

The 3 Refuges, the 8 Precepts, 5 Recollections and Dhammapada Verses

Group asks: Please give me the Three Refuges, so my mind will become peaceful. Thank you.

Leader says: Please sit with your backs straight, and calm your mind; now, repeat after me:

I now take refuge in the Buddha.

I now take refuge in the Dhamma.

I now take refuge in the Sangha.

For the second time, I take refuge in the Buddha.

For the second time, I take refuge in the Dhamma.

For the second time, I take refuge in the Sangha.

For the third time, I take refuge in the Buddha.

For the third time, I take refuge in the Dhamma.

For the third time, I take refuge in the Sangha.

Group asks: Please give me the eight precepts, so my retreat will be of great benefit, and my mind will be peaceful. Thank you.

Leader: Please clear your mind and pay close attention, then repeat after me:

1. *I undertake to keep the precept to abstain from killing or harming living beings on purpose.*
2. *I undertake to keep the precept to abstain from taking what is not given.*
3. *I undertake to keep the precept to abstain from all sexual activity*
4. *I undertake to keep the precept to abstain from telling lies and harsh speech.*
5. *I undertake to keep the precept to abstain from taking drugs and alcohol.*
6. *I undertake to keep the precept to abstain from eating solid food after the noonday meal.*
7. *I undertake to keep the precept to abstain from listening to music, singing, dancing, or beautifying my body with make-up, flowers, or perfumes.*
8. *I undertake to be loving and kind to myself and all living beings.*

Group asks: Now, Let us read the five recollections together.

1. I am subject to old age; I am not exempt from old age.
2. I am subject to illness; I am not exempt from illness.
3. I am subject to death; I am not exempt from death.
4. I will be separated from everyone and everything dear and agreeable to me.
5. I am the owner of my kamma, the heir of my kamma; I have kamma as my origin, kamma as my relative, kamma as my resort; I will be the heir of whatever kamma, good or bad, that I do.

Leader says: Now you have taken the three refuges, the precepts and recited the five recollections. This leads to Happiness and Peace. Sadhu! Sadhu! Sadhu!

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Leader: Now let us read the verses of the Dhammapada together;

Group Reads together:

1. Mind is the forerunner of all evil states. Mind is chief; mind made are they. If one speaks or acts with an unwholesome mind, because of that, suffering follows one, even as the wheel follows the hoof of the draft-ox.

2. Mind is the forerunner of all good states. Mind is chief; mind-made are they. If one speaks or acts with a pure mind, because of that, happiness follows one, even as one's shadow that never leaves.

3. "He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he robbed me", in those who harbor such thoughts hatred is not appeased.
4. "He abused me, he beat me, he defeated me, he robbed me", in those who do not harbor such thoughts hatred is appeased.
5. Hatred is never overcome by hatred in this world; hatred is only overcome by love. This is an eternal law.

11. In the unessential, we imagine the essential, in the essential, we see the unessential; anyone who entertains such wrong thoughts never will realize the truth.
12. What is essential we regard as essential, what is unessential, we regard as unessential. Anyone who entertains such right thoughts will realize the truth

16. Here one develops a mind that rejoices now, and in the future one rejoices. In both states the well doer rejoices. One who rejoices a lot will be able to see the purity of their own deeds, speech and thoughts.
18. When one is happy now, they will be happy in the future. In both states the well doer is happy. Thinking I have done good in the past, one becomes happy and will easily experience a blissful state of mind.

19. Though a person recites sacred texts, but doesn't act accordingly, that heedless person is like a cowherd who counts others' cows. They have no share in the fruits of the holy life.
20. Though a person recites the sacred texts very little, but acts in accordance with the teaching, they give up lust, hatred and delusion. They truly know what is good and this leads to a mind that is free from suffering. They cling to nothing here and in the future. In this way, one shares the fruits of the holy life.