

The Bodhisattva Vow  
from the Bodhicharyavatara by Shantideva

As earth and the other elements together with space  
Eternally provide sustenance in many ways for the countless sentient beings

So may I become sustenance in every way for sentient beings  
To the limits of space, until all have attained nirvana.

*As the sugatas of old gave birth to the bodhicitta  
And progressively established themselves in the training of a bodhisattva*

*So I too, for the benefit of beings, shall give birth to the bodhicitta  
And progressively train myself in that discipline.*

At this moment my birth has become fruitful; I have realized my human life.  
Today I am born into the family of the Buddha; now I am a child of the Buddhas.

From now on, I will forthrightly perform the actions befitting my family.  
I will act so as not to degrade the faultlessness and discipline of my family.

Just as with a blind man finding a jewel in the heap of dust,  
Thus, somehow, bodhicitta has been born in me.

This is the supreme amrita which destroys death,  
The inexhaustible treasure that removes the world's poverty.

It is the supreme medicine that cures the world's sickness,  
The tree that provides rest for beings weary of wandering on the paths of existence.

It is the universal bridge on which all travelers may pass over the lower realms,  
The rising moon of mind which dispels the torment of the kleshas.

It is the great sun which puts an end to the obscurity of ignorance,  
The pure butter which comes of churning the milk of the holy dharma.

For travelers wandering the paths of existence seeking happiness from objects of  
enjoyment,  
It is supreme bliss near at hand, the great feast which satisfies sentient beings.

Today, witnessed by all the protectors, I have welcomed the sentient beings and  
sugatas;  
Devas and asuras rejoice.