

The 40th Vow: Countless Various Colored Trees

Let's take a look at the 40th and 41st Vows, please join your palms and read together.

"When I become a Buddha, there will be boundless colorful trees in my land, their height can be hundreds and thousands of yojanas (*either seven or nine miles, about the distance of one day's travel for an emperor) or so. And the trees in the Bodhimanda (a place where religious practice is carried out) will be four million li (*a distance equal to half a kilometer) in height. All the bodhisattvas, even those with the smallest amount of good roots, can also perceive this. Those who wish to see the adornment of all Buddhas' Pure Lands can see images among the trees, as clear as one's face is seen in a bright mirror. If such vows are not realized, I will not procure Anuttara-Samyak-Sambodhi."

40th Vow: The Land has countless various colored trees

41st Vow: The trees will manifest all Buddha Lands.

Bodhi Trees for Your Enlightenment

The adornment of the circumstantial reward in Sukhāvātī is all due to Amitabha's blessing, which is a natural revelation from the innate virtues of self-nature. The scripture states that Amitabha attained Buddhahood ten kalpas ago—it has been ten kalpas so far—and there are numerous colorful trees in Sukhāvātī. They are made of seven jewels with infinite brightness and colors, and they are far beyond comparison with the trees of our world.

Seven-jeweled trees contain all the jewels that you can imagine, such as gold, silver, and agate...etc. They are not decorated by people but naturally grow like this. They are all extremely soft, absolutely not sharp. So when you are under the trees, you do not need to worry, "Aren't they going to hurt us if the leaves fall as the wind blows?" Don't worry! The leaves are so light and soft that they will absolutely not hurt anyone. And their colors, brightness, and beauty are unimaginable. How many trees are there? The colorful trees in this Land are countless, one row after another, very neat, with all sorts of colors and brightness, extremely beautiful.

The trees are very tall, hundreds and thousands of yojanas in height. One yojana is one day's marching distance of the ancient emperor, some say 40 li, some say 60, some say 80. Let's say the least, 40 li. Those trees are hundreds and thousands of yojanas in height. 100 x 1,000 is 100,000. One hundred thousand times 40 li, it is four million li, which equals two million kilometers. If the trees grow on the Earth to such a height, the tip of the trees would pass the moon. People of Sukhāvātī must match the trees. Their bodies are also so tall that they are commensurate with the ratio of trees and people on Earth.

Probably all beings of every world all love trees and flowers. When Amitabha created Sukhāvātī, He had thought of this and decided to create a very good garden environment. In order to allow everyone to feel very comfortable and at ease to learn, He thus made Sukhāvātī full of jeweled-trees, just like the primitive forest, very tall. When strolling between the trees, it

can really make you feel joyful in heart and spirit. The verse states, "Their height can be hundreds and thousands of yojanas or so," which means their height is uncertain, from two million li to four million li all included; some are tall, some are shorter. But "In Bodhimanda, the height of the trees is four million li." In Japan, trees at each temple are also relatively taller and have aged several hundred years. The Bodhimanda in Sukhāvātī is also no exception.

Shakyamuni Buddha attained Buddhahood 3,000 years ago in ancient India. Where did He attain Buddhahood? Under the bodhi tree. This bodhi tree is located 14 or 15 li southwest of Mount Prâgbodhi ([*true-enlightenment mountain](#)) in India. Actually, Shakyamuni Buddha attained Buddhahood under a pippala tree, which was called bodhi tree later. So, the bodhi tree is not a species but a tree where Shakyamuni attained bodhi and became a Buddha. According to the Sutras, after Shakyamuni attained Buddhahood, this tree emitted light which shone very far. And there was a pervasive fragrance. The color and form of this tree was extremely exquisite and wondrous.

All trees in Sukhāvātī are also like this, emitting light and releasing fragrance. Many bodhisattvas want to cultivate, they need to find a bodhi tree. Amitabha has prepared them for all. You meditate under the tree, the tree will emit light, which can bless you to eradicate defilements and reveal your wisdom. And the fragrance you smell can also help you dispel avidyā* ([*nescience](#)) and attain anuṭpattika-dharma-kṣānti ([*a realization of non-arising attained by the eighth bhumi, a stage of immovability](#)). This Vow states, "All the bodhisattvas, even those with the smallest amount of merits, can perceive this." This tree can let you comprehend the *truth* upon seeing it. Its light and fragrance can help all sentient beings of Sukhāvātī to grow their good roots.

Everything Is Amitabha

In fact, those trees are Amitabha's transformations due to Sukhāvātī being a world of "non-duality in body and land." Land refers to the material environment—trees, water, soil, celestial flowers... They are all transformed by Amitabha. So, the direct reward and the circumstantial reward are all Amitabha and are non-duality.

What is it like to be born into Sukhāvātī? You are fully embraced by Amitabha. You have never left Amitabha! Amitabha is inside and outside of you, even your body is transformed by Amitabha to let you use and enjoy. Otherwise, it is impossible for you to have this kind of fortune to obtain the indestructible adamant body—the body of śubha ([*purity & nihility](#)) and the noumenon of amita ([*infinite](#)). Do you have the ability to obtain it? No! Who gives you this body? Amitabha gives it to you.

In other words, your heart is reciting Amitabha, and your body is also Amitabha. Your body and heart are all Amitabha, and the material environment around you is also Amitabha. Think about it, don't you become a Buddha? Look! Sukhāvātī is phenomenal to this extent: you indeed have not eradicated defilements, not even eradicated one level, yet you become no

different from a Buddha once you arrive in Sukhāvātī. Since your body is Buddha, your heart is Buddha, your surroundings are also Buddha Land, isn't this no different from attaining Buddhahood?

Mortal, yet Equally Treated As a Buddha

Master Ou Yi praised the wonders of Sukhāvātī. He said, "If we say that you are an *avaivartika bodhisattva*—a *dharmakaya mahasattva*, you are actually just a mortal because you were originally a mortal. If we say that you are a mortal, you are distinctly a *dharmakaya mahasattva*—an *avaivartika bodhisattva*. To say you are this is wrong; to say you are that is also wrong." Anyhow, what you receive and enjoy is what Buddhas have and enjoy. This is truly too phenomenal and too rare.

To speak of capability, you can travel pervasively in trichiliocosms, even manifest attaining Buddhahood in other worlds, these are all blessed by Amitabha. Everything of yours is all offered by Amitabha, do you dare to accept it? Some fellow practitioners are very polite and said, "No, Amitabha gives me so much, how do I pay it back?" So, they do not dare to accept it. This is wrong. Amitabha wishes for you to accept it. After you accept it, you can then liberate all beings. So, you must shoulder it straightforwardly.

Sukhāvātī is truly praised by all Buddhas. The most phenomenal place of Sukhāvātī is its Land of Mortals and Saints Dwelling Together. In the Land of Mortals and Saints Dwelling Together of our Saha World, the mortals cannot see sages, let alone obtain their enjoyment. Look! We mortals cannot even see an arhat, not to mention a Buddha. As for the supernal power of arhats, seeing clearly with celestial eyes and listening thoroughly with celestial ears, we also cannot obtain it.

But when we arrive at the Land of Mortals and Saints Dwelling Together in Sukhāvātī, despite having been mortals in the past, our supernal power is equivalent to that of *avaivartika bodhisattvas*. Each of us are able to see clearly and listen thoroughly with our celestial eyes and ears, to obtain the power of pervasively knowing others' minds, and to fully possess the supernal power of bodily function, knowing past lives, as well as extinguishing all defilements (*Skt. *niṣparidāha*). This is an immense advantage! If we do not seek rebirth, to what extent are our ignorance and topsy-turvy minds?!

The brilliance and rarity of Sukhāvātī are the benefits of thusness that Amitabha bestows upon all beings in order to allow us to obtain bodhi instantly. According to the *Thrice Yearning Ceremony*, we "receive Buddha's enjoyment and usage, and thoroughly comprehend Dharma to its origin." If we ponder it meticulously, we will realize its inconceivability. This cannot be found in other worlds, only Sukhāvātī has it. When born into the Land of Mortals and Saints Dwelling Together, you are a mortal, yet equally treated as a Buddha. Where in the universe can you possibly find this kind of place?

It is true, even bodhisattvas do not dare to believe it. It is a method that is difficult to believe. Even bodhisattvas cannot believe and comprehend it. Why? This is Buddhas' realm. It is true, all are equal. The title of this sutra is 'Purity, Impartiality, and Enlightenment'. This impartiality has reached the extreme: mortals and Buddha are equal!

Thanks everyone for learning with us. Namó Amitabha!