

YOUTH AUDIENCE

It's very nice to see you guys, of the same generation.

So, why do we say "buddhadharma?" It is because, so far as we know, in the history of this world the one who first really introduced the path of recognizing oneself and taking responsibility for oneself was Buddha Shākyamuni. In the history of the world, the first person to really show something called "self-responsibility" was Buddha Shākyamuni. This is because he didn't believe in a creator. He believed in something called self-responsibility. He was the first person to speak about that. That is why this path teaches self-recognizing.

When we talk about the view of Buddhism, that is recognizing self; and when we talk about the path or the meditation of Buddhism, that is learning about and training in taking self-responsibility. Self-responsibility is understood as the method to achieve the realization of recognizing self. According to world history, that kind of view and meditation was first introduced by Buddha Shākyamuni. Before that, I'm sure there could have been someone else, but we don't have any record of that. According to the records, he was the first person. That is why this kind of knowledge is called "buddhadharma."

It is very rare and difficult to give rise to that kind of thought in one's mind. Even in Buddhism, we say only a very, very fortunate individual can give rise to these kinds of thoughts of dharma, which means training in self-responsibility in order to truly help yourself. Only some fortunate people can give rise to this, not everybody. Buddha said this clearly in the beginning. So what makes an individual practice dharma? It is when an individual really wants to do something truly meaningful. "Truly meaningful" means something that can give a result that cannot be exhausted. Buddha Shākyamuni said, "Through my knowledge, and training in this knowledge, the result that we all can achieve is something called enlightenment, which never gets exhausted."

In the near future you will be able to see the movie "Brilliant Moon," which is a biography of my teacher, His Holiness Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche. In the movie, when His Holiness was in France in 1990, he gave an audience to very young children, who were seven, eight, nine-years-old. One of the kids asked him, "What's the difference between money and enlightenment?" His Holiness replied, "Money is something that can be finished, but enlightenment is something that cannot be finished. That's the difference."

In Buddhism we say, "Saṃsāra, the confused world, is not that pleasurable or pleasant." The reason for that is not that saṃsāra is bad. That's not the reason. It is because the pleasure of saṃsāra gets exhausted; it has an expiry date. It has a manufacturing date, and it has an expiry date. That is the problem with saṃsāra. That is why we understand, and the great masters understand, that saṃsāra is not as interesting as we thought it was, because it has a manufacturing date and an expiry date. Therefore, through the dharma, what we are really seeking is an inexhaustible result. That's what we are seeking.

Obviously, to achieve that inexhaustible result is not easy. So Buddha said you need six different kinds of conditions in order to achieve that inexhaustible result. He gave a special name to these six conditions: the six *pāramitās*.

First, there is being generous. Generosity means being honest. Then, number two is being disciplined. Discipline means being sure of what you are doing. Being sure of what you do is discipline. Then number three is patience. To have patience is very important. Number four is diligence. Then, number five is concentration, and number six is wisdom. Wisdom is none other than human intelligence. To become enlightened you have to utilize human intelligence and improve that human intelligence. So the main cause of enlightenment is none other than human intelligence.

Normally we understand that all living beings have the potential, the seed, or the energy of enlightenment. But why human life is regarded as more special than other life is because human beings have something called human intelligence, which the rest of the living beings do not have. Human beings have human intelligence, and because of that human life is regarded as precious. That intelligence is called *prajñā*. With *prajñā*, we use human intelligence to improve ourselves. Those improvements bring us to recognizing ourselves, which is called enlightenment.

Buddha applied these six conditions in order to become enlightened. Buddha didn't declare that right from the beginning he was already perfected; he never said that. He said, "In the beginning, I was exactly like you guys. I also wanted to be happy, and didn't want to face any problems." But through applying these six conditions, these six *pāramitās*, he improved his human intelligence, and through that he achieved something called enlightenment, self-recognition, absolute self recognition. And he said that once you become awakened, you are free from all problems, as problems have causes and conditions. That's what Buddha understood, and that's what he declared.

Problems have causes and conditions, therefore, if you don't produce the causes and conditions of problems, there's no way you have problems. The only way that we can truly stop creating the causes and conditions of problems is enlightenment. It is only enlightenment that can truly stop causes and conditions, even the production of subtle causes and conditions. That is why we call it enlightenment—it is unconditioned and uncompounded.

There is a lot of depth in the uncompounded and unconditioned. It is not that easy to understand; you have to work, study hard. You have to use all the intelligence to understand what is uncompounded and unconditioned. I can still only understand a small amount of this uncompounded and unconditioned phenomenon, because that can only be understood by the highest level of human intelligence. So obviously, we understand that the level of human intelligence, which is within us at the present, the way we are, is very, very small; very, very small. To improve that, Buddha gave us something called view and meditation. The method that he applied and introduced to us is view and meditation, in order to improve human intelligence, and make it better and better and better. That is how we understand how we can be perfect, by improving human intelligence.

The way that Buddha has designed the teachings is not just about meditation. There are three categories: base, path, and fruition. The base, or the ground, is the view. Then the path is meditation. We meditate in order to achieve that base, the view. And when we achieve the level of that view, that is called fruition, the result. Therefore, the way Buddha introduced the teachings was the base, path and fruition. Most people think, "Buddhism, oh, that's meditation." But that is only part of Buddha's teachings. Some say, "It's a philosophy." But that is only part of the view. Some say, "It's our good heart." That's part of meditation. It's more

than that. It's a huge bag: base, path, and fruition. It's a huge bag. When you study and read, then you'll know how huge it is.

I have always strongly believed that we have a lot of intelligent people in this world. The knowledge that they have introduced, all of it, is very precious. Those wise, intelligent people always spoke something that made sense, that has meaning, and that can help everybody. Somebody who can speak words with these three riches is truly wise. Without any question, Buddha Shākyamuni was one of those individuals who could speak with these three riches. Because his words have these three riches, I have always felt that they are worthy to study, worthy to understand, and worthy to practice.

That is why Buddha himself said, "Just as we examine minerals, to see if they are gold or not, that is how we examine the dharma. When you discover minerals, you examine them to see if they are precious minerals or not. You examine them to find out how precious they are. In the same way as that, you need to exam each and every single one of my words and their meaning."

When I understood this, I really found out that Buddha was totally sure about what he said, what he was teaching. He was totally aware of what he was speaking. He was not guessing. He was totally sure. That's why he had the confidence to say that everyone and anybody is welcome to examine each and every single one of his words and the meaning behind the words. So that is how we find the richness in the words. When I saw the richness in his words, I felt totally one-hundred percent that they were worthy to study, understand, and practice—because that's what we need, the richness. That's what we need.

Even though on one hand I'm a monk, obviously within this robe I'm a human being. It's not that I'm a spirit, or some alien, in this robe. Just like you, within this robe, it's me. Just as you would like to have the richness, I also would like to have this same richness.

Obviously, it will take time to understand this, because something that is really valuable always takes time to discover. Something of lesser value takes less time to discover. The more energy it has, the more time it takes to discover, so that you really know it. Something of lesser energy takes less time to discover. The more we study, that much more we get into its depth. I can say with confidence, and you can also ask many Buddhist scholars, that what is very unique in the Buddhist teachings is that the more you study, the more information you get. The more you study, the meaning gets that much vaster. Normally, when you study, the meaning gets smaller and smaller and smaller, and you come to the end. I can't say whether that is fortunate or unfortunate; I don't know what to say. But one thing I can say about the Buddha's words is that the more you get into the depth of them, the meaning becomes that much more vast.

That's why my teacher, His Holiness Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, told me when I first entered into the college of philosophy (Tib. shedra):

After two or three years of studying, you will have some kind of pride in yourself. You will feel, "I know the teachings of Buddha." You will have some kind of feeling of pride that you know them. But, if you keep continuously studying and studying and studying, then one day, you will feel, "Oh, what I have understood was nothing. I didn't really understand completely." When you come to that stage, that is the beginning of when you are starting to understand the dharma. Then you will discover that it is even free of depth, because it is endless.

There was a very famous master, Patrül Rinpoche, who wrote the book, *The Words of My Perfect Teacher*. That book is very famous, and many people love it. Whether they are Buddhist or not, whoever really reads this book, if they are open minded, they love it. In his life, Patrül Rinpoche received teachings on *The Way of the Bodhisattva*, written by Shāntideva, a hundred times. He received teachings on this from his teacher a hundred times. And he taught this to others another hundred times. That means he studied *The Way of the Bodhisattva* two hundred times. And Patrül Rinpoche said, "There's still more to understand." After two hundred times, he said, "Still, there's more to understand." He said that each time when he began to study or teach. When you teach, first the teacher has to learn it very carefully. Then when you teach it to others, the teacher has to concentrate on the meaning. Whenever we teach, it also helps the teacher to gain knowledge. Patrül Rinpoche said, "When I was teaching or studying, each time I could understand more and more. Even though they were the same words, I could still understand more and more."

That's why my teacher used to say to me, "There isn't a word that you haven't heard before, but there are lots of things that you haven't understood before." That's how you get into the depth of it. There won't be any word that we haven't heard before, but there will be lots of meanings that we haven't understood before. That's how you get into the depth of it when you study.

That is why I call it the unique quality—or should I say—headache! I don't know what to say. From one side, it is a quality; from another side, it is a headache, because it's never going to end. So it's a headache or a quality. I don't know what to say, but it's a little bit unique.

"Two plus two is four." If you repeat that a thousand times, you cannot get an answer of more depth than "four." But in the teachings of Buddhist philosophy, it's a *little* bit different than that. The more you chant or recite or read, each time you will find new meanings. Take for example the word "compassion." The first time you study, there is one way we understand it. Then, with the same word, you study it a second time, and you get another understanding. And then with the same word, you study it a third time, and you will get yet another understanding. If you study it a hundred times, you will get a hundred different kinds of meaning—from one word: "compassion." That's how it is.

My teacher said to me, "We should never be satisfied with knowledge, until we are completely enlightened." Never be satisfied with your knowledge. That is why the great master Sakya Paṇḍita said, "Even if you are going to die tomorrow, study tonight, because it will help you." My teacher, His Holiness Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, was a very, very knowledgeable individual. You can ask the senior students here who met him and studied with him. They have met His Holiness, and know how wise and intelligent he was. In September 1991, he passed away when he was 82. In February of that year, in his monastery in Nepal, even at that age he was still receiving teachings, from some ordinary person. I saw this with my own eyes. That is a big example for us.

When he was alive, whoever saw him, nobody doubted whether he was enlightened or not. When he was in the Paris airport waiting for his flight, whatever people were passing by him would get stuck for a couple of seconds. Everybody gets stuck. When you saw him, you would get stuck, because he had that kind of awakened radiance. Even a realized individual like him showed that knowledge has no end. When he was 82, before he passed away, he was still receiving teachings. So he was a great living example for us. We need to understand, until we become perfectly enlightened, that we can never become satisfied with our knowledge.

If we become satisfied with our knowledge, that is the biggest obstacle that we can ever face, because we are stopping ourselves from improving. Our dream is to be good—that's really our only dream, to be good. And knowledge helps this. That's how I have been guided by my teacher, His Holiness Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche. That is part of the instructions he gave to me. I'm very happy to share that with you.