

Everlasting Happiness,  
as Buddha Attains 5

**Presented by Venerable Da Shi**

**Translated by  
The Dharma Committee  
Miao You Pu Ti Yuan (Singapore)**

## **Preface**

Buddha came into this world to lead all sentient beings away from suffering and towards enlightenment. He forsook his throne and worldly possessions for the pursuit of enlightenment. It was his wish to guide all sentient beings in their understanding of the karmic cycle and the path to Nirvana. After his passing into Parinirvana, his teachings were collected and compiled by his followers.

It is Venerable Da Shi's wish to continue the Buddha's teachings, spread the seeds of compassion, and carry on his wish for all sentient beings to attain Nirvana. Since his ordination, Venerable Da Shi has been actively involved in the teaching of the Dharma in many places, including Taiwan, Malaysia, and Singapore. In 2004/2005, Venerable Da Shi was invited by the Life Television Station in Taiwan to present talks on various Dharma topics. This book was written based on the consolidated content of Venerable Da Shi's televised talks, in hope that his compassionate wish would be furthered through the spreading of the Dharma.

## Foreword

### ***EVERLASTING HAPPINESS, AS BUDDHA ATTAINS***

#### **Editorial Notes**

The Buddha was born into this world out of great compassion with the aim to help all mortal beings avoid sufferings and attain endless bliss.

The world of mortal beings is full of suffering. It is a surreal world of endless desires and yet fulfillment of all desires is impossible. We have to work hard to find fulfillment but it is all transient. It is like a trap where we relentlessly pursue wealth, appearance, fame, gastronomic satisfaction, and excessive sleep without ever pondering what all these could lead to. We repeatedly go through birth, aging, sickness, and death and in this continuous cyclic existence, we suffer immeasurably.

The Buddha is like an expert doctor with the ability to diagnose and treat all kinds of ailments. Indeed, he dispenses

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eighty four thousands procedures for as much trouble that mortal beings could possibly face in this world. All these are found in the Buddha's teachings. If we practice his teachings with complete faith and realization, besides saving ourselves from suffering in this life, we can also find liberation in time to come.

There are very few fortunate beings that have the chance to hear the Buddha's teachings. The number of people who are able to hear and learn the Buddha's Dharma teachings is said to be like the amount of soil caught in one's nail if one were to use hands to dig into the ground.

***Everlasting Happiness, as Buddha Attains*** is translated from a Chinese compilation of Venerable Da Shi's Dharma teachings on television in Taiwan, R.O.C. He has used the Agama Sutra as the central focus of these teachings, supplemented by relevant Dharma from Mahayana Sutras, including the Prajna Sutras, the Middle Way, the Maha-prajna-paramita-Sastra, the Dasabhumika-Vibhasa-Sastra, the Saddharma-Pundarika, etc. for better understanding. Through his skillful narration and explanation, Venerable Da Shi has made the Buddha's Dharma very easy to understand and at the same time, interesting. There are also many citations of examples where one can apply in one's life and practice.

It is the wish of Venerable Da Shi that these teachings should reach out to more people, Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike. For Buddhists who have sought refuge in the Triple Gem, these teachings serve to strengthen their understanding of the Dharma and improve practices. For non-Buddhists, may it serve as a guide to attain true bliss.

The theme of this book is on Dana. A simple act of giving can lead us towards attaining Buddhahood. Thus, the first step to end suffering and attain everlasting happiness is to practice offering. Through the seven chapters of this book, we learn about the significance and splendid merits of giving. This is the fifth installment of a translated series and it will also be made available on our website at [www.mypty.sg](http://www.mypty.sg). Other topics in the series will be published progressively in subsequent books.

The Dharma introduced in this series is in the Chinese Mahayana tradition, the text of which are translated from Sanskrit scriptures. Hence, Sanskrit has been used for the names and specific Buddhist terminologies in the text. Readers can find help from the footnote on the relevant page and the Glossary at the end of the book for explanation of common Buddhist terms (first appearance in italics in the text) and concepts.

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The Dharma Editorial Committee at Miao You Pu Ti Yuan in Singapore wishes all readers blissful fulfillments in reading.

*@@@ This work is an effort to uphold and support Venerable Da Shi's great vow of spreading the Dharma in gratitude of the Buddha's compassion. Please help to spread the wisdom and cheers of the Dharma by passing this book on to someone else should you feel that you do not need it anymore. As the Buddha taught, the gift of the Dharma excels all gifts! May all have the chance to know the Buddha's Dharma! @@@*

***The Dharma Editorial Team  
Miao You Pu Ti Yuan (Singapore)***

## DANA – THE PRACTICE OF GIVING (5)

### The connection between the gift and the resulting merits

A complete giving is made of three factors – the donor, field of merits (recipient), and the gift. The merits in return would depend on the quality of gift offered.

#### **(1) Pleasant appearance is through offering unblemished gifts.**

##### Example 1

During the Buddha's time, there was a group of young children playing on the beach. Upon seeing the Buddha and the Bhikshus walking towards them from afar, one of the children decided to make a sand pagoda to offer it to the Buddha.



Accepting the sand pagoda, the Buddha said, "This child will be the king of a vast kingdom and build many stupas one hundred years after my *Parinirvana*."

Indeed, this child took rebirth and would later be known as King Asoka.

King Asoka was born with coarse and unpleasant skin and his father disliked him.

One day, he met Bhikshu Hai who helped him to establish faith in the Triple Gem. Bhikshu Hai also told King Asoka that his present status as king was due to his offering to the Buddha in the past life.

"Why is my skin so coarse? What is the cause and condition for this?" inquired King Asoka.

Bhikshu Hai replied, "In your past life, you offered a pagoda made of coarse sand to the Buddha. As a sand pagoda is not exquisite, thus your skin is similarly coarse now."

This is an illustration of cause and effect. Giving blemished gifts results in one's unpleasant appearance.

## Example 2

What should we do when we intend to offer food to the Buddha or the Sangha?

Some people might remark that it is alright to cook casually since the Venerable is not particular about the taste of food. This is not the right attitude.

Venerables guard their six sense bases diligently like the Buddha, and are not attached to the five desires and the *six sense objects*. Thus, they are indeed not particular about the taste of food.

However, we should be mindful of the quality of the gift and take note if the food is presentable, palatable, or fine in texture and taste.

Although the recipient is not critical about the taste of food, we ought to take effort to ensure that the food is palatable as it reflects our sincerity.

In return, our sincerity affects the merits that we will reap in the future.

Giving food or water brings about five types of merits:

- (a) **Longevity** – Sentient beings require food to sustain their lives. Thus, giving food to sustain another being's life brings about longevity either in the human or heavenly realm. The donor will also not face premature death in the future.
- (b) **Pleasant appearance** – A hungry person is frail and pallid. With food, he will appear rosy and radiant. Hence, giving food will bring about pleasant and respectable appearance in the future.
- (c) **Good health** – Giving the best food or water to others, so that they would not fall sick, brings future peace and joy to the donor. The donor does not fall ill whether he takes rebirth in the heavenly or the human realm. Moreover, the donor would receive countless wealth and meet sages.
- (d) **Strength** – A donor imbues strength in others by his gift of food, enabling the recipient to be able to carry out his tasks. In the future, the donor will enjoy unlimited might in the heavenly or human realm.
- (e) **Eloquence** – Giving food or water to others not only sustains their life and gives them strength, it also gives them mental energy for learning the Dharma and to share

the Dharma eloquently. The donor, therefore, will reap the results of insurmountable eloquence in the Dharma, attain Anuttara Samyak Sambodhi, and have limitless wisdom.

**(2) Offering gifts of delicate taste yields results of extensive learning through listening to the Dharma.**

Example

Why was Venerable Ananda first in extensive learning through listening to the Dharma?

In his past life, Venerable Ananda met a Sramanera mumbling to himself while collecting alms. Venerable Ananda asked, "What are you mumbling? Why are you not focused on collecting alms?"

The Sramanera replied, "My master instructed me to memorize at least ten gathas each day. As there are close to a thousand gathas in total, I am worried that I cannot memorize all of them in time. So I am reciting them whenever I can."

Venerable Ananda told him, "You will not be able to focus in what you are doing if you continue in this manner."

"That is true! I have to collect rice to provide sustenance to the Sangha on the one hand and memorize the gathas on the other. This indeed makes it difficult to focus on the task", the Sramanera replied.

Venerable Ananda then suggested, "How much rice do you need every day for the entire ninety-day summer retreat? Let me provide sustenance for the whole period so that you may concentrate completely on memorizing the gathas."

"I'm so grateful to you! We need one barrel of rice a day. This translates to a total of ninety barrels of rice for the entire period of the retreat", exclaimed the Sramanera.

"No problem. I will provide this for sustenance every day. You only have to concentrate on memorizing the gathas from now on," replied Venerable Ananda.

Thus, the Sramanera put in great efforts in memorizing the gathas every day. At the end of the summer retreat, he had completely memorized a thousand gathas.

It was this cause and condition that led to Venerable Ananda becoming the most learned Venerable in the Dharma.

By offering rice, Venerable Ananda enabled the Sramanera to concentrate on memorizing the gathas. In return, Venerable Ananda became the most learned through extensive listening of the Dharma. From this, we are able to discern the crucial cause and condition.

**(3) Offering gifts that have pleasant scent entails the reward of respect from others and be well-liked.**

**(4) Offering gifts that is comforting to sense of touch brings about rewards of a gentle appearance that will never come in contact with unpleasant objects.**

### Example

There are five types of merits for providing bathrooms for others.

**(a) Unharmed by wind** – Bathrooms help to block out environmental winds. As a result, providing bathrooms help to eradicate ailments caused by irregular flow of winds in the body. These winds in our body move about and have an impact on our health. For example, irregular flow of wind causes breathlessness.

- (b) Complete recovery from ailments.**
- (c) Immunity from illness caused by dirt and dust** – With a bathroom, our body can be cleansed. Hence, it would be free from contaminants that could cause illnesses.
- (d) Lighter physical form** – The recipient feels lighter and more comfortable with a cleansed body. Thus, the donor will enjoy the merits of a light body in the future.
- (e) Fair and soft complexion** – The donor will also reap the reward of having fairer and softer complexion because he gives cleanliness to the recipient.

## **The seven kinds of gifts at no cost**

A person with no material wealth or possessions may offer seven kinds of gifts.

In the Samyukta-ratna-pitaka Sutra, the Buddha taught about seven kinds of offering at no cost that generate great merits.



**(1) Warm expression**

We should look upon our parents, teachers, monastics, and Brahmins with kindness and not hostility. In turn, we will attain the *Pure Dharma Eye* in the future. When we realize Buddhahood, we will attain the Heavenly Eye and the Buddha Eye.

**(2) Having an amiable countenance**

We should not frown at our parents, teachers, monastics, and Brahmins. This would reap the merits of having pleasant facial features in the future life. When we attain Buddhahood, we will acquire the golden-hued body.

**(3) Kind speech**

We should use gentle words when speaking with parents, teachers, monastics, and Brahmins. In future life, we would be endowed with eloquence and others will have faith in our words. Upon attaining Buddhahood, we will be endowed with the Four Forms of Unhindered Wisdom of Eloquence.

**(4) Respectful conduct**

We will have an upright body with large stature and be respected by others when we receive and pay homage to parents, teachers, monastics, and Brahmins with respect.

When we achieve Buddhahood, our body will be upright and splendid like the Nyagrodha tree and would also have the characteristic of an invisible crown as none can see above Buddha.

### **(5) Giving with a kind and sincere heart**

Giving should be done with kindness and sincerity. Otherwise, it is not a true giving even though exquisite gifts are offered. In our future life, we will have a mind of clarity, free from ignorance and delusion. Upon attaining Buddhahood, we will attain complete wisdom.

### **(6) Giving up seats**

We will be able to enjoy seats adorned with seven gems in the future when we offer seats to parents, teachers, monastics, and Brahmins. When we become Buddha, we will be rewarded with "The Dharma Seat" (师子法座).

### **(7) Accommodation**

Providing accommodation to parents, teachers, monastics, and Brahmins will result in the enjoyable abode of palaces and buildings in the future life. Upon attaining Buddhahood, we will achieve the various meditative contemplations.

These are the seven kinds of offering at no cost that brings about great merits.

Therefore, giving does not only entail the offering of material gifts. It refers to the offering of non-material gifts as well. Other examples of giving include showing concern, bestowing kind words, and showing pleasantness and friendliness to others. These are all called the "non-material" gifts at no cost.

### Example

**Warm expression** – We look upon all sentient beings compassionately. When we see others reap benefits, we should sincerely rejoice in their good fortune with no tinge of jealousy.

**Having an amiable countenance**  
– We greet others with a warm, pleasant, and friendly disposition.

**Kind speech** – We speak with others politely, always using encouraging words.



**Respectful conduct** – We volunteer our services to the public and readily help others. We are always respectful to and pay homage to the Buddha, the Bodhisattva, and all the noble ones.

**Giving with a kind and sincere heart** – Constantly maintain a sincere and gratuitous mind. We empathize with others, and treat them with loving-kindness and compassion.

**Giving up seats** – We offer our seats to the old, the feeble, pregnant women, and children.

**Accommodation** – We provide lodging for visitors from afar. We may also provide a place for everyone to practice and cultivate together and for the Sangha to teach the Dharma.

Thus, we can practice giving according to our means. We can give material gifts if we have wealth. Otherwise, we could also practice giving non-material gifts.

## **How might we practice giving if we wish to take rebirth in the Brahma Heaven?**

© The Sutra of the Various Meritorious Fields of Merit explains that there are seven kinds of giving that will enable a donor to take rebirth in the heavenly realms, including Brahma Heaven:

### **(1) Putting up paintings of the Buddha and providing abodes for the Sangha**

This also includes constructing Buddhist pagodas, providing halls for the Sangha, and giving all the necessary items needed for use in a Buddhist temple.

### **(2) Giving fruit orchards, ponds, and trees**

This means giving gardens filled with flowers, fruit-trees, and ponds which provide a pleasant respite.

### **(3) Giving medicines for the sick**

Giving medications will cure people of their illnesses. One of the universities in Taiwan set up a medical group which visits the monasteries periodically to attend to the sick Sangha. The

donors who had generated such good thoughts would take rebirth in the Brahma Heaven in the future. They could even attain Anuttara Samyak Sambodhi if they generate the Bodhisattva vow.

#### **(4) Constructing durable modes of transportation**

This includes the construction of ships and boats that would assist people in crossing rivers, thus relieving them of their sufferings. Treating others with compassion will lead to rebirth in the Brahma Heaven.

#### **(5) Building bridges for the frail**

There are some organizations in Taiwan that specialize in building bridges and paving roads for people's safety in commuting. The merits for these kind-hearted people are rebirths in the Brahma Heaven.

#### **(6) Digging wells by the roadside to provide water for thirsty travelers**

People of the ancient times would dig wells by the roadsides to provide water to quench the thirst of travelers.

In the modern context, we could offer bottles of mineral water to people travelling on the road.

Some years ago, I met a motorcyclist while journeying the whole of Taiwan on foot. He saw me walking and immediately went to purchase some bottled mineral water as offering.

With this kind offering, the motorcyclist was very happy and gained stronger faith in the Triple Gem as a result.

**(7) Providing public latrines for the convenience of the general public**

By public latrines, we mean lavatories and bathrooms where people can have a suitable place to relief and to bathe themselves.

Hence, we learn that acts of kindness and compassion do not always have to be the offering of food.

© The Ekottaragama mentions four cause and conditions leading us to take rebirth in the Brahma Heaven:

**(1) Building Buddhist temples and pagodas**

**(2) Repairing Buddhist temples**

Earthquakes usually destroy or damage many temples and monasteries. If we could help to repair and reconstruct these temples and monasteries, we would take a higher rebirth in the Brahma Heaven.

**(3) Inviting the Buddha to set the Dharma Wheel in motion**

As soon as the Buddha attained Buddhahood, King Brahma descended from the heavenly realm and beseeched the Buddha to expound the Dharma for the benefit of sentient beings. If we make a similar appeal to the Buddha, we will also take rebirth in the Brahma Heaven.

**(4) Supporting the Sangha**

When we support the Sangha so that they may cultivate and practice peacefully and carry out the teachings wholeheartedly, we will take rebirth in the Brahma Heaven.

Now that we know the various ways of attaining rebirth in the Brahma Heaven, we should also learn how to have a multiplier effect on our merits.

The returns brought about by multiplied merits are incalculable:

- (a) Providing and availing a place for the Sangha to practice and cultivate so as to enable them to have a place for rest and cultivation.
- (b) Providing beds and seats for the Sangha and Bhikshus so that they have a place to rest and stay.
- (c) Providing food for the Sangha to sustain their lives as a healthy body is necessary for cultivation and practice.
- (d) Providing rain coats or umbrellas for the Sangha so that they are sheltered from rains.
- (e) Providing medicines for the Sangha in times of inevitable sickness. The merit for offering of medication is very great.



- (f) Digging wells in the wilderness – In the modern context, we could offer drinks to quench the thirst of the travelers.
- (g) Providing lodgings for people – Homeless people have no places to stay and often resort to sleeping at railways or bus stations which are inconvenient and dangerous. If we could provide accommodation to settle their physical and emotional disturbances, the merits will be tremendous.

We notice in today's society, there are some people who have exhibited magnanimity and kindness by providing places for the destitute to stay. The merits and virtues of these people are already very great in their present lives.

## **What are the merits of creating Buddha statues?**

The merits of building Buddhist temples will enable us to take rebirth in the Brahma Heaven while the merits of offering food and water, clothing, beddings, and medications to the Sangha are also very great. In that case, how great are the merits of building Buddha statues?

### **(1) Unimpaired eye sight**

Obstructing offers of light to the Buddha and slandering the Dharma would result in us being born blind.

But if we could build Buddhist temples and Buddha statues, our eyes cannot be impaired. We may also attain the Heavenly Eye and even the Buddha Eye in the future.

### **(2) Perfect physique and clear mind**

We will have a perfect physical form free of disabilities and a clear and right mind. We will also be strong and have extraordinary strength compared to the average person.

### **(3) No rebirth in the lower realms**

Building Buddha statues would prevent us from having rebirths in the three lower realms. We would instead take rebirths in the human or heavenly realms.

### **(4) Good repute in the Ten Directions**

Our good repute will spread far and wide. Our merits are also endless, countless, and limitless.

These are the merits of creating Buddha images and statues. We might reap these merits in the present life. If we were able to further generate the Bodhisattva vow in this process, our merits would be even greater.

It is said in the Chapter on the Pure Practice of the Flower Adornment Sutra that:

*"When one awakes from sleep,  
May one and all sentient beings,  
Awake from the slumber of ignorance  
and attain complete wisdom,  
To guide and protect all sentient beings in the ten directions."*

It is good for us to learn this now. As we build Buddha statues, may we all generate the Bodhisattva vow that:

*"By the merits of building this Buddha statue,  
May one and all sentient beings  
Attain the pure Buddha Eye  
And guide and liberate all in the ten directions."*

Generating such vows will lead us to attain the pure Buddha Eye and complete wisdom so that we can liberate and guide sentient beings of the ten directions, enabling them to end suffering and attain happiness. This is something of key importance.

Thus, let us all cherish the opportunities provided by the various cause and conditions to cultivate our merits and virtues, always remembering the three cause and conditions that complete a giving.

To reiterate, we must also remember that the donor should acquire the seven virtuous assets and give unblemished gifts respectfully with his own hands at opportune moments.

We should also be aware of the different fields of merits, such as the field of merits of the six realms, the field of compassion, the field of gratitude, and the field of virtue.

Giving material wealth include offering gifts that have pleasant appearance, delicate taste, pleasant scent, and comforting to sense of touch.

Therefore, let us all commit to memory the various ways of giving material wealth and sharing of the Dharma.

~ DANA – THE PRACTICE OF GIVING (5) ~



## Glossary

**Altruistic Joy:** Also known as Sympathetic Joy or Mudita. See also Four Divine States of Mind.

**Amitabha Buddha:** The Buddha of Infinite Light and Infinite Life, who presides over the Western Pure World, to which anyone can be reborn through single minded recitation of or meditation on the Buddha's name.

**Anagamin:** One who has attained the third stage of Liberation. Such a person has abandoned sensuous desires. Upon passing from the human realm, he will take rebirth in one of the five special worlds in the World of Form, called the Suddhavaśa worlds, or "Pure Abodes", from which he will attain Arahatship and will never return to the human realm. Hence, he is also known as a Non Returner. An Anagamin has abandoned the five lower fetters, out of ten total fetters, that bind beings to the cycle of existence. See also Arahatship.

**Anuttara Samyak Sambodhi:** The Supreme and Complete Enlightenment.

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**Arahat:** One who has traversed the Eightfold Noble Path to reach the fourth and final stage of Liberation, called Arahatship. An Arahat has abandoned all ten fetters that bind beings to the cycle of existence. Also known as the Perfect One. See also Arahatship.

**Arahatship:** The fourth and final stage of Liberation, in which one is fully liberated from Samsara and is no longer subject to death and rebirth. The four stages of Liberation are: The First stage known as Srotapanna; the Second stage known as Sakradagamin; the Third stage known as Anagamin; and the Fourth stage known as Arahat.

**Avici Hell:** Also known as the Hell of Uninterrupted Torture. It is the deepest and worst hell. Those born in this hell suffer, die, and are instantly reborn to suffering without interruption, until they have exhausted the retribution for their evil karma.

**Bad existences:** The three lower realms of hell beings, hungry ghosts, and animals; as opposed to the good existences, which are the three realms of humans, asuras, and heavenly beings. See also Six realms of cyclic existence.

**Bardo:** A Tibetan term for the state of existence intermediate between two lives.

**Bhikshu:** A fully ordained male member of the Buddhist Sangha or monk observing two hundred and fifty Precepts.

**Bhikshuni:** A fully ordained female member of the Buddhist Sangha or nun observing five hundred Precepts.

**Bhutatahata:** The true character of reality. The inherent or true nature of phenomena or true suchness. (诸法实相)

**Bodhicitta:** Also known as the Bodhi-mind or the Bodhi-heart, in which "Bodhi" means "enlightened". It is the aspiration to attain supreme Enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings.

**Bodhisattva:** A being who has developed Bodhicitta and is striving for enlightenment for the benefit of all sentient beings.

**Brahma King:** The King of the Brahma World.

**Brahma World:** In the widest sense, this is the name of the World of Form; in a narrower sense, it is the collective name of the first three heavens of the World of Form. See also Three planes of existence.

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**Buddha:** The Fully Enlightened One, who possesses perfect wisdom and compassion.

**Compassion:** Also known as Karuna. See also Four Divine States of Mind and Great Compassion.

**Cycle of existence:** See Samsara.

**Dana:** Charity; benevolence; generosity.

**Defilements:** The mental states of greed, hatred, and delusion which temporarily cloud the mind and manifest in unwholesome actions. These defilements are seen as the very roots of Samsaric existence and are known as the three poisons.

**Deva:** A heavenly being.

**Dharma:** The Teachings of the Buddha.

**Dharma-kaya:** The Dharma body, the truth body, the reality body.

**Eight precepts:** Observed by lay Buddhists during certain retreats: (1) Do not kill; (2) Do not steal; (3) Do not engage in

sexual activities; (4) Do not tell lies; (5) Do not take intoxicants; (6) do not wear bodily adornments, use perfumes, engage in singing and dancing, and watching dances or plays; (7) do not sleep in a raised bed; and (8) do not eat after noon.

**Eightfold Noble Path:** The fundamental teaching of the Buddha that shows the path that leads to the cessation of suffering: (1) Right View or Right Understanding; (2) Right Thought; (3) Right Speech; (4) Right Action; (5) Right Livelihood; (6) Right Effort; (7) Right Mindfulness; and (8) Right Concentration.

**Eighteen kinds of transformation:** Includes (1) moving objects or even worlds; (2) emitting fire from the body; (3) illuminating innumerable worlds; (4) causing sentient beings in all the six realms to be seen; (5) changing an object into something different; (6) roaming freely by penetrating walls, mountains, water, air, and so on; (7) rolling anything into a minute size; (8) enlarging objects to gigantic proportions; (9) storing up swarms of people, mountains, or earth within the body; (10) entering any group, assuming their forms and voices, preaching to them, and then disappearing; (11) magnifying the body to a thousand fold; (12) hiding this magnified metamorphosis; (13) subjecting sentient beings to one's will; (14) controlling the supernatural powers of those

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below one in spiritual achievements; (15) endowing sentient beings with eloquence; (16) restoring memory to those who forget the Dharma; (17) giving joy to listeners; and (18) lighting up the creatures in all the worlds.

**Eon:** See Kalpa.

**Equanimity:** Also known as Upeksa. See also Four Divine States of Mind.

**First Stage of Fruition:** Also known as the first stage of Liberation. One who has attained the first stage of fruition is known as a Srotapanna or Stream Enterer.

**Five aggregates:** Form, feeling, perception, volition, and consciousness.

**Five desires:** Wealth, lust, fame, food, and sleep.

**Five precepts:** (1) Do not kill; (2) Do not steal; (3) Do not engage in sexual misconduct; (4) Do not tell lies; and (5) Do not take intoxicants.

**Five sensual pleasures:** Pleasurable feelings derived from the contact between the five sense bases of eye, ear, nose,

tongue, and body, and the five sense objects of form, sound, odor, flavor, and tactile object.

**Four Divine States of Mind:** (1) Maitri or Loving-kindness; (2) Karuna or Compassion; (3) Mudita or Altruistic Joy; and (4) Upeksa or Equanimity.

**Four Foundations of Mindfulness:** (1) Contemplation of the body; (2) Contemplation of feelings; (3) Contemplation of the state of mind; and (4) Contemplation of phenomena. See also Right Effort.

**Four Noble Truths:** (1) The noble truth of suffering; (2) The noble truth of the cause of suffering; (3) The noble truth of the cessation of suffering; and (4) The noble truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering.

**Four pairs and eight categories of Sravaka practitioners:** This refers to Sravaka practitioners who practice the Srotapanna path and those who have attained Srotapannaship; the ones who practice the Sakradagamin path and those who have attained Sakradagaminship; the ones who practice the Anagamin path and those who have attained Anagaminship; the ones who practice the Arahat path and those who have attained Arahatship.

**Good existences:** The three upper realms of humans, asuras and heavenly beings; as opposed to the bad existences of hell beings, hungry ghosts, and animals. See also Six realms of cyclic existence.

**Great Compassion:** The aspiration to remove the sufferings and causes of sufferings of all sentient beings.

**Heavens of the Four Deva Kings:** Also known as the Heavens of the Deva Kings of the Four Heavens. This is the first of the six heavens in the World of Sensuous Desires. See also Three planes of existence.

**Hell of Screaming:** One of the Eight Hot Hells. The other seven are: the Hell of Thoughts, the Hell of Iron Chains, the Hell of Crushing, the Hell of Great Screaming, the Scorching Hot Hell, the Extreme Scorching Hot Hell, and the Hell of Uninterrupted Torture (also known as the Avici Hell).

**Kalpa:** Also known as Eon. It is often used to denote a very long period of time. There are small, medium, great, and incalculable kalpas. A great kalpa indicates the length of time between the creation and recreation of a universe, spanning the period of the universe's formation, existence, destruction, and non-existence.

**Karma:** The deeds carried out by a person and their effects on the person's future, especially in relation to their succeeding rebirths. Karma can be classified as actions of the body, speech, and mind, each of which can have the moral quality of wholesomeness, unwholesomeness, or indeterminate.

**Karuna:** Also known as Compassion. See also Four Divine States of Mind.

**King Yama:** The King in charge of the hell realm.

**Law of causality:** Also known as the law of cause and effect. This is a fundamental concept within Buddhism governing all situations, in which all actions, which is a cause, will produce a corresponding effect. It is also stated as good begets good, evil begets evil; good will not beget evil, evil will not beget good.

**Law of Dependent Origination:** The principle that phenomena do not come into existence on their own but as a result of cause and conditions.

**Loving-kindness:** Also known as Maitri. See also Four Divine States of Mind.

**Maitri:** Also known as Loving-kindness. See also Four Divine States of Mind.

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**Mara:** The Demon King who resides in the Paranirmita Vasavartin Heaven.

**Mudita:** Also known as Altruistic or Sympathetic Joy. See also Four Divine States of Mind.

**Naga:** Dragon or serpent. A beneficent divine being who governs the various water bodies, such as seas, lakes, rivers, and springs.

**National Preceptor:** The Religious Adviser to the King equivalent to the position of a Prime Minister.

**Nirmanarati Heaven:** This is the fifth of the six heavens in the World of Sensuous Desires. See also Three planes of existence.

**Nirvana:** The perfect state of mind that is free from greed, hatred, and delusion, and hence all suffering. See also Parinirvana and Residue-less Nirvana.

**Non Returner:** See Anagamin.

**Once Returner:** See Sakradagamin.

**Paranirmita Vasavartin Heaven:** This is the sixth of the six heavens in the World of Sensuous Desires. Mara, the Demon King, resides in this heaven. See also Three planes of existence.

**Parinirvana:** Also known as the Great Nirvana; it indicates the Buddha's entering into the state of residue-less Nirvana. See also Nirvana and Residue-less Nirvana.

**Perfect One:** See Arahant.

**Prajna:** Wisdom; insight; divine intuition.

**Pratyeka Buddha:** Also known as the Silent Buddha, or Self-enlightened One. The Pratyeka Buddha appears in an era when there is no Buddha or the Buddha's teachings. He lives apart from others and achieves enlightenment through self-contemplation and realization of dependent arising.

**Pure Dharma Eye:** The pure vision of the true Dharma.

**Residue-less Nirvana:** Also known as Nirvana without residue. It refers to the state of total liberation from all physical and mental conditions. This is in contrast with Nirvana with residue, where the body still exists. See also Nirvana and Parinirvana.

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**Right Action:** To conduct oneself in moral, peaceful, and honorable ways, that is in keeping with the precepts of not killing, not stealing, and not committing sexual misconduct. See also Eightfold Noble Path and Tenfold meritorious cause of action.

**Right Concentration:** To develop one's meditation according to the four Dhyanas. See also Eightfold Noble Path.

**Right Effort:** To develop the four types of efforts: (1) the effort to get rid of unwholesome thoughts that have already arisen in one's mind, such as the desire to take another's property; (2) the effort to prevent the arising of unwholesome thoughts; (3) the effort to develop wholesome thoughts of loving-kindness and compassion; and (4) the effort to maintain and develop further wholesome thoughts that have already arisen in one's mind. See also Eightfold Noble Path.

**Right Faith:** To develop faith in the Triple Gem and the Four Noble Truths, that through practicing Buddhism, all sentient beings can eventually attain liberation from Samsara.

**Right Livelihood:** To live honorably in a profession which is in no way harmful to sentient beings, and in keeping with the precepts. See also Eightfold Noble Path.

**Right Mindfulness:** To practice the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. See also Four Foundations of Mindfulness and Eightfold Noble Path.

**Right Speech:** To abstain from telling lies, slandering, frivolous speech, and harsh speech. See also Eightfold Noble Path and Tenfold meritorious cause of action.

**Right Thought:** To have only thoughts which are in line with Buddhist teachings. See also Eightfold Noble Path.

**Right Understanding:** See Right View.

**Right View:** To develop the understanding or view that complies with the Buddhist teaching of causality or the law of cause and effect; understanding the Four Noble Truths. See also Eightfold Noble Path and Right Understanding.

**Right View of Dependent Arising:** Also known as Law of Dependent Origination. It is the principle that phenomena do not come into existence on their own but as a result of cause and conditions. It is an elaboration of the Principle of Cause and Effect, highlighting the concept of inter-dependency of existence, and also the duality/non-duality.

**Rupa-kaya:** The material body.

**Saha World:** The secular world, which is known as the world that must be endured as it is full of sufferings.

**Sakra:** The King of Trayastrimsat Heaven.

**Sakradagamin:** One who has attained the second stage of Liberation. Such a person, upon passing from the human realm, will take rebirth in the heavenly realms, after which he will be reborn in the human realm one last time to attain Arahathship. Hence he is also known as a Once Returner. A Once Returner has abandoned the first three fetters, out of ten total fetters, that bind beings to the cycle of existence. He is distinguished from the Stream Enterer by the fact that the Once Returner has weakened greed, hatred, and delusion to a greater degree. Therefore, he has fewer than seven rebirths. See also Arahathship.

**Samadhi:** Meditative concentration. Often used to denote the deepest state of pure concentration, in which the mind is free from distraction and totally absorbed in the object of concentration. There are many levels and types of Samadhi, such as the Samadhi of Loving-kindness and Compassion.

**Samsara:** Also known as the Cycle of existence or cyclic existence. This refers to the endless cycle of suffering caused by birth, death, and rebirth in the six realms of cyclic existence.

**Sangha:** The Buddhist monastic order or community.

**Seven Factors of Enlightenment:** (1) Mindfulness; (2) Discriminative investigation of the Dharma; (3) Effort; (4) Joy; (5) Ease of body and mind; (6) Concentration; and (7) Equanimity.

**Sila:** The precept; code of morality; Buddhist ethics.

**Siksamana:** A female novice nun in waiting observing Six Precepts.

**Six consciousnesses:** The consciousnesses of the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind.

**Six Paramitas:** The Sanskrit word Paramita means to cross over to the other shore. Paramita may also be translated as perfection, perfect realization, or reaching beyond limitation. Through the practice of these six Paramitas, we cross over the sea of suffering (Samsara) to the shore of happiness and

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awakening (Nirvana); we cross over from ignorance and delusion to enlightenment. The six Paramitas refer to:

- The Perfection of Generosity (Dana Paramita),
- The Perfection of Ethics (Sila Paramita),
- The Perfection of Patience (Ksanti Paramita)
- The Perfection of Joyous Effort / Enthusiastic Perseverance (Virya Paramita),
- The Perfection of Concentration (Dhyana Paramita),
- The Perfection of Wisdom (Prajna Paramita).

**Six realms:** The realms of hell beings, hungry ghosts, animals, humans, asuras, and heavenly beings.

**Six sense bases:** Eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind.

**Six sense objects:** Form, sound, odor, flavor, tactile object, and phenomena.

**Sramanera:** A male novice monk observing Ten Precepts.

**Sramanerika:** A female novice nun observing Ten Precepts.

**Srotapanna:** One who has attained the first stage of Liberation. One who has attained this stage is said to have

entered the Stream that leads to Liberation, hence he is also known as a Stream Enterer. Due to the fact that the Stream Enterer has attained an intuitive grasp of Buddhist teachings ("Right View") and has complete confidence in the Triple Gem, he will not be reborn in the three bad existences again, and will take at most seven cycles of rebirths alternating between the heavenly realm and the human realm before attaining the final stage of Liberation, Arahatsip. A Stream Enterer has abandoned the first three fetters, out of ten total fetters, that bind beings to the cycle of existence. See also Arahatsip.

**Stream Enterer:** See Srotapanna.

**Supernatural powers:** The six supernatural powers are: (1) Divine eye or clairvoyance; (2) Divine ear or cliraudience; (3) mental telepathy or ability to read the thoughts of others; (4) psychic travel or telekinesis; (5) knowledge of the past and future; and (6) ending contamination. The first five supernatural powers can be acquired by one who practices deep concentration, but the sixth supernatural power is only attainable when one has attained Arahatsip.

**Sympathetic Joy:** Also known as Altruistic Joy or Mudita. See also Four Divine States of Mind.

**Ten directions of space:** The directions of North, South, East, West, Northeast, Southeast, Southwest, Northwest, Zenith, and Nadir, thus covering all spaces.

**Ten epithets:** The ten honorable titles of Buddha. These ten epithets are common to all Buddhas.

- Tathagata - Thus-Come One or Thus-Gone One,
- Arhat - Worthy of Offerings,
- Samyak-Sambuddha - Equally, Perfectly Enlightened One,
- Vidyacarana-Sampanna - Knowledge and Conduct Perfected,
- Sugata - Well-Arrived One or Well-Gone One. Tathagata is completely in control of his own births and deaths,
- Lokavid - Understanding the World,
- Anuttara - Unsurpassed One,
- Purusa-Damya-Sarathi - Tamer of Men,
- Sasta Deva-Manusyanam - Teacher to Gods, Humans, and heavenly beings,
- Buddha-Bhagavan - Buddha the World Honored One.

**Ten Kinds of Mindfulness:** (1) Mindfulness of the Buddha; (2) Mindfulness of the Dharma; (3) Mindfulness of the Sangha; (4) Mindfulness of the Precepts; (5) Mindfulness of Generosity; (6) Mindfulness of the Heavens; (7) Mindfulness of the

Cessation of Thoughts; (8) Mindfulness of Breath; (9) Mindfulness of the Impermanence of the Body; and (10) the Mindfulness of Death.

**Ten Stages of Bodhisattva Practice:** According to the Prajna sutras, the ten stages of Bodhisattva Practice are:

- the stage of dry wisdom,
- the stage of nature,
- the stage of the eighth person,
- the stage of insights,
- the stage of diminishment of afflictions,
- the stage of freedom from desire,
- the stage of completion of discernment,
- the stage of the Pratyeka Buddha,
- the stage of the Bodhisattva, and
- the stage of the Buddha.

**Tenfold meritorious cause of action:** (1) Do not kill; (2) Do not steal; (3) Do not engage in sexual misconduct; (4) Do not tell lies; (5) Do not slander; (6) Do not engage in frivolous speech; (7) Do not engage in harsh speech; (8) Do not bear greed; (9) Do not bear hatred; and (10) Do not stay deluded.

**Three periods:** The past, present, and future.

**Three planes of existence:** The World of Sensuous Desires, the World of Form, and the Formless World. All beings in the six realms of cyclic existence can be found in the World of Sensuous Desires as these beings are plagued by various sensuous desires. Beings in the World of Form have abandoned sensuous desires but still cling on to physical forms, while beings in the Formless World have even relinquished the physical forms and exist only in mental states.

**Three poisons:** See Defilements.

**Trayastrimsat Heaven:** Also known as the Thirty-Three Heavens. It is the second of the six heavens in the World of Sensuous Desires. See also Three planes of existence.

**Tripitaka:** The three main collections of the Buddhist canon – sutra-pitaka (sermons collection), vinaya-pitaka (rules collection), and abhidharma-pitaka (philosophical treatises collection). Also known as the Three Baskets.

**Triple Gem:** The Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha.

**Tusita Heaven:** This is the fourth of the six heavens in the World of Sensuous Desires. Maitreya Bodhisattva is currently residing in this heaven, awaiting for the cause and conditions

to ripen for him to descend to the human realm and become the next Buddha to save and liberate all sentient beings. See also Three planes of existence.

**Twelve Links of Dependent Origination:** The twelve links of dependent origination provide a detailed description on the problem of suffering and rebirth. They are: ignorance, mental formation, consciousness, name and form, the six senses, contact, feeling, craving, clinging, becoming, birth, aging and death. There is no existing phenomenon that is not the effect of dependent origination. All phenomena arise dependent upon a number of casual factors, called conditions.

- Ignorance is the condition for mental formation.
- Mental formation is the condition for consciousness.
- Consciousness is the condition for name and form.
- Name and form is the condition for the six senses.
- The six senses are the conditions for contact.
- Contact is the condition for feeling.
- Feeling is the condition for craving.
- Craving is the condition for clinging.
- Clinging is the condition for becoming.
- Becoming is the condition for birth.
- Birth is the condition for aging and death.

**Upekṣa:** Also known as Equanimity. See also Four Divine States of Mind.

**Western Pure World:** Also known as Sukhavati in Sanskrit. It refers to the Pure World of Amitabha Buddha.

**Wheel Turning Monarch:** Also known as Chakravartin. A universal emperor and protector of Buddhism. It is a term used for an ideal universal ruler, who rules ethically and benevolently over the entire world. Wheel turning literally means whose chariot is rolling or whose Dharmachakra (Wheel of the Dharma) is turning everywhere without obstruction.

**Yama Heaven:** This is the third of the six heavens in the World of Sensuous Desires. See also Three planes of existence.

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