

Prostrations to the Thirty-Five Buddhas

Four General Characteristics of Karma

- It's definite—good karma brings happiness, bad karma brings suffering
- It multiplies—one action, good or bad, brings numerous results
- We don't experience the result if we don't create the cause
- It's never lost—unless we purify bad karma or damage good karma through anger or wrong views

Four Aspects of a Complete Karma

1. The **basis**: the object of the action
2. The **intention**: the state of mind of the person performing the action. This has three parts: recognition, motive, and mental state (afflicted or virtuous)
3. The **deed**: actually performing the action
4. The **completion** of the action

Four Results of a Complete Karma

1. Fully-ripened result—an unfortunate rebirth from bad karma, a fortunate rebirth from good karma
2. Result similar to the cause in terms of experience—having experiences similar to the action you did
3. Result similar to the cause in terms of action—having the tendency to do that same action again
4. Environmental result

Purifying with Four Powers

1. Reliance—taking refuge and generating bodhicitta
2. Remedy—doing something virtuous.
Recommended practices are: 1) recite the names of buddhas, (2) recite mantras, (3) recite scriptures, (4) make buddha images or build stupas or monasteries, (5) meditate on emptiness, and (6) make offerings to buddhas or stupas.
3. Regret—feeling sincere regret, understanding that negative actions bring suffering
4. Resolution—promising to not do it again

How the Four Powers Counteract the Four Karmic Results

POWER	KARMIC RESULT PURIFIED
Reliance	Environmental result
Remedy	Fully ripened result
Regret	Result similar to the cause in terms of experience
Resolution	Result similar to the cause in terms of action

The Sutra of the Three Heaps

The Three Heaps are

1. Confession
2. Dedication
3. Rejoicing

[Alternatively, according to Nagarjuna's commentary, they are confessing, rejoicing, and making requests.]

Benefits of Reciting the Names

- Each time we recite the name of each Buddha, we purify a vast amount of negative karma.
- For example, reciting the name of the first Buddha—Shakyamuni Buddha—purifies 40,000 eons of negative karma.
- Reciting the fifth Buddha’s name, “Leader of the Warriors,” purifies 1,000 eons of negative karma, and karma created with speech, especially idle talk.

The Preliminary Practice of Prostrations, pages 64-69













Benefits of Prostrations

- Being born in a good state with a perfect body
- Having a sweet voice
- Being confident, not shy
- Being able to listen extensively to Dharma
- Having extensive devotion
- Having a good memory and clear mind
- Achieving extensive wisdom
- Achieving all realizations up to enlightenment...

The Preliminary Practice of Prostrations, pages 35-41

Prostrations in Retreat

- Start by taking refuge and generating bodhicitta
- Take time to think of the negative actions you wish to purify, and really generate the four powers sincerely
- Visualize the 35 Buddhas and go through the practice
- You can do one prostration to each Buddha while reciting the name as many times as possible—doing that 3 times = 105 prostrations
- OR prostrate 3 times to each buddha, reciting the name as many times as possible
- Then complete the rest of the prayer and dedicate