

The Asian Classics Institute

△△△ Diamond Mountain University

Master Shantideva's Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life
The Chapter on Dedicating the Power of Good Deeds



Master Shantideva

- (1) Thus have I completed writing
A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life.
And I pray that by this goodness
Every living being
May take up this way of life.**
- (2) By the power of this good deed too
May any single living creature
In sickness or in pain,
Of body or of mind,
In any corner of this universe,
Be thrown into a sea of bliss.**
- (3) And for as long as they may wander
In the circle of suffering life,
May they never lose this bliss.
May every one of them one day reach
The bliss beyond all other,
And stay there never-ending.**
- (4) I don't know how many
Realms of hell there are
Hidden in our world;
But by this power may every person
Trapped in one instead find joy
In the joy of the Heaven of Joy.**

- (5) May those who freeze in the cold of hell
Be covered in warmth.
May infinite showers of gentle rain
Fall from vast bodhisattva clouds
To cool the searing pain
Of those who live there in fire.**
- (6) May the forest of falling leaves of knives
Turn for those who live there into
A pleasure grove of shady bowers.
May the daggers of the trunks
Of the trees of Shalmali
Sprout as the Wish-Giving Tree instead.**
- (7) May the caverns of hell suddenly echo forth
With the soft sweet song of the dove and nightingale,
Ruby-throated sparrow, graceful swans, birds
Of every kind, drawn to the gentle waters
That spring up instantly there, covered with lotuses
Whose delicate fragrance fills the air.**
- (8) May the heaps of burning embers of fire become piles
Of precious jewels, and the red-hot glowing iron floor
The ground of a new world, sparkling in crystal light.
May the mountains that slam together, crushing the crowds
Of helpless people between them, turn to the palace
Temples of heaven, filled with bliss-filled Buddhas.**

- (9) In the moment that I speak may the great rain of putrid
Filth, and stones of solid fire, knives, and spears,
Transform into a soft steady shower of fragrant flower petals.
And in the hells of anger, where people snatch up rocks
And sticks to gash one another open, may they instead
Gather up armfuls of petals, laughing, tossing over each other.**
- (10) I send the awesome power of the good deed that I've done
As well to all those trapped within the river that cannot
Be crossed, wrapped within the hell-flame there, with all
The skin and flesh ripped away from their bodies, the bones
Jutting out in the glistening white of freshly fallen snow;
May this power grow their bodies back, in the form of divine Angels.**
- (11) And then may the beings in hell take pause,
and wonder suddenly to themselves,
"Why now do the henchmen
Of the Lord of Death, and his vicious
ravens, and the birds of prey,
Why do they turn and run from us?"
What glorious power has turned the night of hell
to golden day, and smothered us within
this happiness, this strength, this bliss?
Who could have such power?" And may they raise
their eyes and see the blue
of sky, and seated in it
The One Who Holds the Diamond in His Hand.
And then may joy spread
in their hearts, so powerful that
It tears away every wrong they ever did,
and so then they can rise
and fly—fly away with him.**

**(12) May a rain of lovely flower petals
mixed with cool and perfumed water
Descend in a song and extinguish the flames
of the fires that burn in hell.
May the beings who live there look upon
this sight, and suddenly
Be overcome by happiness. And then
may they think to themselves,
"Who could have done this thing?"
And may they turn and see
Before them the One who holds
the Lotus in His Hand.**

**(13) And then may the hell beings
hear a voice that
calls to them and says:
"Come my friends, so far away,
cast away your fears now,
and come be at my side;
Come to the one whose power
has stripped away your agony
and thrown you into joy."
And when they lay their eyes on this one,
on Gentle Voice himself,
may every miserable creature there
Burst forth in a song, a song
that roars throughout the hells,
a song that sings:
"You are the bodhisattva who protects
every single living being,
overcome by your love for them;**

**(14) "You are the youth divine,
with your flowing locks,
body blazing in light;
How could it be
that you have come to us,
and smashed the terrors here?
Are you not the one
to whom a thousand gods
would run, to touch
The tips of their crowns
at your lotus feet?
The one whose eyes glisten
In tears of compassion for us?
The one on whom
A constant shower of petals falls?
See him now—surrounded by palaces
filled with crowds of celestial maidens
singing out his praises!"**

**(15) Oh thus may it come to pass,
through the power of the goodness
that I've done:
Every suffering being in hell,
wrapped now deep in happiness,
standing staring up
At clouds as they gather overhead,
and the reality
of the bodhisattvas—
The one whose name is
Sheer Excellence,
and all the rest—
Uncovered fully in the light,
sending down upon them
showers of the rain
That brings them bliss,
cool soft rain,
rain of finest fragrance.**

- (16) And by this power may every being
Who lives in the animal realm be freed
From the terror of feeding off each other.
May those who live as craving spirits
Enjoy a life of peace and plenty,
Like humans of the isle of Haunting Voice.**
- (17) May a stream of milk descend from the hand
Of the Lord of Power, the Realized One,
The One Who Looks with Loving Eyes,
And may it fill the spirits who crave,
Washing them too in a gentle bath,
Leaving them cool and refreshed.**
- (18) And by this power may the blind
Open their eyes and see the beauty;
May the deaf hear the song of sound.
May every woman with child give birth
As Maya, the Buddha's angel mother,
Did him—without a hint of pain.**
- (19) May those without sufficient clothing
Be suddenly clothed; may the hungry
Be instantly filled with food.
May those who suffer now from thirst
Drink fine fresh water
And other delicious beverages.**

- (20) May every poor person there is
Find all the money they need;
May those who grieve be comforted.
May those who've lost hope
Find hope anew, and security
That will never leave them.**
- (21) May every single being who's sick
Within this entire universe
Be suddenly, totally, cured.
May every kind of disease
Ever known to living kind
Vanish now, forever.**
- (22) May all those in any kind of fear
Be suddenly freed from it.
May those imprisoned be released.
May those downtrodden come to power,
All of us living then as family,
In harmony with each other.**
- (23) May all of those who are on the road,
To anywhere at all, be safe
And comfortable, wherever they are now.
And may they without the slightest trouble
Find at the end of their journey the thing
They left their home to find.**

- (24) May all those who've left dry land
To travel in boats or ships
Accomplish all they set out to do.
May they cross the dangers of the waters
And then return safe to their homes,
And the arms of friends and family.**
- (25) May those who travel a barren waste,
Or mistake their way, who wander lost,
Suddenly come upon new companions
And find their way easily, free of fatigue,
Without the slightest danger of things
Like thieves or wild beasts.**
- (26) May holy angels come and protect
All those who live in fear, with nowhere
To go, no path to follow:
Small children, the elderly, those with no one
To help them; those who cannot sleep,
Those who are troubled, and the insane.**
- (27) May they spend every life they still have to live
Free of every obstacle to a spiritual life:
May they find firm feelings of faith,
And wisdom, and a perfect capacity
For love; may their physical needs
Be filled, may they lead good lives.**

- (28) May they have all they need to live, forever,
Without a moment's pause, as if they possessed
The treasure of the magic sky.
May they live together without ever quarreling,
Without ever hurting each other, enjoying instead
The freedom to live as they choose to.**
- (29) May every person who is small or shy,
Who has no confidence, become
Strong and full of grace.
May those who've lived a life of need
And suffered from it physically
Recover in resplendent health.**
- (30) May all who live in a place in society
Where they're not treated right transform
Forever to a position ideal.
May those who are looked down upon
Be raised up high, and their arrogant friends
Be tumbled to the ground.**
- (31) And by this goodness I have done
May every single suffering being
Give up every single harmful
Thought or word or deed;
Taking up always in its stead
Thoughts and words and deeds of virtue.**

- (32) May these beings never cease to strive
To reach the ultimate goal, for others;
And may their hearts be swept away
By the stream of loving conduct.
May they abandon every sort of dark behavior,
Remaining in the care of every Holy Being.**
- (33) May every living soul enjoy
A life immeasurably long,
Living thus forever in
A state of constant bliss,
So that even the very word "death"
Is never heard spoken again.**
- (34) May all the places that exist, in every world there is,
Turn instantly into gardens of elegant design,
Filled with trees that grant your every wish.
And may the Enlightened Ones, along with their daughters
And their sons, walk amidst the trees,
Singing out the sweet song of the Dharma.**
- (35) And in each one of these places
May the very foundation, the earth itself,
Be transformed, from sharp stones and the like,
Into the heavenly ground of lapis lazuli—
As smooth as the palm of your hand,
And soft to walk upon.**

- (36) And like a precious jewel
Adorning this same ground,
May all the secret worlds that exist
And all the goodness in them
Abide atop these newfound lands,
Crowded with Warrior Angels.**
- (37) And too, may all who live and breathe
Hear the song of birds,
The wind in the trees,
The light of the sun, and the sky itself,
Singing aloud to them an endless
Rhapsody of holy teachings.**
- (38) And wherever they go may they always meet
The Enlightened Ones, and their children
Who strive for enlightenment.
May they honor these Lamas—
The highest of beings—
With endless showers of offerings.**
- (39) May the lords of the sky
Send down the rains on time,
So to bring forth plentiful harvests.
May all existing governments
Make their decisions based on the teachings,
And thus may the whole world prosper.**

- (40) May every medicine come to have
The power to cure; may the secret words
Fulfill all hopes. May the minds
Of gods and spirits of sickness alike
Be overcome with thoughts of compassion.**
- (41) May no single living being
Ever again feel a single pain.
May they never again feel afraid,
Never again be hurt by another,
Never again be unhappy.**
- (42) May places of spiritual learning thrive,
Filled with people reading sacred books,
And singing them out loud as well.
May communities of spiritual practitioners
Live always in harmony, and may they achieve
The high goals for which they live together.**
- (43) May all those who have ever taken
The vows of a monk come to master
The arts of solitude,
Throwing off every kind of distraction,
Gradually refining their minds,
Learning perfect meditation.**
- (44) May nuns forever find support
For their physical needs, and live lives free
Of conflict or any outside threat.
May every person who's ever become
Ordained conduct themselves
Perfectly in their moral code.**

- (45) And may any of those who may have ever
Broken this code regret what they've done,
And always work to clean the karma.
May they then return to a higher birth,
And in their new life never see
Their spiritual discipline fail again.**
- (46) May every sage who lives in this world
Find the honor due to them, and always be offered
The food and other needs they request.
May they always take care that their hearts are pure,
And may they earn a good name that spreads
Throughout the entire world.**
- (47) May none of these people ever again
Undergo the pain of the lower realms;
In strength beyond the strength of gods
May they quickly win the state
Of a fully Enlightened One
Without the slightest hardship.**
- (48) May every suffering being there is
Make offerings over and over again
To every Enlightened Being there is.
And may the Enlightened Ones enjoy
Forever what we have offered them,
In infinite waves of bliss.**

- (49) May every plan there is in the heart
Of every bodhisattva to help
Every living being come true.
May everyone get every single thing
That the Enlightened Ones who shelter us
Have in mind for us to get.**
- (50) May those who follow the lower paths
Of self-made awakened ones, and listeners,
Attain the happiness they seek.**
- (51) And may we, through the kindness
Of Gentle Voice, remember in life after life
Who we are and what we practice,
Rejecting the worldly way of life
Again and again, until the day
We reach the level called Intense Joy.**
- (52) May we gain the mystic ability
To live off even the poorest of food,
Growing ever more strong and healthy.
In all our lives may we win the wealth
Of learning to live in solitude
With nothing more than barest needs.**

- (53) And when anyone ever longs to see him,
Or ask him even the slightest question,
May the shroud which covers their eyes
Be torn away, so that the High Protector,
Lord Gentle Voice Himself,
Instantly appears.**
- (54) We are working to achieve the goals
Of all the living things there are
In every corner of this universe;
And so by this power may we learn to do
Every single one of the things
That Gentle Voice is able to do.**
- (55) And may we decide that we will stay
To work to clear away the pain
Of every living being there is
Until the last day of this
Universe; until the very last
Suffering creature is changed.**
- (56) May every single pain that is coming
To any single being there is
Ripen now upon me instead.
May the great community of bodhisattvas
Go forth and spread through all the world,
To work for the happiness of all.**

**(57) The teachings of the Enlightened Ones
Are the one medicine that can cure
The great sickness of living kind.
They are the one ultimate source
Of every form of happiness.
And so by this power may the teachings remain
Long upon this planet, with all the support
They require, and all the respect they deserve.**

**(58) And lastly do I bow myself
Down to the One with a Gentle Voice,
The One who has been kind enough
To teach me the ways of virtue;
Thus last do I bow myself down
To the One who was kind enough
To raise me up from childhood:
I bow to You,
My Spiritual Guide.**