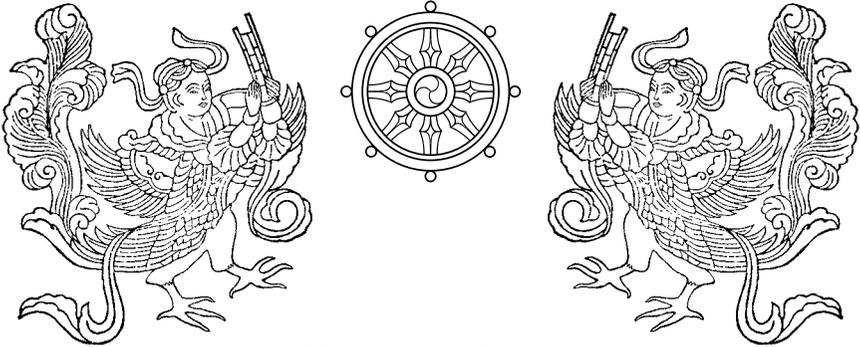


**MARVELOUS STORIES**  
*from*  
**THE PERFECTION OF WISDOM**

130 Didactic Stories from Ārya Nāgārjuna's  
*Exegesis on the Great Perfection of Wisdom Sutra*

By the Great Indian Buddhist Patriarch  
Ārya Nāgārjuna  
(ca 200 CE)

Translation by Bhikshu Dharmamitra



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**Part One:**  
**NĀGĀRJUNA'S STORIES ON GIVING**

复次以七宝人民车乘金银灯  
 烛房舍香华布施故。得作转  
 轮王七宝具足。复次施得时  
 故。报亦增多。如佛说。施  
 远行人远来人。病人看病  
 人。风寒众难时施。是为时  
 施。复次布施时随土地所须  
 施故。得报增多。复次旷路  
 中施故。得福增多。常施不  
 废故。得报增多。如求者所  
 欲施故。得福增多。施物重  
 故。得福增多。如以精舍园  
 林浴池等若施善人故。得  
 报增多。若施僧故。得报  
 增多。若施者受者俱有德  
 故。[23] (丹注云如菩萨及佛慈  
 心布施是为施者若施佛及菩萨阿  
 罗汉辟支佛是为受者故)得报增  
 多。种种将迎恭敬受者故。  
 得福增多。难得物施故。得  
 福增多。

復次以七寶人民車乘金銀燈  
 燭房舍香華布施故。得作轉  
 輪王七寶具足。復次施得時  
 故。報亦增多。如佛說。施  
 遠行人遠來人。病人看病  
 人。風寒眾難時施。是為時  
 施。復次布施時隨土地所須  
 施故。得報增多。復次曠路  
 中施故。得福增多。常施不  
 廢故。得報增多。如求者所  
 欲施故。得福增多。施物重  
 故。得福增多。如以精舍園  
 林浴池等若施善人故。得  
 報增多。若施僧故。得報  
 增多。若施者受者俱有德  
 故。[23] (丹注云如菩薩及佛慈  
 心布施是為施者若施佛及菩薩阿  
 羅漢辟支佛是為受者故)得報增  
 多。種種將迎恭敬受者故。  
 得福增多。難得物施故。得  
 福增多。

简体字

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## The Painter Who Gave Away His Savings

### Nāgārjuna's Preamble: Karmically-Rewarding Forms of Giving

Furthermore, on account of making gifts of the seven precious things, workers, carriages, gold, silver, lamps, candles, buildings, incense and flowers, one is able to become a wheel-turning monarch possessing an abundance of his seven types of treasures.

Additionally, through making gifts with timely appropriateness, one's resulting karmic reward is increased. This is as explained by the Buddha when he said, "If one gives to a person about to travel far, to a person come from afar, to a sick person, to a person caring for the sick, or if one gives to assist with manifold difficulties arising from storms or cold, this qualifies as timely giving."

Again, if one gives in a way which accords with what is most needed in a particular place, one reaps an increased karmic reward from that.

Also, if one performs an act of giving on the road in a wilderness area, one thereby gains an increased measure of merit.

If one continues giving constantly and without neglecting that practice, one gains from that an increased karmic reward.

If one gives a gift which accords with what the solicitor desires, one gains from that an increased measure of merit.

If one gives gifts which are valuable, one gains an increased measure of merit.

If one gives monastic dwellings, parks, forests, bathing ponds, and so forth—provided that those gifts are bestowed upon people who are good—one gains an increased karmic reward on that account.

If one gives gifts to the Sangha, one thereby gains an increased karmic reward.

If both the benefactor and the recipient are possessed of virtue, an increased karmic reward is gained as a result of that.

(Chinese textual note: "The notes in red read, 'Take for example bodhisattvas and buddhas who give with a mind of compassion. This is what is intended with respect to the benefactor. Giving for example to buddhas, bodhisattvas, arhats, or pratyekabuddhas—this is what is intended in regard to the recipient.'")

When one extends all manner of welcoming courtesies out of respect for the recipient, one gains from this an increased measure of merit.

If one gives that which was difficult to come by, one gains an increased amount of merit.

随所有物尽能布施故。得福增多。譬如大月氏弗迦罗城中有一画师。名千那。到东方多<sup>[24]</sup>刹<sup>[25]</sup>陀罗国。客画十二年得三十两金。持还本国于弗迦罗城中。闻打鼓作大会声。往见众僧。信心清净即问维那。此众中几许物。得作一日食。维那答曰。三十两金足得一日食。即以所有三十两金付维那。为我作一日食。我明日当来。空手而归。其妇问曰。十二年作得何等物。答言。我得三十两金。即问三十两金今在何所。答言。已在福田中种。妇言。何等福田。答言施与众僧。妇便缚<sup>[26]</sup>其夫送官治罪断事。大官问。以何事故。妇言我夫 <sup>[142a]</sup> 狂痴。十二年<sup>[1]</sup>客作得三十两金。不怜愍妇儿尽以与他人。依如官制辄缚送来。大官问其夫。汝何以不供给妇儿。乃以与他。

隨所有物盡能布施故。得福增多。譬如大月氏弗迦羅城中有一畫師。名千那。到東方多<sup>[24]</sup>刹<sup>[25]</sup>陀羅國。客畫十二年得三十兩金。持還本國於弗迦羅城中。聞打鼓作大會聲。往見眾僧。信心清淨即問維那。此眾中幾許物。得作一日食。維那答曰。三十兩金足得一日食。即以所有三十兩金付維那。為我作一日食。我明日當來。空手而歸。其婦問曰。十二年作得何等物。答言。我得三十兩金。即問三十兩金今在何所。答言。已在福田中種。婦言。何等福田。答言施與眾僧。婦便縛<sup>[26]</sup>其夫送官治罪斷事。大官問。以何事故。婦言我夫 <sup>[142a]</sup> 狂癡。十二年<sup>[1]</sup>客作得三十兩金。不憐愍婦兒盡以與他人。依如官制輒縛送來。大官問其夫。汝何以不供給婦兒。乃以與他。

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### Story: The Painter who Gave Away his Savings

If one is able to give all that one has, one gains thereby an increased amount of merit. This principle is illustrated by the case of a painter named Karṇa from the city of Puṣkarāvātī in the state of Greater Tokharestan. He had traveled to the east to the state of Takṣaśilā where he served as a painter to that court for a period of twelve years.

He received payment of thirty two-ounce pieces of gold for his work and took it back with him when he journeyed back to the city of Puṣkarāvātī in his home state. He chanced to hear the sound of a drum beating to convene a great assembly. He went there and saw an assembly of the Sangha. With a mind of pure faith he asked the Karmadāna, "How much would be required to provide a day's feast for this assembly?"

The Karmadāna replied, "Thirty two-ounce pieces of gold would be adequate to supply food for one day." At this point, he immediately brought forth the entire sum of thirty two-ounce pieces of gold and entrusted it to the Karmadāna saying, "Prepare on my behalf a day's feast [for this entire assembly]. I will return here tomorrow." He then went back to his home empty-handed.

His wife asked him, "Well, what did you earn for your twelve years of work?"

He replied, "I earned thirty two-ounce pieces of gold."

She immediately asked, "Where are the thirty two-ounce pieces of gold now?"

He replied, "They have already been planted in the merit field."

The wife asked, "What merit field?"

He replied, "I gave them to the assembly of the Sangha." His wife then had him detained and sent before a judge that his crime could be dealt with and the matter properly adjudicated. The Grand Judge asked, "Why is it that we are convened here?"

The wife replied, "My husband has become crazy and deluded. He worked in royal service in a foreign country for twelve years and earned thirty two-ounce pieces of gold. He had no compassionate regard for his wife or child and so gave away the entire sum to other people. Thus, wishing him to be dealt with by judicial decree, I quickly moved to have him detained and brought forth."

The Grand Judge then asked her husband, "Why did you not share it with your wife and child, preferring instead to give the gold away to others?"

答言。我先世不行功德。今世贫穷受诸辛苦。今世遭遇福田。若不种福后世复贫。贫贫相续无得脱时。我今欲顿舍贫穷。以是故尽以金施众僧。大官是优婆塞信佛清净。闻是语已赞言。是为甚难。勤苦得此少物尽以施僧。汝是善人。即脱身瓔珞及所乘马并一聚落以施贫人。而语之言。汝始施众僧。众僧未食是为谷子未种。[2]牙已得生。大果方在后[3]身以是故言。难得之物尽用布施其福最多。

答言。我先世不行功德。今世貧窮受諸辛苦。今世遭遇福田。若不種福後世復貧。貧貧相續無得脫時。我今欲頓捨貧窮。以是故盡以金施眾僧。大官是優婆塞信佛清淨。聞是語已讚言。是為甚難。勤苦得此少物盡以施僧。汝是善人。即脫身瓔珞及所乘馬并一聚落以施貧人。而語之言。汝始施眾僧。眾僧未食是為穀子未種。[2]牙已得生。大果方在後[3]身以是故言。難得之物盡用布施其福最多。

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He replied, "In previous lives I did not cultivate merit. In the present life I am poor and so have undergone all manner of bitter suffering. Now, in this life I have encountered the field of merit. If I do not plant merit, in later lives I will still be poor, and so poverty will follow upon poverty continuously, such that there will be no time when I am able to escape it. I now wish to immediately relinquish this state of poverty. It is for this reason that I took all of the gold and gave it to the Sangha community."

The Grand Judge happened to be an *upāsaka*<sup>1</sup> who maintained a pure faith in the Buddha. When he heard these words, he praised him, saying, "This is an extremely difficult thing to have done. You applied yourself diligently and underwent hardship in order to obtain such a small material reward, and then you were able to take it all and give it to the Sangha. You are a good man."

He then took off the strand of jewels around his neck and gave it to the poor man along with his horse and the income which he received from the taxes on an entire village. He then declared to him, "At the beginning, when you had already made the gift to an assembly of the Sangha, but that assembly of Sangha members had still not partaken of that food, it was a case of the seed still not really having been planted. But now a sprout has already come forth from it. The great fruit of this will come forth in the next life."

### Conclusion

It is for reasons such as this that it is said that one gains the most merit if one is able to give entirely of that which has been hard to come by.

### Notes

1. An *upāsaka* (feminine: *upāsikā*) is a Buddhist layman, the minimum qualification for which is having formally received from duly-ordained clergy (usually a bhikshu with at least five years full ordination) the Three Refuges: refuge in the Buddha; refuge in the Dharma; and refuge in the Ārya Sangha. ("Ārya" is a reference to those who have realized the path of seeing or above.) Although pledging adherence to specific moral norms is not a prerequisite to obtain the Refuges and become formally "Buddhist," the universal ethical standard for the Buddhist layperson consists in the five precepts which prohibit: killing; stealing; sexual misconduct; false speech; intoxicants.

复次不为众生。亦不为知诸  
 法实相故施。但求脱生老病  
 死。是为声闻檀。为一切众  
 生故施。亦为知诸法实相故  
 施。是为诸佛菩萨檀。于诸  
 功德不能具足。[7]但欲得少  
 许分。是为声闻檀。一切诸  
 功德欲具足满。是为诸佛菩  
 萨檀。畏老病死故施。是为  
 声闻檀。为助佛道为化众生  
 不畏老病死。是为诸佛菩萨  
 檀。是中应说菩萨本生经。  
 如说阿婆陀那经中。昔閻浮  
 提中有王。名婆[8]萨婆。尔  
 时有婆罗门菩萨。名韦罗  
 摩。是国王师。教王作转轮  
 圣王法。韦罗摩财富无量珍  
 宝具足。作是思惟。人谓我  
 为贵[9]人财富无量。饶益众  
 生今正是时应当大施。富贵  
 虽乐一切无常。五家所共令  
 人心散轻[10]泆不定。譬如獼  
 猴不能暂住。人命逝速疾于  
 电灭。人身无常众苦之藪。  
 以是之故应行布施。

復次不為眾生。亦不為知諸  
 法實相故施。但求脫生老病  
 死。是為聲聞檀。為一切眾  
 生故施。亦為知諸法實相故  
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 聲聞檀。為助佛道為化眾生  
 不畏老病死。是為諸佛菩薩  
 檀。是中應說菩薩本生經。  
 如說阿婆陀那經中。昔閻浮  
 提中有王。名婆[8]薩婆。爾  
 時有婆羅門菩薩。名韋羅  
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 猴不能暫住。人命逝速疾於  
 電滅。人身無常眾苦之藪。  
 以是之故應行布施。

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## The Fabulous Giving of Velāma Bodhisattva

### Nāgārjuna's Preamble: Hearer *Dāna* versus Bodhisattva *Dāna*

Moreover, if it is not done for the sake of beings, if it is not done for the sake of realizing the true character of dharmas,<sup>1</sup> and if it is done solely for the sake of gaining liberation from birth, old age, sickness, and death, this is the *dāna* of the Hearers.<sup>2</sup> If one gives for the sake of all beings and if one does so for the sake of realizing the true character of dharmas, this is the *dāna* of the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas.

If one is unable to make one's giving replete with every manner of meritorious quality, but rather desires only to gain a minor measure thereof, this is the *dāna* of the Hearers. If one wishes to make it entirely replete with every manner of meritorious quality, this is the *dāna* of the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas.

If one gives out of a fear of old age, sickness, and death, this is the *dāna* of the Hearers. If it is done to assist the realization of the Buddha Path, if it is done for the sake of transforming beings, and if it is not done out of fear of old age, sickness, and death, this is the *dāna* of the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas.

### Story: The Fabulous Giving of Velāma Bodhisattva

In this connection one ought to draw upon *The Sutra of the Past Lives of the Bodhisattva*. As discussed in *The Avadāna Sutra*, in the past, in Jambudvīpa, there was a king named Vāsava. At that time there was a brahman bodhisattva named Velāma who served as the teacher of the King. He taught the King the method for becoming a wheel-turning sage king.<sup>3</sup>

Velāma's own wealth was immeasurable. He possessed an abundance of precious jewels. He had these thoughts: "People look upon me as a noble man possessed of immeasurable wealth. If I am to be of benefit to beings, now is precisely the right time. I should perform a great act of giving. Although being wealthy and noble is blissful, everything is impermanent. This wealth, held in common with five types of agents (the King, thieves, fire, flood, and bad sons), causes a man's mind to be so scattered, agitated and unfocused as to make it like a monkey which is unable to remain still. A person's life passes more quickly than the disappearance of a lightning bolt. A person's body is impermanent and is a thicket of the manifold sufferings. On account of these things, one ought to practice giving."

如是思惟已自作手疏。普告閻浮提諸婆羅門及一切出家人。願各屈德來集我舍。欲設大施滿十二歲。飯汁行船以酪為池。米麵為山<sup>[11]</sup>蘇油為渠。衣服飲食臥具湯藥。皆令極妙過十二歲。欲以布施。八萬四千白象犀甲金飾珞。以名寶建大金幢。四寶莊嚴。八萬四千馬。亦以犀甲金飾。四寶<sup>[12]</sup>交絡。八萬四千車。皆以金銀琉璃頗梨寶飾。覆以師子虎豹之皮。若白劍婆羅寶<sup>[13]</sup>[車\*憲]雜飾以為莊嚴。八萬四千四寶床。雜色綉縵種種茵蓐柔軟細滑以為綉飾。丹枕錦被置床兩頭。妙衣盛服皆亦備有。八萬四千金鉢盛滿銀粟。銀鉢盛金粟。琉璃鉢盛<sup>[14]</sup>頗梨粟。頗梨鉢盛琉璃粟。八萬四千乳牛。牛出乳一斛。金飾其<sup>[15]</sup>[跳-兆+甲]角衣以白<sup>[16]</sup>疊。八萬四千美女端正福德。皆以白珠名寶瓔珞其身。略舉其要如是。種種不可勝記。爾時婆羅婆王及八萬四千<sup>[17]</sup>諸小國王。并諸臣民豪傑

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After having these thoughts he wrote out a personal declaration in which he announced to all of the brahmins and monastics throughout Jambudvīpa, “We pray that each shall condescend to come and gather at our estate as we desire to present a great offering lasting for a period of twelve years during which boats will cruise on streams of rice consommé and there will be ponds filled with curds. There will be mountains made of rice and noodles and canals created of *perilla* oil. There will be robes, food, drink, bedding, and medicines. Everything will be of the most supremely marvelous quality for over a dozen years during which time we desire to make offerings in this way.”

There were eighty-four thousand<sup>4</sup> white elephants girded in gold-adorned rhinoceros hide armor. Rare gems were strung together to create a huge gold pavilion ornamented with four kinds of precious things. There were eighty-four thousand horses also clad in gold-adorned rhinoceros hide armor and caparisoned with strands of the four kinds of precious things.

There were eighty-four thousand carriages, each adorned with gold, silver, beryl, and crystal, shaded with the skins of lions, tigers, and leopards, draped with curtains of *pāṇḍukambala* gems and ornamented with various embellishments.

There were eighty-four thousand precious thrones fitted and adorned with multicolored cushions which were soft and smooth. Arranged at each end of the thrones were crimson pillows and embroidered blankets. Marvelous garments and flowing robes were supplied in abundance. There were eighty-four thousand gold bowls filled with silver nuggets, silver bowls filled with gold nuggets, beryl bowls filled with crystals, and crystal bowls filled with beryl gems.

There were eighty-four thousand dairy cattle. The cows each produced an abundant measure of milk. The horns of the bulls were adorned with gold. They were each dressed in white blankets.

There were eighty-four thousand beautiful women of refined appearance and endowed with meritorious qualities. Their bodies were draped in strands of white pearls and precious gems.

This represents only a summary recital of the main features. There were all manner of other arrangements which one could never succeed in detailing.

At that time, King Vāsava and eighty-four thousand kings of lesser states, together with their ministers, national heroes, and

长者。各以十万旧金钱赠遗  
 劝助。设此法祠具足施已。  
 释提婆那民来语韦罗摩菩  
 萨。说此偈言天地难得物能  
 喜悦一切汝今皆<sup>[18]</sup>以得为佛  
 道布施<sup>[0142c18]</sup> 尔时净居诸  
 天现身而赞。说此偈言开门  
 大布施汝所为者是怜愍众生  
 故为之求佛道<sup>[0142c21]</sup> 是时诸  
 天作是思惟。我当闭其金瓶  
 令水不下。所以者何。有施  
 者无福田故。是时魔王语净  
 居天。此诸婆罗门。皆出家  
 持戒清净入道。何以<sup>[19]</sup>故乃  
 言无有福田。净居天言。是  
 菩萨为佛道故布施。今此诸  
 人皆是邪见。是故我言无有  
 福田。魔王语天言。云何知  
 是人为佛道故布施。是时净  
 居天化作婆罗门身。持金瓶  
 执金杖。至韦罗摩菩萨所语  
 言。汝大布施难舍能舍欲求  
 何等。欲作转轮圣王七宝千  
 子王四天下耶。菩萨答言。  
 不求此事。

長者。各以十萬舊金錢贈遺  
 勸助。設此法祠具足施已。  
 釋提婆那民來語韋羅摩菩  
 薩。說此偈言天地難得物能  
 喜悅一切汝今皆<sup>[18]</sup>以得為佛  
 道布施<sup>[0142c18]</sup> 爾時淨居諸  
 天現身而讚。說此偈言開門  
 大布施汝所為者是憐愍眾生  
 故為之求佛道<sup>[0142c21]</sup> 是時諸  
 天作是思惟。我當閉其金瓶  
 令水不下。所以者何。有施  
 者無福田故。是時魔王語淨  
 居天。此諸婆羅門。皆出家  
 持戒清淨入道。何以<sup>[19]</sup>故乃  
 言無有福田。淨居天言。是  
 菩薩為佛道故布施。今此諸  
 人皆是邪見。是故我言無有  
 福田。魔王語天言。云何知  
 是人為佛道故布施。是時淨  
 居天化作婆羅門身。持金瓶  
 執金杖。至韋羅摩菩薩所語  
 言。汝大布施難捨能捨欲求  
 何等。欲作轉輪聖王七寶千  
 子王四天下耶。菩薩答言。  
 不求此事。

简体字

正體字

those who served as elders each offered a contribution in encouragement and support consisting of ten thousand pieces of ancient gold.

After this Dharma offering had been arranged and completely set forth, the god Śakra Devānām Indra came forth and addressed the Bodhisattva Velāma by uttering this verse, in which he said:

The most rarely encountered things in heaven and on earth  
Which are able to delight everyone,—  
You have now already obtained them  
And made gifts of them for the sake of the Buddha Path.

At that time the gods of the Pure Dwelling Heaven showed themselves and offered praises through the utterance of this verse:

You have thrown open the gate of great giving.  
It is on account of feeling pity for all beings  
And out of the desire to seek the Buddha Path for their sakes  
That you now act here in this manner.

At this time the gods all had this thought, “We should stop up his gold vase so as to prevent the water from flowing forth. Why? Because, although there is a benefactor, there is no one suitable to serve as a field of merit.”<sup>5</sup>

At that time the Demon King said to the gods of the Pure Dwelling Heaven, “All of these brahmans have left behind the home life. They uphold the moral precepts purely and have entered upon the Path. Why is it that you now say that there is no one to serve as a field of merit?”

The gods of the Pure Dwelling Heaven said, “This bodhisattva is giving for the sake of the Buddha Path. All of those now here are possessed of erroneous views. It is for this reason that we claim there is no one to serve as a field of merit.”

The Demon King said to the gods, “How do you know that this man is giving for the sake of the Buddha Path?”

One of the Pure Dwelling gods then appeared in the body of a brahman. Holding a gold vase and a branch made of gold, he went up to the Bodhisattva Velāma and said to him, “What is it that you seek to gain through this act of great giving where you relinquishing what is so hard to give up? Is it that you desire to become a wheel-turning sage king who has the seven precious things, a thousand sons, and dominion over the entire world?”

The Bodhisattva replied by saying, “I do not seek this sort of circumstance.”

汝求释提婆那民。为八[1]千那由他天女主耶。答言不。汝求六欲天主耶。答言不。汝求梵天王主三千大千世界为众生祖父耶。答言不。汝欲何所求。是时菩萨。说此偈言我求无欲处离生老病死[2]欲度诸众生求如是佛道[0143a09] 化婆罗[3]门言。布施主。佛道难得当大辛苦。汝心软串乐。必不能求成办此道。如我先语。转轮圣王释提婆那民六欲天王梵天王是易可得。不如求此。菩萨答言。汝听我一心誓假令热铁轮在我头上转一心求佛道终不怀悔恨若使三恶道人中无量苦一心求佛道终不为此转[0143a18] 化婆罗门言。布施主。善哉善哉求佛如是。便赞偈言汝精进力大慈愍于一切

汝求釋提婆那民。為八[1]千那由他天女主耶。答言不。汝求六欲天主耶。答言不。汝求梵天王主三千大千世界為眾生祖父耶。答言不。汝欲何所求。是時菩薩。說此偈言我求無欲處離生老病死[2]欲度諸眾生求如是佛道[0143a09] 化婆羅[3]門言。布施主。佛道難得當大辛苦。汝心軟串樂。必不能求成辦此道。如我先語。轉輪聖王釋提婆那民六欲天王梵天王是易可得。不如求此。菩薩答言。汝聽我一心誓假令熱鐵輪在我頭上轉一心求佛道終不懷悔恨若使三惡道人中無量苦一心求佛道終不為此轉[0143a18] 化婆羅門言。布施主。善哉善哉求佛如是。便讚偈言汝精進力大慈愍於一切

简体字

正體字

“Is it that you seek to become Śakra Devānām Indra so that you might then be lord to eight thousand *nayutas* of heavenly nymphs?”

He replied, “No.”

“Are you seeking to become the Lord of the Six Desire Heavens?”

He replied, “No.”

“Are you seeking to become the Brahma Heaven God who serves as lord over the great trichiliocosm and who is looked on as the patriarchal father of all beings?”

He replied, “No.”

“What is it that you seek?”

At this time the Bodhisattva spoke forth a verse, saying:

I seek that place which is without desire  
 And which transcends birth, aging, sickness, and death.  
 I yearn to bring deliverance to all beings.  
 I seek the path to buddhahood which is just thus.

The transformationally-produced brahman said, “Benefactor, the Buddha Path is difficult to achieve. It is beset with great bitterness and suffering. Your mind is soft and accustomed to pleasures. It is certainly the case that you will be unable to seek out and accomplish realization of this path. As I suggested before: to become a wheel-turning sage king, or Śakra Devānām Indra, or King of the Six Desire Heavens, or the King of the Brahma Heaven gods—these would be easily achievable. It would be better to seek these instead.”

The Bodhisattva replied, saying, “Listen to my single-minded vow:”

Even if one were to cause a wheel of hot steel  
 To spin around atop my head,  
 I shall single-mindedly seek the Buddha Path  
 And never cherish any regrets.

Were I to be subjected to the three wretched destinies  
 And to the countless sufferings of the human realm,  
 I would single-mindedly seek the Buddha Path  
 And would never be turned aside by this.

The transformationally-produced brahman said, “Oh Benefactor, it is good indeed, good indeed that you seek buddhahood in this manner.” He then uttered a praise, saying,

Your power arising from your vigor is immense.  
 You manifest kindness and pity extending to everyone.

智慧无罣碍成佛在不久  
 [0143a22] 是时天雨众华供养  
 菩萨。诸净居天闭瓶水者即  
 隐不现。菩萨是时至婆罗门  
 上座前。以金瓶行水。水闭  
 不下众人疑怪。此种种[4]大  
 施一切具足。布施主人功德  
 亦大。今何以故瓶水不下。  
 菩萨自念。此非他事。将无  
 我心不清净耶。得无施物不  
 具足乎。何以致此。自观祠  
 经十六种书清静无瑕。是时  
 诸天语菩萨言。汝莫疑悔。  
 汝无不办。是诸婆罗门恶邪  
 不净故也。即说偈言是人邪  
 见网烦恼破正智离诸清静戒  
 唐苦堕[5]异道[0143b04] 以是故  
 水闭不下。如是语已忽然不  
 现。尔时六欲天放种种光明  
 照诸众会。语菩萨而说偈言  
 [6]邪恶海中行不顺汝正道诸  
 受施人中无有如汝者

智慧無罣礙成佛在不久  
 [0143a22] 是時天雨眾華供養  
 菩薩。諸淨居天閉瓶水者即  
 隱不現。菩薩是時至婆羅門  
 上座前。以金瓶行水。水閉  
 不下眾人疑怪。此種種[4]大  
 施一切具足。布施主人功德  
 亦大。今何以故瓶水不下。  
 菩薩自念。此非他事。將無  
 我心不清淨耶。得無施物不  
 具足乎。何以致此。自觀祠  
 經十六種書清淨無瑕。是時  
 諸天語菩薩言。汝莫疑悔。  
 汝無不辦。是諸婆羅門惡邪  
 不淨故也。即說偈言是人邪  
 見網煩惱破正智離諸清淨戒  
 唐苦墮[5]異道[0143b04] 以是故  
 水閉不下。如是語已忽然不  
 現。爾時六欲天放種種光明  
 照諸眾會。語菩薩而說偈言  
 [6]邪惡海中行不順汝正道諸  
 受施人中無有如汝者

简体字

正體字

Your wisdom has become detached and unobstructed.  
Your realization of buddhahood cannot be far off.

At that time the gods rained down a profusion of blossoms as an offering to the Bodhisattva. The gods of the Pure Dwelling Heaven who had stopped up the water from the vase then disappeared from sight.

The Bodhisattva then went before the most senior ranked among the brahmans and attempted to pour forth the water from the gold vase [and thus formally endow them as recipients of his offerings]. However, the water remained stopped up and would not flow out. The members of the assembly were then overcome with doubt and consternation and wondered, "All of these various kinds of great giving are replete in every way and the benefactor's meritorious qualities are also immense. Why then does the water now fail to flow forth from the vase?"

The Bodhisattva thought to himself, "This circumstance could be due to nothing other than one of these factors: Have I freed my mind of all impurity? Have I achieved a situation where there are no deficiencies in the gifts? What could have brought this about?" He personally contemplated the sixteen parts of the *Classic on Giving* and found that all preparations were pure and free of defects.

At this time the gods spoke to the Bodhisattva, saying, "Do not become overcome by doubt and regret. There is nothing which you have failed to accomplish. It is because these brahmans are characterized by unwholesomeness, error, and impurity." They then uttered a verse, saying,

These men are caught in the net of erroneous views.  
Their afflictions have brought on destruction of right wisdom.  
They have abandoned purity in the observance of moral precepts.  
They indulge useless asceticism and fall into unorthodox paths.

"It is for these reasons that the water is stopped up and will not pour forth."

Having said this, they suddenly disappeared. The gods of the Six Desire Heavens then emitted many different kinds of light which illuminated the entire assembly and then spoke to the Bodhisattva, proclaiming in a verse:

Practices from within the sea of error and unwholesomeness  
Do not accord with your orthodox path.  
Among the recipients of your gifts,  
There are none who can compare with you.

[0143b09] 说是语已忽然不现。是时菩萨闻说此偈自念。会中实自无有与我等者。水闭不下其将为此[7]乎。即说偈言若有十方天地中诸有好人清淨者我今归命稽首礼右手执瓶灌左手而自立愿我一人应受如是大布施[0143b15] 是时瓶水[8]踊在虚空从上来下而灌其左手。是时[9]婆[10]萨婆王。见是感应心生恭敬。而说偈言大婆罗门主清琉璃色水从上流注下来堕汝手中[0143b20] 是时大婆罗门众恭敬心生。合手作礼归命菩萨。菩萨是时说此偈言今我所布施不求三界福为诸众生故以用求佛道[0143b24] 说此偈已。一切大地山川树木皆六[11]返震动。韦罗摩本谓此众应受供养故与。既知[12]此众无堪受者。今以怜愍故。以所受物施之。如是种种檀本生因缘。是中应广说。是为外布施。

[0143b09] 說是語已忽然不現。是時菩薩聞說此偈自念。會中實自無有與我等者。水閉不下其將為此[7]乎。即說偈言若有十方天地中諸有好人清淨者我今歸命稽首禮右手執瓶灌左手而自立願我一人應受如是大布施[0143b15] 是時瓶水[8]踊在虛空從上來下而灌其左手。是時[9]婆[10]薩婆王。見是感應心生恭敬。而說偈言大婆羅門主清琉璃色水從上流注下來墮汝手中[0143b20] 是時大婆羅門眾恭敬心生。合手作禮歸命菩薩。菩薩是時說此偈言今我所布施不求三界福為諸眾生故以用求佛道[0143b24] 說此偈已。一切大地山川樹木皆六[11]返震動。韋羅摩本謂此眾應受供養故與。既知[12]此眾無堪受者。今以憐愍故。以所受物施之。如是種種檀本生因緣。是中應廣說。是為外布施。

简体字

正體字

After speaking in this way, they suddenly disappeared. After the Bodhisattva had listened to this verse, he then thought to himself, “If it were actually the case that there was no one in the assembly who could serve as my equal, the water would indeed be stopped up and so would not flow forth. Could it actually be then that it is on account of this?” He then uttered a verse:

Throughout the ten directions, in the heavens or on earth,  
Wherever there are good and pure people—  
I now take refuge in them and, in reverence, make obeisance.  
With the vase in the right hand, I pour an ablution on the left hand,  
I now swear that I, this one person,  
Should accept on their behalf such a great offering as this.

The water from the vase then straightaway spouted forth into the air, descended from above, and came down as an ablution upon his left hand. Then, when King Vāsava had witnessed this marvelous response, his mind became filled with reverence and he uttered a verse, saying:

Great Lord of the Brahmans,  
This clear beryl-hued water  
Has flowed on down from above  
And, falling, has come to rest in your hand.

At that time, there arose thoughts of reverence in the minds of those brahmans in the great assembly. They placed their palms together, made obeisance, and took refuge in the Bodhisattva. At this time, the Bodhisattva uttered this verse, saying:

That which I have now given  
Is not in quest of any blessings in the sphere of the three realms.<sup>6</sup>  
It is for the sake of all beings,  
And is to be employed in seeking the path of the Buddhas.

After he had spoken this verse, the entire earth with its mountains, rivers, and trees quaked and moved in six ways. Velāma had originally been of the opinion that this assembly should be the recipient of the offering and so gave it. Even though he realized there was no one in the assembly worthy to accept it, he now, out of pity, gave to them all those things which he had himself accepted.

Ideally, one would proceed at this point into an extensive discussion of all sorts of similar past-life causes and conditions associated with *dāna* (giving). The foregoing was an example of “outward giving.”