



Bodhicharya

AWAKEN THE HEART BY OPENING THE MIND

Ringu Tulku Rinpoche
Offering of Material Things Not Owned by Anybody.
2nd Chapter, Stanzas 2-7.

BA2_2-7: Offering of Material Things Not Owned by Anybody. 2nd Chapter, Stanzas 2-7.
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Teachings on the Bodhicharyavatara for the Bodhicharya Online Shedra



So we went through the first stanza of the second chapter of Bodhichayavatara and we try to talk about the offering of things that we actually have. So this actually means that we try to help, we try to give. Give here means offering to the great beings, to the destitute beings, to the needy ones. But here offering to the enlightened beings is kind of emphasized because if we make offerings, if we give out of ignorance, we can sometimes give things which might cause harm and trouble to others. Therefore, we try to give and help through the enlightened beings, through wiser beings, so that this kind of thing doesn't happen - that's the idea - but it does not mean that we cannot give. We should give, we should try to give and try to help.

Now, the second question is - if we have nothing to give, if we are poor, if we are renounced, then can't we accumulate any positive deeds? Can we not accumulate merit? So here it says that that's not true - even if we don't have anything, we can still make offerings. So having things and not having things is one thing - that we have attachment to things and not have any attachment to things is totally another thing. So therefore here, for those people who do not have things to offer, or even if you have things to offer but you cannot offer them due to any reason, then we can try to make offerings of things that we do not own by ourselves, but which are naturally there around us, which are not possessed by anybody. So to say this Shantideva makes offerings here since he kind of belongs to that category of beings.

So his offering here is a little bit longer - it consists of five stanzas. So Shantideva says

*"I (Shantideva) offer every fruit and flower,
Every kind of healing draft,
And all the precious gems the world contains,
With all pure waters of refreshment:"*

So this is also a way to appreciate all those things – the fruits growing in the forests, the flowers everywhere growing, the drafts, but also the healing drafts. They are kind of descriptions of healing drafts, but healing drafts can be oxygen also. And all the precious gems the world contains - the gems that are not mined but naturally there. And all the fresh waters and refreshment that is naturally in the earth, in the land – I take them all and make offerings of them. I take them of this world and all the worlds that may be around, in the universe and I make offering of them from my heart.

*"Every mountain wrought of precious jewels.
All sweet and lonely forest groves,
The trees of paradise adorned with blossom,
Trees with branches bowed with perfect fruit;*

*The perfumed fragrance of divine and other realms,
All incense, wishing trees, and trees of gems,*

*All crops that grow without the tiller's care,
And every sumptuous object worthy to be offered;"*

All those things that I take from whatever is there - nice, beautiful, wonderful, all over the universe - that's not owned by somebody, I take into my mind and I make an offering of them.

*"Lakes and meres adorned with lotuses,
Delightful with the sweet-voiced cries of water birds,
And everything unclaimed and free
Extending to the margins of the boundless sky."*

That's all those nice and beautiful things that ever is throughout the space - that I take them all. I make an offering of them. So by making an offering of them I appreciate them. I see how important they are, how valuable they are, how nice they are, and then I do not cling to them. I do not try to possess them. I try not to conquer them, but I make an offering for the benefit of all the beings.

*"I hold them all before my mind, and to the mighty Sage, the
greatest of our kind,
And to his heirs, I make a perfect offering."*

So all these things that I take in my mind, I think about them and then I make an offering to the Buddha. The Buddha is the perfect human being and not only Buddha, but all his heirs which means bodhisattvas and the sangha – to all the people, enlightened beings, and those who are on the way of enlightenment and those who are doing something good for others, and those who are worthy of making offerings, who has been kind to me and kind to other beings - those who are suffering and having pain and problems - to all of them I make offerings. But especially to those who have great wisdom and compassion. Because they can receive.

*"Sublime recipients, compassionate lords,
O think of me with love; accept these gifts of mine!"*

Because these are the gifts or these are the offerings I make from my heart with the devotion, with appreciation, with gratitude, so therefore the great wise beings, the enlightened beings, the compassionate beings, they can actually kind of accept them. Because they don't have any selfishness, they don't have any need. So therefore when I make an offering, it's like they have accepted it because they're always fulfilled. But from my side, I make a very kind of strong and sincere wish to make offerings. And when I make that kind of wish, when I open my heart, when I let go of all the desires that I have, of all these nice things that ever is throughout the space, then I accumulate merit - because what prevents me from accumulating positive deeds is my own selfishness, my own clinging, my own smallness, my own obstructive and negative emotions and reactions and attitude.

So therefore even if I don't have anything, I can make offerings of all those things that I don't have and therefore can train my mind, can change my mind, my attitude - a poverty [stricken] state of mind can be transformed into abundance - abundant state of mind. So therefore this kind of making offerings of things that I don't have or that I don't possess - that is not possessed by anybody, but I can see - this becomes very important training also, because usually, how we react is - when I see something nice, when I see something good, valuable, wonderful - immediately, the way we, my mind or our mind usually reacts is, 'Oh this is so nice, I wish I had that'. And then you already created a kind of poverty state of mind - you already created a state of mind where you don't have something, you are lacking something, you want something, you crave for something - and that is dissatisfied mind - you create a dissatisfied state of mind.

By seeing this nice and beautiful thing, instead of enjoying this and appreciating this nice beauty and valuable thing, we create a dissatisfied state of mind. Instead of making ourselves happy, we make ourselves unhappy. And why should we make ourselves unhappy when we see something that's so nice and so wonderful? So therefore instead of thinking that way, that I wish I should have it or I wish I had this - I appreciate this very much - I like this, I value this, it's so nice, I wish to make an offering of all these to all the beings, to all the Buddhas, to all the great beings to all the whoever - every being, every enlightened being, every wisdom being, every energy that is great. So when I do that, then I don't cling to that and I enjoy it. And I even have a sense of being fulfilled. I not only enjoyed the presence of that beautiful or valuable thing, but I have the satisfaction of having even given it - offered it to somebody. So therefore, I create a sense of satisfaction in me - I

create a sense of fulfillment, a prosperity. That state of mind which I'm creating - a satisfied mind, a fulfilled mind, 'having more than I want' kind of state of mind - is very important and that makes one rich. How rich I am is not how many things I have, but how rich I am is how much I feel fulfilled, I feel satisfied, I feel contentment, I feel I have and therefore I can give. The more you have a feeling that you can share, you can give, you can offer - then you have the feeling that you are not poor, you are rich, you are satisfied, you are content. So therefore you feel grateful, you feel gratitude, you feel happy, you feel satisfied.

So this is a very important practice and this we can do anytime, and everyday. Even like I see a nice beautiful car, you can make an offering of that, I can appreciate that - rejoice that this person has that. And then I can make an offering of such things from my mind. Or I see a beautiful flower, I see a beautiful mountain, or garden, or tree, or snow or anything that's wonderful - beautiful sunlight, nice rain or snowfall, river, anything - I can make an offering of that. And that would become, we should make a habit of this, that immediately I see something or I hear something or I read of something, you don't kind of [think] 'I want this'. You make [instead] 'I wish I could make an offering of this', 'I could share this with others', 'I could make a gift of this to everybody'.

So this is the second section of the second chapter which is from stanza number two to stanza number six. Now the seventh,

*"For, destitute of merit, I am very poor;
I have no other wealth. And so, protectors,
You whose wise intentions are for others' good,
In your great power, receive them for my sake."*

So this is the last stanza of this. We're saying that - this I have already described and I have already commented, so maybe I don't need to comment again - but all these great protectors, wise and compassionate beings, they don't have any intentions for themselves, they have intentions only for others' good. So therefore when you are that wise and that compassionate, you can receive them for my sake - you don't need them but please receive them for my benefit, for my good - because if my offering is received by you, then I will feel not only grateful but I will also receive positive deeds, positive energy, or positive result of having offered. So this is what he says. It doesn't mean

that the Buddhas will actually come and take away those things, but this is a way of training our minds and it is also possible that the enlightened beings have the capacity to bless you, to generate energies, to receive things that you are actually, from your heart, offering. So this is the idea.

So thank you very much. Tomorrow I'm leaving for Europe through Delhi and Varanasi and things like that. So I hope I will be able to do the next transmission as successfully as I have been doing here – here I am kind of settled in my room and I have lights and I have all the.....now when I'm traveling, maybe it's a new challenge. So anyway I wish you all a very happy Losar for the Iron Female Rabbit Year. I thought it was a Fire Rabbit but it's not true – Fire Rabbit went many years ago, like twelve years ago – no, two times before this. So it's Iron Rabbit Year so I wish you all the best. And wish that this year will be very happy and healthy and successful and harmonious year for all of you. Thank you very much.

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