

## Abhisanda Sutta: “Rewards” [AN 8:39 (Bodhi 172)]

“Monks, there are these eight rewards of merit, rewards of skillfulness, nourishments of happiness, celestial, resulting in happiness, leading to heaven, leading to what is desirable, pleasurable, & appealing, to welfare & happiness. Which eight?

“There is the case where a disciple of the noble ones has gone to the Buddha for refuge. This is the first reward of merit, reward of skillfulness, nourishment of happiness, celestial, resulting in happiness, leading to heaven, leading to what is desirable, pleasurable, & appealing; to welfare & to happiness.

“Furthermore, the disciple of the noble ones has gone to the Dhamma for refuge. This is the second reward of merit...

“Furthermore, the disciple of the noble ones has gone to the Sangha for refuge. This is the third reward of merit...

“Now, there are these five gifts, five great gifts — original, long-standing, traditional, ancient, unadulterated, unadulterated from the beginning — that are not open to suspicion, will never be open to suspicion, and are unfaulted by knowledgeable contemplatives & brahmans. Which five?

“There is the case where a disciple of the noble ones, abandoning the taking of life, abstains from taking life. In doing so, he gives freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings. In giving freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings, he gains a share in limitless freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, and freedom from oppression. This is the first gift, the first great gift — original, long-standing, traditional, ancient, unadulterated, unadulterated from the beginning — that is not open to suspicion, will never be open to suspicion, and is unfaulted by knowledgeable contemplatives & brahmans. And this is the fourth reward of merit...

“Furthermore, abandoning taking what is not given (stealing), the disciple of the noble ones abstains from taking what is not given. In doing so, he gives freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings. In giving freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings, he gains a share in limitless freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, and freedom from oppression. This is the second gift, the second great gift... and this is the fifth reward of merit...

“Furthermore, abandoning illicit sex, the disciple of the noble ones abstains from illicit sex. In doing so, he gives freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings. In giving freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings, he gains a share in limitless freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, and freedom from oppression. This is the third gift, the third great gift... and this is the sixth reward of merit...

“Furthermore, abandoning lying, the disciple of the noble ones abstains from lying. In doing so, he gives freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings. In giving freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings, he gains a share in limitless freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, and freedom from oppression. This is the fourth gift, the fourth great gift... and this is the seventh reward of merit...

“Furthermore, abandoning the use of intoxicants, the disciple of the noble ones abstains from taking intoxicants. In doing so, he gives freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings. In giving freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of beings, he gains a share in limitless freedom from danger, freedom from animosity, and freedom from oppression. This is the fifth gift, the fifth great gift — original, long-standing, traditional, ancient, unadulterated, unadulterated from the beginning — that is not open to suspicion, will never be open to suspicion, and is unfaulted by knowledgeable contemplatives & brahmans. And this is the eighth reward of merit, reward of skillfulness, nourishment of happiness, celestial, resulting in happiness, leading to heaven, leading to what is desirable, pleasurable, & appealing; to welfare & to happiness.”

### Sigālaka/Sigalovada Sutta: “6 Directions” of relationship [DN 31 (Bodhi 116)], excerpt

Thus have I heard.

1. On one occasion, the Buddha was living near the town of Rajagaha at a spot in the Bamboo Grove called the Squirrel's Feeding Place. At that time a young householder named Sigālaka arose early and set out from Rajagaha with freshly washed clothes and hair. With palms together held up in reverence, he was paying respect towards the six directions: that is east, south, west, north, lower and upper.

2. Meanwhile the Buddha dressed himself in the early morning, took his bowl and robe and went in to Rajagaha on alms round. On the way, he saw Sigālaka worshipping the six directions. Seeing this, the Buddha said to him:

“Young man, why have you risen in the early morning and set out from Rajagaha to worship in such a way?”

“Dear sir, my father on his deathbed urged me, ‘My son, you must worship the directions’. So, dear sir, realizing, honoring, respecting, and holding sacred my father's request, I have risen in the early morning and set out from Rajagaha to worship in this way.”

“But, young man, that is not how the six directions should be worshipped according to the discipline of the noble ones.”

“Then how, dear sir, should the six directions be worshipped according to the discipline of the noble ones? I would appreciate it if you would teach me the proper way this should be done.”

“Very well, young man, listen and pay careful attention while I tell you.”

“Yes, dear sir,” agreed Sigālaka. The Buddha said this: [instructions on ethics & social maturity]...

27. “And how, young man, does the noble disciple protect the six directions? These six directions should be known: mother and father as the east, teachers as the south, spouse and family as the west, friends and colleagues as the north, workers and servants as the lower direction, and ascetics and Brahmans as the upper direction.

28. “In five ways should a mother and father as the eastern direction be respected by a child: ‘I will support them who supported me; I will do my duty to them; I will maintain the family lineage and tradition; I will be worthy of my inheritance; and I will make donations on behalf of dead ancestors.’

“And, the mother and father so respected reciprocate with compassion in five ways: by restraining you from wrongdoing, guiding you towards good actions, training you in a profession, supporting the choice of a suitable spouse, and in due time, handing over the inheritance.

“In this way, the eastern direction is protected and made peaceful and secure.

29. “In five ways should teachers as the southern direction be respected by a student: by rising for them, regularly attending lessons, eagerly desiring to learn, duly serving them, and receiving instruction.

“And, teachers so respected reciprocate with compassion in five ways: by training in self-discipline, ensuring the teachings are well-grasped, instructing in every branch of knowledge, introducing their friends and colleagues, and providing safeguards in every direction.

“In this way, the southern direction is protected and made peaceful and secure.

30. “In five ways should a wife as the western direction be respected by a husband: by honoring, not disrespecting, being faithful, sharing authority, and by giving gifts.

“And, the wife so respected reciprocates with compassion in five ways: by being well-organized, being kindly disposed to the in-laws and household workers, being faithful, looking after the household goods, and being skillful and diligent in all duties.

“In this way, the western direction is protected and made peaceful and secure.

31. “In five ways should friends and colleagues as the northern direction be respected: by generosity, kind words, acting for their welfare, impartiality, and honesty.

“And, friends and colleagues so respected reciprocate with compassion in five ways: by protecting you when you are vulnerable, and likewise your wealth, being a refuge when you are afraid, not abandoning you in misfortunes, and honoring all your descendants.

“In this way, the northern direction is protected and made peaceful and secure.

32. “In five ways should workers and servants as the lower direction be respected by an employer: by allocating work according to aptitude, providing wages and food, looking after the sick, sharing special treats, and giving reasonable time off work.

“And, workers and servants so respected reciprocate with compassion in five ways: being willing to start early and finish late when necessary, taking only what is given, doing work well, and promoting a good reputation.

“In this way, the lower direction is protected and made peaceful and secure.

33. “In five ways should ascetics and Brahmans as the upper direction be respected: by kindly actions, speech, and thoughts, having an open door, and providing material needs.

“And, ascetics and Brahmans so respected reciprocate with compassion in six ways: by restraining you from wrongdoing, guiding you to good actions, thinking compassionately, telling you what you ought to know, clarifying what you already know, and showing you the path to heaven.

“In this way, the upper direction is protected and made peaceful and secure.”

That is what the Buddha said.

34. Summing up in verse, the sublime teacher said:

“Mother and father as the east,  
Teachers as the south,  
Spouse and family as the west,  
Friends and colleagues as the north,  
Servants and workers below,  
Brahmans and ascetics above;  
These directions a person should honor  
In order to be truly good.

Wise and virtuous,  
Gentle and eloquent,  
Humble and accommodating;  
Such a person attains glory.

Energetic, not lazy,  
Not shaken in misfortune,  
Flawless in conduct, and intelligent;  
Such a person attains glory.

A compassionate maker of friends,  
Approachable, free from stinginess,  
A leader, a teacher, and diplomat;  
Such a person attains glory.

Generosity and kind words,  
Conduct for others' welfare,  
Impartiality in all things;  
These are suitable everywhere.

These kind dispositions hold the world together,  
Like the linchpin of a moving chariot.  
And should these kind dispositions not exist,  
Then the mother would not receive  
Respect or honor from her child,  
Neither would a father.

Upon these things  
The wise reflect;  
They obtain greatness  
And are sources of praise.”

35. When all was said, the young householder, Sigalaka, exclaimed to the Buddha:

“Wonderful, dear sir! Wonderful! It is as though you have set upright what was overturned, or uncovered what was concealed, or shown the path to one gone astray, or brought an oil-lamp into the darkness such that those with eyes could see. So too has the Buddha made clear the Dhamma by various ways. I go for refuge to the Buddha and to the Dhamma and to the monastic community. May the exalted one accept me as a lay-follower gone for refuge from henceforth for as long as I live.”

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Full texts online: <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/an/an08/an08.039.than.html>  
<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.31.0.ksw0.html>

Handout/chart: <http://www.nadalila.org/texts/Sigalaka-LayBuddhistPath-Chart.pdf>  
Web page for EBMC sutta class with additional resources: <http://www.nadalila.org/study/ebmc-2015/>