

Shantideva's Commitment to the Awakened Mind

With joy I celebrate
The virtue that relieves all beings
From the sorrows of the states of loss,
And places those who languish into the realm of bliss.

I rejoice in virtue that creates the cause
Of gaining the enlightened state,
And celebrate the freedom won
By living beings from the round of anguish.

In the awakening of the Buddhas I delight,
And in the wisdoms of the Bodhisattvas.

Altruism, that ocean of great good
That seeks to place all beings in the state of bliss,
With every action for the benefit of all:
Such is my delight and all my joy.

So I join my hands and pray
To the Buddhas everywhere,
'Kindle now the Dharma's light
For those who grope, bewildered, in the dark of suffering.'

I join my hands, beseeching the enlightened ones
Who wish to leave behind this world of sorrow,
Do not leave us in our ignorance;
Remain among us for unending eons!

Through these actions now performed
And by all the virtue I have just amassed,
May all the anguish of every living being
Be wholly scattered and destroyed!

For all those ailing in the world,
Until their every sickness has been healed,
May I myself become for them
The healer, companion, the medicine itself.

Raining down a flood of food and drink,
May I dispel the ills of thirst and famine.
In the ages marked by scarcity and want,
May I myself appear as drink and sustenance.

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.

My body, thus, and all my goods besides,
And all my merits gained and to be gained,
I give them all away withholding nothing,
To bring about the benefit of beings.

Nirvana is attained by giving all;
Let this be my sole, eternal aspiration.
Everything is inherently illusion,
So I shall give it all to others.

I freely offer up my existence to all beings.
Though I be harmed, insulted or disparaged,
May I be free from all traces of self-cherishing.

So let beings do to me
Whatever does not bring them harm.
Whenever they catch sight of me,
Let this not fail to bring them benefit.

If those who see me entertain
A thought of love or anger,
May that connection be the cause
Whereby they attain complete awakening.

All those who slight me to my face,
Or do me any other wrong,
Even if they blame or slander me,
May they attain the fortune of enlightenment!

May I be a guard for those who are protectorless,
A guide for those who journey on the road.
For those who wish to go across the water
May I be a boat, a raft, a bridge.

May I be an isle for those who yearn for landfall,
And a lamp for those who long for light;
For those who need a resting place, a bed;
For all who are in need, a servant.

May I be the wishing jewel, the vase of plenty,
A word of power and the supreme healing.
May I be the tree of miracles,
And for every being the source of all fulfillment.

Like the earth and the great elements
Enduring as the sky itself endures,
For boundless multitudes of living beings,
May I be their ground and sustenance.

Thus, for every thing that lives
As far as are the limits of the sky,
May I provide their livelihood and nourishment
Until they pass beyond the bonds of suffering.

Just as all the Buddhas of the past
Embraced the enlightened heart,
And the path of the Bodhisattvas,
Just so, and for the benefit of beings,
I will also embrace the enlightened heart,
And travel down the path to great awakening.

Through the power of inspiration and courage,
May I be able to hold this enlightened heart forever;
May it permeate my entire being, again and again.

Today my life has given fruit.
This human state has now been well assumed.
Today I take my birth in Buddhas' line,
And have become the Buddhas' child and heir.

In every way, then, I will undertake
Activities befitting such an aspiration.
And I will do no act to mar
Or compromise this supreme and perfect path.

For I am like a blind man who has found
A precious gem within a mound of filth.
Exactly so, as if by some strange chance,
The enlightened mind has come to birth in me.

This is the draft of immortality
That slays the Lord of Death, the slaughterer of beings;
The rich unfailing treasure-mine
To heal the poverty of wanderers.

It is the sovereign remedy
That perfectly allays all maladies.
It is the wishing tree bestowing rest
On those who wander wearily the pathways of existence.

It is the universal vehicle that saves
All wandering beings from the states of loss;
The rising moon of the enlightened mind
That soothes the sorrows born of the afflictions.

It is a mighty sun that utterly dispels
The gloom and ignorance of wandering beings,
The creamy butter, rich and full,
All churned from the milk of holy Dharma.

Living beings! Wayfarers upon life's paths
Who wish to taste the riches of contentment,
Here before you is the supreme bliss!
Here, O ceaseless wanderers, is your fulfillment!

And so, within sight of all protectors,
I summon every being, calling them to Buddhahood;
And till that state is reached, to every earthly joy!
May gods and spirits, and all the rest, rejoice!