

On the Decline of the Dharma

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Everyone should read Chapter 96 of the *Life and Liberation of Padmasambhava*, the Pema Katang, in which it describes how the doctrine of the Buddha's dharma will diminish. Some of the descriptions sound exactly like what happened in Tibet, but don't think this is just the Tibetans' problem!

Right now in the West the dharma is growing. Now is when you should practice. Right now Guru Rinpoche's dharma has not declined, it is still full of power and blessings. The teachings of Buddha Shakyamuni also have not declined. Now when they are still in their full power, it is very effective to practice. It won't always be that way, just as the Tibetans discovered. In the future, forget it! Forget about being liberated from samsara, you'll be very lucky if you manage to stay out of hell.

Think about what we have right now. We have teachers, teachings, and the chance to practice. Do others have this opportunity? I don't think so. Consider that fact when you are figuring out what to do with your precious human time. Did anyone ever hear any buddha or bodhisattva say that someone was once liberated by money? I don't think so. You don't want to cheat yourself, so try to practice. It is easy to say OM BENZAR SATTO HUNG, so say that, with a little faith to go along with it. But we want to block all virtue, shut the door of our faith and turn away from our practice. If you yourself won't use your opportunity and exercise your power to practice, do you think someone else has the power to practice for you? Who? Are you going to wait for the next life and the next life? Haha if you think so.

We have the chance right now, the merit, the gurus' blessings. If we save all our money, at best it will only last our family a generation or two and then it will run out. Money liberates nobody, it drags us deeper into samsara. So please, if you think you have some kind of suffering, read about the real suffering of the terrible times when the doctrine declines and is hidden or gone. Compared to that we are all in the sunshine, happy and fun. Try to take your opportunity while the sunshine lasts. We don't know how long.

Tashi Delek!

-Gyatrul