
Shantideva's Bodhisattvacharyavatara

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Commentary by the Venerable Geshe Doga

Translated by the Venerable Michael Lobsang Yeshe

20 September 2016

Based on the motivation we generated during the refuge and bodhicitta prayers, we can now engage in our regular meditation practice. *[meditation]*

Generate the motivation for receiving the teachings along these lines: For the sake of all other mother sentient beings I need to achieve enlightenment. So for that purpose I will engage in the practice of listening to the Mahayana teachings and then put them into practice well.

Generating such a motivation, even for a few moments, will definitely establish very strong positive imprints in our mind.

2.1.2.2.3.2.2. *Showing that meditating on the wisdom realising emptiness can overcome the afflictions and their imprints*

2.1.2.2.3.2.2.2. **Specific presentation (cont.)**

There are two verses under this heading, the first of which was covered last time. The second reads:

34. *When objects and non-objects
Do not linger before one's awareness,
And since there is no other possibility,
They are totally pacified in non-existence.*

The commentary explains:

Thus, when no truly existent functionality or non-functionality lingers before one's awareness, and as there is no other aspect of true existence at this time, one realises that all objects of true-grasping are non-existent and then all elaborations become pacified. In the perception of a person who realises emptiness directly, all dualistic elaborations with regards to emptiness are pacified and although the realisation of emptiness, conceptually or with a meaning generality has not stopped dualistic appearance, it has stopped the elaborations of true existence with regards to the meaning it ascertains. This verse and the lower five verses elaborately show the reality of the result.

The explanation starts with *when no truly existent functionality or non-functionality lingers before one's awareness*. Here functionality refers to the category of compounded phenomena, impermanence and so forth, while non-functionality refers to permanent phenomena such as non-obstructing space.

This section of the text shows the absurdity of the **Mind Only** presentation in that if things were to exist truly, as the Mind Only say they do, then they would have to exist either as functional phenomena or non-functional phenomena. These are the only two possibilities - functional or non-functional. Here functional and non-functional can also be related to the basis of imputation and the emptiness of that base, or in other words, conventional illusory phenomena or ultimate

phenomena. If something exists it has to exist in one of these two categories.

When the commentary refers to *no truly existent functionality or non-functionality* lingering before one's awareness, it is saying that if true existence were established it would have to be established either as a functionality or a non-functionality. And since true existence doesn't appear before the awareness in either in these two ways, there is no other aspect of true existence that it could be. This leaves no other possibility for it to exist, as it does not appear to the valid awareness in any other way.

One realises that all objects of true-grasping are non-existent and then all elaborations are pacified in the perception of a person who realises emptiness directly. If truly existent phenomena were to exist then they would have to appear either as functional phenomena or non-functional phenomena; or as the basis of imputation, or the emptiness of that base. When one realises that it does not appear in any of these ways, then one sees that the object of true grasping is non-existent. What is being explained here is that grasping at true existence is a mistaken conception. Whatever appears to the mind that grasps at true existence does not actually exist in the way that it appears, because it is a mistaken conception.

When one realises that, then that is the dawning of the realisation of emptiness. As the commentary mentions, *all elaborations are then pacified in the perception of a person who realises emptiness directly.* When one realises that all objects of true-grasping are non-existent, then all elaborations are pacified.

This is a very significant point. When the objects of true grasping are seen as non-existent, then, as mentioned earlier, all the elaborations are pacified. There's this statement in the teachings which says 'the non-seeing is the ultimate seeing'. This is the same point being made here. When one realises that the apprehended object of true grasping doesn't exist, then one sees emptiness.

Further on the commentary states, *in the perception of a person who realises emptiness directly, all dualistic elaborations with regard to emptiness are pacified.* We had a lot of discussion earlier about how all dualistic appearances are pacified for a being who is in meditative equipoise realising emptiness directly. For such a being there's no dualistic appearance whatsoever – such as conventional appearance, or the appearance of the subject and object as being distinct, or true existence. So the three types of dualistic appearances have completely subsided.

Furthermore, *although the realisation of emptiness, conceptually or with a meaning generality, has not stopped dualistic appearance, it has stopped the elaborations of true existence with regard to the meaning it ascertains.* As opposed to the direct perception of emptiness, when one gains a conceptual understanding of emptiness, or the realization of emptiness with a meaning generality, although the true existence of objects is not perceived it has stopped the elaborations of true existence with regard to the meaning it ascertains, there's still the perception of the object and subject as being distinct. That is because emptiness is not yet perceived directly but rather through

a generic image. Thus, the dualistic appearance of subject and object being distinct is still present.

When the commentary mentions the *elaborations of true existence with regard to the meaning it ascertains*, it means that although all dualistic appearances have not subsided, the appearance of true existence in relation to the particular object that it is seeing subsides.

To explain how a conceptual mind perceives objects, think of how, when we see the colour blue with our eye consciousness, there's nothing that obstructs us from seeing the colour blue. We see it nakedly – blue - as it is, without any obstruction. When we close our eyes however and bring up the image of blue in our mind, we see the colour blue but not directly, we are rather see or perceive it through a generic image – or meaning generality. So we're not seeing blue directly. This is the difference between direct perception and perceiving an object conceptually.

What is being presented here in summary is the stages of ascertaining the ultimate reality of phenomena up to the point of directly realising emptiness. That process of gaining the realisation of emptiness directly is a gradual one where one first obtains the conceptual understanding of emptiness. With a conceptual understanding of emptiness, one ascertains a vivid and clear understanding of what emptiness is, but there is still something that obstructs one from seeing it directly. One is able to see emptiness only through the generic image and not directly. Therefore one has to meditate further to familiarise oneself with the meditation of realising emptiness. When one further develops that then eventually one obtains the actual direct perception of emptiness.

If we take someone who enters the Mahayana path from the very beginning, (i.e. not having entered either of the two lower vehicles' paths), then on the first two paths, the **path of accumulation** and the **path of preparation** the bodhisattva has only a conceptual understanding of emptiness, and has not yet developed the direct realisation of emptiness.

Whenever a bodhisattva obtains **calm abiding focussing on emptiness**, then they have reached the **path of accumulation**.

When that bodhisattva, on further meditating on emptiness, develops the **special insight on emptiness**, then they reach the **path of preparation**.

The bodhisattvas on these paths still only have a conceptual understanding of emptiness. When that conceptual understanding which perceives emptiness through a generic image or meaning generality is further developed, and becomes a **union of calm abiding and special insight directly perceiving emptiness**, the bodhisattva then has obtained the **path of seeing**.

It is said that one with a definite lineage and sharp faculty who has not entered the Mahayana path yet, and who is inclined to become a bodhisattva, first obtains the realisation of emptiness and then develops bodhicitta. But one of duller faculty will generate bodhicitta first and then gain the realisation of emptiness. Those with sharp faculty who have not entered the path first ascertain as to whether enlightenment is possible or not, whether

liberation is possible or not, and whether it is possible to overcome the delusions or not. And then only by seeing and ascertaining that it is possible, and working towards achieving that, they develop bodhicitta because they realise that it is possible to overcome all delusions and thus see the possibilities of attaining enlightenment.

The older students will recall that this was explained in detail when we covered the Madhyamaka teachings.¹ Whenever this topic comes up in any teaching then one has to be able to relate it to this understanding. If we start to think that there's possibly a different explanation, then one has missed the point.

Gyaltsab Je then mentions:

A Red One from Toelung argues: On the basis of thinking that the meaning of this commentary, and of the abbot of the two truths, is that at the time of the manifesting of the mode of abiding, no object of knowledge or consciousness exists: 'I do not know consciousness without an object of knowledge and prime cognition without an object of comprehension. I accept the lack of true existence to exist truly.'

Gyaltsab Je further mentions:

Gyaltsab Je: It is very clear that they do not understand the position of the great pioneer², while oneself is under the influence of a mere personal investigation, to be conceited with the presumption that one has realised the meaning of the middle way is a great mistake.

2.1.2.2.3.2.2.3. Showing that one will receive the perfect complete result of abandonment

This is subdivided into two:

2.1.2.2.3.2.2.3.1. Showing with example that although there are no conceptual thoughts the hopes of the disciples will be fulfilled

2.1.2.2.3.2.2.3.2. Refuting arguments with regard to this

This is a very meticulous presentation of an argument questioning how the Buddha could benefit sentient beings if there are no conceptual thoughts.

2.1.2.2.3.2.2.3.1. Showing with example that although there are no conceptual thoughts the hopes of the disciples will be fulfilled

What is presented first here is this carefully constructed argument:

Argument: If buddhas have pacified all conceptual consciousnesses, then they also do not think, 'I shall show the Dharma to those to be subdued' and therefore it is invalid to say they fulfil the purpose of sentient beings by showing the Dharma and through other actions or enlightened activities.

The first verse under this heading serves as an answer:

35. *Like the wish-fulfilling jewel and wish-granting tree
Fulfil hopes
Similarly, through the power of prayer
The body of the conqueror appears to disciples.*

The answer in the commentary reads:

Answer: There is no fault. Although they have no conceptual thoughts, the wish-fulfilling jewel grants

¹ See the teaching of 15 October 2002 for example.

² Nagarjuna.

humans their wishes and wish-granting trees fulfil the hopes of gods when supplicated.

Similarly, the conquerors appear to those to be subdued through the power of their accumulated merit to meet them. Although the buddhas do not have conceptual thoughts, their form bodies appear and teach the Dharma through the power of previous prayers such as, 'May I be able to fulfil the purpose of sentient beings effortlessly and simultaneously.'

To establish the example, the commentary responds to the opening argument saying *there is no fault*. The example is *the wish-fulfilling jewel*, which has *no conceptual thoughts*. A wish-fulfilling jewel is a mythological jewel, representing the most precious and supreme object that humans could possess. When humans supplicate this wish-fulfilling jewel, all their wishes will be fulfilled. Likewise, for the gods a wish-fulfilling tree is the most precious object they can possess because when the gods make supplications to the wish-fulfilling tree, all of their wishes are fulfilled. Both the wish-fulfilling jewel and the wish-fulfilling tree are devoid of a consciousness, so of course they don't have any conceptual thoughts. The specific meaning of this is that it is not as if they have an intentional thought of wishing to benefit humans or gods, but nevertheless they do fulfil the wishes of the humans and gods.

To explain the meaning of the analogy the commentary states, *similarly, the conquerors appear to those to be subdued through the power of their accumulated merit to meet the conquerors*. This is a very, very significant point in relation to our personal conditions right now. What is being illustrated here is that due to the aspirational prayers of the buddhas and the merit of the sentient beings, sentient beings are benefitted by the conquerors. When we relate that to our own situation and our own conditions, we can see that meeting with perfect Mahayana teachers is due to the teachers' aspirational prayers, as well as our own merit. So we need to consider ourselves as extremely fortunate to have met these good conditions right now.

Although buddhas do not have conceptual thoughts, their form bodies appear and teach the Dharma through the power of previous prayers such as, 'May I be able to fulfil the purpose of sentient beings effortlessly and simultaneously.' The resultant state of buddhahood is a result of the practices and unimaginably extensive aspirational prayers that have been made by bodhisattvas while engaging on the path. This also shows us the importance of the power of the aspirational prayers, which we really need to acknowledge.

At this point the Tibetan version of the commentary then states, *the conquerors appear to those to be subdued through the power of their accumulated merit to meet them*. It is not really clear in the translation, but through the combination of the previous aspirational prayers of the bodhisattvas, the buddhas enacting those aspirational prayers, and due to the merit accumulated by the disciples, they are benefitted through the actions of teaching and so forth.

Having presented this explanation a counter argument is then presented:

Argument: Because a long time has passed since these prayers were made they cannot generate a result in

the present, and as the ones praying were bodhisattvas, it is invalid to posit the enlightened activities of the conquerors as their result.

This is again a very clever argument. Since the aspirational prayers were made by bodhisattvas on the path, they must have been made a long, long time ago. So how could those aspirational prayers made such a long time ago have taken effect now in the aspect of the buddhas' deeds?

We can see that the arguments being presented here are not really all that different to the questions and doubts that we normally have.

The next two verses serve as an answer:

36. *For example, although having passed
After having established an offering tree to the
garuda,
And though a long time has passed since then,
Poisons and so forth will be pacified.*
37. *Having established an offering tree to the
conquerors
In accordance with the bodhisattva practices,
Although the bodhisattva has gone beyond
misery,
They fulfil all purposes.*

The commentary explains:

Answer: There is no fault. For example, the Brahmin may have passed upon having established an offering tree to the poison pacifying garuda, and although a long time has since passed, the offering tree can even now still pacify poisons. Similarly, the bodhisattvas have established an offering tree to the conquerors by way of building up the two accumulations in accordance with the bodhisattva practices, and although the bodhisattvas have manifested the non-abiding nirvana, this does not contradict them fulfilling all the temporary and ultimate purposes of sentient beings. This debate arises from not knowing placement through continuity.

The commentary begins the explanation with the statement: *there is no fault*. The example to illustrate the point is a mythological story of a Brahmin who, in order to protect villages from harmful snakes and so forth, took it upon himself to make great offerings to a garuda, which is a mythological bird that devours snakes. From the mass of offerings that he established through his prayers and practices, he made the offering tree i.e. great mass of offerings, to the garuda. And even though *a long time has passed* since then, that mass of offerings still has that ability to continuously pacify poisons. This analogy is used to counter the earlier argument that there can be no effects if a long time passes.

Then, as further explained, *similarly, the bodhisattvas have established an offering tree, a great mass of offerings, to the conquerors by way of building up the two accumulations in accordance with the bodhisattva practices. Although the bodhisattvas have manifested non-abiding nirvana*, meaning that when bodhisattvas reach the ultimate state of enlightenment, *this does not contradict them fulfilling all the temporary and ultimate purposes of sentient beings*.

As the commentary further mentions, *this debate arises from not knowing placement through continuity*. Basically, this argument arises from failing to understand that a

benefit that occurs on a continuous basis has a continuous effect.

2.1.2.2.3.2.2.3.2. Refuting arguments with regard to this

The first two lines of the verse are presented:

*38ab. How can one become endowed with a result
From having presented offerings to one lacking
mind?*

This is then followed by the argument from the commentary:

Argument by a hearer: How can one achieve the result of merit by making offerings to a buddha, who lacks conceptual mind? They also do not possess the thought of having received the offering.

This is an argument by a follower of the hearer vehicle who says, *how can one achieve the result of merit by making offerings to a buddha, who lacks conceptual mind?* This is implying that since a buddha does not have a conceptual mind that can know that they have received an offering and so forth, then how can one be sure that one actually receives the benefit of that offering?

Then the next two lines of the verse serve as the answer:

*38cd. Because it is taught that it is the same,
Whether they remain or have gone beyond
sorrow.*

The answer from the commentary:

Answer: It follows it is valid that merits are received by making offerings to the buddhas although they lack conceptual consciousness. Why? Because it teaches in the *Maitri Lion's Roar Sutra* that it is equally meritorious to make offerings to the body of a buddha that is actually present, as it is to the relics of a buddha who has passed beyond sorrow.

As presented in the commentary, when hearers say that it is not valid to make *offerings to a buddha, who lacks conceptual mind*, so it follows *it is valid that merits are received by making offerings to the buddhas although they lack conceptual consciousness*. And the reason is *because it is taught in the Maitri Lion's Roar Sutra*. Since we both agree that the Buddha's words in the sutras are a valid source that we can rely upon, there is a quotation from a sutra that explains our argument.

The quotation from the sutra reads,

Aside from the benefits of circumambulating,
Making offerings to those present and
To the relics of those gone beyond sorrow,
There is no difference in the merits
To a mind of equal faith.

As clearly mentioned in the quotation, when those who generate faith equal to the faith of the buddhas make offerings to images of the Buddha, they receive the merit equal to making the actual offering to the Buddha, because of that faith.

These are very, very significant and important points for our personal practice. Rather than doing some regular practice and making offerings mindlessly, we need to remember that we are making an offering to the actual Buddha. When we remember that, then it makes our practice much more powerful, and much more worthwhile because, as mentioned here, one receives the same benefit as if one had made the offering directly.

The main point is that when one makes an offering to a reliquary, or an image or representation of the Buddha as if it were the actual Buddha, then the benefit one gains from that is equal; meaning that the blessings one receives from the representation of the Buddha will be the same as receiving an actual blessing from the Buddha.

As you would recall, one of the refuge commitments is to regard all representations of the buddhas as being an actual buddha, and to have respect for any representation of the Buddha as being the actual Buddha. That is part of our refuge practice. Therefore these are significant points showing us the way to accumulate extensive merit when we engage in practices of making offerings and so forth. That is a significant point for us to recall.

Under the same heading the next four lines of verse are:

*39. Whether illusory or ultimate,
The result is taught in the scriptures.
For example, like having a result
Relative to a true buddha.*

The commentary explains their meaning:

The Buddha taught in the scriptures that one will receive a result by making offerings to the buddhas and so forth regardless of whether they exist conventionally or ultimately. For example, it is just as you assert. This can be seen in your assertion of the results with regard to a true buddha. The important meaning or point is that, while treating the analysis into the meaning of suchness with equanimity for the moment, regardless of whether they are true or false, one will receive the result in accordance with the functionality. This is the important meaning.

Again these are very pertinent points. Earlier we saw that the Realists – the Vaibhashikas and Sautrantikas – accept true existence. Regardless of whether one accepts the buddhas as being truly established or truly existent, or whether they lack true existence, the point is that by relying on the buddhas, making offerings and so forth, the resultant benefit is the same. The commentary goes on to say *it is just as you assert. This can be seen in your assertion of the results with regard to a true buddha*. Basically this is saying that gaining extensive results by making offerings to a true or truly existent buddha is similar to our earlier presentation.

The commentary further mentions that *the important meaning or point is that, while treating the analysis into the meaning of suchness with equanimity for the moment*. What it is saying here is: let's just put aside for the time being whether something exists truly or not, the main thing is that *one will receive the result in accordance with the functionality*. One will actually definitely receive the result of making offerings to the buddhas and so forth.

2.2 Establishing that even just to attain liberation one needs to realise emptiness

There are two subdivisions.

2.2.1. Argument

2.2.2. Answer

These are points that were raised earlier. As I've also emphasised, the unique presentation of the Prasangika is that one definitely needs to realise emptiness to obtain even liberation. Before we actually go into the explanation here, I'd like to check with you, why is it necessary to realise emptiness?

Student: It is my understanding that if any realisations of compassion or other such realisations weren't on the basis of emptiness they would not be accurate realisations. So we would always have new problems coming up, because those other realisations wouldn't have [inaudible].

Basically what you are saying in a roundabout way is another point that is also mentioned in the teachings, which is that compassion and so forth is not a direct opponent to the delusions, and therefore cannot overcome the delusions. That is the point here – in order to achieve liberation one has to overcome the opponent to obtaining liberation, which is this grasping at a self. It is only that which directly opposes grasping to a self - which is selflessness - that can become a cause to obtain liberation.

Can someone else give an explanation of what liberation means?

Student: Being free from afflictive obscurations.

I want the specific meaning of that word 'liberation'. What is one being liberated from?

Many students answer together.

The word liberation has a connotation that one is bound by something. To be liberated would have a connotation of being liberated from something to which one has been bound, right? Here that specific binding factor is karma and delusions. It's the karma and delusions that bind us to our contaminated aggregates. Our contaminated aggregates are cyclic existence and what binds us to our own cyclic existence of the contaminated aggregates is delusions and karma.

To give a specific illustration to clarify the point: If someone is bound to a tree with strong rope or chains then the tree is analogous to our samsaric aggregates. Basically, when we talk about samsara in relation to ourselves, our aggregates are our samsara; the person tied to the tree is analogous to our consciousness, and the strong rope or chains that bind that person to the tree are delusions and karma. When the chains are unshackled, then the person is free. Likewise, when karma and delusions are overcome, then we are freed from that which binds us to contaminated aggregates.

On a personal level we need to understand that samsara refers to our contaminated aggregates. Even in Tibetan, the term samsara can be misunderstood as being a place, and this has carried over into English. When samsara is referred to as a place then it is specifically referring to the abode of samsara.

The actual samsara is one's own aggregates. When the teachings refer to circling in samsara, they are referring to circling from the most unfortunate realm of the hells without respite, up to the highest form of the cyclic existence, which is called the peak of existence. Beings move through many different realms uncontrollably, i.e. bound by delusions and karma to these existences, from the lowest of the cyclic existence to the hell without respite, up to the peak of existence, and every other existence in between. We have no control because we are bound by delusions and karma. So when we talk about samsara, it is good to have a clear understanding that it is

our personal samsara, to which we are bound by our own delusions and karma.

When one is not bound by delusions and karma, yet is reborn in the abode of samsara, it has come about through aspirational prayers to benefit sentient beings. Bodhisattvas are still in the abode of samsara but they are not there involuntarily due to karma and delusions. Rather, due to their aspirational prayers, they are there as a way to benefit sentient beings in samsara.

2.2.1. Argument

The *argument* is presented in these two lines:

*40ab. One becomes liberated by seeing truth,
Why should one see emptiness?*

Other translations of the last line say, *What does emptiness do?* That is the argument.

This is a presentation from a hearer opponent:

Hearer opponent: By meditating on the direct perception of the four noble truths' 16 aspects of impermanence and so forth, one will attain the result of a liberated arhat. Why should one realise the emptiness of true existence of all phenomena for this? It is without purpose and even unsuitable.

Then Gyaltsab Je explains:

Gyaltsab Je: For this hearer opponent not only does one not need to realise emptiness to attain enlightenment, they do not even accept the concept of selflessness of phenomena. These, who do not accept the Mahayana sutras to be the words of the Buddha, are the main opponent. To refute them, and to refute on the side also those that, while positing the Mahayana sutras as valid, assert that one does not need to realise the selflessness of phenomena to attain the result of an arhat, I state these sources which, refuting these opponents, establish that only the wisdom realising emptiness is the path to be liberated from existence.

2.2.2. Answer

The *answer* is presented in these three subdivisions:

2.2.2.1. Establishing that only the wisdom realising emptiness is the path to liberation from existence

2.2.2.2. Establishing it as the path to the non-abiding nirvana

2.2.2.3. Advising that it is suitable for those wishing for liberation to meditate on emptiness

2.2.2.1. ESTABLISHING THAT ONLY THE WISDOM REALISING EMPTINESS IS THE PATH TO LIBERATION FROM EXISTENCE

This is again subdivided into two:

2.2.2.1.1. Establishing this with the Mahayana sutras

2.2.2.1.2. Establishing this with logic

2.2.2.1.1. Establishing this with the Mahayana sutras

The lines from the verse under this heading are:

*40cd. Because it is taught in scripture that
Without this path there is no enlightenment.*

This is the point where the actual answer is presented, and there's quite a bit of it. So it will be good for you read it as preparation for next time.

In other parts of the text Gyaltsab Je attempts to just give a literal explanation of the verse by inserting all of the words of the verse into the explanation. Here we can see that much more explanation is presented, and this is

actually Lama Tsong Khapa's own words, as they are from notes taken when Lama Tsong Khapa himself was teaching. So these are actually very significant points.

In the following verses Shantideva will be establishing the Mahayana sutras as valid teachings of the Buddha. These are very significant points that will be presented, and so it is good to be familiar with them.

In the Middle Way teachings establishing that the Mahayana teachings are valid words of the Buddha is explained in the part on identifying the lineage of bodhisattvas. I'll not go through the explanation now but if you can prepare by reading the text, then it will become clearer when I go through the text in our next session.

We can conclude here for the evening. Once you are able to apply the logical reasoning in its proper place then it will be easy to understand and read the text. It just requires the application of logic.

Addendum

Final revision of the commentary on verse 29 from the teaching of 6 September 2016

29. *When the mind is devoid of that perceived
Everyone will have gone thus.
In that case, what is the benefit
Of that imputed as mere mind?*

The commentary explains:

If this is accepted: It follows that when the mind is free from the dualistic appearance of apprehender and apprehended, then all sentient beings become thus gone ones and effortlessly attain liberation - because all minds are free from the appearances of apprehender and apprehended.

If however one accepts this position, then it follows that there is not the slightest need to comprehend the lack of apprehender and apprehended as being of different substance, which is labelled mere mind, in order to achieve the omniscient transcendental wisdom.

The explanation is that *it follows that when the mind is free from the dualistic appearance of apprehender and apprehended, then all sentient beings become thus gone ones and effortlessly attain liberation.* According to the **Mind Only** system the apprehension of form and the mind apprehending form being of different substance is the grasping to self of phenomena. So according to them, if things did exist externally then this is how it would have to exist, i.e. apprehender and apprehended being distinct and of different substance. Thus, they assert that the apprehender and apprehend are devoid of being distinct.

So the **Madhyamikas** are saying: at the time *when the mind is free from the dualistic appearance of apprehender and apprehended*, then all sentient beings by default would already be *thus gone ones* or enlightened buddhas *effortlessly, and attain liberation - because, according to you, Mind Only, all minds would have be free from the appearances of apprehender and apprehended.* Since, according to you *all minds are free from the appearances of apprehender and apprehended*, then this would mean that sentient beings are effortlessly and spontaneously liberated. Again according to the Mind Only, form and

the apprehension of form being devoid of being different substance, is the selflessness of phenomena. Thus the **Madhyamikas** conclude: *then it follows that there is not the slightest need to comprehend the lack of apprehender and apprehended as being of different substance, which is labelled mere mind, in order to achieve the omniscient transcendental wisdom.*

Extracts from *Entrance for the Child of the Conquerors* used with the kind permission of Ven. Fedor Stracke

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