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SPEAKERS

Gil Fronsdal

I wanted to read a little bit from my translation of the book of eights, this ancient. Some people say it's with maybe the oldest teachings of the Buddha, the first teachings of his before Buddhism was systematized into all its lists and kind of formalized into what became a religion. And then, if it does come from the early days of the Buddhist teachings, it kind of has a purity to it, or simplicity to it, there are a radicalness to it, that I think it's very much alive still today, because in many ways, it kind of pulls the rug from underneath all kinds of attachments and orientations that people often have, especially people when they engage in religion. And this idea, it's very refreshing to have all our attachments kind of pulled away. It's kind of nice, I think. And so I wanted to read a little bit from chapter that's called the discourse on the ultimate. Now that's pretty promising. You know, who doesn't want to know what the ultimate is, and learn about it. So this, so being the edge of your seat ready to know this, you can get the core teachings.

And a lot of this teaching focuses on views, and the word views, is really an ancient word means doctrines, religious doctrines, how we, we the philosophical views, which we approach our life, but many people in the West don't feel like they have particular doctrines or views they live by. Because somehow, you know, we don't, we think we're free of it. But in fact, many times they're unconscious, they're very deeply seated, the unconscious assumptions about our life, which are, you know, philosophical at its root or something. But if the another another word is if every time you hear the word views, you could interpret in your mind as stories, and that, that we live in stories, and we have stories about things and those stories, that's kind of how we orient ourselves to understand what's going on. So, the major theme is the introduction of the before reading the poem, the major theme of the discourse on the ultimate is the avoidance of use, which is stated most explicitly, in the instruction, not to construct prefer or take up any doctrine. Or the major theme and the discourse on the ultimate is avoidance of stories, which are stated most explicitly in the instruction not to construct, prefer or take up any story. Instead, this poem advocates, such a thorough letting go, that a person no longer relies on any view, any story, any doctrine, including existential ideas of existence, and non existence, either in this life or the next. And so like what's left if you're not thinking about existing or not existing? I mean, that's kind of like, Where do you stand if you don't, you know, you kind of like to exist most people. So that seems like a good thing. But then you'd have some people don't want to not exist. And so they're negotiating the world of existing and not existing. And here it says, Let go of any kind of concern with existing and not existing, what's left? If one isn't holding on to views, then when wouldn't then would, then one would never have a reason to claim that one's own doctrines are ultimate, or that someone else's are inferior. So this is kind of a funny thing, the title of the doc is discourse on what's ultimate. And then what it says about what's ultimate is, don't get cut off, don't get caught up thinking about what's ultimate. And especially around doctrines and religious teachings, the whole idea that we know that I have the ultimate teachings that Buddhism has the ultimate teachings or my teacher is the

ultimate teachings and everyone else is inferior. According to this, that's just more stories and views and attachments to get caught up in. And this is one of the reasons why this kind of teaching is a little bit radical. Because it seems pretty second nature for people to gravitate towards those teachings they think are the best. You know, the highest greatest whatever. So if one isn't holding on to views into understories into doctrine, then we would never have a reason to claim that one's own doctrines are the ultimate, and then someone else's are inferior. In the same way, when wouldn't think of one step one, in the same way, when wouldn't think of oneself as superior, equal or inferior to others. Any of you that serves as the basis for such comparisons is called an entanglement. So not only our views, you know, unnecessary to taking away our views, our doctrines are better than others and others are worse, to think that you're better than others that you're superior, or that you're inferior is just more entanglement, more and more attachments to be caught up in. And then this fascinating idea, the even thinking that you're equal is a problem. And so what's left, you're not supposed to think about existence or non existence, not supposed to be attached to what's ultimate, and what's the best, or what's inferior, and you're not supposed to think of yourself as being superior, inferior, or equal to others. So like, doesn't leave you with anything. What's that that's no good. You know, you don't know you're gonna come to IMC and go home with something.

So instead of doing this, taking anything is ultimate. Rather, one shouldn't depend on anything. If when it's holding on to anything, one should let go.

With its thorough emphasis on letting go, this discourse, as is true for most of this book, advises against any religious observance or practice, except letting go. And that's also challenging people come to religion or to Buddhism, what practices and things they can do. And this book, the title I gave the book is the Buddha before Buddhism. But this book emphasizes that doesn't doesn't emphasize anything, no practices, nothing to do nothing to believe nothing to hold on to, except letting go, is that good enough to be left with nothing to hold on to or to believe or, you know, it's like, pretty, doesn't doesn't leave you anywhere. So here's some of the verses. Having views about what is ultimate, a person makes these the best in the world, and calls all other views inferior. As such, they have not gone beyond quarrelling. Seeing benefit in the self, or in things seen heard or thought, or in precepts and religious practices. And then grasping at this, a person then sees all else as inferior. What one relies on in order to see all else as inferior is an entanglement say those who are skilled when should therefore not depend on things seen, heard or thought out, or on virtue and religious observances doesn't leave much for religious people to do. One should not think of themselves as inferior or superior to others. And they shouldn't take themselves as equal either. Letting go of what is taken up, the person free of grasping doesn't depend on knowledge or take sides, when factions disagree or fall back on any kind of view. When one not inclined to either side of existence or non existence, to this world or the next, there exists nothing to get entrenched in, when considering the doctrines others grasp. Here, when does not conceive the slightest concept in regard to what is seen, heard or thought? How in the world how in this world could one categorize that Brahman who does not take hold of us so not holding on to stories not holding on to views not being attached to anything seen thought seen heard or thought about heard means anything you read because didn't have books back then. So hearing about how you got teachings, but nowadays we say read maybe or hear hear and teachings. So So, how does how do you categorize the person who does not hold on to any views? How do you see them? How do you understand such a person such a one does not construct prefer or take up any doctrine such as one does not construct prefer or take up any story. Such a person is not led by precepts, or religious practices. A person of led by precepts and religious practice, who has gone beyond does not fall back on belief is one who is thus. So the whole poem ends. So it talks about all these things, you know, just like just let go, don't depend on knowledge don't depend on views on doctrines and stories don't even depend on the normal things which people depend on for religious life don't depend on practices, virtue, ethics, don't depend on any

of it, don't be attached to any of it. Don't get caught up in ideas of you're better than others, or your religion is better than others, or theirs are worse than yours. Don't be concerned with whether you exist or don't exist, don't be concerned about next life or this life. What's left in between, like, very little space to kind of exist then.

But the person who does this has gone beyond all limitations. And the only way you can categorize this person, I don't know why you can refer to them or describe such a person is with a very imprecise title. Thus, the person is this. So it's like, you know, if you came to someone and said, you know, tell me who you really are. And the person just kind of stands there and opens their arms, say, I'm this. This is how it is just this, just this, maybe there's no, it doesn't need to be a more definition than that. Maybe there doesn't need to be to limit ourselves by some kind of title or some kind of opinion or some kind of identity that we have, you know, just Thus, it seems very imprecise. But it's also very freeing. Imagine someone loves you. And you say, Why do you love me? And then they go through the exact list, particular clothes that you wear, they have that opinion, you cook this kind of good food. Those are the reasons why I love you. Like, probably, you know, okay, but that's not what you want to be known by. But they say, What do you love? Why do you love me? And the person says, because you're just the way you are. The kind of home you know, you're just, you're not defined or limited. Just kind of like you can relax at home. You don't even know who you are. But, you know, you can just Uh huh, okay. So thus just to be this. So someone who is free, it's just us. That we can it's a way of being very generous to other people, just us. And not to live in this world and world of opinions and stories and ideas and judgments. That human life is so much caught up in. don't depend on views don't depend on knowledge, don't depend on even ethics. Be ethical. But don't depend on it. Don't hold on to it, don't hold on to anything. That's this radical message from the time of the earliest teachings of the Buddha. I like to call it the Buddha before Buddhism before before we have Buddhism, which is just another religion that's better than all the other better religions. On the other, you know, just all these systems and all that. It's just Deus. So can you be this? Can you let go of all your stories and all your views and allow yourself just to be this Okay, thank you and