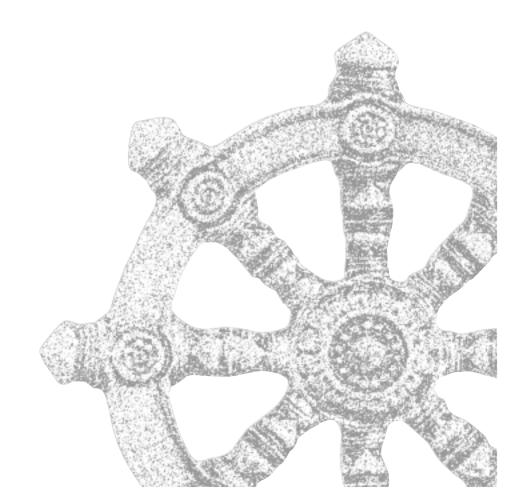


COURSE

B OF EXISTENCE

Level 2 of Higher Knowledge (Abhidharma)



THE ASIAN CLASSICS INSTITUTE

Thank you for your interest in the Asian Classics Institute's Correspondence Courses. A complete Formal Study Course consists of audio recordings from the original class series in New York, along with the supporting text materials from each class. The text and audio may be downloaded (see <u>www.world-view.org</u> in the on-line teachings section), or ordered by mail (see the Courses by mail section of the web site).

This Course consists of eleven classes, each of which has approximately two hours of audio, along with corresponding written materials. The audio can be ordered by mail, listened to online as streaming Real Audio, or downloaded onto your computer in mp3 or RA format for playback later. The written materials for this Course are contained in nine on-line files which can be downloaded, printed and assembled into a three-ring binder.

A complete Course binder contains the following sections in this order: a binder cover and spine, an overview of the teacher training program, prayers, a course syllabus, readings, class notes, homework, quizzes, a final examination, answer keys and Tibetan study materials. (The class notes were taken by a student in the original live classes, and you'll need these for reference as what's written on the board isn't always spoken.) For ease of binder assembly, be sure to print the files on three hole paper.

Each class lecture has a corresponding homework, quiz, meditation, and class notes. Most classes have readings, although not every class does. After listening to the audio from a class, the homework, quiz and meditation should be completed for that class before continuing on to the next class. The homework can be completed using your class notes, open book style. The quizzes should be completed from memory only, without the aid of notes or other materials. (A good approach is to look at an answer key *after* you have finished that homework, and to use that answer key to study for that quiz.) A final exam is given at the end of the Course.

You may grade your own papers using the supplied answer keys or, if you wish to do so, you may mail your quizzes, homework and final examination to the Asian Classics Institute to be graded. All of the quiz and final exam questions come from the homework, so the homework answer keys are also used to grade the quizzes and the final exam.

If you use the answer keys to complete your homework or quizzes by copying, please do not mail your papers to the Institute for grading. If you do mail your papers in, upon successfully passing, you will be presented with a certificate of proficiency from the Institute.

If you choose to have your papers graded by the Institute (this is completely optional), please mail all of the homework, quizzes and the final for the Course together – *DO NOT* mail papers from individual classes, or a partially completed Course. Once you have completed the entire Course, mail it to: The Asian Classics Institute, Correspondence Courses, 7055 Juniper Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80908. Please make a copy of all materials that you send to us, in case they are lost in the mail. **Be sure to provide a self-addressed, stamped envelope of appropriate size and postage to have your papers returned.**

We would like to emphasize finally that, although recordings and written materials can be extremely helpful, it is essential for serious Buddhist practitioners to meet and study directly with a qualified Teacher who can give the necessary guidance and personal instructions of the lineage.

The wisdom of Enlightened Beings has been passed down in an unbroken lineage in these teachings. May you put them into practice in your life, gain every realization, and benefit all. May every goodness grow and spread in all directions right now!



Overview of the Formal Study Course Teacher Training Program

The Six Great Books of Buddhism outlined below are the subject of a geshe's eighteen year program of monastic study. The Asian Classics Institute condenses these Six Great Books of Buddhism into a series of 15 Formal Study Courses.

Book One

Geshe Study Subject: The Perfection of Wisdom (Prajnya Paramita)

School of Buddhism Studied: Beginning Middle-Way (Madhyamika Svatrantika); also includes some material from Mind-Only (Chitta Matra)

Main Root Text: The Jewel of Realization (Abhisamaya Alamkara)

Written by: Maitreya (the Future Buddha) as related to Master Asanga, circa 350 AD Traditional period to cover this subject: Six years in a Tibetan monastery Summarized in ACI Courses:

Course II: Buddhist Refuge

Course XV: What the Buddha Really Meant

Principal monastic textbooks used for ACI Courses: Analysis of the Perfection of Wisdom, Overview of the Art of Interpretation, Overview of the Twenty Practitioners, Overview of Dependent Origination, Overview of the Form and Formless

Written by: Kedrup Tenpa Dargye (1493-1568); Gyalwang Trinley Namgyal (fl. 1850)

Typical Subjects: The three kinds of refuge; The wish for enlightenment; What is nirvana?; The proofs for emptiness; Who is Maitreya?; The twelve links of dependent origination in the Wheel of Life; Deep levels of meditation; How do we know when the Buddha was speaking figuratively?; A flow-chart for liberation.

Book Two

Geshe Study Subject: The Middle Way (Madhyamika)

School of Buddhism Studied: Advanced Middle Way (Madhyamika Prasangika); also includes some material from the Mind-Only School (Chitta Matra)

- Main Root Texts: Entering the Middle Way (Madhyamaka Avatara) and A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life (Bodhisattva Charya Avatara)
- Written by: The first by Master Chandrakirti, circa 650 AD in explanation of Master Nagarjuna, about 200 AD; and the second by Master Shantideva, circa 700 AD

Traditional period to cover this subject: Four years in a Tibetan monastery **Summarized in ACI Courses:**

Course VI: The Diamond-Cutter Sutra

Course VII: The Vows of the Bodhisattva

Courses X, XI, XII: A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life

- **Principal monastic textbooks used for ACI Courses:** Overview of the Middle Way; A Commentary on the Diamond-Cutter Sutra; The String of Shining Jewels, on the Three Sets of Vows; The Point of Entry for Bodhisattvas, a Commentary to the "Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life"
- Written by: Gyaltsab Je Darma Rinchen (1364-1432); Kedrup Tenpa Dargye (1493-1568); Choney Lama Drakpa Shedrup (1675-1748); Geshe Tsewang Samdrup (c. 1830)
- **Typical Subjects:** Emptiness and the Wish for enlightenment; Emptiness and the bodies of a Buddha; The future of the Buddha's teaching; Emptiness and karma; The direct perception of emptiness; Emptiness and paradise; How empty things still work; The root and secondary vows of a bodhisattva; How to keep the vows; How to purify bad deeds; Taking joy; How to fight mental afflictions; The perfection of giving; How anger destroys good karma; The nature of anger; Where bad things really come from; Dealing with jealousy; Quietude; Stopping attachment; On the joys of solitude; Devoting oneself to meditation; On the need to see emptiness; The two realities; The emptiness of feelings; The sliver of Diamond.

<u>Book Three</u>

Geshe Study Subject: Higher Knowledge (Abhidharma)

School of Buddhism Studied: Detailist (Vaibhashika)

Main Root Text: The Treasure House of Higher Knowledge (Abhidharma Kosha)

Written by: Master Vasubandhu, circa 350 AD

Traditional period to cover this subject: Two years in a Tibetan monastery **Summarized in ACI Courses:**

Course V: How Karma Works

Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence

Principal monastic textbooks used for ACI Courses: *Light on the Path to Freedom, a Commentary to the Treasure House*

Written by: Gyalwa Gendun Drup, the First Dalai Lama (1391-1474)

Typical Subjects: The nature of karma; The role of motivation; The correlation of deeds and their results; How karma is carried; The relative severity of deeds; The three realms of existence; The nature of the *bardo* (intermediate state between birth and death); A description of time and space; The destruction of the world; How to do death meditation

<u>Book Four</u>

Geshe Study Subject: Vowed Morality (Vinaya) School of Buddhism Studied: Detailist (Vaibhashika) Main Root Text: A Summary of Vowed Morality (Vinaya Sutra) Written by: Master Gunaprabha, circa 500 AD Traditional period to cover this subject: Two years in a Tibetan monastery

Summarized in ACI Course:

Course IX: The Ethical Life

- **Principal monastic textbooks used for ACI Course:** *Essence of the Ocean of Discipline; Daymaker--A commentary on the "Essence of the Ocean"*
- Written by: Je Tsongkapa (1357-1419), Master Ngulchu Dharma Bhadra (1772-1851)
- **Typical Subjects:** The nature of the vows of freedom; Their divisions; The specific vows (note: nuns and monks' vows are presented only to those with ordination); Who can take vows; How vows are lost; The benefits of keeping vows.

Book Five

Geshe Study Subject: Buddhist Logic (Pramana)

School of Buddhism Studied: Sutrist (Sautrantika)

- Main Root Text: The Commentary on Valid Perception (Pramana Varttika)
- Written by: Master Dharmakirti, circa 650 AD, on Master Dignaga, circa 450 AD
- **Traditional period to cover this subject:** Three months per year for 15 years in a Tibetan monastery
- Summarized in ACI Courses:

Course IV: The Proof of Future Lives Course XIII: The Art of Reasoning

Principal monastic textbooks used for ACI Courses: The Four Reasonings; Light on the Path to Freedom, An Explanation of the "Commentary on Valid Perception"; Jewel of the True Thought; An Explanation of the Art of Reasoning; An Explanation of the Path of Reasoning; The Collected Topics of the Spiritual Son; The Collected

Topics of Rato; A Clear Exposition upon Mind and Mental Functions

- Written by: Khen Rinpoche Geshe Lobsang Tharchin (b. 1921); Gyaltsab Je Darma Rinchen (1364-1432); The First Panchen Lama, Lobsang Chukyi Gyaltsen (1567?-1662); Geshe Yeshe Wangchuk (1928-1997); Master Tutor Purbuchok Jampa Tsultrim Gyatso (1825-1901); Master Ngawang Trashi (c. 1700); Master Chok-hla U-ser (c. 1500)
- **Typical Subjects:** The meaning of valid perception; The nature of omniscience; Proofs for past and future lives; The qualities of a Buddha; Why study the art of reasoning?; The definition of a reason; How to do Buddhist debate; The parts of a logical statement; Cause and effect; The nature of the subject mind; The concept of negatives and positives; The nature of definitions; The concept of time.

Book Six

Geshe Study Subject: The Steps to Buddhahood (Lam Rim)

School of Buddhism Studied: Advanced Middle Way (Madhyamika Prasangika) **Main Root Text:** *The Great Book on the Steps to Buddhahood (Lam Rim Chenmo)* **Written by:** Je Tsongkapa (1357-1419)

Traditional period to cover this subject: Intermittently over a period of 15 years in a Tibetan monastery

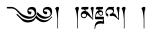
Summarized in ACI Courses:

Course I: The Principal Teachings of Buddhism Course III: Applied Meditation

Course XIV: Lojong, Developing the Good Heart

Principal monastic textbooks used for ACI Courses: A Gift of Liberation, Thrust into Our Hands; The Principal Teachings of Buddhism; A Commentary on the Principal Teachings of Buddhism; A Thousand Angels of the Heaven of Bliss (Ganden Hlagyama); Preparing for Tantra (The "Source of All My Good" and its Commentary); A Collection of Lojong Texts; Offering of the Mandala; How to Offer the Mandala in Thirty-Seven Parts

- Written by: Khen Rinpoche Geshe Lobsang Tharchin (b. 1921); Je Tsongkapa (1357-1419); Pabongka Rinpoche (1878-1941); Master Ngulchu Dharma Bhadra (1772-1851)
- **Typical Subjects:** The Meaning of Rennciation, the Wish for enlightenment, and correct world view; How to do a daily practice; How to meditate; What to meditate on; How to practice at work and other everyday situations; How to offer the mandala; How to practice love and compassion; Brief presentations of the entire path to Enlightenment; How to prepare for the secret teachings.



mandel

เพาตุดิ สิ้พ ฏิพ อูสพ จิร พิ รัสา รามูพ

sashi pukyi jukshing metok tram,

าราราสีรารดิ.ย.สีญายุจ.ก.รูโ

rirab lingshi nyinde gyenpa di,

เพรพาสูพาติรารูารมิทุพาริารุฐณากรารสิบุ

sangye shingdu mikte ulwar gyi,

१२र्चेग्गुब:इरु:न्य:बिन:पः र्ड्वेन:यन: र्वेग ॥

drokun namdak shingla chupar shok.

เพิ่าร้าญารูารฐามฐาณฑาริฐารานามิไ

Idam guru ratna mandalakam niryatayami.

Offering the Mandala

Here is the great Earth, Filled with the smell of incense, Covered with a blanket of flowers,

The Great Mountain, The Four Continents, Wearing a jewel Of the Sun, and Moon.

In my mind I make them The Paradise of a Buddha, And offer it all to You.

By this deed May every living being Experience The Pure World.

Idam guru ratna mandalakam niryatayami.



kyabdro semkye

sangye chudang tsokyi choknam la,

ไป๊ะ.ชึน.นะ.บ๊.นะนะนะเม็นสมุม

jangchub bardu dakni kyabsu chi,

าวาทาทิพาผู้สาพักพาวฏิพานนิวาพัวาสมพาฏิพา

dakki jinsok gyipay sunam kyi,

१२र्वे.ज.सर्द.हुर.जटश.मुग्र.दर्यीय.तर्य. ११

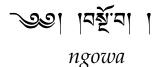
drola penchir sangye druppar shok.

Refuge and The Wish

I go for refuge To the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha Until I achieve enlightenment.

By the power Of the goodness that I do In giving and the rest,

May I reach Buddhahood For the sake Of every living being.



ٳ٢ؚٵٜٛ؆؆٢

gewa diyi kyewo kun,

ารพัร สุมพาพิ เวิพาส์ โทพาย์ โกพา เวิรา

sunam yeshe tsok-dzok shing,

ารตั้ว สุมมานิ เป็นเกพา มีว่า เป็น

sunam yeshe lejung way,

ารมานาลูาสาธิพาวรัสานราวุศสา 11

dampa kunyi topar shok.

Dedication of the Goodness of a Deed

By the goodness Of what I have just done May all beings

Complete the collection Of merit and wisdom,

And thus gain the two Ultimate bodies That merit and wisdom make.



าสิุ้สานาสูามิราพรพาสูพาริสานีาธิา

tonpa lame sanggye rinpoche,

ાર્ગ્સેન્ગ્ય સુએન્ગ્ન અંદેશ રેન યેં ઢા

kyoppa lame damchu rinpoche,



drenpa lame gendun rinpoche,



kyabne konchok sumla chupa bul.

A Buddhist Grace

I offer this To the Teacher Higher than any other, The precious Buddha.

I offer this To the protection Higher than any other, The precious Dharma.

I offer this To the guides Higher than any other, The precious Sangha.

I offer this To the places of refuge, To the Three Jewels, Rare and supreme.



The Asian Classics Institute Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence

Level Two of Higher Knowledge (Abhidharma)

Class Syllabus

Reading One

- Subject: Review of syllabus, schedule, and class rules; introduction to the desire and form realms.
- Reading: The *Treasure House of Higher Knowledge (Abhidharma Kosha)* of Master Vasubandhu (c. 350 AD), Chapter III, lines 1-8; with commentary from the *Illumination of the Path to Freedom (mDzod-tik thar-lam gsal-byed)* by Gyalwa Gendun Drup, His Holiness the First Dalai Lama (1391-1474).

Reading Two

- Subject: Introduction to the formless realm; the five different births; the ways of taking birth; pre-knowledge of your birth
- Reading: The *Treasure House*, Chapter III, lines 9-16, 31-36, 61-68; with commentary from the *Illumination of the Path*.

Reading Three

- Subject: The lives of craving spirits, and animals.
- Reading: The *Great Book on the Steps of the Teaching (bsTan-rim chen-mo),* by Geshe Drolungpa (c. 1100 AD), folios 83b-86a.

Reading Four

- Subject: The lives of humans, and pleasure beings.
- Reading: The *Path of Ease (bDe-lam),* by His Holiness the First Panchen Lama, Lobsang Chukyi Gyeltsen (1567?-1662); with a selection from the *Chest of Riches (Rin-chen bang-mdzod),* a commentary on this work by Master Ngulchu Dharma Bhadra (1772-1851), folios 61a-64b.

Reading Five

- Subject: All about the beings living in the intermediate state (the *bardo*): their basic natures; logical and scriptural proofs for their existence; what their bodies look like; their other features; and how these beings find their next birth.
- Reading: The *Treasure House*, Chapter III, lines 37-60; with commentary from the *Illumination of the Path*.

Reading Six

Subject: The types of sustenance, and a general description of the physical world.

Reading: The *Treasure House*, Chapter III, lines 152-158, and 177-230; with commentary from the *Illumination of the Path*.

Reading Seven

- Subject: The lives of hellbeings.
- Reading: The *Treasure House*, Chapter III, lines 231-238; with commentary from the *Illumination of the Path*.

Reading Eight

- Subject: A description of time and space; the concept of an eon (*kalpa*); an explanation of the eons of destruction, formation, and continuation; a great eon, and the coming of a Buddha.
- Reading: The *Treasure House*, Chapter III, lines 358-376; with commentary from the *Illumination of the Path*.

Reading Nine

- Subject: The meditation on death, part one: problems of not thinking about death; benefits of thinking about death; how to start thinking about death; first of the three principles of death.
- Reading: The *Great Book on the Steps of the Path,* by Je Tsongkapa (1357-1419), pages 98-108.

Reading Ten

- Subject: Second and third of the three principles of death; and the three resolutions.
- Reading: The Great Book on the Steps of the Path, pages 108-114.

The Asian Classics Institute Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence

Reading One: Introduction to the desire and form realms

The following selection is taken from the Illumination of the Path to Freedom, a commentary by Gyalwa Gendun Drup, His Holiness the First Dalai Lama, on the Treasure House of Higher Knowledge (Abhidharma Kosha), written by the Buddhist master Vasubandhu in the fourth century AD. Master Vasubandhu's root text verses do not appear in the original of the commentary, and have been inserted at the appropriate points. Parts of these verses woven into the commentary have been printed in bold to show the close connection of the two works, and section headings have been provided for clarity.

¥ાાગસુઅપ્યવ્યદેશાં કે ગયસ્ય માર્ગ્ય ગયત્ર ગયત્ય ગયત્ર ગયત્ય ગયત્ર ગયત્ય ગયત્ર ગયત્ય ગયત્

The third chapter [of the *Treasure House of Higher Knowledge*] is called "A Presentation of the World," and our discussion of it has two parts: (1) an explanation of the world of living beings—those who are taking birth, and (2) an explanation of the world that acts as their container—the place in which they're born. The living beings we will treat in three steps: their different divisions, various features, and an in-depth explanation of their basic nature. The first step itself covers first the division of beings into those of the three realms, and then their division into the five types of birth.

Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence Reading One

1 The Desire Realm

Hell beings, craving spirits, animals, Men, six different types of pleasure beings: These are the realm of desire. They are twenty By dividing up hell and the continents. [III.1-4]

One may begin with the following question:

Above, [in line 292 of the second chapter,] you mentioned "states of mental affliction with three realms." With these and other references you have been indicating that the mind and mental functions, as well as other objects, may be divided into categories that relate to three different realms. Just what are these three realms?

These three are the desire realm, the form realm, and the formless realm. We'll start by describing the first of them.

धीन दें।

Hell beings [Sanskrit: *naraka*] are so called because they live without [Skt: *na*] any comfort [Skt: *rañj*]. **Craving spirits** [*preta*] are so called either because they come to their state without turning back [*apunarāvŗt*] or because they are overcome [*parīta*] by thirst. **Animals** [*tiryañca*] are given this name because they go along on all fours, in a bent-over position [*tiryac*]. **Men** get their name from their *mental* prowess [the Sanskrit etymology also holds in English], and the **six different types of pleasure beings** or gods [*divaukas*] of the desire realm are so called because their homes are in the sky [*div*]. **These are the realm of desire**.

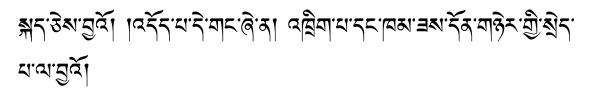
The realm of desire may also be divided into **twenty** different classes of beings. **By dividing hell** into the eight hot hells, we get a total of ten different births of misery. **By dividing** human beings up into those belonging to each of **the** four **continents**, we get a total of ten happy kinds of birth. There is a reason why we make no separate count of the eight cold hells and various partial hells: the former are not the principal hells, and the latter are indefinite as to lifespans, locations, and so on.

The *Actual Level* explains the desire realm as being divided into thirty-six parts. In this count animals are excluded, since their location is nothing definite. The others are the eight hot hells, eight cold hells, craving spirits, and lesser pleasure beings, making a total of eighteen—and on top of this humans split into those on each of twelve continents, and six types of desire-realm pleasure beings.

Consider now these hell beings and the others, along with their particular locations and the rest. They are the desire realm, for they are a realm of objects with which mental afflictions which are non-virtues can develop. Someone may then pose the following question:

What about the state of mind used to produce an emanation? Isn't this something possessed by beings who are free of desire? How could mental afflictions develop with this?

Someone else could hear that the person had such an ability, and gain desire towards this state of mind. Or the person himself could begin to worry that he might lose the ability and thus gain desire towards it. Still again, someone might catch sight of some exquisite emanation, think how wonderful the state of mind behind it was, and thereby start to desire it. Finally, even if this state of mind doesn't directly cause mental affliction to develop in someone's mind, it is still "an object with which mental affliction can develop"—since smells and tastes of the desire realm can be emanated in this state.



Someone may ask why we call it the "desire realm." We do so because it is a realm full of desire. And what is desire? Craving aimed at getting sex or food.

The Form Realm मिन्टिग्सदेग्यामुरुगन्तु अत्वी मिन्डियास्रायस्रस्था स्वेत्तन्ते स्वेर्ग्से मिन्द्यस्यायानुमुन्स्याद्वी यास्तुस्राय्या स्वी मिन्दियास्याद्वी मक्कुन्याय्या स्वी

The seventeen locations above it Are the realm of form. The levels of The various concentrations for it, three. Eight different levels correspond to the fourth. [III.5-8]

୲ଦଽ୕ୖଽ୲୳୶୶୲୶୶୲ଐଽ୕୶ୖୖୖୖୖୖ୶ଽ୶ୡୖ୲୴୶୶୲୵୕ୣୄ୕ୖ୕୕ୖ୕ୖ୕୷୲୰ୠୄୢୖୖ୶୷୰୶୲ ୲୶ୠ୶୲୴୶ୖୠ୲ୠ୲ୢୖ୶ଽ୕ୣୖ୵୲୳୲୶୶୲ଌୣଽ୶୲ୖୣୖୠଽ୲ଽଽଽ୶ୖୡୖ୲ୠ୕୶୲ୖୠଽ୷ୢୄୢୠୢୄ୶୲ୢଽଽ୲୶୲ଽୖୖଵୣ ୲୶୲ୢୄଌ୶୲୶୲୶ଌୖ୕୶୲ୄୄୠୄୢୄୠୄୢ୵ୖ୳ୡୖ୲୳୶୶୲୴ୖୠ୲୳ୡୖୄୢୖୢୢୢୄୢୢୄୠଽ୲

Consider now **the seventeen** different **locations above it**—above the desire realm. This is **the realm of form,** for it is first of all beyond the level of the desire realm and can lead to the development of the particular mental afflictions of this level. Secondly, it is a realm where form reaches its height.

๚ลูกพานพพาวิาณาจรูาอารูสาพ์ราวิท กาลูกพานพพาวิราลิโอนร์าล์เล้ารัญ จพพากุรสารราวันกาลูพาฏิาพาสิากาลูพากาลูพานาพิสาณา จพพากุรสารสิ

यते अत्रे नमुन यः भेत यते भेर हे।

This realm of form has seventeen parts in that there are **three levels** each corresponding to each of the first three **of the various** types of **concentration** that act as causes **for** a birth in "**it**"—that is, the form realm. And there are **eight different levels** that **correspond to the fourth** and final type of concentration. These correspondences are as follows.

One may engage in three different degrees of causal meditation relating to the first concentration level: these are the greater, the medium, and the lesser. These three degrees of meditation cause one to take birth, respectively, into the levels known as "Class of the Pure," "Reciting Before the Pure One," and "the Great Pure One."

Meditation on the same three degrees, relating to the second concentration level, leads to respective births in the levels known as "Lesser Light," "Immeasurable Light," and "Clear Light." Meditation again on the three degrees, those related to the third concentration level, leads to respective births in the levels known as "Lesser Virtue," "Immeasurable Virtue," and "Widespread Virtue."

Meditation on the stained parts of the fourth concentration level by ordinary beings leads them to a birth at one of the three stages. They are known as "Cloudless," "Birth of Merit," and the "Great Result." When realized beings meditate on five different stages of the fourth concentration level, they take their respective births in what are called the "Five Pure Places." The five causal stages are known as "the lesser" (three alternations), "the medium" (six alternations), "the great" (nine alternations), "the very great," (twelve alternations), and "the really very great" (fifteen alternations).

One may ask why we call it the "form realm." It is so named because the characteristic which distinguishes it is the extraordinary form there. The Detailist group called "Under the Sun" claims that there are seventeen distinct locales within the form realm because the god known as the "Great Pure One" has a lifespan, feelings, and conceptions which are totally separate from those of the beings who sit before him reciting their religious books.

The Kashmiri Detailists claim, on the other hand, that there are only sixteen distinct locales in the form realm, since although the Great Pure One is enthroned in a slightly elevated position at the head of those who recite before him, there is really no separate location. Further, the Arya Master [Asanga] has stated that there are eighteen distinct locales to the form realm, as it includes the level known as "Below None" which is also a paradise.

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Reading Two: Introduction to the formless realm; the five different births; the ways of taking birth; preknowledge of your birth

The following selections are taken from the Illumination of the Path to Freedom, a commentary by Gyalwa Gendun Drup, His Holiness the First Dalai Lama, on the Treasure House of Higher Knowledge (Abhidharma Kosha), written by the Buddhist master Vasubandhu in the fourth century AD. Master Vasubandhu's root text verses do not appear in the original of the commentary, and have been inserted at the appropriate points. Parts of these verses woven into the commentary have been printed in bold to show the close connection of the two works, and section headings have been provided for clarity.

There is no other, separate place for the formless realm. A person who is born there must first have attained single-pointed concentration relating to the formless realm, and must not have lost this ability since that time. When such a person dies and migrates, he is born into the formless realm at the very place where he died, the four "name" heaps of the formless realm coming into existence there. There are however **four kinds** of levels to the formless realm, **depending on** the relative quality of **that** meditation to which one had **given rise** and which had caused his birth there. These are the levels known as the "Door of Limitless Space" and so on.

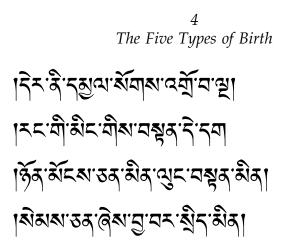
"If there's no form in the formless realm," one may ask, "then what provides a basis for the stream of mind there?" In this one—in the formless realm—the continuum of the mind is based on the continuation of a discrete type of being and upon life, as well. The words "as well" are meant to indicate that this stream of mind is also based on the ordinary being, on the factors not linked with mind, on holds, on the characteristics of birth, and so on.

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"Well then," one might ask, "couldn't the stream of mind in one of the two lower realms then also rely on the discrete type of being involved, or upon life, without depending upon form?" It could not, because the mind in these cases is of little force, as it is not yet free of the conception of form. The mind of the formless realm, on the other hand, need not rely on form: because of the power of its single-pointed concentration, the mind is free of the conception of form and thus possesses considerable force.

Consider these different levels—the "Door of Limitless Space" and the others. They are the formless realm, for they are first of all beyond the lower two realms. Secondly, they consist of objects that can lead to the development of the particular mental afflictions of the formless realm. And why is this realm called the "formless realm"? It is given the name because it is a realm which is absolutely devoid of form.

Having thus presented the division of living beings into those of the three realms, we now turn to a grouping into the five types of birth.



Five types of birth, hells and the rest, in them. Indicated by their names. They're not The affliction, but rather neutral ethically. Known as "sentient beings"—the inbetween not. [III.13-6]

Now there are **five types of birth**, those of a **hell** being **and the rest**, **in them**—in the three realms. They are **indicated by their** own separate **names**: hell beings, craving spirits, animals, humans, and pleasure beings. [Refer to the Sanskrit etymologies for these types listed in the commentary to the first verse of this chapter.]

What, in their essence, **are they**? Not virtue, because there are individuals among them who have lost their core of virtues; and **not** mental **affliction**, since there are those among them who have eliminated all their mental afflictions. Thus we can say that they are, **rather**, **ethically neutral** things, of the type that is not an impediment.

The five types are part of living beings, so they are **known as "sentient beings."** Those beings **in between** death and rebirth are sentient beings but **not** considered here as a separate type of birth. As *Comment on Wisdom* says,

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The four ways of birth cover all five types Of birth, though the five don't cover all four. Which is left? The being in between.

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The sutra called *The Seven Types of Lives* states as well:

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There are seven types of lives: life as a hell being, life as a craving spirit, life as an animal, life as a human, life as a pleasure being, life as a category of deeds, and the life in between.

"If there are only five types of birth," one may ask, "then in which of these two types do you include the lesser pleasure beings?" According to realized master Asanga,

...They are to be included among the full-fledged pleasure beings. This is because they vie with these beings in their physical appearance and material wealth, and belong to the same family. The lesser pleasure beings are though inferior in their qualities to the complete pleasure beings, and thus we refer to them as "pleasure beings" but [in Sanskrit and Tibetan] with the negative attached to their name, to indicate inferiority.

The sutra called *Constant Recollection* explains that the lesser pleasure beings should be grouped with craving spirits or among the animals. A number of other sutras also teach them as being a sixth type of being.

As for harmful spirits, some may be counted among the pleasure beings, and others among the craving spirits. The spirits known as "those who live on smells" are grouped into the pleasure beings, as they serve as their musicians. The great *garuda* birds, the "big-belly" and "humanoid" spirits, as well as the serpent-like *naga* creatures are all explained as belonging to the animal type.

The spirits known as "flesh-eaters," "crazy-makers," and "those who cause forgetfulness," as well as the *ma-mo* spirits, are all considered different kinds of craving spirits.

This completes our discussion of the different divisions of living beings. Now we continue to a presentation of their various features. This presentation will cover four topics: the seven states of consciousness, the nine states of living beings, the four states of consciousness, and an analysis of how the seven and four states overlap.

Here the states of birth for living beings Are counted as four: birth from an egg and the rest. Four exist with humans, and animals. Hell beings and the beings of pleasure as well As beings between their lives are born complete. Craving spirits are also born from the womb.

[III.31-6]

One may begin with the question: "How many states of birth are there for beings of the three realms?" Here in the three realms **the** different **states of birth for living beings are counted as four: birth from an egg and "the rest"**—which refers to birth from the womb, birth from warmth and moisture, and instantaneous birth as a complete being.

"What kinds of beings," one may ask, "have which of the different states of birth?" All **four** types of birth **exist with humans.** An example of instant, complete birth would be humans of the very first eon. The king called "Let-Me-Nurse-You" would typify birth from warmth and moisture. A case of humans born from eggs would be the elders Drak and Nyedrak, who were offspring of a shipwrecked merchant who coupled with a female crane. Another such instance would be that of Sagala, a woman with laywoman's vows, who gave 32 eggs from which 32 boys sprang forth. Yet another case would be that of the queen of King Panchala, who gave 500 eggs. These were put into a chest that was thrown into the Ganges River. A Lichavi youth saw the chest while washing—and when he opened the lid, 500 boys sprang forth. Examples of birth from the womb would be the majority of humans of present times.

All **four** types of birth **exist with animals**—we see an explanation that "The great *garuda* birds, who can be born in any of the four different ways, devour the serpent-like *nagas*, themselves born in all four different ways."

Hell beings and the beings of pleasure, as well as beings between their lives, are born instantly, complete in every way. This is because they possess tremendous energy coming from their past deeds. The majority of craving spirits are born complete, but there are also those that are born from the womb. As a certain craving spirit, a female one, said to the great and revered Maudgalyayana:

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By night I bear five sons, By day another five. Even though I eat them, Never satisfied.

Someone may raise the following objection:

If complete birth is a better way to take birth, then why didn't King Siddhartha take birth complete? After all, he was a bodhisattva in his final life, one who had achieved the power to take any birth he pleased. What purpose was served by taking birth from the womb?

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He did have a purpose: first of all, he wanted to lead his relatives of the Shakya clan to the Teaching. Secondly, his human followers would be inspired to emulate him. Lastly, he wanted to avoid any possibility of raising suspicions in people who might think to themselves that our Teacher was a wizard, or something similar, if they saw him display great miracles or mystic power.

Some people claim that the Buddha took birth from the womb in order to be able to leave his bodily relics behind and thereby attract even more followers than if he hadn't done so. This is because a person born through instant, complete birth leaves behind no corpse. Master Vasubandhu though states that "This is not a correct answer to the question, for we accept that relics are left behind by force of the holy person's own blessing."

Someone may object to the above explanation that beings born complete leave no corpse: "Doesn't it contradict the statement that `the great *garuda* birds, born complete, devastate the serpent *nagas* (also born complete) by devouring them'?" But keep in mind that the expression is "by devouring them"—not "by having devoured them." You could also say that they devour them only until they die.

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One might ask which kinds of birth are the most common. The better the birth as explained above, the more types of beings born that way.

One is cognizant while entering, Another so while staying too; others As they issue. One more ignorant all. This is always the case with those from eggs. Three are the types who enter the womb or such: Wheel emperors and the two self-born, Respectively, due to the vastness of their Deeds, their wisdom, or the both of them.

[III.61-8]

"In the lines above," one may begin, "you mentioned beings' entering the womb `because of a mistaken impression.' Does this hold true in every case?" **One** type **is cognizant** of what they are doing **while** they are **entering** the womb, yet lose this awareness during their stay there. **Another** type is cognizant not only of entering the womb but **while** they are **staying** there **too**. Still **others** are moreover cognizant **as they issue** from the womb as well. **One more** type is **ignorant** of **all** three, cognizant of neither entering, nor staying in, nor issuing from the womb. **Those** who are born **from eggs**, even if they are selfmade victors, are **always** of this last type, and it alone—ignorant. This is what they say.

"Just who is it," one may ask, "that represents each of these three types—those who are cognizant of entering the womb but not staying there, and so on?" Three are the types who enter the womb as such; respectively, wheel-

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empowered **emperors and the two "self-born"**—referring to self-made victors and Buddhas. They enter as they do **due to** the fact that they have been able, respectively, to amass **vast** collections of **deeds** (referring in this case to merit), **wisdom, and** merit and wisdom **both**.

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Reading Three: The lives of craving spirits, and animals

The following selection is taken from the Great Book on the Steps of the Teaching, *composed by the Kadampa Geshe Drolungpa, Lodru Jungne (c. 1100 AD).*

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I have already explained how the deeds which lead to a life as a craving spirit or an animal are precisely medium or lesser instances of the ten wrong actions. Now I will describe these two kinds of beings themselves, from the point of view of specific characteristics.

Now I will address the lives of craving spirits from the point of view of what causes them to be.

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It comes from a part or parts of the ten paths of deeds, But mostly because the person's misled by his cheapness Or jealousy and forgets the three kinds of giving. He neglects to share with all who were offered a thing, Reduces what was earmarked, or never gives it at all, Redirects it, prevents it, or anything of the like. A mind full of this dirt collects a mass of loathsome deeds; Awesome strong, they drag him down to the life of a craving spirit.

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Here a "part" of the ten bad deeds can refer to performing them to a medium extent, or else to a "part" in the sense of some residual karmic energy from having performed them to a greater extent. A part or parts like this lead to this particular rebirth, as do the following deeds described in the text called *Constant Awareness:*

য়ર્૪ કેમ એમ સૂચ્ય વસ્ અપ્ય સું અપ્ય મે અપ્ય સું પ્રાપ્ત અપ્ય સું પ્રાપ્ત અપ્ય સું અપ્ય મે સું પ્રાપ્ત અપ્ય સું પ્રાપ્ત સું અપ્ય સું પ્રાપ્ત સું અપ્ય સું પ્રાપત સું અપ્ય સું પ્રાપ્ત અપ્ય સું પ્રાપ્ત સું અપ્ય સું અર્ય સું પ્રાપ્ત સું અપ્ય સું પ્રાયું સું પ્રાપ્ત સું અપ્ય સું અપ્ય સું પ્રાયું સું પ્રાયું સું પ્રાયું સું પ્રાયું સું પ્રાયું સું પ્રાપત સું અપ્ય સું અર્ય સું પ્રાયું પ્રાયું સું પ્રાયું સું પ્રાયું પ્રાયું સું પ્રાયું પ્રાયું સ્ય સું પ્રાયું પ્રાયું સું પ્રાયું સું પ્રાયું સું પ્ય સું પ્ય સું પ્ય સું પ્રાયું સું પ્રાયું સું પ્ય સું પ્ય સું પ્ય સું પ્રાયું સું પ્ય સું પ્રાયું સું પ્રાયું પ્રાયું સું પ્ય સું પ્રાયું સું પ્રાયું સું પ્રાયું સું પ્રાયું સું પ્યું પ્ય સું પ્રાયું સું પ્ય સું પ્રાયું સું પ્ય સું પ્રાયું સું પ્યું પ્યું પ્રાયું સું પ્યું સું પ્યું સું પ્યું સું પ્યું સું પ્યું પ્યું સું પ્યું પ્યું સું પ્ય સું સું પ્ય



Most of these are people who were misled by their own cheapness, or by their desire for the miserable possessions of this world, or who were overwhelmed by a hope for the miserable offerings that are all someone here can present you with. And because of this they found they could not give to others. They could not give to any of those who might come to ask: they gave neither to practitioners of the Dharma, nor to Brahmins, nor the poor, nor needy, nor destitute. They did no good deeds. They observed nothing of that great sea of ethical living, neither for this life, nor for the life beyond. They provided nothing for their children, or for their wives, or to the men and women who served them, or to all the others whom it was their responsibility to sustain with meat and bread. Their cheapness swindled them out of all they could hope for, in this world and the next. They are people too who were swindled by their quarreling, or by jealousy. These for the most part then are the kinds of people who take birth as craving spirits; and most of them turn into those craving spirits who are witches.

In addition to these kinds of actions there is failing to hand over offerings that were earmarked for a certain virtuous purpose, and all the rest: a whole mass of different bad deeds that can lead you to this kind of birth.

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Here next is some detail from the point of view of where it is that craving spirits live.

One place they stay is the world of our daily life, And the other is their land, 500 yojana under the ground, And 3600 from the borders of our place.

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Cravings spirits live in two different places, described as follows:

There are those who roam about our world, and then there are those who stay in their own land. It is sometimes possible for human beings to catch sight of the first kind, at night. Their own land is 500 yojana under the ground; except for extraordinary circumstances, this land is located 3600 yojana from the borders of Dzambu Continent. This distance though is variable.

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Here is some detail about the suffering experienced by these beings.

They're of three types, distinguished by the obstacles to what They live on: outer problems and inner, problems with food Or drink. All of them share though the infinite pain Of hunger and thirst, intense as the flames of a fire.

The sufferings of these craving spirits can all be reduced to three different kinds. First are those with outer obstacles to what they need to live on. People like this approach a place like a mountain spring, or a pond or stream, and catch sight of something that they could eat or drink. They race ahead to get it, only to be forced back by beings cutting them with knives, or beating them with clubs and such. Or else they come to the side of some water and find themselves unable to drink of it, for then it looks to them like blood and pus or the like.

Those craving spirits with inner obstacles have mouths no bigger than the eye of a needle, spouting with flame. Their throats are the size of a guitar string, but their bellies are huge. Even where there is no one to stop them, and even when they can locate something to eat or drink, they find themselves unable to get it down.

Next are the craving spirits with obstacles to what they can eat or drink. An example would be the spirit whose name was "The Necklace of Flame." Every single thing this spirit tried to eat, and every single thing it tried to drink as well, would burn it instead; and whatever went down would anyway never relieve those feelings of hunger and thirst.

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Some of these spirits are referred to as the "ones who eat filth." This refers to the fact that they are forced to eat feces, and drink urine; they are completely unable to partake of anything other than putrid, poisonous, disgusting excrement. Others are constantly cutting off pieces of their own flesh to get something to eat; they can never find anything which is clean, or fresh.

All of them have the look of a scorched piece of wood; the searing pain of hunger and thirst have dried up all their skin and flesh and blood. Their entire look has changed: their faces are covered with hair; their visage is gaunt, from hunger and thirst; their tongues pass over their lips, dry, and parched. They run from place to place, terrified, and aimless.

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Next we cover all the different types of craving spirits.

In brief, they can be divided into thirty-six different types: The "pot-bellies," "needle-throats," "eaters of shit," "Take-anythings," "smell-eaters," and the rest. More broadly, The types are endless, according to the kinds of karma.

 $\begin{aligned} & \sum_{i=1}^{n} \sum_{i=1}^{n}$

In a brief way, these craving spirits can be divided into thirty-six different types, with the following names: (1) pot-bellies, (2) needle-throats, (3) eaters of shit, [from Chim Jampey Yang: (4) show-anythings, for above "take-anythings"] (5) smell-eaters, (6) thing-eaters, (7) offering-eaters, (8) water-drinkers, (9) the ones who live off thoughts, (10) spit-eaters, (11) bead-eaters, (12) blood-drinkers, (13) flesh-eaters, (14) smoke-eaters, (15) the savage, (16) the opportunity-takers, (17) the undergrounders, (18) the power spirits, (19) the night-shiners, (20) those who await their chance for a person, (21) the enticers, (22) the ones who stay around islands, (23) the bludgeons of the Lord of Death, (24) the baby-eaters, (25) the Brahma-witches, (26) the husk-eaters, (27) the scum-eaters, (28) those who stay on well-travelled roads, (29) the voracious ones, (30) the flame-eaters, (31) the poison-eaters, (34) the spirits who stay in monasteries, (35) the spirits who stay at crossroads, and (36) the devil legions.



For more detail on the karma and suffering of these spirits, you should study further the sutras themselves. The further divisions of the spirits into a multitude of different types all come from particulars of the karma involved in creating them, which comes itself from the great variety of motivations present in their past deeds. As such, the full range of different kinds of suffering, and thoughts, and migrations, and locations of these craving spirits is simply beyond all reckoning.

The great majority of these beings have fallen to their current state because of cheapness and jealousy; they have created the karmic power of the ten bad deeds, in their actions and speech and thoughts, to an overwhelming degree. What was the cause of these deeds? All of them are performed relative to other living beings; it is towards them that we act; and the karma we collect comes through the way we relate to them, flows from our interaction with others. We may be wandering again and again through births of misery, but it seems that still we are not tired of it.

Our minds, like restless monkeys, have lived in the circle of suffering life for time with no beginning. We have grown accustomed to staying out in a rain of all kinds of suffering. Weighted down in the shackles of a whole variety of different bodies, we drag ourselves again and again up the great mountain of the wheel of rebirth. But still this is something we find hard to realize, to recognize, for our minds are filled with the habits of our suffering past. We must seek, from the beginning, to control this restless monkey—the mind flitting constantly from one thing to another. If we fail in this task we will only come to the unstoppable torment of the lower realms; locked in the circle of birth by the enemy of our own minds, we will forever lose any kind of happiness.

If you want to know then what it is that brings a person to the birth of a craving spirit, it is primarily the failure to perform the three kinds of giving, and being overcome by the emotions of cheapness, and jealousy. [The three kinds of giving are: giving material needs, giving freedom from fear, and giving the Dharma.]

Their heads are caught in the noose of incredibly Powerful karma, which drags them helplessly on; Neither spiritual guides, nor their children or wife, Nor other loved ones can help them in the least. On the whole, their size and lifespan are nothing fixed; The longest is five hundred days that are made of months.

The bodily dimensions of beings in all three of the lower realms are nothing that are fixed; the size of the body they possess, and the suffering that they can therefore feel, increase according to the power of the karma they have collected previously. On the whole, the lifespans of craving spirits are nothing which is fixed; the very longest they can live is five hundred days which each last as long as a month among human beings.

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Next we will describe the lives of animals, first from the point of view of what causes this type of birth, and what types of suffering they have.

Next is what comes from a part or parts of bad deeds, And mainly from lesser forms of the acts of fools, Collecting bad karma from disregarding, and such. You fall to an animal birth, killing and eating each other, Or becoming the property of pleasure beings or men, Helplessly slaughtered, or forced to do their bidding.

What causes a person to be born as an animal are the parts of the ten bad deeds which are considered lesser forms of these deeds. In particular are cases where especially ignorant people disregard minor rules of morality, and do so on a continual basis; or else where they collect a great number of wrong deeds such as failing to act with respect towards those who are worthy of such respect.

How is it that these animals suffer? They kill each other, and use each other for food: the ones that are bigger, or more powerful, slay and devour the others, swallowing them even before they have stopped breathing, and such. Or else they hurt each other, in every imaginable way. Some kinds of animals become possessions of humans or other types of beings, and are slaughtered for their meat, or skins, or bones and the rest. Or else they are forced to do the bidding of their masters; mercilessly and helplessly they are sheared or milked or herded or saddled or dragged along—whatever their owners wish.

¥امع:۲۰۰۶)

Here next are the different types of animals.

Three hundred and sixty million kinds of animals; Their forms, and colors, and the ways they're born are various. They get along, or not; have wings, or not; and so on, Endless different types, from deeds and motivation.

Generally speaking, there are some three hundred and sixty million kinds of animals: it is stated in scripture, for example, that the human body is itself home to eighty thousand different animal forms. They come in all different kinds of appearances; they have all different kinds of bodies; they are born in all four different ways; they use all four kinds of sustenance; they may get along with each other, or fight; they may rage, or be peaceful; they might be friendly, or dangerous; they live in communities, or alone; they have wings, or have no wings, and so on—there are endless different types, all depending on the different types of deeds they committed, and the motivations they had.

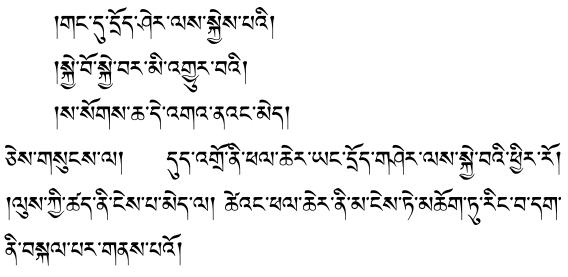
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Here are the places where animals are located.

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The "place in the depths" is the ocean, immense, while others Live above ground, in the sky, and the rest—they're found everywhere. The size of their bodies, and span of life, are not fixed either; Those with the very longest lives remain for an eon.

The location of animals known as the "place in the depths" refers to the immense ocean. The "place of the scattered" is nothing fixed, and so we find animals living above ground, below ground, in the sky, in water, on the bodies of other creatures, and the rest—they're found virtually everywhere.



It is stated that—

There is no piece of land or the like Where those who are born from warmth And moisture cannot be born.

This is true because the vast majority of animals as well are born from warmth and moisture. As for the size of their bodies, there is no fixed size. Their lifespans too are for the most part indefinite; those with the very longest lives remain for an eon.

You must consult the sutras if you wish to know more about the places, or the bodies, or the things they use, or other details about the animals that live in the depths of the sea, and so on. There too you will find all about the details of the pleasures and pains these beings undergo, all according to the specific types of karma they have collected. My intention here is to present a refutation, something to challenge the mistaken viewpoint of those worldly people who say the world is some glorious, wonderful place.

The Asian Classics Institute Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence

Reading Four: The lives of humans, and pleasure beings

The following selection is taken from the Chest of Riches, by Master Ngulchu Dharma Bhadra (1772-1851), an important link in the lineage leading from Je Tsongkapa, through Pabongka Rinpoche, and down to our own root lama, Khen Rinpoche Geshe Lobsang Tharchin. The work is a commentary on the Path of Ease, a famous lam-rim text by His Holiness the First Panchen Lama, Lobsang Chukyi Gyeltsen (1567?-1662).

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Here first is the contemplation of the sufferings of cyclic life in general, and then the contemplation of the individual sufferings of this life. The first of these is covered in the *Great Book on the Steps of the Path* in three progressive stages: the contemplation of the eight kinds of suffering, the contemplation of the six kinds of suffering, and the contemplation of the three kinds of suffering. In the *Path of Ease* though the contemplation of the six sufferings is presented at this point, and then the first seven of the eight kinds of suffering are applied specifically to humans in the contemplation of the individual sufferings of life. As such I will give my own explanation in this same order.

First comes the following resolution, made in the practitioner's mind:

Suppose I am able to give up doing the ten bad deeds, and then follow the ten good deeds in the proper way. And suppose that, for this very reason, I pass beyond the suffering of the lower births and reach up to the level of the higher ones. If though I fail to reach a freedom where I have eliminated suffering from its very root, it doesn't matter what kind of body I may be able to attain in the higher births. The fact that I have not yet gotten rid of the mental afflictions means that I will never enjoy even a single instant of happiness.

Right after this, the metaphor of the terrible criminal is presented.

Here the text includes the phrase that begins, "Even though we don't at the present moment have the suffering of being beaten with a club..." Prior to this point in the work, two different punishments—the torture of having molten wax dripped slowly over your body, and being beaten with a club—have been explicitly mentioned. As such we see nowadays a custom where, when the text is recited out loud, people add a few words and say, "Even though we don't at the present moment have the suffering of being tortured with drops

of wax, or beaten with a club..." Nonetheless it appears to me that the point of this phrase is that, first of all, we who live the life of a pleasure being or human in the desire realm are free of any constant pain like the torture of molten wax. Those who live in the higher two realms have neither feelings of pain nor of [so-called] pleasure, and are thus free of both the suffering of the wax and the club.

All this is a metaphor for life in the higher states of birth; no matter how good a rebirth you may gain there, the good karma you have collected in the past, and which has projected you there, eventually wears out. Then you fall to the lower births, and begin to experience infinite varieties of pain. The final end of such a birth then is always something gruesome.

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Here next is the actual contemplation of the six forms of suffering. A summary of these in verse goes as follows:

Life has no certainty, we know no satisfaction, and shed our bodies Over and over, take birth again, over and over, go over and over From high to low, with no companion: and so we suffer, six ways.

The first of the sufferings mentioned here is [1] the fact that life has no certainity. We have taken birth here, in the cycle of suffering, and by its very nature our birth has two causes: the pair of our own past deeds, and our mental afflictions. The only result that can ever come from these two causes is something which is, in its very essence, pain. And the kinds of pain that come to us are those in the words that include the line, "Enemies turn to those we love..." The *Letter to a Friend* describes this suffering as follows:

Your father turns to your very own son, your mother to your wife; And the one who was your enemy becomes a relative dear to you. The complete reverse of this happens too, and thus it is we say That in the circle of life there is no certainty at all.

What this verse is saying is that it is possible for the person who was your father in your last life to turn into your son in this life. Your mother in your last life then can turn to your wife in this one. Your worst enemy can turn into your dearest relative, and the complete reverse of all these can happen as well: your son in your past life turns into your father in this one, and all the rest—there is no absolutely no certainty who is who. And that's not all. Even in this present life, we can see with our own two eyes how uncertain life can be: a person who was ready to murder someone the year before becomes in the following year their bosom friend, and so on. People though grasp to the occasional appearance that these relationships are something that are certain, and then begin to feel strong emotions of attachment, or anger. These lead them to spend their lives helping some people, and hurting others. They act like some kind of animal, dazed and confused, wandering aimlessly across some great wasteland. The animal runs, with no idea what it does, exhausting itself in the pursuit of what seems to be some great goal. And then some man appears and shouts at it, "What are you doing!" And then the animal reverses direction, and runs just as purposefully the opposite way. So give up now this tendency you have of making any distinction between your friends and your enemies, this habit of liking the friends, and disliking the enemies. Come to realize that there is not a single object in this entire suffering life that you can trust. Study to find disgust for this kind of existence.

The next suffering, [2] the fact that we can never find any sense of satisfaction, is described in the words that include, "No matter what kind of happiness you find here in the circle of suffering life..." The verse here is:

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Each one of us has fed upon a massive amount of milk Exceeding the water in all four seas; and those still living within This suffering life, who follow the way of ordinary beings, Can still expect to drink a measure infinitely more.

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The point of the verse is as follows. Suppose that you could manage to bring back, and collect together all the mothers' milk that you had ever fed upon in all the different bodies you have taken upon yourself. The massive amount of this milk would exceed the water in all four seas. The "four seas" here are different parts of the greater outer ocean, named from the four different hues of its four quarters as the colors of Mount Supreme reflect upon them.

Even the deepest parts of these seas, and their other distances, are something that it is possible to measure; yet the number of births that you and I have taken are limitless in number. As such we have already drunk more milk of our mothers than the water these seas hold in them. And if we continue the way we are, if we go on following the life of ordinary beings, failing to practice the path, then we can still expect to drink a measure of milk which is infinitely more.

The meaning of the words "a measure infinitely more" is not "infinitely more than what they drank before," since the milk we have sucked in the past is itself beyond all measurement. The point rather is that we will from this point on be forced to drink again a quantity that is greater than all the water in the four seas.

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The whole point of enjoying things which are pleasant is to bring ourselves some kind of contentment. The fact though is that, no matter how much pleasure we may feel with a thing in this cycle of suffering, we never reach any sense of satisfaction. Much less; for the normal reaction is that our feelings of attachment grow more, and this forces us to wander around even longer in the circle of life. And what the pleasures end up bringing to us are great many different kinds of suffering—unbearable pains that dwarf the pleasures themselves.

head of a king named Gupali. The child was named "Headborn," and known as well as "Nurse-from-me." The astrologers foretold that he would someday be the emperor of the world.

This prince sought to make great efforts in doing good deeds, in order to provide for the food, clothing, and other needs of his people. After inquiring into the ways of bringing this about, he made great prayers that his subjects would be able to find the food, clothing, and other needs without any effort at all. As a result, people began to get anything they wished for: crops sprang forth without anyone ever planting them; jewels fell like raindrops from the sky; clothing grew like leaves from the branches of wonderful trees; and the like.

Because of the incredible force of the good deeds he had done, Headborn came to be emperor over our entire world, the continent of Dzambu.

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Dissatisfied with only this much, he then went to the eastern continent of Greatbody, and took it over as well. Dissatisfied with only this much, he then went to the western continent of Cattle-Users, and took it over as well. Dissatisfied with only this much, he hen went to the northern continent of Unpleasant Sound and took it over as well. Dissatisfied with only this much, he went to the Heaven of the Thirty-Three, and appropriated half the throne of Shakra, the king of the full pleasure beings. He reigned there with this being, for the length of 137 years.

Then, during the time of the Buddha named Kashyapa, a war with the lesser pleasure beings broke out. Even Shakra found himself unable to repulse them, but Headborn was successful. Then an evil thought began to form in his mind: dissatisfied with the idea of continuing to share his power with Shakra, he decided that he would have to murder the being.

This single thought erased all the good energy that was keeping Headborn in this realm, and he fell back to Dzambu Continent. Not long after that he was on his deathbed, ready to pass on to the next world. His ministers crowded around him, and asked the mighty being what it was that could force him to

leave them so. And then it was that he gave his famous reply, describing how his bad thoughts had brought him to death, and so on.

The next suffering is [3] the fact that we have to shed our bodies, over and over. This is indicated in the lines that include, "It doesn't matter what wonderful kind of body I may be able to attain..." The point here is that, regardless of all the bad deeds we might accumulate in order to maintain this body we have now, it is an absolute certainty that—in the end—we will be forced to shed it. The power of the wrong deeds we did for the sake of the body though we carry along in our mind, and they bring to us the eventual result of unbearable pain.

Beyond this are the lines that say,

The size of the stack of rotting corpses belonging to each of us Would exceed an equivalent to the height of Mount Supreme itself.

Suppose that you could put together a huge stack of all the skeletons left from the bodies that any particular person had ever taken on, and then left behind. This stack would be more immense than Summit, the great mountain at the middle of the world.

The difficult expression *nyechik* here is meant to indicate "a quantity equivalent to the height," which is then exceeded.

The next suffering is [4] the fact that we have to take birth again, over and over. The text at this point includes the line, "Since we have, for time with no beginning, been forced to take birth again, over and over..."

The Tibetan expression for "taking birth again" here is *nying tsam jorwa*, and is somewhat unusual. The *nying* means "again," and appears with the same sense in a number of other terms. One is *nying-gu*, "ultimate goal," or the further goal within a goal. Another is *nying-lak*, "appendage," meaning a further limb [such as a finger] splitting off from what is already a limb [such as an arm].

The point of the expression *nying tsam jorwa* then is to emphasize that, during our lives in this circle of suffering, we have not just crossed the border [*tsam jorwa*] between death and life at some isolated instance in the past, but rather that we have done so again and again [*nying*].

Beyond this we see the lines that say,

Suppose you tried to count the mothers all the way back to the beginning, using tiny balls Of earth the size of juniper berries; the fact though is that the planet would not be enough.

Suppose, says the verse, that you took tiny bits of dirt from this massive planet Earth and rolled them up into little balls the size of juniper berries. Then you

used them to count all the mothers: you start with the one who was your mother this time, and then her mother, and then her mother's mother, and so on. The dirt contained in the entire planet would run out before you finished your counting.

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The next suffering is [5] the fact that we have to go from a high position to a low position, over and over again. This is indicated in the lines that include, "No matter how many good things you get in this cycle of suffering..." As the verse says,

First you reach the level of the one named Shakra, and merit the gifts of everyone in the world;
Then because of the force of past deeds done you fall again to the surface of the earth.
First you reach the level of an emperor who with the wheel reigns over all the world;
Then in the realms of the circle of birth you become again the lowest of slaves.

As the Word of the Discipline says,

A high position eventually leads to a fall, And relationships always come to separation; Life itself leads in its end to death.

The point here is that any good thing that ever happens here in the circle of suffering life eventually turns into some kind of problem. Try to concentrate

on this pattern that life shows us: how we always go from something high to something low. Try to develop a healthy disgust for this kind of existence.

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The final suffering is [6] the fact that we have no companion. This suffering is indicated in the lines about "going by oneself, alone, with no companion at all..." As the *Bodhisattva's Life* says,

Consider even just the body we have; If the flesh and bone that come with it Must one day rot and be parted from it, What need then to talk of our other friends?

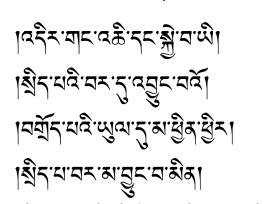
All who are born are born alone, And all who die by themselves; Since they can't share the slightest bit of your pain, What use are the friends that hold you back?

As the verse points out, we tend to collect a great variety of different bad deeds for the sake of our friends. But when the time comes to experience the consequences of these actions, none of these same friends can participate in our pain at all. And in those situations where we try to practice some Dharma, these friends tend to hold us back. So what use are they, anyway?

The Asian Classics Institute Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence

Reading Five: Beings in the intermediate state (the bardo)

The following selection is taken from the Illumination of the Path to Freedom, a commentary by Gyalwa Gendun Drup, His Holiness the First Dalai Lama, on the Treasure House of Higher Knowledge (Abhidharma Kosha), written by the Buddhist master Vasubandhu in the fourth century AD. Master Vasubandhu's root text verses do not appear in the original of the commentary, and have been inserted at the appropriate points. Parts of these verses woven into the commentary have been printed in bold to show the close connection of the two works, and section headings have been provided for clarity.



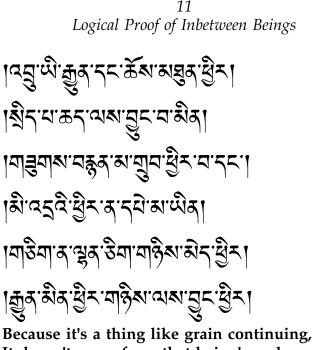
10 Basic Nature of the Intermediate Being

These are the beings who occur between The being at death here, and the one at birth. Because they have not reached their destination, The beings between are not yet arrived. [III.37-40]

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"You have stated," one may begin, "that the inbetween being is born complete. What is the basic nature of those beings who are between lives?" They may be described as **those beings who occur between** the point of **the being at death here** with the present stream of heaps **and** the point of the being **at birth. These between beings are though not yet "arrived," for they have yet to reach the destination** towards which they travel.

Next come the proofs for the existence of such beings. These consist of two types: proofs based on logic and proofs based on scriptural authority.



It doesn't occur from that being's end. Because this image does not exist, and since They are dissimilar, it's no example. First, there are no two together in one. Second, not the continuation, by two. [III.41-6]

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Now a member of the "Majority Group" of philosophers might come and say that there is no being between death and birth—that the being at birth comes right from the end of the being at death. Consider though the being at birth. **It doesn't** just **occur from the end of the being** at death, **because it is a thing** that goes along in a stream of consecutive stages, **continuing** on **like** the seeds for crops of **grain**. [That is, a seed turning into a fully developed plant requires the inbetween stage of a young sprout. Just so, an inbetween life is required for the being to move from the location of death to the location of rebirth. (This explanation is from the famed commentary of Chim Jampay Yang.)]

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Someone may make the following objection:

A continuum doesn't necessitate a medium. The reflection of some image in a mirror is, for example, a continuation of that image—yet goes on cut off from the image.

We reply in the classical form of a proof:

Consider all existent things.

- Isn't the way in which in which the reflection of an image in a mirror is a continuation of that image **not** a good **example** to describe how the being at birth can go on cut off from the being at death but still be its continuation?
- **Because** doesn't the reflection of **the image** in a mirror **not** even **exist** in the way that the image does? Because isn't it true that **there are no two** separate things that both have form and can both stand **together in one** point in space at the same time?

And isn't our argument sound for yet another reason? **Since are**n't **they** two **dissimilar** things—the way in which the reflection of the image in the mirror is the continuation of that image, and the way in which the being at birth is a continuation of the being at death? Because isn't it true that the reflection is **not** really **the continuation** of the image? Isn't it also true that the reflection of the image is brought about **by two** principal causes—the image itself and a good, clean mirror; whereas the being at birth is something that comes from the being at death, not from any combination of two different principal causes?

নান্ট্র ম'ম'মী

We turn next to the scriptural proof.

12 Scriptural Proof of Inbetween Beings **৻**য়য়ৢৼ৾৾য়ৼ৾য়৾য়ৢৼয়৾৾ৼৢ৾ৼ৾৽ড়৾৾৾ৼ৾৾য় ายาามสูรสาวมี้เมร์ ณสาฏรามูา

They are, from his lips, who live on smells. Five taught. Proof too from the sutra on births. [III.47-8]

Beings in the state between death and rebirth **are** something that exist, as we hear **from** the Victor's own **lips** in the sutra on *The Seven Types of Lives*, where it mentions "There are seven types of lives: life as a hell being," and so on.

અન્ડ્ર મું આ મુ तकग्रायरावगुराने। आरुदावितात्वायर्वनात्ताय्वनायात्ता यायाकग्रायेता अन्तर्भात्रमा देः अत्रे म्वर्ग्याय म्यान्य क्रिया विश्वाय क्रिया क्र क्रिया क्र क्रिया क्र क्रिया क्रिय क्रिया क्र क्रिया क्रिया क्रिया क्रिया क्रिया क्र าริลิ:ริ:ฮริ:จร.สุราณสามฤดสามาพิสานลิ:ผู้ระวั

Another sutra concurs:

If three conditions are present, a child will form in the mother's womb. These are (1) a being suitable to be a mother, and who is still menstruating; (2) a feeling of desire and then sexual contact between the prospective parents; and (3) the proximity of one of the beings who live on smells.

This proves the existence of the intermediate being first because it comes **from** the Buddha, and secondly because the phrase "beings **who live on smells**" in the quotation refers to none other than the intermediate being.

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Someone may object to the last point, citing the common reading that goes "...the proximity of the cessation of the heaps." This position though is mistaken. The sutra called *Son of Talen* states:

Your "being who lives on smells" stands in close proximity, whether he be one for royalty, one for the Brahmin caste, for aristocracy, or for the common man; whether he stands to the east or...

The end of some heaps could hardly be described this way.

The intermediate being can also be said to exist in that **five** different types of non-returners, including those who "pass beyond" during the intermediate state, are **taught** in scripture. Some may claim that this type only refers to a certain kind of pleasure being, but if this were the case then other types such as "those who pass beyond after rebirth" would also have to be some kind of pleasure being.

Proof of the intermediate being comes **too from the sutra** called *The Seven Births of the Holy,* where types that pass beyond during the intermediate state are further divided into those that pass quickly and so on.

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Someone might raise the following objection:

If intermediate beings did exist it would contradict the teaching about the demon named "Destroyer," who with a fist of stone cracked the skull of Wiseman's Delight, a disciple of the Buddha known as Light Protector. The disciple died and flames immediately enveloped the body of the demon, who then took birth in the hells.

There is though no contradiction. The flames were not part of a result that ripened in the next life from a misdeed in this life—that came later. They were, rather, one of those results of a deed that ripens and returns to one in the very same life.

Yet another objection may be raised: if there is supposed to be a state between death and rebirth, what about the explanation that one takes birth in the hells "right after" he commits any one of the five **immediate** misdeeds? Yet there is no problem. The word "immediate" here is meant to refer to the fact that a person who has committed such a deed can take his next birth only in the hells, and nowhere else. Otherwise a person would logically take his birth in the hells the moment after he actually committed the deed.

One last objection could be offered, that the postulation of an intermediate being is at odds with the statement that

The Transcendent Victor spoke these words to the evil Brahmin:

Brahmin, you will come into the presence of the Lord of Death, Ere you live to any old age, or meet with some kind of sickness. There will be no place between, nowhere you can stop and stay; No need for you to prepare provisions for the journey.

Again though there is no problem. The only point of the words was to tell the Brahmin that he hadn't long to remain among humans.

Having thus completed proofs for the existence of intermediate beings, we turn to a description of their bodily images.

13 Bodies of Intermediate Beings اکَنَّمَ عَظَمَ عَنَّ عَلَى الْحَصَّى اکَنَمَ عَظَمَ عَنْ عَلَى الْحَصَّى اکْنَمَ عَلَى عَلَى الْحَصَى اکْنَا عَلَى عَلَى عَلَى الْحَصَى الْحَا عَلَى عَلَى عَلَى عَلَى الْحَا عَلَى الْحَصَى الْحَا عَلَى عَلَى عَلَى عَلَى الْحَا عَلَى عَلَى الْحَا Because the force projecting them's the same,

He has the image of the being "before." This is the one that's after the moment of birth, Before the point that one has already died. [III.49-52]

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What does the body of an inbetween being look like? The being between death and rebirth has the image of the being "before," or the being which is going to come into existence. This is because both the intermediate being and the being of the next life are thrown into the future by the same projecting force—the deeds they did in the past. This expression, the "being before," is meant to refer to the one that consists of the five (or four) heaps that exist *before* the point that one has already died (up through the moment of death) but after the moment of birth (the second moment of birth and so on).

What color is an intermediate being? An inbetween being headed for the hells has the color of a scorched stump of wood. Those to be animals are the color of smoke; craving spirits have a look like water. Those to become pleasure beings of the desire realm, or humans, possess a golden color. Inbetween beings for the form realm are white. No intermediate being exists for the formless realm, as there is no form there.

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How big are intermediate beings? Those to become pleasure beings of the desire realm, or humans, are the size of five or six-year old children. Those headed for the form realm possess more of a sense of shame and conscience than not, so have the body of a mature adult and are fully clothed at birth. Those of the desire realm have a greater share of shamelessness and a lack of conscience, so are naked at their birth. There was though the nun known as "Lady of White," who was born with clothes by force of her former prayers to that effect. Bodhisattvas in their final life are as well from infancy possessed of the special bodily signs and marks, and clothing.

"Your above description of intermediate beings," one may object, "appears to contradict the dream that the Buddha's mother had, of a white baby elephant entering her womb prior to the Buddha's birth." There is though no such inconsistency. The dream was only meant to represent certain symbolic points—something like the ten portents that were shown in the dreams of King Kirki.

Someone might continue the argument, citing the verse from the venerable saint, Subhuti:

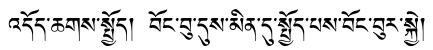
He made his entry, taking his place in the womb of the Mother with Full knowledge, cognizant as saints who know where they'll be born, And having first assumed the form of an elephant of white, A body embellished with six tusks of ivory, and four legs.

This reading though is only meant to match the Mother's dream.

"How long then," one may ask, "does a being stay in the intermediate state?" The Sutrist called the "Venerable Layman with Vows" makes the claim that "There is no fixed time: the intermediate being remains in this state until all the factors necessary for birth have come together." And the master Vasumitra claims that "they stay for a period of seven days. If by the end of this time they have failed to find a new birth, they die and migrate into yet another intermediate state." Still others claim that the intermediate being stays for seven weeks—a total of 49 days.

The Detailists make another claim:

A being in the intermediate state is one in an active search for his rebirth, so his conception into a new birth occurs relatively quickly, before he has spent any great amount of time in this state. If his birth in a certain place is a fixed thing but the necessary factors have not yet assembled, the force of his past deeds will pull these factors together and he will take birth there. If his birth in the particular place is not a fixed thing, he will then simply take birth somewhere else.



Suppose too that it is winter and someone has reached an intermediate state from which he is supposed to take rebirth as a cow. Since cows mate in the summer, he will instead take birth as a similar animal without a definite mating season. If in winter also a person has come to an intermediate state from which he is meant to take birth as a horse, we will instead be born as a donkey—since donkeys mate in any season, but horses in spring.

If again in summer a person has reached the state between death and rebirth and is supposed to be born as a bear, he will take birth as a *dre*-creature. They mate in no particular season, while bears mate only in the winter. If, finally, it is summer and a person has become an intermediate being meant to be born as a dog, he'll take his rebirth as a wolf: they mate any time, dogs only in autumn.

। ମିଂଙ୍ଗ୍ୟା ତିଂହ୍ଯିଂବ ଶ୍ଲିସାସ୍ଥି । ମିଂଦ୍ୟାସ୍ୟାଷ୍ଟର୍ମ୍ୟୁ ସ୍ମାସ୍ଥି । ଜିଷ୍ୟ ସାକ୍ଷ୍ୟୁର୍ମ୍ୟୁ ସ୍ୟାସ୍ୟ ସ୍ଥ୍ୟୁ ସ୍ଥିବା ଅଭିନ୍ୟ ଅଭ୍ୟୁ ଅଭିନ୍ୟ ଅଭ୍ୟୁ ଅର୍କ୍ୟୁ ଅଭ୍ୟୁ ଅର୍କ୍ୟୁ ଅଭ୍ୟୁ ଅଭ୍ୟୁ ଅଭ୍ୟୁ ଅଭ୍ୟୁ ଅଭ୍ୟୁ ଅଭ୍ୟୁ ଅର୍କ୍ୟୁ ଅର୍କ୍ୟୁ ଅ୍ର୍ୟୁ ଅର୍କ୍ୟୁ ଅର୍କ୍ୟୁ ଅର୍କ

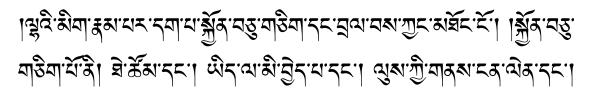
This all supports the quotation that says, "They turn from what they were; they collect new forces of the kind that come from deeds." Moreover, the "collection of new forces" mentioned here refers to a collection of new forces of the kind that come from deeds in this life and produce their results here in the very same life. This confirmation that the inbetween being is capable of collecting new deeds that will bring him a result in this life itself confirms that he can collect the other two types: those that produce a result that is experienced in the very next life, and those that lead to a result experienced in lives beyond the next. This is what they claim.



We now turn to the fourth of our five points on intermediate beings. Here we discuss their various special features.

Seen by the same type, with a clear god's eye. Miraculous feats from deeds, a special strength. All their powers complete, cannot be stopped. Never diverted, those ones live on smells. [III.53-6]

"Who," one may ask, "can see an intermediate being?" Intermediate beings, at least those of **the same type**, can be **seen by** each other. Some people have claimed that intermediate beings headed for a birth as a pleasure being can see those for all the other types of beings, and that intermediate beings to be born as humans, craving spirits, animals, and hell-beings can each see all but the preceding types.



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Intermediate beings can also be seen **by** using what is called the "eye of a god." It must be one which is **clear**, free of the eleven typical faults. These eleven are (1) doubt, (2) failing to direct one's attention properly, (3) improper physical states, (4) a feeling of dullness or sleepiness, (5) mental excitation, (6) an excessive application of effort, (7) vacant mental wandering, (8) anxiety, (9) too many different ideas, (10) talking too much, and (11) trying too hard to meditate.

Intermediate beings have a capability to perform **miraculous feats** that comes **through** the power of **deeds**. They can fly through the sky, and display **a special strength**, or capacity to travel at extraordinary speeds. **All their powers**, those of the eye and the rest, are **complete**—and they have the ability to pass through mountains and so forth **without being stopped**. Evidence of this fact is the presence of frogs and other types of creatures found in the middle of rocks with no openings at all.

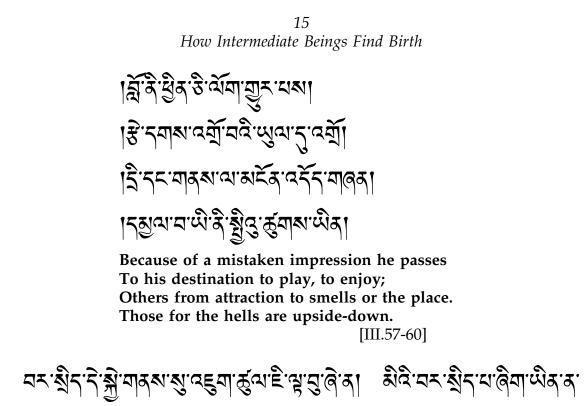
"Is it then possible," one may ask, "for a person to be diverted to another type of birth after he has already taken form as an intermediate being headed for the hells?" You are **never diverted** to another birth: the energy of one's past deeds which is throwing forth the intermediate being headed for the hells is the same energy that will project the being "before"—that is, the hell being itself.

One can however reach the state of an intermediate being headed for the level known as "Class of the Pure" and still not have to take birth there: cases where one achieves nirvana between death and rebirth, as just such a being, do exist.

One may ask whether intermediate beings of the desire realm eat any physical types of food. It is stated that **those ones** eat no gross kinds of physical food, but rather **live on** mere **smells**. And the more powerful consume the good smells, while the less powerful must eat the poor ones.

اکتر برا

The fifth and final point in our treatment of intermediate beings concerns how they enter the state of birth.



"How does an intermediate being," one may begin, "enter his particular state of birth?" If he is an inbetween being headed for a birth as a human, he sees his parents from a distance, having sex together. **Because of a mistaken impression**, and imagining that he can **play** and enjoy himself, **he passes to his destination** within the womb, lodged in the midst of the mother's abdomen and entrails.

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If the child is to be a boy, it lies crouched up on the right side of the mother's abdomen, facing her back. If it is to be a girl, the child lies to the left side of the abdomen, facing the front. A child to be born as a neuter lies in either position, depending on whether masculine or feminine types of desire dominate his personality.

As for the **other** types of intermediate beings, those headed for a birth from warmth and moisture pass to their destination **from an attraction for the smells** there. Those to be born complete come to their destination **from an attraction for the place** itself.

Someone might object: "How could anyone be attracted to the hells?" Yet they are—all based on a mistaken impression.

What does an intermediate being look like as he travels to his goal? Those headed for the hells travel upside-down. As sutra states,

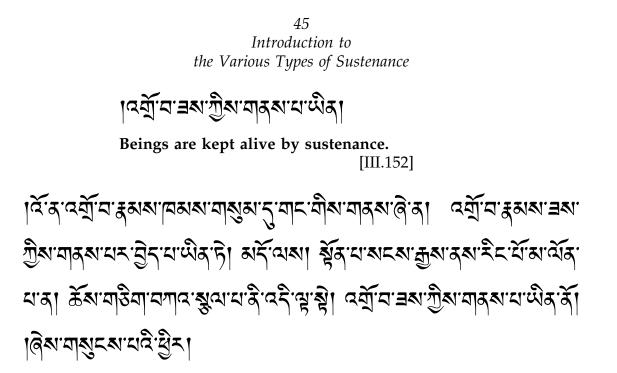
Those who berate the saints—accomplished ones With vows unstained and mighty asceticisms— Can only fall, travelling down into the hells, Passing with bodies upside-down.

It is stated that intermediate beings to be born as pleasure beings travel along in an upward direction. All of the others, those to be humans and the rest, travel on a level plane. The master Purnavardhana states that inbetween beings headed for a birth as a craving spirit go along like craving spirits themselves, facing backwards.

The Asian Classics Institute Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence

Reading Six: The types of sustenance, and a general description of the physical world

The following selection is taken from the Illumination of the Path to Freedom, a commentary by Gyalwa Gendun Drup, His Holiness the First Dalai Lama, on the Treasure House of Higher Knowledge (Abhidharma Kosha), written by the Buddhist master Vasubandhu in the fourth century AD. Master Vasubandhu's root text verses do not appear in the original of the commentary, and have been inserted at the appropriate points. Parts of these verses woven into the commentary have been printed in bold to show the close connection of the two works, and section headings have been provided for clarity.

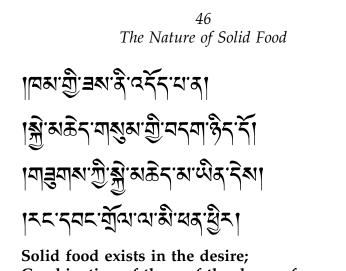


"What," one may ask, "keeps beings alive in these three realms?" **Beings are kept alive by sustenance,** for as sutra states:

Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence Reading Six

Not long after the Teacher had become enlightened, he gave voice to a certain teaching, to the effect that beings are kept alive by sustenance.

We next treat this point in greater detail, in three divisions concerning (1) the nature of sustenance; (2) incidentally, different names used to refer to intermediate beings; and (3) a rationale for the number of the different types of sustenance.



Solid food exists in the desire; Combination of three of the doors of sense. The door of sense that's form is not, because It neither aids its power nor the free.

[III.153-6]

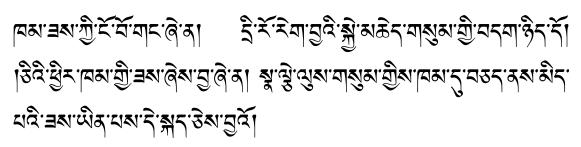
"In the lines above," one may begin, "you mentioned that `beings are kept alive by sustenance.' Just how many kinds of sustenance are there?" There are four different kinds: sustenance in the form of solid food, contact, mental movement, and consciousness.

"In what realms are they found?" one may ask. **Solid food exists in the desire** realm, but not in the realms above it, for it is just those beings who have freed themselves of desire for solid food who are born in these upper realms. Someone may ask how there can be any solid food in the great hells. And yet there is, for it is said that flaming iron balls and molten copper are forced into the mouths of the beings living in these hells. Moreover we can understand from the accounts of Gendun Sung and Shrona that in the partial and adjacent hells there are kinds of food resembling those of the human realm.

Some may object that this explanation seems to contradict the following words of the *Treatise:*

What is solid food? Any portion of a substance which, when used as food, nurtures the various powers, and supports and promotes the development of the major elements of the body.

Yet there is no contradiction. This explanation was given only with reference to food as part of a nurturing process; iron balls or the like can be said to satisfy the definition of food in that they do exhibit the ability to remove a feeling of hunger.



"What," one may ask, "is the basic nature of solid food?" It is a **combination of three of the doors of sense:** smell, taste, and the tangible. Why is it referred to as "solid food" [literally, "portion food"]? It is so named because it is food which is ingested only after it has been divided into portions by three agents: nose, tongue, or body.

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"Consider then," one may object, "the smells and tastes of sunshine or shade. Are they then not a kind of solid food? Because isn't it impossible to ingest them by cutting them first into portions of some certain size?" It's true that this would be impossible; nonetheless, they do fit the general description of solid sustenance. You could also say that our description is intended to fit only the majority of instances.

The door of sense that is form is not a kind of solid food, because it does not aid in the nurturing process of "its power" (i.e., the power which takes this form as its object) or of the power's basis. Nor is it similar to the general class of things that do perform such a function.

हनारायात्रान्त्रान्त्रे। अप्येन्द्रांदेरानन्त्रकारायायां केंद्रान्त्रत्वद्रेन्त्र्यात्र्याः नराव्युरानदेधुरावेग्द्रीरावेग्द्रा देवेग्वर्याद्रायात्र्ययायायां कर्यात्रान्द्रान्त्र्याः नराव्युरानदेधुरावेग्द्रीरावेग्द्रा देवेग्वर्यात्र्यायायायां कर्यात्र्यात्र्याः

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"To this I disagree," one may reply. "Isn't it possible for sensations of pleasure and happiness to arise when one looks upon a meal laid out in a particularly attractive manner?" In this case though we would describe the sustenance as that consisting of contact involving an experience of pleasure through focussing on the meal. The point is not that this form, the object of the eye, is functioning as sustenance. If it were, it would also have to produce some beneficial effect even in beings that are **free**: enemy destroyers or those that need never return. The fact though is that such form **does not** in any way **aid** them.

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Contact, mental movement, and consciousness With stain are sustenance.

[III.157-8a]

"You have mentioned," one may begin, "sustenance consisting of contact, and so on. Just what is the nature of each of these types of sustenance?" **Contact, mental movement, and consciousness** that come **with stain are** each a kind of **sustenance.** In their unstained form they can't be called sustenance, for sustenance is defined by its function of perpetuating this suffering life, whereas the stainless act to bring it to a stop. As sutra says,

⁴⁷ Three More Forms of Sustenance

It functions to keep alive those beings who have already come out, and to nourish them; it functions to provide aid to those still in the state of seeking their next life.

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It also states,

The four types of sustenance are the very root of sickness, cancer, agony. They help bring about old age and death.

Stainless things could hardly be described this way.

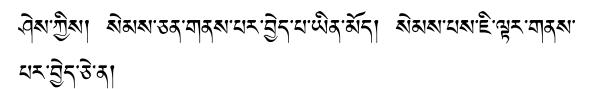
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One may ask how many of the different types of sustenance function to keep beings alive, and to provide aid to them. All of them do. One then might ask again:

Let us admit that movement of the mind (since it is, after all, by nature a deed) acts—along with the consciousness and contact linked up with it—to bring a being into existence, and to provide aid to those who are still in search of a rebirth. How can solid food though work to bring a being into existence?

But it can: solid food can bring one into a new existence by power of his craving for it.

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One may pose still another question:

Admitted that solid food and contact involving an experience of pleasure, as well as the consciousness linked with this contact, can all function to keep a sentient being alive. But how can movement of the mind perform this function?

The answer is that movement of the mind involving the emotion of hope can actually keep one alive. We see for example the story of a father who couldn't bear the thought of dying, along with his two sons, during a famine. He took a bag full of powder and tied it fast, telling his sons that the chaff was flour. As long as they entertained this hope, it kept them from dying. When they opened the bag and saw the chaff, they lost hope, and thus expired.

We also see mention of shipwrecked merchants adrift in the sea, who mistakenly took far-off whitecaps to be dry land. As long as they had hope it kept them alive, but when they realized their mistake and lost this hope they straightaway died. The *Types of Beings* also describes certain great creatures that crawl up out of the water to bury their eggs beneath the sandy beach. As long as the mother creature keeps her eggs in mind, they remain fresh. If she forgets about them, so it is said, they spoil.

าสู้สารนัสาสิท ริาหาสายคลามฉิามิมมานาสูฉิาสมาญรณาสฉาสิสาพัรานมา ส์ โกมามารสาสามาวิรูณา มารสาสาวุรณานวิวิรัสาพิสาส์ เดิมาภาพูกา

The Master though objects to this explanation:

If this were true, then the movement of the mother's mind would have to be sustenance for the young, which is illogical. The point is, rather, that the beings in the eggs are kept from spoiling as long as they recall their mother, and spoil when they forget.

રે ભાર્ષે માટ્ટે મુખ્ય તે દે તે સે ભારત્વા કે સે માળ્ય સુધ્ય માટે સે માટે સે

The Pandit makes a counterclaim that "This position is itself mistaken: the root text itself states that `one is ignorant all,' and that `this is always the case with those from eggs." He is himself in error though, for the mental states of failing to recall something on one hand and total ignorance on the other are not exclusive of one another.

48 Realms and Three Types of Sustenance

<u>...খ</u>র্শ্বস্থ্র

These in three. [III.158b]

In what realms are these three types of sustenance found? **These** are found **in** all **three** realms. One might ask whether everything that can be made into portions can also act as sustenance which nurtures the powers and their basis. All four combinations are possible in this regard. First consider types of smells, tastes, or tangibles which come in portions but do harm to the powers and their basis. They are an example of something which exists in portions but which is not a kind of sustenance which nurtures the powers and this basis.

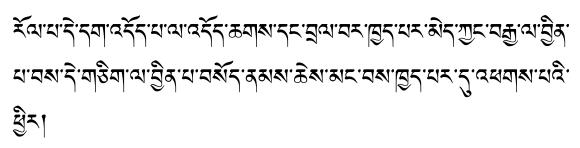
The final three types of sustenance provide an example of something which is sustenance nurturing the powers and their basis but which is not something made into these physical portions. An example of both would be any kind of sustenance which, once taken in portions, produced a nurturing effect upon the powers and their basis. A case of neither would be, finally, something like sound or suffering with its attendant phenomena.

"If something produces a deleterious effect upon the powers and their basis," one may assert, "it could never be referred to as `solid food."" Even if it produces a harmful effect at some future date, we may nonetheless properly refer to something as solid food on the basis that, for the time being, it has a beneficial influence. This is because the food is performing a function on two different occasions.

"Now the Victorious Buddha," one may continue, "spoke that the result of offering food to a single ordinary being staying in the *dzambu*-tree grove was greater than that of the same offering of food to a hundred non-Buddhist sages who had managed to free themselves of desire for the objects of the senses. Who was he referring to in the expression `ordinary being staying in the *dzambu*-tree grove'?"

Some claim that the reference is to everyone on *Dzambu* with a stomach, but this is incorrect since it contradicts the specific mention of a *single* being. Moreover the force of the comparison would be lost, there being no great wonder that giving to so many people would outweigh the other act.

Others have claimed that the words refer to a bodhisattva who has reached the point where only a certain, fixed time remains before he achieves the final goal. The Detailists on their part claim that this interpretation is incorrect, since giving to such a being would be an act of much greater merit than that of making offerings to ten million enemy destroyers, and that the words are therefore meant to refer to bodhisattvas who have reached the state conducive to certain separation from suffering [i.e., the path of preparation].



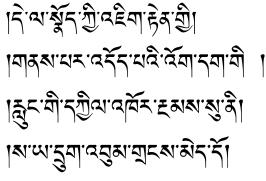
The Master though rebuts this position:

This could never be correct—first because of the incongruity between the being to which the name supposedly refers and the nature of the name itself. Moreover, in no sutra or classical commentary at all do we see bodhisattvas who have reached the state conducive to their certain separation from suffering referred to as bodhisattvas residing in the *dzambu*-tree grove. Therefore the being in question is a bodhisattva who has managed to develop the first concentration level sitting at the base of a *dzambu* tree, and who has gained his every goal. From the point of view of his having overcome any desire for the objects of the desire realm, the bodhisattva is in no way distinguished from the non-Buddhists mentioned. His vast superiority is nonetheless reflected in the fact that giving to this single person constitutes so much greater merit than giving to the hundred others.

Someone might ask whether making offerings to such a person wouldn't be a greater merit than giving to an absolutely infinite number of the non-Buddhists mentioned. Admittedly it would be, he says; the word "hundred" is employed here first to maintain a continuity in composition, since in passages of the sutra preceding the one in question the word constantly appears: "You could give something to a hundred beings living in the animal state of birth, yet still look forward to results a hundred times more powerful maturing from the deed of offering something to a single human being, even an immoral one."

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54 The Great Disc of Wind



Here the beliefs on how it stays, this great Vessel of the world: below, a great Disc of wind, a million six hundred thousand Thick, by another without count.

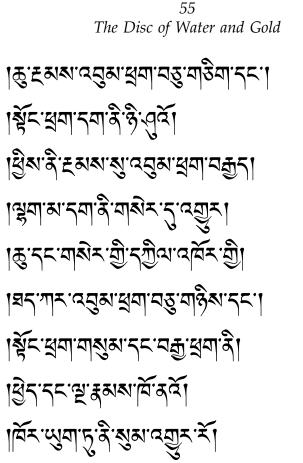
[III.177-80]

Having thus explained the world of living beings, we turn to the other world—the great outer vessel itself. There are a limitless number of planets, planets of countless different descriptions—we could never cover them all. We will thus touch, and only briefly, on the details of the planet connected to the Saha Paradise of our own precious Teacher.

$$\begin{split} & |\widehat{f}^{(\alpha)}\widehat{\delta}^{(\alpha)} \times \widehat{f}^{(\alpha)} - \widehat{f}^{(\alpha)} -$$

२) नितेन्स्यर्थासु से नयमा केन स्थाया मेरेमा नम् मुमा सुमा सम् स्था सेन महिमा थेन ने न

Here then are the beliefs of the Knowledge school of philosophers on how it stays, this great vessel of the world. According to their system, the foundation that lies below this world first consisted of nothing but empty space. Then began a portent of the formation of a new world: a gentle force of wind, swirling about itself over a period of very many years. Eventually it turned into a great disk of wind, so fierce and solid that even a massive diamond could never crack it. In thickness, this disc measures one million, six hundred thousand yojana [about 7 million miles]. Its diameter runs one "countless" of yojana [about 4.5 times 10 to the 60th power (60 zeroes) miles].



The measure of the water in its thickness Is equal to one million, twenty thousand. Eight hundred thousand, the thickness externally; All of the remainder turned to gold. The measurement of the radius Of this massive disc of water and gold Is just about a million two hundred And three thousand, four hundred and fifty. Three times this for the circumference. [III.181-9]

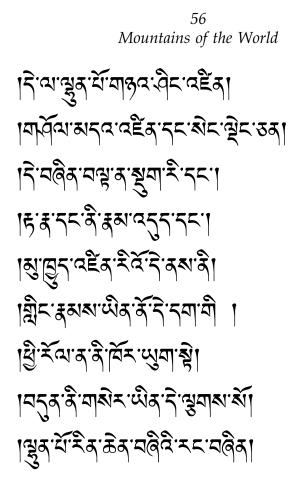
As for the disc of water and gold, a pillar of rain so dense it looks like the shaft of a oxcart falls then upon that massive disc of wind. This causes the formation of a great disc of water possessing an inner base of gold. The measure of this water in its thickness is equal to one million, twenty thousand yojana [about 4.6 million miles].

One may ask why this water doesn't just roll off the edge of the disc of wind. Some claim that what holds it on is the power of the past deeds of all living beings; food that you've eaten, for example, stays without dropping into the intestines until the stomach has finished dissolving it. Others claim that the suction of the wind below keeps it on.

Next a great wind stirs up the surface of this water, so much that it gains solidity and a great disc of gold takes shape. The **external thickness** of this formation is as follows. The thickness of the disc of water is now **eight hundred thousand** yojana [about 3.6 million miles]. **All of the remainder**, three hundred and twenty thousand yojana [about 1.4 million miles], has **turned to gold**.

One may ask about the measurement of the radius of this massive disk of water and gold. It is just a single million and two hundred and three thousand, four hundred and fifty yojana [5.4 million miles]. The circumference, since the disc has a circular outline, would be three times this.

Having thus explained the foundation of the world, we will now describe what rests upon this foundation. We'll first treat the mountains, then the oceans, and finally the various continents.



Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence Reading Six

Here then Mount Supreme and also Yoke, Plowshare next and after it Khadira, Just so that referred to as Mount Lovely, Ear of the Horse, and then the Perfect Bow. Next is Rim of the Wheel, and after that The various continents, and on the outer Side of them the range Encircling. The seven are of gold; this one iron. Mount Supreme of four different precious things, Standing in the water at a depth of Eighty thousand, eighty thousand too Above the water line, in yojana. The height of eight decreases by a half, In length across the same as altitude. [III.190-203]

Next in the formation of the world comes another great rain, like the one before, falling upon the disc of water and gold. This leads to the formation of an outer ocean composed of various primeval elements. A great wind rises and agitates the highest order of the elements, thereby creating the first of the great mountain areas,

1) **Mount Supreme:** so called because of its supremacy, its eminence, over all the other mountains.

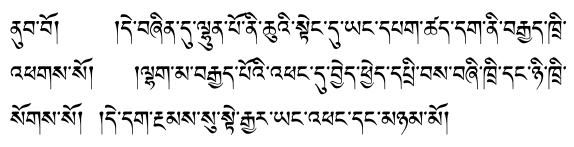
As the wind agitates the middle-order elements, other great ranges come into being. They are

- 2) the range of The **Yoke**, mountains embellished with a peak of a pleasing outline that strikes the eye like the yoke between two oxen pulling a cart;
- 3) the range of The **Plowshare**, mountains with the attractive look of a plowshare of gold; **after it**
- 4) the Khadira range, embellished with a forest of *khadira* trees;
- 5) **just so that referred to as** the **"Lovely"** range, with a peak that is lovely to look upon;
- 6) the **Ear of the Horse**, mountains embellished with the shape of a horse's ear; **and then**
- 7) **the Perfect Bow,** a range of mountains topped with a peak shaped like a person bending over in a bow. **Next is**
- 8) **Rim of the Wheel,** a range with peaks arranged like a wheel's rim. All of these last-mentioned mountain ranges lie like concentric circles around Mount Supreme.

After that the lower-order elements of the ocean are agitated by the wind, leading to the formation of **the various continents**. On the outer side of them lies **the Encircling range** of mountains, which take their name from the fact that they circle around the area of the four continents.

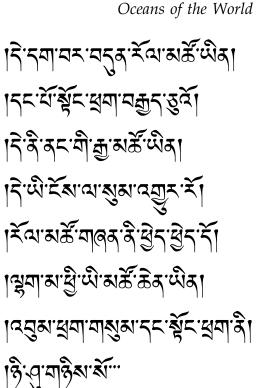
One may ask what materials make up these nine kinds of mountains. **The seven** from the Yoke out to Rim of the Wheel **are** made **of gold**, while "**this one**"—the Encircling range—is **iron**.

Mount Supreme is made **of four different precious things:** its eastern side is silver, the southern side is lapis, the west of ruby, and the north of gold. (*The Comment* states that it is the east side that is made of ruby, while the west is the one with silver.) The color of the sky in each of the quarters running out from Mount Supreme is determined by the particular precious material on that side of the mountain: therefore the sky over Dzambu, the southern continent where we live, appears blue.



One may ask about the distances involved with these mountain ranges. Mount Supreme stands in the water at a depth of eighty thousand yojana [360,000 miles]. It rises eighty thousand yojana too above the water line. The height of the remaining eight mountains decreases by a half, which makes them forty thousand, twenty thousand, and so on. The length across these ranges, that is their breadth, is exactly the same as their altitude.

Next we'll describe the oceans of the world.



The seven between them are the Seas of Sport. The first of them consists of eighty thousand; It is the one we call the Inner Sea,

Three times longer in circumference. The other Seas of Sport then half by half. That remaining, the Great Outer Sea; In its measure some three hundred twenty And two thousand.

[III.204-11a]

There are **seven** different seas lying **between** the concentric mountain chains from Mount Supreme out to Rim of the Wheel. They **are** known as **the "Seas of Sport,"** so named because they are filled with water possessed of the eight wonderful qualities, and are bodies of water where the kings of the serpent-like nagas play and sport.

What are these "eight wonderful qualities"? As the verse goes,

Cool and delicious, light and soft as well, Sparkling clear, with no odor at all, Never a harm to the stomach when it's drunk, Never either unpleasant to the throat.

"What," one may ask, "are the dimensions of these seas?" **The first of them consists of eighty thousand** yojana [about 360,000 miles]. Of the Inner and

Outer Seas, it is the one we call the "Inner," and it is three times longer than its length in circumference. The measures of the other Seas of Sport then are each half less than that of the sea inside of it.

The **remaining** ocean area, that from Rim of the Wheel out to the Encircling range, is known as the Great Outer Sea. It is in its measure some three hundred and twenty-two thousand yojana [about 1.5 million miles].

Our last section here concerns the various continents. We treat first the major continents, then the subcontinents, and close with a description of the particular features of our own continent—that of Dzambu.

> 58 Continents and Subcontinents ...ने.ज.मे। เลย์สาสูลิ:สู้ราสู่รัสาสสูสาญ าสั้ราสุขาของงังอุรารจารอิจงา ามุธิญาณารุณฑาส์ราษิรารุราจุดา 142.মৃ.জিশ্ব.তথ্যারা.জ্ব.বিপাত্রহা ารั้งเขาผู้มาตรี รราตราขอขาณา ાન્યગાર્જન સુસાનનુ ભૂગવરુવે

Among each of these, The continent of Dzambu runs two thousand On three sides. It has a wagon's shape, On the one, three and a half yojana. The Eastern, Greatbody, like half a moon, Three sides similar to those and one With three hundred and fifty yojana. The continent of Cattle Users round, Seven and a half thousand around: Through its center, just two and a half. Terrible Sound, eight, even square. Eight the continents that lie between: Body and Greatbody, Terrible Sound, The Matching continent of Terrible Sound, Oxtail Fan, the Other Oxtail Fan, Moving and the one called Path Supreme. [III.211b-26]

રે ત્રશ્ય તે શ્વેમ્ સમય પ્યત્ર તે ાલિશ્ય વ્યવન તા શ્વેમ્ સ્થય ગામ લે તા શ્વેમ્ વલે બેન પર ને બાદ તે સ્થય પ્યત્ર તે ાલિશ્ય વ્યવન તા શ્વેમ્ ત્ર સ્થય વાય તે સ્વિપ્ય વિદ્ય વ્યવ સ્થય તે સ્થય ત્ર સ્વ

Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence Reading Six

"In the lines above," one may begin, "you spoke about `the various continents' that came `after that.' Just what are these continents?" **Among each of these** continents, the first is known as **the** "Southern **Continent of Dzambu.**" The name derives from the fact that, first of all, it lies south of the ultimate mountain—Mount Supreme. "Dzambu" comes from the sound that comes when the fruit of a *dzambu* tree drops into the water. And since this mass is surrounded by water, we call it a "continent." [This is a play on words in the Sanskrit, where the word for "island" or "continent" is $dv\bar{v}pa$, meaning "that which divides the water (*ap*) into two (dvi)."] The continent **runs two thousand** yojana [about 9,000 miles] **on** each of **three** different **sides. It has the shape of a wagon,** with **three and a half yojana on the one** remaining side.

The Eastern Continent, Greatbody, is so named because it lies to the east of this mountain, and since the size of its inhabitants' bodies is twice that of those living here. Like a half moon in its outline, this continent has three sides similar to those of our own continent: two thousand yojana each in measure. It has one remaining side with three hundred and fifty yojana.

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The name of **the** Western **Continent, Cattle Users,** comes from the fact that it lies to the west of this mountain, while its inhabitants enjoy the use of cattle and jewels. It is also, of course, surrounded by water and thus called a "continent." It is **round**, shaped like a circle, measuring **seven and a half thousand** yojana. This means that, measured straight **through its center**, the continent is **just two and a half** thousand yojana.

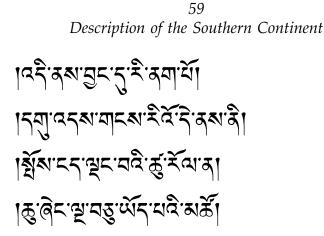
Next is the Northern Continent, **Terrible Sound**, so named because it lies to the north of this mountain and because, seven days before they die, people there hear a terrible sound telling them in advance. The total outer measure of the continent is **eight** thousand yojana; it has the shape of **a square**, with four **even** sides of two thousand yojana each.

រុជាតិសម្ភរៀ ភ្លិករកឲ្យដ៍ភ្លើលកករញ៉ិរញ្ណិករកាល៍ការកត្វភូវៀ លួសរកករលូស ឧដកាសរណ៍ ឆ្លាំងករកាល៍កា ឆ្លែងសិត្តតកករត្មាសិរត្តតរញ៉ាំភ្លិកភាំរញ៉ិរក្សាភ្លិកភាំអំកាល៍កា ក្រលកកកកតិ ដល់ការឲ្យតរអ្នំជិះឆ្លិករកាល៍កា ក្រាល៍ខ្មែតកកកតិ លេសរស័ត៌កាលក្ម័ា ត្បូករញ៉ិរញ្ញិករកាល៍ការខ្ចុំរញ្ញិករដ្ឋត ភេត្ញកក្សា គេសសរ ចក្ខត្តសិរកាតុសរលរដ្ឋលេក ត ខ្សិតរបំរកាតុសរស័រ

As for the subcontinents, there are **eight** of these ancillary **continents that lie between** the four principal ones. Ancillary to the Eastern Continent are the subcontinents named **Body and Greatbody**. Those ancillary to the Northern Continent are the subcontinents of **Terrible Sound** and **Matching Terrible Sound**. The subcontinents related to the Southern Continent are known as **Oxtail Fan** and **the Other Oxtail Fan;** those around the Western Continent we call **Moving and Path Supreme**. Thus there are four pairs of subcontinents, totalling eight. Humans live on all of them; harmful spirits inhabit Oxtail Fan.

াবার্যুরা ঘারী

We turn lastly now to the particular features of the Southern Continent, our own.



North from here, the Nine Mountains of Black; Past them stand the Mountains of Snow. Next The Scent of Incense; to its near side lies The Lake with banks the length of fifty. [III.227-30]

North from "here"—that is, from the Seat of the Diamond here in India, at the very center of Dzambu Continent—are **the Nine Mountains of Black. Past them stand the** towering **Mountains of Snow. Next,** still travelling north, we come upon the mountain they call **Scent of Incense.**

Ten yojana [about 45 miles] **to the near side of this** peak **lies Lake** Neverwarm, the home of the *naga* king of the same name. It is filled with waters having the eight wonderful qualities, and covered with various flowers such as the blue, red, and night lotuses. It has **banks the length of fifty** yojana each and, being four-sided, measures two hundred [900 miles] all around.

The Ganges River descends from a rock formation on the east side of the lake shaped like the mouth of an elephant. From a formation on the southern side with an outline like the beak of the great *garuda* bird flows the Sindhu. The Pakshu River falls from an aperture to the west shaped like a horse's mouth; the Sita finally comes from the lake's northern section, from a formation which bears a resemblance to the mouth of a lion. These currents run a circle around Lake Neverwarm seven times in a clockwise direction, joining with some five hundred smaller currents, and flow down to the Great Outer Sea. As *Comment on the World* relates,

The rivers of the Ganges and the Sindhu, Pakshu And the Sita fall, currents sporting garlands strung With bubbles of the froth, and each with cool refreshing waters. They spring forth from the outer edge in each of four directions: From the eastern side the Ganges, flowing to the sea; Passing there as well the Sindhu, from the southern quarter; From the west the Pakshu, heading also to the ocean; Lastly to the seaside too the Sita from the north. These, the four most mighty torrents, greatest of all rivers, Make each one their separate descent in a way most grand, Each one also taking with it some five hundred more, All these currents flowing then to meet the Greater Sea.

 $|\hat{X}_{N} = \sum_{i=1}^{N} |\hat{X}_{i} = \sum_{i=1}^{N} |\hat{$

Twenty yojana [about 90 miles] north of Scent of Incense mountain stands a great golden crag covered with overhangs providing nesting places for birds. Known as "Obelisk of the Lesser Pleasure Beings," it is square and measures fifty yojana [225 miles] to a side, or two hundred all round. In height the crag stands three and a half yojana [about 16 miles]; it possesses a special beauty very pleasing to the eye. An additional hundred thousand golden crags with similar overhangs surround the principal one.

Another twenty yojana [90 miles] to the north stands the King of the Sala Trees, otherwise known as "Steadfast." Its roots penetrate the earth to a distance of forty cubits [60 feet], and seven rows of *sala* trees ring it all around. Its branches tower into the sky with leaves that overlap each other so tightly that they almost seem to cover the sky.

$|\hat{f}^{\dagger}$ ર્વશ્ચ બુરુ ર્શ્વેશ્વશ્ચ નયવા ર્જન છે. બુર્વ દેવ્યુન પશુ શાયવા છે. પ્રચ્લા અર્જે આ સંગ છે. પ્રચ્લા અર્જે આ સંગ છે. પ્રચ્લા અર્થે આ સંગ છે. પ્રચ્લા અર્થે આ સંગ છે. પ્રચ્લા અર્થે આ સંગ છે. પ્રચ્લા પ્રચ્લા સંગ છે. પ્રચ્લા સંગ છે. પ્રચ્લા પ્રચ્લા સંગ છે. પ્ર્યુ સંગ છે. પ્રચ્લા સંગ છે. પ્ર્ય સંગ છે. પ્રચ્લા સંગ છે. પ્રચ્લા સંગ છે. પ્રચ્લા સંગ છે. પ્રચ્લા સંગ છે. પ્ર્ય સંગ છે. પ્લ્ય સંગ છે. પ્રચ્લા સંગ છે. પ્ર્ય સંગ છે.

Still another twenty yojana, this time to the east, lies a great pool of water known as Gentle Currents. Its dimensions are the same as those of Lake Neverwarm. A hundred lesser pools surround it, and all are covered by extraordinary lotuses with stems the size of plows, leaves the size of cowhides, and blossoms big as wagon wheels.

२िंगनमु मुनेम्मु मुभ्यादेर क्रुंत्यवे स्वर्य्यके राज्य न्या खुर्यात्या स्वर्य्य के स्वर्य के स्वर्य के स्वर्य स्वर्य के स्वर्य के स्वर्य स्वर्य स्वर्य के स्वर्य स्वर्य के स्वर्य स् स्वर्य स्

Here too is another "Steadfast," the war-elephant of the pleasure-being named Hundred Offerings. His body is white, his head blue with a reddish center, and he sports six tusks. The elephant stands two and a half yojana in height, and one full yojana in breadth. Two and a half in length, he measures then seven yojana all round. Another hundred thousand elephants serve as his attendants, and they reside for the four months of the winter, spring, and summer seasons at a different one of the locations just mentioned.

Having completed a description of the physical bodies atop the foundation of the world, we turn to a more particular explanation of the various locales of living beings. Here we will first complete a basic presentation and then follow it further to related points. The presentation itself begins with the locales of those in births of misery and proceeds to the places inhabited by those of the higher births. Within the births of misery we treat first the hot hells, and after that the cold.

The Asian Classics Institute Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence

Reading Seven: The lives of hellbeings

The following selection is taken from the Illumination of the Path to Freedom, a commentary by Gyalwa Gendun Drup, His Holiness the First Dalai Lama, on the Treasure House of Higher Knowledge (Abhidharma Kosha), written by the Buddhist master Vasubandhu in the fourth century AD. Master Vasubandhu's root text verses do not appear in the original of the commentary, and have been inserted at the appropriate points. Parts of these verses woven into the commentary have been printed in bold to show the close connection of the two works, and section headings have been provided for clarity.



Twenty thousand deep beneath of us, That of No Respite, just the same. Seven are the hells atop of it.

[III.231-3]

Twenty thousand yojana **deep** [about 90,000 miles] **beneath of us** here on Dzambu Continent lies the ceiling of the hell known as **No Respite**. Its height and depth are **just the same**: twenty thousand yojana each. The hell is known as "No Respite" because the beings living there experience unlimited sufferings without the slightest interruption. Some have claimed that "No Respite" [Skt: $av\bar{i}ci$] takes its name from the fact that there is no [Skt: a] occurrence of pleasure [Skt: $v\bar{i}$] here.

Seven are the hells atop of No Respite:

1) "Revive," so called because the beings living here strike each other with various weapons until they all lie still as death. Then a voice comes from the sky, commanding them to "Revive!" This makes them rise and start all over again.

2) In the hell called "Lines of Black," hellguards first cover beings' bodies with black lines and then use various kinds of blades to slice them open along these lines.

3) The hellguards in "Gather and Smash" gather the beings here together and smash them to a pulp.

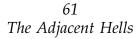
4) "Screaming" hell is named from the shrieks of pain by the beings there, seared by heat.

Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence Reading Seven

5) In the "Great Screaming Hell," the heat that burns those living there is much greater, their screams of pain more horrible too.

6) The next hell is simply "Heat," named from the fact that its inhabitants burn stuffed in red-hot iron chambers.

7) Those of the next hell, "Superheat," roast in an even more unbearable heat, jammed in ceramic chambers of single or double walls.



Sixteen extra with the entire eight, Standing at their four individual quarters: Hells by the name of Embers and Corpse Rot, Razor Road and the rest, the River as well. [III.234-7]

Sixteen extra, adjacent hells come with each of the entire eight, standing around them in a circular arrangement. At each of their four individual

quarters we find then first a **hell by the name of Embers.** These embers reach up to one's knees: when he sets his foot down, all the flesh and bone of his leg are burned away. When he raises his foot again, it all grows back.

Next is the **Corpse Rot**, a swamp hell of rotten corpses. You sink down to your waist and out come creatures called Sharpbeaks, with white bodies and black heads, to spear your body. Right up against the Swamp is the **Razor**-Studded **Road**, where again the flesh and bone of your feet are sliced away as you set your feet down, constantly regenerating as you raise them again.

"The rest" refers first to the Forest of Swords, where the leaves of the trees are actually swords. A breeze blows through the forest and stirs the sword-leaves, which fall and lacerate your body. Great speckled dogs live in the forest and attack, tearing the flesh away with fangs of iron. Terror drives you to the Wood of Shalmali.

The *shalmali* are huge trees with trunks many miles in height, covered with spines some sixteen inches long. As you climb a tree to escape the dogs, its spines point downwards and stick into your body. When you reach the top, ravens with steel beaks are waiting to pluck your eyeballs away from the sockets. In desperation you begin to climb back down, only now the spikes turn their points upward to spear your body again.

Last comes **the River** Uncrossable, filled with burning ashes and almost impossible to pass. Now the three hells of the previous paragraphs are counted only as one because the instruments of torture in each of them are of the same general type. The dogs and ravens are considered characteristics of the Forest of Swords and the Shalmali Wood.

In front of these hells stand the hellguards of the Lord of Death, weapons in hand to stop any of the hellbeings from running somewhere else. One may ask whether these guards are a kind of living being or not. The Sutrists claim that they are not, that they are merely constructs of the elements and their derivatives, like mountains that resemble the head of a goat or sheep.

Some might say that this explanation seems to contradict a verse from the venerable Dharmika Subhuti:

Those who delight in anger, cruelty, Those who find their pleasure in bad deeds, Those who love to see some suffering, Take their births as demons of Lord Death.

And yet it does not. Here the expression "demons of Lord Death" is meant to refer only to those craving spirits who act as attendants to the Lord of All Things, the Lord of Death, and whose job it is to lead beings to their places in the hells.

The Detailists on their part claim that the hellguards are a kind of living being, and that after their deaths they take birth as hellbeings themselves, this being the ripened result of their having done such harm to the beings in the hells. They say the reason why the guards themselves are left unharmed by the hellfires and so on is that their past deeds prevent it.

। বাধীর্ষ শেষী।

Next we describe the cold hells.

62 The Cold Hells



The other eight, cold, starting with Blisters. [III.238]

There are **eight** more hells, **other** than the hot ones. These are the **cold** hells, and they **start with** the hell called **Blisters**. The names of the eight are Blisters, Blisters Bursting, Chattering, Moaning in Cold, Screaming in Cold, Splitting Open like a Blue Lotus, Splitting Open like a Red Lotus, and Breaking Wide Open like a Red Lotus.

One might ask how all these different hells, No Respite and the rest, could ever fit under this one continent. And yet they do, for the continents are all much wider at the base, shaped like a pile of grain.

Now the principal habitat for animals is supplied by the Great Outer Sea: their numbers here are great, their suffering limitless. Those that live in the lands of men and pleasure beings are spread all over, with no one particular location. The main place for craving spirits lies beneath the area of Rajagirha here on our continent, some five hundred yojana [about 2,250 miles] deep. Here lives the Lord of Death, known also as the Lord of All Things. He has the body of a craving spirit, for the past deeds that have thrown him into this place were non-virtuous. The deeds that determined the finishing details of his life, though, were virtuous—so he enjoys a kind of eminence, like one of the greater pleasure beings.

ન્દ્યુભાવરા સ્રેુગ્વરાવ્વુુદાવાદે ભૂરાવુશાર્શે શેબેશાયન્વાભાવેલે નશેવાશા સ્રેંતાય બેંદાયભા દેવે વર્ષે રાયે ક્વાર્શ્વા છે દેશા છે સાંગુ છે સંગુ છે દેશા દેવે દેશા છે દેશા છે દેશા છે દેશા છે દેશા સ્રેવાય જ્યાં તે દેશા છે દેશા કર્યો ક્રિયા છે સ્રેવાય છે સ્રે દ્વાયે દેશા દેશા છે દેશા છે દેશા છે દેશા છે દેશા છે સ્રેવાય જ્યાં તે દેશા છે દેશા છે દેશા છે દેશા છે સ્રેવાય છે દેશા છ દેશા છે દેશા છ દેશા છે દેશા

His job is to inform beings who are headed for the hells, those who are ignorant of why they must go there, just what they did to deserve such a birth. He is attended by some thirty-six types of craving spirits. These spirits may, in general, be divided into three different groups: those with outer obstacles, those with inner obstacles, and those with obstacles in the very nature of what they try to eat or drink. Such spirits who live in the lands of men or pleasure beings have no particular place, and are found throughout these areas.

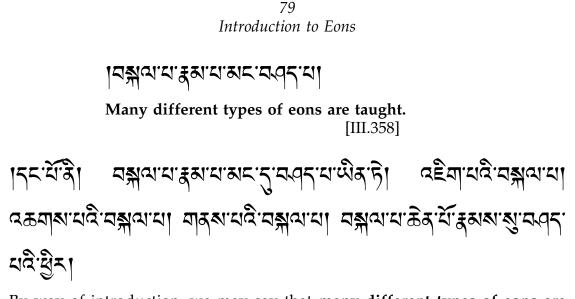
मिहिरूग्याद्वे सेवे महरूम्यत् के भा सुवे महरूग्या रूप्तत्त्वे स्वयाय क्यात्त्य स्वयाय क्यात्य स्वयाय क्या स्वय रूप्त के स्वयाय के प्रत्य के स्वयाय के स्व स्वरूप्त स्वयाय के स्व

Having thus discussed places where beings in the births of misery live, we turn to the locations of those in the higher births. Since we have already described the places where humans live, we begin with the lands of the pleasure beings. These fall into two types: those actually related to an area of solid ground, and those not so related. In the first category fall the lands of those in the class of the Four Great Kings, as well as those of the Thirty-Three. Pleasure beings in the class of the Four Great Kings may themselves be divided into those of the mansions, and those of the mountains.

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Reading Eight: Time and the coming of a Buddha

The following selection is taken from the Illumination of the Path to Freedom, a commentary by Gyalwa Gendun Drup, His Holiness the First Dalai Lama, on the Treasure House of Higher Knowledge (Abhidharma Kosha), written by the Buddhist master Vasubandhu in the fourth century AD. Master Vasubandhu's root text verses do not appear in the original of the commentary, and have been inserted at the appropriate points. Parts of these verses woven into the commentary have been printed in bold to show the close connection of the two works, and section headings have been provided for clarity.



By way of introduction, we may say that **many different types of eons are taught.** These include the eon of destruction, the eon of formation, the eon of continuation, and the great eon.



Our detailed treatment of eons covers four topics, which correspond to the four different types of eons just mentioned.

80 The Eon of Destruction

An eon of destruction from the point Of no more hell births to the vessel's end. [III.359-60]

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"In the line above," one may begin, "you mentioned that `many different types of eons are taught.' Can you now describe the `eon of destruction' and other kinds of eons?" **An "eon of destruction"** starts **from the point of** where there are **no more** beings taking **births** in the **hell** called "No Respite." And it lasts up **to the** point where that great **vessel**, the outer world, has come to its **end**.

าราพรามสุรามีราราพิมพางสุรฏิวิจรัฐาตรรายารรา จะสมสูรฏิรายจำมาสมมา สำนักสูราฏิวิรามาจะจายารรา กลุมายจำจะการรา จะสายจะ มศัวร์มายสุมมารูมามหมา

Four different events then occur simultaneously: (1) the discontinuation of all births by living beings into the hell of No Respite; (2) the increase of lifespans among humans of Dzambu Continent up to eighty thousand years in length; (3) the close of the eon of continuation, and (4) the opening of the eon of destruction.

At this stage all the beings living in the hell of No Respite come to the end of their lives—they die and move on. And even those who have collected new karma that would normally bring them a rebirth in this same hell take their birth instead in the hell on another planet. The same process follows for the beings in the other hells, as well as for the animals and craving spirits living in the depths of the seas. And the same thing happens, at the same time, with the animals and craving spirits living in the lands of pleasure beings and humans.

At this point one of the human beings living on Dzambu Continent automatically attains the first concentration level. When he comes back out of it, he exclaims: "Wonders! The bliss and pleasure that come from this deep solitude are truly happiness!" Other inhabitants of the continent hear these words, and then attain the first concentration level which is achieved automatically. Subsequently they all take birth at the same level.

The very same process then occurs, in respective order, with the inhabitants of the eastern continent and those of the continent to the west—Cattle Users. The beings who live on the northern continent of Terrible Sound though possess a special obstruction that has ripened from their past deeds, and are completely incapable of ridding themselves of attachment for the kind of life they have. Thus the process for them is that they first take rebirth as pleasure beings of the desire realm.

The six classes of desire-realm pleasure beings each then go through the same process, one by one. One of them attains the first concentration level automatically. When he comes out of it, he exclaims: "Wonders! The bliss and pleasure that come from this deep solitude are truly happiness!" Again the others hear about it, and reach themselves the first concentration level achieved through an automatic process. This leads them to take a birth into the level known as "Class of the Pure."

Next one of the beings residing at the first concentration level achieves the second concentration level, again through an automatic process. He comes out of it and exclaims, "Wonders! The bliss and pleasure that come from single-pointed concentration are truly happiness!" Still again the others hear about it, and reach themselves the second concentration level achieved by an automatic process. This brings about their birth at this second level.

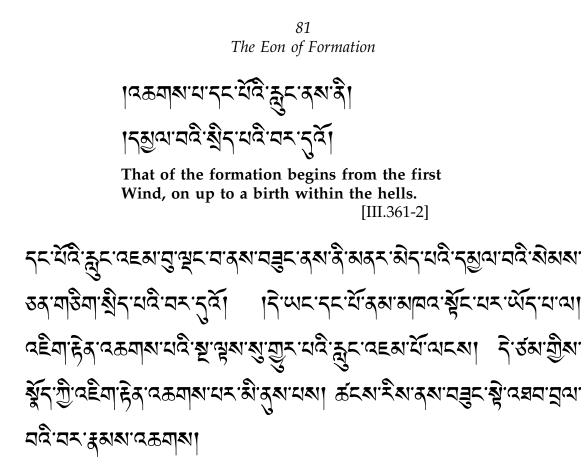
The events described above go on for some nineteen intermediate eons. At this point the great pleasure beings begin to stop sending rain at its proper time; all the vegetation and forests of Dzambu Continent dry up and die. After an extremely long period of time, a second sun rises in the sky, creating tremendous heat. All the lesser bodies of water and small ponds turn dry.

This leads to the rising of a third sun, which causes all the streams and rivers to evaporate. A fourth sun rises, and even the huge Lake Neverwarm disappears. Then comes the fifth sun, drying the Great Outer Sea as well. With the rising of a sixth sun, the four continents and Mount Supreme dissolve in a cloud of smoke. Finally a seventh sun comes up, engulfing the world in a single flame, destroying it in fire.

This fire then triggers a parallel fire in the first concentration level. The mansions of this first level, empty of inhabitants by this time, are burned completely. It is not actually the fire in the desire realm that burns down the mansions here, for they are separate levels.

These last events require a single intermediate eon, which means that the destruction of the world takes a total of twenty intermediate eons. The above description, by the way, pertains to the destruction of a world by fire. In cases where the planet is destroyed by water, beings living at the second concentration level attain the third level of concentration by an automatic process. This leads to their subsequent birth at the third level. In an instance where the world is, finally, destroyed by wind, inhabitants of this third level reach the fourth concentration level by an automatic process and then take birth there.

We turn next to the eon of formation.



Now an **eon of formation begins from** the rising of **the first** gentle **wind on up to** the **birth** of a single living being **within the hell** of No Respite. At the very beginning, space is completely empty—then a gentle wind rises, a portent of the formation of a new planet. The force of this wind alone would never be enough to create that great vessel, the outer world—although the levels from Class of the Pure down to Free of Conflict do take shape.

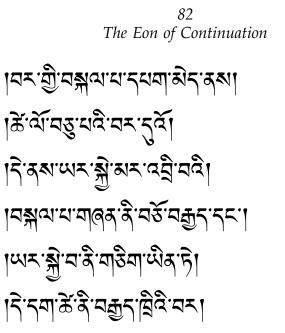
This same wind from before then gathers strength over a period of a great many years, until all the parts of the world from the foundation disc of wind up to the land of the Thirty-Three have formed, one by one, working up from the bottom. All these different events require one entire intermediate eon.

Next there is a certain being who was living at the level of Clear Light, and whose life, merit, and power of past deeds have all run out. He takes a rebirth into the empty mansion of the Pure One; for it is the nature of things, that what was destroyed last is the first to take form. Then come all the other inhabitants of the world, one by one, up to those of Dzambu Continent.

These first human beings to dwell on Dzambu Continent are born instantaneously, all complete. For food they need nothing but the feeling of bliss, and their bodies shine with a radiant light. They have miraculous

Four different events then occur simultaneously: (1) a drop in the lifespan from a "inestimable" number to eighty thousand years; (2) the birth of any single being into the hell of No Respite; (3) the close of the formation eon; and (4) the opening of the eon of continuation.

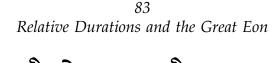
Our next subject is this very "eon of continuation."



Intermediate eon from an "inestimable" Down to when the spans of life are ten; Eighteen other eons after that, Each an increase followed by decrease; Last of all is one which is an increase, Up until they're eighty thousand long. [III.363-8]

Now the length of an eon of continuation is twenty intermediate eons, with the length of each **intermediate eon** figured as follows. One such eon consists of the period during which average lifespans drop **from an "inestimable"** number of years **down to when the spans of life are** only **ten** years. There are **eighteen other** intermediate **eons after that, each** consisting of **an increase** in lifespans up to eighty thousand years **followed by a decrease** back to ten. **Last of all is one** intermediate eon **which is** another **increase** alone. How far is the increase? **Up until they're eighty thousand long.**

One may make the following objection: "According to you then, the first and final members of any such set of twenty intermediate eons represent only half a curve apiece—whereas each of the eighteen between consist of full curves. Wouldn't this imply a difference in the lengths of these different eons?" It does not, for the first and final ones move along their half curves relatively slower, while the eons in between these two move along their full curves relatively faster.



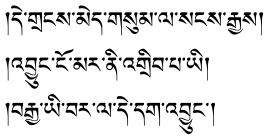
Thus the process of the world's formation Goes on twenty intermediate eons. This formation, then destruction and The state that follows it are equal all. One great eon made of eighty of these. [III.369-73]

Thus we can say that the process of the world's formation goes on for twenty intermediate eons. This formation of the world, then its destruction, and the state that follows this destruction are all equal in duration: each lasts for twenty intermediate eons.

As for the fourth and final type of eon—one great eon is made of eighty of these intermediate eons.

Having thus concluded our main explanation of eons, we turn to several incidental points. These include further information relating first to great eons, then to eons of destruction. The former treats the occurrence of three types of beings: Buddhas, self-made victors, and wheel emperors.

84 Occurrence of a Buddha



The occurrence of a Buddha, for three countless Of these. They make their appearance during The drop that goes down 'til a hundred is reached. [III.374-6]

One may begin with the following question: "It is explained that Buddhas come from the act of accumulating merit and wisdom for a period of three `countless' eons. Just what type of eons are referred to here?" A Buddha occurs from the act of accumulating merit and wisdom for a period of three "countless" numbers of these great eons.

ાગ્રન્સ એન રેગ્સ્સ ગુરુ વ્યાપ લેવા ક્રેંત્ર એન ના ગ્રાન્સ ગ્રીસ ગ્વાન્સ ગ્રીસ ગ્વાન્સ છે. પસ ગ્રાન્સ એન નુ ગ્વાન્સ છે ગુન્સ ગ્રી ગ્રાન્સ ગ્રી ગાન્સ ગ્રીસ્ત ગ્રાહ્ય સ્ટ ગ્રાન્સ ગરેયા બ ગ્રાન્સ એન નુ ગ્વાન્સ છે ના

Some may object that it is a contradiction of terms to speak of "three" that are "countless." And yet it is not. Here we are not talking about the "countless" that refers to something that is beyond numbers. Rather, what we call a "countless" is the name of a specific number, the highest of our numbers with separate names, corresponding to ten to the sixtieth power.

Now the present eon is also known as the "Eon of Good Fortune," the "Eon of Light." As the *Holy Teaching of the White Lotus* states,

ଦିଇସାନ୍ଟିନ ଦେଇସାବ୍ୟ ସହିରେ ବିରି ବିର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଅଧିକାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଅଧିକର ଅଧିକରେ ଅଭିନ୍ୟରେ ଅଭିନ୍ ଅଭିନ୍ୟରେ ଅଭିନ୍ୟ ଅଭିନ୍ୟରେ ଅଭିନ୍

During the formation of the world, a thousand lotus blossoms of gold with a thousand petals each appear within the great disc of water. They pique the curiosity of the pleasure beings of the Pure Places, who investigate the phenomenon and come to learn that it portends the appearance of a thousand Buddhas. "Wonders!" they proclaim, "a thousand different Buddhas are to come—this eon is truly an eon of good fortune!" Thus it is that everyone calls this time the "Eon of Good Fortune."

 $| \sum_{i=1}^{N} \sum$

One may ask just when it is that Buddhas like this appear. They never come while the average lifespan is rising, for during this period beings feel less disgust with the circle of life. Rather, **they**—these Buddhas—**make their appearance during the** time that starts from the **drop** of lifespans from eighty thousand years, and which continues as they **go down**, un**til a hundred** years **is reached**.

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Buddhas do not appear subsequent to this period, as lifespans are decreasing even further. Since the five degenerations have spread fairly widely by this time, beings then are no fit vessels to receive the teachings.

The Asian Classics Institute Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence

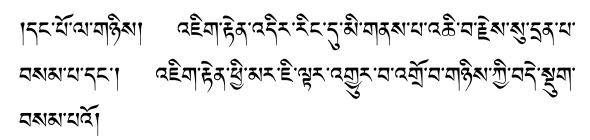
Reading Nine: The Meditation on Death, Part One

The following selection is taken from the Great Book on the Steps of the Path (Lamrim Chenmo), by Je Tsongkapa (1357-1419).

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The second part, the instruction on how to get the very essence out of life, includes three different sections: the teaching on how to train one's mind in the steps of the path that are shared with those of lesser scope; the teaching on how to train one's mind in the steps of the path that are shared with those of medium scope; and the teaching on how to train one's mind in the steps of the path for those of greater scope.

The first of these three sections has three divisions of its own: the actual teaching for training one's mind in the attitude of a person of lesser scope; how to know when you have succeeded in reaching this attitude; and clearing up some misconceptions about the attitude. The first of these divisions has two parts: learning to develop the attitude of focussing on the life hereafter; and learning to make use of the various ways of achieving happiness in these future lives.



We will cover the subject of focusing on the life after death in two stages. The first is the contemplation of how to maintain an awareness of death; that is, the fact that we have not long to stay in this present world. The second is the contemplation of the relative happiness and pain of the two broad categories of living beings; that is, the question of what will happen to us when we reach our future life.

There are four steps to the contemplation of death. These are:

1) Considering the problems of not meditating on death.

- 2) Considering the benefits of meditating on death.
- 3) Identifying just what kind of death awareness we seek to develop.
- 4) How to meditate and develop this awareness of death.

Here is the first of the four. Above we spoke of getting the very essence out of this life, where now you have a whole range spiritual opportunities. The one thing that could damage your ability to do so, from the very beginning, is the first of what we call the "four misconceptions." This is the misconception where you grasp to impermanent things as being permanent.

$$|\hat{\zeta}' \cdot \alpha \cdot \underline{x}' \cdot \overline{x} \eta \cdot \overline{x} \eta \cdot \overline{x} \cdot \overline{x} \eta \cdot \overline{x} \cdot$$

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There are two versions to this wrong idea. One is more subtle, and one is more gross. The one that could damage your practice is the grosser one, where you look upon your own impermanence, your own mortality, and imagine for some reason that you are *not* going to die.

Now it is true that in your life up to now you have had some awareness that eventually you would have to die. Everybody has this kind of death awareness. But at the same time you tend to be of the opinion that you won't die, because with every day that passes you say to yourself, "It won't be today, today is not the day that I will die." And you keep this attitude all the way up to the moment of your death.

Suppose you let this kind of attitude go on, suppose you fail to apply the spiritual antidotes that would stop these sorts of thoughts. The thoughts then create a kind of spiritual blindness: you begin to get the idea that you are going to be able to stay here in this life, and then you start to obsess on this life. All you can concentrate on then is how to get what you want, and how to escape what you don't want, in this life. Your life becomes, "Today I need this, and this, and next this."

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And then even if—by some remote chance—you do engage in spiritual activities like learning, or contemplation, or meditation, they all become something you are doing only for this life. Whatever good deeds you do this way are of very little strength. And because they are then typically connected with some bad deed, some breaking of morality or transgression of a vow, it is quite unusual to find any good activities of this type that are not interlaced with the very causes that would take you to one of the births of misery.

Suppose even that you do decide to do something for your future life. Without this awareness of death you find yourself unable to stop the kind of laziness where you put your practice off, where you say to yourself, "I'll get to it later, I'll do all these things eventually, one at a time." You begin to pass the time of your life with all kinds of distractions: with sleep, or lazing around, or wasted talk, or food or drink, or the like. You won't be able to reach a point where the practice that you do has any great energy behind it.

This kind of hope that you will be able to live for a long time deceives you. You start to have strong attachment to gain, to being honored by other people, and the like. You begin to feel a strong dislike for anything that prevents you, or anything that you think might prevent you, from having these things. There grows in you a dark ignorance that cannot understand the problems these thoughts then give you. These lead to a steady torrent of mental afflictions, strong ones, and all the different varieties of them, major and minor: pride, and jealousy, and all the rest.

These afflictions in turn lead you to harmful deeds done in your acts, your words, and your thoughts: deeds like the ten non-virtues, and the five "immediate" deeds, and the five that are close to these, and giving up the highest Dharma, and on and on. Every single day then deeds like these, of tremendous power, capable of leading you to the sufferings of the three lower realms and the like, will tend to increase, further and further.

The antidote for all these deeds is the nectar of the Dharma, spoken so true, and the further you turn from it then the more tightly you strangle your chances for the higher realms, and ultimate good. Death will rip away your life, and the wrong deeds you have done will drag you to the lower realms, to a fearful place of mighty and savage suffering, to the fires. And so I ask you, where could you find any thought more disastrous for you than this idea, that what is impermanent could be permanent?

On this point the *Four Hundred* concurs:

What could be more a disaster than someone Who with no other Lord of Death to kill him Was acting as this Lord of Three Realms For himself, asleep as if all were well?

[The "Lord of the Three Realms" is the Lord of Death; he has total control over all living things except those who are travelling on the path of the realized, those who have seen emptiness directly. If we could reach this path we would have a chance to reach deathlessness, but instead we lazily act as if everything were all right, and end up inviting Lord Death, who otherwise would have to pass us by.]

The Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life says as well,

You must leave it all behind and go, with your karmic baggage, But because you do not understand this, You undertake an entire variety of wrong deeds, Reacting to your friends, and your enemies.

Here secondly is the contemplation of the benefits of meditating upon your death. Suppose on the other hand that you are able to develop a real awareness of your mortality. You would then be like a person who knew he or she were going to die within the next day or two.

If this person had even a feeble understanding of the Dharma, or of course anything more than that, then he or she would quickly realize that none of their loved ones, nor any of the things they owned or anything else, could go on the journey with them. All their attachment to these things would stop. The great majority of such people at this point would automatically start to feel some desire to get the essence out of the life they had left to them, and they would start to engage in acts such as charity and the like.

You now should be the same. Think of the gain and honor, the fame and other such things you hope for from others—all these worldly hopes and dreams. Try to see that all the efforts you put into these things are empty, meaningless, like useless shells of wheat once the grain has been taken out. Try to understand how these thoughts deceive you, how they wait to snare and trap you. Stop all your bad deeds.

Exert yourself now in the opposite—in good deeds, such as going for refuge, and observing an ethical way of life, and the like. Amass these kinds of deeds constantly, and with a sense of reverence and joy. This body and the rest may be meaningless, but you can give them the highest meaning; you can use them to climb to the highest state there is, and then you can lead others there as well. And then I would ask you another question: Where could you find any more important deed you could do, than this?

This is why the awareness of death is praised in so many places, with so many metaphors. We see for example the following, from the *Sutra of the Great Nirvana*:

- Of all the crops plowed in the ground, the crops of autumn are greatest.
- Of all the tracks left on the ground, the elephant's are greatest.
- Of all the thoughts a person can have, the thoughts of impermanence and death are the greatest ones,
- For these are the thoughts that clear away the desire, ignorance, and the pride of all three of the realms.

The awareness of death has been praised in other similes as well, sometimes for example compared to a great hammer, which can smash in a single stroke all your mental afflictions, and harmful deeds. It is also compared to a huge gateway, where all good and pure things can come through to you, all in a single rush.

The Anthology too states,

Come to see that this body of yours is fragile as a piece of china, And that all other things that exist are something similar to a mirage. If you can, then the rain of spears thrown by the demons, the flowers, Are stopped short, and the Lord of Death hungering for you dies himself.

It says as well that,

Those who have seen what it is to grow old, who have seen the suffering of disease, Those who have seen what it is to die, who have seen the mind depart and leave, They can give up the family life, so much like a prison hard and fast; Don't ever dream though that normal people of the world could ever give up desire.

To put it briefly, the time for a person to do something of value is now, and only now—now while we possess a body and life like this, so full of spiritual leisure. You and I have spent most of our time in the births of misery, and we come up now and again to the better births; but the vast majority of the time was in the realms where we had none of the necessary opportunities, and so we had no chance at all to undertake any spiritual practice.

And the fact that in this moment here, when we *have* found the kind of life where we could do some practice, we nonetheless do nothing the way it should be done, is all in the final analysis due to our belief that we will not die, just yet. We can say then that our natural bias towards thinking that we won't die is the root of every trouble we have. The antidote for this way of thinking—that is, to stay aware of our imminent death—is then the root of anything good that could ever come to us.

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This being the case, you should never let yourself think, "This is one of those practices meant for people who have nothing more profound to meditate upon." And you should never let yourself think that, "It is admittedly something we should meditate upon, but only at the beginning of our practice, and only for a bit at that; it's not something that warrants a continual effort to put into practice." Rather you should try to develop a true understanding, from the depths of your heart, where you realize that this is a meditation which you need at the start, at the end, and all throughout the path. With this understanding established within you then, you must meditate upon your death.

Here now is the third step—identifying just what kind of death awareness we seek to develop. Now there is a kind of terror that a person can feel when he or she fears that they are about to be torn away from their loved ones and such. This fear stems from a very strong attachment for those around you, and is the natural fear of a person who has never attempted any kind of practice of the path. As such, it is *not* the awareness of death that we are talking about having to develop here.

What then is this awareness? There is not a single being who has taken on a body like ours—one created by the force of our past deeds and mental afflictions—who is exempt from the absolute certainty of death. It is true that, in the short run, trying to develop some fear about this fact might not enable you to stop it. Nonetheless you really must try to develop some fear that you might die before you have been able to achieve your goals for your future life: that you might die before you have managed to put an end to anything that might cause you to be born in one of the lower realms, or before you have achieved all those things that would lead you to the higher realms, and to ultimate good.

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If you had this kind of fear, over these kinds of things, then it would help you to do something about them, and at the moment of death itself you would have no reason to be afraid. If on the other hand you find yourself unable to achieve these goals, then when death comes you will be tormented by regret, of two different kinds. In a general sense, you will realize that you were unable to free yourself from the circle of suffering life. More specifically, you will begin to feel sheer terror over the possibility of having to drop into the realms of misery. As the *Birth Stories* say,

You concentrate your every effort, but there's no way to stay; What possible benefit can it be to feel a sense of fear And tremble over something that you can now never repair?

You can tell yourself by looking at the nature of this world, That those who did bad deeds are at this point consumed by regret; They realize then that they didn't at all do good the way they should, And begin to suspect that in the life beyond they will come to suffer.

The fear that you begin to feel as you die confuses you, Making it difficult to recall the very deeds there were That you did before, and that you feel such strong regret for doing.

So make it now a habit in your life to undertake those deeds that are pure white; For where would you ever find a person who, living the Dharma, still needs fear Lord Death?

The *Four Hundred* too has the following verse:

Anyone who's truly sure, Who says to themselves, "I'll die," Leaves every kind of fear behind; How could they then fear Death?

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Suppose then that you are able to contemplate your impermanence, and think to yourself, over and over again, "There is absolutely no doubt that I am quickly going to be ripped away from my body, and from all of my possessions." This would allow you to block the kind of desire that still entertains some hope that you will be able to avoid losing all these things. And then you would feel none of the fear of death that comes when your mind is tormented by the thought of this loss.

Next we cover the fourth step, which is how to meditate and develop this awareness of death. You should do the meditation in three stages, going through the three principles, the nine reasons, and the three resolutions. We will proceed then through the three of (a) contemplating how it is certain that we will die; (b) contemplating how there is no certainty when we will die; and (c) contemplating how, when we do die, nothing but the Dharma can be of any help to us.

The first of these has three parts; here is the first, which is (1) contemplating how the Lord of Death must certainly arrive and, when he does, how nothing at all can stop him.

No matter what kind of body you take on yourself, death must come to you. As the *Anthology on Impermanence* states,

If total Buddhas, and self-made Buddhas as well, And the listeners who are the followers of the Buddha, All must eventually leave their holy forms, Why should we need then speak of normal people?

We can say too that death will come to you, no matter where you go. The same text says,

It doesn't matter where you go; the place does not exist Where death would find it difficult to intrude. There is no such place in the sky, nor at the bottom Of the sea, nor deep within a mountain keep.

So too death makes no distinction at all for the proper order of young and old when it comes to destroy its victims. On this the same work says,

Those who are now, and those who are yet to be, All must give up this body, and travel on. Realize, you wise ones, that all this dies; Live the Dharma, and do what must be done.

สูญาน์าญาสุมพานาญญา รุณิราสา ผู้สามาสุดิาสมาริาธิสาน์ามาสุสานา ୢଈୖୄୣଽୖଽ୰୕ୣଽଽୄଌ୶୵୳୕ୄୄ୶ୖଡ଼୶୲୵୳୕ଈ୕୶୲୶୲୳୲୵ୡ୶ୠୖ୳୷ୖଡ଼୶ୄୄୠ୕ୄ୶୲ୡୗ୶୲୶୲୳୲୶ୖୖଡ଼୶୲ୄୄୠ สุขานั้วสดิวทุสมาณาริทาชิรามารส์ทาสิ่า สารราชิรารราชิราทิณานารรายณา য়৽ঀৼ৽৾য়৾য়৽য়য়য়৾৽ঽঀ৾ঀৼ৾৾য়য়য়৾৽ঽয়৾য়৾য়৾য়য়য়৽ঽঀৣ৾ৼ৾য়৾য়য়য়৽ঽঀ৾৾ঀৣ৾য়য়৽ ลุสฤ ซิราวิ์ราวาณ สิ เผญีญลามพาวรัฐมายลมา ผู้กลาญลาวรัฐญายลมารัฐา ฏิพากลิ์กานฉพายพารราฐกุพารราฐสาสมพาฏิพากลิ์กานราฐากสำมาพิสา à

Beyond this is the fact that no one can free themselves from the Lord of Death by outrunning him, nor turn him back with magic words or the like. As the scripture known as *Advice to the King* states,

Suppose for example that you were surrounded on all four sides by four great mountains, solid, firm, hard to the core, indestructible, unbreakable, indomitable, adamantine and massive, stretching to the highest limits of the sky. And then suppose suddenly that they caved in on you. Every trace of vegetation—from the roots, to the stalks, to the branches, to the twigs, and out to the leaves, would be crushed to powder. And every living creature there, every sentient being, every spirit too, would be smashed to dust. And as the mountains fell in it would happen in a minute, and no one would be able to outrun them, or force them back, or buy them off. Nor but with the greatest difficulty could you use any kind of magic substance, or magic words, or any sort of elixir to stop them.

Here, great King, our life is the same. When the four great terrors make their appearance, no one can outrun them, nor force them back, nor buy them off. Nor but with the greatest difficulty could you use any kind of magic substance, or magic words, or any sort of elixir to stop them.

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And what are these four terrors? They are aging, and sickness, and death, and trouble. Great King, I say to you: aging is the fact that our vitality is inevitably obliterated; sickness is the fact that our health is inevitably obliterated; trouble is the fact that any good thing that ever comes to us is inevitably obliterated; and death is the fact that our very life is inevitably obliterated. All four of these come to us, and we cannot outrun them, nor force them back, nor buy them off. Nor but with the greatest difficulty could you use any kind of magic substance, or magic words, or any sort of elixir to stop them.

Kamawa too once said,

A person is supposed to be frightened of death now, and then unperturbed when it actually comes. You and me though act the opposite: we feel no concern for it now, and then when it actually comes we will tear at our chest in agony.

The second reason here is (2) the contemplation of how it is impossible to add any time onto your life, and how it continually leaks away, without a pause. The scripture entitled *Entering the Womb* describes the longest you could live as follows:

Nowadays the longest you can live, supposing you are able to take care of yourself in the very best way possible, is a hundred years, or a touch more.

Even if you could live for a hundred years, the time would pass very quickly. This is because years pass in months, and months in their turn pass in days, and days pass in daytimes and nighttimes. These too pass in the shortest

periods, of mornings and evenings and the like. So a human lifespan in general is something which is very short.

You and I can see for ourselves, moreover, that we've already used up a good number of these days. As for the days we have left, we know we are helpless to add a single moment to them. They leak away, twenty-four hours a day, without the slightest pause. On this the *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Life* says,

Our lifetime constantly leaks away, Day and night, without a moment's pause. If your life is leaking away, and never being replenished, Then how can you imagine, that you will never die?

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There are many examples you can use during your contemplation of these points. Think of weaving a carpet: you are building it up with rows of yarn, and each row is nothing more than a few threads of wool. But if you work steadily, it all adds up and soon you've finished an entire carpet.

Think too of a flock of sheep. When they are led to the slaughter house, they go forth with only one very short step at a time. But every single step brings them inexorably nearer to their death.

Think too of the rapids of a great river, or of a waterfall as it leaps from the top of a high cliff. The moments of your life are rushing away, just the same. ๚ูสาม[ุ]รัฐมารีสูมานานสูราสมาฐินามาสมมารราวกราชวานรารราชานาสมาญ ส์ูณ สุมม ส์ รามสุม กล์ มารายาลิโม ส์มม ณม ราวราสายกุมส์ નમુદ્રશ્વાયાયા સિંધાયાયા અપ્રિયાય સ્વેયાય સ્વેયાયાયા સિંધાયાયા સિંધાયાયા સિંધાયાયા સિંધાયાયા સિંધાયાયા સિંધાયાયા หา เมิสมมาผู้ทาบราวิเวติสาส์ เราวิเราระจารมาราย ने'मलेब'र्बे। नलेक से भे के वर्षे ना क्षिर के हेंगायर व्युर न सेना निगाय म केन न हा สารกา เราพการสุขาวสุขาวสุขาวขา เมูราราวิร์เสราวะโขาวยูราริไปร ณารูปู่าญี่ฐามีสามานอุษา เปกุม เล็ณสาย. เล็นเลา เล็นเลา เล็นเลา เล็นเลา เล็นเลา เล็นเลา เล็นเลา เล็นเลา เล้า เล ฑุลุฆฺฺฺฆู฿ฺลฺฺฏิรฺฺฺ๛๛ๅๅรฺฺ๛ฺ฿ฺลฺฺรฺรฺ๛ฺ๚ฺ๛๛฿๚ๅ฿ฺ๚฿๛๚๛฿๛๛๛๚๛๛๛ શ્રેભા લિશ્વાગ્યુપ્શ્વાયભૂમાર્મો

A cowherd takes a club up in his hand and drives the cattle, totally helpless, to their destination. Just so do sickness and the natural aging of our bodies drive us, totally helpless, into the presence of the Lord of Death. You must use a whole variety of such examples in your meditation upon death; as the *Anthology* again says,

When for example you start to weave a carpet, You build it up, a string of wool at a time— Eventually then you weave it to the end. Human lives are just the same.

Those condemned to death are another example, Passing along with a single step at a time, Drawing ever closer to the slaughter. Human lives are just the same.

The rapids of a mighty river Rush unstoppable to their end; The passing of a human life Is just as irreversible.

Our lives are simple hardship, short, And something full of suffering; In simple speed we are all destroyed, Letters written with a stick on water.

A cowherd for example grasps a staff, Then drives the cattle to their destination. Just so sickness and the ravages of age Transport us to the presence of Lord Death.

हिंग्वेंके र्येश्वगुट रु व्यायर् हें विषय ये से स्वाय यक्षे या या कु से यो यो वयें य वरे या यरे या यहा र का यक्षे या स्वाय का स्वाय का या र या यहा र या स्वा क्षें व गावे क्षे व र र या या यहा र या यहा र र यहा य यवे के वयें वियाय या यहा र यवे के वयें वियाय यहा र य यहा र यहा यहा र यहा र यहा र यहा र यहा र यहा र यहा

They say as well that the great Lord Atisha would go to the edge of a stream and meditate there on the death; he would comment that "Sitting here and watching a trickle of water pass by is a wonderful way to meditate on life's impermanence." The *Sutra of the Cosmic Play* uses a lot of similes as well:

The three realms are impermanent, like a cloud in the autumn sky; Watching as people are born and die is the same as theater. The passing of a person's life is a single flash of lightning; We rush on our way to the end with speed, like a waterfall off a cliff.

It has been said that, "For a person who has the least bit of ability to reflect and draw some inferences on the inside, there is nothing outside of them that doesn't speak of impermanence." As such, you should try to find in your life a whole variety of examples for the fact of impermanence. Use these examples for your contemplation—and when you have contemplated thus on a regular basis, you will gain a true recognition of your impermanence. Just thinking these things over once or twice is not enough to reach this recognition. As Kamawa once said,

Here's a question for all you people who say you tried to do this contemplation but didn't get any result from it. Just *when* was it that you were contemplating? All day long you were distracted by other things. At night all you did was sleep. Perhaps you should stop lying to yourself.

At the end of our life, the Lord of Death comes and destroys us, and we travel on to our next life. But there is something else too that happens all during the interim, during every hour of our life here. There is not a single moment at all when our lifetime is not slipping away, when it is not getting shorter and shorter, even as we go somewhere, or stay somewhere, waking or sleeping. So in a sense we are always on our way to our next life, we are travelling there now, and we have been on the move every second from the day we first entered our mother's womb.

Therefore even in these days, while we still live, we are living only to die: those emissaries of death, the ones called Sickness and Aging, are dragging us towards him. Don't take any comfort then in the fact that you haven't died yet, don't get the idea that you are staying anywhere, and that you haven't yet started off on your journey to the next life. You are like a man who just fell off the edge of a great rock crag; you would be foolish to take some comfort from the fact that you are still in mid-air, and haven't hit ground yet.

The following lines too are quoted in the commentary on *The Four Hundred*:

This warrior amongst men, from the very first night, From the moment of entering the womb in this world Walks with each passing day, with ne'er a delay, Into the presence of the Lord of Death.

The Words on Stopping the Four Misconceptions also speak to this point:

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Suppose you had fallen from the peak of some high mountain top,
And were just about to die—would you then in the free-fall feel content?
From the moment of their birth they race to one goal only, death;
How before they reach there then could any living being relax?

All of the above is meant to show how it is certain that we will die quickly.

Next is contemplating (3) how certain it is that you will die without having had any time to practice the Dharma, even while you were alive. Suppose you were able to live to the end of one of those longest lives that we described above. Even so it would be wrong to think that you would have any free time all that time. So far in your life you have squandered a great deal of time meaninglessly; as for what remains, you will pass half of it in sleeping.

The other half you will also spend meaninglessly, your mind filled with a great many other distractions. You will while away your days of good health and then arrive at old age, your body and mind worn out, and lacking any energy to do any Dharma, even if you wanted to. The point is that the window of opportunity during which we can undertake our spiritual practice is nothing more than a very brief period. As *Entering the Womb* relates,

You spend half of it wrapped in sleep. Ten years is wasted by childhood, and another twenty in old age. From what's left you have to subtract the time you spend in grief, and the time you spend crying in anguish, and the time you spend in physical pain, and the time you spend in deep unhappiness, and the time you spend in strife. Subtract too the time that you spend going through all those thousands of different diseases which the body is subject to.

The Words on Stopping the Four Misconceptions concur:

Suppose you live to a human's longest life; it can never be more than a hundred years.
Of these you spend the beginning, your youth, and the end, old age, in a meaningless way.
In the days that are left, all your hopes and plans are smashed by sleep, and disease, and the rest;
Tell me then how much time is left over, for those who live as humans, to feel any kind of contentment?

Chekawa too has said,

I have been alive for sixty years; and if you take away the time that I spent feeding myself, and sleeping, and being sick, there were not even five years left that I had for spiritual practice.

And so all the good things of this life are like the happiness within one night's dream: you wake, and then it's nothing more than a memory. The time comes to die, and everything good you ever had lives only in a dim remembrance.

This great enemy, death, will surely come; nothing can stop him. You should contemplate this fact—try to wonder, "Why do I take such pleasure in the lie of this life?" Make up your mind that you absolutely must now practice some Dharma; swear it to yourself, continually. Remember the *Birth Stories*, where it says:

Alas, you worldly ones so full of affliction of the mind; Why do you take such pleasure in a land of shifting sands? The shining glory of the kumuda bloom, opening to the moon, Soon enough turns nothing more than a simple memory.

It's something of a pure amazement too that all of us Thrust into a life like this are not consumed by total fear; Damn the Lord of Death, who stands and blocks all pathways out, While we oblivious feel content, and have an enjoyable day. We all share enemies, dreadfully powerful, ones we cannot stop: Their names are sickness, age, and death; they attack us even now. If it's certain that we are headed for agony in the world beyond, How could anyone with a mind be content in the one here now?

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Go now and contemplate these lines, from the Epistle of Kanika:

The Lord of Death, the heartless one, Lays waste to the efforts of a lifetime; With such a death on its way to him, What man of wisdom would sit and wait?

This merciless warrior stands and aims His detestable merciless arrow at you; In the time before he lets it fly then Try to make something of your life.

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Reading Ten: The Meditation on Death, Part Two

The following selection is taken from the Great Book on the Steps of the Path (Lamrim Chenmo), by Je Tsongkapa (1357-1419).

Here next is the second of the three principles: contemplating how there is no certainty when we will die. It is an absolute certainty that death will come to us at some point between today and a hundred years from now. It is not certain though which day between these two he will choose. As such, we would have to admit that it's impossible to come to a definite conclusion whether or not we will die, for example, today itself.

Nonetheless, if you are going to try to think more on the mortal side, then you will have to develop the attitude that you will die today. If you tend to think more on the side that denies your mortality—that is, if you tend to think that you won't die today, or that you probably won't die today—then you will constantly be acting on the assumption that you will continue to be here, rather than doing something to help your future life. Right in the middle of

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everything then the Lord of Death will come to take you, and you will have to die in anguish.

If you spend every day getting ready to die, you will find yourself able to achieve many goals that relate to your future lives. This is an excellent thing to do regardless of whether you actually die that day or not. And it is an absolute necessity if you *do* happen to die that very day.

This truth can be illustrated with the following example. Suppose you have a sworn enemy, a very powerful one, and that he is planning to make some vicious attack on you. Suppose too that the general timeframe for this attack has been decided: you know that he is going to come for you sometime between this date and that date. You're not sure exactly which day he's going to appear, but you would certainly have to be on your guard every single day. The case with our death is exactly the same.

Suppose you are able to develop this attitude where you believe that you are going to die today, or at least that it is very likely that you will die today. The result is that you will start getting things ready for what is surely going to come—that is, for your next life—and you will stop concentrating on arranging things in your current life.

If you are unable to develop this attitude, then you will continue to believe somehow that you are going to be staying here in the present life, and you will continue to concentrate on organizing things for this life. You will continue too to ignore what's needed for your future life.

If for example you believe that you are going to be living in a certain house for a long time to come, you concentrate your time on making the house a nice place to live. If one the other hand you believe that you are moving to another house, if you believe that you will not be staying in the house where you are, then you naturally begin to concentrate on getting everything ready for the place you're going to go. Again, our case is just the same.

This proves that you must develop the attitude that you are going to die today, every day.

There are three reasons to prove this second principle, that there is absolutely no certainty when you are going to die. The first is the contemplation that (4) here on the continent of Dzambu, lifetimes are anything but fixed. Looking at things in a broad way, we can say that the length of a life on the continent of Unpleasant Sound is something which is fixed. And although on the other continents the span of life is not fixed, there are many cases where a certain length of life is normally the case.

Here on the continent of Dzambu though a person's life is anything but fixed. There are times at the beginning of the world when people can live up to an

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"inestimable" number of years. Eventually though there comes a time when the the longest life we can point to is only ten years. Even nowadays we can see with our own eyes how indefinite lifetimes can be, as death comes for the old, and the young, and those inbetween, at random.

าวิ.เลรา.เพรา.พรีราณฑา ฉริ.ส.พาริพาส.พราสิโ าณ์.เสช.รราวับรุณฑาษ์.พรา เชิงเรรา สัมงเญญ สูร์รัฐาวังรางส์ราย เยิร์รายงิญพล์ราม ู้ฉฏิว เมิร์ มีร์ พระพุมราย เมร์ โลริยามม์รามเลยู่ว่า เดิมราร ลูโลเนาอูรามิรามรานี้รรา เรราณาสสายกราดอิเวญราสุ เราณามิเวริ मर्वित विश्व हो। । मार्श्व संदे मनिन हेन छे विमार्थना । । मार्छमा सन्य नु प्वके मन त्युमा निम्बितायर्ज्यायर्ज्यायर्थ्यायार्थ्या निम्बितायर्ज्यायीयार्थ्वायां निः าดิสานซินาพักพาสูมาสา เนานาสาสารราณานาสาดิ์สา เนานารราณารา યવેઓ મિશ્રામીશ્વાસ્ય છે. ત્વાં ત્વીં સ્ટીં સ્ટી સ્ટીં સ્ટીં સ્ટીં સ્ટીં સ્ટી સ્ટીં સ્ટી સ્ટીં સ્ટોં સ્ટીં સ્ટીં સ્ટીં સ્ટોર સ્ટીં સ્ટીર સ્ટીં સ્ટીં સ્ટીર સ્ટીં સ્ટીં સ્ટીર સ્ટીં સ્ટીર સ્ટીં સ્ટીર સ્ટીં સ્ટીર સ્ટીં સ્ટોર સ્ટીં સ્ટીં સ્ટીં સ્ટીર સ્ટીં સ્ટીર સ્ટીં સ્ટીં સ્ટીં સ્ટીં સ્ટીં સ્ટીં સ્ટીં સ્ટીર સ્ટીં સ્ટીર સ્ટીં સ્ટીં સ્ટીં સ્ટીં સ્ટીર સ્ટીં સ્ટીર સ્ટીં સ્ટોર સ્ટીં સ્ટોર સ્ กลู่ระเวิ สูเมลมาฏ์กุญเญริกุญเราชิวิเพยรามหู้สานราฏิ์เกรารูหู้เรา ঀ৾৾৾ৼয়৾৽৾৾৽ৡ৾৾ঀ৾য়ৢ৾য়৽ঀ৾য়য়৻য়৾য়ৼ৾য়য়৽য়ৼ৾৾৾ঀ৾য়৾য়৾য়৾য়ৼয়য়য়৽ড়৾৾ঀ৾৽য়৾ નન્ત્રા ગુન્ટે સા પર ને ભુ નુવે જે સા અત તે સુસાનુ અન્ નન્ અન્નનુ <u>7</u>8'al ୵୶୶୶ୖ୶୲୵୵ୡୖ୷୵୵ୡୖୄୖଽ

As the *Treasure House* says,

Here indefinite: at the very end, Ten years; at the beginning "inestimable."

The Anthology too states,

In the morning a lot of people were standing here; By evening some of them were missing. In the evening a lot of people were standing here; By morning some of them were missing.

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So too it says,

We see men die, we see women die, We see those in the bloom of health die; So how on earth could you point to someone And say, "He's young, he'll certainly live."

Some people die still in the womb, Some people die in the moment of birth, Some people die standing still, Some people die on the run.

Some are old, some are young, Some are strong ones in between, They walk and then drop, in a steady stream, Like ripe fruit falling from a tree.

Think of great lamas you've known, or friends, or anyone—the people that you've seen yourself, or heard about from others—who died before their time. Something on the outside, or something on the inside of them, came and killed them suddenly, before they were able to do all the things they were hoping to do.

You must think to yourself, "I'm in exactly the same situation now that they were in when they died..." Try to think this truth over again and again; try your best to reach this realization of your death.

Next is the contemplation that (5) the things that can kill you are very, very many; whereas the things that can keep you alive are very few. There are many things that threaten the kind of life we live: threats that are living beings, and threats that are inanimate objects. Humans and inhumans, beings of the

spirit realm, do harm to us in many different ways. Beings of the animal realm threaten our body and life in a variety of ways as well.

You have to try to contemplate thoroughly all the ways in which these living things can hurt you; and how too that inner things like sickness, and outer things made of the various physical elements, attack you constantly.

Moreover, your body consists by necessity of the four elements. Their nature is to be in conflict with each other, which causes the energies of the four to fall out of balance, some asserting themselves too strongly, and some becoming too weak. This situation triggers then illness within the body, and this eventually rips out your life. And so in a way you are under attack by the components of your own body. Since these elements are a very part of you, life is by nature a very fragile thing.

રિંભુર અદાવર્ગ હેવ બચા વર્ત્તે વર્ષ વે ચેંગ વર્તે સુંગ વર્તે મુંગ પું કું ગામ છે. તે સું ગામ

The Sutra of the Great Nirvana says as well,

And then there is the conception of death: see your life as standing there, surrounded all the time by a mass of hate-filled enemies, life leaking away with every moment, and no hope at all of ever filling back what was lost.

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The String of Jewels also states,

The tools of Lord Death are the very world around us; Our lives are candles standing in a tempest.

The Letter to a Friend mentions,

Our lives are filled with danger, and we are more fragile Than a bubble of water swept along in the wind. The fact that we live long enough to exhale after inhaling, Or wake again from a night of sleep, is truly a miracle.

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The Four Hundred again says,

Alone they have no power to give us birth; Only as a group can the elements in us work. It would be totally wrong for a person to say That this inner war could ever feel good.

These are the days when the five degenerations have spread to a very great extent, when it is infinitely difficult to find anyone who is capable of amassing the powerful good karma necessary for producing any very long lifetime. Food and other kinds of medicinal substances have little potency, and lack any great power to stop diseases.

The general ability of the body to break down easily the things we eat and drink, so that the great elements within the body can be properly nourished, is declining. We find it difficult to digest these things, and even after they are digested they have little beneficial effect on our bodies.

There is an additional problem caused by the fact that we are able to collect only small quantities of good karmic energy, whereas we commit massive amounts of bad deeds. These diminish greatly the power of practices such as repeating a number of mantras, and so it is extremely difficult to use these methods to lengthen our lifespan, and such.

Beyond all this is the fact that there is nothing at all that we use to keep ourselves alive that cannot also turn into something that kills us. We spend our lives searching for food and drink, or a place to stay, or friends or the like, with the intent that they help keep us from dying.

But they can all turn into something that kills us instead. If we eat or drink too much, or too little, or ingest something which is not clean or the like, it can kill us. Our house can collapse on us, and our friends can cheat us, and they can all in the end lead us to our deaths. You literally cannot find anything that is supposed to keep you alive that cannot kill you as well.

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Moreover, life itself is directed at dying; even if there were more objects that were supposed to function to keep us alive, we could hardly put any faith in them. As the *String of Jewels* says,

The things that can kill us are many; Those that keep us alive are precious few, And act as well to kill us. We must as such do all the Dharma we can.

Next is the contemplation that there is no certainty when we will die, for the reason that (6) our bodies are extremely fragile. Our bodies really are very fragile, very much like a bubble, and it requires no great injury to destroy our life-force: even something like the prick of a thorn, if we disregard it, can kill us. The point is that none of the things that can kill us has to try very hard to kill us. The *Letter to a Friend* says,

Great edifices like the earth itself, and the mountain At the center of the world, and the seas, all burn When the seven suns rise, and not even dust remains. Who needs to mention then that fragile thing called man?

ิ ฉุลลาร์ ฉุญาราสพา เพรารุญาฏาติพามาฤดิพานา เรพานนิ ธัพาณาสุพูราริ พรี้รา เฉรางราวิราสาวราฐาติพา เฐารามาณาราราร์ามสา เสมาติสาญร์รา สิ.ชุ2.นซิ้น.นซูโ เพะเป.นปุช.ชู.ล.นะ.นูะ.โ เผูล.นะ.โ

Once you have taken this contemplation to its end, it will occur to you clearly that there is no certainty at all when the Lord of Death will decide to come and destroy your body and life. You will realize that you have no time left; and then you must make many solemn vows to yourself, you must resolve to practice the Dharma here and now. As the *Epistle of Kanika* states,

The Lord of Death is partial to no one; When he strikes, he does so suddenly. Don't ever say then you'll "Do it tomorrow"; Practice the Dharma instead with speed.

It's no good thing for a human being Ever to say, "I'll do it tomorrow"; The tomorrow when you are no longer here Is a day that beyond any doubt will come.

That lord of accomplished practitioners, Shri Jagata Mitra Ananda, has also spoken:

The spirit lord will take this form you rent, In health, in its prime, in an hour of contentment, And rip away in this very moment its heart.

You sit there now unconcerned by disease or death, By decline and the like, but when the day arrives To meet them face to face you'll know nothing to do.

Of all the three principles, this one, the contemplation that it is totally uncertain when you will die, is the most important. Since this attitude is the critical one, you must do your best to grow it within you.

So we have seen that we will be forced to pass on to a future life. When the day comes, you can be surrounded by any number of friends and relatives, by people who love you and whose hearts are torn, but (7) there is not a single one of them that you can take along with you. You can be the owner of a great heap of lovely riches, any amount of them at all, but (8) you cannot carry along with you a single molecule. When you die (9) you must give up even the flesh and bone that are part of your very being; it's ridiculous to think then that you could keep anything else.

Here finally are the three reasons behind the third principle, which is that—when you do die—nothing but the Dharma can be of the least help to you.

અ૮.૬.૪૮.૬૮.૬ મારી ત્રુપ્ર 2. ૧ મારી સંગ્રા સંગ્ર ૡ૱ૹ૾ૣૣૣ૱ૡૡ૾ૢ૾ૡૡ૱ૡ૱ૡૡ૱ૡૡ૱ૡૡ૱ૡૡ૱ૡૡ૱ૡૡ নেহা ากพร.สร.สพ.22.5 พ.23 พ.82.1 เอริเวริมามู่พ.ย.22.4.4.1 เวม. ระพิภานพาศร์ศพานะา เฉติ์เวรมพาธราชิราณ์ศาสมา เฉติเวเนะ ହିଁ୍ର ଛିଷଂଷାଦ୍ୟସ୍ୟ ସ୍ୟା । ଆସ୍ପିଶ୍ୱ ସ୍ୟ ଅନିନ୍ଦି । ସହାର୍ଥ୍ୟ ଅନ୍ତର୍ଶ୍ୱ କାର୍ଯ୍ୟ ଅନ୍ତର୍ମ

We can say then that each and every good thing of this life will send us away, and we too will send them away, and pass on to our next life: this is, simply, quite certain to happen. You must contemplate how this is coming to you today, and you must contemplate how, when the moment comes, it is only the Dharma which will be your refuge, and your protector, and your one true friend. As the *Epistle of Kanika* says,

The karma ripens, and all your deeds From before abandon and leave you alone. Driven by all the new karma now, You're forced ahead by the Lord of Death.

Everyone you've ever known Is left behind, and only the good Or bad you've done comes with you. Please understand, and do only things that are right.

নার্যুদর্ষামান্দ্রমার্মী

It's just as Shri Jagata Mitra describes it:

Now matter how wealthy you are, Your Highness, Once you die and slip to the world beyond, It's like standing defeated in an empty desert—

Alone, without the Prince, without the Queen, Without a stitch of clothing, without a friend, Without a kingdom, without a country at all; Solitary, single, not a trusted servant in sight.

To put it simply, how could you hope for more In a land where you no longer own your own name?

લેગ સુન પર એ દુન ના અ બે ર્દ્ય દેન છે. નને ના ના સુવાય ના સુવાય જે બા ના ૡૡ૾ૺૠ૾૾ૺઌૹૡૢઽૢઽૡ૽૽ૣૼૠૢઌૹ૾ૻ૾૾ૹ૽ઌ૽ૼૼૼૻૡૹૡૼઽ૽ૺઽઌૼૼૻૡૹૡૢ૱ૡૢૡૹૻ૱ૡ૾૽ૡ૽ૼ รัสารู เราจารอัราซูสาชัยางริรารทาวารา เกาะบิพาพสรายาสมพาบิพา ารัญ เดิญาญุรุณานิ นิร.รับ

Thus it is then that you must contemplate upon the awareness of your death: the spiritual leisure you now possess is extremely valuable; it is extremely difficult to find; and beyond its being so hard to find it is also extremely easy to lose.

Suppose we fail even to attempt reaching something of ultimate benefit, for our next life and beyond; suppose instead we spend all the time from now up to the moment of our death in the pursuit of the things that make us feel good, and in avoiding the things that cause us pain.

Common animals are more skilled at this endeavor than we could ever be; we need to engage in some kind of activity that distinguishes us from beasts. Otherwise achieving the kind of life in a higher birth that we enjoy now is essentially the same as never having found it at all. As the *Guide to the Bodhisattva's Life* puts it,

There are certain insignificant gains That are not a difficult thing to attain Even for a cow if he tries;

Yet there are those who suffer from karma And waste this perfect leisure and fortune, Achieved with such effort, on nothing more.

And so even though the awareness of your death may sometimes seem a difficult thing to attain, you must still make great efforts to do so, for it is the very foundation of the path. Potowa too has said,

My guiding lamp is nothing but this meditation on my own impermanence. It helps me to clear away all my concern about the things of this life—my friends and possessions and so on—and realize that I will be flying away to my next life, alone, with no one to come along with me. Then I am truly able to stop my attachment to my current life, and maintain an intention never to do anything which is against the Dharma. As long as you find yourself unable to reach this state of mind, you will find too that the road to each and every part of the teaching is shut off to you.

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Dolpa once stated,

You must along the way undertake practices to amass the energy of good deeds, and to purify yourself of spiritual obstacles. So too you must make supplication to the angels, and to your Lama. If then you put all your heart into contemplating this attitude, if you focus on it, you will be able to attain it. Things produced by causes have a basic nature that they can never just stay the same, and you will find that you can arrive at certain kinds of attitudes that you thought you could never develop in a thousand years of trying.

They say too that when someone would ask Kamawa if they could move on to a new spiritual topic he would say, "Work again on the old one." When they asked if he could finish up the old one, he would say, "There is no finish to the old one." So if your mind can handle it, do the meditation as I have described it above. If your mind cannot handle it, then try to absorb as many of the nine reasons for the three principles as fits your capacity. Meditate over and over on your death until you gain a complete disgust for the activities of this life; until you can think of them like a man on his way to the site of his execution, stopping to put on some fine jewelry.

The subjects of how to serve a spiritual guide, of the spiritual fortune and leisure of this life, and of our impermanence are found throughout the supreme form of speech, the word of the Buddha, and the commentaries upon it. You must come to realize that these are instructions to be put into practice at each point where they occur, and so you should actually undertake them at each step.

If you do so, then you will be able to grasp the true intent of the victorious Buddhas quite easily. You should apply this advice to each of the other sections here as well.



This brings us to our second major division, which is the contemplation of what will happen to us in our next life. This involves thinking about the relative happiness and suffering of the higher and lower realms.



COURSE VIII Death and the Realms of Existence

Name:	
Date:	
Grade:	

Homework, Class One

1) Give the name of the principal text we will be using for our study of the realms of existence, along with the name of its author, and his approximate dates. (Tibetan track answer in Tibetan and Sanskrit.)

2) Give the name of the principal commentary we will be using, its author, and his dates. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

3) Give the names of the three realms. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

- a)
- b)
- c)

4) Explain how the desire realm can be divided into twenty different parts. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

5) What quality characterizes the beings and places of the desire realm?

Course VIII, Class One, Homework, cont.

6) What is the nature of the "desire" in the expression "desire realm"?

7) What qualities characterize the form realm?

8) Why is the "form realm" called what it is?

9) Why do the four levels of the form realm consist of seventeen different sections?

10) Is the level called "Below None" a part of the form realm or not? (Tibetan track also give the name of the level.)

11) According to the highest school of Buddhism, what ultimately causes each of the different realms and types of birth?

Meditation assignment: Analytical meditation, 15 minutes per day, on the question of why
a highly realized being such as Master Vasubandhu would
describe details of a world if they did not in fact exist.Meditation dates and times (must be filled in, or homework will not be accepted):

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INSTITUTE COURSE VIII Death and the Realms of Existence

Name:	
Date:	
Grade:	

Homework, Class Two

1) Explain how the location of the formless realm is determined.

2) What are the names of the four levels of the formless realm, and how does one reach them? (Tibetan track give the names in Tibetan.)

3) Aside from the total lack of physical matter there, what distinguishes the formless realm from the lower two realms?

4) Name the five types of birth that a person can take. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)
- e)

5) Where in the five types of birth do we include the intermediate beings, and the lesser pleasure beings? (Tibetan track give their names in Tibetan also.)

Course VIII, Class Two, Homework, cont.

6) Name the four ways of taking birth. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a) b) c) d)

7) Which types of birth are considered better than the others?

8) Which kinds of beings are said to be (a) aware of what they are doing as they enter the womb; (b) aware both while entering and staying; (c) aware while entering, staying, and issuing; and (d) aware at none of these points?

a) b) c) d)

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day, try to imagine what each of the three realmsis like, and what it would be like to be born as each of thefive different types of beings in these realms.Meditation dates and times (must be filled in, or homework will not be accepted):



COURSE VIII Death and the Realms of Existence

Name:	
Date:	
Grade:	

Homework, Class Three

1) Name the text that we are using for our study of the lives of craving spirits and animals. Who wrote it, and what are his approximate dates? What famous book was based on this text? (Tibetan track answer in Tibetan.)

2) Name the one general cause, and then the three specific causes that can lead us to a birth as a craving spirit. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a) b) c) d)

3) Describe the three basic kinds of sufferings that craving spirits can have. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

Course VIII, Class Three, Homework, cont.

4) Name one general cause, and then two specific causes, for birth as an animal.

a) b) c)

5) Describe some of the sufferings that animals must undergo.

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day, try to visualize what it would be like if you were actually a craving spirit, or an animal. *Meditation dates and times (must be filled in, or homework will not be accepted):*



COURSE VIII Death and the Realms of Existence

Name:	
Date:	
Grade:	

Homework, Class Four

1) Give the name, and the author and his dates, for the commentary we will use for our study of the suffering of humans. Then give the name, and the author and his dates, for the root text that this author is commenting upon. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

Commentary:

Root text:

2) Name and describe the six kinds of suffering that we must undergo. (Tibetan track name in Tibetan and describe in English.)

a) b) c) d) e) f)

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day, memorize the six sufferings, and review specific instances of them in your life. *Meditation dates and times (must be filled in, or homework will not be accepted):*

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INSTITUTE COURSE VIII Death and the Realms of Existence

Name:	
Date:	

Grade:

Homework, Class Five

1) Explain the meaning of the word "bardo."

2) Describe the example of seeds for crops of grain, used to explain why intermediate beings must logically exist.

3) The existence of intermediate beings is also proven by statements of the Buddha. Describe the three conditions under which, according to the Buddha, a child will form in the mother's womb. (Tibetan track answer in Tibetan.)

a) b)

c)

4) What determines the appearance that an intermediate being's body will take?

Course VIII, Class Five, Homework, cont.

5) Who can see an intermediate being?

6) Describe the special powers that intermediate beings enjoy.

7) Is it possible to be diverted to another type of birth after one has already taken form as an intermediate being headed for a particular type of rebirth?

8) How does an intermediate being enter the state of a human womb birth?

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day, imagining how it will be to enter the bardo realm as you die. *Meditation dates and times (must be filled in, or homework will not be accepted):*

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COURSE VIII Death and the Realms of Existence

Name:		
Date:		
Grade:		

Homework, Class Six

1) Name the four different kinds of sustenance, and give examples of each. (Tibetan track name the four in Tibetan, and explain in English.)

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)

2) What is the function of these types of sustenance?

- 3) Describe the very first stage in the formation of the world.
- 4) Describe briefly the nine major mountains of the world.
- 5) Describe briefly the three oceans of the world.

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day, imagining the ultimate evolution of the world for yourself into a Buddha paradise. Meditation dates and times (must be filled in, or homework will not be accepted):

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INSTITUTE COURSE VIII Death and the Realms of Existence

Name:	
Date:	
Grade:	

Homework, Class Seven

1) Name and describe the eight hot hells. (Tibetan track name in Tibetan, describe in English.)

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)
- e)
- f)
- g)
- h)

2) Name and describe briefly three additional kinds of hells. (Tibetan track name in Tibetan and describe in English.)

a)

b)

c)

3) Explain how karma ripens into a hell birth, and why this makes it very possible for people like us to be born into a hell.

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day, go mentally from one of the eight hot hells to the next, picturing the suffering in each. *Meditation dates and times (must be completed, or homework will not be accepted):*

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INSTITUTE COURSE VIII Death and the Realms of Existence

Name:		
Date:		
Grade:		

Homework, Class Eight

1) Name the four different kinds of kalpas (eons). (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)

2) Describe the events that open and close the eon of destruction. (Tibetan track in Tibetan, from the root text.)

3) The physical world can be destroyed by fire, water, or wind. Describe how the world ends when it is destroyed by fire.

4) Describe the events that open and close the eon of formation. (Tibetan track in Tibetan, from the root text.)

Course VIII, Class Eight, Homework, cont.

5) The eon of continuation continues for twenty intermediate eons. Describe the length of an intermediate eon.

6) Describe the length of a great eon.

7) What is the length of time that a person must accumulate the collections of merit and wisdom to become a Buddha? (Tibetan track in Tibetan, from the root text.)

8) Describe the periods during which Buddhas appear in the world.

Meditation assignment: Fifteen minutes per day, meditate upon the day that you become a Buddha. Meditation dates and times (must be filled in, or homework will not be accepted):

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INSTITUTE
Course VIII
Death and the Realms of Existence

Name:	
Date:	
Grade:	

Homework, Class Nine

1) Name the four steps in the contemplation of death. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)		
b)		
c)		
d)		

2) Describe the awareness of death which is not the one which we seek to develop through meditation.

3) Describe the awareness of death which is the one which we seek to develop through meditation.

Course VIII, Class Nine, Homework, cont.

4) Name the three principles for meditating on death. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b) c)

5) Describe the three reasons for the certainty of death.

a)

b)

c)

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes a day, analytical meditation on the three reasons for the certainty of death. *Meditation dates and times (must be filled in, or homework will not be accepted):*

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Name:	
Date:	
Grade:	

Homework, Class Ten

1) Name the three reasons behind the second principle of death meditation: contemplating that there is no certainty when we will die. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)	
b)	

c)

2) Name the three reasons behind the third principle of death meditation: contemplating that, when you do die, nothing but the Dharma can be of the least help to you. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

- b)
- c)

3) State the three resolutions that we should make after understanding the nine reasons for the three principles.

a)	
b)	
c)	

Meditation assignment: 15 minutes per day, analytical meditation on the three reasons behind each of the latter two principles of death meditation. *Meditation dates and times (must be filled in, or homework will not be accepted):*



Name:	
Date:	
Grade:	

Quiz, Class One

1) Give the name of the principal text we will be using for our study of the realms of existence, along with the name of its author, and his approximate dates. (Tibetan track answer in Tibetan and Sanskrit.)

2) Explain how the desire realm can be divided into twenty different parts. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

3) What is the nature of the "desire" in the expression "desire realm"?

4) Why is the "form realm" called what it is?

5) Why do the four levels of the form realm consist of seventeen different sections?

6) According to the highest school of Buddhism, what ultimately causes each of the different realms and types of birth?

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Name:		
Date:		
Grade:		

Quiz, Class Two

1) Explain how the location of the formless realm is determined.

2) What are the names of the four levels of the formless realm, and how does one reach them? (Tibetan track give the names in Tibetan.)

3) Name the four ways of taking birth. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a) b) c) d)



Name:	
Date:	
Grade:	

Quiz, Class Three

1) Name the text that we are using for our study of the lives of craving spirits and animals. Who wrote it, and what are his approximate dates? What famous book was based on this text? (Tibetan track answer in Tibetan.)

2) Name the one general cause, and then the three specific causes that can lead us to a birth as a craving spirit. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a) b) c) d)

4) Name one general cause, and then two specific causes, for birth as an animal.

a) b)

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Name:	
Date:	
Grade:	

Quiz, Class Four

1) Name and describe briefly the six kinds of suffering that we must undergo. (Tibetan track name in Tibetan and describe in English.)

a)			
b)			
c)			
d)			
e)			
f)			

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Name:	
Date:	
Grade:	

Quiz, Class Five

1) Describe the example of seeds for crops of grain, used to explain why intermediate beings must logically exist.

2) The existence of intermediate beings is also proven by statements of the Buddha. Describe the three conditions under which, according to the Buddha, a child will form in the mother's womb. (Tibetan track answer in Tibetan.)

a) b) c)

3) Who can see an intermediate being?

4) Is it possible to be diverted to another type of birth after one has already taken form as an intermediate being headed for a particular type of rebirth?

5) How does an intermediate being enter the state of a human womb birth?

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Name:	
Date:	
Grade:	

Quiz, Class Six

1) Name the four different kinds of sustenance, and give examples of each. (Tibetan track name the four in Tibetan, and explain in English.)

a)		
b)		
c)		
d)		

2) What is the function of these types of sustenance?

3) Describe the very first stage in the formation of the world.

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Name:	
Date:	
Grade:	

Quiz, Class Seven

1) Name and describe the eight hot hells. (Tibetan track name in Tibetan, describe in English.)

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)
- e)
- f)
- g)
- h)

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Name:	
Date:	
Grade:	

Quiz, Class Eight

1) Name the four different kinds of kalpas (eons). (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

- a)
- b)
- c)
- d)

2) Describe the events that open and close the eon of destruction. (Tibetan track in Tibetan, from the root text.)

3) The eon of continuation continues for twenty intermediate eons. Describe the length of an intermediate eon.

4) Describe the length of a great eon.

5) What is the length of time that a person must accumulate the collections of merit and wisdom to become a Buddha? (Tibetan track in Tibetan, from the root text.)

6) Describe the periods during which Buddhas appear in the world.

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INSTITUTE
Course VIII
Death and the Realms of Existence

Name:		
Date:		
Grade:		

Quiz, Class Nine

1) Name the four steps in the contemplation of death. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)	
b)	
c)	
d)	

2) Describe the awareness of death which is not the one which we seek to develop through meditation.

3) Describe the awareness of death which is the one which we seek to develop through meditation.

	THE ASIAN CLASSICS
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Name:	
Date:	
Grade:	

Quiz, Class Ten

1) Name the three reasons behind the second principle of death meditation: contemplating that there is no certainty when we will die. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

2) State the three resolutions that we should make after understanding the nine reasons for the three principles.

a)

b)

c)



Name:
Date:
Grade:

Final Examination

1) Give the name of the principal text which we used for our study of the realms of existence, along with the name of its author, and his approximate dates. (Tibetan track answer in Tibetan and Sanskrit.)

2) Explain how the desire realm can be divided into twenty different parts. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

3) Why do the four levels of the form realm consist of seventeen different sections?

4) According to the highest school of Buddhism, what ultimately causes each of the different realms and types of birth?

5) Explain how the location of the formless realm is determined.

6) Name the four ways of taking birth. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a) b) c) d)

7) Name the one general cause, and then the three specific causes that can lead us to a birth as a craving spirit. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a) b) c) d)

8) Name one general cause, and then two specific causes, for birth as an animal.

- a)
- b)
- c)

9) Name and describe briefly the six kinds of suffering that we must undergo. (Tibetan track name in Tibetan and describe in English.)

a) b) c) d) e) f)

10) Describe the example of seeds for crops of grain, used to explain why intermediate beings must logically exist.

11) The existence of intermediate beings is also proven by statements of the Buddha. Describe the three conditions under which, according to the Buddha, a child will form in the mother's womb. (Tibetan track answer in Tibetan.)

a) b) c)

12) How does an intermediate being enter the state of a human womb birth?

13) What is the function of the four types of sustenance?

14) Name and describe the eight hot hells. (Tibetan track name in Tibetan, describe in English.)

a)			
b)			
c)			
d)			
e)			
f)			
g)			
h)			

15) Name the four different kinds of kalpas (eons). (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a) b) c) d) 16) Describe the events that open and close the eon of destruction. (Tibetan track in Tibetan, from the root text.)

17) Describe the length of a great eon.

18) What is the length of time that a person must accumulate the collections of merit and wisdom to become a Buddha? (Tibetan track in Tibetan, from the root text.)

19) Name the four steps in the contemplation of death. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a) b) c) d) 20) Describe the awareness of death which is not the one which we seek to develop through meditation.

21) Describe the awareness of death which is the one which we seek to develop through meditation.

22) Name the three reasons behind the second principle of death meditation: contemplating that there is no certainty when we will die. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a)

b)

c)

23) State the three resolutions that we should make after understanding the nine reasons for the three principles.

a)

b)

c)

Please PRINT your name clearly, exactly as you would like it to appear on your certificate, and the address to which the certificate should be sent.

Please circle one or specify other: Mr. Ms. Mrs. Miss Venerable

Name as you would like it to appear on the certificate:

Mailing name, if different:			
Address			
City	State	Zip code	
Country			

These notes were taken by a student in class, and should be used for reference only. Please check them against the audiotapes for accuracy of content.

CLASS NOTES Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence Class One: Introduction to the desire and form realms

Death and the CHU NGUN	realms of existance: PA_DZUSans	krit: Abhidharma - kosha		
Dharma high (thing)		nigher knowledge treasure house		
(Written by Master Vasubandhu (c. 350 A.D.) (also called Yik-nyen)		
We're studying	We're studying the third chapter.			
GYALWA victorious one (means Dalai L		The first Dalai Lama, student of Je Tsongkapa. (1391-1474)		
TAR LAM freedom path	SEL JE lamp, illumination	"Illumination/Lamp on the Path to Freedom." Commentary by the first Dalai Lama to explain the <i>Abhidharmakosha</i> .		

Three realms of suffering existance:

The universe is made up of these three parts. All three realms are suffering realms - every being and every object in all three realms is suffering. There are also beings who don't live in these realms. They are outside suffering. If you're in these three realms, you're in a place of suffering:

DU - KAM	SUK - KAM	SUK-ME - KAM
desire realm	form realm	form less realm
	(physical matter)	(mental beings without physical matter)

Form realm:

Physical matter reaches its highest expression in this realm. The realm is characterized by beauty - everything is beautiful, and the beings aren't naturally attracted to objects of the senses; they're beyond that. All beings here are devas - living in a kind of temporary paradise. They live for millions of years enjoying themselves. There are different kinds of pleasure beings - some think of something and it appears for them to enjoy; others can enjoy both what they emanate and what others emanate as well. These pleasure beings are not the same as tantric deities who are enlightened. These devas use up all their good karma by living for millions of years in paradise, and then suffer death and are reborn in hell. No virtue is left for a better birth, only negative karmic seeds. The suffering of the last days of a deva before dying is greater than all the pleasure of those millions of years.

The form realm has four divisions, each of which has 3 or more subdivisions - deep, very deep, and extremely deep. There are a total of 17 levels of the form realm – 17 physical places where you can be born.

Four divisions of the form realm:

- 8 subdivisions within this level
- <u>3</u> subdivisions within this level
- <u>3</u> subdivisions within this level
- 3 subdivisions within this level

There is a **causal form realm**, which is the meditation which you are in during this life which **causes** your mind to transfer over to the **result form realm** after you die and take a resulting rebirth there.

Being in deep meditation, withdrawn from all physical senses leads to the first level of the form realm. The better your meditation, the higher the form realm level in which you take rebirth. There are four different meditation levels (samtens). In this life, if you meditate at one of those levels long enough, when you die you will go to the corresponding level of the form realm. For example, by meditating at the second level of samten, you end up in the second division of the form realm. The depth of your meditation determines in which level (1, 2, or 3) of the second samten division you will be reborn. You can only get to this realm by doing no bad deeds. *The purpose of meditation is not to be reborn in a higher suffering realm, but for your mind to go to the form realm and use it as a platform to see emptiness, and for higher spiritual attainment*.

<u>The desire realm</u> is the lowest of the three realms. It has five or six different kinds of beings (depending upon how you count intermediate state beings). There are twenty different sections of the desire realm.

Kinds of beings:

Ten bad births:

- 1.) **Hell beings**: There are eight levels of hells (eight hot and eight cold)
- 2.) **Craving spirits**: They have a subtle physical body, which you can't see. They are born into an existance where they are never satisfied.
- 3.) Animals: They live lives of fear of being killed. Most live in the ocean.

Ten good births:

- 4.) **Humans**: They are divided into four types according to the continent they are living on.
- 5.) **Pleasure beings**: There are six different kinds living in the desire realm. (There are 17 kinds living in the form realm, which are a higher type than those living in the desire realm.) There are two kinds of pleasure beings in general: those living inside samsara (which includes form realm and desire realm pleasure beings) spending their lives in super-pleasure, and the totally pure and enlightened beings who live outside suffering life.

6.) Bardo (intermediate state) beings.

The first three kinds of beings constitute ten possible bad births (eight levels of hell, craving spirits, and animals = ten). The humans (four types) and pleasure beings (six types) constitute the ten possible good births in the desire realm. There are **twenty total possible kinds of rebirth in the desire realm**.

The desire realm is so called because desire is our primary motivation - desire for food, sex, and the objects of the senses. We are attracted to the most lowly kind of food and pleasure - coarse bodies and foods. Our existence is defined by our desire for nice physical objects and wanting to get away from unpleasant objects. The characteristic of this realm is that we can have bad thoughts which are bad deeds. When we focus on our desirous thoughts, the thoughts become greater and stronger.

Okmin is the highest level of the form realm, but it is <u>still</u> a suffering realm. You can get there by meditation and practice. There is a second **Okmin** which is a Buddha's paradise where you become enlightened, live, and from where you send emanation bodies to help all beings. You can't prove that any of these realms exist. If things are empty, then any realm could exist for you based upon your karmic projections.

CLASS NOTES Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence Class Two: Formless realm, five births and ways of birth

Formless Realm:

There is no one physical place where the formless realm exists. The formless realm for a being is wherever it dies. Beings in the formless realm have only minds, no bodies. By putting your mind in formless realm meditation, you create the cause to be born there.

<u>Four kinds of meditation</u> - which cause rebirth in four corresponding levels of the formless realm:

- 1.) Not conceptual and not non-conceptual. Your body is in the desire realm; the mind is at an extremely subtle level called "not conceptual and not non-conceptual."
- 2.) Limitless awareness meditation.
- 3.) Nothing at all meditation.
- 4.) Peak of existence meditation.

<u>Four levels of formless realm</u> - resulting levels where you are born based on the meditation you do:

- 1.) **NAMKA TAYE** limitless space.
- 2.) **NAMSHE TAYE** limitless awareness/consciousness.
- 3.) **CHIYANG ME** nothing at all.
- 4.) **SI-TSE** the peak of (suffering) existence.

Beings in each realm, and each realm itself, are defined by their own particular hang-ups and attachments/afflictions. The formless realm beings are attached to their minds (it's all they have!)

The way you move up from realm to realm is that you become unattached to more objects: smells, food, etc. When you think of the three realms, you think of three physical places. How do you travel between the three realms? The way you travel between them is mental - your mind reaches a new level of subtlety. If you meditate a lot, you lose your desire for the objects of the senses - your mind is resting on a higher plane and doesn't care about food or sense objects.

The mind is absorbed in a very subtle existence. The mind is in the form realm, and the body is in the desire realm. If you refine the mind further, so that there is absolutely no attachment to objects of the senses, the mind enters the formless realm. That's what the three realms are: three different levels of caring about (or being attached to) the objects of the senses. The subtlety of your mind determines which of the three realms you are in.

While you are in these subtle meditations experiencing bliss, your body is still deteriorating. You have not reached nirvana. You are still in suffering worlds. By doing this meditation, you are just creating the cause to be born in a higher pleasure realm when you die. If you are reborn in these higher realms, you lose the opportunity to become enlightened - a human birth provides the best (perhaps only) basis to become enlightened and permanently free from suffering.

When you escape samsara it's not that you go somewhere else - to another place - it's that your being has changed to something else, which is not suffering.

The goal is to get to the introductory level of the first level of the form realm now, in this life, to see emptiness directly. The goal is not to be born in the form or formless realms.

Four ways of taking birth:

- 1.) **DZU KYE** To be born complete, with a mature body. This is the best way to be born. It doesn't hurt you or anyone else.
- 2.) **DRUSHER LE KYEWA** To be born from warmth and moisture like insect eggs when it rains in summer. This is the second best way to be born; it hurts you but not your mother.
- 3.) **NGEL KYE** Born from a womb. The third best way to be born. It hurts the mother and it hurts you once.
- 4.) **GONG KYE** Born from an egg. The worst way to be born. It hurts the mother and it hurts you twice, when laid and when hatching.

YI - DAK Sanskrit: <i>Preta</i> craving spirit	We will study craving spirits from this book: TEN RIM CHENMO teaching steps great book
GESHE DROLUNGPA spiritual friend (place name)	C. 1100 AD, author of TENRIM CHENMO - <i>The Great Book on the Steps of the Teaching</i> .
Je Tsongkapa (1357-1419) was the au This work was taken from the book b	path steps great book Great Book on the Steps of the Path

Four causes for birth as a craving spirit: There is one general cause and three specific causes (attitudes).

General cause: Doing the ten bad deeds with medium strength (neither premeditated nor light strength, such as accidental, etc.)

Three specific causes:

1.) JINPA NAMSUM M giving three types no		Failing to give the three types of giving:
The three types of givi a.) SANSING GI J material wealth of §	INPA	Giving shelter, food, etc. the material things that people need to live.
b.) MINJIKPAY JI not to be frightened g		Giving protection from harm, danger, fear.
c.) CHU - KYI JIN Dharma teaching giv		Giving Dharma teachings. This is the highest kind of giving because it helps in all future lives.
2.) SERNA being cheap	Stinginess. Not wanting to see your possessions become less. Having the misconception that keeping what you have and not giving is the way to get things.	
3.) TRAKDOK jealousy	Jealousy. Wishing that others didn't have the good things that they have. The opposite of a bodhisattva ideal.	

How does one become a craving spirit by doing the above? The essence of karma is the movement of the mind. The movement of the mind leaves an impression on the mindstream.

CLASS NOTES Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence Class Three, continued

Four principles of karma:

1.)

do bad ● → ↔ bad result do good ● → ↔ good result

LE NGEPA - Fixed content. Doing good yields a pleasurable result, and doing bad yields a painful result.

Because the good result comes at the same time as the bad deed, you think it came from that bad deed rather than from a prior good deed.

2.) **PEL CHEWA - Gets bigger.** Results are greater than their seeds.

3.) MA JEPA DANG MA TREPA - If you don't do a karma, you won't get a result.

4.) JEPA CHU MISAWA - If you do a karma it <u>never</u> just goes away.

In an extreme form, not giving causes the perception of yourself to flower that you can't ever get enough, and you always want more. This is what a preta is: a being overwhelmed with wanting and not being able to find anything. So by planting perceptual seeds of not giving, those seeds grow extremely large and powerful and expand. Not giving plants a seed that grows and causes your perception to become such that you see yourself as a craving spirit.

Three kinds of pretas:

1.) CHIY DRIPPA CHEN	Beings with obstacles on the outside. The things out side
outside obstacle	of you are a problem. The outside things that you want become repulsive when you get close to them. Your perception of things is appealing from afar (a good karma ripening), and when you get close, your perception shifts, and it becomes repulsive.
	and it becomes repuisive.

- 2.) NANG-GI DRIPPA CHEN inside obstacle Beings with obstacles on the inside. They have mouths the size of a pinhead, and a stomach that is very large. Can't get enough food to ever be satisfied. If they get any food into their mouth, it is consumed by fire in their mouth.
- 3.) **SEKOM GYI DRIPPA CHEN Obstacles to food and drink.** When they get something to food and drink obstacle eat that's not nasty appearing, it burns on the way down and in the stomach.

Pretas can be any size and reside either below the earth, a certain distance from this planet, or amongst us. A preta grows from having a perception of yourself not giving, or being stingy or jealous. The seed expands, and you see yourself not having or being able to get enough in a big way.

CLASS NOTES Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence Class Three, continued

Animals:

<u>**General cause**</u>: Doing the ten bad deeds to a lesser extent, for example accidentally or infrequently leads to rebirth as an animal.

Specific Causes to be born as an animal:

Consistantly breaking minor rules.
 Disrespecting others.

Where animals live:

JING - NA NEPA In the ocean
 KATORWA Spread out all over the place

Animals' existence is based on living in fear of being eaten. They are in sheer terror their entire lives, and always running away from danger. Animals in contact with humans have another set of sufferings: being tortured, having their skins taken off, being beaten, being riden, being made to work involuntarily, etc.

In the human body alone, there are 80,000 species living, and there are 360 million species living on the planet, according to the scriptures.

CLASS NOTES Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence Class Four: The lives of humans and pleasure beings

Books used: **PANCHEN LOBSANG CHUKYI GYELTSEN First Panchen Lama** (1567?-1662) great master pure mind banner of Dharma Author of **DE - LAM** easy path We will study a commentary on *The Easy Path* by

NGULCHU DHARMA BHADRA (1772-1851), called RINCHEN BANGDZU quicksilver jewels chest *Chest of Jewels*

DUK -NGEL DRUKThe six sufferings which are always with ussufferingsix(humans and devas):

- 1.) **NGEPA MEPA** Nothing is fixed. Friends become enemies, and vice versa. What you like for awhile, later you don't like. Things are always shifting and never stable. Good karma wears out and bad karma ripens to replace it, and vice versa.
- 2.) NGOM MI SHEPA You can't be satisfied. You see something you want, you obtain it, bring it into yourself, and digest it. This is the pursuit of happiness. Nothing works for us though. Our nature is that nothing is satisfying in the end. It's as if the pursuit of happiness ends in the pursuit of suffering. This suffering never stops.

3.) YANG YANG LU NDORWA over over body shedding shedding tendency to take care of your body more than other people's bodies. Putting your body first

causes you to withhold things from others, which is a non-virtue. You can't take your body with you when you die, but you take your mind with you, which is full of non-virtue from taking care of your body instead of theirs.

4.) YANG YANG	NYINGTSAM JORWA	Being reborn over and over. The energy
over over	to be reborn	which projects you into this life is the same
		defective energy which leads to the
degeneratio	n of this body. The energy	which makes you young and beautiful is the
same energ	y which makes you old and	ugly.

5.) YANG	YANG	TO-MEN D	U GYURWA	After high comes low. Everything cycles
over	over	high low	change	around from high to low. It's the nature of

CLASS NOTES Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence Class Four, continued

the energy driving your life. It goes in waves; karma ripens and then wears out/dissapates. Work, relationships, and life end in lows after highs.

6.) **DROK MEPA** companion none There is no companion. You are the flow of your karma - the result of what you did before. You are separate from everyone else, and will always be separate and alone. You meet with people temporarily and then separate and are alone. (Therefore do not do a bad deed for <u>anyone</u>. You and your karma is yours alone.)

CLASS NOTES Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence Class Five: Bardo beings

Bardo teachings (all from Abhidharmakosha Commentary)

BAR - DO in between	The state a being is in between death and birth.
BAR SI between life	The life in between.
The following two a BARDOWA	are synonyms for bardo beings: The being in the bardo
DRI - SA smells eater	Smell eater

There are many corrupt teachings on the bardo. This teaching is from the original text and is very accurate.

Beings take rebirth in the bardo as bardo beings, although with a very short lifespan. Bardo beings are **DZU - KYE** - born complete; they arise spontaneously. miraculous born

LUNG	RIKPA	Master Vasubandu uses both logic and scriptural
scriptural proof	logical proof	proofs to prove the existence of bardo beings.

Logical proof of bardowas:

DRU GYUN a grain stream continuum	You can't go from a (seed) grain to a plant with out the seed turning into a sprout and continuing to grow. You can't get from New York to Kansas without traveling there. Similarly, when you die, you must travel to the next birth. Bardo beings and the bardo are how you travel. It's where you travel from the place of your death to the place of your birth. It's part of the continuum. But why not just die and immediately be reborn elsewhere?
CHELE JUNGWA cut off continuum	You can't have a broken continuum. There must be instances of time between death and birth. The period of time between death and birth, and what goes on during that time, is what the bardo is.

Ultimately, the moment you stop seeing yourself as one kind of being and start to see yourself as another kind of being, your perception has shifted. You are empty and exist as a continuum of perceptual shifts toward yourself. Death, the intermediate state, and rebirth as another kind of being result from your perceptions about you and your world shifting. You and your world are empty; they are projections. Your perceptions of who you are and what your are just shift.

Scriptural proofs:

SIPADUNTENPAYDOexistance/sevento teachsutrakind of being

The Buddha taught that there are seven types of beings and one of them is a bardo being. If you accept the Buddha's omniscience, you must accept a bardo being.

Three conditions needed for human birth:

1.) MA - RUNGDATSENDENfit to be a motherstillpossess(human women)menstruating	A woman who has a physical body capable of birth and is still menstruating.
2.) PAMA CHAK SHING TREPA parents desire and make sexual contact	The father and mother have desire and make sexual contact.
3.) ORISA NYEWAR NEPA smell eater in the immediate vicinity	A bardo being must be in the immediate vicinity of the parents when they're having sex.

Because these above statements are made in scripture spoken by the Buddha, it's considered a proof of bardo existence.

BARDOR	DAVVA	Buddha taught that you can enter nirvana from the
in the bardo state	gone beyond	bardo - this is another scriptural proof.
	Nirvana	

If you commit one of the immediate five misdeeds you immediately take rebirth in the lowest hell. The bardo isn't considered a rebirth, it's not listed among the five types of beings' rebirths. You still go through the bardo in this case.

CLASS NOTES Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence Class Five, continued

What do bardowas look like?

The outward appearance is like the realm you will be born in. The same karma is projecting you through the bardo as is projecting you into your next life. Hell bound beings are the color of charred wood; animal bound beings are greyish, craving spirits are translucent, human or desire realm devas appear as five or six year olds with golden bodies, form realm bound beings appear as clothed adults, formless realm bound beings have no appearance at all.

A bardowa's life span is a maximum of seven days. If you reach the end of seven days and haven't taken rebirth, you die and take another rebirth as a bardowa again. You can do this seven times. The maximum total time in the bardo is 49 days. You can also be there for a few seconds. The day of death counts as day one. According to the secret teachings, it's possible to help someone in the bardo.

It's possible to see bardo beings if you get "the eye of a god" (**HLAY CHEN**). This means that in deep meditation you can see them. It doesn't mean that a third eye pops up on your forehead. There are eleven classic obstacles to developing that meditation. If you meditate and eliminate the eleven obstacles, you can see bardowas.

Bardowas can see other bardowas of the same class or realm.

Once you enter the bardo, you can't redirect your rebirth to another realm. The same karma projects you through and out of the bardo.

Bardowas have miraculous powers like flying, passing through solid objects, and travelling vast distances very quickly.

Bardowas live on and eat smells.

Bardowas are caught in the womb when they see a couple making love from a distance and interpret it to be some kind of pleasure, and move closer to join in. They have a hallucination where they see sex as something wonderful and glorious and go closer and closer. Then they go into the womb where, because of the perceptions they have there, they become trapped and can't get out. Their perception changes, and they see solid tissue which they can't pass through. Their perception of themselves and the world shifts, and they become locked into that existence/rebirth/perceptual reality. The karma ripens and continues to propel them along that way of seeing things.

Bardowas travel according to the realm they are going to. If they are going to hell, they're walking upside down. If they're headed for a pleasure being realm, they're travelling slightly upward. Once in the bardo, you are looking for your next birth, being driven towards it. That's the life of a bardowa.

CLASS NOTES Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence Class Six: Types of sustenance, and the physical world

Sustenance and a description of our planet:

DROWA SE - KYI NEPA YIN (line from the third chapter of *Abhidharmakosha*) beings sustenance by they live

Living beings stay here because of sustenance. Beings need sustenance to stay alive.

Four kinds of sustenance:

1.) **KAM GYI SE** The kind of food you bite and ingest in portions.

portion sustenance

- a.) **subtle types**: Called subtle because they don't produce pee or poo. It's absorbed into the body. For example, bardowas eat smell, desire realm pleasure beings and human beings of the first eon eat nectar. (Tib. dutsi).
- b.) gross types: Include everything else. This is what we eat.
- 2.) **REK PA** contact **The convening of three things**: Where you have: 1.) an object, 2.) a sense power perceiving it, and 3.) consciousness. Then you have contact. Just seeing the object gives sustenance; you take sustenance from being near the object. Nobody dies three feet from food. Something keeps them going for it.
- 3.) **SEM PA** movement of the mind **Sustains you to continue life**. It is the thing which is the basis for, or which creates and sustains the body's speech and actions.
- 4.) **NAMSHE** The mind itself. Without a mind, there would be no consciousness and therefore, no being. The mind sustains a being's existence.

All beings have the latter three types of sustenance. Only desire realm beings use the first type of sustenance. Beings outside the desire realm don't need the sustenance of portions; there are no tastes or smells in the form or formless realms.

Things which nourish the body:

food

GYE PAY GYU SHI flourish cause four	Four things which cause the elements and body to flourish, by nourishing the physical faculties of your body and the four elements which support your body.
1.) KA - SE	Eating food. Food keeps you alive here in samsara.

CLASS NOTES Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence Class Six, continued

2.) LEK JA doing good	Taking care of your body with massage, baths, etc. Generally taking care of your body.
3.) NYI sleep	Sleep. Not too much or too little.
4.) TING-NGEN-DZIN concentration	Concentration is good for your body. Not having your mind torn in many directions or running all over the place. You

concentrate on one thing at a time.

These things sustain the body, which is a polluted one and which must deteriorate and die. These things keep the body going, but it's a defective and inferior body.

Formation of the World

JIK TEN	LUNG	GI	KYILNKOR
perishable base	wind energy	of	mandala (a huge disc)
(the world)			

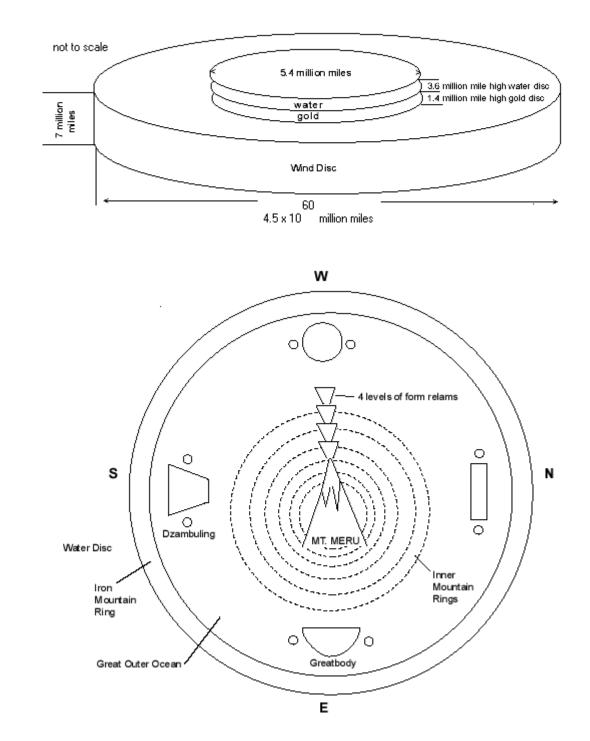
There are two great presentations of how the world came to be - one in the Kalachakra tantra, and one in the Abhidharma system. We'll cover the Abhidharma system.

In the beginning of this planet there was empty space. Energy began moving very slowly and picked up speed until it congealed and formed a diamond-hard disc as a base. It is still energy circling, but going so fast that it is diamond hard. On top of that water formed, and gold formed within the water at its lower third. Mt. Meru is in the center, with seven mountain ranges circling it. Then there is a mountain range around the outer edge of the wind disc made of iron. The inner mountain rings are made or gold.

Mt. Meru is made of something different on each side. The eastern side is silver, southern is lapis, western is ruby, northern is gold. The color of the sky around Mt. Meru corresponds to the side of Mt. Meru you live on. Blue sky means you live on the south side of Mt. Meru. The first inner mountain ring is 360,000 miles above the water and 360,000 miles below the water. Each ring of mountains is half as big, as you go outward. Between each mountain range is an ocean. Those are called the inner oceans. The outer ocean is between the iron mountain ring and the outer gold mountain ring. In the outer ocean are four continents. We live on the Dzambu ling continent. Our world consists of the disks, hells, paradises, etc.

Why doesn't the world appear to us like this? Because it's empty. Our karmic projection is different. If we had different karma, we would see a different world system.

CLASS NOTES Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence Class Six, continued



Drawing of the mandala of a universe beyond our normal perception.

CLASS NOTES Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence Class Seven: The lives of hell beings

8 TYPES OF HOT HELLS

NYEL - WA hells

TSA NYEL GYE hot hell 8 kinds

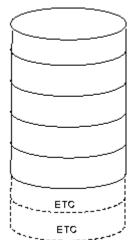
Eight different kinds of hot hells

They are shaped like this, stacked on top of each other. The lighter ones are on top, and the heavier ones are toward the bottom. They are located directly under Bodh Gaya in India.

1.) **YANG - SU** Hell called revive. It is a huge chamber 90,000 miles across. A mass of confusion,

screaming, heat. The inhabitants have hatred towards everyone there. Everyone attacks each other with their hands or whatever they can find until they knock each other unconscious. Then they hear a voice that says "Yang-su", and they revive, get up, and start again. They have the special kind of pain and agony of dying repeatedly each day without end. In our life we only feel the pain of death once. Beings live there for millions of years. A moment of pain there is greater than all the pain you could feel in your entire life as a human. This is the lightest of the hot hells.

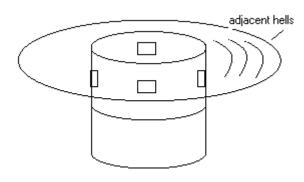
- 2.) **TIK NAK** line black **Black line hell.** Strong beings force you down on the hot ground and put hot chains across your body which leave black burn lines along your body. Other hell guards cut you up along those lines. Each part of you that is cut up still feels pain. In the hells, you never lose consciousness: you always feel pain, endlessly. Your body just regenerates and then you start over again.
- 3.) **DUN JOM** collect destroy Gather and smash. Hell guards drive you into a canyon between mountains and then the walls collapse or close and smash you. Then the mountains open and you regenerate. The rocks take on different animal shapes each time. With each hell, the life span is progressively longer.
- 4.) NGU MBU scream Screaming hell. The ground of all the hells are iron and red hot. You're naked and there's nowhere to go. The ground of this hell is particularly hot. You can't stand still, and so you just run around screaming. Your feet are burned to flesh, then bone, then your legs burn up and you are running around on your knee stumps. Then they burn and you're on your hands. Then the body burns up. After that, your body regenerates and you start over.



CLASS NOTES Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence Class Seven, continued

5.) NGU-MBU CHENPO scream great	Great screaming hell. The same as above. Everything just hurts more than the one above.
6.) TSA-WA heat	Heat. There is a metal hut with a sealed door. You're put inside and the hut is heated. You're inside without escape and nowhere to go. You just stay inside roasting, suffering, running around, etc.
7.) RABTU TSAWA extremely hot	Extremely hot. You are put into a chamber with two rooms. You think the other room is better, and so run back and forth between the rooms to escape. Your feet and legs burn up as you run back and forth.
8.) NAR ME torment no	No torment. (Sanskrit: <i>Avichi</i>) The suffering never gets less. This is the greatest pain possible. The degree of pain is constant at that level. The pain there is greater than all the pain of all the other hells combined. A jet of fire hits you, and you become incandescent like the filament of a light bulb. You emit some kind of noise, which is the only way to be recognized as a being. Otherwise, you'd think that there was just a column of flame there. This is the longest life span that exists.
DRANG NYEL GYE cold hell 8 kinds	Eight cold hells: You are naked and cold, with icy winds blowing. As the cold gets worse in lower hells, your body blisters. The blisters worsen, open up, and your body splits open as you go lower in the cold hells. The names of the hells reflect your body color or the way in which your body is splitting open from the cold.
NYE KORWAY NYELWA adjacent hells	A <u>Adjacent Hells</u> : There are doors to escape the hot hells when your karma to be there wears out. When you escape the hot hells, you enter the adjacent hells, which have different zones. You come to the door of hell, leave hell, and jump into hot coals up to your knees. Each step you take burns your foot off. Every time you lift your foot, it regenerates, and every time you step down, it burns off. After you leave that zone, you're up to your neck in the swamp of corpses - rotting corpses and excrement. There are creatures biting at your skin. Then you come to the razor road - razors face up. You run barefoot across the

CLASS NOTES Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence Class Seven, continued



razors. Each time your foot comes up for a step, it regenerates. You see some trees and run over for escape. When you get under the trees, the leaves are like knives and fall down on you. Huge wild dogs chase you and you try to climb the trees. The trunks are covered with long daggers which turn down as you climb up. When you get to the top and think you're safe, birds with steel beaks come and pluck out your eyes and at your face. When you climb down, the trunk daggers turn up toward you as you go down.

Partial Hells: NYITSEWAY NYELWA tiny part; partial hell

This is the ripening of a personal karma. You can only share this karma with one or two other people. You are born into a very painful situation which is restricted to you. This can happen anywhere. You're a hell-being and you're in a situation like crashing and burning in the desert.

How do you get to the hells? Where do they come from? They are your own projections. They do not have a quality of their own. No construction crew built the hells. You just have a perception of dying, a perception of being a bardo being, and then a perception of hell. It just takes three perceptual shifts to go from this life to hell. There are 64 movements of the mind in one finger snap. It could happen that fast.

Karma expands. You had a perception, it expands and ripens into something vastly greater than the original event. Your past bad deeds create your hell - that perceptual projection. You're not 1,000 miles from hell. You're at the door all the time.

KAL - PAThere are four different kinds of kalpas in Buddhism.eon(this is from the third chapter of the Abhidharmakosha)

1.) **JIKPAY KALPA** <u>Eon of destruction</u>. Four different things happen at the same time:

- 1.) No more beings are born in the Avichi hell of this planet. (There's no time to go through Avichi hell if the planet is destroyed. Beings are born in Avichi hell of another planet instead.)
- 2.) Lifespans on Dzambuling (our world) reach 80,000 years.
- 3.) The eon of continuation ends.
- 4.) The eon of destruction opens.

The above four things happen simultaneously at the beginning of the eon of destruction. This is followed by animals and craving spirits being born on other planets instead of here. Humans reach the meditative attainment of the first level of the form realm, die, and take rebirth there. Then beings in the first level of the form realm attain the second level of form realm meditation, die, and are reborn there. So everything in the desire realm empties out up to the second level of the form realm. It takes 19 intermediate eons for the desire realm to empty out after the process has started in the beginning of the eon of destruction.

BARKALThere are 20 intermediate eons that make up an eon of
destruction. It takes 19 intermediate eons for beings to empty off
the planet. At the beginning of the 20th eon, the rain stops and

all vegetation dies, the sun supernovas, and splits into two. Later a third sun forms, and all rivers and streams evaporate. A fourth sun forms, and large lakes dry up. A fifth sun forms, and oceans dry up. A sixth sun forms, and continents go up in smoke. A seventh sun forms, and the planet burns up, which also causes the first level of the form realm to burn up. There are other kalpas of destruction by wind or water. There are also minor destruction eons where inhabitants destroy the planet with weapons, etc. Millions of years pass between the formation of each new sun.

2.) CHAKPAY KALPA

formation eon

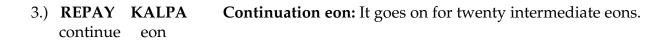
TSE - ME measurable not

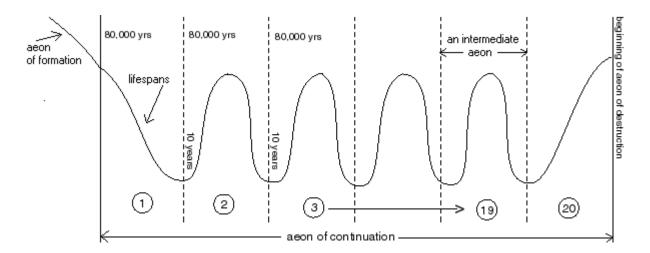
Eon of formation: It goes on for the length of twenty

intermediate eons (but doesn't have the up and down wave structure of an intermediate eon - it has one down slope only - it just lasts as long as twenty intermediate eons would). In a time length equal to one intermediate eon, the physical basis for the world forms - discs, mountains, etc. The first beings who take birth have bodies which radiate light, they can fly in the sky, are very gentle. The whole planet is edible - just lick anything for sustenance - very much like the garden of Eden. Then they slowly

CLASS NOTES Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence Class Eight: Description of time and space, cycles of eons

start to collect bad deeds, and their bodies start to change. Human lives are immeasurable (a specific number with > 30 zeros) at this point. The formation eon ends when the first being is born in Avichi hell. Lifespans have dropped to 80,000 years at that point.





Lifespans drop from 80,000 years down to ten years because people are doing the ten nonvirtues more and more, which creates disturbances in the world. People create more and more powerful weapons. Most people are living in cities. Some people are out in the country when the weapons of destruction are unleashed, and only they survive. The few who survive are overcome with remorse, and decide to give up the ten non-virtues. Lifespans increase from ten years back up to 80,000 years. The same cycle keeps repeating: one cycle is an intermediate eon. The eon of continuation is made up of twenty intermediate eons (i.e., the world is destroyed twenty times by people). The first intermediate eon is only half a wave, but the drop in lifespans is slower in that eon, so it ends up taking the same length of time as the other intermediate eons. The same is true for the last intermediate eon.

A moment of anger directed at a bodhisattva destroys an intermediate eon's worth of virtue. You don't know who is a bodhisattva, so you shouldn't get angry at anyone! 4.) **KAL CHEN** great eon is eighty intermediate eons long. (Believe it refers to four eons of continuation.)

DE DRANGME SUM LA SANG GYE that countless (10^{60}) three after Buddha

After you decide to begin collecting virtue to become a Buddha, it takes three countless great eons to collect enough virtue to sustain the perception of yourself as a Buddha in paradise forever.

KALPA SANGPO

eon good fortune

This present eon is called the Eon of good fortune because 1,000 Buddhas will appear in this eon.



Buddhas don't appear while things are improving. They appear as things are getting worse. People get interested when they have problems. Buddhas don't

appear in a period below 100 years lifespans (where we are now) because beings don't have suitable faculties to grasp the message. It's too near the point of blowing up, and beings have too much ingrained negativity.

Five degenerations - which exist in our time and are spreading. It's a sign that the kalpa's end is approaching. We're very close to the time when people are no longer interested in Dharma. People study it, but don't practice it. People stop keeping it in their hearts. That's the beginning of the end of the eon.

1.)		Human life is very fragile. There are many diseases, the body is very weak, it's very easy to die.
	NYON MONG mental afflictions	
3.)	SEM CHEN living being	We have lousy bodies. Our bodies are not very servicable - not in good shape. They're not strong, coordinated, well-proportioned, etc.

- 4.) **DU** Food loses its ability to nourish you, to keep you alive and healthy. The benefits which food and medicine supply diminish.
- 5.) **TAWA** Ordained people are not virtuous. worldview

CLASS NOTES Course VIII: Death and the Realms of Existence Class Nine: Meditation on the awareness of death, part one

CHIWA	MITAKPA	CHIWA	DRENPA	GOMPA
death	impermanence	death	remember	meditation

This is a special section of the Lam Rim. **Death awareness habituation**.

Death awareness habituation doesn't take place sitting in meditation. It takes place all throughout the day. The point of the practice is to feel (know) that you are going to die today. If you know that you're going to die today, what would you be doing right now? Having awareness of death means that you are always living as if today was your last day; you would always be doing virtue for your future lives. With awareness of death, you have great clarity in your life. You know what you have to do. Things are in perspective.

Four-part death meditation:

1.) **CHIWA MAGOMPAY NYE MIK** Disadvantages of not cultivating death awareness: death not meditating problems

Six problems that will come to you if you don't meditate on death:

1.) **You don't do Dharma -** If you don't do death meditation, then you will concentrate on the small pleasures of this life, i.e. food, clothes, etc. They will be the main focus of your day and your day won't be focused on Dharma.

2.) You consider death, but think it will happen to you later. You delay undertaking virtue because in your heart you believe death will come to you later, and that you can do virtue later. Later never comes.

3.) You do practice, but for reputation only. Our natural motivation is from self-interest and self-concern. This becomes accentuated if we don't do death meditation.

4.) You practice, but with no enthusiasm. Without death meditation, you just do rote practice, and eventually drop the practice.

5.) You get deeper into this life. If you don't do death meditation, you get more invested in and entrenched in this life. You need the lifestyle, leisure, money, and activities, etc. you're accustomed to as you age. You get sucked into and stuck in mundane, neutral, or non-virtuous activities.

6.) You have intense regret at death that your life was wasted. You're sorry for how you lived your life. You didn't change your heart/nature/character. This feeling is intensified at death.

2.) CHIWA GOMPAY PEN YUN death meditation benefits <u>Advantages of cultivating awareness of death</u>:

1.) **Your practice is pure.** You're doing it for the right reasons. Not for others' approval, etc. You also practice more.

2.) **Your practice gains power.** If you felt you were going to die, you'd get serious and concentrate hard and have forceful practice. This is your last meditation before you die.

3.) **Helps you get started.** It motivates you to give up something else that you were going to do and practice instead. Personal practice must come first before everything else, including Dharma work.

4.) **Keeps you going strong.** Your practice will always have ups and downs. When your practice is down, death meditation helps lift you back up.

5.) **Gets you to the end.** When you're practicing and you reach a hard spot - you're 75% there and then start to fade - then death meditation keeps you going and gets you to the end.

6.) You die with satisfaction. As you near the end, your choices provide more satisfaction. The older you get, the more vindication you have that you made the right choices. You see the wisdom of your choices in life, and feel the satisfaction of having chosen Dharma activity, which now pays off.

3.) What death awareness is and isn't:

CHILOJITARKYEWAWhat kind of death awarenessdeath awarenesswhat kind ofdevelopare you supposed to develop?

A.) Death awareness is **not** paying attention to or trying to recreate the panic and terror you will feel at death because of your mind's hallucinations, dissolutions, and grasping at the things of this world which you are losing.

B.) Death awareness **is learning to focus on the things in this life which will affect you after you die**; to focus your life on the things which help after death. This is the minimum motivation to be a Buddhist.

4.) <u>How to develop death awareness</u> - three steps:

1.) Death is certain. NGEPAR CHIWA certain death

2.) The time of death is uncertain. NAM CHI MA - NGE PA when time death not certain

3.) When you die, nothing helps but Dharma.

CHU	MA TOK	MI PEN	The only thing which you bring with you beyond
Dharma	except for	doesn't help	death is your mind and what's in it. What's in your
			mind is based upon what you thought, did, and
			said.

Three main points and nine sub-points of death awareness:

1.) Death is certain:

- a.) Nothing can stop it when your time comes, you go.
- b.) You can't add time to your life with each breath, you are that much closer to death. Life here is finite. Each activity brings you toward death.
- c.) **You have no time to practice while you are alive**. Even if you choose to practice, the day flies by and you have no time left to practice.

(continued in the next class)

2.) The time of death is uncertain:

d.) **DZAMLING TSE MA - NGE** this world lifespan not certain

Lifespans are not fixed. There is no order to how long people live on this planet. Some die young or old. Bad and good people die, instead of the good living and the bad dying. Death seems random. Also, this eon is one of fluctuating ages (from 80,000 to 10 years). Other planets and eons have fixed, ordered lifespans.

e.) **CHI KYEN MANG SUN KYEN NYUNG** things that can kill you a lot things that keep you alive not a lot

There are a lot of things that can kill you, and not a lot that keep you alive.

Things that can kill you are divided into:

- 1.) **Living -** animals, people, bacteria, etc.
- 2.) **Inanimate** cars and things outside of you, or things inside you (the four elements).

The four elements represent the energy of hardness and solidity, the energy of fluidity and wetness, the energy of heat and burning, and the energy of dissipation. These four elements are at work in your body and are in conflict with each other. Solidity and dissipation fight against each other, as do wetness and heat. Health is when the four elements are in balance - equal amounts present as they fight each other - no one element is less or more present than the others. This is a rare and unnatural occurrence. It's normal that the four elements are fluctuating. Imbalance in various elements lead to certain diseases. Sooner or later one of the elements will win and dominate. This kills you. Your own body's basic constitution is set to kill you eventually. If you live long enough, your own body will kill you. Otherwise you'll get hit by a truck or killed by someone else sooner. In the wheel of life, the lord of death represents the elements of your body, which will kill you ultimately.

CHI KYEN	DU GYUR	Things that keep you alive can turn into
things that can kill you	turn into	things that can kill you.

f.) LU SHINTU NYAM CHUNG

body extremely delicate/fragile

Your body is extremely delicate and easily hurt. A small thorn with dirt can cause an infection and death. The body is fragile like a bubble. You die easily and are very fragile. Life is directed at death; death is the only way that life can end.

3.) When you die, only Dharma can help.

- g.) **Friends and relatives don't help.** They can hang onto you or treat you nicely, but as your system breaks down, you hallucinate and it doesn't help, as you can't recognize anything around you.
- h.) **Material possessions don't help.** Your physical senses are shut down early on in death and you can't perceive external things such as food, money, clothes, etc.
- i.) **Your body doesn't help.** You lose your body, and only your mind is left. Only your mind and its imprints are left. As you die, your mind selects a karma, and that karma becomes activated. That karma expands like an atom bomb, and largely determines your next life.

<u>Three resolutions</u>: (in reaction to the three points of death awareness)

1.) Knowing you must die, **begin to practice Dharma.**

- 2.) Knowing you can die at any time, **quit your worldly work and begin Dharma today.**
- 3.) Knowing nothing else can help, **practice only Dharma**.

NAMDAK see the purity

*** See every event that happens to you as happening to you for the purpose of leading you to enlightenment. See everything as being done by Buddhas to help you reach enlightenment. Think of everything and everyone as holy all the time in every circumstance. ***



Answer Key, Class One

1) Give the name of the principal text we will be using for our study of the realms of existence, along with the name of its author, and his approximate dates. (Tibetan track answer in Tibetan and Sanskrit.)

The principal text for our study of the realms of existence will be the third chapter of the *Treasure House of Higher Knowledge* (Abhidharmakosha) written by Master Vasubandhu about 350 AD.



chu ngunpa dzu

क्षेंच नयें क नहीं मा मा के का

lopun yiknyen

2) Give the name of the principal commentary we will be using, its author, and his dates. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

The principal commentary we will be using is the *Illumination of the Path to Freedom* composed by His Holiness the First Dalai Lama, Gendun Drup, who lived 1391-1474.

พธิ์ราชิ้ฑาฮราณสาสสณาฏิรา

dzutik tarlam selje

कुव्य न न मी वर्त युग

gyalwa gendun drup

- 3) Give the names of the three realms. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)
 - a) Desire realm.

مَجْحَ (معاهم) dukam

b) Form realm.

মার্নাম'নিমমা sukkam

c) Formless realm.



sukme kam

4) Explain how the desire realm can be divided into twenty different parts. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

The division of the desire realm into twenty parts is done as follows:

a) eight hot hells



tsa-nyel gye

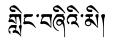
b) craving spirits



c) animals



d) humans of the four continents



lingshiy mi

e) six types of pleasure beings of the desire realm



du-hla druk

5) What quality characterizes the beings and places of the desire realm?

The quality that characterizes the beings and places of the desire realm is that they are all objects with which mental afflictions which are nonvirtues can develop.

6) What is the nature of the "desire" in the expression "desire realm"?

The "desire" in the expression "desire realm" refers to craving aimed at getting sex or food.

7) What qualities characterize the form realm?

The form realm is characterized by (1) the quality of being beyond the desire realm, and (2) consisting of objects which can lead to the development of the particular mental afflictions of this level.

8) Why is the "form realm" called what it is?

The form realm is so called because this is the realm where form reaches its highest expression.

9) Why do the four levels of the form realm consist of seventeen different sections?

The first three levels of the form realm consist of three different sections each, whereas the fourth level of this realm consists of eight different sections. Each of these sections corresponds to a particular stage of causal meditation.

10) Is the level called "Below None" a part of the form realm or not? (Tibetan track also give the name of the level.)

This is a trick question. There are actually two levels with this same name, "Below None (*Okmin*)." One is the highest level of the form realm, and a part of the circle of suffering life. The other one, which has the full name of "the Paradise Below None (*Okmin Tukpo Kupa*)," is a Buddha paradise and beyond the circle of suffering life.



okmin tukpo kupa

11) According to the highest school of Buddhism, what ultimately causes each of the different realms and types of birth?

According to the highest school of Buddhism, the "Consequence" section of the "Middle-Way" school (Madhyamika Prasangika), the realms and each of the kinds of beings in them are—like all other objects—the result of a projection forced upon an otherwise blank screen by our past karma. Thus it is perfectly acceptable to assert that Master Vasubandhu is describing actual life forms and realms that we ourselves could, if the karma demanded it, experience after our death from this present life.

Answer Key, Class Two

1) Explain how the location of the formless realm is determined.

The formless realm has no separate place. The four heaps of a person who is born there (all but the heap of form, which is absent) come into existence at the same place where he or she died from the birth before.

2) What are the names of the four levels of the formless realm, and how does one reach them? (Tibetan track give the names in Tibetan.)

The four levels of the formless realm are called "Limitless Space," "Limitless Awareness," "Simple Nothingness," and the "Peak of Existence." These are four levels of birth that result from meditating, in the previous life, on the levels that are called "Limitless Space," "Limitless Awareness," "Simple Nothingness," and "Neither Conception nor Non-conception."

ধরা প্রায় প্র প্রায় প্র প্রায় প্র namka taye ধুপ্রা:পুর্রা:প্রশ্রন:পার্রা namshe taye रे'यद'सेना chiyang me শ্বীন স্থা si-tse

3) Aside from the total lack of physical matter there, what distinguishes the formless realm from the lower two realms?

What distinguishes the formless realm from the lower two realms is the fact that it consists of objects which can lead to the development of the particular mental afflictions of the formless realm; these are mental afflictions which are relatively much more subtle than those of the lower two realms.

4) Name the five types of birth that a person can take. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a) hellbeings

শ্রুন্স ব

nyelwa

b) craving spirits

ŵ'ন্বনাৰু। yidak

c) animals



d) humans



e) pleasure beings



5) Where in the five types of birth do we include the intermediate beings, and the lesser pleasure beings? (Tibetan track give their names in Tibetan also.)

Intermediate beings are not considered a separate type of birth. Lesser pleasure beings are included among the full pleasure beings.



6) Name the four ways of taking birth. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

The four ways of taking birth are (1) birth from an egg, (2) birth from the womb, (3) birth from warmth and moisture, and (4) instantaneous birth as a complete being.



-

dzute kyewa

7) Which types of birth are considered better than the others?

Complete birth, birth from warmth and moisture, birth from the womb, and birth from an egg are each a better type than the next. This is because the first hurts no one; the second hurts no one else; the third hurts [another once and then] yourself once; and the second hurts [another once and then] yourself twice. 8) Which kinds of beings are said to be (a) aware of what they are doing as they enter the womb; (b) aware both while entering and staying; (c) aware while entering, staying, and issuing; and (d) aware at none of these points?

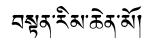
(a) Wheel-empowered emperors are said to be aware of what they are doing as they enter the womb; (b) self-made victors are aware of both entering and staying; (c) Buddhas are aware of entering, staying, and issuing; and (d) those who are born from eggs are always ignorant at all three points.



Answer Key, Class Three

1) Name the text that we are using for our study of the lives of craving spirits and animals. Who wrote it, and what are his approximate dates? What famous book was based on this text? (Tibetan track answer in Tibetan.)

The text we are using for our study of the lives of craving spirits and animals is the *Great Book on the Steps of the Teaching*, composed by the Kadampa Geshe Drolungpa, also known as Lodru Jungne. He lived during the last half of the 11th Century and the first half of the 12th. His text served as a basis for the *Great Book on the Steps of the Path* by Je Tsongkapa.



tenrim chenmo



kadampa geshe drolungpa, lodru jungne



lamrim chenmo

2) Name the one general cause, and then the three specific causes that can lead us to a birth as a craving spirit. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a) The one general cause is performing the ten bad deeds to a medium degree of seriousness.

mige chupo dringche

b) The first specific cause for birth as a craving spirit is a failure to perform the three kinds of giving. The three kinds of giving are giving material things, giving freedom from fear, and giving the Dharma.



c) A second specific cause is possessiveness or cheapness.



d) A third specific cause is jealousy.

ধ্ৰন্য:র্ন্য trakdok 3) Describe the three basic kinds of sufferings that craving spirits can have. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

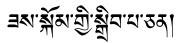
a) The first type are those with outer obstacles that block them from partaking of what they crave. Those who are tormented by thirst, for example, catch sight of water and run towards it, but are either driven back by cruel beings, or else see the water as disgusting pus and blood when they reach it.

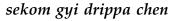


b) The second type of craving spirits are those with inner obstacles to partaking of what they crave. They have mouths the size of needles, spouting flames. Their throats are as thin as strings and their bellies are huge, and they can never be satisfied.

nang gi drippa chen

c) The third type are those with obstacles to what they can eat or drink. Whatever they eat or drink, instead of satisfying them, burns them, or leaves them unfilled.





- 4) Name one general cause, and then two specific causes, for birth as an animal.
 - a) A general cause for birth as an animal is performing the ten bad deeds to a less serious extent.
 - b) The first more specific cause would be breaking minor rules of morality on a regular basis.
 - c) The second more specific cause would be committing a great number of wrong deeds such as failing to respect those who are worthy of respect.

5) Describe some of the sufferings that animals must undergo.

Animals are in constant fear for their life; they suffer from being captured, experimented upon, tortured, skinned, and eaten.



Answer Key, Class Four

1) Give the name, and the author and his dates, for the commentary we will use for our study of the suffering of humans. Then give the name, and the author and his dates, for the root text that this author is commenting upon. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a) Commentary: The commentary we will study is The Chest of Riches of Ngulchu Dharma Bhadra (1772-1851).



ngulchu dharma bhadra

b) *Root text:* The root text is *The Path of Ease*, written by His Holiness the First Panchen Lama, Lobsang Chukyi Gyeltsen (1567?-1662).

ন্দ্র-আমা

delam

นุระธิสุรัฐานสะเธิ้มเฏิเญณามธ์สุ

penchen lobsang chu kyi gyeltsen

2) Name and describe the six kinds of suffering that we must undergo. (Tibetan track name in Tibetan and describe in English.)

a) The first suffering is the fact that life has no certainty: because the events of our life are determined by our past karma and our mental afflictions, there is no certainty that your friend will not become your enemy, or your father your son, or any other possibility.

देश्रायासेन्या пдера тера

b) The second suffering is that we can never find any sense of satisfaction. No matter how much we get of something, we cannot feel any contentment. In fact, the normal reaction to pleasure is that—rather than satisfying us—it creates a desire for even more of the object, thus giving us more pain.



ngom mi-shepa

c) The third suffering is the fact that we have to shed our bodies, over and over again. The point is that, "regardless of all the bad deeds we might accumulate in order to maintain this body we have now, it is an absolute certainty that—in the end—we will be forced to shed it. The power of the wrong deeds we did for the sake of the body though we carry along in our mind, and they bring to us the eventual result of unbearable pain."

พราพราญสาตร์ราญ

yang yang lu dorwa

d) The fourth suffering is the fact that we have to take birth, over and over again. If we tried to count our past lives by using pinches of dirt to represent each one, this planet itself would be used up before we finished.

yang yang nyingtsam jorwa

e) The fifth suffering is the fact that we have to go from a high position to a low position, over and over again. "The point here is that any good thing that ever happens here in the circle of suffering life eventually turns into some kind of problem."

พราพราพฮ์ราสสาราจฏราวๆ

yang yang tomen du gyurwa

f) The sixth suffering is the fact that we have no companion. We not only lose our other friends, but even the body which is our most intimate companion. "We tend to collect a great variety of different bad deeds for the sake of our friends. But when the time comes to experience the consequences of these actions, none of these same friends can participate in our pain at all. And in those situations where we try to practice some Dharma, these friends tend to hold us back. So what use are they, anyway?"

drok mepa

Answer Key, Class Five

1) Explain the meaning of the word "bardo."

The word "bardo" means "inbetween," since it refers to the state between death and rebirth.



bardo

2) Describe the example of seeds for crops of grain, used to explain why intermediate beings must logically exist.

Chim Jampey Yang explains that a plant cannot come directly from a seed: there must be the intermediary of a sprout. Just so, the being at rebirth in one location cannot come directly from the being at death in another location; there must be the intermediary of a bardo being, who travels between.

3) The existence of intermediate beings is also proven by statements of the Buddha. Describe the three conditions under which, according to the Buddha, a child will form in the mother's womb. (Tibetan track answer in Tibetan.)

a) There is the presence of a being who is suitable to be a mother, and who is still menstruating.



ma rung da-tsen dang denpa

b) There is a feeling of desire, and then sexual contact, between the prospective parents.



pa ma chak shing trepa

c) There is the proximity of "one of the beings who lives on smells"; that is, an intermediate being.

วั := छे जर जात्र रा

drisa nyewar nepa

4) What determines the appearance that an intermediate being's body will take?

The appearance of an intermediate resembles that of the "being before," which refers to the life that the person is about to take, meaning before one's next death but after one's next birth.

5) Who can see an intermediate being?

Intermediate beings of the same type can see each other; you can also see one with the meditative eye called the "eye of a god."

6) Describe the special powers that intermediate beings enjoy.

As the First Dalai Lama notes, "Intermediate beings have a capability to perform miraculous feats that comes through the power of deeds. They can fly through the sky, and display a special strength, or capacity to travel at extraordinary speeds. [Continued in next note.]

All their powers, those of the eye and the rest, are complete—and they have the ability to pass through mountains and so forth without being stopped."

7) Is it possible to be diverted to another type of birth after one has already taken form as an intermediate being headed for a particular type of rebirth?

The First Dalai Lama notes, "You are never diverted to another birth: the energy of one's past deeds that is throwing forth the intermediate being headed for the hells is the same energy that will project the being "before"—that is, the hell being itself.

One can however reach the state of an intermediate being headed for the level known as "Class of the Pure" and still not have to take birth there: cases where one achieves nirvana between death and rebirth, as just such a being, do exist." 8) How does an intermediate being enter the state of a human womb birth?

If the person is to be born a human, he or she sees their parents from a distance, having sex together. Because of a mistaken impression, and imagining that they can play and enjoy themself, they pass to their destination within the womb, lodged in the midst of the mother's abdomen and entrails.

Answer Key, Class Six

1) Name the four different kinds of sustenance, and give examples of each. (Tibetan track name the four in Tibetan, and explain in English.)

a) Solid food, such as the food we eat.



b) Stained contact, such as contact of the object, sense power, and consciousness that involve an experience of pleasure.



c) Stained movement of the mind, such as that consisting of hope that one is about to be fed when close to starvation.



sakche kyi sempa

d) Stained consciousness, such as the consciousness linked with the contact involved in an experience of pleasure.

ৰনা'নতথ'শ্ৰী' ৰথা প্ৰথা

sakche kyi namshe

2) What is the function of these types of sustenance?

They function to perpetuate this suffering life. As sutra states, "The four types of sustenance are the very root of sickness, cancer, agony. They help bring about old age and death."

3) Describe the very first stage in the formation of the world.

The foundation that lies below this world first consisted of nothing but empty space. Then began a portent of the formation of a new world: a gentle force of wind, swirling about itself over a period of very many years. Eventually it turned into a great disk of wind, so fierce and solid that even a massive diamond could never crack it.

4) Describe briefly the nine major mountains of the world.

In the center is Mount Meru, surrounded by seven concentric ranges of mountains. On the very edge of the world is the Encircling range.

5) Describe briefly the three oceans of the world.

The three oceans of the world consist of the seven seas of sport (between the concentric golden mountains around Mount Meru) and the great outer ocean, between the last of the concentric mountains and the iron mountain range known as "Encircling." The innermost of the seas of sport is called the "Inner Ocean."

Answer Key, Class Seven

1) Name and describe the eight hot hells. (Tibetan track name in Tibetan, describe in English.)

a) "Revive." So called because the beings living here strike each other with various weapons until they all lie still as death. Then a voice comes from the sky, commanding them to "Revive!" This makes them rise and start all over again.

অন্যন্মর্মিমা yangsu

b) "Lines of Black." In this hell, the hellguards first cover beings' bodies with black lines and then use various kinds of blades to slice them open along these lines.

'ইমা'ৰ্যা tiknak

c) "Gather and Smash." The hellguards gather the beings here together and smash them to a pulp.



d) "Screaming." This hell is named from the shrieks of pain by the beings there, seared by heat.

5ुःवर्चेना

ngumbu

e) "Great Screaming Hell." The heat that burns those living there is much greater, their screams of pain more horrible too.

f) "Heat." This hell is named from the fact that its inhabitants burn stuffed in red-hot iron chambers.

ל אי

tsawa

g) "Superheat." The beings here roast in an even more unbearable heat, jammed in ceramic chambers of single or double walls.

<u>মন'দ</u>়'র্ক'ন|

rabtu tsawa

h) "No Respite." The hell is known as "No Respite" because the beings living there experience unlimited sufferings without the slightest interruption.

narme

2) Name and describe briefly three additional kinds of hells. (Tibetan track name in Tibetan and describe in English.)

a) The four adjacent hells, which are situated around the eight hot hells, and are known by the names of Embers, Corpse Rot, Razor Road, and the Uncrossable River.

के वर्षित्र पवे नुसुवा म मले।

nyekorway nyelwa shi

b) The eight cold hells. You are naked, with cold, icy winds blowing. The suffering from the cold gets progressively worse in each of the cold hells, and your body blisters, cracks and breaks open from the cold in different ways.

শ্রন:নুস্থান্মন্রা drang-nyel gye

c) The partial hells are located near the hot and cold hells, and also in particularly terrible locations in the lands of humans. They are places of great suffering which are less horrible than the full hell realms, and which you experience as a hell realm being.

<u>ଌୖ</u>ୖୄ୶ୖୖୖ୷୕୳ୖୖୖୡ୕ୄ୵ୣୠ୲ୠ୲୷

nyi-tseway nyelwa

3) Explain how karma ripens into a hell birth, and why this makes it very possible for people like us to be born into a hell.

Karma ripens as a perception of the mind. When one passes into a hell bardo and then into a hell rebirth, it is all actually a shifting of the perceptions, projected onto an otherwise blank object. It may seem difficult to pass to a far-off land called the "hells," but it is easy to think of a shift of the perceptions forced upon one by unkind deeds.

Answer Key, Class Eight

1) Name the four different kinds of kalpas (eons). (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a) The eon of destruction

वहेमा'यवे'नङ्गवा'य jikpay kelpa

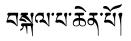
b) The eon of formation



c) The eon of continuation



d) The great eon



kelpa chenpo

2) Describe the events that open and close the eon of destruction. (Tibetan track in Tibetan, from the root text.)

The eon of destruction starts from the point when there are no more beings taking birth into the hell called "No Respite." It lasts up to the point that the outer world has come to its end.

าระสานริวารูณนารุญณาราพิ เมิรานามิราสุฆาฐัราสราม

jikpay kelpa nyelwa yi sipa me ne nu sepa

3) The physical world can be destroyed by fire, water, or wind. Describe how the world ends when it is destroyed by fire.

Nineteen intermediate eons after the opening of the eon of destruction, the great pleasure beings begin to stop sending rain at its proper time; all the vegetation and forests of Dzambu Continent dry up and die. After an extremely long period of time, a second sun rises in the sky, creating tremendous heat. All the lesser bodies of water and small ponds turn dry. This leads to the rising of a third sun, which causes all the streams and rivers to evaporate. A fourth sun rises, and even the huge Lake Neverwarm disappears. Then comes the fifth sun, drying the Great Outer Sea as well. With the rising of a sixth sun, the four continents and Mount Supreme dissolve in a cloud of smoke.

Finally a seventh sun comes up, engulfing the world in a single flame, destroying it in fire. This fire then triggers a parallel fire in the first concentration level. The mansions of this first level, empty of inhabitants by this time, are burned completely. It is not actually the fire in the desire realm that burns down the mansions here, for they are separate levels. All this requires another intermediate eon, so that the eon of destruction requires twenty intermediate eons.

4) Describe the events that open and close the eon of formation. (Tibetan track in Tibetan, from the root text.)

An eon of formation begins from the rising of the first gentle wind on up to the birth of a single living being within the hell of No Respite.

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chakpa dangpoy lung ne ni nyelway sipay barduo

5) The eon of continuation continues for twenty intermediate eons. Describe the length of an intermediate eon.

One intermediate eon consists of the period during which average lifespans drop from an "inestimable" number of years down to when the spans of life are only ten years. There are eighteen other intermediate eons after that, each consisting of an increase in lifespans up to eighty thousand years followed by a decrease back to ten. Last of all is one intermediate eon which is another increase alone. How far is the increase? Up until they're eighty thousand long.

6) Describe the length of a great eon.

Thus we can say that the process of the world's formation goes on for twenty intermediate eons. This formation of the world, then its destruction, and the state that follows this destruction are all equal in duration: each lasts for twenty intermediate eons. As for the fourth and final type of eon—one great eon is made of eighty of these intermediate eons.

7) What is the length of time that a person must accumulate the collections of merit and wisdom to become a Buddha? (Tibetan track in Tibetan, from the root text.)

A Buddha occurs from the act of accumulating merit and wisdom for a period of three "countless" numbers of these great eons. "Countless" refers to the number 10 followed by 59 zeroes.

de drangme sum la sanggye

8) Describe the periods during which Buddhas appear in the world.

Buddhas never appear while the average lifespan is rising, for during this period beings feel less disgust with the circle of life. Rather, they come during the time that starts from the drop of lifespans from eighty thousand years, and which continues as they go down, until a hundred years is reached. Buddhas do not appear subsequent to this period, as lifespans are decreasing even further. Since the five degenerations have spread fairly widely by this time, beings then are not fit vessels to receive the teachings. COURSE VIII Death and the Realms of Existence

Answer Key, Class Nine

1) Name the four steps in the contemplation of death. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a) Considering the problems of not meditating on death.

ฉ฿⁻นารสานาสาร์ส์สสานนิวิษีสารสิญสา

chiwa drenpa magompay nyemik

b) Considering the benefits of meditating on death.

chiwa drenpa gompay penyun

c) Identifying just what kind of death awareness we seek to develop.

ૡૹ૾૾ૻઌૻઽ૱ૻૡૡ૽૾૽૽ૢૼ૽ૺૼ૿૽ૼૡૢૻૻૡૢૻ૽ૡ૾૿ઌ<u>ૻ</u>ઌ૽૾ૢૢ૽ૼૢૺૻૻૻ

chiwa drenpay lo jitar shik kyepa

d) How to meditate and develop this awareness of death.

ฉลิ^เจารุส^เนเจลิ์ส^เนเจะส์ุณ

chiwa drenpa gompay tsul

2) Describe the awareness of death which is not the one which we seek to develop through meditation.

"There is a kind of terror that a person can feel when he or she fears that they are about to be torn away from their loved ones and such. This fear stems from a very strong attachment for those around you, and is the natural fear of a person who has never attempted any kind of practice of the path. As such, it is *not* the awareness of death that we are talking about having to develop here."

3) Describe the awareness of death which is the one which we seek to develop through meditation.

"There is not a single being who has taken on a body like ours—one created by the force of our past deeds and mental afflictions—who is exempt from the absolute certainty of death. It is true that, in the short run, trying to develop some fear about this fact might not enable you to stop it. Nonetheless you really must try to develop some fear that you might die before you have been able to achieve your goals for your future life: that you might die before you have managed to put an end to anything that might cause you to be born in one of the lower realms, or before you have achieved all those things that would lead you to the higher realms, and to ultimate good."

"If you had this kind of fear, over these kinds of things, then it would help you to do something about them, and at the moment of death itself you would have no reason to be afraid. If on the other hand you find yourself unable to achieve these goals, then when death comes you will be tormented by regret, of two different kinds. In a general sense, you will realize that you were unable to free yourself from the circle of suffering life. More specifically, you will begin to feel sheer terror over the possibility of having to drop into the realms of misery."

- 4) Name the three principles for meditating on death. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)
 - a) Contemplating how it is certain that we will die.

รีฆ.สร.ชช.ยร.ยพฆ.สโ

ngepar chiwar sampa

b) Contemplating how there is no certainty when we will die.

สมารสิวริมามิรุวรมมายๆ

c) Contemplating how, when we do die, nothing but the Dharma can be of any help to us.

chiway tse chu matok gang gi kyang mipenpar sampa

- 5) Describe the three reasons for the certainty of death.
 - a) The Lord of Death must certainly arrive and, when he does, nothing at all can stop him.
 - b) It is impossible to add any time onto your life, and it continually leaks away, without a pause.
 - c) It is that you will die without having had any time to practice the Dharma, even while you were alive.

namchi ngeme sampa

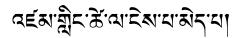


COURSE VIII Death and the Realms of Existence

Answer Key, Class Ten

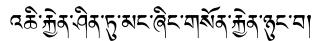
1) Name the three reasons behind the second principle of death meditation: contemplating that there is no certainty when we will die. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a) Here on the continent of Dzambu, lifetimes are anything but fixed.



dzamling tse la ngepa mepa

b) The things that can kill you are very, very many; whereas the things that can keep you alive are very few.



chikyen shintu mang shing sunkyen nyungwa

c) Our bodies are extremely fragile.

સુશ્વ. વૈત્ર. દે. છે શા જેટ. ચો

lu shintu nyam chungwa

2) Name the three reasons behind the third principle of death meditation: contemplating that, when you do die, nothing but the Dharma can be of the least help to you. (Tibetan track in Tibetan.)

a) When you do die, there is not a single one of your friends or relatives that you can take along with you.

ุ่มหิสานผิพายุจยาญราผสิราพาพิรายุ

nyenshe chik kyang trisa mepa

b) When you die, you cannot carry along with you a single molecule of any material wealth you have. No object or posseson will benefit you in any way at death.

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nor gyi dultren kyerdu mepa

c) When you die, you must give up even the flesh and bone that are part of your very being. You body will not help you in any way at death.

५.रेश्राग्रेर.पर्ट्र.यो

sha ru kyang dorwa

3) State the three resolutions that we should make after understanding the nine reasons for the three principles.

- a) Knowing that we shall have to die, we must resolve to begin our practice.
- b) Knowing that we could die any time, we must quit our worldly work immediately and start our practice today.
- c) And finally, since nothing else can help us, we must devote ourselves to our practice only. A man who is hiking many miles doesn't fill up his pack with a lot of junk that he won't be needing.



COURSE VIII Death and the Realms of Existence

Tibetan Language Study Guide

Class One

ส์สามรัสานามยัง

chu ngunpa dzu

lopun yiknyen

พธีรรัฐทายราณพากุลณาฏิรา

dzutik tarlam selje

कुव्य न न मी वर्त युग

gyalwa gendun drup

पर्नेन् मिरुम्हा

dukam

মার্রমাঝ'দেরাঝা

sukkam

নার্নাঝ'র্মান্যমার্মা

sukme kam



tsa-nyel gye



yidak



dundro

สิราวดิวิ:พิ

lingshiy mi





okmin



okmin tukpo kupa

Class Two

ধপ্রামাদর প্রায়ত থেম্বা

namka taye



namshe taye



chiyang me



si-tse



nyelwa

ঐ'ব্বশৃষ্ণ

yidak



dundro

মা

mi

द्भ

hla



bardowa



hlamayin



gongkye





drusher le kyewa



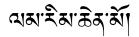
Class Three

न्द्रुदःर्रेषःकेदःर्वेष

tenrim chenmo

รฑจาสารมพายารสิเราจิพาส์เญรายา ส์เส์พาจธูราสุม

kadampa geshe drolungpa, lodru jungne



lamrim chenmo

มีเรติเจริเรีเรสีระฐรา

mige chupo dringche

श्रुेत'य'दयायाश्रुय'या युत्र'या

jinpa nam sum ma-jinpa

ละ ลิะ ฑิ ฐิส ะ เ

sangsing gi jinpa



minjikpay jinpa



chu kyi jinpa



serna





chiy drippa chen

नद्र मी क्षेत्र य उन्न

nang gi drippa chen

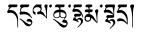
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sekom gyi drippa chen

Class Four

ริส.ซิส.ปะเพรีโ

rinchen bangdzu



ngulchu dharma bhadra

न्दी' आस्रा

delam

นุราธิสาลีเนาสะาธิสามิเขาสายสา

penchen lobsang chu kyi gyeltsen

देश्रायासेन्या

ngepa mepa

र्देसासी लेखाया

ngom mi-shepa

שבישביתואיתלדיהן

yang yang lu dorwa

พราพราชิรามส์มมาผู้ราว

yang yang nyingtsam jorwa

พร.พร.พฐ.เวพร.วี.ชพิว.ป

yang yang tomen du gyurwa

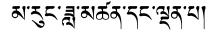
র্ম্মামামান্যমা

drok mepa

Class Five

ন্ম:র্না

bardo



ma rung da-tsen dang denpa

pa ma chak shing trepa

drisa nyewar nepa

Class Six

kam gyi se

র্বা'নতর্ষাশ্রী'র্নবা'শা

sakche kyi rekpa

สղารองญัญ เงิมงาน

sakche kyi sempa

ৰনা'নতথ'শ্ৰী' ৰথা প্ৰথা

sakche kyi namshe

ষর্ম মিশ্

narme

Class Seven

অন্যন্থ্যুজ্যা

yangsu

ইন্য'র্ব্য

tiknak





ngumbu



ngumbu chenpo



tsawa

শ্ব:দ্র্র্ট্রাবা

rabtu tsawa

के वर्षित्र नवे नुसुवान नवी

nyekorway nyelwa shi

drang-nyel gye

<u>ୖ</u>ୖୠୖ:ୖୖୖୖୖୖୖୖୖ୕ : ସସିଂମ୍ୟୁଦ୍ୟ:ସ୍ୱା

nyi-tseway nyelwa

Class Eight

ลุธุญานลิ.ปรีขานไ

jikpay kelpa

तक्रम्ब्रायः पद्भेतः प

chakpay kelpa

ปลุ่งเก่น.นพี่เก่ม

nepay kelpa

नङ्गलायाकेदार्ये

kelpa chenpo

าละิญานลิวารูการารุญณาราพิ ાર્ચ્<u>ચ</u>ેર'ય'એર'ત્રચ્ચ'ર્સ્ટ્રેર'⊒ર'ય|

jikpay kelpa nyelwa yi sipa me ne nu sepa

पिकम्बार्थायान्दः रेविः सूदः दुरुषः दी

chakpa dangpoy lung ne ni nyelway sipay barduo

de drangme sum la sanggye

Class Nine

ฉ฿๊า เวรสานา มา เวลู์ ม มานา นิ ซิ มารมิ มามา

chiwa drenpa magompay nyemik

<u> ୧</u>ୖଈ୕୳୵ଽ୶୳୳୳ୠୖୄୄଈ୶୳୳ୖୖୖ୳୳୶୲ୖୖ୴୶୲

chiwa drenpa gompay penyun

chiwa drenpay lo jitar shik kyepa

<u> ୧</u>ୖଈ୕୳୷ୣଽ୶୳୷୳ୢୖୢଈୄୖୄଈ୷୳ୡୖୄ୷ୠୄ

chiwa drenpa gompay tsul

ngepar chiwar sampa

สมารธิ์ ริมามิรารมมาย

namchi ngeme sampa

chiway tse chu matok gang gi kyang mipenpar sampa

Class Ten

ุลยุฆ. นี่มามี่ระชุเนารูมาเม

dzamling tse la ngepa mepa

२कै'र्ग्रेब'पैब'तृ'य< खेर'याओं ब'र्ग्रेब'र्ग्रुद'य।

chikyen shintu mang shing sunkyen nyungwa

lu shintu nyam chungwa

ุ่มหิสานผิพายุจิยาญราผสิราพาพิราย

nyenshe chik kyang trisa mepa

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nor gyi dultren kyerdu mepa

. १.रु.श.गुर. २र्देर.य

sha ru kyang dorwa



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THIS COURSE USES A 1 INCH BINDER





COURSE

B OF EXISTENCE

Level 2 of Higher Knowledge (Abhidharma)

