

## Toward Understanding *The Ten DharmaRealms*

This text is basic to Buddhism<sup>1</sup> so the Buddha's view of the world in which humans live is essential to understanding these ten poems. As Okakura observes about Zen within The Book of Tea, so also in this case with Buddha, the understanding of the Tao is basic. As a human being, the Buddha Gautama, probably lived between 560 and 480 B.C. in north eastern India, but radically the Buddha as "enlightened" is something of an archetype which manifests itself in the world at different periods in different personalities whose individuality is of no account. This text has this title because the text explains the ten realms of dharma which exist within the human world and these stand as the ten "ways" humans may live life. The first seven are "safe" areas, however, the final three are areas with which a human can "play" but that play-full person "might not be able to escape" because these are "The Three Evil Destinies (and) can be very dangerous". So, the introductory stanza to the ten states: "If there are people who wish to understand all Buddhas of the three periods of time, they should contemplate the nature of the *Dharmarealm*."

*Dharma* is a Sanskrit word coming from *dhri*, meaning to bear or to hold the essence of a thing. So, *dharmā* expresses a central law of life: that all things and events are part of a unified but invisible, that is, spiritual whole. To act according to *dharmā*, therefore, means to act in harmony with this unity - as the Greeks and Romans would say, to act according to nature. If the Buddhist (or Bodhisattva) so acts, then many names may be used to designate his or her actions or even him or her: just, righteous, fair; noble, truthful, loyal, compassionate. Indeed, an ancient Sanskrit saying is: *ahimsa paramo dharma*, paraphrasing, the essence of life's law is do no harm to any living creature. So, the central, indeed, fundamental virtue for a Buddhist is compassion for living beings. Actually, two tone poems of the *Tao* describe such a unity:

#1

The *Tao* which can be told of is not the eternal *Tao*.  
The name which can be named is not the eternal name:  
The Nameless is the origin of Heaven and Earth;

The Named is the Mother of all things.  
 Therefore, let there always be non-being, so we may see their subtlety.  
 And let there always be being, so we may see their outcome.  
 The two are the same.  
 But after they are produced, they have different names.  
 They both may be called deep and profound.  
 Deeper and more profound.  
 The door of all subtleties!

### #25

There is something undifferentiated and yet complete  
 Which existed before Heaven and earth.  
 Soundless and formless, it depends on nothing and does not change.  
 It operates everywhere and is free from danger.  
 It may be considered the Mother of the universe.  
 Do not know its name; I call it *Tao*.  
 If forced to give it a name, I shall call it Great.  
 Now being great means functioning everywhere.  
 Functioning everywhere means to be far-reaching.  
 Being far-reaching means returning to the original point.  
 Therefore, *Tao* is great.  
 Heaven is great.  
 Earth is great and the king is also great.  
 There are four great things in the universe and the king is one of them.  
 Man models himself after Earth.  
 Earth models itself after Heaven.

Heaven models itself after *Tao* and *Tao* models itself after Nature.  
 Given this Buddhist view of the world and of human<sup>2</sup> actions within this world, two things follow: first, nothing happens by chance within this world; secondly, given this unity, no action any human does can escape the human actor's responsibility - literally, what goes around will come around, an attitude which models itself upon the biological cycle as replicated within nature's seasonal cycle from winter to spring, spring to summer, summer to fall and fall to winter.

*Karma* is a Sanskrit word, meaning something done, whether as cause or effect, so actions in harmony with dharma bring good karma, but actions done in violation of dharma, bring bad karma - again, using the Greek or

Roman model, actions performed according to nature are virtuous and self-constructive, but actions performed in violation of nature are vicious and self-destructive. Such a view, therefore, dispenses with any “external punisher” or “external rewarder”, so no after life of punishment or of heaven exists. Both punishment and reward are self-administered, given the fact that acting according to nature is rewarding to the self and acting against nature is punishing to the self. Therefore, the Buddhist’s responsibility of what happens to a person is solely that person’s responsibility. This, of course, finds its echo within the Tao, specifically, tone poem, 23:

Therefore, he who follows ***Tao*** is identified with ***Tao***  
He who follows virtue is identified with virtue.  
He who abandons ***Tao*** is identified with the abandonment of ***Tao***.  
He who is identified with ***Tao - Tao*** is also happy to have him.  
And he who is identified with the abandonment - the abandonment is also  
happy  
to abandon him.

Yet, such is not a new view, nor is such a view a non-*New Testament* view, since Luke's portrayal of Christ as within the parable the "prodigal" son clearly shows that humans must live with the choices they make and the "father" will not interfere with those human choices. (*Luke:3 15: 11-32*)

Indeed, the celebrated “Our Father” of Matthew’s Gospel specifies that the “Father’s” mercy toward a person is contingent upon and will replicate that person’s mercy toward others: Forgive us our debts (or trespasses) as we forgive those who trespass against us. Now, the central theses of the T’ien-t’ai school come from three common sayings: “the true nature of all *dharma*s (elements of existence)”; “the perfect harmony of the Three Levels of Truth”; and “the three thousand worlds immanent in an instance of thought”. The perfect harmony of the Three Levels of Truth means: that all *dharma*s are empty because they have no nature of their own but depend on causes for their production and this is the Truth of Emptiness level; but, *dharma*s are produced and do possess temporary and dependent existence and this is the Temporary Truth level; being both empty and temporary is the very nature of *dharma*s and this is the Truth of the Mean level.

Consequently, these three are one and this one is three and this mutual identity with this threefold distinction is the true state of real being! Of course, this three are one and one is three itself echoes the Catholic Christian

view of the Triune God, the Trinity, the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Tone poem #45 of the *Tao* parallels this Buddhist view of Truth and emptiness:

#45

What is most perfect seems to be incomplete;  
 But it, utility is unimpaired.  
 What is most full seems to be empty;  
 But its usefulness is inexhaustible.  
 What is most full seems to be empty;  
 But, its usefulness is inexhaustible.  
 What is most straight seems to be crooked.  
 The greatest skill seems to be clumsy.  
 The greatest eloquence seems to stutter.  
 Hasty movement overcomes cold,  
 But, tranquility overcomes heat.  
 By being greatly tranquil,  
 One is qualified to be the ruler of the world.  
 However, this unity without division is reflected within the Analects of  
 Confucius, namely,  
 unity of a person with self and the consequent lack of duplicity, namely,  
 being honest:

Man's very life is honesty, in that without it, he will be lucky indeed if he escapes with his life. (*Analects, Book VI, No. 17*)

Buddha, literally, the “enlightened one” not only favors light, but looks to light to dispel darkness and Buddha insists that humans avoid all forms of darkness. Indeed, the “dust” mentioned within these *Ten DharmaRealms*, as well as ignorance correspond as an obstruction to light by material reality since such darkness light can not penetrate. Thus, the Buddha prefers *yang*, as the light and dry of the mind to the *yin*, the shadow and wet of the body and the material world. So, the purpose of the Buddha’s self-reflection is the pure white light of *yang* which contains no distinctions or differences.

The logic of this “mind” of Buddha may be clearly found within the “commentary” accompanying the third of the *DharmaRealms*, entitled *The DharmaRealms of those Enlightened to Conditions*. Again, as in *Tao*, the commentary states: “Name and form are the trouble.” “Name” is trouble

because of the human use of words. Words enable human aggressiveness as they attach their words to beings, the knowable and even the unknowable and proceed to live by and think according to those names rather than be receptive to understanding the world in which they live. “Form” is trouble because the “form” of beings which humans see are more like appearances than realities. Indeed, a given “form”, such as a saltine cracker tastes one way when human taste buds are receptive, but in another way, with no taste, when a person holds one’s nose. Thus, humans who judge according to forms and, therefore, appearances are in “trouble”. This brief description of “name and form” points Buddha to the conclusion contained within the first poem: “*The Tathagatas* (literally, ‘all things’) are made from the mind alone.” Yet, this view of the mind’s verbal “world creations” is not unique to the Oriental view, in this case, the Buddhists’ view. Albert Camus takes a parallel view in his *Myth of Sisyphus*. Camus directs the reader to place a right hand over one’s heart and feel the beating heart. Then Camus observes that “everything else is construction.” Thus, Camus writes that the mind creates words which construct the world of appearances, worlds of “men,” “women,” “chairs,” “tables,” entities all of which are mental creations and exist in the world of the mind, but none of which exist in the real world.

So, the Buddha, in order to be pure, free from the “dirt” of material and mental appearances, therefore, must remove the self of the mind from all “connection” to the world in which s/he lives in order to rid her/his mind of all things named and formed beings to reach the light in which no specific distinctions exist - while light, remember contains all colors but is not a specific color! So the science of spectrometry supports *The Ten DharmaRealms*

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Now, given this short background for understanding, the following uncovers the logic of the Buddha’s thinking about the world of beings. The Sanskrit word Buddha literally means not big and thus not little, so the effect of this meaning renders the meaning of Buddha as self-less, implying no distinction and no division. Why? Well, any “big” or “little” would imply comparison against a specific form and thereby require a name, indeed, many names - grammatically, the positive adjective, such as “big” has a comparative, such as “bigger” and a superlative, such as “biggest”. The same, of course would apply to “little”. So, Buddha-as enlightened has no identity because Buddha-as-enlightened is not a form and, therefore, has no name! The result of this implication is that Buddha seeks to annihilate any form of self or individuality in the quest for enlightenment! Of course, this

effort runs counter to the *New Testament* emphasis upon God, the Father's concern for each individual human being as manifested by the life, death and resurrection of Christ. Indeed, the very prayer which Christ gave in response to the question, "how do we pray?" calls God by the Hebrew word Abba, literally, Daddy and, therefore, means that all who pray this prayer are children. Then the proverbial curiosity of the human mind is also a human curse to Buddha because curiosity leads human beings to seek knowledge and understanding because "...the more you understand the more confused you become and the less you understand", as the commentary 5 observes. But, this individualized human curiosity to search does not end here. No, this is only the beginning of that kind of human thinking which leads to "hell." The curiosity to understand involves human beings in knowing material beings through their appearances to human sense perceptions; this knowing occasions naming them and this naming creates a whole other world of appearances. Examples abound but consider only one. Take human being. We sense, know and name men and women through knowing individual men and women. Yet, human being is a construct of men and women and the words "men" and "women" are constructs created by the human mind as a result of meeting individual men and women. So, our words create a world of appearances wherein we humans accustom ourselves to live. So, these words create a mist, a fog, or, as Buddha calls it "dust" which obscures human vision of being.

Again, this view of the material world and the mind's connection to it being "hell" is not unique to the Oriental world, in this case the Buddhist view of the world. Jean Paul Sartre creates a similar view within his *Huis Clos* (*No Exit*) novel. The play's three participants find themselves "down below," having died. Estelle, the lesbian realizes that each of the three is the other's tormentor, or torturer, particularly because not only is the place where they find themselves lacking both in windows and doors, but each of them lacks eye lids, so no one of them can escape the look of the other into the soul of each. In addition, of course, the retina of each reflects the image of the one looking back to the looker, so in both cases, each person experiences torment twice over. Thus, Garcon concludes: "Hell is other people."

But, this (human) desire to understand creates more problems, as far as Buddha is concerned. The desire to understand leads each human to a desire to be in contact with that which s/he seeks to understand. Such contact, however, produces the feelings of pleasure and pain. Then, from

such feelings of pleasure, “love arises”. Yet, “with love comes hate” because “you like to get involved with the present situations, but you hate painful circumstances”. Therefore, happiness and unhappiness are generated by humans within their lives because of their involvement with the beings within the material world. Finally, this love leads to the desire to grasp that which is loved and “this grasping leads to becoming” because “to grasp” means that you reach for and take hold of material beings in their various diverse forms and such a person no longer seeks just being! In addition, such grasping necessarily involves the human being into the mortal world of becoming and dying leading that person away from the spiritual world of being, or immortal living. The human, however, is made for the immortal world of being, yet, the fact is the human being’s mind is born into a mortal body. Therefore, the human must avoid the circumstances of the darkness within material reality or condemn the self to a world of becoming, a place of dying and death!

Buddha, therefore, seeks the world of light, the world of spirituality and the world of immortal being because all humans are born to live an immortal existence, a life united with being. So, as the commentary on the first poem, “The *DharmaRealm* of *Bodhisattvas*” states: “Sentient beings when enlightened leap out of the dust.” Therefore, as Buddha does and any Bodhisattvas, of which all humans are, can do, all can live in the spiritual world wherein no dust, or material appearances exist and no appearances can stimulate human desires. Thus, imitating Buddha these *bodhisattva* humans may “..awaken to the knowledge that all phenomena, or appearances are non-existent”. (See the class notes on the two basic schools of buddhism and their different views about being and non-being, existence and non-existence because no buddhist view can be understood without this awareness of their differences concerning being and non-being.

Actually, the Greek Pre-socratic, Parmenides looked upon the world in a parallel manner and wrote a book about this with two chapters, one about being and existence and the second about becoming and appearances.) Now that Buddha (or any bodhisattva) no longer “lives in the dust”, “..he is no longer a slave to his body, working from morning to night to prove it with food, clothing and a place to live.”

Buddha (and any *buddhisattva*) can “...concentrate on the six perfections: giving, holding precepts, patience, vigor, samadhi and wisdom.” Of course, this process to perfection can reverse itself. This reverse begins

with “contact” with material beings through the mind’s desire to understand, as described above and, therefore generates greed because “beings become animals as a result of one thing: greed”. Furthermore, such material attachment and consequent greed necessitates that continuous mortal re-incarnation into the material world of beings which precludes a bodhisattva from living in the unchanging immortal and spiritual existence united with being as an enlightened Buddha. Thus, the commentary observes:

If they don’t cultivate according to the Buddha precepts, they will fall even faster.

The ancients have a saying, ‘The majority of those standing at the gates of the hells are Sanghans and Taoists’s. All the old Taoists and Buddhist monks who are greedy are waiting at the doors of hell saying. ‘Quick! Send me to the hells. Hurry up and let me come in!’

Once in, it’s a lot of fun inside. They think the hells will provide good entertainment so they go there, but once they arrive, they realize it is not a game. Greed, therefore generates bad karma because being greedy means that a person is grasping and holding onto material beings, thus, making the mind and soul a slave to bodily desire. So, one goes to hell because of “...ignorance, affliction, stupidity and confusion” and, therefore, one “...can’t do good deeds”. Only when one is free generally from material contact with worldly beings and consequently detached from all human desire and specifically from greed can one practice the “four Holy Truths: suffering, accumulation, extinction and the Way”. “Suffering,” however, is the entry to the realm of “Truth,” as the story of the King and the “cultivator” indicates. The characteristics of the king are his lack of contention and his lack of hate, notwithstanding his repeated loss of limbs and the continuous attacks upon him by the “cultivator.”

Now, the *Tao* of humans is harmony, a balance of *yin* and *yang* so “beings which become people are neither completely good nor completely bad.” “Beings,” therefore, “...with a preponderance of good are born in the heavens and those who are thoroughly bad become animals, hungry ghosts or fall into hells.” Two groups of beings, however *asuras* and *ghosts* are enemies of all humans and, therefore, all *bodhisattvas*. *Asuras* are present and occasion contention and ghosts are present and occasion hate. Indeed, the Sanskrit word *asura* means *ugly* and the *male yang asura’s* nature is to

initiate fighting, to generate contention so any human who involves self in contention runs the risk of becoming an asura for eternity. *Ghosts*, on the contrary, are, entities who exist between light and darkness “...masses of *yin* energy which have shadow and no form or form and no shadow” and their characteristic is *hate*. Of course, this assignation of “good” and “bad” to the *Tao’s yin* and *yang* is radically Buddhist and, therefore is a Buddhist use of the *yin* and *yang*.

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## The Ten DharmaRealms<sup>3</sup>

If there are people who wish to understand  
All members of the three periods of time<sup>4</sup>,  
They should contemplate the nature of the *DharmaRealms*.  
The Tathagatas<sup>5</sup> are made from mind alone.

### #1

The *Tao* which can be told of is not the eternal *Tao*.  
The name which can be named is not the eternal name:  
The Nameless is the origin of Heaven and Earth;  
The Named is the Mother of all things.  
Therefore, let there always be non-being, so we may see their subtlety,  
And let there always be being, so we may see their outcome.  
The two are not the same, but after they are produced, they have different  
names.  
They both may be called deep and profound,  
Deeper and more profound,  
The door of all subtleties!

### #14

We look at it (*Tao*) and do not see it;  
Its name is The Indivisible.  
We listen to it and do not hear it;  
Its name is The inaudible.  
We touch it and do not find it;  
Its name is The Subtle (Formless).  
These three cannot be inquired into, and hence merge into one.  
Going up high, it is not bright and coming down low, it is not dark.  
Infinite and boundless, it cannot be given any name;  
It reverts to nothingness.

8

This is called shape without shape, form without objects.

It is The Vague and Elusive.

Meet it and you will not see its head.

Follow it and you will not see its back.

Hold onto the Tao or (the) Old in order to master the things of the present.

From this One may know the primeval beginning (of the universe).

This is called the Bond (or Thread) of *Tao*.

#56

He who knows, does not speak.

He who speaks, does not know.

Close the mouth.

Shut the doors

.Blunt the sharpness.

Unite the tangles

Soften the light.

Become one with the dusty world.

This is called profound identification.

Therefore, it is impossible either to be intimate and close to Tao or to be  
distant and indifferent  
to *Tao*.

It is impossible either to benefit Tao or to harm *Tao*.

It is impossible either to honor Tao or to disgrace *Tao*.

For this reason *Tao* is honored by the world.

#12

The five colors cause one's eyes to be blind.

The five tones cause one's ears to be deaf.

The five flavors cause one's palate to be spoiled.

Racing and hunting cause one's mind to be mad.

Goods that are hard to get injure one's activities.

For this reason, the wise person is concerned with the belly, not the eyes.

Therefore, he rejects the one but accepts the other.

## **The Dharmarealm of Bodhisatvas # 1**

Neither great nor small

Neither gone nor come

In the world systems like motes of dust  
They shine upon each others' lotus thrones.

The Sanscrit word Buddha is actually bu da and in Cantonese means "not big." The Buddha being selfless is "not big." Nor is Buddha "little," for, if he were "little," he would not be Buddha. The Buddha's *dharmā* exhausts empty space and pervades the *Dhramarealm*. So, Buddha is nowhere and everywhere, neither past, nor future, but present! Just as light contains all color, so Buddha contains everything which exists.

#44

One may know the world without going out of doors.  
One may see The Way of Heaven without looking through the windows.  
The further one goes, the less one knows.  
Therefore, the wise person knows without going about;  
Understands without seeing.  
And accomplishes without any action.

#52

There was a beginning of the universe  
Which may be called the Mother of the universe.  
He who has found the Mother (*Tao*)  
And thereby understands her sons (beings)  
And having understood the son,  
Still keeps to its Mother,  
Will be free from danger throughout his lifetime.  
Close the mouth  
Shut the doors (of cunning and desires)  
And to the end of life there will be peace without toil.  
Open the mouth,  
Meddle with affairs and to the end of life there will be no salvation.  
Seeing what is small is called enlightenment.  
Keeping to weakness is called strength.  
Use the light.  
Revert to enlightenment.  
And thereby avoid danger to one's life.  
This is called practicing the eternal.

#54

Who is firmly established is not easily shaken.

Who has a firm grasp does not easily let go.  
From generation to generation his ancestral sacrifices shall be continued  
without fail.

Cultivated in the individual, character will become genuine;  
Cultivated in the family, character will become abundant;  
Cultivated in the village, character will multiply;  
Cultivated in the state, character will prosper;  
Cultivated in the world, character will become universal.

Therefore, according to the character of the individual, judge the individual;  
According to the character of the family, judge the family;  
According to the character of the village, judge the village;  
According to the character of the state, judge the state;  
According to the character of the world, judge the world.

How do I know this is so?  
From within myself.

## **The Dharmarealm of Buddhas # 2**

Sentient beings when enlightened  
Leap out of the dust.  
Their six perfections<sup>6</sup> and ten thousand practices  
At all times are nurtured.

The Sanskrit word, *bodhisattva* means enlightened one, so such a one “leaps out of the dust,” or material reality, that is, that which causes opaqueness or darkness, as does matter. Bodhisattvas are twofold, that is, one who causes others to become enlightened and one who is enlightened. A parallel to understand that each person is both a bodhisattva and a buddha is to compare the child in whom the adult is present to the adult who the child becomes.

#3

Do not exalt the worthy, so that the people shall not compete.  
Do not value rare treasures, so that the people shall not steal.  
Do not display objects of desire so people’s hearts shall not be disturbed.  
Therefore, in the government of the wise,  
He keeps their hearts vacuous,  
Fills their bellies,  
Weakens their ambitions,  
And strengthens their bones.

He always causes his people to be without knowledge or desire.  
 And the crafty to be afraid to act.  
 By acting without actions, all things will be in order.

## #13

“Favor and disgrace cause one dismay;  
 What we value and what we fear are within the Self”.  
 What does this mean,  
 “Favor and disgrace cause one dismay?”  
 Those who receive a favor from above are dismayed when they receive it,  
 And dismayed when they lose it.  
 What does this mean,  
 “What we value and what we fear are within the Self?”  
 We have fears because we have a self (literally, a mortal body),  
 When we do not regard that self as self,  
 What have we to fear?  
 Therefore, he who values the world as self  
 May then be entrusted with the government of the world;  
 And he who loves the world as self,  
 The world may then be entrusted to his care.

## #15

The wise of old had subtle wisdom and depth of understanding.  
 So profound that they could not be understood..  
 Because they could not be understood,

## 11

Perforce must they be so described:  
 Cautious, like crossing a wintry stream,  
 Irresolute, like one fearing danger all around,  
 Grave, like one acting as a guest,  
 Self-effacing like ice beginning to melt,  
 Genuine, like a piece of undressed wood,  
 Open-minded, like a valley and mixing freely, like murky water.  
 Who can find repose in a muddy world?  
 By lying still, it becomes clear.  
 Who can maintain his calm for long?  
 By activity, it comes back to life.  
 He who embraces this Tao, guards against being over-full.  
 Because he guards against being over-full,

He is beyond wearing out and renewal.

### **Dharmarealms of Those Enlightened to Conditions #3**

The Holy Sage enlightened to Conditions  
 Dozes high on the mountain peaks alone.  
 Springtime's flowers wither in the fall  
 In an interconnected cycle of twelve links.

When a Buddha is in the world, then sages are called those who “are enlightened to conditions”; but when no Buddha is in the world, sages are called “solitary enlightened ones,” Pratyebuddhas because they are enlightened by themselves. The sage seeks the high mountain perch because from there the sage sees the coming to birth in Springtime and the dying in Wintertime, realizing that all mortal things die and only the enlightened live throughout the cycle of the seasons and during the twelve months of every year.

The contraries are: unconditioned and conditioned; the “conditioned” occurs when humans are attached to something; Socratically, attachments would be to “wealth, honor and reputation.” The Buddhist tradition compares the wise person to the mountain swans; they leave their mountain lake, move from puddle to puddle, without making a home anywhere until they return to the clear waters of their mountain lake.

#### #61

A big country may be compared to the lower part of a river.

It is the converging point of the world;

It is the female of the world.

The female (yin) always overcomes the male (yang) by tranquility.

And by tranquility she is underneath.

A big state can take over a small state if it places itself below the small state.

And the small state can take over a big state if it places itself below the big state.

Thus, some, by placing themselves below, take over others.

And some, by being naturally low, take over other states.

After all, what a big state wants is but to annex and herd others.

Since both big and small states get what they want,

The big state should place itself low.

## #32

Tao is eternal and has no name.  
 Though its simplicity seems insignificant, no one in the world can master it.  
 If kings and barons would hold on to it, all things would submit to them  
 spontaneously.  
 Heaven and earth unite to drip sweet dew.  
 Without the command of men, it drips evenly over all.  
 As soon as there were regulations and institutions, there were names.  
 As soon as there are names, know that it is time to stop.  
 It is by knowing when to stop that one can be free from danger.  
 Analogically, Tao in the world may be compared to rivers and streams  
 running into the sea  
 The universe is everlasting.  
 The reason the universe is everlasting  
 Is that it gives life to others (through its transformations).  
 There it can long endure.  
 Therefore, the wise person puts self last,  
 And finds self in the foremost place.  
 Regards his body as accidental,  
 And his body is thereby preserved.  
 Is it not because he does not live for Self  
 That his Self is realized?

### **The Dharmarealm of Sound Hearers (#4)**

The S'rāvaks Sangha  
 Both men and women  
 Contemplate and Practice The Four Holy Truths,  
 Concealing the real and displaying the provisional.

S'rāvaks, also called Arhats can fly, transform themselves and spiritually penetrate material things. Fruition is spiritual enjoyment and exists on four levels: first fruition cuts off delusion when we sensibly perceive things; the second cuts off thought delusions; the third cuts off delusions of dust and sand; the fourth fruition is that of the S'rāvaks which has almost pierced through ignorance, but still is not entirely free from ignorance, so he can not yet become enlightened, a Buddha, so the sage in this fourth fruit cultivates the *Dhrama* of the Four Holy Truths: suffering, accumulation, extinction and The Way.

This is the first path of the Four Holy (or Sagely) Paths. An Arhat is one who has attained the renunciation of all desires and no attachment to anything. Thus, he will be liberated from the reincarnation of the Six Paths as soon as his Karmic causes are completely lived. This Path is the joyful state of existence beyond the worldly birth and death because Arhats are enlightened that worldly beings are unreal and die; their enlightenment results from them listening to the Four Noble Truths.

The entire “brotherhood” of monks and hermits is called the “Samgha.” The “Four Holy Truths” are the essence of Buddhism; a person must live a life of meditation on these Four: (1) being a soul in the world is ill, so, suffering is a Holy Truth; (2) so, when we understand the origin of ill, greed and delight which leads to rebirth this understanding is a Holy Truth; (3) so stopping that craving, withdrawing from it, renouncing it, liberation from it, nonattachment is also a Holy Truth; (4) finally, the Holy, eight fold path of right views, right intentions, right speech, right conduct, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration is a Holy Truth.

#### #41

When the highest type of men hear *Tao*, they diligently practice it.

When the average type of men hear *Tao*, they half believe in it.

When the lowest type of men hear *Tao*, they laugh heartily at it.

If they did not laugh at it, it would not be *Tao*.

Therefore, there is the established saying:

The Tao which is bright (*yang*) appears to be dark (*yin*).

The Tao which goes forward appears to fall backward.

Great virtue appears like a valley.

Great purity appears like disgrace.

Far-reaching virtue appears to be changeable.

The great square has no corners.

The great implement (or talent) is slow to mature.

Great music sounds faint.

Great form has no shape.

Tao is hidden and nameless.

Yet, it is Tao alone that skillfully provides for all and brings them to perfection.

#### #6

The Spirit of the Valley never dies.

It is called the Mystic Female (the principle of yin).

The door of the Mystic Female

Is the root of Heaven and Earth.  
 Continuously, continuously,  
 It seems to remain.  
 Draw upon it  
 And it serves you with ease.

#### #64

That which lies still is easy to hold;  
 That which is not yet manifest is easy to forestall;  
 That which is brittle (like ice) easily melts;  
 That which is minute easily scatters.  
 Deal with a thing before it is there;  
 Check disorder before it is rife.  
 A tree with a full span's girth begins from a tiny sprout;  
 A nine-storied terrace begins with a clod of earth.  
 A journey of a thousand li begins at one's feet.  
 He who acts, spoils;  
 He who grasps, lets slip.  
 Because the wise person does not act, he does not spoil,  
 Because he does not grasp, he does not let slip.  
 The affairs of men are often spoiled within an act of completion,  
 By being careful at the end as at the beginning, failure is averted.  
 Therefore, the wise person desires to have no desire,  
 And values not objects difficult to obtain;  
 Learns that which is unlearned,  
 And restores what the multitude has lost.  
 That he may assist in the course of Nature and not presume to interfere.

### **The Dharmarealm of Gods(# 5)**

The six desire and brahma gods  
 With five precepts and ten good acts,  
 Plant seeds that have outflows  
 So the turning wheel is hard to stop.

There are four realms: desire, form and formless; in the desire realm six realms exist. Our world is under the first of these, called the heaven of the Four Kings. The heaven above us is half way up Mount Sumeru, so Mount Sumeru is half within the realm of men. The Four Kings

govern the four sides of the mountain, east, west, north and south as are the four continents connected to them, Jumbudvipa to the south, Purvavideha to the east, Aparagodaniya to the west and Uttaraakuru to the north. The gods in the heaven of the Four Kings have a life span of five hundred years and each day and night in that heaven is the equivalent of fifty human years.

The three kinds of life are: men, animals and plants; the six planes of life are: the Gods, the Asuras, Men, Ghosts, Animals and Hells. The “Gods” are “above” us in the sense that their material constitution is more refined than that of humans; their emotions are less course and lifespan is longer. “Asuras” also are “celestial beings, perhaps our equivalent of angels.

### #34

The Great *Tao* flows everywhere.

It may go left or right.

All things depend on it for life and it does not turn away from them.

It accomplishes its task but does not claim credit for it.

It clothes and feeds all things, but does not claim to be master over them.

It accomplishes its task but does not claim credit for it.

It clothes and feeds all things, but does not claim to be master over them.

Always without desires, it may be called The Small.

All things come to it and it does not master them;

It may be called The Great.

Therefore, the wise person never strives himself for the great and thereby the great is achieved.

Great form has no shape.

Tao is hidden and nameless.

Yet, it is Tao alone that skillfully provides for all and brings them to perfection.

### #25

There was something undifferentiated and yet complete

Which existed before heaven and earth.

Soundless and formless, it depends on nothing and does not change.

It operates everywhere and is free from danger.

It may be considered the Mother of the universe.

Id do not know its name; I call it Tao.

If forced to give it a name, I shall call it Great.

Now, being great means functioning everywhere.

Functioning everywhere means to be far-reaching.

Being far-reaching means returning to the original point.

Therefore, Tao is great.  
 Heaven is great.  
 Earth is great and the king is also great.  
 There are four great things in the universe and the king is one of them.  
 Man models himself after Earth.  
 Earth models itself after Heaven.  
 Heaven models itself after Tao and Tao models itself after Nature.

### #37

The Tao never does, yet, through it everything is done.  
 If princes and dukes can keep the Tao, the world will of its own accord be reformed.  
 When reformed and rising to action,  
 Let it be restrained by Nameless pristine simplicity.  
 The Nameless pristine simplicity is stripped of desire (for contention).  
 By stripping of desire, quiescence is achieved,  
 And the world arrives at peace of its own accord.

### #52

There was a beginning of the universe,  
 Which may be called the Mother of the universe.  
 He who has found the Mother (Tao),  
 And therefore, understands her sons (things),  
 And having understood the son,  
 Still keeps to its Mother,  
 Will be free from danger throughout his lifetime.  
 Close the mouth,  
 Shut the doors (of cunning and desires)  
 And to the end of life there will be peace without toil.  
 Open the mouth,  
 Meddle with affairs and to the end of life there will be no salvation.  
 Seeing what is small is called enlightenment.  
 Keeping to weakness is called strength.  
 Use the light,  
 Revert to enlightenment and thereby avoid danger to one's life –  
 This is called practicing the eternal.

## **The Dharmarealm of Asuras (#6)**

Asuras have a violent nature  
 Laden with blessings, lacking power.  
 Absolutely determined to fight,  
 They bob along in *karma's* tow.

This is a peculiar path in the Six paths; in terms of material enjoyment and psychic power it is similar to Deva, however, in some ways it is worse than the Human Path. The male Asura is extremely ugly while the female Asura is as beautiful as an angel. Male Asuras always fight with each other and they are cruel and furious, proud of themselves, reluctant to learn and reluctant to practice Buddhist teachings. Asura is a collective term for Yaksas, Raksasas and other demons. This Dharmarealm is formless. Although they have a cultivated goodness and perform good deeds, they are very combative, full of anger; because they have not rid themselves of anger, they are not qualified for entering heavens and hence they fall into this Realm of Asuras. So, in order not to fall into this Realm of Asuras, one must retain a compassionate heart, be righteous in compliance with propriety, be honest and benevolent.

#54

Who is firmly established is not easily shaken.  
 Who has a firm grasp does not easily let go.  
 From generation to generation has ancestral sacrifices shall be continued  
 without fail.  
 Cultivated in the individual, character will become genuine;  
 Cultivated in the family, character will become abundant;  
 Cultivated in the village, character will multiply;  
 Cultivated in the state, character will prosper;  
 Cultivated in the world, character will become universal.  
 Therefore, according to character of the individual, judge the individual;  
 According to character of the family, judge the family;  
 According to character of the village, judge the village;  
 According to character of the state, judge the state;  
 According to character of the world, judge the world.  
 How do I know the world is so? From within myself.

### **The Dharmarealm of People (#7)**

The way of men is harmony.  
 With merit and error interspersed.

On virtuous deeds you rise, offenses make you fall.  
It has nothing to do with anyone else at all.

This realm includes both happiness and suffering since it represents a material world of dust and therefore, the mind is always in contact with matter, given the fact that whatever is in the mind comes through the senses. Since the soul is within the body freedom is limited; yet, suffering can be the main cause or condition to allow man to possess a kind heart and therefore allow man to pursue the Buddhist Way, so in this respect, the Human Path is better than the Deva Path. But, even at death, if one were to want to be reborn human, that possibility is difficult since such a person must practice the Five Precepts:

1. avoid killing, since one must show compassion to animals, birds and fish, even plants;
2. avoid stealing namely, stealing of a flower or even grass without the consent of the owner of the property and love self and be honest to self;
3. avoid illicit sexual activity, which means one must practice monogamy ;
4. avoid lying, so if a person distorts Truth or confuses justice with injustice, one indulges in lying.
5. avoid alcoholic beverages since it is better to avoid intoxicant beverages if one is to avoid causing evil.

### #33

He who knows others is wise;  
He who knows himself is enlightened.  
He who conquers others has physical strength.  
He who conquers himself is strong.  
He who is contented is rich.  
He who acts with vigor has will;  
He who does not lose his place (with *Tao*) will endure.  
He who dies but does not really perish enjoys long life.

### #44

Fame or oneself, which does one love more?  
Oneself or material goods, which has more worth?  
Loss (of self) or possession (of goods), which is the greater evil.  
Therefore: he who loves most spends most,

He who hoards much loses much.  
 The contented man meets no disgrace;  
 Who knows when to stop runs into no danger -  
 That person can long endure.

## #49

The wise person has no decided opinions and feelings (*hsin*, literally “heart” which denotes both thinking and feeling in Chinese; indeed, knowing for a Chinese is feeling as in the belly).  
 But regards the people’s opinions and feelings as his own.

The good ones I declare good;  
 The bad ones I also declare good.  
 That is the goodness of Virtue.  
 The honest ones I believe;  
 The liars I also believe;  
 That is the faith of Virtue.  
 The wise person dwells in the world peacefully, harmoniously.  
 The people of the world are brought into a community of heart,  
 And the wise regard them all as their own children.

## #3

Do not exalt the worthy, so that the people shall not compete.  
 Do not value rare treasures, so that the people shall not steal.  
 Do not display objects of desire so people’s hearts shall not be disturbed.  
 Therefore, in the government of the wise,  
 He keeps their hearts vacuous,  
 Fills their bellies,  
 Weakens their ambitions and strengthens their bones.  
 He always causes his people to be without knowledge or desire,  
 And the crafty to be afraid to act.  
 By acting without actions, all things will be in order.

## #13

“Favor and disgrace cause one dismay;  
 What we value and what we fear are within the Self”.  
 What does this mean:  
 “Favor and disgrace cause one dismay?”  
 Those who receive favor from above are dismayed when they receive it,  
 And dismayed when they lost it.  
 What does this mean:

“What we value and what we fear are within the Self?”  
 We have fears because we have a self (literally, a mortal body).  
 When we do not regard that self as self, what have we have to fear?  
 Therefore, he who values the world as self  
 May then be entrusted with the government of the world;  
 And he who loves the world as self- the world may then be entrusted to his  
 care.

### **The Dharmarealm of Animals (#8)**

Eager animals feed on greed,  
 Never sated by a lot,  
 Because they make what's black white  
 They don't distinguish wrong from right.

This realm is special, since any being within the six realms which do not belong to any other of the five realms are found here so, animals can exist in all the other five realms. Animals have minimal intelligence and consciousness; they live in adapting to nature and their actions spring from instinct without deliberation. Animal karma is neutral, neither good nor evil. Since they live naturally, they fight and sometimes eat each other; mosquitoes, flies, lice and worms die of disintegration; chickens, ducks, fish, goats and pigs are killed, cooked and eaten. So, the animal realm is one of suffering.

#29

There are those who conquer the world  
 And make of it (what they conceive and desire).  
 I see they will not succeed.  
 (For) the world is God's own Vessel.  
 It cannot be made (by human interference).  
 He who makes it spoils it. He who holds it, loses it.  
 For: Some things go forward and some things follow behind;  
 Some blow hot and some blow cold;  
 Some are strong and some are weak;  
 Some may break and some may fall.  
 Hence, the wise eschew (avoid) excess, eschew extravagance, eschew pride.

#42

Tao produced the One.

The One produced the two;  
 The two produced the three and the three produced the ten thousand things.  
 The ten thousand things carry the yin and embrace the yang,  
 And even through the blending of the material force they achieve harmony.  
 People hate to be children without parents, lonely people without spouses, or  
 men without food to eat.  
 And yet, kings and lords call themselves by these names.  
 Therefore, it is often the case that things gain by losing and lose by gaining.  
 What others have taught, I teach also:  
 “Violent and fierce people do not die a natural death.”  
 I shall make this the father of my teachings.

### #67

All the world says that my Tao is great and does not seem to resemble the  
 ordinary.  
 It is precisely because Tao is great that Tao does not resemble the ordinary.  
 If Tao did resemble it, Tao would have been small for a long time.  
 I have three treasures; guard and keep them.  
 The first is deep love.  
 The second is frugality.  
 And the third is not to dare to be ahead of the world.  
 Because of deep love, one is courageous.  
 Because of frugality, one is generous.  
 Because of not daring to be ahead of the world, one becomes the leader of  
 the world.  
 Not to be courageous by forsaking deep love,  
 To be generous by forsaking frugality.  
 And to be ahead of the world by forsaking following behind –  
 This is fatal.  
 For deep love helps one to win in the case of attack,  
 And to be firm in the case of defense.  
 When Heaven is to save a person, Heaven will protect him through deep  
 love.

## **The Dharmarealm of Hungry Ghosts (#9)**

The ghostly crew delights in hate,  
 Deluded by effects, confused about cause.  
 Their ignorance and up and downness

Grows greater each day, deeper each month.

Ghosts live in realm of anxiety, illusion and fear; their desires can not be satisfied and they can not eat because their throat is as narrow as a pin, their stomach as large as a drum – their condition would seem to parallel that of the Greek Midas whose greed was so intense that he died of starvation, since his appetite for gold was so absolute that he died of starvation. If a human is to avoid this realm, s\he must control one's desires so he must control his desire for money, sex, fame, food and sleep. Thus, meditation upon the fact of death is a necessity, as well as the fact that life is short and death is inevitable precludes eternal wealth; likewise meditation upon impurity and the inevitable loss of beauty; meditation on the temporal aspect of pleasure requires one to be temperate in eating and drinking as well as sleeping. So, the insatiable hunger of ghosts is a punishment for greed and results in everything they do becoming flames in their mouths.

#72

When the people do not fear what is dreadful,  
Then what is greatly dreadful will descend on them;  
Do not reduce the living space of their dwelling.  
Do not oppress their lives.

It is because you do not oppress them that they are not oppressed.  
Therefore, the wise person knows himself but does not show himself.  
He loves himself but does not exalt himself.  
Therefore, he rejects the one but accepts the other.

#73

To know that you do not know is the best.  
To pretend to know when you do not know is a disease.  
The wise person is free from the disease.  
Only when one recognizes this disease as a disease can one be free from it.

### **Dharmarealm of Hells (10)**

The hells' anxiety and suffering  
Is devoid of doors, yet one bores right in.  
Giving rise to delusion deeds are done.

The retribution is borne in due accord.

Here is suffering most severe, continuous and everlasting and humans create this realm of hell by committing unforgivable, evil deeds; such deeds are any one of the five deadly sins and they will stay in hell without any specific time to be freed: killing one's father or one's mother; killing an Arhat, shedding the Buddhist's blood; creating disharmony among the Sangha. So, the *karma* of such a person results in one's own conscience punishing one's own sins. Therefore, Buddhism has no so-called "afterlife" including "heaven" or "hell"; thus whether or not an Absolute or God exists is not only doubtful but totally unnecessary since humans bestow happiness or misery upon themselves; as the saying goes, "what goes around comes around," so if one does evil that evil comes back home to live and rest; the same is true if one does good.

The five deadly sins are: 1) killing one's father or\and 2) one's mother; 3) killing an Arhat<sup>6</sup>; (4) shedding the Buddha's blood; (5) creating disharmony among the Sangha<sup>7</sup>.

#### #24

He who stands on tiptoe does not stand (firm);  
 He who strains his strides does not walk (well);  
 He who reveals himself is not luminous  
 He who justifies himself is not far-famed;  
 He who boasts of himself is not given credit;  
 He who prides himself is not chief among men.  
 These in the eyes of *Tao*  
 Are called 'the dregs and tumors of Virtue,'  
 Which are things of disgust.  
 Therefore, the man of *Tao* spurns them.

#### #14

We look at it (*Tao*) and do not see it;  
 Its name is The Invisible.  
 We listen to it and do not hear it;  
 Its name is The Inaudible.  
 We touch it and do not find it;  
 Its name is The Subtle (Formless) (  
 These three cannot be further inquired into;  
 And hence merge into one.  
 Going up high, it is not bright, and coming down low, it is not dark.

Infinite and boundless, it cannot be given any name;  
 It reverts to nothingness.  
 This is called shape without shape,  
 Form without objects.  
 It is The Vague and Elusive.  
 Meet it and you will not see its head.  
 Follow it and you will not see its back.  
 Hold on to the **Tao** or (the) Old in order to master the things of the present.  
 From this one may know the primeval beginning (of the universe).  
 This is called the bond (or, thread) of **Tao**.

## #23

Nature says few words.  
 For the same reason a whirlwind does not last a whole morning;  
 Nor does a rainstorm last a whole day:  
 What causes them?  
 It is Heaven and Earth (Nature).  
 If even Heaven and Earth cannot make them last long,  
 How much less can man?  
 Therefore, he who follows **Tao** is identified with **Tao**.  
 He who follows virtue is identified with virtue.  
 He who abandons **Tao** is identified with the abandonment of Tao.  
 He who is identified with **Tao** – Tao is also happy to have him.  
 And he who is identified with the abandonment – abandonment is also  
 happy to abandon him.  
 It is only when one does not have enough faith in others that others will have  
 no faith in him.  
 All of these ten realms – a single thought –  
 Are not apart from your present thought.  
 Being able to awake to that thought  
 Is climbing to stand on the other shore.

## #11

Thirty spokes are united around the hub to make a wheel,  
 But, it is on its non-being that the utility of the carriage depends.  
 Clay is molded to form a utensil,  
 But, it is on its non-being that the utility depends.  
 Doors and windows are cut out to make a room,  
 But, it is on its non-being that the utility of the room depends.  
 Therefore, turn being into advantage, and turn non-being into utility.

## #21

The marks of great Character (Te) follow alone from the Tao.  
 The thing which is called Tao is elusive, elusive, evasive.  
 Yet, latent in it are forms, elusive, evasive;  
 Yet, latent in it are objects, dark and dim;  
 Yet, latent in it is the life-force, the life-force being very true.  
 Latent in it are evidences.  
 From the days of old till now, its Named (manifested forms) have never  
 ceased.  
 By which we may view the Father of All Things.  
 How do I know the shape of Father of All things?  
 Through These! (the manifested forms).

All of these ten realms – a single thought –  
 Are not apart from your present thought.  
 Being able to awake to that thought  
 In climbing to stand on the other shore.

A parallel here, of course, is found in the third part of the Myth of  
 Gilgamesh, as Gilgamesh traverses the river of death on his way from the  
 moral side to the wise one, Upnapishtim the eternal side of the shore.  
 Buddhism likewise conceives reality in two parts, the mortal and the  
 immortal part and as did Buddha, so the bodhisattva must pass from the  
 mortal to the immortal world wherein one is enlightened, the eternal shore.  
 Given the fact that to be enlightened seems to mean to be within light and  
 lose all difference and individuality, one's thought becomes central as both  
 the beginning and end of Buddha's meditation.

## #81

True words are not beautiful;  
 Beautiful words are not true.  
 A good man does not argue;  
 He who argues is not a good man.  
 A wise person has no extensive knowledge;  
 He who has extensive knowledge is not a wise person.

The wise person does not accumulate for himself.  
 The more he uses for others, the more he has himself.  
 The more he gives to others, the more he possesses of his own.

The Way of Heaven is to benefit others and not to injure.  
The Way of the wise is to act but not to compete.

### #65

In ancient times, those who practiced *Tao* well  
Did not seek to enlighten the people, but to make them ignorant.  
People are difficult to govern because they have too much knowledge.  
Therefore, he who rules the state through knowledge is a robber of the state.  
He who rules a state not through knowledge is a blessing to the state.  
One who knows these two things also (knows) the standard..  
Always to know the standard is called profound and secret virtue.  
Virtue becomes deep and far-reaching.  
And with it all things return to their original state.  
Then, complete harmony will be achieved,

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<sup>1</sup> The purpose of Buddhism is salvation and meditation is the chief means through which salvation is achieved; suffering is the basic fact of life.

<sup>2</sup> The Buddhist view is that the human being is a spirit ill at ease, a soul fallen from heaven, a stranger on earth; a similar view is found within the so-called "cave scene" in Book X of Plato's Republic wherein he alternates between *soma*, an omicron in Greek and *sema*, an epsilon in Greek, the former meaning *body*, the latter meaning *cave* or *jail cell*.  
for whom self-denial is the highest law and duty.

<sup>2</sup>**Pali:** Dhamma signifies the [underlying order](#) in [nature](#) and life (human or other) considered to be in accord with that order. The word Dharma literally means 'that which upholds or supports' (from the root 'Dhr' - to hold), here referring to the order which makes the [cosmos](#) and the harmonious complexity of the natural world possible. Dharma is a central concept in Indian civilization and the symbol of the dharma - [the wheel](#) - takes central place in the national flag of [India](#). Of course, the Tao displays itself as the yin/yang circle but as the wheel in tone poem #32. Its most frequent usage (in the sphere of morality and ethics) of dharma means 'right way of living', 'proper conduct', 'duty' or

<sup>5</sup> The Arahant is the "Perfected One" who has overcome The Three Poisons of Desire, Hatred and Ignorance. At the end of the present life, he is no longer reborn. In other words, he is finally freed from the suffering of existence in the cycle of birth and death, and attains Nirvana.

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<sup>6</sup> "The Sangha of the Blessed One's disciples who have practiced well... who have practiced straight-forwardly... who have practiced methodically... who have practiced masterfully — in other words, the four types [of noble disciples] when taken as pairs, the eight when taken as individual types — they are the Sangha of the Blessed One's disciples: worthy of gifts, worthy of hospitality, worthy of offerings, worthy of respect, the incomparable field of merit for the world."