

**Translation of Ch. 3 of the Bodhisattvacaryavatara  
by Andreas Kretschmar**

# **Śāntideva's Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra**

## **Chapter Three The Thorough Adoption of Bodhicitta**

[1] Gladly do I rejoice  
In the virtues of all beings who are relieved  
From the sufferings of the lower realms and  
(Gladly do I rejoice) in those who dwell  
in happiness (though) infused with suffering.

[2] I rejoice in that gathering of virtue  
That is the cause for the enlightenment (of arhats and pratyekabuddhas).  
I rejoice in (all) sentient beings who are definitely liberated From the misery of samsara.

[3] I rejoice in the enlightenment of the protectors  
And also in the levels of the sons of the victors.

[4] With gladness I rejoice  
In the oceanic virtues of directing the mind (toward supreme enlightenment),  
Establishing all sentient beings in happiness,  
And in the deeds that benefit sentient beings.

[5] With folded hands I beseech The buddhas of all directions:  
“I supplicate you to shine the lamp of dharma  
For (all) those sentient beings who are bewildered in the darkness of misery.”

[6] With folded hands I beseech  
The victors who wish to pass into nirvana:  
“I supplicate you to remain for countless aeons  
And not to leave these beings in blindness.”

[7] Thus by having performed all these (seven sections mentioned above),  
And through whatever virtue I have amassed,  
May all the misery of all sentient beings  
Be cleared away.

[8] For as long as beings are ill

And until they are cured from their diseases,  
May I become their medicine and their physician  
And may I become their nurse.

[9] May a rain of food and drink descend  
To clear away the ills of thirst and hunger.  
During the intermediate aeon of famine  
May I myself become food and drink.

[10] May I become an inexhaustible treasure  
For sentient beings who are poor and destitute  
And may all the various things they might need  
Be readily available to them.<sup>4</sup>

[11] My body and likewise my enjoyments,  
And even all my virtue of the three times,  
I surrender without any sense of loss,  
In order to accomplish the welfare of all sentient beings.

[12] (If) suffering is transcended by giving away all,  
Then (since) my objective is to accomplish nirvāṇa—  
As I will have to surrender everything at once (anyway)—  
It is the best to give (the three bases) to sentient beings (now).

[13] Since I have already given this body  
To all living beings to do with whatever they like,  
They may at any time kill it, revile it,  
Beat it and so forth—whatever pleases them.

[14] Even if they toy with my body  
Or make it a source of jest and mockery,  
Since (I) have already given this body of mine (to others),  
Why should I hold it dear?

[15] Let them do any action to it  
That brings them no harm.  
May thinking of me  
Never be meaningless for anyone.

[16] If an angry or a faithful thought  
Arises in anyone who thinks of me,  
May that (thought) always be the cause  
That fulfills all (their) goals through these (skillful means).  
4 Literally ‘remain closely before them’.

[17] May whoever slanders me

Or whoever does me any harm  
Or, similarly, whoever insults me in whatever way,  
All have the fortune of enlightenment.

[18] May I be a protector for those without protection,  
A guide for those who have set out on the road,  
A boat, a ship, and a bridge For (all) who wish to cross (the water).

[19] May I be an island for those who seek an island,  
A lamp for those who desire a lamp,  
A place and a bed for those who want a place and a bed,  
And a servant for all  
Beings who wish for a servant.

[20] May I be a wishing jewel, a noble vase,  
An accomplished vidyā-mantra and a great medicine,  
A wish-fulfilling tree, And a wish-granting (cow) for beings.

[21] In the same way as earth and so forth—  
The great elements—and space (provide the basis for life),  
May I always be the basis for providing manifold necessities  
For countless sentient beings.

[22] Likewise, may I as well be a cause for providing necessities,  
In all circumstances, for the realms of sentient beings,  
Which extend to the farthest reaches of space,  
Until all reach nirvana.

[23] Just as the sugatas of former times  
Directed their minds toward awakening,  
And just as they established themselves by stages  
In the trainings of a bodhisattva;

[24] Likewise for the sake of all beings  
I give birth to bodhicitta,  
And likewise I shall also  
Practice the trainings by stages.

[25] When an intelligent person has lucidly  
Adopted bodhicitta in this way,  
He should also in the future, in order to expand it further,  
Inspire his mind in the following manner:

[26] Today my life has become fruitful.  
Human existence is well obtained.  
Today I have been born into the family of the buddhas

And have now become a son of the buddhas.

[27] From now on, in any situation,  
I will (only) undertake actions that accord with the (Mahāyāna) family.  
Never shall I defile  
This unsullied and noble family.

[28] Just like a blind man  
Discovering a jewel in a heap of dust,  
Likewise by some coincidence  
Bodhicitta has been born within me.

[29] This (bodhicitta) is also the supreme nectar  
That defeats the lord of death, (the slayer) of beings.  
This (bodhicitta) is the inexhaustible treasure  
That eliminates (all) the poverty of beings.

[30] This (bodhicitta) also is the supreme medicine  
That pacifies the diseases of beings.  
It is the tree that shelters all beings  
Wandering and wearied on the path of existence.

[31] It is the palanquin  
That liberates them from the lower realms.  
It is the rising moon of the mind  
That dispels the torment of affliction.

[32] It is the great sun that utterly dispels  
The misty ignorance of beings.  
It is (like) clarified butter which comes forth  
From churning the milk of the sublime dharma.

[33] For (all) guests, beings travelling on the paths of existence  
Who wish to experience the pleasures of happiness,  
The (bodhisattva) remains (in samsara) so that (beings attain) supreme bliss,  
Thus satisfying sentient beings, his chief guests.

[34] Today in the sight of all protectors,  
I summon beings to be my guests, (bestowing upon them) happiness Until (they attain the level) of the sugatas, May gods, asuras and others generate joy.

From the *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*, the third chapter, entitled “The Thorough Adoption of Bodhicitta.”