

CHAPTER 12

Distinctions with Regard to Giving

XII. CHAPTER 12: DISTINCTIONS WITH REGARD TO GIVING

A. WITH MORE MERIT & MENTAL PLIANCY, THE BODHISATTVA DEVELOPS FAITH

As for the bodhisattva who is able in this manner to carry out repentance, entreating, rejoicing, and dedication:

As the power of his merit increases,
and his mind also becomes more pliant,
he then develops faith in the Buddhas' meritorious qualities
and in the great conduct of the bodhisattvas.

Because of his repentance, entreating, rejoicing, and dedication, the power of this bodhisattva's merit increases and his mind becomes well-trained and possessed of pliancy. Thus he becomes able to have faith in and accept what the common person has no faith in, namely the Buddhas' measureless and supremely pure meritorious qualities. He is also able to place faith in and accept the rare and difficult endeavors accomplished by the great bodhisattvas' as they carry out their pure and great practices.

Now, again, a verse:

B. THE BODHISATTVA'S SYMPATHY FOR BEINGS LEADS TO COMPASSION FOR THEM

Beings who are all afflicted with suffering
do not possess this profound and pure Dharma.
He feels pity and sadness for them
and so brings forth a mind of deep compassion for them.

Having developed faith in the measureless, extremely profound, and supremely pure meritorious qualities of the buddhas and bodhisattvas, the bodhisattva feels pity and sadness for all beings who have none of these meritorious qualities. Because they hold every sort of wrong view, they only experience the many different types of suffering. Consequently, he brings forth a mind of deep compassion for them.

C. THE BODHISATTVA IS THEN MOTIVATED TO RESCUE BEINGS FROM SUFFERING

He is mindful of all these beings
that are mired in the mud of suffering, and thinks,
"I should rescue them by extricating them from this,
thereby causing them to abide in a state of peace and security.

Having brought forth the mind of compassion, this bodhisattva thinks, "All of these beings are always afflicted by greed, hatred, and delusion and because of that they undergo all manner of physical and mental suffering. I shall rescue them by extricating them from that, thereby causing them to leave behind the deep mud of physical and mental suffering. Then they will finally become free of the misfortunes of birth, aging, sickness, and death and become able to abide in the peace and security of nirvāṇa's bliss."

He therefore brings forth a deeply compassionate mind for these suffering beings. If, because of this mind of compassion, he seeks for their sakes to bring about whatever they wish for, thereby causing them to find happiness, this is what is known as the mind of loving kindness.

D. DUE TO KINDNESS & COMPASSION, HE DEVOTES HIMSELF TO GIVING

When, in this manner, the bodhisattva
deeply accords with the mind of kindness and compassion,
he cuts off all covetous cherishing
and devotes himself to giving with diligence and vigor.

It is in this manner that the bodhisattva seeks to realize buddhahood and to liberate beings afflicted by sufferings. As for the "accordance" [engaged in by this individual] who is mindful in this way, this refers to his accordance with kindness and compassion and to his refraining from according with any other states of mind. "Deep kindness" refers to that which extends universally to all beings and involves a degree of mindfulness of them that penetrates to the very marrow of his bones.

"All" refers to every inward and outward thing, to all gold, silver, precious jewels, the state, its cities, his wife and sons, and so forth. "Covetousness" refers to the insatiable desire to obtain something. "Cherishing" refers to affectionate attachment on account of which one does not wish to give up something to someone else. "Cut off" refers to abandoning these two bad influences.¹⁷⁶

If one accords with this, then one thereby throws open the gates of *dāna pāramitā* (the perfection of giving). Therefore, one should always engage in its single-minded and diligent practice, not allowing any room for negligence. And how does one go about accomplishing this? The bodhisattva thinks to himself, "I will now strive to benefit beings however I am able." And so it is that he brings forth a solid resolve to practice giving.

1. THE BODHISATTVA IS WILLING TO GIVE EVERYTHING TO BEINGS

As for all of those things he possesses,
whether living or not living,

including even the throne of a wheel-turning or heavenly king, there are no instances of their being requested but not given.

This is still the case even with sons and daughters as well as the clan's wives and consorts of which he is fond, these who in their youthfulness have extremely fine appearances and are skillful in their ability to render service to others,

Whose respectful and acquiescent minds are pliant and congenial, whom he lovingly bears in mind with utmost depth of feeling, cherishing them even more than his own life—

If someone seeks to have them, he is able to give them all.

This is so even with the flesh and blood of his own body, his own marrow, his hands and feet, his head, eyes, ears, nose, and so forth.

He is even able to sacrifice his entire body.

This bodhisattva fixes his mind on giving. As regards whatever outward things he owns, whether sentient or insentient, there is never any case where someone seeks to have them and yet he fails to make a gift of them.

“Not living things” refers to all such things as gold, silver, and precious jewels even up to and including the position of a wheel-turning king or the position of a king among the devas.

“Living things” refers to sons or daughters or to the youthful wives and consorts of the nobility and the best of the clans. Though they are of fine appearance, gentle and agreeable, respectful, and thoroughly acquiescent and even though he feels the most extremely affectionate cherishing for them, greater even than what he feels for his own life, he is still able to give them away to others.

In doing so, he is like “Comprehensive Giving Bodhisattva”¹⁷⁷ who was able to give away all outward possessions including his wife and children. This bodhisattva was able to give even the flesh and blood from his own body, his head, his eyes, his hands and feet, his ears, and his nose, and he was also able to cut into his own flesh, expose the bones, break the bones, and extract his own marrow.

In this, he is also like Sadāprarudita Bodhisattva who would even give his entire body. One cherishes nothing more than one's own body and yet he, too, was able to give like Sarvadāna.

In this, he is also like the bodhisattva who, when he was a rabbit, gave his body as a gift to a rishi.¹⁷⁸

And, in doing so, he is also like King Śibi who gave up his body to substitute for [and save the life of] a pigeon.

2. Q: IS HIS GIVING DONE FOR MERIT OR DUE TO KINDNESS AND COMPASSION?

Question: Is this bodhisattva able to perform such difficult acts of giving because of his discriminating knowledge of the value of different types of giving and their corresponding karmic rewards, or does he instead give simply because of the mind of kindness and compassion that he has brought forth?

3. A: HE KNOWS, HAS FAITH, MAY HAVE THE HEAVENLY EYE & SO GIVES ALL

Response:

If one practices giving of this sort,
then one will gain karmic results of this very same sort.
Inwardly, one gives up his limbs and such
while also giving away even all of one's outward possessions.

"Inward possessions" refers to one's own head, eyes, hands, feet, and so forth. "Outward possessions" refers to one's wife, sons, gold, silver, jeweled objects, and so forth. This bodhisattva understands giving in accordance with reality in a manner whereby, making distinctions with regard to each case, he realizes, "When this is achieved, then this will be the corresponding karmic result."

In addition, he has faith in what is taught in the sutras and may also be able to use the heavenly eye to know such matters.

a. Q: AS YOU SAID HE KNOWS THEM, PLEASE EXPLAIN THESE KARMIC RESULTS

Question: You just said that he knows the karmic results obtained by giving his body or limbs or by giving away his outward possessions. Could you now speak of the karmic results that may be obtained from this?

b. A: AKṢAYAMATI BODHISATTVA'S EXPLANATION IS AS FOLLOWS:

Response: In Chapter Thirty of the *Precious Summit Sutra*, "On the Meaning of Dāna Pāramitā,"¹⁷⁹ Akṣayamati Bodhisattva states that the bodhisattva makes the following aspirational vows:

May giving food to the hungry result in my receiving five things as karmic results: First, long life; second, courage; third, happiness; fourth, strength; and fifth, physical beauty;

May providing drinks to those needing something to drink first result in being able when abiding in the human realm to have fragrant and delicious beverages, and then, afterward, being able to dispel the thirst-like cravings associated with the afflictions;

May giving vehicles to those needing vehicles result in gaining happiness through whatever one wishes, in perfecting the four bases of psychic power, and later on, in attaining success in the paths of the Three Vehicles;

- May providing clothing to those in need of clothes bring about the karmic result of then being able to wear the robes of a sense of shame and a dread of blame;
- May giving lamplight to those in need of lamplight result in gaining the light of the buddha eye;
- May giving music to those wishing for music result in complete acquisition of the heavenly ear;
- May giving powdered incenses and perfumes to those needing powdered incense and perfumes result in gaining a body free of unpleasant odors;
- May giving juices to those needing juices result in obtaining flavorful tastes;
- May providing homes to those in need of homes result in becoming a place of refuge and a source of rescue and protection for all beings;
- May providing life-sustaining things to beings result in acquiring the meritorious qualities assisting the attainment of bodhi;
- May the giving of medical treatment and medicines result in becoming free of aging, sickness, and death, and in always being able to abide in happiness and security;
- May the providing of servants result in perfect wisdom that is masterfully and freely implemented;
- May giving gold, silver, coral, mother-of-pearl, and carnelian result in complete acquisition of all thirty-two marks;
- May giving all manner of adornments result in gaining the eighty secondary characteristics;
- May giving elephants, horses, and carriages result in complete acquisition of the Great Vehicle;
- May giving gardens and groves result in complete acquisition of the bliss of *dhyāna* meditation;
- May providing male and female [servants] for others result in gaining the *anuttarasamyaksambodhi* that one so cherishes;
- May giving granaries and treasuries result in gaining the complete treasury of Dharma;
- May bestowing royal dominion over a country, over a Jambudvīpa continent or over the four continents result in becoming a Dharma king exercising sovereign mastery in the *bodhimaṇḍa*;
- May the giving all manner of happiness enhancing amusements result in acquiring Dharma bliss;
- May giving away one's feet result in gaining the feet of Dharma with which one is able to arrive at the *bodhimaṇḍa*;
- May giving away one's hands result in gaining the jewel-bestowing hands with which one is able to give everything;

- May giving away one's ears and nose result in gaining the perfect physical body;
- May giving away one's eyes result in gaining the unimpeded Dharma eye;
- May giving up one's head result in gaining the omniscience of he who is especially revered throughout the three realms;
- May giving one's flesh and blood result in influencing all beings to achieve solid practice;
- May the giving of one's marrow result in gaining the indestructible vajra body.

It is in this manner that karmic rewards ensue from opening the gates to the practice of giving.

C. THE KARMIC RESULTS OF OTHER SORTS OF GIVING

The karmic results derived from other sorts of giving should be readily deducible, as follows:

- By giving bedding, one may gain the couch of liberation that comes with the peace and security of the Three Vehicles;
- By providing a place for sitting [meditation], one may gain the indestructible abode in the *bodhimaṇḍa* beneath the bodhi tree;
- By providing someone with a wife, one may gain the pleasures of Dharma joy;
- By providing roads, one may be able to enter the right path for the sake of beings who are lost on the road of *saṃsāra*;
- By giving rafts, one becomes able to cross beyond the flood of desire, the flood of existence, the flood of views, and the flood of ignorance;
- By giving one's bones, one gains solidity in moral precept observance, solidity in meditative concentration, solidity in wisdom,¹⁸⁰ solidity in liberation, solidity in the knowledge and vision of liberation, and solidity in [dedication to liberating] beings;
- By providing others with a following, one becomes able to assemble a retinue consisting of a countless and boundless number of *asaṃkhyeyas* of devas who are endowed with merit and who are all identically possessed of pure minds and inviolable loyalty;
- By conferring admiring accolades on others, when one speaks on the Dharma, one elicits the delight and praises of devas, dragons, *yakṣas*, *gandharvas*, *śramaṇas*, and brahmins;
- By giving volumes of the sutras, one enables the nine categories of canonical texts to remain for an immeasurably long period of time;
- By giving the Dharma, one becomes able to gain a penetrating understanding of all dharmas.

Because it enables the accumulation of all of the meritorious qualities, this bodhisattva delights in the practice of giving in this manner. He understands how it is that giving is made pure and understands as well the measure of the karmic results that ensue from the practice of giving. Therefore:

d. HE AVOIDS WRONG GIVING AND GIVES IN ACCORDANCE WITH EMPTINESS

As for giving wealth obtained contrary to Dharma and so forth, as well as all those sorts of giving that are censured by the wise, he remains free of any such forms of giving, and instead gives only in ways that are conjoined with emptiness and such.¹⁸¹

Giving that is “contrary to Dharma” involves wealth obtained through bad actions. “Wealth” refers to life-supporting possessions. To sum it up, because the bodhisattva realizes that giving involving wealth obtained through bad actions is not pure, he does not engage in any of these sorts of giving that are contrary to Dharma. He refrains from participating in any of them, including especially such forms of giving as might be censured by the wise. Hence, when the bodhisattva engages in the practice of giving, he only gives in ways that are conjoined with the wisdom that fathoms emptiness and with the other sorts of associated qualities.

1) Q: WILL YOU PLEASE DISCUSS THESE TWO TYPES OF GIVING?

Question: As for these two types of giving: that sort of giving which involves wealth obtained contrary to Dharma and that sort of giving which is conjoined with the wisdom that fathoms emptiness, one should present here a broad-ranging discussion elucidating the associated distinctions.

2) AKṢAYAMATI BODHISATTVA EXPLAINS THEM AS FOLLOWS:

Response: These two types of giving are discussed in the treatment of *dāna pāramitā* that is contained within the “Akṣayamati Bodhisattva Assembly” chapter, as below:¹⁸²

a) THE TYPES OF IMPURE GIVING

First, let us consider the distinctions involved in giving-associated merit, specifically as follows:

Bodhisattvas do not give wealth acquired in a manner that is contrary to Dharma. They do not engage in any giving that has the effect of aggravating other beings. No giving is done out of fearfulness. No giving is done due to some type of attachment. There are no instances where someone makes a request and yet they fail to give. There is no giving that fails

to accord with what one has already pledged. There is no giving done wherein, because one is stingy with what is fine, one instead gives an inferior item;

There is no giving not rooted in earnest intentions, no giving intended to curry favor, no giving of anything that is counterfeit, no giving that produces damaging effects, no giving done with perverse intent, no giving done with a deluded mind, no giving done with mixed motivations, no giving involving an absence of resolute conviction,¹⁸³ and no giving done out of weariness;

There is no giving involving personal favoritism, no giving with the expectation of self-benefit, no giving seeking to focus [exclusively] on "fields of merit," and no giving that slights other beings as inadequate "fields of merit",¹⁸⁴

There is no giving with a mind that distinguishes between those who uphold the moral precepts versus those who transgress against the moral precepts or that distinguishes between those who are seen as superior versus those who are seen as inferior;

There is no giving done out of a desire for fame, no giving done with the intent to elevate oneself, no giving done in a way that treats others as inferior, no giving because of intensely painful regret, and no giving that is done out of remorse;

There is no giving done [only as] a response to cries of urgency, no abusive giving, no giving promoting the dharma of spontaneous [acausal] occurrence,¹⁸⁵ no giving done simply to gain the resulting karmic rewards, no giving done out of hatred, and no giving that causes others to be left wanting;

There is no giving involving annoyance toward the supplicant, no giving involving slighting or dallying with the recipient, no deceptive giving, no giving just to save face, no giving done by tossing a donation, no giving not done with focused mind, and no giving of gifts not presented with one's own hands;

There is no failure to always give, no desisting from giving, no halting of giving, no giving as a means of struggling for superiority, no giving of merely insignificant and trivial things, and no giving involving an invitation to take whatever one wishes when one is offering only trivial things;

There is no giving not matching one's powers to give, no giving that considers some to not be fields of merit,¹⁸⁶ no giving of merely trivial things that is accompanied by inferior intentions, no giving accompanied by arrogance because of the

abundance of one's gifts, and no giving that involves unprincipled actions;

There is no giving done with the intention of gaining rebirth in pleasurable places, no giving reliant upon the largesse of wealthy and noble clans, no giving done to gain rebirth in the heavens of the Four Heavenly Kings, Śakra, or Brahmā, no giving in pursuit of the Śrāvaka Vehicle or the Pratyekabuddha Vehicle, no giving in quest of becoming a king or a prince, and no giving with only a view to [favorable effects to be gained in] this present lifetime;

There is no self-satisfied [termination of one's] giving, no giving not dedicated to realization of all-knowledge, no impure giving, no giving at the wrong time, no giving of knives or poisons, no giving intended to aggravate or dally with beings, and no giving censured by the wise.

It is in this manner that one opens up and reveals what constitutes the gateway of giving. The other sorts of impure giving are such that one should be able to deduce what they are, as follows:

The bodhisattva does not give cast-off things. There is no giving demonstrating a hatred or abhorrence of nirvāṇa, no giving of easily acquired and abundantly available things, no giving calculated to manipulate kindness, no giving done just to repay kindnesses, and no giving done to elicit some reward in return;

There is no giving to ensure protection, no giving in quest of auspicious occurrences, no giving motivated by pride, no giving only to accord with customs of the clan, no perfunctory giving simply as a response to having received something, no failing to give for one's entire life, and no giving occasioned by defiled thoughts;

There is no giving done for sport, no giving done simply at the behest of a good spiritual guide, no giving done but lightly, no giving done with an unbridled mind, no giving because one has experienced loss, no giving simply as a response to having been praised by someone, no giving done because one has been rebuked, no giving done as a prayer for auspicious developments, no giving in praise of performing miracles, and no giving done to make a show of one's faith;

There is no giving because one has become fearful, no giving done with the intent to deceive, no giving to gain a following, no giving that does not serve to lead others [toward goodness], no giving done to lead others along, no giving done in the absence of faith, no giving that asserts the nonexistence of causes and conditions, no merely frivolous giving, and no giving done to make a display of one's exceptional qualities;

There is no giving to elicit one's own praises, no giving that does not accord with what is sought, no giving done to reduce the significance of someone else's giving, no giving of what does not please, no giving of something that will not be put to use, no giving out of disrespect, no inferior giving, no giving because of the occurrence of strange signs, no giving to restrain or suppress others, no giving of things obtained through intimidation, and no giving done with impure intentions;

There is no giving done with doubting thoughts, no giving intended to mentally crush a supplicant, no giving of forbidden things, no giving done out of discrimination, no giving of alcoholic beverages, no giving of tools of war, no giving of things seized from others, no giving that causes others to have doubts, and no giving done to induce intimacy;

There is no giving that serves to announce the faults of others, no giving in pursuit of something one cherishes, no giving influenced by hatred, no giving influenced by delusion, no giving rooted in fallacious conceptual proliferation,¹⁸⁷ and no giving not done for the sake of bodhi.

i) Q: IS THE BODHISATTVA ENTIRELY FREE OF ALL SUCH GIVING?

Question: [As for the types of giving just listed], from giving of wealth sought in ways contrary to Dharma to giving not done for the sake of bodhi, does the bodhisattva engage in any of them or not? Were he to engage in none of them, then he would be at fault for not seeking out fields of merit, for not making distinctions among beings, for not acknowledging kindnesses, for not repaying kindnesses, for not presenting gifts in accordance with clan customs, or for not giving things in accordance with national customs. If he does in fact engage in such giving, why do you claim here that there are no instances of this?

ii) A: NO, BUT SUCH GIVING IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE PERFECTION OF GIVING

Response: It is not necessarily the case that the bodhisattva is completely free of all of these sorts of giving from giving of wealth that is acquired in ways contrary to Dharma to giving not done for the sake of bodhi. There may be times when he engages in some of them. However, these sorts of giving are not included within *dāna pāramitā*. It is because they cannot be instrumental in the perfection of *dāna pāramitā* that they are characterized here as being absent.

a) GIVING CONJOINED WITH EMPTINESS, SIGNLESSNESS, OR WISHLESSNESS

Now, as for what is meant by [the above stanza's reference to] "giving conjoined with emptiness and other such meritorious qualities," this is as described in the *Akṣayamati Bodhisattva Sutra*, in the "Dāna Pāramitā" chapter, as follows:¹⁸⁸

- Because the giving done by the bodhisattva is conjoined with the mind that fathoms emptiness, it is endless;
- Because this giving involves the cultivation of signlessness, it is endless;
- Because this giving is preserved and protected by the practice of wishlessness, it is endless;
- Because this giving is subsumed within roots of goodness, it is endless;
- Because this giving accords with the characteristics associated with liberation, it is endless;
- Because this giving is able to defeat all *māras*, it is endless;
- Because this giving involves no admixture with the afflictions, it is endless;
- Because this giving becomes ever more superior in its benefits, it is endless;
- Because this giving is done with definite resolve, it is endless;
- Because this giving facilitates accumulation of the dharmas constituting the limbs of bodhi, it is endless;
- Because this giving is rightly dedicated, it is endless;
- Because this giving brings about acquisition of the fruits of the liberation attained in the *bodhimaṇḍa*, it is endless;
- Because this giving knows no bounds, it is endless;
- Because this giving is inexhaustible, it is endless;
- Because this giving is never cut off, it is endless;
- Because this giving is vast, it is endless;
- Because this giving is indestructible, it is endless;
- Because this giving is invincible, it is endless;
- Because this giving leads one to all-knowledge, it is endless;
- Because this giving cuts off the defilement involved in giving wealth obtained in ways contrary to Dharma and other such forms of giving, and because it leads to the complete development of the realization of emptiness and the other associated meritorious qualities, it is therefore endless.

b) IMPURE GIVING VERSUS PURE GIVING

As for “the giving of wealth obtained in ways contrary to Dharma and other such forms of giving” these types of giving constitute “defiled giving.” Whichever types of giving are conjoined with defilement are instances of impure giving whereas whichever types of giving are conjoined with emptiness and the other [associated meritorious qualities]—those are instances of pure giving.

Additionally, this topic of purity versus impurity in the practice of giving is one that now merits further discussion.

i) FOUR TYPES OF GIVING ACCORDING TO THE AGENTS OF ITS PURIFICATION

The sutras state that there are four types of giving, as follows:¹⁸⁹

There is giving that is purified by the giver and that is not purified by the receiver;

There is giving that is purified by the receiver and that is not purified by the giver;

There is giving that is purified by the giver and that is also purified by the receiver.

There is giving that is not purified by the giver and that is also not purified by the receiver.

Where the giver performs good actions of body, speech, and mind but the receiver has performed bad actions of body, speech, and mind, this is an instance of giving that is purified by the giver and that is not purified by the receiver.

Where the giver performs bad actions of body, speech, and mind and the receiver performs good actions of body, speech, and mind, this is an instance of giving that is purified by the receiver and that is not purified by the giver.

Where the giver performs good actions of body, speech, and mind and the receiver also performs good actions of body, speech, and mind, this is an instance of giving that is purified by the giver and that is also purified by the receiver.

Where the giver performs bad actions of body, speech, and mind and the receiver also performs bad actions of body, speech, and mind, this is an instance of giving that is not purified by the giver and that is also not purified by the receiver.

One should also make distinctions of this sort with regard to whether or not covetousness, hatred, and delusion have been cut off.

(1) THE BASES FOR PRESENCE OR ABSENCE OF PURIFICATION

Additionally, in connection with these four types of giving, there are bases for distinguishing presence or absence of purification:

First, purification may be accomplished by the giver;

Second, purification may be accomplished by the receiver;

Third, purification is accomplished by both of them.

These classifications are determinants of purification. Also:

First, purification is not accomplished by the giver;

Second, purification is not accomplished by the recipient;

Third, they do not both purify [the act of giving].

These classifications are determinants of failure to accomplish purification [of the act of giving].

In these instances, when the giver possesses meritorious qualities, the act of giving derives its qualification as “pure” from the giver. When the receiver possesses meritorious qualities, the act of giving derives its qualification as “pure” from the receiver. When both the giver and the receiver possess meritorious qualities, the act of giving derives its qualification as “pure” from both the giver and the receiver.

When the giver commits karmic offenses, the act of giving derives its qualification as “impure” from the giver. When the receiver commits karmic offenses, the act of giving derives its qualification as “impure” from the receiver. When both the giver and the receiver commit karmic offenses, the act of giving derives its qualification as “impure” from both the giver and the receiver.

As for what constitutes the possession of meritorious qualities on the part of the giver, what constitutes possession of meritorious qualities on the part of the receiver, what constitutes commission of karmic offenses on the part of the giver, and what constitutes the commission of karmic offenses on the part of the receiver, these have already been discussed.

(1) Q: OF THESE FOUR, WHICH SHOULD BE PRACTICED?

Question: Of the approaches to giving that you have described as contained within these four types of giving, which ones should the bodhisattva practice?

(2) A: PRACTICE TWO THAT ARE PURE AND AVOID SELFISH MOTIVES

Response:

Among the four types of giving,
one practices the two types involving pure giving.
In doing so, one does not seek fame or self-benefit
and one also does not seek to obtain any karmic fruits from this.

These types of giving consist of four types of which three contain bases of purity and three contain bases of impurity.¹⁹⁰ He does not practice any type of impure giving and does practice two types of pure giving: First, giving that is purified by the giver but is not purified by the receiver, and, second, giving where the giving is purified by both [the giver and the receiver].

One should always be vigorous devoted to the practice of these two types of pure giving. Why? Because this bodhisattva does not hope for any associated karmic fruits from this. Were one to hope for some sort of karmic fruits [from performing this act], then one would be inclined to seek out a pure receiver.

“Purity” is defined here by the giver and the receiver both being graced by meritorious qualities whereby the minds of each of them are

pure. "Impurity" is defined by the presence in the giver of a miserliness. This accords with the Buddha's declaration that, in the practice of giving, miserliness constitutes a defilement. Although the other afflictions also constitute bases of impurity, here it is miserliness that constitutes the most serious [form of defilement].

(2) Q: HOW CAN ONE POSSESSED OF DESIRES PRACTICE PURE GIVING?

Question: If the bodhisattva should engage in diligent practice of these two types of giving, that wherein the giving is purified by the giver [but not by the receiver] and that wherein the giving is purified by both the giver and the receiver, since miserliness constitutes a defilement on the part of the giver and a major defilement of the act of giving, if the bodhisattva has not yet transcended desire and hence cannot yet cut off miserliness, how then could he succeed in practicing these two types of pure giving?

(3) A: DO NOT ACCUMULATE THINGS THAT ENGENDER MISERLINESS

Response:

If some possession is capable of causing the arising of miserliness, then one should refrain from accumulating such things.

If a bodhisattva realizes that some possession, whether living or not, causes the arising of miserly thoughts, then he should not accumulate such things. As a consequence [of refraining from accumulating such things], whenever he gives something, he will always be free of miserliness.

(a) Q: HOW CAN ONE ACCOMPLISH THIS WITH ONE'S OWN BODY?

Question: Outward possessions are such that one might refrain from accumulating them. But how does one accomplish this in relation to one's own body?

(b) A: CONSIDER ONE'S BODY TO BE LIKE A MEDICINE TREE

Response:

In order to always be of benefit to beings, understand the body as like a medicinal tree.

In order to provide benefit to beings, one should possess a firm belief that one's body is like a medicinal tree that beings may use as medicine, taking roots, trunk, branches, leaves, blossoms, fruit, and so forth, each to cure a particular disease. In such a case, they may take whatever they wish without [the tree] preventing them from doing so in order to protect itself.

The bodhisattva is just like this. In order to be of benefit to beings, he is able to relinquish his body, thinking in this way: "If beings take

whatever they need of my head, eyes, hands, feet, limbs, spine, abdomen, arms, ears, nose, teeth, tongue, blood, flesh, bones, marrow, and so forth, I shall be able to give them up, perhaps even giving them my entire body.”

It is in this manner that one subdues one’s mind as one cultivates and accumulates roots of goodness and remains protected by the adoption of skillful means in one’s practice of *dāna pāramitā* (the perfection of giving).

E. THE BODHISATVA’S DEDICATION OF THE MERIT ARISING FROM HIS GIVING

In ways that are general in character and specific in character, one is always able to dedicate all acts of giving that one performs.

This bodhisattva is able to understand and pursue two sorts of dedication in relation to the two types of pure giving. The first is that which is of a general character and the second is that which is of a specific character.

As for dedications that are of a general character, one dedicates the merit from all of one’s giving to *anuttarasamyakṣaṃbodhi*. As for dedication of a specific character, this is as described in the above treatment of the karmic fruits resulting from acts of giving.

Then again, in the case of dedication of a general character, it is done for the sake of bringing peace, happiness, and benefit to all beings. As for dedication of a specific character, it is done for the sake of influencing beings without faith to gain faith, for the sake of influencing those who have broken the precepts to succeed in upholding the precepts, for the sake of influencing those of but little learning to develop extensive learning, for the sake of influencing those who are indolent to become vigorous in their efforts, for the sake of influencing those whose minds are scattered to gain *dhyāna* concentration, for the sake of influencing deluded beings to gain wisdom, and for the sake of influencing the miserly to develop minds inclined toward generosity.¹⁹¹ And so it is that there are many different sorts of specifically-directed dedications.

Additionally, with regard to dedication of a general character, one dedicates the merit associated with the six *pāramitās* to *anuttarasamyakṣaṃbodhi*, whereas, with regard to dedication of a specific character, when one gives outward things, one prays that all beings will gain the most supreme happiness. When giving one’s limbs, one prays that all beings will gain the perfect body of a buddha.

1. Q: HOW MANY TYPES OF RIGHT AND WRONG DEDICATION ARE THERE?

Question: In the practice of giving, how many kinds of dedication are there? And how many kinds of dedication does one not practice?

2. THERE ARE 4 PURE OBJECTIVES OF DEDICATION AND 3 NOT PRACTICED

Response: The first category, those done for the sake of pure objectives, consist of four types of dedication. There are three types of dedication that one does not practice. The bodhisattva's giving may be dedicated to four types of pure objectives.

a. THE THREE TYPES OF DEDICATION ONE DOES NOT PRACTICE

The three objectives toward which one does not dedicate merit are as follows:

One does not dedicate merit for the sake of becoming a king.

One does not dedicate merit for the sake of sensual pleasures.

And one does not dedicate merit for the sake of gaining any of the grounds of a *śrāvaka* disciple or a *pratyekabuddha*.

Now, as for "not dedicating merit for the sake of becoming a king," this restriction of the objective of becoming a king is also intended to restrict dedications done to acquire the power and sovereign freedom of the nobility.

As for "not dedicating merit for the sake of acquiring sensual pleasures," this refers, aside from the above-mentioned nobility, to all others who partake of wealth's enjoyments and indulge themselves in the pleasures of the five types of desire.

As for "not dedicating merit for the sake of gaining any of the grounds of a *śrāvaka* disciple or a *pratyekabuddha*," this restricts entry into the Small Vehicle's nirvāṇa without residue but it does enable one to become securely established in the Great Vehicle in which, after a long time, one eventually enters the nirvāṇa without residue.

b. THE FOUR TYPES OF DEDICATION DONE FOR THE SAKE OF PURE OBJECTIVES

Now, as for the four types of dedication done for the sake of pure objectives, the merit from a bodhisattva's giving:

Is dedicated for the sake of purifying buddha lands;

Is dedicated for the sake of purifying one's realization of bodhi;¹⁹²

Is dedicated for the sake of purifying one's teaching of beings;

And is dedicated for the sake of purifying one's realization of all-knowledge.¹⁹³

The bodhisattva should adopt skillful means such as these in making dedications so as to not diminish the effectiveness of his giving and so as to cause it to become powerful.

1) Q: WHICH DHARMAS DIMINISH ITS BENEFIT AND WHICH INCREASE IT?

Question: Through which dharmas does one diminish the effectiveness of one's giving and through which dharmas does one cause the benefits of one's giving to increase?

b) A: THERE ARE FOUR CAUSES OF DIMINISHMENT, AS FOLLOWS:

Response:

If one gives but fails to dedicate the merit,
if one has no skillful means,
if one seeks rebirth in an inferior station of existence,
or if one draws close to bad friends—

If one's giving takes place under such conditions,
then its effectiveness will thereby be diminished.

[This means]:

If one gives, but fails to dedicate the merit to *anuttarasamyaksambodhi*—
If, because one is pursuing worldly happiness, one seeks rebirth in
an inferior station of existence—

If one has no skillful means by which one can freely bring forth the
karmic fruits of giving and *dhyāna* concentration—

Or if one draws near to [bad] friends who obstruct one's progress in
the Great Vehicle—

Then, because of [any of] these four dharmas, [the effectiveness of]
one's giving will be diminished.

c) FOR INCREASE, STOP THESE FOUR AND ADOPT THREE TYPES OF THOUGHT

If one abandons these four, the power of one's giving will increase.
Also, one should adopt three types of thought as one gives.
In this, the bodhisattva accords with the words of the Buddha
while also not seeking to gain any karmic rewards [from giving].

If one abandons the above four dharmas, then the effectiveness of
one's giving will be able to increase. [One does so as follows]:

First, one dedicates one's merit to *anuttarasamyaksambodhi*;

Second, one adopts appropriate skillful means in carrying out dedi-
cations of merit;

Third, one seeks to reach the station of a Dharma king;

Fourth, one draws near to good spiritual guides.

Also, in one's practice of giving, one should use three types of Dharma-
based thought, as follows:

First, because one feels pity for all beings, one bases one's giving on
the resolve to attain bodhi;

Second, in one's practice of giving, one does not depart from the
Dharma of the Buddha;

Third, in one's practice of giving, one does not seek any karmic
rewards.

F. ONE GIVES FOR THE SAKE OF CAUSING 3 DHARMAS AND SEEKING 2 DHARMAS

Moreover:

It is for the sake of bringing about three dharmas
that one engages in the practice of giving
and it is also for the sake of seeking two dharmas
that one should engage in the practice giving.

It is for the sake of bringing about three dharmas that the bodhisattva
engages in the practice of giving:

First, to acquire the Dharma of a Buddha;

Second, to bring about the proclamation of the Dharma;

Third, to cause all beings to abide in unsurpassable happiness.

Additionally, it is because one wishes to seek two dharmas that one
practices giving: First, to acquire great wealth, and second, to perfect
the practice of *dāna pāramitā*. Why? If the bodhisattva is endowed with
great wealth, then:

He will leave behind the suffering of poverty;

He will not take other's wealth;

He will not seek to earn interest;

He will have nobody to whom he is indebted;

And he will have no worries about the repayment of debts.

When one possesses much wealth and one's assets are adequate, then:

One is able to see to one's own clothing and food while also being
able to give out of kindness, thereby benefiting one's relatives,
one's clan, and one's good spiritual guides;

One's retinue will be happy, one's household will prosper for their
minds will always be as delighted as if they were always partici-
pating in a celebratory gathering;

One will be able to practice great giving, one's retinue will not slight
him, and people will look up to him with respect;

Everyone will be inclined to believe and accept one's words;

One will be relied upon by the many;

When others come, one will be looked up to as a mentor;

On entering an assembly, one will have nothing to fear;

One will always delight in bathing, smoothing famous fragrances
onto the body, wearing fine new clothes, and being adorned by a
full array of ornaments;

One will become able to behold fine physical forms, to hear agree-
able sounds, to smell marvelous fragrances, to always eat the most
supremely exquisite flavors, [and to experience] subtle tactile sen-
sations;

One will become indomitable by adversaries and will become well-liked by good spiritual friends.

These are instances of karmic rewards for goodness as experienced in the human body. Moreover:

One will become respected and admired, one will always be praised as wonderfully good, and others will forget one's disgraceful lapses;

Although one may have been born into a lower-class household, one will have the marks of a great man;

Although one might have no skill in speech, one will become a skillful speaker;

Although one might not be learned, one will acquire extensive learning;

Although one might be deficient in wisdom, one will become a wise person;

If one is already a person of fine appearance, one will develop a doubly outstanding appearance;

If one was formerly from a great clan, one will rise to a doubly revered social station;

If one is already a skillful speaker, one will become a doubly skillful speaker;

If one was already learned, one will become doubly learned;

If one was already wise, one will become doubly wise;

Wherever one sits or lies down, it will be on a precious bejeweled couch;

Whether asleep or awake, one will be peaceful and secure and surrounded by an abundance of attendants;

One's house will be made from the many sorts of jewels and one will be completely free to roam about at will;

One will be regarded as a personage worthy of the highest esteem;

If one has need of any scriptures or books, one will readily obtain whichever ones he seeks;

One's power and position will ensure that one has easy access to the king and one will be borne in mind by all of the nobility;

Physicians will voluntarily come and one will always have those who are close and trustworthy, attending as appropriate to the vicissitudes [of one's health];

If one catches some disease, it will be only minor and mild;

Whatever one's disease, it will be easily cured;

One will leave far behind any fears with respect to either present or later lives;

- One will ultimately forever abandon any fear of one's life not continuing on and one will always be rescued and protected;
 There will be many people close to one who will feel immensely blessed with good fortune;
 One will be sincerely and joyously celebrated by those of like mind;
 Whenever anyone extends even a small kindness to one, that person will be repaid magnanimously and whenever anyone afflicts one with even a minor evil deed, that person will encounter a major personal disaster;
 Young women from one's own clan who are possessed of fine appearance and complete adornments will voluntarily seek to serve as retainers;
 Whoever is seeking to reach agreements will take refuge in one [as a source of resolution];
 If one falls into some bad action, that action will usually be only minor;
 If one expends even a small effort [in some endeavor], one will immediately receive great benefit as a result;
 One will have an abundance of good spiritual friends whereas those who dislike one will grow ever fewer;
 One will not be susceptible to accidental encounters with venomous snakes, poison, negligence, evil people, or other such occurrences;
 All of one's kindly and respectful actions will tend to be returned in kind;
 Whenever one experiences some kind of good fortune, everyone will join in sympathetic rejoicing;
 If one experiences some sort of anguishing misfortune, everyone will join in sympathetic commiseration;
 Everyone will join in assisting one's guidance, vying to provide one with whatever is good and auspicious while influencing one to avoid whatever is contrary to Dharma and to abide securely in good dharmas;
 The works that one accomplishes will be grand and none who witness them will fail to be delighted by them;
 If one is able to abide together with those of identical aims, one will find satisfaction in that and will not aspire for worldly wealth, noble birth, acclamation, or benefit;
 If one comes to abide in a position of power, people will devote their thoughts to assisting one and doing away with anything that might cause anguishing misfortune;
 On observing the wealth and high social stature of others, one entertains no aspirations to assume them for himself;

The people sing the praises of one's virtues but do not propagate reports of one's errors;

Although one might be from a family of inferior social stature, one will acquire the reputation of a great personage;

One never displays a disapproving expression and, whenever one observes someone else's appearance, one does not adopt a pretentious demeanor;

If one becomes a brahmin,¹⁹⁴ one will garner great karmic rewards from his works within the temples of the deities. When studying the scriptures, one gains their genuine benefits and, having gained them, one is able to bestow them on others;

If one becomes a *kṣatriya*,¹⁹⁵ one succeeds in his endeavors, is renowned for his skill in archery, is consummate in one's abilities, and is well able to gain the results taught in the classics on ruling the world;

If one becomes a *vaiśya*,¹⁹⁶ one is well able to grow whichever crops one wishes;

If one becomes a merchant, one is well able to gain the profit one seeks;

If one becomes a *śūdra*,¹⁹⁷ whatever work one does becomes abundantly successful in a way that matches one's wishes.

1. Q: YOU SAID ONE DOESN'T SEEK REWARDS. ISN'T THIS CONTRADICTIONARY?

Question: Earlier, you claimed that the bodhisattva does not have the motivation to seek karmic rewards from his practice of giving, and, beyond that, that he is not motivated by a desire for wealth and high social status. Now, however, you state that one gives in quest of great wealth. How are these statements not contradictory?

2. A: NO, BECAUSE THIS WEALTH IS GAINED & USED ONLY TO BENEFIT BEINGS

Response: They are not contradictory. It is with reference to cases where one seeks to acquire wealth and enjoyment of pleasures for oneself that it was said that one should not seek for wealth. Now, however, we speak of seeking wealth solely to benefit beings. It is for that reason that it was stated that one seeks wealth out of an aspiration to engage in great giving. This is not a case of seeking wealth and pleasures for oneself. Hence we discuss here the causal factors within such karmic results.

If a bodhisattva fails to come by great wealth, then, even though he has a resolute belief in giving, he still has no wealth that he can use in giving. Therefore you should not raise such a challenge.

G. ONE ALSO GIVES TO CUT OFF TWO DHARMAS AND GAIN TWO DHARMAS

Additionally, it is for the sake of cutting off two types of dharmas that one should practice giving. What are those two? The first is miserliness and the second is covetousness. These two dharmas are the most extreme sorts of defilement that may sully one's practice of giving.

Then again, it is for the sake of gaining two types of dharmas that one practices giving, namely the knowledge of cessation and also the knowledge of non-production.

H. ONE ALSO GIVES TO INCREASE THREE TYPES OF WISDOM

Also, [giving is done] in order to increase three types of wisdom:

First, the wisdom that serves to achieve self-benefit;¹⁹⁸

Second, fundamental wisdom;

Third, the wisdom arising from extensive learning.

I. OTHERS SAY THAT GIVING IS PRACTICED TO INCREASE TWO DHARMAS

There are yet others who say that one should give in order to bring about the increase of two dharmas: First, goodness. Second, wisdom.

J. IN SUMMARY, THE BODHISATTVA SHOULD PRACTICE FOUR KINDS OF GIVING

To present a general summation here, the bodhisattva should engage in four kinds of giving in order to subsume within his practice all of the different types of good dharmas, as follows:

First, giving that originates in a mind that perceives everyone as equal;

Second, giving that transcends opposites;

Third, giving that is dedicated to attaining bodhi;

Fourth, giving characterized by the presence of a thoroughly quiescent mind.

It is in order to completely perfect *dāna pāramitā* in this manner that the bodhisattva diligently practices the giving of material wealth.