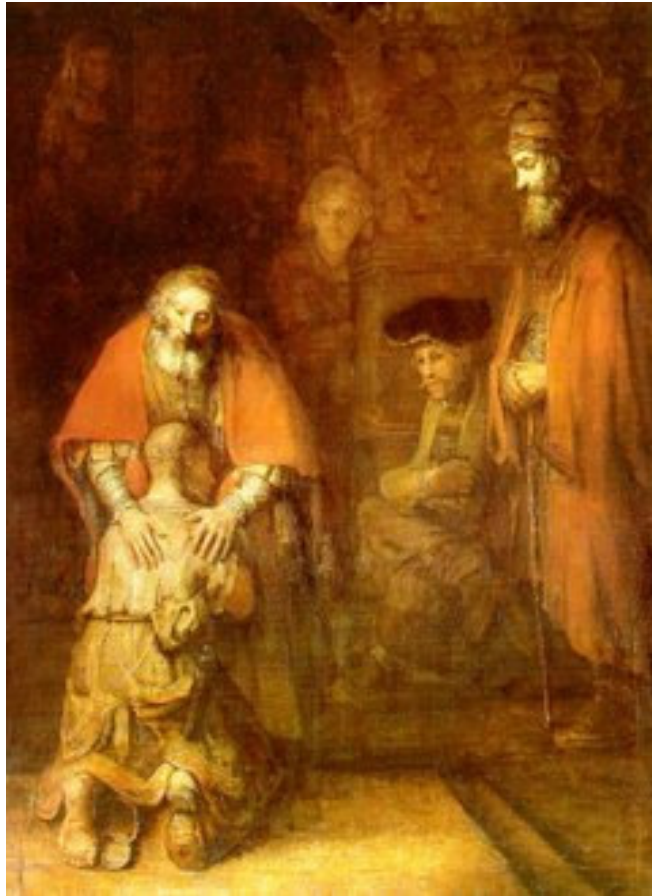


LEARNING FORGIVENESS



ADVICES FROM THE SIXTH CHAPTER OF
MASTER SHANTIDEVA'S *GUIDE TO THE
BODHISATTVA'S WAY OF LIFE*

I. NOBODY'S RIGHT WHEN EVERYBODY'S WRONG

मोहादेकेऽपराध्यन्ति कुप्यन्त्यन्येऽपिमोहिताः ।

ब्रूमः कमेषु निर्दोषं कं वा ब्रूमोऽपराधिनम् ॥६७॥

*mohad ekeparadhyanti kupyantyanypimohitah
brumah kameshu nirdosham kam va brumoparadhinam*

Some people, out of sheer ignorance,
Do bad things. Other people, out of
Sheer ignorance, get mad at them.
How can you say that either one
Is without any fault?
Both of them are at fault. (67)

न च द्वेषसमं पापं न च क्षान्तिसमं तपः

तस्मात्क्षान्तिं प्रयत्नेन भावयेद्विविधैर्नयैः ॥२॥

*na cha dvesha samam papam na cha ksanti samam tapah
tasmad kshantim prayatnena bhavayed vividhair nayaih*

There is no kind of deed
As evil as the act of anger;
There is no spiritual hardship
Like patience. Practice it then,
Concentrate on patience,
In many different ways. (2)

II. THE DISADVANTAGES IN THIS LIFE OF NOT PRACTICING FORGIVENESS

मनः शमं न गृह्णाति न प्रीतिसुखमश्नुते ।

न निद्रां न घृतिं याति द्वेषशल्ये ह्यदि स्थिते ॥३॥

*manah shamam na girhnati na priti sukham ashnute
na nidram na ghirtim yati dvesha shalye hyadi sthite*

If you hold to the sharp pain
Of thoughts of anger, your mind
Can know no peace;
You find no happiness,
No pleasure. Sleep stays away,
And the mind remains unsettled. (3)

III. THE DISADVANTAGES IN THE NEXT LIFE OF NOT PRACTICING FORGIVENESS

वरमद्यैव मे मृत्युर्न मिथ्याजीवितं चिरम् ।

यस्माच्चिरमपि स्थित्वा मृत्युदुःखं तदेव मे ॥५६॥

*varam adyaiva me mirtyur na mithya jivitam chiram
yasmach chiram api sthitva mirtyu dukkham tad eva me*

It's no problem if I die, even today,
But it's wrong to live a life that's long
If I do so by living a life that's wrong.
For a person like me, the pain
Of death is all the same, even if
The life I live is long. (56)

IV. THE ADVANTAGES OF PRACTICING FORGIVENESS

एवमादीनि दुःखानि करोतीत्यरिसंज्ञया ।

यः क्रोधं हन्ति निर्बन्धात् स सुखीह परत्र च ॥६॥

*evam adini duhkhani karotityari sanjnyaya
yah krodham hanti nirbandhat sa sukhiha paratra cha*

Anger our enemy
Brings us these
And other pains as well.
Anyone who can learn to focus
And destroy their anger achieves
Happiness, here and there as well. (6)

V. LEARNING PATIENCE AND ACCEPTANCE

यद्यस्त्येव प्रतीकारो दौर्मनस्येन तत्र किम् ।

अथ नास्ति प्रतीकारो दौर्मनस्येन तत्र किम् ॥१०॥

*yadyastyeva pratikaro daurmanasyena tatra kim
atha nasti pratikaro daurmanasyena tatra kim*

If there is something
You can do about it,
Why should you feel upset?
If there is nothing
You can do about it,
What use is being upset? (10)

V. LEARNING PATIENCE AND ACCEPTANCE, cont.

कथंचिल्लभ्यते सौख्यं दुःखं स्थितमयत्नतः ।

दुःखेनैव च निःसारः चेतस्तस्माद्दृढी भव ॥१२॥

*katham chil labhyate saukhyam dukkham sthitam ayatnatah
duhkhenaiiva cha nihsarah chetas tasmad diridi bhava*

Things to be happy about
Occur only from time to time;
Whereas things that cause us pain
Are extremely numerous.
Without suffering though
We would never feel renunciation;
Be resolute then, my mind. (12)

गुणो ऽपरश्च दुःखस्य यत्संवेगान्मदच्युतिः

संसारिषु च कारुण्यं पापाद् भीतिजिने स्पृहा ॥२१॥

*gunoparash cha dukkhasya yat sanvegan mada chyutih
sansarishu cha karunyam papad bhitir jine spirha*

Besides, suffering possesses
Certain good qualities:
It brings sadness,
Which removes my arrogance;
It brings compassion for those
Caught in the cycle of pain;
It brings fear of doing harm,
And a mastery of virtue. (21)

V. LEARNING PATIENCE AND ACCEPTANCE, cont.

न किञ्चिदस्ति तद्वस्तु यदभ्यासस्य दुष्करम् ।

तस्मान्मृदुव्यथाभ्यासात् सोढव्यापि महाव्यथा ॥१४ ॥

*na kinchid asti tad vastu yad abhyasasya dushkaram
tasman mirdu vyathabhyasat sodaavyapi mahavyatha*

There is nothing in the world
Which does not come easily
If you make a habit of it;
Make then a habit
Of bearing the small pains,
And thus endure the greater. (14)

VI. LEARNING GRATITUDE

स्तुत्यादयश्च मे क्षेमं संवेगं नाशयन्त्यमी ।

गुणवत्सु च मात्सर्यं संपत्कोपं च कुर्वते ॥१८ ॥

*stutyadayash cha me kshemam samvegam nashayantyanami
guna vatsu cha matsaryam sampat kopam cha kurvate*

Praise and the rest distract me,
And also function to destroy
My feelings of dismay with life.
They make me feel envy towards
Those who possess high qualities,
And obliterate everything excellent. (98)

VI. LEARNING GRATITUDE, cont.

तस्मात्स्तुत्यादिघाताय मम ये प्रत्युपस्थिताः ।

अपायपातरक्षार्थं प्रवृत्ता ननु ते मम ॥९९॥

*tasmat stutyadi ghataya mama ye pratyupasthitah
apayapata rakshartham pravirtta nanu te mama*

Can't we say then that it's the case
That anyone who devotes themselves
To destroying the praise I get and such
Is actually engaged in the act
Of protecting me from falling
Into the births of misery? (99)

अश्रमोपार्जितस्तस्माद् गृहे निधिरिवोत्थितः ।

बोधिचर्यासहायत्वात् स्पृहणीयो मया ॥१०७॥

*ashramoparjitas tasmad girhe nidhir ivot-thitah
bodhicharya saha yatvat spirhaniyo maya*

Suppose that without an ounce
Of effort you came across
A treasure chest hidden in your house;
You should thus feel grateful for
Your enemies, who aid you in
Your bodhisattva practice. (107)

VII. LEARNING COMPASSION

यदैवं क्लेशवश्यत्वाद् घ्नन्त्यात्मानमपि प्रियम् ।

तदैषां परकायेषु परिहारः कथं भवेत् ॥३७॥

*yadaivam klesha vashyatvad ghnantyatmanam api priyam
tadaisham parakayeshu pariharah katham bhavet*

If people driven to it because
Of their mental afflictions even kill
Their own dear selves, then what
Surprise could it ever be to see
That they also act in ways that harm
The bodies of other people? (37)

यदि स्वभावो बालानां परोपद्रवकारिता ।

तेषु कोपो न युक्तो मे यथाग्नौ दहनात्मके ॥३९॥

*yadi svabhavo balanam paropadrava karita
teshu kopo na yukto me yathagnau dahanatmake*

If it is the very nature
Of those who are children
To do harm to others,
Then being angry with them
Is wrong, as wrong as hating
Fire for the fact it burns. (39)

VII. LEARNING COMPASSION, cont.

अथ दोषोऽयमागन्तुः सत्त्वाः प्रकृतिपेशलाः ।

तथाप्ययुक्तस्तत्कोपः कटुधूमे यथाम्बरे ॥४०॥

*atha doshoyam agantuh sattvah prakirti peshalah
tathapya yuktas tat kopah katu dhume yathambare*

And if the nature of living beings
Is to be thoughtful, then all their faults
Are occasional, and being angry with them
Is wrong too, wrong as hating
A puff of smoke in the sky. (40)

VIII. WHERE DOES THEIR HARMFULNESS COME FROM?

मुख्यं दण्डादिकं हित्वा प्रेरके यदि कुप्यते ।

द्वेषेण प्रेरितः सोऽपि द्वेषे द्वेषोऽस्तु मे वरम् ॥४१॥

*mukhyam dandadikam hitva prerake yadi kupyate
dveshena preritah sopi dveshe dveshostu me varam*

It's the stick or whatever
That delivers directly; if you're angry
At what impels it,
Then get mad if you really must
At anger itself, since it's the force
That sets the other into motion. (41)

IX. AND WHERE DOES MY SUFFERING COME FROM?

मयापि पूर्वं सत्त्वानामीदृश्येव व्यथा कृता ।

तस्मान्मे युक्तमेवैतत्सत्त्वोपद्रवकारिणः ॥४२॥

*mayapi purvam sattvanam idirshyeva vyatha kirta
tasman me yuktam evaitat sattvopadrava karinah*

I myself in days gone by
Perpetuated this very harm
On other living beings,
And so it's right that now the one
Who did the harm, myself,
Should have this hurt come to him. (42)

कस्मादेवं कृतं पूर्वं येनैवं बाध्यसे परैः ।

सर्वे कर्मपरायत्ताः कोऽहमत्रान्यथाकृतौ ॥६८॥

*kasmad evam kirtam purvam yenaivam badhyase paraih
sarve karma parayattah koham atranyatha kirtau*

Where did it come from? What was it
That I did before that makes others
Do this deed of hurting me now?
If everything that happens now
Depends on the deeds I did before,
How can I be angry at them? (68)

IX. AND WHERE DOES MY SUFFERING COME FROM?, cont.

दुःखं नेच्छामि दुःखस्य हेतुमिच्छामि बालिशः ।

स्वापराधागते दुःखे कस्मादन्यत्र कुप्यते ॥४५॥

*duhkham nech-chami dukkhasya hetum ich-chami balishah
svaparadhagate dukkhe kasmad anyatra kupyate*

Children want no suffering
But at the same time then they thirst
For the things that bring them pain.
If suffering comes to you because
Of some fault of your own,
Why feel hate for others? (45)

एवं बुद्ध्वा तु पुण्येषु तथा यत्नं करोम्यहम् ।

येन सर्वे भविष्यन्ति मैत्रचित्ताः परस्परम् ॥६९॥

*evam buddhva tu punyeshu tatha yatnam karomyaham
yena sarve bhavishyanti maitra chittah paras param*

Seeing that this is the way things are,
Let me now focus my efforts
On doing good deeds, so that
All the living beings there are
Come to find feelings of love,
Each one for the other. (69)

X. BE ON THE SIDE OF THE ANGELS!

आदीप्तकायस्य यथा समन्तान् न सर्वकामैरपि सौमनस्यम् ।
सत्त्वव्यथायामपि तद्वदेव न प्रीत्युपायोऽस्ति दयामयानाम् ॥१२३ ॥

*adipta kayasya yatha samantan na sarvakamair api saumanasyam
sattva vyathayam api tadvadeva na prityupayosti dayamayanam*

A person whose body is covered in flame
Would never be enticed by any
Of the various objects of the senses.
So too, if you hurt any living being
There is no possible way that those
Of great compassion could ever feel pleased. (123)

तस्मान्मया यज्जनदुःखदेन दुःखं कृतं सर्वमहाकृपाणाम् ।
तद्य पापं प्रतिदेशयामि यत्खेदितास्तन्मुनयः क्षमन्ताम् ॥१२४ ॥

*tasman maya yaj jana dukkhadena dukkham kirtam sarva mahakirpanam
tadadya papam pratideshayami yat kheditas tan munayah kshamantam*

As such, in this very moment do I confess
All the bad deeds I have ever committed—
Deeds which displeased every single one
Of those possessed of great compassion,
Since by doing them I hurt living beings.
I ask you to forgive, and be patient with me,
For anything I've done to displease you. (124)

X. BE ON THE SIDE OF THE ANGELS!, cont.

तथागताराधनमैतदेव स्वार्थस्य ससाधनमेतदेव ।

लोकस्य दुःखापहमेतदेव तस्मान्ममास्तु व्रतमेतदेव ॥१२७॥

*tathagataradhanamaitad eva svarthasya sasadhanam etadeva
lokasya dukhapham etadeva tsaman mamastu vratam etadeva*

This is the one thing that pleases the Ones Gone Thus;
It's also the one way to accomplish one's own goals,
And moreover the very method to remove
The pain of the entire world. Given all this,
I'll forever accomplish this very same single thing. (127)