

The Wisdom Chapter of The Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra **By Śāntideva**

1.

All these branches of the Doctrine
The Enlightened Sage expounded for the sake of wisdom.
Therefore they must cultivate this wisdom
Who wish to have an end of suffering.

2.

Relative and ultimate,
These the two truths are declared to be.
The ultimate is not within the reach of intellect,
For intellect is said to be the relative.

3.

In light of this, within the world, two kinds of people are observed:
Those with yogic insight and the common run of people.
In this regard, the views of ordinary folk
Are undermined by yogis who themselves are in the world

4.

(Within whose ranks
The lower, in degrees of insight, are confuted by the higher)
By means of the examples that the yogis and the worldly both accept.
And for the sake of the result, analysis is left aside.

5.

When ordinary folk perceive phenomena,
They look on them as real, and not illusory.
This, then, is the subject of debate
Where ordinary and yogis differ.

6.

Forms and so forth, which we all perceive,
Exist by general acclaim but not by valid reasoning.
They're false just like, for instance, unclean things
Regarded in the common view as pure.

7.

But that he might instruct the worldly,
Our Protector spoke of "things."
But these in truth lack even momentariness.
Now if you say it's wrong to claim the momentary as relative,

8.

There is no fault. For momentariness
Is relative for yogis, but for worldly beings, ultimate.
Were it otherwise, the common view
Could fault the yogic insight into corporal impurity

9.

“Through a Buddha, who is but illusion, how does merit spring?”

As if the Buddha were existing truly.

“But,” you ask, “if beings are like illusions,

How, when dying, can they take rebirth?”

10.

As long as the conditions are assembled,

Illusions, likewise, will persist and manifest.

Why, through simply being more protracted,

Should sentient beings be regarded as more real?

11.

If one kills or harms the magical illusion of a man,

There is no mind in such a thing and therefore there’s no sin.

But beings do indeed have mirage-like minds;

Sin and merit will, in consequence, arise.

12.

There is no power in things like spells,

So mirage-like minds do not occur through them.

Illusions spring from various causes;

Thus illusions are of different kinds.

13.

A single cause for everything

There never was!

“If ultimately, beings are in nirvāṇa,” you will say,

“But relatively circle in saṃsāra,

14.

“Even Buddhahood reverts to the saṃsāric state.

So why,” you ask, “pursue the Bodhisattva path?”

As long as there’s no cutting of the causal stream,

There is no halting even of illusory displays.

15.

But when the causal stream is severed,

Even relative phenomena do not appear.

“If even that which is deceived does not exist,

What is it,” you will ask, “that sees illusion?”

16.

But if, for you, these same illusions have no being,

What, indeed, is there to be perceived?

“But objects have another mode of being,” you will say,

“That very mode is but the mind itself.”

17.

But if the mirage is the mind itself,

What is then perceived by what?

The Guardian of the World himself has said

That mind cannot be seen by mind

18.

In just the same way, he has said,
The sword's edge cannot cut the sword.
"But," you say, "it's like the flame
That perfectly illuminates itself."

19.

The flame, in fact, can never light itself.
And why? Because the darkness never dims it!
"The blueness of a thing by nature blue," you say,
"Depends, unlike a crystal, upon nothing else."

20.

"Likewise some perceptions
Come from other things, while some do not."
But something that's by nature blue has never of itself imposed
A blueness on its non-blue self.

21.

The phrase "The lamp illuminates itself"
The mind can know and formulate.
But what is there to know and say
That "mind is self-illuminating?"

22.

The mind, indeed, is never seen by anything.
And therefore, whether it can know, or cannot know, itself,
Is like the beauty of a barren woman's daughter:
Something that it's pointless to discuss.

23.

"But if," you ask, "the mind is not self-knowing,
How does it remember what it knew?"
We say that, like the poison of the water rat,
It's through the link with things experienced that memory occurs.

24.

"In certain cases," you will say, "the mind
Can see the minds of others, how then not itself?"
But through the application of a magic balm,
The eye may see the treasure, but the salve it does not see.

25.

It's not indeed our purpose to disprove
Experiences of sight or sound or knowing.
Our aim is here to undermine the cause of sorrow:
The thought that such phenomena have true existence.

26.

"Illusions are not other than the mind," you say,
And yet you don't consider them the same.
How could they not be different if the mind is real?
And how can mind be real if you deny a difference?

27.
Although it is unreal, a mirage can be seen;
And that which sees is just the same.
“But saṃsāra must be based on something real,” you say,
“Or else it is like empty space.”

28.
But how could the unreal be causally effective,
Even if it rests on something real?
This mind of yours is isolated and alone,
Alone, in solitude, and unaccompanied.

29.
If the mind indeed is free of objects,
All beings must be Buddhas, Thus-Gone and enlightened.
And so, what purpose can there be
In saying thus, that there is “Only Mind”?

30.
“Even if we know that all is like illusion,
How,” you ask, “will this dispel afflictive passion?
Magicians may indeed themselves desire
The mirage-women they themselves create.”

31
The reason is they have not rid themselves
Of habits of desiring objects of perception;
And when they gaze upon such things,
Their aptitude for emptiness is weak indeed.

32.
By training in this aptitude for emptiness,
The habit to perceive real things will be relinquished.
By training in the thought “There isn’t anything,”
This view itself will also be abandoned.

33.
“There is nothing”—when this is asserted,
No thing is there to be examined.
How can a “nothing,” wholly unsupported,
Rest before the mind as something present?

34.
When something and its nonexistence
Both are absent from before the mind,
No other option does the latter have:
It comes to perfect rest, from concepts free.

35.
As the wishing jewel and tree of miracles
Fulfill and satisfy all hopes and wishes,
Likewise, through their prayers for those who might be trained,
The physical appearance of the Conquerors occurs.

36.
The healing shrine of the garuḍa,
Even when its builder was long dead,
Continued even ages thence
To remedy and soothe all plagues and venom.

37.
Likewise having gained the “shrine of victory”
In accordance with their deeds for sake of Buddhahood,
Though Bodhisattvas pass beyond all grief,
They yet can satisfy all ends.

38.
“But how,” you ask, “can offerings made
To beings freed from all discursiveness give fruit?”
It’s said that whether Buddhas live or pass beyond,
The offerings made to them are equal in their merit.

39.
Whether you assert them in the ultimate or relative,
Merit, so the scriptures say, arises,
Just as there will be results
When Buddhas are considered truly real.

40.
“We’re free,” you say, “through seeing the (Four) Truths—
What use is it to us, this view of emptiness?”
But as the scriptures have themselves proclaimed,
Without this path there can be no enlightenment.

41.
You say the Mahāyāna has no certainty.
But how do you substantiate your own tradition?
“Because it is accepted by both parties,” you will say.
But at the outset, you yourself lacked proof!

42.
The reasons why you trust in your tradition
May likewise be applied to Mahāyāna.
Moreover, if accord between two parties shows the truth,
The Vedas and the rest are also true.

43.
“Mahāyāna is at fault,” you say, “because it is contested.”
But Buddhist texts are questioned by extremists,
While Buddhists also vie among themselves;
And so your own tradition you must now abandon.

44.
The true monk is the root of Dharma,
And to be a monk is difficult indeed.
It’s hard for minds enmeshed in thoughts
To pass beyond the bonds of suffering.

45.
You say there's liberation in the instant
That defilements are entirely forsaken.
Yet those who from defilements are set free
Continue to display the influence of karma.

46.
"Only for a while," you say. "For it is certain
That the causes of rebirth, their cravings, are no more."
They have no craving, granted, through defilement,
But like their ignorance, why should they not have craving undefiled?

47.
This craving is produced by virtue of sensation,
And sensation, this they surely have.
Concepts linger still within their minds;
And it is to these concepts that they cling.

48.
The mind that has not realized voidness,
May be halted, but will once again arise,
Just as from a non-perceptual absorption.
Therefore one must train in emptiness.

49.
If all the words recorded in the sūtras
You admit to be the Buddha's perfect speech,
Why don't you now accept the greater part of Mahāyāna,
With which your sūtras are in perfect harmony?

50.
If due to just a single jarring element,
The whole is held to be at fault,
Why should a single sūtra in agreement with your texts
Not vindicate the rest as Buddha's teaching?

51.
Mahākāshyapa himself and others
Could not sound the depths of such a teaching.
Who will therefore say that they're to be rejected
Just because they are not grasped by you?

52.
To linger and abide within saṃsāra,
Freed from every craving and from every fear,
In order to achieve the good of those who ignorantly suffer:
Such is the fruit that emptiness will bear.

53.
Therefore it is incorrect
To find fault with this view of emptiness.
And so, with every doubt abandoned,
We should meditate on it!

54.
Afflictive passion and the veil upon cognition—
The cure for their obscurity is emptiness.
How then shall they not meditate on this
Who wish for swift attainment of omniscience?

55.
Whatever is the source of suffering,
Let that be the object of our fear.
But voidness will allay our every grief,
How could it be for us a thing of dread?

56.
If such a thing as “I” exists indeed,
Then terrors, granted, will torment it.
But since no self or “I” exists at all,
What is there left for fears to terrify?

57.
The teeth, the hair, the nails are not the “I,”
And “I” is not the bones or blood,
The mucus from the nose and phlegm are not the “I,”
And neither is it made of lymph or pus.

58.
The “I” is not the body’s grease or sweat,
The lungs and liver likewise do not constitute it.
Neither are the inner organs “I,”
Nor yet the body’s excrement and waste.

59.
The flesh and skin are not the “I,”
And neither are the body’s warmth and breath.
The cavities within the frame are not the “I,”
And “I” is not accounted for in sixfold consciousness.

60.
If the hearing consciousness is permanent,
It follows that it’s hearing all the time.
And if there is no object, what does it cognize?
On what grounds do you call it consciousness?

61.
If something that’s unconscious knows,
It follows that a stick has knowledge also.
Therefore in the absence of a thing to know,
It’s clear that consciousness will not arise.

62.
If the selfsame consciousness detects a form,
At that time, why does it not hear?
Perhaps you say the sound’s no longer there.
Then neither is there consciousness of sound.

63.

How could that which has the nature of a sound-perceiver
Ever be transformed into a form-perceiver?
“A single man,” you say, “can be both son and father.”
But these are merely names; his nature is not so.

64.

And likewise “pain,” “neutrality,” and “pleasure”
Are neither fatherhood nor sonship;
And we indeed have never yet observed
A consciousness of form perceiving sound.

65.

“But like an actor,” you reply, “it takes a different role and sees.”
If so, this consciousness is not a constant thing.
And if its later mode is still the first,
That’s identity indeed and never seen before!

66.

“But its different modes,” you say, “are quite unreal.”
Its essence therefore you must now describe.
You say that this is simply knowing.
It follows that all beings are a single thing.

67.

What has mind and what does not have mind
Are thus identical, for both are equal in existing.
If the different kinds of mind are all unreal,
What common basis can there be for them?

68.

Something destitute of mind, we hold, is not a self.
For mindlessness means matter, like a vase.
“But,” you say, “the self has consciousness when joined to mind.”
Then this refutes its nature of unconsciousness.

69.

If the self, moreover, is immutable,
What change in it could mingling with the mind produce?
And selfhood we might equally affirm
Of empty space, inert and destitute of mind.

70.

“If self does not exist,” you say,
“There is no link connecting actions with results.
If when the deed is done, the doer is no more,
Who is there to reap the karmic fruit?”

71.

The bases of the act and fruit are not the same,
In both a self is without scope for action.
This is valid both for you and us;
What point is there, therefore, in our debate?

72.
“A cause coterminous with its result”
Is something quite impossible to see.
And only in the context of a single mental stream
Can it be said that one who acts will later reap the fruit.

73.
The thoughts now passed, and those to come, are not the self;
They are no more, or are not yet.
Is then the self the thought which now is born?
If so, it sinks to nothing when the latter fades.

74.
For instance, we may take banana trees—
Cutting through the fibers, finding nothing.
Likewise analytical investigation
Will find no “I,” no underlying self.

75.
“If beings,” you will say, “have no existence,
Who will be the object of compassion?”
Those whom ignorance imputes,
For whose sake we have pledged ourselves.

76.
“If,” you ask, “there are no beings, who will gain the fruit?”
It’s true! It is through ignorance that they are said to be!
But for the total vanquishing of sorrow,
The goal, which ignorance conceives, should not be spurned.

77.
The source of sorrow is the pride of saying “I,”
It’s fostered and increased by false belief in self.
To this you may believe that there is no redress,
But meditation on no-self will be the supreme way.

78.
What we call the body is not feet or shins;
The body, likewise, is not thighs or loins.
It’s not the belly nor indeed the back,
And from the chest and arms the body is not formed.

79.
The body is not ribs or hands,
Armpits, shoulders, bowels, or entrails.
It is not the head, and it is not the throat.
What is the “body,” then, in all of this?

80.
If the “body” spreads itself
And with the members coincides,
Its parts indeed are present in those parts.
But where does “body,” in itself, abide?

81.
But if the "body," single and entire
Is present in the hands and other members,
However many parts there are, the hands and all the rest,
You'll find an equal quantity of "bodies."

82.
If "body" is not outside or within its parts,
How is it, then, residing in its members?
And since it is not other than its parts,
How can you say that it exists at all?

83.
Thus there is no "body." It is through illusion,
With regard to hands and other parts, that "body" as a notion is conceived—
Just as on account of its specific shape
A pile of stones is taken for a man.

84.
As long as the conditions are assembled,
The body will appear to be a man.
As long as all the parts are likewise present,
A body will appear therein.

85.
Likewise, since it is a group of fingers,
The hand itself does not exist as such.
And so it is with fingers, made of joints—
And joints themselves consist of many parts.

86.
These parts themselves will break down into particles,
And particles divide according to direction.
These fragments, too, lack partless parts; they are like space.
Thus even particles have no existence.

87.
All form, therefore, is like a dream,
And who will be attached to it, who thus investigates?
The body, in this way, has no existence;
What, therefore, is male and what is female?

88.
If suffering itself is truly real,
Why is joy not altogether quenched thereby?
If pleasure's real, then why will pleasant tastes
Not comfort and amuse a man in agony?

89.
If the feeling fails to be experienced,
Through being overwhelmed by something stronger,
How can "feeling" rightly be ascribed
To that which lacks the character of being felt?

90.
Perhaps you say that only subtle pain remains,
Its grosser form has now been overmastered—
Or rather it is felt as “mere pleasure.”
But what is subtle still remains itself.

91.
If, because its opposite is present,
Discomfort fails to manifest,
Is not the claim that it’s a “feeling”
No more than a mental imputation?

92.
Since so it is, the antidote
Is meditation and analysis.
Absorption grown in fields of their investigation
Is indeed the food and sustenance of yogis.

93.
If between the sense power and a thing
There is a space, how will the two terms meet?
And if there is no space, they form a unity,
And therefore what is it that meets with what?

94.
No penetration can there be of particle by particle,
For they are both the same in lacking volume.
But if they do not penetrate, they do not merge;
And if they do not merge, there’s no encounter.

95.
For how could anyone accept
That what is partless could be said to meet?
And you must show me, if you ever saw,
A contact taking place between two partless things.

96.
Consciousness is immaterial,
And so one cannot speak of contact with it.
A combination, too, has no reality,
Just as we have previously shown.

97.
If therefore there’s no touch or contact,
Whence is it that feeling takes its rise?
What purpose is there, then, in all our toil,
For what is it, indeed, that torments what?

98.
Since there is no subject for sensation,
And sensation, too, lacks all existence,
How is craving not arrested
When all this is clearly understood?

99.

What we see and what we touch
Is stuff of dreams and mirages.
If feeling is coincident with consciousness,
It follows that it is not seen thereby.

100.

If the one arises first, the other after,
Memory occurs and not direct sensation.
Sensation is without perception of itself
And likewise, by another it is not perceived.

101.

The agent of sensation has no real existence,
Thus sensation, likewise, has no being.
What damage, therefore, can sensation do to it—
This aggregate deprived of self?

102.

The mind within the senses does not dwell,
It has no place in outer things like form.
And in between, the mind does not abide:
Not out, not in, not elsewhere, can the mind be found.

103.

It is not in the body, yet is nowhere else.
It does not merge with it nor stand apart—
Something such as this does not exist, not even slightly.
Beings by their nature are beyond the reach of suffering.

104.

If consciousness precedes the cognized object,
With regard to what does it arise?
If consciousness arises at the same time as its object,
Again, regarding what does it arise?

105.

If consciousness comes later than its object,
Once again, from what does it arise?
Thus the origin of all phenomena
Exceeds the reach of understanding.

106.

“If this is so,” you say, “there is no relative,
And then the two truths—what becomes of them?
Moreover, if the relative derives from beings’ minds,
How can they pass beyond their sorrows?”

107.

But that is just the thought of others;
It is not what I mean by the relative.
If subsequently there are thoughts, the relative’s still there;
If not, the relative has ceased indeed.

108.

The analyzing mind and what is analyzed
Are linked together, mutually dependent.
It is on the basis of conventional consensus
That all investigation is expressed.

109.

“But when,” you say, “the process of analysis
Is made, in turn, the object of our scrutiny,
This investigation likewise may be analyzed,
And thus we find an infinite regress.”

110.

If phenomena are truly analyzed,
No basis for analysis remains.
And when the object is removed, the subject too subsides.
That indeed is said to be nirvāṇa.

111.

Those who say that both are true,
Are hard-pressed to maintain their case.
If consciousness reveals the truth of things,
On what grounds, in its turn, does consciousness exist?

112.

If knowledge objects show that consciousness exists,
What is it that shows that they exist?
If both subsist through mutual dependence,
Both will thereby lose their true existence.

113.

If, without a son, a man cannot be father,
Whence, indeed, will such a son arise?
There is no father in the absence of a son.
Just so, the mind and object have no true existence.

114.

“The plant arises from the seed,” you say,
“And through it is the seed deduced.
It’s just the same with consciousness arising from its object.
How can it fail to show the thing’s existence?”

115.

A consciousness that’s different from the plant itself
Deduces the existence of the seed.
But what will show that consciousness exists,
Whereby the object is itself established?

116.

In everyday perception
There’s a cause for everything.
The different segments of the lotus flower
Arise from a variety of causes.

117.
“But what gives rise,” you ask, “to such variety of causes?”
An even earlier variety of causes, we declare.
“And how,” you ask, “do causes give their fruits?”
Through power, we answer, of preceding causes.

118.
If Īshvara is held to be the cause of beings,
You must now define for us his nature.
If, by this, you simply mean the elements,
No need to tire ourselves disputing names!

119.
Yet earth and other elements are many,
Impermanent, inert, without divinity.
Trampled underfoot, they are impure,
And thus they cannot be a God Omnipotent.

120.
The Deity cannot be space—inert and unproductive.
He cannot be the self, for this we have refuted.
He’s inconceivable, they say—then likewise his creatorship.
Is there any point, therefore, to such a claim?

121.
What is it that he wishes to create?
Has he made the self and all the elements?
But are not self and elements and he himself eternal?
And consciousness, we know, arises from its object.

122.
Pain and pleasure have, from all time, sprung from karma,
So tell us, what has his Divinity produced?
And if there’s no beginning in the cause,
How can there be beginnings in its fruits?

123.
Why are creatures not created constantly,
For Īshvara relies on nothing but himself?
And if there’s nothing that he has not made,
What remains on which he might depend?

124.
If Īshvara depends, the cause of all
Is but the meeting of conditions and not Īshvara.
When these obtain, he cannot but create;
When these are absent, he is powerless to make.

125.
If Almighty God does not intend,
But yet creates, another thing has forced him.
If he wishes to create, he’s swayed by his desire.
So even though Creator, what of his omnipotence?

126.

Those who hold the permanence of particles
Were indeed refuted earlier.
The Sāṃkhyas are the ones who hold
That permanent prakṛiti is the cause of the evolving world.

127.

“Pleasure,” “pain,” “neutrality,” so-called,
Are qualities which, when they rest
In equilibrium are termed “prakṛiti.”
The universe arises when this balance is disturbed.

128.

Three natures in a unity are disallowed,
And thus prakṛiti is without existence.
These qualities likewise do not exist,
For each of them indeed is three.

129.

If these qualities have no existence,
A thing like sound is very far from plausible!
And cloth and other mindless objects
Cannot be the seat of feelings such as pleasure.

130.

“But,” you say, “these things possess the nature of their cause.”
But have we not investigated “things” already?
For you the cause is “pleasure” and the like,
And yet from pleasure, cloth has never sprung!

131.

Pleasure, rather, is produced from cloth.
If this is nonexistent, pleasure likewise.
As for permanence of pleasure and the rest—
Well, there’s a thing that’s never been observed!

132.

If pleasure and the rest are manifestly present,
How comes it that they’re not perceived?
And if you claim they take on subtle form,
How is it that they are both gross and subtle?

133.

If coarseness is abandoned, subtlety assumed,
Subtlety and grossness both lack permanence.
So why not grant that, in this way,
All things possess the character of transience?

134.

If the coarser aspect is none other than the pleasure,
It’s clear that pleasure is itself impermanent.
If you claim that what does not exist in any sense
(Because it has no being) cannot manifest,

135.

Although you have denied the birth of things
That did not previously exist, it's this that you're now saying!
But if results exist within their cause,
Those who eat their food consume their excrement.

136.

And likewise with the money they would spend on clothing,
Let them rather buy the cotton grains to wear!
"But," you say, "the world is ignorant and blind.
For this is taught by 'those who know the truth.'"

137.

This knowledge must be present in the worldly too!
And if they have it, why do they not see?
If now you say that what the worldly see has no validity,
This means that what they clearly see is false.

138.

"If," you ask, "there's no validity in valid knowledge,
Is not all that it assesses false?
And therefore it becomes untenable
To meditate on voidness, ultimate reality."

139.

If there is no object for analysis,
There can be no grasping of its nonexistence.
And so deceptive objects of whatever kind
Will also have a nonexistence equally deceptive.

140.

When therefore in one's dream a child has died,
The state of mind that thinks it is no more
Supplants the thought that it is living still.
And yet both thoughts are equally deceptive.

141.

Therefore, as we see through such investigation,
Nothing is that does not have a cause;
And nothing is existent in its causes
Taken one by one or in the aggregate.

142.

It does not come from somewhere else,
Neither does it stay nor yet depart.
How will what confusion takes for truth
In any sense be different from a mirage?

143.

Things, then, bodied forth by magic spells,
And that which is displayed by dint of causes—
Whence have these arisen? we should ask;
And where they go to, that we should examine!

144.
What is seen when circumstances meet
And is not seen in absence of the same
Is not real; it is like an image in a mirror.
How can true existence be ascribed to it?

145.
What need is there for cause
In something that's already real?
But then, what need is there for cause
In something that does not exist?

146.
Even through a hundred million causes,
No change takes place in nonexistent things,
For in that state of "non-thing," how could "things" occur?
And into what could nonexistent things transform?

147.
Since things cannot become when they are nonexistent,
When could such existent things occur?
For insofar as entities do not arise,
Nonentities themselves will not depart.

148.
And if nonentity is not dispersed,
No chance is there for entity to manifest.
And entity cannot be changed into nonentity,
For otherwise it has a double nature.

149.
Thus there are no entities
And likewise there's no ceasing of the same.
And therefore beings, each and every one,
Are without origin and never cease.

150.
Wandering beings, thus, resemble dreams,
And also the banana tree, if you examine well.
In ultimate reality there's no distinguishing
Between the states of sorrow and beyond all sorrow.

151.
With things that in this way are empty
What is there to gain and what to lose?
Who is there to pay me court and honors,
And who is there to scorn and to revile me?

152.
Pleasure, sorrow—whence do these arise?
What is there to give me joy and pain?
And if I search their very suchness,
Who is craving? What is craved?

153.
Examine now this world of living beings:
Who is there therein to pass away?
What is there to come, and what has been?
And who, indeed, are relatives and friends?

154.
May beings like myself discern and grasp
That all things have the character of space!
But those who seek their happiness and ease,
Through disputes or enjoyments,

155.
All are deeply troubled, or else thrilled with joy.
They suffer, strive, contend among themselves,
Slashing, stabbing, injuring each other:
They live their lives engulfed in evil and travail.

156.
From time to time they surface in the states of bliss,
Abandoning themselves to many pleasures.
But dying, down they fall to suffer torment,
Long, unbearable, in realms of sorrow.

157.
Many are the chasms and abysses of existence,
Where the truth of suchness is not found.
All is contradiction, all denial;
Suchness in this world is not like this.

158.
Here, exceeding all description,
Is the shoreless sea of pain unbearable.
Here it is that strength is low,
And lives are flickering and brief.

159.
All activities for sake of life and health,
Relief of hunger and of weariness,
Time consumed in sleep, all accident and injury,
And sterile friendships with the childish—

160.
Thus life passes quickly, meaningless.
True discernment—hard it is to have!
How therefore shall we ever find the means
To curb the futile wanderings of the mind?

161.
Further, evil forces work and strain
To cast us down into the states of woe;
Manifold are false, deceptive trails,
And it is hard to dissipate our doubts.

162.

Hard it is to find again this state of freedom,
Harder yet to come upon enlightened teachers,
Hard, indeed, to turn aside the torrent of defilement!
Alas, our sorrows fall in endless streams!

163.

Alas indeed that living beings,
Carried on the flood of bitter pain,
However terrible their plight may be,
Do not perceive they suffer so!

164.

They are like those who bathe themselves repeatedly
And then proceed to scorch themselves with fire.
They suffer greatly in this way,
Yet there they stay, proclaiming loud their bliss.

165.

Likewise there are some who live and act
As though old age and death will never come to them.
But first they're slain and then there comes
The dreadful fall into the states of loss.

166.

When shall I be able to allay and quench
The dreadful heat of suffering's blazing fires
With plenteous rains of my own bliss
That pour torrential from my clouds of merit?

167.

My wealth of merit gathered in,
With reverence but without conceptual target,
When shall I reveal this truth of emptiness
To those who go to ruin through belief in real existence?