

Transcending Reincarnation with Pure Land Method —Amitabha's 48 Great Vows Venerable Ding Hong -03 2012/Japan

The Origins of Amitabha Buddha

尊敬的諸位法師，諸位大德，同修，大家晚上好！阿彌陀佛！

Distinguished Venerables, great virtuous men and fellow practitioners, good evening everyone, Amitabha!

我們這堂課開始，正式進入『無量壽經』第六品的學習，「發大誓願第六」。

Starting from this session, we are going to formally study Chapter Six, “Bringing Forth the Great Vows,” of *The Infinite Life Sutra*.

這一品經文是『無量壽經』的核心，因為『無量壽經』是淨土宗的第一經，

This chapter is the heart of *The Infinite Life Sutra*. *The Infinite Life Sutra* is “the first sutra” of the Pure Land School.

而淨宗的這個法門的建立，就是圍繞阿彌陀佛四十八願來建立。

And the method of the Pure Land School is established by these Forty Eight Great Vows of Amitabha.

所以我們要修學淨宗，對於阿彌陀佛這四十八大願不能不認真地來學習。

Therefore, if we want to learn Pure Land Buddhism, we must conscientiously study the Forty Eight Great Vows of Amitabha.

唯有明瞭彌陀大願才能夠真正發起信願，那麼往生淨土才能夠有把握。

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.

這一品經文是接著之前的經文部分講下來，是釋迦牟尼佛，我們娑婆本土的導師，為我們介紹阿彌陀佛的由來。

This chapter is a continuation of the previous verse where the Fundamental Teacher of our Saha world, Shakyamuni Buddha, introduced the origin of Amitabha to us.

阿彌陀佛在因地上他也是一個人，

Amitabha, in His causal stage of cultivation, was also a man.

這是經文前面介紹的，說阿彌陀佛在無量劫前，過去無量不可思議無央數劫之前，當時有佛出世，叫世間自在王如來，

This was introduced in the previous chapter. Inconceivably immeasurable kalpas ago, there was a Buddha named Lokēśvararāja.

阿彌陀佛那個時候是一個國王，他的名字叫世饒王，

Amitabha at that time was a king, named World-Affluent-King.

從這個名號我們可以得知，當時這位國王他管理的國度一定是非常繁榮富強的國度，是世間豐饒，饒是豐饒，就是經濟發達，

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.

人民的物質生活水平非常地發達，而且肯定精神文明建設也是非常好的，所以當時佛法非常地興盛。

The citizens' quality of life was very advanced and its spiritual civilization also highly developed, so Buddha-Dharma was flourishing greatly at that time.

國王當然也常常邀請佛講法，所以他自己親自帶領百官、人民來聽法，

The king not only often invited the Buddha to give Dharma speeches but also led his officials and people to learn in person.

所以我們可以想像得出來，當時這個世界真的是太平盛世，和諧世界和諧社會。

We can imagine, the society of this nation at that time was truly in an era of peace and prosperity—a harmonious world.

他所用的方法就是用教育，自己帶頭來學習聖賢的教育，佛陀的教育，所以能夠讓社會那麼樣的和諧，

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

社會和諧安定，自然就帶動經濟發達，所以他有一個美名，肯定是人民百姓贈與他的美名，叫世饒王。

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.

National Leaders and the Media Must Advocate Education

今天中午，當地東方時報總編于總來看我，

Today at noon, General Editor Yu of the local Eastern Times came to visit me.

就跟我講起，現在日本有很多的隱患，包括日本的華人也出現一些問題，在日本社會當中也並不是十分受到尊重。

He mentioned that there are many hidden troubles in Japanese society, including some problems that have emerged with the Chinese communities causing them to be not well respected by Japanese society.

這些問題，我跟于總講，歸根結柢是個教育問題，教育出了問題了，這個人心變壞了，這社會肯定就不安，所以要解決社會的問題，唯有靠教育。

I told General Editor Yu, “These problems, down at the root, are issues of education. Something is wrong with our education, resulting in people's hearts to deteriorate and therefore bringing societal unrest. To solve social problems, we can only rely on education.”

那麼提倡教育有兩種人，他們的效果是最顯著，一個是國家領導人，這個國家最有威望的人，通常是國家的元首，像日本是天皇、首相這類人。

I told him that there are two kinds of people who can advocate education to produce the most significant impact. One is our national leaders, the most prestigious people in the country, usually heads of state, such as an emperor or prime minister in Japan's case. 另外一個就是新聞媒體，這些網路、報紙、電視台的領導人，就是他們這類的。這兩種人可以救社會。

The other is the media, such as the leaders of the internet, newspapers, TV stations, etc. These two kinds of people can save society today.

國家領導人如果能執行良好的教育政策，大力地推廣倫理、道德、因果教育，就能夠起到淨化人心的效果，那麼社會自然就安和了。

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 naturally bring social harmony and peace.

還有就是媒體工作者，他們肩負著社會教育的責任，能夠把新聞的這些媒體作為教育的一個平台，引導人民百姓斷惡修善，

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 cultivate goodness.

這個是功德無量的事業。

This is an undertaking of infinite merits.

Chinese Virtues-Education Column

于總是我三年沒跟他見過面了！三年前我來東京，當時是東京淨宗學會邀請我講課，于總到我住的酒店來見我，我就建議他，你們這報紙能不能夠闢出一個專欄，叫「中華德育」，專門來推動倫理道德教育和因果教育，我可以提供素材給你，我的這個素材很多。

I have not seen General Editor Yu for three years! Three years ago, invited by the Pure Land Society to give a lecture, I came to Tokyo. General Editor Yu came to see me in my hotel. I suggested that he create a special column in his newspaper, titled *Chinese*

Virtues-Education, specifically to promote the education of ethics, morality, and causality. I told him that I have a lot of material to provide him.

結果我跟他分析，你們這個媒體可以救世，也可以毀滅這個社會，就看你用什麼材料了，因為你這個報紙它是華文報紙裡面最大的報紙，在日本。如果專門是報導好的內容，這些有教育意義的內容，那你就是在做救世工作。

I analyzed for him, “Media like yours can save the world, it can also destroy the world, depending on what materials are used. Your newspaper is the biggest Chinese newspaper in Japan, you are doing the work of saving the world if you specialize in covering good content with educational implications.”

他聽了之後很受鼓舞，於是就發心闢出這個「中華德育」的專欄。我就給他提供『太上感應篇』的白話註解，師父題的「積福消災之道」。我不知道大家有沒有留意到？可能很多人都看到了！好！「中華德育」這個欄目，從那個時候起，這三年沒有斷過，每一期都出，這很難得！

After listening, he was very encouraged and motivated. He thus created the column: Chinese Virtues-Education. I offered him the modern language annotation of *Treatise on Response and Retribution* as the material for this column. Our Shifu (*Fatherly teacher, a Chinese way to address one's teacher, because Chinese in ancient times respected Dao heavily, they thought he who teaches me for one day is my mentor, like a father for life) also gave him an inscription which reads, The Method of Accumulating Fortune and Eliminating Disaster. I wonder if you noticed or not? Many people have seen it! Good! This column of “Chinese Virtues-Education” has run uninterrupted for the past three years since. It has been published in every single edition. It is really remarkable!

我這次跟他講說，你這個版面大概只有一個版面的四分之一大，不夠，要把它闢出整版。「中華德育」的內容很多，有倫理的，有道德的，有因果的教育。另外你們要辦一些活動，比如說評選「華人十大孝子」的活動，提倡孝道的教育。

This time, I told him, “You have only given a quarter of one page for this column, that's not enough. It should be given a whole page.” Chinese Virtues-Education” contains a lot of content, there is education of ethics, morality, and causality. Additionally, you have to hold some activities, such as selecting ‘Chinese Top Ten Filial Children’ to promote filial piety education.”

Filial Piety Is the Best Virtue, Sexual Misconduct Is the Worst Evil

孝經孔子講「教民親愛，莫善於孝。」人有孝心，他再壞也壞不了哪去，人如果沒有孝心，再好也好不到哪去。所以孝道是道德之根本，教化的起源，夫子所說的「夫孝，德之本也，教之所由生也。」

Confucius said in *The Classic of Filial Piety*, "To teach people to be affectionate and loving, there is nothing better than teaching filial piety." People who are filial would not be too evil no matter how bad they seem to be, while people who are unfilial would not be too good no matter how nice they seem to be. Filial piety is the foundation of morality, the origin of edification. As Confucius said, "Filial piety is the root of all virtues, and it is where education originates."

另外還有這些專題的這些探討，比如說，如何教兒女，這些很多人都很困惑，確實社會誘惑這麼大，怎麼教好兒女？不知道。另外比如說，提倡戒邪淫，反墮胎，這個問題也很嚴重。In addition, this column can add some special topics, for instance, How do we teach children? This issue has confused many people. Under the enormous temptation of society, how do we teach children well? Most people indeed have no idea. Furthermore, topics like advocating abstaining from sexual misconduct and anti-abortion, these issues are very serious too.

古人有說：「百善孝為先，萬惡淫為首。」所以我們要救社會，這兩頭都得抓，一個是孝道要提倡，一個要戒邪淫，提倡戒邪淫活動。

Ancients said, "Filial piety is the foremost of all virtues, while sexual misconduct is the top among all evils." To save society, we must stress both. On one hand, it is to promote filial piety, on the other hand, it is to advocate abstaining from sexual misconduct.

Abortion Is a Very Serious Problem

邪淫之後馬上就會跟著另外一個問題，墮胎問題，現在這全世界，墮胎是非常地嚴重。據世界衛生組織的統計，每年統計的墮胎人數有五千萬。這個數字太驚人了！估計是保守統計，因為很多你沒辦法統計的不能算在內。這五千萬是個什麼數字呢？

Sexual misconduct will soon lead to another problem: abortion. Nowadays, abortion is a very serious problem across the whole world. According to statistics from WHO, there are 50 million abortions per year. This figure is too frightening! And this is estimated as a conservative statistic because many cases go uncounted. What is the concept of this figure of 50 million?

人類歷史上最殘酷的戰爭，第二次世界大戰，所死難的人數也是五千萬，這個戰爭打了四年多，總共是五千萬，我們現在一年五千萬，而且不是殺敵人，是殺自己的親生骨肉，你說這個業造得多重？

The most brutal war in human history was World War II, its death toll was also 50 million. That war lasted for more than four years, and the total deaths was 50 million. We now have 50 million abortions per year. Moreover, it is not killing enemies but our own flesh and blood. Can you tell me how heavy this sin is?!

這股怨氣瀰漫在這個虛空當中，那造成非常不良的磁場，所以社會怎麼可能沒有災難？這些被墮胎的嬰靈需要我們去祭祀，我們給他要念佛，要功德迴向，所以這次我們的法會，也專門為這些被墮胎的嬰靈來立一個大牌位，專門給他們迴向。

This resentful energy pervades in the cosmic void, causing a very bad magnetic field. How could our society not have any disasters? These aborted infant souls need our comfort. We should recite Amitabha and transfer the merit to them. This time, our Dharma ceremony specifically set a big memorial tablet for those aborted baby souls, particularly dedicating to transfer the merits to them.

上個月，就還是這個月，四月七號在香港，舉辦了一個戒邪淫、反墮胎的萬人法會，海內外兩岸四地，有一萬兩千人參加，大家都參與，呼籲，提倡，要戒邪淫、反墮胎，尊重胎兒的生命權。

This month, on April 7th in Hong Kong, we held a Dharma assembly of 12,000 people, advocating anti-abortion and abstaining from sexual misconduct. Twelve thousand people from China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macao, and other places in the world attended, they all appealed abstaining from sexual misconduct and anti-abortion so as to respect the fetus's right to life.

要真正有效地防止墮胎，那就是戒淫亂，慾望要把它淡化，這需要用教育，所以所有的社會問題其實歸根結柢都出在教育問題。教育要想普及，要想非常快速地去推廣，那媒體是最好的一個工具。

To truly and effectively prevent abortion, we must abstain from sexual misconduct. The desire must be reduced, and this requires education (education of ethics, morality, and causality). All social problems, down at the root, are actually caused by a lack of "education." To spread and promote "education" rapidly, the media is the best tool.

Leaders Should Take the Lead

今天我跟于總談了這個話，他也很受鼓舞，他說那好，他接受教誨，他回去繼續努力。我說希望你來帶動，不僅把華文的媒體，還要把日本主流的媒體都應該帶動起來，大家共同擔負起社會教育的使命來救社會。那麼國家的安全、太平、乃至世界的和諧，不難達到。

After the conversation with General Editor Yu today, he was very encouraged. He said that he accepts this idea and will continue his efforts. I said, "I hope you can bring along the impetus, not only Chinese media but also the mainstream media in Japan. All of you

jointly take the mission of social education to save society. Consequently, state security, peace, and even world harmony will not be difficult to achieve.”

所以你看看，阿彌陀佛當年做世饒王他就是這樣，身先士卒，他帶頭聞佛說法，他來學習。我們看到中國清朝，前清的幾位皇帝，他們也是帶頭來學佛，你看順治，康熙，雍正，乾隆，這些人都是虔誠的佛弟子。順治出家了，那麼康熙、雍正、乾隆，他們也都認真努力地來學佛，學習中華傳統文化。

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

所以你想想，清朝當時是滿族，少數民族，能夠統治多數民族，而且能夠建立康乾盛世，這個靠什麼？就是靠中華傳統文化，靠聖賢的教育，靠佛陀的教育。如果我們現在來復興傳統文化，佛陀教育，那這個盛世再度出現並不是難事，哪一個國家做，哪個國家那就是領導世界的領頭人。

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-Qian (*the era of Emperors 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 Buddha's 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.

湯恩比博士，這是英國著名的歷史哲學家，他就講得很好，說「要解決二十一世紀的社會問題，唯有靠中國的孔孟學說與大乘佛法。」真正把孔孟學說和大乘佛法復興起來了，那麼這個盛世一定能夠出現。

Dr. Arnold Joseph Toynbee, a well known British philosopher in history, said it well, “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.

World-Affluent-King Practices the Bodhisattva Way

所以這個世饒王當時他就為大家做出這個好樣子，把國家治理得非常好，可是他並不滿足於這個現狀，他要再提升，所以怎麼提升？他知道光是把社會治理得很和諧，但是人民百姓也不能夠究竟脫離生命輪迴的這種痛苦，這一生遇到聖主，享福，可是如果來生遇不到這樣的因緣又會造業，造業就要受報，輪迴不休，這不是究竟的解脫之道，

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 governing society to a harmonious state, people still would not be free from the suffering of samsara (Skt., the cycle of birth and death). 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 reincarnations. This is not the Way of the ultimate liberation.

所以世饒王就發心出家，他出家的目的就是為了修菩薩道，廣度一切眾生，幫助眾生究竟圓滿地解脫輪迴之苦，能夠圓成佛道，所以他的志趣就高於一般國家領導人了，他出家修行。

Therefore, the World-Affluent King brought forth the aspiration of renouncing his worldly home. The purpose of his renunciation was to cultivate the Bodhisattva-Way, to universally liberate all beings, and to help all beings be ultimately free from the sufferings of samsara and attain consummate Buddhahood. His aspiration was higher than general national leaders, he became a monk for cultivation.

因為他有這樣的大願，出家之後勇猛精進，當時在世間自在王佛的弟子們當中，他這個修學是第一的，經上講「高才勇哲，與世超異，信解銘記，悉皆第一。」更有殊勝的行願和念慧力來增上他的這種願心。所以修行精進，沒有人能夠超過，

Due to such a great aspiration, he cultivated aggressively and earnestly after his renunciation. At that time, among all disciples of Lokēśvararāja Buddha, his cultivation was at the top. It is stated in the scripture, "His high talent and great courage, far surpassing the people in the world, along with his faith as well as the faculty of his comprehension and memory, he was always number one among all. Furthermore, his aspiration was enhanced by his phenomenal practice, vow, and mindfulness and wisdom (*smṛti-buddhi)." As a result, no one could exceed his diligent cultivation.

World-Affluent King Vows to Establish Sukhāvati

他修行到一定程度，有一天他到他的老師世間自在王佛那裡頂禮長跪，向佛合掌，把自己修學的心得報告匯報給他的老師，什麼心得報告？說他自己希望能夠儘快地成佛。

When cultivating to a certain level, Bhikṣu Dharmakara went to visit his teacher, Lokêśvararāja Buddha. With utmost etiquette, he prostrated to the Buddha then knelt down and joined his palms to report what he had learned. What did he report to his teacher? He said he wished to attain Buddhahood as soon as possible.

經文上講：「願我得佛清淨聲，法音普及無邊界，宣揚戒定精進門，通達甚深微妙法。」 According to the scripture, "I wish to obtain the pure voice of the Buddha so that I can pervasively expound the Dharma to boundless worlds. I also wish to propagate the methods of sila* (*precepts, good conducts, morality), samadhi* (*meditative concentration, dhyana), and virya* (*diligence in one focus), to let all beings be able to comprehend the utmost subtle and profound Dharma."

希望自己盡快速地成佛，而且他的法音遍布十方，廣度一切有情，宣說甚深微妙之法，這個法是什麼法？念佛成佛的微妙法。

This means that he was hoping to attain Buddhahood quickly and pervasively spread his Dharma-voice to ten directions in order to universally liberate all beings. He wished to propagate the utmost subtle, profound, and wondrous Dharma. What is this Dharma? It is the subtle and wondrous Dharma of "reciting Buddha's name to become a Buddha." 他希望能夠建立廣大清淨居，就是廣大清淨莊嚴的佛國土，就是極樂世界，令輪迴六道的眾生都能夠「速生我剎受安樂」，快速地來到極樂世界來成佛。他的願望是「度盡無邊苦眾生」，這個願太殊勝稀有。真的，這一切佛菩薩都沒有能超過他，

He hoped to establish a vast pure habitation—a vast, pure, and solemn Buddha land—known as the Sukhāvātī (*The Western Ultimate Bliss World). He wished all beings who are reincarnated in the six paths would quickly be born to His land to enjoy peace and bliss. This implies "quickly attaining Buddhahood." His aspiration was to completely liberate boundless suffering beings. This aspiration is too rare and marvelous! Indeed, all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas have not surpassed him.

他要建立這樣的極樂世界，就是讓最苦的眾生，輪迴當中的眾生，最快速度地來到他的極樂世界成佛，而且願心堅固，說「縱使身止諸苦中，如是願心永不退。」這是發大菩提心了，然後他向佛請法，希望佛能夠給他宣說妙法，讓他能夠非常快速地達成他的願望。

In order to establish this Sukhāvātī to enable the most suffering beings of samsara to quickly come to his land and attain Buddhahood, he said with his firm aspiration, "Even if my body is to undergo all kinds of suffering, I will never regress from my vows." This connotes that he had brought forth a great bodhicitta (*Skt., the aspiration to realize bodhi-wisdom, perfect enlightenment). He then implored the Dharma from the Buddha, hoping that the Buddha would expound the wondrous Dharma to allow him to quickly realize his wishes.

Lokêśvararāja Buddha Encourages World-Affluent-King

世間自在王佛從來沒有遇到這樣的好學生，當然是無量地歡喜，而且鼓勵他說，「譬如大海，一人斗量，經歷劫數，尚可窮底。」

Lokêśvararāja Buddha had never met such a good student, of course He felt immeasurable joy and further encouraged him, "Just like a big sea, if someone was to measure it, through countless kalpas, he would be able to expose the bottom of it " 就像大海，就說我們的太平洋吧，這麼大的海洋，如果你發這個大願心，真心，用一個斗去量那個海水，一斗一斗地把那個海水倒出來，經歷劫數，經歷多劫都能夠令海水見底，如果有人有志心求道，精進不止，一定能夠達成你自己的願望。

This verse above means that, if one brought forth great aspiration and a true heart to pour out and measure the water of a big sea like our Pacific Ocean bucket by bucket after many kalpas, he would expose the bottom of the ocean. This is to say if someone vigorously seeks for bodhi with a determined heart without ceasing, he will definitely realize his wish.

Achieving Buddhahood and Establishing Buddha Lands Relies on Your Own Effort

佛在這裡鼓勵他，同時也啟發他、點化他，說「汝自思惟，修何方便，而能成就佛剎莊嚴。汝所修行，汝自當知，清淨佛國，汝應自攝。」

The Buddha encouraged him, in the meantime, inspired and illuminated him, "You should contemplate on your own about which expedient ways you can practice to accomplish a solemn Buddha land. You would know from your own cultivation. A pure Buddha land should be obtained by your own effort."

這裡連說了三個自，自己的自。換句話說，你要達成這樣的大願，這是你自己的事啊，你自己去思惟，修學什麼樣的方便法門，而能成就佛剎莊嚴，成就你的極樂世界，成就淨土法門？你自己思惟。然後怎麼樣修學，你自己要知道，清淨的佛國你自己來攝取。

The phrase "your own" was repeated three consecutive times here. In other words, to fulfill such a great wish, it all depends on yourself. You have to contemplate by yourself! What kind of expedient ways can you practice to accomplish the Pure Land Method and a solemn pure Buddha land of Sukhāvātī? You must contemplate on your own and figure out how to practice on your own because a pure Buddha land must be established by your own effort.

世間自在王佛這樣給他一點化，以法藏比丘這樣的修學境界和智慧，肯定當下會大徹大悟，就像禪宗似的，誰是佛？怎麼成佛？這個佛法裡如果師父來問，那佛是誰？弟子如果開悟了，就會答一句，那清潭對面的就是佛，清潭對面你去照一照那個清澈的潭水，那就是，對面的就是自己。那佛是誰啊？就是自己。所以佛要靠你自己成，自己修，自己證。

After Lokêśvararāja Buddha gave him such hints, as his cultivation level and the wisdom, Bhikṣu Dharmākara definitely should have attained supreme enlightenment at that moment. It is like the questions that are often asked in Zen Buddhism, “Who is Buddha? How do you attain Buddhahood?” If this Zen disciple had attained enlightenment, when his Shifu asked him “Who is buddha?”, he would answer, “The one on the other side of the limpid pond is a Buddha.” That’s right! When you are looking at the pond, the image you see in the limpid pond is you. Who is buddha? It is you! As such, Buddhahood relies on yourself to accomplish, to cultivate, and to attain.

Bhikṣu Dharmākara Establishes Pure Land Buddhism

這經上如果講法藏比丘當時就大徹大悟了，明心見性了，那經就講完了，講完了之後，這就不叫『無量壽經』了，這是屬於禪宗的經典了，那這就不是淨土法門了。

If the scripture recorded that Bhikṣu Dharmākara attained supreme enlightenment at that moment, seeing (through to) the true nature with a purified heart, the scripture would be finished right there. If the scripture finished right there, it would not be called *The Infinite Life Sutra*; it would belong to a sutra of Zen Buddhism, it would not be Pure Land Method then.

而你看法藏比丘他在這裏頭表演，真是向上一著，他這裡怎麼說？法藏白言，「斯義宏深，非我境界，惟願如來，應正遍知，廣演諸佛無量妙剎，若我得聞，如是等法，思惟修習，誓滿所願。」

Look! Bhikṣu Dharmākara was playing an act here, he truly went one level higher. What did he say? Bhikṣu Dharmākara said to the Buddha, “Such a doctrine is indeed vast and profound. It is beyond my understanding. I only hope that the Tathagata*, the Pujya*, the Samyak-Sambuddha* would manifest all innumerable wondrous solemn Buddha lands broadly.

(*Three of the ten epithets of the Buddha:

1. Tathagata, the most exalted of Buddha’s titles, thus come 如來
2. Pujya, a noble person who deserves offerings 應供
3. Samyak-Sambuddha, peerless proper enlightenment

Using three epithets to represent all ten epithets to express the highest respect.)

If I could hear such Dharma of all Buddha Lands, I will contemplate and cultivate diligently so as to completely realize my vows.”

這一個回答太妙了，他不滿足於自修自證，他要怎麼樣？他說這個「斯義宏深」，這佛的境界非常廣大幽深，不是我的境界。

This answer was too wondrous! He was not satisfied with his self-cultivation and self-attainment. What did he want? He said, "This doctrine is indeed vast and profound." The Buddha's realm is extremely vast, subtle, and deep, it is not my realm.

這是法藏比丘給我們表演，實際上，他完全能夠入這個境界了，可是他不入這個境界，他要佛來幫忙，「惟願如來，應正遍知。」

Bhikṣu Dharmākara was acting on our behalf. In fact, he was fully capable of entering this realm, but he did not enter. He pleaded for Buddha's help, "I only hope that the Tathagata, Puja, and Samyak-Samguddha..."

如來是無所不知，無所不能，有求必應，請您來廣演諸佛無量妙剎，把諸佛世界的依正莊嚴，這些國土都顯現出來給我看，讓我能夠得聞這些微妙法，我能夠按照這樣的法修習，能夠成滿我的大願。

Tathagata is omniscient, omnipotent (all-knowing, all-capable), and gives response to every prayer. Bhikṣu Dharmākara pleaded with the Buddha to manifest all innumerable wonderous solemn Buddha lands broadly, and show him the adornment of all Buddha lands in both the circumstantial retribution/reward (*The circumstances we are born into, such as societal status and geographical location, are based on the karma of prior lifetimes. This is contrasted with the 'personal reward' of the mind and body that one is born with) and the personal retribution/reward (*The body and mind that sentient beings are born with is a result of activities in prior lifetimes. The personal retribution of the individual's previous existence is being born as a human being, etc. This is distinguished from the "circumstantial retribution"). Let him be able to hear these subtle Dharma so that he can cultivate himself in accordance with the Dharma and complete his great wishes.

A Cultivation Method for the Rest of Us

你看法藏比丘，這裡他不靠自力，他要靠佛力，就這麼一個回答，就為我們開出淨宗法門了，淨宗法門的精髓在哪裡？他不是要靠自力，他要靠佛力。而佛力跟自力又是不二。

Look! Bhikṣu Dharmākara, he did not rely on his own power, he wanted to rely on Buddha's power. Simply by this request, he had opened the gate of Pure Land School

for us. What is the essence of Pure Land School? It does not rely on self-power, it relies on Buddha-power. Yet self-power and Buddha-power are not two separate things.

所以世間自在王佛「知其高明，志願深廣。」他這一回答，那境界已經遠超於一般講的禪宗祖師大德開悟的境界了。他所開顯的就是無上殊勝微妙的法門，淨宗法門，能令博地凡夫都能夠當生成佛的這樣的法門，這個法門跟其他法門比起來就殊勝多了。

Lokêśvararāja Buddha “knew that he was indeed a man of great wisdom with vast and deep aspiration.” His answer had shown that his realm had gone far beyond the enlightened realm of general Zen patriarchs. What he had revealed is the supreme, splendid, and subtle Pure Land Method. It is a method that can allow all secular mortals to attain Buddhahood in their current lifetime. Compared to other methods, this method is far superior.

其他的法門，像禪宗六祖惠能大師講得很清楚，他只接引上上根人。換句話說，上中根的都不能夠成就的，上上根。

As for other methods... such as the Sixth Patriarch of Zen Buddhism, Master Hui Neng, said explicitly that he could only guide people of the top-utmost-indriya (*spiritual proclivity). In other words, even people of the top-middle-indriya would be unable to attain accomplishment under his guidance, only the top-utmost-indriya could.

那我自己想，我這個根性屬於中下，甚至是下根，如果是我來修禪宗法門，那我肯定這一生沒辦法成就，但是我要修淨宗法門，可以成就。為什麼？這個不是靠自力，自己的力量不行，我自修，自證，自悟，我達不到，但是我靠阿彌陀佛，靠他力，這個有把握了。

Contemplating my own situation, I realize that I belong to the middle-low indriya, even the low rank indriya. If I chose Zen Buddhism to practice, I would definitely accomplish nothing in this life. But, if I practice with the Pure Land Method, I can attain accomplishment. Why? This method does not rely on self-power. Self-power cannot make it. Relying on self-practice, self-attainment, self-enlightenment, I would not be able to make it. But, if I rely on Amitabha, rely on Buddha-power, I would have assurance.

How Was Sukhavati Created?

所以法藏比丘這麼一開出淨宗法門，世間自在王佛都讚嘆他的高明，讚歎他的志願深廣，確實他的這種智慧，他的這個善巧方便，超過其他諸佛。於是世間自在王佛當然立刻就幫助他，為他顯現二百一十億諸佛國土。二百一十億，這個不是數字，這是個表法。在密宗裡面，常常用二十一來表大圓滿，這二百一十億，是二十億乘上十，後頭還加個億，就表示更是大圓滿了。

Once Bhikṣu Dharmākara opened the gate of this Pure Land Method, Lokêśvararāja Buddha praised his intelligence as well as his vast and profound aspiration. Indeed, his wisdom and skillful expediency surpasses other Buddhas. Of course, Lokêśvararāja Buddha helped him immediately and revealed 21 billion Buddha lands to him.

Twenty-one billion is not just a number, it is a symbolic Dharma implication. In Esoteric Buddhism, twenty one often represents the great consummation. Twenty one billion, this big number even more strongly represents “the great consummation.”

也就是說讓法藏比丘遍觀十方一切國土，看到每一個國土裡面的善惡，這種殊勝的或者是陋劣的，讓他自己去抉擇，好的他來選取，他來會集，把十方諸佛國土殊勝的地方，他全部會集在一起，做成一個西方極樂世界的藍圖。

This is to say that Bhikṣu Dharmākara broadly reviewed all the lands in ten directions. He saw all the goodness and evilness in each land and discerned the superiority and inferiority of them. He then made a decision to choose and compile the goodness of each land. He gathered together all superiorities of all Buddha lands in ten directions, and then he made a blueprint for Sukhāvātī.

這種修學時間很長，當時是佛給他講法，講了多久？講了千億歲，一千億年。當時的人福報也大，平均壽命是四十二劫。這個劫很長，他當時聽法的時間，就一千億歲。

His studying time was very long. At that time, the Buddha preached Dharma to him.

How long did the Buddha preach? Buddha Lokeshvararaja preached one hundred billion years to him. People's fortune was huge at that time, the average lifespan was 42 kalpas. One Kalpa is very long. At that time he listened to the preaching for one hundred billion years.

Bhikṣu Dharmākara Spends Five Kalpas to Compile the Blueprint

然後聽完法了，也就是把所有諸佛國土都看遍了。我們現在講，他是實地考察。這個極樂世界，他不是自己在那裡閉門造車，自己想出來的，他是真的去每一個國土實地考察，然後他還要回來，做總結，做歸納，做整理。多長時間呢？五劫。用五劫的時間來消化，來吸收，來整理他所學習的這些內容，然後提取出精華的部分，造出西方極樂世界的藍圖。

Then he finished the Dharma learning; this means that he had reviewed all Buddha lands. Nowadays we would say that he had done field research on site. So, this Sukhāvātī was not fabricated by him but was summarized, concluded, and organized from his field research in each land. How long did he spend? Five kalpas. He used five

kalpas to digest, absorb, and organize all the content of what he had learned. Then he extracted the essence of all Buddha lands to create a blueprint of Sukhāvātī.

換句話說，這個極樂世界它也是個會集本，是十方諸佛國土的會集本，法藏比丘當時就開創會集的這樣的一個做法了。這是孔老夫子在『論語』中所說的，「述而不作，信而好古。」法藏比丘他真的是這麼做，

In other words, this Sukhāvātī is also a compilation, a compilation of the best of all Buddha lands throughout ten directions. Bhikṣu Dharmākara at that time had already set a precedent of compilation. This is the same spirit as what Confucius said in *The Analects*, “I simply recount sages’ teachings without adding my own ideas, because I believe in the teachings of ancient wisdom with a deep love.” Bhikṣu Dharmākara did exactly as Confucius did.

然後成就了這樣的藍圖，他就回到他老師那裡，跟他的老師匯報自己所成就的極樂世界的這樣的一個藍圖，那就是本經第六品「發大誓願第六」。

He completed the blueprint and then returned to his teacher. He reported to his teacher with the blueprint of the Sukhāvātī that he had achieved. That is Chapter Six of this scripture: Bringing Forth the Great Vows.

當他發起這樣的大願的時候，同時也就成就了西方極樂世界，西方極樂世界是靠彌陀願力所成就的，它不是業力，它是願力成就。我們現在科學講，念力成就，用阿彌陀佛清淨的念力，成就這樣的國土。

When he brought forth such great Vows, he accomplished Sukhāvātī at the same time. Sukhāvātī relied on Amitabha's aspiration to be achieved, it was not achieved by the force of karma but by the power of aspiration. To use a modern scientific term, it was achieved by the power of the mind. Amitabha used the power of His pure mind to achieve such a Land.

The Importance of Respecting One's Teacher with Utmost Sincerity

我們來看這一品的經文。法藏白言，「唯願世尊，大慈聽察。」

Let us take a look at the verse of this chapter. Bhikṣu Dharmākara then said, “I solely hope that Bhagavan would listen to and examine my vows with great compassion.”

這是法藏比丘，他出家修道，他的法號就是法藏，他經過千億歲聽佛來講解，又用五劫的時間，消化，吸收，整理，會集，做成這樣的極樂世界的藍圖，也就是四十八願，現在向世尊匯報，世尊就是他的老師，世間自在王如來。啟請佛大慈聽察。你看，對世尊，對佛，對他的老師那樣地恭敬。無怪乎他是世間自在王佛最好的學生。

Bhikṣu Dharmākara relinquished worldly pleasures to cultivate Dao. His Dharma-name is Dharmākara. He went through one hundred billion years to learn Buddha's teachings and used five kalpas to digest, absorb, organize, and compile together the blueprint of Sukhāvātī, which is the Forty Eight Great Vows. He now reported to his teacher Bhagavan, Lokêśvararāja Tathagata, and implored the Buddha to listen to and examine his vows with great mercy. Look! He is so respectful to Bhagavan—the Buddha—his teacher. No wonder he is the best student of Lokêśvararāja Buddha.

這個學生好不好，從哪看？從他對老師的誠敬心來看。印光大師講，「一分誠敬得一分利益；十分誠敬得十分利益。」老師的傳人怎麼找？老師只用一個標準，就是看弟子當中，哪一個人對他最有誠敬心。

How can we tell if a student is good or not? From how sincerely and respectfully he treats his teacher. Master Yin Guang said, "With ten percent sincerity and respect, you earn ten percent benefit. With 100 percent sincerity and respect, you earn 100 percent benefit." How does a teacher find his Dharma successor? The teacher only uses one standard: whoever has the highest degree of respect for his teacher among all the disciples.

不是說老師希望學生對他恭敬，那不是這樣的，老師早已把名利放下了，不需要人去恭敬，但是他為什麼要用這個標準來選學生？是因為一個人唯有尊師，他才是重道，尊師重道的人他才有大成就。他不尊師，不重道，他不可能學到老師的真東西，所以老師的傳人，那肯定都是對老師有十足的誠敬。

It is not as if the teacher wants students to respect him, that is not the case. The teacher has let go of fame and wealth long ago, he does not need people's respect. But, why does he use this standard to choose students? Because, only if one can respect the teacher can he then value the Dao. And only those who respect teachers and honor Dao can attain great achievements. If one does not respect teachers and does not honor Dao, he would not be able to obtain true wisdom from his teacher. So, the teacher's successor must have extreme sincerity and respect for his teacher.

Master Hui Neng Paid 10,000% Sincerity and Respect to His Teacher

像師父也講，你看禪宗五祖忍和尚，為什麼把衣鉢傳給六祖？不傳給神秀？神秀大師跟了五祖好多年了，當時已經做到五祖的助教了，這威望也很高，但是他對老師的誠敬，師父講有百分的誠敬，很不錯了，但是六祖惠能大師對老師的誠敬是萬分的誠敬，

Our Shifu also pointed out, "Why did the Fifth Patriarch of Zen Buddhism, Master Hong Ren, hand down his mantle and alms bowl to Hui Neng instead of Shen Xiu? Master Shen Xiu had followed the Fifth Patriarch for many years. He was already the Assistant Instructor of the Fifth Patriarch and was also held in high prestige. However, his sincerity and respect to his teacher was 100%, very good already. But, the Sixth Patriarch, Master Hui Neng, paid 10,000% sincerity and respect to his teacher."

所以雖然六祖惠能大字不認識一個，沒有文化，年紀輕輕地，二十四歲，樵夫出身，出身貧寒，沒有任何的背景，沒有任何的文化，竟然就得五祖的衣鉢，他就能開悟見性，成佛做祖，原因就是他有萬分的誠敬。

He was born poor and illiterate with no culture. At the young age of twenty four, a woodcutter with no background and being born poor, he unexpectedly received the mantle and alms bowl from the Fifth Patriarch. He could gain true enlightenment, saw self-nature, attained Buddhahood, and became a patriarch, it is because he was extremely sincere and respectful.

How Bhiksu Dharmākara Showed Respect for Lokêśvararāja Buddha

法藏比丘當時也是世間自在王佛的第一弟子，你看他對於世尊那種尊重。前面經文就講到，他到了世間自在王如來所，「稽首禮足」，稽首是頂禮，禮足，「繞佛三匝，合掌而住。」

Bhiksu Dharmākara was "the first disciple" of the Lokêśvararāja Buddha. Let us take a look at how he respected the Bhagavan. It is mentioned in the preceding verse. When he arrived at the dwelling of Lokêśvararāja Tathagata, he prostrated at the teacher's feet with utmost homage. He walked around (circumambulated) the Buddha three times, then he stood upright and joined his palms.

這是向佛報告，你看這樣地具足誠敬。世間自在王佛看到自己的弟子有這樣的成就，當然非常歡喜，立刻就講，「善哉，今正是時，汝應具說，令眾歡喜。」

This is the way he made a report to the Buddha. You see, he possessed full sincerity and respect. The Lokêśvararāja Buddha, seeing that His disciple had such accomplishment, of course, was extremely joyous. He said immediately, "Sādhu (*Great indeed)! Now is the right time to fully speak your vows so that all the living beings would rejoice."

現在正是你來匯報的時候，趕緊說，能夠利益大眾，能夠普度一切眾生。你要宣說這個法門，將會是整個法界當中的第一法門，十方諸佛如來都會讚嘆這個法門，這個法門就是淨宗法門，念佛求生淨土的法門。

The verse above means that this moment is the time for you to report. Say it quickly, it can benefit the public and liberate all beings universally. The method that you are going to proclaim will be the best method within the entire dharma-realms. All Buddhas in ten directions will praise this method. This method is the Pure Land Method, seeking Sukhāvātī rebirth by reciting Amitabha.

The Forty Eight Great Vows of Bhikṣu Dharmākara

底下就是四十八願，這個是法藏的修學報告。四十八願，在古代的五種原譯本當中，只有兩種，就是唐譯和魏譯是用四十八條，還有用二十四條的，也有用三十六條的。

The following are the Forty Eight Great Vows. This is the study report of Bhikṣu Dharmākara. Among the five original translations in the past, only two versions, the versions of the Tang Dynasty and the Wei Dynasty, appeared as Forty Eight Vows; other versions appeared as twenty four or thirty six Vows.

夏蓮老會集四十八願，他照顧到二十四和四十八，把這五種原譯本就是會集得非常善巧，一個意思都不漏，但是又言簡意賅。它有二十四個段落，有四十八個願目，就那個條目有四十八條，所以二十四和四十八都照顧到。我們看到這個經文，粗體字的部分是四十八願，每一段最後有標一個數字，「一，國無惡道願」這個小字，就是講四十八願的願目。

When compiling these Forty Great Eight Vows, Senior Laity Xia Lian Ju took both versions of twenty four and forty eight into consideration. He gathered these five versions of original translations together very skillfully, not even leaving out one meaning, yet being concise and comprehensive. There are twenty four paragraphs and forty eight Vows, both versions of twenty four and forty eight were taken into consideration. When reading the verse, we can see the Forty Eight Great Vows are in bold letters indicated by numbers at the end of each paragraph, such as “**1st Vow: the land is free from evil paths.**” These small letters are the list of the Forty Eight Great Vows.

The Merits, Virtues, and Adornments beyond language and cognition (the 1st, 2nd Vows)

好，我們來讀經文，「我若證得無上菩提，成正覺已，所居佛剎，具足無量不可思議功德莊嚴，無有地獄、餓鬼、禽獸、蜎飛蠕動之類，所有一切眾生，以及焰摩羅界，三惡道中，來生我

剎，受我法化，悉成阿耨多羅三藐三菩提，不復更墮惡趣，得是願，乃作佛，不得是願，不取無上正覺。」謝謝大家！這是四十八願前面兩條，第一，國無惡道願。第二，不墮惡趣願。

Let's read the verse, "When I realize the supreme bodhi and accomplish Anuttara-Samyak-Sambodhi, the Buddha land I dwell in will be replete with inconceivably boundless merits, virtues, and adornments. There will be no existence of hells, hungry ghosts, animals, and neither flying, wriggling creatures nor the like. All beings, including those in the Yamaraja realms and three evil paths, who are born into my Buddha Land and are edified by my Dharma, will all attain Anuttara-Samyak-Sambodhi (the Supreme True Enlightenment, or Unexcelled Perfect Enlightenment) and never again fall into the evil paths. Only having fulfilled such vows, will I become a Buddha; otherwise, I will not procure Anuttara-Samyak-Sambodhi."

Thank you everyone! These are the first two Vows among the 48 Vows:

1st Vow: the Land is free from evil paths.

2nd Vow: the inhabitants will never again fall into the evil paths.

經文開端講的，「我若證得無上菩提，成正覺已，所居佛剎，具足無量不可思議功德莊嚴。」這幾句經文是極樂世界的總讚，提綱挈領。

The opening of the verse states, "When I realize the supreme bodhi and attain Anuttara-Samyak-Sambodhi, the Buddha land I dwell in will be replete with inconceivably boundless merits, virtues, and adornments." These few sentences are the overall praise of the Sukhāvātī, bringing up its essential points.

這個我，是法藏菩薩的自稱，他說我成佛的時候...「無上菩提」就是成佛了！我成佛的時候，我所居住的佛土，具足無量不可思議功德莊嚴。這個具足就是圓滿的意思，沒有絲毫的欠缺。這裡講無量，它是沒有辦法形容，不能用數字來表示，太多了！

This 'I' is what Bhikṣu Dharmākara called himself. He said when I become a Buddha... "Supreme bodhi" means "attain Buddhahood." When I attain Buddhahood, the Buddha land that I dwell in will fully possess inconceivably boundless merits and adornments. This "full possession" connotes perfection, without the slightest insufficiency. And the "boundless" stated here implies indescribable. It cannot be expressed with numbers because there are too many!

就是講一切莊嚴，無量，後頭還加個不可思議，不可思就是不能想，不可議就是說不出來，那個莊嚴的程度，那種境界想也想不出，更是說不出，它超越我們語言，超越我們的思惟。This indicates that all are adorned and immeasurable. Moreover, "inconceivable" is added to further enforce the degree of its unthinkable and unspeakable. The level of the adornment and its realm are unimaginable and inexpressible, it is beyond our language and exceeds our cognition.

換句話說，極樂世界依正莊嚴，不是通過我們語言思惟可以達到的。語言思惟是什麼？就是分別執著而已，你用思惟，你得想，想是什麼？想是分別，你說出來就是執著了。你用分別執著怎麼能夠達到自性所現的極樂國土？

In other words, the adornment of the circumstantial and personal reward of Sukhāvātī is unreachable by our language and cognition. What is language and cognition? It is exactly the discrimination and attachment. If you use cogitation, you have to think. What is “think”? “Think” is discrimination, and it turns into attachment after you speak out. How could you possibly use discrimination and attachment to reach Sukhāvātī that is manifested by self-nature?

極樂國土是法性土，是我們真心自性所流現的國土。想要達到，想要契入這樣的境界，唯有放下語言思惟，所以這裡講不可思議。

Sukhāvātī is a Dharma-nature land, a land manifested naturally by our true heart, by our self-nature. If you want to reach and enter such a realm, you can only relinquish language and cogitation, that's why it is defined as “inconceivable.”

The Four-Non-Obstruction-Dharma-Realms

它不是一個只是形容而已，它是勸我們，不要用思，也不用議。古德所說的，「言語道斷，心行處滅。」這個境界，華嚴經上所說的，這是四無礙的法界，理無礙，事無礙，理事無礙，事事無礙的法界。

This is not just a description. It advises us not to use cogitation and language. Ancient virtuous ones said, “Dao will be exterminated when language is used, and it will be extinguished where the mind is moved.” This realm, as stated in *The Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, is the “four non-obstruction dharma-realm”:

the realm of

*non-obstruction in noumenon,

*non-obstruction in phenomena,

*non-obstruction between noumenon and phenomena,

*and non-obstruction among all phenomena.

這四無礙的法界，唯有放下自己起心動念，你才能夠契入，有起心動念，這就有障礙，那就入不進去了。換句話說，極樂世界那就是自性國土。這個自性，本體空寂。六祖惠能講的，「本來無一物，何處惹塵埃。」

This “four non-obstruction dharma-realm” can only be entered when you no longer give rise to thoughts and your heart is unmoved. Once your heart is moved and you give rise to thoughts, there will be obstacles; you have prevented yourself from entering the

realm of Sukhavati, the Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss.! In other words, Sukhāvātī is a land of self-nature. This self-nature is a noumenon of emptiness and stillness. As the Sixth Patriarch Hui Neng said, "Since all is void, where can the dust alight?"

Use the Name "Amitabha" to Replace Delusion, Discrimination, and Attachment, and Enter Sukhāvātī

你想一個極樂世界，那是落在你的思想，那就有了一物了，你還把它說出來，又說出一物了，那都不是真正的極樂世界。放下妄想、分別，執著才能夠入。我們怎麼放下呢？用一句佛號，把妄想、分別、執著全都給替換掉。

If you think of a Sukhāvātī, it falls to your cogitation, you have created one thing. If you go one step further and speak it out, you add one more thing again. These are not real Sukhāvātī. You can only enter that realm by renouncing delusion, discrimination, and attachment. How do we renounce? We use the name of Amitabha to replace all delusions, discriminations, and attachments!

因為我們說要想斷妄想、分別、執著很難... 難在哪？這已經是久遠劫來形成的習氣了，你想斷都斷不了。怎麼辦？佛勸我們轉念頭，你換不下來，你止不住，沒關係，你就把它轉成阿彌陀佛，用一句阿彌陀佛代替所有的妄想、分別、執著。

It is very difficult to eradicate delusions, discriminations, and attachments for us. Why? Because they are the habits that we had formed over immeasurable kalpas. They could not be eradicated even if we desire to. What can we do? The Buddha persuades us to transform our mind. But we can neither change nor rid our mind of delusions, discriminations, and attachments, the Buddha therefore teaches us to turn them into remembrance of Amitabha, using the thought of remembering of Amitabha to replace all delusions, discriminations, and attachments.

那這句阿彌陀佛是不是也是妄想分別執著？沒錯，它也屬於妄想分別執著，但是用這個妄想分別執著，你能往生極樂世界，這契合阿彌陀佛的願，阿彌陀佛能接引你往生，你能帶業往生。

Is the name of Amitabha also a delusion, discrimination, and attachment? Correct, it is! But you can attain Sukhāvātī rebirth if this delusion, discrimination, and attachment is used. Since this is in line with Amitabha's wish, you can induce His escort, you can carry your karma along to be reborn.

帶什麼？就帶這個妄想分別執著，帶這句佛號，往生西方。到了西方極樂世界之後，你就繼續念，那裡頭沒有讓你起心動念的緣了，

What do you carry? You simply carry this delusion, discrimination, and attachment, which means you carry exactly the attachment of remembering Amitabha to be reborn into Sukhāvātī. After arriving in Sukhāvātī, you would continue to recite because there would be no conditions for you to give rise to thoughts and have your heart unmoved.

Taking Two Steps for Enlightenment

那個地方容易修，比我們這個世界強。這個世界你說讓你不起心、不動念，根本做不到，有幾個有這樣的根性？像六祖惠能，那是「前無古人，後無來者。」史上就這麼一個惠能，再數第二個都找不到，他是上上根人。

It is easy to cultivate in Sukhāvātī, much better than here in our world. In our world, it is simply impossible for us not to give rise to thoughts and have our heart unmoved.. How many people have such indriya (*spiritual proclivities)? There was no parallel before the Sixth Patriarch Hui Neng and there probably will be none ever after; there was only one Hui Neng in our history, we cannot find another one. He had the top-upmost indriya.

我們怎麼辦？我們先求極樂世界，到了極樂世界，那真的就不起心動念了，這個習氣它任運脫落，很自然就落了，就沒有了，你就能開悟了，所以古德講，「但得見彌陀，何愁不開悟？」到西方極樂世界開悟太容易了，肯定開悟。

What should we do? We should first seek Sukhāvātī rebirth. When we get to Sukhāvātī, neither will our heart move nor will we give rise to thoughts. This habit will fall off naturally and disappear, then we will be enlightened. So, ancient virtuous men said, “As long as we see Amitabha, how could we possibly worry about not getting enlightened?” It will be so easy to get enlightened when we are born into Sukhāvātī. It is guaranteed that we will attain enlightenment.

所以這等於是分兩步走。這一生開悟不了，先到西方，到了西方再開悟，保險，太保險了，很安全，絕對沒有差錯。等你真正開悟了，你對西方極樂世界就全明白了，你跟阿彌陀佛融成一體了，那個極樂世界就是你自己極樂世界了。這個不可思議，確確實實，因為它是法性土，極樂世界法性土，而法性遍一切處，它包容一切，所以極樂世界，它也是遍一切處。

This is equal to taking two steps: we cannot attain enlightenment in this life, but we can go to Sukhāvātī first and attain enlightenment after being born into Sukhāvātī. This is ensured, very ensured and safe, we absolutely will not go wrong. Wait until you attain enlightenment, you would understand Sukhāvātī utterly. You infuse one unity with Amitabha, Amitabha's Sukhāvātī is your own Sukhāvātī. This is indeed inconceivable!

Since Sukhāvātī is truly a Dharma-nature land, and Dharma-nature pervades everywhere and includes everything, Sukhāvātī thus pervades everywhere as well. 中峰國師講,「淨土即此方,此方即淨土。」這就是講遍一切處。「原夫遍十方是極樂世界」,原夫,本來是這樣。十方世界無不是極樂世界,這就是遍一切處,為什麼?法性本來如是。等你入得法性當中了,你就能夠全明白了,極樂世界在哪?眼前就是。

National Master Zhong Feng stated, "The Pure Land is this land, this land is the Pure Land." This revelation indicates that Sukhavati is pervading everywhere. According to the verse, "Intrinsically, all places in ten directions are Sukhāvātī." "Intrinsically" connotes "as it is." All worlds in ten directions are all Sukhāvātī, this is "pervading everywhere." Why? Because Dharma-nature is as thusness. You will understand completely when you enter Dharma-nature. Where is Sukhāvātī? Right here in front of you.

那我們現在念佛,念到心清淨了,那個極樂世界國土,它就自然現前。這個無量不可思議功德所莊嚴,這個不可思議功德就是自性功德莊嚴,那種莊嚴,後頭經文有詳細介紹。我們舉幾個例子來說,

We now recite Amitabha until our heart is purified, Sukhāvātī will naturally manifest in front of us. These immeasurably and inconceivably solemn merits are the solemn merits of our own self-nature. There is a detailed introduction of its solemnness in the later verses. Let's give a few examples:

Following Amitabha to Sukhāvātī in a Lotus Flower

那個極樂世界的蓮花就很莊嚴,那蓮花是我們自己念佛,當我們發心念佛求往生的時候,極樂世界就長出一朵蓮花,我們越念,那蓮花長得越殊勝,越美,越大。到我們臨命終的時候,阿彌陀佛就會帶著這朵蓮花來到你跟前,垂手接引,你就坐上這個蓮花隨著阿彌陀佛去了。

The lotus flowers in Sukhāvātī are very solemn and are manifested by our recitations. When we determine to recite Amitabha and seek Sukhāvātī rebirth, that Land will then grow a lotus flower. The more we recite, the more glorious, beautiful, and bigger this lotus flower will grow. At the end of our life, Amitabha will bring this lotus flower to manifest in front of us and greet us with His hand reaching down. We then sit in this lotus flower and follow Amitabha to Sukhāvātī.

這個時候你一見到阿彌陀佛,一見到蓮花,業障全部消除,現前證得無生法忍,就是阿惟越致菩薩,你就到西方極樂世界了。

Once we see Amitabha and the lotus flower, all our karma will be eliminated. We immediately attain anutpattika-dharma-ksanti (*The acceptance that all phenomena are

illusory and nonexistent, is realized by the bodhisattvas in the seventh bhumi and above) and become an avaiartika bodhisattva; you have arrived in Sukhāvātī.

有同修說，我們念阿彌陀佛，師父講讓我們專看一個佛像，那我看了好幾個佛像，到時候不知道阿彌陀佛變什麼像來接？我萬一把他認錯了怎麼辦？

Some fellow practitioners said, "We recite Amitabha, Shifu told us to see only one version of Amitabha's image, but I have seen many different versions; how do I know which version of Amitabha will manifest to escort me? What if I have mistaken Him?"

The Lotus Flower Emits 360 Trillion Lights

這個都是多慮了，你到那個時候，佛放光來接引你，你的業障全消除，你的智慧就開了，你馬上就知道，那是真的阿彌陀佛，你不會認錯了，所以阿彌陀佛也不會變一個讓你認錯的像，絕對不會。你到了西方，你的那個蓮花那就更殊勝了。那個蓮花，這經上講，一朵蓮花放三十六百千億光，你們想想那個花，怎麼放這麼多光？

This is "excessive worrying." At that moment, Amitabha will emit light to greet you; your karma will all be eliminated, and your wisdom will be revealed. You will know right away if it is the real Amitabha, you will not mistake Him. Moreover, Amitabha would also not manifest an image that would confuse you. Absolutely not. Once you arrive in Sukhāvātī, your lotus flower will be even more glorious. That lotus, as stated in this sutra, emits 360 trillion lights. Can you imagine how a flower could emit so many lights? 三十六百千，百千，一百乘上一千，就是十萬，三十六乘十萬，三百六十萬，後頭還有個億，三百六十萬億種光。每一光又現無量的佛，一一光中現三十六百千億佛，每一佛他又有國土，就在每一個國土裡面，又度化無量無邊的眾生，「為諸眾生宣說妙法」，說什麼法？就是說極樂世界淨土法門，勸一切眾生都往生淨土。

100 x 1,000 is one hundred thousand. 36 x 100,000 x 100,000,000, that is 360 trillion lights. Each light manifests 360 trillion Buddhas, each Buddha has His own land. And each Buddha liberates incalculable sentient beings right in His land by "proclaiming wondrous Dharma to all beings." What Dharma does They expound? It is the Pure Land Method of Sukhāvātī. They convince all beings to seek Sukhāvātī rebirth.

你想想你的那朵蓮花有這麼大的功德，你能想得出來嗎？反正我想像不出來，你別說三十六億百千，三十六百千億光那麼多了，就是三十六道光想都很難想，是吧，真不容易。更何況三百六十萬億，這叫不可思不可議！而且每一個光還現佛，每一個佛又放光，那真是無量的，這個就是事事無礙法界，真正是不可思議莊嚴。

Think about it, the lotus flower of yours has such great merit, can you imagine? Anyway, I cannot. Not to mention 360 trillion lights, even with only thirty six lights, it would be

difficult for us to imagine, right? It is really not easy, let alone 360 trillion. This is why it is defined as “inconceivable.” It is unthinkable and unspeakable! Furthermore, each light manifests Buddhas, every Buddha also emits light, it is indeed infinite. This is the dharma-realm of non-obstruction among all phenomena. It is genuinely inconceivably solemn.

Everything in Sukhāvātī Is Inconceivably Solemn

這是舉一個例子，就這蓮花就是這樣，極樂世界每一個物那都是這樣不可思議莊嚴。那寶香普薰十方，那個風吹那個樹聲音.... 那個樹都是七寶做的樹，什麼金銀，琉璃，珍珠，瑪瑙，反正是你在世間能夠想像出來的那種珍寶的極品，都在極樂世界，

This is only one example. Not only are the lotuses like this, everything in Sukhāvātī is inconceivably solemn like this. The precious fragrances permeate the ten directions pervasively, the sound tinkles when the wind blows the trees... The trees are all made of seven jewels, such as gold, silver, liuli (*azure stone, colored glass), pearl, agate. Anyway, all the highest grade jewels in the world that you can imagine can all be seen in Sukhāvātī.

隨手可得，而且都長在樹上，不是人為去雕琢的，它就長的就是，風一吹就像風鈴一樣，叮叮噹噹就響起來了，那聲音是什麼聲音？佛法僧聲，止息寂靜聲，讓你這一聽之後，你就證得無生法忍，你就能開悟，你就能成佛。

They are all at your fingertips and all grow on the trees. They are not artificially carved but naturally grow like this. When the wind blows, the tinkling sound appears just like wind chimes. What sound is that? It is the sound of Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, the sound of stillness and tranquility. After hearing this, you would attain anutpattika-dharma-ksanti. You could get enlightened and attain Buddhahood.

這個法音又遍佈十方國土，你也有這樣的神通力量，你到十方諸佛國土去遍遊的時候，你要聽那聲音都能聽到，那什麼聲音，自性出來的聲音，它遍一切處。也不會說你去到很遠很遠的地方，它就聲音變小了，不會，還是同樣的音量絕對不會說你距離遠了，它就聲小了。

This Dharma sound pervades all lands in ten directions. You also have the supernal power to hear them when you visit all Buddha lands in ten directions if you want to.

What sound is that? It is the sound of self-nature. It pervades everywhere. The volume will not sound lower when you go to a very far place. It won't, the volume will still be the same, it absolutely will not become lower when you are far in distance.

不像我們這，廣場這邊喊，那邊都未必聽到。它這不會，它，你多遠距離，都好像在耳邊響起一樣。所以六根所接觸的六塵境界，都是不可思議功德莊嚴。

Unlike us, if we shout on this side of a square, people on the other side are unlikely to hear us. But Sukhāvātī is different, no matter how far away you are, it always sounds like it is right next to your ears. Therefore, in Sukhāvātī, when the six sense organs (*eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind) contact the six dusts (the field of form, sound, odor, taste, touch, and concept), the realms are all full of inconceivably solemn merits.

1st Vow: A Land without Evil Path Why Did Amitabha Make This Vow?

那個世界無有地獄、餓鬼、禽獸、蝸飛蠕動之類，這就是第一願，國無惡道願。這個願非常地真實，尤其是對我們娑婆國土的眾生，

That world has no hells, hungry ghosts, beasts, nor the creatures that fly or wriggle.

This first Vow, the Land is free from evil paths, is very realistic, especially for all beings in our Saha World.

我們這個世界眾生非常容易墮三惡道，不要問別人，就看自己。三惡道怎麼來的？貪瞋癡感召來的，貪心感召餓鬼，變成惡鬼去了。瞋恚心就感召地獄道，愚癡感應的是畜生道。那我們貪瞋癡斷了沒有？

It is very easy for all beings in our Saha World to fall into the three evil paths. There is no need to ask others, just look at ourselves. How do the three evil paths manifest?

They are induced by greed, resentment, and ignorance. Greed induces the realm of hungry ghosts, one becomes a hungry ghost if being greedy. A resentful heart induces the hell realm. And ignorance induces the animal realm. Is our greed, resentment, and ignorance eradicated yet?

可能不僅沒有斷，可能天天都在增長。換句話說，我們如果天天增長貪瞋癡，就是向三惡道去進軍，將來就得勇猛扎入三惡道去了，太恐怖了。

Not only have we not eradicated them but probably let them grow every day. In other words, if we let our greed, resentment, and ignorance grow every day, we are marching towards the three evil paths. In the future, we will then be aggressively plunged into the three evil paths. It is too horrifying.

It Is Difficult to Cultivate in the Three Evil Paths

所以我們 為什麼修了無量劫，都沒成就？別說成佛了，就是證阿羅漢果都沒有，原因在哪裏？就是因為我們貪瞋癡沒斷，所以輪迴當中三惡道的時間佔絕大多數。

Why have we practiced for infinite kalpas still with no achievement? We are nowhere near arhathood, let alone attaining Buddhahood. What is the reason? It is because we have not eradicated greed, resentment, and ignorance. As a result, the three evil paths account for the vast portion of our samsara.

在三惡道裏就很難修行，你看那動物怎麼修？太難修了。狗，豬，那個豬是愚痴，我們講蠢豬蠢豬，它蠢，愚癡。那個雞，鴨那都受報，被宰割，痛苦不堪，牠哪有心思修行，也不懂。餓鬼也是，非常地飢餓。地獄就更不用說了，最苦的地方。所以這些地方都沒辦法修行，這只是受報。

It is very difficult to cultivate in the three evil paths. Look! How can an animal cultivate? It is too difficult for them to cultivate! Dogs, pigs..., pigs are ignorant. We often say, dumb pigs; they are dumb, ignorant. Those chickens and ducks are all receiving retribution through being slaughtered. It is excruciating misery for them, how could they have the mind to cultivate? Plus they are also unable to comprehend. As for the hungry ghosts, they are extremely hungry. Let alone in hell, it is the place with the most suffering. So, it is impossible to cultivate in these places, those beings only exist to receive their retribution.

所以我們雖然學了無量劫，沒學成，就可能到三惡道去了，然後輪迴，在三惡道輪迴了好久好久，再出離的時候，前生學的全忘了。但是所學的，它都變成善根累積下來，在我們的第八識，阿賴耶識田裏頭種下種子。

Although we have learned for infinite kalpas ([*Kalpa, a Sanskrit word, an Indian and Buddhist cosmology term, the period of time between the creation and recreation of a world or universe](#)), we might end up in the three evil paths if we do not attain accomplishment in this lifetime. After a long time of reincarnations within the three evil paths, we would forget everything we had learned in the past lives when we finally transcend the evil paths. But what we have learned will be accumulated as good roots (*indriya) and planted as seeds in our eighth consciousness, the alaya-vijnana.

這些種子不斷地積累，每一次遇到佛法就積累一些，然後就斷掉了，然後在下一位佛出世的時候，再積累一點，無量劫的積累到現在，善根算是很深厚了。但是你要知道，伴隨著善根深厚的時候，我們這個三惡道的苦也受夠了

These seeds accumulate continuously every time we encounter Buddha-Dharma, then they are cut off until the next Buddha comes and they accumulate little by little again. From infinite kalpas ago until today, the good roots are finally regarded as deep-seated. But we must know, as we accumulated these deep-seated good roots, we have experienced incredible sufferings within the three evil paths.

[Liberating Ourselves From the Delusion of Samsara](#)

這一生一定要解脫，不能再搞輪迴了，再搞輪迴，即使你到人天道，你還是會迷，一迷了之後就一定造業，一造業那就是三惡道報，

In this life, we must liberate ourselves and not engage in samsara anymore. If we engage in samsara, even in heaven or the human realms, we are still deluded. Once deluded we will definitely create karma. Once we create karma, we will definitely receive the retribution of three evil paths.

所以西方極樂世界殊勝的地方，它沒有三惡道，就是不會讓你墮落。為什麼沒有三惡道？因為極樂世界它沒有貪瞋癡，貪瞋癡是三惡道的因，不造貪瞋癡他不會墮三惡道。雖然我們的神識裡頭，阿賴耶識種子裡頭有貪瞋癡這些種子，但是在極樂世界它不會起現行，沒有這個緣讓你起現行。

The reason that Sukhāvātī is marvelous is because it has no three evil paths, which means that you will not degenerate. Why does it not have three evil paths? Because there is no greed, resentment, and ignorance in Sukhāvātī. Greed, resentment, and ignorance are the cause of the three evil paths. If one does not create these karma, he will not fall into the three evil paths. Even though we have these seeds in our alaya-vijnana (*consciousness), they won't arise in Sukhāvātī because there are no conditions to let them arise.

There Is No Greed in Sukhāvātī

你想想極樂世界你不會起貪心，在我們世界看到的金銀珠寶，眼睛都紅了，起貪心，為什麼？那金銀珠寶非常稀罕，很少有，所以物以稀為貴。看到了他就起貪心，就想據為己有。在極樂世界絕對沒這個問題，看那黃金，幹什麼的？鋪馬路用，就像我們這裡水泥一樣，水泥鋪馬路，是吧，極樂世界用黃金鋪馬路。

Think about it! In Sukhāvātī you will not give rise to greed. In our world, you get jealous and give rise to greed when seeing jewels like gold, silver, and pearls. Why? Because jewels like gold, silver, and pearls are very rare in our world. The more scarce, the more precious. One gets greedy when seeing them and thinks to take possession for himself. There are no such problems in Sukhāvātī. You see gold, what is it used for? For paving roads, just like cement in our world. Cement paves roads, right? In Sukhāvātī, they use gold to pave the roads.

像我們這個世界，把黃金看得這是寶貴得不得了。在香港，我現在長住香港，香港那個金鋪特別多，一克黃金都挺貴的，買一個什麼金項鍊掛在脖子上，那美得不得了，極樂世界的人看了，覺得哭笑不得，就好像我們這個世界的人，你說拿那些水泥，拿出一塊水泥掛在脖子上，不得了，就一個道理，讓你哭笑不得，沒人幹那個傻事。

In our world, gold is regarded as so precious. In Hong Kong where I now reside, there are particularly many gold shops. One gram of gold is quite expensive. If you buy a golden necklace and wear it, you take so much pride in its beauty. But people in Sukhāvātī see it, they don't know whether to laugh or cry. This is just like the people in our world taking cement to hang on their necks, it is frightful. For the same reason, it makes you wonder if you should cry or laugh. No one does this kind of silly thing. 極樂世界你看都是金銀珠寶，七寶，隨便拿，隨便你都不用要，沒人去貪，所以他的貪心起不來，什麼都有，你要什麼，它有什麼。

In Sukhāvātī, you see all those gold, silver, pearls... seven jewels, you can take them as you wish without requesting. No one gets greedy, thus your greed will not arise. They have everything. Whatever you want, they have it all.

When You Want to Eat Great Dishes Will Appear Before You

像想吃飯，念頭一動，「七寶鉢器自然盈滿」，百味飲食都在你面前了。

For example, when you think of eating a meal, as the thought arises, seven jeweled bowls are naturally full, and one hundred dishes all appear before you.

百味飲食那是古代皇帝才有這個資格吃百味飲食，你到西方極樂世界想吃飯的時候，你比那皇帝還強。七寶珍寶做成的那個器皿，裝的那都是珍饈，美味佳餚。可是你會不會要貪吃？絕對不貪吃，你看到這些食品，你當時馬上就起了正念了，這是習氣現行。

One hundred dishes! Only the ancient emperors had the fortune to enjoy this. When you get to Sukhāvātī, once thinking of eating, you are more fortunate than emperors.

Utensils made of seven jewels are filled with precious delicacies. Will you get greedy to eat it? Absolutely not. Seeing these delicacies, you give rise to righteous thoughts immediately. Eating is just the manifestation of your karmic habit!

其實在極樂世界哪裡要吃飯，那是清虛之身，無極之體，不像我們這個色身，那是五陰身，它得要補充食品，作為能量補充，在極樂世界根本不需要，禪悅為食，法喜充滿。

In fact, how could you need food in Sukhāvātī? You have the body of śubha (*purity and clarity) and the noumenon of amita (*infinity). It is unlike our physical body, the body of five skandhas, [\(the five skandhas in Buddhism refers to matter, sensations, perception, formations, and consciousness. They make up the physical and mental existence of each person\)](#), that needs food to recharge our energy. In Sukhāvātī, food is fundamentally not needed. You regard dhyana-joy as food and are suffused with Dharma-bliss.

為什麼會有想吃飯的時候？這是你的習氣。通常是欲界去的人，他們有飲食的習慣，到了西方極樂世界還有這個習氣，就他還會動那麼微小的念頭。來了這麼久，怎麼都沒吃飯？動了這麼一個小小的念頭，一動的時候，馬上那個七寶鉢器，百味飲食全都在你面前了，根本不用自己準備。

But, why would you have a moment of wanting to eat? This is your karmic habit. Usually, people from the desire realm (*One of the 'three realms: desire, form, and formlessness) have the habit of eating. After arriving in Sukhāvātī, they still have this karmic habit and still give rise to such tiny thoughts, "It has been so long since I arrived, how come I have not eaten yet?" Once such tiny thoughts arise, the seven-jeweled vessels filled with one hundred delicacies immediately appear in front of you. You do not need to prepare it by yourself at all.

我們這世界你要吃餐飯，那挺辛苦的，是吧，自己買菜，做飯，切、弄、煮、炸，可能花了一、兩個小時，搞出一桌飯了，吃也就吃二十分鐘，完了之後還得洗碗，是不是？

In our world, to eat one meal, you have to work hard, right? You have to buy food, and then cut, cook, fry, possibly spending one or two hours to make a meal, yet only spend about twenty minutes to enjoy it. Then you still have to clean it up, don't you?

到極樂世界根本不需要，想吃就來了。不想吃了.... 這極樂世界的人一看到百味飲食就想，我現在是菩薩了，我還要吃飯嗎？這一動念頭，那飲食自然就化去了，碗都不用洗，多好，所以你還會有貪心嗎？

When you are in Sukhāvātī, you do not need to do all these. Whenever you want to eat, it appears. When you do not want it.... People in Sukhāvātī seeing the one hundred delicacies will think that I am a bodhisattva now, do I still need food? When this thought arises, the food will naturally disappear. You do not even need to wash dishes! How wonderful it is! How would you still get greedy?

There Is No Resentment in Sukhāvātī

你也絕對不會有瞋恚，你絕對不會跟任何人對立，你不會跟人競爭，根本不用爭，什麼都有，你也絕對不會愚癡，為什麼？你天天聽阿彌陀佛給你講經說法，而且二十四小時不間斷，六塵都給你說法。

You will absolutely not have resentment either. You will neither conflict nor compete with others. There is no need to compete at all, because you have everything. You will absolutely not be ignorant either. Why? You listen to Amitabha's preaching everyday. It is twenty four hours non-stop, even the six-dusts (*form, sound, smell, taste, touch, and concepts) speak Dharma to you.

所以大家也不要聽到二十四小時都得聽經，那挺辛苦的！你別害怕，我們這聽個三小時都覺得挺辛苦，那到西方極樂世界能夠天天都聽二十四小時，你這又錯會意思了。

Some may think that listening to preaching twenty four hours is quite hard work! Do not be scared! You think, "It's quite hard work to listen to lectures for only three hours here, but in Sukhāvati we have to listen for twenty four hours everyday?!" You have mistaken the meaning again!

Dharma Preaching Flows Unceasingly

到西方極樂世界你聽法很自在，每天你想去親近阿彌陀佛，阿彌陀佛在大講堂裡面講經，你去那裡端端正正地坐著。好了，坐累了，坐累了想出來休息休息，可以，走出大講堂，在外面七寶鋪成的馬路，去那裡溜達溜達，

You can listen to the Dharma with ease in Sukhāvati. Every day you are eager to be close to Amitabha; Amitabha preaches in the Great Hall, you go there and sit upright. But when you feel tired and think of going out to take a rest, sure, you can walk out from the Great Hall. Outside, the road is paved with seven jewels, you can stroll there.

然後聽到那風吹樹葉的聲音，那不是還是阿彌陀佛講經說法嗎？阿彌陀佛沒有間斷地說法。看到樹上還有小鳥，那小鳥都是阿彌陀佛變的，也是讓法音宣流，沒有間斷。然後想到，現在想活動活動身體，下這個七寶池，八功德水裏頭游游泳怎麼樣？也行！然後看到那水也有聲音，那個水也是說法。游完泳了上來，一看那樹，你聽到樹的聲音，看到樹的影子，摸到樹，你都能夠證無生法忍。所以你哪有愚癡？

Then you hear the sound of the wind blowing leaves, isn't that still Amitabha's preaching? Amitabha does not stop preaching. You see birds in the trees, all those birds are the transformations of Amitabha, it is to allow Dharma proclamation to flow unceasingly. Then you are thinking, "Now I want to do some exercise, how about I go to the seven jewels pond to swim in "the water of eight merits." No problem! You hear the sound of the water also proclaiming Dharma. After finishing swimming, you see the trees. You can attain anutpattika-dharma-ksanti from hearing the sound of the trees or seeing the shadows of the trees, or by touching these trees. As such, how could you have ignorance?

所以貪瞋癡都沒有了。那「國無惡道」自然就是形成的就是這個狀況，肯定沒有三惡道，所以我們要了解。這些殊勝的功德，完全是阿彌陀佛本願功德的加持。在西方極樂世界，去到那裡，我們的修學只有進步，絕對不會退轉，我們都證得三不退的菩薩果位。為什麼不退轉？原因在哪裏

Your greed, resentment, and ignorance are all gone. The Land is free from evil realms; it naturally exists as thusness. Undoubtedly, there are no three evil paths, we must understand this. These phenomenal merits are entirely the blessing of Amitabha's Fundamental Vows. Once we get to Sukhāvātī, our cultivation will only progress and absolutely not regress. And we will all attain the level of three non-retrogression bodhisattva. Why do we not regress? What is the reason?

Ceaselessly Listen to the Sutra and Dharma Teachings Everyday

有很多同修也曾經問過我，學佛總是進進退退，一會挺精進，一天能在家裡拜上五百拜，六百拜，每天三部『無量壽經』，然後聽經也聽個八小時，挺法喜充滿的。然後大概過了兩三個月，不知什麼因緣，就不能在家裡堅持了，然後再過一兩個月，不行了，什麼煩惱都起來了，退轉了，所以很煩惱，跑來問我，為什麼會退轉？

Many fellow practitioners have also asked me, “Why is there no persistence in my learning of Buddhism? Sometimes I was aggressive and prostrated myself to Buddha 500 or 600 times in one day. Plus, I read *The Infinite Life Sutra* three times and listened to lectures for eight hours, full of Dharma-joy. Yet two or three months later, I have no idea why I lose persistence at home. One or two months more, I am done. All my defilements arise, I have regressed.” They felt very afflicted and came to ask me, “Why have I regressed?”

我就說這是很正常的，娑婆世界就苦在這，你想修行，退緣特別多，都不是幫助你進步的，往往是拖你後腿。真不容易。要真正不退，用什麼方法最好？一天到晚不間斷地聽經聞法。I said, “This is very normal. This is exactly the suffering of the Saha world.” You want to practice, but there are especially many regressive conditions; all of which do not help you to progress but usually drag your feet. It is really not easy. If we want to have non-retrogression, what method is the best? Listen to the sutra and Dharma teachings every day ceaselessly.

Listening to *The Infinite Life Sutra* Ten Hours a Day Everyday

你看我們師父上人非常讚嘆劉素雲居士，她是在家裡『無量壽經』一門深入，十年不出門的，就在家裡聽經，一天聽個十小時。一個光盤，她就放這一個光盤，一個小時的光盤，重複地聽，一天聽十遍再換，第二天換第二張。

Our revered Shifu highly praises Laity Liu Suyun (*a great practitioner who encountered Master Chin Kung's teaching after being diagnosed with lupus. She put all effort into practice with one focus after the hospital had given up on her treatment. Later, she recovered. This was regarded as a miracle by the hospital. She was approved by Master Chin Kung having attained the Samadhi of Reciting Amitabha), who studied *The Infinite Life Sutra* at home, delving deeply into one subject ten hours a day without leaving home for ten years. She played a one-hour disc at a time, repeatedly listening ten times and only changing to the second disc the next day.

她就是能夠堅持不間斷地聞法，所以她能不退轉，師父上人給她印證達到念佛三昧了。換句話說，她往生有十足的把握，甚至她想什麼時候走就什麼時候走，只要真想走的時候，求阿彌陀佛，阿彌陀佛就來了，就能往生。

She insists on listening to the Dharma teachings ceaselessly, so she would not regress. Our revered Shifu confirmed that she has attained the Samadhi of Reciting Amitabha. In other words, she has attained full assurance of rebirth and even has the capability to choose her own rebirth time. As soon as she really wants to go, she can make a request to Amitabha; Amitabha will come, she can then be reborn.

她成就的秘訣，就是不間斷地聽經聞法，而且專修。所以我們想要不退轉，這是秘訣。千萬不能學雜，不能學亂，要精進，精就是專精，進就是進步。

The key of her accomplishment is to listen to Dharma teachings ceaselessly and delve deeply into only one subject. So, if we want to obtain non-retrogression, this is the key. We must not learn intermixed and disarrayed teachings. We must proceed diligently with only one focus.

努力每天用功，一門深入，長時薰修，你就能得不退轉。極樂世界為什麼不退轉？就是這個道理，那裡的菩薩，是每天聽經不間斷，不管上哪裏，都是聽經聞法不間斷，甚至是到十方世界去旅遊的時候。

Working hard every day! “To delve deeply into one subject and persevere with practice for the long term,” you will then attain non-retrogression. Why do bodhisattvas in Sukhāvātī not regress? This is the reason. All bodhisattvas there listen to Dharma teachings uninterruptedly. No matter where they go, they listen to sutra and Dharma teachings uninterruptedly even at the time of visiting all worlds in ten directions.

Bodhisattvas in Sukhāvātī

Visit Ten Trillion Buddha Lands Everyday

他們是每天都出去旅遊的，到哪旅遊？到十方諸佛國土。你看『阿彌陀經』裡記載的，每天早晨起來了，他們要出去玩一玩。在「清旦」就是早晨的時候，「各以衣祴，盛眾妙華，供養他方十萬億佛。」衣祴就是花籃。

They visit places everyday, where do they go? They go to all Buddha lands in ten directions. According to *The Amitabha Sutra*, every morning when getting up, they go out for fun. At dawn, each collects variously wondrous flowers with floral baskets and makes offerings to ten trillion Buddhas of other lands.

他用那種花籃盛載天上下來的天花，你看供養的物品都不用自己操心準備，全是想要什麼，它自然現前。拿著這個花籃裝的天花，到十方十萬億佛國土那裡去供養。這十萬億也不是數字，它是表法，表大圓滿。就是十方一切諸佛，他都能夠普供養。

They use the floral baskets to gather celestial flowers that fall from the sky. Look! They do not need to worry about preparing the offerings, it will all naturally manifest in front of them as they wish. Bringing these wondrous flowers gathered in floral baskets, they go to ten trillion Buddha lands to offer Buddhas. This ten trillion is not just a number but signifies the Dharma of great consummation. It insinuates that they can universally give offerings to all Buddhas in ten directions.

他去供養佛，那佛肯定會給他們講經說法，對不對？哪能說白供養是不是，不用說多，每一尊佛給他每天講一句法，這一天下來就聽了十萬億句，你看他這種修學進步有多快。聽法的功德很殊勝，如果能夠保持不間斷地聽，你的修學長進是非常之快。

They offer to Buddhas, and the Buddhas will certainly teach them Dharma. Right? There is no such thing as an offering going in vain. No need to say much, if each Buddha teaches them just one sentence a day, it will be ten trillion sentences in one day. How fast their practice will progress! The merit of listening to Buddha-Dharma is splendid; if you listen uninterruptedly, your practice and learning will advance rapidly.

A Miniature Sukhāvati

你就拿我們這七天，你就可以做試驗，如果你天天來，天天這樣認真地法，保證你七天之後你的境界有大幅提升，這肯定的。為什麼？不是我在這講得好，我們講的基本是照本宣科，我拿的這個是『無量壽經』的白話解。是師父老人家讓我用這個經本，黃念祖老居士那時候他寫的，當然也結合我們師父上人日常講經的這些理念，跟他的述而不作，跟大家匯報，這叫複講。

You can take these seven days as an experiment! If you come every day and earnestly learn every day, I assure you, your level will advance greatly after seven days. This is for sure. Why? It is not because I expound so well, what I speak is basically to repeat the contents of the text. Specified by Shifu, I give this lecture based on *The Modern Language Annotation of the Infinite Life Sutra*, written by senior practitioner Huang Nian Zu (*A great contemporary practitioner, his work includes *The Annotation of the Larger Sukhavativyuha* - 大經解, *The Provisions for Pure Land Rebirth* - 淨土資糧, etc.). Of course, I also combine the concepts from Shifu's daily lectures as well as his principle of "recounting the sages' teachings without adding one's own ideas." This is called 'repetition-narration' (*repeating what is expounded by the teacher').

大家聽了之後，你能夠消化吸收，你能夠去落實，那你這個境界一定是大幅度提升，這七天我們是全日制的，從早上八點半到晚上九點，有聽經，有念佛，有點點像一個極樂世界的小雛形。極樂世界的生活就是這樣，當然會這現在自在很多。

After listening, if you could digest, absorb, and further implement what you have learned, you would greatly elevate your level. In these seven days, we practice full time, from 8:30 am to 9:00 pm, listening to sutra expounding and reciting Amitabha; it is a bit like a miniature Sukhāvātī. This is life in Sukhāvātī! Of course, in Sukhāvātī, it will be much more comfortable and easier than this.

大家一天下來可能有的老菩薩會覺得很辛苦，是吧？念佛還得走著念，聽經得坐著，腰板好像都得要活動活動才行，這個是什麼？我們這個色身沒辦法，但是如果你能夠堅持，七天下來就會很殊勝。我們想想我們這七天還不是二十四小時不間斷，到西方是二十四小時不間斷，你看看有多殊勝，所以他一定是不退轉，一定是不會墮落惡趣。

Some of the senior practitioners probably feel arduous after a whole day of practice. Right? You have to walk for recitation and sit while listening to the Dharma talk, your waist seems to beg for exercise. Why is this? It is due to the insufficient function of our physical bodies. If you can persist, it will be remarkable after seven days. Think about it, our seven days are still not twenty four hours continuously. When you are in Sukhāvātī, it is twenty four hours non-stop. How phenomenal it will be! So, you will definitely not regress, definitely not fall into evil paths.

Amitabha's Aspiration-Power Is Aimed at Beings in the Evil Paths

十方世界所有一切眾生，乃至三惡道當中，這個「焰摩羅界」就是講地獄道的眾生。地獄道的眾生要念阿彌陀佛求生淨土，能不能往生？一樣可以往生。所以不管是哪一類眾生，只要具

足信願行三個條件，統統都能往生。這裡尤其提三惡道中，可見得阿彌陀佛真是大慈大悲，他的願力所向，尤其是要度三惡道的眾生。

Among all beings in the worlds of ten directions, can the beings of three evil paths, even “yamaraja realms” attain rebirth even if hell beings recite Amitabha and seek Sukhāvati rebirth? They can also attain rebirth. So, no matter which kind of beings, as long as they are sufficient in the three provisions of faith, aspiration, and practice, they can all be reborn. The text here specifically mentions three evil paths, it shows that Amitabha is indeed filled with infinite compassion and mercy. His aspiration-power is particularly aimed towards liberating the beings of the three evil paths.

誰是三惡道的眾生？現在在三惡道裡那個畜生、地獄、餓鬼、那當然固然是三惡道，那我們自己呢？如果我們自己也造殺盜淫妄，也搞貪瞋痴慢，那我們也是三惡道的眾生，差一步而已。現在這人身壽命還沒完，完了之後就得到三惡道。

Who are the beings of the three evil paths? Those beings currently in the realm of animal, hell, and hungry ghosts are of course the beings of the three evil paths, but what about ourselves? If we also create the karma of killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, and lying, as well as engage in the speech and actions of greed, resentment, ignorance, and arrogance, we are the beings of the three evil paths too. There is only one step difference. Our human life has not ended yet; once it ends, we will definitely fall into the three evil paths.

學佛裡頭的也一樣，殺盜淫妄，貪瞋痴慢沒有放下的，那也免不了要墮三惡道，所以我們想想真是挺恐怖的。

People who are learning Buddhism are also the same; if we have not yet eradicated killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, and lying, as well as have not let go of greed, resentment, ignorance, and arrogance, we will inevitably fall into the three evil paths. It is quite terrifying when we think about it.

We Can Carry Along Our Old Karma at Our Rebirth

好在有這個法門，我們可以念阿彌陀佛帶業往生，但是要知道，帶業不能帶新業，只能帶舊業。新業是什麼？你現在還在造，還在造的就說明不是真想去，你不是想去，那怎麼能去？往生與否全由信願之有無，你真信切願，你才能去往生，

Fortunately, we have this method! We can recite Amitabha and carry our karma along at our rebirth. But we must know that we cannot carry new karma, only the old karma.

What is new karma? That which is ongoing. If you are still creating karma, it indicates that you do not really want to go. If you do not want to go, how can you be reborn?

Rebirth or not, it is utterly up to whether your faith and aspiration exists or not. Only when you have genuine faith and imperative aspiration can you then be reborn.

所以真正相信，真正發願求往生，現在不能再造惡業了。不造惡業，過去造的統統能帶，即使是昨天造的，即使是一個小時之前造的，都能帶業往生，只要你現前真的不造，懺悔業障，後不再造，這樣的條件就具足。

Therefore, if you genuinely believe and bring forth aspiration to seek rebirth, you must not create evil karma now. Do not create evil karma! All karma created in the past can all be taken along, even if you made it yesterday or one hour ago. All can be carried, as long as you do not create new karma now. “Repent our karma, no longer create it”-----this condition is enough for your rebirth.

一到西方極樂世界，雖然過去我們有造過三惡道的業，但是你也不會墮三惡道，因為就是剛才講的，你沒有緣了。所以從這裡就可以看到阿彌陀佛無限的悲心，真正憐憫這些惡道苦難眾生，憐憫我們這些業障習氣深重的眾生，

As soon as you arrive in Sukhāvātī, even though you had created some karma of the three evil paths in the past, you would not fall into the three evil paths. Because, as we have just mentioned, you are free from those evil conditions. From this perspective, we can see the infinite compassion of Amitabha. He is genuinely merciful to those suffering beings of evil paths and all beings like us who have heavy karma and deep karmic habits.

我們的業障深重表現在哪裡？明知自己在造惡業就是止不住，那個習氣，那個煩惱，真是根深蒂固。我們現在真正發起一念真心，仰求阿彌陀佛加持，垂手接引我們，只要這個心是真的，就必定感得阿彌陀佛來接引我們。

What is the indication of our deep and heavy karma? Knowing that we are making evil karma yet have no way to stop it, because those habits and the defilements are truly deeply ingrained. We now bring forth a genuine heart, beseeching Amitabha's blessings to escort us with His hand reaching down; so long as our heart is genuine, we will definitely induce Amitabha to escort us.

All Matters in This World Can All Be Renounced

阿彌陀佛真是無限的慈悲，我們必須是不能有任何的懷疑，不能有任何的掛礙，對這個世界什麼都放下，不能有絲毫的牽掛，那你就決定能往生。所以常常問問自己... 能不能往生其實很簡單，你問問自己，如果阿彌陀佛現在來接引，你是不是就願意去？願意去的請舉手。好，給自己一些掌聲。

Amitabha really has infinite compassion, we must not have any doubts or any worries. We relinquish all things and matters in this world and strictly do not have the slightest disquietude in our mind, we will then definitely be reborn. So, we should ask ourselves often... Whether one will be reborn or not, it is actually very simple; you can ask yourself, "If Amitabha comes to escort me right now, am I willing to go?" Raise your hand if you are. Great, give yourself some applause.

真的！真的嗎？好，真的就是你這個世界什麼牽掛都放下了，這是真願意去，如果你還掛著，我家裡的人，兒孫，先生，太太，兒女，那就不是真的。你還掛著，財產，存款，工作，甚至掛著自己的身體，這災難來了到哪去避，這都不是真的。真的是一切掛礙都放下了，越早去越好。

Are you really willing to go? Yes! (Audience response.) Good! If you are genuinely willing to go, you must have let go of all matters in this world! This is the indication that you are really willing to go. If you still think of your family, children, grandchildren, and spouse, you have not let go of your affection-attachment; your willingness to go is not real. If your mind still harbors your properties, bank account, work, even worries about your body, such as thinking about where you can hide when disaster hits, then all these willingness to go are not real. When your willingness is genuine, you will let go of all disquietude of worldly matters and feel the earlier the better.

你看極樂世界這麼殊勝，這麼莊嚴，你還不想去，那不愚癡顛倒嗎？所以一定要放下，真正放下了，你決定往生，不肯放下的，那就得將來到六道，甚至是三惡道去受生了，那真的是太可憐，太痛苦了，所以認真地想清楚，想明白了，下定決心，這一生我們一定要去西方。Look! Sukhāvātī is so phenomenal, so solemn, if you are still not wanting to go, aren't you ignorant and topsy-turvy? So, we must let go! When letting go genuinely, we will absolutely attain rebirth. For those who are not willing to let go, they will be reincarnated in the six paths and may even get retribution in the three evil paths. That would be really wretched. Too painful! So, we should seriously think clearly, come to a realization; we must make up our mind to attain Sukhāvātī rebirth decisively in this lifetime!

With Genuine Comprehension, You Will Genuinely Bring Forth Faith and Aspiration

可能有的同修來之前，還未必能夠這麼堅定不移地要求生淨土，有沒有這樣的？還是一直以來就很堅定不移？為什麼你能夠堅定不移？說老實話，你真明白了，你就堅定不移，所以這聽經聞法的功德就在這裡。

Before coming here, some fellow practitioners may not yet be unwaveringly determined to seek Sukhāvātī rebirth. Is there anyone here like that? Or, have you always been very determined? Why can you be determined? To be honest, if you have genuinely comprehended, you will then be unwaveringly resolute. This is exactly the merits of listening to the sutra and Dharma teachings.

你把經真聽懂了，你就真正發起信願，你就堅定不移求生淨土。不想求生淨土的，或者還有疑慮的，還有掛礙的，都不是真明白的人。怎麼辦？那就得多聽經，真的聽明白了就能放下了，這是唯一的方法。所以你想不墮惡趣，怎麼辦？聽經聞法。

Once you have a genuine comprehension of the sutra teachings, you will then genuinely bring forth faith and aspiration, and unwaveringly seek Sukhāvātī rebirth. Those who are not willing to seek rebirth or still have some doubts and some disquietude in mind, are all the people without genuine understanding. What can they do? They must spend more time listening to the sutra teachings. Once understanding, they can then naturally let go. This is the only way. For this reason, if you do not want to fall into evil paths, what can you do? Listen to the sutra and Dharma teachings.

這個經上講的，聞名這個功德，這是阿彌陀佛加持你，讓你業障消除，讓你放下牽掛，放下對於人事物的控制、佔有、支配，放下這世間名聞利養，五欲六塵，貪瞋痴慢，自私自利，這些統統放下，那你肯定往生，災難對你一點影響都沒有。

According to this scripture, the merit of "hearing Amitabha's name" is getting the blessings from Amitabha to reduce our karma, to let us renounce the disquietude in mind, and to let go of our controlling, possession, and manipulation of people, matters, and things. Plus it helps us let go of fame, gain, interest, offerings, along with the five-desires (*wealth, lust, fame, eating, sleeping), and the six-dusts (*form, sound, smell, taste, touch, and concepts), as well as greed, resentment, ignorance, arrogance, and selfishness. When we relinquish all of these, we will surely be reborn, and disasters will not affect us at all.

今天的時間又到了，我們只講了第一願。而這第一願也是最重要的一願。以後的這些願都是更加細化地來給我們說明。明天我們八點半繼續來跟大家一起學習。今天有講得不妥之處，請諸位法師，諸位大德同修多多批評指正。阿彌陀佛！

Today's time has finished, we have only discussed the first Vow, which is also the most important Vow. The later Vows are more detailed explanations. Tomorrow at 8:30 am, we will continue to study together. If there was any improper elaboration in today's speech, respected Venerables, virtuous men, and fellow practitioners, please give me critiques and corrections. Amitabha!