

## Begging for Watermelon | What is Karma?

Hi everyone, this is Nancy. Today is Dec. 4th, 2021. How are you doing. We often say that everything that happens to us is due to our own karma. We ourselves incur everything that happens to us. Today I would like to share with you an interesting and very inspiring story to help you understand this saying and karma.

One day, the Buddha and his two disciples, Ananda and Maudgalyayana were walking. They just finished eating the food they begged and then they felt were thirsty. There was no water, but there was a watermelon field nearby.

The Buddha said to Maudgalyayana, "Maudgalyayana, you go for alms and get us a watermelon."

Maudgalyayana said, "O.K. On my way."

However, after a while, Maudgalyayana came back empty-handed. Not only that, his robe was torn and he was in embarrassment.

The Buddha asked him, "Maudgalyayana, what happened?"

Maudgalyayana said, "Buddha, there is a girl in the shed in front of the field. She is guarding the watermelons. She has a wolf dog. You cannot imagine how vicious the girl is. When I arrived there, I begged for a watermelon. She said she wouldn't give me. Not only that, she also told the wolf dog to bite me. Fortunately, I ran fast."

The Buddha said, "Oh, that's what happened?"

The Buddha then told Ananda, "Ananda, you go."

Ananda said, "Buddha, Maudgalyayana is senior and No. 1 in supernatural power. If he could not do it, how can I do it?"

The Buddha said, "Don't worry. You go."

Shortly after, Ananda came back happily with two watermelons in hands.

Ananda said to the Buddha, "Buddha, what Maudgalyayana said is not right. I think that girl is really nice. I went there and she was very enthusiastic. She asked me to sit down, gave me some snacks, talked with me, and then picked two big watermelons for me."

Venerable Maudgalyayana felt embarrassed and asked, "Buddha, how could this be? Neither I nor Ananda have seen this girl before. Why was she so mean to me, but so nice to Ananda?"

The Buddha said, "Kalpas ago, you two were also my students and followed me. Whenever you had time, you would walk together like today. Once, when you two were walking, there was a dead mouse in the middle of the road. You saw the dead mouse, and had this thought, 'This dead mouse is annoying.' Then you kicked it to the side of the road. Ananda was a junior. He saw this dead mouse and felt that this dead mouse was so pitiful. He thought, 'It might have been my parents in the past lives. Now that it is an animal, died in the middle of the road, and stepped on by others, I need to help it. Ananda dug a hole

carefully, put the dead mouse in it, recited the mantra of rebirth three times, helped it take refuge in the Buddha, and then buried it.”

The Buddha then continued, “The dead mouse in that life is this girl in this life. Countless kalpas ago, you kicked it, so this life, she told the dog to bite you. Ananda helped it that life, so she was happy just by seeing Ananda.”

Amitabha! This is today’s Dharma share. All the beings share not only the same Buddha nature, but also similar emotions and habits. So treat every being the way we want to be treated. Thank you everyone for being here. I will see you next time. Bye.