How We Create Our Own Reality Course

Land of Joy, 16-21 May 2020

Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way

(Skt: Mûlamadhyamakakârikâ) (Tib: Tsawa sherab)

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CHAPTER 18

EXAMINATION OF SELF AND PHENOMENON

1. If the self were the aggregates,

It would have arising and ceasing (as properties).

If it were different from the aggregates,

It would not have the characteristics of the aggregates.

1. If there were no self,

Where would the self’s (possessions) be?

From the pacification of the self and what belongs to it,

One is freed from grasping onto ‘I’ and ‘mine’.

1. One who does not grasp onto ‘I’ and ‘mine’,

That one does not exist.

One who views non-grasping onto ‘I’ and ‘mine’

He does not perceive (the reality).

1. When views of ‘I’ and ‘mine’ are extinguished,

Whether with respect to the internal or external,

The appropriator ceases.

This having ceased, birth ceases.

1. Ceasing of action and affliction leads to Nirvana.

Action and affliction come from conceptual thought.

This comes from (mental) elaboration.

Elaboration ceases through emptiness.

1. That there is a self has been taught,

And the doctrine of no-self,

By the Buddhas, as well as the

Doctrine of neither self nor non-self.

1. What language expresses is non-existent.

The apprehension of mind is non-existent.

(Because of being) unarisen and unceased, like Nirvana

Is the nature of things.

1. Everything is real and is not real,

Both real and not real,

Neither real nor not real.

This, the Lord Buddha taught accordingly.

Neither nihilism nor eternalism.

1. Not dependent upon another, peaceful and

Not elaborated by elaboration,

Not thought, without distinctions,

These are the characteristics of thatness.

1. Whatever comes into being, dependent upon another,

Is not identical to that thing.

Nor is it different from it.

Therefore it is neither nihilistic nor eternalistic.

1. This nectar of the teachings

Of the Buddhas, patrons of the world,

Is (understood as) without identity, without distinction,

Neither nihilism nor eternalism.

1. When the fully enlightened ones do not appear,

And when the Hearers have disappeared,

The wisdom of self-enlightenment

Will arise completely without dependence.

CHAPTER 26

EXAMINATION OF THE TWELVE LINKS OF (SAMSARIC) EXISTENCE

1. The obscuring ignorance propels (one) into (Samsaric) birth.

The three compositional factors

Enhance the formation (of births).

These actions impel (one) into the state of migrators.

1. Having composition as its condition,

Consciousness enters transmigration.

Once consciousness has entered transmigration,

Name and form come into being.

1. Once name and form come to be,

The six sense sources come into being.

Depending on the six sense sources,

Contact, unwaveringly, comes into being.

1. Arising is only dependent

Upon eye, form and attention.

Thus, depending on name and form,

Consciousness is produced.

1. That which is assembled from the three

Eye, form and consciousness

Is contact.

From contact arises feeling.

1. Conditioned by feeling, arises craving.

Craving arises because of feeling.

When it arises, there is grasping,

Which comprises the four.

1. When there is grasping,

The existence of the one who craves comes into being.

If there is no grasping,

Then being freed, he would not take (Samsaric) birth.

1. This birth is comprised of five aggregates.

From existence arises birth,

Old age and death and misery,

Moaning and suffering

1. Grief and confusion.

All these arise entirely because of birth.

In this way this very mass of suffering

Comes into being.

1. The root of cyclic existence is compositional (factor).

Therefore, the wise do not engage in compositional (factor).

Thus, the unwise are the agents.

The wise see reality.

1. With the cessation of ignorance,

Compositional (factor) will not arise.

The cessation of ignorance occurs through

Insight and meditation.

1. Through the cessation of these,

Those will not be manifest.

The entire mass of suffering

Indeed, thereby, completely ceases.

Colophon: English translation by Geshe Dorji Damdul, used with permission from Tibet House, Cultural Centre of H. H. the Dalai Lama, New Delhi.