

The Advantages of the Wholesome Deeds in *Vimānavatthu*

Mi Mi Khaing *

Abstract

The *Vimānavatthu* is the sixth treatise in the *Khuddaka Nikāya*. *Vimānavatthu* is a collection of the stories in which the venerable *Moggallāna* and other persons asked the male and female devas about how they got such magnificent buildings. It is written in verse form about the very wide and subtle of *Kamma*. The treatise of *Vimānavatthu* is divided into two parts, namely, the *Itthivimāna* (femal *vimāna*) and *Purisavimāna* (male *vimāna*). A study of the enjoyment of the pleasures of the celestial abodes shows that the male and female devas enjoyed such pleasures because they had performed the wholesome deeds during their existence as human beings. The study will be presented in four parts: (1) the enjoyment of pleasures in celestial abodes as a result of the act of charity, (2) the enjoyment of pleasures in celestial abodes as a result of the keeping up of morality, (3) the enjoyment of pleasures in celestial abodes as a result of the acts of charity and morality, and (4) the enjoyment of pleasures in celestial abodes as a result of the other wholesome deeds. It is mentioned the diversity of celestial abodes according to the excellent quality of gift, the recipient is also morally virtuous and the moral conduct of the donar.

Introduction

Among the thirty-one planes of existence, the plane of human being is the only place where both wholesome and unwholesome deeds can be performed. Just as the persons who had done the wholesome deeds in this life can attain the pleasant world of devas in the next life, those who had done the unwholesome deeds in the present life will fall down into the hell after death. It is found that the *Vimānavatthu* describes about the pleasures and luxuries of the deva world. The *Vimānavatthu* is the sixth treatise in the *Khuddaka Nikāya*. It is written in verse form about the very wide and subtle of *Kamma*. *Vimāna* is a *Pāli* word which may be analyzed as *vi* + *mā* + *yu* or *vi* + *māna* + *a* or *vih* + *mā* + *yu*.¹ The various divisions of the word denote the abode of devas² or the multi-tiered building of *Vejayantā*³, the place or site⁴ or house⁵ or pavillion⁶, the mother's womb⁷ or the flying chariot of the devas.⁸

In the foreword of the *Vimānavatthu* Commentary,⁹ *Vimāna* is defined as the distinctly noble place of the devas or the place where the devas can enjoy pleasures. The abodes appear as the results of the meritorious deeds of the previous lives of the devas. These abodes rise up to one or two *yojanas* and studded with various gems. As these abodes are especially lovable, so they are called *Vimāna*.

Mrs. Rhys Davids says that it is difficult to define the word *Vimāna*. *Vimāna* has the double meaning of both measurement and various buildings. “*Vi*” means evident or distinguished. So it is a distinguished place where the devas can enjoy pleasures. Such places

¹ Pālipada Piṭaka Kyannhyun, Vol. I, 221.

² *Vimānavatthu Aṭṭhakathā*, 146.

³ *Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā*, Vol. VII, 18.

⁴ *Ibid*, 79.

⁵ *Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā*, Vol. IV, 303.

⁶ *Ibid*.

⁷ *Saṃyutta Aṭṭhakathā*, Vol. I, 45. *Saṃyuttaṭīkā*, Vol. I, 89.

⁸ *Sīlakkhandhavagga Abhinavaṭīkā*, Vol. I, 74.

⁹ *Vimānavatthu Aṭṭhakathā*, 2.

are called “*Vamāna*” (Viman). Moreover, such place where they are completely furnished with houses, gardens, forests, lakes, elephants, horses, chariots are also called “*Vamāna*”. Therefore, these celestial abodes are superior in quality to those abodes of man.¹⁰ It is found that the dictionary published by the P.T.S defines “*Vimāna*” as a vehicle with a tiered building.¹¹

Vimānavatthu

Vimānavatthu is a collection of the stories in which the venerable *Moggallāna* and other persons asked the male and female devas about how they got such magnificent buildings. Answers to Buddha's questions are described in the stories of *Tatīyanāvā*, *Bhadditthi*, *Maṇḍukadevaputta* and *Chattamāṇavaka*. The stories of *Pesavatī*, *Nāga* and *Dutīyanāga* are concerned with their meeting with the Ven. *Vaṅṅisa*. Answers to *Sakka*'s questions are described in the stories of *Kesakārī*, *Ācāmadāyikā*, *Visālakkhi* and *Pīta*. The story of *Mallikāvimānavatthu* is related to the venerable *Nārada*. The story of *Vihāravimāna* is connected with the Ven. *Anuruddha*. *Tatīyanāgāvimāna* is related to a wise man. The story of *Latāvimāna* describes about the meeting *Subhā*, the goddess. In the *Daddallavimānavatthu*, the Buddha discussed with the goddess, *Bhaddā*; in the *Maṭṭhakuṇḍalivatthu*, he discussed with the brahmin, *Adinnapubbaka*; in the *Cūḷarathavatthu*,¹² discussed with the Ven. *Mahākaccāyana*; in the *Pāyāsi*¹³ and *Serīsakavatthus*,¹⁴ discussed with the Ven. *Kumārakassapa* and in the rest *vatthus* gods and goddesses discussed with the Ven. *Mahāmoggallāna*.

The male or female deva told about his or her meritorious deeds in the previous life and the benefits gained as a result of the past meritorious deeds. The answers are made in verse form. The verses depict the past meritorious deeds and their results in a vivid and pithy manner. There had been persons who had done many wholesome deeds and persons who had done little. Depending on the amount of the wholesome deeds and the force of volition (*cetanā*), the verses describe about the differences in the resultant benefits. Those who had donated food got the benefit of being endowed with the abundance of food. Those who had donated the golden robes became golden complexion in this present life. Those who had donated monasteries got the benefit of being provided with buildings already made for them. In this way various acts of charity have various benefits.¹⁵

The treatise of *Vimānavatthu* is divided into two parts, namely, the *Itthivimāna* (female *vimāna*) and *Purisavimāna* (male *vimāna*). The *Itthivimāna* is composed of *Pīṭhavagga*, *Cittalatāvagga*, *Pāricchattakavagga* and *Mañjiṭṭhakavagga*. The *Purisavimāna* is composed of *Mahārathavagga*, *Pāyāsivagga* and *Sunikkhitavagga*.

There are eighty five stories in this treatise. The *Pīṭhavagga* contains seventeen stories; the *Cittalatāvagga* contains eleven stories; the *Pāricchattakavagga* contains ten stories; the *Mañjiṭṭhakavagga* contains twelve stories; the *Mahārathavagga* contains fourteen stories; the *Pāyāsivagga* contains ten stories; and the *Sunikkhitavagga* contains eleven stories respectively.

¹⁰ The Minor Anthologies of the Pāli Canon, Part IV, vi.

¹¹ Pāli Text Society's, Vol. II, 89.

¹² *Vimānavatthu* Pāli, 87-90

¹³ Ibid, 102.

¹⁴ Ibid, 116-24.

¹⁵ Akhyekhanpālisarpethamine, 37

On the basis of the analysis of the kinds of meritorious deeds, the stories may be grouped as follows: - on attaining the *deva* abode

- | | |
|--|--------------|
| (1) after becoming Stream – winners | = 4 stories |
| (2) after becoming Once – returners | = 3 stories |
| (3) by putting both palms together in a gesture of reverence | = 3 stories |
| (4) by placing the head at the pair of feet | = 1 story |
| (5) by expressing " <i>Sādhū</i> " | = 1 story |
| (6) for zealous devotion | = 1 story |
| (7) by just listening to a discourse | = 2 stories |
| (8) by keeping up the precepts | = 5 stories |
| (9) for making charity | = 54 stories |
| (10) by making charity and keeping up the precepts | = 7 stories. |

The Commentary of *Vimānavatthu*

The *Vimānavatthu* is entirely composed of *Pāli* verses without any prose versions. They are merely the general statements of the stories in which the owners of the buildings told how they received those buildings as a result of their past meritorious deeds. In *Pāli* literature the questioning verses and the answering verses are sometimes intermingled. However, these verses do not describe in detail about the persons who uttered these verses. In other words, although these verses contain the direct conversation between the main characters, the details about the questioning and answering persons are found to be absent. So, the Commentary supplies the missing links in the original *Pāli*. It describes about the characters and themes of each story in detail. It is adorned with the comprehensive explanations about such things as the place in which the story originated and the time at which the story happened.¹⁶

The Ven. *Dhammapāla* wrote the Commentary on the *Vimānavatthu*. According to the foreword of this Commentary, it is learnt that the original teller of these stories was *Moggallāna Thera*, the Left Chief Disciple of the Buddha. Once the Venerable *Thera* had been to the *deva* abodes. He admired about their luxuries and grandeurs. Then, an intention occurred in him. Although he knew about them, he wanted to enquire about their magnificence and what meritorious deeds they had performed while they existed as human beings. This intention is called *Diṭṭhasanisandanā* in *Pāli*. This intention was inspired by his great and noble wish to elucidate the fact of the nobility of human life which is like a tree of plenty. Moreover, he wanted to negate those concepts of annihilationism (*Ucchedadiṭṭhi*) and non-existence of the results of good and bad actions (*Natthikadiṭṭhi*) which were in vogue at that time in India. He wanted to prove that there is life after death and that the result of the wholesome deed really exists.¹⁷

Moggallāna Thera was the most superior person in psychic power other than the Buddha. He was the recipient of the title of “the *Iddhimanta etadagga*”.¹⁸ Therefore, he could visit both the world of *devas* and the hell and deliver discourses there. There were four reasons for receiving this highest title: -

- (1) he could defeat and tame down the dragon kings who were like the dragon king *Nandopananda*,

¹⁶ Akhyekhanpālisarpethamine, 100-101.

¹⁷ *Vimānavatthu Aṭṭhakathā*, 45.

¹⁸ *Aṅguttara Pāli*, Vol. I, 23. *Therāgathā Aṭṭhakathā*, Vol. II, 482.

- (2) he possessed the supernormal psychic power not only in this life but also in the five hundred previous lives,
- (3) he went to the hell and sought relief for the dwellers in the hell with his psychic power, in order to cool them down, he made a vow and created a paduma flower as large as a wheel of the carriage; he seated himself at the centre of the flower and delivered discourses to them ; then he went to the world of *devas* and let them realize about the plane of *Kamma* (the plane of existence to which one reaches as a result of one's actions); he delivered the discourse on the Four Noble Truths,
- (4) beside the Fully-enlightened Buddha, no other disciple possessed the super normal psychic power like *Moggallāna Thera*.

While he was residing at a secluded place, a thought flashed in him. The thought ran thus: “Nowadays, although the human beings are not fully endowed with material wealth and the perfection of the contemporary times, they can attain complete mental purification. So they perform wholesome deeds and enjoy the luxuries and pleasures of the *devas* as a result of such deeds. I shall visit the world of *devas* and ask them about their past meritorious deeds and the resultant luxuries. I shall explain to them about the causal relations between their past deeds and the resultant luxuries. I shall make them stand testimony to such causal relationship. How fine would it be if only I could report my study of the deva world in full to the Buddha. After listening to my report, the Buddha would elaborate on the merits of the wholesome deeds. He would make the benefits of the wholesome deeds obvious just as the full moon striding across the clear sky. He would make it evident that even a small act of the wholesome deed can bring about enormous benefits through the power of confidence (*Saddhā*). By making the *Vimāna* stories as precedents, he would deliver the noble discourses. It is believed that this discourse will be for the welfare of the human beings and happiness of *devas* and human beings.”

With this thought in mind, the *Thera* left the place where had resided and approached the *Buddha*. Seated himself in a suitable place, he paid obeisance to the *Buddha* and said about his wish. After receiving the permission of the *Buddha* he left and began to absorb himself in the fourth jhanic state which was the basis of the supernormal psychic power. He rose up from that jhanic state and went to *Tāvatinīsa* by his power. He asked the male and female *devas* about their past deeds. Having heard their answers he returned to the human abode. He reported to the *Buddha* about his findings in full. The *Buddha* related about those *devas* in detail to the relevant audiences.¹⁹

After writing the foreword, the author of the Commentary explained in detail about the *Vimāna* stories in accordance with the order in the original *Pāli* by dividing them into seven groups. The author elucidated the sub-merged facts about the past wholesome deeds of the eighty-five *devas*. He also made explanations on words and terms that were contained in the original verses. From such explanations one can learn about the extraordinary events, lessons on supra-mundane affairs which are to be emulated and vocabulary knowledge.

The Enjoyment in the Celestial Abodes Individually because of Moral Kammās

A study of the enjoyment of the pleasures of the celestial abodes shows that the male and female *devas* enjoyed such pleasures because they had performed the wholesome deeds during their existence as human beings. The study will be presented in four parts: –

- (1) the enjoyment of pleasures in celestial abodes as a result of the act of charity,

¹⁹ *Vimānavatthu Aṭṭhakathā*, 3-4.

- (2) the enjoyment of pleasures in celestial abodes as a result of the keeping up of morality,
- (3) the enjoyment of pleasures in celestial abodes as a result of the acts of charity and morality and
- (4) the enjoyment of pleasures in celestial abodes as a result of the other wholesome deeds.

The enjoyment of pleasures in celestial abodes as a result of the act of Charity

There were altogether fifty four male and female devas who enjoyed the pleasures of the celestial abodes as a result of the acts of charity. It is called “*Dāna*” because of its quality of causing to give away.²⁰ The *Pāli* word “*Dāna*” is rendered in English as “alms-giving, gift, offering, charity, present, liberality, dealing-out.” The act of giving away takes various forms. The parents give the children. The children give the parents. The siblings give each other. Giving to the unloved one to get love in return. Giving to the beloved one out of love. Giving to the enemy out of fear. Giving to the enemy to win over him. Giving away or supporting the subordinate persons. Giving to the superior persons as token of respect. Giving donations to the *Buddha* and the Order of Monks. All these are acts of charity.

Regarding “*Dāna*”, the Great Chronicle of the *Buddhas* says that it is the causative factor which brings about happiness in this life, happiness in the next life and the happiness of *Nibbāna*.²¹ *Dāna* provides good protection to those who are encountering the danger of various forms of destruction. Nothing equals *Dāna* in providing reliability, a place to stand on, a thing to cling to, a protection, a hide-out, a place to go to or a place to rest upon.²² On the mundane side one can enjoy the luxuries of the *Sakka*, *Māra*, *Brahma* king or the Universal monarch. On the supra-mundane side, one can achieve the knowledge of the disciple, the knowledge of the *Pravīte Buddha* or the knowledge of the Fully-enlightened *Buddha*.²³

The characteristic of *Dāna* is the giving away of an offertory. The alms-giving has the function of non-attachment in the offering materials and destroying the greed. Its manifestation is non-attachment in the materials. The benefit of being endowed with the luxuries of life is the *Phala Paccupaṭṭhāna*. The immediate cause of *Dāna* is the object of offering.²⁴ The objects of offering play a very important role in performing acts of charity. So, the scriptures classify various *Dāna* depending on the objects of offering according to the *Vinaya*²⁵, *Suttanta*²⁶, *Abhidhamma*.²⁷

Among the three kinds of *Dāna*, that *Dāna* is enumerated in the *Vinaya* can be performed by anybody. So, this kind of *Dāna* is more beneficial than those of the *Suttanta*. In performing the *Dāna* of the *Abhidhamma*, the attention is not concentrated on the nomenclature but on the ultimate truths. So, the benefit of such *Dāna* is much more superior than the other two kinds of *Dāna*. In whichever kind of *Dāna*, enormous benefit can be

²⁰ Sagāthāvagga, Nidānavagga Saṃyutta Pāli, 19. Aṅguttara Pāli, Vol. I, 90. Itivuttaka Pāli, 205. Petavatthu Pāli, 151.

²¹ Mahābuddhawin, Vol. V, 504.

²² Mahāvagga Aṭṭhakathā (Dīghanikāya), Vol. II, 62. Majjhimanapaṇṇāsa Aṭṭhakathā, 64. Aṅguttara Aṭṭhakathā, Vol. III, 213. Udāna Aṭṭhakathā, 255.

²³ Mahāvagga Aṭṭhakathā (Dīghanikāya), Vol. II, 63. Majjhimanapaṇṇāsa Aṭṭhakathā, 64. Aṅguttara Aṭṭhakathā, Vol. III, 213.

²⁴ Cariyāpiṭaka Aṭṭhakathā, 273.

²⁵ Pāthikavagga Aṭṭhakathā, 180. Aṭṭhasālinī Aṭṭhakathā, 201.

²⁶ Khandhavagga, Saḷāyatanavagga Saṃyutta Pāli, 205-6. Pāthikavagga Aṭṭhakathā, 106-7. Saṃyutta Aṭṭhakathā, Vol. II, 320. Cūḷavagga Aṭṭhakathā, 182. Aṭṭhasālinī Aṭṭhakathā, 201.

²⁷ Aṅguttara Pāli, Vol. 3, 180. Aṭṭhasālinī Aṭṭhakathā, 201.

achieved only on the fulfillment of the purity and completion of the three factors, namely, the recipient of the charity, the offertory and the three cetanas or volitional acts.²⁸

There are also six kinds of *Dāna* the benefits of which increase at all times. They are:–

- | | | | |
|-----|------------------------|---|---|
| (1) | <i>Ārāmaropa dāna</i> | - | the offering of flower or fruit gardens, |
| (2) | <i>Vanaropa dāna</i> | - | the offering of the shady trees, |
| (3) | <i>Setukāraka dāna</i> | - | the offering of the bridges, |
| (4) | <i>Papā dāna</i> | - | the offering of stand for water pots, |
| (5) | <i>Upapāna dāna</i> | - | the offering of wells, lakes and drainages and |
| (6) | <i>Upassaya dāna</i> | - | the offering of rest houses, large halls, caves, monasteries or tiered-buildings. |

A person who donates one of the six kinds of *Dāna* has the benefit of enjoying joy at such meritorious deed day and night. The results of such deed are beneficial at all times. So he is destined to be reborn in the world of *devas* after his death.²⁹

Dāna makes the minds of both the donor and the recipient delicate and flexible. The foolish become well-behaved. The wild become polite.³⁰ It can bring about the benefits of the present life as well as the next life for both himself and the other persons. *Dāna* bestowed upon the donor wealth, luxury, surrounding followers, fame and dignity. If a person donates the honestly-earned offertories to *Ariyas*, he can reach the *deva* world beyond the eight strata of the major hell.³¹ It can bring about the superior and noble mundane wealth and luxury as well as the bliss of the supra-mundane *Nibbāna*.³² The benefits of the *Dāna* always follow the donor whether in this life or life hereafter.³³

Buddha was residing at a monastery the roof of which was adorned with pinnacles and finials in the big forest in the state of *Vesālī*. At the request of *Sīha*, the general, *Buddha* explained about the five current benefits of *Dāna*. They are: -

- (1) He is loved by the people on seeing him.
- (2) He is approached and relied upon by the virtuous persons.
- (3) He is good news, glory and gratitude spread far and wide.
- (4) He can remain well-composed among the four audience with courage and confidence.
- (5) He can reach the *deva* world after death.³⁴

In order to become *Dāna* in the full sense of the word, there are four requisites to be fulfilled. They are the donor, the recipient, the offertory and the volition (the will to give).³⁵ In performing a *Dāna*, the donor must be equipped with the three stages of *cetanā*, namely, the preceding will (*Pubba cetanā*), the current will (*Muñña cetanā*) and the succeeding will (*Apara cetanā*). The recipient must also be free from craving, anger and delusion. The offertory must also be an honestly-earned property. In making a *Dāna* it must be inspired by an independent and free will to give without any attachment. Only then the *Dāna* brings about growing benefits. If a *Dāna* is consistent with the three *cetanās*, an offering of the size of a banyan seed can bring about the benefit as big as a large banyan tree. This fact is testified by the many

²⁸ Abhidhanṭikā, 422.

²⁹ Sagāthāvagga, Nidānavagga Saṃyutta Pāli, 30-1. Saṃyutta Aṭṭhakathā, Vol. I, 83. Saṃyuttaṭikā, Vol. I, 123.

³⁰ Pāthikavagga Aṭṭhakathā, 227.

³¹ Sagāthāvagga, Nidānavagga Saṃyutta Pāli, 28.

³² Mahāvaggaṭikā, 68.

³³ Sagāthāvagga, Nidānavagga Saṃyutta Pāli, 38.

³⁴ Aṅguttara Pāli, Vol. II, 33-5.

³⁵ Vimānavatthu Pāli, 127. Petavatthu Aṭṭhakathā, 7.

commentaries on the original *Pāli*. The act of *Dāna* is to be based on such factor as confidence (*saddhā*).³⁶

In *Vimānavatthu*, it is found that most of the male and female devas enjoyed the luxuries of the celestial abodes as a result of their past act of *Dāna*. It is also found that the celestial abodes differ according to the differences in the wholesome deeds they had performed during their existence as human beings.

Table 1. The enjoyment of pleasures in celestial abodes as a result of the act of Charity

No.	Offertory	Celestial abode	God	Goddess	Remark
1	seat	<i>Tāvatiṃsa</i>	-	5	
2	water	<i>Tāvatiṃsa</i>	1	3	
3	light	<i>Tāvatiṃsa</i>	-	1	
4	sesamum	<i>Tāvatiṃsa</i>	-	1	
5	snack	<i>Tāvatiṃsa</i>	2	3	
6	scum of boiling rice	<i>Nimmānarati</i>	-	1	<i>Ācāmadāyikā</i>
7	alms-food	<i>Tāvatiṃsa</i>	4	3	
8	sugar cane	<i>Tāvatiṃsa</i>	1	2	
9	flower	<i>Tāvatiṃsa</i>	2	6	
10	robe	<i>Tāvatiṃsa</i>	-	1	
11	Mahalata dress	<i>Tāvatiṃsa</i>	-	1	
12	broken-rice and fermented rice gruel	<i>Tāvatiṃsa</i>	2	1	
13	monastery	<i>Tāvatiṃsa</i>	2	2	
14	crab soup	<i>Tāvatiṃsa</i>	1	-	
15	needles	<i>Tāvatiṃsa</i>	2	-	
16	mango	<i>Tāvatiṃsa</i>	1	-	
17	alms-food, light, coach, bed sheet and washing water	<i>Tāvatiṃsa</i>	2	-	
18	various offering	<i>Tāvatiṃsa</i>	-	36	<i>Guttila</i>
19	doing offering unrespectfully	<i>Catumahārājika</i>	1	-	<i>Serīsaka</i>

The enjoyment of pleasures in celestial abodes as a result of the keeping up of Morality

The male and female *devas* are to enjoy the luxury in the celestial abodes as they observed the morality in their past existences. So, morality is important for the attainment of Heaven. Furthermore, it leads the one to develop the concentration and wisdom with the reliance of morality.³⁷ In the introduction of the *Visuddhimagga*, the exposition of the morality is mentioned.

“When a wise man, established well in Virtue,
develops Consciousness and Understanding,

³⁶ Sagāthāvagga, Nidānavagga Saṃyutta Pāli, 20. Jātaka Pāli, Vol. I, 183. Saṃyutta Aṭṭhakathā, Vol. I, 58. Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā, Vol. III, 448-9.

³⁷ Sagāthāvagga, Nidānavagga Saṃyutta Pāli, 128.

then as a bhikkhu ardent and sagacious,
he succeeds in disentangling this tangle.”³⁸

In fact, the morality is not only the practice to the Heaven but also it is the access to all *dhammas*.

It has the sense of composing (*Sīlana*). It is either a coordinating (*Samādhāna*) observing the physical or verbal action due to virtuousness; or it is an upholding (*Upadhāraṇa*). It is exposed as the head (*Sīras*) and the meaning of coal (*Sīṭala*).³⁹

The word “*Sīla*” is interpreted in various ways: nature (*pakatibhāva*)⁴⁰, habit or custom (*sīlabbata*)⁴¹, quality (*guṇa*)⁴², restraint (*samvara*) volition (*cetanā*), mental concomitant (*cetasika*)⁴³, the five precepts (*pañca sīla*)⁴⁴, the four kinds of morality (*catupārisuddhi sīla*)⁴⁵, eight precepts (*uposatha sīla*)⁴⁶, the ten precepts (*dasa sīla*)⁴⁷, the ten virtuous actions (*dasakusalakammāpatha sīla*)⁴⁸ and the ten duties of a king (*dasa rājadhama*), etc.⁴⁹

Morality is defined as four: volition, mental, concomitant, restrain and non-transgression.⁵⁰

Sīla has the characteristic of controlling one’s physical and verbal action and orientating them towards the right direction; it also serves as a basis of all meritoriousness.

Its function is to prevent from becoming immoral through uncontrolled physical and verbal actions. It helps one to remain spotless in conduct, free from the blame by the wise.

It is manifested as purify in thought, word and deed.

The proximate cause is moral shame (*hiri*) and moral dread (*ottappa*).⁵¹

One who observes the morality acquires the five benefits.⁵²

- (1) He acquires great wealth.
- (2) He gains fame and good reputation.
- (3) He approaches and enters any assembly without any indication of inferiority complex.
- (4) He dies unconfused.
- (5) He is reborn in the celestial world after death.

We find the 12 benefits of morality in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*⁵³ and the 11 benefit of morality in the *Mūlapaṇṇāsa*.⁵⁴

³⁸ Visuddhimagga Pāli, Vol. I, 1.

³⁹ Ibid, 8.

⁴⁰ Khandhavagga, Saḷāyatanavagga Saṃyutta Pāli, 3.

⁴¹ Apadāna Pāli, Vol. I, 208.

⁴² Uparipaṇṇāsa Pāli, 198.

⁴³ Visuddhimagga Pāli, Vol. I, 7-8.

⁴⁴ Mahāvagga Aṭṭhakathā (Dīghanikāya), Vol. II, 127. Itivuttaka Aṭṭhakathā, 228.

⁴⁵ Vimānavatthu Aṭṭhakathā, 64-5.

⁴⁶ Aṅguttara Aṭṭhakathā, Vol. II, 196.

⁴⁷ Cariyāpiṭaka Pāli, 418. Cariyāpiṭaka Aṭṭhakathā, 254-5.

⁴⁸ Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā, Vol. III, 258.

⁴⁹ Jātaka Pāli, Vol. II, 93. Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā, Vol. V, 403.

⁵⁰ Paṭisambhidāmagga Pāli, 43.

⁵¹ Visuddhimagga Pāli, Vol. I, 8-9.

⁵² Mahāvagga Pāli, Dīghanikāya, 72-73. Mahābuddhawin, Vol. V, 275-7.

⁵³ Aṅguttara Pāli, Vol. III, 515-6.

⁵⁴ M.I, 39-43. M.A.I, 158-69.

There will be seen that some gods and goddesses have arrived the celestial abodes individually as they have observed morality; alms-giving; and other moral deeds in the *Vimānavatthu*.

Table 2. The enjoyment of pleasures in celestial abodes as a result of morality, charity and morality

No.	Reason	Celestial abode	God	Goddess	Remark
1	Morality	<i>Tāvatiṃsa</i>	2	2	
2	Morality	<i>Yāmā</i>	1	-	<i>Dvārapālaka</i>
3	Charity and Morality	<i>Tāvatiṃsa</i>	5	3	
4	Charity and Morality	<i>Catumahārājika</i>	-	1	<i>Latā</i>

Table 3. The enjoyment of pleasures in celestial abodes as a result of the other wholesome deeds

No.	Reason	Celestial abode	God	Goddess	Remark
1	Sottāpattiship	<i>Tāvatiṃsa</i>	-	8	
2	Sottāpattiship	<i>Nimmānarati</i>	-	1	<i>Sirimā</i>
3	Sakadāgāmihip	<i>Tāvatiṃsa</i>	-	1	
4	Clasped – palms	<i>Tāvatiṃsa</i>	1	2	
5	Devoted to the <i>Buddha</i>	<i>Tāvatiṃsa</i>	1	-	<i>Kandaka</i>
6	Listeing to the <i>Dhamma</i>	<i>Tāvatiṃsa</i>	1	1	<i>Maṇṇukadevaputta</i>

Evaluation

Being evaluated the moral deeds as mentioned in the *Vimānavatthu*, it can be seen that one can attain the celestial abodes because of alms-giving and morality. According to the colour of gifts, the mansions become different. In the stories of *Pathamapīṭha*⁵⁵ and *Tatiyapīṭha*⁵⁶, the gold mansion was got as the small seat with the golden cloth was offered. In the *Dutiyapīṭhavimāna*⁵⁷ and *Catutthapīṭhavimāna*⁵⁸ stories, the brown cat-eye mansion was got as the small seat with brown cloth was offered. In the *Dīpavimānavatthu*⁵⁹, becoming a goddess of bright colour is as the lamp was offered. In the *Mallikāvimānavatthu*⁶⁰, becoming a goddess, she got the jewelled garland of flower ornamented with various jewels on the hair and having the sweet voice like the peacock is as the *Mahālatā* dress was offered.

In the *Mañciṭṭhakavimānavatthu*⁶¹, the mansion surrounded sal-trees had been god sal-flowers were offered. In the *Ambavimānavatthu*⁶², a mansion with mango garden had been got

⁵⁵ *Vimānavatthu Aṭṭhakathā*, 6-27.

⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 23-6.

⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 22-3.

⁵⁸ *Vimānavatthu Aṭṭhakathā*, 26-7.

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 44.

⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 150-4.

⁶¹ *Ibid*, 160-2.

⁶² *Ibid*, 267-70.

as the monastery surrounded by the mango trees. In the *Kakkaṭakarasadāyakāvimānavatthu*⁶³, a mansion with the idol of crab at the door had been got as the crab curry was offered.

In the offering, it is more beneficial if the donor is more virtuous. In the *Ācāmadāyikāvimānavatthu*⁶⁴, a poor lady was reborn in the *Nimmānarati* abode as she offered the crust of the cooked-rice to the Venerable *Mahākassapa*. The recipient was virtuous but the material and one's inclination were inferior, King *Pāyāsi* was reborn in the *Catumahārajika* abode. The attendant of the King, the young man *Uttara* was reborn in the *Tāvātimsa* as he offered the alms-giving with respect. So it is important to have good material and tendency. King *Pāyāsirājañña* offered the alms-giving to the Venerable *Kumārakassapa* and five hundred monks unrespectfully. After death, he became a god in the *Serīsaka* mansion in the *Catumahārajika* abode about without any attendant.⁶⁵

In accordance with morality, in the *Dvārapālakavimānavatthu*⁶⁶, a lay devotee was reborn in the *Yāmā* abode offered the continuous alms-food support being devoted in the *Kamma* and result of *Kamma* and morality was observed. In the *Latāvimānavatthu*⁶⁷, *Latā* goddess was reborn in the *Catumahārajika* abode as the daughter of *Vessavaṇṇa*, king of the gods after death being observed the five precepts and alms-giving. In the *Sirimāvimānavatthu*⁶⁸, the prostitute *Sirimā* was reborn in the *Nimmānarati* as she offered daily the *Aṭṭhakabhatta* by lot and attained Sotāpattiship. The female bagger *Caṇḍālī*⁶⁹ was reborn in the *Tāvātimsa* abode just paying respect to the *Buddha* and monks with raising clasped – palms being devoted to the virtuous of the *Buddha*. So also the incidents of a woman⁷⁰ from a village and the son of the rich man *Adinnapubbaka*, *Maṭṭhakuṇḍalī*⁷¹ were reborn in the celestial abode have been seen. The horse, *Kaṇḍaka*⁷² was reborn in the celestial abode having devoted to the *Buddha*. *Maṇḍukadevaputta*⁷³ was the god who had transferred to the celestial abode even listening to the *dhamma*. Therefore it can be known that even animals can be reborn in the celestial abode.

In brief, when studied the owners of the mansions individually, it has come to know that they become gods and goddesses because of *Dāna*, *Sīla* and both *Dāna* and *Sīla*. In doing so, it is essential the quality of the gift, the morality of the recipient, the tendency of the donor, the result is different. Some are born in the celestial abodes not by the *Dāna* and *Sīla* but only raising the clasped-palms and even listening to the *dhamma*. Some have to enjoy the benefit of the merit in the very life. Therefore it is to evaluate that those who wish the two advantages of present and next existences should perform the wholesomeness and keep the precepts.

⁶³ Ibid, 225-7.

⁶⁴ Ibid, 90-4.

⁶⁵ Ibid, 277-9.

⁶⁶ Ibid, 228-9.

⁶⁷ Ibid, 120-5.

⁶⁸ *Vimānavatthu Aṭṭhakathā*, 67-78.

⁶⁹ Ibid, 94-7.

⁷⁰ Ibid, 189-90.

⁷¹ Ibid, 303-10.

⁷² Ibid, 293-9.

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