

Treasure Vase Teaching

Lama Sonam Rinpoche
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First, I want to say “welcome” to those of you joining us online. Some of you are probably Dharma practitioners and some of you not Dharma practitioners—probably there’s all kinds of people joining us. But, regardless, our motivation, our intentions are very important. This is the case for Buddhist Dharma practitioners and followers of other spiritual and followers of other spiritual traditions or people who do some kind of spiritual practice or people who don’t do spiritual practice regardless. For all of us, our motivation and our intentions are very important.

The Buddha said that our minds are most important and go before all activities. So, before whatever activities we do we have to think about what we are to do before actually doing any action. In the context of spiritual practice, whatever type, before doing it we have to have this thing we call Bodhicitta—the mind of enlightenment. Someone who has Bodhicitta is called a Bodhisattva. So, the word Bodhicitta, or *jang-chupki-sem* in Tibetan. Someone who has this is called a *jang-chupk-sempa*, or Bodhisattva and the *pa* part of the word means a hero or someone who is able to do what others are not—someone who’s more courageous than other people. So Bodhicitta means mind of compassion.

Everyone in the world has compassion. It’s only a matter of that some people have more or less compassion in their minds, but everyone has at least some. And whether this is actually manifest or not right now, still it is naturally present there in our minds. Because everyone has mind and the nature of mind is emptiness with the heart of compassion. And, whether this is actually manifest or not right now, still it’s naturally present there in our minds. Normal sentient beings have joy and some bias in their minds. Like taking joy in particular things and disliking other things. They have some bias with their compassion. They’re bias towards those they like and against those they dislike.

Ordinary people don’t have compassion for people they dislike, they have anger for them, and instead of compassion for beings they dislike, they have anger and fear and jealousy and so on. But Bodhisattvas aren’t like that. They have the same compassion for all sentient beings, whether they like them or not; whether those people treat them with compassion or not, or treat them lovingly or not, they have that same compassion towards all beings. Bodhisattvas, because they have this capacity, that’s why we say they have a powerful wisdom mind. Why is it that we call them powerful? It’s because they have this powerful state of mind where they don’t fall into attachment and aversion. Basically, it boils down to having a good heart. This is something all sentient beings need—especially all of us humans need it.

If we have good hearts then there will be less harm and less doing harm in the world. In the Buddhist tradition we consider the mind to be very important and we have to always reflect upon

our state of mind and cultivate a positive, good-hearted motivation. This is something I wanted to share.

The main topic today is this Orgyen Khandro Norlha—Guru Rinpoche in the form of a wealth deity—practice that we’re doing now during Summer Retreat. When we do this wealth deity accomplishment practice, there’s another supplementary practice connected with this of making treasure vases. The practice we do to consecrate the treasure vases is called a Gathering of the Wealth practice. The reason that we have treasure vases, the reason that we have the practice of making treasure vases is because all the Buddhas, through their incredibly great compassion and skillful methods, came up with many different ways to alleviate the suffering of poverty that sentient beings experience. The suffering and fear associated with poverty—that’s the reason we have this Khandro Norlha practice. So, for ourselves and other sentient beings, even if we don’t have the empowerments and the oral transmissions and instructions to be able to do these wealth accomplishment practices ourselves, we still can accomplish wealth through different methods. This type of wealth practice is very important.

The practice of creating treasure vases is done for the sake of the people who don’t know how to do wealth accomplishment practices themselves. It’s for worldly people who don’t know how to do a lot of elaborate dharma practices. It’s a way for them to increase their merit and longevity and prosperity. The people that do know how to do wealth accomplishment practice do this treasure vase creation practice in the correct traditional way, gathering all the necessary substances and consecrating treasure vases through the practice and then they can be placed in the homes of those not knowing how to do the practices and those that do know how. They can be placed in everyone’s homes and by doing this they help to increase the longevity, merit, prosperity and successfulness of all the families where they’re placed.

The reason we call them “treasure” is because they have the ability to make it possible to accomplish all our goals, all our wishes, effortlessly. I don’t know if it’s really “effortlessly” but they will help us accomplish all our wishes if we believe in them and pray to them and place them in our homes as a support for our devotion. They have extraordinary substances in them. Substances connected with increasing our merit and increasing our lifespans and making it so that we aren’t afflicted by disease and making it, in the short term, so that we have happiness. And ultimately so that we accomplish the state of Buddha-hood—which is the state of lasting happiness where we don’t have to experience any suffering anymore.

If we do have a treasure vase in our homes that has been consecrated by a good lama and which is filled with all the correct substances, if we have this, then naturally it will happen that our longevity and merit and prosperity increase. Our treasure vases are very precious. Not just our treasure vases, but all treasure vases made according to the tradition of HH Dudjom Rinpoche, are really very special. All the other traditions that have treasure vases are also precious. What makes treasure vases in our tradition so special is that we have a very close lineage. In the 30 or so years since HH Dudjom Rinpoche passed away, there’s been no chance for any sorts of obstacles to interfere with the lineage. There’s been no time for damaged samaya commitments to interfere with the lineage. There’s many of Rinpoche’s students who are still around in the world in the east and the west and all over.

These treasure vases we make were first made by Lama Tharchin Rinpoche who was a direct student of HH Dudjom Rinpoche himself. He was the one who created the shape and proportions of the treasure vases and he did everything in exactly the correct way. He had us put substances in the treasure vases exactly how they're supposed to be. We continue to do this practice of making treasure vases according to his lineage, without letting the lineage fall into decline in anyway. These treasure vases continue to be made in exactly in the traditional way according to his students here in the west. Lama Tharchin Rinpoche who first started creating these treasure vases here, he was a really authentic Lama and realized master. He started this practice of creating treasure vases here for the benefit of his students in the future, so that they would not be afflicted by suffering disease and poverty and lacking whatever supporting circumstances they needed. He started the practice of making treasure vases particularly for protecting against these types of circumstances like this epidemic disease we're facing now.

These treasure vases are for the purpose of making it so each individual sentient being accomplishes their goals and has their merit increase. For example: if we're looking for work they'll help us find a job. Not just any job, but a job where we are a benefit to other beings. If we're getting into a business then, it will help us be successful in business. Not just these types of things, but they make it so that we are able to accomplish our goals with fewer obstacles and accomplish whatever we're trying to do. Basically they help with all types of worldly pursuits like work and business and getting an education. Basically all our worldly activities can be condensed into those three things: work, business, and education or learning.

In order to be able to accomplish what we want to do in those areas we have to have merit. These treasure vases were created in order to help us obtain merit. If we have something very heavy, if we try to pick it up ourselves it's difficult, but if someone else helps us, two people can pick it up more easily. In this example, one of the people trying to pick up the object is our own merit that we've accumulated in the past and that we're experiencing the results now. The other person helping us is our spiritual merit from making aspiration prayers and making offerings and having a pure hearted mind.

There are particular times when treasure vases should be made. In general, the summer is the right time to make treasure vases. The summer is when everything is increasing, flowers and fruits are growing. In the spring and summer water is increasing and flowers and fruits are growing. In particular, we have to make treasure vases on auspicious days, astrologically. We also have to make treasure vases on the days of the week which are auspicious for increasing wealth. Sundays and Tuesdays are fire days but Saturdays are for increasing activities. Mondays and Wednesdays are good for peaceful activities. Thursdays are good days for doing dharma practices ourselves. Fridays are good days for all types of activities. Saturday is the best day of the week for all types of dharma practices but especially for wealth accomplishing practices.

When we first start the project of making treasure vases, we should start on a good day during the waxing moon part of the month and on a day month that is auspicious with the planets and stars having auspicious conjunctions, on a day of the week like Saturday. On a Saturday, we should start this treasure vase creation practice on that kind of day when all those factors come

together. We should start making the treasure vase on that kind of day. When Lama Tharchin first started making these treasure vases he knew all about this and chose that kind of auspicious day to start the project.

For the substances that the treasure vases are made out of, the best thing is if it's made out of gold, or if not that, silver, or if not that, then copper, or if not that then ceramic. Those are the type of things they should be made out of. There's different ways of measuring weight in different places. In Tibet they had a different way of measuring the size of the treasure vase. It's roughly equivalent of one pound of material in the U.S. They say they should be at least that big (indicating the approximate size with hands)

LST *bring me that golden one...*

This is how our treasure vases are—more than a pound of stuff fits inside this. This is also the really correct, traditional size of a treasure vase.

(holds up ramekin with pills)

These are the wealth substance pills. This is the size they should be. These wealth substance pills have earth from all the highest mountain peaks in the world. Not just any mountains, but the auspicious mountains—not from volcanoes or mountains where wars have been fought on them—but earth from the peaks of all the highest mountains in the world. Also, they have earth and stones from all of the holy places of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas—especially where the Buddha accomplished complete enlightenment and the place where he first turned the wheel of the dharma. There's earth and stone from many holy places blessed by the presence of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas.

And there's also water from all the excellent and auspicious sources of water, like the oceans and lakes and rivers whose flow is uninterrupted like the Ganges river. Also there's water from many different holy places. There's auspicious and holy water from many different sources in these treasure vases. The reason for having these kinds of wealth substances is that one of the main sources of happiness for all of us is external circumstances. We have to rely upon external circumstances for our happiness. And so we depend on our environment. If the environment is clean and doesn't have any pollution then the air will be very clean. The wind is something that we use all the time, everyone, all humans, all beings breathe and make use of the wind all the time. When we, all beings, all animals, when we're able to make use of clean pure wind, auspicious winds, then we have a lot less sickness and disease in our bodies. Also, correspondingly, our minds are happier and we have less suffering. All of these kinds of earth and water that we put in the treasure vases we put in for the sake of the environment being clean and so there are no obstacles to having a clean environment. We create and consecrate the substances with those prayers that there be no contamination of the environment.

We pray for the environment, in general, to have no contamination or problems and, along the same lines, if there's sources of precious treasure substances in the earth, naturally the environment will be good. This is because the gods, nagas and local spirits that live in a place—if they are happy then they won't become upset and won't do anything to harm us. If these spirits, like local deities and nagas and those types of spirits are happy then, naturally, the environment will be nice. And naturally the humans living in that environment will have

happiness and things will go well for them. But, if these local spirits become disturbed and upset, then they cause all kinds of disturbances in the outer elements like earthquakes and floods and tornadoes and circumstances where there is the risk of fire. These kinds of circumstances, which are some of the main sources of fear and suffering for us, occur because the local spirits and nagas and other local deities that live in a place become upset because the environment's been disturbed.

Treasure vases are a way to benefit the outer environment. Because of all those kinds of substances are in treasure vases, so if we think just about the treasure vases themselves, they are extraordinary things. The excellent container of the vase itself benefits the external container of the environment and then the inner contents of the vase are extraordinary. One of the main things we need for happiness, in the worldly sense, is longevity. Even if we have happy circumstances, good material circumstances, we have to live long enough to enjoy those things. So, one of the main things that make up the inner contents of the treasure vases are longevity substances so that we live long lives.

Ourselves, and all other sentient beings, need longevity. And we need to regain all our lost and damaged longevity and vital energy, so we have substances that are connected with the life energy of different kinds of beings. Like, we have cowry shells that are connected with the *la*, or life energy of the god-realm beings or nagas. And we the hemotites???...these naturally occurring square stone, which is the substance connected with the life energy of local spirits. And then we have turquoise which is the substance connected to the life energy of humans. We have quartz crystals which are connected to the life energy of god-realm beings.

There's different aspects of life-force or life-energy with different words for different aspects in Tibetan. I don't know if these kinds of terms exist in English. There's *tse* which is longevity and there's *la* which is life-force energy, and this *la* or life-force energy, if we lose this life energy we won't live very long at all if we lose this energy. We would die in a month or two. If we lose this energy we will begin to become sick and die. It will one circumstance which leads to our death. Then *tse* or longevity, if it is exhausted then we will die very quickly. The elements of our body will decline and we will die. That's the second factor that leads to death. And the third factor is the breath. If we lose our breath then it's not even that we're going to die quickly from that, but that we are already almost ready to die. We will fall from consciousness to unconsciousness. The fourth aspect of life or longevity is *tsok*, or life force. When this stops then we are dead, that's the point when we are fully dead. These substances help with all these things not falling into decline. *La*, *tse*, ?, and *tsok*—life energy, longevity, breath and life-force they all help us to not have any of these factors decline. These substances help, not just for ourselves, not just for humans, but they help ourselves and all other sentient beings to have longer lives. All the substances for these things are in the treasure vases as well.

So, there's also substances in the treasure vases that help, not just with these energies and factors for life, but they're substances that make them last a long time. There are substances that make our lives long. There's relics from the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas from the past who lived very long lives—Arhats and these kinds of beings who there are historical accounts of them living very long lives. There are relics from them in the treasure vases. In particular there are

substances from Guru Rinpoche and Yeshe Tsogyal who accomplished immortality and who are still alive in the Copper Colored Mountain Pure-land. There's relics of theirs such as clothing and hair. These relics were placed during Guru Rinpoche's time for the sake of future sentient beings. They were concealed as treasures especially by Yeshe Tsogyal who concealed many of these relics as treasures to be revealed at particular times in the future.

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Like we talked about before: please develop the two-fold positive motivation for listening to the teaching. Yesterday we were talking about how we gather the essence of the earth in treasure vases for the sake of benefiting the environment. I got mixed up and didn't explain things clearly yesterday. The stone which is associated with the life-energy, the *la* of the god-realm beings is conch shell and the *ou* life-energy stone of the nagas is quartz crystal and the life-energy stone of humans is turquoise and the life-energy stone of *yakshas* is the hematite. We also have earth from farm fields and plants and fruits and grains and these things help to avert famine. We have earth from really excellent farm fields that have never had any blight or never had any harm from the elements occur. So we have earth from really excellent farm fields. Not just from one place, but many places like that. We also have many different kinds of grain and other crops from farm fields that grew in really excellent ways and increased and flourished excellently. We also have naturally growing fruits that are not poisonous. And we also have flowers, really excellent flowers that grow in auspicious places. We have all these things in the treasure vases to prevent famine. We have the best, most excellent things in the treasure vases to avert famine.

There's also medicines from medicinal plants that don't have any poison to them at all but are naturally growing medicinal plants. These things are in the treasure vases to prevent times of disease and for pacifying disease and the kinds of pandemic like we're in the middle of now.

There's also hair from many different kinds of animals. From auspicious kinds of animals. Even within one kind of animal, there are different animals that have more merit than others and have more abundant good qualities than others of the same kind of animals. So we have all kinds of hair and things from many different kinds of auspicious animals. These hairs are taken, not from dead animals or animals that have been killed, but from live animals and are taken in ways that don't cause any harm to the animal. Some of them are taken by Buddhas and Bodhisattvas through magical means. The reason we have all these different things from different animals is so that these treasure vases are not just the source of happiness for humans but are the source of happiness for all sentient beings as well. So, we have all these many things gathered together with the five precious jeweled substances we mentioned before. These help avert times of war and conflict.

We also have earth and rocks and water and pieces of plants from special holy places that have been blessed by the Buddha and the Buddha's followers. There's things from where the Buddha Shakyamuni accomplished perfect Buddhahood and from where he first turned the wheel of dharma and from where he passed into parinirvana and from where he displayed miracles. In these holy places of the Buddha where his followers—the arhats and bodhisattvas—stayed in those places and practiced meditation and gained accomplishment in those places. So they also

contribute their blessings to those holy places. So, we have these incredibly blessed, sacred, holy substances from these very special holy places.

There's also five kinds of colored sand. The five colors of sand: white, yellow, green, and so on, that are naturally occurring and are taken from different places around the endless oceans. These naturally occurring different colors of sand are from the oceans and are also in the treasure vases. Also, in some lakes that have been blessed by the buddhas and bodhisattvas, these five colors of sand: white, yellow, red, green and blue occur naturally in those holy lakes. So we also have that kind of sand of five colors.

We also have things from very meritorious people like kings and other rulers from ancient times who were very meritorious beings. We have things that come from their hands and have some incredible wealth and possessions of very meritorious people from the past also. All of those substances that we mentioned, we gather them together and make them into a powder and then we make pills out of this powder. These pills are what we call the mother pills. They are like the mother, or the source of the other substances in the treasure vases. Each of these mother pills can make enough other pills to go into a large number of treasure vases. We soak the mother pill in water and then mix it with the materials for the other pills and then make a large number of pills from one mother pill.

There's also many other substances such as different kinds of excellent fabrics. All of these substances are ground up and made into a powder. Some of the really difficult to acquire substances were gathered by the kings and Buddhas and Bodhisattvas and great beings of the past and then, when the Buddha's teachings were brought to Tibet some of them were given to king Tresong Detsen and other members of the group of the king's other 25 original disciples of Guru Rinpoche. Then they concealed some of these substances as treasures to be revealed in future times when the elements would be in decline and sentient beings would be suffering a lot from disease, war and famine. They were concealed as treasures to be revealed at these later times and revealed and distributed from their places of concealment.

The foundation of our mother pills is substances from HH Dudjom Rinpoche. With the substances we received from HH Dudjom Rinpoche, we made a small number of mother pills and we used those as the basis of making the mother pills here. And we also have substances from other treasure revealing masters like 24:53...? Wealth gathering substances from Choki Nyima? Rinpoche's terma revelations and also from the treasure revelations of other masters, but the main basis of the mother pill substances comes from HH Dudjom Rinpoche and they're all gathered together and Lama Tharchin Rinpoche made them into the mother pills. He gathered many things together, Lama Tharchin Rinpoche, and made a lot of mother pills. These mother pills that Lama Tharchin Rinpoche made are the basis for what we use to make the treasure vases.

There's also other things that we put into the treasure vases to fulfill any lack there might be. We write prayers requesting the fulfillment of our wishes on paper and put them inside the treasure vases. Along with that, we have Orgyen Khandro Norla's mantra written. At the bottom of the treasure vase we have the circles, or mandalas, of the male and female *yakshas*. These are the

lords of wealth and so we have the mandalas associated with them in the bottom of the treasure vase. And then, above that in the center of the treasure vase we have a supporting image of the main deity, Orgyen Khandro Norla. These days we don't have to draw these images by hand, it's very convenient, we have photographs that we put inside. These pictures of Khandro Norlha are photographs of very blessed consecrated thangka paintings of Khandro Norlha.

This picture of this particular thangka I'm not sure where it comes from, but the original example illustration for this thangka was drawn by Tulku Jamyang Rinpoche. Later his original example illustration was copied by many other thangka painters. But the basis for this image comes from a thangka by Tulku Jamyang Rinpoche. Tulku Jamyang's paintings and drawings are full of blessings because he, himself, is an excellent practitioner and knows very well how to paint thangkas and he does them, not just as a way to make money off them, but he does them in the correct traditional way. Dungse Thinley Norbu Rinpoche also gave him a lot of training on how to paint thangkas and the motivation you should have when you paint the thangka. Like what motivation you should have and what you should meditate upon—how to meditate while you paint the thangka. Dungse Rinpoche gave him a lot of that kind of training, so all of his thangkas and all of the images that are based on his work are very full of blessings.

In Nepal the stupa that contains the body of HH Dudjom Rinpoche was commissioned by Chatrul Rinpoche and he had a lot of other thangka painters he could have chosen who maybe had more skillful hands than Tulku Jamyang. But Chatrul Rinpoche particularly chose to have Tulku Jamyang draw the blueprints for the stupa, which contains HH Dudjom Rinpoche's body. Also, Chatrul Rinpoche had Tulku Jamyang paint the statues and thangkas at his monastery in Pharping, Nepal, in an earlier time.

So, we have the supporting image of Orgyen Khandro Norla's wisdom body, and we also bless and consecrate this image and put it in the treasure vases. This supporting image of the wisdom deity's body is in the center of the treasure vase. And there's also other things like a meritorious elephant mandala. This mandala is consecrated and inside the treasure vases. With this mandala, there's a particular way that it has to be folded up. It's not okay to fold it up any which way. There's a very particular way it gets folded up and it requires some training to do properly and Lama Tharchin Rinpoche gave this training to his western students here so they all know how to do this in the really the exact correct traditional way.

All those substances we mentioned before are all mixed together and mixed with mud and are rolled into the balls or pills. These substance pills are rolled, mostly by dharma practitioners and they recite the Orgyen Khandro Norlha mantra while they roll the pills. While they do this rolling of the balls that go in the treasure vases, they have the motivation wanting to benefit all sentient beings, wanting to benefit the entire outer elements—the entire outer environment—and all the sentient beings that live within that environment. They pray that the sponsors, the people that buy the treasure vases, may have success in their lives and may they lead all other sentient beings to have success in their lives. The practitioners who roll these balls do so with this kind of vast motivation as they roll the balls by hand. Then the balls are painted gold.

Generally, there's a tradition of putting some actual grains in the treasure vases. There's a traditional way of doing things in Tibet where every year they replenish the grain. They call a Lama to their home to re-consecrate the treasure vase where they take out any old or damaged grain that might have been eaten by bugs or something. Then they refill the treasure vase with the same wealth substances as were in there but then they add fresh new grain to fill the treasure vase. So this is kind of the traditional thing. The Lamas will practice and consecrate the treasure vases and then reseal them for a period of seven days or so. Lama Tharchin Rinpoche realized that in these current times it's difficult to do that. It's difficult to find a good lama to invite to do that kind of thing, even if you want to, and it's also difficult for people who are inviting them. It's difficult to do that kind of thing that often. Based on how things are these days, Lama Tharchin Rinpoche chose to mix all the substances together in the balls. All the grains that would usually fill the treasure vase are mixed in together with the balls of substances.

Now, this hands-on practice lineage continues to be done without any fault. All this treasure vase activity continues to be done without any decline by Naropa and by Jennifer. They're the two main ones doing this activity and all of the other students (of Lama Tharchin Rinpoche?) help them.

Also, in each treasure vase, either in front or behind the Orgyen Khandro Nhorla picture—wherever it fits—we put all the life-energy stones of all the different classes of beings we mentioned. The life-energy stones of gods and nagas and humans and yakshas—they're all gathered together in one bundle and wrapped up in red and yellow fabric. That little bundle of life-energy stones is placed in the treasure vase either in front or behind the Orgyen Khandro Norlha deity image. Also, the rolled-up mantras are placed inside the treasure vase either before or behind the Orgyen Khandro Norlha image. The mandalas are also placed very carefully inside the treasure vases—they're wrapped up and placed very carefully making sure not to mix up the front and the back. Then the treasure vases are filled up with the balls or pills. Then, once that's finished the treasure vases are sealed and a mark is placed on the bottom of the vase so people won't mix up which is the front and which is the back of it. Then the treasure vases are brought here to the shrine room and consecrated by myself and Tulku Jamyang and whatever Lamas are here on that day when they're consecrated. Sometimes it happens that there are a lot of practitioners gathered together on the day we do the consecration such as Guru Rinpoche day or the full moon or the eighth day of the lunar calendar or the new moon. Sometimes we do the practice on these different holy days, but mostly we do the practice on the tenth day of the lunar calendar on Guru Rinpoche day and we do the practice of consecrating the treasure vases along with the Lake-Born Vajra practice.

So that's a very short explanation and a very short history of these treasure vases that we make at Pema Osel Ling. There's also a prayer for requesting the fulfillment of our wishes that's placed in the treasure vases and this prayer goes along with the rolled-up mantras placed in the treasure vases for whoever owns the treasure vase, for them to have happiness, long lives, merit and not sickness, disease, and no obstacles—and for them to accomplish all their wishes. We make sure this prayer is inside the treasure vases. These treasure vases are beneficial for whoever owns them and they're more beneficial the more we believe in them. The more merit and karmic connection we have with them, the more we believe in them and the more beneficial they are.

This isn't just how it works for treasure vases. With whatever activity we do, if we have doubts about what we're doing, then we won't be very successful. All activities—everything that we do—is like that, not just treasure vases. We make two or three different kinds of treasure vases that have different external appearances. One of the types of treasure vases we make is intended to be buried in the earth for the sake of restoring the elements of the outer environment. If we keep treasure vases in our homes, they'll be very beneficial for us and help us to increase our merit. Depending on how much faith we have, and how much of a connection we have with treasure vases then we may get more or less merit. But even if we have no karmic connection at all, even if we have no meritorious connection at all with treasure vases, just by having one of these treasure vases connected with Orgyen Khandro Norlha in our homes we will come to have merit. It will cause us to gain merit even if we have no karmic connection. It will make a new, positive karmic connection for us just to have it. It will make it so that we have less disease, less sickness, less obstacles, and so on. We have to at least have the motivation where we think of the treasure vase as being a precious wish fulfilling jewel treasure. We have to have this kind of motivation and sooner or later our wishes will be fulfilled.

It's possible that the treasure vase will be beneficial for us when we are in the bardo of the intermediate state after death, or in our next life. Even if we have no merit in this lifetime at all, then just by having the treasure vase it's possible that it can make it so that, in our next lifetime, in our future lifetimes, we become powerfully meritorious people. This isn't something I'm making up. It's the teaching of the Buddha and the Buddha's words are deceitless. Even though these treasure vases themselves are very precious, if we don't consider them to be precious, if we just consider them to be ordinary things, then we'll only get the blessings of an ordinary thing. But, if we think that they are very precious, then we will receive very precious blessings. The sort of blessings we receive depends on our motivation. It's not that the Buddha's and Bodhisattvas don't have blessings to give us but if we don't open our container, then we don't have anywhere to put the blessings into. That's how it is, whether we receive greater or lesser blessings.

This isn't the only place where treasure vases are made. They make treasure vases all over the place. Those are all probably very good and I think they all have their own, authentic origins for how they make their treasure vases. I have confidence in the treasure vases we make here because I have experience with them myself. I have seen with my own eyes how they're made and have first-hand experience with all this so I have particular confidence with the treasure vases made here.

Please keep this in mind. Not just about treasure vases, but all of us, all humans, need some spiritual practice. We can't accomplish our goals in life if we have just a purely conceptual relationship with the world. We won't be able to accomplish a lot in life that way unless the backbone of our life that supports us doing whatever we set out to do is spiritual. With spiritual practice, it's good if we do it in a way where we don't harm others and we don't have any bias towards others at all, but we just focus on our own spiritual practice, whatever it may be, and have confidence in that. It's not good if we have an attitude where we think: "My spiritual practice is good and other people's is bad" or something like that.

There have been three emanations of Manjushri in Tibet and one of them in our Nyingma school was Mipham Rinpoche, or Jampal Mipham Rinpoche, and he said the dharma is like a cake—a round cake—whatever side of the cake we cut a piece from and eat it, the piece of cake from that side of the cake is particularly delicious to us. But, taking a piece from any side is just as delicious. We really shouldn't have any bias or discrimination in terms of the dharma. Having bias and discriminating against others based upon the dharma is a really dangerous thing. It causes a lot of problems in the world. I'm learning this myself. I used to be very biased in terms of dharma, thinking of Buddhism as superior, but I'm learning how problematic that is myself. The real point of the dharma is to benefit our minds so whatever dharma is beneficial to your mind is authentic dharma. All spiritual practices actually are very precious. I think the point of all spiritual traditions is to have peace. Especially these days, now is the time to practice and pray for the pacification of these times of disease and conflict.

If we pray with pure-hearted motivation it will be beneficial. So everyone please do that and we'll conclude the teaching now.