

The Bodhisattva's Garland of Jewels

Taking Refuge and Generating Bodhichitta

In the Buddha, Dharma and the Supreme Assembly
I take refuge until I attain enlightenment.
Through the merit of practicing generosity and the rest,
May I attain Buddhahood for the benefit of all beings!

Verses of Refuge and Bodhichitta

Motivated by the wish to free all beings,
Continually, I shall take refuge
In the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha,
Till the essence of enlightenment is reached.

With wisdom and with heartfelt love,
Diligently, for the sake of sentient beings,
I shall place myself before the buddhas,
And generate the perfect mind of bodhichitta.

Eight Verses of Mind Training

by Geshe Langri Tangpa

By thinking of all sentient beings
As more precious than a wish-fulfilling jewel
For accomplishing the highest aim,
I will always hold them dear.

Whenever I'm in the company of others,
I will regard myself as the lowest among all,
And from the depths of my heart
Cherish others as supreme.

In my every action, I will watch my mind,
And the moment destructive emotions arise,
I will confront them strongly and avert them,
Since they will hurt both me and others.

Whenever I see ill-natured beings,
Or those overwhelmed by heavy misdeeds or suffering,
I will cherish them as something rare,
As though I'd found a priceless treasure.

Whenever someone out of envy
Does me wrong by attacking or belittling me,
I will take defeat upon myself,
And give the victory to others.

Even when someone I have helped,
Or in whom I have placed great hopes
Mistreats me very unjustly,
I will view that person as a true spiritual teacher.

In brief, directly or indirectly,
I will offer help and happiness to all my mothers,
And secretly take upon myself
All their hurt and suffering.

I will learn to keep all these practices
Untainted by thoughts of the eight worldly concerns.
May I recognize all things as like illusions,
And, without attachment, gain freedom from bondage.

The Bodhisattva's Garland of Jewels

by Atisha Dipamkara

Homage to great compassion!
Homage to the deities who inspire faith and devotion!
Homage to the masters!

Be done with doubt and indecision,
And embrace your practice with all your heart.
Shake off lethargy, dullness and laziness,
And strive always with enthusiasm and joy.

Mindful, vigilant and careful,
Guard the doorways of your senses at every moment.
Three times each day, three times at night,
Again and again, examine your thoughts.

Make plain your own failings,
But don't look for faults in others.
Make known the good points of others,
But keep quiet about your own best qualities.

Let go of craving for gain and honor,
And give up the urge for profit or fame.

Cultivate love and compassion,
And make your bodhichitta stable.
Avoid the ten unwholesome actions,
And make your faith and confidence be strong.

With few wants, be content with what you have,
And with gratitude repay any kindness you receive.

Overcome anger and arrogance,
And let humility rule your mind.
Give up any unwholesome kind of living,
And pursue a livelihood in keeping with the Dharma.

Do away with your addiction to material things,
And adorn yourself with the riches of the Aryas.

The wealth of faith, of discipline,
Generosity and learning,
Decency, self-control,
And wisdom—such are the seven riches.
These most sacred forms of wealth
Are seven treasures that never run out.
Do not speak of this to those who are not human.

Leave all busyness and distraction behind,
And dwell instead in seclusion and solitude.

Refrain from meaningless chatter,
And always keep a check on what you say.

Whenever you see your master or preceptor,
Offer to serve them with devotion and respect.
Those who possess enlightened vision
And those first setting out upon the path—
Regard them both as your spiritual teachers.

Whenever you see any sentient beings,
Regard them as your parents or your children.
Don't befriend those who act in harmful ways;
Instead rely on true spiritual friends.

Drop any feelings of hostility or ill will,
And be happy, wherever you choose to go.

Avoid getting attached to anything at all,
And stay free from craving and desire.
Attachment not only keeps you from happy births,
It kills the very life of liberation.

Should you find a way to peace and happiness,
Strive constantly to put it into practice.
Whatever task you set out to do,
Accomplish that very thing first.
This way, everything will turn out well;
If not, nothing will succeed.

Never take pleasure in acts that harm.
And when thoughts of superiority creep in,
There and then, deflate your self-importance,
And recall your master's personal advice.
Or whenever you feel discouraged or inadequate,
Raise your spirits and encourage yourself.
And always meditate on emptiness.

Should the objects of attachment or aversion appear,
View them as no more than illusions or projections.

Should you hear unpleasant words,
Consider them nothing more than echoes.
Should you suffer physical harm,
See it as the result of your past actions.

Keep entirely to solitude, far away from town,
And, like the carcass of some wild animal,
Stay hidden in nature by yourself,
Free of all entanglement and attachment.

Always keep up your pledges and commitments,
And should laziness or procrastination strike,
Immediately take note of your errors, one by one,
And remind yourself of the heart of your discipline.

Whenever you meet another person,
Speak calmly, sincerely and truthfully.

Take care not to frown or glare,
And always wear a cheerful smile.

And when you're with those you see every day,
Don't be stingy, but be happy to give,
And banish all feelings of envy.

So as to protect others' peace of mind,
Stay clear of quarrels of any kind,
And be patient and always forbearing.

Don't flatter, or be a fickle friend,
But be steadfast and reliable all the time.
Never disparage or belittle other people,
But treat everyone with respect.
When giving advice or instructions,
Do so with compassion and a genuine wish to help.

Be sure never to criticize the teachings.
Set your sights on what inspires you most,
And, through the ten forms of Dharma practice,
Exert yourself in sessions, day and night.

Among others, keep a check on your speech;
When alone, keep a check on your mind.

Whatever virtues you amass in the past, present and future,
Dedicate them all towards great, unsurpassable awakening,
Share your merit among all sentient beings,
And with the seven branch practice,
Continually make great prayers of aspiration.

Practicing like this, you will complete
Accumulations of both merit and wisdom,
And eliminate the two forms of obscurity.
You will make this human life meaningful,
And, in time, gain unsurpassable awakening.

*This concludes The Bodhisattva's Garland of Jewels
composed by the great Indian pandita Dipamkara Shrijnana.*

Aspiration Prayers

O sublime and precious bodhichitta,
May it arise in those in whom it has not arisen;
May it never decline where it has arisen,
But go on increasing further and further!

May they not be separated from bodhichitta,
But be always inclined to enlightened action:
May they be cared for by the buddhas, and
May they abandon harmful action.

May the bodhisattvas' good wishes
For benefitting beings be fulfilled.
Whatever the protectors have intended for them:
May sentient beings receive it.

May all sentient beings be happy.
May all the lower realms be forever empty.
May the aspirations of all the bodhisattvas
Of the various bhūmis be fulfilled!

Verse from the Bodhicharyavatara by Shantideva

For as long as space exists,
And sentient beings endure,
May I too remain,
To dispel the misery of the world.

Dedication by Nagarjuna

Through this merit, may all beings
Complete the accumulations of merit and wisdom,
And so attain the dharmakaya and rupakaya
That come from merit and wisdom.