



Bodhicharya

AWAKEN THE HEART BY OPENING THE MIND

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Power of Antidote & Power of Resolution
2nd Chapter, Stanzas 60-65



BA2_60-65: The Power of Antidote & Power of Resolution. 2nd Chapter, Stanzas 60 to 65.

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So this is now the last part of the second chapter and we are on stanza number 60 which is very important. The stanza is translated like this in the Padmakara translation:

*"Of life's experience, all seasons past,
What's left to me, what now remains?
By clinging to what now is here no more,
My teacher's precepts I have disobeyed."*

Now this is translated by another translator which is actually on the internet under Bodhicharyavatara commentary [translation by Andreas Kretschmar, <http://www.kunpal.com>]:

*"Is there anything that remains with me
From what I experienced before
Which has not already vanished?
Nevertheless I am clearly attached to these pleasures
And I've disregarded my guru's advice."*

This is more clear in meaning. What it means, what it's saying, is that we do negative deeds because there is something enchanting. Something that - what can you say? - that we're attached to. Something that we think is nice or pleasurable or something that satisfies our emotion, or excites something. But when we look back - all the things that we have done, you know, everything that we have experienced - is there any experience that's left and not passed away, not vanished? Whatever I have experienced, the next moment it's gone, it's vanished, it doesn't come back. However [much] I am attached to that experience, to that pleasure, to that excitement, to that whatever emotion - the next moment it's gone. It never comes back. But the effect of that action, if it is a negative action, I have created that - and it is harmful to others, its effect remains on me also - and I continually create problems for myself because of that instant action. So therefore, why should I be attached to an experience which passes and diminishes in one moment just after experiencing it. And it's a kind of a consequence that I have to carry all the time.

So this is a very important thing - when you look at any experience, or at anything you have to do - our emotions instigate us to act. I have to see what this is going to give me - what consequences will that action and that emotion have? If it has negative consequence, then I should not do it even if it's very nice, or very satisfying in this one moment, because that satisfaction, that moment passes, never to come back. But the consequence remains.

So this is something that is very deep and very important. This is the main reason why we should not indulge in negative actions. If we can see this, then it becomes extremely clear. So this is supposed to be the most important stanza in this chapter. So one must, deliberate, one must think on this, put one's mind on this, study this, and investigate this, and try to experience it again and

again.

And then stanza 61:

*"And when this life is left behind,
And with it all my kith and kin,
I must set out on strange paths all alone:
Why make so much of all my friends and foes?"*

And even if you say 'I do this for my friends or for my foes - to help my friends or to harm my foes' - [yet] you should not do negative things even to help your friends or harm your foes, because eventually, it doesn't help. It doesn't help me and it doesn't help others. Because everything passes. Because, when my life is gone, then all the kith and kin are gone, all the enemies gone also and so therefore I go alone. I come in this world alone and I go from this world also alone. But whatever actions I have made – whether it's for myself, whether it's for my foes or enemies, whether it's for my friends – they remain. And if I do negative things for my friends, it doesn't help them either. And moreover - even more important - if I harm my enemies - why harm them anyway? After I die, there is no foe, there is no enemy. It doesn't help to harm my enemies, because they're also fleeting. And anyway there is no permanent enemy - the worst enemy can sometimes become your best friend - not only in the next life - it can be in the next life also - but even in this life. So there's no permanence.

[Stanza] 62:

*"How instead can I make sure
To rid myself of evil, only cause of sorrow?
This should be my one concern,
My only thought both night and day."*

So therefore I should not be concerned about anything else, I should only be concerned with how I transform myself, how I get rid of my negative actions, negative karma and the things that will bring harmful consequences for myself and others – because that is the only thing that matters.

So therefore the most important thing for me should be to think about this. What is it that I can [do to] bring total purification of all negative actions and to cultivate my positive side so that I become positive - I become wise and compassionate? So therefore I am liberated. And that is the best for me and that is the best for others also.

*"The wrongs that I have done
Through ignorant stupidity:
All actions evil by their nature
And transgressions of the precepts."*

Then therefore in front of all the Buddhas and bodhisattvas I must pray, I must acknowledge, I must say this, promise this, that all the negative things, wrong things that I should not have done, but I have done because of my ignorance, because of my stupidity, because I was under the power and influence of my negative emotions, because I didn't know that negative emotions actually have no good result. If I indulge in something that gives me some kind of a satisfaction or pleasure at that one moment, it's completely gone the next moment - but the consequence remains. So therefore [we are including] the natural negative things, as well as transgressions of precepts. You know there are two negative things: one negative thing is 'natural negative'. That is like - you kill, you cheat, you steal, you tell lies - all these are natural [negative]. So whoever does it - it's negative, it's harmful. And then there are some [acts for] which I take a precept and [it's] only because I take the precepts [that it's wrong] - there are things that, in order to remain under that precept, in order to prevent me doing something wrong, then there are [particular] kinds of things - say I take the precepts of a monk, and when I take the precepts of a monk, then it is said that if I cut the grass, or a kind of a plant or something like that, then it's wrong. I shouldn't do that. But if I didn't take that precept it's not necessarily wrong. So those kind of two categories: what is wrong naturally because it's harmful and [what is] not naturally wrong but because I have taken a precept and because of that then it's one of the branches - so any of those.

*"Fearing all the pains to come
I join my palms and ceaselessly prostrate,
And everything I will confess
Directly in the sight of my protectors."*

So I will confess. I will think about those negative things. I will say that all the negative things that I have done I confess now, I get rid of, I let go. I will do all the positive things [and request], *'Please give me the blessings, please give help, please give me your positive energy - you know your strength and blessings - so that all my negative things are purified'*.

*"I pray you, guides and guardians of the world,
To take me as I am, a sinful man.*

So please see me, please look at me - see me as somebody who has done something negative. Now 'sinful' is the translation given by this [translation] - but whether we use the word 'sin' for negative deeds or not is [the subject of] a discussion which is going on amongst the interpreters and translators. We discussed this before. So because the enlightened beings, wherever they are, they have the capacity to see, the capacity to bless, the capacity to help, so therefore, *'Please help me and give me the blessing so that I can totally purify them'*. I want to purify them, I must purify them, I would purify them, I'd do everything to purify them. I dedicate all my positive actions for that. So therefore this is the way of purification - I think we discussed this before. So this is what we call the third power.

And then the fourth power is the power that we promise not to indulge in this negativity again - try not to indulge, try not to do the negative action again.

So this is the last two lines of this chapter. It says:

*"And all these actions, evil as they are,
I promise I will never do again."*

So this I think I've discussed before also. Because I see very clearly and directly that these negative actions only create harm and problems and suffering for myself and others, so therefore there is absolutely no intention, there is absolutely no kind of desire, there is absolutely no kind of attraction to do any of these negative deeds any more. I see it so clearly - I see it like a bad smelling, bad looking, bad tasting and giving me pain thing. If there is something that I see which doesn't look good, which doesn't smell good, which doesn't taste good and which doesn't give any

kind of benefit for me but only harm, then I would totally avoid that. I would totally not go near it. So if I see these negative deeds in this way then I must be able to say '*I wouldn't do it again*'. So therefore I promise I will never do it again. So therefore, the more I can clearly understand this, then the more my purification becomes stronger.

Of course this does not mean that when I make a purification I become totally pure and have done away with all my old negativity and negative emotions and negative habitual tendencies. This cannot be, but at least I make a try, I make the intention, I start - I start to work on that. So if I start work on that, then I purify - and once I have no attachment to negativity, once I have no clinging to negativity, I'm totally pure, I'm totally pure. That's when I totally get rid of my karma because when I have no clinging and I have no attachment, my negative karma doesn't work anymore. So therefore that's the total purification.

And this is then the second chapter of Bodhicharyavatara – 'The Purification'. I would like to call it purification although the translation of this text call it 'Confession'. Because '*chag pa*' is like splitting, taking it away from me, separating it from me - and that I think is purification.

Thank you.

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This is a transcript of a video talk given for the Bodhicharya Online Shedra by Ringu Tulku Rinpoche. The transcript has only been lightly edited and is meant to be used within the Online Shedra study context.