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.”

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.4

[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.”