

Handout 6: Realms of Existence

Names of Realms

| Categories | | | Name of realm |
|------------|---------------------|--|---|
| 31 | Immaterial Plane | Immaterial Jhāna | Neither perception nor non-perception |
| 30 | | | Nothingness |
| 29 | | | Infinite consciousness |
| 28 | | | Infinite space |
| 27 | Fine Material Plane | 5 th Jhāna | Pure Abodes |
| 26 | | | Highest Pure Abode |
| 25 | | | Clear-sighted Abode |
| 24 | | | Beautiful Abode |
| 23 | | | Serene Abode |
| 22 | | | Durable Abode |
| 21 | | 4 th Jhāna | Gods without consciousness |
| 20 | | | Gods of great reward |
| 19 | | | Gods of steady aura |
| 18 | | 2 nd & 3 rd Jhāna | Gods of infinite aura |
| 17 | | | Gods of minor aura |
| 16 | | | Gods of radiant luster |
| 15 | | 1 st Jhāna | Gods of infinite luster |
| 14 | | | Gods of minor luster |
| 13 | | | Great Brahmās |
| 12 | Sensuous Plane | Happy Destinations | Ministers of Brahmā |
| 11 | | | Retinue of Brahmā |
| 10 | | | Gods wielding power over creation of others |
| 9 | | | Gods delighting in creation |
| 8 | | | Heaven of the contented Gods |
| 7 | | Deva Realms | Heaven of the Yāma Gods |
| 6 | | | Heaven of the 33 Gods |
| 5 | | | Heaven of the Four Great Kings |
| 4 | | Woeful States | Human ☺ |
| 3 | | | Asura |
| 2 | | | Peta (Hungry Ghosts) |
| 1 | | | Animal |
| | | | Hell |

Details of Realms 12–31

Fine Material Plane (12–27) and Immaterial Plane (28–31)

| Categories | | | Cause of rebirth into this Realm | Life- continuum | Lifespan | Destination | |
|------------|------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| | | | | | | Non- saints | Saints |
| 31 | Immaterial Plane | Immaterial Jhāna | Thought Moment 73 | 77 | 84,000 Great aeons | 5–11, 31 | 31 |
| 30 | | | Thought Moment 72 | 76 | 60,000 Great aeons | 5–11, 30, 31 | 30, 31 |
| 29 | | | Thought Moment 71 | 75 | 40,000 Great aeons | 5–11, 29–31 | 29–31 |
| 28 | | | Thought Moment 70 | 74 | 20,000 Great aeons | 5–11, 28–31 | 28–31 |
| 27 | Fine Material Plane | 5 th Jhāna | Understanding | 64 | 16,000 Great aeons | - | - |
| 26 | | | Concentration | | 8,000 Great aeons | - | 27 |
| 25 | | | Mindfulness | | 4,000 Great aeons | - | 26, 27 |
| 24 | | | Energy | | 2,000 Great aeons | - | 25–27 |
| 23 | | | Faith | | 1,000 Great aeons | - | 24–27 |
| 22 | | | Dispassion to perception | | 500 Great aeons | 5–11 | - |
| 21 | | | - | | 500 Great aeons | 5–22, 28–31 | 21, 23–31 |
| 20 | | 4 th Jhāna | Highest Degree | | 64 Great aeons | 5–22, 28–31 | 20–21, 23–31 |
| 19 | | | Medium Degree | | 32 Great aeons | 5–22, 28–31 | 19–21, 23–31 |
| 18 | | | Minor Degree | | 16 Great aeons | 5–22, 28–31 | 18–21, 23–31 |
| 17 | | 2 nd & 3 rd Jhāna | Highest Degree | 3 rd Jhāna 62 | 8 Great aeons | 5–22, 28–31 | 17–21, 23–31 |
| 16 | | | Medium Degree | 2 nd Jhāna 61 | 4 Great aeons | 5–22, 28–31 | 16–21, 23–31 |
| 15 | | | Minor Degree | | 2 Great aeons | 5–22, 28–31 | 15–21, 23–31 |
| 14 | | 1 st Jhāna | Highest Degree | 60 | 1 Incalculable aeon | 5–22, 28–31 | 14–21, 23–31 |
| 13 | | | Medium Degree | | $\frac{1}{2}$ Incalculable aeon | 5–22, 28–31 | 13–21, 23–31 |
| 12 | | | Minor Degree | | $\frac{1}{3}$ Incalculable aeon | 5–22, 28–31 | 12–21, 23–31 |

Details of Realms 1–11 (Sensuous Plane)

Happy Destinations (5–11)

| | Cause of rebirth into this Realm | Life- continuum | Lifespan | Destination | |
|----|---|--------------------|---------------------------------|--|---------------|
| | | | | Non-saints | Saints |
| 11 | | | 9216 million years | | |
| 10 | 3-rooted superior kamma → being with life-continuum of | 39, 40, 43, 44 | 2304 million years | | |
| 9 | 39, 40, 43, 44 (3 roots) | | 576 million years | Being with life-continuum of 39, 40, 43, 44 → 1–22, 28–31 | |
| 8 | 3-rooted superior kamma or 2-rooted superior kamma → being with life-continuum of | | 144 million years | | 5–21 23–31 |
| 7 | 41, 42, 45, 46 (2 roots) | | 36 million years | Being with life-continuum of 27, 41, 42, 45, 46 → 1–11 | |
| 6 | 2-rooted inferior kamma → being with life-continuum of | 27, 39–46 | 9 million years / Indefinite | | |
| 5 | 27 (0 roots) | | Indefinite | | |

Woeful States (1–4)

| | Cause of rebirth into this Realm | Life- continuum | Lifespan | Destination | |
|---|--|--------------------|------------|-------------|--------|
| | | | | Non-saints | Saints |
| 4 | “Completed” unwholesome kamma | 19 | Indefinite | 1–11 | - |
| 3 | “Completed” unwholesome kamma | | | | |
| 2 | “Completed” unwholesome kamma & behaving like an animal | | | | |
| 1 | “Completed” unwholesome kamma & five heinous deeds | | | | |