



PANDITARAMA

Saraniya Dhamma Meditation  
Centre (Manchester)

# Mangala & Social Duties



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## SALUTATION TO THE BUDDHA

**Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammāsambuddhassa (3X)**

*Homage to the Exalted One, Free from all Defilements and Perfectly Enlightened by Himself (3X)*

## PAYING HOMAGE

**Buddhaṃ Pūjemi**

I pay my respect to the Buddha

**Dhammaṃ Pūjemi**

I pay my respect to the Dhamma

**Samghaṃ Pūjemi**

I pay my respect to the Sangha

## MAṄĀLA SUTTA THE DISCOURSE ON BLESSING

\* \* \* \* \*

**Yaṃ maṅgalaṃ dwādasahi,  
Cintayimsu sadevakā,  
Sothānaṃ nādhigacchanti,  
Aṭṭhatimsaṅca Maṅgalaṃ.**

Men, together with deities, try to find out for twelve years what blessings were. But they could not find out the blessings which number thirty-eight, that are the cause of happiness.

**Desitaṃ Devadevena,  
Sabbapāpavināsaṃ  
Sabbalokahitathāya  
Magalaṃ taṃ bhaṇāma he.**

Oh, Good People! Let us recite those blessings which were taught by the Deity of the Deities (the Buddha) for the benefit of beings and which destroy all evil.

**Evaṃ me sutāṃ**

The Venerable Mahā Kassapa: I, a humble disciple of the Venerable Buddha, have heard the 38 blessings as spoken by the Venerable Buddha.

**Ekam samayaṃ Bhagavā Sāvattiyaṃ viharati Jetavane Anāthapiṇḍikassa ārāme.**

At one time, the Venerable Buddha was dwelling at the monastery sponsored by the wealthy Anāthapiṇḍika at Jeta's Grove near the city of Savatthi.

**Athakho aññtarā devatā abhikkantāya rattiyā  
abhikkantavannā kevalakappaṃ Jetavanaṃ obhāsetvā,  
yena Bhagavā tenupasaṅkami;  
upasaṅkamtīvā Bhagavantam abhivādetvā ekamantaṃ aṭṭhāsi.**

During that time, a little-known celestial being came in the late hours of the night radiating so much splendour all throughout the monastery. After paying homage to the Buddha, he approached the Buddha and stood in as appropriate place.\*

**\*Six Places that are Inappropriate (When approaching a person one must honor)**

In the world, when approaching those who are deserving of your respect and honor, you should avoid the following places:

1. a place that is too far away (from the person you are approaching)- (further than the intersection of yours and that person's outstretched arms)
2. a place that is too close (to the person you are approaching.)
3. a place toward which the wind is blowing.
4. a high place.
5. a place that is right in front (of the person you are approaching.)
6. a place that is right behind (the person you are approaching.)

**Eka-mantaṃ ṭhitā kho  
sā devatā  
Bhagavantam gāthāya ajjhabhāsi:**

Standing at an appropriate place, the celestial being addressed the Venerable Buddha in verse:

**“Bahū devā manussā ca,  
Maṅgalani acintayum,  
Ākaṅkhamānā sotthānaṃ,  
Brūhi maṅgala-muttamaṃ.”**

“Many celestial beings and people, desiring what is good, have pondered what constitute blessings. I humbly request the Venerable One to tell what the highest blessing is.”

## The Meaning of “Maṅgala”

Maṅgala is a Burmese word that comes from the Pāḷi language. It means “blessing,” because it refers to that which causes living beings to develop, prosper and be well.

### The 38 Blessings

1. Asevanā ca bālānaṃ,
  2. Paṇḍitānañca sevanā,
  3. Pūjā ca pūjaneyyānaṃ,
- Etam maṅgala-muttamaṃ.

1. Not to associate with fools,
  2. To associate with the wise
  3. To honour those who are worthy of honour,
- This is the highest blessing.

#### Poem

If they are fools, you stay away, don't rely on them okay?  
To the wise, you go take refuge, stay near them and learn  
from them.  
Pay respect to the Triple Gems, parents and teachers, too,  
okay?  
These are three ways to relate that give peace now and always.  
Only then, we have Buddhism's blessings for the world, hey!

### Fools

The marks of a fool are the following: fools think unwholesome thoughts, they speak unwholesome words, and in their actions, they do unwholesome deeds. People with these three characteristics are fool. It does not matter if they are wealthy, come from a high status family, or are in positions of power. If they possess the above characteristics of fools, they are fool.

### The Wise

The marks of the wise are the following: the wise think wholesome thoughts, they speak wholesome words, and in their actions, they do wholesome deeds.

## Those Who are Worthy of Your Honor

1. Buddha.
2. Sangha.
3. Teachers.
4. Mother.
5. Father.
6. Mother-in-law.
7. Father-in-law.
8. Older brother.
9. Older sister.
10. Anyone older in age or status than you.

## Two Kinds of Veneration

**Āmisapūjā** - venerating with material gifts.

**Dhammapūjā** - venerating with your moral conduct, concentration and insight meditation practices.

4. **Patirūpadesavāso ca,**
5. **Pubbe ca katapuññatā,**
6. **Attasammāpaṇidhi ca,**
- Etam maṅgala-muttamaṃ.**

4. To live in a suitable place,
  5. To have done meritorious deeds in the past,
  6. To keep one's mind and body in a proper way,
- This is the highest blessing.

### Poem

To make merits, learn, and make a living, in a good place always stay.  
Be sure to do good deeds now for wholesome results in future days.  
Take care of your mind and body, do not let them deviate.  
These are three ways to live that give prosperity now and always.  
Only then, we have Buddhism's blessings for the world, hey!

## Suitable Places to Live

Suitable places to live are places where there are enough opportunities for making a living, for becoming educated, for staying healthy, and for attaining peace.

In more detail, such places:

1. must have 4 kinds of "audiences" living there.
2. must provide opportunities to do wholesome deeds.
3. must be where the *Sāsanā-the Buddha's* dispensation-is radiating.

## Good Deeds are Your Only True Wealth

In this world, living beings do only two things: wholesome deeds and unwholesome deeds. Hence, only these two, wholesome and unwholesome deeds, are what you truly own. You can take these with you to your next existence. Just as a shadow always follows you, wholesome and unwholesome deeds you have committed always follow you, too. That is why, it is important to collect as many good deeds as possible in this life so that you may also receive their benefits in the next. Good deeds are living beings' foundations in their next existence.

In this present existence, being wealthy, being educated, being handsome or beautiful, possessing influence and power, having many friends and followers, and such are a result of past wholesome deeds. If you possess one or all of the above qualities, you are someone who has done good deeds in the past.

Being poor, uneducated, dull in thought, unattractive looking, and such are a result of a lack of wholesome deeds done in the past.

## If You Desire to Become A Good and Wise Person, Reform Your Mind and Body

“Keep your mind and body in a proper way” refers to reforming your mind and body. So, if you do not have much faith (in the *Buddha*, *Dhamma*, and *Sangha*), foster such faith. If you are lacking in moral conduct, try to keep *sīla* - the precepts. If you are selfish, then try to do *dāna* - give generously. Trying to prevent unwholesomeness in action, speech, and thought is reforming your mind and body.

(Great Paraitta New Nissaya-91)

In a more worldly perspective, taking care of your health, making an effort to secure a living, working hard to gain an education, and doing away with laziness are also ways of reforming your mind and body, and hence, are a blessing.

Within the many ways to reform your mind, however, the best way is through *Vipassanā-insight* meditation. Through insight meditation, your mind will be developed and become purified, and hence, your bodily conduct and speech too will similarly become more refined.

(Great Paraitta New Nissaya-86)

The meaning of *manussa* or person is someone whose mentality is noble. Persons or *manussas* are beings who have the potential to spread loving-kindness toward each other, reciprocate, unite, and give priority to making the world a pleasant place. Because it is among animals that jealousy and oppression are a normality, people should try, through practice, to lessen such characteristics as much as possible within themselves and reform their minds and bodies.

## The Four Wheels

Add “Associating with the wise” to the above three blessings, and we get what are called ‘Four Wheels:’

1. Living in a suitable place.
2. Having done meritorious deeds in the past.
3. Associating with the wise.
4. Keeping one's mind and body in a proper way (reforming one's mind and body.)

People who make sure to be endowed with these four blessings will receive wholesome results in this and future existences. Because of such continuity (chain reaction effect), these four blessings are called wheels.

**7,8. Bāhusaccaṇca sippaṇca,  
9. Vinayo ca susikkhito,  
10. Subhāsītā ca yā vācā,  
Etaṃ maṅgala-muttamaṃ.**

7. To have much learning,
8. To be skilled in crafts,
9. To be well-trained in moral conduct,
10. To have speech that is well-spoken,  
This is the highest blessing.

### Poem

Know all there is that's important to know.  
Be someone who's well-learned.  
For making a living and building a household,  
Learn a craft and know it well.  
Know the codes of conduct of a human being,  
And learn to speak sweetly, politely, and truthfully.  
Only then, we have buddhism's blessings for the world, hey!

### Try Hard to Become Someone Who is Well-Learned

*Bāhusaccam* refers to being well-learned in the texts one has studied. Someone who has not studied even one or two books of *Suttas* (*Buddha's* discourses) is someone who is lacking in knowledge. Someone who has studied meditation practice and is himself or herself practicing meditation is someone who is well-learned.

*Paññā narānaṃ ratanaṃ*— “knowledge is people's jewel,” the Venerable *Buddha* had said. In aiming to be emancipated from the world, one must be well-learned in the *Tipitaka* -The Three Baskets, the *Pāli* texts expounding what the *Buddha* taught, which includes such texts as the *Suttas* or the *Buddha's* discourses. In a more worldly perspective, one must be well-learned in vocational crafts, rhetoric, trade and commerce, medicine, music, and such which are related to making a living, for one's prosperity in the world. Only when one is well-learned, one will know the correct path to follow in both worldly and *Dhamma* matters. If one knows the correct path to follow in both worldly and *Dhamma* matters, then one will be free from enmity and danger and will get to experience happiness and peace.

### Four Characteristics of Speech

The Venerable *Buddha* and wise people from ancient times only spoke words that included the following characteristics:

1. *subhāsita* -wholesome.
2. *Dhamma-fair*.
3. *piya*-affectionate.
4. *sacca*-truthful.

- 11. Mātāpitu-upatṭhānaṃ,**
- 12. Puttadārassa saṅgho,**
- 13. Anākulā ca kammantā,**
- Etam maṅgala-muttamaṃ.**

- 11. Caring for one's mother and father,
- 12. Supporting one's spouse and children,
- 13. Having peaceful occupations,
- This is the highest blessing.

### **Poem**

For the endless ways parents have cared for you,  
 Repay them the best you can, too.  
 When you have your own family,  
 Support your spouse and child dutifully, too.  
 Don't neglect work, work blamelessly and with clarity.  
 These are three ways of taking care  
 that give comfort now and always.  
 Only then, we have buddhism's blessings for the world, hey!

### **Gratitude Owed to Parents**

When children play outdoors and particles of dirt adhere to them, parents dust these off, pick up their children, and kiss and embrace the children with so much affection. Parents have wiped and cleaned so much of their children's dirt and waste and have taught their children, little by little, those things that are important to know. For these reasons, parents are people who possess the following virtues:

- 1. the virtue likened to the greatest celestial being.
- 2. the virtue of being one's first teachers.
- 3. the virtue of those deserving of one's gifts and support.

Because of these virtues, it is not at all appropriate to consider one's parents as one's equals and disrespect them. One should be paying homage to one's parents and taking care of them tirelessly, such as by serving them food and drinks and making their beds. In addition, one should encourage them to revere the Triple Gems, help them to keep the moral precepts and lead a noble life. These are the most venerable forms of taking care of one's parents.

- 14, 15. Dānañca dhammacariyā ca,**
- 16. Nātakānañca saṅgaho,**
- 17. Anavajjāni kammāni,**
- Etam maṅgala-muttamaṃ.**

- 14. Giving,
- 15. Practising of what is good,
- 16. supporting of one's relatives,
- 17. Performing blameless actions,
- This is the highest blessing.

## Poem

May you give with a generous heart.  
Be wholesome in what you say, do, and think.  
Don't neglect your relatives,  
But support them as part of your duty to kin.  
Pure deeds for the good of others,  
May you carry them out now and always.  
Only then, we have Buddhism's blessings for the world, hey!

### Four Benefits of *Dāna* (Generous Giving)

#### 1. *Gaining people's affection*

Even animals feel affection for those who give to them. It does not need to be said how people may feel. The affection one receives as a giver is the direct result of one's *metta* loving-kindness, one's wish for the other being to benefit, when one gives generously to him or her.

#### 2. *Approaching the wise*

No one wants to come to those who are not giving. When the wise come, they always arrive where there are those who are giving or making offerings. Because the wise come, *kusala*, or merits, can accrue and the valuable gift of *Dhamma* can be received. There can be much benefit.

#### 3. *Good news about oneself spreads*

Those who work for the benefit of others do not need ostentation nor do they need to create recognitions for themselves. Many people tend to announce this person's virtues to others. So, good news about him or her is already fresh and fragrant.

#### 4. *Being able to be reborn in the celestial realms.*

### What is Meant by "Dhamma"

In the *Dhammacariya* blessing, "Dhamma" refers to the Ten Wholesome Behaviors. Those who follow these behaviors receive the benefits of being free from disease, having a long life, and such. And in the next existence, too, one may be reborn in the celestial realms. Hence, these behaviors are a blessing.

### What Happens to Those Who Commit Unwholesome Deeds?

1. *attānuvāda* -the danger of accusing oneself.
2. *parānuvāda* -the danger of being accused by others.
3. *daṇḍa* -the danger of being punished by the laws of the king or the state (e.g., being jailed.)
4. *duggati* -the danger of being reborn in the lowly abodes.

18, 19. Āratī viratī pāpā,  
20. Majjapānā ca saṃyamo,  
21. Appamādo ca dhammesu,  
Etaṃ maṅgala-muttamaṃ.

18. Abstention from evil in mind,
  19. Abstention from evil in body and speech,
  20. Abstention from intoxicants,
  21. Non-negligence in meritorious acts,
- This is the highest blessing.

### Poem

Being mindful, avoid unwholesome deeds  
 even before they begin.  
 When you're tempted to do bad things,  
 don't violate restrain yourself especially.  
 Don't take drugs and alcohol,  
 these will certainly cause you err.  
 May you not forget Dhamma  
 and be mindful all of you do, say, and hear.  
 Only then, we have Buddhism's blessings for the world, hey!

### “Araṭī ”-Mentally Avoiding Unwholesome Acts

*Araṭī* or mentally avoiding unwholesome acts refers to stopping or thwarting thoughts of committing unwholesome acts before these thoughts continue to develop. One should try to mentally avoid unwholesome acts in a variety of ways, such as by exercising, reading or studying, doing concentration meditation through counting beads, or *Vipassanā* (insight) meditation.

### “Viratī ”- Avoiding Unwholesome Acts Through Body and Speech

1. *sampatta viratī* -although one is confronted with doing an unwholesome act, avoid the transgression by remembering the virtues of one's parents and teachers and reflecting, “Someone like me should not be doing something as disgusting as this.”

2. *samādāna viratī* - although one is confronted with doing an unwholesome act, avoid the transgression by observing the Five Precepts.

3. *samuccheda viratī*- although one is confronted with doing an unwholesome act, be able to avoid the transgression through one's wisdom accrued as an *ariya*, someone who has reached any of the four main levels of enlightenment.

### The Unwholesome Results of Taking Drugs and Alcohol

1. loss of one's possessions.
2. gaining many enemies.
3. vulnerability to many kinds of diseases.
4. not having any respectable status.
5. tendency to display parts of the body that others would normally keep covered.
6. being dull in one's ability to learn and accrue knowledge or wisdom.

22,23. Gāravo ca nivāto ca,  
 24, 25. Santuṭṭhi ca kataññutā,  
 26. Kālena Dhammassavanam,

**Etam maṅgala-muttamaṃ.**

22. Respectfulness,
  23. Humbleness,
  24. Contentment,
  25. Gratitude,
  26. Listening to the Dhamma on suitable occasions,
- This is the highest blessing.

**Poem**

Pay respect to those older and higher in status than one.  
Don't be arrogant, conceited, or boastful.  
Always stay grounded with humility.  
Don't indulge in wants and cravings.  
Be contented with what you've got.  
Regularly listen to Dhamma talks  
as Dhamma benefits you now and always.  
Only then, you have Buddhism's blessings for the world, hey!

**Those Who are Worthy of Your Respect**

1. *Buddha*.
2. *Pacceka Buddha*.
3. *Sanṅha*, who are the *Buddha's* Disciples.
4. Teachers.
5. Parents.
6. Older sister, older brother.

**27, 28. Khantī ca sovacassatā,  
29. Samaṇānañca dassanaṃ,  
30. kālena Dhammasākacchā,  
Etam maṅgala-muttamaṃ.**

27. Being patient,
  28. Being easily disciplined,
  29. Meeting those who have calmed the mental defilements,
  30. Discussing the Dhamma on suitable occasions,
- This is the highest blessing.

**Poem**

To be free from enmity as you live and move everyday,  
control your mind, cultivate patience.  
When being admonished about causes and effects,  
be someone who's easily disciplined.  
Meet with monks who are noble,  
Discuss the Dhamma, the correct, true nature of things,  
Only then, we have Buddhism's blessings for the world, hey!

## Blessing That Results from Being able to Meet with Monks

When you pay reverence to monks, you may meet with a monk who knows his duties. Then, you will be able to hear from him guidance about how to prosper in both worldly and *Dhamma* matters. Like receiving a gem, meeting with such a monk will be valuable, and hence, is a blessing.

**31, 32. Tapo ca brahmacariyañca,  
33. Ariyasaccāna dassanaṃ,  
34. Nibbāna-sacchikiriyā ca,  
Etaṃ maṅgala-muttamaṃ.**

31. The practice of self-denial,
  32. Leading a noble life,
  33. Seeing the Noble Truth,
  34. Realization of Nibbana,
- This is the highest blessing.

### Poem

Don't indulge in worldly pleasures  
Keeping in mind the Sublime Mental States  
(loving kindness, compassion, joy for others and equanimity),  
Abstain from sexual relations,  
Exert effort to realize the Four Noble Truths.  
You can be free from suffering, be enlightened,  
and approach Nibbāna.  
Only then, we have Buddhism's blessing for the world, hey!

## The Four Noble Truths

1. *dukkha saccā*- the truth of suffering (that it exists everywhere in the world).
2. *samudaya saccaā*- the truth regarding the cause of suffering (the cause is craving.)
3. *nirodha saccā* - the truth regarding the cessation of suffering (*Nibbāna* is the cessation of suffering.)
4. *magga saccā* - the truth regarding the path, the noble training and practice, that leads to the cessation of suffering (The Eight-Fold Noble Path: right view, right thought, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration.)

**35. Phuṭṭhassa lokadhammehi,  
Cittaṃ yassa na kampaṭi,  
36, 37, 38. Asokaṃ virajaṃ khemaṃ,  
Etaṃ maṅgala-muttamaṃ.**

35. The mind of a person (an Arahant) when confronted with worldly conditions does not flutter,  
 36. Sorrowless,  
 37. Stainless,  
 38. Secure  
 This is the highest blessing.

### Poem

A natural part of life are happiness and misery.  
 Everyone always encounters these.  
 The good and the bad, they come in pairs,  
 and are always taking turns you see.  
 When you're confronted with the good and the bad,  
 don't tremble, don't quiver, keep your mind still.  
 Control your sorrow and craving, too.  
 Then, you will attain peace.  
 Only then, we have Buddhism's blessings for the world, hey!

### The Eight *LokaDhamma* (Ups and Downs of Life)

1. *lāba* - receiving gifts or wealth.
2. *alāba* - not receiving gifts or wealth.
3. *yasa* - having many friends or followers.
4. *ayasa* - not having friends or followers.
5. *nindā* - being blamed.
6. *pasansā* - being praised.
7. *sukha* - happiness.
8. *dukkha* - misery.

**Etādisāni katvāna,  
 Sabbattha maparājitā,  
 Sabbattha sotthiṃ gacchanti,  
 Taṃ tesam maṅgala-muttamaṃ.**

When one puts these blessings into practice, there will be no enemy over whom one will not be victorious. In all matters, one will be well and peaceful. These 38 blessings that one may possess are noble blessing.

### Concluding Poem Regarding the Blessings

Those who practice and wear the thirty-eight,  
 Gain in prosperity, wellness, and grace,  
 Are free from danger and loved by many.  
 They will be peaceful in mind and body,  
 And will succeed in all they think, do, and say.  
 That's why, wear them, don them, the flowers of Maṅgala, hey!

## **Maṅgala Sutta's Conclusion**

After the Venerable Buddha spoke the Maṅgala Sutta, the celestial being who had requested the Buddha to teach it, taught the sutta to the Venerable Ānanda the next day. The celestial being told the Venerable Ānanda to later teach the sutta to the Saṅgha. In accordance with this command, the Venerable Ānanda taught it to the Saṅgha. And in this way, one teacher after another transmitted the Maṅgala Sutta so that today it remains distinguished throughout the entire world.

May the 38 Maṅgala Dhamma develop and spread with each passing day.

Maṅgala-suttaṃ Niṭṭhitam.  
End Of Maṅgala Sutta.

## **SOCIAL DUTIES AND RESPECT**

### **For a harmonious and peaceful society**

Respect is very important at home, at school, and everywhere you go. To have respect means that you treat people and things in a kind, considerate, and polite way. Then you are being respectful. When you show respect, you show that you care for other people's feelings or that you care for belongings, buildings, streets, and nature.

When you are respectful, the world is nicer to live in. Respect brings harmony and peace in society.

In particular, the Buddha taught that it is very important to have a deep profound respect, to revere the "Five". Which Five? (Anan daw Anan da Nga Par)

- 1. The Buddha**
- 2. The Dhamma, the Teaching of the Buddha**
- 3. The Sangha, the Order of monks of the Buddha**
- 4. The parents**
- 5. The teachers**

It means having respect, veneration for the Triple Gem and for parents and teachers.

What do we need to do in order to show respect to our parents and teachers? Parents and teachers try their best to guide and teach us so that we can have a good and happy life. It is their duties. So, we should also strive our best to fulfil our duties as son and daughters and as pupils.

### **Five duties of Children**

1. Taking care of our parents who have supported us, supporting them financially, making sure they are well.
2. Helping to plan and carry out tasks our parents may need to be done (their social affairs, business...)
3. Listening and following parents' advice and make ourselves worthy of their inheritance.
4. When our parents pass away, doing meritorious deeds to honor them, and share the merits with them.
5. Preserving our parents' tradition and culture by taking care of the wealth they had accumulated, the business they had done, the meditation center they had helped to build or support... If our parents have wrong views, trying to straighten them.

### **Five duties of Parents**

1. Guiding our children so to prevent them from doing unwholesome deeds (the 10 Duccarita).
2. Guiding our children so that they are virtuous and perform wholesome deeds.
3. Helping them to acquire sound, good education.
4. Supporting our children with some initial investments for their finances and business.
5. Helping to arrange a suitable marriage for our child.

### **Five duties of Students**

1. Out of respect, students should stand up and welcome their teacher as he/she comes in.
2. When the teacher returns from a far away trip, students should respectfully greet and welcome the teacher back.
3. Students should wait upon their teacher by personal services, helping him/her regarding minor and big tasks.
4. Students should be eager to learn, faithfully listening and following the teacher's admonishments.
5. Students should pay attention when receiving their lessons: learning with respect what is taught and repeatedly recite what they have learned. Also they should recollect again and again their lessons.

### **Five duties of Teachers**

1. Teach the students good behavior.
2. Impart knowledge to the students in such a manner that they may thoroughly grasp the subject.
3. Teach all that he/she knows without leaving anything out.
4. Foresee dangers that may befall his/her students and help to protect them by giving appropriate advice.
5. After students have finished learning with you, help place them in another suitable class/school where they can continue their studies.

### **Five duties of Friends**

1. Generously share your belongings with yours friends.
2. Use kind and sweet words with your friends.
3. Do your best for the welfare of your friend.
4. Treat your friend as your treat yourself.
5. Be true to your words and promises to your friends.

### **Five ways a friend should behave in return**

1. Remembering the gratitude a friend had bestowed upon you, repay him/her by protecting his/her life.
2. Guard your friends' belongings.
3. Be a refuge for your friends when they are in danger.
4. Don't leave your friends when they are in trouble.
5. Show consideration and protect your friends' children and descendants.

From Singalovada Sutta, Dighanikaya Mahavaggapali