

LAND OF COMPASSION BUDDHA

www.compassionbuddha.org

THE THREE PRINCIPLES OF THE PATH

Fourteen verses written by Lama Tsongkhapa

1. As far as I am able, I shall explain
the essence of all the high teachings of the Victors,
the path that all their holy sons commend,
the entry point for the fortunate seeking freedom
2. Listen with a pure mind, fortunate ones who have no craving
for the pleasures of life, and who to make leisure and fortune meaningful,
strive to turn their mind to the path which pleases the Victors
3. There is no way to end without pure renunciation
this striving for pleasant results in the ocean of life
It is because of their hankering life as well that beings are fettered,
So seek renunciation first
4. Leisure and fortune are hard to find, life is not long,
think it constantly; stop desire for this life
think over and over how deeds and their fruits never fail
and the cycle's suffering; stop desire for the future
5. When you have meditated thus,
and feel not even a moment's desire
for the good things of cyclic life,
and when you begin to think both night and day
of achieving freedom,
you have found renunciation
6. Renunciation, though, can never bring
the total bliss of matchless Buddhahood,
unless it is bound by the highest wish
and so the wise seek the high wish for enlightenment
7. They are swept along on four fierce river currents,
chained up tight in past deeds hard to undo
stuffed in a steel cage of grasping "self"
smothered in the pitch black ignorance

LAND OF COMPASSION BUDDHA

www.compassionbuddha.org

8. In a limitless round they are born,
and in their births are tortured by the three sufferings
without a break
think how your mothers feel
think of what is happening to them
try to develop this highest wish

9. You may master renunciation and the wish,
but unless you have the wisdom perceiving reality,
you cannot cut the root of cyclic life
make efforts in ways, then, to perceive interdependence

10. A person is entered the path that pleases the Buddhas
when for all objects in the cycle or beyond,
he sees that cause and effect can never fail
and when, for him, they lose all solid appearance

11. You have yet to realize the Thought of the Able
as long as two ideas seem disparate to you:
the appearance of things - infallible interdependence
and emptiness - beyond taking any position

12. At some point they no longer alternate
but come together; just seeing that
interdependence never fails
brings realization that destroys how you hold to objects
and then your analysis with view is complete

13. In addition, the appearance prevents the existence extreme,
and emptiness prevents that of nonexistence
and if you see how emptiness shows in cause and effect,
you will never be stolen off by extreme views

14. When you have grasped as well as I
the essential points of each of the three principle paths explained,
then go into isolation, my son*
make mighty efforts,
and quickly win your ultimate wish.

**The word "son" here is referring to those who have developed bodhicitta in their hearts, rather than indicating gender.*