

། རྒྱལ་བུ་དམ་པ།

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## The Good Person

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*Satpuruṣa*

འཕགས་པ་སྐྱེས་བུ་དམ་པའི་མདོ།

*'phags pa skyes bu dam pa'i mdo*

The Noble Sūtra on the Good Person

*Āryasatpuruṣasūtra*

· Toh 327 ·

Degé Kangyur, vol. 72 (mdo sde, sa), folios 253.b–254.b

TRANSLATED INTO TIBETAN BY

· Dharmākara · Bandé Zangkyong · Bandé Paltsek ·



First published 2024

Current version v 1.0.1 (2024)

Generated by 84000 Reading Room v2.23.4

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co.

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## SUMMARY

s.1 While staying in Śrāvastī, the Buddha gives a short teaching on five ways in which gifts are given and discusses the karmic results of giving them.

ac.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ac.1 This text was translated by the Kagyu Translation Project Group. Artur Przybyśławski wrote the introduction.

ac.2 The translation was completed under the patronage and supervision of 84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha. Rory Lindsay edited the translation and the introduction, and Dawn Collins copyedited the text. Martina Cotter was in charge of the digital publication process.

## INTRODUCTION

i.

i.1 *The Good Person*<sup>1</sup> is a concise sūtra on karma in which the Buddha explains the results of generosity. He lists five ways in which gifts are given: with trust, respectfully, with one's own hands, at the right time,<sup>2</sup> and without harming others.<sup>3</sup> Since this analysis does not refer to key karmic factors such as intent, but rather to the ways in which gifts are given, the differences between the karmic results of each type of giving are relatively minor.

i.2 There are no commentaries on this sūtra, and we have not yet found discussions of it in other Buddhist texts. According to the colophon, it was translated by the Indian paṇḍita Dharmākara and the Tibetan translator Zangkyong,<sup>4</sup> and was revised by Kawa Paltsek. If that attribution is correct, the translation can be dated to the late eighth or early ninth century CE. The text is also included in the Denkarma catalog, dated to 812 CE, further confirming this dating.<sup>5</sup>

i.3 There is no extant Sanskrit version of this text, nor is there a Chinese translation. The text has a Pāli parallel, however, namely the *Sappurisdānasutta* from the *Aṅguttaranikāya* (5.148).<sup>6</sup>

i.4 The basis for this translation was the Degé version in consultation with the Comparative Edition (*dpe bsdur ma*) and the version included in the Stok Palace Kangyur.



**The Noble Sūtra**  
**The Good Person**

1.

## The Translation

[F.253.b]

1.1 Homage to the noble youthful Mañjuśrī.

Thus did I hear at one time. The Bhagavān was residing in Prince Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍada's park at Śrāvastī. Then the Bhagavān said to the monks, "Monks, these five are the gifts of good people. What are the five? Monks, good people give gifts with trust.<sup>7</sup> They give gifts respectfully, with their own hands, at the right time, and without harming others.

1.2 "Monks, what karmic results should good people expect from giving gifts with trust? By giving gifts with trust, they become rich. They have abundant riches and great wealth. They have abundant precious materials. They have many properties. They have abundant riches, grains, jewels, gold, depositories, and reserves. They have many servants, maids, workers, and casual laborers. They have many friends, ministers, kinsmen, and relatives. Monks, they should expect such karmic results from giving gifts with trust.

1.3 "Monks, what karmic results should good people expect from giving gifts respectfully? By giving gifts respectfully, they become rich. They have many friends, ministers, kinsmen, and relatives, as before. Children, wives, servants, maids, workers, casual laborers, friends, ministers, kinsmen, and relatives also pay them respect. Monks, they should expect such karmic results from giving gifts respectfully. [F.254.a]

1.4 "Monks, what karmic results should good people expect from giving gifts with their own hands? By giving gifts with their own hands, they become rich and then have many friends, ministers, kinsmen, and relatives, as before. They also enjoy the great wealth of householders. They enjoy an enormous wealth of food, an enormous wealth of animal-drawn carts, an enormous wealth of clothes, and an enormous wealth of bedding. They enjoy forms, sounds, smells, tastes, and tangibles. Monks, they should expect such karmic results from giving gifts with their own hands.

- 1.5 “Monks, what karmic results should good people expect from giving gifts at the right time? By giving gifts at the right time, they become rich and then have many friends, ministers, kinsmen, and relatives, as before. They also receive jewels accumulated in great numbers. Monks, they should expect such karmic results from giving gifts at the right time.
- 1.6 “Monks, what karmic results should good people expect from giving gifts without harming others? By giving gifts without harming others, they become rich and then have many friends, ministers, kinsmen, and relatives, as before. They obtain whatever wealth they wish for through diligence. It is achieved with power; it is achieved without sweating, and while a pleasant aroma pervades.<sup>8</sup> Those things obtained by Dharma practitioners through the Dharma are not obstructed by kings, thieves, fire, water, unfriendly people, the sharing of goods, or any other activity. They should expect such karmic results from giving gifts without harming others.” [F.254.b]
- 1.7 Thus spoke the Bhagavān. After the Sugata had said this, the Teacher accordingly spoke again:
- 1.8 “The wise ones give with trust, respectfully, with their own hands,  
At the right time, and without harming others.  
After giving vast and great gifts,  
They who always give in this way take fortunate rebirths.”
- 1.9 When the Bhagavān spoke thus, the monks rejoiced and praised what the Bhagavān had said.
- 1.10 *The Noble Sūtra on the Good Person is complete.*

c.

## Colophon

c.1 Translated by the Indian preceptor Dharmākara and the translator Bandé Zangkyong, and revised by Bandé Paltsek.

n.

## NOTES

- n.1 In this text, this is a person who practices the five ways of giving.
- n.2 As McCombs points out, “giving ‘respectfully,’ ‘from one’s own hand,’ and ‘at the right time’ are customs of South Asian gift etiquette” (McCombs 2014, p. 266).
- n.3 In Mahāyāna literature, this quite common division is discussed, for example, in the *Yogācārabhūmi*—in particular, the Dānapāṭala chapter of *Bodhisattvabhūmi*. Cf. Wogihara, 132.19–22 [ *tatra katamad bodhisattvasya satpuruṣasya satpuruṣadānaṃ / yad bodhisattvaḥ śraddhayā dānaṃ dadāti satkṛtya svahastena kālena parān anupahatya / idaṃ bodhisattvasya satpuruṣasya satpuruṣadānaṃ ity ucyate /*]. Cf. also the interpretation of that fragment in McCombs (2014), p. 265ff.
- n.4 In addition to texts found in the Kangyur, Dharmākara and Zangkyong also translated two commentaries in the Tengyur (Toh 4015 and 4038).
- n.5 See Herrmann-Pfandt 2008, pp. 157–58, no. 285. Note, however, as pointed out by Herrmann-Pfandt, that the length of the text as given in the Denkarma catalog (200 *ślokas*) does not match the length of this text. Herrmann-Pfandt suggests that this text may either be an excerpt from a longer version, or that the length given in the Denkarma is incorrect.
- n.6 Cf. *Sappurisdana Sutta: A Person of Integrity’s Gifts*, trans. Thanissaro Bhikkhu, <https://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/an/an05/an05.148.than.html> (<https://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/an/an05/an05.148.than.html>)
- n.7 For more on the term *śraddhā* (Tib. *dad pa*), translated here as “trust,” see Rotman (2009), pp. 29ff.
- n.8 There are two alternative readings of this fragment, namely *rngul zhing dri ma chags chags* in most of the editions and *rngul med zhing dri ma chags chags* in the

Stok Palace version. *chags chags* is probably a misspelling for *chag chag* ("to sprinkle"). Also, the negation *med* provides a better meaning in the context, referring to easy achievement of the results. Thus, we read this line as *rngul med zhing dri ma chag chag* and translate accordingly.

b.

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## GLOSSARY

· Types of attestation for names and terms of the corresponding ·  
source language

AS	<i>Attested in source text</i> This term is attested in a manuscript used as a source for this translation.
AO	<i>Attested in other text</i> This term is attested in other manuscripts with a parallel or similar context.
AD	<i>Attested in dictionary</i> This term is attested in dictionaries matching Tibetan to the corresponding language.
AA	<i>Approximate attestation</i> The attestation of this name is approximate. It is based on other names where the relationship between the Tibetan and source language is attested in dictionaries or other manuscripts.
RP	<i>Reconstruction from Tibetan phonetic rendering</i> This term is a reconstruction based on the Tibetan phonetic rendering of the term.
RS	<i>Reconstruction from Tibetan semantic rendering</i> This term is a reconstruction based on the semantics of the Tibetan translation.
SU	<i>Source unspecified</i> This term has been supplied from an unspecified source, which most often is a widely trusted dictionary.

g.1 Bandé Paltsek

*ban de dpal brtseg*

བན་དེ་དཔལ་བརྟེན།

—

One of the great Tibetan translators. Also known as Paltsek Rakṣita or Kawa Paltsek.

g.2 Bandé Zangkyong

*ban de bzang skyong*

བན་དེ་བཟང་སྐྱོང་།

—

A Tibetan translator working with Dharmākara, mainly on Vinaya translations.

g.3 Bhagavān

*bcom ldan 'das*

བཅོམ་ལྷན་འདས།

*bhagavān*<sup>AD</sup>

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

In Buddhist literature, an epithet applied to buddhas, most often to Śākyamuni. The Sanskrit term generally means “possessing fortune,” but in specifically Buddhist contexts it implies that a buddha is in possession of six auspicious qualities (*bhaga*) associated with complete awakening. The Tibetan term—where *bcom* is said to refer to “subduing” the four *māras*, *ldan* to “possessing” the great qualities of buddhahood, and *'das* to “going beyond” *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*—possibly reflects the commentarial tradition where the Sanskrit *bhagavat* is interpreted, in addition, as “one who destroys the four *māras*.” This is achieved either by reading *bhagavat* as *bhagnavat* (“one who broke”), or by tracing the word *bhaga* to the root √*bhañj* (“to break”).

g.4 Dharmākara

*d+harmA ka ra*

ལྷམ་ཀ་ར།

*dharmākara*<sup>AD</sup>

One of the translators of the Tibetan *Vinayavastu* of the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya*. Butön includes the Kashmiri preceptor Dharmākara in his list of ninety-three paṇḍitas invited to Tibet to assist in the translation of the Buddhist scriptures. Tāranātha dates Dharmākara to the rule of \*Vanapāla, son of Dharmapāla. With Paltsek, he translated two of Kalyāṇamitra’s works on Vinaya, the *Vinayaprasnakārikā* (*'dul ba dri ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa*, Toh 4134, Degé Tengyur, vol. SU, folios 70.b.3–74.b.5) and the *Vinayaprasnaṭikā* (*'dul ba dri ba rgya cher 'grel pa*, Toh 4135, Degé Tengyur, vol. SU, folios 74.b.5–132.a.2).

g.5 generosity

*sbyin pa*

སྤྱོན་པ།

*dāna*<sup>AD</sup>

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

The first of the six perfections.

g.6 monk

*dge slong*

དགེ་སྦྱོང་།

*bhikṣu*<sup>AD</sup>

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

The term *bhikṣu*, often translated as “monk,” refers to the highest among the eight types of prātimokṣa vows that make one part of the Buddhist assembly. The Sanskrit term literally means “beggar” or “mendicant,” referring to the fact that Buddhist monks and nuns—like other ascetics of the time—subsisted on alms (*bhikṣā*) begged from the laity.

In the Tibetan tradition, which follows the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya, a monk follows 253 rules as part of his moral discipline. A nun (*bhikṣuṇī*; *dge slong ma*) follows 364 rules. A novice monk (*śrāmaṇera*; *dge tshul*) or nun (*śrāmaṇerikā*; *dge tshul ma*) follows thirty-six rules of moral discipline (although in other vinaya traditions novices typically follow only ten).

g.7 Prince Jeta’s Grove, Anāthapiṇḍada’s park

*rgyal bu rgyal byed kyī tshal mgon med zas sbyin gyi kun dga’ ra ba*

རྒྱལ་བུ་རྒྱལ་བྱེད་ཀྱི་ཚལ་མགོན་མེད་ཟས་སྦྱོན་གྱི་ཀུན་དགའ་ར་བ།

*jetavanam anāthapiṇḍadasyārāmaḥ*<sup>AD</sup>

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

One of the first Buddhist monasteries, located in a park outside Śrāvastī, the capital of the ancient kingdom of Kośala in northern India. This park was originally owned by Prince Jeta, hence the name Jetavana, meaning Jeta’s grove. The wealthy merchant Anāthapiṇḍada, wishing to offer it to the Buddha, sought to buy it from him, but the prince, not wishing to sell, said he would only do so if Anāthapiṇḍada covered the entire property with gold coins. Anāthapiṇḍada agreed, and managed to cover all of the park except the entrance, hence the name Anāthapiṇḍadasyārāma, meaning Anāthapiṇḍada’s park. The place is usually referred to in the sūtras as “Jetavana, Anāthapiṇḍada’s park,” and according to the *Samghabhedavastu*

the Buddha used Prince Jeta's name in first place because that was Prince Jeta's own unspoken wish while Anāthapiṇḍada was offering the park. Inspired by the occasion and the Buddha's use of his name, Prince Jeta then offered the rest of the property and had an entrance gate built. The Buddha specifically instructed those who recite the sūtras to use Prince Jeta's name in first place to commemorate the mutual effort of both benefactors.

Anāthapiṇḍada built residences for the monks, to house them during the monsoon season, thus creating the first Buddhist monastery. It was one of the Buddha's main residences, where he spent around nineteen rainy season retreats, and it was therefore the setting for many of the Buddha's discourses and events. According to the travel accounts of Chinese monks, it was still in use as a Buddhist monastery in the early fifth century CE, but by the sixth century it had been reduced to ruins.

g.8 Śrāvastī

*mnyan yod*

མཉན་ཡོད།

*śrāvastī*<sup>AD</sup>

*Definition from the 84000 Glossary of Terms:*

During the life of the Buddha, Śrāvastī was the capital city of the powerful kingdom of Kośala, ruled by King Prasenajit, who became a follower and patron of the Buddha. It was also the hometown of Anāthapiṇḍada, the wealthy patron who first invited the Buddha there, and then offered him a park known as Jetavana, Prince Jeta's Grove, which became one of the first Buddhist monasteries. The Buddha is said to have spent about twenty-five rainy seasons with his disciples in Śrāvastī, thus it is named as the setting of numerous events and teachings. It is located in present-day Uttar Pradesh in northern India.