

~ *You Are Already a Buddha* ~

Mingyur Rinpoche

In the Foundational Vehicle and the Great Vehicle, one is taking the seed as the path or taking the causes as the path. Now here, with the Vajra Vehicle or the Vajrayana, we are taking fruition as the path.

The difference is normally like this: here is an apple, right? And there is something here... This is a magic show. This is the seed of an apple. What are the causes? What is the seed? The seed is like—for example, the main practice is awareness, compassion, and wisdom. So taking the seed as the path, you focus on your breath. The breath is more important—of course, we need awareness, but the focus is on the breath. If you lose the breath, you have to come back to the breath, it is a little bit tight. You need to develop this awareness—you do not have much of this awareness now.

In the beginning, you have awareness for only a few seconds, so it is like a seed. This awareness has to grow. The awareness grows longer and longer and longer—then you are lost. Your mind thinks about pizza. “No good! Back to the breath. Concentration. Kleshas—No good! Back to the breath” And, eventually, if you can keep awareness for twenty-four hours, then you become like the apple, your awareness becomes like the apple—that is the fruition.

This is also true for compassion—at the beginning, we do not have much compassion. We have just a small amount of compassion. We have to try to meditate on compassion little by little, to grow compassion slowly. Hatred is the opposite of compassion, so we have to fight with it, coming back to the right track. Then slowly, slowly, in the end, you have twenty-four-hour compassion. That becomes the fruition. Wisdom is also the same.

But in the Vajrayana or the Vajra Vehicle, what we believe is that from the beginning what you have is—you do not need the seed, you have the apple! Everybody has a full apple.

But the problem is like this [Mingyur Rinpoche hides the apple]. That is the problem, right? We all have this apple, but there are obscurations that cover the apple. You need to discover the apple. It is not like a seed that needs to grow slowly, slowly. It is not like that. You just need to discover the apple. "Oh!" In the beginning, you discover a little bit, and then more and more and more and more.

That is what we call "taking fruition as path." How is fruition the path? We believe that everybody is equal. Everybody has awareness, compassion, and wisdom twenty-four hours a day. Not just a little bit. Therefore, meditation is not object-oriented. Meditation is subject-oriented, awareness is important. We all have awareness. What is awareness? Knowing, being aware, cognition.

Now, when you are looking at me, do you know me? Do you see me? If you know that you see me, that is awareness. So awareness is just knowing—knowing what you are thinking, what you are experiencing, what you are hearing. All of this is awareness. Actually, this awareness is with us twenty-four hours a day. Even when you are in a deep sleep, there is awareness. Sleep is part of what we call "mental events." It is like awareness—we say that awareness is like the sky. Even when the sky becomes completely dark and full of clouds, there is still a sky. And the sky is always free, pure, genuine, calm, and peaceful. Awareness is like that. That is what we introduce from the beginning of the Vajrayana.

But the problem is, then we have a question. If awareness is always perfect and pure and with us all the time, then what is the problem? The problem is that you do not recognize it. For example, if you have this apple but you do not know you own it, you may die of hunger, right? Even though you have the best healthy organic apple in the world, even though you have many kilos. So you have to recognize it. If you do not recognize it, it is the same as if you do not have it.