



Diamond Mountain University

Sacred Classics Translator Program, Fall Term 2006

Answer Key, Homework, Class 6

Name:
Date:
Grade:

1) Comment on the translation principle presented in this class upon translating GNYIS PA.

Tibetan commentators do not present a list of contents or use chapters like in Western books. Instead they simply use very terse phrases like, in this example, GNYIS PA (literally, “the second”). As translators we need to flesh out our translations of such phrases to make it easier for the reader to follow the flow of the book.

However, we need to pay attention to style and in this case it would have been lazy and poor style to just copy and paste the description of this second point as it appears in the immediately preceding page of the text (“an explanation of how those of a lower nature than this do their giving”). Rather, we provided a reduced description (“Here secondly is our explanation about those of a lower nature.” In this way there is still some guidance for the reader without needlessly repeating what the reader would have read just a few paragraphs before.

2) Is it corrupt to present a Buddhist teaching to an audience with the focus that if they give to others then they will make more money? What implication does this have for us as teachers?

No. On the contrary, Master Kedrup Tenpa Dargye states that Buddhas introduce their teachings to ordinary beings in this very way because such an audience is predominantly concerned with material wealth, which is achieved by giving to others.

It's admittedly crude to teach dharma this way but it necessary to bring most people to the teachings and onto the path. Generally, such an audience is not ready for the pure bodhisattva motivation, but they will be inspired to come to a class on how to make their business more profitable or how to find an ideal partner.

Therefore, as teachers we must not be attached to being a 'purist' in what and how we teach. Out of love and compassion for the very many beings who are operating at a lower motivation, we must follow the example of the Buddhas themselves and adapt our teachings to meet people at their level and respond to their interests.

3) Write out our English translation for the verse from the root text which Master Kedrup Tenpa Dargye states as presenting the above point.

Every one of the beings here
Craves happiness
And among humans there can be
No happiness
If one has no possessions.
Possessions in turn
Come from giving them to others.
Knowing this the Able Ones
Began their presentation with giving.

4) Does someone have to perform an act of giving with a pure intention in order for their giving to bring them some wealth? Explain.

Master Kedrup Tenpa Dargye, citing a verse from Master Chandrakirti's root text, states that even an act of giving performed completely out of self-interest by someone with a very spiritually crude motivation causes material wealth to come to that person.

5) What is the greater benefit that Master Kedrup Tenpa Dargye explains in his following paragraph comes from giving even in a selfish way? What is the Tibetan phrase for “the happiness of ultimate (or definite) good” and what does it mean?

It leads to meeting a realized being who will teach them profound dependent origination which will bring them to “the happiness of ultimate good” – the state of either nirvana or total enlightenment.

In Buddhism it is not considered wrong to give something to another person with the wish to get something back karmically in return. Such an act functions to produce a pleasant, if fleeting, result for the giver in the form of some material wealth. However, when the time is right the teacher will show them how the result of such a deed is limited and relatively meaningless and will lead them to higher motivations for their giving.

One expression of this is that the bodhisattva gives to others so they may make more money with which they can give to and serve others. Expressed more sophisticatedly, the bodhisattva actually increases the net wealth of the world by giving. For example, they give \$5 to another person and get back \$500 as a karmic result. There is now \$500 that has been created, that was not there before, and which is now increased the total net wealth of the entire world and all in it.

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nge lek kyi dewa