

Kṣānti Pāramitā

VI. CHAPTER 6: THE PERFECTION OF PATIENCE

A. THREE KINDS OF BENEFIT AND PATH ADORNMENT FROM PATIENCE

How does the bodhisattva go about cultivating patience? If patience is cultivated for the sake of bringing about self-benefit, benefit of others, and the combined benefit of both, one becomes able thereby to adorn the path to bodhi.

1. RIGHT MOTIVATION IN THE PRACTICE OF PATIENCE

The bodhisattva cultivates patience out of a wish to train and discipline beings in a manner whereby they are therefore caused to abandon suffering and affliction.

As for one who cultivates patience, in relating to all beings, his mind remains in a state of constant humility. Stubbornness and arrogance are relinquished and thus are not a part of his practice. When one encounters someone who is coarse and evil, he brings forth thoughts inclined towards pity. His words are always gentle, encouraging change and the cultivation of goodness. He is able to distinguish and explain the differences in the resulting retribution arising from hatefulness on the one hand and harmoniousness and patience on the other.

This is what qualifies as the mind of patience as initially cultivated by the bodhisattva.

2. SELF BENEFIT

On account of cultivating patience, one departs far from the many sorts of evil and enjoys happiness in both body and mind. This is what is meant by "self-benefit."

3. BENEFIT OF OTHERS

One transforms beings through teaching and guides them so that in every case they are caused to become harmonious and accommodating. This is what is meant by "benefit of others."

4. COMBINED BENEFIT

On account of the unsurpassed great patience which one has cultivated, one teaches beings, thus causing them to gain benefit identical to one's own. This is what is meant by "combined benefit."

5. ADORNING THE PATH OF BODHI THROUGH PATIENCE

On account of cultivating patience, one gains a body possessed of a fine and well-formed appearance, becomes one who is revered by

others, and eventually even gains the supremely marvelous major marks and subsidiary characteristics of a buddha. This is what is meant by "adorning the path to bodhi.

B. THE THREE TYPES OF PATIENCE

Patience is of three types: physical, verbal, and mental.

1. PHYSICAL PATIENCE

What is meant by physical patience? In an instance where someone visits evil actions on one's person by invading, wreaking destruction, seizing, striking, and even inflicting serious injury, one remains able in all such instances to patiently endure it. In an instance where one observes beings placed in danger, subjected to physical force, and afflicted with terror, one physically stands in for them and yet remains free of any weariness or indolence in doing so. This is what is meant by physical patience.

2. VERBAL PATIENCE

What is meant by verbal patience? In an instance where one encounters someone who subjects one to cursing, one remains silent and endures it without responding in kind. In an instance where one encounters someone who, with no basis in principle, scolds and rebukes, one should respond with gentle words and deferential accommodation. In an instance where someone subjects one to false accusations or arbitrary and fierce slanders, one should in all cases endure it patiently. This is what is meant by verbal patience.

3. MENTAL PATIENCE

What is meant by mental patience? In an instance where one encounters someone who is angry, one's mind refrains from cherishing any enmity towards them. In an instance where one is subjected to torment, one's mind remains undisturbed. In an instance where one is subjected to ridicule and ruinous behavior, one's mind still remains free of resentment. This is what is meant by mental patience.

C. TWO TYPES OF BEATINGS

There are two types of circumstances in the world wherein one might be subjected to being beaten. In the case of the first, it has a real basis for its occurrence. In the case of the second, it is arbitrary and unwarranted.

In a case where one has transgressed by committing offenses and if one is then struck by someone motivated by animosity and suspicion, one should patiently endure it as if one were drinking sweet-dew ambrosia (*amṛta*). One should feel respect for that person.

Why? "Because he is well able to instruct, warn, train, and subdue me, thus causing me to abandon all manner of transgressions."

In a case where I am arbitrarily subjected to evil actions which inflict injury on me, I should reflect thus: "I am not now guilty of having committed any offenses. It must be then that this is a circumstance brought on by previous-life karma from the past." This, too, is something with which one should be patient.

One should also reflect thus: "In this circumstance consisting of an artificial conjunction of the four great elements and a meeting together of conditions associated with the five aggregates, just who is it that is undergoing a beating here?"

Additionally, one may contemplate the person before him as if he were mentally deranged or as if he were crazed, and reflect, "I should pity him. How could I not be patient?"

D. TWO TYPES OF SCOLDINGS

Scoldings are also of two different types: first, those which are based on the truth; and second, those which are based on what is false. In the case of those where what is said is true, I should bring forth a sense of shame. In a case where what is said is false, it is a circumstance which has nothing to do with me. It is comparable then to the sounds of an echo and is also comparable to the sound of the passing wind which does me no harm. Therefore one should be patient in these situations.

E. THE NECESSITY OF PATIENCE WHEN SUBJECTED TO OTHERS' HATRED

Again, in a circumstance involving someone who is possessed by hatred, it is just the same. In a situation where another person comes and expresses hatred towards me, I should patiently endure it. If I react with hatred towards him, then in a future lifetime, I may fall down into the wretched destinies and be forced to undergo great suffering and affliction therein. Because of such causal circumstances as these, even if my body were to be hacked up and scattered about, I still should not generate any hatred. One should deeply contemplate the nature of one's past-life karmic causes and conditions. Then one should cultivate kindness, compassion, and pity for everyone.

[One reflects], "If I cannot endure even such minor sufferings as these, I shall not even be able to train and discipline my own mind. This being so, how could I ever be able to train and discipline other beings, causing them to become liberated from all evil dharmas and causing them to perfect the unsurpassed fruition [of the Path]?"

F. RETRIBUTIONS CORRESPONDING TO PRESENCE OR ABSENCE OF PATIENCE

In a circumstance where there is a wise person delighting in the cultivation of patience, this person will always be reborn with a well-formed and attractive appearance and will always be abundantly endowed with material wealth and jewels. When people lay eyes upon him, they become delighted, respectful, deferential, and accommodating.

One should also contemplate those circumstance where a person possesses a deformed body, an ugly countenance, incomplete faculties, or a dearth of material wealth. One should realize that these effects are all obtained through causes and conditions associated with hatred.

G. TEN BASES FOR DEVELOPING PATIENCE

For these reasons, the wise should deeply cultivate patience. There are ten circumstances reflecting the causes and conditions conducive to the development of patience:

First, one does not indulge a regard for the marks associated with "I" or "mine."

Second, one does not bear in mind matters of caste;

Third, one does away with arrogance.

Fourth, if one is wronged, he does not respond in kind.

Fifth, one contemplates the reflection on impermanence.

Sixth, one cultivates kindness and compassion.

Seventh, one's mind remains free of negligence.

Eighth, one maintains equanimity even in circumstances involving hunger, thirst, suffering, happiness, and such.

Ninth, one cuts off hatefulness;

Tenth, one cultivates wisdom.

If a person is able to succeed in these ten endeavors, one should realize that this person is able to cultivate patience.

H. QUALIFICATIONS PREREQUISITE TO PURE AND ULTIMATE PATIENCE

When the bodhisattva, *mahāsattva* cultivates pure, ultimate patience, on entering emptiness, signlessness, wishlessness, and effortlessness, he does not associate himself with view-ridden ideation, wishfulness, or artificially effortful endeavors, nor does he indulge in any attachment to emptiness, signlessness, wishlessness, or effortlessness. All such view-ridden ideation, wishfulness, and artificially effortful endeavors are empty of inherent existence.

Patience of this sort is free of any duality-based aspects. It is this which qualifies as pure and ultimate patience.

Where one enters a state characterized by the ending of the fetters or enters a state characterized by quiescent cessation, one does not associate with the fetters or birth-and-death. Neither does one indulge in the utter ending of the fetters or in the abidance in quiescent cessation. Still, the fetters and birth-and-death are in all cases [realized as] empty of inherent existence. Patience of this sort is free of any duality-based aspects. It is this which qualifies as pure and ultimate patience.

If by their very nature, [the fetters] are not self-generated, are not other-generated, and are not generated from a combination of the two, then they do not have any coming forth [into existence] either and hence are not such as can be destroyed. Whatsoever is indestructible is not susceptible to being made to come to an utter end. Patience of this sort is free of any duality-based aspects. It is this which qualifies as pure and ultimate patience.

I. SUMMATION ON THE BODHISATTVA'S CULTIVATION OF PATIENCE

One does not indulge any attachment to freedom from artificially effortful endeavors or non-endeavoring. One remains free of thought inclined toward making discriminating distinctions while also being free of [any concept of] pursuing the adornment [of buddhalands]. One has no [concept of] "engaging in cultivation" or of "progressing" [on the Path]. To the very end, one does not create or produce anything at all.

Patience of this sort is the unproduced-dharmas patience. When a bodhisattva of this sort cultivates this sort of patience he realizes that patience through one receives the prediction [of definite eventual buddhahood].

J. THE ESSENCE OF THE BODHISATTVA'S PERFECTION OF PATIENCE

When the bodhisattva, *mahāsattva* cultivates patience, both nature and phenomenal characteristics are all realized as entirely empty of any inherent existence. It is through realizing that "beings" do not exist at all that one achieves *kṣānti pāramitā* (the perfection of patience).