

Dedication Chapter of Shantidava's Guide to the Bodhisattva Way of Life

Due to merits of my composing
A guide to bodhisattva conduct,
May all sentient beings enter into
The pure conduct of bodhisattvas.

May sentient beings in all directions
Who suffer ills of body and mind
Have oceans of joy and happiness
Due to the merits I have obtained.

May their happiness never decline
While they still remain in samsara.
May they obtain the unceasing joy
Of all those who are bodhisattvas.

No matter the types or the number
Of the hells that exist in the worlds,
May all hell beings who abide in them
Enjoy the bliss of Sukhavati.

May those tormented by cold be warmed.
May those tormented by heat be cooled
By endless streams of water that fall
From vast clouds of the bodhisattvas.

May forests of trees with sword blade leaves
Now become beautiful pleasure groves.
May the trees that grow in Shalmali
Become forests of wish-granting trees.

May all hells become charming places
With immense fragrant lotus filled lakes;
Beautiful places where sounds are heard
From birds like wild ducks, geese and white swans.

May ember heaps become mounds of jewels,
May burning grounds be smooth crystal floors.
May immense mountains of crushing hells
Become buddha filled halls of worship.

May lava rains, burning coals, sharp swords,
Now become gentle rains of blossoms.
May those who fight others with weapons
Now play, tossing flowers at each other.

May those in the acid Ash River,
With flesh dissolved, bones bleached lily white,
By my merits gain deva bodies
And dwell with gods by gentle rivers.

Why are crows, vultures, Yama's agents frightened?
They see shining Vajrapani in the sky.

They wonder "Who dispels darkness and brings joy?"
Freed by joy from wrong deeds, may they go with him.

May hell beings who see rains of flowers, perfume,
Extinguish rivers of fire in all the hells
Be amazed and wonder "Why has this happened?"
Be filled with joy and see great Padmapani.

Friends, cast aside all of your fears.
Come here, come here quickly, quickly!
Here is one with power of joy
Who can free all from suffering,
A supreme great bodhisattva
Protector for all sentient beings
A fearless shining youth who has
A top knot on top of his head.

Look, a hundred gods worship him,
With their crowns bowed low at his feet,
His eyes are moist with compassion,
Flowers fall down upon his head,
Thousands of goddesses sing praise.
When those in the hells have seen this,
May all of them rejoice loudly.

So due to my merits, when hell beings can see
Cooling sweet-scented rains fall unobstructed
From Samantabhadra bodhisattva clouds,
May all those in the hells become filled with joy.

May animals no longer fear
Being eaten by each other.
May hungry ghosts be as happy
As men of Uttarakuru.

May all pretas be satisfied,
Continuously cleansed and cooled
By the milk that flows from the hand
Of Avalokiteshvara.

May the blind now see forms.
May the deaf now hear sounds.
May birth be without pain
As with Buddha's mother.

May the naked find clothes.
May the hungry find food.
May the parched find water
And enjoyable drinks.

May the poor obtain wealth.
May those sorrowed find joy.

May the forlorn find hope,
May their minds be steadied.

May those with illnesses
Very quickly be cured.
May the world's diseases
Completely be ended.

May the frightened not fear.
May those bound be set free.
May the weak become strong.
May hearts join in friendship.

May travelers find comfort
Wherever they travel;
Without any effort
May they find what they seek.

May those in boats and ships
Accomplish their wishes,
Return safely to shore,
And rejoice with families.

May those distressed and lost on wrong paths,
Meet and join other travelers.
Not fatigued may they journey with ease,
Without fear of thieves, tigers and such.

May deities give protection
To unsheltered young and old ones,
To those tired, insane, or drunken,
To those lost in wildernesses.

May all humans not face hardships,
Have faith, wisdom and compassion,
Have excellent food and conduct,
And never forget prior lives.

May all have unending fortune
With wealth like the Sky Treasury.
Without disputes and not threatened
May they use their wealth as they please.

May those who have little splendor
Be endowed with magnificence.
May the deformed who bear hardships
Have beauty and obtain great wealth.

May all the women in the world
Achieve the same status as men.
May the lowly be exalted.
May the prideful ones be subdued.

From the virtue of my merits
May all beings without exception

End all their negative actions
And always engage in virtue.

May all maintain bodhichitta
And behave like bodhisattvas.
May maras' deeds not beset them.
May they all have spiritual guides.

May all of the sentient beings
Have immeasurable long lives
And always live in happiness
Not even knowing the word 'death.'

May there be in all directions
Pleasure groves with wish-granting trees,
With buddhas and bodhisattvas,
And with the sweet sounds of Dharma.

May all the grounds be totally clean,
Free of all flaws, including small stones,
In nature like lapis lazuli,
And supple like palm of one's hand.

May circles of disciples
Be filled with bodhisattvas
Abiding on the ten grounds
Adorning them with splendor.

May all of the sentient beings
Hear without interruption
Sounds of Dharma that arise
From birds, trees, lights and the sky.

May sentient beings always meet
Buddhas and bodhisattvas.
May sentient beings praise teachers
With endless offering clouds.

May the gods bring timely rains.
May harvests be abundant.
May rulers govern justly.
And the worldly ones prosper.

May medicines bring healing.
May mantras be successful.
May dakas, demons, and such
Have minds filled with compassion.

May sentient beings not have fear,
Not be despised or suffer,
And never be unhappy.

May monasteries remain and flourish
Filled with learning and with recitations.
May all those with vows live in harmony
And may all of their goals be accomplished.

May those with vows who wish to practice
Find quiet and peaceful locations
Where they are free of all distractions
And can meditate with supple minds.

May nuns have sufficient support,
Be free from harm and not quarrel.
May all of those who are ordained
Hold pure the vows they have taken.

May those distressed with broken vows
Turn away from all wrong actions.
Having obtained higher rebirths
May they maintain all of their vows.

May those who are wise be honored.
May the learned ones receive alms.
May they cleanse their minds of all stains.
May they be renowned everywhere.

Free from the lower realms' sufferings,
Not beset with any hardship,
May all soon become enlightened
With bodies more splendid than gods.

May all sentient beings continue
To make offerings to the buddhas.
Through training may all sentient beings
Gain the endless bliss of buddhas.

May wishes of bodhisattvas
To aid sentient beings be fulfilled.
May wishes of the protectors
Also be completely achieved.

May all pratyekas obtain joy,
And likewise all the shravakas.

Through the kindness of Manjushri,
Until I attain 'Joyous Ground,'

May I recall my prior lives
And may I always be ordained.

May I live completely sustained
With only bare necessities.
In each of my lives may I find
Places suited for solitude.

When with the wish to behold him,
Or even ask simple questions,
May Bodhisattva Manjushri
Come to me without hindrance.

Just as Lord Manjushri practiced
To benefit all sentient beings
Who fill space in all directions,
May I practice in the same way.

A long as space remains,
As long worlds remain,
May I also remain
To end all suffering.

May all sufferings of sentient beings,
Now ripen on me completely.
Aided by the bodhisattvas,
May sentient beings gain happiness.

May teachings remain bringing joy and wellbeing,
The sole remedy for sentient beings' suffering.
May teachings be met, be praised, and respected.
May teachings remain for a very long time.

I prostrate to Bodhisattva Manjushri
By whose great kindness my mind turns to virtue.
I prostrate to all my spiritual teachers
By whose kindness my mind grows ever stronger.

Translated by Rodney Stevenson

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