

Ornament for Clear Realisation

(Abhisamayalamkara)

*Chapter 1**

* to Naturally Abiding Lineage

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INTRODUCTION¹

The *Ornament for Clear Realisation* (sanskrit: *Abhisamayalamkara*) is a commentary on the hidden meaning of the extensive, middling and condensed *Perfection of Wisdom (Prajnaparamita) Sutras*. The sutras explicitly teach the profound view of emptiness as explained by Nagarjuna in his six treatises. In the *Ornament*, there is an explanation of the hidden meaning of the sutras, detailing the practices and realisations of the bodhisattva. In the course of re-establishing the Great Vehicle, centuries after the Buddha's passing, further supportive textual material was needed clearly setting out these hidden teachings. Through the efforts of Asanga, Maitreya was able to impart his commentary, the *Ornament for Clear Realisation*, which explicitly sets out in eight clear realisations and seventy topics all of the vast aspect taught in the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras*.

The main Tibetan commentaries on the *Ornament* are *The Golden Rosary of Excellent Explanations* by Je Tsong Khapa, *General Meaning of the Ornament of Clear Realisation* by Jedzun Chogyi Gyeltshen and *Ornament of Essential Meaning* by Gyeltsab Je.

1. Sources of the *Ornament*

There are three preliminary points:

(a) *identifying the root Sutras on which the Ornament is a commentary*

The root sutras explained by the *Ornament* are the extensive, middling and brief *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras* - the three mothers.

(b) *the way in which the Ornament unravels the meaning of the sutras*

There are two main lineages regarding the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras* - the profound and extensive. The profound lineage is the lineage of Manjushri and Nagarjuna explicitly elucidating the meaning of emptiness. The extensive lineage is the hidden aspect of the Sutras, detailing the method aspect of the path and was elucidated by Maitreya and Asanga. Thus, Nagarjuna and Asanga are referred to as the 'two pioneers'.

Nagarjuna explained emptiness in six texts. Maitreya explained method in five texts - the Uttaratantra is according to the Prasangika viewpoint, the *Ornament of Clear Realisation* and the *Ornament of Mahayana Sutras* are both written from the Svatantrika Madhyamika point of view plus two further texts according to the mind only point of view.

(c) *the way in which the commentaries on the Ornament originated*

There are 21 commentaries on the *Ornament* according to the Indian tradition of which there are 12 commentaries that connect the *Ornament* to the Sutras and nine that do not. What is the difference between commentaries that connect the *Ornament* to the Sutras and those that do not? 'To connect the *Ornament* to the Sutras' means to set out the meaning of the words of the Sutras as well as the meaning of the words of the *Ornament*. The commentaries that do not connect the *Ornament* to the Sutras simply explain the meaning of the *Ornament*, without setting out the meaning of the Sutras.

(d) *which commentary one follows*

The *Commentary Clarifying the Meaning* by Acharya Haribhadra is regarded as the main commentary of the 21 Indian commentaries on the *Ornament*. It does not connect the *Ornament* to the Sutras. The other main commentaries are based on Haribhadra's commentary.

¹ Definitions in arial text are from Jetsun Chogyi Gyeltshen's *70 Topics* with amendments and additions indicated in square brackets.

2. Explanation of the title

(a) Etymology

The sanskrit title of the text is *Abhisamayalamkara-nama-prajnaparamita-upadesha-satra*. The English translation of these terms are: 'Abhisamayalamkara' means 'Ornament for Clear Realisation'; 'prajnaparamita' refers to the perfection of wisdom sutras, 'upadesa' means 'essential instruction', 'satra' means commentary.

(b) Terminological division of perfection of wisdom

The perfection of wisdom has a nominal four-fold division:

1. Scriptural – the great (100,000 stanzas), medium (20,000 stanzas) and condensed (8,000 stanzas) perfection of wisdom sutras (the three mothers); some scholars also include other Mahayana sutras (the 11 sons) that elucidate emptiness directly, such as the *Heart Sutra*. Boundary is prior to the path to the Buddha ground.
2. Path – an awareness meditating on emptiness in the continuum of a bodhisattva. The wisdom of a bodhisattva realising emptiness has the essential meaning (natural) perfection of wisdom as its object. Boundary is from the Mahayana path of accumulation through to the end of the continuum of a sentient being.
3. Essential meaning/natural – the unfindability of the imputed meaning at the time of analysis is the essential meaning perfection of wisdom – the emptiness of inherent existence. Boundary is that it exists in all phenomena.
4. Resultant – omniscient consciousness, the consciousness of a buddha. Boundary is that it exists only on the buddha ground.

Prajnaparamita is the perfection of wisdom or 'having gone beyond'. Here it has two parts – first, the path which one follows to go beyond and second, having gone beyond, the resultant perfection of wisdom. One arrives at the resultant perfection of wisdom through the path perfection of wisdom, the wisdom realising emptiness.

Path perfection of wisdom is attained in dependence on the scriptural perfection of wisdom – the great, medium and condensed. By listening, reflecting and meditating on the scriptures, one develops the path perfection of wisdom, which is the perfection of wisdom of going beyond. The resulting perfection of wisdom is the omniscient consciousness. The resultant perfection of wisdom is the actual perfection of wisdom. They are mutually inclusive.

Definition of perfection of wisdom: a fully developed exalted wisdom qualified by three attributes. It is synonymous with resultant perfection of wisdom. The three attributes are:
Basis - It exists only in the continuum of a buddha superior;
Entity - being a non-dual exalted wisdom; and
Freedom from the object of negation - being empty of true existence, like an illusion.

Why are the others also termed perfection of wisdom?

In order to show that they are the medium through which one attains the actual perfection of wisdom. One has to meditate on the path perfection of wisdom that takes the essential meaning perfection of wisdom as its object by relying on the scriptural perfection of wisdom that teaches the essential meaning perfection of wisdom. The term 'perfection of wisdom' is applied to those sutras, emptiness itself and the wisdom realising emptiness itself at the learners stage for the reason of showing that one needs to have those to attain the actual resultant perfection of wisdom. For that reason, Buddha in the sutras gave the name 'perfection of wisdom' to the texts, to emptiness itself and to the wisdom that meditates on emptiness to show that they are needed in order to attain the actual perfection of wisdom.

For example, in order to show the importance of scriptural perfection of wisdom, Buddha asked Ananda to memorise the perfection of wisdom sutras and said that he would be present where-ever someone teaches the

perfection of wisdom. He said that it is more beneficial to recite than any other type of his teachings because it is the foundation on which one attains enlightenment.

Why is the Ornament called the essential instructions?

Because disciples can easily gain the meaning of the perfection of wisdom sutras.

It is called a commentary because it has the two features of separating and rescuing. It separates the delusions from the continuum of the disciple and rescues the disciple from the suffering of cyclic existence.

(c) Why is it referred to as an ornament?

The text is referred to as an ornament not because it beautifies but because it clarifies the subject matter. There are four types of ornament:

- Natural ornament – e.g. the beautiful shape of a woman
- Beautifying ornament – earrings and ornaments to beautify the body
- Clarifying ornament – a mirror to show or clarify to the woman how beautiful she is
- Joyful ornament - the joy that arises on seeing the beauty

Applied to the text:

- The natural ornament is the three mothers – the extensive, middling and condensed Perfection of Wisdom sutras.
- The beautifying ornament refers to the eight categories and 70 topics.
- The clarifying ornament is the text itself - it clearly shows or reflects the whole meaning of the Perfection of Wisdom sutras.
- The joyful ornament is the joy that arises from listening to and reflecting on the Ornament.

(d) Definitions

Exalted wisdom (knower): is a consciousness which has become a path. It is mutually inclusive with path and clear realiser.

Non-dual: means it is a subjective wisdom which becomes oneness with its object, emptiness, like water mixed with water.

3. Homage

*By the knower of all, hearers seeking pacification are led to peace,
By the knower of paths, those benefiting migrating beings accomplish the welfare of the world,
By the perfect possession of it, the subduers teach the varieties possessing all aspects;
To these mothers of the buddhas, together with the host of hearers and bodhisattvas - homage.*

The first three verses of the homage refer to the three types of wisdom:

Exalted knower of bases (basic wisdom)

Arya hearer trainees are the type of practitioner. The plural ending shows that solitary realisers are also included. How do they attain their aim? Wisdom called 'complete knowledge' or 'basic knowledge/wisdom'. This refers to the wisdom realising the selflessness of persons that understands the bases of pervasive sufferings included in the 16 aspects of the Four Noble Truths. The result is liberation from cyclic existence.

Basis – Hinayana arya hearer trainees

Method – basic wisdom itself, the wisdom realising the selflessness of persons that understands the Four Noble Truths

Result – liberation, pacification of pervasive compounded suffering

Verse 2: Exalted knower of paths (path wisdom)

Those working for the benefit of migrators (i.e. bodhisattvas) accomplish the benefit of transitory beings through path wisdom. Base, method and result of path wisdom is set out.

Basis - those working for the benefit of migrators, arya bodhisattva trainees.

Method – path wisdom itself, the awareness in the continuum of a bodhisattva that is combined with method and wisdom. Method is great compassion and wisdom is the wisdom realising emptiness.

Great compassion, wisdom realising emptiness and bodhicitta are all examples of path wisdom.

Bodhisattvas arise from the root of compassion, the root of which is meditating on the suffering of sentient beings.

Result – the activities engaged in by bodhisattvas for the benefit of sentient beings.

Verse 3: Exalted knower of all aspects

Refers to the wisdom of all aspects which is the mind of omniscient consciousness that understands all aspects of existence.

Basis - those endowed with the perfect, enlightened beings - arya buddhas.

Method – omniscient consciousness – the knowledge of all aspects.

Result – teachings comprising the three turnings of the wheel of dharma by enlightened beings through their omniscient knowledge. The three turnings of the wheel came about through the teacher having complete knowledge of all aspects of existence – in particular, knowing the different aspirations and abilities of sentient beings. The hearer basket of teachings comprises the first turning of the wheel. The perfection of wisdom sutras were taught in the second turning of the wheel. The third turning of the wheel was called the ‘third turning clearly discerning reality’.

What does a knower of bases know? It knows the bases, the Four Noble Truths. What does a knower of paths know? It knows the paths, the fifteen paths of the three vehicles. What does a knower of all aspects know? It knows all phenomena from forms through the exalted knower of all aspects.

Verse 4: Prostration to the mothers

Homage is offered by prostrating to the mother that is the cause of the four children. The four types of results – hearers, solitary realisers, bodhisattvas and buddhas – are the children of the mother, the perfection of wisdom. The prostration is done to the mother keeping in mind the four supreme results that have arisen from the perfection of wisdom. By prostrating to the cause one implicitly prostrates to the result. Likewise in Madhyamakavatara, homage is explicitly paid to great compassion, which implicitly pays homage to the buddhas and bodhisattvas.

Here the transcendental wisdom realising emptiness is referred to as the generator (is the mother of) the various types of arya beings who are the children. They attain their result by practicing their respective path.

Practice note

One can recite the whole verse of four lines or simply recite the last line: “I prostrate to the mother of hearers and so forth and the host of bodhisattvas and buddhas”. One keeps in mind that the perfection of wisdom is the cause of the result of the four children. By this means one is making a very extensive prostration to all causes and results of perfection of wisdom. Contrast this to prostration to the 35 Confessional Buddhas - prostration is made to individual buddhas in order to purify specific non-virtuous karma, which is possible due to prayers and merits dedicated by these buddhas on their first becoming bodhisattvas. However, prostrating to the mothers is equivalent to prostrating to all the buddhas of the past, present and future.

Discussion of nirvana

The first line of the homage makes reference to the ‘peace’ which is the goal of hearers. This is referring to nirvana or liberation. There are three types of nirvana:

- (a) nirvana with remainder: cessation free from the afflictive obscurations still having the remainder of the suffering aggregates (Hinayana nirvana)
- (b) nirvana without remainder: cessation free from the afflictive obscurations without remainder of the suffering aggregates (Hinayana nirvana)

- (c) non-abiding nirvana: freedom from the two obscurations (Mahayana nirvana). It is a true cessation at the level of the buddha ground.

When a Hinayana arhat with remainder passes away to nirvana without remainder, they do so by flying into the sky and showing the four types of miraculous power such as sprouting fire from upper body and water from lower. Then their body is incinerated by the fire of transcendental wisdom.

The arhat meditates on and arises as the body of uncontaminated transcendental wisdom that is in the nature of consciousness and then pass away.

The Dharma wheel

By possessing omniscient consciousness that comprehends all aspects of existence, Buddhas teach the various wheels of dharma. All objects of knowledge were explained in three turnings of the wheel:

- (a) First turning of the wheel - the turning of the dharma wheel of the Four Noble Truths took place at Varanasi. It was taught for Hinayana (hearer) practitioners.
- (b) Second turning of the wheel - the turning of the dharma wheel without characteristics - the Prajnaparamita Sutras - took place at Rajgir. It was taught for practitioners accepting Prasangika point of view.
- (a) Third turning of the wheel - the turning of the dharma wheel clearly distinguishing phenomena took place at Shravastri. In these sutras, various types of bodhisattvas ask questions of the Buddha - for example, The Perfect Ultimate Arya. It was taught for practitioners accepting the Mind Only point of view.

4. Purpose

The path of the exalted knower of all aspects itself, explained by the Teacher in these mothers, is not experienced by others. In order for the intelligent to behold the meaning of the sutra which is the entity of the ten Dharma practices, through establishing mindfulness on them, the so-called 'easy realisation', is the purpose of my composing the Ornament.

This section related to purpose is divided into four:

- (a) Subject: is what the Buddha implicitly taught in the Perfection of Wisdom Sutras, as clarified by the Ornament. The hidden subject of the sutras presents the path to omniscience which is in the nature of the 10 dharma practices by means of a presentation of eight 'dharmas' and 70 topics. This path has the characteristic that it is not understood by 'others' non-buddhists, hearers and solitary realisers.
- (b) Purpose: for disciples to easily understand the implicit meaning of the Perfection of Wisdom Sutras.
- (c) Essential purpose: for disciples to attain omniscient consciousness by meditating on the subject of the text.
- (d) Relationship: the essential purpose depends on the purpose. To attain omniscient consciousness depends on understanding the meaning of the Perfection of Wisdom Sutras. The purpose itself depends on the subject of the sutras themselves.

Having placed one's mindfulness on the meaning of the sutras, those endowed with wisdom will see and easily comprehend the meaning of the sutras and then attain omniscient consciousness. It is not enough just to understand the meaning - one needs to meditate on the subject with mindfulness in order to obtain a realisation of the meaning.

Understanding comes from listening again and again to the teachings on the topic so that mindfulness and remembrance of the subject grows and then meditate using the four close placements of mindfulness. Some Schools say that the primary tool is wisdom while others say that it is mindfulness. However, it needs to be a combination of the two - wisdom to understand the topic and mindfulness to keep the mind on the topic. Wisdom makes the meaning very clear. Mindfulness helps one continually meditate on the topic. One goes through the three steps of listening, contemplation and meditation to develop the three types of wisdom - that gained through listening, contemplation and meditation. By progressing on the path by these three steps, one gains omniscient consciousness.

The essential purpose of obtaining omniscient consciousness depends on the purpose of understanding the meaning of the sutras - purpose precedes the essential purpose in the same way that the arm is the basis for the fingers.

5. Summary

*The Perfection of Wisdom is perfectly explained by the eight clear categories.
The very exalted knower of all aspects, the very knower of paths,
Then the very knower of all,
Clear complete realisation of all aspects,
Gone to the peak and serial,
Clear complete enlightenment in one moment,
The truth body: these are the eight.*

The eight dharmas (clear realisations) are the three types of knowledge/realisers, four trainings and the resultant dharmakaya. They are:

Four wisdoms Knower of all aspects - omniscient consciousness
 Knower of paths - path wisdom
 Knower of (all) bases - basic wisdom
Four trainings Training in all aspects
 Peak
 Serial (sequential)
 Momentary (instantaneous)
Resultant truth body (dharmakaya)

Omniscient consciousness is explained first because it is the final attainment. In order to reach it one must practice the four trainings.

Note that the subject of the perfection of wisdom is all phenomena from form to omniscient mind for a total of 108 phenomena - the 53 that belong to the ever-deluded class and the 55 that belong to the thoroughly purified class.

The following is a summary of the eight categories in brief form. Note that Maitreya has used skillful means explaining the subject matter in different ways in the homage, brief summary and extensively in separate chapters.

6. Brief explanation of the eight categories

(a) *Exalted knower of all aspects*

Definition: a fully developed exalted wisdom directly realising the ten topics, mind generation and so forth.

Mutually inclusive with: an exalted knower in the continuum of a buddha superior. [Also, omniscient consciousness and resultant perfection of wisdom.]

Divisions: there are two -

an exalted knower of all aspects that knows all the aspects of object of knowledge without exception; and an exalted knower of all aspects that knows the main causes and effects in terms of the 70 topics.

Boundaries: it exists only on the buddha ground.

Omniscient consciousness refers to the awareness of a buddha that comprehends all aspects of existence or the awareness of the buddha that comprehends the 70 topics. They are mutually inclusive - if one understands the 70 topics one directly understands all aspects of existence. This definition is from the point of view of different objects - the mind that realises one will also realise the other. In nature, each instance of omniscient consciousness will always be omniscient consciousness realising all aspects of existence.

The transcendental wisdom gone beyond directly realising all phenomena is the definition of omniscient consciousness. If it is an omniscient awareness it must fulfill the definition and if it fulfills the definition it is omniscient awareness. If it is not omniscient awareness it will not fulfill the definition and if it does not fulfill the definition it can't be omniscient consciousness. The definition and definendum are mutually inclusive.

Any path in the continuum of a buddha is omniscient transcendental wisdom. They are synonymous.

(b) Knower of paths

Definition: a Mahayana superior's clear realiser conjoined with the wisdom directly realising emptiness in the continuum of the person who possesses it.

Mutually inclusive with: the exalted knower of a Mahayana superior. [Also, path wisdom.]

Divisions: there are three -

a knower of paths that knows hearers' paths [e.g. an exalted knower in the continuum of a Mahayana arya which realises the selflessness of person]

a knower of paths that knows solitary realisers' paths [e.g. the wisdom in a Mahayana arya's continuum which realises form and its valid cogniser are empty of different substances]

a knower of paths that knows Mahayana paths [e.g. the wisdom in a Mahayana arya's continuum which directly realises emptiness].

Boundaries: it exists from the Mahayana path of seeing through the buddha ground.

A path (knower, realiser) in the continuum of an arya bodhisattva that is being held by the wisdom realising emptiness directly in the continuum of that bodhisattva. The wisdom increases the potency of the realiser and the realiser increases the potency of the wisdom realising emptiness. Once the bodhisattva has reached the path of seeing he has the wisdom that realises emptiness directly. From then onwards, all the realisers/transcendental wisdoms in his continuum are path wisdoms. They are all realisers that are being held by the wisdom realising emptiness directly in the continuum of an arya bodhisattva. So the transcendental wisdom of an arya Mahayana practitioner and path wisdom are synonymous. If it is a realiser in the continuum of an arya bodhisattva practitioner, it is automatically a path wisdom.

It may also be defined as an exalted wisdom of a Mahayana arya held by special wisdom and method. Here special wisdom refers to the wisdom directly realising emptiness and special method is great compassion. Any arya Mahayana path held by the wisdom realising emptiness directly and compassion is a path wisdom. This occurs from the path of seeing up to enlightenment.

Note that the term 'path wisdom' does not mean that it is the actual mental factor of wisdom. Path, realiser and clear realisation are synonymous.

(c) Knower of bases

Definition: an exalted wisdom conjoined with the wisdom directly realising selflessness [of persons] abiding within a lesser vehicle [Hinayana] class of realisations in the continuum of the person who possesses it.

Mutually inclusive with: an exalted knower in a superior's continuum abiding within a lesser vehicle [Hinayana] class of realisations.

Divisions: there are four -

(i) a knower of bases close to the resultant mother;

(ii) a knower of bases distant from the resultant mother;

(iii) a knower of bases of the discordant [contrary] class; and

(iv) a knower of bases of the antidote [remedial] class.

Boundaries: it exists in the continuum of all superiors.

An arya's realiser that is being held by the wisdom realising selflessness of persons directly and abiding within the Hinayana mode of realisation. This definition contains two parts.

The basic wisdom refers to the basis of the Four Noble Truths. An arya Mahayana path and path wisdom are synonymous. Basic wisdom is the wisdom meditating on the Four Noble Truths. This type of wisdom exists in all three types of arya practitioners. It refers to the path or transcendental wisdom, the aspect and focal

object of which is concordant with that of Hinayana path i.e. abiding within the Hinayana mode of realisation.

Selflessness of persons

The Ornament accords with the Svatantrika Madhyamika school of tenet. Since basic wisdom is the realisation in the continuum of an arya being held by the direct realisation of selfless of person, being a Svatantrika Madhyamika tenet, the realisation of selflessness of persons refers to the realisation of the absence of a person that is a self sufficient substantial existent. According to the Prasangika Madhyamika system, the selflessness of persons is the absence of an inherently existent person and the selflessness of phenomena is the absence of inherently existent phenomena.

In the Svatantrika system, there are two levels of emptiness:

(i) Coarse selflessness of person: is the absence of a person that is permanent, partless and independent. Hence, the object of negation has three parts. One first relates to the grasping at the person as being permanent (not impermanent), then the grasping at the person as being independent of parts, and finally to the grasping at the person as being independent of causes and conditions.

(ii) Subtle selflessness of person: is the absence of a person that is a self sufficient substantial existent.

The Svatantrika Madhyamika tenets differ from those of Prasangika Madhyamika in several ways including:

- (i) the way subtle and coarse selflessness of persons is posited;
- (ii) the way in which each of the three practitioners - hearers, solitary realisers and bodhisattvas - attain their goals.

Svatantrika Madhyamika asserts that:

- A practitioner on the hearers path will take as the main meditational object the emptiness of the person being self sufficient substantially existent.
- A practitioner on the solitary realiser path will meditate on the emptiness of subject and object being of different substance.
- A Mahayana practitioner will take as the primary meditational object emptiness, or the lack of true existence.

The Prasangika system does not posit the distinction between coarse and subtle emptiness or that there are three different modes of realising emptiness. Svatantrika Madhyamika asserts that arhatship can be reached by meditating on the person's lack of being self sufficient substantially existent. That wisdom realising subtle selflessness of person is an example of basic wisdom.

Hinayana mode of realisation

In order for the definition of basic wisdom to be satisfied, two conditions must be met - the practitioner must have realised the selflessness of persons directly; and the realisation must abide within the Hinayana mode of realisation. This refers to the main meditational subjects of the Hinayana practitioner - the selflessness of person and the 16 aspects of the Four Noble Truths. Once that practitioner has realised selflessness of persons, those meditations are basic wisdom in their continuum.

Bodhisattvas also meditate on the 16 aspects of the Four Noble Truths. Once the bodhisattva has realised directly the selflessness of persons, his meditation on the 16 aspects is not a Hinayana path because he is not a Hinayana practitioner. Yet those meditations abide within the mode of the practice of a Hinayana practitioner and are basic wisdom. Nevertheless, they are a hearers path. Why? Because the bodhisattva understands the paths of the hearers and solitary realisers by generating their paths within his own continuum. For example, the wisdom realising selflessness of person directly in the continuum of an arya bodhisattva or buddha is basic wisdom because both in aspect as well as object it concurs with the main meditational path of the hearer.

If you are asked, “if it is the transcendental wisdom of a buddha, is there a pervasion that it is not basic wisdom”. If no pervasion, what would you posit as both omniscient transcendental wisdom and a knower of bases? The wisdom realising selfless of person directly in the continuum of a buddha is an example of both omniscient consciousness and knower of bases.

If it is an exalted wisdom in the continuum of a Hinayana arya practitioner, does it have to be knower of basis? No, a direct realisation of emptiness in the continuum of such a person is not a knower of bases because it does not abide within the Hinayana mode of realisation. It abides within the Mahayana mode of realisation.

What are the ‘bases’?

‘All bases’ are the inner and outer phenomena. All bases are known, that is all inner and outer phenomena are understood, by hearers and solitary realisers. Inner phenomena refers to the six sense powers and outer phenomena refers to the six sense objects - all phenomena are therefore included. Hearers realise the selflessness of persons of these twelve bases and know their 16 aspects, i.e. realise them in terms of the 16 attributes of the Four Noble Truths. (See Haribhadra 2B2A-1B2A-2A1). In other words, we should realise the reality of how these 12 actually exist.

Summary

Path wisdom is a realiser in the continuum of a Mahayana arya. Starting from the path of seeing up to enlightenment any type of realiser in the practitioner’s continuum is path wisdom.

Basic wisdom exists in the continuum of all three types of arya beings. The direct realisation of selflessness of person is basic wisdom regardless of whether it is found in the continuum of a bodhisattva, hearer or solitary realiser. But not all realisations of an arya bodhisattva will be basic wisdom. For example, the wisdom realising emptiness in the continuum of an arya bodhisattva will not be basic wisdom because it is not abiding in the Hinayana’s mode of realisation. The same applies for bodhicitta and so for. These realisations abide in the Mahayana mode of realisation. Not all realisations in the continuum of an arya hearer practitioner are basic wisdom. For example, the wisdom realising emptiness in the continuum of an arya hearer is not basic wisdom because it doesn’t abide within the mode of Hinayana realisation.

Omniscient consciousness, path wisdom and basic wisdom are not mutually exclusive. For example, the wisdom realising selflessness of persons in the continuum of a buddha is all three.

(d) Complete aspects application

Definition: a bodhisattva’s yoga conjoined with the wisdom cultivating a compendium of the aspects of the three exalted knowers.

Mutually inclusive with: the exalted knower of a bodhisattva.

Divisions: there are 173.

Boundaries: it exists from the Mahayana path of accumulation through the end of the continuum of the sentient being.

To attain omniscient consciousness one has to practice the four trainings, including the training in all aspects or complete aspects application. One has to meditate on paths that in aspect are similar to the result or the three types of wisdom. This is the 173 aspects. A bodhisattva’s path meditates on these aspects by condensing them. In brief, one can say it is a condensed mediation on the three types of knowers. The boundary extends from the path of accumulation up to the last instant before attainment of enlightenment.

‘Cultivating a compendium of the aspects of the three exalted knowers’ means to collect all 173 aspects of the three exalted knowers within the union of calm abiding and special insight.

The 173 divisions are:

1. the 27 aspects of a knower of bases
2. the 36 aspects of a knower of paths

3. the 110 aspects of an exalted knower of all aspects.

Since one attains the training in all aspects at the start of the path, the practitioner is not empowered - he is still a beginner bodhisattva. He meditates in order to become empowered in the aspects of the three knowers. Once he has been empowered, he reaches peak training. However, his meditation is still not stable. To gain stability he engages in serial training. Once his training in the three knowers is stable he reaches the momentary training where the bodhisattva can focus on all uncontaminated dharmas in an instant.

(e) Peak application

Definition: a bodhisattva's yoga conjoined with the wisdom highly transformed from the Mahayana path of accumulation that cultivates a compendium of the three exalted knowers.

Mutually inclusive with: achievement through engaging.

Divisions: there are four:

peak application of the path of preparation

peak application of the path of seeing

peak application of the path of meditation

uninterrupted peak application

Boundaries: it exists from the heat level of the Mahayana path of preparation through the end of the continuum of the sentient being.

The difference between a complete aspects application and a peak application is that the former cultivates a compendium of the three exalted knowers in order to gain mastery over them, whereas the latter cultivates a compendium of the 173 aspects having gained this mastery. To gain mastery over the 173 aspects means to have gained the ability to meditate on all 173 aspects in a single session without leaving any out and without doing so in the wrong order.

'Highly transformed from the Mahayana path of accumulation' means that it has become a Mahayana path of preparation.

(f) Serial application

Definition: a bodhisattva's yoga conjoined with the wisdom that serially cultivates the aspects of the three exalted knowers for the sake of attaining steadiness with respect to the aspects of the three exalted knowers.

Divisions: there are 13

1-6. the six serial applications of the six perfections

7-12. the six serial applications of the six recollections, and

13. the serial application of non-entitiness.

Boundaries: it exists from the Mahayana path of accumulation through just prior to the end of the continuum of the sentient being.

A serial application is 'for the sake of attaining steadiness with respect to the aspects of the three exalted knowers' in that it cultivates the aspects in order to gain steadiness, whereas in the case of momentary application this steadiness has already been gained. Steadiness is attained with the practitioner is able to take all 173 aspects as an object in the shortest moment of a fingersnap.

The boundary is just prior to the end of the continuum of a sentient being because if it existed through the end of the continuum it would become a momentary application.

(g) Momentary application

Definition: a bodhisattva's final yoga that has attained steadiness with respect to the aspects of the three exalted knowers.

Mutually inclusive with: exalted wisdom at the end of the continuum of the sentient being.

Divisions: there are four

a fully ripened momentary application

a non-fully ripened momentary application

a characterless momentary application, and

a non-dual momentary application.

Boundaries: it exists only at the end of the continuum of the sentient being.

A momentary application is able to have all 173 aspects appear in the shortest moment of a complete action (a fingersnap). On the other hand, a buddha is able to have all 173 aspects appear in 1/65th of the moment of a complete action.

When a bodhisattva at the level of momentary training manifests a single fully matured uncontaminated phenomenon he is also able to manifest all other fully matured uncontaminated phenomena of a similar class in one action instant - the shortest moment in which an action can be completed. One action instant is the instant of a finger snap.

Momentary application only exists at the last instant of the uninterrupted path of meditation before the practitioner becomes enlightened.

Boundaries of the four trainings

If it is any of the four types of bodhisattva trainings there is a pervasion that it is a bodhisattva path.

- Momentary training: only exists in the last instant of continuum of a sentient being.
- Serial training: begins from the first moment of the path of accumulation to just before the end of the continuum of a sentient being ie just before momentary training. It is for the purpose of becoming stable in the aspects of the three knowledges. When it is stable that is the level of momentary training.
- Peak training: begins at the heat level of the path of preparation up to the very end of the learner's path. Out of the four paths of preparation - heat, peak, forbearance and supreme - peak training begins on the peak level and goes until the end of the learner's continuum.
- Training in all aspects: comprises the whole bodhisattva path from the path of accumulation up to the end of the continuum. So training in all aspects is synonymous with an exalted bodhisattva knower.

Question and answer

Q: is there a common basis that is all 8 dharmas?

A: . there is nothing that can be all eight dharmas.

- If it is any of the four trainings it has to be a bodhisattva's knower - so it only exists in the continuum of bodhisattva.
- Base wisdom can be found in all three types of aryas.
- And path wisdom can be found only in the continuum of Mahayana aryas.
- The transcendental wisdom of a buddha and the transcendental wisdom of a bodhisattva are mutually exclusive. If something is an awareness in the continuum of a bodhisattva - a bodhisattva path - it can't be omniscient consciousness. If it is the consciousness in the continuum of a buddha then it can't be a consciousness in the continuum of a bodhisattva.

Q: Is there a common basis that is all three types of knowledge?

The wisdom realising selflessness of persons in a Hinayana mode of realisation is not omniscient consciousness so it is not all three types of knowledge at once. However, consider the wisdom directly realising selflessness of persons in the continuum of a buddha - this is omniscient consciousness, path wisdom and base wisdom. It is all three.

How can path wisdom also be base wisdom? The definition of path wisdom is: a transcendental knower in the continuum of an arya Mahayana practitioner being held by special method and wisdom - great compassion and the wisdom realising emptiness directly. In the continuums of arya bodhisattvas and buddha's one can find great compassion as well as the wisdom realising emptiness directly. Path wisdom does not mean that it has to be one of those two but that it is held by one of those two. Being held means that one increases the other. So take the subject the wisdom realising selflessness of persons directly in the continuum of a buddha - is it held by great compassion and the wisdom realising emptiness directly? Yes.

Does it abide within the mode of Hinayana realisation? Yes. It is the main meditational object of the Hinayana practitioner. So the wisdom realising selflessness of person abides within the Hinayana mode of realisation. Hence it is all three types of knowledge.

Q: is there a common basis between the four trainings? Is there a path that is all four trainings at once?

A: consider the boundaries of the four trainings. Momentary training can only be found at the end of the learner's continuum. Other trainings begin at the path of accumulation and go up to just before the end of the continuum etc.

Q: Is there a common basis between momentary training and training in all aspects?

A: Momentary training itself is the common base i.e if it is momentary training there is a pervasion that it is training in all aspects. (Pervasion means that it is necessarily that i.e it pervades that. For example, if it is momentary training there is a pervasion that it is impermanent.)

If the training in all aspects is the common base it follows that it is momentary training. Take the subject training in aspects, is it momentary training? If yes, it follows that it exists only at the end of a sentient being's continuum which is not correct because it also exists before.

Q: Out of the four trainings, momentary training encompasses how many of the other trainings?

Is momentary training, training in all aspects or not? Yes. Momentary training is training in all aspects because it is an exalted bodhisattva's knower/path. Any type of bodhisattva's path is a training in all aspects. So momentary training is a bodhisattva path so it is a training in all aspects.

Q: is momentary training peak training? Yes (but not vice versa).

Q: is momentary training sequential training? No. One is training in order to attain stability and the other has attained it.

(h) Resultant truth body

Definition: the final result attained by the power of cultivating the aspects of the three exalted knowers which is the means of attaining it.

Mutually inclusive with: buddha.

Divisions: there are four
nature body

exalted wisdom truth body

enjoyment body, and

emanation body.

Boundary: it exists only on the buddha ground.

The eighth dharma is the resultant dharmakaya - buddha and resultant dharmakaya are synonymous. There are four bodies of a buddha - wisdom truth, nature truth body, enjoyment body and emanation body.

- Nature truth body: is the quality of cessation of obscurations in the continuum of a buddha.
- Wisdom truth body: is synonymous with omniscient consciousness.
- Enjoyment body: according to sutra is the body with which one first attains enlightenment in the pure land of Ogmin.
- Emanation body: there are many different types of emanation body such as supreme emanation body - buddhas like Shakyamuni that performs the 12 deeds, turn the wheel of dharma etc. Then there is the incarnate emanation body.

Enjoyment and emanation bodies are both form bodies.

This is the end of the commentary on the verse "The Perfection of Wisdom is perfectly explained by eight categories."

CHAPTER ONE: The Ten Topics of Exalted Knower of All Aspects

The eight dharmas are the eight subject of the eight chapters of the *Ornament*. The eight chapters are what expresses those eight subjects. The eight subjects are the subject of the *Prajnaparamita Sutras* as well as the *Ornament*. Also they are the subject of the commentary called *Clear Meaning* which was subsequent to the *Ornament* and is a commentary on it.

Q: Is there a difference between the eight dharmas and the eight clear realisations?

When talking about the eight dharmas and eight realisations, the difference lies in the last dharma. When talking about the dharmas, the last is the nature truth body or dharmakaya of the Buddha and when talking of the eight realisations the last is the wisdom truth body. The nature truth body is permanent which makes the dharmakaya permanent so therefore it cannot be a clear realisation.

From verse 1.5 to verse 1.17, there is a list of the 70 topics which constitute the body of the *Ornament*. It is called the presentation of the body of the *Ornament for Clear Realisation*. In the beginning there is a list of topics within each of the chapters - 10, 11, 9, 11, 8, 8, 13, 4 and 4 respectively. It shows the structure of the text.

The 10 topics that illustrate the first chapter are: Mind generation (bodhicitta), precepts (teaching or advice), the four branches of definite discrimination or separation (path of preparation - heat, peak, forbearance and supreme dharma), that which is the basis of the accomplishment/practice the nature of the sphere of reality - buddha nature, observed object (meditational objects), purpose (buddhahood), the three great aims - great intent, great abandonment and great realisation, armour-like practice (exalted bodhisattva knower), practice through engagement, practice through accumulation, definitely issuing/emerging practice.

1. Mind generation (conventional bodhicitta)

*Mind generation is the desire for
perfect complete enlightenment
For the welfare of others.
1.18cd That and that are, as in the sutras,
Expressed in a brief and extensive manner.*

(a) *The two aspirations*

Mind generation refers to conventional bodhicitta. Bodhicitta is the wish to attain complete enlightenment for the benefit of others. In the 20,000 verse *Prajnaparamita Sutra* it explains that there must be two wishes - to attain enlightenment and to benefit all sentient beings. In verse 1.18cd, the 'that and that' refers to these two wishes. It is also explained this way in the extensive and brief *Prajnaparamita Sutras*.

Bodhicitta is characterised by these two wishes. At the causal stage, it is the wish to accomplish the welfare of all sentient beings. At the actual time of the bodhicitta, it has to have the catalyst of the wish for complete enlightenment. Strictly speaking we are referring to the two aspirations.

An objection could arise, how could mind generation, which is a main mind, be a desire, which is the mental factor (aspiration)?

Mind generation is called a desire/aspiration in the sense that the name of the cause is given to the result. The desire to benefit others and the Mahayana mind generation are cause and effect.

Another objection could arise that one main consciousness can't be concomitant with two different aspirations simultaneously, i.e. one main consciousness can only be concomitant with one type of mental factor.

This is why at the causal time and the actual time of bodhicitta the aspirations are different.

It is not the case that one consciousness is concomitant with two different aspirations. It is saying that one aspiration exists at the causal stage and another exists at the time of the result, which is the actual bodhicitta. For example, the prayer "may all sentient beings attain enlightenment" is not bodhicitta because there is not the aspiration to attain one's own enlightenment. Nevertheless, the name of the cause is given to the result.

At the causal stage, one reflects on the sufferings of sentient beings to generate compassion and one generates the first aspiration of wanting to accomplish the welfare of sentient beings. When one looks at the method of accomplishing this, then one arrives at the second aspiration of wanting to attain one's own enlightenment. So of the two, the aspiration to accomplish the welfare of others is generated first and the aspiration to attain one's own enlightenment is generated second. But if one looks at which aim one accomplishes first, it is the reverse - first one attains enlightenment and then one accomplishes the welfare of sentient beings.

Concomitance between main mind and mental factors means concomitant in five ways - through:

- (i) object - both mental factor and main consciousness have the same object. Here the common observed objects are complete enlightenment and others' purpose; and
- (ii) aspect - both arise in the same aspect, for e.g. if main consciousness perceives impermanent sound the mental factor also arises in the aspect of impermanent sound. It refers to the aspect that is apprehended - the aspect of the object that is apprehended. The aspect of both the Mahayana conventional mind generation and the desire for enlightenment is of apprehending complete enlightenment.
- (iii) support - both arise in dependence on the same empowering condition, a sense power - in this case, the mental sense power.
- (iv) substance - refers to being of individual substance. The main mind and mental factor concomitant with it are of one substance from the point of view that there will only be one of each present at one time, i.e. not two mental factors of the same type with one main mental mind and not two mental consciousnesses with one mental factor. Also from the point of view of the substance of the object, there will always be only one particular substance apprehended. The main consciousness always perceives its object through/with the help of the mental factors.
- (v) time - simultaneous.

To summarise this point: Mahayana conventional mind generation is a main mind. The desire for enlightenment is its companion and is concomitant with it, while the desire for the welfare of others is its cause. 'Concomitant' refers to the five concomitances between main mind and mental factors that accompany it.

Q: are 'all sentient beings' the purpose of the Mahayana path?

A: there could not be anything stranger than positing all sentient beings as the purpose of the Mahayana path. Bodhicitta is a Mahayana practice/path. Previously we stated the three-fold purpose of the Mahayana path - great intent, great abandonment and great realisation. Basically it was Buddhahood. The purpose is to establish all sentient beings in non-abiding nirvana.

When reflecting on the suffering of sentient beings one generates the wish to accomplish their welfare. The best one can do for them is to lead them to enlightenment. Looking at one's present situation one is not even able to lead oneself to full enlightenment, one realises the need to accomplish one's own enlightenment.

Q: What is the altruistic purpose, i.e. the Mahayana/bodhicitta purpose relating to others?

A: The enlightenment of other sentient beings - nirvana in the continuum of others is the welfare of others.

Q: What is the purpose of self of bodhicitta?

A: one's own enlightenment.

Q: Does conventional bodhicitta focus on enlightenment or not?

Q: is the buddha that is the focal object of bodhicitta already a buddha?

A: The aspiration to accomplish the welfare of others and the aspiration to achieve enlightenment are cause and effect. When real time bodhicitta focuses on full enlightenment the practitioner has not yet attained enlightenment so has not achieved the enlightenment of others. Hence one's own enlightenment is the focus during real time bodhicitta ie qualities of enlightenment, it's characteristics etc.

Q: Does real time bodhicitta focus on actual enlightenment?

A: the basis is the altruistic intention wishing to accomplish the welfare of sentient beings. Then in searching for a method to accomplish this the practitioner looks toward the buddha and his qualities - clairvoyance, compassion etc. Then thinking if he could attain that state, the practitioner sees that if he becomes enlightened like the buddha he could achieve his aim and generates the aspiration to himself become enlightenment - so the real time bodhicitta focuses on the enlightenment of self and takes as an example the real enlightenment of a buddha as inspiration. If the practitioner needs to have a reason to want to attain his own enlightenment that needs to come about through a cause - seeing the qualities of someone who already has become enlightened.

(b) Definition of mind generation

Definition of a Mahayana conventional mind generation: a Mahayana special main mental knower distinguished by abiding in a type of path that serves as the door of entry into the Mahayana and that arises concomitant with an accompanying aspiration observing complete enlightenment for the sake of others.
When divided by way of entity: (1) wishing mind generation and (2) practical mind generation.

Different scholars posit different definitions but the essence is the same.

Verse 1.18ab of the Ornament says that mind generation is a 'desire'. It is so-called because it has an accompanying mental factor of aspiration that observes enlightenment - the name 'aspiration' is given to the result, 'mind generation'. In addition, there is a causal aspiration, which is an aspiration for the welfare of others. In this case the name of the cause is also given to mind generation

Note that the aspiration (a) wanting to accomplish the welfare of others, arises before (b) wanting to attain one's own perfect complete enlightenment.

Consider different aspects of the definition:

- "Welfare of others" - is the nirvana existing in the continua of other sentient beings. Thus, one helps others attain a nirvana in their continu and when they attain it one has accomplished their welfare.
- "The door of entry into the Mahayana" - when one attains a conventional mind generation one enters into the rank of mahayanists. Note that the definition says "distinguished by abiding in a type of path that serves as a door of entry into the Mahayana to cover the instance of more advanced conventional mind generations (eg waxing moon-like) which are mind generations but are not a door of entry into the Mahayana.
- "A Mahayana special main mental knower" - this shows that it is a main mental consciousness.

(c) Division by way of entity

Bodhicitta has a natural two-fold division:

- Wishing (aspiring)
- Engaging (practical)

The difference between the two is not that one merely wishes for enlightenment and the other engages in practices to achieve this. The difference is whether the bodhicitta is directly held by or combined with the

practice of the six perfections (generosity etc) or not. For bodhicitta to be directly held or combined with the practice of the six perfections both the bodhicitta and the practice of the six perfections both have to be manifest in the practitioner's mental continuum. This can only happen in the post-meditational period. During the time of meditative absorption on emptiness, because of the nature of the meditation, all dualistic and conventional appearances will become non-manifest - the only thing that appears to the meditator's mind is emptiness. So at this time the bodhicitta is aspiring bodhicitta.

In the post-meditation period, both bodhicitta and the practice of the six perfections hold each other - this is engaging bodhicitta. The wish to attain enlightenment to benefit all sentient beings needs to be manifest in the practitioner's mental continuum and combined with a practice of the six perfections such as generosity etc.

Generation of wishing bodhicitta and the taking of the engaging bodhicitta vows are not to be confused with wishing and engaging bodhicitta. When someone generates the wish wanting to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings, this is called generating the wishing bodhicitta. Combining this with the thought that this precious thought never decline is called the generation of the wishing bodhicitta. This is not to be confused with the division into wishing and engaging. Also when a person takes engaging bodhisattva vows there are two possibilities - that the person has already generated bodhicitta or that they haven't. So the fact that someone has the engaging bodhicitta vows does not mean that someone has engaging bodhicitta.

Engaging mind generation exists from the Mahayana path of accumulation up to the buddha ground. The wishing mind generation exists from the Mahayana path of accumulation up to the tenth ground i.e. it does not exist on the buddha ground.

(d) Division of mind generation

There is a nominal division of bodhicitta into 22 according to use with different types of similies/examples.

1.19 *Furthermore, earth, gold, moon, fire,
Treasure, jewel-mine, ocean,
Vajra, mountain, medicine, spiritual friend,
Wish-granting jewel, sun, song,*

1.20 *King, storehouse, highway,
Mount, spring,
Pleasant sound, river, and cloud:
These are the twenty-two types.*

There are 22 mind generations, 22 similies of these mind generations and 22 similarities between mind generation and the similies. For example, 'mind generation like earth' is a similie for the mind generation of aspiration which indicates the meaning of being a fundamental property of all virtuous dharmas.²

The way the different bodhicitta's differ is their conducive condition or catalyst. This is like the three types of compassion mentioned in Madhyamikavatara (a) compassion focusing merely on sentient beings; (b) compassion focusing on dharmas; (c) compassion focusing on non-focus. They vary in strength with the third being the strongest having as its facilitating condition the wisdom realising emptiness. The first is compassion. When compassion is combined with the wisdom realising impermanence even just coarse impermanence - the process of death and dying - can greatly increasing one's compassion. Compassion focused on dharmas is recognising how at the time of death, the person is separated from friends, possessions and body. By reflecting on these factors, compassion arises through the catalyst of wisdom realising coarse impermanence and then if one realises that everyone experiences this it becomes an equaliser as everyone must go through the death process.

² See GJG, February 24, 98, p9.

Likewise, the different types of bodhicitta arise with different catalysts and have different strength. The bodhicittas increase through the progress of the path through the conducive conditions.

The 22 are:

1. Earth-like: the mind generation that is accompanied by aspiration acts as the earth, the foundation on which all is built. Earth-like bodhicitta is the basis of all qualities. It is found at the very beginner stage of the bodhisattva path, the **small path of accumulation**. Earth-like bodhicitta is concomitant with aspiration. It is the ground or basis for all subsequent qualities. The practitioner first obtains the faith, called wishing faith, wanting to attain the qualities of a buddha and out of this faith arises aspiration which acts as the basis for the attainment of these qualities. The key is aspiration - if one has strong aspiration one will attain the qualities of enlightenment. However, this bodhicitta is still reversible - for example, Shariputra is said to have lost his bodhicitta when a demon refused Shariputra's cut-off hand because he presented it with his left hand.
2. Gold-like: in a similar way that gold possesses a certain purity, the practitioner with gold-like bodhicitta has reached a level of purity that will not degenerate from this point on-ward. The supporting condition is contemplation (or 'thought') - by contemplating more and more on the desire to attain enlightenment for the welfare of others, the practitioner achieves stability in his bodhicitta at the **medium level of path of accumulation**. In the sutras there are quotes that relate to each of the 22 bodhicittas. Here it says: "Those who wish to attain complete enlightenment in all aspects should train in the perfection of wisdom" which is said to show the object of one's own enlightenment.
3. Moon-like: the mind generation possessing extraordinary thought is like the waxing (increasing) moon and exists on the **greater path of accumulation**. Here 'extraordinary thought' means that the mind generation that is the wish to attain enlightenment for the welfare of others becomes more intense. Virtuous qualities such as the close placements of mindfulness continually increase in the continuum of the bodhisattva like the increasing whiteness of the waxing moon. At this stage, in the sutras the Buddha says to Shariputra "the bodhisattva while abiding in the perfection of wisdom meditates on the 37 features of full enlightenment and in such a way the white side of the mind of the bodhisattva increases like the whiteness of the waxing moon." The bodhisattva attains the meditative stabilisation of the stream of dharma which enables him to receive teachings directly from a supreme emanation body.
4. Fire-like: at the **heat level of the path of preparation** the bodhisattva has a conceptual realisation of emptiness held by a union of calm abiding and special insight and this is referred to as the mind generation possessing unification which is like fire. The meditation has attained such power that it is able to oppose the manifest afflictions of the bodhisattva in the same way that fire burns fuel. However, it does not have the power to cut the root of the afflictions. Sutra says that "the great bodhisattva who wishes to know and to see and to look on the complete knowledges (the three knowers) and go beyond, through that should meditate on the perfection of wisdom."
5. Treasure-like: this bodhicitta has as its supporting condition the superior practice of the perfection of generosity. It is in the continuum of bodhisattvas of the **first ground** of the path of seeing and it is called treasure-like because such a bodhisattva excels in the practice of generosity - he is never running out of things to give to others. Note that the treasure is the generosity itself, not the things given.
6. Jewel-mine: bodhisattvas on the **second ground** excels in the superior practice of the perfection of morality. Morality is like a source of all good qualities in the same way that a mine is the source of jewels, hence this bodhicitta is called jewel-mine.
7. Ocean-like: bodhisattvas on the **third ground** excel in the superior practice of patience. While on the surface the ocean is disturbed, underneath it is calm and still and difficult to agitate. Similarly someone with the practice of patience will be difficult to disturb. Because this bodhicitta has as its facilitating condition, it is called ocean-like. The bodhisattva will not be disturbed by any type of problem or suffering.

8. Diamond (Vajra)-like: bodhisattvas on the **fourth ground** excel in the superior practice of enthusiasm. It is called diamond-like because the diamond is indestructible - if one has enthusiasm one's practice will become very stable. The bodhisattva can't be diverted to any of the lower paths so the bodhicitta is irreversible.
9. Mountain-like: bodhisattvas on the **fifth ground** excel in the superior practice of mental stabilisation. They cannot be diverted by and can subdue the different types of laziness. Here meditative stabilisation refers to meditation through engagement which is single-pointed meditation - it is immovable as a mountain and through the force of this single-pointed concentration the bodhisattva can eat up different types of obscurations
10. Medicine-like: bodhisattvas on the **sixth ground** excel in the superior practice of the perfection wisdom. There is no medicine as effective against the delusions as meditation on emptiness.
11. Spiritual friend: bodhisattvas on the **seventh ground** excel in the superior practice of method. On the ground the bodhisattva meditates on the four immeasurable thoughts etc. By doing so he completely eliminates the distinction between friend, enemy and stranger and aims to benefit all sentient beings equally. If one wishes to benefit others there is nothing better than meditating on the four immeasurable thoughts.
12. Wish granting jewel: bodhisattvas on the **eighth ground** excel in the superior practice of prayer. On this ground the bodhisattvas has attained the five clairvoyances that empower him to help sentient beings more effectively. He becomes like a wish granting jewel.
13. Sun-like: bodhisattvas on the **ninth ground** excel in the superior practice of power. Bodhicitta at this level has as its conducive condition the practice of power whereby the bodhisattva benefits sentient beings with the four ways of gathering disciples. It is like the sun in that the sun shines everywhere and helps things grow in the same way that the bodhisattva nourishes sentient beings. The four ways of subduing disciples are: (a) practicing generosity - giving them presents; (b) speaking pleasantly - explaining dharma in a non-conceptual way; (c) explaining the meaning - the deeper meaning of dharma; (d) exhorts disciples to practice what they have learnt and the bodhisattva also practices what he teaches.
14. Song-like: bodhicitta that has as its supporting condition the superior practice of the transcendental perfection of wisdom, which is the last of the 10 perfections. This is on the **10th ground**. It is likened to a song which gives pleasure to those who hear it due to the melody, tune and the sound coming from instruments etc. The bodhisattva on this ground is referred to as the cloud of dharma - he teaches to those desiring liberation in a melodious tone. The bodhisattva teaches dharma by way of the four individual correct knowledges:
 - (a) The individual correct knowledge of definitive words
 - (b) The individual correct knowledge of the meaning
 - (c) The individual correct knowledge of phenomena (dharma)
 - (d) The individual correct knowledge of self assurance (confidence)
 Because the bodhisattva has attained (a), he can teach in any language without the aid of a translator.
15. King-like: bodhicitta that is concomitant with the five clairvoyances. It is found on the three pure grounds - the **8th, 9th and 10th grounds**. A king has many resources like an army, wealth etc and likewise this bodhicitta is concomitant with the great resource of the clairvoyances - the divine ear hearing distant sounds, the eye seeing distant forms, knowing the minds of students, remembering past lives of self and others, seeing future lives etc.
16. Storehouse-like: bodhicitta that is concomitant with the accumulation of merit and wisdom (the "two collections"). Bodhisattvas build the accumulation of merits which is the cause of the form body of the buddhas, and wisdom which is the cause of the truth body of the buddhas. If one has built up both accumulations, one can achieve whatever one wishes. It is said to be like a storehouse because wherever such a person goes they have whatever they need and they do not need to rely on external things.

17. Highway-like: bodhicitta like a great path that is concomitant with the 37 harmonies with enlightenment. Meditating on these becomes an extensive path so the bodhicitta that is concomitant with this is likened to a highway. There are two reasons the practice of the 37 harmonies is a great path:
- it is a path on which many sentient beings can travel; and
 - buddhas of the past, present and future all have used, are using and will use this path.

The 37 harmonies with enlightenment are:

- Four close placements of mindfulness
- Four thorough abandonings
- Four legs of magical manifestation
- Five powers
- Five forces
- Seven branches of enlightenment
- Eight-fold path of superiors

They are called ‘harmonies with enlightenment’ because by practicing these the practitioner attains his respective enlightenment i.e. hearer, solitary realiser, and buddha enlightenments.

18. Mount-like: bodhicitta that is concomitant with compassion and special insight. If a rider mounts a horse it will take him to where he wants to go - similarly if the practitioner with mount-like bodhicitta mounts his practice on compassion and special insight he can go directly to enlightenment without going to the two extremes of peace or existence. Compassion prevents the extreme of peace (like arhats) and special insight prevents the extreme of existence. Special insight refers to the realisation of emptiness, which is the only tool that can overcome true grasping and cuts the roots of cyclic existence. If one takes as one meditative object any type of conventional phenomena it will always be combined with the appearance of true existence. The only meditative object to overcome this appearance of true existence is emptiness. Therefore one must mount one’s practice on special insight to avoid the extreme of existence. In such a way, one can go directly to enlightenment.
19. Like spring water: bodhicitta that is concomitant with the qualities of perfect recollection and confidence. The practitioner who has this quality will not forget any teaching that they have heard which means that their knowledge becomes inexhaustible like a spring. Confidence is to be confident in the sense of not losing courage in the face of any object.
20. Like pleasant sound: bodhicitta that is concomitant with the joyful teaching of the dharma like the four seals (collections) of dharma:
- All compounded phenomena are impermanent
 - All contaminated phenomena are suffering
 - All phenomena are empty and selfless
 - Nirvana is peace
- These teachings are melodious to those wishing to attain liberation. It exists on the **buddha ground**.
21. River-like: bodhicitta that is concomitant with the path of solitary progress (“the unique path traveled”: GJG). The practitioner who has developed this path can benefit different sentient beings simultaneously. For example, with one verbal action the buddha can teach different things to different beings in accordance with their potential and needs. It is like a one-way street or river - the exalted knower realising selflessness is the unique path traveled in that in order to attain enlightenment one must necessarily attain an exalted knower realising selflessness. This mind generation, as well as 20 and 22, exists on the **buddha ground** on the divisions of preparation, actual and conclusion respectively.
22. Cloud-like: bodhicitta that is concomitant with the truth body of a buddha (**buddha ground**), which is capable of displaying the 12 deeds of a buddha (eg descending from a pure land etc.). The truth body is like a cloud in that just as a cloud is a source of rain, likewise the truth body is the source of the 12 deeds, such as giving dharma teachings and so forth. A supreme emanation body performs 12 deeds in order to benefit sentient beings. The 12 are:
- 1) The deed of abiding in Tushita, or the deed of taking a high birth
 - 2) The deed of descending from Tushita

- 3) The deed of being conceived in a womb
- 4) The deed of being born
- 5) The deed of youthful sporting, or the deed of becoming skillful in the arts
- 6) The deed of sporting with a retinue and reigning over a kingdom
- 7) The deed of taking ordination
- 8) The deed of fasting for six years
- 9) The deed of sitting under a bodhi tree and taming the maras
- 10) The deed of becoming a buddha
- 11) The deed of turning the wheel of dharma; and
- 12) The deed of passing into nirvana

According to the Vaibhashikas and Sautrantikas, the first nine deeds are those of a bodhisattva and the last three are the deeds of a buddha. The uncommon view of the Prasangika Madhyamika school is that all 12 are the deeds of a buddha.

Boundaries

The boundaries of the 22 mind generations are as posited:

- (1-3) the first three mind generations are included on the occasions of the three levels of the Mahayana path of accumulation, the small, middling and great;
- (4) the one following them is included in the path of preparation;
- (5-14) the ten following that are included respectively in the 10 grounds;
- (15-19) the five following them, that possessing the six clairvoyances and so forth, are included in the special path - the special path of the tenth ground [note: Geshe Dawa says they exist on the three pure grounds - 8,9,10]; and
- (20-22) the three mind generations following them are included in the buddha ground that is the preparation (end of the continuum of a sentient being), the actual (meditative equipoise of a buddha) and the conclusion (subsequent attainment of a buddha).

The 22 bodhicittas can be found from the first path of accumulation to the state of a buddha. They are attained sequentially and as the practitioner progresses along the path the bodhicitta becomes more and more powerful. This is how one meditates once one has attained real-time bodhicitta.

(e) Instruction on the Seven Point Cause & Effect Method and Exchanging Self With Others

Practice note one

The Seven Point Cause and Effect method has the following stages:

- Recognising sentient beings as one's mother
- Remembering their kindness
- Repaying their kindness
- Attractive love - wishing all beings to have happiness and its causes
- Great compassion - wishing all beings to be free from suffering and its causes
- Pure extraordinary resolve - taking responsibility
- The result: the Mahayana mind generation

Bodhicitta is generated through either the Seven-Point Cause and Effect method or Exchanging Self With Others method. Both systems are similar in generating the feeling that regards others as near and dear like how a mother regards her child. How this is done differs - the first focuses on regarding others as one's mother and the other method is more expansive. In exchanging self and others, nearness is generated by meditating on the kindness of all sentient beings not just being our mother but kindnesses shown even when there was no family ties etc. So they are kind regardless of what relationship one has with them.

When meditating on the kindness of sentient beings when they act as a condition for one's own enlightenment, this is separate from the kindness of the mother - it is related to where others are the object of one's generosity etc. Likewise for patience, love and compassion etc all depend on other sentient beings as the object. This method of exchanging self and others is to do with a switch in one's view - one's ordinary discriminatory attitude generates attachment to self and those belonging to self such as friends and family

and generates aversion to those one regards as others and dislikes. One has a switch in this view by reflecting on the benefits of cherishing others and the disadvantages of cherishing oneself.

Self cherishing is the mind that cherishes the side of self and has aversion for the side of other. Within the side of self one includes one's family and friends etc. It arises from the wrong view of self grasping. It sounds like it has a positive aspect because one cherishes the side of oneself, i.e. family etc. However, when one looks more closely the fault of self cherishing is that oneself will always be more important than others - more aversion to others than actual cherishing. For example, one has cherishing for one's own country and aversion for others' countries. Even from the side of one's own country, not all in it are cherished - there are many that are disliked or disregarded. One even holds oneself more important than friends and relatives. If our relationship turns out well, we take the credit but if there is some problem the fault is with the other. In the final analysis, oneself is more important to the self cherishing attitude than anyone else. It puts oneself ahead of even one's friends and relatives and makes one abandon even those one is normally close with.

Self cherishing is based on self grasping but the two should not be confused. Self cherishing is the door for all suffering. Self grasping can have a positive impact on one's life - thinking about one's friends, country etc then the attitude of wanting to help them can arise, so a benefit can arise from self grasping e.g. repaying the kindness of mother is on the basis of self grasping. Self cherishing is the mind that neglects the needs of others or abandons them, taking one's own aims as more important but self cherishing is not necessarily that type of mind. The generation of virtue based on this notion of self is called correct worldly view - positive actions based on the notion of self.

Afflictions act as the cause of karma and afflictions arise from the root affliction of ignorance. Ignorance refers to the grasping at a self so in this sense ignorance is the root of karma and afflictions. In the lam rim, during the meditations of the practitioner of intermediate capacity, because ignorance is the source of samsara (the contaminated aggregates compounded by afflictions and karma), it is regarded as an object of abandonment. Likewise for the being of medium capacity, the cause of rebirth is regarded as an object of abandonment but for those of small capacity it is regarded as an object of attainment (i.e. higher rebirth). The Mahayana practitioner recognises that a precious human body is the basis of the attainment of enlightenment.

When you meditate on the lam rim, bring the Mahayana motivation from the outset - this is the motivation of the great capacity being. So engage in the small capacity meditations because you recognise that you need a precious human rebirth to attain enlightenment. This is what is meant by the three scopes being a common path. It means that generation of fear of lower rebirth, for example, is the path common to the being of small capacity but the practitioner is not generating a path of a being of small capacity. However, when the practitioner is engaging in the methods (eg selflessness of persons) then this is an actual path of a being of medium capacity. The practitioner is meditating on a path common to or similar to those of small and medium capacity beings. The meditation is the same but the motivation is different. Lama Tsong Khapa said that if one has not comprehended one's own suffering one can't comprehend the suffering of others and therefore one can't generate compassion.

Practice note two

Meditate on compassion for sentient beings and generate the wish to attain enlightenment for their benefit. This is an expansive thought which is difficult to hold but even if held for a short time is very beneficial for the reason that it is done for countless sentient beings and the aim of complete enlightenment is a powerful object. Then one can accustom one's mind slowly to increasing this. Compassion even for just one person can be incredibly powerful.

It is beneficial to meditate on bodhicitta even for just a short time. The benefits are great because with respect to the aspiration to benefit others: (a) the object, sentient beings, is very vast which makes the benefit limitless; and (b) because one wishes to free all beings from each and every suffering, it also becomes very powerful. The second aspiration wanting to attain complete enlightenment has as its object qualities that are beyond comprehension so the benefits obtained by wishing to attain it are also beyond comprehension.

Meditating on bodhicitta is very effective and can bring about a very profound change within the mind.

A doubt may arise whether all sentient beings qualify as the object of my compassion due to thinking that some sentient beings appear not to be suffering. Considering the general sufferings of cyclic existence, one comes to realise that no beings in samsara can escape suffering and they are pervaded by suffering irrespective of whether suffering is manifest at any particular time. This equalises all sentient beings as the object of one's compassion. For example, a king has the same sufferings as a poor person.

There are two main practices for the generation of bodhicitta. One needs to focus on these techniques at the beginning. Out of the two methods, the Seven-Point Cause and Effect method is preferred by those of lesser mental capacity, whereas the Exchanging Self With Others method is recommended for those of higher mental capacity.

For the Seven-Point Cause and Effect method, one recollects how one has been in cyclic existence since beginningless times and that during each rebirth one has had a mother who has been very kind to oneself. In this way one establishes that all sentient beings have been one's mother and focuses on the kindness of the mother. Regardless of whether one thinks one's mother has been particularly kind, all mothers have in fact been kind. Recollect how many meals have been provided by our mother plus all other services like cleaning etc since our birth. If someone saved your life, you would think them very kind. Our mother has saved our life 100's of times. Therefore there is no-one kinder than our mother. People often have the thought that their mother was not kind. But it is strange that the human mind can remember and gives prominence to the bad things that have been done to us and ignores the many good things that that person has done for us.

The purpose of this meditation is to generate sentient beings in one's mind as being very dear to facilitate the development of love and compassion. If we regard others as dear, they will appear in this way. For such a person we generate love and compassion very easily and strongly. We generate, for example, love through dearness. One can generate love for sentient beings equal to the love of a mother for her only child. This love comes about because the mother regards her child as dear and precious. This is also found amongst animals. A mother may even be prepared to give up her life for her child.

A mother can do this because of the way she holds her child as dear. If one has this feeling of dearness and closeness, one cannot bear seeing them experiencing even slight suffering and wishes them to have complete happiness, hence feelings of love and compassion arise very strongly.

The Exchanging Self With Others method doesn't mean that we regard others as self and self as others. What it does mean is that we exchange the level of importance that we place on ourselves to others. Others are not less important to self - they become more important. To do this practice is very difficult and very powerful. The buddha's achieved their qualities by a switch in attitude. Most people regard self more important than other so therefore have not attained enlightenment. If out of all the times where we have regarded self more than other, even for a short time if we had regarded others more important than self we would already have attained enlightenment. The buddhas became enlightened because they gave up regarding self as more important than others. So this practice of exchanging self with others is very effective.

The process must be preceded by reflection on the advantages of cherishing others and the disadvantages of cherishing self. Here one reflects how during the present, past and future lives, all the problems one experiences come about because of self cherishing - how self cherishing naturally induces all that one doesn't like. Naturally, one wants happiness and not suffering but also naturally what one doesn't want is induced by self cherishing. Likewise, cherishing others also taking into consideration past, present and future life, induces all that one likes and produces all the happiness that one wishes for. First one has to reflect on the benefits and disadvantages of the benefits of cherishing others and the disadvantages of cherishing self.

Ordinarily, one regards self cherishing as a friend. Why can't we benefit others the way one wishes to? Because of self cherishing - putting our own needs over others. If a person puts the benefits of others ahead of themselves even a little, he is generally regarded as a very nice person. But a person who always regards himself as more important always gets angry as soon as things are not right etc. It appears that self cherishing protects our own interests and that giving up self cherishing would cause a loss. But in actuality, the way self cherishing works for one's benefit is to get angry as soon as something small is not right.

Self cherishing and cherishing others can be likened to two friends. Both look after one's interests. One does so aggressively and gets into fights when one is threatened. The other friend is relaxed and achieves one's benefit by peaceful means. The first friend is self cherishing - it looks like he has positive intentions but he tends to be disruptive and finally one will become an enemy of such a person as his anger eventually becomes directed to oneself. This is how self cherishing works. The other friend is like cherishing others and is much more stable.

2. Precepts

(a) Definition

Definition of Mahayana precepts: Mahayana speech that teaches a method for attaining the object of striving of Mahayana mind generation.

When divided by way of entity there are two:

- (1) precepts exhorting to the Mahayana (for the sake of newly attaining previously unattained qualities) and
- (2) precepts of subsequent Mahayana teachings (for the sake of increasing already attained qualities).

When divided by way of exhortation there are ten: precepts of exhortation with respect to –

- (1) its own entity, achieving,
- (2) the object of observation, the Four Noble Truths,
- (3) the basis, the three jewels,
- (4) effort in non-clinging,
- (5) tireless effort,
- (6) effort that thoroughly maintains the path,
- (7) the five eyes: eye of flesh, divine eye, eye of wisdom, eye of dharma, and eye of buddha,
- (8) the six clairvoyances of: magical emanations, divine ear, knowing others' minds, remembrance of past lives, divine eye, and exhaustion of contaminations,
- (9) the path of seeing, and
- (10) the path of meditation.

Its boundaries: from before entering the path through the buddha ground.

What is a precept? This word can also be translated as 'oral instruction'. Precepts are defined as 'Mahayana words that teach the method for attaining the aim of bodhicitta'. The aim of bodhicitta is complete enlightenment for the welfare of others and the Mahayana teachings show the method for attaining this.

(b) Mahayana speech

What is referred to as teaching or advice can be either a commentary or the Buddha's speech itself.

Definition of commentary: pure words that have the two features of liberating and rescuing.

This is liberating one from the afflictions by practicing what they express and rescuing one from suffering. Within the definition of 'commentary', all the teachings of the Buddha are included - they all become commentaries. But also we can look at commentaries as distinct from the original teachings - they are not the Buddha's own words.

When we talk of the Mahayana words that show the method for attaining the aim of bodhicitta, it can either be the speech of the Buddha himself or a commentary. Commentaries themselves come in various forms. Likewise the speech of the Buddha comes about in various ways and means. Being the speech of the Buddha does not necessarily mean that he spoke those actual words. For example, the *Heart Sutra* is called the speech of the Buddha that came about through the blessing of the Buddha. It is a conversation between Chenrezig and Shariputra that came about through the inspiration of the Buddha, so therefore is regarded as the speech of the Buddha.

In general, everything that was spoken by the Buddha and that written by later lineage lamas are pure words endowed with the features of liberating and rescuing.

Q: is there a difference between the speech of the Buddha and a commentary that is not a speech of the Buddha? Are they mutually exclusive or do they have a common basis?

A: to be speech of the Buddha it must have either been spoken by the Buddha himself or come about through the inspiration of the Buddha. If it is speech of the Buddha, there is a pervasion that it is a commentary because it is pure speech endowed with the two features. But is it necessarily a commentary? In general, if it is the speech of the Buddha it will be a commentary but if a text is a commentary as opposed to being the speech of the Buddha then they are mutually exclusive. So there are two ways of looking at it - commentaries in general and the other way is where there is a distinction between the speech of the Buddha and a commentary.

The Mahayana speech that was taught by the Buddha for the purpose of leading disciples to the aim of bodhicitta will be speech of the Buddha. Mahayana speech that was composed by anyone else for the same purpose is a commentary.

Mahayana teachings has a two-fold division between speech of the buddha and commentaries. In order to be speech of the Buddha it must have four features:

- 1) Subject: the words are endowed with the qualities of high status (higher rebirth), liberation and so forth. This means that they are the subject matter of the teachings.
- 2) Free from mistakes
- 3) Function: it was taught in order to abandon the various types of abandonments such as the afflictions belonging to the three realms and so forth. If the teachings lead to a lessening of the afflictions belonging to the three realms, then they accomplish this purpose.
- 4) Purpose: to show the benefit of pacifying the afflictions and thereby the sufferings. Teachings that convey the meaning, for example, of calm abiding and special insight convey how one can free oneself from afflictions and suffering.

Speech of the Buddha has a three-fold division into:

- 1) Speech of the Buddha actually expressed by the Buddha himself: from his mouth;
- 2) Speech of the Buddha that came about through the blessing of the Buddha: for example, in the Heart Sutra there is a teaching through the blessing of the Buddha with Chenrezig teaching on emptiness and the five paths at the end of which the Buddha says “well said, well said” i.e confirmation that it accords with his own mind.
- 3) Subsequent speech of the Buddha: the Buddha said to his disciples that after he passed away they should convene an assembly of 500 arhats and make a collection of his teachings - they collected the Hinayana teachings and later Mahayana teachings were collected by Manjushri etc. They were instructed by the Buddha to begin each teaching with the words, “Thus I have heard at one time”. So these words were actually spoken on the instruction of the Buddha and therefore are referred to as the subsequent speech of the Buddha.

(c) Division by entity

The two-fold division of the topic of precepts by entity is as follows:

- 1) Teachings of the Buddha that were taught for the purpose of increasing qualities already attained; and
- 2) Teachings of the Buddha that were taught for the purpose of newly generating qualities that had not been attained previously.

Take the subject, 'the vessel, a bodhisattva who has generated any of the first three bodhicittas', there is a need for him to be instructed by a supreme emanation body - a) to generate the bodhicitta not generated before and to accomplish the unions of calm abiding and special insight etc. contained within the perfect dharma practices facilitated by those bodhicittas; b) in order to perfectly protect the previously attained qualities from degenerating and rather to increase them.

From the great path of accumulation onwards, the concentration of continuous dharma is attained. This empowers all bodhisattvas on the great path of accumulation to always be able to directly listen to instruction from a supreme emanation body. In general, of course, there are also ordinary beings that can listen to teachings of a supreme emanation body so there is no need to mention this specifically for the lower bodhisattvas on the small and medium path of accumulation.

Difference in vessel: A proper vessel aspires to immediately put into practice what it has heard while listening to the instructions.

Concentration of continuous dharma, which is the cause for listening to Mahayana instructions: A concentration unifying calm abiding and special insight that is able to directly listen to teachings from a supreme emanation body after having purified the obscurations preventing lesser practitioners from directly seeing and taking teachings in this way. The causes are building up the accumulations for several eons, having pure view and morality, being endowed with lineage, extensive listening and having abandoned the four adverse conditions to having pure lineage.

Q: Are these two types of teachings mutually exclusive or synonymous?

A: Synonymous. Both types of teachings were taught to the same group of disciples as a result of which some generated new qualities and others increased qualities they already had.

(d) Division by subject

According to the words of the *Ornament* (verse 1.21, 1.22), the subject of precepts has a 10-fold division by subject starting with the nature of accomplishment up to the path of meditation:

- 1.21 *Achievings, the truths,
The Three Jewels – Buddha and so forth,
Non-clinging, tireless,
Thoroughly upholding the path,*
- 1.22 *The five eyes, the six excellent qualities of
The clairvoyances, and the so-called paths
Of seeing and meditation: precepts are to be
Understood as the entity of these ten.*

- 1) Instructions regarding the nature of practice (achievements, accomplishments, practice and path are synonymous)
- 2) Instructions regarding the meditational object, the Four Noble Truths
- 3) Instructions regarding the basis, the three jewels
- 4) Instructions regarding effort in non-clinging
- 5) Instructions on tireless effort
- 6) Instructions regarding effort that thoroughly upholds the path
- 7) Instructions regarding the five eyes - flesh eye, divine eye, eye of wisdom, eye of dharma, buddha eye
- 8) Instructions regarding the six type of clairvoyance
- 9) Instructions on the path of seeing
- 10) Instructions on the path of meditation

Regarding the basis of accomplishment and that which are based, for the former there are instructions on the Three Jewels - Buddha and so forth. For the later, we have the basis of characteristic and the characteristics. Regarding the first we have instructions on accomplishment and truths, which are respectively instructions on aspect and object. Regarding the characteristics we have instructions on the elimination of obstructions and instructions on the accomplishing of qualities. For the elimination of manifest obstacles, there are the

instructions on non-clinging, tirelessness and thorough upholding of the path, which are respectively causes for starting to accomplish, increasing and non-degeneration. The instructions on the five eyes and six clairvoyances are respectively to naturally accomplish and for the quick completion of the result. The instructions on the path of seeing and meditation are for the elimination of the seeds of the abandonments.

This structure may be summarised as follows:

- A. Oral instructions about the support of the achievement - the Three Jewels
- B. Oral instructions about the supported achievement
 - (a) About the qualified basis
 - (i) Aspect - the entity of achievement itself - the Two Truths
 - (ii) Object - the Four Noble Truths
 - (b) About the qualities themselves
 - (i) Instructions about dispelling the discordant class
 - 1. Instructions about dispelling the manifest discordant class (i.e. laziness)
 - Non-clinging
 - Tirelessness
 - Thoroughly upholding the path
 - 2. Instructions about dispelling the dormant discordant class (i.e. seeds)
 - Path of seeing
 - Path of meditation
 - (ii) Achieving excellent qualities
 - 5 eyes: to engage in the achievement by one's own force
 - 6 clairvoyances: in order to achieve the result quickly

Why is the instruction given? So as to realise the achievements. What is to be achieved? The 22 mind generations and the practice of the six perfections which are impelled by those mind generations are to be achieved.

1) Instructions regarding the nature of practice - the Two Truths

That which is accomplished: are the divisions of bodhicitta and the various trainings of generosity etc. facilitated by those as explained above.

How that is accomplished: By entering into the four dharmas that engage the perfection of wisdom for the purpose of achieving the truth body and liberating all sentient beings from suffering. One should do this without going beyond the sequence of the path based on conventional truth, that is practice based on valid cognition of the person practicing, that to be practiced and the fruit, as well as not going beyond the sequence of the path based on ultimate truth, that is practicing after having realized that all of the above are empty of true existence.

Our practice we must not go beyond the limits of the Two Truths. All our practices such as the Four Noble Truths, the three jewels, compassion etc., are conventional truths. We have to depend on conventionalities to realise the ultimate truth but also apply our understanding of ultimate truth to all of these by remembering their non-true existence.

Commentary on the Two Truths is set out in four outlines: Definitions, Etymology, Divisions of Examples and Analysis of Being One or Different

(a) Definitions

Definition of ultimate truth: that which is realised in a non-dual manner by the direct perception realising it directly and not being a positive phenomena.

'Not a positive phenomena'

The reason for specifying that it is not a positive phenomenon is to eliminate consciousness as ultimate truth. According to the Svatantrika Madhyamika school, consciousness is also understood by its self-knower in a

non-dual manner. So there could be the objection that consciousness would be an ultimate truth because it is realised in a non-dual manner by the direct perception realising it directly. However, only emptiness can be ultimate truth and emptiness is a negation.

Definition of conventional truth: that which is realised in a dualistic manner by the valid cogniser realising it directly.

Realising something in a dualistic manner means that there appears to be a distance between subject mind and object. When something is realised in a non-dual manner there is no appearance of distance between subject and object, they merge like water into water.

Regarding the term 'ultimate', it is applied both to the subject and object. The subject is uncontaminated wisdom realising emptiness directly. It is also applied to the ultimate inferential cogniser realising emptiness directly. The object is emptiness itself. Ultimate truth is only emptiness. So ultimate truth is applied to the subject but the subject is not ultimate truth.

(b) Etymology

Why is it a 'truth'?

Emptiness is ultimate truth because it is true for the ultimate subject. Emptiness is true for the ultimate subject, the uncontaminated wisdom realising emptiness directly, because it exists the way in which it appears.

A conventional truth, such as a vase, appears as true to a conventional subject such as an eye consciousness. A conventional awareness always has a conventional object. They are called conventional truths because they appear as true to the conventional awareness. But that doesn't mean that they are actually true phenomena. They are false phenomena because even though they appear as true they are false. They don't exist the way they appear. At the time of analysis by an ultimate inferential cogniser, they cannot be found which means they aren't true even though they appear as such while not analysing.

The tibetan word 'kuntsob', which is translated as 'conventional', more literally means 'all-obscuring'. Conventional truth is the completely obscured truth³ or truth for the all-obscuring mind, such as an eye consciousness. Conventional phenomena, even though they lack true existence, appear to the all-obscuring mind as true. Such a mind prevents the understanding of the emptiness of conventional phenomena by obscuring the ultimate nature of phenomena.

(c) Divisions of examples

Emptiness is the truth of the ultimate awareness and it is true in that it exists the way in which it appears. Therefore, by entity there are no divisions. However, it has a nominal division into 16, 18 and 20⁴. This division is by the basis of the emptiness, not by nature.

Conventional truth has a two-fold division:

- (a) Correct conventional truth: a conventional truth that can't be understood by an ordinary person to exist differently from the way it appears.
- (b) Incorrect conventional truth: a conventional truth that can be understood by an ordinary person to exist differently from the way it appears.

Here ordinary person refers to a person that hasn't realised emptiness.

Consider the reflection of form in a mirror. To understand that this is not form one only needs to understand the nature of reflection itself. Phenomena such as reflections, dream objects and magical illusions are

³ Illusory or surreal truth.

⁴ See GJG short commentary Sept 29, 99 p21

incorrect conventional truths because an ordinary person can understand that they don't exist the way in which they appear. This can be understood without understanding emptiness.

Then consider a vase. It also appears as true but is actually false. It also doesn't exist the way it appears. But in order to understand that one needs to understand the emptiness of the vase. That's why it is a correct conventional truth. To understand the way in which the vase really exists you need to understand the emptiness of the vase. Therefore, the vase is a correct conventional truth.

Examples of incorrect conventional truths that can be refuted by a valid cogniser with respect to their conventional existence are the self of persons, a self sufficient substantially existent self, a permanent, partless and independent person, the son of a barren woman, the horns of a rabbit and so forth.

The Prasangika Mahyamika school says that there is no such division between correct and incorrect conventional truths because if it is a conventional truth it is pervaded by being an incorrect conventional truth. They can only be differentiated with respect to the understanding of ordinary beings and that conventional truth itself is not divided between correct and incorrect.

Emptiness is a negation

Conventional truths, such as vase, appear as vivid and solid, existing independent of causes and conditions - one only understands the non-existence of this appearance by performing ultimate analysis by going through the process of negation arriving at the absence of the imputed object, which is emptiness. Emptiness is a negation, which does not mean that the object is non-existent. Rather this refers to how the object is realised. For example, if you are asked whether there is a horse outside but on looking find no horse, the absence of horse is a negation. Likewise, during meditation on emptiness, if one looks for true existence one arrives at the absence of true existence, which is a non-affirming negation. On one side, true existence is negated but nothing is affirmed in its place so it is said to be 'non-affirming'. The unfindability of conventional phenomena at the time of analysis is ultimate truth. The *Heart Sutra* contains a list of negations - no eye, no ear, no nose etc. These phenomena are not to be found at the time of analysis.

Space is the best metaphor for emptiness amongst conventional phenomena. Why one says there is space is because one doesn't see anything. There is space because one can't see anything solid. Likewise, there is emptiness because there is no true existence.

The best type of vision is the vision that sees nothing. This is called Superior Vision and is the not seeing of conventional phenomena at the time of analysis - the best seeing is not seeing any conventional phenomena at the time of analysis. When at the time of analysis one realises the unfindability of the object of negation one has arrived at an understanding of emptiness.

Dualistic appearance

Conventional truth is realised in a dualistic manner by the valid cogniser realising it directly. Ultimate truth is realised in a non-dualistic manner by the direct perception realising it directly.

Conventional truth is realised primarily by the five sense consciousnesses. Ultimate truth is realised by the uncontaminated wisdom realising emptiness directly. Realising conventional truths dualistically refers to the appearance of subject and object as different. However, with ultimate truth there is no difference between subject and object. One merges with the object like pouring water into water.

Dualistic appearance can be explained as being of three types:

- (i) the subject and object appearing as two,
- (ii) the appearance of true existence, and
- (iii) the mere appearance of conventional phenomena, such as form.

When a bodhisattva realises emptiness his mind is focused only on emptiness and there is none of the three types of dualistic appearance. When a conventional phenomena is realised there is dualistic appearance because the subject and object appear to be different, the cogniser has the appearance of true existence, and the conventional phenomena appears.

According to the Svatantrika Madhyamika point of view, if it is the apprehended object of a non-dualistic awareness, it can only be emptiness. If such awareness takes a conventional object it can't understand it in a non-dualistic manner. By having conventional appearance, there will necessarily be a dualistic appearance.

Mistaken, unmistaken, wrong consciousnesses

According to Svatantrika Madhyamika tenets, the subtle object of negation of true existence doesn't appear to a sense consciousness. However, according to Prasangika Madhyamika, where-ever there is the appearance of conventional phenomena to a sentient being there will always be the appearance of true existence. They assert that if it is a sense consciousness, it will always be a mistaken awareness.

It is important not to confuse what is being said here. The Prasangikas are not saying that an eye consciousness has grasping at true existence. True existence appears to the eye consciousness but it doesn't grasp at true existence. It isn't grasping even though it has the appearance of true existence. If it is an awareness to which true existence appears, then it is a mistaken awareness. However, this does not make it a wrong awareness.

On the other hand, Svatantrika tenets assert that a sense consciousness realising its object is always unmistaken regarding the appearing object. A wrong consciousness is always mistaken with respect to the appearing object. For example, the eye consciousness to which a snow-covered mountain appears as blue, the eye consciousness to which one moon appears as two or the eye consciousness to which the mirage appears as water.

However, according to the Prasangikas, an eye consciousness apprehending vase as truly existent is not a wrong consciousness but is mistaken with respect to how the object appears to it. According to the Svatantrikas, if the dualistic appearance is mistaken with respect to its appearing object it is a wrong consciousness.

(d) Investigating one and different

In general, when we talk about 'one', we can do so in many different contexts. For example, 'being of one meaning', which means to be synonymous; or one talks of 'one nature'; or 'one substance. But when talking of just being one, it is being of one isolate. This means having the same name - there is no difference in the sound as it is expressed. An example of one entity being of different isolates, are the different names of Buddha Shakyamuni. Even though the names are not one, they refer to the same person.

When one says that the Two Truths are one, it means that they are of one nature. It doesn't mean that they are of one isolate. So the Two Truths are said to be of one nature but of different isolate.

Q: what does it mean that the Two Truths are of one nature?

A: conventional truth is always the basis of negation on which one can find ultimate truth, emptiness. As such, ultimate truth and conventional truth are of one nature. For example, the verse in the *Heart Sutra* that begins "Form is emptiness, emptiness is form" explains how the Two Truths are of one nature. Consider the components of the verse:

- "Form is emptiness": form is empty of true existence. The absence of true existence is the nature of form. Here we are negating an intrinsic existence of form.
- "Emptiness is form": emptiness is the nature of form. His Holiness the Dalai Lama⁵ says that "because forms have no fixed, isolated entity, we can say that emptiness is the basis for the existence of form...form [is] a manifestation or expression of emptiness, something that comes out of emptiness." Emptiness is the basis that allows the dependent origination of form.
- "Emptiness is not other than form": there is no emptiness of form that is of a different nature from form. His Holiness says, "emptiness exists only as a quality of a particular phenomena; emptiness does not exist separately and independently of particular phenomena."

⁵ *Essence of the Heart Sutra*, p116,

- “Form also is not other than emptiness”: the basis of negation, form, cannot be found apart from its nature, emptiness. It is of the same nature as emptiness (i.e. form is dependently originated).

When we say the Two Truths are of one nature but different isolate, we have to relate it to this relationship of basis of negation and emptiness.

On the example of form, we can see how the Two Truths are of one nature. Form exists conventionally, so therefore it doesn't exist ultimately. Conventionally existing form goes hand in hand with form lacking ultimate existence. Likewise, form lacking ultimate existence goes hand in hand with form that exists conventionally. Thinking in this context, one understands how the Two Truths are of one nature. It is equivalent to the example, 'product is impermanent'. Whatever is produced is impermanent - whatever is impermanent is also produced. Like product and impermanence goes hand in hand, likewise conventionally existing form and form lacking ultimate existence also goes hand in hand.

In order to understand the Two Truths, first one must understand cause conventional truth. The basis of negation, such as form, is referred to as the 'other-powered' basis of negation. The basis of negation is the object of ultimate analysis, investigating whether the imputed meaning can be found. We find that at the time of analysis the imputed meaning cannot be found - we arrive at the unfindability of the imputed meaning. This is emptiness. One has arrived at a negation - a non-affirming negative of true existence.

Having arrived at that point, if there is a danger of falling into nihilism, thinking that phenomena don't exist at all, one has to look at the nominal side of form, i.e. conventionally existing form. To understand conventionally existing form one needs to have understood emptiness. Conventionally existing form is subtle conventional truth. It needs to be understood by first understanding ultimate truth on the basis of the absence of negation. When one understands conventionally existing form, which is subtle conventional truth, one understands how phenomena can perform functions while existing as merely labelled.

First one has the basis of negation, for example, of form which is cause conventional truth. Then when one investigates the mode of abiding or nature of form with ultimate analysis, one finds that the imputed meaning cannot be found at the time of analysis. In that one way, one arrives at form's lack of true existence, which is the emptiness of form. The emptiness of form is the nature of form and is of one nature with form. Form is not the nature of emptiness, it is the other way around. If there is a danger of falling into nihilism one has to go to the understanding of conventionally existent form and how form can perform functions while existing only nominally. One has to contemplate how phenomena can function as causes and effects while existing nominally. If one understands this one has understood emptiness as well as conventional truth. Conventional truth becomes the method. Ultimate truth is the effect, meaning that at the beginning one has the basis being a conventional truth and then on the basis of that one can investigate its nature and arrive at ultimate truth. From that one goes to the subtle conventional truth, for example, conventionally existing form and one can understand the combination of the ability to perform a function as cause and effects while existing only nominally. For example, the person, even though existing only nominally can cause effects, experience results and so forth.

Geshe Jampa Gyatso's commentary makes the following points with respect to the Two Truths being one or different:

- If the Two Truths were one there would be four faults and if they were different there would be four faults (see appendix). Therefore, they are one entity but different in name. All phenomena have the entity of both conventional and ultimate truths. This means that on each single phenomena there is something that is perceived as false and something that is perceived as its ultimate entity. Whatever exists for a mistaken consciousness of an ordinary being is a conventional truth and whatever exists for the contemplative mind of an arya is an ultimate truth.
- All phenomena are included in the Two Truths, but all phenomena are not included in the Four Noble Truths. For example, a vase's emptiness of true existence is none of the Four Noble Truths.

- The Prasangika Madhyamikas assert that true sufferings, true origins and true paths are conventional truths while true cessations are ultimate truths.⁶

2) Instructions about the observed object of that achieving - the Four Noble Truths

(a) Establishing the Four Noble Truths

All phenomena apart from emptiness are conventional truths. The only phenomena that isn't a conventional truth is emptiness.

Phenomena that are conventional truths are divided into permanent and impermanent (or functioning) phenomena. An example of permanent phenomena is space, which is not generated through causes and conditions. Functioning phenomena has a three-fold division into form, awareness and non-associated compositional factors.

Form comprise the five - visible form, sound, smell, taste and tactile sensations. They are perceived or engaged by the five sense consciousnesses eg. eye consciousness etc. These consciousnesses are generated in dependence upon their uncommon empowering condition, the respective sense power or source, e.g. eye sense power, ear, nose etc. Through the inner uncommon empowering condition of the eye sense power and the outer condition of visible form, the eye consciousness engages visible form.

Non-associated compositional factors are all compounded phenomena that are not associated with the aggregates of form and awareness (minds and mental factors). They are not matter nor awareness. According to the Sautrantika, form, awareness and non-associated compositional factors are mutually exclusive - one can never be the other. Examples of non-associated compositional factors are year, month etc. 'Year' exists and is impermanent but is not form or awareness. This category of conventional phenomena is quite extensive and important as one progresses through the higher tenets. Karmic imprints are also non-associated compositional factors.

There are many different types of conventional phenomena. However, if it is a non-existent, it can't be a conventional phenomena.

Within the three-fold division of compounded phenomena, awareness or consciousness is the most important because the whole path is contained within that division. For example, meditation on calm abiding is a type of awareness; superior insight is an awareness; the perfections are awarenesses. The different paths and grounds are different types of consciousness.

Awareness has a two-fold division into mind and mental factors. The Tibetan word for mental factors literally translates as 'arisen from mind'. From this the doubt arises whether mental factors arise from mind. But actually, mental factors always arise together with a concomitant mind. Each main conscious always has an entourage of mental factors. Mental factors can never be found by themselves. They are called 'arisen from mind' because they arise from the preceding moment of mind.

Mental factors can be sub-divided into the 51 mental factors. They constitute what has to be abandoned and what has to be developed within our mental continuum. Whether our mind improves or declines depends on the mental factors. In this way, they determine our life.

In the text, the Four Noble Truths are presented next in the context of the explanation of conventional truth. When His Holiness the Dalai Lama taught the Four Noble Truths in Sydney⁷, he spent much time establishing the Four Noble Truths by different types of analysis. The link with the Four Noble Truths is that the truths are describing different mental states, so one needs to have an understanding of awareness. Awareness is that which makes it possible for us to attain omniscient consciousness. To understand the

⁶ For an analysis of conventional and ultimate truth in respect of each of the four systems of tenets see GJG March 12, 98, p23.

⁷ See tape

nature of awareness, which is clear and knowing naturally, one relies upon the analysis of nature, which is one of the three types of analysis⁸:

- (i) natural inference/reason
- (ii) reason of dependent arising
- (iii) reason of valid cognition

Natural inference: in relation to awareness, the first reason establishes that consciousness has existed since beginningless time (i.e. one cannot find the first moment). In its nature, awareness is clear and knowing. This clarity and knowingness of awareness constitutes the nature of awareness. It is not something that has been created but is in its nature. Likewise, the nature of fire is hot and burning - there is nothing that makes it that way. There is nothing also that makes awareness clear and knowing. Understanding this, one relies upon natural inference, analysing the nature of the object. In dependence on this consciousness that is clear and knowing naturally, one can become enlightened and attain omniscient consciousness.

Reason/analysis of dependent arising: here one tries to understand the different types of cause and effect relationships. Scientists do this with outer phenomena, analysing how things function, how reacting when combined with other phenomena and so forth. Similarly, in the Buddhist context, we need to consider the inner cause and effect relationships. Buddha explained that suffering was created from karma and that karma was created from the afflictions which are created from ignorance. He was explaining the inner development of suffering.

This is explained in the context of the 12 links of dependent arising. The root is ignorance from which arises the various types of afflictions. Through the power of the afflictions one creates virtuous and non-virtuous karma. Virtuous karma makes one go up in cyclic existence and non-virtuous karma makes one go down in cyclic existence. In this way, Buddha explained how one circles in cyclic existence. He also explained the antidote - there is a different type of cause and effect relationship that can free one from cyclic existence. One has to rely on love and compassion, which can lead one from suffering.

Reason of valid cognition: this was not expanded upon by Geshe-la, however, this refers to investigation by way of reasoning based on valid proof. Geshe Jampa Gyatso gives the example of the proof that sound is impermanent by way of a sign, such as the sign 'because it changes momentarily'. He also said that the five reasonings that establish all phenomena as non-truly existent can be included in the logic that proves correctness, or valid cognition.

There was a Geshe who explained the types of analysis on the basis of making tea. First you need water, which has the nature of being wet and moist (analysis into nature). Then you add the tea itself and heat, add sugar and milk etc (reason of dependent arising). Similarly to the metaphor, in order to become enlightened one needs the basis of consciousness. The nature of consciousness is clear and knowing. Without this clear and knowing aspect of consciousness, one couldn't become enlightened. However, every consciousness has this nature. Even though each consciousness is temporarily obscured with the afflictions, they are not one with consciousness - they can be separated from consciousness and one can become enlightened. Because of the clear and knowing nature consciousness one can free the consciousness from the afflictions and become enlightened.

Consciousness has a six-fold division into the five sense consciousnesses and mental consciousness. The difference between the sense and mental consciousnesses are their uncommon empowering conditions. The five sense consciousnesses are very specific with regard to their objects. This comes about due to the uncommon empowering condition of the sense power. For example, the eye consciousness will only apprehend visual form. Why? Because the eye consciousness arises in dependence on the uncommon empowering condition of the eye sense power and in dependence on the common empowering condition of the mental sense power.

⁸ Or four (GJG March 13, 98, p24) if one includes the proof that phenomena can perform a function. See also His Holiness the Dalai Lama, *The Meaning of Life*, p25.

The mental sense power is the common empowering condition for all five sense consciousnesses because it is generated in dependence on a preceding moment of *mental* consciousness⁹. The uncommon empowering condition of mental consciousness is mental consciousness itself. It is a common empowering condition for the five sense consciousnesses but for mental consciousness itself it has the uncommon empowering condition of a preceding moment of mental consciousness.

The sense consciousnesses are very unstable whereas the mental consciousness is stable. The mental consciousness is the basis of one's Buddhist practice. To become enlightened, one needs to practice for a long time and this practice can only happen on the basis of mental consciousness. Sense consciousnesses are very adventitious and unstable

Because mental consciousness is stable, the karmic imprints go from life on the mental consciousness. They could not be placed on a sense consciousness. When throwing karma is created on the basis of the dependent link of ignorance, that throwing karma projects a future life. Since it does this, the seed needs to go to that future life when it ripens. This is done on the basis of mental consciousness. Therefore, the third link 'consciousness' is mental consciousness. Mental consciousness is the stable basis on which the karmic imprints can go from life to life. When those imprints ripen, they create the worlds and the beings within. They are created by karma. Karma ripens through the catalyst of the afflictions. Anything that has arisen through the power of karma and afflictions is suffering. That is why one says that 'all three worlds and the beings within are in the nature of suffering'.

To know the process of how suffering comes into existence is beneficial to oneself.

(b) Meaning of the branches

(i) The truth of suffering

The definition of true sufferings is: a truth of the thoroughly afflicted class distinguished by being qualified by the four:

- 1) impermanence,
- 2) misery,
- 3) empty of a self that is a different entity, and
- 4) without a self of persons that is its own entity.

When divided there are two:

- 1) the world of the impure environment and
- 2) the world of the impure inhabitants.

The truth of suffering has a three-fold division –

- 1) Suffering of suffering: physical and mental pain.
- 2) Suffering of change: all feelings of pleasure which are contaminated with the misconception of inherent existence is the suffering of change. If things were inherently pleasurable, long-term usage would increase the pleasure; however, in fact suffering is eventually induced. The need for moderation is a sign of their not naturally being pleasurable.
- 3) Pervasive compounded suffering: having contaminated aggregates controlled by karma and delusion - they are in the nature of suffering. The conditions are always present to undergo suffering. Hence the suffering is 'pervasive' because no matter how one searches among the ordinary body and mind, every instance of it is miserable, either manifestly painful or capable of inducing suffering. It is called 'compounded' because the contaminated aggregates are creating the causes for suffering in the future.

Why talk of the truth of suffering? Because it is perceived by an arya being to be true – that suffering exists in this way. That is why it is called 'the arya's truth of suffering'.

⁹ Cf *Abhidharmakosha* which defines the mental sense power as 'the immediately preceding moment of any of the six consciousnesses': GJG 91-97 p112. See also GJG 91-97, p53.

Phenomena that are contained in the truth of suffering have four characteristics:

1. **Impermanent:** because they are momentarily changing, adventitious phenomena
2. **Suffering:** sometimes translated as 'misery' because they arose through the power of karma and afflictions. That applies to the samsaric worlds and the beings within those worlds. So to be suffering it doesn't have to be the feeling of suffering. Vase can be suffering because it came about through karma and afflictions. That explains the truth of origin – suffering arises from karma and afflictions. Why is it suffering? Because it arises through the power of karma and afflictions. The primary source is the afflictions and within the afflictions the primary source is ignorance.
3. **Empty:** Anything that is the truth of suffering is the third aspect of empty because it lacks a controlling different person. This refers to the basis of the three doors, body, speech and mind, feeling my 'body, my mind, my speech'. This notion of a person that is different from these three that has ownership thinks, for example, 'I have a nice body', generating pride etc. There is a notion of ownership over body, speech and mind. The claim of ownership is the same as when we say 'my table'. But when we look for the owner of the table, we need to look for the owner apart from the table. Likewise, if the imaginary controlling self different from the aggregates were to exist it would have to be left after negating body, speech and mind. For example, when we offer body, speech and mind to the Buddha, if a different controlling self exists it should be left over. If not then it doesn't exist.
4. **Selfless:** Anything that is the truth of suffering is in the aspect of selfless because it is not established in the nature of an independent self. Both self as well as the aggregates are empty. Why is it not established in the nature of an independent self? Because it is created through causes and conditions - through karma and delusions. For example, death comes about due to causes and conditions. It does not arise independently.

To be a truth of suffering it has to have the four characteristics. Why? Take the subject, contaminated aggregates, why are they impermanent? They are impermanent because they are adventitious phenomena, which implies that they are created by causes and conditions. Sometimes they are there and sometimes not. Take the contaminated aggregates, they are suffering because they arose through the power of karma and afflictions. Take the contaminated aggregates, they are empty because there is no controlling self reigning over the five aggregates. Take the contaminated aggregates, they are selfless because there is no self of person.

There are different ways of explaining empty and selfless. A phenomena can be 'empty' because there is no controlling self. This refers to the absence of a permanent, partless (singular), independent self that is separate from the aggregates. Take the contaminated aggregates, they are empty because they lack this controlling self, meaning they lack a permanent, partless, independent self. Permanent is unchanging; partless means singular, independent of its parts; independent means independent of causes and conditions.

'Selfless' is also sometimes related to the absence of being a permanent, partless, independent self. Also, sometimes it refers to the absence of person as a substantial self existent. This is a non-existent. There can be the appearance of a person as being self sufficient but actually the person depends on its parts and so forth.

There is a difference between 'empty' and 'selfless' according to the different tenets. However, in terms of how they are to be meditated on, Jampa Gendun¹⁰ said that they can be combined into two steps in a searching for a self of persons as follows:

- is the self/I one with the aggregates? - in the same nature of the aggregates (attribute #4, selfless);
- is the self/I separate from the aggregates? (attribute #3, empty)

To summarise, take the subject, suffering of suffering. It follows that it is impermanent because it arises adventitiously. It is suffering because it is under the control of karma and afflictions. It is empty because there is no different controlling self (different from the aggregates). It is selfless because it is not established in the nature of an independent self.

These four are important to understand.

¹⁰ *Ornament Review* March 26, 98

(ii) True origins

The definition of true origins is: a truth of the thoroughly afflicted class distinguished by being qualified by the four:

- 1) cause,
- 2) origin,
- 3) strong production, and
- 4) condition.

When divided there are two:

- 1) actions (*karma*) and
- 2) afflictive emotions.

If the truth of origin is explained in a detailed way, it is explained through the ‘12 Links of Dependent Arising’. First, there is ignorance and through the power of ignorance one creates projecting karma¹¹. Then the power of the projecting karma is placed on the mental consciousness and is ripened at the time of death through craving, grasping and becoming. Becoming means establishing karma. Projecting karma has turned into establishing karma that establishes the next life. In the next life one experiences the six results. So there are three projected results and three established results.

The 12 Links can be classified into the six causes and six effects. The six causes can also be sub-classified into the three projecting causes and the three establishing causes. Likewise, there are the three projected results and the three established results.

The six causes are:

- (a) Projecting causes:
 - 1) ignorance, 2) projecting karma and 3) consciousness (projecting causes);
- (b) Establishing causes:
 - 8) craving, 9) grasping and 10) becoming – they establish the six results.

The six results are:

- (a) Projected results:
 - 4) Names & form, 5) sources, 6) contact, 7) feeling
- (b) Established results:
 - 11) birth, 12) aging and death.

Out of the six results, Birth and Name & Form arise simultaneously. The dependent link of Name & Form is the form aggregate (form) and the other four aggregates (name). However, not all beings have the form aggregate - beings have either four or five aggregates. Subsequent to that comes the dependent link of the Six Sources - the sense power and consciousness meet but the object cannot be engaged. At the link of Contact, the object can be engaged but no feeling is generated. From the subsequent link of Feeling, on the meeting of the object, consciousness and sense power, the person generates feelings of happiness, suffering and indifference. The dependent link of Aging starts the moment after Birth (conception), and Death happens at the end. Implicitly, within the six results one creates further causes for links to arise. Because one generates feeling, due to this attachment is generated, perpetuating further sets of dependent links.

The process of how suffering arises through karma and afflictions is well explained the 12 Dependent Links. Of the six causes, two are karma and three are afflictions. The two karmas are the second link, Projecting Karma, and the tenth link of Becoming (or ‘Existence’). The first, Ignorance, and the eighth and ninth, Craving and Grasping, are afflictions. So the main causes are karma and afflictions. The nature of the result depends on the nature of the cause. If one wants a good result, one needs to create good causes.

(iii) True cessations

The definition of true cessations is: a truth of the completely pure class distinguished by being qualified by the four:

¹¹ For an analysis of karma in the context of true origins, see GJG March 11, 98, p9

- 1) cessation,
- 2) pacification,
- 3) auspiciousness highness, and
- 4) definite emergence.

When divided there are:

(1-10) ten, such as profound cessation, from the point of view of not individually distinguishing between actual and imputed.¹²

(iv) True paths

The definition of true paths is: a truth of the completely pure class distinguished by being qualified by the four:

- 1) path,
- 2) suitability,
- 3) achievement, and
- 4) deliverance.

When divided there are three:

- 1) path of seeing,
- 2) path of meditation, and
- 3) path of no more learning.

In *Abhidharmasamucchaya*, it says: “What are true paths? They are that which thoroughly knows suffering, abandons true origins, actualises true cessations, and meditates on the path.”

In *Uttaratantra*, the analogy of a sick person is used: “The sickness is to be known, the cause is to be abandoned, well-being is to be attained, and the medicine is to be applied”.

(c) Etymology

According to *Golden Rosary* (p. 117):

- Truth: it means characterized as not being in disagreement with the doctrine, that is, impermanence and so forth are just as the buddha described them. Thus they are truths from the side of the object, impermanence and so forth. And they are that which, when understood, become the cause for purity, that is, when seen for what they are they produce non-distorted awareness.
- Noble: Noble ones see them as truth true to reality, while the foolish do not understand them or see them properly. Though these truths are true in fact for the foolish they are not true. While for noble ones they are truths both for awareness and in fact. They are “truths for Nobles”.
- Others say that the two (true sufferings and true origins) are truths for nobles and two (true cessations and true paths) are both noble and truths in facts.

Geshe Ngawang Samten¹³ said that the Hinayana explanation is that the Four Noble Truths lead to liberation so they are a true teaching. From a Mahayana Madhyamika perspective, there are no truly existent truths, so

¹² There are 10 divisions from the point of view of actual and imputed. The 9 actual cessations:

- 1) cessation which is profound: a true cessation in the continuum of a mahayana arya,
- 2) (see below)
- 3) cessation which is ultimate: a true cessation in the continuum of an arya
- 4) cessation which is not complete: a true cessation in the continuum of an hinayana learner
- 5) cessation which is complete: a true cessation in the continuum of a hinayana foe destroyer
- 6) cessation which is unadorned: a nirvana with remainder which is a liberation by means of the factor of wisdom alone
- 7) cessation which is adorned: a nirvana without remainder which is a liberation by means of both factors
- 8) cessation which is with remainder: a true cessation of a hearer foe destroyer abiding in nirvana with remainder which is a liberation by means of the factor of wisdom alone
- 9) cessation which is without remainder: a true cessation of a hearer foe destroyer abiding in nirvana without remainder which is a liberation by means of both factors
- 10) cessation which is surpassing: non-abiding nirvana. (Ocean pp. 187-188)

One imputed cessation:

- 2) cessation which is a sign: an abandonment which is a temporary abandonment of the manifest desire afflictions of a mundane path. For an analysis of the 10 cessations, see GJG March 11, 98, p11.

the truths are actually fake i.e. how they appear is different to how they actually exist. For example, there is the appearance of truly existent suffering but in fact the suffering is empty of true existence.

(d) Sequence of the Four Noble Truths¹⁴

In Buddhism, one investigates phenomena's mode of abiding. If this has some benefit for the mind, one has taken the meaning. First, one investigates suffering and when one does so the question naturally arises, 'Where does the suffering come from?'. This leads to the cause of suffering - afflictions and karma. Out of these two, the primary cause is afflictions and amongst the afflictions the primary cause is ignorance. Within afflictions, there are six root and 20 secondary afflictions.

Starting from the root cause, ignorance, the accumulation of karma and the experiencing of suffering is explained in detail in the teaching on the 12 links. Here the samsaric chain reaction is explained - ignorance creates karma, one takes rebirth due to the power of karma and afflictions, and one experiences suffering. Initially, one meditates on suffering, investigating the mode of abiding (or nature) of cyclic existence and understands that its nature is suffering. One naturally asks if there is a cause or not, arriving at the second noble truth of origin. When one meditates on the truth of origin one understands that the root cause is ignorance. Ignorance is a wrong mind, a misconception, meaning that its object does not exist. It can be opposed by its opposite, the wisdom realising emptiness directly. One arrives at the need to understand emptiness. To understand emptiness one needs to develop calm abiding. To do this one practices morality and so forth.

By understanding that the root cause of the afflictions is ignorance and understanding that it can be opposed, one arrives at the truth of cessation. Suffering and the causes of suffering can be eliminated - the absence of those two is cessation. If you investigate the afflictions in a general manner, we can understand that the afflictions can be opposed temporarily by using certain antidotes. If we investigate the afflictions more deeply, it can be understood that the afflictions can be completely eradicated. This leads us to an understanding of the cessation of suffering and its cause. From there, we go to an understanding of the path, which makes it possible to attain cessation by opposing ignorance. For that we have the practices of the path such as realisation of emptiness, calm abiding, morality and so forth.

This is how one's understanding of the noble truths is generated in the mind and is why the noble truth of suffering is taught first. First one investigates the noble truth of suffering. The basis for suffering is the contaminated aggregates. They are also referred to as pervasive compounded suffering. One needs to look at the causes and conditions of that suffering. It is said to be difficult for an ordinary being to comprehend pervasive compounded suffering. It is directly seen by arya beings, which is why it is called the arya truth of suffering. The metaphor of eyes and palms are used. Individual beings are like palms of the hand that can't even discern a hair. Eyes are like arya beings because they can discern even a very small hair - if a small hair comes into the eye it is irritating and hence perceived. Aryas are like the eye, and discern pervasive compounded suffering.

To understand pervasive compounded suffering, one needs to look at its cause. First of all, in general there are many different types of functioning phenomena that come about through an aggregation of the elements. There are the various types of outer phenomena such as mountains, plants etc. Then also there are sentient beings. Sentient beings have the power to comprehend knowledge of phenomena. The way sentient beings come about is through the specific aggregation of causes and conditions that non-sentient phenomena don't require. They are special and specific to them. They are not just the four elements but there is also consciousness. Sentient beings come about through preceding moments of consciousness. The cause of

¹³ Teaching at Vajrayana Institute (10/9/03), CD2. See also See Hopkins, Meditation on Emptiness, p289.

¹⁴ One can precede this section with a discussion on why the enumeration of the Four Noble Truths. They are definitely four, with two relating to the thoroughly afflicted and two relating to the completely pure. In each case, there is a cause and a result. Geshe Ngawang Samten (10/9/03) said that the first sequence explained in accordance with how the truths are to be practiced was set out by Maitreya in Ornament of Mahayana Sutras. The second sequence explained in accordance with causes and effects was set out by Maitreya in Uttaratantra.

consciousness can only be consciousness. In such a way, the preceding moment of consciousness is the specific cause uncommon to sentient beings, not shared with other types of phenomena.

How sentient beings go together with consciousness from life to life is explained through the 12 Dependent Links. There is a specific aggregation of causes and conditions that make the four or five aggregates of a sentient being pervasive compounded suffering. They are explained in the 12 Links. There is the basis of consciousness but there are also such causes and conditions as afflictions and karma. One has ignorance, through which one creates karma which is placed on the consciousness. The karma is ripened by craving and grasping which are attachment. Then a future life is created. This future life is in the nature of suffering. The aggregates of the next life that have been projected by ignorance, karma and consciousness and established by craving, grasping and becoming are pervasive compounded suffering - because they were projected and established through the power of karma and afflictions. So to understand why the aggregates are referred to as pervasive compounded suffering we need to look at the specific causes and conditions that caused them.

In such a way one has to understand the first noble truth of suffering. It is taught first from the point of view of the sequence in which the understanding of the Four Noble Truths must be generated in the mind. There is another sequence according to cause and effect, in which the truth of origin is explained first, followed by suffering, path and cessation.

Having meditated on the noble truth of suffering, one comes to the truth of origin. Suffering does not just go away by itself. One has to employ a method in order to make it go away. The method is to generate an awareness that while focusing on the same object as the affliction, apprehends that object in a completely opposite way to the affliction. In such a way, the awareness that apprehends the object in an opposite manner to the affliction, opposes the affliction. This employs the various types of meditation on patience, love and compassion etc which can temporarily oppose some of the afflictions.

Ultimately, if we want to completely get rid of the truth of origin we have to get rid of ignorance. To do this we need to generate a wisdom that in its mode of apprehending is completely opposite to ignorance. We have to generate the wisdom realising emptiness which can oppose the root of suffering, the ignorance grasping at true existence. Through reflecting on the truth of origin, we can understand that ignorance grasping true existence is the root of the truth of origin and it has to be opposed by the wisdom realising the lack of true existence - the wisdom realising emptiness.

In order to clarify this, it likens ignorance to the body sense power that pervades the other four sense powers. Likewise, ignorance pervades all the other afflictions. If one negates the body sense power then implicitly all the other sense powers are negated. Likewise, if one eliminates afflictions, all the afflictions pervaded by ignorance will also be destroyed.

Regarding the sequence of the Four Noble Truths, suffering is to be known. The origin or cause of suffering is to be abandoned. Cessation of suffering and its cause is to be generated and the path is to be practiced.

The Four Noble Truths is an essential teaching. By meditating on it we can become enlightened.

(e) Valid cognisers which ascertain them

(i) Identifying the sixteen perverse conceptions¹⁵

The Four Noble Truths are set out in the sequence in which they are understood. There are not more needed nor less needed. The Four Noble Truths are characterised by the 16 aspects. Each truth as four aspects, the understanding of which directly counteracts the 16 misconceptions. How one has to realise the Four Noble Truths is by counteracting the 16 misconceptions by the understanding of the 16 aspects of the Four Noble Truths.

¹⁵ More detail is found in the second chapter of *Pramanavartika*.

The four perverse conceptions (or misconceptions) in relation to **true sufferings** which are contradictory to the four attributes of true sufferings:

- 1) a perverse conception of the aggregates as permanent - in general true sufferings are *impermanent* yet in spite of that we have a perverse conception thinking that, for example, the aggregates are permanent.
- 2) a perverse conception of the aggregates as pleasurable (happiness) - the aggregates are misconceived as pleasurable while in fact they are *misery/suffering*.
- 3) a perverse conception of the aggregates as pure - we consider the aggregates as pure while in fact they are impure. This is because, based on thinking that the self is permanent, partless and independent, which does not accord with reality, we think that there are aggregates to be enjoyed by such a self and then think these aggregates are in the nature of purity.¹⁶
- 4) a perverse conception of the aggregates as having a self - apprehends true sufferings, the contaminated aggregates, as an object to be enjoyed by a self-supporting substantially existent self. This misconception conceives of such a self and conceives the aggregates to be an object to be enjoyed by such a self.¹⁷

Our aggregates are suffering aggregates because they are under the control of karma and afflictions. Even though they are misery we apprehend them as permanent, happy, pure and having a self.

The four perverse conceptions related to **true origins** are:

- 1) that suffering is without a cause (and that causes do not accord with their results) - the Charvakas assert that sufferings arise without a cause. Another school asserts that sufferings arise from a discordant cause. However, results arise from a concordant cause, for example, smoke comes from fire and not water.
- 2) that there is only one cause of suffering - such as a creator/god (or the general principal of the Samkyas). This is wrong because sufferings arise from diverse causes and conditions.
- 3) that suffering is induced by a movement of a mind, such as that of Ishvara - the Vaishashikas assert that Ishvara at times engages in actions, then rests, then acts and so forth and from this movement all phenomena arise.¹⁸
- 4) that there is a permanent self that changes momentarily¹⁹ - even though momentarily impermanent and changing, holding suffering to be, in its final nature, permanent - held by the Nirgranthas.²⁰

Geshe Dawa explained that 2 and 3 can be grouped together under the category of the misconception that suffering arises from a discordant cause.

The four perverse conceptions related to **true cessations** are:

- 1) that there is no liberation - counteracted by the first attribute, *cessation*. There is liberation because there is a cessation which is attained by the power of applying an antidote.
- 2) that some contaminated states are liberation, for example, the actual absorption of the concentrations - relates to the idea that the mere absorptions of the form and formless realms are liberation. In fact they are contaminated phenomena. They are not an uncontaminated path because they are attained through the meditation method of viewing the below as coarse and the above as happiness and peace. But if they are not combined with the realisation of emptiness they are still contaminated. On the contrary, even if one has attained only the Preparatory stage of the absorptions, if this is combined with the realisation of emptiness then this becomes an uncontaminated path through which one can abandon the seeds of the afflictions. If one has not attained this path then one cannot abandon the seeds of the afflictions. The mere preparatory stage of the absorptions combined with the wisdom realising emptiness is called the 'Preparatory Stage That Can Do Anything'. This misconception is counteracted by the second attribute, *pacification* - contaminated states are not true cessations because they are not a total pacification.

¹⁶ Geshe Samten (Four Noble Truths teaching, October 2003) linked this to the caste system of India - the Brahmins are considered pure and other lower castes as dirty.

¹⁷ The wrong conceptions concerning the self, or person, come from non-Buddhist ideas of the self. For example, the Samkyas (see GJG March 10, 98, p4).

¹⁸ See GJG, April 3, 1998: "When one comes to understand that craving acts as a cooperative condition to bring about suffering, this understanding opposes the mind thinking that suffering arises due to a movement of the mind of Ishvara.

¹⁹ Ibid: "By realising that craving is a cooperative condition for suffering we come to understand that a cause cannot be permanent, as if it were permanent it would not be changed by a cooperative condition."

²⁰ More details on the various non-Buddhist schools can be found in a text on tenets by Konchog Jigme Wangpo which is available in English.

- 3) that some sufferings are auspicious highness (ie are supreme) - this is holding that some afflicted phenomena are supreme, such as certain afflicted happinesses of the God realm. This is contradicted by the third attribute, *auspicious highness*, because such cessations of suffering are not auspicious for lasting freedom but are just temporary. Grasping at the existence of the body of Brahma, Indra etc and other gods as supreme is a misconception of the state of liberation. It must be free of suffering and its cause. These are still afflicted states so they can't be liberation.
- 4) that sufferings can return once exhausted - this is holding that suffering can be reversed momentarily but that it will arise again. There are certain practitioners who, by meditating on a worldly path such as the form and formless absorptions can temporarily pacify manifest afflictions by viewing below as coarse and above as pure. They believe that they have attained liberation but because they haven't abandoned the seeds of the afflictions, when those afflictions arise again, they get the idea that suffering and its cause, afflictions, can only be abandoned temporarily. This is counteracted by the attribute of *definite emergence* which shows that true cessations are definitely emerged from suffering.

In reality, liberation is the total negation (elimination) of suffering. Someone who has the second misconception grasps at the contaminated aggregates of someone who has attained the form and formless absorptions to be liberation. They grasp at something that is contaminated to be liberation. They are contaminated because they are arisen from karma and afflictions. They are not free of karma and afflictions so they can't be liberation.

The four misconceptions with respect to the **truth of the path** are:

- 1) that there are no paths to liberation - this is counteracted by the first attribute, *path*, which says that there is a path to liberation because there is the wisdom directly realising the selflessness of persons by way of which one can achieve liberation
- 2) that it is not suitable to familiarise oneself with the realisation of selflessness as a path to true cessations - is counteracted by the second attribute, *suitability*, which is that an exalted knower directly realising selflessness is suitable to act as an antidote to the delusions.
- 3) that some concentrations are a path to liberation - is counteracted by the third attribute, *achievement*, because a concentration does not realise the nature of mind, while achievement is a factor that realises the nature of mind.
- 4) that there is no path to be meditated on in order to eradicate true sufferings - that the afflictions cannot be abandoned from their root including their seed. This is counteracted by the fourth attribute, *deliverance*, which is that sufferings are exhausted forever.

The 16 aspects of the Four Noble Truths were taught to oppose these 16 misconceptions. These mostly relate to misconceptions of Hindu practitioners existing at the time of the Buddha. There was a school that didn't accept past and future lives, cause and effect and so forth. Also the idea that there is a self and so forth.

The path to liberation is the wisdom realising selflessness. Hindus do not accept selflessness, as they assert a self, which is why they do not accept that a path meditating on an absence of self can lead to liberation. From this point of view, they think that the absorptions of the form and formless realm are paths to liberation and have the wrong view of contaminated paths being paths to liberation. When they have meditated on the contaminated form and formless realm absorptions and achieve a momentary pacification of the manifest afflictions, because the afflictions do arise again, they get the view that the mind cannot be freed from the afflictions - that they can only be momentarily pacified. By only meditating on a contaminated path they cannot uproot the seeds of the afflictions.

It is important to realise the differences in these misconceptions. For example, consider the difference between the wrong view that grasps at contaminated phenomena to be liberation and another view that grasps at contaminated phenomena to be a path to liberation.

There are (non-buddhist) practitioners who make it their main practice to meditate up through the eight absorptions. The afflictions in their mind become more and more subtle. The practitioner reaches a point where they feel that they have no more afflictions in their continuum and have generated certain powers such as clairvoyance and the power of magical emanation and so forth. They feel that they have attained liberation as they see no delusions in their mind. But at this point they can develop pride thinking that they are better

than practitioners who concentrate more on the practice of wisdom once they have attained only the preparatory stage of the absorptions. The arising of this affliction causes the meditative absorptions to degenerate (i.e. an afflicted meditative absorption), causing the afflictions to arise again. This causes them to generate the idea thinking 'before I attained liberation but now it is gone again, so liberation is not something that stays and the afflictions will arise again'. In this way they get the misconception that the afflictions can be opposed momentarily but they cannot be permanently removed from the mind. Such practitioners believe that the absorptions are liberation and the path to liberation.

Worldly paths are where the practitioner aims to subdue the delusions but doesn't meditate on emptiness. There are six levels of the preparatory state of the absorptions. One is called the Discriminating Attention - here there is no manifest delusion in the mind. At this level, the practitioner then checks for the reason - have the delusions disappeared or have their conditions disappeared? In order to test this, they turn their mind to an attractive object. If an affliction arises they apply a worldly antidote to pacify the affliction. But still they don't meditate on emptiness. If someone uses the antidote to emptiness they can pacify the afflictions completely.

The concentration that is the union of calm abiding and special insight is able to eradicate the afflictions from their root. One is not able to achieve this by relying on concentration alone, nor by relying on wisdom alone. One needs the unification of concentration and wisdom.

(ii) Identifying the 16 aspects of the truths contradicting these

In brief, there are three types of suffering. The suffering of suffering is the feeling of suffering²¹. The suffering of change occurs when, for example, one overeats²². Pervasive compounded suffering is the aggregates being under the control of karma and afflictions. All three types of suffering are the second aspect of the noble truth of suffering - misery. The aggregates are misery because they are generated through the force of karma and afflictions.

The second noble truth is the noble truth of origin. The noble truth of origin has two parts - karma and afflictions. Out of the afflictions, the three major afflictions are ignorance, attachment and anger. The root is ignorance out of which the others arise. From actions motivated by ignorance karma is generated, the second of the 12 Links.

Then one investigates whether the afflictions can be abandoned or not. One finds that the root of cyclic existence is ignorance and that it can be opposed by wisdom which is directly opposite to the way ignorance comprehends its object. One has to generate a mind that apprehends its object in completely the opposite way to how ignorance comprehends its object. By abandoning ignorance, one can uproot afflictions and karma - this is called 'seeing cessation'. Cessation is the mere negation of the obscurations. The liberated Mahayana path of seeing has attained the cessation of intellectually acquired true grasping, i.e. the uninterrupted path of seeing is the actual antidote.

The first instance of the truth of cessation is when one reaches the liberated Mahayana path of seeing. One attains the cessation of intellectually acquired true grasping. Then one goes through the path and if one is a Hinayana practitioner one attains arhatship, or if a Mahayana practitioner one attains buddhahood. Then one attains the final cessation. Becoming an arhat and abandoning the afflictions with their seeds completely from the mind is simultaneous. When the afflictions and their seeds become non-existent, in the mental continuum at that time the practitioner has become an arhat and has attained liberation. Liberation is the cessation of the afflictive obscurations.

²¹ Geshe Ngawang Samten (10/9/03) explained that in the term 'suffering of suffering', the first suffering is like the initial pain of a needle which does not end just when the needle is withdrawn – the pain continues on and on.

²² Geshe Ngawang Samten said that all happinesses that we experience are contaminated. They are feelings which are taken as pleasurable only relative to the painful experience that precedes it. For example, after the suffering of tiredness from walking, the first moment of rest is experienced as happiness only relative to the suffering of walking but it is actually the first moment of the next suffering i.e. one becomes uncomfortable with resting.

Then one comes to understand that if the abandonment or cessation of the afflictions is the truth of cessation, then one needs to generate a path that can oppose the afflictions and remove the afflictions from the mind. This is the fourth noble truth. The path that can oppose the afflictions is the wisdom realising selflessness. One has to meditate on the wisdom realising selfless and this becomes the path opposing the afflictions.

Why is the wisdom realising selflessness so important?

The significance of the wisdom realising selflessness is that it is only that wisdom that is able to oppose the ignorance that is the root of cyclic existence. This ignorance obscures phenomena's mode of abiding or ultimate nature. One needs to generate a mind that understands phenomena's mode of abiding or ultimate nature. This is the wisdom realising selflessness. It is a wisdom that, while focusing on the same object as the ignorance, has a completely different way of apprehending reality. The way that each apprehends reality is completely opposite. If ignorance is the root of the other afflictions, one needs to oppose ignorance. Temporarily, one can oppose the other afflictions by generating a mind directly opposite to how the afflictions apprehend reality but, ultimately, if one wants to free oneself permanently from them one has to oppose ignorance.

The Four Noble Truths are characterised by 16 aspects. So in defining each of the Four Noble Truths, the four characteristics of each are given. The 16 aspects oppose the 16 misconceptions regarding the Four Noble Truths. The 16 aspects are directly opposite to the 16 misconceptions. This has already been discussed. There is a reason given that establishes each of the 16 aspects.

1) Truth of suffering

Take the subject, the suffering aggregates. They are in the aspect of:

- (i) impermanent - because they are generated adventitiously. Phenomena that are sometimes generated and sometimes not generated have to depend on causes and conditions. Anything that is the truth of suffering is in the aspect of impermanence due to being adventitious, generated by causes and conditions.
- (ii) Misery - because they are controlled by karma and afflictions.
- (iii) Empty - because they lack a controlling self of different nature.
- (iv) Selfless: because there is no independent self. It doesn't exist because the self is generated in dependence on causes and conditions.

2) Truth of origin

Take the subject, contaminated karma and craving. They are in the aspect of:

- (i) Cause - because they are the root of their resultant suffering.
- (ii) Origin - because they generate all suffering and afflictions again and again (i.e. not just here and there but are the aspect of origin or source because they generate all suffering and afflictions all the time). Origin and cause are similar - it is like looking at the same thing from different angles rather than looking at different phenomena.
- (iii) Intense generation - because they generate suffering and afflictions intensely.
- (iv) Condition - because they are the concurrently producing condition of their resultant suffering. For example, there is a substantial cause and concurrently producing conditions. For a clay vase, clay is the substantial cause but also there are other conditions that are there at the same time that produce the vase.

3) Truth of cessation

Take the subject, the extinguishment of the afflictions through an antidote. It is in the aspect of:

- (i) Cessation - because it is the final or total abandonment of the afflictions.
- (ii) Pacification (peace) - because it is the abandonment of afflictions. When they are abandoned, peace is generated in the mind.
- (iii) Auspicious highness (supremacy) - because it is liberation that possesses benefit and bliss.

(iv) Definite emergence - because it is irreversible liberation.

4) Truth of the path

Take the subject, the mental consciousness directly realising selflessness. It is in the aspect of:

- (i) Path - because it is a path that induces liberation.
- (ii) Suitability - because it is the direct antidote to the afflictions.
- (iii) Achievement (practice) - because it is a wisdom that directly realises the mode of abiding of all phenomena.²³
- (iv) Deliverance - because it irreversibly abandons the afflictions.

3) *Instructions about the supports of achieving - the Three Jewels*

A. *General explanation*

The first set of instructions deals with the nature of Mahanaya practice, the second the object of Mahayana practice and the third the basis - the three jewels. These are the instructions given for the purpose of abandoning true grasping of the Three Jewels.

(a) Causal and resultant refuge

There are two types of refuge:

- (a) Resultant: our own future buddhahood.
- (b) Causal: the refuge that is of a different mental continuum to oneself - for example, other practitioners, such as Shakyamuni Buddha, who have become enlightened, can show us the path. One reflects on the qualities of Shakyamuni Buddha, such as the five types of clairvoyance, the 10 powers and so forth, and thinks that these are qualities that we would like to attain. One takes refuge in Shakyamuni Buddha as the teacher who shows us how to attain those qualities. In this way, Shakyamuni Buddha becomes our causal refuge.

The object of refuge is always the same - buddha, dharma and sangha.

The nature of refuge is the putting of one's faith and hope in the triple gem. For example, thinking that they can free one from any problem that one is experiencing. On the basis of this faith and hope, one goes for refuge in the triple gem.

One takes refuge in the Buddha as the teacher, the one who gives us our refuge. Having attained enlightenment himself by freeing himself from all faults and developing all qualities, he can show us the path that leads to the same result. He becomes the revealer of our refuge - he shows us our refuge.

So the buddha is the teacher/revealer of the refuge. The dharma that is shown to us by the buddha is the actual refuge. Even though we have not generated the actual dharma, the path of seeing in our mind, in order to avoid rebirth in the lower realms, one needs to abandon the 10 non-virtuous actions. So practicing abandonment of the 10 non-virtuous actions becomes our refuge. The buddha explained the different actions and their causes and if one wants to avoid experiencing those causes one needs to avoid the actions. So by avoiding those actions and engaging in the practice of purification using the four opponent powers to purify negative karmas already created, one can close the door to the lower realms. In such a way, the dharma becomes one's actual refuge that rescues one from suffering.

²³ GJG, April 3, 1998 says that this means that the exalted wisdom realising selflessness improves the mind . . . its clarity and knowing improves."

Sangha act as examples. They are practitioners who have reached the path of seeing and above. They are examples and inspiration after the Buddha has passed away. There are many thousands of different types of arhats and practitioners included in sangha. Sangha can belong to any of the three lineages - hearer, solitary realiser and Mahayana.

The hearer's path of seeing, meditation and no-more learning are divided into the 20 sangha. First of all one has the four fruits - stream enterer, once returner, non returner and arhat. Stream enter means having entered the stream of the path of seeing. Then, for example, the four fruits have different sub-divisions. There are those liberated in the intermediate state, liberated after one birth etc. There are further sub-divisions into thousands of different types of practitioners. For example, Once returner is divided into those liberated in the intermeditate state, at birth and so forth, arriving at 2500 once returners. The differences between the practitioners can also relate to the level of their meditative absorptions and so forth.

To summarise, causal and resultant refuge²⁴:

- Mahayana refuge in the Buddha Jewel is both resultant and causal. Resultant is one's future buddhahood. Causal is those who are already buddhas, who shows the refuge and give teachings. Our ultimate refuge is the resultant.
- Hinayana refuge (hearers and solitary realisers) is only causal buddha, not resultant.
- Those in neither lineage also go to refuge to the buddha.
- For solitary realisers, resultant refuge is their future attainment of nirvana without depending on others' speech. This is resultant Dharma refuge.
- For hearers, their resultant refuge object is a nirvana that is to be attained by following others' speech (i.e. to become an arya). This is resultant Sangha refuge.

Even though one does not have the wish to achieve nirvana or become an arya only, one can still take refuge in the present causal Dharma and Sangha objects.

Now we will concentrate on the general meaning of refuge as presented in *General Meaning*.

(b) General presentation of refuge

A verse in the *Uttaratantra* says: "teacher, dharma and preceptor". Here, refuge is taught from the point of view of aspiration and practice. Teacher refers to Shakyamuni Buddha, dharma refers to that taught by Shakyamuni Buddha, and preceptor refers to the sangha. The three refuges are posited from the point of view of three types of practitioners i.e. where their main interest lies:

For a Mahayana practitioner, the main interest is to become enlightened. The practitioner takes the buddha jewel as the resultant refuge as well as the causal refuge. By relying on the causal refuge, one generates a result buddha refuge in one's mind. With the altruistic aspiration to attain enlightenment for all sentient beings, one realises that one can only attain others' welfare if one is enlightened and so the Mahayana practitioner aspires to attain the resultant buddha refuge.

Why is there this presentation of the three refuges?

The buddha refuge is from the point of view of the Mahayana practitioner. Dharma refuge is from the point of view of the solitary realiser practitioner - they see the buddha as an object of veneration in which to pay homage and accumulate merits but they are not interested in becoming a buddha. They want to attain liberation through self-generating innate wisdom (the dharma) within their mind without depending on a buddha.

The presentation of the sangha is from the viewpoint of the hearer practitioner that lives together with other practitioners. They try to develop qualities through listening and practicing together with others.

²⁴ from GJG, March 11, 98, p14

As it says in the *Uttaratantra*, from the point of view of the three aspirations then comes the presentation of the three jewels. The three aspirations refer to practitioners of the Mahayana family, hearers family and solitary realisers family:

- Mahayana: whether having entered the path or not, their aspiration is to attain enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings. That is the aim of their practice. Whether all sentient beings are included or not is debatable because this includes those who have yet to enter the path. For this type of practitioner, the buddha refuge is particularly important.
- Solitary realiser: is interested in developing transcendental wisdom and attaining liberation in their final lifetime without dependence on another teacher through the self-generating transcendental wisdom. Regardless of whether they have entered the solitary realiser path or not, the dharma refuge is particularly important.
- Hearer: sangha refuge is from the point of view of the hearer family. They don't have the aim of not depending on a teacher. During their practice time, they stay in a spiritual community and develop qualities with them.

The verse from the *Uttaratantra* is giving the reason why there are three refuges. The reason is because there are three types of practitioners with three types of paths. For the Mahayana practitioner, the qualities of the buddha are attractive to him - based on altruism, he is attracted to these qualities in order to help others. The solitary realiser practitioner is attracted to the qualities of the dharma, wanting to attain liberation through self-generating transcendental wisdom, that is, without depending on a teacher. They are interested primarily in their own liberation and during their lifetime practice reclusively, separate from other practitioners. Whilst in prior lifetimes they rely on the buddha, in their final lifetime they practice without reliance on a teacher. The hearer is more of a communal type of practitioner, which is why the sangha jewel is most attractive to him. For example, the arhats at the time of the buddha were hearers.

When solitary realisers attain liberation, they levitate into the air, issue forth fire and water and their body is burnt up by the transcendental wisdom fire and their mind enters the absorption of cessation.

(c) Benefits of taking refuge

Before every teaching it is regarded as beneficial to recite verses of refuge and bodhicitta because of the great merit that is accumulated by doing so. There are three steps - refuge and bodhicitta, the actual action and dedication subsequent to the action. The reason why initially one takes refuge and generates merit is due to the great merits created. There is nothing that creates more merit than refuge and bodhicitta.

It is said that if the merits one accumulates by taking refuge had form, the three world systems would not have enough space to hold it. The significance of accumulating merits is that they are the cause of the form body of the buddha. The merits from refuge and bodhicitta are inexhaustible. If one tried to empty the ocean with a teaspoon it would be impossible. Likewise the merits of refuge and bodhicitta are inexhaustible.

(d) Divisions

As mentioned previously, there are Hinayana and Mahayana types of refuge:

(i) Hinayana refuge

From the viewpoint of the Hinayana, when the buddha took birth he was a bodhisattva on the path of accumulation. Under the bodhi tree, he progressed in one meditative session from the path of accumulation to the path of no-more-learning as a result of the accumulation of merits over three countless great eons. The body of the buddha is not buddha - only the enlightened mind is buddha. They posit the inexhaustible transcendental wisdom of the buddha as the Buddha Jewel.

The different types of arya beings from the path of seeing and above are regarded as sangha. The path generated in their mind is dharma. The transcendental wisdom of the buddha is also regarded as the dharma refuge. Hinayana regards hearer practitioners on the path of seeing and above as the Sangha Jewel. Also, a group of four ordained practitioners is regarded as sangha.²⁵

(ii) Mahayana refuge

The commentary on Mahayana refuge follows two outlines - first, presentation of the objects of refuge and second, presentation of going for refuge. The first subject is divided into the way the three jewels are posited, the nature of the three jewels, the difference between ultimate and conventional refuge, causal and resultant refuge and etymology.

B. Particular presentation

(a) Presentation of the objects of refuge

(i) The way the three jewels are posited

The objects of refuge are the three jewels. As already discussed, the presentation of the three jewels is in accordance with the wishes of the three types of practitioners - the presentation of the buddha jewel is according to the presentation of the Mahayana practitioner, the presentation of the dharma jewel is according to the presentation of the solitary realiser practitioner and the presentation of the sangha jewel is according to the presentation of the hearer practitioner. That is the reason why three, not one, refuges are posited.

In the verse from the *Uttaratantra*, which says ‘the teacher, dharma and preceptor’, preceptor refers to the hearers and the sangha is posited in accordance with the wishes of the three practitioners. So the reason for positing three objects of refuge is because of the three types of practitioners.

(ii) The nature of the three jewels

Buddha Jewel

The definition of Buddha Jewel is: a final source of refuge possessing eight qualities, such as uncompounded and so forth.

When divided there are two:

- 1) conventional Buddha Jewel and
- 2) ultimate Buddha Jewel.

(i) Definition: that which has completed abandonment and realisation and possesses the eight qualities. An example is Shakyamuni Buddha.

(ii) Qualities: the *Uttaratantra* lists eight qualities of the Buddha Jewel:

- 1) Uncompounded: refers to the qualities of abandonment of a buddha. The buddha has the cessation of the obscurations and uncompounded means not being generated by causes and conditions.
- 2) Simultaneous: refers to the enlightened activity of the buddha which arises simultaneously with the need for the activity. It means that there is no period of motivation, conceptualisation and so forth because buddha is free from the afflictive obscurations and the obscurations to knowledge.
- 3) Not realised by others (unrealisable by sound and conception): ‘others’ refers to the conditions of expressive sound and conceptual thoughts which are not able to realise the qualities of the buddha. Through sound and conceptual thoughts alone, those who are not enlightened can’t understand the qualities of a buddha.

²⁵ Geshe Ngawang Samten (10/9/03) said that Hinayana practitioners are taking refuge from rebirth in the lower realms. Based on conviction in the law of cause and effect, their main practice is that of ethics – determining that to be adopted and that to be abandoned. This training in ethics is the Dharma Jewel. The Sangha Jewel is anyone who thoughtlessly practices moral discipline.

- 4) Knowledge: a buddha possesses knowledge perceiving the conventional and ultimate truths.
- 5) Compassion (mercy): great compassion wishing sentient beings to be free from suffering
- 6) Power (ability)
- 7) Welfare of self
- 8) Welfare of others

The first three qualities are contained within the seventh - purpose of self - and are the buddha's abandonments. The buddha has accomplished the purpose of self and others and has the qualities of non-compoundedness etc. The only person that possesses these eight qualities is a buddha. The qualities that are for the purpose of others are knowledge, compassion and power - they are the qualities of a buddha's realisations. So in a condensed way, there are two qualities - the purpose of self and others. Otherwise, they can be enumerated as six and eight.

(iii) Divisions

Form body

(a) Enjoyment body: the final form body endowed with the five definitenesses:

- definiteness of place - only in the pure land of Ogmin
- definiteness of body - adorned with the marks and signs
- definiteness of dharma - teaching only Mahayana dharma
- definiteness of entourage - only arya bodhisattvas
- definiteness of time - to the end of cyclic existence

(b) Emanation body: is a form body without the five certainties. It has three divisions:

- Supreme emanation body - for example, Shakyamuni Buddha
- Generated emanation body - for example, the emanation body one takes before taking rebirth as a supreme emanation body
- Artisan emanation body - incarnations as a King and so forth in an ordinary aspect.

Truth body

(a) Wisdom truth body - the enlightened (omniscient) mind of the buddha. There are 27 divisions of uncontaminated wisdom.

(b) Nature truth body

- natural nature truth body: the nature truth body that is the natural purity
- nature truth body that is the cessation of the adventitious obscurations

The nature truth body that is the natural purity is the purity from the beginning. The other is the purity that is attained by abandoning the obscurations.

The two bodies of a buddha arise from the collection of merit and wisdom. The collection of wisdom is the primary cause for the attainment of the truth body. It is the wisdom realising emptiness, meditating on impermanence etc. The collection of merits refers to the meditation on great compassion, bodhicitta and so forth which is the primary cause for the attainment of the form body of the buddha.

To be the Buddha Jewel, it needs to be endowed with 8 qualities of uncompoundedness and so forth.

Dharma Jewel

The definition of Dharma Jewel is: a completely pure truth in the continuum of a superior that possesses any of the eight qualities, such as inconceivable and so forth.

When divided terminologically there are two:

- 1) conventional Dharma Jewel and
- 2) ultimate Dharma Jewel.

(i) Definition: a pure quality contained within either cessation or path.

Before, when speaking of the Buddha Jewel, it was said that it had to be the completion of the qualities of abandonment and realisation. The Dharma Jewel has to be a pure quality contained either within cessation or path.

(ii) Qualities: for something to be a Dharma Jewel, it has to be endowed with any of the eight qualities of being 'beyond comprehension' and so forth:

- 1) Beyond comprehension (unthinkable): means being beyond the comprehension of ordinary logicians that analyse the four possibilities between objects (both A+B, A not B, B not A, not A+not B). They do not have the wisdom realising selflessness.
- 2) Freedom from the two (two-fold freedom): freedom from various aspects of karma and afflictions, meaning it can be free from one and not the other.
- 3) Free from conceptualisation (inconceivable): conceptualisation refers to conceptualisation of mistaken thoughts. A conception with improper mental activity cannot conceive of the dharma jewel.
- 4) Purity: because the uncontaminated wisdom is in its nature unstained by the obscurations.
- 5) Clarity: because the uncontaminated wisdom is in the nature of realisation.
- 6) Antidote: acts as an antidote to the obscurations.
- 7) Cessation: free of obscurations.
- 8) Path: that which brings about freedom from obscurations.

The more elaborate explanation enumerates eight qualities. This can be condensed into two - the qualities of cessation, encompassing the first three qualities, and path, encompassing the second three; or six qualities, which are aspects of cessation and path.

Sangha Jewel

The definition of Sangha Jewel is: a superior who possesses any of the eight qualities of knowledges and freedoms.

When divided terminologically there are two:

- 1) conventional Sangha Jewel and
- 2) ultimate Sangha Jewel.

(i) Definition: an arya being who possesses any of the eight qualities of understanding (knowledge) and freedom (liberation).

(ii) Qualities: it has eight qualities:

- 1) Knowledge of suchness (knowledge cognising ultimate truth): transcendental wisdom understanding suchness.
- 2) Knowledge of conventional phenomena: transcendental wisdom understanding the world of multiplicity.
- 3) Individual self knowledge: understanding by analysing one's own continuum - understanding one's own transcendental wisdom.
- 4) Freedom from afflictive obstructions: attachment and so forth.
- 5) Freedom from knowledge obstructions: one's knowledge is unobstructed so that one can see with clairvoyance, through walls etc.
- 6) Freedom from lesser obstructions: self cherishing (practitioners of lesser paths).
- 7) Knowledge
- 8) Freedom

These can be condensed into two qualities - knowledge and freedom (liberation). The first three qualities are included within knowledge. The second three are included within freedom.

An example of the Sangha Jewel is a bodhisattva on the path of seeing

(iii) Difference of ultimate and conventional refuge

The definition of conventional refuge is: that which is neither the ultimate refuge nor one of the ultimate refuges and is a refuge that has not fully traversed the path in reality. It and temporal refuge are mutually inclusive. The definition of ultimate refuge is: a refuge that has fully traversed the path in reality. It and final refuge are mutually inclusive.

Refuge is divided into conventional (temporal) refuge and ultimate (final) refuge. The Sangha Jewel is divided into the conventional Sangha Jewel and ultimate Sangha Jewel. An example of the conventional Sangha Jewel is an arya being who is on a learner's path or all non-enlightened arya beings. Some sources say that a collection of four ordained sangha is the conventional Sangha Jewel but this is not correct. The collection of four ordained sangha is an example of the conventional Sangha Jewel in name only and not by definition. An example of the uncommon Mahayana conventional Sangha Jewel is an arya bodhisattva.

The same nominal division into conventional and ultimate applies to the Dharma Jewel. The 12 categories of the buddha's teachings are the nominal (conventional) Dharma Jewel but not the actual Dharma Jewel. A scriptural dharma refuge is not an ultimate refuge because when the practitioner becomes a buddha, he abandons the scriptural dharma, like someone who, wanting to cross a river, uses a boat only to get to the other shore, but then abandons it when he gets there. The actual Dharma Jewel is the truth of cessation and true paths.

Geshe Gyatso says: "the only ultimate object of refuge is a rare supreme Buddha. The distinction between an ultimate and conventional object of refuge is that which has reached the end of the path in reality is an ultimate object of refuge while that which has not reached the end of the path in reality is a conventional object of refuge. *Uttaratantra* says that: 'the ultimate object of refuge for the welfare of sentient beings is the Buddha refuge alone'."

Q: are the three jewels different? i.e. are they mutually exclusive?

A: no, the mental continuum of a buddha is the buddha jewel, the dharma jewel and the sangha jewel. It is an arya buddha; it is also a dharma refuge because it is omniscient mind and consciousness; and it is also a sangha refuge because it is an arya being.

To summarise:

Conventional Buddha Jewel: the conventional Buddha Jewel is the two form bodies, the complete enjoyment body and the supreme emanation body, because they can be seen by the eye consciousness of a sentient being.

Ultimate Buddha Jewel: the two truth bodies, the nature truth body (omniscient mind) and the wisdom truth body (emptiness of the omniscient mind) because it can only be seen by a superior's exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise.

Conventional Dharma Jewel: the 12 categories of Buddha's speech (scriptural dharma); teachings; learner paths.

Ultimate Dharma Jewel: true cessation and true path in the continuum of a buddha.

Conventional Sangha Jewel: an arya being.

Ultimate Sangha Jewel: form body of a buddha.

The mental consciousness of a buddha superior is all three refuges. Note that the dharma and sangha are not final refuges.²⁶ It is important to have clear knowledge of the objects of refuge and faith in their qualities.

Q: What is the difference between the ultimate Sangha Jewel and the conventional Sangha Jewel?

A: There are two sanghas - conventional and ultimate. The ultimate Sangha Jewel is only buddha. Ultimate refuge refers only to something that has completed the path. So the buddha, the mental consciousness of the buddha, the dharmakaya, can be considered ultimate refuge. Anything else that has yet to arrive at its destination and is progressing along the path is a conventional refuge. The only ultimate or final refuge has to be a buddha. Ultimate refuge and final refuge are mutually inclusive.

²⁶ See Ornament Review April 9, p3.

Anything below a buddha cannot be an ultimate refuge. For example, the host of hearer aryas, solitary realiser aryas and arya bodhisattvas are not an ultimate refuge because they still have the danger of the obscurations to knowledge in their continuum. The different learner paths are not an ultimate refuge because they are abandoned once one reaches one's aim, in the same way that a ship that brings one to the shore is abandoned. Once one has reached the final aim, buddhahood, one leaves behind the learner paths like a ferry.

Uttaratantra says: "Because of being abandoned, deceptive, non-existence and fear, the two aspects of Dharma and the assembly of sangha are not eternal supreme refuges."

The two Dharmas refers to scriptural Dharma (speech of a buddha) and the Dharma of realisation (realisation of the written or spoken words in the mind). Scriptural Dharma is, for example, the small, medium and great *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras* - it is 'abandoned'. The realised Dharma goes from the path of accumulation to the path of no more learning - it is 'deceptive' due to possessing stains whilst appearing to be without stain. The second aspect of the Dharma of realisation, true cessation, is 'non-existence' because it is a non-affirming negative.

Here it says that the two Dharmas and the host of arya sangha (non-enlightened arya beings) are not ultimate refuge because they are left behind. Scriptural and realised Dharma from the path of accumulation until the end of the path of meditation as well as all the hearer, solitary realiser and bodhisattva aryas are left behind like a ferry that has reached its destination. All those that still possess fear of the obscurations to knowledge (e.g. a hearer's nirvana) are not regarded as ultimate refuge.

A person who has completed the path is regarded as an ultimate Sangha Jewel. That is only a buddha. An arya being who has not completed the path is a conventional Sangha Jewel.

(iv) Nature of going for refuge

The nature of going for refuge is like the making of a promise. First, identify the object. Then have strong faith that the objects of refuge can rescue you from the sufferings of cyclic existence - have fear of cyclic existence and faith that the three jewels can rescue you from it. For example, if one develops fear as a result of meditation on death, one should take refuge and this will be correct refuge. Faith is generated by knowing the qualities of the three jewels.

The human body is the best basis for going to refuge.

The way of going for refuge is:

- Take refuge in the buddha - he shows us the path
- Take refuge in the dharma - the actual practice in our mind
- Take refuge in the sangha - are an example to us

The Buddha Jewel is the main refuge that one needs initially. The buddha is someone who has gone to the end of the path and can show the way to others. So one relies on buddha as a revealer of the path. Hence, the buddha jewel is the definite or main refuge.

The Dharma Jewel is the actual refuge.

Ultimate refuge will always be buddha. One needs a complete path so that is why the buddha is the definite, ultimate and main refuge. One of the characteristics is that one has to have a non-discriminating compassion (i.e. not close to some and distant from others).

Question & answer session

Q: What are the four possibilities between the Buddha and the Sangha Jewel.

A: It can be both Buddha and Sangha jewel, Sangha Jewel but not Buddha Jewel, Buddha Jewel but not Sangha Jewel and neither Sangha Jewel nor Buddha Jewel. What is neither? Anything that is neither a Buddha Jewel or Sangha Jewel.

Q: Is there something that is a Buddha Jewel but not a Sangha Jewel, something that is both or something that is Sangha Jewel but not Buddha Jewel, or something that is neither?

Q: if it is a Buddha Jewel is it a pervasion that it is also a Sangha Jewel?

A: if it is a Buddha Jewel there is no pervasion that it is a Sangha Jewel. If it is a Sangha Jewel there is a pervasion that it is a person. Isn't the nature truth body the Dharma Jewel? Isn't it also the Buddha Jewel? Yes. Is it Sangha Jewel? No, because it is not a person.

What is something that is both? Is there a pervasion that if it is Buddha Jewel then it isn't Sangha Jewel? No pervasion, for example, the form body of the buddha is the Sangha Jewel. The Buddha Jewel is not necessarily the Sangha Jewel. Buddha Shakyamuni is a Sangha Jewel. He is a Buddha Jewel.

Q: If it is a Buddha Jewel, is there a pervasion that it is not the Sangha Jewel?

A: no pervasion, for example, Buddha Shakyamuni is the Buddha and Sangha Jewels. Omniscient mind (dhamakaya) is Buddha Jewel and Sangha Jewel. Sangha Jewel is an arya being - hearer, solitary realiser and bodhisattva aryas.

Geshe Jampa Gyatso asks: is there anything which is all three objects of refuge? Yes, it is a mental consciousness existing in the continuum of an arya buddha (wisdom truth body). Who is an example of an arya buddha? The illustrating mental consciousness is an arya buddha; it is also a dharma refuge because it is omniscient mind and consciousness; and it is also a sangha refuge because it is an arya being. When we become a buddha, our mental consciousness will become the buddha, dharma and sangha refuges.

(b) Going for refuge

(i) Definition of refuge

When you posit the definition, the definition and the definendum (that which is being defined) have to be synonymous. So here the definition is:

The promise or pledge that, after having recognised that the triple gem can rescue one from sufferings, one will put one's trust in the three.

(ii) The causes for going for refuge

If it is a Mahayana refuge, there must be fear of suffering of the lower realms, fear of the sufferings of cyclic existence in general and fear of the obscurations to knowledge. If it is a hearer or solitary realiser then they just have the first two respectively. This is combined with faith in the triple gem.

(iii) The divisions of refuge

Resultant and causal. Causal is refuge in an object that is different from one's own mental continuum. An example is a buddha. Resultant refuge is the result in one's own mind.

Q: How many refuges are there?

Hinayana and Mahayana refuge.

Q: How many objects of refuge are there?

Three - buddha, dharma and sangha.

Q: How many sangha are there?

In the *Ornament*, it gives the division of 20 sangha. There are the eight causal and fruitional aryas. If someone first enters the Hinayana path of seeing, they are called a causal stream enterer. The basis on which one divides the 20 sangha are the eight causal and fruitional aryas. The causal stream enterer starts at the path of preparation i.e. not an arya.

Q: If it is an uninterrupted path of seeing is it a causal stream enterer?

It becomes complicated where one tries to define where causal ends and resultant starts. To understand this, one needs an understanding of the divisions of the path of seeing.

Further points from Geshe Jampa Gyatso (March 12, 98, p22)

According to the *Uttaratantra*, the Three Jewels are called rare supreme jewels because there are six similarities between them and a wish-fulfilling gem: the Three Jewels appear rarely in the world just as does a wish-fulfilling gem; they are stainless like a wish-fulfilling gem; they have powers, such as clairvoyance; they are the best ornament for a virtuous thought; they are supreme among excellent qualities; and they are not under the domination of attachment and hatred.

The actual practice of going for refuge has five divisions:

- 1) on which objects does one rely: the Three Jewels are the sole objects of refuge for those seeking refuge.
- 2) the causes for taking refuge: fear of suffering, and faith that only the Three Jewels have the capacity to help.
- 3) the measure of having gone for refuge: (a) to have total confidence from the depths of one's heart that the Three Jewels can protect one from all suffering and (b) to abide in the distinguished class because of having made the promise to not go for refuge to any objects other than them due to the two causes.
- 4) the benefits of going for refuge: (a) the negative karma of downfalls will be destroyed, (b) one completes the two great accumulations, (c) one will be protected from all harm, (d) one will be able to receive new vows such as those of individual liberation, (e) one will increase those vows that have been received, (f) the buddha nature will be awakened, (g) one gains many other excellent qualities such as attaining enlightenment quickly and so forth.
- 5) the stages of training oneself after having gone for refuge (the precepts of going for refuge): there are individual precepts with respect to each of the Three Jewels and common precepts. With respect to the individual precepts there is a precept about what is to be abandoned and a precept about what is to be practiced.
 - (a) Buddha: not take refuge in other gods; respect every image of the Buddha.
 - (b) Dharma: the mind should be free from harm.
 - (c) Sangha: not associate with Tirthikas or misleading friends.

The precepts common to all Three Jewels are to cherish the Three Jewels as even more precious than one's own life, to remember the Three Jewels continuously, to make prostrations and offerings and respect them, and to never generate a mind of disrespect toward them even for an instant. "If one keeps these common precepts, the foundation of happiness and goodness will be established."

Divisions

If going for refuge is divided by way of its entity, there are three divisions: 1) going for refuge with the body, 2) going for refuge with speech, and 3) going for refuge with the mind.

Refuge is also divided into the refuges of small, middle and great beings. That of a small being is to go for refuge to the Three Jewels in order to become free of the suffering of the lower realms. That of a middling being is to go for refuge in order to free oneself from cyclic existence. That of a great being is to go for refuge to the Three Jewels to liberate other sentient beings from the sufferings of cyclic existence.

Boundaries

Refuge is also divided by way of its boundaries: 1) the refuge present at the causal time, and 2) the refuge present at the result time. That present at the causal time is the refuge present in the continuum of sentient beings. That present at the resultant time is the refuge present on the buddha ground.

(iv) Practice note

Contemplating the qualities of the refuge object and going for refuge is very important. It is the starting point of the buddhist path. Preceding the teaching on the Three Jewels, was the teaching of the Four Noble Truths. First reflect on one's suffering existence by reflecting on the different categories of suffering, the three and so forth, and then analyse its cause, the second noble truth. The cause is found to be karma and afflictions. At

the root of the afflictions is the root affliction of ignorance. By investigating the nature of ignorance, we come to understand that its apprehended object is non-existent, by which we can understand the profundity of emptiness.

Buddha also contemplated the Four Noble Truths and practiced the path to remove suffering. He did so for many eons. At the end, he became enlightened. Because of having the qualities of knowledge etc he is able to show us the path. This is his function. But we won't get liberated just by the Buddha showing us the path - we need to also put the teachings into practice. This is the significance of the Dharma Jewel. By the purification of non-virtuous karma and accumulating virtue one can close the door to the lower realms and to suffering. The virtuous states generated in one's own mind and purification that is happening in one's mind is the actual Dharma.

For example, one can recite Buddha's mantra, OM MUNI MUNI MAHA MUNIYE SOHA. The three MUNIs indicates that the Buddha is free from any type of obscurity. He has conquered the three stages of the Lam Rim. The first MUNI indicates that he has closed the door to the lower realms. The second MUNI indicates that he has gained mastery over the sufferings of cyclic existence. The last MUNI indicates that he has gained mastery over the obscurities to knowledge and self cherishing which makes him a great muni, a great able one. For these reasons, the Buddha is regarded as the main object of refuge.

The Buddha Jewel is regarded as the main object of refuge. The Dharma Jewel is the actual object of refuge. By putting the path into practice by reflecting on the Four Noble Truths etc, one effects a transformation of one's mind - it becomes an actual path. The actual transformation that takes place within one's mind becomes an actual path or refuge. This is why the Dharma or positive states one generates in one's mind are the actual refuge.

The Buddha has freed himself from all obscurities and has compassion, power and knowledge. He has limitless compassion for each and every sentient being. In order to liberate sentient beings, Buddha taught and then he inspired students with his magical and psychic powers etc and also with his blessing. But if there is nothing from the student's own side then nothing can change. So even though from the Buddha's side there are the powers and blessings, if the student does not practice, no transformation occurs. Therefore, it is said that oneself is one's own protector or refuge, meaning that one must put the Buddha's teachings into practice so that the mind can change.

From the Buddha's side, he blesses disciples with his body, speech and mind by giving them teachings, inspiration and so forth but in order for the disciples to receive those blessings they must have faith in the Buddha. Both conditions need to come together - the Buddha's qualities and the faith of the disciple. The Buddha can't transfer his realisations - if he could then everyone would already be enlightened. In order to be helped by Buddha's hooks of compassion, one needs to develop faith in the Buddha. There are various stories where people have attained realisations by being struck by light from the Buddha or being blessed by him. Even though it looks like it has come from the power of the Buddha, if there is no karma coming from the side of the disciple then it can't happen.

In order for one's practice to be successful, the virtues one is creating need to be preceded by proper motivation and followed by proper dedication. Motivation should be for happiness in future lives, liberation or enlightenment - or to be free from sufferings of lower realms, free from the sufferings of cyclic existence or to be free from the obscurities to knowledge. On the basis of that motivation one engages in virtuous action, which is concluded with the dedication of merits that one has accumulated to the achievement of one's aim.

For this purpose, practice starts with refuge, bodhicitta, the seven-limbed practice and the practice of requests. Requests are of different types - first, one makes requests for Buddha to look on one's self, which is a request to Buddha's knowledge; then the request to the Buddha's compassion - 'please take care of me'; requests to the Buddha's power, 'please rescue me'. In such a way, one makes requests to the Buddha's knowledge, compassion and power. It is also very good to request that one's mind turn towards the Dharma ('may my mind turn towards the Dharma'), 'may the path be generated within my mind', and 'may I not have any obstacles in my Dharma practice'.

From before, the Buddha is one's main object of request even though there are many deities and so forth. There are many stories of the Lam Rim lineage lamas who generated realisations by making requests to the lineage lamas and they generated the realisations of the lama to whom request was made.

These are all important points.

The Buddha taught in the middling *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras* that one should go for refuge without grasping at the true existence of the objects of refuge. It is like this with the whole path - when one practices the path one should not grasp at its true existence, understanding its lack of true existence. Maitreya identified the whole body of the path in the *Ornament* for the purpose to identify it as the basis of negation, the basis of emptiness. For example, why the Three Jewels are taught is in order to identify the Three Jewels as the basis of negation of true existence, as the basis of emptiness. So it is said that one should not grasp at a truly existent Buddha, Dharma and Sangha.

(c) 20 Sangha

(1) General outline

Having identified the Three Jewels as the object of refuge, and as a basis of negation of true existence, the text goes on to identify the eight causal and fruitional arias as the basis of negation. Having completed the Sangha Jewel, here there is a more detailed explanation of the Sangha Jewel. When more elaborated upon, they become eight and then the 20 Sangha. The words dealing with the 20 Sangha come some time after the Sangha Jewel but in the commentary, the explanation comes immediately afterwards.

The 20 Sangha refers only to Hinayana practitioners explicitly. The teaching on the eight arias - the four causal and four fruitional arias - explicitly deals with hearer sangha. These eight arias form the basis for the 20 Sangha, based on various distinctions of their mental faculties. The eight arias are:

- 1) the causal stream enterer
- 2) the fruitional stream enterer
- 3) the causal returner
- 4) the fruitional returner
- 5) the causal non-returner
- 6) the fruitional non-returner
- 7) the causal arhat
- 8) the fruitional arhat

The four fruitional arias are distinguished by the number of afflictions they have abandoned. A hearer practitioner becomes a fruitional stream enterer when they have abandoned the three fetters that are abandonments of the path of seeing. Then when the sixth affliction contained within the desire realm is abandoned, the practitioner becomes a fruitional returner. When the ninth affliction contained within the desire realm is abandoned, the practitioner becomes a fruitional non-returner. When all the afflictions are abandoned, the practitioner becomes a fruitional arhat.

Those four fruits are distinguished by the number of afflictions that they have abandoned. Preceding each of those fruits, the practitioner is aspiring to that fruit. As already mentioned, the result of a stream enterer is attained when one has abandoned the three fetters that belong to the abandonments through seeing. Preceding that, starting with the meditation session that links the path of preparation with the path of seeing, from that time on up until just before the three fetters are abandoned, the practitioner is a causal stream enterer. Then he becomes a fruitional stream enterer. Then again after that time, just before the sixth affliction belonging to the desire realm is abandoned, the practitioner is a causal returner. Then when the sixth affliction contained within the desire realm is abandoned, the practitioner is a fruitional returner. After that until before the ninth affliction of the desire realm is abandoned, the practitioner is a causal non-returner. Then when the ninth affliction contained within the desire realm is abandoned, the practitioner becomes a fruitional non-returner. Then just before the result of arhat is attained, the practitioner is a causal arhat

aspiring towards the fruit of arhat. Then when the afflictions are actually abandoned, from that point on the practitioner has attained the fruit of arhat.

When 20 Sangha is explained in a more elaborate manner there are 1000's of different Sangha.

(2) Explaining the Sangha Jewel in detail

Since the 10-fold Mahayana instructions cover the whole path, what need is there for anything further after that? This is just a general presentation of the path, which does not go into all the details. To clarify all the instructions, much further detail follows in subsequent chapters. For example, one can present the generality of compounded phenomena, but in order to fully understand the subject, one must go into the detail of this.

We have had a general explanation of the Three Jewels, now there is a detailed explanation of the Sangha Jewel in particular. Within the detailed explanation, there is discussion of the Mahayana Sangha Jewel. It is explained with the exemplary Sangha Jewel, which is the Hinayana Sangha Jewel. By using the hearer sangha as an example, the Mahayana Sangha Jewel is defined.

(i) Presentation of fruits

Here we have a presentation of those that abide within the fruit or result of their practice. After practicing, the practitioner attains a certain fruit, after which they abide within the fruit or their practice. Regarding the Mahayana sangha that is being explained, here we have the virtuous training and the fruit of the virtuous training. Virtuous training refers to the uninterrupted path of seeing. It is defined as:

A way of virtuous training is an uninterrupted path, a way of engaging in ultimate endeavour through abandoning the afflictive emotions.

The fruit of the virtuous training is divided into two parts:

- (a) Impermanent part - the liberated path of seeing that is produced by the uninterrupted path of seeing (result similar to the cause);
- (b) Permanent part - the cessation attained by that liberated path of seeing (the effect of separating).

In other words, the result of a liberated path is a compounded phenomena, because it has been produced by an uninterrupted path - it is called "a result similar to the cause". However, the cessation attained by the uninterrupted path is an uncompounded phenomena - it is called "a result of separation".

The method of virtuous training refers to the uncontaminated uninterrupted path of seeing. All such paths are the manner of virtuous training. The result or fruit of that method of virtuous training is the liberated path it induces and the cessation attained by the liberated path.

The four different fruits that one obtains along the path are determined by which of the three sets of obscurations one has abandoned (sometimes we talk about the nine circles of the abandonments of seeing and so forth, but it is not this division of the abandonments to which we are referring here). The three sets of abandonments are:

Three fetters that are the abandonment through seeing:

- 1) Intellectually acquired view of the transitory collection;
- 2) View holding mistaken disciplines and morality supreme;
- 3) Afflicted doubt.

Five final abandonments (five partial concordances with the lower realm)

Add to the three fetters, the following:

- 4) aspiration for desire (attachment of the desire realm);
- 5) harmful intent.

Five higher abandonments (five partial concordances with the upper realm)

- 1) attachment contained within the form and formless realms;
- 2) sleep

- 3) mental excitement;
- 4) pride; and
- 5) ignorance.

The five higher abandonments abandon all the afflictions. Once all the afflictions have been abandoned, one attains the fruit of arhat.

For example, when the practitioner meditates on the method of virtuous training, the uninterrupted path of seeing, he is in the process of abandoning the three fetters that are abandonments through seeing. When these have been abandoned, he attains the fruit of the method of virtuous training, the liberated path, and the cessation, the abandonment of these three fetters.

When the practitioner abandons the three fetters that are the abandonment through seeing, he engages in the method of virtuous training. When he actually attains the abandonment, he attains the first fruit of stream enterer. However, at this point, he has not abandoned all the afflictions contained in the desire realm.

The subsequent afflictions of the desire realm are then abandoned sequentially. The afflictions are divided into nine levels: the small big, small middle, small small, and so on. When the first six levels of the desire realm afflictions have been abandoned, the fruit of returner is attained. When the practitioner goes on to sequentially abandon the remaining desire realm afflictions, the five final abandonments have been completed and he attains the fruit of a non-returner. When he goes on and abandons all the afflictions completely, the five higher abandonments, he attains the fruit of arhat.

Just to clarify, the four fruits (stream enterer, returner, non-returner and arhat) are related to the three sets of abandonments (three fetters, final abandonments and higher abandonments). The fruit of stream enterer is related to the three fetters, returner and non-returner are related to the final abandonments, and arhat is related to the higher abandonments.

Progressing along the path sequentially:

- **Stream enterer:** is a practitioner who has abandoned the three fetters which are the abandonment through seeing - but he has not abandoned all the desire realm afflictions. Then through meditating, he sequentially abandons the different levels of the afflictions contained within the desire realm, of which there are nine. By meditating on, for example, a path that meditates on the coarse and subtle aspects, the practitioner sequentially abandons afflictions contained in the desire realm from the first to the sixth level.
- **Returner:** is a practitioner who has attained the liberated path that has abandoned the sixth level of the afflictions contained within the desire realm. Most of the five final abandonments have been abandoned.
- **Non-returner:** is attained when he goes on to further meditate and abandons the ninth level of the afflictions contained within the desire realm. All of the five final abandonments have been abandoned.
- **Arhat:** is attained after the practitioner goes on to abandon the afflictions contained with the higher realms - the five higher abandonments. After this is achieved, all afflictions have been abandoned and the fruit of arhat is obtained.

On which path does the attainment depend?

The first result (stream enterer) is attained only on the path of seeing. The two intermediate results (once returner and non-returner) if attained serially depend on the path of meditation. The last result (foe destroyer) is attained in dependence upon the path of meditation, since it is necessarily attained by completely abandoning the abandonments of meditation of the peak of cyclic existence.

(ii) Presentation of persons

What is referred to as the fruit is always the liberated path that is liberated from that set of afflictions. The person is someone who abides within the fruit. Taking the four fruits as a basis, there is a further sub-division into eight and then to 20 sangha.

Sub-division into eight sangha

The four trainees and four results are:

	<u>Alternative names</u> (GJG)
1. Training stream enterer	Approacher to stream enterer
2. Fruitional stream enterer	Abider in the result of stream enterer
3. Training returner	Approacher to returner
4. Fruitional returner	Abider in the result of returner
5. Training non-returner	Approacher to non-returner
6. Fruitional non-returner	Abider in the result of non-returner
7. Training arhat	Approacher to arhat
8. Fruitional arhat	Abider in the result of arhat

A hearer trainee stream enterer is one who enters the meditative equipoise that is the last part of the path of preparation up until and including the 15th moment of the path of seeing. From the 16th moment, he is a resultant stream enterer. When talking of the 16 moments of the path of seeing, this relates to the eight forbearances, which are uninterrupted paths, and the eight knowledges, which are liberated paths, all of which arise in relation to the Four Noble Truths.

The hearer practitioner progresses from the path of preparation - when in meditative equipoise they realise selflessness directly to attain the path of seeing. The first part of the path of seeing is an uninterrupted path - the forbearance of the truth of suffering. Forbearance is the direct antidote to the first set of afflictions contained within the desire realm. The forbearance is always the uninterrupted path that counteracts the afflictions contained in the desire realm and the subsequent forbearance is always the uninterrupted path that counteracts the afflictions contained in the form and formless realms.

First one attains the uninterrupted path that counteracts the afflictions of the desire realm and then one attains the liberated path.

Up until the subsequent forbearance of the truth of the path the practitioner has not completely abandoned all the afflictions that are abandonments through seeing. This is the last uninterrupted path of seeing. That is the final antidote. When the practitioner has attained the subsequent knowledge of the truth of the path, he has attained the final liberated path of seeing and the fruit of stream enterer.

Mainly what the practitioner has abandoned is the three fetters. That is the view of the transitory collection, afflicted doubt and view holding mistaken disciplines and morality as supreme that belong to the abandonments through seeing.

When the hearer has abandoned the three fetters he has become a resultant or fruitional stream enterer. Then as he progresses along the path, once he has abandoned the fifth of the nine levels of the afflictions contained within the desire realm, he has become a returner. When he has abandoned all levels including the ninth level of the afflictions contained within the desire realm, then he has become a non-returner. If he has completely abandoned all of the afflictions contained within the form and formless realms, he has become an arhat.

The four results are determined by having abandoned the three fetters that are abandonments through seeing, which determines the result of stream enterer. Then abandoning the fifth level of the afflictions contained in the desire realm determines the result of returner. Then abandoning all nine levels of afflictions contained within the desire realm determines the result of no-returner. Abandoning all afflictions within the form and formless realms determines the result of arhat. Preceding each of these is the four trainees.

Sub-division into 20 sangha

Trainee stream enterer

Approacher to stream enterer is defined as: a person striving for the distinguished result by way of abandoning the three fetters (objects of abandonment of the path of seeing).

There are two divisions: followers of faith and followers of dharma.

Boundary: from a single meditation session that begins on the path of preparation up to the liberated path belonging to the result of stream enterer.

Stream enterer

Abider in the result of stream enterer who abandons serially is: a person abiding in the distinguished result by way of abandoning the three fetters who does not simultaneously abandon all the objects of abandonment of the three realms that are to be abandoned by the path of meditation.

Abider in the result of stream enterer who abandons simultaneously is: a person abiding in the distinguished result by way of abandoning the three fetters who simultaneously abandons all the objects of abandonment of the three realms that are to be abandoned by the path of meditation.

There are stream enterers who abandon serially and stream enterers who abandon simultaneously. The latter abandons the three fetters and simultaneously abandons all the objects of abandonment of the three realms that are to be abandoned by the path of meditation. The divisions are:

- (a) When fruitional stream enterers are divided in terms of faculty there are two: dull (aspirers-by-faith) and sharp (attainers-by-seeing).
- (b) When fruitional stream enterers are divided in terms of activity there are two: mere abiders in the result and distinguished abiders in the result. A mere abider in the result is one who has attained the result of stream enterer who is not yet striving to achieve the result of once returner. A distinguished abider in the result is one who has attained the result of stream enterer and is striving to achieve the result of once returner.
- (c) When fruitional stream enterers are divided by way of differentiation of rebirth there are two: those who are obstructed by seven lives and those who have to be born from class to class. Those who are obstructed by seven lives are divided into two: those who are definite and those who are not definite. Those who are born from class to class are also divided into two: those who are born as a god after having been a god and those who are born as a human after having been a human.

Boundary: exists from the 16th moment of the path of seeing up to the uninterrupted path that abandons the sixth delusion to be abandoned by the path of meditation.

Trainee once returner

Approacher to the result of once returner is: a person who is striving to attain a distinguished result of training in virtue who has previously separated from most of the attachments of the desire realm.

approacher to the result of once returner who leaps over is: one who has abandoned any of the two levels of attachment, the seventh and eighth, of the desire realm before the path of seeing.

There are two divisions:

- (a) Trainee once returner who abandons serially - exists from the moment of exerting effort after attaining the path of seeing in abandoning the objects of abandonment of the desire realm by the mundane path of meditation up to the abandonment of the sixth delusion.
- (b) Trainee once returner who leaps over - abandons the nine levels of attachment of the desire realm before the path of seeing. He then enters the path of seeing and on the 16th moment, the subsequent knowledge of true paths, becomes an abider in the result of non-returner.

Fruitional once returner

Abider in the result of once returner is: a person abiding in the distinguished result of training in virtue who has previously separated from most of the attachments of the desire realm.

Has only one more rebirth before achieving the result of foe destroyer. Such an abider has abandoned either the seventh or eighth level of attachment of the desire realm but has not abandoned the ninth level of attachment.

- (a) Fruitional once returners who abandon serially - from the liberated path that is separated from the sixth level of attachment of the desire realm up to the uninterrupted path of meditation that is the antidote to the ninth level of attachment of the desire realm.
- (b) Fruitional once returners who leap over - from the 16th moment of the path of seeing up to the uninterrupted path of meditation that is the antidote to the ninth level of attachment of the desire realm.

Trainee non-returner

Approacher to the result of non-returner is: a person who strives to attain the distinguished result of training in virtue by abandoning the last five similitudes.

- (a) Trainee non-returner who abandons serially - from the moment of exerting effort in abandoning the seventh level of attachment of the desire realm after attaining the path of seeing up to that of exerting effort in abandoning the ninth level of attachment of the desire realm.

(b) Trainee non-returners who leap over - same as for fruitional once returners who leap over.

Fruitional non-returner

Abider in the result of non-returner is: a person who abides on the distinguished result of training in virtue by way of abandoning the last five similitudes: (1-3) the three fetters, (4) aspiration for the desire realm, and (5) harmful mind.

non-returner who migrates to the form realm is: a person who, having attained the result of non-returner at the time of attaining the path of seeing, takes rebirth in the form realm.

- (a) Fruitional non-returners who attain the result serially and fruitional non-returners who attain the result by previously separating from attachment.
- (b) Divided in terms of devoting oneself to the arya Dharma:
- non-returners who having completed their life in the desire realm go to nirvana - those who generate the path of seeing in the desire realm, then continuously generate the path, and then attain the result of non-returner. There is a division into three - non-returner who attains peace in this life, non-returner manifesting a body, and trainee arhat; and
 - non-returners who do not attain nirvana in the same life but in a future life. The latter is divided into four - those who pass beyond in the intermediate state, upon rebirth, with manifest effort, without manifest effort, and those who transfer to a higher level. The latter includes those who attain nirvana in Akanishta (Not Low, the 17th level of the form realm) or a support of the Peak of Existence. Those who transfer to the formless realm and attain nirvana are divided into three - those who leap, half leap and those who leap in all levels except Great Brahma.

Foe destroyer

Abider in the result of foe destroyer is: one abiding in the distinguished result of training in virtue who has abandoned the five upper similitudes.

Divided into trainee foe destroyer and fruitional foe destroyer. Also divided into those who abandon serially and those who abandon simultaneously. When divided by way of faculty there are six.

The *Ornament* lists the 20 as:

	<i>Ornament</i> reference (verse 1.23)
(a) <u>five related to stream enterers</u> :	
1) the followers of faith	Dull faculty
2) the followers of Dharma	Sharp faculty
3) those born from god to god	From lineage to lineage
4) those born from human to human	From lineage to lineage
5) mere abiders in the result of stream enterer	Dull and sharp faculty (implicitly)
(b) <u>three related to once returners</u> :	
1) trainee once returner	Faith and attained insight
2) once returner blocked by one rebirth	Single interruption
3) mere abider in the result of once returner	Single interruption (implicitly)
(c) <u>10 related to non-returners</u> :	
1) trainee non-returner	Faith and attained insight
2) those passing beyond in the intermediate state	Through the intermediate state and birth, applying..
3) those passing beyond upon rebirth	Through the intermediate state and birth, applying..
4) those passing beyond with manifest effort	Through the intermediate state and birth, applying..
5) those passing beyond without manifest effort	Through the intermediate state and birth, applying..
6) those who leap	Progressing to Akanishta - Three leapers
7) those who half-leap	Progressing to Akanishta - Three leapers
8) those who transfer/die in all places	Progressing to Akanishta - Three leapers
9) those who attain nirvana in the same life	Prog'g to the POE - Pacifying in this life
10) those who manifest with a body	Prog'g to the POE - Manifesting a body
(d) <u>Two related to foe destroyers</u> :	
1) trainee foe destroyer	Prog'g to the POE

2) rhinoceros-like solitary realisers

The rhinoceros

Alternatively, this may be presented as:

Dull and sharp faculty	Explicitly dull faculty trainee stream enterer(1) Explicitly sharp faculty trainee stream enterer(2) Implicitly mere resultant stream enterer(3)
Faith and attained insight	Trainer returner following faith Trainee returner following insight(6) Trainee non-returner following faith Trainee non-returner following insight(7)
Lineage to lineage	Stream enterers according to human(4), divine lineage(5)
Single interruption	Explicitly returner with one interruption(8) Implicitly mere resultant returner(9)
Intermediate state and rebirth	Resultant non-returner liberated in intermediate state(10) Resultant non-returner liberated through mere birth(11)
Applying and not applying	Resultant non-returner liberated through application(12) Resultant non-returner liberated without application(13)
Progressing to Akanishta, Three leapers	Basis for the following three: 1. Ascending non-retuner(14) 2. Half ascending non-retuner(15) 3. Ascending non-returner progressing thru all states(16)
Progressing to limit of the peak of existence, destroying attachment to form, Pacifying in this life Manifesting a body	Basis for non-returners who overcome attachment to the form realm– 1. Non-returner who attains arhat's same life as POS (17) 2. Non-returner who has attained the cessative absorption(18) Implicitly the trainee arhat(19)
Rhinoceros	Solitary realiser arhat(20)

These are the 20 sangha of example, while bodhisattvas are the sangha of meaning, to whom the same divisions of 20 sangha apply. No bodhisattvas are actually called stream enterers, once returners and so forth, but these names can be applied to them.

If you know the 20 sangha, they are an object of faith in the Sangha Jewel. They are also paths in the continuum of the Dharma Jewel. The function of the buddha dharma is to bring about the four types of results. At the time of the Buddha, thousands would attain stream enterer every day but this has diminished to the extent that you now don't see practitioners attaining the four fruits.

Supports

Stream enterer and once returner can be achieved supported on a preparation of the first concentration. Non-returners depend on one of the four actual absorptions of the concentrations. Foe destroyer is achieved supported on any of the six levels of concentrations or one of the first three formless absorptions. These

fruits cannot be achieved supported on a mind of the desire realm or the Peak of Existence. The mind of the desire realm is too gross and the mind of the Peak of Existence is too subtle and unclear.

Paths

Stream enterer is attained only on the path of seeing

Once returner and non-returner, when attained serially, are attained on the path of meditation. Those previously separated from attachment to the desire realm attain the result on the path of seeing.

Foe destroyer I attained only by the path of meditation.

4) Effort in non-clinging

The set of the next three instructions are instructions on how to eliminate obstacles that prevent one's practice (4-6), how to generate the nature of the path (7-8) and how to abandon afflictions and their seeds (9-10). This is how they are explained in the sutras.

The structure of precepts of exhortation concerning effort in non-clinging (4), tireless effort (5), and effort that thoroughly upholds the path (6) in terms of the subject of the precept, discordant class and instruction for the elimination of the discordant class are explained as follows:

Precepts about the features of practice (achieving)

Precepts with regard to eliminating the discordant class

- a) precept with regard to cause of non-degeneration of practice (laziness of attachment to bad activities); precept on non-attachment to meaningless activities and mental and physical pleasure is to realize that they do not truly exist.
- b) precept with regard to increase of practice (laziness of procrastination); due to a covetousness, a pride with regard to the path one becomes weary of practice; precept of non-covetousness is to realize form, feeling, etc. do not truly exist.
- c) the cause of not falling to the hinayana (laziness of self-defeatism); doubting one's own ability, daunted by the task of achieving omniscience; precept of thoroughly upholding the mahayana is to realize that all phenomenon are not intrinsically produced.

First there is the instruction dealing with enthusiasm that counteracts the initial adverse conditions that prevent one from accomplishing the path, specifically laziness. Laziness is three fold:

- Attraction to negative actions (antidote is 4)
- Laziness of laziness: sloth, wanting to sleep etc. (antidote is 5)
- Laziness of low self esteem: feeling that you personally could not accomplish the dharmic aims, for example (antidote is 6).

In order to overcome the initial laziness that prevents one from starting to practice, one needs strong faith in the qualities and fruits of the practice to be engaged in. For example, with the practice of calm abiding, think of the qualities of calm abiding and generate aspiring faith. Based on aspiring faith, one generates strong aspiration - a strong wish to accomplish the aim through performing the action. This leads to joyous effort. By seeing the qualities of calm abiding one engages in the practice and attains the result. Otherwise, if one doesn't see the qualities of the practice, there will be no strong aspiration and no effort. It is like this with all qualities - they all arise from strong effort.

This is the enthusiasm of not grasping. Maitreya taught this text to specific disciples. He advised them to meditate on the lack of true existence in order to overcome the different types of laziness. This is why the first enthusiasm is called the enthusiasm of non-clinging. By not clinging to true existence, those disciples overcome the laziness of being attracted to negative actions and so forth. But for us, it is primarily reflecting on the qualities of the practice to become inspired by the practice.

The Buddha said in the sutras, 'no forms or feelings and so forth should appear in your mind'. This means that you should not grasp at inherently existent forms or inherently existent feelings.

5) Tireless effort

When bodhisattva's initially generate the mind of enlightenment they make a pledge to eliminate the suffering of all sentient beings and to place them in an enlightened state. In order to place them in an enlightened state they have to eliminate their suffering. In order to eliminate their suffering they must first gain enlightenment themselves. They think that by attaining enlightenment themselves they can liberate countless sentient beings from their suffering. Then the bodhisattva reflects that if they remain lazy, then that won't happen.

The second instructions say that bodhisattvas should not cling at true existence. If they do so the path to enlightenment will be very long. However if they meditate single pointedly without clinging to true existence they will attain enlightenment very quickly.

Geshe Jampa Gyatso refers to this as the precept with regard to increase of the practice. Due to covetousness, a pride with regard to the path, one becomes weary of practice. The sense here is that you are egotistically ambitious with your practice, wanting to become a great practice. Then you don't get the results you want and give up. The antidote is to realise that form, feeling etc do not truly exist.

Also, one should give up the laziness of lethargy because if one has this laziness, one will not be able to reach one's aim.

6) Effort that thoroughly maintains (upholds) the path

The next instructions deal with preventing bodhisattvas from falling to a lower path. By practicing the bodhisattva path, one becomes close to enlightenment in a short time. But if the practitioner works for their own happiness, they become distant from enlightenment.

Geshe Jampa Gyatso refers to this as the precept of thoroughly upholding the Mahayana, which serves as an antidote to the laziness of self-defeatism - a cause of falling to the Hinayana. One must realise that all phenomena are not intrinsically produced. That is, all you need to do is to create the causes and conditions to achieve buddhahood and you will get there.

7) The five eyes

The next set of instructions deal with what facilitates the natural generation of one's practice - the natural Mahayana achievement. These are the five eyes and six clairvoyances. They are a cause for independently engaging in practice, i.e. to practice without depending on others.

It is said that if one wants one's meditation practice to develop well one should develop these the five eyes and six clairvoyances. The instructions are necessary for attaining mastery in one's meditation practice. For example, if one teaches dharma with these eyes and clairvoyances, one will know the karma and dispositions of the disciples so that the teaching becomes very powerful.

The Buddha taught the eyes and clairvoyances in the *Prajnaparamita Sutras* in two ways. He taught their nominal existence implicitly and taught their lack of true existence explicitly. When Maitreya taught on the implicit meaning of the *Prajnaparamita Sutras*, he identified the five eyes and six clairvoyances as a basis of negation.

The definition of an eye is: a knower that arises in dependence upon a mind of an actual concentration which is its own empowering condition and that abides in a class that is distinguished by directly seeing its own object.

When divided there are five:
(1) eye of flesh,

- (2) divine eye,
- (3) eye of wisdom,
- (4) eye of dharma, and
- (5) eye of buddha.

Note that the first two have an uncommon empowering condition that is a physical sense power as well as an empowering condition that is a mind of meditative equipoise that is a form realm concentration.

The definition of an eye of flesh is: one of the five eyes that is a knower that directly sees subtle and gross forms at a distance of one hundred *pak-tshe* (6,800kms) in dependence on an eye of flesh (the eye sense power) which is its uncommon empowering condition.

The flesh eye has two types of empowering conditions: the common and uncommon. The common empowering condition is an actual concentration, while the uncommon empowering condition is the actual eye sense power.

The definition of a divine eye is: one of the five eyes that is a knower that directly sees the deaths and rebirths of sentient beings in dependence on a divine eye which is its uncommon empowering condition.

The definition of an eye of wisdom is: one of the five eyes that is observed to be a non-conceptual exalted wisdom (transcendental wisdom in meditative equipoise).

The definition of an eye of dharma is: one of five eyes that is an exalted (or transcendental) knower that realizes the level of sharp and dull faculties of superiors (aryas) exactly as they are.

The definition of an eye of buddha is: one of the five eyes that is a fully developed exalted wisdom directly realizing all phenomena.

There is a debate regarding the flesh eye as to whether the fact that its uncommon empowering condition being the eye sense power means that it is an eye consciousness. Normally a sense consciousness arises in dependence on the uncommon empowering condition of a physical sense power and a mental consciousness arises in dependence on the uncommon empowering condition of the mental sense power. Also, at the same time, the flesh eye arises in dependence upon the empowering condition of an actual absorption.

On the one side, the flesh eye arises in dependence on the uncommon empowering condition of the eye sense power and on the other arises in dependence on the common empowering condition of a form realm absorption. In itself, it is contained within the level of a form realm absorption. But due to its uncommon empowering condition, doesn't it become an eye consciousness? The lower tenets say that first the person achieves the absorption of the form realm, then in dependence on this they meditate on the eye sense power and then by doing this the flesh eye clairvoyance is generated. Is it a mental consciousness or sense consciousness?

With the dharma eye, when the practitioner attains the form absorption the physical attributes of the body change. The body is contained within the level of the form realm, which means that the eye sense power, for example, becomes the divine eye sense power and in dependence on that it generates the consciousness that sees the birth, death and transference of sentient beings. Again the question arises, is this a sense consciousness? A sense consciousness can't see the birth etc of sentient beings.

Another question is whether clairvoyance is attained during meditative absorption or in the post-meditation period? When a person is in single pointed concentration the sense consciousnesses are not manifest.

This debate does not occur with respect to the eye of dharma because it doesn't have a physical sense power as an uncommon empowering condition. It is a transcendental knowledge that is able to see the level of the faculties of arya beings. It is actually very difficult to see these qualities directly, so it is a very profound realisation. The question arises, is a lower arya being able to see the faculties of a higher arya being?

The eye of wisdom is a non-conceptual transcendental wisdom in meditative equipoise. This is straightforward, as is the eye of buddha.

Boundaries

The flesh, divine and dharma eyes can exist in someone who has not entered the path. However, in the context of a being who has entered the path:

- The flesh eye exists from the path of accumulation up;
- the divine eye from the path of preparation up;
- the wisdom eye from the path of seeing up;
- the dharma eye from the post-meditation of the path of seeing; and
- the buddha eye exists on the buddha ground.

For example, the flesh eye can exist in animals (nagas).

Causes

To attain the five eyes one should train in the six perfections and the four legs of magical emanation. The four legs of magical emanation refer to the concentrations. The principal cause of the five eyes is to achieve the actual concentrations of the form realm. To attain an actual concentration one has to develop calm abiding.

8) Six clairvoyances

The six clairvoyances²⁷ are to be developed in one's continuum while realising that they do not exist truly. The clairvoyances are taught to identify them as a basis of negation.

The definition of a clairvoyance is: that which abides in a class distinguished by directly seeing its object in dependence on a mind of an actual concentration which is its empowering condition.

When divided there are six:

- (1) clairvoyance of magical emanation,
- (2) clairvoyance of divine ear,
- (3) clairvoyance knowing others' minds,
- (4) clairvoyance of remembrance of previous states,
- (5) clairvoyance of divine eye, and
- (6) clairvoyance of the exhaustion of contaminations.

The definition of a clairvoyance is similar to that of an eye. Since an actual concentration is necessary in order to develop both a clairvoyance and an eye, one has to first train in developing calm abiding and special insight and then achieve the preparations of an actual concentration. "Directly seeing its objects" refers to the fact that each of the six clairvoyances sees its respective object.

- (1) The definition of a clairvoyance of magical emanation is: one of the six clairvoyances that is a knower able to move the ground, emanate one into many and many into one, and so forth.

The main function of the clairvoyance of magical emanation is to attract others in order to help them. This clairvoyance of magical emanation is able to make, for example, a single cup into thousands of cups and absorb thousands of cups into one. This is the meaning of emanating one into many and many into one.

- (2) The definition of a clairvoyance of divine ear is: one of the six clairvoyances that is produced from a divine ear which is its empowering condition and knows the faint and loud sounds of the realms of the universe.

- (3) The definition of a clairvoyance knowing others' minds is: one of the six clairvoyances that abides in a class of knowing whether other's minds are with attachment or without attachment and so forth.

To achieve this clairvoyance one has to train in examining the characteristics of one's own body which stem from ignorance, attachment, and hatred, after which one trains in examining others' bodies. Or one can train in observing the body language of others in order to identify what kind of minds they have; for example, how someone walks may reveal pride, attachment, or ignorance.

²⁷ For an analysis of the six clairvoyances and their causes, see Geshe Loden, *The Fundamental Potential of Enlightenment*, p66-74.

The dharma eye is quite similar to the clairvoyance knowing the minds of others. However, with the clairvoyance, one can't see the minds of higher beings while with the dharma eye one can see the faculties of all arya beings, whether higher or lower.

(4) The definition of a clairvoyance of remembrance of previous states is: one of the six clairvoyances that abides in a class of remembering many past lives of oneself and others.

This clairvoyance mainly remembers the different rebirths oneself and others have taken, but it also knows the causes of these rebirths whereby one can tell others the causes of their good and bad rebirths.

(5) The definition of a clairvoyance of divine eye is: one of the six clairvoyances that is produced in dependence on a divine eye which is its empowering condition and directly sees the subtle and gross forms of the realms of the universe.

The divine eye is the empowering condition for the clairvoyance of divine eye. With this clairvoyance one can directly see all subtle and gross forms at a long distance. The divine eye directly sees the deaths and rebirths of sentient beings, as does the clairvoyance of divine eye. This clairvoyance also can see when someone will die and where he will be reborn.

(6) The definition of a clairvoyance of the exhaustion of contaminations (afflictions) is: one of the six clairvoyances that has exhaustively abandoned the afflictive obstructions.

Boundaries

The first five clairvoyances can exist in the continua of non-Buddhists, hearers, solitary realisers, and bodhisattvas. So, the boundary of the first five is from before entering the path up until enlightenment. The sixth exists from the level of a hearer arhat upwards.

The Middle Way School asserts that all six clairvoyances are virtuous mental consciousnesses. On the other hand, the Vaibhashikas assert that the clairvoyances of divine eye and divine ear are unspecified sense consciousnesses.

Whether they are sense or mental consciousness, to attain them one needs to generate calm abiding. His Holiness says that calm abiding protects one from the disturbing thoughts. Within that space one can generate the different clairvoyances. There is no need to have developed superior insight for the clairvoyances to be generated but one definitely needs to have calm abiding. When one attains calm abiding the nature of one's mind changes and it is contained within the level of the form and formless realms. One's sense powers change - ordinary sense powers can see great distances etc but with meditative sense powers one can develop these special powers.

All of the clairvoyances depend on calm abiding. Some of the clairvoyances also depend on the physical sense power. They are transformed sense powers due to the force of concentration.

From this it can be seen that the basis of the path is calm abiding. As long as the mind is disrupted by disturbing conceptual thoughts, clairvoyances won't be generated.

Base

The first five clairvoyances are generated in dependence upon any of the four actual concentrations which are their empowering condition. The sixth is generated in dependence upon the concentration of the excellent end (fourth concentration).

Individual projecting causes

Nagaruna's Precious Garland lists the causes:

- Divine eye: making light offerings to stupas.
- Divine ear: making offerings of music and bells to stupas.
- Knowledge of others' minds: not discussing others' faults and mistakes, protecting one's mind.
- Magical emanation: giving shoes, vehicles, paying respect to the weak etc.
- Remembrance of past lives: remembering the meaning of the Dharma and giving the Dharma.

- Supreme exhaustion: realisation of emptiness.

Difference between the 5 Eyes and 6 Clairvoyances

The difference between them is that “the clairvoyance of divine eye arises from achieving an actual absorption in this life while the divine eye comes from the maturation of virtuous karma created in the past.”²⁸

9) *Path of seeing*

“What is the path of seeing?” The path of seeing is the 16 moments of the realization of the Four Noble Truths, those of dharma forbearance and so forth. “To what person are these instructions given?” To a yogi who realizes all phenomena as without the entity of true existence.²⁹

(a) *Divisions of the path of seeing*

There is the uninterrupted path of seeing and there is the liberated path of seeing. To each of these, there are eight moments. The uninterrupted path of seeing is divided into the eight forbearances. The liberated path of seeing is divided into the eight knowledges. In this way, there are 16 moments of the path of seeing.

In relation to the Mahayana path, the eight forbearances are synonymous and the eight knowledges are also synonymous. When one reaches the uninterrupted path of seeing one attains the eight forbearances simultaneously and when one reaches the liberated path of seeing one attains the eight knowledges simultaneously. However, Hinayana practitioners attain the 16 moments sequentially, not simultaneously.

The eight forbearances and eight knowledges are divided in relation to the Four Noble Truths. The eight forbearances are the four forbearances and four subsequent forbearances. The eight knowledges are the four knowledges and the four subsequent knowledges. Each of the Four Noble Truths is associated with two forbearances and two knowledges.

For example, the four in relation to the noble truth of suffering are:

- The dharmic forbearance of the noble truth of suffering
- The dharmic knowledge of suffering
- The subsequent forbearance of the noble truth of suffering
- The subsequent dharmic knowledge of suffering

Here in relation to the noble truth of suffering we have these four - dharmic forbearance, subsequent forbearance, knowledge of dharma and subsequent knowledge. There are two subsequent and two dharmic forbearances. The dharmic forbearance is the path that abandons the delusions that are contained within the desire realm. The subsequent forbearance abandons the delusions that are contained in the form and formless realms.

Dharmic knowledge and subsequent knowledge are both liberated paths. They are the result of the uninterrupted path. The two forbearances are the uninterrupted path and the two knowledges are the liberated path. The uninterrupted path is the direct antidote that opposes the afflictions and the liberated path is the result. It is a path that is free from the afflictions. The afflictions within the desire and form and formless realms have been opposed. Likewise, there are two liberated paths. A liberated path is free from the afflictions contained within the desire realm, which is dharmic knowledge. Then there is the liberated path which is free from the afflictions contained within the form and formless realms, which is subsequent dharmic knowledge.

²⁸ GJG March 17, 1998, p4.

²⁹ This passage from Geshe Jampa Gyatso, March 17, 1998, p12.

(b) Abandonments

We already talked before about the abandonments through seeing and meditation. This is one way of classifying the abandonments. For example, within the abandonment through seeing we have the abandonment related to the noble truth of suffering, abandonment related to the noble truth of origin, abandonment related to the noble truth of cessation and abandonment related to the noble truth of path.

The abandonment through seeing contains 10 afflictions - the five non-views and the five views.

- Five non-views: attachment, anger, ignorance, pride and afflicted doubt.
- Five views: the view of the transitory collection, extreme view, view holding bad ethics and modes of conduct as supreme, wrong view, view holding mistaken views as supreme.

One has to define these more clearly. Attachment by itself is not an abandonment through seeing. There is also attachment that is an abandonment through meditation. One has to say, 'the attachment that is an abandonment through seeing', to be more correct.

Consider the first uninterrupted path that is called the dharmic forbearance of the noble truth of suffering. First, the 10 afflictions of the desire realm that are abandonments through seeing belonging to the noble truth of suffering are abandoned. They are abandoned by the first uninterrupted path of seeing, which is the dharmic forbearance. It is the direct antidote against the 10 afflictions related to the noble truth of suffering.

Then one subsequently attains the first moment of the liberated path that is free from the 10 afflictions of the desire realm that belong to the path of seeing related to the noble truth of suffering. That first instance of the liberated path is the dharmic knowledge of the truth of suffering.

This system is not all that difficult. The Mahayana path of seeing attains all eight forbearances simultaneously and therefore can oppose all level of afflictions of the path of seeing simultaneously. Subsequently, all liberated paths are attained simultaneously. But for the Hinayana practitioner, they progress along the various paths sequentially. First they attain the dharmic forbearance of suffering. Then they attain the dharmic knowledge of suffering. Then they go on to the subsequent forbearance of suffering and then attain subsequent knowledge of suffering and so forth.

First the delusions belonging to the desire realm are abandoned. This is done with the dharmic forbearance of suffering. Then one attains the liberated path, the knowledge of suffering. Then one abandons the afflictions belonging to the higher realms with the subsequent forbearance of suffering. Then subsequently you attain the subsequent knowledge of suffering. That completes the four relating to the **truth of suffering**.

The same structure applies to the truths of origin, cessation and path. You attain the dharmic forbearance and dharmic knowledge of the **truth of origin**. Then you attain the subsequent forbearance and subsequent knowledge relating to the truth of origin. Then you attain the dharmic forbearance and dharmic knowledge relating to the **truth of cessation**. Then you attain the subsequent forbearance and subsequent knowledge relating to the truth of cessation. Then you attain the dharmic forbearance and dharmic knowledge relating to the **truth of the path**. Then you attain subsequent forbearance and subsequent knowledge relating to the truth of the path in that sequence.

(c) Afflictions abandoned

Those 16 aspects of the path of seeing abandon 112 afflictions. This is calculated by:

- The 10 afflictions that are abandonment through seeing.
- In relation to each of the truths there are afflictions contained with the desire realm and afflictions contained in the form and formless realm. The afflictions contained within the desire realm are those 10. For the form and formless realms, there is no anger - so there are just 9 afflictions relating to the form realm and 9 afflictions relating to the formless realm.

- That makes it 28 afflictions in relation to each of the afflictions of the four noble truths, which adds to 112.

In relation to the Four Noble Truths, there are 40 afflictions within the desire realm, 36 afflictions in each of the form and formless realms (anger is removed 8 times).

To summarise, the 112 afflictions are abandoned sequentially by going through the 16 aspects of the path of seeing - the 8 forbearances and the 8 knowledges.

- First, one attains an uninterrupted path of seeing that is a forbearance.
- Then one attains a liberated path of seeing that is a knowledge.
- Then one attains an uninterrupted path of seeing that is a subsequent forbearance
- Then one attains a liberated path of seeing that is a subsequent knowledge.

The first uninterrupted path of seeing abandons the first level of afflictions of the noble truth of suffering contained within the desire realm. Then one attains the liberated path of seeing that is free from that - it is an instance of the path of seeing that is free from that abandoned level of afflictions belonging to the desire realm. Then one abandons the afflictions contained within the noble truth of suffering contained in the higher realms with the subsequent forbearance. Then again one attains a liberated path that is free from that level of afflictions. Like that, one works through the 112 afflictions.

Q: does this occur in one meditation session?

A: In each meditation session, you would generate one forbearance and one knowledge. Then post-meditation period, then one forbearance and one knowledge etc.

Q: when is the first session generated?

A: the attainment of cessation is simultaneous with the attainment of the liberated path. An uninterrupted path is always a direct antidote and a liberated path is a cessation induced by the antidote.

When one attains the path of seeing, one attains an uninterrupted path of seeing. That first uninterrupted path of seeing is a direct antidote against the first level of afflictions. So it abandons the first level of afflictions contained within the desire realm related to the noble truth of suffering. Subsequent to that, one attains cessation of that level of afflictions - this is the first moment of the liberated path. The liberated path is not the cessation. The cessation is the absence of that level of afflictions within that liberated path of seeing. What kind of cessation? Cessation of a level of the afflictions. The attainment of the first cessation of the afflictions is simultaneous with the first moment of the liberated path of the path of seeing. That is why it is called the liberated path.

The uninterrupted path directly opposes a level of afflictions - it abandons. It is abandoning a level of afflictions. Subsequently to that, one attains a liberated path that has attained the actual cessation of the afflictions that were abandoned by the preceding uninterrupted path. So that first cessation of the afflictions that were abandoned by the uninterrupted path is the truth of cessation.

Q: Is the liberated path attained in post-meditation?

A: the preceding uninterrupted path and the subsequent liberated path are always generated in the same meditation session. For example, to reach the path of seeing, one is at the end of the path of preparation - the supreme path of preparation. You progress in one meditative equipoise from the last part of the path of preparation to the first part of the first uninterrupted path of seeing and first liberated path of seeing. Those three are always attained in one meditative session. When you go from the path of preparation at that moment you haven't realised emptiness directly yet. Then you go into meditative equipoise with the object as emptiness or selflessness of persons (Hinayana practitioners meditate on this) then when you realise the object directly you have reached the path of seeing. That is in the same meditative session. This is the first uninterrupted path of the path of seeing that opposes the first level of afflictions contained in the desire realm. Subsequently you attain a liberated path of seeing, still in meditative equipoise. So the uninterrupted path of seeing and the liberated path of seeing are direct realisers of emptiness or selflessness. In this tenet (Svatantrika), the hearer practitioners generate the non-dual wisdom focusing on selflessness of person. The Mahayana practitioner generates the non-dual wisdom focusing on emptiness. According to the Prasangika, they all meditate on emptiness.

Now you may think it looks difficult. But if you always give up when things are difficult you will always be confused. If you understand one or two difficult subjects, it becomes more and more easy.

Truth of suffering	Type of path	Abandonment
1) Dharmic forbearance	Uninterrupted	- 10 abandonments of the path of seeing of the desire realm associated with the noble truth of suffering
2) Dharmic knowledge	Liberated	
3) Subsequent forbearance	Uninterrupted	
4) Subsequent knowledge	Liberated	
Truth of origin		
1) Dharmic forbearance	Uninterrupted	- 10 abandonments of the path of seeing of the desire realm associated with the truth of origin
2) Dharmic knowledge	Liberated	
3) Subsequent forbearance	Uninterrupted	
4) Subsequent knowledge	Liberated	
Truth of cessation		
1) Dharmic forbearance	Uninterrupted	- 10 abandonments of the path of seeing of the desire realm associated with the truth of cessation
2) Dharmic knowledge	Liberated	
3) Subsequent forbearance	Uninterrupted	
4) Subsequent knowledge	Liberated	
Truth of the path		
1) Dharmic forbearance	Uninterrupted	- 10 abandonments of the path of seeing of the desire realm associated with the truth of the path
2) Dharmic knowledge	Liberated	
3) Subsequent forbearance	Uninterrupted	
4) Subsequent knowledge	Liberated	

10) Path of Meditation

This topic was not covered by Geshe Dawa but is the 10th of the 10 divisions of Precepts. It and the preceding division, the Path of Seeing, falls under the general category of instructions about removing the seeds of the objects to be abandoned. This category is divided into:

- Instructions about the antidotes of the intellectually formed objects of abandonment - the path of seeing.
- Instructions about the antidotes of the innate objects of abandonment - the path of meditation.

The paths of seeing and meditation are the same in taking emptiness as their object. However, they have a difference in their ability to abandon the objects of abandonment. The path of seeing does not abandon the innate seeds – it abandons the intellectually formed objects of abandonment. The path of meditation has much greater familiarity with emptiness and is therefore naturally able to abandon the innate seeds.

For example, a valid inferential cogniser realizing that sound is impermanent knows the non-existence of sound as permanent; yet this only harms the manifest conception of sound as permanent which is intellectually formed and not the innate conception that sound is permanent.³⁰

This concludes the topic of precepts. It is said that those who strive for the omniscient state can actually accomplish their aims perfectly and completely merely by way of these ten divisions of precepts. Although there is no Mahayana path that is not included here, all the divisions and clarifications are not, therefore they need to be explained elsewhere in the text.

3. Four branches of definite discrimination - the path of preparation

A connection is made between the section of the text on precepts and the section on the path of preparation. First one develops mind generation (topic 1) by means of which one enters the mahayana path. Now, on the path of accumulation, one listens to precepts or instructions (topic 2) on how to proceed along the path. Main

³⁰ Geshe Jampa Gyatso, March 17, 1998, p13.

among these are the teachings regarding the view of emptiness. One develops the wisdom arisen from hearing. One again and again contemplates these teachings, developing the wisdom arising from reflecting. Having developed a calm abiding one meditates on emptiness. When within calm abiding we analyse emptiness including a wisdom discriminating phenomena conjoined with mental and physical pliancy, special insight observing emptiness is attained. The attainment of this union of calm abiding and special insight observing emptiness is simultaneous with the attainment of the path of preparation (topic 3). It is for this reason that the path of preparation is now explained for we must know how to proceed on the path of preparation. And, because the object being observed is emptiness of true existence, it necessarily is the mahayana path of preparation. On the mahayana path of preparation, one removes most of the four obstacles to activating the Mahayana lineage (topic 4) and suppresses the manifest conceptions of true existence preparing the way for the direct realisation on the path of seeing.

(a) General presentation

The path of preparation is so-called because the practitioner is preparing for the direct realisation of truth (emptiness). When the bodhisattva attains the union of calm abiding and special insight focusing on emptiness, he has attained the path of preparation.³¹

First, the bodhisattva attains the path of accumulation by the generation of bodhicitta. He then engages in building the two accumulations to attain the three bodies of a buddha. He engages in single pointed meditation on emptiness - an analytic meditation on emptiness in calm abiding. When the analytic meditation on emptiness doesn't negatively affect the calm abiding meditation on emptiness, he has attained the union of calm abiding and special insight. This point marks the progress from the path of accumulation to the path of preparation.

What is the difference between the path of preparation and the path of accumulation?

On the path of accumulation and on the path of preparation, the bodhisattva meditates on emptiness with the help of a mental image - a meaning generality. It is a conceptual meditation on emptiness in each case. The difference is that the meditation on the path of preparation is more profound and deep than on the path of accumulation. Even though the bodhisattva on the path of accumulation has a conceptual understanding of emptiness, it is not that clear and sharp. On the path of preparation it becomes more profound. From that point, the mental image becomes so subtle that the bodhisattva meditating on emptiness feels that he is having a direct experience of emptiness. He feels that there is no duality - that he has a realisation of non-duality. In actuality, there is still duality because it is a conceptual meditation which has the appearance of a non-dual realisation.

What is the difference between the path of preparation and the path of seeing?

On the path of preparation, emptiness is still realised with a mental image - it is a conceptual realisation. The path of seeing is a direct realisation without the aid of a mental image. The bodhisattva on the path of preparation has attained a clear realisation of emptiness - emptiness appears clearly to the bodhisattva's mind. But here the clear appearance of emptiness doesn't refer to the appearance that is free of conceptuality - it refers to a clear appearance of the mental image of emptiness.

Consider the transcendental wisdom that is the great path of preparation called Supreme Dharma, which has a three-fold division, the last called Great Supreme Dharma. Here the bodhisattva meditates on emptiness in

³¹ The following explains how the mahayana path of preparation is attained in conjunction with the three wisdoms. Through extensive listening to precepts on emptiness, the wisdom observing emptiness arising from hearing is attained. This wisdom is mainly correctly assuming consciousnesses. Then, using various types of reasoning such as "freedom from being one or many" and so forth, the wisdom observing emptiness arising from reflecting which is an inferential cognizer is attained. Then, having developed calm abiding, within this meditative stabilization one observes emptiness and analyzes with reasoning). Through familiarity stability increases and a union of calm abiding and special insight observing emptiness conjoined with mental and physical pliancy is attained and with that the wisdom arising from meditation experiencing emptiness. As was mentioned, this is the initial attainment of the path of preparation. (Ornament Review Class, Quiz 11, 1998).

such a profound way that the duality of subject and object vanishes for the meditator. However, even though the practitioner has reached the Great Supreme Dharma and has a very clear appearance of emptiness, it is still not free from conceptuality.

What does it mean to attain the union of calm abiding and special insight?

When the practitioner, while remaining in calm abiding, through analysing emptiness can induce the bliss of mental and physical pliancy, then he has attained the union of calm abiding and special insight. At this stage, the mediation on calm abiding and the analytical meditation on emptiness don't harm each other. On previous levels, when one meditates on calm abiding and starts to analyse, this process disturbs the calm abiding. But when the practitioner has reached the stage when both induce each other, when one practices analytic meditation on emptiness it doesn't disturb the calm abiding. When the calm abiding does not lessen the force of the analytic meditation then one has attained the union of calm abiding and special insight.

At the time when the analytic meditation on emptiness while within calm abiding can induce the bliss of mental and physical pliancy, one has reached the stage when calm abiding and analytic meditation are conducive to one another and do not disturb one another. Here it has to be specified that the union of calm abiding and special insight one is referring to is the union of calm abiding and special insight that is meditating on emptiness. The union of calm abiding and special insight in general is attained even by non-buddhist practitioners. The union of calm abiding and special insight that takes emptiness as its object is a buddhist realisation, which is what is being referred to here.

When one reaches the union of calm abiding and special insight that meditates on emptiness, one has reached the heat level of the path of preparation. When the bodhisattva on the heat level of the path of preparation is in meditative equipoise on emptiness, through his own experience he can still confirm the duality of subject and object. However, at the level of forbearance of the path of preparation (the third level), while in meditative equipoise on emptiness, the meditator can't confirm the duality of subject and object. It appears to the meditator that he has overcome the duality of subject and object. But in actuality it is still a conceptual meditation.

This is the path of preparation because it prepares the practitioner for the direct realisation of emptiness. On this level, the different paths of the path of preparation counteract the different levels of manifest true grasping - they can subdue manifest levels of true grasping but not completely abandon them. Here true grasping has a two-fold division into grasping at the object and grasping at the subject.

Of the two, grasping at the object is easier to subdue than grasping at the subject³². Therefore, the four paths of preparation sequentially subdue the manifest graspings at object then the manifest graspings at subject. The first two levels subdue manifest true grasping at objects. The second two levels subdue manifest true grasping at subject, the mind itself.

In this way, while on the path of preparation, manifest true grasping is subdued already. Even though it has not been abandoned by the root, meaning from the seeds, the manifest true grasping has been subdued. In such a way the mind has been well prepared to abandon true grasping from the root. The bodhisattva has already realised emptiness. He has realised the absence of the apprehended object of ignorance and has subdued manifest true grasping. But he still has not abandoned true grasping from the root - to do this one needs to realise emptiness directly.

When the bodhisattva on the path of preparation arises from meditative equipoise then naturally through the force of his meditation in the post meditation period objects will appear to that bodhisattvas as illusory.

³² These levels of overcoming the manifest conceptions of true existence are arranged according to their difficulty in attaining. First, it is easier to overcome the conception of objects as truly existent than it is of subjects. Within that, it is easier to overcome the manifest conception of the true existence of afflicted phenomena than that of completely purified phenomena. Finally, it is easier to overcome the conceiving of an apprehender of a substantially existent person to truly exist than that of an apprehender of a imputedly existent being to truly exist. The apprehender of a substantial existent person is a wrong consciousness while the apprehender of an imputedly existent being is factually concordant. Therefore, conceiving the latter to truly exist is more difficult to overcome than the former. (Ornament Review Class, Quiz 11, 1998).

While appearing to exist truly, the bodhisattva is aware through the force of his realisation that this is deceptive appearance.

This is a general explanation. If one goes into more detail into the different types of grasping at subject and object that is sequentially abandoned on the different levels of the path of seeing, it becomes very complicated. This explanation is in accordance with what Maitreya taught in the *Ornament of Mahayana Sutras*, where he said that initially the bodhisattva overcomes true grasping at objects and subsequently he subdues true grasping at subjects.

Conceptual and unmistaken

The realisation of transcendental wisdom that is the path of preparation is not non-conceptual. Why? Because for ordinary individuals, (i.e. a bodhisattva on the path of preparation) emptiness is a hidden phenomena and it is impossible for such a person to have a non-conceptual realisation of emptiness. In case one says that it is a non-conceptual realisation of emptiness, the question arises: why is this realisation not able to directly counteract the afflictions as is possible on the path of seeing? So it must be a lesser realisation than the direct realisation of emptiness.

On the other hand, if one said that it is not a realisation of emptiness at all (i.e. it is mistaken with regard to emptiness) how is it that the path of preparation can suppress manifest grasping at subject and object? So one arrives at somewhere in the middle. One cannot say it is a non-conceptual realisation. But at the same time one cannot say that is mistaken regarding emptiness. It is a conceptual realisation that is unmistaken with regards to emptiness.³³

(b) Detailed presentation

The path of preparation is so-called because it prepares the practitioner for the path of seeing. There are two synonyms for the path of seeing:

- ‘Clear realisation of meaning’: because the path of preparation realises directly, not conceptually, the meaning of the *Perfection of Wisdom Sutras*.
- ‘Limb of definite separation’ or ‘that harmonious with definite separation’: because although it does not free one from cyclic existence it leads to the path of seeing, which does.

The heat level of the path of preparation is referred to as being free from conceptuality. Even though it is still a conceptual understanding of emptiness, it is an initial attainment of the union of calm abiding and special insight that focuses on emptiness and therefore possesses the great potential to overcome the manifest types of true grasping.

The path of preparation by way of identity has a four-fold division into heat, peak, forbearance and supreme dharma. The path of preparation primarily refers to a transcendental wisdom realising emptiness and the way one reaches this is first by progressing through the path of accumulation. On the path of accumulation, the practitioner builds up the two accumulations and has already attained calm abiding focusing on emptiness. When that calm abiding focusing on emptiness has been transformed into the union of calm abiding and special insight focusing on emptiness, then the practitioner has progressed to the path of preparation.

³³ The exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise of the mahayana path of preparation is necessarily a subsequent cognizer since it realizes an object, emptiness, that has already been realized by a former inferential cognizer which induces it.

- it is not an inferential cognizer - this is easily eliminated since an inferential cognizer arises in dependence upon a correct sign, that is, an inferential cognizer is an awareness that is arisen from reflection, whereas the exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise is an experience arisen from meditation attained in conjoined with calm abiding,
- it is not a correctly assuming consciousness - because it is arisen from meditation and realizes its object,
- it is neither an awareness to which the object appears but is not ascertained (inattentive perception, nor a doubting consciousness, nor a wrong consciousness because it is a path of liberation, since it is an awareness that realizes emptiness in the continuum of an ordinary person,
- it is not a direct perception because it is not a consciousness to which its object appears clearly unmixed with a mental image (meaning generality), that is, the exalted wisdom of meditative equipoise of the mahayana path of preparation is a conceptual consciousness. Direct perception is not. (Ornament Review Class, Quiz 11, 1998)

On the path of accumulation the bodhisattva is engaged in building the two accumulations. He is primarily engaging in the meditation on emptiness through listening and contemplation. He has also attained the calm abiding that is focused on emptiness. When one talks of the path of accumulation, it primarily refers to that calm abiding meditation on emptiness. However, there are also other aspects to the path of accumulation such as the bodhicitta that has already been generated and the different practices for the accumulation of merits that the bodhisattva engages in on the basis of that bodhicitta e.g. prostrations, circumambulations, offerings. Offerings are made to the objects of refuge followed by the thought that the refuge objects are pleased with the offerings - this constitutes the practice of making offerings. That would also be included in the path of accumulation. Those practices that are done by a bodhisattva on the path of accumulation are included within the path of accumulation. Even though when we talk of the path of accumulation it refers to the calm abiding meditation on emptiness, there are many other aspects to it. Here likewise, with the path of preparation, while primarily it refers to the union of calm abiding and special insight meditating on emptiness, there are also other aspects to it.

Verse 1.25 of the *Ornament* begins with 'by way of the observed object'. A major part of the *Prajnaparamita* sutras deals with the observed objects of the path of preparation. The different objects that the path of preparation takes as the observed object for meditation on emptiness are divided into phenomena of the totally afflicted type and phenomena belonging to the completely purified type. The path of preparation counteracts the manifest. It is free from conception, which refers to true grasping. So the path of preparation is free from manifest true grasping.

True grasping has a four-fold division:

- Grasping at the object - grasping at objects of the afflicted type and grasping at objects of the purified type
- Grasping at the subject - grasping at the apprehension of substance and grasping at the apprehension of imputedly existent.

Grasping at object

True grasping can be divided into two: true grasping at object and true grasping at subject. The former has a two-fold division into true grasping at objects belonging to the totally afflicted type and true grasping at objects contained within the completely pure type. The afflicted and purified objects are explained in great length in the *Prajnaparamita* sutras and basically encompass all objects of knowledge. True grasping at afflicted objects refers to grasping at all the abandonments such as the different levels of the afflictions and so forth. True grasping at objects belonging to the completely purified side refers to grasping at the various antidote paths, cessations and so forth.

Grasping is the conceptual thought that takes the object belonging to the respective side, such as a delusion in the case of the afflicted side, as its object and then holds it to be truly existing. The meaning of the first type of conceptual thought, true grasping at objects belonging to the afflicted side, is a conceptual thought that takes as its object that belonging to the totally afflicted side and then grasping at it as being a truly existing object.

This shows that all phenomena that are to be abandoned and all attainments that are to be generated in one's mind when progressing along the path are equal in lacking true existence. Objects that belong to the afflicted type are objects that one has to abandon. Objects of the purified type are the different realisations and understandings that one has to generate within one's mind. All of those phenomena that have to be abandoned and those that must be practiced are equal in lacking true existence. When the sutras lists all phenomena that are the focal object of the path of preparation, it is saying that they all equally lack true existence. For example, the five aggregates, the 12 sources, the 18 spheres, and the first two noble truths of suffering and origin are objects of the afflicted type and all lack true existence. The *Heart Sutra* lists different objects as the basis of emptiness and similarly, in the more extensive *Prajnaparamita* sutras, the different phenomena are listed in detail - the various objects of abandonment, the stages of the path and so forth.

Grasping at subject

The conception of the apprehension of substance is true grasping. The conception of the apprehension of imputedly existent is also true grasping. They grasp at two subjects - the apprehension of substance and apprehension of imputedly existent. Here 'subject' refers to another aspect of the mind - the different conceptual thoughts in our mind. There is the conceptual thought that apprehends the person as being substantially existent. Then there is the grasping at the true existence of that conceptual thought of the person being substantially existent. So there are two graspings - one conceptual thought holds the person to be a substantially existent. That thought is actually the object. Then there is the true grasping that holds that thought to be truly existent.

Then there is another thought that understands that the person is an imputedly existent, which is the second object. Then there is the true grasping at the true existence of the thought which understands the person to be imputedly existent. So there are two types of objects referring to two different types of thoughts. One thought thinks that the person is substantially existent and the other holds the person to be imputedly existent. Those two thoughts are the object of true grasping. The true grasping that holds the conception of the person as substantially existent to be truly existent is the third category of the four types of conceptual thoughts. The true grasping that holds the understanding of the person as an imputedly existent to be truly existent is the fourth category.

Substantial and imputed existence

Here it refers to two types of existence - phenomena that are a substantial existent and phenomena that are imputedly existent. The person is an example of the second. They are an imputedly existent because by itself the person can't appear to the mind without the aggregates appearing to the mind. The meaning of being imputedly existent is that for the imputedly existent object to appear to the mind, something else also needs to appear to the mind. If it can appear to the mind without something else appearing to the mind then it is substantially existent. For example, forms that appear to the eye consciousness are substantially existent. Nothing else needs to appear to our mind for them to appear to the mind - colour and shapes can appear to our mind without requiring something else.

In summary, grasping at the subject has two types of objects that have these different modes of appearing to the mind and are either substantially existent or imputedly existent. Then we have the apprehension of those objects. There are two types of apprehensions - of substantial existent and imputedly existent. Then we have true grasping - the conception that holds the apprehension of substantially existent to be truly existent; and the conception that holds the apprehension of imputedly existent to be truly existent. So we have first the two modes of appearance (ie substantially existent and imputedly existent), the two modes of apprehensions of the two modes of appearance and then the grasping at the true existence of those two modes of apprehension. The two true graspings that hold the apprehensions to be truly existent are the third and fourth of the four-fold division of conceptual thoughts that are true graspings.

Summary

These four types of true grasping are that which are being opposed by the path of preparation. In the sutras, it explains the objects of those different types of true grasping in much more detail e.g. the five aggregates, 12 sources, 18 spheres, 4 foods, 12 links, first two noble truths and so forth. It goes into the particulars of those categories. Likewise for the objects belonging to the purified types, it lists all the different aspects of the path starting from the beginners levels up to the attainment of enlightenment.

This explanation in the sutras of the focal object for the meditation on emptiness of the path of preparation shows that all phenomena are equally lacking inherent existence - are equally emptiness. Here when it refers to conceptual thoughts it doesn't refer to them in a general way such as an awareness that apprehends its object with a meaning generality. It refers to concepts in the context of true grasping - concepts that grasp at true existence.

Demonstrating the superiority of the Mahayana Path of Preparation

What differentiates the mahayana path of preparation from the hinayana path of preparation are it's six features of:

- 1) Its observed object: the observed object of a Hinayana path of preparation is the Four Noble Truths, while the observed object of a Mahayana path of preparation is the Four Noble Truths which lack true existence. The Mahayana path of preparation meditates on emptiness through the door of limitless inference. It takes each of the phenomena of afflicted and purified type as the object and meditates on their lack of true existence using many different types of reasonings and proofs. Hinayana practitioners meditate on emptiness in a more simplistic way.
- 2) Its aspect: a Hinayana path of preparation does not have the aspect of apprehending the Four Noble Truths as empty of true existence, while a Mahayana path of preparation has the aspect of realising that the Four Noble Truths are empty of true existence. Or it can be said to have the aspect of the emptiness of true existence, its apprehended object.
- 3) Its cause: the Mahayana path of preparation becomes the cause for attaining the paths of seeing of the three types of practitioners. This is because the mahayana path of preparation becomes the cause of the mahayana path of seeing which has all the realisations of the mahayana, solitary realiser and hearer paths of seeing. The sutras say that the bodhisattva acquires knowledge of the lower paths by generating a path within his mind which is concordant with the paths of hearers and solitary realisers. Bodhisattvas have an understanding of the lesser paths by meditating on the meditational objects of the lesser paths. The bodhisattva needs to know the lower paths in order to teach solitary realiser and hearer practitioners. Hence the bodhisattva on the mahayana path of preparation has realisations of the hinayana path of preparation and likewise for the path of seeing. An objection could be made that bodhisattvas don't generate a lesser path within their mind. But they generate paths within their mind that abide within the mode of realisation of the lesser paths. A bodhisattva is not a hinayana practitioner so does not generate a hinayana path within his mind. He generates a path within his mind that perfectly understands the objects of the hinayana paths.
- 4) Its tutor: it is superior due to its tutor because someone on a Hinayana path of preparation does not have a tutor who is a supreme emanation body of a buddha and gives the entire set of teachings of method and wisdom, while a person on a Mahayana path of preparation does have such a tutor.
- 5) The conceptions that are abandoned: the mahayana path of preparation has the feature of acting as the antidote against the four types of manifest true grasping. It is divided on the basis of its ability to sequentially counteract the four manifest true graspings. The hinayana path of preparation cannot do this.
- 6) The divisions into small, middle and great: the mahayana path of preparation of supreme dharma has a three-fold division into small, medium and great which the hinayana path of preparation does not have. The hinayana path of preparation of supreme dharma lasts for only one small instance, which can't be further subdivided.

Individual divisions

The path of preparation is divided by nature into heat, peak, forbearance and supreme dharma. The division is dependent on the ability to oppose one of the four conceptions.³⁴ Each division is itself divided into three. The small, middling and great levels of the heat, peak, forbearance and supreme dharma divisions of the mahayana path of preparation are superior to the path of preparation of hearers and solitary realisers due to the above features.

Tutor

The mahayana path of preparation has the distinctive feature of inner and outer teacher. Outer teacher refers to the guru who teaches the bodhisattva the mahayana teachings. The inner teacher refers to the understandings of that bodhisattva concerning method and wisdom. Out of the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha that which actually rescues one is the Dharma - the realisations generated in the mind. It becomes the inner teacher.

The buddha is also our refuge but he helps us by teaching the dharma. How one actually gets enlightened is by generating the dharma in ones mind. The realisations of method and wisdom become that which rescues

³⁴ The heat level of the path of preparation has the capacity to suppress the manifest conception grasping at the phenomena of the ever-deluded class as truly existent. The peak level has the capacity to suppress the manifest conception grasping at the phenomena of the thoroughly purified class as truly existent. The patience level has the capacity to suppress the manifest conception apprehending the apprehender of substantial existence as truly existent. The highest mundane dharma level has the capacity to suppress the manifest conception apprehending the apprehender of imputed existence as truly existent.

one from suffering and cyclic existence. This is the inner teacher. On the path of preparation, the bodhisattva has the conceptual realisation of emptiness. This transforms to a non-conceptual direct understanding of emptiness at the path of seeing. It is by definition the actual dharma. When refined further it becomes the path of meditation. When refined even further it becomes the resultant truth body of the buddha. In such a way, one's realisations of method and wisdom develop along the path and ultimately become the resultant feature of a buddha.

(c) Further extensive explanation

The explanation of the path of preparation is divided into the basis of the path of preparation and that which relies on the basis, which is the path of preparation itself. The basis is divided into the physical basis and mental basis.

(i) Basis

The physical basis is the bodhisattva who has reached the greater path of accumulation. The physical basis is not any being of the six realms - this is the physical basis for generating bodhicitta. The progression from the greater path of accumulation to the path of preparation is made in meditative equipoise and a hence a human or divine (gods of the desire realm) basis is required for this.

The mental basis is an absorption of the form realm. A bodhisattva on the greater path of accumulation has already attained the various form and formless realm absorptions so it is logical for him to use the preparatory stage of form absorption rather than rely on mere calm abiding as the mind basis for generating the path of preparation. Once one has attained a concentration of an absorption, it is easier to attain the path of preparation with this than with the preparatory stage of mere calm abiding. So there is no need to rely on mere calm abiding when one can rely on the absorption.

(ii) Definition

Definition of mahayana path of preparation: a mahayana mundane path that is concordant with the clear realisation of truth and abides in a class of clear realisers that arise subsequent to the completion of the partial concordance with liberation. It and mahayana partial concordance with definite discrimination are mutually inclusive.

When divided there are four:

- 1) the heat level of the mahayana path of preparation;
- 2) the peak level of the mahayana path of preparation;
- 3) the tolerance level of the mahayana path of preparation;
- 4) the supreme mundane quality level of the mahayana path of preparation.

The path of preparation is the path that comes subsequent to the path of accumulation and prior to the path of seeing. The main path of preparation is the union of calm abiding and special insight focusing on emptiness in meditative equipoise. The difference between the path of preparation in general and that explained here is that here we are dealing with the path of preparation from the point of view of being a single-pointed transcendental wisdom meditating on emptiness. One always makes the progression along the five paths in meditative equipoise. Even though we are explicitly dealing with the path of preparation, it is primarily from the view of being single-pointed transcendental wisdom focusing on emptiness in meditative equipoise.

In the post-meditation period, the practice of the six perfections is manifest in the continuum. They are regarded as the path of preparation. Any type of virtue that is present in the continuum of a bodhisattva on the path of preparation is included in the path of preparation. In meditative equipoise, the six perfections are not manifestly present but the first four are present in a non-manifest form. So the path of preparation has different aspects - first, the main path of preparation is the transcendental wisdom realising emptiness and second, the other features of the path of preparation such as the wisdom realising impermanence, selflessness and so forth.

In post meditation, the bodhisattva builds the two accumulations. Through the force of doing this in meditative equipoise, the bodhisattva can engage in the actual practice of progressing along the path.

(iii) Divisions

The path of preparation has four divisions. The basis of division is according to which of the four types of obscurations to knowledge they can oppose. There are four types of conceptual obscurations to knowledge, which are included in either grasping at the object or grasping at the subject.

- Grasping at the object is divided into grasping at objects belonging to the thoroughly afflicted side and grasping at objects belonging to the pure side.
- Grasping at the subject is divided into grasping at the apprehension of substance and grasping at the apprehension of imputation.

Each path can individually counteract one of the four conceptual obscurations to knowledge. This is why the path of preparation is divided into four.³⁵

Conceptual obscuration to knowledge does not refer to concepts in general but to true grasping in particular. Therefore, conceptual thought grasping at its object as truly existent is the definition of conceptual obscuration to knowledge. Grasping at the object is that which is engaged and grasping at the subject is the engager. Here grasping refers to 'true grasping' - grasping at the object as being a truly existently engaged object and grasping at the subject as being a truly existent engager. This is further sub-divided into grasping at objects belonging to the thoroughly afflicted side and grasping at objects belonging to the purified side as that which is engaged.

In respect of grasping at the subject, it is sub-divided into grasping at the apprehension of substance and grasping at the apprehension of imputation. Here 'substance' refers to a substantially existent. To be a substantial existent means that for the object to appear to the mind it does not rely upon the appearance to the mind of another object. It is the opposite of the object appearing to the mind by reliance upon another object, in which case it becomes an imputedly existent. This is according to the Svatantrika Madhyamika tenet.

Here we have grasping at the apprehension of substance and grasping at the apprehension of imputation. It refers to the substantially existent and imputedly existent. Apprehension refers to the conception understanding grasping to be the apprehension of an object to be either substantially existent or imputedly existent. Grasping at the apprehension refers to the obscuration to knowledge - true grasping. For example, true grasping at the apprehension of substance as being a truly existent engager or true grasping at the apprehension of imputation as being a truly existent engager.

An example of imputedly existent is the person. It can't be apprehended by the mind without the aggregates appearing to the mind as well. However, the aggregates can be apprehended by the mind themselves e.g. the aggregate of consciousness is apprehended by the self knower. Consciousness appears to the self knower directly without something else appearing to the self knower as well. So consciousness is regarded as being a substantially existent. Also, objects such as vase are regarded as substantially existent. This is the Svatantrika point of view.

The four divisions of the path of preparation sequentially are the antidote against each of the four conceptual obscurations to knowledge, which is why there is the division of the path of preparation into four as follows:

- Heat: suppresses manifest conception grasping at objects of the thoroughly afflicted side;
- Peak: suppresses manifest conception grasping at objects of the completely pure side;
- Forbearance: suppresses manifest conception grasping at the apprehension of substance;
- Supreme dharma: suppresses manifest conception grasping at the apprehension of imputed existents.

True grasping

According to the Svatantrika, true grasping is regarded as an obscuration to knowledge. According to the Prasangika Maydhamika school, it is an afflictive obscuration.

Definition of grasping at object: a determinative knower (conceptual mind) grasping at that which is being engaged to be truly existent.

Definition of grasping at subject: a determinative knower that grasps at subject to be truly existent.

Conceptions abandoned³⁶

Each of the four conceptual obstacles to knowledge has a nine-fold sub-division of conceptions to be abandoned, giving a total of 36.

(a) Conceptions of apprehendeds:

- 1) conceptions of apprehendeds having the thoroughly afflicted such as ignorance as a base, and
- 2) conceptions of apprehendeds having the completely purified such as aggregates as a base, each has nine aspects.

1) Nine conceptions of apprehendeds having a base of the thoroughly afflicted from the point of view of their objects:

1. ignorance, (1. True Origin 1, 3-6)
2. the aggregates such as form, (2. True Suffering 2, 7-9)
3. strong clinging to name and form,
4. attachment to the two extremes,
5. unknowing with respect to the afflicted and completely purified, (assoc. with non-faith)
6. non-abidance on an superior's path, (assoc. with laziness)
7. observed object, (feelings)
8. self, and
9. completely pure production. (weariness re. cyclic existence)

2) Nine conceptions of apprehendeds having a base of the completely purified as antidotes:

1. aggregates having a basis of an antidote, (1. 1-5 completely pure objects of knowledge;
2. avenue of generation (sources) 1-4 varieties, 5 modes)
3. class,
4. birth, (pure)
5. emptiness,
6. the meaning of the perfections, (2. 6 conduct)
7. path of seeing, (3. 7-9 entity)
8. path of meditation, and
9. path of no more learning.

(b) Conceptions of apprehenders:

- 3) conceptions of apprehenders observing the person to substantially exist, and
- 4) conceptions of apprehenders observing the person to imputedly exist, each has nine aspects.

3) Nine conceptions of apprehenders of substantial existence:

1. an independent self as the base of a substantially existent person, (1.1 determinative ob)
2. a unitary self, (aggregates) (2. 2-4 observed object in general terms)
3. a causal self, (sources)
4. a self such as a viewer, (constituents)
5. a thoroughly afflicted self, (3. 5-9 observed object in specific terms)
6. a self free from attachment and desire, (mundane path)
7. a self which has as its base the (path of) seeing,
8. a self which has as its base the (path of) meditation, and

³⁶ From Masters Program: Ornament, Review Class - Path of Preparation (2) June, 1998. See also GJG March 26, p23

9. a self which has as its base the accomplishments.

4) Nine conceptions of apprehenders of imputed existence:

1. the aggregates as the base of the imputedly existent being
2. the sources, (1. 1-3 general object)
3. constituents (elements),
4. dependent-arising, (2. 4-9 specific object)
5. the completely purified,
6. path of seeing,
7. path of meditation,
8. special path, and
9. path of no more learning.

With respect to the two types of conceptions of apprehenders, the first (3 above) conceives the apprehender of a substantially existent self to be a truly existent user, and the second (4 above) conceives the apprehender of an imputedly existent self to be a truly exists user.

Observed objects and aspects³⁷

The observed objects are the Four Noble Truths or their sixteen attributes qualified in various ways, since they are the basis for the elimination of the superimposition of true existence. The aspects are the exalted wisdoms at each of the twelve levels of the path of preparation that actually eliminate these superimpositions by suppressing a respective manifest conception of true existence (i.e. the aspect is their emptiness). For example, at first there is a fixing upon a Truth such as that of suffering, as being truly existent, then there is an insistence on this, and, finally, through employing a faulty reason, holding it to be true. This particular manifest conception of true existence with respect to a thoroughly afflicted class of phenomena is pacified by the exalted wisdom of the small heat of the path of preparation realising it to be not truly existent.

1) **Heat:** is the initial attainment of a state arisen from meditation observing emptiness and with that the attainment of the special capacity to burn away its discordant class, the conception of true existence.

Small heat: observed object - the 16 attributes such as impermanence and so forth, based on the four truths (the 16 attributes being the basis for the elimination of the superimposition [of true existence]); aspect - the exalted wisdom of small heat which pacifies fixing upon, insisting, and holding through a wrong reason as true the true existence of the sixteen attributes of the four noble truths (the exalted wisdom of the small heat pacifies the wrong superimposition [of true existence] with respect to the properties of these observed objects, the 16 attributes).

Middling heat: observed object - the 4 truths qualified by form and so forth being free of true compounding (production and disintegration); aspect: the exalted wisdom which realizes that ultimately there is no continuity or discontinuity of names.

Great heat: observed object - the 4 truths qualified by form and so forth being merely concepts in language; aspect - the exalted wisdom which realizes that ultimately virtue and so forth are inexpressible.

2) **Peak:** From heat downwards roots of virtue are fluctuating because it is possible that they can be severed due to wrong view. With the attainment of Peak one has come to the *peak* of that fluctuation and their severance is no longer possible.

Small Peak: 1. (not based on the 4 truths) observed object: form and so forth ultimately qualified by ultimately being without entityness; aspect: the exalted wisdom which realizes that form and so forth and their reality are of a single nature.

2. (based on the 4 truths) observed object: form and so forth being qualified by not existing as ultimately impermanent etc.; aspect: the exalted wisdom which realizes that impermanence and so forth and their reality are of a single nature.

Middling Peak: observed object: whatsoever phenomena are not conceived of with sign; aspect: the exalted wisdom which realizes those as not seen with the sign of true existence.

³⁷ Ibid

Great Peak: observed object: the 4 truths qualified by the thorough investigation by a wisdom analysing for the ultimate; aspect: the exalted wisdom of the great peak which realizes the non-observance of all three spheres as truly existent.

3) Forbearance: By the power of attaining Forbearance, rebirth (due to karma and afflictive emotions) in unfortunate migrations is finished (a non-analytic cessation) and one has attained a forbearance that is a freedom from manifest fear with respect to the great doctrine of unborn phenomena.

Small Forbearance: observed object: form and so forth being ultimately without entityness; aspect: the exalted wisdom realizing them as nominal entities while ultimately non-existent.

Middling Forbearance: observed object: form and so forth qualified by non-production and definite-arising; aspect: having observed the 4 truths in such as way, realizing one will attain a completely pure body and so forth through cultivation of that.

Great Forbearance: observed object: those qualified by signlessness; aspect: the exalted wisdom realizing the non-existence of knowing sign.

4) Supreme Mundane Quality: is the supreme of all mundane qualities and is a mundane exalted wisdom that will directly generate the uncontaminated exalted wisdom of the path of seeing.

Small Supreme Mundane Quality: observed object: the object of meditation, the entity of meditative stabilization and the inseparability of the entity of form and so forth with respect to suchness; aspect: exalted wisdom that realizes spontaneous engagement in meditative stabilization.

Middling Supreme Mundane Quality: observed object: the middling supreme quality having a special cause of giving hidden prophesy and the meditative stabilization which perfectly engages in meditating the non-inherent existence of apprehended and apprehender; aspect: the exalted wisdom which has extinguished coarse craving for the three spheres as ultimate.

Great Supreme Mundane Quality: observed object: the nature of the reality of the three spheres are a single mutual entity; aspect: exalted wisdom realizing that the non-conception of meditative stabilization as ultimate is the means to attain buddha.

Tutor

Another characteristic of the path of preparation is the spiritual mentor of the bodhisattva on the path of preparation. There are two:

- (a) Inner spiritual mentor: is the union of method and wisdom in the continuum of a bodhisattva on the path of preparation. They have two qualities - they work undauntedly for the welfare of sentient beings, teaching selflessness etc; and are free from the extreme of existence discarding the discordant classes. Wisdom knowledge frees the bodhisattva from the extreme of samsaric existence and compassion frees the bodhisattva from the extreme of peace.
- (b) Outer spiritual mentor: one posits the supreme emanation body of a buddha because the bodhisattva has attained the concentration of continuous dharma so that they can listen to teachings from a supreme emanation body. As the outer mentor, one posits Shakyamuni Buddha - a supreme emanation body.

4. Naturally abiding lineage

Lineage is explained according to the four schools:

(a) Vaibashika

Definition of buddha lineage: the virtue of non-attachment, which is a mental factor, in the continuum of a sentient being that acts as the substantial cause for the arya realisations which are its result.

The Vaibashika School asserts that the virtuous mental factor of non-attachment in the continuum of sentient beings that acts as the substantial cause for the realisations of the various arya fruits is buddha lineage (or buddha nature). The *Vinaya Sutra* says, "Being content with inferior offerings is the arya lineage. Contentment with inferior residence is the arya lineage. Liking for meditation and abandonment is the arya

lineage.” While this is not strictly correct according to the final point of view, it is significant from the point of view of practice.

The Vaibashikas say that the mental factor of contentment, which is non-attachment, is the buddha lineage. For example, monks being content with inferior offerings, food, robes, residence and so forth. This is the cause for the attainment of the arya fruits. Having an affinity for meditation and abandoning afflictions is also a contributory factor for attaining the arya fruits and so is included in lineage. Basically, they regard non-attachment as the major cause.

Out of the three higher trainings, morality is regarded as the base. Concentration can't be attained and wisdom can't be developed without morality because these attainments require a mind undistracted by destructive behaviour. Therefore, they regard contentment with inferior offerings, robes and so forth and rules such as those regarding the time of eating etc to be a cause for non-attachment, being the main factor for attainment of the fruits. The actual path is the actual meditation and realisation of abandonment of afflictions which has to be supported by non-attachment. The arya beings explained it to be as such.

In monasteries, the Geshe who have extensive knowledge and realisation of grounds and paths have given up attachment for possessions. Sometimes they lack even basic supplies but it doesn't affect them. They would rather use their time for study and practice than attend pujas for money. Having this quality of non-attachment gives the opportunity to acquire a vast dharma knowledge and acquire realisations of the grounds and paths.

There are two types of practitioners:

- From before the outset on their practice they have the quality of non-attachment; and
- Those not having this quality at the outset but develop it through practice.

(b) Sautrantika

The definition of buddha lineage is: a seed of an uncontaminated mind in the continuum of a sentient being.

The Sautrantika School posits buddha lineage as the seed of the uncontaminated mind in the continuum of a sentient being. The uncontaminated mind is the actual path. They posit the potential for the generation of the uncontaminated path in the mind as the buddha lineage.

(c) Mind Only

The Mind Only tenet also asserts as buddha lineage the seed of the uncontaminated mind. However, it is defined more specifically as:

Definition of buddha lineage: the seed of the uncontaminated mind possessing three characteristics:

- 1) It has come from beginningless time through each lifetime
- 2) It is acquired through the force of suchness - the mind is intrinsically pure from the beginning even though momentarily obscured by adventitious obscurations.
- 3) It exists on the basis of a mind source (i.e. mental consciousness)³⁸. It does not have as its basis one of the five sense consciousnesses.

So Mind Only asserts the seed of the uncontaminated mind that exists on the basis of the mental consciousness that has come down from beginningless time from life to life and which is attained through the force of suchness, meaning that it is naturally clear and knowing, as buddha lineage. This clarity and knowingness is not something attained through causes such as development of compassion, realisation of

³⁸ Geshe Jampa Gyatso says that according to the False Aspectarian Chittamatrins, who do not accept a consciousness called a mind-basis-of-all, the lineage is an uncontaminated seed within the mental consciousness. However, the True Aspectarian Chittamatrins, who do accept a mind-basis-of-all, say that it is an uncontaminated seed that exists in the seventh consciousness, the mind-basis-of-all.

emptiness etc. It is a natural quality of the mind. This quality arises at birth and at death goes with the conscious - it is an intrinsic part of the consciousness.

This clear and knowing purity of the mind with the three characteristics, as long as it is not ripened through conditions of listening and contemplation, is naturally abiding lineage. However, when that seed is ripened through the condition of listening to teachings and contemplation, it becomes the developmental (or increased) lineage.

By listening to teachings and contemplating on, for example, compassion for sentient beings and the qualities of a buddha, mahayana lineage is awakened. Or if one is impressed by, for example, the strong single-pointed meditation of hearers and arhats and their displays of magical powers, one can be inspired to practice the hinayana path in which case the hearers lineage is awakened. By these means, naturally abiding lineage is ripened into developmental lineage.

According to the Chittamatrins, the buddha lineage is divided into nine (each with four divisions), as set out *Ornament of Mahayana Sutras* by Maitreya Buddha: existence, supremacy, definition (of naturally abiding lineage and developmental lineage), sign of having activated the lineage, divisions, obscurations that obscure lineage, benefits of lineage, example of naturally abiding lineage and example of the developmental lineage.

The *Ornament of Mahayana Sutras* is one of five texts by Maitreya and is composed according to the Mind Only point of view. *Uttaratantra (Sublime Continuum of the Mahayana)* by Maitreya is another of the five texts and is composed according to the Prasangika point of view.

(1) Existing

In proving that the sentient beings of all three vehicles have three different types of lineage for attaining their respective enlightenments, it says in *Ornament of Mahayana Sutras*:

“Different predispositions, different beliefs, different divisions of achievement and different results observed; therefore the very existence of lineage is expressed.”

This is saying that because one can observe the different *dispositions* of sentient beings prior to entering the path, on entering the path they hold three distinct *beliefs*, have three different paths of *practice* and, through these, produce three different *results*, therefore one can say that lineage exists. Lineage is like ‘type’ or ‘family’.

The Buddha taught three paths - two hinayana and one mahayana. In that context, there are both hinayana and mahayana sutras - those shared and those uncommon - that came about due to the different types of practitioners. Before sentient beings start practicing they have different wishes, likes and dislikes and according to this they enter a path. After entry, there are different types of practice to engage in. Arising from that practice, there are different types of results. So it is clear why one talks of lineage - it is because there are different types of practitioners.

Atisha once said, “Today I have heard something interesting. A practitioner of Hevajra tantra attained the result of stream enterer!” The practitioner did not have mahayana motivation and therefore couldn’t reach enlightenment. This shows that the fruit attained is due to the aspiration.

Why are there different types of lineage? Because those with different aspirations engage in different practices and attain different fruits. Out of the nine points, this is the first - existence.

(2) Supremacy

Why is mahayana lineage superior to hinayana lineage? *Ornament of Mahayana Sutras* says:

“The virtues are superior,
The basis of all, great benefit,
And inexhaustible. For those reasons
It is said the potential is indeed superior.”

Here mahayana virtue is distinguished from hinayana virtue. First it is *superior virtue*, due to the pure motivation of bodhichitta. Second, Mahayana lineage can act as the *basis for all qualities* (compassion, bodhicitta, five mahayana paths, bumis, four bodies of a buddha) while hinayana lineage cannot.

The mahayana lineage acts as the cause for the enlightenment that has perfected the two accumulations. The attainment of that enlightenment that has perfected the two is the *great meaning*. The Mahayana lineage acts as the cause for that enlightenment but the Hinayana lineage cannot.

When one attains a final nirvana depending on mahayana lineage, the continuity of one's roots of virtue are not exhausted i.e. they are *inexhaustable*. If the final result is attained with hinayana lineage, the continuity of virtue will be cut. This relates to the assertion that being a non-returner means that the mental continuity of the person is severed. However, the mental continuity of a buddha will never be severed.

(3) Definition of mahayana lineage by way of four attributes

"Natural and developing, that is the support and the supported, the very existing and not existing, that which is excellent is to be known as that which liberates."

This means that when the buddha lineage is divided by way of its entity there are two divisions - naturally abiding lineage is the *support* (base); and developmental lineage is the *supported* i.e. that which is based on the natural potential.

It follows that the seed of the uncontaminated mind in the continuum of a sentient being is a lineage because when it is not nourished by hearing and so forth it is merely the naturally abiding lineage, not the developmental lineage. *Existent* refers to the fact that these two lineages exist on the learner's path but buddha potential is *not existant* at the time of the buddha ground. Such a mahayana lineage has the excellent quality of liberating those who possess it in their continua from cyclic existence because in dependence on it their excellent qualities increase more and more.³⁹

(4) The sign of having activated the mahayana lineage

"Prior to joining, there is compassion, belief, patience and [perseverance] in correct virtuous activity. This is the sign of [having activated] the lineage."

This means that the signs of having activated the mahayana lineage are of four types⁴⁰:

1. before joining the actual mahayana path, one already has intense *compassion* observing all sentient beings;
2. strong *belief* in the mahayana dharma;
3. *patience* in bearing hardships for others' welfare;
4. *joyous effect* striving in the virtuous activities, such as generosity, of the bodhisattvas (the six perfections)

Various signs show an awakening of mahayana lineage. When looking for signs, they should be findable on a continuous basis and not just momentarily. The person observing must be a person free from preconceptions (eg not having pride or attachment causing them to see faults). If the qualities can be seen by such a person, it can be said that mahayana lineage has been awakened. Check up continuously whether one has great compassion - it is not just a momentary thing.

(5) Divisions of lineage

There are four types of Mahayana lineage:

³⁹ Both Prasangika and Mind Only schools believe that the intrinsic nature is buddha potential but their interpretations of this intrinsic nature differ. According to Prasangika, the intrinsic nature of the mind is the emptiness of the mind itself, which is permanent and beginningless. The Mind Only school refers to intrinsic nature as the capacity of mind to be separated from defilements and not being by nature polluted by defilements, which is impermanent. See Geshe Acharya Thubten Loden, *The Fundamental Potential for Enlightenment*, p36-39.

⁴⁰ For a more detailed explanation of the four see Geshe Loden, p38-48.

- 1) *Definite* lineage - from the beginning follows a specific one of the three lineages and progresses upward until he achieve the specific goal of his respective lineage.
- 2) *Indefinite* lineage - one who changes vehicle.
- 3) A lineage that cannot be taken - a synonym for the first. It is *unlosable* as in the case of a bodhisattva on the medium path of accumulation
- 4) A lineage that can be taken away - a synonym for the second. Mahayana lineage may be *losable* due to criticism by others or discouragement.

(6) The shortcomings that are obstacles to activating the Mahayana lineage

The four adverse conditions obstructing lineage are:

- 1) great familiarity with the afflictions⁴¹
- 2) the influence of misleading non-virtuous friends
- 3) lacking the material conditions for dharma practice (eg destitution)
- 4) being under the control of a king (or another person)

(7) The benefits of awakening mahayana lineage

Even though one may have accumulated karmas to project a rebirth in the lower realms, this result will be (1) delayed or (2) experienced only for a short time if one's mahayana lineage has been awakened. Also, (3) one's suffering will be less whilst there. And (4) The suffering that one experiences becomes a supportive condition for the increase of one's compassion. When one has awakened mahayana lineage, one has greater renunciation and on seeing the suffering of others compassion increases.

(8) Examples illustrating the naturally abiding lineage

Naturally abiding lineage can be understood with the help of an analogy. It is like 'gold treasure' or 'gold mine'. A gold mine holds:

- 1) great reserves of gold - likewise, naturally abiding lineage is the source of limitless virtue; which is
- 2) bright and shining - likewise, naturally abiding lineage is clear and luminous. It is the source of the wisdom perceiving emptiness;
- 3) stainless - is free from the stains of the afflictions; and
- 4) malleable - likewise, naturally abiding lineage is the source of powers for the various concentrations of the clairvoyances, concentrations and so forth.

(9) Examples illustrating the developmental lineage

The Mahayana developmental lineage is like a mine of jewels because just as a mine of jewels has the four attributes of possessing perfect kind of jewels, perfect shapes, perfect colours and perfect sizes, so too does the Mahayana developmental lineage have four similar attributes.

- 1) It is a cause for great enlightenment, its result;
- 2) It the source of exalted wisdom realising non-true existence sustained by distinguished method;
- 3) It the source of supreme concentration;
- 4) It is the source of the welfare of many sentient beings.

These are the nine sections concerning lineage. If we ask whether all sentient being possess mahanaya lineage, the Mind Only school answers 'no'. There are those whose lineage has been severed. There are four types:

- 1) Sentient beings who enjoy only negative actions
- 2) Sentient beings with no white virtue (i.e. virtue destroyed by anger)
- 3) Sentient beings with no merits (karma) to attain liberation
- 4) Sentient beings that doesn't possess the seed of the uncontaminated mind

Out of the four possibilities of being without lineage, the first three relate to the severing of the increased lineage and the fourth to the severing of the naturally abiding lineage⁴², as explained in the *Ornament of*

⁴¹ At this point, Geshe Lodon (p51) extensively reviews the sections on combating afflictions with mindfulness in *Shantideva's Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life*.

⁴² Geshe Loden says that the first three have natural potential but are unable to develop it. The fourth type of person lacks even natural potential and therefore cannot attain enlightenment. There is debate on this point - see p76.

Mahayana Sutras. This is a specific tenet of the Mind Only School. The higher tenets don't accept that there are sentient beings that don't possess the mahayana lineage.

The Mind Only tenet asserts that there are sentient beings whose lineage has been severed. As proof they give a quote from the *Ornament*. They assert that lineage is a compounded phenomena. This is not accepted by the higher tenets. They say that the quote has to be read interpretatively. The Madhyamikas assert lineage to be an un-compounded phenomena.

For all the reasons explained above, Mahayana lineage is the essence of great excellent qualities at the time of its cause and the time of its result. It has *causal greatness* because the mahayana lineage induces the generation of bodhicitta and the mahayana path of accumulation. It is *resultant greatness* because it induces the generation of the 10 powers of a buddha; it induces the generation of great joy and bliss; it induces the generation of the pacification of great suffering; and it is the source of great benefit for self and others.

The resultant greatness of the mahayana lineage is like the root of the wish fulfilling tree that gives rise to the trunk, the branches, the leaves, flowers, fruits, smells etc that dispel the suffering of heat and pain. *Ornament of Mahayana Sutras* says: "Extremely great excellent qualities, the wood of great enlightenment is generated, the attainment of the pacification of great suffering and the attainment of happiness. It is great for the reason of its result, it benefits oneself and others; such a supreme lineage is like a good root." It is like the good root of the wish-fulfilling tree.

Regarding the increased lineage and the naturally abiding lineage, as long as the practitioner hasn't entered a path, the lineage will always be just the naturally abiding lineage. However, when that lineage has been ripened through listening and contemplation, the practitioner has entered the path and the naturally abiding lineage is also the developmental lineage. There is a quote that says if one looks from the point of view of substance, then it is both. This refers to the seed of the uncontaminated mind. As long as the seed of the uncontaminated mind is not ripened by listening and contemplation, then it is the naturally abiding lineage. After the practitioner has entered the path it is both the naturally abiding lineage and the developmental lineage because it is has been ripened by listening and contemplation.

From that point of view, both the naturally abiding lineage and developmental lineage are posited as the seed of the uncontaminated mind. As long as it is not ripened through listening and contemplation, the seed of the uncontaminated mind is the naturally abiding lineage. When it is ripened, it's substantial continuum is the developmental lineage. Naturally abiding lineage becomes the developmental lineage.

(d) *Madhyamika tenet*

The Madhyamika tenet refutes all the previous assertions of buddha lineage and posits its own interpretation. According to the Madhyamikas, the emptiness of the mind is the naturally abiding lineage. The emptiness of a stained mind is the naturally abiding lineage. Stains, even though adventitiously present within the mind, are not of one nature with the mind.

At the time when the mind is stained, even though it has stains they are not of one nature with the mind itself. As such, the mind's nature is pure - unstained. Therefore, because of the naturally unstained nature of the mind it is suitable to transform into the dharmakaya of a buddha. At that time when the mind becomes freed from the adventitious stains, that cessation of the adventitious stains is called the 'nature truth body free from the adventitious stains'.⁴³

The emptiness of the mind is the naturally abiding lineage which every sentient being possesses⁴⁴. Since the mind of every sentient being is empty of true existence, then every sentient being has buddha lineage. Even

⁴³ Geshe Jampa Gyatso (April 14, 98, p8) makes the point that when the potentiality of the developmental lineage is changed and becomes perfect by correct practice it becomes the form body. The naturally abiding lineage is transformed into the un-compounded body of a buddha, while the developmental lineage is transformed into the compounded body of a buddha.

⁴⁴ This means that all sentient beings without distinction have a nature that can become pure eventually. It is said that although sentient beings do not have a beginning there is an end to their lives in cyclic existence. Such naturally abiding lineage, which is the

though the mind has been pure from the beginning, because we view the mind as truly existent and is obscured by the ignorance of true grasping, we don't comprehend that innate purity of the mind and grasp at the mind as truly existent. In actuality, one has this naturally abiding purity. In order to free the mind from the adventitious obscurations such as anger, attachment etc one has to realise the natural purity of the mind - the mind's lack of true existence. The adventitious obscurations are adventitious - we may be angry at one time but it will pass away. For them to be removed we need to remove the root which is true grasping, which is why we need to realise emptiness.⁴⁵

Explanation of buddha lineage according to the Uttaratantra

The *Uttaratantra* is the main source on buddha lineage for our system. There are three sub-outlines - brief, extensive and purpose for showing lineage.

Uttaratantra sets out three reasons why sentient beings have a naturally abiding lineage: "Because the body of a completely enlightened being radiates everywhere; because thusness is inseparable from all; because of the existence of lineage; all embodied beings have the buddha essence at all times."

The suchness of the buddha's mind and the suchness of sentient beings' minds are of indivisible in nature. Both lack true existence. The difference is that the buddha has realised the lack of true existence of his mind while sentient beings haven't realised their minds' lack of true existence due to their obscurations. Both minds are equal in lacking true existence so their nature of suchness is indivisible. Therefore, the only thing preventing sentient beings from realising the suchness of their mind are the adventitious obscurations. Not knowing the emptiness of mind is like not knowing the mother who has been with us since the beginning.

Because the radiance of the complete buddha's body is all pervading, one can make requests and rely on buddha and realise the suchness of one's mind. The virtuous activities of the buddha are all-pervading. Buddha is constantly helping sentient beings with his virtuous activities. From sentient beings' side, they have the tathagatta essence, the suchness of their mind. By relying on the virtuous activities of the buddha, one can realise the suchness of one's mind and free the mind from the adventitious obscurations. All one needs to do is practice and one can become enlightened.

We have been in the lower realms since beginningless times. Others have gone on to liberation and enlightenment.

Geshe Dawa's teachings on this text finished at this point.

Definitions⁴⁶

Buddha lineage is: a quality suitable to transform into the body of a buddha.

Naturally abiding lineage: the reality of a mind with stains which are its own supported quality and that suitable to transform into a nature body.

Developmental lineage: a buddha lineage suitable to transform into a compounded body of a buddha.

The boundaries of the naturally abiding lineage, the basis of the Mahayana achievings, are: it exists from the Mahayana path of accumulation through the end of the continuum of a sentient being.

Lineage is posited by the Middle Way school as "the reality of the adventitious stains not residing within the nature of a mind possessing adventitious stains within the continua of sentient beings."

Naturally abiding lineage refers to the emptiness of the sentient beings' minds, which becomes the nature truth body. The developmental lineage refers to sentient beings' minds, particularly the mental consciousness, which will become a buddha's wisdom truth body. As long as stains are present the mental

nature of the mind, its emptiness of true existence, a permanent object, cannot be seen because it has been covered by a shell or by stains since beginningless rebirths.

⁴⁵ In short, one can assert a definite and an indefinite lineage but not a broken lineage.

⁴⁶ Geshe Jampa Gyatso, October 8, 1999, p30.

consciousness is the developmental lineage. When the stains are removed these transform respectively into the wisdom truth body and the nature truth body.

Uttaratantra gives a presentation of the nature of the mind, which is clear light, by means of ten references (entity, cause, result, action possession, engaging, occasion, going everywhere, never changing, inseparable), giving examples such as it being like water not mixed with sediment, sky not mixed with cloud etc.

It establishes that the obscurations are incidental by way of nine examples and meanings (see appendix). A brief presentation of this is: because there is lineage all sentient beings have the buddha nature. The buddha nature exists in the continua of sentient beings covered by the shell of the afflictions. This is to be known by way of the nine examples and nine meanings. *Uttaratantra* says: “That abiding in the shell of the afflictions is to be understood by the examples”.

The nine obscuring and nine obscured are: “a lotus, a hive, a husk, impurity, the ground, a husk of grain, rags, a woman’s womb, a clay mold; likewise inside it, a buddha, honey, essence, gold, a treasure, a wish-fulfilling tree, a jeweled statue, a wheel-turning king, a golden statue.”

Divisions

Naturally abiding lineage, which is the support of the Mahayana achievings, can be further divided into two: the common and the uncommon. The common support of a Mahayana achieving is that which is common to all bodhisattvas. The uncommon support of a Mahayana achieving is the 13 types of emptiness that exist from the path of preparation up – it is not present in the continua of all bodhisattvas.

Support

A general naturally abiding lineage exists from before entering the path up to the final continuum of a sentient being. The boundary of a naturally abiding lineage that is a support of a Mahayana achieving is from the Mahayana path of accumulation up to the final continuum of a sentient being. The boundary of a naturally abiding lineage which is a support for the Mahayana achievings that are explicitly presented here is from the Mahayana path of preparation up the final continuum of a sentient being.

Appendices

1. Definitions of the 8 Categories
2. Exalted knower of aspects (10 topics)
3. Mind generation – 22 types
4. Four noble truths according to Jetsun Chokyi Gyeltsen's *Ocean Playground*
5. Path of Seeing
6. Calm Abiding
7. Concentrations and Formless Absorptions
8. The Five Eyes
9. The Six Clairvoyances
10. Path of Preparation
11. The nine subjects of Buddha lineage according to Chittamata in *Ornament of Mahayana Sutras*
12. Nine similes illustrating lineage as explained in *Sublime Continuum of the Mahayana*
13. Naturally abiding lineage, the basis of Mahayana achievings
14. The Path of Preparation
15. Four Faults of the Two Truths Being One
16. Twenty Sangha
17. Text: *70 Topics* by Jedzun Chogyi Gyeltshen