

**Transcript of the teachings by Khen Rinpoche Geshe Chonyi on
*Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds, 2014***

Root text: *Engaging in the Bodhisattva Deeds* by Shantideva, translated by Toh Sze Gee. Copyright: Toh Sze Gee, 2006; Revised edition, 2014.

Lesson 32

10 June 2014

CHAPTER SIX: VERSES 6.13 - 6.21.

- A. Cultivating the patience that accepts suffering.
2. Reflecting on the benefits of meditating on suffering (V. 6.13)
 3. Reflecting on the fact that, if one is familiar with such attitudes, they are not difficult to implement (V. 6.14 – V. 6.19 a, b)
 4. The benefits of making effort in abandoning the afflictions (V. 6.19 c, d – V. 6. 20)
 5. An extensive explanation of the benefits of meditating on suffering (V. 6.21)

Just to reiterate the measure of the destruction of the roots of virtue:

- When a non-bodhisattva is angry with a bodhisattva, he destroys the merit accumulated over a thousand great eons.
- When a higher-level bodhisattva is angry with a lower-level bodhisattva, he destroys the roots of merit accumulated over a hundred great eons.
- When a lower-level bodhisattva gets angry with a higher-level bodhisattva, that bodhisattva has to meditate on the path all over again. What does this mean? It is mentioned in the text that he has to train again for eons. It doesn't say how many eons but the text says, "for eons," i.e., many eons.

Khen Rinpoche: So it can be for 200, 300 or 500 eons. I am not sure.

A non-bodhisattva gets angry at another non-bodhisattva	Destruction of merit equal to making a full prostration to a stupa (The sutras say that the number of atoms covered by the body during such a prostration is equal to the number of times one will be reborn as a wheel-turning king).
A non-bodhisattva gets angry at a bodhisattva.	Destruction of merit accumulated over a thousand great eons
A lower-level bodhisattva gets angry at a higher-level bodhisattva E.g., a bodhisattva who has not received a prediction of his enlightenment gets angry at a bodhisattva who has received a prediction of his enlightenment	His achievement of the next path is delayed. E.g., a bodhisattva on the great Mahayana path of accumulation who is due to enter the Mahayana path of preparation gets angry at another bodhisattva who is already on the path of preparation. Instead of entering the path of preparation, his realisation is delayed for one great eon and he has to retrain for this path all over again.
A higher-level bodhisattva gets angry at a lower-level bodhisattva.	Destruction of merit accumulated over a hundred great eons



We have started looking at the patience of accepting suffering. The teachings tell us that when we experience suffering, we should accept it voluntarily. One of the reasons for doing so is because we are in cyclic existence or samsara. The nature of samsara is such that it does not transcend suffering and life in samsara will be beset with problems and suffering. Remembering this, we come to accept problems and suffering as part of our existence.

Another way of putting up with and accepting suffering is to reflect on the benefits and the advantages of suffering, i.e., to look at suffering from a positive angle. For someone who seeks the permanent happiness of liberation from samsara—a true practitioner of the Buddhadharma in other words—in order to develop such an aspiration and wish, problems, first, are necessary.

The existence of suffering is an essential condition for developing disenchantment and disillusionment with samsara. This spurs an individual to seek once and for all the total freedom of liberation from samsara. Without suffering as a condition, there is no way to develop disenchantment with samsara and there will be no real wish for such freedom from samsara. But for a person who is intent on achieving liberation, it is better to have suffering. Suffering is a good thing.

We saw in the last lesson that suffering acts as a condition for someone to develop disenchantment with samsara. Therefore based on that, one develops an attitude of definite emergence or renunciation.

For someone who does not see the faults of contaminated existence—existing in a state made up of the contaminated body and mind—and holds the view of samsara to be as pleasurable as a beautiful garden, there is no end to samsara for this person. When you do not see a problem with samsara, you will not develop the wish to get out of it.

But because there is suffering, when you recognise that it is an essential condition for the development of disenchantment with such a contaminated existence, that will spur you on to develop the wish or intent to get out of such an existence. Come the day when you develop disenchantment with samsara, this is like the door through which you enter into renunciation and develop the thought of definite emergence. So having problems and suffering actually makes you think about doing beneficial and virtuous activities.

You should also realise that whatever problems or suffering you experience is the result of the non-virtuous karma that you have accumulated in the past. So when you are experiencing suffering, it is the ripening of your non-virtuous karma. As such you can look at suffering as a broom sweeping away all the dirt, i.e., the negativities that you have accumulated in the past. In that sense, it is beneficial and a positive thing to experience suffering.

When you are able to look at the problems or suffering that you are experiencing from this perspective, then it will help you to be able to voluntarily accept the problems or suffering. When you are able to voluntarily accept the problems or suffering through realising the benefits of suffering, looking at the difficult situation

from a positive perspective, it will make a huge difference. You will not be as unhappy as before. Your mind is able to remain calm and relaxed without becoming overly disturbed.

When you experience problems or when you are suffering and you refuse to accept that situation, then what happens? The only result is that you will be very unhappy inside. When you are unhappy inside, your mind is disturbed and this mental unhappiness will build up and become anger. When you are angry, you look at yourself and everything around you through that view. Everything appears to be unpleasant. You even see everybody as bad, as an enemy or as a problem. The problem may be very small but this is what can happen when you refuse to put up with it, when you make the choice of not wanting to accept it voluntarily. You react unhappily and this is what you get.

So when a problem arises or when you experience discomfort or unhappiness, you should remind yourself that this is the nature of contaminated life. As long as you are in samsara, it will always be like that. Since that is the case, then what is the point of begrudging the nature of samsara? That is life and there is nothing you can do about it.

You should also remind yourself that whatever problem, unhappiness or suffering that you are experiencing is the ripening result of the non-virtue that you yourself created in the past.

By reminding yourself of these points, when the problem arises, it will make it easier for you to accept the problem voluntarily and put up with it. In doing so, you will be able to stop yourself from becoming unhappier and unhappier. You will be able to protect your mind and not be disturbed. This is very important in stopping anger from arising.

D. HAVING EXAMINED IN DETAIL THE CAUSES THAT GIVE RISE TO ANGER, MAKING EFFORT TO ABANDON THEM

2. *Arresting fury towards that which brings unwanted things.*
 - A. *Arresting fury towards those who wrong you.*
 1. *Being patient with those who would create suffering for you.*
 - A. *Cultivating the patience that accepts suffering.*
 2. *Reflecting on the benefits of meditating on suffering*

Verse 6.13

If the followers of Durga and the people of Karnata
Endure the feelings of burns, cuts, and the like meaninglessly,
Then for the sake of liberation,
Why have I no courage?

It is said that the faithful followers of the Indian goddess, Uma, would do things like burn their bodies and so forth in order to please her. There are also followers of certain religious beliefs who jump into fires or pierce their bodies with all kinds of weapons and so forth.

In this world of ours, there are people who undergo many physical hardships and who endure all kinds of physical austerities like piercing and cutting their bodies in order to achieve what they believe is the state of celestial beings such as Brahma. If these people can put up with so much hardship in order to achieve their goals, shouldn't those who say they want to achieve liberation also put up with hardships and difficulties in the process of working for that goal?

The point is that there are so many people in this world who put up with so much hardship in order to achieve goals that are not as meaningful as achieving liberation from cyclic existence. That being the case, then for those who are intent on achieving liberation, all the more they should put up with even more difficulties and hardships since achieving liberation is a much more meaningful and higher goal. What this verse is driving at is that it is appropriate and important for us to put up with suffering.

If there is a need to tolerate and put up with difficulties and sufferings, then the question is: "Is it possible to do such a thing?" The answer is: "Yes it is possible." The reason is in the next verse.

3. *Reflecting on the fact that, if one is familiar with such attitudes, they are not difficult to implement*

A. *Extensive explanation*

1. *Establishing that if one has familiarised oneself with such attitudes they are easily applied*

Verse 6.14

There is nothing whatsoever

That is not made easier through acquaintance.

So through becoming acquainted with small harms,

I will become patient with great harms.

This verse is just stating the reality. Whatever the object or situation may be, once we are accustomed to it, whatever it may be, it becomes easier. We could be talking about a bad habit or fault or we may be talking about a good quality. Whatever it may be, good or bad, once we are used to it, it becomes easier as we become more familiar with it. Therefore we should start to acquaint ourselves with tolerating small discomforts or problems and become accustomed to putting up with them. Then gradually we will be tolerant of and patient with bigger problems.

In the *Compendium of Trainings*, it says that we ordinary sentient beings find samsara so wonderful. Although the nature of samsara is problems and suffering, we like it so much. We don't think of it as suffering. We think it is wonderful.

Although that is not the reality, why do we find samsara so wonderful and appealing? It is a matter of familiarity. We have been accustomed and habituated to viewing samsara in this mistaken way. Although the reality is that our existence is contaminated and in the nature of suffering—that samsara is in the nature of suffering—we view it in a completely distorted way, thinking it is pleasurable and that it is happiness. This is through familiarisation but nevertheless it is a bad habit.

Conversely when we are able to put up with and accept suffering through our familiarity with it and not be disturbed by it, then it is also possible to familiarise the mind to the extent that we see everything, including suffering, as pleasant and in a positive light. We are able to develop this kind of concentration. It is matter of familiarisation.

For example, it is said that the great bodhisattvas on the first bodhisattva ground, because of having achieved the exalted practice of the perfection of generosity, are able to give away their bodies happily. Even if they have to cut off parts of their body, piece by piece, every additional piece they cut off and give away brings them more and more joy and happiness. Why does this happen for them? It happens to them because of their familiarity with such a practice.

In short, in the context here of cultivating the patience of voluntarily accepting difficult situations and suffering, it is all a matter of familiarisation. So when you are acquainted with such a practice, over time, you too will be able to tolerate problems and difficulties so that they no longer disturb your mind. It is even possible to familiarise the mind to the extent that suffering is seen as positive and as a cause of happiness. It is all a matter of habituation.

2. Establishing that by means of an analogy

Verse 6.15

Who has not seen this to be so with meaningless sufferings,
Such as the feelings of
[Harms from] snakes, insects, hunger, and thirst
And of rashes?

Verse 6.15 illustrates what was said in the earlier verse, that with the familiarity or the habituation of putting up with and tolerating problems and suffering without letting them disturb our mind, we will be able to see problems as the condition for happiness. It is all a matter of familiarisation. But if we do not put up with problems and difficulties, then even a small problem can disturb us a lot.

Verse 6.15 gives some examples such as insect bites, feeling hot, hungry and thirsty. It is plainly obvious to everyone that when we are able to put up with these things, over time, these things would not bother us as much as they would have if we had refused to put up with them.

3. The object towards which one is patient

Verse 6.16

I should not be impatient
With heat and cold, wind and rain, and so forth, and
Sickness, bondage, beatings, and so forth;
For if I am, the harm will increase.

The examples given here are putting up with hot weather in the summer, cold weather in the winter, putting up with other changes in the weather such as wind, rain and so forth and experiencing all kinds of sicknesses. The text is saying that we should put up with such situations. If we do not put up with them, they will cause us

more problems, more unhappiness and more suffering.

The verse here is saying, “Do not be intolerant of these small problems and discomforts for if you are, then they will cause you more harm and problems.”

Khen Rinpoche: I don't know whether I have told you this before. I'm not sure.

For some people, when somebody teases them a little bit, they get upset. Some people have this kind of character. You cannot tease them about even a small thing. A little bit of teasing, the person gets upset. But for this kind of people, I noticed that many people tease them continually.

It is also like that in the monastery. I noticed there was one monk in the monastery. During debate, there are small pebbles lying around everywhere outside. Sometimes a pebble would hit him. He would get so upset. He would look around. He didn't know who threw it. Because he reacted like that, another person would throw a pebble at him again.

Because he couldn't take it, he had more problems. Even when you say some nasty words or some small thing to him, he would get upset. In this way, people made fun of him. Everybody teased him.

For some other people, when the pebble hit them, they won't care, “This is a small pebble. Never mind.” For these people, they had less pebbles thrown at them. Also when someone teased them, they would just smile and take it easy. I noticed these people had less problems. Fewer people teased them. Fewer people disturbed them. I saw that.

I think the verse is saying something like that. When small problem comes, you must accept it. Somebody say nasty words to you, you just smile and accept it. Then next time, this person won't say bad words anymore to you. If you don't accept it and you get upset, they will come back again.

Here you must know what you want. If you don't want more nasty things happening to you, then you smile and accept them. If you want more nasty things, then you react. I think the verse is saying something like that.

The good thing is I saw my friend becoming a more patient person after everybody teased him. So many pebbles had been thrown at him. He couldn't take it. But after that, it's OK. He became more tolerant and had less problems.

Anyway this verse is saying something like that.

4. An example of how the strength of patience arises if one familiarises oneself with it

Verse 6.17

Some when they see their own blood
Become especially brave and steady,
But some when they see the blood of others
Become unconscious and faint.

Verse 6.18 a, b
These come from the states of the mind
Being either steady or timid.

There are those who feel more courageous when they see their own blood being shed. When they are injured in a fight and they have cuts and bruises, then they start to bleed. The shedding of blood gives them more courage to fight on, while there are others who are discouraged, lose heart or become very timid when they see the blood of others. What accounts for this difference in reaction? It has nothing to do with the object, blood. It has to do more with the strength of their minds; in this case, we could say courage or the lack of it.

This analogy here is to help us understand the meaning. When you apply the analogy to the meaning, instead of blood, we are focusing more on problems and suffering. When we encounter problems and difficulties, rather than becoming discouraged or defeated by the problems, the ideal thing is to have more determination and more courage to deal with the problems. This is, of course, if you are a real practitioner.

It is mentioned in one of the sutras that our mind should not be like a leaf fluttering in the wind especially in the context here of transforming our minds and practising the Dharma. Whatever practice we do, right from the beginning, we need to be very determined, firm and stable. We must put up with difficulties and problems. We must have that mind-set right from the beginning. It is a matter of having determination, courage and stability. The teachings tell us that our firmness of mind and determination should be so strong that we can use the problems we encounter in our practice instead of letting them become obstacles for us.

In order to transform our mind and practise the Dharma, we need to be very determined and courageous. Our determination and courage have to be firm. With that, then in the course of our practice, we can deal with any problem that may come along the way. We can even transform difficult situations into something that is beneficial for our practice.

Right from the beginning of our mental transformation, when we are practising the Dharma, if we do not have strong determination and courage or there is no stability in our determination—“Whatever comes along, let it come. I am going to take it”—then even if we meet with a small problem, it becomes a huge problem. We did not have the determination in the first place. Therefore we did not want to put up with it. Then it is difficult. Even a small problem can become a huge obstacle that prevents us from continuing and doing the practice. Without this strong determination and courage, even a small problem can become a great hindrance.

This is the meaning of the analogy given in the sutras that tell us we should not be like a leaf fluttering in the wind. Rather we should be as firm and stable as the trunk of a tree. If you are like a leaf, then wherever the wind blows, even just a slight breeze, the leaf will flutter here, there and everywhere. Our mind should not be like that. Just because of a small problem, we change in a negative way.

B. Synopsis

Verse 6.18 c, d

Therefore I should disregard harms
And be unaffected by suffering.

Verse 6.19 a, b

Even when those who are skilled are suffering,
Their minds remain very lucid and undefiled.

In the course of achieving something that is greatly meaningful, we should patiently and voluntarily put up with hardships along the way. This becomes very important for us in the course of our mental transformation. In the practice of the Dharma, we should try not to let our minds be affected or disturbed by various problems and difficulties.

“Those who are skilled” refers to those who are really meditators and practitioners of the Mahayana intent on developing bodhicitta with the thought of benefiting others. In particular, for such practitioners, they would not let their minds be disturbed and affected by difficulties and problems.

In summarising this section, when we are talking about voluntarily accepting problems and sufferings and developing that kind of patience, the point here is not to allow ourselves to be disturbed. Yes, there are problems and difficult situations. But the point here is not to let these difficult situations, problems or suffering increase or cause any mental unhappiness that will lead us to generating anger. On top of putting up with and voluntarily accepting problems and suffering, we should see how we can use the experience of problems or difficulties to increase our determination and courage.

4. The benefits of making effort in abandoning the afflictions

Verse 6.19 c, d

When war is waged against the afflictions
Much harm is caused at the time of battle.

Verse 6.20

The victorious heroes are those
Who, having disregarded all suffering,
Vanquish the foes of hatred and so forth;
The rest slay corpses.

In this world when countries go to war, the people who go to war know that they will experience a lot of problems, i.e. during war time, there will be many difficulties and problems. Whatever the reason for going to war may be, the thing is that once they have decided to go to war, they disregard whatever problems they may meet. They know there will be problems but they disregard them. They are intent on waging war and defeating the enemies.

Here we are talking about ordinary people going to war. Dharma practitioners are also like soldiers going to war. But who are they fighting when they go to war? When

real Dharma practitioners go to war, they are waging war against and fighting their afflictions. They know all the problems that will come with that. They know how difficult this will be. They know the difficulties they will experience and they know the problems that will come along the way when they start to fight their afflictions. They know all this but nevertheless they do it.

In this particular section, we are specifically talking about vanquishing the foe of anger through the practice of patience.

Here for a practitioner who is intent on cultivating patience, in order to vanquish the enemy of anger, she knows the enemy, anger, very well. She knows the damage that anger can do. She knows how anger can counter-attack when she fights it. She knows the difficulties. This practitioner understands all the problems but is willing to disregard them all in fighting anger.

The real heroes are those who wage war against their own afflictions such as anger with the strong intent and determination to vanquish these afflictions. These people are the real heroes and the best of all heroes.

So the real hero is the person who wages war against his own afflictions and vanquishes them unlike what the conventional world consider as heroes, i.e., those who defeat their outer enemies. These conventional ordinary heroes go to war to defeat their outer enemies. They are not real heroes because what they are doing is essentially fast forwarding the deaths of the enemies when they kill them. Even if they didn't kill these enemies, sooner or later, the enemies will die of their own accord.

The ordinary worldly heroes are not really heroes. What they do is no different from killing corpses because whether they actually kill the external enemies or not, sooner or later, those enemies will die one day. Since that is the case, killing them is like fast forwarding their deaths. It is not a big deal. There is nothing heroic about it. Therefore the real heroes are those who conquer their own afflictions.

I think I have mentioned this before. For those who are really practising correctly, this means their practice has hit the mark. We have to understand that such people may experience a lot of suffering due to their very pure and correct practice. A lot of the non-virtue they had accumulated in the past will ripen in this life and as a result, they will experience problems and suffering. You have to understand that such things do happen. But for such people, it becomes even more important to them to realise and put up with suffering.

A pure practitioner is someone who is practising correctly. Her practice really hits the mark basically like ordinary soldiers going to war. When ordinary soldiers go to war, they understand the problems or difficulties they will face but their intent is vanquishing their external enemies. Therefore they disregard all the problems and difficulties when they go to war. They put up with all these difficulties because they want to achieve their goal.

Likewise a pure practitioner who is really practising correctly is someone who is

intent on destroying his own afflictions. He knows how difficult it is and that definitely there will be problems. Pure practitioners understand, recognise and are prepared for this. They have to be even more determined not to give up. It is through not giving up that they will be able to complete and achieve their goal of vanquishing their afflictions.

There are many people who are afraid to practise the Dharma because they really think, “When I practise the Dharma, I will get problems. Therefore I don’t want to practise Dharma.” Many people are like that.

Khen Rinpoche: I heard this, “When I read the Diamond Cutter Sutra, then I get a headache. That is why I don’t want to read it. When I read it, I get this problem. So I don’t want to read it.” I heard many people saying this.

If you don’t know the reality, you don’t know how to think, i.e., you don’t know what is right and what is wrong, then you will really have a lot of misunderstanding like what I mentioned in the last lesson.

There are many people who tell me, “When I do this practice or when I recite this text, I get so many problems.” They tell me, “I get so many problems because I recited this text or I did that practice.”

As I have told you, please don’t tell me these things because none of us are actual practitioners. None of us are real Dharma practitioners!

When you experience problems, it is not due to you having practised the Dharma because you don’t practise the Dharma. When you experience problems, just acknowledge them and tell yourself, “This is a result of my own non-virtue that I had accumulated in the past ripening.” That’s it. Don’t blame it on the Dharma because we don’t even practise the Dharma correctly and purely.

Of course it is a different matter if you are a real practitioner. But if you are a real practitioner, in the first place, you won’t be complaining. You wouldn’t even mention things like that if you are a real practitioner. When real and pure practitioners experience problems, they will not complain. They will also not attribute the problems to their Dharma practice because immediately they know these are the results of their own non-virtue accumulated in the past.

Actually those people who complain are those people who don’t practise the Dharma. These people who attribute whatever problems they experience in life to be results of their Dharma practice—this is a clear sign that they are not practitioners. It is a clear sign that they do not know what Dharma practice is. It is a clear sign that they do not practise the Dharma.

How can the Dharma bring about suffering?

Therefore the real practitioners are the real heroes because they fight their own afflictions, which are the real enemies. They understand that and they know exactly what this means. They know all the problems, difficulties and challenges, yet they do

it with the intent to vanquish their own afflictions. They are the real heroes.

5. *An extensive explanation of the meditations on suffering*

Verse 6.21

Furthermore, suffering has good qualities:

Through being disheartened with it, arrogance is dispelled,
Compassion arises for those in cyclic existence,
Negativities are shunned, and joy is found in virtue.

When we think of our own problems and our own sufferings, first we can use that experience to develop disenchantment and disillusionment with samsara. When we suffer or when we have problems, through the personal experiences of those problems, we develop disenchantment and disillusionment with samsara. We realise we have problems. That realisation of problems and suffering weakens our arrogance and our pride.

Because of that personal understanding of suffering, we can also come to understand how others are in a similar situation in that everybody has problems and everybody is suffering. That understanding can help us to have compassion for others.

It is said in the teachings that through meditating on our own suffering, we develop definite emergence, the thought of renunciation. When we think of the suffering of others, we develop compassion for others. When we think of how others are suffering, we then develop a wish for them to be free of suffering. That is compassion.

When we suffer, there is this thought that dislikes suffering. We don't like suffering so we want to be parted from suffering. Because of that wish not wanting to experience suffering, if we investigate what the cause of suffering is, through that investigation, we understand it is non-virtue. Because we don't want suffering, then we would restrain ourselves from committing non-virtue.

Since we don't want suffering, that means we want happiness. Because we want happiness, if we come to understand that the cause of happiness is virtue, we will then engage in virtue and accumulate virtue.

These are the benefits of going through and experiencing suffering. When we have problems and because we don't want suffering—we want happiness—that may spur us to really think more deeply about what the cause of happiness really is and what the cause of suffering really is. If we can think about this in terms of karma and its effects, that will then spur us on to abandon non-virtue and to cultivate virtue.

With this, we have finished the section on cultivating the patience that accepts suffering. The next section will be on cultivating the patience that is intent on Dharma.

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**ONE-YEAR ANALYTICAL MEDITATION PROGRAM**

For those of you who are part of the one year analytical meditation program, you can switch to the next topic this coming Friday, 13 June 2014. Let's assume that you have now realised guru devotion!

The next topics are the human life of freedoms and endowments and death and impermanence. Let us do those topics for three months. You meditate on that for the next three months. Approximately two months after this Friday, we will come together again and you will have a chance to share your experience.

**ABC CHOIR**

*Khen Rinpoche: I think probably most of you have received the email from ABC about the choir, the vocal group for chanting and singing songs.*

*Of course if you don't have a good voice, then nothing can be done. You just relax. You don't have to join. But if you have a good voice, then please join this group if possible. The whole idea is not so much like people singing outside. This singing group is mainly to attract people especially the young ones. By listening to the chanting, they are able to have some kind of feeling in their heart.*

*We can change our tune a little bit. Not like a very old tune. We can change our tune to a modern tune so that people like it. That is our plan. We need people who have good voices. So please join.*

*If I had a good voice, I will do everything but I don't have a good voice for singing. I don't have that.*

*Those who have a good voice that is very good. This is part of your practice. You are offering something to other people so this is important. It is just a different method to bring people to the Dharma. That is the goal.*

**QUESTIONS FROM KHEN RINPOCHE**

*This can be your exercise. At my Chinese class for seniors<sup>1</sup>, a senior ask me a question: How can you persuade somebody, say your friend, to take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha? If the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha are so wonderful, how you persuade that person to take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha?*

*You can write this down. You can think of what is the most skilful way of doing this. You can take two or three months to do this. It is up to you. So write it down.*

*I thought it was a really good question.*

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<sup>1</sup> Khen Rinpoche conducts a monthly class called *Dharma for Seniors* to cater to older Chinese-speaking members as well as a weekly Chinese lam-rim class. Both these classes are interpreted in Mandarin.

*Last Sunday, this same senior asked me this question, “What is the quickest way to achieve liberation?” This one, we really need to think.*

*The previous Sunday she asked me how to persuade someone to take refuge. We say that the Buddha is good, the Dharma is good, the Sangha is good but how to convince people? It is not easy. Think about it.*

*You tell your friend, “Buddha, Dharma and Sangha are good. You should take refuge.” What is your skill in doing this? Maybe you can write this down.*

*I thought it was good she asked me these questions. She asked two questions and they were very good. I thought they were not easy questions.*

*Maybe you can think about them. You can take two months’ time to write down what are the best answers to these questions.*

Interpreted by Ven. Tenzin Gyurme; transcribed by Phuah Soon Ek, Patricia Lee & Julia Koh; edited by Cecilia Tsong.