

within Buddhist circles, holding on to sectarianism. I think His Holiness is the completely equanimous representative of not only the Tibetan tradition, but of the entire world's religions: he is the universal representative.

Therefore, especially at this critical time, I think His Holiness the Dalai Lama's coming is very important for all people, not only for religious people, but even non-religious people, to make the world community harmonious. His Holiness' message, from my understanding when listening to his lectures, is universal love, universal compassion, and for each of us to take universal responsibility to bring universal people to happiness. Somehow everybody understands that message.

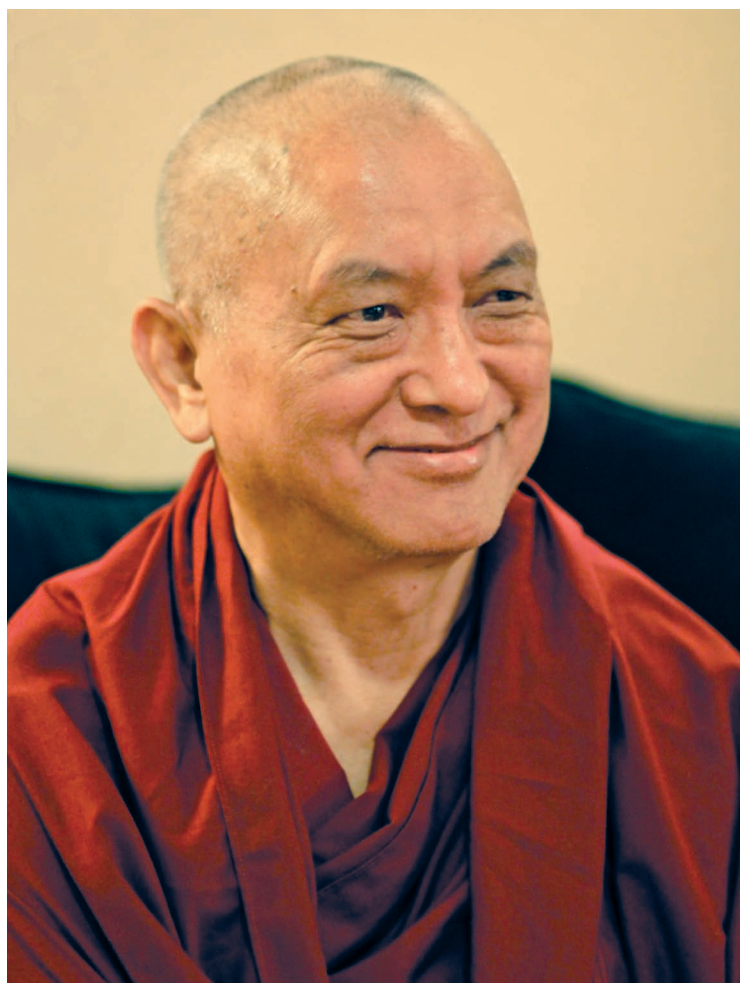
I think the Dalai Lama's coming is an incredible, incredible blessing. I and the Western people really feel something very unusual now that His Holiness has come. There is some kind of incredible harmony and good understanding between everyone in our global community. I think this understanding brings better peace, liberation and harmony to the world. I think it is very important because His Holiness teaches the best way for harmonious development, individually and universally. ♦

The complete interview is available on *Bringing Dharma to the West*, a DVD from the Lama Yeshe Wisdom Archive (www.lamayeshe.com) featuring Lama Yeshe's 1982 interviews with Geoff Jukes and Brian Beresford about Buddhism coming to the West, the development of FPMT centers and related topics.

ADVICE FROM A VIRTUOUS FRIEND

WHAT BUDDHA DID FOR YOU

By Lama Zopa Rinpoche



We have to understand what Buddha did in order to be able to reveal the three baskets of teachings, the 100 volumes of the *Kangyur*. The Buddha taught these sutra and tantra teachings to us sentient beings, which includes you. To sentient beings, which includes you, the Buddha taught the 84,000 teachings which come in three baskets; and the Hinayana, Mahayana Paramitayana and Mahayana Secret Mantra Vajrayana. Buddha completed the merits of wisdom and the merits of virtue in order to actualize the whole entire path and achieve the dharmakaya and rupakaya – so that he could reveal the path to us sentient beings. That means including you. Buddha has included you; he hasn't left you out. "Sentient beings" includes you.

After completing the path and achieving enlightenment, Buddha wanted to clearly show how to achieve the whole entire path to enlightenment; how to achieve the happiness of future lives, liberation from samsara and full enlightenment. That is why the Buddha taught all those 100 volumes.

The Buddha sacrificed his life. He practiced **charity** for three countless great eons – not only for

Lama Zopa Rinpoche, April 2010.
Photo by Ven. Roger Kunsang.

■ Teachings and ADVICE

hours, days, months or years. He practiced charity for *eons* with his own limbs, eyes and whole body. He gave his entire body to the tigress and her cubs. He gave his warm blood to spirits. These are not the only stories of charity; they are numberless. He did this numberless times to complete the merits of transcendental wisdom and the merits of virtue – like for a billion-dollar project you need to raise a billion dollars. He did this, numberless times, to achieve the dharma-kaya and rupakaya, in order to reveal the whole entire path, in detail, to ultimate happiness, liberation and full enlightenment; to bring us there.

It is most amazing for us to make charity of even one eye to one sentient being. We can't do that. But the Buddha sacrificed his life and made charity to sentient beings for three countless great eons. Can you imagine?

Then, he practiced **morality**. Relating to your own experience of practicing morality, you know how difficult it is. Even though we take many vows, it doesn't mean that we are able to practice them. It is very difficult. But the Buddha gave up his life for sentient beings, including yourself, and practiced charity and morality purely – not for three days, months or years, but for *three countless great eons*. That is amazing. He practiced completely, totally, purely for sentient beings, including oneself. The Buddha did that for you.

Not only that, but he practiced **patience** for three countless great eons. When sentient beings gave harm to him, he practiced patience. They criticized him and he practiced patience. Even one sentient being who he had benefited so much, but who criticized him back – especially for that being, he generated even greater compassion than for others. Buddha *especially* generated great compassion for the sentient beings who harmed him. From his side, he generated even stronger patience. Buddha practiced patience for three countless great eons for sentient beings, that includes you, for your benefit.

On top of that, Buddha practiced **perseverance**, the mind that is happy in virtue, in doing virtuous activities. For the sake of each and every single sentient being, even if one has to experience the Inexhaustible Hot Hell, in which the suffering is the heaviest and the length of time it is experienced is the longest. Even if one has to experience this hell suffering for eons equaling the number of drops of the Pacific Ocean, one never allows one's mind to be upset. Even if you have to suffer so much, you generate

compassion for sentient beings.

The Buddha did that for us sentient beings, that includes you. You are not left out; you are included. That means the Buddha did all that for you, practiced perseverance for three countless great eons for *you*.

Then, he practiced **firm contemplation** for three countless great eons for sentient beings; that includes you. Then, the Buddha did the **paramita of gone beyond wisdom** for three countless great eons for sentient beings, for you. The Buddha did that.

We can't imagine what the Buddha did. Then, after achieving enlightenment, he gave all these teachings to reveal the path to achieve liberation, ultimate happiness and enlightenment. The Buddha taught all these teachings to show the path for us sentient beings, including yourself, to become free from oceans of samsaric sufferings, and to bring sentient beings, including you, to enlightenment.

The Buddha, himself, by completing the merits of wisdom and the merits of virtue for three countless great eons, achieved the holy two kayas in order to reveal all these teachings, the 100 volumes to sentient beings, that means including yourself. By achieving *that*, then he taught all these teachings for you. He gave and left them in this world for you.

In the Tibetan monasteries, there are so many scriptures on the shelves – the *Kangyur*, Buddha's teachings, and then also the *Tengyur*, the commentaries by pandits and yogis. When we see all those texts, it is very good to remember, "The Buddha taught all these for me." When you think of all the teachings the Buddha left in this world for you, it definitely inspires you to learn as much as possible.

What I am saying here today is remember what the Buddha did for sentient beings, how he sacrificed his life for sentient beings and for you. He sacrificed his life for three countless great eons. Each of these practices was done for three countless great eons. If you remember that, then even if for so many years you have sacrificed for Dharma and worked for sentient beings, it is nothing. Compared to that, it is nothing. It is unbelievable comfort compared to what Buddha did. ♦

Teaching by Lama Zopa Rinpoche from *Living in the Path, Instruction 02: Refuge and Bodhichitta*. Extracted and edited by Kendall Magnussen, July 2011.

This and other teachings are available through the FPMT Online Learning Center: <http://onlinelearning.fpmf.org>