

Study Group - Bodhicharyavatara

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Commentary by the Venerable Geshe Doga

Translated by the Venerable Tenzin Dongak

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Generate a virtuous motivation thinking, 'I need to attain complete enlightenment for the welfare of all sentient beings. For that purpose I am going to listen to this profound teaching and then I am going to put it into practice as much as possible'.

2.1. Dedication for the welfare of others

2.1.1.2. Dedicating by relating it to the individual sufferings of the three lower realms

The following three verses dedicate that the beings in the hell realms be liberated by the trinity of Vajrapani, Chenrezig and Manjushri, through the power of prayer and mental stabilisation.

The first of these three verses dedicates in relation to Vajrapani, who is the emanation of all the Buddha's power. The second verse dedicates in relation to Chenrezig, who is the embodiment of all the Buddha's compassion, and the third verse dedicates in relation to Manjushri, who is the embodiment of all the Buddha's wisdom.

*Why am I afraid here of the men, crows and vultures
of the lord of death?* [11]

*Whose power created this pure bliss and happiness
that dispels darkness completely?*

*Having thought this, may they look up, and see
Vajrapani blazing in the sky.*

*May they be separated from their negativities
through their joy of seeing him and become his
companion.*

Previously one dedicated that the sufferings of the hell realms cease. Here it says that after the terrifying noises made by the *vultures*, the *crows* and the different minions of *the lord of death* in the hell realms (who instil very great fear in the beings that live there) cease, may the hell realms be transformed into places of *pure bliss and happiness*. Then the beings there wonder how this has come about and look up into the sky.

After all the different fears, the terrifying noises and beings, and the darkness of the hell realms have been pacified, and the hell realms have become beautiful blissful and happy places (as one has prayed for in the previous verses) may all the beings *look up* and behold the powerful form of *Vajrapani blazing in the sky*. May great joy be generated in their minds *through seeing him* and through that *joy* may they become free from all *their negativities* and join Vajrapani as *his companion*.

*Having see the fires of hell extinguished
By a rain of flowers and scented water* [12]
*May the hell beings think about where this
adventitious satisfaction of happiness
Came from, and see the lotus in Vajrapani's hand.*

This verse prays for the sufferings of hell realms to be relieved through the compassion of Chenrezig. It is somewhat similar to the previous one in that initially the sufferings of the hell realms are extinguished, and the sentient beings wonder about the cause of this. Then they

see the deity, which in this case is Chenrezig. *Having seen the fires of hell extinguished by a rain of flowers and scented water, may all the hell beings*, for whom one has previously prayed, *think about where this adventitious satisfaction of happiness has come from*, and may they *see the lotus*, which is Chenrezig, *in Vajrapani's hand*.

*Friend, come hither, far away from the dangerous one
within. You* [13]

*Will become free from all sufferings and be gone in
the power of joy.*

*The one who generates bodhicitta and love to rescue
all migrators,*

*Who will come to Manjushri with the radiant top
knot eliminating all fears?*

*A hundred gods make offerings to his lotus feet, he
has eyes moistened with compassion* [14]

And a rain of various flowers falls on his crown.

*He has a pleasant house, hundreds of thousands of
goddesses Melodiously singing his praises; behold
him!*

*Having seen Manjushri may the hellish minds
emerge.*

Here the scenario is that one of the hell beings is Manjushri, who invites all the other hell beings to join with him to get away from *the dangerous one* - the lord of death. He tells them that if they go with him then they *will be free from suffering, and be gone in the power of joy*, and *will join Manjushri* who has *the radiant top knot illuminating all fears, the one who generates bodhicitta and love to rescue all migratory beings. A hundred gods make offerings to his lotus feet*, and *his eyes are moistened with compassion. A rain of various flowers fall on his crown and he has a pleasant house where hundreds of thousands of goddesses melodiously sing his praises. Behold him!*

May all beings in the hell realms, after having seen Manjushri in such a way, break out in praises from joy and happiness.

There are two ways of viewing Vajrapani, Manjushri and Chenrezig. One, as the trinity explained above, and two, as three of the eight close disciples. The remaining five close disciples are Samanta-bhadra (Always Pure), Namka'i Nyingpo (Essence of Space), Sa'i Nying-po (Essence of the Earth), Jampa (Love) and Dripa Namsel (Pure from Obscurations)

The next verse relates to the remaining five close disciples.

Thus, by the roots of my merits, [15]
May the hell sentient beings be delighted
*By seeing fresh and nice smelling blissful rain falling
from clouds*
*Unobscured; like the bodhisattvas completely pure
and so forth.*

Shantideva prays that *by the roots of my merit, by the power and ability of the remaining five close disciples may a rain of fresh and nice smelling rain*, which is *blissful* to the touch and *unobscured* by obscurations, *fall from the clouds*. When the *hell beings* see this rain may *they be delighted* and happy.

That completes the dedication relating to the merits. In this context the eight close disciples are viewed as bodhisattvas who always accompany the Buddha.

May animals be free from the [16ab]
Fear of one being eaten by the other.

Animals have the particular suffering of living in a realm of

constantly being eaten by other bigger animals. *May the animals be free from the suffering of being eaten by others.*

May all hungry ghosts be happy [16cd]
Like the people in Draminyen.

May the hungry ghosts be purified and satisfied [17]
By a stream of milk flowing down
From the hand of the powerful transcendent
Chenrezig
And be satisfied forever

The continent of Draminyen is endowed with many fortunes - steady wealth, food, life span and so forth. *May all hungry ghosts* have this happiness, like the *people* who took rebirth in *Draminyen*. *May the hungry ghosts be purified and satisfied by a stream of milk flowing down from the hand of the powerful transcendent Chenrezig and be satisfied forever.*

This relates to a visualization of the milk flowing down from the hand of Chenrezig into the mouth of the hungry ghost, purifying them from their negativities. By doing this meditation you are satisfying their hunger and thirst, and placing them in a state of everlasting happiness.

The previous prayers were for beings reborn in the lower realms; one has dedicated for beings that were reborn in the hell realms, the beings that were reborn in the preta realm, and one dedicated for those that were reborn in the animal realm.

2.1.2. Dedicating for the completion of realisations of those who have already advanced

Now one dedicates for beings that have been reborn in the higher realms so that they become free from suffering. Initially one dedicates so that those with incomplete faculties have complete faculties.

May all that are blind behold form [18]
And all that are deaf always hear sounds.
Like the magical goddesses
May pregnant women be protected and without harm.

One dedicates for those who have incomplete faculties to have complete faculties: for *the blind* to be able to see and for *the deaf* to be able to *hear* and so forth. One also dedicates for *pregnant women to be protected* from difficulty and harm *like the Magical Goddess* (which is the name of the Buddha's mother), who had a very problem-free pregnancy.

The subsequent prayers are dedicating to all the different individual physical and mental sufferings of the beings in the happy realms.

May the naked ones get clothes [19]
Those hungry get food
Those thirsty get water
And sweet drinks.

May those destitute attain wealth [20]
May those miserable and downtrodden attain happiness.
Those depressed by uplifted
And attain perfect stability.

May those who lack *clothes get* nice, beautiful *clothes*, may *those* who are *hungry get* very good and delicious *food*, may *those* who are *thirsty get water* and other kinds of nice drinks such as good tea and so forth. *May those* who are *destitute attain* perfect, stable *wealth*.

May *those* who are *miserable and downtrodden* be uplifted and attain *happiness*. May *those* who are *depressed* and discouraged, because of not achieving their aims, be uplifted and cheered up though achieving their aims. May they attain inner strength and a life of perfect stability and harmony, where suffering and mental unhappiness can harm them.

May those who are low and miserable attain happiness. May those who are burdened by many sufferings, and who are low and miserable attain happiness, and may they attain the objects that make them happy and so forth. May the minds of those who are depressed and miserable be uplifted and may they also attain happiness. Sometimes there are things that can uplift the mind of somebody who is miserable and depressed. May they all experience or receive those things and may their minds be uplifted and happy.

May all sick sentient beings quickly [21]
Be liberated from their sickness
May all the sicknesses of all migratory beings
Be eternally banished forever.

May those with anxieties, paranoias and fears become fearless, may those in bondage be liberated, may the powerless ones become powerful and empowered. *May all sentient beings* who are *sick be* cured of *their sickness*. *May all* the mental and physical ailments and *sicknesses of migratory beings be banished forever*. May they never arise ever again.

Praying that may those who are fearful, with anxieties, paranoia and so forth become fearless, is a very good prayer for these times where many people are very afraid.

May those who are in bondage and in serfdom and [22]
Under the power of others become liberated.
May those who are powerless
Become empowered.

May sentient beings who are powerless become empowered and may their minds become mutually friendly, One can often observe that people don't interact in a very friendly manner with each other. May all this harmful intent and spite and so forth be pacified in their minds, and may they live together harmoniously.

A note on variations in translations

Different translations come about because some translators do a word commentary, and others concentrate on the actual words that are there in the root text. It could be that some don't stick to the words of the root text, but give more of an explanation of the words.

Transcribed from tape by Jenny Brooks
Edit 1 by Adair Bunnett
Edit 2 by Venerable Tenzin Dongak
Edited Version
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