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Wholesome Questions and Noble-Minded Answers

The Melody of a Noble-Minded Proposal by Panchen Losang Chökyi
Gyaltsen as an Answer to the Very Wholesome Questions Expressed
with an Extraordinary Attitude by Lama Tsong Khapa

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**The Very Wholesome Questions Expressed
with an Extraordinary Attitude**
by the incomparable Dharma king,
the great Tsong Khapa

together with

༄༅། མཉམ་མེད་ཙོང་ཁ་བ་ཚེན་པོའི་དྲི་བ་ལྷག་བསམ་རབ་དཀར་གྱི་
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Peace Publications

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Lama Michel Rinpoche requested the translation of these two texts from Tibetan into English after having received their transmission and teachings from the Abbot of Tashi Lhunpo Monastery in Tibet, Khenpo Kachen Losang Phuntsog Rinpoche, བཀའ་འགྲུབ་ལྷན་པོའི་མཁན་པོ་བཀའ་ཚེན་ལྷོ་བཟང་ལུན་ཚོགས་ཅིན་པོ་ཚེ།

A note from the editor

These two texts, *The Very Wholesome Questions Expressed with an Extraordinary Attitude* by Lama Tsong Khapa and *A Melody of Noble-Minded Proposal* by Panchen Losang Chökyi Gyaltzen as an answers to the questions were here integrated for readability. The numbering of questions and answers are not in the original Tibetan texts but added here for clarity. Each question by Lama Tsong Khapa is thus followed by the answer given by Panchen Losang Chökyi Gyaltzen. Note that some answers respond to several questions, explaining the occasional delay in answer. Text closed in brackets [...] is from the Tibetan-English translator, Lotsawa Thubten Sherab Sherpa, to render the sentence complete and more comprehensible. The numerical and alphabetical codes in brackets refer to the verses of the original Tibetan text.



Lama Tsong Khapa

Namo Gurū Mañju Ghoṣaya.
I prostrate to Gurū Mañjuśrī.

[The topic here] is called “an exhortation to hear very wholesome questions regarding certain points of virtuous practice.”

Just as the peak of the golden mountain saturated by the rain of vermilion, where a dense cloud of sapphire billows, your orange holy-body with the five knots of hair is most beautiful; You, Gurū Mañjuśrī, please always guard me and increase virtues and goodness. *[1abcd]*

To the great meditators who abide single-pointedly on the pith or the essential taste of the nectar-like instruction given by the Victors, and who want also to place others there, I present the following questions: *[2abcd]*

To those whose answers are correct according to exactly what the Victors said, I venerate them with all my three doors without separating myself from them even for an instant. Therefore, please answer me clearly and quickly. *[3abcd]*

To those whose answers will not be correct, I will not have any envy or a hateful mind; rather, it will be an analytical meditation for my mind.

If we do not still seek well for a non-mistaken [answer], we will all be cheating ourselves and we will risk falling [into a lower realm]. [4abcd]

These questions that I am going to present here are not asked with the motivation of pretending to be knowledgeable, wanting to degrade other people or wanting material gain, respect or fame.

Why? It is [just simply because of the following points:]

A Pandit of the Sakya tradition, who is an emanation of Mañjuśrī, in his *Treasury of Knowledge* says,

“Although you are achieving concentration with constant effort, you are deviated from the path which pleases the Victors. You, the beings of the *kaliyuga* with the knowledge of satisfaction, think well and follow a learned being!”

And [another passage from the same source says,]

“It is greatly emphasized in many texts such as the *Thorough Classification of the Three Vows*. Furthermore, there is simply a limitless number of people in both India and Tibet who are mistaken with regard to the view, meditation and conduct.”

Specifically among them, if the view and the meditation regarding emptiness are mistaken, one will be ruined because Nagarjuna in his *Fundamental Wisdom* says,

“If the view of emptiness is failed,
those with small wisdom will be ruined.
For instance, it is like failing in catching a snake and
the perverse achievement of knowledge and so forth.”

And in the discourses of many Indian and Tibetan scholars, an infinite number of passages such as: “It is very difficult to find something that is not mistaken to meditate on from the beginning,” is seen [or heard].

Therefore, for those who have the courage in meditation which leads their own life to an empty end and who want to lead others [to such a destiny], I, with the motivation of mercy, write the following questions as a request.



Panchen Lobsang Chöky Gyaltzen

Namo Gurū Mañju Ghoṣaya.
I prostrate to Gurū Mañjuśrī.

You, who display the exalted wisdom of all the Buddhas
by way of saffron color and dance, are pleasantly known
as the Pervasive Lord of the hundred lineages of the Noble Mind.
To you, the Glorious One, I bow down.

You Lord, with mercy exhorted us [to answer]
your indirect questions regarding profound points.
And I answer whatever my intelligence can bear
with my two palms joined respectfully [at my heart].

[Question 1 by Lama Tsong Khapa]

What is the reason for rolling the important points (of all the eighty-four thousand bundles of teachings which the Buddha taught in general) into one?

[Own answer]

Freeing sentient beings from this great ocean of samsaric suffering would be the first purpose.

Additionally, liberation: keeping them from falling into the nirvāṇa of hearers and solitary realizers would be the [second purpose].

In summary, allowing sentient beings to cross gradually from both samsara and [limited] nirvāṇa and to attain the completely enlightened state [is the target].

Therefore, what instruction is there that is not included in this [answer]?

[Own comment]

Hence, the questions that are asked regarding the actual practice and the preliminary practice, [which are the contents of those teachings,] are the basis of discussion.

The meaning of those teachings is also to be stored in one's own mental continuum, as in the following way. When we reflect well with our body upright and the mind turned inward in an isolated place, we affirm that we ourselves have experienced such painful suffering in the past [as in the present] on this site of samsara without beginning. So now, I should act by any means from right now not to be born here in such a place. Then it is necessary first to strive in the method of generating a strong feeling similar to kidney pain, with a vivid emotion thinking, "If I do not enact thus, I will cause my heart to rot." To do such a thing is extremely difficult. If we did not gain any experience in this [matter of acting in order not to be born again

[in this samsaric world], no matter how profound a method to free us from samsara is taught by a Lama, and you indeed understand, it would be similar to a previous illustration of the water on [melting] ice. For example, it is like the case when somebody does not have the desire to drink water: he would remain sitting without putting any effort into drinking it. The mode of that meditation is also not the fact that one is able to remain seated and firm thinking, “I need to make sure that I will not be born in this samsara.” That would be quite a big obstacle and have little impact.

[Answer 1 by Panchen Losang Chökyi Gyaltsen]

The aim of the Victor's intention of teaching the eighty-four thousand volumes of Dharma is as the Second Buddha Nagarjuna commented:

“First, the Dharma for the high status and later, that of the definitive goodness [was taught]. *[1abcd, 2a]*

For somebody who attains [the rebirth] of high status, there will be the definitive goodness for him gradually.”

This is the meaning of what I have comprehended. *[2bcd]*

[Question 2]

Therefore, what is there where there is more impact when it is meditated on from another approach of a strict meditation, like the [technique of] an expert carpenter lifting [his tool with more effect]?

[Own answer]

It is possible that there are some who proclaim: to practice such as making a prayer of request to the [Three] Jewels or

to make the confession of negativities or
to meditate on the mind of enlightenment or
to train him or herself in the six perfections.

Because [meditating on these things brings] indeed much more difference. Yet, it appears that there is a superior means to generate an uncontrived awareness seeking liberation, where one knows that the Victor has taught to emphasize those respective cycles of visualization which enhance one's experience of the relevant subject. Therefore, I asked this question.

[Answer 2]

The technique to generate an intense wish for liberation, like the technique of an expert carpenter who lifts up a mechanical tool, is as taught by the sublime Master Gyal Tshab Je.

Even the Omniscient himself said,

“If you do not think of the shortcomings of true suffering, the genuine wish for liberation will not be generated.” [3abcd, 4ab]

There are many ways of thinking about the shortcomings of samsara; however, the wish for freedom due to the fear of the suffering of suffering also exists in the [mental continuum of] cattle. [4cd, 5a]

Renouncing the happiness of contaminated feeling can arise also in the [mental continuum of a] non-Buddhist. [5bc]

Hence, [only] if one observed the perpetuating aggregates, [the pervasive suffering of] compositional factors which are naturally contaminated and meditated upon them [as a provider of suffering and a receptacle of sufferings like sickness, tumor and pain], one could save oneself from being drowned [in sufferings]. [5d, 6abcd]

[Question 3]

If we think of that advice, then what is it that you said, "... He could have given one single teaching on a sublime and strict method which frees us from this samsara"?

[Answer 3]

If the sublime method to free ourselves from cyclic existence were closely identified, one teaching from the Victor would be enough; the three higher trainings could be within our reach. [7abcd]

[Question 4]

However, first of all, we should identify the main cause, the real and absolute [cause] that makes us be born in this samsara; therefore, what did the Victor say about such a thing?

[Own answer]

Here if we do not identify [that cause] closely, we would have only arrogance without even knowing what the antidote is, what destroys them or how to destroy them. For instance, this is like starting a war without knowing the enemies.

[Own comment]

There could be some people who say, "...that is further ignorance, it is further closed-mindedness, it is further [a conception] grasping at the [inherent existence of] things, and so forth." But, they also do not really identify [that cause] closely. For instance, it is like someone who is asked to identify a thief and cannot identify him until he or she points at a particular individual with his or her index finger, regardless of whatever he or she says, "It is a man, it is a monk; furthermore, it is a young one."

Thus, when applying this analysis upon one's own continuum and looking at ourselves, we rely upon a correct reason, a vivid experience in oneself thinking, "The main cause for me to be born in samsara is this absolute self-me," and it is first necessary to generate [such a conviction in ourselves] in a way that does not become just a belief or thought.

For instance, it is similar to the case where the sickness needs to be identified first, in order to prescribe the medicine.

Furthermore, there would be no way for us to reverse our attachment to samsara, to have a real sadness about it and to have a real wish to emerge definitively from it, without generating a vivid experience of how we transmigrate continuously from one rebirth to another rebirth in this samsara. That vivid experience of how we wander in samsara occurs in dependence upon the meditation of how we wander in samsara due to the twelve links.

[Answer 4]

The root of our rebirth in samsara is the two kinds of inborn conceptions of self-observing: respectively, the self and the mine in the mental continuum of all the embodied beings and the grasping at them as being not merely labeled by thought but rather as independently established; and that is a deluded ignorance.

[8abcd, 9abc]

Thus, the Victor also in his mother-sutra [of the *Perfection of Wisdom*] said, "Due to the conception grasping at I and mine, the embodied beings wander in samsara."

[9d, 10ab]

Also [Nagarjuna in his] *Seventy Stanzas on Emptiness* says, "Any conception which conceives the things produced by causes and conditions as perfect is taught

by the Master to be an ignorance.

From there arises the twelve branches [of dependent relation]”
(64cd, 65ab).

[10cd, 11abc]

And [Nagarjuna in his] *Precious Garland*

says, “As long as there is grasping at [one’s] aggregates,
there is [conception] grasping at self in oneself.

And if there is the conception of self, there will again be karma.

From karma again comes a rebirth” (1.35abcd).

[11d, 12abcd]

And also Ćandrakṛti [in his *Entering in the Middle Way*] says,

“[With intelligence, having seen] all afflictions and defects

as arisen from the view of transitory collection” (6.120ab).

[13abc]

Although there is a difference between the observed objects of
the two conceptions of self, the mode of apprehension
toward them is not different whereby the root of cyclic existence
is free from the problem or consequence of being two. [13d, 14abc]

[Question 5]

Therefore, what is the mode of wandering due to them, their
number being twelve, of their order being definite, the way
in which they are causes and results; and the way the guiding
commentary on the three levels of beings comes within them?

[Answer 5]

The way in which [the ordinary beings] wander in samsara
in terms of the twelve links is as the following taught by
the Supreme Ārya Nagarjuna, “The three components are without
beginning, middle and end. The circle of samsara is like
the circle of a lighted piece of wood being spun in the sense that [those
three components] cause each other to turn [constantly].”

They thus wander without any rest.

[14d, 15abcd, 16ab]

As a branch of the dependent relation, it is definite as twelve.
It is divided into that number because there is no need for more.
[And this unit of twelve]
is also free of the fault of not including [other branches], if there were
fewer. [16cd, 17a]

Their sequence is determined by way of those which throw and those
thrown,
and those which accomplish and those accomplished.
If asked, then what are the throwing branches and the thrown
branches? [17bcd]

With [the three throwing branches of] ignorance, karmic formation
and consciousness,
[the four following] branches are thrown: name and form,
the six entrances, contact and feeling.
[The three] accomplishing branches are:
craving, grasping and becoming from which
come [the two] accomplished branches: birth and aging and death.
[18abcd, 19ab]

The supreme Ārya Nagarjuna said,
“The first, eighth and the ninth are delusions.
The second and the tenth are karma.
The remaining seven are sufferings.” [19cd, 20ab]

Regarding the way [that some of the branches are] causes and [some
are] results,
he said, “From the three delusions arise the two karmas.
From there [the two karmas], arise the seven sufferings. [20cd, 21a]
From the seven arise again their own result,
the three delusions. As long as it is like
the spun wheel of a potter, there arise
the two karmas from the three delusions.

From the two, seven will come. And again from the seven arise the three. This very wheel of samsara will thus keep turning again and again.” *[21bcd, 22abcd]*

Furthermore, there are the twelve branches of bad destiny [lower realm]. To think of them in forward process and reversed process is called the [meditation] of a lesser being. To think of the twelve branches of happy destiny [upper realm] in reversed process and forward process is called the [meditation] of an intermediate being. *[23abcd, 24a]*

So, basing oneself on one's own experience, [one can think about] also all mother sentient beings, about how they wander in the samsaric ocean by way of the twelve links [or branches]. Then generating love, compassion and the mind of enlightenment and training oneself in the practice of the Victor's son is [called that of] the great being. *[24bcd, 25abcd]*

[Question 6]

If they are identified, I then ask the following question: Between either meditation on the definitive meaning or meditation on bodhicitta, what is the uncommon cause for achieving the state of complete enlightenment?

[Answer 6]

In definitive meaning there are two minds of enlightenment. The uncommon substantial cause to accomplish the complete enlightenment is the conventional mind of enlightenment [or bodhicitta]. *[26abcd]*

For that reason, the Savior Śāntideva [in his *Bodhisattva's Way of Life*] said,

“[Having generated it,] today we are born in the lineage of Buddha. From now on, we are the child of Buddha” (3.26bc) and so forth.

It is thus established by scriptural authority and logic. [27abcd]

[Question 7]

[a] What is also the principal factor that pulls us out of samsara?

[b] Also before the cultivation of bodhicitta, it would be necessary to gain the experiential realization that all sentient beings have been one's mother. But forget talking about all sentient beings. When we simply observe a dog near our door, it would be indispensable first to generate a vivid experience feeling, “It has definitely been my mother.” Therefore, how would one handle meditating on it?

[Answer 7]

The main method to free oneself from samsara is the wisdom realizing selflessness because the samsaric root is the innate [conception] grasping at the self.

Also Āryadeva [in his *Four Hundred Stanzas on the Middle Way*] says,

“After seeing selflessness in objects the samsaric seed will cease” (14.25cd). [28abcd, 29ab]

[Question 8]

[a] Is it just a matter of insisting on thinking, “This dog is my mother”?

[b] Or, is there another technical visualization like in the case of lifting a machine?

[c] If there is, what is it?

[Answer 8]

The technique to meditate on domestic animals such as dogs as a mother is as taught in *Pramāṇavārtika* [by Dharmakṛti]:

“One is asked to meditate with the magical method of the scriptural authority and logic which establishes that the starting point of

one's rebirth is untraceable following the reasoning such as saying, ‘when taking a rebirth entirely.’”

[29cd, 30abcd]

[Question 9]

Moreover, what is the mode of exchanging based on the teaching that says, “Meditate on exchanging oneself with others”?

[a] Is it to focus on exchanging oneself (this side) for the other who is on the other side?

[b] Or, is there another way [of thinking]?

If it were the first way [a], what would the idea of that option be?

If it were the second way [b], then what would that very instruction be?

[Answer 9]

The meaning of exchanging oneself for other does not mean that one meditates on oneself as the other and others as oneself.

It is rather as suggested by [Śāntideva in his] the *Bodhisattva's Way of Life*:

“Having seen the faults of cherishing myself

and the ocean of good qualities of cherishing others,

I should completely forsake self-cherishing

and become familiar with cherishing others” (8.113abcd). [31abcd, 32abc]

And furthermore, the same text says,

“All the happiness there is in this world

arises from wishing others to be happy.

All the suffering there is in this world

arises from wishing oneself to be happy.
But what need is there to say it at length?
The childish work only for themselves,
whereas the Buddhas work only for others.
Just look at the difference between the two”

(8.129abcd, 130abcd).

[32d, 33abcd, 34abcd]

As it has just been said, know that cherishing oneself is
the source of all ruin
and cherishing others is the best
source of excellent qualities.

[35abcd]

Then meditate by exchanging the position of
the awareness which cherishes oneself
and that which gives up the others. At the end of that,
give up one’s own interest and
procure only the interest for others.
For this, generating a mind toward complete enlightenment
is the technique of meditating on exchanging oneself for others.

[36abcd, 37abc]

[Question 10]

Furthermore, whatever object one meditates on, it would be necessary to divide the time into two: the actual session and an intermediate session.

Therefore, regardless of whatever object one meditates on during the time of the actual session, what mode of observation of virtuous actions during the intermediate session would be an enhancement for the meditation of the actual session?

[Answer 10]

In the actual session, one meditates [on the relevant] object and in the post session, one also tries to seal

the number and the sequence of the meditational object of the actual session with mindfulness [དྲན་པ་ *dren pa*] and introspection [ཤེ་མིན་ *shé zhin*].

And in order to generate the meaning of meditation in one's continuum, if one collected [the two] accumulations and purified obscuration by reading scriptures and thinking about them as a support, this would be the best to enhance the practice of the actual session as it is admired by the Savior yourself. [37d, 38abcd, 39abcd]

[Question 11]

And also, how should one act to transform one's behaviour into virtuous actions?

[Answer 11]

The most skillful method to take all our behaviour as a way to practice virtue is to have mindfulness, introspection and conscientiousness [བློ་ཡོད་ *bak yö*] in everything: walking, strolling, sleeping and sitting. [40abcd]

In that way, one guards (like one's eye) the three vows which are the foundation of every excellent quality. Based upon that, restrain the sense doors and limit eating. Exert effort in the yoga of not sleeping. [41abcd]

I would join my palms before you to learn what is taught by Lord Maitri and his spiritual son Asaṅga about what to do when sleeping and so on. [42abc]

[Question 12]

Also in regard to the actual session:

[a] How many sessions should one make [in one day]?

[b] How should one approximate the duration of the session?

[Answer 12]

The number of sessions could be either four or three times during the day and three times at night which make a total of six, as taught in tantra.

[42d, 43ab]

The duration of the session is something that suits the awareness of the trainee.

There cannot be one fixed rule [for all].

[43cd]

Because those supremely learned ones said that it can last as long as one can [stay] in the mode of lotus nature. Yet, the former and the latter holy beings propose that it is more positive to have a shorter session for those who are beginners.

[44abcd, 45a]

[Question 13]

How should one keep the body postures and so forth during those sessions?

[Answer 13]

Cherish the possession of the seven body postures for the achievement of a faultless concentration.

[45bc]

[Question 14]

How many mantras should one recite during a session?

[Answer 14]

The mode of counting the number [of mantras for example] has many aspects.

The amount of exerting effort regarding the visualization of the points of wind

is infinite due to the division of the components,

thoughts and the concentration of trainees. *[45d, 46abc]*

[Question 15]

What is the reason to consider this as the beginning of meditation like the Sanskrit [in the beginning of any sutra translation]? [This question, in other words is: What is the beginning of a mediation that is like the first sentence on the first page of all the translations of sutras in Tibetan, which names the title in Sanskrit, as “It is called such and such” or “The title of the sutra is such and such”?]

[Answer 15]

“The beginning of all meditation,

which is like the Indian language [in the beginning of all translations of sutra in Tibetan],

is to check one's own mind well.”

So it is proposed by the supreme unmatched Gurū. *[46d, 47abc]*

[Question 16]

[a] Some great meditators of today say that they have the realization of meditative equipoise [equal placement, མཉམ་གཞན་ *nyam zhak*] and the post meditation [lit. subsequent attainment, རྗེས་ཐོབ་ *jé top*] as integrated. Is that true?

[b] If that is true, how are they integrated?

[c] And, when they are not integrated, what is the boundary between equal placement and subsequent attainment?

[Answer 16]

Any great meditator of today, freed from the two obscurations, proclaims to have the integration of equal placement [མཉམ་གཞན་ *nyam zhak*] and subsequent attainment [རྗེས་ཐོབ་ *jé top*].

It is true. Within the state where one does not depart even for an instant from equal placement, he gives instruction without effort to his trainees through the three miracles. The mode of associating equal placement and subsequent attainment is like that.

[47d, 48abcd, 49abc]

[Question 17]

Also, in all sutra, tantra and also in commentaries, a great admiration is expressed for the [importance of] Gurū devotion. In particular, if the great meditators were to perfect the practice of Gurū Yoga, I would ask the following questions:

[a] At what spot should one meditate on the Gurū?

[b] How many Gurūs should one meditate on?

[c] How does one carry out the actual Gurū Yoga?

[d] How are the root Gurū and Vajradhara inseparable?

[e] How should one radiate light rays and withdraw them?

[Answer 17]

The spot where to meditate on the Gurū
could be in front, at the crown of the head or in the middle of one's heart,
according to each individual's predisposition. [49d, 50ab]

Also in the *Abhidhana* tantra, it says,
“No matter where one meditates on
the kind Gurū within any part of one's body,
at the palm of one's hand or in the middle of the heart,
that person would also collect
all the blessings of thousands of Buddhas.” [50cd, 51abcd]

The number of Gurūs,
the mode of meditating on the actual yoga,
viewing the Gurū as indivisible from Vajradhara,
the order of what to do [such as
radiating and withdrawing the light-rays]
and the Ear-Whispered lineage which
came from you, the All-Knowing
Prince Siddhartha of the site of the snowy mountain,
are as written by [you] separately. [52abcd, 53abcd, 54a]

[Question 18]

For most of the great meditators these days, the meditation
on the preciousness of the human body and impermanence
appears to be a simple practice of Dharma; whereby, I would
ask the following questions:

Generally speaking, the purpose of all the virtuous practice
we do would be worth only for our progression from any level
of short term to the [long term of] crossing samsara and to
attaining the state of complete enlightenment. If that is so,
there should be a particular effect from meditating on only

these two [topics: the preciousness of the human body and impermanence], a great purpose regardless of one's level. What are those two [purposes]?

[Answer 18]

By contemplating leisure and endowments, the wish to take the essence from this supporting body is produced. By meditating on impermanence, the postponing [of our practice] is stopped. *[54bcd]*

[Question 19]

If they [really] meditated on the precious human body, how is it [attributed with] leisure and how is it endowed?

[Answer 19]

[The human body is attributed with] leisure due to having the time to practice Dharma. [It has] endowments due to having the ten favorable conditions. *[55ab]*

[Question 20]

[a] If they meditated on it with regards to their own continuum, how would they apply it?
[b] Also regarding the way of meditating on impermanence, how would they meditate with their own mind so that it does not become merely a subject to explain [to others]?

[Answer 20]

By contemplating on the qualities of leisure and endowments within one's own continuum, one will think, "I will make [my human body] meaningful."

One then furthermore thinks, “while having this [rare] supporting body, I must meditate right now.” *[55cd, 56ab]*

[Question 21]

[a] How many [subjects of] visualization are there within the Victor’s teachings? Which are the sharpest [or most effective] for one’s mind to be exhorted?

[b] Also, if it is said that it would be impossible to have a correct refuge without having gained a real experiential realization of the meditation on the sufferings of lower realms, how many [practitioners] are there who are able to accept that it possible to have a correct refuge without that experiential realization?

[c] If it is not possible, what is the reason?

[Answer 21]

Although there are many ways to meditate on impermanence, you yourself have taught to meditate on the three root points and the nine reasons. Have you not?

[56cd, 57ab]

And among them, the one that is the most effective and the best object of meditation taught by the Victor is the undefined time of death, *i.e.*, that he said that the notion of death is the best [to exhort us to practice Dharma].

[57cd, 58ab]

One cannot violate the words of you, the great personage who said, “It is not possible to have correct refuge if there is no sense of fear from the heart in regard to the sufferings of the three lower realms.” *[58cd, 59abc]*

Because it is proven by the scriptural authority [Āryadeva] which says,

“How can there be peace and respect in

Somebody who does not have the notion of sadness?” [59d, 60ab]

[Question 22]

Excluding the refuge performed by way of verbal recitation, how would one carry out the mode of taking refuge when it is meditated upon mentally?

[Answer 22]

Besides the refuge of verbal recitation, there exists a principle refuge, which is to be mentally frightened by the dread of that from which one needs protection,

and to know the difference between the qualities of the Gurū and the Three Jewels.

Entrusting one's hope in refuge

by believing that they have the capacity to

protect us from the greatly frightening dread and not telling others one's promise [regarding refuge, is the mental refuge].

[60cd, 61abcd, 62abc]

The object of refuge is of three: the Gurū and Three Jewels.

When meditating in the perspective of one's own mind,

[one can include the entire] merit field of the gradual path [to enlightenment]

and make request to them according to individual instruction.

[62d, 63abc]

[Question 23]

[a] When the refuge-subject is meditated upon mentally, how are the Three Jewels perceived in the perspective of his or her mind?

[b] [When meditating on the Three Jewels,] does our mind reflect only on the three objects representing the [Three] Jewels, which appear to our [consciousness of the] five sensory doors, or something else separate?

[Answer 23]

The supporting image of body, speech and mind [of a holy being] that we have now, are not really the Three Jewels. But they are the objects for us to recall the Three Jewels.

[63d, 64abc]

The supreme guide together with the deities said in the ocean of sutra and tantra that venerating respectfully the supporting images of the Three Jewels that are made in the appropriate manner, is the same as venerating the Three real Jewels. Therefore, I would respect them as real Three Jewels.

[64d, 65abcd, 66ab]

[Question 24]

[a] If it does as the first option, [reflecting only on the three representations,] upon what should one meditate mentally?

[b] When meditating on them, how could one's devotion to them [the Three Jewels] not lessen?

[c] If it does as the second option, what are the actual Three Jewels?

[Answer 24]

The real non-deceptive Three Jewels could be different due to different schools. However, the Almighty Lord said, “The three *kayās*, *nirvāṇa* and the eight spiritual persons [are the real non-deceptive Three Jewels].”

[66cd, 67ab]

Venerable Ajita [Maitri] asserts the difference between the causal [refuge] and resultant [refuge], conventional [refuge] and ultimate [refuge], as well as temporary [refuge] and absolute refuge, as taught in the *Uttaratantra*.

[67cd, 68ab]

[Question 25]

What would be considered the real entity of refuge?

[Own comment]

Accepting that one takes refuge in them without gaining a good understanding of these preceding points is like a fire which cannot burn or cook.

[Answer 25]

The real entity of refuge is a refuge of knowing that oneself has great fear and knowing that the [Three] Jewels have the power to protect from it, as Omniscient you, yourself accept.

[68cd, 69abc]

“Considering oneself to have taken refuge without having gained such understanding, is similar to a fire which is not able to burn and boil.”

Making such a statement has some significance.

[69d, 70abc]

[Question 26]

Also, the confession of negativities is important and fundamental to know.

What would you identify as being negative?

[Answer 26]

Regarding the confession of negativities, the four powers are principal and among them what is most supreme is the power of constant application of the antidote. [70d, 71ab]

[Question 27]

[a] And also, when virtuous forces and negative forces are committed together and equally, can the force of all the virtues make the negativities not come to their fruition, or can it not?

[b] If it does, why do the negativities not destroy the virtues?

[c] If one thinks, “Yet, the negativities do destroy the virtues, because [Śāntideva in his *A Bodhisattva’s Way of Life* says,]

‘All the virtuous deeds and merit
such as giving and making offerings to the Sugatas
that we have accumulated over thousands of eons
can be destroyed by just one moment of anger’” (6.1abcd).

Then in that case, since any virtue that a person creates is destroyed by his or her negativities and will be impossible to yield a result, can we accept that it is a mistake for a person to create a virtue?

[d] Yet, if one thinks “the virtue and negativity infect each other and thus neither yields any result,” then it follows that when barley and peas are sown together they would also be infected. So, don’t they also yield a result?

[Hypothetical position of others]

Somebody thinks, “Or, one can accept that the barley seed is stronger, whereby the pea is destroyed and it will not have its result. However, according to this example, both would yield their fruits individually and they would not harm each other.”

[e] Then, the virtue also does not harm the negativity; therefore, what would be the intention of saying, “All the karmic obscuration from the five boundless actions will be purified in dependence upon virtue”?

[f] If this quotation were true, I would also ask, what is the intention of the [above] quotation from [Śāntideva’s] *A Bodhisattva’s Way of Life*?

[g] If the meaning of that quotation from [Śāntideva’s] *A Bodhisattva’s Way of Life* were that one instant of anger destroys all the virtues collected over a thousand eons, could we accept that all the virtues which somebody has collected with effort before that instant of anger have become useless?

[Hypothetical answer from our own system]

If we accept it, [there is no doubt that] there are so many people today who give rise to one instant of anger and who will continue to give rise [to many other instants].

[h] Should we furthermore also accept that all the past virtues that we created from the confession of negativities are destroyed by a future instant of anger, whereby it follows that the purified negativities from confession would come back again and yield their fruits?

[Own comment]

If one did not know where to focus the mind, proclaiming oneself to be loyal to the law of karma would be mere faith.

In summary, although the current-day practitioners indeed consider the meditation on the sufferings of lower realms, refuge, action and its result and confession of negativities as a simple practice, they, from the perspective of people whose mind and effort are weak and whose experiential realizations are inferior, are very important and difficult subjects.

There are many other points including the above-mentioned ones to discuss but fearing that there would be too many words, I will not write them all.

Generally speaking, there is no oral instruction from the Victor that is not included in the three: theory, meditation and conduct. Therefore, also when the practitioners start to check if what they do is mistaken or non-mistaken, they should verify themselves within these three [areas]. From my side, the points which I reported earlier were related to the subject of conduct.

From here onward, I will report certain points regarding theory and meditation. Forget about the previous turbulence which I have caused and think of the following.

In general, the teachings of the Victor are profound and firm. In particular, regarding the view and meditation, there is the possibility of ruining oneself or feeling gratification, and a great danger of falling astray, whereby it is necessary to be careful.

How much disaster would we encounter even if we mistook an ordinary road just for one day?

The road here [that we are referring to] is forever. Therefore, investigate well the stage where one can go astray in order to know what position to take.

So, now if the great meditators put effort mainly in the view and meditation, the mind which realizes the view of emptiness should not be separated from the meditative state of calm-abiding. If that is procured, the integration of view and meditation becomes the union of *shamatha* [calm-abiding, རྫོག་མཐོང་ *zhi né*] and *vipashana* [higher seeing, ལྷན་མཐོང་ *lhag thong*]. For this, firstly, if one did not have a stable calm-abiding that is like glue, he or she would not be able to lead his or her mind close to emptiness and remain there. And if one did not have a good mind of equal placement [or meditative equipoise] which abides close to emptiness, there would simply be no way [for the yogi] to have the appearances as illusion in the subsequent attainment. For that reason, it is important to have calm-abiding before meditating on higher seeing or definitive meaning.

[Answer 27]

A virtue committed in the mixture of
powerful virtue and negativity
does not make negativity come to its fruition.

The opposite is also true.

When both are equal

neither of them will yield its result.

[71cd, 72abcd]

The virtue from the confession of previously collected negativities
will arise later. The result of negativity
which has already been confessed can come back again
due to being destroyed by anger.

[73abcd]

Any virtue that a person destroyed
by creating anger, renders impossible
its result because of [this] negativity.

[74abc]

All virtues that one

has generated before the instant of

the person [destroying them by anger] and the angry mind,
are not accepted to have become useless. [74d, 75abc]

Likewise, the fact that one of the
more powerful virtues or negativities
removes the fruition of the one that is weaker
does not mean that [the weaker is] destroyed. [75d, 76abc]

Since the karmas are definite on their own,
even if a virtue and negativity are practiced in mixture,
their effect will be experienced in mixture individually
if they do not encounter any agents which create obstacles.
[76d, 77abc]

Furthermore, the way in which the balanced karmas ripen
their results is: “That the karma makes us wander in samsara
in accordance with whatever is heavier, closer and more familiar.
So, depending on whatever is done in the past,
the first of each priority will give its result first.”
Karmas yield their result exactly as it is said. [77d, 78abcd, 79a]

However, when a virtue and negativity are
created in a way that they are the same in power and being mixed,
it is possible that they destroy each other. [79bcd]

In that case, when one generates an inexhaustible anger
and wrong view with respect to the bodhisattvas,
any root of virtue would be destroyed. [80abc]

Hence, the Savior Śāntideva [in his *Bodhisattva’s Way of Life* says,]
“All the virtuous deeds and merit,
such as giving and making offerings to the Sugatas,
that we have accumulated over thousands of eons
can be destroyed by just one moment of anger” (6.1abcd). [80d, 81abcd]

Similarly, if one familiarized oneself with emptiness
and directly realized it at that time,
it would uproot even the seed of the negativity. [82abc]

Also in the *Vajramaṇḍalālamkāra*, it says,
“If the yogis informed each other and
went into isolation to
put so much effort into it,
they would purify the negativities and get enlightened in this lifetime.
When one meditates well on phenomena such as selflessness,
one will embrace the knowledge of all.”
So it is said. And also the fact of saying that the virtue and negativity
can be a harming agent and harmful object to each other,
was intended upon such an issue. [82d, 83abcd, 84abcd]

Though it is said that they destroy each other,
they do not uproot the seed
except if it is a profound path.
But they destroy the ripening of fruits
even if the conditions are met now. [85abcd, 86a]

Hence, I offer a lovely lute of
lapis lazuli in the two hands of
Saraswati as an answer to
the question regarding conduct. [86bcd, 87a]

[Question 28]

[a] What is mental laxity [ཇིང་པ་ *jing wa*]? Which is one of the
obstacles to developing that calm-abiding?

[b] Is mental dullness [མུག་པ་ *muk pa*] the same or is it different?

[c] If it were the same, how would you refute the fact that Ārya
Asaṅga and so forth identified them both individually?

[d] If they were not same, how would you differentiate the two of them?

[Answer 28]

The beginning of your questions regarding the view and meditation are the following:

Are mental laxity [བྱིང་བ་ *jing wa*] and mental dullness [སྣགས་པ་ *muk pa*] the same or different? [87bcd]

What makes it that they are not same?

When one sets oneself in equal placement, how do the subtle and gross mental laxity arise?

What is the antidote for neither to arise? [88abcd]

Here follow the answers to those questions:

Mental laxity and mental dullness are different, because Asaṅga in his *Bodhisattva Ground* taught them both as separate. [89abcd]

Also, [Kamalaśīla in his] *Gomrim, The Stages of Meditation*, said that mental dullness gives rise to mental laxity.

After laxity vanishes, a neutral state or a virtue which has mere clarity but no intensity in regard to a loose object can become any kind of consciousness. [90abcd, 91ab]

Mental dullness renders both body and mind very heavy. It makes them unserviceable.

It is included in ignorance, it is non-virtuous, and is taught to be an obscured and unspecified phenomenon. [91cd, 92ab]

[Question 29]

Moreover, how do the gross and subtle mental laxity arise when being in equal placement?

[Answer 29]

While carrying out an immovable concentration, if one slightly loses the intensity of visualization, one then is caught by subtle mental laxity. [92cd, 93a]

But if there is clarity and not intensity then a medium mental laxity has come. If there is not even clarity, it is then great mental laxity. [93bcd]

[Question 30]

What antidotes are there to keep them both from arising?

[Answer 30]

The antidotes to abandon them are mainly recollection [དྲན་པ་ *dren pa*] and introspection [ཤེ་མིན་པ་ *shé zhin*].

Again between the two of them, recollection is the principal factor. [94abc]

[Question 31]

Also, there is something important called “mindfulness” [དྲན་པ་ *dren pa*] and “introspection” [ཤེ་མིན་པ་ *shé zhin*] which comes out of the mouth of all the great meditators just like their breath.

I would like to ask them, “How would you recognize these two individually and precisely?”

[Answer 31]

Mindfulness (ཇམ་པ་ *dren pa*) and introspection are identified as follows:

Mindfulness is a mental factor with the three following attributes: being a support for visualization, having the aspect of thinking and mentally attending [its object in each session].

[94d, 95abc]

Introspection is a mental factor, a part of the mind which, while being in equal placement, observes to see if laxity and excitement arise or not, acting like a spy.

It is a result of non-distraction.

[95d, 96abcd]

[Question 32a]

[a] If somebody said, “Mindfulness is just the fact of not being distracted and introspection is that which spies if one is distracted or not,” what is the meaning of being distracted and not being distracted?

[b] Is distraction and non distraction posited simply in relation to the object of meditation?

[Answer 32a]

The meaning of distraction and not non-distraction:

A mind which observes any object of observation that does not liberate itself from the bonds of mindfulness and introspection and abiding on it without moving single-pointedly, is described as non-distraction in this case.

Through this, one can realize the other one.

[97abcd, 98ab]

[Question 32b]

[a] Is mindfulness simply the fact that the mind does not wander around, without taking the object of meditation into account?

[b] Is that which checks if the mind wanders or not, posited as introspection?

[Answer 32b]

Also, in regard to wandering and not wandering mentally, think that when one is lead away from the way of mindfulness and introspection, there is no difference from the above case.

[98cd, 99a]

[Question 33a]

There are also some who say that the non-conceptualized blissful clarity [བདེ་གསལ་མི་རྟོག་པ་ *dé sel mi tok pa*] is the best of meditation.

[a] How would they identify the two: clarity and non-conceptual?

[b] Does the meaning of clarity refer to the needing of a clear object of visualization for the mind?

[c] Or is it just the mind itself which has the nature of lucidity, vividly clear within the state of not wandering and without taking the object of visualization in account?

[d] Is the meaning of non-conceptual also supposed to focus on a single object of visualization and not to conceive of any other object?

[e] Or, is it simply the mind itself without taking the object of visualization into account and not conceptualizing anything?

[f] Or, is it enough to abide [on the object of visualization] without wandering around?

[Question 33b]

If somebody said, “Mindfulness has to be that which is not distracted from one object of meditation and also introspection

has to be that which checks if one is distracted or not from that single object of meditation. Clarity also must be that [the mind] has to be clear with respect to the object of meditation. Non-conceptual also means that [the mind] has to abide on a single object of meditation and not conceive of any other object; all exactly as the first optional answer given above,” what would be one of [the factors which make] the union of calm-abiding and higher seeing if one did not have such calm-abiding which consists of mindfulness, introspection, clarity and non-conceptualization at the moment of [meditation on] definitive meaning?

[Answer 33a, 33b]

Although “Non-conceptual blissful clarity” is known as such, the bliss is not necessarily a branch of every concentration. [99bcd]

However, a fully qualified calm-abiding and higher seeing are accompanied by the bliss of pliancy. [100ab]

Clarity means that the object of meditation is clear. Non-conceptual means that the mind observes the object of meditation and doesn’t conceive of anything other than that object. [100cd, 101a]

[Question 33c]

If somebody said, “If one did have it, it follows that that higher seeing also would focus its attention on the object of meditation when that calm-abiding is united with higher seeing. Therefore, [that union] would become a meditation with an observed object and not a meditation on an unobserved object,” how would you answer?

[Own comment]

This being the case, some people think, “All of these [factors], do not take the object of meditation into account. It is just the mind itself, not engaged in anything and not being distracted. It does not wander, it does not conceptualize and it abides by itself suspended. And when one can stay as long as one can within that state where the mind itself is in the nature of being vividly lucid, that [yogi] would have all the five factors: mindfulness, introspection, bliss, clarity and non-conceptualization. This very thing is also the union of calm-abiding. In brief, meditation on definitive meaning or emptiness is the actual part of mahamudra. Some believe that this very thing is the individual-withdraw [མེད་སྤྱད་ *sor dü*], which is one of the six preliminary branches.”

But to be sure about all this, one should gain knowledge from sutra, tantra and commentaries.

[Own comment]

The commentaries on the instructional teachings from the Victor are mainly from the lineages of the two famous Great Chariot-Way Makers [or simply the two Innovators] in India: Nagarjuna together with his spiritual son and their following lineage, and Asaṅga together with his brother and their following lineage. The groups of lineages are definite as these two.

[Answer 33c]

Also the statement “The one with object and the one without object,” is due to the difference of the division of the supporting object in the sense that ultimately, there is no object and conventionally there is an object. [101bcd,102a]

Hence, both calm-abiding and higher seeing which observe conventional truth are asserted as a meditation with object. [102bcd]

Also the statement saying, “Ultimately, there is no object,” is said so because the focused object of conception of true existence does not exist even in an atom. [103abc]

In the *Ārya Atyayajñanasūtra*, it says, “Since phenomena are inherently clear lighted, it is taught to meditate with the knowledge that they are unobservable.” It does not mean that there is no object at all. [103d, 104abc]

[Question 33d]

What they both taught about the meaning of mindfulness, introspection, clarity and non-conceptual and what you said [in the above hypothetical statement] are not compatible. In particular, the great scholar Kamalashila has taught three kinds of stages of meditation. Therefore, read them well. Since that subject was taught as a basis of argument between him and Hashang, can one accept that these scholars are wrong?

[Answer 33d]

The elaborated meaning from this point shows the contradictory harm to those who accept that. Meditating by placing the mind without any supporting object and stopping the mind from wandering is a meditation on the unity of calm-abiding and higher seeing on emptiness, on mahamudra, on individual withdrawal [སོང་སྤྱད་ *sor dü*] and on yoga and so forth. [104d, 105abcd,106ab]

Since we would never wish to give up all the scriptures from the Victor and their meaning, the commentary texts by the scholars and adepts even in a dream, it would be better if also those which are known as personal instructions could concord with the holy scripture. If they do not concord they will fall into the category of instructions to be given up.

[106cd, 107abcd, 108a]

[Question 34]

[a] Beside that, does meditation have two divisions: analytical meditation and stabilizing meditation or not?

[b] If it does not have [two types], should we refuse these teachings of the authentic Indian Masters?

[c] If it does have [two types], what is the reason for dividing the meditation into two?

[d] Is analytical meditation a meditation?

[e] If it is not, the Indian scholars have said that it is a meditation, so is it thus a mistake?

[f] If it is a meditation, what is the point of saying not to let the mind wander [in analytical meditation] since a mental wandering is [hypothetically] an obstacle for meditation?

[Answer 34]

Furthermore, the reason for dividing meditation into two: analytical and stabilizing,

is that those who want liberation must definitely achieve

calm-abiding [*shamatha* ཞི་གནས་ *zhi né*] and higher seeing [*vipashana* ལྷག་མཐོང་ *lhag thong*].

[108bcd, 109a]

With the wisdom of individual investigation,
one analyzes often and meditates. [109bc]
Mental wandering and excitement, which are
the enemies of concentration, cannot be the same. [109d, 110a]

[Question 35]

Also, what is the reason for saying that a wise man who has previously heard [a teaching] and a foolish man who has not previously heard [a teaching] do not have any difference of nobility or evil, when meditating?

[Answer 35]

The wiser you are, the more
you analyze things via scriptural authority and logic. [110bc]

[Question 36]

Furthermore, if [mental] wandering is an obstacle to meditation, is it a wrong teaching for Asaṅga to say in his *Abhidharmasamućcya* that there cannot be a correct meditation without relying upon hearing and thinking or also many other scholars who taught hearing and reflecting as a companion of meditation?

[Answer 36]

The more people like this there are, the more there are mental wanderings and excitement, whereby the foolish ones are quicker than the wise ones to generate realizations, in which case saying, “Hearing and thinking create obstacles for meditation,” is a story of forsaking the holy Dharma. [110d, 111abcd]

[Question 37]

If somebody thought, “That statement, ‘[mental] wandering is an obstacle to meditation,’ is not meant to be in all cases. It is an obstacle at the time of meditating on the absolute, the definitive meaning,” does the wisdom of individual investigation [སོར་རྟོག་ས་ ཡེ་ཤེས་ *sor tok yé shé*] need to analyze or not when meditating?

[Own comment]

If it needs to analyze, it contradicts the statement saying that wandering is an obstacle to meditation and if does not need to make analysis, that kind of [meditation on] definitive meaning is contradicting the higher seeing of the system of Nagarjuna. Therefore, refuse that as a meditation on absolute [truth]!

[Answer 37]

Some, when meditating on definitive meaning proclaim “to do a stabilizing meditation,” without analyzing if mental wandering and excitement are obstacles or not. This also is a fault of considering analytical meditation as wandering and excitement. [112abcd]

[Question 38]

If somebody thought, “[mental] wandering and meditation do not contradict [each other], there is advice about making [mental] wandering become a meditation,” I would ask the following questions:

[a] Are mental excitement and mental wandering the same or not?

[b] Are calm-abiding and meditation the same or not?

[c] If they are the same, the enemy of calm-abiding is mental laxity and excitement, therefore [mental] wandering [automatically] becomes an obstacle to meditation.

If they are not the same, what is the difference?

[Answer 38]

Mental wandering and excitement are not the same thing. Because excitement

is as [Asaṅga] taught in his *Abhidharmasamućcya*,

“It is included in attachment and is an unapacified [state of mind].”

[113abc]

Mental wandering is even more expansive than that

because there could also be mental wandering due to aversion.

[113d, 114a]

They both create interference not only for stabilizing meditation

but also for analytical meditation.

[114bc]

Calm-abiding is not same as meditation. Because

if it is a meditation, it is not pervaded by calm-abiding. [114d, 115a]

[Question 39]

[a] Also, when doing the stabilizing meditation, does one have to bind the mind to one object of meditation and to place the mind on it or not?

[b] If the mind is not placed, what kind of stabilizing meditation is it if the mind is not stabilized on it?

[Answer 39]

When setting ourselves in stabilizing meditation

we bind our mind to the supporting object [of meditation]

and it is asserted that [our mind] is single-pointedly placed on it.

[115bcd]

The mind should not be placed on any

other object. It is stabilized in a suspended [manner] by

stopping it from wandering. It is called “stabilizing meditation” because of being stabilized in such a way.

[116abcd]

[Question 40]

If somebody thought, “However, the mind does not have to be stabilized on the object [of meditation]. It is called stabilizing meditation because the mind does not let itself wander anywhere and is stabilized in a suspended manner,” how can such a blank mind which does not have anything to deal with in its perspective, be explained as a right stabilizing meditation?

[Khachig or one hypothetical disputant] thinks:

“This [stabilizing meditation] is transmitted from ear to ear. Therefore, it is not to be left behind even with the witness [or excuse] of sutra and tantra. One also does not require hearing [teachings for this]. With the [stabilizing meditation] alone one will accomplish the absolute [realization of emptiness].”

[Hypothetical Answer]

It is great if one can attain the omniscient state which realizes the three times simultaneously just by sitting in a blank state, without attending to anything mentally. I, myself would absolutely not differentiate that kind of meditation from Hashang’s mode of meditating.

[The same disputant from before] thinks:

“However, there is a big difference between Hashang’s mode of meditating and that of ours. Because, Hashang views all the virtues such as those of the six perfections as a fault, whereas we consider all the virtues as excellent qualities.”

[Hypothetical answer again]

That is a statement for affirming that the meditation on the view and conduct are different, as an answer to somebody who says that there is no difference between the view and meditation.

That is for example when somebody is asked if his face is white or black, he answers regarding the size of his bottom, [which is completely different from the question at hand].

[Hypothetical thought of the same disputant]

“However, this meditation that I am talking about here does not really consist of not reflecting on anything mentally; I do reflect on mahamudra.”

[Hypothetical answer]

Check if the mahamudra that you are accepting is concordant with the view and meditation taught by [the saviour] Nagarjuna and if it is not accordant, what difference is there from labelling a dog as a lion? If it is concordant with them, there should not be any error of falling in [the extreme of] eternalism or nihilism. Therefore, say very clearly what one places the mind on for it to become a meditation on eternalism and what the mind is placed on for it to become a meditation on nihilism!

[Hypothetical thought]

“I do not know that kind of distinction, I myself am present with it.”

[Hypothetical answer]

The fact of not knowing if you are going astray or not, is also because the meditation that you are doing is not directed by gaining a stability that is based upon an unmistaken, correct

reason. Therefore, although you feel proud of doing a meditation, thinking that you have induced a deep ascertainment and that your mind is decisively sure about it, think that you are not effectively in that direction and it is rather just a belief.

[Hypothetical thought]

“Viewing existence becomes eternalism, viewing non-existence becomes nihilism, viewing both [becomes the view of both] and viewing things other than them becomes a view of extreme, therefore the mode of viewing things, free from those four alternatives is the view and meditation of Nagarjuna.”

[Answer 40]

There is nothing to take from the object [of meditation].
To those who express their assertions of
the placement of mind on a total blankness as a mahamudra,
and that it being an ear-whispered lineage and so on;
and who pass over analysis by quoting
scriptural authority and logic out of mercy,
I venerate. If even those who know all
can be poor in answering
what can somebody like me do? *[117abcd, 118abcd, 119ab]*

[Question 41]

[a] What is the mode of viewing which is free from those four alternatives?

[b] Although you say that it is viewing, don't you realize that you are in a position where [phenomena] do not rely upon anything?

[c] Aren't you still on the side of the previously mentioned view of Hashang, where one keeps oneself in a blank state of mind, not thinking of anything?

[The same hypothetical disputant] thinks:

“Then, not thinking of anything and not meditating is the best meditation. Not viewing anything is the best view and not practicing anything is the best practice.”

[Denial of that statement]

You who make such a statement seem to have an advanced experiential realization. But in that case, it would follow that, not doing a virtuous practice is already a virtuous practice. The very non-purification of obscuration is already a purification of obscuration. In that way, you do not have any valid support, whereby it would be better to spend your time by practicing whatever comes to your mind without really the need of going into a cave at a high altitude. Have we really reached the limit where such thing is allowed? I hope not. Therefore, as we have not yet reached such a time, it is very important to be careful.

[The same hypothetical disputant from before] thinks:

“Then, why did the Victor say, ‘Whatever is not seen is the best seeing, and whatever is not viewed is the best view?’”

[Hypothetical answer]

The intention of that [statement from the Victor] is very profound; it is addressed to those whose mind abides up straight, not to the rough ones above. I want to bestow the very original oral instruction from the wise Gurū father, but it appears that it is not the moment for now. Therefore, ask this question to others.

[Question 42]

What is the emptiness to meditate on when a text says, “Meditation on emptiness is peerless”?

[Hypothetical disputant] thinks:

“It is that which is not established anywhere.”

[Hypothetical and indirect rebuttal from our own system]

If you think that, the result of meditating on that which is not established anywhere also cannot be other than that which does not exist anywhere. Therefore, that meditation is the highest one.

[Another optional answer from the hypothetical disputant] thinking:

“Or if not, the meaning of that emptiness is that which is unobservable anywhere.”

[Question 43]

Then, what is the meaning of unobservable?

[Hypothetical disputant] thinks:

“It means not engaging anywhere in conception.”

[Answer 41, 42, 43]

How ever many phenomena there are, without exception, are free of inherent existence.

That is the profound emptiness to meditate upon. *[119cd, 120a]*

[Question 44]

Then, how should one practice the generosity of the three unobservable [factors or] circles?

Because if conception is involved in the three entities of generosity: the giver, to whom the object is given and the entity of giving, it becomes an observable generosity and if no conception is involved in any of the three of them then an ordinary being would just not know how to practice generosity!

[Another answer from the hypothetical disputant] thinking:
“Or also, practicing generosity without apprehending all three of them as truly existent, is a generosity of the three thorough purities.”

[Answer 44]

A generosity accompanied by a wisdom which realizes the three factors of generosity as non-truly existent has the three factors entirely purely.

[120bcd]

[Question 45]

[a] What is the meaning of not apprehending them as truly existent?

[b] Is it just the fact of blocking the above-mentioned conception?

[c] Or is it just the notion that they do not exist truly?

[Question 46]

Furthermore, there is the so-called “All phenomena do not exist truly” moving from the mouth of all people like their breath. I would like to ask the following questions:

[a] Forget about all phenomena for now, and let us first ask ourselves, what does it mean that the persons do not exist truly?

[b] If they did exist truly, how would they be?

[c] For example, it is indeed impossible to have a horn on the head of a rabbit, but in case it did exist, there should be some kind of imaginary way of forming a horn on its head. Likewise, what would be the imaginary way of thinking of the formation of a truly existent person?

[Answer from hypothetical disputant who] thinks:

“Apprehending simply that ‘I am real’ would be the mode.”

[Indirect denial from our own system]

Then, the way to meditate on the non-true existence of self would also simply be, apprehending that “I am not real.” Both of these two apprehensions are mere beliefs which are not based upon any reason.

[Another optional answer from the same disputant] thinking: “Or, if not, not being established anywhere is the meaning of non-true existence.”

[Denial from our own system]

Then, viewing in that way is nihilism. Therefore, one goes astray.

[Answer 45, 46]

Even this [entire purity] does not exist anywhere.
For those who assert to meditate on mahamudra
by simply withdrawing their mental activity,
I wrote [this section] with false mercy.

[121abcd]

The reason why the person himself does not exist truly:
If the object (of the mode of apprehension
of the innate self-grasping in one's continuum,
the self which appears to be independent,
existed as it appears, it would be a truly established phenomenon;
instead, it is not established at all in that way.

[122abcd, 123ab]

It is likewise to be applied to all.

It is not just a question of belief and pondering.

[123cd]

There is nothing that is not non-truly existent.

But, “nothing exists” is not asserted to be

the meaning of non-truly existent.

[124abc]

[Question 47]

Moreover, is there a difference between “not grasping x as truly-[existent]” and “grasping x as non-truly existent” or not?

[Own comment]

If there is no difference, it follows that there is no difference between “not creating non-virtue” and “creating virtue.” Then it follows also that there is no difference between “that which is not non-virtuous” and “that which is virtuous.” In this case, it follows that there is no neutrality which is neither virtue nor non-virtue. It would mean that somebody has to be a good man simply because of not being bad. In this case, it follows that the three categories of people: good, bad and middling do not exist.

Or, otherwise you must tell me the difference- if there is one- between “not grasping x as truly-[existent]” and “grasping x as non-truly existent.”

[Answer 47]

Moreover, there is a difference between “not apprehending truly” and “apprehending something as non-truly existent,” because there are many who apprehend a third possibility which is neither of those two. *[124d, 125abc]*

In short, [for instance] even the doubtful mind thinking, “If the vase, cloth and so forth are true or not true,” neither apprehends them as truly existent nor as non-truly existent. *[125d, 126abc]*

[Question 48]

Furthermore, when some people check carefully if the mind exists as colour or shape, they believe that the very fact of seeing the mind not existing as neither of them, is the seeing of the mind. Then [the question is], when one looks carefully if the sharp and long horn is on the head of a donkey or on that of a horse, and sees that it is not on either one of them, is that very seeing the seeing of a horn?

[Question 49]

And some people, when they observe if the mind exists as a color or a shape and realize that the mind is not seen as either one of them, they introduce [the mind] saying “the mind is not established.” [In other words, the mind is non-existent.] Then [the question is], when one looks carefully if this dog exists as a lion or fox, and when he does not see the dog as either one of them, can he state that the dog does not exist?

[Own comment]

These two [cases] are similar because, for example, just as the dog cannot be established as non-existent due to not existing as a lion or a fox, similarly, the meaning is that the mind cannot be established as being non-existent due to not existing as colour and shape.

[Question 50]

[a] Also some people, when they watch the mind in that way, they do not see the mind anywhere as a colour and shape. And they introduce that “not seeing” as seeing the reality or the entity of the mind. If that is the case, then when one looks to see if the dog exists as a lion or a fox, is the fact of not seeing the dog as neither of the two, the seeing of the reality or the entity of the mind?

[b] Explain to me why these two [cases] are not similar!

[Remark]

There are also some who think the following, “If we lose the retention of our mindfulness which directly watches the entity of the mind of the very present moment, we will realize the mind as empty right away at the second moment. Therefore, it is very important not to be separated from the mindfulness which watches the entity of conception of the very present moment regardless of the dawning of any kind of conception. If one can carry out [the direct watching] however much one can with such retention of mindfulness, one will realize that any conception which arises during that [retention of mindfulness] will vanish by itself just like water-bubbles.

In short, it is a conception at the first moment, but when it is carried out by such mindfulness, that former conception would dawn as dharmakāya at its second moment. Regardless of any rising of conceptions - good or bad - it [the dharmakāya] would not cease. Dharmakāya and exalted wisdom are not to be sought elsewhere. [They say that the practice of] transforming any rising of conception into exalted wisdom or viewing all that appears as the face of dharmakāya is something to be carried out in all kinds of great and lesser circumstances such as in equal placement, subsequent attainment, at death, in the intermediate state and so forth. There is no [practice that is] more profound than this. All the environments and the essential sentient beings do not exist beyond conception. All conceptions are equal in the taste of dharmakāya, whereby they are of equal taste.”

[Answer 48, 49, 50]

Not having seen the mind as color, shape and so forth, wanting to see the mind while it is not established as color, shape and so forth, the mind [itself] is not established.

[126d, 127abc]

Due to seeing [the question of mind] in that way,
people introduce three ways of seeing the mind's nature.
In order to present clearly whether all those three
identifications are appropriate or not, out of mercy,
I endeavor here with fatigue whatever I can. [127d, 128abcd]

[Question 51]

To those who make the above statements, I would ask the following questions:

[a] Is the oral instruction about observing the entity of the mind from Nagarjuna a mode where an individually investigating wisdom analyzes it everywhere inside and out from the Buddha[-level] to that of hell, and watching that very entity, no matter where it dawns?

[b] Or is it observed in a rough manner without entering into detail?

[c] If [his oral transmission] is the first option, what is that mode of making analysis with an individually investigating wisdom?

[d] If it is the second option, forget about observing the dharmakāya with that technique. Even the realization of emptiness would be impossible.

[Hypothetical answer from them and proposed correction from our own system]

Maybe, you want to say that some conceptions dawn and when directly watched, vanish at the second moment, and that very thing is the dawning of dharmakāya.

But something which suddenly arises at the first moment and then seeing that it does not last at the second moment is actually a mode of viewing impermanence. This is not the same way as viewing emptiness in Nagarjuna's system.

[Answer 51]

The entity of the mind being momentary is how Ārya Nagarjuna views it. His personal instruction is: Those accustomed with the definitive meaning, scriptural authority and logic should meditate [that regardless of whatever appearance that all phenomena - from form to omniscience - dawn, they all do not exist inherently,] with the reasonings which refute production from the four extremes of existence, non-existence, the five reasonings, seven reasonings, the reasonings of dependent relation and that of being free from [a truly-existent] one and many and so on.

[129abcd, 130abcd, 131a]

Or, both those learned ones and those unlearned ones should examine that with parts, that without parts, the basis of imputation, imputed phenomenon, conception, the mode of appearance and the mode of abidance individually, and that their nature, free from being a truly existent thing, could be applied [to everything] from the Buddha-level to the level of hell and meditate.

[131bcd, 132abcd]

By leaving things just for good looks, one cannot really cease the conceived object of the conception grasping at self.

[133ab]

Due to watching the gradual rising of conceptualization it vanishes. So, to assert that this is the seeing of the natural face of dharmakāya, and that this is the realization of the nature of all phenomena, emptiness, is a mistake in all [senses].

[133cd, 134abc]

However, meditating in that way is a positive thing for achieving the [calm-]abiding of mind. *[134d, 135a]*

[Question 52]

Even if I admitted that it is a mode of viewing emptiness, and that it is not superior to that of the two groups of Hinayana schools, what would you say?

[Answer 52]

Also to view the previous moment and successive moment of the mind is to think of the impermanence of mind because a compounded phenomenon disintegrates momentarily. It is not that one meditates on emptiness during the session.

[135bcd, 136a]

It is similar to the way of negating the self that is permanent, unitary and independent, and the substantially existing self which is self-sufficient according to the Vaibhashika and Sautrantika.

[136bcd, 137a]

[Question 53]

If I asked you who the author is of such language saying, “the [simple term] empty and the dharmakāya are the same,” thus contradicting the [fixed] spoken statement of the [learned] people in general saying, “In the sutra, tantra and commentaries, it is taught that there is a great difference between the [simple term] empty and dharmakāya,” what would you say?

[Clarification]

Nevertheless, there is no contradiction if you speak of such a statement “...dharmakāya...” by simply thinking that it is a base which will become dharmakāya.

[Answer 53]

In scripture, it is said that when some hearers directly realize emptiness, they directly realize the nature of the mind, whereby they see the dharmakāya of the natural purity. [137bcd, 138a]

[Nagarjuna in his] Dharmadhātustotra says, “The dharmakāya which is free of the stain to be abandoned by the path of seeing is seen, on the first ground.” There is no scripture where it says that emptiness is dharmakāya. [138bcd, 139a]

A sentient being who possesses dharmakāya, which is a compounded phenomenon in his continuum, would be a real lotus of the sky. [139bc]

But, if somebody gives the label “dharmakāya” to the mind’s nature because it will become the dharmakāya of natural purity at the moment when the stains will be purified, that is fine. [139d, 140abc]

[Question 54]

Furthermore, if I made the following statements, what answer would you give? “It is not only for the inner mind, but also for all [other] phenomena that there are two ways of viewing [conventionally and ultimately]. [When your way of viewing the ‘empty’ and dharmakāya] is viewed by any means of mental intensity [ལྷོའི་ངར་ *lō ngar*] ascertainment [ངེས་པ་ *ngé pa*], a way which is different from the [ultimate way of viewing], *i.e.*, a reasoning for analyzing the ultimate [truth] through an individually investigating wisdom, [it is seen] as not going beyond the conventional way of viewing. Therefore, with that technique, leave out [the subject of] dharmakāya, it will be impossible to realize even emptiness.”

[Answer 54]

The mode of the view of wisdom which analyzes ultimate truth individually is that it has not come before.

From the point of view of any mind which watches it, the dharmakāya is, needless to say, attained.

Realizing emptiness is also impossible. *[140d, 141abcd, 142a]*

[Question 55]

What would you say if I said, “Thus, if one viewed [any object] with the knowledge of reasoning for analyzing ultimate [truth], reality, or the entity or the characteristic of conception would be found and what is thus found, is empty [of inherent existence]. This is the essence of those gone to bliss [the Buddha nature]”?

[Question 56]

What would you say if I said, “In short, a view which is contradictory to Nagarjuna’s mode of viewing is a mistaken view no matter what you have said about it hundreds of times”?

[Section of the view]

In brief, among what I have reported above, there are some sacred points regarding the view. But, I indeed reported about it by making a rough synthesis. Generally, there are infinite ways of approaching the view, such as the following:

One group says, “Whatever is conceptual is to be negated, whether it is good or bad.”

Another group says, “All the good and bad conceptual thoughts are not to be negated. The more conceptual thoughts you have, the more experiential realizations you will have. For example, the more firewood you add [to the fire] the more flames of fire there will be.”

These two groups are thus exactly the opposite of each other. One group [quotes the following passage of a text,] “Conception is a great ignorance,” and says that a conception is ignorance. Another group says, “Conception is a dharmakāya.”

These two groups are also opposite to each other.

And some say, “When the mind is left alone suspended without wandering around, it is a Buddha or a nirvāṇa. When it wanders or jumps a little bit, the sentient beings are wandering.” This is one group.

And another group says, “When our conceptual thoughts wander, the more threads of thoughts we stream out, the more we watch their nature, whereby the dharmakāya dawns to us nakedly.”

These two groups are also contradictory.

Another group says, “The hazy vision from the mere negation of a dark room, body posture and conception is a dharmakāya. It is an emptiness that has all the aspects. Therefore we introduce a dharmakāya which even an ordinary being can see directly.”

And some say, “That is not the whole seeing of dharmakāya. That is [only the] seeing of the dharmakāya’s nose-tip, or a limb or a part.”

Some say, “That is not the seeing of neither the whole dharmakāya nor any of its parts. It is the seeing of a mere ‘Empty.’ Furthermore, the Empty has two types: intrinsic-emptiness and extrinsic-emptiness. From these two, [the mere Empty here] is, not the evil intrinsic-emptiness asserted by Āndrakṛti and Haribhadra. It is the extrinsic-emptiness asserted by the Middle Way-er Asaṅga.”

One group says, “It is like that previous approach. Just the vision of what is perceived is the intrinsic-emptiness.”

These two are also contradictory.

Another group says, “[The above hazy vision] is a form or brightness which is empty of the emptiness, the non-thing. It is not a dharmakāya; it is the sign of dharmakāya. For instance, it is like seeing smoke as a sign of the coming of fire.”

Another group says, “The actual view of mahamudra and the individual withdrawal from the six branches of preparation refer to the same point of intrinsic emptiness. On that basis, one can increase the extrinsic emptiness which is the view of mental stabilization from the six preparations. Therefore, it appears that there are so many who affirm that the view from [the context of] six branches is higher than the [view of] mahamudra.”

[Gradually concluding comment]

Furthermore, there are many different ways of meditating on channels, winds, drops and especially on the inner heat [གཏུམ་མཚོ་ *tummo*] and so forth in the case of life-force exertion and so forth of the remaining branches, the Six Yogas of Naropa and in the Six Yogas of Nigu. But, they [those techniques] appear to be specific methods of the secret mantra [vehicle]. Therefore, thinking that I may create the fault of divulging secrecy, I have not written them.

If somebody thought, “Haven’t you made a *lapsus lingue* earlier in the case of the profound definitive meaning?” There, I do not see any negative consequences even if there were hundreds of thousands of answers. I wrote those questions thinking that they would be beneficial to the realization of the profound view. In short, although there are so many different contradictory tenets propounded from their own position, if it is all self-invented speech without conforming to sutra, tantra and so forth, the proponents would not belong to any [official philosophical school].

This means, it would be better if one took the valid statement from sutra, tantra and the commentaries as a witness [or the supportive scriptural authority]. On that basis, one can then check why such is feasible or unfeasible through one’s own intelligent reasoning to see:

[a] if there is a difference between emptiness and dharmakāya, what the criteria of seeing a dharmakāya is, [b] if both mahamudra and the six preparations are taught as an indifferent guiding commentary in the profound tantra-set, [c] if there is a difference of view or not if they are taught [as an indifferent guiding commentary], [d] especially if there is a difference between the mind and its mode of abidance or not, [e] and to find out what one should do to search for the [final] mode of abidance, emptiness.

If one keeps a principle that accords with the thoughts of the Victor, and if one researches the writings of the scholars (who have great familiarity with the immaculate discourses of the Victor and who unravel the Victor's thought, especially in the texts of Nagarjuna and his spiritual son), he or she will then have the eyes of excellence.

Here follow the reasons for adulterating the profound instruction:

Some of those who want to remain absorbed in practice single-pointedly, consider the hearing [of teachings] and thinking [about them] as an obstacle.

And some of those who want to hear and think [about the teachings] from the very beginning, start with an idea of degrading others, and not to seek a subject of meditation for one's own continuum. So they, due to the thought of obtaining a dry reputation, i.e. wanting to become oneself a scholar, turn out to be extroverted beings and remain so because they lack meditation inside.

It is thus why it is necessary to preserve the Victor's doctrine by way of all three: hearing, reflecting and meditating. As I try to make some distinction between what is appropriate to do and what is not appropriate to do, it looks like there are also some who say, "His mental continuum is still untamed."

[Answer 55, 56]

When it is watched with the knowledge of reasoning
for analyzing ultimate [truth], reality, the entity
or the characteristic of conception is found,
and I state respectfully that this is
emptiness or the Sugatagarva.

[142bcd, 143ab]

“In brief, with a tradition which contradicts
the noble tradition of Nagarjuna,
forget about omniscience,
one will not even attain mere liberation
no matter how much one can describe
how it possesses hundreds of ideal qualities,”
as mentioned by the Savior yourself.

[143cd, 144abcd, 145a]

I join my two palms together to you
for your good teaching as taught by Ćandrakṛti.

[145bc]

[Question 57]

There are some who, (regarding those contradictory tenets) say,
“All phenomena are multiples of one taste. Therefore, they are
perfect.” Many of them stay with that [simple] faith, saying,
“I am a Dharma practitioner and you are the nobleman.”
However, I would ask them the following questions:

[a] Why are all phenomena multiples of one taste?

[b] If it is said that samsara and nirvāṇa are equal, then, are
the Buddhas and hell beings also equal?

[c] Are virtue and negativity also of one taste?

So they suppress the root of cyclic existence and accept that
none of them has any difference of high and low or good and

bad by saying that they are all equal and of one taste. And one should not say, “You are a nobleman” to somebody who does not know the meaning of [the passage from Maitreya’s *Abhisamayalamkara*, chapter 1, verse 14a]:
“The very equality of cyclic existence and peace...”
Because there would be so many criticisms from scriptural authority and logic.

[Answer 57]

Hence, just like the wish of Nagarjuna, make us gain the ascertainment that [a] all phenomena without exception not having even one atom of inherent existence and [b] the way of being non-deceptive interdependence which is only a name and imputedly existent, [are] non-contradictory, so that we travel on the unmistakable path of method and wisdom and manifest the two kayās.

[145d, 146abcd, 147abc]

[Question 58a]

Don’t you think that somebody who thinks that “everything is good” and who says so [without perceiving those former and latter statements as being exact opposites of each other,] is not stupid?

[Question 58b]

At the same time, somebody [hypothetically] sees those contradictions and also knows how to negate their position and how to posit [them or set them in the right position] and he or she also knows that there would be benefit for [other] sentient beings if he or she reacted in such a way [*i.e.*, to negating others’ systems and positing one’s own system].

Yet while knowing this if he or she said, “They are all perfect” to those who are the victims of being censured by their own contradictory statements, scriptural authority and logic, wouldn’t it follow that it is a lack of holding the [Victor’s] doctrine dear and that one’s compassion has lessened?

[Suggestion]

Also, knowing that if it is of little benefit for him or her to react in such a way even though the object of negation is greater, there is not really any obligation to say, “It is perfect” to those [who are] faulty. Let them just [be] neutral.

[Question 58c]

If somebody hypothetically thought and asked, “But, in negating [others’ systems] and positing [one’s own system] how do you see that there is little negative consequence and ideal purpose?”

[Own answer]

I think of the following:

I do not see good things when there are so many who, although have gone astray regarding the view, meditation and conduct and being separated from the profound point, spend their lives with lots of courage and hardship for an end empty of meaning. On the other hand, I also see that when those (with the eyes of having culminated all the three [deeds of] hearing, reflecting and meditating, which make them abide single-pointedly upon the mode of abidance [the reality, the emptiness] after clearing out all the superimpositions regarding the [three deeds of this case] by way of understanding [both] the definitive meaning and interpretive meaning of sutra and tantra) see this mere act from me, which is only a fraction of negating [other’s systems]

and positing [one's own system], it becomes a great offering to delight their holy mind.

Also, those who are not involved in it may engage in them [to find out what one's own system is and what another's system is to be negated].

There are also many other purposes such as that if those who are beginners in meditation hear even a little bit about it [a clarified presentation of one's own system and the negation of the other's system], they would not engage in practice vaguely, they would rather investigate well what they practice and rely upon a well learned tutor and so forth.

Also, there are some, two or three people who have not been intellectually involved in this issue in the past and they, out of jealousy and without seeing any reason, criticize my act of negating [others' systems] and positing [one's own system]. So, although there is this small negative consequence, it can be compensated by the preceding benefits. I therefore, have written here only the important points of the instructions by summarizing them.

[Answer 58a, 58b, 58c]

Thus, from the great moving of the ocean of the compassion of the Venerable Gurū, a rain of pearls of teachings on the profound point has fallen in the form of questions.

[147d, 148abc]

[This volume of teaching you gave] is like the foundation of the complete teachings of the Śākyamuni in the northern direction [of Tibet].

Its upper part is adorned by the best garment of Dukula as if it is covered with a molten moon-crystal.

[148d, 149abc]

It is profound like the source of precious minerals.
This instructional teaching which is firm
like Mount Meru is exactly a sharp thorn
in the heart of all those who are proud of being scholars,
who hold on to their rope of intelligence, doubt and analysis,
those fallen in taking sides, those who are completely mad
due to venomous water and most of those who are
spiritually arrogant and take refuge in darkness. [149d, 150abcd, 151abc]

Among those who travel following the trace of the path
where the chief Victor has passed, many greet the
Supreme with pressed palms of devotion,
but are devoid of the arrow which penetrates
the target, the subtlety of questions and answers. [151d, 52abcd]

It is as the lord of logician [Dharmakṛti] said [in his *Pramāṇavārtika*],
“The hidden cause, arisen from method,
is difficult to explain to most of them.” [153abc]

Therefore, for the highly elevated companion,
i.e., the refined golden questions about profound meaning,
I, the Panchen Losang Chökyi Gyaltzen, with faith
offer a beautifying ornament of meritorious answers. [153d, 154abc]

But, as I am mentally weak and
have not learned so much, I ask for your forgiveness
in the presence of all you general assembly of scholars
and you venerable Lama Tsongkhapa, if there is any mistake.
[154d, 155abc]

Whatever bright constellation of answers that I wrote
in response to your *Very Wholesome Questions Expressed with an
Extraordinary Attitude*, that appears in the ocean of my serene mind
is not
from my own capacity; it is only from the kindness of my Gurū.

[155d, 156abc]

Due to bowing to the Holy One at the crown of my head,
I have become continuously familiar in hearing teachings.
It is amazing that the noble vase of good explanation
in my heart takes up my free time.

[156d, 157a]

I also have the hope of asking questions about
profound points like this to you,
just like Śākyamuni and Mañjuśrī,
in an outstanding and beautiful form.

[157bcd, 158a]

With whatever heap of immaculate positivity I have, including
this, may we be taken under the care of father Lama Tsong Khapa
with delight in all our lives without any separation, so that we
practice only to please you according to your words.

[158bcd, 159a]

Due to the force of that [privilege], may I embrace well all
the holy Dharma of scripture and realization exactly as it is thought
by the Victor, and that I become the best master in order to liberate
all migrating beings equal to space, by myself alone.

[159bcd, 160a]

[Concluding verses by Lama Tsong Khapa]

In short, the holy ones who are absorbed single-pointedly in practice, having seen this [text] will throw the mistake in regards to hearing, reflecting and meditating far away.

I request the bees of the practice to taste single-pointedly the profound honey of the non-mistaken oral instruction from the Victor.

If the darkness of the extreme view of eternalism and annihilation is not cleared away,
one will not see the sun-like clear light, the mode of abidance.

Therefore, those great meditators who do not seek a spiritual friend acquainted with
the three deeds of hearing, thinking and meditating, which is like a wish-fulfilling gem,
endeavor day and night in the cause for a result [to be born as a] conceptionless god
at best, and to be born as an animal at the very least.

Being unable to bear their situation,
I indeed reported here just a portion [of their defects] and
forgive me if I made mistakes.

I, with the motivation of extraordinary thought, have set here
the questions regarding the view, meditation and conduct.

By the virtue of reporting [all the above questions], may all
the stains (from the self-invented evil view [arisen due to] the
wrong conceptions regarding the meaning of the doctrine, the
wheel of the practice of mental stabilization and the purpose
of the intention of the Victor himself) be washed away.

From now on, may I set all [the new and old great meditators
on the right way of] view, meditation and conduct exactly as it
was intended [by the Victor].

It is thus composed by me, the meditator absorbed single-
pointedly in practice at my special remote place of retreat, a
mountain valley, after having heard so many teachings on
sutra and tantra and “being taken care of by Gurū Manjushri.”
Even through this simple writing may there be a great benefit
for the doctrine [of the Buddha].

[Concluding verses by Panchen Losang Chökyi Gyaltzen]

This Melody of Noble-Minded Proposal [by Panchen Losang Chökyi Gyaltzen] as an answer to the *Very Wholesome Questions Expressed with an Extraordinary Attitude* [by Lama Tsong Khapa] is thus written by the monk, Panchen Losang Chökyi Gyaltzen, accustomed in the scriptures of the Venerable All-Knowing One [Lama Tsong Khapa], and who preserves the oral instruction of the holy sutra and tantra with his hand in the great Monastery of Tashi Lhunpo, the academic place of complete victory in all directions, after examining correctly [his own thoughts] and giving up the elaboration of words and rolling all the meanings into one essence, and yet thinking that it would be a very extensive answer if he presented it by way of scriptural authority and logic, with the consideration that it is an offering of practice to the very Venerable Holy One, upon greatly emphatic exhortation upon several occasions, (requesting him [because] it was necessary by any means,) from the Bhikshu Losang Gyatso of Kongpo, Bhikshu Tsondu Gyaltzen of Ngari mastered in the ten great difficult texts and Bhikshu Losang Phuntsog, who, having seen the samsaric feast as a banana tree without any essence, single-pointedly exert effort in the achievement of the Omniscient State in their hermitage, and seeing that it would be of great benefit in many points of practice if the meaning of the questioning-words from Lama Tsong Khapa were understood.

May this act also cause the precious doctrine to flourish in all directions and times and live long.

Oṃ svāsti

May this tree gather the entire doctrine of the Victor, the source of benefits and happiness

be fully developed for all the transmigrators to enjoy the good fruit of supreme liberation.

For this, may the great Dharma class of Tashi Lhunpo be an inexhaustible

Dharma-generosity, gradually moving and continuously increasing.

Sarva jagatam.

Je Tsong Khapa, Lobsang Drakpa (1357–1419)

Je Tsong Khapa, Lobsang Drakpa, popularly known as “Je Rinpoche,” was the founder of the Gelug tradition and one of the most influential Tibetan Buddhist scholars of the last millennium. He was born in the Tsongkha region of Amdo in northeast Tibet. At age 7 he received novice ordination and the name Lobsang Dragpa Pal. Later he moved to Lhasa and studied with more than 50 teachers of all Tibetan Buddhist traditions, including his spiritual master Rendawa.

At the age of 24 he received full ordination, and at age 37 he went with eight of his greatest students to the region of Olkar where he spent many years in retreat, teaching and debating on the meaning of the sutras and tantras, which resulted in a deep understanding of Nagarjuna’s Madhyamaka view. In his forties he composed both *Lamrim Chenmo* (The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path) and *Ngarim Chenmo* (The Great Treatise on the Tantric Stages of the Path). In 1409 he instituted the Great Prayer Festival in Lhasa, and in 1411 he founded Ganden Monastery, which eventually became the largest monastery in Tibet. Widely regarded as an emanation of Mañjuśrī, Je Tsong Khapa composed eighteen volumes of works, of which the majority dealt with tantric subjects. Among his many famous students were his two principle disciples, Khedrub Je and Gyaltseb Je, and H.H. the First Dalai Lama Gendun Drub.

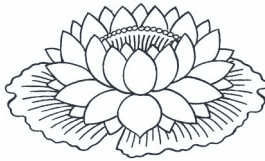
Panchen Lobsang Chöky Gyaltzen (1570–1662)

Panchen Lobsang Chökyi Gyaltzen was born in a district of Tsang in central Tibet. He was recognized at the age of 5 as the reincarnation of Ensapa Lobsang Dondrup (1505–1566) and received monastic ordination at 13. He received his philosophical education at Tashi Lhunpo Monastery where he later became the abbot. He helped institute the Geshe Lharampa degree system, and was a teacher to many important Tibetan, Bhutanese and Mongolian political and religious figures including the First Jetsun Dampa of Mongolia. He was the personal tutor to H.H. the Fourth Dalai Lama and a teacher and ordination master of H.H. the Fifth Dalai Lama.

He was posthumously given the title “Panchen,” meaning “Great Scholar,” by H.H. the Fifth Dalai Lama, who declared him an emanation of Amitabha. Though he was the first to receive this title, he is sometimes considered the Fourth Panchen, counting three previous incarnations, beginning with Khedrub Je, one of Je Tsong Khapa’s closest disciples. He is credited with over a hundred compositions which include a number of commentaries and ritual texts, such as the *The Gurū Puja* (Tib. *Lama Chöpa*), that remain central to the Gelug tradition.

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KUNPEN LAMA GANGCHEN

INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY AND DISSEMINATION OF VAJRAYANA BUDDHISM IN THE WEST

Affiliated with the Italian Buddhist Union

MILAN

Via Marco Polo, 13
20124 Milano (MI) Italy
Tel +39 02 29010263
kunpen@gangchen.it
kunpen.ngalso.net

ALBAGNANO

Via Campo dell'Eva, 5
28813 Albagnano di Bèe (VB) Italy
Tel +39 0323 569601
reception@ngalso.net
ahmc.ngalso.net