



# Bodhicharya

AWAKEN THE HEART BY OPENING THE MIND

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***The Power of Support***  
***2<sup>nd</sup> Chapter, Stanzas 47-53***



BA2\_47-53: The Power of Support. 2nd Chapter, Stanzas 47 to 53.  
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So now we come to the second power of purification, or the second point in the practice of the purification - and that's the power of support or the power of reliance. Now it starts with stanza number 47 of the second chapter and it says:

*“Thus, from this day forward I take refuge  
In the Buddhas, guardians of beings,  
Who labor to protect all wanderers,  
Those mighty ones who scatter every fear.”*

Now this is 'I go for refuge to the Buddha' – because I need to. The Buddhas - what are the Buddhas? The Buddhas are the example of the purification, those who have become fully enlightened and have gained the ten powers. So therefore, they've learnt, they've understood - not only how to free themselves from the sufferings of samsara, and how to free themselves from negative deeds and their influence and their effect - but they also have learnt and understood how to help others in this. So therefore if we do what they tell us to do, the way they show us, if we practice the way they show us, how to do it, then we are also sure to be free from all the fears, all the sufferings and pains.

These Buddhas are not only those who know about how to [become] free from suffering themselves and how to help others, but they have unlimited compassion towards all sentient beings, toward all beings in samsara and suffering - and their only aim or objective is to help them. So therefore they are the ones who can guide people and they have the power to guide. They have the compassion to guide. So therefore, we would all like to, and I must, go for refuge to them - I must work on the path they show immediately. If I don't do it now ... we never know when our life will end. We never know what the future is - everything is uncertain and impermanent. So therefore, I must do it now, this moment. I must purify all my negative things at this moment because if I die before I could do that, then it's a big havoc. So therefore, from this very moment, from today onwards, I would like to go for refuge to the Buddha and purify my negative karma, negative emotions - whatever the causes of my sufferings and pain.

Then the second stanza is:

*“And in the Dharma they have realized in their hearts,  
Which drives away the terrors of samsara,  
And in all the host of Bodhisattvas  
Likewise I will perfectly take refuge.”*

And the dharma is the path, the dharma is the experience of all the Buddhas. So therefore, if they have - the Buddhas have - practiced the dharma, they will thereby have gone beyond samsara and become freed from all fears and all negative things - pains and problems and sufferings of samsara.

So therefore, I would also like to go for refuge to the Dharma and to use the dharma on myself from today, in order to purify all the negativity in myself. And in order to do that, I need also to go for refuge to the bodhisattvas - all the bodhisattvas, enlightened bodhisattvas - in order to be inspired and to get help - to understand the dharma. Because the dharma is something that we need to learn - because the reason why we are still suffering in samsara is not because we didn't want to be free from suffering - but because we didn't know [the way to end it]. Therefore we have to learn the dharma, and in order to learn the dharma, we need the sangha - and the best sangha is therefore the bodhisattva sangha. Of course any sangha is [good] also - I would like to go for refuge to them and I would like to learn from them - but especially the bodhisattva sangha which is compassionate and wise. So therefore I would like to take them as my companions, as my helpers and from whom I learn - and I would like to work on my purification.

And then in stanza 49:

*“Gripped by dread, beside myself with anguish,  
To Samantabhadra I will give myself  
My body I myself will give  
To Manjughosha, gentle and melodious.”*

Now, when I know the negative results or the negative karma and all the negative deeds that have happened - the negative karma that I might have accumulated has its negative results – and I don't want to have pain and suffering, so therefore I am afraid of them, utterly panicking with fear. If I'm not afraid, or if I don't care for the causes of suffering, then I am just foolish. I am not brave, but I am foolish. If I can see the causes of lots of suffering then I must do everything to get rid of those [causes], because if I don't do that, if I am not immediately working on that, it's not that I'm fearless, but I'm just being foolish. So therefore, I must fear them and I must work on them. And how to work on them? I must seek the help and guidance and inspiration of, as we say, Buddha, Dharma and Sangha - and especially the great bodhisattvas who have promised to help all beings for countless aeons - every being - like Samantabhadra. Samantabhadra has promised or his main strength is that anybody who has done anything wrong - that has had any downfalls or done negative deeds - that he will be able to help them to completely purify those negative deeds and

bring them out of the sufferings of samsara. And I also offer myself to Manjushri - Manjushri the great bodhisattva of wisdom - because he is the one who brings wisdom to people. And wisdom is that which uproots samsara, or the suffering - so therefore I go for refuge to Manjushri.

*“Also to the protector Avalokiteshvara,  
Whose compassionate conduct is without delusion  
I let out a lamentation of mournful crying  
‘Please grant me, the wicked one, protection!’”* [Stanza 50]

So I also go for refuge to Avalokiteshvara. Avalokiteshvara as you know is the bodhisattva of compassion, or embodiment of compassion, so therefore I ask for help from him. I cry out, since I really seek protection and help because if I don't do something now, if I don't get rid of my negative actions and their causes, then I will go into samsara and maybe not be able to get rid of it for a long, long time.

So therefore, when I am aware, and when I have the capacity and circumstances to do that, I will do it. I have to do it now, with urgency. So therefore, I cry out from the depths of misery, *‘Protect me now, an evildoer!’* If I have done anything evil, then I must acknowledge that. I must understand what is negative and what is positive and by first seeing my negative deeds and negative emotions then [I must] work on that.

*“Now to the noble one, Akashagarbha,  
And to Kshitigarbha, from my heart I call.  
To all protectors, great, compassionate,  
I cry to them in search of refuge.”* [Stanza 51]

So I also call for help from others, from Akasagarbha. Akasagarbha is also said to be a very great bodhisattva, who is supposed to be able to help to purify all kinds of downfalls and therefore to purify negative deeds. And Kshitigarbha is also said to be somebody who has made a great commitment to help - especially the beginners when they have very little understanding and very

little circumstances for improvement - that they will be able to be helped. So there is Kshitigarbha.

And then,

*“To Vajrapani I shall fly,  
For at the sight of him  
All vengeful things like Yama’s host  
Escape in terror to the four directions.” [Stanza 52]*

So Vajrapani is the wrathful bodhisattva who is supposed to protect all beings, especially the bodhisattvas who are on the way. And he protects them from any kind of obstacles and any kind of misfortunes that might fall on them - so therefore he is the greatest protector. And also because, it is said, that even the Lord of Death, Yama, runs away as soon as Vajrapani’s name is mentioned - and things like that. So to this great Vajrapani: wrathful, powerful - the powerful, the most powerful kind of bodhisattva - the wrathful form - and also the most, one of the most compassionate - so therefore I go for refuge to Vajrapani also.

*“Formerly your words I have transgressed,  
But having seen these terrors all around,  
I come to you for refuge praying:  
Swiftly drive away my fear!”*

This is stanza number 53. Before, I didn't understand, because I didn't understand the effect of negative actions. So therefore, [previously] if the Buddhas or bodhisattvas or my teachers told me that I should not do negative deeds and I should get rid of negative emotions and negative actions, then I didn't do that. I transgressed those advise and teachings. But now I see the effect of negativity: I understand that if I do not get rid of the negative karma that I have accumulated - the negative emotions and all the negative causes in me that bring more negative actions and thereby lots of suffering for myself - then there will be lots of problems and terrors and pain for me in this life, in the next life and in the bardo. So therefore I must get rid of these negative things and I must purify myself. So I come to you (for) Buddhas, bodhisattvas and dharma - that I very quickly get rid

of all these causes of suffering - and so therefore, I don't have to fear anymore.

Now this is something very important here: we have always done lots of negative things, because we also have, always, lots of negative emotions and thereby lots of negative habitual tendencies that we can see in ourselves now. So therefore, there is no reason to think that we have not done anything negative in the past. There must be a great deal of negative actions that we have done in the past. Now even if we do something positive, we [still] need to also get rid of the negative karma and negative actions and negative emotions and things like that. Because otherwise we may get the result of the positive actions - but we also get the results of the negative actions. The example given is like this - that you have a bag of rice, and in that bag of rice you have some peas. So if you use it as seed and you plant it in the land, then you know you will grow the rice but you will also grow the peas. In the same way, if I do not get rid of the negativity, if I do not purify my negative kind of karma, then even if I do positive things, I will have the result of the positive thing, but I will also have the result of the negative thing. But if I purify them, then I don't. So therefore, the purification is very important and I should work on it. I should dedicate my practice to the purification. So that's the main understanding.

So I think I will stop here at stanza number 53. Thank you.

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