



# Bodhicharya

AWAKEN THE HEART BY OPENING THE MIND

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***Rejoicing in Taking the Vows***  
***3<sup>rd</sup> Chapter, Stanzas 25-28***

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Teachings on the Bodhicharyavatara for the Bodhicharya Online Shedra

So now we come to stanza number twenty-five of the third chapter. This is rejoicing after having taken the Bodhisattvas' vows that we went through last time and now this is the time to rejoice at what we have done.

So it says:

*Those who thus with clear intelligence  
Take hold of the awakened mind with bright and lucid joy,  
That they may now increase what they have gained,  
Should lift their hearts with praises such as these: [25]*

So, with clear intelligence means that, those who are wise, they have taken the Bodhisattva vows. First they have generated the bodhichitta, they have generated the intention of a bodhisattva and then they have taken the commitment, made the commitment to work for that. These two are what we call the intention bodhichitta and the action bodhichitta. So after having done that, now we need to sustain that. We've made a promise. I've got a very good kind of motivation and intention and now we have to train with that. And in order to train with that we need to sustain that good motivation - that aspiration. And in order to sustain that aspiration we need to inspire ourselves again and again. Because if we don't inspire ourselves again and again, that inspiration, that aspiration that we have, that bodhichitta that we have generated this time, may slowly

deteriorate and then we might even forget. So therefore, it is extremely important in order to improve, in order to work further and stabilize and increase and make our bodhichitta very strong and progressed, we need to again and again inspire ourselves. So therefore, we have to feel very joyful, we have to rejoice at what we have done by taking these Bodhisattvas' vows. And we should think how great that was and how important that was to take the Bodhisattvas' vow, and to act on that and train in that. So therefore, when we have taken the Bodhisattvas' vows then we should rejoice in that, we should feel how wonderful that is that we have been able to do that, how beneficial it is, and so that bodhichitta will not deteriorate but increase more and more. Otherwise, then if you forget the value of that bodhichitta, if you don't see the positive qualities of that, if we regret what we have done, then it will go away and then there's no kind of continuation and no progress. So therefore it's extremely important to again and again rejoice for ourselves, inspire ourselves, and make this bodhichitta increase and strong.

So the 26<sup>th</sup>. Now there are two things - first, rejoice for ourselves - rejoice at what we have done for ourselves and for others. Secondly, that we not only rejoice for ourselves but also ask other people to rejoice that I have taken these Bodhisattva vows. So first rejoicing for ourselves:

*"Today my life has given fruit.*

*this human state has now been well assumed.*

*Today I take my birth in Buddha's line,*

*And have become the Buddha's child and heir. [26]*

You know I have, according to the Buddhist way of understanding, taken birth countless times before now. There's no kind of a beginning of the beginning. We may have taken countless lifetimes and in those countless lifetimes, so far, we have been trying to do something that's good for ourselves, we've been very busy and have been making lots of efforts and lots of stress and lots of hard work. But where have we arrived? All those struggles, all those sufferings, all those lamentations and fears and hopes and anguish, have given us nothing substantial. So we have wasted them. But now, at this time, I've found a way and I have found an understanding, that if I not only work for myself, but work for the benefit of all sentient beings - and also in order to do that, if I generate compassion and generate wisdom - then I'll find the gate or I'll find a way to free myself from all kinds of sufferings - and also not only myself - but I might find the wisdom to bring

all beings to the end of suffering.

So therefore, if I have found some really important fruit, really important result of this life and because of this understanding, and because I have decided to work on that, in that line, in order to help myself and all sentient beings - that I've decided to harm nobody and help everybody and, follow this clear way, that will benefit myself now at this very moment, and also in the long run, that I can see very clearly that if I act like this, if I train like this, if I think like this, if I react like this, with my emotions, if I change my habitual tendencies in this way of compassion and wisdom - then I know very clearly that it is all good for myself and others. So therefore I've done something completely useful, completely beneficial. So therefore I've made this human life, this time, something really useful. And not only that, but I've taken - today - I've taken my birth in Buddha's line. So I've made this decision to take the Bodhisattvas' vows. And so therefore I am following in the footsteps of the Buddhas of the past, the great Bodhisattvas, and therefore now I have become an heir to the Buddhas. I have become like the follower of the Buddhas. I have become somebody who will be a future Buddha, or is a future Buddha. So therefore I have now found the lineage, I've found my direction, I've found something that if I follow and if I train myself, I know will bring only good things for myself and good things for others as well. So therefore, I must be extremely happy about that. I must appreciate this. I have done something really worthwhile this time.

And then to continue:

*"In every way, then, I will undertake*

*Activities befitting such a rank.*

*And I will do no act to mar*

*Or compromise this high and faultless lineage. [27]*

So therefore, I will be very careful, I will be very mindful that I will take this promise, take this direction, take this path seriously, because I understand how beneficial it is. I understand how negative it would be if I don't follow this way - if I forget about this, if I do the same as I have been doing for countless lifetimes before this. So therefore, I will take this seriously, I will do nothing to mar or to compromise or to belittle - to become a dark spot and mar and become somebody who

didn't do well, who made a fault in this lineage. I must keep this lineage pure - wholeheartedly and without making any kind of negativity. So therefore, I will not act in any way that will mar or compromise this, the high state of the promise that I have made to become a Bodhisattva and I will not do anything to discredit this great lineage or the name that I have got - that of Bodhisattva.

So now is verse 28:

*"For I am like a blind man who had found  
A precious gem inside a heap of dust.  
For so it is, by some strange chance,  
That Bodhichitta has been born in me.*

Because you know I've generated bodhichitta, I've found this understanding of how important it is to generate bodhichitta, to feel compassion and wisdom, to work on compassion and wisdom. It is because that is the source of all happiness and source of all positive things for myself and for others and for all beings. So it is like, if you have to give an example, it's like a blind man finding a precious gem inside a heap of dust – there was a big heap of dust and in that there was a most precious gem. And you are yourself blind but somehow you found it. That's very rare, it doesn't happen often, it can't - it's very very difficult and if you find that, you must consider yourself extremely fortunate, extremely lucky.

I must feel myself like that. I am an ordinary person. I am not the most intelligent person. I have all sorts of negativity and still I found the bodhichitta and I find that I am going to generate bodhichitta and work towards [and keep] on the path of the bodhisattvas. So this is so fantastic, so wonderful, because this is going to bring lasting peace and happiness for myself and lasting peace and happiness for all sentient beings. So, by some great blessing, by some great chance, by some really great something, karma that I have done, some where, some time, some great connection that I have [and so] generated bodhichitta a little bit - so that is so precious. Because if I am a blind man and I have found this precious jewel I will not waste it, I will try to keep it as dear as my life - so in the same way, I would now keep the bodhichitta as dear or more dear as my own life, because it so wonderful and so beneficial and so useful.

So I think I will stop here. This is stanza number 25 to stanza number 28.

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