



Dhargyey Buddhist Centre

Teacher:- Venerable Geshe Jampa Tenzin Title:- Sunday Meditation Venue: D.B.C. Dunedin

Sunday 24 April 2011 Maitreya teaching

As I have previously described please recall the right motivation to listen to this teaching, to attain the state of a Buddha to help all sentient beings to attain the state of a Buddha themselves.

Today is a very holy day in the Christian calendar and therefore I have been asked to talk about Maitreya Buddha. To celebrate this important holiday I will briefly talk about Maitreya. Talking about Maitreya Buddha is not disrespectful to Jesus Christ who undoubtedly was a great spiritual guide who achieved what he did through his prayers in the past to be able to reach out and help being. A path he has shown and the legacy he has left has helped a great number of being in the past and in the future. We therefore honour that great person. I will talk about Maitreya Buddha and his life. Although I am not in the position to do justice to the life of this great being, I will give you a narrative. Maitreya like other Buddhas set out the intention to reach the state of a Buddha thousands of eons ago. He went on to materialise this intention and finally succeeded and became a Buddha ages ago. Maitreya will be the 5th Buddha of the 1000 predicted to come.

How did he come to be the 5th Buddha? This started thousands of eons ago there was a King Tsibkyi Mukhyue, the Rim of the Crown – literally translated. This great king had a lot of ministers serving him and one was called Gyatshoey Dhuel, the Particles of Ocean. He was a great scholar of the Brahman tradition and heritage and he had immense number of people learning from here and 999 were outstanding students. This Brahman had a son born to his family and he is said to have developed Bodhicitta, the intention to achieve the state of Buddha. Not only that he also trained on the path and is said to have attained Buddhahood in that very life. That son was then advised to help the Brahma's 999 students and the Brahman advised his students to approach this Buddha Ratnagarba and in his presence generate the intention to reach the state of a Buddha individually. These students took these instructions seriously and set out this motivation and then they choose different times and places when and where they will manifest in the future. Two of them choose a time when the average life span of humans will be 100 years and another one choose a time when it is 80 000 years. When it came to choosing different periods in the annals of seamless times to come and help sentient beings hardly anyone choose the former because it is called the Dark Times because it is marked by 5 degenerations. They are degenerate times, rampant negative thoughts, and degenerate life, meaning people live only 100 years and have degenerate views that are highly detrimental for their spiritual growth and degenerate lives. Because of these rampant degenerate conditions hardly anyone dared to choose it. The second segments of time difficult to choose is the time when the average human life is 80 000. According to Buddhist description of constant evolution of life and space or habitat of beings, the life span will decrease to 10 years. From there people will develop more virtues and they will embrace virtues more and more and this will impact their life span and it will increase until it reaches 80 000 years. When it reaches that people will become complacent, things are rosy and nothing needs to be done and they will not wake up to the true nature of *samsaric* life. Then it is very hard to change spiritually and therefore this is another difficult time Buddhas can choose.

When 999 brilliant students developed Bodhicitta and chose different segments of time to come to a world then the time with 100 year human life expectancy was not taken up by any one. Then this great teacher, Ocean Particle, knelt before the Buddha and vowed that he would attain the state of a Buddha and then he would come to the world left in the lurch by others and help beings there. He was so moved by the sense of great compassion for the people in this segment of time. This was Maitreya who vowed to help this time, although with a semblance of a long life and an abundance of affluence, people were complacent. He would come to the world to channel people's attitude to spiritual practice. That is why he chose that time. Because Ocean Particle,

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who was going to be Shakyamuni Buddha choose a difficult time, as well as Maitreya, Buddha Ratnagarba said that they stand out among all other Buddhas. That is why our lineage gurus consider these two as exceptional kind due to their courage and they were heralded as being very special. Based on their intention to achieve the state of Buddha, Maitreya Buddha and Shakyamuni Buddha undertook the practice of Bodhisattva Deeds seriously as Bodhisattvas until they evolved into Buddhas.

How did Maitreya Buddha come to be called Maitreya? This happened at a time when another Buddha appeared in the world. His name was Rinchen Dhug, Precious Umbrella. When this Buddha was here Maitreya was reborn as Lodroe Tenpa. This person was a very determined Bodhisattva and he would not eat until he had placed as many as 100 other humans in deep concentration on love. He would teach them different things including deep concentration on love. Until he managed to place every day as many as 100 people in that concentration he would not eat or have the necessities in life. Because of this The Precious Umbrellas and other Buddhas unanimously declared that this Bodhisattva shall be called Maitreya at all times because of his persistent practice of love every day. From then on Maitreya Buddha took the future Buddha (Shakyamuni Buddha) as his mentor. At that time Shakyamuni Buddha was not a Buddha but at the 1st stage of the 2nd path called the Heat Stage of the Path of Preparation. Maitreya Buddha took him as his spiritual mentor and visualised him as seated on the crown of his head and held him in the greatest esteem. If you see an image of Maitreya in 3D he has a small *stupa* on the crown on his head. Many great beings in the past visualised Maitreya with a *stupa* like that because he held Shakyamuni Buddha there at all times. As the time approached for Shakyamuni Buddha to come to the world he was in Tushita Pureland and he was called Dhampa Tok Karpo. When the time came for this divine being to come to the world when the average life span was 100 years, he asked Bodhisattva Maitreya in Tushita Pureland to take his seat and continue to teach Mahayana teachings in this absence. Maitreya was called Bodhisattva Maitreya at a time when Shakyamuni Buddha was the presiding Buddha in Tushita Pureland and Maitreya was there too. Now he is the presiding Buddha there and is called Maitreya the Conqueror. In the future when he comes to the world, he will be called Maitreya Buddha so at all stages of his evolution and performance of the deeds of the Buddha, from Bodhisattva to the regent in Tushita Pureland and until he comes to the world, he has different titles but he will always be known by his name, Maitreya.

When will Conqueror Maitreya come to the world? He will come to the world after 4900 million years. He is bound to arrive. This may sound like a long time but time is relative and therefore we do things not only to grow spiritually in this lifetime but also to make a connection to Maitreya for when he comes to this world. There are pros and cons for this. Whilst it is admirable to be patient to wait that long there are down sides. To wait that long would mean that we will have to die so many painful deaths. Secondly, if we place our hope in the future too much it may well be that we may not realise this hope to connect with the living Buddha Maitreya because due to unfortunate karma we may be reborn in hell realm or due to non-liberating karma we may be born in celestial realm where beings live incredibly long. There 4900 million years is a small part of life, and Maitreya would have come, taught and his teachings will have come to an end. The same could happen if we are reborn in hell realm where life span is incredibly long, much longer than the number of years there are for Maitreya Buddha to come. We can't place our hope too much in the future.

However, the downsides can be overcome so that you definitely make a connection even long before he comes to the world through being reborn where Conqueror Maitreya is in Tushita Pureland. What can one do? Some things suggested are that you embrace the teaching of Shakyamuni Buddha and live by them and preferably take on the vows of ordination. If one does this in general and seriously dedicates one's life to observing the vows of ordination is one way. Secondly this Gelug order has a practice prayer called the 100 Deities of the Joyous Land (Tushita Pureland). Although this practice is a practice pertaining to Tibetan Buddhist master Lama Je Tsong Khapa it is closely connected to Tushita Pureland where Maitreya is. This practice evokes Lama Je Tsong Khapa's flight as you say, 'from the heart of the lord of Tushita Pureland a blowing cloud emerges on which Lama Je Tsong Khapa appears' with this you invite him straight from the heart of Maitreya Buddha. Lama Je Tsong Khapa is in Tushita Pureland and Lama Je Tsong Khapa comes to you from the clouds

of compassion at Maitreya Buddha's heart. With this you have a brilliant chance to connect with Conqueror Maitreya. This also paves the way to make connection with Maitreya Buddha in some distant future.

How do we know there is a connection with Lama Je Tsong Khapa and Maitreya? There is an anecdote about a great yogi of Vajrapani called Laekyi Dorjee Karmavajra in Tibet. Vajrapani appeared to him saying 'how Maitreya is coming.' Vajrapani said 'tomorrow you will have a visit by Maitreya and I want you to get a teaching on Shikshasamuccya, the Compendium of Instruction by Shantideva'. The next day Lama Je Tsong Khapa appeared to him. The next day Lama Je Tsong Khapa came to Karmavarja who asked for this teaching and Lama Je Tsong Khapa said 'did you have some instruction to get this teaching from your deity?' The outcome is he received this teaching from Lama Je Tsong Khapa and he saw vividly Maitreya Buddha sitting on his head during the course of the teaching. When you do the 5 line concerted prayer in relation to Lama Je Tsong Khapa it is extremely beneficial and helpful to make an immediate connection with Maitreya, not in the distant future but you may be in the presence of Conqueror Maitreya in Tushita Pureland and more distantly you may make a connection with Maitreya Buddha when he comes to the world to perform the 12 Deeds of the Nirmanakaya Buddha. A special cause to meet with Maitreya is to go through a special manual that instructs you to visualise and to do practice in relation to Maitreya.

Regardless of what you do your practice must be grounded in a universal great love. Without love for all beings no matter what you do, then short of the satisfaction that you have done something, nothing much will happen. Love and compassion are whole principles that come in the image of Maitreya. He is a human manifestation of universal love and compassion. If one has true, unconditional love for all beings then you have a great chance to connect with Maitreya. We can know this from the story of Asanga. He needed to see Maitreya in person to ask critical questions on the Perfection of the Wisdom Gone Beyond. He had to meditate on Maitreya Buddha for 12 years. At the end he did not see Maitreya Buddha, he came back crest fallen. On the way home, he saw female dog in terrible condition and his heart went out and he developed immense compassion and love for the dog. He tried to save the dog and the maggots eating the dog with his own flesh. When he tried to lick the maggots off the dog with his tongue he was unable to connect and when he opened his eyes, he saw Maitreya. This anecdote shows that love and compassion do wonders purifying the mind and developing immense spiritual realisations.

I appeal to you, because we won't be much longer and we live a precarious life, we have no guarantee that our next life will be better with a connection to a spiritual mentor. Now is the time to connect with Maitreya Buddha, do the practice, recite Maitreya Buddha prayers, and Maitreya Buddha's mantra. Maitreya Buddha vowed that people reciting the mantra will make connection with him. I seriously call upon you to make your life meaningful and take your chance now while you can.

Let me share an anecdote I heard from Khensur Rinpoche. He went to see Purchog Ngawang Jampa. He was universally claimed by people and great beings of his time to be an unmistakable human manifestation of Maitreya Buddha. Khensur Rinpoche went to see this master and asked him to say prayers that he may be reborn in Tushita Pureland and reconnect with Maitreya Buddha. This master then said, 'yes it will happen. From now on recite Maitreya Buddha prayer every day.' This was done and many other great beings said his prayer every day. If you can't seize this opportunity it may not come up again as it is extremely hard to come by. When you get it, especially at a time when you are spiritually connected, you must take the opportunity to do something for yourself and for the greater good of all being to connect with Maitreya in the near future. You have a perfect human life and perfect condition and resources at your disposal, all these practices are there, I appeal to you solemnly to do your best. If you miss this chance it could be a completely different story.