Ultimate Meditation

*Selections from* The Devil Debates an Angel, *an explanation of Mahamudra, the True Nature of the Mind, by His Holiness the First Panchen Lama, Lobsang Chukyi Gyeltsen (1570-1662). In the first few verses, we hear our Tendency to Misunderstand Everything concluding one of his arguments. Then the Lady of Wisdom responds, with an explanation about the highest way of meditating.*

k$-,m-Wv,-.8m-$m$-1m-9m,k

k=}+-,m-Q}-0v:-<{=-:0-%{k

k8E}-,-=}+-:$-8E}-08m-:m#=k

49

I am the unwavering confidante

Staying in the depths of the heart,

While you are the occasional flash

Of some small understanding.

If one of us then were forced to leave,

I should think it would be yourself.

kP}+-.=-\{+-0v-80v+-.-+$-k

k@m=-[{=-8-9m-#)1-8+m-13:k

50

All this talk about your younger brother

Being a devil with horns on his head

And fighting to drive him from the warmth

Of this the hearth of our mind

Is simply ludicrous.

k$-,m-={1=-+$-[,-%m#-\_pk

k;=-;=-Es0-%{-[{=-.=-,k

k`o=-#=v1-=$=-W=-\*1=-%+-<mk

k1\*v-ao=-Qw-8Js;-\o,->m=-<$-k

k"}-0}-80v+-.:-#-;-ao=k

kao=-,-\*v#=-;-+{-;=-1{+k

51

The reason that I am living here,

The inborn companion of the mind,

Is that Karma put me here;

It was Karma that gave me birth.

How then could anything drive me away?

Not even the might and power

Of every Buddha of all of time—

Not all the miracles that they can perform—

Could ever overcome Karma;

If that could be, then the mind would be

Something outside of Karma itself.

k<{=-:0-<m=-,m-;,-e=-.k

52

And Wisdom said back,

k0}$-0v-6},-,=-0}$-0v-83~;k

k=}+-,m-[{=-.-"}-,=-,mk

k8+m-:v-&}+-.-84n,-%$=-8#;k

53

You’re riding out on the donkey

To look for the donkey you think you lost!

The very fact that you have popped up

Here within the mind

Is what makes it impossible

For you to stay, for the way

That you and I see things

Is completely incompatible.

k={1=-%,-M1=-<m-#,=-;v#=-,mk

k={1=-+$-`o=-1(1-#,=-`o=-,=k

k9{-=$=-W=-%m#-9m,-.-;k

k8},-<$-Q}-0v:-Hm-1=-0am0=k

54

The way of all things

Lies here within people;

It has lived there part and parcel

With their minds since minds began—

And this is the one primordial Buddha

That each of them already is;

It’s just that this Buddha is veiled

By impurities that are not all

Innate parts of the mind.

kP}+-.=-\{+-0v-=}+-<m=-/v$-k

k@m=-[{=-8-%}-=}+-<m=-A=k

k$-,m-8+m-,-8`o#-06m,-`ok

k=}+-,m-&}+-.8m-#,=-+$-,mk

kK{,-=-K{,-/v:-#$-`o-A{+k

55

If anyone is ruining our happy home,

It’s you!

If anyone has made

The younger brother a devil with horns,

It’s you!

As long as I live here in the mind

You will have to be homeless—

How can you make your headquarters here?

How can you strike your home dagger here?

k%m=-<$-=}+-,m-&}+-7{:-,k

k0+#-#m=-8+m-W:-+?}+-.=-,k

k=}+-<m=-:$-13$-1-Tz#=-%m#

56

But if you still insist on remaining,

Then I shall perform

The following lines of reasoning;

And I rather believe that by the time

I finish with them you will have torn

Your own house down by yourself.

k]m-0}-,=-,m-F$-.8m-0:k

k/v$-.}8m-3~#=-Wv,-=}+-1m,-6m$-k

57

You can search the entire length

Of yourself from the top of your head

Down to the soles of your feet;

But you will find that neither

The sum of the parts to yourself,

Nor the stream of yourself,

Is you.

k3~#=-.-1m,-6m$-:{-:{8$-1m,k

k+{-+#-\o,-<$-=}+-1m,-,}k

kK{,-8K{;-K#=-<m-+?+-.8$-A{+k

58

You are not all of your parts put together,

Nor are you any one of your parts.

None of these is who you are.

You could also look into all of this

With the line of reasoning

Which says that everything there is

Depends on something else.

kW=-.:-7v$-`o-0au0=-9}+-?$-k

k&-<=-3~#=-.8$-=}+-1m,-6m$-k

k:{-:{8$-=}+-1m,-=}+-<$-1m,k

59

You could go further and check

Whether it goes both ways:

The sum of all your parts is not you,

Nor is any one part you,

Nor are you either of these.

k={1=-<m-!+-%m#-#-@m-,mk

k=}+-1m,-=}+-<$-+{-+#-1m,k

k+{-W:-!+-%m#-#-@m-+$-k

k+{-9m-!+-%m#-#-@m-+$-k

k\*-1:-`o=-1\*8m-!+-%m#-18mk

k!+-%m#-#-@m-\*1=-%+-<$-k

k=}+-1m,-=}+-<$-+{-+#-1m,k

60

The successive moments of your mind

Are not you, nor are you them.

You are neither one moment nor the next,

Nor the start or end of any one moment,

Nor even the start or end of that time

Which is the shortest moment of all;

None of these moments is you,

Nor are you any of them.

k+{-9$-`-P{-80v1-#<#=-3|k

k={1=-<m-$}-0}-#$-`o-9$-k

k:$-06m,->m=-,m-1-Es0-,k

k=}+-<m-/v$-13$-L};-0-9m,k

61

You can go to a single hair on your head

And split it into a million strands

But you’ll never come to some point

Where you find some quality of the mind

Which exists in and of itself—

Now everyone can see

The game that you’ve been playing.

k8Ds;-08m-:$-$}-6m#-.-9m,k

k={1=-<m-P-0-&}+-.-9m,k

k`o#-#m-&}$-.}-8>{;-0-9m,k

62

The illusion now is torn

The root of the mind is ripped

The poison tree is felled.

k(},-1}$=-\o,->m-+.},-.}-+{k

k<m-=-`o:-`o-&u+-.-9m,k

k(},-1}$=-\o,->m-P-0-&+k

63

The king of every negativity

That exists within a person

Is laid to rest now in his grave;

The very root of every evil

Has finally been severed.

k(},-1}$=-;-=}#=-&}=-\o,-,mk

k#),-,=-[{-0-1{+-.-9m,k

k#,=-;v#=-+},-6m#-1\*}$-0-9m,k

k9{-,=-9}+-1-B}$-0-9m,k

k#<m=-=v-Es0-.-1{+-.-9m,k

64

None of our negative emotions—

And nothing else, in fact—

Has ever even begun.

Now we see the way

That all things really are:

They were never there at all,

They have been, forever, never.

k:$-06m,-#+}+-,=-1-Es0-.k

k={1=-<m-:$-$}-1\*}$-0-9m,k

k#,=-;v#=-7$=-\*;-&{,-.}-9m,k

65

We have seen now the real nature

That the mind really has:

For it has never possessed a single quality

Of its own since time began.

This is the mighty nature of things

Which no thing can ever stop.

kW-Wv-1{+-.8m-W-0-9m,k

k1\*}$-Wv-1{+-.8m-1\*}$-0-9m,k

k"}1-Wv-1{+-.8m-0"}1-.-9m,k

k0I}+-`o-1{+-.8m-+},-6m#-9m,k

ke-0=1-9v;-;=-8+=-.-9m,k

66

This is the viewpoint that no one can view;

This is the sight that no one could see;

This is the meditation that no one could do,

And a thing which words cannot express:

A thing beyond all speaking,

A thing beyond all thinking.

k1",-.}-(m+-<$-e-0=1-8+=k

k#({,-.}-(m+-<$-:$-=:-E};k

k\o,-K}#-9m+-<m-+1m#=-#)+-6mk

k+{-M1=-1m$-#m-M1-E$=-9m,k

67

This is the master

That no one can describe;

This is the antidote

Which fixes itself;

And the way we imagine things to be

Is forever put to rest.

All of these are different ways

Of saying the very same thing.

kHm;-0=-1(1-(m+-&{,-.}-9m,k

k`o-1-:}-#%m#-A-0-9m,k

k8"}:-8+=-+A{:-1{+-A-0-9m,k

k+{-M1=-+},-;-1(1-.:-06#

68

To sum, this is the single way

In which all things are equal;

It is the single song

Of all the many things there are.

This is what makes the cycle of pain

And the act of going beyond it

Inseparable one from the other.

And then we sink into deep meditation

Upon what these things are.

k1(1-.:-06#-.8m-06#-$}-,k

k0+{,-84n,-=}+-.=-=$=-W=-1{+k

k&}=-+$-+#{-8`o,-=-;1-1{+k

k8K=-0v-1$},-`o->v:-.-1{+k

k0+{,-.-1{+-%m$-0Qw,-.-1{+k

k&}=-<m-!r-9$-1m-#+8-,k

k0+{,-84n,-=}+-,m-#-,-1&m=k

k\o,-Q}0-&}=-M1=-W-%m-\*}=k

69

To the state of mind in this meditation,

There is no Buddha—

Even less than you,

My Tendency to Think that Things are Themselves.

To this state of mind

There is no teaching, no community,

No spiritual paths or levels,

No reaching any goal at all,

No truth nor lie

And no ultimate body of a Buddha.

How then could You exist,

Sitting there thinking that things are themselves!

How could there be there anything

Which wasn’t as it appeared to be?

k)m$-84n,-+{-;=-;$=-.8m-I{=k

k={1=-(m+-%}$-.8m-1{-;}$-;k

k\o,-Q}0-'$-08m-#7v#=-0J,-<:k

k'$-21-1-#)}#=-#),-1{+-.=k

k0+{,-84n,-&}+-.8m-9v;-1{+-+}k

70

And in the aftermath,

After a person comes out of this meditation,

The reflection of all those things

Which aren’t what they appear to be

Appears once more within the mirror

Of this emptiness, of the mind as it is.

Apart from their appearance,

They don’t exist at all—

There is no land there where the Tendency

To Think that Things are Themselves

Could ever make his home.

k={1=-(m+-%}$-.8m-1{-;}$-+$-k

k\o,-Q}0-'$-08m-K{,-8K{;->mk

kWv-V{,-3~#=-.8m-'$-0-21k

k1-+?+-,-9m,-+?+-,-1{+k

71

All this world is but an appearance

Which forms when all the necessary

Causes and conditions have met—

It is only apparent, not what it seems,

A world where things occur

Because they depend upon others,

A reflection appearing in the mirror

Of emptiness, the mind as it is.

If we ask no questions, things are there;

When we start to ask them, things disappear.

k'$-0-Q}-0v:-1m$-0)#=-%,k

k+?+-1{+-21-;-Wv-8K=-8'}#

72

The way we think that certain things

Can act as causes for other things

Exists only in an apparent world;

In a world of names that come and go;

In a world we never question.

k+{-9m=-3n1-.:-1->v:-,k

k02;-08m-3|-,-8'}#-Wv-1{+k

73

But if we are not satisfied

With leaving the world like this,

And instead begin to investigate

How one thing can cause another,

In the end we come up with nothing.

kA-A{+-V{,-;-0W}=-06m,-`ok

k0+{,-.:-'$-0-9-:{-13,k

k0+{,-.:-6{,-.-+{-0=-13:k

k13:-9$-6{,-.=-?-\*$-&+k

74

If you think about it it’s passingly strange

That the workings of things can appear to us

As if all of them were real,

Even as they must still depend

Upon their conditions to happen.

The fact that we then believe they are real

Is something even more strange;

Strange but also sad,

In the way this belief exhausts us.

kAm=-.-G=-.8m-G,-.}-+{k

k[{=-21-(m+-,=-G,-.}-:$-k

kEs0-Es0-8H-08m-'$-0-+$-k

k+{-;-6{,-.-(m+-+$-13u$=k

75

An old man is a boy grown old;

But a boy who was old in actual fact

From the moment he was born;

And yet it seems to us

That he grows old gradually.

The way we believe now the world is real

Is exactly the same as how we believe

That the boy is how he appears to be.

k={1=-(m+-%}$-.8m-,1-1"8-;k

k\w-1-;v=-<m-cm,-3~#=-8Dm#=k

k'-3~#=-K}#-.=-\o,-0U$=-,=k

kA-A{+-9}$=-<m-&:-00=-.k

76

The clouds of the body, the illusion,

Gather in the sky

Of emptiness, the mind as it is.

Inspired by our many imaginings,

The rain of the entire way

That things around us work descends.

k={1=-+$-'$-08m-Wv-V{,-;=k

kAv$-0:-=v-9m=-1-1\*}$-0k

k+?+-,-&:-cm,-={1=-(m+-#=v1k

kAv$-9$-,1-1"8-:$-;=-Av$-k

k\*m1-9$-,1-1"8-:$-;-\*m1k

77

Who could fail to see that they come

From the mind, and from all the various

Causes and conditions

That make them appear to us?

When you look into it you realize

That although these three different things—

The rain, the clouds, and the mind itself—

All occur, they occur but from the sky,

And when they disappear

They vanish into the sky itself.

k={1=-(m+-%}$-.8m-1{-;}$-;k

kOm-;1-;v=-<m-#7v#=-0J,-<:k

78

The reflection of the body of the dream

Appears in the mirror of emptiness,

The mind as it really is.

kWv-V{,-K{,-8K{;-#(m+-+$-,mk

k#},-&+-#}1=-.8m-0#-&#=-<m=k

kWv-8K=-9}$=-<m-A-;=-1"=k

k'$-21-`o-,m-\o,->m=-1\*}$-k

79

The sleep here is all the ways that things

Cause other things—how each and every thing

Depends upon another.

And then due to the seed within our mind

Planted by the time we’ve already spent

Getting used to these ideas,

We become a master in understanding

The entire workings of causation.

Everyone comes then to see

How things are only apparent.

k+?+-+$-=+-.8m-`o=-,-,mk

k+},-;-9}+-.-$=-1-1\*}$-k

kAv$-9$-={1=-(m+-:$-;=-Av$-k

k\*m1-9$-={1=-(m+-:$-;-\*m1k

80

When we examine things—

That is, when we awake—

Then we see that nothing exists

In and of itself.

Things do happen, but we understand

That they happen from the mind itself.

Things do fade away, but we know

That they fade from the mind itself.

k'$-0-21-;-;=-8K=-8'}#

k={1=-(m+-%}$-.8m-&u-,$-`ok

k<{=-:0-S-08m-#7v#=-0J,-<:k

kW-$,-1v,-.-={;-0-+{k

81

We can say that our actions

Do produce consequences,

But only apparently.

The reflection of the moon of wisdom

Appears in the still water of emptiness,

The mind as it really is,

And its brightness dispels the darkness

Of all the different mistaken ways

In which we see all things.

k={1=-(m+-%}$-.8m-&u-+$-,mk

k<{=-:0-S-08m-K{,-8K{;->m=k

k#,=-;v#=-K}#=-.-\o,->m=-1\*}$-k

k'$-0-21-`o-\*-$+-8'}#

82

Certain events are set in motion

When the moon of wisdom appears upon

The still waters of emptiness,

The mind as it really is.

Everyone then comes to see,

Everyone realizes,

The way things really are.

Nominally speaking then

We can say that all things do exist,

If only in an apparent way.

k+?+-+},-Es0-.-$=-1-1\*}$-k

k+{-M1=-Av$-9$-={1=-;=-Av$-k

k\*m1-9$-={1=-%}$-:$-;-\*m1k

83

I don’t see how the object

That we are checking to find

Could ever really exist;

Things do happen, but they happen

From the mind;

Things do fade away,

But they fade into the emptiness,

Fade into the mind itself.

k={1=-8+m-%}$-.8m-K#-:m-;k

k&}=-a-1\*},-.8m-a-6m#-<:k

k#,=-;v#=-a}-8+}#=-&}=-.8m-ak

kK#-%8m-!+-`o-a}#-.-8+mk

84

The mind perceives the exalted sound,

The words of these very teachings,

Within the canyons of emptiness;

But these words themselves, sounds that correct

Our habit of overestimating how things really are,

Are actually just an echo

Sounding back to us.

k%}$-.8m-3n#-#m-a-&{,-+$-k

k={1=-%}$-K#-&{,-3~#=-.-9mk

kWv-V{,-;=-[{=-%}$-a-a}#

k1-:m#-1v,-={;-a},-1{-9m,k

85

The mighty roar of the words of emptiness

Fly to meet the vast canyon walls

Of the mind of emptiness;

And then because the causes and conditions

Are complete, the sound of emptiness

Is born and sounded back.

k'$-0-21-`o-\*}=-0=1-14~+k

k+?+-,-9}+-.:-$=-1-1\*}$-k

kAv$-9$-={1=-(m+-:$-;=-Av$-k

k\*m1-9$-={1=-%}$-:$-;-\*m1k

86

We learn, and we study,

But only apparently;

I don’t see that there is anything there

If one pauses to examine them.

Things do happen, but we understand

That they happen from the mind itself.

Things do fade away, but we know

That they fade from the mind itself.

k+{=-,-=}+-+$-$-#(m=-,mk

k84n,-%$=-+$}=-8#;-bo#=-.-8+m=k

k[,-%m#-&}+-.8m-#,=-1-1&m=k

k=}+-:$-8E}-08m-#,=-;-Wv#

87

Thus the way that you and I

See things is completely incompatible;

There is no one place in the universe

Where both of us could reside.

And so it is you who must leave,

And go wherever you mght.