



The Devil Debates An Angel
by the First Panchen Lama

Session 18
Mexico City, July 2024

The Devil Debates an Angel

*,,GZHI LAM 'BRAS GSUM PHYAG RGYA CHEN PO'I NGO BO NGOS 'DZIN LAS
BRTZAMS PA'I SHES RAB DANG BDAG 'DZIN GNYIS KYI GSHAGS 'DEBS,,

1

This is an argument which occurred one time between Wisdom and her opponent, whose name was The Tendency to Think that Things are Real. It all started when Wisdom was identifying what the word “Mahamudra” meant, at three different stages in a person’s life: in the way things normally are for them; in the way they are as this person practices the spiritual path; and as they are when the person reaches the fruit of their practice.

We are about halfway through this epic poem by His Holiness the First Panchen Lama, Lobsang Chukyi Gyeltsen (1567?-1662):

Problems with kids & fogeys

[294]

,’O NA PHUNG PO ‘DI YANG NI,
,DANG PO THOG MA MED DUS NAS,
,LTOS [f. 252a] MED GRUB PAR YOD DAM CI,

Well then, are you saying
That this particular body & mind
Has also existed—
Since the very first days,
For time with no beginning,
Independent of anything else?

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[295]

,YOD NA 'GRO BA GZHAN LNGA RU,
,SKYE BA MED PAS KHYOD LA 'GAL,
,MI LUS TSE 'DIR 'PHRAL BLANGS BZHIN,
,THOG MED GRUB PA'I KHAS LEN 'GAL,

And if so, then since
There should never have been
Any births into any of the other
Of the five different forms of life,
You contradict yourself.

You contradict the fact
That for time without beginning
We have taken on these births,

In just the same way
That in this present moment
We have slipped on a human body
Here within this life.

[296]

,BU CHUNG NAS NI RIM PAR NI,
,RGAN PO'I LUS SU GYUR BZHIN DU,
,THOG MED DUS NAS RGAN PO'I LUS,
, 'DI GA BCOS MIN LTOS MED DU,
,GRUB PA'I KHAS LEN 'DI 'DRA AANG,
,MA RIG YIN KYANG GAD MO 'CHOR,

Our bodies transform,
Step by step,
From the form of a child
Into that of the aged.

How then can you
Take the position

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That this same body
Of the elderly one
Has existed for time
Without a beginning,
Never refreshed,
Existing in and of itself?

Yes, we know —
It's just your misunderstanding,
But how can we keep
A burst of laughter
From escaping out our lips?

[297]

,AA MAR SKYES PA YIN BZHIN DU,
, 'GYUR MED RGAN PO'I RANG BZHIN DU,
,GRUB GRUB 'DRA BA 'DI GAR NA,
,RGAN POR AA MA'I LUS SU NI,
,ZHUGS PA'I TSUL 'DI KHYOD KYIS SMROS,

On one hand then
You have somebody
Taking birth inside their mother;

Who on the other hand
Keeps going on
In the form of a fogey unchanged.

Tell us now
Just how this works:
Someone here who's elderly,
And who's entered into
The body of their mother!

A list of different “mines”

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[298]

,NGA PHUNG BDEN PA'I GCIG GRUB NA,
,PHUNG PO LA CHAGS BDEN 'DZIN DE,
, 'GYUR BA MED PAS SEMS LA NI,
,BDEN 'DZIN CI YI PHYIR NA SKYE,

If the "me" really is
One and the same
With my body & mind
In a way which is real,

Then our habit of grasping
To some true existence
Of our body and our mind
Would have to be unchangeable.

How then could we ever begin
To have in our mind fresh ideas
Of holding things as true?

[299]

,SKYE NA GZHAN 'GYUR MED PA 'GAL,
,SKYE BA MED PA'I DON DANG 'GAL,
,KUN LA 'DI YI RIGS BSGRES NA,
, 'DI 'DRA'I RIGS LA ZAD MTHA' MED,

If those ideas did begin,
Then that would contradict
Your idea that nothing could ever
Change into something else.

It would contradict
Your idea
That none of these would start.

And since this same logic applies

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Equally to every other thing there is,
The things that are really endless
Are the applications of these thoughts.

[300]

,NGA DANG PHUNG PO BDEN PA YI,
,THA DAD DU NI GRUB PA NA,
,’BREL MED DON GZHAN YIN DGOS PAS,
,LAG PA NA YANG NGA NA ZHES,
,BDAG GIR BYED PA ’BREL MED YIN,

And now suppose instead
That the “me” existed as something
Which was separate, in truth,
From the body and the mind.

In this case, this “me”
And body & mind would have to be
Completely unrelated, separate things.

And then it would be
Completely irrelevant
To consider anything as my own:
To say, when I hurt my hand,
That I had hurt myself.

[301]

,NGA YI MGO DANG NGA YI KHA,
,NGA YI SNA RTZE MIG DBANG SOGS,
,NGA YI LUS DANG NGA YI GROD,
,NGA YI RKED TSIGS PUS MO DANG,
,NGA YI LTO SKOM GOS LA SOGS,
,NGA YI ZHING KHANG NGA YI GA-YOG
,NGA YI CHUNG MA BU SOGS DANG,
,NGA YI DNGOS PO THAMS CAD LA,
,DMIGS NAS NGA YIR ’DZIN PA YI,

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,BLO NI SKYE BA [f. 252b] 'BREL MED YIN,

So too would it become
Completely irrelevant
To ever begin to feel a thought
Where we considered a thing
And held it to be mine;

For none of them would ever be
My head, my mouth,
The tip of my nose,
The senses of my eyes,
My whole body, or my belly,
Or my spine, or knees,
The hunger in my stomach,
The clothes upon my back;

My fields, my house,
The ones who work for me;

My wife, my children,
My anything else—
Each & every thing of mine.

[302]

,BDEN PA'I 'BREL MED DON GZHAN LA,
, 'BREL BA GTAN MED AA THANG CHAD,
,BDEN 'DZIN DANG NI SHES RAB BZHIN,
,LHAN CIG GNAS PA'I SKABS MED PAS,

And don't keep telling me
That if a connection isn't real,
Then there's no connection at all—
You wear my patience thin!

According to you,
It would have to be meaningless

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For us ever to look at a thing
That was mine, and think
That it was mine,

Since me and the thing—
Like the habit of grasping
To things as real, and Wisdom herself—
Could never live together
Within a single place.

[303]

,NGA YI BA LA DMIGS PA YI,
,NGA YIR 'DZIN PA'I DON MED PAS,
,NGA YI BA LA BDAG GIR NI,
,BYED PA MA RIG KHYOD LA 'GAL,
, 'GAL YANG BYED NA RGYU MTSAN MED,
,DE BAS KHA ROG 'DUG NA DGA',

Since there's no point
In looking at the things that are mine
And considering them to be mine,

It's a contradiction,
Mr. Misunderstanding,
For you to claim the things
That are "mine" for you
As being yours.

And there's not much point
To keep on doing the same thing
Where it's a blatant contradiction.

I think maybe
You should take a break,
And sit still for a bit.

[304]

,NGA PHUNG BDEN PA'I DU MAR NI,
,GRUB NA NGA PHUNG BDEN PA YI,
,GCIG TU GRUB PAR 'GYUR BA YIN,

If what I consider “me”
Is, in truth, the many parts
Of my body & mind,
Then my “me” must also be
A single thing with body & mind.

Some scripture in support

[305]

,RGYU MTSAN RIN CHEN PHRENG BA LAS,
,GCIG MED PHYIR NA DU MA DANG,
,ZHES DANG GZHAN YANG DU MA NI,
,YOD NA GCIG KYANG YOD DGOS SO,

The reason for this
Can be found
In the *String of Precious Jewels*,
Where it speaks of things
Not being more than one,
Since they are not one.

And in any case,
If there could ever be more than one,
There would have to be
A one as well.

[306]

,NGA DANG PHUNG PO GCIG PAR THAL,
,NGA PHUNG BDEN PA'I GCIG YIN PHYIR,
,DOD NA DBU MA 'JUG PAR BKAG

And isn't it the case
That the "me" and my body & mind
Are one and the same?
Because the "me" and my body & mind
Are a one and the same that's real.

Oh you may agree to it;
But *Entering the Middle Way*
Proves that idea wrong.

Problems with splitting the me's and mine's

[307]
,NGA PHUNG BDEN PA'I GCIG GRUB NA,
,PHUNG PO'I CHA SHAS KUN DANG NI,
,BDEN PA'I GCIG TU GRUB DGOS PAS,
,SHAR NUB LHO BYANG DBUS DBYE BA'I,
,PHYOGS NI GANG DU GCIG PAR 'GYUR,

If the "me" were,
In reality,
One with my body & mind,

Then the "me" would have to be,
In reality,
One with each and every one
Of the separate parts of body & mind.

And then the "me" would be
One with each of the separate
Directions of east, and west,
South, and north, and middle.

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[308]

,DBUS CHAR MTSON NAS GCIG NA NI,
,DE LA'ANG SHAR NUB DBUS DBYE'O,

And then the same with,
For example,
The parts of the middle itself;
For it too can be divided
Into its own east & west & middle.

[309]

,DE BZHIN THA MAR RDUL PHRAN NI,
,LCAGS RDUL TZAM DU GSIL BA'I TSE,
,RDUL MED MA GYUR BAR DU NI,
,GSIL BA'I TSE NA BDEN 'DZIN KHYOD,
,BDEN PA'I GCIG TU SU DANG 'GROGS,

And it would be the same
As well all the way down
To the tiny atoms of stuff:

Suppose you reduced things
Down to iron particles,
And then all the way past that
To the point where
There would no longer be
Any particle at all.

What real single one is it then,
My Friend Who Grasps to Real,
That you relate yourself to
When things are reduced to that?

[310]

,NGA PHUNG BDEN PA'I RANG BZHIN DU,

, 'GYUR BA MED PA GANG DU SONG,
, 'GYUR GYIN 'GYUR GYIN MI 'GYUR ZER,
, 'DI 'DRA 'I BDEN GRUB YA MTSAN CAN,,

Where then would your “me”
Run off to—the one
That was unchangeable,
And truly in nature body & mind?

Oh this real existence of yours—
The kind that’s always changing,
And then changing over again—
But which still you say is changeless,
Is truly something amazing!

Mr. Misunderstanding defends himself

[311]
,,BDEN 'DZIN GYIS [f. 253a] NI LAN SMRAS PA,

And then the Habit
of Seeing Things as Real replied—

[312]
,KHYOD KYIS KHA STOBS CI LABS KYANG,
, 'GRO BA YONGS LA GA-YO 'GUL MED,
,DES NA NGA YANG GA-YO 'GUL MED,
,RDO LA CHOS BSHAD BYAS PA BZHIN,

You put all this effort
Into talking to people,
But not a single one of them
Moves then an inch.

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And because of that,
I don't have
To move an inch either!

You may as well
Preach your dharma
To a pile of stones.

[312]

,KHYOD RANG KHA NI NA BAR ZAD,
,YANG NA NYI MA PHYID LA RE,
,DE YI RGYU MTSAN CI STE NA,
,LHA NI BAG MED PA YIS GA-YENGGS,

Soon your mouth
Will hurt, from all
Its useless efforts;

Or else the sun
Will slip
Behind the horizon.

And do you
Really want to know why?

The worldly gods
Are too busy playing.

Everyone's too busy

d[313]

,LHA MIN PHRAG DOG GIS NI GA-YENGGS,
,DUD 'GRO GCIG LA GCIG ZAS GA-YENGGS,
,YI DVAGS BKREN ZHING PHONGS PAS GA-YENGGS,

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,DMYAL BA TSA GRANG SDUG BSNGAL GA-YENGs,

The demigods
Are too busy being jealous.

The animals
Are too busy eating each other.

The hungry ghosts
Are too busy starving,
And living with nothing.

The hell beings
Are too busy with the pain
Of burning & freezing.

[314]

,MI RNAMS LA LA YOD PAS GA-YENGs,
,LA LA MED PA KHO NAS GA-YENGs,
,LA LA GSOD PA KHO NAS GA-YENGs,
,LA LA RKU 'PHROG KHO NAS GA-YENGs,
,LA LA PHRA MA KHO NAS GA-YENGs,

Some of the humans
Are too busy
Thinking things are there;

And some of the humans
Are too busy
Thinking that nothing is there.

Some of them too
Are too busy
With killing;

Some are too busy
With robbing, and stealing;

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Some are too busy
Trying to say things
That will split up others.

[315]

,LA LA CHOS BRDZU KHO NAS GA-YENGs,
,LA LA BSGOM BRDZU KHO NAS GA-YENGs,
,LA LA ZOG CHOS KHO NAS GA-YENGs,
,LA LA GA-YO RGYU {%SGYU} KHO NAS GA-YENGs,

Some are too busy
Trying to follow
Fake teachings;

Some are too busy
Trying to do
Fake meditations;

Some are too busy
With teachings
That are simple lies;

Some are too busy
With the lying itself.

[316]

,LA LA SO NAM TSONG GIS GA-YENGs,
,LA LA BUD MED KHO NAS GA-YENGs,
,LA LA CHANG 'THUNG KHO NAS GA-YENGs,
,LA LA GNYID DANG LE LOS GA-YENGs,

Some are too busy
With their farming,
Or their selling.

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Some are too busy
With a man,
Or a woman.

Some are too busy
With drinking,
And drugs;

Some are too busy
With sleeping,
Or simple laziness.

[317]

,LA LA LONG GTAM KHO NAS GA-YENGs,
,LA LA BZO DANG RTZED MOS GA-YENGs,
,LA LA CI YANG MI BSAMS PA'I,
,THOM YUR LUS PA KHO NAS GA-YENGs,

Some are too busy
With talking all day;

Some are too busy
With making things,
Or entertainment;

Some are too busy
Simply spending their day
In a fog without any thinking.

[318]

,LA LA MTSAMS MED LAS KYIS GA-YENGs,
,PHAL CHER MI DGE BCU YIS GA-YENGs,
,DE RNAMS LA NI KHYOD KYI DE,
,DGOS PA MED CING GO RGYU MED,

Some are too busy

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Committing
The immediate bad deeds;

And the majority
Are too busy
With the ten non-virtues.

They have no need
For you,
And can't understand you
Anyway.

[319]
,THOS MED BSGOM CHEN PHAL CHER GYIS,
,KHYOD KYI DE NI GO BA MED,
,THOS LDAN MKHAS [f. 253b] PA RNAMS KYIS NI,
,YID KYANG MI CHES NYAMS LEN MED,

In fact, the majority
Of those “great meditators”
Who never took the time
To study the scriptures
Don't understand you either.

And even those
Who are scholars,
Those with great learning,
Don't believe what you say —
Nor put it into practice.

Some teachings are wasted

[320]
,SKYON NI CI 'DUG BLTA BLTA NAS,
,BSGOM PA'I LONG YANG MED PA YIN,

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,GAL TE LONG YOD GYUR NA NI,
,THOS PA'I DUS DE BSGOM TSE MED,

Devoting all their time
To trying to find some mistakes
Among all the things you teach,

They end up without any time
To do their meditations.

And even if they were
To find some time,
They manage
During their studies
To ignore their meditation.

[321]

,NAM GZHUG CI YANG MI SHES PA'I,
,BSGOM CHEN GCIG LA BLO GTAD 'CHA',
,NGES {%DES?} NA NGA NI GAD MO 'CHOR,
,KHYOD RANG YID THANG CHAD PA DE,
,CHOD PA RANG DU BAS BAR GDA',

And so there always
Comes a time
When they decide to put
All their faith into some
Supposedly "great meditator."

When I watch
All this going on,
Sometimes I just have to
Break out laughing.

And I know that you,
For your part, must
Start to feel discouraged.

You will only
Exhaust yourself,
And your days will come
To an end.

Wrong ways are easy ways

[322]

,KHYOD KYI PHYAG RGYA CHEN PO DE,
,BSGOM PA DKA' LA SKYE BA NYUNG,
,NGA YI PHYAG RGYA CHEN PO DE,
,BSGOM PA SLA LA SKYE BA MANG,

This Great Seal of yours
Is difficult to practice,
And those who reach it
Are very few.

My own Great Seal though
Is easily practiced,
And many succeed
In reaching it.

[323]

,DE YI RGYU MTSAN CI STE NA,
,SKYES PA BUD MED GANG YANG RUNG,
,SDOM PA GSUM PO GANG YANG RUNG,
,LEN YANG MI DGOS BSRUNG MI DGOS,
,DBANG BSKUR RNAM DAG MI DGOS SHING,
,DAM TSIG BSRUNG YANG MI DGOS LA,
,DGE BCU SGRUB KYANG MI DGOS SHING,

And what, you ask,
Is the reason for this?

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Whether we're talking about
Women or men,

And whichever one
Of the three sets of vows
We're talking about,

These people take them,
But they don't need them—
They don't need
To keep them.

They have no need
For an authentic empowerment
Into the Way of the Diamond,

And they have no need
To keep their diamond pledges;

They don't even
Feel a need
To keep the ten good deeds!

[324]

,DOR MA RKED PAR BCAD PAS CHOG
,MA BCAD KYANG NI RUNG BA YIN,
,DBA' LO MED MI RUNG DU DGOS,
,DO LO'I GA-YU TSAR SOG RNA DGOS,

You might wear trousers
With a waist that fits
Or that doesn't fit—
It doesn't really matter.

But you better
Wear something that

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Will get you some “ooohs”!

You’re going to need
A big tantric necklace
With a huge piece of turquoise,
And outrageous earrings too.

[325]

,DUNG SKOR LCAGS KHRA RUS RGYAN SOGS,
,KHA tV’Am GA DANG ZA MA MTSON,
,GYAD THUR STAG SHI SGUL THOG SOGS,
,KA LI RKANG THUNG TSOGS PA NA,

You’ll need to whirl
A spear around,
And wear some armor;

And ornaments made
Of bone, and such.

You’ve got to have
A yogi’s staff,
With a little box
Hanging from it.

And remember
To get yourself together

Things like a
Skirt of tiger skin
Hanging down,
As you jump around;

And with all this
Assemble as well
A human skull,
And a thighbone trumpet.

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[326]

,CI YANG MED PA'I NGO SPROD BYED,
,YID LA CI YANG MI BSAM PAR,
,BSGOMS PAS TING 'DZIN 'PHRAL MANG SKYE,
,DI NI NGA YI BSGOM SGRUB MKHAN,

Lead people
By the hand
To the nothing at all;

Teach them
Not to think
Of anything.

Make their concentration
Filled with busyness
Every time they meditate;

Ah, these are
The masters of meditation
Inside my system!

[327]

,DI PHYI GNYIS KA MED PA YI,
,BSGOM GYIS 'BRAS BU SANGS RGYAS 'THOB,
,ZHAG GSUM PHOG NAS ZLA GCIG BSGOMS,
,DE YIS THAMS CAD GROL BAR 'GYUR,

And they will attain
Results of meditation
That exist in neither
This life or the next;
And they will reach
To Buddhahood.

They can fool around
For three days,
And meditate
For a month;

And with this
Every one of them
Is liberated.

**A moron who
cannot tie their shoe**

[328]

,NGA YI 'PHRIN LAS 'DI 'DRA NA,
,KHYOD [f. 254a] KYI 'PHRIN LAS GTAN MED PAS,
,KHYOD RANG YI MUG SKYES ZHAN 'DRA,
,KHYOD NI LAN GCIG YOD PA LA,

Thus are the mighty deeds
That I am capable of;
Whereas you can do
No holy work at all.

You are like a moron
That cannot tie their shoe;
You appear but once,
And then are gone.

[329]

,BSOD NAMS DPAG MED SOG DGOS NA,
,NGA NI BCAR MAR SDOD PA LA,
,PHRAG DOG KHYOD KYIS BYAS ZHAN 'DRA,
,YID THANG CHAD PAS MI 'ONG NGO,,

Those who hope

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To accumulate merit
Beyond any measure

Should come and serve
Here at my feet.

You must live
In envy of me,
Too weak to do a thing;

By now you must
Be entirely exhausted;
I suggest that now
You stop coming to me.

The Beautiful Lady reappears

[330]

„SHES RAB KYIS NI LAN SMRAS PA,

And Wisdom, she replied:

,BDEN PA ZER BA'I NGA RGYAL CAN,
,RANG LA YON TAN GCIG MED KYANG,
,KHYOD KYIS KUN LA MKHAS PAR RLOM,
,YON TAN LTA ZHOG GROGS MED PO,

Ah, you arrogant one;
You don't possess even
A single good quality,

And yet you
Grasp to this delusion
Of being a master
For everyone.

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Not only do you have
No fine qualities at all;
You lack as well anything
That would bring them.