



Ultimately Perfect
by
the 12th Chamgon Tai Situ Rinpoche

As requested I am sharing a few words of dharma which I have received from my sacred and kind enlightened masters. The subject requested here is 'ultimately perfect'. It is quite obvious that we are talking about ultimate by definition of being ultimate which is beyond the opposite of relative. Normally when we say ultimate we are talking about it as the opposite of relative, so the relatively speaking ultimate. That ultimate is sometimes perfect and sometimes not, but if you go beyond that, then everything is perfect. The easiest way to look at this aspect of ultimate is by looking at the mind—in each one of us, everything that is perfect is our mind. Our mind is perfect but our thoughts are not perfect, our perceptions are not perfect, and our body definitely is not perfect, it can't even fly or jump very well. Monkeys have a hundred times better body than we do. For example, their feet are useful in that they don't need staircases. But we need staircases because our feet are useless—we have to walk up, we can't just hold on with our hands. We say hold on with our hands; we never say hold on with our feet! Anyway, when I say ultimate you have to know that we are talking about the ultimate which is beyond the dualistic definition of ultimate and relative.

I will give you a very simple definition which is very commonly spoken about these days—this is not really the ultimate but it is close to it—everyone talks about environmental disaster, environmental problems. If we look at the ultimate of the relative, the dualistic ultimate, then if we human beings hadn't done all these things, if everything was left alone, then everything would be perfect. But over the past maybe two or three million years we started to be smart and clever. Our cleverness made us so much in need of everything—we have to have clothes, we have to have houses, we have to have medicine, we have to have everything, everything that we have here. We made it so that we need it. Two or three million years ago we didn't need any of this; we didn't even know it existed. Other sentient beings who we think are inferior to us, like birds and wild animals, actually they are smarter than us because they don't need what we need, therefore they don't cause the problems that we cause, and they don't suffer the suffering that we suffer. We build golden cages for ourselves and then lock them and throw the keys into the ocean and then we scream and cry for help. That is what we are doing. This way the ultimate, the dualistic ultimate, is perfect.

Right now if we go a little bit beyond our relative, our being clever, if we go thirty miles away from here into space then everything is perfect. The sun is perfect, the moon is perfect, the

stars are perfect, the sky is perfect, everything is going in its own perfect way, and there is no problem there, there is no suffering there. Then when we come down, when we get closer and closer to here—I am not a new-age person, I am an old-age person, but I use new-age terms from time to time—closer by meters, then we get the ‘vibe’, you know, the ‘human vibe’. The human vibration we get which is nothing more and nothing less than suffering and problems. So that is, ultimately everything is perfect, even in the dualistic ultimate.

You might be saying in your mind, ‘does he mean that we all should remain as Neanderthals?’ Why not? I think that maybe Neanderthals had fewer problems than we do. Many of the problems that Neanderthals had were real problems, but 99% of our problems are not real problems, we just create them. For example, if you are a landlord, then because you are a landlord and because you say ‘this is my land’ you have all those types of problems—in the east you have a problem with the neighbor who lives in the east, in the west you have a problem with the neighbor who lives in the west, in the north you have a problem with the neighbor who lives in the north, and in the south you have the problem with the neighbor who lives in the south. They also have the same problems, because you made the border, you said ‘this is my land’. It is the same thing with a house. When you have a house you have lots of problems. And the more sophisticated your house is the more problems you have, because you put so many electric gadgets in your house. Also we bring water into our house—we are clever, so we don’t have to go out and bring water on our head in a big pot and have a stiff neck, we can just turn on a tap and we get the water—but that is very problematic, we have to put in so many filters, then clean the tank so many times, and change the pipes so many times etc. Then even the taps; new ones come and you like to change everything—if you want to change one tap for a new design then you have to change all the taps in the house, otherwise your house will look like a tap museum because each tap will be different.

In this way everything is problematic and not perfect. That is why Buddha said that samsara is full of suffering; there is nothing in samsara that does not have suffering attached to it. Buddha is not saying for example that honey is not sweet, of course if you eat honey it is very sweet, but a problem of suffering is attached to it. For example, if you eat too many sweets you will become diabetic, so a big problem is attached to it. In this way, in samsara, everything has suffering attached to it. Therefore, relatively nothing is perfect. Then the unspoken word that goes with that is, if you speak, is that ultimately everything is perfect. Relatively nothing is perfect, ultimately everything is perfect. That is what comes afterwards.

What I have been talking about is the basic dualistic relative and ultimate. Now I will go to the point, the subject that I think is very important for those who really like to do something with what you learn, which is, the ultimate is the essence of our mind. I have to say essence otherwise you will get all kinds of ideas about mind. For example, your thoughts, your emotions, your perceptions, also each culture has their own description of mind, atma, soul, all

kinds of things—we have so many readymade perceptions about the mind. You can call it atma, pram-atma¹, soul, you can call it anything, but whoever is saying this, whoever is thinking about this, whoever is thinking about whatever it thinks, is the mind. That thinker, where the thoughts come from, has so much depth in it; if you go deeper and deeper into that, then it has nothing to do with thought and it has nothing to do with a subject. Also it is not an object, it is beyond that. But for a simple definition of whether there is mind or not, of course there is, otherwise what are you? What am I? There is mind. But mind is not like anything; you cannot find an example that can describe the mind one hundred percent. Mind is not like a mountain, mind is not like a river, mind is not like a fire, mind is not like the wind, and mind is not like the sky. You cannot find one single example that precisely describes the mind, but superficially everything describes one aspect of the mind. Mind is like fire, mind is like wind, mind is like sky, mind is like the ocean, mind is like everything. Therefore one has to go beyond the dualistic description of 'mind is like this and mind is not like that'.

The simple reason that we can grasp very easily why there is fire, why there is water, why there are mountains and why there is space is because mind is like that and perceived that way. Also when we talk about heaven and hell—heaven must be very nice, so good that we can't even imagine, and hell must be very bad and terrible. We have a description of heaven, we say, if you like to hear music you will hear it exactly according to how loud and how fast or how slow you like to hear it. But if you don't want to hear music, it will become totally silent. If you want to taste something, you will taste exactly what you want to taste, but if you don't want it, it is not there. That is a description of heaven. Then hell, it is described that you and the fire become one. What does that mean? If you are flesh and fire is the burning material, then fire will burn the flesh and then it is finished. But when you and fire become one, because it is you, you suffer, but because you are one with the fire you don't die. For example, our human body cannot have limitless suffering. That is impossible because this body cannot take it—up to a certain amount of pain, a certain amount of damage, our mind can still remain in the body and suffer, but beyond that our mind cannot be hosted in the body, we will die. This way hell is described as beyond this, and heaven is described as beyond this. In heaven you and all the good things become one; that is heaven. In hell you and all the terrible things become one; that is hell.

These both tell us that mind has no limitation. Why somebody will be born in hell is because that person's negativity is so extreme that they become the embodiment of negativity; that is hell. Why somebody will be born in heaven is because that person is so positive that they become, not just positive as a subject and object, but they become the embodiment of positiveness. Then they are born in heaven. So that is the definition of being born in heaven and being born in hell.

Now what about us? We are the embodiment of whatever we are; we are somewhere in the

middle. We have positive and we have negative, therefore when something wonderful happens we feel like a god and when something terrible happens we feel like hell. Then when nothing is happening we get bored. This is a reality I guess, but there are people like me, odd people, who like to be bored. There is nothing like boring, it is wonderful. When nothing is happening that is perfect, it is absolute silence, and absolute quietness. But normal people get bored and have to do something, go to a movie or whatever. They have to do something because it is so boring.

Anyway, this describes not only the connection of everything to the mind but everything as being the manifestation of the mind. It describes this very clearly. For example, each one of us looks absolutely different; although we are all human beings, we all have a nose, mouth, eyes, hair etc, but each one of us are different, we look different, otherwise we couldn't recognize one from another. So each one of us is different and this is our manifestation. The usual established term for this is 'karma', which is a Sanskrit word. Karma means action, activity, you have done something—you are not just thinking about something but you have done something—then it becomes a full karma. When you just think about something and don't manage to do it then that is just a kind of perception, it is not full karma; it is kind of a base for karma and is less serious. But when you think, act and accomplish something then that is complete karma; whether it is good or bad it becomes complete. And each one of us is a result of our karma.

Another thing is, we can be twins, we might look exactly the same, have exactly the same voice, have exactly the same weight and exactly the same height, but the mind is different, we think differently. One twin might like something and not like something else, whereas the other twin might like something different and not like other things, they will be different. In this way everything is the manifestation of the mind, and whether it is positive or negative, it is the manifestation of the mind.

This way you can understand that ultimately everything is perfect, and that is why we do meditation, that is why we go on pilgrimage, that is why we do prayers, that is why we try to be helpful, nice, tolerant, compassionate and devoted and so on and so forth. These things are positive. Being cynical and disrespectful is negative, being respectful and faithful is positive, being angry is negative, being compassionate is positive. This way we are practicing what is positive in order to overcome the negative. That is why we don't want to go to hell and instead want to go to heaven. But heaven is not the end because we are still the embodiment of the positive; we have not reached the ultimate, non-dualistic destination.

Heaven we will enjoy for millions of years, but when our karma for being in heaven is finished then we will be back to square one. In heaven beings very rarely create good karma because everything and everyone is perfect. For example, you can't practice generosity in heaven

because there are no beggars. Also, how can you practice patience in heaven when there is nobody who is impatient? If everybody gets everything then they will not be impatient about anything. If they want to be alone everybody will disappear, if they want to be with friends everybody will appear. It is like that, therefore there is no making of anything in heaven. Heaven is like having a very big trust fund that you are using, but one day the trust fund will be finished; you have used all of it and then the karma for being in heaven is finished. Then you don't necessarily fall from heaven to hell, you might become a human or something else. Our astrologers, when they check peoples' astrological signs, they say that if in your past life you were in heaven then in this life you will have such and such signs in your body, and also you are a very jolly and happy person; you make everybody happy because you came from heaven.

This kind of thing is there. Also everything comes in numbers, which is another thing that proves everything as being the manifestation of the mind, because numbers can describe everything. Numbers start with zero and end with ten, another zero. Then you add up, two times ten is twenty, three times, four times etc, and we are born with ten fingers. Some of us have extra fingers though, but you still have to count ten.

In this way everything is interconnected, interrelated, and if you know how to read this you can read anything. By reading anything, if you know how to read this then you can predict the future, you can see the past and you can reason the present, through numbers, that is one way. We don't have a lineage for reading other things, but there are some people who read palms, some who read faces and some who read drawings—you draw something on paper and then that person will read it and tell you about who you are, what you think and what is going to happen to you. But of course, if you don't have lineage then you are pretty much guessing and you might get things wrong. Anyway, why that is possible is because everything is a manifestation of the mind.

Another way to look at this life is that it is the result of all the past lives—this life is the fingerprint of all of our past lives. Everyone is unique, everyone is a masterpiece, there is nobody in the whole universe like you, like any one of you—you are the rarest masterpiece because there isn't anybody who is exactly like you. In this way, each one of us is a product of countless past lifetimes. I say 'past', which has the sense of relative, because in the ultimate there is no past, no future and no present; more than one. But for us, there is a past, there is a future, and there is a present—forget about beyond one, for us this is not even one.

In this way ultimately everything is perfect and beyond any dualistic definition of ultimate. And this is relevant to whom? Of course it is relevant to all of us, but when will it be relevant? Not now I am afraid. Now I can talk about it, you can think about it, you can understand it, but it's

irrelevant. Because, for example, let's say if you want to fly, you can flap your hands but you will not fly, so it is irrelevant. Ultimately everybody has wings, but relatively we don't, therefore we can't fly. Also we might not want to eat anything because it is a lot of work—cooking, cleaning and then eating. It is so much work, it is unnecessary, but we have to otherwise we will be hungry, and worse than that we will be sick, then worse than that we will die if we don't eat.

So the true ultimate is irrelevant to us right now. Then when will it be relevant to us? When our duality becomes less, then the more relevant the ultimate will be—the less we are caught up in the relative then the more the ultimate is relevant to us. And it is our ultimate that is the ultimate of everything as well. For example, there is no sun other than what mind perceives, there is no moon other than what mind perceives, there is no stars other than what mind perceives—you can prove that by astrologers reading your future through reading the stars, it is part and parcel of you. This way the ultimate becomes relevant to us when we become freer from the relative.

Now how do we go about it? You might think, 'You have said so many things but tell me something about what to do?' Okay, it can be true, you can be correct. But now what do we do? Very simple, the entire practice of dharma is about developing our positive potential. I am a Buddhist, but I believe every religion is for this purpose. Why I say religion is because there are two things happening in humanity: one is following the negative aspect of our manifestation; following that, serving that and trying to fulfill that, that is the samsaric way, not the religious way; then following the positive aspect of us, the positive aspect of everything; following that and serving that, is the religious aspect. You might ask, "To be religious, do I have to follow one particular religion or can I just be a good person and consider myself a religious person?" There is a risk involved there, which can be a big risk or it can be no risk, it depends on individual karma. Religion by definition is: once upon a time one human being got everything correct and reached the ultimate, not only intellectually but as realization; so not just understood but *became*. That person who became perfect ultimately, then what manifested from that person is called dharma. The word dharma we use for every religion, Buddha dharma, Christian dharma, Hindu dharma, Muslim dharma etc.

Tibetans have a very funny description of Muslims—which is very interesting for me—we call Muslims *Khachei*, which means Kashmir. We don't have any other word for Muslim. Then saffron, which comes from Kashmir, we call it *kachei shakham*. Actually we have so many Buddhist texts that are translated from Sanskrit to Tibetan by mahapanditas of the Kachei, but they are not Muslim. So it is very interesting; the name of the area, which later became Muslim, following Islam, that name remained in the Tibetan language as the name for the Islam religion. For Christians we say *Yesu*, which means Jesus, for the religion of Jesus. For Hindu we say Hindu, because of the river Indus I think. It has something to do with the people

who live on the banks of the river Indus, and the beliefs, culture and religion of those people, that is Hindu, I think. I heard something like that from some Tibetan historians. So this is there in our language.

Anyway, I think every religion is... I can't say they are the same, I am not a politician and also I am not that diplomatic, but for the sake of diplomacy I say everything is the same. I don't know, but definitely they are the same in the sense of the discovery of the ultimate by a person, by a human being. In that regard every religion is the same. Then for this, the difference between just being a good person and not following any religion and being a good person and following a living religion, the later is much safer because you don't have to interpret anything, it is already there. The road is already built and the road has road signs. For example, imagine Delhi without road names, road signs, and house numbers, how could you get anywhere? To find a house you might have to go around for two years. If there was no name for the streets and no numbers for the houses then you would have to knock on everybody's door and call the name of the person and see who is living there. You might be looking on the ground floor and that will be somebody else, so you might miss the house ten times because you are knocking on the wrong door, you don't see the right person.

So following a living religion with lineage has a blessing, plus everything is set out clearly so that you don't have to make anything up, you don't have to guess about anything. Just being a nice person, a good person is good, but then you might have to guess about everything—what is right, what is wrong etc. If you have to guess about everything, for that you need a tremendous amount of very good karma, otherwise there are a million chances to get it wrong and only one chance to get it right. Just like Delhi having no street names and no house numbers, then to find something there would be a million chances to miss the place and only one chance to get there.

This way it is safer, but I must add lineage there, because if a religion has no lineage then again it is back to square one, because no lineage means no blessing. Then it is anybody's interpretation—it is the interpretation of the person who claims to be religious, but they did not receive it from a master who had the lineage, which goes back to the original person from whom the religion manifested. In Buddhism the lineage is from Prince Siddhartha, not before his enlightenment but after his enlightenment—when Prince Siddhartha became Buddha Shakyamuni then he taught the dharma the first time to five disciples,ⁱⁱ then after that of course for many, many disciples. This lineage is unbroken, not re-interpreted and not adjusted for different times and situations and people, but kept purely, out of devotion, out of honor, and out of compassion. That is what we call lineage. If that is discontinued then I could just go to a library and pick up a Bhagavad-Gita in English or in Tibetan and start to teach it. Many people might listen to me and might follow me, but it will not be a real Bhagavad-Gita teaching because it would just be my interpretation. I haven't received teachings from anybody on the

Bhagavad-Gita therefore it is impossible for me to get it one hundred percent right, and on top of that there is no blessing because I did not receive the Bhagavad-Gita blessing from a Bhagavad-Gita practitioner.

Therefore lineage is very important, and so when I say following a religion is safer than just trying to do your best, that is given that the religion has lineage. If the religion has no lineage then it is just a name. For example, we say that in the future Buddhism will be no more. I hope that future will be at least two million years away because that is when Lord Maitreya is going to become Buddha Maitreya, in about two million years. The end of Buddhism could be next century or it could be fifty years from now, but what will define that will be when the lineage of Buddhism is no more; when the lineage of Buddhism is no more, then that is the end of Buddhism. It doesn't mean that there won't be lots of books and no more monasteries, maybe there would be more monasteries. Also it doesn't mean that there will be no more nuns and monks, there might be more monks and nuns. Real genuine ones are very precious, and a person needs very, very good karma in order to come across the genuine thing, therefore a person who does not have genuine good karma might not appreciate the genuine thing. This is very clear in our life. For example, healthy food is good for you but most people don't like healthy food. Deep fried food and all these kinds of things are bad for you, but everybody likes that, including me!

In this way it is quite certain that dharma without lineage might have more followers; it might be more attractive because it will be flexible—people will interpret it and make it flexible for everybody so that it gets more people, it is more attractive for people. Different methods might be used, for example, instead of sitting cross legged and meditating you just lie down on a couch and meditate. That would be very comfortable, right? If somebody teaches you that sitting cross legged is wrong, that you don't have to sit like that, that it is very hard and you are torturing yourself, so instead just lay down on your bed and meditate with classical music playing, which would be very attractive, you would definitely have more followers.

In this way the end of Buddhism will mean when there are no more lineages, but from the outside it might look like it is flourishing much more. You might have thousands and thousands of temples, thousands and thousands of libraries, and every year thousands and thousands of new books come out, so it might look like it is flourishing more. This is something we all have to cherish, and not only Buddhism, every religion I think; every religion should take this very seriously, otherwise we might just have look-a-like religions—we might look like Buddhists but we are not, we might look like Hindus but we are not, we might look like Islamists but we are not, we might look like Jews but we are not, because there is no lineage. This way, with lineage, is the way to reach the ultimate.

But then, how do you know that you are on the right path, given that you are following a

proper lineage, a genuine lineage? When your negative aspects become less and your positive aspects become more, then it is a sign that everything is going well. For example, you don't get angry easily, you don't get attached easily, you don't get jealous easily, you don't become greedy easily, and you don't get afraid easily. When all of these negative aspects are less that means something is going well. Then the person should be encouraged to go ahead, everything is going well; whatever you are doing you are doing right because you have less anger, less jealousy, less attachment, less fear, and less greed, so that means that everything is going well.

I can share one thing with you, which is, no matter what, I consider myself to be the happiest person on Earth, really. I am very happy all the time; even when there is a problem I am happy. I have problems, but I am still happy, they don't bother me, it is okay. It is like when you swim, you get wet, right, but you can't complain. Also if you eat chili your mouth will burn, but you can't complain because that is why you eat chili. So everything is perfect. Even if I suffer, I suffer happily. It is like this: if you have a debt to pay, when you are handing over the cash you should be very happy; you should not be upset and angry when you pay your debt. You should pay your debt happily and shake the person's hand saying "Now I am very happy that I don't owe you anything." It shouldn't be like, "take it," then it becomes negative. Suffering is paying the debt—you are paying for what you have done in your past life, so when the suffering comes you should be happy, the debt is being paid. But it doesn't mean that you should sit there and suffer. You should do everything to overcome your suffering, which is also karma. You have to create the karma to overcome it. For example, going to a doctor if you are sick, that is creating the karma to overcome your sickness. Also when the doctor gives you medicine, that is also karma, for the doctor and for you. Then you take it and you get well, that is also karma.

So you should do everything to overcome your so-called problems but it shouldn't make you unhappy because we all should be the happiest person on Earth, we have everything. We have primordial wisdom, it is part and parcel of us, and we are like space, limitless like space, each one of us. We are bright like a sun, solid like a mountain, powerful like thunder and we are fearless like a lion; nothing to be afraid of. Also, there is nothing in this world that is worth losing a night's sleep over, nothing. If somebody said to me "I am going to make you the king of Earth tomorrow," I wouldn't be able to sleep tonight. I would be so worried. But it is not worth losing a night's sleep over. It is never going to happen so you might be laughing at me, but this is not going to happen to me so you can talk like that. But I guarantee you, if somebody said that to me then I would really run away, tomorrow you wouldn't be able to find me. I don't want that. What kind of problems would I have to face?

In this way, as it is, ultimately everything is perfect and there is nothing we don't have, we have everything. Each and every one of us has everything and all these extra things are extra

things and we should take them as extra things. Extra things are like a house, a car, a nice kitchen, a nice pool, nice clothes, good friends, all these things are extra, but even without any of these we are perfect, ultimately.

So that is the basic definition of this subject and I hope that those of you who are doing meditation are able to experience this—I can't say realize this because that is too presumptuous of me, but experience this. Experience and realization are different because realization is forever but experience comes and goes. It is like if you do a bungee jump you have a frightening experience, but that kind of experience comes and goes. So those of you who are doing some meditation can experience this, just relax and meditate and then look at who is meditating. When you look at who is meditating then you will see yourself by yourself, beyond your race, your country, your name, your situation, your perception, beyond all of that. Then you see limitlessly like space, you see brightly like a sun, you see incorruptible, invincible and incomparable potential and truth in each and every being.

Since we have this, then what do we want? Everything is extra, and with extras we should be happy, like a bonus; everything is a bonus. I am not saying that all of you should become a monk or a nun and go into a cave. You should be what you are, but you should travel a positive path so that you don't create negativity; if you become habituated with what is negative then everything will become negative. For example, if you try to solve a problem by thinking 'this is a real bad problem, why does this happen to me', and if you are angry and try to solve that problem, then I guarantee you, you might be able to solve that problem but you will create another three or four problems; then you will be busy solving them and meanwhile create another nine problems. I am only multiplying by three, that's more than fair isn't it? You have ten fingers so you are capable of multiplying easily by ten.

In this way, if you have a problem think about it as, 'Oh, this must be my past life's karma; I am paying a debt, so how do I solve this problem?' You solve it positively, happily, without sadness, without grievance, without revengeful thoughts, and without being angry at the other person who you think has created the problem. If you don't have the cause and condition for a problem then not even the whole universe can create a problem for you. But if you have all the causes and conditions for a problem then that is a debt. In that way we can use the great opportunity of this life and progress so much so that in the next life we will be at least a little bit better than in this life. If that happens then in that life you will be doing much better than you are in this life, then the next life will be much better than that. Then not before too long, maybe in a few hundred lives, you will end up being Buddha. One good morning the greatest surprise on Earth will come....'oh I am enlightened!' But of course there will be no question, because I have met people who say they are enlightened. They ask me, "I think I am enlightened, what do you think?" I try to be polite and ask them why they ask the question. You know, if they are enlightened then why ask me, why do they have to be assured?

So in this way, gradually, life after life, things will transform. But it has to begin here, right now in this life. So if I managed to convince you that you are ultimately perfect then I am much more than happy—I am already happy, but it will be much more than happy. I will be honored. So that is all, do you have any questions?

Questions

Question: You said that ultimately everything is perfect.

Rinpoche: Perfect, yes, all the time, even now.

Same Student: I want to get more understanding of the flavor and essence of that perfection, what does it really mean to say that ultimately everything is perfect?

Rinpoche: Ultimately you are nothing less than Buddha. Relatively you are what you are, try to practice and try to realize that, not experience that, but realize that.

Question: Can you speak about compassion for others and the prayer we always say, “By myself may I lead others to enlightenment.” Does that mean I go around preaching to everybody?

Rinpoche: Not necessarily. If you have the lineage and if others want to learn, and if you have full confidence—maybe ascertained by your guru or through your own realization—then if people ask, you should teach. But going around preaching would be very strange.

Same Student: How can you lead others to enlightenment? I can barely lead myself to enlightenment.

Rinpoche: That is different; you have to be enlightened, therefore you will lead others to enlightenment

Student: At that stage?

Rinpoche: Yes, but your first question is very important, it can be misunderstood so I don't want to be lazy here. I will answer that question because it is very important. You can never become Buddha unless it is for the Buddhahood of everybody. You cannot say “I want to be enlightened just for me.” That is like a joke... we have an owl's joke. Somebody asked an owl, “Why are your eyes so yellow?” The owl said “I have been drinking melted butter all my life.” Then the same person asked the owl, “Why are your feet cracked and so rough?” The owl said “I have never seen any oil in my life.” So if I want to reach Buddhahood for me it will never happen. How can limitless enlightenment be possible? Limitless liberation has to be for a limitless purpose. Therefore we start with, “may I reach Buddhahood to assist all sentient beings to reach Buddhahood”. Only then is it possible.

Then when you become Buddha you are not helping others the way we help others right now, you are manifesting spontaneously. For example, before becoming Buddha, a first level bodhisattva will manifest in one hundred places at the same time to help countless sentient

beings, and perfectly at all times. I can't be in one place perfectly even for one minute; my nose is running, my eyes are running, then I repeat what I say again and again because I think the first time was not that clear so I try to make it more clear. That shows very clearly what enlightenment means. One of the Buddha's qualities of speech is that everything is spontaneous, there is no thinking; it is beyond thinking. Buddha becomes one with everyone and everything. For example, if there were ten thousand people each with a different language, each one of them would hear Buddha's speech in their own language at the same time—it wouldn't have to be translated ten thousand times. Also each one of them would hear it according to their capacity, as whatever is good for them; whatever is good for them is what they will hear.

I saw a book the other day, I don't know who the author is but it is a very old book in my personal library and it says 'The Thoughts of the Buddha'. You can say that but it is very strange. If you have thoughts you are not Buddha. We have thoughts but Buddha is beyond thoughts. Buddha manifests the dharma, Buddha does not preach the dharma, he manifests.

This way this is very, very important. Many times we don't get a clear understanding of what Buddha is and what dharma is. Dharma is not Buddha's thoughts. In the beginning Buddha took a vow to be enlightened for all sentient beings, therefore when enlightenment happened, everything manifests for the benefit of all sentient beings, forever. Prince Siddhartha, the physical body, passed away in Kushinagar, but his dharmakaya his sambhogakaya and his nirmanakaya are ever present in everything and in everyone. When we recognize that, when we experience that, then we feel good. We don't have to be assured by anybody saying that we are good; if everybody says we are bad it doesn't matter. We say, "I must have lots of debts to pay to everyone, therefore they all say I am bad. That is okay, that takes care of that debt. I know whether I am good or bad, my ultimate is perfect, but my relative has lots of work to be done." It is like an old car, the tires have to be fixed, the clutch is worn out, the gears are not really working properly and the horn makes a funny sound. So relatively it has to be fixed, so many things have to be fixed, but ultimately it is perfect. So this is a very good question.

Question: Despite meditation, despite knowing that nothing is worth losing one's sleep over, the mind gets involved with mundane reactions and problems. Is that fear of meditation?

Rinpoche: No, that is natural, only natural.

Same Student: For so many years I have been trying and have not been able to change this.

Rinpoche: You should not expect too much change because when we expect something, that expectation itself builds up dualistic karma. As a result of that it will hold you back because you want it to go so fast. It is the same with everything, for example, if you are running a marathon you should not run too fast at the beginning otherwise you will be the last one at the finish—you might be the first one for the first two miles but then you will be the last one at the

end.

So we should not expect too much. We are meditating and practicing to reach enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings. All sentient beings are our father, our mother, our brother, our sister, everything. That is all, and if you have that very clearly and practice, then the result will naturally happen. If the result does not happen that is also good, you can practice more and if you end up with the full result then you don't have to practice. Actually I think it is good, because if something happens suddenly, some kind of big change happens suddenly, we still have all our defilements so we will become egoistic and think that we are better than everybody else, then it will stop us from any further development.

That way you should not look at what you are feeling in a negative way; if you feel that you are not progressing very much then that itself is progress, that way it is working.

Okay. I hope this was meaningful. All the best for all of you and do your practice happily. Whether you do your daily practice or not, be happy, that is a very good practice. In darkness we are happy and in the light we also are happy. Also I pray that your life will be meaningful for you and meaningful for others. Finally, as result, you will end up reaching Buddhahood and lead all sentient beings to Buddhahood. I dedicate all of our merit for this.

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- ⁱ. The Hindi word for God Almighty is Pramatma. In Sanskrit, the language of ancient India, atma meant the soul, and Pram-atma means the Great and Holy Soul, or the Holy Spirit.
ⁱⁱ. Buddha taught the four noble truths to five disciples in the holy place of Varanasi.