
Shantideva's *Bodhisattvacharyavatara*

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Commentary by the Venerable Geshe Doga

Translated by the Venerable Michael Lobsang Yeshe

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As usual let us engage in our meditation practice.

[Meditation]

We can now generate a good bodhicitta motivation for receiving the teachings. Indeed, the mind of wishing to benefit others is a very important and precious mind.

If we don't have the right mindset, then even though what is to be practised may be quite clear, we might engage in practices that are contrary to the teachings. However, this will not occur if we generate the mind of wishing to benefit others.

An example of practising contrary to the teachings would be to immediately revert back to our old habits of becoming upset or angry in difficult situations, rather than generating love and compassion. That is the complete opposite to the mindset one should have. Although one wishes for happiness, one voluntarily engages in creating the causes for one's own misery or suffering. We know the teachings and if we fail to put them into practice, then that will be the inevitable result. While regularly familiarising ourselves with positive states of mind such as love and compassion may not completely prevent anger from arising, when situations that cause us to become angry occur, that love and compassion will help us immediately notice the anger and not allow it to take root. That comes from familiarity with practising love and compassion regularly.

Throughout the day, in our spare time, it is really important to intentionally put some effort in to generate and familiarise ourselves with a virtuous state mind; this is really important. We might claim to be Dharma practitioners and set aside a minimum time for practice, but most of our time we are completely immersed in the afflicted distractions. In contrast to that, if we actually take the initiative to periodically bring a virtuous object to mind, then that definitely contributes to having a genuinely relaxed body and mind and to experience a happy state of mind. This will also ensure that one will have a genuinely happy life.

I mention this as a reminder for you to put into practice whatever Dharma you already know. For those who don't know anything about Dharma practice, then there is not much that can be done, as they are only familiar with following the afflicted distractions. As they don't know how to practise the Dharma, we cannot blame them for not practising.

But in our case it is different, as we know the value of the Dharma and have the means to practise it; we know the disadvantages and faults of following the afflicted distractions. Furthermore we know the great benefits of generating a virtuous mind, and know how to generate it. If, while knowing this and having the means to do so, we

fail to put it into practice, then the fault lies with ourselves. As the previous masters warned, 'disregarding karma and its effects while understanding karma, is like knowingly taking poison'. So, we need to be really mindful. Taking these points into consideration is the best method for having a meaningful, happy life.

Often it seems I go off on a tangent, however the point that I always try to emphasise is to actually put the teachings into practice. That is something I've taken interest in since I was very young. I've always been concerned with putting into practice what I have learnt; that has always been my intention. Through that familiarity from a young age it has become part of my character. Thus, whenever I share the teachings it is to emphasise putting into practice whatever one has understood. I believe that this is essential. Therefore I feel compelled to relate the ways and means of how to practice.

As those of you who come on Wednesday nights know, I always emphasise the importance of putting the Dharma into practice in everyday life. This must be why Fedor took the initiative to make a booklet out of the Wednesday night teachings. It must be useful for some, because quite a few have come up and thanked me for the book.

Whenever we engage in the teachings, our intention and priority should always be on putting it into practice. Now, while the subject we are dealing with is quite complex and hard to fully understand at times, we must consider ourselves extremely fortunate to have this opportunity to engage in listening to these teachings. Even though it's difficult, try not to resort to despair, thinking, 'Oh, it's too difficult'. Rather, just continue listening with the intention, 'May I be able to understand this profound teaching and put it into practice someday'.

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

2.2.2.1.2. *Establishing this with logic (cont.)*

2.2.2.1.2.2. Establishing it with shared reason

The four sub-divisions under this heading are:

2.2.2.1.2.2.1. Showing that it is impossible to become an arhat and go beyond sorrow if one is devoid of the wisdom realising emptiness.

From the heading alone, one should be able to derive an understanding of what is being presented, i.e. the reasons why it is impossible to become an arhat and go beyond sorrow if one doesn't realise emptiness. The Tibetan term for arhat is *dra-chompa* which literally means foe destroyer. So, we need to understand what that means. What is the 'foe' that they have destroyed? What is the state of 'going beyond sorrow'? More specifically, the heading explains that it is impossible to achieve the state of liberation if one lacks the wisdom realising emptiness. So this heading presents the point that without the wisdom realising emptiness, there is no possible way of becoming an arhat or foe destroyer.

2.2.2.1.2.2.2. If one can become an arhat simply through the path of the sixteen aspects, then one can also become an arhat by merely abandoning the manifest afflictions.

As explained earlier, in relation to the sixteen aspects of the four noble truths, there are the coarser levels of understanding of the sixteen aspects and more subtle levels of understanding of the sixteen aspects of the four noble truths.¹ This presentation relates to the coarser levels. It explains that there is no way that one can become an arhat through relying on the coarser levels of the sixteen aspects of the four noble truths alone. One can only abandon the manifest levels of delusions with that coarse level of understanding, but not completely abandon all forms of delusion and their imprints.

2.2.2.1.2.2.3. Refuting the answer to that

This refers to refuting an argument on the previous presentation.

2.2.2.1.2.2.4. Showing that even those merely wishing to attain liberation need to meditate on emptiness.

What is being confirmed under this heading is that one definitely needs to have the realisation of emptiness in order to achieve liberation.

2.2.2.1.2.2.1. *Showing that it is impossible to become an arhat and go beyond sorrow if one is devoid of the wisdom realising emptiness.*

The first two lines of the root text are:

*44ab. If the root of the teachings is the essential
bhikhu,
Even the essential is difficult to abide.*

Under these two lines the commentary explains that:

The arhats had received direct teachings from the Buddha, and assembled them later into the collected works of the Buddha. Therefore, in a discussion amongst bhikkhus, it would be difficult for even an ordained arhat to be the root of the Tathagata's teachings because of the following reason:

Take the subject 'superior hearer': it follows they have not attained the state of an arhat – because they did not take the wisdom realising emptiness as the path. This shows also the consequence that those who do not accept the emptiness that is the lack of inherent existence of phenomena cannot destroy the foes. The word 'even' indicates that 'not only can those devoid of a realisation of emptiness not become enlightened'.

As the commentary explains, *the arhats received direct teachings from the Buddha, and assembled them later into the collected works of the Buddha.* After the Buddha had passed away, those arhats who had received the teachings directly from the Buddha convened a gathering where they assembled a collection of all of the teachings of the Buddha. They had heard the teachings directly, and in that first council they recorded what they had heard. As mentioned earlier, the eighteen different Hinayana schools formed at that time, arising from some of the disputes in interpreting the words of the Buddha. So, that's one way of stating how arhats are the essence of the Buddha's teachings.

Another way of understanding the essence of the Buddha's teaching is the Vinaya sutra itself. As hearer arhats, they had heard the Vinaya teachings from the Buddha. In particular, the self-liberation vows are said to be the essence of the Buddha's teachings.

As Lama Tsong Khapa mentions in *The Foundation of All Good Qualities*:

The root of the teachings is keeping the pratimoksha (self-liberation) vows. Thus, please bless me to accomplish this essential practice.

While it is commonly accepted that the sangha in general, and the arhats in particular, are the essence of the Buddha's teachings, it would be difficult to state that they are actually the essence of the Buddha's teachings, because they are devoid of the wisdom realising emptiness and thus are not actually arhats. The reasoning is presented in the following syllogism. Take the subject 'superior hearer': it follows they have not attained the state of an arhat – because they did not take the wisdom realising emptiness as the path.

If one does not need to have the wisdom realising emptiness in order to become an arhat then, by default, it would be contradictory for the arhats to be accepted as the essential holders of the Buddha's teachings. They would in fact not be real arhats, because they are devoid of the wisdom realising emptiness, i.e. they have not taken the wisdom realising emptiness as a path.

As the commentary further explains, the syllogism shows that *those who do not accept the emptiness that is the lack of inherent existence of phenomena cannot destroy the foes.* Thus, it is difficult to establish the arhats as being the essence of the Buddha's teachings.

Then the next two lines of the verse are presented:

*44cd. The mind endowed with an object,
Has difficulty even to abide beyond sorrow.*

The commentary explains as follows:

Take the subject 'hearer arhat': it follows they have difficulties to go beyond sorrow as it is invalid for them to have liberation in their continuum – due to their mind possessing the object of true-grasping, as they have not repudiated with reasoning the grasped object of true-grasping, and so grasp at functionalities as truly existent.

Or: It is saying that for as long as one has true-grasping one will not go beyond sorrow. The first two lines state the proposition and the second two lines state the reason.

In brief, the *mind endowed with an object* means the mind that is endowed with the perception of a truly existent or an inherently existent object. Such a mind will have difficulty in even abiding beyond sorrow.

The syllogism, *take the subject 'hearer arhat': it follows they have difficulties in going beyond sorrow,* indicates that hearer arhats could not possibly *go beyond sorrow, as it is invalid for them to have liberation in their continuum.* The reasoning is that this is *due to their mind possessing the object of true-grasping, as they have not repudiated with reasoning the grasped object of true-grasping, and so grasp at functionalities as truly existent.*

The **Madhyamikas** are saying, since you accept that the hearer arhats have not actually overcome true-grasping with reasoning, and therefore *grasp at functionalities as truly existent,* they could not possibly *go beyond sorrow.* In other words, they could not possibly obtain the state of liberation.

¹ See teaching of 23 July 2002.

Then the commentary indicates that *the first two lines state the proposition and the second two lines state the reason.*

In verse 44, the first set of two lines serves as the proposition: *If the root of the teachings is the essential bhikhu, and the mind endowed with an object.*

The second set of two lines *Even the essential bhikhu is difficult to abide and has difficulty even to abide beyond sorrow,* show the reasoning, which is that *for as long as one has true-grasping one will not go beyond sorrow.*

2.2.2.1.2.2.2. *If one can become an arhat simply through the path of the sixteen aspects, then one can also become an arhat by merely abandoning the manifest afflictions.*

This heading posits a similar argument to the previous heading. If you accept the first case, then it has to follow that by merely abandoning the manifest afflictions one can become an arhat.

The first two lines under this heading are:

45ab. *If liberated through abandonment of the afflictions,
One transforms immediately afterwards.*

Then the commentary states the argument:

Argument: One does not need to realise emptiness to become an arhat. By meditating on the path that realises the sixteen aspects of impermanence and so forth, one exhaustively abandons the afflictions and attains the liberated result of an arhat.

Then the commentary gives the answer:

Answer: It follows that the person who has merely abandoned the manifest afflictions temporarily transforms into an arhat immediately afterwards because by merely meditating on the path of the sixteen aspects of impermanence and so forth one eliminates the afflictions and becomes an arhat. These two are similar in all aspects.

The opponent's argument is that *one does not need to realise emptiness to become an arhat* because *by meditating on the path that realises the sixteen aspects of impermanence and so forth, one exhaustively abandons the afflictions and attains the liberated result of an arhat.* This is their reason for saying that it is not necessary to realise emptiness.

The **Madhyamika** contradict this by saying that if you assert this, then *it follows that the person who has merely abandoned the manifest afflictions temporarily transforms into an arhat immediately* after they have abandoned those manifest afflictions. This is achieved *by merely meditating on the path of the sixteen aspects of impermanence and so forth.*

The proponents of the **Hinayana** tenets for example, do not accept the subtle selflessness of person. Rather, they assert a person who is empty or devoid of having a self-sufficient substantial existence. When they gain that realisation, the manifest levels of delusions such as anger and attachment can be overcome. However they have not been completely uprooted, because the means used is not an ultimate antidote for overcoming the afflictions.

The counter argument being proposed here by the **Madhyamika** is that you holders of the Hinayana tenets would have to also accept that by temporarily overcoming these manifest afflictions, one would then become an arhat, *merely by meditating on the path of the sixteen aspects of impermanence and so forth, and eliminating*

the [coarse] afflictions. As mentioned here, *these two are similar in all aspects,* which means that the reasons you gave earlier, and the reasons presented here on overcoming the manifest levels of the afflictions are exactly the same. Since they don't accept the latter, the Madhyamika are saying 'according to you, you would have to accept both because *these two reasons are similar in all aspects*'.

The reasons are similar in all aspects in that the opponent asserts that *by meditating on the path that realises the sixteen aspects of impermanence and so forth,* that one will *exhaustively abandon the afflictions and attain liberation,* becoming an arhat. That is what they accept.

The counter argument is, 'in that case, you would have to also accept that by abandoning the manifest afflictions temporarily, one is immediately transformed into an arhat'. As the realisation of the sixteen aspects is only on the coarser level, and since they accept that as the criteria for abandoning the afflictions and obtaining arhatship, then by default they would also have to accept the second proposition.

The next two lines of the verse are:

45cd. *Although not having afflictions,
One can see that their karma is still potent.*

The commentary that explains this reads as follows:

This is unacceptable however. Although the manifest afflictions are temporarily non-existent, it is observed that the person who has abandoned the manifest afflictions temporarily has the karmic potential to connect with a future existence.

The school of the opponent is expressed by: 'If liberated through abandonment of the afflictions', and the meaning of this is as stated in: 'One becomes liberated by seeing truth.'² What it is saying is that if one can abandon the afflictions and attain the state of an arhat through meditating on the path of the sixteen aspects of impermanence etc.

This is actually quite clear. It is unacceptable to posit that by abandoning the manifest levels of afflictions one becomes an arhat. That is because *although the manifest afflictions are temporarily non-existent,* it remains a fact *that the person who has abandoned the manifest afflictions temporarily still has the karmic potential to connect with a future existence,* i.e. cyclic existence. So those who have overcome the manifest levels of afflictions still carry the karma to be reborn into cyclic existence.

As the verse states: *Although not having afflictions, one can see that their karma is still potent.* The point is that they still have the karmic seeds to be propelled into cyclic existence.

The commentary continues:

The school of the opponent is expressed by: 'If liberated through abandonment of the afflictions', and the meaning of this is as stated in: 'One becomes liberated by seeing truth.' What it is saying is that if one can abandon the afflictions and attain the state of an arhat through meditating on the path of the sixteen aspects of impermanence and so forth.

This is the meaning of what it is saying, because at this point it is debating whether or not one attains

² This is the first line of verse 40.

liberation from the afflictions merely through the path of impermanence and so forth. This also is very clear from the arguments of, 'One becomes liberated by seeing the truth.'

The meaning is certainly not that, while accepting that one can eliminate the afflictions by meditating on the path of the sixteen aspects, that one will not be liberated from suffering through that.

The meaning is that when that posited specifically by the two Hinayana schools as afflictions³ is temporarily absent in its mere manifest form by having generated the earlier explained path in the continuum, they posit that one has attained liberation from the afflictions. As a result, by merely abandoning the manifest afflictions temporarily, one will then immediately attain liberation from all contamination.

This is the assertion of both of the **Hinayana** lower schools, which posit a self-sufficient and substantially existent person that has to be abandoned. The lower schools accept that as the selflessness of the person, while for the **Prasangika** this is only the coarser level of the selflessness of a person. For the Prasangika the selflessness of a person is a person who is empty of being a truly and inherently existent person. It is only by abandoning the view of grasping at an inherently and truly existent person that one can actually abandon the afflictions from their very root. What is being established here is that while we both accept that abandonment of the coarse afflictions, for the Prasangika, the subtlest level of the afflictions is only abandoned when you abandon that grasping at an inherently existing self.

Thus the argument that overcoming the manifest afflictions temporarily is the *cause to immediately attaining liberation from all contamination* cannot be accepted.

This is shown in the lines:

That one cannot accept this is shown in the lines, 'Although not having afflictions one can see that their karma is still potent'. This is saying that although the manifest afflictions are temporarily absent one can observe the potential to be thrown into a future existence through the power of karma.

The conclusion in the commentary is quite clear:

These lines need to be explained in this way, and not as some commentaries and past Tibetans have done, who say that because it is observed that Maugalyana and Phagpa Sodreng experienced the suffering result of karma created earlier while an ordinary individual, they are not liberated in the moments afterwards. Here it does not refer to the potential to create suffering in this life, but it is saying that one is not liberated because one has not stopped the karmic potential that throws one into a future existence.

2.2.2.1.2.2.3. Refuting the answer to this

The first two lines of the next verse read:

*46ab. 'You say the craving that takes forcefully,
Is temporarily non-existent and say it is certain.'*

The argument is:

Argument: The attainment of the state of arhat by meditating on the path of impermanence and so forth is not merely temporary. Craving is the simultaneously acting condition for the forceful taking of another existence, and as it is exhaustively abandoned through this path, there is no seed and one does not take another rebirth. It is like this with certainty.

In stating, *The attainment of the state of arhat by meditating on the path of impermanence and so forth is not merely temporary*, the **Hearer** opponent is saying, 'I'm not claiming that by overcoming the manifest afflictions, one can become an arhat. I'm not saying that that is temporary'.

Craving is the simultaneously acting condition for the forceful taking of another existence, and as it is exhaustively abandoned through this path, there is no seed and one does not take another rebirth. It is like this with certainty. So here the Hearer is positing a counter argument to them saying, 'we don't accept that it's a temporary abandonment. Rather it is a complete abandonment, and one does not have to take rebirth in samsara.

The next two lines of the verse, which serve as an answer, read:

*46cd. Although this craving is not afflicted,
Why should it not be like ignorance?*

Then the commentary reads:

Answer: Although the craving in the continuum of the person that you assert to be an arhat is not afflicted as explained in the *Knowledges* similar to there being posited a total incomprehension⁴ that is afflicted according to the *Knowledges* and one being not, why should there not be a craving that is afflicted according to the *Knowledges* and one that is not? Both need to be posited.

These texts show the existence of a craving that is commonly renowned as non-afflicted in the two Hinayana schools and the Mahayana, but for the craving that is asserted by our own system certainly no afflicted and non-afflicted are asserted.

The **Prasangika** are saying that *although the craving in the continuum of the person that you assert to be an arhat is not afflicted as explained in the Knowledges, similar to there being posited as total incomprehension that is afflicted according to the Knowledges and one being not, why should there not be a craving that is afflicted according to the Knowledges.*

What the Prasangika are saying is that there is the common ignorance as explained in the two *Knowledges*, and uncommon ignorance according to our system. The **common ignorance** that is taught in the two *Knowledges* is the ignorance grasping at the person as a self-sufficient substantial existent. The **uncommon ignorance** as taught in the Prasangika system is the ignorance grasping at an inherently existent self.

To explain the meaning of the line although this craving is not afflicted: first we need to understand that just like with ignorance there are two types of craving, one that is induced by grasping at a person as self-sufficient and substantial existent, and the other is craving which is

³ The coarse afflictions correspond to the explanations of the two *Knowledges* i.e. *The Treasury of Knowledge* by Vasubandhu and the *Compendium of Knowledge* by Asanga. These are the explanations of the afflictions having as their root the grasping at a self-sufficient substantial self. This text however follows the uncommon Prasangika presentation of the afflictions.

⁴ Ignorance.

induced by grasping at an inherently existent person. The **Vaibhashika** and **Sautrantikas** (the two Hinayana schools) accept that craving induced by grasping at a person as self-sufficient substantial existent is an affliction, but do not accept that there is craving induced by grasping at a person as inherently existent; that is because they do not assert that the grasping at an inherently and truly existent person is a wrong view of the transitory collection. So, the **Prasangika** are saying that while we both commonly accept that the craving induced by grasping at a person as self-sufficient and substantially existent is an affliction in accordance with the presentation in the two Knowledges, this craving however is not an affliction that is induced by the grasping at an inherently existent person, which is a wrong view of the transitory collections. Thus, in saying *although this craving is not afflicted* the Prasangika are saying that according to our system this craving that is induced by the grasping at a person as self-sufficient substantially existent is not afflicted, (i.e. not an affliction induced by the view of transitory collections), but they are not saying that it is not an affliction at all. The Prasangika do of course accept that craving is an affliction.

The line *why should it not be like ignorance?* means that since there are two levels of ignorance, why should it not also be the same for craving? There is the coarse craving that is induced by the transitory view grasping at the person as self-sufficient substantially existent, and the more subtle craving that is induced by the transitory view grasping at an inherently existent self.

Basically the **Hinayana** hearers assert that arhatship is obtained when grasping at a self-sufficient and substantially existent person is abandoned.

If you read through this carefully, it will become clear. I have explained this previously and this material is also explained in the *Madhyamaka* teachings.

As explained earlier, the view of a self-sufficient substantial existent person as being ignorance, is accepted by both schools. However, the **Hinayana** schools do not accept the grasping at an inherently existent person as being an affliction. They don't assert that one has to overcome the grasping at a truly existent or an inherently existent person to become an arhat, because they don't accept that as being ignorance of the transitory collection. That is the main point being presented here. The lower schools assert that abandoning the ignorance of grasping at a self-sufficient and substantially existent person is the cause to become an arhat. But the **Prasangika** do not accept that.

The commentary continues:

Thus, it is saying that although one temporarily abandons the manifest craving induced by the grasping at a person that is a self-sufficient substantial-existent self, how can one say that the craving induced by the transitory view that is grasping at the person as existing out of its own nature, is non-existent? The elimination of the earlier mentioned in manifest form does not stop even the manifest form of the just mentioned transitory view and craving.

If it is the same for both schools that when their manifest afflictions are abandoned, then this does not mean that the seeds are abandoned, then it is meaningless to set that craving apart.

What is being explained is that through meditating only on the sixteen aspects of the four noble truths as taught in the two *Knowledges*, a person may have abandoned the manifest craving that is induced by the grasping at the person as self-sufficient substantially existent. But that will not harm the manifest craving that arises from grasping at the self as inherently existent. The craving that arises from the grasping at the self as inherently existent will not be harmed in the slightest by the meditation on the sixteen aspects alone. Although it can abandon the manifest coarse afflictions to a degree, it will not abandon the seed of the afflictions at all.

We will now recite the *Eight Verses of Mind Training*, dedicating it to Susanna's mother, who is in Germany and is experiencing complications with her health. Susanna comes here regularly, and is a regular donor, and this is when the Centre needs to take the initiative to help out. We need to be mindful of those who are experiencing difficulty. After all, even dogs and cats recognise someone who has been nice and kind to them, and return their affection.

We will pray that Susanna's mother be freed from her illness and that she be quickly restored to health, and so that she has some more years. If however it is an illness that she cannot overcome and passes away, then we pray for her to have a good rebirth in the next life in Amitabha's pure land, coming into contact with Amitabha directly, receiving teachings from Amitabha and then gaining all the realisations of the path in her mind.

In general this is a good way to proceed whenever there is an occasion that we need to pray for others who pass away.

I, for my part, have definitely done prayers and as a study group if we can do these prayers, and then when she hears about that, that will also help Susanna.

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

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The Sixteen Aspects of the Four Noble Truths

Truth of Suffering

One is mistaken with regard to the truth of suffering by grasping at purity, happiness, permanence and self. Understanding the four aspects of the truth of suffering, which are impermanence, suffering, empty and selfless, counteracts this.

Take the subject suffering of suffering - it is **impermanent** - because it is generated adventitiously; it is **suffering** - because it is powered by karma and afflictions; it is **empty** - because there is no separate controlling self; it is empty - because it **isn't** established in the nature of an **independent self**.

Truth of Origin

One is mistaken with regard to the truth of origin by grasping at sufferings to be without cause or to have a discordant cause. Regarding the latter there is the grasping at suffering being produced by only one cause, being produced by a creator the intention of whom preceded the result, and grasping at suffering to be changeable adventitiously but being essentially permanent. Understanding the four aspects of the truth of origin, which are cause, origin, intense generation and condition, counteracts this.

Take the subject contaminated karma and craving - it follows it is the aspect of **cause** - because it is the root of its resultant suffering; it is **origin** - because it generates its resultant suffering entirely again and again; it is **intense generation** - because it generates it strongly; it is the aspect of **condition** - because it is the concurrently acting condition of it's resultant suffering.

Truth of Cessation

One is mistaken with regard to the truth of cessation by grasping at liberation to be non-existent, by grasping at certain contaminated dharmas to be liberation, by grasping at certain sufferings to be supreme liberation, and by thinking that even though one can exhaust the sufferings one could reverse from that state.

Understanding the four aspects of the truth of cessation, which are cessation, peace, supremacy and definite emergence, contacts those misconceptions.

Take the subject complete freedom from suffering achieved through the power of the antidote - it is the aspect of **cessation** - because it is the freedom having abandoned suffering; it is **peace** - because it is the freedom having abandoned the afflictions; it is **supreme** - because it is liberation with benefit and bliss; it is the aspect of having **definitely emerged** - because it is irreversible liberation.

Truth of the Path

One is mistaken with regard to the truth of the path by thinking that a path to liberation is non-existent, thinking that meditation on selflessness isn't suitable to be the path, holding certain meditative absorptions alone to be the path to liberation and holding a path reversing suffering to be non-existent.

Understanding the four aspects of the noble truth of the path, which are path, suitable, accomplishment and definitely liberating, counteracts those misconceptions.

Take the subject wisdom directly realising selflessness - it is the aspect of **path** - because it is a path progressing towards liberation; it is the aspect of **suitable** - because it is the direct antidote against the afflictions; it is the aspect of **accomplishment** - because it is a transcendental wisdom directly realising mind's final nature; it is the aspect of **definitely liberating** - because it is the antidote irreversibly eliminating the afflictions.

This list was prepared by Ven. Tenzin Dongak as a supplement to the teachings on 30 July 2002