**The Buddha Speaks of**

**Amitabha Sutra Ceremony**

***Please bow to the Buddhas four times****.*

***LEADER OF THE ASSEMBLY: Please be Seated.***

***1- Pure Land Praise***

In the Lotus Pool Assembly as vast as the sea.

May Amita, the Thus Come One,

Avalokiteshvara, and Mahashamaprapta sitting on the lotus daises,

Lead beings to ascend the golden ladder,

And based on great vows, expansively teach them

So that all will vow to leave defilement.

Namo Vast Sea Lotus Pool Assembly of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. *(RECITE 3X)*

***2-Mantra for Purifying the Karma of the Body***

Om xiu duo li xiu duo li xiu mo li xiu mo li sa po he.

***3-Mantra for Purifying the Karma of the Mouth***

Om xiu li xiu li mo he xiu li xiu xiu li sa po he.

***4-Mantra for Purifying the Karma of the Mind***

Om wa ri la da he he hu.

***5-Mantra for Calming the Earth***

Na mo san man duo mu tuo nan om du lu du lu zhai wei sa po he.

***6-Mantra for Making Universal Offerings***

Om ye ye nang san po wa fa ri la hu.

***7-Verse for Opening a Sutra***

An unsurpassed, penetrating, and perfect Dharma,

Is rarely met with even in a hundred thousand millions kalpas.

Having it to see and listen to, to remember and accept,

I vow to taste the truth of the Tathagata’s words.

Namo Vast Sea Lotus Pool Assembly of Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. *(RECITE 3X)*

***8-The Buddha Speaks of Amitabha Sutra***

Thus have I heard, at one time, the Buddha dwelt at Shravasti in the Jeta Grove in the garden of Anathapindada, the Benefactor of Orphans and the Solitary, together with a gathering of great bhikshus, twelve hundred fifty in all, all great arhats whom the assembly knew and recognized: Elders Sariputra, Mahamaudgalyayana, Mahakasyapa, Mahakatyayana, Mahakaushtila, Revata, Suddhipanthaka, Nanda, Ananda, Rahula, Gavampati, Pindolabharadvaja, Kalodayin, Mahakaphina, Vakkula, Aniruddha, and others such as these, all great disciples; together with all the Bodhisattvas, mahasattvas: Dharma Prince Manjushri, Ajita Bodhisattva, Gandhastin Bodhisattva, Nityodyukta Bodhisattva, and others such as these, all great Bodhisattvas; and together with Shakra, chief among gods, and the numberless great multitudes from all the heavens.

At that time the Buddha told the Elder Sariputra, "Pass from here through hundreds of thousands of millions of Buddhalands to the west, there is a world called Ultimate Bliss. In this land a Buddha called Amitabha right now teaches the dharma.

Shariputra, for what reason is this land called Ultimate Bliss? All living beings of this country endure none of the sufferings, but enjoy every bliss. Therefore, it is called Ultimate Bliss. Moreover, Sariputra, this land of Ultimate Bliss is everywhere surrounded by seven rows of balustrades, seven rows of decorative netting, and seven rows of trees, all formed from the four treasures and for this reason named Ultimate Bliss. Moreover Sariputra, the land of Ultimate Bliss has pools of the seven jewels, filled with water possessing the eight excellent qualities. The bottom of each pool is pure, spread over with golden sand. On the four sides of each bed rise stairs of gold, silver, lapis lazuli, and crystal; above are raised pavilions adorned with gold, silver, lapis lazuli, crystal, mother-of-pearl, red pearls, and carnelian. In the pools are lotuses as large as chariot wheels: the blue ones radiating a blue light; the yellow a yellow light; the red a red light; and the white a white light. They are marvelous and beautiful, fragrant and pure. Sariputra, the land of Ultimate Bliss is filled with such splendid adornments.

Moreover, Sariputra, in that Buddhaland there is always heavenly music, and the ground is solid gold. Six times during the day and night mandarava flowers rain down from the sky. Every day, in the serenity of early morning, the people of that land fill the hems of their robes with exquisite flowers and go to make offerings to the hundreds of thousands of millions of Buddhas of the other directions. At mealtime they return to their own country, and having eaten, they stroll around. Sariputra, the land of Ultimate Bliss is filled with such splendid adornments.

Moreover, Sariputra, in this country they are always many kinds of rare and wonderful varicolored birds such as white cranes, peacocks, parrots and egrets, kalavinkas, and two headed birds. Six times during the day and night, the flocks of birds sing forth harmonious and elegant sounds. Their clear and joyful sounds proclaim the five roots of good, the five powers, the seven practices leading to enlightenment, the Noble Eightfold Path, and dharmas such as these. When living beings of this land hear these sounds, they become mindful of the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha. But Sariputra, you should not assume that these birds are born as retribution for their karmic offenses.

For what reason? None of the three evil realms exist in this Buddhaland. Sariputra, in this Buddhaland not even the names of the three evil realms exist, how much the less their actuality! These birds are manifested by Amitabha so that their singing can proclaim and spread the Dharma.

Sariputra, in that Buddhaland, when the soft breezes waft through the rows of jeweled trees and jeweled nets they produce subtle and wonderful sounds. It is as if a 100,000 musical instruments were playing together. Everyone who hears the sounds spontaneously becomes mindful of the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Sariputra, the land of Ultimate Bliss is filled with such splendid adornments.

Sariputra, what do you think? Why is it that Buddha called Amitabha? Sariputra, the brilliance of that Buddha’s light is measureless, illumining the lands of the ten directions everywhere without obstructions; for this reason He is called Amitabha. Moreover, Sariputra, the life of that Buddha and that of his people extends for innumerable, unlimited, and incalculable kalpas: for this reason he is called Amitabha. And Sariputra ten kalpas have passed since Amitabha realized Buddhahood.

Morever, Sariputra, that Buddha has immeasurable and unlimitled number of sravaka disciples, all of them arahats, their number incalculable; thus also is the assembly of Bodhisattvas. Sariputra, the land of Ultimate Bliss is filled with such splendid adornments.

Moreover, Sariputra, those living beings born in the land of Ultimate Bliss are all in the stage of non-regression. Among them are many who in this very life will dwell in Buddhahood. Their number is extremely many; it is incalculable and only in measureless, limitless Asankhyeya kalpas could it be spoken.

Sariputra, those living beings who hear of that land should vow, “I wish to be born in that country.” And why? Because they will be able to meet such sages of supreme virtue. Sariputra, one cannot attain birth in that land with a few good roots of good or a small store of merit. Sariputra, if there is a good man or woman who hears spoken “Amitabha “ and holds fast to His name even for one day, two days, three, four, five days, six days, as long as seven days, with a concentrated and undistracted mind, then, at the hour of death, Amitabha will appear with a host of holy ones. Consequently, when their life comes to an end, the aspirants’ minds will not fall into confusion and so they will be born immediately in Amitabha’s land of Ultimate Bliss. Sariputra, perceiving these benefits, I say: All sentient beings who hear this teaching should make the vow “I wish to be born in that land.”

Sariputra, just as I praise the inconceivable virtue of Amitabha, so do the Buddhas in the eastern direction as numerous as the sands of the Ganges River, such as Aksobhya Buddha, Sumeru Appearance Buddha, Great Sumeru Buddha, Sumeru Light Buddha, and Wonderful Sound Buddha. While dwelling in their own lands, they extend their long, broad tongues, and, encompassing with them the universe of a thousand million worlds, pronounce these words of truth: “Sentient beings should accept this sutra entitled ‘Praise of the Inconceivable Virtue and Protection by All Buddhas’.”

Sariputra, there are in the zenith Buddhas as numerous as the sands of the Ganges River, such as Brahmaghosa Buddha, Naksatraraja Buddha, Gandhottama Buddha, Gandhaprabhasa Buddha, Mahacisdkanda Buddha, Ratnakusuma-sampu-spitagatra Buddha, Salendraraja Buddha, Ratnotpalasri Buddha, Sarvartadara Buddha, and Sumerukalpa Buddha. While dwelling in their own lands, they extend their long, broad tongues, and, encompassing with them the universe of a thousand million worlds, pronounce these words of truth: “Sentient beings should accept this sutra entitled ‘Praise of the Inconceivable Virtue and Protection by All Buddhas’.”

Sariputra, what do you think? Why is this teaching called the ‘Sutra of Protection by All Buddhas’? Sariputra, if a good man or good woman hears this sutra and holds fast to it, and hears the names of all these Buddhas, this good man or woman will be the mindful one of whom all Buddhas are protective, and will dwell in the stage of non-retrogression for realizing annutara-samyak-sambodhi. Therefore, Sariputra, all of you should believe and accept my words, and those that all Buddhas speak.

Sariputra, if there are people who already made the vow, who now make this vow, or who are about to make the vow, "I desire to be born in the land of Amitabha”, these people whether born in the past, now being born, or to be born in the future, all will irreversibly attain Annutara-samyak-sambodhi. Therefore, Sariputra, all good men and good women, if they are among those who have faith, should make the vow, “I will be born in that country.”

Sariputra, just as I am now one who praises the merit and virtue of all Buddhas, all those Buddhas equally praise my inconceivable merit and virtue saying these words: “Shakyamuni Buddha can complete extremely rare and difficult deeds in the Saha Land, in the evil time of the five turbidites, in the midst of the kalpa (time) turbidity, the view tubidity, the affliction (passions) turbidity, the sentient beings turbidity, and the lifespan turbidity, he can attain Annutara-samyak-sambodhi and for the sake of living beings, speak this Dharma which in the whole world is hard to believe.

Sariputra, you should know that I, in the evil time of the five turbidites, practice these difficult deeds, attain Annutara-samyak-sambodhi, and for all the world speak this Dharma, difficult to believe, extremely difficult!”

After the Buddha spoke this sutra, Sariputra and all the bhikshus, all the gods, humans, and asuras, and others from the worlds, hearing what the Buddha had said joyously welcomed, faithfully accepted, bowed, and withdrew.

***End of the Buddha Speaks of Amitabha Sutra***

***9-Dharani for Pulling Out Karmic Obstructions by the Roots and Obtaining Birth in the Pure Land***

*(Recite 3X)*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| [南無]阿彌多婆夜 | [Namo] ā mí duō pó yè |
| 哆他伽多夜 | Duō tā qie duō yè |
| 哆地夜他 | Duō de yè tā |
| 阿彌利都婆毗 | Ā mí lì dōu pó pí |
| 阿彌利哆 | Ā mí lì duō |
| 悉耽婆毗 | Xī dān pó pí |
| 阿彌唎哆 | Ā mí lì duō |
| 毗迦蘭帝 | Pí jiā lán dì |
| 啊彌唎哆 | Ā mí lì duō |
| 毗迦闌多 | Pí jiā lán duō |
| 伽彌膩 | Qie mí nì |
| 伽伽那 | Qie qie nà |
| 枳多迦利 | Zhí duō jiā lì |
| 娑婆訶 | Suō pó hē |

***10-Praise to Amita Buddha***

Amita Buddha, the Lord with the greatest wishes,

His mercy, compassion, delight, and abandonment immeasurable,

Between His eyebrows always emits white-curled radiance.

He delivers sentient beings so they may enter His Paradise.

Where the pond of eight-virtue water grow lotuses of nine gardens,

And where marvelous seven-jeweled trees form rows,

If the Tathagata’s sacred epithets are propagated,

He will receive us and lead us to His Western Paradise.

Amitabha’s body is the color of gold,

The splendor of His hallmarks has no peer.

The light of His brow shines round a hundred worlds,

Wide as the seas are His eyes pure and clear.

Shinning in His brilliance by transformation

Are countless bodhisattvas and infinite buddhas.

His forty-eight vows will be our liberation.

In nine lotus-stages we reach the farthest shore.

Homage to the Buddha of the western pure land, kind and compassionate Amitabha.

(南無)阿彌陀佛 (Na Mo) Āmí Tuo Fo (Amita Buddha) *[Recite many times, stopping after the chant leader rings bell.]*

南無觀世音菩 薩 Na Mo Guan Shi Yin Pu Sa (Kuan Yin Bodhisattva) *[Recite 3X-ring bell at beginning of last chant]*

南 無 大 勢 至 菩 薩 Na Mo Da Shi Zhi Pu Sa (Great Strength or Mahāsthāmaprāpta Bodhisattva) *[Recite 3X-ring bell at beginning of last chant]*

南 無 清 凈大海眾菩薩 Na Mo Qing Jing Da Hai Zhoung Pu Sa (Great Pure Sea of Bodhisattvas) *[Recite 3X-ring bell at beginning of last chant]*.

***11-Great Compassion Bodhisattva Prayer to Amita Buddha***

Of Buddhas in all places and at all times, Amita Buddha is the foremost.

He delivers sentient beings of all nine grades.

We now are taking complete refuge in Him and repent our physical, oral, and mental sins.

If there is any blessing or good action, we sincerely apply it as Parinamana (Transfer of Merit).

May we, as fellow Amidists, enjoy miraculous manifestations from time to time.

At the end of our lives, the scene of Western Paradise will manifest clearly in front of our eyes.

What we see and hear will contribute to our good progress towards rebirth into Paradise.

We shall see the Buddha and end further births and deaths, just like Buddhas who deliver all beings.

May boundless klesas be severed, may countless approaches be practiced.

We vow that we wish to deliver all sentient beings and wish all may achieve Buddhahood.

Even if the Void be finite, our wish, however, is infinite.

All beings, both with and without senses, will be perfected in wisdom.

All buddhas in all places and all times and all Bodhisattvas mahasattvas,

Maha prajna paramita.

***12-The Three Refuges***

To the Buddha I return and rely, vowing that all living beings understand the great way profoundly and bring forth the Bodhi mind.

To the Dharma I return and rely, vowing that all living beings deeply enter the sutra and have wisdom like the sea.

To the Sangha I return and rely, vowing that all living beings come together as a great assembly, one and all in harmony.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 自皈依佛, 當願眾生, 體解大道, 發無上心。 | Zì guī yī fó, dāng yuàn zhòng sheng, tǐ jiě dà dào, fā wú shàng xīn。 |
| 自皈依法, 當願眾生, 深入經藏, 智慧如海。 | Zì guī yī fǎ, dāng yuàn zhòng sheng, shēn rù jīng zāng , zhì huì rú hǎi。 |
| 自皈依僧, 當願眾生, 統理大眾, 一 切無礙。 | Zì guī yī sēng, dāng yuàn zhòng sheng, tǒng lǐ dà zhòng, yī qiè wú ài。 |

***13-Dedication of Merit***

***LEADER of DHARMA ASSEMBLY:******Please rise for the dedication of merit. Please place your palms together.***

***We dedicate the merit of these actions to******STEVEN JAMES HOLSTROM.***

We pray he will be born in the Western Pure Land,

With the nine grades of lotus flowers as parents.

When the flowers open, he will see the Buddha and become enlightened to the unproduced,

And irreversible Bodhisattvas will be his companions.

***LEADER of DHARMA ASSEMBLY:******Please respectfully recite the Wish-Fulfilling Mantra 7 times.***

***LEADER of DHARMA ASSEMBLY:******Please rise and face the Buddhas. Please place your palms together and bow to the Buddhas four times****.*