

Pure Land Teachings—Part II

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With our powerful attachment and aversion, there will never be a pure land for us. In the pure land, there is no attachment and aversion. It is our ordinary mind, the maker of the impure, that divides things into good and bad, what we like and don't like, what we have attachment to and aversion to. The objects of our attachment are unbelievably wonderful; the objects of our aversion are terrible, horrible! This is ugly, that is pretty, disgusting, handsome, wonderful, something we fear so much we think we'll die, or someone we can't live without and obsess about day and night—these are the deceptions of ordinary mind, not qualities of the fundamental nature. We need to slow these down, slow down our attachment and aversion. These are all our afflictions, the passions. If you know the nature of the qualities of enlightened body, speech, mind, qualities, and activities, they primordially have never been contaminated by the afflictions. The afflictions primordially don't exist—how could they contaminate enlightened qualities? We make them—we make our attachment, and we make our aversion, of course we make our ignorance. This is the impurity that we create. The lamas speak of purity—of course, some are just talking about it without any understanding of the meaning, but some are talking about what they realize directly.

“If the mind is good, the stages and paths will be good,” as the saying goes. This means that everything depends on the mind. For the mind that is filled with compassion and bodhicitta for all sentient beings, there are no enemies. There is nobody you dislike. There are no enemies on your path. Our enemies and friends, what we like and don't like, what is good and bad—there is no truth to these. They are nothing more than our conceptual projections. Ultimately, they don't exist. What doesn't exist, we take to exist, and we block our own path with it.

Yet if we know and recognize its nature, there is no dzogchen beyond that. Everyone makes such a big deal of dzogchen, the Great Perfection, blah blah blah. Dzogchen isn't something special that just a few people have. It is the fundamental nature of all things. This nature primordially has never been sullied by the duality of "pure versus impure." It is beyond all movement and change, so no contaminating admixture has ever been introduced into it. It is pure in the genuine sense, the same purity that is the nature of all buddhas' enlightened body, speech, mind, qualities, and activities. If we understand even a tiny glimpse of this, just one word or one second, then our faith will grow incredibly. Our compassion for all deluded sentient beings, who have no understanding of this whatsoever, will likewise grow inconceivably. We will be able to give rise to bodhicitta for all who fail to understand this and great faith in all who realize it. This is excellent, to have any insight into this nature at all! If we do,

we will have pure faith and trust in the buddhas and bodhisattvas, in the three jewels, and all objects of refuge. Some people study and contemplate the dharma, but only shallowly. As they understand more and more, they do not build up their faith and lessen their poisons. Instead, they build up their poisons, especially their desire and jealousy, building them up as though they were sticks and stones being piled into a giant building or great rocky mountain. That is their sign of accomplishment, the sign that they are accomplishing the three poisons—attachment and aversion, both of course built on the foundation of ignorance. That is the sign of their lack of understanding or their wrong understanding, their lack of recognition. Who makes that? We do. We show everybody our failure to recognize our nature. And we aren't even embarrassed! If we study in this ego way and then contemplate in this ego way, when we practice, of course it is going to be ego practice, too, not dharma practice. That way we lose everything, our whole chance to be of benefit. Maybe we will think we are really practicing: "I am trying so hard! Nobody is practicing like me! I'm going to be enlightened in one lifetime! It must be! I deserve it!" Actually we are losing everything to our ego.

It doesn't matter which practice you think you are doing—generation stage or dzogchen, mahayana or vajrayana. If you are just practicing your ego, you are lying to yourself. I don't think the Buddha taught any practice based on lying to yourself. Come on! Dzogchen, particularly, is not lying to yourself. It isn't spacing out with bulging eyes, either. It is the enlightened mind of all buddhas. It isn't any form of being busy. That is how we lose our dzogchen, not how we practice it!

Enlightened body, speech, mind, qualities, and activities are spontaneously, naturally present. To say, "They are not! There is only emptiness!" is just crazy. Of course they are there! Of course the pure land is there—no, not "there" meaning "over there" somewhere, but here. It is the nature of this place, any ordinary place. If the pure land isn't already here—this room, this table, this book—then I don't think we are going to find it somewhere else. Where are you going to get it? Are you going to buy it somewhere?

You might say, "If it's here, why don't I see it?" Yes, that's a big problem! You are so smart, probably you could sue somebody about that. You could ask Judge Judy; tell her, "Somebody has to pay me lots of money because they stole my pure land! They are guilty!" Wonderful, I think you will get lots of success that way. Go for it!

Actually, you need to sue yourself. Nobody is blocking you from your pure land; you are blocking yourself. With your eyeglasses of attachment and aversion you are completely blind. You can see lots of things, billions of things of every kind, but you don't see your pure land. You need to stop looking with attachment and aversion, and start looking at the nature. How? By having faith and compassion. That way our attachment and aversion calm down. Then you can slowly see your pure land. Then you will say, "Wow!" Actually the pure land isn't some "Wow!" big deal. Who's going

to make a big deal about the nature? The nature is everywhere, it is even the nature of this cup of tea. I don't think anybody will pay you for it, especially because now I finished the tea! Haha! I got delicious things. My pure land! Don't be jealous, okay?

Tashi delek!

-Gyatral