

## Shugden and the Guru.

*First Rinpoche talks about the importance of compassion and our responsibility for leading all sentient beings to enlightenment. To do that, we need first to become enlightened ourselves. In order to do that, we have to complete the entire path to enlightenment, the root of which is guru devotion. Then Rinpoche talks about the qualities of the guru, like the ten from the Abhisamayalankara and the twenty qualities required of a tantric guru.*

Then, I want to specify one extra point, on the basis of the usual examination that is explained in the teachings. I want to add that, if you are making a new Dharma connection with a teacher, you should examine to make sure that that teacher is not someone who is against His Holiness the Dalai Lama, particularly with respect to the practice of the being called Dholgyel or Shugden. These days, that's an extra analysis you should make. In that way, you'll avoid problems in the future.

Recently, I also introduced a new guideline for the protection of the centers and their students, which is not to invite to the center teachers who practice Shugden and are therefore against His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

But this doesn't include gurus who may have practiced the protector in the past. It doesn't mean that they're bad. I'm not saying that. If you have already made a Dharma connection with such teachers and you criticize them or give them up, that's totally incorrect; that's opposite to lam-rim practice. The lam-rim, sutra and tantra teachings all explain how to practice guru devotion so that we can avoid creating such heavy negative karmas as criticizing our gurus. It's for our benefit. Since we disciples want profit, not loss, since we aspire to achieve the highest profit, enlightenment, the complete qualities of cessation and realization, it is crucial to know how to practice guru devotion.

If those previous gurus who used to do the practice were still in the same aspect now, if they were still alive in that aspect, they would also change. For example, His Holiness himself did the practice in Tibet for short while, but after extensive analysis, checking many experiences and signs, and considering the advice of many other high lamas, who spread the teaching of Lama Tsong Khapa like the sun rising both inside and outside of Tibet, who greatly benefited sentient beings, many valid lamas who advised not to do the practice, His Holiness also decided against it.

Is not only His Holiness who is saying not to do it. Before His Holiness, many other high lamas, holders of the entire Buddhadharma, also instructed their monasteries and students not to do this practice.

After checking in many ways, His Holiness came to the conclusion that for the benefit of individual people as well as world in general, he himself would stop doing this practice and also advised others to quit. Therefore, His Holiness did the practice for short while, but stopped.

Therefore, if those gurus who did the practice were still in same aspect, they would stop. Also, many gurus, many great teachers, who are still living, have stopped as well, even though they used to do the practice before. So, that's one thing.

Also, even though many people, groups and monasteries have asked His Holiness to change his advice on this, he remained firm. Since he arrived at his decision through many years' analysis, there's been no change; His Holiness always says the same thing in this regard. As His Holiness has said in many teachings, he will never, ever change his opinion on this matter.

Now, if His Holiness the Dalai Lama is not Chenrezig, if he's not Buddha, who else is there in the world that you can point to as Buddha? If His Holiness is not the Buddha of Compassion, then it's also a mistake to call Buddha all those other lamas who are said to be incarnations of this Buddha or that.

*[After this, Rinpoche explains in detail how His Holiness is Chenrezig and how the guru is Buddha.]*

*Colophon: From a talk given at Aryatara Institute, Munich, Germany on 7 April 2001. Lightly edited by Claire Isitt.*