

THE 7 TRUE BLESSINGS

As the new year 2017 dawns, let us rejoice in our love for the Dharma and our friendship with those whom we love and care about. On this special occasion, let us reflect on the 7 highest blessings we can have, with which to adorn the world and our life:

(1) May our eye see beauty.

May what we see teach us Dharma and bring meaning to our life and love. May we love ourselves and others unconditionally, just as the Buddha freely teaches us the Dharma that has given us the best that we are. When we see the Buddha under the Bodhi tree, we remind ourselves that no matter how challenged we are, we can grow by our efforts and free ourselves to attain awakening in this life itself.

(2) May our ear hear truth.

May what we hear teach us Dharma and bring us purpose in our life and love. When we hear of the sufferings of others, we understand them to be their karma and present conditions. We can help to better the conditions of others by even some small effort of lovingkindness through our bodily action, communicated by speech or radiated through thought. May we talk more without a cell-phone, but warmly with the living before us. May all that we hear become the soothing sounds of Dharma.

(3) May we smell goodness.

May what we smell remind us of moral goodness; may we breathe peace. Even the sweetest fragrance follows the wind. The fragrance of moral virtue and inner peace go against the wind to spread to everyone with open mind and ready heart. As we breathe in and out, may we recollect that we can take nothing of this world with us, even the air that we breathe. We breathe in it, we give it back.

(4) May we taste freedom.

May what we taste bring us health and joy for Dharma effort. May we eat without haste, and take only what and when we need to. May we have fun without drinks, and drink without getting drunk. A healthy diet blesses us with a calm and clear mind, the door to true freedom.

(5) May we touch hearts.

May what we feel teach us that joy and pain are never separate. One is the absence of the other; one defines another. In both, there is the laughter of impermanence and smile of wisdom. Let us gaze into the eyes of others and feel their pains and joys, so that we know and love others better. May we naturally smile without selfies.

(6) May we think true.

May what we think bring calm and clarity to our heart so that we see both light and love within us. May we sleep happily: for, our bed is a sacred place of healing. May we dream without drugs. May we wake from our dreams to see and shape a happier self and better world. May we wake with a smile like the sun shining on all alike.

(7) May we feel and learn.

To feel is to be present to the moment; to live the life before us; to unconditionally accept others before us; to directly see true reality with joy. May we see others as a mirror of ourself. As we clean our mind's mirror, we see more clearly how we are but the 6 elements – earth, water, fire, wind, consciousness and space.

May we support and nourish others like **the earth**, giving and forgiving.

May we cool and wash ourselves inwardly with **the water** of living compassion.

May we burn away negative emotions and light the true way with wisdom's **fire**.

May we let fly all our defilements just as **the wind** purifies the air of dust and darkness.

May our **mind** be in the moment, living and loving timelessly.

May we feel the **space** in our heart and give that space to all beings and nature herself.

Since we are but the elements, and these elements dance all through our lives, may we joyfully keep in time with their dance of impermanence. What we are but the elements: bones, blood, body, breath, and the mind living in their spaces.

To be wise is to see that we are but these elements – the elements within, the elements without – are the same elements, yet ever changing, becoming other. Earth into water into fire into wind into space, and consciousness amongst them all.

We see them – even more so – with the closed eyes and open hands of cultivation. As we see, we let them go. We free the elements to dance their dance, and so free ourself from the timeless dance. This is a dance we dance alone, but are never lonely. For, it is a dance of giving back with joy what has come to us with wisdom.

The historical Buddha teaches us all this. Looking into ourself, we see all. Letting go of all, we truly renounce the world. In truly renouncing, we see the real all. We then rise into the space that frees us from all – this is nirvana.

May we inspire all in the teaching of the historical Buddha, the liberating Dharma and the noble sangha.

HAPPY NEW YEAR: 2017, another Dharma year.

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