SN 1.33 — Good

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
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Text

Linked Discourses 1.33

4. The Host of a Hundred Felicities

Good

At Sāvatthī.

Then, late at night, several glorious deities of the host of a hundred felicities, lighting up the entire Jeta's Grove, went up to the Buddha, bowed, and stood to one side. Standing to one side, one deity expressed this heartfelt sentiment in the Buddha's presence:

"Good, good fellow, is giving!

Because of stinginess and negligence

a gift is not given.

Wanting merit,

a smart person would give."

Then another deity expressed this heartfelt sentiment in the Buddha's presence:

"Good, good fellow, is giving!

Even when one has little, giving is good.

Some who have little are happy to provide,

while some who have much don't wish to give.

An offering given from little

is multiplied a thousand times."

Then another deity expressed this heartfelt sentiment in the Buddha's presence:

"Good, good fellow, is giving!

Even when one has little, giving is good.

And it's also good to give out of faith.

Giving and warfare are similar, they say,

for even a few of the good may conquer the many.
If a faithful person gives even a little,
it still brings them happiness in the hereafter.”
Then another deity expressed this heartfelt sentiment in the Buddha’s presence:
“Good, good fellow, is giving!
Even when one has little, giving is good.
And it’s also good to give out of faith.
And it’s also good to give legitimate wealth.
A personage who gives legitimate wealth,
earned by his efforts and initiative,
has passed over Yama’s Vetaraṇī River;
that mortal arrives at celestial fields.”
Then another deity expressed this heartfelt sentiment in the Buddha’s presence:
“Good, good fellow, is giving!
Even when one has little, giving is good.
And it’s also good to give out of faith.
And it’s also good to give legitimate wealth.
And it’s also good to give intelligently.
The Holy One praises giving intelligently
to those worthy of offerings here in the world of the living.
What’s given to these is very fruitful,
like seeds sown in a fertile field.”
Then another deity expressed this heartfelt sentiment in the Buddha’s presence:
“Good, good fellow, is giving!
Even when one has little, giving is good.
And it’s also good to give out of faith.
And it’s also good to give legitimate wealth.
And it’s also good to give intelligently.
And it’s also good to be restrained when it comes to living creatures.

One who lives without harming any living being

does no bad because of others' blame.

Were that the case they praise the coward, not the brave;

for the virtuous do no bad out of fear."

Then another deity said to the Buddha, "Sir, who has spoken well?"

"You've all spoken well in your own way. However, listen to me also:

A gift of faith is praised in many ways,

but a passage of teaching is better than giving,

for the virtuous, in days old and older still,

even attained extinction with wisdom."