THE HIGHEST BLESSINGS

(Maṅgala Sutta)

(Thus have I heard that the Blessed One)
    Was staying at Sāvatthi,
    Residing at the Jeta's Grove
    Then in the dark of the night, a radiant deva
    Illuminated all Jeta's Grove.
    She bowed down low before the Blessed One
    Then standing to one side she said:

'Devas are concerned for happiness
    And ever long for peace.
    The same is true for humankind.
    What then are the highest blessings?'

'Avoiding those of foolish ways,
    Associating with the wise,
    And honouring those worthy of honour.
    These are the highest blessings.

'Living in places of suitable kinds,
    With the fruits of past good deeds
    And guided by the rightful way.
    These are the highest blessings.

'Accomplished in learning and craftsman's skills,
    With discipline, highly trained,
    And speech that is true and pleasant to hear.
    These are the highest blessings.

'Providing for mother and father's support
    And cherishing family,
    And ways of work that harm no being,
    These are the highest blessings.

'Giving with Dhamma in the heart,
   Offering help to relatives and kin,
   And acting in ways that leave no blame.
   These are the highest blessings.

'Steadfast in restraint, and shunning evil ways,
   Avoiding intoxicants that dull the mind,
   And heedfulness in all things that arise.
   These are the highest blessings.

'Respectfulness and being of humble ways,
   Contentment and gratitude,
   And hearing the Dhamma frequently taught.
   These are the highest blessings.

'Patience and willingness to accept one's faults,
   Seeing venerated seekers of the truth,
   And sharing often the words of Dhamma.
   These are the highest blessings.

'The Holy Life lived with ardent effort,
   Seeing for oneself the Noble Truths
   And the realisation of Nibbāna.
   These are the highest blessings.

'Although involved in worldly ways,
   Unshaken the mind remains
   And beyond all sorrow, spotless, secure.
   These are the highest blessings.

'They who live by following this path
   Know victory wherever they go,
   And every place for them is safe.
   These are the highest blessings.'