

**Part One:**  
**THE PERFECTION OF GIVING**  
**(Chapters 17–20)**



## H. DĀNA'S GENERATION OF THE SIX PĀRAMITĀS

## 1. HOW DĀNA PĀRAMITĀ GENERATES DĀNA PĀRAMITĀ

## a. THREE LEVELS OF THE PRACTICE OF GIVING

How can giving bring forth *dāna pāramitā*? *Dāna* may be of lesser, middling or superior quality. From the lesser is born the middling. From the middling is born the superior. If one draws upon drink, food, or coarse things and employs a weak mind in giving, this is what is known as lesser giving. If one practices giving so that it transforms and increases resulting in one's becoming able to draw upon clothing or precious things and use them in one's giving, this amounts to bringing forth the middling from the lesser. When the mind of giving transforms and increases such that there is nothing whatsoever which one cherishes as too dear with the result that one becomes able to employ one's head, eyes, blood, flesh, country, wealth, wives, and sons, exhaustively using them all in one's giving, this amounts to bringing forth the superior from the middling.

## 1) THE BUDDHA'S PAST-LIFE PRACTICE OF LESSER-LEVEL GIVING

Take for example when Shakyamuni Buddha first brought forth the aspiration [to achieve buddhahood]. At that time he was the king of a great country who was named "Brilliance." In seeking after the Buddha Path, he performed a lesser or greater amount of giving. When he passed on and took on his next body, he next became a potter who was able to make gifts of bathing implements and rock honey condiments to a previous Buddha named Shakyamuni and the members of that sangha of bhikshus. Subsequently, he passed on, changed bodies again, and next became the daughter of a great elder who adopted the practice of making offerings of lamps to Kauṇḍinya Buddha. All sorts of instances such as these illustrate what is meant by the bodhisattva's practice of lesser-level giving.

## 2) THE BUDDHA'S PAST LIFE PRACTICE OF MIDDLING-LEVEL GIVING

Next, we have the example of when Shakyamuni Buddha in a former life was the son of an elder. In that instance, he made offerings of robes to Great Voice Buddha. After that buddha had crossed on over into extinction, he erected ninety stupas [in commemoration]. He subsequently changed bodies again and became the king of a great country who made an offering to Lion Buddha of a canopy which had been made from the seven precious things.

He afterwards took on a body wherein he became a greater elder who made offerings to Marvelous Eyes Buddha of supremely fine

buildings together with marvelous flowers created from the seven precious things. All sorts of instances such as these illustrate what is meant by the bodhisattva's practice of middling-level giving.

### 3) THE BUDDHA'S PAST-LIFE PRACTICE OF SUPERIOR-LEVEL GIVING

Now, take for example when Shakyamuni Buddha in a former life was a rishi. On seeing Kauṇḍinya Buddha who was so handsome, upright, and exceptionally marvelous, he threw himself down off of a mountain in front of that buddha. His body remained unharmed and he then stood off to one side.

Again, take for example the bodhisattva named "He Who Beings Delight in Seeing" who used his own body as a lamp in making offerings to Sun and Moonlight Virtue Buddha. All sorts of examples such as these of not cherishing even one's own body and life in making offerings to the Buddhas illustrate the bodhisattva's practice of superior-level giving.

#### b. HOW NEW BODHISATTVAS GENERATE THE LEVELS OF GIVING

This is what is meant by the bodhisattva's three kinds of giving. If there is a being who has just brought forth the aspiration to achieve buddhahood who takes up the practice of giving, he too may act in just such ways. He may first draw upon food and drink in his practice of giving. When that mind of giving transforms and increases, he will eventually be able to take even the flesh of his own body and use it as an offering.<sup>40</sup>

He may initially use all manner of fine condiments in his giving. Later, when the mind transforms and increases in its strength, he may be able to give even the blood from his own body. He may first employ paper, ink, and scriptures in his giving while also making offerings to Dharma masters of robes, drink, food, and the four kinds of offerings.

Finally, once he has gained the Dharma body, for the sake of an incalculable number of beings, he may speak many varieties of Dharma and so carry forth the giving of Dharma. All sorts of cases such as these illustrate the development of *dāna pāramitā* from within the practice of *dāna pāramitā*.

## 2. HOW DĀNA PĀRAMITĀ GENERATES ŚĪLA PĀRAMITĀ

### a. FAILING TO GIVE GENERATES TEN BAD KARMAS

How is it that the bodhisattva's practice of giving can generate *śīla pāramitā*? The bodhisattva reflects, "Beings become poor and destitute in later lives through failing to practice giving. Then, on

account of having become poor and destitute, the thought of stealing arises in them. From engaging in stealing, the harm of killing then occurs.

“Due to being poor and destitute, one may encounter circumstances wherein one is sexually unsatisfied. On account of being sexually unsatisfied, one might then engage in sexual misconduct.

“Additionally, through being poor and destitute, one may be regarded by others as of low social station. On account of the fearfulness associated with being of low social station, one might then engage in false speech.

“Thus, based on such causes and conditions linked to being poor and destitute, one may consequently course along on the path of the ten unwholesome deeds. However, if one practices giving, then one will be reborn into circumstances wherein one possesses things of value. Because one will then already own valuable possessions, one will tend to refrain from engaging in endeavors contrary to Dharma. Why is this the case? It is because the five sense objects will already exist in abundance and thus there will never be a shortage of anything.”

b. THE SNAKE, THE TURTLE, AND THE FROG (STORY)

This principle is illustrated by the case of Devadatta in a previous life when he was a snake who dwelt together with a frog and a turtle in a pond. They had all become close friends. Later, the water of the pond dried up. They all became hungry, poor, in desperate straits, and lacking in any other resources. The snake then dispatched the turtle to call forth the frog. The frog then sent back the turtle through uttering this verse:

“On encountering poverty, one may stray from his original intent.  
 Ignoring one’s fundamental principles, eating becomes foremost.  
 You should take my words and pass them on to that snake:  
 “This frog will never come over to show up at your side.”

If one cultivates the practice of giving, then in later lives one will possess such merit that there will be nothing which one lacks. If this is the case, then one will be able to uphold the moral precepts and will remain free of these many types of bad deeds. This is how the practice of giving is able to bring forth *śīla* pāramita.

Additionally, when one gives, one is able to bring about a scarcity of all of the fetters associated with breaking precepts while also bolstering the mind’s devotion to upholding moral precepts, thus

causing it to become solidly established. These are the causal bases through which giving brings about an increase in the cultivation of the moral precepts.

Moreover, when the bodhisattva practices giving, he constantly brings forth thoughts of kindness and compassion for the recipient. He is not attached to valuables and does not cherish his own goods. How much the less would he engage in stealing. When one feels kindness and compassion for the recipient, how could one maintain any ideation intent on killing? Through means such as these, he becomes able to block off any tendency to transgress against the moral precepts. This is how the practice of giving brings forth observance of the moral precepts.

If one is able to engage in giving while employing a mind intent on destroying miserliness, then he will subsequently find easy success in the practice moral virtue, patience, and so forth.

c. MAÑJUŚRĪ TEACHES A BEGGAR CHILD (STORY)

This principle is illustrated by the case of Mañjuśrī when he was a bhikshu long ago in the past in a far distant kalpa. Having gone into the city to seek alms, he received a bowl full of “hundred-flavored delightful dumplings.” There was a small child in that city who followed along after him, begging. [Mañjuśrī ] did not immediately give anything to him.

Then, when they had reached a Buddha stupa, [the monk] picked up two of the dumplings in his hand and required of the child, “If you are able to eat only one of the dumplings yourself, while taking one of the dumplings and giving it to the Sangha, I will give these to you.”

The child immediately agreed and so then took one of the delightful dumplings and presented it to the Sangha community. Later, he obtained Mañjuśrī’s consent to receive the precepts and then subsequently brought forth the aspiration to become a buddha.

In just such a fashion, the practice of giving may be able to cause one to take on the moral precepts and to bring forth the aspiration to become a buddha. This illustrates how the practice of giving brings forth *śīla pāramitā*.

Furthermore, it is as a reward for giving that one subsequently receives offerings of the four requisites, lives in a fine country, finds a good spiritual master, and has nothing in which he is lacking. One thereby becomes able to uphold the moral precepts.

Additionally, it is as a karmic reward for giving that one's mind becomes well-regulated and supple. Because one's mind becomes well-regulated and supple, one becomes able to observe the moral precepts. Because one is able to observe the moral precepts, one becomes able to control one's own mind even in the midst of circumstances involving unwholesome dharmas. All sorts of causes and conditions such as these demonstrate the bringing forth of *śīla pāramitā* on the basis of the practice of giving.

### 3. HOW *DĀNA PĀRAMITĀ* GENERATES *KṢĀNTI PĀRAMITĀ*

How is it that giving is able to bring forth *kṣānti pāramitā*? When the bodhisattva performs an act of giving and then the recipient subjects him to verbal abuse, or makes unreasonably great demands, or presses his demands at an inopportune time, or seeks to obtain what he should not seek, the bodhisattva thinks to himself, "Now, as I am giving, I am wishing to search out the Buddha Path. It is not the case that anyone ordered me to do this giving. As I am doing it at my own behest, why should I allow myself to become angry?" After he reflected in this manner, he proceeds with the cultivation of patience. This is a case in which giving generates *kṣānti pāramitā*.

Then again, when the bodhisattva gives, if the recipient is hateful and abusive, he then thinks to himself, "As I now cultivate giving both inward and outward things, I am able to relinquish even what is difficult to relinquish, how much the less should I be unable to have patience with what is merely an empty sound? If I am not patient with it, then what I am able to give will thereby become impure. It would be just as when a white elephant enters into a pool, bathes, and then having gotten out, goes back and covers himself with dirt again. To give and yet be impatient would be just like this." Having reflected in this manner, he then carries on with the practice of patience.

All sorts of such causes and conditions associated with giving result in the bringing forth of *kṣānti pāramitā*.

### 4. HOW *DĀNA PĀRAMITĀ* GENERATES *VĪRYA PĀRAMITĀ*

How is it that giving brings forth *vīrya pāramitā*? When the bodhisattva engages in the practice of giving, he constantly cultivates vigor. Why is this? When the bodhisattva first brings forth the aspiration [to achieve buddhahood], his merit is not yet vast. He then desires to cultivate the two kinds of giving in order to fulfill the aspirations of all beings. Because of a shortage of things to give, he seeks earnestly for valuables and Dharma with which to be able to provide for them adequately.

## 5. THE BUDDHA'S PERFECTION OF VIGOR (STORY)

This is illustrated by the case of Shākyamuni Buddha when, in a previous lifetime, he was a great physician king who worked to cure every manner of disease without any concern for fame or profit. It was done out of pity for all beings. The sick were extremely numerous and so his powers were inadequate to rescue everyone. He was concerned about and mindful of everyone and yet matters did not correspond in their outcome to his aspirations. He became so distressed and agitated that he died.

He was then reborn in the Trāyastriṃśa Heaven. He thought to himself, "Now, I've been reborn in the heavens. All I'm doing here is consuming my reward of blessings without any sort of progress arising from it." He then used a skillful means to bring that personal existence to an end.

Having relinquished this rebirth into the long life of the heavens, he was next reborn as a dragon prince in the palace of Sāgara, the Dragon King. His body grew to full maturity. His parents were extremely attached in their love for him. But he desired to die, and so he went to the king of the golden-winged [*garuḍa*] birds. The bird immediately seized this young dragon and devoured him in the top of a *śālmali* tree. His father and mother then wailed and cried in grief-stricken distress.

Having died, the young dragon was then reborn in Jambudvīpa as a prince in the house of the king of a great country. He was named "Able to Give." From the moment he was born, he was able to speak. He asked all of the retainers, "Now, what all does this country contain? Bring it all forth so that it can be used to make gifts."

Everyone was struck with amazement and became fearful. They all withdrew from him and ran off. His mother, however, felt kindness and love for him and so looked after him by herself. He said to his mother, "I am not a *rākṣasa* ghost. Why has everyone run off? In my previous lives, I have always taken pleasure in giving and thus have been a benefactor to everyone."

When his mother heard his words, she reported them to everyone else. The others then all returned. The mother thenceforth delighted in raising him. By the time he had grown older, he had given away everything he owned. He then went to his father, the King, and requested things to give. His father responded by giving him his share. Again, he gave it all away.

He observed that the people of Jambudvīpa were all poverty-stricken and lived lives of intense hardship. He thought to supply



them all with gifts, but the valuables were inadequate. He then began to weep and inquired of everyone, "How will I be able to cause everyone to become completely supplied with wealth?"

The wise elders said, "We have heard of the existence of a precious wish-fulfilling pearl. If you were able to obtain this pearl then, no matter what your heart desired, there would be nothing which would not be certainly be obtained."

When the Bodhisattva had heard these words, he spoke to his mother and father, saying, "I desire to go out upon the great sea and seek the precious wish-fulfilling pearl worn on the head of the Dragon King."

His father and mother replied, "We have only you, our one son. If you go out upon the great sea the many difficulties will be difficult to overcome. If ever we were to lose you, what use would we have for going on living? It is not necessary for you to go. We do still have other things in our treasury with which we will be able to supply you."

The son said, "There is a limit to the contents of the treasury. My intentions are boundless. I wish to bestow enough wealth to satisfy everyone so that they will never again be found wanting. I pray that you will give your permission so that I may succeed in my original aspiration to cause everyone in Jambudvīpa to be completely provided for."

His parents knew that his determination was immense. They did not dare to restrain him and so subsequently relented and allowed him to go. There were five hundred merchants at that time who, because his special qualities were so extraordinary, took pleasure in following him wherever he went. They happened to know the day when he was due to depart and so gathered at the port.

The Bodhisattva had heard earlier that Sāgara, the Dragon King, had a precious wish-fulfilling pearl. He inquired of everyone, "Who knows the route across the sea to his dragon palace?" There was a blind man named Dāsa who had been to sea seven times and who knew all of the sea routes. The Bodhisattva instructed him to travel along with him.

He replied, "As I have grown old, both of my eyes have lost their acuity. Although I have been to sea many times, I cannot go this time."

The Bodhisattva said, "In going forth this time, I do not do it for my own sake. I seek the precious wish-fulfilling pearl for the

universal benefit of everyone. I desire to completely supply all beings so that they are caused to never again be found wanting. Then I wish to instruct them in the causes and conditions relating to the Dharma of the Path. You are a wise man. How can you withdraw? Without the power of your assistance, how could my vow possibly succeed?"

When Dāsa heard his entreaty, he happily shared the Bodhisattva's aspiration and said to him, "I'll now go out with you onto the great sea. However, I most certainly will not survive. You should lay my body to rest on the island of gold sands out in the middle of the ocean."

When the provisions for the journey had all been loaded, they set loose the last of the seven lines. The ship went forth like a camel until it arrived at the Isle of Many Gems. The host of merchants all tried to outdo each other in gathering up the seven precious jewels. When they had all satisfied themselves, they asked the Bodhisattva, "Why do you refrain from gathering them yourself?"

The Bodhisattva replied, "It is the precious wish-fulfilling pearl which I seek. I have no use for things of this sort which will inevitably be used up. You all should know when enough is enough and should realize the limits so as to avoid overloading the ship. We must not fail to prevent our own self-destruction."

The group of merchants then said to the Bodhisattva, "Virtuous One, please invoke a spell for us to insure our safety." They then withdrew.

At this point Dāsa instructed the Bodhisattva, "Hold alongside the landing dinghy. We will want to use it to go off on this other route. After we have been driven by the wind for seven days, we will arrive at a treacherous place on the southern shore of the vast sea. There should be a steep cliff with a date tree forest's branches overhanging the water. If a strong wind blows, the ship could be overturned and capsized. By reaching up and clinging to the date branches, you may be able to save yourself. As I am sightless, I will likely die then. Beyond this precipitous shoreline there will be the isle of gold sand. You can take my body and lay it to rest in the midst of those sands. Those gold sands are pure. This is what I desire."

And so it was just as foretold. The wind came and they set off. Having come to the steep cliffs, it was just as Dāsa had described. The Bodhisattva reached up, grabbed onto the date branches, and so avoided disaster. He interred Dāsa's body in the ground of gold.

From this point, he went on alone, following his earlier instructions. He floated in deep water for seven days. He then walked for seven days in water the depth of his throat. Then he moved for seven days through water up to his waist. After that, he walked for seven days through water up to his knees. Then he walked through mud for seven days.

Next, he came upon marvelous lotus flowers which were fresh and pure and soft. He thought to himself, "These blossoms are so soft and fragile. I should enter into the empty space samādhi." And so he made his body light and then walked upon the lotus blossoms for another seven days.

Next, he came upon poisonous snakes and thought to himself, "These poisonous serpents are extremely fearsome." He then entered the samādhi of loving kindness and proceeded to walk upon the heads of the poisonous snakes for seven days. As he did this, the snakes all extended their heads up to receive the Bodhisattva, thus allowing him to tread upon them as he passed.

After he had traversed these difficulties, he saw there was a jeweled city up ahead protected by seven sets of city walls. There were seven successive moats. Each of the moats was filled with poisonous snakes and there were three huge dragons guarding the gates.

The dragons saw that the Bodhisattva was possessed of a handsome and fine appearance, that he was a bearer of refined features and solemn deportment, and that he had been able to successfully pass through numerous difficulties in arriving at this place. They thought to themselves, "It is not the case that this is any ordinary man. It must certainly be that he is a bodhisattva, a man possessed of much merit." They then immediately allowed him to advance and directly enter the palace.

It was not so long ago that the mate of the Dragon King had lost her son and so she continued as before to grieve and weep. She had observed the arrival of the Bodhisattva. The Dragon King's mate possessed superknowledges and so, realizing that this was her son, milk spontaneously flowed forth from her two breasts. She gave the order allowing him to sit down and then spoke to him, "You are my son. After you left me and then died, where were you reborn?"

The Bodhisattva was also able to know his own previous lives. He knew that these were his parents and so replied, "I was reborn on the continent of Jambudvīpa as a prince to the king of a great country. I felt pity for the poverty-stricken people afflicted by the

intense sufferings of hunger and cold who thus are unable to enjoy their own freedom. It is because of this that I have come here seeking to obtain the precious wish-fulfilling pearl.”

His mother replied, “Your father wears this precious pearl as an adornment on his head. It is a difficult thing to acquire. Surely he will take you into the treasury of jewels where he certainly will wish to give you whatever you desire. You should reply by saying, ‘I have no need of the various other jewels. I only desire the precious pearl atop the head of the Great King. If I may receive such kindness, I pray that you will bestow it upon me.’ It may be that you can acquire it in this way.”

He then went to see his father. His father was overcome with nostalgia and delight and experienced boundless rejoicing. He thought with pity on his son’s coming from afar, having to undergo extreme difficulties, and now arriving at this place. He showed him his marvelous jewels and said, “I will give you whatever you want. Take whatever you need.”

The Bodhisattva said, “I came from afar wishing to see the Great King. I am seeking to obtain the precious wish-fulfilling pearl on the King’s head. If I may receive such kindness, may it be that you will bestow it upon me. If I am not given that, then I have no need of any other thing.”

The Dragon King replied, saying, “I have only this single pearl which I always wear as crown. The people of Jambudvīpa possess only scant merit and are of such base character that they should not even be allowed to catch a glimpse of it.”

The Bodhisattva replied, “It is on this account that I have come from afar, experiencing extreme difficulties and risking death. It is for the sake of the people of Jambudvīpa who have only scant merit, who are poverty-stricken, and who are possessed of base character. I wish to use the precious wish-fulfilling pearl to provide for them everything they desire so that I may then use aspects of the Buddha Path to teach and transform them.”

The Dragon King gave him the pearl and placed a condition on it by saying, “I will now give you this pearl. But when you are about to depart from the world, you must first return it to me.”

He replied, “With all respect, it shall be as the King instructs.” When the Bodhisattva had acquired the pearl, he flew up into space and, with the ease of extending and withdrawing his arm, he instantly arrived back in Jambudvīpa.

When his human royal parents observed his auspicious return, they were delighted and danced about with joy. They hugged him and then asked, "Well, what did you acquire?"

He replied, "I have obtained the precious wish-fulfilling pearl."

They asked, "Where is it now?"

He told them, "It's in the corner of my robe."

His parents said, "How could it be so small?"

He explained, "Its power resides in its supernatural qualities. It is not a function of its size." He told his parents, "It should be ordered that, both inside and outside of the city, the grounds are to be swept clean and incense is to be burned. Banners should be hung and canopies set up. Everyone should observe the standards of pure diet and take on the moral precepts."

The next morning at dawn he set up a tall wooden pillar as a display pedestal and attached the pearl up on the very top of it. The Bodhisattva then swore an oath, "If it is the case that I am to be able to complete the Buddha Path and bring everyone to deliverance, then this pearl should, in accordance with my vow, bring forth all kinds of precious things so that whatever anyone needs, it will manifest in utter repletion."

Dark clouds then covered the entire sky and rained down every type of precious thing, including clothes, drink, food, bedding, and medicines. Whatever people needed became abundantly available. This remained ever so, never ceasing until the very end of his life.

Instances such as this illustrate what is meant by a bodhisattva's practice of giving coincidentally serving as the means to bring forth the *pāramitā* of vigor.

#### 6. HOW *DĀNA PĀRAMITĀ* GENERATES *DHYĀNA PĀRAMITĀ*

How is it that the bodhisattva's practice of giving generates the *pāramitā* of dhyāna? When the bodhisattva gives, he is able to eliminate stinginess. Having gotten rid of stinginess, he is further enabled by this giving to devote himself single-mindedly to the gradual elimination of the five hindrances (*nīvaraṇa*). It is the ability to eliminate the five hindrances which in itself constitutes [the basis for realizing success in] dhyāna meditation.<sup>41</sup>

Then again, it is on account of giving that the mind enters into the first dhyāna and so forth on up to the dhyāna of the extinction-samādhi. How is it that this is supposedly is "on account of" giving? It may be, for instance, that on giving to a practitioner of dhyāna, one reflects, "It is because of this person's cultivation of dhyāna

absorption that I make an offering with a pure mind. Why do I settle for only a vicarious experience of dhyāna?" And so one may then focus his own mind and thenceforth take up contemplation and the practice of dhyāna meditation.

Then again, it could be that, on giving to a poverty-stricken person, one reflects on that person's previous lives in which he engaged in all sorts of unwholesomeness, failed to seek single-mindedness, failed to cultivate works generating karmic blessings, and then consequently became poverty-stricken in this life. On account of this, one may provoke himself to cultivate skillful single-mindedness, thus enabling himself to enter the dhyāna absorptions.

#### 7. SUDARŚANA, THE WHEEL-TURNING SAGE-KING (STORY)

According to the story about Sudarśana, a wheel-turning sage-king, eighty-four thousand of the lesser kings came to his court, all bringing marvelous things made of the seven treasures which they presented as offerings. The King declared, "I do not need them. You may each use them yourselves to cultivate karmic blessings."

Those kings thought to themselves, "Although the great King cannot bring himself to accept them, it still wouldn't be appropriate for us to take them for our own use." And so they collectively saw to the construction of a seven-jeweled pavilion. They planted rows of seven-jeweled trees and created bathing pools made of the seven jewels. Within the great pavilion, they built eighty-four thousand halls, each made from the seven precious things.

Within each of the halls, there was a seven-jeweled throne with multi-colored cushions at each end of the throne. Decorated canopies were suspended above and the ground below was sprinkled with fragrances. After all of these preparations had been made, they addressed the King, saying, "We pray that his majesty will accept this Dharma pavilion with its bejeweled trees and bathing pools."

The King indicated his acceptance by remaining silent and then thought to himself, "I ought not to indulge myself with the pleasure of being the first to dwell within this new pavilion. I should invite good people such as the Śramaṇas and the Brahmans to first enter here to receive offerings. After that, I may go ahead and dwell in it." He then gathered together those good personages and had them be the first to enter the jeweled pavilion. There they were provided an abundance of all manner of fine and marvelous offerings.

After those people had all left, the King entered the jeweled pavilion, ascended into the hall of gold, and then sat down upon

the silver throne. There he reflected upon giving, dispensed with the five hindrances, withdrew the six sense faculties, did away with the six sense objects, and, experiencing joy and bliss, entered into the first dhyāna.

Next, he ascended into the hall of silver, sat down upon the throne of gold, and then entered into the second dhyāna. Next he ascended into the hall of beryl, sat down upon the crystal throne, and then entered into the third dhyāna. And then, finally, he ascended into the jeweled hall of crystal, sat down upon the beryl throne, and entered into the fourth dhyāna. He sat there alone in contemplation for a total of three months.

The jade ladies, the precious queen, and eighty-four thousand female retainers all draped their bodies in strands of pearls and rare jewels and then came to see the King, saying, “As His Majesty has for so long now withdrawn from intimate audiences, we have dared to come and offer our greetings.”

The King announced to them, “Sisters, each of you should maintain a mind imbued with correctness. You should serve me as friends. Don’t act as my adversaries.”

The jade ladies and the precious queen then began to weep and, as their tears streamed down, they inquired, “Why does the Great King now refer to us as ‘sisters’? Surely, he must be thinking of us in a different way now. Pray, may we hear his intent? Why do we now receive the remonstrance: ‘You should serve me as friends. Don’t act as my adversaries?’”

The King instructed them, saying, “If you look upon me as a mere worldly entity with whom to indulge desires and thus abide in bliss, this amounts to acting as my adversary. If, however, you are able to awaken to the fact of impermanence, realize that the body is like an illusion, cultivate karmic blessings, practice goodness, and cut away desire-laden affections—it is this which amounts to serving me as a friend.”

The jade ladies responded, “We shall adhere respectfully to the dictates of the King.” After they had spoken thus, they were sent back to their quarters.

After the women had gone, the King ascended into the hall of gold and sat upon the silver throne where he immersed himself in the samādhi of kindness. He then ascended into the hall of silver, sat upon the throne of gold, and immersed himself in the samādhi of compassion. Next, he ascended into the hall of beryl, sat down

upon the crystal throne, and immersed himself in the samādhi of sympathetic joy. Finally, he ascended into the jeweled hall of crystal and sat down upon the throne of beryl where he immersed himself in the samādhi of evenmindedness. This is an instance of the bodhisattva's practice of giving generating the *pāramitā* of dhyāna.

#### 8. HOW *DĀNA PĀRAMITĀ* GENERATES *PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ*

How does the bodhisattva's giving bring about *prajñāpāramitā*? When the bodhisattva gives, he knows that this giving will definitely have a resulting karmic reward and so he is not beset by the delusions of doubt. Thus he is able to shatter erroneous views and ignorance. This is a case of giving bringing forth *prajñāpāramitā*.

##### 1. THE BODHISATTVA'S CAUSALITY REALIZATIONS

Furthermore, when the bodhisattva engages in giving, he is able to distinguish and know the circumstances of the person who fails to observe the moral precepts.

##### 1. BENEFACTORS WHO BEAT OR TIE UP OTHERS

If someone whips, strikes, beats up, flogs, confines, or ties up others, or if he circumvents the law and so comes by valuables, and then proceeds to perform acts of giving [with such wealth], he is reborn among elephants, horses, or cattle. Although he takes on the form of an animal which must carry heavy burdens, which is whipped and prodded, which is restrained by halters and fetters, and which is ridden, still, he always obtains good living quarters and fine food, is prized by people, and is provided for by people.

##### 2. BENEFACTORS WHO ARE HATEFUL

Additionally, he knows about the circumstances of evil people who are much obsessed with hatefulness and anger, whose minds are devious and not upright, and yet who practice giving. He knows that they will fall into rebirths among the dragons where they will obtain a palace composed of the seven precious things and will have fine food and marvelous sensual pleasures.

##### 3. BENEFACTORS WHO ARE ARROGANT

He also knows that people who are arrogant and who engage in giving with a mind beset with conceit and hatefulness will fall into births among the golden-winged [*garuḍa*] birds where they will always experience sovereign independence and will have a necklace made of precious "as-you-wish-it" pearls. All sorts of things which they require will all be obtained without need for restraint in



indulging in them and there will be nothing which will not follow in accordance with their wishes. They will be able to perform magical transformations of a myriad sorts and there will be no matter which they will be unable to bring to completion.

#### 4. BENEFACTORS WHO ARE CORRUPT OFFICIALS

He also knows of the circumstances of high government officials who circumvent the law, indulge in unscrupulous excesses at the expense of the people, do not follow regulatory laws, and appropriate valuable goods. If they use them to perform acts of giving, they then fall into births among ghosts and spirits. There they become *kumbhāṇḍa* ghosts who are able to perform all sorts of transformations while pleasing themselves with the five objects of the senses.

#### 5. TYRANNICAL BENEFACTORS FOND OF MEAT AND DRINK

He also knows of the circumstances of people who are beset with much hatred, who are tyrannical, who are much obsessed in their fondness for liquor and meat, and who then perform acts of giving. They fall into births among the earth-coursing *yakṣa* ghosts. There they always obtain all sorts of pleasures, music, drink, and food.

#### 6. OBSTINATE BENEFACTORS WHO GIVE CARRIAGES AND HORSES

He also knows of the existence of those people who are obstinate and stubborn and who are unruly and defiant, and yet who are able to perform acts whereby they make gifts of carriages and horses as substitutes for foot travel. They fall into births among the space-coursing *yakṣas* who are possessed of great strength and who arrive at their destinations with wind-like speed.

#### 7. JEALOUS AND ARGUMENTATIVE BENEFACTORS

He also knows of the existence of those people who have jealous minds and who enjoy disputation, but who, on account of making gifts of fine dwellings, bedding, clothing, drink and food, are able to be reborn among the flying *yakṣas* abiding in palaces and temples. They possess all sorts of pleasurable things which provide them with personal convenience.

In all sorts of cases such as these, when giving is performed, he is able to make distinctions and know their import. This illustrates what is meant by the bodhisattva's practice of giving being able to produce *prajñā*.

#### 8. HUMAN REALM REWARDS FROM GIVING

Furthermore, when one makes offerings of drink and food, one gains strength, physical attractiveness, long life, and admiration.

If one makes gifts of clothes, even from one's very birth, one gains an awareness of a sense of shame and a dread of blame. One possesses the quality of awesome deportment, is physically handsome, and enjoys peace and bliss in both body and mind.

If one makes gifts of dwellings, then one obtains all manner of palaces and towers composed of the seven precious things. One naturally comes to have the five objects of desire with which to afford oneself pleasure.

If one makes gifts of the waters of wells, ponds and springs, and makes gifts of all sorts of fine condiments, then, wherever one is born, one will succeed in being free of hunger or thirst and will possess an abundant repletion of the five objects of desire.

If one gives bridges, boats, or shoes, then, even from birth, one will have an abundance of all sorts of carriages and horses. If one gives parks and forests, then one will achieve the honor of aristocratic social station and will become one to whom everyone looks in reliance. One will take on a body which is handsome and one's mind will be blissful and free of worries.

All sorts of causes and conditions such as these within the realm of people constitute what is gained through the practice of giving.

#### 9. CELESTIAL REALM REWARDS FROM GIVING

If a person gives as a way of cultivating meritorious qualities associated with karmic blessings and does not find the life of conditioned karmic activity to be agreeable, then he succeeds in being reborn in the dwelling place of the four heavenly kings.

If in his practice of giving a person supplements it by making offerings to his father, mother, uncles, brothers, and sisters, if he gives without hatefulness or enmity, and if he is not fond of disputation and also does not delight in seeing disputatious people, he then succeeds in being born in the Trāyastriṃśa heaven or in the Yāma, Tuṣita, Nirmāṇarati, or Paranirmita-vaśavartin heavens.

In all sorts of ways such as these he makes distinctions regarding giving. These examples illustrate how the bodhisattva's practice of giving brings forth *prajñā*.

#### 10. GIVING PERFORMED BY ARHATS AND PRATYKABUDDHAS

If when one is giving, his mind remains free of any defiling attachment and if one tends to be disgusted with and distressed by the world and thus consequently seeks to realize nirvāṇa, this qualifies as the sort of giving performed by arhats and pratyekabuddhas.

## 11. GIVING PERFORMED BY BODHISATTVAS

If one gives for the sake of the Buddha Path and for the sake of beings, this constitutes the giving of the bodhisattva.

Among all the different sorts of giving such as these, he makes distinctions and derives understanding. This constitutes the practice of giving bringing forth *prajñāpāramitā*.

Again, when the bodhisattva gives, he contemplates in accordance with reality the true character of the three factors as discussed above. When he is able to know these things in this manner, this constitutes the practice of giving bringing forth *prajñāpāramitā*.

Moreover, all of the causes and conditions associated with wisdom and merit come forth from giving. This is exemplified by the Thousand Buddhas who, on first bringing forth the intention [to achieve buddhahood], each used all kinds of valuable things to make gifts to the Buddhas. In some cases, they used flowers and incense as gifts while in other cases they used robes as gifts. In other instances, they took up willow branches as gifts and so brought forth the resolve [intent on buddhahood] in that way.

All sorts of giving of these sorts demonstrate how the bodhisattva's practice of giving brings forth the *prajñāpāramitā*.

**The Exegesis on the Great Perfection of Wisdom Sutra  
The End of Fascicle Number Twelve.**