

Let us take a look at the next Vow. Please read together, "When I become a Buddha, if all Buddhas in countless Buddha lands of ten directions do not praise my name and proclaim the merits and virtues of my land, I will not procure Anuttara-Samyak-Sambodhi." This is the **17th Vow: Praises from all Buddhas.**

### **All Buddhas Propagate *The Infinite Life Sutra***

The general idea of this text is very clear. Dharmākara Bodhisattva made a Vow, saying that, when he becomes a Buddha, innumerable Buddhas in numberless Buddha lands of ten directions will all praise his name and elaborate his merits. This implies that all Buddhas will propagate *The Infinite Life Sutra*. This sutra is about the merits of the name of Amitabha, about how Amitabha cultivated and achieved Sukhāvātī, about His Great Vows, about the theory and methods of how to get to Sukhāvātī, and about the marvelousness of His liberating all beings.

Amitabha expressed to us that, even if only one Buddha in ten directions does not propagate *The Infinite Life Sutra*, does not praise the name of Amitabha, and does not elaborate the solemn, excellent merit of His Sukhāvātī, He will not attain Buddhahood. When we hear these high statements, do we ask, "Why is Amitabha so arrogant and conceited? How come He even wants everyone to praise Him?"

We cannot use our mundane perspective to **measure** Buddha's great compassion. Think about it! Why does Amitabha want all Buddhas to praise His name, to laud Sukhāvātī and the Pure Land Method? He is not trying to raise His own prestige because He has renounced fame, gain, and offerings long ago! It is for all beings to have a chance to know the existence of such a great Sukhavati, to know the Pure Land Method, and to attain Buddhahood most quickly. All considerations are for all beings, not for Himself.

Besides, all Buddhas have no jealousy. Your prestige is higher than mine, I won't praise you; this is jealousy. A mortal has jealousy, Buddhas absolutely do not have it. Why? Because all Buddhas' wish is to help all beings attain Buddhahood in the fastest way. Now there is Amitabha, who has created such a Sukhāvātī to escort all beings to His Land. This is great! What He has done is exactly what I want to do. Since He has done it, I do not need to do it; I only need to urge all beings in my land to seek rebirth into His Land. How convenient it is!

### **Rejoice in Others' Merits Is as Great as Creating the Merits Yourself**

All Buddhas in ten directions are absolutely not meddlesome. Someone has done such a good thing, all Buddhas wholeheartedly support and safeguard Him. They do not need to be troubled. Besides, all Buddhas in ten directions are one unity; they are not the same, yet have no differences. Despite the many manifestations of Buddhas and Buddha lands, they are indeed one unity due to all Buddhas being of the same dharmakaya.

With this logic, Amitabha is all Buddhas in ten directions, and all Buddhas in ten directions are Amitabha. One is all, all are one. *The Avatamsaka Sutra* has given us an incisive account of this truth. This realm is called the “four dharma-realm of non-obstruction”:  
non-obstruction in noumenon,  
non-obstruction in phenomena,  
non-obstruction between noumenon-phenomena, and  
non-obstruction among all phenomena.

All Buddhas have attained these realms, they do not differentiate between themselves and others. You are me, I am you. The merit of your liberating all beings is the merit of my liberating all beings. We can share the work and cooperate with one another. We are doing the same work with the same goal. Just like when we are walking, our brain has to think about which way to go, our eyes have to see, our legs have to stride, and our arms have to swing, right? Walking involves all different organs of our body, our four limbs have to collaborate to complete this work together. Buddhas in ten directions are also like this. They are one unity and would absolutely not compete with each other.

We now want to liberate all beings. “Okay, since you have built Sukhāvātī, I will be responsible for publicity.” So, all Buddhas in ten directions will speak *The Infinite Life Sutra* in their lands, urging all beings to seek Sukhāvātī rebirth. They would absolutely not say, “Do not go! Don’t listen to Him, just listen to me.” There is no such kind of Buddha. All Buddhas have only the thought of helping all beings to attain Buddhahood quickly, no desire to control others. Just like Shakyamuni Buddha, He persuades us to go to Sukhāvātī instead of staying in the Saha World just listening to Him.

“Don’t listen to others!” Who would say this? Only demons would say this. Demons have a very strong desire to possess, Buddhas do not. Buddhas collaborate to complete one job, this is the manifestation of “one unity.” Accomplishing one job, the merits belong to everyone. All Buddhas rejoice in others’ merits. The merit of rejoicing in others’ merits is as great as creating the merit by yourself.

The Buddha urged us to seek Sukhāvātī rebirth, this merit is the same as Amitabha building Sukhāvātī to help all beings. All Buddhas praise Amitabha’s infinite and boundless merits, they also praise Shakyamuni Buddha’s infinite and boundless merits. There is proof in the ***The Amitabha Sutra*** where Shakyamuni Buddha told us, “I, in the evil world of five turbidity, practice this difficult deed, attain Anuttara-Samyak-Sambodhi, and speak this Dharma that is difficult to believe for all beings.” This difficult deed refers to expounding *The Infinite Life Sutra* and *The Amitabha Sutra*. As stated in *The Amitabha Sutra*, Buddhas in ten directions praised Shakyamuni Buddha, for He can practice this difficult deed. This is an inconceivable merit! Look! The merit of Shakyamuni Buddha is as great as Amitabha’s merit. This is called “rejoicing in others’ merit.”

We must learn to “rejoice in others' merit.” When we see others doing good deeds, we should do our best to help. When we are unable to help, we should rejoice with praise, supporting spiritually. We must not say, “He is doing good deeds, I have to question whether or not he is doing it for fame, prestige, gain, and offerings. I cannot help him. Even though he claims to do it for all beings' benefit. I still have to observe him. And I will not let him use my resources.” You deliberately do not support him and even impede him. This way, you have created severe karma.

A really smart person would learn to rejoice in others' merit. You do good deeds, I do not care what kind of intention you have; as long as it is beneficial to all beings, I will rejoice in your merit. If you bear bad intentions, you have your own causality. If I do not support you to do beneficial things for all beings, I have lost this opportunity to cultivate merit.

## **The Right Attitude to Rejoice in Others' Merits**

Each person bears his own cause and effect. Regarding good things, we should judge by **things**, not by one's intention. As long as it is a good deed, we should support and rejoice in the merits. Regarding bad things, we judge by one's intention, not the thing he did. Someone made a mistake, if he did it intentionally, of course it is not good. If he did it unintentionally or he had good intentions yet it turned out to be a bad thing, we should just see his good intention, not his mistake. What a big heart this is!

All Buddhas have demonstrated this way to us. When all Buddhas praise Amitabha's merits, we all receive Amitabha's blessing at the same time. What do we rely on to get blessings? We rely on this Vow: Praises from All Buddhas. Buddhas of numberless worlds in ten directions are all included; not only does Shakyamuni Buddha in the Saha World speak of Amitabha's merits, but Buddhas of each world and each land in ten directions all do the same. Buddhas of all dharma-realms in the pervasive cosmic void of ten directions and three time periods all expound Amitabha's merits and proclaim *The Infinite Life Sutra*.

Thanks for watching! We rejoice in the merits of your learning and your spreading the messages of all precious Buddha-Dharma! Namo Amitabha!