



Bodhicharya

AWAKEN THE HEART BY OPENING THE MIND

Ringu Tulku Rinpoche
*Requesting the Teachings &
Requesting the Enlightened Beings to Stay
3rd Chapter, Stanzas 5-6*



BA3_5-6: Requesting the Teachings &
Requesting the Enlightened Beings to Stay. 3rd Chapter, Stanzas 5-6.
July 3, 2011

Transcribed by Desi and revised by Rinchen
Teachings on the Bodhicharyavatara for the Bodhicharya Online Shedra

So we now go forward with the third chapter of Bodhicharyavatara: "*Taking hold of Bodhichitta*". And last time we discussed the rejoicing - and now we come to the next [preliminary], which is requesting enlightened beings to give us teachings, or to turn the wheel of dharma. So this is stanza number five of the third chapter. And it says:

*"And so I join my hands and pray
The Buddhas who reside in every quarter;
Kindle now the Dharma's light
For those who grope, bewildered, in the dark of pain!"*

So I think we talked about this before - that for the Buddhists, the most important thing is to learn to bring [forth] the wisdom in us, to awaken the wisdom in us. Because the reason why we suffer, why we have all the problems, is only because we do not see the things, see ourselves as we are, and because of that ignorance, because of that confusion and misunderstanding, samsara is created and all the problems and sufferings of samsara happen. So therefore, the most important thing is to enlighten ourselves, to bring wisdom, to understand, to make things clear, to know - so therefore dharma is very important. Study is very important. Wisdom is very important. So therefore to make any efforts, to make any kind of work or actions that directly or indirectly brings [forth] this wisdom and enlightenment is of great positiveness and virtue. So therefore, requesting the teachings is the beginning of learning because unless we are interested to know, unless we have the enthusiasm, the drive to understand and to know, we will not ask for teachings. And when we ask for teachings, then we will receive the teachings and that's the beginning of the dispelling of our ignorance.

So therefore when we understand, when we recognize the great beings, the Buddhas, the enlightened beings, those who have the true experience and understanding of the reality of the way things are, and then we actually request them to give us teachings, to enlighten us, then that's the most important action, most virtuous action that we can make. So therefore here we are making a kind of beginning of that. We request with respect, that's why we join our hands together, with great respect - giving great importance and value to the teachings - and it's not just academic interest or to know what [it is] they are saying - not that, but with the true intention to learn, so that my own causes and results of the suffering are eliminated and also through which [method] I can find a way to help all sentient beings to be free from suffering. With that kind of great urgency and with the very great importance that I give to the teachings, I make a prayer, I make this request. And requesting not only one kind of lama or two lamas, or one Buddha or two Buddhas, but I request from the heart, from the bottom of my heart, to all the Buddhas, to all the enlightened beings, wherever they are throughout this world, throughout the whole of space,

whichever world, whichever earth, whichever world systems they are and they reside in, all the Buddhas and great beings and enlightened beings and bodhisattvas, I request [all of] them. I request them to kindle the dharma's light - the light of the dharma - to bring the dharma in our heart.

The darkness of ignorance is the main problem in us, which is giving us bewilderment, which gives [rise to] all negative actions, negative emotions, all the confusions, all the sufferings. So all these beings - myself and all other beings of samsara - we are suffering because we are in ignorance and we don't know – because of that we have all the emotions, negative emotions, negative actions and things like that. So if we really get the wisdom and understand the way things are, then that is the one [way] which will directly cause [us] to eliminate all the sufferings and pain. So therefore, with that understanding, I request the Buddhas to give us teachings and turn the wheel of dharma. Now what this is saying is that for any kind of studies we make, that study is regarded as - especially studying the dharma, studying how to work with our emotions, how to work, how to become better human beings, how to get rid of our confusion - is regarded as a very positive deed from the Buddhist point of view. It's regarded as one of the most virtuous, most positive deeds. And so therefore, the learning - even like requesting not Buddhas, but samsaric or living teachers to give teachings is regarded as a most positive deed accumulating lots of merit.

Organizing teachings - that's why [we have] centres, Buddhist centres, monasteries and things like that - we create a monastery or dharma centre – and what is it? It is a place where we create the circumstances, create the environment and facilities to receive teachings, to study and to practice. So therefore study and practice of dharma is regarded as one of the most important, positive deeds and therefore to create that situation, to create that facility or environment, is regarded as one of the most positive deeds. So therefore, when we are - and this is also I think very important to understand - that when we are trying to organize teachings, or organize centres and things like that, it should be seen as a very important dharma practice, it should not be seen as just another organizing work. It should be seen as a practice. It should be seen as requesting the teachings, turning the wheel of dharma. So therefore if you do it with good intention and pure mind and with less emotion, less negative emotions, then it actually becomes one of the greatest [practices]. It's as good as meditation, as good as any dharma practice, so therefore it is also very important to understand like that.

Then the next or the seventh of these eight preliminaries is requesting the enlightened beings to live, to be, to stay among us. Now this is the sixth stanza. And it says:

*"I join my hands beseeching the enlightened ones
Who wish to pass into nirvana:
Do not leave us wandering in blindness,
Stay among us for unnumbered ages!"*

So we need to request the great beings, the enlightened beings - it is regarded that they have the freedom [to decide whether] to live longer or shorter in this world. And if they feel their work is finished - they can't help beings any more, their being here does not benefit human beings or other beings - then they will leave this world. So therefore it is not good for us, it is not good for the world, when we don't have enlightened beings or great beings among ourselves [and] so therefore it is very important to appreciate the positive qualities of the enlightened ones - great beings, great masters - and it is also important to request them to live, to be among ourselves - to live long and to give us guidance.

So therefore what we are doing here is we are requesting all the enlightened beings throughout space to be with us, to come in this world wherever we are, and to give us their support, their company, their positive influence and to guide us, and to bring enlightenment and light where we have ignorance and blindness. So therefore this is here as a prayer requesting all the Buddhas to be among us creating a very important and very strong positive influence - positive karma. But this also applies in a practical way to appreciate the good beings - even if they are not Buddhas or great bodhisattvas, but any positive beings, any good beings - to try to see their positive qualities, to appreciate their positive qualities and then to really value them and request them to be among us, in various ways - by appreciation, by saying good things about them, by taking examples from them, by following their way of being, by using their instructions and advice, by asking their advice and then using it, by bringing them into the limelight and showing respect for them in many different ways. Because if there is a kind of a community or a world where the great people, the good people, the positive people are not respected, then that society will certainly become very negative, very bad. A society where the good people, the kind people, the compassionate people, the generous people, the wise people are not respected - that society has no other way but to

become degenerate. So therefore, we need to appreciate good people, we need to praise them, we need to respect them, we need to use their advice, their influence - we need to ask them to guide us. And if that is done then that therefore becomes a very positive deed, a very important practice.

So I think I will stop here with these two most important practices - the preliminary it is called - but it is a true practice that we can do in our meditation, in our imagination, which also creates the right kind of attitude and right kind of co-dependence, interdependence - but it is something that we can also use in our life practically thereby making it a true real kind of living practice also.

So [that is] stanzas number five and six. Thank you very much.

©Ringu Tulku Rinpoche

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.