

**Do even the gods, the rishis,
Or even Brahmā harbour such benevolence?**

One's parents, who naturally have a strong bond of love with their children, one's personal guardian deities,⁹ rishis who always speak the truth and even Brahmā who has trained his mind in the [four] immeasurables certainly wish for our happiness in this life but they do not have the intention to achieve enlightenment for our benefit.

2. Not even for themselves

**1.24
Those beings never before,
Even in their dreams,
Had an intention like this, even for their own sake.
How could it arise then for the sake of others?**

3. Establishing the greatness of the benefit of generating this mind

**1.25
The intention to benefit others did not arise
For sentient beings even for their own sake.
The arising of this highest treasure of the mind
Is an unprecedented wonder.**

'Unprecedented' here means it is extraordinary or uncommon.

3. The greatness of its goodness

**1.26
It is the cause of joy in all wandering beings.
It is the elixir remedying the suffering of sentient beings.
How can the merit of this treasure of mind
Even begin to be measured or quantified?**

It generates both joy in the mind and happiness in the body.

2. The reasons for the benefits of application [268]

1. The actual practice is undertaken

2. The many individuals affected
3. It does not depend on getting anything back
4. Establishing vastness
5. Explaining how it is particularly powerful

1. The actual practice is undertaken

1.27

**If the mere intention to help others
Is better than making offerings to the Buddhas,
What can one say about the endeavour
To bring happiness and benefit to all beings without
exception?**

This verse describes the intention to help others as superior even to the worship of the Buddhas. As it says in the *Sutra Requested by Candrapradipa*,

If one filled a myriad of worlds
With limitless kinds of offerings
And offered this every day for all time,
It would not even approach the mind of loving kindness.¹⁰

It also says in the *Sutra Requested by Viradatta*,

To the Buddhas, the one who has
The intention of bodhicitta
Is superior to the one who makes offerings
Of overflowing treasures to the Sugatas.¹¹

2. The many individuals affected

1.28

**Though they long to be free from suffering,
They hurriedly chase after suffering itself.
Though they long for happiness, in their ignorance,
They destroy it as though their own happiness were their
enemy.**

1.29

**Whoever is destitute of happiness
And burdened with many sufferings
Will be filled with every happiness
And cut off from all their suffering,**

1.30

**And their ignorance, too, will be dispelled.
What virtue could equal that?
What friend can compare to it?
What merit is remotely comparable to it?**

There are three kinds of beings referenced here:

1. Those possessing the cause—ignorance
2. Those experiencing result—destitution of happiness
3. Those tormented by suffering

1. Although they long to be free from suffering, in their ignorance they hurriedly chase after suffering itself and, although they long for happiness, in their ignorance they destroy their own happiness as if it were their enemy. Thus, they possess the cause: ignorance. The benefit for such beings is that ‘their ignorance too will be dispelled.’ The additional benefit of that is they now accumulate merit. No other kind of merit is known which is remotely like this.

2. The particular benefit for whomever is destitute of happiness is that they are ‘filled with every happiness.’ The praise is, ‘What [virtue] could equal to that?’ [269]

3. The benefit for those burdened with many sufferings is they are ‘cut off from all suffering.’ The praise is, ‘What friend is even alike to it?’

3. It does not depend on getting anything back

1.31

**If one who repays a helpful deed
Is worthy of some praise,
What can one say of the bodhisattva
Whose excellent deeds are unsolicited?**

4. Establishing vastness

1.32

**Worldly people respect someone who briefly
Gives a little food, contemptuously,
To a few beings, satisfying them only for half a day,
Saying, 'That was a virtuous deed.'**

1.33

**What can one say then of someone who
Always gives the unsurpassed happiness
Of the Sugatas to countless sentient beings throughout time,
The ultimate perfection of their wishes?**

Even the giving of food is praised with the words, 'That was a virtuous deed.' If one wonders why the bodhisattva is superior, it is because the former has an inferior number of beings: a few; inferior time: one moment; inferior substance: mere food; inferior conduct: with contempt; and inferior benefit: satisfying for half a day, while the bodhisattva is superior in always practising vast giving for great fields of countless sentient beings; for a superior time: throughout time; with a superior substance: the unsurpassed bliss of the Sugatas; and a superior benefit: the ultimate perfection of their wishes.

5. Explaining how it is particularly powerful

1.34

**If one should develop a malevolent intention
Towards such beneficent sons of the conquerors,
The Sage has taught they will remain in the hells
For as many aeons as malevolent thoughts developed.**

For even a momentary malevolent intent, one can remain in the hells for an entire aeon. In the sutra of the *Display of Completely Definitive Pacification*, it says,

For however long they develop a mind of hatred and a mind of contempt for bodhisattvas, for as many aeons beings will remain in the hell realms.¹²

Having explained bodhicitta as a particularly powerful field of nonvirtue, next it is explained as a particularly powerful field of merit:

1.35

**Nevertheless, if one's attitude is good,
The results will be even greater.**

4. Summarizing the benefits of self

**The sons of the conquerors, with great seriousness,
Never perform nonvirtue and their virtues continuously
increase.**

With great dedication, they never perform nonvirtue [270] even at the cost of their lives. Rather, their virtues continuously increase.

5. Summarizing the benefits of others

1.36

**I bow down before
Those in whom this sacred jewel of mind is born
And I take refuge in those sources of happiness
Who bring happiness even to those who harm them.**

Bringing happiness even to those who harm them means, out of compassion, they bestow happiness on those who do them harm. It does not mean the happiness arises as a result of the harms committed, for that would contradict the earlier assertion in verse 34.