

BCA Chapter 1, Verses 23, Text Sections 276-277

***Do even fathers and mothers
Have such a benefiting intention?
Do the gods and sages
Or even Brahma have it?***

BCA 1-23, Text sections 276-277:

Even parents, considered to be the most well-meaning beings in the world, as they wish their children to be well and successful, lack bodhicitta of aspiration, the benefiting intention of bodhisattvas, who wish to establish all beings on the level of perfect buddhahood. Parents wish the best for their children, but their aspirations are very limited and concern only this life.

One might say that parents, being unlearned, simply lack knowledge about bodhicitta. The great sages and gods, however, who have the five worldly supernatural perceptions, should because of this be knowledgeable about bodhicitta. Nethertheless, even the great sages learned in *the eighteen great fields of knowledge* and the gods like Brahma, who possess the five worldly supernatural perceptions, lack bodhicitta. While Brahma has compassion and love for those beings that have taken rebirth in his sphere, he does not have this compassion and love for all sentient beings.

The eighteen great fields of knowledge are: 1) musical instruments, 2) amorous dalliance, 3) family maintenance, 4) calculation, 5) Sanskrit, 6) medicine, 7) rules of behavior, 8) fine arts, 9) martial arts, 10) philosophy, 11) yoga, 12) scholasticism, 13) memorization, 14) predictions based on stars, 15) astrology, 16) yantra-yoga, 17) ancient epics, and 18) historical analysis.