

Question from audience: (Not heard)

Answer: We won't have delusions in our minds concerning the upper realms (the form and formless realms) because we will not have achieved calm abiding. Once you do achieve calm abiding you will see the desire realm as inferior and the upper realms as superior and you begin to direct your mind upward. Then your mind will be associated with delusions pertaining to the upper realms.

Question: how is it that the 16 moments overcome the distortions of the form and formless realm?

Answer: Once you have the wisdom understanding selflessness it cuts through all distortions whether in this desire realm or the upper realms. With regard to the 16 moments, there are 8 forbearances and eight subsequent forbearances. They are called by a different name but the nature of wisdom understanding selflessness is the same and it has the capacity to cut through delusions of beings in the upper realm about self of person. Presently you may not have the mind of a person in the upper realm grasping at self, but you will develop it once you achieve calm abiding. Then you develop what is called preparatory concentration which is the preparation of the actual concentration of the form realm.

The first moment of path of seeing doesn't cut through all 112 distortions, but only distortions pertaining to truth of suffering in desire realm. Why is that? This is because when you were on path of preparation, you made concerted effort in overcoming delusions of desire realm, due to dissatisfaction with/being sick of desire realm – so antidotes were sought. This helps your first moment on path of seeing to address delusions of the desire realm, especially delusions associated with truth of suffering which is so acute in desire realm.

When you go into meditative absorption of supreme dharma path of preparation, you don't have delusions of abandonment of path of seeing, (not sure about this translation??) but the seeds are not overcome. The seeds are cut through by those first and subsequent moments. Shravaka and Pratyeka Buddha Hinayanists on the path of seeing go through the sixteen moments serially. Mahayanists on path of seeing have a single instant which cuts through the objects to be overcome on the path of seeing.

Question: re four forbearances:

Answer: They are all about the desire realm. Subsequent forbearances are all about upper realms.

Question: Please explain the etymology of “forbearance of dharma”.

How does first moment of path of seeing, the forbearance of dharma of suffering, tackle the object – do antidotes and objects of abandonment meet in the way heat and cold affect each other, where one increases and the other decreases, or are they like light and darkness affecting each other?

Answer: Forbearance of dharma; Dharma is the object to be tackled; forbearance means to be able to withstand and have the capacity to tackle.

The first moment of path of seeing, which is forbearance of dharma of suffering, tackles delusions pertaining to it. Success is in the form of permanent cessation of distorted thoughts pertaining to for eg truth of suffering. That result is realized like the realization/fulfillment of one's dream. The outcome here is total cessation of a particular distortion. The same thing applies to subsequent forbearance and subsequent knowledge. The Tibetan word does say the meaning is realization in the form of achievement/cessation.

What is the manner of eradication of distortion? Is there a simultaneous presence of the antidote and that to be abandoned – like heat and cold analogy? No not like that. The eradication is more like the presence of light and absence of darkness.

Question: If a practitioner gets to that state doesn't the capacity come and go? How do we know when the seeds are there and how many and if they are dealt with?

Answer: The distortion pertaining to truth of suffering once eradicated never comes back.

When on the fourth stage of path of preparation, it is your last time on that path. You have a degree of confidence that you will be able to move up to path of seeing. With that confidence you go into meditative absorption. Within that absorption you are in the first moment of path of seeing. You get there.

However when you remain in the meditative absorption of the fourth stage of path of preparation there aren't any objects of abandonment of the path of seeing but the seed has not been eliminated.

Question: How do you know the seeds have been dealt with?

Answer: The realization that you have dealt with the seeds on path of seeing is highly intuitive, experiential, personal and indescribable. However the person meditating in it really gets it.

Question: How is it that objects of abandonment (tongpang) on path of seeing are absent in meditative absorption of a lower path (Preparation).

Answer: Tong.pang has two aspects – consciousness aspect which are distortions, such as truth of suffering as clean, permanent, unitary etc. The second aspect refers to the potency underlying it. It follows that in meditative absorption on path of preparation, while you are meditating on emptiness, that wisdom is correct wisdom – valid wisdom. Since it is valid an invalid thought pertaining to truth of suffering can't co-exist with it, but the seed giving rise to that can still remain and those seeds are eradicated when you develop the 16 moments of path of seeing.

Thinking when seeing a scarecrow from a distance, there is a person I can talk to is a distortion. After time proximity helps overcome the distortion that the scarecrow is a human, it happens straight away.

Question: What are the stages of Path of Preparation?

What are the four stages on path of preparation?

- 1) Heat stage: This is achieved once special insight into selflessness is achieved. That is because on the path of accumulation, the 1st path, you have understanding of selflessness of person, but it was not grounded in special insight into emptiness, Vipassana. When you move from knowledge to special insight you achieve the heat stage. It is the harbinger of the path of seeing – like the heat of spring is for summer. Heat stage is a special insight into emptiness. Your mind has already sensed what is about to happen.
- 2) Peak stage: The Mahayana vehicle considers that the difference between these two, heat and peak, is the degree of clarity on emptiness. Speaking from Theravada/Hinayana context – the difference is whether or not you have gained the power of resistance to destruction of merit through anger. During the heat stage although your merits will not be destroyed by anger you have not fully achieved the energy to withstand anger. You do this on the peak stage.
- 3) Forbearance stage: The difference between peak and forbearance stage is that this has the total confidence of not falling into lower realms, (hungry ghosts and so on) which in fact is not possible on the second stage as well, however on the second stage you don't have certainty.
- 4) Supreme dharma: This is the highest meditative absorption of non-arya beings before the arya stage.

Of these four, the first three are divided into three stages each: small, middling and great of heat, peak, and forbearance. There is a debate as to whether the fourth, supreme dharma, has similar levels to it. Lets not go into it as its really complex. The complexity is around how four different concepts pertaining to subject, object etc are viewed. We could get confused. Complexity arises in terms of how these four different concepts are dealt with. These are entrenched concepts pertaining to subject and object and the issue of which are to be eradicated and which are to be cultivated.

Returning to the text:

Last time we discussed objects abandoned on path of seeing. Now I would like to discuss objects abandoned on path of meditation.

2011.08.22

Tenets

Geshe Jampa Tenzin

Path of Meditation

Objects Abandoned on the Path of Meditation:

Audio tape is at 1 hour approx at this point.

There are 16 objects to be abandoned on this path as opposed to the 112 on the path of seeing; there are 81 uninterrupted paths.

There are six innate objects of abandonment on path of meditation (desire, arrogance/haughtiness, the view of transitory/transient collection, extreme view, ignorance, and hatred), which relate to the desire realm.

The remaining ten are five innate objects of abandonment each in the form and formless realms; these are all of the above ones excluding hatred, which is not found in upper two realms. They are desire, arrogance, view of transitory collection, ignorance and extreme view; five for form and five for formless realm.

All these are innate, not intellectually acquired, delusions.

Question: Which ones are eradicated on the path of seeing?

*Answer: Delusions are of two types; unreasoned and reasoned. Reasoned delusions are called intellectually acquired/formed/schooled. Someone tells you something is a good thing and you develop reasoned desire for it. **These types of delusions are eradicated on the path of seeing.***

*The unreasoned examples of delusions happen without anyone teaching you about it; that is an innate delusion, like desire/ attachment to self. The same happens with innate arrogance, view of transitory collection etc. **What are eradicated on the path of meditation are the subtle innate versions of delusions.***

With regard to the conception of self as a person the one that we have is innate. The one that non-Buddhists have is different. They believe that person is permanent, single, independent. They give a lot of reasons. Therefore people who are born into those traditions or embrace them and then believe in those reasons acquire intellectually formed delusion about self. That kind of self of person is eradicated on the path of seeing. The kind of grasping at self that we have, that the person has inherent existence, is more subtle but harder to overcome. ***What we are overcoming here on the path of meditation is subtle grasping of inherent existence of self.***

There are six innate distortions of the desire realm eradicated on the path of meditation (ED: here the translator says 'seeing' but I am sure he means 'meditation')

What follows is a discussion on the how we get 81 divisions of the obstacles eradicated on the path of meditation. From this point in the tape, 01.05.08 to 01.12.30 bracket the discussion. For help please move to next page for a quote from our companion text on Tenets, Cutting Through Appearances, by Geshe Lhundop Sopa. On page 212 he gives a simple explanation of how the 81 is enumerated.

are divided into three categories; big, middling and small.

There's the big of the small, middling of the small and small of the small. Then there is the big of the middling, middling of the middling and small of the middling. Then there is the big of the big, middling of the big and small of the big which gives us nine divisions of these delusions. That's how we get 81.

We have now nine divisions of these innate distortions/delusions of the desire realm. Small of the small, middling of the small, big of the small; small of the middling, middling of the middling, big of the middling; small of the big, middling of the big, big of the big. We have 81 now.

There are nine rounds for desire realm; then for form realm there are four planes of existence/stages.

These four stages are called four dhyanas; the first, second, third and fourth dhyanas. The first concentration stage/dhyanana in the form realm has five innate delusions (anger is left out). Divide these five collectively into nine rounds again. (Translator means these five are collectively grouped as one. He does not mean divide them.)

Path of Meditation

Objects Abandoned on the Path of Meditation:

These five are bunched as one and divided into the nine rounds again. This is repeated for the second, third and fourth dhyanas making 36.

The last realm is called formless realm. There are four formless abodes in the formless realm. They are called infinite space, infinite consciousness, nothingness and peak of samsara/ existence. These four realms have nine rounds each, making 36. Both sets of four realms have nine rounds each. $36 + 36 = 72 + 9 = 81$.

Audio Tape is at 1.12.30

What follows is a quote from Cutting Through Appearances by Geshe Lhundop Sopa, which may help to unravel the enumeration of the 81:

“Cyclic existence is divided into three realms and nine levels. The first level is the Desire Realm. The next four levels are the four divisions of the form realm, called the Four Concentrations. The last four levels are divisions of the Formless Realm. Each level has nine series of obstacles that are to be abandoned; big big, middling big, and small big: big middle, middle middle, and small middle; big small, middle small and small small. Thus if trainees proceed serially, they have to pass through eighty one steps, that is, through a series of nine steps on each of the nine levels.” Page 212

How are the 81 delusions eradicated? The person on path of seeing who has achieved the 16 moments – the last being *subsequent knowledge of dharma of path* which is a liberated path, emerges from it, and is now in post meditative session; now they accumulate merit from offering, prostration etc. After that they gain confidence that says to them if I enter meditative absorption again I think I can overcome the objects abandoned on the path of meditation which are innate delusions. Then they go into meditative absorption. When they go in they are still a person of the path of seeing. While meditating on emptiness there when they develop the ability to tackle the great of the great – six delusions of desire realm, they have achieved the goal of eradicating the 81 obstacles.

The moment they develop the direct antidote to the ‘great of the great’ six delusions of desire realm, they have achieved the first uninterrupted path of path of meditation. This first uninterrupted path is the weakest of all those 81 uninterrupted paths, but it deals with the coarsest delusions, which are easiest to deal with because it is so outstanding, it is easy to identify and pick up.

In this way you can relate (to such practitioners). When they develop the second uninterrupted path of the path of meditation, they deal with the middling of the great delusions of desire realm. When on the third uninterrupted path they deal with the small of the great delusions of the desire realm. And so on.

In this way, once they develop 9th uninterrupted path, they overcome small of the small of those six delusions. These are more subtle, harder to tackle. Once overcoming that one moves to overcome 9 delusions of first concentration similarly.

Lastly it is the peak of existence. The last of the 81 delusions is the small of the small of the peak of existence. Its antidote is the big of the big of the uninterrupted paths. When on the big of the big uninterrupted path of path of meditation of fourth abode of formless realm, you have totally eradicated your inner foes – delusions. Even the subtlest is overcome and you become an arahat.

I started talking about all these because of the four truths – Truth of path and cessation are the main issues. These uninterrupted paths on path of seeing and liberated paths on path of seeing and the same thing on the path of meditation are the best examples of genuine dharma, the jewel of dharma. This is what we mean when we say we are taking refuge in the jewel of dharma.

Each of these 81 uninterrupted paths of path of meditation, address 81 delusions of three realms. Soon after a particular delusion is dealt with an absence of that delusion is gained and that is permanent by nature. That absence is a non-affirming negative which will never change. It remains the same forever. These uninterrupted paths and the state of cessation resulting from these are the best specimens of the jewel of dharma because they are true paths/ true cessations that will never change.

11.08.22 Path of Meditation

Continued: Tenets

GJT

An arya being in meditation going through these is a true Sangha member – a real object of refuge. When you persevere to develop these paths, true dharma and true cessation, you are taking refuge, turning to true dharma and when you are associating with those who have developed these or are on the way to developing these you are taking refuge in the jewel of Sangha.

Although the Sutra system has a lot to say about it, next Monday I would like to capture the essential differences between Vaibasheka and Sutra, then move on to Mind Only school and then the Madhyamika. These two schools are more important.