

Successful Service Due to Guru Devotion

I can't do much, but I try my best - a tiny bit, whatever I can do!

Up to now what we have been able to accomplish, benefiting this world in various ways is I think basically through the kindness of the guru: His Holiness, who is the only object of refuge of all of us sentient beings and the originator of all us sentient beings' happiness. And then secondly the founder of this organisation, Lama Yeshe, whose holy name is extremely rare to mention, who is kinder than all the three time buddhas. And the kindness of many other gurus. So what we have been able to accomplish so far depends on how much guru devotion practice we did correctly, it is the result of that.

The 500 feet Maitreya statue is still left, waiting, on the waiting list! There are many on the waiting list! In the six session yoga it says that all success came from guru devotion: whatever benefit we are able to offer sentient beings in this world, in many different ways, either social service or Dharma, establishing centers, having learned teachers who are living in practice - not just scholars, not just knowing the words but teachers who are living in the practice of sutra and tantra, lam-rim, meditating on the path. Many of the teachers that we have, especially the elder geshes, the scholars, practitioners, who are meditating on the path - this is an incredible success just to have learned teachers in our centers, that's a great achievement, so that you can teach others unmistakable Dharma, extensively show a clear path to sentient beings who are lost, who are wandering in samsara lost and suffering from time without beginning. So I think that's one most wonderful thing that is growing more and more.

Then here is a recent thing - here is Yangsi Rinpoche who studied extremely well in the monastery, starting in Kopan. Lama Yeshe put in effort requesting His Holiness Trijang Rinpoche (who is Lama Yeshe and myself's root guru) to recognize the reincarnation. And then HH Trijang Rinpoche proved and recognized him as the incarnation of the great, outstanding, extremely learned geshe from Sera Je, Geshe Nawang Gendun, who was already well known in those largest monasteries in the Lama Tsongkhapa tradition in Tibet: Sera, Ganden, Drepung, and so forth. So under Lama's guidance Yangsi Rinpoche studied at Kopan, then studied at Sera as Geshe Sopa Rinpoche advised. So Yangsi Rinpoche completed extensive study. And the result? I think if Lama Yeshe was still here he would say: yum yum!

Maitripa Institute is going through the process of becoming a university, which is extremely needed - a Buddhist university like this is extremely needed. With the extensive study of Buddhadharma, philosophy and then the practice of compassion, with the help of all the students. So I think the process already looks very inspiring and this will be a great model of a Buddhist university for the rest of the world, in many, many countries. We need that to be recognized in society and be known in the world, with qualified students who can then teach in other universities in the rest of the world, as well as but not only teaching in Dharma centers.

This is another way to offer great benefit to the world, to enlighten the world and to reduce and eliminate the suffering in the world from war, famine, disease, torture, poverty, also the dangers of fire, water, earth, all those things which come from the mind, from karma and delusions. I think this is extremely needed, and I think it is the best way to repay the kindness to Lama Yeshe, and to His Holiness Dalai Lama. His Holiness always emphasizes education, not just closing the eyes and meditating, His Holiness emphasizes education, those scriptures composed by those great Indian pundits, those very highly attained Indians - His Holiness often talks about Nalanda. So [Maitripa Institute is] bringing Nalanda University into America! So I think this is a great service to His Holiness as well as for all Tibetans, because Mahayana Buddhism is something that was preserved in Tibet by the Tibetan people since Buddhism was brought from India to Tibet; preserved for so many hundreds of years without letting in the influence of materialistic life, without allowing the West into Tibet. People just kept Buddhism pure. For so many years the government, the people, only thought about Buddhism, about preserving Buddhism, never allowed any building of factories, didn't allow any of this materialistic life into Tibet, so that's why Buddhism is still very strong. Numberless beings attained the path through lam-rim practice. There are so many mountains in Tibet with hermitages like ants' nests. So many beings attained the path. So when you go to Tibet, the whole land is blessed by Dharma, the whole earth has so much blessing.

And because of that, pure Buddhism without degeneration is now able to spread, with the experience of the great masters to be offered to the rest of the world - how fantastic that is. So that's the best gift to the Western world. Every year tens of thousands of people in the West and all over are able to make their life meaningful by meeting Tibetan Mahayana Buddhism, and then have the opportunity to follow the path to enlightenment, to find answers in their life which are missing in Western culture. So this is due to the kindness of the Tibetan people and His Holiness. So what FPMT centers already do, and now with Yangsi Rinpoche establishing the university, it's offering a great service to the Western world, in the United States, also for Tibetan people.

So everybody please pray for Maitripa Institute to be most effective, most fruitful, in the way I mentioned. That's the best model for the rest of the world. To bring light to the rest of the world, the light of wisdom, compassion. For Yangsi Rinpoche to have long life and for all his wishes to succeed without any obstacles and also the wishes of all the organisers here.

I request everyone to pray, that's very important.

And then for all the needs for the success of Maitripa to happen instantly. And the same for all the rest of the organization to be most useful for all sentient beings, all the projects to succeed immediately, to complete and be most beneficial for all sentient beings, even the social services, anyone who receives whatever social service - shelter, food, medicine or universal education, anyone who receives whatever to generate compassion, that giving these things, these external needs, causes them to generate compassion within their mind,

so that their life becomes better, now and in the future, so there is change from their own side.

Earlier I mentioned the words from the six session yoga - please grant me blessings to be able to gain all the attainments, the sublime, the common siddhis, realizations. These follow from correctly depending on, correctly devoting to you the saviour (this means the guru): all this success, achieving all these realizations, depends on correctly devoting to you the saviour, guru, so by seeing this, then one is able to give up one's body and life, to completely give them up and only do actions pleasing you.

From guru devotion comes correctly devoting to the virtuous friend with thought and action, and everything comes from that. The guru is White Tara for long life; the guru is Manjushri to achieve wisdom; the guru is the yidam, from which through prayers one achieves attainments; the guru is also the protector from whom you receive protection, who dispels interferers; the guru is also Dzambala, from whom with devotion seeing as Buddha and correctly devoting then you get all wealth, all prosperity for your own conditions needed to help other sentient beings, teaching them; the guru is the controlling deity, like Hayagriva or Mahakala, eliminating obstacles to control your mind, delusions and to achieve enlightenment, the subtle mind, and then to benefit other sentient beings.

The guru is everything, from guru devotion you achieve everything, one achieves everything from that, that's the main cause, the main source. It's like a big department store where you can get everything! So the guru is everything.

So as I mentioned from before up to now our success came from that: the success we have achieved up to now, how much we are able to offer service to the teaching of Buddha and Lama Tsongkhapa, to Sangha and sentient beings. So the rest depends on that.

Colophon: Lama Zopa Rinpoche at the end of the Black Garuda initiation given at Maitripa Institute, Portland, USA on 1st November 2006. Transcribed by Soo Foong, edited by Claire Isitt, FPMT International Office, May 2007.

