

The Incredible Benefit Offered by FPMT Centers

Recently when Rinpoche flew from Singapore to USA, a very devoted airline stewardess sat on the floor in the aisle asking Rinpoche many questions about the prayer wheel – Rinpoche always travels with a prayer wheel on a plane and turns it throughout the trip. Rinpoche arranged for her to receive a prayer wheel and sent her a letter, which is excerpted below:

“One of the incredible benefits of FPMT centers is that they offer education. They offer a place to practice and receive teachings on Buddha’s sutra and tantra teachings, on how to live life, how to overcome death.

Mainly the centers offer sutra teachings and philosophy which explain how we can be free from death, also how to not be afraid of death: to take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, and how to do the special practice of integrating the entire teachings of Buddha into the 5 powers. This is a daily practice and also a special practice at the time of death which makes death most beneficial for sentient beings - for the numberless hell beings, hungry ghosts, animals, human beings, suras, asuras and intermediate state beings. Use the 5 powers near the time of death to make death happiest and most meaningful.

The centers offer education on the Buddha’s teachings, for example the very basic teachings such as karma – action and result. From pure action the result is happiness and from negative action, the result is suffering: so these teachings are important and fundamental to be able to help oneself and others. These teachings are even fundamental for this life’s happiness and success. By knowing how to abandon negative karma and how to create good karma, this can create the cause to achieve happiness in all future lives, good rebirth, happy rebirth, including being reborn in a Buddha pure land. Then one is free from the hell, hungry ghost and animal realms. If one is born in a pure land you can become enlightened there.

So by knowing these fundamental teachings it can cause happiness in one’s future lives, not just one life, or two lives or three lives, but hundreds and thousands and millions, billions, zillions and trillions of lives until you are free forever from samsara, free from continuously taking rebirth - the aggregates taking birth.

These aggregates come from the contaminated seed of delusion and are caused by karma and delusion. So this is what continues in samsara. It is not until you stop this completely that there is no more death and no more rebirth, no more oceans of samsaric suffering and then one can achieve ultimate happiness forever, the blissful state of peace. So for this one needs to understand the true path taught by Shakyamuni Buddha. To learn and practice and then to be able achieve ultimate happiness, total liberation from the oceans of samsaric suffering and its causes, and not only that, even more importantly to be able to cause all sentient beings to achieve the peerless happiness, full enlightenment. To achieve the complete cessation of gross and subtle defilements and the complete qualities of all the realizations.

So for that one needs to actualize the Mahayana path, the 5 paths and 10 bhumis, according to sutra and to achieve enlightenment by practicing the paramita path of sutra. For that one needs to collect the merit of wisdom – which is the cause of the dharmakaya - for three countless great eons. For that one needs to collect the merit of virtue for 3 countless great eons, which is an unbelievable amount of time. So this means that the sentient beings who depend on you in order to be free from

suffering and to become enlightened have to suffer for an unbelievably long period of time, eons. So this is unbearable, so Buddha revealed tantra - the quick way for sentient beings to be liberated from the oceans of samsaric suffering and to achieve full enlightenment, in one brief lifetime.

Tantra has 4 levels and the 4th level of tantra is the maha-anuttara path – this is the quickest path to achieve full enlightenment. The first level of tantra, kriya tantra, enables one to achieve enlightenment in one lifetime, so that is unbelievably quicker than the paramita path of sutra. By practicing the 4th level of tantra, the maha-anuttara path has the greatest skill, because one can achieve full enlightenment in a brief lifetime of degenerate time. So that means much faster than by practicing lower tantra.

So the idea for the FPMT centers is that they offer education in all these paths: sutra and tantra. The centers offer education in all the paths, even highest tantra, so this gives everyone the opportunity to achieve enlightenment in one brief lifetime of degenerate time.

Thank you very much. If you are able to practice like this, it is the best present, better than offering a billion, zillion dollars. Thank you very much.

With much love and prayers,

Lama Zopa”

Colophon: Scribe Holly Ansett, Kachoe Dechen Ling, Aptos, CA, USA; Feb 2011. Lightly edited by Claire Isitt, March 2011.