

Class Four Outline

- I. The Body and Mind
 - A. Can sense powers or living tissue be the cause of the mind?
 - B. Karma and the mind
 - 1. Mind as the basis for sense powers
 - 2. What keeps the mind going
 - 3. The mind at the moment of death, and its relationship to the body
- II. Format of Logical Proof
 - A. Three parts of Master Dharmakirti's main proof of future lives
- III. Twelve Links of Dependent Origination – the Wheel of Life
 - A. The twelve links
 - B. Two links involving desire
 - C. Three types of craving
 - D. Four levels of focusing on yourself and the triggering of karma
- IV. Meditation Assignment

Fifteen minutes a day on how mistaken ideas of the self and the craving we have for the continued existence of that “self” triggers the karma for rebirth

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Reading Four:

From *Jewel of the True Thought*, by Geshe Yeshe Wangchuk of Sera Mey Tibetan Buddhist Monastery:

Dharmakirti's Proofs for the Existence of Other Lives

Here secondly is the detailed refutation [of the Charvaka system]. We begin by presenting proofs for the existence of past and future lives, and then refute attempted proofs that these lives do not exist....

Here then are the proofs. The root text states,

When a person goes to take his birth,
The in-out breath, the powers, and the mind
Are nothing not dependent on their type,
Nor only something born from body alone;

It would be absurd. The thing that you can see
Has the ability to cross the line
Without another thing that need be there
Then isn't such that later doesn't cross.

There then would never be any part of earth
And such where there could never grow those beings
Who come from heat and moisture and the rest,
And so it all would be by nature seeds.

So if the powers and such could ever occur
Without depending each upon their type,
Then all of them should change the same as one,
For there exists no difference between them.

If you hurt each one of all the powers,
It isn't that the mind is also hurt.
The fact that they too change whenever it
Changes, this is something we can see.

Thus the basis for the mind to stay
Is mind itself, a number which it depends.

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Since they are the cause for all the various powers,
These powers are something then that comes from mind.

And if the same projecting ones are there,
Later too it will become the same.

Given this text, consider now an infant who has just taken birth: consider his *breathing in and out*, the clarity of his *powers*, the feeling of anxiety in his *mind*, and so forth. *When a person goes to take his birth*, these are *nothing* such that they are *not dependent on* something of *their own type* which has come before, because the infant is now possessed of this in-out breath, and the clarity of his powers, anxiety in his mind, and so on.

Nor are these things *only something born from* the *body*, with its elements, *alone*; for they have come from something of their own type that came before them.

If this were not the case *it would be absurd*. Every one of the elements then would have to be a living being, for the mind is something that comes only from the elements.

There is a *thing that you can see has the ability to cross the line* into a new life *without another single thing*, without any extra cause, *that need be there*. This thing *then isn't such that later it doesn't cross* into another life.

Then too there would never be any part of earth and "such" (meaning any one of the other elements) *where there could never grow those beings who come from heat and moisture and the rest, and so "it all"* (that is, every case of the elements) *would be by nature seeds*. And that would be absurd.

So if the powers and the mind and such could ever occur just from the elements, *without depending each upon something of their own type* which came before them, *then all of them* (the elements) *should change* into a living being, in the *same way as one* of them had changed into a living being—[*for there exists no difference between them.*]

Even *if you hurt each one of all the powers*, *it isn't always the case that the mind is also hurt*. But suppose *it*, the mind, *changes* because it is hurt by feelings of grief or the like. *It is something we can see then that they—the powers—change too*. Therefore the mind is a very special basis for these powers; and it is something which *depends* on the *mind itself*, meaning former instances of its

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same type. Moreover, *a number* of cases of mental action, or karma, from one's past life are now *the basis for the mind to stay*. For these reasons then the mind is not something which has no basis of its own.

These powers are something then that comes from mind, since they—a number of previous instances of mind—are the cause that projects the future occurrence of all the various powers. And later on, things like the mind at the moment of death too will become the same as these previous cases, crossing the line into later states of a similar type. This is because the same (meaning the same type of) projecting ones (that is, causes) are there.

The root text and its commentary just given present different reasonings to prove the existence of past and future lives. This is because when you prove that the passing in and out of breath with an infant who has just been born (or any of the other examples) comes from something of the same type which occurred previously, one can understand that the "same type" refers to the inhaling and exhaling of the past life, and so on.

Suppose you say that the powers and so forth of someone who has just now taken birth could occur only from the various elements. We can see that in one glass of water there grows one bug with a red head and a yellow body, and then another with a yellow head and a red body. Some creatures come out smaller, and others come out larger.

Among humans as well some come with larger bodies, and then some with smaller ones. Certain people come with a very sharp intellect, and others with one which is dull. Some children display a great amount of understanding and love and the like, while others show a tendency towards attachment and other bad thoughts. According to you, these and similar cases should be impossible, because beings take birth only through the elements, without having to depend on any earlier instance of a similar type.

Suppose again that creatures were born only from the elements. Then when any one element turned into a creature, all the elements would have to turn into creatures. This is because there would be no cause or condition that would make one of the two occur, and the other not occur.

Our own position is that a number of instances of mind in the past act as projecting causes, and from them occur our present powers and so on, which are such that they result from karma, through a time-lag. And since a number of instances of mind in the form of the mind at the moment of death will also

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provide a cause, for the powers and so forth that come later, we are able to establish that future lives exist.

For this reason, it is not always the case that the mind is affected when you hurt any one of the five sense powers. On the other hand, it is invariably the case that when the mind is affected by strong emotions of grief, or by various harmful influences, then it does hurt the physical powers. When for example the mind is affected by powerful feelings of fear, the sense power of the tongue can no longer taste something as delicious.

One may present the following argument:

What about a case where the power of the eye is damaged, and because of this the consciousness of the eye loses its ability to see its object? Isn't it common knowledge that you then undergo some feelings of distress, and that these affect the mind?

This though is no problem. It is true that such cases are possible, but it is not that mind is affected by the damage to the sense power. Rather, the damage to the eye power provides a general condition for a separate occurrence, the distress. The distress itself increases to a point to where the mind as well is affected.

It is not though the case that the mind is affected solely by the damage to the sense power of the eye. This is because there are instances where certain great beings have given away their very eyes, and yet still felt emotions of great happiness within their minds.

As such, the mind provides a very unique cause, a *sine qua non*, for a corresponding result: the sense powers and so on. The powers and the rest though do not provide this same kind of cause for any state of mind resulting from them.

To summarize, let us consider the mind of someone who has just taken birth. A previous state of mind has come before it, because it (the one at birth) is a state of mind. It is, for example, like one's current state of mind. This is the reasoning for proving the existence of former lives.

Consider further the mind at the moment of death, for an ordinary person. It will cross the line into a later state of mind, because it is a state of mind where attachment is present. It is, for example, like one's state of mind from the day before. This is the reasoning for proving existence of future lives.

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If one gets caught up in the wording, it might seem that we are asking you to consider a former state of mind, and arguing that a former state of mind has preceded it, since it is a state of mind. Or else it sounds like we are saying one should consider a later state of mind, and arguing that it will cross the line into a later state of mind, because it is state of mind where attachment is present. It would seem that we had accepted that all these reasons were true, and that all the necessities held. And it would seem as though one could never accept these arguments, for in each case elements were the same.

These proofs are similar to where Master Kamalashila proves past and future lives in his *Concise Commentary on Suchness*, for there he states:

A state of mind such that desire is present in it does have the ability to give birth to yet another state of mind, the one that we take on at birth. This is because the state of mind at death for an ordinary person is similar to states of mind on previous occasions where desire was present: it too has desire.

The text goes on to state that these are types of reasoning where the quality asserted and the quality accepted share a nature.

With both the reasonings presented above, you would have to perceive past and future lives if you perceived what the reasonings are trying to prove. Therefore it will be necessary for us to examine what object we can utilize as a starting point for perceiving past and future lives.

Selections on How Ignorant Desire Triggers Another Life

The first selection is from the *Overview of Dependent Origination* by Kedrup Tenpa Dargye (1493-1568).

The definition of that ignorance which constitutes the first of the twelve links in the chain of dependent origination is: "That view of the perishable assemblage [view of a "me" or "mine" which has its own nature] which inspires one to commit fresh cases of the relevant second link--that of immature karma."

The definition of that immature karma which constitutes the second link in the chain of dependent origination is: "That impure movement of the mind which is of the type that is inspired freshly by the relevant first link, of ignorance."

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This particular immature karma can be divided into three types: merit, non-meritorious karma, and un-shifting karma. Meritorious karma and un-shifting karma are not mutually exclusive, for there does exist something which can be both basic virtue which is consistent with merit and also the causal form of balanced concentration.

There are various typical examples of these three. The first would be the karma which projects as a karmic result the parts of a person who takes birth in one of the better forms of life in the desire realm. The second would be a karma which projects as a karmic result the parts of a person who takes birth in one of the three lives of misery. The third would be a karma which projects as a karmic result the parts of a person who takes birth in one of the higher two realms.

The definition of that craving which constitutes the eighth link in the chain of dependent origination is: "The mental function which, based on the link of feeling, desires of its own accord not to be separated from its object."

This particular craving can be divided into three types: desire craving, fear craving, and existence craving. Each of these three can be described in the following typical examples. The first is that craving where you desire not to be separated from an attractive object. The second is that craving where you desire to be separated from an unattractive object. The third is that craving wherein you crave the parts of your being at the time of your death, out of fear that you think you are going to stop.

The definition of that grasping which constitutes the ninth link in the chain of dependent origination is: "The strong desire that represents the craving of the previous link developed to an intense degree."

This particular grasping may be divided into four types: grasping to the desirable, grasping to views, grasping where you profess the existence of a self-nature, and grasping where you hold mistaken forms of morality and ascetic practices to be supreme.

The first of these is a kind of desire which is strongly attached to an attractive object. The second is a kind of desire which is strongly attached to bad views. The third is a kind of desire which is strongly attached to professing that a self-nature of a person exists. The fourth is a kind of desire which is strongly attached to bad ascetic practices.

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These two links possess certain typical characteristics. Among the three categories of being virtuous and so on, they are invariably ethically neutral. There are types of each which are eliminated by the path of seeing, and types of each which are eliminated by the path of habituation; both types are possible. These links are found with both normal beings and with realized beings, and are had by beings in all three realms.

The definition of that ripened karma which constitutes the tenth link of the chain of dependent origination is: "The movement of the mind which is in its essence an impure ripening where karma has become extremely potent due to its being triggered by the relevant links of craving and grasping."

The second selection is from *Jewel of the True Thought*, a commentary to Master Dharmakirti's *Commentary on Valid Perception* by Geshe Yeshe Wangchuk (b. 1928) of Sera Mey Tibetan Monastery. [The verses are inserted from the original work by Master Dharmakirti (630 AD), sometimes in shorter excerpts than in Geshe Wangchuk's text, to facilitate comparison with the corresponding commentary.]

**Suppose because he's free of the perishable view
He would stop rebirth at the beginning of the path.
Because the innate one's not yet eliminated.
If it were, then how could there ever be a rebirth?**

Suppose someone makes the following argument: "Let's say that you are right, and that the view of the perishable assemblage [seeing some "me" or "mine" with a self-nature] is the very root of the cycle of rebirth. Well then, just after a person had been able to develop the **beginning moments of the path** of seeing, **he would have stopped** himself from every crossing again the line into a new **rebirth**. Why? **Because he's free then of the perishable view.**"

Our answer then would be as follows: "Consider a stream enterer [a person who has reached the path of seeing, and seen emptiness directly.] Isn't it rather the case that he has not yet reached a point where, because he has eliminated the perishable view, he need not take another rebirth? **Because** isn't it true that **the innate one**, the inborn perishable view, **is not yet eliminated?** And **if it were** eliminated, **then how could there ever be a rebirth?** In that case then he could of course never take another rebirth."

You could also answer: "Consider then a stream enterer who sees peace in that same life [that is, who reaches nirvana in the same life in which he reached the

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path of seeing]. **How could there ever be a rebirth** for someone like this? He is one of those people who is certain to eliminate the perishable view completely, and thereby achieve nirvana, in the same life that he reaches the path of seeing.

**That state of mind where a person thinks of "me,"
Where he wishes to himself "May I be happy,"
Or "May I never suffer any pain,"
This viewpoint of a person is the innate.**

And suppose you say, "Perishable view only comes in one kind: the type where you consciously believe [in a "me" or "mine" which has its own nature]. Therefore it is not the cause for suffering existence." It is not true though that there exists no innate form of the perishable view. Think of that case **where a person wishes** a certain object, where he thinks **to himself, "May I be happy," or "May I never suffer any pain."** Without being influenced by any kind of intellectual belief, he holds to a "me," he **thinks of a "me"** who is independent, and who is not just a label applied to the various parts of himself. **That particular state of mind is the viewpoint of a person which is the innate one.**

**If they never thought they saw any kind of "me,"
If they had no attachment at all to some kind of "self,"
If they were free of this craving to a self-nature,
They'd never race on through desire for happiness.**

And are you saying then that people like stream enterers [those who have seen emptiness directly but have not yet reached nirvana] **have no attachment at all to some kind of "self"?** You must be, because [according to you] **they never think they see any kind of "me."** If you agree, then you must be saying that **they could never** be the kind of people who **race on** to the next life **through a desire for happiness** [for a self-existent "me," and yet they are.] This would have to be the case, because **they would be free of this craving to a self-nature.**

The *Great Commentary* says: "Wherever a person **never thinks they see any kind of "me,"** then they have **no attachment at all to some kind of "self."** And because **they are free of this craving to a self-nature,** then **they can never race on** again to a next life **through a desire** for "my-self's" happiness."

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We should note at this point that it is incorrect to assert, as some have done, that the simple awareness of oneself constitutes the perishable view. This is proven by the fact that enemy destroyers and Buddhas do possess states of mind in which they think to themselves, "These are my robes," or "This is my wisdom bowl."

If you disagree that this could ever be the case, then you would have to say as well that there could never exist that failure in one's monastic vows where you steal the robes or bowl or any similar article belonging to one of these beings. This would have to be the case, for these beings would according to you lack any state of mind where they considered something "mine." A lack of such a state should always mean that one could not steal from such beings, for the following distinction is correctly made: So long as the Teacher is still blessing the world with His presence, there can occur the failure of one's vows where he steals what rightfully belongs to the Teacher; and yet, after He pretends to pass into His final nirvana, such a failure can no longer occur.

There are moreover those lines in *Entering [the Middle Way]*, which talk about being

Like the case where Buddhas, who are
free of the view
Of the perishable assemblage, still speak of
'me' and 'my teaching'..."

**From the one cause of being attached to some self-nature,
They conceive of what's not happiness as happiness,
And as a result they dive into everything;
Therefore craving's a basis for rebirth.**

Consider now **craving**. It is the [aspect of the truth of the source of suffering we call] "factor." This is because it is a **basis** which contributes to a corresponding result; ie, another **rebirth**.

It is true that craving is this way, because **those** who have been brought down by the tendency to **conceive of what's not happiness as being happiness** **dive as a result** of this into "**everything**," which refers to unworthy things and goals. Neither is it true that this totally mistaken backwards conception of things is without its proper cause, for all this occurs **from the one cause of being attached to some self-nature**.

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**Because of the fact that the Masters have said
"Those free of attachment will never see birth."**

It is true that craving is a cause for a future rebirth, **because of the fact that Masters of the past have said** that "Enemy destroyers, **those** who are **free of attachment, never** again **see a birth** in some future life; this is due to the fact that they have eliminated craving in its entirety."