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## **FIVE JEWELS OF WISDOM**

### **A Discourse on the Art of Questing Life**

**By David Barrett-Murrer**

#### **Introduction**

The five jewels of wisdom are a fundamental part of the path of awakening and the way of enlightenment. They provide a source of inspiration for people to draw upon and benefit from. You are not asked to believe, but rather to discover for yourself the truths outlined in these jewels of wisdom and how they can transform your life.

This teaching is essentially a spiritual cleansing as the five jewels (karma, harmlessness, desire, love and freedom), when internalised, can take one rapidly to the threshold of spiritual awakening.

At some point in their lives most individuals ponder the question, 'What can I do to advance spiritually?'. Many do not wish to get involved with any particular religion or belief-system, traditional or otherwise. They are looking for a method of teaching that frees the mind and does not restrict their personal freedom.

If a method is true then it will work for anyone who embraces it sincerely. No matter what belief-system you hold this teaching will enhance your understanding of yourself and also enhance any belief-system that you may subscribe to.

It is easy to dismiss the simplicity of this teaching but it can have a truly dynamic potency when understood and lived in daily life. The five truths that are central to this method have been known for centuries. They are like diamonds scattered in the darkness of the secular world. To process these jewels you just need to discover them and to live them.

These jewels are:

- (1) The Awareness of Karma**
- (2) The Spirit of Harmlessness**
- (3) The Cessation of Selfish Desire**
- (4) A Sustained Loving Attitude**
- (5) The Harmony of Freedom**

## THE AWARENESS OF KARMA

The jewel of karma contains a great and cleansing truth that can radically transform your life for the better. It is a truth that has been known for centuries yet its significance in the life of man is rarely understood and adopted. When you fully understand this truth then you can choose between suffering and freedom from suffering. In time you will discover that no one makes us suffer we make ourselves suffer by what we think, say and do.

Karma is the law of cause and effect and is also known as the law of reactivity. In science this is known as the law of action and reaction. This law of cause and effect is part of most philosophies and cultures, yet its practical implication in the lives of men and women is seldom taken onboard.

All religions have some understanding of the nature of karma. This knowledge has not been hidden from man, rather it has been disregarded by adopting a superficial attitude of, 'Oh yes, I know that'. But it's not enough just to know it; one must live in the acute awareness of this truth of karma. Only then can it become a jewel of cleansing in one's life.

Many people wonder how they can advance spiritually. What everyone can benefit from is to understand the nature of karma as it is worked out in one's daily life. By thinking and pondering on the concept of karma one will gain a theoretical understanding. From this understanding it is easy to discover that karma is a reality in everyone's life. If you can live with the awareness of karma then the process of cleansing will naturally occur. This is definitely part of the spiritual path that everyone can actively work at, irrespective of who or what you are.

So what is this truth, this dynamic jewel of cleansing?

It is simply this: Every thought that we think, every word that we speak and every deed that we do (good, bad and indifferent) will return to us in some form or other.

The consequences of this are that if we hurt someone physically, emotionally or mentally then someone, sooner or later, will hurt us also. If we love or show kindness then that love or kindness will also return to us in some form or other. It is as Jesus taught us, as we sow so shall we reap what we have sown. These were once words of real significance and they can still be for those who understand the nature of karma in their lives.

In this truth of karma the three areas of activity are clearly indicated as physical acts, words and thoughts. Moses gave the children of Israel a simply guide concerning their physical acts in the Ten Commandments. This is a basic and universal guide that should be adhered to by every Jew, Christian and Moslem (since all three are part of the same line of divine guidance). Yet sadly, even these simple commandments are mostly platitudes, just empty words in our modern day world. If it were not so, how could a Christian kill a Moslem or a Moslem kill a Jew. Have they forgotten the commandment, 'You shall not kill'?

What people fail to see is that every act of violence they perform is accountable under karmic law. Sooner or later, in this or in another life, they will suffer an equal act of violence and reap the full impact of their actions. Every hurt, minor or serious, on another being will incur

**a karmic reaction that will return to the perpetrator. The hard fact is, if you hurt or cheat someone then someone, sooner or later, will hurt or cheat you.**

**It may help in the understanding of karma to realise that karma is impersonal and indifferent to one's actions. Karma does not judge us rather it simply returns to us in time and space what we put out in our thoughts, words and actions. If we show kindness and compassion to others then that kindness and compassion will certainly return to us in some form or other. Good deeds return spiritual merit or positive karma while bad deeds return suffering or negative karma.**

**Most people can distinguish between good and bad physical acts, but when it comes to acts such as adultery, for example, many fail to acknowledge the suffering inflicted on the innocent spouse and children. If your actions and choices cause suffering to others then that suffering will return to you.**

**Can you imagine the negative karma incurred by a terrorist who blows up innocent people just to make a political statement? If these terrorists truly understood the law of karma would they really want to acquire such a heavy karmic burden?**

**Now there are many people in the world who control their actions and do others no physical harm, yet they still suffer emotionally. This brings us to the second area of karmic activity, which involves the words we speak and how we speak them. As our words invoke both good and bad karma, there are many ways in which people can be hurt by what we say to and about them. If we are feeling angry and voice that anger causing distress to others then it is a form of emotional abuse.**

**Even malicious gossip is a form of verbal violence. Remember that those who gossip to you about others will also gossip to others about you. It is a vicious circle that many take pleasure in without realising the inevitable consequences of their malicious words. Thereby failing to see the real reason behind their suffering.**

**Words can also be used to damage the reputation of an individual, harming that person indirectly. Again these words are karmic and the ones who smear and slander another are opening themselves up to the same.**

**Words can equally be used to heal, comfort and inspire others. This is positive karma and these qualities of comfort and inspiration will enrich your life also. Jesus gave us a wonderful guide to live by when he said, 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you' [Luke 6:31].**

**Now there are those who are mindful of what they say but other people still say unkind and hurtful things to them. This brings us to the most important area of karmic activity that involves the thoughts we think. Cruel thoughts about others are as bad as cruel words or cruel deeds and all incur karma. There is no escaping from the consequences of our thoughts, words and deeds. Karma is unerring in all matters and cannot be avoided.**

**Before speaking or acting in a negative fashion, you must first think about it and then mentally agree to it. If someone has developed a habit of negative or cruel responses then it may seem as if this is an unstoppable process. However, a little awareness of the processes involved will soon reveal that before acting automatically one must agree with the action.**

Usually it comes as an urge to act on the first thought. If it is a habit, then to go with it is almost effortless. However, you can with a slight effort of mind simply refuse to act, overriding the urge. People have free will so there is always a choice involved.

When Jesus said that even to think of adultery with someone is to commit that sin [Matthew 5:27 to 5:28]; in this he was referring to the sins of the mind, our thoughts. Where Moses gave us the law of the commandments, which so many people have found unable to live by, Jesus, however, gave us a tougher discipline that is much harder to live by.

The things we do, the words we speak and even the thoughts we think are all accountable karmically. This can be terrible news for those who enjoy harming others and get an emotional kick out of it. On the other hand, for those who wish to enrich their lives, it is a wonderful revelation since karma works both ways. One only has to think, say and do the things that will help, comfort and inspire others to a brighter and happier life. In this way one begins to see the good in others and not dwell on the bad. As we are all imperfect beings on the path of spiritual awakening.

Our behaviour colours our life with suffering, indifference or joy depending on what we chose to think, say and do. We are in the driving seat regards these matters. In the next sentence is the key to the nature of suffering and to the ending of suffering. No one makes us suffer, we make ourselves suffer by what we think, say and do. If each of us accepted this as a fact then the technique of positive harmlessness can become a powerful cleansing agent of one's heart and mind.

### **THE SPIRIT OF HARMLESSNESS**

With the understanding of karma comes a profound realisation that all one needs to do is to master the art of harmlessness in thought, word and deed. Then your karma becomes positive and your life is transformed accordingly.

A distinction should be made here between positive and negative harmlessness. Many immature or weak people use negative harmlessness because they fear other people's reactions. This is simply a form of escape from the brutal world as they see it, whereas positive harmlessness is the refraining from the urge to harm because the understanding of karma has been internalised. Meaning that they are aware of the consequences of their actions and not acting out of fear of reprisals.

It's important to show mercy to others, as it's the quality of strong, mature individuals who conscientiously choose to act in a harmless way. Thus, they grow spiritually until the path of awakening becomes their only meaningful goal. It is a goal to which all mankind is striving to achieve whether or not they are aware of it.

This technique of harmlessness, although simple, is extremely difficult to adopt as a living awareness and is very difficult to master. It's one of the most powerful techniques on the spiritual path and takes time, patience and a loving attitude. The spirit of harmlessness is a technique that has been known for centuries by many different religions and belief-systems. There are many examples of this in Jainism and Christianity. One familiar example being when Jesus told us to, 'love one another' [John 15:12 to 15:13].

**A common error is when people think that by performing a particular meditation, by repeating a mantra or prayer, or by following some guru that they will advance spiritually. Yet if they knew the true nature of awakening then they would see that the spirit of harmlessness is far more powerful than any other method, old or new.**

**To ignore this technique of harmlessness is to discard a dynamic jewel of cleansing. It may be dismissed because it was found too hard to adopt or seen as too simple to be of any value. Yet, the truth is that by focusing on this technique it can, over time, do more for you than a lifetime of following other methods. Only by persisting can you learn the actuality of this ancient truth.**

**The truth is that harmlessness is next to Godliness. The very substance of one's soul is spiritual love that is expressed as compassion. When there is no hate or bad feelings then compassion can enter and the light of one's soul can radiate through one's being. The spirit of harmlessness effectively prepares the ground for soul to enter and illuminate one's life. However, while there is hate and bad feeling soul remains in abeyance. If you want the communion of God, Who is perfect love, then every shred of hate and negativity must be transcended. Here lies an opportunity for anyone who is truly seeking the only goal that really matters, a goal that has been called by various names such as liberation, moksha, enlightenment and the Kingdom of God.**

### **THE CESSATION OF SELFISH DESIRE**

**Desire is generally understood to be a wish or longing for someone or something. It is emotional thought focussed on wanting, or not wanting, that is commonly expressed as a craving for some object, person or power.**

**Here is another area of deep emotional suffering that stems from selfish desires. Buddha, who gave us great insights into the nature of desire, said that desire is the cause of all suffering, which means that to harm someone intentionally you must first have the desire to hurt that person. While the technique of harmlessness covers a large area of negative desire there is still the equally large area of selfish desire, of which even spiritually advanced people can so easily succumb to. Desire is simply emotive thought focused on someone or something.**

**A distinction should be made at this stage between positive and negative desire. Positive desires are those that in the main enhance your spiritual development and those of the people around you. Take, for instance, the desire to become a doctor, a scientist, an artist or just to be the best human being that you can be. These are positive desires and they are a natural part of the human experience. The diversity of human interests provides a vast array of potential experiences for the individual. Positive desires indicate one's true direction and should be encouraged.**

**Negative desires manifest themselves as selfish desires. As to wish or long for anything unattainable will certainly cause suffering in one form or another. Whether you want to be richer, younger or desire the partner of another person eventually your desire will lead to suffering. Likewise to crave things that you cannot afford will cause you to be dissatisfied with your current lifestyle. The desire for wealth is a negative one that has tempted many people into crime activities in order to accumulate money.**

However, there are also other negative, far subtler, desires that are equally as damaging to your emotional well being. These are comparison, ambition and self-importance.

### Comparison

Comparing yourself with other people can lead to a negative desire to be superior to another person or to feel inferior to others making you unhappy. Instead of just being yourself, there is a discord between what you are and what you think that you should be or have.

If the comparison is made to that of a spiritually awakened person like Buddha or Christ then the desire to be like them can be positive and part of the path. However, if the comparison is made on the grounds of someone's wealth, social status, or a position of authority then the desire to be like them is negative. This negativity will rob you of your peace of mind and your thoughts will be occupied with stressful and mostly unattainable desires. Losing ones peace of mind leads to nothing but unhappiness.

### Ambition

When desire is worked at intensely enough it becomes the dominating factor in one's mind. From this burning desire comes ambition, to be ambitious is to be obsessed with some overwhelming desire. Many sacrifices must be made to achieve that ambition such as neglecting family and friends. Much negative karma is also incurred as one 'treads over others' to achieve the status or power that they think will bring them happiness. However, without peace of mind there can be no true and abiding happiness. Therefore, to be ambitious is to be possessed by negative desire.

### Self-importance

The primary cause of emotional suffering is usually our sense of self-importance. This can affect anyone from the least evolved to some of the most advanced individuals. The inherent drive of self-importance is the common source of emotional stress. To put the nature of self-importance into an understandable perspective consider the following examples.

If someone insults you then it is your sense of self-importance that responds emotionally with hurt and retribution. Likewise, if someone praises you then it is your sense of self-importance that responds emotionally with a feeling of pride and self-esteem. When self-importance is frustrated then it becomes self-pity, which is one of the most crippling states of emotional suffering. Yet if one has no sense of self-importance then insults and praise are meaningless.

There is a tendency for socialites, intellectuals and the wealthy to develop a hardcore sense of self-importance. These people usually find the path of awakening far more difficult, since the path really begins when self-importance ends. The average person, who has less of a sense of self-importance, can and often does progress faster. This was true in the time of Jesus and it is still true today.

From a spiritually awakened state one sees the greater view of soul, in which the personality is but a shadow of that soul. What does it matter to soul if its shadow is insulted, praised or even abused? Likewise, would it matter to you if you saw a group of people insulting your car by calling it a stupid, ignorant piece of machinery or by praising it? It is the substance of the greater view, as seen by soul, that dispels all sense of self-importance. Soul exists in a state of unity and a sea of love where self-importance is a shallow state that eventually everyone will transcend.

**Self-importance is a very poor substitute for the purity of soul awareness.**

**All that is needed at this stage is to gain an awareness of your selfish desires, comparisons, ambitions and your sense of self-importance. By recognising them for what they are then you will gradually transcend them and regain the peace of mind that comes from the purity of soul awareness.**

### **A SUSTAINED LOVING ATTITUDE**

**The awareness of karma gives one the understanding of the consequences of one's thoughts, words and deeds. The spirit of harmlessness gives one the means to cleanse oneself of much negativity. Finally the awareness of selfish desires reveals the cause of much unnecessary suffering and stress. Now the fourth jewel of cleansing makes this process an uplifting experience since it involves the cultivation of a sustained loving attitude. This brings a lightness of being into one's life and includes the cleansing quality of innocent laughter. It is a quality that is often abused and adulterated by the unenlightened masses. Innocent laughter is a spiritual gift on the thorny path of spiritual awakening. For it allows us to laugh at ourselves and to see the brighter side of life in the secular world. However, malicious laughter and ridicule are naturally expressions of hate and bad feeling.**

**Everyone has a loving attitude for certain people and things in their life such as their family, pets, home and garden. The fact is this attitude is there to a lesser or a greater degree in everyone. In order to cultivate a loving attitude this subtle quality needs to be discovered as it is expressed in one's daily life. For instance, that lovely feeling that comes when you reconnect with a long lost friend. In that moment of reconnection, close your eyes, forget your friend and try to capture the unique quality of this extraordinary feeling. For it is the quality of this loving attitude that matters and not the reasons that manifests it. To understand love you need to realise that it comes from within your being and that the people or things you love are merely the means for bringing this love to the surface.**

**Many people fail to cultivate a loving attitude because they have not yet learnt to forgive themselves and others. Forgiveness is not some sentimental idea but a practical way of clearing the mind and heart of much unnecessary activity and emotional stress.**

**There is a simple technique that you can use to enhance this subtle quality in your life, and it only takes five minutes each morning and five minutes last thing at night. Settle yourself comfortably with your eyes closed, take a few deep breaths and relax. Now begin the gentle cultivation of a loving attitude by visualising the ones you love most and capturing the quality or feeling of love. Then gradually expand that feeling to include all the people that you know, even the ones who you dislike and those who dislike you. Feed this feeling with all the moments in which you have known or given love. Then slowly extend this loving feeling to include all of the human race and the natural world. Finally summon all the love you can until your love is absorbed within the greater love of God.**

**Do this in the morning and last thing each night. If you persist, say over a few months, then you should see, or at least others will see, a positive change in your life. This is not a sentimental or superficial activity. It is a jewel of cleansing that can, over time, connect you with the source of love within your being. The substance of soul is spiritual love and by using**

**this technique you are definitely working towards union with that soul. That is the true master within and the inner guiding light in everyone.**

**Another good reason for the daily cultivation of a loving attitude is that it will bring into your life continuity regarding your spiritual quest. A quest that can all too easily be forgotten or dismissed when one is busy in the secular world. This daily routine of cultivating a loving attitude is the natural preamble to daily meditation. After working at a loving attitude try to ponder on the jewels of wisdom or any other teaching that you find appealing. This is the beginning of a meditation that will allow you to understand at a deeper level.**

**Please do not dismiss these simple techniques, for they are some of the most profound truths on the spiritual path. Work with them, live with them and discover for yourself the actual potency of these jewels of cleansing.**

**The awareness of karma, the spirit of harmlessness, the cessation of selfish desire and the sustained loving attitude with its spirit of forgiveness are the means for anyone to activity take up the spiritual path. A path that leads eventually to a freedom that most people cannot even imagine. It matters not who you are, or even what you believe, since these jewels of cleansing are a small part of the universal teaching for the New Age and are applicable to everyone.**

### **THE HARMONY OF FREEDOM**

**From the jewels of cleansing one discovers the jewel of revelation, which culminates eventually in the harmony of freedom. Human consciousness is driven to seek its own expansion. From the beginning man has been confronted by the awesome mystery of existence. Through the ages he has expanded his awareness and his understanding up to our present state of being. Everyone is part of this expansion of consciousness. It is an expansion that has brought about marvellous discoveries regarding the natural world and the human species. However, collectively and individually, human consciousness is still fragmented by emotional and intellectual awareness. This fragmentation is the cause of the conflicts and divisions between people, nations, religions and of the many ideologies invented by man. While there is separation between people, groups and nations then divisions, conflicts and suffering will remain. The cleansing of the fifth jewel of revelation comes in the understanding of the greater view in which the fragmented states of human consciousness are effortlessly transformed into a state of observable unity. Then, and only then, can this fifth jewel come forth with revelations that are beyond space and time, beyond mind and imagination. In essence this last jewel can be summed up as a deliberate expansion of consciousness and then the letting go of self, knowledge, belief and doubt. Hence, the necessity of these jewels of cleansing on the path of spiritual awakening.**

**What is left when these cleansing jewels have done their work? A being whose body, heart, mind and soul are functioning together in harmony. Now the awareness of karma, the spirit of harmlessness, the cessation of selfish desire and a sustained loving attitude are an internalised awareness guiding one through the interests and concerns of the secular world. You discover that your state of body, heart and mind have now gained an evenness of being. You may feel, as many have before you, that you are in this world but not of this world.**

**This evenness of being is the razor's edge, the middle path and narrow way upon the thorny path of return to our divine origins. With this harmony of being one can catch the elusive**

spirit of freedom that can take one to the very source of one's being. Yet one cannot seek this subtle harmony, one cannot create it or even cultivate it. It is given by the grace of God to those who have attained an enduring evenness of being.

Through the harmony of freedom the perfect jewel of enlightenment is finally discovered. It is the heart of the lotus (soul), the living light that is eternal, and it is freedom from the long dark process of human evolution. Then one encounters a new and a vast horizon waiting to be explored by the courageous questing soul.

### The Process of Awakening and a Buddhist Story

Human evolution and the path of awakening is a process of gradual development. The four jewels of cleansing and the fifth jewel of revelation can greatly enhance what is usually a slow process. The truth is that you really need so little, but that little is not necessarily easy. Many people, in the beginning, find the working of these jewels an arduous task. However, once you have acknowledged these truths in your own life then they take on a new and penetrating meaning. Little by little you will grow more aware of yourself, of others and of the natural world. Into this enhanced state of awareness deeper revelations will naturally arise. Then the jewels of cleansing are not seen as a discipline but as a natural balance on the path of awakening.

There is a Buddhist story that indicates a very subtle truth. Please note that this is a free interpretation of the story and should not be considered as Buddha's actual words. The story is merely a parable.

Buddha was often questioned by learned men on the nature of the cosmos and of the natural world, but he would usually say little or nothing. One day while he was staying in a forest retreat in Kosambi, a group of his disciples were questioning him about the existence of God and the nature of the cosmos. Finally Buddha picked up a few leaves and held them in the palm of his hand for all to see. Then he asked them, 'Which is more, the leaves in my hand or all the leaves in the forest?'

They replied that the leaves in the forest were abundantly more than the few leaves in his hand. Buddha agreed, then said, 'If the leaves in this forest represent the sum of all the knowledge that I possess then I tell you this: All that you need to know to reach enlightenment is contained in these few leaves in my hand. What I have not told you is not useful to the path, therefore, I have not burdened you with what is not useful.' Buddha was simply saying that there is no need to understand everything, you only need to understand a little and that little may be enough to understand everything.

For Buddha that little is expressed in the Four Noble Truths and the Eight-Fold Path of his teaching. Here that little is expressed in the four jewels of cleansing and the fifth jewel of revelation. For those of you who can see or sense the rightness of these jewels, you have enough to place your feet firmly on the path of awakening. Then there is really no turning back.

It should be noted, in the story of the leaves, that Buddha was indicating a way for his disciples to go beyond the intellect that is knowledge and thought. For the average person emotional awareness must be cleansed of selfishness and gradually transcended. Then intellectual awareness must be duly worked at and finally this too is transcended. The first four jewels of wisdom aid the transformation of emotional and social awareness. While the

**fifth jewel begins to expand consciousness by developing intellectual awareness until the limitations of the intellect are clearly seen. Usually this involves studying the teachings and cultivating a greater, more inclusive, view of existence. This may well include science, philosophy, psychology and other schools of thought. It is simply the accumulation of intellectual knowledge that expands consciousness up to a certain point. Then the limitation of intellectual knowledge is seen for what it is and it loses its attraction. Once seen the realm of knowledge ceases to be important. Now intuitive awareness gradually becomes the source of revelations that the intellect can barely define. Beyond intuitive awareness one discovers the realm of spiritual awareness (nirvana), where the journey begins anew on a higher turn of the upward spiral to the divinity that is the source of all being.**

**This discourse can easily be read in an hour. However, to fully understand and benefit from these cleansing jewels of wisdom one needs to ponder deeply and discover their inner meanings. Only by living in the understanding of these jewels can they actually transform your state of being. No one can do this for you. All one can do is inspire others towards their own understanding. For those who act on this inspiration then the path of awakening is theirs.**

**From the writings, 'In the Spirit of Freedom' by dbm**

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