



# Bodhicharya

AWAKEN THE HEART BY OPENING THE MIND

**Ringu Tulku Rinpoche**  
***Making Prostrations***  
***2<sup>nd</sup> Chapter, Stanzas 24-25***



BA2\_24-25: Making Prostrations. 2nd Chapter, Stanzas 24 to 25.

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Transcribed by Desi and revised by Rinchen

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So now we come to the prostration or homage and this is stanza number 24 of the second chapter. It says:

*“To Buddhas of the past, the present, and all future time,  
And to the Dharma and Sublime Assembly,  
With bodies many as the grains of dust  
Upon the earth, I will prostrate and bow.”*

So this is making the prostration or making homage or showing respect. Bowing down to all the great beings. Having appreciation in our heart. Remembering their positive or special qualities and

aspiring to embody them in myself, or develop them in myself and, inspired by them, I make these prostrations.

To all the Buddhas of the past, all the Buddhas who are around in the present moment in all the countless worlds throughout space, and all the future Buddhas – those who will become Buddhas, who are not Buddhas at the time being, who are sentient beings or bodhisattvas, but who will become Buddhas - to all of them I make prostrations and I make homage.

And not only the Buddhas but also the dharma. The dharma - that's the teaching - and also the dharma that's in the experience of the enlightened beings - that is like the experience of the enlightened beings - that's also Dharma. To all these dharma I bow down. And then also to the sangha. Sangha is all the beings who have experience of the dharma or any kind of attainments, of any levels of attainments of enlightenment, or any bhumis, or any of the different stages. And they, *dge 'dun*, or the sangha, sometimes it's described that once they gather together they never part - meaning that the assembly is harmony.

To that I will manifest my body into countless bodies and then with all the signs of my respect - like of my body - I fold my hands as if holding a precious jewel and then I feel – actually I visualize holding a wish fulfilling jewel in my hands, in my palms - and then put that on my forehead to represent my body, at my throat center to represent my speech, and at my heart representing my mind. So I make prostration or I bow down or I make homage with my body, with my speech and with my heart to all these beings of Buddha, Dharma and also the Sangha.

And not only those, but I also bow down

*“To shrines and all supports*

*Of bodhichitta – I bow down.”*

To the shrines and all other supports that will bring dharma to my mind, that will help people to generate, experience and understand, or give rise to inspiration of the dharma - like images or forms of Buddha - like teachings, or the books, which give us the understanding of the dharma and

also all kinds of stupas and the great places where the Buddhas and bodhisattvas have made connections and things like that - to all of them, anything that generates positive thoughts and reminds me of those great qualities of the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha - I also bow down to them.

And then also,

*“To abbots who transmit the vows, to every learned master,  
To all sublime practitioners of Dharma.”*

I also bow down to my abbot from whom I received my precepts and my vows. I also bow down to all the acharyas, or the masters from whom I have learnt - like learning reading, writing, learning how to behave, learning any kind of subjects that helps me to be a better human being or that guides me in any different way to help me - all those masters I bow down to. And then also to all those monastic or non-monastic sangha, anybody who is trying to practice on the right path, who is trying to train themselves on the right path and working for the benefit of beings - to all of them I bow down.

Now there is making prostration: sometimes people see prostration as something a little bit strange. But it's actually a way of salutation - you know one way of saluting - one way of showing respect from the Indian way of showing respect. But this is also a kind of meditation in a way. You kind of fold your hands and feel that there is a wish fulfilling jewel in it. And then you fold your hands and you put it on your forehead, on your throat center and heart and this is to remember the positive qualities, the great qualities of the enlightened beings - the qualities of their body, the qualities of their speech, the qualities of their mind. And also that I want to purify mine and all other beings body, speech and mind.

And so with this kind of wish, I bow down - either I kind of put my head and my body flat on the ground or I put five parts of my body on the ground - the kind of shorter prostration - my forehead, my two hands, my two knees - and then feel and pray that, *‘May I be able to help all sentient beings to purify their body, speech and mind and get them all out of samsara’*.

And also, sometimes we think about each of these - like when you put the right knee on the ground and then you think that *'All those beings - may all beings go in the right direction'*. And then when you put your left knee on the ground, then you say, *'All those beings who are going on the wrong path, may I lead them to the right direction, the right path'*. Then when I put my right hand on the ground, then I feel that, *'As the Buddha Shakyamuni defeated all the maras and became enlightened under the bodhi tree, may I be able to do the same for all sentient beings'*. And then when I put the left hand on the ground, then *'May I be able to subdue or tame all the beings who are difficult to be tamed, and difficult to be subdued'*. And then when I put my head or my forehead on the ground, so *'May I be free from any kind of pride or arrogance and may I be able to bring this complete humility and bring all the beings to that state of buddhahood. And may all beings have the what we call as the...'* - you know Buddha had a special mound on his head which was a special sign - that it is, you could never see above; everybody seems to be below that, so therefore you have great glory and complete kind of radiance and could kind of overpower all negativity. So may that kind of quality happen to all the beings.

And with that, then you also think that *'Because I put all the five points of my body on the ground, may all beings be free from five obscurations, may they complete all the five powers, may they have the five clairvoyances and may all beings be freed from the five realms and may all beings attain the special discipline, special meditation, special wisdom, special freedom, and also may they get the complete kind of enlightenment'*.

So with this kind of understanding and feeling, I do the prostration. And I do the prostration also feeling that I myself am emanated into countless bodies and together with all the sentient beings, my father, my mother, my near and dear ones and all other beings, including not only human beings but all other beings together - I make prostrations to the enlightened beings, to everybody who are worthy of respect, I show respect. I maintain the humility so I can see others' goodness - this is the main thing about prostration is that I kind of cultivate humility in me. When I cultivate humility in me, I can see the qualities of others. When I see qualities of others, I get inspired by those qualities and I also naturally kind of aspire to embody them and then slowly I inherit - I kind of learn to develop those qualities in me. So without that if I am not humble, if I don't have the humility, if I have too much pride then I cannot see the qualities of others and I cannot aspire to

have those qualities and then I will not acquire those qualities. So therefore it is extremely important to maintain this, the humility, and try to see the positive qualities in others, especially in very qualified beings, great beings, to appreciate that and to aspire for those qualities. And it is also said that to have this kind of making prostrations and showing respect is a very great practice in itself, because it generates positive qualities in myself and also helps me to see positive qualities in others.

So that's all for today - this is two stanzas, stanza number 24 and 25 of the second chapter. Thank you.

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