

## **Go to Sukhāvātī, Marching, Marching, Marching Forward**

Three or four years ago, my mother and I once visited Senior Monk Ben Huan of Hongfa Temple in Shenzhen. He was reborn into Sukhavati recently. He had upheld *The Chapter of the Practice and Vows of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra* all life, and was reborn recently.

Many years ago, Senior Monk Ben Huan introduced Buddhism to us, which bestowed upon us great benevolence. That was twenty years ago when he was the abbot of Guangxiao Temple in Guangzhou. He had led us to the door of Buddhism and introduced us to learn *The Infinite Life Sutra* from Master Chin Kung. This has created a deep connection for us with him.

Senior Monk Ben Huan cultivated *The Chapter of the Practice and Vows of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra*. We asked him, “Where do you want to go in the future?” He said, “I want to go to Sukhāvātī.” This is very in line with the method he learned because the Ten Great Vows of Bodhisattva Samantabhadra leads to Sukhāvātī. If you practice the Ten Great Vows, you certainly aspire to be born to Sukhāvātī.

At the time when we went to visit him, he was more than 100 years old. He sat there and looked disoriented. His disciple read the newspaper to him by his side. He closed his eyes and listened to the reading. We had no idea if he was listening, had dozed off, or had entered samadhi. We went to greet him. He opened his eyes, looked at us, and then closed his eyes with no expression at all. We thought, as an elder, he probably had poor hearing. We talked about something else and were ready to leave. Before leaving, my mother asked him, “Senior Master, do you want to go to Sukhāvātī?” Surprisingly, he suddenly opened his bright eyes, raised his fist, and said, “Go to Sukhāvātī! Marching, marching, marching forward.”

Upon seeing this, we realized that this senior monk was not confused at all. He was groggy when listening to the worldly news. But his spirit was immediately uplifted once he heard going to Sukhāvātī. This is a genuine “believing and rejoicing with utmost sincerity.” He had only this one thought, this one aspiration. We believed that he would be born into Sukhāvātī without a doubt. Look! He had to be the deputy of CPPCC or NPC, but he was not interested in it from the bottom of his heart, just muddled through it. When the topic of Sukhāvātī was raised, he was sincerely interested. This demonstrated that he had believed and rejoiced with utmost sincerity.

## **Nurturing Utmost Sincerity of Believing and Rejoicing**

We should nurture this kind of utmost sincerity in believing and rejoicing at ordinary times. Listen to sutra and Dharma teachings as often as possible, and renounce worldly matters as much as possible. Do not cling, be curious, and be interested in worldly matters, but we must fulfill our obligations by doing things we must do. The things we can avoid, don't do them. Frankly speaking, just be perfunctory to secular matters.

Some people are particularly interested in worldly matters. Once they hear something, such as going somewhere to see someone, they will chisel their way in and find a connection. It is not necessary. Even those who come our way, we should judge whether or not they are necessary to deal with. If there is no need, it will naturally disconnect when we do not deal with it. If there is no way to reject, we must go with the flow and let nature take its course. Yet our heart has absolutely no interest in it. Only then can we be regarded as “having let go.” What we believe, exhilarate, and love is only Sukhāvātī. We are not interested in other matters.

The text further states, “Transferring all their good roots wholeheartedly.” These “good roots” are all the good deeds that we have done as well as all merits that we have accrued, including helping all beings, guarding and propagating true Dharma, plus all merits of our practice on precepts, samadhi, and prajna\* (*the wisdom that enables us to understand true nature*). We do not seek the fortune of human or celestial realms, and we do not seek a present comfortable life either. We only seek Sukhāvātī rebirth. This can then be called “transferring all their good roots wholeheartedly and wishing to be reborn into my land.”

In our current life, we should live as unadorned as possible. We absolutely do not have any demands, such as what do I do to enjoy more, to eat better, or to sleep better? These make no difference to us. Good is good, bad is also good. Just go with the flow! The only thing I desire is “a rebirth with ease.” We all want to gain “ease.” But what is “ease”? At the end of life, being able to predict our Sukhāvātī rebirth time with no physical suffering from illness, and neither having avarice, clinging, nor a topsy-turvy mind, as if entering samadhi, this is “a rebirth at ease.” Can we do it? Yes, we can.

## The Key to Get Rebirth with Ease

Many years ago, my mother asked Master Chin Kung this very same question. My mother said, “This life I long for a rebirth with ease. May I ask Shifu, ‘How do we get a rebirth with ease?’” Shifu said, “You only need to renounce secular matters. It is very simple, you just need to let go.” So, we have to ask ourselves now, “What else have we not let go of?” If we still have something that we have not let go of, it indicates that we have not “believed and rejoiced with utmost sincerity.” If we believe and enjoy even one thing, one matter, or one person of this world, it suggests that we still do not believe and rejoice Sukhāvātī with utmost sincerity. This will be very difficult for us to attain rebirth with ease. And it is very possible that we will suffer from illness at the end of our lives.

However, the suffering of illness is also not a bad thing. Without suffering from illness, we would really linger in this world as Senior Laity Huang Jinxuan did. He possessed a great fortune, was a big entrepreneur. His corporation owned quite a few chain hotels around the world. His family members all treated him well. His children and daughter-in-laws were extremely filial to him. His wife, a lady full of womanly virtues such as very dutiful, loving, and

intelligent, never quarreled with her husband and was always accommodating. Senior Laity Huang Jinxuan really had great fortune.

## **Great Fortune Is Actually Dangerous, and Illness Is Not a Bad Thing Either**

With such a great fortune, one would definitely try to linger and be reluctant to leave. Although he said, "I want rebirth", his heart may not agree. He did not "believe and rejoice with utmost sincerity," what can be done? The only way is through illness to let him suffer and to help him let go of the world. Without suffering, he would be reluctant to go. So, I said that illness is also not a bad thing. Everything is a good thing. Only through illness will one understand the sufferings of the Saha World and the bitterness of reincarnation, he can then let go.

At last, Huang Jinxuan truly renounced everything. His family members would not be able to help with his physical pain at all. Because the sufferings of one's illness afflict only oneself, no matter how filial one's children are, they cannot take the suffering for you even if they wanted to. It is useless even with vast wealth, for it cannot cure terminal cancer. The illness tortured him and made him uneasy. Tormented to a certain extent, finally he was pushed to "believe and rejoice with utmost sincerity" due to his good roots.

He also knew that he had no other hope, there was only Amitabha left to grab onto. He grabbed onto Amitabha and obtained the utmost sincerity in believing and rejoicing. He finally attained Sukhāvātī rebirth. It was not easy for him at the last stage. He was sick for three years, the more time towards the end the more pain he suffered. Three years of torment had finally led him to relinquish everything. Without these three years, would it have been easy if you asked him to let go of the secular world?

## **How Would One Live When Truly Let Go?**

So, we must reflect upon ourselves, especially those practitioners with great fortune. What is great fortune? Children are filial to you, you obtain everything you wish for, such as food and clothing, you are free from the worries of daily life, and you have good health. Everything you have makes others envious. This is actually quite dangerous. Why? You will become attached to it and it will lead to uneasiness at the end of life. And the suffering of illness will definitely occur. If we do not want to be forced to renounce everything through illness, we must let go of the worldly matters early. By letting go early, we will be more likely not to suffer from illness and attain rebirth with ease.

Shifu answered my mother's question incisively, "You just need to do it by letting go!" We must ponder this meticulously. Indeed, we must let go. Those who have let go will not be bothered by the circumstances of their prosperity or adversity in life. They have no opinion

about everything. Those with a lot of opinions indicate that they have not let go. How could people who have let go have opinions? It is okay to eat anything, to sleep anywhere. And it is fine even with no food tomorrow, he just waits for Amitabha's escort. This is to "let go."

"To transfer all good roots wholeheartedly" is for the purpose of going to Sukhāvātī only. This wholeheartedly refers to unceasing thoughts one after another. The only hope he has is to go to Amitabha's land and be close to Amitabha. There are no intermixed thoughts in his mind, only this uninterrupted pure thought.

Thanks for learning with us, Namo Amitabha!