

Records of the Pure Land

In the past, during the Tang dynasty, there was a Bhikshu named Hwai Yu. He cultivated the contemplations of the Pure Land for forty years. One day as he was concentrating on reciting the name of Amitabha Buddha, he suddenly saw Amitabha Buddha and Bodhisattvas as numerous as the sand grains in the Ganges River. One Bodhisattva came before him with a silver lotus dais. The Bhikshu then spoke, "I was hoping for a golden dais, why is this only a silver dais?"

After he had said that one phrase, the silver lotus dais disappeared along with the Buddha and all of the Bodhisattvas. He then increased his cultivation even more. Another 21 days passed. The Bodhisattva who had appeared to him earlier holding the silver lotus dais reappeared, and told him, "Dharma Master, because you are so diligent, you will be reborn in an upper grade of lotus flower and Amitabha Buddha will come to welcome you. You can sit in lotus posture and wait." Then a strong light illumined the room he was sitting in while he recited the Buddha's name; then it disappeared. After three days the light reappeared. He told his disciples, "when a rare fragrance appears, I will go off to rebirth."

Very pure, clean, lustrous, and bright: there's not the least bit of dust and filth.
Born transformationally, I take a lotus flower as my parents.
After cultivating for ten kalpas, I loath the sufferings of Jambudvipa.
In one life, bitter practices transcend ten kalpas.
I will forever leave the Saha world and return to the Pure Land.

After he had spoken this verse, the room was permeated with a rare fragrance which came from the four directions. He saw Amitabha Buddha and two Bodhisattvas appear with a golden lotus dais. There were also many transformation Buddhas who sat all around the dais. They were coming from the west to receive him. At that time he felt deep happiness. Wearing a peaceful smile on his face, he very reverently placed his palms together and went off to rebirth.

from *Pure Land Essays*
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Editor's correction: VBS #172, pg.19 credit for Records of the Pure Land should read as it does above.