

Study Group - "Liberation *in the Palm of Your Hand*"
A Commentary by The Venerable Geshe Doga
Translated by Samdup Tsering



ལྷན་སྐྱེས་རྒྱུ་ལ་ལག་བཅངས།

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The Necessity To Achieve Buddhahood First

In motivation one generates a wish to attain Buddhahood for the benefit of all beings. To fulfil that wish one engages in the study and practice of the stages of the path. First we cultivate genuine feelings of love and compassion which are to cause happiness to others and to free them from suffering. It is always necessary to motivate one's practice to attain Buddhahood for oneself first. One can only cause others to have happiness and be free of suffering if one has attained this state of Buddhahood. So therefore in generating motivation, we always produce this wish to attain enlightenment for the sake of others.

As a result of learning about the ten non-virtuous actions and their shortcomings, and also the ten virtuous actions which need to be practised in order to attain a better life and better rebirth, we must try to see the result of that study in our daily practice. We need to ask ourselves if we have developed the discriminating wisdom of what is right and wrong as a result of studying the law of karma. The meaning of this sense of discrimination is to be able to recognise the ten non-virtuous actions and their shortcomings as well as recognise the ten virtuous actions and their advantages. Through study of the law of karma, we can check our progress in abandoning the ten non-virtuous actions and in adopting the ten virtuous actions, which means to restrain from the ten non virtuous actions.

It is a matter of taking advantage of the unique potential and conditions of this life. The conditions of our future rebirth are in our own hands. The life we possess now has the potential to enable us to obtain the same form of good life in the future, or liberation from cyclic existence, or even a fully enlightened state. The causes to attain those different levels of future result depend mainly upon our motivation or the scope of mind. If we do any practice (such as preventing the non-virtuous action of killing), out of the motivation to obtain a good rebirth in the future then this practice can be a cause for that better rebirth. Doing the same out of a motivation of renunciation, and wishing for liberation from cyclic existence, can be a cause to achieve the state of liberation.

Doing the same practice out of motivation of bodhicitta, can be a cause to reach the full state of enlightenment. In

this way we have a wonderful opportunity to attain any level of spiritual goal. This does not refer to worldly goals which include wealth and securing life's necessities of life such as food or clothing. We do however also have the opportunity to achieve those worldly goals. To have the opportunities we have now, is excellent for practising dharma. Also in this life we have contact with pure dharma which is the stainless dharma or spiritual legacy of Lama Tsong Khapa. It is very pure and authentic. It came down directly from the teaching of Buddha himself through the commentaries of the ancient Indian masters. All these opportunities are like the fulfilment of a prayer we might have made in a past life - a prayer for a life with the freedom to practise dharma and to meet with the pure dharma. With this unique opportunity we have all the conditions to prepare ourselves for the better future life. We should always try to be kind to others, patient, helpful, and tolerant, especially to our friends and parents in order to utilise the unique potential of this life. This is a very essential spiritual practice for daily life.

422.122.122.2: Teaching The Results Of The Ten Virtuous Actions'

དེ་དག་གི་འབྲས་བུ་བསྟན་པའོ།

Last week we discussed the ten virtuous actions and now we continue with the result of those virtuous actions. There are three:

422.122.122.21: Ripened Result

རྣམ་སྲིན་གྱི་འབྲས་བུ།

422.122.122.22: Result Similar To The Cause

གྱི་མཐུན་གྱི་འབྲས་བུ།

422.122.122.23: Environmental Result

བདག་པོའི་འབྲས་བུ།

1Liberation... p455 The title used in the text is "Teaching its results."

422.122.122.21: Ripened Result

རྣམ་སྐྱོན་གྱི་འབྲས་བུ།

The ripened results of the ten virtuous actions are the opposite of those for the ten non-virtuous actions. It depends on the degree of the virtuous actions that is, if it is a small, medium or large virtuous action.

It is said that a small virtuous action can result in rebirth as a human. A medium virtuous action can result in rebirth as a god of the desire realms and a large virtuous action can result in rebirth as a god of the higher realms - the form or formless realms.

422.122.122.22: Result Similar To The Cause

རྒྱ་མཐུན་གྱི་འབྲས་བུ།

This has two sections:

1: Result Similar To The Cause In Terms Of Experience

སྤོང་བ་རྒྱ་མཐུན་གྱི་འབྲས་བུ།

- For the virtuous activity of abandoning killing, the result is the enjoyment of a long life, without any disease.
- For the virtuous activity of abandoning stealing, the result is an increase in wealth and in possessions not becoming common property with others.
- For the virtuous activity of abandoning sexual misconduct, the result is a harmonious relationship with one's partner, and generally very good relationships with others
- For the virtuous activity of abandoning lying the result is the gaining of trust from others in one's speech
- For the virtuous activity of abandoning divisive speech the result is having many good friends and friendships
- For the virtuous activity of abandoning harsh speech the result is always hearing pleasant things. Someone who always hears unpleasant news is suffering the outcome of harsh speech in the past.
- For the virtuous activity of abandoning idle gossip the result is that people pay respect to one's speech in contrast to the practise of idle gossip where people place no value on one's speech. Even if two people make the same statement the listener will choose to listen to one seriously and ignore the other.
- For the virtuous activity of abandoning covetousness the result is achieving one's goal or objective
- For the virtuous activity of abandoning harmful thought the result is fearlessness

- For the virtuous activity of abandoning wrong view the result is being free from ignorance or being free of not knowing the true view.

These are the results similar to the cause in terms of the experience of the cause.

2: Result Similar To The Cause In Terms Of Habit

བྱེད་པ་རྒྱ་མཐུན་གྱི་འབྲས་བུ།

In each case of a virtuous act, the result is having the intuitive wish to abandon the non-virtuous activity e.g. killing, stealing. Of all the three types of results, the result similar to the habit of the cause is the most important one. Just as the result similar to the habit of the cause for non-virtuous activities can be the worst form of result, so for virtuous activities it is the best form of result. This can be a source of developing and increasing virtuous actions in the future as well as the present.

422.122.122.23: Environmental Result

བདག་པོའི་འབྲས་བུ།

These are the opposite of the same result for the non-virtuous activities.

End of discourse here.

We leave the teaching here. Geshe Doga again thanks the students for completing the previous test. All he can say is thank you countless times. He admired all because the answers clearly showed a great deal of study as they were very complete.

Tomorrow is the most auspicious day of Lama Tsong Khapa. The Lama Tsong Khapa puja is a special occasion. Lama Tsong Khapa appeared to the world in an ordinary human aspect but in reality was a manifestation of Manjushri. He is Manjushri in the aspect of our own guru. Prayers at this puja are especially powerful. Geshe-la has previously missed these pujas because he was in India, Singapore and Tasmania. Geshe-la will be here tomorrow and will lead the puja.

There is nothing else to say, so we can enjoy the tea and wonderful cake. Geshe-la would like to give thanks for the cake. This clearly shows the kindness of these people. Geshe-la enjoys his cake. Quite a number of people have said to Geshe-la that it is amazing that there are free teachings, free tea and free cake with people all around smiling. This is great, so why not enjoy the tea and cake?

Geshe Doga recalled being in a debate with Khensur Urgyen Tsetan in Tibet as part of his Geshe Lharampa degree. This event happened when monks returned from a winter debate session which was held more than a days journey from Sera. The participants came from all the major monasteries, and they were sponsored by the monasteries for the month of debate on Pramana.

On their return they usually found high geshe sitting for their degree. The participants of the winter sessions have to put questions to the high geshe in public, before an audience including scholars, abbots, teachers and disciplinarians. Because he had just returned from the winter sessions and had been sponsored, there was a lot of pressure to perform well. The ceremony was preceded by a great feast of tea and cake, but Geshe Doga couldn't eat because he was so worried. But tonight there are no questions so he can enjoy himself.

So for the last evening of Study Group in 1993 there were no questions.

Headings with outline numbering are derived from the Text. Headings without outline numbering are derived from Geshe Doga's commentary.

The original typescript is prepared from Alan Molloy's original transcript, which has been checked against Damien Busby's notes. Adair Bunnett then checks the typescript against a tape recording, and edits the text, which is finally checked by Alan Molloy.

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