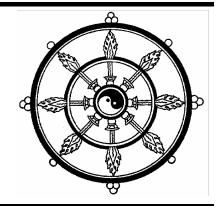
## Dharmarakshita's "The Wheel of Sharp Weapons" A Commentary by The Venerable Geshe Doga Translated by Samdup Tsering

७७ ते बैट्सिकें कें के विवस्ती





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First of all we will do some breathing meditation together. Start by choosing a comfortable meditation posture, making sure that your body is fully relaxed. Then try to calm the mind by turning it inward and overcoming any thoughts of external objects. When our mind is turned inward, rather than wandering outside, then it is a good time to start the meditation. Simply focus the mind on the inhaling and the exhaling of your Make sure that there are no other objects distracting your mental attention, and make sure that you make an effort to single pointedly focus on the

After concentrating on the breathing meditation for a short time, you can then include purification using mental visualisation. Imagine that you breathe out in the form of darkish smoke, Tibetans call it darkish light, and that all your sources of mental and physical discomfort, or any obstacles in your life, are all going out of you with this breath.

When you breathe in, imagine that you are breathing in some kind of positive and inspiring energy in the form of bright, white light. As it fills your body, generate a strong thought that both your mind and body are completely purified and that there are no stains or negativities left inside. Imagine that your body becomes pure and is like a body of light and crystal clear.

So, by starting with the breathing meditation we can then try to incorporate this visualisation. It is beneficial to practice meditation whenever you can find some time, as meditation practise is something that we need to integrate into our lives.

We are up to Verse 24 of 'The Wheel of Sharp Weapons':

When our servants and friends are annoyed by our

And after awhile cannot stay in our homes, This is the wheel of sharp weapons returning Full circle upon us from wrongs we have done. Till now we have imposed our bad habits on others; Hereafter lets change and show only kind ways.

This verse is specifically relevant to people in positions of leadership. There are many leaders who are initially famous and popular with many friends and supporters. But, over time, all the close friends and others who surround these leaders may start to criticise them and even show anger and hatred towards them. Without applying some sort of spiritual training to the mind, these leaders can suffer a great deal as a result of a

change of attitude towards them. The advice given in this verse is so leaders can examine the cause of these supportive and friendly people suddenly turning against them.

Its a result of the past karmic action of misleading others or by serving as a bad example to many others. These leaders have influenced many people through their past negative actions. This verse says that when leaders face such circumstances, they should try to identify the cause in their own past actions rather than blaming or criticising former supporters.

If you make a mistake and realise that it's your own fault, then you don't usually get too upset or angry towards others. Likewise, if leaders could see that his or her situation is the ripening of past karmic action, then they will suffer less. This verse is also talking about the effect that our mental attitude, or our way of thinking, has on our actions, and the personal consequences of these actions.

For example, if influential leaders misuse or take advantage of their power, then of course the public will not like or accept that behaviour. As a result of their illnatured mind and their actions, they can lose their friends, supporters and their reputation. Sometimes, as a consequence of this, great suffering is experienced in the mind. This could be lessened or even prevented if there was an understanding of the circumstances and an effort made to modify or change their perspective on their situation. If the right mental attitude is not adopted, then leaders can suffer greatly, feeling that they have lost face and feel rejected and isolated.

We can relate the teaching of this verse to ourselves in that we should also be more responsible for our mental attitudes, thoughts and actions. We need to realise that the harm and problems we have in our daily lives, and from even our close friends, are a result of our own ill natured thoughts and our own bad actions towards others. For example, two close friends living together both have good natures as part of their personalities, but if in their daily actions they have a selfish mental attitude with no consideration of the other person and only act for some selfish advantage, then the result is disappointment.

Our daily actions simply follow our mind, our mental intentions. If we have a selfish motivation, then our actions will be faulty and unskillful. However, if our mental attitude is one of love, compassion and consideration for others, then naturally this will be

reflected in our actions. The results of these actions are beneficial both to us and to others, who are likely to respond in the same way. We do not like it when someone close to us treats us in a selfish manner. Likewise, our friends wouldn't tolerate the same selfish behaviour from us. If we don't make an effort to correct our day to day selfish thoughts and actions towards our friends, then our actions will be reciprocated, day after day, today and tomorrow. Underneath us all we have a good and caring human nature, but if we don't correct or get rid of the day to day selfish nature in our thoughts and actions, then its as if our good nature never has the chance to manifest itself to others.

So when we think about the meaning of this verse, we don't necessarily have to take into consideration our past life actions. But if you do believe in past lives, then it is helpful to think that the many misfortunes and bad circumstances that arise in this life are due to actions done in past lives. Thinking like this is beneficial in that we don't blame others for our misfortunes, we can keep our friendships and our trust in others. So whenever anyone criticises or complains about us, just think that an action we have done in the past is the cause of that criticism or complaint.

So we are instructed in this verse: "Hereafter lets change and show only kind ways...". We all want to be good natured people, because we clearly know that if we are bad natured it is difficult for our friends and family to get along with us. If our day to day nature is more bad natured than good natured, and our mental attitudes and actions are selfish, then this will affect the people closest to us. Eventually they won't want to be our friends anymore and will become more distant. We could even make more enemies with these negative attitudes and actions. But if we have a good nature and hold a attitude of loving kindness and compassion, then our friendships will last and become more stable, and also we'll have more friends.

So we need to think seriously on the importance of having a more positive nature in our day to day attitude and actions. The outcome of a selfish mind is being all alone. Friends we have will keep their distance. If you can live alone without friends and enjoy life, then that's a different story. But many people find it miserable living in isolation.

When we talk of bringing more happiness to our lives, we don't always think about happiness in terms of more money or more material possessions. But by changing our own mental attitude towards others and likewise changing our actions, we can bring about more positive habits in our thoughts and actions. This results in winning more friends, having more stable relationships and receiving more help from others. Everything naturally seems positive. So when happiness comes to our lives, it is not in the form of people giving us money, clothes, food or drink, but from bringing about some positive change in our own minds and actions.

As usual we will finish by chanting the Buddha's mantra. Once again, choose a comfortable meditation posture and try to calm the mind. Use the mantra as the object of

concentration.

## TAYATHA OM MUNI MUNI MAHA MUNAYE SOHA

Transcribed from the tapes by Jenny Brooks Edited by Cynthia Kareena Edit checked against the tapes by Richard Garward Edited Version

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