

**Shantideva's**  
**Bodhicaryâvatâra**

བྱང་ཆུབ་སེམས་པའི་སྡོད་བཀའ་འཇུག་པ།

Group Study with Venerable Lama Sangyay Tendzin

Session 51 - Saturday August 27, 2022

**Chapter SIX: Showing Patience (Continued)**

**REFUGE | MANDALA | REQUEST for TEACHINGS**

**Lama's Invocation**

**Short practice of Mental Quiescence**

Tashi Deleg! Welcome everyone as we meet again to continue our group study of Bodhicaryâvatâra.

In the sixth chapter teaching the practice of patience on its subsequent level, we are currently analysing how to

**"Cultivate patience when people do good to our enemies."**

This topic is presented through the stanzas 76 to 86.

Of these we went through the first eight and follow now with sloka 84.

**Stanza 84:**

**If, whether he receives it from him**

**Or it remains in the benefactor's house,**

**It will in no way be yours,**

**So, what does it matter whether it's given to him or not?**

Shantideva here alludes to the attitude of practitioners and even (as Kunzang Palden refers to it in his commentary) of young lamas and tulkus who, jealous of each other, find it intolerable that others of their rank should be honoured and served. When they behave in this way, the manifest resentment for both the benefactors and the beneficiaries.

This is unacceptable and they should immediately counteract their mental attitude by consistently reflecting on what follows.

Whether a benefactor gives a horse, or whether the benefactor keeps it for himself, and the horse stays in his stable, in neither case is this horse going to come to the lama thinking this way.

Whether the benefactor gives or does not give his horse to his rival, how can it be a matter of concern to the lama?

What is the point for him to wish enviously that the horse be not given to his rival but to him instead? One should rejoice or at the very least rest in a state of indifference about it.

**Stanza 85:**

**Why throw away your merit, your faith,**

**And even your own good qualities?**

**Why don't you get enraged**

**With who's lacking the cause of riches.**

We get angry out of jealousy when others acquire possessions, and we wish even more of such possessions for ourselves. But one must reflect on the fact that the cause of others' wealth is their

previously accumulated merit, their present devotion to the Dharma and the teachers, and their qualities of learning and discipline.

These are the sort of qualities that benefactors appreciate, and therefore such people are sponsored.

- We too can accumulate merit by making offerings, giving alms and so forth.
- We too can inspire clear confidence in others by the strength of our faith in the three jewels and through being quiet and disciplined because of practicing mindfulness, close examination, and vigilance.
- We too may possess a pure observance of monastic discipline.
- We too can develop the skill to distinguish between what is to be done and what is to be avoided through our study of the teachings.
- We too may soften our hearts with compassion and bodhicitta and,
- We too may find an effortless source of provisions because of all these qualities.

Why, being jealous, do we find such causes of wealth so unbearable when they happen to others? Why, by our bitterness, do we cast these very same causes so far away from us?

On the contrary, we should grasp them to ourselves. Not behaving grudgingly. Indeed, if we wish to enrich ourselves by every means, why are we not angry with ourselves for not seizing upon such causes? For they are what benefactors regard as most worthy and what inspire them making offerings, providing thus the source of abundant wealth.

It is our own jealousy that we must censure. We should begrudge ourselves and no one else.

**Stanza 86:**

**Not only do you not feel sorry  
About the negative things you've done yourself,  
You wish to compete against others  
Who've enacted positive deeds?**

We may want to argue that we and the people that we envy being all the same and equal. Therefore, when we lack something, they shouldn't have it either! However, the cause of our poverty has nothing to do with them but resides in the fact that, ignorant of what should be done and what should be avoided, we committed evil actions such as stealing in the past.

Moreover, without repentance and remorse, we even are arrogant to the point of competing with those who possess the knowledge of correct conduct, pure discipline, and great merit. These are what caused their wealth to materialise.

Our attitude is wrong! And if we cannot help competing with others, then let us observe the discipline, accumulate merit, and understand the proper rules of conduct.

Of the twelve undesirable factors that have been quoted earlier, the way to cultivate patience regarding the causes of our suffering was explained in detail under three headings:

- The patience of accepting suffering,
- The patience regarding the ultimate reality of things and,
- The patience of making light of adversity.

The cultivation of patience regarding those who treat us with contempt, through verbal aggression, together with the destruction of one's good name through malicious gossips; patience with those who mistreat our loved ones, together with patience towards those who do good to our enemies. All these has been presented very briefly and should be reflected upon carefully, analysing these three points.

To meditate on these points is helpful as you will get familiar with them, becoming skilled to keep pure conduct when finding yourself in similar situations and thereby, progress on the path of virtue.

The next three slokas bring the topic of **“Cultivating patience toward obstacles that prevent unpleasant things from happening to our enemies.”**

**Stanza 87:**

**Even if your enemy lacks any joy,  
What’s there in that for you to take delight?  
The mere wish in your mind  
Won’t become the cause for (any) harm to him.**

We get irritated with what prevents those we dislike from suffering and being despised by others. On the other hand, when our enemies suffer, when they are mourning, affected by a theft, or being attacked by enemies, we should ask ourselves why should this cause us to rejoice?

And if, thinking that we might be benefited by it, we express such a wish and say how much we would like such things to happen to our enemies, such words cannot cause them the slightest harm, either now or in their future lives. Therefore, such behaviour is completely futile!

**Stanza 88:**

**And even if his suffering came about through your wish,  
Still, what’s there in that for you to take delight?  
If you said that you’d become gratified,  
Is there anything else more degenerate than that?**

And even if our hostile wishes were to occasion harm, once again, what reason is that for us to rejoice? We might tell ourselves that we would be happy if our wish were to be fulfilled before we die. But what manner of happiness could that be?

Indeed, could there be anything more ruinous either in the present life or in the life to come? Not only will our malevolence do nothing to ruin our enemies, but the weapon of our evil wish will turn against us, attracting every kind of misfortune like a magnet drawing iron to itself.

Since such an attitude constitutes the downfall of abandoning beings, it follows that in our next life we will fall into the hells and will have to endure great suffering.

**Stanza 89:**

**This hook cast by the fishermen, the disturbing emotions,  
Is horrendously sharp.  
Procuring (you) from them,  
O mind, the joyless realm guards will cook me, for sure, In the cauldrons of hell.**

Just as when a fish is caught on a hook by a fisherman who cooks it in his pan (the fisherman in this case being the defiled emotion who casts the hook, namely, the evil wish), we too are caught on the hook, unbearable and sharp, and flung into the burning copper cauldrons of the hells, sure to be boiled by the workmen of the Lord of Death and to suffer pain for long ages.

We will stop here for today. Let us practice mental quiescence for a short while, before dedicating the merit of this session for the benefit of all.

