

AN 6.37: Chaḷaṅgadāna Sutta

Six Aspects of Giving

Translated by Bhante Suddhāso

On one occasion the Fortunate One was dwelling at Sāvatti, in Jeta's Grove, in Anāthapiṇḍika's Park. On this occasion, the female lay devotee Veḷukaṇḍakī Nandamātā was arranging a six-aspect donation for the monastic community led by Sāriputta and Moggallāna. Using divine vision - pure and superhuman - the Fortunate One saw Veḷukaṇḍakī Nandamātā arranging the six-aspect donation for the monastic community led by Sāriputta and Moggallāna, and said to the monks, "Monks, the female lay devotee Veḷukaṇḍakī Nandamātā is arranging a six-aspect donation for the monastic community led by Sāriputta and Moggallāna.

"Monks, how is a donation a six-aspect donation? Monks, the donor has three aspects, and the recipient has three aspects.

"What are the three aspects of the donor? Here, monks, the donor has a happy and wholesome mind before giving, inspires serene faith in the mind while giving, and is satisfied after giving. These are the three aspects of the donor.

"What are the three aspects of the recipient? Here, monks, the recipient is either free of lust or is practicing for the removal of lust, is either free of aversion or practicing for the removal of aversion, and is either free of delusion or practicing for the removal of delusion. These are the three aspects of the recipient.

"In this way, monks, a donation is a six-aspect donation.

"Monks, it is not easy to measure the amount of merit produced by a six-aspect donation [by saying] 'The meritorious result is like this, the wholesome result is like this, it brings pleasure like this, it is heavenly like this, results in this happiness, leads to this heaven, leads to getting this which is desirable, appealing, pleasing, beneficial, and pleasant.' It is just considered to be an incalculable and immeasurably vast heap of merit.

"Monks, just as it is not to easy to measure the amount of water in the ocean [by saying] 'It has this many liters of water, or this many hundreds of liters of water, or this many thousands of liters of water, or this many hundreds of thousands of liters of water,' it is just considered to be an incalculable and immeasurably vast amount of water, in the same way, monks, it is not easy to measure the amount of merit produced by a six-aspect donation [by saying] 'The meritorious result is like this, the wholesome result is like this, it brings pleasure like this, it is heavenly like this, results in this happiness, leads to this heaven, leads to getting this which is desirable, appealing, pleasing, beneficial, and pleasant.' It is just considered to be an incalculable and immeasurably vast heap of merit."

"Before giving one has a good mind,
While giving one inspires serene faith,
After giving one is satisfied -
This is the perfect sacrifice.

“One who is free of lust, free of aversion,
Free of delusion, with no corruptions,
This is the perfect field for a sacrifice -
A restrained spiritual practitioner.

“Having bathed oneself before
And giving with one’s own hands,
For both oneself and the other
The sacrifice is of great fruit.

“The wise who have sacrificed in this way,
Faithful, with a mind released,
In a benign and happy world
Will be reborn.”