

**Translation of Ch. 2 of the Bodhisattvacaryavatara
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Śāntideva's Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra

**Chapter Two
Confessing Negativity**

[1] In order to adopt this precious bodhicitta,
(I) present offerings in an excellent way to the tathāgatas,
To the sublime dharma, the immaculate jewel,
And to the sons of the buddhas, who are an ocean of qualities.

[2] Whatever flowers and fruits there are
And whatever kinds of medicine,
Whatever jewels exist in this world
And whatever clean and pleasing waters there are;

[3] Jewel mountains and likewise
Forests, remote and joyful places,
Heavenly trees ornamented and bedecked with flowers
As well as trees (laden with) beautiful fruits, bending down the branches;

[4] Fragrances in the realms of gods and the like,
Incense, wish-granting trees and jewel trees,
Untilled and naturally grown crops,
And furthermore, ornaments that are worthy to be offered;

[5] Lakes and pools adorned with lotuses,
Wild geese, endowed with most beautiful voices,
All these, which do not belong to an owner,
Within the reaches of infinite space;

[6] Creating these in my mind, I offer them in an excellent way
To the Muni, the supreme being, together with his sons.
Sacred recipients of gifts, great compassionate ones, think kindly of me;
Accept these (offerings) of mine.

[7] Not being endowed with merit, I am destitute,
Having no other riches to offer.
Therefore, protector, you who care (only) for the welfare of others,
Accept these (offerings) with (your) powers for my own sake.

[8] To the victor and his sons
I shall constantly offer all my bodies.
Supreme heroic beings, please accept me completely;
I shall be your respectful subject.
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[9] When I am completely cared for by you,
I shall benefit sentient beings without fearing saṃsāric existence;
I shall perfectly transcend my previous negative deeds
And furthermore shall not commit wicked deeds in the future.

[10] (In) very sweetly scented bathing pavilions
(With) luminous and sparkling, level crystal floors,
Endowed with exquisite pillars ablaze with gems,
Aglow with pearls, canopies are hanging; there

[11] I offer bathing to the tathāgatas and their sons
With many precious vases,
Properly filled with pleasant scented water,
Accompanied by various songs and music.

[12] I dry their bodies with incomparable cloths,
Clean and well-powdered with scent,
And then I present them excellent things,
Garments of colors well-dyed, (powdered with) most sublime sweet-smelling fragrance.

[13] With each and every one (of the many) hundreds of excellent ornaments
And various noble garments, fine and smooth,
I adorn the noble Samantabhadra, Mañjughoṣa,
Lokeśvara and others.

[14] Just like polishing cleaned and refined gold,
I anoint the bodies of all lords of the sages with supreme perfumes
Of scented fragrances permeating all 'third order of a thousand (world systems)'.
So that they glow and sparkle in their luster.

[15] To the lords of the sages, the supreme objects for offerings,
I offer every (variety of) beautiful flowers, sweetly fragrant,
Such as māṅḍāravā-flower, lotus, utpal and others
As well as beautiful, well-arranged garlands.

[16] I also offer (the victors and their sons) cloud banks of incense that spreads
A supreme scent of sweet fragrance, captivating the mind;
And I present them royal delicacies,
Including a variety of food and drink.

[17] I offer precious lamps
Arranged in rows upon golden lotuses;
On a level floor anointed with perfume,
I scatter petals of lovely flower blossoms.

[18] To those who have the nature of compassion
I offer also these unfathomable palaces endowed with beautiful melodies of praise,
Exquisitely radiating, bedecked with ornaments of pearls and gems,
Serving as an adornment for immeasurable space.

[19] I constantly offer to the lords of the sages
Precious and lovely parasols with golden handles
And exquisite ornamental designs embellishing the rims.
Hoisted, their excellent shapes are beautiful to behold.

[20] In addition, may masses of offerings
Endowed with sweet and pleasing melodies of musical instruments
Each remain as (offering) clouds, Soothing the misery of beings.

[21] May a rain of gems, flowers and the like
Continuously descend
Upon all sublime jewels of dharma
And upon stūpas and images.

[22] In the same way as Mañjughoṣa and others
Have made offerings to the victors,
Similarly I present offerings to the tathāgatas,
The protectors and their sons.

[23] I praise the oceans of qualities
With an ocean of variations of melodious eulogies;
May clouds of lovely melodies of praise
Actually ascend to them at all times.

[24] To all buddhas who appear throughout the three times,
To the dharma and the supreme among gatherings,
Bowing down with bodies as numerous
As all the atoms in the buddha fields, I pay respect.

[25] To the basis of bodhicitta
And to (all) stūpas I pay respect.
Likewise, to the preceptors and to the teachers
As well as to the supreme practitioners, I pay respect.

[26] I go for refuge to the buddhas

Until I attain the essence of awakening.
Likewise, I go for refuge to the dharma
And to the gathering of bodhisattvas.

[27] Perfect buddhas and bodhisattvas,
Endowed with great compassion,
Residing in all directions,
Joining my palms, I beseech you thus:

[28] Throughout beginningless saṃsāra
In this lifetime and in others,
Ignorantly I committed negative deeds,
Incited (others) to commit them and,

[29] Overwhelmed by the delusion of ignorance,
I rejoiced (in negativity). Whichever of these (deeds) I have done,
Recognizing this as a fault, I confess to you, protectors, from the depth of my heart.

[30] Whatever harm I have done due to my afflictions,
With body, speech and mind,
To the three jewels,
My father, mother, teachers and others;

[31] Whatever negative deeds I, the wicked one—
(To whose mind) the stains of various mistakes cling—
Have committed, (even) the most intolerable acts,
I confess them to the guides of all.

[32] I may well come to perish
Before my wicked deeds have been purified.
What then will liberate me with certainty from these?
Please grant me your protection in a swift manner.

[33] This unreliable (Māra of) Death
Will not wait, (whether your tasks) are completed or not completed.
Therefore, no one, neither the ill nor the healthy,
Should place his trust in this fleeting life.

[34] One must depart (alone), leaving all behind.
But I, not understanding this,
Have committed various kinds of negative deeds
For the sake of friends and foes.

[35] Foes will cease to be;
Friends will cease to be;
I too will cease to be;

Likewise, everything will cease to be.

[36] Just like an experience in a dream,
Whatever things I have enjoyed
Have become a (mere) object of memory of 'this and that'.
I will not see (again) anything that has passed.

[37] Even within this very life, while I am briefly alive,
Many friends and foes have passed,
But whatever unbearable negative deeds I committed for their sake,
(The karmic ripening of these deeds) remains ahead of me.

[38] Thus, as I did not realize
That I am ephemeral,
I committed many forms of negative deeds
Out of ignorance, attachment and aversion.

[39] Remaining neither day nor night,
This life is constantly slipping away.
And since (life) is never getting any longer,
Why would death not come to one like me?

[40] While I am lying in bed,
Even though (I am) surrounded by my friends and relatives, I alone will experience
The feeling of life being severed.

[41] When captured by the messengers of the Lord of Death,
What benefit will relatives afford? What benefit will friends afford?
At that time (my) merit should protect me,
But upon that I have never relied.

[42] Protectors! I, so heedless,
Unaware of such terror as this,
Committed many a negative deed
For the sake of this transient life.

[43] If those people, who are led today
To the place where their limbs will be amputated, are petrified,
With parched mouths and glazed eyes,
Appearing different than before,

[44] Then needless to mention (my) tremendous despair
When taken by the physical forms
Of the fearsome looking messengers of the Lord of Death,
When (I am thus) stricken with the disease of great panic.

[45] Who can really protect me
From this great horror?
With eyes gaping in an expression of terror
I will search the four quarters for refuge.

[46] Seeing no refuge in the four quarters
I will become completely depressed.
If there is no refuge on that occasion,
Then what should I do at that time?

[47] Therefore, from today onward I go for refuge
To the Victor, the protector of beings,
Who strives to shelter all beings
And with great power eradicates all fear.

[48] To the dharma he has realized,
Which clears away the fears of saṃsāra,
And also to the assembly of bodhisattvas,
I genuinely go for refuge in the same manner.

[49] Utterly panicking with fear, I
Offer myself to Samantabhadra;
To Mañjuḥṣa as well
I myself offer this body of mine.

[50] Also to the protector Avalokita,
Whose compassionate conduct is without delusion,
I let out a lamentation of mournful crying,
“Please grant me, the wicked one, protection!”

[51] In the noble Ākāśagarbha,
In Kṣitigarbha, and
In all protectors of great compassion
I seek refuge, crying out in lamentation from my heart.

[52] I go for refuge to Vajrī,⁴
The sight of whom frightens (all) hateful ones,
Such as the messengers of the Lord of Death,
And causes them to flee in terror to the four quarters.

[53] Previously, I ignored your teaching.
Now, catching sight of great terror,
I go for refuge to you.
Please swiftly clear away (these) fears.

[54] If I must comply with a physician's advice
When frightened by a common disease,
Then no need to mention (that I must heed the Buddha) when perpetually infected
With diseases of hundreds of misdeeds such as desire and so forth.

[55] If all people living in Jambudvīpa
Can be destroyed by just one of these (diseases of afflictions),
And if no other medicine to cure these
Can be found in any quarter,

[56] Then concerning this, those who have the intention to disregard
The advice of the omniscient physician
That can uproot all misery
Are extremely ignorant and deserve to be criticized.

[57] If I must remain heedful
(When approaching) even a small, ordinary drop,
Then how much more so (when in fear of falling) into a chasm
That drops thousands of leagues, (where I have to remain) for a long time.

[58] It is unreasonable to rest easy
Thinking, "Today, at least, I shall not die,"
For inevitably the time will come
When I shall become nothing.

[59] Who can assure me (that I need) not fear?
How can I be surely freed from this (fear of dying)?
If I will inevitably become nothing,
How can my mind rest at ease?

[60] Is there anything that remains with me
From what I experienced before, which has (not already) vanished?
Nevertheless, I am clearly attached to these (pleasures),
And have disregarded my guru's advice.

[61] As I must abandon this life and in the same way
My relatives and friends
When I must go alone to an uncertain destination,
What use are all my friends and enemies?

[62] Since from non-virtuous actions suffering will arise,
How can I surely free (my mind) from these?
Thinking constantly, day and night,
About this alone, is (most) appropriate.

[63] Whatever I may have done

Due to ignorance and stupidity,
Among (all) unreported misdeeds of (violating) natural laws
Or all negative deeds of (breaking) established rules,

[64] In the direct sight of the protectors,
With palms joined and mind terrified by the misery (to come),
I prostrate again and again,
Confessing all these (misdeeds).

[65] I beseech the guides (of the world)
To accept me as I am, at fault due to my negative deeds.
Since these (negative deeds) are not good,
From now on I shall never repeat them.

From the *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*, the second, the chapter on Confessing Negativity.