

Perfect Happiness

How to Practice the Perfection of Giving



by Je Tsongkapa

translated by Geshe Michael Roach

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The following presentation of the perfection of giving is found in the explanation of the first bodhisattva level, known as “Perfect Happiness,” from Je Tsongkapa’s Illumination of the True Thought—one of the greatest books ever written on emptiness.

A Brief Presentation of Perfect Happiness

GNYIS PA LA GSUM, RAB DGA' SOGS SA LNGA BSHAD PA DANG, SA DRUG PA MNGON DU GYUR PA BSHAD PA DANG, RING DU SONG BA SOGS SA BZHI BSHAD PA'O,,

This brings us to our second step from above: a separate presentation for each one of the ten levels. Here we proceed in three sections: an explanation of the five levels beginning with Perfect Happiness; an explanation of the sixth level—Direct Perception; and then an explanation of the four levels starting with Gone Far.

DANG PO LA LNGA, SA DANG PO RAB TU DGA' BA DANG, SA GNYIS PA DRI MA MED PA DANG, SA GSUM PA 'OD BYED PA DANG, SA BZHI PA 'OD 'PHRO BA DANG, SA LNGA PA SBYANG DKA' BA BSHAD PA'O,,

The first of these three sections we will cover in five further divisions, which are explanations of the first bodhisattva level, Perfect Happiness; the second level, Immaculate; the third level, Shining in Light; the fourth level, Radiating Light; and the fifth level, Difficult to Perfect.

DANG PO LA GSUM, KHYAD GZHI SA'I NGO BO MDOR BSTAN, KHYAD CHOS SA'I YON TAN RGYAS PAR BSHAD [24a], SA'I YON TAN BRJOD PA'I SGO NAS MJUG BSDU BA'O,,

And the first of these has three parts of its own: a brief presentation of what it is which possesses a certain feature—that is, the level itself; an expanded

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explanation of the feature which the level possesses—that is, specific high personal qualities; and then finally a concluding summary, accomplished through describing the high qualities of the level themselves.

DANG PO NI, SA DANG PO LA GNAS PA'I RGYAL BA'I SRAS PO SNGAR
BSHAD PA'I TSUL GYIS, 'GRO BA RANG BZHIN MED PAR MTHONG BA'I
RANG BZHIN MED PA SNYING RJE'I DMIGS YUL GYI KHYAD PAR DU
BZUNG BA

Here is the first. Children of the Victors who are at the first bodhisattva level see—in the way that we described above—how living beings have no nature of their own. But they take this absence of any nature as a detail of how they regard the object of their compassion.

'DI YI SEMS GANG 'GRO BA RNAMS, RNAM PAR GROL BAR BYA BA'I
PHYIR DU SNYING RJE CHEN PO'I GZHAN DBANG DU GYUR CING,

And so their heart becomes a slave to thoughts of compassion, determined to free these beings.

BYANG SEMS KUN TU BZANG PO'I SMON LAM GYIS DGE BA RNAMS RAB
TU BSNAGOS PA,

And they dedicate all the good that they do with the prayer of the bodhisattva named Perfect Goodness.

RAB TU DGA' BA ZHES PA'I MING CAN GNYIS SU SNANG BA MED PA'I YE
SHES,

They possess a kind of wisdom free of any appearance of duality—a wisdom which is given the name of Perfect *Happiness*.

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DE'I 'BRAS BU YON TAN GYI GRANGS LA SOGS PAS NYE BAR MTSON PA
LA, RAB TU GNAS PA'I BYANG SEMS KYI DON DAM PA'I SEMS DE NI 'JIG
RTEN LAS 'DAS PA'I SEMS DANG PO ZHES BYA'O,,

And as a result of these practices, these bodhisattvas *live perfectly, in a place* which is represented by details such as the number of high qualities attained. The ultimate state of mind which they possess then is referred to as “the first state of mind that has gone beyond the world.”

DE LA SA BCU PA'I MDO LAS GSUNGS PA'I SMON LAM CHEN PO BCU LA
SOGS PA, SMON LAM 'BUM PHRAG GRANGS MED PA BCU SA DANG PO
BAS 'DEBS PA NI, KUN TU BZANG PO'I SMON LAM GYI NANG DU 'DUS
PAS, SMON LAM MA LUS PA BSDU BA'I PHYIR DU RTZA BAR KUN TU
BZANG PO'I SMON LAM BKOD DE, BZANG PO SPYOD PA'I SMON LAM
MO,,

Now the bodhisattva at the first level makes ten billion billion billion billion billion billion million groups of a hundred thousand prayers—the “ten great prayers” and so on described in the *Sutra on the Ten Levels*.¹ These are all included within the *Prayer of Perfect Goodness*, and so—because it does subsume each and every prayer—it is this *Prayer of Perfect Goodness*, the *Prayer of Deeds of Goodness*, which is recorded in the root text.

DE'I NANG NAS KYANG 'JAM DPAL DPA' BO ZHES PA'I TSIGS BCAD
GNYIS NI, BSNGO BA BLA NA MED PAR BSLAB BTUS LAS GSUNGS SO,,

Within the entire prayer, by the way, it is the two verses with the part about “Gentle Voice, the Warrior” which is said in *The Compendium of All the Trainings* to be an unsurpassed form of the dedication of good deeds.²

¹ *The ten great prayers*: See ff. 82-86 of the sutra for the ten (%S35 KL00044E3).

² *Unsurpassed form of dedication*: The recommendation of the words from the prayer of the bodhisattva named Perfect Goodness (Samantabhadra) is found at f. 162b of Master Shantideva’s work (%S29, TD03940); the two verses there read as follows:

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'GREL PAR NYAN THOS SBYOR LAM PA 'BRAS BU DANG PO LA ZHUGS
PAR MI 'DOD PA BZHIN DU, SA DANG POR [@24b] DE MA THAG TU
'BYUNG BAR 'GYUR BA'I BYANG SEMS KYI MOS PAS SPYOD PA CHEN PO'I
YANG CHEN PO NI, BYANG CHUB KYI SEMS MA BSKYED PA'I SA'O, ZHES
GSUNGS PA NI DON DAM PA'I SEMS MA BSKYED PA YIN GYI, SPYIR NA
DE LAS DMA' BA NAS KYANG BLA MED BYANG CHUB TU SEMS BSKYED

Gentle Voice, the Warrior, in his knowledge,
And Perfect Goodness just the same;
I train myself following in their footsteps,
And dedicate every goodness I've done.

This is the dedication which every Victor,
Gone in the past and present and future
Has praised as highest; and so I dedicate
Every goodness I've accomplished here
That the Deeds of Goodness may prevail.

It's interesting to note how these two verses have changed over the centuries. The first line of the original version of the prayer from the Kangyur, found buried within the *Majority Sutra (Avatansaka* in Sanskrit), reads "Gentle Voice, in his knowledge and valor" (*'Jam-dpal ji-ltar mkhyen cing dpa'-ba dang*, at f. 340b, %S37, KL00044E6 {@give it a -number later}). This emphasis on the word "valor" (*dpa'-ba*) is significant in the extreme efforts of bodhisattvas described even in Master Shantideva's work, for example, and is more striking in the original than the more commonplace "warrior" (*dpa'-bo*).

The "warrior" reading though for this line is also found as early as the Tengyur redaction of the prayer as a work in its own right, at TD04377 (%S38); and is referred to here by Je Tsongkapa, writing in the 15th century. It persists in modern times; see for example the prayer books of both Sera Mey and Sera Jey (at f. 120b, %B20, S00212 and f. 202a, %B21, S00207, respectively).

In all of these versions of the dedication except for the one found in Master Shantideva—that is, from the Kangyur up to modern times—the second verse reads rather "...and so I dedicate...my stores of goodness...for the sake of deeds of goodness" (*,bdag gi dge-ba'i rtza ba 'di kun kyang, ,bzang-po spyod phyir rab-tu bsngo-bar bgyi*).

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PA DANG, BYANG CHUB SEMS DPA' YOD PAR LUGS 'DIS KYANG BZHED
PA NI, SNGAR BSHAD ZIN LA,

The commentary—in the same way that it expresses the position that listeners on the path of preparation cannot have entered into the first of the fruits³—speaks of how the greater form within the greater one of the levels where the bodhisattva is acting out of aspiration⁴ (from which the first bodhisattva level is in fact about

³ *First of the fruits*: A reference to the famous “four fruits of the practice of virtue”: entering the stream; returning once to the desire realm; never returning to the desire realm; and defeating the enemy. In the present context, the first fruit—or “entering the stream”—refers to the direct perception of emptiness. The literature on Higher Knowledge (Abhidharma) is a popular source for discussions of these four fruits; see for example the section beginning from f. 169a in Choney Lama’s magnificent commentary to the *Treasure House* (%B5, ACIP S00027).

⁴ *Level where a bodhisattva is acting out of aspiration*: This is a difficult technical term whose meaning is often disputed in the literature, but it can definitively be described as relating to the first two of the five paths for a bodhisattva; that is, the path of accumulation and the path of preparation. One of the best references appears in the famed *Great Book on the Steps of the Teaching* (*bsTan-rim chen-mo*) of Geshe Drolungpa Lodru Jungne (c. 1100AD), whose work provided the basis and title for Je Tsongkapa’s own masterwork, the *Great Book on the Steps of the Path* (*Lam-rim chen-mo*): “Everything from here [he is in a discussion of the path of accumulation] on down is referred to as a ‘level where one is acting out of aspiration,’ because the way in which one perceives suchness is limited to nothing more than focusing upon it in aspiration [rather than through a direct perception]” (%B22, SE00070-2, f. 452b).

The great Kedrup Tenpa Dargye (1493-1568) of Sera Mey Tibetan Monastery, in his *Overview of the Perfection of Wisdom*, concurs with Geshe Drolungpa: “And so in general, both the path of accumulation and the path of preparation for a bodhisattva are given the name of ‘a level where the bodhisattva is acting out of aspiration” (%B23, SE00009-1, f. 133b).

There is by the way a moving description and painted scene of how Je Tsongkapa “re-discovered” Geshe Drolungpa’s work, in the traditional rendering of his life known as the “Tsongkapa Eighty” (see the definitive biography by the great Jamyang Shepay Dorje [1648-1721], both the original

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to come) is *not* a level where one has given rise to the Wish for enlightenment.⁵ What this is saying though is that this is not a level where one has given rise to the ultimate form of the Wish;⁶ more generally speaking, one can already have given rise to the Wish for matchless enlightenment at an even lower level, and there are bodhisattvas at such levels. We have already explained how this position is accepted here in the system of the current text as well.

BSLAB BTUS LAS KYANG, SO SO SKYE BO LA BYANG CHUB KYI SEMS
BSKYED PA YOD PAR MDO MANG POS BSGRUBS PAS BYANG CHUB SEMS
DPA' BTAGS PA BAR 'DOD PA NI LOG PAR 'CHAD PA'O,,

The Compendium of All the Trainings also uses many references from sutra to establish that normal people can also possess the Wish for enlightenment; as such, it is an error to think that such practitioners are only “nominal” bodhisattvas.⁷

NYAN THOS KYI SBYOR LAM STAN GCIG PA NAS BZUNG STE, 'BRAS BU
DANG PO MA THOB PA'I BAR RNAMS RGYUN ZHUGS ZHUGS PAR
MNGON PA KUN LAS BTUS LAS BSHAD PAS ,DPE MA GRUB BO SNYAM
NA,

One might raise the following objection:

The Compendium of All the Teachings on Higher Knowledge describes
listeners on the path of preparation who pass up to the

Tibetan and the English translation, in *The King of the Dharma: The Illustrated Life of Je Tsongkapa, Teacher of the First Dalai Lama*, pp. 262-3 and p. 351).

⁵ *Not a level of the Wish*: This section of the Autocommentary (f. 224b) revolves around a more ancient reference closely paraphrased here. It is found at ff. 73b-74a of the *Sutra of the Cloud of the Jewels* (%S39, KL00231).

⁶ *Ultimate form of the Wish*: Referring, again, to the direct perception of emptiness.

⁷ *Normal people can also possess the Wish*: See f. 5b of the work (%S29, TD03940). The term “normal people” (Skt: *prthagjana*; Tib: *so-so-skye-bo*) in the present context refers to persons who have not yet perceived emptiness directly; those who have are called “realized beings” (Skt: *ārya*; Tib: *phags-pa*).

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achievement of the first of the fruits in a single sitting as practitioners who are at the “entrance” stage of entering the stream; as such, your example is disproved.⁸

RGYUN ZHUGS ZHUGS PA 'PHAGS LAM THOB PA NYID LA 'JOG PAR
MNGON PA MDZOD LAS BSHAD LA, KUN LAS BTUS LAS SNGA MA LTAR
YANG BSHAD PAS, LUGS MI MTHUN PA GNYIS BYUNG BA LA SLOB
DPON 'DI MNGON PA MDZOD LTAR BZHED DO,,

The *Treasure House of Higher Knowledge* states that attaining the path of a realized being is precisely what the “entrance” stage of entering the stream is; whereas the *Compendium* also gives the explanation just described. As such, there came to be two incompatible systems on this question—but the master here accepts the position of the *Treasure House*.⁹

'DI NI MDO KUN LAS BTUS LAS, DAD PA'I RJES SU 'BRANG BA 'JIG RTEN
GYI KHAMS THAMS CAD KYI RDUL PHRA RAB KYI RDUL SNYED LA,
BSKAL PA GANG+G'A'I KLUNG GI BYE MA SNYED DU, NYI MA RE RE
ZHING LHA'I ZAS RO BRGYA PA DANG, LHA'I GOS BYIN PA BAS,

⁸ *Practitioners at the “entrance” stage*: The text referred to is Master Asanga’s classic interpretation of the teachings of Higher Knowledge (Abhidharma) according to the Mind-Only School, at %S40, TD04049. The opponent seems to be referring to the discussion of entering the stream beginning at f. 105b, and in particular the section at f. 110a. The texts of the Higher Knowledge schools describe two stages for each of the four fruits: an “entrance” stage, where one is in the act of attaining the fruit through eliminating certain negative emotions; and a “residence” stage, where one has completed attaining the fruit, through eliminating the final negative emotion relating to the particular fruit. See for example the discussion beginning at f. 171a of His Holiness the First Dalai Lama’s commentary to the *Treasure House of Higher Knowledge* (%B24, SE05525).

⁹ *The master here*: Referring to Master Chandrakirti.

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This position in fact accords with that found in the *Compendium of All the Sutras*, where it speaks of a practitioner who is following after faith,¹⁰ and who—every single day, for the length of eons equal in number to the drops of water¹¹ found in the Ganges River—presents living beings,¹² equal themselves in number to the particles of dust that compose every planet that exists, with delectable feasts of the gods, and silk of the gods.

GZHAN ZHIG GIS CHOS KYI RJES 'BRANG GCIG LA, NYIN GCIG ZAN GCIG
[@25a] BYIN NA SNGA MA BAS BSOD NAMS CHES GRANGS MED PA
BSKYED PA DANG,

And then this text speaks of “another practitioner” (referring to one who is following after the teachings) and states that—if they present a single article of food on only a single day—they create good karma which is infinitely greater than that of the follower after faith just mentioned.

YANG CHOS KYI RJES 'BRANG SNGA MA LTA BU'I GRANGS LA, SNGA MA
LTAR SBYIN PA BYIN PA BAS, BRGYAD PA'I GANG ZAG GCIG LA NYIN
GCIG ZAN GCIG BYIN NA, SNGA MA BAS BSOD NAMS CHES GRANGS
MED PA BSKYED PAR GSUNGS PA DANG MTHUN PA YIN TE, RJES
'BRANG GNYIS NI TSOGS SBYOR GYI SKABS YIN PAR GSAL BA'I PHYIR
RO,,

¹⁰ *A practitioner who is following after faith*: Generally speaking, a person who acts out of blind faith in the teaching or the teacher, rather than because they have thought a point out carefully and accept it because it makes sense. The former is referred to as “one of dull intellect” (Tib: *dbang-rtul*) and the latter—which is obviously preferred—is referred to as “one of sharp intellect” (*dbang-rnon*). The more specific sense of the two types here is noted following.

¹¹ *Equal in number to the drops of water in the Ganges River*: The Tibetan here (*gang+g'a'i klung gi bye-ma snyed*) is traditionally explained as referring either to the drops of water in the Ganges, or to the grains of sand in its riverbed. See the discussion by Choney Lama Drakpa Shedrup in his commentary to the *Diamond Cutter Sutra*, f. 17a, %B14, SP00024.

¹² *Living beings*: This clarifying term is supplied from the *Compendium*, at f. 160a.

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And then it speaks of making the presentation mentioned to followers after the teachings who are equal in number to the living beings mentioned; and says that if we present a single article of food to a single person of the eighth,¹³ we again create good karma which is infinitely greater than in the former case.¹⁴ The description relates here because the two mentions of “followers” are clearly a reference to the points at which one is on the path of accumulation or of preparation.

The High Qualities Where our Being is Made Beautiful

GNYIS PA LA GSUM, RANG GI RGYUD MDZES PAR BYED PA'I YON TAN,
GZHAN GYI RGYUD ZIL GYIS GNON PA'I YON TAN, SA DANG POR LHAG
PA'I YON TAN BSTAN PA'O,,

Here next we cover the second part from above—an expanded explanation of the feature which the level possesses—that is, specific high personal qualities. We proceed in three sections: a description of the high qualities where our being is made beautiful; of the high quality where our being outshines those of others; and of the high quality where we bring our practice to a higher level.

DANG PO LA GNYIS, YON TAN SO SOR PHYE STE BSHAD PA DANG, YON
TAN MDOR BSDUS TE BSTAN PA'O,,

¹³ *A person of the eighth*: A rare expression (Tib: *brgyad-pa'i gang-zag*, or *gang-zag brgyad-pa*, or sometimes simply *brgyad-pa*) which seems to have some different interpretations; but which here in *Illumination* itself will be explained below (see f. 26b) as referring to a person who has reached the level of seeing emptiness directly.

¹⁴ *Greater than in the former case*: The entire paraphrase found here is from ff. 160a-160b of Arya Nagarjuna's work, %S27, TD03934.

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The first of these has two steps of its own: an explanation of these high qualities, made by separating them out individually; and then an explanation of the qualities by summarizing them.

DANG PO LA GSUM, DON LDAN GYI MTSAN 'THOB PA'I YON TAN, RIGS SU SKYE BA SOGS BZHI'I YON TAN, SA GONG MA GNON PA SOGS GSUM GYI YON TAN NO,,

The first of these, in turn, includes three points: the high quality where we earn a very significant name; the high quality with the four characteristics that begin with taking birth into a royal family; and lastly the high quality with three characteristics, beginning with surpassing the levels before.

The Name We Earn

[DE NAS BZUNG STE DE NI THOB PAR GYUR PA YIS,
,BYANG CHUB SEMS DPA' ZHES BYA'I SGRA NYID KYIS BSNYAD DO,]

**[Starting from this point,
They have attained it;
As such, they are referred to
With nothing less
Than the name of “bodhisattva.”**

I.19-20]

DANG PO NI, SA DANG PO LA ZHUGS PA DE NAS BZUNG STE BYANG SEMS DE NI DON DAM PA'I SEMS DE THOB PAR GYUR PA YIS, ,SO SKYE'I SA LAS 'DAS PA'I SKABS SU DON DAM PA'I BYANG CHUB SEMS DPA' ZHES BYA BA'I SGRA NYID KYIS BSNYAD PAR BYA BA YIN GYI, DE DANG MI MTHUN PA'I RNAM PA GZHAN GYIS BRJOD PAR MI BYA STE, DE'I TSE DE BYANG SEMS 'PHAGS PA YIN PA'I PHYIR RO,,

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Here is the first. *Starting from the point* that a person enters the first level, the bodhisattva *has attained* the ultimate form of mind. *As such*, this is a stage where they have gone beyond the levels of normal people; and *they are referred to with nothing less* than the name of “an ultimate bodhisattva.” It would not though be appropriate to describe them in some other way—in a way that didn’t fit this name. And that’s because, at this point, they are a bodhisattva who is a realized being.

'GREL PAR DKON MCHO G SPRIN DRANGS PA LAS, SBYOR LAM CHOS
MCHO G CHEN PO PA LA, DON DAM [25b] PA'I BYANG CHUB SEMS
DPA'I SA NI MA THOB PA YIN NO, ZHES GSUNGS PAS, BYANG SEMS
KHYAD PAR BA'I MING GIS BSNYAD PAR SHES SO,,

The commentary at this point quotes *The Cloud of the Jewels* as stating that—at the greater portion of the stage called “The Ultimate Experience,” within the path of preparation—one has not yet achieved the level of an ultimate bodhisattva. From this we understand that the practitioner by the first level is to be referred to with a term signifying that they are an exceptional bodhisattva.¹⁵

SHER PHYIN NYIS STONG LNGA BRGYA PA LAS, JI LTAR SHES SHE NA,
MA BYUNG BA DANG YANG DAG PAR MA BYUNG BA DANG, LOG PA
DANG, DE DAG JI LTAR BYIS PA SO SO'I SKYE BOS BTAGS PA MA YIN PA
DANG, JI LTAR BYIS PA SO SO SKYE BOS RNYED PA DE LTAR MA YIN PAR
TE, DE'I PHYIR BYANG CHUB SEMS DPA' ZHES BYA'O,

The Perfection of Wisdom in 2500 Lines includes a section that says,

How then are we to understand this? The very reason that we call someone a “bodhisattva” is because they never started; they never started at all; they are the total opposite; they are nothing that the

¹⁵ *They are an exceptional bodhisattva*: The section of the autocommentary in question is located at f. 224b. The original quotation from *The Sutra of the Cloud of the Jewels*, paraphrased closely here, is found at f. 74a (%S39, KL00231).

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children, the normal beings, think they are; they are nothing at all like the way that these beings, these children, find them to be.¹⁶

¹⁶ *The very reason we call someone a “bodhisattova”*: The quotation is very close to the same reading is found at folio 18a of what is now most often called *The Presentation on the Perfection of Wisdom Requested by Suvikranta Vikrama* (%S41, KL00014). One important difference though is that the word *log-pa* (here translated as *the total opposite*) is found in our version as *phyin-ci-log ma-yin-pa* (meaning *they are totally correct*).

A version of the Perfection of Wisdom sutras in 2,500 lines is very little known and deserves some clarification. Many of the major works of this genre by Lord Buddha are named from the number of lines in the work; *The 8,000 Lines on the Perfection of Wisdom* is an easily recognized example, and this work is famous enough to warrant its own carving as a separate work on occasion throughout history. The names of some of these Perfection sutras are sometimes translated as *The 8,000 Verses* and so on—but in fact, and in this case for example, much of the text is in prose and not in verse. The Tibetan translation usually comes out to two or three times more separate lines than the original Sanskrit.

At any rate, a typical survey of these “numbered” texts may be found in the Tengyur itself, within *A Brief Explanation of the Divisions of the Secret Points* (%S42, TD04052, f. 301a), which is said in the native catalog to have been identified by earlier catalogs as a work composed by Master Vasubandhu, an attribution which the authors of the later catalog express doubts about, without naming an alternate author (see f. 446a of the catalog, at %B26, TD04569). The work is also here said to be a commentary upon the first chapter of *A Summary of the Greater Way*, written by Master Vasubandhu’s half brother, Master Asanga (the chapter in question is there entitled “The Chapter on Reality”; see f. 13a of %S43, TD04048).

In the *Divisions*, eight “numbered” sutras on the Perfection of Wisdom are listed; and the first is commonly known to correspond to a sutra with a separate name. Here are the eight: 1) *The Perfection of Wisdom in 300 Lines*, another name for the *Diamond Cutter Sutra*; 2) the one in 500 lines; 3) in 700 lines; 4) in 2500 lines, corresponding to our current text, *The Presentation on the Perfection of Wisdom Requested by Suvikranta Vikrama*; 5) in 8000 lines; 6) in 18,000 lines; 7) in 25,000 lines, sometimes referred to with an abbreviated name, *The 20,000*; and 8) in 100,000 lines. Scriptural tradition says that there were much more massive versions of the Perfection of Wisdom which are lost to us.

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ZHES GSUNGS PA'I SHUGS KYIS CHOS 'DI DAG GI DE KHO NA NYID
'PHAGS PAS RNYED PA JI BZHIN PA DE LTAR RNYED PA CIG ,BYANG
CHUB SEMS DPAR GSUNGS PA YANG DON DAM PA'I BYANG SEMS LA
DGONGS KYI, SO SKYE LA BYANG SEMS MTSAN NYID PA MED PAR STON
PA MIN NO,,

What these lines are in effect referring to is a case where they could ever find the meaning of suchness in the way that these types of suchness are found by realized beings. Speaking of those kinds of people as “bodhisattvas” here is meant in the sense of “ultimate bodhisattvas”; it is not meant to indicate that a normal being could never be a real bodhisattva.

**You Belong Now to a Royal Family,
And You are Free of the Three Bonds**

['DI NI DE BZHIN GSHEGS PA RNAMS KYI RIGS SU'ANG SKYES PA STE,
, 'DI NI KUN TU SBYOR BA GSUM PO THAMS CAD SPANGS PA YIN,]

**[They have also taken their birth
Into the family of Those Gone Thus,
And they have eliminated, within themselves,
All three of the bonds.**

I.21-22]

There are very few references in the literature (at this point in its digitalization) which tie *The Perfection of Wisdom in 2500 Lines* to the teaching requested by Suvikranta Vikrama. One canonical case though is found in *An Extensive Commentary to “The Lamp of Wisdom,”* composed by Master Avalokitavrata (%S44, TD03859), at f. 199a.

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GNYSIS PA NI, GZHAN YANG SA DANG PO LA GNAS PA 'DI NI SO SKYE
DANG NYAN RANG GI SA THAMS CAD LAS 'DAS PA'I PHYIR DANG,
SANGS RGYAS KYI SA'I RJES SU 'GRO BAR NGES PA'I LAM RGYUD LA
SKYES PA'I PHYIR DE BZHIN GSHEGS PA RNAMS KYI RIGS SU'ANG SKYES
PA STE, LAM GZHAN DU MI 'GRO BAR RANG GI LAM DU RIGS NGES PA
YIN NO,,

This brings us to our second point from above: the high quality with the four characteristics which begin with taking birth into a royal family. We can *moreover* add that this person who is at the first bodhisattva level *has taken birth into the family of Those Gone Thus*—because they have gone far beyond the levels of normal people, and both the listeners and self made buddhas; and moreover because they have now given rise, within their hearts, to a path which is definite to lead them to the level of a Buddha. That is, they are confirmed within the family of their own path, and will never go off to some different path.

SA DANG PO 'DI NI GANG ZAG RANG GI MTSAN NYID KYIS GRUB PA
MED PA'I GANG ZAG GI BDAG MED MNGON SUM DU MTHONG BAS, 'JIG
LTA DANG PHRA RGYAS KYI THE TSOM DANG, TSUL KHRIMS DANG
BRTUL ZHUGS MCHOOG 'DZIN GYI KUN TU SBYOR BA GSUM PO THAMS
CAD SPANGS PA YIN TE, SLAR MI SKYE BA'I PHYIR RO,,

This practitioner at the first bodhisattva level has seen, directly, the lack of a self-nature to the person: the fact that the person possesses no nature of existing by definition. *They have thus eliminated, within themselves, all three of what we call the “bonds”*: the view of destruction; forms of doubt which are infectious negative thoughts; and the belief that mistaken forms of morality and asceticism are perfect.¹⁷ They have “eliminated” the three because these will never again make their appearance within the bodhisattva.

¹⁷ *Eliminated the “bonds”*: Specific negative emotions are called “bonds” in the tradition of Higher Knowledge (Abhidharma) because, as Je Tsongkapa’s great disciple Gyaltsab Je (1364-1432) puts it, in the case of desire for example “a bond can be understood in terms of what it is that binds us; how it binds us, and what it binds us to. What binds us is desire operating in all three of the realms. How so? It prevents us from feeling renunciation for the three realms, and this in turn leads us both to engage in acts that are harmful, and to avoid acts which are

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DES NI DE GSUM GYI SA BON SPANGS PAR [26a] BSTAN LA, 'JIG LTA NI
MTHONG SPANG DU GYUR PA KUN BR TAGS YIN GYI LHAN SKYES MIN
NO,,

This by the way is to indicate that the seeds of these three have been eliminated. In the case of the view of destruction, however, the form which is eliminated at the path of seeing is the learned one, and not the inborn one.

'O NA PHRA RGYAS KYI MTHONG SPANG GZHAN YANG SPANGS PA LA,
GSUM PO 'DI TZAM SMOS PA CI YIN SNYAM NA, MDO SDE LAS 'DI LTAR
GSUNGS PA 'I DGONGS PA 'CHAD PA LA LUGS GNYIS YOD KYANG,

One may wonder why—since there are other infectious negative thoughts also eliminated when we reach the path of seeing—only these three are mentioned. There are two different systems of explaining what the sutras had in mind when they described it this way.

LEGS PA NI MDZOD LAS,
, 'GRO MI 'DOD DANG LAM NOR DANG,
, LAM LA THE TSOM DE SNYED CIG
, THAR PAR BGROD LA GEGS BYED PA,
, DE YI PHYIR NA GSUM BSTAN NO, ZHES BSHAD PA LTAR RO,,

The system which is best is expressed in the *Treasure House of Wisdom*, where it says:

The number given is three,
Since they correspond
To not wanting to go;

helpful, to others. In our next life then this brings us suffering: it *binds* us to pain.” See ff. 120b-121a of his *Essence of an Ocean of Fine Explanation for Higher Knowledge* (B27, S05435). We have covered the concept of the “view of destruction” above, in footnote 72.

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To choosing a wrong path;
And to doubt about the path—
The number that create an obstacle
To our journey to liberation.¹⁸

DPER NA YUL GZHAN DU 'GRO 'DOD PA LA BAR CHAD KYI GTZO BO
GSUM STE, 'GRO MI 'DOD PA DANG, LAM NOR BA DANG, LAM LA THE
TSOM ZA BA'O,,

If for example we wish to travel to some other land, then there are three main obstacles that can prevent us: not wanting to go; choosing the wrong road; and not being sure which road to take.

DE BZHIN DU THAR PAR BGROD PA LA YANG BAR CHAD KYI GTZO BO
GSUM STE, DANG POS NI THAR PA LA SKRAG PAS DER 'GRO MI 'DOD PA
DANG, GSUM PAS NI LAM GZHAN LA BR TEN PAS LAM NOR BA DANG,
GNYIS PAS NI LAM LA THE TSOM ZA BAS GSUM BSTAN NO,,

Just so, there are three primary obstacles to our journey to liberation. The first of these causes us to have some fear about being liberated—and so this one is like not wanting to go. The third one causes us to attempt to follow some other path; and that is similar to taking a wrong road. And the second consists of having doubts about the path; thus it is that three are indicated.

BYANG CHUB SEMS DPA' SA DANG PO BA DE NI SNGAR BSHAD PA LTAR
RIGS NGES PA LA ZHUGS PAS, DE'I 'BRAS BU'I YON TAN THOB PA DANG,
SA'I SPANG BYA'I SKYON DANG BRAL BAS

The bodhisattva on the first level, as we have already mentioned, has reached a point of certainty about the family to which they belong. They have thus

¹⁸ *An obstacle to our journey*: See f. 17b of Master Vasubandhu's text (%S36, TD04089).

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attained the high spiritual quality which is the result of belonging to this family, and are free of the defects which are eliminated at this particular level.¹⁹

Happiness Supreme

[BYANG CHUB SEMS DPA' DE NI DGA' BA MCHOG TU GYUR 'CHANG ZHING,
,JIG RTEN KHAMS BRGYA KUN NAS G-YO BAR NUS PAR GYUR PA'ANG YIN,]

[This bodhisattva holds in their hands

A supreme form of happiness;

And they are further someone

Who can shake a hundred planets.

I.23-24]

THUN MONG MA YIN PA'I DGA' BA SKYES PAS, RAB TU DGA' BA MANG BA'I PHYIR, RGYAL SRAS DE DGA' BA MCHOG TU GYUR PA 'CHANG BA YANG YIN NO, ,RAB DGA' KHYAD PAR DU 'PHAGS PA YOD PA'I PHYIR SA 'DI LA RAB TU DGA' BA ZHES KYANG BYA'O,,

As such, they come to feel a truly unique form of happiness; and are thus filled with many different kinds of perfect happiness. Because of this we can also say, “This level is named Perfect Happiness, since the son or daughter of the Victors

¹⁹ *Free of the defects:* Je Rinpoche in these sentences is helping us identify the “four” high qualities that he had promised in this section; they are not otherwise completely clear. The first of the four thus is positive: (1) being born into the family of the Buddhas. The remaining three are negative: (2) we have eliminated the learned from of the view of destruction; (3) we have eliminated doubt about the path; and (4) we have eliminated the belief that practices where we hurt our body or mind could ever be considered proper spiritual practices.

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holds in their hands a supreme form of happiness, and their perfect happiness itself is one which is truly superior."²⁰

'JIG RTEN GYI KHAMS [26b] MI GCIG PA BRGYA KUN NAS G-YO BAR
NUS PAR GYUR PA'ANG YIN NO,,

*And they are further someone who has the power to shake not just a single planet, but no less than a hundred.*²¹

Working Our Way Up

[,SA NAS SAR GNON BYED CING GONG MAR RAB TU 'GRO BAR 'GYUR,
,DE TSE 'DI YI NGAN 'GRO'I LAM RNAMS MTHA' DAG 'GAG PAR 'GYUR,
,DE TSE 'DI YI SO SO SKYE BO'I SA RNAMS THAMS CAD ZAD,
, 'DI NI 'PHAGS PA BRGYAD PA JI LTA DE LTAR NYE BAR BSTAN,

**[They want to work their way up
From the one level to the next;
They begin to move up;
And when it happens
They block all the paths
To the realms of misery.
At this point as well
All the levels for them
Relating to normal beings
Are finished.
They are spoken of this way**

²⁰ *Happiness which is truly superior*: Je Tsongkapa is here following closely the wording of Master Jayananda's *Explanation of "Entering the Middle Way"* (%S1, TD03870, f. 66a). The word for *superior* here is 'phags-pa in the Tibetan, a double entendre as this is also the word for a realized person—one who has seen emptiness directly—and this of course applies to the bodhisattva at the first level.

²¹ *Shake a hundred planets*: Further following the same wording.

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As a realized being of the eight.

I.25-28]

GSUM PA NI, SA DANG PO NAS SA GNYIS PAR GNON PAR BYED PA LA
SPRO BA SHIN TU CHE ZHING, SA GONG MAR RAB TU 'GRO BAR 'GYUR
RO, SA DANG PO THOB PA DE'I TSE BYANG SEMS 'DI YI NGAN 'GROR
'GRO BA'I LAM RNAMS MTHA' DAG 'GAG PA STE ZAD PAR 'GYUR RO,,

With this we come to our third point from above, which is a description of the high quality with three characteristics, beginning with surpassing the levels before. They start to feel an intense joy about *working their way up* to the second level from the first. And then *they actually begin to move up* through the levels. And when they reach the first level, the bodhisattva is able to *block*—that is, to stop—all the paths that would lead them to a birth in the realms of misery.

'O NA SBYOR LAM BZOD PA THOB NAS NGAN SONG DU LAS DBANG GIS
'GRO MI SRID PA MA YIN NAM, NGAN 'GRO'I LAM ZAD PA SA 'DI THOB
PA LA LTOS CI DGOS SNYAM NA,

“Isn’t it the case though,” one may wonder, “that it is impossible—once one has reached the level called Mastery within the path of preparation—for that person to go the lower realms through the power of karma? Why then have you said here that one must rely upon this particular bodhisattva level, in order to ‘block the paths to the realms of misery’?”

BZOD PA THOB NAS NGAN 'GROR 'GRO MI SRID PA NI, DER 'KHRID PA'I
SA BON GNYEN POS BCOM PA MIN GYI, RKYEN MA TSANG BAS YIN
CING, 'DIR NI SA BON GNYEN POS BCOM PA YIN LA, KUN LAS BTUS LAS
KYANG NGAN 'GRO'I PHUNG KHAMS SOGS MTHONG SPANG DU BSHAD
DO,,

The fact that it is impossible to go to the realms of misery once one has attained the level of Mastery is not due to one’s having destroyed the seed that can pull one there with a spiritual antidote, at that particular stage. Rather, it is because the conditions that would make this happen are simply incomplete. Here at this

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bodhisattva level though, the seed is destroyed, with a spiritual antidote; and *The Compendium* states as well that things like the heaps and categories of a being in the realms of misery are something which is eliminated by the path of seeing.²²

SA DANG PO THOB PA DE'I TSE BYANG SEMS 'DI YI SO SO SKYE BO'I SA
STE GNAS SKABS THAMS CAD ZAD DO,,

At this point as well—that is, when one reaches the first level—all the levels or periods for this bodhisattva which relate to normal beings are finished.

GNYSIS PA NI, MDOR NA JI LTAR 'BRAS GNAS BZHI DANG 'BRAS BU LA
ZHUGS PA BZHI'I DGRA BCOM NAS YAS BGRANGS NA, GRANGS BRGYAD
PA YIN PAS 'PHAGS PA BRGYAD PA RGYUN ZHUGS ZHUGS PA LA,

This brings us to the second step in our description of the high qualities where our being is made beautiful. This is an explanation of these qualities made by summarizing them. And so in brief we can think of the steps leading up to an enemy destroyer: where they have gone through the four stages of residing at the level of the result, and the four stages of entering the level of the result. Counting downwards from here, we get eight stages, so we can refer to a someone who is just entering the state of a stream-enterer as an “eighth-rank realized being.”

'PHAGS PA'I CHOS THOB PA LAS RANG DANG RJES SU MTHUN PA'I
SPANGS PA DANG, RTOGS PA'I YON TAN 'BYUNG BAR 'GYUR BA BZHIN
DU, BYANG SEMS 'DI YANG SA DANG PO THOB PA LAS SKYON ZAD PA
DANG, YON TAN 'BYUNG BA BRGYAD PA JI LTA BA DE LTAR NYE BAR
BSTAN NO,,

²² *Realms of misery eliminated by seeing*: When Je Rinpoche quotes “*The Compendium*” we always have to go see which one; in this case it is Master Asanga’s *Compendium of All the Teachings on Higher Knowledge*, at f. 65a (%S40, TD04049).

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Once we have attained the world of a *realized being*, a number of things happen in conjunction with this occurrence; that is, we gain specific personal qualities related to having eliminated certain negativities, and to having reached certain realizations. In the same way, this particular bodhisattva—the one who has reached the first level—has finished off certain faults, and gained certain virtues, relating to the number *eight*; and is thus *spoken of in this way*.²³

Outshining Others by Virtue of Our Family

GNYIS PA LA [27a] GSUM, SA 'DIR NYAN RANG RNAMS RIGS KYI SGO
NAS ZIL GYIS GNON PA DANG, SA BDUN PAR NYAN RANG GNYIS BLO'I
SGO NAS ZIL GYIS GNON PA DANG, DE LTAR GSUNGS PAS GRUB PA'I
DON BSHAD PA'O,,

With this we have reached the second of our more general sections above—the high quality where our being outshines those of others. This we also cover in three steps: how a bodhisattva at this level outshines the listeners and self-made buddhas, by virtue of the family to which they belong; how, at the seventh bodhisattva level, they outshine these two by virtue of their state of mind; and then an explanation of the conclusion we can draw from statements to this effect.

[RDZOGS PA'I BYANG CHUB SEMS LTA DANG PO LA GNAS KYANG,
,THUB DBANG GSUNG SKYES DANG BCAS [f. 202a] RANG SANGS RGYAS
RNAMS NI,

²³ *The number eight*: I think it's worthwhile here to pause and total the eight qualities which are being compared, generally, to the eight stages of residing and entering. And so the eight qualities of a first-level bodhisattva which we have covered to this point are (1) they earn the name of (ultimate) “bodhisattva”; (2) they take birth into the family of Those Gone Thus; (3) they have eliminated an intellectual belief in their own self-existence; (4) they have eliminated doubt about the path; (5) eliminated any belief in spiritual practices which harm oneself; (6) they feel an intense joy towards working up through the levels; (7) they undertake this task; and (8) they block the paths to the realms of misery.

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,BSOD NAMS DAG GI DBANG GIS PHAM BYAS RNAM PAR 'PHEL,]

**[Even those who stay at the first
Of the visions of total enlightenment
Defeat, by the force of both good karmas,
The self-made buddhas,
Along with those born from the words
Of the Lords of the Able Ones;
Then they continue to exceed them further.**

I.29-31]

DANG PO NI, RDZOGS PA'I BYANG CHUB KYI SEMS LTA GNYIS PA SOGS
SU MA ZAD, SEMS DANG PO RAB TU DGA' BA LA GNAS PAS KYANG,
THUB PA'I DBANG PO'I GSUNG LAS SKYES PA NYAN THOS DANG BCAS
PA'I RANG SANGS RGYAS RNAMS NI, KUN RDZOB BYANG CHUB KYI
SEMS DANG SNYING RJE'I BSOD NAMS DAG GI DBANG GIS PHAM PAR
BYAS PA STE ZIL GYIS MNAN NAS, DE DAG LAS BSOD NAMS RNAM PAR
'PHEL BAR 'GYUR TE,

Here is the first. This thing is true not only for those who have reached levels such as the second *vision of total enlightenment*; that is, *even those who are staying at the first state of mind*—at Perfect Happiness—“*defeat*” (which is to say, outshine) *the self-made buddhas, along with the listeners: those who have been born from the words of the Lords of the Able Ones*. And they do so *by force of both the good karma of their deceptive form of the Wish for enlightenment, and the good karma of their compassion*. *They continue on then and exceed both these types of practitioners even further in this goodness*.

SNGAR BSHAD PA'I YON TAN GYI KHYAD PAR RNAMS LAS, YON TAN
GYI KHYAD PAR GZHAN PA CIG YIN NO,,

This is yet one more type of high good quality which they possess, in addition to those types which we have already described.

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'DI YANG BYAMS PA'I RNAM PAR THAR PA LAS, RIGS KYI BU 'DI LTA STE
DPER NA RGYAL PO'I BU SKYES NAS RING PO MA LON PA, RGYAL PO'I
MTSAN DANG LDAN PA NI BLON PO'I TSOGS RGAN PO GTZO BOR GYUR
PA THAMS CAD KYANG, RIGS KYI BDAG NYID CHE BA'I DBANG GIS ZIL
GYIS GNON TO,,

We hear too from the *Life of Loving One*,

O child of noble family, this is how it is. Imagine that the king of a land has given birth to a son or daughter. Within a short time after their birth, this child—the one who bears the name of the king—already outshines even all of those who are the most senior and foremost among the ministers of state, by force of the greatness of their family line.

DE BZHIN DU BYANG CHUB SEMS DPA' LAS DANG PO PA BYANG CHUB
TU SEMS BSKYED NAS RING PO MA LON PA, DE BZHIN GSHEGS PA CHOS
KYI RGYAL PO'I RIGS SU SKYES PAS KYANG, BYANG CHUB KYI SEMS
DANG SNYING RJE'I DBANG GIS NYAN THOS DANG, RANG SANGS
RGYAS YUN RING DU TSANGS PAR SPYAD PA RNAMS ZIL [27b] GYIS
GNON TO,,

A beginner bodhisattva is just the same: not long after they have reached the wish for enlightenment, and taken their birth into the family of the Kings of the Dharma—Those Who Have Gone That Way—then by force of their wish for enlightenment and their compassion, they already outshine the listeners and the self-made buddhas, who have led a life of purity over a very long period of time.

RIGS KYI BU 'DI LTA STE, DPER NA NAM MKHA' LDING GI DBANG PO
CHEN PO'I PHRUG GU SKYES NAS RING PO MA LON PA'I GSHOG PA'I
RLUNG GI SHUGS DANG, MIG YONGS SU DAG PA'I YON TAN GANG YIN
PA DE NI, DE LAS GZHAN PA'I BYA'I TSOGS MA LUS PA RGAS PAR GYUR
PA THAMS CAD LA YOD PA MA YIN NO,,

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It is like, o child of noble family, the case with the Lords of the Skygliders, once they have given birth to a chick. Within a short period of time, the baby's wings possess a power of thrust, and their eyes possess a quality of sharpness—things that the great mass of other types of birds, even though they may have lived much longer, simply lack.

DE BZHIN DU BYANG CHUB SEMS DPA' BYANG CHUB TU SEMS DANG PO
BSKYED PA, DE BZHIN GSHEGS PA NAM MKHA' LDING GI DBANG PO
CHEN PO'I RIGS KYI RGYUD DU YANG DAG PAR BYUNG BA,

Bodhisattvas who have just given birth for the first time to the wish for enlightenment are the same. They have now stepped into the family line of the great lords among skygliders: Those Who Have Gone That Way.

NAM MKHA' LDING GI DBANG PO'I PHRUG GU THAMS CAD MKHYEN
PA NYID DU SEMS BSKYED PA'I GSHOG PA'I STOBS KYIS PHA ROL GNON
PA DANG,

These chicks of the lords of the skygliders outshine others in the power of their wings—in the wish they have developed for a single goal: the state of omniscience.

LHAG PA'I BSAM PA YONGS SU DAG PA'I MIG GI YON TAN GANG YIN PA
DE NI, BSKAL PA BRGYA STONG DU NGES PAR BYUNG BA'I NYAN THOS
DANG, RANG SANGS RGYAS THAMS CAD LA YOD PA MA YIN NO ZHES
BYA BA LA SOGS PA GSUNGS PA BZHIN NO,,

The quality of the sharpness of their eyes—that is, their sense of personal responsibility for others—is as well something that is simply lacking among any one of the listeners or self-made

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buddhas, even though they may have reached their state hundreds, or even thousands, of eons before.²⁴

'GREL BSHAD LAS LUNG DE GNYIS KYI DON BRDA LAS BYUNG BA'I SEMS
BSKYED LA 'CHAD MOD KYANG, LAS DANG PO PA DANG, SEMS BSKYED
NAS RING DU MA LON PA ZHES GSUNGS PA NI, DON DAM PA'I SEMS
BSKYED LA BLTOS NAS YIN LA,

Admittedly, the *Explanation* describes these two citations as referring to the Wish for enlightenment which comes from terms;²⁵ but the mentions of “a beginner” and “not long after they have reached the wish for enlightenment” are made relative to the ultimate form of this Wish.

SNGAR DE BZHIN GSHEGS PA'I RIGS SU SKYES PA SA DANG PO NAS YIN
PAR GSUNGS PA DANG, LUNG SNGA PHYI GNYIS KA NI DPE SO SO BA
TZAM MA GTOGS PA DON GCIG YIN PA'I PHYIR DANG, RTZA BA'I TSIG
RKANG GSUM GYI DON YANG [@28a] MDO DE'I DON BSDUS PAR SNANG
BA'I PHYIR DANG,

This is the true because of the statement, earlier on, that ones birth into the family of Those Gone Thus begins from the first bodhisattva level; and because the meaning of the two metaphors—in the first and then the second citations—is the same, only that these metaphors are presented separately. Also, it would appear that the point of the three lines of the [Tibetan translation of the] root text at this point [seven lines in the English translation] is to summarize the meaning of this particular sutra.

²⁴ *The Life of Loving One*: This extended citation subsumes two sections of a portion of Part Six of the *Majority Sutra* devoted to metaphors for these bodhisattvas; and a large part of this is devoted to describing the life of the bodhisattva Loving One (Maitreya), although there does not appear to be any separate *Sutra on the Life of Loving One*, as is often referred to. See f. 279a and ff. 283a-283b of Part Six, %S34, KL00044E6.

²⁵ *The wish which comes from terms*: That is, the deceptive form of the Wish, which utilizes conceptual thought—words. See f. 68b of Master Jayananda's commentary, at %S1 (TD03870).

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LHAG PA'I BSAM PA DAG PA'I SEMS BSKYED NI SA DANG PO'I SEMS
BSKYED LA MDO SDE RGYAN LA SOGS PA MANG PO LAS GSUNGS PA'I
PHYIR RO,,

Finally, it is stated in many sources—such as *The Jewel of the Sutras*—that the Wish for enlightenment in the form of taking personal responsibility for all beings is the type of Wish for enlightenment at the first bodhisattva level.²⁶

'O NA BYANG SEMS SO SKYE'I KUN RDZOB SEMS BSKYED KYIS, NYAN
RANG ZIL GYIS GNON PAR MI 'DOD DAM SNYAM NA,

You might think to yourself, “But are you saying then that you don’t believe that the deceptive Wish for enlightenment possessed by a bodhisattva who is a normal being outshines listeners and self-made buddhas?”

DE NI MA YIN TE MDO DE NYID LAS, RIGS KYI BU 'DI LTA STE DPER
NA RDO RJE RIN PO CHE NI CHAG KYANG GSER GYI RGYAN
KHYAD PAR DU 'PHAGS PA THAMS CAD ZIL GYIS GNON CING,
RDO RJE RIN PO CHE'I MING YANG MI 'DOR LA, DBUL BA THAMS
CAD KYANG RNAM PAR ZLOG GO

No, we’re not. Because the very same sutra says,

Here, o child of noble family, is how it is. A jewel which is a diamond—even if it is broken—outshines even an extraordinarily fine ornament made of gold. Nor, even if it is broken, does it ever lose the name of “a diamond” —and it can still alleviate every form of poverty.

,RIGS KYI BU DE BZHIN DU THAMS CAD MKHYEN PAR SEMS BSKYED PA'I
RDO RJE RIN PO CHE NAN TAN DANG BRAL YANG, NYAN THOS DANG

²⁶ *The wish at the first level*: See ff. 4b and 35a of the work, by Lord Maitreya, at %S45, TD04020.

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RANG SANGS RGYAS KYI YON TAN GYI GSER GYI RGYAN THAMS CAD
ZIL GYIS GNON CING, BYANG CHUB SEMS DPA'I MING YANG MI 'DOR LA
'KHOR BA'I DBUL BA THAMS CAD KYANG RNAM PAR ZLOG GO ,ZHES
GSUNGS LA

O child of noble family, it is the same with the jewel of the diamond where one has reached the Wish for the state of omniscience, even if he or she lacks any special effort in this thinking. It still outshines all the golden ornaments of the good qualities of listeners and self-made buddhas; one still never loses the name of “a bodhisattva”; and it still alleviates every form of the poverty of the cycle of pain.²⁷

MDO 'DI BSLAB BTUS LAS, BYANG CHUB KYI SEMS SPYOD PA DANG
BRAL BA LA YANG BRNYAS PAR MI BYA BA'I SHES BYED DU DRANGS
PA'I PHYIR DANG, SA THOB PA LA SEMS BSKYED SPYOD PA DANG BRAL
BA NI SRID PA'I PHYIR RO,,

It is further the case that *The Compendium* quotes—as support for the idea that one should never disparage even a form of the Wish for enlightenment where the person who possesses it has yet to act upon it—this same sutra.²⁸ And finally it is possible for a person who has reached the bodhisattva levels to have the Wish for enlightenment and not be acting upon it.

Outshining Others by Virtue of Our State of Mind

[DE NI RING DU SONG BAR BLO YANG LHAG PAR 'GYUR,]

[This same one will also exceed them

²⁷ *Alleviates every form of poverty*: See ff. 285b-286a of the same Part Six of the *Majority Sutra*, %S34, KL00044E6.

²⁸ “*The Compendium*” quotes this same sutra: In this case, the “*Compendium*” refers to Master Shantideva’s *Compendium of All the Trainings*, citing again *The Life of Loving One*; see f. 7b of the work (%S29, TD03940).

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**In their state of mind,
At the level called “Gone Far.”**

I.32]

GNYSIS PA NI, BYANG SEMS SA DANG PO BA DE NI, SA RING DU SONG
BAR SON PA NA, KUN RDZOB BYANG CHUB KYI SEMS KYIS ZIL GYIS
GNON PAR MA ZAD, DON DAM PA'I SEMS BSKYED KYI BLO YI STOBS
KYIS KYANG, NYAN RANG RNAMS [28b] LHAG PAR TE ZIL GYIS GNON
PAR 'GYUR TE,

Which brings us to the second step from above: how—at the seventh level—a bodhisattva outshines these two by virtue of their state of mind. Once *this same* bodhisattva at the first level reaches *the level called “Gone Far,”* it’s not only the case that they outshine listeners and self-made buddhas by virtue of the deceptive Wish for enlightenment which they possess; that is, they *will also exceed them*—outshine them—due to the power of their *state of mind*: the ultimate Wish for enlightenment.

'DI NI SA BCU PA'I MDO LAS, KYE RGYAL BA'I SRAS DAG 'DI LTA STE,
DPER NA RGYAL PO'I RIGS SU SKYES PA'I RGYAL PO'I BU RGYAL PO'I
MTSAN DANG LDAN PA NI, SKYES PA TZAM GYIS RGYAL PO'I BYIN GYIS
BLON PO'I TSOGS THAMS CAD ZIL GYIS GNON GYI, RANG GI BLO'I STOBS
KYIS RNAM PAR DPYAD PAS NI MA YIN NO,,

This recalls *The Sutra on the Ten Levels*, where it says:

O child of the Victors, this is the way of it. A child of the King— one who has been born into the line of kings, and now possesses the name of the King—outshines the entire assembly of ministers, by nothing more than taking that birth: by virtue of the blessing of the King. It is not though because they possess, at this point in their lives, high powers of discrimination: not because of their own state of mind.

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NAM DE NAR SON PAR GYUR PA DE'I TSE RANG GI BLO'I STOBS BSKYED PAS, BLON PO'I BYA BA THAMS CAD LAS NI SHIN TU 'DAS PA YIN NO,,

When though they have grown to be an adult, they have developed their full mental powers; and then they absolutely surpass the ministers, in all their deeds.

KYE RGYAL BA'I SRAS DAG DE BZHIN DU BYANG CHUB SEMS DPA' YANG, SEMS BSKYED MA THAG TU LHAG PA'I BSAM PA'I CHE BA NYID KYIS, NYAN THOS DANG RANG SANGS RGYAS THAMS CAD ZIL GYIS GNON GYI, RANG GI BLO'I STOBS KYIS RNAM PAR DPYAD PA NI MA YIN NO,,

It is the same, o child of the Victors, with the bodhisattvas. In the moment after they have developed the Wish for enlightenment, they outshine all listeners and self-made buddhas—in the magnificence of their attitude of personal responsibility. It is not however in their state of mind: in their capacity of discrimination.

BYANG CHUB SEMS DPA'I SA BDUN PA 'DI LA GNAS PA'I BYANG CHUB SEMS DPA' NI, RANG GI YUL SHES PA'I CHE BA LA GNAS PAS, NYAN THOS DANG RANG SANGS RGYAS KYI BYA BA THAMS CAD LAS SHIN TU 'DAS PA YIN NO, ZHES GSUNGS PA BZHIN NO,,

A bodhisattva residing here, at the seventh bodhisattva level, is also residing in a magnificence of how they perceive their object—and so they absolutely surpass the listeners and self-made buddhas, in all their deeds.²⁹

SEMS BSKYED MA THAG TU ZHES PA NI SA DANG PO'I SKABS YIN PAS, LHAG PA'I BSAM PA DAG PA'I SEMS BSKYED PA'O,,

²⁹ *Absolutely surpass the listeners and self-made buddhas*: See ff. 164a-164b of the piece, at %S35, KL00044E3.

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The expression “in the moment after they have developed the Wish for enlightenment” applies to the point at which they are at the first bodhisattva level, and is thus a reference to Wish for enlightenment in the form of taking personal responsibility for all beings.

DE LTAR NA SA RING DU SONG BA KHO NA NAS BZUNG NAS, BYANG SEMS KYIS RANG GI BLO'I STOBS BSKYED PAS KYANG, NYAN RANG RNAMS ZIL GYIS GNON GYI, SA DRUG PA MAN CHAD DU NI [29a] BLO'I STOBS KYIS ZIL GYIS GNON PA MA YIN NO,,

Thus we can say that it is only from the point when they reach the level of “Gone Far” that the bodhisattva also outshines listeners and self-made buddhas in the powers of mind that they have developed: it is not the case that they outshine them in their state of mind at the sixth level on down.

NYAN RANG GI BYA BA THAMS CAD LAS 'DAS PA'I DON NI, DE GNYIS BLOS ZIL GYIS GNON PA'I DON YIN PAR 'GREL PA'I DON BSDUS LAS SHES SO,,

What does it mean when we say that the bodhisattva “surpasses all listeners and self-made buddhas in their deeds”? We can understand, from the summation of this citation in the commentary, that it refers to how they surpass these two in their state of mind.³⁰

BLO'I STOBS 'CHAD PA NA RANG GI YUL SHES PA'I CHE BA LA GNAS PAS, ZHES PA NI BYANG SEMS RANG GI YUL 'GOG PA YANG DAG PA'I MTHA' SHES PA'I CHE BA'O,,

Where the lines are clarifying what “mental powers” are and mention “a magnificence of how they perceive their object,” the reference is to the

³⁰ *Summation of the citation:* See f. 226b of the autocommentary, at entry %S3, TD03862.

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magnificence of the bodhisattva's own object, in the sense of the end that they have put to negativities; and of their perception of the absolute end.³¹

DON 'DI LA KHA CIG DRUG PA MAN CHAD DANG, BDUN PA'I YE SHES
KYI NGO BO LA KHYAD MED KYANG, YE SHES DANG PO RNAMS LA
SHES SGRIB SPONG BA'I NUS PA MED LA, BDUN PA'I YE SHES LA SHES
SGRIB SPONG BA'I NUS PA YOD PAS, BLO'I SGO NAS ZIL GYIS GNON MI
GNON YOD DO, ,ZHES PA DANG,

With reference to this point, some have made the claim that—although there is no essential difference between the wisdom we possess at the sixth and lower bodhisattva levels, and that which we possess at the seventh—the first of them lacks the power to remove obstacles to omniscience; whereas the wisdom of the seventh level does possess this power. This then, they say, is what determines whether we outshine others by virtue of our state of mind, or not.

³¹ *Perception of the absolute end*: A technical term that can be a little confusing. The Tibetan is *yang-dag mtha'*, and the Sanskrit *bhūtakoti*. The *yang-dag* means *purely*, or *absolutely*, and the *mtha'* means *the end*, like the end of a table. The Sanskrit for the former is *bhūta*, which also has connotations of *reality*, while the *koti* has as well connotations of *a thin slice of a spectrum*. Here's how the combination of the terms here is explained by Je Rinpoche's own illustrious protégé, Gyaltsab Je, in his *Essence of the Ocean of Higher Knowledge* (see f. 53a, %B27, S05435):

We call it “the absolute end,” first of all because it is the ultimate object focused upon by an unmistaken state of meditation; and secondly because you cannot go higher than that.

This “thin slice of the spectrum of reality” —or “pure” or unmistaken “end” —refers of course to emptiness itself, as noted in *The Great Book on the Steps of the Teaching* by Geshe Drolungpa Lodru Jungne (c. 1100AD):

This is, moreover, the real nature of all existing things; thus, if we are able to perceive it, then it is as if we are calling to us every good quality that there is, gathering them into us. It is described in a good many different terms, such as “the sphere of all things,” or “suchness,” or “the ultimate end” [f. 361b, %B22, S00070-2].

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YANG BDUN PA NAS TING NGE 'DZIN LA THOD RGAL DU 'JUG NUS PAS
ZHES PA DANG,

Others have made the claim that the distinction is based upon the fact that—from the seventh level on—we are able to engage in what we call “alternating” meditation.

BDUN PA'I YE SHES DE PHYIR MI LDOG PA'I SA BRGYAD PA LA MNGON
DU PHYOGS PA'I YE SHES SU 'DUG PAS, BLOS ZIL GYIS GNON NO ZHES
ZER RO,,

Still others have said that at the seventh level we outshine others in our state of mind because the wisdom of this level is a kind of wisdom where we are closely approaching the unstoppable state of the eighth level.

DE'I DANG PO NI MI RIGS TE LUGS 'DIS NI, GANG ZAG BDEN 'DZIN
THAMS CAD NYON MONGS CAN GYI MA RIG PAR BZHED LA, DE SLAR
MI SKYE BA'I TSUL GYIS SPONG BA LA, DE DAG GI SA BON ZAD DGOS
SHING, SPANGS PA DE YANG DGRA BCOM PA GNYIS DANG THUN
MONG BA YIN PAS, BDEN 'DZIN GYI SA BON SPONG BA NI SHES SGRIB
SPONG BA MIN NO,,

The first of these positions is incorrect because this particular system asserts that all forms of the tendency to believe that the person is real are a kind of misunderstanding which is involved with negative thoughts; and to eliminate these tendencies in a way which assures that they can never arise again, we must stop their seeds. It being further the case that this kind of elimination is shared by both types of enemy destroyers,³² we do not eliminate obstacles to omniscience when we eliminate the seeds of our tendency to believe that something is real.

³² *Both types of enemy destroyers:* That is, by enemy destroyers who are on a lower track, and have only reached nirvana; and by enemy destroyers on the higher track, who have also reached total enlightenment, or omniscience.

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SA BON DE LAS GZHAN PA'I BAG CHAGS KYI SGRIB [29b] PA SHES SGRIB
TU 'JOG PA NI, SA BRGYAD PA MA THOB BAR DU SPONG BA MIN PA'I
PHYIR RO,,

This is because we say that obstacles represented by mental potentials other than these particular seeds are obstacles to omniscience because they are not eliminated until we attain the eighth level.

DES NA LUGS 'DI LA BDEN 'DZIN SHES SGRIB TU 'JOG PA'I LUGS KYIS, DE
LA SHES SGRIB CHUNG 'BRING CHEN PO DGUR BYAS NAS, SA GNYIS PA
SOGS SGOM LAM DGUS SPONG BA'I RNAM GZHAG KHAS MI LEN TE, DA
DUNG 'CHAD PAR 'GYUR RO,,

Thus it is that in this particular system we refuse to accept the presentation—found in the system where they say that the tendency to believe that things are real is an obstacle to omniscience—which says that obstacles to omniscience are to be divided into nine degrees (starting from a division into lesser, medium, and greater), and that these are eliminated by nine forms of the path of habituation at the second and other levels. We will elucidate this further on in this work.

GNYIS PA YANG MI RIGS TE THOD RGAL ZHES PA LA NI, BRDA RNYING
PA LAS SNREL ZHI ZHES KYANG 'BYUNG BAS, RIM PA 'CHOL BA LA ZER
ZHING, 'DIR DE'I SGO NAS TING NGE 'DZIN LA 'JUG PA DRUG PA MAN
CHAD LA MED CING BDUN PA NAS YOD PA LA SHES BYED MED PA'I
PHYIR RO,,

The second position is also mistaken. The expression “alternating meditation” is also referred to with the archaism *nelshi*, which means “out of order.” But there is no scriptural support for the idea that a form of meditation which engages in different meditative levels in this way—skipping through them out of order—

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would be absent at the sixth and lower bodhisattva levels, and then suddenly exist at the seventh.³³

GSUM PA YANG MI RIGS TE, DE LA NI DRUG PA MAN CHAD DANG
BDUN PA LA RTOGS PAS ZIL GYIS GNON MI GNON GYI RGYU MTSAN LA,
DA DUNG DOGS PA MA CHOD PAS RTZOD GZHI RTAGS SU BKOD PA
DANG 'DRA BA'I PHYIR RO,,

The third of the positions mentioned is also incorrect. It gives—as a reason for making the distinction that at the seventh bodhisattva level we outshine the sixth and lower levels by virtue of our state of realization—something which by that point we have not yet resolved; and so it's as if the thing we are using as our reason is the very thing we are arguing about.

³³ *Skipping through meditative levels out of order*: An idea which is presented classically by Master Vasubandhu *Treasure House of Higher Knowledge*. There are considered to be eight meditative levels—the first four of them increasingly deeper states of meditation which, if practiced regularly in this world, ripen after death as a rebirth into the form realm of a wondrous but temporary world of extreme beauty—and the second four, even deeper, which ripen as a rebirth in a temporary state of bliss quite nearly devoid of any physical body: the formless realm.

The eight states are marked by a passage from relatively gross states of mind—say, a general awareness of an object of compassion during a deep meditation—to extraordinarily subtle states: for example, a depth of meditation even beyond bliss, nearly senseless. A truly skilled meditator can run their mind up and down the increasing scale of subtlety at will; an even more adept meditator can choose to jump say from the first level of subtlety to the third, and then the fifth, skipping over the intervening levels—a practice meant to sharpen one's meditative powers. This then is what the expressions “alternating” or “out of order” refer to.

A great explanation of this practice can be found in the commentary to *The Treasure House* by Cho-ne Lama Drakpa Shedrup (1675-1748); see the section starting at f. 202a, %B5, S00027.

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'GREL BSHAD LAS SA BDUN PAR KHO BO LAM LA 'JUG PAR BYA'O
SNYAM PA'I RNAM RTOG YOD PAS RTZOL BA DANG BCAS LA, MDO LA
SOGS PA'I CHOS KYI MTSAN MA MNGON DU MI BYED PAS, MTSAN MA
MED PA'I LAM THOB CING, DRUG PA MAN CHAD DANG NYAN RANG
RNAMS LA MTSAN MED DE MED PAS, BLOS ZIL GYIS GNON PAR GSUNGS
KYANG,

It is true that *The Explanation* speaks of how—at the seventh level—we still engage in discursive thought: we still say to ourselves, “I will practice the path”; and thus still exhibit conscious will. But we do not at this point still bring up mental forms of the physical manifestations of the teachings—the books of the sutras, or anything such; and so we can say that we have reached a “path free of the signs of things.” At the sixth and lower levels, continues this text, and with listeners and self-made buddhas, there is no “freedom from signs” of this kind.³⁴

'DI LA DE KHO NA NYID KYI RTOGS PA'I STENG NAS KHYAD PAR
GZHAG DGOS PAR SNANG NGO,,

And yet it appears to me that the distinction we are dealing with here must be drawn on the basis of how far one has realized suchness.

DE YANG YANG DAG PA'I MTHA'I DE KHO NA NYID LA 'JUG [30a]
LDANG GI SGO NAS YIN TE, SA BDUN PA'I SKABS SU 'CHAD PA LTAR
SEMS KYI SKAD CIG RE RE LA 'GOG PA YANG DAG MTHA' LA 'JUG
LDANG BYED PA SA 'DI NAS NUS LA, SA 'OG MAR MI NUS PAR GSUNGS
PA YIN NO,

In this version, the reference is to how we sink into or come out of suchness, in the form of the ultimate end. As we will see in the section where we cover the seventh bodhisattva level, it is said that we are at this level capable of sinking in or coming out of this ultimate end, and a state of cessation, at will—in every

³⁴ *Freedom from signs*: See ff. 52a-52b of Master Jayananda’s *Explanation of “Entering the Middle Way”* (%S1, TD03870).

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successive instant of the flow of our mind. We do not though possess this capacity at levels below this.

ZHES BDAG GI BLA MA DAM PA GSUNG BA LTAR LEGS TE, MOS SPYOD
DU SEMS DANG DE KHO NA NYID GNYIS RO GCIG TU MA SONG BA'I
STONG NYID KYI TING NGE 'DZIN LA DUS THUNG NGUR 'JUG LDANG
BYED PA MI DKA' YANG,

This is how my own precious Lama has explained the point, and this is a good way to do it. At the levels where our perception of suchness is no more than picturing how it must be, we have no great difficulty in entering and rising from—for brief periods of time—the meditative concentration on a form of emptiness where the two of our own mind and the suchness have yet to meld together into a single song.

SEMS DANG DE KHO NA NYID GNYIS CHU LA CHU BZHAG PA BZHIN DU
SONG BA'I 'PHAGS PA'I SKABS SU, 'JUG LDANG GI TSUL DE SHIN TU DKA'
BA'I PHYIR RO,,

This particular way of entering and rising from the meditation though becomes extremely difficult at the point where we become a realized being: when the two of our mind and suchness have turned like water poured into water.

GAL TE SA DANG PO'I YON TAN GYI SKABS SU, SA BDUN PAR NYAN
RANG BLOS ZIL GYIS GNON PAR 'CHAD PA 'DI SKABS LA MA BAB PO
SNYAM NA,

Now you might be thinking to yourself that at this particular juncture—where we are covering the high spiritual qualities of the first bodhisattva level—an explanation of how a bodhisattva at the seventh level outshines the listeners and self-made buddhas seems a little out of place.

SKABS 'CHOL BA'I SKYON MED DE, 'DIR SA DANG PO SOGS KYI BSHAD
PA NI, MDO SDE SA BCU PA LA BR TEN NAS 'CHAD LA, MDO DER SA

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DANG PO LA GNAS PAS NYAN RANG RNAMS KUN RDZOB SEMS BSKYED
KYIS ZIL GYIS GNON PA DANG, DON DAM SEMS BSKYED KYI SGO NAS
ZIL GYIS MI GNON PA'I KHYAD PAR LEGS PAR PHYE NAS GSUNGS LA,

And yet there is no such concern, that the order of our presentation might be mixed up. The treatment in the present work of the first level and so on is based upon the *Sutra on the Ten Levels*; and in that scripture, the subject is covered by making a very definite distinction between the way that someone at the first level outshines the listeners and self-made buddhas by virtue of the deceptive form of the Wish for enlightenment which they possess, and the way that they do so by virtue of the ultimate form of this Wish that they have reached.

DE'I TSE SA GANG NAS RTOGS PAS ZIL GYIS GNON SNYAM PA'I DOGS PA
SKYE BA BSAL BA'I PHYIR DU, SA BDUN PA NAS RTOGS PAS ZIL GYIS
GNON PAR GSUNGS PA DE NYID, GZHUNG 'DIR YANG BKOD PA YIN PAS
SHIN TU YANG SKABS LA BAB [30b] PAR SHES PAR BYA'O,,

And at this juncture in that text, it is stated that they are outshined—from the seventh level on—by virtue of realizations. This statement is made in order to remove any possible doubt coming up where a person might wonder at exactly what level it is that these two types of practitioners are outshone by virtue of realizations. As such, our reader should understand that inserting this same point into our present text at this juncture is in fact highly germane to the discussion.

The Thinking of the Autocommentary on These Subjects

GSUM PA LA GSUM, SA BCU PA'I MDOS NYAN RANG LA CHOS RANG
BZHIN MED PAR RTOGS PA YOD PAR BSTAN PA DANG, DE SGRUB PA'I
KHUNGS BSTAN PA DANG, DE LTAR BSTAN PA LA RTZOD PA SPANG
BA'O,,

This brings us to our third step from above: an explanation of the conclusion that we can draw from statements about how the bodhisattva outshines others. Here

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we will cover three topics: how the *Sutra on the Ten Levels* indicates that the listeners and self-made buddhas do possess the realization that things have no nature of their own; a presentation of authentic sources which prove this point; and a refutation of arguments concerning these presentations.

DANG PO LA GNYIS, 'GREL PA MDZAD PA'I DGONGS PA GSAL BAR
BSHAD PA DANG, DE NYID SPYOD 'JUG GI LUGS SU'ANG BSTAN PA'O,,

The first of these we will cover in two parts: a clear explanation of what the author of the autocommentary actually had in mind; and a demonstration that the position accepted by the *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* is just the same.

DANG PO NI, SA BCU PA LAS SA DRUG PA MAN CHAD DU RTOGS PA'I
SGO NAS, NYAN RANG RNAMS ZIL GYIS GNON MI NUS PAR GSUNGS
PA'I LUNG 'DI LAS NI, NYAN RANG RNAMS LA YANG CHOS RANG
BZHIN MED PAR SHES PA YOD DO, ZHES GSAL BAR NGES TE,

Here is the first. And so *The Ten Levels* does say that—at the sixth and lower levels—one cannot outshine the listeners and self-made buddhas by virtue of their realizations. And from this scriptural citation, we can very clearly perceive that these listeners and self-made buddhas do also possess an understanding that things have no nature of their own.

DE GNYIS LA SHES RAB DE MED NA 'JIG RTEN PA'I LAM ZHI RAGS KYI
RNAM PA CAN GYIS SRID RTZE MA GTOGS PA'I SA LA 'DOD CHAGS
DANG BRAL BA'I DRANG SRONG RNAMS BZHIN DU,

If these two types of practitioners lacked this wisdom, they would resemble those sages who have freed themselves from desire for any of the different levels of the cycle—with the exception of the level called “Peak of Existence”—by utilizing a worldly path:³⁵ one which depends only upon moving up through discursive mental states of increasing subtlety.

³⁵ *Worldly path*: A technical term referring to a spiritual method which is still mired in the world, and has not yet transcended it (which would be a *'jig-rten las*

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NYAN RANG DGRA BCOM PA DE DAG KYANG DON DAM PA'I SEMS
DANG PO BSKYED PAS KYANG, RTOGS PA'I SGO NAS ZIL GYIS GNON
PAR 'GYUR TE, DNGOS PO RANG BZHIN MED PAR SHES PA DANG BRAL
BA'I PHYIR RO,,

In this case, one would outshine—by virtue of their realizations—enemy destroyers who follow the path of the listener or the self-made buddha by nothing more than their first experience of the ultimate form of the Wish. And this would be because those two types of practitioners lacked a perception of how things lacked any nature of their own.

PHYI ROL MU STEGS BYED BZHIN DU NYAN RANG GIS KHAM GSUM NA
SPYOD PA'I NYON MONGS PA THAMS CAD SA BON DANG BCAS PA
SPANGS PAR YANG MI 'GYUR BAR GSUNGS PA NI, STONG NYID LEGS
PAR RTOGS NAS GOMS PA MED NA, NYON MONGS KYI SA BON ZAD PAR
BYED MI NUS PA, 'JIG RTEN PA'I LAM ZHI RAGS KYI RNAM PA CAN
DANG 'DRA BAR BSTAN TO,,

And then, the sutra is saying, these listeners and self-made buddhas would end up being the same as those of other traditions—the non-Buddhists, who have failed to eliminate everything connected to negative emotions, and the seeds for these, relating to any of the three realms. What this is saying is that—if we fail to perceive emptiness perfectly, and get used to what we perceived—then we could never be able to finish off the seeds for negative emotions; and then our efforts would end up being like those who follow the path of the world, trying to go from one discursive state of meditation to another, from rough to fine.

'das-pa'i lam). An example of the first would be to simply go deeper and deeper into one's breath during a meditation; the second would be to explore how the things and people around us are coming from us, from seeds planted in our mind, by how we treat others. Refer to folios 163a-163b of Je Tsongkapa's own *Medium-Length Book on the Steps of the Path* (ACIP S05393).

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DE KHO NA [31a] NYID RTOGS PA DANG BRAL NA, GZUGS LA SOGS PA'I
PHUNG PO LA BDEN PAR DMIGS PAS, BLO PHYIN CI LOG TU GYUR PA'I
PHYIR, GANG ZAG GI BDAG MED MTSAN NYID RDZOGS PA RTOGS PA
MED PAR 'GYUR TE, BDAG DANG GANG ZAG TU 'DOGS PA'I GZHI,
PHUNG PO LA BDEN PAR DMIGS PA'I YUL SUN PHYUNG BA MED PAS
PHYIR RO,,

If we are without the realization of suchness, then we will see the parts of ourselves—our physical form and the rest—as being real; and then our mind is purely mistaken. Because of this then we are without the realization, complete in every respect, that the person is not himself, or herself. This in turn is because we would have failed to rip out, from its roots, the object that the tendency to see the parts of us as real thinks it sees; and these parts are in fact the very thing that is labelled “me,” or “the person.”

'DIS NI GDAGS GZHI PHUNG PO LA BDEN PAR ZHEN PA'I ZHEN YUL SUN
MA PHYIN NA, BTAGS CHOS GANG ZAG LA BDEN PAR 'DZIN PA'I ZHEN
YUL YANG SUN MI PHYIN PAS, GANG ZAG BDEN MED DU MA RTOGS
PA'I PHYIR, GANG ZAG GI BDAG MED MTSAN NYID RDZOGS PA MA
RTOGS PAR BSTAN NO,,

What's being said here is that—if we are not able to use this realization to rip out the object that the belief in the thing we label ourselves (the parts of us) believes is real—then we will fail, in turn, to rip out the object that our tendency to think that things are real believes is real when it focuses on the result of the labeling: the person themselves. And then we will fail to realize that the person has no reality; and then we will fail to reach a realization which is complete in every respect as it sees that the person is not themselves.

DE LTAR SNGAR BSHAD PA DE DAG GI DON SHIN TU RTOGS DKA' LA,
LUGS 'DI DANG ZHI BA LHA'I GZHUNG LA BR TEN PA RNAMS KYIS
KYANG LEGS PAR MA SHOD SNANG BAS, 'DI'I MTHA' BCAD PA LA DOGS
PA SKYE TSUL DANG, DE SEL TSUL GTAN LA PHAB NA,

The points that we have just elucidated are extremely difficult to grasp; it would seem that even in our own immediate tradition—and even among those who

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follow Master Shantideva's classic—people have failed to give these ideas a proper explanation. To resolve the various issues then we could first examine how different questions come up in various people's minds; and after that set forth a way of addressing them.

GAL TE GANG ZAG RANG RKYA THUB PA'I RDZAS YOD PHUNG PO
DANG NGO BO GCIG TU MED PA DANG, DE LAS THA DAD PAS STONG
PA'I STONG BDAG MED DANG, MI RTAG PA LA SOGS PA BCU DRUG TU
TSAD MAS GTAN LA PHEBS PA NI NGES PAR 'ONG LA, DE BYUNG BA NA
DE'I GDUL BYA'I GTZO BO RNAMS KYIS, DE LA SHIN TU GOMS PAR BYED
PA YANG 'ONG NGO,,

So suppose that someone were to think the following:

Suppose we are finally able to establish, through a valid perception, the fact that nothing is itself: suppose we are able to establish an emptiness where a person who was substantial—in the sense of being self-standing—could neither be one with the parts to that person, nor separate from those parts; and where the 16 aspects of being changing and the rest applied to this person. If this were to happen, then the primary students of this approach would in turn be able to accustom themselves quite perfectly to this emptiness.

DE BYAS NA GANG ZAG GI BDAG MED DE MNGON SUM DU RTOGS PA
'ONG BA NI, RNAL 'BYOR MNGON [31b] SUM SGRUB PA'I RIGS PA
RNAMS KYIS 'GRUB BO,,

And if they were, then they would come to be able to perceive—directly—the fact that the person is not themselves. This fact is established by the logic with which we establish the existence of a direct, mystic perception.

DE LTAR NA DE RTOGS PA'I MTHONG LAM GYIS NYON MONGS KUN
BRTAGS RNAMS SPONG BA 'GRUB BO, ,DE GRUB NA GANG ZAG GI BDAG
MED MNGON SUM DU MTHONG ZIN GOMS PAR BYED PA'I SGOM LAM

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YANG 'GRUB PAS, LHAN SKYES KYI NYON MONGS KYANG SPONG NUS PAS,

If this is the case, then we can establish that the path of seeing whereby we perceive this fact eliminates the learned forms of negative emotions. And if we can establish that, then we can in turn establish the existence of a path of habituation, where we accustom ourselves to the lack of a self to the person which we have already seen directly. This then means that we also have the capacity to eliminate the inborn forms of negative emotions.

NYON MONGS PA'I ZAG PA THAMS CAD ZAD PA 'GRUB PAS STONG NYID MA RTOGS KYANG, KHAMS GSUM GYI PHRA RGYAS THAMS CAD SA BON DANG BCAS PA SPONG BAR NUS TE,

Having thus established that we would have eliminated all forms of the impurity caused by the negative emotions; we can say that—even without realizing emptiness—one can eliminate each and every widespread, negative emotion of all three of the realms, along with the seeds for these emotions.

JI SKAD BSHAD PA'I TSUL DU MTHONG SGOM GNYIS KYIS SPANGS PA NI, 'JIG RTEN LAS 'DAS PA'I LAM GYI SPONG TSUL YIN PA'I PHYIR RO, ,DES NA MI RTAG SOGS BCU DRUG SGOM PA'I LAM GYIS KYANG NYON MONGS THAMS CAD ZAD PAR NUS SO ZHE NA,

And this is true because the process that we have just described here—where the elimination is done through the pair of the path of seeing and the path of habituation—is in fact the very way in which we eliminate these negativities by using the path which transcends the world. In conclusion then we can say that it is possible, as well, to finish off each and every negative emotion by using the path of meditating upon the 16 aspects of being changing, and the rest.

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'DI LA BSHAD PAR BYA STE, DE KHO NA NYID KYI LTA BA MA RNYED
KYANG MI RTAG SOGS BCU DRUG TSAD MAS GTAN LA PHEBS PA DANG,
DE'I GDUL BYA RNAMS KYIS DON DE BRTZON PA CHEN POS SGOM PA
DANG, BSGOMS PA LAS GANG ZAG GI BDAG MED RAGS PA MNGON
SUM DU MTHONG BA DANG, MTHONG ZIN GOMS PAR BYED PA NI MI
'ONG ZHES KHO BO CAG MI SMRA'O,,

Let us then present our response. We are *not* saying that it is impossible that—
even without coming to the view of suchness—a person cannot use valid
perception to establish the 16 aspects of being changing and the rest; and that the
students who follow this approach cannot then expend great effort in meditating
upon these points; and that as a result of this meditation they cannot perceive,
directly, the gross form of the lack of a self to the person; and that they cannot
then accustom themselves to what they have succeeded in seeing.

'O NA CI ZHE NA, DE 'DRA BA'I LAM DE GANG ZAG GI BDAG MED
MTSAN NYID RDZOGS PAR RTOGS PA MIN PAS, LAM DE MTHONG LAM
DANG 'JIG RTEN LAS 'DAS PA'I SGOM LAM DU MI 'DOD DO,,

“Well then,” one may ask, “what *are* you saying?” What we are saying is that
this kind of approach does not constitute a perception of the lack of self to a
person which is complete in every respect. This being the case, we cannot agree
that this approach is the path of seeing, or a form of the path of habituation
which has transcended the world.

DE'I PHYIR MTHONG SPANG DANG, SGOM SPANG GANG GI YANG SA
BON SPONG MI NUS [32a] PAS, LAM DE MTHONG LAM DANG SGOM
LAM DU BSHAD PA DANG, SPANG BYA GNYIS SA BON DANG BCAS PA
SPONG BAR BSHAD PA DANG, LAM DE GNYIS KYI MTHAR DGRA BCOM
PA 'THOB PAR BSHAD PA NI, DRANG BA'I DON DU 'GREL BA'I LUGS YIN
TE,

And for this reason, the approach you have described cannot enable one to
eliminate the seeds either of those negativities which we eliminate with the path
of seeing; or of those which we eliminate with the path of habituation. And this
means that we must interpret as metaphoric any system which says that this

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kind of approach *could* be either the path of seeing or the path of habituation; or which says that with it we can eliminate these two types of objects to be eliminated, along with their seeds; or which says that at the end of two paths of this type we would ever be able to achieve the state of an enemy destroyer.

DPER NA SEMS TZAM PAS RDUL CHA MED DANG, DE BSAGS PA'I PHYI
DON DANG, DE LAS RDZAS THA DAD PA'I 'DZIN PA GNYIS BKAG PA
YANG TSAD MAS 'GRUB CING, DES 'DUL BA'I GDUL BYAS RING DU GOMS
PAR BYAS NA, DON DE MNGON SUM DU MTHONG BA DANG, MTHONG
ZIN GOMS PAR BYED PA 'GRUB TU CHUG KYANG, DE'I STENG NAS SA
BCU DANG, LAM PHYI MA GSUM BGROD PA DBU MA PAS DRANG DON
DU 'GREL BA BZHIN NO,,

Followers of the Middle-Way School can, for example, accept the idea that those of the Mind-Only School might disprove, through a valid perception, the two ideas that (1) atoms could have sides, and that outer objects composed of such atoms could exist; and (2) there could exist a perception of these objects which was substantially separate from them³⁶—and that students for whom this school was meant might then accustom themselves to these positions over a long period of time; and finally come to perceive them directly; and then get used to what they had at that point seen directly. But as for saying that this process could be used to go higher, to the ten levels; or to travel the latter three paths;³⁷ those of the Middle Way would interpret any such pronouncements as only metaphoric.

MI RTAG SOGS BCU DRUG SGOM PA YIN KYANG, SNGAR BSHAD PA'I
GANG ZAG GI BDAG MED RTOGS PA NYID NYON MONGS LAS GROL BAR
BYED PA'I LAM DU 'DOD PA YIN TE,

³⁶ *Perceptions substantially separate from their objects*: This is a reference to a technical expression (*gzugs dang gzugs-'dzin gyi tsad-ma rdzas-gzhan gyis stong-ba*) common to the Mind-Only School which describes the fact that the perceiving subject has never arisen from a karmic seed which is separate from that which has given birth to the object being perceived. See f. 31a of the Kyabje Pabongka's classic commentary to Je Rinpoche's *Three Principal Paths* at %B4 (ACIP S00034).

³⁷ *The latter three paths*: That is, the path of seeing; the path of habituation; and the path of no more learning.

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The approach described is a meditation upon the 16 aspects of being changing, and so on; but it is only the perception of how the person is not themselves—the perception which we described above—which we accept as the path which can free us from our negative emotions.

KUN LAS BTUS LAS, BDAG MED PA'I YID BYED KYIS NYON MONGS
SPONG LA, RNAM PA LHAG MA RNAMS DE YONGS SU SBYONG BA'I
THABS SU GSUNGS PA DANG,

As *The Compendium* puts it, a state of mind where you are focused on how nothing is itself can enable you to eliminate your negative emotions; but all the rest of the ways of looking at things are only methods of improving on them.³⁸

RNAM 'GREL LAS KYANG,
,STONG NYID LTA BAS GROL 'GYUR GYI,
,SGOM PA LHAG MA DE DON YIN,
,ZHES SNGA MA DANG MTHUN PAR GSUNGS PAS SO,,

The *Commentary on Valid Perception* is in agreement with the preceding where it says,

The view of emptiness
Will free you;
All other meditations
Are just to get you there.³⁹

STONG NYID LTA BA ZHES PA'I TSIG TZAM LA 'KHRUL NAS, RGYA GAR
BA 'GA' ZHIG GIS KYANG DE KHO NA NYID RTOGS PA'I LTA BA LA 'DOD

³⁸ *Focused on how nothing is itself*: The relevant discussions seem to be those at ff. 100b, 111b, and 161a of Master Shantideva's *Compendium of All The Trainings*, at %S29 (TD03940).

³⁹ *All other meditations are just to get you there*: See f. 117a of Master Dharmakirti's classic, at %S46 (TD04210).

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PA NI DON MIN PAS, GANG ZAG RANG RKYA THUB PA'I RDZAS [32b]
YOD KYIS STONG PA'I LTA BA YIN NO,,

Some of the Indian authors, misled by the wording of the expression “view of emptiness,” have taken the position that this last citation is referring to “view” in the sense of the realization of suchness; but that’s not what it’s talking about. It is a view about the person being empty of existing substantially—an emptiness of any self-standing person.

LAM DES NYON MONGS KYI SA BON SPONG MI NUS KYANG, NYON
MONGS MNGON GYUR BA NI RE ZHIG 'GOG NUS TE, PHYI ROL PA DANG
THUN MONG BA'I ZHI RAGS KYI RNAM PA CAN GYIS, CI YANG MED PA
MAN CHAD KYI NYON MONGS MNGON GYUR SPONG BAR MNGON PA
LAS GSUNGS PA LTAR 'DOD DGOS NA, SNGAR GYI LAM GYIS MNGON
GYUR RE ZHIG SPONG NUS PA LTA CI SMOS PA'I PHYIR RO,,

That particular approach does not have the power to eliminate the seeds of the negative emotions, but it can for the time being block the manifest appearance of these emotions. If though you insist on taking the above discussion as referring to statements in the literature on higher knowledge about eliminating the manifest form of negative emotions at the meditative level called “Nothing At All” on down—by utilizing a meditation that the non-Buddhists also use, going up and down through cursive states of meditation that are increasingly more or less subtle—then we couldn’t even say what we did, about the approach mentioned previously being able, for the time being, to eliminate the manifest form of these negative emotions.

NYON MONGS MNGON GYUR SPONG ZHES PA'I NYON MONGS KYANG,
MNGON PA GNYIS NAS GSUNGS PA LTAR GYI DMIGS RNAM CAN GYI
NYON MONGS YIN GYI, LUGS 'DIS BDEN 'DZIN NYON MONGS CAN GYI
MA RIG PAR BSHAD PA DANG, DE'I DBANG DU BYAS PA'I LTA BA DANG
LTA MIN GYI NYON MONGS MNGON PA LAS BSHAD TSUL LAS GZHAN
RNAMS NI MNGON GYUR YANG SPONG BAR MI NUS SO,,

Even just the expression “manifest form of negative emotions” is a reference to negative emotions with a certain object of their focus, as described in the two

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presentations of higher knowledge.⁴⁰ The system of the present text though explains the tendency to believe things as real to be a kind of misunderstanding tied up with negative emotions. Negative emotions from this point of view, whether they be ways of looking at things or other types of negative emotions—that is, those other than ones explained as they are in the works of higher knowledge—could in fact never be eliminated by the approach described, even in their manifest form.

MNGON PA NAS BSHAD PA'I SRID RTZE'I SAS BSDUS PA'I NYON MONGS
MNGON GYUR, ZHI RAGS KYI RNAM PA CAN GYIS SPONG MI NUS
KYANG, SNGAR BSHAD PA'I GANG ZAG GI BDAG MED RAGS PA RTOGS
PA'I LAM LA GOMS PAR BYAS PAS SPONG NUS SO,,

Manifest forms of negative thoughts as they are described in the literature on higher knowledge, and which are subsumed by the “Peak of Existence,” cannot be eliminated by the forms of meditation in which we go increasingly more subtle, still in a discursive state of mind. They can though be eliminated by mastering the path in which we perceive a gross form of the way in which a person is not themselves, as just described.

DE DAG GIS NI 'GREL PAR DE KHO NA NYID RTOGS PA DANG BRAL BA'I
NYON MONGS KYI SPONG GNYEN DU BSHAD PA'I LAM RNAMS, ZHI
RAGS KYI RNAM PA CAN GYI LAM DANG 'DRA BA DANG, PHYI ROL PA
BZHIN DU NYON MONGS THAMS CAD SPONG MI NUS PAR GSUNGS PA
RNAMS GSAL BAR BSTAN TO,,

The point of these sections has been to describe, in a clear way, statements made in the commentary about how paths that don't involve a perception of suchness but which are still described as antidotes we can use to eliminate negative emotions are in fact only the same as approaches involving moving through discursive meditative states of greater or lesser subtlety; and how they fail—as

⁴⁰ *The two presentations of Higher Knowledge*: That is, that of the Detailist School, and that of the Mind-Only School, represented respectively by Master Vasubhandu's *Treasure House of Higher Knowledge* and Master Asanga's *Compendium of Higher Knowledge*.

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other traditions fail—to enable us to eliminate each and every one of our negative emotions.

How This is the Position
of the Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life

GNYIS PA NI, 'DI NI [33a] RGYAL SRAS CHEN PO ZHI BA LHA YANG
BZHED DE, SPYOD 'JUG LAS,

The position we've just described is, furthermore, also accepted by that great child of the victorious Buddhas, the bodhisattva Shantideva. As the *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life* puts it,

,BDEN PA MTHONG BAS GROL 'GYUR GYI,
,STONG NYID MTHONG BAS CI ZHIG BYA,

Only by seeing the truth
Can we be freed;
What use is it
To see emptiness?

ZHES BDEN BZHI MI RTAG SOGS BCU DRUG MTHONG BA'I LAM GYIS,
NYON MONGS LAS GROL BAR 'GYUR BAS, NYON MONGS ZAD PA'I DON
DU RANG BZHIN MED PA'I STONG NYID MTHONG BA MI DGOS SO, ZHES
PA'I LAN DU,

These lines present the mistaken position that we can be freed simply with a path which involves seeing the Four Truths—with their 16 aspects of being changing and the rest; it is saying that it is not necessary to see a kind of emptiness where nothing has any nature of its own, in order to finish off our negative emotions. In response to this position, the work continues with:

,GANG PHYIR LUNG LAS LAM 'DI NI,

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,MED PAR BYANG CHUB MED PAR GSUNGS,

But the use of it
Has been stated in scripture:
“Without this path,
There can be no enlightenment.”⁴¹

ZHES RANG BZHIN GYIS GRUB PAS STONG PAR MTHONG BA'I LAM 'DI
MED PAR, BYANG CHUB GSUM GANG YANG THOB PA MED PAR GSUNGS
TE,

What this is saying is that—if we lack this path where we see how things are empty of existing through any nature of their own—then we cannot achieve any of the three forms of enlightenment.⁴²

GSUNGS TSUL NI SPYOD 'JUG 'GREL CHEN LAS, YUM GYI MDO LAS
DNGOS PO'I 'DU SHES CAN LA THAR PA MED PA DANG, DUS GSUM GA'I
RGYUN ZHUGS NAS RANG RGYAL GYI BAR RNAMS SHER PHYIN 'DI
NYID LA BR TEN NAS THOB PAR GSUNGS PA DRANGS PA LTAR YIN GYI,
BLA NA MED PA'I BYANG CHUB RKYANG PA LA BYED PA DON MIN NO,,

The way in which the work makes this statement is described in the *Great Commentary on the “Guide to the Bodhisattva’s Way of Life,”* where it recounts how the Mother Sutras say that there can be no freedom for those who still conceive of things as things, and how all those who achieve the goals from entering the stream on up to becoming a self-made buddha—whether they have already come, or are here now, or are yet to come—do so by utilizing this same

⁴¹ *Without this path there can be no enlightenment:* See f. 32a of Master Shantideva’s classic, at %S47, TD03871.

⁴² *Three forms of enlightenment:* That is, nirvana achieved by way of the listener and self-made buddha progressing through the five paths; or true enlightenment achieved by travelling the greater way. In the presentation of the five paths, all three are given the name of “enlightenment” (*byang-chub*, or *bodhi*), although the first two are not actual Buddhahood, but only the nirvana of a lower track. See for example f. 10b of Ngulchu Dharma Bhadra’s brief commentary on Je Rinpoche’s masterful summary of vowed morality at %B29 (S006361).

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perfection of wisdom. And so it is not as if the point applies only to those who reach matchless enlightenment.⁴³

DE NAS BSTAN RTZA DGE SLONG NYID YIN NA, ZHES PA'I RKANG PA
BZHIS SEMS BDEN 'DZIN GYI DMIGS PA DANG BCAS PA'I LAM GYIS
MYANG 'DAS MI 'THOB PAR YANG BSTAN NO,,

The four lines [in the Tibetan] which include “that special monk who is the foundation of the teachings” are also meant to convey that one cannot achieve nirvana by using a path in which ones mind is still wrapped up in seeing something in the way that we do when we are holding things to be real.⁴⁴

⁴³ *Great Commentary to the “Guide”*: The “great” commentary to Master Shantideva’s masterpiece is a reference to the commentary by Master Prajnakaramati, titled *in situ* as *A Commentary to Difficult Points in the “Guide to the Bodhisattva’s Way of Life”*; see the discussion beginning from f. 217b, %S48, S03872. Original statements from the Mother Sutras quoted in this work at this particular juncture may be found at ff. 333b-343b of Part 11, and ff. 487a-488a of Part 5, in the *Perfection of Wisdom in 100,000 Lines* (%S49, KL00008).

⁴⁴ *Monk who is the foundation of the teachings*: The full verse, from the *Guide*, goes like this—

The very foundation of the teachings
Is an ultimate monk;
But in that case it would be difficult
To say that one existed.
It would be difficult as well to say
That reaching the state of nirvana
Existed for those whose minds
Are still seeing something there.

An “ultimate monk” is described as anyone (ordained or not) who has reached nirvana, or the state of an enemy destroyer; see for example Kyabje Pabongka Rinpoche’s explanation of these same lines in his *Notes Taken on the Occasion of a Profound Teaching on the “Guide to the Bodhisattva’s Way of Life,”* f. 27b (%B31, S00362). The concept is tied to the idea of “ultimate good” as found in the teachings on higher knowledge (abhidharma), where highest goodness is

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DE NAS NYON MONGS SPANGS PAS GROL NA DE'I, DE MA THAG TU DE
'GYUR RO, ZHES GSUNGS PA'I NYON MONGS SPANGS PAS GROL NA
ZHES PA NI, PHYOGS SNGA MA'I LUGS BRJOD PA YIN LA,

The next lines in the *Guide* say:

If one were freed by this elimination
Of the negative emotions,
Then one would reach it
Just after that.⁴⁵

The part about “If one were freed by this elimination of the negative emotions” is a reiteration of the opponent’s position.

DE'I DON NI, BDEN PA [33b] MTHONG BAS GROL 'GYUR GYI, ZHES
BSHAD PA BZHIN DU MI RTAG SOGS BCU DRUG GI LAM BSGOMS PAS,
NYON MONGS SPANGS TE GROL BA 'THOB NA ZHES BSHAD RGYU YIN
TE, SKABS 'DIR MI RTAG SOGS CU DRUG GI LAM TZAM GYIS NYON
MONGS LAS GROL BA 'THOB MI 'THOB LA RTZOD PA'I PHYIR DANG,
BDEN PA MTHONG BAS ZHES SOGS KYI RTZOD PA LAS SHIN TU GSAL
BA'I PHYIR RO,,

described as nirvana itself (a nice description can be found in the Sera Mey textbook on higher knowledge by the eminent Gyalwang Trinley Namgyal [fl. 1850], at f. 3b, %B30, S00044-4).

The point is that one could never reach the state of an enemy destroyer only by utilizing an understanding that the person is nothing self-standing; and just so, never reach nirvana only through the use of discursive meditative states of differing degrees of subtlety.

The lines are found on f. 32b of the *Guide* (%S47, TD03871).

⁴⁵ *If one were freed*: There is a small but perhaps useful difference between the Tibetan version of the line as quoted here and that found in the Tengyur: the *de 'gyur* reads as *der 'gyur* (again, f. 32b).

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Here's what the lines are referring to. They should be read in the same way as we did the part that goes, "Only by seeing the truth / Can we be freed" —that is, "If one were freed by an elimination of the negative emotions which was brought about by meditating upon the path of impermanence and the rest of the 16 aspects of the Four Truths..." This is because the whole point of this particular section is a disagreement about whether or not one can achieve liberation through using no more than the path of the 16 aspects of impermanence and the rest—and this is eminently clear from the preceding dispute upon the line about "seeing the truth."

DES NA MI RTAG SOGS BCU DRUG GI LAM TZAM GYIS NYON MONGS
ZAD PAR NUS PA KHAS BLANGS NAS, DES SDUG BSNGAL THAMS CAD
LAS GROL BA MIN NO ZHES 'CHAD PA NI 'DI'I DON GTAN MIN NO,,

Therefore explaining this section as meaning that someone has accepted that nothing more than the path of the 16 aspects of impermanence and the rest can finish off the negative emotions, but that this does not free one from each and every form of suffering, is missing the point completely.

DE'I PHYIR LAM DES NYAN THOS SDE PA GNYIS DANG THUN MONG
BA'I NYON MONGS SU BZHAG PA RNAMS, SNGAR BSHAD PA LTAR GYI
LAM RGYUD LA BSKYED PAS, RE ZHIG MNGON GYUR DU RGYU BA MED
PA'I TSE, NYON MONGS ZAD PA'I GROL BA THOB PAR 'JOG NA, NYON
MONGS MNGON GYUR TZAM RE ZHIG SPANGS PA DE'I DE MA THAG TU
ZAG PA THAMS CAD ZAD PA'I GROL BA THOB PAR 'GYUR RO, ZHES 'GOG
PA DGONGS PA YIN NO,,

Therefore the real intent of these lines is to refute the idea held by those who present the negative emotions in the same way as the two listener groups do,⁴⁶

⁴⁶ *As the two listener groups do:* A work by His Holiness the First Dalai Lama on the art of interpretation clarifies this expression as referring to—from among the four classical Buddhist schools of ancient India—the lower two: the Higher Knowledge (Abhidharma) School; and the Sutrist School, both belonging to the lesser way. See ff. 40b-41a of *A Lamp that Illuminates, with Total Clarity, the True Intent: A Commentary on Difficult Points in "Distinguishing between the Figurative*

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saying that—if we describe managing to develop within ourselves the path described earlier, and thus stopping, for the time being, the running of manifest forms of negative emotion, as attaining *freedom* in the form of finishing off the negative emotions—then it would be the case that *just after* the *elimination* of no more than manifest forms of *negative emotion* for a limited period of time, *one would* further *reach* a liberation where they had finished off each and every impurity.

DE 'DOD PAR MI NUS PA NI,
,NYON MONGS MED KYANG DE DAG LA,
,LAS KYI NUS PA MTHONG BA YIN,

The fact that we cannot accept this position is indicated in the very next lines of the work:

Even though they lack
Those negative emotions,
We can still see the forces
Of karma in them.⁴⁷

ZHES NYON MONGS MNGON GYUR RE ZHIG MED KYANG, LAS KYI
DBANG GIS YANG SRID PHYI MA 'PHEN PA'I NUS PA MTHONG BAS SO,
ZHES PAS STON NO,,

What these lines are saying is that—even though a person may *lack those* manifest forms of *negative emotion* for a limited period of time—we can still see in them *the forces* that project another future life, through the power of *karma*.

GZHUNG DE RNAMS NI DE LTAR BSHAD DGOS KYI, 'GREL PA 'GA' ZHIG
DANG BOD RNAMS, NYON MONGS [34a] MED KYANG MOO GAL GYI BU
DANG, 'PHAGS PA SOR PHRENG CAN LA SOGS PA LA SNGON SO SKYE'I

and the Literal,” found in the Collected Works of the Holy and Omniscient One [Je Tsongkapa] (%B@, SE05565).

⁴⁷ *We can still see the power:* Still at f. 32b.

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DUS SU BSAGS PA'I LAS KYI 'BRAS BUS SDUG BSNAL 'BYIN PA MTHONG
BAS, DE MA THAG TU GROL BA MA YIN NO, ,ZHES PA LTAR MI BYA STE,

This then is how we should explain these major works; we should not though follow the interpretation of a number of commentaries—and of certain Tibetan thinkers—who say that “We do not, just after that point, achieve liberation; because we can see examples such as those of Maudgalyayana⁴⁸ and the realized being Angulimala,⁴⁹ who because of the fruits of karma they had accumulated previously—when they were still normal beings—experienced suffering.”

⁴⁸ *Maudgalyayana experienced suffering*: Part of an ongoing debate about whether an enemy destroyer (someone who has reached nirvana) can still experience suffering due to the ripening of negative karmic seeds planted earlier. His Holiness the First Dalai Lama for example discusses the point in his commentary on higher knowledge (*abhidharma*) called *Light on the Path to Freedom* (f. 10a ff, %B10, SE05525). Pabongka Rinpoche Dechen Nyingpo, in his famed text on the steps to liberation—*A Gift of Liberation, Thrust into Our Hands*—alludes to an incident in which Maudgalyayana, due to his past karma, was unable to use his miracle powers to escape a serious beating at the hands of the disciples of another, non-Buddhist teacher (ff. 230b-231a, %B33, S00004). We find the complete original story in the Kangyur at ff. 360a-360b of *The Foundation of Assorted Topics of Vowed Morality, Part 1* (%S50, KL00006-1). It is the protagonist of the Heart Sutra, the Buddha’s close disciple Shariputra, who explains this reason for the sudden inability of Maudgalyayana, who was known to be the greatest master of such powers in his time.

⁴⁹ *Anguli Mala experienced suffering*: The story of Anguli Mala, or “String of Fingers,” is well known to students of the Tibetan literature on the steps of the path (*lam-rim*), where he is often cited as a person who was misled by an unqualified teacher, and instructed to kill a thousand (or some sources say two thousand) people and put their fingers on a string around his neck, to achieve high spiritual goals. He managed to kill one short of his goal and then chose the Buddha as his last victim; and of course was in short order converted and abandoned his error.

There are two extended versions of his story in the Kangyur Buddhist Canon. The first is a complete sutra entitled *An Exalted Sutra of the Greater Way Meant to Benefit Anguli Mala* (%S51, KL00213). This is an extraordinary story of over 200 folio sides where we get a different impression of the young Anguli Mala as a devoted disciple who never wanted to follow the hellish advice he was given,

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'DI NI TSE 'DI'I SDUG BSNGAL SKYED PA'I NUS PA MIN GYI, LAS KYIS
YANG SRID PHYI MA 'PHEN PA'I NUS PA MI LDOG PAS GROL BA MED
DO, ZHES STON DGOS PA'I PHYIR TE,

This is because we must interpret these statements as saying that one is not liberated so long as they have not yet stopped the capacity for karma to project another suffering life for them; this is not a reference to stopping the capacity for karma to produce suffering in this current life.

,STONG PA NYID DANG BRAL BA'I SEMS,
,GAGS PA SLAR YANG SKYE 'GYUR TE,
,DU SHES MED PA'I SNYOMS 'JUG BZHIN,

As the text continues,

and who after his conversion quickly outstrips all the Buddha's major disciples in his understanding. By the end of the sutra, he is in fact revealed to be the emanation of a second Buddha upon this planet—as are many of the other characters in the tale.

The sutra is rich in other useful information, such as an extended section on the correlations between specific deeds and their karmic results (starting from folio 235a); a statement that “all of us are brothers and sisters, because of the emptiness we share” (f. 298b); a moving argument against eating meat (f. 301a); and a later much-quoted verse about how people who were bad and turned good are the very best of people (f. 310b).

We don't though see in this sutra any mention of Anguli Mala suffering after his conversion and realizations, aside from a brief attempt at revenge by the local king and his forces which is easily thwarted. So for this part we need to go to the second extended account of his story, which forms a chapter of the famed *Sutra of the Wise and Foolish* (ff. 408a-426a, %S52, KL00341). This version contains none of the astounding revelations of the first, but does describe Anguli Mala becoming an enemy destroyer and afterwards undergoing great suffering through hellfire because of his past misdeeds. There is also great detail on the karmic patterns from their past lives which put each of the major characters in their current predicament.

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For a mind still left
Without emptiness,
They may stop; but then
Once more spring forth—
Just as we see with the meditation
Where discrimination is stopped.⁵⁰

ZHES GSUNGS TE DE'I DON STONG PA NYID KYI RTOGS PA DANG BRAL
NA, LAM GZHAN BSGOMS PAS NYON MONGS DANG BCAS PA'I SEMS RE
ZHIG 'GAGS KYANG, GTAN NAS LOG PA MIN PAS SLAR YANG NYON
MONGS MNGON GYUR DU SKYE BAS, LAS KYI DBANG GIS 'KHOR BAR
'KHOR BA MI 'CHAD CES PA'I DON YIN PA'I PHYIR RO,,

The point being made here is to say that a person who is still left without a realization of emptiness may be able to practice other paths and thus manage—temporarily—to stop states of mind that possess negative emotions. These states are not though then stopped permanently; and so manifest negative emotions will once more spring forth. And because of them, the power of karma will assure that the person continues to circle through the wheel of suffering.

⁵⁰ *Where discrimination is stopped*: Still from f. 32b of *A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*, a few lines down from the last citation. “Meditation where discrimination is stopped” (Tib: *'du-shes med-pa'i snyoms-'jug*, Skt: *asaṃjñīsamāpatti*) is a concept introduced in the literature on higher knowledge (*abhidharma*). It describes a deep meditation at the fourth level of a group of meditative states which create the rarified karma to be reborn into the form realm, a temporary god-like existence typically followed by a birth in the hell realms as all good karma is squandered. During this meditation all forms of gross discrimination are stopped, and so it may be mistaken for something more profound—but eventually ones karma shifts and gross states of mind return. For a concise treatment see Choney Lama's *Sun that Illuminates the True Intent* (%B5, ACIP S00027), ff. 48b-49a.

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NYON MONGS DANG BCAS PA'I SEMS RE ZHIG 'GAGS PA 'ONG BAR
BSTAN PA NI, SNGAR BSHAD PA LTAR NYON MONGS MNGON GYUR
SPANGS PA RE ZHIG 'ONG BA'I DON NO,,

Saying here that “it will come that states of mind which possess negative emotions will temporarily be stopped” has the meaning, as we spoke of earlier, that “it will come that one is able to eliminate, temporarily, manifest forms of negative emotion.”

LAS KYI NUS PA MTHONG BA YIN, ZHES PA'I LAN DU, RE ZHIG NYER
LEN SRED PA NI, ,MED CES NGES PA NYID CE NA, ZHES YANG SRID LEN
PA'I SRED PA LAM DES ZAD PAR BYED PAS, LAS KYI DBANG GIS YANG
SRID PHYI MA MI LEN PAR NGES PA NYID DO,

In response to the statement that “We can still see the forces / Of karma in them,” we find the lines,

And suppose you say it's assured,
Since the material cause
Of initial desire is absent,
For the moment.⁵¹

Which is to say: “Given that these paths have finished off the initial desire which causes us to take our next rebirth, it is assured that we will not be forced by karma to take this rebirth.”

⁵¹ *The material cause is absent*: These lines follow immediately upon “We can still see the forces of karma in them.” A “material cause” (Tib: *nyer-len gyi rgyu*, Skt: *upādānakāraṇa*) is easily understood in the example of an alfalfa sprout: the alfalfa seed provides the main “stuff” that turns into the sprout; whereas the sunlight, water, and fertilizer provide the contributing factors for its growth (Tib: *lhan-cig byed-rkyen*, Skt: *sahākārikāraṇa*). Nice discussions of these elements of causation are found in the “Collected Topics of Logic” (*bsDus-grva*) genre of Tibetan monastic textbook; see for example ff. 84a-85b of the modern classic by the late abbot of Trashī Hlunpo monastery, the esteemed Kachen Lobsang Supa (%B34, S00978).

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ZHES PA'I LAN DU, SRED 'DI NYON MONGS CAN MIN YANG, ,KUN [@34b]
RMONGS BZHIN DU CI STE MED, CES PHA ROL POS KUN RMONGS MI
SHES PA LA, MNGON PA NAS BSHAD PA LTAR GYI NYON MONGS YIN PA
CIG DANG, DE MIN PA GNYIS 'DOD PA BZHIN DU, SRED PA YANG
MNGON PA NAS BSHAD PA LTAR GYI NYON MONGS CAN YIN PA CIG
DANG MIN PA CIG KYANG CI'I PHYIR MI 'DOD, CES GSUNGS SO,,

We respond in turn to this statement with:

It may be that this initial desire
Is not the type
Possessed of negative emotion;
But why couldn't it be
Like the negative side of things?⁵²

These words are being addressed to an opponent who doesn't understand the concept of the "negative side of things." That is, we recognize two kinds of negative emotions: the kind that is presented in the works on higher knowledge, and another which is different. And what we are asking them in these lines is why they couldn't agree that a similar distinction could be drawn with initial desire: a type possessing negative emotion which is similar to that described in the works on higher knowledge; and a type which is different.

⁵² *Like the negative side of things*: The lines of the *Guide* immediately following the last. "The negative side of things" (Tib: *kun nas nyong-mongs-pa*, Skt: *saṃkliṣṭa*) is a concept from the schools of higher knowledge which encompasses not only negative emotions but everything related to them causally: for example, things which are in themselves karmically neutral but which have been created by negative emotions, such as a suffering human body; or even neutral objects which can inspire negative emotions: a scene of beauty which triggers feelings of attachment in certain people. In the Tibetan, this key distinction is reflected in the final adjectival suffix *pa*: that is, *involved* with negative emotions rather than only *being* negative emotions. See Choney Lama's commentary, f. 33a, for some discussion of this "negative side of things," especially as differentiated from the "pure side of things," or *rnam-byang phyogs* (%B5, S00027).

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DE NI SDE PA GNYIS DANG THEG CHEN PA LA THUN MONG DU GRAGS
PA LTAR GYI NYON MONGS CAN MA YIN PA'I SRED PA YOD PAR STON
GYI RANG LUGS KYIS SRED PA DE, NYON MONGS CAN DU MI 'DOD PA
MIN NO,,

This statement, by the way, is meant to indicate that there is a type of initial desire which is common to both the two groups and to the greater way, and which is not possessed of negative emotions. It is not though meant to say that according to our own system this particular form of initial desire is not possessed of negative emotions.

DES NA GANG ZAG RANG RKYA THUB PA'I RDZAS YOD DU 'DZIN PA'I
BDAG 'DZIN GYIS DRANGS PA'I SRED PA MNGON GYUR BA RE ZHIG
SPANGS KYANG, GANG ZAG NGO BO NYID KYIS GRUB PAR 'DZIN PA'I
'JIG LTAS DRANGS PA'I SRED PA CI STE MED CES PA YIN PAS, SNGAR
BSHAD PA'I MNGON GYUR SPANGS PA LA NI, BSHAD MA THAG PA'I 'JIG
LTA DANG SRED PA MNGON GYUR BA YANG MI LDOG GO ,

Therefore what we are saying here is: "It may indeed be the case that one has eliminated, for the time being, manifest forms of that initial desire which is brought on by the tendency to grasp to some self-nature which holds that the individual is substantial, in the sense of being self-standing. Why though would this preclude the form of initial desire which is brought on by the view of destruction⁵³ which grasps to the idea that the individual could exist in and of itself?" The point is that a person who has eliminated the manifest form that we mentioned earlier will not have eliminated, in addition, the view of destruction that we just described; nor the manifest form of initial desire.

GAL TE LUGS DE GNYIS KA'I NYON MONGS MNGON GYUR BA SPANGS
NA, GNYIS KA'I SA BON MA SPANGS PAR NI 'DRA LA, MNGON GYUR
YOD MED LA KHYAD MA BYUNG NA, SRED PA LA KHYAD PAR PHYE BA
DON MED DO,

⁵³ *View of destruction*: Refer back to footnote %72.

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If both these systems are similar in saying that—if one has eliminated the manifest form of negative emotion in the system—then one will not have eliminated the seed for the negative emotion as it is described in the same system; then there is actually no difference to be drawn at this juncture between possessing the manifest form or not. And in this case it would be meaningless to draw any distinction between different forms of the initial desire.

,TSOR BA'I RKYEN GYIS SRED PA YIN,
,TSOR BA DE DAG LA YANG YOD,

As the next lines themselves point out,

Initial desire occurs
Because of the factor of feelings—
And they still possess
These feelings.

CES GSUNGS PAS NI LAM GZHAN GYIS NYON MONGS MNGON GYUR BA
GZHAN SPANGS PA LA, SRED PA MI LDOG PA'I RGYU MTSAN STON TE,
DE KHO NA NYID RTOGS PA'I LTA BA DANG [35a] BRAL NA, TSOR BA
LA BDEN 'DZIN GYI MA RIG PA CUNG ZAD KYANG MI SPONG LA,

What's being described here is a reason why other paths cannot be used to put a stop to initial desire, which in turn is necessary to eliminate the manifest form of other negative emotions; that is, a person who still lacks the viewpoint with which they realize suchness will continue to be unable to eliminate even the tiniest bit of that misunderstanding which holds that feelings have some real nature of their own.

DE LTA NA TSOR BA BDE BA SKYES PA NA MI 'BRAL BAR SRED PA DANG,
TSOR BA SDUG BSNGAL SKYES PA NA 'BRAL 'DOD KYI SRED PA CI'I
PHYIR MI SKYE STE, MTHUN RKYEN TSANG ZHING 'GAL RKYEN MED
PA'I RGYU LAS 'BRAS BU SKYE BAR NGES PA'I PHYIR RO,,

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Why then in this case would we not see the arising of a form of initial desire where the person was hoping not to be separated from some feeling of pleasure that had come up in their life; and another form of this desire where the person was hoping *to* be separated from some feeling of pain that had made its own appearance? For it is absolutely certain that a given result will occur, in a case where all the conditions which support its growth are complete, even as all the conditions which might impede its growth are absent.

RANG LUGS KYI TSOR BA LA SRED PA LDOG LUGS NI,
,GANG TSE TSOR PO 'GA' MED CING,
,TSOR BA'ANG YOD PA MA YIN PA,
,DE TSE GNAS SKABS 'DI MTHONG NAS,
,SRED PA CI PHYIR LDOG MI 'GYUR,

The position of our own system on how to prevent initial desire towards a particular feeling is described in the following lines—

At a certain point,
We see that there is no one
Doing the feeling;
Nor any feeling
For them to have.
Why then by this time
Would initial desire
Not come to a stop?⁵⁴

ZHES SPYOD 'JUG LAS GSUNGS PA LTAR YIN TE, TSOR BA PO DANG TSOR
BA 'GA' YANG RANG BZHIN GYIS GRUB PA MED PAR MTHONG BA GOMS
NA, SRED PA LDOG PAR BSTAN PAS, DE 'DRA BA'I LAM MED NA SRED PA
THAMS CAD CI'I PHYIR LDOG CES PAR YANG STON NO,,

It's just as the *Guide* is putting it here. At some point, the lines are teaching us, we are able to see—and become accustomed to the fact—that there is no one at all doing the feeling, and no feeling at all for them to have, which exist through

⁵⁴ *There is no one doing the feeling:* From the next section of the *Guide*, on f. 34b.

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some nature of their own. And it is at this point that we are able to stop initial desire. The lines are also, in effect, saying: “How then, in the absence of such a path, would you ever be able to stop all forms of initial desire?”

'DI NI RIGS PA DRUG CU PA LAS,
,GNAS DANG BCAS PA'I SEMS LDAN LA,
,NYON MONGS DUG CHEN CIS MI 'BYUNG,
,ZHES GSUNGS PA'I DON NO,,

This is also the point being made in *The Sixty Verses on Reasoning* where it says,

Why would we not find
The great poison
Of negative emotions
In a person who possessed
A state of mind
Where they still took some position?⁵⁵

TSOR BA YOD PA'I RGYU MTSAN GYIS SRED PA YOD PAR GSUNGS PA LA,
RGYU YOD PAS 'BRAS BU YOD PAR SGRUB MI NUS PAS LEGS PA MIN
ZHES CHA PA DANG, RTZEGS DBANG PHYUG SENG GES SPYOD 'JUG
'GOG PA NI,

Chapa and Tsek Wangchuk Senge have attempted to refute the *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*, claiming that this statement that “A person possesses initial desire for the reason that they possess feelings” is imperfect, since the presence of a cause does not necessarily establish the presence of its result.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ *Where they still took some position*: Found in Arya Nagarjuna's work at f. 22a. The wording of the version found in the edition of the Tengyur that we're using is slightly different, with no change in meaning (%S24, TD03825). “Taking some position” is clarified in the lines immediately preceding as meaning “taking a stand on either side of an argument between saying that something is completely unreal or that something is as real as it appears to a normal person to be.”

⁵⁶ *Chapa and Tsek Wangchuk Senge have attempted*: The first reference is to the early Tibetan writer Chapa Chukyi Senge (whose name in Tibetan is variously spelt

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NYAN THOS LA CHOS KYI BDAG MED RTOGS PA YOD MED GNYIS BOD
NA PHYI MA GRAGS CHE ZHING, LUGS DE LA GOMS PA SHAS CHE BA
DANG, PHYOGS DANG PO'I LUNG RIGS RNAMS LA MTHA' [35b] CHOD
PAR MA SBYANGS PAS, RIGS PA BRLING PO'I DON ZHIB TU MA RNYED
PAR MKHAS PA CHEN PO LA GYA TSOM DU SKYON BZUNG BA'I NOR PA
CHEN PO'O,,

Now there are two positions taken about whether practitioners on the listener track are able to perceive the lack of a self-nature to things: some say yes, and some say no. The latter position has become more widespread here in Tibet. The problem with these two thinkers is that they were more familiar with this position, and failed to acquaint themselves with the exhaustive analysis necessary to establish the former position through both scriptural authority and reasoning. And so they have fallen into a stupendous error, unable to unravel subtle shades of reasoning and thus accusing a truly great sage of error, with no foundation for doing so.

DE BZHIN DU ZLA BA'I ZHABS LA BOD RNAMS KYIS SKYON BZUNG BA
'GA' ZHIG SNANG BA YANG, PHYOGS SNGA MA ZHIB TU YE MA GO BAR
SKYON LTAR SNANG BRJOD PAS, RANG GI DE NYID STON PA MKHAS
PAS MTHONG NA SHIN TU NGO TSA BA'I GNAS KHO NAR SNANG NGO,,

So too we have seen some Tibetans of the past who considered the great Chandrakirti to have made some kind of errors—but these are just false errors

Cha-pa or *Phya-pa* or even *Phyva-pa Chos kyi seng-ge*, 1109-1169; his birth year is also given by Mugey Samten Gyatso as 1103, see p. 437 of his religious history at %B35, S12339). Refer to Chapa's commentary to Master Shantideva's work at %B@ (S0@), f. @. Chukyi Senge was a disciple of the eminent Geshe Drolungpa, Lodru Jungne (c. 1100), author of *The Great Book on the Steps of the Teaching* (*bsTan-rim chen-mo*), a magnificent prototype for Je Tsongkapa's own *Great Book on the Steps of the Path* (*Lam-rim chen-mo*). Chapa in turn had eight primary disciples, known as the "Eight Lions." One of these was Tsek Wangchuk Senge; we often see the first word of his name listed as "Tsak" (*rTzags*), and it is probably a place name (cf. *lCang-tzags* in the Das dictionary, p. 399, %E4, R@).

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seen by a person who has no understanding at all of the finer points of the former position. And so if a sage were to see the way that these people themselves describe suchness, it seems that it would be no more than a total embarrassment.

DE LTAR NA 'GREL BSHAD LAS MI RTAG SOGS BCU DRUG GI LAM GYIS
NYON MONGS KUN BRTAGS SPONG NUS LA, LHAN SKYES SPONG MI
NUS SO ZHES KHYAD PAR 'BYED PA YANG RIGS PA MA YIN TE,

As such it is also wrong to draw a distinction of saying that the *Explanation* states that a person can eliminate learned forms of negative emotion by using the path of impermanence and the rest of the 16 aspects; and yet not thus eliminate inborn forms.

THEG PA THUN MONG BA LA GRAGS PA'I NYON MONGS MNGON GYUR
TZAM RE ZHIG SPONG BA LA NI, KUN BRTAGS DANG LHAN SKYES
GNYIS 'DRA LA, SA BON SPONG MI NUS PA YANG GNYIS KA LA 'DRA BA'I
PHYIR RO,,

Even with the question of eliminating just manifest forms of negative emotions—as they are described in the way which is common to the schools, and then only for some period of time—the case with both learned forms and inborn forms is similar; and the point is also similar for both regarding the issue of whether one is able to eliminate the seeds or not.

'DIR ZLA BA DANG ZHI BA LHA GNYIS DGONGS PA GCIG TU 'CHAD MA
SHES 'DUG GO

On this matter, people haven't understood how to explain both Master Chandrakirti and Master Shantideva as having the same idea.

,PHUNG PO BDEN MED DU MA RTOGS NA, GANG ZAG BDEN MED DU MI
RTOGS LA, DE LTA NA GANG ZAG GI BDAG MED MI RTOGS PA NI, DPER
NA PHUNG SOGS KYI CHOS BDEN PAS STONG PA CHOS KYI BDAG MED

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DU 'JOG PA LTAR, GANG ZAG BDEN MED KYANG GANG ZAG GI BDAG
MED DU GZHAG DGOS TE, RGYU MTSAN KUN NAS MTSUNGS PA'I PHYIR
RO,,

If one fails to realize that the parts of a person have no reality, then they will also fail to realize that the person themselves has no reality; and then they will fail to realize that the person has no nature of being themselves. We must, for example, describe the fact that things have no nature of being themselves as referring to the fact that things—in the form of the parts of a person and so on—are devoid of any reality. Just so, we must describe the fact that the person has no nature of being themselves as referring to the fact that the person is devoid of any reality: the reason is completely the same.

DE LTA NA GANG ZAG BDEN PAR 'DZIN PA GANG ZAG GI BDAG 'DZIN
DU GZHAG DGOS PAS, DE MA ZAD BAR DU NYON MONGS THAMS CAD
ZAD PA MI 'ONG BA DANG, GANG [36a] ZAG DANG CHOS LA BDEN
'DZIN NYON MONGS SU 'JOG DGOS PA YIN TE, ZHI BA LHA'I LUGS
LA'ANG 'DI NYID RNAM PAR BZHAG DGOS SO,,

As such, we must describe the tendency to hold that the person is real as being the tendency to hold that the person is themselves. And then we would have to say that—until such time as we manage to finish off this tendency—then we could never finish off all of our negative emotions. We must also describe the two tendencies of holding that the person is real, and that things are real, as being themselves negative emotions. And we would have to describe it exactly this same way in the system of Master Shantideva as well.

Sutras of the Greater Way which Prove the Same Point

GNYIS PA LA GNYIS, THEG CHEN GYI MDO'I SHES BYED DGOD PA DANG,
BSTAN BCOS DANG THEG DMAN GYI MDO'I SHES BYED DGOD PA'O,,

This brings us to the second topic in our explanation of the conclusion that we can draw from statements about how the bodhisattva outshines others: a

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presentation of authentic sources which prove the point that listeners and self-made buddhas do possess the realization that things have no nature of their own. We proceed in two steps, presenting sutras of the greater way which prove this point; and then presenting classical commentaries, and sutras of the lower way, which prove the point.

DANG PO NI, LHAG PA'I BSAM PA BSTAN PAS ZHUS PA TSIG GSAL DU
DRANGS PA LAS,

Here is the first. Our point is stated in very clear terms in *The Section Requested by Sthira Adhyashaya*, as this work is quoted in *A Clarification of the Verses*:

DPER NA MI LA LA ZHIG GIS SGYU MA MKHAN GYI ROL MO BYUNG BA'I
TSE, SGYU MA MKHAN GYIS SPRUL PA'I BUD MED MTHONG NAS, 'DOD
CHAGS KYI SEMS SKYED DE, DE 'DOD CHAGS KYIS SEMS DKRIS NAS
'KHOR GYIS 'JIGS SHING BAG TSA STE, STAN LAS LANGS NAS SONG STE

“There are for example some people who—when the magician begins his music—lay eyes on a woman conjured up by this sorcerer. They then begin to feel lust for her and, overcome by this lust, they jump up from their seats; much to the concern and consternation of those around them, they run to the woman.”

DE SONG NAS KYANG BUD MED DE NYID LA MI SDUG PAR YID LA BYED
CING, MI RTAG PA DANG SDUG BSNGAL BA DANG STONG PA DANG
BDAG MED PAR YID LA BYED NA,

“But once they approach her they begin to think of this woman as being unattractive; and they think of her as impermanent; and something painful; and empty and not even herself.”

RIGS KYI BU DE JI SNYAM DU SEMS, MI DE YANG DAG PAR ZHUGS PA
YIN NAM 'ON TE LOG PAR ZHUGS PA YIN,

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“And so I ask you, o child of noble family. Do these people know what they are doing, or not?”

GSOL BA BCOM LDAN 'DAS GANG BUD MED MA MCHIS PA LA MI SDUG
PAR YID LA BYED CING, MI RTAG PA DANG SDUG BSNAL BA DANG
STONG PA DANG, BDAG MED PAR YID LA BGYID PA'I MI DE'I MNGON
PAR BRTZON PA DE NI LOG PA LAGS SO,,

And the bodhisattva Sthira Adhyashaya replied, “O Conqueror, for people to make the effort to think of an impossible woman as being unattractive; and to think of her as being impermanent; and something painful; and empty, and not even herself, would show that they didn't know what they were doing.”

BCOM LDAN 'DAS KYIS BKA' STZAL PA, RIGS KYI BU 'DI NA DGE SLONG
DANG DGE SLONG MA DANG, DGE BSNYEN DANG DGE BSNYEN MA
KHA CIG MA SKYES SHING MA [36b] BYUNG BA'I CHOS RNAMS LA MI
SDUG PAR YID LA BYED CING, MI RTAG PA DANG SDUG BSNAL BA
DANG STONG PA DANG BDAG MED PAR YID LA BYED PA GANG YIN PA
DE DAG KYANG DE DANG 'DRA BAR BLTA BAR BYA'O,,

And the Conqueror spoke, “O child of noble family, there are here a number of monks, and nuns, and men and women with lifetime vows, who look at things which have never started, and never even happened, and think of them as being unattractive; and think of them as impermanent; and empty; and painful; and not even themselves. You should view them as being the same as those other people.”

NGA NI MI BLUN PO DE DAG LA LAM SGOM PA YIN NO ZHES MI SMRA
STE DE DAG NI LOG PAR ZHUGS PA ZHES BYA'O, ZHES SHIN TU GSAL
BAR GSUNGS SO,,

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“And I do *not* say that foolish people such as these are practicing the path—for they don’t know what they are doing.”⁵⁷

SGYU MA'I BUD MED LA BUD MED DNGOS SU BZUNG NAS, DE LA MI RTAG SOGS SU YID LA BYED PA DANG, PHUNG PO BDEN PAR BZUNG NAS PHUNG PO LA MI RTAG PA LA SOGS PA LNGAR YID LA BYED PA GNYIS DPE DON DU SBYAR BA LA,

What we have here is a metaphor and the thing to which the metaphor refers. That is, someone is taking an illusory woman to be a real one, and then thinking of her as impermanent and the rest. And this refers to someone who is taking the parts of a person to be real, and then thinking of them in these five different ways—impermanent and so on.

BDEN PA'I PHUNG PO DMIGS PAR BYAS NAS MI RTAG SOGS SU YID LA BYED PA CIG KYANG YOD LA, DE NI ZHEN YUL LA 'KHRUL BA'I LOG SHES RKYANG PA YIN PAS, TSAD MAS GRUB PA MIN KYANG

And so there are people who think they are looking at parts to a person which are real, and who think of them as impermanent and such—but their state of mind is a total misperception, mistaken in the object that it believes it sees. Therefore we can go further and say the object here is not even one which is established by a valid perception.

BDEN 'DZIN GYI YUL SUN PHYUNG BA'I LTA BA MA RNYED PA'I RGYUD LA, BDEN BRDZUN GANG GIS KYANG KHYAD PAR DU MA BYAS PA'I PHUNG PO LA DMIGS NAS, DE GNYIS GANG GIS KYANG KHYAD PAR DU MA BYAS PA'I MI RTAG PA SOGS SU THA SNYAD PA'I TSAD MAS GRUB PA

⁵⁷ *They don't know what they are doing*: Found in *A Clarification of the Verses* at f. 152b (%S6, TD03860). Pretty much the exact same wording is found in the original sutra at ff. 269b-270a (%S@, KL00224); the spelling of the sutra's name with *bstan* rather than *brtan* in this carving of *Illumination* is an error. Note how the wording of the sutra includes both the first of the four higher truths and its four aspects, thus alluding to our topic of the 16 aspects of all four truths.

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DU MA ZHIG 'ONG LA, SGOM PA'I TSE YANG DON DE BSGOMS PAS
SNGAR BSHAD PA BZHIN GYI LAM RGYUD LA SKYE'O,,

The mind of this person—one who has yet to arrive at the viewpoint in which the object of the tendency to hold things as real has been demolished—is focusing on the parts of the person and failing to make any distinction at all between what is real and what is false. And then they do manage to establish, but only with valid perception operating at a nominal level, no small number of facts such as impermanence and the rest—even as they fail to make the distinction between these two. And since when they then meditate they are meditating on these particular kinds of facts, the path that arises in their mind looks like the one we described above.

YANG 'PHAGS PA BSAM GTAN PA'I DPE MKHYUD KYI MDO TSIG GSAL
DU DRANGS PA LAS KYANG, 'JAM DPAL 'PHAGS PA'I BDEN PA RNAMS
YANG DAG PA JI LTA BA BZHIN DU MA MTHONG BAS, SEMS CAN PHYIN
CI LOG BZHIS SEMS PHYIN CI LOG TU GYUR PA [37a] RNAMS 'KHOR BA
YANG DAG PA MA YIN PA 'DI LAS 'DA' BAR MI 'GYUR RO,

We also see in *A Clarification of the Verses* the following citation of the *Sutra of the Realized Being* “*Possessiveness of Meditation*”:

O Manjushri, there are people whose minds are misled by the four misperceptions, for they have yet to see—correctly, in just the way they are—the higher truths. And these people will never be able to go beyond this impurity, the cycle of suffering.

ZHES GSUNGS PA LA 'JAM DPAL GYIS, BCOM LDAN 'DAS GANG LA NYE
BAR DMIGS PAS SEMS CAN RNAMS 'KHOR BA LAS 'DA' BAR MI 'GYUR BA
BSTAN DU GSOL,

And in response to these words, Manjushri says:

O Conqueror, could you explain to us what it is that people would have to have a viewpoint about which would cause their failure to go beyond this cycle of pain?

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ZHES STON PAS BDEN BZHI YANG DAG PA JI LTA BA BZHIN DU MA SHES
PAS, 'KHOR BA LAS MI GROL BAR GSUNGS PA LA,

And the Teacher is saying that it is because they have failed to understand the four truths correctly, just as they are, that these people fail to achieve liberation from the cycle."⁵⁸

RJE BTZUN GYIS YUL GANG LA JI 'DRA BA ZHIG TU DMIGS PAS, 'KHOR
BA LAS MI THAR BA BSHAD PA ZHUS PA'I LAN DU, BDAG NI 'KHOR BA
LAS 'DA' BA DANG, MYANG 'DAS 'THOB PAR 'GYUR RO SNYAM DU BDEN
PAR ZHEN PA'I TSUL GYIS RTOG PAR BYED PAS, MI RTAG PA LA SOGS PA
BSGOMS PA NA,

And so the Holy One is requesting an explanation of what object a person needs to focus on—and in what way—in order to fail to free themselves from the cycle of suffering. The response given to him is that there are people who meditate upon the aspects of impermanence and so on, but in a way in which they are imagining to themselves that things are real as they think to themselves, “I will go beyond the cycle of pain; I will reach nirvana.”

,BDAG GIS SDUG BSNAL SHES SO, ,KUN 'BYUNG SPANGS SO, 'GOG PA
MNGON DU BYAS SO, ,LAM BSGOMS SO SNYAM NAS BDAG NI DGRA
BCOM PAR GYUR TO SNYAM PA 'BYUNG BAR GSUNGS TE,

⁵⁸ *People fail to achieve liberation*: The citations throughout here, as found in *A Clarification of the Verses*, appear at f. 171b (%S6, TD03860). We haven't located the sutra mentioned in the body of sutras preserved in the Kangyur. The “four misperceptions” are widely described; a concise presentation may be found on f. 150a of His Holiness the First Dalai Lama's commentary on higher knowledge (%B10, S05525), where they are described as the misperception that what is changing is unchanging; that what is unclean is clean; that what is pain is pleasure; and that what is not itself is itself.

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The Buddha mentions how they start thinking to themselves, “I will become an enemy destroyer: I will understand suffering; I will abandon the source of suffering; I will bring about the end of suffering; I will practice the path.”⁵⁹

SNGAR BSHAD PA LTAR GYI NYON MONGS MNGON GYUR RE ZHIG
SPANGS PA NA, ZAG PA THAMS CAD ZAD DO SNYAM PA SKYES PA'O,
,DE 'CHI BA'I DUS KYI TSE RANG SKYE BA LEN PAR MTHONG BA NA,
SANGS RGYAS LA THE TSOM ZOS PA'I NYES PAS, DMYAL BA CHEN POR
LTUNG BAR GSUNGS SO, ,DE NI LAM DE LTA BU LA GNAS PA 'GA' ZHIG
LA YIN GYI, THAMS CAD LA NI MA YIN NO,,

As we mentioned earlier, the scriptures describe how these people are able to eliminate—for the time being—manifest forms of negative emotions, and so the thought comes in their mind that “I have managed to finish off all my impurities.” But then as they come to their death they perceive that they are going to take another birth, and so they begin to doubt the Buddha. Because of this error they fall to the greater realms of hell. This last by the way only happens with some of the people who are following this kind of path; it is not the case with everyone who does so.

DE NAS 'JAM DPAL GYIS 'PHAGS PA'I BDEN PA BZHI PO JI LTAR RTOGS
PAR BGYI ZHUS [37b] PA NI, SNGAR 'KHOR BA LAS GROL BA LA BDEN
BZHI YANG DAG PA JI LTA BA BZHIN SHES DGOS PAR GSUNGS PA DE
'DIR DRIS PA'O,,

Manjushri then asks how it is that we are to correctly understand these four higher truths. He is here asking about the earlier statement by the Conqueror that in order to gain liberation from the cycle of pain we must understand—correctly, and just as they are—the four truths.

⁵⁹ *I will understand*: These are the traditional four ways in which we should relate to the four higher truths. A typical treatment is found in Kedrup Tenpa Dargye’s commentary on the art of interpretation at f. 2b (B36, S00010).

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DE'I LAN DU, 'JAM DPAL GANG GIS 'DU BYED THAMS CAD MA SKYES
PAR MTHONG BA DES NI, SDUG BSNAL YONGS SU SHES PA YIN NO,,

In reply, Lord Buddha says:

O Manjushri, anyone who sees that nothing involved in causing
things ever starts has understood suffering, completely.

GANG GIS CHOS THAMS CAD 'BYUNG BA MED PAR MTHONG BA DES NI
KUN 'BYUNG BA SPANGS PA YIN NO,,

Anyone who sees that nothing ever happens has abandoned the
source of suffering.

GANG ZHIG CHOS THAMS CAD GTAN MYA NGAN LAS 'DAS PAR
MTHONG BA DES NI 'GOG PA MNGON DU BYAS PA YIN NO,,

Anyone who sees that everything there is has gone entirely beyond
all grief has brought about the end of suffering.

GANG GIS CHOS THAMS CAD SHIN TU MA SKYES PAR MTHONG BA DES
NI LAM BSGOMS PA YIN NO, ZHES GSUNGS NAS LAM DES LEN PA MED
PAR MYA NGAN LAS 'DA' BAR GSUNGS TE,

And anyone who sees that no thing at all has ever in the least begun
is practicing the path.

Which is to say, only those who see the path as nothing they can follow will be
able to reach nirvana.

'DIS NI BDEN BZHI RANG BZHIN GYIS GRUB PA MED PAR MTHONG BA
DES, 'KHOR BA LAS GROL BAR BYED LA, BDEN 'DZIN DANG MA BRAL
BA'I LAM GYIS 'KHOR BA LAS MI 'DA' BA SHIN TU GSAL BAR GSUNGS
PAS,

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The point being made is that people who see that the four truths cannot exist through any nature of their own are able to liberate themselves from the cycle of pain—meaning that the Buddha is very clearly stating that one cannot go beyond this cycle by using a path where one is still not free of the tendency to think that things are real.

BDEN BZHI MI RTAG SOGS BCU DRUG TZAM GYI LAM GYIS NYON
MONGS KYI SA BON SPONG MI NUS PA DANG, DE SPONG BA LA YIN
LUGS KYI DON RTOGS NAS SGOM PA DGOS PAR BSTAN NO,,

What the Buddha is teaching us here is that we will never be able to eliminate the seeds of negative thoughts only by using the path of impermanence and the rest of the 16 aspects of the four truths; rather, stopping these seeds requires that we follow a practice which involves perceiving the way things are.

'DI RNAMS LEGS PAR MA PHYED NA NYAN THOS LA NYON MONGS
SPONG BA'I LAM MI RTAG SOGS BCU DRUG TU SGOM PA TZAM LAS MED
PAR BZUNG NAS, NYAN THOS 'PHAGS PA DANG NYAN THOS DGRA
BCOM PAS 'PHAGS PA DANG DGRA BCOM GYI GO MI CHOD DO, ZHES
'PHAGS [38a] PA LA SKUR 'DEBS KYI SDIG CHEN PO SOG LA,

Anyone who fails to make these kinds of distinctions successfully can begin to think that the only path that listeners have at their disposal for eliminating negative emotions is the practice of the 16 aspects of impermanence and the rest. And then they can start thinking that realized beings who are listeners, and enemy destroyers who are listeners, aren't really up to the standard of "real" realized beings and enemy destroyers. And by thinking this, they collect the serious misdeed of denigrating a realized being.

DE LTAR SMRA BA LA BYANG SEMS KYI SDOM PA YOD NA, RTZA LTUNG
YANG SKYED PA YIN TE, BSLAB BTUS LAS,

If a person who says this kind of thing has also previously taken bodhisattva vows, then in addition they commit a root downfall of these vows. For in fact

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The Compendium describes this kind of thing as a root downfall, in the following words:

,SLOB PA'I THEG PAS CHAGS LA SOGS,
,SPONG BAR 'GYUR BA MIN ZHES 'DZIN,
,PHA ROL DAG KYANG 'DZIN 'JUG DANG,
ZHES RTZA LTUNG DU GSUNGS PA'I PHYIR RO,,

It is when a person holds the view
That one cannot eliminate desire and the rest
By following the way of the learners;
And when they try to convince
Others to hold this view as well.⁶⁰

DON 'DI RDO RJE GCOD PA LAS KYANG GSAL BAR GSUNGS TE, RAB
'BYOR 'DI JI SNYAM DU SEMS, RGYUN DU ZHUGS PA 'DI SNYAM DU
BDAG GIS RGYUN DU ZHUGS PA'I 'BRAS BU THOB BO SNYAM DU SEMS
SAM,

This same point is also expressed, quite clearly, in the *Diamond Cutter Sutra*:

Now Subhuti, what do you think? Do those who
have entered the stream ever think to themselves,
"Now I have attained the goal of entering the
stream"?

RAB 'BYOR GYIS GSOL PA, BCOM LDAN 'DAS DE NI MA LAGS SO, ,DE CI'I
SLAD DU ZHE NA, BCOM LDAN 'DAS DE NI GANG LA YANG ZHUGS PA
MA MCHIS PA'I SLAD DU STE, DES NA RGYUN DU ZHUGS PA ZHES
BGYI'O, ZHES

⁶⁰ *Others hold this view*: Found in *The Compendium* at f. 43b (%S29, TD03940). The lines are also quoted in Master Prajnakaramati's *Commentary to Difficult Points in the "Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life"* (%S48, TD03872, ff. 109a-109b), where the Tibetan for *slob-pa* is spelled as *slob-ma*, which would sway the translation towards "way of the students" — even more clear.

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And Subhuti respectfully replied,

O Conqueror, they do not. And why is it so? It is, o Conqueror, because it would be impossible for them to enter anything at all. And this is precisely why we can call them a "stream enterer."

DANG, BCOM LDAN 'DAS GAL TE RGYUN DU ZHUGS PA DE 'DI SNYAM DU BDAG GIS RGYUN DU ZHUGS PA'I 'BRAS BU THOB BO SNYAM DU SEMS PAR GYUR NA, DE NYID DE'I BDAG TU 'DZIN PAR 'GYUR BA LAGS SO, ,SEMS CAN DU 'DZIN PA DANG, SROG TU 'DZIN PA DANG, GANG ZAG TU 'DZIN PAR 'GYUR LAGS SO, ,ZHES GSUNGS SHING, 'BRAS GNAS PHYI MA GSUM LA YANG DE BZHIN DU GSUNGS SO,,

We also see:

And if it happened, o Conqueror, that a stream-enterer were to think to themselves, "I have attained the goal of entering the stream," then they would begin to grasp to some self in it. And they would begin to grasp to a living being, and to something that lives, and to a person.

And then we see the same thing repeated for attaining the latter three goals as well.⁶¹

RGYUN ZHUGS KYI SA THOB MKHAN DANG, THOB BYA'I 'BRAS BU LA BDEN PAR BZUNG NAS, BDAG GIS RGYUN ZHUGS THOB BO SNYAM DU SEMS NA, DE NYID DE'I BDAG TU 'DZIN PAR [@38b] 'GYUR RO, ZHES PAS NI GANG ZAG DANG 'BRAS BU BDEN 'DZIN GNYIS BDAG 'DZIN DU GSUNGS PA'I DANG PO NI, GANG ZAG GI BDAG 'DZIN DANG, GNYIS PA NI CHOS KYI BDAG 'DZIN NO,,

⁶¹ *The latter three goals:* Both of the two quotations from *The Diamond Cutter* are found on f. 220a of the sutra (%S54, KL00016). The "latter three" goals mentioned here are returning but once to the desire realm; never returning to this same realm; and destroying the enemy of the negative emotions.

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That is, suppose that someone holds that the person who attains the level of entering the stream—as well as the goal which they are attaining—are real; and with this state of mind thinks to themselves, “I have attained the goal of entering the stream.” Someone like this would then be holding that this experience was itself. The statement here that the tendency to hold that both the person and the goal are real is a form of holding that something is itself is describing, in the first case, the tendency to hold that the person is themselves; and in the second case, the tendency to hold that things are themselves.

RGYUN ZHUGS KYI SA BDEN PAR BZUNG NAS BDAG GIS 'BRAS BU THOB
BO SNYAM DU MI 'DZIN PA NI, BDEN 'DZIN GYI YUL SUN MA PHYUNG
BA'I DBANG DU MDZAD PA YIN GYI, LHAN SKYES KYI 'DZIN PA YANG
MED PAR STON PA MIN NO, ,DES NI PHYI MA RNAMS KYANG SHES PAR
BYA'O,,

Holding that the level of entering the stream is real, but not then holding to the idea that “I have attained the goal,” refers to a point where one has not yet demolished the object of the tendency to think that something is real; but it’s not that what is being described here is that one no longer possesses the inborn tendency to do the holding. With this we can understand the latter cases as well.

LUNG 'DI DBU MA RANG RGYUD PA KHA CIG GZHAN DU 'CHAD
KYANG, SHER 'BYUNG BLO GROS KYIS NYAN RANG GI BYANG CHUB TU
BGROD PA LA, STONG NYID RTOGS DGOS PA'I SHES BYED DU DRANGS
PA LTAR LEGS SO,,

Certain members of the Independent Group within the Middle-Way School have interpreted this citation in a different way; but it is best if we interpret it as Prajnakaramati does: he quotes it as verification for the idea that it is necessary to perceive emptiness in order to make the journey to the enlightenment of the listeners and self-made buddhas.⁶²

⁶² *To make the journey*: See ff. 223b-224b of his commentary to *A Guide to the Bodhisattva’s Way of Life* (%S48, TD03872).

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DE LTAR NA LUNG DE DAG GIS NI DE KHO NA NYID KYI LTA BA DANG
BRAL NA, 'KHOR BA LAS MI GROL BA DANG, 'KHOR BA LAS GROL BA LA
LTA BA DE DGOS PAR GSAL BAR BSTAN LA, NYAN RANG DGRA BCOM
PA 'KHOR BA'I 'CHING BA LAS MA GROL BA NI, MKHAS PA SU YANG MI
'DOD CING MI 'THAD PAS, NYAN RANG LA CHOS RANG BZHIN GYIS
GRUB PA MED PA RTOGS PA YOD PAR GSAL BAR BSTAN NO,,

These citations then are clearly indicating that, so long as one still lacks the view of suchness, they cannot be liberated from the cycle of pain; and in order to achieve such a liberation, one *must* possess this view. And since there is no sage anywhere who would ever agree to the idea that enemy destroyers who are listeners or self-made buddhas have not yet achieved liberation from the shackles of the cycle of suffering—and since it would be wrong in any case to do so—then what these citations are also indicating clearly is that these listeners and self-made buddhas do possess the realization that nothing exists through any nature of its own.

GZHAN YANG YUM CHEN MO SOGS KHUNGS MANG MOD KYANG, TSIG
MANGS SU DOGS NAS MA BRIS SO,,

There are admittedly a great number of other authoritative sources for this concept—such as those found in the Great Mother—but I shall not write of them here, for I fear it would make my composition too lengthy.

**Classical Commentaries and Sutras of the Lower Way
which Prove the Same Point**

GNYIS PA NI, RIN CHEN 'PHRENG BA LAS,
,JI SRID PHUNG POR 'DZIN YOD PA,
,DE SRID DE LA NGAR 'DZIN NYID,
,NGAR 'DZIN YOD NA YANG LAS TE,
,DE LAS [39a] YANG NI SKYE BA YIN,

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Here is our second step from above: presenting classical commentaries, and sutras of the lower way, which prove the point that listeners and self-made buddhas do possess the realization that things have no nature of their own. *The String of Precious Jewels* puts it this way:

As long as one holds
To the parts of a person,
One will surely hold
To a “me.”

And as long as one holds
To a “me,”
One also has karma,
And from it in turn rebirth.

,LAM GSUM THOG MTHA' DBUS MED PA,
,KHOR BA'I DKYIL 'KHOR MGAL ME YI,
,DKYIL 'KHOR LTA BU PHAN TSUN GYI,
,RGYU CAN 'DI NI 'KHOR BAR 'GYUR,

These three patterns
Have no beginning,
Or end, or middle;

So the wheel of pain spins,
Like a spinning wheel of lights,

Each pattern triggered
By each of the others,
Creating a wheel of rebirth.

,DE NI RANG GZHAN GNYIS KA DANG,
,DUS GSUM NYID DU'ANG MA THOB PHYIR,
,NGAR 'DZIN PA NI ZAD PAR 'GYUR,
,DE LAS LAS DANG SKYE BA YANG,
ZHES GSUNGS SO,,

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But here there is no itself,
Nor something else or both,
Nor can anything reach
The now or then or going to be;

So the tendency
To hold to a “me”
Will end,

And then as well
Will karma,
And then will rebirth too.⁶³

DE'I RKANG PA DANG PO GNYIS KYIS NI PHUNG PO LA BDEN PAR 'DZIN
PA JI SRID YOD PA DE SRID DU, DE LAS NGAR 'DZIN PA'I 'JIG LTA 'BYUNG
BAR BSTAN PAS, 'JIG LTA MA LUS PAR ZAD PA LA PHUNG PO BDEN
'DZIN ZAD DGOS PAR BSTAN TE, DE'I TSE NYAN RANG DGRA BCOM PAS
KYANG PHUNG PO BDEN 'DZIN ZAD PAR SPANGS PAR SHES SO,,

The very first part here, from “As long as one holds...” up to “...to a ‘me’,” is meant to indicate that—as long as one holds that the parts of a person are real—then one will be subject to the view of destruction that holds to a “me.” And what this implies is that—if one wishes to finish off every form of the view of destruction—then one must finish off the tendency to hold that the parts of the person are real. And we thus come to understand that at this point enemy destroyers who are listeners or self-made buddhas also eliminate the tendency to hold that the parts of the person are real.

DE LTAR NA BDEN 'DZIN GYI ZHEN YUL SUN MA PHYUNG BAR DU, 'JIG
LTA'I ZHEN YUL SUN MI PHYIN PAS, THEG PA CHE CHUNG GI GRUB
MTHA' SMRA BA LA THUN MONG DU GRAGS PA'I GANG ZAG GI BDAG

⁶³ *In turn rebirth*: See f. 108a of Arya Nagarjuna’s classic (%S16, TD04158). The Tengyur version that we are using has *yod-par* in the Tibetan of the first line of the first verse, which is even more clear.

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MED NI, RAGS PA'I GANG ZAG GI BDAG TZAM BKAG PA YIN GYI, PHRA
BA'I GANG ZAG GI BDAG MED MIN PAR SHES SO,,

As such, we cannot demolish the object that the view of destruction thinks it sees, until we manage to demolish the object that the tendency to think that things are real thinks it sees. And so you should understand that the version of the lack of a self-nature to the person which is generally understood to be held in common by those who follow the schools of the greater way and those who follow the schools of the lesser way is a denial of a self-nature to the person in no more than its gross form; and is not the subtle form of the lack of a self-nature to the person.

DE'I PHYIR SLOB DPON 'DI'I LUGS KYIS NYAN RANG GIS GANG ZAG GI
BDAG MED RTOGS TSUL, GRUB MTHA' SMRA BA GZHAN DANG 'DRA BA
BZUNG NAS, CHOS KYI BDAG MED RTOGS PA YOD MED LA MI MTHUN
PAR SMRA BAS NI, 'DI'I LUGS LEGS PAR MA RTOGS PA YIN TE,

Therefore those who make contradictory statements about whether listeners and self-made buddhas perceive the lack of a self-nature to things—because they have interpreted this particular master's presentation on how these two types of practitioners perceive the lack of a self-nature to the person in accordance with proponents of other schools—have in fact failed to grasp this presentation correctly.

DE KHO NA NYID KYI LTA BA DANG BRAL BA LA GANG ZAG GI [39b]
BDAG MED PA RTOGS PAR YANG MI 'GYUR BAR 'GREL PA LAS GSUNGS
PA'I PHYIR RO,,

And this is true because the *Autocommentary* states that anyone who lacks the view of suchness cannot be someone who perceives the lack of a self-nature to the person.

DE NAS RKANG PA GNYIS KYIS 'JIG LTA YOD PAS DE'I DBANG GIS 'KHOR
BAR 'CHING BA'I LAS SOG PA DANG, DE LAS LAS DBANG GIS 'KHOR BAR
SKYE BAR GSUNGS TE,

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The following lines of our citation—the ones that go from “And as long as...” up to “...in turn rebirth”—are saying that, because one then possesses the view of destruction, it will cause them to collect the kind of karma that fetters them to the cycle of pain; and because of this, one will be reborn into this cycle, through the power of karma.

DE YANG PHUNG PO LA BDEN 'DZIN GYI ZHEN YUL SUN MA PHYIN PA'I
DBANG DU MDZAD KYI, SPYIR 'JIG LTA YOD TZAM LA MIN TE, SA BDUN
PA'I BAR DU 'JIG LTA YOD KYANG, SA DANG PO NAS LAS DBANG GIS
SKYE BA MI LEN PA'I PHYIR RO,,

This statement by the way is made with reference to someone who has failed to demolish the object that the tendency to hold that the parts to a person are real thinks it sees; it is not though a general reference only to anyone who possesses the view of destruction. Up to the seventh bodhisattva level, we still possess this view; but from the first bodhisattva level on up, we no longer take rebirth through the power of karma.

GZHUNG DE DAG GIS NI DE KHO NA NYID KYI LTA BA SGOM PA DANG
BRAL NA, 'JIG LTA ZAD PAR BYED MI NUS PAR BSTAN PAS, MI RTAG
SOGS BCU DRUG GI LAM TZAM LAS MED NA NYON MONGS ZAD PAR
SPONG BA MED PAR BSTAN NO,,

What these works are teaching us is that—so long as we lack a deep familiarity with the view of suchness—we will be unable to put an end to the view of destruction. As such they are teaching us that there can be no final elimination of our negative thoughts so long as we possess nothing more than the path of impermanence and the rest of the 16 aspects.

DE LTAR THUN MONG MA YIN PA'I GANG ZAG GI BDAG MED KYI 'JOG
TSUL MDZAD PHYIN CHAD, GANG ZAG GI BDAG MED THUN MONG BA
TZAM GYI DBANG DU MDZAD NAS, 'JIG LTA LA SOGS PA'I NGOS 'DZIN
MDZAD PA'I NYON MONGS KYI RNAM GZHAG RNAMS SOR BZHAG TU
MDZAD NA, THUN MONG MA YIN PA'I GRUB MTHA', MTHA' MA CHOD

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PA'I NOR PA CHEN POR 'GYUR BAS, DE LA MKHAS PA'I DBANG PO 'DI
'KHRUL BA GA LA SRID,

And so suppose we start with a thinker who was actually the one who set forth the way of defining the lack of a self-nature to the person in a way which was *not* shared by the different systems; and who supposedly then limited themselves to the shared concept of this particular lack of a self-nature; and who then set aside the presentation of the negative emotions which correctly identifies the view of destruction and so on; and thus made the stupendous error of failing to thresh out the views of this very unique school of thought...how could this Lord of All Sages ever possibly make such a mistake?

DES NA NYAN RANG LA CHOS KYI BDAG MED RTOGS PA YOD PAR
BSHAD PA'I GZHUNG 'DZUGS PAR SGOM ZHING, NYON MONGS KYI
RNAM GZHAG LA THUN MONG MA YIN PA'I 'JOG TSUL YOD DAM MED
SNYAM PA TZAM YANG MI SKYE [40a] BA'I 'DI' RJES 'BRANG RNAMS NI,
LUGS 'DI LA DAD PA TZAM DU ZAD DO, 'DIS MTSON NAS GZHAN YANG
MANG DU SNANG BA RNAMS LEGS PAR RTZAD GCAD PAR BYA'O,,

So what we have here is a person who has failed to sit down and put in front of their mind the great classics which explain how listeners and self-made buddhas *do* possess the perception that there is no self-nature to things; and to whom it has never even occurred to examine whether or not there is a unique way of setting forth how the negative emotions work. And then we have all of those who have followed this person, and who possess no more than a blind faith in our school. And all these people are only one example that we have dealt with here; there appear to be many others like them, and you should learn to scrutinize their views carefully.

LAM GSUM NI NYON MONGS DANG LAS DANG SKYE BA'I KUN NYON
GSUM MO, 'DE GSUM LA THOG MTHA' DANG DBUS MED PA NI NYON
MONGS LAS LAS DANG, DE LAS SDUG BSNAL SKYE ZHING SDUG
BSNAGAL LAS KYANG DE'I RIGS 'DRA DANG, NYON MONGS SOGS SKYE
BA'I PHYIR PHAR SKYE TSUR SKYE BYED PAS, SNGA PHYI' RIM PA NGES
PA MED PA STE, PHAN TSUN GYI RGYU CAN GYI DON NO,,

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The “three patterns” mentioned in our quotation, by the way, refer to the negative-emotion side of things, in the form of negative thoughts themselves; karma; and rebirth. When we say that these three “have no beginning, or end, or middle,” what we are referring to is how there is no definite sequential order to them, for they trigger each other: that is, negative thoughts lead to karma, and then karma instigates suffering, and suffering in turn gives birth to more of the same, as well as negative emotions and the rest—so that all of the three are triggering each other.

RTEN 'BREL DE NI RANG DANG GZHAN DANG GNYIS KA LAS SKYE BA
MED LA, DE YANG DUS GSUM GANG YANG RANG BZHIN GYIS SKYE BA
MA THOB PA STE MED PA MTHONG BA'AM, MA MTHONG BA'I PHYIR TE,
RGYU MTSAN GYIS NGAR 'DZIN PA'I 'JIG LTA ZAD PAS 'KHOR BAR 'KHOR
BA LDOG GO

But here in the system of dependent creation there is no such thing as something which has come from itself, nor something which has come from something else, or else from both of these two. Nor can anything reach any of the three times—being here now, or then in the past, or going to be in the future—which come into being through some nature of their own. Here the expression “not reach” refers to the fact that we can see that such things cannot exist; or simply that we never see such things. And it is only because of this fact that we can finish off the view of destruction which grasps onto some “me,” thus putting a stop to our spinning through this wheel of pain.

,DE'I 'OG TU PHUNG KHAMS SOGS RANG BZHIN MED PAR GTAN LA
PHAB PA'I MTHAR,
,DE LTAR YANG DAG JI BZHIN DU,
, 'GRO BA DON MED SHES NAS NI,
,RGYU MED PA YI ME BZHIN DU,
,GNAS MED LEN MED MYA NGAN 'DA',
ZHES DE KHO NA NYID KYI DON MTHONG NAS MYA NGAN LAS 'DA'
BAR GSUNGS SO,,

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The following lines come further on in the same work, at the end of a section where things like the parts to a person and the categories are shown to lack any nature of their own:

And once they understand,
Purely and correctly,
That it is not the case
That anything can come—
That there is no such thing,
That it could never be held,
That it would be the same
As a fire that flamed
With nothing at all to cause it—
Then they reach nirvana.⁶⁴

What these lines are saying is that a person who sees the object of suchness will reach nirvana.

CI STE DE LTAR MTHONG BA DE BYANG SEMS KHO NA'I DBANG DU
MDZAD NAS GSUNGS SO ZHE NA, DE LTAR GSUNGS PA DE NYAN RANG
GI DBANG DU MDZAD NAS GSUNGS PA YIN TE, MYA NGAN [40b] 'DA'
ZHES PA'I MJUG THOGS NYID DU,

One may ask: “Is seeing things this way being described here with reference only to bodhisattvas?” The answer is that in fact the reference here is to listeners and self-made buddhas, for we read lines such as the following just after the words “Then they reach nirvana”:

,DE LTAR BYANG CHUB SEMS DPAS KYANG,
,MTHONG NAS BYANG CHUB NGES PAR 'DOD,
,ON KYANG DE NI SNYING RJE YIS,
,BYANG CHUB BAR DU SRID MTSAMS SBYOR,
ZHES BYA BA LA SOGS PA GSUNGS PA'I PHYIR RO,,

⁶⁴ *They reach nirvana*: Quite a bit further along in the *String of Precious Jewels*, f. 120b.

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We assert as well that bodhisattvas
Always reach their enlightenment
By seeing the very same thing,
Although up to the point where they
Attain enlightenment they may
Make the crossing into a new life,
Because of their compassion.⁶⁵

'GREL PAR DRANGS PA'I RIN CHEN 'PHRENG BA'I GZHUNG RNAMS NI
SNGA 'GYUR MI LEGS PAR 'DUG GO

The selections from the text of the *String of Precious Jewels* quoted in the autocommentary are translations from the earlier period and are not the best.⁶⁶

,NYAN THOS LA BSTAN PA'I MDO LAS KYANG, NYAN THOS RNAMS KYI
NYON MONGS PA'I SGRIB PA SPANG BAR BYA BA'I PHYIR,
,GZUGS NI DBU BA BRDOS PA 'DRA,
,TSOR BA CHU YI CHU BUR 'DRA,
,DU SHES SMIG RGYU LTA BU STE,
,DU BYED RNAMS NI CHU SHING BZHIN,
,RNAM PAR SHES PA SGYU MA LTAR,
,NYI MA'I GNYEN GYIS BKA' STZAL TE,
ZHES DPE LNGAS 'DUS BYAS RNAMS RANG BZHIN MED PAR DPYAD PA
YIN NO,,

⁶⁵ *Because of their compassion*: Indeed, the very next lines in the text, still folio 120b. The Tengyur edition we are using reads “But only out of compassion” (*de ni snying-rje 'ba'-zhig gis*) for the “although...because of their compassion” (*'on-kyang de ni snying-rje yis*) seen here.

⁶⁶ *Translations from the earlier period*: The immediately relevant selections are found on ff. 227a-227b of the autommentary (%S3, TD03862). The Tibetan translation here is the same as that used as Je Tsongkapa, rather than the Tengyur version mentioned in our last footnote.

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We further see, in sutras presented to listeners, an examination of how caused things lack any nature of their own; these presentations utilize five different similes to help listeners eliminate the negative-emotion obstacles:

The Friend of the Sun declared
That physical forms are like bubbles,
And feelings like the froth on a wave;
That the capacity to discriminate
Resembles a mirage;
That the other factors
Are like the hollow cane of sugar;
And consciousness like an illusion.⁶⁷

BYANG CHUB SEMS 'GREL LAS, STON PAS NYAN THOS RNAMS LA
PHUNG PO LNGA DANG, BYANG SEMS RNAMS LA GZUGS DBU BA SOGS
LNGA DANG 'DRA BAR BSHAD CES KHYAD PAR PHYE BA NI, RE ZHIG DE
KHO NA NYID RTOGS MI NUS PA'I NYAN THOS LA DGONGS KYI NYAN
THOS THAMS CAD LA MIN TE,

The *Commentary on the Wish for Enlightenment* makes a distinction between how the Teacher has taught the listeners the five parts to a person; while teaching the bodhisattvas how physical forms and the rest of the five are like a bubble and so on. This statement though is intended to refer to listeners who for the time being are unable to perceive suchness; it is not meant to refer to all listeners.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ *Consciousness like an illusion*: The Tibetan used here, *nyan-thos la bstan-pa'i mdo*, almost sounds like the title of a sutra; but the autocommentary (at f. 227b) reads as the plural (*mdo dag*); thus our translation. The wording here is quoted in the Tengyur more than 15 times, attributed at times to “sutra” but without mention of any particular one. The only sutra we’ve found in the Kangyur with almost the exact same wording (specifically mentioning the “Friend of the Sun,” an epithet of Shakyamuni Buddha) is *A Conversation among Buddhas* (%S55, KL00228), at f. 312a. The opening section of this sutra would seem to allow saying that it was also presented to listeners.

⁶⁸ *Not meant to refer to all listeners*: The section where the distinction is laid out is on ff. 38b-39a of the work, at %S56, TD01800.

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DE NYID LAS,
,GANG DAG STONG NYID MI SHES PA,
,DE DAG THAR PA RTEN MA YIN,
, 'GRO DRUG SRID PA'I BTZON RAR NI,
,RMONGS PA DE DAG 'KHOR BAR 'GYUR,
ZHES GSUNGS PA'I PHYIR RO,,

As this text itself states,

There can be no freedom at all
For those who cannot
Understand emptiness.

These in their dark ignorance
Will continue to spin in the prison
Of the six realms of existence.⁶⁹

THEG DMAN GYI SDE SNOD DU CHOS RANG BZHIN MED PA'I DON 'DI
NYID STON PAR MDZAD PA NA, RIN CHEN 'PHRENG BA LAS [@41a],

And it's because this is in fact how the collection of scriptures in the lower way presents what it means for things to have no nature of their own that *The String of Precious Jewels* can say the following:

,THEG PA CHE LAS SKYE MED BSTAN,
,GZHAN GYI ZAD PA STONG PA NYID,
,ZAD DANG MI SKYE DON DU NI,
,GCIG PA DE PHYIR BZOD PAR GYIS,

The greater way teaches how things
Never start; while the others describe
Their end as emptiness.

⁶⁹ *Spin in the prison*: See f. 41a of the work.

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Stopping and never starting
Refer to the very same thing;
Thus you must bear with it.⁷⁰

ZHES THEG CHEN GYI MDO SDE LAS RANG BZHIN GYIS SKYE BA MED
PA STONG NYID DU BSTAN PA DANG, GZHAN TE THEG DMAN GYI MDO
LAS NI STONG PA NYID STON PA NA, 'DUS BYAS ZAD PAR BSTAN PAS
STONG PA NYID STON PA GNYIS DON GCIG PAS, THEG CHEN LAS
STONG NYID BSTAN PA LA MI BZOD PAR MA BYED CES GSUNGS SO,,

What this is saying is that the collection of sutras of *the greater way teaches* that the fact that *things never start* through any nature of their own is emptiness; *while* when *the “others”*—referring to the sutras of the lower way—present *emptiness*, they do so by *describing* how caused things *end*. These two though *refer to the very same thing*; and *thus*, says the text, *you must* be careful not to fail to *bear with* the way in which the higher way presents emptiness.

'DI GNYIS DON GCIG LUGS LA KHA CIG NA RE, NYAN THOS PA RNAMS
DNGOS PO LA ZAD PA KHAS LEN NA, RANG BZHIN YOD NA ZAD PA MI
RIGS PAS, DE KHAS LEN NA DANG PO NAS RANG BZHIN MED PA KHAS
LEN DGOS PAS DE GNYIS DON GCIG GO ZHES 'CHAD PA NI,

On the question of just how these two refer to the same thing, some have given us the following explanation:

Given that the listeners accept that functional things do end, and given that—if something had any nature of its own—it would be illogical for it to end, then because of these givens we can say that listeners must from the very start accept that nothing has any nature of its own; and this then is what it means here when we say that “the two refer to the same thing.”

⁷⁰ *You must bear with it*: See f. 121b of the text, at %S16, TD04158.

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SHIN TU MI 'THAD DE, DE LTA YIN NA DBU MA PAS YOD PAR 'DOD PA'I
MYU GU LA SOGS PA'I CHOS GANG KHAS LEN PA LA YANG, RGYU
MTSAN DE YOD PAS MYU GU LA SOGS PA THAMS CAD DANG, STONG
PA NYID GNYIS DON GCIG TU HA CANG THAL BAR 'GYUR BA'I PHYIR
RO,,

This position though is grossly mistaken. If it's the way you've described it, then we would be forced to accept the ridiculous implication that—because the very same reason applies to how those of the Middle Way School accept any particular object, such as the sprouts whose existence they believe in—then they would have to be saying that all objects, such as sprouts and the rest, are the same thing as emptiness itself.

RIN CHEN 'PHRENG BA'I 'GREL PAR SKYE BA MED PA DANG, SKAD CIG
MA LA DON GYI KHYAD PAR 'GA' YANG MED DO, ZHES PA YANG
GZHUNG DON MA GO BA'I BSHAD PA'O,,

And to say that the commentary to the *String of Precious Jewels* draws no distinction at all between the meaning of things never starting, and of things changing moment by moment, is also the explanation of a person who has no understanding of this classic.⁷¹

RIGS PA DRUG CU PA'I 'GREL PAR DRANGS PA'I THEG DMAN GYI MDO
LAS, GANG SDUG BSNAL 'DI MA LUS PAR SPANGS PA, NGES PAR [41b]
SPANGS PA, BYANG BAR GYUR PA, ZAD PA 'DOD CHAGS DANG BRAL
BA, 'GOG PA, NYE BAR ZHI BA, NUB PA, SDUG BSNAL GZHAN GYI
MTSAMS MI SBYOR ZHING, MI 'BYUNG MI SKYE BA 'DI NI ZHI BA, 'DI NI
GYA NOM PA STE,

We see the following sutra of the lower way quoted in *A Commentary to the "Sixty Verses on Reasoning"*:

⁷¹ *No understanding of this classic*: It appears that the commentary in question is that immediately following the *String of Precious Jewels* in the Tengyur, which is the one by Master Ajitamitra. See the discussion starting from f. 141b and continuing for several full folios (%S57, TD04159).

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Anytime someone is able to eliminate every bit of this suffering; to rid themselves of it forever; to clean it away; to reach the end, free of all desire; to finish it; to put it to a final rest; to see it melt away; never to cross over into more of this suffering; never to see it come again, never to see it rise again—this then is peace, this then is beauty.

'DI LTA STE PHUNG PO THAMS CAD NGES PAR SPANGS PA, SRID PA ZAD PA, 'DOD CHAGS DANG BRAL BA, 'GOG PA, MYA NGAN LAS 'DAS PA'O, ZHES GSUNGS LA,

In this way they have eliminated each and every part to the person; they have finished off this kind of existence; they are free of all desire; they have stopped; they have reached nirvana, beyond all grief.

DE'I DON 'GREL BA NA SDUG BSNGAL 'DI ZHES PA'I NYE BA'I TSIG GIS GSUNGS PA'I PHYIR, DA LTAR GYI RANG RGYUD KYI SDUG BSNGAL LAM PHUNG PO KHO NA'I DBANG DU MDZAD NAS, MA LUS PAR SPANGS PA NAS NUB PA'I BAR DANG, MA 'ONGS PA'I SDUG BSNGAL GYI DBANG DU MDZAD NAS, SDUG BSNGAL GZHAN MTSAMS MI SBYOR BA NAS, MYA NGAN LAS 'DAS PA'O ZHES PA'I BAR DU GSUNGS SO,,

When this text interprets the sutra, it draws our attention to the demonstrative adjective of proximity: “*this* suffering,” saying that this phrase thus applies only to the suffering or parts of a person included within our own being, in the present time. And then the description from “eliminating every bit of this suffering” up to “see it melt away” is said to apply to this present pain. Next, the wording from “never to cross over into more of this suffering” up to “nirvana, beyond all grief” is said to apply to future pain.⁷²

⁷² *Said to apply to future pain*: The commentary in question is the one on Arya Nagarjuna’s classic by Master Chandrakirti; the citation from the sutra and comments upon it are found at ff. 10a-10b (%S58, TD03864). There are small differences in the wording and phrasing; for example, “only this is peace, only

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SDUG BSNAL LAM PHUNG PO 'DI ZHES PA DE GNYIS KYI BYE BRAG
NYON MONGS LA 'JUG PA'I SPYI SGRA BYE BRAG LA 'JUG PA'O SNYAM
NA, DE YANG MI RUNG STE SPYI SGRA NI SPYI'I DON LA BSHAD DU MI
RUNG NA, BYE BRAG LA BSHAD DGOS MOD KYANG, 'DIR NI SPYI SGRA'I
STENG NAS BSHAD DU YOD PA'I PHYIR RO,,

Now one might think to oneself that there is a case here where the general refers to the specific: that is, where the expression “this suffering or parts of a person” refers to the negative emotions which are a subcategory of both of these. This though would be a mistake. While it is true that the general term here cannot be explained as referring to the general category itself, and must be explained as referring to a subcategory, we should still adhere to an explanation referencing the general.

DE LTAR BYAS NA DNGOS POR SMRA BA RNAMS LTAR NA, RGYUD BLA
MA LAS NYON MONGS GDOD NAS ZAD PHYIR RO, ZHES GSUNGS PA
LTAR PHUNG PO GDOD MA NAS RANG BZHIN GYIS SKYE BA MED PAS,
GDOD MA NAS ZAD PA LA BSHAD DU MI RUNG BA'I PHYIR,

As such, when we are speaking from the viewpoint of the schools which accept the reality of function, it would be improper to follow the idea expressed in the section of *The Higher Line* which goes “...because the negative emotions have been finished off since forever”—that is, to say that the parts to a person are “finished off since forever” because, since forever, they have never started through any nature of their own.⁷³

this is beauty” (*de-nyid*); and “never to see it rise again later” (*phyis mi skye-ba*) for “never to see it come again, never to see it rise again.” Although Master Chandrakirti identifies the source only as “a sutra,” we do see almost identical wording in two clearly Hinayana works from the Kangyur: *The Foundation of Vowed Morality* (ff. 64a-64b, %S18, KL00001-4); and *The Foundation of Assorted Topics of Vowed Morality* (see ff. 477a-477b, %S50, KL00006-2).

⁷³ *Finished off since forever*: Found on f. 55b of this crucial work by Lord Maitreya, with the dictation taken by Master Asanga (%S59, TD04024).

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LAM GYIS MA LUS PAR SPANGS PA LA BSHAD DGOS NA, DE'I TSE MNGON DU BYA RGYU'I MYANG 'DAS YOD PA NA MNGON DU BYED MKHAN [42a] MED PA DANG, BYED MKHAN YOD PA NA PHUNG PO MA ZAD PAS MNGON DU BYA RGYU'I MYANG 'DAS MED PAR 'GYUR BAS, MDO 'DI BSHAD MI NUS PAR 'GYUR RO,,

And so that would be wrong; but we would still be left with having to explain how it is that we use the path to “eliminate every bit.” If at this point the thing we were trying to bring about—the nirvana—did exist, then the person who brought it about could not. And if the person who brought it about did exist, then the nirvana that they were trying to bring about could not—since the parts of a person would still not have been finished off. And then in this case we would be left unable to explain the wording of this sutra.

KHO BO CAG LTAR NA, 'DI'I ZAD PA NI, ZAD PA GNYEN POS ZAD PA MA YIN TE, DE NI GDOD NAS ZAD PAS ZAD CES BYA, ZHES GSUNGS PA LTAR BSHAD PAS CHOG PAS MDO'I DON LEGS PAR BSHAD PAR NUS SO,,

The way we ourselves would explain the sutra would be to say that the “finishing off” here is not the kind of finishing off that you do by applying a particular spiritual antidote. Rather, we would follow that kind of thinking which says “We say something is ‘finished off’ because it has been finished off since forever.” It would be fine to do it this way, and this would leave us easily able to explain the meaning of this sutra, correctly.

DES NA MDO LAS 'DI 'DRA BA'I ZAD PA BSTAN NAS, SDUG BSNGAL 'GAGS PA'I 'GOG PA MYA NGAN LAS 'DAS PA BSTAN PA DE DANG, RANG BZHIN GYIS SKYE BA MED PA'I 'GOG PA BSTAN PA GNYIS DON GCIG TU 'PHAGS PAS GSUNGS PA 'DI MA RTOGS PAR SNANG BAS ZHIB TU BSHAD DO,,

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Given that the sutra has presented this kind of “finishing off,” we can say that it appears that people have failed to grasp this statement by the Realized One,⁷⁴ where he explains how these two—presenting nirvana as a cessation where suffering has been stopped; and presenting a cessation which consists of the fact that nothing ever starts through any nature of its own—can be seen as amounting to the same thing. And so this is why I have taken the time to go into such detail on this point.

RTZA SHE LAS KYANG,
,BCOM LDAN DNGOS DANG DNGOS MED PA,
,MKHYEN PAS KA TY'A YA NA YI,
,GDAMS NGAG LAS NI YOD PA DANG,
,MED PA GNYIS KA'ANG DGAG PA MDZAD,

Wisdom says as well:

The Conqueror sees
What is real and what is not;
And thus in the advices
Given to Katyayana
Denied both things existing
And not existing at all.⁷⁵

CES GSUNGS PA 'DIS KYANG THEG DMAN GYI MDO LAS MTHA' GNYIS
BKAG PA GSUNGS PAR STON TE, MDO 'DI NI LUNG PHRAN TSEGS NA
SNANG NGO, ,DE DAG KYANG MTSON PA TZAM YIN GYI, RIN CHEN
PHRENG BA NA 'DIR MA DRANGS PA DU MA ZHIG DANG, RIGS PA DRUG
CU PA DANG, BSTOD PA'I TSOGS LAS KYANG DU MA ZHIG GSUNGS SO,,

⁷⁴ *Statement by the Realized One*: Referring back to Arya Nagarjuna, as the author of the *Sixty Verses*. Throughout our translation we will be rendering the word *arya* as *realized person*, given its definition as a person who has seen emptiness directly.

⁷⁵ *Both existing and not existing*: See f. 9a of the text (%S4, T03824).

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These lines are also expressing how sutras of the lower way state that both extremes should be denied—and this particular sutra citation appears in *The Assorted Topics of the Word*.⁷⁶ These are all just representative examples; there are many other supporting citations from the *String of Precious Jewels* that we have not quoted here; as well as many others from the *Sixty Verses on Reasoning*, and the Collection of Praises.⁷⁷

Refuting Arguments Covered in the Autocommentary

GSUM PA LA GNYIS, 'GREL PA NAS BSHAD PA'I RTZOD PA SPANG BA
DANG, DER MA BSHAD PA'I RTZOD PA SPANG BA'O,,

With this we have reached our third topic from above: a refutation of arguments concerning the presentations we have cited which show that listeners and self-made buddhas do possess the realization that things have no nature of their own. We proceed in two steps: the refutation of arguments covered in the autocommentary; and a refutation of arguments not covered there.

DANG PO NI, 'GREL PA LAS, GANG ZHIG GAL TE NYAN THOS KYI [@42b]
THEG PA LAS KYANG CHOS LA BDAG MED PA BSTAN NA, DE'I TSE THEG
PA CHEN PO BSTAN PA DON MED PAR 'GYUR RO SNYAM DU SEMS PA
DE'I LUGS DE YANG 'DI LTAR RIGS PA DANG LUNG DANG 'GAL BAR
RTOGS SO,,

⁷⁶ Citation appears in *The Assorted Topics of the Word*: See f. 426a of Part One of the work, at %S50, KL00006-1.

⁷⁷ Many other supporting citations: From the *Sixty Verses* alone a reader can start with references to the two extremes at ff. 20b, 21b-22a, 22b, 23a, and 28b. Some 20 different songs of praise from the eulogies section of the *Tengyur* are attributed to Arya Nagarjuna; and these no doubt comprise the “Collection of Praises” mentioned here. For references to the extremes in these works, see f. 69a of *A Praise of the One Who Went Beyond the World* (%S60, TD01120); f. 72a of *A Praise of the Three Holy Bodies* (%S61, TD01124); and ff. 77a and 78a-78b of *A Praise of the Inconceivable* (%S62, TD01128).

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Here is the first. We see the following in the autocommentary:

Someone might think to themselves: “If it is the case that the lack of a self-nature to things is presented in the way of the listeners, then it becomes pointless to present it again in the greater way.” You should understand though that this approach contradicts both logic and scriptural authority.⁷⁸

ZHES PA'I PHYOGS SNGA MA SMRA BA NI SLOB DPON LEGS LDAN YIN TE, SANGS RGYAS BSKYANGS KYIS RAB BYED BDUN PA'I 'GREL PAR THEG DMAN GYI MDOR CHOS THAMS CAD BDAG MED PAR GSUNGS PA'I DON, CHOS RNAMS NGO BO NYID KYIS GRUB PA MED PA'I DON DU BSHAD PA LA, SHES RAB SGRON MAR DE LTA YIN NA, THEG CHEN BSTAN PA DON MED DU 'GYUR RO ZHES DGAG PA MDZAD DO,,

The person who expressed the first position found in this citation is Master Bhavaviveka. Master Buddhapalita, in commenting upon the seventh section of *Wisdom*, had described the statement that the sutras of the lower way speak of how nothing has any nature of its own as referring to the way in which nothing exists through any unique quality of its own. And then in his *Lamp on Wisdom*, Master Bhavaviveka tries to refute this position, saying that if this were the case, then the presentation found in the greater way would be pointless.⁷⁹

DE LA SPYIR THEG CHEN BSTAN PA DON MED DU 'GYUR ZER RAM, THEG CHEN DU CHOS KYI BDAG MED BSTAN PA DON MED DU 'GYUR ZER,

⁷⁸ *It becomes meaningless*: See f. 227b of the text (%S3, TD03862).

⁷⁹ *Master Bhavaviveka tries to refute*: The relevant section from Master Buddhapalita's eponymous work is found at f. 198a (%S@, TD03842); it is not directly stated that the sutra source is from the lower way, but it does deal with metaphors already described as coming from this way. Master Bhavaviveka's comments on this section are found at ff. 113a-113b of his *Lamp* (%S5, TD03853), and he does specifically reference the “way of the listeners.”

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On this position we would ask: “Are you saying that the teachings of the greater way in general would be pointless, or are you saying that it would be pointless to present the lack of a self-nature to things in the greater way?”

DANG PO LTAR NA NI, THAL BA DE LA KHYAB PA YOD NA NI, THEG
CHEN BSTAN PA CHOS LA BDAG MED PA TZAM 'BA' ZHIG STON PAR
'GYUR NA, DE NI MA YIN TE

Suppose you respond that the former is the case. If then the relationship expressed in this statement of absurdity here always held true—and it were the case that only the lack of a self-nature to things were presented in the teachings of the greater way—we would have to respond that this is not at all the way things are.

THEG CHEN LAS NI, BYANG SEMS KYI SA RNAMS DANG, SBYIN PA LA
SOGS PA'I PHAR PHYIN GYI SPYOD PA DANG, SMON LAM DANG BSNGO
BA RLABS PO CHE RNAMS DANG, SNYING RJE CHEN PO SOGS DANG,
TSOGS GNYIS RLABS PO CHE DANG, BYANG SEMS KYI MTHU RMAD DU
BYUNG BA SO SKYE DANG, NYAN RANG GIS BSAM GYIS MI KHYAB PA'I
CHOS NYID KYANG STON PA'I PHYIR TE,

And that's because the following subjects are also presented there: the levels of the bodhisattva; the activities of giving and the other perfections; vast and effective forms of prayer and dedication; great compassion and the like; powerful ways of completing the two collections; and the extraordinary might of the bodhisattva, the very nature of things, inconceivable to beings who have yet to see emptiness, and to the listeners and self-made buddhas.

RIN CHEN 'PHRENG BA LAS,
,NYAN THOS THEG PA DE LAS NI,
,BYANG CHUB SEMS DPA'I SMON LAM DANG,
,SPYOD PA YONGS BSNGO MA BSHAD DES,
,BYANG CHUB SEMS DPAR GA LA 'GYUR,

As the String of Precious Jewels puts it,

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The prayers of the bodhisattva,
Their actions and their dedications,
Find no presentation in the way
Of the listeners;
How then could they ever
Become bodhisattvas?

,[@43a] BYANG CHUB SPYOD LA GNAS PA'I DON,
,MDO SDE LAS NI BKA' MA STZAL,
,THEG PA CHE LAS BKA' STZAL PA,
,DE PHYIR MKHAS PA RNAMS KYIS GZUNG,
ZHES GSUNGS PA'I PHYIR RO,,

What it means to live
The life of a bodhisattva
Is not something spoken
Within these sutras;
But it is in the greater way—
Keep these teachings then,
Sages among you.

'DI NI THEG DMAN GYI SDE SNOD NAS BSHAD PA'I LAM NYID KYIS,
SANGS RGYAS SU BGROD NUS PAS, THEG CHEN GZHAN MI DGOS SO
SNYAM PA'I LOG RTOG SEL BA LA GSUNGS LA, KHYED LTAR NA THEG
CHEN LAS CHOS KYI BDAG MED GSUNGS PAS THEG DMAN GYI
GZHUNG NAS BSHAD PAS MI CHOG CES GSUNG DGOS PA LA, DE MA
GSUNGS PAR RGYA CHE BA'I PHYOGS GZHAN GSUNGS SO ZHES PA'O,,

This statement was made to counter the idea that—since it is possible to travel to Buddhahood using nothing more than the path presented in the collection of scriptures of the lower way—then there must be no need for another, higher way. It is saying that—if we follow your line of thinking—then we would have to say that, because the lack of a self-nature to things is spoken in the teachings of the greater way, then it would be disallowable to explain it in the scriptures of

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the lower way. But even if it were not so spoken, the teachings on the widespread side of things still are.

GAL TE PHYOGS GNYIS PA LTAR NA NI DE LA YANG KHYAB PA MED DE,
NYAN THOS KYI SDE SNOD LAS NI CHOS KYI BDAG MED PA MDOR
BSDUS PA TZAM LAS MI STON LA, THEG CHEN LAS NI CHOS KYI BDAG
MED SGO DU MA NAS SHIN TU RGYAS PAR STON PA'I PHYIR RO,,

Even according to the latter position expressed above, there is no certainty to your conclusion. And that's because the lack of a self-nature to things is presented in the scriptural collection of the listeners in no more than a cursory way, whereas in the greater way this lack of a self-nature is presented in an extremely detailed way, from many different angles.

DE YANG 'PHAGS PA'I BZHED PA YIN TE, 'JIG RTEN LAS 'DAS PAR BSTOD
PA LAS,
,MTSAN MA MED PA MA RTOGS PAR,
,KHYOD KYIS THAR PA MED PAR GSUNGS,
,DE PHYIR KHYOD KYIS THEG CHEN LAS,
,DE NI TSANG BAR BSTAN PA LAGS,
ZHES GSUNGS PA'I PHYIR RO,,

This is also the position of the Arya, for in the *Praise of the One Who Went Beyond the World* he says,

You stated that—
Without grasping how things
Have no signs of their own—
There is no freedom.
And that is why,
In the greater way,
You taught this in its entirety.⁸⁰

⁸⁰ *You taught this in its entirety*: See f. 69b of the eulogy, at %S@ (TD01120). The lines as they are translated in our version of the Tengyur have a much different wording, but almost exactly the same meaning:

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DE'I RKANG BA DANG PO GNYIS KYIS MTSAN MED KYI DE KHO NA NYID
MA RTOGS PAR NYON MONGS ZAD PA MED PAS THAR PA THOB PA
MED PAR BSTAN NO,,

The part in this verse from “You stated that...” up to “...there is no freedom” is meant to convey the fact that—if one fails to perceive suchness, the lack of signs to things—then they cannot put an end to their negative emotions; and thus they cannot achieve freedom.

KHYOD KYI ZHES SOGS KYIS THEG CHEN LAS MTSAN MED CHOS KYI
BDAG MED TSANG BAR TE RDZOGS PAR BSTAN, [43b] ZHES PAS THEG
DMAN DU NI CHOS KYI BDAG MED RDZOGS PAR MA BSTAN PAR SHES
SO,,

The part of the verse which includes “you taught” is saying that the lack of a self-nature to things—the lack of signs—is presented “in its entirety” (meaning “in a complete way”) in the teachings of the greater way. We can understand from this statement that the lack of a self-nature to things is *not* presented in a complete way in the teachings of the lower way.

,MTSAN MA MED LA MA ZHUGS PAR,
,THAR PA MED CES GSUNGS PA'I PHYIR,
,DE PHYIR KHYOD KYIS THEG CHEN RNAMS,
,MA LUS PAR NI DE NYID BSTAN,

You have stated that
Without entering into
The lack of signs,
There is no freedom.
And thus did you present
This suchness
In all the teachings
Of the greater way.

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'O NA DE PHYIR ZHES PA RDZOGS PAR BSTAN PA'I RGYU MTSAN DU
'GRO TSUL JI LTAR YIN SNYAM NA,

“Well now,” you may ask, “just how is it that ‘that is why’? Just how is it that a reason for why these things were ‘taught in their entirety’ is given here?”

MTSAN MED MA RTOGS PAR NYON MONGS ZAD PA'I THAR PA MI 'THOB
PAS NA, NYAN THOS KYI THEG PAR YANG CHOS KYI BDAG MED BSTAN
DGOS LA, DE LA THEG PA CHE CHUNG GI KHYAD PAR YANG DGOS PA
DE'I PHYIR ZHES BSHAD DGOS SO,,

One cannot reach the freedom where the negative emotions are finished off unless they perceive how things have no signs. Thus, the lack of a self-nature to things must necessarily be presented even in the way of the listeners. But still there must exist a distinction between the higher and lower ways—and “that” then “is why”. This is how the point should be explained.

DE DAG GIS NI SUN 'BYIN PA'I THAL BA DANG, DES BZLOG PA 'PHANGS
PA GNYIS LA KHYAB BYED MA NGES PA'I SUN 'BYIN LTAR SNANG DU
BSTAN PA NI, RIGS PA DANG 'GAL BA'O, ,LUNG DANG 'GAL BA NI
SNGAR MANG DU BSHAD ZIN TO,,

Saying that the pair of (1) the statement of necessity here which overthrows the other’s position and (2) the opposite which this implies are a false refutation due to the necessity failing to hold in every instance contradicts logic. And we have already demonstrated, with many citations, that it contradicts scriptural authority.

'O NA THEG PA CHE CHUNG GI SDE SNOD DU CHOS KYI BDAG MED
RDZOGS PAR STON MI STON DANG, DE GNYIS KYI LAM DU'ANG CHOS
KYI BDAG MED RDZOGS PAR SGOM MI SGOM SLOB DPON 'DIS BSHAD
PA'I DON GANG YIN SNYAM NA,

“What then is the point,” you may ask yourself, “for this master to go into an explanation of whether or not, in the scriptural collections of the greater and

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lesser ways, the lack of a self-nature to things is presented in its entirety; and whether or not, on the path of these two ways, one meditates—in a complete way—upon this same lack of a self-nature?”

DE NI THEG CHEN PA LA SHES BYA THAMS CAD RANG BZHIN GYIS
GRUB PA MED PAR RTOGS PA YOD LA, NYAN RANG LA DE MED PAR
SHES BYA PHYOGS GCIG PA 'GA' RANG BZHIN GYIS GRUB PA MED PAR
RTOGS PA YOD CES PA NI, GTAN MIN TE

It is not at all the case, as some have put it, that this presentation is meant to convey that those of the greater way possess a realization that no existing object exists through any nature of its own; whereas those of the ways of the listener and the self-made buddha lack this same realization—since they realize only that some portion of all the things there are exist through no nature of their own.

GZHI GRUB PA CIG GI STENG DU, CHOS KYI BDAG MED TSAD MAS GRUB
PA CIG BYUNG NA, DE NAS GZHI GZHAN LA BDEN PAR YOD MED KYI
DPYOD PA ZHUGS NA, RIGS PA SNGA MA LA BRTEN NAS BDEN MED DU
RTOGS PAR NUS PA'I PHYIR RO,,

And this is because—if one is able to establish, by using a valid perception, that the lack of a self-nature to things is true with regard to any single existent thing—then when one engages in an examination of whether things exist in truth with regard to any other object, they will be able to perceive that in fact it does not exist in truth, simply by using the same reasoning that they have employed previously.

DBU MA PAR 'DOD PA KHA CIG GIS DNGOS [44a] PO BDEN GRUB KHEGS
PA'I LUGS SU BYAS NAS, BDEN STONG BDEN GRUB TU 'DOD PA DANG,
KHA CIG GIS CHOS NYID SGRUB PA'ANG DBANG BA {%SGRUB PA RANG
DBANG BA} BDEN GRUB TU 'DOD PA'I

Now some people who consider themselves to be followers of the Middle Way School—thinking to use it as a way of denying that functional things could exist in truth—have expressed the opinion that this lack of real existence itself *does*

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exist in truth. And others believe that the proof of the very nature of things is itself something which has its own inherent power: that it exists in truth.

SNGA MA NI, BDEN TSAD LEGS POR MA ZIN PAR RAGS PA CIG LAS MA
KHEGS PAR 'DUG PA'I SKYON DU SNANG LA, PHYI MA NI DNGOS PO
BDEN PA BKAG PAR RLOM YANG, TSAD MAS KHEGS PAR MI SNANG GI
DNGOS PO LA SKUR 'DEBS KYI LTA BAR 'DUG PAS, DE DAG GIS MA NGES
PA MED DO,,

The former of these two positions would appear to have the problem that—because this person has failed to identify, correctly, the point at which something can be said to exist “in truth”—it refutes no more than a very gross version of some object. Those who have put forth the latter position may entertain the delusion that they have managed to disprove that a functioning thing could exist in truth, but it would not appear that they have been able to do so with any valid perception; rather, their position only serves to deny the existence of functioning things which do in fact exist. As such, there is no doubt in our assessment of these positions.

DES NA THEG CHEN PAS NI RTZA SHE LAS GSUNGS PA BZHIN DU, GZHI
GCIG BDEN MED DU SGRUB PA LA YANG, SGRUB BYED KYI RIGS PA MI
'DRA BA MTHA' YAS PAS BSGRUBS PAS, DE KHO NA NYID LA BLO SHIN
TU RGYAS PAR 'GYUR LA,

Thus it is that when, as described in *Wisdom*, those of the greater way undertake to prove that any single object is devoid of true existence, they do so by using a limitless number of proofs to make their point—and their minds are thereby made wide open towards suchness.

THEG DMAN LA NI RIGS PA MDOR BSDUS PA CIG GIS DE KHO NA NYID
TSAD MAS GRUB NA, SNGA MA LTAR MI BYED PAS DE KHO NA NYID LA
BLO RGYAS PA MED PAS RGYAS BSDUS DANG, BDAG MED SGOM PA
RDZOGS MA RDZOGS SU GSUNGS SO,,

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Those of the lower way, on the other hand, employ only abbreviated forms of reasoning to prove suchness with valid perception. Since they fail to do what those other ones do, they lack any broadening of their mind towards suchness. Thus it is that pronouncements have been made about the relative detail of the two approaches; and whether or not one has meditated in a complete way upon the lack of a self-nature.

DE LTAR 'ONG BA YANG NYAN RANG RNAMS NI, NYON MONGS TZAM SPONG BA'I PHYIR BRTZON PA YIN LA, DE LA NI DE KHO NA NYID KYI DON MDOR BSDUS PA DE TZAM ZHIG RTOGS PAS CHOG GO ,THEG CHEN PA SHES SGRIB SPONG BA LHUR LEN PAS, DE LA DE KHO NA NYID LA SHES RAB MCHED NAS BLO SHIN TU RGYAS PA CIG DGOS PA YIN NO,,

The reason this has come to be is that the listeners and self-made buddhas are making efforts towards nothing more than eliminating their negative emotions—and that may be done by perceiving the meaning of suchness in no more than but this abbreviated manner. Those of the greater way, on the other hand, are striving to rid themselves of the obstacles to knowledge; as such, they must develop wisdom towards suchness which grows in an exponential way: they must make their minds wide open.

Refuting Arguments not Covered in the Autocommentary

GNYIS PA NI, 'O NA MNGON RTOGS RGYAN LAS,
,GZUNG DON RTOG PA SPONG PHYIR DANG,
, 'DZIN PA MI SPONG PHYIR [44b] DANG NI,
,RTEN GYIS BSE RU LTA BU'I LAM,
,YANG DAG BSDUS PAR SHES PAR BYA,
ZHES RANG RGYAL GYI LAM GYIS GZUNG BA LA BDEN ZHEN GYI RTOG PA SPONG NUS KYANG, 'DZIN PA LA BDEN ZHEN SPONG MI NUS PAR GSUNGS PA DANG,

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This brings us to our second step from above: a refutation of arguments not covered in the autocommentary. “How then can it be correct,” one may ask, “that in the *Jewel of Realizations* it says that, by using the path of the self-made buddhas, one can rid oneself of the idea where we imagine that objects held by the mind could exist in truth; but at the same time are unable to rid ourselves of the idea that the states of mind which hold onto objects exist in truth? For that work does say,

The path of those like a rhinoceros
Is known as ‘the path
Which is perfectly combined,’
Because one rids oneself
Of wrong ideas of the object held;
But not wrong ideas
About what holds them;
And because of the person
Who follows it.⁸¹

YANG

,NYON MONGS SHES BYA LAM GSUM GYI,
,NYAMS PHYIR SLOB MA BSE RU DANG,
,RGYAL SRAS RNAMS KYI DAG PA STE,
ZHES GZUNG BA LA BDEN ZHEN SHES SGRIB TU GSUNGS PA JI LTAR
DRANG ZHE NA,

“And what of the part in the same text where it states that a belief that objects held by the mind exist in truth is an obstacle to knowledge? For it says—

Those of the negative emotions
And of the objects of knowledge
Wither away through the use
Of three different paths;
Therefore the purity
Of students who are rhinoceroses

⁸¹ *The path of those like a rhinoceros*: See f. 5a of Lord Maitreya’s teaching at entry %S10, Tohoku TD03786.

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And those who are children
Of the Buddhas...⁸²

DE LA GZUNG BA PHYI ROL LA ZHEN PA SPONG BA'I DON NI, PHYI ROL
GYI DON TSAD MAS GRUB KYANG, PHYI ROL BDEN GRUB RIGS PAS
KHEGS PA DBU MA PA LTAR GTAN LA PHAB PA'I DON BSGOMS NAS
BDEN ZHEN SPONG BA DANG,

What does it mean then when we say that one has “rid oneself of a belief in objects of the mind—outer objects”? It could mean that we have meditated upon the way as those of the Middle Way School describe it—showing how, although outer objects are confirmed by valid perception, the idea that outer objects could exist in truth is disproved by reasoning—and through this meditation we have been able to rid ourselves of this particular belief that a thing could exist in truth.

YANG NA SEMS TZAM PA LTAR PHYI ROL GYI DON RIGS PAS BKAG PA'I
DON BSGOMS PA LA BR TEN NAS, PHYI ROL YOD PAR 'DZIN PA SPONG
BA GANG RUNG GCIG LAS MI 'DA'O,,

Or else it could mean that one has meditated on the point as the Mind Only School explains it—using logic to deny the existence of outer objects—and through this meditation has rid oneself of the belief that outer objects even exist. It has to mean one of these two; there is no other choice.

DE LA DANG PO LTAR NA NI MI RIGS TE, PHYI DON SPYIR YOD PAR 'JOG
THUB PA LA, BDEN YOD DE KHO NA NYID LA DPYOD PA'I RIGS PAS
KHEGS PA CIG YIN NA NI,

And yet the first option is incorrect. That is, suppose a person were someone who was able to establish that, in general, outer objects do exist; and at the same time were someone who had managed to disprove—through the use of reasoning which examined the meaning of suchness—the idea that they could exist in truth.

⁸² *Students who are like rhinoceroses*: See f. 6a of the same work.

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DE NAS 'DZIN PA LA BDEN PA YOD MED KYI DPYOD PA ZHUGS PA NA,
RIGS PA SNGA MA'I MTHU LA BR TEN NAS BDEN MED DU RTOGS PAR
NUS TE,

When this person subsequently undertook to examine whether the state of mind that holds to objects exists in truth or not, they would be able to realize that in fact it does *not* exist in truth, based simply on the power of their previous reasoning.

'PHAGS PA LHAS,
,GANG GIS DNGOS GCIG DE BZHIN NYID MTHONG BA,
,DE YIS DNGOS KUN DE BZHIN NYID DU MTHONG,
ZHES GSUNGS PA'I PHYIR RO,,

This in turn is established by the words of Master Aryadeva:

Anyone who sees
That any single object
Exists in just that way
Also sees
That all the objects there are
Exist in just that way.⁸³

⁸³ *Exist in just that way*: The lines as quoted by Je Tsongkapa are cited in five different works in the Tengyur, but without being clearly attributed to Master Aryadeva (see Tohoku numbers TD01352; TD01872; TD03791; TD03793; and TD03852). The last of these works is a commentary by Master Bodhibhadra on Aryadeva's *Compendium of All the Works on the Essence of Wisdom* (TD03851); but the lines are not found there. In Master Aryadeva's most famous work, *The 400 Verses*, a verse with precisely the same point is found (at f. 9b, %S13, TD03846):

,DNGOS PO GCIG GI LTA PO GANG,
,DE NI KUN GYI LTA POR BSHAD,
,GCIG GI STONG NYID GANG YIN PA,
,DE NI KUN GYI STONG PA NYID,

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GNYSIS PA LTAR 'DOD PA NI SLOB DPON SENG GE BZANG PO LA SOGS
PA'I 'GREL PA'I LUGS YIN [45a] PAS, DE'I LTAR NA PHYI ROL MED PAR
TSAD MAS GRUB PA YIN NO,,

Accepting the second option is what we see done in the commentarial tradition of Master Haribhadra and others; and in this case then, it would be established through valid perception that there are no outer objects.

PHYI ROL MED PAR GRUB NA DE 'DZIN PA'I SHES PA, GZUNG BA LAS
RDZAS THA DAD PA MED PAR NI, SU DBANG PO RTUL YANG 'GRUB PAS,

Once a person has established that there are no outer objects, then they can figure out—regardless of how dull they might be—that the state of mind holding to an object cannot be substantially separate from the object being held.

We can say that anyone
Who knows how to look
At any single object
Is someone who knows how to look
At every object there is.
The emptiness of any particular object
Is the emptiness of every one of them.

But Je Tsongkapa, in works like *The Great Book on the Steps to the Path*, quotes this verse separately (at f. 479b), indicating that it is not an alternate translation of the former. So too, His Holiness the Fifth Dalai Lama, in his famed *Word of Gentle Voice* (B37, S05637) even quotes both verses on the same page; attributing the latter correctly to the *400 Verses*, and attributing the former only to “Master Aryadeva.” A quick check through all of the Master’s works in the Tengyur doesn’t seem to offer any other alternatives; the mention of the verse in Master Haribhadra’s famed commentary to the *Jewel* (S12, TD03793) attributes it “to tradition” (*lugs las*).

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'DZIN PA LA BDEN ZHEN MI SPONG BA NI, SPYIR SHES PA BDEN GRUB
TU KHAS LEN PA LA BYED KYI, GZUNG 'DZIN RDZAS THA DAD KYI
PHYED KHEGS SHING PHYED BDEN PAR 'DZIN PA GTAN MIN PAS,

And so when we say that someone has yet to rid themselves—with respect to the state of mind holding to an object—of the belief that it exists in truth, what we are referring to is someone who accepts the idea that the mind could exist in truth. It is not at all as if they deny half of the idea that subjects and objects could be separate from each other, and believe that the rest exists in truth.

'DZIN PA BDEN PAR SMRA BA'I RANG RGYAL DANG, GZUNG 'DZIN
GNYIS MED KYI SHES PA DON DAM DU GRUB PAR SMRA BA'I RNAM RIG
PA GNYIS GRUB MTHA' MTSUNGS PA MTSAR ZHES PA NI, GSAL BYED
PA'I BZHAD GAD DO,,

Thus they are having an illuminating laugh when they say, “Isn’t it weird that self-made buddhas who say that the state of mind holding to an object exists in truth; and those that believe everything is the mind who go on to say that the perception that objects and subjects are no two things exists in an ultimate way, are actually sharing the very same school of thought?”⁸⁴

'DIR RANG RGYAL GYI LAM THEG PA 'BRING DU STON PA LA, GZUNG
BA DANG 'DZIN PA LA BDEN ZHEN SPONG MI SPONG GI KHYAD PAR

⁸⁴ *Isn't it weird*: Je Tsongkapa is paraphrasing a “poetic interlude” (*bar-skabs kyi tsigs-bcad*) found in *The Golden Harvest of The Word* (B38, S05173, f. 208b), a commentary to the *Jewel of Realizations* written by Buton Rinpoche Rinchen Drup (1290-1364), innovator of the Buddhist canon in Tibet and much emulated by Tsongkapa. They just missed each other historically, Buton Rinpoche passing when Je Rinpoche was only 7; but in the translation of Tsongkapa’s standard biography, *The King of the Dharma*, we see him receiving confirmation of Buton’s lineage at the hermitage of Chudzong in 1374 (p. 312, E3). This particular passage is also discussed by Gungtang Lodru Gyatso (1851-1930) in his analysis of the middle way at B40, ACIP S00975, ff. 47b-48a.

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GSUNGS TE, DE GNYIS KYIS NYAN THOS LAS LHAG PA DANG, THEG CHEN LAS DMAN PA'I PHYIR 'BRING PO'O,,

Here the path of a self-made buddha is said to be a “medium” way, and a distinction is described between whether or not they have rid themselves of the tendency to believe that the objects which are held by the mind, and the state of mind which holds to those objects, exist in truth. In these two respects, they are higher than the listeners, but lower than those of the greater way—and so they are called “medium.”

'DI NI THEG PA CHE 'BRING CHUNG GSUM GYI GANG ZAG GSUM, DBANG PO RNO 'BRING RTUL BA YIN PAS, BDAG MED LA LTOS TE DBANG PO'I RIM PA BZHAG PA STE, THEG CHEN LA LTA BA RAB DBU MA'I LTA BA DANG, THEG 'BRING LA LTA BA 'BRING SEMS TZAM GYI LTA BA DANG, THEG CHUNG LA LTA BA THA MA GANG ZAG GI BDAG MED THUN MONG BA'I LTA BA BZHAG PA YIN KYANG, DER MA NGES SO,,

These are the three types of practitioners, of the ways which are greater, medium, and lesser; and their intellectual capacities are sharp, middling, and dull. Thus with the presentation where they say that the different levels of ones faculties are decided upon the basis of the lack of a self-nature—where those of the higher way are said to have the best viewpoint, the viewpoint of the Middle-Way School; and those of the medium way are said to have a middling viewpoint, the viewpoint of the Mind-Only School; and those of the lesser way are said to have very lowest viewpoint, a viewpoint held in common about how the person has no self-nature—there is no certainty that this is the case.

DE KHO NA NYID KYI LTA BA GSUM GA LA YOD PA LTAR NA'ANG, DE KHO NA NYID MYUR DU GTING DPOGS MI DPOGS SOGS KYI [45b] SGO NAS DBANG PO'I RIM PA GSUM MI 'GAL LO,,

The fact is that—despite it being the case that all three possess the view of suchness—there is no contradiction to saying that there are three different degrees of intelligence, based upon distinctions such as whether or not they get to the bottom of suchness quickly.

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'DZIN PA SHES PA LA BDEN ZHEN SPONG MI NUS PA DMAN KHYAD DU
BSTAN PA'I PHYIR, MNGON RTOGS RGYAN NAS BSHAD PA'I BDAG MED
KYI LTA BA NI MDO RGYAN DANG, 'BYED RNAM PA GNYIS LTAR SEMS
TZAM LA BSHAD DU MI RUNG NGO,,

Given that the *Jewel of Realizations* expressly presents the inability to rid oneself of a belief that what holds onto things—the consciousness—exists in truth as a lower viewpoint, it is incorrect to say that this text, like the *Jewel of the Sutras* and the two books of “distinguishing,” should be described as a work of the Mind-Only School.⁸⁵

MNGON RTOGS RGYAN LA'ANG DBU SEMS SU 'GREL TSUL RGYA GAR BA
RNAMS LA'ANG YOD PAS, DE DAG GI RGYU MTSAN MANG DU BSHAD
DGOS KYANG, TSIG MANGS SU DOGS NAS RE ZHIG MA BRIS SO,,

The *Jewel of Realizations* has also been explained by different Indians as belonging to either the Middle-Way School or the Mind-Only School; there is certainly a need to explain the many reasons for this, but I shall not cover that point here, since I fear that the book would go on for too long.

YANG,
,CHOS KYI DBYINGS LA DBYER MED PHYIR,

⁸⁵ *The two books of “distinguishing”*: A reference to two of the Five Books of Maitreya which contain the word “distinguishing” in the title; that is, *Distinguishing the Middle from the Extremes*, and *Distinguishing Things from the Very Nature of Things* (this last being often referred to as simply *Distinguishing the Realm of Things*). This pair, along with a third of the five books—the *Jewel of the Sutras*—are traditionally interpreted as scriptures of the Mind-Only School. The remaining two—the *Jewel of Realizations* and *The Higher Line*—are primarily considered to present the views of the Middle-Way School, although the scholars who assembled the Tengyur have placed the latter in the Mind-Only section. In the bibliography see, respectively, %S64 (TD04021); %S65 (TD04022 or TD04023); %S45 (TD04020); %S10 (TD03786); and %S59 (TD04024).

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,RIGS NI THA DAD RUNG MA YIN,
,BRTEN PA'I CHOS KYI BYE BRAG GIS,
,DE YI DBYE BA YONGS SU BRJOD,
CES GSUNGS PA 'DIS NI NYAN RANG RNAMS LA'ANG CHOS NYID RTOGS
PA YOD PAR BSTAN NO,,

Moreover, we read that:

Because the sphere of reality
Cannot be divided up,
It would be incorrect to say
That there are different family qualities.
And yet the division between them
Is only described
According to the things
Which rely upon them.⁸⁶

These lines are saying that listeners too can possess a realization of the way things are.

DE LA CHOS KYI DBYINGS ZHES PA NI NYI KHRI SNANG BA LAS, DE LA
RTOG PA DANG RNAM PAR RTOG PA NI DNGOS PO DANG DE'I MTSAN
MA LA MNGON PAR ZHEN PA STE, DE MED PA'I PHYIR CHAGS PA MED
PA NYID DU RIG PAR BYA'O, ,YOD PAR MA GYUR PA NYID NI CHOS
THAMS CAD KYI DE BZHIN NYID DO,,

As for this expression, “sphere of reality,” we see it explained in the *Illumination of the Twenty Thousand*:

When we talk about “thinking that something is there” or
“imagining that something is there,” we’re referring to a belief in
things, and the indicators of things. And you should understand
that—since these don’t even exist—the attachment to them doesn’t

⁸⁶ *According to the things which they rely upon*: From the *Jewel of Realizations* (%S10, TD03786), f. 3b.

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really exist either. The ultimate nature of things is in fact nothing other than this same quality, of not even existing.

DES NA 'DIS NI CHOS KYI DBYINGS NYID 'PHAGS PA'I CHOS RNAMS KYI
RGYU YIN PA'I PHYIR, ,RANG BZHIN DU GNAS PA'I RIGS SGRUB PA'I
RTEN YIN NO ZHES STON PAR BYED DO,

Thus it has been taught that—because this sphere of reality is in fact the cause of the qualities of a realized being—the family quality⁸⁷ that exists in all beings by nature is the foundation of all Buddhist practice.⁸⁸

ZHES DNGOS PO DANG DE'I MTSAN MA LA BDEN PAR ZHEN PA'I CHAGS
PAS BZUNG BA LTAR YOD PA MIN PA'I BDEN STONG LA BSHAD DO,,

These lines are describing the “sphere of reality” as the quality of being empty of any true existence, in the sense of something’s not existing in the way that it is held to exist by the kind of attachment which believes that things and their indicators exist in truth.

DE LA CHOS DBYINGS RIGS YIN NA, SEMS CAN THAMS [@46a] CAD RIGS
LA GNAS PAR 'GYUR TE, CHOS DBYINGS NI THAMS CAD LA SPYIR GNAS
PA'I PHYIR RO, ZHES PA'I RTZOD PA BKOD DE, RIGS LA GNAS PA NI LAM
GYI SKABS KYI RIGS LA BSAMS PA'O,,

If the sphere of reality here is the family quality, the argument thus goes, then all living beings reside in this quality—for the sphere of reality resides in all of

⁸⁷ *The family quality*: That is, emptiness: the quality inherent within all living beings which will allow them to become enlightened, and thus enter the family of the Buddhas. In Tibetan, *rang-bzhin gnas-rigs*; in Sanskrit, *prakṛtisthagotra*.

⁸⁸ *Foundation of all Buddhist practice*: The *Illumination of the Twenty Thousand* is the common name for Master Vimuktasena’s commentary to the *Jewel of Realizations*, which the full title of his work describes in turn as *A Book of Advices in Commentary upon the Perfection of Wisdom in 25,000 Lines*; for the citation here, see ff. 59a-59b (%S66, TD03787).

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them, as a general characteristic. And when they speak of “residing in the family quality” here, what they have in mind is the family quality as it is present while one is still traveling the path.

DE'I LAN DU, JI LTAR DMIGS PA NA 'PHAGS PA'I CHOS RNAMS KYI RGYUR 'GYUR BA DE LTAR RIGS YIN PAR BRJOD PA DES NA, 'DIR HA CANG THAL BA MED PAR GSUNGS TE, CHOS NYID YOD PA TZAM GYIS LAM GYI SKABS KYI RIGS LA GNAS PA MIN GYI, CHOS NYID LA LAM GYIS DMIGS NAS BSGOMS PA NA, 'PHAGS CHOS KYI RGYU KHYAD PAR CAN DU GYUR PA'I TSE, RIGS KHYAD PAR CAN DU 'JOG PA'I DON NO,,

In response, we might point out that—since you are here referring to something as the “family quality” insofar as, when one focuses upon it, that becomes a cause for the qualities of a realized being—then we would have to say that this is no great thing. This is because we don’t say that—while they are still on the path—a person is considered to be residing in the family quality simply because they possess the very nature of things. Rather, the point is that—when one uses the path to focus on this nature of things, and then meditates upon it—then this becomes an exceptional cause for the qualities of a realized being: they are talking about how we define something as an extraordinary form of the family quality.

DE LTA NA'ANG CHOS DBYINGS LA DBYE BA MED PAS THEG PA GSUM GYI RIGS NI THA DAD MI RUNG NGO ZHES PA'I LAN DU, BRTEN PA'I CHOS DMIGS BYED KYI LAM GYI DBYE BAS RIGS THA DAD DU BRJOD DO, ,ZHES STON NO,,

“If that’s the case,” one might say, “then—because the sphere of reality cannot be divided up into different versions—it would be incorrect to say that there are different family qualities, corresponding to the three different ways.” In response we would say that, nonetheless, it is appropriate to divide the family quality into different types, according to the divisions of the things which rely upon them; that is, the paths which focus upon them. This then is what’s being described [in the verse from the *Jewel of Realizations*].

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RTEN NI 'DIR DMIGS PA DANG, BR TEN PA NI DMIGS BYED YIN LA, DMIGS BYED LA NYAN RANG GI THEG PA GNYIS KYANG YOD CING, CHOS NYID LA DMIGS PA LA DE BLO NGOR 'GRUB DGOS LA, B DEN GRUB BLO NGOR MA BCAD PAR, B DEN STONG BLO NGOR MI 'GRUB CING, DE MA GRUB NA CHOS NYID BLO NGOR MI 'GRUB BO,,

The thing being relied upon here is the object of the perception; while what relies upon it is the state of mind doing the perceiving—and the mind doing the perceiving can also include the minds of those who belong to the two ways of the listener or the self-made buddha. And to say that one is perceiving the way things are, this way must have presented itself to the mind. Yet if one has yet to exclude the idea that things exist in truth from presenting itself to the mind, the idea that things are void of existing in truth cannot present itself—and so long as it does not, then the way things really are cannot.

DE YANG DANG POR GZHI CHOS CAN GCIG GI STENG DU NGES DGOS PAS, NYAN RANG LA YANG PHYI NANG GI CHOS CAN LA DMIGS NAS, DE'I CHOS [46b] NYID B DEN PAR MED PAR DMIGS PA YOD PAR BSTAN NO,,

This way that things really are, in turn, must be confirmed first with regard to some one particular object, or instance. That being the case, what's being indicated here is that listeners and self-made buddhas also first focus upon different outer and inner instances of things, and then perceive that their real nature is to lack any real existence.

DE LTAR BYAS NA RANG RGYAL LA DE KHO NA NYID KYI DON RTOGS PA CIG KYANG YOD PAS, RANG RGYAL LA SHES PA LA B DEN ZHEN SPONG MI NUS PAS MA KHYAB BO,,

Given all this, we can also say that there does exist the possibility of a self-made buddha who realizes the meaning of suchness; and that therefore it is not necessarily the case that a self-made buddha is incapable of ridding themselves of the belief that the mind exists in truth.

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NYAN THOS LA YANG DE KHO NA NYID RTOGS PA DANG MA RTOGS PA
GNYIS SU DBYE DGOS PA'I PHYIR, MNGON RTOGS RGYAN DU YANG
THEG DMAN LA TSUL GNYIS GSUNGS PAS, GZUNG 'DZIN RDZAS THA
DAD DU BDEN PAR 'DZIN PA LA, SHES SGRIB TU 'JOG MI 'JOG GNYIS
NGES PAR BYA DGOS SO,,

And since we must as well divide listeners into two types of those who have realized suchness and those who have not, we must—given further that the *Jewel of Realizations* divides the lower way into two systems—say that the tendency to hold that objects and subjects exist in truth, as substantially separate, can either be described as an obstacle to omniscience, or not.

GAL TE THEG PA GSUM GYI RIGS THA DAD PA MI RUNG NGO ZHES MI
RTZOD KYI, RIGS BCU GSUM GYI DBYE BA MI RUNG BAR RTZOD PA YIN
SNYAM NA'ANG MI 'THAD DE,

And if you think to yourself that the argument here is not that it is incorrect to say that there are different family qualities for the three ways—but rather that it is incorrect to say that the family qualities can be divided into 13 different types—then you are also mistaken.

NYI KHRI SNANG BAR JI SKAD DU 'JAM DPAL GAL TE CHOS KYI DBYINGS
GCIG DANG, DE BZHIN NYID GCIG DANG, YANG DAG PA'I MTHA' GCIG
YIN NA, DE LA JI LTAR SNOD DANG SNOD MA YIN PAR GDAGS SO ZHES
GSUNGS PA BZHIN NO ZHE NA,

This is because the *Illumination of the Twenty Thousand* itself includes the lines:

Suppose one says that it's similar to the statement: "O Gentle Voice, given that the sphere of reality is one; and that the ultimate nature of things is one; and that the ultimate end of things is one; then how can someone imagine that there are some people who are worthy vessels, and others who are not?"⁸⁹

⁸⁹ *Some are, and some are not*: The selection is from f. 60a of the *Illumination*, discussed above. The original sutra is *A Box of Precious Jewels*, and the

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ZHES MDO GZHAN LAS CHOS DBYINGS LA DBYE BA MED PAS, THEG
CHEN GYI SNOD DANG SNOD MA YIN PAR JI LTAR BRTAG CES GSUNGS
PA DANG 'DI 'DRA BAS, THEG PA CHE CHUNG GI RIGS THA DAD PA MI
RUNG BA LA RTZOD RGYU YIN GYI, RIGS BCU GSUM LA BYAS NA SNOD
DANG SNOD MA YIN PAR RTZOD PA MI RUNG BA'I PHYIR RO,,

Here, our point is being compared to one in a separate work, a sutra, which asks the question: “Given that there are no separate versions of the sphere of reality, how then can one imagine that there are some people who are worthy vessels for the greater way, and other people who are not?” The argument here is about the question of it not being correct to say that there separate versions of the family quality for those belonging to the greater or lesser ways; it wouldn’t be correct to argue about people being worthy vessels or not after distinguishing 13 types of family quality.

SLOB DPON CHEN PO SENG GE BZANG PO YANG 'PHAGS PA GROL SDE
DANG MTHUN PAR BZHED DO, ,DE BZHIN DU RGYUD BLA MA RTZA
'GREL LAS KYANG, NYAN RANG LA CHOS NYID RTOGS PA DANG MA
RTOGS PA GNYIS KA GSUNGS [47a] PA YOD DE MANGS PAS 'JIGS NAS RE
ZHIG MA BRIS SO,,

The great master Haribhadra takes the same position as the realized being Vimuktasena. And the root text and commentary of the *Higher Line* also say that listeners and self-made buddhas include some who have realized the real nature of things and some who have not—it is only out of a concern that I might go on too long that I do not write more on that, for the present.⁹⁰

quotation—in a slightly different form—is found on f. 390a (%S67, KL00117). The speaker by the way is Subhuti, the protagonist of the *Diamond Cutter Sutra*.

⁹⁰ *For the present*: Like Je Rinpoche, we have our own time constraints and have not been able to go deeply into works mentioned for these points; but here are some leads for those who would like to. Some discussion of the topic by Master Haribhadra may be found in the area of ff. 249b-250a of the third volume of his massive commentary to the *Jewel of Realizations* (%S68, TD03790). One of the popular places in the *Higher Line* where the topic is discussed (in the context of a

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DE LTAR GNYIS 'ONG BA NI MNGON RTOGS RGYAN DU NYAN RANG GI
LAM SHES PA'I LAM SHES STON PA NI, NYAN RANG GI RIGS CAN RNAMS
RJES SU 'DZIN PA'I PHYIR DU YIN PAS, RJES SU GZUNG RGYU'I THEG
DMAN LA YANG ZAB MO'I SNOD DU GYUR MA GYUR GNYIS YOD CING,
DE GNYIS LA'ANG PHYI MA CHE MANG BAS PHAL CHER DE'I LAM
MANG DU GSUNGS SO,,

The fact that we see these two types relates to the fact that, in the *Jewel of Realizations*, the presentation of the knowledge of the path—where the listeners and self-made buddhas each know their own path—is something made in order to attract persons who fall into either the listener type or the self-made buddha type. As such, we can say that—among those of the lower way that the presentation is trying to attract—there are two types: those who are worthy vessels for the profound, and those who are not. And among these two types, the latter is by far more numerous; thus it is that for the most part, the path meant for them is spoken of more frequently.

THEG CHEN LA THOG MAR SEMS TZAM LA MA KHRID PAR DBU MA'I
LTA BA MI RNYED PA SNANG BA BZHIN DU, RANG RGYAL LA YANG
YOD LA DE NI NYAN THOS LA'ANG YOD PAR MNGON NO,,

It would seem that there are people belonging to the greater way who must be guided through the ideas of the Mind-Only School before they are able to find the viewpoint of the Middle-Way School; it would appear that there is a similar process for the self-made buddhas, and for the listeners as well.

clarification of a misunderstanding of a reference to these lower practitioners as being blind) may be found in the poetry of the root text at f. 61b (%S59, TD04024), and in the corresponding commentary of Master Asanga at f. 112b (%S69, TD04025). His Holiness the Second Dalai Lama, Gyalwa Gendun Gyatso, discusses the citations from all three sources at some length in his explanation of *Entering the Middle Way*, at ff. 32b-33a (%B41, S05566).

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GZHAN YANG NYI KHRI SNANG BA DANG, BRGYAD STONG 'GREL CHEN
GNYIS KAR CHOS DBYINGS THEG PA GSUM GA'I RIGS SU 'JOG PA'I SHES
BYED DU, 'PHAGS PA'I GANG ZAG THAMS CAD NI, 'DUS MA BYAS KYIS
RAB TU PHYE BAR GSUNGS PA DRANGS LA,

Moreover, both the *Illumination of the Twenty Thousand* and the *Great Commentary to the Eight Thousand* cite—in support of the idea that the sphere of reality is the family quality for all three ways—the statement in scripture that “all those people who are realized beings are distinguished by something which is unproduced.”⁹¹

DE NI RDO RJE GCOD PA LAS SANGS RGYAS PA'I CHOS DANG, DES
BSTAN PA'I CHOS THAMS CAD MA MCHIS SO, ZHES PA'I SGRUB BYED DU
'PHAGS PA'I GANG ZAG RNAMS NI 'DUS MA BYAS KYIS RAB TU PHYE
BA'ISLAD DU'O,

This statement recalls the statement in the *Diamond Cutter Sutra* that it is impossible for there to be any such thing as a being who becomes enlightened; and for there to be any such thing as the teaching which this being gives. And in support of this idea, it is then stated that people who are realized beings are distinguished by something which is unproduced.⁹²

ZHES GSUNGS PA'I DON NI THEG PA CHE CHUNG GI 'PHAGS PA'I GANG
ZAG THAMS CAD NI CHOS RNAMS DE KHO NAR MA GRUB PA'I DON
DAM 'DUS MA BYAS MNGON DU BYAS PAS BZHAG PA'I PHYIR ZHES
PA'O,,

⁹¹ *Distinguished by something which is unproduced*: The citations in the *Illumination of Master Vimuktasena* may be found at ff. 28a, 60a, and 180a (%S66, TD03787). That in the *Great Commentary to the Eight Thousand* by Master Haribhadra is on ff. 48a-48b (%S70, TD03791).

⁹² *The statement in the “Diamond Cutter Sutra”*: See f. 219a of the sutra (%S54, KL00016). Don't be confused here incidentally by the ancient form 'dus ma-bgyis rather than the later 'dus ma-byas.

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The point being made in these words is that all realized beings—whether they belong to the greater way or the lesser—are established as what they are by actualizing the ultimate unproduced thing: the fact that nothing in the universe is only what it is.

DE'I PHYIR LUGS 'DI DANG MNGON RTOGS RGYAN GNYIS 'GAL BA MA
YIN NO,
,DES NA RGYAN GYI 'GREL MDZAD DE DAG GI [47b] LUGS LA YANG
TSUL GNYIS SHES PAR BYA'O, SPROS PAS CHOG GO ,

Thus it is that the system we are presenting here is not one which is inconsistent with the teachings of the *Jewel of Realizations*. And thus too you should understand that there are two different ways expressed in the systems of commentators to the *Jewel*. Much more could be said about all of this.

How a Person Practices Giving at the First Bodhisattva Level

GSUM PA LA BZHI, SA DANG PO LA GNAS PA'I SBYIN PA BSHAD PA,
RTEN DMAN PA RNAMS KYI SBYIN PA BSHAD PA, BYANG CHUB SEMS
DPA' RNAMS KYI SBYIN PA BSHAD PA, SBYIN PA'I PHAR PHYIN GYI DBYE
BA BSTAN PA'O,,

With this we have come to our third section from above, which is a description of the high quality where we bring our practice to a higher level. We will proceed in four steps: an explanation of the giving practiced by a person who is at the first level; an explanation of the giving practiced by people of a lower type of being; an explanation of the giving practiced by bodhisattvas; and a presentation of the divisions of the perfection of giving.

[DE TSE DE LA RDZOGS SANGS BYANG CHUB RGYU,
,DANG PO SBYIN PA NYID NI LHAG PAR 'GYUR,]

[At this point,

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**It is none other than giving,
The first of the causes
Of total enlightenment,
Which becomes higher for them.**

I.33-34]

DANG PO NI, SA RAB TU DGA' BA THOB PA DE'I TSE BYANG SEMS DE LA PHAR PHYIN BCU'I NANG NAS SBYIN PA'I PHA ROL TU PHYIN PA NYID DE KHO NA, CHOS LHAG PAR YOD PAR 'GYUR TE, DE LA PHAR PHYIN GZHAN RNAMS MED PA NI MIN NO,,

Here is the first. *At this point*—that is, when the bodhisattva achieves the level called “Perfect Happiness”—*it is only the perfection of giving* (from among all the ten perfections) which is a practice *which becomes higher for them*. It is not though that they lack all the other perfections.

'JIG RTEN LAS 'DAS PA'I SBYIN PA'I PHAR PHYIN DE YANG RDZOGS PA'I BYANG CHUB KYI RGYU DANG PO STE, DE YANG 'JIG RTEN LAS 'DAS PA'I DBANG DU BYAS PA'O,,

And it is the perfection giving that transcends the mortal world which is the first of the causes of total enlightenment—and this refers too to those that transcend the mortal world.

SPYIR PHAR PHYIN SNGA MA RNAMS LAS PHYI MA RNAMS LHAG PA YIN KYANG, SA 'DIR SBYIN PA LHAG PAR GSUNGS PA NI, SA 'DIR SBYIN PA NYAMS SU LEN PA LA MTHU PHUL DU BYUNG BA DE'I TSOD TZAM TSUL KHRIMS LA SOGS PA NYAMS SU LEN PA LA MED PA'I DON TE,

As a general rule, each of the perfections is higher than the one preceding it in the list; but saying that giving at this particular level is higher is only meant to indicate that—at this level—ones practice of an ethical way of life and the other perfections is not as incredibly powerful as the way one puts giving into practice.

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SA DANG POR BDAG GI LUS DANG, PHYI'YO BYAD GTONG BA LA SBYIN
PA'I PHAR PHYIN DANG 'GAL BA'I KUN 'DZIN GYI CHAGS PA CUNG ZAD
KYANG MI 'BYUNG BAR GSUNGS PA LTAR SPYOD NUS KYANG, SA GNYIS
PAR RMI LAM NA YANG TSUL KHRIMS KYI MI MTHUN PHYOGS 'CHAL
KHRIMS LA GTAN MI SPYOD PA LTAR MI NUS PA'O,,

Here at the first bodhisattva level, one is able to practice their giving, as they say, without even the slightest bit of that possessive attachment which acts contrary to the perfection where one gives away their own body, and all their outer, material possessions. But they are not yet able to practice as they will at the second level, where a person avoids—even in their dreams—each and every form of that immorality which works against an ethical way of life.

[RANG SHA STER LA'ANG GUS PAR BYAS PA YIS,
,SNANG DU MI RUNG DPOG PA'I RGYUR YANG 'GYUR,]

**[The fact that this person
Esteems even the act
Of giving away their own flesh
Acts as a cause for the deduction
Of something not normally apparent.**

I.35-36]

YANG SA DER SNANG DU MI RUNG BA'I RTOGS PA SBYIN PAS DPOG PA
NI, PHYI'YO BYAD STER BA LA GUS PAR MA ZAD, SLONG BA LA RANG
GI SHA STER [48a] BA LA'ANG CHES GUS PAR BYAS PA YIS, GANG ZAG
GZHAN PHAL CHE BA LA SNANG DU MI RUNG BA'I NANG GI SA THOB
PA SOGS DPOG PA'I RGYUR TE GTAN TSIGS SU 'GYUR TE, DU BA SOGS
KYIS ME LA SOGS PA DPOG PA BZHIN NO,,

There is also at this level a deduction, triggered by the giving, of a state of realization which is not normally apparent. That is, *this person* not only has a high regard for the act of giving outer, material objects; but they also greatly *esteem even the act of giving away their own flesh* to someone who asks for it. This *fact* then *acts as a cause*, or sort of a logical reason, which allows someone else to *deduce* things like the fact that within themselves this person has attained the

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level—a condition which is *not normally apparent* to the majority of people. This is similar to how we deduce facts such as the presence of a fire, from the presence of smoke.

'DIS NI LUS SROG DANG LONGS SPYOD GTONG BA LA KUN 'DZIN GYI
DRI MA MED PAR BSTAN TE, DE LTAR BTANG YANG RGYUD RNAM PA
GZHAN DU MI 'GYUR BAR BRTAN PAR GNAS PA'I PHYIR RO,,

All this is meant to indicate that the practitioner is free of the stench of any possessiveness about giving away their own body, their own life, and all that they own. This in turn is because they have reached a kind of steadfastness in their practice where—even after they had given these things away—the feelings that had inspired them to do so would never change.

How People of a Lower Type of Being Practice Giving

GNYSIS PA LA GNYIS, SBYIN PAS 'KHOR BA'I BDE BA 'THOB PA DANG,
SBYIN PAS MYANG 'DAS KYI BDE BA 'THOB PAR BSTAN PA'O,,

We will cover the second point here—how people of a lower type of being practice giving—in two steps: a description of how we reach happiness in the circle of pain, through the practice of giving; and a description of how we reach the happiness of nirvana, through the same practice.

Why Did the Buddha Teach Giving First?

[SKYE BO 'DI KUN BDE BA MNGON 'DOD CING,
,MI RNAMS BDE BA'ANG LONGS SPYOD MED MIN LA,
,LONGS SPYOD KYANG NI SBYIN LAS 'BYUNG MKHYEN NAS,
,THUB PAS DANG POR SBYIN PA'I GTAM MDZAD DO,,]

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**[All people here have a hope
For happiness;
And without things,
Human beings are not happy.
The Able Ones,
Understanding that things
Come from giving,
Thus speak of giving first.**

I.37-40]

DANG PO NI, SKYE BO 'DI RNAMS KUN NI, BKRES SKOM DANG NAD
DANG TSA GRANG SOGS KYI SDUG BSNAL PHYIR BCOS PA'I BDE BA
THOB PAR MNGON PAR 'DOD CING, MI LA SOGS PA RNAMS KYI BDE BA
DE'ANG 'DOD PA'I YUL GYI LONGS SPYOD BZA' BTUNG DANG, NAD GSO
BA'I CHAS DANG GOS DANG GNAS KHANG SOGS LA, SPYAD PA MED
PAR SKYE BA MIN LA,

Here is the first. *All people here have a hope for happiness*, first in the form of alleviating their hunger and thirst; of comfort when they are too hot or too cold; and so on. *And without* enjoying the use of *things*, in the form of the things that they want—be it things to drink or eat; or the things they need to treat some illness; or clothing; or houses to stay in; or all the like, *human beings do not feel happy*.

LONGS SPYOD DE RNAMS KYANG NI SNGON SBYIN PA LAS BYUNG BA'I
BSOD NAMS BSAGS PA LAS 'BYUNG BAR MKHYEN NAS, 'GRO BA THAMS
CAD KYI BSAM PA MKHYEN PA'I THUB PAS, CHES DANG POR SBYIN PA'I
GTAM NYID MDZAD DE, THABS DE LA 'JUG PAR YANG SLA BA'I PHYIR
RO,,

And *the Able Ones*, understanding that these things in turn come from accumulating the merit that is created by *giving*—and also knowing the wishes of all living creatures—*thus speak of the practice of giving first*, long before anything else. They understand as well that it is much easier for beings to follow this practice.

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[SNYING RJE DMAN ZHING SHIN TU RTZUB SEMS CAN,
,RANG DON LHUR LEN NYID DU 'GYUR BA GANG,
,DE DAG GI YANG 'DOD PA'I LONGS SPYOD RNAMS,
,SDUG BSNGAL NYER ZHI'I RGYUR GYUR SBYIN LAS 'BYUNG,

**Even people with little compassion,
Or those with a very cruel heart,
The ones who are only
Watching out for themselves,
Can still get the things they want
From giving, the cause which puts
Suffering to a final rest.**

I.41-44]

GAL TE SBYIN PA BTANG BA LAS LONGS SPYOD PHUN SUM TSOGS PA
THOB PA DE LA, GTONG BA PO TSUL DANG MTHUN PA DGOS SAM
SNYAM NA, DE NI MI DGOS TE [48b] 'DI LTAR, TSONG PA BZHIN DU
NOR CHES CHUNG NGU BTANG BA LAS, 'BRAS BU NOR GYI PHUNG PO
CHES YANGS PA 'DOD PAS LONGS SPYOD 'DOD PA'I SLONG MO BA LAS
KYANG LONGS SPYOD RGYA CHE BA 'DOD PAS, SBYIN PA BYED PA LA
GUS KYI,

You may be wondering whether this person who engages in the practice of giving needs to be someone who is acting in an appropriate way, in order to acquire excellent things from their giving. In fact they do not; consider someone like a businessperson who is already extremely wealthy, but who is hoping to reap a tremendous quantity of riches as a result of giving something small to someone; and so has their sights set on gaining great wealth from even just a single beggar who comes to them asking for some material thing—and so the businessperson has a high regard for the practice of giving.

BYANG SEMS RNAMS LTAR SNYING RJE'I GZHAN GYI DBANG GIS SBYIN
PA'I 'BRAS BU DON DU MI GNYER BA KHO NAR, SBYIN PAR 'DOD PA'I
DGA' STON MNGON PAR 'PHEL BAR MI BYED PA'I GTONG BA PO SNYING
RJE DMAN ZHING,

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These kinds of *people* are givers who have *little compassion*—they are not like the bodhisattvas, who are slaves of their compassion, and who with absolutely no expectations of what they will get back from their giving live in an ever-expanding celebration of the pursuit of generosity.

DER MA ZAD SEMS CAN LA SEMS SHIN TU RTZUB PA'I SEMS DANG
LDAN PA, RANG GI DON MNGON MTHO'I BDE BA TZAM LHUR LEN PA
NYID DU 'GYUR BA STE,

There are as well other types of *people with a very cruel heart, the ones who are only watching out for themselves*, just trying to reach the higher realms for their own sake.

GTZO BOR BYED PA GANG YIN PA DE DAG GI STE LA YANG, LONGS
SPYOD MI GTONG BAR 'DZIN PA'I SKYON LA RGYAB KYIS PHYOGS PA
RNAM SMIN LA RE BA'I YON TAN TZAM 'DZIN PA LA G-YER BAG THOB
PA'I SBYIN PA LAS, LONGS SPYOD PHUL DU BYUNG BA PHUN TSOGS
'BYUNG BA'I SGO NAS, BKRES SKOM SOGS KYI SDUG BSNAL NYE BAR
ZHI BA'I RGYUR 'GYUR RO,,

Even those who make such things their main goal *can still get the things they want*—the most amazing, excellent things—*from* a kind of *giving* where they do exhibit the virtue of being extremely careful to avoid the faults of possessiveness, the refusal to share ones things, but only because they are hoping for some great karmic payoff. This kind of giving then does become a *cause which puts to a final rest sufferings* such as hunger, thirst, and the rest.

How We can Meet Realized Beings

['DI YANG SBYIN PA'I SKABS KYIS NAM ZHIG TSE,
,PHAGS PA'I SKYE BO DANG 'PHRAD MYUR DU 'THOB,
,DE NAS SRID RGYUN YANG DAG BCAD BYAS TE,
,DE YI RGYU CAN ZHI BAR 'GRO BAR 'GYUR,]

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**[Because of these instances of giving then,
Even they at some point will quickly attain
Opportunities to meet people
Who are realized beings.
And then the flow
Of their lives of suffering
Will be stopped completely,
And those with this cause
Will come to peace.**

I.45-48]

GNYSIS PA NI, GANG ZHIG SNYING RJE DANG BRAL BAS RANG GI SDUG
BSNGAL PHYIR BCOS PA'I BDE BA TZAM LA LTOS PA NYID KYIS, SBYIN
PA GTONG BA LA GUS PA 'DI YANG, SBYIN BDAG GTONG BA PO'I THAD
DU DAM PA DAG GIS BGROD PA YIN NO, ZHES GSUNGS PA'I PHYIR,
SBYIN PA GTONG BA'I SKABS KYIS NAM ZHIG GI TSE 'PHAGS PA'I SKYE
BO DANG PHRAD PA MYUR DU 'THOB BO,,

Which brings us to the second point from above. Consider again these people who have no compassion—those who seek only the happiness of alleviating their own suffering—and thus hold the act of giving in high regard. *Even they then, because of these instances of giving, will at some point quickly attain opportunities to meet people who are realized beings.* This is the case because, as they say, “The holy ones come into the presence of sponsors—meaning all those who give.”⁹³

DE NAS DAM PA DES CHOS BSTAN PA LAS, 'KHOR BA LA YON TAN MED
[@49a] PAR RIG CING, 'PHAGS LAM ZAG PA MED PA MNGON DU BYAS
PAS MA RIG PA SPANGS NAS, SRID PA 'KHOR BA'I RGYUN THOG MED

⁹³ *The holy come into the presence:* Throughout this section, Je Tsongkapa is paraphrasing the autocommentary almost verbatim; and this same allusion also occurs there, without attribution (at f. 229a, %S3, TD03862). The reference is repeated in Master Jayananda’s commentary (f. 82a, %S1, TD03870), and by subsequent Tibetan authors relying on these two works, but we haven’t been able to locate any quotation similar, from an original source.

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NAS SKYE 'CHI GCIG NAS GCIG TU BRGYUD PA YANG DAG PAR BCAD
PAR BYAS TE, DAM PA DANG PHRAD PA DE YI RGYU CAN NYAN THOS
SAM RANG RGYAL GYI ZHI BA MYANG 'DAS SU 'GRO BAR 'GYUR RO,,

And then the holy ones grant these people the teachings, and they come to an understanding that there is no good thing in the cycle of pain. And then they manifest the immaculate path of a realized being, and rid themselves of misunderstanding. *And then they put a complete stop to the spinning of this beginningless wheel of suffering, lives of births and deaths flowing one after the other. Thus then those listeners or self-made buddhas with this cause—that is, who have met the holy ones—will come to peace: meaning nirvana.*

GSUM PA LA BZHI, BYANG SEMS KYI SBYIN PA'I PHAN YON THUN
MONG MA YIN PA BSTAN PA, RTEN GNYIS KA LA SBYIN PA'I GTAM
GTZO BOR BSTAN PA, BYANG SEMS KYIS SBYIN PA'I TSE DGA' BA JI 'DRA
BA 'THOB PA BSTAN PA, BYANG SEMS KYIS LUS SBYIN PA LA SDUG
BSNGAL YOD MED BSTAN PA'O,,

This brings us to the third of our four steps from before: an explanation of the giving practiced by bodhisattvas. We proceed in four sections: a description of the unique type of giving practiced by a bodhisattva; a description of how the discussion of giving is primary for both types of people; a description of the kind of happiness that a bodhisattva feels when they are giving; and a description of whether or not a bodhisattva feels pain when they give away their own body.

Happiness Comes from Giving

['GRO LA PHAN PAR DAM BCAS YID CAN RNAMS,
, SBYIN PAS RING POR MI THOGS DGA' BA 'THOB,]

**[The giving of those
Who have resolved in their hearts
To be of benefit to living beings**

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**Makes them feel happiness,
Not long afterwards.**

I.49-50]

DANG PO NI, BYANG SEMS MA YIN PA RNAMS NI SBYIN PAS SLONG BA
PO TSIM PAR BYAS PA DANG, DUS MNYAM PA STE DE'I MJUG THOGS
NYID DU SBYIN PA'I 'BRAS BU'I BDE BA LA NGES PAR LONGS SPYOD PA
MIN NO,,

Here is the first. When someone who is not a bodhisattva performs an act of giving and thus satisfies the needs of the person who has asked them for something, there is no certainty that they will experience that happiness which is a result of this giving “at the same time”—meaning immediately subsequent to the giving.

DES NA DE RNAMS NI SBYIN PA'I 'BRAS BU MNGON SUM DU MI
MTHONG BA'I PHYIR SBYIN PA LA MI 'JUG PA YANG SRID NA, 'GRO BA
THAMS CAD LA PHUGS SU PHAN PA DANG, 'PHRAL DU BDE BA SGRUB
PAR DAM BCAS PA'I YID CAN GYI BYANG SEMS RNAMS, SBYIN PAS RING
POR MI THOGS PAR SLONG BA PO TSIM PAR BYAS PA MTHONG BA'I
MJUG THOGS NYID DU, SBYIN PA'I 'BRAS BU DGA' BA MCHOG TU GYUR
BA 'THOB CING SBYIN 'BRAS LA LONGS SPYOD PAS, DUS THAMS CAD
KYI TSE SBYIN PA BYED PA LA DGA' BAR 'GYUR RO,,

As such—because they don't see the results of their giving in a direct way—there is a possibility that they will fail to engage in the act of giving. But the bodhisattvas—who have *resolved in their hearts to be of benefit to every living being* in the long run, and in the short run to make them happy—undertake acts of *giving* and then *not long afterwards* (meaning immediately subsequent to seeing that their giving has satisfied the needs of those who have asked them for something) these acts *make them feel* a supreme form of *happiness* as the result of their giving. Having thus enjoyed the fruits of their giving, they are at all times very pleased to engage in giving.

Why Giving is the Most Important

[GANG PHYIR BRTZE BDAG BRTZE BDAG MA YIN PA,
,DE PHYIR SBYIN PA'I GTAM NYID GTZO BO YIN,]

**[And these are the reasons
Why it is none other
Than the discussion of giving
Which is primary for both
Those who are the embodiment of love,
And those who are not this embodiment.**

I.51-52]

GNYSIS PA NI, GANG GI PHYIR SNGAR JI SKAD [49b] BSHAD PA'I TSUL
GYIS BRTZE BA'I BDAG NYID BYANG SEMS DANG, BRTZE BA'I BDAG NYID
MA YIN PA THAMS CAD KYI MNGON MTHO DANG NGES LEGS KYI BDE
BA RNAMS SBYIN PAS 'DREN PA DE'I PHYIR, SBYIN PA'I GTAM NYID
GTZO BO STE SHIN TU GAL CHE BA YIN NO,,

Here is our second section, on how the discussion of giving is primary for both types of people. *These* then—that is, the points we have discussed just now—are *the reasons why it is none other than the discussion of giving which is primary* (here meaning “extremely important”) *for both those people who are the embodiment of love* (the bodhisattvas) *and for those who are not an embodiment of this kind*; for it is the act of giving which brings to all these people the happiness of both the higher births and certain goodness.⁹⁴

BSHES SPRING LAS KYANG,
,LONGS SPYOD G-YO BA SNYING PO MED MKHYEN NAS,
,DGE SBYONG BRAM ZE BKREN DANG BSHES RNAMS LA,
,SBYIN PA TSUL BZHIN STZAL BGYI PHA ROL TU,

⁹⁴ *Certain goodness*: The term “certain goodness” (*nges-legs* in Tibetan, or *nihśreyasa* in Sanskrit) refers to both nirvana and enlightenment; see for example *An Easy Path to Omniscience*, by Changkya Rinpoche Ngawang Lobsang Chunden (1642-1714), f. 31a (%B12, S00464).

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,SBYIN LAS GZHAN PA'I GNYEN MCHOG MA MCHIS SO,
ZHES GSUNGS SO,,

The *Letter to a Friend* says as well,

First understand that your possessions
Are fleeting, and have no essence—
And then work to give, in the proper way,
To the monks; to the brahmans;
To the poor; and the friends.
There is no higher companion
In the world beyond
Than the giving you have done.⁹⁵

The High Happiness of a Bodhisattva

[JI LTAR BYIN ZHIG CES SGRA THOS BSAMS LAS,
,RGYAS SRAS BDE 'BYUNG DE LTAR THUB RNAMS LA,
,ZHI BAR ZHUGS PAS BDE BA BYED MIN NA,
,THAMS CAD BTANG BAS LTA ZHIG SMOS CI DGOS,]

**[When a child of the Victors
Hears “Please give it to me,”
And thinks to themselves,
They feel a happiness
Which is even greater
Than the happiness
Of the Able Ones,
When they enter into peace.
What need then is there
To mention how they feel
When they give away everything?**

⁹⁵ *No higher friend than giving*: See f. 41a of this classic outline of enlightenment and emptiness by Arya Nagarjuna (%S25, TD04182).

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I.53-56]

GSUM PA NI, RGYU GANG LAS BYANG SEMS RNAMS SBYIN PA LA GUS
PAR 'GYUR BA, ,SLONG BA RNAMS LONGS SPYOD KYIS TSIM PAR BYAS
PA NA, BYANG SEMS LA DGA' BA'I KHYAD PAR SKYE BA KO CI 'DRA
ZHIG CI {%CE} NA,

This brings us to the third section: a description of how the discussion of giving is primary for both types of people. One may ask the following question: “Just what is the cause that makes bodhisattvas—those people who have such a high regard for the act of giving—feel this special type of happiness, when they have given some material thing to someone who has asked for it from them, and thus satisfied their needs?”

JI LTAR SLONG BA POS BYIN CIG CES ZER BA'I SGRA THOS PA'I DON
BSAMS PA NA, 'DI DAG NI BDAG LA SLONG BA ZHIG GO SNYAM PA LAS,

Think of *when* a bodhisattva—a *child of the Victors*—hears the words “Please give it to me” from a person who is asking them for something. Then they think to themselves, “I have found someone to ask me for something!”

RGYAL SRAS LA YID LA BDE BA YANG NAS YANG DU 'BYUNG BA DE
LTAR NI, THUB PA DGRA BCOM PA RNAMS LA ZHI BA MYANG 'DAS KYI
DBYINGS SU ZHUGS PAS, BDE BA SKYED PAR BYED PA MIN NA,

This makes them *feel*—over and over again—a *happiness which is greater even than the happiness* that the *Able Ones*, those destroyers of the enemy, feel *when they enter the realm of peace: nirvana.*

PHYI NANG GI DNGOS PO THAMS CAD BTANG BAS SLONG BA PO TSIM
PAR BYED PAS, ZHI BA DE LAS LHAG PA'I BDE BA SKYED PA LTA CI ZHIG
SMOS DGOS TE MI DGOS SO,,

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If *then* they go further and *give away every* outer and inner *thing* they have to satisfy the needs of the person who's asking them for something, *what need is there to mention* that *they feel* a happiness greater than this peace? There is no need!

ZHI BA DES SEMS PHROGS PA NA GZHAN DON LA G-YEL BAR 'GYUR LA,
BYANG SEMS KYI BDE BA SNGAR BSHAD PA DES SEMS PHROGS [50a] PA
NYID KYIS, GZHAN DON LA LHAG PAR YANG BRTZON PAR 'GYUR BAS
MI 'DRA'O,,

If a person's heart is stolen away by this kind of peace, then they will lose themselves completely in working for others. But if your heart is stolen away by nothing less than the happiness of a bodhisattva that we've just described, you make even greater efforts to work for others—and so the two are not the same.

**Does a Bodhisattva Feel Pain,
When They Give Away their Own Flesh?**

[LUS BCAD STER ZHING BDAG GI SDUG BSNGAL GYIS,
,GZHAN DAG RNAMS KYI DMYAL BA LA SOGS PA'I,
,SDUG BSNGAL RANG RIG NYID DU MTHONG NAS NI,
,DE BCAD BYA PHYIR MYUR DU BRTZON 'GRUS RTZOM,]

**[What do they do with the pain
Of cutting off and giving away
Their own flesh?
When they have seen for themselves
The pain of others—
Those in the hells, and the rest,
They leap to do the deed,
In order to cut that pain.**

I.57-60]

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BZHI PA NI, YANG SBYIN PA BTANG BA GANG LAS BDE BA PHUL BYUNG
SKYE BAR BRJOD PA PHYI NANG GE {%GI} DNGOS PO GTONG BA'I
BYANG SEMS LA, LUS KYI SDUG BSNAL YANG MI 'BYUNG NGAM ZHE
NA,

Here finally is the fourth section from above: a description of whether or not a bodhisattva feels pain when they give away their own body. One might ask the following question: “You have mentioned, in your description of the giving from which the bodhisattva feels such wonderful happiness, their giving away ‘outer and inner things.’ But doesn’t such a bodhisattva feel then bodily pain?”

BDAG NYID CHEN PO SA THOB PA'I DBANG DU BYAS NAS 'DRI NA NI,
SEMS MED PA RNAMS LA BCAD PA LTAR LUS KYI SDUG BSNAL MED
DE, 'PHAGS PA NAM MKHA' MDZOD KYI TING NGE 'DZIN LAS,

If you are asking this question with regard to those great beings who have reached a bodhisattva level, then the answer is that in this moment they feel no suffering at all: it is just as if you have cut an inanimate object with a knife. This recalls a statement in the exalted *Concentration of Gagana Ganja*:

'DI LTA STE, DPER NA SHING S'A LA CHEN PO'I TSAL ZHIG YOD LA, DER
'GA' ZHIG 'ONGS NAS S'A LA GCIG BCAD PA NA, DER SHING S'A LA
LHAG MA DE RNAMS 'DI SNYAM DU 'DI NI BCAD PA'O, ,BDAG CAG NI
MA BCAD PA'O SNYAM DU SEMS SHING, DE DAG LA RJES SU CHAGS PA
DANG KHONG KHRO BA MED DO, ,RTOG PA DANG RNAM PAR RTOG PA
MED DO,,

This then is how it is. Picture a forest of huge *sal* trees. And then suppose that some people show up and cut one of them down. It's not as if the remaining trees think to themselves, “Oh, they cut one of us down. But they aren't cutting the rest of us down.” The trees don't feel attachment, and they don't feel anger. The fact is that they have no thoughts—no awareness at all.

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BYANG CHUB SEMS DPA'I BZOD PA DE LTA BU GANG YIN PA 'DI NI,
BZOD PA YONGS SU DAG PA MCHOG NAM MKHA' DANG MNYAM PA
YIN NO, ZHES JI SKAD GSUNGS PA LTA BU'O,,

The type of forbearance which a bodhisattva possesses is similar; it is a totally pure forbearance, the highest of its kind, and equal to space itself.⁹⁶

RIN CHEN 'PHRENG BA LAS KYANG,
,DE LA LUS KYI SDUG BSNAL MED,
,YID KYI SDUG BSNAL GA LA YOD,
,DE NI SNYING RJES 'JIG RTEN SDUG
,DE NYID KYIS NI YUN RING GNAS,
ZHES GSUNGS PA 'DI YANG SA THOB PA LA DGONGS SO,,

The *String of Precious Jewels* says as well:

They feel no pain in their body;
So how could they in their mind?
They stay in the world out of compassion;
And for the same reason stay here long.⁹⁷

This statement, by the way, is also made with regard to someone who has attained the levels of the bodhisattva.

YANG LUS DANG LONGS SPYOD LA KUN 'DZIN GYI CHAGS PA MED PA'I
SA RAB TU DGA' BA MA THOB PA'I DBANG DU BYAS NAS 'DRI NA NI
[50b] LUS GNAS PA DANG 'GAL BA'I RKYEN RANG GI LUS LA BABS PAS,
LUS KYI SDUG BSNAL GDON MI ZA BAR 'BYUNG MOD KYANG, DE'I TSE
YANG SDUG BSNAL DE LA BR TEN NAS SEMS CAN GYI DON LA LHAG
PAR 'JUG PA'I RGYU NYID DU GNAS TE,

⁹⁶ *Equal to space itself*: See ff. 341a-341b of the work, known by the full name of *An Exalted Sutra of the Greater Way Requested by Gagana Ganja* (%S71, KL00148).

⁹⁷ *They stay here long*: See f. 115b of the work, at %S16, TD04158.

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Suppose though that the same question is asked with regard to someone who has yet to achieve the bodhisattva level of Perfect Happiness—a stage where one is free of attachment which grasps on to one's body or possessions. In this case a person will beyond any doubt experience bodily suffering, since something has befallen the body which is a factor acting in contradiction to the body's continued existence. Nonetheless, even at this point they utilize this pain as just another reason for redoubling their efforts to work for the sake of other living beings.

'DI LTAR BYANG SEMS RNAMS NI, DMYAL BA DANG, DUD 'GRO DANG,
YI DVAGS LA SOGS PA'I 'GRO BA MI BZAD PAR CHUD PA, BAR MTSAMS
MED PAR SDUG BSNAL CHEN PO DRAG POS LUS 'JOMS PA, RANG GI
LUS GCOD PA'I SDUG BSNAL LAS STONG 'GYUR LAS KYANG CHES
LHAG PA'I SDUG BSNAL BSRAN DU MED PA DANG LDAN PA DAG LA
BLTAS PA NA,

And so the bodhisattvas *look upon* those who have been forced into these unbearable forms of life—*those in the realms of hell, or living as animals, or craving spirits, and all the rest*; their bodies battered by extreme torment. And what they see is that these beings are undergoing pain which is completely intolerable—thousands of times greater than the pain that the bodhisattva feels when they cut their own flesh.

SLONG BA PO LA RANG LUS BCAD NAS STER BA'I BDAG GI SDUG
BSNAL GYIS TE SDUG BSNAL LA RTZIS MED PAR BYAS NAS, RANG GIS
SDUG BSNAL NYAMS SU MYONG BA DE NYID KYI RGYU MTSAN LAS,
SEMS CAN GZHAN DAG RNAMS KYI DMYAL BA LA SOGS PA'I SDUG
BSNAL DE GCAD PA'I PHYIR DU CHOS {%CHES} MYUR DU BRTZON
'GRUS RTZOM MO,,

And when the bodhisattva *cuts the flesh* from their own body and *gives it away* to someone who asks them for it, the first words they say are “*With this pain of mine*”—meaning they pay no attention at all to their own pain, but rather see this same suffering they are *undergoing themselves* as a reason: as something whose *purpose is to cut off the suffering of other living beings*—those living in the hell realms, and so on. And so they immediately *leap to do the deed*.

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'DI NI NAG TSO'I 'GYUR LAS,
,LUS NI BCAD NAS BYIN PA'I SDUG BSNGAL DES,
,DMYAL BA LA SOGS SDUG BSNGAL GZHAN DAG LA,
,BLTAS NAS RANG GI NYAMS SU MYONG DE LAS,
,GCOD PA'I DON DU DE NI BRTZON PAR BYED,
,CES 'BYUNG BA DANG 'GYUR GNYIS KA LA BR TEN PA'I BSHAD PA'O,,

We also see these lines translated by Naktso⁹⁸ as:

What do they do with the pain
Of cutting off their flesh,
And giving it away?
They look upon those other pains—
Of people in the hells and such—
And leap to do the deed,
Hoping that what
They will undergo themselves
Will serve to cut the others.

For my own explanation here, I have utilized both translations.

⁹⁸ *Translated by Naktso*: A reference to the master translator Naktso Lotsawa, Tsultrim Gyalwa, who in one source is said to have been born in 1011. At a young age—some say in 1037—he was sent to India with Ngok Lekpay Sherab as an emissary from the Tibetan king Hla-tsunpa Jangchub Uw to invite Lord Atisha to Tibet. His translations of the classics are mentioned by Buton Rinpoche and seem well respected by Je Tsongkapa in a number of works in which he mentions them; but we don't see him credited in any of the native catalogs to the Kangyur and Tengyur available to us, and in general alternate translations of works in these canons have not survived, beyond occasional references such as this one.

Je Tsongkapa's own credentials to assess a translation, incidentally, are covered in the sections of his biography which describe his study of Sanskrit; see for example the chapter entitled "Speaker of the Mother Tongue" in the *King of the Dharma: The Illustrated Life of Je Tsongkapa* (E3).

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DE 'DRA BA'I BSAM PA'I STOBS YOD NA LUS GTONG BA YIN LA, BSAM PA
DE YANG SA MA THOB PA LA 'ONG BA MI 'GAL BAS, SA MA THOB PAS
KYANG LUS GTONG [51a] BA GSUNGS SO,,

If a person possesses an intention with this degree of strength, then they will be able to give away their body; and it is no contradiction to say that this intention can come to one even before they attain the bodhisattva levels. As such, it has been stated that even those who have yet to attain these levels do give away their bodies.

The Different Kinds of the Perfection of Giving

[SBYIN PA SBYIN BYA LEN PO GTONG POS STONG,
,JIG RTEN 'DAS PA'I PHA ROL PHYIN ZHES BYA,]

**[Giving which is void
Of anything which is given;
And anyone who receives it;
And anyone who gives it
Is what we say
Is a “perfection beyond the world.”
I.61-62]**

BZHI PA NI, GTONG BA'I SEMS PA'I SBYIN PA 'DI YANG SBYIN PAR BYA
BA DANG, LEN PA PO DANG, GTONG BA POR BDEN PAR DMIGS PAS
STONG PA'I SHES RAB ZAG PA MED PAS ZIN PA NI, 'JIG RTEN LAS 'DAS
PA'I PHA ROL TU PHYIN PA ZHES BYA'O, ZHES SHES RAB KYI PHA ROL
TU PHYIN PA CHEN MO LAS GSUNGS TE,

This brings us to the fourth step of our description of the high quality where we bring our practice to a higher level: a presentation of the divisions of the perfection of giving. Now the great *Perfection of Wisdom* says that—

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That *perfection which we say is “beyond the world”* is where the giving of the bodhisattva doing the act is done in a way where it is imbued with immaculate wisdom: where the object *which is given*; and *the person receiving it*; and *the person giving it* are all *void of being* considered to exist in truth.⁹⁹

MI DMIGS PA'I 'PHAGS PA'I MNYAM GZHAG NI 'JIG RTEN LAS 'DAS PA
YIN PAS DES ZIN PA'I SBYIN PA YANG 'JIG RTEN LAS 'DAS PA'I PHA ROL
TU PHYIN PAR BZHAG LA, MI DMIGS PA DES MA ZIN PA'I SBYIN PA NI
'JIG RTEN PA'O,,

The deep meditative state of a realized being who is no longer looking at things as coming from themselves is beyond the world; as such, we say that the giving which is imbued with this state of mind is a perfection which is beyond the world. Giving which is not imbued with no longer looking at things that way then is considered to be worldly.

DE GNYIS KYI RNAM PAR DBYE BA NI DON DAM PA'I BYANG SEMS MA
THOB PA DAG GIS MNGON SUM DU NGES PAR MI NUS SO,,

The distinction between these two is something that those who have yet to achieve the ultimate form of the Wish for enlightenment are incapable of perceiving directly.

DE LA PHA ROL NI 'KHOR BA'I RGYA MTSO'I PHAR 'GRAM DANG, NGOGS
TE SGRIB GNYIS MA LUS PA SPANGS PA'I SANGS RGYAS SO, ,PHA ROL TU
SON PA NI PHA ROL TU PHYIN PA'O,,

⁹⁹ *Empty of being considered to exist in truth*: See ff. 17a-17b; 25a; and 73a of *The Perfection of Wisdom in 18,000 Lines* (%S72, KL00010-1). The reference at f. 25a is I believe the only specific use in the Kangyur of the term “three spheres” (*'khor gsum*) in connection with this idea of the emptiness of the gift, the giver, and recipient. It does occur much more frequently by the time of the Tengyur, and of course greatly more in the native Tibetan commentarial tradition.

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When we say “beyond” here, what we’re referring to is the far side or shore of the ocean of cyclic existence: the state of enlightenment where one has rid oneself of every form of the two obstacles. The word “perfection” as we use it here means “passed” or “gone” to that far shore.

'DIR 'GREL PAR TSIG PHYI MA YOD NA MI MNGON PAR MI BYA'O, ZHES
BYA BA'I MTSAN NYID 'DIS LAS KYI RNAM PAR DBYE BA MI MNGON PAR
MA BYAS PAS GZUGS SU GYUR PA'AM, PRi shO DA RA LA SOGS PA YIN
PA'I PHYIR MA'I MTHA' CAN NYID DU BZHAG GO ,

On this point, the autocommentary says—

Remember the injunction that “If there is an elided *m* letter, don’t fail to show it”; meaning that we should leave the final *m* as it is when we have an instance of the accusative case: we shouldn’t fail to represent it physically, as we would with examples such as *pirshodara*.¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ *Examples such as “pirshodara”*: The example named is variously misspelled throughout the history of the literature and is correctly rendered as *pr̥ṣodara*, meaning “a spotted belly” (of an animal such as a deer; see for example p. 667 of *A Dictionary, Canarese and English*, by Rev. William Reeve and Daniel Sanderson, %E8). It is an example in classical native works of Sanskrit grammar of a word which results from the combination of two other words, where the first of the words is truncated during the combining.

Thus, *pr̥ṣodara* is said to result from the joining of *pr̥ṣat* (*spotted*) with *udara* (*belly*), with the truncation of the *-t* and a phonetic combination of the *a-* and the *-u* into *o*.

In our case here, we are instructed *not* to perform a *pr̥ṣodara* type of truncation with the word *pāramita*; since otherwise it would become *pāreta*. This single example *pr̥ṣodara* became by extension the name of the entire class of combinations which exhibit this same behavior, along with three or four other classes of compounds within the study of *nirukta*, or the resolution of difficult ancient terms.

Students of yoga may be interested to learn that the name of the author of the *Yoga Sutra*—Patāñjali—is said to exemplify this same type of truncation, from the combination of *patat* (*falling*) with *añjali* (*open palms filled with offered water*);

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ZHES GSUNGS PA'I DON PAndI TA DZA YA A'A NAN+TA 'DI LTAR 'CHAD DE, RGYA GAR GYI SKAD LA PHA ROL LA P'A RA DANG, PHYIN PA LA AI T'A ZHES PA YOD LA, TSIG GNYIS SDUD PAR BYED PA'I DUS SU P'A RA LA RNAM DBYE GNYIS PA'I GCIG TSIG AAM BYIN, AI T'A'I RJES SU RNAM DBYE DANG PO'I TSIG SU BYIN TE, P'A RA [51b] MRA {MA\} AI T'A PA RA MI T'A ZHES TSIG BSDU BAR BYAS NA, AAM DANG SU MI MNGON PAR 'GRO BA YIN NA'ANG, 'DIR TSIG PHYI MA YOD NA MI MNGON PAR MI BYA'O, ZHES PA'I SGRA'I RTZA BA'I TSIG GIS SU MI MNGON PAR BYED KYANG AAM MI MNGON PAR MA BYAS PA'O,,

The meaning of these lines is explained by Pandit Jayananda as follows:

In Sanskrit, the word for “other side” is *para*; whereas the word for “gone” is *ita*. When the two words are combined, we add a final *m* to the end of the *para*, to represent the singular form of the second grammar case [the accusative]. After the *ita* we would add a *-su* ending for the first grammar case [the nominative]. Thus we have *param* and *ita*, which combine into *paramita*. And although an *m* and *su* could have not been shown, we are told here “don’t fail to show it” when a final *m* could have been elided. This is an instruction from the root texts on the study of Sanskrit, saying that—although we may drop the *su* physically—we should not do so with the *m*.

referring to the fact that this saint is said to have been born by falling from heaven into the cupped hands of his mother, as she made an offering of sacred water. See the classical Sanskrit grammar *Siddhanta Kaumadi* (S73, pp. 589-@), as well as notes on *pr̥ṣodara* compounds by Max Muller, Rajendralala Mitra, and Nilmani Mukerjea in the records of the Asiatic Society of Bengal (E6, pp. 2-4; and E7, p. 179).

The reference in the *Autocommentary* may be found at f. 230a (S3, TD03862), where the word is miscarved as *preṣodara* {check the carving}.

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MTSAN NYID 'DIS LAS KYI RNAM PAR DBYE BA ZHES PA NI, RNAM DBYE
GNYIS PA'I GCIG TSIG AAM MO, ,DE MI MNGON PAR MA BYAS PAS P'A
RA MI T'A ZHES PA'I SGRA'I RANG BZHIN DU GYUR PA'O,,

The part about an “injunction” concerning the “accusative case” is a reference to the singular form of the second grammar case, where the ending is *m*. When you don’t fail to represent it, you come out with *paramita*, simply by the way that Sanskrit is structured.

PRi shO DA RA LA SOGS PA'I NANG NA P'A RA MRA {%MA\} ZHES PA'I
TSIG MA'I MTHA' CAN TE, P'A RA MRA {%MA\} ZHES BRJOD PA YIN PAS
MI MNGON PAR MI BYA'O ZHES BSHAD DE, AA MRA {%MA\} GYI AA
PHYIS MRA {%MA\} BZHAG PA LA AI BYIN PAS MI T'AR SONG ZHES
PA'O,,

And so the *param* here, with *m* at the end, needs to be pronounced as *param*, and we “should not fail to show” the *m*, as is done within words such as *pirshodara*. Technically, the ending here is *-am*, and we drop the *a* and leave the *-m*, adding the following *i* straight on so we come out with *mita*. And so this is what’s being said in this section.¹⁰¹

DANG PO'I TSIG SU NI MA DAG PA 'DRA BAS SI YIN NAM DPYAD DO,,

It seems as though the syllable *su* mentioned in the first part here might be a misspelling; I think perhaps it is supposed to be *si*—this is something that should be examined further.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ *This is what’s being said:* See ff. 85a-85b (%S1, TD03870); the ending *-itā* in the Tibetan transcription in the *Illumination* here is simply *-ita* in the corresponding Tengyur passage.

¹⁰² *Should be examined further:* This seems to be a question of how we refer to the ending *-s* for the nominative singular of a neuter Sanskrit noun of an *-a* class; here, *pāramita*. (This is the ending which then becomes *-h*.) I wonder if both the *su* and *si* under discussion here might not simply be a final *-s* followed by a

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BOD KHA CIG PHA ROL TU PHYIN PA'I RGYA SKAD LA P'A RAM AI T'A
ZHES PA YOD PA'I RA'I KLAD KOR GRAL DU BZHAG PAS P'A RAM AI
T'AR 'GYUR BA LA, MTSAMS SBYAR BA'I TSE AI YIG GI GI GU MA LA BYIN,
AA PHYIS PAS MI T'AR SONG ZER BA SOGS KYI MUN SPRUL GYI BSHAD
PA MANG DU SNANG NA YANG, PAndI TA'I BSHAD PA SNGAR BKOD PA
NYID LEGS SO,,

It appears that here some Tibetan writers have indulged in quite a few different harebrained explanations such as saying—

In explaining the original Sanskrit for the word *perfection*, we take the little circle over the *r* in the word *pāramitā* [पारं अिता] and set it down in the row with the other letters, and so we come out with *pāram itā* [पारम अिता]. When we do the phonetic joining here, the *i* [ि]vowel sign of the *i* [अि] changes to *ma*; then the *a* of the *ma* is dropped, and we come out with the *mita*.

Nonetheless, it is only the explanation of the Pandit, as we have just presented it, which is well done.

SBYIN PA SBYIN BYA ZHES PA'I RKANG PA GNYIS KYIS 'KHOR GSUM MI
DMIGS PAR RTOGS PA'I SHES RAB BZUNG NAS, DES ZIN PA'I SBYIN PA'I
PHAR PHYIN BYE BRAG TU BSHAD PA YIN TE, DES MA ZIN PA'I SBYIN PA
LA SOGS PA RNAMS NI, SHES RAB KYIS ZIN PA'I PHAR PHYIN DANG
'DRA BAS PHAR PHYIN ZHES BYA'O,,

The two lines [in the Tibetan] which speak about a “giving” and “anything which is given” are identifying a state of wisdom which perceives that the three spheres of any particular act have no existence; and, more particularly, they are explaining the perfection of giving which is imbued with this wisdom. Acts

virama stroke, which when utilized in a Tibetan manuscript is very frequently misinterpreted as a vowel sign or subjoined *r*. Or perhaps there really is a tradition of referring to this final *-s* by itself as *su* or *si*.

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of giving and the rest which are not thus imbued are referred to as “perfections,” but only because they resemble perfections which *are* imbued with this wisdom.

[@52a] DE YANG SHES RAB KYIS MA ZIN KYANG BYANG CHUB CHEN
POR BSNOS PAS ZIN PAS PHA ROL TU 'GRO BAR NGES PA LA BZHAG
PA'I PHYIR, SBYIN PA'I PHAR PHYIN GYI MING RNYED PAR 'GYUR RO,,

And—even if it is not imbued with that wisdom—an act of giving can still deserve to be called “the perfection of giving” if it is imbued with a dedication of this act to achieving the Great Enlightenment; since then we can say, with certainty, that it will take one to the other side; [which is, again, the literal meaning of the Sanskrit word *paramita*].

DES NA PHA ROL TU PHYIN PA'I DON LA PHA ROL 'DIR PHYIN PA ZHES
LAS LA SBYAR NA, SANGS RGYAS KYI SAR PHYIN PA YIN LA, 'DIS PHA
ROL TU PHYIN PAR BYED PA ZHES BYED PA LA SBYAR NA, SLOB LAM NA
YANG PHAR PHYIN YOD DO,,

Thus if we render the expression “perfection” as meaning “arrived here at the other side” —as referring to the finished deed—then we would have to say that it connotes having reached the level of a Buddha. If rather we render it as “that which gets you to the other side”—something like a “perfectionizer”—then we can say that a perfection can be present even when we are still on the paths of learning.

SBYIN PA LA BSHAD PA DES TSUL KHRIMS LA SOGS PA LA YANG SEMS
BSKYED DANG, BSNOS BA DANG, SHES RAB KYIS ZIN PA SO SO BA
DANG GNYIS KA RIG PA BYA'O,,

You should understand that this clarification of the act of giving can be applied—both individually, and to the pair—when we are speaking of cases where leading an ethical way of life, and the rest, are said to be imbued by the Wish for enlightenment, dedication, and wisdom.

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[G SUM PO DAG LA CHAGS SKYES GYUR PAS DE,
,JIG RTEN PA YI PHA ROL PHYIN CES BSTAN,]

**[When a person feels an attachment
To all the three of these,
This has been taught
As a “perfection of the world.”**

I.63-64]

SBYIN PA'I 'KHOR GSUM PO DAG LA CHAGS PA STE BDEN ZHEN SKYES
PAR GYUR PAS BCINGS NA NI, SBYIN PA DE LA 'JIG RTEN PA'I PHA ROL
TU PHYIN PA ZHES MDO LAS BSTAN NO,,

When a person feels an attachment to all three of these spheres within the act of giving—that is, when they are chained by a feeling where they believe that these things exist in truth—this has been taught in the sutras as a “perfection of the world.”¹⁰³

DE LTAR BSHAD PA RNAMS LA DA LTA NAS NYAMS SU LEN TSUL NI,
LUS GZHAN LA STER BA DANG, DGA' BA SKYED TSUL KHYAD PAR CAN
RNAMS NI MOS YUL DU BYAS NAS SBYONG LA, ZANG ZING GI SBYIN PA
GZHAN RNAMS NI YAR MAR GYI ZHING LA BR TEN NAS, CHU YAN
CHAD GTONG BA'I SGO NAS RGYUN LDAN DU SOG PA DANG, DE'I TSE
'KHOR GSUM MI DMIGS PAR RTOGS PA'I SHES RAB KYIS ZIN PAR BYA'O,,

How do we put into practice, starting right now, all that we have explained here? Things like giving away our own flesh to others, and having some extraordinary feeling of joy about it, are practices that we can practice as aspirations. Things like giving material stuff away to others—to those who are both higher and lower objects of offering—are karmas that we can collect on a continual basis. As we do, we should make sure these practices are imbued with the wisdom which realizes that none of the three spheres exist.

¹⁰³ *A perfection of the world*: See for example f. 38a of *The Book of the Eon of Good Fortune* (%S74, KL00094), which discusses the concept at length.

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DE YANG RANG GI LUS DANG LONGS SPYOD DANG DGE RTZA GSUM
SEMS CAN GYI DON DU BSAM PAS YANG YANG GTONG BA DANG, MA
BTANG YANG DE RNAMS 'JIG PAS 'DOR DGOS LA, GTONG TSOD 'DRA BA
LA SNGON DU RANG GI BSAM PAS GTONG BA [52b] MCHOG YIN PA
RNAMS BSAM STE,

If you think about it, we have to give up all these things, just the same: we can either give them away consciously—give away the three of our flesh, our things, and the good things we have done—for the sake of others; or we will have to give them up later anyway, even if we refuse to do so now, but in a state of terror. Think then to yourself that the very best thing to do would be to give them away before that day, now, purposely.

SPYOD 'JUG LAS,
,LUS DANG DE BZHIN LONGS SPYOD DANG,
,DUS GSUM DGE BA THAMS CAD KYANG,
,SEMS CAN KUN GYI DON BSGRUB PHYIR,
,PHANGS PA MED PAR GTANG BAR BYA,
ZHES DANG,

As the *Guide to the Bodhisattoa's Way of Life* puts it,

Give up everything you have:
Your own flesh, the things you own,
And the good things you do
In the past, in the present, in the future—
All for the sake
Of every living being.¹⁰⁴

,THAMS CAD BTANG BAS MYA NGAN 'DA',
,BDAG BLO MYA NGAN 'DAS PA SGRUB,
,THAMS CAD GTONG BAR CHABS CIG LA,

¹⁰⁴ *Give up everything*: See f. 7a of Master Shantideva's classic at %S47, TD03871. The following quotation is from the same page.

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,SEMS CAN RNAMS LA BTANG BA MCHOG
,CES GSUNGS PA LTAR BYA'O,,

We reach nirvana
Giving up all we have;
Let me reach it then
Within my own mind:
It's best, when I give it all up,
To do the giving
To every living being.

The Moonstone

[,DE LTAR RGYAL BA'I SRAS KYI YID LA RAB GNAS SHING,
,DAM PA'I RTEN LA 'OD CHAGS MDZES PA RNYED GYUR PA'I,
,DGA' BA 'DI NI NOR BU CHU SHEL JI BZHIN DU,
,MUN PA STUG PO THAMS CAD RNAM PAR BSAL NAS RGYAL,]

**[Thus does the happiness we have found
Rest, perfectly, within the mind
Of a child of the Victors;
Thus does its light, like a moonstone,
Lend great beauty to this ultimate setting;
Thus does it clear away and conquer
All the masses of darkness.**

I.65-68]

GSUM PA NI, DA NI SNGAR JI SKAD BRJOD PA'I SA RAB DGA' ZHES PA
ZAG MED KYI SHES PA'I KHYAD PAR GYIS, SA DE'I YON TAN MDOR
BSDUS TE BRJOD PA'I SGO NAS BSTAN PA NI,

This bring us to our third and final point from above; that is, we will give a concluding summary of the first level, named Perfect Happiness, by describing its high qualities, singling out the quality of immaculate knowledge.

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SA RAB TU DGA' BA 'DI NI NOR BU CHU SHEL ZLA BA'I DKYIL 'KHOR
BZHIN DU GNAS SO, 'DI LA ZLA BA DANG CHOS MTHUN GSUM LAS,
DANG PO GNAS MTHON POR GNAS PA NI, SNGAR BSHAD PA DE LTA
BUR SA'I YON TAN THOB PA'I RGYAL BA'I SRAS SA DANG PO BA'I YID LA
RAB TU GNAS PA'I PHYIR, LAM MTHON POR GNAS PAS ZLA BA NAM
MKHA'I GNAS MTHON POR GNAS PA DANG 'DRA'O,,

The bodhisattva level of Perfect *Happiness* is *like* the disc of the moon, which is made of *moonstone*. The simile of the moon for this level extends to three characteristics—the first being that it rests in a high place. This level *rests, perfectly, within the mind of a child of the Victors*—a bodhisattva—who has attained the high qualities of this level, as we have described above. As such, it rests in a very high place; and so it is similar to the way in which moon rests in a high place in the sky.

SA DANG PO NI BYANG SEMS DE'I YID KYI CHA SHAS SHIG YIN PAS DE
LA GNAS ZHES BYA STE, DPER NA MGO LA MIG GNAS PA BZHIN NO,,

When we say that the first bodhisattva level “rests” in the mind of this bodhisattva, what we mean is that it is a part of their mind—in the same way that, for example, we say that the eye rests in the head.

SA DANG PO'I DON DAM PA'I SEMS DE RANG GANG LA GNAS PA'I DAM
PA STE MCHOOG GI RTEN DE'I YID DE, YE SHES KYI 'OD CHAGS PAS
MDZES PA RNYED PAR GYUR PA'I PHYIR, ZLA BAS RANG GI RTEN GYI
NAM MKHA' 'OD DKAR POS MDZES PAR BYED PA DANG 'DRA'O,,

The ultimate state of mind of a person at the first bodhisattva level covers the “*ultimate*”—meaning the high *setting* of the person in whom this state rests—with the *light* of understanding, thus *lending it great beauty*. It is thus again similar to the moon, which with its alabaster light lends great beauty to its setting: the sky.

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YANG SA DANG PO NI RANG GI MI MTHUN PHYOGS MTHONG SPANG
RNAMS LAS RGYAL TE GNAS PA'I PHYIR, [53a] ZLA BAS MUN PA STUG
PO STE 'THUG PO THAMS CAD RNAM PAR BSAL NAS GNAS PA DANG
'DRA'O,,

We can also say that the first bodhisattva level rests in a state where we have *conquered*, or rid ourselves of, what works against it: the negativities which we eliminate at the path of seeing. As such, it resembles the way in which the moon rests in a state where it has *cleared away all the “masses”* or thick clouds of *darkness*.

[DBU MA LA 'JUG PA LAS, ,SEMS BSKYED PA DANG PO'O,,]

[This concludes the first wish for enlightenment, or chapter, of *Entering the Middle Way*.]

DBU MA LA 'JUG PA'I RGYA CHER BSHAD PA DGONGS PA RAB TU GSAL
BA LAS, DON DAM PA'I SEMS BSKYED PA DANG PO'I RNAM PAR BSHAD
PA'O,,

*This concludes our explanation of the first ultimate “wish for enlightenment,” or chapter, of *An Illumination of the True Thought*, an expanded explanation of *Entering the Middle Way*.*