

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

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Lesson 40**24 July 2014****CHAPTER SIX: VERSES 6.112 a, b - 6.134.**

2. It is unreasonable to be furious with that which hinders merit (cont'd)
 - C. Reflecting on it as an object one ought to have respect for
 1. As it is something that acts to develop qualities, one should respect it (V. 6.112 a, b – V. 6.118)
 2. Due to faith in the Teacher, one should have respect (V. 6.119 – V.126)
2. The benefits of cultivating patience (V. 6.127 – V. 6.134)

In the last lesson, we saw how patience cannot be developed in dependence on a person who is kind to us and always benefiting us. That person cannot be the object for our development of patience.

Rather the object for our development of patience has to be someone who has a hateful mind towards us, someone who is upset and angry with us, someone who wishes to harm us or who is harming us. That person has to exist before any patience can be cultivated. As such, the enemy or harm-doer is an indispensable cause and condition for our development of patience.

As such, just as we respect and venerate the Dharma, likewise the teachings tell us that we should also venerate the enemy. This is because the enemy is like the Dharma as he is an indispensable cause for us to accumulate virtue.

Because the enemy is an indispensable cause for our development of patience, it doesn't matter whether that enemy or harm-doer has the intention to benefit us or not. Regardless of that, since the enemy or harm-doer is an indispensable cause for our development of patience, therefore he is worthy of veneration just like the Dharma. Although the Dharma benefits us, the Dharma also does not have any intention to benefit us.

Next is the explanation of why we should consider the enemy or the harm-doer to be special and exalted, i.e., why we should view the enemy to be like the Buddha. In essence, the following section talks about how precious sentient beings are and why we should respect them.

- One reason is that sentient beings are like a merit field for us. That is one reason for respecting sentient beings.
- The other reason for respecting sentient beings is that when we do so, we please all the buddhas and bodhisattvas.
- Another reason is that any help or benefit extended to sentient beings from our

side brings about great positive results in the future. Conversely any harm that we inflict on sentient beings will bring about great suffering results for ourselves in the future.

So analysing and distinguishing well the consequences of both benefiting and harming others is another way to cultivate our respect for sentient beings.

2. IT IS UNREASONABLE TO BE FURIOUS WITH THAT WHICH HINDERS MERIT (cont'd)

C. Reflecting on it as an object one ought to have respect for

1. As it is something that acts to develop qualities, one should respect it

C. Seeing it to be like the Teacher

1. Extensive explanation

A. The scriptures teach that sentient beings and the buddhas are comparable fields of merit

Verse 6.112 a, b

Therefore the Muni taught

The field of sentient beings and the so-called “field of Victors.”

Essentially the Buddha said that both sentient beings and the buddhas are equal in being merit fields for us, i.e., they are equal in being objects in relation to whom we can collect merit.

In one sutra, the Buddha said that the field of sentient beings is the field of the buddhas. From the field of the buddhas, the Buddhadharma is obtained, so it will be unsuitable to mistreat them. That is what the Buddha said. Following this is establishing this with reasoning.

B. Establishing that by reason

1. One attains the final object of desire¹ by having faith in the buddhas and sentient beings

Verse 6.112 c, d

Many who have pleased them

Have thereby reached perfection.

Many have become buddhas and achieved the fulfilment of the two purposes through cultivating and generating love and compassion for sentient beings. As such, this is a reason for us to respect sentient beings.

2. As having faith in both is comparable in terms of attaining Buddhahood, it is unreasonable to discard one and embrace the other

Verse 6.113

A buddha’s qualities are accomplished

From sentient beings and the Victors alike,

So what kind of system is it that

I do not respect sentient beings in the same way I respect the Victors?

¹ “The final object of desire” refers to buddhahood.

The achievement of the qualities of enlightenment such as the ten powers and the four fearlessnesses come about in dependence upon both the buddhas and sentient beings. If that is the case, the teachings are questioning why on the one hand, we venerate the buddhas—prostrating to them, cherishing them and making offerings to them—but on the other hand, we do not do likewise to sentient beings? We do not respect them. As such, the teachings say that respecting the buddhas and at the same time, neglecting and not respecting sentient beings are behaviours that are discordant with one another.

We may have qualms about this. For example, we may accept that the buddhas and sentient beings are equal in being fields of merit. However the buddhas and sentient beings are vastly different in that the buddhas have all the qualities and do not have any faults. This is not the case for sentient beings who are full of faults. As such, it is only appropriate to venerate and make offerings to the buddhas and not to sentient beings. The answer to our qualm is in verse 6.114.

C. Abandoning objections

1. *Rejecting the position that holds that it is invalid to cultivate equal faith in objects that are not equal in terms of their qualities*

Verse 6.114

They are not similar in the excellent qualities of their intentions
But in the results.
Sentient beings also have excellent qualities
And they are therefore equal.

In relation to what we have said so far, we are not claiming that the buddhas and the sentient beings are equal in terms of their qualities. Of course, it is not the case that the buddhas and sentient beings are equal in terms of their qualities. But they are equal in terms of being causes for achieving the final fruit of enlightenment. Since we need to depend on *both* the buddhas and sentient beings to achieve our desired result of full enlightenment, as such, we also have to respect sentient beings.

2. *The greatness of faith in both: It is reasonable to cultivate equal faith on the basis that they are comparable in terms of their ability to act as causes for Buddhahood*

Verse 6.115

Whatever veneration of one with a loving mind
Is the greatness of sentient beings.
Whatever merit of faith in the buddhas
Is the greatness of buddhas.

Verse 6.116 a, b

Therefore, they are asserted to be equal
In the share they have in establishing a buddha's qualities.

If someone who is cultivating love and has entered into the meditative equipoise concentrating on love, when that person arises from that concentration on love and if

we were to venerate and make offerings to this person, it is said that we would accumulate a vast amount of merit. The merit that we collect in relation to making offerings to such a person is so powerful that it can bear fruit even in this life. Why is the merit that is created so powerful? The amount of merit that we collect in relation to making offerings to a person who has achieved the concentration of love is so great because sentient beings are the objects of observation of that person's love.

Because of our faith in them, we venerate the buddhas by making prostrations, offerings and so forth. We accumulate so much merit by doing so. Such merit is said to last all the way to our attainment of enlightenment. As we make offerings due to our faith, the result we get is very powerful because the object of our veneration and offerings is the Buddha. In this case, the Buddha is the object that enables us to accumulate such vast merit.

In the earlier example, we can accumulate so much merit when we make offerings to someone who has achieved the concentration of love because of sentient beings. So, in the first example, we accumulate that amount of merit in dependence upon sentient beings.

In the second example, we accumulate that much merit in dependence upon the Buddha.

The point is that in order to achieve the state of full enlightenment, our ultimate goal, we need one of the causes for doing so, i.e., sentient beings. So besides the buddhas, we need to depend upon sentient beings. Since in that sense sentient beings are equal to the buddhas in being the necessary cause and condition for us to achieve full enlightenment, therefore it is correct to be equally respectful to sentient beings.

3. It is reasonable to have faith because there is unlimited merit in making offerings to sentient beings who possess only a fraction of the qualities of a buddha

Verse 6.116 c,d

They are not equal with the buddhas
Who are boundless oceans of excellence.

Verse 6.117

Even if the three realms were offered
For the sake of venerating
Some person in whom a mere share of the good qualities
Of the unique Assembly of Supreme Excellent Qualities appears, it would be little.

In terms of qualities, the buddhas and sentient beings are *not* equal. The buddhas have boundless oceans of qualities. That is true.

Although sentient beings are not equal to the buddhas in terms of qualities, the sentient beings do have some portion of the qualities that the buddhas possess.

It is said that for the sake of venerating sentient beings, even if we were to offer the

entire three realms to one sentient being who has a mere fraction of the qualities of the buddhas, that offering will be insufficient.

2. Synopsis

Verse 6.118

Thus since sentient beings have a share
In giving rise to the supreme qualities of the buddhas,
It is correct to venerate sentient beings
Due to similarity through just these.

The next section talks about how we should be respectful to sentient beings if we really have faith in the Buddha. I guess one of the main ways to repay the kindness of the buddhas is to respect and to cherish sentient beings.

2. *Due to faith in the Teacher, one should have respect*

A. *One should respect the Teacher because he acted as if all sentient beings were his only child*

1. *Accomplishing the principal method required of buddhas*

A. *Showing respect and cherishing other beings is identified as the principal method for repaying the kindness of the buddhas in the light of what they have done*

Verse 6.119

Furthermore, what way is there to repay
Those without dissimulation who are a friend
And grant immeasurable benefit,
Other than by pleasing sentient beings?

The buddhas look upon all sentient beings as their loved ones without any discrimination, deceit and pretension.

- It is said that there is no better way to honour and please the buddhas than to cherish and respect all sentient beings.
- It is also said that there is no better way to repay the kindness of the buddhas than to cherish and help sentient beings.
- In fact, it is said that there is no higher offering to the buddhas than to help and benefit sentient beings.

As such, there is really no way to please the buddhas if, on the one hand, we venerate and make offerings to them and then, on the other hand, we harm sentient beings, get upset with them, look down on them or bully them.

If there is this need to respect sentient beings, then what is the way to do it? One of these ways is to be patient when we are harmed by them.

B. *Establishing that*

1. *One should be patient with harm done by sentient beings*

Verse 6.120

Because benefiting them will repay
Those who give up their holy bodies and enter Relentless Torment,

Therefore even if they cause me great harm
I shall behave impeccably in all.

The buddhas worked very hard in order to become buddhas. Even if they had to give up their exalted bodies to fulfil the welfare of sentient beings, they would do it. They would even go to the lowest of the hot hells, the unrelenting hot hells, for the benefit of the sentient beings.

So if we really have faith in such buddhas, then we should benefit sentient beings. That would be the best way to repay the kindness of the buddhas in whom we have such faith. As such, if our possessions or our bodies are harmed in any way by sentient beings, the practice here is to be able to train our mind to look at these enemies and harm-doers in a positive way, just as we would view our spiritual teachers or gurus. When we look at our gurus, we look at them as *only* wanting to benefit and to help us.

A person who is able to devote correctly to the virtuous friend is someone who is able to see good in every action of the virtuous friend due to her training in how to look at the virtuous friend. Likewise the practice here is to train the mind to look at sentient beings, especially the enemy and harm-doer, in a positive light regardless of what they do to us. That is one way to train our mind.

This verse is the advice to, from our side, look at everything that the harm-doer does as something that is good and positive.

Next is the advice to abandon arrogance in relation to sentient beings because if we are arrogant, it is difficult to do what we have set out to do here, i.e., developing respect for sentient beings.

2. *Abandoning conceit one feels in relation to other sentient beings*

Verse 6. 121

Because those who are my Lords, for the time being
Disregard even their own bodies,
Then why does the confused I
Act proud and not behave with the attributes of a servant toward them?

The “Lords” here refer to the buddhas and bodhisattvas whom we love, hold in high regard and respect very much. From the side of the buddhas and bodhisattvas, they have the intention and the wish to give themselves up, even their lives and their bodies, if there is such a need in order to benefit others.

If the buddhas and bodhisattvas whom we respect, love and hold in high regard would disregard even their own lives in order to benefit sentient beings, then why do we, out of our confusion, behave with such pride and arrogance towards sentient beings? Why are we doing that? That is incorrect. Rather the training here is that we should strive to regard all sentient beings with respect just as we would the buddhas. Usually a servant would do his best to please his master by acting in accordance with what the master wants. Likewise here, we should work for sentient beings, just as a servant would serve his master. One of the main reasons why we are unable to

respect others is because of our arrogance. As such, from our side, if we are able to regard sentient beings as our master and we ourselves as servants, then it would be easier for us to work for others.

Next is the explanation of why it is inappropriate to harm others.

3. *Abandoning harm*

A. *The reasons why it is unreasonable to cause harm*

Verse 6.122

Because of their happiness the Munis will be pleased
But if they are harmed they will be displeased.
By making them happy I shall delight the Munis,
And by harming them I shall harm the Munis.

This verse is very straightforward and not difficult to understand. If we can keep these words in our mind, it will be helpful to mentally go over them every now and then or to recite them. In particular, at times when we have thoughts of wanting to harm others, then we can bring this verse to mind: if we harm sentient beings, then there is no way we would ever please the buddhas.

B. *There is no way to please the buddhas while one is harming others*

Verse 6.123

Just as anything desirable would give my mind no pleasure
If my body was ablaze with fire,
Likewise when sentient beings are harmed
There is no way for the Great Compassionate Ones to be pleased.

If, for whatever reason, your body is set ablaze with fire, if somebody were to come along and give you a plate of delicious food or some other desirable object, there is no way you could enjoy it. You will not be able to find anything that is given to you as pleasurable or desirable while your body is on fire.

Likewise there is no way that the buddhas can really be pleased if on the one hand, you are harming sentient beings while at the same time venerating the buddhas with offerings.

Now we should confess whatever actions of harming sentient beings that we have done in the past.

2. *Confessing previous displeasing actions*

Verse 6.124

Due to having harmed migrating beings,
I have displeased the Great Compassionate Ones.
Therefore today I confess individually all my negativities.
I request your forgiveness, Munis, for this displeasure I have caused.

If you have accumulated such negativities in the past, then such actions would have displeased the buddhas. As such, you should confess them without any concealment

in the presence of the buddhas and also not do similar actions again in the future. Verse 6.124 is confessing the disrespectful actions that we have engaged in in the past.

The next verse is refraining from any such similar actions in the future.

3. Refraining from allowing negativities to arise in the future

Verse 6.125

From now on, in order to delight the Tathagatas,
I shall be subdued and be a servant to the world.
Although many beings may kick and smash my head or kill me,
I shall not retaliate and may I delight the Protectors of the World.

You confessed whatever mistakes that you have done in the past. Now you should refrain from such similar actions again in the future with the thought of pleasing the buddhas. You should refrain from arrogance and pride which is the meaning of the second line, “I shall be subdued,” i.e., to subdue one’s arrogance and pride and to view oneself as a servant to sentient beings with the attitude to benefit them.

The highest part of the body is the head and the lowest part of the body is the feet. It is said that from one’s own side, even if someone were to kick one’s head and even if they were to take one’s life, from one’s own side, one is not to view those actions with anger or to retaliate with anger.

Here we are applying the mind of restraint, i.e., cultivating the thought that even if such things happen to us, from our side, we will not retaliate with anger. Instead we will voluntarily accept that situation. We offer these thoughts of restraint to the buddhas with the hope that it may please the buddhas.

B. Thus, this shows in brief that we should respect sentient beings as well

Verse 6.126

There is no doubt that those with the nature of compassion
Regard all these migrating beings as themselves.
These very ones seen in the entities of sentient beings are the
Protectors themselves;
Why then do I not respect them?

Through the practice of having exchanged themselves with others, there is no doubt that the buddhas consider sentient beings to be similar to themselves. In fact, they cherish sentient beings more than they do themselves. As such, from our side, we should regard every sentient being in such a way, i.e., as being like a buddha.

What do you think is the meaning of the third line of verse 6.126: “These very ones seen in the entities of sentient beings are the Protectors themselves”? Here it is saying that the sentient beings are in the entities of the buddhas.

Khen Rinpoche: How are you going to explain that sentence? Make it short as I have to finish this chapter on patience today. There is still some more verses to cover.

Student: This verse means that the way the Buddha treats sentient beings is the way

he sees himself. If sentient beings were to suffer, he feels as if he himself is suffering.

Khen Rinpoche: The Buddha feels suffering also? So the Buddha is not free from suffering?

Student: This is due to his compassion.

Khen Rinpoche: Due to his compassion, he suffers, so he is not free of suffering?

In the teachings on equalising self and others, there is a way of equalising self and other from the ultimate point of view. From the ultimate point of view, if you look at the ultimate nature of both the Buddha's mind and sentient beings' minds, both are the same in never having been polluted by the defilements since beginningless lifetimes. The defilements are not one with the mind.

If we look at the words of this sentence, what it seems to suggest literally is this: the sentient being who I see is a buddha. It seems to be telling us that whoever we see is a buddha. But it is not that the sentient beings are buddhas. Sentient beings are not buddhas. But by seeing sentient beings as being in the nature of the buddhas, it is giving the result to the cause in that although the sentient beings are not buddhas, they possess right from the beginning the potential to become enlightened. That is, they have the fundamental cause or the nature of enlightenment in them so they will be future buddhas.

The essence is that by respecting sentient beings, from our side, we will swiftly achieve the state of full enlightenment.

The remaining verses of this chapter are talking about the benefits of meditating on patience.

2. THE BENEFITS OF CULTIVATING PATIENCE²

A. Brief presentation

Verse 6.127

It delights the tathagatas

And perfectly accomplishes my own purpose as well.

It dispels the suffering of the world.

Therefore I should always practice it.

Here it says that when we are harmed by sentient beings, if we cultivate patience, do not retaliate and if we are respectful towards sentient beings, then this alone is the supreme way of pleasing the buddhas.

² A. Abandoning hindrances to the accomplishment of abiding by the antidote: Devoting oneself to the cultivation of patience (V. 6.1 – V. 6.6)

B. Engaging the mind in the methods for accomplishing patience (V. 6.7 – V. 6.134)

1. Arresting the causes of anger (V. 6.7 – V. 126)

2. The benefits of cultivating patience (V. 6.127 – V. 6.134)

Meditating on patience is also the supreme method to fulfil our own purposes of this life and our ultimate goal of achieving full enlightenment. Our own practice of the meditation on patience alone can dispel the sufferings of the world.

In Gyaltsab Je's commentary, these are stated to be the benefits of patience. In some other commentaries, there is a list of benefits that come from respecting others. But whatever it is—whether it is a list of the benefits of respecting sentient beings or a list of benefits of meditating on patience—the point is that through ascertaining, acknowledging and accepting those benefits, the practice of patience is something that we should always practise.

Next is explaining the benefits through an example.

B. Explaining the benefits by means of an analogy

1. The meaning of the analogy in terms of benefit

A. Analogy

Verse 6.128

For example, should even some of the king's men
Cause harm to many people,
Farsighted men would not retaliate
Even if they were able to.

Verse 6.129 a, b

For they are not alone;
The might of the king is their might.

When we know how to think in the long-term, then for whatever reason if somebody who is very powerful sends his subordinates to give us problems, even though we may have the capacity to retaliate, we will not do so. We will think carefully first before doing anything because we know that that person has the support of someone who is very powerful. This is an example of not retaliating because of fear. So we just put up with it.

B. Meaning

Verse 6.129 c, d

Likewise I should not underestimate
Weak harmers.

Verse 6.130 a, b

For the guardians of hell and the Compassionate Ones
Are their army.

Likewise when pitiful sentient beings cause us harm, even though we can retaliate, we should not do so. We should not put them down, look down on or kill them.

Here it is mentioned that we should not underestimate the "weak harmers". We may think the weak harmers are insignificant or very weak. For example, the mosquito is insignificant to us. We have all the capacity to smash it and destroy it if we wanted to. But the point is that we should not do that.

Although we may be in a position to overcome these weak enemies and harm-doers, we shouldn't because behind them are the armies of the guardians of hell and all the buddhas.

How does the army of the hell guardians come into the picture? If we harm sentient beings, we accumulate the non-virtuous karma that will produce the appearance of the hell guardians in the future when we are born in the hells.

What about the army of the conquerors that are supporting these insignificant weak harmers? As I mentioned earlier, any actions we do that harm sentient beings are actions that would displease the buddhas. By harming sentient beings, we displease the buddhas and we move further away from them. We will not have the fortune to meet up with the buddhas. We will not have the bases to receive the blessings of the buddhas and bodhisattvas.

So that is the explanation through the analogy but in reality, the meaning itself is even greater than the analogy, i.e., what happens in reality is greater than what we see in the analogy.

2. Explaining that the reality of it surpasses the analogy

Verse 6.130 c, d

Just as subjects behave towards a fierce king,
I should please sentient beings.

Verse 6.131

Even if such a king were to become angry,
Could he cause the harm of hell,
Which is what I would have to experience
By displeasing sentient beings?

Verse 6.132

And even if such a king were to be pleased,
He could not possibly grant me buddhahood,
Which is what I would obtain
By pleasing sentient beings.

Here it says that we should please sentient beings in the same way that subjects would behave towards their fierce king. In the case of the example here, if the king that we are trying to please is fierce, even if he were upset with us, from his own side, the king cannot throw us into the hells. But if we harm sentient beings, we will be thrown into the lower realms. On the other hand, even if the king is happy, no matter how happy he may be, he can never grant us enlightenment. But if you look at the meaning, the king is really the sentient being for if we please sentient beings, we can achieve enlightenment.

C. A condensed presentation of the types of benefit

1. The principal effect

Verse 6.133 a, b

Let alone my future attainment of buddhahood,

Which comes from pleasing sentient beings,

2. The visible effect

Verse 6.133 c, d

Why do I not see that there will be great glory,

Fame, and happiness in this very life?

By respecting sentient beings and practising patience in relation to them, the state of full enlightenment will be ours in the future. As such, here is the justification to be respectful of others and to cultivate patience. Even in this life, it is quite obvious that through respecting others and cultivating patience, we would have a good reputation, peace and happiness in this life. By seeing that there are these visible results such as having fame, good reputation, peace and happiness in this life, then one should practise patience and have respect for others.

Lastly by understanding the fruitional effects, we cultivate respect for and patience with others.

3. Explaining the fully ripened effect

Verse 6.134

While in cyclic existence patience causes

Beauty, freedom from sickness, and fame.

Because of these I shall live for a very long time

And win the prosperous pleasures of the wheel-turning kings.

The result of the practice of patience is that while we are in cyclic existence, we will achieve a body that is pleasant in appearance and pleasing to others. We will also be able to have good helpers. It is said that the practice of patience results in a very long life as well as a life that is free of sicknesses. It will also result in fame and we will be able to obtain the enjoyments of the wheel-turning kings.

2. THE CHAPTER'S NAME³

The name of this chapter is "Teaching patience."

SUMMARY

In the face of experiencing harm or disturbances from others, if we become overly upset and we react with too much anger and unhappiness, then life becomes really complicated. In the case of a Dharma practitioner, being overly upset and agitated really harms our practice. It becomes very difficult to practise. In particular, for someone who is aiming for and trying to cultivate bodhicitta, becoming overly upset is a huge obstacle.

³ 3. Explaining the way to train in the remaining four perfections (Chapters 6 – 9)

A. The way to train in patience

1. Explaining the chapter's material (V. 6.1 – V. 6.134)

2. The chapter's name

The antidote to that is cultivating the patience of disregarding harm done to us. If we look at the teachings pertaining to this particular form of patience, many reasons are put forth in order to help us change our perspective of the harm-doer from someone who is totally bad into someone who is truly good and beneficial. These are all methods to help us avoid developing any anger towards harm-doers.

Another source of disturbance and obstacle to our Dharma practice is meeting with difficult situations and challenges, difficult people and problems in life such as sicknesses and so forth. Often people give up their Dharma practice in the face of such problems. As such, these problems become obstacles, interfering with our Dharma practice. To counteract this danger, there is the practice of cultivating the patience of accepting suffering. We acknowledge and accept the suffering so that it does not detract us from the practice but rather, we are able to persevere with our practice.

In the section dealing with this particular form of patience, the patience of accepting suffering, in the beginning, there is a discussion prompting us to look at whatever problems we are facing to see if there is anything that can be done about it. Can it be solved? If it cannot be solved, then why are we worried? So that is the analysis to be done.

Then there is the discussion of the benefits of suffering. It is actually good to have suffering because it is very useful. There is also the discussion of how we can actually deal with these sufferings. We can actually put up with them or even develop a liking for them. After all, this is only a matter of familiarity. Once we are accustomed to changing our ideas about suffering, we can really put up with it.

Yet another source of problems—why we do not succeed in our practice—is a lack of desire for the Dharma in the first place. Dharma is not really desirable for some people. We may want to practise a little bit but we don't really want to do it. One of the reasons is because we don't see the benefit of Dharma practice. Basically we don't have faith and trust in the Dharma. That is another reason.

In order to counteract that, we have an antidote in the form of the patience that is intent on the Dharma or developing certitude about the teachings, which counteracts our lack of faith or trust in the teachings. The way to cultivate this particular form of patience is to develop an ascertainment of the Buddha's teachings—in particular the workings of the law of cause and effect, i.e., karma—by thinking about them and developing conviction in them. In particular, we need to develop the ascertainment and certitude about dependant arising on its subtlest level. It is through these methods that we gain stability in our faith and trust in the Dharma that provides us with the foundation to actually practise and continue with our practice.

On the basis of thinking about the presentation of the principles of cause and effect, one then thinks about dependant arising at its subtlest level. This is the main contemplation. Through this contemplation—when we are really able to ascertain that both the 'I', the person receiving harm, and the harm-doer, although they exist, but they do not exist by way of their own nature, from their own side or in and of themselves—this understanding serves as the supreme antidote to counteracting

anger. If you remember, in the earlier section of this chapter, there is an explanation of how to regard ourselves and the harm-doer as emanations or illusions, i.e., both we ourselves and the harm-doer do not exist from their own side.

In summarising his commentary on this chapter on patience, Gyaltsab Je said that although one may meditate on the virtues of generosity and the like for many eons, these are destroyed by the tongue of the fire of anger. Therefore one needs to cultivate the force of patience over and over again and not to give anger any chance to do this.

This advice is really very essential for us. Even if the Buddha was to appear in person directly before us, in the context of patience, there is nothing more that he could say to us than this particular quotation.

We have to pay attention to and really take these teachings to heart. Sometimes when we have the opportunity to hear teachings many times to the point where the mind becomes hardened to the Dharma, we tend to disregard these teachings, thinking, "It is one of those things again!" It is essential that we don't end up like that.

We should learn the Dharma. From our own side, we must seek out the Dharma with great interest. The Dharma should be of the utmost priority for us. The Dharma should be so important to us that we would give up everything, including our life, in order to receive the Dharma, to be educated in it, to learn and practise it. Ideally it should be like that.

It should be like that but we are not like that. It seems that what happens to people at times is that after having listened to too much Dharma, instead of having benefited, their minds harden to the Dharma and they no longer value the Dharma. We have all the opportunities but we tend to think, "Oh, it is just another teaching."

Therefore we should not disregard this text and look down on it. In fact, this text is a very precious instruction. It is a very, very precious, very, very holy text in that even if the Buddha is to appear directly in front of us, there is nothing more that he can say beside what we have already seen here in this text. We have to keep that in mind. So it is important to know the text and to familiarise ourselves with it, mixing our mind with what is said in the text.

Interpreted by Ven. Tenzin Gyurme; transcribed by Phuah Soon Ek, Vivien Ng & Aki Yeo; edited by Cecilia Tsong.