

Gaining Certainty in the View
Frameworks of Buddhist Philosophy
From Jamgon Kongtrul's Treasury of Knowledge

Ten Thursdays from March 20–June 19, 2008
(Skipping April 10, May 1 and June 12)

Overview of the Course

This course will examine in detail the stages of the view as presented in the Kagyu-Nyingma tradition. The main source for this will be the recently published work, *The Treasury Of Knowledge: Frameworks Of Buddhist Philosophy (Book 6, Part 3)* by Jamgon Kongtrul Lodro Taye, translated by Elizabeth M. Callahan.

In Tibetan religious literature, Jamgon Kongtrul's *Treasury of Knowledge*, which spans ten volumes, stands out as a unique encyclopedic masterpiece embodying the entire range of Buddhist teachings as it was preserved in Tibet. In this volume, *Frameworks of Buddhist Philosophy*, Kongtrul presents a masterful survey of the broad themes and subtle philosophical points found in more than fifteen hundred years of Buddhist philosophical writings and analytical meditation traditions.

In a clear and systematic manner, he sets out the traditional framework of Buddhism's three vehicles and four philosophical systems and provides an overview of the key points of each system. His syncretistic approach, which emphasizes the strengths of each of the systems and incorporates them into a comprehensive picture of philosophical endeavor, is well suited for scholar-practitioners, who seek awakening through the combination of analytical inquiry and contemplative meditation. The text culminates in an unusually profound presentation of the Rangtong and Shentong Madhyamaka views.

Summary Syllabus & Schedule

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|-------|--|----------|---|
| I. | Gaining Certainty in the View | March 20 | |
| II. | Fundamentals of the Four Noble Truths | March 27 | |
| III. | Shravakayana | April 3 | |
| IV. | Pratyekabuddhayana & The Mahayana | April 17 | |
| V. | Mind Only | April 24 | |
| VI. | Rangtong Madhyamaka and Svatantrika | May 8 | |
| VII. | Prasangika Part One | May 22 | |
| VIII. | Prasangika Part Two & Shentong Part One | May 29 | |
| IX. | Shentong Part Two and Vajrayana Madhyamaka | June 5 | |
| X. | Review, Dharma Exchange, Celebration | June 19 | ? |

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Detailed Syllabus

I. Gaining Certainty in the View

A. Topics:

1. Jamgon Kongtrul
2. The Rime Movement
3. The Treasury of Knowledge
4. Gaining Certainty in the View
5. Buddhist Doxography: The Three Yanas and The Four Tenet Systems
6. Jamgon Kongtrul's Version

B. In Class Reading:

1. Gaining Certainty In The Provisional and Definitive Meanings Of the Three Turnings of the Wheel of Dharma, The Two Truths, and Dependent Arising, *Treasury of Knowledge*, Chapter Seven, Part Two, Translated by Ari Goldfield, 2 pages

C. Optional Reading:

1. TOK, Introduction, pages, 9-32 = 22
2. TOK, Three Yanas and Four Tenet Systems, pages 83-84 = 2

II. Fundamentals of the Four Noble Truths

A. Topics:

1. Suffering
2. Causes of Suffering: Afflictions
3. Causes of Suffering: Karma
4. Cessation
5. The Path

B. Reading:

1. TOK, The Shravakayana: An Overview and the Four Truths –
 - a) A Systematic Presentation of the Hinayana, pages 89-99 (bottom) = 11
 - b) Alternative Classification Schemes, pages 109 (top) - 122 = 13

C. Optional Reading (to skim):

1. TOK, The Shravakayana: An Overview and the Four Truths –
 - a) The Commentary's Addition: A Detailed Treatment, pages 99 (bottom) - 109 (top) = 10

III. Shravakayana

A. Topics:

1. The Shravakayana:
 - a) Classifications of their Tenet Systems
 - b) Classifications of their Orders
 - c) The Classifications of their Results

B. Reading:

1. TOK, Introduction, pages 32-36 = 3
2. TOK, The Shravakayana: Its Tenet Systems, Orders and Results -

- a) The Classifications of Its Philosophical Tenet Systems, pages 122-135 = 13
 - b) The Classifications of Its Results, pages 141-150 = 10
 - C. Optional Reading (to skim):
 - 1. TOK, The Shravakayana: Its Tenet Systems, Orders and Results -
 - a) The Classification of Its Orders, pages 135-141 = 6

IV. Pratyekabuddhayana & The Mahayana's Distinctions & Training

- A. Topics:
 - 1. The Pratyekabuddhayana
 - 2. The Mahayana
 - a) Five Differences between Hinayana and Mahayana
 - b) Seven Greatnesses
 - c) The Paramitas
 - d) Shamatha and Vipashyana
- B. Reading:
 - 1. TOK, The Pratyekabuddhayana, pages 151-158 = 7
 - 2. TOK, Introduction, pages 36-37 = 1
 - 3. TOK, The Mahayana's Distinctions & Training, pages 162-174 = 12

V. Mind Only

- A. Topics:
 - 1. The Seven Bases
 - 2. Classifications of Chittamattra
 - 3. Chittamattra Masters
 - 4. Refutation of Chittamattra
- B. Reading:
 - 1. TOK, Introduction, pages 37-40 = 3
 - 2. TOK, Chittamattra, pages 176-193 = 17

VI. Rangtong Madhyamaka and Svatantrika Madhyamaka

- A. Topics:
 - 1. Madhyamaka
 - a) Essence
 - b) Classifications and Divisions
 - c) Two-fold Selflessness
 - d) Reasonings
 - 2. Svatantrika Madhyamaka
 - a) Divisions of Svatantrika
 - b) The Two Truths
- B. Reading:
 - 1. TOK, Introduction, pages 40-45 = 6
 - 2. TOK, Madhyamaka, pages 196-201 = 6
 - 3. TOK, Rangtong Madhyamaka, pages 203-216 = 4
 - 4. TOK, Svatantrika pages 217-222 = 6

VII. Prasangika Madhyamaka Part One

- A. Topics:
 - 1. Ground Madhyamaka
 - 2. Path Madhyamaka
 - 3. Resultant Madhyamaka
- B. Reading:
 - 1. TOK, Prasangika, pages 223-244 = 22

VIII. Prasangika Madhyamaka Part Two & Shentong Madhyamaka Part One

A. Topics:

1. Prasangika Madhyamaka Part Two
 - a) A Synopsis of The main points
2. Shentong Madhyamaka Part One
 - a) The Two Truths
 - b) Freedom from Chittamattra Defects
 - c) Distinctions from Rangtong

B. Reading:

1. TOK, Prasangika -
 - a) A synopsis of the Main Points, pages 244-247 = 3
2. TOK, Introduction, pages 45-52 = 8
3. TOK, Shentong Madhyamaka, pages 249-261 = 11

IX. Shentong Madhyamaka Part Two & Vajrayana Madhyamaka

A. Topics:

1. Shentong Madhyamaka Part Two
 - a) Recommendations
2. Vajrayana Madhyamaka
 - a) Ground
 - b) Path
 - c) Fruition

B. Readings:

1. TOK, Shentong Madhyamaka, pages 261-268 = 7
2. TOK, Secret Mantra Madhyamaka, pages 269-273 = 5

C. Additional Readings – TBD....

X. Review, Dharma Exchange, Celebration

A. Topics:

1. Definitions and Classifications of the stages of the view
2. Clarifying the Distinctions in the stages of the view
3. Contemplating the stages of the view

B. Additional Readings – TBD....