

A Bodhisattva's Garland of Jewels  
bodhisattvamaniavali

I bow down to great compassion.  
I bow down to the profound teachers.  
I bow down to the sacred beings.

Now I shall be done with indecisiveness,  
And wholeheartedly take up my practice,  
No longer lazy, lethargic and listless,  
Always nourishing the joy in my effort.

Mindful, alert and careful,  
I shall protect the gateways of my senses in all situations,  
Checking my thoughts again and again,  
Three times a day and three at night.

Let me proclaim my own faults,  
But not look for the mistakes of others,  
Keeping my good qualities to myself,  
And pointing out the good qualities of others.

Let me be unmoved by wealth and honors,  
Never seeking profit<sup>1</sup> and reputation,  
Desiring little and content with what I have,  
Grateful to those who show me kindness.

I shall meditate on compassion and loving kindness,  
And make strong my awakened heart, bodhicitta.<sup>2</sup>  
Having curbed the ten harmful actions,  
I shall be always reliable, with confidence in myself.

Outwitting pride and anger,  
Let my mind rest in unassuming simplicity.<sup>3</sup>  
Refusing to make a living by deceit or manipulation,  
I shall support myself with right livelihood.

Let me cast off all material clutter,  
And wear instead the jewels of the Noble Ones;<sup>4</sup>  
Quitting all my compulsive business,<sup>5</sup>  
Let me spend my time in quiet places.

I must stop all afflicted and meaningless talk,  
And always control my speech.  
Then when I meet a spiritual teacher or master,  
I can offer service with respect.

Regarding sentient beings who are beginners  
As well as those who have the Eye of Dharma,  
I shall cultivate the thought of all of them as teachers.

And when I see any sentient being,  
Let me perceive my father, mother, son or daughter.  
But sidestepping friends who influence me negatively,  
I shall rely instead on the spiritual friend.

Freeing myself from the mind of unhappiness and aversion,  
I shall go where I must with happiness.  
Freeing myself from attachment to anything,  
I shall remain where I am without attachment.

Because of attachment, I may not even obtain a good<sup>6</sup> rebirth,  
And may be cut off from a life of liberation.  
So wherever I discover a true path to happiness,  
I should always put my energy there.

I determine to finish first  
Whatever I have begun to do;  
This way, everything will be done well;  
Otherwise, nothing at all will be accomplished.

Since I am still joyless and enthralled by negativity,  
When a feeling that I am better than someone arises,  
I shall flatten my pride  
And remember the advice of my teachers.  
When a feeling of discouragement<sup>7</sup> arises,  
I shall praise the magnificence of mind  
And meditate on the emptiness of both feelings.<sup>8</sup>

When attachment or aversion arises in any situation  
I should see its object as illusion and projection.<sup>9</sup>  
When I hear upsetting talk  
I should regard it as an echo.  
When my body is hurt,  
I should know this as the result of my previous actions.

I would do better to live in wilderness beyond the edge of towns,  
Like a wounded wild animal,<sup>10</sup>  
Sequestered, by myself,  
Abiding without attachment.

Then constantly holding in mind my practice commitments,  
When a lack of focus or indifference arises,  
I should take note of these shortcomings in myself  
And reconnect with the heart of my path of practice.

Whenever I do see others,  
Then let me speak calmly, kindly<sup>11</sup> and sincerely,  
Without frown or preoccupied look,<sup>12</sup>  
And, smiling, remain fully present.

When I am with those I see daily,  
Let me delight in giving without holding back,  
And eliminate any jealousy.  
To protect the minds of others,  
Let me stay clear of all contention,  
And always practice patience.

Never flattering nor fickle in relationships,<sup>13</sup>  
Let me be grounded and steadfast<sup>14</sup> always,  
Free of contempt for others,  
Conducting myself respectfully.

When giving guidance to others  
Let me have compassion and the wish to be of benefit.  
Without criticizing any Dharma teaching,<sup>15</sup>  
And letting others aspire to whichever they are drawn,<sup>16</sup>  
I shall practice by way of the ten Dharma activities,  
Dividing my days and nights between them.

Whatever good I accomplish throughout the three times,  
I shall dedicate to the highest, complete enlightenment,  
Spreading my positive force to living beings,  
Sowing the seeds of the seven-part practice,  
The great aspirational prayer.

If I practice like this,  
The two accumulations of wisdom and positive force  
Will be perfected,  
And the two kinds of obscurations will be exhausted.  
I will fulfill the purpose of my human life,  
And attain highest enlightenment.

These seven,  
The jewels of certainty and of ethical discipline,  
The jewels of giving and of listening to teachings,  
The jewels of personal integrity and of care for how one affects others,  
And the jewel of supreme wisdom,  
These are the seven jewels that are inexhaustible treasures.  
Describe them only to those with mature humanity.<sup>17</sup>

May I watch my speech when among many.  
May I watch my mind when alone.

Written by the glorious master of India, Atisha Dipankara,  
Heart of Perfect Wisdom, Illuminator Who is Entirely Good.  
Thus, “The Bodhisattva's Garland of Jewels” is complete.

Translation from the Tibetan by Jesse Fenton, Nov. 1997, Seattle,  
under the guidance of Geshe Yeshe Tobden.  
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- <sup>1</sup> *ge* . Alternately, *gyed* in ACIP TB3951 and *gens* in ACIP TD3951
- <sup>2</sup> *byang chub sems* - mind of enlightenment, awakened heart, bodhichitta
- <sup>3</sup> *dman pa' sems*
- <sup>4</sup> *'phags pa* - a Superior, a being who has directly realized emptiness but has not necessarily achieved highest enlightenment
- <sup>5</sup> *du 'dzi*
- <sup>6</sup> *bde* (good) is missing in the Geshe Rabten version
- <sup>7</sup> *shum pa*
- <sup>8</sup> Alternately, *rtag tu stong nyid bsgom par bya* (ACIP TD3951)
- <sup>9</sup> *sgyu ma spru*
- <sup>10</sup> *ri dwags shi ba' ro bzhin du* literally, like a corpse of a wild animal. Geshe Yeshe Tobden says this means a wounded animal.
- <sup>11</sup> *des* (good-natured.) Alternately, *tal* (Geshe Rabten version)
- <sup>12</sup> *gro gnyer no zum spang bya zhing*
- <sup>13</sup> *gsar 'grog med* - literally, a love of new things, new acquaintances (ACIP TD3951 and TB3951)
- <sup>14</sup> *rtag tu tshugs ni thub par bya*. Alternately, *rtag tu zuns ni thub par bya* in ACIP TD3951
- <sup>15</sup> *chos*
- <sup>16</sup> *gang mos de la 'dun pa dang* - literally, "Be intent on these various (teachings)". Geshe Yeshe glosses that the line should be translated as above.
- <sup>17</sup> *mi ma yin la brjod mi bya* - literally, "do not tell this to the non-human"