

Meet the Four Great Heavenly Kings

The "Four Great Heavenly Kings," also the most celebrated devas, are enshrined in Nankunshen Daitian Temple. See below for a brief introduction of the Four Kings:

- **Chief of the four kings and protector of the north ("Duo Wen Tianwang")**

"Duo Wen" suggests that the Chief excels in the Dharma, who is noted for being the bringer of good fortune and virtues. He carries the umbrella in his hand (as the ruler of rain). He is in charge of watching over Uttarakuru.

- **King of the east and upholder of the realm ("Chih Guo Tianwang")**

He is compassionate and protects all beings. His symbolic weapon is the pipa (as the god of order). He protects the realm and watches over Pūrva-videha.

- **King of the south and the grower of goodness ("Zeng Jhang Tianwang")**

He enables the growth of virtuous roots. He holds a sword (as the rule of the wind) to protect the Dharma against encroachment. He stands guard over Jambudvīpa.

- **King of the west and the seer of all ("Guang Mu Tiangwang")**

As the eye in the sky, he can observe the world up-close. He is the head of dragons, hence a snake or red cord in his hand representative of a dragon (as the ruler of propitiousness). He is the protector of the people and watches over Aparagodānīya.

The Four Great Heavenly Kings carry a sword, a pipa, an umbrella and a dragon, respectively, symbolizing "the wind," "order," "rain," "order," and "propitiousness," which suggests "favorable weather." Their symbolic weapons indicate timely wind and rain, with no disasters, and seasonal festivities.

四大天王

南鯤鯓代天府配祀四大天王，為著名的護法神。以下為四大天王的簡介：

- 北方「多聞天王」：「多聞」意為頗精通佛法，以福、德聞名四方。手持寶傘(象徵：雨)，護持人民財富，負責守護北俱蘆洲。
 - 東方「持國天王」：慈悲為懷，保護眾生，手持琵琶(象徵：調)，護持國土，負責守護東勝神洲。
 - 南方「增長天王」：讓眾生增長善根，手握寶劍(象徵：風)，護持佛法，保護佛法不受侵犯，負責守護南瞻部洲。
 - 西方「廣目天王」：能以淨天眼隨時觀察世界，為群龍領袖，故手纏蛟龍(象徵：順)，護持人民，負責守護西牛賀洲。
- 四大天王分別持劍、琵琶、傘與蛟龍，象徵「風」、「調」、「雨」、「順」，以祈求四時無災，八節有慶。



("Duo Wen Tianwang")
北方「多聞天王」



("Chih Guo Tianwang")
東方「持國天王」



("Zeng Jhang Tianwang")
南方「增長天王」



("Guang Mu Tiangwang")
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