AN 8.36 — Grounds for Making Merit

English translation by Bhikkhu Sujato.
Source: https://suttacentral.net/an8.36/en/sujato
Source revision: 3bc8665e0e28e70518eba94304a2fafcab80f933
License: CC0-1.0 — https://creativecommons.org/publicdomain/zero/1.0/

Text

Numbered Discourses 8.36

4. Giving

Grounds for Making Merit

“Mendicants, there are these three grounds for making merit. What three? Giving, ethical conduct, and meditation are all grounds for making merit.

First, someone has practiced a little giving and ethical conduct as grounds for making merit, but they haven’t got as far as meditation as a ground for making merit. When their body breaks up, after death, they’re reborn among disadvantaged humans.

Next, someone has practiced a moderate amount of giving and ethical conduct as grounds for making merit, but they haven’t got as far as meditation as a ground for making merit. When their body breaks up, after death, they’re reborn among well-off humans.

Next, someone has practiced to an extraordinary degree giving and ethical conduct as grounds for making merit, but they haven’t got as far as meditation as a ground for making merit. When their body breaks up, after death, they’re reborn in the company of the gods of the four great kings. There, the four great kings themselves have practiced giving and ethical conduct as grounds for making merit to a greater degree than the other gods. So they surpass them in ten respects: heavenly lifespan, beauty, happiness, glory, sovereignty, sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and touches.

Next, someone has practiced to an extraordinary degree giving and ethical conduct as grounds for making merit, but they haven’t got as far as meditation as a ground for making merit. When their body breaks up, after death, they’re reborn in the company of the gods of the thirty-three. There, Sakka, lord of gods, has practiced giving and ethical conduct as grounds for making merit to a greater degree than the other gods. So he surpasses them in ten respects …

Next, someone has practiced to an extraordinary degree giving and ethical conduct as grounds for making merit, but they haven’t got as far as meditation as a ground for making merit. When their body breaks up, after death, they’re reborn in the company of the gods of Yama. There, the godling Suyāma has practiced giving and ethical conduct as grounds for making merit to a greater degree than the other gods. So he surpasses them in ten respects …

Next, someone has practiced to an extraordinary degree giving and ethical conduct as grounds for making merit, but they haven't got as far as meditation as a ground for making merit. When their body breaks up, after death, they're reborn in the company of the joyful gods. There, the godling Santusita has practiced giving and ethical conduct as grounds for making merit to a greater degree than the other gods. So he surpasses them in ten respects …

Next, someone has practiced to an extraordinary degree giving and ethical conduct as grounds for making merit, but they haven't got as far as meditation as a ground for making merit. When their body breaks up, after death, they're reborn in the company of the gods who love to create. There, the godling Sunimmita has practiced giving and ethical conduct as grounds for making merit to a greater degree than the other gods. So he surpasses them in ten respects …

Next, someone has practiced to an extraordinary degree giving and ethical conduct as grounds for making merit, but they haven't got as far as meditation as a ground for making merit. When their body breaks up, after death, they're reborn in the company of the gods who control what is created by others. There, the godling Vasavattī has practiced giving and ethical conduct as grounds for making merit to a greater degree than the other gods. So he surpasses them in ten respects: heavenly lifespan, beauty, happiness, glory, sovereignty, sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and touches.

These are the three grounds for making merit."