

# HE Garchen Rinpoche's Message to the World regarding the rise of global environmental challenges.

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This is a message to all the Buddhists in the world. In general, anyone who practices a religion, any religion, needs love and compassion. This love and compassion is to be directed towards all sentient beings: "May all sentient beings have happiness and may they be free from suffering." Therefore, when people anywhere suffer from heat and cold, you should pray to the one in whom you take refuge. Pray for the benefit of all countries in the world, for example, "May those without rain have rain; may those without water have water; may the fire that injures some be extinguished," and so forth. You should make prayers that accord with your own tradition. As Buddhists we can recite the Prayer for World Peace or single-pointedly supplicate to Tara. This is the responsibility of every religious practitioner, even if you are the only one in the house. Such prayers will surely be of benefit. Even if only one or two people pray, it will surely bring benefit. We should all pray together for the well-being of all countries. This will also benefit us. If we close ourselves up and only care about our own well-being, then of course, that will not be of much benefit. But if you pray with the intention to benefit the entire world, that will actually benefit yourself the most, and it will also benefit the world. This is called "accomplishing the benefit of others and oneself." So everyone should supplicate his or her own source of refuge. Buddhists, for example, can supplicate Jetsun Tara, Chenrezig, and so forth; recite Mani mantras; perform purification rituals before stupas, or even small statues; be generous to animals, and so forth. All these practices will benefit the world. Otherwise, hatred and jealousy will increase in this world, and love will decline. This will lead to an increase of heat in the world, and in the end the world will go up in flames. Thus, it would be good if everyone would consider this. We should all pray and take this to heart with great concern. If we remain unconcerned about the suffering of others as long as it doesn't affect us personally, we are just paying lip service to our prayer, "May all sentient beings have happiness and may they be free from suffering."

The single cause of all the misery in this world, such as floods on the outer level and conflicts on the inner level, is the ill will arising from the hatred and jealousy of the people inhabiting this planet. Instead of helping one another, people harm each other: countries go to war, people and religious groups fight with each other. In brief, love—the harmony of the inner elements—affects the harmony of the outer elements. The five mental afflictions and the five outer elements are profoundly related. Therefore, our efforts to give rise to love and compassion will be fruitful by virtue of three powers: first, the power of one's own pure intention—one's own good heart; second, the power of the Tatagathas—all the buddhas of the three times have made aspiration prayers, but in addition, we must supplicate them. Just as with a wish-fulfilling jewel, unless one expresses the wish, it will not be fulfilled. If we supplicate, then we will receive the power of all the buddhas; this is the power of the Tatagathas. And third, the power of Dharmadhatu—samsara and nirvana have a single basis. The duality of samsara and nirvana is only a temporary appearance due to various karma and afflictions.

As a result of actions committed with an afflicted mind, we now witness a lot of suffering in this world. So how can we purify these afflictions? All afflictions arise from self-grasping, and the antidote to self-grasping is the altruistic mind. Altruism will benefit one in all circumstances: in this life, in the next life, and in the bardo. Everyone needs altruism. Even a tiny creature will experience happiness relative to the

level of its altruism. Thus we pray, “May beings possess happiness and the causes of happiness.” The cause of happiness is love. And, “May beings be free from suffering and the causes of suffering.” The cause of suffering is self-grasping. There is no other Dharma than that. The heart-essence of the Dharma is love and compassion. Apart from love and compassion, no other Dharma exists. What we call “the Buddha” is the wisdom-mind, the perfection of wisdom. The subtle wisdom of buddha-nature is the underlying basis of samsara and nirvana. Therefore, if one has love and compassion, wisdom will increase. If you understand this, you will discover the method to bring about happiness and liberation from suffering. Thus, we should engender excellent aspirations. Since the world is currently in such a perilous state, I request everyone to pray well.

Translated by Ina Dhargye and edited by Kay Candler.