

Discussion Questions: Mahayana Class 8

(Pages 1-20 “Not Even a Middle”)

- 1) What distinguishes the Mādhyamaka or middle way school of philosophy from the other 3 philosophical schools that we have discussed?
- 2) Define relative and absolute truth according to the Mādhyamaka philosophical system.
- 3) Compare the Chittamātrin view of the three truths to the Mādhyamaka view of the two truths.
- 4) In what way are relative experiences seen as being of the nature of truth in the Mādhyamaka system?
- 5) Distinguish between the levels of slight analysis and thorough analysis in appreciating absolute truth.
- 6) Describe the three misunderstandings of emptiness that may arise on the path.
- 7) Explain the “real emptiness” as defined by Mādhyamaka philosophy.
- 8) Explain the concepts of independence, permanence, and existence as asserted by Mādhyamaka philosophy.
- 9) What gave rise to the split between the Svātantrika Mādhyamaka and the Prāsaṅgika Mādhyamaka?
- 10) Describe the five methods of analysis provided by Nāgārjuna to help us see the emptiness of all things.