

BCA Chapter 1, Verse 26, Text Sections 281-283

It is the source of happiness for all beings.

It is the panacea for all the suffering of beings.

The totality of merit of this precious intention—

How can it be fathomed?

BCA 1-26, Text sections 281-282

The merit of bodhicitta of application cannot be fathomed for the following reasons: 1) the reaches of space are immeasurable, 2) the number of sentient beings is immeasurable, 3) the suffering of sentient beings is immeasurable, 4) the qualities of the Buddha are immeasurable, and 5) time is immeasurable. By contemplating on these five immeasurable objects, you realize that the qualities of bodhicitta of application are equally immeasurable and, therefore, cannot be fathomed.

Sentient beings are said to exist as far as space extends. To the farthest reaches wherein sentient beings exist, there also do exist karma and afflictions. To the farthest reaches wherein karma and afflictions exist, there also does suffering exist. Three kinds of suffering torment sentient beings: suffering of change, suffering upon suffering, and suffering in the making.

In a logical argument one would say, “The subject under consideration, bodhicitta, has infinite benefits because it focuses on the five immeasurable qualities.” If one states that the wish to merely relieve the headaches of other beings has merit without bounds, then it is only logical that the wish to free all beings from suffering and to establish them on the level of perfect buddhahood has much greater merit.

Buddha himself repeatedly taught about the importance of precious bodhicitta. He did so to inspire his followers to generate the bodhicitta attitude constantly. Generating bodhicitta is not at all difficult. Once you have become used to it, you should remember it as often as possible during your daily activities. Beginners as well as old practitioners should read this commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryaavataara frequently and fuse their minds with the contents of this text. The Bodhisattva-caryaavataara is not a book to be studied for a few months or years

and then to be left behind when one moves on to the next book. This book should accompany you through your entire life, until the very end. Its ultimate purpose is the attainment of enlightenment.

BCA 1-26, Text section 283:

In the quote from the Samaadhi-raaja-sūtra the phrase a *loving mind* or a *mind of kindness* refers to a mind infused with immeasurable kindness that thinks, “May all beings have happiness and the causes for happiness.” The merit of generating such a kind attitude only once surpasses by far the merit gained by offering boundless myriads of offerings to boundless numbers of buddhas every day. The phrase *does not match* literally means ‘does not come close to’ and connotes ‘cannot even compete in the slightest way’.

What benefits your mind most is what bears the most merit. When you genuinely develop a mind of loving kindness, your mind will become open and peaceful. If you present great offerings, the danger still exists that you might develop pride and arrogance, thinking, “I have offered the supreme offerings. No one gathers merit like I do.”

A practitioner whose mind is absorbed in meditation on kindness is also a supreme object for receiving offerings. If you present offerings to such a yogin, the karmic fruition will ripen for you in this very life. If a mind of kindness is so powerful, there is no need to mention the much greater benefits of bodhicitta of application.