



Bodhicharya

AWAKEN THE HEART BY OPENING THE MIND

Ringu Tulku Rinpoche
Dedication
3rd Chapter, Stanzas 7-10



BA3_7-10: Dedication. 3rd Chapter, Stanzas 7-10.

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So, to continue the third chapter, and in the third chapter also is the seven-branch practice or the eight preliminaries including refuge. So, we now come to the eighth which is the *dedication*. And this is from stanza number seven of the third chapter:

*“Through these actions now performed
And all the virtues I have gained,
May all the pain of every living being
Be wholly scattered and destroyed!”*

We talked about the seven-branch practice to accumulate positive deeds, and saying that, we have already discussed the other six and refuge. So, all the positive things that I have done, including the practise of this seven-branch practice, but everything that I have done in this life, in past lives, and also the positive deeds that I will be doing; by the power, by the energy, by the karma, the good karma of all these practices, then [as] the result of this it may happen that all the pain, the suffering, the true suffering, the pain of all beings be totally destroyed and got rid of. May all beings be free from all sufferings.

Now, generally speaking, the dedication is, or the the wish is, from the bodhisattva’s point of view, that may all sentient beings be free from suffering, and not just free from suffering, but that they have lasting and the best kind of attainment of the lasting peace and happiness which is regarded as the enlightenment. So, usually, we dedicate ultimately for that. Not just for that. So, therefore, the dedication is also a practice of compassion. I think this is very important to understand. Dedication is also a practice of compassion because the beginning of every practice starts with motivation, that’s also compassion. At the end, dedication, that’s also compassion; in the middle, compassion and wisdom. Therefore, the compassion and wisdom is in the beginning, in the middle and at the end in all the practices. And that’s very much done and important to understand.

Now, here there’s a short dedication, but the longer dedication is coming in the tenth chapter which is totally only on dedication. So that here is a kind of short one but important. So, by the power of all the positive virtues that I have gained, may this help or may this contribute to end and destroy the sufferings or the pain of all the beings. That’s the first.

Then the eighth stanza is:

*“For all those ailing in the world,
Until their every sickness has been healed,
May I myself become for them
The doctor, nurse, the medicine itself.”*

Now this is being a little bit more specific. We all know in this world that being ill, being not well with our body and with our mind is very difficult and very negative, very full of suffering, and the illness can not only be the illness we think, like diseases, but it can also be the long-term illness of negative emotions and the *kleshas* and the ignorance is also regarded as an [illness]. And because of those basic illnesses, basic defects and problems, then we have also lots of imbalances in our body and lots of other illnesses also come. So therefore, by the positive deeds that I have done, by the power of them, may all the illnesses of the world, all kinds of illnesses of the world be healed, until every sickness has been healed. And in order to heal those sicknesses and illnesses of body and mind, long term and short term, that I may become a very strong kind of contribution to get rid of these illnesses. May I myself become, for them, *“the doctor, the nurse, the medicine itself”*. And not only that because of my positive deeds things may come together and something may happen so that people will be free from their illnesses, but that I may myself, with my own body, speech and mind, do something like become a doctor and work with the people directly and help them to cure illnesses, all different kinds of illnesses and maladies: and not only become a doctor who would advise them and give medicine, but may be able to nurse them. Clean the dirty part of the body and really kind of look after them, nurture them, serve them and become like nurses. And not only that, but may I also, when there’s a lack of medicine or there are some diseases that don’t have any remedies or any medicines or haven’t found any medicines, I myself become the medicine.

There are kinds of stories from Buddha’s past lives like when there were epidemics or great famines or things like that, the Buddha himself was born as a big fish or something like that. And then when people took the meat of that fish they got cured of all the diseases and things like that. So, taking in that kind of a footstep, may I myself be emanated or become not only doctors and nurses but also medicine itself. So this is kind of directly causing and working towards the dispelling of the sufferings of the beings.

Then the ninth stanza:

*“Raining down a flood of food and drink,
May I dispel the ills of thirst and famine.
And in the aeons marked by scarcity and want,
May I myself appear as drink and sustenance.”*

So, because of the energy of my positive deeds, where there is lots of famine, where people don't get food and drink there, then the rain of food and drink and whatever people may need may happen because of the power of my own positive deeds and, through that, get rid of all the hunger and thirst and the scarcity: and not only that, but when the great famine or really hard times come for the world – sometimes it is even said that at the end of the world, because of the people's negative actions of hatred, of greed and of ignorance there will be the time of great famines, great wars, conflicts and because of that a lot of diseases – at those times I may become myself the food and drink by the power of my positive deeds and also myself may become emanate as food and drink and help all the people to be freed from those kinds of difficult and great sufferings.

*“For sentient beings, poor and destitute
May I become a treasure ever-plentiful,
And lie before them closely in their reach,
A varied source of all that they might need.” [10]*

So therefore, not only provide food and drink but whatever the people need in order to get rid of their sufferings and pain and problems, may I be able to give them that, whatever they need, whatever is necessary to free them from sufferings. And those things or those situations or circumstances may automatically happen because of my own positive deeds; because of my practice, because of my accumulation of merit there may be nobody who has to suffer in any kind of ways with hunger, with thirst, with any kind of other sufferings, with diseases, all kind of things.

In this particular section of dedication there are more immediate needs, about the freeing from

the suffering, pain and acute problems, what we call the suffering of the suffering, because these are so strongly problematic that we can see. And also, I think that is important, that sometimes people think that as a Buddhist or as a spiritual practitioner, you only think that may everybody become enlightened, and sometimes people think wrongly that if somebody's suffering then you allow them to suffer so that they get rid of their negative karma. That's totally wrong, it's very clear here that anybody who is hungry, that I may be able to give food; if they have illness I'll be able to give them medicine and nursing, be free from their illnesses. Any other kinds of pain and problems and suffering I should be able to do something. This is very clear that I may be able to actually do something. It's not just praying and meditation and things like that. Of course, all these things are also very important, very helpful too. The more kind of strong I become, the more pure I become, the more I gain strength, I gain energy, I gain more positive power and energy so that I can do more, but it's not that I don't do anything and I just sit. I have to do, I have to work, not only for people's a kind of mental freedom through meditation and only that, but I also have to work so that people are free from hunger, free from thirst, free from diseases and free from all kinds of sufferings and pain that they're suffering from.

So this is the section of dedication and now it goes on to what we call the training the mind and it's in the same direction, it just continues. So, these are the kinds of seven-branch practice. It's very important to understand they're not just a prayer you say and then it's finished. It's not like that; it's a practical kind of practice that we can do every day in our life, things like that. So it has to be taken in that understanding. It's not just like a short prayer that we do and then finished. Each one of them is a real practice working on our own emotions and habitual tendencies as well as a way to help other beings. This is something that needs to be understood.

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