

To Enlightenment-14

Amitabha's 48 Great Vows

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The Meaning of "Sutra"

Lastly, the ninth part is "Sutra." Sutra is a general term. The eight parts mentioned above all belong to individual terms, which means they are only specifically used for this sutra. But this word "sutra" is used by all sutras; it is a general term.

Ancient virtuous men concluded the meaning of "sutra" with four significances:

1. "Consistency" means that its logical structure is very meticulous. Only a good article that is very meticulous in logical structure can then be called an article with "consistency."
2. "Enchantment" indicates its enchanting power, attracting one to read it over and over again. The more you read the more its richness is revealed. This is called "enchantment." This implies that reading this sutra over and over until becoming a Buddha, you will not feel bored at all. Look! We will not feel bored by reading *The Infinite Life Sutra* 3,000 times, nor with preaching and listening to the lectures. Our Shifu, Master Chin Kung, has preached this sutra eleven times so far. He never tires of preaching it, we also never tire of listening to it. Its enchanting power is very formidable!
3. "Constant" means that it is a constant law, an eternal truth. It can be widely used not only in our Saha World but also in other worlds.

*Any sentient beings in any world,
as long as they recite Amitabha and seek Sukhāvātī rebirth,
they will gain the attainment of rebirth, non-retrogression,
and Buddhahood.
This is called constant.
It is called the truth!*

Ancients described a constant law as "universally applicable through Four Seas," yet this Dharma-Method, even higher, is "universally applicable through ten directions of the cosmos."

4. And lastly; “Dharma” means that there are cultivation methods and theories within. Therefore, this sutra is very complete and consummate.

The True Heart Reveals When Delusions Vanish

In conclusion, this title is *The Buddha Speaks the Mahayana, Infinite Life, Adornment, Purity, Impartiality, Enlightenment Sutra*. We have spent quite a lot of time expounding on this title. Indeed, senior Laity Xia Lian Ju did a great job on its compilation. This title itself also completely and perfectly reveals all the general ideas of the entire scripture. The entire scripture is the annotation of this title.

This sutra was given when Shakyamuni Buddha saw that the cause and condition of all beings to become a Buddha were all in place, He then used a very joyful mood to elaborate this sutra, and spoke freely and inspiringly about the origin of the Teaching-Master of Sukhāvātī. Where does Amitabha come from? What is the merit of His Fundamental Vows? How did He accomplish Sukhāvātī? How do we cultivate this Pure Land Method?

He persuaded each of us to recite Amitabha with our belief and aspiration, and to seek Sukhāvātī rebirth. Do not have any doubts! This is the method that Buddhas use to equally and universally awaken and liberate all beings.

To sum up, this method is just one name, Amitabha. We use this name of Amitabha to reveal our self-nature and to bring back all the immeasurable merits in our self-nature. All will be back! All will be manifested! It does not matter even if we do not really understand its Dharma at the moment when we recite Amitabha; by just reciting it conscientiously all the way, our defilement, discrimination, attachment, and delusion will all naturally fall off in the end. This is the so-called “the true heart reveals when delusions vanish.”

When our deluded thoughts die away, the true heart manifests, we then become a Buddha. This is the method of helping all beings equally attain Buddhahood, it is called impartiality-enlightenment. The title of this sutra has disclosed to us the boundless phenomenal merits.

This session was mainly to introduce the title of this sutra to you all. Starting from the next class, we will begin to learn Chapter Six, “Bringing Forth the Great Vows.”

Thanks for watching, see you later! Amitabha !