veneration, homage, refuge and so on. And we also have the habitual pattern of thinking that Buddha is a level, some kind of state that we wish to achieve or attain, which is why we are practicing the Dharma. And even in the sutras there are words like "the Buddha is the king of all sublime beings", or "a lion among men". All these strengthen our habit of thinking that we are referring to a person when we talk about the Buddha. Similarly, when we talk about compassion and wisdom, we think we are talking about an agent – someone who does the knowing and someone who has the compassion. This ordinary approach of understanding the Buddha is something that we have to improve!

We also misunderstand it as a level that we wish to attain through practice

Likewise, we tend to think of compassion and wisdom in a dualistic way, in terms of agent and action

We also forget about the 'elimination' when we talk about 'result of elimination'

And then as we discussed yesterday, when we talk about the 'quality of elimination', we keep on forgetting the 'elimination' part, and we get distracted by the 'quality' part. For instance, even the word Buddha is loosely translated as the 'awakened one'. When we say 'awakened one' (*sang*), we are talking about a quality of elimination. To 'awaken' means to eliminate the deep sleep of ignorance. It's really difficult to discuss the concept of Buddha!

Buddha is beyond time, and therefore beyond suffering. We cannot even talk of 'achieving' Buddhahood, as this is related to time

Basically, as Maitreya has clearly pointed out, Buddha is none other than these six qualities. Since it has no beginning, middle and end, we are talking about something that is beyond time. If the entity or phenomenon of the Buddha were stained by time, then it would be suffering. So Buddha is beyond time. Therefore we can't even talk about 'achieving Buddhahood', as achieving Buddhahood is a time-related matter. And another habit of our ordinary minds is that every time we talk about the Buddha, we are talking about someone who does this and that, for instance a person who begs in the streets of Magadha with bare feet, holding a begging bowl. Someone who said, "when I was a Bodhisattva", indicating that had a past life. Basically, someone who is limited by symbols. The ultimate Buddha that Maitreya is talking about is beyond all that. It's beyond conceptions. The moment that we think about something, it's a production. It's a compounded phenomenon. Then it is dependent. What's the problem with it being dependent? Then it will change. So in the morning you're a Buddha, and maybe in the afternoon you're not a Buddha. We need to understand that the ultimate Buddha is beyond all these extremes.

The ultimate Buddha is beyond all conceptions

All conceptions are compounded, and thus dependent, and therefore impermanent. Buddha is beyond all such extremes

And again in our ordinary minds, we think Buddha is something that can be achieved. For example, by acts of worship such as making offerings of flowers

Since Buddha is beyond time, it cannot be achieved through conceptions or extremes such as flower offerings or visualisations

In the Diamond Sutra, Buddha said "those who see me as a form have a wrong view"

and drinking water, or by visualising the Buddha in front of you, or by visualising yourself as the Buddha. But if the Buddha is beyond time and beyond conceptions, then there is no way to achieve that kind of Buddha through conceptions and extremes such as flower offerings. So these three qualities that concern the Buddha himself are very important. Because even as we speak, we speak in a very deluded language. For example, we say "himself", as if the Buddha is limited by gender. In the Diamond Sutra, Buddha himself said "those who see me as a form and those who hear me as a sound, they have a wrong view". But even when we hear that quotation, we think 'this was spoken by the Buddha, Gautama, who was born in India, who said that those who see me as a form have wrong view'. We think this because he used the word 'me' (*nga*), as in "those who see 'me' as a form have a wrong view", where this 'me' refers to the son of Shuddodana and Mayadevi. The Diamond Sutra is another very important Prajñaparamita sutra, and this text is the commentary to such sutras, and here it explains what he meant when he said "those who see me as a form have a wrong view".

Light is nothing other than the elimination of darkness, but we need to understand the unity of darkness and light

This is the result of elimination (*dralwey dreybu*) that we were talking about yesterday. This is quite a good word, one that you should get used to. Because when you eliminate darkness, what happens then? Then so-called light happens. But it's nothing other than the elimination of darkness. We need to understand the unity of darkness and light. Of course, we often get confused, because when we talk about the quality of elimination, then the Mahayana sutras talk of 32 major marks and some of them are very tangible qualities, such as webbed hands and special earlobes and all that, and then it becomes seemingly very substantial.

The 32 major marks are seemingly substantial, but they are important symbolic teachings

For example, Vairocana Buddha, the essence of all form, is referred to as 'big', even though Buddha transcends big and small

But these forms like the 32 major marks and 80 minor marks are very symbolic. They are very important symbolic teachings. For instance, Vairocana Buddha is supposedly the essence of form. He is the essence of every form, including all the forms that we can perceive. Everything from a flower to the earlobe of the Buddha is a form, a shape. And the essence of all these is Vairocana Buddha. And who is Vairocana Buddha? Ultimately, someone who has these six qualities. But again, when we talk to ordinary beings, there are teachings that describe the appearance of Vairocana Buddha as "An ocean of snowy mountains" – it's a very big Buddha, they will say. It begins with "big". Because somehow in the minds of ordinary people, big is appreciated more than small. Of course, the Buddha doesn't have any preference – there are no extremes of big and small. But when we ordinary people talk about these things, somehow we think that the Buddha should always be described in terms of best rather than worst. And when it comes to big and small, maybe big is the better one!

Each of the 25 lotus layers above Vairocana's begging bowl contains a three thousand-fold universe

You should read these kinds of texts thoroughly, and get all the way to the bottom of them. Because when Vairocana is described, we hear that he's sitting with his hands in the meditation mudra, and on the top of this mudra is his begging bowl, and above this begging bowl there are 25 layers of lotus, each of

which contains a three thousand-fold universe. And counting downwards, the thirteenth lotus has many universes, and one of them is called the 'fearless' indivisible realm or universe. And within that universe we find Mount Meru and many planets, and one small planet among these is called Jambudvipa, which is where we are now! So all these descriptions are telling us that he is a very big man! So we continue, and read more. And then it says that in each pore, there's a complete set of what we have just spoken about. Until now, we were thinking that he's a big man. But now when it says that there's a whole set of all the universes in each pore, we are starting to question the concept of a big man. And next it says that these pores have not become bigger to accommodate the universe, and nor has the universe become smaller. They're all the same size. So now we're back to non-duality, and we're back to the Buddha being uncompounded and spontaneously accomplished. We're back to something that cannot be comprehended with all our ordinary means.

Each of his pores contains a complete set of all these universes, without the pores becoming bigger or the universes becoming smaller

Thus our idea of 'big' is deconstructed, and we return to non-duality

We also misunderstand Buddha because we talk about it from an emotional point of view, seeing it as something 'better' than our current experience

It's very difficult to conceive of these things, because most of the time when we talk about the Buddha, we're always talking about him from an emotional point of view. We imagine a place where things are seven times better than what we have now, where there are many gigabytes and a very fast broadband connection! But as long as we think in terms of gigabytes and broadband and fast and automatic, then conception is already there. And as long as there is conception, then there are compounded phenomena, and then it's not independent. Then you are suffering again. So you can see that this is difficult! Really identifying the Buddha is difficult, and Lord Maitreya has done a really good job!

So if Buddha is completely inexpressible and beyond conception, how can any communication take place?

Now all of this makes us think that whoever this Buddha is, he is completely unreachable and beyond all of us. All we have is our mind, our eyes, our nose, and our consciousness. This Buddha is something beyond mind and beyond comprehension through any other means, so there is no kind of bridge from him to us, if he is indeed a "him"! So if he's really beyond us, inexpressible and beyond our conception, how do we start? How can communication take place?

This is why the qualities of the Buddha are divided into two sets – those concerning himself, and those concerning others – with *kham*, the element, as the bridge between them

This is why the six qualities of the Buddha are divided into two sets. The first three are referred to as qualities concerning himself, and the second set of three are the qualities concerning others (sometimes we refer to 'eight qualities', by adding 'qualities concerning himself' and 'qualities concerning others' to the other six qualities). So now we can see that there's a bridge emerging. Between these six – between the first three qualities and the second set of three qualities – there is already a bridge. We don't need anything else, as we have *kham*, the element. That's why *kham*, the fourth of the seven vajra points, is so important. It's really misleading for us to say, "we have this element", but what can we do? It's the only way for us to talk about it. Anyway, let's say that we have this nature, this family, this element. It's because of this – and here we are talking academically – that we can experience the result of elimination.

To experience the result, we need only to remove the temporary garbage

This is none other than receiving the Buddha's wisdom, compassion, power and blessings

All we need to do is to eliminate the temporary garbage – that's all we need to do. And what is this so-called elimination of the temporary garbage? It's none other than receiving the wisdom, compassion and power of the Buddha. This is why prayer works, why blessing works – why everything works. This is why all the methods of thinking will work to help you reach somewhere where there is no thinking, somewhere beyond thinking.

We can't say Buddha is everywhere, nor that Buddha is nowhere. We cannot say anything!

I hope we have managed to give some vague introduction to the Buddha. It shouldn't be bound by time, space or gender. You cannot say, like all these spaced-out hippies, that Buddha is everywhere – but nor can you say, like those nerdy intellectual nihilists, that it's nowhere. You cannot say anything! If you really want to say something, you can recite these few stanzas. Oh, by the way, the first stanza introducing the Buddha comes in the form of homage, a prostration, but it does not mean that this is the homage that usually comes at the beginning of a text. Now, let's discuss the Dharma.

The Second Vajra Point: Dharma

9 གང་ཞིག་མེད་མིན་ཡོད་མིན་ཡོད་མེད་མ་ཡིན་ཡོད་མེད་ལས་གཞན་དུའང། །
བཏགས་པར་མི་རྟགས་ངེས་ཚིག་དང་བྲལ་སོ་སོ་རང་གིས་རིག་ཞི་བ། །
དྲི་མེད་ཡེ་ཤེས་འོད་ཟེར་སྣང་ལྡན་དམིགས་པ་ཀུན་ལ་ཆགས་པ་དང་། །
སྣང་དང་རབ་རིབ་རྣམ་པར་འཇོམས་མཛད་དམ་ཆོས་ཉི་མ་དེ་ལ་འདུད། །

I bow down to the sun of Dharma, which is neither existence nor non-existence, nor existence with non-existence, nor other than existence and non-existence: the unexaminable, beyond all verbal definition, the self-cognisant–peace, the stainless, brilliant with the light of jñana, which completely destroys craving for, aversion to or dullness towards mental objects.

The Dharma is neither non-existent not existent. It is not both existent and non-existent, nor is it other than existent and non-existent. It is inaccessible to such investigation and cannot be defined. It is self-aware and peace. The Dharma is without defilement. Holding the brilliant light rays of primordial wisdom, it fully defeats attachment, aversion and dull indifference with regard to all objects of perception. I bow down to this sun of the sacred Dharma.

A summary of the second vajra point, Dharma, in the form of praise

The Dharma is something that can be understood by self-awareness wisdom (*so so rang rigpey yeshey*). Therefore it is not inexistent, and thus it is free from nihilism. At the same time, it does not have a truly existing nature, so Dharma is free from the extreme of eternalism. Dharma is not both existent and non-existent, so Dharma is not neither. Dharma is beyond words and language, beyond analogy or methods, although it can be understood with self-awareness. Dharma is free from the root of samsara, which is emotion, and from improper thoughts. Therefore Dharma, the path, is stainless. Because Dharma is free from clinging to phenomena, Dharma is luminous. Dharma is beyond object, and therefore Dharma is free from desire towards beautiful objects. Dharma is free from aggression that arises towards undesirable objects. Dharma destroys the darkness of ignorance. To this Dharma, which is like a sun, I prostrate. As before, this will be explained very extensively, twice.

10 བསམ་མེད་གཉིས་མེད་རྟོག་མེད་པ། །
དག་གསལ་ལ་གཉེན་པོའི་ཕྱོགས་ཉིད་ཀྱིས། །
གང་ཞིག་གང་གིས་ཆགས་བྲལ་བ། །
བདེན་གཉིས་མཚན་ཉིད་ཅན་དེ་ཆོས། །

The Dharma is that imbued with the very characteristics of the two truths; that which is, and that which causes, freedom from bondage. Inconceivable, not two and concept-free, purity, clarity and the remedy.

Inconceivable, free from the two [veils] and from thought, being pure, clear and playing the part of an antidote, it is free from attachment and frees from attachment. This is the Dharma with its features of the two truths.

11 ཚགས་བླ་ལ་ཉིད་ནི་འགོག་པ་དང་། །
ལམ་གྱི་བདེན་པ་དག་གིས་བསྟན། །
གོ་རིམས་ཇི་བཞིན་དེ་དག་ཀྱང་། །
ཡོན་ཏན་གསུམ་གསུམ་གྱིས་རིག་བྱ། །

"Freedom from bondage" covers the truths of cessation and the path and these each have qualities three, for each, respectively.

Freedom from attachments [as fruit and means] consists of the truths of cessation and path. Accordingly these should also be known by means of three qualities each.

Like Buddha, Dharma is described in two sets of qualities. In this case: (1) the truth of cessation, (2) the truth of the path to cessation

Dharma cannot be conceived of or contemplated. Dharma is free from dualism such as karma and emotion. Dharma is free from confused mind. Dharma is pure from emotions. Dharma is the illuminating wisdom itself. Dharma is the antidote to the three poisons. Like Buddha, Dharma has six different qualities. The three first qualities – which are that Dharma is beyond contemplation, non-dual, and inconceivable – are what we call the truth of the cessation of suffering (*gokpey denpa*). The second set of three qualities are the path to the cessation of suffering (*lamgyi denpa*). These two truths – the truth of cessation and the truth of path to cessation – are the characteristics that define Dharma. And the absence of attachment and clinging is the truth of cessation, and also the path to the cessation. And the order of the definition of the Dharma comes in two sets of three qualities. The first three are the definition for the truth of cessation, and the later three are the definition of the path to cessation. Again, this is explained extensively.

12 བརྗོག་མེད་ཕྱིར་དང་བརྗོད་མེད་ཕྱིར། །
འཕགས་པས་མཁྱེན་ཕྱིར་བསམ་མེད་ཉིད། །
ཞི་ཉིད་གཉིས་མེད་རྟོག་མེད་དེ། །
དག་སོགས་གསུམ་ནི་ཉི་བཞིན་ནོ། །

Inconceivability (since it defies examination by thought, expression by speech and it is the knowledge of the realized), absence of two and to be concept-free (peace), purity and so on, these three being like the sun.

Not being an object of conceptual investigation, being inexpressible, and [only] to be known by noble ones, the Dharma is inconceivable. Since it is peace, it is free from the two [veils] and free from thought. In its three [aspects of] purity and so on it is similar to the sun.

Dharma cannot be uttered with language or conceived of with ordinary mind, but it dispels the kleshas and karma. It is stainless and luminous like the sun

The Dharma cannot be imputed with the four kinds of imputation, namely existence, non-existence, both and neither. It cannot be uttered with sound, words or language. Only an Arya, a sublime being, can understand the Dharma. Therefore, it is something that cannot be conceived of by ordinary mind. But it dispels the kleshas and karma, and there are no improper thoughts. It is stainless and luminous, and therefore the Dharma is like the sun. So, let's discuss this a little more.

We should not misunderstand Dharma as some kind of method or technique

To our ordinary minds, 'Dharma' usually refers to a path. It refers to some kind of method or technique. But it's a very big mistake to understand the Dharma as a technique. Again, we have to invoke this concept of the result of elimination. Yesterday we talked about peeling layers of skin. However, the skin is not the Dharma, and therefore the process of peeling the skin is also not Dharma. So what is Dharma? Dharma is the fact that the skin is not the fruit or the seed. The Dharma is that there is no seed – that fact is the Dharma. The ordinary mind thinks that peeling the skin reveals the fruit, but that's just ordinary thinking. The real Dharma is beyond words, beyond conceptions, and all that we have just discussed.

Dharma is neither the skin nor the peeling of the skin. It is the fact that there is no seed

How does Dharma benefit? Through the second set of qualities, as an antidote to the idea of a fruit inside

So how does the Dharma benefit us? For this, we come to the second set of three qualities. Dharma is an antidote. For instance, when you are peeling layers of skin and getting closer to the inner skins, the fact that there is ultimately no fruit at the centre works as an antidote to the notion that there must be a fruit inside.

Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche's example of the thin iron meat hooks onto which things get stuck

For example, there is something quite interesting that you should know when you do prostrations or take refuge in the Buddha. When we say Buddha, we say *kangnyi namkyi chok*, which literally means 'supreme among bipeds', the supreme among men. That's how we refer to the Buddha when we take refuge. But when we take refuge in the Dharma, it is defined as something that is not clinging to anything. This is very important. Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche has a good example here. He said that the path, the Dharma should never be like a very thin iron hook. For example, imagine that you have many such hooks hanging, and then without really aiming you throw some meat at these hooks – maybe it would be better to think of throwing a sweater! The hooks hold the sweater – basically it gets stuck there. Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche said that Dharma should never be like that. No concept of Dharma should hold and entangle you so that you have to undo it. He continued with his example – the fact that the iron is so thin makes it even harder to take it out, because if it were one big and solid hook, it would be easy to remove. But because there are many small hooks, all very thin, the meat or whatever gets hooked. And this example applies to all the things we were talking about earlier, because we usually think that Dharma is a concept, an idea. But an idea refers to something that's already hooked, something that's already stuck – and that means suffering again. Dharma is not an idea. It's *chaktok dralwa*. It's free from being attached (*chakpa*), and free from being blocked or obstructed (*togpa*)

Dharma should never be like this. It should never hook or entangle you

Dharma is beyond ideas and concepts, *chaktok*. These are all hooked or stuck, and lead to suffering

For example, we get hooked on the concept of 'flower', so we don't think of it as a bowl of soup

A good idea is once which is strongly stuck. This is how all our ideas lead to conflict and suffering

All ideas need to be peeled away. If you get stuck with an idea, even of Dharma, you are thinking that the skin is the fruit

For instance, a flower is a concept. We are hooked, attached (*chak*). And our idea of flower has arrived at a dead end – 'flower'. It's impossible for us to think of this flower as a bowl of soup – do you understand? This is how all our ideas lead to conflicts, and also where there are no conflicts! Ideas arise, and then we get stuck there. 'Idea' means stuck, getting stuck – that's how ideas should be formed, isn't it? Saying that something is a good idea means that it's really sticky, that it's strongly stuck. If it doesn't stick well, then it's a shaky or irrational idea, something that isn't so good. Our mind is a bit like honey, but honey that isn't in its jar! It is sticky – it sticks to other things and other things get stuck on it. Do you understand? But the Dharma that Maitreya is describing here is totally different. It's not an idea. All the ideas need to be peeled away! Remember the result of elimination (*dralwey dreybu*). If you always go back to this *draldrey*, it really helps. Every idea needs to be eliminated. If you are stuck with an idea, then you are thinking that that the skin is a fruit, and that is a misunderstanding.

The Third Vajra Point: Sangha

13 སེམས་དེ་རང་བཞིན་འོད་གསལ་བས་ན་ཉོན་མོངས་ངོ་བོ་མེད་གཟིགས་པས། །
གང་དག་འགྲོ་ཀུན་བདག་མེད་མཐའ་ཞི་ཡང་དག་རྟོགས་ནས་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ། །
ཤེས་གསལ་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་རྒྱུས་རྒྱགས་གཟིགས་པ་སྤྲིན་པ་མེད་པའི་བློ་མངའ་བ། །
སེམས་ཅན་རྣམ་དག་མཐའ་ཡས་ཡུལ་ཅན་ཡེ་ཤེས་གཟིགས་མངའ་དེ་ལ་འདུད། །

I bow down to those whose mind is no longer obscured, who possess jñana-perception–awareness of total purity present in limitless beings. As the nature of mind is clarity, they see defilements to be without essence and hence truly realize the ultimate no-self, the peace within all beings. Thus they know the all-pervasive presence of perfect Buddhahood in each and every one of them.

This mind being by nature clear light, they have seen the poisons to be essenceless and therefore truly realize [the nature of] every being as peace, the ultimate non-existence of a self. They perceive that the Perfect Buddha pervades them all. They possess the understanding that is free from veils. Thus seeing that beings are utterly pure and that [this purity pervades] their limitless number, they are endowed with the vision of primordial wisdom. I bow down to this [Sangha].

Bodhisattvas who have destroyed samsara have naturally luminous minds. They understand things as they are and as many as they are

So now we come to Sangha. For Bodhisattvas who have reached the state of 'non-returner', which means those who have destroyed samsara, their minds are naturally luminous. This luminosity, their luminous wisdom, arises because they have seen that emotions such as desire, aggression and so on have never existed throughout beginningless time. These Bodhisattvas who have realised selflessness or the state beyond extremes have understood things as they are. At the same time, they have realised that the Buddha dharmakaya exists within all sentient beings, and so they understand things as many as they are. To these Bodhisattvas I prostrate. As usual, this is explained further.

14 ཇི་ལྟ་ཇི་སྙེད་ནང་གི་ནི། །
ཡེ་ཤེས་གཟིགས་པ་དག་པའི་ཕྱིར། །
བློ་ལྡན་ཕྱིར་མི་ལྡོག་པའི་ཚོགས། །
བླ་མེད་ཡོན་ཏན་དང་ལྡན་ཉིད། །

The Sangha of the wise, who never regress, possess unsurpassable qualities because they have pure perception: how-it-isness, manyness and the inner jñana.

The assembly of those who have understanding and thus do not fall back has unsurpassable qualities, since their vision of inner primordial wisdom, which knows correctly and knows completely, is pure.

15 འགྲོ་བ་ཞི་བའི་ཚོས་ཉིད་དུ། །
རྟོགས་ཕྱིར་ཇི་ལྟ་ཉིད་དེ་ཡང་། །
རང་བཞིན་གྱིས་ནི་ཡོངས་དག་ཕྱིར། །
ཉོན་མོངས་གདོད་ནས་ཟད་ཕྱིར་རོ། །

The deeply-realized have how-it-isness because they have understood the peaceful nature of all beings, their absolute purity by nature, and that all defilements have been extinct from the very beginning.

Realizing beings in their state of peace [the noble ones] know correctly, for [the mind] is by nature utterly pure and the poisons were always exhausted.

16 ཤེས་བྱ་མཐར་ཐུག་རྟོགས་པའི་བློས། །
ཐམས་ཅད་མཁྱེན་པའི་ཚོས་ཉིད་ནི། །
སེམས་ཅན་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ་ཡོད་པར། ། །
མཐོང་ཕྱིར་ཇི་སྙེད་ཡོད་པ་ཉིད། །

They have manyness through intelligence which understands the ultimate object of knowledge; it perceives that all beings have the nature of omniscience.

Their understanding, which realizes the knowable as well as [its] ultimate condition, sees that the state of omniscience is within all beings. Thus the [noble ones] know completely.

17 དེ་ལྟར་རྟོགས་པ་གང་ཡིན་དེ། །
ས་ས་རང་ཤེས་མཐོང་བ་ཉིད། ། །
དྲི་མེད་དབྱིངས་ལ་ཆགས་མེད་དང་། ། །
ཐོགས་མེད་ཕྱིར་དེ་དག་པ་ཡིན། ། །

Such understanding is that which is seen by self-cognisant jñana. This is completely pure because the stainless space is free from hindrance and from desire.

Such realization is the vision of wisdom that is self-aware. This wisdom is pure, since it [sees] the undefiled expanse, free from attachment and obstruction.

18 ཡེ་ཤེས་གཟིགས་པ་དག་པས་ན། ། །
སངས་རྒྱས་ཡེ་ཤེས་བློ་མེད་ཕྱིར། ། ། །
འཕགས་པ་ཕྱིར་མི་ལྷོག་པ་ནི། ། ། །
ལུས་ཅན་ཀུན་གྱི་སྙིང་རྗེས་ཡིན་ནོ། ། ། །

The "never regressing deeply-realized" are for all beings a refuge because of unsurpassable Buddhajñana and because of their completely pure perception through jñana.

Their vision [of] primordial wisdom is pure and [nears] unsurpassable Buddha wisdom. The noble ones who do not fall back are therefore a refuge for all beings.

Why Bodhisattvas are more supreme than Shravakas and Pratyekabuddhas

With self-awareness, Bodhisattvas understand things as they are and how they appear. Therefore they are free from clinging and obstructions. Therefore those who possess such a great mind (*löden*), do not return to samsara. So they are far more supreme than all the Shravakas and Pratyekabuddhas. Bodhisattvas have realised that sentient beings have always been never separated from the extremeless *chönyi,* the reality of all phenomena. Therefore they understand how sentient beings are. And Bodhisattvas purify temporary defilements, but not in the sense that the defilements existed at the start and were then subsequently eliminated. Because in the ultimate truth, sentient beings have never been stained by temporary defilements. Therefore Bodhisattvas know that all sentient beings, without any difference, have this tathagatagarbha. And this understanding comes not through some external means, but because of the Bodhisattvas' own self-awareness. The space of the dharmadhatu or absolute dimension (*ying*) is always stainless. And that is the stainless quality of the Sangha that we're talking about here. The Sangha is also free from the obscurations to omniscience, and so the Sangha has not only realised ordinary emptiness, but also complete emptiness. Because the Sangha is free from clinging and obstruction, the Sangha is also the object of refuge.

The Sangha is free from clinging and obstruction, so it is an object of refuge

Day 3 – Introduction

The Uttaratantra is taught as a later subject, so the concept of *kham* or Buddha-nature is not misunderstood

The Uttaratantra appears simple at first, but the more you study, the more difficult it becomes

Madhyamika teaches that all phenomena are emptiness

I mentioned that the Uttaratantra-Shastra is generally taught as a later subject in Buddhist philosophical schools. I think there's quite a good reason for that. If it were taught right at the beginning, let's say as an introduction to Buddhism, then I guess there is a danger that a practitioner could misunderstand the concept of *kham*, the Buddha-nature. Also, and this is just my observation, the stanzas of the *gyü lama*, the Uttaratantra text, are quite easy to understand at a glance, especially if you haven't studied Madhyamika before. The subjects are not like Mulamadhyamikakarika or Madhyamakavatara where there are a lot of arguments and fine points of analysis. At a glance, the Uttaratantra is basically about the Buddha, Dharma, Sangha, and the qualities of the Buddha and so on. But this is a very special text: the more you study it, the more difficult it becomes! And especially if you've studied Madhyamika before, then this is so difficult! Because you will have heard teachings that say there is not a single phenomenon that is not interdependent, and therefore there is not a single phenomenon that is not emptiness. You will have heard stuff like that. And now, suddenly we are introduced to a different way of describing things – we hear that there is

But here we are told there is something clean, self, and uncompounded – seemingly the opposite of what Madhyamika teaches

something that is uncompounded, there is something that is clean, there is self – all these things that are seemingly almost the complete opposite of what we hear from the Madhyamika. And there's a good reason for this.

Many philosophies have some kind of nihilist deconstruction of phenomena

You see, the Buddhist view of emptiness, the Buddhist philosophy of emptiness is not something that you read just to stimulate your mind and then maybe leave the book on a shelf, or maybe at times gather together with some nerdy people to talk about philosophy! It's not for that. You know, some kind of nihilist deconstruction of phenomena can be found in many philosophies, such as existentialism and so on. They arrive at a sort of partial emptiness, where there's no previous life, no next life, no god, no karma, no cause and condition. I think there are people who have that kind of habit and view. But in the Madhyamika, every aspect of these extremes is thoroughly analysed and deconstructed. For example, in the Mulamadhyamikakarika, everything is analysed – from coming and going, all the way up to the tathagata, the Buddha. And Nagarjuna concludes that everything is emptiness. But as I said before, emptiness is not just a concept for us to learn about, discuss and then forget. We need it throughout the path. The effort made by Madhyamika masters like Nagarjuna and the purpose of the Buddhist teachings on the Madhyamika is not merely to provoke an academic discussion that is then left behind, but to liberate sentient beings.

Nagarjuna analyses, and finds that everything is emptiness, right up to the Buddha. But his aim is not merely to provoke discussion. It is to set out a path

As soon as we talk of liberation, we must talk of a path, otherwise there is no point in writing

And as soon as we talk about liberation, we have to talk about a path. Otherwise it will become like the views of some contemporary philosophers – no path, no guru, and all of that. They write hundreds of books about it, but it's all a self-contradiction! Why write? Why say anything? I'm trying to provoke any Krishnamurti followers who might be here! To write a book saying that there is no path is a self-contradiction. You have to have a path, and when you talk about a path, you have to talk about a finishing line, otherwise what kind of circular path are you on? It's a deception. So we have to talk about defilements, because when we talk about a path, we are talking about someone who hasn't yet reached the finishing line. And then we have to talk about the reason why we're not there, so obviously we're talking about defilements. And, most importantly, we have to talk about the person who is on the path. We haven't forgotten about emptiness. All of it is still intact in our head. We're not denying Nagarjuna and all that at all. We are very much embracing Nagarjuna's view, but we nevertheless have to talk about someone on the path. So we ask, who is this someone? And this is where we have to talk about *kham*, the element or nature, or *rig*, the race or family that we've been talking about.

If we talk of path, we must talk of defilements. We must talk of someone who hasn't yet reached the finishing line

We must also talk of the person on the path, and this is where we talk of *kham* or Buddha-nature

For a path, we also need a reference point or model of 'success', someone who is better than we are

When you are on the path, a big part of being on the path is having a reference point or model of what you want to become. You have to talk about some kind of model of how you want to look, how you want to think, and how you want to speak, because you're talking about the path. This model usually has to be someone better than you, otherwise why would you consider them a model? All

This seems to contradict emptiness, where there is no better or worse, just the great equanimity

Maitreya's model is the Three Jewels, but this doesn't contradict Nagarjuna at all

this might seem to be a contradiction with emptiness, because if everything is emptiness, there is no such thing as someone being better or worse than you. Everything is the great equanimity or equality (*nyampar chenpo*). So when he talks about a model, Maitreya very skilfully presents three models: the Three Jewels. But as you have noticed in the stanzas we went through earlier, this doesn't contradict what Nagarjuna said about emptiness: no end, no beginning, and no middle (*togma tama umeypa*). What Maitreya is saying here when he talks about the Three Jewels is just what Nagarjuna said. Really, all the stanzas, every word is so important.

When we talk of a path, we also talk of progress (i.e. qualities), and the benefit upon finishing the path (i.e. activity)

Of course, when we talk about path, we have to talk about progress. That's when we talk about the qualities (*yönten*). And then, what will happen when you finish the path? What is the benefit? That's the Buddha activity (*trinley*). As I was telling you, during the path you need some kind of finishing line, but this finishing line is not something external – the stanzas say this very clearly.

We also talk of devotion, i.e. trust or confidence. For example, we spend money to have our windows cleaned because we trust that the dirt is washable

The clean window is *dralwey dreybu*, the 'result of elimination', but this is path language. In reality the window has never been dirty, and there's nothing to eliminate

And yet at the same time we talk about an object of supplication. When we talk about object of supplication, we're talking about devotion. Devotion is basically trust. And trust is confidence. I think we should introduce the example of the window. It's not the best example, but it might work. The very reason why we spend so much money buying all kinds of equipment to wash our windows is because there is trust. There is devotion. We trust that the dirt is washable, that the dirt is temporary, and the clean window is what we call the result of elimination (*dralwey dreybu*). Now, the word 'result' (*dreybu*) is path language. Removing the dirt is our aim during the path, hence the result is called the result of elimination. This word 'result of elimination' seems to imply that you need to eliminate something, but actually it was never there in the first place! In reality, the window was never dirty. When you buy a pane of glass to make a window, you never buy it with the dirt included! The dirt isn't in the bill, you understand. It's not "the glass and this amount of dirt will cost this much"!

We crave the glass that was originally clean, and hence we work to clean the dirt. This is the path

The Sakyapas have a very good way of describing this. You know that when you buy the glass it's not dirty, so when you see dirt on the glass, your aim is to clean it (*shelwa*). You crave the original glass that you bought, and you work to attain that. For example you buy soap and wash the glass, and this gradually brings you towards your goal. That's what's happening during the path. It's slightly difficult to understand these things.

You know the glass didn't come with any dirt, so you wash the dirt with this confidence. The path is a great delusion!

When we talk about the 'result of elimination', that's path language. In reality, the glass never came with dirt as part of it, and it's with that base of confidence that you wash the window. You know that it's washable, that the glass is not dirt. That's how the path works. The path is a great delusion – this will be taught right afterwards – the path is deceptive. We call this the Lion's Roar (*sengey naro*) of the Buddha Dharma. Which path apart from the Mahayana can say, "Our path is deceptive"?

Because the original glass had no dirt, there is no concept of clean

So there is no beginning, middle or end. 'Cleaning' and 'clean' are path language

I'm sorry, but we have to dwell on this glass a little longer! The original glass that you bought is not dirty. It didn't come with the dirt. And because there was no dirt, therefore there is no concept of clean. We call this no beginning, middle or end (*togma tama umeypa*), and when we talk about 'middle, beginning, and end', then already we are talking about the path. The dirt is the beginning (*togma*), the washing is the middle, and then the end is when the dirt has gone – do you understand?

The Three Refuges

Similarly, in Vajrayana, taking refuge in the Three Jewels you have visualised in front of you is 'relative taking refuge'. The indispensable part is when the refuge dissolves and remains inseparably within you

If you only think you are inseparable from the guru after the dissolution, you are denying *kham*

It's more like you have always been inseparable. In fact there aren't even two things that could be inseparable

This is so important to understand, even for instance in the Vajrayana, when we take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha and visualise the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha in the space before us. All of that is called 'relative taking refuge' (*kundzop chi chabdro*). The most indispensable thing when taking refuge is that at the end the refuge objects dissolve into you, and then you remain inseparable from the refuge objects within you. This comes back to all that we talked about yesterday. Although this is not the time for Vajrayana, I think that it might work as an example. This inseparability of yourself and the object of refuge, such as the guru, is a very interesting concept. In many people's head, this inseparability is something like having been divorced for a long time, so to speak, before practicing Guru Yoga. Or maybe we had never even met. And only after practicing Guru Yoga do we somehow get engaged and then mixed. And then from then on we pray and long for inseparability. We have that kind of concept, but according to the Uttaratantra, that's absolutely wrong! If you think that you can only become inseparable from the guru once the guru has dissolved into you, then you are completely denying the fourth vajra point – the *kham*, the element. It's a bit like this. It's not as though you become inseparable only after practicing Guru Yoga. It's more like you have always been inseparable. In fact, there aren't even two objects that could be inseparable.

We aim for the model, the finishing line, and hence we take refuge

But it is not like taking refuge in suntan lotion to get a tan. Instead we have to know we have always been tanned!

So as I was saying, we long for the clean window. That's our aim. It's our finishing line, our model, what we want. And this is also why we use words like 'take refuge'. It's not like taking refuge in suntan lotion when you don't want to get burned. Instead, you have to know that you have always been tanned. If you were not originally tanned, then the suntan lotion would have to be used again and again. You would have to attain enlightenment again and again, as if you had to renew your enlightenment membership! So this is a path, and during the path, we take refuge in the Three Jewels. We have the concept of refuge and we have the concept that the Three Jewels are the object of refuge.

19 སྟོན་པ་བསྟན་པ་བསླབ་དོན་གྱིས། །
ཐེག་པ་གསུམ་དང་བྱེད་གསུམ་ལ། །
མོས་པ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་དབང་བྱས་ནས། །
སྐྱེས་གསུམ་རྣམ་པར་བཞག་པ་ཡིན། །

Through the aspects of the teacher, the teaching and the disciples, the refuge is presented as threefold: in relation to the three vehicles and to those whose aspirations are to the three styles of action.

There being the teacher, his teaching and his disciple leads to respective aspirations towards three vehicles and to three different activities [of veneration]. Viewing this, the refuge is shown as threefold.

We "refer" to the Three Jewels as the object of refuge. We label them for the sake of the path

We refer to the Three Jewels as the object of refuge. It's so beautiful to say that we "refer" to them this way, meaning that it's not as though they are this. We label or categorise them as objects of refuge for the sake of the path – Buddha as the teacher, Dharma as his teachings such as interdependent reality, and Sangha as those who practice this Dharma. And we also categorise the vehicles into three. The vehicle that aims for Buddhahood is the Mahayana. The vehicle that aims to attain the realisation of the Dharma is the Pratyekabuddha path, and the vehicle that seeks freedom from samsara is the Shravakayana.

We also categorise the vehicles into three

Different beings favour different refuge objects while on the path

Different beings at different times favour different objects among these three, and therefore, they are referred to as three objects of refuge. But this is only for the sake of the path, as they will not remain as objects of refuge when you achieve enlightenment. This will be explained further. The *gyü lama* is so nice – everything is explained again and again and again! Now according to Maitreya, among these three, the only ultimate object of refuge is the Buddha. Dharma is not really an ultimate object of refuge, as we will see when we now look at the two kinds of Dharma: scripture and realisation.

The only ultimate object of refuge is the Buddha

Dharma has two aspects: scripture and realisation

20 སྒང་ཕྱིར་བསྟུ་བའི་ཆོས་ཅན་ཕྱིར། །
མེད་ཕྱིར་འཇིགས་དང་བཅས་པའི་ཕྱིར། །
ཆོས་རྣམས་གཉིས་དང་འཕགས་པའི་ཚོགས། །
གཏན་གྱི་སྐྱེས་མཆོག་མ་ཡིན་ནོ། །

Neither both aspects of Dharma nor the deeply-realized Sangha constitute a supreme refuge that will last forever – because they are to be abandoned, one is an inconstant and one nothing whatsoever and because they have fear.

[The Dharma] will be abandoned and is of an unsteady nature. It is not [the ultimate quality] and [the Sangha] is still with fear. Thus the two aspects of Dharma and the Assembly of noble ones do not represent the supreme refuge, which is constant and stable

You abandon the skins of the scriptural Dharma as you gradually peel them

Even realisation Dharma is compounded, the result of a process. Realisation changes as skins are peeled

The scriptural Dharma is something that you abandon automatically when you reach the other shore. Even as you are getting closer to the other shore, you abandon the skins gradually as you peel them – you remember? And even the realisation Dharma, which is when a practitioner realises something, is a production. It is *dujey*, compounded, because it is the result of a process. All our realisations will change, again like peeling the skins. We realise another, more inner skin, thinking "this is it", and then that also gets peeled away. Every realisation is a step, and this is why even the realisation Dharma is deceptive.

Even the realisation of Shravakas is only an understanding of partial emptiness, so it is not the ultimate object of refuge

Even Bodhisattvas have some fear right to the end of the tenth bhumi, so only the Buddha is the ultimate object of refuge

Even the final realisation of the Shravakas and Pratyekabuddhas – we are not referring here to the final realisation of the Buddha – is actually only an understanding of partial emptiness. It is only the absence of suffering and emotion. Therefore it is not the ultimate object of refuge. And even Arhats – even Pratyekabuddhas I think, but definitely Arhats – although they have reached their final stage, their final enlightenment, they nevertheless still have fear towards aggregates and karma. And Bodhisattvas, those who are on the Mahayana path, are still on the path right until the last moment of the tenth bhumi, so they still have some kind of fear. Therefore they are also not ultimate objects of refuge. So the only ultimate object of refuge is the Buddha.

21 དམ་པའི་དོན་དུ་འགྲོ་བ་ཡི། །
སྒྲུབས་ནི་སངས་རྒྱས་ཉིད་གཅིག་ཡིན། །
ཐུབ་པ་ཆོས་ཀྱི་སྐུ་ཅན་ཕྱིར། །
ཚོགས་ཀྱང་དེ་ཡི་མཐར་ཐུག་ཕྱིར། །

Ultimately, only the Buddha constitutes a refuge for beings because that great victor is the embodiment of Dharma which is the ultimate attainment of the Sangha.

In a true sense only the Buddha is beings' refuge, since the Great Sage embodies the dharmakaya, and the Assembly also reaches its ultimate goal when these [qualities of dharmakaya are attained].

Ultimately Buddha is none other than Dharma and Sangha

But ultimately, Buddha is not other than the Dharma and the Sangha, because the ultimate Dharma is the absence of attachment. And that's what Buddha has achieved. And since Buddha is the result of end point of all the bhumis, the Buddha is also the essence, the quintessence of the Sangha.

We say *draldrey*, 'result of elimination', but there's nothing to eliminate, and we should not get stuck with the result either

Let's return to the idea of the result of elimination (*draldrey*). This will help a lot, especially if you are following Mipham Rinpoche's commentary. When you read the words 'result of elimination', just bear in mind that you can't think of elimination in the sense that there's something to eliminate. And nor should you get stuck with the result. Although during the path you can literally understand *draldrey* as the result of elimination, when we talk about the *kham*, nature, then we have to talk and think in a slightly different way. The mahasandhi people

In mahasandhi, we speak of 'primordially pure', but *draldrey* is a good word – the window glass that is pre-dirty and pre-clean

have very good words for this, such as 'primordially pure' (*kadag*), primordially eliminated so to speak. But unfortunately we can't use these words now, as this is Mahayana! Also, words like 'primordially pure' can really cause a lot of misunderstanding. So there are many reasons why *draldrey* is actually a very good term, especially for those who are following the gradual path. Just think about the window-glass that is pre-dirty and pre-clean. I'm telling you this again because in the next stanza we will hear words like 'rare and precious gem' (*könchok*), and when we hear the word 'rare', we immediately think that there is an actually, externally existing rare species called the Triple Gem that we should grab hold of while we have the chance!

We say 'rare and precious gem', but it should not be misunderstood as something that actually exists externally

22 འདྲུང་བ་དགོན་མཆོག་དྲི་མེད་མཆོག། །
མཐུ་ལྡན་མཆོག་དང་འཇིག་རྟེན་གྱི། །
རྒྱན་གྱུར་མཆོག་དང་མཆོག་ཉིད་མཆོག། །
འགྱུར་བ་མེད་མཆོག་དགོན་མཆོག་ཉིད། །

"Rare and supreme" because of being a most rare occurrence, stainless, powerful, the ornament of the world, the best possible thing and changeless.

Their occurrence is rare, they are free from defilement, they possess power, they are the adornment of the world, they are sublime and they are unchanging. Thus [they are named] "rare and sublime."

How the Three Jewels are like a rare and precious gem

A precious gem is very rare. It is stainless. It has the power to dispel poverty, and it is an ornament. Likewise the Triple Gem is an ornament for samsara and it is sublime. One great quality of this precious gem is that it doesn't change. Unlike a diamond, which is a diamond today but might not be a diamond tomorrow, it doesn't change. That's why it's precious. Likewise the three gems, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, are always precious. They do not change. All compounded phenomena are impermanent, and that will always be the case. But unlike the impermanence of phenomena, there is no expiry date for the Buddha! This last quality (*gyurwa mechir könchok nyi*) again indicates that Buddha is uncompounded, which is why Maitreya refers to the Three Jewels, and especially the Buddha, as 'uncompounded'. We will talk about this special meaning of 'uncompounded' many times later on. In referring to the Three Jewels as uncompounded, Maitreya is referring to the fact that their quality doesn't change. If they did change, they wouldn't be worthy objects of refuge. The window becomes clean and it becomes dirty, but the fact that it's washable doesn't change. That is the object of refuge. That's rare. And that's the only source of hope. And the fact that it's washable is also the ornament. It's a very bad example, but I think it works.

The precious quality of the Three Jewels does not change, otherwise they wouldn't be worthy objects of refuge. Therefore the Buddha is uncompounded

The window is sometimes clean and sometimes dirty, but it is always washable, and that 'washability' is the object of refuge

The Last Four Vajra Points

23 ཇི་བཅས་དེ་བཞིན་ཉིད་དང་ཇི་མ་མེད། །
ཇི་མེད་སངས་རྒྱས་ཡོན་ཏན་རྒྱལ་བའི་མཛད། །
གང་ལས་དགོན་མཆོག་དག་བ་གསུམ་འབྱུང་བ། །
དོན་དམ་གཟིགས་པ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་ཡུལ་ཉིད་དོ། །

That those three, excellent, rare and supreme arise from the suchness, polluted and unpolluted, the qualities of immaculate Buddhahood and the victor's deeds – such is the knowledge's domain for those who the ultimate perceive.

The virtuous Three Jewels, which are rare and sublime, arise from suchness bound up with pollution, from the one free from pollution, from the qualities of unpolluted Buddhahood and from the deeds of the Victor. This is the object of those who see the ultimate truth.

The four reasons why the Three Jewels arise:

Now we come to a thorough explanation of why there are the Three Jewels. There are four reasons:

1. *kham* when it is wrapped by defilements
2. When free from them
3. The Buddha's qualities
4. The Buddha's activity

1. When the Buddha-nature is accompanied or wrapped by stains or defilements
2. When the same Buddha-nature is free from these temporary defilements
3. This Buddha has all the great qualities such as the ten powers.
4. And this Buddha manifests, with infinite activity, in order to benefit sentient beings.

The first reason is amazing. When it is wrapped, there is a path and longing for a model or reference, thus we have the Three Jewels

From these four reasons emerges the concept of the "Triple Gem". This stanza is amazing. It's an amazing teaching. You see, we have the Triple Gem as the object of refuge. But who appointed it as the object of refuge to which we should be praying? Maitreya is saying that no one did! So where does it come from? From *kham*, the element or Buddha-nature. When this Buddha-nature is wrapped by defilements, when it is free from defilements, and after that its activity and its power. There are the four reasons, including the time when it is wrapped. Because when it is wrapped then there is a path, and then there is longing for or referring to some kind of model, as I was telling you earlier. And with this comes the notion of the rare, precious gem. And then Maitreya concludes by saying that this is beyond our ordinary conception.

All this is beyond our ordinary conception

For example, the window is pre-clean and pre-dirty. It is covered with temporary dirt and so we can clean it

For me, the most amazing part of this is the first reason. As we have just seen, there are four reasons why there are Three Jewels, and the first one is when Buddha-nature is wrapped by defilements. Again, let me bore you with my window example. The glass itself is pre-clean and pre-dirty. It has nothing to do with dirty and clean. It's just pure glass. Now it's wrapped by dirt, temporary dirt, and therefore it can be cleaned. And after cleaning, we have a certain quality that we call 'clean glass'. This is an analogy for the Buddha qualities, like

the ten powers. For example, when the glass is clean, then you can see the leaves falling through the glass. This is like the infinite Buddha activity. These four exist, and because of that, the Three Jewels exist. The clean glass – that's Buddha. The fact that the dirt is not glass and therefore it can be cleaned – that's the Dharma. And then, those window-washers who, with that confidence, wash the temporary non-glass dirt – that's the Sangha. That's the path. Maitreya's introduction to the Triple Gem is amazing! I don't think you will find a greater introduction than this. And ultimately this can only be expressed or explained by someone who has understood the ultimate nature.

The analogy of the window corresponds to the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha

24 དཀོན་མཆོག་གསུམ་པོ་འདི་ཡི་རིགས། །
ཐམས་ཅད་གཟིགས་པ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་ཡུལ། །
དེ་ཡང་རྣམ་བཞི་གོ་རིམས་བཞིན། །
རྒྱུ་བཞི་ཡིས་ནི་བསམ་མི་ཕྱེད། །

The potential for these three rare and supreme gems is the domain of knowledge of the omniscient. In respective order there are four reasons for these four aspects being inconceivable. They are:

The disposition of the Three Rare and Sublime Ones is the object [of vision] of those who see everything. Furthermore, these four aspects in the given order are inconceivable, for the following four reasons:

The four reasons are inconceivable because they contain four paradoxes

The reason for the Triple Gem is going to be explained once again. There are four reasons, which are understood only by the Buddha, and cannot be understood by ordinary beings.

The Four Paradoxes

25 དག་དང་ཉོན་མོངས་དང་ལྡན་ཕྱིར། །
ཀུན་ནས་ཉོན་མོངས་མེད་དག་ཕྱིར། །
རྣམ་པར་དབྱེ་བ་མེད་ཚོས་ཕྱིར། །
ལྷུན་གྱིས་བྱེད་ལ་ཤེས་ཀྱིས་ཕྱིར། །

Pure yet accompanied by defilement, completely undefiled yet to be purified truly inseparable qualities, total non-thought and spontaneity.

[The Buddha element] is pure and yet has afflictions. [Enlightenment] was not afflicted and yet is purified. Qualities are totally indivisible [and yet unapparent]. [Activity] is spontaneous and yet without any thought.

He will now explain the reasons in more detail, in terms of four paradoxes. These are amazing, unbelievable reasons! The four paradoxes are as follows.

The four paradoxes:

1. *kham* is primordially pure yet shrouded by temporal defilements

2. Defilements have never been part of Buddha-nature, yet they are seemingly eliminated during the path

3. All the qualities of the Buddha exist within sentient beings even now, but we don't see them

This doesn't just refer to the Buddha's mind, but all of his qualities down to every single lock of hair

People misunderstand Buddha-nature as being some kind of potential that we all have. But we have all the enlightened qualities right now

4. Buddha's compassion is infinite, yet he has no intention

1. The first paradox is that the *kham*, the Buddha-nature, is primordially pure, yet it is accompanied by or shrouded with temporary defilements. That's a paradox, and that's one reason why there are the Three Jewels.

2. The second paradox is that although the defilements have never been part of the Buddha-nature, nevertheless when you practice the path, there is seemingly the elimination of defilements. You really have to listen carefully to the Uttaratantra – there are not many 'resting' words!

3. The third paradox is that even though all the qualities of the Buddha – such as the ten powers, 32 major marks, and 80 minor marks – exist within ordinary beings all the time without increase, decrease or change, nevertheless we don't see them. For example, one of the 32 major marks is that the Buddha's lips are as red as the *bimpa*, a very special fruit. These qualities are all there all the time, but we don't see them. This is the third paradox, and it is another reason for the Three Jewels. I am really talking like a Shentongpa now! We're talking here about all the Buddha qualities, not just the existence of qualities like his mind, or more dharmakaya kind of things! It's not only things like that. For the Shentongpas, every single quality of the Buddha exists within us right now, including each single hair. This is why I was emphasising the lips. Similarly, when the Buddha extends his tongue, it covers his whole face. But right now we don't see that – it's a paradox! But according to the great Shentongpa masters, all these qualities exist right now. It's a very big statement. When people say, "everybody has the Buddha-nature", they are usually referring to some kind of potential. It's almost like having something that you could put into a certain solution, some special chemicals, which would then enlarge into the Buddha! We think like that! But that's not what he's saying here. Everything, down to each single hair of the Buddha, exists right now.

4. The fourth paradox is that although the Buddha's compassion is infinite, omnipresent and all-pervasive, nevertheless the Buddha doesn't have any intention.

26 རྒྱས་བྱ་རྒྱས་པ་དེ་ཡི་ནི། །
ཡན་ལག་རྒྱས་པར་བྱེད་ཕྱིར་ཏེ། །
གོ་རིམས་ཇི་བཞིན་གནས་གཉིག་དེ། །
དག་རྒྱུ་གསུམ་ནི་རྒྱུན་ཡིན་གོ། །

> Since there is that to be realized, the realization, the attributes of realization and that which brings realization, then respectively, the first point is the prime cause, that to be purified, and the remaining three points constitute conditions.
>
> *Constituting what must be realized, realization, its attributes and the means to bring it about, accordingly the first is the cause to be purified and the [latter] three points are the conditions.*

The explanation of the reasons continues. The Buddha-nature is what needs to be actualised, understood or realised. And upon realising the Buddha-nature we attain enlightenment, which is not other than the Buddha-nature. The Buddha qualities arise as you realise the Buddha-nature. And then with great compassion you help others to understand this Buddha-nature. Here we are talking about the four paradoxes once again, and among these four paradoxes, the first paradox is the true cause, and the three others are conditions. What is it the cause for? It's the cause for the path, the Three Jewels.

The first paradox is the true cause, the other three are conditions

Now we are really going to enter into a very extensive explanation of the Buddha-nature. When Buddha taught, the main aim or the quintessence of his teachings is the Dharmadhatu or space of phenomena (*ying*). It is the space of all the dharmas (*chökyi ku*). At times, the Buddha explains this more in terms of emptiness. And at times, the Buddha explains this Dharmadhatu more in terms of the qualities of this emptiness, such as the ten powers and 32 major marks. And therefore we have the teachings such as Buddha-nature. Mipham Rinpoche is saying that it's very important for us to understand that emptiness and Buddha-nature are in union, inseparable. But it's difficult. It's not only difficult intellectually, but also emotionally, as we always fall into one of the extremes. We are always forgetting the unity of these two. Some people don't like the emptiness part, so they fall into a more eternalist way of thinking about Buddha-nature. And some fall into nihilism by thinking that all these qualities and powers of the Buddha qualities are not primordially within the space. If you fall into either of these extremes, you will always encounter problems, not just intellectually, but also in your practice. We have already covered some of the comments that Mipham Rinpoche makes here in his commentary.

At times, the Buddha taught the Dharmadhatu more in terms of emptiness. At other times more in terms of the qualities of this emptiness, such as the ten powers and 32 major marks

Emptiness and Buddha-nature are inseparable. We have trouble with this emotionally: some don't like the emptiness aspect (and become eternalist); others don't think Buddha qualities are primordially present (nihilist). Either extreme leads to problems in your practice

There's another danger when we talk about family, type, race or element, which some of the early scholars in Tibet fell prey to. This danger is that we might interpret the element as being some kind of potential. Many scholars think that all sentient beings have the potential to achieve enlightenment, and they refer to that potential as the Buddha-nature. But Mipham Rinpoche is not happy with that, especially if the potential is compounded. Of course there's a different way to define this. When there is a process of cause and result, usually the cause transforms into the result. For example, the seed transforms into a shoot, meaning that the seed ceases to exist. When the seed ceases to exist, this is referred to birth of the shoot, the existence of the shoot. But Mipham Rinpoche does not accept that. According to him, and I must say according to Maitreya as

There is a danger that we may misinterpret *kham* or Buddha-nature as being a 'potential'

Buddha-nature is not like a seed that transforms into a shoot through practice. It already has all the qualities of the shoot

We cannot even speak of 'seed' and 'shoot', as these are path language

well, it doesn't work like that. Mipham Rinpoche's commentary has a very profound explanation of this. Many scholars think that we have the Buddha-nature like a seed, and that as we practice, it then transforms into the fully enlightened state. But according to Mipham Rinpoche, this Buddha-nature is not like a seed. It has all the qualities of the shoot. In fact, according to Mipham Rinpoche, it cannot even be referred to as a shoot, because 'seed' and 'shoot' are path language.

As Longchenpa said, our practice only cleans the dirt. So the Buddha qualities are all *draldrey*, the result of elimination

So as Longchenpa said, all our so-called practice and accumulation of merit – such as reciting the Vajrasattva mantra and doing all these prostrations – the only thing that they do is clear defilements. This works quite well with my bad example of the window. Because if we believe, like some of the early scholars, that Buddha-nature is a potential, like some kind of seed that transforms into a shoot, then the consequence is that we would have to say that the window, the glass, is changing. But it is not. The pre-dirty and pre-clean glass never changes. All of our washing and spraying only cleans the dirt, and this is why we say that all the Buddha qualities, including each lock of hair, are the result of elimination (*draldrey*).

The Fourth Vajra Point: The Element

27 རྒྱལ་བས་སངས་རྒྱས་ནི་འཕྲོ་ཕྱིར་དང་། །
དེ་བཞིན་ཉིད་བདེར་མེད་ཕྱིར་དང་། །
རིགས་ཡོད་ཕྱིར་ན་ལུས་ཅན་ཀུན། །
རྒྱུན་ཆུ་སངས་རྒྱས་སྙིང་པོ་ཅན། །

The Buddha-essence is ever-present in everyone because the dharmakaya of perfect Buddhahood pervades all, the suchness is undifferentiated and they have the potential.

The perfect Buddhakaya is all-embracing, suchness cannot be differentiated, and all beings have the disposition. Thus they always have Buddha-nature.

Ordinary beings can practice and then manifest as the Buddha because they have Buddha-nature

The first reason that an ordinary being can practice and then manifest as the perfect Buddha, adorned with all the qualities of perfection, is that ordinary beings have the Buddha-nature. Therefore they can manifest as the Buddha just as Siddhartha did, as we saw yesterday.

Samsara and nirvana are extremeless and thus equal. Buddha and sentient beings are inseparable

The second reason is that all the phenomena of samsara and nirvana are free from all extremes, and therefore they are equal. They are not separate entities. So in the ultimate sense, Buddha and sentient beings cannot be separated. You might have a question at this point. If all phenomena are equal in the ultimate sense, if they are equally emptiness, does this also includes stones and pieces of

Do stones also have *kham*? To answer this, we talk about *rig* or race

wood? Do they have the *kham*? Do they have this element or nature? This is where we can talk about *rig* or race. This quotation is quoted so much, especially by mahasandhi people. Until now, we have been hearing that there is something called Buddha-nature, and that problems arise because of the wrapping, the defilements. Now for the first time, we are going to hear some kind of benefit of having that wrapping, because wood and stones don't have it. Also, it is our mind that sees or projects inanimate things like wood and stones. It is never the other way around. Here we are continuing to slowly construct the definition of Buddha-nature, what we call family, element, or nature. With three reasons, all sentient beings have the essence of the Buddha.

Defilements cause our problems, but they also have benefits. Stones don't have this 'wrapping', so they aren't sentient beings

Day 4 – Introduction

There is no truly existing self. All that we think exists is a fabrication of our minds

We become attached to our fabrications and think they are real, which is why they are referred to as 'extreme'. Any conception is fanatical!

Emptiness is taught in order to lead us beyond these extremes

Buddha Shakyamuni taught us many teachings, including more than 84,000 teachings, three different vehicles and so on. The essence of all of these teachings is interdependent arising (*tenching drelwa jungwa*). Nothing arises independently, therefore nothing dwells independently, and so nothing ceases independently. Therefore there's nothing permanent. There is no truly existing self. So everything that we think exists, or does not exist, or both or neither – all these things are fabrications of our mind. We fabricate them and then we become attached to our fabrications. We don't realise that they are our own fabrications, so we think that they are real, which is why they are referred to as "extreme". Basically, every single conception or clinging that we have is some kind of fanatical process. And many Mahayana sutras teach emptiness or shunyata to lead us beyond all these extremes and fabrications.

But emptiness is not like exhaustion of fire. It has an aspect of unobstructed wisdom

Our difficulty is that we think wisdom implies a cognizer, which implies the senses and sense objects

We talk of the Buddha's tongue and so on because his body is the ripening of the two accumulations. We call it kaya, dimension

But as I've told you repeatedly, and will tell you again and again, when we talk about emptiness, it is not like the exhaustion of a fire or evaporation of water. It is not merely a negation, elimination or denial. It has unobstructed omniscience (*chencha gakpa mepa*). This is where things become a little difficult! Emptiness has an aspect of uninterrupted wisdom. And this is the difficulty, because as soon as we talk about wisdom, we're talking about a cognizer or cognition. And the moment we talk about a cognizer or cognition, we start talking about five or six senses and their sense objects, because that's the only way we are used to thinking about the idea of a 'cognizer'. When we say, "I recognise him", we are already talking about our eyes or ear consciousness or something like that. If we say, "I recognise his voice", then there's cognition. Yesterday we talked about the Buddha's tongue and teeth and some of you asked why do we need to talk about this. That's an important question, because when we talk about the body of the deity, or the body of the Buddha, we are talking about what we call the ripening of two kinds of accumulations – the accumulation of merit and the accumulation of wisdom. And we usually we call that a kaya or dimension.

The wisdom aspect of emptiness isn't subject to our usual logic of subject, object and time

As I was saying earlier, as soon as we talk about wisdom, we automatically think of it as a cognizer. And when we think about a cognizer, we also think about an object that needs to be cognised. But that kind of logic really doesn't apply to this kind of wisdom, which is why it is difficult. Our ordinary kind of cognition has a beginning, middle and end, so it is compounded, and then it becomes suffering and all that. The moment that we talk about wisdom, our mind thinks it's something that isn't inanimate. We have to be quite careful here, because when we say that it's not inanimate, our mind automatically thinks that it's something animate, which takes us back to the mind again. This is why *gyü lama* is really complementary to the mahasandhi teachings, which always say that mind and wisdom are separate (*semdang yeshey*).

It is not inanimate, but nor is it animate in the ordinary sense of mind. Uttaratantra complements mahasandhi, which says that mind and wisdom are separate

We need to talk about this seeming cognizer because we have to construct a path. It is an important part of *kham* or tathagatagarbha

You might wonder why we need to struggle to construct this seeming cognizer or cognition that is somehow not inanimate, but at the same time is not animate in the ordinary way. We need to do this because we have to construct a path, and so we have these seven vajra points. And this cognizer is a big aspect of the *kham*, the element that we're talking about. It's seemingly a cognizer, but it has no object, and therefore it's not a subject. And yet it's still a cognizer. It's not inanimate, but I cannot say that it's animate in the sense of mind.

It is a quality of the emptiness, *dralwey dreybu*

This is one aspect of the element or *rig*, the tathagatagarbha (*deshek nyingpo*). That's one way of talking about it, but the safest way to talk about it is always *dralwey dreybu*. Let me give you a very bad example. The space where I am sitting has a quality or function. It's a bit like having an empty flat, where you can put furniture and stuff like that. If your flat isn't empty then you can't do that. That's a quality of the emptiness. And this cognizer is not like a couch potato or piece of stone, something that has no function and doesn't do anything. You see again, when we talk about emptiness, something beyond fabrication, we immediately we think of a state that has no function, but that is absolutely not correct. It is full of function, and this function is what we call Buddha activity, which is another aspect of the Buddha-nature. Let's go through some stanzas today. At a glance they are quite easy to understand, but the more you read and contemplate them, the more difficult they become!

We misunderstand emptiness as referring to a state with no function, but in fact it is full of function, which is Buddha activity

28 སངས་རྒྱས་ཡེ་ཤེས་སེམས་ཅན་ཚོགས་ཞུགས་ཕྱིར། །
རང་བཞིན་དྲི་མེད་དེ་ནི་གཉིས་མེད་དེ། །
སངས་རྒྱས་རིགས་ལ་དེ་འབྲས་ཉེར་བརྡགས་ཕྱིར། །
འགྲོ་ཀུན་སངས་རྒྱས་སྙིང་པོ་ཅན་དུ་གསུངས། །

It is said that all beings possess Buddhahood's essence since the Buddhajñana has ever been in them present, also since the immaculate nature is non-dual and the Buddha-potential is named after its fruit.

The Buddha has said that all beings have Buddha-nature "since Buddha wisdom is always present within the assembly of beings, since this undefiled nature is free from duality, and since the disposition to Buddhahood has been named after its fruit."

Buddha-nature is no different in samsara or nirvana, but when we realise it, we label that realisation 'nirvana', so Buddha has said all beings have Buddha-nature

The wisdom or dharmakaya of the Buddha dwells within sentient beings, and therefore one day it manifests. And the stainless Buddha-nature is no different during samsara and after samsara, which is nirvana. The Buddha-nature doesn't change at all. When we realise this Buddha-nature, or this Buddha family, then we label that realisation 'nirvana'. That's why the Buddhas have said that all sentient beings have the essence of the Buddha. From now on, we will go into a very extensive explanation of this.

The Ten Aspects (of Buddha-nature)

29 ངོ་བོ་རྒྱུ་འབྲས་ལས་ལྷན་འཛིན་པ་དང་། །
གནས་སྐབས་དེ་བཞིན་ཀུན་ཏུ་འགྱུར་བའི་དོན། །
རྒྱ་ཏུ་མི་འགྱུར་ཡོན་ཏན་བཟོད་མེད་གི། །
དོན་དམ་བདེ་བར་ཀྱི་དགོངས་དོན་ཡིན་ཞེས་བྱ། །

The meaning intended by "the ultimate space" should be known through its nature, cause, result, function, endowments, approach, phases, all-pervasiveness, inalterability and the qualities' inseparability.

Essence, cause, fruit, function, endowment, manifestation, phases, all-pervasiveness of suchness, unchangingness, and inseparability of the qualities should be understood as intended to describe the meaning of the absolute expanse.

Buddha-nature has ten aspects:

The Buddha-nature has ten different aspects. All this will be explained in detail, and we will begin with just a summary. By now you know that Maitreya talks about each topic again and again. First it is introduced and then it is explained. So be patient. In terms of its ten aspects, Buddha-nature is:

1. Essence
2. Cause
3. Result
4. Action/Function
5. Possessor/Endowment

1. Primordially pure, which is the essence (*ngowo*).
2. A cause (*gyu*), when there is motivation.
3. A result (*dre*), when it is free from stains.
4. An action (*ley*), where you see or feel suffering and pain, and then act accordingly. For example you try to get rid of suffering and achieve happiness. This is because of the *rig* or *kham*. As we also discussed yesterday, because of the *kham* you know how to harm others and avoid that harm for yourself.
5. A possessor (*denpa*), a container or possessor of all the qualities of cause and result.

6. Entry/Approach

6. An entry (*jug*), an entrance or approach where practitioners of different faculties can enter and achieve the result.

7. Occasions/Phases

7. Different occasions (*nekab*), or situations. We have Buddha-nature at impure occasions, pure occasions and so forth.

8. All-pervasive

8. All-pervasive (*deshin kuntu drowey dön*), because the Buddha-nature is all pervasive.

9. Unchanging

9. Unchanging (*taktu mingyur*), as it is not stained by any other fault or made more beautiful by any kind of good quality.

10. Non-dual/Inseparable

10. Non-dual or inseparable (*yermey*), as you cannot separate emptiness and clarity and so on.

These ten aspects are the real or hidden meaning of emptiness, which is Buddha-nature

And this is the real meaning of emptiness (*döndam yingkyi kong*). It's a very beautiful phrase. When Buddha taught the Prajñaparamita, he used words like 'emptiness', and the real or hidden meaning of emptiness is actually Buddha-nature. So now we'll go through these ten aspects of Buddha-nature in more detail.

#1: Essence

30 ངོ་ཆེན་ནམ་མཁའ་ཆུ་དག་བཞིན། །
རྒྱ་ཆུ་རང་བཞིན་ཉོན་མོངས་མེད། །
ཆོས་མོས་ལྷག་པའི་ཞེས་རབ་དང་། །
ཏིང་འཛིན་སྙིང་རྗེ་བརྩེ་ལས་བྱུང་བ། །

Like the purity of a jewel, space or water, it is always undefiled in essence. It emerges through aspiration for Dharma, highest prajña, meditation and compassion.

Just as a jewel, the sky and water are pure it is by nature always free from poisons. From devotion to the Dharma, from highest wisdom, and from samadhi and compassion [its realization arises].

#1: Essence. Buddha-nature is primordially pure, like a jewel, space or water

A jewel is naturally or primordially pure. This is not the example of the window that we talked about yesterday. This is a different example, a better one I guess. It's much better of course! Mine was just a window-pane. The sky and water are also naturally pure, like the jewel. When we talk about water being naturally pure, it seems as though a little bit of India is creeping in here! But the mahasandhi people also use this kind of example, and it works very well. For instance, they say that when the mind is stained, it's like water that has become like ice. But the very water has become ice. The ice and the water are inseparable. It's the great union. These examples work very well. Likewise Buddha-nature is primordially pure.

The example of water and ice is used in mahasandhi to illustrate defiled mind

#2: Cause

#2: Cause. There are four causes, which stem from and also realise *kham*:

i) enthusiasm
ii) wisdom
iii) samadhi
iv) compassion

That was the first aspect, essence, and in the second half of the stanza we come to the second aspect, cause. There are four causes: the first is enthusiasm (*möpa*), for example towards the Mahayana. The second is the insight or wisdom that understands selflessness. Third is samadhi that has bliss, and fourth is compassion towards sentient beings. These four causes stem from the *kham*. But these four causes also actualise or realise the *kham*. I think that I will use the word *kham* more from now on, as it seems that we know what we are talking about. Again, this is explained in more detail.

31 མཐུ་དང་གཞན་དུ་མི་འགྱུར་དང་། །
བརྩན་པའི་ངོ་བོའི་རང་བཞིན་ཕྱིར། །
འདི་དག་རྡོར་བྱ་རིན་ཆེན་མཁའ། །
ཆུ་ཡི་ཡོན་ཏན་ཆོས་མཐུན་ཉིད། །

Its qualities resemble those of a valued gem because it is powerful, of space because it is inalterable and of water because it moistens.

[Wielding] power, not changing into something else, and being a nature that has a moistening [quality]: these [three] have properties corresponding to those of a precious gem, the sky and water.

As we clean the dirt, we say the pre-dirty and pre-clean glass becomes clean. In reality, the glass is neither clean nor dirty, otherwise the cleaning process could not happen

Likewise, Buddha-nature is like a wish-fulfilling jewel

This stanza is so beautiful! Yesterday we saw that the Three Jewels are the objects of veneration and supplication, but they are actually none other than the Buddha-nature. As the Sakyapas say, because the glass is pre-clean and pre-dirty, the motivation to clean the dirt is like a supplication. And as you clean the dirt, the glass becomes clean, and that is because its reality is not dirty and not clean. That's why relatively you can say it has become clean. If it were either clean or dirty in reality, one or the other, then the cleaning process could not happen. Likewise, Buddha-nature has the power to fulfil the wishes of sentient beings, and that's why it's like a wishfulfilling jewel.

Buddha-nature's quality never changes, like the sky, and its unobstructed cognition is compassion, which moistens like water

Before you begin the path, during the path and after the path, the quality of the Buddha-nature never changes. Therefore it's like the sky. Now the next one is interesting! Buddha-nature has unobstructed cognition. Remember, we were talking about it earlier? This cognition is not other than compassion, which has a moistening quality, and therefore Buddha-nature is like water.

32 ཆོས་ལ་བོད་ཁྲོ་བདག་ལྟ་དང་། །
འཁོར་བའི་སྡུག་བསྔལ་གྱིས་འཇིགས་དང་། །
སེམས་ཅན་དོན་ལ་ལྷོས་མེད་ཉིད། །
འདོད་ཆེན་མ་སྟེགས་ཉན་ཐོས་དང་། །

Hostility towards the Dharma the view that there is a self-entity, fear of samsara's sufferings and disregard for benefiting beings are the four sorts of obscurations

Enmity towards the Dharma, a view [asserting an existing] self, fear of samsara's suffering, and neglect of the welfare of fellow beings are the four veils

33 རང་བྱུང་རྣམས་ཀྱི་སྨྲོན་རྣམ་བཞི། །
དགེ་རྩ་ལྷག་པར་མོས་པ་ལ། །
སོགས་པའི་ཆོས་ནི་རྣམ་བཞི་ཉིད། །

Of the desire-bound, the mistaken, Shravakas and Pratyekabuddhas respectively. The causes of purification are four qualities: strong aspiration for Dharma and so on.
Of those with great desire, of tirthikas, Shravakas and Pratyekabuddhas. The cause that purifies [all these veils] consists of the four qualities [of the path], which are outstanding devotion and so on.

Four obscurations wrap the *kham*:

1. Aggression towards Dharma, for example the denial that we will all die

2. Clinging to self

3. Fear of samsara and a desire to attain nirvana

4. Not relying on actions to benefit sentient beings

There are four obscurations that are wrapping the *kham*, the Buddha-nature.

1. Aggression towards the Dharma, for example towards the Mahayana path. The usage of the word 'aggression' here is quite interesting. Ordinary people have this obscuration. For example, we don't want to hear that we will die one of these days, or that we are getting old every minute. That is the aggression. It's a sort of denial.
2. Attachment or clinging to the self.
3. Fear towards samsara, and therefore a desire to attain nirvana.
4. The fourth one is very special to Maitreya, and not included in many other Mahayana shastras. The fourth obscuration is not relying on actions to benefit sentient beings.

These obscurations are found, respectively, in sentient beings, extremists, Shravakas, and Pratyekabuddhas. They are dispelled by four different kinds of Dharma

The obscurations are found in different beings. Those who have desire, referring to sentient beings like us, have the first obscuration. Extremists (*muthekpa*) – we could say non-Buddhists, but we have to be politically correct here – have the second. Shravakas have the third, and Pratyekabuddhas have the fourth. And in order to dispel these four obscurations, Bodhisattvas apply four different kinds of Dharma.

34 ཐེག་མཆོག་ལ་མོས་པའོན་ཤེས་རབ་ནི། །
སངས་རྒྱས་ཆོས་བསྐྱེད་མ་དང་བསམ་གཏན་ཀྱི། །
བདེ་བའི་མངལ་གནས་སྨྲིང་རྟེའི་མ་མ་ཅན། །
གང་ཡིན་དེ་དག་ཐུབ་པའི་རྟེས་སྐྱེས་སྲས། །

Those whose seed is aspiration for the supreme yana, whose mother is prajña, originator of the Buddha's qualities, for whom meditative stability is a comfortable womb and compassion a nanny–these are sons of Buddhas born.

Those whose seed is devotion towards the supreme vehicle, whose mother is analytical wisdom generating the Buddha qualities, whose abode is the blissful womb of meditative stability, and whose nurse is compassion, are heirs born to succeed the Muni.

The four obscurations that wrap the *kham* are dispelled by four different kinds of Dharma:

1. Enthusiasm for the Mahayana – like the seed

2. Wisdom that understands emptiness – like the mother

3. Samadhi with infinite bliss – like the womb

4. Compassion, which makes Bodhisattvas rely on actions to benefit sentient beings – like the nurse

1. Enthusiasm for the supreme vehicle, the Mahayana vehicle, is like a seed. This is the antidote towards aggression to the Dharma, the first obscuration.
2. The wisdom that understands selflessness gives birth to all the qualities of the Buddha, and therefore the view or wisdom of selflessness is like a mother. It's the antidote to the second obscuration.
3. The supreme samadhi with infinite bliss is like a womb. The womb also refers to samsara, because this is the antidote to the third obscuration, fear of samsara. The analogy here is that the womb is a very blissful place, which is why Bodhisattvas don't have that fear.
4. Compassion is like a nurse, which makes Bodhisattvas always rely on actions to benefit sentient beings.

From these come the children of the Buddha. Now if you have heard many Mahayana and Shravakayana teachings before, the next stanza will really puzzle you if not shock you.

#3: Result

35 གཙང་བདག་བདེ་བང་རྒྱ་ཉིད་ཀྱི། །
ཡོན་ཏན་ཕ་རོལ་ཕྱིན་པ་འབྲས། །
སྡུག་བསྔལ་ཡིད་འབྱུང་ཞི་ཕོད་པར། །
འདུན་བང་སྨོན་པའི་ལས་ཅན་ནོ། །

Its result has the transcendental qualities of purity, identity, happiness and permanence. Its function is revulsion for suffering accompanied by an aspiration, a longing, for peace.

The fruit is the perfection of the qualities of purity, self happiness and permanence. Weariness of suffering, longing to attain peace, and devotion towards this aim are the function.

#3. Result.

The Shravakayana and the Bodhicharyavatara teach that things are not clean, there is no self, etc. But here we learn that as the result of applying the four causes, we obtain something that is clean, self, bliss and permanence

In the gradual path, the Shravakayana, and even in the Bodhicharyavatara, we hear words like "things are not clean". We are reminded that a body is full of shit, pus, blood and so on, and all the things that we think are clean and pristine are actually not clean. Remember that kind of mind training? And we also hear that there is no self, no ultimate independent happiness, and of course there is nothing that is permanent. And yet here we hear that as the result of applying the four causes that we've just talked about, we will obtain something that is clean, self, bliss and permanence.

However these qualities are 'transcendental'. For example, the 'purity' is not ordinary purity but transcendental purity (which is beyond both pure and impure)

But the word 'transcend' is quite important here, as in 'transcendental paramita' (*paroltu chinpa*). These are transcendental purity (*tsangwey paroltu chinpa*), transcendental bliss (*dewey paroltu chinpa*), transcendental permanence (*tagpey paroltu chinpa*) and transcendental sublime identity (*dag dampey paroltu chinpa*). For example, transcendent purity is not really clean in the ordinary sense of clean, but something that transcends that kind of cleanliness. It's a bit like this. In the Heart Sutra, for instance, it talks about how "form is emptiness", and most of the Madhyamika texts are based on that first aspect, namely form is emptiness. By contrast, *gyü lama* concentrates on "emptiness is form". This will be explained a little later. But before that, let's talk about result and action. One of the functions of *kham*, the Buddha-nature or element, is that one will feel revulsion towards suffering. Because there is Buddha-nature, one will have longing and aspiration for peace, happiness, and enlightenment.

Madhyamika concentrates on "form is emptiness", and Uttaratantra concentrates on "emptiness is form"

Through the function of the *kham*, we feel revulsion to samsara and longing for enlightenment

36 འདི་དག་འབྲས་ནི་མདོར་བསྡུ་ན། །
ཆོས་ཀྱི་སྐུ་ལ་ཕྱིན་ཅི་ལོག
རྣམ་པ་བཞི་ལས་བརྒྱུད་པ་ཡི། །
གཉེན་པོས་རབ་ཏུ་ཕྱེ་བ་ཉིད། །

In brief the result of these represents the remedy to both the four ways of straying from dharmakaya and to their four antidotes.

In brief, the fruit of these [purifying causes] fully divides into the remedies [for the antidotes], which [in their turn] counteract the four aspects of wrong beliefs with regard to the dharmakaya.

The four causes give the result dharmakaya, which is the absence of the four wrong views, and which is clean, blissful, permanent and self

The four causes that we talked about give a result, which is dharmakaya. Dharmakaya is the absence of these four wrong views. So the four causes give the result of dharmakaya, which is absent of dirty, no-self, pain and impermanent. Thus we obtain the dharmakaya that is clean, blissful, permanent: and self. This is being taught metaphorically, so to speak.

37 དེ་ནི་རང་བཞིན་དག་ཕྱིར་དང་། །
བག་ཆགས་སྦྱང་ཕྱིར་གཙང་བ་ཡིན། །

This is purity because its nature is pure and all karmic impurities have been removed.

The [Dharmakaya] is purity, since its nature is pure and [even] the remaining imprints are fully removed.

Dharmakaya is primordially pure, pre-clean and pre-dirty. But like washing the window, if we apply the path, we experience purification of the dirt

We experience clean glass, but the glass itself never experienced dirt. This is transcendental cleanliness

Once again this is explained in more detail. Why is the dharmakaya clean? Because dharmakaya is primordially pure. It has not been stained even for a moment with any kind of dirt. Here we are talking about the pre-dirty and pre-clean kind of cleanliness. And the second line says if you apply the path, then seemingly once again you experience the purification of the dirt. Just like when you apply washing methods, once again you experience the clean glass. But this is only based on the path. The glass itself still has no idea that it has ever experienced dirt. This is what we call the paramita of cleanliness, the transcendental cleanliness.

37 (contd.) བདག་དང་བདག་མེད་སྤྲོས་པ་དག །
ཉེ་བར་ཞི་བས་དམ་པའི་བདག །

It is true identity because all complications of "self" or "no-self" have been absolutely quelled.

It is true self, since all conceptual elaboration in terms of self and non-self is totally stilled.

Here we use the word dharmakaya instead of *kham*, as we are referring to the result

Dharmakaya is beyond all ideas of self or selflessness. This is transcendental self

Why is the dharmakaya a self? Notice that I'm using the word 'dharmakaya'. I'm actually talking about the *kham*, but I am using the word 'dharmakaya', because at the moment we are talking about the category of result. We are talking about the same thing, but now we're talking about pre-clean and pre-dirty, which is why I have to use the word 'dharmakaya'. Dharmakaya is beyond the self that is imputed by extremists, and it is also beyond the selflessness is beyond selflessness that is imputed by the Shravakas and all the lower paths – by all paths, actually. That is the transcendental self. I feel like I'm teaching Purvamimasa or Vedanta right now!

38 ཡིད་ཀྱི་རང་བཞིན་ལྷན་པོ་དང་། །
དེ་རྒྱུ་ལོག་ཕྱིར་བདེ་བ་ཉིད། །

It is happiness through the five aggregates, which are of a mental nature, and also their causes' demise.

It is true happiness, since [even] the aggregates of mental nature and their causes are reversed.

Dharmakaya is beyond aggregates and their cause, ignorance. Hence there is no suffering. This is transcendental bliss

The dharmakaya has no aggregates, not even the subtlest aggregates, nor the cause of such aggregates, which is ignorance. When there is no ignorance and no result of ignorance, namely the aggregates, there is no suffering. That is transcendental bliss.

38 (contd.) འཁོར་བ་དང་ནི་མྱ་ངན་འདས། །
མཉམ་པ་ཉིད་དུ་རྟོགས་ཕྱིར་རྟག །

It is permanence, since the sameness of samsara and nirvana has been realized.

It is permanence, since the cycle of existence and the state beyond pain are realized as one.

Since samsara and nirvana are inseparable, dharmakaya is beyond time. This is transcendental permanence

In the state of the dharmakaya, there is no such thing as someone who was once upon a time a samsaric being and then later achieved enlightenment. Again, we are talking about pre-dirty and pre-clean, the same thing. Therefore, there is no change, for example from a being in samsara to a being in nirvana. And that unchangingness is transcendental permanence.

39 བདག་སྒོམ་མ་ལུས་ཤེས་རབ་ཀྱིས་བཅད་དེ། །
སེམས་ཅན་སྒོམ་ཕྱིར་བརྩེ་ལྡན་ཞི་ཐོབ་མིན། །
དེ་ལྟར་བློ་བརྩེ་བྱང་ཆུབ་ཐབས་བརྟེན་ནས། །
འཕགས་པ་འཁོར་བའམ་མྱ་ངན་འདའ་མི་འགྱུར། །

Those of compassionate love have, with prajña, completely cut through all self-cherishing. They will not want to enter personal nirvana because they dearly care for every being. Hence by reliance upon these means to enlightenment – wisdom and compassion – the deeply-realized are neither in samsara nor personal nirvana's quiescence.

Their analytical wisdom has cut all self-cherishing without exception. Yet, cherishing beings, those possessed of compassion do not adhere to peace. Relying on understanding and compassionate love – the means to enlightenment – noble ones will neither [abide] in samsara nor in a [limited] nirvana.

Because of wisdom and compassion, a Bodhisattva dwells neither in samsara nor nirvana

Now, we are talking about the path, and how a Bodhisattva transcends all kinds of extremes. A Bodhisattva who is on the path has cut all kinds of craving and attachment to the self with the sword of wisdom. Therefore, a Bodhisattva does not dwell in samsara. Nevertheless, a Bodhisattva craves for sentient beings out of compassion. Therefore a Bodhisattva also does not fall into the extreme of nirvana. Because of wisdom and method – with the wisdom that understands selflessness and with compassion – a sublime being, a Bodhisattva, does not dwell in samsara and nirvana.

#4: Action/Function

40 གལ་ཏེ་སངས་རྒྱས་བཞེས་མེད་ན། །
སྡུག་ལ་སྨྲོ་བར་མི་འགྱུར་ཞིང་། །
མྱ་ངན་འདས་ལ་འདོད་པ་དང་། །
དོན་གཉེར་སྨོན་པའང་མེད་པར་འགྱུར། །

Were there no Buddha-nature there would be no discontent with suffering nor desire, effort and aspiration for nirvana.

If the Buddha element were not present, there would be no remorse over suffering. There would be no longing for nirvana, nor striving and devotion towards this aim.

#4: Action/Function. If there were no *kham*, we would not feel discontent with samsara or long for nirvana

We're still talking about the ten points or aspects of the *kham*. We've covered the third aspect, which is the result (*dreybu*). Now the fourth, which is the action or activity of Buddha-nature (*ley*). If there were no *kham* or element, then we would not feel sad with suffering. Likewise, we would also not long for and work towards peace or nirvana.

41 ཕྱིད་དང་མྱ་ངན་འདས་ལ་དེའི། །
སྡུག་བདེའི་སྐྱོན་ཡོན་མཐོང་བ་འདི། །
རིགས་ཡོད་ལས་ཡིན་གང་ཕྱིར་དེ། །
རིགས་མེད་དག་ལ་མེད་ཕྱིར་རོ། །

Perception of suffering, samsara's fault, and happiness, nirvana's quality, is due to the potential's presence. Why should this be? Without such potential it will not be present.

That with regard to existence and nirvana their respective fault and quality are seen, that suffering is seen as the fault of existence and happiness as the quality of nirvana, stems from the presence of the disposition to Buddhahood. "Why so?" In those who are devoid of disposition, such seeing does not occur.

The intellect that sees the fault of samsara and quality of nirvana only arises because of *kham*

We understand that samsara is suffering? is suffering, and that samsaric or cyclic existence is painful. And we think that we will attain bliss if we transcend this cyclic existence. The kind of intellect that sees the fault of samsara and the quality of nirvana only arises because there is *rig*, *kham* or Buddha-nature. Just as rice seeds cannot give birth to barley shoots, those who don't have this kind of seed, this *kham*, will not have this kind of aversion or longing. This will be explained further.

#5: Container/Endowment

42 རྒྱ་མཚོ་ཆེ་བཞིན་དཔག་མེད་པའི། །
ཡོན་ཏན་རིན་ཆེན་མི་ཟད་གནས། །
དབྱེར་མེད་ཡོན་ཏན་དང་ལྡན་པའི། །
ངོ་བོ་ཉིད་ཕྱིར་མར་མེ་བཞིན། །

Like a great ocean – an inexhaustible abode containing gems of inestimable qualities.
Like a lamp-flame because this essence is endowed with inseparable qualities.

Like the great sea it holds qualities immeasurable, precious and inexhaustible. Its essence holds indivisible properties. Thus [the element] is similar to a lamp.

#5: Container. Buddha-nature contains all things like an ocean, and its qualities are inseparable like a lamp

Now we come to the fifth aspect, container or possessor (*denpa*). An ocean is a container. It contains all kinds of waters, rivers and so on, and it also acts as a container for all kinds of beings, jewels, and all kinds of other things. Likewise, Buddha-nature is a container. It is the container of everything. Buddha-nature is also like a lamp, because it includes all the enlightened qualities such as omniscience and clairvoyance and all the qualities that stem from wisdom.

43 ཆོས་སྐུ་རྒྱལ་བའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་དང་། །
ཐུགས་རྗེའི་ཁམས་ནི་བསྡུས་པའི་ཕྱིར། །
སྣོད་དང་རིན་ཆེན་ཆུ་ཡིས་ནི། །
རྒྱ་མཚོ་དང་ནི་མཚུངས་པར་བསྟན། །

Because it contains the essence of dharmakaya, the jñana of the Victors and great compassion, then, through environment, jewels and its waters, it has been taught as being similar to an ocean.

Unifying the element of dharmakaya, a victor's wisdom and great compassion, it is shown as being similar to the sea by the vessel, the gems and the water.

Buddha-nature contains the four causes of dharmakaya, so it is like a container, a jewel and water. Therefore it is taught using the analogy of an ocean

The cause of the dharmakaya, such as enthusiasm towards the Mahayana path – the cause of the wisdom of the Buddha, such as the understanding of selflessness – and the cause of Buddha activity, which is compassion – all of these causes exist within the Buddha-nature. Therefore, Buddha-nature is like a container, like a jewel, and like water. For these three reasons – container, jewel and moisture – Buddha-nature is taught using the analogy of an ocean.

44 ཏྲི་མེད་གནས་ལ་མངོན་ཤེས་དང་། །
ཡེ་ཤེས་ཏྲི་མེད་དེ་ཉིད་དང་། །
རྣམ་དབྱེར་མེད་ཕྱིར་མར་མེ་ཡི། །
སྣང་དང་དྲོ་མདོག་ཆོས་མཚུངས་ཅན། །

Since direct cognition, jñana and freedom from stain are inseparable in the immaculate ground they are compared to the light, heat and colour of a flame.

Clairvoyance, primordial wisdom and absence of pollution are totally indivisible and native to the unstained abode. Thus it has properties corresponding to the light, heat and colour of a lamp.

Buddha-nature is like a lamp because it illuminates, it has warmth, and its radiance is incorruptible

All that we have said before is explained again here. Buddha-nature is stainless from the beginning. Therefore it has all the five types of clairvoyance, undefiled wisdom and stainless quality. It is like a lamp, because it illuminates, it has warmth and its colour or radiance is unchangeable or incorruptible.

#6: Entry

45 སོ་སོའི་སྒྲ་འཕགས་རྣོ་གས་ས་ངས་ཀྱི། །
དེ་བཞིན་ཉིད་དབྱེའི་འཇུག་པ་ལས། །
དེ་ཉིད་གཟིགས་པས་སེམས་ཅན་ལ། །
རྒྱལ་བའི་སྙིང་པོ་འདི་བསྟན་ཏོ། །

Suchness is approached in different ways by ordinary beings, the deeply-realized and the completely-enlightened. Hence the seers of the true nature have taught that all beings have this Buddha-essence.

Based upon the manifestation of suchness dividing into that of an ordinary being, that of a noble one, and that of a perfect Buddha, He who Sees Thatness has explained the nature of the Victor to beings.

#6: Entry. Buddha-nature acts as an entry because all beings equally enter into Buddha-nature

Now we come to the sixth aspect, entry. Why does Buddha-nature also act as an entry? Because ordinary beings, sublime beings on the path, and Buddhas all equally enter into Buddha-nature. This is why Buddha taught Buddha-nature.

46 སོ་སོ་སྐྱེ་བོ་ཕྱི་ནས་ཅི་ལོག། །
བདེན་པ་མཐོང་བ་བརྒྱོག་པ་སྟེ། །
དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཇི་ལྟ་བཞིན། །
ཕྱི་ནས་ཅི་མ་ལོག་སྤྲོས་མེད་ཉིད། །

Ordinary beings go in a wrong direction. Those who see the truth revert from this and the tathagatas face it just as it is, unerringly and without conceptual complication.

[It manifests as] perverted [views in] ordinary beings, [as] the reversal [of these in] those who see the truth, and [it manifests] as it is, in an unperverted way, and as freedom from elaboration [in] a tathagata.

The three different kinds of beings look at or enter the same thing, but differently:

1. Ordinary beings look at the glass (i.e. Buddha-nature) and think it's dirty and needs cleaning

2. Sublime beings on the path know it's not dirty, and thus can be cleaned

3. Buddha sees it as pre-dirty and pre-clean so does not even think of cleaning it

There are three different kinds of beings: ordinary beings, sublime beings on the path, and beings who are already enlightened. They are all looking at or entering the same thing. When ordinary beings look at Buddha-nature, they have confusion and misunderstanding. When sublime beings, those who are on the path, look at the Buddha-nature, they see the truth. So they are opposite from ordinary beings. Again, let's go back to the example of the glass, as it always seems to work. Ordinary beings look at the glass and think it's dirty and needs cleaning. Sublime beings, those who are on the path, know that's wrong. They know the glass is not dirty (i.e. the dirt is not part of the glass), and therefore it can be cleaned. Buddha looks at the same glass, and sees it as pre-dirty and pre-clean. So the burden of the cleaning, which comes from thinking that it has become dirty, doesn't even exist for him. This is why it says that tathagatas see it as it is, without any kind of fabricated extremes. That is the entry.

#7: Occasions

47 མ་དག་མ་དག་དག་པ་དང་། །
ཤིན་ཏུ་རྣམ་དག་གོ་རིམས་བཞིན། །
སེམས་ཅན་བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་དཔའ་དང་། །
དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཞེས་བརྗོད་དོ། །

The impure, those both pure and impure and those absolutely perfectly pure are known respectively as ordinary beings, Bodhisattvas and tathagatas.

The unpurified, the both unpurified and purified, and the utterly purified [phases] are expressed in their given order [by names] "being", "Bodhisattva" and "tathagata."

#7: Occasions/Phases. There are three occasions, corresponding to the three kinds of beings – impure, both impure and pure, and pure

Now the seventh aspect, occasions. There are three kinds of occasions: when the Buddha-nature is impure, stained by defilements (*madag*); when the Buddha-nature is still stained but in the process of being cleaned (*madag dagpa*); and

when Buddha-nature is absolutely free from stains (*shintu namdag*). These occasions correspond to the state of ordinary sentient beings, the state of Bodhisattvas and the state of Tathagatas.

48 ངོ་བོ་ཉིད་ལ་སོགས་པའི་དོན། །
འདི་དྲུག་གིས་ནི་བསྡུས་པ་ཡི། །
ཁམས་ནི་གནས་སྐབས་གསུམ་དག་ཏུ། །
མིང་གསུམ་གྱིས་ནི་བསྟན་པ་ཡིན། །

The Buddha-nature, summarized by the six points on essence and so on, is explained through three phases and by means of three terms.

The element as contained in the six topics of "essence" and so on is explained in the light of three phases by means of three names.

The first six aspects of Buddha-nature can be subdivided in terms of three occasions. For example, there are three types of entry that correspond to three occasions, but in reality, they are all the same

For each of the first six aspects of Buddha-nature that we talked about – namely essence, cause, result, action, possessor, and entry – we can make a subdivision or categorisation based on these three occasions. For example, when we were talking about entry, we talked about three ways of entering the Buddha-nature. These categories correspond to the three different kinds of occasions. However in reality, you cannot really say there is any difference, as they are exactly the same.

#8: All-pervasive

49 ཇི་ལྟར་རྟོག་མེད་བདག་ཉིད་ཅན། །
ནམ་མཁའ་ཀུན་ཏུ་རྒྱས་སོང་ལྟར། །
སེམས་ཀྱི་རང་བཞིན་དྲི་མེད་དབྱིངས། །
དེ་བཞིན་ཀུན་ཏུ་འགྲོ་བ་ཉིད། །

Just as space, concept-free by nature, is all-embracing, so also is the immaculate space, the nature of mind, all-pervading.

Just as space, which is by nature free from thought, pervades everything, the undefiled expanse, which is the nature of mind, is all-pervading.

#8: All-pervasiveness. Buddha-nature is all pervasive and free from conceptions, like the sky

Now we are explaining the eighth aspect, all-pervasiveness. Why is the Buddha-nature all-pervasive? For example, the sky has no conceptions, and therefore it doesn't have any obscurations. And it is everywhere, it is all-pervasive. Likewise the nature of the mind, the stainless space or tathagatagarbha, is all-pervasive.

50 དེ་སྐྱེའི་མཚན་ཉིད་ཉེས་པ་དང་། །
ཡོན་ཏན་མཐར་ཐུག་ཕྱུག་པ་སྟེ། །
གཟུགས་ཀྱི་རྣམ་པ་དམན་པ་དང་། །
བར་མ་མཆོག་ལ་རྣམ་མཁའ་བཞིན། །

This, the general characteristic of all, permeates the good, the bad and the ultimate, like space permeates all forms whether lesser, mediocre or perfect.

As the general feature [of everything], it embraces [those with] faults, [those with] qualities and [those in whom qualities are] ultimate just as space [pervades everything] visible, be it of inferior, average or supreme appearance.

When we speak of its all-pervasiveness, we refer to Buddha-nature as *ying*, the stainless space

The stainless space is a characteristic of all beings, so it is all-pervasive

Similarly, the quality of the space within containers of clay, copper and gold is identical

Now we are referring to the Buddha-nature with a different term: *ying* or 'stainless space'. We don't use the term 'dharmakaya' any longer, because we are now talking about a different occasion or aspect. Now we use the term 'stainless space' because we are talking about its all-pervasive quality. This stainless space is the characteristic of everything. It is a characteristic of sentient beings that have faults and defilements, Bodhisattvas who have enlightened qualities, and Buddhas who are completely beyond the path. This stainless space is characteristic to all of them, and so it's all-pervasive. Again, this is explained further. Imagine that we take three containers, for instance a clay pot that is not a very precious container, a copper pot that is slightly better than the clay container, and a golden pot that is the best container. The quality of the space within all these containers is exactly the same.

#9: Unchanging

51 ཉེས་པ་གློ་བུར་དང་ལྡན་དང་། །
ཡོན་ཏན་རང་བཞིན་ཉིད་ལྡན་ཕྱིར། །
ཇི་ལྟར་སྔར་བཞིན་ཕྱིར་དེ་བཞིན། །
འགྱུར་བ་མེད་པའི་ཆོས་ཉིད་དོ། །

Since the faults are but accidental whereas its qualities are part of its very character, it is the changeless reality, the same after as it was before.

Having faults that are adventitious and qualities that are its nature, it is afterwards the same as before. This is Dharmata ever unchanging.

52 ཇི་ལྟར་ནམ་མཁའ་ཀུན་སོང་བ། །
ཕྱི་ཕྱིར་ཉེ་བར་གོས་པ་མེད། །
དེ་བཞིན་སེམས་ཅན་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ། །
གནས་འདི་ཉེ་བར་གོས་པ་མེད། །

Just as space pervades all but remains absolutely unaffected, because of its extreme subtlety, similarly this, present in all beings, remains absolutely taint-free.

[Though] space permeates everything, it is never polluted, due to its subtlety. Likewise the [Dharmadhatu] in all beings does not suffer the slightest pollution.

#9: Unchangingness. The defilements are adventitious but the result of their elimination, Buddha-nature, is unchanging

Now, we come to the ninth aspect, permanence or unchangingness. Defilements have the characteristic of *loburwa*, which can be translated as 'temporary' or 'adventitious'. It can also be translated as 'sudden', but it doesn't really mean that here. 'Temporary' or 'adventitious' are good words, even better than *loburwa*. We are referring to something that can be removed (*drima dralrung*). The quality of the dirt or the defilements is that they are temporary, removable, and adventitious. But after they have been removed, the absence of the defilements cannot be removed. That quality is the nature, and cannot be removed. This is a very important phrase, 'the quality is the nature' (*yönten rangshin*). Again, we're back to the result of elimination! The only way to remove it is bring back the defilements. The result of elimination, the result of removing something removable, cannot be removed! Therefore, Buddha-nature cannot change. From the time when Buddha-nature is dwelling in samsara, through practice for aeons of lifetimes, until finally reaching enlightenment, the *kham* or Buddha-nature hasn't changed a bit. Again, this will be explained extensively.

Throughout samsara and nirvana, Buddha-nature is unchanging

For example, although space pervades all forms, space is unchanging and undisturbed by these forms. Similarly, Buddha-nature pervades sentient beings, yet is undisturbed by their defilements

For example, sky or space is everywhere. It's all-pervasive. It pervades all kinds of forms, but because sky or space is very subtle, forms such as trees and mountains do not stain, disturb or interfere with this space. And the downfalls of a form, such as when the form gets deformed (e.g. when placed beside another form), will not affect the space. Likewise, even though Buddha-nature exists within sentient beings, sentient beings' downfalls such as aggression and passion will not stain the Buddha-nature. This is explained even more.

53 ཇི་ལྟར་འཇིག་རྟེན་ཐམས་ཅད་དུ། །
ནམ་མཁའ་ལ་ནི་སྐྱེ་ཞིང་འཇིག །
དེ་བཞིན་འདུས་མ་བྱས་དབྱིངས་ལ། །
དབང་པོ་རྣམས་ནི་སྐྱེ་ཞིང་འཇིག །

Just as universes always arise and disintegrate in space, so also do the senses arise and disintegrate in the uncreated space.

Just as at all times worlds arise and disintegrate in space, the senses arise and disintegrate in the uncreated expanse.

All phenomena arise, dwell and cease within space, but space itself does not arise, dwell or cease

Likewise, beings come and go on the path, but Buddha-nature does not change

For example, everything in this universe arises, dwells and then ceases to exist within this space. But the space itself has no arising, no dwelling and no cessation. Likewise, within the uncompounded space, within Buddha-nature, sentient beings come and go. They become ignorant, meet Dharma, get inspired, and practice. Practice goes wrong, practice goes right, and they dwell on the path. There is progress. There is failure. All this happens, but Buddha-nature doesn't change.

54

ཇི་ལྟར་ནམ་མཁའ་མེ་རྒྱས་ཀྱིས། །
སྟོན་ཆད་ནམ་ཡང་ཚོགས་པ་མེད། །
དེ་བཞིན་འདི་ནི་འཆི་བ་དང་། །
ན་དང་རྒྱ་བའི་མེས་མི་འཚོགས། །

Just as space has never been consumed by fire, likewise this is never consumed by death, sickness and ageing's fires.

Space is never burnt by fires. Likewise this [Dharmadhatu] is not burnt by the fires of death, sickness and aging.

Space is not burned by fire. Similarly, Buddha-nature is not burned by the three fires of sickness, old age, and death

Space or sky has never been burned by fire. Trees have been burned, houses have been burned, human beings have been burned – all of this. But the space or sky cannot be burned. Likewise, Buddha-nature cannot be burned by three kinds of fire – death, old age and sickness.

55

ས་ནི་ཆུ་ལ་ཆུ་རླུང་ལ། །
རླུང་ནི་མཁའ་ལ་རབ་ཏུ་གནས། །
མཁའ་ནི་རླུང་དང་ཆུ་དག་དང་། །
ས་ཡི་ཁམས་ལ་གནས་མ་ཡིན། །

Earth is supported by water, water by air, air is supported by space but space is supported neither by air, water nor earth.

Earth rests upon water and water upon wind. Wind fully rests on space. Space does not rest upon any of the elements of wind, water or earth.

56 དེ་བཞིན་ལྷུང་པོ།བསམས་དབང་རྣམས། །
ལས་དང་ཉོན་མོངས་དག་ལ་གནས། །
ལས་དང་ཉོན་མོངས་ཚུལ་བཞིན་མིན། །
ཡིད་ལ་བྱེད་ལ་རྟག་ཏུ་གནས། །

In a similar way the aggregates, the elements and the senses are based upon karma and defilements. Karma and the defilements are always based upon a mode of thought which is wrong.

Likewise skandhas, elements and senses are based upon karma and mental poisons. Karma and poisons are always based upon improper conceptual activity.

57 ཚུལ་བཞིན་མ་ཡིན་ཡིད་བྱེད་ནི། །
སེམས་ཀྱི་དག་པ་ལ་རབ་གནས། །
སེམས་ཀྱི་རང་བཞིན་ཆོས་རྣམས་ནི། །
ཐམས་ཅད་ལ་ཡང་གནས་པ་མེད། །

This improper mode of thought has its basis in the mind's purity whereas the true nature of mind has no basis in any of the many phenomena.

The improper conceptual activity fully abides on the purity of mind. Yet, the nature of the mind itself has no basis in all these phenomena.

The earth, water and air elements depend on space, but space doesn't depend on the other elements

The earth element relies on the water element. The water element depends on the air element, and the air element depends on the space element. But space is not dependent on air, water or earth. Likewise, the skandhas, dhatus and sense-objects, like the five aggregates, consciousnesses, and objects such as form and sound – all these depend on karma and emotion. And karma and emotion depend on wrong views, such as clinging to the self as a truly existing thing, clinging to phenomena as permanently existing, and all that. But what does this improper thought or wrong view depend on? Or maybe more literally, where does it dwell? In only one place – Buddha-nature. It's like if you dream about an elephant. Even though the dream-elephant does not exist in reality, you still experience it. Likewise, although wrong views do not exist ultimately, you nevertheless experience them. And this experience resides in Buddha-nature.

Likewise, aggregates, emotions and wrong views depend on Buddha-nature. Although they do not exist, you experience them, and this experience resides in Buddha-nature

Buddha-nature is not the cause of wrong views, but they have nowhere else to dwell, hence we say this

Like space, Buddha-nature doesn't depend on aggregates, emotions or wrong views

Mipham Rinpoche stresses here that it is not as though the Buddha-nature is the cause of this wrong view. However, just as aggregates and dhatus come from karma and emotion, and karma and emotion come from wrong view, we need a place for wrong views to dwell. And other than Buddha-nature, there is none. That's why we have to speak in this way. We are not saying that Buddha-nature is producing these kinds of wrong view. Also the Buddha-nature itself, the space, does not dwell on any of the above things – not on aggregates, dhatus, ayatanas, karma or emotions – none! This is explained in more detail.

58 ས་དང་འདྲ་བ་ཕུང་པོ་དང་། །
སྐྱེ་མཆེད་ཁམས་རྣམས་ཤེས་པར་བྱ། །
ཆུ་ཁམས་དང་འདྲ་ལུས་ཅན་གྱི། །
ལས་དང་ཉོན་མོངས་ཤེས་བྱ་སྟེ། །

The aggregates, entrances and elements should be known as being similar to earth. The karma and defilements of beings are to be known as similar to water.

The skandhas, entrances and elements are to be known as resembling earth. Karma and the mental poisons of beings should be envisaged as the water element.

59 ཚུལ་བཞིན་མ་ཡིན་ཡིད་བྱེད་ནི། །
རླུང་གི་ཁམས་དང་འདྲ་བར་ལྟ། །
རང་བཞིན་ནམ་མཁའི་ཁམས་བཞིན་དུ། །
དེ་གཞི་ཅན་མིན་གནས་པ་མེད། །

The improper mode of thought is similar to air whereas the true nature is like the element of space – it has no base and no abiding.

Improper conceptual activity is viewed as being similar to the element of wind. [Mind's] nature, as the element of space, has no ground and no place of abiding.

60 ཚུལ་བཞིན་མ་ཡིན་ཡིད་བྱེད་ནི། །
སེམས་ཀྱི་རང་བཞིན་ལ་གནས་ཏེ། །
ཚུལ་བཞིན་མ་ཡིན་ཡིད་བྱེད་ཀྱིས། །
ལས་དང་ཉོན་མོངས་རབ་ཏུ་སྐྱེ། །

The improper mode of thought abides within the true nature of mind. This improper mode of thought gives rise to karma and the defilements.

The improper conceptual activity rests upon the nature of the mind. Improper conceptual activity brings about all the classes of karma and mental poisons.

61 ལས་དང་ཉོན་མོངས་ཆུ་ལས་ནི། །
ཕུང་པོ་སྐྱེ་མཆེད་ཁམས་རྣམས་འབྱུང་། །
དེ་འཇིག་པ་དང་ཆགས་པ་ལྟར། །
སྐྱེ་དང་འཇིག་པར་འགྱུར་བ་ཡིན། །

From karma and defilements' waters arise the aggregates, entrances and elements, arising and disintegrating just as everything begins and has an end.

From the water of karma and the mental poisons the skandhas, entrances and elements arise. As this [world] arises and disintegrates, they will arise and disintegrate as well.

Aggregates, emotions and wrong views correspond to the earth, water and air elements. Buddha-nature is like the sky.

We were just talking about the elements, about how the earth element depends on water and so forth, and all this is explained more thoroughly here. The five aggregates, twelve ayatanas and eighteen dhatus are all like the earth element. Karma and emotions are like the water element. Wrong views and improper thoughts are like the air element. And the Buddha-nature is like the sky. Therefore Buddha-nature is not dependent on any of the other elements. Here we are explaining the meaning of 'temporary' again. Wrong views, such as clinging to phenomena as permanent, dwell as obscurations to this Buddha-nature. And that's like the air element which produces or acts as a container for the next element, which is the water element. Therefore, the air element which is like wrong views gives birth to the water element which is like emotions and karma. And the water element which is like karma and emotions produces or gives birth to aggregates, ayatanas and so on, which are like the earth element. And just as all these gross elements arise, dwell and cease to exist, the dhatus, skandhas, karma and kleshas also arise, dwell and cease to exist, but this does not interfere with space at all.

Just as the gross elements arise and cease within space, the aggregates, karma and kleshas arise and cease within Buddha-nature without interfering with it at all

62 སེམས་ཀྱི་རང་བཞིན་ནམ་མཁའ་ཡི། །
བསམས་ལྷུར་རྒྱུ་མེད་རྒྱུན་མེད་དེ། །
ཚོགས་པ་མེད་ཅིང་སྐྱེ་བ་དང་། །
འཇིག་དང་གནས་པའང་ཡོད་མ་ཡིན། །

The nature of mind is like the space element: it has neither causes, nor conditions nor these in any combination, nor any arising, destruction or abiding.

The nature of mind as the element of space does not [depend on] a gathering of these. It has neither arising, cessation, not abiding.

The nature of the mind is like space, not dependent on causes or conditions. So it is beyond arising, dwelling and cessation

This stanza explains the unchanging aspect of Buddha-nature a bit more. The nature of the mind is like space. It does not depend on cause and it is not influenced by conditions. There is no compounding of different entities to make the Buddha-nature. Therefore it does not having arising, cessation and dwelling.

63 སེམས་ཀྱི་རང་བཞིན་འོད་གསལ་ལ་གང་ཡིན་པ། །
དེ་ནི་ནམ་མཁའ་བཞིན་དུ་འགྱུར་མེད་དེ། །
ཡང་དག་མིན་རྟོག་ལས་བྱུང་འདོད་ཆགས་སོགས། །
གློ་བུར་ཏྲི་མས་དེ་ཉོན་མོངས་མི་འགྱུར། །

This true nature of the mind–clarity, is, like space, unchanging; not becoming defiled by desire and so on, passing impurities which from improper thinking spring.

This clear and luminous nature of mind is as changeless as space. It is not afflicted by desire and so on, the adventitious stains, which are sprung from incorrect thoughts.

The clarity and luminosity of Buddha-nature is like the sky. It cannot be stained by adventitious defilements like clouds

The clarity and luminosity of the Buddha-nature, the tathagatagarbha, is like sky. It cannot be influenced by temporary phenomena such as clouds. Temporary defilements will not stain, defile or influence this Buddha-nature.

64 ལས་དང་ཉོན་མོངས་རྒྱ་མཚོ་གཡོ་ཀྱིས། །
འདི་ནི་མངོན་པར་འགྱུར་མིན་ཏེ། །
འཆི་དང་ན་དང་རྒ་བའི་མེ། །
མི་བཟད་པས་ཀྱང་འཚོག་མི་འགྱུར། །

It is not produced by the waters of karma, defilements and so forth nor will it be burnt by the cruel fires of ageing, sickness and death.

It is not brought into existence by the water of karma, of the poisons and so on. Hence it is also not consumed by the cruel fires of dying, falling sick and aging.

Buddha-nature is not created by karma and emotions, nor destroyed by sickness, old age and death

Karma and emotions that are like the water element cannot produce a new Buddha-nature. Basically, all the various kinds of aggregates, dhatus, ayatanas and emotions cannot produce Buddha-nature. Likewise, conditions such as death, old age and sickness cannot burn the Buddha-nature or make it cease to exist.

65 དུས་མཐའ་དགྱེལ་བ་ཐ་མལ་པའི། །
མེ་གསུམ་འཆི་དང་ན་བ་དང་། །
རྒ་བའི་མེ་གསུམ་རིམ་བཞིན་དུ། །
དེ་དག་འདྲ་བར་ཤེས་པར་བྱ། །

One should know that the fires three – of death, sickness and age – are similar respectively to the fires which blaze at the end of time, in the hells and ordinarily.

The three fires of death, sickness and aging are to be understood in their given sequence as resembling the fire at the end of time, the fire of hell and an ordinary fire.

The three kinds of fire (sickness, old age and death) cannot burn Buddha-nature

There are three different kinds of fire that can burn things. There is the fire of the end of time, the fire of hell and ordinary fire. These are actually death, sickness and old age. None of these can burn the Buddha-nature. I recall Krishna saying something like this to Arjuna! We have to be careful here, I think!

66 སྐྱེ་འཆི་ན་དང་རྒ་བ་ལས་གྲོལ་བ། །
འདི་ཡི་རང་བཞིན་ཇི་བཞིན་ཉིད་རྟོགས་ཏེ། །
སྐྱེ་སོགས་ཕོངས་དང་བྲལ་ཡང་དེ་ཡི་རྒྱུས། །
བློ་ལྡན་འགྲོ་ལ་སྙིང་རྗེ་བསྐྱེད་ཕྱིར་བསྟེན། །

Free from birth, ageing, sickness and death, they have realized the true nature, just as it is. On account of this the wise have awakened compassion for beings, and even though free from the miseries of birth and so on they demonstrate these.

Having realized thatness, the nature of the [Dharmadhatu], just as it is, those of understanding are released from birth, sickness aging and death. Through free from the destitution of birth and so on, they demonstrate these, since by their [insight] they have given rise to compassion for beings.

The Bodhisattva has freed himself from samsara by practising and realising the Buddha-nature, but he still manifests birth and death in order to benefit sentient beings

In order to end this endless cycle of birth, old age, sickness and death – basically, going round in samsara – a Bodhisattva on the path will aspire to practice and realise the Buddha-nature that is beyond birth, sickness, old age and death. With this kind of aspiration, the Bodhisattva gradually frees himself from karma, emotions, birth and all these samsaric problems. But with great compassion for sentient beings who haven't understood Buddha-nature, Bodhisattvas will still manifest being born, dwelling, old age, death and so on.

67 འཕགས་པས་འཆི་དང་ན་བ་དང་། །
རྒ་བའི་སྡུག་བསྔལ་རྩད་ནས་སྤངས། །
ལས་དང་ཉོན་མོངས་དབང་གིས་སྐྱེ། །
དེ་ལ་དེ་མེད་ཕྱིར་དེ་མེད། །

The sufferings of ageing, sickness and death – these the deeply-realized have radically removed. They are without them because their birth is not brought about by karma and the defiled.

The noble have eradicated the suffering of dying, falling ill and aging at its root, which is being born due to karma and poisons. There being no such [cause], there is no such [fruit].

As they have actualised the Dharmadhatu, Bodhisattvas no longer have karma and emotion, so they are free from birth and death

Because sublime beings, Bodhisattvas, have actualised the Dharmadhatu or Buddha-nature, they have abandoned death, sickness, old age and all kinds of suffering. This is because Bodhisattvas don't have karma and emotion, meaning that they aren't under the power of karma and emotion. Therefore Bodhisattvas are free from birth, sickness, old age and death.

68 ཇི་བཞིན་ཡང་དག་མཐོང་བའི་ཕྱིར། །
སྐྱེ་སོགས་རྣམས་ལས་འདས་ཀྱང་ཀྱང་། །
སྐྱེ་རྟེའི་བདག་ཉིད་སྐྱེ་བ་དང་། །
འཆི་དང་རྒ་དང་ན་བར་སྟོན། །

Since they have seen the truth, just as it is, their compassionate nature shows birth, ageing, sickness and death even though they have transcended birth and the rest.

Since they have seen reality as it is, they are beyond being born and so on. Yet, as the embodiment of compassion itself they display birth, illness, old age and death.

Bodhisattvas still manifest birth and death, but through compassion, rather than the power of karma and emotion

But we still see the birth and death of Bodhisattvas, and all kinds of seemingly ordinary appearances. This is because of their compassion. They are under the power of compassion, not under the power of emotion and karma. Even though Bodhisattvas are beyond birth and death, by the power of their compassion they will manifest being born and going through sickness, old age and death.

69 རྒྱལ་སྲས་འགྱུར་མེད་ཆོས་ཉིད་འདི། །
རྟོག་ནས་མ་རིག་ལྡོངས་རྣམས་ཀྱིས། །
སྐྱེ་བ་ལ་སོགས་དག་ཏུ་ནི། །
མཐོང་བ་གང་ཡིན་དེ་རྨད་དོ། །

Those by ignorance blinded see the sons of the victors – the ones who have realized this changeless true nature – as having birth and so on. This is indeed a wonder!

After the heirs of the Victorious One have realized this changeless state, those who are blinded by ignorance see them as being born and so forth. That such seeing should occur is truly wonderful and amazing.

The Bodhisattvas have transcended birth and death, yet still manifest these out of compassion. This is extraordinary!

Maitreya is saying that this is an extraordinary quality of the Bodhisattvas. They have realised the unchanging nature of the Buddha, and therefore they have transcended all the suffering of death and birth. But for the sake of those who are ignorant, and who have not understood this Buddha-nature, they still manifest birth and death and so on, which is something extraordinary.

Day 5 – Introduction

Although the stanzas we'll cover today are actually very difficult to understand, at a glance they're more comprehensible. So I'll go quickly and cover several stanzas, and then try to spend more time on questions and answers. And if we have time, perhaps I can extract some of Mipham Rinpoche's explanations of Buddha-nature from the *tongtun sengey naro*, the "Lion's Roar".

70 འཕགས་པའི་སྤྱོད་ཡུལ་ཐོབ་པ་གང་། །
བྱིས་པའི་སྤྱོད་ཡུལ་དུ་སྟོན་ཏེ། །
དེ་ཕྱིར་ཕྱིར་ན་འགྲོ་བ་ཡི། །
གཉེན་གྱི་ཐབས་དང་སྙིང་རྗེ་མཆོག །

Those who have reached the domain of realization appear within the immature's field of experience. Therefore the skills and compassion of these friends for beings are truly excellent.

When they have attained the field of experience of the noble, they show themselves as the field of experience of the children. Hence means and compassion of the friends of beings are supreme.

Because sublime beings manifest, we consider them the most compassionate and virtuous friends, and the best method

Although sublime beings have obtained the sublime state, they nevertheless manifest as ordinary beings. Here 'sublime beings' refers to the Bodhisattvas, and it can also refer to the Buddha. Because they manifest, this alone is a good reason why we consider them as the most compassionate and virtuous friends, and also as the best method.

Form is emptiness, but emptiness is form – there is still unobstructed cognition

Bodhisattvas have not evaporated like moisture. They have transcended.

Bodhisattvas have transcended ordinary tongue and even the Buddha's special tongue. All form is emptiness

Diamond Sutra: "Those who see me as form have a wrong view"

But we prefer a Buddha with a tongue, so he manifests one through his unobstructed compassion

Again, let's go back to *draldrey*, the result of elimination. Form is emptiness, emptiness is form – this is what we are talking about here. When we say form is emptiness, of course everything is fabrication, and these fabricated phenomena do not exist in reality in the way that they appear. But unobstructed cognition is still there. It's not like the evaporation of moisture. The sublime being has reached a higher level, or perhaps it would be better to say he has transcended. Here we are talking about the word 'Arya' in Sanskrit (*pakpa* in Tibetan), which we translate as 'sublime'. So when we say Buddha transcends tongue, he transcends our ordinary kind of tongue. He even transcends the special type of tongue that is one of the 32 major marks, because all form is emptiness. In the Diamond Sutra he himself said, "those who see me as a form, they have not seen me. They have a wrong view". But when we talk about a form Buddha, then we prefer a Buddha with a tongue rather than a Buddha without a tongue! This alone demonstrates the Buddha's quality of unobstructed compassion, and shows that he is the great virtuous friend. Sublime beings in general, and particularly sublime beings from the second bhumi to the seventh bhumi, transcend all kinds of worldly states. And yet sublime beings still appear as ordinary beings.

71 དེ་ནི་འཇིག་རྟེན་ཐམས་ཅད་ལས། །
འདས་ཀྱང་འཇིག་རྟེན་ལས་མ་གཡོས། །
འཇིག་རྟེན་དོན་དུ་འཇིག་རྟེན་ན། །
འཇིག་རྟེན་དྲེ་མས་མ་གོས་སྤྱོད། །

Even though they have transcended everything worldly, the world they do not leave. They act within the world for the world but unblemished by worldly impurity.

Though they are beyond all worldly matters, these [Bodhisattvas] do not leave the world. They act for the sake of all worldly beings within the world, unblemished by its defects.

Sublime beings have transcended the worldly state, yet they have not moved beyond it. They manifest in this world without any worldly stain

Even though they have gone beyond the worldly state, they have not moved from the worldly state. This term 'has not moved or deviated' (*mayöpa*) is so beautiful. It's such an important term, because in a way, this is another quality of the Buddha-nature. Because he has not moved from the worldly state, for the sake of worldly beings a sublime being will manifest in this world without any worldly stain.

72 ཇི་ལྟར་པདྨ་ཆུ་ནང་དུ། །
སྐྱེས་པ་ཆུ་ཡིས་གོས་པ་མེད། །
དེ་བཞིན་འདི་ནི་འཇིག་རྟེན་དུ། །
སྐྱེས་ཀྱང་འཇིག་རྟེན་ཆོས་མི་གོས། །

A lotus, born of water, by water is unblemished. Similarly, even though they are born in the world, by worldly things they are unblemished.

As a lotus will grow in the midst of water, not being polluted by the water's [faults], these [noble ones] are born in the world unpolluted by any worldly phenomena.

As the lotus is unstained by muddy water, so sublime beings are unstained by emotion and karma

Here we have an example. Even though a lotus is born in muddy water, the muddy water does not stain it. Likewise, although these sublime beings arise in this world, the stains of this world, such as emotion or karma, do not affect them.

73 བྱ་བ་སྒྲུབ་ལ་རྒྱ་ཆུ་བློ། །
མེ་བཞིན་དུ་ནི་འབར་བ་དང་། །
ཞི་བའི་བསམ་གཏན་སྙོམས་འཇུག་ལ། །
རྒྱ་ཆུ་སྙོམས་པར་ཞུགས་པ་ཡིན། །

In order to accomplish their task their brilliant intelligence is like a fire blazing without cease. They always rest evenly immersed in meditative stability upon peace.

Viewing the accomplishment of their task, their understanding always blazes like fire. And they always rest evenly balanced in meditative stability, which is peace.

Sublime beings engage in action to benefit sentient beings without any effort, like fire burns dry wood

For sublime beings in general, and especially for those on the eighth bhumi, their motivation to engage in action that benefits sentient beings comes without any effort. It's like when your have lots of twigs and dry wood, then fire comes

without any effort. At the same time, the Bodhisattva is always dwelling in the samadhi of shunyata, the extremeless.

74 སྟོན་གྱི་འཕེན་པའི་དབང་དང་གི། །
རྣམ་རྟོག་ཐམས་ཅད་བྲལ་བའི་ཕྱིར། །
དེ་ནི་ལུས་ཅན་སྨིན་པ་ཡི། །
དོན་དུ་འབད་པ་བྱེད་མ་ཡིན། །

Due to previous impetus and their being ideation-free, no effort need be made to bring beings to maturity.

By the power of their former [prayers] and since they are free from all ideation, they do not exert any deliberate effort to lead all sentient beings to maturation.

Ninth bhumi Bodhisattvas benefit beings by the power of their past aspirations. Tenth bhumi Bodhisattvas benefit beings without any intention, conception or effort

When the Bodhisattva reaches the ninth bhumi, he engages in actions to benefit sentient beings without any effort. These Bodhisattvas benefit beings by the power of all their aspirations in the past. And finally, when the Bodhisattva reaches the tenth bhumi, he no longer even has the intention of helping. There is no intention, there is no conception, and so there is absolutely no effort.

75 བསྟན་དང་གཟུགས་སྐུ་དག་དང་གི། །
སྤྱོད་དང་སྤྱོད་ལམ་གྱིས་ཀྱང་རྟེན། །
གང་ཞིག་ཇི་ལྟར་གང་གིས་འདུལ། །
དེས་དེ་དེ་ལྟ་ཉིད་དུ་ཤེས། །

They know precisely the ways and means to train anyone and whichever teaching, physical form, mode of conduct or action would be appropriate.

These [heirs of the Victorious One] know precisely how and by what [method] each should be trained – through whatever teachings, form kayas, conduct and ways of behaviour are individually appropriate.

Bodhisattvas engage in different kinds of teachings and activity for different kinds of beings, from ordinary activities like walking to special actions like chanting mantras or giving their limbs to hungry tigers

Bodhisattvas such as the tenth bhumi Bodhisattvas teach all kinds of vehicles for different kinds of disciples and beings with different kinds of aspiration or motivation (*möpa*). For these different beings, Bodhisattvas will manifest in different forms and they will engage in general actions and also specific actions (*chölam*). General actions include the 'four postures', which are the seemingly ordinary actions of walking, standing, sitting and sleeping (*drowa*, *chak*, *duk* and *nyal*). They will engage in specific Bodhisattva actions such as chanting mantras or giving their limbs to hungry tigers. But at the same time, they also engage in seemingly ordinary kinds of actions such as walking, yawning, sleeping and all that. These points are very important here, because the Buddha and Bodhisattvas are all part of the path.

Sublime beings, particularly manifestation Buddhas, are all part of the path. They are there for deluded beings

They cannot be completely sublime, else there would be no communication with us, so they need to look somewhat ordinary and do some ordinary things

But they can't be too ordinary, so they have a blue colour, six arms etc.

Thus sublime beings manifest to different beings according to their needs

In particular, the manifestation Buddhas like the nirmanakaya are all tools of the path. The path is there because there are deluded beings. But because ordinary beings are deluded, sublime beings can't be absolutely sublime. Otherwise they would be beyond us, and there would be no communication between Bodhisattvas and those on the path – it would be completely sublime! So they have to be somewhat related to us, with one nose, one face and so on. This works better. Similarly, we can relate to things like sleeping, yawning and walking. But at the same time, they can't be too ordinary, because then what's the point? They have to be special, with a blue colour, six arms, and things like that. Even the 32 major marks are related to ordinary things like a tongue. But rather than an ordinary tongue, it's slightly beyond the normal, like a tongue that covers the whole face. Things are slightly beyond the normal. The path is difficult, but the difficulty is not because of the path. It's because of the person that walks on the path, and that's why it has to suit the needs of person on the path. And at the same time it should not negate or oppose the result. So it's difficult. And this is why sublime beings manifest to different kinds of sentient beings according to their different wishes and necessity. They know how to do that.

Similarly, in the 'Treasury of Knowledge', Jamgön Kongtrül talks about thumb-sized worlds where beings look completely different. They also have sublime beings manifesting for their needs, but we have no idea how this looks

In the beginning of Jamgön Kongtrül's encyclopaedia, the "Treasury of Knowledge" (*sheja kunchab dzö*), he talks about cosmology. He explains that there are certain planets that are only as large as our thumb. Some of these planets are reserved only for eighth bhumi Bodhisattvas, and they have their own master, a Buddha. It's very interesting to read these things because we have no idea how these beings would look. We can only imagine, and our imagination is very limited. It's like fashion designers. They never come up with anything really new. There are usually two sleeves because we only have two hands. That's all we can do. You can't really go further than that! Fashion has to be something to wrap the body, and this is as far as we can go.

76 དེ་ལྟར་ནམ་མཁའི་མཐའ་བྱས་ཀྱི། །
འགྲོ་ལ་རྒྱུན་ཏུ་ལྷུན་གྱིས་པར། །
ཐོགས་མེད་བློ་ལྡན་དེ་ཡིས་ནི། །
སེམས་ཅན་དོན་ནི་ཡང་དག་འཇུག །

Like this, those of unhindered intelligence excellently engage themselves in benefiting beings as limitless as the sky, continually and spontaneously.

Always [acting] spontaneously and without hindrance for sentient beings whose number is limitless as space, such [Bodhisattvas] who possess understanding truly engage in the task of benefiting beings.

Thus sublime beings will benefit infinite sentient beings spontaneously and without obstruction

So a sublime being will benefit infinite sentient beings, as limitless as the sky, and he will benefit them spontaneously, without any obstruction.

77 བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་དཔའི་ཚུལ་འདི་ནི། །
རྟེས་ཐོབ་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་རྣམས་དང་། །
སེམས་ཅན་ཡང་དག་སྒྲོལ་བ་ལ། །
འཇིག་རྟེན་ན་ནི་མཉམ་པ་ཉིད། །

The way in which these Bodhisattvas act in the worlds to help beings during the post-meditation phase is the same as the tathagata's way of truly liberating beings.

The way the Bodhisattvas [unfold activity] in the post-meditative phase equals the tathagatas' [action] in the world for beings' true liberation.

Ordinary beings cannot differentiate between the manifestation of a tenth bhumi Bodhisattva and a Buddha

From the point of view of ordinary beings, it is impossible to differentiate between the way tenth bhumi Bodhisattvas manifest and benefit sentient beings during their post-meditation, and the way that Buddhas manifest. Ordinary beings cannot differentiate between the Buddha's activity and the tenth bhumi Bodhisattva's activity. They are seen as equal.

78 དེ་ལྟ་མོད་ཀྱི་ས་རྡུལ་དང་། །
རྒྱ་མཚོ་བ་གླང་རྐྱེགས་རྟེས་ཀྱི། །
ཁྱད་པར་གང་ཡིན་སངས་རྒྱས་དང་། །
བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་དཔའི་ཁྱད་དེ་ཉིད། །

Although this is true, the differences between these Bodhisattvas and the Buddhas are like those between the earth and an atom or between an ox's hoof-print and the ocean.

Though this is true indeed, whatever difference lies between the earth and an atom or else between [the water in] the sea and in an ox's hoof print, is the difference between a Buddha and a Bodhisattva.

But in reality there is a big difference. The tenth bhumi Bodhisattva's activity is like the water in an ox's hoof-print, and the Buddha's is like the ocean

But in reality, there's a big difference. In reality, the extent of the tenth bhumi Bodhisattva's activity to benefit sentient beings is equal to a piece of earth, while the Buddha's is like infinite particles of dust. The Bodhisattva's depth of compassion and wisdom is like the water that has collected in a cow's footprint, whereas the Buddha's depth of compassion and wisdom is like an ocean.

79 གཞན་འགྱུར་མིན་བདག་མི་ཟད་ཆོས་ལྡན་ཕྱིར། །
འགྲོ་སྐྱབས་ཕྱི་མའི་མཐའ་མེད་མྱུར་ཐུག་ཕྱིར། །
དེ་ནི་རྒྱུ་ཀུ་གཉིས་མེད་མི་རྟོག་ཕྱིར། །
འཇིག་མེད་ཆོས་ཀྱང་མ་བྱས་རང་བཞིན་ཕྱིར། །

Because it has inexhaustible qualities, its nature is not to alter. It is the refuge of beings because it has no limits in the future, right to the very end. It is always non-dual

because it is non-conceptual. It is also of indestructible character because, by nature, it is uncreated.

[The dharmakaya] does not change into something else, since it has inexhaustible properties. It is the refuge of beings, since [it protects them] without any limit of time, until the final end. It is always free from duality, since it is foreign to all ideation. It is also indestructible state, since its nature is uncreated.

The dharmakaya has obtained inexhaustible attainment. It does not transform, so it is the only undeceptive object of refuge

Now we are going back to Buddha-nature again. The Dharmadhatu or the dharmakaya does not change. It does not transform. It does not give up its old body, nor shed its old skin like a snake, nor does it acquire a new skin. It does not shed because it has obtained inexhaustible attainment. When we talk about inexhaustible, we should not think in terms of very large numbers like being a millionaire or billionaire, because that's still exhaustible. Here we're talking about going beyond one and many. It's a bit like the sky treasure. This dharmakaya (*chöku*) is the only undeceptive object of refuge. It is the refuge until the end or without any end, meaning endlessly.

Avoiding the consequence that the clarity aspect of dharmakaya is compounded

Rupakaya, Buddha's form, would be compounded if you needed to accumulate merit to obtain it

Therefore, Mipham asserts that even a lock of the Buddha's hair is uncompounded

Mipham Rinpoche makes a very good remark here. You see, for some Tibetan schools, the consequence of their view is that the clarity aspect of the dharmakaya is a compounded phenomenon. A few days ago, there was a question about accumulating merit and purifying defilements. There's a very important source of doubt here. Because if you say that we accumulate merit in order to obtain or construct, so to speak, the rupakaya, the form of the Buddha, then there's a consequence. You are then asserting that the Buddha's form is actually a compounded phenomenon (*dujey*). Whereas the Shentongpas, especially Mipham and all these guys, are saying that even a lock of his hair is an uncompounded phenomenon. And I don't understand why you are not shocked, as that's saying a lot! As a Buddhist, when you hear that a lock of hair is an uncompounded phenomenon, it should shock you at first, although afterwards it should not shock you any more.

If it were compounded, it would be impermanent, and thus not an unfailing object of refuge

We need the Uttaratantra to establish Buddha as uncompounded, and therefore an unfailing object of refuge, something that is essential for our path

We have been talking about the ultimate refuge, but we have never thought about it. And Mipham Rinpoche is very right. Because if Buddha's form, such as a lock of his hair, were a compounded phenomenon then it must be impermanent. Of course, that's standard Buddhist logic. Then there's a problem, because if you take refuge in this Buddha, he could be gone next time, because he's impermanent. The person in whom you take refuge is already gone, and his replacement doesn't even know whether you've taken refuge or not, as he's completely new, so there's a difficulty here. So can you understand why the Uttaratantra is necessary? It's really necessary. Also, we should really think about things like why the Buddha is an unfailing object of refuge.

Dharmakaya is free from extremes and indestructible

Dharmakaya does not grasp at dualistic phenomena, for example as being beneficial or useless. Therefore dharmakaya is free from all these extremes, and it is indestructible, because it is uncompounded.

80 སྐྱེ་བ་མེད་ཕྱིར་འཆི་བ་མེད། །
གཞོན་མེད་རྒྱ་བ་མེད་པ་སྟེ། །
དེ་ནི་རྒྱུ་དང་བཤད་ཕྱིར་དང་། །
ཞི་བའི་ཕྱིར་དང་གཡུང་དྲུང་ཕྱིར། །

This has no birth because it is permanent, no death because it is everlasting, no harm because it is peace and no ageing because it is unchanging.

It is not born and does not die. It suffers no harm and does not age since it is permanent and steadfast, the state of peace and immutability.

Dharmadhatu is beyond birth and death, as it is permanent, a state of peace and immutability

Space, Dharmadhatu, has no birth, no genesis, no beginning. It has no death, no end. It has no middle, no aging. Why is that? Because it is permanent, stable, extremeless. And because it is changeless, a state of peace and immutability (*yungdrung*). The word *shiwa* usually means 'peaceful', but here it means extremeless. For me, these are the same thing. When you are in an extreme, then you are not peaceful. Here, the four extremes or eight extremes are pacified. This is explained further.

81 དེ་ནི་ཡིད་ཀྱི་རང་བཞིན་གྱི། །
ལུས་ཀྱི་སྐྱེ་མེད་རྒྱུ་པའི་ཕྱིར། །
བསམ་མི་ཁྱབ་འགྱུར་འཆི་འཕོ་ཡིས། །
དེ་ནི་མི་འཆི་བརྟན་པའི་ཕྱིར། །

It has no birth in a mental form because it is permanent. It has no death through inconceivable death and transmigration, because it is everlasting.

It is not [even] born in a body of mental nature, since it is permanent. Steadfast it does not die, not [even] through the death and transmigration that constitute an inconceivable transformation.

Buddha-nature is permanent as it is beyond form, even mental form. It is stable, as it continues through death and transmigration

Buddha-nature is of course not form, not a substantial form. But it is not even a mental form, which is why it does not have arising. Therefore it is unchanging and permanent. And it is beyond the comprehension of our ordinary mind. Therefore, even death and transmigration will not make Buddha-nature cease to exist. And that is stability.

82 བག་ཆགས་ཟློ་མོའི་ནད་རྣམས་ཀྱིས། །
གཞོན་མེད་ཞེ་བ་ཉིད་ཀྱི་ཕྱིར། ། །
ཟག་མེད་མངོན་པར་འདུ་བྱེད་ཀྱིས། ། །
གཡུང་དྲུང་ཕྱིར་ན་རྒྱ་བ་མེད། ། །

It is unharmed by the disease of the finer karmic imprints because it is peace. It has no ageing produced by untainted karma because it is immutable.

Since it is peace, it does not [even] suffer harm from illnesses caused by subtle karmic imprints. Since it is immutable, there is not [even] aging induced by compositional factors free from stain.

Buddha-nature is peaceful. It is free from extremes as it is not interfered with by karma. It is immutable as it cannot be changed or improved even by positive actions

And even very small habitual patterns will not interfere with this Buddha-nature. Therefore Buddha-nature is free from all extremes. And Buddha-nature will not change. It cannot be dismantled even by unstained actions such as Dharma practice, samadhi and meditation. Here we are saying that you cannot improve the Buddha-nature, because if you improve something, then you are dismantling or changing it. Because Buddha-nature cannot be improved, it's immutable. And this is why it is not subject to old age or decay.

83 དེ་ལ་ཚོགས་གཉིས་དེ་བཞིན་གཉིས། །
གཉིས་དང་གཉིས་ཀྱིས་གོ་རིམས་བཞིན། །
འདུས་མ་བྱས་པའི་དབྱིངས་ལ་ནི། །
རྒྱུ་པ་ལ་སོགས་དོན་ཤེས་བྱ། །

This uncreated space has the attributes of permanence and so forth which should be known respectively through the first pair of verses and likewise the next pair and the next pair and the last.

[Combining] sentences from the foregoing two by two, the uncreated expanse should be known [as possessing] in the same sequence the attributes of being permanent and so forth.

Stanzas 81 and 82 thus explain the four points introduced in stanza 80: permanence, stability, peace, immutability

This stanza confirms what we talked about earlier. The first two lines of stanza 81 said that Buddha-nature does not even have a mental form, and therefore it does not have arising. This is because Buddha-nature is permanent. And the next two lines say that Buddha-nature is beyond our conception, therefore death will not make the Buddha-nature non-existent. That's like a proof that Buddha-nature is stable. Each pair of lines corresponds to one of the four points that we talked about in stanza 80, namely permanence, stability, peace or extremelessness, and immutability. This is explained again.

84 མི་ཟད་ཡོན་ཏན་དང་ལྡན་ཕྱིར། །
གཞན་འགྱུར་མིན་བདག་རྒྱ་པའི་དོན། །
མཐའ་ཡི་མུ་དང་མཚུངས་པའི་ཕྱིར། །
སྐྱེས་ཀྱི་བདག་ཉིད་བརྟན་པའི་དོན། །

84 (contd.)

རྣམ་པར་མི་རྟོག་པ་བཞིན་ཕྱིར། །
གཉིས་མེད་ཆོས་ཉིད་ཞི་བའི་དོན། །
མ་བཅོས་ཡོན་ཏན་ཉིད་ཕྱིར་ན། །
འཇིག་མེད་དོན་ནི་གཡུང་དྲུང་ཉིད། །

Being endowed with inexhaustible qualities it has the attribute of permanence, the quality of not altering. Because it equals the furthest end its attribute is everlastingness, the nature of a refuge. Because its very character is not to conceptualize, it has the attribute of peace; the non-dual true nature. As its qualities are not things fabricated, its attribute is immutability; the changeless nature.

Since it is endowed with inexhaustible qualities, [the dharmakaya] is unchangingness itself and thus [has] the attribute of permanence. Equalling the uttermost end it is refuge itself and thus [holds] the attributes of steadfastness. Since absence of thought is its nature, it is Dharmata free from duality and thus [has] the attribute of peace. Hosting uncreated qualities, it is immutability itself and thus [possesses] the attribute of indestructibility.

The reasons that Buddha-nature or dharmakaya is permanent, stable, peaceful and immutable

Why is Buddha-nature permanent, stable and so on? Because Dharmakaya has obtained inexhaustible qualities, therefore it does not have something to achieve. So, dharmakaya does not transform, and that is why it is permanent. And Dharmakaya continues, so to speak, until the end of samsara. So dharmakaya is the ultimate object of refuge, the unfailing object if refuge, and that's why dharmakaya is stable. Dharmakaya does not fall into the two extremes of non-existence and existence, so dharmakaya is free from samsara and nirvana, and this is extremelessness. And dharmakaya possesses an unfabricated, uncompounded quality, so dharmakaya is inexhaustible, and that's immutability.

#10: Inseparable

84 (contd.)

གང་ཕྱིར་དེ་ནི་ཆོས་སྐུ་དེ་ནི་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས། །
དེ་ནི་འཕགས་པའི་བདེན་པ་དོན་དམ་མྱ་ངན་འདས། །
དེ་ཕྱིར་ཉི་དང་ཟེར་བཞིན་ཡོན་ཏན་དབྱེར་མེད་པས། །
སངས་རྒྱས་ཉིད་ལས་མ་གཏོགས་མྱ་ངན་འདས་པ་མེད། །

It is the dharmakaya. It is the tathagata. It is the highest truth. It is the ultimately-true nirvana. Like the sun and its rays, these aspects are inseparable: so there is no nirvana apart from the Buddhahood itself.

Why is it the dharmakaya, the tathagata, the noble truth and the absolute nirvana? Its qualities are inseparable, like the sun and its rays. Thus other than Buddhahood there is no nirvana.

#10: Inseparable

An emptiness practitioner practices the emptiness path, goes through the emptiness bhumis and achieves emptiness

Buddha-nature, ultimate truth, the dharmakaya and the tathagata are all synonymous. Like the sun and its rays, they are one but with different aspects

It's almost like this. An emptiness practitioner practices the emptiness path, goes through the emptiness bhumis and achieves emptiness. That's it! What I'm saying is that if a follower of Madhyamika were to translate the Uttaratantra teachings, they might say something like that. This is a wonderful stanza. This Buddha-nature is the dharmakaya. It is the tathagata, it is enlightenment, and it is the sublime or ultimate truth. And it is also the actual enlightenment. So all these terms are synonymous. They are all are different names or different ways of saying the same thing. Like the sun and its rays, they are one, but with different aspects. So there is no nirvana apart from Buddha-nature. Again this will be explained extensively.

85 མདོར་ན་ཟག་མེད་དབྱིངས་ལ་ནི། །
དོན་གྱི་རབ་ཏུ་དབྱེ་བ་བཞིས། །
ཆོས་ཀྱི་སྐུ་ལ་སོགས་པ་ཡི། །
རྣམ་གྲངས་བཞིར་ནི་རིག་པར་བྱ། །

In brief, since the meaning of this untainted space is divided into four aspects, dharmakaya etc., should be known as four synonyms for it.

Since the unpolluted expanse has, put briefly, four different types of meaning, it should be known in terms of four synonyms: the dharmakaya and so forth.

The *ying*, the unstained space, is divided into four categories

This will be explained extensively, but first there is a summary. This *ying*, the unstained space is divided into four categories, such as dharmakaya, which will now be explained.

86 སངས་རྒྱས་ཆོས་དབྱེར་མེད་པ་དང་། །
དེ་རིགས་དེ་བཞིན་ཐོབ་པ་དང་། །
བརྫུན་མེད་བསྲུ་མེད་ཆོས་ཉིད་དང་། །
གདོད་ནས་རང་བཞིན་ཞི་ཉིད་དོ། །

That inseparable from the Buddha qualities, the achievement of the potential, just as it is, the true nature, neither false nor unreliable and that having, from the very beginning, the very nature of peace itself.

Buddha qualities are indivisible. The disposition is attained as it is. The true state is [always] free from any fickleness and deceit. Since beginningless time the nature has been peace itself.

Buddha-nature is referred to with four different names:

1. Dharmakaya – to refer to the enlightened qualities inseparable from Buddha-nature

(1) Dharmakaya: The qualities of the Buddha such as the ten powers have never been separated from Buddha-nature even for a single moment. And because of that, at times we refer to Buddha-nature as dharmakaya.
(2) Tathagata: And at times during the path, when the qualities of the Buddha such as the ten powers are revealed as if they are something newly obtained

2. Tathagata – to refer to the qualities revealed upon enlightenment

(even though they have always been there), then we call Buddha-nature 'tathagata' (*deshin shekpa*), where *gata* means something like 'going, gone and reached'. We are looking at the same thing, the same Buddha-nature, but now we are giving it a different name. We are calling it Buddhahood, enlightenment. It is like when the clouds go away, we say the sun is coming out. But the sun is there already.

3. Ultimate truth – to refer to the quality unstained by dualistic distinctions

(3) Ultimate truth: The quality of the Buddha-nature is never failing. It's a truth that is never false. It is never stained by the fault of dualistic distinctions. And because there is no dualism, there is no change. Again, this is the same Buddha-nature, but at times we refer to this aspect as the sublime truth or the ultimate truth. People like Nagarjuna do this.

4. Absolute nirvana – to refer to it as primordially pure from defilements that are seemingly present but only temporary in reality

(4) Absolute nirvana: Right from the beginning this Buddha-nature is primordially pure from all kinds of seemingly present but actually temporary defilements, and that is the absolute nirvana.

Dharmakaya is like the clean window we aspire for. It's not the cleaning, but the non-existence of the dirt

Let's go back once again to my strange example of the window-glass. What's the non-existence of dirt? That's automatically the clean glass, isn't it? And that aspect is what we call dharmakaya. We say that actually it's clean, but it's stained at the moment. We even think like that! We think, "Actually it's clean, so let me clean it". We are longing for the result that is clean, and this aspect is called dharmakaya. It's not the cleaning, but this non-existence of the dirt that is called dharmakaya. You may have noticed that two out of these four points – the second and the fourth points – both refer to enlightenment. But they are two different kinds of enlightenment. The second point is like the clean glass that you obtain after you have washed it, that kind of enlightenment. Many practitioners aspire for this kind of enlightenment, and that's already very good. But it's what we call 'approximate enlightenment'. By contrast, the glass that is pre-dirty and pre-clean is never changing, and that is the sublime truth, which is at times also referred to as the 'ultimate enlightenment'.

Points (2) and (4) both refer to enlightenment:

(2) is like the clean glass you obtain after washing, called approximate enlightenment

(4) is like the glass that is pre-dirty and pre-clean, ultimate enlightenment

87 རྣམ་གྲོལ་མངོན་རྫོགས་བྱང་ཆུབ་བང་། །
ཏིང་མ་བཞི་ཆགས་བཅས་སྤངས་པ། །
སངས་རྒྱས་སྒྲུབ་ཅན་འདས་པ་ནི། །
དམ་པའི་དོན་དུ་གཉིས་མེད་ཉིད། །

Buddhahood is every aspect of true and perfect enlightenment. Nirvana is total removal of impurities, along with their latencies. In the true sense, these are not different.

Direct perfect enlightenment [with regard to] all aspects, and abandonment of the stains along with their imprints [are called] Buddha and nirvana respectively. In truth, these are not two different things.

When we explain the meaning of non-duality or the Buddha, then we are referring to a mind, a cognizer or a wisdom that understands everything –

The words Buddha and nirvana are synonymous. Buddha refers to a mind or wisdom that is omniscient, and nirvana refers to the purification of all temporary defilements. But in reality, Buddha and nirvana are no different

everything as it is and everything as it appears. We refer to this kind of omniscience as 'enlightenment' (*changchub*). When all the temporary defilements are purified, we also refer to this as 'nirvana' (*nya ngendey*) . So the absolute realisation is referred to as Buddha, and the absolute purification is referred to as nirvana, but in reality they're exactly the same. They're no different.

88 རྣམ་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་གྱིར་མེད་པ། །
བསམ་མེད་ཏྲི་མེད་ཡོན་ཏན་དང་། །
དབྱེར་མེད་མཚན་ཉིད་ཐར་པ་སྟེ། །
ཐར་པ་གང་དེ་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས། །

Liberation's characteristic is to be inseparable from its qualities – complete, numberless, inconceivable and stainless as they are. Such liberation as this is the tathagata.

Liberation is distinguished by indivisibility from qualities present in all their aspects: innumerable, inconceivable and unpolluted. Such liberation is [also called] "tathagata."

Liberation is when all qualities are completed and all defilements are purified, explained with the analogy of the painters

Now, what is nirvana? What is liberation? It is when all the Buddha qualities are completed, when all the qualities cannot be measured or contemplated. And it is when all the defilements are purified, and therefore it possesses the quality of stainlessness. We refer to this kind of non-duality as liberation. This is going to be explained extensively, with an analogy.

88 (contd.) ཇི་ལྟར་རི་མོ་འདྲི་བྱེད་པ། །
གཞན་དང་གཞན་ལ་མ་བས་པ་དག །
གང་ཞིག་ཡན་ལག་གང་ཤེས་པ། །
དེ་གཞན་རེས་ཟིན་མེད་པར་འགྱུར། །

Compare this to artists specialized in drawing one part to another, yet whichever part one knew the others had not mastered.

Suppose some painters mastered their craft, each with respect to a different [part of the body], so that whichever part one would know how to do, he would not success with any other part.

89 དེ་ནས་འདི་ལ་ཕྱེད་ཀྱན་ཐྱིས། །
ང་ཡི་གཟུགས་ནི་ཐྱིས་ཤིག་ཅེས། །
མངའ་བདག་རྒྱལ་པོས་དེ་དག་ལ། །
བཀའ་ཡིས་རས་ནི་བྱིན་པ་དང་། །

Their king and ruler gives them a canvas, with the order, "all of you must now away and paint my picture!"

Then the king, the ruler of the country, hands them a canvas and gives the order: "You all together paint my image on this!"

90 དེ་ལས་དེ་ནི་ཐོས་ཐུར་ཏེ། །
རི་མོའི་ལས་ལ་རབ་སྦྱོར་རོ། །
དེ་ལ་མངོན་པར་སྦྱོར་རྣམས་ལ། །
གཅིག་གཅིག་ཡུལ་གཞན་སོང་ཐུར་པ། །

Having this received they commence its painting as best as they can but one of them departs to some far and foreign land.

Having heard this [order] from the [king] they carefully take up their painting work. While they are well immersed in their task, one among them leaves for another country.

91 དེ་ནི་ཡུལ་གཞན་སོང་བས་ན། །
དེ་མ་ཚང་ཕྱིར་རི་མོ་དེ། །
ཡན་ལག་ཐམས་ཅད་ཡོངས་རྫོགས་པར། །
མི་འགྱུར་བཞིན་ཞེས་དཔེར་བྱས་སོ། །

Since this man was missing, through going to another place, the portrait in all its parts could not be finished. Thus is an example made.

Since they are incomplete due to this travel abroad, their painting in all its parts does not get fully perfected. Thus the example is given.

The analogy – a king wants a portrait painted by several painters, each of whom specialises in one part of the body. So if any painter is absent, the portrait cannot be completed

Now, let's imagine that a king wishes to have his portrait painted, and there are several painters each of whom can paint a different part of his body. Some can paint the eyes, some can paint the nose, and they are only good at their own particular aspect. The one who's good at painting the ears doesn't know how to paint the rest. And the king commands them to paint his form, gives them canvas, and they start to paint. If one of them has to go to another country, then the painting will not be completed. This is the example, which comes from a sutra requested by a naga. Now we will hear the actual meaning.

92 དེ་རྣམས་འདི་བྱེད་གང་ཡིན་པ། །
སྦྱིན་དང་ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་བཟོད་ལ་སོགས། །
རྣམ་པ་ཀུན་གྱི་མཆོག་ལྡན་པའི། །
ས্ལོང་པ་ཉིད་ནི་གཟུགས་སུ་བརྗོད། །

The "artists" are generosity, skilful conduct, patience et cetera. Voidness, endowed with every finest aspect, is said to be like the royal picture.

Who are the painters of these [parts of the image]? They are generosity, morality, patience and so on. Emptiness endowed with all the supreme aspects is described as being the form [of the king].

Similarly, the dharmakaya cannot be completed if any of the six paramitas is absent, so accumulation and purification need to be completed to establish the dharmakaya

The painters are generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, meditation and wisdom. When they are all present, with nobody missing, then the form of the dharmakaya can be completed. If one of them is missing, then the form of the dharmakaya cannot be completed. This is why qualities such as accumulation and purification, emptiness and clarity all have to be completed in order to establish the dharmakaya.

93 ཤེས་རབ་ཡེ་ཤེས་རྣམ་གྲོལ་རྣམས། །
གསལ་དང་འཕྲོ་དང་དག་ཕྱིར་དང་། །
ཐ་དད་མེད་ཕྱིར་འོད་དང་ཟེར། །
ཉི་མའི་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་རྣམས་དང་མཚུངས། །

Prajña, jñana and perfect freedom are like the sun's light, beams and orb, because they are respectively bright, radiant and pure, and since they are inseparable.

Illuminating, radiating and purifying, and inseparable from each other, analytical wisdom, primordial wisdom and total liberation correspond to the light, rays and orb of the sun.

When the two wisdoms are free from defilements, this is called clarity, radiance and purity. These are one with three aspects, like the sun, its light and its radiance

When the two wisdoms – the wisdom that understands how it is and the wisdom that understands whatever there is – are free from defilements, this is called clarity, radiance and purity. Clarity, radiance and purity are one, but with three different aspects or qualities. It is like the sun, its light and its radiance. These cannot be separated.

94 དེས་ན་ས་ངས་རྒྱས་མ་ཐོབ་པར། །
སྒྲ་ངན་འདས་པ་མི་ཐོབ་སྟེ། །
འོད་དང་འོད་ཟེར་སྣང་ས་ནས་ནི། །
ཉི་མ་ལྟ་བར་མི་རྒྱས་བཞིན། །

Therefore until the achievement of Buddhahood nirvana is never achieved, just as without sunlight and sun rays the sun could never be seen.

One will therefore not attain nirvana without attaining the state of Buddhahood. Just as one could not see the sun if one were to eliminate its light and its rays.

This is why we need to achieve Buddhahood or approximate enlightenment in order to achieve nirvana

This is why if you haven't achieved Buddhahood, the second kind of approximate enlightenment that we talked about before, then you will not achieve nirvana, the fourth kind of enlightenment. This is also an answer to the question that was raised about purification and accumulation. If you haven't accomplished the

Purification and realisation come together, like the sun and its light and radiance

actions of purification then you will not accomplish the action of realisation. Just as you cannot see the sun if you get rid of its light and its radiance, purification and realisation have to come together.

Day 6 – Introduction

Our primary motivation when studying the Uttaratantra should be to benefit all sentient beings

This subject is difficult, and we need to create merit – the habit or propensity to understand the Mahayana

I would like to remind you that when we study the profound Mahayana shastras like the Uttaratantra, we must do so with the profound motivation of benefiting all sentient beings. The motivation to understand and realise the meaning of the text should be secondary. Our primary motivation should be bodhicitta, doing this to benefit sentient beings. This subject is very difficult to understand. As Chandrakirti said, unless one has some kind of merit, some kind of habit or propensity (*bakchak*) to understand the Mahayana, it's very difficult to understand. And we must work hard so that we will have that propensity. And for that we need renunciation mind, and revulsion towards samsara.

To do that, we need renunciation mind. But that's difficult in this modern age, as our need to schedule things makes us forget about impermanence

Our weakness is good for businesses like insurance, but we have no power over the two biggest things in our life – birth and death

But that's difficult, especially in this modern age. We have to program and schedule everything otherwise things do not work. But when we need to schedule things, then we automatically forget about impermanence, changeability and all of that. This so-called modern and advanced society has actually made us very weak, and this weakness is very good for business! Take insurance, for example. In certain countries, you have to have insurance to do anything at all, and it's all based on the thought that 'if this happens then you will be safe from the consequences', so it's all very much based on scheduling and planning. We're basically programming our life. And yet, so far I have met almost nobody who is completely insured! And this is because we have no power. We just don't have any power. No one has the right, this so-called human right. The two most important things that can happen in our life are birth and death. And these happen because they happen. We have no power over them. We cannot choose our mother, our father, or the date of their intercourse, none of this! And likewise, we all know that we cannot choose when we will die.

Likewise all our thoughts are dependent on others

We can plan, but we can't believe our plans will work 100%. Planning is like samsara in a nutshell

Jamgön Kongtrül wrote "Go along with whatever happens in your life". This is the highest attitude

Likewise, every thought that we have is eventually or ultimately dependent on something else. We can plan, but we can't believe that our plans will work 100%. We don't have freedom. Our so-called planning and programming is really like an image of samsara in a nutshell. As it says in the praise to Jamgön Kongtrül Lodrö Thayé Rinpoche that he wrote himself, "Go along with whatever happens in your life". It's really the highest attitude. You cannot plan things – we never know. Today you're in love with someone and you think that this should last, and you hope that it will be forever, but who knows what will happen? The most ridiculous reason such as rain falling on the tent can spoil your relationship! It's one thing to think that we are a free society and say that we can do whatever we like, but actually practicing that is so difficult. If people could do whatever

We like to think we live in a free society, but if people could do whatever they wanted, they would be truly free – nirvana. But even the person who thinks they are freest doesn't have the guts to practice it. We love to plan and our plans chain us!

Our planning is the cause of all our regret, guilt and paranoia! And not only do we plan, but we have to go along with plans that others make for us, like movie times and dates for the World Cup!

So since we now know we're not free, let's apply discipline and further restrictions (a bit like homeopathy) and seek real freedom. And we will find it, because we already have it

they wanted to do, then they would actually be free. They would have reached nirvana! But even the people who think they are the freest, free from all kinds of religion, free from all kinds of political systems and so on, I don't think they are really free. We don't have the guts to actually practice freedom because we love planning! And once we plan, then we are chained. I'm telling you this because just this morning I was writing my schedule for the next two years!

This planning and scheduling is the cause of regret, guilt, paranoia, everything! And not only do we make our own plans, but we have to go along with the plans that other people have arranged for us, like the dates of the World Cup. And this interferes with our life! Or things like the time that a movie is showing in the cinema in the afternoon. This also really interferes with our life! If it is showing at four o'clock, then you have to drive there, and you have to be slightly early because you don't want to miss the beginning, and then you have to upset people who'd like to see you before that, because you have to tell them that you're busy. All kinds of things!

So, what I am saying is that since we now know that we can't be free, we should apply a method of discipline. If we are not free after all, we should put further restrictions upon ourselves. It's a bit like homeopathy. And with that discipline, we can seek real freedom. And we will find it, because as we have seen over the last five days, we have it. We already have real freedom and all the qualities of this freedom, such as the immeasurable ushnisha. It's not just a non-functioning liberation, but liberation complete with all its qualities.

95 དེ་ལྟར་རྒྱལ་བའི་སྙིང་པོ་ནི། །
རྣམ་གཞག་རྣམ་པ་བཅུ་ཞེས་བརྗོད། །

Thus as the victor's essence been described through a tenfold presentation.

In this way the nature of the Victorious One is expressed [by] the "Tenfold Presentation."

95 (contd.) ཉོན་མོངས་སྒྲུབས་ནང་གནས་པ་དེ། །
དཔེ་དག་གིས་ནི་ཤེས་པར་བྱ། །

One should understand from the following examples its presence within the confines of the defilements.

This [tathagatagarbha] abides within the shroud of the afflictions, as should be understood through [the following nine] examples.

We have now completed the ten aspects of the quality of Buddha-nature

So we have seen that quality of the Buddha-nature has ten different aspects. And now Maitreya will use a series of nine examples to explain how this Buddha-nature dwells inside the casket, cocoon or wrapping of emotion.

Maitreya now introduces nine examples to illustrate how Buddha-nature is wrapped by defilements

This topic of Buddha-nature is so important, especially for Mahayana Buddhists, and I can't think of any other shastras that talk about Buddha-nature as extensively as this. There are many texts that explain emptiness, the other aspect of Buddha-nature, but not many that explain the clarity aspect. And because it's such an important point, Maitreya will give us nine examples, and each will be repeated. First there is a summary, then each example is explained three times in increasing detail.

The Nine Examples (of essence and defilements)

96 སངས་རྒྱས་པད་ངན་སྦྲང་རྩི་སྦྲང་མ་ལ། །
ས྄ན་ལ་སྐྱོང་པོ་མི་གཙང་ནང་ན་གསེར། །
ས་ལ་གཏེར་དང་སྲུ་གཤོགས་འབྲས་ཆུང་དང་། །
གོས་ཏྲུལ་ནང་ན་རྒྱལ་བའི་སྐུ་དང་གི། །

Similar to a Buddha in a decaying lotus, honey amidst bees, grains in their husks, gold in filth, a treasure in the ground, shoots and so on piercing through fruits, a Buddha-statue inside tattered rags,

Just like a Buddha in a decaying lotus, honey amidst bees, a grain in its husk, gold in filth, a treasure underground, a shoot and so on sprouting from a little fruit, a statue of the Victorious One in a tattered rag,

97 བུད་མེད་ངན་མའི་ལྷོ་ན་མི་བདག་དང་། །
ས་ལ་རིན་ཆེན་གཟུགས་ཡོད་ཇི་ལྟ་བར། །
གློ་བུར་ཉོན་མོངས་དྲི་མས་བསྒྲིགས་པ་ཡི། །
སེམས་ཅན་རྣམས་ལ་དེ་བཞིན་བམས་འདི་གནས། །

a monarch in a poor and ugly woman's womb or a precious image inside some clay, this nature is within all beings present but obscured by the impurity of passing defilement.

a ruler of mankind in a destitute woman's womb, and a precious image under [a layer of] clay, this [Buddha] element abides within all sentient beings, obscured by the defilement of the adventitious poisons.

First there is a summary of the nine examples:

The nine examples:

1. Buddha inside a lotus
2. Honey amidst bees
3. Fruit in its husk
4. Gold lying in dirt
5. Jewels under a house
6. Tree shoot within fruit
7. Statue wrapped in cloth
8. Chakravartin in the womb
9. Gold statue in a mould

(1) The sublime being's body, the Buddha's body, in an ordinary entity such as lotus.
(2) Honey surrounded by many bees.
(3) A fruit or grain within its husk.
(4) Gold in the middle of dirt or garbage.
(5) A treasure of jewels underneath a poor person's house.
(6) The potential of a big tree with branches, fruit and flowers inside a small fruit.
(7) A statue of the Buddha wrapped in ragged cloth.
(8) A universal monarch inside an ordinary woman's womb.
(9) A gold statue inside a mould made of ordinary earth and clay.

Likewise, *kham* is within sentient beings but wrapped by defilements

Likewise, the *kham* or Buddha-nature is within sentient beings who are wrapped by temporary defilements or obscurations.

98 དེ་མ་བརྒྱ་སྲོག་ཆགས་སྦྲུན་པ་མི་གཙང་ས་འབྲས་གོས་རྡུལ་དང་། །
སྡུག་བསྔལ་འབར་བས་མངོན་པར་གདུངས་བའི་བུད་མེད་ས་ཡི་ཁམས་དང་མཚུངས། །
སངས་རྒྱས་སྦྲང་རྩི་སྦྱིང་པོ་གསེར་དང་གཏེར་དང་ནྱ་ག་རོ་ཌ་ཤིན་སྐྱ། །
གླིང་བདག་མཆོག་དང་རིན་ཆེན་གཟུགས་དང་དེ་མེད་ཁམས་མཆོག་མཚུངས་པ་ཉིད། །

The impurities correspond to the lotus, the insects, the husks, filth, the ground, the fruit, the tattered rags, the woman strongly afflicted by burning sorrows and the clay. The Buddha, the honey, the grains, the gold, the treasure, the nyagrodha tree, the precious statue, the supreme ruler of the continents and the precious image correspond to this supreme, immaculate nature.

The defilements correspond to the lotus, the insects, the husk, the filth, the earth, the fruit, the tattered rag, the pregnant woman direly vexed with burning suffering and the clay. The Buddha, the honey, the grain, the gold, the treasure, the nyagrodha tree, the precious statue, the continents' supreme ruler and the precious image are similar to the supreme undefiled element.

In the examples, the 'wrapper' corresponds to the defilements, and what is 'wrapped' corresponds to *kham*, the Buddha-nature

In the examples, the obscurations correspond to the lotus, bees, husk, garbage, ground, fruit, the ragged cloth, the woman stained by all kinds of suffering, and the clay. The *kham* is wrapped, and this list tells us the wrapper or wrapping in each of the analogies. The thing that is being wrapped, the *kham*, is like the Buddha, honey, fruit, gold, treasure, tree, the precious statue, the universal monarch and precious statue. These correspond to Buddha-nature in the analogies. Now the first example is explained.

Example #1: The Buddha and the Lotus

99 ཇི་ལྟར་མདོག་ངན་པད་མའི་ཁོང་གནས་པ། །
མཚན་སྟོང་གིས་འབར་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ནི། །
དྲི་མེད་ལྷ་ཡི་མིག་ལྡན་མིས་མཐོང་ནས། །
ཆུ་སྐྱེས་འདབ་མའི་སྒྲབས་ནས་འཏྲོན་བྱེད་པ། །

Someone endowed with pure vision, upon seeing the tathagata shining with a thousand marks adorned within a decaying lotus, would remove him from the prison of those petals of that "flower of water born".

Seeing that in the calyx of an ugly-coloured lotus a tathagata dwells ablaze with a thousand marks, a man endowed with immaculate divine vision takes it from the shroud of the water-born's petals.

#1: A person with divine eye perceives a Buddha in a lotus and takes it out

In this example, when someone with a divine eye perceives the Buddha dwelling inside an ordinary lotus, they will try to peel off the petals of this ordinary lotus. That is the example, and now we come to the meaning.

100 དེ་བཞིན་བདེ་གཤེགས་མནར་མེད་གནས་རྣམས་ལའང་། །
སངས་རྒྱས་སྤྱན་གྱིས་རང་ཚོས་ཉིད་གཟིགས་ཏེ། །
སྙིང་མེད་ཕྱི་མཐའི་མྱུར་གནས་ཐུགས་རྗེས་ཡི། །
བདག་ཅག་སྙིང་པ་ལས་ནི་གྲོལ་བར་མཛད། །

Similarly the sugatas (with their Buddha eyes) see their own true nature even in those in the worst of hells and, their nature being compassion present until the very end, they bring freedom from all those veils.

Likewise the Sugata with his Buddha eye perceives his own true state even in those who must abide in the hell of direct pain. Endowed with compassion itself, which is unobscured and endures to the final end, he relieves them from their obscurations.

Likewise, the Buddha sees that all sentient beings have Buddha-nature, and seeks to liberate them

Likewise, with their own self-awareness Buddhas see that even the beings that are being burned in the hell realms have the Buddha-nature. Since the Buddha sees this with his wisdom that is none other than compassion, he then liberates beings like us who are chained by obscurations. He unpeels the skin of defilements with his compassion. Now we have the example and the meaning together.

101 ཇི་ལྟར་མི་སྡུག་པརྒྱ་ཟུམ་ལ་བདེ་བར་གཤེགས་པ་ནི། །
དེ་ཡི་ཁོང་གནས་ལྷ་མིག་མཐོང་ནས་འདབ་མ་གཅོད་བྱེད་ལྟར། །
ཚགས་སྦང་སོགས་དྲི་སྒྲབས་བསྒྲིགས་ཐོར་གས་སངས་སྐྱེང་པོ་འགྲོ་གཟིགས་ཏེ། །
ཐུགས་རྗེས་ཐུབ་པ་དེ་བཞིན་སྙིང་པ་དེ་ནི་འཇོམས་པར་མཛད། །

Once the sugata inside the closed decaying lotus had been seen by someone with divine vision, the petals were sliced asunder. Likewise, when the Buddhas see the presence of perfect Buddhahood, in beings but obscured by an impure shell of desire, hatred and so on, through their compassion those victors destroy such obscuration.

Once his divine eye sees the Sugata abiding within the closed ugly lotus, the man cuts the petals. Seeing the perfect Buddha-nature within beings, obscured by the shroud of desire, hatred and the other mental poisons, the Muni does likewise and through his compassion defeats all their veils.

With compassion, Buddha destroys defilements just like the person with divine eye unpeels the lotus

Someone with a divine eye unpeels the petals of an ordinary lotus that is wrapping the form of the Buddha. Likewise with his compassion and wisdom, the Buddha sees Buddha-nature wrapped within the defilements of ordinary sentient beings. And with compassion, the Buddha destroys these defilements. Now we come to the second example.

Example #2: The Honey and the Bees

102 ཇི་ལྟར་སྲོག་ཆགས་ཚོགས་བསྐོར་སྦྲང་རྩི་ནི། །
སྐྱེས་བུ་མཁས་པས་དེ་དོན་གཉེར་བ་ཡིས། །
མཐོང་ནས་ཐབས་ཀྱིས་དེ་དང་སྲོག་ཆགས་ཚོགས། །
ཀུན་ནས་བྱལ་བར་རབ་ཏུ་བྱེད་པ་བཞིན། །

A clever man trying to get honey amidst swarms of insects would, having spotted it, employ skilful means to separate that honey from the host of bees and then actually obtain it.

Honey is surrounded by a swarm of insects. A skilful man in search of [honey] [employs], upon seeing this, suitable means to fully separate it from the host of bees.

#2: Honey surrounded by bees. To obtain honey, a person uses smoke to clear away the bees

First the example, which is honey that is surrounded by thousands of bees. A wise person who wishes to have this honey will use all kinds of methods such as creating smoke to remove the bees in order to reveal the honey.

103 དབང་སྲོང་ཆེན་པོས་ཀུན་མཁྱེན་སྣྱན་ཀྱིས་ནི། །
རིགས་ཁམས་སྦྲང་རྩི་དང་འདྲ་དེ་གཟིགས་ནས། །
དེ་ཡི་སྒྲིབ་པ་སྦྲང་མ་དང་འདྲ་བ། །
གཏན་ནས་རབ་ཏུ་སྤོང་བར་མཛད་པ་ཡིན། །

Likewise the great sages with their omniscient vision, upon seeing the honey-like causal ground, the essence, cause total, radical relinquishment of the bee-like obscurations.

Likewise, when his eye of omniscience sees the honey-like element of awareness, the Great Sage causes its bees-like veils to be fully and radically abandoned.

Likewise, the great rishi sees the honey-like Buddha-nature within beings and helps them clear away their bee-like obscurations

Likewise, with his infinite omniscience the great rishi, the truth-teller, sees the Buddha-nature, which is like the honey, within all sentient beings and then helps people to chase away the obscurations that are like the bees.

104 ཇི་ལྟར་སྦྲང་རྩི་སྦོག་ཆགས་བྱེ་བ་ཁྱག་ཁྱིག་སྟོང་བསྒྲིགས་སྦྲང་རྩི་དོན་གཉེར་མིས། །
སྦྲང་མ་དེ་དག་བསལ་ཏེ་ཇི་ལྟར་འདོད་པ་བཞིན་དུ་སྦྲང་རྩི་འཛིན་བྱེད་པ། །
དེ་བཞིན་ལུས་ཅན་ལ་ཡོད་ཟག་པ་མེད་པའི་ཤེས་པ་སྦྲང་མའི་རྩི་དང་འདྲ། །
ཉོན་མོངས་སྦྲང་མ་དང་འདྲ་དེ་འཇོམས་པ་ལ་མཁས་པའི་རྒྱལ་བ་སྐྱེས་བུ་བཞིན། །

The man who tries to get the honey surrounded by myriads of bees disperses all the bees and procures the honey as he planned. The untainted intelligence which is in all beings is like the honey: the Buddhas, skilful victors over bee-like defilements, like the man.

Aiming to get honey that is obscured by millions and millions of honeybees, the man disperses all these bees and procures the honey, just as he wishes. The unpolluted knowledge present in all sentient beings is similar to the honey, and the Victor skilled in vanquishing the bee-like poisons resembles the man.

Like the man chasing away bees to obtain honey, the Buddha gets rid of sentient beings' defilements

A person who wishes to obtain honey that is surrounded by thousands of bees will use a method such as creating smoke to clear the bees. Thus he obtains his aim, which is the honey. The honey is like the primordially pure Buddha-nature dwelling in the midst of emotions that are like bees, and the Buddha who is wise gets rid of these emotions that are like bees. Now the third example.

Example #3: The Grain and the Husk

105 ཇི་ལྟར་སྦྲུན་ལྡན་འབྲུ་ཡི་སྐྱོང་པོ་ནི། །
མི་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་ནི་སྦྱོད་བྱར་མི་འགྱུར་བ། །
ཟས་སོགས་དོན་དུ་གཉེར་བ་གང་ཡིན་པ། །
དེ་དག་གིས་ནི་སྦྲུན་ནས་དེ་འཕྲིན་ལྟར། །

Kernels of grains, still in their husks, are unusable for man. Whoever wants them as food must remove them from their husks.

A grain when still in its husk is not fit to be eaten by man. Those seeking food and sustenance remove the [grain] from its husk.

#3: Grain and husk. To eat the grain, the husk must first be removed

For example, a person cannot use something like a fruit or rice that has a husk or skin as food. So when they need to eat this, they will remove the skin or the husk.

106 དེ་བཞིན་སེམས་ཅན་ལ་ཡོད་ཉོན་མོངས་ཀྱི། །
ཏྲི་མ་དང་འདྲེས་རྒྱལ་བའང་ཇི་སྲིད་དུ། །
ཉོན་མོངས་ཏྲི་མ་འདྲེས་ལས་མ་གྲོལ་བ། །
དེ་སྲིད་རྒྱལ་མཛད་སྲིད་གསུམ་འདུ་མི་བྱེད། །

Similarly, whilst Buddhahood, present in all beings but mixed with defilement-impurities, has not been from defilement freed then Buddha-activity in the three worlds will not be accomplished.

[The nature of] the Victorious One, which is present within beings [but] mixed with the defilement of the poisons, is similar to this. While it is not freed from being mingled with the pollution of these afflictions, the deeds of the Victor will not be [displayed] in the three realms of existence.

Likewise, the infinite Buddha activities cannot manifest while Buddha-nature is wrapped with emotions

Now the meaning. Likewise, as long as Buddha-nature is wrapped with emotions, then the infinite activities of the Buddha cannot manifest.

107 ཇི་ལྟར་སྦ་ལུ་བྱ་བོ་ནས་འབྱུའི་སྐྱོང་པོ་སྦྱོན་ལས་མ་བྱུང་བ། །
ལེགས་པར་མ་བསྲུབས་མི་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་ནི་སྦྱོང་བྱ་བཟའ་བ་ཞིམ་པོར་མི་འགྱུར་ལྟར། །
དེ་བཞིན་སེམས་ཅན་ལ་ཡོད་ཆོས་ཀྱི་དབང་ཕྱུག་ཉོན་མོངས་སྦྱོབས་ལས་མ་གྲོལ་ལུས། །
ཉོན་མོངས་བཀྲེས་པས་ཉེན་པའི་འགྲོ་ལ་ཆོས་ཀྱི་དགའ་བའི་ངོ་སྦྲེར་འགྱུར་བ་མིན། །

Incompletely-threshed kernels of rice, buckwheat and barley that have not been de-husked still have their husks and beards. Just as these are not usable, tasty food for men, likewise the "lord of all qualities" present in living beings, and whose corps has not yet been freed from defilement, will not give the taste of the joy of Dharma to beings afflicted by defilement-hunger.

Unthreshed grains of rice, buckwheat or barley, which not having emerged from their husks still have husk and beard, cannot be turned into delicious food that is palatable for man. Likewise the Lord of Qualities is present within all beings, but his body is not liberated from the shroud of the poisons. Thus his body cannot bestow the joyous taste of Dharma upon sentient beings stricken by the famine of their afflictions.

This example emphasis the negative aspect more. Until the defilements are removed, Buddha-nature cannot be used, just as the husk must be removed for the grain to be used

Once again, we return to the example for the third time. Maitreya really wants us to understand this! Each of these examples is slightly different. For example, here there is more emphasis on the negative aspect. For example, until the husk of the rice is taken off, then you cannot eat it. You cannot use it. Likewise, as long as this *kham*, the Buddha-nature, is wrapped with emotions, then this Buddha-nature will not fulfil the hunger of sentient beings, meaning that this Buddha-nature is useless. Maybe "useless" is too strong, but it cannot be used.

Example #4: The Gold and the Filth

108 ཇི་ལྟར་རབ་ཏུ་རྒྱུ་ཆོ་མི་ཡི་གསེར། །
ལྷན་ཕྱིན་རྒལ་བའི་གནས་སུ་ལྷུང་ཐུར་པ། །
མི་འཛིག་ཆོས་ཅན་དེ་ནི་དེར་དེ་བཞིན། །
ལོ་བརྒྱ་མང་པོ་དག་ཏུ་གནས་པ་དེ། །

The gold of a man on a journey dropped into a place containing filth arot. Being of indestructible nature, for many centuries that gold remained in that same place yet quite unchanged.

While a man was travelling, gold he owned fell into a place filled with rotting refuse. This [gold], being of indestructible nature, remained for many centuries just as it was.

109 ལྷ་མིག་རྣམ་དག་དང་ལྡན་ལྷ་ཡིས་དེར། །
མཐོང་ནས་མི་ལ་འདི་ན་ཡོད་པའི་གསེར། །
རིན་ཆེན་མཆོག་འདི་སྦྱངས་ཏེ་རིན་ཆེན་ཐྲིས། །
བསྒྲུབ་པར་བྱ་བ་ཐྲིས་ཞེས་སྨྲ་བ་ལྟར། །

A god with perfect divine vision noticed it there told someone, "There is gold here. Once you have cleansed this most valued thing then do what can be done with such a precious substance."

Then a god with completely pure divine vision saw it there and addressed a man: "Purify this supremely precious gold lying here in this [filth] and [then convert it into something] that is worth being made from such a precious substance!"

#4: Gold coin dropped in filth. It will remain there unchanged until found and cleaned. A divine being sees the gold coin, and tells a man to clean it and make it into something worthy of its value

A person with a gold coin is roaming around, and while roaming around, the gold coin drops into some garbage or dirty ground. And this gold coin will remain there until it is found or manipulated by another cause. And as long as it is not found, it will stay there for hundreds of years. And then someone with a divine eye sees the gold coin, and then tells a man that this precious item be cleaned and purified, and then made into something that is worthy of its value, such as an ornament, or even better a statue of the Buddha or something like that.

110 དེ་བཞིན་ཐུབ་པས་མི་གཙང་དང་འདྲ་བའི། །
ཉོན་མོངས་སུ་ཏྲིང་ས་ཆེམས་ཅན་ཡོན་ཏན་ནི། །
གཟིགས་ནས་ཉོན་མོངས་འདམ་དེ་དག་ཏུའི་ཕྱིར། ། །
སྒྲ་དགེ་རྣམས་ལ་དམ་ཆོས་ཆུ་ཆར་འབེབས། ། །

In a similar way, the Victors see the quality of beings, which has sunken into the filth-like defilements, and shower upon them true Dharma's rain that they be purified of defilement's mire.

Likewise the Muni sees the quality [of] beings, which is sunken in the filth-like mental poisons, and pours his rain of sacred Dharma upon them to purify the muddiness of their afflictions.

Likewise, Buddha sees Buddha-nature fallen into the garbage of emotion and obscuration, which he cleans by showering a rain of compassion on beings

Likewise, Buddha sees this Buddha-nature fallen in the midst of the garbage, the mud of emotions and obscurations. And in order to purify these obscurations, he showers a rain of compassion upon sentient beings.

111 ཇི་ལྟར་ལྷན་ལྤོན་རྡལ་བའི་གནས་སུ་ལྷུང་བའི་གསེར་ནི་ལྷ་ཡིས་མཐོང་ཐྱུར་ནས། །
ཀུན་ཏུ་དག་པར་བྱ་ཕྱིར་མཆོག་ཏུ་མཛོས་པ་མི་ལ་ནན་གྱིས་སྟོན་པ་ལྟར། །
དེ་བཞིན་རྒྱལ་བས་ཉོན་མོངས་མི་གཙང་ཆེན་པོར་ལྷུང་ཐྱུར་ཕྱོགས་སངས་རྒྱས་པོ་ཆེ། །
སེམས་ཅན་རྣམས་ལ་གཟུགས་ནས་དེ་དག་བྱ་ཕྱིར་ལུས་ཅན་རྣམས་ལ་ཆོས་སྟོན་ཏོ། །

Just as the gold fallen into the place arot with garbage was seen there by a god who then with great insistence showed the man that most supremely-beautiful of things, so that it might be completely cleansed, so also do the victors perceive that most precious, perfect Buddhahood within all beings has fallen in the defilements' great mire and so they teach them all the Dharma in order that in may be purified.

Once the god has seen the gold that has fallen into the place full of rotting refuse, insistently he directs the man's attention to this supremely beautiful thing so he may completely cleanse it. Seeing within all beings the precious perfect Buddha that has fallen into the great filth of the mental poisons, the Victorious One does likewise and teaches the Dharma to persuade them to purify it.

Likewise, the Buddha turns the wheel of the Dharma to point out Buddha-nature, which is like the lost gold coin, to ignorant beings

Once again, we have the example and the meaning together. When someone with a divine eye sees the gold coin that has fallen into the garbage, in order to make this gold coin worthy of its value, he will point it out to the man who lost it. Likewise, with their infinite wisdom and compassion, Buddhas will turn the wheel of the Dharma in order to point out Buddha-nature, which is like the lost gold coin, to ignorant sentient beings.

These examples might seem to contradict Madhyamika, where true existence is always negated, and there is nothing independent, permanent and one

For example, when we think today's hand is the same as yesterday's hand, we cling to the idea of permanence, and then we get unhappy when we see we have wrinkles

Well as you can see, we have some very extensive examples and statements of the Buddha-nature. In the Madhyamika shastras, true existence is always negated. Nothing truly exists. This is the case not only the Madhyamika, but even in the common vehicle such as the Shravakayana. For instance, in the Shravaka path, they use many different methods to establish the notion that there is no truly existent hand, to take a simple example. If it did exist truly, there are only three ways that it could exist truly. The three conditions for true existence are that it should exist as independent, permanent, and one. This is a very big thing, especially for the Sautrantika and Vaibashika schools, that talk about this a lot. And people like Shantarakshita have brought that subject all the way up to Madhyamika. If you read his "Ornament of the Middle Way" (*uma gyen*), you will find a lot written about it there. For example, we think that today's hand is yesterday's hand. Of course we do. But when we think that it's the same hand, we're clinging to the idea of permanence. And this is why we don't feel

In the Shravakayana, this impermanence is proof that the hand does not truly exist

happy when we see wrinkles, because it contradicts our notion that our hand is permanent. If it's permanent, why does it have wrinkles? We can't understand that. It's unacceptable. But in the Shravakayana, they say that this is proof that the hand is not truly existent.

We forget that our hand is dependent on everything else. We know it a little on the ordinary level, which is why we buy moisturiser, but not completely

Moisturiser alone will not take care of wrinkles, as there are so many other causes and conditions

Next, we always think that our hand is independent. Or perhaps I should say that we forget the fact that the existence of our hand, and its movement for instance, depends on everything else. For example, my hand depends on everything, including this flower that I'm holding, even including this tent not falling on my hand. We know this a little bit on an ordinary level, which is why we buy moisturizer. But we don't know it completely. We can see that we don't know this completely, because we trust that moisturiser will take care of the wrinkles. We don't know that there are so many other causes and conditions that need to be cleaned, not only the dry skin. And this again proves, for a second time, that our hand doesn't truly exist. The word 'truly' is such a big word.

We see the hand as one thing, instead of the skin, blood, bones etc.

For all these reasons, the hand does not truly exist

And when we look at our hand, we always see it as one thing – a whole so-called hand. For instance, we say 'let me shake hands with you'. We don't say 'let us touch our skin, blood, bones, nail and hair'! Especially hair – some people have a lot of hair, and sweat! But we think there is one phenomenon that's called 'hand'. That's how the Shravakayana path analyses things. It's a really profound path, and should never be disparaged. The Theravada path is an object of homage.

The Mahayana goes further, and dismantles the idea of 'parts' not just the idea of the 'whole'

In all Buddhist schools, especially in Mahayana, we cannot say mind truly exists. It contradicts the notion of enlightenment

The Mahayana goes even further. Let's not go through this too much now, but for instance, it's somehow easier to understand and get rid of clinging to the idea of the whole. But not many theologians (*drumta*) have the courage to dismantle the parts as well. This is why the idea of 'one' is defeated by many schools, but the idea of 'parts' (*dulma*) is only defeated by certain schools. Again I'm getting pulled by the Madhyamika system, as the idea of not truly existing is very important in the Madhyamika. Therefore, in all Buddhist systems, and especially in the Mahayana, we cannot say that there is a truly existing mind. Speaking of a truly existing mind and then inviting the notion of enlightenment is a contradiction.

Some scholars believe the absence of true existence can be referred to as Buddha-nature

Mipham disagrees. Stones don't truly exist, but they don't have Buddha-nature either. 'Form is emptiness' is not enough. We also need 'emptiness is form'

Many scholars of the past thought that the absence of true existence alone is a good enough quality to be referred to as the Buddha-nature, although people like Mipham Rinpoche disagree. Because stones and trees also do not truly exist, but they don't have Buddha-nature. So the lack of true existence alone is not enough of a qualification to say that this is the Buddha-nature. Saying that form is emptiness is not enough. We must also say that emptiness is form. Let me tell you something quite subtle. There are certain schools that also think that just because something is not truly existent does not mean that it's the Buddha-nature. But then they add something. For example, some people say that the not truly existing mind is the Buddha-nature, but again Mipham Rinpoche will

Mipham also disagrees with scholars who identify Buddha-nature with something compounded, like truly existing mind

disagree with that. According to Maitreya, when you achieve enlightenment, you are not getting anything new. You are only getting what you already have. But mind is a compounded phenomenon. So if you believe that the not truly existing mind is the Buddha-nature, you will have to face the consequence that the qualities of the Buddha will become impermanent.

So what is the clarity and cognition aspect of Buddha-nature if it isn't mind?

It is not inanimate, nor is it animate in the sense of mind. It is wisdom

So what about the cognition aspect or clarity aspect of the Buddha-nature (*selwa*)? I'm not sure if the word 'clarity' says enough, because I don't feel that it has the connotation of cognition and omniscience, which it should have. Anyway, we must now ask what is this cognition aspect of the Buddha-nature. According to Mipham Rinpoche, it's not mind. It is wisdom. This is what I was telling you yesterday. It is not inanimate, but that does not mean that it is animate in the sense of mind. It is wisdom.

Even in Tibetan, we must clarify that 'clarity' includes awareness and cognition

Uncompounded Buddha-nature cannot be the result of compounded mind

We practice because defilements are removable, *drima dral rung*

Tulku Jigme Rinpoche was just telling me that even in Tibetan we have to clarify the meaning of the word 'clarity' (*selwa*), because we need to add the aspect of awareness and cognition (*rigpa*). So I suppose 'clarity' is fine. There is an important reason why Mipham Rinpoche is so persistent on this point. Remember yesterday we talked about how if you plant rice, rice will grow, not barley. You see, if you think that the not truly existent mind is the Buddha-nature, then you are planting mind, which is a compounded phenomenon, and yet what grows is an uncompounded phenomenon. And that is absolutely not right. So why are we practicing? The whole reason that we practice the path is because defilements are removable (*drima dralrung*), and because sentient beings can achieve enlightenment (*sang jarung*), as they have that potential. The possibility of the Buddhahood is there because of Buddha-nature, and this Buddha-nature has got nothing to do with a mind that is not truly existent.

We differentiate between two kinds of nirvana – one with residue (nirvana), and one without (parinirvana)

In the common vehicle, the Buddha's body is the truth of suffering, and thus not an ultimate object of refuge

For them, only the Buddha's mind is an ultimate object of refuge, and he only passed into parinirvana when he exhausted the last truth of suffering at Kushinagar

Generally, when we talk about nirvana, we talk about two kinds of nirvana: nirvana with remainder or residue, and without: nirvana and parinirvana. According to the common vehicle, it is believed that Shakyamuni Buddha's body is the truth of suffering. From the moment he was born in Lumbini, all the way to when he passed into parinirvana in Kushinagar, his body – including the locks of hair, everything – is the truth of suffering, and therefore it is not the ultimate object of refuge. Although, of course, you will still obtain a lot of merit by offering alms to this body. Also this is why they say in the common vehicle that Shakyamuni Buddha had all the symptoms of a human body. For example, he grew up, he produced Rahula with Yasodhara, he even had thorns piercing the sole of his feet, and he died. Basically, that's the perspective of the common vehicle, which is why they see that the Buddha's mind is the only ultimate object of refuge. So in the common vehicle, from the time that Buddha Shakyamuni was enlightened under the bodhi tree, until he passed into parinirvana at Kushinagar, this enlightenment is called 'enlightenment with residue', with remainder. Only after he passed into parinirvana, when he exhausted the last truth of suffering, did he achieve parinirvana, enlightenment without any residue or remainder.

The Mahayana explains all this as a nirmanakaya manifestation, a show that depends on the audience's perception

Some like Devadatta saw nothing. Others attained the first bhumi just by looking at a painting of the Buddha

Behind the manifestation Buddha is the one who manifests, one with all the uncompounded Buddha qualities

The Mahayana talks about all this quite differently. The Mahayana thinks that all this is a nirmanakaya manifestation. From the time that Buddha descended from Tushita heaven, all the way until he passed into parinirvana, all of this is his manifestation. This means it's like a show, which means we're talking about an audience. And so much depends on the audience and their perception. There are some audiences like Buddha's cousin Devadatta, who didn't see anything at all special with the Buddha. And there are other audiences like a certain princess in Sri Lanka, who achieved the first bhumi just by looking at a painting of the Buddha. So, as soon as we talk about a manifestation Buddha, we are indicating that there must be a 'real' Buddha, the manifester who is behind this manifestation. And this manifester has all the qualities such as the 32 major marks and all of that; it's not like some formless deity that manifests. And every quality, even the lock of hair of this manifester Buddha, is uncompounded. It has to be.

The word uncompounded' is just a label. It refers to something that is beyond both compounded and uncompounded. Buddha is not a phenomenon

However, concepts such as 'uncompounded' are actually only a label here. When we use words like 'compounded' and 'uncompounded', we're not referring to uncompounded in the usual sense. Here we are talking about the kind of uncompounded that is beyond compounded and uncompounded. Basically we are saying that Buddha-nature, the Buddha, is not a phenomenon. Because when we talk about phenomena, then we are talking about perception, and that doesn't work. These are some words from Mipham Rinpoche, extracted from "The Lion's Roar Which Points Out The Shentong View".

Day 7 – Introduction

The nine examples are very important for Mahayana and tantric practitioners

They will help you in future when you hear masters use expressions like "this ordinary mind" or "this very moment, present moment"

We perform Buddhist practice to accumulate merit, purify defilements and thus reveal what we already have

We are going through the nine examples, and we covered four of them yesterday. Although you may not understand the whole of the Uttaratantra, I would encourage you to really make a note of these nine examples. They are so important, especially for Mahayana practitioners, and eventually also for tantric practitioners. They're not that difficult to understand, and they're talking about us as we are now, not describing something we will have in the future. If you understand these examples, then it will help you understand when you hear masters using expressions such as 'here, now, this very moment, this present moment', or 'this ordinary mind'. When you receive such teachings in the future, and when you practice them, all this information will definitely help you.

Why do we perform very ordinary, common Buddhist practices such as fasting? So that we will accumulate merit and purify defilements in order to reveal what we have. Why do some people shave their hair, go to caves and sit there in solitude for many years? To reveal these things that we have, which Lord Maitreya has very profoundly explained with these nine examples. This goes all the way up to atiyoga, when the guru makes a very simple remark to introduce

Even the Madhyamika consequentialists are only negating arising to help us remove the husk from the grain

Our problem is that we think the husk is the rice, so all these methods are to purify our defilements

you to the nature of the mind. What is really happening there is not other than revealing what we have been describing. Even in the Madhyamika, where we have the seven-fold analysis of the chariot, the negation of self-arising, other-arising, and all of that – why do we do that? Why do the Madhyamika philosophers do that? Why are followers of the Prasangika Madhyamika even called consequentialists? It's not because they want to be irritable philosophers, with berets and cigars in their mouths! What they are doing is none other than simply taking off the husk, the skin, or the shell. The problem with us is that we think the husk is the rice! Therefore the purpose of all these methods is not other than washing, purifying the mud, garbage, and the earth that's covering the gold coin.

Buddha qualities are inconceivable, but we still talk about them for the sake of practitioners

For a general audience, we might say enlightenment is a state free from paranoia or obsession, but there's no benefit in speaking of the uncompounded ushnisha

I'd like to tell you something quite important. You know, the qualities of the Buddha-nature are infinite. Maitreya said they are inconceivable. But for the sake of practitioners, we still have to talk about them, despite the lack of words and language. And for a very general audience, if they ask what enlightenment is, at times it's much easier to say that enlightenment is nothing but the absence of paranoia or obsession. That's all they can understand and they like that. If there is a state where there's no paranoia, that sounds nice and they will aim for that. For this kind of ordinary audience, if we tell them about the uncompounded lock of hair and the ushnisha, it's just not conceivable.

For others, it's easier to speak of peeling the husk rather than the qualities of the infinite omniscient ever-manifesting rice

Absence of paranoia is a very attractive notion for simple people

And then there are many people who are very simple-minded. For them, it's much easier to talk about getting rid of the husk, rather than to talk about the rice that you cannot see at the moment because of the husk. It just won't work. They're simple-minded, so you can't talk about what's inside the husk, because all they can see is the husk. So it's better to talk about removing the husk, instead of the brilliant, infinite, ever-manifesting rice. You can't talk about the ever-present omnipotent, omniscient rice! It won't work. And you know, when we say that enlightenment is simply an absence of paranoia, that's a very attractive notion for limited and simple-minded people. Nobody wants to be paranoid. I'm sure all the psychologists and psychiatrists in the audience could explain this.

Absence of paranoia isn't mere nothingness. It opens up many great qualities, which are the equivalent of the *kudang yeshey*, the jñanas and kayas

But the absence of paranoia is something very limited. It might be something very simple, like maybe you have an obsession that involves replacing the handset ten times every time you finish making a phone call. If you could get rid of that paranoia and reduce it to maybe just twice, that would be a wonderful achievement! And what could this do for you? It opens many great qualities. For example, it takes time to replace the handset ten times, and if you bring it down to just twice, you'll free up a lot of time. And that is what we call *kudang yeshey*, the jñanas, kayas, 32 major marks, 80 minor marks and so on. It's a bit like that. We are talking about the qualities that you obtain when you are free from something. When you are free from paranoia, what's happening to you? It's not

like paranoia is gone and then full stop. The absence of paranoia is something great, and that greatness is what we have been talking about here.

Many people practice Buddhism to become more happy and relaxed, or perhaps less inhibited, and come out of the closet. All this is already good, an object of veneration, but enlightenment is so much more

People nowadays think that by practicing Buddhism you gain some self-control. You become more sober, maybe slightly happier. Maybe it's not that extreme. I don't know. In any case, that's good. Even that idea is an object of veneration, but here we have to talk about something more. My guess is that many of us are meditating and aiming for a state of that is more relaxed. That's also good! Relaxation is also a very necessary object of veneration. And some people go a little further, and become slightly less inhibited. It's as if they feel it's OK to come out of the closet. That's also very good. Many religions don't even have a path to do that! It's wonderful to have that.

Most of us have a very limited view of enlightenment, associating it with people who are gentle or outrageous

But qualities like being relaxed and carefree can be obtained with Prozac! Obtaining the uncompounded lock of Buddha's hair is something very different

But enlightenment, Buddhahood is not something limited like being able to come out of the closet! I'm telling you this because most people have such a limited view of enlightenment. They say things like a person must be enlightened, because he's so gentle and he's always smiling. Or some say the opposite, that he must be enlightened because he's so outrageous. This is so limited! These are all compounded phenomena. Most of the qualities that we associate with so-called enlightenment these days, like being relaxed or carefree, I think they're obtainable with Prozac! But the Buddha's hair, now that's difficult! And yet, at the same time, you have it! The rice is inside the husk. And that's the amazing aspect of these examples. It's incredible. Only people like Maitreya can talk about these things, because he's the Buddha in waiting. And those of us who are not that diligent, like myself, might as well get used to his language and his teachings, because the next 'reign' will be under his control!

Example #5: The Treasure and the Earth

112 ཇི་ལྟར་མི་དབུལ་བྱིམ་རང་ས་འོག་ན། །
མི་ཟད་པ་ཡི་གཏེར་ནི་ཡོད་ཐུར་ལ། །
མི་དེས་དེ་མ་ཤེས་ཏེ་གཏེར་དེ་ཡང་། །
དེ་ལ་ང་འདིར་ཡོད་ཅེས་མི་སྨྲ་ལྟར། །

Were there an inexhaustible treasure underground beneath the house of a poor man, neither would he know of its presence nor could the treasure tell him: "Here I am".

If an inexhaustible treasure were buried in the ground beneath a poor man's house, the man would not know of it and the treasure would not speak and tell him "I am here!"

(#5) A source of endless treasure is under a poor man's house. But he doesn't know it's there, and the treasure doesn't tell him

The fifth example is a source of endless treasure underneath a poor man's house, and he doesn't know that it's there. And this is an interesting point – the treasure doesn't tell him that it's there.

113 དེ་བཞིན་ཡིད་ཀྱི་ནང་ཆུད་རིན་ཆེན་གཏེར། །
ཏྲི་མེད་གཞན་དང་བསལ་མེད་ཆོས་ཉིད་ཀྱང་། །
མ་རྟོགས་པས་ན་དབུལ་བའི་སྡུག་བསྔལ་ནི། །
རྣམ་མང་རྒྱུན་དུ་སྐྱེ་དགུ་འདིས་རྒྱོང་དོ། །

Similarly, as beings have not realized the very precious treasure contained within their mind, the immaculate true nature to which nothing need to be added and from which nothing need to be taken, they continually experience many kinds of suffering of "deprivation".

Likewise a precious treasure is contained in each being's mind. This is its true state, which is free from defilement. Nothing is to be added and nothing to be removed. Nevertheless, since they do not realize this, sentient beings continuously undergo the manifold sufferings of deprivation.

Similarly, we all have the Buddha-nature within us, a source of endless treasure. But we don't know it's there. This example is important for people who think they have faults

Likewise, even though the endless source of treasure, the Buddha-nature, is within sentient beings, this source of treasure also doesn't say that it's there. And because we don't know that this source of treasure exists within us, we go through the suffering of poverty because of the lack of enlightened qualities. This is a really important example for people who think they have faults or they have no merit. They should realise that they have great merit – all kinds of outer, inner, and secret merit.

114 ཇི་ལྟར་དབུལ་པོའི་ཁྱིམ་ནང་དུ་ནི་རིན་ཆེན་གཏེར་ཆུད་ཐྱུར་བའི་མི་ལ་ནི། །
རིན་ཆེན་གཏེར་བདག་ཡོད་ཅེས་རྗོད་པར་མི་བྱེད་དེ་ནི་མི་ཡིས་ཤེས་མིན་ལྟར། །
དེ་བཞིན་ཆོས་གཏེར་ཡིད་ཀྱི་ཁྱིམ་གནས་སེམས་ཅན་རྣམས་ནི་དབུལ་པོ་ལྟ་བུ་སྟེ། ། །
དེ་དག་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་དེ་ཐོབ་བྱ་ཕྱིར་འཇིག་རྟེན་དུ་ནི་བྱང་སྲོང་ཡང་དག་བལྟམས། ། །

The jewel treasure contained in the poor man's house would not tell him: "I the precious treasure am here" and the man would never know it there. All beings, who have the dharmakaya treasure within the mansion of their mind, are to that poor man similar. So the Great Sages have taken worldly birth in a most perfect way so that those that treasure could obtain.

When a precious treasure is contained within [the ground beneath] a poor man's house, the treasure cannot tell him "I am here!" [and] the man does not know of its presence. Like the poor man, beings are [unaware] that Dharma's treasure lies in the house of their minds and the great Sage truly takes birth within the world to cause them to attain [this treasure].

Although there's a source of treasure underneath the poor man's house, the poor person doesn't know this, and the treasure doesn't report that it's there, so the

Sentient beings live in a house, their physical body. But they don't know about the source of treasure beneath, the Dharmadhatu. The Buddha teaches so that they may obtain that wealth

person doesn't realise that he's sitting on top of it. Likewise, we sentient beings live in a house, in this body, in this form. And beneath it there is the source of treasure, the Dharmadhatu (*chökyi ying*). But because we don't know about it, we go through the suffering of poverty. Therefore the Buddha, the rishi or truth-teller, turns the wheel of the Dharma in order for sentient beings to obtain that wealth.

Example #6: The Shoot and the Fruit-skin

115 ཇི་ལྟར་ཨ་མ་ལ་སོགས་ཤིང་འབྲས་ལ། །
ཡོད་པའི་ས་བོན་རྒྱ་གཏེ་འཇིག་མེད་ཆོས། །
ས་རྩོལ་ཆུ་སོགས་ལྟན་པའི་ལྟོན་ཤིང་གི། །
རྒྱལ་པོའི་དངོས་པོ་རིམ་གྱིས་འགྲུབ་པ་ལྟར། །

Just as the imperishable quality of germinating in the seeds of mangoes and other fruits, in the presence of prepared soil, water and so on, the body of a kingly tree will gradually produce,

The seed contained in the fruit of a mango or similar trees [is possessed of] the indestructible property of sprouting. Once it gets ploughed-earth, water and the other [conditions], the substance of a majestic tree will gradually come about.

(#6) The mango fruit, which contains a seed that will grow into the king of trees

The next example is of fruits like the mango (*amra*). These fruits have seeds inside. When the seed encounters the right conditions such as ploughing and fertilizer and all that, and as long as it does not encounter obstacles that will destroy it, then the result, the shoot, will come. And that becomes the mango tree, the king of trees.

116 སེམས་ཅན་རྨུགས་ཀྱི་མ་རིག་སོགས་འབྲས་ཀྱི། ། །
པགས་སྦུབས་ནང་ཆུད་ཆོས་ཁམས་དགེ་བ་ཡང་། ། །
དེ་བཞིན་དགེ་བ་དེ་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས། ། །
རིམ་གྱིས་ཐུབ་པའི་རྒྱལ་པོའི་དངོས་པོར་འགྱུར། ། །

So also within the rind-confine of beings' ignorance etc, is contained the pure Dharma nature. Likewise, when by virtue it is sustained, it will the very substance of a "king of victors" gradually attain.

The fruit consisting of the ignorance and the other defects of beings contains in the shroud of its peel the virtuous element of the Dharma[kaya]. Likewise, through relying on virtue, this [element] also will gradually turn into the substance of a King of Munis.

Sentient beings' ignorance is like a skin that obscures the *kham*. This example indicates that the ground and result are the same

Sentient beings have ignorance that is like a skin or a wrapping, and inside this wrapping is the *kham*. Here we are using the word 'virtue' (*gewa*), to refer to Buddha-nature. And then by the power of this virtue, gradually this *kham*, this Buddha-nature becomes the Victorious One. I think this example is quite interesting because there is a seed inside the fruit, and the fruit also happens to be the result. It indicates that the ground and the result are the same.

117 ཆུ་དང་ཉི་མའི་འོད་དང་རླུང་དང་ས་དུས་ནམ་མཁའི་རྒྱུན་རྣམས་ཀྱིས། །
ཏ་ལ་དང་ནི་ཨ་ལྦའི་འབྲས་སྦུབས་གཞིན་ནས་ཤིང་སྲྭེ་ཇི་ལྟར་བར། །
སེམས་ཅན་ཉོན་མོངས་འབྲས་ལྷགས་ནང་ཆུད་ཇོགས་སངས་ས་བོན་སྙུ་གུ་ཡང་། །
དེ་བཞིན་དགེ་རྒྱུན་དེ་དང་དེ་ལས་ཆོས་མཐོང་འཕེལ་བར་འགྱུར་བ་ཡིན། །

Just as a tree grows from within a banana or mango fruit's skin, due to conditions–humidity, sunlight, air, soil, space and time, likewise is the seed and germ of perfect Buddhahood contained within the skin of that "fruit"–sentient beings' defilements; due to virtue's condition, this true nature will be seen and augment.

By means of water, sunlight, wind, time and space, the necessary conditions, the tree grows from within the narrow shroud of the fruit of a banana or mango. Similarly the fertile seed of the Perfect Buddha, contained within the fruit-skin of the mental poisons of beings, also grows from the virtue as its necessary condition, until the [shoot of] Dharma is seen and augmented [towards perfection].

With the right conditions such as virtuous actions, the Buddha-nature will be revealed and stabilised

The example is explained once again. There are many conditions that give birth to fruits like the mango and the banana palm, such as the warmth of the sun, air, earth, time and space. Similarly, the Buddha-nature is contained within the skin of sentient beings' emotions, and with the right causes and conditions such as virtuous actions, the Dharmadhatu or Buddha-nature will be revealed, increased and stabilised.

Example #7: The Statue and the Tattered Rag

118 ཇི་ལྟར་རིན་ཆེན་ལས་བྱས་རྒྱལ་བའི་གཟུགས། །
གོས་རྡུལ་དྲི་ངན་ཀྱིས་ནི་གཏུམས་ཐྱུར་པ། །
ལམ་གནས་ལྟ་ཡིས་མཐོང་ནས་གྲོལ་བྱའི་ཕྱིར། །
ལམ་གནས་དོན་དེ་དེ་ལ་སྨྲ་བ་ལྟར། །

A god, having by the road a precious image of a tathagata discovered, all wrapped in smelly tattered rags, would tell someone the fact of it lying there at the roadside, so that it might be recovered.

An image of the Victorious One made from precious material lies by the road, wrapped in an evil-smelling tattered rag. Upon seeing this, a god will alert the [passers by] to its presence by the road to cause its retrieval.

(#7) A precious statue of the Buddha wrapped in rags and left lying by the roadside

Now, the seventh example. A statue of Buddha made of precious gems is wrapped in rags and left lying by the roadside. A person with a divine eye will see this and tell someone about this statue, so that he can unwrap and reveal it.

119 ཐོགས་མེད་སྤྱན་མངའ་རྣམ་པ་སྟ་ཚོགས་ཀྱི། །
ཏོན་རྫོང་ཁས་ཀྱིས་གཏུམས་བདེ་གཤེགས་དངོས་པོ་ཉིད། །
དྲྭ་འགྲོ་ལ་ཡང་གཟིགས་ནས་དེ་བཞིན་དེ། །
ཐར་པར་བྱ་བའི་དོན་དུ་ཐབས་སྟོན་མཛད། །

Similarly, when the Buddhas, of unhindered vision, see the very "substance" of the tathagatas (even in animals present) but wrapped within the envelope of defilement, they also show the means by which it may be set free.

Likewise, being possessed of unhindered vision [the Buddha] sees the substance of the Sugata wrapped in the multitude of the mental poisons, even in animals, and teaches the means to free it.

Buddha sees the nature within sentient beings wrapped by all kinds of temporary emotions

Buddha has unobstructed omniscience which is like the divine eye, and he sees the Buddha-nature within sentient beings wrapped by all kinds of temporary emotions, even within those of lowly birth such as animals. In order to liberate beings from these wrappings, the emotions, and reveal their true nature, Buddha engages in all kinds of methods.

120 ཇི་ལྟར་རིན་ཆེན་རང་བཞིན་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་སྐུ་ཏི་ངན་གོས་གཏུམས་པ། །
ལམ་གནས་ལྟ་ཡི་མིག་གིས་མཐོང་ནས་ཐར་ཕྱིར་མི་ལ་སྟོན་པ་ལྟར། །
དེ་བཞིན་ཉོན་མོངས་གོས་རྫུལ་ཀྱིས་གཏུམས་འགོར་བའི་ལམ་ན་གནས་པའི་ཁམས། །
དྲྭ་འགྲོ་ལ་ཡང་གཟིགས་ནས་ཐར་བར་བྱ་ཕྱིར་རྒྱལ་བ་ཆོས་སྟོན་ཏེ། །

A god with divine vision who had perceived the tathagata image, precious by nature yet wrapped in smelly rags and lying by the road, would point it out to folk that it might be freed. Just like that, the victors see (even in animals) the Buddha-nature, lying by samsara's road, wrapped in defilements tattered garb and they teach the Dharma in order that it might be liberated.

When his eye perceives the statue of the Tathagata, which is of precious nature but wrapped in a stinking rag and lying by the road, the god points it out to passers by, so that they retrieve it. Likewise the Victor sees that the element, wrapped in the tattered garments of the poisons and lying on samsara's road, is present even within animals, and teaches the Dharma so that it may be released.

The one who has divine eyes sees the statue of the Buddha made out of precious gems and wrapped in ragged clothes lying by the roadside, and he points this

Seeing the nature wrapped in rags, the Buddha engages in all kinds of methods, like turning the wheel of the Dharma

out to those who don't see, like ordinary human beings. Likewise the victorious ones see the Buddha-nature wrapped with emotions even within animals, and so the Buddhas engage in all kinds of methods such as turning the wheel of the Dharma.

Example #8: The Chakravartin and the Woman

121 ཇི་ལྟར་མི་མོ་གཟུགས་ངན་མགོན་མེད་འགའ། །
མགོན་མེད་འདུག་གནས་སུ་ནི་འདུག་ཐུར་ལ། །
མངལ་གྱིས་རྒྱལ་པོའི་དཔལ་ནི་འཛིན་བྱེད་པས། །
རང་ལྷོ་ན་ཡོད་མི་བདག་མི་ཤེས་ལྟར། །

An ugly looking woman, having no one to whom to turn and staying in a pauper-home may hold the glory of a king within her very womb yet not know this ruler of men to be within her present.

A woman of miserable appearance who is without protection and abides in a poorhouse holds in her womb a glorious king, not knowing that a lord of man dwells in her own body.

(#8) A plain and destitute woman feels unprotected and yet she is pregnant with the chakravartin, the ultimate protector

Now we come to the eighth example, which is of a woman who is not beautiful, and who is completely without protection. She is in a very strange place, like an empty, abandoned house or cave, and she is full of fear, facing all kinds of unexpected situations. But she doesn't know that inside her womb is the real protector, the universal king. So she continues to think that she is despised and abused.

122 སྲིད་པར་སྐྱེ་བ་མགོན་མེད་ཁྱིམ་བཞིན་ཏེ། །
མ་དག་སེམས་ཅན་མངལ་ལྟན་བུད་མེད་བཞིན། །
དེ་ལ་གང་ཞིག་ཡོད་པས་མགོན་བཅས་པ། །
ཟྭ་མེད་ཁམས་ནི་དེ་ཡི་མངལ་གནས་བཞིན། །

Worldly existence is like the pauper hostel and impure beings are like the pregnant woman. Having his being within her, she has a protector and the embryo is like the immaculate nature.

Birth in an existence is similar to the poorhouse. Impure beings are like the woman bearing [a king] in her womb. Since he is present within her, she has protection. The undefiled element is like [the king] who dwells in her womb.

Likewise, sentient beings are born in this samsara, which is like an abandoned house or cave, and they undergo so many different kinds of suffering. And just

Likewise, sentient beings suffer in the abandoned house that is samsara, feeling unprotected despite the Buddha-nature within

like the poor pregnant woman, they are without protection. And yet right inside the womb of sentient beings dwells the Buddha-nature that is like a universal king.

123 ཇི་ལྟར་བུད་མེད་ལུས་ལ་དྲི་བཅས་གོས་ཆོན་མི་སྡུག་གཟུགས་ལྡན་པ། །
ས་བདག་མངལ་ན་གནས་ཀྱང་མགོན་མེད་ཁང་པར་སྡུག་བསྔལ་མཆོག་ཆྱོང་ལྟར། །
དེ་བཞིན་བདག་རང་ནང་གནས་མགོན་ཡོད་ཐུགས་ཀྱང་མགོན་མེད་བློ་ལྡན་པ། །
འགྲོ་བ་ཉོན་མོངས་དབང་གིས་ཡིད་མ་ཞི་བས་སྡུག་བསྔལ་གཞི་ལ་གནས། །

The woman is dressed in dirty clothes, her form unpleasant and in the pauper-home she must endure the worst of sorrows, even though a ruler dwells within her womb. Similarly, even though within them they have a protector residing, beings believing themselves undefended can never find their peace of mind, being by defilement overpowered – so in the "ground of suffering" they remain.

A ruler of the earth dwells in the womb of a woman has an unpleasant appearance and whose body is dressed in dirty clothes. Nevertheless she has [to abide] in a poorhouse and undergo the experience of direst suffering. Likewise, beings deem themselves unsheltered though a protector resides within their own [minds]. Thus they have to abide in the ground of suffering, their minds being unpeaceful under the predominating drive of the mental poisons.

Like the destitute woman, we don't realise we have the protector within us

The woman is not even beautiful, wears ragged clothes and is victimised, without any protection, even though she's pregnant with the chakravartin. This is such a beautiful analogy. Especially when taking refuge, we always think that the protector, lord, god or whatever is somewhere out there. And if you think they're out there, then you will have all sorts of problems. You feel that you're ignored, that you're not on the list of protection and stuff like that. The analogy is very beautiful because the woman feels she's abused, abandoned and living in a very strange, scary, deserted cave. And all along, there is the real protector, the big protector, who is not only her protector but everybody's protector. Like this woman, we sentient beings dwell in samsara not knowing that we are pregnant with the protector.

Example #9: The Golden Image and the Clay Mould

124 ཇི་ལྟར་ནང་གི་གསེར་ཞུན་གཟུགས་རྒྱས་པ། །
ཞི་བ་ཕྱི་རོལ་ས་ཡི་རང་བཞིན་ཅན། །
མཐོང་ནས་དེ་ཤེས་པ་དག་ནང་གི་གསེར། །
སྦྱང་ཕྱིར་ཕྱི་རོལ་སྦྲིབ་པ་སེལ་བྱེད་ལྟར། །

Upon seeing a complete and peaceful statue, cast in gold yet still its mould, externally like clay, those who know would remove the outer covering to cleanse the gold that lies within.

An artistically well-designed image of peaceful appearance, which has been cast in gold and is [still] inside [its mould], externally has the nature of clay. Experts, upon seeing this, will clear away the outer layer and cleanse the gold therein.

(#9) A golden statue inside a clay mould isn't affected by the vulgarity of the mould. Those who wish to have the statue will dismantle the mould

The ninth example is a mould that is made out of clay or dirty, impure earth. Inside this mould lies a statue made of pure gold, completely unstained by the impurity of the mould. Again, this is a very profound example, because as I was saying, the mould does not affect the quality or essence of the statue. Of course, in our ordinary mind, we think that without the mould there is no statue, so we think that the mould must affect the statue. But the statue is not affected by the vulgarity of the mould. And knowing that the mould is not the statue, those who wish to have the golden statue will dismantle the mould.

125 རང་བཞིན་འོད་གསལ་ལ་དྲི་མེད་རྣམས་ཀྱང་ནི། །
གློ་བུར་བར་ནི་རྣམ་པར་གཟིགས་ཐུབ་ནས། །
རིན་ཆེན་འབྱུང་གནས་ལྟ་བུའི་འགྲོ་བ་རྣམས། །
སྒྲིབ་པ་དག་ལས་སྒྲོལ་མཛད་བྱེད་ཆུབ་མཆོག། །

The perfectly-enlightened perfectly see that the nature of mind, clarity, is covered by transient impurities. Hence from these obscurations they cleanse beings, who are like mines of precious gems.

Likewise those of supreme enlightenment fully see that there are defilements [on] the luminous nature, but that these stains are just adventitious, and purify beings, who are like jewel mines, from all their veils.

Buddha knows the mould is temporary, so he manifests for the sake of beings, even though he has never moved from the original state of enlightenment

Buddha-nature is primordially pure and completely stainless, but it is wrapped inside this mould of emotions and obscurations. Buddha knows that these emotions are temporary. So in order to benefit sentient beings, to dismantle this mould, although the Buddhas have never moved from the original state of enlightenment, they manifest as if they have, like Shakyamuni Buddha. This is a little tricky to translate. And they try to take the Buddha-nature that is like the golden statue from its source, meaning the mould.

"One hundred emotions, one hundred wisdoms"

Here we deconstruct the concept 'wrapping', as we see it is the source of the statue

There is a very important remark here, which is especially used by tantric people. For example, they say "one hundred emotions, one hundred wisdoms". They even say that emotions are like the source or origin of wisdom. Here Maitreya is becoming very profound. Until now when we have talked about the identity, the temporary emotions, the wrapping, we have been thinking that the wrapping somehow exists independently. But now even the wrapping is dismantled as a concept of wrapping, because it is the source (*jungney*) of the statue. The mould

Despite its impurity, it is the where the golden statue dwells

is somehow bad, vulgar and made of impure substances. It is not gold, it is not pure, and yet this is where the statue dwells.

Rangtongpas would prefer to say that emotions are path, but Shentongpas say emotions are like a mould from which Buddha-nature is taken out

This is a big one! Many Rangtongpa people don't have that courage to say this. Here we are saying that the emotions are like a mould, and Buddha-nature is like a statue, and the statue comes from the mould. Many of the Rangtongpas prefer to say that the mould is like a path, and the path is emotions, so when we refer to emotions we are referring to the path. But many Shentongpas, and especially the mahasandhi people, would say without any doubt that all emotions are like a mould from which Buddha-nature is taken out. It implies that they are the source of the Buddha-nature. It doesn't mean that Buddha-nature is a compounded phenomenon. Don't bring that petty logic here – it's just a simple example. This complements the mahasandhi philosophy so well.

126 ཇི་ལྟར་དྲི་མེད་གསེར་འབར་ལས་བྱས་ས་ཡི་ནང་དུ་ཚུད་ཐྱུར་གཟུགས། །
ཞི་དེ་ར་བ་བཞིན་མ་ལས་པས་རིག་ནས་ས་དག་སེལ་བར་བྱེད་པར་ལྟར། །
དེ་བཞིན་ཀུན་མཁྱེན་དག་པའི་གསེར་འདྲ་ཞི་བའི་ཡིད་ནི་མཁྱེན་ཐྱུར་ནས། །
ཆོས་འཆད་ཚུལ་གྱིས་བརྡེག་སྲུང་སྲུབ་པས་སྲིག་པ་དག་ནི་སེལ་བར་མཛོད། །

Just as an expert removes all the clay, knowing the nature of the peaceful statue in bright stainless gold which it contains, so likewise the omniscient know the peace of mind like the cleansed gold: chipping away, by means of Dharma explanation, they clean away each and every obscuration.

Recognizing the nature of an image of peaceful appearance, flawless and made from shimmering gold, while it is [still] contained in its mould, an expert removes the layers of clay. Likewise the omniscient know the peaceful mind, which is similar to pure gold, and remove the obstructions by teaching the Dharma, [just as the mould] is struck and chipped away.

Knowing that the statue is unstained by the mould, the Buddhas chip away at the mould and dismantle it

The solid golden statue that is inside the mould is not stained by any of the stains of the mould, and a good sculptor with great skill can dismantle the mould. Likewise, the Buddhas, knowing that this Buddha-nature is like a golden statue dwelling in the mould of the emotions, will chip away at the mould and dismantle it with their skills such as turning the wheel of the Dharma.

127 པད্ཆ་སྲོག་ཆགས་བུང་བ་དང་། །
སྲུན་པ་དང་ནི་མི་གཙང་ས། །
འབྲས་ཕུན་གོས་ཏྲུལ་བུད་མེད་ཀྱི། །
མངལ་དང་ས་ཡི་སྲུབས་ན་ཡང་། །

Inside the lotus, the bees, the husk, the filth, the ground, the fruit skin, the tattered rags, the woman's womb and the clay mould there are

The lotus, the bees, the husk, the filth, the earth, the skin of the fruit, the tattered rag, the woman's womb and the shroud of clay [exemplify the defilements],

128 སངས་རྒྱས་སྦྲང་རྩི་སྲིང་པོ་བཞིན། །
གསེར་བཞིན་གཏེར་བཞིན་ལྷུན་པ་བཞིན། །
རིན་ཆེན་སྐུ་དང་འབོར་ལོ་ཡིས། །
བསྡུར་བ་བཞིན་དང་གསེར་གཟུགས་བཞིན། །

the Buddha, the honey, the kernel, the gold, the treasure, the great tree, the precious image, the universal monarch and the golden figure.

while [the pure nature] is like the Buddha, the honey, the kernel, the gold, the treasure, the great tree, the precious statue, the universal monarch and the golden image.

Summary of nine examples: Buddha-nature exists within sentient beings, wrapped by adventitious emotions, but nevertheless unaffected by them

Once again there is another summary. The examples of the wrapping are the ordinary lotus, the bees, the rice husk, the dirty mud or garbage, the ground, the fruit skin, the ragged clothes, the woman's womb and the clay mould. And inside these wrappings dwells Buddha, honey, rice, gold, source of treasure, tree, statue, king, the precious form of the Buddha, and the golden statue. Buddha-nature exists within sentient beings, and even though it has been wrapped by all the defilements of the emotions since beginningless time, the emotions are temporary or adventitious. So the Buddha-nature itself has never been affected by these wrappings, which are the emotions, since beginningless time.

Day 8 – Introduction

The power of Jamgön Kongtrül's words

Last night, I was reading the commentaries by Asanga and some of the great masters, including Jamgön Kongtrül, and I realised that even after all this time, having been a Buddhist for 42 years, I've really ignored the power of the statements that 'the stain is removable' (*drima dralrung*), and that 'enlightenment is possible' (*sang jarung*). Perhaps we should say 'enlightenable', since whenever we talk of 'possible', it brings up 'impossible'. In any case, *drima dralrung* and *sang jarung* are such great words. They have so much meaning, especially when we say that the stain is removable, that the defilements are temporary, adventitious. This concept is amazing, and actually this one idea of *drima dralrung*, that the stains are removable, it what makes the Buddhist path. It's the very quintessence of the Buddhist path. It is refuge, bodhicitta, the Vajrasattva mantra, development meditation and completion meditation – everything is in there. That aspect is what we are talking about and studying here. I know some of you are somewhat discouraged or something, because you are hearing unfamiliar ideas like the "uncompounded single lock of hair" being there already and all of that. But basically, if you just keep in your head the ideas of *draldrey*,

The idea of *drima dralrung*, that stains are removable, is the very quintessence of the Buddhist path

the result of elimination, and *drima dralrung*, that stains are adventitious, then you'll be OK when you study this.

If the stains were not removable then prayers would be a complaint, and blessings would be compounded, so they would be unobtainable

The concepts of supplication, taking refuge, receiving blessings and receiving abhishekas – everything is based on this *drima dralrung*, that the stains are removable. The stains are not you. They are adventitious, temporary. If this were not the case, then prayers would be a complaint. And blessings and empowerments would be compounded and changeable. Basically, they would be unobtainable. Blessings would be like your underwear – sooner or later you would have to remove them and then change to another pair of underwear, and then for a moment you would have to become naked, and that's not good, is it? I'll resist talking about Gérard, although I can understand why he's irresistible, especially for oversized people like elephants!

The husk, bees and mould are sophisticated and strong and they have been there a long time. If it were not for *drima dralrung*, we might almost think they were our nature

You know how we talk about human rights? I think this is the essence of the rights of all beings, not only humans. This is the essence of beings' rights. I think if we have a good understanding of this, the inspiration to practice the Dharma and the seed of diligence and enthusiasm will be planted. Because the husk, the bees and the mould are very strong and sophisticated, and they have been there for a long time, so if it were not for the *drima dralrung*, we might almost think that they were our nature.

129 སེམས་ཅན་འགམས་ཀྱི་ཉོན་མོངས་སྒྲུབས། །
མ་འདྲེལ་ཐོག་མ་མེད་པ་ན། །
སེམས་ཀྱི་རང་བཞིན་དྲི་མེད་ནི། །
ཐོག་མ་མེད་པ་ཡིན་པར་བརྗོད། །

Similarly, it is said that the shell of defilements covering the nature of beings is beginningless and unconnected with it and that the stainlessness of that nature of mind is beginningless.

It is said that the shroud of the mental poisons, [which causes the veils] of the element of beings, has had no connection with it since beginningless time, while the nature of mind, which is devoid of stains, [has been present within them] since beginningless time.

130 ཆགས་དང་སྡང་དང་རྨོངས་དང་དེའི། །
ཀུན་ལྡང་དགེ་དང་བག་ཆགས་དང་། །
མཐོང་སྤོམ་ལམ་སྦང་མ་དག་དང་། །
དག་པའི་ས་ལ་བརྟེན་པ་ཡི། །

Desire, aversion and ignorance, these in their strongly active state or as latent imprints, that to be abandoned through insight, that to be abandoned through cultivation, the impurities present in the impure and the impurities present in the pure –

The nine aspects of defilements: desire, aversion and mental blindness, their fierce active state, the remaining imprints [of unknowing], the defilements to be abandoned on the paths of seeing and meditation, and the defilements based upon the impure levels and the pure levels respectively,

131 ཏྲི་མ་རྣམ་དགུ་པཎ་ཡི། །
སྒྲིབས་སོགས་དཔེ་ནི་རབ་བསྟན་ཏེ། །
ཉེ་བའི་ཁྱོན་མོང་ས་སྒྲིབས་ཀྱི་ནི། །
དབྱེ་བ་བྱེ་བ་མཐའ་ལས་འདས། །

These nine have been illustrated by the examples of the lotus "shell" and so on. The "shell" of subsidiary defilements divides into infinite categories.

Are fully taught by the shroud of the lotus and the other examples. [When] classified, the shroud of the secondary poisons is beyond any end.

132 ཆགས་སོགས་ཏྲི་མ་དགུ་པོ་འདི། །
མདོར་བསྡུས་ནས་ནི་གོ་རིམས་བཞིན། །
པཎ་ནི་སྒྲིབས་ལ་སོགས་པ་ཡི། །
དཔེ་དགུ་དག་གིས་ཡང་དག་བསྟན། །

Summarized briefly, the nine impurities, desire and so on, have been well illustrated through nine examples – the lotus "shell" and so forth respectively.

But when it is comprised concisely, the nine defilements of desire and the other afflictions are well explained in the given order by the nine similes of the shroud of the lotus and subsequent examples.

The nine examples are ordered to correspond to nine categories of emotional defilement

We're still continuing with the nine examples. Yesterday someone asked me whether these nine examples have any order, and here we will see that they do. Although the emotions that wrap the Buddha-nature are infinite, Maitreya is going to summarise these emotions into nine categories that correspond to the nine examples. Then he will gradually explain how these obscurations obscure the *kham* or the Buddha-nature. In order, the nine categories are:

(1) to (3) Passion, aggression and ignorance in their latent form

(4) The three poisons in their obvious form

(1) to (3) The first three are passion/desire, anger/aggression and ignorance in their latent form, rather than their obvious form. The latent three poisons are defilements that are purified by the sublime beings.
(4) The obvious three poisons, which really throw you into samsara. These are defilements that are purified by non-sublime beings, worldly beings that are still on the path, by practicing methods such as meditating on ugliness, impermanence and so forth.

(5) Subtle habitual patterns that produce mental form

(6) Obscurations to be abandoned on path of seeing

(7) Obscurations to be abandoned on path of meditation

(8) Obscurations on the seven lower bhumis

(9) Obscurations on the three final 'pure' bhumis

(5) The very subtle habitual patterns, the obscurations (*dripa*) that usually produce mental form, such as the subtle form of the Arhats. This kind of defilement is purified by the path of the greater enlightened beings.
(6) The obscurations that obstruct beings from seeing the nature of phenomena, which are what we call the 'obscurations to be abandoned on the path of seeing' (*tongpang*).
(7) The obscurations that have to be abandoned by sublime beings on the path of meditation.
(8) The obscurations that exist on the seven lower bhumis, which are to be purified on the three last bhumis.
(9) The last obscurations are those on three pure bhumis, the three last bhumis, which have to be abandoned by the vajra-like antidote.

These nine obscurations are explained by the nine examples.

133 ཏྲི་འདི་དག་གིས་བྱིས་རྣམས་དང་། །
ངན་བཅོམ་སྨོན་པ་བ་ཏློ་ལྟན་རྣམས། །
རིམ་བཞིན་བཞི་དང་གཉིག་དང་ནི། །
གཉིས་དང་གཉིས་ཀྱིས་མ་དག་ཉིད། །

The pollutions respectively cause the four impurities of ordinary beings, one of Arhats, two of beings training in Dharma and two impurities of the wise.

These defilements cause in their given sequence the four impurities of children, the impurity of Arhats, the two impurities of followers of the path of training, and the two impurities of those with understanding.

The nine obscurations correspond to four stages of the path:

(1) Ordinary beings: obscurations (1) to (4)

(2) Arhats: obscuration (5)

(3) Bodhisattvas up to the path of accumulation: obscurations (6) and (7)

(4) Bodhisattvas on the bhumis: obscurations (8) and (9)

So there are nine obscurations, in the order we have just explained, and they can be arranged in four categories corresponding to four different stages of the path:

(1) The first category obscures ordinary beings, those that are like infants. This includes the first four obscurations.
(2) The second category obscures the Arhats on the Shravaka and Pratyekabuddha paths. This includes the fifth obscuration
(3) The third category obscures Bodhisattvas on the paths of accumulation, application, seeing and meditation. The sixth and seventh obscurations.
(4) The fourth category obscures Bodhisattvas on the bhumis, including the seven lower or 'impure' bhumis and the final three 'pure' bhumis. The eighth and ninth obscurations.

134 ཏི་ལྦར་པདྨ་འད�་སྐྱེས་དེ། །
མདུན་དུ་ལྷུར་ན་ཡིད་དགའ་དང་། །
ཕྱིས་ནས་དགའ་བ་མེད་འགྱུར་པ། །
འདོད་ཆགས་དགའ་བ་དེ་བཞིན་ནོ། །

The mind is delighted by the "mud-born" – the lotus but later becomes dismayed – such is desire's happiness.

When a lotus [just] born from the mud appears to [a beholder], it delights his mind. Yet later it changes and becomes undelightful. The joy born from desire is similar to this.

(1) The lotus is an analogy for latent passion. It is a source of joy when fresh and young, but no longer when it's old and decayed

These obscurations are now explained extensively, starting with the lotus in the first analogy. When you see a fresh young lotus, then it is a source of joy. But when the lotus becomes old and decayed, you don't find joy in it any more. Likewise, when latent passion becomes obvious, that's like finding joy in a new lotus. And when the object of the desire is no longer fresh, then the joy also stops. This is a very good description of how passion drives us! You really can't get a better example than this!

[Q]{Gérard} That's not love!
[A] Are you sure you're not in love these days?
[Q]{Gérard} With everyone!

Love and compassion are very different from passion

[A] Oh, that's a love and compassion kind of love. Actually you're right. The joy of loving sentient beings is not like this at all, because if the lotus never gets old, then it's not that kind of passion. It's not like the kind of latent passion that grows very strongly and then stops when the object no longer interests you. When there's love and compassion, your interest continues to grow and never stops.

135 ཏི་ལྦར་སྲོག་ཆགས་སྣང་མ་ནི། །
ཤིན་ཏུ་འཁྲུགས་ཏེ་མདུང་བརྡུག་ལྦར། །
དེ་བཞིན་ཞེ་སྡང་སྐྱེ་བས་ན། །
སྙིང་ལ་སྡུག་བསྔལ་སྐྱེད་པར་བྱེད། །

When bees are very irritated, they sting. Likewise, once anger has arisen, to the heart it brings but suffering.

Bees, when extremely agitated, will fiercely use their stings. Similarly hatred, once arisen, brings suffering to the heart.

(2) The bees are an analogy for latent aggression. When a bee stings, it harms others and also itself

In the second analogy of the bees and honey, when the bee stings out of aggression, it creates a lot of pain not only to others, but also to itself. This is a really good description of temper and how latent aggression becomes obvious,

and then how you do things that are irrational, which cause pain to others and to yourself.

136 ཇི་ལྟར་འབྲས་སོགས་སྐྱོང་པོ་ནི། །
ཕྱི་རོལ་སྦུབ་པས་བསྒྲིགས་པ་ལྟར། །
དེ་བཞིན་སྐྱོང་པོའི་དོན་མཐོང་བ། །
མ་རིག་སྒོ་ངའི་སྦུབས་ཀྱིས་བསྒྲིགས། །

Just as kernels of rice and other grains are covered outwardly by husks and skins, so similarly is the vision of the very essence obscured by the "shell" of ignorance.

The kernel of rice and so on is obscured by its outer husk. Likewise the vision of the [true] meaning is obscured by the eggshell of ignorance.

(3) The husk is an analogy for latent ignorance. It completely obscures what's inside

In the third analogy, the rice seed is completely obscured by the husk, so you don't see any aspect of the rice inside. Likewise, when emotions obscure you from seeing the Buddha-nature, that's latent ignorance.

137 ཇི་ལྟར་མི་གཙང་མི་མཐུན་པ། །
དེ་བཞིན་ཆགས་དང་བཅས་རྣམས་ཀྱི། །
འདོད་པ་བསྟེན་པའི་རྒྱུ་ཡིན་ཕྱིར། །
ཀུན་ནས་ལྡང་བ་མི་གཙང་འདྲ། །

Filth is something unpleasant – like such filth is the active state, causing those who are involved in gratification to indulge.

Filth is repugnant. Being the cause for those bound up with greed to indulge in sense pleasures, the active state [of the poisons] resembles it.

(4) Filth is the analogy for the three poisons in their active state

In the fourth analogy, the filth and dirt are something revolting. Likewise, those who dwell in the desire realm partake or use desirable objects, but this has many downfalls. It leads to pain and suffering and all that. Therefore the example of the dirt symbolises the three emotions of passion, aggression and ignorance in their obvious or active state.

138 ཇི་ལྟར་ནོར་ནི་བསྒྲིགས་པས་ན། །
མི་ཤེས་གཏེར་མི་ཐོབ་པ་ལྟར། །
དེ་བཞིན་སྐྱེ་ལ་རང་བྱུང་ཉིད། །
མ་རིག་བག་ཆགས་ས་ཡིས་བསྒྲིགས། །

When the wealth was covered, they, not knowing, its treasure could not obtain. In a similar way the spontaneously-arising is concealed by ignorance's latent traces.

When wealth is hidden, one is ignorant of it and therefore does not obtain the treasure. Likewise self-sprung [wisdom] is veiled in Arhats by the ground of remaining imprints of ignorance.

(5) The earth is the analogy for habitual patterns that produce mental form

In the fifth example, the earth obscures the source of the treasure, so the poor people don't know about it, and therefore they can't enjoy it. Likewise, those who dwell in the bhumi of *bakchak*, the habitual patterns that we talked about earlier, still don't know that the source of endless treasure, which is the Buddha-nature, exists within these earth-like obscurations.

139 ཇི་ལྟར་རྒྱུ་གསོག་རིམ་སྐྱེ་བས། །
ས་བོན་ཕུན་པ་གཅོད་པ་ལྟར། །
དེ་བཞིན་དེ་ཉིད་མཐོང་བ་ཡིས། །
མཐོང་སྤང་རྣམས་ནི་བརྨོག་པར་འགྱུར། །

Just as the germ and so on split the husk of their grain by their gradual growth, so insight into thatness dispels likewise "obscurations to be abandoned through insight".

As by gradual growth from bud to shoot the skins of the seed are cut, the vision of thatness averts [the stains] to be abandoned by seeing.

(6) The way the shoot dismantles the fruit around it is an analogy for the Bodhisattva's wisdom dismantling the emotions

In the sixth example, when a shoot sprouts from within the fruit, and gradually grows branches and then grows into a tree, it automatically dismantles the shell or wrapping of the fruit from the inside. Likewise, when the Bodhisattva reaches the path of seeing, from then on his wisdom grows gradually and this automatically dismantles the wrapping, the emotions. This is why it is called *tongpang*.

140 འཕགས་པའི་ལམ་དང་འབྲེལ་པ་ལས། །
འཇིག་ཚོགས་སྲིད་པ་བཅོམ་རྣམས་ཀྱིས། །
བསྟོམ་ལམ་ཡེ་ཤེས་སྤང་བྱ་རྣམས། །
གོས་རྩལ་དག་དང་མཚུངས་པར་བསྟན། །

Those who, through following the path of the realized, have overcome the very pith, the beliefs that the destructible and multiple could be a self, still have obscurations to be abandoned through the jñana of the path of cultivation. These have been illustrated as being like those tattered rags.

Through their junction with the noble path they have overcome the essential part of the transitory collection. What their wisdom must abandon [on] the path of meditation is explained as being similar to tattered rags.

(7) Ragged clothes are the analogy for defilements dismantled on the path of meditation

A Bodhisattva who has reached the path of seeing gradually dismantles the chief of all obscurations, which is clinging to things that are destructible. This refers to how we usually have clinging towards the aggregates, as in the example of the

hand that we talked about earlier. This is destructible, but we cling to it as though it were not. A Bodhisattva who has passed through the path of seeing, and who is now on the path of meditation will dismantle and purify these kinds of defilements like ragged clothes. Ragged clothes are very easy to dismantle. They are not stubborn. Of course, here we are talking about the quality of the antidote.

Ragged clothes fall apart easily because of the strength of the antidote

141 ས་བདུན་ལ་བརྟེན་དྲི་མ་ནི། །
མངལ་སྒྲུབས་དྲི་མ་དག་དང་མཚུངས། །
མངལ་སྒྲུབས་བྱལ་འདྲ་མི་རྟོག་པའི། །
ཡེ་ཤེས་རྣམ་པར་སྨིན་པ་བཞིན། །

In the seven deep levels the impurities which remain are comparable to impurities in the confine of a womb. Release from them is like freedom from that womb whilst non-conceptual jñana is like finally maturing.

The stains based on the seven [impure] levels resemble the defilements of the shrouding womb. Concept-free primordial wisdom [is released] like the mature [prince] from the womb's confine.

(8) The womb is the analogy for obscurations on the seven lower bhumis

The obscurations that Bodhisattvas have on the seven lower bhumis are womb-like obscurations. They involve effort, and you still don't see the Buddha-nature completely. Whereas once you reach the three higher bhumis, then the non-conceptual wisdom, which is like the chakravartin or universal monarch, will arise without any effort.

142 ས་གསུམ་རྣམ་འབྱེལ་དྲི་མ་རྣམས། །
ས་འདམ་གོས་བཞིན་ཤེས་བྱ་སྟེ། །
བདག་ཉིད་ཆེན་པོ་རྡོ་རྗེ་ལྟའི། །
ཏིང་ངེ་འཛིན་གྱིས་གཞོམ་བྱ་ཡིན། །

The impurities related to the three deep levels should be known as similar to the traces of clay. These are those to be eliminated by the vajra-like samadhi of the "Great".

The defilements connected with the three [pure] levels should be known as being similar to the layer of clay. They must be overcome by the vajra-like samadhi of [those] who are the embodiment of greatness.

(9) The clay mould is the analogy for obscurations on the three pure bhumis

The obscurations on the three last bhumis, the three pure bhumis, are like the clay mould. You don't need a very big effort to break the mould, and for these weak defilements there is a very strong antidote, the vajra-like antidote.

143 དེ་ལྟར་ཚགས་སོགས་དྲྭ་མ་དགུ། །
པད་མ་ལ་སོགས་དག་དང་མཚུངས། །

Thus the nine impurities, desire etc., correspond to the lotus and the rest.

Thus desire and the further of the nine defilements correspond to the lotus and the following examples.

Once again there is a summary: these nine different kinds of defilement correspond to the nine different kinds of examples.

143 (contd.) རང་བཞིན་གསུམ་གྱིས་བསྡུས་ཕྱིར་ཁམས། །
སངས་རྒྱས་སོགས་དང་ཚོས་མཚུངས་སོ། །

The Buddha-nature corresponds to the Buddha and so on being the three natures' union.

Its nature unifying three aspects, the element has properties that correspond to those of the Buddha and the other similes.

The nine examples also provide analogies for the three aspects of the qualities of Buddha-nature

We are still continuing with the nine examples. We have been explaining how the obscurations are symbolised by the nine different kinds of attributes such as lotus, bees and all of that. Now we are beginning to talk about the Buddha-nature. Because of the three aspects of the qualities of the Buddha-nature, this Buddha-nature is therefore symbolised in the nine examples as Buddha, honey and so forth.

144 འདི་ཡི་རང་བཞིན་ཆོས་སྐུ་དང་། །
དེ་བཞིན་ཉིད་དང་རིགས་ཀྱང་སྟེ། །
དེ་ནི་དཔེ་གསུམ་གཅིག་དང་ནི། །
ལྔ་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་ནི་ཤེས་པར་བྱ། །

Its three natures are the dharmakaya, the suchness and the potential. These should be understood respectively through the three, one and five examples.

Its nature is dharmakaya, suchness and also the disposition. These are to be known by the [first] three examples, the [fourth] one and the [following] five.

There are three aspects of Buddha-nature:

(1) Self-arising wisdom, the Dharmadhatu, examples (1) to (3)

(2) Unchanging thatness, example (4)

(3) *Rig* or *kham*, the Buddha family or element, examples (5) to (9)

The three aspects or natures of the Buddha-nature are explained here. The first nature of Buddha-nature is self-arising wisdom, the Dharmadhatu. The second nature of the Buddha-nature is the unchanging thatness. The third is the family (*rig*) that becomes the Buddha, or the element (*kham*) that makes or becomes the Buddha. And these three natures of the Buddha-nature are explained by the nine examples. The first three examples explain the dharmakaya, the fourth example explains the thatness, and the final five examples explain the *kham*.

145 ཆོས་སྐུ་རྣམ་གཉིས་ཤེས་བྱ་སྟེ། །
ཆོས་དབྱིངས་ཤིན་ཏུ་དྲི་མེད་དང་། །
དེ་ཡི་རྒྱུ་མཐུན་ཟབ་པ་དང་། །
སྣ་ཚོགས་ཚུལ་ལ་གེ་སྡོན་པའོ། །

The dharmakaya should be known as two: the perfect immaculate Dharmadhatu and the favourable conditions for this – the teachings in their profound and manifold aspects

The dharmakaya is to be known [in] two aspects. These are the utterly unstained Dharmadhatu and the cause conductive to its [realization], which is teaching in the deep and manifold way.

This stanza is very important. All this time we have been talking about the dharmakaya and the rupakaya, and these will be explained very thoroughly here. From now on, when you talk about dharmakaya or nirmanakaya, you should remember the nine examples. Because otherwise, I have the feeling that when people talk about the dharmakaya, in the worst case they think it's some kind of blue Buddha in the sky. Or perhaps slightly better, other people think it's some kind of a nothingness that doesn't have form, colour or shape. Very few think about it in terms of the universal king in the womb of an ordinary woman, or the golden statue inside the ordinary mould.

We tend to think of dharmakaya as some kind of blue Buddha or formless nothingness

This text is an extensive study of the three or two kayas. The word 'kaya' can be translated as 'body', which is a very good word. I say this, because when you receive Mahayana teachings on the dharmakaya, you are almost sure to hear about emptiness. We talk about emptiness and nothingness, but we tend to forget the fullness, the kaya, the part about the 'body'! Even in the highest teachings, the emptiness aspect of the mind is somehow introduced as the dharmakaya, but it isn't something non-functioning and inanimate. It has the aspect of kaya, the body, fullness, or mass if you like.

Now we can think of dharmakaya as a chakravartin in the womb of an ordinary woman, or a golden statue in a mould

We talk about emptiness, but forget the aspect of fullness, the kaya or body

There are two categories of dharmakaya. First is the dharmakaya that is primordially pure, which can only be perceived by self-awareness wisdom. The word 'perceived' is not so good. Perhaps we should say it is solely the object of self-awareness wisdom. Second is *gyütün*, which means 'similar cause'. I think the word 'approximate' is quite good here. This is the approximate dharmakaya that is taught during the path, as we are doing right now. Basically, it is our attempt to talk about the primordially pure dharmakaya, which it is impossible for us to talk about. And it can be explained in infinitely many ways.

Two categories of dharmakaya:

(1) 'Primordially pure', can only be perceived by self-awareness wisdom

(2) 'Approximate', taught during the path

146 འཇིག་རྟེན་འདས་ཕྱིར་འཇིག་རྟེན་ན། །
འདི་ལ་དཔེ་ནི་མི་དམིགས་པས། །
དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཉིད་དང་།མམས། །
འདྲ་བ་ཉིད་དུ་བསྟན་པ་ཡིན། །

As it transcends the world, there is no example for it manifest within the world; therefore it has been represented by corresponding the essence to the tathagata's form.

[The dharmakaya] being beyond the worldly, no example for it can be found in the world. Therefore the element and the Tathagata are explained as being [slightly] similar.

The first kind of dharmakaya is beyond concept and expression. We cannot find an example to symbolise it, so we use the Buddha, example (1)

This stanza is so beautiful. The first kind of dharmakaya is beyond worldly. It is beyond conception, beyond imagination. When we say something is 'beyond imagination' or 'beyond thoughts', I don't think that many people understand what is meant. It's really something big, not just a Buddhist excuse for not saying anything! It's not something like saying we can't imagine a tail growing from George Bush's bottom, because that's kind of imaginable! There are some examples that I don't really remember, like when certain young people look through their window and see certain things that give them such extreme joy that it's unimaginable. We cannot express it! Even in our ordinary experience we have this kind of unimaginable, and perhaps this can serve as a really poor example of the sort of beyond worldly we're talking about here. Therefore Lord Maitreya is saying that because the dharmakaya is beyond worldly, we cannot find an example to symbolise it, so we use the Buddha. In the analogy of the lotus and the Buddha, dharmakaya itself is used as the example for the first kind of dharmakaya, because there is no example.

Dharmakaya itself is used as the example for the first kind of dharmakaya, as there is no example

147 ཕ་མོ་ཟབ་མོའི་ཚུལ་བསྟན་ནི། །
སྒྲ་ཐུ་ར་གཅིག་པ་བཞིན་ཏེ། །
རྣམ་པ་སྣ་ཚོགས་ཚུལ་བསྟན་ནི། །
སྣ་ཚོགས་སྒྲུབས་སྣོད་བཞིན་ཤེས་བྱ། །

The teachings in their aspect subtle and deep should be known as like honey's taste unique whilst the teachings in their manifold aspect as like grains within their various husks.

Teaching in the deep and subtle way is like the one single taste of honey, while teaching through various aspects resembles grain in its variety of husks.

The second kind of dharmakaya is symbolised by honey, example (2), and the many aspects of teachings by the grain husks, example (3)

The second kind of dharmakaya, the approximate dharmakaya, is symbolised by the honey, which is the second of the nine examples. It can be understood and realised, but it is very difficult. It is very subtle, deep, and vast. After all, the essence of this dharmakaya is the same as the first dharmakaya. And then all the different kinds of manifestations such as the twelve branches of teachings are

symbolised by various kinds of husks and skins of different kinds of grains, as in the third of the nine examples.

148 རང་བཞིན་འགྱུར་བ་མེད་པ་དང་། །
དགེ་དང་རྣམ་པར་དག་པའི་ཕྱིར། །
དེ་བཞིན་ཉིད་འདི་གསེར་ཀྱི་ནི། །
གཟུགས་དང་མཚུངས་པར་བརྗོད་པ་ཡིན། །

Suchness is said to be similar to the substance of gold because this essence is immutable, perfectly pure and most noble.

Since the nature is unchanging, full of virtue and utterly pure, suchness is said to correspond to the shape and colour of gold.

The unchanging nature, which remains pure and naturally virtuous, is symbolised by the gold coin, example (4)

Whether the Buddhas come or not, the nature of the Buddha never changes, even though there are temporary defilements. The gold coin is used as an example to symbolize this *kham*, this Buddha-nature, because even if the gold coin drops in dirty mud or whatever, it is still gold. It is still pure and naturally virtuous, and if it is found, it can be used to make rings, ornaments and so on, and beautify the world.

149 གཏེར་དང་འབྲས་བུའི་ཤིང་བཞིན་དུ། །
རིགས་དེ་རྣམ་གཉིས་ཤེས་བྱ་སྟེ། །
ཐོག་མེད་རང་བཞིན་གནས་པ་དང་། །
ཡང་དག་བླང་བ་མཆོག་ཉིད་དོ། །

One should know the potential as having aspects two, similar to the treasure and the tree grown from the fruit: that since beginningless time naturally-present and that perfected through proper cultivation.

Similar to the treasure and the fruit of a tree, the disposition is to be known in two aspects, as it has existed [as] the nature since beginningless time and has become supreme [through] right cultivation.

The element is also divided into two categories:

(1) Spontaneously present *rig* that is primordially pure is symbolised by the poor man's treasure, example (5)

(2) The element that can be made pure is symbolised by examples (6) to (9). This second kind of element is the path

Now the *rig*, the family or element, is explained further by dividing it into two categories. The first (which is the fifth of the nine examples) is the treasure beneath the poor man's house, which wasn't hidden there by anyone. It's there spontaneously, without any effort. The second (which is the sixth of the nine examples) is the fruit, which has the potential to give birth to a big tree like the mango, but it requires ploughing and fertilizer and so on. Likewise, there are two kinds of *rig*, family or element, very similar to the two kinds of dharmakaya that we talked about. One is the element that is primordially pure, and the second one is the element that can be made pure, that has the possibility of being pure. And that possibility is because the first kind of element is

primordially pure (*rangshin neypey rig*). It's very important to understand that the second kind of element is the path.

150 རིགས་འདི་གཉིས་ལས་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི། །
སྐུ་གསུམ་ཐོབ་པར་འདོད་པ་ཡིན། །
དང་པོའི་སྐུ་ནི་དང་པོ་སྟེ། །
གཉིས་པ་ཡིས་ནི་ཕྱི་མ་གཉིས། །

From this twofold potential there is achievement of the three kayas of the Buddha: the first kaya through the former and the other two through the latter.

The attainment of the three kayas of a Buddha is seen to stem from the twofold disposition. By the first aspect there is the first [kaya], through the second there are the latter two.

The origin of the three kayas:

Now the origin of the three kayas is explained, based on these two elements. When we talk about three kayas, we have to talk about them sequentially because we don't have three mouths. Otherwise, we would talk about them simultaneously. But because there is seemingly an order, we end up thinking that they're three different things. If you have this kind of deluded mind, the sutras and shastras might make you think that there are different causes for the dharmakaya and the other two kayas.

When the first kind of element is realised (the primordially pure element), that is dharmakaya

When the second kind of element is realised, that is sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya

In reality, when the primordially pure element is actualised, that is dharmakaya. And the accomplishment of the second kind of element, that which can be developed or realised, is usually referred to as the two later kayas, the sambhogakaya and the nirmanakaya. This will be taught in just moment, so be patient for a while!

151 ངོ་བོ་ཉིད་སྐུ་མཛེས་པ་ནི། །
རིན་ཆེན་སྐུ་འདྲར་ཤེས་བྱ་སྟེ། །
རང་བཞིན་གྱིས་ནི་བྱས་མིན་དང་། །
ཡོན་ཏན་རིན་ཆེན་གཏེར་ཡིན་ཕྱིར། །

The essence-kaya, magnificent, should be known as being similar to the statue made of precious substance, because that is natural and not-created and it is a treasure of jewel qualities.

The beautiful svabhavikakaya is like the statue of precious material, since [it exists] naturally, is not created and is a treasure of gem-like qualities.

152 ཆོས་ཆེན་རྒྱལ་སྲིད་ཆེ་ལྡན་ཕྱིར། །
རྫོགས་ལོངས་འཁོར་ལོས་སྐྱེར་བཞིན་ནོ། །
གཟུགས་བརྙན་གྱི་ནི་རང་བཞིན་ཕྱིར། །
སྐྱེལ་པ་གསེར་གྱི་གཟུགས་ལྟ་བུ། །

The perfect expression is like the chakravartin, being endowed with the greater Dharma's majesty. Like the golden image are the emanations having the very nature of a representation.

Wielding the sublime majesty of the Great Dharma, the sambhoga[kaya] resembles the Chakravartin. Being of the nature of a [mere] representation, the nirmana[kaya] is similar to the golden image.

The essence kaya, the svabhavikakaya, is like the precious statue, as it is primordially pure and beautiful

The essence body, the svabhavikakaya that is the essence of the dharmakaya, is primordially pure and beautiful with all the enlightened qualities. That's why it's like the precious statue, because it has been there right from the beginning. It's not newly produced. And like the endless qualities of the dharmakaya, the statue is like the source of all treasure. This Buddha is adorned with the wealth of profound and vast teachings, wisdoms and methods. Beings who have the ability of pure perception can enjoy this endless wealth, and that is symbolised by the universal monarch.

Beings with pure perception can enjoy this endless wealth, like the universal monarch

The manifestation Buddha appearing to ordinary beings is symbolised by the golden statue

The power of the actualisation of the primordially pure dharmakaya is perceived to different degrees by different kinds of beings who have different kinds of defilements. Therefore it is like a reflection that appears to different beings with different capacities. So the manifestation Buddha that appears to common beings is symbolised by the golden statue.

153 རང་བྱུང་རྣམས་ཀྱི་དོན་དམ་དེ། །
དད་པ་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་རྟོགས་བྱ་ཡིན། །
ཉི་མའི་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་འོད་འབར་བ། །
མིག་མེད་པས་ནི་མཐོང་བ་མེད། །

This ultimate truth of the spontaneously-born is to be understood through faith alone – The orb of the sun may shine but it cannot be seen by the blind!

This truth of the Self-Sprung Ones is to be realized through faith. The orb of the sun blazes with light, [but] is not seen by the blind.

The ultimate Buddha can only be realised by devotion

The self-arising Buddha, the ultimate Buddha or Buddha-nature, can be only understood and realised by devotion, and not with any other means. This will be explained. In our limited minds, when we talk about devotion, we immediately jump to the conclusion that devotion is somehow blind, and that there is something that we have to believe. But that's a very limited way of thinking. It's

We tend to think of devotion as blind, but Maitreya says our ordinary critical mind is blind, since all our concepts are extremes, compounded phenomena, to which we have a very sharp clinging

very interesting. When Maitreya says that Buddha-nature cannot be understood by any other means apart from devotion, he's saying that we don't usually think of our ordinary critical mind as blind. But no matter how critical and intellectually sharp we are, we always fall into extremes. We are still limited by words, sentences, and our imagination. Basically, they are all fixations. They are all compounded phenomena. So that's why this kind of limited mind, even though it is very sharp from our ordinary point of view, will never understand Buddha-nature.

Maitreya is saying that Buddha-nature can only be understood by a mind that has gone beyond extremes, and that is devotion

When teachers say "don't think – relax, meditate", we should not misunderstand this as encouraging blind devotion

And yet, those with blind devotion somehow end up with greater profit! They think less, and that is already a benefit

So when Maitreya says that this kind of Buddha can be only understood by devotion and not by any other means, he's saying that this kind of Buddha-nature cannot be understood by a mind that is limited by extremes, but only by a mind that has gone beyond extremes. I'm borrowing a here from my father's teachings. He said that our so-called critical or sharp mind actually has very sharp clinging, and as long as there is clinging, there is clinging to some thing – it becomes a thing or entity (*ngöpo*). Because of your clinging, it becomes an entity, and hence it is compounded, and changeable. Devotion is actually a mind that has gone beyond extremes. But you know it's very easy to fall into thinking that the lamas are forcing us to do things when they say, "Don't think too much now, just have devotion and do it". But in reality, the more you think, the more you are going to fall into extremes anyway! So when the lamas say, "Don't think – relax, meditate, let your mind be free from this clinging and these fixations", it would be very sad if you interpret it as encouraging blind devotion. And yet, those who do have what we might call blind devotion somehow end up having greater profit! They don't think so much, and that's already a benefit! As this stanza says, even though the sun may be blazing, if you don't have eyes, you won't see it. Similarly, as long as you don't have devotion, you won't see the Buddha-nature.

Day 9 – Introduction

We talk of understanding, experience and realisation, but gaining understanding is very difficult. We have too little wisdom, because we have too little merit

As our merit increases, our understanding improves

When we talk of our reactions in terms of mood or the situation, it's actually all about merit

In the teachings we hear the lamas talk about understanding (*gowa*), experience (*nyongwa*) and realisation (*togpa*). Understanding comes first, and at a first glance, one might think that understanding the Dharma is possible, and certainly easier than realisation. But gaining understanding is actually very difficult. It's not only because we have insufficient wisdom. The bigger reason is that we don't have enough merit. As our merit increases, it's incredible how it changes our understanding of every word or stanza of the Buddha's teachings – even of seemingly very common or ordinary teachings. As our merit increases, our understanding really improves. And this doesn't only apply to the Dharma. In our mundane world, we talk about how we react to things in terms of our mood or the situation. But it's actually all about merit. When a person has merit,

whatever they hear, they will hear it as something pleasant, or at least it won't upset them.

Even if we do everything right, things can still go wrong. Our life is really controlled by merit

How Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche would teach

Of course in the ordinary world we believe in saying the right thing at the right time with the right words and all that, but we don't really have that kind of absolute control. We could do everything right, but everything could go still wrong as a result. This just means that our merit is what really controls or interprets our life. I remember when Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche was teaching us. Sometimes he would start to teach, and as he was just about to start the actual text, he would fall silent for a long time. Then he would say, "Nothing seems to be coming out of my mind, so we had better stop here today. Why don't you guys do some Vajrasattva mantra and if possible some ganachakra puja, and I'll come back when the time is right". Then he'd disappear for ten days. And he would come back in a very good mood and teach, and he would say that everything was coming fluently and flowing this time. But if we thought about it carefully, he hadn't really taught anything new. It was the same thing, but the amazing thing is that after ten days, what we heard actually penetrated us much more deeply. It was the same thing, nothing new. Merit is an ability or power, and that is actually when you eliminate weakness. That's power, isn't it? Again, as we have said many times already, accumulation and purification are really one but with two different aspects.

After accumulating merit, the same teachings will penetrate far more deeply

Accumulation and purification are one, with two different aspects

Some people have the merit to enjoy food, and others don't

Some people have the merit to enjoy food, and others don't. It's quite amazing to watch people who have merit to enjoy food. Whatever they eat, even just a boring sandwich, they eat so well! If you watch them eating, it's a real appetizer if you don't happen to be in the mood to eat. By contrast, for some other people, nothing is right. I definitely think we need a lot of merit to understand the teachings from the sutras and shastras. And I think we do have merit, because here we are in this age, this time when everybody is fighting for completely meaningless things, and here we are talking about things like the nine examples! It's an amazing subject – it has so much merit.

We need merit to understand the teachings, and we have it. We are here discussing the nine examples as others fight for meaningless things

Buddha sacrificed his body for one word of Dharma. This tells us that any kind of attachment to form leads to interference between us and the teachings

Even in normal life, our preconceptions about others distort our conversations with them, and our ability to enjoy them

We hear from the sutras that when the Buddha was a Bodhisattva, he sacrificed his kingdom for one word of wisdom. He sacrificed his body and his identity. And we hear that he drove one thousand nails into his body just for one word of the Dharma, or made one thousand holes in his body and filled them with mustard seed oil to make butter lamp offerings. For me it's so logical. It tells us that our attachment to the body or any kind of form always becomes a filter or a source of interference between the teachings and us. For me it's so logical, because even in our mundane world, we can meet someone for the first time and already have an idea about them, for example that they're arrogant. And we're so fixated on this idea that it influences all our conversations with this person. Nothing good can come out, even though the other person is telling you something that's good and right, because you are clinging to your idea, and it has become a big filter. So for me this whole merit business is very logical.

Many of you have sacrificed things to come here. This is a form of accumulating merit

Although the teachings coming from my mouth are not worthwhile, all of you have sacrificed many things to come here – time, money, work, in some cases your relationship. All of that. I think it's good that you should know this is a form of accumulating merit. For those of you who have come thousands of miles just to hear this, I'm sure there is a lot of merit. Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche once told me a story about someone who requested him to give them the introduction to the nature of mind, all the usual dzogchen teachings. He said that's fine, but since it's a very important teaching, it deserves a celebration and it also requires accumulation of merit, and for that the ganachakra puja is the best, so why don't you get some tsok substance? The other person asked if ten dollars would be enough. And Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche said, of course – whatever you can afford. There's no price. One million dollars is not enough, and one cent is enough. And the guy bought about seven dollars' worth of food, and later on, as they were still walking in the same department store, he bought a perfume or eau de cologne for himself that cost about forty dollars!

Story of student making offerings to Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche to receive dzogchen teachings for which there is no price, then spending more on eau de cologne for himself

We tend to undervalue the preciousness of the Dharma

Story of Khenpo Kunga Wangchuk, who never bargains for Dharma books and statues. For him, Dharma is priceless

We have a tendency to undervalue the rareness and the preciousness of the Dharma. I think that the present khenpo of Dzongsar Institute, Khenpo Kunga Wangchuk, is a really good example of a great Dharma practitioner. When he goes to Dharma bookshops, the owners are very happy, because he never negotiates. Similarly, he never bargains for statues and sometimes his attendants have to go back later without him knowing, to ask the storeowners to give back the money. Because he gives whatever they ask! His concept is that Dharma is priceless. It's an offering, so he gives whatever they ask. This is very admirable, but very difficult to do. I always negotiate! I cannot tolerate it when I feel I am being cheated or deceived! I once overheard His Holiness the Dalai Lama saying that he was probably just a cowherd in the distance when Buddha Shakyamuni was in India, someone who wasn't receiving teachings or anything like that. He just happened to be nearby, admiring the sight of the serene gathering of the Buddha and his maroon-robed disciples. This is an amazing teaching! When you go to places like Sri Lanka or Thailand and see these robed monks, we call them the supreme object of offering. It's an amazing sight. But I'm prejudiced. Somehow I don't seem to get that kind of inspiration with Tibetan and Chinese monks. I cannot understand why. I feel it more with Sri Lankan and Thai monks, when they come barefoot with their begging bowls and great humility. It's a great sight. I'm sure that just by having goose bumps, I will create merit equal to the number of goose bumps that I have!

We create merit even when being inspired by the example of monks barefoot with their begging bowls

We must learn this, as the value of Dharma has gone down. Some people even try to avoid paying to attend the teachings

This is a very important lesson to learn, because the value of the Dharma has really gone down. Some people even try to avoid paying the cost to attend the teachings as if they were trying to evade tax from the government! I'm saying these things because we're about to begin a very important stanza. Some people think it is actually quoted from the sutras, and maha ati people sometimes use this quotation to introduce *rigpa* or wisdom.

154 འདི་ལ་བསལ་བྱ་ཅི་ཡང་མེད། །
གཞན་ཡང་བྱ་བ་ཆུང་ཟད་མེད། །
ཡང་དག་ཉིད་ལ་ཡང་དག་ལྟ། །
ཡང་དག་མཐོང་ན་རྣམ་པར་གྲོལ། །

There is nothing whatever to remove from this, nor the slightest thing thereon to add. Truly beholding the true nature – when truly seen–complete liberation.

Nothing whatsoever is to be removed. Not the slightest thing is to be added. Truly looking at truth, truth is seen. When seen, this is complete liberation.

There is nothing to remove from 'this' or add to it. Here Rangtongpas say 'this' refers to interdependent reality or emptiness, and Shentongpas say 'this' refers to Buddha-nature or *kham*

This stanza has been explained and quoted in so many shastras and texts written by Indians and Tibetans. Here, the Tibetan word *dila* means 'this', indicating some thing - and that is actually the big point here. The Rangtongpas would refer to *dila* as 'this interdependence' (*tenching dreljung dila*), this interdependent reality or emptiness . Whereas the Shentongpas might refer to it as Buddha-nature, the *kham*.

When you realise that this Buddha-nature is primordially pure beyond purifying and adding, then you are liberated

Anyway, for now, let's use *kham*, Buddha-nature. Within this Buddha-nature there is nothing to purify. There are no emotions or faults to purify, and there are no good, true or enlightened qualities that we have to add. Basically, there is nothing to reject, and nothing to add or impute. It is primordially pure, right from the beginning, and this needs to be understood by self-awareness. When you realise the fact that it is primordially pure beyond purifying and adding, then you are liberated from all obscurations.

155 རྣམ་དབྱེ་བཅས་པའི་མཚན་ཉིད་ཅན། །
གློ་བུར་བགེ་གཞི་ཁམས་སྟོང་གི། །
རྣམ་དབྱེ་མེད་པའི་མཚན་ཉིད་ཅན། །
བླ་མེད་ཆོས་ཀྱིས་སྟོང་མ་ཡིན། །

The Buddha-nature is devoid of any affect – such an intrinsic characteristic would be completely foreign. Yet it is not devoid of the supreme qualities, whose intrinsic characteristics are undifferentiable from its domain.

The element is empty of the adventitious [stains], which are featured by their total separateness. But it is not empty of the matchless properties, which are featured by their total inseparability.

Buddha-nature doesn't need to be purified because defilements are adventitious.

This stanza is like the Shentongpas' stanza, and it really works with their ideas. Why doesn't the Buddha-nature have any obscurations to purify or any enlightened qualities that need to be added? Because, as it says very clearly here, the temporary defilements can be differentiated from the Buddha-nature. They can be removed. They are adventitious. This is it. It is not that Buddha-

This is an important stanza for Shentongpas, for two reasons:

1) Buddha-nature is not a phenomenon, so there is nothing for it to be empty of

2) Enlightened qualities cannot be removed from Buddha-nature, as they are there primordially

nature is emptiness. It is because all these temporary defilements can be removed from the Buddha-nature. In reality, Buddha-nature itself is not even a phenomenon, so there is nothing for it to be empty of. That's one reason why this is such an important stanza for Shentongpas. The second one is that the enlightened qualities cannot be removed from the Buddha-nature, because they are there primordially. They are not something that you have to add. These are very important quotations for the Shentongpas, and many Nyingmapas, Kagyupas and maybe some Sakyapas really treasure this stanza. Today, all the stanzas are especially important. Of course, this whole text is important, but today we will hear something really useful for us.

156 སྒྲིན་དང་རྨི་ལམ་སྒྱུ་བཞིན་དེ་དང་དེར། །
ཤེས་བྱ་ཐམས་ཅད་རྣམ་ཀུན་སྟོང་པ་ཞེས། །
གསུངས་ནས་ཡང་འདིར་རྒྱལ་རྣམས་སེམས་ཅན་ལ། །
སངས་རྒྱས་སྙིང་པོ་ཡོད་ཅེས་ཅི་སྟེ་གསུངས། །

He had taught in various places that every knowable thing is ever void, like a cloud, a dream or an illusion. Then why did the Buddha declare the essence of Buddhahood to be there in every sentient being?

[The sutras of the second turning of the wheel of Dharma] state in numerous places that all knowable [phenomena] are in all ways empty like a cloud, a dream or an illusion. Why is it then that in [the sutras of the third turning of the wheel of Dharma] the Buddha, having said this, declared that Buddha-nature is present within beings?

What is the purpose of teaching Buddha-nature?

Why did Buddha teach in the second turning that all phenomena are emptiness, and then in the third turning that all beings have Buddha-nature?

Why did Buddha teach Buddha-nature to ordinary beings, when even sublime beings on the path find it very hard to understand?

Now there is a question. Why did Buddha teach in the sutras that all phenomena are like a cloud, unstable, naturally illusory and empty? Why is it that even though we can experience them, they don't exist like tangible phenomena, but like a dream? Why can we perceive them, though they are essenceless like a mirage? Why is all this taught as emptiness in the Madhyamika teachings and the Prajñaparamita Sutras? And as Mipham Rinpoche's commentary asks, why in this third turning of the wheel of the Dharma does Buddha say there is a *kham*, a Buddha-nature that exists within all sentient beings? Isn't that a contradiction? And since the Buddha-nature is very difficult to understand even for sublime beings that are on the path, why is it taught here for beings who are not sublime, but who are still ordinary beings? What's the purpose of teaching it here?

There is no contradiction between the second and third turnings. The third emphasises the clarity aspect of Buddha-nature, but does not indicate that it truly exists. We must understand both clarity and emptiness to talk of their union

First of all there's no contradiction between the second turning of the wheel of the Dharma, where Buddha said that everything is emptiness, and the third turning of the wheel of the Dharma, where Buddha then said that all sentient beings have Buddha-nature. In the Prajñaparamita sutras of the second turning of the wheel of the Dharma, Buddha emphasises that everything is not truly existent. Here when Buddha says there is Buddha-nature, he is not indicating that Buddha-nature truly exists, but he is emphasising its clarity aspect. When we talk about the union of clarity and emptiness, it's important that we

There are five reasons why Buddha-nature was taught during the third turning

understand both aspects, not only the emptiness aspect. Besides, there are five reasons why Buddha taught Buddha-nature during the third turning of the wheel of the Dharma, which will now be explained.

157 སེམས་ཁུམ་སེམས་ཅན་དམན་ལ་བརྟེས་པ་དང་། །
ཡང་དག་མིན་འཛིན་ཡང་དག་ཆོས་ལ་སྐྱུར། །
བདག་ཅག་ལྷག་པའི་སྟོན་ལྡན་གང་དག་ལ། །
ཡོད་པ་དེ་དག་དེ་སྤང་དོན་དུ་གསུངས། །

There are five mistakes: faint-heartedness, contempt for those of lesser ability, to believe in the false, to speak about the true nature badly and to cherish oneself above all else. So that those in whom these above were there might rid themselves of them, therefore was it declared.

With regard to faintheartedness, contempt for inferior beings, perceiving the untrue, disparaging the true nature and exceeding self-cherishing, he said this to persuade those who have any of these five to abandon their defects.

Throughout the path, the most important thing is to generate enlightened mind

Generally throughout the Buddha Dharma, and especially in the Mahayana, the most important thing to do is generate the enlightened mind. This is what all the Buddhas did right at the beginning. If you read the Bhadrakalpa-sutra, the Sutra of the Fortunate Aeon (*kalpa zangpo*), you will hear how in the beginning one thousand Buddhas generated enlightened mind (*semchey*). Here we are referring to the mind that wishes to enlighten oneself and all sentient beings. Although it may not come from a ritual or a ceremony, it's a promise or pledge that I will enlighten myself and all sentient beings. For practitioners on the path, this is the most important thing. For example, when you pray, why does prayer work? Because of this *semchey*, this determination, this pledge to help sentient beings. It's all based on that. So we come to the five reasons:

All practice works because of this determination, this pledge to help beings

The five reasons why Buddha-nature was taught:

(1) So Bodhisattvas do not become discouraged during the path, and also to bring joy to the path. If we know the statue is inside, then there's joy in breaking the mould

1. First, if Buddha-nature were not emphasised, then a Bodhisattva on the path might become discouraged, because the path is long, rough, and endless. So if we know that Buddha-nature is there within us, like the gold coin, the statue and all of that, it really gives us so much encouragement. We know it's possible because Buddha-nature is there. It's within us. And this also brings joy during the path. If we don't know that the statue is inside the mould, then there's no joy in breaking the mould. But when we know, the desire to find the statue inside is so strong that we will not even notice the process of breaking the mould or generating the enlightened mind.

(2) If we did not know that all beings equally possess Buddha-nature, we might become proud that we are Bodhisattvas, which would become a big obstacle

2. The second reason is that as Bodhisattvas we have to benefit many sentient beings, all sentient beings. Now if we don't know that Buddha-nature lies with within everybody, then we might not respect other sentient beings. We might think that we are great because we are Bodhisattvas, and then

despise other sentient beings. This would become a big obstacle that would hinder us in benefiting other beings, so the second reason that Buddha-nature is taught is to dispel that obstacle.

The third and fourth are to dispel obstructions to wisdom or *sherab*:

(3) Imputing that Buddha qualities truly exist, when in reality they don't

3. The third and fourth reasons are to dispel the obstacles that obstruct us from having the wisdom (*sherab*) that understands the scripture and the realisation. There are two of these obstacles. The first one is imputing. Even though there is no Buddha-nature, we impute or imagine its existence by thinking that all these Buddha qualities like the ushnisha exist. But in reality, they don't.

(4) Thinking that Buddha qualities do not exist, which is like a criticism

4. The fourth reason is to overcome the second obstacle to *sherab*, namely thinking that the Buddha qualities do not exist, and that there are no Buddha qualities within us, which is like some kind of criticism.

(5) If we did not know that all beings equally possess Buddha-nature, we might have more attachment to ourselves and more aversion to others

5. The fifth reason is to dispel the obstacle that prevents us understanding that we and others are equal. If we don't know that Buddha-nature exists equally within all beings, then we might have more attachment to ourselves, and more aversion towards others.

These are the five reasons why Buddha-nature is taught, and they will now be explained in more detail.

158 ཡང་དག་མཐའ་ནི་འདུས་བྱས་ཀྱིས། །
རྣམ་པ་ཐམས་ཅད་དབེན་པ་སྟེ། །
ཉོན་མོངས་ལས་དང་རྣམ་སྨིན་དོན། །
སྤྲིན་ལ་སོགས་པ་བཞིན་དུ་བརྗོད། །

The ultimate true nature is always devoid of any thing compounded: so it is said that defilements, karma and their full ripening are like a cloud etc.
The final truth is in every respect devoid of anything compounded. The poisons, karma and their product are said to be like a cloud and so on.

Buddha-nature is primordially pure from all compounded phenomena, including the defilements, karma and their result. Therefore all our emotions are like clouds

Here the Tibetan term *yangdak peydak* means something like 'absolute purity' or 'the end of purity', and of course, we're referring to Buddha-nature. Buddha-nature is pure from all kinds of compounded phenomena, right from the beginning. Therefore, Buddha-nature is free from the three kinds of emotions: desire, aggression and jealousy. It is free from the emotions of karmic formation such as virtuous actions and non-virtuous actions. And it is free from the result emotion, which is more like the five aggregates. This goes back to when we were talking about how some people say that the form of the Buddha, his body, is the first noble truth of suffering. So therefore the emotions are like clouds.

159 ཉོན་མོངས་སྤྲིན་འདྲ་བ་ཡིན། །
ལས་ནི་རྨི་ལམ་ལོངས་སྤྱོད་བཞིན། །
ཉོན་མོངས་ལས་ཀྱི་རྣམ་པར་སྨིན། །
ཕུང་པོ་སྒྱུ་མ་སྤྲུལ་པ་བཞིན། །

The defilements are said to be like clouds, karma is likened to the experience in dreams and the full ripening of karma and defilements – the aggregates – are likened to conjurations.

The mental poisons are like a cloud. Karma resembles a dream experience. The skandhas produced by the poisons and karma are similar to an illusion or a deceptive apparition.

Emotions are seemingly apparent and stubborn, but they are adventitious

Emotions are like clouds. We are always talking about the same thing again and again. The nature of beings is primordially pure, and that's why we call it Buddha-nature. And although emotions are seemingly apparent and seemingly stubborn, seemingly almost like a second nature, they are never a second nature. They are like clouds. They are adventitious, and not you. This point is quite important. In Buddhism we always come to the conclusion that these emotions and defilements are temporary. When we're looking at a grey cloudy sky, we might call it a cloudy sky but it's not really a cloudy sky. The clouds are never the sky. The clouds are temporary or adventitious.

Similarly, we speak of a 'cloudy sky', but the clouds are never the sky. They are adventitious

Because emotions are adventitious, karma is like a dream, not some kind of divine force

The next line is very important for our understanding of karma. Because emotions are temporary, so-called karma or action is like a dream. This is very important because many people think that karma is almost like a substitute for God. They think it's like one who punishes you, rewards you, and decides your fate. But it's never like that in Buddhism. Karma is actually like a dream. And in his dream, Gérard might have all kinds of ecstasy, and I'm sure there's a lot of panting too! But no matter how much he pants and sweats, it's just a dream. When we say, "it's just a dream", there's sometimes a connotation that we despise it, because it's not real, it's just a dream. But it doesn't work like that. In the dream you go through everything, from the ecstasy of meeting an elephant, through sadness and missing the elephant, to the agony of not having one. That's how karma works.

But we should not despise this dream, as we still experience the full range of emotions during the dream. That's how karma works

Emotions are temporary, action is like a dream, and so the aggregates – the result of emotions and action – are like a mirage

The closer we approach the five aggregates, the more futile or essenceless they become

This stanza is a big summary of Buddhism. Emotions are temporary, so action is like a dream, and therefore the aggregates – the result of emotions and action – are like a mirage. The five aggregates are like a mirage, because the closer you approach them, the more futile or essenceless they become. We try so hard to get close to the elephant! But even if there's an engagement, the exchange of rings, a marriage ceremony or whatever, the elephant is a mirage, so Gérard will soon begin to see the tail as a tusk. But he's very smart! He doesn't get too close. He only wants to look through the window, and he likes to have a little bit of dirt on the window!

[Q] {Gérard}: If I understand correctly, you are teaching us that elephants are temporary?
[A] Yes, that's true.

160 སྔར་ནི་དེ་ལྟར་རྣམ་བཞག་མས། །
སླར་ཡང་བླ་མའི་རྒྱུད་འདིར་ནི། །
ཉེས་པ་ལྔ་དག་སྤང་བའི་ཕྱིར། །
བཞག་ཡོད་ཉིད་ཅེས་བསྟན་པ་ཡིན། །

Previously was it thus presented. Then, further to this, the presence, of the Buddha-nature, was taught ultimately in the "changeless continuity", as here so that these five faults could be abandoned.

For the time being it was thus expounded. Additionally in the unsurpassable continuity it was the taught: "The element is present", so that the five evils would be abandoned.

The second turning was taught to emphasise that form is emptiness, and that emotions, karma and aggregates are like a mirage. The third turning was taught to dispel the five kinds of obstacles

Because of this, and to emphasise this, Buddha taught emptiness in the earlier turnings of the wheel of the Dharma. For example, in the Prajñaparamita-sutra, he said form is emptiness, emptiness is form, and everything is like a mirage or a dream, and so forth. And then after that, in order to dispel the five kinds of obstacles or downfalls, Buddha taught *kham*, the Buddha-nature, in the sublime teachings such as the third turning of the wheel of the Dharma.

161 འདི་ལྟར་དེ་ནི་མ་ཐོས་པར། །
བདག་ལ་བརྙས་པའི་ཉེས་པ་ཡིས། །
སེམས་ནི་ཞུམ་པ་འགའ་ཞིག་ལ། །
བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་ནི་སྐྱེ་མི་འགྱུར། །

Not learning in this fashion, some people are disheartened, through mistaken self-contempt, and bodhicitta will not develop in them.

As long as they have not heard this, bodhicitta will not be born in those whose minds are feeble and fainthearted, stirred by the evil of self-contempt.

If you do not know about Buddha-nature, you might despise yourself and become discouraged at the thought of enlightening all beings

If you have not heard that we have the Buddha-nature within us, then you might lose courage. You might despise yourself, thinking how can someone impure and useless like me achieve enlightenment? Bodhicitta, the wish to enlighten all sentient beings, will not arise within people who have that kind of discouragement and despise themselves.

162 གང་ལ་བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་སྐྱེས་པས། །
བདག་ནི་མཆོག་ཅེས་རྟོམ་པ་ན། །
བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་མ་སྐྱེས་པ་ལ། །
དམན་པའི་འདུ་ཤེས་རབ་ཏུ་འཛིན། །

Some people, when proud, think, "I am best", because bodhicitta has dawned in them, and they strongly dwell on the idea that those in whom it has not dawned are inferior.

Having engendered [a little] bodhicitta, some proudly imagine: "I am supreme!" Towards those who have not developed it they are imbued with notions of inferiority.

Others might become arrogant and proud of being Bodhisattvas, seeing themselves as saviours

Others might have the bodhicitta of wishing to enlighten all sentient beings, but if they don't know that Buddha-nature exists within all sentient beings, they might become proud of being Bodhisattvas. They might see themselves as some kind of saviour, and other sentient beings as needing to be saved. Then they could develop arrogance and despise other sentient beings.

163 དེ་ལྟར་སེམས་པ་དེ་ལ་ནི། །
ཡང་དག་ཤེས་པ་མི་སྐྱེ་བ། །
དེས་ན་ཡང་དག་མིན་འཛིན་ཅིང་། །
ཡང་དག་དོན་ནི་རིག་མི་འགྱུར། །

Right understanding cannot arise in those who think like this and so, since they misinterpret the true, they will not understand the truth.

In those who entertain such thoughts, true understanding will not arise. They hold the untrue [to be true] and thus will not realize the truth.

If you think others don't have Buddha-nature but you then seek to help them, you are imputing as you are trying to insert Buddha-nature within them. Nobody can do this

If you think others don't have Buddha-nature, this is *drotagpa*, imputation

We all have Buddha-nature. A teacher or Buddha can only be a path to help you realise it

I think this stanza is quite easy to understand. If you have the arrogance of thinking that Buddha-nature does not exist within other beings, you end up despising them. Imagine that you think you're a Bodhisattva who has Buddha-nature, and other sentient beings don't have the Buddha-nature, so they require your help. What are you doing? You are constructing and imputing now, but you're also contradicting yourself. You don't believe they have the Buddha-nature. So you are helping them, but helping them to do what? You're helping them to become enlightened. But that's imputation, because you don't believe that they have the Buddha-nature, so you have to insert the Buddha inside them. That's a very big mistake. It's what we call *drotagpa*, which means 'exaggeration' or 'imputation'. The Buddhist view is that everybody has the Buddha-nature. It will not change. No one, no guru, no Buddha can insert it. All they can do is become some kind of path to enable you to realise that.

164 བཅོས་མ་གློ་བུར་བ་ཉིད་ཕྱིར། །
སེམས་ཅན་སྐྱོན་དེ་ཡང་དག་མིན། །
ཡང་དག་ཉེས་དེ་བདག་མེད་པ། །
ཡོན་ཏན་རང་བཞིན་དག་པ་ཡིན། །

Beings' defects are not the true, being but a fabrication and accidental. In reality, these faults are not entities whereas the qualities are naturally pure.

Being artificially produced and adventitious, these faults of beings are not truly [existent]. In truth these evils do not exist as self, but exist as the qualities by nature pure.

Another problem is that we might act as saviours if we don't realise that emotions are adventitious and not the real nature. If we think emotions are real, this is *kurdep* or depreciation

These are amazing reasons! Another problem is that you might act as a saviour, not realising that other people's emotions are removable and not their real nature. If I think that people's emotions are real, this is called *kurdep* , which means 'depreciation'. In the previous example, we were adding something. In this case, we are taking something away. The first fault is the arrogance of a Bodhisattva who thinks that you don't have these qualities, so he has to give them to you. But all the qualities of enlightenment exist within all of us. The second fault is when a Bodhisattva doesn't realise that defilements are adventitious, and he says that you have a problem and need to be purified.

It is important to know this to avoid Buddhism degenerating, for example through teachers who try to control your life by telling you what to do, what to add and remove

It's so important that you hear these words, because although Buddhism is growing in one way, it could also be degenerating. If you don't know this information, Buddhist teachers might behave like people who control your life, which is now happening in many parts of the world. They might start to become your spiritual and secular leaders, deciding that you shouldn't have some things and you should have other things. They will tell you what to do, what to add, and what to remove. Then we might have Buddhist masters imposing laws like making everyone wear six layers of socks wherever they go, or things like that.

We don't accept that everyone has Buddha-nature because the first thing we see in others is the adventitious emotions, which we take as real. It's like 'emotion at first sight'!

Also, if we think surface emotions are real, we can't see how Buddhahood and these emotions coexist, so we think that Buddhahood will only come to us later

So why can't we conceive or accept that everybody has the Buddha-nature? Mipham Rinpoche has a very good explanation. As we have seen, beings have all these adventitious emotions that are not their nature, but which are nevertheless a temporary manifestation. The problem is that's the first thing that we see in others, and so we think, 'that's it, that's what's real', without looking at what's behind that. I would call it 'emotion at first sight'! I could illustrate it, but I don't want to go through the example of Gérard and his elephant any more! There's another problem that arises when you look at what's on the surface and think that it's the absolute truth. You might then wonder how can enlightenment or Buddha-nature coexist with emotion? So then you separate or remove Buddhahood from normal ignorant sentient beings. This is why we always think that Buddhahood will come to us later, in some other time or place, after ten

years of practice or whatever, because we don't understand the nine examples that we talked about earlier.

165 ཡང་དག་མིན་པའི་ཉེས་འཛིན་ཅིང་། །
ཡང་དག་ཡོན་ཏན་སྐྱོར་འདེབས་པ། །
བློ་ལྡན་བདག་དང་སེམས་ཅན་ལ། །
མཚུངས་མཐོང་བྱམས་པ་ཐོབ་མི་འགྱུར། །

If one clings to the faults, the untrue, and disparages the qualities, the true, one will not have the loving kindness of the wise, which sees the similarity of others and oneself.

While they hold the evils, which are untrue [to be true] and disparage the true qualities, [denying their presence,] even those of understanding will not attain the love that perceives the similarity of oneself and others.

If you don't know that all beings have Buddha-nature, you won't have loving kindness, as this is based on everybody being equal. Otherwise it's only condescension or pity

This stanza is really beautiful. When you don't know that all beings have Buddha-nature, then you will not have loving-kindness. Loving-kindness has to be based on the fact that everybody is equal. As long as you think that the one who gives love is 'higher' in some hierarchical sense, and the poor needy beings that receive it are somehow 'lower', then there is no love and kindness. It's more like condescension or pity. And this equality is based on knowing that everybody has the Buddha-nature. Now Maitreya is coming towards the end of the chapter, so he's basically giving us everything!

166 འདི་ལྟར་དེ་ནི་ཐོས་པ་ལས། །
ས্ལོ་དང་ས্ལ্ོན་པ་བཞིན་གུས་དང་། །
ཤེས་རབ་ཡེ་ཤེས་བྱམས་ཆེན་སྐྱེ། །

Through learning in such fashion there will arise enthusiasm, respect, as towards the Buddha, prajña, jñana and great love.

Once one has heard this, joy will be born. Respect as towards the Buddha, analytical wisdom, primordial wisdom and great love will arise.

The benefits of hearing about Buddha-nature. Five qualities are attained:

(1) Joy and enthusiasm for the path, as we know Buddha-nature is possible

(2) Respect for all beings, knowing they have Buddha-nature and are worthy of homage

(3) Wisdom, prajña, by knowing that all defilements are removable

Now we come to the benefit of hearing about Buddha-nature. When we hear about Buddha-nature, we will have joy or enthusiasm towards the path, because we know that the Buddha is possible. Even a dog is worthy of homage, because it has Buddha-nature. Even a dog deserves homage, although perhaps 'deserves' is not the right word, as it might sound like a gift. Even a dog is worthy of homage. No matter how many emotions you have erupting inside you, you'll know that they are removable, and that is wisdom. And at the same time you will know that all the qualities of the Buddha are within you, and that is primordial wisdom. So now when you hear about, read about, or see amazing Buddha qualities according to your projection, you won't treat them as separate from you

(4) Primordial wisdom, jñana, by knowing that you already possess all the qualities of the Buddha

(5) Loving kindness towards all sentient beings

Emptiness alone doesn't allow you to do all this!

by thinking, 'well that's them, but I'm different'. You will not think like that, because you know that all the qualities of the Buddha, down to every single lock of hair, exist within you. There is nothing to be jealous of or covet, because you have everything. And when you know that everybody has the Buddha-nature, loving-kindness will grow. Can you see that emptiness alone doesn't allow you to do these things? I'm sure by now everyone has converted from the Madhyamika to the Uttaratantra!

So what is the effect of knowing that you have these great qualities? If you have confidence, then negativity, literally 'the unutterable negative actions', cannot easily overcome you. You become a stranger to negativity, and a stranger has some kind of dignity. When you're a stranger, others don't have access to you. They don't come and feel at home with you, because you're courageous. The second effect of knowing that you have Buddha-nature is that you will not look down on those who are destitute and think that they are lower than you. You won't have arrogance, and nor will you feel inferior when you see a sublime being, someone who has attained a lot. There's no reason to feel inferior, because you have everything that he has. You have no more and no less than Shakyamuni Buddha or any of a thousand Buddhas. Basically, there's no inferiority or superiority complex any longer, because of Buddha-nature. By now you should all be followers of the Uttaratantra!

Because of Buddha-nature, there is no more inferiority or superiority complex. You won't look down with arrogance on those below you, nor feel inferior to beings with great attainment, as you know that you have no more and no less than Shakyamuni Buddha

167 ཆོས་ལྔ་སྐྱེ་ཕྱིར་དེ་ལས་ནི། །
ཁ་ན་མ་ཐོ་མེད་མཚུངས་ལྡན། །
སྐྱོན་མེད་ཡོན་ཏན་ལྡན་པ་དང་། །
བདག་དང་སེམས་ཅན་མཚུངས་བྱེམས་ལས། །
སངས་རྒྱས་ཉིད་ནི་མྱུར་དུ་འཐོབ། །

Due to the growth of these five qualities, the unwholesome aspects will be absent and the similarity will be seen. Through faultlessness, inherent qualities and through loving kindness, which sees oneself and others' similarity, Buddhahood will be swiftly achieved.

Through the arising of these five qualities, one is rid of the faults and sees similarity. [By realizing] the absence of defects and the presence of qualities, and through love, [seeing] the equality of oneself and [all] beings, Buddhahood will be quickly attained.

You will not be put off by negativities, as you know they do not truly exist

You will not become excited as small signs of enlightened qualities arise, as you know you already have them – what is there to be excited about?

When negativities arise, you will know that they are not truly existent. When good things like small signs of enlightened qualities arise, you will not get excited, because you already have them. What is there to be excited about? And then there is loving kindness. With all these, you will attain enlightenment swiftly. And that is the end of the first chapter.

ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོ་རྒྱུད་བླ་མའི་བསྟན་བཅོས་དཀོན་མཆོག་གི་རིགས་རྣམ་པར་དབྱེ་བ་ལས། །
དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པའི་སྙིང་པོའི་སྐབས་ཏེ་དང་པོའོ།། །།

This was the first chapter, on the "Essence of the Tathagatas", from the analysis of the "Potential for the Rare and Supreme" in the Ultimate Explanatory Mahayana Teaching on the Changeless Continuity.

This was the section "Tathagatagarbha", the first [chapter] of The Commentary on the Highest Continuity of the Mahayana Dharma that Analyzes the Disposition of the Rare and the Sublime Ones.

Chapter 2

The Fifth Vajra Point – Enlightenment

We can understand enlightenment simply as freedom from fixation, obsession and paranoia

We might practice yoga or aromatherapy to remove our gross paranoia, but most of us don't want to get rid of all our paranoia

Our idea of 'living', our so-called 'common sense' is actually subtle paranoia that isn't too obvious or uncomfortable

According to Buddhism, as we have already seen, enlightenment can be understood simply as freedom from fixation, freedom from obsessions, and freedom from paranoia. But understanding paranoia and understanding the absence of paranoia are very different. You might be following an alternative path, like yoga or aromatherapy or whatever, as a means of getting rid of your paranoia. Most of us are only interested in getting rid of the really gross kinds of paranoia that we don't feel comfortable with. In general, I don't believe that worldly beings like us really want to get rid of all our paranoia, because what we call 'living' is paranoia! It's a system that we need and like. If there were no paranoia, then the whole business world would collapse, the political system would collapse, everything. And not many of us have the courage or wish to transcend this paranoia. Our so-called common sense, the so-called rational world is actually a very subtle form of paranoia. It's paranoia that isn't too obvious or too uncomfortable.

Someone who really wishes to attain enlightenment must go beyond all references, whereas most of us are just looking for a better life! We don't want to get rid of all our references!

As we discussed yesterday, someone who really wishes to achieve enlightenment must have the courage to think in terms of going beyond all references, including time, space, and everything that is emotional. Most of the time, when we talk about enlightenment, we are just talking about having a better life! But as we discussed yesterday, if you really achieved enlightenment, you would no longer enjoy a suspense film or the next World Cup. The sort of enlightenment that we normally long for is a bit like a long weekend, or paid leave! We don't want to get rid of all our references.

The previous chapter covered *kham* and *rig*. Ground enlightenment is already there

In any case, enlightenment is the subject of the next chapter. We are just going to start it today, and those who are interested can come back next year, although I'm not claiming that you will receive enlightenment next year, only that I will continue the enlightenment chapter! In the chapter that we have just completed, we covered quite extensively the *kham*, the *rig*, the family or the element, which is our true nature.

The problem is that we don't know this, so we have the concept of 'discovery', as if finding something new even though it has always been there. This 'discovery' is the subject of this chapter

So basically the ground enlightenment is already there. The source of endless treasure is beneath our bed, but the problem is that we don't know this. So because we don't know, we have the concept of 'discovery', as if have found something that wasn't there before. In reality it's not as though it has appeared as a new phenomenon. It has always been there, and now we are discovering it. And that is what is explained in this chapter.

168 དག་ཕོབ་བླ་ལ་བ་རང་བཞིན་དོན། །
དེ་བརྟེན་ཟབ་དང་རྒྱ་ཆེ་དང་། །
བདག་ཉིད་ཆེན་པོ་དེ་ཡང་ནི། །
ཇི་སྲིད་བྱེས་དང་ཇི་ལྟ་ཉིད། །

Purity, achievement, freedom, value for oneself and others, basis, depth, vastness and greatness of nature, their duration and "how-it-isness"

With its purity, attainment, freedom, benefit for oneself and others, [their] basis, depth, vastness and greatness of nature, duration and suchness [it has eight qualities].

169 ངོ་བོ་རྒྱུ་དང་འབྲས་བུ་དང་། །
ལས་དང་ལྷན་ལ་འཇུག་པ་དང་། །
དེ་རྣམ་བས་མ་མི་ཕྱེད་ཉིད་ཀྱིས། །
སངས་རྒྱས་ས་ནི་རྣམ་པར་གཞག །

Present the state of Buddhahood according to its nature, cause, fruit, function, endowments, manifestation, permanence and inconceivability.

By [the topics] essence, cause, fruit, function, endowment, manifestation, permanence and inconceivability, the level of a Buddha is presented.

170 རང་བཞིན་འོད་གསལ་ཞེས་བརྗོད་གང་ཡིན་ཉི་དང་མཁའ་བཞིན་གློ་བུར་གྱི། །
ཉོན་མོངས་ཤེས་བྱའི་སྒྲིབ་ཚོགས་སྦུག་པོའི་སྒྲིབ་པ་ཡིས་ནི་བསྒྲིབས་ཀྱང་པ། །
དྲི་མེད་སངས་རྒྱས་ཡོན་ཏན་ཀུན་ལྷན་རྟག་བརྟན་གཡུང་དྲུང་སངས་རྒྱས་ཉིད། །
དེ་ནི་ཚོས་ལ་མི་རྟོག་རྣམ་འབྱེད་ཡེ་ཤེས་དག་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་འཐོབ། །

That which has been described by "its nature is lucid clarity" is like the sun and the sky, obscured by the thick veils of those multitudes of "clouds" – defilements and cognitive impediments – which are but accidents. Buddhahood has no stain, is endowed with Buddha-qualities, is permanent, everlasting and without change. Its achievement depends upon non-conceptual and analytical jñana regarding all phenomena.

[Enlightenment, of which the Buddha] said: "It is by nature clear light", is similar to the sun and space. It is free from the stains of the adventitious poisons and hindrances to knowledge, the veils of which obscured it [like] a dense sea of clouds. Buddhahood is permanent, steadfast and immutable, possessing all the unpolluted Buddha qualities. It is attained on the basis of [two] primordial wisdoms: [one is] free from ideation with regard to phenomena, [the other] is discriminative.

The importance of the view in Buddhism:

The method or form may be beautiful or inspiring, but it is meaningless without the view. All religions have similar methods, such as love and compassion, but they have different views

The chapter begins with a summary. Enlightenment is primordially pure (*dakpa*). This is the view. In any spiritual path, the fundamental view is so important. The method, the form of the path, can be very beautiful and inspiring and all that, but if the fundamental view is not right, the method doesn't mean anything. After

The view is what makes the difference, and it also distinguishes the kind of motivation you have

For example, people may avoid goose liver out of vanity, for health reasons or out of compassion. Their actions may be similar, but their view is different

Someone who avoids goose liver out of compassion is an object of homage, but someone who does the same thing just to look good isn't necessarily an object of homage. Their view is different

all, in general all religions have similar kinds of methods. Everybody talks about love, compassion, some kind of heaven, the divine, and things like that. But it is the view that really makes the difference, and the view also distinguishes the kind of motivation you have. Imagine two people who are both on a diet, one for the sake of vanity, and the other for sake of their health. They have different views, as fundamentally one is interested in dieting for health reasons and the other because of their looks, even though their actions are similar, like avoiding goose liver. And someone else might avoid goose liver out of a view that is based more on compassion. So according to the Buddha's path, someone trying to avoid goose liver based on the view of compassion is an object of homage. But a Parisian girl who is avoiding goose liver because she is trying to lose weight in order to look beautiful is not necessarily an object of homage. This is because she has a different view, even though her action is exactly the same.

The fundamental view in the Uttaratantra is that all beings have Buddha-nature. Practicing generosity based on the view that we're all equally enlightened is very different from practicing it with the view that we're all fundamentally bad

The view is the idea that determines everything else. For example in the Uttaratantra, the fundamental view is that everybody has the Buddha-nature. So as we saw yesterday, nobody should feel superior and nobody should feel inferior, and so on. They are all equally enlightened fundamentally. And based on that view, if you now practice generosity or patience, then it's very different from practicing generosity, charity or patience based on the view that we're all fundamentally bad or wrong. The view really makes a big difference.

The eight points that explain enlightenment:

1. Essence
2. Cause
3. Result
4. Action
5. Possessor
6. Entering
7. Unchanging
8. Inexpressible

So we illustrate the first quality of enlightenment with the first word, 'primordially pure' (*dakpa*), which designates the view or the essence. Next is the method to actualise or realise that view, *tobpa*, which means 'obtaining' or 'method'. Then is the result, which is what happens when you realise that view. The result is that defilements are removed, which is *dralwey dreybu*. And then 'self' or 'concerning oneself' (*rang*). This refers to the fact that an enlightened being purifies all defilements, so all the flaws of the emotions are gone, and the wealth of stainlessness is obtained for oneself. The fact that an enlightened being has purified the obscurations to omniscience, and has therefore obtained the omniscience that is not obstructed from anything and not stuck with anything, that is what we call *zhen*. This is the perfection concerning others.

How these eight points relate to the three kayas

The three kayas will never cease to exist, which is unchanging, permanent. And their suchness cannot be understood except by the Buddha's wisdom

Next there is the 'container' or 'possessor' (*denpa*) in which all these qualities are contained. Next is that the enlightened quality is very profound and deep (*zapa*), and cannot be comprehended by ordinary thoughts. It is the dharmakaya (*chöku*). At the same time, the enlightened qualities are infinite (*gyachey*) and they manifest to different beings. There are all kinds of infinite qualities that will benefit different sentient beings, and that is the vast sambhogakaya. The infinite quality that is inseparable from the dharmakaya is the vast sambhogakaya (*longku*). And these two qualities, the sambhogakaya and the dharmakaya, manifest to different beings in different forms according to their needs. And that is the nirmanakaya (*tulpeyku*). These three kayas will never cease to exist, and that is the unchanging, permanent. The suchness of these three kayas cannot be

understood by anything other than the Buddha's wisdom. So these eight points that explain what enlightenment is – essence, cause, result, action, possessor, entering, unchanging, and inexpressible – will now be thoroughly explained.

We refer to Buddha-nature as follows: "the nature of the mind, luminosity and clarity from beginningless time". That is like the wisdom, the awareness that is like the sun. As its nature, that Buddha quality has never been stained right from the beginning, therefore it is the perfection of purity, which is symbolised by the sky. That Buddha-nature, temporarily obscured by emotions and obscurations, is like a cloud. But in reality, that Buddha-nature is never even for a moment separate from all the Buddha qualities such as the ten powers. It hasn't changed at all, and that is immutability. So how do we achieve this kind of state? By focussing on the reality of phenomena, and having the primordial wisdom that does not dwell on phenomena. And also by having the wisdom to understand phenomena however and as many as they exist. With these two wisdoms, one will obtain Buddhahood.

Buddha-nature is never separated from Buddha qualities: that is immutability

With the two wisdoms, one will obtain Buddhahood

171 སངས་རྒྱས་ཉིད་ནི་དབྱེར་མེད་པ། །
དག་པའི་ཆོས་ཀྱིས་རབ་ཕྱེ་བ། །
ཉི་མ་མཁའ་བཞིན་ཡེ་ཤེས་དང་། །
སྤངས་པ་གཉིས་ཀྱི་མཚན་ཉིད་དོ། །

Buddhahood is indivisible yet one can categorize according to its qualities of purity; the two qualities of jñana and freedom – comparable to the sun and to the sky.

Buddhahood is indivisible, yet can be divided according to its property of [twofold] purity. [Thus] it has two features, which are abandonment and primordial wisdom, similar to peace and the sun.

Two kinds of purity: having all enlightened qualities, and not having any defilements. These are symbolised by sun and sky

Now this will be explained again. The absolute Buddha is never separate from all the enlightened qualities. The absolute Buddha is never stained by temporary defilements. This is what we call the two kinds of purity: the purity of having all the enlightened qualities, and the purity of not having any defilement. Having the purity of the all the enlightened qualities is symbolised by the sun, and the purity of primordially not having any defilements is symbolised by the sky. So basically this is the Buddha. Who is Buddha? Buddha is someone or something that has two qualities – the purity of all the enlightened qualities, which is wisdom, and the purity of never having been corrupted by any temporary stain. This is the Buddha, the perfection of elimination.

172 འོད་གསལ་བྱས་མིན་དབྱེར་མེད་པར། །
འཇུག་ཅན་གང་གྱེའི་གྲུང་གི་ནི། །
རྒྱལ་ལས་འདས་ཕྱིར་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི། །
ཆོས་རྣམས་ཀུན་དང་ལྡན་པ་ཉིད། །

This lucid clarity is uncreated. It is that which pervades without any differentiation, having all Buddhahood's qualities, far greater in number than the sand grains in the river Ganges.

Luminous clear light is not created. It is indivisibly manifest [in the nature of beings] and holds all the Buddha properties outnumbering the grains of sand in the river Ganges.

The enlightened qualities are emptiness and clarity inseparable. This is the perfection of realisation

The enlightened quality is naturally luminous. The stainless quality or stainlessless is primordially pure, and that luminosity is not compounded or created with any new causes and conditions. This space (*ying*) and clarity (*ösel*), the emptiness and clarity, are inseparable. They function inseparably. The enlightened qualities are like the sands of the Ganges river, even greater in number than the grains of sand in the Ganges river, meaning infinite. These infinite qualities have always been spontaneously accomplished, and they have never been separate from the Buddha-nature.

173 རང་བཞིན་ཀྱིས་ནི་མ་གྲུབ་དང་། །
ཕྱིན་དང་གློ་བུར་བ་ཉིད་ཀྱིས། །
ཉོན་མོངས་ཤེས་བྱའི་སྒྲིབ་པ་དེར། །
སྒྲིན་དང་འདྲ་བར་བརྗོད་པ་ཡིན། །

The defilement and cognitive veils are said to be like covering clouds since they are, by nature, non-existent, they spread everywhere and are but accidents.

By nature not existent, pervasive and adventitious, the veils of the poisons and of the hindrances to knowledge are described as being similar to a cloud.

The perfection of purification: adventitious defilements are cloud-like, as they do not exist, and they are removable

The previous stanza explained the perfection of realisation, and this one explains the perfection of purification. First of all, when we talk about purification, we are talking about defilements that need to be purified. The temporary or adventitious defilements are not naturally or truly existent. Yet they are all-pervasive during the impure or defiled time, although they are removable. And these removable temporary defilements, which are the emotions and obscurations to omniscience, obscure sentient beings like a cloud. That's why they are referred to as being like a cloud.

174 སྒྲིབ་པ་གཉིས་དང་བྲལ་བ་ཡི། །
རྒྱུ་ནི་ཡེ་ཤེས་གཉིས་ཡིན་ཏེ། །
མི་རྟོག་པ་དང་དེ་ཡི་ནི། །
རྗེས་ཐོབ་དེ་ནི་ཡེ་ཤེས་འདོད། །

The causes of freedom from these two veils are the two jñanas, considered as being the non-conceptual jñana.

Twofold wisdom causes release from the two veils. Since there is the one that is free from ideation and the one ensuing from this in post-meditation, it is held that there are [two] primordial wisdoms.

The two kinds of wisdom are the antidote to the two kinds of obscuration

The antidotes to remove these two kinds of obscurations, namely emotions and the obscurations to omniscience, are the two kinds of wisdom. These are the non-conceptual wisdom which understands the nature of things, and the wisdom that understands phenomena however and as many as they exist. We'll have to stop here. We are about to start a new thread, and if we continued we would have to end it, which would mean you would have to stay here for another two days! So we'll stop here for this year, as if we continue, it will really open some big doors!

End of 2003 teachings

2004 Teachings

The Fifth Vajra Point: Enlightenment (continued)

Day 1 – Introduction

We should listen with the motivation of enlightening all beings

It is so difficult to talk about enlightenment, as we always end up talking about a person or a state. But shunyata is ground, path and result

I should teach this and you should listen to this with the intention of enlightening all sentient beings. And that enlightenment that we are aspiring to achieve is what will be taught here, especially in this part of the Uttaratantra-shastra. It's very vast, so I know that I won't do it justice. It's very difficult for us talk about enlightenment, because we have a very limited approach. For instance, when we talk about enlightenment, we end up thinking about an enlightened person or some kind of state that we should all aim at. These things make it difficult, because the shunyata that is explained by the Madhyamika masters like Nagarjuna and Aryadeva is the path, the ground and the result.

When we talk about enlightenment, we want to know about the enlightened being's qualities and behaviour

Last year we talked about Buddha-nature with very extensive and detailed examples. And from these we know that Buddha-nature is within every being and it is all-pervasive. Every sentient being has Buddha-nature. And when we talk about Buddha-nature, we are talking about enlightenment. When we talk about enlightenment, we like to hear about the enlightened being's qualities. What does he look like? How does he talk? Does he sleep or not? This is a very limited and obscure way of trying to understand enlightenment and enlightened beings. But it's understandable, because we need to begin somehow. And actually there are detailed characteristics of how enlightened beings look, such as the 32 major marks.

The insatiable beauty of the enlightened being's form

When we talk about these qualities, we are always made to understand that they are all beautiful. It has to be like this! We can't really say enlightenment comprises endless ugly qualities, so all the enlightened qualities have to be very attractive and wholesome. There's a Tibetan word that means 'insatiable beauty' (*tawey nyingmong*), something that's so beautiful that you cannot look at it enough. You will not get tired of it, unlike the beauties that we have normally in our mundane world, which we soon tire of and then long for another look or fashion. But you won't get bored looking at an enlightened being's physical qualities. Even after thousands of aeons, you won't have had enough of this one characteristic of an enlightened being.

The enlightened being's physical characteristics cannot be perceived, and this is considered beauty

There are also concepts like *tawey mi-ngönpa*, which means that the enlightened being's physical characteristics, especially important ones like the ushnisha, are not perceivable. And that imperceptibility is considered to be beauty or wholesomeness, something good rather than bad. Now all this tells us

The enlightened being's qualities are not ordinary. They are *dralwey dreybu*, then result of elimination

something, namely that the enlightened being's qualities are not ordinary. Now when I say "not ordinary", of course there will be blindly devoted people, just like other people who follow a theistic path, who could say that the Buddha must have an incredible look, an incredible quality. But here we are trying to study this subject in a way that's slightly beyond that, in fact quite a lot beyond that, and not just with blind acceptance. So it will help our understanding when we approach this by understanding the concept of the 'result of elimination' (*dralwey dreybu* or *draldrey*). When we talk about the result of elimination, there are two kinds:

There are two kinds of result of elimination:

1) The 'primordially eliminated result', which is that our Buddha-nature has no defilements.

(1) The first is that in reality, our nature – our Buddha-nature – does not have any of these negative aspects. In reality, the sky does not have clouds. Clouds are different from sky. So we are talking about something like a 'primordially eliminated result'. I don't think that words like 'elimination' are particularly good, but we have no choice. As soon as we talk about elimination, we are talking about someone pushing, pulling, digging or something like that. Whereas right from the beginning, the sky is not cloud. It doesn't come with clouds as part of its attribute or character.

2) The result of eliminating adventitious defilements

(2) The second is the result of eliminating adventitious or temporary removable negative qualities (*lobur gyi drima*). The first result of elimination is that the sky has no clouds primordially, right from the beginning. The second is that sometimes there are clouds, even though they are not part of the sky, and when the clouds go away we can enjoy the sky. Somehow there is a relationship.

These two correspond to two kinds of Dharma: the Dharma of transmission, and the Dharma of realisation

What we are doing now is not the ultimate Dharma

It's because of this that we talk about two kinds of Dharma, the Dharma of transmission and the Dharma of realisation. What we are doing right now is not considered the ultimate Dharma, because everything we are saying is something like "If you want to see the sky, you should clear away the clouds". The moment you say this there's a bit of a contradiction, because sky is not cloud. But for ignorant beings like us, we are sort of beginning with the clouds, even though they are not the primordial nature. So somehow you have to start by saying that if you want to see the sky, you have to clear away the clouds.

Although the two kinds of elimination are one, in one case we talk about clearing the clouds, and in the other we don't

There are two kinds of elimination, primordially eliminated and eliminating temporary defilements, but in reality they are one. The sky that has never been cloud and the sky that has recently been cleared of clouds – they are the same. But there is a difference, because in one case there were clouds, but in the other we are not even talking about clouds or no clouds. When we talk about the sky, we are not talking about clouds or no clouds. But when we talk about the clouds, then we talk about eliminating the clouds. So there are two kinds of elimination, as you can see.

We are studying the result of elimination

And this result of elimination is the kind of result that we are trying to study. I am telling you this, because as we go through the stanzas, you will hear words

We will hear words like 'unchanging' and 'permanent', which sound non-Buddhist. But they work if you remember the result of elimination

like 'unchanging' and 'permanent', which might sound very non-Buddhist, let's say! So just keep in your head this concept of the result of elimination and the two kinds of elimination. As long as you have that in your head, I think that all these details like permanent and uncompounded will work. Because now we will be talking about enlightenment (*changchub*). And as before, there will first be a general summary, then a more extended summary, and then the detailed explanation – so it will be repeated.

Enlightenment is explained with an example in stanza 175.

175 དྲི་མེད་ཆུ་ལྟར་རིམ་རྒྱས་པདྨས་ཁེབས་པའི་མཚོ་བཞིན་དང་། །
སྒྲ་གཅན་ཁ་ནས་ཐར་བའི་ཟླ་བ་ཉ་བ་ལྟ་བུ་དང་། །
སྲིན་ཚོགས་ཉོན་མོངས་དག་ལས་གྲོལ་བའི་ཉི་མ་ལྟ་བུར་གྱི། །
དྲི་མེད་ཡོན་ཏན་ལྡན་ཕྱིར་འོད་ཟེར་སྣང་ལྡན་དེ་ཉིད་དོ། །

Like a lake of purest water gradually overspread by lotuses, Like the full moon set free from Rahu's mouth, and like the sun liberated from the banked defilement clouds – This is radiantly manifest being stainless and of all qualities possessed.

Like a lake filled with unpolluted water gradually overspread by lotus flowers, like the full moon released from Rahu's mouth and the sun liberated from a sea of clouds, it is free from affliction. Being free from pollution and possessing qualities, [Buddhahood] is endowed with the brilliant light rays [of correct and complete vision].

(1) The example of a lake covered with lotuses. When we have desire, the lake is polluted and no lotuses can grow

Buddha is pure, free from desire, which is explained using the metaphor of a lake of pure water. When you have desire, the lake is polluted and no lotuses can grow. When we speak of 'desire', usually we are thinking in terms of some gross emotion that requires a bit of sweating, sighing, panting and all that. The word *chakpa* is very good. It has the connotation of 'settled' or 'landed', like birds that have settled or snow that has settled on the peak of the mountain. Of course this is true when we have gross desire, but even when we only have a very subtle attachment or fixation or grasping, it lands and settles. Not only that, it builds a house, migrates there, and settles there forever! And so there's no room for good qualities, because the attachment is big and it has occupied the space.

Likewise, our *chakpa*, our attachment and grasping takes up all the space, so no lotuses can grow. But Buddha is free from this

In our entire way of thinking, we encourage ourselves to have more *chakpa*, more settling, and more fixation. And this takes up all the space, so no lotuses can grow. Buddha does not have this kind of fixation, desire, and attachment, so there is infinite space for his great qualities to grow, and these qualities are symbolized by lotuses.

(2) Buddha is also free from aggression, as explained by the story of Rahula trying to swallow the moon

Buddha is also free from aggression, which is explained using a story. This is one of the many stories from Hindu mythology used as examples in this text. I can't remember the details, but Lord Indra or Shiva, I don't know who, was distributing amrita, the nectar of immortality, to the gods. The asuras are the

Buddha is free from aggression, so his compassion for sentient beings is like the full moon

archrivals of the gods, and Rahula, the son of an asura king, came to receive the amrita disguised as another god. The sun and moon, which are the gods' spies, knew he was an asura in disguise and they immediately reported this to Indra, so Lord Indra refrained from giving the amrita to Rahula. So Rahula now bears a grudge, and he tries to swallow the sun and moon every year. Unfortunately he doesn't have a throat, only a mouth, so as soon as he swallows, they come out. In the modern scientific world, it's called an eclipse. Buddha is free from these kinds of grudges and aggression, so his compassion and love for sentient beings are like the full moon.

(3) Buddha is free from ignorance, like the sun that is not covered by clouds

The third example is one we have already used – the sun that is free of clouds. Here the clouds symbolise ignorance. When the clouds go away, the sun can shine, and that's how the wisdom of the Buddha shines. And the clouds are gone in two ways. Primordially they have never been there, and then temporarily they have gone away. This will be explained very thoroughly.

176 ཐུབ་པ་ཁྱུ་མཆོག་སྦྲང་ཙི་སྲིང་པོ་དང། །
རིན་ཆེན་གསེར་དང་གཏེར་དང་ལྷུན་པ་བཞིན། །
ཏི་མེད་རིན་ཆེན་བདེ་གཤེགས་སྐུ་དང་ནི། །
ས་བདག་གསེར་གྱི་གཟུགས་འདྲ་རྒྱལ་བ་ཉིད། །

Such Buddhahood is like the Victor, the best of all, like the honey, the kernels, the gold, so valuable, the treasure, the great tree, the image of the Sugata, made of that which is precious and pure, like the monarch of the world and the statue of gold.

Being similar to the [statue of the] Muni, the leader of beings and to the honey, the grain, the precious gold, the treasure, the mighty tree, the Sugata's statue [made from] immaculate precious material, the ruler of the earth and the golden image, [a Buddha] has gained victory.

The family names of the Shakyas

The word *tubpa*, which is 'muni' in Sanskrit, is one of the family names of the Shakyas. They had many family names, and another one is goramshingpa or 'sugar cane'. We also call the Buddha 'peerless sugar cane'! I think he got the name *tubpa*, which means 'able', because there was incest at that time, and people were shocked that people could even do such things.

Some examples used to symbolise the Buddha: the *udumbara* flower that is very rare, and the four supreme animals

But later of course, after Shakyamuni became enlightened, we can conveniently interpret *tubpa* as 'one who has the ability to destroy the four maras'. Anyway, *tubpa*, the Victorious One, the Buddha, is like the supreme animal (*kyüchok*). We use all kinds of examples to symbolise the Buddha, like the *ubumbara* flower that is used to symbolize the Buddha because it is so rare. Likewise, there are four animals that have merit to be used as examples – elephant, lion, water buffalo and unicorn. These supreme animals have particular qualities, e.g. when elephants look at things, they are not intrusive or aggressive. They see you, but they don't look at you in a way that makes you feel uncomfortable.

There are nine examples used to describe the Buddha

There are some more examples coming now. Buddha is like a supreme animal; honey without bees; a grain without husk; gold taken from the mud; treasure found beneath the earth; a tree sprouting from a seed; a precious statue unwrapped from dirty cloths; a king or prince born from an ordinary woman's womb; and a golden statue that has come from an ordinary mould. These are the examples in brief, and they will be explained again.

177 ཆུ་མཚོ་སོགས་བཞིན་འདོད་ཆགས་སོགས། །
གློ་བུར་ཉོན་མོངས་དག་པ་ནི། །
མདོར་ན་མི་རྟོག་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཀྱི། །
འབྲས་བུ་ཡིན་པར་རབ་ཏུ་བརྗོད། །

Purity – no accidental defilements (desire and the others) – is like the waters of the lake and so forth. In brief it is described as being the fruit of the non-conceptualizing jñana.

Purity from the adventitious afflictions of desire and the other mental poisons is like the water of the lake and so forth. When put concisely it can be fully shown as the fruit of wisdom free from ideation.

The examples of lake, moon and sun represent that the Buddha is free from *nyöndrip*, the emotional obscurations (attachment, aggression and ignorance)

The three examples that were explained earlier (the lake of pure water filled with lotuses, full moon liberated from Rahula's mouth, and the sun that is free from being covered by clouds) represent that the Buddha is free from attachment, aggression and ignorance. The causes of such liberation are infinite, but the main one is non-conceptual wisdom that is free from all kinds of emotions. Just keep in your head the two kinds of result of elimination that we talked about – primordially pure, and with temporary or adventitious defilements having been eliminated. If you can keep this in your head, then all these qualities mean a lot. Otherwise, we are just praising someone for not having desire, anger, and ignorance, which doesn't really describe the qualities of the Buddha.

178 རྣམ་པ་ཀུན་ཀྱི་མཆོག་ལྡན་པའི། །
སངས་རྒྱས་སྐུ་ནི་ངེས་ཐོབ་པ། །
དེ་ནི་རྗེས་ལས་ཐོབ་པ་ཡི། །
ཡེ་ཤེས་འབྲས་བུ་ཡིན་པར་སྟོན། །

Authentic attainment of the Buddhakayas, endowed with those qualities that are supreme of all, is taught as being the result of the jñana that ensues.

The actual attainment of the Buddhakaya, which has all supreme aspects, is explained as the fruit of primordial wisdom ensuing from this after meditation.

The Buddha is also the result of eliminating *shedrip*, the cognitive obscurations

In stanza 177 we were talking about the result of elimination of emotions, the emotional obscurations or defilements (*nyöndrip*). In this stanza we are talking about the result of elimination of the cognitive obscurations (*sheydrip*). You can

We are talking about a body or kaya, *sangyey kyi ku*, but it's not a physical body with face, hands, length and width etc.

It is emptiness, which is the support for all the qualities of the Buddha, achieved by abandoning all cognitive obscurations

see that here we are again talking about a body, a kaya. We are talking about the body of the Buddha (*sangyey kyi ku*). But clearly we know that when we talk about this body, we are not talking about a body with markings, such as face, hands, length, colour, width, and all that. So why then do we call it a 'body'? The word *ku* or body usually refers to a container or support. The support for all the perfections is called the 'body of the Buddha'. And here that body or support is emptiness. It is emptiness and at the same time luminous. That is the Buddhakaya, the Buddha's body, which the Buddha achieved by abandoning the cognitive obscurations.

179 འདོད་ཆགས་རྡུལ་ནི་སྤང་ཕྱིར་དང་། །
གཏུལ་བྱ་ཡི་ནི་པདྨ་ལ། །
བསམ་གཏན་ཆུ་ནི་འབབ་ཕྱིར་དེ། །
ཆུ་དག་ཟྭོང་དང་མཚུངས་པ་ཉིད། །

This is like the lake of pure water and so on because the silt of desire has been removed and because it causes the waters of meditative stability to sustain the "lotus" beings who are to be trained.

Having eliminated the silt of desire, he lets the waters of meditative stability flow onto the lotus-[like] disciples and thus resembles the lake of pure water.

Buddha has no fixation, so he is like a lake of pure water

This is an extended version of everything that was said earlier. No dirt of attachment or fixation exists within the Buddha. All the dirt of desire has been abandoned. Therefore the Buddha can give Dharma to sentient beings that are like a lotus, and this is why the Buddha is like a lake of pure water.

180 ཞེ་སྡང་སྒྲ་གཅན་ལས་གྲོལ་བས། །
སྙིང་རྗེ་བྱམས་ཆེན་འོད་ཟེར་གྱིས། །
འགྲོ་བ་ཐམས་བའི་ཕྱིར་ན་དེ། །
ཏྲི་མེད་ཟླ་བ་ཉ་བ་བཞིན། །

It is like the unblemished full moon because being freed from hatred's Rahu, it embraces all beings with its light of great compassion and loving-kindness.

Having freed himself from the Rahu of hatred, he pervades beings with the light rays of his great love and compassionate concern and thus is similar to the immaculate full moon.

Buddha has no aggression, so his compassion and love radiate like the full moon

The Buddha is free from Rahula-like anger or aggression. That's why his compassion and love are all-pervasive, radiating towards all sentient beings like a stainless full moon.

181 གཏི་མུག་སྨྲིན་ལས་རྣམ་གྲོལ་བ། །
འགྲོ་བར་ཡེ་ཤེས་འོད་ཟེར་གྱིས། །
མུན་པ་སེལ་ཕྱིར་སངས་རྒྱས་ཉིད། །
དེ་ནི་ཏྲི་མེད་ཉི་མ་བཞིན། །

Buddhahood is like the immaculate sun because, being completely freed from the clouds of ignorance, it dispels beings' darkness with its jñana's radiance.

Totally freed from the clouds of unknowing and dispelling [its] darkness within beings through the light rays of primordial wisdom, Buddhahood is similar to the unpolluted sun.

Buddha has no ignorance, so his wisdom radiates on sentient beings like a cloudless sun

Buddha has none of this cloud-like ignorance. He is completely free from this ignorance. Again, keep in your mind the two ways of being free. And because Buddha has no clouds of ignorance, he can generate rays of wisdom towards sentient beings and illuminate their ignorance, which is why he is like the sun.

182 མི་མཉམ་མཉམ་པའི་ཆོས་ཕྱིར་དང་། །
དམ་ཆོས་རོ་ནི་སྦྱིན་མཛད་དང་། །
ཤུན་པ་དང་ནི་བྲལ་ཕྱིར་དེ། །
བདེ་གཤེགས་སྦྲང་རྩི་སྙིང་པོ་བཞིན། །

Because it has peerless qualities, because it gives the taste of true Dharma and because it is free from ignorance's shell, it is likened to the Sugata, to honey and to the kernel.

Since [enlightenment has] peerless properties, since it bestows the taste of sacred Dharma and since it is free from the peel [of the veils]' it is like the Sugata, the honey and the grain.

Why Buddha is like a statue without wrapping, honey without bees, and a grain without a husk

Buddha is peerless. There is no one like him. His only peer, the only one who is equal to him is himself. This is all an extended explanation of the summary we had earlier. Buddha gives an infinite and endless taste of the Dharma to sentient beings. He is free from the two obscurations that are like a husk, and therefore the Buddha is like a statue that has no wrapping, honey that is not surrounded by bees, and the grain that has no husk.

183 དགེ་ཕྱིར་ཡོན་ཏན་ཐུན་ཀྱིས་ནི། །
དབུལ་བ་སེལ་བར་བྱེད་ཕྱིར་དང་། །
རྣམ་གྲོལ་འབྲས་བུ་འཕྲིན་བྱེད་ཕྱིར། །
གསེར་དང་གཏེར་དང་ལྷོན་པ་བཞིན། །

Because it is naturally pure, because it dispels beings' poverties by its own wealth of qualities and because it gives total liberation's fruit, it is likened to gold, a treasure and the great tree.

Since it is purified, since [beings'] poverty is dispelled by the wealth of its qualities and since it grants the fruit of total liberation, it is like the gold, the treasure and the tree.

Why Buddha is like the gold, the treasure and the tree

Buddha is primordially free from all the obscurations, and therefore he has infinite enlightened qualities to dispel the pain of poverty within sentient beings. And Buddha gives the fruit of liberation to sentient beings, which is why Buddha is like gold, the treasure and the tree.

184 རིན་ཆེན་ཆོས་ཀྱི་སྐུ་ཕྱིར་དང་། །
རྒྱང་གཉིས་བདག་པོའི་མཆོག་ཕྱིར་དང་། །
རིན་ཆེན་གཟུགས་ཀྱི་རྣམ་པའི་ཕྱིར། །
དེ་ནི་རིན་ཆེན་རྒྱལ་གསེར་བཞིན། །

Because it is the "embodiment of jewel qualities", because it is the "supreme lord of bipeds" and because its form is an image of precious composition, it is likened to the bejewelled, the monarch and the golden.

Representing the jewel of the dharmakaya and [the attainment of] the supreme lord of humans and [manifesting in] the likeness of a precious image, they are like the bejewelled, the king and the golden.

Why Buddha is like the statue removed from the mould, the chakravartin and the gold removed from the mud

Buddha is like a wishfulfilling gem, because he possesses the infinite qualities of the dharmakaya. Again I would like to remind you as we talk about these qualities that we are talking about the qualities of the result of elimination. Buddha is the supreme liberator among the bipeds, and he can manifest in many different forms in order to fulfil the wishes of sentient beings. This is why he is like the statue that has been removed from the mould, the chakravartin, and the gold removed from the mud.

185 ཟག་པ་མེད་ཁྱབ་འཇུག་མེད་ཆོས་ཅན་ཏེ། །
བརྟན་ཞི་རྟག་པ་འགྱུར་མེད་གནས་ཡིན་ནོ། །
དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་མ་བའི་བཞིན་དག་པ་ཡི། །
དབང་པོ་དྲུག་དོན་ཉམས་སུ་བྱེད་བའི་རྟེན། །

Buddhahood–untainted and all-pervading – is of an indestructible nature because it is everlasting, at peace, permanent and undying. It is the ground for benefiting beings. The tathagatas are like space, the basis for objects of the six sense faculties to be experienced by the excellent.

Rid of pollution [and] all-pervasive, [true Buddhahood] has an indestructible nature since it is steadfast, at peace, permanent and unchanging. As the abode [of qualities] a

tathagata is similar to space. For the six sense-faculties of a saintly being it forms the cause to experience their respective [pure] objects [of perception].

The Buddha's body, the dharmakaya, is stainless, all-pervasive, indestructible, stable, peaceful, permanent and undying, and it is the support for all qualities

The body of the Buddha, the Buddhakaya, is stainless and without emotions. This Buddha's body, the dharmakaya is all-pervasive and indestructible. It is stable because it has no decay. It is peaceful (*shiwa*) because it has no sickness. It is permanent because it has no birth. It does not transform because it has no death. And it is the support or the container for all the virtuous qualities of oneself and others.

The meaning of 'peace'. It's not about being against worldly violence

Here, peace means overcoming the violence of dualism

When we talk about 'Buddha', we are not only talking about a person, but also about Buddha-nature

When we talk about peace or peaceful (*shiwa*), we are talking about the path of peace or non-violence. It's quite important to understand what is meant here, because generally when we talk about non-violence in the mundane world, we're talking about things like disarmament, which is more like a philanthropically oriented non-violence. We are not saying that going to an anti-war demonstration is the quintessence of the Dharma. It has got nothing to do with that. Of course, as a Buddhist it's good to be against war and against violence. But when we talk about peace here, we're talking about much more than that. Here we refer to violence as anything to do with dualism. Anything to do with dualism is aggression. Therefore, anything to do with dualism is pain, and Buddha does not have that. Again, when we talk about Buddha, don't think we are only referring to a person. It can also refer to the Buddha-nature, which is the profound aspect of the Uttaratantra-shastra. Not having the pain of dualism is what we refer to as peace.

Buddha is permanent, but he does not exist like the gods of theistic religions. Buddha was never born

Likewise, Buddha has no death or transformation

Here we are not referring to a symbolic Buddha such as Shakyamuni, who had a birth date etc.

Here we say Buddha is permanent (*tagpa*). Why? Many theistic religions might consider their god or whatever to be permanent, but they also say their god exists. And the characteristic of existence is that it has been born, it is abiding, and whether they know it or not, by consequence it will cease to exist. But when we say Buddha is permanent, it is because Buddha was never born. There is no arising of the Buddha, it doesn't even exist, and therefore it is permanent. In fact, it is almost a contradiction to say something is existing and also permanent. Existing means it has been born, born means it's dwelling, and that means eventual death – and that's not permanent. And similarly Buddha has no death. Therefore there is no transformation. Here we are not talking about a symbolic Buddha such as Shakyamuni. Of course, when we talk about the symbolic Shakyamuni, Prince Siddhartha, we talk about his birth date, the anniversary of his parinirvana, and all of that.

We might think this Buddha is useless, but he isn't – he is the support of all the virtuous qualities of self and others, like space. This is how Buddha manifests

All this might make you think that this kind of Buddha is useless. It's not born and therefore it doesn't exist, so what is its benefit? A lot! Because it's the support of all the virtuous qualities of self and others. This will be explained in detail, but here it is briefly compared to the sky or space. The sky does not think, 'I am going to let these people sit in this space', but because of the space

it provides we are able to function here. That's how Buddha manifests and benefits sentient beings. This is explained further.

186 འབྱུང་མེད་གཟུགས་དོན་བལྟ་དང་གཏམ་བཟང་ནི། །
གཙང་མ་མཉན་དང་བདེ་གཤེགས་ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་ཀྱི། །
དྲི་གཙང་སྟོམ་དང་འཕགས་ཆེན་དམ་ཆོས་རོ། །
མྱོང་དང་ཏིང་འཛིན་རིག་བདེ་ཉམས་མྱོང་དང་། །

It is the condition for form beyond the four elements to be seen, for the good and pure sound to be heard, for the pure fragrance of perfect conduct of the Sugatas to be smelt, for the flavour of true Dharma of the great and deeply-realized to be tasted,

It is the cause for visible objects, which are non-arising, to be seen, for good and pure speech to be heard, for the pure scent of the moral conduct of the Sugata to be smelled, for the flavour of sacred Dharma [of] the great noble ones to be tasted,

How does Buddha see or hear things?

The question is this: does Buddha see things, does Buddha taste things, and does he use his six senses and six consciousnesses as we do? Since his body is not a product of elements, none of the five elements is involved, so non-involvement of elements is how he sees things. All characteristics have been purified (*tsenma mepa*), so there is no more dualism. This is how he hears: the good and pure sound of characteristiclessness. And because he has no dualism, he has no downfalls. Having no downfalls is perfect discipline, and perfection of discipline is how he smells. All phenomena are understood as non-dualistic and therefore equal, because there are no distinctions such as bad and good. This is how he enjoys the taste of oneness.

Without any elements, dualism or characteristics. All phenomena are understood as non-dual and therefore equal, which is how he enjoys the taste of oneness

187 རང་གི་ངོ་བོ་ཉིད་ཀྱི་ཟབ་པའི་ཚུལ། །
རྟོགས་པའི་རྒྱུར་གྱུར་ཞིབ་མོར་བསམས་པ་ན། །
དོན་དམ་བདེ་མཛད་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ནི། །
ནམ་མཁའ་བཞིན་དུ་རྒྱུ་མཚན་རྣམས་དང་བྲལ། །

For the bliss in samadhi to be experienced and for the essence, the deep nature, to be realized. Therefore, when considered in a very fine way, the tathagatas, who give birth to true bliss, are like space, devoid of reasons.

For the blissful touch of samadhi to be felt and for the mode [of the Dharma], which is by essence deep, to be realized. When reflected upon in a very fine way, a sugata bestowing true bliss is like space, devoid of any reasons.

He dwells in non-dualism, so experiences no bodily discomfort, and he sees with self-awareness. But all this is beyond our comprehension

Since discomfort comes from dualism, and he dwells in non-dualism, he feels no discomfort with his body. And with his mind he sees things as unborn right from the beginning, therefore there is no dwelling and no cessation. So he sees things with self-awareness. But like the sky, if we examine this we cannot really comprehend. It is beyond ordinary people's comprehension.

188 མདོར་ན་ཡེ་ཤེས་གཉིས་པོ་ཡི། །
ལས་སུ་འདི་ནི་ཤེས་བྱ་སྟེ། །
གྲོལ་བའི་སྐུ་ནི་རྫོགས་པ་དང་། །
ཆོས་ཀྱི་སྐུ་ནི་སྒྲུབ་བའོ། །

The function of the two jñanas, expressed concisely, is to be known as perfect fulfilment of the vimuktikaya and accomplishment of the dharmakaya.

In brief, [two kayas] are to be understood as functions of the two primordial wisdoms: the vimuktikaya [representing] perfection and the dharmakaya [representing] refinement.

Buddha's infinite actions can be categorised into two: the body of liberation, and the dharmakaya

The body of liberation has no defilements. The dharmakaya has all-pervasive wisdom, and both kayas are uncompounded

Buddha has infinite actions or activity. But all his actions can be abbreviated into two aspects. First is the perfection of purification, the perfect purification of defilements, through which he has achieved the body of liberation. And second, he has perfected the purification of cognitive obscurations, through which he has attained the dharmakaya. These two kayas or bodies have three qualities. The bodies have one quality each, and they have one common quality. The quality of the body of liberation is that there are no defilements, and the quality of the dharmakaya is all-pervasive wisdom. The common quality of both kayas is that they are uncompounded. This will be explained in more detail.

189 རྣམ་གྲོལ་ཆོས་ཀྱི་སྐུ་དག་ནི། །
རྣམ་གཉིས་རྣམ་གཅིག་ཤེས་བྱ་སྟེ། ། །
ཟག་པ་མེད་ཕྱིར་ཁྱབ་པའི་ཕྱིར། ། །
འདུས་མ་བྱས་ཕྱིར་གནས་ཉིད་ཕྱིར། ། །

Being untainted and all-embracing, and since they are the uncreated ground, the vimuktikaya and the dharmakaya should be known as having two attributes and one.

Vimuktikaya and dharmakaya are to be known in terms of the two aspects and [a common] one, as they are free from pollution and all-pervasive, uncreated and thus embody the ground [of virtue].

Buddha has no emotional defilements, so he has no fixations. This is wisdom

For the Buddha, all defilements and their propensities have ceased to exist, so he has the quality of not being fixated on one object (*chakpa mepa*). He has no defilements, so he has no fixation. This is the first quality, his wisdom.

190 ཉོན་མོངས་རྣམས་ནི་བག་ཆགས་དང་། ། །
བཅས་པ་འགགས་ཕྱིར་ཟག་མེད་དེ། ། །
ཆགས་མེད་ཐོགས་པ་མེད་པའི་ཕྱིར། ། །
ཡེ་ཤེས་ཁྱབ་པ་ཉིད་དུ་འདོད། ། །

One is untainted because the defilements along with their accompanying conditioning, have ceased. Jñana is considered as all-embracing because it is unattached and unimpeded.

Since the mental poisons along with their remaining imprints are ended, [the vimuktikaya] is free from any pollution. Since there is no attachment and obstruction, [the dharmakaya] is considered as pervasive primordial wisdom.

Buddha has no cognitive obscurations, so his wisdom is infinite and all-pervasive

The second quality is that there is no obstruction. Because he has no cognitive obscurations, there are no obstructions. So his wisdom is infinite and all-pervasive.

191 གཏན་དུ་འཇིག་པ་མེད་པ་ཡི། །
རང་བཞིན་ཡིན་ཕྱིར་འདུས་མ་བྱས། །
འཇིག་མེད་ཉིད་ནི་བསྟན་པ་སྟེ། །
བརྟན་སོགས་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་དེ་བཤད་དོ། །

They are uncreated since their nature is at all times indestructible. This indestructibility has been mentioned and explained as everlastingness and so on.

Being of a nature forever indestructible [neither kaya] is something that is created. While "indestructibility" is the [concise] explanation [of uncreatedness], it is taught in more detail through [the topic] "steadfast' and so forth.

Both wisdoms are indestructible, so they are permanent

Both wisdoms can never be destroyed. Therefore, they are indestructible, which is a kind of permanence. Now there is an extended explanation of why it is indestructible. There are four kinds of destruction.

192 འཇིག་པ་རྣམ་བཞིར་ཤེས་བྱ་སྟེ། །
བརྟན་སོགས་དག་ལས་བཟློག་ཕྱིར་རོ། །
སྨྲ་གས་དང་རྣམ་འགྱུར་ཆད་པ་དང་། །
བསམ་མི་བྱུབ་འགྱུར་འཕོ་བ་སྟེ། །

Destructibility is to be known through these four aspects since they are the counterparts of everlastingness etc – decay, drastic change, interruption and the inconceivable change of death.

"Destructibility" is to be understood [in terms of] four aspects, since it constitutes the contrary of "steadfastness" and so on. These are decay, drastic change, being cut-off and transmigration, which is inconceivable [and] a transformation [in various] ways.

The four kinds of destruction

The four kinds of destruction are the opposites of four positive aspects of stability, peace, unchangingness and so on. Because Buddha has a stainless quality, his body cannot decay or become dented.

Maitreya has written the root text in a very condensed way, and Khenpo Kunga Wangchuk used to say this is because Maitreya is a god, a heavenly creature, and the way they talk is a little different from how ordinary human beings talk! But you don't need to worry about this too much, because what you really need to understand is that the Buddha is the result of elimination.

Emotions or defilements are referred to as *sakchey*, which has the connotation of dropping or discharge

And maybe we can simplify this a little. We need to understand the word *sakchey*, which means 'emotions', where *sak* means 'dropping' or 'falling', and *chey* means someone or something that has that. When we talk about 'defilements' (*nyönmongpa*) in philosophy, we will often use the term *sakchey* as in *sakchey nyönmongpa*. It has the connotation of dropping, and you can even understand this literally, like rabbit droppings. One of the main characteristics of defilements is that they create droppings, a lot of garbage or stains. It's like the white stuff that comes from your eyes, the discharge. That's a good word. Any time there are defilements, it's almost synonymous to discharging something. Defilements discharge things. They give birth to things. This term *sakchey* is very good, and it is often used to refer to defilements.

Defilements discharge things. They give birth to things

Defilements are the reason that we feel pain

This is quite important. Right now, if someone pokes our body with a needle or a thorn, we feel pain. Why do we feel pain? Because of our defilements, because of *sakchey*. And these defilements are fixation, which is basically our clinging. And this is so big. For example, imagine someone who is a fanatical environmentalist. If somebody cuts the branch of a very beautiful tree, this person will feel it and go crazy. They really go through pain! And we are just like that with our body. We are very attached to this body, just like the environmentalist is attached to the tree. Also, literally, if someone else is chewing something sour, you feel saliva in your mouth. All this is proof of *sakchey* and the function of defilements. As long as you're in samsara, you're always falling. And samsara means the product of defilements. Sometimes we climb up, but just so we can fall. So don't climb too high!

For example, someone could feel pain if a tree is cut down

The Buddha doesn't have any defilements or any of their propensities, the *bagchak*

The Buddha doesn't have any of that. He doesn't have defilements at all. He doesn't even have their propensities (*bagchak*). The defilements are all gone, right from the root. This is what we mean when we say his body does not get rotten. There are no defilements, so there is no transformation of his body. That happens to us. For instance, if we travel from a hot place to a cold place, we might catch a cold, as our elements are changing. I shouldn't use the word 'transforming'. But there is no changing of the elements for the Buddha, as he has no defilements, so he doesn't have a gross body. So there is no changing of his elements. I guess you could say he is fully immune! Although when we talk about 'immune', we also talk about its opposite. And for the Buddha, that opposite is gone, so I don't know if we should call it 'fully immune'. Because of that, he does not shed his old skin, so to speak. Therefore, there is no new skin. Meaning, there is no rebirth, no transformation, and therefore no death.

Therefore he is not subject to rebirth, transformation or death

193 དེ་མེད་ཕྱིར་ན་བརྟན་ཞི་དང་། །
རྒྱུ་དང་འཕོ་མེད་ཤེས་པར་བྱ། །
ཏྲི་མེད་ཤེས་དེ་དཀར་པོ་ཡི། །
ཆོས་ཀྱི་རྟེན་ཡིན་ཕྱིར་ན་གནས། །

Since enlightenment is free of these, it should be known as everlasting, at peace, permanent and deathless. This intelligence so stainless is "the ground" because it is the foundation for all virtuous qualities.

Since [the vimuktikaya and the dharmakaya] are free from these [features], they are to be known as steadfast, peaceful, permanent and unchanging. As absence of pollution and [primordial] wisdom are the support for the unstained properties [to come forth in the disciples], they are [also] the abode [of the best possible benefit for others].

This Buddha is useful as he is the support or ground of all virtuous thoughts and actions of self and others

The Buddha is not a person who sends compassion etc. That would be theistic

So can we do something with this Buddha? Can we use this Buddha? Yes. He is the support and ground of all the virtuous thoughts and actions of self and others. Before we were talking about two kinds of result of elimination. Let's imagine if the sky had clouds or the sky came with clouds. Then you would have no hope. But the fact is that the sky is not cloud, so all the virtuous actions of trying to see the sky without cloud are possible. And that's the activity of the Buddha. That's also his compassion. We have to put it like that otherwise it's too dangerous. If we had a real person called Buddha who sends compassion or doesn't send compassion and all that, then it would all become too theistic. This is explained further in the next stanza.

194 ཇི་ལྟར་རྒྱུ་མིན་ནམ་མཁའི་། །
གཟུགས་མཐོང་བ་དང་སྒྲ་དང་བྲེ། །
ར་དང་རེག་དང་ཆོས་རྣམས་ནི། །
ཐོས་ལ་སོགས་པའི་རྒྱུ་ཡིན་ལྟར། །

Just as space, which is without cause, is the cause of seeing, hearing and so on forms, sounds, odours, sensations and mental data,

Space is not a cause and yet the cause for all visible things to be seen, for sound, odour, flavour, touch and phenomena to be heard and so on.

Space is not the cause of form, yet because of space we are able to see, hear, smell, taste and feel

Sky or space is not a cause of form, yet without the sky or space, you will not see form, hear sound, smell, taste or feel. You will not think of anything. In this sense you can say that because of the sky we can do all of that.

195 དེ་བཞིན་སྐྱེ་གཉིས་སྒྲིབ་མེད་པའི། །
སྒྲོར་བས་བསྟན་པའི་དབང་དོན་ལ། །
ཟག་པ་མེད་པའི་ཡོན་ཏན་དག །
སྐྱེ་བ་ཡི་ནི་རྒྱུ་ཡིན་ནོ། །

Likewise this is the condition for the untainted qualities to arise as objects of stable beings' sense faculties through their unimpeded connection with the two kayas.

Just so, they cause the unstained qualities to arise as objects sensed by those [whose vision is] stable by junction with the unveiled [seeing of] the two kayas.

When Bodhisattvas understand that the kayas are primordially free from defilements, they can engage in all kinds of practices and aspirations

When the Bodhisattvas understand that all obstacles are temporary, and that the Buddha-nature or in this case the two kayas are absent of all defilements right from the beginning, then based on that they can engage in all kinds of practice and aspiration, like the six paramitas and all that.

196 བསམ་མེད་རྟག་བརྟན་ཞི་བ་གཡུང་དྲུང་ཉིད། །
རབ་ཏུ་ཞི་ཁྱབ་རྟོག་བྲལ་ནམ་མཁའ་བཞིན། །
ཚགས་མེད་ཀུན་ཏུ་ཐོགས་མེད་རྩུབ་རེག་སྤངས། །
ལྟ་གཟུང་མེད་དགེ་སངས་རྒྱས་བྱེ་མ་མེད། །

Buddhahood is inconceivable, permanent, everlasting, at peace, immutable, perfectly at peace, all-embracing and concept-free. Like space, it is unclinging, completely unhindered, free of coarse sensation, invisible, imperceptible, wholesome and immaculate.

Buddhahood is inconceivable, permanent, steadfast, at peace and immutable. It is utterly peaceful, pervasive, without thought and unattached like space. It is free from hindrance and coarse objects of contact are eliminated. It cannot be seen or grasped. It is virtuous and free from pollution.

The 15 qualities of the Buddha

The Buddha is inconceivable, permanent, stable or everlasting, peaceful, unchanging, perfect, all-pervasive, and completely free from all kinds of conceptions, like space. It's unclinging and unobstructed. It cannot be perceived through eyes, so I guess you can say it's invisible. It cannot be perceived, yet it has the qualities of virtue and wholesomeness. These are the 15 qualities of the Buddha.

197 ཆོས་བཅུ་ལ་ཆོས་ཀྱི་སྐུ་དག་གིས། །
རང་དང་གཞན་གྱི་དོན་བསྟན་ཏེ། །
རང་གཞན་དོན་རྟེན་དེ་ལ་ནི། །
བསམ་མི་ཁྱབ་སོགས་ཡོན་ཏན་ལྡན། །

One's own fulfilment and benefit for beings are manifested through the vimuktikaya and the dharmakaya. These two foundations, of own-value and value-for-others, have the above qualities of inconceivability and so forth.

As were explained, the vimuktikaya and the dharmakaya [accomplish] benefit for oneself and benefit for others. These [kayas], being the support of this twofold benefit, possess the qualities of being inconceivable and so forth.

The two kayas, the two bodies of the Buddha have 15 qualities, to benefit himself and others

Who has these 15 qualities? Both bodies, the body of liberation and the wisdom. Not separately, but together. And for what purpose does he have these 15 qualities? To benefit himself and others. All this is explained again.

198

ཐམས་ཅད་མཁྱེན་པའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཡུལ། །
སངས་རྒྱས་ཤེས་གསུམ་ཡུལ་མིན་ཕྱིར། །
ཡེ་ཤེས་ལུས་ཅན་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་ནི། །
བསམ་མི་ཁྱབ་པར་རྟོགས་པར་བྱ། །

Buddhahood is the domain of omniscient jñana and not within the scope of the three prajñas. Therefore the jñana-kaya should be understood as inconceivable for beings.

Being the object of the omniscient primordial wisdom, Buddhahood is not an object for the three types of insight. So even those with a wisdom body must realize that [Buddha enlightenment] is inconceivable.

#1: Inconceivable

Only the Buddha can perceive the Buddha's wisdom. Ordinary beings cannot even conceive of it

Buddha is only the object of his own wisdom. Therefore, the wisdom of the Buddha cannot be perceived even by other sublime beings, and ordinary beings cannot even conceive of the Buddha's wisdom. Usually when we understand an object, there are three ways to understand it, by hearing, contemplating, or meditating. But Buddha cannot be understood in any of these ways.

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ཕྲ་ཕྱིར་ཐོས་པའི་ཡུལ་མིན་ཏེ། །
དོན་དམ་ཡིན་ཕྱིར་བསམ་བྱའི་མིན། །
ཆོས་ཉིད་ཟབ་ཕྱིར་འཇིག་རྟེན་པའི། །
བསྒོམ་པ་ལ་སོགས་ཡུལ་མ་ཡིན། །

Being so subtle, it is not an object of study. Being the ultimate truth, it is not contemplation's domain. Being the profound universal essence, it is not within the scope of the mundane sorts of meditation and so on.

Being subtle it is not an object for study. Being absolute it cannot be reflected upon. Dharmata is deep. Hence it is not an object for any worldly meditation and so on.

The Buddha cannot be heard, contemplated or meditated upon. This last aspect is explained in detail in the mahasandhi

It is very subtle, so it cannot be heard. It is the absolute truth, so it cannot be contemplated. It is the profound reality of everything without any characteristics, so it cannot be meditated upon. This last aspect, "cannot be meditated upon", is explained in detail in the Vajrayana, especially in mahamudra and mahasandhi.

200 གང་ཕྱིར་གཟུགས་ལ་དམིགས་ལོང་བཞིན། །
བྱིས་པས་དེ་སྟོན་མཐོང་མ་མྱོང་། །
བཙོས་པའི་ཁྱིམ་ནས་བུ་ཆུང་གིས། །
ཉི་མའི་གཟུགས་བཞིན་འཕགས་པས་ཀྱང་། །

This is because the immature have never seen this before – like the blind before visible form. Even the deeply-realized are like the newly born, seeing the sun from within their room.

Why [is it hard to realize]? Like the blind with regard to the visible, the children have never seen it before. Even noble ones [see it] as babies [would glimpse] the sun from within the house where they are born.

The Buddha cannot be perceived because there are no references, like a person born blind cannot conceive of shapes or colours

Why is it unperceivable? Because there is no reference for ordinary beings. For someone who is blind right from the beginning it's impossible to conceive of shapes and colours. Likewise, ordinary beings, those who are blind right from the beginning, cannot conceive of the Buddha. And even those who have a little bit of a reference such as Shravakas or Pratyekabuddhas dare not look. It is like a small child, maybe seven days old, who cannot look at the sun directly because it is too strong. Some scholars also include the Bodhisattvas here. This has been an explanation of the first quality of the Buddha, 'inconceivable'.

This is the first quality of the Buddha, inconceivable

201 སྐྱེ་དང་བྲལ་ཕྱིར་རྒྱག་པ་སྟེ། །
འགག་མེད་ཕྱིར་ན་བརྟན་པ་ཡིན། ། །
གཉིས་མེད་ཕྱིར་དེ་ཞི་བ་སྟེ། །
གཡུང་དྲུང་ཆོས་ཉིད་གནས་ཕྱིར་རོ། ། །

Permanent, since it has no origination, everlasting, since it has no cessation, at peace, being free from both, immutable, since it abides in the true nature,

Since it is free from being born, it is permanent. Since it is without cessation, it is steadfast. Since these two are not present, it is peaceful. It is immutable, for the Dharmata [ever] remains.

#2: Permanent

Buddha is unborn, so it is permanent. It is unchanging like the sky

Now the second quality, 'permanent'. Why is it permanent? Because it is free from birth. Since Buddha was never born, it cannot cease to exist, so it's called permanent. And when there is none of the dualism of birth and death, that is peace (*shiwa*). And the quality of the Buddha has never changed, because there is no birth, no old age, no sickness, and no death. Whether the clouds are there or not, the sky does not change. Likewise, whether the defilements are there or not, it's unchanging (*yungdrung*). It has the quality that it is unchanging.

Day 2 – Introduction

What do we understand by 'enlightenment'?

I would like to clarify a few things about yesterday. We are talking about enlightenment (*changchub*). This is difficult, because we can get mixed up between enlightenment and an enlightened being. So let me ask you, how do you interpret the word 'enlightenment'? Without using religious influences, what does it mean to you?

[Student] Union of the personal with the universal, i.e. what exists beyond the person.
[Student] Total compassion.
[Rinpoche] You are talking about an enlightened being. You think enlightenment is continuous non-stop recognition, continuous residing in the state of awareness? This is helpful. I think it will clear some of the misunderstanding.
[Students] Elimination of fear, no more fear … Potentialised faith … When we have no hatred inside us, like a child … Inconceivable, so one cannot give it a description.

Our emotional mind thinks it refers to things like continuous residing in the state of awareness

[Rinpoche] It's good that you said, "continuous residing in the state of awareness". This is how our emotional mind thinks! Are you talking about an enlightened being or enlightenment?
[Student] They are the same thing.
[Rinpoche] The idea of 'continuous' is a little bit faulty. If you take it literally, the aspect 'continuous' is a little bit permanent.
[Student] It's 'naturally continuous'!
[Rinpoche] You are trying your best, that's good. Somehow that's the way we talk here anyway! But I'd like to challenge you to help you understand more.

This indicates that there's a point where there is no residing, and something called non-awareness

We also have ideas like the union of the personal with the universal, which indicates that we are not yet united and so we struggle to unite

If we talking about residing and awareness, about "residing in the state of awareness", it all indicates to me that there's a point where there is no residing, and there is something called 'non-awareness'. And this idea of the "union of the personal and universal" is something I have heard from many people. There seems to be a great longing to be part of everything! But what do we mean by universe? If the term 'universe' refers to emptiness or the whole of phenomena, I think perhaps it can work. But I have a doubt, as when you say the union of personal with the universe, it automatically makes me think that you are not yet united, and that you are struggling to unite, which you are calling the path. Yes, why not? But if you really suggest that, it might not work with the description of Buddha-nature. As we were saying yesterday, the sky is primordially pure or free from cloud, meaning it's already united.

When the cloud goes away we assume the sky is clear. But it has always been clear

[Student] We could call it the reactivated power of the original mind
[Rinpoche] That sounds a bit like the cloud going away and then seeing the sky. Are you talking about something like that? When the cloud goes away, we assume the sky is clear. But the sky has always been clear. All this can work.

Whether we talk of enlightenment in terms of ground or result, it's all in terms of the path. Ground, path and result only exist as relative truth

[Student] To speak about sky, we need to speak about clouds even if clouds are not part of sky. So to speak of enlightenment, we need to speak of what is not enlightenment.
[Rinpoche] Yes, you are right. When we talk about enlightenment either in terms of the ground or in terms of the result, we are talking in terms of path. Ground, path, result – all this exists only on the relative level.

[Student] Enlightenment is a state beyond all concepts, indescribable.
[Rinpoche] Yes, it's very difficult to describe, because we live in our own very small world. And we only have a very limited amount of rationality and logic. We know that 2+2 = 4, but we cannot even conceive that 2+2 could be 5.
[Student] There are many systems of mathematics based on that, on different logic systems. We can conceive a thing like that!
[Rinpoche] You are not intoxicated? Did you count one and two, like that? I'm interested! That's good.

We can only conceive of 'limitless' to a certain extent, and we call that inexpressible or inconceivable

But what I'm saying is that we can only conceive of 'limitless' to a certain extent, or within a certain limit, and we have to speak within that boundary. And this is called 'inexpressible', 'unthinkable', or 'inconceivable'. I think all religions would say this about their god, just like that. But you have to be careful, because the way it's said here may be different. As you said earlier, we can only talk about sky in the context of cloud. It's like Maitreya's example that if you're blind right from the beginning, you have no visual reference to talk about colours like blue, white, and all that. Maybe you can say red is hot, blue is cold, and things like that, but that's not really a colour.

Here 'inconceivable' refers to a sky that never had any clouds. So there is no clearing away the clouds and no seeing the sky. Basically, there is no path

When we talk about 'inconceivable', we are talking about a sky that never had a cloud. You might want to ask, why do we talk about that? It's very important, and it will be explained today. If we don't talk about a sky that never had a cloud, then we can't talk about a sky that has clouds. And without the sky that has clouds there can be no clearing of the clouds, seeing the sky and all that. Basically, there is no path.

During the path, inferential logic is all we have to conceive of enlightenment. Only the yogis can have direct cognition of mind

Enlightenment is not conceivable within our very limited logic, reasoning and rationalism, but we still have to talk about the path. And during the path, inferential logic is all that beings like us can use during hearing, contemplation and most of our meditation. Direct cognition of objects like form and sounds with the five sense consciousnesses may be possible, as in "I'm looking at this flower". But I think that for the Chittamatrin school and the Madhyamika school, direct cognition of mind is simply not possible for ordinary people. It can only be done with the yogi's direct cognition (*naljor ngönsum*).

We cannot perceive enlightenment directly, but we can infer that emotions like anger are temporary just like clouds

Likewise, direct perception of enlightenment is just not possible for us. So we can only infer. And how do we do that? By speaking about the clouds. We can think that just as clouds are temporary, our emotions like anger are also

temporary, because nobody is angry continuously, permanently, non-stop. I'm sure there are some people who get angry a lot, but a lot means 'a lot', it doesn't mean all the time, non-stop! For instance, when they sneeze, or during deep sleep, they may be not angry! So anger doesn't continue all the time. Anger, or whatever emotion you have, changes. And if you are at first angry because of so-and-so, then this anger leads to another one. So even if anger is continuing, it's not the same one. Anger continues, but it doesn't exist. If it did, actually, the world would be much safer. If one particularly instance of anger were to continue, then you would know what to do with it, because there would only be the one anger that was continuing. But it's changing all the time. So the only thing we can do is infer. We also know that anger is temporary because all our emotions come from causes and conditions. We get upset because somebody did something to us. And because of that, we know that anger is temporary, because it has a beginning. This is good news, as it means you can manipulate the cause of anger. For example, you can stop going to visit the person who angers you.

We know that defilements are removable, and once they are removed, that's enlightenment. But it's not pure absence, like the exhaustion of fire

But we cannot imagine a state without emotions and subject-object activities

So somehow we know from this inferential logic that all these defilements are removable. And when we talk about enlightenment or the Buddha-nature, we use this same logic. All this garbage is removable. But when we manage to remove it, what happens? When we remove the dirt, negative emotions, and defilements – the elimination and absence of all that – it's not like the exhaustion of fire or evaporation of moisture. This is quite important, because we actually do get angry, have desire and all of these emotions, and it actually makes us more solid. We can't just imagine a state without any of these emotions, without any of these subject-object activities.

Complete emptiness is infinite abundance. It's something you can pray to, and by praying you actually receive blessings

Prayer works because you have devotion, like the confidence that there is blue sky behind the grey clouds

We can talk about complete emptiness, yes, but what does that mean? There is a potential problem here, as it's not like evaporation of moisture. It's abundance, it's infinite, it's someone who you can pray to, and by praying it actually gives you blessings and all of that. This is why it's difficult. Imagine that you want to see the clear blue sky, but at the moment there is a cloud. And maybe your friend says, "let's go, we won't see the sky today". But you say, "no, wait a minute, this cloud might go". You have confidence and devotion that behind this grey cloud is the blue sky, and that is basically how prayer works. It works because you have that confidence. It doesn't mean that by waiting for another half hour that the blue sky becomes more powerful and actually reveals itself. It's nothing like that!

Changchub, the word for enlightenment, has two connotations: purification and realisation:

Chang means purification. Enlightenment is primordially pure, or all temporary defilements have been removed

All this is very well explained here in the terms of three kayas. It's so beautifully set up. The Tibetan word for enlightenment (*changchub*) has two connotations. *Chang* means 'purification', and *chub* means 'realisation'. When we talk of *chang* or *sang* (as in *sangyey* or Buddha), we are talking about the quality that enlightenment is primordially pure, or that the temporary defilements can be removed and that it has reached the level of purity after they have been removed.

Chub means realisation. Enlightenment has all the enlightened qualities, with no increasing and no decreasing

And with *chub*, we are talking about the same thing, but its other aspect, namely that it has all the enlightened qualities. The Heart Sutra says there is "no decreasing and no increasing". Even if there are clouds in the sky seemingly forever, just like in England, it doesn't mean that the blue sky decreases. And even if the sky were cloudless for years, the quality of the sky wouldn't increase.

Whether beings engage in virtuous or non-virtuous thoughts and actions, the quality of the Buddha does not change at all

Even for ordinary sentient beings who are not practicing, even if they are killing, stealing, lying, and engaging in all kinds of non-virtuous thoughts and actions, the quality of the Buddha does not decrease. And you might be practicing very diligently, perhaps doing 500,000 prostrations instead of 100,000. But the quality of the Buddha does not increase even one hair's breadth. So what's the point of practice? To actualise that Buddha! To understand it, not just academically or intellectually. And what's the benefit? There is a lot of benefit. For instance, by knowing there is no decreasing, there is no fear. And by knowing there is no increasing, there is no hope.

If we know this, then we have no hope and fear

Ordinary beings like us can only generalise about this, but the path will not mislead us

But still we have a problem. The problem is that when we talk about it we can only generalise. There is only one person who can talk without generalising, that's the enlightened person, the Buddha. Even tenth bhumi Bodhisattvas can't do this. Ordinary sentient beings make generalisations all the time. For example, we talk about just five negative emotions – anger, desire, jealousy, pride, and ignorance – which is a big generalisation. There may be many other emotions. But don't think that the path is therefore a little unreliable because we can only generalise. All these generalisations are very accurate. Basically, the path will not mislead you. It will lead you to the higher path, and then you will generalise less.

Yesterday we read many stanzas describing qualities of the dharmakaya, the two bodies of wisdom and liberation. And there's quite a lot more today.

202 རབ་ཞི་འགོག་པའི་བདེན་པའི་ཕྱིར། །
ཐམས་ཅད་རྟོགས་ཕྱིར་ཁྱབ་པ་ཉིད། །
གནས་པ་མེད་ཕྱིར་རྟོག་མེད་དེ། །
ཉོན་མོངས་སྤངས་ཕྱིར་ཆགས་པ་མེད། །

Perfectly at ease, since it is cessation's truth, all-embracing since all has been understood, concept-free, since it does not dwell, unclinging, since all defilements have been dispelled,

It is utter peace, since the truth of cessation [is revealed]. Since everything is realized, it pervades [all the knowable]. Since it does not dwell upon anything, it is without ideation. Since the mental poisons are eliminated, it has no attachment.

This state of enlightenment is peaceful. It can also refer to an enlightened being. Although we can only use inferential logic to describe the state, there are also

Enlightenment is peaceful as all causes of suffering are eliminated. This refers to nirodha

people and beings who have actually reached that state. We are talking about both. Sometimes we will talk about them almost together, sometimes separately. It will be indicated very clearly. Anyway that state or being is peaceful, as the causes of suffering are all eliminated. This line actually describes nirodha, the cessation of suffering.

Applying the Four Noble Truths to curing a headache

Normally we think in terms of knowing that you have a headache, finding its cause, and then taking some medicine

The fact is that you are not your headache. It is not your absolute nature, and because of that it is possible to cure it

I'll give you a very bad example of nirodha. The first of the Four Noble Truths is "know the suffering". If you want to cure a headache, you should first know that you have a headache, and then secondly you should understand the cause of the headache. The Third Noble Truth is the cessation of suffering or nirodha (*gokpey denpa*). It's a bit like saying that you have to know that you only *have* a headache, not that you *are* your headache. This is quite clever, as we normally think we should talk in terms of know the headache, know the cause of headache, and then apply the medicine to cure the headache. But it doesn't come like that. The fact is that you are not your headache. Your headache is temporary, and not your absolute nature. It is not your reality, not your Buddha-nature, and because of that, the path to the cessation of the headache is possible, and there is a path.

Enlightenment has the quality of wisdom, in two aspects: knowing things as they are, and knowing them in their multiplicity and diversity

The next quality of enlightenment, which is described in the same stanza, is the quality of wisdom. This has two aspects. The first is the 'wisdom that knows phenomena in all their multiplicity and diversity' (*jinyeypey kyenpey yeshey*). The second is the 'wisdom that knows phenomena as they are' (*jitawey kyenpey yeshey*).

The wisdom of knowing things in their multiplicity and diversity is different from how many religions talk about their god

The wisdom of knowing things in their multiplicity is only possible because this multiplicity of phenomena doesn't truly exist

The first aspect of wisdom, for both the being and the state, knows everything, like the number of leaves on a certain tree growing in a certain place somewhere in South America. I have to clarify something here, as this wisdom is slightly different from the way many religions talk about how their God knows everything. Here, when talk about a location somewhere in South America, on a particular mountain, and in the middle of this mountain there's a small tree six feet tall with 200 leaves and all of that – when we talk like this, we are talking about a mental projection. For someone who can accept that everything is mind's projection, then this wisdom is acceptable. But if all things truly exist externally, independent from your mind, then this God or Buddha or whoever it is must bring a notebook and note down everything everywhere, including how many leaves this tree has, so in case one day somebody might ask him, he can immediately answer. In our very limited and small minds, we are shocked when we read words like "phenomena in their multiplicity", as it's an infinite quantity, number and amount of detail. But because this multiplicity of phenomena doesn't truly exist, this kind of wisdom is possible.

With the wisdom of knowing the nature of things, Buddha has no conceptual thoughts

The second aspect is the wisdom that knows the nature of things. When we talk about the first kind of wisdom, that Buddha knows everything, we feel that we are talking about conceptual thoughts like numbers, colours, all of that. But

Buddha has no conceptual thoughts. Let me put it this way, without the second wisdom, the first cannot exist. You would still have the problem of phenomena being conceptual, and needing to write everything down in a notebook. But the second wisdom knows the nature of phenomena. And what is the nature of phenomena? The nature of phenomena is that there is no such thing as multiplicity. There are no different kinds of categories. And because Buddha also has that wisdom, Buddha does not have conceptual thoughts. This is quite important to understand, as it will clarify some common misunderstandings.

For example, if you are praying to the Buddha you might wonder if he will understand what you are praying for. Yes, he will know. But because of the second kind of wisdom that knows phenomena as they are, there is no such thing as you, your prayer, the cause of your prayer or the result of your prayer – none of these truly exist. So Buddha does not have to categorise which prayers need a more urgent response. I'm sure some of you are itching to ask what happened when Brahma asked Shakyamuni Buddha to teach. How did that happen? Or when Shakyamuni Buddha was asked certain questions, he didn't answer. It looks like he has a choice, and can answer some but not others, so why is that? We'll explain this later.

Buddha's wisdom has no defilements or fixation, so he sees in a completely different way from us.

Because he has no defilements (*nyöndrip*), he has no grasping or fixation (*chakpa*). So when his wisdom enters an object (let's say 'enters' for the sake of communication), when he sees something, he sees it but he's not fixating on this object. It's totally different from what we see. Basically, his gaze does not settle there. It will not grasp and dwell there. When you have defilements you voluntarily fixate on something. That's what you want. All our defilements want to fixate, not knowing that by fixating on things, you become very limited, so that eventually no lotuses will cover your lake.

We have defilements and fixation and we become very limited, so no lotuses will cover our lake

Buddha has no cognitive obscurations, so he has no concept of agent, object and action

And because he has no obscurations to omniscience, no cognitive obscurations (*sheydrip*), he doesn't have the concept of agent, object and action. And that's what we call "no obstruction". When you have cognitive obscurations, even if you don't want to fixate, you get stuck and blocked with that kind of obscuration.

Shravakayana practitioners mainly want to remove defilements, as these are the cause of samsara

Bodhisattvas have a greater aim, so they also want to remove cognitive obscurations

Defilements and cognitive obscurations are closely related, but defilements are the direct cause of samsara. This is discussed in many Mahayana shastras because, for instance, Shravakayana practitioners mainly want to get rid of the first kind of defilements, as their aim is to get out of samsara. They don't have an aim that's greater than that. Whereas Bodhisattvas have a much bigger agenda, so removing cognitive obscurations and not being blocked is so important to them.

203 ཤེས་བྱའི་སྒྲིབ་ཀུན་དག་པའི་ཕྱིར། །
ཐམས་ཅད་དུ་ནི་ཐོགས་པ་མེད། །
གཉིས་མེད་ལས་སུ་རུང་བའི་ཕྱིར། །
རྩྭ་པའི་རེག་བདང་བྲལ་བ་ཡིན། །

Unhindered always, since the obscurations to knowledge have been purified, free from coarse sensations, being without the two and highly-suited,

Since the veil of the hindrances to knowledge is cleansed, it is in all ways unobstructed [with regard to the complete insight]. Being free from its two [obstacles], it is suited for [samadhi] and thus relieved from the touch of coarse objects of contact.

The Buddha has no agitation and no dullness, so he has no harsh sensations

He has no agitation and no dullness. That's why his wisdom is workable or malleable. And because there is no dullness and no agitation, there are no harsh sensations. These stanzas are all trying to explain something that's almost impossible to explain. But they are trying hard. Let me give you an example. We look at this tent, and every time we look at it, there is a harsh sensation. Because the fact is that we have to look at it, and that we have to have some kind of a sense that it is a tent and not soup, and that's a harsh sensation. So for us, we have to concentrate, and that concentration is a harsh sensation. We have to really concentrate, and not wander around. And every time we try to do that, we either get agitated or we get dull, so the result is that every time we have even a slight cognition, even a very short glimpse of an object, it is a harsh sensation. But for us, we are so calloused and jaded that even though it's a harsh sensation we don't feel it, because we are so numb. This is why some people here in the audience need a cheese grater to turn them on!

204 དེ་གཟུགས་མེད་ཕྱིར་བལྟར་མེད་དེ། །
མཚན་མ་མེད་ཕྱིར་གཟུང་དུ་མེད། །
དགེ་བ་རང་བཞིན་དག་པའི་ཕྱིར། །
དྲི་མེད་དྲི་མ་སྤངས་ཕྱིར་རོ། །

Invisible, since it is formless, imperceptible, because it has no characteristic, wholesome, since its nature is pure and immaculate, all impurities being removed.

Since it is not something visible, it cannot be seen. Since it is free from features, it cannot be grasped. It is virtuous, [the Dharmadhatu] being by nature pure and it is free from stains, since pollution is abandoned.

Enlightenment has no form or characteristics. It is virtuous and stainless, because it is primordially pure and temporary stains can be eliminated

Enlightenment cannot be perceived by the eyes because it doesn't have form. In many sutras, like the Lankavatara-sutra, Buddha said "those who see me as a form, they have wrong view". We might think that even if he is formless there must at least be something that we can refer to. But there is no reference to grasp onto, because there are no extremes, and there are no marks or

characteristics (*tsenma*). Therefore no mind or no cognition can grasp it. But it's virtuous, because it's primordially pure. And it can be referred to as stainless, because you can eliminate the temporary stains. Now it will all be explained once again, this time in terms of the three kayas separately. First the dharmakaya.

205 ཐོག་མ་དབུས་མཐའ་མེད་ཅིང་རྣམ་དབྱེར་མེད། །
གཉིས་མེད་གསུམ་བྲལ་ཏེ་མེད་རྣམ་རྟོག་མེད། །
ཆོས་དབྱིངས་རང་བཞིན་གང་ཡིན་དེ་རྟོགས་པ། །
མཉམ་པར་བཞག་པའི་རྣལ་འབྱོར་པ་ཡིས་མཐོང་། །

Beginningless, centreless and endless, completely indivisible, free from the two, free from the three, stainless and concept-free – such is the Dharmadhatu. Understanding of its nature is the vision of the yogin who abides in meditation.

What is the nature of Dharmadhatu? It is without beginning, middle and end. It is totally indivisible and far away from the two [extremes], rid of the three [veils], unpolluted and not an object of thought. Its realization is the vision of a Yogi who Dwells in Meditative Equipoise.

Enlightenment has no beginning, middle or end. The concept 'three kayas' is a relative imputation: they are inseparable

There is no birth, so there is no beginning. There is no abiding, so there is no middle. There is no cessation, so there is no end. And these three (no beginning, no middle, and no end) are inseparable. Even the concept 'three kayas' is only imputed on a relative level. In reality, these three kayas are inseparable. There is no such thing as three kayas. Since there is no stain and no conception, it's luminous. I think you can understand this if you can understand what we discussed earlier, that there is no fixation and no obstruction (*chaktok dralwa*). Having no fixation and no obstruction is actually the essence of luminosity. But ordinary people cannot understand this. Only a yogi in his meditative state can see it.

Having no fixation or obstruction is the essence of luminosity, but only a yogi can realise this

206 གཙང་མེད་གང་གྱིས་བྱེ་མ་ལས་འདས་པ། །
བསམ་མེད་མཉམ་མེད་ཡོན་ཏན་རྣམས་དང་ལྡན། །
དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པའི་སྤྱི་མེད་དབྱིངས་དེ་ནི། །
བག་ཚགས་བཅས་པའི་ཉེས་པ་རྣམ་སྤངས་པའོ། །

Unfathomable and greater in number, than the sand-grains of the Ganga, inconceivable and unequalled are the qualities of the immaculate space of the tathagatas – purged of every defect and related conditioning.

The unpolluted sphere of a tathagata possesses the [four] qualities [of realization]. It cannot be fathomed and [in number] is beyond the grains of sand in the river Ganges. It is inconceivable and peerless and there is furthermore elimination of all faults along with their remaining traces.

The dharmakaya has five qualities:

This dharmakaya has five qualities:

1) Immeasurable

(1) Immeasurable: It is immeasurable because it's very big. It's vast. You have to understand this in terms of the context we talked about earlier. Our measurement is in terms of centimetres, feet, inches, miles and kilometres. We have certain tools, and with these we cannot measure it.

2) Innumerable

(2) Innumerable: The second quality is interesting, because it answers the question about whether everyone has a single Buddha-nature or whether there are lots of individual Buddha-natures. You can't really say that both are true. First of all, as we just heard, it cannot be measured. And now it says it is infinite in number, more than the grains of sand of the river Ganga.

3) Inconceivable

(3) Inconceivable: It is profound. Therefore it is inconceivable. There is no mind or cognition, no cognizer that can conceive of emptiness. It cannot be fathomed because within this boundary there is no fathomer than can fathom it. That's how you have to understand this. It's inconceivable because there is no conceiver. Our conceiver is very crippled or handicapped, and needs a lot of the cheese grater. It only has one way of knowing things, which is inferring, and that's all we have. It's a very pathetic and limited way of knowing things. It's like going to Rome and speaking only two words of Italian, and not having any hands. That's how we are!

4) Uncommon

(4) Uncommon: There is no other entity or phenomenon that can equal this dharmakaya, that's why it's uncommon.

5) Pure

(5) Pure: Right from the beginning, it is primordially free from all the defilements and their propensities. That's why it's pure.

These are the five qualities of the dharmakaya. Next comes the sambhogakaya.

207 སྒྲ་ཚོགས་དམ་ཆོས་འོད་ཟེར་མངའ་བའི་སྐུས། །
འགྲོ་བའི་རྣམ་གྲོལ་དོན་གྱུར་ལ་བརྩོན་པ། །
མཛད་པ་ཡིད་བཞིན་ནོར་བུའི་རྒྱལ་བཞིན་ཏེ། །
སྒྲ་ཚོགས་དངོས་ཀྱང་དེ་ཡི་རང་བཞིན་མིན། །

By various facets of the true Dharma, through its radiant embodiments and diligence in accomplishing its aim of liberating beings, its deeds are like those of a king of wishing-gems. Although having different "substantial" forms, it is not really of such character.

Through various aspects of the sacred Dharma, through bodies shot with light rays and through its readiness to accomplish the task of the total liberation of beings, its deeds resemble the activity of a king of wishfulfilling jewels. [It appears as] a variety of things, yet is not of the nature of these.

The sambhogakaya has five qualities:

1) Infinite speech, which is dharma
2) Form with major and minor marks
3) Diligence and compassion
4) Benefits without conception
5) Appears in many forms, but none is him

The sambhogakaya also has five qualities:

1) He has infinite, or numerous, speech, which is none other than the holy Dharma.
2) He has a form with major and minor marks, which is perceivable now.
3) With his mind, he is ever diligent and compassionate, to benefit sentient beings.
4) Although he has a mind that wishes to benefit sentient beings, he doesn't have conception. He benefits beings like a wishfulfilling jewel.
5) He appears in many different ways or forms, but none of them is really him.

This really describes the nature of our mind so well. Now we come to the nirmanakaya.

208 འཇིག་རྟེན་ཞི་བའི་ལམ་ལ་འཇུག་པ་དང་། །
རབ་ཏུ་སྨིན་དང་ལུང་སྟོན་རྒྱུ་ཡི་གཟུགས། །
གང་ཡིན་དེ་ཡང་འདིར་ནི་རྟག་གནས་ཏེ། །
ནམ་མཁའི་བཙམས་སུ་གཟུགས་ཀྱི་བཙམས་བཞིན་ནོ། །

The form aspects are the cause, establishing worldlings on the path to peace, maturing them and predicting. Moreover these worlds by their presence are ever graced, just as the element of form ever abides in that of space.

[The nirmanakaya persuades] the worldly beings to enter the path towards peace. He fully matures them and granting prophecy [becomes] the cause [of their release]. These form [kayas] remain forever in this [world] like the realm of form within the realm of space.

The nirmanakaya appears continuously in samsara to benefit sentient beings

What does the nirmanakaya do? In the beginning he tries to encourage samsaric beings to enter the path of the Shravakayana nirvana. And then in the middle he tries to ripen all the sentient beings within the path of the Mahayana. And then at the end he will predict that the Bodhisattva who is on the path will reach enlightenment at a certain time and place, and so on and so forth. This kind of nirmanakaya will also appear on this earth or in this samsara all the time, continuously, in the same way that all the elements of form appear within space at all times. This will be explained again, but first there is once again a summary.

209 རང་བྱུང་རྣམས་ཀྱི་ཐམས་ཅད་མཁྱེན། །
སངས་རྒྱས་ཉིད་ཅེས་གང་བརྗོད་པ། །
མཆོག་ཏུ་མྱ་ངན་འདས་བས་མ་མེད། །
དགྲ་བཅོམ་སོ་སོའི་བདག་ཕྱུར་པ། །

That called "the omniscience of the self-existent", "Buddhahood", "supreme nirvana", "inconceivability", "victory over the enemy" and "the own-nature"

The Omniscience of All the Self-Sprung Ones is given the name of "Buddhahood." Its meaning is [also termed]: "Most Supremely Beyond Torment", "The Inconceivable", "Foe-Vanquisher", and "Quintessence of Self-Awareness".

There are many different terms used to refer to *changchub*, Buddha or enlightenment

"Self-arising, all-knowing wisdom", "the Buddha", "the supreme enlightenment", " that which ordinary persons or conceivers cannot conceive", "the supreme destroyer of all the enemies or defilements", and "that which can be only perceived by self-awareness" – all these are different names referring to one and only one thing: enlightenment (*changchub*).

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དེ་དག་ཟབ་དང་རྒྱ་ཆེ་དང་། །
བདག་ཉིད་ཆེན་པོའི་ཡོན་ཏན་གྱི། །
ཆོས་ཀྱིས་རབ་ཕྱེ་རང་བཞིན་ལ། །
སོགས་པའི་སྒྲ་གསུམ་དག་གིས་འཇུག །

Is categorized according to its qualities of profoundness, vastness and magnanimity, through the essence kaya and so on–the kayas three.

When these are categorized, they can be fully divided into [three] properties, which are the qualities of depth, vastness and greatness or the nature [kaya] and so on. [The benefits] are fulfilled through these three kayas.

These can be categorised into three: vast, profound and supreme being, which correspond to three kayas

All these can be categorised into three: profound, vast and supreme being. And therefore we categorise them into three kayas or bodies. That's the summary.

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དེ་ལ་སངས་རྒྱས་རྣམས་ཀྱི་ནི། །
ངོ་བོ་ཉིད་སྐུ་མཚན་ཉིད་ལྔ། །
མདོར་ན་ཡོན་ཏན་ལྔ་དང་ནི། །
ལྔན་པ་ཉིད་དུ་རིག་པར་བྱ། །

Of these, the Buddhas' essence-kaya should be known as that which has the five intrinsic characteristics and, when put concisely, five qualities.

Of these, the svabhavikakaya of the Buddhas is to be known as having five characteristics and if condensed, five qualities:

The three kayas possess five different qualities

Again, this is another summary before it will be explained in an extended way. These three kayas all possess five different kinds of characters and qualities.

212 འདུས་མ་བྱས་ཤིང་རྣམ་དབྱེར་མེད། །
མཐའ་གཉིས་དག་ནི་རྣམ་པར་སྤངས། །
ཉོན་མོངས་ཤེས་བྱ་སྒྲིམས་འཇུག་གི །
སྒྲིབ་གསུམ་ལས་ནི་ངེས་གྲོལ་ཏེ། །

It is uncreated and indivisible, utterly purged, purified of the two extremes, definitely liberated from the obscurations three – the defilements, ideational knowledge and blockages to meditative mastery:

It is uncreated and totally indivisible. The two extremes are completely abandoned. It is definitively freed from the three veils – the mental poisons and the obscurations to knowledge and meditative equipoise.

213 དྲི་མེད་རྣམ་པར་རྟོག་མེད་དང་། །
རྣལ་འབྱོར་རྣམས་ཀྱི་ཡུལ་ཡིན་ཕྱིར། །
ཆོས་དབྱིངས་ངོ་བོ་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་ནི། །
དག་པའི་ཕྱིར་ན་འོད་གསལ་བ། །

Stainless, completely beyond concept, and through being the domain of the Yogi, and through the Dharmadhatu being, essentially, pure, it is clarity.

It is unpolluted and not an [object of] thought. Being the field of the yogis and the Dharmadhatu, being by essence pure, it is luminous clarity.

Why dharmakaya is uncompounded, stainless and luminous

Why is dharmakaya uncompounded? Because it doesn't have birth, dwelling and cessation. You cannot distinguish it in the context of birth, dwelling and cessation. We cannot say it is born, it is dwelling, or it is ceasing. Nor can dharmakaya be distinguished in the context of one or separate. It doesn't have self and the possessions of the self. It doesn't have any of these defilements, and it doesn't have any obscuration that is not a defilement, which refers to the cognitive obscurations. Also dharmakaya doesn't have the meditative obscurations. Therefore it is stainless. It has no conceptions. Only yogis during their meditative state can perceive it. It is primordially pure, or primordially free from all kinds of extremes, therefore it is luminous.

214 གཞལ་མེད་གྲངས་མེད་བསམ་མེད་པ། །
མཉམ་མེད་དག་པའི་མཐར་ཐུག་པའི། །
ཡོན་ཏན་རྣམས་དང་ཡང་དག་པར། །
ངོ་བོ་ཉིད་ཀྱི་སྐུ་ལྡན་ཏེ། །

The svabhavikakaya is truly endowed with the qualities of immeasurability, unaccountability, inconceivability, incomparability and ultimate purity.

The svabhavikakaya truly has the final and ultimate qualities of being unfathomable, countless, inconceivable, unequalled and pure.

215 རྒྱ་ཆེའི་ཕྱིར་དང་གྲངས་མེད་ཕྱིར། །
རྟོག་གེའི་ཡུལ་དེ་མིན་ཕྱིར་དང་། །
འཐད་ཞིག་བག་ཆགས་བཅས་སྤང་ཕྱིར། །
གཞལ་མེད་ལ་སོགས་གོ་རིམས་བཞིན། །

It is respectively immeasurable and so on because it is vast, immeasurable, beyond the scope of intellectual speculation, unique and rid of even the conditioning.

Since it is vast, not to be numbered, not an object of reasoning and unique, and since the remaining traces are eliminated, it is in the same order unfathomable and so on.

Why dharmakaya is immeasurable etc: a repetition of the qualities of the dharmakaya

Dharmakaya is immeasurable, because it's vast. It cannot be counted, because it's innumerable. It cannot be perceived or conceived, because it's not an object of analysis. It is unique or uncommon because only the Buddha has it. It has the most supreme quality of purity, because all obscurations are purified. This has been an extended repetition of the explanation of the qualities of the dharmakaya. Now we come to the sambhogakaya again.

216 སྣ་ཚོགས་ཆོས་ལ་རྫོགས་པོར་བས་སྤྱོད། །
རང་བཞིན་ཆོས་ནི་སྣང་ཕྱིར་དང་། །
ཐུགས་རྗེ་དག་པའི་རྒྱུ་མཐུན་པ། །
འགྲོ་དོན་རྒྱུན་མི་འཆད་ཕྱིར་དང་། །

It takes the form of perfect expression because: it uses perfectly the various Dharmas, it manifests real attributes and has uninterrupted activity to benefit beings, being the natural outflow of pure compassion,

It perfectly enjoys the various aspects of Dharma and appears [in the form] of natural qualities. Corresponding to the pure cause of its compassion, the benefit of sentient beings is uninterrupted.

217 རྣམ་པར་རྟོག་མེད་ལྷུན་གྱིས་གྲུབ་པར། །
འདོད་པ་ཇི་བཞིན་ཡོངས་སྐོང་ཕྱིར། །
ཡིད་བཞིན་ནོར་བུའི་རྫུ་འཕྲུལ་ཀྱིས། །
རྫོགས་པར་ལོངས་སྤྱོད་རྣམ་པར་གནས། །

it completely, exactly, fulfils aspirations, spontaneously and without conceptual agitation, and because it has miraculous abilities like those of the gem fulfilling all wishes.

Totally without any thought and spontaneously it wholly grants all wishes exactly as they are by miraculous powers, like a wishfulfilling gem. It therefore fully abides in Perfect Enjoyment.

The qualities of the sambhogakaya are not just symbolic. They are naturally present

The sambhogakaya has unobstructed compassion without conception or intention to benefit beings, like a jewel that reflects different colours

The speech enjoys the wealth of the infinite greater path. And the form of the sambhogakaya, including its characteristics such as the 32 major marks, is not just symbolic. It is not just a manifestation. These qualities are naturally there. And it has unobstructed compassion, which reflects as unobstructed action to benefit sentient beings. Meanwhile, all this time there is not a single conception. There is no such thing as intention or planning to benefit sentient beings. Everything is spontaneously accomplished. It is like a wishfulfilling jewel. According to Khun Rinpoche, we can understand this jewel as being like a diamond, in the sense that it reflects different colours depending on where you place it, but none of these colours is its own nature.

218 བརྗེད་སྟོན་མཛད་རྒྱུན་མི་འཆད་དང་། །
མངོན་པར་འདུ་བྱེད་མེད་པ་དང་། །
དེ་ཡི་ངོ་བོ་མིན་སྟོན་ལ། །
འདིར་ནི་སྣ་ཚོགས་རྣམ་ལྔར་སྟོན། །

It is being shown here in facets five – its uninterrupted speech, emanation and deeds, these being absolutely uncontrived and it manifesting not its true identity.

Since the stream of verbal expression, display [of form] and action [of mind] is uninterrupted and not a product, and since it shows that it is not of the essence of these, it is taught here in five aspects, as "various" and so on.

The sambhogakaya has five qualities: speech, form, unobstructed compassion, unintended action and manifestation

These are the five qualities of the sambhogakaya. Basically the sambhogakaya's qualities are speech, form, unobstructed compassion, unintended action, and the ability to manifest in many different forms, none of which is his real form. This explanation of form continues.

219 ཇི་ལྟར་ཚོན་ནི་སྣ་ཚོགས་ཀྱིས། །
ནོར་བུ་དེ་དངོས་མིན་སྣང་ལྟར། །
དེ་བཞིན་འགྲོ་རྒྱུན་སྣ་ཚོགས་པས། །
ཁྱབ་བདག་དེ་དངོས་མིན་པར་སྣང་། །

Just as a gem is actually not the various hues it can pick up, so likewise the all-embracing is not the way it appears to be due to situations of various beings.

Due to the various colours [of its background] a gem appears [in manifold colours], [but] is not a thing fulfilling their function. Likewise the All-Pervasive [Ones] appear due to the manifold conditions [set by beings] without being a thing fulfilling their functions.

Just as a clear jewel reflects the colour of its surroundings without changing colour, beings will see the form of the sambhogakaya according to their aspirations

This is again a repetition. Depending on where you place it, a clear jewel changes its colour according to different kinds of wrapping like red silk, blue silk, or yellow silk. But in reality the jewel itself hasn't changed colour. Likewise because of the different intention, devotion, and aspiration of different sentient beings, they will see the form of the sambhogakaya in different ways. But the sambhogakaya himself hasn't changed. Now we come to the nirmanakaya, again with an extensive explanation.

220 ཐུགས་རྗེ་ཆེན་པོས་འཛིག་རྟེན་མཁྱེན། །
འཛིག་རྟེན་ཀུན་ལ་གཟིགས་ནས་ནི། །
ཆོས་སྐྱེ་སྒྲུ་ལས་མ་གཡོས་པར། །
སྤྲུལ་པའི་རང་བཞིན་སྣ་ཚོགས་ཀྱིས། །

Through greatest compassion knowing all worlds, having seen all worlds, whilst never leaving the dharmakaya, through various forms, apparitional by nature, the one excellently born into the highest birth

[The Supreme nirmanakaya] knows the world and having gazed upon all worldly [beings demonstrates] out of his great compassion [twelve wondrous deeds]. Without moving away from the dharmakaya he manifests through various [aspects] of an illusory nature. Having [first] been born spontaneously in a [divine] existence

221 སྐྱེ་བ་མངོན་པར་སྐྱེ་བ་དང་། །
དགའ་ལྡན་གནས་ནས་འཕོ་བ་དང་། །
ལྷུམས་སུ་འཇུག་དང་བལྟམས་པ་དང་། །
བཟོ་ཡི་གནས་ལ་མཁས་པ་དང་། །

Descends from that "Realm of Great Joy", enters the royal womb and is nobly born on Earth. Perfectly skilled in every science and craft,

He then leaves the realm of Tushita and passes [into this world]. He enters [his mother's] womb, takes birth and gains perfect skill, mastering all the various fields of handicraft, science and art.

222 བཙུན་མོའི་འཁོར་དགྱེས་རོལ་པ་དང་། །
ངེས་འབྱུང་དཀའ་བ་སྤྱོད་པ་དང་། །
བྱང་ཆུབ་སྙིང་པོར་གཤེགས་པ་དང་། །
བདུད་སྡེ་འཇོམས་དང་རྒྱལ་བར་ནི། །

Delighting in his royal consorts' company, renouncing, practising the path of difficulty, going to the place called "Enlightenment's Very Heart", he vanquishes the hosts of Mara.

He mirthfully enjoys amusement among his spouse and her retinue. Feeling weariness and renunciation he practises as an ascetic. Then he goes to Awakening's Heart and defeats the hosts of Mara.

223 བྱང་ཆུབ་ཆོས་ཀྱི་འཁོར་ལོ་དང་། །
མྱ་ངན་འདས་པར་གཤེགས་མཛད་རྣམས། །
ཡོངས་སུ་མ་དག་ཞིང་རྣམས་སུ། །
སྨིན་པའི་སྨིན་གཤགས་པར་སྟྲོན། །

Then, perfect enlightenment, he turns the wheel of Dharma and passes into nirvana – in all those places, so impure, the nirmanakaya shows these deeds as long as worlds endure.

[He finds] perfect enlightenment and turns the wheel of Dharma. He passes into nirvana [the state beyond any torment and pain]. Within all the [endless] fields totally infested with impurity he shows these deeds as long as [beings] abide in existence.

The nirmanakaya is a show that happens in the impure realm and continues as long as samsara exists

The last word of stanza 223 is quite important. It is *tön*, which means 'show'. So now there's a show. Where is this show happening, in which theatre? Penultimate line of 223: in the impure realm. Now we are talking about nirmanakaya. This is the theatre. And for how long does show go on? The last word of the last line: for as long as samsara exists. As long as samsara exists, the show will go on.

The Buddha gives people what they want and what they need, both together

Who is going to show this? Who is directing this, who is producing this? Second part of first line of 220: the "One who knows the world" (*Jikten Khyenpa*). One who knows what people need and what people want, that's why he is called *jikten chenpa*. This is one of the most important qualities of the Buddha. In the Sutra of Remembering the Triple Gem, it says that he knows what people need and what people want, and he will give them both. If he only gave people what they need to hear, then nobody would listen! And if he only gave people what they want to hear, there's no point. The he would be useless, just a comedian or entertainer.

He manifests in the world out of great compassion, but he never departs from the dharmakaya

What made him show this? Is he interested in financial gain, or some kind of award? No! The first word of the first line of 220: he sees the world with great compassion (*thujey chenpo*). How will he do it? Will he run around and put on make up? Will he take the role of an actor sometimes? What's his style? How will he do it? Third and fourth lines of stanza 220: never departing from the state of the dharmakaya. He is always sitting on the seat of the dharmakaya, never moving an inch, and sending all kinds of manifestations.

The real show: the story of the Buddha's life according to the common vehicle

So, what's the real show? He took rebirths as a rabbit, as a monkey, as a bird and so on, until the last of his rebirths, as a god. At that time, his name in Sanskrit was Swetaketu, which means 'white tip'. His hair had a white tipped

jewel, or something like that. And Maitreya knows this very well, because this Bodhisattva was the one who took off his crown and gave it to Maitreya, saying, "I'm going to earth". Leaving the god realm, dying from the god realm basically, and going to earth, entering Mayadevi's womb in the form of an ash-coloured elephant with six tusks. And after nine months and nine days, or ten days, being born in the garden of Lumbini. And then studying arts such as writing, reading and warfare under various tutors. Don't forget, this is all a show. And enjoying the courtesans and the queens. And having a certain curiosity to go out. And seeing death and old age, and asking his chariot driver, his chauffeur, "What are these?" And coming back, depressed. Brooding. And escaping from the palace and looking for enlightenment. And for that, six years of penance. And then realising that's not right and stopping the penance. And meeting Sujata, the cowherd girl. And a grass-seller. And accepting the offerings like grass. And going under the bodhi tree. And in the evening defeating the maras. And at dawn, attaining enlightenment. And not wanting to teach.

It's all a show, but every aspect of the show has a purpose. It gives sentient beings what they want and what they need

And it's amazing! It's all a show. And what is the show for? It's for sentient beings. He's giving them both what they want and what they need. Every action, every aspect of his show has a purpose. For example, when he didn't want to teach – what did that do? It caused sentient beings like Brahma and Indra to come down and ask him to teach. By doing so, they created merit. It's amazing compassion!

And then he turns the wheel of the Dharma three times, and at the end, in Kushinagar, under two *sal* trees he passes into Parinirvana. That's how the show goes on, all the time, until the end of samsara.

224 ཅི་རྒྱས་སྦྱོར་བསྟལ་བདག་མེད་དང་། །
ཞི་བའི་སྒྲ་ཡིས་ཐབས་མཁྱེན་པས། །
སེམས་ཅན་གྱིད་གསུམ་སྒྲོ་བསྐྱེད་ནས། །
སྡུག་བསྔལ་འདས་ལ་རབ་འཇུག་མཛོད། །

Knowing the means (through such terms as "impermanence", "suffering", "non self" and "peace"), the nirmanakaya instils weariness with the world in beings of the three dimensions, thereby causing them to apply themselves to suffering's transcendence.

With the words "impermanent," "suffering," "selfless" and "peace" [the Buddhas] who know all means persuade sentient beings to generate weariness with the three realms of existence and to fully enter into the state beyond torment and pain.

Again we continue with the activity of the nirmanakaya Buddha. Since nirmanakaya is a show, what is his activity? This is explained in stanzas 224-226. Stanza 224 is so beautiful! I'm so proud of it. When we talk about activity, we judge people by their actions. We say somebody is good because of what he did, and that's what's happening here. We are talking about his activity. And the

The nirmanakaya's activity is to make four sounds, the four seals:

- Impermanence
- Pain
- No self
- No extremes

reason why I'm proud of this stanza is that one might think Buddha were great if he could fly, if he went inside the earth, if he fed thousands of people or things like that. But instead of that, here we have four incredible activities. And these activities are sounds. He made four sounds, though they are not moaning or hiccups! The four noises or sounds he made are:

- All compounded things are impermanent
- All defilements (*sakchey*) are pain
- All phenomena have no self
- Enlightenment has no extremes

It's just a show, so he's making sounds

I like the choice of word 'sound' (*dra*), as he's an actor. Instead of saying, "he talked", the text says, "He made four sounds". If we say he talked then it becomes slightly more personal. But it's just a show, so he's just making some sounds. Maybe we should change the translation to 'sound' instead of 'word'.

225 ཞི་བའི་ལམ་ལ་རབ་ཞུགས་པ། །
རྒྱ་ངན་འདས་ཐོབ་འདུ་ཤེས་ཅན། །
དམ་ཆོས་པད་དཀར་ལ་སོགས། །
ཆོས་ཀྱི་དེ་ཉིད་བསྟན་པ་ཡིས། །

To those excellently established on the path of peace, who believe themselves nirvana to have reached, he teaches the thatness of all phenomena in "The White Lotus of Dharma" and others,

Those who have perfectly followed the path of peace believe that they have attained the state of nirvana. By the White Lotus of Dharma Sutra and similar aspects of his sacred teaching he explains the nature of phenomena.

By making these sounds, Buddha encourages sentient beings to follow the path, and Shravakas and Pratyekabuddhas to demolish their clinging to enlightenment

So what does he do? He first makes sentient beings feel sad about samsara, by making these noises. And then he makes sentient beings enter the path of nirvana. And for beings that have entered the path of nirvana but not yet achieved the absolute nirvana, such as Shravakas and Pratyekabuddhas, in places like the Pundarika-sutra he teaches that there is only one vehicle and only one essence. With these teachings, audiences such as the Shravakas will demolish their clinging to enlightenment. Earlier they had been thinking that the state of Arhat is the final enlightenment, but now they will get rid of that kind of clinging.

226 དེ་དག་ལྷར་འཛིན་ལས་བཟློག་སྟེ། །
ཐབས་དང་ཤེས་རབ་ཡོངས་བཟུང་བས། །
ཐེག་པ་མཆོག་ལ་སྨོན་མཛད་དེ། །
བྱང་ཆུབ་མཆོག་ཏུ་ལུང་བསྟན་ཏོ། །

Wherefore they turn away from their former belief and, inspired to well adopt wisdom and skilful means, he brings them to maturity in the highest yana and predicts their enlightenment supreme.

Thus he causes them to refrain from their former belief, to fully adopt skilful means and discriminating wisdom, and gain maturity on the [path of the] supreme vehicle. Then he grants them prophecy of their supreme enlightenment.

With wisdom and compassion he leads beings out of samsara and nirvana, and then he predicts their final enlightenment

So, with wisdom he will make them not dwell in samsara. And with compassion, he will make them not dwell in nirvana. And he will predict to these audiences that they will reach enlightenment beyond samsara and nirvana. Now we come to the conclusion.

227 ཟབ་དང་མཐུ་ནི་ལྷན་ཚོགས་དང་། །
བྱིས་པའི་དོན་མཐུན་རབ་འདྲེན་ཕྱིར། །
འདི་དག་གྲངས་བཞིན་ཟབ་པ་དང་། །
རྒྱ་ཆེ་བདག་ཉིད་ཆེ་ཞེས་བྱ། །

Being profound, the very best of all powers and cleverest guidance for the immature according to their specific needs, these are respectively known as "the deep", "the vast" and "the great by nature".

Since [these kayas] constitute depth, best possible power and supreme guidance in tune with the aims of the children, they should be known in accordance with this number as being deep, vast and the embodiment of greatness.

Dharmakaya is profound, sambhogakaya is vast, and nirmanakaya is shown to benefit and liberate sentient beings

Dharmakaya is profound, deep, and difficult for an ordinary perceiver to conceive. That's why it's called profound. For different beings he can manifest the sambhogakaya in all kinds of manifestations. He has all the attributes to manifest, but he is not that. And for the sake of the children, for the naïve and uncultivated, nirmanakaya is shown. And the purpose of showing this is to benefit and liberate them.

228 འདིར་ནི་དང་པོ་ཆོས་སྐུ་སྟེ། །
ཕྱི་མ་དག་ནི་གཟུགས་ཀྱི་སྐུ། །
ནམ་མཁའ་ལ་ནི་གཟུགས་གནས་བཞིན། །
དང་པོ་ལ་ནི་ཐ་མ་གནས། །

The first of the above is the dharmakaya whilst the latter are the form kayas. Just as forms abide in space, the latter abide in the former.

Here the first is the dharmakaya, and the latter are the form kayas. As the visible abides in space, the latter abides in the first.

This explains how the three kayas correspond to each other, or how they exist so to speak. Even though there is no hierarchy among the three kayas, for the sake

Although the three kayas are one, we can say that dharmakaya is like a container for all forms, and sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya are contents

of explanation, we describe the dharmakaya as a container, like the sky or space can be referred to as a container containing all forms, and the sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya as contents.

Day 3 – Introduction

Your motivation as you listen to these teachings should be for you and all beings to attain these qualities

As you listen to all these qualities and characteristics of the Buddha that we have heard and we will hear, your primary motivation should be to listen to this so that these qualities will actually be attained not only by yourself, but also by all sentient beings. I can't stress this enough. And in order to do that, you must become attracted to the qualities of the Buddha. And for that, you must not be attracted to other things, such as all the so-called worldly gains, happiness, glory and wealth. You must again and again remind yourself that all those are futile. Your main motivation should be a strong longing for this Buddha, for yourself and for others. And therefore we are talking amount a certain amount of devotion. Even Buddha himself says the absolute truth can only be realised through devotion. And although there's nothing in the text about this, I like to talk about three kinds of devotion:

To be attracted to the teachings rather than worldly gains requires devotion. There are three kinds of devotion:

1) Irrational devotion, such as wrapping your penis with cotton before blowing yourself up

1) First there's irrational devotion, such as devoting yourself to someone with madness, with complete stupidity. You are so devoted to this person or this particular path that you will go through amazing stupidity, such as wrapping your penis with cotton before you blow yourself up, so when you reach heaven you can use that tool in order to enjoy certain virgins. It's so stupid to wrap it when you're going to blow yourself up, as your whole body will be blown up! Yet you try to keep this part intact, so that as you take your next breath you can enjoy, I think, 74 virgins. And they are not even infinite virgins! When you are done with one, then there are only 73 left, and that's suffering. I should be careful! I keep on forgetting I'm in France. Anyway, that's what we call irrational devotion.

2) Rational devotion, which is trust in cause, condition and effect, and which is taught for most of the Buddhist path

2) Then there's rational devotion, which is generally taught for most of the Buddhist path. This is based on the belief or trust in cause, condition and result. As I often say, it's like cooking an egg. If you have all the necessary causes and conditions, then you know the egg will be cooked, even if you pray that it won't be cooked. Most of the so-called practice of devotion in Buddhism is based on that. Even the inspiration to eliminate temporary or removable defilements is very much based on rational devotion, because you know that the dirt, the defilements, are caused and conditioned, so they are temporary. And based on that rationale we have trust that they can be removed. Similarly, when you know that everything is mind, you know that the only thing for you to do is tame your mind and train your mind. Therefore you should do shamatha and vipashyana, and all this is based on rational devotion.

3) Beyond-rational devotion, which is not irrational, and is required to comprehend the inconceivable qualities of the Buddha that are beyond our rationality

3) There is a third, beyond rational devotion that we should all aspire to have. It's beyond rational devotion, but it is not irrational. Without this kind of devotion, we will find it very difficult to comprehend everything that we talked about yesterday and all the things we are going to talk about today. Because as I said yesterday, the moment you hear the name 'Buddha', you have a certain image in your head, especially if you are a Buddhist. You think of someone who is extraordinary, but only extraordinary, as if he becomes beyond extraordinary, we cannot conceive of him. The human mind is so complicated! We want our Buddha to be amazingly beautiful, incredible, and have all kinds of great qualities. But we cannot fathom 100% perfection. It's just not possible.

We would like the Buddha to be extraordinary, but not too extraordinary. Out of his compassion, the Buddha gives us both what we want and what we need

The way we perceive an excellent or extraordinary being is very fickle. If he is too good, then we won't like that manifestation. We won't. We need to be able to identify ourselves with him. This is why some of us can relate to Milarepa's biography, but not to Guru Rinpoche's biography. How would you like to have a boyfriend or girlfriend, or a husband or wife, who was born from a hibiscus or a cabbage? You'd be hiding this partner from others! You wouldn't say, "this is my boyfriend, he was born from a cabbage". And all this is because we don't have this beyond-rational devotion. This alone is a great manifestation of compassion of the Buddha. We talked about how he will give you what you want and what you need, both together. Ordinary people like us cannot do this. For example, if you see an alcoholic, he might want alcohol but he doesn't need it. How are you going to give him what he wants and needs together? We can only take turns, but he can do it together.

Some Western scholars seem to believe that thinking of the Buddha as a normal human who suffers just like us makes him more approachable

I think there are some people nowadays, some scholars, who without realising these things believe that Buddha has suffering. And I have seen some things written quite proudly to justify that thesis that Buddha has suffering, that Buddha has emotion, that Buddha is a human being and so on. I think the author, let's call him Mr Steve, believes that he's doing a service to the Dharma by writing this. I have a feeling that he wants to scold the theologians by saying, "your God is unreachable, but our Buddha is a human, and he sometimes has ups and downs", things like that.

This kind of confusion arises because we cannot conceive that the entire nirmanakaya is just a show, a manifestation

I think these people believe that Buddha was upset when there was a schism within the Sangha, or when he was hit on the toe when Devadatta was throwing stones and he felt pain, stuff like that. I think that all this, such as thinking that he actually went through pain is a very human way of thinking. Because what makes a person extraordinary from a human being's perspective is when he doesn't have big sufferings. But if he doesn't even have little sufferings, then he becomes a bit alien and you cannot relate to him. But as long as he doesn't have the very big sufferings, then this person becomes extraordinary. All this is because we just cannot conceive that this is all a show, and this is all his manifestation. Now I have to clarify something here, because when we say, "he's just manifesting this", it could be understood as saying he's pretending for the

sake of sentient beings. That he pretends in public, and then when all the disciples go away he goes inside, closes the door and he cries and tends to his wounds! Basically, we think like that because most of the time we only have ourselves as a reference. So we think this is the only way. We think others must go through pain because we go through pain.

We must aspire to beyond-rational devotion to understand these qualities of the Buddha

So beyond-rational devotion is really important. We must aspire to have that. Then we will understand these incredible, deep, vast qualities of the Buddha.

The Buddha's qualities do not need to be created

We already have them all, and they are manifesting all the time, but we misinterpret this because of our ignorance

And I have to repeat that all these qualities of the Buddha are not something that you have to create or manufacture. According to many Nyingmapas and the Shentongpas in particular, you have them. You have all of them. Your Buddha-nature has all of these incredible, inconceivable qualities. And when I say that you have them, you might think, "Oh, I have them, but at the moment they are a bit like sleeping octopus". Basically, you might think they are not manifesting. But the amazing thing is they are never sleeping. They never stop. They are manifesting all the time, even though this gets misinterpreted most of the time because of our ignorance. So the shastras and even the sutras say that even a temporary cool breeze is the manifestation of the Buddha. This is not to be understood as suggesting that there is a group of breeze-creating Buddhas deciding to send you a cool breeze! For example, if you are hot, thirsty, and tired, your merit may for a moment manage to interpret a certain phenomenon as a cool breeze. But if you don't have that merit, you could be engaged in a heated argument with your wife as the small breeze passes, and there's no benefit!

Even a cool breeze can be the manifestation of the Buddha if we have the merit to interpret it

The Buddha's actions do not exhaust or run out. They are there all the time, but we don't get it!

The actions of the Buddha do not exhaust or run out. Whether it's a cool breeze or a beautiful sight of a falling autumn leaf that might inspire you and change your whole life, these actions do not exhaust. They are happening all the time, and you are just not getting it! They are not rare. It's not like it only happens in Kathmandu! Even with a cappuccino, first there is the stage of froth with chocolate on top, then comes the middle stage when it is post-froth, and then there is the complete disappearance of whatever you were drinking. There is continuous manifestation, all the time. And when I say the manifestations of the Buddha do not run out, you might think it's like a river that's flowing all the time, something continuous. But 'continuous' is not really the right word, as that means lots of different kinds of things continuing one after another, a bit like a mala or rosary with a single string. By contrast, the Buddha is there, basically. His Holiness Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche uses the example of a crystal, which refracts lots of rainbow light when you hold it up to the sun. If you hide it for a thousand years, there is no rainbow. But if after a thousand years you hold it up to the sun, suddenly all the rainbows are there again. The rainbows don't get confused. They are already there.

The Buddha is there. It's like a crystal that will produce rainbow light even after it has been hidden for a thousand years

If a falling leaf makes you think of impermanence, that's the blessing of the Buddha. But if it makes you want to listen to love songs instead, ignorance is at work!

If a cool breeze or a falling autumn leaf makes you feel really sad because it reminds you of impermanence, that's the blessing of the Buddha, right there. But if it makes you feel melancholic and you want to listen to touchy-feely love songs, then ignorance is working instead! If a hideous sight of two thighbones wrapped in a short skirt makes you think of the futility of worldly existence, you should really go to the Champs-Elysées as often as possible! But if that sight inspires you to other things, then ignorance is working again. I'm trying to find some opportunities to refer to Gérard, my usual example. But he has recently taken the full bhikshu vow, and it's supposedly really bad to make fun of a fully ordained bhikshu. I'm trying to find a way. Maybe we can talk about his pre-bhikshu days?

There is no externally existing manifestation of an externally existing Buddha

So, basically, when we talk about the manifestation of the Buddha, please don't think in terms of an externally existing manifestation of the Buddha. Never think like that. There's no externally existing Buddha plucking an autumn leaf in front of you.

229 རྒྱུ་མཐའ་ཡས་དང་སེམས་ཅན་ཟད་མེད་དང་། །
བརྩེ་དང་འཕྲུལ་དང་མཁྱེན་དང་ལྷན་ཚོགས་ལྡན། །
ཚོས་ཀྱི་དབང་ཕྱུག་འཆི་བདེ་བདུད་བཅོམ་དང་། །
ངོ་བོ་མེད་ཕྱིར་འཇིག་རྟེན་མགོན་པོས་བརྟན། །

Through infinite causes, an inexhaustible number of beings, compassionate love, miraculous powers, perfect knowledge, having the very best, mastery over all qualities, having vanquished the evil of death, insubstantiality and being the protector of the worlds–they are permanent:

There is permanence [since] the causes are endless and sentient beings inexhaustible [in number]. They have compassionate love, miraculous power, knowledge and utter [bliss]. They are masters of [all] qualities. The demon of death has been vanquished. Being not of the essence [of the compounded] it is the [true] protector of all worldly [beings].

The manifestations do not cease because Buddha has infinite causes to benefit beings, and there are endless beings to benefit

Why do these manifestations not discontinue? Why are they permanent? Because Buddha has endless causes to benefit sentient beings. There are endless sentient beings, and Buddha has to benefit all of them. He has the compassion to benefit sentient beings as long as samsara exists. And he has the miracle power to remain until samsara ceases to exist.

Buddha will not give up samsara, primarily because he has realised samsara and nirvana are equal. Also because he has the bliss of samadhi, and he is unstained by samsaric faults

There are three reasons why the Buddha will not give up samsara. First and most important, he has realised that samsara and nirvana are equal, so there is nothing to abandon and nothing to adopt. That's the main one. Also, while he manifests in samsara, he always has the bliss of samadhi, and samsaric faults will not stain him. This will be explained, as usual. This is something so good about

the Uttaratantra. It's explained again and again, even within the root text. Now he explains in more detail why the rupakaya is inexhaustible or permanent.

230 ལུས་དང་སྲོག་དང་ལོངས་སྤྱོད་རྣམས། །
བཀུར་ནས་དམ་ཆོས་འཛིན་ཕྱིར་དང་། །
སེམས་ཅན་ཀུན་ལ་ཕན་པའི་ཕྱིར། །
དང་པོར་དམ་བཅས་མཐར་ཕྱིན་ཕྱིར། །

Because, having devoted their bodies, lives and resources, they uphold the true Dharma, because of completely fulfilling their initial promises to benefit beings.

Having offered bodies, lives and goods they [purely] uphold the sacred Dharma. In order to benefit all sentient beings they fulfil their vow as initially taken.

231 སངས་རྒྱས་ཉིད་ནི་གཙོ་བ་དང་། །
དག་པའི་ཐུགས་རྗེ་རབ་འཇུག་ཕྱིར། །
རྫུ་འཕྲུལ་ཞབས་པ་སྟོན་པར་ནི། །
དེ་ཡིས་གནས་པར་སྤྱོད་པའི་ཕྱིར། །

Because the stainless and pure compassion of the Buddhas permeates all beings, because they manifest, through the bases of miraculous powers, by which they display abiding,

Buddhahood supremely expresses itself as compassion both cleansed and purified. Appearing on the feet of miraculous powers they [can] act forever by means of these.

232 མཁྱེན་པས་འཁོར་དང་མྱ་ངན་འདས། །
གཉིས་སུ་འཛིན་ལས་གྲོལ་བའི་ཕྱིར། །
རྟག་ཏུ་བསམ་ཡས་ཏིང་འཛིན་གྱི། །
བདེ་བ་ཕུན་སུམ་ཚོགས་ལྡན་ཕྱིར། །

Because, having perfect knowledge, they are freed from believing in a samsara-nirvana duality, because they have very best of bliss of constant and unimaginable samadhis.

By knowledge they are freed from the belief fixed on the duality of samsara and nirvana. They always possess the best possible bliss of samadhi, beyond ideation [and end].

No compounded phenomena are permanent, but the Buddha's qualities are not compounded phenomena

When we talk about 'permanent', you should know that it is just language that we have to use. You all know that in Buddhism there is not a single compounded phenomenon that is permanent. And that works well here, because none of the Buddha's qualities are compounded phenomena, especially according to the Shentongpas. But there's a difficulty here, because we have to talk about his activity, how he benefits sentient beings. And when you think of the Buddha's

On the rupakaya level, where we talk of Buddha benefiting sentient beings we use the word 'permanent' to mean 'continuous'

activities, you will wonder how can Buddha be permanent, because his activity has to benefit sentient beings, and 'benefit' means there must be a beginning, end and middle, otherwise it's not a benefit. So here, when we talk about 'permanent', especially on the rupakaya level, we're talking more in terms of it being continuous, and that's why we use the word 'permanent'. It's a continuous phenomenon, like a permanent residence.

The Buddhas remain in samsara in order to benefit sentient beings

The rupakaya is continuously permanent, because it has all the causes and reasons to exist in order to benefit sentient beings. For instance, when the Buddhas were Bodhisattvas for three countless eons they sacrificed their bodies, lives and wealth for a single word of Dharma. And there's a purpose to Buddhas remaining in samsara, because they have to benefit the endless sentient beings. And right at the beginning when they took the Bodhisattva vow, they vowed to liberate all sentient beings, and that vow is to be fulfilled.

There are three reasons why Buddha will continue to benefit sentient beings in samsara:

And because the Buddha has eliminated defilements and cognitive obscurations, Buddha's compassion is unobstructed. Even though he might wish to liberate all sentient beings, one might wonder if he will have enough time to accomplish this. But he has miraculous powers that allow him to remain forever if he wishes. There are three reasons why the Buddha will not give up benefiting sentient beings in samsara.

1) He sees no difference between samsara and nirvana, so there is no giving up samsara

1) If he thought that samsara and nirvana were different, there might be good reasons for him to give up, but that is not the case. He doesn't see any difference between samsara and nirvana. Neither has any essence, so there is no such thing as giving up samsara.

2) The downfalls of samsara do not bother him as he always dwells in the bliss of samadhi

2) If the downfall of samsara bothered him or interfered with him, there might be a possibility that he could give up samsara. But samsaric suffering never bothers him, as he is always dwelling in the bliss of samadhi.

3) Samsaric defilements cannot stain him, as he is like a lotus

3) (The first two lines of stanza 233). If samsaric defilements could stain him, it might also be possible he could give up samsara. But that is also not the case, because he is like a lotus. While the lotus is born in the mud, the mud does not stain it.

233 འཇིག་རྟེན་ན་ནི་སྤྱོད་པ་ན། །
འཇིག་རྟེན་ཆོས་ཀྱིས་གོས་མེད་ཕྱིར། །
འཆི་མེད་ཞི་བའི་གནས་ཐོབ་ལ། །
འཆི་བདུད་རྒྱུ་བ་མེད་པའི་ཕྱིར། །

Because even though they act in the world, by worldly qualities they are unblemished, because, being immortal and having attained the state of peace, there is no opportunity for the evil of death.

While acting in the world [for other's good] they are unsullied by all worldly phenomena. Free from dying, it is the attainment of peace. In this sphere the demon of death cannot roam.

234 འདུས་མ་བྱས་པའི་རང་བཞིན་གྱི། །
ཐུབ་པ་གདོད་ནས་རབ་ཞི་ཕྱིར། །
རྟག་པ་སྐྱབས་མེད་རྣམས་ཀྱི་ནི། །
སྐྱབས་ལ་སོགས་པར་འཐད་ཕྱིར་རོ། །

Because the victors, whose nature is uncreated, have been forever perfectly at peace and because they are most suited as refuge and so forth for those without a source of refuge.

The state of the Muni being of uncreated nature has been fully pacified since beginningless time. For all those who are bereft of permanent shelter it provides the most delightful refuge and so on.

Dharmakaya is permanent, because the demon of death cannot enter the dharmakaya. In the Vajrayana, we refer to Guru Rinpoche as the 'skull garland lotus born deathless' one

Now we are talking about the cause for dharmakaya being permanent, in the last two lines of stanza 233 and stanza 234. Dharmakaya is free from death, because the demon or mara of death cannot enter or steal within the dharmakaya. These things are exposed more in the Vajrayana, in a more raw fashion so to speak. For instance, we refer to Guru Rinpoche as 'skull garland lotus-born deathless' (*Chimey Pema Tötreng*) or 'boundless life' (*Tsepamey*). Again, all these things are here partly because we like our god, our Buddha, to have extraordinary qualities. We like them to have certain faults, but we don't want them to have certain faults that we have, particularly death. Death is considered a big fault, a big mistake, and if the saviour, the object of refuge also has that fault, then you could almost say what's the point? So immortality is therefore appreciated and sought after.

The real demon of death is dualism, which is completely absent from the dharmakaya, so the dharmakaya is always peaceful

This is why the three kayas are the only unfailing object of refuge

Within the dharmakaya, the demon of death has no place to roam around, because the real demon of death is dualism, things like right and left, beauty and ugliness, samsara and nirvana. When you are closer to the right, then it's the death of the left. When you're closer to beauty, it's the death of the ugliness. And all of that is gone during the state of the dharmakaya. Not only gone, but gone beyond. It's like the sky without any clouds. This is why dharmakaya is always peaceful. Right from the beginning, there is no birth and no death, as there is no cause or condition that interferes with dharmakaya. This is why the dharmakaya, actually all the three kayas, is the only unfailing object of refuge.

If our object of refuge is even a little bit ordinary, then it is no longer an unfailing object of refuge

As we said earlier, we all like our object of refuge to be extraordinary, but if he becomes too special then we don't like it. So he has to have a little bit of the ordinary about him, some ordinary-ness. But as long as he has a little bit of ordinary-ness then he might fail you, as there's always a loophole. For example, let's say that he can fly, he can swim, and he can remember the past lifetimes of himself and others and predict the future for thousands or millions of lifetimes. Let's say that he has all the Buddha qualities, but let's also say his favourite food

is pizza, which is your favourite food so you want him to have the same favourite as you. Now he might not fail you for 100 years, and give you whatever you need. But then one day you come to a place where there's no oven, no cheese, no flour and all of this, and then he's no longer an object of refuge!

Buddha has no dualism or preferences, so he cannot be bribed or manipulated

Buddha is the unfailing object of refuge because he has no favouritism or dualism. He cannot get upset, and he cannot be bribed. There's nothing he prefers, so you cannot bribe or manipulate him.

235 དང་པོ་ཡི་ནི་རྒྱུ་བདུན་གྱིས། །
གཟུགས་ཀྱི་སྐུ་ཡི་རྒྱས་ཁྱད་དེ། །
ཕྱི་མ་གསུམ་གྱིས་སྟོན་པ་ནི། །
ཆོས་ཀྱི་སྐུ་ཡི་རྒྱས་པ་ཁྱད། །

The first seven reasons demonstrate the form kayas' permanence and the last three demonstrate the dharmakaya's permanence.

The first seven reasons clarify the permanence of the form kayas, while the latter three illustrate why the dharmakaya lasts forever.

There are ten reasons why Buddha is permanent. The first seven refer to the rupakayas, and the last three to dharmakaya

In conclusion, we have talked about ten reasons. The first seven are the reasons why the rupakayas are permanent, and the last three are the reasons why dharmakaya is permanent. We've been talking about it being inconceivable and unthinkable. And that's what we're now going to explain, again with lots of summary, detail and all that.

236 ངག་ཡུལ་མིན་ཕྱིར་དོན་དམ་གྱིས་བསྡུས་ཕྱིར། །
རྟོག་གཞན་མིན་ཕྱིར་དཔེ་ལས་འདས་པའི་ཕྱིར། །
བྱ་ན་མེད་ཕྱིར་སྲིད་ཞིས་མ་བསྡུས་ཕྱིར། །
རྒྱལ་ཡུལ་འཕགས་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་ཀྱང་བསམ་མི་ཕྱེད། །

Since it is ineffable, consists of the ultimately true, is not the object of intellectual investigation, is beyond example, is peerless and comprised of neither conditioned existence nor "peace", it is the domain of the Buddhas, inconceivable for even the deeply-realized.

It is not an object of speech and is embraced by the absolute. It is not a field for ideation and is beyond any example, unexcelled and not embraced by existence and peace. Even the noble cannot conceive the sphere of the Victor.

The three kayas are inconceivable and beyond expression, conception, analysis or example.

The three kayas are inconceivable. Even the sublime beings that dwell on the tenth bhumi cannot conceive or comprehend this, let alone ordinary beings. It cannot be expressed, because it is absolute truth, the absolute absolute, the final absolute. No conceptual analysis can enter it. You cannot analyse it with

The three kayas are neither samsara nor nirvana

ordinary mind. There is no example. It is the most supreme. And the three kayas are neither samsara nor nirvana. These reasons are explained in more detail.

237 བསམ་མེད་བརྗོད་དུ་མེད་ཕྱིར་ཏེ། །
བརྗོད་མེད་དོན་དམ་ཡིན་ཕྱིར་རོ། །
དོན་དམ་བརྟག་བྱ་མིན་ཕྱིར་ཏེ། །
བརྟག་མིན་རྗེས་དཔག་བྱ་མིན་ཕྱིར། །

Inconceivable because it is ineffable, ineffable because it is the ultimately true, ultimately true because it cannot be investigated intellectually, intellectually uninvestigable because it cannot be deduced,

It is inconceivable since it cannot be verbally expressed. It is inexpressible since it consists of the absolute [truth]. It is absolute since it cannot be [intellectually] scrutinized. It is inscrutable since it cannot be inferentially deduced.

238 དཔག་མིན་བླ་ན་མེད་པའི་ཕྱིར། །
བླ་ན་མེད་པ་མ་བསྡུས་ཕྱིར། །
མ་བསྡུས་གནས་པ་མེད་ཕྱིར་ཏེ། །
ཡོན་ཏན་སྐྱོན་རྟོག་མེད་ཕྱིར་རོ། །

Non-deducible since it is peerless, peerless because it is uncomprised, uncomprised because it does not abide since qualities and faults are not conceptualized.

It is not deducible since it is peerless, the highest of all. It is the highest of all since it is not comprised by anything. It is uncomprised since it does not dwell [on any extreme]. This is because there is no dualistic idea of quality and fault.

Why the three kayas are inconceivable and beyond expression, conception, analysis or example

The three kayas cannot be perceived even by the tenth bhumi Bodhisattvas, because they cannot be expressed by speech. All speech, words, and language are relative, so language, words, and speech are all dependent. Anything that depends on something else can be manipulated and so it is fickle. Therefore the absolute truth cannot be expressed. It is absolute truth because it is beyond conceptions. When you conceptualise, you always have a reference such as an example, which means you can only use inferential logic. No absolute truth can be analysed and we can never find an example because there is nothing that is equal to the three kayas, so it is peerless. Anything that has a peer is within samsara and nirvana, but this is beyond samsara and nirvana, so there is no peer or equal. And the three kayas are neither samsara nor nirvana, because from the point of view of the three kayas, samsara is never understood as a fault, and nirvana is never looked up to as some kind of blessing.

From the perspective of the three kayas, samsara is never seen as a fault nor nirvana as a blessing

239 རྒྱུ་ལྔ་དག་གིས་ཕྲ་བའི་ཕྱིར། །
ཆོས་སྐུ་བསམ་མི་ཕྱུབ་པ་སྟེ། །
དྲུག་པས་དེ་ཡི་དངོས་མིན་ཕྱིར། །
གཟུགས་སྐུ་བསམ་མི་ཕྱུབ་པའོ། །

For five reasons is the dharmakaya inconceivable, being by them extremely subtle, and by the sixth are the form kayas inconceivable, since they are non-substantial.

For the [first] five reasons the dharmakaya is subtle and thus beyond the reach of thought. For the sixth the form kayas are inconceivable. [They show appearance] but are not something that fulfils the function of this.

There are six reasons the Buddha is inconceivable. The first five refer to the dharmakaya, the sixth to the rupakayas

There are six reasons. The first five are to establish that dharmakaya is inconceivable, and the sixth reason is to establish that the rupakayas are unthinkable, because even though they appear to have birth and death, they are not stained by that kind of fault.

240 ཐུགས་མེད་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཐུགས་རྗེ་ཆེ་སོགས་ཡོན་ཏན་གྱིས། །
ཡོན་ཏན་ཕ་རོལ་བྱིན་པའི་རྒྱལ་བ་བསམ་མི་ཕྱུབ། །
དེས་ན་རང་བྱུང་རྣམས་ཀྱི་ཐ་མའི་ཚུལ་འདི་ནི། །
དབང་སྒྲོང་ཆེན་པོ་དབང་ཐོབ་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་ཀྱང་རིག་མིན། །

Through their attributes of jñana unsurpassable, great compassion and others like these, the victors have perfected every quality and are inconceivable. Therefore is this final point, the spontaneously-present, not even understood by great sages who have received empowerment.

Since through peerless primordial wisdom, great compassion and further attributes all qualities are finally perfected, the Victor is inconceivable. Thus the last mode of the Self-Sprung Ones is not even seen by those Great Sages who have received "the Empowerment [of Splendorous Light Rays]".

The Buddha's qualities of wisdom and compassion are beyond samsara and nirvana, and cannot even be expressed by the tenth bhumi Bodhisattvas

This is the conclusion of the chapter. These great, peerless qualities such as wisdom and compassion do not dwell within the extremes of samsara or nirvana. Such qualities cannot be expressed even by the great sages, referring to the tenth bhumi Bodhisattvas, or even by those who have received the abhisheka of the great luminosity. The tenth bhumi Bodhisattvas are not ordinary, you know! As explained in the Madhyamakavatara, if they wish to, they can instantly see hundreds of millions of Buddhas or manifest themselves into hundreds of millions of forms. Forget about us, but even the Bodhisattvas on the paths of accumulation and application cannot distinguish the tenth bhumi Bodhisattvas from the real Buddha. And yet it's said that the tenth bhumi Bodhisattva's wisdom is like the water collected within the footprint of a cow, whereas the Buddha's wisdom like the ocean. That's the end of the second chapter.

ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོ་རྒྱུད་བླ་མའི་བསྟན་བཅོས་དཀོན་མཆོག་གི་རིགས་རྣམ་པར་དབྱེ་བ་ལས། བྱང་ཆུབ་ཀྱི་སྐབས་དེ་གཉིས་པའོ།། །།

This was the second chapter, on enlightenment, from the Analysis of the Potential for the Rare and Supreme in this "Ultimate Mahayana Treatise on the Changeless Continuity of the True Nature".

This was the section "Enlightenment", the second chapter of The Commentary on the Highest Continuity of the Mahayana Dharma that Analyzes the Disposition of the Rare and the Sublime Ones.

Chapter Three

The Sixth Vajra Point: Qualities

241 རང་དོན་གཞན་དོན་དོན་བམ་སྐུ་དང་ནི། །
དེ་ལ་བརྟེན་པ་ཀུན་ཇོང་སྐུ་ཉིད་དེ། །
བྲལ་དང་རྣམ་པར་སྨིན་པའི་འབྲས་བུ་ནི། །
ཡོན་ཏན་བཞི་བ་དྲུག་ཏུ་བཞི་འདི་དག །

Fulfilment for oneself and benefit for the others are the ultimate-true kaya and its dependent relative-true kayas. The fruits of freedom and perfect maturity are their sixty-four qualities.

Benefit for oneself and benefit for others are equivalent to the ultimate kaya and the relative kayas based upon it. Being the fruits of freedom and complete maturation these are [endowed with] sixty-four types of qualities.

The dharmakaya contains the rupakaya, and these two contain all Buddha qualities

We are now talking about the qualities of enlightenment (*changchub*), the qualities of the Buddha. The containers of these qualities are the rupakaya and dharmakaya, but there is only one real container – the dharmakaya. The dharmakaya is the real container that contains the rupakaya, and these two kayas then act as container for all the Buddha qualities. There are 64 Buddha qualities. 32 qualities are the result of elimination (*dralwey dreybu*), and the other 32 qualities are the effect of maturation. There's a debate here, but in brief I think many of the Rangtongpas might not say this effect of maturation is actually a direct effect of the result of elimination, so in other words, they would say that these qualities need to be cultivated. These 64 qualities are what we are going to explain. Now there is another brief summary.

There are 64 Buddha qualities. 32 are *draldrey*, the result of elimination, and the other 32 are the effect of maturation

The Rangtongpas might say the second set of 32 needs to be cultivated

242 བདག་ཉིད་ཀྱི་ནི་འབྱོར་པའི་གནས། །
བམ་པའི་དོན་ཀྱི་སྐུ་ཡིན་ཏེ། །
ཕྱང་སྒོང་རྣམས་ཀྱི་བརྟ་ཡི་སྐུ། །
ཕ་རོལ་ལུན་སུམ་ཆོགས་པའི་གནས། །

The ground for acquiring fulfilment for oneself is the embodiment of the ultimate truth. The symbolic embodiments of the great sages are the ground for the greatest possible altruism.

The abode adhering to [benefit] for oneself is the kaya being [wisdom's] sacred object. The symbolic kaya of sages is the ground of best possible [benefit] for other beings.

243 དང་པོའི་སྐུ་ནི་སྟོབས་ལ་སོགས། །
བྱལ་བའི་ཡོན་ཏན་རྣམས་དང་ལྡན། །
གཉིས་པ་སྨྱོས་བྱ་ཆེན་པོའི་མཚན། །
རྣམ་སྨིན་ཡོན་ཏན་དག་དང་ལྡན། །

The first kaya is endowed with freedom's qualities – powers and so on. The second with maturity's qualities – the marks of a perfect being.

The first kaya has the qualities of freedom, which are the qualities of power and so on. The second has those of full maturation, which are the marks of a great being.

The 32 qualities of the dharmakaya are the Buddha's own wealth, and the 32 qualities of the rupakaya are the wealth for others. In reality, they are all one

The 64 qualities are divided between the two kayas, the dharmakaya and the rupakaya. The 32 qualities of the dharmakaya are what we call the wealth for the Buddha himself, his own personal wealth that benefits himself so to speak. And the other 32 qualities, those of the rupakaya, are to be enjoyed by others. This is where all the activity of benefiting sentient beings comes from. But all these are only distinguished for the sake of explanation. We have to talk as if there are two kayas and 64 qualities and all that, but in reality they are all one. The 32 qualities of the dharmakaya, which are the result of elimination, are:

The 32 qualities of the dharmakaya are:
- The ten powers
- The four fearlessnesses
- The eighteen uncommon qualities

- The ten powers (*tobchu*)
- The four fearlessnesses (*mi jigpa zhi*)
- The eighteen uncommon (or distinctive) qualities

The 32 qualities of the rupakaya are the 32 major marks

The 32 qualities of the dharmakaya cannot be appreciated by other beings, so we refer to them as his own wealth

The qualities of the rupakaya are the 32 major marks, which we will explain tomorrow. The reason why we have to distinguish between his own wealth and the wealth that can benefit others is that his own wealth cannot be appreciated by other beings. For example, he has the quality *wangpo khyenpa*, which allows him to see every single sentient being's sense elements, constituents and so on, but ordinary people cannot really relate to this kind of quality, so it is more like his own wealth.

The 32 qualities of the rupakaya can be appreciated by disciples. Shentongpas say these qualities have always been present, but Rangtongpas say they need to be cultivated

By contrast, qualities such as the ushnisha at the top of his head or his lips that are like the bimpa fruit are things that others such as the audience, his disciplines, can appreciate. Shentongpa masters would say that the effects of maturation, like the 32 major marks, are there right from the beginning. They say that not even a single lock of hair can be produced. But the Rangtongpa masters would say those things need to be cultivated, and the way they are cultivated is through two aspirations. For example, when the Buddha was a Bodhisattva, he engaged in prayers. And when disciples like us generate our devotion and our pure vision (*dak nang*), then we begin to see these qualities.

244 སྟོང་བས་ཉིད་མ་རིག་སྒྲིབ་ལ་རྡོ་རྗེ་བཞིན། །
མི་འཇིགས་ཉིད་ནི་འཁོར་དུ་སེང་གེ་བཞིན། །
དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་མ་འདྲེས་མཁའ་བཞིན་ཏེ། །
ཐུབ་པའི་བསྟན་པ་རྣམ་གཉིས་ཆུ་ཟླ་བཞིན། །

Against ignorance's veils, the powers are like a vajra and the fearlessnesses in any situation like a lion. Like space are the tathagatas' distinctive qualities and like the moon in water the two aspects victors manifest.

Power is like a vajra against the veil of unknowing. Fearlessness acts like a lion amidst [any] assembly. Like space are the unmixed features of the Tathagata, like a water-moon the two facets of the Muni's teaching.

The powers are like a vajra, the fearlessnesses are like a lion, and the uncommon qualities are like space

Power (as in the ten powers) is like a vajra. It has the power to dispel ignorance, and it does not get dispelled in return. That's the vajra. It has the power to dispel something else, but nothing can dispel it. When HH Dudjom Rinpoche praised the compassion of the Buddha, he said, "he knows how to grasp with compassion, but he doesn't know how to give it up". Fearlessness (as in the four fearlessnesses) is like a lion. When Buddha is surrounded by a mass of people, he has no nervousness. And the eighteen uncommon qualities are like the sky, because no other phenomena resemble them. This is again explained thoroughly. First we will talk about the 32 qualities that are the result of elimination: the ten powers, four fearlessnesses and eighteen uncommon qualities.

The Ten Powers

245 གནས་དང་གནས་མིན་ལས་རྣམས་ཀྱི། །
རྣམ་སྨིན་དང་ནི་དབང་པོ་དང་། །
ཁམས་རྣམས་དང་ནི་མོས་པ་དང་། །
ཀུན་འགྲོའི་ལམ་དང་བསམ་གཏན་སོགས། །

To know the appropriate and the inappropriate, the full maturation of actions, faculties, temperaments, wishes, the paths that lead everywhere,

Knowing what is worthwhile and worthless, knowing the ripening product of all action, knowing faculties, temperaments and wishes, knowing the path reaching the entire range,

246 ཏིན་མོངས་དྲི་མ་མེད་པ་དང་། །
གནས་གོ་རྗེས་སུ་དྲན་པ་དང་། །
ལྷ་ཡི་མིག་དང་ཞི་བ་དག །
མཁྱེན་པའི་སྟོབས་གོ་རྣམ་པ་བཅུ། །

Meditative stability and so on–that unblemished by defilement, remembrance of former states, divine vision and peace the ten powers of perfect knowledge are these.

Knowing meditative stability and so on – when it is afflicted or without pollution – memory of past states, divine sight and peace are the ten aspects of the power of knowledge.

The Buddha's ten powers are his knowledge of:

1) What is fitting
2) Karma
3) Faculties
4) Elements/disposition
5) Aspiration
6) Vehicles
7) Defilements/stainless
8) Remembering the past
9) Birth and death
10) What will exhaust each defilement

First he will just present the names of the ten powers, then he will explain them in detail. Maitreya is so kind, really kind. Now you are really beginning to learn about the omniscience of the Buddha in more detail. The ten powers are:

1) His wisdom knows what is fitting or unfitting.
2) He knows karma, the result or maturity of a particular karma. This is a really important power, as many people think karma is easy to learn, as usually when we talk about karma, we talk about cause, condition and effect. But only the Buddha knows the real detail of karma and its effect.
3) Only his wisdom knows who has what kind of faculties.
4) Only he knows who has what kind of element or disposition (*kham*).
5) Only he knows who has what kind of aspiration (*möpa*).
6) Only he knows the different vehicles of the path, and who needs what kind of vehicle.
7) Only he knows the difference between what is defilement and what is stainless.
8) Only he can recall or remember (though 'remember' is not really the right word) absolutely all past events, places, times and so on.
9) Only he with his divine eye can see death, transformation and birth in absolute detail.
10) And only he can tell what will exhaust each distinct defilement (*sakpa*).

These are the ten powers, and now these will be explained again.

247 གནས་དང་གནས་མིན་རྣམ་སྨིན་ལམས་དང་འགྲོ་བའི་མོས་པ་སྣ་ཚོགས་དང་། །
ཏིན་མོངས་རྣམ་བྱང་དབང་པོའི་ཚོགས་དང་སྟོན་གནས་རྗེས་སུ་དྲན་པ་དང་། །
ལྷ་ཡི་མིག་དང་ཟག་པ་ཟད་ཚུལ་མི་ཤེས་གོ་ཆ་ཐུག་བརྟན་དང་། །
ཤིང་རྣམས་འབེགས་དང་འཇིག་དང་གཅོད་ཕྱིར་སྟོབས་གང་ཡིན་པ་རྣོ་རྗེ་བཞིན། །

Such powers – the appropriate and inappropriate, full maturations, temperaments, beings' wishes, the various paths, the defiled and perfectly pure, the groupings of

faculties, remembrance of former states, divine vision and the way to exhaust impurity – are like a vajra because they penetrate ignorance's armour, shatter its walls and hew down its tree.

[Knowing] the worthwhile and worthless, complete ripening, the various temperaments, paths and aspirations of beings, their manifold faculties, the defiled and the utterly pure, remembrance of previous states [of existence], divine sight and [knowing] the way in which [all] pollution is exhausted piercingly destroys the armour of ignorance, fells its trees and smashes its unshakable walls, laying them in utter ruin. Such power therefore resembles an [indestructible] vajra.

Virtuous thoughts or actions give a favourable or attractive result

The powers are explained with an example. Virtuous thoughts or actions give a result that is attractive or favourable. They will not result in unfavourable or unattractive experiences. This is a very general explanation, because we can only generalise.

Everything that we talk about is generalisation and guesswork, but it is good generalisation

All the things that we talk about are generalisations, like five aggregates, five Buddha families, five emotions, and five paths. Why? Because we don't have these ten powers. From now until the last stage of the tenth bhumi Bodhisattva, everything that we do is guesswork. Until you have these ten powers, everything that you do is guesswork. But they are good generalisations. And your guesses will become better and better. Generalisations are all that we can rely on. It's like if you have some French guests coming for dinner, as long as there is a bottle of red wine, you are safe. If some Indians come, you are safe with some masalas.

When we talk about good and bad karma, we generalise based on ethics, morality, and our innate sense of justice

When we talk about karma, we say don't kill, don't lie, and don't cheat because you will have bad consequences. We don't only talk about this in Buddhism, but also in the mundane world – ethics, morality, all this. It comes from all kinds of things – culture, traditions, teachings, books and so on. And there is a good cause of all this morality and ethics, which is something a bit like empathy. Like let's say you have never had any kinds of religious influence for seven generations. No one told you that you shouldn't steal or cheat and all that. Maybe you see somebody's handbag wide open and you could steal a couple of Euros and maybe that will buy you a good lunch. But you do not do it because you feel uncomfortable. There are no rules. There's no religion and no police to catch you, but you feel uncomfortable. Or let's say you are such a bad person that you don't feel bad about stealing, but nevertheless if somebody steals from you, you don't like it.

So although the general rule is that if you do something bad you will not have good outcomes such as success and long life, this doesn't always seem to work. Only the Buddha knows what is 'fitting' and 'unfitting'

These things have resulted in some kind of ethic. One should not tell lies, because there are bad consequences. And in religions, we go even further. They say that if you tell a lie now, then in your next life you will go through various consequences. But then we see there are many contradictory phenomena in this world, certain people who do many bad things and yet are successful and live long. So although the general rule might be that if you do something bad, you will not be successful or live long, it doesn't always work! For some people the

opposite appears to be true. So, what's happening? Is the law of karma also biased? These are the kinds of things we call 'fitting' and 'unfitting'.

We can only generalise when we talk about someone like George Bush. We might say that he is American, and that it's generally the whole world's bad karma to have him there. Or maybe we could say it's our good karma, and having him there will exhaust all of our bad karma within these four years. We might say it's Donald Rumsfeld's great karma to have a great leader like him to work for. You understand. It's things like that. It's very difficult to generalise, and only the Buddha knows what's really happening in the karmic system. Karma is very scientific in terms of cause, condition and effect. But usually we generalise and only include certain causes when we say, 'these causes and conditions gives us this kind of result'. It's even like that in the scientific world. Ten years ago, they might have talked about how a certain medicine would bring various benefits, and today they might say that this same medicine has caused various diseases. This is fitting and unfitting. We don't have the knowledge. And it's also why there will never be an absolutely correct diet book. Maybe in ten years someone will find all the diseases that have been caused because of Dr. Atkins' diet. Only the Buddha can write the absolutely right diet book!

Although karma is very scientific in terms of cause, condition and effect, we always generalise when we describe which causes lead to which results. Only the Buddha doesn't generalise about karma

Another very important power is his ability to understand people's disposition (*kham*). Vajrayana people talk about this a lot. For example, you know how we like to date people. We want to talk to them, be with them, and more – with or without a cheese grater! We like to build relationships. But it doesn't work, because beings' dispositions are different. We can only generalise, of course. The first day you meet someone, you're already generalising. If you're a man, instead of looking at her eyes, you're looking at something else. But it all works, to a certain extent. It lasts for about 90 or 100 years, and we call it 'success'. Although I think on average nowadays, it lasts only two years.

Likewise, only the Buddha knows the dispositions of beings. The rest of us always generalise, for example in relationships

The difficulty is that the other person's disposition is changing all the time. It could be for a simple reason, like a bee that has recently been flying to a flower, and the bee is flying back and is carrying some pollen, and one drop of the pollen gets into your partner's nose, and that can cause the whole upset of their disposition. You understand? And normally you talk a certain way to your partner, but now that doesn't work, and it's all because of this pollen, just one drop, which was innocently dropped by this bee! So whatever you say at that time, honey, sugar, salt, butter, whatever you say, whatever gift you give, it won't work! This is particularly important when it comes to teaching, because a teaching has to take account of a person's emotions, defilements, obscurations, five aggregates and so on. They are all related. And because a person's disposition changes every single moment, only the Buddha can apply the right medicine for their particular disposition at a given moment.

The difficulty is that our dispositions change all the time

Only the Buddha can apply the right medicine for a particular disposition at a particular moment

Likewise, only the Buddha knows our aspirations at any given moment

Only the Buddha knows which vehicles or paths are necessary to benefit different people

And then there is aspiration. Different sentient beings have different aspirations. And even if, for example, I aspire to become enlightened, that doesn't mean anything! It's just a big generalisation. Each moment we have a slightly different aspiration, and only the Buddha knows each of these aspirations, which is why only he can give absolutely the right dosage of the right medicine at the right time. We also generalise about vehicles. Now we talk about the Shravakayana, Mahayana and Vajrayana and that's about it, as that's all we can imagine. Only Buddha has the capacity to understand vehicles. It could be that those who were born in the desert have the disposition and aspiration to cover their faces, and for them, he may have taught that you have to pray to the almighty five times a day, things like that. This is a big compliment, coming from me! And for others who have a certain disposition, perhaps he taught that it's necessary to have a concept such as 'saviour', and all of that. We don't know! Only he knows these things.

How the ten powers are like a vajra

Anyway, if we compare these ten powers to the example of a vajra:

- The first six are like a vajra that pierces and destroys the armour of ignorance.
- And the next three are like a vajra that destroys the wall of ignorance
- The last one is like a vajra that cuts ignorance

The Four Fearlessnesses

248 ཆོས་ཀུན་རྫོགས་པར་བྱང་ཆུབ་དང། །
གེགས་ནི་འགོག་པར་བྱེད་པ་དང། །
ལམ་སྟོན་པ་དང་འགོག་སྟོན་ལ། །
མི་འཛིགས་པ་ནི་རྣམ་པ་བཞི། །

In everything perfectly enlightened, in bringing cease to hindrances, in teaching the path and stating cessation, they have four kinds of fearlessness.

Perfectly enlightened [in] all phenomena, setting an end to [all] hindrances, teaching the path and showing cessation are the four aspects of fearlessness.

The four fearlessnesses. Buddha has no fear in saying:

1) All phenomena have always been enlightened

2) Defilements obstruct enlightenment and need to be destroyed

Now the four fearlessnesses:

1) He has no fear in saying that all phenomena have always been enlightened, because there is no opponent who can contradict him.
2) He has no fear in saying that defilements are obstacles to enlightenment, and therefore they need to be destroyed, because no one can contradict him.

3) The 37-fold Bodhisattva path will take you to enlightenment

4) He has attained the cessation of suffering

3) He has no fear in saying that the 37-fold Bodhisattva path is the path that will take you to enlightenment, because again no one can contradict or defeat him.
4) And then he has no fear to claim that he has attained nirodha, the cessation of suffering.

249 བདག་གཞན་ཤེས་བྱའི་དངོས་པོ་རྣམ་ཀུན་ཤེས་དང་ཤེས་མཛད་ཕྱིར། །
སྤང་དངོས་སྤངས་དང་སྤོང་མཛད་ཕྱིར་དང་བརྟེན་བྱ་བསྟེན་པའི་ཕྱིར། །
ཐོབ་བྱ་བླ་མེད་ཤིན་ཏུ་དྲི་མེད་ཐོབ་དང་ཐོབ་མཛད་ཕྱིར། །
རང་གཞན་དོན་ལྡན་གསུང་ཕྱིར་དྲང་སྲོང་གང་དུའང་ཐོགས་པ་མེད། །

Because they themselves know and help others to know every aspect of the knowledge, because they have relinquished and help others relinquish those things which must be relinquished, because they teach and make taught and because they have attained and help attain the utterly stainless highest attainment, they truthfully tell others their own realization and in so doing are unhindered in any way.

Knowing and causing [others] to know all the different aspects of things that are to be known of oneself and others, having abandoned and causing abandonment of all things that are to be abandoned, having relied on what is to be relied upon, having attained and causing attainment of the Peerless and Stainless to be attained, they relate their own truth to others. Thus the Great Sages are unhindered anywhere.

The four fearlessnesses allow beings to follow the Four Noble Truths

What do these four fearlessnesses do? First, Buddha has actualised the truth that all phenomena are the truth of suffering, and he will guide all other beings to actualise it. He has abandoned the cause of all suffering, and he will guide others to do the same. He has practised the path to the cessation of suffering, and he will guide others to do the same. He has obtained the cessation of suffering, and he will guide others reach the same. And this is what the four fearlessnesses do.

250 རི་དྭགས་དབང་པོ་ཇི་ལྟར་ནགས་མཐར་རྒྱ་འཛིག་མེད། །
རི་དྭགས་རྣམས་ལ་སླེབ་པ་མེད་པར་རྒྱུ་བ་ལྟར། །
དེ་བཞིན་ཚོགས་ནང་ཐུབ་པའི་དབང་པོ་སེང་གེ་ཡང་། །
ལེགས་གནས་ལྟོས་མེད་བརྟན་པའི་རྩལ་དང་ལྡན་པར་གནས། །

Just as in all parts of the jungle the king of wild animals is never fearful, moving fearlessly amongst all other animals, so also does that lion, the king of victors, remain, in any gathering, completely fearless, independent, stable and highly skilful.

The lord of animals is ever fearless to the far ends of the jungle, undaunted roaming amongst the [other] animals. In [any] assembly the Lord of Munis is a lion as well, remaining at ease, independent, stable and endowed with skill.

When lions are in the forest, they have no fear. They can relax and walk around. Likewise, within the crowds, Buddha has no fear, because no one can contradict

Lions are fearless in the forest, and similarly the Buddha is fearless within a crowd because he cannot be contradicted

all that we have talked about. He does not have to rely on anyone, so he has no fear. And because he has no ignorance, not a single drop of defilements, he's not handicapped. And that's why he has complete power and skill. And if he were here now, the heat of the tent would never bother him! OK, that's it for today.

Day 4 – Introduction

We are discussing the qualities of the dharmakaya, which are the result of elimination, like the example of cleaning a window

At this point, we are discussing the qualities of the Buddha and enlightenment. And there are two groups of qualities – the qualities that are the result of elimination, and the qualities that are the effect of maturation. Last year, we were talking about the example of cleaning a window. The dirt on the surface of the window is definitely temporary and removable. When you eliminate that dirt, then the window, the glass, becomes clean. You can say that's a bit like the result of elimination. Of course, in reality, whether there is dirt or not, the inherent quality of the glass is clear. It's not stained. Whether the dirt has been there for a long time or not, it will not make any difference. But during the path, you can think in terms of cleaning the dirt, so we can also have the concept of the gradual appearance of a clean window or glass, and we can say it is an effect of maturation. We are still talking about the result of elimination. We have already discussed the ten powers and four fearlessnesses, and today we will talk about the eighteen uncommon characteristics of the Buddha. These things are very difficult to discuss, because they are uncommon!

The Buddha's qualities are inconceivable, but we can at least listen to his activity, such as the four sounds

The effect of maturation is difficult to discuss. We will go through the list later, but I'll give you one example of how the Buddha's qualities are so distinctive. Yesterday we were talking about the qualities of nirmanakaya Buddha, and about the show that started when Shakyamuni was in Tushita heaven and continued until he passed into parinirvana. Then Maitreya talked about the activity of Buddha, and the first thing he said was that Buddha made four sounds. Let's forget about the ten strengths and all that for a moment and just examine those four sounds. His activity arises from his qualities, so even though his qualities are incredible and inconceivable, at least we can listen to this example of his activity. And if you really contemplate them, these four sounds are amazing.

2500 years ago, Buddha said all compounded phenomena are impermanent

Some people say all religions are the same, but they are actually all different

The first of these four sounds or four voices is that all compounded phenomena are impermanent. Full stop. He had the complete confidence to say that. And this was 2500 years ago! Nowadays people make very strange attempts to be politically correct, trying to label it as openness and a compassionate mind, saying that all religions have one goal, one essence, and one message, which means that they're all the same. I completely disagree with that! No religion is the same as another. They are all distinctive, and especially Buddhism. That kind of dialogue only works in an inter-faith conference.

In these degenerate times, we have the habit of looking for the faults in greatness and the good in a bad situation

In these degenerated times, we humans have a strange habit. Whenever we see a really great being, our first motivation is trying to find a fault, and whenever we have a terrible situation, the first thing we do is try to find some good in it so we can talk about it! I sometimes wonder what kind of bad karma Hitler has accumulated, because no one seems to try to find something good in him! He must also have something good, and there are also good reasons to find that out. If you really want to look for the good, better to do it equally.

The four seals do not need to be adapted as times change, and they cannot be used as a political tool

Many religions need to have some kind of progress, and they need to change as time passes. But take these four voices, for example the first voice that all compounded things are impermanent. Do we need to change that? No! Never in ten thousand years will someone find that any compounded phenomenon has suddenly become permanent. Never. These four voices define Buddhism. And they don't talk about whether a woman should have four husbands or not, and Buddha doesn't talk about how all Buddhists must try and make the whole world Buddhist. Nor can any of them be used as a political tool. How can a leader say, "you better behave, or all compounded things are impermanent"?

Nor is there a lot of room for them to be reinterpreted

And nowadays there's something else we see with religions. People often say things like, "actually the original text is fine, but later disciples have interpreted this". But there's not a lot of room to interpret the four sounds or voices:

- All compounded phenomena are impermanent, period.
- All kinds of thoughts or emotions that derive from clinging to self are pain. Period. No room for interpretation.
- All phenomena have no inherently or truly existing nature. Period. No interpretation.
- Nirvana is beyond extremes.

Maybe in the future, some long bearded fanatical Buddhist masters might try to interpret them, but it's impossible. It just won't work! For example, when we hear that all phenomena are emptiness, how are you going to use that as a threat? It cannot be used as a threat. And when we hear that nirvana is beyond extremes and beyond aspiration, that's the opposite of "if you do these things and engage in this work, you are guaranteed to go to a certain place, to sit on a lofty sofa" or things like that. There's none of that here!

Buddha didn't just say these four things. He gave us countless paths to realise them, and to attain liberation

Now consider that these things were taught 2500 years ago. This is the Buddha's activity, and we are not even talking about his quality. We like to say that a person has to be judged by their actions, so someone who taught something like this has to be slightly different. And the great thing is, he didn't just say these four things and write some books about it and then conclude his work. He gave us countless paths to realise this, to liberate us. And his path and his methods are interpretable, many of them. Because, he has to say different things for different audiences, and he himself said it's fine to interpret, and that

We should not accept the Buddha's path blindly. We should burn it and temper it like gold

we should interpret. He actually said we should not take his path blindly, but that we should burn it and temper it like gold. He even gave us a way to judge which paths should not be interpreted and which should be interpreted.

The Eighteen Distinctive Qualities

251 འཁྲུལ་དང་ཅ་ཅོ་མི་མངའ་སྟེ། །
སྟོན་ལ་དྲན་པ་ཉམས་མི་མངའ། །
མཉམ་པར་མ་བཞག་ཐུགས་མི་མངའ། །
འདུ་ཤེས་སྣ་ཚོགས་ཀྱང་མི་མངའ། །

The Buddhas are unmistaken and do not noisily chatter, their mindfulness is impeccable and their mind is never not resting in meditation. They do not harbour ideas of various kinds.

There is no delusion and no idle talk. The Teacher's mindfulness is unimpaired. Never is his mind not resting evenly. There is no harbouring of various ideas.

252 མ་བརྟགས་བཏང་སྙོམས་མི་མངའ་སྟེ། །
འདུན་དང་བརྩོན་འགྲུས་དྲན་པ་དང་། །
ཤེས་རབ་རྣམ་གྲོལ་རྣམ་གྲོལ་ཀྱི། །
ཡེ་ཤེས་གཟིགས་པ་ཉམས་མི་མངའ། །

Never is their impartiality something undeliberate and their mighty aspiration is never subject to degradation; nor is their diligence, their memory nor their prajña, nor their perfect liberation and perception – the jñana of liberation.

There is no equanimity without analysis. His aspiration, diligence, mindfulness and discriminative wisdom are unimpaired, as are total release and its eye of wisdom.

253 ལས་རྣམས་ཡེ་ཤེས་སྟོན་འགྲོ་དང་། །
དུས་ལ་ཡེ་ཤེས་སྨྲིབ་པ་མེད། །
དེ་ལྟར་བཅོ་བརྒྱད་འདི་དང་གཞན། །
སྟོན་པའི་མ་འདྲེས་ཡོན་ཏན་ཡིན། །

Their activities are preceded by jñana and that jñana to time's injuries is not prone. These eighteen qualities and more are those teachers' attributes alone.

All action is preceded by primordial wisdom and this is unobscured with regard to time. Thus these eighteen features and others are the unmixed qualities of the Teacher.

The eighteen distinctive qualities

(i) Six distinctive qualities of the Buddha's action

None of the Buddha's actions are deluded. All are done to benefit beings

Now we come to the eighteen distinctive qualities. There's a good explanation in the book "Treasury of precious qualities" by Jigme Lingpa (*Yönten Dzö*). For those who have some kind of aspiration to read that book, it's on page 299. Anyway, Buddha's body has no delusion. All his acts, even opening or closing his eyes, are done to benefit sentient beings. There's no deluded or wasted bodily or physical activity that doesn't benefit sentient beings, such as yawning or stretching. If it doesn't benefit, he doesn't engage in that kind of activity. And his speech also has no delusion. It's not like Shravakas and Pratyekabuddhas, who have some faults in their body and their speech, for example sometimes they laugh loud, like a horse neighing. But Buddhas don't do that, unless it's benefiting beings.

The Buddha is never not mindful. Unlike Shravakas, he does not have meditation and post-meditation

And the Buddha's mind is never not mindful. For example, the Shravakas sometimes have to focus for them to be mindful, but Buddha is never apart from meditation. In other words, he does not have meditation and post-meditation like others. For example, when Shravakas go for alms, then they are in post-meditation rather than meditation. But whether Buddha is begging alms or answering someone's question, he is always in the state of meditation. Buddhas do not have discriminating perceptions, unlike for example Shravakas who discriminate between samsara as bad and nirvana as good. Buddhas, Bodhisattvas and even Shravakas may all treat students with equanimity or impartiality. For example, they might decide not to teach them. But only the Buddha does it with proper analysis, so to speak. These are six distinctive qualities of the Buddha's actions.

(ii) Six distinctive qualities of the Buddha's speech

Next are the six distinctive qualities of Buddha's realisation. Buddha is constantly joyful, with keenness and a wish to act for others, unlike others such as the Shravakas. He also has distinctive mindfulness, diligence, wisdom, and complete liberation of cognitive obscurations and defilements.

(iii) Three distinctive activities

(iv) Three distinctive wisdoms

And then there are three distinctive activities. All his activity of body, speech and mind is always accompanied by wisdom. And the last three are his three distinctive wisdoms. We have to say 'distinctive wisdom' because Shravakas and Pratyekabuddhas also have wisdom. But only Buddha knows the essence of the three times, therefore only Buddha knows the three times without fixation and obstruction.

These are the general eighteen different distinctive qualities of the Buddha, and there are also some others. For example when Buddha wears a robe, the robe never touches his body. There's always a space about four fingers' width. Now we'll have another repetition and a more detailed explanation.

254 འཕྲུལ་དང་ཅ་ཅོ་བསྟེལ་དང་ཐུགས་གཡོ་ཐ་དད་ཀྱི་ནི་འདུ་ཤེས་དང་། །
ངང་གི་བཏང་སྙོམས་དང་སྲོང་ལ་མེད་འདུན་པ་དང་ནི་བརྩོན་འགྲུས་དང་། །
དྲན་པ་རྣམ་དག་དྲི་མེད་ཤེས་རབ་རྒྱ་ཆུ་རྣམ་པར་གྲོལ་བ་དང་། །
ཤེས་བྱའི་དོན་ཀུན་གཟིགས་པ་གྲོལ་བའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་ལས་ནི་ཉམས་མི་མངའ། །

For great sages there are no mistakes, chatter, unmindfulness, mental agitation, various forms of ideation or causal indifference. Aspiration, diligence, memory, perfectly pure and immaculate prajña, constant, perfect liberation and the jñana of perfect liberation, which sees all aspects of the knowable – these are theirs and these never suffer from any deterioration.

Delusion, idle talk, forgetfulness, mental agitation, ideation of duality and indifferent equanimity: the Sage does not have any of these. His aspiration, diligence and mindfulness, his utterly pure and unstained discriminative wisdom, his constant total release and his primordial wisdom of liberation seeing all fields of the knowable do not suffer any impairment.

255 གང་གི་ལས་གསུམ་ཐམས་ཅད་ཡེ་ཤེས་སྔོན་འགྲོའི་རྗེས་སུ་འཇུག་པ་དང་། །
དུས་གསུམ་རྒྱ་ཆུ་ཐོགས་པ་མེད་པ་མཁྱེན་པ་རྒྱ་ཆེན་འཇུག་པ་སྟེ། །
གང་ཏོགས་འགྲོ་བར་འཛིགས་མེད་དམ་ཆོས་འཁོར་ལོ་ཆེན་པོ་རབ་བསྐོར་བ། །
ཐུགས་རྗེ་ཆེན་པོ་དང་ལྷན་རྒྱལ་བ་ཉིད་དེ་སངས་རྒྱས་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་བརྙེས། །

All three activities, whatever they may be are preceded and accompanied by jñana. Their perfect knowledge constantly and extensively penetrates the three times without hindrance. Such having been realized, the Buddhas, those victorious ones with compassion's magnificence achieve a perfect and fearless turning of the great wheel of the true Dharma for beings.

His three activities are preceded [by primordial wisdom] and display themselves in its likeness. He manifests his vast definitive knowing, always unhindered in its vision of the three times. By such insight he is fearless and supremely turns the Great Wheel of Pure Dharma for beings. Endowment with great compassion and quintessence of victory are what Buddhas will find.

This is basically a repetition of everything that was just said. The Buddha is free from all faults of body, speech and mind. He is never in the state of not meditating. He never distinguishes between samsara and nirvana. And he never carelessly leaves beings because of his indifference. He is never apart from motivation, diligence, mindfulness, stainless wisdom, and liberation. He's never apart from these wisdoms. All his actions of body, speech and mind are always preceded by wisdom. And he knows the nature of past, present and future. These are the eighteen distinctive qualities of the Buddha.

256 ས་སོགས་ལ་ཡོད་ཆོས་གང་ཡིན་པའི་ཆོས་ཉིད་དེ་ནི་རྣམ་མཁའི་མིན། །
རྣམ་མཁའི་མཚན་ཉིད་སྒྲིབ་མེད་ལ་སོགས་མཚན་ཉིད་གང་དེ་གཟུགས་ལ་མེད། །
ས་ཆུ་མེ་རླུང་རྣམ་མཁའང་མཚུངས་པ་འཇིག་རྟེན་དག་ན་ཐུན་མོང་སྟེ། །
མ་འདྲེས་ཉིད་ནི་རྡུལ་ཕྲན་ཙམ་ཡང་འཇིག་རྟེན་དག་ན་ཐུན་མོང་མིན། །

Earth and the others have properties of specific character – their nature is not that of space. Space's own intrinsic characteristic, non-obstruction, is absent in matter. Earth, water, fire, air and space are equally common to all the worlds but not even so much as an atom of the distinctive attributes of a Buddha is common to any of the worlds.

The nature of any of the properties native to earth and so on is not the nature of space. Any of the features of space, such as being non-obstructive and so on, is not a feature of the visible. Earth, water, fire, air and space, being equally [elements], have something in common in the world. The unmixed qualities and worldly beings have nothing in common, not even as much as a single atom.

Just like the sky does not share the characteristics of the other elements, the eighteen uncommon qualities are completely distinct from those of Shravakas and Pratyekabuddhas

We have already heard the examples for the 32 qualities. The ten powers are like a vajra, the four fearlessnesses are like a lion, and the sky is the example for the eighteen distinctive qualities. The characteristics of the other elements do not exist within the sky, and the characteristics of the sky or space are not found in the other elements. Therefore they are distinctive. Likewise the Buddha's qualities are completely distinctive from those of the Pratyekabuddhas and Shravakas. And Maitreya adds that even this example is not distinctive enough, because the elements of earth, water, wind, fire, and space are very common in the mundane world, but Buddha's qualities are completely uncommon. Next we will hear about the effect of maturation.

The Fruit of Maturation (the 32 Major Marks)

257 ལེགས་གནས་འཁོར་ལོའི་མཚན་པ་དང་། །
ཡངས་ཤིང་ཞབས་ལོང་མི་མངོན་དང་། །
སོར་མོ་རིང་དང་ཕྱག་ཞབས་ནི། །
ཏ་བ་ཡིས་ནི་འབྲེལ་པ་དང་། །

Perfectly level and marked with wheels, his feet are broad and ankles unobtrusive. Long are his fingers and toes, which are themselves interwebbed.

His perfectly even [soles] are marked with wheels. His feet are broad and his ankles are not visible. His fingers and toes are long and the digits of his hand and feet are entwined by a web.

258 པགས་འཛམ་གཞོན་ཤ་ཅན་ལེགས་ཉིད། །
སྐུ་ནི་བདུན་དགེ་མཐོ་བ་དང་། །
བྱིན་པ་ཙེ་ན་ཡ་འདྲ་གསང་། །
གླང་པོ་བཞིན་དུ་སྦུབས་སུ་ནུབ། །

Soft is his skin and fine his youthful flesh. His body has seven elevated parts. Like an antelope's are his calves and like an elephant's are his private parts recessed.

His skin is soft and his flesh remains youthful. His body has seven elevated and rounded parts. His calves are like those of an antelope and his secret parts are hidden as are an elephant's.

259 ངོ་ལྷོ་ནས་ཀྱི་འདྲ་བ་དང་། །
ཐལ་གོང་བར་མེད་རྒྱས་པ་དང་། །
དཔུང་མགོ་ལེགས་རྒྱུ་ཕྱུག་འཛམ་ཞིང་། །
རྒྱུ་ཞིང་མཐོ་དམན་མེད་པ་དང་། །

His torso is like a lion's and clavicles not hollow but well-filled. His shoulders are elegantly rounded and rounded, soft and even are his arms.

His [mighty] torso is similar to that of a lion. [The hollow] between his clavicles is well filled. The curve of his shoulders is perfect and beautiful. His hands and arms are rounded, soft and even.

260 ཕྱག་རིང་ཡོངས་སུ་དག་པའི་སྐུ། །
འོད་ཀྱི་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་དང་ལྡན་དང་། །
མཁྲིན་པ་ཏྲི་མེད་དུང་འདྲ་དང་། །
འགྲམ་པ་རི་དྭགས་རྒྱལ་པོ་འདྲ། །

His arms are long and his perfectly-pure body by an aura of light is surrounded. His neck is like a conch and without blemish and cheeks like those of the king of beasts'.

His arms are long and his utterly immaculate body is enfolded in the mandala of an aureole of light. His neck, unblemished [in hue], resembles a conch. His cheeks are like those of the king of all animals.

261 ཆོས་ནས་ནི་བཞི་བཅུ་མཉམ་པ་དང་། །
རབ་དག་ཆོས་ཐགས་བཟང་བ་དང་། ། །
རྣམ་དག་ཆོས་མཉམ་ཉིད་དང་ནི། །
མཆེ་བ་རབ་མཆོག་དཀར་བ་ཉིད། །

Equal are his forty teeth. They are very pure and closely set, immaculate and evenly aligned; the eye-teeth perfect and excellently white.

His forty teeth are equal [in number in both jaws]. His teeth are supremely pure and most beautifully set. They are totally immaculate and aligned in even rows. The eye-teeth are of supreme and excellent whiteness.

262 ལྷན་གས་རིང་མཐའ་མེད་བསམ་མེད་པ། །
རོ་བྲོ་བ་ཡི་མཆོག་ཉིད་དང་། །
རང་བྱུང་ཀ་ལ་པིང་ཀ་ཡི། །
སྒྲ་དང་ཚངས་པའི་དབྱངས་ཉིད་དང་། །

His tongue is long, unending and inconceivable, with the most perfect faculty of taste. The spontaneously-born one has a voice like the song of the kalavinka bird or Brahma's melody.

His tongue is long, his speech unlimited and inconceivable. His sense of taste is supreme, and the Self-Sprung's voice s like the kalavinka's call and the melody of Brahma.

263 སྤྱན་བཟང་ཡུངས་ལྟ་མཆོག་ཐ་ཧེ་འདྲ་དང་། །
ཞལ་མཛེས་དེ་མེད་མཛོད་སྤུ་དཀར་ལྷན་དང་། །
གཙུག་ཏོར་དབུ་ལྷན་དག་ཅིང་སྲབ་པ་དང་། །
པགས་པ་གསེར་ཀྱི་མདོག་འདྲ་སེམས་ཅན་མཆོག །

The supreme of beings has beautiful eyes like blue lotuses, and like an ox's are his eyelashes. With its immaculate white urna hair, his face is handsome to behold; his head bears a mound and his skin is pure, fine and golden.

His pure eyes are like blue lotuses, his eyelashes [dense] as those of an ox. He has the stainless white urna hair embellishing his face and the ushnisha crowning his head. His skin is pure and delicate and of the colour of gold.

264 བ་སྤུ་ལེགས་ཕྲ་འཛམ་ཞིང་རེ་རེ་ནས། །
སྐྲ་ཡི་ཐྲེན་དུ་གཡས་ཕྱོགས་འཁྱོལ་བ་དང་། །
དབུ་སྐྲ་དེ་མེད་རིན་ཆེན་མཐོན་མཐིང་བཞིན། །
ཚུ་གོ་ཐོགས་པའི་ལྷོན་ཤིང་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་འདྲ། །

The hairs on his body are exceeding fine and soft, one from each and curling to the right and to the top. His hair is impeccable and like a deep-blue gem. As well-rounded as a perfect nyagrodha tree,

Extremely fine and soft, each of the hairs on his body curls from one pore to the right and upwards to his crown. His immaculate hair resembles [in colour] a deep-blue gem. Well-proportioned in stature like a perfect nyagrodha tree,

265 ཀུན་ཏུ་བཟང་པོ་དཔེ་མེད་ཕྱང་ས྄ོང་ཆེ། །
ས྄ེད་མེད་བུ་ཡི་ས྄ྐོབས་མངའ་མཁྲེགས་པའི་སྐུ། །
བས་མ་མི་ཕྱེད་པར་ས྄ུམ་ཅུ་རྒྱིས་པོ། །
འདི་དག་ས྄ྐྱེན་པས་མི་དབང་མཚན་དུ་གསུངས། །

the ever-good and incomparable great sage has the strength of Narayana in his body firm. These two and thirty marks, vividly brilliant and beyond any concept's grasp, are by our teacher taught as those of a lord of men.

the Great Sage who is all-good and without any example has an unbreakable body possessed of Narayana's strength. These thirty-two marks, which one cannot conceive or grasp and which are resplendent [in their brightness and beauty], the Teacher has described as the signs of a lord of humans.

Some of the 32 major marks are simply not comprehensible

As I said at the beginning, some of these 32 major marks are simply not comprehensible. And I also feel a little reluctant to talk about them, because my words are the source of the destruction of other people's merit. Because of my very limited and completely stupid mind, if I speak about these things it could paint a very strange image of the Buddha that would not be at all good for you or for me.

The chakravartins have a set of 32 'similar' major marks, and other beings may also have some of these marks, but only Buddha has a genuine and complete set

There are several categories of these 32 major marks, for example there is also a set of 32 "similar" marks that are not the real ones, but are very close. When Buddha was born, the astrologer Asita said, "This boy will become either a great king, a chakravartin, or if he renounces, then he will become a great liberator of the world". It is believed that if Buddha had chosen the first career, then he would only have the 32 "similar" major marks and not the real ones. This indicates that all the chakravartins, the universal kings, also have these qualities. And other beings may have also a few of them, perhaps fifteen or six or two. But only the Buddha has a genuine and complete set. The 32 major marks are:

The 32 major marks

1) The soles of his feet are perfectly level or even, and they are marked with a thousand-spoke wheel. He will never be drafted in the US Army – is it the same in France?
2) His feet are quite broad. His heels are as broad as his entire feet, and you cannot see his ankles. We can only try our best to imagine what this looks like! Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche says that you could not see the ankles of HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche.
3) His fingers and toes are long, as long as his palms and the soles of his feet.
4) His fingers and toes are webbed, like the king of the swans. But when Siddhartha was a prince, he wore rings on all his fingers, and they fitted very nicely. Don't think he's like a duck. Also his fingers are even. None is shorter or longer than any other. Likewise, his toes are even.

The qualities of the Buddha are inconceivable, but we demand to perceive them. The 32 major marks give us what we want and what we need

We are talking about unimaginable things. The qualities of the Buddha are inconceivable and unperceivable, but we demand to perceive them. So this is what we get! As I told you, he will always give us what we want and what we need together – and this is it! We want him to have fingers, so he's giving us some sort of fingers, but not really our kind of fingers.

5) He has soft skin and youthful flesh.
6) His two knees, two elbows, two shoulders and the nape of his neck are all elevated.
7) His calves are like those of an antelope. Their shape is unlike ours.
8) His private parts are concealed in a recess, like an elephant. That's one of the big qualities of the chakravartins.
9) His torso is mighty, like a lion's.
10) There is no hollow in the bone of his clavicles.
11) His shoulders are elegantly rounded.
12) His hands have no raised parts. They are entirely even.
13) He has long arms. He doesn't have to bend to touch his knees.
14) There is always light radiating from his body.
15) His neck is like a conch, the tip of the conch, without any dirt. It has rings like a conch.
16) His cheeks are like the king of beasts, meaning a lion. They're quite rounded.
17) He has 40 teeth, 20 in each of his upper and lower jaws – we only have 32 or 36.
18) His teeth are very clean and pure.
19) His teeth are set perfectly without some protruding and others behind.
20) His canines are very white and sharp.

We can't discuss this very much, so we will just go through the list.

21) He has a very long tongue, with no end. It's an inconceivable tongue. Normally his tongue covers his whole face, like a dog.
22) His sense of taste is supreme. Whatever falls on his tongue becomes very delicious, like horse food, oats I think. There's a story about when the king forgot to offer alms to the Sangha for their summer retreat, and the whole Sangha had to live with horse food. And Buddha had to eat the horse food, and when the monks shared his leftovers, it was the most delicious food. There's a whole story about it.
23) He has a voice with a melody with Brahma, or like a *kalavinka*, a nightingale. His voice is very soothing.
24) He has long and big eyes, like blue utpala lotuses.
25) His eyelashes are dense and shining like an ox's. When they close, the upper hairs and the lower hairs do not touch. The upper hairs fall right in between the lower hairs.

26) His face is beautiful, and it is adorned with the white urna hair. When you pull it, it's supposedly about a foot long, and when you let go, it curls anticlockwise.
27) He has an ushnisha on the crown of his head. That's very special, probably the most supreme of all his 32 qualities.
28) He has pure and delicate skin.
29) His skin is golden-coloured.
30) His body is covered with fine and soft small hairs, and there are never two hairs growing together. They don't grow downwards. They grow upwards towards his head, and they are all curly, and they curl anticlockwise.
31) He has impeccable hair. His hair is indigo blue in colour, like the jewel of *tönting*. I don't know the name in English. Perhaps it's like a lapis lazuli.
32) His whole body is like a nyagrodha tree. His height and his width with his arms extended are the same. He has an incomparable body, and he has the strength of Narayana. You find Narayana everywhere in Hindu mythology, and he is supposedly very strong. He is the one who lifted the elephant's tail when Indra killed the Asuras' elephant.

The 32 major marks are the result of maturation, and they are explained in the Ratnadarika-sutra

So this, briefly, is the list of the 32 major marks. And let's not forget that they are the result of the maturation of his purification and accumulation. And behind each of them there are many stories (*nampar tarpa*). Most of these are explained in the sutra requested by a girl called Rinchen, the Ratnadarika-sutra (*bu mo rin chen gyis zhus pa'i do*).

For example, the Buddha's feet are level because he never broke any promises or pledges

For instance, why are his feet level? This has lots to do with his past lives, when he never broke any promise or pledge that he made. This wasn't just small pledges, but also very big pledges. He gave so many pledges, for one word of Dharma, or to save the life of a single sentient being. And he was very generous with everything, with protection, gifts and Dharma, so that's why there are 1000-spoked wheels on the sole of his feet. He has never abused or despised anyone, so his feet are even and his ankles are not perceivable. And there are so many stories about how he protected people from fear, such as fear of disasters, fear of punishment from the rulers and so on. This is why his fingers are long. And one of the causes of his ushnisha is that he stood on one leg for 21 days and nights in praise to his guru Dipamkara, the first Buddha. At the end, Dipamkara predicted that in the future, after many eons, that he would become the sage called Shakyamuni.

One of the causes of his ushnisha was that he stood on one leg for 21 days and nights in praise to his guru Dipamkara

This was a summary of the 32 major marks, and they will now be explained with some examples.

266 ཇི་ལྟར་སྟོན་མེད་མཁའ་ཡི་རྒྱ་བའི་གཟུགས། །
སྟོན་ཀའི་ཆུ་སྟོན་མཚོ་ནི་མཐོང་བ་ལྟར། །
དེ་བཞིན་རྒྱལ་སྲས་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་ཕྱོགས་བདག་གཟུགས། །
ཐུགས་སངས་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་ནང་དུ་མཐོང་བར་འགྱུར། །

Just as the form of the autumn moon in a cloudless sky is seen on the azure waters of a lake, so also are the all-embracing one's form kayas seen by all the victor's sons in the perfect Buddha mandala.

Just as in autumn the form of the moon is seen in a cloudless sky and in the deep blue water of a lake, the form of the All-Embracing is seen by the Victor's heirs in the perfect Buddha mandala [and in the world].

The 32 marks are like the autumn moon in water, symbolising that the Buddha will always stand out in a crowd

Like an autumn moon reflecting on the water, even though there may be trees or flowers growing by the water, none of these will obstruct the reflection of the moon. Likewise wherever the Buddha is dwelling and whoever is with him you will not miss him, even if he is in the midst of 10,000 tenth bhumi Bodhisattvas, 10,000 ninth bhumi Bodhisattvas, many other people, and lots of mountains, rivers, and rocks. Wherever you are, you will just find him. This is one of his distinctive qualities. If one of us is in a crowd of people then it's hard to find us. But unlike us, he cannot be lost. So the 32 major marks are symbolised by the reflection of the moon.

267 ཡོན་ཏན་དྲུག་བཅུ་རྩ་བཞི་པོ། །
འདི་དག་སོ་སོར་རྒྱུ་བཅས་ཏེ། །
གོ་རིམས་ཇི་བཞིན་རིན་ཆེན་གྱི། །
མདོ་ཡི་རྟེས་འཇུག་ཤེས་པར་བྱ། །

One should know that these sixty-four qualities and their respective causes here follow their order in the "Jewel Discourse" – the Ratna Sutra.

These sixty-four qualities each combined with its cause should be known in their order to follow the Ratnadarikasutra.

The 64 qualities of the Buddha are explained in the Ratnadarika-sutra

Maitreya is saying that the order, character, explanation, reason, and cause of the ten strengths, four fearlessnesses and so on are explained in the sutra requested by lady Ratna.

He will now conclude with a summary of how the examples and the qualities of the Buddha complement each other.

268 ཨི་ཕྱེད་པ་དང་མི་ཞན་དང་། །
མཚུངས་པ་མེད་ཕྱིར་གཡོ་མེད་ཕྱིར། །
རྡོ་རྗེ་སེང་གེ་མཁའ་དགེ་བའི། །
ཆུ་ཡི་ཟླ་བའི་དཔེས་བསྟན་ཏོ། །

Being invulnerable, undisheartened, peerless and motionless, they are illustrated by the examples of a vajra, a lion, space and the clear moon in water.

Being unchangeable and never weakened, dissimilar and unmoving, they are taught by the examples of the vajra, the lion, space and the moon in sky and water.

The ten strengths, four fearlessnesses, eighteen distinctive qualities and 32 major marks are like the vajra, lion, space and moon

The ten strengths or powers are symbolised by the vajra, because no obstacles can dismantle the vajra. The four fearlessnesses are symbolised by the lion, because the lion does not lose courage. The eighteen distinctive qualities are symbolised by sky, because there is no other quality that is equal to the sky. The 32 major marks are like the moon in the water, because the 32 major marks cannot be manipulated by conceptions. This is explained again in more detail.

269 སྟོབས་སོགས་རྣམས་ལས་སྟོབས་དྲུག་དང་། །
གསུམ་དང་གཅིག་གིས་རིམ་པ་བཞིན། །
ཤེས་བྱ་སྟོམས་པར་འཇུག་པ་དང་། །
བག་ཆགས་བཅས་པ་ཀུན་བསལ་བས། །

Of these powers and so on, six, three and one, have completely dispelled, respectively, cognitive, meditative balance and those accompanied by their latent conditioning.

Of the powers, six powers, three and one, in this sequence, have totally dispelled [the veils of] knowledge and meditation, along with that of the remaining imprints.

270 གོ་ཆ་ལ্ཚིག་པ་ཤེད་བཞིན་དུ། །
ཕུག་དང་བཤིག་དང་བཅད་ཕྱིར་རོ། །
བརྟན་དང་སྙིང་བཏན་མི་ཕྱེད་པས། །
དང་སྲོང་སྟོབས་ནི་རྡོ་རྗེ་འདྲ། །

Thus they have pierced, destroyed and felled the armour-like, wall-like and tree-like. Being firm, resistant, steadfast and invulnerable, these powers of the sages are vajra-like.

Resembling armour, a wall and a tree, they were pierced, shattered and felled. Being firm, essential, steadfast and unchangeable the powers of the Great Sage are similar to a vajra.

Why the ten powers are like a vajra

Again this is repeated. The sage's ten strengths or powers are like a vajra. The first six of the ten strengths pierce through the armour of cognitive obscurations. The next three strengths are like a vajra because they dismantle the wall of meditative obscurations, and the tenth strength is like a vajra because it cuts the root of defilements that are like a tree.

271 གང་ཕྱིར་བརྟན་པ་སྟེང་པའི་ཕྱིར། །
གང་ཕྱིར་སྟེང་པོ་བརྟན་པའི་ཕྱིར། །
གང་ཕྱིར་བརྟན་པ་མི་ཕྱེད་ཕྱིར། །
མི་ཕྱེད་ཕྱིར་ན་རྡོ་རྗེ་བཞིན། །

Why firm? Because they are resistant. Why resistant? Because they are steadfast. Why steadfast? Because they are invulnerable. Since they are invulnerable they are like a vajra.

Why are they firm? Because they are essential. Why essential? Because they are steadfast. Why steadfast? Because they are unchangeable. Being unchangeable, they are like a vajra.

They are firm because they are resistant, and they are resistant because they are steadfast. They are steadfast because they are not subject to change, so they are not vulnerable. This is why they are like a vajra. Next there is again the summary of the four fearlessnesses.

272 འཇིགས་པ་མེད་ཕྱིར་ལྷོག་མེད་ཕྱིར། །
བརྟན་ཕྱིར་རྩལ་ནི་ཕུན་ཚོགས་པས། །
ཐུབ་པ་སེང་གེ་སེང་གེ་བཞིན། །
འཁོར་གྱི་ཚོགས་སུ་འཇིགས་མི་མཛད། །

Being fearless, unconcerned and stable, and since his skill is supreme, the lion of men, the one triumphant, is likened to a lion – fearless in the midst of any gathering.

Since he is not intimidated, is independent, stable and [possessed of] best possible skill, the Muni is like a lion. The Lion [of Mankind] does not have fear in any assembly whatever.

Why the four fearlessnesses are like a lion

The great Muni is like a lion among men. The lion is not afraid when his retinue surrounds him. The lion has no fear of anything. It is not dependent on anything. It is stable, skilled and agile. Now we have the detailed explanation.

273 ཀུན་མངོན་མཁྱེན་པས་གང་ལས་ཀྱང་། །
འཇིགས་མེད་པར་ནི་རྣམ་པར་གནས། །
དག་པའི་སེམས་ཅན་དང་ཡང་བདག །
མི་མཉམ་གཟིགས་ཕྱིར་ལྷོས་པ་མེད། །

Having definite knowledge of everything, he stays absolutely fearless of anyone. Since he clearly sees that even purified beings are not his peers, he remains uninfluenced.

Knowing everything directly, he always remains totally fearless of anyone, no matter of whom. Seeing that even pure beings are not his equal, he is unimpressed and not daunted [by others].

274 ཐུགས་ནི་ཆོས་རྣམས་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ། །
རྩེ་གཅིག་ཕྱིར་ན་བརྟན་པ་ཉིད། །
མཆོག་ཏུ་མ་རིག་བག་ཆགས་ཀྱི། །
ས་ལས་བརྒལ་ཕྱིར་རྩལ་ལྡན་ནོ། །

Since his noble mind is constantly attentive to each and every phenomenon, he has stability. Having transcended the state of latent ignorance, exceedingly difficult, he possesses skilful mastery.

His mind being one-pointed as to all phenomena, [his samadhi] is the quintessence of stability. He possesses skill, having crossed the earth of the latencies of unknowing, ever so [subtle].

The Buddha is fearless, independent, stable and agile with wisdom

No opponent can defeat the Sage, so the Sage does not fear any opponent. This is because the Sage can answer any questions within the context of the three times. The Sage is not dependent on anyone, because he is distinctive even compared to the tenth bhumi Bodhisattvas, whose qualities are very close to the Buddha's. This is why he doesn't have to depend on them. The Sage is stable, because he is never swayed by dualistic phenomena. And the Sage is agile with wisdom, because he has gone beyond the boundary of ignorance.

275 འཇིག་རྟེན་ཉན་ཐོས་མཐའ་གཅིག་ཏུ། །
སྟོང་དང་ཏྲི་ལྡན་རང་བྱུང་རྣམས། །
གོང་ནས་གོང་དུ་ཏྲི་དག་ནི། ། །
ཕ་ཕྱིར་དགེ་ནི་རྣམ་པ་ལྟ། ། །

Worldlings, Shravakas, those one sided, the wise and that which spontaneously arises – their understanding being progressively subtler, can be exemplified through elements five.

The understanding of worldly beings, of listeners, of biased practitioners, of those who have insight and of self-sprung Buddhas getting ever subtler and progressively refined, there are five similes:

276 འཇིག་རྟེན་ཀུན་གྱི་རྟེར་འཚོའི་ཕྱིར། །
ས་ཆུ་མེ་རླུང་རྣམས་དང་མཚུངས། །
འཇིག་རྟེན་འཇིག་རྟེན་འདས་པ་ཡི། །
མཚན་ཉིད་ལས་འདས་ནམ་མཁའ་བཞིན། །

Buddhas are like earth, water, fire and air, being sustenance for all the worlds. They are like space, being beyond the characteristics of both worldly existence and that which transcends it.

Sustaining the life of all worldly beings, [Buddhas] are likened to earth and water and to fire and air. Away from the features of the worldly and of those being beyond the world, they are similar to space.

Why the eighteen distinctive qualities are like the sky or space

All this has been explained before, but it's repeated. It explains why the eighteen distinctive qualities of the Buddha are distinctive. In increasing order of subtlety the five elements are: earth, water, fire, wind, and space. For example, water is subtler than earth. And the sky or space is the subtlest. Likewise there are five types of beings: ordinary beings, Shravakas, Pratyekabuddhas, Bodhisattvas and Buddhas. The first four elements have a slightly common quality, like earth and water. But the quality of the sky is completely uncommon. Likewise the qualities of the Bodhisattvas have some similarity with ordinary beings, Shravakas and Pratyekabuddhas, but the qualities of the Buddha are totally distinctive.

277 དེ་དག་ཡོན་ཏན་སུམ་ཅུ་རྩི། །
གཉིས་འདི་ཆོས་སྐུས་རབ་ཕྱེ་སྟེ། །
ནོར་བུ་རིན་ཆེན་འོད་མདོག་དང་། །
དབྱིབས་བཞིན་དབྱེ་བ་མེད་ཕྱིར་རོ། །

Into two and thirty qualities then are aspects of the dharmakaya made, though they are as inseparable as a gem's colour, its brilliance and its shape.

So the dharmakaya fully divides into these thirty-two qualities, indivisible like a precious gem in its light, radiance and shape.

The 32 qualities of the dharmakaya can be divided into three aspects like a wishfulfilling jewel has aspects of radiance, colour and shape

The 32 qualities of the dharmakaya can be compared to a wishfulfilling jewel. Like a jewel, they can be divided into three aspects. We can talk about a jewel's light or radiance, its colour and its shape. Likewise we can talk about the dharmakaya in three aspects.

278 མཐོང་ན་ཚིམ་བྱེད་ཡོན་ཏན་གང་། །
སྒྱུ་ལུ་ཕ་ཆོས་ལ་རྫོགས་པར་ནི། །
སྤྲུལ་པ་ཆོས་ལ་རྫོགས་ཕྱུག་ཕྱིས་ལ་བརྟེན། །

Those attributes, which, when seen, contentment inspire, are known as the "two and thirty" (marks) which are founded in the kayas two–the nirmanakaya and the sambhogakaya which makes the Dharma perfect.

Granting satisfaction whenever they are seen, the qualities called "the thirty-two [marks]" adhere to two kayas, being the illusory kaya and the kaya perfectly rejoicing in Dharma.

279 དག་ལས་རིང་དང་ཉེ་རྣམས་ལས། །
འཇིག་རྟེན་རྒྱལ་བའི་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་དུ། །
ཆུ་དང་ནམ་མཁའ་ཟླ་གཟུགས་བཞིན། །
དེ་མཐོང་བ་ནི་རྣམ་པ་གཉིས། །

Those far from purity and those close to it see these in two ways – as being in the world or as the mandala of the victors – like the form of the moon, beheld in water or in space.

Those far from and close to purity [see them] as the mandalas of the world and the Victor, like the form of the moon in water and sky. Thus these [kayas] are beheld in two ways.

Ordinary beings can see the 32 major marks indirectly, like a reflection of the moon in water

The 32 major marks satisfy your mind. Here we are talking about an audience. We are talking about manifestation and sentient beings whose minds obtain satisfaction. So this is actually the quality of the nirmanakaya and sambhogakaya. For some ordinary sentient beings, those who have merit, and also for Shravakas and Pratyekabuddhas, they see Buddhas with all these qualities such as the 32 major marks. But their kind of perception is like the reflection of the moon in water. All that they see is a reflection of the sambhogakaya, meaning the nirmanakaya.

Bodhisattvas can see the 32 major marks directly, like seeing the real moon in the sky

But the Bodhisattvas are able to see the 32 major marks directly. And that is like actually seeing the real moon in the sky. Since only the Bodhisattvas can see the sambhogakaya, there are two ways of perceiving these kayas. That's the end of the third chapter, the chapter on the qualities of enlightenment.

ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོ་རྒྱུད་བླ་མའི་བསྟན་བཅོས་དཀོན་མཆོག་གི་རིགས་རྣམ་པར་དབྱེ་བ་ལས།
ཡོན་ཏན་གྱི་སྒྲབས་ཏེ་གསུམ་བའོ།། །།

This was the third chapter, on the qualities, from the Analysis of the Potential for the Rare and Supreme, in this Ultimate Mahayana Treatise on the Changeless Continuity of the True Nature.

This was the section "Qualities", the third chapter of The Commentary on the Highest Continuity of the Mahayana Dharma that Analyzes the Disposition of the Rare and the Sublime Ones.

Chapter Four

The Seventh Vajra Point: Activity

Day 5 – Introduction

How to listen to the teachings

I would like to remind you to listen to these teachings with the motivation of renouncing samsara and wishing for enlightenment, not just for yourself but also for all sentient beings. The past Bodhisattvas have sacrificed their bodies, their belongings, and their kingdoms just for one word of the Dharma. And ordinary beings like us have also sacrificed our bodies, our wealth, and our kingdoms so many times – but for all kinds of useless things, rather than one word of the Dharma. For instance, in this tent each one of us must have sacrificed our life and given up our time and everything for someone else. Each of us must have caused others the suffering of broken heartedness. And I'm sure some of us are causing it right now as we are talking! And it's all for nothing. And it looks like we are going to continue doing this. Whereas if you could sacrifice even a little bit of your devotion for one word of the Dharma, there would be so much benefit, not only for you but for many others.

The merit of hearing the name of the Triple Gem

And the words of the Dharma, the path of the Buddha, are not like other paths. The path of the Buddha is painless, which is why we call it the path of the Sugatas. For instance, during the past few days we have been hearing a few drops out of the infinitely vast and deep qualities of the Buddha, even though they are inconceivable and unthinkable. Even to remember the Triple Gem, or to hear the name of the Triple Gem, that alone must indicate that we have so much merit.

The benefits of hearing about the Buddha:

Relatively, we are reminded of gentleness, love and compassion.

Ultimately, we understand that our nature is that very Buddha. We already have all the Buddha qualities

By hearing the name of the Buddha, contemplating it, and doing a little bit of meditation on the Buddha, we accumulate so much merit on the relative level. At the very least, we are remembering someone who is walking gently, loving and kind, which reminds us of gentleness, love, and compassion instead of us remembering and getting caught up in sibling rivalries and family disputes that cause centuries of war and conflict in societies. On the more ultimate level, by hearing and contemplating the Buddha, we understand that we have that very Buddha. Our nature is that very Buddha. We don't have to envy an externally existing figure called Buddha, this guy Siddhartha who came 2500 years ago. We have all his qualities, complete – not one less, not one more. We have exactly the same measurement, weight, everything. We don't have to envy him. We don't have to wait for a prophet that's supposedly going to come later. You have those qualities within your being.

The benefits of hearing about the Dharma:

Relatively, we are reminded of the truth of impermanence

Ultimately, all extremes simply evaporate

By hearing the words of the Dharma on the relative level, it reminds you of the truth that all compounded things are impermanent. So if you don't have a Ferrari today, perhaps you might have one tomorrow. And if you feel terrible about yourself, that you're an ultimately evil being, then you know there's hope, as there's a chance that your badness will go. And at least you have to pretend that you want to pursue non-violence. On the ultimate level when you hear the Dharma, think about it and contemplate it, all kinds of extremes simply evaporate. It's a bit like somebody who is falling from a cliff, and just before he falls he manages to grab onto some dry grass whose roots are coming out. You are so afraid that you will fall, but when you really contemplate and practice the Dharma, suddenly you have the wit to look down and you realise there's no cliff. And the funny thing is the very moment you realise there's no cliff is when the grass comes out.

The benefits of hearing about the Sangha:

Relatively, we feel we can be vessels to practice the truth, and we behave a little better

Ultimately, we realise that all sentient beings have the potential for enlightenment

By hearing about the Sangha, and contemplating on the Sangha, on the relative level we feel that we can be vessels to practice and use this truth. At least, we are forced to behave a little better, such as partially becoming vegetarian, or reluctantly becoming a monk. And on the ultimate level, by hearing, contemplating and meditating on the Sangha, we realise that we all have the potential – all sentient beings, not only myself. And you also realise, as stated by Maitreya, that every being can be the ultimate object of refuge. Everybody's nature is definitely the ultimate object of refuge, so you have no choice but to be non-sectarian. So at this age and time, we can say that even to have this opportunity to hear the name of the Triple Gem is the activity of the Buddha.

When we talk about the Buddha's activity, we must talk about the audience. Does the Buddha hear our prayers?

Ignorant beings like us cannot communicate with the 'real' Buddha, the dharmakaya. And even the rupakayas can only be perceived by certain beings

Today we are beginning the chapter on the activity of the Buddha. When we talk about activity, we are talking about beings to be tamed (*dülja*), so we are talking about an audience, about disciples. It's important to understand these things if we are to understand so-called supplications and prayers. Do the Buddhas hear and understand our supplications or not? Do they completely fulfil the wishes of whoever is supplicating or not? In a way it's so easy, as there is no truly existing Buddha externally. But on the relative level, there is a Buddha who came, who was born in Lumbini and all of that. We can distinguish between the 'real' Buddha, the dharmakaya, and the rupakayas, which are like a manifestation. Ignorant beings like us cannot communicate with the ultimate Buddha, the dharmakaya. And there's something quite amazing about these manifestations, as the sambhogakaya is perceivable, but not by everyone, and the nirmanakaya can only be understood by those who have merit.

The nirmanakaya is the outermost manifestation, and always appears as a serene, humble, simple renunciant. This form is what the general audience both wants and needs

When we talk about the three kayas, especially the nirmanakaya, we're talking about the outermost manifestation. And the outermost is always in nirmanakaya form, a renunciant who appears as serene, humble and simple. There are many reasons for choosing this form, and it's both what we want and what we need. We want our so-called teacher or master to be serene. We're talking particularly about the most general audience here. Special audiences don't care! For them,

We should contemplate why Buddha chose this outermost manifestation

there are manifestations like herukas, which are beyond our imagination! You should contemplate why Buddha chose for his outermost manifestation someone serene, humble, walking barefoot, and begging alms. After all, begging is considered a lowly thing to do, especially these days, but it's something he did almost every day.

Although we can say that sambhogakaya manifestations like herukas are 'higher', we determine hierarchy in terms of the audience, so Shakyamuni Buddha is supreme

When we talk about sovereignty, there's another good example. In Orgyen Tobgyal Rinpoche's monastery, the main statue is a Guru Rinpoche and there is also a big heruka statue, and many other statues of herukas and dakinis. And on a side wall, not on the main shrine, there's a painting of a standing Buddha, walking and begging alms. It's not the main figure. The main figure is Guru Rinpoche and all these herukas, dakas and dakinis. So we're both looking at the statues, and suddenly he says "You know, these guys can think whatever they want to think, about being the most supreme heruka, the supreme guru and all of that", and then he points at the Buddha and says, "But if this guy suddenly walked into this room, all these deities would have to stand up and bow down to him". And if Shakyamuni Buddha were sitting somewhere and all these herukas and sambhogakaya Buddhas with their attributes and retinues were to come in, he wouldn't even have to pay attention. He could ignore them. You see, Shakyamuni Buddha is the king right now. During this period, he's the sovereign. We can say nirmanakaya is the outermost, so sambhogakaya is higher, so to speak, and therefore the herukas are higher. But when we talk about sovereignty, then we're talking about hierarchy in terms of the audience. And this is why Shakyamuni Buddha is supreme among all the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas.

When we supplicate to the Buddha, that is already the activity of the Buddha. We do not have to wait for blessings sometime later

We were talking about the concept of supplication. For example, Shariputra had this. He has the capacity to supplicate to the Buddha. But Devadatta didn't have it. I'm telling you this because today we're talking about the activity of the Buddha. And you will hear that the fact you are supplicating, and that you know how to supplicate, is already the activity of the Buddha. It's not as though you first do supplication and prayers and only then comes the activity of the Buddha, giving you blessings and all that. As Shantideva said, in this darkness, a momentary wish to supplicate or actually performing supplication is already the act of the Buddha. The very moment you have done that, you have received the blessing. You don't have to hit the 'enter' button to send it and then wait for a reply.

For example, we prostrate in order to crush our pride, and the very act of prostrating is already starting to crush our pride

Once you know this, then you'll understand concepts like the Seven Branch Offering, the accumulation of merit, turning the wheel of the Dharma, requesting to remain forever, and things like that. You don't have to wait for the result. The supplication itself is already a result. For instance, why do we prostrate? So we can crush our pride. As you prostrate, it is already beginning to crush your pride to a certain extent. This is so important. Even the Buddha himself, before he taught, prostrated to the seat where he was about to sit and teach. Similarly,

Similarly, the very wish to receive the Dharma is already beginning to defeat wrong views

asking to turn the wheel of the Dharma is supposedly an antidote for ignorance and wrong views, and the very wish to receive the Dharma is already beginning to defeat wrong views. It's the antidote for ignorance.

At a glance these stanzas are not difficult, but as we contemplate and practice, our understanding will deepen over the years

This was just a general background. As we go through the stanzas, at a glance they are not that difficult. But of course it's endless, and these are the words of a 10th bhumi Bodhisattva. You can contemplate a stanza, practice, pray, and read it again after ten years and you'll hear and understand something different. It's a bit like practicing Chinese bamboo painting. The first time when you paint, it looks OK, but you can practice it forever, and it's still not that OK.

280 གཱདུལ་བྱའི་ཁམས་དང་འདུལ་བའི་ཐབས་དང་ནི། །
གཱདུལ་བྱའི་ཁམས་ཀྱི་གཱདུལ་བྱའི་བྱ་བ་དང་། །
དེ་ཡི་ཡུལ་དང་དུས་སུ་གཤེགས་པ་ཡ། །
ཁྱབ་བདག་རྣམ་ཏུ་ལྷུན་གྱིས་གྲུབ་པར་འཛིན། །

With respect to the temperaments of students, the means for training them, the trainings which are suited to their temperaments, and their movements in terms of time and space, the all-embracing are always spontaneous in their acts.

An all-Embracing One always has spontaneous access to the disciples' temperaments, the means of training, the [various] trainings that suit their temperaments and to seeking them wherever they are, at the right time.

Buddha is spontaneous, because he knows beings' elements, motivations and intentions

This stanza talks about how Buddha is spontaneous. He knows sentient beings' elements, motivations, and underlying or latent intentions. Many of the great masters of our time have this. With some of these masters, you see some of their students and you really wonder how can these guys practice Dharma. Then they go to these masters, and within ten days even the colour of their complexion has changed.

Therefore he knows how to tame beings

The story of the poor girl who repaired the hole in the Buddha's robes

And the Buddha knows how to tame beings. He knows where they are, and where to place them, for example, onto the higher realms for the time being, or directly to enlightenment. For instance, when Buddha was in Magadha, once there was a small hole in his robes and his monks wanted to stitch it, but the Buddha said "No, not today". He walked out begging alms, and met a very poor girl who was so poor that she didn't have anything to wear. Buddha went to her begging alms, and everybody was surprised. And when she saw the hole in his robes she offered to stitch it and Buddha let her do that. And as she was stitching, it's believed that Shariputra saw a palace newly constructed for her in Tushita heaven, so that immediately after she died she would be reborn in that heaven. But instead of heaven, she became Buddha's disciple, and became one of the most prominent nuns.

Buddha will not teach just because he has knowledge. He will function when the situation is right

And Buddha knows when to tame beings. Buddha never manifests and teaches because just because he has knowledge, because he has a degree so to speak. He will function when the time, the place and the elements are right, when the situation is right. For instance he did not exhibit his miraculous powers immediately. It was long afterwards, with some tirthika masters who were creating disputes in Shravasti. Basically, he always chooses the right time.

The story of Buddha and his younger brother Nanda

And he tamed his own younger brother, Nanda, much later. Nanda was in love with a beautiful courtesan and they were very much in love, always stroking and embracing each other. They were really inseparable, and one day Shakyamuni Buddha decided it was the time to see his brother. And so he went to Nanda's palace. Nanda was a prince, but he was usually too busy lovemaking to have time for royal messengers or whoever. He would always say, "come later", or send his servants to deal with it. But when Shakyamuni Buddha came, he couldn't refuse him. This is one of the Buddha's qualities. Because he never said no or refused a request from anyone who asked for help in all his many lifetimes, no one can really refuse him. So Nanda had to go out, thinking "Oh god, that man!" And Nanda's queen put a saliva mark on his forehead, saying that he had to be back before it was dry.

And when he went to the door, Buddha was there begging alms. And of course, Nanda offered something and hurried to go back in. But Buddha said, "Wait, I want to show you something. I want to take you somewhere", and again Nanda couldn't refuse. So Buddha took him on a trip to Kailash and during the journey they saw a female monkey, and Buddha pointed to the monkey and asked, "Who do you think is more beautiful, this monkey or your wife?" Nanda replied, "Of course my wife". Their journey continued, and Buddha said, "Let's go to Tushita heaven", and upon arrival, they saw a big palace, with a throne, bathtubs, and many beautiful goddesses cleaning and making all kinds of arrangements. And Buddha asked Nanda, "Who is more beautiful, your wife or these girls?" Nanda said, "Well, compared to these girls, my wife is like the monkey". And Buddha told Nanda to ask the goddesses what they were doing, and they said "Well, on earth there's a guy called Nanda, he's soon going to become a monk, and because of that merit when he dies he'll be reborn here, and we're all waiting to serve him".

So they went back to earth, and immediately Nanda became a monk. But Buddha told his other disciples, including his other cousin Ananda, that from then on all the other monks should not be around Nanda. They should not eat with him, walk with him, or sleep with him. He should be isolated and live separately. Buddha said, "You guys are aiming for something different from him, so you should live separately". After several months Nanda became very sad, because he had no friends and nobody was talking to him. So he went to Buddha and asked everybody was avoiding him. So Buddha said, "OK let's go for another trip". This time they went to the hell realm, where there were all kinds of hideous

sights. And in one corner there was a big cauldron with boiling water and attendants of Yama preparing wood and all kinds of torture implements. And again Buddha sent Nanda to ask them what are they doing. They told him, "There's someone called Nanda who's now a monk, and because he's a monk, he's going to heaven. But that power of merit will exhaust. And because he has accumulated all kinds of non-virtuous actions, that will throw him right into this cauldron where we're going to boil him".

Buddha's activities are spontaneous because he knows what is required to teach his disciples

Likewise, Buddha's activities are always spontaneous because he knows all that is required to teach his disciples.

281 ཡོན་ཏན་རིན་ཆེན་མཆོག་ཚོགས་དང་ལྡན་ཡེ་ཤེས་རྒྱ་མཚོ་བསོད་ནམས་ཡེ་ཤེས་ཀྱི་འོད་ཅན། །
ཐེག་པ་མ་ལུས་ངེས་པར་བསྒྲུབས་ཏེ་མཐའ་དང་དབུས་མེད་རྒྱ་ཆེན་ནམ་མཁའ་ལྟར་ཁྱབ་པ། །
སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱིད་ནི་ཡོན་ཏན་དྲི་མ་མེད་གཏེར་སེམས་ཅན་ཀུན་ལ་ཁྱོད་མེད་རྣམ་གཟིགས་ནས། །
ཉོན་མོངས་ཤེས་བྱའི་སྒྲིབ་ཀྱི་དྲ་བ་སངས་རྒྱས་རྣམས་ཀྱི་ཐུགས་རྗེའི་རླུང་གིས་རྣམ་པར་གཏོར། །

Endowed with jñana's mighty sea, full with a multitude of gem-like qualities, and with the sunlight of virtue and jñana, the Buddhas have achieved all yanas. Without middle or end – exceedingly vast, Buddhahood is all-pervading, just like space. Perfectly seeing that this treasure of unsullied qualities is in every being, without the slightest distinction, they dispel defilements' and knowledge's cloud lattices with the wind of their perfect compassion.

Having multitudes of supremely precious qualities and the waters of the ocean of primordial wisdom, possessing the sunlight of merit and wisdom, it is the definitive accomplishment of all vehicles without exception. [Enlightenment] is vast, without middle or end and thus all-pervasive like space. Fully seeing that Buddhahood, the treasure of the unpolluted qualities, is [present] within all sentient beings without the slightest distinction, the wind of the Buddhas' sublime compassion totally dispels the clouds of afflictions and hindrances to knowledge, which have spun their net about it.

Buddha's sky-like enlightenment is the fruit of perfecting the accomplishment of merit and wisdom during the ten bhumis

This stanza is so beautiful. It talks about why Buddha's activity is uninterrupted. He has so many great qualities such as the enlightened samadhis, and he has accomplished all these qualities by going through this ocean-like or water-like wisdom, which refers to the ten bhumis. After going through the ten bhumis he has perfected or accomplished the accumulation of merit and accumulation of wisdom, which is like the sun. And the result or fruit of all these samadhis and stages of the Bodhisattva is like the sky-like enlightenment.

Buddha's activity is uninterrupted because he knows his Buddhahood is the same as the Buddha-nature of sentient beings

This is the real reason his activity is uninterrupted. Buddha knows that this stainless element (*kham*), this stainless Buddha that he has achieved is not the slightest bit different from the Buddha that exists within sentient beings, which is why his activity just cannot be interrupted. So where does the activity fit in here? His compassion is like the wind that destroys the temporary clouds, the temporary defilements, and that kind of confidence is possible because Buddha knows there is not the slightest difference between his Buddhahood and sentient

beings' Buddha-nature. That is why his activity cannot be interrupted. For example, let's suppose you forget to pray today, it doesn't mean that his activity stops or that you're not a Buddhist for the next 500 lifetimes. It doesn't mean that he stops.

That was the summary. Now the detailed explanation begins, but that also has a summary. That's how Lord Maitreya talks. He is a god, not a human being. And I guess this is how they talk, very detailed and very relaxed.

282 གང་ཞིག་གང་གིས་གཏན་པ་ཡི། །
བྱ་གང་གང་དུ་གང་གི་ཚེ། །
དེ་ཡི་རྣམ་རྟོག་སྒྲ་མེད་ཕྱིར། །
ཐུབ་པ་རྟག་ཏུ་ལྷུན་གྱིས་གྲུབ། །

Since thoughts of "for whom", "by what means", "through what training", "where" and "when" do not arise, these masters of wisdom are spontaneous at all times:

For whom? How? By which training? Where? And when? Since ideation as to such [questions] does not occur, the Muni always [acts] spontaneously.

Buddha knows how to tame sentient beings. He acts spontaneously as he has no conception

Which sentient beings are to be tamed, where, when and how? The Buddha knows all this because he does not have any conception, so all of it is spontaneous.

283 གཏུལ་བྱའི་ལམས་ནི་གང་ཞིག་གི། །
གཏུལ་བའི་ཐབས་མང་གང་གིས། །
གཏུལ་བྱའི་བྱ་གང་གང་དུ་ནི། །
གང་ཚེ་ཡུལ་དང་དུས་དེ་དག །

"For whom" – the temperaments of those to be trained, "by what means" – which of the many training techniques, "through what training" – which actions to use to train them and "where and when" – on what occasion.

The temperaments of the disciples, which of the many means for each, which training at what place and time: [He is not mistaken as to any of] these.

284 ངེས་འབྱུང་དེ་ཡི་སྟོན་པ་དང་། །
དེ་འབྲས་དེ་ཡི་ཡོངས་འཛིན་དང་། །
དེ་སྒྲིབ་དེ་གཅོད་རྒྱུན་ལ་ནི། །
རྣམ་པར་རྟོག་པ་མེད་ཕྱིར་རོ། །

Buddha-activity is unceasing because it is devoid of conceptualizing with regard to true freedom, freedom's support, the fruit of freedom, authentic possession of this fruit, the obscurations which veil it and the necessary conditions for breaking through them.

Since, with regard to the definitive revelation of release, its support, its fruit, those being fully sustained, their obscurations and the condition cutting these veils, there is no ideation, [Buddha activity is uninterrupted.]

285 ངེས་པར་འབྱུང་པ་ས་བཅུ་སྟེ། །
ཚོགས་གཉིས་དག་ནི་དེ་ཡི་རྒྱུ། །
དེ་འབྲས་བྱང་ཆུབ་མཆོག་ཡིན་ཏེ། །
བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་ཅན་ཡོངས་སུ་འཛིན། །

Genuine release is the ten levels; its cause is the two accumulations. Its fruit is supreme enlightenment; an enlightenment beings really possess.

The ten levels definitively reveal release. The two accumulations provide their cause. Supreme enlightenment is the fruit of these. Enlightenment in beings is fully sustained.

286 དེ་སྒྲིབ་མཐའ་ཡས་ཉོན་མོངས་དང་། །
ཉེ་བའི་ཉོན་མོངས་བཞི་ཆགས་སོ། །
དུས་ཀུན་དུ་ནི་དེ་འཇོམས་པའི། །
རྒྱུན་ནི་ཐུགས་རྗེ་ཆེན་པོ་ཡིན། །

Its obscuring veils are the endless defilements, the subsidiary defilements and the latencies. Great compassion is the condition for destroying these.

These are obscured by the endless afflictions, the secondary afflictions and the latencies. A Buddha's great compassion is the condition that, at all times, vanquishes these [veils].

The Mahayana path is called the 'path that extracts', as it extracts our Buddha-nature from temporary defilements

When Buddhas act, they manifest in six fashions without any conception. The whole Mahayana path, the Bodhisattva path, is also called the "path that extracts" (*nyejin gyi lam*). We all have Buddha-nature that is cocooned and wrapped by defilements, so we're extracting it from these temporary defilements. When we talk about that path, we're talking about the ten bhumis (*sa chu*) . And the path produces two kinds of accumulations: the accumulation of merit and accumulation of wisdom. The two accumulations are like a cause that generates all the virtuous qualities during the ten bhumis. And the result, or the fruit of these two accumulations is enlightenment (*changchub*). What does Buddha activity do? It eliminates defilements. And upon which object does Buddha manifest? Sentient beings. And the condition to eliminate defilements is great compassion (*thujey chenpo*).

Buddha activity eliminates the defilements of sentient beings with great compassion

One of the most important causes for Buddha activity is that sentient beings have Buddha-nature

One of the most important causes for the Buddha's activity is that sentient beings have the potential to reach enlightenment. This is very important. If sentient beings didn't have Buddha-nature, then Buddha activity wouldn't work. There are two kinds of defilements that obstruct this Buddha-nature, and the condition that triggers the action of clearing the defilements is compassion. This is how an enlightened being holds and does not let go of the object, sentient beings. All this is explained once again with an example.

287 གནས་དྲུག་པོ་ནི་འདི་དག་རྣམས། །
གོ་རིམས་ཏེ་བཞིན་རྒྱ་མཚོ་དང་། །
ཉི་མ་དང་ནི་ནམ་མཁའི་གཏེར། །
སྤྲིན་དང་རླུང་བཞིན་ཤེས་པར་བྱ། །

These six points should be known as respectively being like an ocean, the sun, space, a treasure, clouds and the wind.

These six points: being similar to an ocean, the sun, space, a treasure, clouds and wind are to be grasped accordingly.

Buddha activity manifests in six ways

The six fashions or ways of manifesting Buddha activity are like the examples that follow.

288 ཤེས་རབ་ཡེ་ཁན་རིན་ཆེན་དང་། །
ལྡན་ཕྱིར་ས་རྣམས་རྒྱ་མཚོ་བཞིན། །
སེམས་ཅན་ཐམས་ཅད་ཉེར་འཚོའི་ཕྱིར། །
ཚོགས་གཉིས་དག་ནི་ཉི་མ་བཞིན། །

The levels are like an ocean whose waters are jñana and which possesses the qualities as its ocean's gems. The two-accumulations are like the sun, since by them all beings are sustained.

Holding wisdom's waters and qualities like gems, the levels are like an ocean. Closely sustaining all sentient beings, the two accumulations are like the sun.

The ten bhumis are like an ocean filled with jewels, and the two accumulations are like the sun that ripens the fruit

The bhumis are like an ocean. The ocean contains so many jewels and has so many incredible attributes, and likewise the ten bhumis have infinite, immeasurable wealth. The two accumulations of merit and wisdom are like the sun, because the sun ripens the fruit. This is an amazing example for the concept of accumulation of merit, things like offering butterlamps and all that. When the sun ripens the fruit, it just happens spontaneously. The sun doesn't think, "I'm going to ripen that apple". The sun comes and provides heat, and fruit that is exposed is ripened, and fruit that is somewhere in a cave doesn't get ripened.

289 རྒྱ་ཆེ་མཐའ་དང་དབུས་མེད་ཕྱིར། །
བྱང་ཆུབ་ནམ་མཁའི་ཁམས་བཞིན་ནོ། །
ཡང་དག་རྫོགས་སངས་རྒྱས་ཆོས་ཉིད་ཕྱིར། །
སེམས་ཅན་ཁམས་ནི་གཏེར་དང་འདྲ། །

Enlightenment is like space, being vast, centreless and without end. The basic character of beings is like a treasure, being the very nature of utterly perfect enlightenment.

Being vast and without any middle or end, enlightenment is like the element of space. Genuine perfect awakening is Dharmata, hence beings' nature is like a treasure.

Enlightenment is like unchanging space and sentient beings are like a treasure mine that is the source of wealth

Enlightenment is like the sky or space. All kinds of things happen within space, but the space itself doesn't change. Sentient beings are like a treasure mine. This is such an encouraging example. You dig for treasures and wealth in a mine. Wealth comes from the mine, and likewise Buddhas come from sentient beings, so sentient beings are like a mine.

290 གློ་བུར་ཁྲོག་དང་མ་གྲུབ་ཕྱིར། །
དེ་ཡི་ཉོན་མོངས་སྤྲིན་ཚོགས་བཞིན། །
དེ་འཕྲོར་བར་ནི་ཉེར་གནས་ཕྱིར། །
ཐུགས་རྗེ་མི་བཟད་རླུང་དང་འདྲ། །

The covering defilements are like cloud-hosts, being fleeting, pervasive and not entities. Compassion is like a mighty wind, being ever-present to dispel them.

Adventitious, pervasive and not existent, its afflictions are like a host of clouds. Always ready to dispel these [afflictions], compassion is similar to a merciless wind.

Defilements are like adventitious clouds, and compassion is like the wind that disorganises the rational world of samsara

Defilements are like clouds. They are adventitious and removable, not what it is. Compassion is like the wind. It destroys, scatters, creates chaos, and disorganises the systematic, samsaric, rational world of 1 + 1 = 2 and all that. These are amazing examples! Only Maitreya can think of things like this. Usually we think compassion is like honey, something sticky, gluey and all that. Now he will conclude the summary, and then we will have the actual extended explanation.

291 གཞན་ཕྱི་དབང་གིས་ངེས་འབྱུང་དང་། །
བདག་དང་སེམས་ཅན་མཚུངས་གཟིགས་དང་། ། །
མཛད་པ་ཡོངས་སུ་མ་རྫོགས་ཕྱིར། །
འཕོར་བ་སྲིད་དུ་མཛད་མི་འཚད། །

Since their release is for others' benefit, since they see the equality of themselves and beings and since their deeds have not been fully completed, their activity is unbroken until samsara's end.

Their release [is accomplished] for the sake of others. They see the equality of themselves and sentient beings and their activity is not completed to its full extent. Thus their deeds will never cease while samsara exists.

There are three causes why the activity of the Buddha is inexhaustible:

1) His renunciation was for the sake of liberating all sentient beings

By contrast, we have renunciation only rarely, and it's directed only at our own petty problems

The activity of the Buddha is inexhaustible. It continues until samsara ends. Because first of all, when Buddha was a Bodhisattva he had renunciation mind, and the main cause of his renunciation mind was seeing the pain and suffering of other sentient beings. It wasn't as though he was fed up with this worldly life just for himself. He didn't just want to have fun himself, alone. This is an incredible message. First of all most of us don't even have renunciation mind. But if we do have it, once in a blue moon, it's usually because we are tired with our own petty problems. We're tired with our boss or colleagues or friends or relatives, and so we want to have an extended picnic! But when Buddha renounces these things it's not so much because he's going through pain or because he's unhappy, but because others are going through all these problems. That's something different. It's one cause why Buddha activity will never end.

2) Buddha sees that he is no different from the nature of sentient beings

The second cause why Buddha activity will never end is that he sees there's not the slightest difference between him and the nature of sentient beings.

3) He knows that defilements are removable

And third, he knows that defilements are removable. They're not that much of a big deal, so it's not a hopeless case. And who proved that? He did, because he has achieved it himself. So he has the driving force to bring others to reach there as well.

Now all this will be explained with some examples.

292 བརྒྱ་བྱིན་ཌ་སྦྱིན་ཚངས་པ་དང་། །
ཉི་མ་ནོར་བུ་རིན་ཆེན་བཞིན། །
དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་སྒྲ་བརྒྱན་བཞིན། །
ནམ་མཁའ་དང་ནི་ས་བཞིན་ནོ། །

Like Indra, the drum, clouds, Brahma, the sun, a wishfulfilling gem, [an echo], space and earth is the tathagata.

A tathagata is similar to Indra, to the drum [of the gods], clouds, to Brahma, the sun, a precious gem, to an echo, to space and the earth.

There are nine examples for Buddha activity

The examples for Buddha activity are Indra, the drum, clouds, Brahma, sun, gem, sound, space and earth.

Example #1: Indra's Reflection On The Lapis Lazuli Floor

293 ཇི་ལྟར་གོ་ཆར་དག་པ་ཡི། །
རང་བཞིན་ས་སྟེང་འདིར་འགྱུར་ཏེ། །
དག་ཕྱིར་ལྷ་ཡི་དབང་པོ་དེར། །
ལྷ་ཡི་བུ་མོའི་ཚོགས་དང་བཅས། །

If the ground here had the quality of flawless lapis-lazuli, then one would see appear in it, through its clarity, the king of gods accompanied by hosts of young goddesses,

If the surface of the ground here changed into the nature of immaculate lapis lazuli, because of its purity one would see it the [appearance of] the Lord of all Gods with his following of many young goddesses.

294 རྣམ་པར་རྒྱལ་བའི་ཁང་བཟང་དང། །
ལྷ་གནས་དེ་ལས་གཞན་དག་དང། །
དེ་ཡི་གཞལ་ཡས་སྟོ་ཚོགས་དང། །
ལྷ་ཐུས་རྣམ་མང་དེ་མཐོང་བོ། །

"perfectly Victorious" – his resplendent palace, the divine abodes, other places with various wonders and all the many kinds of enjoyments that gods possess.

One would see his sublimely beautiful palace "the All-Victorious" and other divine abodes, the gods' various palaces and manifold wealth.

#1: Indra's reflection on the lapis lazuli floor

The first example is the reflection of Indra. We call him *Gyachin* because he has achieved that form by making hundred kinds of offerings. It's Hindu stuff! This is a very long example, and it's more of a hypothetical example. And there are also examples like this, stories actually, in the Hindu mythology. I don't know whether we should call it 'mythology'. I don't think so. I've got a little bit of a soft spot for Hindus myself. Indra is supposedly very powerful and a product of a lot of merit. There are 33 Indras, and here we're talking about the main one. He also manifests as 32 other kings, and he's also father of many prominent figures. For example, these Vajrayana people talk about Mahakali. She's the daughter of Indra, although Indra expelled her because he wasn't happy with her. Basically, the most powerful being within the desiring realm, which is where we are, is Indra. And because Indra is very powerful, ordinary gods cannot look at him directly. They can only look at the lapis lazuli floor. And because the floor is blue and very clean, all the reflections of Indra the king of the gods and his courtesans and his ministers are visible on the floor. And the ordinary gods can only talk to him by looking at his reflection.

Because Indra is so powerful, ordinary gods cannot look at him directly. They can only talk to him by looking at his reflection in the floor

295 དེ་ནས་སྐྱེས་པ་བྱད་མེད་ཚོགས། །
ས་ཡི་སྟེང་ན་གནས་པ་རྣམས། །
སྣང་བ་དེ་ནི་མཐོང་ཐུར་ཏེ། །
ངེད་ཀྱང་རིང་ཡོར་མི་ཐོགས་པར། །

Seeing these appearances, multitude of men and women living on the earth's surface would exclaim:

Once the assembly of men and women who inhabit the surface of the earth saw this appearance, each would say:

296 ལྷ་དབང་འདི་འདྲར་ཐུར་ཅིག་ཅེས། །
དེ་འདྲའི་སྨོན་ལམ་འདེབས་བྱེད་ཅིང་། །
དེ་ཐོབ་དོན་དུ་དགེ་བ་ནི། །
ཡང་དག་བླངས་ཏེ་གནས་པར་ཐུར། །

"O! May we also, before long, become like this divine king." Having made such a prayer, that it be realized, they would truly adopt virtue and persist.

"Before a long time passes, may I too become like this Lord of the Gods!" Prayers like these they would utter and to achieve this feat would adopt genuine virtue and remain within it.

When ordinary beings like us see Indra's reflection, we are strongly attracted by the wealth and beauty and we will diligently follow the path to attain that result

Indra's reflection, and the reflections of all his palaces and retinues, appears on the lapis lazuli floor. And when this is observed by ordinary beings like us, like human beings, we are strongly attracted to the wealth, beauty and greatness of these beings. We'll automatically want to be like them and have the same things as them, so we'll inquire about what to do in order to become like this. And realising that some sort of virtuous deeds are necessary, we'll try to be diligent in praying and accumulating this kind of virtuous action.

297 དེ་དག་དགེ་བའི་ལས་དེས་ནི། །
འདི་སྣང་ཙམ་ཞེས་དེ་ལྟ་བུར། །
ཤེས་པ་མེད་ཀྱང་ས་སྟེང་ནས། །
འཕོས་ཏེ་ལྷ་ར་སྐྱེ་བར་འགྱུར། །

Though they may not realize that these are just appearances, they would, nevertheless, through virtue, be reborn as gods when they had departed from the surface of this Earth.

"This is just an appearance!" There would not be any such understanding. Still their virtuous deeds would lead them to be reborn in a divine existence after they departed from the surface of the earth.

Ordinary beings don't realise it is only Indra's reflection, but they can still achieve Indra's state through their aspiration and virtuous actions

Ordinary beings don't know that this is only Indra's reflection. They think it is real. But through their own wish to become like him, and their gathering of the necessary causes such as virtuous actions, they can actually achieve Indra's state.

298 སྣང་བ་དེ་ནི་ཤིན་ཏུ་ཡང་། །
རྟོག་པ་མེད་ཅིང་གཡོ་བ་མེད། །
དེ་ལྟ་མོད་ཀྱི་སས་སྟེང་ན། །
དོན་ཆེན་གྱིས་ནི་ཉེ་བར་གནས། །

These appearances are absolutely unintentional and without shift. However, their presence on Earth is accompanied by great benefit.

These appearances are totally free from ideation and do not involve the slightest movement at all. There is nothing of this kind and yet nevertheless they are accompanied by great benefit on the earth.

Indra's reflection doesn't have any thoughts or intentions, but it can still have a big effect on people

And Indra's reflections don't have any thoughts. They are only reflections. They don't have thoughts like "let us inspire ordinary human beings, and make them wish they could become like us". They don't have any thoughts. They're just there. But they have a big effect on people, even though they're just reflections and don't have any wishes. They make people have all these wishes and aspirations, and all this diligence.

Day 6 – Introduction

The attraction to Indra's wealth and glory is an important part of the example

Some beings are so stupid that they're not even attracted to that

But the reflections have no intention to make people feel any attraction

We will continue with the example of Indra's reflection on the lapis lazuli floor. Upon seeing the reflection of Lord Indra and his retinue on the lapis lazuli floor some ordinary beings, although not all of them, will become strongly attracted to that. In other words, they see something that they want to be part of and a place where they would like to be. But they don't have any idea that it's just a reflection. This attraction to Indra's wealth and glory is quite an important aspect of the example, because there are other people who are so stupid that they're not even attracted to that. Anyway, those who are attracted will inquire about what to do in order to become like Indra. And when they understand that it can be attained through accumulating virtuous thoughts and actions such as generosity, not killing, not lying and so on, they will then engage in these actions diligently and they will end up obtaining that kind of state. Meanwhile the reflections don't know any of these things, and they don't have any intention or motivation to make any of these people feel any attraction.

299 དེ་བཞིན་དད་སོགས་ཏྲི་མེད་ཅན། །
དད་སོགས་ཡོན་ཏན་བསྒོམ་པ་ཡི། །
རང་སེམས་ལ་སྣང་ཐོགས་སངས་རྒྱས། །
མཚན་དང་དཔེ་བྱད་ལྡན་པ་དང་། །

In a similar way, beings with faultless faith and so forth will, through practising these qualities, see the perfect Buddha manifest in their mind –

Those endowed with unpolluted faith and so forth, having cultivated the qualities of faith and so on, will see in their own minds the Buddha's appearance,

300 འཆག་པ་དང་གི་བཞེངས་པ་དང་། །
བཞུགས་པ་དང་གི་གཟིམས་པ་དང་། །
སྤྱོད་ལམ་སྣ་ཚོགས་མཛད་པ་ཅན། །
ཞི་བའི་ཆོས་ནི་གསུང་བ་དང་། །

Endowed with the marks and meaningful signs. They see in walking, standing, sitting, sleeping; enacting all the various modes of conduct,

Which is perfect and has special signs and marks. They will see the Buddha while he is walking, while he is standing, sitting or resting in sleep. They will see him in manifold forms of conduct:

301 མི་གསུང་མཉམ་པར་བཞག་ལྷུར་པ། །
ཆོ་འཕྲུལ་རྣམ་པ་སྣ་ཚོགས་དག །
མཛད་པ་གཟི་མཛངས་ཆེན་པོ་ཅན། །
སེམས་ཅན་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་མཐོང་བར་འགྱུར། །

Proclaiming the teaching of peace or, without speaking, remaining in meditation, performing various sorts of miracle and being with magnificence and splendour full.

When explaining the teaching leading to peace, when silently resting in meditative equipoise or when displaying various forms of miracles. Possessed of great splendour and magnificence, [the Buddha] will be seen by all sentient beings.

Likewise, when we have occasional wholesome thoughts, these things are like a lapis lazuli floor

Likewise, some of us may have occasional wholesome thoughts about attaining virtuous qualities. And this kind of virtue doesn't have to be Buddhist. It could be from anything, religious or non-religious, from believers in 'Heaven and Earth' or even followers of Rudolf Steiner. Basically, any wholesome thoughts, like devotion or aspiration towards something wholesome, something non-violent, something helpful to society, anyway to something more than oneself. These thoughts aren't necessarily from a doctrine. They're basically commonsense, for example you don't punch other people because you know that it's painful when someone punches you. These kinds of things are like a lapis lazuli floor.

Virtue or goodness is not defined religiously, but as the kind of act that doesn't create pain

Having that view, contemplating it, and then deliberately putting effort into refraining from punching people, and telling other people not to punch is like having the lapis lazuli floor very well vacuumed, cleaned and polished. It's basic goodness. And when we talk about goodness, we're not defining it religiously. We're defining it as goodness because that kind of act does not create pain.

On this lapis lazuli floor, your Buddha-nature will be reflected as the Buddha or a figure that inspires you

Now, on this kind of ground or floor, the Buddha-nature that is the true nature of your mind will then be reflected as the 32 major marks, or for some as the 80 minor marks. Basically you will see someone who inspires you. That Buddha would reflect on that lapis lazuli floor, that commonsense floor.

What you see on the lapis lazuli floor depends on how clean the floor is

Of course, this depends on how clean the lapis lazuli is. If it's not that clean, then there's still a reflection of the Buddha, but it might appear as a companion who is a bit of a good influence, but who is totally a pain in the neck. And if the lapis lazuli or commonsense is cleaner, then I'm sure the Buddha-nature can appear in the form of all kinds of masters and gods such as Krishna or Shiva, and I really think as Jesus Christ also. Or as Omar Khayyam or Rumi, although whether it appears as others is yet to be analysed. Basically, it appears as someone who gives you some kind of bliss. And it can even appear as animals, such as some of the supreme animals like elephants and lions. I was told that one should really look at creatures like tigers, lions and elephants, or at least their photos, as they have a certain effect. Or perhaps dolphins, maybe that's good! And for some, the lapis lazuli is quite clean, and they see Buddha Shakyamuni, prince Siddhartha. And this is so good! And you'll perceive him walking. He will appear like that to you. Walking barefoot. Or perhaps wearing Gucci shoes! Standing up sometimes. Or sitting. Actually, we talking about Shakyamuni here, and Gucci shoes are more like the Vajrayana, so let's not talk about that here!

Buddha-nature can appear as all kinds of masters or gods such as Krishna, Shiva or Jesus, or as animals such as the supreme animals

For those whose lapis lazuli is quite clean, they see Buddha Shakyamuni, prince Siddhartha.

We may see many different manifestations of Buddha in many forms, all very majestic, on our lapis lazuli floor of commonsense basic goodness. Our own Buddha-nature manifests all of them

When we depict, paint, or make statues of Shakyamuni Buddha, we sometimes represent him sitting, sometimes standing, and sometimes lying down, with different mudras or gestures. He may be eating or sleeping, and sometimes he appears to be teaching. And sometimes he appears not to be teaching. And all these appearances are very majestic. Anyway, we see all of this on this lapis lazuli floor of commonsense basic goodness. What you see is being manifested by your own Buddha-nature, and that's how you will perceive the Buddha. This is quite an important point.

302 དེ་མཐོང་ནས་ཀྱང་འདོད་ལྷན་པ། །
ས་ངན་རྒྱས་ཉིད་ཅེས་རབ་སྦྱོར་ཏེ། །
དེ་རྒྱུ་ཡང་དག་བླངས་ནས་ནི། །
འདོད་པའི་གོ་འཕང་ཐོབ་པར་བྱེད། །

Having seen this and felt aspiration for such Buddhahood, they apply themselves to it most excellently. Through properly adopting its causes, the desired state is reached.

Once having seen this, they too will wish to fully join what is named "Buddhahood" and adopting its causes in a genuine way they will attain the state they longed for.

Some of us are attracted to these manifestations and seek to become like them, so we follow the path and attain that state

Some of us are more enterprising, and upon seeing these things we get attracted to them. The attraction is quite important. And you want to be one of them, not knowing that it's actually your own reflection. So you ask around about what to do in order to become like this. And upon hearing that you have to do the six paramitas and stuff like that, you will actually do it. And then you will actually attain that state.

303 སྣང་བ་དེ་ནི་ཤིན་ཏུ་ཡང་། །
རྟོག་མེད་གཡོ་བ་མེད་པ་ཉིད། །
དེ་ལྟ་ན་ཡང་འཇིག་རྟེན་ན། །
དོན་ཆེན་པོས་ནི་ཉེ་བར་གནས། །

These appearances are completely concept-free and involve no shift. Though this be so, they bring to the world tremendous benefit.

These appearances are totally free from ideation and do not involve the slightest movement at all. There is nothing of this kind and yet nevertheless they are accompanied by great benefit in the world.

But these reflections have no intention

Meanwhile, these reflections that appear to be walking and teaching, to have an ushnisha, to be prince Siddhartha, they have no intention. They aren't thinking, "We need to nail this guy down!" They don't have that kind of intention.

304 འདི་ནི་རང་སེམས་སྣང་བ་ཞེས། །
སོ་སོའི་སྐྱེ་བོས་མི་ཤེས་མོད། །
དེ་ལྟ་ན་ཡང་གཟུགས་མཐོང་སྟེ། །
དེ་དག་ལ་ནི་དོན་ཡོད་འགྱུར། །

Ordinary beings are held not to understand that, "these are one's own mind's manifestations" yet to see such forms nevertheless bring them benefit.

"This is appearance of my own mind." Worldly beings do not have such insight. Yet, their seeing of this visible kaya will become meaningful for these beings.

Although we don't know that it is just our own reflection, it will still do the job

And also we won't know that it is our own reflection. But the reflection will still do the job, because it will make you want to have those kinds of qualities.

305 རིམ་གྱིས་དེ་མཐོང་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས། །
ཐེག་པ་འདི་ལ་གནས་པ་རྣམས། །
ནང་གི་དམ་པ་ཆོས་སྐུ་ཞི། །
ཡེ་ཤེས་མིག་གིས་མཐོང་བར་འགྱུར། །

Progressively, through what is seen, established in the yana, they will see the inner true dharmakaya through the eyes of jñana.

Relying on gradually beholding this form, all those who follow the [Great] Vehicle will see their genuine inner dharmakaya by means of the eye of primordial wisdom.

The reflection is far from useless, as it makes us engage in the path that leads us to Buddhahood

So it's not as though that reflection is useless. It will make you engage in all kinds of accumulations of merit and wisdom and eventually take you to the state of the Buddha.

306 ཇི་ལྟར་ས་ཀུན་ཉམ་ངའི་གནས་གཞན་དང་བྲལ་ཏེ་མེད་བཅུ་ཆ། །
གསལ་མཛེས་ནོར་བུའི་ཡོན་ཏན་ཏེ་བྲལ་དཔལ་ལྡན་སྟེང་ནི་མཉམ་ཐུང་ཏེ། །
དགེ་ཕྱིར་དེར་ནི་ལྷ་དགེ་སྡུ་ཚོགས་ལྷ་དབང་ལྷ་ཡི་གཟུགས་ཤར་སྟེ། །
རིམ་གྱིས་ས་ཡི་ཡོན་ཏན་བྲལ་ཕྱིར་དེ་ནི་སྣང་ཡང་མི་སྣང་འགྱུར། །

If all the earth were rid of fearful places and became flawless lapis, lustrous and beautiful with all that jewel's qualities – free from impurity, magnificent and of smooth, even surface, then there would appear, on account of its purity, the various divine abodes and the form of the king of gods. By such a ground's qualities' gradual disappearance, these things would once again become non-apparent.

If the whole earth became rid of fearful places and turned into an even surface of lapis lazuli that was flawless, radiant and beautiful, having a gem's qualities and unstained lustre, various divine abodes and the form of their Lord would shine forth within it because of its purity. Then, as the earth gradually lost these properties, they would be invisible again and appear no more.

The lapis lazuli floor is very even and has all kinds of qualities
When the floor is clean, Indra's reflection appears, but when it is dirty, its qualities cease and there is no more reflection

The example is explained in more detail. The lapis lazuli floor, which is very even just like the palm of the hand, has all kinds of qualities. When it is clean and polished, the reflection of Lord Indra will be reflected in it. But as soon as it's not clean, the qualities of the lapis lazuli cease to exist, and there is no more reflection.

307 དེ་དང་པོ་ཐོབ་ཕྱིར་བསྟན་གནས་བརྩལ་ཞུགས་དེས་པར་སྤྱིན་སོགས་ལ་ཕྱོགས་པ། །
བྱང་མེད་སྐྱེས་ཚོགས་སྨོན་པའི་སེམས་ཀྱིས་མེ་ཏོག་ལ་སོགས་འཕོར་བ་ལྟར། །
དགེ་བ་ནི་ཏཱ་ཐ་ཨ་ཏ་ལ་སྡོང་བའི་ཐུབ་དབང་ཐོབ་བྱའི་ཕྱིར། །
རབ་དགའི་སེམས་ལྟན་ཆུལ་བའི་སྲས་རྣམས་དེ་བཞིན་སེམས་རབ་སྐྱེད་པར་བྱེད། །

In order to obtain such a state, many men and women would turn to the "precepts of close observance" – true generosity and so on, scatter flowers and do other like deeds, their mind full of aspiration. In a similar way, in order to become this "mighty victor king" who had appeared in their mind, comparable to pure lapis-lazuli, the victors' sons develop their "mind" perfectly, their spirit being filled with great joy.

Yet, for their real attainment the men and women would side with the vows of individual release, with penitence, authentic giving and so forth, scattering flowers and so on with longing minds. Likewise, to attain the state of a Lord of Munis shining forth in their minds, which is similar to pure lapis lazuli, the heirs of the Victor, their vision filled with sheer delight, give rise to bodhicitta in the most perfect manner.

Those of us who wish to become like Indra will engage in virtuous actions such as generosity or meditation

Some of us, those who wish to reach the state of Lord Indra, will try to engage in all kinds of virtuous actions such as the lay disciplines of fasting and refraining from at least one non-virtuous action. Or we will engage in generosity, discipline, shamatha, and vipashyana meditation. Or we will at least have the aspiration to become like that and then throw some flowers on the lapis lazuli as an offering.

308 ཇི་ལྟར་བཻ་ཌཱུརྱ་ས་གཞི་གཙང་མ་ལ། །
ལྷ་དབང་ལུས་ཀྱི་གཟུགས་བརྙན་སྣང་བ་ལྟར། །
དེ་བཞིན་འགྲོ་སེམས་ས་གཞི་གཙང་མ་ལ། །
ཐུབ་པའི་དབང་པོའི་སྐུ་ཡི་གཟུགས་བརྙན་འཆར། །

Just as the reflection of the form of the king of gods appears in the clear lapis-lazuli ground, so also does the reflection of the king of mighty sages' form appear in the clear ground that is beings' minds.

Just as mirrored by the purified lapis lazuli ground the physical appearance of the Lord of Gods is seen, likewise the kaya of the Lord of Munis is reflected in the purified ground of sentient beings' mind.

309 འགྲོ་བར་གཟུགས་བརྙན་འཆར་ཆུབ་རྟོག་མེད་དང་། །
རྟོག་པའི་རང་སེམས་རབ་འཇུག་དབང་གིས་འཇུག །
ཇི་ལྟར་འཇིག་རྟེན་དག་ན་གཟུགས་སྣང་ལྟར། །
དེ་བཞིན་ཡོད་དང་ཞིག་ཅེས་དེ་མི་ལྟ། །

For beings, the appearances and disappearances of these reflections occur because of their mind's either unpolluted or polluted condition. Similar to the manifestation of form in the worlds, these should not be taken as entities "existent" or "extinct".

Whether these reflections will rise or set in beings owes to their own minds being sullied or unstained. Like the form [of the Lord Indra] appearing in the worlds, they are not to be viewed as "existent" or "extinct"

Likewise, Bodhisattvas will engage in the path of the paramitas to attain the infinite qualities of the Buddha

You should write stanzas 308 and 309 on the wall! Just like these boys and girls who wish to become like Indra, Bodhisattvas who are on the path of the greater

vehicle will diligently engage in the path of the paramitas to attain the infinite enlightened qualities of the Buddha.

For sentient beings with a clean mind, the reflection of the Sambhogakaya Buddha appears to them, like Indra appears on the clean lapis lazuli floor

For sentient beings with defilements, the reflection of the Buddha doesn't appear. But it hasn't gone

Just as Lord Indra's reflection reflects on a clean floor of lapis lazuli, the sambhogakaya Buddha's reflection will reflect on the clean mind of sentient beings. But when you forget to clean the lapis lazuli floor, then Lord Indra's reflection either becomes distorted or even disappears for a long time. That's not Lord Indra's fault, as Lord Indra doesn't even know. Forget about Lord Indra, even the reflections don't know. They don't know if they are not there. Likewise when sentient beings have a lot of defilements and obscurations, the reflection of the Buddha appears not to be there. But it's not as if it is gone. This concludes the first example.

Example #2: The Heavenly Drum

310 ཇི་ལྟར་ལྷ་ནང་ལྷ་རྣམས་ཀྱི། །
སྟོན་ཀྱི་དཀར་པོའི་མཐུ་ཡིས་ནི། །
འབད་དང་གནས་དང་ཡིད་གཟུགས་དང་། །
རྣམ་པར་རྟོག་པ་མེད་བཞིན་ཏུ། །

Through the power of the gods' former goodness, the Dharma drum in the divine realms, without effort, location, mental form or concept,

By the powers of the gods' former virtue the Dharma drum [arose] among them. Involving no effort, origin or thought, no vibration and no intention at all,

311 མི་རྟག་སྡུག་བསྔལ་བདག་མེད་དང་། །
ཞི་བའི་སྒྲ་ཡིས་བག་མེད་པའི། །
ལྷ་རྣམས་ཐམས་ཅད་ཡང་དང་ཡང་། །
ཆོས་ཀྱི་རྡས་ནི་སྒྲོལ་བྱེད་ལྟར། །

Exhorts all the uncaring gods over and over again with its throbs of "impermanence", "suffering", "no-self" and "peace".

The drum resounds again and again with "impermanence" and "suffering", "non-existence of self" and "peace", admonishing all the careless gods.

#2: The heavenly drum

After the human realm, the god realm has more access to dharma than any other realm

The second example is the big drum of the gods. As you know, among the five or six realms, the human realm is supposedly the best. And the god realm is not the best, basically, but I think that after the human realm, the god realm has more access to the Dharma than any other realm. Well, for one thing the author of this text is there! Anyway, many gods also have an aspiration to practice the

Dharma. And before Shakyamuni Buddha decided to descend to the earth, his last samsaric life was in heaven. Many gods decided to migrate to human realm, basically dying in the god realm and being reborn in the human realm.

The heavenly drum is like an alarm that makes the four sounds such as "all compounded phenomena are impermanent"

When someone dies here on earth, it's like the drum beating, but many of us are deaf

Although in the god realm the facility for the Dharma is not as great as in the human realm, there is one big one – the big drum of heaven. It seems as though it doesn't have a shape or anything like that, and it's supposedly up somewhere in the sky. But from time to time it makes four sounds, "All compounded things are impermanent" and all that. That's the example. Actually the drum in this case is more like a siren or an alarm. And we don't have to think about the big drum in the sky in a mythological way. That kind of alarm or siren exists even here on earth in the human realm, for example every time someone dies it's the drum beating, "all compounded things are impermanent". But a lot of us are deaf.

Because of their merit, the gods have the drum to remind them, and they need it as their lives are very insulated and death is rare

Anyway, because of their collective virtuous deeds the gods have this big drum. And they particularly require it, because death doesn't happen as frequently there as it does here. For instance, this teaching is one of five teachings by Maitreya and it was taught to Asanga in the god realm. I think Maitreya taught it in five heavenly days, but when Asanga came back to earth, five years had passed. The gods lead a very insulated life in their realm. Their insurance really works! It's the real thing, not just the fake deception that we have. And they also have a really good security system, so they keep defeating the asuras all the time. So they need this drum to remind them.

312 དེ་བཞིན་ཁྱབ་བདག་འབད་མེད་གསས་དང་། །
བླ་ལ་ཡང་འགྲོ་བ་མ་ལུས་པ། །
སངས་རྒྱས་གསུང་གིས་ཁྱབ་མཛད་དེ། །
སྐལ་ལྡན་རྣམས་ལ་ཆོས་སྟོན་ཏེ། །

Like this, the all-pervading is without effort and so on, yet his Buddha-speech permeates all beings without exception, teaching the noble doctrine to those of good fortune.

Likewise, though free from effort and so on, the Buddha speech of the All-pervading Ones permeates sentient beings without exception, teaching Dharma to those of karmic fortune.

Just as the drum makes the four sounds without any intention, the Buddha teaches without intention

Anyway, the drum doesn't have any intention or mouth, but the sound of these four seals or four essences comes spontaneously. Likewise, Lord Chabda, the Lord of All-Pervading, meaning the Buddha, also teaches without any intention or any words, phrases or language.

313 ཇི་ལྟར་ལྷ་ནང་ལྷ་རྣམས་ཀྱི། །
རྒ་སྒྲ་རང་གི་ལས་ལས་བྱུང་། །
དེ་བཞིན་འཇིག་རྟེན་ཐུབ་པའི་ཚོས། །
གསུང་བ་རང་གི་ལས་ལས་བྱུང་། །
འབད་རྩལ་ལུས་དང་སེམས་བྲལ་བའི། །
སྒྲ་དེ་ཇི་ལྟར་ཞི་སྒྲུབ་ལྟར། །
དེ་བཞིན་འབད་སོགས་དང་བྲལ་བའི། །
ཚོས་དེ་ཞི་བ་སྒྲུབ་པར་བྱེད། །

Just as the divine drum's throb sounds for devas, through their karma, so also the sage's Dharma speech arises in the world due to karma. Just as its sound, without effort, source, form or mind, brings peace, so also, without effort and the others, is peace procured by Dharma.

Just as the sound of the drum arises among the gods from their own deeds, the Dharma spoken by the Muni arises in the world from beings' own deeds. Just as the sound [of the drum] accomplishes peace without effort, origin, visible form or intention, likewise the Dharma causes accomplishment of peace without deliberate effort or any other such feature.

Just as the drum appears because of the collective good karma of the gods, a Buddha appears and teaches because of our collective good karma

Once you understand the first example of the lapis lazuli floor, the rest of the examples are very similar. How did the sound of the drum happen to be there? Because of the collective good karma of the god realm. Likewise, because of our collective good karma, a Buddha appears and teaches. This also happens a lot on a human level. Many sentient beings nowadays don't have good karma, and our collective karma is maybe not that good, so our singers, performers and writers do things that are not especially wholesome or non-violent. But when the collective karma is good, sometimes there are seemingly crazy artists who do things that benefit a lot of people.

Past masters like Jigme Lingpa and Gampopa write about cuckoos, as they remind practitioners that time is passing and another spring has come

For instance, when you read the songs of the past masters like Jigme Lingpa and Gampopa, you will often find a reference to cuckoos. Cuckoos supposedly migrate from India to Tibet in the springtime, and when practitioners in the forest hear cuckoos it reminds them that time is passing and another spring has come. Most of us don't have much chance to hear cuckoos these days, as we live among too many buildings. Now I'll make up the example a little bit, based on the true sources although they are mixed together. There is a story about Kharak Gomchung in the *Kunzang Lama'i Shelung*, 'The Words of My Perfect Teacher'. Whenever he thinks of coming out from his cave he sees a small thorny bush growing in front. Since clearing it would take time, and time is precious because the light will fade, he goes back inside and continues practicing. And one day the bush has grown so big that he can't go out. I'm imagining that his urgency to go back and practice, and not waste too much time cutting this bush,

Cuckoos can inspire and benefit practitioners, even if they are only cooing to attract a mate!

could be because there's a cuckoo singing and reminding him that time is passing. In this case, I would say that it's our collective good karma that this cuckoo sang and inspired Kharak Gomchung to practice, so that his story can inspire us now. That's how it works. I'm sure the cuckoo wasn't thinking about us at all, but it doesn't matter, as it had the effect. For all we know the cuckoo was cooing for a mate!

314 ཇི་ལྟར་ལྷ་ཡི་གྲོང་ན་ཌཾ་སྒྲའི་རྒྱུས་བྱང་མི་འཛིགས་སྤྱིན་པ་ནི། །
ཉོན་མོངས་གཡུལ་དུ་འཛུག་ཚོ་ལྷ་མིན་དཔུང་རྒྱལ་ཐེབ་མོ་སེལ་བ་ལྟར། །
དེ་བཞིན་འཛིག་རྟེན་དག་ན་བསམ་གཏན་གཟུགས་མེད་ལ་སོགས་རྒྱུས་བྱང་བ། །
སེམས་ཅན་ཉོན་མོངས་སྡུག་བསྔལ་རབ་འཇོམས་ཞི་བ་བླ་མེད་ལམ་ཚུལ་བརྗོད། །

The sound of the drum in the celestial citadel is the cause which both bestows fearlessness, to vanquish Asura armies when through defilement wars occur, and ends divine playfulness. Like this, that arising from the likes of formless meditation proclaims, in the worlds, the way of unsurpassable path of peace, to totally defeat sentient beings' defilements and suffering.

The sound of the drum in the city of the gods acts as the cause, yielding the gift of undauntedness and granting them victory over the host of the asuras, when these, driven by their poisons, make war upon them and it dispels the gods' revelling in play. Likewise, arising in the worlds from the cause of meditative stability, formless dimension and so on, expresses the mode of the unsurpassable path, which will fully overcome all affliction and suffering and thus lead all sentient beings to peace.

When the drum sounds, it helps the gods in their fight with the asuras

Likewise, the sound of the Dharma dispels all the sources of dispute of samsara and nirvana

Now the benefit of the sound of the drum. When this drum makes a sound, it really helps the gods in their fight with the Asuras. Every time it sounds, it reminds them how things are impermanent, and how things coming from clinging to the self lead to suffering. Basically this is an example for the Buddha's speech, whereas the first one of Indra is more for the Buddha's appearance, his body. Likewise when the sound of the Dharma, the sound of the speech of the Buddha is heard, it has the ability to dispel all the sources of dispute of samsara and nirvana. Now there is a detailed explanation to tell us why the Buddha's speech is like the drum of the gods rather than the cymbals of the gods.

315 གང་ཕྱིར་སྐྱེ་གཤེན་ཕྱོགས་ཀྱི་དང་། །
ཕན་བདེ་ཆོ་འཕྲུལ་གསུམ་ལྡན་པ། །
དེ་ཕྱིར་ཐུབ་དབྱངས་ལྷ་ཐུས་ཀྱི། །
སོལ་སྐད་རྣམས་ལས་ཁྱད་པར་འཕགས། །

Universal, joyously beneficial and having threefold miracles, the sages' melody is superior to the celestial cymbals.

Universal, of benefit, bestowing bliss and endowed with threefold miracle, the Muni's melody is by far superior to the cymbals treasured by the gods.

The gods love music, but the heavenly drum is unlike an ordinary musical instrument. Likewise, Buddha's speech is not ordinary. Every drop reminds us of truth and dismantles the net of delusion

The gods are known for being big lovers of music, for example Saraswati, Indra and Brahma. At times we see Lord Indra holding a thunderbolt, but at other times we see him with a tamboura or something like that. But this music is different from the drum, as the drum isn't really a musical instrument. It's more like an alarm or a siren, a reminder. It reminds being of the truth of phenomena so they do not get caught up in delusions. Likewise, Buddha's speech is not ordinary. Every drop of his speech reminds us of the truth, and dismantles or disorganises the net of delusion. This is now explained in more detail.

316 ལྷར་ནི་ཏ་ཡི་སྒྲ་ཆེན་པོ། །
སར་གན་ས་རྒྱམས་ཀྱི་རྣར་མི་འགྲོ། །
ས་ངས་རྒྱུས་ཏ་སྒྲ་འགོར་བ་ཡི། །
ས་འོག་འཛིག་རྟེན་དག་ཏུ་འགྲོ། །

The mighty sound of the divine drum earthlings' ears cannot reach. Yet samsara's subterraneans can hear the throb of Buddha-speech.

The mighty sound of the drum in the divine realms does not reach the ears of those dwelling on earth, whereas the drumming sound of Buddha's [speech] even reaches the subterranean worlds of samsara.

Although the heavenly drum is used as an example, the Buddha's speech is greater, as it can be heard everywhere

Only the gods can hear the sound of this big heavenly drum, and not ordinary human beings. Although the Buddha's word is like the heavenly drum, it can be heard everywhere, so it is not like an ordinary musical instrument. This stanza is basically saying that even though the heavenly drum is used as an example, actually the Buddha's speech is even greater than the example.

317 ལྷར་ནི་ལྷ་ཡི་སིལ་སྙན་བྱེ་བ་མང། །
འདོད་མེ་མཇོན་པར་འཕེལ་བའི་དོན་དུ་སྒྲོག །
ཐུགས་རྗེའི་བདག་ཉིད་རྣམས་ཀྱི་དབྱངས་གཅིག་ཀྱང། །
སྡུག་བསྔལ་མེ་རབ་ཞི་བའི་དོན་དུ་འཇུག །

In the heavens, tens of millions of celestial cymbals resound to reinforce desire's fires. Yet those whose identity is compassion effect a single melody to extinguish sufferings' fires totally.

Millions of divine cymbals resound among the gods to set the fire of lust ablaze and to fan its flames. The single melody of Those of Compassionate Being manifests to fully quench all the fires of suffering.

Unlike the Buddha's speech, ordinary musical instruments like the cymbals of the gods only cause more distraction

Musical instruments such as the cymbals of the god realm can be the cause for all kinds of distractions. But the sounds of the Buddha, the speech or melody of

the Buddha is the only antidote to extinguish this fire of suffering in samsara.

318 ལྷར་ནི་མཛེས་ཤིང་ཡིད་འོང་སིལ་སྒྲན་སྒྲ། །
སེམས་ཀྱི་རྩོད་པ་འཕེལ་བར་འགྱུར་བའི་རྒྱུ། །
ཐུགས་རྗེའི་བདག་ཉིད་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པའི་གསུང་། །
ཏིང་འཛིན་སེམས་གཏོད་བསམ་པ་སྐྱེལ་བྱེད་ཉིད། །

The beautiful and pleasant music of cymbals in the heavens creates and increase in their mental agitation. The speech of the tathagatas, whose nature is compassion, turns the mind towards samadhi and stimulates reflection.

The beautiful and bewitching sound of the cymbals causes among the gods increase of their distraction, whereas the speech of the compassionate Tathagata exhorts [us] to reflect and commits the mind to samadhi.

The gods' cymbals cause distraction, but the Buddha's speech does the opposite. It causes you to focus and find bliss

Ordinary musical instruments such as cymbals cause distractions. Basically a distraction or a movement is not bliss. The speech or melody of the Buddha does the opposite. Instead of making your mind move and distracting it, it makes you focus and not move. And this unmoving is bliss. And the speech of the Buddha extracts you from samsara.

319 མདོར་ན་མ་ལུས་འཇིག་རྟེན་ཁམས་སུ་ཡང་། །
ལྷ་དང་མ་གཏམ་བདེ་བའི་རྒྱུ་གང་ཡིན། །
དེ་ནི་མ་ལུས་འཇིག་རྟེན་ཁྱབ་སྟང་བ། །
དབྱངས་ཉིད་ལ་ནི་རབ་ཏུ་བརྟེན་པར་བརྗོད། །

In brief, it is said that the cause of happiness, for those in each and every universe, in heaven or earth, depends entirely upon that very melody which in every world is manifest all-pervasively.

Any cause of happiness for earthly beings and gods in whichever sphere of the world without exception, briefly spoken, fully depends upon this melody that pervades all the worlds, not forsaken one.

The three miracle powers of the Buddha's speech:

1) His form appears in countless realms

2) He knows the elements and dispositions of all

3) He teaches according to that

First of all the Buddha will appear. His form will appear in countless realms. And then he will make sentient beings realise that he knows their motivations, elements and aspirations, all of them. And then he will teach them with his melody. These three are what we call the three miracle powers of the Buddha (*chomtrul sum*), which are actually the aspect of Buddhas' speech. If somebody were to ask you "what is the Buddha's speech?" it's these three: (1) that his form appears in countless realms. (2) That he will let sentient beings know that he knows each and every individual's motivation, elements and all of that. And (3) that he will teach according to that.

But the Buddha does not have motivation. His manifestations in different realms are only reflections. Your mind is doing this

But even though our minds do this, we don't have control. We're like buffalos in India. Every day we willingly give our rein to things

But this does not mean that the Buddha has motivation. All his appearances in different forms in different realms, all these exist only on the level of the reflection. At the end of the day it's your mind that's doing this. But you still don't have control, basically because you have chosen not to have control. You have chosen to give up all your rights and all your abilities. In India, they pierce the noses of cows and buffalos to attach reins. And once someone has the reins, then the buffalos have no choice but to follow them. And we're a bit like that. In Tibetan there's a saying, "Every day we willingly give our rein to things". It's our choice, and yet we complain that we have no choice!

320

ཏི་ལྟར་རྣ་བ་དང་བྲལ་བས། །
ཕ་མོའི་སྒྲ་ནི་མི་ཐོབ་ཀྱང་། །
ཐམས་ཅད་ལྷ་ཡི་རྣ་བར་ཡང་། །
རྣ་ལམ་དུ་ནི་མི་འགྲོ་བཞིན། །
དེ་བཞིན་ཆོས་ཕ་མཆོག་ཏུ་ནི། །
ཞིབ་མོའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་སྤྱོད་ཡུལ་ཡང་། །
ཉོན་མོངས་མེད་ཡིད་འགའ་ཞིག་གི ། །
རྣ་བའི་ལམ་དུ་འགྱུར་བ་ཡིན། ། །

Just as those with no hearing cannot experience subtle sound and even with divine hearing not all sounds can be heard, so also is the subtle Dharma, the domain of the very finest jñana, to be heard by just those few whose mind is undefiled.

Without [an intact sense of] hearing one cannot experience subtle sound, and all [its manifold variations] do not even reach the ears of a god. Likewise, as the field of experience of the very finest primordial wisdom, the subtle Dharma only reaches the ear of someone whose mind is rid of poison.

Not everyone hears the Buddha's speech, because some are partially or fully deaf. Shravakas and Pratyekabuddhas don't hear his speech properly or completely, and other beings hear nothing

So the question is this. If the Buddha's speech is spontaneous and ever-present, why doesn't everybody hear it? It's because some people are completely deaf, and others are semi-deaf. So even though the Buddha has come and taught, and his teachings are still dwelling, some ordinary beings will not hear them. It's not the fault of his speech. And some who are semi-deaf will hear them, but not completely. So they end up hearing the path of the Shravakas and the Pratyekabuddhas. And the courageous ones, those with big, courageous minds, will hear it completely.

I'd like to emphasise that when we say that Shravakas and Pratyekabuddhas don't hear his speech properly or completely, we're not referring to Sri Lankan or Thai Buddhists, because each path will have the three enlightenments (*changchub sum*), and each of them will say the same thing.

Example #3: The Cloud

321 ཇི་ལྟར་དབྱར་གྱི་དུས་ན་སྦྲིན། །
ལོ་ཏོག་ཕུན་སུམ་ཚོགས་པའི་རྒྱུ། །
ཆུ་ཡི་ཕུང་པོ་འབབ་མེད་པར། །
ས་ལ་རྒྱུན་དུ་འབེབས་པ་ལྟར། །

The rainy season's clouds continually and effortlessly downpour vast amounts of water onto the earth and are the cause for good and bountiful crops.

The monsoon clouds in summertime continuously and without any effort pour down their vast masses of water, causing on earth the best possible crops.

322 དེ་བཞིན་ཐུགས་རྗེའི་སྤྲིན་ལས་ནི། །
རྒྱལ་བའི་དམ་ཆོས་ཆུ་ཡི་ཆར། །
འགྲོ་བའི་དགེ་བའི་ལོ་ཏོག་རྒྱུ། །
རྣམ་པར་རྟོག་པ་མེད་པར་འབེབས། །

Likewise clouds of compassion, without any conceptualization, rain down the waters of the victors' noble teaching and cause the harvests of virtue for sentient beings.

Just so, from the cloud of compassion the rain of the Victor's pure teaching pours down its waters without ideation, causing a harvest of virtue for beings.

#3: The cloud

The Buddha's mind is like a rain cloud from which the rain of dharma falls to ripen sentient beings, manifesting according to the container it falls into

The third example is the example for the Buddha's mind. The mind of the Buddha is like rain clouds. The rain ripens sentient beings. It manifests differently depending on the container into which it falls, and the conditions of the container do not manipulate the rain itself. This will be explained. The rainwater has the effect of pacifying, of cleaning and washing, and during the summer monsoon season, so much rain comes and ripens so many different kinds of fruit. Likewise, from the cloud of compassion, the rain of Dharma falls onto sentient beings in order to ripen their potential, and it does so without any concepts or motivations.

323 ཇི་ལྟར་འཛིག་རྟེན་དགེ་བའི་ལམ་འཇུག་ན། །
རླུང་སྒྲོས་ཆུ་ཆར་སྤྲིན་ཀྱིས་འབེབས་པ་ལྟར། །
དེ་བཞིན་བརྩེ་རླུང་འགྲོ་དགེ་མངོན་འཕེལ་ཕྱིར། །
སངས་རྒྱས་སྤྲིན་ལས་དམ་ཆོས་ཆར་པ་འབེབས། །

Provided that the world is engaged in virtue's ways, the wind-borne clouds will cause a fall of rain. Likewise compassion's wind causes Buddha-clouds to cascade their rain of true teachings to increase virtue in beings.

Just as the wind-born clouds cause rain to fall when the worldly beings follow the path of virtue, From the Buddha cloud called by compassion's wind, pure Dharma rains to nurture the virtue of beings.

When samsaric beings are inspired to engage in virtuous actions, Buddha's wind-like compassion causes the rain to fall from the clouds

In this samsara, whenever samsaric beings have even a very short-lived inspiration to engage in virtuous actions, the compassion of the Buddha that is like the wind will generate a rain cloud and produce rain.

324 སྲིད་ལ་མཁྱེན་དང་བརྩེ་ཆེན་འགྱུར་བ་དང་། །
མི་འགྱུར་མི་གོས་ནམ་མཁའི་དབྱིལ་གན་པ། །
ཏིང་འཛིན་གཟུངས་ཆུ་བྱེ་མེད་སྙིང་པོ་ཅན། །
ཐུབ་དབང་སྨྲིན་ནི་དགེ་བའི་ལེ་ཏོག་རྒྱ། །
ཇི་ལྟར་བསོལ་དང་ཞིམ་དང་འཇམ་པ་དང་། །
ཡང་བའི་ཆུ་ནི་སྨྲིན་དེ་ལས་ཐོན་པ། །
ས་ལ་བ་ཆུ་ལ་སོགས་གནས་འབྲེལ་བས། །
ཤིན་ཏུ་མང་པོའི་རོར་ནི་འགྱུར་བ་བཞིན། །

In the world, due to great compassionate love and knowledge, the lord of all sage's clouds abide amidst a space unblemished by either that which changes or the changeless. They have, as their unspoilt essence, samadhi and dharani's waters, which for the harvest of virtue there are the very cause.

Through great knowledge and compassionate love with regard to existence it abides in the midst of space unsullied by change and non-change. Holding the essence of unpolluted waters of dharani and samadhi, the cloud of the Lord of Munis is the cause of the harvest of virtue.

The rain cloud has the moisture of samadhi and wisdom, but it has no motivation. So neither samsara nor nirvana can manipulate its wisdom and compassion

Let's explain this in more detail. Sentient beings are the harvest. Buddha is the cloud. What kind of cloud? A cloud that has the moisture of samadhi and wisdom. And where is this cloud? In the sky. What kind of sky? The sky of omniscience and compassion. But neither samsara nor nirvana could ever manipulate this compassion and wisdom, as the cloud doesn't have motivation. It doesn't think things like "There's a drought, so I should produce more rain", or "There's a flood, so I should stop raining".

325 དེ་བཞིན་འཕགས་པའི་ཡན་ལག་བརྒྱད་ཆུའི་ཆར། །
རབ་ཡངས་བརྩེ་སྨྲིན་སྙིང་པོ་ལས་ཐོན་པ། །
འགྲོ་བའི་རྒྱུ་ཀྱི་གནས་ཀྱི་དབྱེ་བ་ལས། །
རྣམ་པ་མང་པོའི་རོ་དང་ལྡན་པར་འགྱུར། །

Cool, delicious, soft, light water fallen from the clouds acquires many tasted through contact with salty and other grounds. Likewise the rain of the eightfold water of the

sublime, falling from the heart of that vastest could of compassionate love, assumes many a flavour according to beings' various states of mind.

Water that is cool, delicious, soft and light when it falls from the clouds acquires on earth very many tastes by touching salty and other grounds. When the waters of the noble eightfold [path] rain from the heart of the vast cloud of love, they will also acquire many kinds of tastes by the different grounds of beings' make-up.

If rain falls into containers with different substances, its taste will change. Likewise, the rain-like dharma will become different for Shravakas, Pratyekabuddhas, and Bodhisattvas

The rain will appear differently to different beings. The rainwater is cool, delicious, sweet, soft and light when it falls on the earth. But when it falls on different containers that contain things like salt, chilli or sugar, then the taste of this rainwater will change. Likewise, when the rain-like Dharma, teachings like the sublime eight-fold noble path are showered down on beings, then they will become different depending on the different vessels or faculties of the disciples who receive them. It will bear different tastes for Shravakas, Pratyekabuddhas, and Bodhisattvas. This is explained further.

326 ཕྱིག་པ་མཆོག་ལ་དང་བ་དང་། །
བར་མ་དང་ནི་ལྷན་བ་ཡི། །
ཕུང་པོ་གསུམ་ནི་མི་དག་དང་། །
རྨ་བྱ་དང་ནི་ཡི་དྭགས་འདྲ། །

Those of appreciative faith, the middling and those with animosity form three groups comparable to humans, peafowl and craving spirits.

Those of devotion towards the supreme vehicle, those who are neutral and those with animosity are three groups [of beings] who are similar to humans, peacocks and craving spirits.

Beings may have liking, indifference or animosity towards the Mahayana path, like the attitudes of humans, birds and hungry ghosts towards rain

Some sentient beings or vessels have an inspiration towards the Mahayana path. Some other sentient beings or vessels have indifference, neither inspiration nor revulsion. And there are some beings or vessels that dislike this rain of the Mahayana path. Likewise, when the rain falls, there are three types of recipient. Human beings like the rain. Perhaps "like" is not the right word. Basically, they can use it. And there are birds for which the rain is not a big deal. And then there are the hungry ghosts who dislike it.

327 དགྱེད་མཐར་སྨྲིན་མེད་པ་ན་མི་དང་མ/ཁའ་མི་རྒྱུ་བའི་བྱ་དག་དང་། །
དབྱར་ཚོ་ས་ལ་ཆར་བབས་པ་ན་ཡི་དྭགས་དག་ནི་སྡུག་པ་ལྟར། །
སྐྱེ་རྟེའི་སྨྲིན་ཚོགས་དག་གིས་ཆོས་ཆུ་བྱུང་དང་མ་བྱུང་བ་ལས་ཀྱང་། །
ཆོས་འདོད་པ་དང་ཆོས་ལ་སྡང་བའི་འཇིག་རྟེན་དག་ན་དགེ་ཉིད། །

In the cloudless end of spring, it is men and these non-flying birds, and in the summertime, when it rains, the craving spirits, who suffer. This example is made since, depending on whether there is or not a rain of Dharma from compassion's multitudes of clouds, then worldly beings will either aspire to or have animosity for Dharma.

At the end of spring, when there are no clouds, human beings and the birds that rarely fly [are unhappy or neutral, respectively]. When rain is falling in summertime, the craving spirits suffer. Similar to this example, the arising and non-arising of the Dharma-rain from the host of clouds of compassion also [leads to opposite reactions] in worldly beings who long for Dharma or are hostile to it, respectively.

How the attitudes of humans, birds and hungry ghosts change in the dry spring and rainy summer

For instance, when there is no rain at the end of spring then humans are not happy. Birds couldn't care less. And hungry ghosts are very happy. During the summer when the rain comes, humans are happy, birds again couldn't care less, and hungry ghosts are unhappy because so much pus and blood and so many hailstones are falling. By the way, I don't think this is talking about all birds. There's a particular kind of bird called a *tsataka* that supposedly doesn't care about rain. I guess others either like or dislike rain.

Likewise, when the rains of the Mahayana come, Bodhisattvas are happy, some beings don't care, and others are not happy

When the rain of the Mahayana path showers down, the Bodhisattvas are happy. Some beings couldn't care less. And people who are very much attached to the self and all that are not so happy. They're angry. When there is no rain of the Mahayana path, Bodhisattvas are not happy, some sentient beings couldn't care less, and others are happy.

328 ཕིགས་པ་རགས་འབེབས་རྡོ་ཚན་དང་ནི་རྡོ་རྗེའི་མེ་ནི་འབེབས་པ་ན། །
སྲོག་ཆགས་ཕྲ་དང་རི་སྲལ་སོང་བ་དག་ལ་ཇི་ལྟར་སྨྲིན་ལྟོས་མེད། །
ཕ་དང་རྒྱ་ཆེན་རིགས་པའི་ཚུལ་གྱིས་མཁྱེན་པ་དང་ནི་བརྩེ་བའི་སྨྲིན། །
ཉོན་མོངས་དག་འགྱུར་བདག་ལྟའི་བག་ཆགས་ལ་དག་ལ་རྣམ་ཀུན་ལྟོས་པ་མེད། །

Deluging mighty raindrops, hurling down hailstones or thunderbolts, clouds do not consider the small fauna or those run to the hills. Likewise the clouds of perfect knowledge and compassionate love with their very fine or larger drops, do not mind that some will purify their defilements and others tend to believe in a self.

When releasing a deluge of heavy drops or hurling down hailstones and thunderbolts, a cloud does not heed any tiny beings or those who have sought shelter in the hills. Likewise the cloud of knowledge and love does not heed whether its vast and subtle drops will purify the afflictions or [increase] dormant tendencies towards holding the view of a self.

Buddha is not influenced by whether or not the vessels are happy. His rain and hailstones will come without prejudice

Buddha's compassion fulfils the wishes of sentient beings, but he won't alter the truth to be politically correct or give in to beings' wishes

This stanza is saying that whether the vessels are happy or not will not influence the mind of the Buddha. Sometimes the raindrops can be very hard, or the rain clouds can hurl down hailstones and thunderbolts. But the rain cloud itself, like the Buddha's compassion, travels everywhere without any prejudice. This is quite important, because it is saying that Buddha's compassion will not give in to sentient beings' wishes. It seems like a bit of a contradiction, as we also say that the Buddha's compassion fulfils the wishes of sentient beings, but it's not. Basically Buddha will not stop saying, "All compounded things are impermanent" just because it's going to upset someone who is totally vain! So sometimes

Buddha's words can be like a thunderbolt. They won't necessarily be diplomatic or politically correct. This is a very important aspect of Buddha's activity.

When Buddha taught the Four Noble Truths, people were either happy, indifferent or unhappy. For example, Hindus who believed in truly existing caste were unhappy

We have already talked about how Buddha never teaches based on his knowledge. He doesn't teach just because he knows something. He may also choose not to teach, and that could very well be the teaching itself. For instance, when Buddha gave the first sermon, the Four Noble Truths, those who were inclined to cause and effect were very happy. And perhaps a busy cowherd somewhere in Varanasi couldn't care less, as he was busy herding cows. And some Hindus who believed in a truly existing caste system were very unhappy, because cause and effect does not work with the caste system. Buddha said, "You cannot be born as Brahmin, you have to make yourself a Brahmin".

Likewise, when Buddha taught the second and third turnings of the wheel, some people were unhappy. But this does not manipulate Buddha's teachings and activities

Although he benefits beings according to their wishes and capacities, he does not give in to their defilements

And when he taught Prajñaparamita at Vulture Peak Mountain, people like Avalokiteshvara were very excited. Some others nearby couldn't care less about what was happening there. And some theologians like the Charvakas may have got quite upset. And when Buddha taught the third wheel of the Dharma at different places, people like Vajrapani and Mañjushri were very excited. And some people like the past incarnations of the members of the Beijing Politburo couldn't care less. And according to the Shentongpas, they would say that the Rangtongpas were a little bit unhappy. But that will not manipulate Buddha's teachings and activities. This is really quite an important quality of the Buddha's activity. As much as he will benefit beings according to their wishes and capacities, he will not give in to their defilements.

Day 7 – Introduction

Every wants to have fun and be happy, and Buddhism isn't against that! But happiness and fun are very relative

George Bush's happiness isn't happiness for Saddam Hussein

Everyone wants to have fun. Everybody wants to be happy, and they look for happiness, and there's nothing wrong with that. Buddhism does not contradict that. It's not against that. But fun or happiness is very relative. One person's happiness isn't necessarily happiness for others. George Bush's happiness is obviously not happiness for Saddam Hussein. As Buddhists, when we pray "may all sentient beings be happy", we will have a difficulty in catering to the happiness of both Saddam Hussein and George Bush!

The meaning of happiness also changes during our lifetime, from sandcastles to good careers and finally to tablecloths

Based on our view of happiness, we will value and approach things differently

And even within our own single lifetime, the meaning of happiness also changes. Once upon a time, happiness used to be sandcastles or toys. Then happiness could have been computer games. Then happiness could be fast cars, and then maybe a big house, or a good career and all that. And at the end, happiness is tablecloths. Collecting tablecloths. This is because our interpretation of happiness changes all the time. And based on our different kinds of interpretations of happiness, our different views of happiness, we will value things differently and approach them differently.

In Buddhism, happiness is freedom from clinging to the self and phenomena

In Buddhism, we are also looking for happiness, but according to the Buddha happiness is when you are free from clinging to the self and clinging to phenomena. And that is what we call inexhaustible wealth, everlasting bliss, fun, or whatever you want to call it.

329 འཁོར་བའི་སྐྱེ་འཆི་ཐོག་མ་མེད་དེར་འགྲོ་བའི་ཡམ་ནི་རྣམ་པ་ལྔ། །
མི་གཙང་བ་ལ་དྲི་ཞིམ་མེད་བཞིན་འགྲོ་ལྔ་དག་ན་བདེ་བ་མེད། །
དེ་ཡི་སྡུག་བསྔལ་རྒྱག་ཏུ་མེ་མཚོན་རྒྱ་ཚྭ་ལ་སོགས་རེག་སྐྱེས་བཞིན། །
ཐུགས་རྗེའི་སྤྲིན་ལས་དམ་ཆོས་ཆར་ཆེན་དེ་རབ་ཞི་བྱེད་རབ་ཏུ་འབེབས། །

In this samsara of beginningless births and deaths, there are five sorts of sentient being. Just as there is no nice smell in excrement, among those five there is no contentment. Their sufferings are like the unceasing pain of burns, wounds, chemical scalds and so on. Compassion's clouds cause a mighty rain of true Dharma that will soothe all those.

In this cycle of beginningless birth and death five paths are open for sentient beings to tread. Just as no sweet scent is found in excrement, no happiness will be found among the five types of beings. Their suffering resembles the continuous pain arising from fire and weapons or [from a wound] being touched by salt, and so on. The great rain of sacred Dharma pours down in cascades from the cloud of compassion, fully soothing and appeasing this [pain].

There is no lasting happiness to be found within these five realms

According to the Buddhadharma, wherever we dwell within these five realms, there is always a fault. Just as you will not find any sweet scent in excrement or anything dirty, you will not find happiness, at least not any everlasting soothing inexhaustible happiness, within these five realms. Because if we could find such a thing, then something that excited you in the past could excite you all the time, but it doesn't seem to be that way.

There is endless pain, anxiety and suffering, and nothing is certain.

In these five realms, there is countless pain and anxiety. There is the suffering of suffering, such as disasters, war and famine. Basically, there is suffering on top of another suffering, and that's what we have. And even if we don't have that, we are definitely subject to change because we are within these five realms. Nothing is certain. It is quite important to contemplate this truth that nothing is certain. It's so important. If we just take the Buddha's first voice that "all compounded phenomena are impermanent", I think that alone contains the whole path to enlightenment.

Just the first seal, "all compounded phenomena are impermanent" has the whole path to enlightenment

We only talk about impermanence on an intellectual level, as we crave permanence and certainty

Even our Dharma practice is based on our longing for certainty

But when we talk about impermanence, about how nothing is certain, we end up talking on an intellectual level. We have a constant longing and make-believing for permanence and certainty. The reason we have things like moisturiser cream, vitamins, medicine and all of this is basically because secretly we somehow believe in certainty. This is why I find existentialists very contradictory, because if they really don't want to believe in anything, they really shouldn't believe in certainty. Even our Dharma practice, when we pray and meditate, and especially when we seek blessings, is actually generated from our longing for certainty.

Buddha cannot change his first voice. The one thing that's unchangeable is that everything is changeable

Dramatic change is quite good, but non-dramatic change is the problem, as it makes you believe things are certain even while they are changing

But you cannot ask Buddha, "can you please change your first voice?" And even if he did change it, that wouldn't change the reality. We should know that the one thing that's unchangeable is that things are changeable, so contemplation on uncertainty is very important. We never know. Maybe half of the people sitting in this tent will be in a wheelchair next year or the year after, or maybe they will have another being inside them. Or maybe they will be going through the anxiety of being a contributor to a being inside another being! Or maybe they will be experiencing happiness. Things can change so dramatically. And that's good. Dramatic change is quite good. It's the non-dramatic change that's really not good. The most cunning thing about non-dramatic change is that it gives you hope. It makes you believe that things are certain, even while they are changing! Non-dramatic change is like the perfect camouflage to make you believe that things are permanent. But everything can change. Your compassion, your devotion, your respect, all of this can change. This is the suffering of change.

Beside the sufferings of suffering and change, we suffer because all phenomena are not what they appear to be

Trying to build something from transitory gatherings is like building houses out of bubbles. They will all burst sooner or later

So there is the suffering of suffering, and the suffering of change, and on top of that we have another suffering. Everything that we experience is not what it appears to be, and that is the big one. Basically all phenomena are compounded. They are all like a gathering. And if some of what you have gathered were not transitory, that would be a blessing. But everything that you gather is actually transitory. And if you gather all these transitory things and then try to make something solid out of them, it's like gathering 500 bubbles and trying to build a house out of them. Many of the bubbles have already burst, some are on the verge on bursting, and even if they are not, they are all bound to burst sooner or later. And yet we have this amazing diligence to build things out of bubbles! We have built a lot of bubble houses, and that is suffering.

All it takes to change everything is just one small condition

You might look at me right now and think, as I myself think, that I'm someone who's really fanatically anti-fanaticism, fanatically anti-extreme. But we don't know. I have all the attributes, the complete qualities, to be a complete extremist in ten years. I could be sending all my students to do all kinds of things, and I will have an incredible logic to justify that, one that cannot be defeated. And I think I would probably have more students! All it takes to change everything is just one small condition, like a drop of pollen from a passing bee. That could change my view, my action, everything.

330 ལྷ་ལ་འཆི་འཕོ་མི་ལ་ཡོངས་ཆོས་སྦྱིན་བསྟལ་ཞེས་བྱར་རྟོགས་པའི་ཕྱིར། །
ཤེས་རབ་ལྡན་པ་ལྷ་མིའི་དབང་ཕྱུག་མཆོག་ལའང་མངོན་པར་འདོད་མེད་དེ། །
ཤེས་རབ་དང་ནི་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པའི་གསུང་རབ་དང་པའི་རྫས་འབྱངས་ལ། །
འདི་ནི་སྦྱིན་བསྟལ་འདི་རྒྱུ་འདི་ནི་འགོག་ཅེས་ཤེས་པས་མཐོང་ཕྱིར་རོ། །

Those endowed with prajña have no longing for even the highest celestial or human sovereignty, having understood that divine death and transmigration as well as humans'

constant searching, are "misery". They have also seen, through prajña and through following with trust the tathagatas' excellent teachings: "this is suffering", "this is its cause" and "this is its cessation" through "understanding".

"[Even] gods have the suffering of death and transmigration, and man suffers from desperate strife!" Realizing this, those endowed with discriminative wisdom have no desire for even the highest [state] of a lord of humans or gods. There is wisdom [from the past] and they faithfully follow the sublime words of the Tathagata, so insight makes them see: "This is suffering! This is its cause! And this is cessation of misery!"

Bodhisattvas have no wish to become like gods or humans. They want to abandon the causes of suffering, which are karma and defilements

Those who have wisdom, the Bodhisattvas, don't have any wish to become like Indra. They know that even Lord Indra is the subject of suffering such as death or transformation. They are also not attracted to human state, because they know there is lots of pain of collecting things and losing what you have and all that. Bodhisattvas know that the cause of this pain is actually defilements and karma. And they are inspired to stop these causes, conditions and karma. So they engage in the means of practicing the path, and the way they do it is by knowing that suffering is something to be understood. "Know the suffering". This is really important. We don't say, "Abandon suffering". We say, "Abandon the causes of suffering", but to do that, you first have to know suffering. You shouldn't think, "We know suffering, that's kind of obvious". No! What we think is pleasure, like sandcastles and tablecloths, is actually suffering.

We may think we know suffering, but we don't. What we think is pleasure, like sandcastles, is actually suffering

331 ནད་ནི་ཤེས་བྱ་བད་ཀྱི་རྒྱུ་ནི་སྤང་བྱ་ལ། །
བདེ་གནས་ཐོབ་བྱ་སྨན་ནི་བསྟེན་པར་བྱ་བ་ལྟར། །
སྡུག་བསྔལ་རྒྱུ་དང་དེ་འགོག་པ་པ་དང་དེ་བཞིན་ལམ། །
ཤེས་བྱ་སྤང་བྱ་རིག་པར་བྱ་ཞིང་བསྟེན་པར་བྱ། །

Just as the disease need be diagnosed, its cause eliminated, a healthy state achieved and the remedy implemented, so also suffering, its causes, its cessation and the path to be known, removed, attained and undertaken.

In the case of disease, one needs to diagnose it, remove its cause, attain the happy state [of health] and rely on suitable medicine; similarly one needs to recognize suffering, removing its cause, come in touch with its cessation and rely on the suitable path.

It is important for the Bodhisattva to know suffering and its causes, as he wishes to apply the antidote

Knowing suffering is a very important subject, as the Bodhisattva wishes to be free from the disease, which is suffering. And the antidote or medicine for the disease is what the Bodhisattva is trying to apply.

Example #4: Brahma

332 ཇི་ལྟར་ཚངས་པ་ཚངས་པ་ཡི། །
གནས་ནས་འཕྲོ་བ་མེད་བཞིན་དུ། །
ལྷ་ཡི་གནས་ནི་ཐམས་ཅད་དུ། །
སྟོང་བ་འབད་མེད་སྟོན་པ་ལྟར། །

Without effort and without leaving the Brahma-heaven, Brahma in any divine abode can manifest his presence.

Just like the way in which Brahma, without departing from his abode, effortlessly shows his appearance in all the residences of the gods,

333 དེ་བཞིན་ཐུབ་པ་ཆོས་སྐུ་ལས། །
བསྐྱོད་པ་མེད་པར་ཁམས་ཀུན་ཏུ། །
སྐལ་ལྡན་རྣམས་ལ་འབད་མེད་པར། །
སྤྲུལ་པ་དག་ནི་སྟོན་པར་མཛད། །

Similarly, without ever departing from dharmakaya, the great victor effortlessly manifests his emanations in any sphere, to the mature.

Without moving from dharmakaya the Muni effortlessly demonstrates illusory appearances in every realm to beings who have karmic fortune.

#4: Brahma

Just like Brahma manifests without moving, the Buddha manifests myriad forms and emanations without moving from the dharmakaya

The fourth example is Brahma, and we start with a summary. We have already talked about Indra, and now we talk about Brahma, who is an even higher god. He is one of the three main figures in Hinduism. He is creator of the whole world, because he's one of the most skilled magicians. He can do whatever he likes. Because in his past lives he has done things of incredible virtue, especially the practice of Brahmacarya, refraining from all kinds of unwholesome things. Brahma is the creator, Vishnu is the sustainer, and Shiva is the destroyer. And Brahma has four faces. I think he wanted to look at Saraswati, but Saraswati is a very active young girl going around everywhere, so he just couldn't turn around quickly enough, so he just manifested four faces. But the thing is that he never moves from his seat, even though his manifestations are manifested in all kinds of realms. Likewise, the Buddha manifests in myriad forms and emanations without moving from the state of dharmakaya.

334 ཇི་ལྟར་ཚངས་རྒྱ་གཞལ་ཡས་ཁང་ན་མི་གཡོ་འདོད་ཁམས་ཞུགས་པ་དེ། །
ལྷ་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་མཐོང་དེ་མཐོང་དེ་ཡང་ཡུལ་ལ་དགའ་བ་སྤྲོང་བྱེད་ལྟར། །
དེ་བཞིན་བདེ་གཤེགས་ཆོས་ཀྱི་སྐུ་ལས་མི་བསྐྱོད་འཇིག་རྟེན་ཁམས་ཀུན་ཏུ། །
སྐལ་ལྡན་ཀྱིས་མཐོང་དེ་མཐོང་དེ་ཡང་རྒྱ་ཆུ་བྱ་མ་ཀུན་སེལ་བྱེད། །

Without leaving his palace, Brahma manifests in the sensuous realm. Seeing him there makes its gods abandon seeking sense gratification. Similarly, the sugatas, while never departing from dharmakaya, are seen in every world-sphere by those who are ready. This vision is constantly causing them to relinquish impurity.

When Brahma, never departing from his palace, has manifested in the desire realm, he is seen by the gods. This vision incites them to emulate him and to abandon their delight in [sensuous] objects. Similarly, without moving from dharmakaya, the Sugata is seen in all spheres of this world by beings of karmic fortune. This vision incites them to emulate him and to dispel all their pollution.

When Brahma manifests in the god realm, the gods wish to become like him, and dedicate their lives to attaining this

Without moving from his seat, Brahma manifests everywhere, and one of his manifestations appears within the karmadhatu, the desire realm of the gods. And when the gods see the form of Brahma, they realise the inadequacy and incompleteness of their own godly wealth. They see that Brahma's is better. So they renounce their attachment to their godly wealth, and have a strong wish to be like Brahma. They dedicate all their life to this, and as a result they will be reborn in his realm. Likewise, the Buddha, the dharmakaya, manifests in all different realms while never moving from that state. The cause of this is explained in the next stanza.

335 སྨོན་གྱི་དང་ཏིད་སྨོན་ལམ་དང་། །
ལྷ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་ནི་དགེ་བའི་མཐུས། །
ཇི་ལྟར་ཚངས་པ་འབབ་མེད་སྣང་། །
དང་བྱང་སྒྲུལ་སྐུ་དེ་བཞིན་ནོ། །

Due to both the power of his own former prayers and the gods' virtue, Brahma appears effortlessly; the Spontaneous One's emanated form appears similarly.

By his own former wishing prayers and the power of the virtue of the gods Brahma appears without deliberate effort. So does the self-sprung illusory kaya.

There are two causes for Brahma's manifestation:
(1) his own merit, and
(2) the merit of the gods

Likewise, the rupakayas manifest because of:
(1) Buddha's aspirations as a Bodhisattva, and
(2) sentient beings' merit

Why do the gods see Brahma's manifestation? What is the cause? There are two causes. One is Brahma's own merit, such as his aspiration in his past lives, through which he has obtained this powerful state of Brahma. And the second cause is the merit of the gods, the power of their virtuous actions. So without any effort they see the appearance of Brahma. Likewise the Buddha's manifestations or rupakayas, the nirmanakaya and the sambhogakaya, can be seen because of two causes. The first is the Buddha's own aspirations and his activities while he was a Bodhisattva, and the second is sentient beings' good karma and fortune, such as the power of their own aspirations.

336 འཕོ་དང་ལྷུམས་འཇུག་བལྟམས་དང་ཡབ་ཀྱི་ཁབ་གཤེགས་དང་། །
དགྱེས་རོལ་པ་དང་དབེན་པར་སྒྲུབ་དང་བདུད་བཅོམ་དང་། །
བྱང་ཆུབ་ཆེ་བརྙེས་ཞི་བའི་གྲོང་དུ་ལམ་སྟོན་དག །
བསྟན་ནས་ཐུབ་པ་སྣལ་མེད་མིག་གི་ལམ་མི་འགྱུར། །

Descent, entry into the womb, going to his father's palace, enjoyment, solitary practise, subduing negativity, attainment of enlightenment, teaching the path to the citadel of peace – having demonstrated these, the mighty sage become invisible to those of insufficient maturity.

He moves from [Tushita] and enters the womb, gets born and goes to his father's palace. He enjoys amusement and then seeks solitude, undergoes austerity and defeats all evils. [In Bodhgaya] he finds great enlightenment and shows the path to the citadel of peace. The Muni, having shown [these deeds], becomes invisible to those of no karmic fortune.

A brief summary of how the nirmanakaya appears

The nirmanakaya only appears to those who have merit

Descending from Tushita heaven, entering the womb of his mother Maya in the form an elephant. Being born in Lumbini grove. Going to his father's palace. Enjoying the queens. Renouncing all of that and practicing penance. Renouncing that as well, and entering the path of the essence of enlightenment. Destroying all the demons, the maras. Obtaining enlightenment. Teaching those who are tameable how to reach nirvana. And finally passing into parinirvana. Those who are not fortunate will not perceive any of this. Basically Maitreya is saying that you have to have merit to observe all that.

Example #5: The Sun

337 ཉི་ལྷར་ཉི་མས་གཏུངས་པའི་དུས་གཅིག་ཚོ་ཉིད་ལ། །
པད་སོགས་རྒྱས་དང་ཀུ་མུ་ཏ་ནི་རབ་ཟུམ་པ། །
ཆུ་སྐྱེས་བྱེ་དང་ཟུམ་པའི་ཡོན་ཏན་སྐྱོན་དག་ལ། །
ཉི་མ་རྟོག་མེད་འདིར་ནི་འཕགས་པའི་ཉི་དེ་བཞིན། ། །

When the sun blazes, lotuses and like flowers open; simultaneously, the kumuta flowers close up completely. The sun has no thought of "good" or "bad" that those "water-born" flowers be either open or closed. Like this also is the "sun" – the perfectly-realized one.

When the sun blazes down, lotuses and so on open while simultaneously kumata flowers totally close. On the benefit and fault of the water-born flowers' opening and closing the sun does not shed any thought. The sun of the Noble acts likewise.

Now the fifth example. When the blazing sun appears in the sky, the lotus and many other flowers will open. But at the same time, the kumuta flower will close

#5: The sun

When the sun shines, flowers like the lotus will open, some other flowers are indifferent, but the kumuta will close

completely. I think the kumuta is a very small white flower that blossoms at night and has a sweet smell. Perhaps it's night jasmine? In India it's called "Queen of the Night". Anyway, when the sun comes, the lotus and many other flowers will open, and the kumuta will close. And there are some other flowers that don't have any bias or preference like the lotus or jasmine, and don't have any wish to either open or close.

338 ཉི་ལྷར་ཉི་མ་རྟོག་མེད་པར། །
རང་འོད་ཀྱིས་ཅར་སྦྱོས་པ་ཡིས། །
པདྨ་རྒྱས་པར་བྱེད་པ་དང་། །
གཞན་དག་སྨིན་པར་བྱེད་པ་ལྟར། །

The sun, without ideation, by its own light's radiation, simultaneously makes lotuses and other things ripen.

As the sun shining its won light simultaneously and without thought makes lotus flowers open their petals and brings ripening to other [crops],

339 དེ་བཞིན་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཡི། །
ཉི་མ་དམ་ཆོས་འོད་ཟེར་དག །
གདུལ་བྱའི་སྐྱེ་བོའི་པདྨ་ལ། །
རྣམ་པར་རྟོག་པ་མེད་པར་འཛུག །

Similarly, without ideation, the tathagata sun pours forth his rays of true Dharma onto those "lotuses" who are beings to be trained.

So the sun of the Tathagata manifests, shedding its rays of the sacred Dharma on the lotus-like beings to be trained without harbouring any thought or idea.

Likewise, the Buddha will radiate the Dharma like sunshine without any intention or prejudice

Likewise, the Buddha who is like the sun radiates the Dharma like sunshine. And those who are fortunate, those who are to be tamed by the Buddha, will open like a lotus and they will reap the benefit like the harvest. But other beings will be provoked and irritated like the jasmine. Dharmakaya and the rupakayas are like the sun and its rays. They radiate at all times and in all places. The purpose of this example is to show that the Buddha does not have motivation, intention or prejudice, as in "these are my disciples and these are not".

340 ཆོས་དང་གཟུགས་ཀྱི་སྐུ་དག་གིས། །
བྱང་ཆུབ་སྙིང་པོ་མཁས་ཤར་བའི། །
ཀུན་མཁྱེན་ཉི་མ་འགྲོ་བར་ནི། །
ཡེ་ཤེས་འོད་ཟེར་སྦྱོ་བར་མཛད། །

Through the Dharma and form kayas, the sun of omniscience rises in the firmament of the essence of enlightenment to send forth its sunbeams of jñana into sentient beings.

By the dharmakaya and the visible kayas the sun of omniscience rises in the sky, which is the very heart of enlightenment, to shed light beams of wisdom on beings.

The dharmakaya and the rupakayas are like the sun and its rays, radiating at all times without prejudice

The dharmakaya and the rupakayas are like the sun and the rays of the sun, radiating at all times without any prejudice. And the rays of the sun are infinite and countless.

341 གང་ཕྱིར་གདུལ་བྱ་དག་པ་ཡི། །
ཆུ་ཡི་སྟོང་ནི་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ། །
བདེ་གཤེགས་ཉི་མའི་གཟུགས་བརྙན་ནི། །
དཔག་ཏུ་མེད་པ་ཅིག་ཅར་འཚར། །

Due to this, the sugata-sun in countless reflections appears at once in all those "water-vessels" that are the purer sentient beings to be trained.

In all disciples, as in water vessels, simultaneously the sun of the Sugata is mirrored in countless reflections owing to the purity [of these beings].

But in containers that are broken or filled with muddy water, the sunlight might not appear

But in some parts of the world, or in certain containers like those that are broken or contain muddy water, the sunlight might not appear.

342 རྒྱུན་ཏུ་ཐམས་ཅད་ལ་ཁྱབ་པའི། །
ཆོས་དབྱིངས་ནམ་མཁའི་དཀྱིལ་དུ་ནི། །
སངས་རྒྱས་ཉི་མ་གདུལ་བྱ་ཡི། །
རི་ལ་ཇི་ལྟར་འོས་པར་འབབ། །

Continually, from amid the sky of all-pervading Dharmadhatu, in manner determined by what they have merited, shines the Buddha-sun on the mountain-like students.

[From] within the space of Dharmadhatu, which continuously pervades everything, the Buddha sun shines on the disciples [like] on mountains, as merited by each.

Although the dharmakaya is seemingly far away, like the sun is far from earth, the rupakayas still reach us like the rays of the sun

Although the sun is very far away from the earth, when the sun rises, its light reaches the earth. Likewise, although the Buddha, the dharmakaya, is seemingly very distant from this world, the Buddha's rays of compassion, the rupakayas still reach this world.

343 ཇི་ལྟར་རྒྱུ་ཆེན་འོད་ཟེར་སྟོང་ལྡན་ཉི་ཨར་འདི། །
འཇིག་རྟེན་ཀུན་ཏུ་སྣང་བར་བྱས་ནས་རིམ་གྱིས་ནི། །
མཆོག་དང་བར་མ་དམན་པའི་རི་ལ་འབབ་དེ་བཞིན། །
རྒྱལ་བའི་ཉི་མ་སེམས་ཅན་ཚོགས་ལ་རིམ་གྱིས་འབབ། །

Just as the risen sun, with thousands of magnificent rays, having illumined the universe, sheds its light in turn on the highest summits, the medium and the plains, likewise does that sun, the victorious one, confer his light progressively on the multitudes of beings.

Just as the rising sun with thousands of far-reaching beams illuminates all the worlds and then gradually sheds its light on the highest mountains, then the medium-sized, and the small, the Buddha sun gradually shines on the assembly of beings.

Just like the rising sun first hits the mountain peaks, the Buddha's rays first hit Bodhisattvas, then Pratyekabuddhas and Shravakas and even uncertain vessels

Even if you only have a bad connection with a Buddha, the end of samsara is guaranteed

When the light from the rising sun reaches the earth, it first hits the highest mountain peaks, then the medium peaks and finally the flat ground. And like the sun, the rays from the Buddha first hit the Bodhisattvas, then Pratyekabuddhas, and then the Shravakas. And then it also reaches the 'uncertain vessels'. It even reaches those who are seemingly not vessels, the 'infidels' who might be provoked or made angry by the Buddha's teachings. This might answer a lot of the questions you asked yesterday. Patrul Rinpoche said "if you create a good connection with a Buddha", which in Vajrayana they call a 'guru', "then you will attain enlightenment within one lifetime". Maybe I shouldn't speak about this, as it's Vajrayana stuff! Anyway, Patrul Rinpoche continues "but even if you only have a bad connection with a Buddha, the end of samsara is guaranteed".

344 ཞིང་ཀུན་ནས་མ་བའི་མཐའ་སྦྲེ་ཉི་མ་ལ་མེད་ལ། །
མི་ཤེས་ལྷུན་བ་ཀུན་ཤེས་བྱའི་དོན་སྟོན་པ་ཡང་མིན། །
ཐུགས་རྗེའི་བདག་ཉིད་སྣ་ཚོགས་མདངས་བཀྲའི་འོད་ཚོགས་ཀྱིས། །
གསལ་བ་དག་ནི་འགྲོ་ལ་ཤེས་བྱའི་དོན་སྟོན་མཛད། །

The sun cannot radiate to the depths of space of every realm, nor show the knowable's meaning to those obscured in dark ignorance. The one whose identity is compassion shows beings the significance of the knowable–clarity, through spectra of radiant multiple colour.

The sun does not radiate to the depth of space in every fields nor can it show the meaning of the knowable [to those] confined to the darkness of unknowing. Appearing in clarity through a multitude of light emitting various colours, Those of Compassionate Nature show the meaning of the knowable to beings.

As with the previous examples, Buddha is much greater than the example of the sun

Now as before, Maitreya is saying that the Buddha is much greater than this example. He's saying that the example of the sun is just used here for the sake of communication, and it's not a particularly good example. This is because the sun and the sunlight are not all pervasive. The sun doesn't have that kind of power, as it sets at times, and even when it is there blazing with its full might, it

can only illuminate surface things and it does not illuminate the darkness of ignorance. Buddha is much more than the sun. He illuminates the whole ten directions simultaneously. His light never sets, and it illuminates the inner darkness, the darkness of ignorance. When the Buddha's light comes to earth, first it dispels the gross suffering and the gross causes of suffering, and leads beings from the lower realms to the higher realms. And then eventually it will even liberate sentient beings from the higher realms. And it dispels all the causes of both gross and subtle sufferings.

345 སངས་རྒྱས་གྲོང་དུ་གཤེགས་ཚེ་མིག་དང་མི་ལྡན་པ་ཡི་སྣྲེ་བོ་རྣམས། །
མཐོང་ཞིང་དོན་མེད་ཚོགས་བླལ་དོན་དེ་མཐོང་བ་ལས་ནི་ཁྱོད་བ་དང་། །
གཏི་མུག་གིས་ལྷོངས་སྲིད་པའི་མཚོར་ལྷུང་ལྟ་བའི་མུན་པས་བསྒྲིབས་པ་རྣམས། །
སངས་རྒྱས་ཉི་མའི་འོད་ཀྱིས་བློ་སྣང་མ་མཐོང་བ་ཡི་གནས་མཐོང་འགྱུར། །

When the Buddha goes to cities, the eyeless see. They experience, through that seeing, the meaningful, free from the various facets of the unbeneficial. Their intelligence illuminated by the light of the Buddha-sun, those blinded by ignorance, fallen into the ocean of existence and veiled by opinions' darkness, see the essence they had not seen.

When a Buddha goes to the city [of the disciples], people without eyes become sighted. Being freed from all meaningless things they see the meaningful and experience [happiness]. When blinded by delusion they fall into existence's sea and are wrapped in the darkness of views, the light of the Buddha sun illumines their vision and they see the very point they never saw before.

When the Buddha walks in the city, those who were blind will begin to see

In the Mahayana, you are considered blind when you have a view

And it will illuminate or open the eyes of sentient beings and make them see something that they have never seen before. When the Buddha walks in the city, those who are blind will begin to see. Then they will stop doing unnecessary things and become diligent in doing wholesome things. There is an important point in this stanza. In Mahayana Buddhism, when we talk about 'blindness', what makes you blind is when you have a view. I have really not been doing justice to the powerful and poetic usage of words by Maitreya. And this phrase "blinded by view" is an example.

This is why the Buddha taught: first to remove non-virtuous views, then to remove views of self, and finally to exhaust all views

Basically, having a view is being blind. In Mahayana Buddhism, you have to exhaust all views. That's why Buddha taught. First you try to get rid of non-virtuous views and try to become familiar with virtuous views. And then you try to get rid of clinging to the self or "me", by getting rid of the views of self. Last, and most importantly, all views have to be exhausted. Every time that His Holiness the Dalai Lama teaches, before he starts he recites this prayer "to the one who eliminated all views, Gautama, I prostrate". So having a view is actually being blind. And when the sun-like Buddha walks in this city of samsara, his light eliminates all views, and eliminates the blindness of the people, and then they begin to see with an eye that sees beyond views.

Example #6: The Wishfulfilling Jewel

346 ཇི་ལྟར་ཡིད་བཞིན་རོར་བུ་ནི། །
རྟོག་པ་མེད་ཀྱང་ཅིག་ཅར་དུ། །
སྒྲོན་ཡུལ་གནས་པ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་ནི། །
བསམ་གྱུར་སོ་སོར་རྫོགས་བྱེད་ལྟར། །

A wishfulfilling gem, though thought-free, fulfils simultaneously all the wishes of those within its sphere of activity.

A wishfulfilling gem, though free from thought, grants all those who dwell in its field of activity each of their desires simultaneously, doing so in the most perfect manner.

347 དེ་བཞིན་སངས་རྒྱས་ཡིད་བཞིན་ལ། །
བརྟེན་ནས་བསམ་པ་ཐ་དད་རྣམས། །
སྙན་ཆོས་ཆོས་ནི་ཐོས་བྱུང་བྱེད། །
དེ་ནི་དེ་ལ་རྣམ་མི་རྟོག །

Likewise, though those of varying aspiration hear various teachings when relying on the wishfulfilling Buddha, he does not so conceive.

Likewise beings of different ways thinking, when they rely on the wishfulfilling Buddha, will hear various kinds of teachings, though he generates no ideas of these.

348 ཇི་ལྟར་རོར་བུ་རིན་ཆེན་རྟོག་མེད་འདོད་ཡིད་པའི་རོར། །
འབད་པ་མེད་པར་གཞན་པ་དག་ལ་རབ་སྦྱོར་ལྟར། །
དེ་བཞིན་ཐུབ་པ་འབད་མེད་ཇི་ལྟར་འོས་པར་ནི། །
གཞན་གྱི་དོན་དུ་སྒྲིད་པ་ཇི་སྲིད་རྒྱུ་བཞུགས། །

Such a precious gem bestows on others desired wealth, perfectly, effortlessly and without any concept. Similarly, effortlessly and however appropriate, the mighty sage remains constantly in the world to help others for as long as it persists.

As a precious gem, which is free from thought, fully bestows the desired riches on others, doing so without any effort, the Muni always stays for others' sake, as merited by each and as long as existence last, doing so without any effort.

#6: Wishfulfilling Jewel

The sixth example is the wishfulfilling jewel, which is the example for the aim of his mind. I don't know how to explain the wishfulfilling jewel to you. I'm sure in your mythology or history there must be certain treasures that many kings have desired and fought for. Likewise, in ancient times in India, the idea of the wishfulfilling jewel appears almost everywhere, in many different texts and

stories. There are similar stories in South-East Asia about white elephants. There were many disputes between Burma and Thailand over white elephants, as they were considered a royal symbol, and whichever kingdom possessed the white elephant would have power and conquest and all that.

There are many stories about the wishfulfilling jewel, including detailed descriptions of how lords and merchants would search for it

The wishfulfilling jewel is not like going to a treasure island, where you go and collect gold and treasures. It's a specific jewel that you're supposed to tie to a banner, and wash during the full moon with some kind of ritual, and then whatever you wish for will happen. There are detailed descriptions about powerful lords and merchants who constructed boats and ships and hunted for this jewel. The stories are very detailed, for example they would bring crows to navigate when they were in the middle of the ocean. They would release a crow and let it fly away. And if the crow was able to land somewhere then that meant the island was nearby. Or sometimes the crow might land on some sea monster by mistake, but this was also good for the merchants because that's a warning of danger. If the crows didn't find either island or danger, then once they became tired they would have to return to the ship. We can read things like that with so many details in *Pema Katang* and texts like that. Actually Indrabhuti was also hunting for the wishfulfilling jewel when he ended up finding Guru Rinpoche!

Indrabhuti was searching for the wishfulfilling jewel when he found Guru Rinpoche

There are three reasons why Buddha is like a wishfulfilling jewel:

(1) He has no intention
(2) He benefits beings effortlessly
(3) He is rare

There are three reasons why the Buddha is like a wishfulfilling gem. First, the wishfulfilling gem doesn't have any intention or conception of benefiting, yet for those who are close by, their wishes get fulfilled. Likewise, Buddha doesn't have any intention or conception, but he can fulfil the wishes of different beings with a wealth of different vehicles. Second, when the jewel fulfils beings' wishes, it does so effortlessly. Likewise, when the Buddha fulfils the wishes of sentient beings, it's not as if he has to make notes in order to teach, or that he has to learn the language of the audience and all of that. Third, the wishfulfilling jewel is rare, which is explained in the next stanza.

349 གང་ཕྱིར་རྒྱ་མཚོ་ས་འོག་གམས་དེ་ལ་འདོད་པས། །
ཇི་ལྟར་ཁོར་བ་བཟང་པོ་འགྲོ་འདིར་རབ་རྒྱུད་དཀའ། །
དེ་བཞིན་འགྲོ་བ་ཤིན་ཏུ་སྐྱལ་ངན་ཉོན་མོངས་ཟིན། །
ཡིད་འདིར་བདེ་གཤེགས་མཐོང་བ་རྒྱུད་དཀར་ཤེས་པར་བྱ། །

Just as it is difficult for beings here desirous of such a gem to encounter one, because they lie underground or in the ocean, so also should one know it to be difficult to see a sugata, for those beings here, poorly fated and in defilements' grasp.

The good jewel lying underground or in the ocean is very hard to find for beings wanting it. Likewise, one should understand that beings held in the grip of the poisons and whose karmic gifts are poor, will hardly see the Sugata in their minds.

Even though it fulfils the wishes of people, the wishfulfilling jewel is very difficult to find. It's very rare. It can only be obtained with great difficulty. Likewise,

Although Buddha is everywhere, it is difficult and rare for beings to perceive him because of their defilements and obscurations

even though the Buddha is everywhere, for sentient beings who don't have good fortune, it is very difficult and rare for them to perceive the appearance of the Buddha. This is because they are blinded by view, defilements and cognitive obscurations.

Day 8 – Introduction

We should tune our motivation while receiving these teachings, as it will determine everything we do

As usual it's really important for us to tune our motivation while we receive these teachings and teach these texts. And all our actions, especially our virtuous actions, must begin with, dwell in and conclude with the method of the three wholesomenesses. And it's really important that our main aim or agenda should actually be to obtain liberation, enlightenment. Especially for practitioners like us, that will determine everything we do.

Ordinary practitioners like us should begin with renunciation mind. Even this is difficult, as there are too many attractive things in this world, so we aren't attracted to enlightenment

For ordinary practitioners like us, we begin with renunciation mind. Even renunciation mind alone is really difficult, as there are too many attractive things in this world. But if you can see even more attractive things in enlightenment, then renunciation becomes easy. However if all our emotions, clinging and fixation are intact, then it's difficult for us to get attracted to enlightenment. It's almost unheard of. Will we still have our pets after we are enlightened? Will we still have the pleasure of choosing the right pet food for them? Will we still be able to watch soap operas, something to look forward to next Thursday? Since we will be omniscient when we are enlightened, maybe that just won't be possible.

You are only a Dharma practitioner if your main agenda is enlightenment

For example, this applies how you look for a spiritual teacher

Seeking enlightenment, that being your main agenda, will determine whether you are a Dharma practitioner or not. For example, one of the biggest dilemmas on the spiritual path is finding a teacher. But most of the time, seeking enlightenment is never your agenda when you are looking for a teacher. You are basically looking for a higher-class companion. And that's difficult. Looking for a guru is even more difficult than a middle-aged person looking for a partner. When they become middle-aged, some people have the fortune of expanding their repertoire, so they're less fussy about whom they hang around with. They're not so particular, although that's only true for some fortunate middle-aged people, and then only by force. They're being forced to be less particular. But when you do the same thing with a spiritual master, it becomes kind of sad. It might work on the relationship level, but when you are looking for a spiritual guide and your strength to be really particular becomes somehow lethargic, then it could cause a lot of sadness.

If your main aim is enlightenment, you won't be worried about approval from your master or good or bad signs on the path

While you practice, while you meditate, study and follow the Buddhist or Mahayana path or whatever, if your main aim is enlightenment, then the path becomes much easier. Then you're not longing for some kind of sign or approval

from your master, as that's not your agenda. That's not an issue. And until you achieve enlightenment, there will be all kinds of good signs and bad signs, and the good signs are worse that the bad signs. But you will not be tempted when they come, because you are looking for enlightenment and not for signs.

We should generate joy and enthusiasm for the result of enlightenment, so we should contemplate the qualities and aspects of enlightenment

Because enlightenment is our main aim, it's really important for us to generate joy and enthusiasm for the result, enlightenment. To do that, it's really important for beings like us to hear and contemplate the qualities, characteristics and aspects of enlightenment again and again. And what better text can you find than this one to hear about the qualities of enlightenment? But you have to keep in mind that in Mahayana Buddhism, ground, path and result are the three important things. The ground is the view. You follow the path in order to actualise that view, and the result is the effect of actualising the view. And in Mahayana Buddhism, the ground is beyond extremes or fabrications, the path is beyond characteristics, and the result is beyond expectations.

In Mahayana, ground is beyond extremes, path is beyond characteristics, and result is beyond expectations

Example #7: The Echo

350 ཇི་ལྟར་སྒྲ་བརྒྱན་གྱི་ནི་སྒྲ། །
གཞན་གྱི་རྣམ་རིག་ལས་བྱུང་བ། །
རྣམ་རྟོག་མེད་ཅིང་བཟོ་མེད་ལ། །
ཕྱི་དང་ནང་ན་མི་གནས་ལྟར། །

The echo's sound arises due to others' faculties of cognition. Concept-free, it is effortless and abides neither without nor within.
Just as the sound of an echo arises due to the perception of others, without thought or purposeful labour and neither abiding without or within,

351 དེ་བཞིན་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པའི་གསུང་། །
གཞན་གྱི་རྣམ་རིག་ལས་བྱུང་བ། །
རྣམ་པར་རྟོག་མེད་བཟོ་མེད་ཅིང་། །
ཕྱི་དང་ནང་ན་གནས་མ་ཡིན། །

Likewise, tathagatas' speech arises due to others' cognitive faculties and is concept-free, effortless and abides neither without nor within.

So the speech of the Tathagata arises due to the perception of others, without thought or purposeful labour and neither abiding without or within.

#7: The echo

Like an echo, Buddha's speech has no conception

This is another example for Buddha's speech. The example is music, or sound or an echo. Probably the echo is best. An echo has no conception. It doesn't exert

A person's own Buddha speech is reflected back at them, and they hear it a a teaching. In Mahayana, everything is manifested by your own mind, including anything good or bad that you hear

any effort to tell us something. When someone shouts into a cave or something, the cave shouts back. Likewise, Buddha's speech has no conception or effort. But when fortunate beings have the karma to be able to listen, their own Buddha speech reflects back towards them, and they hear it as a teaching. As you know, although we are talking about the Buddha right now, in Mahayana Buddhism everything is your mind. So when you hear somebody telling you something bad or good or whatever, it's your mind that's doing the hearing. It's your mind that's manifesting somebody telling you something or other.

Example #8: The Sky/Space

352 ཐུང་ཟད་མེད་ཅིང་སྣང་བ་མེད། །
དམིགས་པ་མེད་ཅིང་རྟེན་མེད་ལ། །
མིག་གི་ལམ་ལས་རབ་འདས་པ། །
གཟུགས་མེད་བསྟན་དུ་མེད་པ་ཡི། །

Even though space is nothing whatsoever, non-manifest, not a mental object, without foundation, completely invisible, without form and not demonstrable,

Space is nothing at all and does not appear. It is neither an object [of the senses] nor a support. It is totally beyond being a path for the eye. It has no form and is not to be demonstrated.

353 མ་ཁའ་ལ་ཇི་ལྟར་མཐོ་དང་དམའ། །
མཐོང་ཡང་དེ་ནི་དེ་ལྟར་མིན། །
དེ་བཞིན་ཐམས་ཅད་སངས་རྒྱས་ལ། །
མཐོང་ཡང་དེ་ནི་དེ་ལྟར་མིན། །

it is "seen" as being "up" or "down" – but space is not like that. Likewise everything seen relating to Buddha is not like him at all.

Nevertheless it is seen as being high and low, but it is not at all like that. Likewise all [his appearances] are seen as Buddha, but he is not at all like that.

#8: The sky/space

Even though the sky is unperceivable, we talk about how it appears, and whether it is high or low

This is the eighth example. By the way, I thought after all these examples the text would be finished, but I'm wrong. I was surprised to find there's another whole chapter! It has been almost 23 years since I last received a teaching on the Uttaratantra. These two stanzas are an example for the Buddha's body. The sky does not have a single entity that is tangible or perceivable. But in the ordinary world we can say, "look at the sky", and we can look at the sky even though there really is nothing called sky. And we can also talk about the higher sky, deeper sky, clearer sky, lower sky, and so on. Likewise even though it cannot be

Likewise, beings see Buddhas in many forms but he is not like any of them

perceived, Buddha's form appears for different beings on different levels. And although beings will see Buddhas in different forms, Buddha himself is no different.

Example #9: The Earth

354 ཇི་ལྟར་ས་ལས་སྐྱེ་བ་ཀུན། །
རྟོག་མེད་ས་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་ནི། །
འཕེལ་དང་བརྟན་དང་ཡངས་འགྱུར་ལྟར། །

Everything which grows from the ground develops, becomes firm, and grows up through depending on the thought-free earth.

Everything that grows from the earth will increase and become firm and vast on the support of its thought-free soil.

355 དེ་བཞིན་རྫོགས་པའི་སངས་རྒྱས་ས། །
རྣམ་རྟོག་མེད་པ་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས། །
འགྲོ་བའི་དགེ་བའི་རྩ་བ་རྣམས། །
མ་ལུས་པར་ནི་འཕེལ་བར་འགྱུར། །

Likewise every root of beings' virtue, without exception, increases through dependence on the thought-free Buddha-ground.

Likewise, relying on the Perfect Buddha, who [like] the earth is free from thought, every root of virtue of sentient beings without exception will flourish and grow.

#9: The earth

Buddha's mind is like the earth. The earth supports all kinds of plants without having any intention, and likewise the Buddha supports the growth of virtue among beings

Buddha's mind is like the ground or the earth. The ground doesn't have any motivation to give birth to all kinds of grass and trees, yet things sprout from the ground, and become shoots, trees, leaves, fruits and so on. Likewise, without any conception or intention of giving birth to or generating all the virtuous thoughts and actions, Buddha manifests not only within the three vehicles, but also among the tirthikas and the barbarians. And he makes them generate wholesome and virtuous thoughts and actions.

356 འབད་རྩོལ་མེད་པར་བྱ་བ་འགའ། །
བྱེད་པ་མཐོང་མེད་དེ་བས་ན། །
གཤུལ་བྱའི་ཐེ་ཚོམ་གཅོད་པའི་ཕྱིར། །
དཔེ་རྣམས་དགུ་ནི་བསྟན་པ་ཡིན། །

Since ordinary beings do not perceive action without effort, these nine examples are taught to annihilate students' doubts.

It is not obvious that one could act without exerting deliberate effort. Therefore nine examples are taught to cut the doubts of the disciples.

One of the big problems for dzogchen practitioners is that they misunderstand the meaning of effortlessness

The next stanza is the reason why we use the nine examples. There's something that I just have to say here, even though it's maybe not really the time to talk about this. For people who listen to dzogchen teachings, one of their greatest difficulties is that they just don't believe in the concept of 'effortless'. For example, HH Dudjom Rinpoche's "Calling The Guru" is basically promoting effortlessness and spontaneity. In fact, the whole dzogchen teaching is very difficult to understand, and the main reason is that we are so used to the logic that you have to earn things, that you have to work for them. We're so stuck with that kind of logic. We believe that if you make the effort then you'll get the result. But many of these so-called dzogchen practitioners completely misunderstand the meaning of 'effortlessness' and they engage with a lot of effort in being lazy.

We all want to do whatever we feel like doing, but that's so difficult! We need to be very brave, especially in this world of advertising and our concern about what people will say. It's much easier to follow a code of conduct

Everyone wants to become like Drukpa Kunley, the "divine madman of Tibet". We are a species that really wants to do whatever we feel like doing. And that's not discouraged, especially in Vajrayana and *dzogpachenpo*. In fact they really want you to do that. But that's so difficult! To do whatever you want to do is the most difficult thing! You have to be so brave, so very brave! It's much easier to shave your head, walk gently, and follow a certain code of conduct – much easier! And we should have the aspiration to be able to do whatever comes in our minds, without second thoughts or blinking our eyes. Without having any concerns about what people will say. That's difficult in this world that is driven by advertisement. Our generation is the generation of advertisement, and we just don't know how to do what we want.

Some people pretend they don't care about success or failure, but they end up stepping on people's toes and burning people's noses. And yet they call themselves practitioners of crazy wisdom

Someone who really can do what they want has no concept of so-called success or failure. And on top of that, as HH Dudjom Rinpoche says, they don't burn people's noses. What does this mean? You know, there are some people who pretend that they don't care about success or failure, but then they do all kinds of things so that wherever they go, they carry a certain smell or energy. And they manage to step on people's toes. It's amazing! If there were an award for being able to burn people's noses and step on people's toes, they should win it. And yet they call themselves practitioners of crazy wisdom. There is just so much pretence among Dharma practitioners. For example, the pretence of practicing crazy wisdom, the pretence of being humble, or the pretence of being serene. There's so much of that, just pretence after pretence, although they are all different. Some come in the form of humility, and others come in the form of confidence, but they are basically all pretence.

There is so much pretence among Dharma practitioners, whether it's in the form of humility or confidence

We are stuck with the logic of expending effort to reap a reward, so we cannot conceive of how Buddha benefits beings effortlessly. This is why the nine examples are taught

So we are stuck with this logic of effort, or having to reap the harvest with effort. And now we are being told that Buddha effortlessly benefits sentient beings all the time. It's very difficult for us to conceive of this. This is why the nine examples are given, because all nine examples have no intention or agenda. They are just there and yet they benefit, like Indra's reflection. It doesn't have any intention to help you, and it doesn't know what's happening, so to speak. Yet by throwing flowers there you will actually reach that kind of state.

357 གང་དུ་དགེ་བགྱི་པོ་འདི་དག །
རྒྱས་པར་རབ་ཏུ་བསྟན་གྱུར་པ། །
མདོ་སྡེ་ཡི་ནི་མིང་ཉིད་ཀྱིས། །
དེ་ཡི་དགོས་པ་བསྟན་པ་ཉིད། །

These nine examples have been excellently, fully taught in a sutra of name that explains their purpose.

The place where these nine examples were explained in very great detail is the sutra that through its very name teaches their necessity and purpose.

Lord Maitreya acknowledges his sources, unlike so many of today's authors

This is a very admirable stanza. As you know, Lord Maitreya is a tenth bhumi Bodhisattva, at the last limit of the tenth bhumi. Today there are so many authors who steal things from here and there, and plagiarise from the great masters, and they have blind hope that nobody is going to find out that it has actually been stolen. And unfortunately, many people don't realise this. And these authors like to tell the world that it actually comes from their own realisation, even though the Buddha taught this 2500 years ago. We find this a lot within many books. Some authors are slightly more decent and give a little credit to their teachers, albeit usually teachers that are long gone.

Respect towards the teachers has degenerated, especially among so-called celebrity lamas

Whereas in India, classical music performers still venerate their teachers

The nine examples were taught by the Buddha in the Jñanaloka-sutra

Respect towards one's teacher has really degenerated a lot, especially among the celebrity lamas. They would not hesitate to sit higher than their own guru in public, and they certainly wouldn't settle for less than equal. This is a big degeneration. When I am in India, I sometimes go to Indian classical music recitals, and it's so beautiful to see the students, the disciples, touching the feet of their guru in front of the audience. This is only the wisdom of music, and yet there's so much veneration. And by the way, some of these musicians are well known celebrities. At one point, one of the musicians actually came into the audience, because she noticed that her guru was sitting there, and she walked all the way up to her guru before starting the performance. This is something really good. Anyway, in this stanza, Maitreya is saying that he didn't come up with these nine examples. They were taught by the Buddha in the Jñanaloka-sutra, in order for the Bodhisattvas to happily and joyfully enter the Bodhisattva path.

358 ཐོས་པ་ལས་བྱུང་ཤེས་པ་ཡི། །
སྣང་བ་རྒྱ་ཆེན་འདིས་བརྒྱན་པའི། །
བློ་ལྡན་སྒྲུབ་དུ་སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི། །
སྤྱོད་ཡུལ་ཀུན་ལ་འཇུག་པར་འགྱུར། །

The wise, adorned with great light of wisdom born of such study will swiftly enter all Buddha domains.

Adorned with the far-reaching light of knowledge arisen from hearing it, those of insight will quickly enter the field of experience of a Buddha.

The nine examples are taught so Bodhisattvas will joyfully enter the Bodhisattva path

The nine examples are explained in that sutra so that the Bodhisattvas will enter into the infinite activity of the Bodhisattva. Now we have finished all the nine examples, and we will now have the nine meanings of the examples. It's already finished, but this is like a repetition. Everything we have been doing is like a summary, and now it will be explained again. Of course, that also begins with a summary.

359 དེ་དོན་བི་ཌཱུ་རར་བརྒྱ་བྱིན་ཀྱི། །
གཟུགས་བརྙན་ལ་སོགས་དཔེ་དག་གི། །
རྣམ་དགུ་བརྗོད་པ་དེ་ལ་ནི། །
དེ་ཡི་བསྟན་དོན་ངེས་པར་བཟུང་། །

The nine examples, such as Indra's reflection in lapis lazuli, have taught this point. The meanings they illustrate so accurately:

This point is made clear in the nine examples of Indra's reflection in lapis lazuli and so on. Their concise meaning, when grasped precisely,

The nine examples are taught to explain the nine meanings

This stanza is saying that these nine examples are given to explain the nine meanings.

360 སྟོན་དང་གསུང་དང་ཁྱབ་པ་དང་། །
སྤྲུལ་དང་ཡེ་ཤེས་སྦྱོ་བ་དང་། །
ཐུགས་གསུང་སྐུ་ཡི་གསང་བ་དང་། །
ཐུགས་རྗེའི་བདག་ཉིད་ཐོབ་པ་ཉིད། །

Manifestation, speech, all-pervasiveness, the emanations, the shining forth of jñana, the "mystery" of body, speech and mind and possession of a compassionate nature.

Is to [illustrate] display [of physical form], speech and the all-pervasiveness [of mind], illusory emanation, radiation of wisdom, the secret aspects of body, speech and mind, and the fact that compassion itself is attained.

So what are the nine meanings? Manifestation, speech, all-pervasiveness, and so on.

361 འབད་རྩོལ་རྒྱུན་ཀུན་ར་བ་ཞི་བ། །
རྣམ་པར་རྟོག་པ་མེད་པའི་ཐུགས། །
དེ་མེད་ཞི་ཏྲེ་བརྒྱ་བྱིན་ཐྱི། །
གཟུགས་བརྙན་ཤར་བ་ལ་སོགས་བཞིན། །

Their mind ideation free, all channels of effort having been pacified totally, is just like Indra's reflection and so on appearing in stainless lapis lazuli.

All streams of effort being fully appeased and the mind being free from all ideation is similar to Indra's reflection appearing within stainless lapis lazuli and so forth.

The nine examples symbolise that all efforts and conceptions are stopped, like Indra's reflection in the lapis lazuli

Now the question is, how do these nine examples exemplify or symbolise the nine meanings? First, in brief, all the stream of effort is stopped, there are no conceptions, it is peaceful, and so forth. This is symbolised by Indra's reflection in the lapis lazuli and so forth.

362 འབད་རྩོལ་ཞི་བ་དམ་བཅས་ཏེ། །
རྟོག་མེད་ཐུགས་ནི་གཏན་ཚིགས་སོ། །
ར་བ་ཞིན་དོན་ནི་གྲུབ་དོན་དུ། །
དཔེ་ནི་བརྒྱ་བྱིན་གཟུགས་སོགས་ཡིན། །

Here, "pacification of effort" is a proposition. The logical justification is the "mind free of ideation". The examples, of Indra's form and so forth, help establish the point of naturalness.

Appeasement of effort is the proposition; mind free from ideation its justification. In order to establish the meaning of its nature the similes of Indra's form and so on are given.

The meanings are the subject, effortlessness is the thesis, and the reason is that Buddha doesn't have conceptions

As long as there is no conception, there is no effort. To symbolise this we have nine examples

Once again, how do the nine examples symbolise the nine meanings? The nine meanings are like the subject. The fact that there is no effort is the thesis (*damcha*), and the reasoning is that Buddha doesn't have conceptions. As long as there is no conception, it has to be effortless. And to symbolise this, we have nine examples. Basically this stanza is saying that as long as there is no conception, there is no effort.

363 འདིར་གི་སྐབས་དོན་འདི་ཡིན་ཏེ། །
སྟོན་པ་ལ་སོགས་རྣམ་དགུ་ནི། །
སྟོན་པ་སྐྱེ་འཆི་དང་བྲལ་བ། །
འབད་པ་མེད་པར་རབ་འཇུག་པའོ། །

The point that this is making is that the teacher, who is beyond birth and death, effortlessly manifests these nine – appearance etc.

Here the meaning of the chapter is as follows: The nine aspects of physical display and so on [show] that the Teacher has no birth and death, and yet perfectly manifests without any effort.

The purpose is to state that Buddha has no birth, no death and no effort

One of the purposes of the nine examples that we have been talking about is to state that Buddha has no birth, no death, and no effort.

364 གང་ཞིག་བརྒྱ་བྱིན་ཏ་དང་སྒྲིན་བཞིན་དང་། །
ཚངས་ཉིད་རིན་ཆེན་ཡིད་བཞིན་ནོར་རྒྱལ་བཞིན། །
སྒྲ་བརྟན་ནམ་མཁའ་ས་བཞིན་སྲིད་པའི་བར། །
འབད་མེད་གཞན་དོན་མཛད་དེ་རྣལ་འབྱོར་རིག །

Effortless altruistic action for as long as there is existence – like that of Indra, the drum, clouds, Brahma, the sun, the kingly wishfulfilling gem, an echo, space or the earth is understood by the great yogin alone.

Something that, similar to Indra, the drum, clouds, Brahma, the sun, the precious king of wish-granting gems, an echo, space and the earth, effortlessly and as long as existence may last fulfils others' benefit is only conceived of by [supreme] yogis.

Yogis on the Bodhisattva path will understand that the Buddha is like these nine examples

Again he will explain how the meanings are shown by the examples, and again we'll begin with a summary. Buddha is like Indra, the drum, the cloud, Brahma, the sun, the wishfulfilling gem, an echo, space and earth. That's how the yogis, those who dwell on the path of the Bodhisattvayana will understand the Buddha.

365 རིན་ཆེན་ལྟ་དབང་སྣང་ཞིང་སྟོན་པ་སྟེ། །
ལེགས་པར་འདོམས་མཛད་ལྟ་ཡི་ཏ་དང་འདྲ། །
ཁྱབ་བདག་མཁྱེན་དང་བརྩེ་ཆེན་སྤྲིན་ཆོགས་ནི། །
མཐའ་ཡས་འགྲོ་བ་སྲིད་རྩེའི་བར་དུ་ཁྱབ། །

Similar to Indra's jewel appearance – manifestation, like the divine drum – the perfect bestowing of instruction, the cloud-hosts – those of perfect knowledge and loving compassion with which the all-embracing pervades limitless beings up to the summit of conditioned existence.

[Kayas] are displayed like the Lord of Gods appearing [in] the gem. Explanation being well bestowed resembles the drum of the gods. With cloud-hosts of insight and deep concern, the All-Embracing pervades the limitless number of beings up to existence's peak.

366 ཚངས་བཞིན་ཟག་མེད་གནས་ལས་མི་བསྐྱོད་པར། །
སྣྱུལ་པ་རྣམ་པ་དུ་མ་རབ་ཏུ་སྟོན། །
ཉི་བཞིན་ཡེ་ཤེས་སྣང་བ་རབ་སྤྲོ་གང་། །
རྣམ་དག་རིན་ཆེན་ཡིད་བཞིན་ནོར་འདྲའི་ཐུགས། །

Similarly to Brahma, they manifest many an emanation without ever departing from their untainted domain. Like the sun, they radiate universally their jñana light and like the wishfulfilling gem, perfectly pure, their mind.

Like Brahma, not moving from his sphere devoid of pollution, he perfectly displays a manifold number of illusory appearances. Like a sun, primordial wisdom perfectly radiates its brilliance. Buddha mind resembles a pure and precious wishfulfilling jewel.

367 རྒྱལ་བ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་གསུང་དེ་བཟག་ཆ་བཞིན་དུ་ཡི་གེ་མེད། །
སྐྱ་ནི་ནམ་མཁའ་ལྟ་བུར་ཁྱབ་བདག་གཟུགས་མེད་རྟག་པ་ཉིད། །
ས་གཞི་འགྲོ་བའི་དཀར་པོའི་ཚོས་ཀྱི་སྨན་རྣམས་མ་ལུས་པའི། །
རྣམ་པ་ཀུན་ཏུ་གཞིར་གྱུར་པ་ནི་སངས་རྒྱས་སྐུས་མ་ཡིན་ནོ། །

Like an echo, devoid of any verbalization is the victors' speech. Like space, all pervading, formless and permanent, their form and like the earth, the universal ground for the medicinal herbs that are beings' virtues, is the state of Buddhahood.

Buddha speech has no letters, like an echo resounding from rock. Similar to space, his body is pervasive, formless and permanent. Like the earth, a Buddha is the ground holding without exception and in any way all medicinal herbs of beings' unstained qualities.

The first eight examples are for the Buddha's body, speech and mind

The ninth example indicates that the Buddha is like the earth, where you can plant a seed and cultivate enlightened qualities

The form of the Buddha is like Indra's reflection on the lapis lazuli floor. The speech of the Buddha is like the drum of heaven. His omniscient mind is all-pervasive like the sky. His manifestation is like Brahma. His wisdom is like the sun and the rays of the sun. The extraordinary aspect of his mind is like the wishfulfilling gem. The extraordinary aspect of his speech is like an echo. The extraordinary aspect of his form is like space. All these eight examples might somehow lead you to think that the Buddha isn't able to bear or hold enlightened qualities, so in order to negate that kind of thought, we have the ninth example of the earth. This indicates that the Buddha is like the earth. He can be the ground where you can plant the seed and cultivate it.

368 དགེ་པའི་ཏཱུན্ཆ་འདྲ་ཡི། །
སེམས་ལ་སངས་རྒྱས་མཐོང་བའི་རྒྱུ། །
དེ་དགེ་སྟེ་མི་ཟློག་པའི། །
དད་པའི་དབང་པོ་བརྟས་པ་ཉིད། །

One sees Buddha in his mind, comparable to pure lapis lazuli, through mind's purity – development of irreversible faith's faculty.

The cause for the Buddha to be seen in the mind similar to pure lapis lazuli is the purity of this ground, [achieved] by a firm faculty of irreversible faith.

369 དགེ་བ་སྐྱེ་དང་འཇིག་པས་ན། །
སངས་རྒྱས་གཟུགས་ནི་སྐྱེ་དང་འཇིག །
བརྒྱ་བྱིན་བཞིན་དུ་ཐུབ་པ་ནི། །
ཆོས་ཀྱི་སྐུ་ཡི་སྐྱེ་འཇིག་མེད། །

Since this virtue appears and disappears, the forms of the Buddhas also appear and disappear. However, like Indra, the great sage's dharmakaya is beyond arising and destruction.

Since virtue arises and ceases, the form of a Buddha arises and ceases. Like Indra, the Muni who is dharmakaya is free from arising and ceasing.

370 དེ་བཞིན་དུ་ནི་འབད་མེད་པར། །
སྐྱེ་མེད་འགག་མེད་ཆོས་སྐུ་ལས། །
སྲིད་པ་ཇི་སྲིད་གནས་བར་དུ། །
སྟོན་པ་ལ་སོགས་མཛད་པ་འཇུག །

Like him, in a way that is effortless, from this dharmakaya without birth or death, he engages in activity, such as manifestation, for as long as conditioned existence goes on.

Effortlessly, like [Indra] he manifests his deeds, displaying [physical appearance] and so forth, from birthless and deathless dharmakaya for as long as samsaric existence may last.

On the absolute level, Buddha has no arising or ceasing, but on the relative level we have the manifestation of the Buddha, and we may still have doubts about whether this is effortless

To clear doubts about how the examples symbolise the qualities of the Buddha, once again they are explained in a different manner. We discussed some of these doubts during the questions and answers yesterday. On the absolute level, Buddha does not have arising and ceasing, and yet Buddha has manifested being born in Lumbini, passing into parinirvana in Kushinagar and so on. Also, although we have talked again and again about effortlessness, there still seems to be an effort when we talk about the manifestation of the Buddha. For instance, there is arising from six years of penance, going to Magadha,

Why did Buddha choose to achieve enlightenment in Bodh Gaya rather than somewhere else?

destroying the maras, achieving enlightenment and then deciding not to teach, and then upon the request of Indra and Brahma choosing to teach in Sarnath. And although we keep on saying that he has no intention, there are doubts about why Shakyamuni Buddha chose to achieve enlightenment under a bodhi tree in Bodh Gaya, rather than somewhere else in the world. These are many explanations for this, and especially the Vajrayana has amazing things to say, but on a more common level it's believed that once upon a time a very long time ago, 100 million Bodhisattvas were simultaneously beheaded by a very vicious king on that spot, and they all made different prayers. A thousand of them prayed to be teachers, some prayed to be patrons, and others prayed to be the holders of the teachings, such as the disciples. We have talked about these kinds of doubts many times. Anyway, it is explained in these stanzas.

When you perceive the appearance of a Buddha, it's because there is no obstacle to your virtuous thoughts and activities. Your lapis lazuli floor is clean. But neither the presence nor absence of dirt affects the Buddha

When you perceive the appearance of a Buddha and his activities, and when you perceive that he seemingly has intentions of walking up and down, begging, teaching, choosing Bodh Gaya and all of that, it's because there is no obstacle to your virtuous or wholesome thoughts and actions. It's like seeing the reflection of Indra when there is no dirt on the lapis lazuli floor. When you have devotion and inspiration, then you see these things. And when you don't have devotion or inspiration, then you don't see these appearances. But like the reflection of Indra, neither the absence nor the presence of devotion or dirt affects the actual Buddha. And that's how the Buddha manifests and benefits people.

The entire Mahayana path is based on this view, like the story of the dog's tooth bearing relics

We have talked about that. Basically the entire Mahayana practice is based on this logic or view. It's like the popular story in The Words of My Perfect Teacher (*Kunzang Lama'i Shelung*) about the dog's tooth bearing relics. When you have that kind of devotion, it invokes the blessings of the Buddha even from a dog's tooth. For instance, although I wish that you would do prostrations to the holy objects here beside me, some of you may be aiming your prostrations towards me. And if you prostrate with the right attitude and motivation, I'm sure you'll get the benefit. Strictly speaking, the 'credit' for what you receive should go to your own merit, devotion and inspiration. Because although I may be the object of your prostration, I haven't moved one inch from being a dog's tooth!

But even if you know it's your own merit that's creating the benefit, that doesn't mean you should stop prostrating. Keep the donkey with you even while you try to ride the horse

Some of you asked about the donkey and horse issue that we discussed a couple of days ago. Well, even if you know that it's your own merit and devotion that's creating all this benefit, it doesn't mean that you should stop prostrating. You can still keep on doing prostrations to me, because you will still get the benefit. And meanwhile, because most of the time my mind is all over the place, I don't even notice that you're doing prostrations. And so I won't acknowledge it, so I'll forget to dedicate that act, and therefore for many lifetimes to come, probably the next 500 lifetimes, I will have to pay my own karmic debt. I will have to prostrate or bow down, becoming a sycophant to all kinds of people, again and again. The fact that many of you are ass-kissers is because you, like me, may have forgotten to acknowledge other people's venerations and respect to you in

many previous lifetimes, and now you just have to kiss ass. Patrul Rinpoche gives very extended explanations of this, especially for people like us lamas, about how we misuse offerings (*kor*), offerings of respect or whatever. I don't think you will have this problem so much, but people like me have it a lot. And the law of cause, condition and effect does not give preferential treatment to any 'special' people. Patrul Rinpoche's example of a big fish being eaten by lots of small fish, and lots of small fish being eaten by the big fish, is a perfect example of spiritual masters and their disciples these days.

As Patrul Rinpoche said, lamas in particular should be careful to acknowledge offerings and prostrations

Day 9 – Introduction

The nine examples of the Buddha's activity are ordinary. The meanings far surpass the examples

Maitreya concludes this chapter by indicating that the nine examples of the Buddha are ordinary, and the nine meanings far surpass the nine examples. He has explained that the nine examples are similar to the Buddha. Now he's saying that they are also not similar. The Sakyapa scholar Sakya Pandita said that that some similarity exists between all things, but no two things are absolutely identical. If one thing is similar to another it is not 'it', and if it is dissimilar, then it is not an analogy, so it cannot be an example. This is from Buddhist logic, the *pramana*. In order to define something as an example, there has to be some kind of similarity. It's a bit like that here, and it's also one of the reasons why there are nine examples. Each successive example is like an answer to a refutation of the previous example that points out how it is not similar to the Buddha.

The examples are also not similar to the Buddha, so they cannot be examples. This is why there are nine examples, as each one is like an answer to a refutation of the previous example

371 དཔེ་འདི་རྣམས་ཀྱིས་བསྟན་པ་ཡིན། །
དོན་ནི་འདི་ཡིན་རིམ་པ་ཡང་། །
སྤྱ་མ་ཕྱི་མ་ཆོས་མི་མཐུན། །
སྒྲུབ་པའི་སྒོ་ནས་བརྗོད་པ་ཡིན། །

Here is a summarized meaning of the examples taught through an order where dissimilarities are eliminated from the former to the latter.

The condensed meaning of the examples is [contained] herein. Their order is also [not arbitrary], as they are abandoned such that properties not in tune are eliminated [progressing] from the former to the latter.

372 སངས་རྒྱས་གཟུགས་བརྙན་ལྟ་བུ་སྟེ། །
དབྱངས་དང་མི་ལྡན་དེ་འདྲ་མིན། །
ལྟ་ཡི་ཤ་བཞིན་ཐམས་ཅད་དུ། །
དོན་བྱེད་མིན་པ་དེ་འདྲ་མིན། །

The Buddha is like that reflection, but not the same – that doesn't have his melody. He is like the celestial drum, but not the same – it is not universally beneficial.

A Buddha is like the reflection and yet dissimilar, since the reflection is not endowed with his melody. He is like the drum of the gods and yet dissimilar, since the drum does not bring benefit everywhere.

373 སྤྲིན་ཆེན་དང་མཚུངས་དོན་མེད་པའི། །
ས་བོན་སྤོང་མིན་དེ་འདྲ་མིན། །
ཚངས་ཆེན་བཞིན་ཏེ་གཏན་དུ་ནི། །
སྨིན་པར་བྱེད་མིན་དེ་འདྲ་མིན། །

He is like the vast cloud, but not the same – it removes not useless seeds. He is like Mahabrahma, but not the same – he does not engender lasting maturity.

He is similar to a vast cloud and yet dissimilar, since a cloud does not eliminate worthless seeds. He is like the mighty Brahma and yet dissimilar, since Brahma does not continuously cause maturity.

374 ཉི་མའི་གཟུགས་བཞིན་གཏན་ནུ་ནི། །
མུན་པ་འཇོམས་མིན་དེ་འདྲ་མིན། །
ཡིད་བཞིན་ནོར་འདྲ་འབྱུང་བ་ནི། །
རྙེད་པར་མི་དཀའ་དེ་འདྲ་མིན། །

He is like the form of the sun, but not the same – it cannot vanquish darkness forever. He is like the wishfulfilling gem, but not the same – its appearance is not that difficult to encounter.

He is like the orb of the sun and yet dissimilar, since the sun does not always overcome darkness. He is like a wish-granting gem and yet dissimilar, since the gem's appearance is not so rarely found.

375 སྒྲ་བརྒྱན་བཞིན་ཏེ་རྒྱུ་ལས་ནི། །
བྱུང་བ་དེ་དང་འདྲ་བའང་མིན། །
ནམ་མཁའ་དང་འདྲ་དགེ་པ་ཡི། །
གཞི་མིན་དེ་དང་འདྲ་བའང་མིན། །

He is like an echo, but not the same – it arises through circumstance. He is like space, but not the same–that is not the basis for goodness.

He is similar to an echo and yet dissimilar, since an echo arises from cause and condition. He is similar to space and yet dissimilar, since space is not a ground of pure virtue.

376 འཇིག་རྟེན་འཇིག་རྟེན་ལས་འདས་པའི། །
འགྲོ་བའི་ཕུན་ཚོགས་མ་ལུས་པ། །
དེ་གནས་པ་ཡི་རྟེན་ཡིན་ཕྱིར། །
ས་ཡི་དཀྱིལ་འཁོར་དག་དང་འདྲ། །
སངས་རྒྱས་བྱང་ཆུབ་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས། །
འཇིག་རྟེན་འདས་པའི་ལམ་འབྱུང་ཕྱིར། །
དགེ་བའི་ལས་ལམ་བསམ་གཏན་དང་། །
ཚད་མེད་པ་དང་གཟུགས་མེད་འབྱུང་། །

He is like the mandala of earth, being the supportive ground for absolutely every single goodness in sentient life – mundane and supramundane, because the supramundane arises on the basis of the Buddha's enlightenment, as do the paths of virtuous acts, concentrative meditation, the limitless contemplations and the formless ones.

Being the lasting basis for every goodness, the best possible for all without exception, for worldly beings and those beyond the world, [activity] is similar to the mandala of earth. Because based upon all Buddha's enlightenment, the path beyond the world will arise, as will the path of virtuous deeds, mental stability and the immeasurable and formless contemplations.

For example, although Buddha is like the reflection of Indra, the reflection doesn't have speech. So we have the example of the heavenly drum.

The objections to the nine examples:

1) A reflection has no speech
2) The heavenly drum cannot be heard on earth
3) The cloud cannot benefit beyond this life
4) Brahma's effects only last for one lifetime
5) The sun is not always visible in the sky
6) The wishfulfilling jewel is not rare
7) The echo can come from an ordinary voice
8) The sky cannot be used as the basis for virtue
9) The earth only bears ordinary fruits

The Buddhafield gives birth to both ordinary and sublime fruits

For example, when you say that the form of Buddha is like the reflection of Indra, someone could refute you by saying that a reflection doesn't have sound or speech. That's why the example of the heavenly drum is introduced. But the heavenly drum can only be heard in heaven, not on earth and so on, so we have the third example of the cloud. But a cloud can only benefit during this life, this worldly life, and cannot really benefit beyond this life. So to answer that, the example is Brahma. But the effects of Brahma only last for one lifetime. If you worship or get acquainted with Brahma, it only gives you a result once. It's a bit like Nanda's story. Once the effect of that cause is finished, then you are back to where you started. So to answer that, we bring the next example, which is the sun. But the sun also sets and has eclipses, so the next example is the wishfulfilling gem. But one could think that the wishfulfilling gem is not that rare, relatively speaking, because you can get it from the King of the Nagas. So as an answer to that, we introduce the example of the echo, although this is one thing that I don't understand very well. However, one might think that the echo can be created by an ordinary voice, so the answer to that is the example of the sky. But the sky is not usable. It's sort of uncompounded, so to clarify that doubt, we come back to the example of earth. But even the earth only bears ordinary plants and fruits, whereas the field of the Buddha gives birth to both ordinary and sublime fruits. The Buddhafield is the source of virtuous thoughts and actions, such as the ten virtuous actions, the four samadhis and the four immeasurable thoughts. From this Buddhafield also comes the cause of the

formless realms, such as the four meditative absorptions. I'd like to explain this a little bit.

As long as a being has a want or need, some kind of goal, it is a vessel for the Buddha's activity

Potato chips don't have wants or needs

As soon as there is a want or need, ignorance is already there ready to manipulate them, not a step behind

We have the Buddha-nature, and that Buddha has all the qualities that we have been talking about. Broadly speaking, as long as a being has this wanting or needing, you can safely say it's a vessel for the Buddha's activity. Buddha's compassion and manifestation can enter it. On a very mundane and shallow level, it might be that you don't want to have pain, and consider pain as something not so good, although of course that's also very relative. Further than that, on a very subtle level, you want things. You have some kind of a goal and some needs to satisfy, of course starting with yourself. By contrast, I don't think these potato chips have any wants or needs. I'm not saying that's something good or something bad. There's no judgement here. Of course ignorance plays a very important role here. As soon as there is a want or need, ignorance is already there as well, not a step behind, ready to manipulate this wanting.

Strongly obscured and ignorant people have all kinds of monstrous desires, like wanting to eat another human being

People that are strongly obscured and ignorant have all kinds of incredible or monstrous desires, like wanting to eat another human being. And then they look for someone who is willing to give up their body and they actually finding someone, because there is another person who has that kind of desire. I find this to be very obscured. This happened recently, isn't that right? Someone wanted to eat a human body, and found someone through the Internet who volunteered to do this. And they filmed it while it was happening. As we said earlier, human beings are all different in terms of their elements, constituencies and senses. We have always been generalising. All this was happening between three human beings, the two of them and us. But if we look beyond the human realm, we can see that we are doing exactly the same thing with beef and chicken and prawns. The only reason we don't think that it's sick or hideous is because we have practised it longer. We just couldn't accept it if one day a fashion magazine had a picture of a beautiful tigress holding a bag made out of the skin of Cindy Crawford! Anyway, the point is that we all have something that we want. And of course ignorance gets involved, and makes this want into something very obscure and harmful to oneself and others.

When you get what you want or need, you are happy. So there is a definition of happiness, which is different for everyone

People then engage in different types of virtuous actions. Some engage in philanthropy, others in shamatha or more sophisticated forms of meditation

The important news is that there is wanting, and when you get what you want or what you need, you are happy. So there is a definition of happiness. And this so-called phenomenon of happiness is different for everyone. Some of us who are slightly more fortunate, meaning slightly less ignorant, begin to think, "If I really want to be happy, it's important that I shouldn't harm others". We don't literally think like that, but we think something along those lines in a very obscured way. And this is how things like good conduct, philanthropy, sympathy, charity and so on emerge, because you realise that they give you a lot of happiness. Other people are even less obscured, so they feel they should relax and let their minds be peaceful, and so they engage in shamatha meditation. It is the same for all these different varieties of virtuous actions.

Some want to cut the root of samsara

Although qualities and virtues can grow on this Buddhafield, the same is not true for ignorance, from a Mahayana point of view. Defilements are temporary and removable, not the Buddha's qualities

Then there are even more sophisticated and advanced varieties, such as samadhis, immeasurable thoughts, and meditative absorptions. And most important, some beings are not satisfied with these either, and want to cut the root of samsara. All these things can be born and grow on this Buddhafield. So now we have a question, and some of you have already asked this. What about ignorance? What about hideous wants and desires, like a person who wants to eat someone else's flesh. What are these things? Do they also grow on this Buddhafield? From a strict Mahayana point of view, the answer is no. They are not the Buddha-nature's qualities. They are temporary, which is why they are removable.

There is a problem with the way we think about washing a shirt. We say "my shirt has become dirty" as if the dirt has somehow come from the shirt itself

Since we are at the end of the seven vajra points, I'd like to talk about Buddha-nature. There are so many things that we can understand from the words 'Buddha-nature', and I think all of us have got a picture of it, but let's return to an old example that we used a long time ago. When we wash our clothes, we know that the dirt that has collected on the clothes is temporary, which is why it's washable. But there is problem with the way we think about this. Our mind has somehow learned to think that the dirt comes from the shirt itself, from the fabric or something, because every time we wear the shirt it ends up becoming dirty. We don't think this literally, but this is how we end up thinking about it emotionally. We say, "my shirt is dirty" or "my shirt has become dirty". I'm telling you this because I'm trying to explain why all wholesome qualities and virtuous actions grow from the Buddhafield, but why ugly and unwholesome things are not part of the Buddhafield. It's a little difficult to explain this. Of course, ultimately, from the point of view of absolute truth, you cannot say that Buddha-nature is good or bad. But when we talk about the qualities, I guess we have to say that Buddha-nature is good rather than bad. And the reason we say Buddha-nature is good rather than bad is because the bad can be removed, and the good cannot be removed. That's why it's called Buddha-nature.

Ultimately, you cannot say Buddha-nature is good or bad. But we say it is good, because bad can be removed and good cannot

A shirt may look dirty, but its real cleanliness cannot be removed. Likewise, we call Buddha-nature the ground for all enlightened qualities

When you bought your shirt from the shop it was ultimately beyond clean and beyond dirty, of course. You didn't pay extra for a certain amount of dirt. But for the sake of communication it's safer to say, "the shirt is in fact clean" rather than "the shirt is dirty", because the dirt is removable. No matter how dirty it is, how covered in mud and sweat and all that, the clean aspect of the shirt can never be removed. It's just its nature. It may look dirty, smell dirty, and all of that, but the real cleanliness of the shirt can never be removed. It's still there, and cannot be removed. That's the analogy. And this is why we call Buddha-nature the vessel or the ground of all enlightened qualities.

The Shentongpas say the qualities are all there already, whereas the Rangtongpas would say that Buddha-nature is where good things grow

Well, according to the Shentongpas, the qualities are all there already. But even if you were a Rangtongpa rather than a Shentongpa, you would say it's where good things grow. You have heard all this already, but I'm just fine-tuning, as Buddha-nature is really important. Let me imitate Maitreya a little bit, and say that Buddha-nature is better than the example of cleaning the shirt. When he

Once you 'clean' the Buddha-nature, no more dirt can collect. That requires some dualism, and that's all gone

gives us an example, he says the actual meaning is better than the example. Likewise, you can clean the shirt and reach some kind of first stage of cleanliness, but then it can become dirty again. But when, for the sake of communication, you 'clean' the Buddha-nature, the dirt cannot come back. Once you have cleaned to the root, there's just no way that any more dirt will collect, as that requires some kind of reference or dualism, and that's all gone. And that's the end of the chapter.

ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོ་རྒྱུད་བླ་མའི་བསྟན་བཅོས་དཀོན་མཆོག་གི་རིགས་རྣམ་པར་དབྱེ་བ་ལས། །
དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པའི་ཕྲིན་ལས་མཛད་པའི་སྒྲས། ། །

This was the fourth chapter, on the tathagatas' activity, from the Analysis of the Potential for the Rare and Sublime in this "Ultimate Mahayana Treatise on the Changeless Continuity".

This was the section "Unfolding the Activity of the Tathagata," the fourth chapter of The Commentary on the Highest Continuity of the Mahayana Dharma which Analyzes the Disposition of the Rare and the Sublime Ones.

Chapter Five

Benefit

Now we come to the last chapter, which talks about the benefit of hearing these things. We have heard about the Buddha element, the Buddha-nature (*sangyey gyi kham*) that was explained at the beginning of this text with the nine examples. Then enlightenment. And then the qualities of enlightenment, such as the ten strengths and 32 major marks. And then the activity of this Buddha, which was also explained with another set of nine examples.

377 སངས་རྒྱས་བསམ་དང་སངས་རྒྱས་བྱང་ཆུབ་དང་། །
སངས་རྒྱས་ཆོས་དང་སངས་རྒྱས་ཕྲིན་ལས་ཀྱི། །
དག་པའི་སེམས་ཅན་གྱིས་ཀྱང་བསམ་བྱ་མིན། །
འདི་ནི་འཇིག་པ་རྟེན་པ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་སྤྱོད་ཡུལ་ཡིན། །

Buddha-nature, the Buddha's enlightenment, Buddhahood's qualities and the activity of the Buddhas – these are even inconceivable for purified beings, being the domain of experience of their "leaders".

Buddha element, Buddha awakening, Buddha qualities and Buddha activity cannot be thought, not even by purified beings. They are the field of experience of their guides.

Even tenth bhumi Bodhisattvas cannot understand this. So what can ordinary beings do?

Even the sublime sentient beings, which refers to the tenth bhumi Bodhisattvas, even they can't conceive or fathom this. It is the object only of an enlightened being. Only an enlightened being can understand this. So the question is, what can we do? If it cannot be conceived or fathomed even by tenth bhumi Bodhisattvas, what can we do then?

378 བློ་ལྡན་རྒྱལ་བའི་ཡུལ་དེ་ལ་མོས་པ། །
སངས་རྒྱས་ཡོན་ཏན་ཆོགས་ཀྱི་སྤྱོད་འཇུར་ཏེ། །
བསམ་མེད་ཡོན་ཏན་ཆོགས་ལ་མངོན་དགའ་བས། །
སེམས་ཅན་ཀུན་གྱི་བསོད་ནམས་ཟླལ་གྱིས་གཞོན། །

The wise who have trust in this domain of the Buddhas become vessels for multitudes of Buddha-qualities. Genuinely delighting in hosts of inconceivable qualities, they surpass the virtues of every sentient being.

Those of insight who have devotion to this Buddha domain will become vessels for the multitude of all Buddha qualities, while those truly delighting in these inconceivable properties will exceed in merit [the good actions of] all sentient beings.

So, what can we ordinary beings do? First there is a summary. Lord Maitreya is talking about someone who aspires to Buddha-nature, the Buddha-nature in particular but the seven vajra points in general. Someone who has aspiration, joy, interest, and enthusiasm towards this - someone who gets a thrill out of this. Because this person's vision is big, they are getting a thrill out of something that cannot even be conceived of by the tenth bhumi Bodhisattvas. Other people may be doing all kinds of great things such as generosity and discipline and the rest, but their aim is something fathomable and conceivable. It's not a big vision. And he's saying that all the merit from their actions and good deeds can be outshone just by someone getting a thrill out of this. That's a big statement!

Someone who has joy and enthusiasm for the seven vajra points will outshine even great actions of generosity and discipline

This stanza is amazing, so powerful. When you are washing your shirt, the state that is beyond dirty and beyond clean is unfathomable, so having the aspiration for that state is a big vision. If someone else is washing their shirt and that unfathomable phenomenon is not their agenda, then it's a very limited agenda. So when the second person washes their shirt, there's a big difference, as their washing is like building a sandcastle. Somehow, unconsciously, they know it won't work. And everything is like that, even when we offer incense, or a butter lamp. There's a really big difference between doing these things with an aspiration towards Buddha-nature, and doing the same things just to collect some merit so that you will have a long life or whatever. And now this is explained further.

Washing your shirt with an aspiration for the state beyond dirty and clean is a big vision. If someone else's agenda isn't aimed at that unfathomable phenomenon, then their agenda is very limited

379 གང་ཞིག་བྱང་ཆུབ་དོན་དུ་གཉེར་བས་གསེར་ཞིང་ནོར་བུས་སྦྱས་པ་ནི། །
སངས་རྒྱས་ཞིང་རྡུལ་མཉམ་པ་ཉིན་རེ་ཚོས་རྒྱལ་རྣམས་ལ་རྟག་འབུལ་ན། །
གཞན་གང་འདི་ལས་ཚོགས་ཅན་ཐོས་ཤིང་ཐོས་ནས་ཀྱང་ནི་མོས་ན་འདི། །
སྨྲིན་པ་ལས་བྱུང་དགེ་བ་དེ་ལས་བསོད་ནམས་ཆེས་མང་ཐོབ་པར་འགྱུར། །

One who hears but one word of this and, having heard, has faith in it will attain greater virtue than another who, striving for bodhi, offers golden lands adorned with jewels, equal in number to all the atoms of the Buddhafields, to the Dharma-king daily.

Someone striving for enlightenment may turn to the Dharma kings, offering golden fields adorned with gems of equal [number] to the atoms in the Buddhafields and continue doing so every day. Another may just hear a word of this and upon hearing it become filled with devotion. He will attain merits far greater and more manifold than the virtue sprung from this practise of giving.

Imagine someone making offerings of countless ornaments to the Buddhas, garlands of solid gold decorated with precious jewels, as many garlands as there are atoms in the universe. And not just to one or two Buddhas, but to as many Buddhas as there are particles of dust in the universe, and not just for a day or two, but every day. That must have so much merit.

Someone making daily offerings of countless gold ornaments to innumerable Buddhas creates a lot of merit

Imagine someone else, someone seeking enlightenment, who doesn't have gold ornaments or anything like that, but who has so much joy, happiness and aspiration to the four points:

The four points:

1) We all have Buddha-nature
2) The dirt is removable
3) The 32 major marks are all there intact
4) Buddha's activity manifests all the time

1) All of us have Buddha-nature.
2) The dirt, the emotions and the defilements, are removable.
3) Upon removing them all the enlightened qualities such as the 32 major marks are there intact, without a single one handicapped or incapacitated.
4) The Buddha's activity manifests all the time, as in the nine examples such as Indra's reflection on the lapis lazuli floor.

If you have aspiration and joy upon hearing these four points, your merit is much greater than all those gold offerings

This doesn't mean you shouldn't be generous. But if you have the aspiration to these four points in whatever you do, it will make all the difference

Lord Maitreya is saying that when you have aspiration and joy even at hearing these words, your merit is much greater than the person who is offering the countless gold ornaments to thousands of Buddhas every day. Of course we are not saying that you should stop engaging in generosity. We are simply saying that if you do whatever you do with an aspiration to these four points, it will make all the difference. This is really important.

380 བློ་ལྡན་གང་ཞིག་བླ་མེད་བྱང་ཆུབ་འདོད་པས་བསྒོམ་པ་དུ་མར་ཡང། །
ལུས་ངག་ཡིད་ཀྱི་འབད་པ་མེད་པར་ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་དྲི་མེད་སྲུང་བྱེད་ལ། །
གཞན་གང་འདི་ལས་ཚིག་ཙམ་ཐོས་ཤིང་ཐོས་ནས་ཀྱང་གི་མོས་ན་འདི། །
ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་ལས་བྱུང་དགེ་བ་དེ་ལས་བསོད་ནམས་ཆེས་མང་ཐོབ་པར་འགྱུར། །

One who hears but one word of this and, having heard, has faith in it, will attain greater virtue that that of the right conduct of the wise who, longing for highest enlightenment, keeps effortless right conduct of body, speech and mind – even be it for many cosmic aeons.

An intelligent person wishing for enlightenment may by body, speech and mind guard a flawless moral conduct and do so effortlessly, even through many eons. Another may just hear a word of this and upon hearing it become filed with devotion. He will attain merits far greater and more manifold than the virtue sprung from this discipline.

For Buddhists, wisdom is more important that virtuous actions such as generosity, discipline or ethics

It's more important to think of these four points than to be fanatical about religious laws and not have these four

Likewise, consider someone who is engaging in practice of discipline, very diligently refraining from non-virtuous actions of body, speech and mind. This has so much merit. But again, all that diligence is as nothing compared to someone who has aspiration to these four points. These stanzas have clearly stated, just like in the Madhyamika, that for Mahayana Buddhists, actually for Buddhists in general, wisdom is more important than actions. It surpasses all things like generosity, discipline, morality or ethics. It's much more important to think all sentient beings have Buddha-nature, that defilements are removable, and upon removing their defilements all the qualities and activities of Buddha are present. It's much more important to think of these four points rather than being completely fanatical about religious laws and not having these four.

381 གང་ཞིག་འདི་ན་སྒྲིད་པ་གསུམ་གྱི་ཉོན་མོངས་མེ་འཇིལ་བས་མ་གཏན་ནི། །
ལྷ་དང་ཚངས་གནས་མཐར་སོན་ཐེག་པས་པའི་བྱང་ཆུབ་འཕོ་མེད་ཐབས་བསྟོམས་ལ། །
གཞན་གང་འདི་ལས་ཚོགས་ཅོག་ཅམ་ཐོས་ཤིང་ཐོས་ནས་ཀྱང་ནི་མོས་ན་འདི། །
བསམ་གཏན་ལས་བྱུང་དགེ་བ་དེ་ལས་བསོད་ནམས་ཆེས་མང་ཐོབ་པར་འགྱུར། །

One who hears but one word of this and, having heard, has faith in it, will attain greater virtue than that of the meditative stability of others whose dhyana rids the three worlds of defilements' fires and brings achievement of the divine state of Brahma's paradise, even if it is practised as a means to supreme immutable enlightenment.

Someone here may finally achieve the divine meditative stabilities and Brahma's abode, thus quenching all affliction's fire within the three realms of existence, and may cultivate these as a means to reach unchanging and perfect enlightenment. Another may just hear a word of this and upon hearing it become filled with devotion. He will attain merits far greater and more manifold than the virtue sprung from this meditation.

Someone with motivation to these four points has much greater merit even than someone practicing vipashyana in order to obtain enlightenment

Similarly, imagine someone practicing samadhis in order to extinguish the fires of the defilements, the fires of desire and anger, or practicing the four absorptions, or even practicing vipashyana in order to obtain the Buddha, but without the motivation or aspiration to these four points. Again, someone who has motivation to these four has much greater merit.

382 གང་ཕྱིར་སྦྱིན་པས་ལོངས་སྤྱོད་དག་ནི་སྐྱབ་བྱེད་ཅིང་། །
ཁྲིམས་ཀྱི་མཚོ་རིས་བསྟོམས་པས་ཉོན་མོངས་སྤོང་བྱེད་ལ། །
ཤེས་རབ་ཉོན་མོངས་ཤེས་བྱ་ཀུན་སྤོང་དེ་ཡི་ཕྱིར། །
འདི་མཆོག་ཉིད་དེ་ཡི་རྒྱུ་ནི་འདི་ཐོས་ཡིན། །

Generosity brings affluence, right conduct leads to the higher states, meditative stability removes defilements, but prajña removes all defilements and the cognitive. Therefore this prajña is the most excellent thing: its cause is to study such as this.

Why [is it so beneficial]? Generosity only yields wealth, discipline leads to the higher states of existence and meditation removes affliction. Discriminative wisdom fully abandons all afflictions and [hindrances to] knowledge. It is therefore supreme and its cause is studying these.

Only wisdom can uproot the defilements and cognitive obscurations, which is why it is important to hear these four points

Ordinary generosity will give the result of wealth. Ordinary discipline and moral conduct will give you the result of higher rebirth. Ordinary meditation can suppress emotions. But only wisdom can uproot the defilements and the cognitive obscurations. This is why it's important to hear the sutras and shastras that explain the four points. Again this is explained in a more detailed fashion, beginning with another summary.

383 གནས་དང་དེ་ནི་ཐྱུར་པ་དང། །
དེ་ཡི་ཡོན་ཏན་དོན་སྒྲུབ་སྟེ། །
རྒྱལ་བ་ཡི་ནི་མཁྱེན་པའི་ཡུལ། །
རྣམ་བཞི་ཇི་སྐད་བཤད་འདི་ལ། །

This presence, what is becomes, its qualities, and the accomplishment of the good – these four points are the domain of Buddhas' perfect knowledge, as explained.

The presence [of the element], its result, its qualities and the achievement of benefit are the objects of understanding of a Buddha.

384 བློ་ལྡན་ཡོད་དང་ནུས་ཉིད་དང། །
ཡོན་ཏན་ལྡན་པ་མོས་པས་ནི། །
སྒྲུབ་དུ་དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ཡི། །
གོ་འཕང་ཐོབ་པའི་སྐལ་ལྡན་འགྱུར། །

Through faith in these, the fact of this presence, it being the power and with qualities endowed, the wise are quickly ripe for tathagata achievement.

When towards these four, as explained above, one of understanding is filled with devotion to their presence, ability and qualities, he will be quickly endowed with the fortune by which one attains the state of a tathagata.

Bodhisattvas who are fortunate and wise will have devotion to these four points, and will know that they apply to others. With this attitude, they will swiftly attain enlightenment

These two stanzas are also ones that you should write somewhere so you can see them again and again. This element of the Buddha, this Buddha-nature, is with us. These defilements are removable. And upon removing them, the qualities of the Buddha are there. And not only the qualities, but also the activities of the Buddha are there. If someone is fortunate and wise, they will have devotion to these four points. And when this Bodhisattva looks at others, this Bodhisattva will know that Buddha-nature also exists within them, that their dirt is removable, that upon removing it the qualities of the Buddha are there intact, and that the activities of the Buddha are manifesting. With this kind of attitude, such a Bodhisattva will swiftly attain enlightenment.

385 བསམ་མི་ཁྱབ་པའི་ཡུལ་འདི་ནི། །
ཡོད་དང་བདག་འདྲས་ཐོབ་ནུས་དང། །
ཐོབ་པ་འདི་འདྲའི་ཡོན་ཏན་དང། །
ལྡན་ཞེས་དད་པས་མོས་པའི་ཕྱིར། །

Through faith, one believes this inconceivable domain present, achievable by "someone like me" and, once attained, to have such qualities and to have possession.

Those who realize: "This inconceivable object is present and someone like me can attain it; its attainment will hold such qualities and endowment" will aspire to it, filled with faith.

386 འདུན་བསྟོན་ཏན་དང་བསམ་གཏན་དང་། །
ཤེས་རབ་ལ་སོགས་ཡོན་ཏན་སྣོད། །
བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་ནི་དེ་དག་ལ། །
རྒྱུ་ཏུ་ཉེ་བར་གནས་པར་འགྱུར། །

Therefore is bodhicitta ever-present in them as the vessel for the qualities of earnest aspiration, joyful endeavour, mindfulness, meditative stability, prajña and the others.

Thus becoming vessels of all qualities, such as longing, diligence, mindfulness, meditative stability, wisdom and so on, bodhicitta will be ever-present in them.

One of the main challenges for Mahayana practitioners is not having firm bodhicitta, and so we lose courage when we encounter difficulties

These two stanzas talk about one of the main challenges for the Mahayana practitioner, which is not having firm bodhicitta. And also the reason why we don't have firm bodhicitta. It's like this. If you're driving from here to Paris, you know that Paris is there. It's reachable. So you know that every time your wheels turn, you're getting closer. Maybe there will be some obstacles along the way, but you know that if you continue on your journey, Paris is not going to deceive you. It's there. But for Bodhisattvas like us, when we try to benefit sentient beings, we encounter all kinds of sentient beings, including some very difficult ones. And then we lose courage. As Patrul Rinpoche said, it's easy to talk about "all sentient beings", about having compassion and bodhicitta for all sentient beings, as it's kind of abstract. But having compassion towards one sentient being is much more difficult than having compassion to all sentient beings, as you would probably prefer to keep this one sentient being to one side and look for easier sentient beings to deal with first!

It's easy to talk about having compassion for 'all sentient beings', but it's abstract. It's much more difficult to have compassion towards just one sentient being

Even the most seasoned practitioners forget they have Buddha-nature when they pray to the Buddha. Our practices become very theistic if we forget these four points

And even before we think about other sentient beings, just having courage based on oneself is difficult. When even the most seasoned Mahayana practitioners practice, they trust the path, the Buddha, the blessings of the Buddha and all of that, but they forget that this element of the Buddha is with them. And because of that, all our methods of practice, all our practices, are basically always very theistic. It's a bit like praying to the Buddha so that the Buddha will make you Buddha. Basically, you're forgetting these four points.

When we understand the four points and know we already have all these Buddha qualities, we will not get discouraged during the path

So hearing, contemplating, meditating and having aspiration to these four points is really important, even to have firm bodhicitta to begin with. The fact is that we have this Buddha element, this Buddha-nature, and even people like us can get all these Buddha qualities that we have talked about. And more than that, we have them all already. We have all these Buddha qualities and manifestations, not one less. When you understand this you will have the motivation to enter the Mahayana path. You will not get tired or discouraged during the Mahayana path,

so you'll be diligent. And without effort, almost automatically, you will look for methods that will remind you of these four points and then meditate upon them. Understanding these four points is the only method that will ensure a Bodhisattva doesn't give up.

387 དེ་ནི་རྒྱུན་ཏུ་ཉིར་གནས་པས། །
རྒྱལ་བའི་སྲས་པོ་ཕྱིར་མི་ལྡོག །
བསོད་ནམས་ཕ་རོལ་ཕྱིན་རྫོགས་དང་། །
ཡོངས་སུ་དག་པ་ཉིད་དུ་འགྱུར། །

As this is ever-present, the sons of the victors do not deviate and paramitas gathered by virtue are perfected to become immaculate.

[Bodhicitta] being ever-present in them the heirs of the Victor will not fall back. The perfection of merit will be refined until being transformed into total purity.

388 བསོད་ནམས་ཕ་རོལ་ཕྱིན་པ་ལྔ། །
དེ་ལ་རྣམ་གསུམ་རྟོག་མེད་པས། །
དེ་རྫོགས་ཡོངས་སུ་དག་པ་ནི། །
དེ་ཡི་མི་མཐུན་ཕྱོགས་སྤང་ཕྱིར། །

Virtue, the first five paramitas, is brought to perfection by an absence of any triplistic thought concerning them. They are completely purified by the removal of their opposites.

Once these five perfections of merit are not ideated in threefold division, they will become perfect and fully pure, as their opposite facets are abandoned.

Having the four points also becomes an aid to accumulate merit and wisdom

We're continuing from stanza 386. Having the four points, hearing, contemplating, meditating and having aspiration to them not only ensures that a Bodhisattva doesn't get discouraged during the path. It also becomes an aid to generate all the accumulations of merit and wisdom.

389 སྦྱིན་བྱེད་བསོད་ནམས་སྦྱིན་པ་སྟེ། །
ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་ལས་བྱེད་ཚུལ་ཁྲིམས་ཡིན། །
བཟོད་དང་བསམ་གཏན་གཉིས་དག་ནི། །
སྒོམ་བྱེད་བརྩོན་འགྲུས་ཀུན་ཏུ་འགྲོ། །

Virtue born of giving is generosity; of correct action, right conduct. Forbearance and meditative stability are both born of meditation and joyous perseverance is for all a companion.

The merit of generosity arises from giving, that of morality arises from moral conduct. The two aspects of patience and meditative stability stem from meditation and diligence accompanies all.

There are three kinds of merit, accumulated through generosity, discipline and meditation

Three kinds of merit are explained here. Merit accumulated through generosity, merit accumulated through discipline, and merit accumulated through patience and meditation, which are combined together and referred to as 'merit accumulated through meditation'. This is very similar to the beginning of the ninth chapter in Shantideva's Bodhicharyavatara, where he explains why wisdom is most important. Also at the end of almost each chapter in Chandrakirti's Madhyamakavatara, he talks about the paramitas in a way that's very similar. The only difference is the way they explain wisdom. In the Madhyamika, wisdom means understanding emptiness. Here wisdom means understanding the four points. Basically they mean the same thing.

In the Madhyamika, wisdom is understanding emptiness. Here it means understanding the four points. They mean the same thing

390 འཁོར་གསུམ་རྣམ་པར་རྟོག་པ་གང་། །
དེ་ནི་ཤེས་བྱའི་སྒྲིབ་པར་འདོད། །
སེར་སྣ་ལ་སོགས་རྣམ་རྟོག་གང་། །
དེ་ནི་ཉོན་མོངས་སྒྲིབ་པར་འདོད། །

"Triplistic thoughts" are considered to be the cognitive obscuration; avaricious thoughts, and the like, as the defilement obscuration.

Whatever ideates [in terms of] the three circles is viewed as the veil of the hindrances to knowledge. Whatever is the impulse of avarice and so on is to be regarded as the veil of the mental poisons.

Two obscurations need to be defeated: defilements and cognitive obscurations (having concepts of agent, action and object)

Two kinds of obscurations need to be defeated. The first kind of obscuration is the defilements, such as passion, aggression and ignorance. The second kind is the cognitive obscurations, which are basically having conceptions towards agent, action and object (which are sometimes referred to as the 'three spheres' or 'three circles' of action). In this case, you may not necessarily have any negative emotions such as desire, greed or aggression, but you still have distinctions of agent, action and object. In other words you still have extremes or dualistic distinctions. This is the obstruction to omniscience, which is the defilement that Bodhisattvas try to defeat. Even after you have destroyed or discontinued samsara, you can still have that obscuration.

391 ཤེས་རབ་ལས་གཞན་དེ་དག་ནི། །
སྦྱོང་རྒྱུ་གཞན་མེད་དེ་ཡི་ཕྱིར། ། །
ཤེས་རབ་མཆོག་ཡིན་དེ་བཞི་ནི། །
ཐོས་པས་དེ་ཕྱིར་ཐོས་པ་མཆོག ། །

> Other than prajña, there is no means for removing these; therefore prajña is the best of all the paramitas. Its basis is such study; thus that study is supreme.
>
> *Since apart from discriminative wisdom there is no other cause to remove these [veils], this discriminative wisdom is supreme. Its ground being study, such study is supreme.*

The only way to destroy the two obscurations is to have wisdom, and the only way to obtain that is by having motivation and aspiration to the four points. So we should hear them again and again

Well, this is one thing that we can do and we should do. The only way to destroy the two obscurations is to have the wisdom of understanding emptiness, which is the wisdom of understanding the selflessness of phenomena and the selflessness of the person. And the only way to obtain that is by having motivation and aspiration towards the four points, and the only way to begin is by hearing them. So you should hear them, again and again. As Maitreya says, the wisdom of hearing is really the most supreme.

Story of how Buddha was a Bodhisattva who jumped into a fire for just one stanza of wisdom

There's a story of when Shakyamuni Buddha was a Bodhisattva, and he wanted to hear one stanza of wisdom. The master asked him to jump into a fire, and he said he would do it. I think he did it. This story says a lot. All he wanted was to hear this wisdom, and nothing more. He wasn't going to write about it, because he was going to jump into the fire and die. There's no agenda, no publishing. And he wasn't going to listen to this so that in the future he could brag that he had the only living wisdom lineage, the kind of thing that we see a lot these days in Buddhist magazines! This Bodhisattva just wanted to hear, that's all. That's an amazing motivation.

The qualities and activities of past masters such as Gampopa, Milarepa, Jamgön Kongtrül, Jamyang Khyentse, and HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche

In my lifetime, I was fortunate enough to experience this with HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche. Unfortunately, when I talk about the greatness of the qualities of His Holiness, people don't believe me. They think I'm exaggerating, or think I'm being prejudiced or lenient, saying these things just because I like him. And that's really frustrating! And I'm only talking from my own small and limited capacity and point of view. When you read about the deeds and activities of the past masters like Gampopa, Milarepa, Jamgön Kongtrül and Jamyang Khyentse, you wonder how they managed to do everything that they claimed to have done. But when you see beings like HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, you can convince yourself, yes, this must have happened. But if you tell other people, they think it's just a legend. Unfortunately, I think HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche's actions and activity will become a legend. I call it 'unfortunate', because people don't believe legends.

Story of HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche receiving teachings in Chengdu in the 1990s

Anyway, His Holiness was basically overflowing with teachings, with Dharma and wisdom. Even in his last days, he would teach whenever there was a chance. Of course, we know he taught right until the end, and maybe that's not surprising. But he also listened and received teachings right until the end. From every aspect that's unthinkable! Although he knew everything, that's for sure, his longing and appreciation for the Dharma was so great that he always managed to find someone who had certain teachings or transmissions that he claimed he didn't have. And he would find many of these people in the midst of nowhere. I

remember when we were in Chengdu in China in the 1990s, when things were still quite tight and there weren't many Buddhists. His Holiness was always doing something like pujas or giving initiations. But we were in Chengdu, so who would receive teachings? Not many people! And one day he asked us to come to the hotel, and there was a really filthy looking monk about to open a book, and His Holiness asked all of us to sit down and listen. And he said that it was a certain transmission that was about to go extinct and we should all receive it. And that's how we spent our time for the next two days!

Story of HH Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche giving teachings in Nepal to the young tulkus and Rinpoches

His emphasis on listening to the teachings, just hearing the sound of the teachings, was incredible. When he gave big teachings in Nepal, there would be so many young tulkus and Rinpoches, sometimes 70 or 80 of them, and many of them like me were very wild. We did not appreciate the teachings, and many of us would just go to town and come back late and miss things in between. But His Holiness would somehow know all the page numbers of who had missed what. I know this clearly, because I was usually asked by His Holiness, "can you read that to him, because I think he missed these two pages". I used to get so cross with these young lamas, as I always had to read these extras! He cared so much about who had missed what. His Holiness was generally very gentle, and he would never raise his voice or anything like that. He was diligent for us basically. He put so much emphasis on hearing. There was almost a whole enterprise happening during the teachings. We could write and we would send people to buy *momos* and books, or sew people's robes together, and His Holiness also knew all this, but as long as we were not falling asleep and not listening, it was fine.

His great emphasis on hearing the teachings

I guess as Maitreya says, as a good beginning just hearing is the most important. And even now, even though these guys (Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche and Tulku Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche) have heard this so many times, they're still here. They probably know these things back to front, but instead of relaxing in the morning and then watching a good football match on television, they're here. I guess one thing we can learn from this is that we are keeping alive this tradition of placing importance on listening. And many of you have sacrificed many other things to come here. I suppose that although it's coming from my mouth, at least it's sort of related to Maitreya's words. It's like the dog's tooth that we talked about yesterday. I guess there must at least be some benefit.

Day 10 – Introduction

What is the essence of form?

One of the most powerful phenomena that we experience is form. Form comes right at the beginning of the five aggregates. And, especially for this realm, form is where we affix labels. It's also one of the most powerful phenomena that we get attracted to and revolted by. So form is a very important phenomenon. You

might ask what is the essence of form? What is form made out of? And if you ask people nowadays, scientists or whoever, then they might come up with things like matter, substance, atoms, particles and so on, down to the smallest entities. Their answer is that form is made out of particles. Or I guess you can say form is particles.

Buddhists will answer that form is Vairocana Buddha

If you ask the same question to a Buddhist, maybe a Mahayana or Vajrayana Buddhist, then the answer is that form is Vairocana Buddha. They don't have concepts such as atoms, particles and all that. They say it's Vairocana Buddha. Then you ask them, who is this Vairocana Buddha, how big is it and all that? And instead of saying that it's something very small, they say it's very, very big. It's everywhere. They will say it's so big that it has filled up the whole of space.

A description of the universes in the 13th lotus held by Vairocana Buddha

Out of curiosity you ask more questions, because you want to know about this Vairocana Buddha. And the description continues. He sets in the meditation mudra, they say. Resting on his hand is a big begging bowl, very big. On the top of the begging bowl are 25 lotuses. And counting upwards to the thirteenth lotus, within that lotus there are millions and billions of universes. And each of these universes also has lots of planets. Some are as big as thumbnail, and others are a hundred times bigger than our own planet. Some have no beings. Some have beings like us. Some have only Buddhas. Some have only Bodhisattvas on the eighth bhumi. And they all have different colours, shapes, languages, and completely different forms. Some of these beings look like a wheel, some look like an axe, some look like a lotus, and some look like a sword. There are all kinds of beings. And there's one small planet called "Fearless Planet", and that's where we are.

Each of Vairocana Buddha's pores holds the complete set of universes, without Vairocana becoming bigger or the universes becoming smaller

Now you are getting very curious about this and you ask for more. And they say that each pore of this Vairocana Buddha contains the complete set of universes and planets that I have just described. But although each complete set is as big as the original, Vairocana Buddha has not become bigger, even though each set is completely contained inside a single one of his pores. I'm trying to answer some of your questions related to the 32 major marks, especially for those of you who are pondering elephant dreams.

This is inconceivable.

That doesn't mean thinking is disallowed, but nor is it encouraged.

Many methods can be used to wake someone from a nightmare

When we have been talking about Buddha-nature, we have been talking about inconceivable things. Now it's very important to understand that when we talk about 'inconceivable', it doesn't mean that you're not allowed to think. But equally important, neither does it mean that you're encouraged or have a duty to think. It means that you have no choice except to think. If you want to wake up from a nightmare of an elephant raping you, you have to accept that you are dreaming. There won't be any waking up from the nightmare if the elephant is not raping you. So in order to wake someone who is having such a nightmare, whether you use small methods such as tickling them or pinching their toes, or larger methods such as a cold bucket of water, none of these is discouraged.

But a bucket of cold water doesn't cause the dream-elephant to run away, as there wasn't any elephant to begin with

We already have thinking, and it's not discouraged as it's all we can do. So our path is to manipulate this thinking. That's how we have to begin

Thinking is not discouraged, but we must not forget the Buddha is unthinkable

Another example of inconceivability: Nagarjuna's Praise to Mahakali

The 32 major marks are beyond us. With great compassion, the Bodhisattvas are trying to describe something that is indescribable

But when we say we do not discourage these methods, it doesn't mean that the bucket of cold water is a cause of the elephant running away. It didn't cause the elephant to run away, as there wasn't any elephant to begin with. Likewise, we are being raped by lots of elephants all the time. So if you want to talk about stopping that, you have to accept that you are dreaming. Thinking is there already, and thinking is not discouraged. In fact, that's the only thing that we can do. And manipulating this thinking is our path. So some of us have to think with love and compassion, some with bodhicitta, and some with emptiness. For others, we have to think in terms of moral conduct, a few petty morals and ethics, and doing the right thing. That's how we have to begin.

Thinking is not discouraged, and at the same time you must not forget that the Buddha is unthinkable. So when we talk about the sambhogakaya Buddha's lock of hair, or whichever parts of his body you are having a problem with or imagination about, we cannot imagine it as our only reference for so-called hair is what we have on the top of our head or maybe on our chest. The world has become so small now. It used to be the case that when Tibetans first saw blonde hair, they could not believe it. They wondered what it was. And that's quite strange actually, because most of these Vajrayana practitioners visualise deities with red or blonde hair in their practice. But when they actually saw one, they couldn't believe it. They didn't know how to relate to it.

We just don't know what the sambhogakaya's lock of hair looks like. It's just inconceivable. For all we know, each lock of his hair could look like the Mississippi River. Nagarjuna's Praise to Mahakali can tell us a lot. She is considered a protector who can remove obstacles, and he prays to her to sniff in the obstacles, the demons. And once they are inside her nose, it's so vast that the demons don't know how to come out. Some of the demons are still trying to get out of her nostrils! Basically, the 32 major marks are beyond us, even the outermost 32 major marks that are described here, such as that antelope-like calves and things like that. These Bodhisattvas are trying to describe something that is indescribable. They are very compassionate, that's all that I can say. So now we come to the conclusion, the big conclusion.

392 དེ་ལྟར་ཡིད་ཆེས་ལུང་དང་རིགས་པ་ལ། །
བརྟེན་ནས་བདག་ཉིད་འབའ་ཞིག་དག་ཕྱིར་དང་། །
གང་དག་མོས་དགེ་ཕུན་སུམ་ཚོགས་ལྡན་བློ། །
དེ་དག་རྟེས་སུ་གཟུང་ཕྱིར་འདི་བཤད་དོ། །

Thus, on the basis of the trustworthy words of Lord Buddha and that of reason, have I given this teaching in order to purify myself alone and further to nurture intelligent beings–those having perfect faith and virtue.

Based on the trustworthy words of the Buddha and on scriptures of logic, I have explained this for the sole purpose of purifying myself and supporting all those whose understanding has the best of virtue and devotion.

393 ཇི་ལྟར་སྒྲོན་གྱོ་གོར་བུ་ཉི་ཟླ་ལ། །
བརྟེན་ནས་མིག་དང་ལྡན་པ་ལྟ་བ་བཞིན། །
དེ་བཞིན་དོན་ཚིག་ཆོས་སྟོབས་འོད་མཛད་པ། །
ཐུབ་ལ་བརྟེན་ནས་འདི་ཉིད་རབ་ཏུ་བཤད། །

Just as, when aided by a lamp, lightning, a gem, the sun or the moon, those with eyes can see, so like wise, by relying on the great sage, who light of meanings, terms, Dharma and dharani radiated, have I now properly expounded this.

As someone with eyes sees by relying on a lamp, or on lightening, a jewel, the sun or the moon, this has been truly explained by relying on the Muni, brilliant in meaning, words, phenomena and power.

The sutras that are the basis for Maitreya's text

Here Maitreya is indicating that this is not just something he fabricated, but that it actually came from many sutras, including: the Sutra of Great Compassion, which I think has been translated into Chinese, the Sutra Which Explains Altruism, the Jñanaloka-alamkara-sutra, the Dashabhumika-sutra, and the Avatamsaka-sutra, which I think has also been translated into Chinese and other languages. Also the Prajñaparamita-sutra, the Sutra of the Treasury of the Sky, the Sutra Requested by Matisagara (a Bodhisattva), the Abhidharma-sutra, the Sutra where Buddha taught Buddha Nature, the Sutra of Ratnaketu, and the Mahaparinirvana-sutra. These are the sutras that Maitreya has relied on or extracted from. And he has not only relied on the words of the Buddha with blind faith, but he has also relied on proper analysis and also the yogi's direct cognition. And he has explained this mainly to liberate and purify himself, meaning Maitreya. When he says 'mainly', we shouldn't understand this to mean that he is a Bodhisattva who thinks only about himself, but rather that he's showing humility. He's indicating that he does not want to say this is good for everyone, but rather that it's mainly for himself and people like him, to purify their defilements and obscurations. And it's also for those who have Mahayana aspirations and motivations. He has spoken this for them.

Maitreya has not just relied on blind faith, but also on proper analysis and the yogi's direct cognition

Maitreya has written this mainly to purify and liberate himself and others with aspiration towards the Mahayana

He has explained this with outer causes such as the words of the Buddha and inner causes such as analytical wisdom

We have the ability to see things with the help of outer causes like a lamp, the sun, a jewel or the moon, and with inner causes such as the eye consciousness. Similarly, he has explained this with outer causes such as the words of the Buddha and inner causes such as analytical wisdom. And these words come from the Buddha who has attained the unmoveable and inconceivable qualities that we have been talking about.

394 གང་ཞིག་དོན་ལྡན་ཆོས་དང་ཉེར་འབྲེལ་ཞིང་། །
ཁམས་གསུམ་ཀུན་ནས་ཉོན་མོངས་སྤོང་བྱེད་གསུང་། །
ཞི་བའི་ཕན་ཡོན་སྟོན་པར་མཛད་པ་གང་། །
དེ་ནི་དྲང་སྲོང་གསུང་ཡིན་བརྗོག་པ་གཞན། །

Whatever has significance, is well-connected with Dharma, is a teaching which removes all the three worlds' defilement and shows peace's benefit: such is the sage of truth's teaching. What is contrary to this is something other.

Whatever speech is meaningful and well connected with Dharma, which removes all afflictions of the three realms and shows the benefit of the [attainment] of peace, is the speech of the Sage, while any different speech is other.

395 གང་ཞིག་རྒྱལ་བའི་བསྟན་པ་འབའ་ཞིག་གི། །
དབང་བློས་རྣམ་གཡེང་མེད་ཡིད་ཅན་གྱིས་བཤད། །
ཐར་པ་ཐོབ་པའི་ལམ་དང་རྟེས་མཐུན་པར། །
དེ་ཡང་དྲང་སྲོང་བཀའ་བཞིན་སྙིང་པོས་བླང་། །

Whatever those of perfectly-undistracted mind have expounded, solely in accordance with the teachings of the victorious one, and which is conducive to the path for attaining liberation, should also be placed on the head–like the Buddha's own speech.

Whatever someone has explained with undistracted mind, exclusively in the light of the Victor's teaching, and conductive to the path of attaining release, one should place on one's head as the words of the Sage.

What constitutes the Buddha's words and what constitutes a shastra

The Buddha's words have a greater meaning, no stains, and the purpose to lead beings to absolute peace

As supplementary information, Maitreya describes what constitutes the Buddha's word, and what constitutes a commentary or shastra. The characteristics of the Buddha's words are as follows. They are words that have greater meaning, and their purpose is not just to satisfy passing intellectual curiosity, but for a great meaning such as enlightenment. The words themselves are without any stains or limitations of skilful means and wisdom. And the purpose of these words is to dispel all the obscurations and lead beings to absolute peace beyond fabrications and beyond pain. The words of the Buddha have these characteristics, otherwise they are not considered the words of the Buddha.

A shastra has the sole intention of explaining the Buddha's words, an undistracted author, and the ability to indirectly lead you to enlightenment

It should also be revered as the words of the Sage

And what constitutes a shastra or commentary on the Buddha's words is that its sole intention is to explain the words of the Buddha, and not to answer such questions as whether crows have teeth or not. And although the author of a shastra doesn't have the eighteen uncommon qualities, four fearlessnesses and all that, it's important that at least he has not been distracted. And if the result indirectly helps to lead you to enlightenment, then that is a shastra, and it should also be revered as the words of the Sage. Now he offers some advice.

396 གང་ཕྱིར་རྒྱལ་ལས་ཆོས་མཁས་འགའ་ཡང་འཇིག་རྟེན་འདི་ན་ཡོད་མིན་ཏེ། །
མ་ལུས་དེ་ཉིད་མཆོག་གི་ཚུལ་བཞིན་ཀུན་མཁྱེན་ཀྱིས་མཁྱེན་གཞན་མིན་པ། །
དེ་ཕྱིར་དྲང་སྲོང་རང་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་གཞན་མདོ་སྡེ་གང་ཡིན་དེ་མི་དཀྲུག །
ཐུབ་ཚུལ་བཤིག་ཕྱིར་དེ་ཡང་དམ་ཆོས་ལ་ནི་གནོད་པ་བྱེད་པར་འགྱུར། །

Since no one in this world has more Dharma skill than the Buddha, the omniscient one who properly knows all without exception as being the supreme suchness, which others know not, then whatever sutras were expounded by the great sage himself should not be adulterated; such would harm the true Dharma through destruction of the way of the mighty victor.

There is no one in this world more skilled in Dharma that the Victor. No other has such insight, knowing everything without exception [and knowing] supreme thatness the way it is. Thus one should not distort the sutras presented by the Sage himself, since this would destroy the Muni's manner [of teaching] and furthermore cause harm to the sacred Dharma.

397 ཉོན་མོངས་རྒྱུ་ངན་བདག་ཉིད་ཀྱིས་འཕགས་ལ་སྐུར་བ་དང་། །
དེས་གསུངས་ཆོས་ལ་བརྟགས་གང་དེ་ཀུན་ཞེན་ལྟས་བྱུས། །
དེས་ན་ཞེན་ལྟའི་ཏྲི་ཅན་དེ་ལ་བློ་མི་སྦྱོར། །
གོས་གཙང་ཚོན་གྱིས་ཉིད་མཉམ་འགྱུར་སྦྱོ་ཀྱིས་གོས་པ་མིན། །

Those who, through defilement, are by their nature ignorant, revile the deeply-realized and despise their teachings; all that occurs due to opinionatedness. Therefore the mind should never in the impure prison of fixed views be confined. Clean cloth may be dyed with colour; never cloth with oil-stains.

Those blinded by poisons [and possessed of] the nature of ignorance revile the noble ones and despise the teachings they have spoken. Since all this stems from a fixated view, mind should not be joined with polluted vision. Clean cloth is totally transformed by colour, but never is cloth [to be treated] with oil.

Some advice: it's very important not to misinterpret the Buddha's words with an intellectual mind, as that will dismantle his words and harm the Dharma

If you criticise sublime beings or despise their words, you have strong fixation towards wrong views.

If you have wrong views, it will be very difficult for you to understand the dharma, like it is difficult to dye an oil-stained fabric

This is very important advice. It's very important not to misinterpret or manipulate the words of the Buddha with an intellectual mind, because nobody is more learned about phenomena than the Buddha. He is the only one who knows things as they are and things as they appear. What is the downfall of manipulating the words of the Buddha? If you manipulate the words of the Buddha then you will dismantle the words of the Buddha, and that way you will harm the Dharma. When beings with defilements and obscurations criticise sublime beings or despise the words of the sublime beings, this all comes from having a strong fixation towards a wrong view. So it is important not to get fixated on one's own wrong view, because if you have even a slight wrong view, then it is very difficult to let your mind soak in the Dharma. It will be very difficult for you to understand the Dharma. In fact, having a wrong view is actually considered even more dangerous than being a beginner and not having any view at all. He gives the example that if you want to dye a fabric, then if the

fabric has even a small oil stain, then it will be very difficult to dye it. So how do these wrong views creep in to people like us?

398 བློ་དམན་ཕྱིར་དང་དཀར་མོས་བླལ་ཕྱིར་ལོག་པའི་ང་རྒྱལ་ལ་བརྟེན་ཕྱིར། །
དམ་ཆོས་ཤོང་ནས་པས་བསྒྲིགས་པའི་བདག་ཕྱིར་དྲང་དོན་དེ་ཉིད་ངེས་འཛིན་ཕྱིར། །
རྒྱུ་ལ་བཅུམ་ཕྱིར་ལྟ་བའི་དབང་ཕྱིར་ཆོས་སྒྲུབ་འཁྲིན་པ་བརྟེན་པའི་ཕྱིར། །
ཆོས་འཛིན་བསྲིངས་ཕྱིར་མོས་པ་དམན་ཕྱིར་དགྲ་བཅོམ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་ཆོས་སྤོང་བྱེད། །

Through inferior understanding, absence of aspiration to virtue, indulging in wrong pride, a nature veiled by neglecting Dharma, mistaking the expedient meaning or the absolute–thatness, greed's thirst, ideology's grip, the influence of truth despisers, staying away from those holding the teachings and lower aspiration – thus is the doctrine of "those who defeat the enemy" abandoned.

Due to a feeble intellect, lack of striving for virtue, reliance on false pride, a nature obscured by neglect of pure Dharma, taking the provisional for the definitive meaning–for thatness, craving for profit, being under the sway of [inferior] views, relying on those disapproving [of Dharma], staying away from those who uphold the teachings, and due to mean devotion, the teachings of the Foe-Vanquishers are abandoned.

A list of the causes and origins of wrong views

He lists several causes here. Having an inferior or weak intellect that is not accompanied by strength or confidence. Having a habit of not liking virtuous actions. Almost disliking them. We're not talking about not doing virtuous actions. Most of us don't do them, but at least we know they are the right thing to do or a good thing to do, although we can't do them. That is really important. Some people actually think it's the wrong thing to do. Another cause is when one is full of pride, so that even if one wants to learn, one is only interested in the words and not their meaning. So one looks for a master who is good with words and not with meaning. And if one is deprived of spiritual wealth, Dharma wealth, then there are lots of obscurations. And if one is inclined to stubbornly think that teachings of expedient meaning are certain teachings, teachings of definitive meanings. And if one is under the influence of wrong views. We shouldn't think that this doesn't come easily! These things can come very easily, especially wrong views. It's much easier than killing a human being, and yet having a wrong view is supposedly the worst. And associating with people who distract you from the Dharma. And if one is distant from a spiritual companion who gives you an enlightened influence. And not having a great motivation. With these, you end up abandoning the Dharma. And that is really not good!

Wrong views can come so easily, much more easily than killing a person, and yet wrong views are supposedly the worst

399 ཇི་ལྟར་ཟབ་མོའི་ཆོས་ཉམས་དེ་བཞིན་མ་བས་པ་རྣམས་ཀྱི་མེ་དང་ནི། །
མི་བཟང་སྦྱོལ་གཏུགས་གཤེད་མ་དང་ནི་ཐོག་ལའང་ཤིན་ཏུ་འཇིགས་མི་བྱ། །
མེ་སྦྱོལ་དགྲ་དང་རྡོ་རྗེའི་མེས་ནི་སྲོག་དང་བླལ་བ་ཅོམ་བྱེད་དེ། །
དེ་ལས་མཉན་མེད་རྣམས་ཀྱི་འགྲོ་བ་ཤིན་ཏུ་འཇིགས་པར་འགྲོ་མི་འགྱུར། །

More than fire, cruel poisonous snakes, murderers and lightning, should the wise fear the loss of these profound teachings. Fire, snakes, enemies and thunderbolts only bring life to an end – they do not take one to the so-frightful state of worst torment.

Skilful beings must not be as deeply afraid of fire and cruel poisonous snakes, of murderers or lightning, as they should be of the loss of the profound Dharma. Fire, snakes, enemies and thunderbolts [can] only separate us from this life, but cannot take us to the utterly fearful states of [the hells] of direst pain.

You can be burned by fire, bitten by a poisonous snake, killed by a butcher or struck by lightning, but they will not throw you to the hell realms, unlike abandoning the Dharma

Here Maitreya is saying you can be burned by fire, bitten by a poisonous snake, killed by a merciless butcher, or be struck by thunder and lightning. But you shouldn't really be afraid of those things, because the most they can do is separate you from this life. They have no power to throw you to the hell realm. Whereas by abandoning the Dharma, you are opening the door to the endless pain of the hell realms and other lower realms.

400 གང་ཞིག་ཡང་ཡང་སྡིག་གྲོགས་བསྟེན་པས་སངས་རྒྱས་ཉན་ཐོས་ལྷན་ཀྱང་དང་། །
ཕ་མ་དགྲ་བཅོམ་གསོད་པར་བྱ་བ་མིན་བྱེད་མཆོག་ཆོས་ལའྱེད་པའི་མི། །
དེ་ཡང་ཆོས་ཉིད་ངེས་པར་བསམས་ན་སྒྲུར་དུ་དེ་ལས་ཐར་འགྱུར་གྱི། །
གང་ཞིག་ཡིད་ནི་ཆོས་ལ་སྡང་བ་དེ་ལ་ཐར་པ་གང་ལ་ཡོད། །

Even one who, through repeated association with sinful friends, has had harmful intentions towards the Buddha or who commits the most heinous acts of killing father, mother or an Arhat or who created divisions in the noble Sangha will be quickly rid of such things upon sincere reflection about this true nature – how could there be liberation for one whose mind hates Dharma!

Even someone who has relied on evil friends again and again and thus heeded harmful intentions towards a Buddha, who has committed one of the most heinous acts – killing his father, mother or an Arhat, or splitting the sublime Assembly – will be quickly released from these, once genuinely reflecting the Dharmata. But where would liberation be for someone whose mind is hostile to Dharma?

Even the worst negative actions can be purified, but if you abandon the Dharma then you are abandoning the very path, so nothing can save you

Someone under the influence of non-virtuous friends might kill a Buddha or make him bleed. They could kill their father or mother, kill an Arhat, or make divisions within the great Sangha. This refers to the Buddha's Sangha, so the real division of the Sangha could only happen during the Buddha's time. And apart from killing the Buddha, all this has happened. And some people definitely had the motivation to kill him, like King Ajatashastru, who did some of these things with the help of Devadatta. But even if someone has done these things, if they have motivation and they practice the true essence of all phenomena, or the four points that we talked about yesterday, they can still achieve liberation. Non-virtuous actions such as making the Buddha's body bleed and killing your own father and mother create so much negative karma, but they can still be purified. But if you abandon the Dharma, what hope is there? Then the very path is abandoned, so nothing can save you. Now we come to the dedication.

401 དགེ་མཆོག་རྣམ་པར་བྱང་ཞིང་ཁྱོད་ཀྱིས་ཁྱེད་ལས་ཏེ། །
དོན་གཉིས་རྣམ་བདུན་ཚུལ་བཞིན་བཤད་ལས་བདག་གིས་བདེ་བ་གང་ཐོབ་པ། །
དེས་ནི་འགྲོ་འདི་མཐའ་ཡས་འོད་མངའ་དང་སྟོང་ཚོ་དཔག་མེད་མཐོང་ཞིང་། །
མཐོང་ནས་ཀྱང་ནི་ཆོས་མིག་དྲི་མེད་སྐྱེས་ཏེ་བྱང་ཆུབ་མཆོག་ཐོབ་ཤོག །

Whatever virtue I obtain through having properly explained these seven points – the jewels, the perfectly-pure essence, immaculate enlightenment, its qualities and Buddha-activity, through it may beings see the sage of boundless life, he endowed with limitless light; having seen him, once their stainless Dharma eyes are opened, may they then achieve supreme enlightenment.

Having properly explained the seven [vajra] points of the jewels, the utterly pure element, flawless enlightenment, qualities and activity, may any virtue I harvest from this lead all sentient beings to see the Lord of Boundless Life who is endowed with Infinite Light. Upon seeing, may their stainless Dharma-eye open and may they reach highest enlightenment.

We have been talking about seven vajra points: (1–3) the Three Jewels, (4) the enlightened element (*kham*) that is primordially pure, (5) the state of enlightenment where temporary defilements have been removed, (6) the quality of this enlightenment, and (7) its activity or manifestations.

Dedication of merit

I, Maitreya, I dedicate whatever merit there is by explaining these seven vajra points so all sentient beings may see the Sage of Boundless Life, whose life cannot be measured, who has reached the deathless state. May sentient beings see this Buddha, and upon seeing the Buddha, receive his teachings. And after receiving teachings, may they open their Dharma eyes, gradually follow the entire path and attain enlightenment. And that's the dedication.

402 གང་ལས་རྒྱུ་མཚན་གང་གི་ཕྱིར། །
ཇི་ལྟ་བུར་ནི་གང་བཤད་དང་། །
རྒྱུ་མཐུན་པ་ནི་གང་ཡིན་ཏེ། །
ཚིགས་སུ་བཅད་པ་བཞིས་བསྟན་ཏོ། །

On what basis, for which reason, in which way, that which has been explained and those factors favourable, these have been taught by means of stanzas four.

On what basis, for what reason and in what way [this has been given], what it explains and what cause is conductive [to understanding it] have been taught by means of four stanzas.

403 གཉིས་ཀྱི་བདག་ཉིད་དག་པ་ཡི། །
ཐབས་དང་གཉེན་གྱིས་ཉམས་པའི་རྒྱུ། །
དེ་ནས་ཚོགས་སུ་བཅད་པ་ནི། །
གཉིས་ཀྱིས་འབྲས་བུ་བསྟན་པ་ཡིན། །

Two have shown the means for purifying oneself, then the causes for the loss and, through stanzas two, an explanation of the fruit.

Two stanzas [show] the means to purify oneself and one [shows] the cause of deterioration. Thereupon, by means of two further stanzas the fruit [sprung from deterioration] is explained.

404 འབྲས་ཀྱི་དངོས་འབྲས་བཞི་པ་དང་། །
བྱང་ཆུབ་ཐོབ་པའི་ཆོས་བརྗོད་པའི། །
མདོར་ན་འབྲས་བུ་རྣམ་གཉིས་ནི། །
ཐ་མ་ཡིས་ནི་བསྟན་པ་ཡིན།། །།

In brief, the twofold fruit has been explained in what is said in the last; the surrounding mandala, forbearance and the attainment of enlightenment.

[Being born] in the mandala of a Buddha's retinue, attaining patience and [then] enlightenment: expressing these qualities, the two aspects of fruit are explained by the last in a summarized way.

Conclusion

This is just the explanation of everything that has been taught, a summary of the conclusion. The first four stanzas talk about the cause, the next two stanzas talk about the means to purify oneself, and the next stanza talks about the cause of how one gets degenerated. And then the next two stanzas explain the result of being degenerated. And the last one talks about being able to bear the truth. It's such a beautiful word. We can't bear the truth, so we're always looking for something fake. So, the last one talks about bearing the truth and ultimately obtaining enlightenment.

ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོ་རྒྱུད་བླ་མའི་བསྟན་བཅོས་དཀོན་མཆོག་གི་རིགས་རྣམ་པར་དབྱེ་བ་ལས།
ཕན་ཡོན་གྱི་སྒྲབས་ཏེ་ལྔ་པའོ།། །།

This was the fifth chapter, on the benefits, from the Analysis of the Potential for the Rare and Sublime in this "Ultimate Mahayana Treatise on the Changeless Continuity".
This was the section "Benefit," the fifth chapter of The Commentary on the Highest Continuity of the Mahayana Dharma which Analyzes the Disposition of the Rare and the Sublime Ones.

This means that the *gyü lama*, the Mahayana-Uttaratantra-Shastra written by Maitreya has been completed.

ཐེག་པ་ཆེན་པོ་རྒྱུད་བླ་མའི་བསྟན་བཅོས་མཁོན་པོ་བྱམས་པས་མཛད་པ་རྫོགས་སོ།། །།
དཔལ་གྱོང་ཁྱེར་དཔེ་མེད་ཀྱི་མཁས་པ་ཆེན་པོ་བྲམ་ཟེ་རིན་ཆེན་རྡོ་རྗེའི་དཔོན་པོ་བཏྲ་ཀ་མཁས་པ་ཆེན་པོ་སད་
རྫུ་ན་དང་། ལོ་ཙཱ་བ་ཤ་ཀྱའི་དགེ་སློང་བློ་ལྡན་ཤེས་རབ་ཀྱིས་གྱོང་ཁྱེར་དཔེ་མེད་དུ་བསྒྱུར་བའོ།། །།
ཤེས་རབ་ཀྱིས་གྱོང་ཁྱེར་དཔེ་མེད་དུ་ བསྒྱུར་བའོ།། །།

Translated from the Indian by the great pandita and scholar Sadzana, grandson of the Brahmin Ratnavajra, great scholar of the "Incomparable City of Glory" (Srinagar) and by the Tibetan translator, the Sakya monk Loden Sherab, in that "Incomparable City of Glory".

Translators

This was translated by a pandita and scholar called Sadzana, grandson of the Brahmin called Ratnavajra. He was from Kashmir and this is what they used to do in Kashmir, translate books like this! And the translator from the Tibetan side was the monk Loden Sherab. I think he was the cousin of Legpe Sherab, someone who spent about 17 years in India. We should offer incredible gratitude to these translators for what they have done, and also incredible gratitude to the present-day translators and Dharma patrons.

Now we will celebrate this occasion of discussing this very special Mahayana shastra. I wonder how much merit we have generated through my explanations, but if there is any, it's worthwhile to celebrate. So as a gesture of celebration, we're going to take refuge and the Bodhisattva vow. I will also do it myself together with you guys. So we'll have a short break, so you can go and catch your trains, and for those who don't really want to take refuge, this is the time to sneak out.

Questions & Answers

The Fourth Vajra Point: The Element

Do animals have Buddha-nature?

[Q] So how do we prove that an animate being such as a dog or cat has the element?
[A] There are three reasons: (1) because a sentient being can manifest as the Buddha, by practicing the path and all of that. (2) Because in the ultimate realm, they are equal. Maybe we should say they are equally emptiness. (3) They have *rig*, dualistic mind.
[Q] But a dog can't practice the path
[A] Not now, perhaps. But there was a merchant, called Palché I think, who accidentally went around a stupa when he was a pig.
[Q] But this doesn't prove that a dog or cat has the element.
[A] What would qualify for you as a proof, can you tell me?
[Q] Well, here you have a dog, apparently faithful but a little bit stupid. How can I know that this dog or cat has the element?
[A] I'd like to know why it doesn't have, according to you. What makes you think that? Is it just because the dog is stupid?
[Q] The first reason – that you can practice. A dog or a cat can't.
[A] Yes, but this is Mahayana. You're slightly stained by the Vajrayana, which talks about reaching enlightenment this life and all that. In the Mahayana, you have three countless eons! This life a dog, next life a pig, five hundred lives as a bird, and so on.
[Q] So as a pig or as a dog, are there are things you can do, like walking around a stupa, that qualify as practice?
[A] It's like the story of Lodrötenpa (Sthiramati). When Vasubandhu was reading the Prajñaparamita, Lodrötenpa was just a pigeon, and he became a great disciple afterwards. You're still not convinced? I think we touched this subject when we talked about compassion during the Madhyamakavatara. A very important cause of compassion is the knowledge of how to harm someone, as it means that you're automatically avoiding that harm for yourself. And for now, because you're driven by a certain aggression, you want that pain for others. That's quite an important part of this *kham* or element.

Do plants and stones have Buddha-nature?

[Q] How do we prove that stone doesn't have a mind?
[A] That doesn't matter!

[Q] Why?
[A] It's not our burden. But basically there are two types of phenomena, one is inanimate, one is animate. One particular stone might have mind, or it might not. That doesn't matter. But anything that is animate has the element.

[Q] If there is a beautiful plant that nourishes sentient beings, does it set up the karmic conditions for its eventual awakening, as compared to a plant that causes harm to or poisons a sentient being?
[A] A plant?
[Q] Well, just like we imagine that an animal has the potential for Buddha-nature because it responds to its environment, because a plant manifests characteristics or qualities, it also is responsive to conditions.
[A] This is why I was saying earlier that inanimate things are a projection of your mind.
[Q] But how do we define animate? That's also a projection.
[A] Yes. But for instance, if this tent were to fall on your head and perhaps even kill you, we couldn't really say that the tent had the intention to kill you. I think that a plant is also categorised in this department!
[Q] But then we should do the same with animals. How can I know that an animal has intention? I project intention onto an animal just as I do onto a plant.
[A] With an animal, it's slightly broader, because I guess an animal has wishes. Of course we don't know. When a dog wags its tail, we assume that this indicates the dog likes you. It's an interpretation. But we never know. But we do know that it doesn't want to suffer.
[Q] But scientists can also interpret, by using subtle tools of laboratory inquiry. And they see that plants also respond.
[A] I cannot say that all plants don't have mind, although I'm also not saying that they are beings. This is something that is beyond me. But in *The Words of My Perfect Teacher*, Patrul Rinpoche writes that there are hell beings trapped in the form of brooms, beams and so on. It's infinite. I cannot really say, but I have to say that there are so-called inanimate phenomena in this world, and those inanimate phenomena don't have *rig*, *kham* or family. If a plant has the *kham*, then I guess you have to say that it has all these Buddha qualities.

[Q] We say that cognition is located in the brain. But especially for smaller creatures where the brain is difficult to locate, science may admit that the mind and all that defines the species is located in the DNA molecule. This would mean that the true Buddha-nature is present in a DNA molecule, and even in a single atom that is part of the molecule. Since plants also have DNA molecules, I feel that we could eventually admit the presence of this nature within plants and perhaps stones and as well.
[A] Let's sort this out once and for all! When we talk about *kham*, at the moment we are talking about this special kind of *kham*, the *rig kham*, the Buddha-nature kind of element. But usually *kham* is used to refer to the elements more generally, the 18 dhatus. There are the six outer *kham*: form, sound, smell,

taste, feeling, and phenomena. These are the outer elements, and they are explained in detail if we study the abhidharma. Then there are six inner elements: the eye, ear, nose etc., and in between there are the six types of consciousness (*namshey*): the eye consciousness, ear consciousness etc. The point here is that scientists are usually talking about the outer dhatus and even among these, they don't usually talk about the dhatu of Dharma, as then they would be talking about mind. But now we are talking about abhidharma, and all phenomena that we can perceive exist within these 18 dhatus or *kham*. Some phenomena have only one or two of these 18 elements. Some, like us, have all of them. For instance, a stone might only have the form element. But even just the form element is also divided into the five elements: earth, water, fire, air, and space. So Buddhists also believe that a stone has many of these elements, for example the fire element, the moisture element to hold it together, gravity and so on. That is all acceptable. And each of these dhatus has some kind of movement, some kind of function. They're not permanent and unchanging. For example, when the sun rises, the lotus opens. I don't know the detailed explanation, but there must be some kind of communication between the fire element, the moisture element and so on. But this kind of movement does not mean that this phenomenon has all the 18 dhatus.

Scientists have discovered many things like DNA, and these are all totally acceptable to Buddhists. But there is something that scientists haven't found yet, which Vasubandhu and all the early Buddhist metaphysicists have found. There are other types of phenomena that don't have most of the 18 dhatus, just one or two. But instead of only having inanimate elements, they only have animate elements, such as consciousness. This corresponds to certain god realms, where they don't have form, colour, moisture or any of that. Similarly, bardo beings don't necessarily have all 18 dhatus. They may only have one or two, but these are typically the more 'animate' ones, the inner or 'in-between' dhatus. So if we compare a phenomenon that has only one *kham* or dhatu, and a phenomenon that has all the 18 *kham*, they are different. They function differently. We have all 18 dhatus and the Buddha-nature, but to be referred to as 'animate', a being only has to have the 12 ayatanas – the 12 inner and in-between dhatus or *kham*.

Let's say that a stone has the form element. As I said, form includes earth, water, fire and all that. Now if one of these sub-elements is reduced, such as the water element, then perhaps the stone will disintegrate. But this doesn't mean that the stone has mind dhatu, the consciousness dhatu. This is what the Buddhists would say. There is scientific support for this view too. For example, the difference between chimpanzees and humans in terms of our DNA is very small – we are 99% exactly the same. But look at how big the difference is between us, even with just these few molecules of DNA! Phenomena are incredible! They are really beyond our comprehension. For example, cats have only two vowels but they can still have a conversation with each other!

[Q] When we were starting to talk about *kham*, there was a verse where you said rocks didn't have *kham*, so they couldn't be enlightened. But later we said that Buddha-nature is all-pervasive. It's everywhere. This seems like a contradiction to me.
[A] That's a good question, a very important question. There are many answers for this one. Sometimes in Buddhism, the name 'Buddha-nature' refers to emptiness, and it is not other than emptiness. In that case we use words like 'all-pervasive'. But here we're talking about something a little bit more than that. It's emptiness, but not as in the exhaustion of fire and evaporation of water, so we're talking about cognition (*selcha*), which is the aspect of clarity. And when we say Buddha-nature, we are referring to *selcha*, the cognition, the cognizer. So it is all-pervasive in beings, but earth, stones and trees are not other than the mental projection of these beings. So you can say that in this way they are also a projection of Buddha-nature, although very indirectly.

[Q] What exactly do you mean when you say stones are a projection of beings?
[A] They are objects, so there must be a subject.
[Q] But other beings are also objects of my subject.
[A] Yes, that's why I said that indirectly you could say they're a projection of Buddha-nature, because they're your own projection.
[Q] But if we say that other beings are my projection too, we aren't saying that the Buddha-nature is only there in them because it's indirectly my projection. We said that the Buddha-nature is present in all beings in themselves, whereas it is not present in all stones in themselves.
[A] Yes, of course we have to make this distinction. But when we say that all sentient beings, even this dog, have Buddha-nature, that's your projection. You're thinking it.
[Q] But that's not what it says here. The text says that Buddha-nature is present in all migrating beings.
[A] Yes, but then we're talking about all sentient beings, not the projection of individual beings.
[Q] But I'm talking about all stones, not just the stones that are my projection.
[A] When we talk about projection, we project both inanimate and animate objects. I don't see any problem here, do you?
[Q] It seems that when we talk of Buddha-nature, it is something sublime and ungraspable, and yet we speak of it as a graspable thing. We say it's everywhere or not everywhere, it's not inanimate, and so on. For instance, perhaps there could be a little spark in a stone?
[A] When we talk about a projection, we're talking about someone like Gérard Godet dreaming about an elephant. And if I went to Gérard Godet in that dream and asked if this elephant has Buddha-nature, he would say yes, she does.
[Q] But it seems to complicate the question when you mention projection. Why can't we stay with the distinction between animate things and inanimate things? Stones don't have mind, they are not sentient beings, and therefore they don't have Buddha-nature. Why bring projection into it when we make that distinction?

[A] I have to be careful, as otherwise you couldn't do things like purifying the land. And you couldn't visualise things as Sukhavati, and so on, because a stone is a mental object (*yigyi yul*). It's the *dhatu* of Dharma (*chökyi kham*). Even when you say something is unimaginable, you are imagining that it is unimaginable. And it's just on that basis that I was saying that a stone is indirectly connected to your mind. You can say that a stone is your mind's projection, but you cannot say that a stone has mind.

[Q] In Buddha-nature, there is an aspect of emptiness. And in everything, including a stone or a tree, there is also this aspect of emptiness too. I thought that in their emptiness aspect, they are all inseparable?
[A] Yes, that's one way to understand this. Buddha-nature is sometimes referred to as emptiness, but here when we talk about Buddha-nature, we are talking about *selcha*, the clarity aspect, and then it's a little difficult to say that the stone has Buddha-nature. The stone doesn't have wrapping, and if there is no wrapping, then you are enlightened. But you can't really say a stone is enlightened.

[Q] I still have a problem with the Buddha-nature and the stone. If trees and stones are projections of our mind, then what about the planet we live on, earth? Is it the same for our solar system, and even the galaxies around us? Are they also projections of our mind?
[A] Yes, of course.
[Q] Why?
[A] The solar system is your projection, and it will go when you die. When you no longer exist, then your projection is gone. Your solar system, your earth, everything is gone. You might say that somebody can still see all this after you die, but that somebody is also your projection. You are borrowing his projection to prove your projection.
[Q] Doesn't Jigme Lingpa introduce projection in a different way, when he talks about perception and the objects of perception?
[A] Only the atiyoga people say things like that. They talk about the "form of the display", but that's beyond us right now! It's these guys' department! (Rinpoche looks at Tulku Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche and Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) Right now, I'm only a Sakyapa, a follower of the mahasiddha Virupa, and he's a Yogachara Chittamatrin. When we talk about a projection, we're not saying that it has mind. We're saying that it's my mind's projection. For example, this flower is my mind's projection, but that doesn't mean it has mind. I know that there are some so-called alternative people who project that the flower has mind, but that's their projection!

[Q] There's a famous Chinese story about Buddha-nature that seems to conflict with your teaching. First, let me explain the story. There was a monk. He had concept that every compounded thing, both animate and inanimate, has Buddha-nature. The other monks didn't agree with him, so he left the monastery and

went to the countryside where he came across some stones. He told them that all compounded things have Buddha-nature, and the stones nodded their heads and agreed with his ideas. We might say everything is mind's projection, but we have mountain gods, river gods, tree gods and so on, and I think it is much better for us to think that every compounded thing has Buddha-nature, because then we have a much better attitude towards trees.
[A] Very good! But you know I have to stick with what I told you.
[Q] And since animate and inanimate are equally projection of mind, animate and inanimate all have Buddha-nature.
[Q] (Second student): This is the story of the monk Tao-shen. He was one of the first to appreciate the theories of the Mahaparinirvana-sutra, where it says that even the *chantikas*, those who are condemned never to become Buddha, have got the Buddha-nature. And all the monks around him in Jen-Kang, the capital city in those days, said they didn't believe him, and argued that some people will never become Buddhas. He said, if that's the case, I ask the stones around me to nod and agree. And the stones nodded. But the stones didn't say they had any kind of Buddha-nature, merely that every sentient being without exception has got Buddha-nature. So maybe we don't have the same story!
[A] A Chittamatrin would say that the nodding of the stones is his projection. Anyway, I really admire those of you who really want plants and all that to have some kind of Buddha-nature. I'm a non-vegetarian myself, so I really don't care so much! But I really feel for you fanatical vegetarians, because if plants had Buddha-nature, you'll have nothing to eat! The story also shows that this monk is a very great and realised being. Such realised beings are called truth tellers, because they have such a power of speech. Let's not talk about realised beings and truth tellers now, but even if you really just know astrology, it is said that you can actually change the world. Mipham Rinpoche was a great realised being, but according to the stories, even if he were sewing a new shirt, he would look at the almanac and check the right timing for when the needle should first enter the cloth. All this was driving his attendants crazy, because everything had to be done perfectly on time and so on. So his disciples confronted him, pointing out that he had written so many commentaries on Madhyamika and non-duality, and yet he was the most superstitious person! So Mipham Rinpoche took them to the nearby river that was the source of their drinking water, and gave his attendant a big stone and a very thin and fragile piece of dried grass. He told his attendant to be ready, and when we gave the signal, to piece the stone with the grass. Then Mipham Rinpoche spent a long time looking at the stars and the sky and making calculations, and then suddenly he said, "OK, now!" and the grass went through the rock! And despite repeated tries, the attendant couldn't do this again. Mipham Rinpoche said, "If I did it, you'd say it's just because I'm a great master and all of that. But I didn't do this, you did". He explained that this world is based on the five elements, and they are always changing. And if you know how to make the proper calculations, you can turn anything into anything else. So I guess you can talk to your plants every 24 hours, ask how they are doing, tell them they're beautiful and so on. I heard that some plants become very

gentle if they listen to Mozart. And the so-called tree gods and stone gods are only called that because they are dwelling among the trees and stones. And I'm sure that some animals look like trees or branches, so who knows? Maybe there are such things. The bottom line is that the world is inexpressible. Actually, everything that surrounds us is inexpressible. The carpet is inexpressible, the flowers are inexpressible, and the tent is inexpressible. Our problem is that we are trying to express the inexpressible, and that's why we're suffering.
[Q] We were discussing whether stone and wood have *kham*. Is there a difference between the Mahayana and tantra when it comes to someone with devotion who has carved a statue of Buddha from a stone or a piece of wood. Would that statue contain the *kham*?
[A] Do you mean after the statue has been consecrated?
[Q] Yes.
[A] I don't think those have *kham*, but I cannot really say. It's very difficult. As I said, for the tantric practitioners, whatever exists outside actually exists within your channels, not only within your mind.

Kham and Buddha-nature

[Q] I don't really understand the difference between Buddha, the first vajra point, and *kham*. Also, why isn't *kham* translated as Buddha-nature?
[A] Buddha-nature is all of that, from the Buddha to activity – Buddha-nature is the main subject of these seven vajra points – it's the subject of Uttaratantra. In the text, different aspects of the Buddha-nature are taught. The first vajra point, Buddha, is an aspect that places more emphasis on the result, on what can happen. It is the model we are aspiring towards. The fourth vajra point, *kham*, is the one who is looking at this model, so to speak. Someone who thinks that they don't have the qualities of that model, and who somehow doesn't feel all right, but who can become right and manifest as the Buddha. In the ultimate sense, there is no difference between the Buddha and the *kham*.

[Q] Why do we talk about the consequences if the element didn't exist?
[A] Because of the extremists who don't believe in the *rig*. They don't believe that there is an element.
[Q] We're just saying this to refute the extremists who deny it?
[A] It's like the Prasangika Madhyamika technique. We are saying that if there is no *rig*, then we can't do this and that. It's a consequence that would arise if there were no element. But of course there is *rig* everywhere, all the time, never changing.

[Q] If I understand, gender is not part of Buddha-nature, so does it matter if it's a king or a queen inside the woman's womb?
[A] I guess not.
[Q] Did Maitreya have a purpose in saying 'king'?

[A] No, the word means a 'ruler' basically. I think from my point of view, the real universal ruler of the whole world is the Queen of England. She's all I can think of at the moment. But then I must be careful, because now we're on the other side of the Channel from Brighton, so perhaps Napoleon should be included!

[Q] During the second vajra point, Dharma, we were talking about the truth of the path. We were talking about three words – purity, clarity and the remedial power of the antidote. So what does this word clarity (*selwa*) mean in this context?
[A] It means that the *kham* is not inanimate. You see, before the *selwa* comes *dakpa*, which is 'purity' or 'emptiness'. That makes you think 'nothingness', but it's not nothingness. As I was saying, it's not a couch potato! It has a function, namely clarity or cognition. It's more like cognizer, cognition, or wisdom. It's something that is not inanimate, but cannot be understood as animate in the ordinary way, because the ordinary animate means object and subject, but this doesn't have that. Basically, it's jñana, wisdom, or self-awareness.
[Q] Why is this quality part of Dharma rather than Buddha or Buddha-nature?
[A] Because it is the truth.

[Q] If we define it like that, why isn't it the absolute refuge?
[A] At the end, the text says Buddha has both Dharma and Sangha. In that way, Buddha's Dharma and Buddha's Sangha is the ultimate object of refuge. But Dharma as scripture and realisation is not, because it changes, and so it is deceptive. From the first bhumi to the tenth there's so much change.

[Q] It seems to be hard to find good words for *kham*, like 'element' for instance. Why don't we use the word 'mind'?
[A] We do sometimes, such as when we say 'nature of mind'.

[Q] We can say that there is gold amidst the garbage, but how in everyday life can we have confidence that all sentient beings have Buddha-nature?
[A] Intellectually or academically, my answer is by knowing that all defilements are removable (*drima dralrung*). Actually, that's even a practice. It is the quintessence of what these tantric people call pure perception (*dak nang*), namely that the stain is removable. Of course tantric people say much more than that. They say it's not only removable, but it's also your projection.

[Q] I don't understand the word *nyingpo* in stanza 27. Why does it say that it all beings have the essence of Buddhahood, rather than they are Buddha? Because in the example of the window, it would be like saying that the dirty window has the essence of glass.
[A] It's path language. Even the term 'Buddha-nature' is path language.

Kham and the gross & subtle elements

[Q] Is there is a difference between *rig* and *kham*?
[A] They're all so related – the seven vajra points are seven different kinds of aspects of one thing. Actually, this *kham*, the element, is even related to the gross elements. This is something that the tantric people talk about a lot. This is why, for instance, when you receive the entering abhisheka, the preparation abhisheka, they give you a string in order to protect or preserve the *kham*. It's all related. We said that on the *deshek nyingpo*, the Buddha-nature, dwells wrong view, and then emotions, karma, aggregates and all that, so it all has to relate. Khenpo Appey Rinpoche said something quite interesting here. He said that when we Dharma practitioners die, of course we should die peacefully and all that. But if we have to get sick as a cause of death, then he said that cancers, brain tumours and such diseases are really good diseases to die from, as they invoke compassion. If as a tantric practitioner you die from flu or a cold, that's considered to be somewhat of an obstacle. I became more intrigued with that when he talked about *kham* again, because a flu or cold is related to an imbalance of the outer *kham*, all the outer elements. It gets even more interesting. For instance, in the tantra they say that when we look at a mountain, even though we think the mountain is out there, the mountain is within you. That's different from how the Mahayana talks, where they say that the mountain is a mental projection (*sem chi nangwa*). The tantric people say it's not only a projection, they say it exists within your channels, *tsa*. Again they are talking about the *kham*, element.

I'm really intrigued about DNA! I think it's something wonderful that we should really do some research on. I want to provoke you here. I think for a pure Mahayana practitioner, it's very difficult to prove there's a next life. But if you're a tantric practitioner, it's easy to prove. Because for the Mahayana, it's difficult to prove that there is a mind independent from form. Our physical body (*lu*) is gone, cremated, burned. But in the tantra, body, speech and mind are inseparable, and *tsa*, *lung* and *tigley* continue. So what do we mean by 'form'? When we talk about things like the teeth of the Buddha, the 32 major marks and all that, describing their appearance is a big generalisation. The Buddha's form is the biggest generalisation, but it's a very useful generalisation, because it always has an element that is slightly beyond the ordinary. For example, the four arms of Avalokiteshvara are slightly beyond us, and the eyes on the palm of Tara's hands and feet are beyond us.

Anyway, *kham* is a quality that is not inanimate, but then don't automatically think that it is animate in the sense of mind. More than that, I cannot say! I am a theologian here! If you want to experience all this directly, you should go to some of the people sitting on my left (Rinpoche turns to Tulku Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche and Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche) and grill them with your devotion! And you might get it because they said something, or perhaps you might get it

because they didn't say something! We just don't know! You can get it from some kind of happening, or the happening of something not happening. Basically, if you can create some permanent damage to this cocoon of vanity, even on an intellectual level, then from that time onwards, you will be OK! Then you are a so-called Dharma practitioner!

[Q] I just want to check that I understood. Did you say that when people die, even if the gross body is burned and nothing remains, some element still continues with the mind?
[A] I'm talking about tantra. They say body, speech and mind are inseparable. They call it the primordially existing three doors. They talk about OM, AH, HUM and stuff like that, nadi, prana, bindu, and so on. Who knows what the tantric people are talking about? I say this only because Uttaratantra is supposedly some kind of bridge between Mahayana and tantra, and perhaps now you can see that it is really a bridge.
[Q] I find it very interesting when you talked about the red string that you are given during the preparatory abhisheka to protect your element. And there, the element means your bodhicitta, your pure bodhicitta. So when we use element here to indicate Buddha-nature, are they related?
[A] Yes, they are very much related.
[Q] So then we are talking about Buddha-nature in some kind of form
[A] Yes. And the Nyingmapas say that you can even look at the Buddha-nature. Now that's beyond me! You see, I'm a Sakyapa, and we don't know these things. These guys say that you can actually look at it. You need three ways of sitting or looking or something, and then you will see it. But this is here to my left! (Rinpoche turns to Tulku Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche and Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche and smiles at them).

So we are talking about whether form, the gross element is related to the subtle element, I mean the Buddha-nature element. When we say *rig kham deshin shekpey nyingpo*, that's like the full name of the Buddha-nature, tathagatagarbha, *rig* means race or family, *kham* is element, *dewar shekpa* is tathagata or Buddha, and *nyingpo* is the essence. So again we find a reference to *kham*, the element. Why have the great masters of the past, and even Lord Maitreya, insisted on using this word? There must be a great reason. We talked about how earth depends on water, water depends on air, and air depends on space. Likewise, the aggregates are like earth, emotions are like water, wrong view is like air, and all these things rely on space, which is Buddha-nature, *kham*. And that is the paramita of clean, paramita of self, paramita of bliss, and paramita of unchanging. The concept of *rig* or family is very much like planting rice. If you plant rice, then a rice shoot comes. Think about this. If you plant rice, a rice shoot comes. Now reverse the question: why does the rice shoot come? Because we planted the rice. And that's what we're studying here. We're not studying how the rice shoot grows when you plant rice. We're studying why there is a rice shoot. It's because you planted the rice. Why do sentient beings manifest as the

Buddha? Because the Buddha is there. This is why Longchenpa and all the Nyingmapas say *thartug rig chig*: ultimately, there's only one race or family, not five Buddha families. There's only one family, one vehicle, one yana, one abhisheka and so on.

[Q] *kham* is a synonym of *tigley* in the Vajrayana, so is it a way to make a bridge between Mahayana and Vajrayana to call it *kham*?
[A] Yes, I think so.

[Q] Why do we need to preserve the *kham*? How can the *kham* be preserved?
[A] Oh this is tantric language. They do a lot of these kinds of things! Tantric people are so afraid that *kham* will travel to the wrong places! There are so many mazes in our body, so many roads. And when the inner wind pushes some of this *kham* to certain wrong places, then you will experience the six realms in various orders, or all together – things like that. So Vajrayana even has the path to lead, so to speak, this *kham* to the right channel. But the *kham* is very subtle, invisible almost. So the tantra uses the next agent that has a direct link with the *kham*, and with which we also have some sort of good connection, namely the prana. So we manipulate that by breathing in and out, all kinds of things. But even that is quite subtle, so we use the next agent that has greater familiarity with the prana, namely the nadi. So we practice sitting straight and all kinds of yoga and all that. So symbolically, a red or multicoloured string is given to you during the abhisheka. Usually you tie it to your left arm if you are male and your right arm if you are female. You do this so certain nadis are – how can we say this – manipulated, and so that you will preserve the *kham*.
[Q] Is the *kham* described by Maitreya the same as the *kham* in the tantras?
[A] At least they're very much related. You should read Jamgön Kongtrül's work. That's it – we can't go on talking about this too much!

Buddha-nature, mind & wisdom

[Q] In the last of the nine examples, Buddha-nature is called the nature of the mind (*semkyi rangshin*), whereas we've been saying all along that the mind and the nature are not connected.
[A] The nature of mind, *semkyi rangshin*, is not mind.
[Q] But they're connected?
[A] They're connected, like the mould and statue. You know the sentence, "Mind, is not, mind is luminosity". The first wheel of the Dharma is the mind. Buddha didn't negate the mind. Then second wheel of the Dharma is emptiness, and the third is that the nature of the mind is luminous. That's Buddha-nature.

[Q] We saw in stanza 93 that the three wisdoms: liberation (*namdrol*); knowledge (*sherab*); and wisdom (*yeshey*) are all the sun, radiance and light. We cannot even separate what appears as ordinary *sherab* from wisdom. So even what appears to

us as knowledge in the mind is some light of the Buddha-nature, the primordial *yeshey* that we have but we don't perceive.
[A] Yes, I think that ultimately we have to say that. But now you're really touching some of the tantric stuff here too.

[Q] When you explained the two wisdoms the first time, you talked about the primordial wisdom that doesn't dwell on phenomena. Please could you explain this?
[A] I was talking about *chaktok*. Our deluded minds have what we call attachment (*chakpa*) and blockage (*tokpa*). That's how all our inhibitions and habitual patterns develop. For instance, on a more gross level, we have prejudices about other people's colour, shape, behaviour, culture, sexual orientation or whatever. This kind of prejudice comes from what we call *chakpa* and *tokpa*, and *chaktok* basically comes from our education. For example, perhaps a certain religious text might say that having a particular sexual orientation is not good, and so you have been told that for generations, and you develop that idea. That's what we call *chakpa*, you're clinging to that idea, and you're stuck with it, *tok*, on a gross level. At a more subtle level, from the time that we're very young, we're taught that this thing in front of us is a flower. From then on, we observe, cling to and fixate on this phenomenon as a flower, and nothing more. If you were to say it is an omelette, people would think you are crazy! That's what we call *chaktok*, and it is the mother of all inhibition, prejudice, and pride. Everything comes from that! And the absence of this *chaktok* is actually the Dharma. If somebody asks you what Dharma is, it's already quite good to explain is by saying that it's something beyond *chak* and *tok*. That's the Dharma, because that really explains the truth. We are experiencing something every moment of every day, but when we experience something like this flower, we don't have anything beyond that in our heads. We can't know the non-flower-ness. So when a goat comes and eats this very deliciously, all we can think is "the goat ate my flower!" That's about it. And we don't know what the goat thinks. That's how everything works. We have a very limited world, where a flower is a flower and that's it. That's very limited. We don't know. A flower can be all kinds of things, but our mind is not creative enough. Why aren't we creative? Because we have *chak* and *tok*. We are stuck, and that's why we are all prejudiced, and also why we are plagiarists – we just steal other people's ideas.

[Q] You said that the absence of a truly existent mind is not a sufficient attribute for Buddha-nature?
[A] Yes.
[Q] But the Prasangika Madhyamika produces not only a non-affirmative negative, but also the consequence itself. Can we say that the wisdom that perceives that there is no truly existent mind is the Buddha-nature?
[A] Yes, you can say that. According to the Shentongpas, as long as you differentiate between mind and wisdom, it's fine.

[Q] You said that we should know that we have Buddha-nature inside. It seems true that to think that there is a Buddha outside is an exaggeration that we have to get rid of. But to say that we have a Buddha-nature inside seems to me somewhat extreme also.
[A] It's just to save you from being theistic. That's all.
[Q] But if I really believed that the Buddha is inside, I would probably eat my shit, saying, "Oh, my Buddha-nature is here", or go everywhere and say, "I just practice Buddha-nature, I don't need any goal". It seems that it would be more secure to say that the guru is like the reflection in the lapis lazuli.
[A] OK, if that works for you.

The Fifth Vajra Point: Enlightenment

Is Buddha-nature permanent?

[Q] When you talked about approximate enlightenment and ultimate enlightenment, it sounded like approximate enlightenment is generated, whereas absolute enlightenment is inherent. Does that mean that approximate enlightenment is enlightenment, or does it become enlightenment? Is this like *kyerim* and *dzogrim*, when first you generate and then you become, is this a reference?
[A] It is, in a way. We need that, as without it, we cannot do the actual one.
[Q] Why?
[A] Because of the path, once again. It's all because of the path. The path is the culprit!
[Q] Does someone who's approximately enlightened somehow surrender to enlightenment and then become the real thing?
[A] No, as long as you are thinking about enlightenment, that's approximate enlightenment.
[Q] Is this is a reference to the bhumis?
[A] Yes. Bhumis, stages, purification of defilements, accumulation of merit – all these are approximate enlightenment. That's why I called real enlightenment pre-dirty and pre-clean. Approximate enlightenment is when there's dirt, and then there's cleaning. One of the great Sakyapa commentators, Ngawang Chödrak, said that all Buddhist practice aims towards the result of elimination. There's not a single thing that Buddhists do for a result of creation. I don't know even know whether we should call the result of elimination a 'result'. Perhaps 'state' is better, but even the word 'elimination' is misleading. It's freedom, liberation – it's naturally eliminated, naturally liberated right from the beginning.

We were talking how you plant rice seed and then the rice shoot comes, and then rice comes. So this *dralwey dreybu*, the result of liberation or elimination or

whatever, is with us already, although seemingly we haven't eliminated anything. The seed is already there. You don't even have to plant it. You need some conditions, like ploughing and fertilizer, but these are actually part of the path. They are nothing to do with the rice. When you eat rice, you don't eat fertilizer! But the fertilizer helps. And the result is rice, so we're back to the rice again. That continuity is called *kham*. It is tantra, *gyü*, continuity or continuum – although there is no continuum. It's the same thing.

As I've said many times, the result of elimination is not like a couch potato that has no function. It has infinite function. It's the biggest wealth. When you are buying the window glass in the shop, the pre-dirt and pre-clean glass, it's a big wealth. But many scholars in Tibet don't have the courage to say this. They prefer to emphasise the elimination and liberation bit rather than its qualities, such as the lock of the Buddha's hair. Many scholars think that these qualities have to be a product of accumulation of merit. But Mipham is saying that if this were the case, then the Buddha's forms, the rupakayas, would not be unfailing objects of refuge.

[Q] Is the window glass permanent?
[A] That's a good question! The definition of 'permanent' is when there is no beginning, middle and end. The window that is pre-dirty and pre-clean is free from the beginning, middle and end of clean and dirty. So I will say that the "window is free from beginning, middle and end". Whether you choose to call it permanent or impermanent doesn't matter.
[Q] But the text says 'permanent', which feels like lobbing a bomb into the whole thing, as wouldn't that put that Buddha-nature beyond the four extremes. Something that is permanent exists, but Buddha-nature is supposed to be beyond extremes like existence. So is that path language? Or is it a contradiction?
[A] No, it's beautiful language, because it's trying to describe that there is no beginning, no middle and no end (*togma tama umeypa*)
[Q] So it's more like timeless presence than permanence?
[A] I think the best word is *tagpa.*
[Q] Can you relate that to the way we normally relate to the word 'permanent'? Until we got to this point, we're always being told about impermanence, and now they're using the word 'permanent' to describe something that's supposedly beyond existence
[A] Beyond existence?
[Q] Well, isn't this beyond the four extremes?
[A] Yes.
[Q] So it's beyond existence?
[A] No, the reason why it's permanent is because it's beyond the four extremes.
[Q] But things don't exist.
[A] Exactly. That's what I was saying. For the window that is pre-dirty and pre-clean, clean and dirty do not exist, and that is interpreted as permanent.

[Q] Is spontaneous presence (*lhündrup*) at odds with permanence?
[A] Not at all. If something has a beginning, middle and end, then it's not spontaneous.

[Q] Permanence exists only in reference to impermanence, so it's a view. So why is it called 'permanent' here? If it's a reference, if it depends on its opposite, and then it is not something absolute.
[A] Why do we say everything is emptiness? Emptiness is in reference to not emptiness. It's exactly like that. Here it's the same.

[Q] So this is a new meaning of *tagpa*?
[A] I don't think so. The word *tagpa*, which means 'permanent', has always been something to do with no beginning, no middle and no end, not changing. Nagarjuna's words 'no beginning, no middle and no end' and Maitreya's word 'permanent' are the same.

[Q] You said that it wasn't as if the Buddha-nature wasn't there before and then we found it. Nor is it appearing as a new phenomena. But relatively, we say that the moment that we perceive a phenomenon is when it comes into existence. So either we're always perceiving it, which means it's always there, or it comes into existence the moment we perceive it.
[A] I guess you could say that the moment that we experience the removal of the last thing to be removed, at the moment we can call it experiencing the absolute Buddha-nature. We've been talking about it, but it's something that's impossible to talk about, although I think we can say that the approximate Buddha is a phenomenon.
[Q] Do we know that it was the last thing to be removed?
[A] Yes, I think so.

[Q] What if you've been cleaning a window for many years, even to the extent that after many years we destroy the window because we think we don't need its support to realise the elephant? And then what if on top of that we hear that apparently people live longer if they see elephants?
[A] In this case, the analogy is slightly different. I don't think you destroy the window at all. There's nothing to destroy. And we are not talking about the window. We are talking about the pre-dirty and pre-cleaned. We don't even know what a window is.

[Q] You said we have always been in this pre-clean state. So how come we have never been without defilement? Why have we always had adventitious dirt? It seems to me that one of the problems is that all the language we use is in terms of time, and we think of 'before', of some primordial beginning or whatever. Would it be right to say there is no time, no past?
[A] That would be safe.

[Q] And our impression of history?
[A] That we have always been having defilements

[Q] If we've always had defilements since forever, for most of us that's a problem. You can say that the defilements are adventitious but we think that since beginningless time we've been defiled.
[A] I think the only thing is that we can see it can be manipulated, and I guess through that we can gain some confidence, because it's caused and conditioned, whereas the absence of that is not caused and conditioned.
[Q] But right at the beginning you talked about 'co-emergent' defilements or co-emergent ignorance, and that sounds like ignorance from the beginning.
[A] Again we are talking about time, but it's path language, so there's no choice except to speak like that.

Is Buddha-nature uncompounded?

[Q] You mentioned that some schools believe or the consequence of their view is that the clarity aspect of the dharmakaya is a compounded phenomenon. That sounds quite troubling to me. Because later we talk about the clarity, radiance and so forth being one, so from their point of view the dharmakaya is a compounded phenomenon?
[A] Yes, that's the consequence.
[Q] Which school is this? How can they claim to be Buddhist?
[A] This consequence applies to many new translation schools, including some Sakyapas. I think it's all got to do with not having this concept of mind and wisdom. As we were saying yesterday, when I say that it's not 'inanimate', then automatically we think it's animate. I think that some of these scholars worked out the path based on this ordinary idea of animate. If it is not inanimate, then it's animate, and then the kayas, the path, the bhumis are all constructed on that. But here, animate doesn't refer to the usual animate, because the usual animate needs an object and subject. Here the wisdom is animate in the sense that the object and subject have become inseparable (*yuldang yulchen rochik*). We are talking about that kind of animate.
[Q] I understand that argument, but we still have this word 'compounded'.
[A] The usual animate has object and subject, so it's compounded. For most of these scholars, the entire Buddhist path is based on the mind. Very few talk about wisdom that is different from the mind. There's something important here. What makes Buddhism different from many of the other religions? Generally speaking, it's because Buddhists believe in interdependent reality. So our path is based on cause and effect, so it's a causal path. This is something that Buddhists brag about, and say that scientists and Buddhists can come together over. Why? Because scientists also believe in cause and effect. This path of cause and effect is something that we Buddhists are so proud of, but there are certain schools that say you have to transcend the path of cause and

result, because if you dwell on that, you'll never reach enlightenment. This is why you see books with titles like 'Buddhahood without meditation' (*magom sangyey*). This is where these words come from. Prahevajra, Garab Dorje, was accused of teaching a path beyond cause and effect, but why did he get all the credit? Maitreya is actually talking about the same thing here. This path is beyond cause and effect.

Now this is important, so listen carefully. The reason we use words like 'uncompounded' and 'permanent' is because this path is not causal. Other religions might talk about a permanent god, a permanent soul or whatever, but that's absolutely different from what is being taught here. Because, first of all, the other religions' permanent entity or whatever it is, is something that you have to relate to. It's something or someone that you should pray to or be afraid of. But when something uncompounded and permanent is there externally, and you have to relate to it, it's a contradiction. You can't! Should he respond to you? If he doesn't, why pray? If he does, then he becomes impermanent, because he moves.

By contrast, this permanent and uncompounded Buddha-nature is something that you already have. So what are we doing here? We are only eliminating, even though it's sometimes called accumulating. And the Vajrayana people have grabbed both these ideas, and then they make something big out of nothingness! For accumulation, there's mandala. Purification, why not? That's Vajrasattva. The uncompounded Buddha-nature is something you don't wish for (*möpa mepa*). You don't aspire towards the Buddhist result. These are the three characteristics of the Buddhist path: the essence is emptiness, the path is without characteristics, and the result is without aspiration. You don't even have to aspire for a lock of hair – you have it! So all we are doing is eliminating. The word delete seems to be the most important here – the delete button! You are creating more space, so that your gigabytes will be useful!

[Q] There seems to be quite a paradox here. If you say the Buddha's body is uncompounded, then he didn't display his life. He didn't actually display the truth of suffering – it was all a magical display. It didn't actually happen, because nothing changed. It's an uncompounded body. Therefore surely he didn't display the first Noble Truth? It was a fake. It was never there. Therefore there is no truth of suffering.
[A] According to the Mahayana, yes.
[Q] So what is the nirmanakaya in that context?
[A] It is a paradox, you are right.
[Q] But it's a sambhogakaya manifestation, not a nirmanakaya form, isn't it? If he's uncompounded, he couldn't change, so it must have been a magical display, an illusion. His entire life is illusory. Is that right?
[A] For him, or for us?
[Q] For him and for us. He was just displaying, it wasn't actually happening.

[A] I don't think he manifests for himself, for his own purposes. When we talk about his point of view, there is no concept of manifesting or audience or any of that. As soon as we talk about manifesting, we are talking about the path.
[Q] So the nirmanakaya form and sambhogakaya are both forms of display?
[A] I'm a little reluctant to say that the sambhogakaya is not a display, because in some Mahayana sutras we read that the Bodhisattvas see the sambhogakaya. It's being manifested to them. Well, it's not really manifested to them, but it's realised by them. I guess it can't really be referred to as a display, because it's what the Bodhisattvas are actualising. Basically, one is the example, and one is the real one. Nirmanakaya is the example, and the sambhogakaya usually refers to the clarity aspect of the Buddha-nature.

[Q] But we have a manifester that is primordially uncompounded, and a manifestation that is compounded. It seems no problem to have space, then earth, water and so on. But in that example, the space is purely negative, non-obstructing. That's all. But here the manifester is not purely negative. The 32 marks are not arbitrary, so it's very difficult. We might say that it's something like an uncompounded rupakaya, but if the rupakaya is uncompounded, it is a form that cannot be perceived, because it is uncompounded.
[A] Do you mean the sambhogakaya rupakaya?
[Q] Yes, both the sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya.
[A] Nirmanakaya is perceived. It's often referred to as a compounded phenomenon, in many different quotations.
[Q] But it's very difficult to think about the sambhogakaya, the one that's uncompounded. It's very difficult to imagine or think about a form that cannot be perceived.
[A] Yes. This is what the dzogchenpas always call it 'subject without object'. That's how wisdom functions. Very good! If you realise that this is difficult, you are starting to understand how wisdom works. It doesn't really work to say that emptiness knows everything. It's better to say that wisdom, the Buddha's wisdom, knows everything. So we're always referring to something like a cognizer, but not a cognizer in the sense of object and subject. So that's why it's not inanimate, but it's also not animate in the sense of mind, the subject and object kind of animate. It's difficult!

[Q] Didn't the Buddha say, "I am an ordinary human being, like every one of you"
[A] That's the nirmanakaya talking.

[Q] Did we say that the sambhogakaya Buddha is also a compounded phenomenon?
[A] No. It is the clarity aspect of Buddha-nature.
[Q] But in that case, how can Bodhisattvas perceive a sambhogakaya Buddha? If you are talking about a perceiver, a viewer, then you talking about something compounded.

[A] We've already taken care of that. Remember, until the tenth bhumi, a Bodhisattva's perception of sambhogakaya is compounded. Of course, it gets better. It changes. The Bodhisattva's realisation is compounded, but that doesn't change the sambhogakaya. As in all these examples of the gold coin, the honey and so on, the real sambhogakaya such as the lock of hair is unchanging and uncompounded.

[Q] Is emptiness a compounded phenomenon?
[A] No. But approximate dharmakaya is sort of compounded.

[Q] Can an uncompounded phenomenon give rise to a compounded phenomenon?
[A] No. But it can be perceived by deluded beings as a compounded phenomenon, although that's a mistake. That's why right at the beginning Maitreya says that the realisation of the Bodhisattva is changeable, because it's accompanied by deception. That's why they are still on the Bodhisattva level. Their realisation is not the ultimate object of refuge. But of course, as Maitreya also says, from an ordinary point of view, we can't differentiate between the activity of a tenth bhumi Bodhisattva and the post-meditation time of the Buddha. It's impossible for us!
[Q] I thought that there was no post-meditation and no meditation for the Buddha?
[A] You are right. But saying that there is no meditation and post-meditation time is very much Madhyamika language. I think Maitreya would say that there is no difference between post-meditation and meditation. It's slightly different way of saying the same thing. One says that there is no such thing as the meditation for the Buddha. Why would Buddha meditate? There is no meditation and no post-meditation. But that's exactly the same as when Maitreya says that his meditation and post-meditation become inseparable. The only difference is that Maitreya always likes to say there is something. It's very encouraging! Maitreya's teaching is always from the point of view of clarity, quality, or the result of elimination (*draldrey*). Whereas Nagarjuna's teaching is always from the point of view of elimination (*dralwa*). That's why they complement each other so well. Nagarjuna says in the Mulamadhyamikakarika that "there is no tathagata", and Lord Maitreya says that "the tathagata is uncompounded". They're saying the same thing. Both are necessary. These two are amazing, that's why they are called the two great chariots.

[Q] All these qualities of the Buddha seem completely distinct. They have no common ground with beings or even Bodhisattvas, but it's quite difficult to understand how the tree can have no common ground with the seed or the child with the mother or the honey with bees, or the status with the mould, and so on.
[A] When we talk about womb and mother, we are talking about Buddha-nature.

[Q] Yes, but you also said when we say "enlightenment", we can understand this is terms of the being getting enlightened, or the enlightenment itself. So is this enlightenment also completely distinct from this Buddha nature?
[A] Yes, I think so. When we were talking about Buddha-nature, we were talking more about *kham*, the element. And when we talk about *kham*, we talk about it as it if is a seed, something that you plant and plough it, so it is more like a path.
[Q] But you said Buddha-nature was not a seed. All the qualities are fully there from the very beginning, completely enlightened.
[A] What choice do I have? But we still have to talk about the path, and when we talk about the path, we have to talk about the mould and we have to talk about uncovering the statue.
[Q] Yes, but by now we know there is no use in cleaning the glass, because it's completely different from the quality of the dirt, so there is no use!
[A] You sound slightly like a Rangtongpa. This is what the Rangtongpas would say! I'll tell you something. When the Shentongpas are really daring, the great Shentongpa masters, they say, "Yes, that's exactly what you should do. Don't do anything!" But that's so difficult!

The Sixth Vajra Point: Qualities

The 32 major marks

[Q] This is also a question when it comes to the human body. If each single hair of the Buddha is really present, then why should something completely inanimate like a hair have this ultimate reality or Buddha-nature?
[A] What do you mean by inanimate? Do you mean the teeth and the hair?
[Q] If you're talking about teeth and hair and skin, you're talking about human characteristics.
[A] When we talk about 32 major marks, then that form is *draldrey*. They're all kayas and wisdoms (*kudang yeshey*). For instance, when we do development meditation, they're a product of that.
[Q] So when we talk about the Buddha's physical qualities, they're not physical qualities like our physical qualities?
[A] No, but we have them nevertheless.
[Q] Why should this ultimate Buddha have a human form and these human characteristics?
[A] It doesn't!
[Q] But we have talked about the form of the Buddha's teeth, hands and so on resembling ours.
[A] Well, first of all, the nirmanakaya Buddha is a projection of disciples like us. Let me give you my view. The sambhogakaya form also has the 32 major marks and all that. When we say "mouth", for example, I think we are referring to

something that is above our neck and below our nose, where things go inside, and if we have bulimia, where things occasionally come out. But I don't think you can think like that in the sambhogakaya. This is why at the end it always says it's inconceivable (*samgyi mi khyapa*). Do you know why the sambhogakaya Buddha wears crowns, jewels and all that? It's a very important teaching. When praising the Buddha, Nagarjuna said "Buddha, you never said that there is enlightenment by abandoning the samsara. You only said there is nirvana by knowing there is no samsara". To symbolise that, the Buddha wears royal dress and he is adorned with pleasure objects. All this is symbolic. Even in the nirmanakaya form, one of the most important attributes is the ushnisha, and it is said that it cannot be measured or talked about. So that's an indication. But you're right. I guess it's to make it easier for us to relate to a Buddha with hands, a mouth, some colour.

[Q] We were talking about our inability to see or accommodate the major marks. Do you think that our inability to accommodate them comes from the planning trap, our expectations and preconceived ideas? Should we just trust the practice and that the merit will grow?
[A] Yes, definitely. When Bernardo Bertolucci was making "The Little Buddha" in Nepal, there was a protest, and a scene that had to be cut out. Beautiful girls were massaging Siddhartha, and the Buddhists in Nepal were furious! They were all looking at me, thinking that I was supposed to be an advisor for this film, and yet here was a scene with the Buddha drinking wine and being massaged by beautiful girls. You know, for most Buddhists, Buddha is a golden statue in the temple, and that's as far as it goes.

[Q] I would like to ask about the uncompounded marks and qualities of the Buddha. Should we consider those marks as metaphoric or is it something else?
[A] Metaphoric is maybe a good way to understand them, since it's the manifestation Buddha, which appears to Bodhisattvas. Perhaps 'symbolic' is a better word. The 32 major marks, 80 minor marks and so on symbolise the body or kayas and wisdoms (*kudang yeshey*). They symbolise the infinite. But that actually works with everything. For example, what if Gérard Godet opens the window, and then sees a completely naked elephant? I heard that actually happened a few days ago! This elephant has long nails, and Gérard Godet is holding a cup in his hands, and then the cup falls from his hands, because he is completely amazed by the beauty before him! And beauty is what attracts you. It always works like that. Isn't all of it symbolic?
[Q] I'm happy with the idea that it's a symbol, but I think every word we use is a symbol, so it doesn't help very much. But maybe if I could go on a metaphoric level, it would allow some imagination and maybe it would help.
[A] You mean it doesn't help you to have a model that has webbed hands? But that's exactly what I'm saying about Gérard Godet. For him, my goodness, that sight brings a heart attack!
[Q] That amazement at the signs and qualities of the Buddha is what I'm longing for!

[A] It's somehow the same for me. As I was saying yesterday, we need an object of supplication, an object to long for. And right now, as deluded beings, we can only long for someone or something that is slightly familiar to us. But the object shouldn't be too outside the ordinary, too off the track. Our human mind likes a little bit of difference, but not too big. For example, Gérard likes to have something really elephant-like!
[Q]{Gérard} I hope that elephant isn't a symbol for someone we know!
[A] I thought the elephant is dwelling right opposite your house these days? But you know, we are attracted to the elephant, well at least Gérard is attracted to the elephant, because it has two eyes, and some kind of human form! But then this kind of clinging to symbolism also changes, as you find new information. For instance, when you practice the deity, you find new information. The wrathful deities supposedly have the same 32 major marks, but for the practitioner they change and new ones are revealed. And your idea changes, of course. If Gérard finds out that this elephant travels with a grinding machine, then Gérard will think twice! And I'm not saying that Gérard will dislike this elephant. He might like it more!

[Q] A few days ago you said that there was no self, that all is impermanence, and yet today you say that there is an uncompounded lock of the Buddha's hair! Is there a connection between these two points of view when you say that?
[A] Normally the self is imputed, labelled, it's a delusion. By contrast, this lock of hair is a result of elimination (*dralwey dreybu*). I think that's a good answer.

[Q] When ordinary beings met the nirmanakaya Shakyamuni Buddha, did they see the major and minor marks?
[A] Some of them did, I think. Even if a person sees him as beautiful, this alone means that this person has the merit to get closer to that kind of 32 major marks.
[Q] But if they literally saw the major and minor marks as they are described, it's difficult to see how the Buddha could have functioned. For instance, if he had such a huge tongue that it could not even fit into a normal human mouth, how could he eat with it, or even speak? It's a kind of contradiction, unless it's just a symbol. Because when we talk about all these major and minor marks, if you put them all together, you get something, which is scarcely recognisable as a human being!
[A] But that's the whole point, isn't it? There's a story about when Maudgalyayana (one of the Ten Great Disciples of Shakyamuni Buddha) wanted to see the Buddha's ushnisha. He had to travel all the way up to Tushita heaven and he still couldn't see the tip of the ushnisha! I think that if ordinary people like you and I had been there, we couldn't begin to contain the Buddha's qualities in our heads. For example, the length and width of the Buddha's body are equal. It's like a box. But then there are slightly better audiences, and they will understand. If I had been there, I would not have understood. But someone better than me can understand. Again, we're still talking about perception.

[Q] Are you saying that they're part of the rupakaya, or are they part of the dharmakaya? In other words, are these marks for us?
[A] There are two, and the one that we perceive through our practice is not the object of refuge. It's part of our realisation, and it exhausts. In any case, the Buddhas have accumulated a lot of merit, for three countless aeons. The ushnisha alone, that took a lot of time. The ushnisha is the biggest, and then the urna (*dzöpu*). So the Buddha definitely has qualities that are beyond us. My mind might not understand why Gérard likes this elephant. It just doesn't fit in my head. But he does! It turns him on, and it makes him drop his tea! It's all like that!
[Q] So the Buddha is beyond us?
[A] I guess so. But that's not so bad. After all, what about Hevajra or Chakrasamvara? At least Shakyamuni is serene and barefoot, golden in colour and beautiful. But if Hevajra or Chakrasamvara walked towards us, it would be disgusting! You know the story of Milarepa and Rechungpa, where Milarepa went inside the yak's horn, but Milarepa didn't become any smaller, and the yak's horn didn't become any bigger. Rechungpa was shocked. Milarepa was teasing Rechungpa for going to India to look for non-duality, when he could receive it from him. But for me, the fact that Rechungpa was able to experience this at all means that Rechungpa is a great being. If I had been there and I was lucky enough to see them, I'm sure I would just have seen two Tibetans talking for the whole afternoon, maybe with Milarepa holding a horn or something like that, and that's about it. I would have missed it completely!

[Q] What are the Buddha's eyes like?
[A] They're slightly blue, supposedly like a deer's eyes, with lot of dark on the sides.
[Q] Why do we say they are like a lotus?
[A] That's all we can say!
[Q] If you see Yeshe Tsogyal, do you see her like this?
[A] It's Vajrayana people that talk about things like that. Here we are talking about the common Buddha. With all this talk of Yeshe Tsogyal and Vajrayogini, you're talking about some secret societies. I don't know what they're talking about! Those people say the real Buddha's form is wrathful, and they can fit that with this. You should have the aspiration to study *gyü lama* according to a Vajrayana explanation of Jamgön Kongtrül's commentary, as then the 32 major marks fit very well. All these things can be interpreted, except for four things: the four voices or four seals, such as "All compounded things are impermanent" and the rest.

[Q] When you talked about the Buddha's all-pervasive wisdom, you said it's because he knew his mind, and that's the only way he could know things as they actually are. How would the Rangtongpas answer that?
[A] The Rangtongpas are fine with that, but they would say that mind is empty of its nature. It doesn't have 32 major marks, eighteen uncommon qualities, ten

powers and so on. They are all the result of maturation, so mind doesn't have them. If you stick the Uttaratantra text next to a Rangtongpa's face and say "Look, it says it has these qualities, what is this", they'll say "Oh, it only means it has the potential". The Shentongpas will say, "Ha, you Rangtongpas have to add the word potential". There are so many arguments over things like that.

[Q] When Buddha said, "Those who see me as a form have wrong view", does he mean those who see him as an ordinary man without these marks sees wrongly, or does he mean that even somebody even who sees these marks is wrong?
[A] Even someone who sees these marks is wrong. He's indicating non-duality. Some of these things are impossible!

[Q] Are the 32 major marks present for all Buddhas in the sambhogakaya?
[A] Yes.
[Q] And since there are uncompounded phenomena, I wonder how they can be a skilful show adapted to the audience of a certain era? For example you said that in the future there will be Buddhas with feminine marks. If they are uncompounded, how can they change with time?
[A] It's not that they will be feminine. They already are and already have been.
[Q] Please explain.
[A] This is just this fortunate eon here, where there will be a thousand Buddhas, that's the common description. Remember the stanza said there's a dharmakaya, the one that manifests. And there are two kinds of show, sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya. The sambhogakaya is an exclusive show, like something rated "18" or "R". And there is a common show, a show for the common people. When we talk about hierarchy or authority, one would think dharmakaya has the highest authority, but that's not the case. When we talk about authority it's actually based on the nirmanakaya. The nirmanakaya's manifestation has the authority. But this authority or hierarchy that we are talking about is only on the relative level, the audience's level. The real dharmakaya, sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya have no hierarchy at all. This is why Shravakayana people, let's call them Hinayana for once, have no burden to prove that Mahayana is a teaching of the Buddha. They don't have to. And it's also understandable when they say Vajrayana is actually Hindu. While they have no burden to prove that our teaching is the Buddha's teaching, we have to accept that their teaching is the root of the teaching. So on the common level, the Hinayana doesn't have the problem of proving that there's a Buddha called Tara or there's a Buddha with four arms. But we have to say that right now, in this era, the only Buddha who walked in the flesh is Shakyamuni, the prince of the Shakya clan, the son of Shuddodhana and Maya, who came to India and not France, all of that. We have to say that. We have no choice. Individually, if you talk about Vajrayana, you can think of your guru as the Buddha. That's individual practice. That's your own burden, and if that happened to be an authentic guru then there's lots of reward, as it's your own lapis lazuli. But all of this has to come from the right motivation, which is seeking enlightenment. Just because

one is a feminist, if one thinks that a feminine guru is more to your liking, then there's something wrong with your motivation there. I'm thinking I should soon recognise a gay guru and a lesbian guru. It would be very good for marketing.
[Q] I'm even more confused now. Because what you say about the life of prince Siddhartha sounds to me like a relative teaching adapted to a certain time and audience, while the 32 marks are not compounded phenomena and you say they even exist in the sambhogakaya.
[A] Don't forget that Shakyamuni Buddha is a show.
[Q] So it can change with time, because it is a show?
[A] Yes.
[Q] But the 32 marks are uncompounded. They are not a show. So why are they just masculine?
[A] No, Shakyamuni Buddha's 32 marks are a show. The whole Shakyamuni Buddha, from top to bottom, is a show
[Q] How can the 32 marks adapt to the capacity of an audience, a samsaric audience?
[A] The 32 major marks, all of this, are in the reflection, the lapis lazuli. No one has created this. It's uncompounded. Now someone like you walks in and because of your fortune there is no dirt, and so you see the Buddha.
[Q] And I see a feminine Buddha.
[A] Yes, that's fine. You can see a female Buddha, that's fine. But that's not what I mean by the nirmanakaya common Buddha. If you want to have another kind, you are in the wrong aeon. There are 996 more Buddhas to go. And according to Jamgön Kongtrül, there is a place where there are only feminine Buddhas. And they all have different reasons. For instance Shakyamuni chose to come when people's maximum life span is only about 100 years. But when Maitreya becomes enlightened, I think sentient beings' maximum life span will be 80,000 years. And this all has a purpose. For instance, why 80,000 years? Because everyone will be enjoying themselves and having a nice time, so people will not listen to the dharma. They will not want the dharma. So Maitreya thinks, since nobody else is going around that time, let me go then. Anyway, since you're a woman, unless you are lesbian, which isn't the case from what I know, for you Buddha should be a man! Actually most feminists should have Buddha as a man. It works better. If all the feminists ended up with a Buddha who's a woman, oh my god, there would be a problem! But anyway, in this fortunate aeon, the thousand Buddhas are all men, princes. We should never dilute the Buddhadharma. We shouldn't make it up as time goes by. The historical Buddha is a man, a prince. He shouldn't have a sex change just because it pleases some of us. It's useless, and won't serve much purpose anyway. And it's not as if we don't have female Buddhas. In this case we are talking about an exclusive audience. We have plenty, more than Shakyamuni Buddha in fact, if you want to think like that. We don't need to change anything. And on top of that, we shouldn't forget the words 'inconceivable' and 'generalisation'. I have been generalising about something that is inconceivable! The 32 major marks are a very big generalisation.

[Q] The marks are rather masculine. Do we all get the elephant part in the end, or is there a female equivalent?
[A] According to Maitreya, when you get enlightened, it's in the format of one with the elephant part. This has nothing to do with masculine and feminine. I have to be true to the author.
[Student] The image of the elephant is not very feminine in any case!
[Student] It's very clever because when it's hidden the two genders are almost indistinguishable!

[Q] If you say the Buddha's major and minor marks are present in sambhogakaya, the way they are described is specifically masculine. Are these same major and minor marks present in Tara?
[A] I think so.
[Q] But they're masculine
[A] Not really. As Lord Maitreya clearly stated, the sambhogakaya major marks are an exclusive show for some exclusive people. So we can talk about this until our mouths get wide, but nothing will get any clearer.

[Q] You said the Rangtongpas say that the Buddha's qualities have to be developed.
[A] Yes, these qualities the 32 major marks
[Q] That seems totally contradictory to the statement that all phenomena are enlightened.
[A] What do you mean? You mean in the absolute nature, like the sky that is pre-cloud?
[Q] Yes, but I'm referring to the first of the Four Fearlessnesses, when the Buddha said that all phenomena are enlightened.
[A] He has no fear to say that all phenomena ultimately have no stains.
[Q] Isn't it contradictory for the Rangtongpas to say that the qualities have to be developed?
[A] No, they can always escape from it. They say that it has the potential, and that's what the Buddha meant. It has the potential. They do not negate and say it doesn't have the potential. It's very subtle. What are you going to say? Will you say "make my window clean", or "clean that dirt on my window". Can you see the difference?
[Q] But we've been told that the window has always been clean, and it will never be dirty.
[A] I've been lenient to the Shentongpas sometimes.
[Q] But isn't that a safer presumption?
[A] The Rangtongpas would not agree. They might say it's a little dangerous, as you might end up mixing this with atman and all the 'soul' business and all that.
[Q] I just think it might be easier to recognise stains when you have the presumption that it is already clean and never dirty.
[A] It depends on what kind of preparation you have.

[Q] When you were explaining the qualities of the speech of the Buddhas, you said that the Pratyekabuddhas only have part of that understanding. If that's so, what's the level of comprehension of a Pratyekabuddha compared to someone like me?
[A] Until you are on the seventh bhumi Bodhisattva, you cannot outshine Shravakas and Pratyekabuddhas with your intellect. So we are talking about a very big difference. That is, if you are not a seventh bhumi Bodhisattva. They have destroyed the four maras. They will never go back to samsara. They don't see any difference between the palm of their hand and the sky, or between dirt and gold. And on a more outer level, they can have fire burning on the lower half of their body, and the upper half water.

The activity of the nirmanakaya

[Q] When you were talking about the causes of the Buddha's spontaneity, you said that the second one is that there is no difference between his enlightenment and our enlightenment. But wouldn't it be more accurate to say there's no difference between him and our enlightenment?
[A] I guess so.
[Q] It kind of bothers me, this vagueness between Buddha Shakyamuni on the one hand, and Buddha-nature on the other. If there was a historical Buddha Shakyamuni, what's the connection between him and our Buddha-nature? Is he really outside us?
[A] No he's just a reflection.
[Q] But did somebody called Shakyamuni actually walk around on the earth?
[A] Yes, for the group of beings that has similar collected karma.
[Q] But was he a human being like us?
[A] You mean Shakyamuni himself? He's a reflection, but he's a perfect reflection of a human being
[Q] Is he a human being in our sense of the word? Like we are?
[A] I think he is.
[Q] If he's a separate human being, how can he be the same thing as our Buddha nature?
[A] He is not really a separate human being, because he's your reflection. But he appears exactly like a human being. Not quite exactly, because antelope-like ankles don't really work there!
[Q] But people didn't see him like this, with antelope legs, did they?
[A] I really don't know.
[Q] You seem to be saying, yes, both.
[A] I think so

[Q] I have a question about the nirmanakaya. According to Shentongpa point of view, the nirmanakaya is uncompounded. But there are the 32 marks that are the effect of maturation. And you mentioned, and the text also says, that these are

the perfection of the previous virtues and aspirations of the Bodhisattva. So how can that be uncompounded?
[A] When we say "previous virtue" and all of that, the Shentongpas would say that so-called 'previous' is just a show, even the very concept of 'previous'. It's your mind doing it all. There's no somebody who was previously a monkey and who is becoming a Buddha.
[Q] So primordially we are all uncompounded?
[A] That's what the Shentongpas seem to be saying.
[Q] Is that what Maitreya is saying?
[A] The Shentongpas would like to think like that!

[Q] We are speaking about the Buddha very much in terms of the human realm. How do animals receive the activities of the Buddha?
[A] As I said before, the Buddha is manifesting all the time. How much is being received and interpreted depends on sentient beings.
[Q] So animals cannot interpret much?
[A] This is why Vajrayana people say the Vajrayana is so special, and especially why this precious human body is so special, because we can use all these pranas and bindus and so on.

[Q]: You said there's no way to refer to dharmakaya, but for whom? How can we say there is no way to refer to it? It seems independent of people who try to see it.
[A]: This is quite good actually. There is actually a Hindu school that believes in an inexpressible self. There's a big difference there, because for that Hindus, self exists, but it's not expressible. But the dharmakaya does not even exist. Remember, it's not born, it's not abiding, and it's not ceasing to exist. It cannot be perceived with intellect or conception. As long as something is a concept, it has to have subject and object. With this kind of mind, dharmakaya cannot be perceived. But as has been said many times, only the yogis during their meditation state can experience it.
[Q] But the Bodhisattvas cannot pass on the wisdom of the dharmakaya even to higher yogis?
[A] They will have a little bit.
[Q] Otherwise it would be completely useless.
[A] Yes, that's right. And there's another thing that means it's not useless. The sambhogakaya and nirmanakaya will always make sure that dharmakaya is not useless. And although dharmakaya does not manifest, the sambhogakaya is close to its true character. And although many of the nirmanakaya's activities are very ordinary and worldly, there's always something quite extraordinary about them also, like the 32 major marks. They are inconceivable.

[Q] We talk about this being the causal path, but in samsara, if we fixate on the mould then it doesn't serve its purpose, and it is a problem. Because the mould

is just a passing, fleeting cause for the Buddha statue to emerge. So does the Uttaratantra also indicate a result path?
[A] Which result?
[Q] Like when we say the nirmanakaya appears all the time and we can potentially see it.
[A] I guess so.
[Q] But if we fixate and make it dualistic then the mould is a problem. We have to break it. But we could also say the mould is great, as with the mould we have the statue. Is it OK to say that?
[A] Maybe not in the Mahayana. There we don't really give any credit to the mould.
[Q] But then what is the connection between cause and effect if they are ultimately not connected, in other words if the result doesn't appear to depend on the cause?
[A] The mould and the statue are not really about cause and effect. That example revolves around the fact that the mould is outside the statue, and there is the business of uncovering. The statue doesn't know there's a mould. From the statue's point of view there is no mould.
[Q] But that is pointing at a flaw in our way of functioning, nothing else.
[A] Right now, during the path, yes. So there is the mould and all of that. But still we do not give any credit to the mould. One should not understand the mould as the cause.

[Q] Is the Uttaratantra resulting from Maitreya's realisation, or something that he transmits from someone else? Because at one point you say that teaching itself says 10th a bhumi bodhisattva cannot understand the qualities of the Buddha, and he's talking about the qualities of the Buddha.
[A] Maitreya is disciple of the Buddha.
[Q] So he's transmitting the teaching of the Buddha?
[A] Yes, of course! The Buddha is very much the boss! Buddha Shakyamuni has amazing disciples.

The Seventh Vajra Point: Activity

The reflection in the lapis lazuli floor

[Q] Can you become completely enlightened just by looking at the lapis lazuli floor? Would that give you enough guidance?
[A] Yes, I suppose so.
[Q] So why wouldn't Pratyekabuddhas be totally enlightened, as surely that's what they're doing. They are looking at the lapis lazuli floor. They have no other teacher.

[A] They have some dirt on their lapis lazuli floor. It's about the capacity of the receiver. The Pratyekabuddha is too lazy to clean it
[Q] But surely he's being guided by what he's seeing. He's cleaning the floor, and he's seeing more clearly, so why can't he become totally enlightened?
[A] Yes, but sometimes you clean and you think you have got it, and you can't get more than that.
[Q] So what additional thing do you need apart from the lapis lazuli floor, as the metaphor is that you just need the lapis lazuli floor and it will guide you?
[A] You need the floor, but there's all the dirt, so you have to clean it. And you've got to be not satisfied with what you're cleaning.
[Q] So the Pratyekabuddha is lazy?
[A] He's lazy relative to the Bodhisattvas
[Q] So, there's more than the lapis lazuli floor. He has to do it for other beings, as surely his lapis lazuli floor is for himself.
[A] Not the lapis lazuli floor, but there is more dirt to clean
[Q] So you can't become enlightened just by looking at the floor and cleaning it?
[A] Yes you can.
[Q] So why doesn't the Pratyekabuddha?
[A] He has left a little bit of dirt, not knowing that it's dirt.
[Q] But it is said the Pratyekabuddhas don't have the guidance of a Buddha which is why they can't become completely enlightened.
[A] No, it's not that. It's their motivation. Let's put it this way. Some Shravakas and Pratyekabuddhas end up thinking of some of the dirt as decoration.
[Q] So is this lapis lazuli that isn't fully cleaned the difference between one-fold egolessness and two-fold egolessness?
[A] Yes, it's basically about what they are satisfied with. It's like you have invited a guest to your home, and you only have 5 minutes to clean, so you just clean a little bit so that it's good enough to receive a guest. If you have more time and you're fussier, you think that much is not good, so you clean more.

[Q] So the basic idea is that everyone is looking at the lapis lazuli floor and seeing the reflection of Indra. The people who are looking at the floor aren't aware there is an Indra, all they see is a reflection. But there is an Indra reflecting in the floor. When you compare this example with the Buddhist view, one looks into the floor, and depending on how clean the floor is, one sees Shakyamuni or maybe even Mohammed or Jesus or whatever. Am I right in thinking that the difference is that there's nothing outside reflecting in the floor, whereas there is an Indra reflecting in the floor? It's not that there is a Buddha outside.
[A] Just in this example it's just the reflection that is the most important thing, not its source.
[Q] But it's a reflection of Buddha-nature, not the external Buddha, because there is no external Buddha?
[A] Yes, exactly.

[Q] You said that just by looking at the lapis lazuli floor even without knowing that it is a reflection, people would train and get enlightenment. But at least in the Vajrayana, and I suppose also in the Mahayana, it's said that by knowing it's a reflection we get enlightened quicker.
[A] Who knows about the Vajrayana? I think they say something like that.
[Q] But don't they also say it's better to know it's a reflection and not mistake it for the true thing? Mistakes have never been praised either in Vajrayana or Mahayana. What would Mahayana people say?
[A] That we don't know it's a reflection, that the reflection doesn't know it's causing some benefit, but there's some benefit anyway. Just like putting on lipstick using a mirror.
[Q] But the Buddha taught that it is a reflection.
[A] We know that now, but when it comes we don't know. Remember that.

[Q] Can this Buddha be said to act in any way? He sounds completely passive. It's the argument used by Buddhists against the idea of a permanent god. Such a being cannot exist because he cannot act, so he's completely pointless.
[A] That's coming! That's one of the vajra points, 'Activity'. The Buddha's action is very much your own interpretation.

[Q] You gave the example of the tent not being a soup, but how does the Buddha know it's not a soup?
[A] I don't think the Buddha will have that 'soup' or 'tent' or 'no-tent-no-soup' or any of that. It's more like we're stuck with the notion or phenomenon of 'tent'. We think that something that looks like this has to be a tent, and can't be soup. Out of that stuckness comes everything, like clinging to etiquette, behaviour, and all of that. For example, in some societies sticking out your tongue is polite. Some people are stuck with it, not literally, but we are stuck with certain phenomena like behaviour, etiquette, culture, and so on. There are so many. The big one is samsara and nirvana.

[Q] You say that the effect of the Buddha's activity depends on his prayers and merit. But when the Buddha made those prayers he was a Bodhisattva. He wasn't enlightened. He wasn't yet perfect. So in those prayers there's an aspect of purity, and an aspect that is impure. So why is it that only the pure aspects of his prayers are fulfilled?
[A] According to the Mahayana, the moment we talk about "when he was a Bodhisattva", it's all a reflection on the lapis lazuli.

[Q] In *The Words of My Perfect Teacher* when Patrul Rinpoche was explaining cause and effect, he said even the Buddhas have to see something of the effects of their actions, but according to the Uttaratantra, they're already gone beyond all that.
[A] That's no problem, because when the Buddhas see these effects, it's all a show.

[Q] When Maitreya transformed from the sick and mangy dog into Maitreya, was he in sambhogakaya form?
[A] I don't think so. He's a Bodhisattva. This is a pure, strict Mahayana class
[Q] So Asanga would just see a human form?
[A] He's not a Buddha yet.
[Q] I was thinking that if he were sambhogakaya, then everything would have been a pure realm, wouldn't it? He wouldn't have walked him around the streets on his shoulders
[A] He could.
[Q] What, in a pure realm?
[A] Yes, but Maitreya is not sambhogakaya, he's a tenth bhumi Bodhisattva in the state of *gyünta*, the last limit, the last stream, the last moment just before he becomes Buddha. When the right time comes, he will come. There are two chariots of Mahayana Buddhism, one is Nagarjuna and some say the other is Asanga, others say Maitreya. All of them are Bodhisattvas
[Q] But when you see images of Maitreya, he looks like he's sambhogakaya.
[A] He's wearing royal costume, that's all. Asanga is a very important figure for the lineage of Buddha-nature teachings for that. Asanga and Maitreya. Without these two, Nagarjuna and Asanga, Mahayana studies would be very difficult. Actually it's all thanks to a woman, a nun. She was in India and thought that as a woman she might not be able to do much. So this nun got married to a king, and out came Asanga, then she changed partners to a Brahmin and next came Vasubandhu.

[Q] I have a question about the rupakayas. You said that if we have merit, we could even see a breeze as the manifestation of the nirmanakaya?
[A] When we talk about nirmanakaya, the manifestation of the Buddha, I'm just saying that the activity and blessings of the Buddha are infinite. Buddha may manifest as a bridge, queen, king, minister, and all kinds of things. These are called *kyewa tulku*, 'manifestation of birth', like taking birth as a small insect.
[Q] So does that mean that everything that we see and every experience we encounter could be the manifestation of the Buddha?
[A] Yes, it could be. I was giving the example of the breeze. Sometimes the breeze comes and hits you, and you notice and appreciate it. And maybe it's not only that. Perhaps because of this breeze you may walk to a temple or a meditation centre, and directly through that you find the path. This can happen, all just because of a breeze.
[Q] I find it similar to what other teachings call 'taking the result as the path'.
[A] That's Vajrayana dialogue, 'taking the result as the path'.
[Q] Is this also part of the path seeing all experiences as the manifestation of dharmakaya?
[A] This is a good point, because Vajrayana is the result path, and now we realise that even in the Mahayana path, the causal path, there's a way to appreciate things as Buddha's manifestation.

[Q] Why does Maitreya go to the god realm to teach Asanga? He's a tenth bhumi Bodhisattva, so why does he manifest as a god?
[A] Oh, he has a steady job there! And he's going to come here anyway, so why hurry?
[Q] Does he just manifest everywhere? Is it easier to teach from the god realm?
[A] Yes
[Q] Do we hear better there? Is the communication better there?
[A] To the god beings, he's teaching now. I think these Bodhisattvas, in the midst of their humility and very wholesome qualities, sometimes they want to leave a few marks to tell the world they're not that ordinary, so they do other things. Like when we read Chandrakirti, we somehow feel he's a dry, argumentative, hopeless, cynical, irritating pandit. But he also milked a painted cow! I guess they do things like that. It's just my guess. They are all bodhisattvas, so we don't know.

[Q] I have a question about how karma manifests. Only a Buddha would know all causes, and within the unique realm of one's mindstream, the appearance of causes producing effects. For example, let's say I have sex fixation, so I have a karma or latent tendency of phallic fixation. And because of that latent tendency, I see phalluses wherever I go. So I find myself in Paris and there's the Eiffel Tower. Is it a case of (a) I have this latent tendency so I'm drawn to come to Paris …
[A] What is (a)?
[Q] (a) is that the inner causes, the inner latent tendencies, the karmic potentiality, the seeds are sitting there and looking for somewhere to project this apparent appearance, so I'm drawn to Paris.
[A] Wait. Where's Louise? Can you listen to this?
[Louise] I'm going to Paris!
[Q] Then I have this perfect apparent object that I can project. Or is it the case that because of the randomness of karma, I find other causes have drawn me to Paris, and hence the seed then manifests when I look at the Eiffel Tower. This is part (a). But we're also told that one doesn't need any of these outer influences, because I can dream and think of all these things without seeing any Eiffel Tower anywhere. So how are the causes coming together to make the effects? And the reason I ask this …
[A] Oh – you haven't finished?
[Q] The reason is that even though one may not have the awareness to be able to influence or edit those causes, if you could, it would be that your practice is working. Everything is mere thought whether there is outer manifestation or not.
[A] OK. I need a translator for this one! Louise, could you give a summary?
[Louise] I could have this wrong, but if everything is causes and conditions, and we've got this karma of being obsessed with penises, then something will appear to us. But you have to see it as a penis, because some other French person wouldn't even see it as penis-like. They'd just see a big metal structure.

[Q] That wasn't the point of the question. I said it was within the exclusive realm of my mindstream, not anybody else's mindstream.
[A] I can't see any connection between Eiffel Tower and the rest.
[Q] Why would you go on a pilgrimage if there were no connection with the Eiffel Tower?
[Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche] I have a good solution – Rinpoche will answer this one!
[Tulku Jigme Rinpoche] Of course I can't say that I understand the question, as Rinpoche said that only a Buddha could answer that! But I think I could be safe by saying I think it could be both. It might be both that your attraction to phalluses has made you see the Eiffel Tower, or that some other reason might have brought you to Paris. After all, Paris is not only made of Eiffel Towers, so it could have been some other thing that attracted you to the vicinity of the Eiffel Tower, and because it's so protruding, you can't miss it.
[Q] But even without going to Paris, I can still think or dream these things without any supposedly apparent outer appearance. So these causes resting in the alaya are coming randomly, but there must be other causes for them to manifest?
[Tulku Jigme Rinpoche] I don't know. I was wondering if it's also possible, just in the same way that our present dream-like conditions take us to this relative dream-like Paris, that there might be the same things happening in your double-dreaming situations. Perhaps the same things arise and it happens that way. Rinpoche just said it might be due to the influence of the person you're sitting next to.
[Gérard] You're flattering me, Rinpoche!

Effortlessness

[Q] Could I ask about effortlessness? Surely effortlessness is the fruit of perfection. If you have imperfections and you try to act in a spontaneous way, you will always tread on people's feet. So when looking at Buddha-nature itself, and talking about its spontaneous activity, how should a practitioner react to it? The Uttaratantra is giving us an example, but it's not an example for practice, surely. It's an example to inspire you to practice.
[A] Yes, that's right. Well of course if it is like a mahasandhi teaching, then they really have the compete details of how to do that. Although it is on the result level, when we talk about effortlessness, it's not wrong. In fact it's encouraged to aim for that, aspire for that, and act according to that, to already get used to that. For instance, even in the Mahayana, and not only in the Mahayana, but I would say confidently in all Buddhist meditation methods, there is not a single meditation method that does not say "not to dwell on the past, not to dwell on the future, be in the present". There's not a single meditation method in the whole of Buddhism that does not say that. To dwell on the past, I don't think so! And that non-dwelling is already effortlessness, already getting used to effortlessness. And beginners like us put a lot of effort into pursuing

effortlessness. And all those efforts are worthwhile, because our aim is to achieve effortlessness.
[Q] So, are we talking about mastery here? When you use the word 'effortlessness', it's like being a violin player. When you get really good, it's effortless. But a beginner trying to be effortless would sound awful. It's only when you're a master that you can be effortless
[A] I guess for the time being you could put it that way.

[Q] I have a question about the impartiality of the Buddha's compassion. I see a contradiction. You said that Buddha gives to beings as they need and as they want, and he knows what all beings need and want at every time and in all conditions. But at the same time he has no intention to help, so I find it difficult to understand how the rain falls indiscriminately on all the beings. I thought the Buddha's compassion was like a reflection, and you need beings and Buddhas for that to function. In that case his compassion is in response to beings' needs. But here it seems that whether or not they want the rain, they're going to get it.
[A] It's not about whether they want it or not, but whether they are able to receive it.
[Q] So it will rain down and the question is whether they will receive it?
[A] Yes, it's up to their merit. It's about whether their lapis lazuli is cleaned or not.
[Q] What about the expression *kangla kangdül*?
[A] It works very well here. As you clean the lapis lazuli, the reflection gives you the entire path, whatever is required.
[Q] Yes, but in the example of the rain that is the downpour of Buddha's compassion, is that helping to clean the lapis lazuli?
[A] Yes, it does. But why do you think there's intention necessary?
[Q] So the compassion will be appropriate to each and every being and their situation.
[A] But it's your Buddha that's reflecting (*rangsem sangyey*). It's your own mind that is the Buddha reflecting there.
[Q] So who's giving the teaching?
[A] On which level? Are we talking about the reflection or the rain?
[Q] The rain.
[A] When we are talking about the rain, then yes, we have to say that Buddha is giving the teaching. It's difficult, like when you're looking at a mirror and trying to put on lipstick. You can't really say that face in the mirror is yours, and at the same time you also can't say that it's not yours. Somehow there is a benefit, because if it were not for that reflection in the mirror, you might end up putting lipstick on your eyes or something. It works like that, and the reflection in the mirror doesn't have any wish to direct your hand to the right spot. The path works like that too. It has to be like that, because if part of this system fails, then Buddhism will become theistic. You know, when these Vajrayana people talk about guru they use this lapis lazuli example, and it really works.

View and Path

Blessings & genuine heart of sadness

[Q] What is a blessing?
[A] Blessing is *jinlab*, where *jin* means 'splendour' or 'quality' and *lab* is 'transformation', so basically we are talking about revealing the gold, the honey and all of that. Blessing is revealing that.
[Q] So it isn't active?
[A] What do you mean? Do you mean the gold coin is not active?
[Q] I was referring to the revealing.
[A] Yes, there's not so much motivation. Most of us don't even know we have lost it. Most of us don't even know we have a hole in our pocket. You've brought up a good point. You know how sometimes we think that something is wrong, like some kind of depression? We don't know what's wrong. We feel something is lacking. You know, it's been breakfast for 42 years, lunch for 42 years, dinner for 42 years, 6000 changes of t-shirt, 600 changes of jeans – all this and still something is lacking! You feel something is missing. It's almost like you know you were carrying a gold coin and now suddenly you feel that your pocket is a little light. Buddhists, especially people like Jamgön Kongtrül, talk about *kyoshey*, which is a very special kind of sadness. It's supposedly the gold coin knocking at your door saying, "Hey! Did you realise you lost me?" Certain kinds of depression, though not all of them, are supposedly good examples of why we have Buddha-nature. It's like when there's a fire inside the oven and you feel the heat outside. Buddha-nature is saying something to you, but most ordinary people don't know what it is, so instead they surrender to Three Jewels of a very different kind: LSD, marijuana and Prozac!

Here we are discussing the sadness that Trungpa Rinpoche refers to as the "genuine heart of sadness". It's like the fourth stanza in chapter 6 of the Madhyamakavatara, which describes what happens when people hear about emptiness:

> 6:4 Even an ordinary being may, when hearing of emptiness,
> Repeatedly feel immense joy surging within,
> Bringing forth tears that moisten his eyes,
> And making the hairs on his body quiver.

Some people will have tears in their eyes, goose bumps and great joy. That joy could be this same sadness. Some kinds of depression could also be a certain type of sadness, like when we have the feeling that something is not enough. It could also be something else. We usually have ego and pride, and this pride is like a rope that binds us. It binds us so tightly that it chokes us. And sometimes

through our practice, this binding, that pride, gets broken. And when the pride is damaged or broken, then there is a sense of relaxation because the binding has been broken, and some people might think that is also that *kyoshey*, that sadness that we were talking about.

[Q] You talked about how ego is like a lasso or rope that binds us, and how the genuine heart of sadness is like this rope breaking. Could you explain this?
[A] We were talking about *kyoshey*. Ironically, the fact that we know to harm others is one reason that we can have compassion. The logic is that if you know how to harm someone, that means you know what harm is. You know it is something that you don't want for yourself, but instead you want it for others that you don't like. We are saying that if you are dealing with a person who knows how to harm, then he is someone 'negotiable' so to speak. Someone who doesn't know about harming others cannot be taught compassion. This is a little bit difficult to express.
[Q] And that is the lasso that the Dharma breaks?
[A] It is like a vessel. Let me give you an example. Let's suppose you are very angry person who really harms others, and I'm here to teach you about love and compassion. It's very difficult to teach you, so I do exactly to you what you do to others. And when you feel the pain, I ask you if that's what you want. And if you don't want that pain, you can start to see that others also don't want it. So you're negotiable. I can deal with you. Now let's say that you are from Jupiter, where beating another person is a form of greeting. Although there's a lot of pain, you don't think about it like that. So as a human being, I cannot talk to you. How would I begin? You need a teacher from Jupiter! So that's what I mean. If someone understands harm, it basically means they have a mind or cognition. Because of this, we say that all sentient beings are objects of compassion because, after all, we should have a purpose when we are sending compassion. You don't just send compassion without anyone to send it to!

[Q] I'd like to ask about disgust towards samsara. I think it can lead some people to an incorrect understanding, where instead of taking refuge in the Buddha, they take refuge in doing nothing. They ask their teachers if they can stay in Dharma centres, as then they don't have to be stained by samsara. For me, that's a very easy way of acting, and these people are less prosperous than they would be if they developed their capacity in samsara. I am a fashion designer, and for a long time my designs were very complicated, and finally I realised that simplicity is the best. Now I'm prosperous, but I had to suffer for a long time, in order to be able to work less afterwards. So isn't it necessary to know samsara very well in order to reach nirvana?
[A] If you want to learn about samsara, you have to study and practice Dharma. That's the only way, because the samsaric teachers will never teach you about samsara. They will teach you all kinds of hallucinations. You have to practice hearing, contemplation and meditation, and you'll understand more and more

about samsara, and eventually you'll realise the meaning of Nagarjuna's famous words: "there is no samsara, and that is nirvana".
[Q] If we all have Buddha-nature inherent within us, why do we need blessings?
[A] We talked about blessing before. It is more about revealing or receiving.
[Q] Protection has an aspect of clarity. If there is no defiled nature in reality, then it might seem that if you have a complaint then you're the problem. But what about a sense of clarity or protection that says no, this is enough? How does that fit in?
[A] In the path, it all fits in.

How does prayer work?

[Q] I don't understand how prayer works. When you pray for someone who is sick, that person already has a certain number of causes and conditions, karma, which will bring a result. Either they will be cured, or get worse or die. So what do you do when you pray for that person? Do you add another cause?
[A] Yes.
[Q] And whether it's stronger or weaker, it makes it possible to have a result?
[A] Yes, prayer is a very big cause. And another is whether the person has the merit to be cured from the disease. There are many levels. Let's say someone is sick, and has great karma to recover, but he needs several things. Let's say he needs some vitamins, medicine, and all kinds of treatment, but that one important cause for his recovery is prayer, especially a prayer from certain beings. And if he has the merit, that prayer will work. That's on the ideal level. It could also be that someone is sick, and nothing can cure him, but he has enough karma to have someone pray so that all his negativity comes together so to speak. Then although he will not really recover from the sickness, he will exhaust the karma. Only the Lord of Speech can teach all these subtle movements of karma.

As a Mahayana practitioner, bodhicitta is so important. And that comprises both relative and ultimate bodhicitta. They are equally important. But for ordinary beings like us, ultimate bodhicitta is difficult. That's what Longchenpa said, anyway. But there is something that we can do, based on our ability and our capacity. We should really try to emphasise relative bodhicitta. And within relative bodhicitta there's aspiration and application. And of course both are important, but application is difficult. We have no wisdom, no ability, no money, and no time. But what we can do is aspiration bodhicitta. So for beginners like us, we can do aspiration bodhicitta. It's economical and it's really beneficial. Because by doing aspiration bodhicitta, the first thing that happens is that you become kind.

Patrul Rinpoche talks a lot about kindness. What makes a person kind is having a good aspiration (*mönlam*). When you do prayers, especially when you do prayers

for others, they are not only a seed, but also already the shoot and the flower of kindness. And when you have kindness, you will have love and compassion, and then every enlightened quality will come. It will be like during the monsoon time, which is during the summer, when water bursts out from all kinds of places. Everywhere is wet. Likewise, even if you don't want them, all the enlightened qualities will just happen. That's why Tsele Natsol Rangdrol said, "There are many people who know how to be kind, but not so many people who understand about aspiration". I think aspiration is really important.

[Q] Sometimes prayer works, but obviously sometimes it does not. I've never quite understood the mechanism by which prayer works. Could you please say a few words about that and relate that to the teachings on the Uttaratantra shastra?
[A] There's a difference between dedication and prayers. Dedication is something that you have done, a good deed, which you then dedicate. For prayer or aspiration, it doesn't matter whether you've done it, you're going to do it, or you are doing it. You do this for a certain aim. Based on the Uttaratantra shastra, I think you could say that prayer is cleaning the lapis lazuli.

Uttaratantra and the Vajrayana

[Q] You quoted the Buddha saying that the absolute can only be realised through faith. But I think there's some doubt about whether the Buddha really existed as we do. And when you mentioned the story of Guru Rinpoche, I kind of find it hard to see how to bridge the gap between us. Everything seems to be so remote. I'm trying to find a way to relate to these stories
[A] You mean stories of Guru Rinpoche and the Buddha and stuff like that?
[Q] Yes.
[A] That's why the spiritual companion (*gewe shenyen*) is important, the guru if you like. Because right now he or she is the only person you can relate to. Things like 'lotus born' and 'antelope-like calves' are a little bit difficult. So it's good to have someone who likes pizzas, someone who yawns but not always, someone who yawns nicely. An extraordinary yawn!
[Q] So even though you're trying to teach the class strictly Mahayana, you can't really avoid the Vajrayana?
[A] No, this they have even in the Mahayana. Actually I'm sure the Vajrayana got it from here. You know the Mahayana's reverence to the guru, my goodness. At the end of the Prajñaparamita-sutra there is the story of the Bodhisattva Sadaprarudita "Always Weeping" (*Taktungu* in Tibetan). His story is amazing. Someone should translate it. I don't think the Vajrayana people have those kinds of stories.
[Q] The text is called the Uttaratantra, but it seems to me that the Shentongpas practice something very similar to the atiyoga, which is a Vajrayana practice
[A] Rangtongpas also do atiyoga, I think.
[Q] Is this Vajrayana?

[A] This is Mahayana. This can be explained as Vajrayana, Jamgön Kongtrül Lodrö Thayé did it, and I think the Kagyupas did it.
[Q] What would be the main difference between a Mahayana and a Vajrayana explanation of this text?
[A] I don't know! I think in the Vajrayana you can talk about all these things based on prana, bindu and nadi. Therefore they can talk about it in terms of the primordially existing mandala. And you know for the Vajrayana, they'll say that other beings must be understood as deities because of Buddha-nature. And this is why Jamgön Kongtrül Rinpoche said if you eat one grape with the pride of a deity, that is equal merit to servicing 10,000 Buddhas from the 10,000 directions for 10,000 years. This is all Vajrayana bragging! And also the time is different. Here in the Mahayana, time is the actual time as we think of it, but in the Vajrayana time is very much based on the movement of sun and moon. It's not really the outside sun and moon. Actually the outside sun and moon are only there because there is a sun and moon inside. Basically whatever is outside exists inside. They are just a reflection of what's inside. So for instance, you know we generally say the tenth day is Guru Rinpoche day so we have to do *tsok*, like we're celebrating some kind of anniversary. But actually, at that time, the movement of the inner moon and sun is passing through a certain channel. And at that time if you can do things that are not interfered with by inhibitions, such as partaking of the substance of bala and stuff like that. If you can take a plate of shit and a plate of salad and you don't blink your eyes, if you see no difference between them. Basically the whole practice is a bit like a trumpet. There's a trumpet that's like the nadi, and then a wind that is like the prana that goes through the trumpet, and there is a blower. But right now our trumpet is so rusty! There are lots of defilements, lots of clinging to the self, and lots of obscurations – outer, inner and secret obscurations. So because of all that we need to straighten and clear this trumpet. Stuff like that. All I've been telling you is half true and half exaggerated, so you shouldn't take any of this part seriously. That's it.

[Q] If you're doing your practice, and everything becomes sambhogakaya, a pure realm and it's not a mind trip, but it actually falls away, and suddenly it's Guru Rinpoche …
[A] Are you talking about Vajrayana?
[Q] What else? Anyway, if this happens, and everything really becomes this, what happens for that to become dharmakaya? Is it just recognition? Or is there still more purification, even though suddenly it's Guru Rinpoche and all these dakinis and everything. What makes it dharmakaya?
[Q] You are talking about Vajrayana! I guess Vajrayana has lots of methods to invoke dharmakaya.
[Q] What if it actually becomes this? It's not that you're sitting on your cushion and practicing and then you stop and have a cup of coffee. What happens it this actually becomes reality? How would it then become dharmakaya?
[A] Then you're already there.

[Q] It is dharmakaya at that point.
[A] They're inseparable. That's what the text says.

Why does the path have two accumulations?

[Q] If the main paradox is that even that which is primordially pure is accompanied by temporary defilements, is that the reason why in human existence the path is geared towards clearing the defilements instead of preventing them?
[A] Yes, you could say that. It's not about prevention, as we're too late! Although one could abandon and purify our old habits, and that could be referred as prevention.
[Q] If the qualities of the Buddha are established in Buddha-nature, why are there two accumulations? Surely there should be only one accumulation, namely purification of defilements. Why is there any need to accumulate merit at all?
[A] They are actually one. The lamas, they want their disciples to work hard, so it's divided into two! It's really like that in a way, I'm not joking! Maybe I'm half joking. Cleaning the window is not other than the appearance the clean window. When we talk about accumulation, there's accumulation of merit and accumulation of wisdom. The accumulation of merit is a sort of relative path, but it's a very important path, because it gives you a certain ability and strength. Are you a Rangtongpa, by the way? Because they talk like that!
[Q] But the text talks about the two accumulations. Why does Maitreya talk about the accumulation of merit?
[A] Because there is a path. That's the only reason.
[Q] It's path language?
[A] Yes. I think the Rangtongpas talk just like you! They say if the qualities are already there, why do we need to accumulate anything? Longchenpa's answer is that the entire path is to purify the defilements. But sometimes it's nice to think that we're cleaning the window, rather than just cleaning the dirt! Sometimes it's nice to think we're making something, producing a clean window rather than just cleaning the dirt!
[Q] Why?
[A] There are many reasons! You can keep the window, whereas you have to abandon the dirt. It's very soothing to hear that you can keep something, and that's why there are words like obtaining or achieving (*tobpa*). How would it sound if all the Buddhist prayers only talked about cutting things down, cleaning, and so on? That's not as encouraging!

[Q] So when you are accumulating merit from the perspective of elimination, what does that mean? That seems to me extraordinarily fruitful, because the accumulation of merit sounds like spiritual materialism, where you build things for benefit. It doesn't sound like liberating at all. Much accumulation is not liberating. I feel that people are being trapped by accumulation. So what you

just said is immensely fruitful. How can you accumulate from the perspective of elimination?
[A] Because you already have it. So the only thing that you have to do is eliminate.
[Q] I'd like to ask this as a path question rather than a view question. How do you accumulate from the perspective of elimination? Because if you accumulate from the perspective of accumulation, you're not causing liberation, you're causing samsara. You're becoming wealthy spiritually, and that accumulation cannot be a cause of liberation.
[A] Let's go back to the glass. When you wash the dirt, what is your motivation? Is it just to wash the dirt? Don't you care about the clean window? I think you are doing it to accumulate or construct the clean window. When you are giving, engaging in acts of generosity, then you are purifying or eliminating miserliness. When you are chanting mantras, you are eliminating the defilements of the prana, and that is not other than accumulating your prana as vajra speech. As we explained this morning, they are like the sun and its rays. I guess you can choose one, but you will be doing both. Even with purification, like Vajrasattva, you still accumulate mantras. Basically accumulation is like improving a power or ability, and accumulating the power means eliminating the weakness.

[Q] You said that the activity of the Buddha is somehow dependent on the aspiration of the Bodhisattva during the path. It sounds to me more like a result of achievement, rather than a result of elimination. It sounds a little bit compounded.
[A] It's the same. Elimination is an achievement.
[Q] Elimination is the achievement of freedom. But I understood that somehow the aspiration is necessary, it helps to create something.
[A] When we talk about 'achievement', we're saying you cannot create this. It's not as though you didn't have the Buddha qualities before and then you somehow add them in. It's not like you add a lock of hair for each month that you're accumulating merit! We can't do that. You cannot create the Buddha's quality. It's all there already. But you can eliminate the defilements that block it, and then you will see it.

Defilements, emotions & the origin of suffering

[Q]{Gérard} I didn't understand the symbolism of the young man and the elephant. It seems that the young man is staring out of the window, and then suddenly he sees a beautiful elephant, although you didn't mention that the elephant is female.
[A] You didn't know?
[Q]{Gérard} Perhaps that young man didn't clean the window well enough! Now, when we consider that love for the elephant, or the feeling that you have of missing the Buddha-nature, are these of the same nature of human love? Does

that pure love, that longing for the Buddha-nature, have the same nature as ordinary love, human love? Can ordinary love be used on the path? Can it lead to the final love, total love?
[A] The love for the elephant?
[Q]{Gérard} Any kind of love! The love of men for women and women for men, or universal love, the love of sentient beings!
[A] First of all, you're admitting that you are vigorous!
[Q]{Gérard} I don't have to admit anything! This is Madhyamika. You've got to prove something!
[A] This question about love is a dangerous one! As we said before, our human understanding of what harms people and what benefits them is like a sign, or perhaps we should say, it's like the radiance or light of the Buddha-nature manifesting. In this sense, I you can say that it is the same with love. But in regard to the young man and the elephant, there's something kinky about that kind of love! You used the words "young" and "female elephant", so it sounds like it involves a lot of panting!
[Q]{Gérard} That is your perception!
[A] Well, if you do have that kinky kind of love, then you definitely need to clean your window better! Because I heard that this elephant is actually half man, especially the lower part!
[Q]{Gérard} But Rinpoche, you just said that all emotions are wisdom!
[A] Well, I have to say that your emotion is a mould. I'm not judging here. By all means have fun with this half-man, half-woman elephant! Because after all, this is all the mould, and who cares about the mould, as long as we can get the statue? We should be careful with the mould until we have the statue, but once we have the statue, it doesn't matter. And it looks like you have a very good mould!

[Q] When it is said that the emotions are the origin of wisdom, it sounds like what you were saying before when we were looking at the qualities of Buddha-nature like bliss and permanence, and you said that this 'bliss' is beyond bliss and non-bliss. Surely we would never say that the Buddha-nature is beyond good and evil, would we? Because we talk about Buddha-nature having qualities that are perfected, like the Buddha's tongue is the perfection of our tongue. We always talk in terms of virtue. We would never say that Buddha has transcendent hatred or non-bliss, we'd always say transcendent bliss.
[A] Let's take words like virtue *(gewa),* excellence *(zangpo),* and peace *(shiwa).* Even on a very mundane level, virtue is considered to refer to something that will soothe you, and remove your pain. And when we talk about the Buddha-nature being virtue, I guess we have to talk about its effect of removing the extremes, because the extremes are the pain. So yes, many times we talk about Buddha-nature as virtue in the sense of removing all the pain of the extremes. But as we said earlier, if we were to say this in more of a Madhyamika style, we might say it is beyond virtue and non-virtue, which has the same meaning.
[Q] Don't the tantras talk of supreme hatred, or supreme anger?

[A] It's the same. But now we're touching tantra, so maybe we should discuss this some other time.

[Q] Is enlightenment an emotion?
[A] Basically, even Buddha-nature is a label, and we have to use labels, because we are on the path, and that is the best we can do. As long as it has all the qualities that Maitreya is stating here, we can call it whatever we like: enlightenment, god nature, or whatever.

[Q] When you talk about elimination, could we say that to really eliminate you need to recognise? For example, if we are aware of being selfish, "I, I, I", is that a small realisation, like a seed that's growing in the earth? Or is realisation only possible when the seed is fully grown and flourished.
[A] "I, I, I" – like admitting we have ego? I think admitting that we have ego, pride and all these negative emotions is already a very good step. When the seed is fully grown, that's enlightenment. What you need in the beginning is to know that you have the seed. As I said at the beginning, you need to know that the defilements are removable (*drima dralrung*). That's a very good understanding. I would not call it a realisation, but that understanding alone does many good things, and it will make samsara easy to disintegrate.

[Q] Why is the wrapping evidence of Buddha-nature?
[A] Just go back to the reasons for the Three Jewels. The four paradoxes give a very good answer. The paradox is this – you have the Buddha-nature, and even all the Buddha qualities, but they are not apparent, because you are wrapped by defilements. And then there is a motivation to clear the defilements. Why is there that motivation? Because you think something is wrong. All these are the characteristics of the *rig*, the *kham* that we have been talking about.

[Q] We read statements like 'thoughts are dharmakaya even when wrapped in afflicted emotions'. How does such a statement fit in the system described here in the Uttaratantra shastra?
[A] Not so much, as I'm explaining the Uttaratantra-shastra more in the sutra way at the moment. But if I would explain it based on Jamgön Kongtrül Lodrö Thayé's commentary, then this would fit very well.

[Q] When we speak of beginningless time and temporary emotions, is there a contradiction?
[A] You have a Rangtongpa tendency! I guess there are many ways to answer this. When we talk about the beginning (*togma*), we are talking about ultimate truth. And ultimately, the emotions do not exist, because they don't have beginning, middle and end – all the usual Madhyamika analysis applies here. This is what I was talking about earlier, about how the last example of the mould and the statue really complements mahasandhi. Based on that, we have quotes like "one hundred emotions, one hundred wisdoms" and so on, based on the ultimate

level. But when we talk about temporary or adventitious (*loburwa*), then we are talking about the path. We are talking about the relative truth. Because when we talk about *togma*, we are talking about ultimate truth. If you say there is a beginning of an emotion, then there is a truly existing emotion. That's why emotions are temporary.
[Q] But when you say beginningless, it could be understood that they have always been there.
[A] We say that it exists from the beginningless time, but that's the only way to talk when you try to unite the relative and ultimate truth, isn't it?
[Q] Isn't the difficulty coming from the translation of *loburwa* as 'temporary'? It doesn't mean temporary, it means adventitious. It means that it's not part of the thing that it's appearing with. It's temporary because it's adventitious, isn't it?
[A] Maybe the word 'temporary' is not good. The word *loburwa* has that connotation of 'it's not that'. But when we talk about defilements, we're talking about the path. We have to. How can we talk about the baby before the womb? You have to talk about them as co-emergent (*lhenkyey*). Now we're talking about a pregnant woman. I think our problem is that we don't understand the meaning of elimination or liberation (*dralwa*). This is so difficult to understand. There is nothing to liberate, and that is the liberation. Actually, the fact that there is nothing to liberate is a big part of why it's removable (*drima dralrung*).

[Q] Just as we say there is no beginning to the defilements, presumably we can also say there is no end to them. So it's not like they're going to go away, as you said earlier. So liberation is just realising they weren't there in the first place.
[A] In this regard, yes. If you reach liberation, then, yes, of course there is no end to it. But relatively and individually, there is an end to defilements. Even though relatively and individually, there is no beginning to them.
[Q] How can that be?
[A] The relative is like that, as I was saying! It's completely irrational, so don't analyse too much! When we talk purely from the Buddha-nature's point of view, there is no beginning, and therefore there is no end. But as soon as we talk about confusion about the Buddha-nature, then we are talking about a path. That's relative truth. There is no such thing as all sentient beings one day unwrapping everything, which would be the end of samsara. There is no such thing as that, the big end, because then you are talking about ultimate truth again. But individually, someone like Gérard Godet can practice, unwrap, and then experience the relative end. But that's only on the relative level. And that's how it is. That's a good understanding now! Basically, there is the logic of cause, condition and effect. And then there is Buddha-nature, beyond cause, condition and effect. But to think about or talk about these two together is difficult! On the one hand, we were talking about pre-dirty and pre-clean. And on the other hand, after it is dirty, post-dirt, then we can also talk about the clean, because there is dirt.

[Q] If we've already been enlightened since beginningless time, and all emotions are impermanent, why did all this suffering start? Why are we not already enlightened, and having as much fun as the Buddhas?
[A] Because the baby hasn't come out. We're still pregnant. That gold coin hasn't been found. Isn't that what you're asking?
[Q] I'm asking why all this confusion started. If enlightenment has been there since beginningless time, why did all the suffering start?
[A] We're talking about the beginning, which is a very difficult question. The beginning is the problem again, because then we have to talk about the absolute beginning of suffering, and you will have the consequence that it is a permanent, independent phenomenon. And if it is truly existent, then we cannot abandon it. If there is a beginning to suffering, then it becomes something independent, a truly existing defilement, and so you cannot abandon it. Actually, I guess that this is something that we have to meditate about. The Buddha was asked that same question, and he answered by not saying anything. It's one of the fourteen questions that he answered by not saying anything. Because the moment that you say anything, then it becomes a concept, a phenomenon. These questions are seeking to use the ultimate means and logic to find a relative answer. All the questions that have to do with the origin or the beginning are all analytical, and all belong to the time of establishing the ultimate truth. And when you do that, then all the conventional truth is dismantled. It doesn't exist. It's like saying to a mundane person, "these are nails, this is flesh, this is blood – so where's my hand?" You cannot really talk like that, but it's a path that you can practice, and then get rid of the attachment to the phenomenon called 'hand', because you will realise that it doesn't exist. And time is also like that. I guess the question is coming more from some kind of amazement at partially knowing a little bit of interdependent reality. Everything is so interdependent, and when you really establish this interdependent logic on the subtlest level, it really pokes a lot of holes in this rational world. We like to think that we're modern, we're advanced, we're scientists, everything is interdependent, and everything has causes and conditions, and so on. But we still have a habitual pattern that likes to believe that there are certain things that are permanent and not interdependent.

[Q] I have a question about when this confusion starts. Couldn't we just say it starts now, as now we have the ability to recognise Buddha-nature or fail to do so, so there's no beginning.
[A] I think you can say that, because after all, when we say 'beginning' or 'end', we can only talk about now. When we say 'yesterday', we are talking about it now. We're talking about our idea of yesterday. We cannot bring yesterday back and then talk about it. Whenever we talk about time, it's difficult to understand, because time is the biggest, most deluded and yet most pervasive confusion that we have! Even how time affects you on the relative level, one hour can be very long, or it can be very short. It's such a relative thing.

[Q] Is it all habit? Is there anything we learn that's new?

[A] The old ones are past, gone. I cannot say that they don't come back. However, for my ears it works better to say that everything we know is new. For example, when you think about what happened yesterday, you can't bring back yesterday to think about it
[Q] But this tent was here yesterday, which is how I recognise it.
[A] But you're doing that now.
[Q] Yes, but I know I'm here because of yesterday.
[A] But you are not going to yesterday's tent.
[Q] No, but I recognise it, so I know I'm here, because I experience it before.
[A] That's fine, but the fact is you are not going inside yesterday's tent. And on top of that, yesterday's you has also gone.
[Q] But don't we learn everything from past memory?
[A] Haven't you watched Terminator 3? We learn from the future too! The future is very important. I think it's more important than the past. Who cares about the past? Of course, though, the present is the most important, isn't it?
[Q] Don't we need to remember yesterday's teachings?
[A] I was just teasing her!
[Q] When you're born, do you recognise your mother from the experience of your body and hers, or from karmic memory?
[A] All together.

[Q] What, technically, are the obscurations *nyomjuki dripa*?
[A] They are *samten shi*, the four samadhis without insight wisdom meditation. You could put it this way. If you have only shamatha and no vipashyana, you will manage to have a really stable mind, a mind that is absolutely under your control. And also your body, if you go through the perfection of the body (*shinjang*). And the highest result of the shamatha is amazing. It looks identical to enlightenment, because all the gross thoughts and defilements have been suppressed. But the gross thoughts and defilements are only 'sleeping' or latent, and that is really dangerous. Likewise, you can even practice vipashyana one-sidedly, motivated only by wanting to get out of samsara. Then you might place a lot of emphasis on wisdom, especially the wisdom to defeat the defilements. And because that's your aim, you might not really be bothered about defeating the cognitive obscurations. So basically you have no compassion. The great compassion is not really necessary to escape from samsara, and you can really reach that state and remain there a long time. And you'll never go back to samsara, that's for sure, because you've destroyed all the causes of samsara. So you'll remain in that state. You might wonder why is there a problem with that? It sounds good, especially if you can attain it within three lifetimes! And you don't have to cut your limbs or anything. This is a really good example of how our limited mind cannot conceive of things, because if you understand it on a higher level, that state has a lot of suffering. It's not the suffering of birth, old age, sickness or death that we know. But there are two kinds of suffering: the suffering of change, and all-pervasive suffering. When we talk about the Buddha's compassion, most of us think about it in terms of having some kind of

sympathy towards people who have pain. But that compassion is not uncommon compassion. Hindus and even Islam talk about this kind of compassion. But the compassion that has no aim, the non-dualistic compassion, that's exclusive to Mahayana Buddhism.

[Q] Why do the Arhats have the suffering of change? Or did you just mean that they have all-pervasive suffering?
[A] They definitely have all-pervasive suffering, because they're supposed to be woken up. And there are other examples of suffering, like how Maudgalyana was beaten up, or how Shariputra didn't know whether the layman Palchey had the merit to become a monk or not, things like that.
[Q] But I thought Shravakas and Pratyekabuddhas renounce the suffering of change when the see the qualities of the higher realms?
[A] I have to check this. My mind is not clear on this one. But they definitely have all-pervasive suffering, the first suffering. I think this is explained quite well in the Madhyamakavatara right at the beginning. Even the tenth bhumi Bodhisattva's meditative state is suffering. Even they are objects of compassion, because they still have clinging to marks or characteristics (*tsenma*).

[Q] We talked about removing emotional veils. How do we remove cognitive veils?
[A] The whole Mahayana path concentrates on that. It's what makes the Mahayana Mahayana.

[Q] I don't understand this thing that is primordially pure and temporarily cleaned. I don't understand this "temporary".
[A] The defilements are temporary.
[Q] Does it have any connection with this lapis lazuli floor?
[A] Yes, because the lapis lazuli has defilements that need to be cleaned.
[Q] Does "temporary" mean that you can clean the dirt but it will come back?
[A] No, it just means that the dirt is not the lapis lazuli. It's a separate entity.
[Q] But if you say it is temporarily cleaned, that means it will get dirty again.
[A] When we talk about enlightenment, we are talking about two kinds of enlightenment. They are actually one, but one is the real one, the ultimate enlightenment that is primordially pure and all of that. The other one is what we talk about in reference to the path. We practice and meditate, and so we clean the dirt, the removable temporary defilements.

[Q] When you make the distinction between the pre-clean window and the cleaned window, logically if you talk about pre-cleaned it's also pre-dirty. It's as separate from the cleaned as it is from the dirt. Yet there is some kind of similarity between cleaned and pre-cleaned, which there isn't between pre-cleaned and dirt. We have clean in contrast with dirt, and although Buddha nature is beyond this distinction, we say it's clean.
[A] Yes, for the sake of communication, we say it's clean

[Q] Why?
[A] When you talk about pre-clean, there is no dirt.
[Q] But if you say Buddha nature is beyond all distinctions, including those between clean and dirty, why do we say it's clean? Why should virtue be preferable to non-virtue?
[A] Actually, it isn't! I think I would dare to say this! During the path, when we talk about virtue, we are referring to something auspicious and without pain, so I guess we prefer the word 'virtue'. This is mentioned so often. For example, right at the beginning of the Bodhicharyavatara there's a verse about the blessings of the Buddha and the merit of sentient beings:

1:5 As when a flash of lightning rends the night,
And in its glare shows all the dark black clouds had hid,
Likewise rarely, through the Buddhas' power,
Virtuous thoughts arise, brief and transient, in the world.

As I think we discussed, let's say you're a child from a family where there has been no religion for seven generations. But you still have the ethic that you should not cheat or steal, and even if you don't have that ethic, you don't like it when it happens to you. So where does this disliking come from? I think the Theravadins stress this non-religious, non-cultural, non-traditional ethic or morality a lot. They call it "shame and fear of wrong-doing". This is like a reflection of Buddha-nature, and all this sounds like Buddha nature is virtuous, so that's how you have to understand it. But this virtue is not really a traditional or cultural virtue. It's like an aimless virtue or burden-less virtue. It's virtue without foreplay.

[Q] Isn't non-virtue linked to attachment to hope?
[A] Generally, as Chandrakirti said, "those who are unwise engage in non-virtuous actions and go to hell. Those who are unwise engage in virtuous actions and go to heaven. And those who are wise transcend virtuous and non-virtuous actions and attain liberation". This applies very much here. But if you're in a Vajrayana community, they will almost say, "Everything is Buddha nature"

[Q] Are non-virtuous actions bound to belief in ego?
[A] Yes. Basically, something non-virtuous is inauspicious and creates pain. This is why in the Mahayana, they believe there are only three auspicious things that happened in this world: the fact that the Buddha came, that he taught, and that there was a Sangha, people who appreciated his teaching. And this is because auspiciousness is judged or measured based on how much the situation is going against this primordially non-existing dirt. It's difficult. In Buddhism, you have to say the dirt does not exist in reality. And Buddhists don't only say that, they even dare to say that the path that clears away this dirt, the medicine that cures the disease, is not real. The whole process of healing does not exist. It's like looking at a fire ring. There is no fire ring. You just see it because there are

certain conditions, such as someone who is moving a fire very quickly. As soon as one of those causes stops, for example if the person holding the fire breaks his wrist, that's the end of the fire ring.
[Q] So auspiciousness is measured by how much a situation goes against this primordially non-existing dirt?
[A] Any act or motivation that goes against these temporary defilements is interpreted as auspiciousness.

[Q] A few days ago you said that virtuous action. But we have to ensure our view, meditation and action are complementary, so if the final view is beyond all views, wouldn't it also mean that there is no distinction between virtuous and non-virtuous actions?
[A] That's true. But the way we define virtue, especially in Mahayana Buddhism, is something that does not create suffering. Basically bliss. And the path of no extremes and no characteristics really will free you from pain. So this is why you can say emptiness is the highest virtue.

[Q] When we have the merit to attend teachings and see the teachers on this lapis lazuli floor, it's great, but as you said, for mere talk we like to find fault in the best things. We see the reflections, but we say, "It's OK, but they're upside down". We always get these kinds of obstacles. What can we do about that?
[A] You just have to clean! Generate merit and clean the lapis lazuli again and again.

[Q] You were talking about karmic payback and the ass-kissing thing. So if someone said to me "You look really gorgeous" or "you're a great tarot reader", and I'm trying to be humble so I say "no, I'm rubbish, I'm crap", I'm basically denying my Buddha-nature. Is that a denial? Is that creating a future where I'm basically going to end up complimenting them all the time?
[A] Well, it's good to be humble. That's already cleaning a bit of your lapis lazuli. But if you're humble and just pretending, then that might create a subtle, non-obvious but very stubborn gooey kind of dirt on your lapis lazuli.

[Q] Could trying to be humble, which would be a bit pretending to be humble, couldn't that be better than just letting yourself be really proud? Couldn't being pretentiously humble be at least a start?
[A] That's good.
[Q] If somebody were genuinely spontaneous, would nobody feel like they'd had their toes trodden on, or would that depend on people's merit?
[A] Generally, they won't step on people's toes and if they did, it would benefit them.
[Q] If we're all Buddhas from the very beginning, how can we tread on anyone's toes?
[A] OK. You have to realise that everyone is the Buddha from the beginning. That's the whole thing. We haven't realised it. Because of the dirt on the lapis

lazuli, that's why there are people's toes, and that's why we step on them. What you are saying is a bit like this: if it's only a reflection, then why should I try to become like that, like a reflection? But the thing is you don't know it's a reflection.

Are there other sentient beings?

[Q] I have heard from a khenpo that the appearance of other sentient beings is our projection, but their mind stream is not?
[A] This is tricky! When you think about someone else's mind stream, that's your projection, but relatively of course we have to say that other person has a mind stream, separate from you.
[Q] If I have understood correctly, enlightenment is the end of samsara and the liberation of all sentient beings. The moment we are enlightened, we stop seeing different beings, so we call this liberation of all sentient beings. But if this is correct, then how is it that after the enlightenment of all the historical Buddhas, I am still not enlightened?
[A] For an enlightened being, there is not even the notion of sentient beings, so there is no enlightened being. There's no notion of time. As soon as we talk about somebody getting enlightened 2,500 years ago, or some other people who are trying to get enlightened 2,500 years later, then we are talking about time, space, and relative truth. From that point of view, yes, we do have some people who are enlightened and some people who are not. This is why I always have doubts about whether I really want enlightenment or not. If I were to achieve enlightenment, then I could never enjoy a detective film. Because the whole point of enjoying a detective film is that you don't know the result until the end. But as an enlightened being, you have no time. Everything is known instantly, so there's no enjoyment. There's no World Cup. This would be so sad! No football, or if there were, you would instantly know the results from all the World Cups to come! You would know who scores, everything, instantly with no slow-motion replay!

[Q] Is there one mind or many minds? And is there one Buddha-nature or many Buddha-natures?
[A] That's a difficult question! First, let me give you the standard answer. Ultimately, there's no one, no two or any of that. Relatively, there are as many as you project. But you see there's a problem here. It's quite good that there are all these questions, and I think this is why Jigme Lingpa taught the *Yeshe Lama*. Because if everything, including all sentient beings, is your projection, then you could argue that it becomes quite difficult to practice bodhicitta as a path. But the mind-only schools can easily answer that. They say that it's just because you still have a residue of clinging to the idea of an externally existing sentient being to which you must have compassion. During the path, meaning while you are in the deluded state, there are bhumis, path, defilements, attainments and all of

that. Therefore there is bodhicitta. This is also a difficult question because when you reach enlightenment – let's say you reach enlightenment this year, but it takes me another hundred years – if there are two truly existing two Buddha-natures, then there will be seniority and hierarchy problems! As in, "finally you made it"!
[Q] So you're saying there's one mind?
[A] No. Do you mean ultimately?
[Q] Relatively.
[A] Relatively, there are as many as you project. That's why we have *jinyeypa*, which actually means 'as many as you project'.

Study & Practice

[Q] I have a short practice question. If I'm on a motorcycle and I visualise Vajrasattva above my head, is his hair blowing?
[A] Yes, very much! Because you are practicing, that's why it's blowing.
[Q] Could you say that from the equality point of view that Vajrasattva's hair isn't blowing?
[A] We have to say that blowing and not blowing are inseparable. Or you can say that there is no hair, and therefore there is no blowing. Tulku Jigme Rinpoche just said that we don't know after all, as Vajrasattva is wearing a helmet!

[Q] You were saying that the intellectual approach tends to keep us stuck in duality?
[A] Yes, but on the other hand there are some people, some practitioners or teachers, who don't have the intellectual capacity, and therefore they tend to discourage the intellectual approach. That's not so good. Otherwise why would Nagarjuna and Chandrakirti write all that they did? It's very important. They're all aimed at dismantling our clinging.
[Q] I can understand dismantling the clinging to the intellectual ideas, but isn't devotion also dualistic, with a subject and object?
[A] Yes.
[Q] So how does that help us?
[A] For now, both are subject and object, but when Maitreya is talking about devotion here, he's talking about some kind of confidence in the true nature of the Buddha. He's saying that a mind that is caught in extremes, a mind that is clinging to something has no confidence. Given a choice between a devotional approach and a more non-devotional, sceptical approach, it's better to choose the devotional approach. Even the word 'devotion' is somehow closer to non-clinging. Of course, if the devotion is a clinging kind of devotion then it's not devotion. But here we are talking about non-clinging, a devotion without any reference. It's very interesting. When you have no reference, what happens? Then you have no doubt! Doubt only comes when there is a reference or example and you are trying to compare things against it. Then doubt comes.

When there's no reference, there's no doubt – and that's devotion, and trust. Why do we trust someone or something? We trust when we are not referring, when we are not comparing. Comparing and referring are a cause of hope and fear. So we prefer to use the word devotion (*depa*), like Buddha-nature itself. Of course we can always use just one word, 'emptiness', instead of saying *kham* and *rig* and all that. We can say emptiness is wrapped by the lotus, emptiness is surrounded by the bees, and emptiness is covered by mud and so on. But since we are talking about the quality aspect, it's better to choose words that relate to that quality, like jñanas and kayas, instead of emptiness. If we say that by practicing emptiness you will achieve emptiness, it doesn't sound very inspiring!

[Q] Isn't analysis or reflection an essential first step to avoid precisely the blind devotion that false gurus use as their best tool to attract followers?
[A] Of course, definitely. Otherwise, as I was saying, so-called gurus who are not equipped with adequate understanding could discourage you from doing that, and that's very dangerous. That's why the order is always hearing (*töpa*), then contemplation (*sampa*), and then meditation (*gompa*), which is devotion. It's never the other way round. If you don't have meditation and devotion, then you cannot understand the Buddha-nature. That's the only way. But in order to have that ability of meditation, you first need the contemplation and the hearing. Here Maitreya is saying that meditation is the only way, and devotion is the last stepping-stone. No matter where you come from, you will have to pass through that.

[Q] The object of refuge that you describe seems quite contradictory. If it is an object, it is no longer a refuge. And if it is not an object, what's there to take refuge in?
[A] During the path, it is object of refuge.
[Q] But if it is an object, it is no longer the absolute Dharma or Sangha, as it is duality.
[A] That's fine, accepted. The contradiction is not only made by you! Maitreya also gave four contradictions or paradoxes, and I think your contradiction is included within one of those.

[Q] I want to ask about the mahasandhi people, because they sound very interesting! Where do they come from?
[A] I think they're in Brighton. On the grey muddy beach! It's a grey beach with a lot of pebbles, not a sandy beach. They like eating fish and chips from the newspaper. They have all the conditions they need to defeat their ego, but they keep the last element of their identity because the people on the other side of the English Channel, in Brittany, haven't given up their ego.
[Q] I don't understand a word you've just said!
[A] Because if you have no ego, then revenge won't be sweet, you see! Without ego, revenge is useless. It's not sweet. It's just revenge.

[Q] Several times, the questions brought up some other teachings such as mahasandhi, but at the beginning you said that according to Longchenpa, there is only one path. Isn't there a contradiction?
[A] The masters and the Bodhisattvas always say things like that. They are advertising methods! And you know whose fault that is? It's the audience's fault! First of all, we have to make sure the students concentrate and don't get distracted. So we always say, "this is it", just like some people say "Coke is it". But then you turn round and then "Fanta is it", or French wine is it! Everybody talks about how great they are! Who knows? The greatness will have to be decided by the students, the audience.
[Q] For me the only path is to admit the failures of one's own tradition, as it doesn't include necessarily the whole path
[A] What do you mean?
[Q] For example if you are a Sakyapa, and you say that something belongs to the mahasandhi path, then you are admitting that it is not in your path.
[A] Oh yes, but I'm like a *nyentö*. These *nyentö*, they are Shravakas who also teach Mahayana, but they're only doing it out of service to the Buddha. I'm a bit like that. I'm kind of a Sakyapa, but it's good to do service, and because I've heard about these things from great Buddha-like mahasandhi masters, as a service to them I sometimes praise mahasandhi. But mahasandhi is simply beyond me! I can't comprehend it!

[Q] You spoke of the two tendencies, Shentongpa and Rangtongpa. Did you say that we should find our tendency, and follow it quite deeply before changing it?
[A] The Shentongpa and Rangtongpa are two schools. Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo said the Rangtongpa is very good for establishing the view, because it really makes you view-less. It liberates you from all views, like Nagarjuna's homage to the Buddha Gautama as the one who has renounced all views. But on the path, when you are practicing, Shentongpa is good. Because when you talk about the path, you have to talk about defilements and qualities and all that. Rangtongpa emphasises emptiness, Shentongpa emphasises clarity. I guess you can't really emphasise their unity, apart from practicing.

[Q] I had understood that Mipham Rinpoche's position was also that you need both *rangtong* and *shentong*. So how is one to cope with the fact that in Tibetan Buddhism there are traditions that say that only one is right?
[A] That's another advertising and marketing effort!
[Q] Do you mean that Sakyapas and Gelugpas who are exclusive Rangtongpas actually have a hidden *shentong* side when they practice?
[A] There are also many Shentongpas, like Shakya Chogden and Ngawang Chödrak, who are Sakyapas.
[Q] But if you have Gelugpas who practice tantra, does that mean they must have up their sleeves a *shentong* view that they're not coming clean about?
[A] They might not say it, but the Shentongpas will say that they must have such a view otherwise they would not do those practices!

[Q] But then they could talk to the exclusive Shentongpas and say you must have the view, therefore you must have *rangtong*?
[A] Yes, it's just like that. It's amazing to watch the Rangtongpa masters and the Shentongpa masters. They're equally great. They're amazing. Sakya Pandita and Künchen Tsong Khapa are great Rangtongpa masters. They are like the great Mañjushri. And then there's Longchenpa and Dolpopa Sherab Gyaltsen and Milarepa. I think he is Shentongpa, but Gorampa says that Milarepa is a Rangtongpa. They do that, you know, because Milarepa is famous. He's necessary for window-dressing! We Tibetans will also talk about *tendrel*, because if you're a Shentongpa you will live long. But countering that, if you're Rangtongpa, you'll have fewer diseases!

[Q] If somebody gives you a gift or something, and you see it as a blessing of your guru to help you on the path, is it still a karmic debt? Because it's all about view isn't it?
[A] No, I don't think you'd get a karmic debt in that case. Not at all. And not only will you accumulate merit, but you'll also create a very special link with this person who is giving you the gift.
[Q] I have a lot of guilt accepting stuff, so it's nice to know that.
[A] Are you talking about things like the tantric practice of seeing everything as the guru's expression and stuff like that?
[Q] I'm working on that, yes.
[A] You have to do it the other way around as well. You also have to offer to others thinking that they are your guru.
[Q] Yes, I'm working on that!

[Q] During the Madhyamika, we talked about Bodhisattvas outshining Arhats. But why are Arhats stuck in incomplete nirvana?
[A] They haven't accumulated enough merit. They don't have a greater view, and they don't have a greater motivation. Remember the four defilements we talked about? Their defilement is fear of samsara.
[Q] So is the kind of intellectual knowledge that we are going through now indispensable for full enlightenment?
[A] Yes, for now. But remember, as we said during the section on Dharma, that for Buddhism, the path is a deception. It's something you have to get rid of.

[Q] You said something wonderful, that meditation is devotion. Could you say something more about that?
[A] The Kagyupas are quite good with this. They say something like "devotion is the head of meditation". Because after all, why do we meditate? We meditate because we want to be free from references. And devotion has this sense of not adding references, but instead it's more like eliminating references, more like trust.

[Q] The text says that there are five obstacles that can arise for someone who has only studied the second turning of the wheel, which the *gyü lama* can help to overcome. But I feel that much as this Buddha-nature is very attractive, there is also a big obstacle if we cling to this Buddha-nature as a view. And of course we look around to check that there are no Prasangika police present, and we say it's not truly existent. But these are only words, and instead we continue to cling strongly. At least I feel this! So how can we avoid that? As a Prasangika would say, because I have no view, I'm faultless. But if I have a view of this Buddha-nature, probably I'm not.
[A] That's kind of their job! (Rinpoche smiles at Tulku Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche and Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche). That's a big question. You have to hire someone, and the payment is big! You have to give your body, speech and mind! And it's amazing, because despite this huge payment, we never know whether they'll do anything, because at times not doing anything is considered helping! That's it. Well, these people are available to be hired, and I think you have already hired them! They are very soft-spoken but very efficient – like some kind of silent killers!
[Q] We must practice the pure view, but I don't know how to practice the pure view in everyday life. For example, seeing the guru as the Buddha, beings as deities, the land as a pure land – but it's so hard to visualise! For example, if we see a killer or liar, how can we see their Buddha-nature?
[A] This comes back to the five points that we talked about yesterday.
[Q] So if we see a pure land, how can we know if this is the real pure land, or just our mind's projection?
[A] These questions are answered by the five points. First you have to hear that everybody has the Buddha-nature. You have to hear this again and again, and then contemplate it, and then meditate upon it. Then you will become courageous, and you will obtain loving kindness. You will no longer have inferiority or superiority, and all the other things that we discussed when we talked about the five points. Now we need to address the last part of your question. How would I know that it is not a projection, but that it is real? If you know that it is your projection – that is real! That's about all we can say for now.

[Q] What's the relationship between Sangha and *kham*?
[A] Because the Sangha is a bit like a bridge. The Sangha are the practitioners, and they have the *kham*. They are the ones who have noticed and heard, and who are now cultivating and manipulating the *kham*, which is why they are the Sangha. Everybody has Buddha-nature, even dogs, but most people don't notice it. They haven't heard about it, so they cannot be Sangha. They are not practicing or doing anything about it. Sakya Pandita said it's like two farmers who both have plots of land, and one plants a rice field and the other doesn't do anything with his land.

[Q] Here, the reasons why the Buddha-nature is important are all path reasons. There are no view reasons. Would it be correct then to say that the Uttaratantra is a path teaching?
[A] Yes. Actually, all teachings are, even the Madhyamika. As soon as we begin to talk or make a commentary, then it has to be a path. But this is a path that attempts to describe the result and the ground. In the Madhyamika, the view is explained more from the emptiness aspect, and here more from the clarity aspect.

[Q] I have a question about devotion. When I think with dualism that there is a Buddha outside me with a lot of qualities and compassion and so on, I can feel and develop compassion, but when I think there's no Buddha, and there's Buddha-nature which is in myself, my devotion completely falls down. What can I do with that?
[A] Good question. You know, in many ways, what you are experiencing is good. It's a struggle. Padampa Sangye said this. You pray to the Buddha thinking that he's in front of you, like an object and subject, with tears in your eyes, whining, complaining, and all that. And then suddenly you remember Buddha is emptiness, Buddha is your mind, and there is no truly existing Buddha. All this information comes to your mind. Then like you said, you don't know what to do, as your devotion disappears, tears stop, yearning and longing stops. Padampa Sangye said when that is happening it's like riding a horse. And then you think, "Oh, I want to get back to my old mode of devotion". So Buddha is there again. You are here. And then you cry and all that. And Padampa Sangye says that is like dismounting the horse and riding the donkey. I think the conclusion is that you should try to ride the horse as much as possible, and have the donkey nearby. So when you fall, at least you have a donkey! It's better than nothing! This is the Buddhist path. That question comes from quite a good understanding. It's like that. You know, the Buddhist path is like this. Although the path is so holy and precious, it needs to exhaust. If the path does not exhaust then you are not really practicing. When you sharpen your knife, you have a stone and a knife and you rub them together very quickly. And a so-called sharp knife is actually nothing but the exhaustion of the stone and iron. There is no new phenomenon called a sharp knife that comes from somewhere. It's basically an exhaustion of the stone and iron. The path is like this. When you practice devotion and compassion and all this, which is like the iron, and the stone that is like your defilements, you rub them together and both have to exhaust.

[Q] I have a practical question. We learned that all sentient beings have Buddha-nature. I have hundreds of fleas in my house that attack me every morning and every evening, and I have difficulties seeing Buddha-nature in these fleas that attack me and suck my blood. So how should I behave with these fleas? At the moment I put them in the bathtub and wash them away.

[A] Nothing much. It depends on your determination. If you really want to practice Mahayana Buddhism, then yes, you have to surrender to them.

[Q] On the path, the journey we take, you are emphasising that we have choices to make and decisions to take, but at the same time it seems like there's a destiny, a fate, a broader purpose. How does choice meet fate? It seems like they are very far apart, and maybe we only have the illusion that we can influence everything with our actions.
[A] I think we should do what the Buddha actually did. First we should try to emphasise defeating anything that is non-virtuous. Start from very small things. Be kind, gentle, non-violent, and generous. Then after a while, your spiritual path must defeat clinging to the self. Virtuous actions alone might not do that, as they might increase your clinging to the self instead. And then third you try to defeat all kinds of view, even selflessness. That's a very general structure of the path. If you want to be more particular, you have so much choice.

[Q] I'm very confused. When I am praying for someone who's dead and in the bardo, should I pray to this person, or the Buddha, or myself? What should I think at that time?
[A] All of them! Pray to Buddha, for the person, and for yourself.
[Q] But when we pray to the Buddha we are actually praying to our own potential, so what am I doing if I'm praying to myself?
[A] Wait until tomorrow. There are nine examples coming to answer this question!

[Q] I have a question about a real situation. I want to ask you something related to my mother, who is, as I know it's a metaphor for hundreds of thousands of situations. She's someone who has, because of all her compounded experiences, concentration camps, and mental and physical illnesses, come to a point where her floor is so dirty that she cannot see her own reflection or the larger reflection of her Buddha-nature. She is attracted to the spiritual path, but she does not appreciate what it suggests, and the gap is too big, the bridge is too long, the path is too difficult. Like many people, she does not believe in other lives, and it's very hard to see her not being able to take the next step to get to a situation of greater contentment, happiness and bliss. What can we do in situations like this to respectfully allow some space for these people get to a better place?
[A] Well, people like you and me who are aspiring to practice the Bodhisattva path, we just have to be courageous and patient. So many of these situations happened to Buddha himself when he was a Bodhisattva. There's a story about when he was once a rishi, a truth teller.
[Tulku Jigme Rinpoche] This is a story about the Buddha in one of his previous lives. He was a sage, one who proclaimed to be 'Patience'. That was his name. There were two princes, and the elder one decided to lead a spiritual life and left his kingdom to his younger brother. Then he retreated into the forest and was meditating on patience, and one day the king came to the forest for a

promenade. While he was resting, his queens, courtesans and entourage walked around and saw this rishi meditating, the sage, and they all felt very inspired. And they requested instruction from him. While he was giving them teachings, the king woke up and became very irritated that none of his entourage was there to wait on him, and when he walked around and found that they were all listening to this great sage, he felt very jealous and angry. So he barged in and asked, "So tell me who are you"? And he responded, "I am the patient one", and the king said "well, let's see if you're really the patient one. I'll cut off one of your limbs". He cut off one of his arms, and then said "tell me who you really are, enough joking", "I am the patient one", and so he cut off the other arm, and this continued until he had cut off both his legs as well. And when he had finished cutting his limbs, a strange phenomenon happened. Instead of blood oozing out, there was a white substance. As the king began to calm down a little and started to listen, he realised it was his brother. And then the sage made a dedication of all his merit and said "Just as you have cut my limbs by asking me questions, when I become a Buddha in the future, may I cut the limbs of your obscuring emotions by asking you questions". And it is said that when the Buddha attained enlightenment, some of his students were able to attain liberation just because he asked them a few short questions.
[Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche] So, your mother already has the connection with the reflection of the Buddha for having someone like you, for instance. That is already a seed planted. In her next life, or maybe after 500 lifetimes, she can wake up from that. Some of the sutras say that even when animals unintentionally go around stupas, it can still plant some seeds. So in this kind of situation, recite the names of the Buddha. Frame big paintings of the Buddha, and place them in front of these people in all directions, so that wherever they go they just have to see them. These are practices. We're not just making this up! These Vajrayana people talk about liberation through hearing. We Mahayana people talk about planting seeds.

[Q] What practice would be the best for us to help someone who's going through a lot of pain and anxiety?
[A] Oh, all kinds of practices. Reminding them of the Triple Gem, that's good. Reciting the names of the Three Jewels.

[Q] Could you clarify the attitude we should have when we're prostrating to you?
[A] I think my best advice is to remember the dog's tooth.

[Q] What is the path with no characteristics?
[A] Emptiness.
[Q] Isn't emptiness a view?
[A] It's also a path.
[Q] Then why do you distinguish ground from path?
[A] Because we have to talk to people.
[Q] But I don't understand how to use emptiness on the path.

[A] "Form is emptiness, emptiness is form". When you practice that, you cannot dwell on "form is emptiness" and finish with that, and then go to emptiness is form. If you do that, it becomes a mark, a characteristic, like "Oh, my cup is not empty, let me throw the water away". Chandrakirti said this many times: "Emptiness meditation should not be the destroyer of phenomena". It's not like a bulldozer.
[Q] I'm a little bit confused because we described the characteristics of Buddha-nature, or maybe I am mixing up characteristics and qualities
[A] When we talk about the qualities of Buddha-nature, we're doing it all on the level of the path. But when you practice, you have to go beyond characteristics. The view and the path have to complement each other. The view is emptiness. If you go against that during the path, and try to make lots of characteristics, then you are contradicting the view. The ground, path and result have to complement each other.
[Q] So if you do visualisation and it disappears because you know it is emptiness, how can you use it?
[A] You have already used it.
[Q] It's already gone
[A] Yes, you already used it. It's already gone, you say. That's a characteristic. You have to let that "already gone" go as well.

[Q] Is it true to say in Madhyamika we try to think about this logically, but this text also points to experience?
[A] Madhyamika is more about the 'empty', and this text is about the 'ness'. Generally, the Madhyamika is always taught first.

[Q] I have a question about motivation. I heard that I have to practice without any hope or fear, and I understand that, because when I succeed a little bit in practising in this way, I feel much less grasping. But I feel also that my motivation is not so strong, and I think I'm making a mistake, because I think that my motivation is founded on the hope to do something right or good for other sentient beings, or to clean this lapis lazuli floor. So how can I keep a strong motivation and practice without any hope?
[A] I've talked about sharpening the knife, and how the stone and the knife both have to go. You can't have hope. But you can hope to have no hope.

[Q] What is the difference between wisdom and compassion?
[A] Not so much. The wisdom is what we are trying to achieve, and the compassion can be the method to achieve that. You can also say wisdom is like the sun, and compassion is like the rays of the sun.

[Q] What if someone compliments me because they are being professionally correct, but they don't really mean it? Is there a karmic link? Do I have to return something if I don't feel anything?

[A] It depends on the situation. All these kadampa masters are really good with these very small things. One of them said that if somebody gives you a compliment, whether they mean it or not doesn't really matter. It's not even your business to find out. If they compliment you, you rejoice by thinking "may I also have that kind of ability to see the goodness in others", things like that. The kadampas are very good with this.

Buddha-nature & atman in Hinduism

[Q] On which bhumi does a Bodhisattva emanate more than one form?
[A] The first bhumi. Why do you want to know that?
[Q] Curiosity! I want to ask a question that had to come up sooner or later with this text, I think. I don't have my texts of the *Avadhuta Gita* or the *Dattatreya* with me, but I seem to remember one stanza that goes something like "How can I say who I am? There was never a time when I was not. I have no name, no form. I am all pervading like the sky. I am immutable. One without another"
[A] Is this Krishna speaking?
[Q] No, this is Dattatreya.
[A] I see. And then?
[Q] I'm wondering if enlightenment is only possible through Buddha-nature, and if Dattatreya isn't enlightened, then what is he speaking about?
[A] What makes you think that Dattatreya isn't enlightened?
[Q] Because I think in what we've been learning, the Hindu view is not a complete view, and therefore complete enlightenment is not possible.
[A] That's true.
[Q] Can you resolve this for me please?
[A] That's very difficult! In the 11th century in Tibet, Atisha Dipamkara cried upon receiving the news that Maitripa had died in India. He said that "There are only two people in the whole world that can differentiate between the Hindus and the Buddhists, and one of them, Maitripa, has just died in India". And how many years later is it now, and you are asking me this? It's very difficult. There's a big difference between Buddhists and present-day Hindu fanatics in India, the Hinduthva and Vajpayee Hindus. But the Hindus and Buddhists have debated a lot, and for a very lowly and completely ignorant student like me, the fact that there has been so much debate actually proves that they are very close.
[Q] They sometimes had to resort to magical powers to resolve the debates!
[A] Yes, and there are historical facts, like Nalanda was destroyed by the Hindus two or three times. There is some dispute here, but it is true that there has been a lot of destruction by the Hindus, at least twice. Now, there have been many religions that have fought or destroyed each other without any philosophical discussions, but Hindus and Buddhists have challenged each other in two ways. One is physical destruction, like the Hindus destroying Nalanda University and things like that, and of course there's nothing admirable about that. But I'm

always attracted to the fact that they debated, and that there was something to debate. And the debates were even written down, and many of the texts that we study nowadays, such as the Madhyamakavatara and Pramanavartikka, are by-products of their debate. The Hindus are very worthy opponents in this second sense. By contrast, show me one Buddhist text or Indian account where Buddhists and Moslems actually had a philosophical discussion. In this case, the opponent doesn't believe in that. I think there has been a lot of emotional reaction. For instance, the second destruction of Nalanda was by a Hindu master who worshipped the sun, and he burned Nalanda University by performing magic. But he only did this because when he came to Nalanda University begging food, a mindless young novice set the dogs on him and chased him away, and this really made him angry. But Tulku Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche is saying that's a very small reason, not the whole story! The Buddha himself studied Hinduism. He had two gurus, and of course we say that he was not happy, but this is like a *draldrey* again. He studied Hinduism, and found that it is not right, and then he found the middle way, the path beyond extremes. And he found this, in a very strange way, thanks to the extreme view that he had practiced previously.

Buddhists talk about "not truly existent", and I think that in this present day, this is like the ace up our sleeves, our trump card. It is what distinguishes the Buddhist view. However, only the Samkhyas, the high Samkhyas, have a view that is so close to the Buddhist view as to be nearly indistinguishable. Not all Hindus have this view. And we should also consider the Jain master Mahavira. Even in the Buddhist sutras, we read that he only has two major differences with the Buddha. He doesn't have the hair in between his two eyes or an ushnisha, and that's saying a lot. Jainism is almost all gone now, and we see very little of it in the West, much less than Buddhism. I think this is because in the past, many kings were attracted to Buddhism, especially in far Eastern countries like Japan, China, Korea and of course Tibet. That really helped to maintain Buddhism, and I don't think that Jainism had that same level of support. It's such a shame that Jainism isn't more prevalent, as it's one of the most wonderful paths. It's almost fanatically non-violent! And instead we have violent religions growing everywhere.

[Q] What do Hindus think about Buddhist enlightenment? Do they think that Buddhists can reach enlightenment?
[A] I think they believe in the Buddha, because they believe in him as the ninth avatar of Vishnu. So I think that maybe they believe in the second kind of enlightenment that we talked about today. But I don't think they have the concept of the fourth, the pre-dirty and pre-clean. It's very interesting. Even in Hinduism, the Buddha is very much associated with compassion. The eighth avatar, the one before the Buddha, was very vicious and killed many people. He caused so much bloodshed, and when he saw the blood, he had so much compassion. The Hindus say this compassion produced the Buddha, the ninth avatar. I think Hindu scholars would say that Buddhism has the path, but

Buddhism is actually Hinduism. This puts us in a very awkward situation! But you know, in his Treasury of the Sublime Vehicle (*tekcho dzö*), Longchenpa said that every path except *lalo*, which is a barbaric religion, is a stage on the way to Buddhahood.

[Q] With all these debates between Hinduism or Buddhism or whatever, the question may not be who is the happier, but who has the capacity to preserve perfectly his enlightenment, his happiness. For example, Mozart and Beethoven both wrote music, and we cannot really judge intellectually which music is better. It's very beautiful music. But if Beethoven went to Mozart and destroyed his piano, we might think perhaps Beethoven didn't ultimately understand what music was about.
[A] It sounds to me as though you're talking like you are at an inter-faith conference: "we are all different, but we are all the same". A hard-line Buddhist would not say this. For example, His Holiness the Dalai Lama is very good. He goes around saying that everybody has to be compassionate and kind, and that all religions are the same. But right at the beginning he says, "I prostrate to Gautama, who has renounced all views". In other words, I prostrate to Gautama, who's not stuck or limited to any view. That is really saying a lot. Therefore you cannot have Buddhism inside an inter-faith conference!

[Q] It just occurred to me that if Beethoven smashes Mozart's piano, and let's say Mozart would never have thought of smashing the piano of Beethoven, that would suggest that Beethoven's view is somehow lower. So if you have someone who's prepared to destroy a religion, that suggests their view is less. The fact that the Buddha says that he abandons all views is precisely the reason why Buddhism does not physically seek to destroy other religions.
[A] I guess so.
[Q] Has it ever happened that Buddhists have destroyed other religions?
[A] Maybe among themselves, but not other religions. Almost none, except maybe the Shangjung in Tibet, although even here I think it may have been their own fault. Now, the siddha Virupa did some messy stuff! He invited ten or twenty nihilist Charvaka masters (*jangpenpa*), to a party. He locked them in the house, went outside and burned the house down. Avalokiteshvara really scolded him, saying Virupa should never have done this and that because of that, he wouldn't see Avalokiteshvara in this life. I think Chögyam Trungpa talks about Buddhism as "the philosophy of non-philosophy". I think that clearly differentiates Buddhism from other philosophies!

[Q] What makes us different from Hindus, given that Hindus say everything is from Shiva?
[A] This is their job! (Rinpoche turns to Tulku Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche and Tulku Pema Wangyal Rinpoche). I'm kind of a Hindu myself! What do you want to know? The difference between Buddha-nature and atman or Ishvara?

[A] (Tulku Jigme Khyentse Rinpoche) I don't have an answer to that, but I was just wondering if Rinpoche already answered this when he was explaining the slight difference in the way we are using the vocabulary of permanence, clean, self and bliss.
[A] (Dzongsar Khyentse Rinpoche) I didn't even realise that!

Practice and the Four Seals

[Q] Rinpoche, in translating the four seals and the eighteen uncommon qualities into today's life and world, could you give some suggestions about concrete actions and the path to take?
[A] I don't know about the 18 uncommon qualities. But the four seals can be practiced very concretely. For instance, if you know that all compounded things are impermanent, if you really know it and not just intellectually, you will really change your life. For example, if you're arranging to meet someone for dinner tomorrow, as you are writing the time in your calendar you'll know that maybe the dinner will never happen. Anything could happen in between. So what does that get you? It means you won't get attached and fixated on tomorrow's dinner. So if that dinner gets cancelled, you won't freak out. There are endless blessings in just this first seal. So what about the second one, that all emotions coming from clinging to the self are suffering? Basically, the fundamental problem of human beings, the root and the mother of all our problems, is that we look at a few transitory things collected together and then think they are one, permanent, clean, valuable, and so on. That is the fundamental problem. In reality, everything is like a bubble or slowly sinking sandcastle. But we have the habit of thinking that they are one, permanent and all that, so any emotion coming from this habit is going to lead us to pain. When you know that, there's so much blessing, because everything is like that. 'Relationships' are just labels affixed on a few transitory things put together. Government, parliament, the economy, everything is the same. If you know that, you will never be disappointed when people like George Bush are elected. Because they are all transitory collections (*jigpey tsok*). We are always clinging to something, we give it a name, and that name is usually given to collection of perishable or already perishing group of things. Our so-called life is just a gathering of perishing or perishable stuff that we label as something, such as "me" or "I". That's all we have. Other than that we have nothing, no life!

Glossary: Tibetan and Sanskrit Words & Phrases

Abhisamaya-alamkara (Skt. *Abhisamaya-alamkāra*, Tib. *ngöntok gyen*, མངོན་རྟོགས་རྒྱན [mngon rtogs rgyan]): "Ornament of Realisation" by Maitreya

abhisheka (Skt.): see *wang*

amra (Tib. ཨ་མྲ [a mra]): mango

Aryadeva (Skt. *Āryadeva*): Indian master of Madhyamika

Asanga (Skt. *Asaṅga*): Indian master of Chittamatra; brother of Vasubandhu

atman (Skt. *ātman*): self

ayatana (Skt.): see *kyechey*

bakchak (Tib. བག་ཆགས་ [bag chags]): habit; propensity; habitual tendency or pattern

bhumi (Skt. *bhūmi*): ground; level (on the Bodhisattva path)

bimpa (Tib. བིམ་པ [bim pa]): a type of exotic fruit (from the plant *Momordica monadelpha*)

Bodhicharyavatara (Skt. *Bodhicharyāvatāra*, Tib. *changchub sempa chöpa la jugpa*, བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་དཔའ་སྤྱོད་པ་ལ་འཇུག་པ་ [byang chub sems dpa' spyod pa la 'jug pa] or *chöjug*, སྤྱོད་འཇུག [spyod 'jug]): "The Way of the Bodhisattva" by Shantideva (8th Century)

chak (Tib. འཆག [ʼchag]): to move about

chakpa (Tib. ཆགས་པ [chags pa]): to be attached; attachment; desire; craving for

chakpa mepa (Tib. ཆགས་པ་མེད་པ [chags pa med pa]): not being fixated on one object

chaktok dralwa (Tib. ཆགས་ཐོགས་བྲལ་བ [chags thogs bral ba]): free from attachment and obstruction

changchub (Tib. བྱང་ཆུབ [byang chub]): enlightenment

chencha gakpa mepa (Tib. མཁྱེན་ཆ་འགགས་པ་མེད་པ [mkhyen cha 'gags pa med pa]): unobstructed omniscience

chi chabdro (Tib. ཕྱི་ལྟ་སྐྱབས་འགྲོ་ [phyi'i skyabs 'gro]): outer taking refuge

Chimey Pema Tötreng (Tib. འཆི་མེད་པདྨ་ཐོད་ཕྲེང་ ['chi med pad+ma thod phreng]): The skull garland lotus-born deathless, a name of Guru Rinpoche

chin (Tib. བྱིན་ [byin]): see *jin*

chinlab (Tib. བྱིན་རླབས་ [byin rlabs]): see *jinlab*

Chittamatrin (Skt. *Cittamātrin*): follower of the Chittamatra ("Mind only") school

chö (Tib. མཆོད་ [mchod], Skt. *puja*): ceremony; ritual

chökyi ku (Tib. ཆོས་ཀྱི་སྐུ་ [chos kyi sku], Skt. *dharmakāya*):

chöku (Tib. ཆོས་སྐུ་ [chos sku]): see *chökyi ku*

chökyi ying (Tib. ཆོས་ཀྱི་དབྱིངས་ [chos kyi dbyings], Skt. *dharmadhatu*): basic space of all phenomena; expanse of reality

chölam (Tib. སྤྱོད་ལམ་ [spyod lam]): specific actions

chomtrul sum (Tib. ཆོ་འཕྲུལ་གསུམ་ [cho 'phrul gsum]): the three miracle powers of the Buddha

chönyi (Tib. ཆོས་ཉིད་ [chos nyid], Skt. *dharmata*): the innate or true nature of phenomena

dag dampey paroltu chinpa (Tib. བདག་དམ་པའི་ཕ་རོལ་ཏུ་ཕྱིན་པ་ [bdag dam pa'i pha rol tu phyin pa]): transcendent sublime identity

daknang (Tib. དག་སྣང་ [dag snang]): pure perception

dakpa (Tib. དག་པ་ [dag pa]): true; primordially pure; genuine; authentic

denpa (Tib. བདེན་པ་ [bden pa]): true; truth

denpa (Tib. ལྡན་པ་ [ldan pa]): container; possessor (the fifth of the 10 aspects of Buddha-nature)

depa (Tib. དད་པ་ [dad pa]): devotion, faith, confidence

deshek nyingpo: see *dewar shekpey nyingpo*

deshin shekpa (Tib. དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པ་ [de bzhin gshegs pa], Skt. *tathāgata*): literally 'gone to suchness'; Buddha

deshin shekpey nyingpo (Tib. དེ་བཞིན་གཤེགས་པའི་སྙིང་པོ་ [de bzhin gshegs pa'i snying po], Skt. *tathāgatagarbha*): Buddha-nature

deshin kuntu drowey dön (Tib. དེ་བཞིན་ཀུན་ཏུ་འགྲོ་བའི་དོན་ [de bzhin kun tu 'gro ba'i don]): all-pervasive (the eighth of the 10 aspects of Buddha-nature)

dewar shekpa (Tib. བདེ་བར་གཤེགས་པ་ [bde bar gshegs pa], Skt. *sugata*): literally 'gone to bliss'; Buddha

dewar shekpey nyingpo (Tib. བདེ་བར་གཤེགས་པའི་སྙིང་པོ་ [bde bar gshegs pa'i snying po], Skt. *sugatagarbha*):

dewey paroltu chinpa (Tib. བདེ་བའི་ཕ་རོལ་ཏུ་ཕྱིན་པ་ [bde ba'i pha rol tu phtin pa]): transcendent bliss

Dharanishvararaja-sutra: see *zungkyi gyelpö*

dharmadhatu (Skt.): see *chökyi ying*

dharmakāya (Skt.): see *chökyi ku*

dhatu (Tib.): see *kham*

di la (Tib. འདི་ལ་ ['di la]): this (indicating some thing)

do (Tib. མདོ་ [mdo], Skt. *sūtra*): sutra; teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha in his human form

dodey (Tib. མདོ་སྡེ་ [mdo sde]): sutra; the sutra section of the Tripitaka

Dolpopa Sherab Gyaltsen (Tib. དོལ་པོ་པ་ཤེས་རབ་རྒྱལ་མཚན་ [dol po pa shes rab rgyal mtshan]): a Shentongpa master (1292-1361)

dorjey chöpa (Tib. རྡོ་རྗེ་གཅོད་པ་ [rdo rje gcod pa], Skt. *Vajracchedika*): the Diamond Sutra

dorjey nedün (Tib. རྡོ་རྗེ་གནས་བདུན་ [rdo rje gnas bdun]): the seven vajra points; the seven indestructible points

döndam yingkyi kong (Tib. དོན་དམ་དབྱིངས་ཀྱི་དགོངས་ [don dam dbyings kyi klong]): real meaning of emptiness

dral (Tib. བྲལ་ [bral]): see *dralwa*

draldrey (Tib. བྲལ་འབྲས་ [bral 'bras]): result of absence; result of elimination

dralwa (Tib. བྲལ་བ་ [bral ba]): to be rid of; free from; liberated; elimination

dralwey dreybu (Tib. བྲལ་བའི་འབྲས་བུ་ [bral ba'i 'bras bu]): see *draldrey*

drangdön (Tib. དྲང་དོན་ [drang don], Skt. *neyartha*): (teachings of) provisional or expedient meaning. See also: *nyeydön*

drang song (Tib. དྲང་སྲོང་ [drang srong], Skt. *rishi*): sage; holy hermit

drey (Tib. འབྲས་ ['bras]): see *dreybu*

dreybu (Tib. འབྲས་བུ་ ['bras bu]): result; effect; fruition (the third of the 10 aspects of Buddha-nature)

drima (Tib. དྲི་མ་ [dri ma]): stain; defilement

drima dralwey yönten (Tib. དྲི་མ་བྲལ་བའི་ཡོན་ཏན་ [dri ma bral ba'i yon tan]): the quality of being free from defiled obscuration

drima dralrung (Tib. དྲི་མ་བྲལ་རུང་ [dri ma bral rung]): the stains are removable

dripa (Tib. སྦག་ཆགས་ [bag chags]): obscuration; defilement

dro tagpa (Tib. སྒྲོ་བཏགས་པ་ [sgro btags pa]): fabrication assertions, exaggerations or imputations (also spelled [sgro 'dogs])

drowa (Tib. འགྲོ་བ་ ['gro ba]): to walk

drumta (Tib. གྲུབ་མཐའ་ [grub mtha']): tenets; tenet systems; philosophical schools

dujey (Tib. འདུས་བྱས་ ['dus byas]): compounded

duk (Tib. འདུག་ ['dug]): to sit

dülja (Tib. འདུལ་བྱ་ ['dul bya]): beings to be tamed

dulma (Tib. རྡུལ་མ་ [rdul ma]): parts

dumajey (Tib. འདུས་མ་བྱས [' dus ma byas]): uncompounded

dzinpa (Tib. འཛིན་པ་ ['dzin pa]): grasping; perception of subject

dzogchen (Tib. རྫོགས་ཆེན་ [rdzogs chen], Skt. *mahāsandhi*, *mahā ati*): Great Perfection

dzöpu (Tib. མཛོད་སྤུ་ [mdzod spu], Skt. *urna*): circle of hair between a Buddha's eyebrows; one of the thirty-two major marks of a great being, *kyebu chenpö tsensum chutsa nyi* [skyes bu chen po'i mtshan sum bcu rtsa gnyis]

dzünpa (Tib. རྫུན་པ་ [rdzun pa]): falsehood; lie

ganachakra (Skt.): see *tsok khor*

Garab Dorje (Skt. *Prahevajra*): first Nirmanakaya dzogchen master

gewa (Tib. དགེ་བ་ [dge ba]): virtue; virtuous deeds; good; happy

gokpey denpa (Tib. འགོག་པའི་བདེན་པ་ [’gog pa’i bden pa]): the truth of cessation of suffering, the third of the Four Noble Truths; long form of *gokpa* [’gog pa]

gompa (Tib. སྒོམ་པ་ [sgom pa]): meditation; practice; training; cultivation

gowa (Tib. གོ་བ་ [go ba]): intellectual understanding

gyachey (Tib. རྒྱ་ཆེ་ [rgya che]): immense; immensity

Gyachin (Tib. བརྒྱ་བྱིན་ [brgya byin]): a name of Indra, so called because he achieved that form by making hundreds of offerings

gyü (Tib. རྒྱུ་ [rgyu]): cause (the second of the 10 aspects of Buddha-nature)

gyü (Tib. རྒྱུད་ [rgyud], Skt. *tantra*): continuum

gyünta (Tib. རྒྱུན་མཐའ་ [rgyun mtha’]): the last moment of the tenth bhumi before enlightenment

gyütün (Tib. རྒྱུ་མཐུན་ [rgyu mthun]): similar cause

gyurwa mepa (Tib. འགྱུར་བ་མེད་པ་ [’gyur ba med pa]): unchanging; immutable; changeless

Jambudvipa (Skt. *Jambudvīpa*, Tib. *zambuling* [’dzam bu gling]): rose apple continent

jangpenpa (Tib. རྒྱང་འཕེན་པ་ [rgyang ’phen pa]): Charvaka; nihilist

jug (Tib. འཇུག་ [’jug]): entrance; approach (the sixth of the 10 aspects of Buddha-nature)

jikpey tsok (Tib. འཇིག་པའི་ཚོགས་ [’jig pa’i tshogs]): the transitory collections, which are imputed as truly existing. See ***jiktsok kyi tawa***

jikten khyenpa (Tib. འཇིག་རྟེན་མཁྱེན་པ་ [’jig rten mkhyen pa]): “One who knows the world”; syn. The Buddha

jiktsok kyi tawa (Tib. འཇིག་ཚོགས་ཀྱི་ལྟ་བ་ [’jig tshogs kyi lta ba]): the view of (or belief in) transitory collections. See ***jikpey tsok***

jin (Tib. བྱིན་ [byin]): splendour; magnificence; quality

jinlab (Tib. བྱིན་རླབས་ [byin rlabs]): blessings

jinyeypa (Tib. ཇི་རྣྱེད་པ་ [ji rnyed pa]): things (as many) as they appear in their diversity

jitawa (Tib. ཇི་ལྟ་བ་ [ji lta ba]): things as they are

jñana (Skt.): see *yeshe*

jungney (Tib. འབྱུང་གནས་ [’byung gnas]): origin; source

kadag (Tib. ཀ་དག་ [ka dag]): primordially pure

kangla kangdül (Tib. གང་ལ་གང་འདུལ་ [gang la gang ’dul]): training sentient beings in whichever way is required

kangnyi namkyi chok (Tib. རྐང་གཉིས་རྣམས་ཀྱི་མཆོག་ [rkang gnyis rnams kyi mchog]): literally ‘supreme among bipeds’; Buddha Shakyamuni

karma (Skt., Tib. *lay* [las]): action

kaya (Skt. *kāya*, Tib. *ku*, སྐུ་ [sku]): literally ‘body’; a dimension of enlightened being, functioning as a basis for the enlightened qualities and aspects of timeless awareness

kham (Tib. མས་ [khams], Skt. *dhatu*): element; realm; component; nature; disposition

khenpo (Tib. མཁན་པོ་ [mkhan po]): scholar-abbot

khyenpa (Tib. མཁྱེན་པ་ [mkhyen pa]): knowledge; knowing; wisdom

klesha (Skt.): see *nyönmongpa*

kön (Tib. དཀོན་ [dkon]): rare

könchok (Tib. དཀོན་མཆོག་ [dkon mchog]): rare and precious gem; see *ratna*

kor (Tib. དཀོར་ [dkor]): offerings of the devoted to sublime beings worthy of such

ku (Tib. སྐུ་ [sku], Skt. *kāya*): dimension; body

kudang yeshe (Tib. སྐུ་དང་ཡེ་ཤེས་ [sku dang ye shes]): kayas and wisdoms

kundzop (Tib. ཀུན་རྫོབ་ [kun rdzob]): relative; conventional

kundzop chi chabdro (Tib. ཀུན་རྫོབ་ཕྱི་འི་སྐྱབས་འགྲོ་ [kun rdzob phyi’i skyabs ’gro]): relative taking refuge

kurdep (Tib. སྐུར་བདེབས་ [skur bdebs], Skt. *apavada*): depreciation

kyebu chenpö tsensum chutsa nyi (Tib. སྐྱེས་བུ་ཆེན་པོ་འི་མཚན་སུམ་བཅུ་རྩ་གཉིས་ [skyes chen po’i mtshan sum bcu rtsa gnyis]): the thirty-two major marks of a great being (see also: *urna*, *ushnisha*)

kyechey (Tib. སྐྱེ་མཆེད་ [skye mched], Skt. *ayatana*): the sense fields; the twelve sources of perception

kyewa (Tib. སྐྱེ་བ་ [skye ba]): birth

kyoshey (Tib. སྐྱོ་ཤས་ [skyo shas]): regret; remorse; "genuine heart of sadness"

Kyüchok (Tib. ཁྱུ་མཆོག་ [khyu mchog]): literally 'leader of a herd'; supreme animal; syn. The Buddha

lalo (Tib. བླ་ཀློ་ [kla klo]): barbarian; primitive; uncivilised; savage

lam (Tib. ལམ་ [lam]): path

lama (Tib. བླ་མ་ [bla ma], Skt. *uttara*): unsurpassed; none higher

lamgyi denpa (Tib. ལམ་གྱི་བདེན་པ་ [lam gyi bden pa]): the truth of the path (to the cessation of suffering)

ley (Tib. ལས་ [las], Skt. *karma*): action (the fourth of the 10 aspects of Buddha-nature)

lhakpey sampa tenpey do (Tib. ལྷག་པའི་བསམ་པ་བསྟན་པའི་མདོ་ [lhag pa'i bsam pa bstan pa'i mdo]): the Sutra Exposing the Superior Mind

lhenkyey (Tib. ལྷན་སྐྱེས་ [lhan skyes], Skt. *sahaja*): co-emergent; innate; spontaneous (aspect of conventional reality)

lhündrup (Tib. ལྷུན་གྲུབ་ [lhun grub]): spontaneous presence

lobur gyi drima (Tib. གློ་བུར་གྱི་དྲི་མ་ [glo bur gyi dri ma]): adventitious stains that obstruct or obscure omniscience

loburwa (Tib. གློ་བུར་བ་ [glo bur ba], Skt. *agantuka*): adventitious; temporary; superficial; non-inherent

löden (Tib. བློ་ལྡན་ [blo ldan]): literally 'with a mind'; intelligent

longku (Tib. ལོངས་སྐུ་ [longs sku], Skt. *sambhogakāya*): the enjoyment body of wisdom's compassionate clarity; one of the three kayas or bodies of enlightenment

lu (Tib. ལུས་ [lus]): ordinary body; physical body

lung (Tib. རླུང་ [rlung], Skt. *prana*): the 'winds' or energy currents of the body

ma (Tib. མ་ [ma]): not

madag (Tib. མ་དག་ [ma dag]): impure

madag dagpa (Tib. མ་དག་དག་པ་ [ma dag dag pa]): both pure and impure

Madhyamaka (Skt. *Mādhyamāka*, Tib. *uma*, དབུ་མ་ [dbu ma]): the view of the 'middle way' [the middle way means not holding any conceptual or extreme views]

Madhyamakavatara (Skt. *Mādhyamakāvatāra*, Tib. *uma la jugpa*, དབུ་མ་ལ་འཇུག་པ་ [dbu ma la 'jug pa]): "Introduction to the Middle Way" by Chandrakirti

Madhyamika (Skt. *Mādhyamika*, Tib. *umapa*, དབུ་མ་པ་ [dbu ma pa]): a holder of the view of the Madhyamaka

maha ati (Skt. *mahā ati*): *see dzogchen*

mahasandhi (Skt. *mahāsandhi*): see *dzogchen*

Mahayana (Skt. *mahāyāna*, Tib. *tekpa chenpo* [theg pa chen po]): greater vehicle

mayöpa (Tib. མ་གཡོས་པ་ [ma g.yos pa]): has not moved/deviated

mi jigpa zhi (Tib. མི་འཇིགས་པ་བཞི་ [mi 'jigs pa bzhi]): the Four Fearlessnesses (of the Buddha)

möpa (Tib. མོས་པ་ [mos pa]): aspiration; prayer; devotion; enthusiasm

mudra (Skt. *mudrā*, Tib. ཕྱག་རྒྱ་ [phyag rgya]): seal; mark

Mulamadhyamakakarika (Skt. *Mūlamadhyamākākārikā*, Tib. རྩ་བ་ཤེས་རབ་ [rtsa ba shes rab]): "Root verses on the middle way" by Nagarjuna

muthekpa (Tib. ལུ་སྟེགས་པ་ [mu stegs pa], Skt. *tīrthika*): extremist; one who holds an extreme view

nadi (Skt.): see *tsa*

Nagarjuna (Skt. *Nāgārjuna*, Tib. [klu sgrub]): Indian scholar of Madhyamika

naljor ngönsum (Tib. རྣལ་འབྱོར་མངོན་སུམ་ [rnal 'byor mngon sum]): a yogi's direct cognition; in pramana, the fourth mode of direct cognition, which is only within the scope of the spiritually developed

nampar nangdze (Tib. རྣམ་པར་སྣང་མdzad]): literally 'fully manifested'; Vairocana Buddha

namdrol (Tib. རྣམ་གྲོལ་ [rnam grol], Skt. *vimokṣa*): liberation; complete/total liberation

nampar tarpa (Tib. རྣམ་པར་ཐར་པ [rnam par thar pa]): an account of the origins

namshey (Tib. རྣམ་ཤེས་ [rnam shes], Skt. *vijñana*): consciousness; continuity of the mind (the fifth skandha, the skandha of consciousness)

nekab (Tib. གནས་སྐབས་ [gnas skabs]): occasion; situation (the seventh of the 10 aspects of Buddha-nature)

nga (Tib. ང་ [nga]): I; me

ngöpo (Tib. དངོས་པོ་ [dngos po]): thing; entity

ngowo (Tib. ངོ་བོ་ [ngo bo]): essence (the first of the 10 aspects of Buddha-nature)

ngowo nyiku (Tib. ངོ་བོ་ཉིད་སྐུ [ngo bo nyid sku], Skt. *svabhavikakāya*): essence kaya

nirmanakaya (Skt. *nirmanakāya,* Tib. *tulpeyku*, སྤྲུལ་པའི་སྐུ [sprul pa'i sku]): emanation body

nirvana (Skt. *nirvāna*, Tib. མྱ་ངན་འདས་ [mya ngan las 'das pa]): beyond suffering

nyal (Tib. ཉལ་ [nyal]): to sleep

nyampar chenpo (Tib. མཉམ་པར་ཆེན་པོ་ [mnyam par chen po]): great equanimity

nya ngendey (Tib. མྱ་ངན་འདས་ [mya ngan 'das], Skt. *nirvāna*): see *nirvana*

nyejin (Tib. ཉེས་འབྱིན་ [nyes 'byin]): extracting defects

nyejin gyi lam (Tib. ཉེས་འབྱིན་གྱི་ལམ་ [nyes 'byin gyi lam]): the path that extracts defects, a name for the Mahayana path

nyentö (Tib. ཉན་ཐོས་ [nyan thos], Skt. *śrāvaka*): hearer; listener

nyeydön (Tib. ངེས་དོན་ [nges don], Skt. *nitartha*): (teachings of) ultimate or certain meaning. See also: *drangdön*

nyingpo (Tib. སྙིང་པོ་ [snying po]): essence; heart; pith

nyomjuki dripa (Tib. སྙོམས་འཇུག་གི་སྒྲིབ་པ་ [snyoms 'jug gi sgrib pa]): obscuration for serenity; that which prevents entering serenely the states of samadhi

nyongwa (Tib. མྱོང་བ་ [myong ba]): experience

nyönmongpa (Tib. ཉོན་མོངས་པ་ [nyon mongs pa], Skt. *klesha*): emotions; afflictions

ösel (Tib. འོད་གསལ་ ['od gsal], Skt. *prabhasvara*): luminosity

padma (Skt., Tib. པད্ম [pad+ma]): lotus

pakpa (Tib. འཕགས་པ་ ['phags pa], Skt. *arya*): sublime being

paltreng gi do (Tib. ལྷ་མོ་དཔལ་འཕྲེང་གི་སེང་གེའི་སྒྲའི་མདོ་ [lha mo dpal 'phreng gi seng ge'i sgra'i mdo]): The Shrimaladevisimhanada Sutra

paramita (Skt. *pāramitā*): see *paroltu chinpa*

paroltu chinpa (Tib. ཕ་རོལ་ཏུ་ཕྱིན་པ་ [pha rol tu phyin pa], Skt. *pāramitā*): transcendent; going beyond

Pema Katang (Tib. པད্ম་བཀའ་ཐང་ [pad ma bka thang]): Life-story of Guru Padmasambhava, revealed by Orgyen Lingpa (1329-1360?)

prajña (Skt. *prajñā*): see *sherab*

Prajñaparamita (Skt. *Prajñāpāramitā*, Tib. ཤེས་རབ་ཀྱི་ཕལ་རོལ་ཏུ་ཕྱིན་པ་): literally "wisdom gone beyond"; the final of the six paramitas; genre of sutras that teach emptiness

prana (Skt.): see *lung*

Prasangika (Skt. *Prāsangika*, Tib. ཐལ་འགྱུར་པ་ [thal 'gyur pa]): follower of "consequentialist" school of Madhyamika

puja (Skt.): see *chö*

pungpo (Tib. ཕུང་པོ་ [phung po], Skt. *skandha*): aggregate

rang (Tib. རང་ [rang]): self; oneself; intrinsic; inherent

rangsem sangyey (Tib. རང་སེམས་སངས་རྒྱས་ [rang sems sangs rgyas]): Your own mind that is the buddha

rangshin (Tib. རང་བཞིན་ [rang bzhin]): nature

rangshin nepey rig (Tib. རང་བཞིན་གནས་པའི་རིགས་ [rang bzhin gnas pa'i rigs]): naturally present affinity

ratna (Skt., Tib. *könchok*, དཀོན་མཆོག་ [dkon mchog]): literally "rare" and "precious" when referring to the Three Jewels; jewel as in *tri ratna* or "Triple Gem"

rig (Tib. རིགས་ [rigs], Skt. *gotra*): race; family; class; kind; lineage

rigpa (Tib. རིག་པ་ [rig pa]): awareness

rishi (Skt.): see *drangsong*

rochik (Tib. རོ་གཅིག་ [ro gcig], Skt. *ekarasa*): one taste; the absence of ego's judgement and confused conceptual labelling

sakchey (Tib. བཟག་བཅས་ [zag bcas]): emotions

sambhogakaya (Skt. *sambhogakāya*): see *longku*

samgyi mi khyapa (Tib. བསམ་གྱིས་མི་ཁྱབ་པ་ [bsam gyis my khyab pa], Skt. *acintya*): inconceivable

sampa (Tib. བསམ་པ་ [bsam pa]): contemplation; reflection; consideration

samsara (Skt. *saṁsāra*, Tib. *korwa* ['khor ba]): cyclic existence; realm of suffering

samten shi (Tib. བསམ་གཏན་བཞི་ [bsam gtan bzhi]): the four dhyanas, four absorptions: 1) joy and reflection. 2) joy and absence of reflection. 3) being free of joy, and equable concentration states. 4) supreme equanimity

sang (Tib. སངས་ [sangs]): enlightened; purified; awakened

sang jarung (Tib. སངས་བྱ་རུང་ [sangs bya rung]): enlightenment is possible

sangyey gyi yönten (Tib. སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་ཡོན་ཏན་ [sangs rgyas kyi yon tan], Skt. *buddhaguna*): enlightened qualities

sangyey kyi ku (Tib. སངས་རྒྱས་ཀྱི་སྐུ་ [sangs rgyas kyi sku]): the body of the buddha

selcha (Tib. གསལ་ཆ་ [gsal cha]): cognisant quality, the aspect of its luminosity or clarity [gsal ba'i cha]

selwa (Tib. གསལ་བ་ [gsal ba]): luminosity; clarity

sem (Tib. སེམས་ [sems], Skt. *citta*): mind

semche (Tib. སེམས་བསྐྱེད་ [sems bskyed]): generating enlightened mind; bodhicitta

semchi nangwa (Tib. སེམས་ཕྱི་སྣང་བ་ [sems phyi snang ba]): mental projection

sem dang yeshe (Tib. སེམས་དང་ཡེ་ཤེས་ [sems dang ye shes]): mind and wisdom are separate

semkyi rangshin (Tib. སེམས་ཀྱི་རང་བཞིན་ [sems kyi rang bzhin]): nature of (the) mind

sengey naro (Tib. སེང་གེ་ན་རོ་ [seng ge'i ngo ro]): "The Lion's Roar", Mipham Rinpoche's treatise on Buddha-nature

Shakyamuni (Skt. *Shākyamuni*)

Shantideva (Skt. *Śāntideva*)

shastra (Skt. *śāstra*, Tib. *tenchö,* བསྟན་བཅོས་ [bstan bcos]): commentary

sheja dzö (Tib. ཤེས་བྱ་མཛོད་ [shes bya mdzod]): see *sheja kunchab dzö*

sheja kunchab dzö (Tib. ཤེས་བྱ་ཀུན་ཁྱབ་མཛོད་ [shes bya kun khyab mdzod]): Jamgön Kongtrül's encyclopaedia, the "Treasury of Knowledge"

shelwa (Tib. བཤལ་བ་ [bshal ba]): to clean

shentong uma chenpo (Tib. གཞན་སྟོང་དབུ་མ་ཆེན་པོ་ [gzhan stong dbu ma chen po]): great *shentong* Madhyamika

Shentongpa (Tib. གཞན་སྟོང་པ་, [gzhan stong pa]): follower of "emptiness of other" interpretation of emptiness (*shunyata*), associated with Jonangpa School in Tibet and teachers such as Dol po pa

sherab (Tib. ཤེས་རབ་ [shes rab], Skt. *prajñā*): wisdom; knowledge; see also: *yeshey*

shinjang (Tib. ཤིན་སྦྱང་ [shin sbyang]): workability; pliancy, particularly with regard to the mind

shintu namdag (Tib. ཤིན་ཏུ་རྣམ་དག་ [shin tu rnam dag]): utterly pure

shiwa (Tib. ཞི་བ་ [zhi ba], Skt. *śanti*): peace; liberation

shravaka (Skt. *śrāvaka*, Tib. *nyentö*, ཉན་ཐོས་ [nyan thos]): hearer; (pious) listener; follower of the Hinayana path

Shravakayana (Skt. *Śrāvakayāna*, Tib. ཉན་ཐོས་ཀྱི་ཐེག་པ་ [nyan thos kyi theg pa]): shravaka path

shunyata (Skt.): see *tongpanyi*

Siddhartha (Skt. *Siddhārtha*, Tib. དོན་གྲུབ་ [don grub]): literally "manifests what is meaningful"; the Buddha

skandha (Skt.): see *pungpo*

so so rang rigpey yeshey (Tib. སོ་སོ་རང་རིག་པའི་ཡེ་ཤེས་ [so so rang rig pa'i ye shes]): self-awareness wisdom

sugata (Skt.): see *dewa shekpa*; *tathagata*

sugatagarbha (Skt.): see *dewa shekpey nyingpo*; *tathagatagarbha*

sutra (Skt. *sūtra*, Tib. མདོ་ [mdo]): teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha in his human form

Svatantrika (Skt., Tib. རང་རྒྱུད་པ་ [rang rgyup pa]): "autonomous" school of Madhyamika

svabhavikakaya (Skt. *svabhavikakāya*): see *ngowo nyiku*

tagpa (Tib. རྟག་པ་ [rtag pa]): permanent, eternal, lasting forever

tagpey paroltu chinpa (Tib. རྟག་པའི་ཕ་རོལ་ཏུ་ཕྱིན་པ་ [rtag pa'i pha rol tu phyin pa]): transcendent permanence

takpa nyipa (Tib. བརྟགས་པ་གཉིས་པ་ [brtags pa gnyis pa]): literally 'two sections'; the Hevajra tantra

taktu mingyur (Tib. རྟག་ཏུ་མི་འགྱུར་ [rtag tu mi 'gyur]): unchanging (the ninth of the 10 aspects of Buddha-nature)

Taktungu (Tib. རྟག་ཏུ་དཔྱ་ [rtag tu ngu], Skt. *Sadaprarudita*): the Bodhisattva "Always Weeping" (name)

tathagata (Skt. *tathāgata*): see *deshin shekpa*; *sugata*

tathagatagarbha (Skt. *tathāgatagarbha*): see *deshin shekpey nyingpo*; *sugatagarbha*

tawey mi-ngönpa (Tib. ལྟ་བས་མི་རངས་པ་ [lta bas mi ngom pa]): insatiable beauty; something you don't get tired gazing at

tawey nyingmong (Tib. ལྟ་བས་སྙིང་རྨོངས་ [lta bas snying rmongs]): something that ravishes your heart

teldrip mepa (Tib. འཕེལ་བ་དང་འགྲིབ་པ་མེད་པའི་མདོ་ ['phel ba dang 'grib pa med pa'i mdo]): the "Sutra of No Increasing and No Decreasing"

tenching drelwa jungwa (Tib. རྟེན་ཅིང་འབྲེལ་བར་འབྱུང་བ་ [rten cing 'brel bar 'byung ba], Skt. *pratiyasamutpada*): interdependent arising

tendrel (Tib. རྟེན་འབྲེལ་ [rten 'brel], Skt. *pratityasamutpada*): connection; abbreviation of [rten cing 'brel bar byung ba]: dependent arising; interdependent origination

Thujey Chenpo (Tib. ཐུགས་རྗེ་ཆེན་པོ་ [thugs rje chen po], Skt. *mahakarunika*]): "Great compassion", a name of Avalokiteshvara

tiglé (Tib. ཐིག་ལེ་ [thig le], Skt. *tilaka, bindu*): essence; sphere

tobchu (Tib. སྟོབ་བཅུ་ [stobs bcu], Skt. *daśabala*): the Ten Powers (of the Buddha)

tobpa (Tib. ཐོབ་པ་ [thob pa], Skt. *prapti*): to acquire; obtain; get

togma (Tib. ཐོག་མ་ [thog ma]): beginning

togma tama umeypa (Tib. ཐོག་མ་ཐ་མ་དབུ་མའི་པ་མེད་པ་ [thog ma tha ma dbu ma'i pa]): no end, no beginning, and no middle

togpa (Tib. རྟོགས་པ་ [rtogs pa], Skt. *adhigama*): realisation

togpa (Tib. ཐོགས་པ་ [thogs pa]): obstruction; blockage; impediment; to impede

tokpa (Tib. ཐོགས་པ་ [thogs pa]): see *togpa*

tön (Tib. སྟོན་ [ston]): see *tönpa*

tongpang (Tib. མཐོང་སྤང་ [mthong spang]): the defilements/obscurations that are abandoned/purified on the path of seeing

tongpanyi (Tib. སྟོང་པ་ཉིད་ [stong pa nyid], Skt. *shunyata*): emptiness (the absence of true existence in all phenomena, as distinct from nothingness)

tönpa (Tib. སྟོན་པ་ [ston pa]): teacher

tönting (Tib. མཐོན་མཐིང་ [mthon mthing]): shiny blue-black, the colour of the Buddha's hair

töpa (Tib. ཐོས་པ་ [thos pa], Skt. *śruta*): hearing; to hear; learn; study

trinley (Tib. འཕྲིན་ལས་): activity

trö (Tib. སྤྲོས་ [spros], Skt. *prapañca*): to elaborate; fabricate

trödral (Tib. སྤྲོས་བྲལ་ [spros bral], Skt. *niṣprapañca*): beyond extremes; freedom from (mental) constructs or conceptual elaborations; simplicity

tsa (Tib. རྩ་ [rtsa], Skt. *nadi*): the channels in the subtle body through which energy currents flow

tsangwey paroltu chinpa (Tib. གཙང་བའི་ཕ་རོལ་ཏུ་ཕྱིན་པ་ [gtsang ba'i pha rol tu phyin pa]): transcendent purity

tsenma mepa (Tib. མཚན་མ་མེད་པ་ [mtshan ma med pa]): absence of characteristics

tsenzang sonyi (Tib. མཚན་བཟང་སོ་གཉིས་ [mtshan bzang so gnyis]): the Thirty Two Major Marks

Tsepamey (Tib. ཚེ་དཔག་མེད་ [tshe dpag med], Skt. *Amitayus*): The buddha of boundless life; also a name for Guru Rinpoche

tsok (Tib. ཚོགས་ [tshogs]): feast; gathering; literally 'to bring many things together', Tib. མང་པོ་འཛོམ་བདེ་བ་ [mang po 'dzom bde ba]

tsok khor (Tib. ཚོགས་འཁོར་ [tshogs 'khor], Skt. *ganachakra*): feast gathering

tubpa (Tib. ཐུབ་པ་ [thub pa], Skt. *muni*): literally 'able', 'one who can accomplish'; syn. The Buddha; one of the family names of the Shakya clan

tulku (Tib. སྤྲུལ་སྐུ་ [sprul sku], Skt. *nirmanakāya*): emanation body

tulpeyku (Tib. སྤྲུལ་པའི་སྐུ་ [sprul pa'i sku]): see *tulku*

uma gyen (Tib. དབུ་མ་རྒྱན་ [dbu ma rgyan], Skt. *Madhyamakalamkāra*): "Ornament of the Middle Way", by Shāntaraksita (8th century)

urna (Skt.): see *dzöpu*

ushnisha (Skt.): see *u tsug tor*

u tsug tor (Tib. དབུ་གཙུག་ཏོར་ [dbu gtsug tor], Skt. *ushnisha*): a protuberance on the crown of the head; one of the thirty-two major marks, see *kyebu chenpö tsensum chutsa nyi*

uttara (Skt.): see *lama*

Uttaratantra (Skt., Tib. *gyü lama*, Tib. རྒྱུད་བླ་མ་ [rgyud bla ma]):

vajra (Skt., Tib. *dorjey*, རྡོ་རྗེ་ [rdo rje]): indestructible

vijñana (Skt.): see *namshey*

wang (Tib. དབང་ [dbang], Skt. *abhisheka*): initiation; empowerment (abbreviation for [dbang bsku])

wangpo khyenpa (Tib. དབང་པོ་མཁྱེན་པ་ [dbang po mkhyen pa]): One of the qualities of the buddha, which allows him to see every single sentient being's sense elements, constituents, etc

yana (Skt. *yāna*, Tib. ཐེག་པ་ [theg pa]): "vehicle"; way of proceeding (on the path)

yangdak pe dak (Tib. ཡང་དག་པའི་དག་ [yang dag pa'i dag]): absolute purity

yermey (Tib. དབྱེར་མེད་ [dbyer med]): non-dual; inseparable (the tenth of the 10 aspects of Buddha-nature)

yeshey (Tib. ཡེ་ཤེས་ [ye shes], Skt. *jñana*): primordial wisdom; see also: *sherab*

yigyi yul (Tib. ཡིད་ཀྱི་ཡུལ་ [yid kyi yul], Skt. *manoviṣaya*): mental object; mental field; objects of mind

ying (Tib. དཔྱིངས་ [dbyings]): space

yö (Tib. གཡོས་ [g.yos]): moved, deviated

yönten (Tib. ཡོན་ཏན་ [yon tan], Skt. *guna*): quality, in the sense of an enlightened quality

Yönten Dzö (Tib. ཡོན་ཏན་མdzod [yon tan mdzod]): "Treasury of Precious Qualities" by Jigme Lingpa (1730-1798)

yuldang yulchen rochik (Tib. ཡུལ་དང་ཡུལ་ཅན་རོ་གཅིག་ [yul dang yul can ro gcig]): inseparability of subject and object, one taste

yulmey (Tib. ཡུལ་མེད་ [yul med]): placeless; nonexistent

yungdrung (Tib. གཡུང་རྒྱུད་ [g.yung drung]): changeless; unchanging

zabmo nangdön (Tib. ཟབ་མོ་ནང་དོན་ [zab mo nang don]): The "Profound Inner Sense", one of the three most important texts of the Kagyu tradition, written by the 3rd Karmapa [rang 'byung rdorje]

zangpo (Tib. བཟང་པོ་ [bzang po]): good; kind; excellent; noble

zapa (Tib. ཟབ་པ་ [zab pa], Skt. *gambira*): deep; profound

zhen (Tib. གཞན་ [gzhan]): different; other

zhiwa (Tib. ཞི་བ་ [zhi ba]): see *shiwa*

zöpu (Tib. མdzod spu [mdzod spu]): *see dzöpu*

zungkyi gyelpö (Tib. གཟུངས་ཀྱི་དབང་ཕྱུག་རྒྱལ་པོས་ཞུས་པའི་མdo [gzungs kyi dbang phyug rgyal pos zhus pa'i mdo], Skt. *Dharanishvararaja-sūtra* or *Tathāgatamahā-karunanirdesa-sūtra*): The Sutra Requested by King Dharanishvara

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