

## The Meaning of „Gruat Nam“ (Ritual of Determination)

The Bodhisattva Siddharta, who was to be our historical Buddha Gotama, did a „Gruat Nam“ ritual every existence, whenever he had done great wholesome deeds, he would pour water into the earth, calling mother earth as his witness and he wished as result that he shall become a Fully Enlightened Buddha in future.

In that night when he sat under the Bodhi tree, making a determination that he would not rise from this seat, until he had reached Buddhahood, it is said that the three beautiful daughters of Mara (could be translated as the devil) came and trying to tempt him by dancing half naked in front of him.

The Bodhisattva remained equanimous. Then Mara himself appeared with his army of demons and shot burning arrows at the Bodhisattva, but with Metta (loving kindness) he transformed those arrows into lotus flowers and returned them to Mara and his army.

Then the Bodhisattva touched the earth with his right hand saying mother earth is his witness, that for uncountable existences he had accumulated wholesome deeds (paramitta) to become a Buddha now. When he had spoken these words, the earth shook and mother earth appeared in form of a beautiful lady and she wrung all the water that the Bodhisattva had poured into the earth out of her long ponytail. The water washed away all the demons and temptations.

We have to see this story in a symbolic way. All good deeds we do help us to overcome the „demons“ inside ourselves, namely: greed (daughters of mara), hatred (fear, aversion from demons) might arise in our practice and delusion (not knowing lets the first two „demons“ arise).

Nowadays when Buddhists give alms and receive blessings from the Sangha they pour a glass of water into the earth to follow the example of the Buddhas „Gruat Nam“ and make wishes of whatever they want to attain.

