

Illuminating Tara's Clear Light – A Commentary
7 – Our Precious Human Lives

As mammals our midbrains
wire us for empathy,
and as primates our forebrains
equip us for reason,

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but as humans our throats
crown us with speech
the king of all communication.

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If you are reading
this commentary and sadhana
it could only mean

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that you are currently enjoying
the eight freedoms,
and the five circumstantial advantages
as well as the five personal advantages.

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Unpacking the **eight** freedoms
we are currently **FREE** from enduring:

the violence and malice

of 1) a hell-like war zone;

the drought and famine

of 2) a hungry-ghost like environment;

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the fear, aggression, and befuddlement
of 3) an animal-like environment;
the stress-obscuring pleasure and privilege
of 4) a god-like environment;

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the lack and intolerance
of mindfulness, insight, and love
of 5) a barbarian-like environment;

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6) a body and mind whose faculties
are incomplete;
an interdependence and impermanence
denying 7) perception of reality;

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and 8) a world where individuals have failed to accomplish enlightenment and teach others how to do likewise

thus making the study and practice of the Buddha's path quite unlikely.

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Unpacking the **five** circumstantial
advantages
we are currently enjoying:

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1) living in a world
where there has been a Buddha,
either of flesh, blood, and bone,
or merely archetypically;

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2) living in a world
where the teachings of a Buddha
have been taught;

3) living in a world
where the teachings of a Buddha
are still present;

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4) living in a world
where the teachings of a Buddha
are still practiced;

and 5) living in a world
where there are favorable conditions

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thus making
the study and practice
of the Buddha's path
quite possible.

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Unpacking the **five**
personal advantages
we are currently enjoying:

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- 1) a life as a human being;
- 2) a life in a conducive environment;
- 3) a body and mind with faculties intact;
- 4) a conducive lifestyle

and 5) an enthusiasm
for the spiritual path

that makes
the study and practice
of the Buddha's path
quite possible.

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If we have the good fortune
to enjoy these eight freedoms,
these five circumstantial advantages,
and these five personal advantages

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and we do NOT use them
to escape Devadatta's domineering duality
of dread and desire

then we are truly throwing away
our golden opportunity.

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Perhaps that is why we chant:

“so let's make the most
of our precious lives!”