







## Realms in the Wheel of Life

| realm         |   | mental state   | what the Buddha holds   | message   |
|---------------|---|--|---|---|
| gods          |    | happy, pleased   | lute playing melody of impermanence                                 | when we are happy we need to beware of complacency  |
| titans        |    | hatred - aggressive, competitive, jealous              | flaming sword representing transcendental wisdom                    | When we are feeling competitive and envious, we need to develop wisdom.   |
| hungry ghosts |   | craving, neurotic desire where nothing satisfies       | food and drink which satisfies                                      | When we have neurotic desires we need to understand ourselves better – what we want and whether it is realistic                       |
| hell          |  | acute mental suffering, frustration: hatred and malice | ambrosia offering respite and perhaps enlightenment                 | When in states of intense mental suffering we have the opportunity to realise truths about Reality. These states do not last forever. |
| animals       |  | sensual indulgence – food, sex and physical comfort    | book to help such beings become more civilised                      | The arts are a first step in the spiritual life.  |
| human         |  | experience both pleasure and pain - communication      | begging bowl and three-ringed staff representing the spiritual life | When we are in a human state, the next step is spiritual development.   |