

# Who Can Save the World

## The Origin of Amitabha

In this session, we are going to formally learn chapter six, “Bringing Forth the Great Vows,” of *The Infinite Life Sutra*.

*Chapter Six is the heart of The Infinite Life Sutra.  
And The Infinite Life Sutra is the first-sutra of Pure Land School.*

The method of the Pure Land School is established by these Forty Eight Great Vows of Amitabha. Therefore, if we want to learn Pure Land Buddhism, we must conscientiously study the Forty Eight Great Vows of Amitabha. Only when we comprehend Amitabha's Great Vows, can we then truly bring forth faith and aspiration and further gain the assurance of Sukhāvātī rebirth.

Amitabha, in His causal stage, was also a man. This was introduced in the previous chapter which is a continuation of the previous verse where the Fundamental Teacher of our Saha world, Shakyamuni Buddha, revealed the origin of Amitabha to us.

Immeasurable kalpas ago, there was a Buddha named Lokêśvararāja. Amitabha at that time was a king, named World-Affluent-King. We can tell from this name, the nation governed by this king must have been very prosperous and powerful, a world fertile and rich, therefore economically thriving. The citizens' quality of life was very advanced and its spiritual civilization also highly developed, so Buddhism was flourishing greatly at that time.

The king not only often invited the Buddha to preach but also led his officials and people to learn in person. We can imagine, the society of this nation at that time was truly in an era of peace and prosperity—a harmonious world.

*His method was to use education by taking the lead  
in learning the sages and Buddha's teachings  
to bring harmony and stability to society.*

Once society was harmonious and stable, it naturally drove economic development. That's why he earned a reputation as World-Affluent-King, which must have been a name given by his people.

## Who Can Save the World?

There are many problems in our world now, such as extreme weather bringing floods and drought, drugs penetrating to every corner of societies, polarization of public views on guns, abortion and many other issues bringing social unrest, as well as wars between nations and people...etc.

*These problems, down at the root, are issues of education.  
Something is wrong with our education.  
People's hearts have deteriorated, therefore bringing societal disorder.  
To solve social problems, we can only rely on education.  
There are two kinds of people who can advocate education  
to produce the most significant effect.  
One is our national leaders, the most prestigious people in the country.  
The other is the media creators, such as the internet, newspapers, etc.  
These two kinds of people can save society today.*

If state leaders can implement sound policies of education and vigorously promote the education of ethics, morality, and causality, the effect of purifying people's minds will take place and further bring social harmony and peace naturally. In addition, the media creators, who shoulder the responsibility of social education, should use the media as a platform for education to guide people to eradicate evilness and practice goodness. This is an undertaking of infinite merits.

*Media can save the world,  
it can also destroy the world,  
depending on what materials are used.*

When Amitabha was World-Affluent-King, he took the lead to set an example of learning Buddha's teachings. The emperors of the beginning stage of the Qing Dynasty in China, such as Shun Zhi, Kang Xi, Yong Zheng, Qian Long, also did the same. They were all devout Buddhist disciples and took the lead in learning Buddhism. Emperor Shun Zhi renounced his throne and became a monk; while Kang Xi, Yong Zheng, Qian Long all seriously and earnestly learned Buddhism and Chinese traditional culture.

Think about it, the ethnicity of the Qing Dynasty was Manchu, a minority, yet they ruled the majority of Han people and established the prosperous era of Kang Xi and Qian Long. What did they rely on? They relied on Chinese traditional culture as well as saints, sages, and Buddha's education. If we now revive Chinese traditional culture and

Buddhist education, it will not be difficult for this prosperous era to appear again. No matter which country does it, its leader will be the world leader.

*Dr. Arnold Joseph Toynbee,  
a well known British historian, said it well.  
He claimed that to solve the social problems in the 21st century,  
we can only rely on the Chinese doctrines  
of Confucius, Mencius, and Mahayana Buddhism.*

If the doctrines of Confucius, Mencius, and Mahayana Buddhism were reinvigorated, a prosperous era will definitely appear again.

### **Why Did World-Affluent-King Renounce His Worldly Achievement to Cultivate Dao?**

This World-Affluent-King set a good example for everyone at that time. He governed the nation very well. But he was not satisfied with the existing status, he wanted to upgrade it. How? He knew that only by governing society to a harmonious state, people still would not be free from the suffering of samsara. In this life, they encountered a good emperor and enjoyed fortune; yet in future lives, they will create karma again if not encountering such good causal conditions. Once creating karma, one will have retribution of endless reincarnation. This is not the Way of the ultimate liberation.

Therefore, the World-Affluent-King aspired to renounce his worldly home. The purpose of his renunciation was to practice the Bodhisattva Way, to universally liberate all beings, and to help all beings ultimately be free from the suffering of samsara and attain the consummate Buddhahood. His aspiration was higher than general national leaders; he became a monk to cultivate, he was then known as Bhikṣu Dharmākara.

Due to such a great aspiration, he cultivated aggressively and diligently after his renunciation. At that time, among all disciples of Lokêśvararāja Buddha, his cultivation was at the top. It is stated in the scripture, "With high talent and great courage, far surpassing the people in the world, his faith, comprehension, and memory were always number one among all." In addition, his aspiration was enhanced by his phenomenal practice, vow, and mindfulness wisdom. As a result, no one could exceed his diligent cultivation.