

Garchen Rinpoche's message regarding his month-long retreat starting on March 16, 2020

Even though I will be in retreat for a month, people can still listen to my teachings. Since I will be meditating in retreat, my mind merges into one with anyone else who is meditating too. The meditative state is the state of all the buddhas' mind—they are always resting in the natural condition of the mind. When you meditate, you become one with my mind and the mind of all the buddhas—you become one with the space-like nature of mind that transcends birth and death. So don't think that because I'm in retreat that I'm gone. Whenever you meditate we are together.

Whatever virtue you practice, there are many dedication prayers to dedicate these virtues. Often people request lamas to preform dedication prayers on their behalf. Actually, there is no need to ask for this because you should recite these dedication prayers yourself.

At the end of the Sūtra of the Three Heaps there is a dedication prayer that is concise yet complete in meaning; it can easily be recited by anyone. I encourage you to recite this as a dedication prayer whenever you engage in practice:

Just as the previous Bhagavan buddhas
have perfectly dedicated, just as the
future Bhagavan buddhas will perfectly
dedicate, and just as the present
Bhagavan buddhas perfectly dedicate,
like that I too dedicate perfectly.
I confess each and every wrong-
doing and rejoice in all merit. I urge and
supplicate to all the buddhas: May I attain
the highest, most sublime primordial
wisdom! With my palms joined together I
wholeheartedly take refuge in all those
who possess qualities as vast as an
infinite ocean: to the buddhas, the best of
humans, who are living in the present,
those who have lived in the past, and
likewise, those who will come.

This is the supreme dedication and it also includes refuge. It is endowed with great blessings as it was spoken by the Buddha himself.

All the disciples—we are always together. Buddha is like a big tree. The tree knows that its branches and leaves belong to him. Some branches break and some dry out; these are the many sentient beings who experience suffering. Some branches know that they belong to one single tree; these are those beings who understand Buddha. These branches will not dry out. For as long as you believe, "I am a separate individual," you will be controlled by karma and afflictive emotions and thus you become like dry or broken tree branch. Some of the branches of a tree dry

out, while other branches blossom with flowers and leaves. When you realize the view of Mahāmudrā, you know, “We are all branches of the same Buddha tree. The basis of our mind is one and the same.” Saṃsāra and nirvāṇa have a single basis, which is like the trunk of a tree. This knowledge is referred to as “meditating in the state of Mahāmudrā.” Meditation means to look at the nature of your mind, and cultivating love and compassion, untainted by self-grasping, is the cause of becoming a Buddha. The Buddha said: “All sentient beings are actually buddhas.” When you understand this, you have understood the view of Mahāmudrā. Then you will understand that, as it is said in the Thirty-Seven Practices of a Bodhisattva, “the way things appear is one’s own mind.”

Many Tashi Delek to everyone!

Garchen Rinpoche, March 16, 2020, Chino Valley, USA

Translated by Ina Bieler.