Chapter 10 Dedication

The final chapter of the Bodhicharyāvatāra is the dedication of merit for the benefit of all beings.

10.1.
By all the virtue I have now amassed
By composition of this book, which speaks
Of entry to the Bodhisattva way,
May every being tread the path to Buddhahood.

10.2.
May beings everywhere who suffer
Torment in their minds and bodies
Have, by virtue of my merit,
Joy and happiness in boundless measure.

10.3.
As long as they may linger in saṃsāra,
May their joy be undiminished;
May they taste of unsurpassed beatitude
In constant and unbroken continuity.

On this last day I would like to thank you all for coming so far to attend these teachings. I would like to have given a more detailed commentary on the ninth chapter, the wisdom chapter, but there has not been enough time. However, this provides a good reason for coming back to France, and I am determined to return so that we can spend a week studying only the ninth chapter.[50]

All of you here, spiritual friends with a genuine interest in the teachings of Buddha, please study and practice as much as you can.

The basic knowledge and understanding you have gained on the subject of emptiness will make your practice much easier. **This understanding of emptiness will be much more powerful if it is founded on the practice of altruism.** As **Shāntideva wrote the *Bodhicharyāvatāra* primarily as a manual for practitioners, rather than as a theoretical treatise, we should do our best to apply these teachings on un-selfishness. Living for others is of immense importance for all of us, whatever our beliefs.**

We are all here on this planet, as it were, as tourists. None of us can live here forever. The longest we might live is a hundred years. So **while we are here we should try to have a good heart and to make something positive and useful of our lives. Whether we live just a few years or a whole century, it would be truly regrettable and sad if we were to spend that time aggravating the problems that afflict other people, animals, and the environment. The most important thing is to be a good human being.**

I have noticed some old friends here among you, Western Buddhist monks and nuns who have been practicing and keeping vows of ordination for more than fifteen years, some as long as twenty years. You are almost elders of the Sangha! I've noticed from your posture and gaze that while you are listening to the teachings you are fully concentrated on the subject. This is very pleasing, and I hope you will continue so that you achieve genuine bodhichitta and the realization of emptiness. This is possible through inner transformation. One day you will become Bodhisattvas in reality. So whatever obstacles there are, however long it takes, do not get discouraged. And in the meanwhile, I would like to thank you very much.

Here in Dordogne there are Nyingma and Kagyu Buddhist centres, and elsewhere in France, there are Gelug and Sakya centres. I am very pleased to see that these different traditions maintain a strong spirit of harmony among themselves, with no sectarian prejudice. Please continue to cultivate this spirit.

I would like to say a few words concerning the Tibetan cause.

As a Buddhist monk, I do not find any difficulty in being involved in this national struggle, because it is related to the Buddhadharma and is not merely a political question. Without freedom, the Buddha's teachings cannot be practiced and preserved. The last thirty years have proved this. A free Tibet is therefore very important for the preservation of these teachings, especially so since Buddhism has been practiced in Tibet in a very complete form. Helping this cause will indirectly serve the Buddhadharma. Some of you here are actively defending the rights of Tibetans. I very much appreciate this and ask you to continue your support. I would like to thank you deeply on behalf of all those who live under constant fear and threat and in the name of more than one million Tibetans who have disappeared as a result of this tragedy.

[50] His Holiness did indeed teach the ninth chapter of the Bodhicharyāvatāra to a large audience in November 1993 at the Institut Vajrayogini, Lavaur. A translation of his commentary is in the course of preparation. He based his teaching on two detailed commentaries by Khenpo Kunzang Palden and Minyak Kunzang Sonam (see note 8). These two commentaries have been translated, at his express wish, under the title Wisdom: Two Buddhist Commentaries, translated by the Padmakara Translation Group (Peyzac-le-Moustier, France: Padmakara, 1993).

10.55.
And now as long as space endures,
As long as there are beings to be found,
May I continue likewise to remain
To drive away the sorrows of the world.

10.56.
The pains and sorrows of all wandering beings—
May they ripen wholly on myself.
And may the virtuous company of Bodhisattvas
Always bring about the happiness of beings.

10.57.
May the Doctrine, only cure for sorrow,
Source of every bliss and happiness,
Be blessed with wealth, upheld with veneration,
And throughout a vast continuance of time, endure!

May bodhichitta, precious and sublime,
Arise where it has not yet come to be;
And where it has arisen may it never fail
But grow and flourish ever more and more.