



Name:
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Grade:

Sacred Classics Translator Program – Spring Term, 2005

Answer Key, Homework, Class 3

1) Master Kedrup Tenpa Dargye writes of the existence of bodhisattvas who listen to teachings on the greater way from Buddhas and then pass on these teachings to others. Does this also make them listeners - those who listen and proclaim what they have heard? Explain - and include the Tibetan phrases for the two types of names in your answer.

Master Kedrup Tenpa Dargye explains that listeners are those who merely proclaim to others the teachings on the greater way that they have heard - they have no ability themselves to practice properly the path of the greater way. And so the expression “one who listens and proclaims what they hear” is only applicable to bodhisattvas in an informal or nominal way (BTAGS MING); whereas the expression applies to listeners as a real or actual name (DNGOS MING).

2) Who does Master Kedrup Tenpa Dargye refer to as seeking, for their own sake, NYER ZHI - by way of NYE BAR ZHI BA? Explain the linguistic pun.

Master Kedrup Tenpa Dargye is referring to self-made Buddhas who aspire to nirvana by overcoming the truths of suffering and the source of suffering. The pun lies in the word NYER ZHI which, as a noun, means absolute peace or nirvana; and as a verb (here expressed in its unabbreviated form of NYE BAR ZHI BA) means to completely pacify or overcome.

3) How does Master Kedrup Tenpa Dargye's explain the word 'buddha' in the expression "mid-level Buddha"? What is his purpose?

Master Kedrup Tenpa Dargye explains that the word *buddha* can apply to a number of things in addition to becoming enlightened - such as the opening of a lotus, waking up from a sleep, and the comprehension of something. When one adds *tattva* to the word *buddha* then it means "one who comprehends thusness". And so in this sense mid-level Buddhas (self-made Buddhas) are *buddhas* in that they are *tattvabuddha*; that is, they understand thusness. They are not however Buddhas in the sense of having reach complete and perfect enlightenment.

4) What is Master Kendrup Tenpa Dargye's reason for why self-made Buddhas are "mid-level"?

Master Tenpa Dargye explains that self-made Buddhas are "mid-level" because they are superior to listeners and yet lower than Buddhas and bodhisattvas. They are superior to listeners because they have been able to maintain their practice of the two collections for a relatively longer period of time than listeners. And they are lower than Buddhas and bodhisattvas because they have not reached an extraordinary level of the two collections, omniscience or high holy compassion for all living beings. Therefore, they are "mid-level" between Buddhas and bodhisattvas, and listeners.