

無量壽經簡介 (續)

A Brief Introduction to the *Infinite Life Sutra*

(continued)

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(Continued from issue #648)

Beyond Reach and Darkness describes their enduring separation. Their paths diverge, and it is uncertain when they will ever meet again. Indeed, it is very difficult!

It is said that when people meet in life, they are either asking for debts, repaying debts, kindness, or seeking revenge. Everything has its own causes and conditions. However, when these causes and conditions are exhausted, we say goodbye and move on to the next set of conditions, beginning the next life. In the next life, we may be human or celestial beings or even find ourselves in one of the three evil paths.

Thus, it is said, “Their paths diverge, and it is uncertain when they will meet again.” We are together now, but eventually, we will part, and it won’t be easy to meet again. Even if we encounter each other in the next life, we may not recognize each other.

Therefore, the Buddha earnestly exhorts us, saying, “Why don’t you put it down now? Diligently practice all good so you can attain infinite life, ending birth and death, and realizing Buddhahood. Why don’t you seek the Way? Why are you still fighting over non-urgent matters that are irrelevant to birth and death?’ This is how Shakyamuni Buddha advised us: to become disenchanted with the Saha World and quickly cultivate the Way.”

Even though you spend your whole life practicing strenuously,

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「窈窈冥冥別離久長。道路不同會見無期。甚難甚難復得相值。」這裡是說人生相聚，無非是討債、還債，或者報恩、報怨。這一切都有因緣的。但是緣盡了，大家就說再見。然後再往下個因緣，開始下一期的生命——或許是人、或許是天人，也有可能在三惡道裡面。

所以說「道路不同，會見無

期。」現在相聚，最後也會分開，很難再重逢，即便下輩子遇到了也互不認識了。

所以佛苦口婆心的勸我們說：你們為什麼還不放下呢？要「努力勤修善」才能了生脫死啊。為甚麼到現在還不修道呢？為甚麼還在求那些跟生死不相關，不急的事呢？釋迦佛這樣勸我們要厭離娑婆，趕快修道。

「雖一世勤苦須臾之間。後生無量壽佛國快樂無極。長與道德合明。永拔生死根本。無復貪恚愚癡苦惱之患。欲壽一劫百劫千億萬劫。自在隨意皆可得之。無為自然，次於泥洹之道。」釋迦佛又說，這輩子很短，修道再怎麼辛苦，也就這一輩子而已。趕快發願求生西方極樂世界吧。往生後，生死輪迴的苦本就拔除了。這個是永劫的大利益。修的時間很短，所得到的果報，卻非常的殊勝。

接下來我們分享一個個真實的往生案例。這位王姓居士，活到八十九歲才往生。老人家雖然年紀大，但身體健壯，還能每天種田。他雖然是農夫，但是他的修行可以做我們的模範。

他每天早上4點鐘就起來念佛，拜佛到上午7點。白天就到田裡去耕種。晚上回來從8點到11點繼續拜佛。十幾年來，早晚的功課都沒有間斷過。

1990年12月底，他的兒子回家看望他，晚上兩人睡在大通鋪上，兩人同時看到一朵很大的蓮花，從窗戶慢慢的進來，停在日光燈下面。兒子看得很清楚，蓮花很大很莊嚴。這個老人想要看得清楚一點，就起來開燈，一開燈，蓮花就不見了。

隔天，他的兒子就回自己家去了。老人在一個月後，又看見蓮花了。

這次他沒有開燈，就一直看著那朵亮亮的大蓮花。接著他就聽到外面有人跟他說，「阿象啊！（他的名字）我下個月要來帶你走了喔！」

the duration is just like an instant. In your next life, when you are born in Amitayus' Land, you will attain enduring and limitless peace and bliss. There, you will constantly be in accord with Way-virtue, forever liberated from birth and death and free from the sufferings of greed, hatred, delusion, and afflictions. If you wish your lifespan to be an eon, a hundred eons, or myriad eons, it will all be as you desire. You will dwell in effortless spontaneity, a state second only to Nirvana.

Shakyamuni Buddha said that life is very short. Regardless of how hard cultivation is for us, it is only for this lifetime. Quickly resolve to seek rebirth in the Pure Land. After rebirth, the bitter cause of transmigration will be uprooted. This is an enormous benefit for eons to come. The time one puts into practice is very short, but the benefit one gets afterward is tremendously supreme.

Next, let's share a true case of rebirth. This layman's last name was Wang. He lived to be 89 years old before he passed. Although he was old, he was so healthy and strong that he worked on the farm every day. Even though he was a farmer, he is a model practitioner for us to follow. He would get up at 4:00 am to bow and recite the Buddha's name until 7:00 am. In the evening, he bowed and recited from 8:00 pm to 11:00 pm. During the daytime, he worked in the fields. For more than ten years, he never missed his morning and evening Dharma practice.

In December 1990, his son visited him. At night, they rested on a traditional Chinese shared bed together. Both of them saw a huge lotus flower float in from the window and stop under the ceiling light. His son clearly saw that it was a big, majestic lotus flower. Wishing to see it more clearly, the father got up to turn on the light. As soon as the switch was on, the lotus flower disappeared. The next day, the son went back to his own home. One month later, Mr. Wang saw the lotus flower appear again. This time, he did not turn on the light but just looked at the radiant lotus flower. Then he heard someone outside the door say, "A-xiang (his name), I am taking you next month." "OK!" the old man answered. He got up to open the door. As soon as the door was open, he saw a ray of golden light shooting up toward the sky. When he turned around, the lotus flower in his room disappeared. He knew his time was up. He then arranged to visit his several sons for a few days. He also told them, "This is my last visit. I am leaving!"

On February 18, 1990, he told his grandson, "Make a phone call for me. Ask your Dad and all your uncles to come home.

「好耶。」老人回答著。他起身一開門，就看到一道金光往上衝走了。他回到屋裡後蓮花也沒有了。

他知道他的時間到了。就安排自己輪流到他幾個兒子家去住幾天。還跟他們說：「我這次來是最後一次了，我要走了哦！」

1990年2月18日早上他就跟他的孫子講：「你幫我打一下電話，把你的叔叔伯伯們，都叫回來。我要走了啦！我先去市場買菜，等一下他們回來時可以吃。」他就騎著腳踏車去市場了。

但是在回家的路上，有一輛大卡車速度開很快。卡車經過他時，風速太大，老人家就從腳踏車上面摔下來，當場就死亡了。警察來了，檢查官也來了。檢驗結果顯示，他全身都沒有任何傷痕，沒有生病，也沒有被卡車撞到、壓到。僅僅是被風吹倒，但是就往生了。

兩個小時以後，他的遺體運回家了。陸陸續續有六十多個人來助念。念到他往生後的第六個小時，他的眼睛忽然間睜開三分，他很開心地笑著，臉色也很紅潤。助念的人看到這個情況，都非常感動。

他的兒子阿希，助念到下午一點四十分的時候，蓮花就第三次出現了。這次有三朵蓮花和西方三聖，出現在大門外，其中一朵蓮花速度很快，來到遺體前，停留一下，蓮花的光明就向天上衝去。當時阿希還有他的太太及小孩，共五個人都看到了蓮花和西方三聖。

王居士往生後，滿月的那天晚上11點，還坐著蓮花回來看他的兒子，握著手跟他說話。第二天，他被爸爸拉過的那隻手，從手掌一直紅到手腕三寸的地方，紅了三天都沒有退。奇怪的是，在那之後，他冬天就不怕冷了。你看這種感應，真的是很不可思議。希望大家能夠深信切願，求願往生西方極樂世界，為我們盡未來際的生命做打算、做規劃。不要再留戀娑婆世界了。

以下是摘自宣公上人的一段佛七開示。

I am leaving! I will go to the market to get some groceries so that your uncles have something to eat when they come.” Then he rode his bike to the market. On his way home, a truck passed by him very fast and created a draft. The draft was so strong that Mr. Wang fell from the bike and died on the spot. Police came, and an investigator came. The result of the investigation showed no wounds, no sickness, and no signs of a traffic accident. He was merely blown off by the draft and happened to die right there.

Two hours after his corpse was sent back home, more than 60 people came to recite the Buddha's name for him in different shifts. At the sixth hour of his death, during the recitation, he suddenly opened his eyes 30% and smiled. His countenance was pinkish. Those who were reciting the Buddha's name for him were so moved. His son, A-xi, also recited for his father. At 1:40 in the afternoon, lotus flowers appeared again. There were three outside his house; sitting on them were the Three Pure Land Sages. The four lotus flowers went to the front of the old man's corpse. In just an instant, the radiant lotus flower shot up to the sky. At that time, his son, A-xi, his wife, and his children, a total of five people, saw this miraculous sign.

Exactly one month after Mr. Wang's passing, he came back to visit his son at 11pm, sitting on a lotus flower. He held his son's hand and talked to him. The next day, the son looked at the left hand his father had held last night. His father left a red mark on his palm extending to his wrist. It did not disappear until three days later. The strange thing was that ever since then, he was no longer afraid of cold winters.

You see, this kind of response is truly inconceivable, almost unbelievable. We hope people can have faith and make earnest vows to seek rebirth in the Pure Land so that we have a solid plan for our future lives after death. Don't stay in the Saha World anymore.

Below is an excerpt from the Venerable Master's instruction in the Buddha recitation session:

“Regarding the Land of Ultimate Bliss and the Pure Land Dharma-door, you should take time to study. If you have questions, you can bring them up for discussion. Then we can understand this Dharma bit by bit. So, where is the Pure Land? It is to the west. Didn't we talk about the mind, the Pure Land, and Amitabha of our inherent nature? Our inherent nature is just Amitabha. If you don't tell lies and your mind is pure, that

對於這個極樂世界，淨土法門，有時間深加研究。這個不明白的地方，常常來檢討、討論。我們一點一點就會明白這個道理了。那麼極樂世界在什麼地方？說在西方，方才不說唯心淨土自性彌陀。自性就是阿彌陀佛。你不打妄語，你肚子裡邊清淨了，那就是淨土。甚至於你所吃下去的東西都變成香的，不會臭，那就叫淨土。

我們修行念佛法門。有的人說：這有什麼用？那你天天打妄想有什麼用？你怎不說你打妄想沒有用？念念佛你就說念佛沒有用。你這念一句佛，你就少打其他的妄想。少打其他的妄想，這就是淨土了。這是在理上來講。

那麼事上來講，那麼西方的確有阿彌陀佛，的確有淨土。這淨土不是就一種淨土。有凡聖同居淨土、方便有餘土、實報莊嚴土、有常寂光淨土。這四種。

凡聖同居土，這個也有聖人，也有凡夫。不過凡夫都是在那個蓮花蕊裡頭，就住在蓮花裡邊，在那兒好像住胎似的，住在那個地方很久很久的時間，然後這個蓮花才開，才見到佛。方便有餘土這是二乘人住的地方。那麼實報莊嚴土，這是菩薩住的地方。常寂光淨土，這是佛住的這個淨土。不是就說淨土就是淨土。」

佛陀告訴彌勒菩薩，即使三千大千世界都著火了，你也要衝過猛火，跨越障礙，來聽聞這個經法。以歡喜心受持讀誦，依這部經來修行。

為什麼呢？因為這部經的利益太殊勝了，甚至有很多菩薩想要聽這部經，都聽不到。只要有人能夠聽到這部經，就能夠得到無上菩提佛果，終不退轉的利益。所以佛陀要大家專心受持、讀誦。

「佛語彌勒。其有得聞彼佛名號。

itself is the Pure Land. Or even whatever you put in your stomach when it comes out the other end, it is fragrant; that's also the Pure Land.

When we cultivate and recite the Buddha's name, someone says, 'What use is this?' Well, then, what use is having false thoughts every day? What use is having false thoughts? Why don't you say having false thoughts is useless? Why do you say reciting the Buddha's name is useless? When you recite this one phrase, you have fewer false thoughts about other things. When you have fewer false thoughts, that is also the Pure Land. I am talking about the Pure Land from the perspective of principles (the mind-ground). From the perspective of specifics, Amitabha Buddha is in the West. The Pure Land does exist. But there is not just one kind of Pure Land. There are four kinds in Amitabha's country: the Pure Land Where Sages and Common People Dwell Together, the Pure Land where Expedients Remove Residual Delusions, the Pure Land Adorned with Real Rewards, and the Pure Land of Eternal Stillness and Light.

In the Pure Land, Where Sages and Common People Dwell Together, there are sages and ordinary people. However, ordinary people live in the lotus buds as if they are in a womb. They have to live there for a long time before the flower opens to see the Buddha. The Pure Land Where Expedients Remove Residual Delusions is where the Śrāvakas and Pratyekabuddhas live. The Pure Land Adorned with Real Rewards is where the Bodhisattvas live. The Pure Land of Eternal Stillness and Light is where the Buddhas live. It is not the case that there is just one Pure Land."

The Buddha told Maitreya Bodhisattva that even if the entire trichiliocosm was on fire, you should still go through it in order to hear this sutra, happily believe, uphold, and recite it, and practice according to it. Why? Because the benefit this sutra brings is supreme. Many Bodhisattvas who wish to hear this sutra cannot hear it. If anyone who hears this sutra can attain the unsurpassed Bodhi and fruition of Buddhahood without ever retreating. Therefore, the Buddha wants us to single-mindedly receive, uphold, read, and recite this text.

The Buddha said to Maitreya, "If there are people who hear that Buddha's name, jump with joy, and recite his name even once, you should know that such persons have gained great benefit and are replete with unsurpassed meritorious virtue."

When the Dharma comes to an end in the future, the Buddha will keep the *Infinite Life Sutra* in the world for hundred years to

歡喜踊躍乃至一念。當知此人為得大利。則是具足無上功德。」將來法滅的時候，佛陀特別留這部《無量壽經》在世上一百年度眾生。遇到的人都可以得度。為甚麼是留《無量壽經》，留阿彌陀佛的法？

第一，我們講了，《無量壽經》是暢佛本懷的。佛法要滅了，那時眾生已經沒有辦法靠自力修行了。所以佛陀慈悲把他力法門，眾生可以成佛之法，留在世間度眾生。

第二，我們上節課不是講過「阿彌陀」三個字就代表三寶嗎？它就是正陀羅尼。留下南無阿彌陀佛，就等於是把三寶留在世間是一樣的。這是蓮池大師講，「以一存餘」，讓法流轉不停息的意思。這是佛陀的大悲心和大智慧，我們要能夠真切地去了解、體會。

《無量壽經》是遇無空過的一部經典，我們聽到無量壽經、阿彌陀佛及他老人家的願力，一定能夠得度成佛的。佛門講人身難得、佛法難聞、淨土難遇。

佛都要等很多劫才有因緣講《無量壽經》，我們現在有機會研究，這一生千萬不要錯過阿彌陀佛，及極樂世界。❀

cross over living beings. All who encounter it will be saved. Why is the Buddha preserving the *Infinite Life Sutra* and Amitabha's Dharma at the end of the Dharma age?

First, the *Infinite Life Sutra* expresses the Buddha's original intent. At that time, living beings would no longer be able to cultivate on their own. So, the Buddha compassionately maintains Amitabha's Dharma of other power, which enables living beings to quickly attain Buddhahood and save all.

Secondly, in our last class, we discussed how the three syllables of "Amita" represent the Three Jewels. It is the proper Dharani. Keeping Amitabha's name is equivalent to maintaining the presence of the Three Jewels in the world. This is what Great Master Lianchi meant by "keeping this one to save them all" so the Dharma can continue circulating. This demonstrates the Buddha's great compassion and great wisdom. We hope people can truly understand this.

The *Infinite Life Sutra* is a text you will not encounter in vain. We can hear the *Infinite Life Sutra*, Amitabha Buddha, and his power of vows means we will undoubtedly be crossed over and become Buddhas. In Buddhism, we say it is hard to attain human form, hard to hear the Buddhadharma, and even harder to encounter the Pure Land Dharma-door. Even the Buddha had to wait many eons for the conditions to speak the Infinite Life Sutra. Now we have this opportunity to study this text. Do not miss the chance to connect with Amitabha Buddha and the Land of Ultimate Bliss in this life.❀

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