

## How Do Bodhisattvas in Sukhavati See and Hear Us?

The capability of these bodhisattvas of Sukhāvātī pervades the cosmic void. They are very clear on what happens in every corner of the cosmos. Why? Because this ability is the innate virtue of self-nature, and all beings, matters, and things of all dharma-realms in every direction are all manifested by self-nature.

*Since these bodhisattvas  
do not deviate from self-nature in any thought,  
of course they are very clear on all things and phenomena  
that are manifested by self-nature.*

They also do not have distances of far or near. Isn't it stated in *The Amitabha Sutra* that Sukhāvātī is ten billion Buddha lands away from our Saha World? It seems that it should be too blurry to see from such a distance, but it is not.

*Because the Saha World is also manifested by self-nature  
and bodhisattvas of Sukhāvātī are in this self-nature,  
they surely can be very clear about the whole situation.  
Whether the situation is in the west, east, or ten directions,  
all are like in front of their eyes at the present time.*

Why did Amitabha make these Vows to let all inhabitants fully possess the capabilities of knowing past lives, of celestial eyes, of celestial ears? Because they are good upgrading-conditions\* (\*Skt. adhipati pratyaya) for practitioners.

## Why Arhats Sweat Blood When Recalling Past Lives

The supernal power of knowing all good and evil as well as the cause and effect of our past lives has extreme benefits, because we would know what things we should do and what things we should not. We no longer dare to do evil deeds.

Arhats possess the supernal power of knowing what evil karma they made in their past lives, such as killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, and deceiving. They recall how they committed these kinds of evil deeds and fell into hell.

*The tormented sufferings of hell made arhats*

*sweat blood-perspiration when thinking of it.  
It is not ordinary cold perspiration  
but the perspiration comes with blood. What is this?  
It is the lingering fear.*

Think about it, how deep the arhats' samadhi is, yet they still sweat blood-perspiration when recalling the situations in hell. Can you imagine how horrific the situation is in hell? Recalling all these, how would they dare to do evil again? Why do we mortals still dare to make evil karma? Because we forget all the things we did in the past, we forget also having fallen into hell. Consequently we covet pleasure in front of us and dare to make evil karma.

So firstly, the supernal power of knowing past lives can prevent us from creating evil karma. Secondly, it can also help us to be humble and not dare to be conceited or arrogant. Even having obtained Sukhāvātī rebirth or having the assurance of rebirth now, we still do not dare to be conceited or arrogant. Why? Because that is not attained by the merits of our past cultivation, it is utterly due to Amitabha's blessings. It is due to the blessings of His aspirational power to allow us to obtain rebirth. How could we have this kind of merit and ability to be reborn? This is due to Amitabha's Vows.

Amitabha has attained Buddhahood for ten kalpas. Upon our arrival in Sukhāvātī, we will also know clearly the things of ten kalpas ago, such as how Amitabha brought forth aspirations and practiced in His cultivation-stage, accomplished Sukhāvātī and created this upgrading-condition of attaining Buddhahood for all suffering beings. All these things, we will understand completely. We will see the many sins and the little merits of ourselves yet attain rebirth into Sukhāvātī, we thus truly feel grateful to Amitabha. Our sense of shame arises and the heart of repaying Buddha's benevolence becomes imperative.

If we genuinely understand this truth, we should really repay Buddha's benevolence. Buddha's benevolence is mighty, it indeed guards and blesses us life after life, we then become how we are today. With the supernal power of knowing past lives we will know them all. We will naturally and earnestly help Amitabha liberate all beings universally.

### **How Supernal Power of Celestial Eyes and Ears Help Us**

Likewise, with the supernal power of celestial eyes and ears we can see many

things and naturally do not dare to commit evil karma. According to Nagarjuna Bodhisattva, the power of sravakas, those who directly listen to Buddha's teachings and attain arhathood, is not very strong. They can see 1,000 worlds. It is terrific already! One world refers to one galaxy, they can see 1,000 galaxies.

As for a maha-sravaka it will be more; some maha-sravakas can see a trichiliocosm. A pratyekabuddha, one who self-enlightened through contemplation of twelve links of dependent arising, is higher than a sravaka. A maha-pratyekabuddha can see a trichiliocosm right in front of him without entering samadhi.

These abilities are all very significant, yet compared to the ability of the bodhisattvas in Sukhāvātī, they are like a small sorcerer in the presence of a great one. The inhabitants of Sukhāvātī not only can see a trichiliocosm but can see all directions within the cosmos, there is nothing that cannot be seen by them; their eyesight is not limited to a trichiliocosm.

A trichiliocosm is 1,000 worlds cubed. One thousand unit worlds multiplied by three times, that is the range of one billion galaxies. However, this ability, compared to the bodhisattvas in Sukhāvātī, is small; the bodhisattvas of Sukhavati can see all Buddha lands in all directions, which means the infinite trichiliocosm.

Their supernal power of celestial eyes and ears also helps them see the suffering beings of these worlds, particularly the worlds with the three evil paths of hells, hungry ghosts, and animals. Those beings indeed suffer extreme bitterness. When the bodhisattvas see this situation, they immediately give rise to great compassion and aspire to help them. Once their bodhicitta has been brought forth, they do not dare to slack off.

I also feel very ashamed of myself, for I often slack off in my cultivation. Why do I slack off? It is because I forget the sufferings of all beings. All beings are heavily tormented. Just look at our human realm, there are also a lot of sufferings; in which the sufferings of mental agony are more tormenting than physical agony.

No matter whether one is in a rich, noble, poor, or lowly position, the sufferings are the same. Probably the suffering of the rich is more severe than the poor. For example, those in poor and lowly positions, they have nothing, thus they have nothing to worry about. If you have real estate and savings, you will be thinking, "How do I manage my property? Is it better to rent it out or to sell it when the market appreciates?" If you have a lot of savings, you will think, "Which stock should I invest in? Should I buy stock

or foreign currency?” You think of these things day and night, becoming an insomniac. Many rich people rely on sleeping pills to sleep at night, they are suffering a lot.

Since I was ordained, actually before being ordained, there was neither bank savings nor property under my name. Nothing! I have cleaned up all my past possessions through dāna (giving). Now I am literally a pauper-monk.

There is nothing to be worried about when you’ve got nothing. You possess, thus you worry. You have nothing, what’s there to worry about? Every day, I basically fall asleep within five minutes after my head touches the pillow. Look! Those people who own a lot of possessions are not happier than me.

### **What Can We Bring with Us When We Die?**

***The Infinite Life Sutra*** states, “People with or without possessions, both have worries.” I now found those with possessions worry more than those without possessions. What is the reason? They do not understand the truth of reality. They do not know that those external possessions neither are brought with them at birth nor can be taken with them when they die.

If we could take it with us when we die, it would be worth worrying about a little. Why do we worry about those things that cannot be taken with us? Why don’t we let it go? Why do we torture ourselves for those illusory things and be so tough on ourselves?

What we need are things that can be taken with us. What can we take? Your merits can be taken, The blessings that you cultivated can be taken. The sila (precepts), dhyana (meditative mind), and prajna (wisdom for enlightenment) from your reciting Amitabha can be taken. Your vow and great bodhi-aspiration can be taken.

These things that we can take with us should be cultivated earnestly. Those that we cannot take should be relinquished. Those that are extras to our life are all a burden. How wonderful it would be if we could use them to benefit all beings. Transform those things that we cannot take with us into things that can be taken when we die, that is what a smart person would do. Especially since there are so many disasters nowadays, it is uncertain how long your wealth can be retained.

Take a look at the large earthquake of 3-11, 2011 in Japan, those lives and properties were swallowed up in a flash by the tsunami. We all saw the video of 311 that was recorded from satellite. The scenes of those submerged areas from the tsunami, Shifu advised us to watch it every day. You will get enlightened if you watch it every day! Knowing those things cannot be taken away with you, quickly relinquish them.

Thanks for watching, see you later. Namó Amitabha!