



# **English translation of The Amitâyus Dhyâna Sûtra**

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# Credits

English translation of  
**The Amitâyus Dhyâna Sûtra**

by

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# Section 1

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1.

Thus it was heard by me: At one time the Buddha dwelt in *Râgagrîha*, on the mountain *Gridhrakûta*, with a large assembly of Bhikshus and with thirty–two thousands of Bodhisattvas; with *Mañgusrî*, Prince of the Law, at the head of the assembly.

2.

At that time, in the great city of *Râgagrîha* there was a prince, the heir–apparent, named *Agâtasatru*. He listened to the wicked counsel of *Devadatta* and other friends and forcibly arrested *Bimbisâra* his father, the king, and shut him up by himself in a room with seven walls, proclaiming to all the courtiers that no one should approach (the king). The chief consort of the king, *Vaidehî* by name, was true and faithful to her lord, the king. She supported him in this wise: having purified herself by bathing and washing, she anointed her body with honey and ghee mixed with corn–flour, and she concealed the juice of grapes in the various garlands she wore (in order to give him food without being noticed by the warder). As she stole in and made an offering to him, he was able to eat the flour and to drink the juice (of grapes). Then he called for water and rinsed his mouth. That done, the king stretched forth his folded hands towards the Mount *Gridhrakûta* and worshipped duly and respectfully the World–Honoured One, who at that time abode there. And he uttered the following prayer: 'Mahâyâna is my friend and relative; let him, I pray, feel compassion towards me; and come and communicate to me the eight prohibitive precepts (of Buddha).' On this, *Mahâyâna* at once appeared before the king, coming with a speed equal to the flight of a falcon or an eagle, and communicated to him the eight precepts.

Day after day did he come. The World–Honoured One sent also his worthy disciple *Pûrna* to preach the Law to the king. Thus a period of three weeks passed by. The king showed by his countenance that he was happy and contented when he had an opportunity of hearing the Law as well as of enjoying the honey and flour.

3.

At that time, *Agâtasatru* asked the warder of the gate whether his father was yet alive. On this, the warder answered him: 'O Exalted king, the chief consort (of thy father) brought (food) and presented it to him by anointing her body with honey and flour and filling her garlands with the juice (of grapes), and the *Sramanas*, *Mahâyâna* and *Pûrna*, approached the king through the sky in order to preach the Law to him. It is, O king, impossible to prevent them coming.' When the prince heard this answer his indignation arose against his mother: 'My mother,' he cried, 'is, indeed, a rebel, for she was found in company with that rebel. Wicked people are those *Sramanas*, and it is their art of spells causing illusion and delusion that delayed the death of that wicked king for so many days.' Instantly he brandished his sharp sword, intending to slay his mother. At that moment, there intervened a minister named *Kandraprabha*, who was possessed of great wisdom and intelligence, and *Gîva* (a famous physician). They saluted the prince and remonstrated with him, saying: 'We, ministers, O Great king, heard that since the beginning of the kalpas there had been several wicked kings, even to the number of eighteen thousand, who killed their own fathers, coveting the throne of (their respective) kingdoms, as mentioned in the *Sûtra* of the discourse of the Veda. Yet never have we heard of a man killing his mother, though he be

void of virtue. Now, if thou, O king, shouldst dare to commit such a deadly sin, thou wouldst bring a stain upon the blood of the Kshatriyas (the kingly race). We cannot even bear to hear of it. Thou art indeed a *Kandâla* (the lowest race); we shall not stay here with thee.' After this speech, the two great ministers retired stepping backward, each with his hand placed on his sword. *Agâtasatru* was then frightened, and greatly afraid of them, and asked *Gîva*, saying: 'Wilt thou not be friendly to me?' In reply *Gîva* said to him: 'Do not then, O Great king, by any means think of injuring thy mother.' On hearing this, the prince repented and sought for mercy, and at once laid down his sword and did his mother no hurt. He finally ordered the officers of the inner chambers to put the queen in a hidden palace and not to allow her to come out again.

4.

When *Vaidehî* was thus shut up in retirement she became afflicted by sorrow and distress. She began to do homage to Buddha from afar, looking towards the Mount *Gridhrakûta*. She uttered the following words: 'O Tathâgata! World-Honoured One! In former times thou hast constantly sent *Ânanda* to me for enquiry and consolation. I am now in sorrow and grief. Thou, O World-Honoured One, art majestic and exalted; in no way shall I be able to see thee. Wilt thou, I pray thee, command *Mahâyâna* and thy honoured disciple, *Ânanda*, to come and have an interview with me?' After this speech, she grieved and wept, shedding tears like a shower of rain. Before she raised her head from doing homage to the distant Buddha, the World-Honoured One knew what *Vaidehî* was wishing in her mind, though he was on the Mount *Gridhrakûta*. Therefore, he instantly ordered *Mahâyâna* and *Ânanda* to go to her through the sky. Buddha himself disappeared from that mountain and appeared in the royal palace.

When the queen raised her head as she finished homage to Buddha, she saw before her the World-Honoured Buddha *Sâkyamuni*, whose body was purple gold in colour, sitting on a lotus-flower which consists of a hundred jewels, with *Mahâyâna* attending on his left, and with *Ânanda* on his right. *Sakra* (*Indra*), *Brahman*, and other gods that protect the world were seen in the midst of the sky, everywhere showering heavenly flowers with which they made offerings to Buddha in their worship. *Vaidehî*, at the sight of Buddha the World-Honoured One, took off her garlands and prostrated herself on the ground, crying, sobbing, and speaking to Buddha: 'O World-Honoured One! what former sin of mine has produced such a wicked son? And again, O Exalted One, from what cause and circumstances hast thou such an affinity (by blood and religion) with *Devadatta* (Buddha's wicked cousin and once his disciple)?'

5.

'My only prayer,' she continued, 'is this: O World-Honoured One, mayst thou preach to me in detail of all the places where there is no sorrow or trouble, and where I ought to go to be born anew. I am not satisfied with this world of depravities, with *Gambudvîpa* (*India*), which is full of hells, full of hungry spirits (*pretas*), and of the brute creation. In this world of depravities, there is many an assemblage of the wicked. May I not hear, I pray, the voice of the wicked in the future; and may I not see any wicked person.

'Now I throw my five limbs down to the ground before thee, and seek for thy mercy by confessing my sins. I pray for this only that the Sun-like Buddha may instruct me how to meditate on a world wherein all actions are pure.' At that moment, the World-Honoured

One flashed forth a golden ray from between his eyebrows. It extended to all the innumerable worlds of the ten quarters. On its return the ray rested on the top of Buddha's head and transformed itself into a golden pillar just like the Mount Sumeru, wherein the pure and admirable countries of the Buddhas in the ten quarters appeared all at once illuminated.

One was a country consisting of seven jewels, another was a country all full of lotus-flowers; one was like the palace of Mahesvara Deva (god Siva), another was like a mirror of crystal, with the countries in the ten quarters reflected therein: There were innumerable countries like these, resplendent, gorgeous, and delightful to look upon. All were meant for Vaidehî to see (and choose from).

Thereupon Vaidehî again spoke to Buddha: 'O World-Honoured One, although all other Buddha countries are pure and radiant with light, I should, nevertheless, wish myself to be born in the realm of Buddha Amitâyus (or Amitâbha), in the world of Highest Happiness (Sukhâvatî), Now I simply pray thee, O World-Honoured One, to teach me how to concentrate my thought so as to obtain aright vision (of that country).'

6.

Thereupon the World-Honoured One gently smiled upon her, and rays of five colours issued forth out of his mouth, each ray shining as far as the head of king Bimbisâra.

At that moment, the mental vision of that exalted king was perfectly clear though he was shut up in lonely retirement, and he could see the World-Honoured One from afar. As he paid homage with his head and face, he naturally increased and advanced (in wisdom), whereby he attained to the fruition of an Anâgâmin (the third of the four grades to Nirvâna ).

7.

Then the World-Honoured One said: 'Now dost thou not know, O Vaidehî, that Buddha Amitâyus is not very far from here? Thou shouldst apply thy mind entirely to close meditation upon those who have already perfected the pure actions necessary for that Buddha country.

'I now proceed to fully expound them for thee in many parables, and thereby afford all ordinary persons of the future who wish to cultivate these pure actions an opportunity of being born in the Land of Highest Happiness (Sukhâvatî) in the western quarter. Those who wish to be born in that country of Buddha have to cultivate a threefold goodness. Firstly, they should act filially towards their parents and support them; serve and respect their teachers and elders; be of compassionate mind, abstain from doing any injury, and cultivate the ten virtuous actions. Secondly, they should take and observe the vow of seeking refuge with the Three Jewels, fulfil all moral precepts, and not lower their dignity or neglect any ceremonial observance. Thirdly, they should give their whole mind to the attainment of the Bodhi (perfect wisdom), deeply believe in (the principle of) cause and effect, study and recite (the Sûtras of) the Mahâyâna doctrine, and persuade and encourage others who pursue the same course as themselves.

'These three groups as enumerated are called the pure actions (leading to the Buddha country).'

'O Vaidehî!' Buddha continued, 'dost thou not understand now? These three

classes of actions are the efficient cause of the pure actions taught by all the Buddhas of the past, present, and future.'

8.

Buddha then addressed Ânanda as well as Vaidehî: 'Listen carefully, listen carefully! Ponder carefully on what you hear! I, Tathâgata, now declare the pure actions needful (for that Buddha country) for the sake of all beings hereafter, that are subject to the misery (inflicted) by the enemy, i.e. passion. Well done, O Vaidehî! Appropriate questions are those which thou hast asked! O Ânanda, do thou remember these words of me, of Buddha, and repeat them openly to many assemblies. I, Tathâgata, now teach Vaidehî and also all beings hereafter in order that they may meditate on the World of Highest Happiness (Sukhâvatî) in the western quarter.

'It is by the power of Buddha only that one can see that pure land (of Buddha) as clear as one sees the image of one's face reflected in the transparent mirror held up before one.

'When one sees the state of happiness of that country in its highest excellence, one greatly rejoices in one's heart and immediately attains a spirit of resignation prepared to endure whatever consequences may yet arise.' Buddha, turning again to Vaidehî, said: 'Thou art but an ordinary person; the quality of thy mind is feeble and inferior.

'Thou hast not as yet obtained the divine eye and canst not perceive what is at a distance. All the Buddhas, Tathâgatas have various means at their disposal and can therefore afford thee an opportunity of seeing (that Buddha country).' Then Vaidehî rejoined: 'O World-Honoured One, people such as I, can now see that land by the power of Buddha, but how shall all those beings who are to come after Buddha's Nirvâna, and who, as being depraved and devoid of good qualities, will be harassed by the five worldly sufferings—how shall they see the World of Highest Happiness of the Buddha Amitâyus?'

-- Section 1 --

## Section 2

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9.

Buddha then replied: 'Thou and all other beings besides ought to make it their only aim, with concentrated thought, to get a perception of the western quarter. You will ask how that perception is to be formed. I will explain it now. All beings, if not blind from birth, are uniformly possessed of sight, and they all see the setting sun. Thou shouldst sit down properly, looking in the western direction, and prepare thy thought for a close meditation on the sun; cause thy mind to be firmly fixed (on it) so as to have an unwavering perception by the exclusive application (of thy thought), and gaze upon it (more particularly) when it is about to set and looks like a suspended drum.

'After thou hast thus seen the sun, let (that image) remain clear and fixed, whether thine eyes be shut or open;—such is the perception of the sun, which is the First Meditation.

10.

'Next thou shouldst form the perception of water; gaze on the water clear and pure, and let (this image) also remain clear and fixed (afterwards); never allow thy thought to be scattered and lost.

'When thou hast thus seen the water thou shouldst form the perception of ice. As thou seest the ice shining and transparent, thou shouldst imagine the appearance of lapis lazuli.

'After that has been done, thou wilt see the ground consisting of lapis lazuli, transparent and shining both within and without. Beneath this ground of lapis lazuli there will be seen a golden banner with the seven jewels, diamonds and the rest, supporting the ground. It extends to the eight points of the compass, and thus the eight corners (of the ground) are perfectly filled up. Every side of the eight quarters consists of a hundred jewels, every jewel has a thousand rays, and every ray has eighty-four thousand colours which, when reflected in the ground of lapis lazuli, look like a thousand millions of suns, and it is difficult to see them all one by one. Over the surface of that ground of lapis lazuli there are stretched golden ropes intertwined crosswise; divisions are made by means of (strings of) seven jewels with every part clear and distinct.

'Each jewel has rays of five hundred colours which look like flowers or like the moon and stars. Lodged high up in the open sky these rays form a tower of rays, whose storeys and galleries are ten millions in number and built of a hundred jewels. Both sides of the tower have each a hundred millions of flowery banners furnished and decked with numberless musical instruments. Eight kinds of cool breezes proceed from the brilliant rays. When those musical instruments are played, they emit the sounds "suffering," "non-existence," "impermanence," and "non-self;"—such is the perception of the water, which is the Second Meditation.

11.

'When this perception has been formed, thou shouldst meditate on its (constituents) one by one and make (the images) as clear as possible, so that they may never be scattered and lost, whether thine eyes be shut or open. Except only during the time of thy sleep, thou



shouldst always keep this in thy mind. One who has reached this (stage of) perception is said to have dimly seen the Land of Highest Happiness (Sukhâvatî).

'One who has obtained the Samâdhi (the state of supernatural calm) is able to see the land (of that Buddha country) clearly and distinctly: (this state) is too much to be explained fully;—such is the perception of the land, and it is the Third Meditation.

'Thou shouldst remember, O Ânanda, the Buddha words of mine, and repeat this law for attaining to the perception of the land ( of the Buddha country) for the sake of the great mass of the people hereafter who may wish to be delivered from their sufferings. If anyone meditates on the land (of that Buddha country), his sins (which bind him to) births And deaths during eighty millions of kalpas shall be expiated; after the abandonment of his (present) body, he will assuredly be born in the pure land in the following life. The practice of this kind of meditation is called the "right meditation." If it be of another kind it is called "heretical meditation."

12.

Buddha then spoke to Ânanda and Vaidehî: 'When the perception of the land (of that Buddha country) has been gained, you should next meditate on the jewel–trees (of that country). In meditating on the jewel–trees, you should take each by itself and form a perception of the seven rows of trees; every tree is eight hundred yoganâs high, and all the jewel–trees have flowers and leaves consisting of seven jewels all perfect. All flowers and leaves have colours like the colours of various jewels:—from the colour of lapis lazuli there issues a golden ray; from the colour of crystal, a saffron ray; from the colour of agate, a diamond ray; from the colour of diamond, a ray of blue pearls. Corals, amber, and all other gems are used as ornaments for illumination; nets of excellent pearls are spread over the trees, each tree is covered by seven sets of nets, and between one set and another there are five hundred millions of palaces built of excellent flowers, resembling the palace of the Lord Brahman; all heavenly children live there quite naturally; every child has a garland consisting of five hundred millions of precious gems like those that are fastened on Sakra's (Indra's) head, the rays of which shine over a hundred yoganâs, just as if a hundred millions of suns and moons were united together; it is difficult to explain them in detail. That (garland) is the most excellent among all, as it is the commixture of all sorts of jewels. Rows of these jewel–trees touch one another; the leaves of the trees also join one another.

'Among the dense foliage there blossom various beautiful flowers, upon which are miraculously found fruits of seven jewels. The leaves of the trees are all exactly equal in length and in breadth, measuring twenty–five yoganâs each way; every leaf has a thousand colours and a hundred different pictures on it, just like a heavenly garland. There are many excellent flowers which have the colour of Gâmbûnada gold and an appearance of fire–wheels in motion, turning between the leaves in a graceful fashion. All the fruits are produced just (as easily) as if they flowed out from the pitcher of the God Sakra. There is a magnificent ray which transforms itself into numberless jewelled canopies with banners and flags. Within these jewelled canopies the works of all the Buddhas of the Great Chilocosm appear illuminated; the Buddha countries of the ten quarters also are manifested therein. When you have seen these trees you should also meditate on them one by one in order. In meditating on the trees, trunks, branches, leaves, flowers, and fruits, let them all be distinct and clear;—such is the perception of the trees (of that Buddha country), and it is the Fourth

## Meditation.

13.

'Next, you should perceive the water (of that country). The perception of the water is as follows:--

'In the Land of Highest Happiness there are waters in eight lakes; the water in every lake consists of seven jewels which are soft and yielding. Deriving its source from the king of jewels that fulfils every wish, the water is divided into fourteen streams; every stream has the colour of seven jewels; its channel is built of gold, the bed of which consists of the sand of variegated diamonds.

'In the midst of each lake there are sixty millions of lotus-flowers, made of seven jewels; all the flowers are perfectly round and exactly equal (in circumference), being twelve yoganas. The water of jewels flows amidst the flowers and rises and falls by the stalks (of the lotus); the sound of the streaming water is melodious and pleasing, and propounds all the perfect virtues (Parâmitâs), "suffering," "non-existence," "impermanence," and "non-self;" it proclaims also the praise of the signs of perfection, and minor marks of excellence of all Buddhas. From the king of jewels that fulfils every wish, stream forth the golden-coloured rays excessively beautiful, the radiance of which transforms itself into birds possessing the colours of a hundred jewels, which sing out harmonious notes, sweet and delicious, ever praising the remembrance of Buddha, the remembrance of the Law, and the remembrance of the Church;--such is the perception of the water of eight good qualities, and it is the Fifth Meditation.

14.

'Each division of that (Buddha) country, which consists of several jewels, has also jewelled storeys and galleries to the number of five hundred millions; within each storey and gallery there are innumerable Devas engaged in playing heavenly music. There are some musical instruments that are hung up in the open sky, like the jewelled banners of heaven; they emit musical sounds without being struck, which, while resounding variously, all propound the remembrance of Buddha, of the Law and of the Church, Bhikshus, &c. When this perception is duly accomplished, one is said to have dimly seen the jewel-trees, jewel-ground, and jewel-lakes of that World of Highest Happiness (Sukhâvatî);--such is the perception formed by meditating on the general (features of that Land), and it is the Sixth Meditation.

'If one has experienced this, one has expiated the greatest sinful deeds which would (otherwise lead one) to transmigration for numberless millions of kalpas; after his death he will assuredly be born in that land.

15.

'Listen carefully! listen carefully! Think over what you have heard! I, Buddha, am about to explain in detail the law of delivering one's self from trouble and torment. Commit this to your memory in order to explain it in detail before a great assembly.' While Buddha was uttering these words, Buddha Amitâyus stood in the midst of the sky with Bodhisattvas Mahâsthâma and Avalokitesvara, attending on his right and left respectively. There was such a bright and dazzling radiance that no one could see clearly; the brilliance was a

hundred thousand times greater than that of gold (*Gâmbûnada*). Thereupon *Vaidehî* saw Buddha *Amitâyus* and approached the World-Honoured One, and worshipped him, touching his feet; and spoke to him as follows: 'O Exalted One! I am now able, by the power of Buddha, to see Buddha *Amitâyus* together with the two *Bodhisattvas*. But how shall all the beings of the future meditate on Buddha *Amitâyus* and the two *Bodhisattvas*?'

16.

Buddha answered: 'Those who wish to meditate on that Buddha ought first to direct their thought as follows: form the perception of a lotus-flower on a ground of seven jewels, each leaf of that lotus exhibits the colours of a hundred jewels, and has eighty-four thousand veins, just like heavenly pictures; each vein possesses eighty-four thousand rays, of which each can be clearly seen. Every small leaf and flower is two hundred and fifty *yoganas* in length and the same measurement in breadth. Each lotus-flower possesses eighty-four thousand leaves, each leaf has the kingly pearls to the number of a hundred millions, as ornaments for illumination; each pearl shoots out a thousand rays like bright canopies. The surface of the ground is entirely covered by a mixture of seven jewels. There is a tower built of the gems which are like those that are fastened on *Sakra's* head. It is inlaid and decked with eighty thousand diamonds, *Kimsuka* jewels, *Brahma-mani* and excellent pearl nets.

'On that tower there are miraculously found four posts with jewelled banners; each banner looks like a hundred thousand millions of *Sumeru* mountains.

'The jewelled veil over these banners is like that of the celestial palace of *Yama*, illuminated with five hundred millions of excellent jewels, each jewel has eighty-four thousand rays, each ray has various golden colours to the number of eighty-four thousand, each golden colour covers the whole jewelled soil, it changes and is transformed at various places, every now and then exhibiting various appearances; now it becomes a diamond tower, now a pearl net, again clouds of mixed flowers, freely changing its manifestation in the ten directions it exhibits the state of Buddha;—such is the perception of the flowery throne, and it is the Seventh Meditation.'

Buddha, turning to *Ânanda*, said: 'These excellent flowers were created originally by the power of the prayer of *Bhikshu, Dharmâkara*. All who wish to exercise the remembrance of that Buddha ought first to form the perception of that flowery throne. When engaged in it one ought not to perceive vaguely, but fix the mind upon each detail separately. Leaf, jewel, ray, tower, and banner should be clear and distinct, just as one sees the image of one's own face in a mirror. When one has achieved this perception, the sins which would produce births and deaths during fifty thousand *kalpas* are expiated, and he is one who will most assuredly be born in the World of Highest Happiness.

17.

'When you have perceived this, you should next perceive Buddha himself. Do you ask how? Every Buddha *Tathâgata* is one whose (spiritual) body is the principle of nature (*Darmadhâtu-kâya*), so that he may enter into the mind of any beings. Consequently, when you have perceived Buddha, it is indeed that mind of yours that possesses those thirty-two signs of perfection and eighty minor marks of excellence (which you see in Buddha). In fine, it is your mind that becomes Buddha, nay, it is your mind that is indeed Buddha. The ocean of true and universal knowledge of all the Buddhas derives its source from one's own mind

and thought. Therefore you should apply your thought with an undivided attention to a careful meditation on that Buddha Tathâgata, Arhat, the Holy and Fully Enlightened One. In forming the perception of that Buddha, you should first perceive the image of that Buddha; whether your eyes be open or shut, look at an image like Gâmbûnada gold in colour, sitting on that flower (throne mentioned before).

'When you have seen the seated figure your mental vision will become clear, and you will be able to see clearly and distinctly the adornment of that Buddha country, the jewelled ground, &c. In seeing these things, let them be clear and fixed just as you see the palms of your hands. When you have passed through this experience, you should further form (a perception of) another great lotus-flower which is on the left side of Buddha, and is exactly equal in every way to the above-mentioned lotus-flower of Buddha. Still further, you should form (a perception of) another lotus-flower which is on the right side of Buddha. Perceive that an image of Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara is sitting on the left-hand flowery throne, shooting forth golden rays exactly like those of Buddha. Perceive then that an image of Bodhisattva Mahâsthâma is sitting on the right-hand flowery throne.

'When these perceptions are gained the images of Buddha and the Bodhisattvas will all send forth brilliant rays, clearly lighting up all the jewel-trees with golden colour. Under every tree there are also three lotus-flowers. On every lotus-flower there is an image, either of Buddha or of a Bodhisattva; thus (the images of the Bodhisattvas and of Buddha) are found everywhere in that country. When this perception has been gained, the devotee should hear the excellent Law preached by means of a stream of water, a brilliant ray of light, several jewel-trees, ducks, geese, and swans. Whether he be wrapped in meditation or whether he has ceased from it, he should ever hear the excellent Law. What the devotee hears must be kept in memory and not be lost, when he ceases from that meditation; and it should agree with the Sûtras, for if it does not agree with the Sûtras, it is called an illusory perception, whereas if it does agree, it is called the rough perception of the World of Highest Happiness;—such is the perception of the images, and it is the Eighth Meditation.

'He who has practised this meditation is freed from the sins (which otherwise involve him in) births and deaths for innumerable millions of kalpas, and during this present life he obtains the Samâdhi due to the remembrance of Buddha.

18.

'Further, when this perception is gained, you should next proceed to meditate on the bodily marks and the light of Buddha Amitâyus.

'Thou shouldst know, O Ânanda, that the body of Buddha Amitâyus is a hundred thousand million times as bright as the colour of the Gâmbûnada gold of the heavenly abode of Yama; the height of that Buddha is six hundred thousand niyutas of kofis of yoganas innumerable as are the sands of the river Gangâ.

'The white twist of hair between the eyebrows all turning to the right, is just like the five Sumeru mountains.

'The eyes of Buddha are like the water of the four great oceans; the blue and the white are quite distinct.

'All the roots of hair of his body issue forth brilliant rays which are also like the Sumeru mountains.

'The halo of that Buddha is like a hundred millions of the Great Chilocosms; in that halo there are Buddhas miraculously created, to the number of a million of *niyutas* of *kofis* innumerable as the sands of the *Gangâ*; each of these Buddhas has for attendants a great assembly of numberless *Bodhisattvas* who are also miraculously created.

'Buddha *Amitâyus* has eighty-four thousand signs of perfection, each sign is possessed of eighty-four minor marks of excellence, each mark has eighty-four thousand rays, each ray extends so far as to shine over the worlds of the ten quarters, whereby Buddha embraces and protects all the beings who think upon him and does not exclude (anyone of them). His rays, signs, &c., are difficult to be explained in detail. But in simple meditation let the mind's eye dwell upon them.

'If you pass through this experience, you will at the same time see all the Buddhas of the ten quarters. Since you see all the Buddhas it is called the *Samâdhi* of the remembrance of the Buddhas.

'Those who have practised this meditation are said to have contemplated the bodies of all the Buddhas. Since they have meditated on Buddha's body, they will also see Buddha's mind. It is great compassion that is called Buddha's mind. It is by his absolute compassion that he receives all beings.

'Those who have practised this meditation will, when they die, be born in the presence of the Buddhas in another life, and obtain a spirit of resignation wherewith to face all the consequences which shall hereafter arise.

'Therefore those who have wisdom should direct their thought to the careful meditation upon that Buddha *Amitâyus*. Let those who meditate on Buddha *Amitâyus* begin with one single sign or mark—let them first meditate on the white twist of hair between the eyebrows as clearly as possible; when they have done this, the eighty-four thousand signs and marks will naturally appear before their eyes. Those who see *Amitâyus* will also see all the innumerable Buddhas of the ten quarters. Since they have seen all the innumerable Buddhas, they will receive the prophecy of their future destiny (to become Buddha), in the presence of all the Buddhas;—such is the perception gained by a complete meditation on all forms and bodies (of Buddha), and it is the Ninth Meditation.

19.

'When you have seen Buddha *Amitâyus* distinctly, you should then further meditate upon *Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara*, whose height is eight hundred thousands of *niyutas* of *yoganas*; the colour of his body is purple gold, his head has a turban (*ushmîshasiraskatâ*), at the back of which there is a halo; (the circumference of) his face is a hundred thousand *yoganas*. In that halo, there are five hundred Buddhas miraculously transformed just like those of *Sâkyamuni* Buddha, each transformed Buddha is attended by five hundred transformed *Bodhisattvas* who are also attended by numberless gods.

'Within the circle of light emanating from his whole body, appear illuminated the various forms and marks of all beings that live in the five paths of existence.

'On the top of his head is a heavenly crown of gems like those that are fastened (on Indra's head), in which crown there is a transformed Buddha standing, twenty-five yoganas high.

'The face of Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara is like Gâmbûnada gold in colour.

'The soft hair between the eyebrows has all the colours of the seven jewels, from which eighty-four kinds of rays flow out, each ray has innumerable transformed Buddhas, each of whom is attended by numberless transformed Bodhisattvas; freely changing their manifestations they fill up the worlds of the ten quarters; (the appearance) can be compared with the colour of the red lotus-flower.

'(He wears) a garland consisting of eight thousand rays, in which is seen fully reflected a state of perfect beauty. The palm of his hand has a mixed colour of five hundred lotus-flowers. His hands have ten (tips of) fingers, each tip has eighty-four thousand pictures, which are like signet-marks, each picture has eighty-four thousand colours, each colour has eighty-four thousand rays which are soft and mild and shine over all things that exist. With these jewel hands he draws and embraces all beings. When he lifts up his feet, the soles of his feet are seen to be marked with a wheel of a thousand spokes (one of the thirty-two signs) which miraculously transform themselves into five hundred million pillars of rays. When he puts his feet down to the ground, the flowers of diamonds and jewels are scattered about, and all things are simply covered by them. All the other signs of his body and the minor marks of excellence are perfect, and not at all different from those of Buddha, except the signs of having the turban on his head and the top of his head invisible, which two signs of him are inferior to those of the World-Honoured One;—such is the perception of the real form and body of Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, and it is the Tenth Meditation.'

Buddha, especially addressing Ânanda, said: 'whosoever wishes to meditate on Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara must do so in the way I have explained. Those who practise this meditation will not suffer any calamity; they will utterly remove the obstacle that is raised by Karma, and will expiate the sins which would involve them in births and deaths for numberless kalpas. Even the hearing of the name of this Bodhisattva will enable one to obtain immeasurable happiness. How much more, then, will the diligent contemplation of him!

'Whosoever will meditate on Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara should first meditate on the turban of his head, and then on his heavenly crown.

'All the other signs should also be meditated on according to their order, and they should be clear and distinct just as one sees the palms of one's hands.

'Next you should meditate on Bodhisattva Mahâsthâma, whose bodily signs, height, and size are equal to those of Avalokitesvara; the circumference (lit. surface) of his halo is one hundred and twenty-five yoganas, and it shines as far as two hundred and fifty yoganas. The rays of his whole body shine over the countries of the ten quarters, they are purple gold in colour, and can be seen by all beings that are in favourable circumstances.

'If one but sees the ray that issues from a single root of the hair of this Bodhisattva, he will at the same time see the pure and excellent rays of all the innumerable Buddhas of the ten quarters.

'For this reason this Bodhisattva is named the Unlimited Light; it is with this light of wisdom that he shines over all beings and causes them to be removed from the three paths of existence (Hells, Pretas, and the brute creation), and to obtain the highest power. For the same reason this Bodhisattva is called the Bodhisattva of Great Strength (Mahâsthâma). His heavenly crown has five hundred jewel-flowers; each jewel-flower has five hundred jewel-towers; in each tower are seen manifested all the pure and excellent features of the far-stretching Buddha countries in the ten quarters. The turban on his head is like a padma- (lotus) flower; on the top of the turban there is a jewel-pitcher, which is filled with various brilliant rays fully manifesting the state of Buddha. All his other bodily signs are quite equal to those of Avalokitesvara. When this Bodhisattva walks about, all the regions of the ten quarters tremble and quake. Wherever the earth quakes there appear five hundred millions of jewel-flowers; each jewel-flower with its splendid dazzling beauty looks like the World of Highest Happiness (Sukhâvatî).

'When this Bodhisattva sits down, all the countries of seven jewels at once tremble and quake: all the incarnate (lit. divided) Amitâyus's, innumerable as the dust of the earth, and all the incarnate Bodhisattvas (Aval. and Mahâs.) who dwell in the middlemost Buddha countries (situated) between the Buddha country of the lower region (presided over) by a Buddha called the "Golden Light," and the country of the upper region (presided over) by a Buddha called the "King of Light,"—all these assemble in the World of Highest Happiness (Sukhâvatî), like gathering clouds, sit on their thrones of lotus-flowers, which fill the whole sky, and preach the excellent Law in order to deliver all the beings that are plunged in suffering;—such is the perception of the form and body of Bodhisattva Mahâsthâma, and it is the Eleventh Meditation.

'Those who practise this meditation are freed from the sins (which would otherwise involve them) in births and deaths for innumerable asankhya kalpas.

'Those who have practised this meditation do not live in an embryo state but obtain free access to the excellent and admirable countries of Buddhas. Those who have experienced this are said to have perfectly meditated upon the two Bodhisattvas Avalokitesvara and Mahâsthâma.

20.

'After thou hast had this perception, thou shouldst imagine thyself to be born in the World of Highest Happiness in the western quarter, and to be seated, cross-legged, on a lotus-flower there. Then imagine that the flower has shut thee in and has afterwards unfolded; when the flower has thus unfolded, five hundred coloured rays will shine over thy body, thine eyes will be opened so as to see the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas who fill the whole sky; thou wilt hear the sounds of waters and trees, the notes of birds, and the voices of many Buddhas preaching the excellent Law, in accordance with the twelve divisions of the scriptures. When thou hast ceased from that meditation, thou must remember the experience ever after.

'If thou hast passed through this experience thou art said to have seen the World of Highest Happiness in the realm of the Buddha Amitâyus;—this is the perception obtained by a complete meditation on that Buddha country, and is called the Twelfth Meditation.

'The innumerable incarnate bodies of Amitâyus, together with those of Aval. and Mahâs., constantly come and appear before such devotees (as above mentioned).'

21.

Buddha then spoke to Ânanda and Vaidehî: 'Those who wish, by means of their serene thoughts, to be born in the western land, should first meditate on an image of the Buddha, who is sixteen cubits high, seated on (a lotus-flower in) the water of the lake. As it was stated before the (real) body and its measurement are unlimited, incomprehensible to the ordinary mind.

'But by the efficacy of the ancient prayer of that Tathâgata, those who think of and remember him shall certainly be able to accomplish their aim.

'Even the mere perceiving of the image of that Buddha brings to one immeasurable blessings. How much more, then, will the meditating upon all the complete bodily signs of that Buddha! Buddha Amitâyus has supernatural power; since everything is at his disposal, he freely transforms himself in the regions of the ten quarters. At one time he shows himself as possessing a magnificent body, which fills the whole sky, at another he makes his body appear small, the height being only sixteen or eighteen cubits. The body he manifests is always pure gold in colour; his halo—(bright with) transformed Buddhas—and his jewel lotus-flowers are as mentioned above. The bodies of the two Bodhisattvas are the same always.

'All beings can recognise either of the two Bodhisattvas by simply glancing at the marks of their heads. These two Bodhisattvas assist Amitâyus in his work of universal salvation;—such is the meditation that forms a joint perception of the Buddha and Bodhisattvas, and it is the Thirteenth Meditation.'

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## Section 3

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22.

Buddha then spoke to Ânanda and Vaidehî: 'The beings who will be born in the highest form of the highest grade (i.e. to Buddhahood) are those, whoever they may be, who wish to be born in that country and cherish the threefold thought whereby they are at once destined to be born there. What is the threefold thought, you may ask. First, the True Thought; second, the Deep Believing Thought; third, the Desire to be born in that Pure Land by bringing one's own stock of merit to maturity. Those who have this threefold thought in perfection shall most assuredly be born into that country.

'There are also three classes of beings who are able to be born in that country. What, you may ask, are the three classes of beings? First, those who are possessed of a compassionate mind, who do no injury to any beings, and accomplish all virtuous actions according to Buddha's precepts; second, those who study and recite the Sûtras of the Mahâyâna doctrine, for instance, the Vaipulya Sûtras; third, those who practise the sixfold remembrance. These three classes of beings who wish to be born in that country by bringing (their respective stocks of merit) to maturity, will become destined to be born there if they have accomplished any of those meritorious deeds for one day or even for seven days.

'When one who has practised (these merits) is about to be born in that country, Buddha Amitâyus, together with the two Bodhisattvas Aval. and Mahâs., also numberless created Buddhas, and a hundred thousand Bhikshus and Sâvakas, with their whole retinue, and innumerable gods, together with the palaces of seven jewels, will appear before him out of regard for his diligence and courage; Aval., together with Mahâs., will offer a diamond seat to him; thereupon Amitâyus himself will send forth magnificent rays of light to shine over the dying person's body. He and many Bodhisattvas will offer their hands and welcome him, when Aval., Mahâs., and all the other Bodhisattvas will praise the glory of the man who practised the meritorious deeds, and convey an exhortation to his mind. When the new-comer, having seen these, rejoicing and leaping for joy, looks at himself, he will find his own body seated on that diamond throne; and as he follows behind Buddha he will be born into that country, in a moment. When he has been born there, he will see Buddha's form and body with every sign of perfection complete, and also the perfect forms and signs of all the Bodhisattvas; he will also see brilliant rays and jewel-forests and hear them propounding the excellent Law, and instantly be conscious of a spirit of resignation to whatever consequences may hereafter arise. Before long he will serve every one of the Buddhas who live in the regions of the ten quarters. In the presence of each of those Buddhas he will obtain successively a prophecy of his future destiny. On his return to his own land (Sukhâvatî, in which he has just been born) he will obtain countless hundreds of thousands of Dhârani formulas (mystic form of prayer);—such are those who are to be born in the highest form of the highest grade (to Buddhahood).

23.

'Next, the beings who will be born in the middle form of the highest grade are those who do not necessarily learn, remember, study, or recite those Vaipulya Sûtras, but fully understand the meaning of the truth (contained in them), and having a firm grasp of the

highest truth do not speak evil of the Mahâyâna doctrine, but deeply believe in (the principle of) cause and effect; who by bringing these good qualities to maturity seek to be born in that Country of Highest Happiness. When one who has acquired these qualities is about to die, Amitâyus, surrounded by the two Bodhisattvas Aval. and Mahâs., and an innumerable retinue of dependents, will bring a seat of purple gold and approach him with words of praise, saying: "O my son in the Law! thou hast practised the Mahâyâna doctrine; thou hast understood and believed the highest truth; therefore I now come to meet and welcome thee." He and the thousand created Buddhas offer hands all at once.

'When that man looks at his own body, he will find himself seated on that purple gold seat; he will, then, stretching forth his folded hands, praise and eulogise all the Buddhas. As quick as thought he will be born in the lake of seven jewels, of that country. That purple gold seat on which he sits is like a magnificent jewel-flower, and will open after a night; the new-comer's body becomes purple gold in colour, and he will also find under his feet a lotus-flower consisting of seven jewels. Buddha and the Bodhisattvas at the same time will send forth brilliant rays to shine over the body of that person whose eyes will instantaneously be opened and become clear. According to his former usage (in the human world) he will hear all the voices that are there, preaching primary truths of the deepest significance.

'Then he will descend from that golden seat and worship Buddha with folded hands, praising and eulogising the World-Honoured One. After seven days, he will immediately attain to the state of the highest perfect knowledge (*anuttarasamyaksambodhi*) from which he will never fall away (*avaivartya*); next he will fly to all the ten regions and successively serve all the Buddhas therein; he will practise many a Samâdhi in the presence of those Buddhas. After the lapse of a lesser kalpa he will attain a spirit of resignation to whatever consequences may hereafter arise, and he will also obtain a prophecy of his future destiny in the presence of Buddhas.

24.

'Next are those who are to be born in the lowest form of the highest grade: this class of beings also believes in (the principle of) cause and effect, and without slandering the Mahâyâna doctrine, simply cherishes the thought of obtaining the highest Bodhi and by bringing this good quality to maturity seeks to be born in that Country of Highest Happiness. When a devotee of this class dies, Amitâyus, with Aval., Mahâs., and all the dependents, will offer him a golden lotus-flower; he will also miraculously create five hundred Buddhas in order to send and meet him. These five hundred created Buddhas will, all at once, offer hands and praise him, saying: "O my son in the Law! thou art pure now; as thou hast cherished the thought of obtaining the highest Bodhi, we come to meet thee." When he has seen them, he will find himself seated on that golden lotus-flower. Soon the flower will close upon him; following behind the World-Honoured One he will go to be born in the lake of seven jewels. After one day and one night the lotus-flower will unfold itself. Within seven days he may see Buddha's body, though his mind is not as yet clear enough to perceive all the signs and marks of the Buddha, which he will be able to see clearly after three weeks; then he will hear many sounds and voices preaching the excellent Law, and he himself, travelling through all the ten quarters, will worship all the Buddhas, from whom he will learn the deepest significance of the Law. After three lesser kalpas he will gain entrance to the knowledge of a hundred (divisions of) nature (*satadharmavidyâdvâra*) and become settled

in the (first) joyful stage (of Bodhisattva). The perception of these three classes of beings is called the meditation upon the superior class of beings, and is the Fourteenth Meditation.

25.

'The beings who will be born in the highest form of the middle grade are those who observe the five prohibitive precepts, the eight prohibitive precepts and the fasting, and practise all the moral precepts; who do not commit the five deadly sins, and who bring no blame or trouble upon any being; and who by bringing these good qualities to maturity seek to be born in the World of Highest Happiness in the western quarter. On the eve of such a person's departure from this life, Amitâyus, surrounded by Bhikshus and dependents, will appear before him, flashing forth rays of golden colour, and will preach the Law of suffering, non-existence, impermanence, and non-self. He will also praise the virtue of homelessness that can liberate one from all sufferings. At the sight of Buddha, that believer will excessively rejoice in his heart; he will soon find himself seated on a lotus-flower. Kneeling down on the ground and stretching forth his folded hands he will pay homage to Buddha. Before he raises his head he will reach that Country of Highest Happiness and be born there. Soon the lotus-flower will unfold, when he will hear sounds and voices praising and glorifying the Four Noble Truths (of suffering). He will immediately attain to the fruition of Arhatship, gain the threefold knowledge and the six supernatural faculties, and complete the eightfold emancipation.

26.

'The beings who will be born in the middle form of the middle grade are those who either observe the eight prohibitive precepts, and the fasting for one day and one night, or observe the prohibitive precept for *Sramanera* (a novice) for the same period, or observe the perfect moral precepts, not lowering their dignity nor neglecting any ceremonial observance for one day and one night, and by bringing their respective merits to maturity seek to be born in the Country of Highest Happiness. On the eve of departure from this life, such a believer who is possessed of this moral virtue, which he has made fragrant by cultivation during his life, will see Amitâyus, followed by all his retinue; flashing forth rays of golden colour, this Buddha will come before him and offer a lotus-flower of seven jewels.

'He will hear a voice in the sky, praising him and saying: "O son of a noble family, thou art indeed an excellent man. Out of regard for thy obedience to the teachings of all the Buddhas of the three worlds I, now, come and meet thee." Then the newcomer will see himself seated on that lotus-flower. Soon the lotus-flower will fold around him, and being in this he will be born in the jewel-lake of the World of Highest Happiness in the western quarter.

'After seven days that flower will unfold again, when the believer will open his eyes, and praise the World-Honoured One, stretching forth his folded hands. Having heard the Law, he will rejoice and obtain the fruition of a *Srota-âpanna* (the first grade to *Nirvâna*).

'In the lapse of half a kalpa he will become an Arhat.

27.

'Next are the beings who will be born in the lowest form of the middle grade (to Buddhahood) If there be sons or daughters of a noble family who are filial to their parents

and support them, besides exercising benevolence and compassion in the world, at their departure from this life, such persons will meet a good and learned teacher who will fully describe to them the state of happiness in that Buddha country of Amitâyus, and will also explain the forty–eight prayers of the Bhikshu Dharmâkara. As soon as any such person has heard these details, his life will come to an end. In a brief moment he will be born in the World of Highest Happiness in the western quarter.

'After seven days he will meet Aval. and Mahâs., from whom he will learn the Law and rejoice. After the lapse of a lesser kalpa he will attain to the fruition of an Arhat. The perception of these three sorts of beings is called the meditation of the middle class of beings, and is the Fifteenth Meditation.

28.

'Next are the beings who will be born in the highest form of the lowest grade. If there be anyone who commits many evil deeds, provided that he does not speak evil of the Mahâvaipulya Sûtras, he, though himself a very stupid man, and neither ashamed nor sorry for all the evil actions that he has done, yet, while dying, may meet a good and learned teacher who will recite and laud the headings and titles of the twelve divisions of the Mahâyâna scriptures. Having thus heard the names of all the Sûtras, he will be freed from the greatest sins which would involve him in births and deaths during a thousand kalpas.

'A wise man also will teach him to stretch forth his folded hands and to say, "Adoration to Buddha Amitâyus" (Namo\*mitâbhâya Buddhâya, or, Namo\*mitâyushe Buddhâya). Having uttered the name of the Buddha, he will be freed from the sins which would otherwise involve him in births and deaths for fifty millions of kalpas. Thereupon the Buddha will send a created Buddha, and the created Bodhisattvas Aval. and Mahâs., to approach that person with words of praise, saying: "O son of a noble family, as thou hast uttered the name of that Buddha, all thy sins have been destroyed and expiated, and therefore we now come to meet thee." After this speech the devotee will observe the rays of that created Buddha flooding his chamber with light, and while rejoicing at the sight he will depart this life. Seated on a lotus–flower he will follow that created Buddha and go to be born in the jewel–lake.

'After the lapse of seven weeks, the lotus–flower will unfold, when the great compassionate Bodhisattvas Aval. and Mahâs. will stand before him, flashing forth magnificent rays, and will preach to him the deepest meaning of the twelve divisions of the scriptures. Having heard this, he will understand and believe it, and cherish the thought of attaining the highest Bodhi. In a period of ten lesser kalpas he will gain entrance to the knowledge of the hundred (divisions of) nature, and be able to enter upon the first (joyful) stage (of Bodhisattva). Those who have had an opportunity of hearing the name of Buddha, the name of the Law, and the name of the Church--the names of the Three Jewels can also be born (in that country).'

29.

Buddha continued: 'Next are the beings who will be born in the middle form of the lowest grade. If there be anyone who transgresses the five and the eight prohibitive precepts, and also all the perfect moral precepts; he, being himself so stupid as to steal things that belong to the whole community, or things that belong to a particular Bhikshu, and not be ashamed

nor sorry for his impure preaching of the Law (in case of preacher), but magnify and glorify himself with many wicked deeds:—such a sinful person deserves to fall into hell in consequence of those sins. At the time of his death, when the fires of hell approach him from all sides, he will meet a good and learned teacher who will, out of great compassion, preach the power and virtue of the ten faculties of Amitâyus and fully explain the supernatural powers and brilliant rays of that Buddha; and will further praise moral virtue, meditation, wisdom, emancipation, and the thorough knowledge that follows emancipation. After having heard this, he will be freed from his sins, which would involve him in births and deaths during eighty millions of kalpas; thereupon those violent fires of hell will transform themselves into a pure and cool wind blowing about heavenly flowers. On each of these flowers will stand a created Buddha or Bodhisattva to meet and receive that person. In a moment he will be born in a lotus-flower growing in the lake of seven jewels. After six kalpas the lotus-flower will open, when Avalokitesvara and Mahâsthâma will soothe and encourage him with their Brahma-voices, and preach to him the Mahâyâna Sûtras of the deepest significance.

'Having heard this Law, he will instantaneously direct his thought toward the attainment of the highest Bodhi.

30.

'Lastly, the beings who will be born in the lowest form of the lowest grade. If there be anyone who commits evil deeds, and even completes the ten wicked actions, the five deadly sins and the like; that man, being himself stupid and guilty of many crimes, deserves to fall into a miserable path of existence and suffer endless pains during many kalpas. On the eve of death he will meet a good and learned teacher who will, soothing and encouraging him in various ways, preach to him the excellent Law and teach him the remembrance of Buddha, but, being harassed by pains, he will have no time to think of Buddha. Some good friend will then say to him: "Even if thou canst not exercise the remembrance of Buddha, thou mayst, at least, utter the name, 'Buddha Amitâyus.'" Let him do so serenely with his voice uninterrupted; let him be (continually) thinking of Buddha until he has completed ten times the thought, repeating (the formula), "Adoration to Buddha Amitâyus" (Namo\*mitâyushe Buddhâya). On the strength of (his merit of) uttering Buddha's name he will, during every repetition, expiate the sins which involve him in births and deaths during eighty millions of kalpas. He will, while dying, see a golden lotus-flower like the disk of the sun appearing before his eyes; in a moment he will be born in the World of Highest Happiness. After twelve greater kalpas the lotus-flower will unfold; thereupon the Bodhisattvas Aval. and Mahâs., raising their voices in great compassion, will preach to him in detail the real state of all the elements of nature and the law of the expiation of sins.

'On hearing them he will rejoice and will immediately direct his thought toward the attainment of the Bodhi;—such are the beings who are to be born in the lowest form of the lowest grade (to Buddhahood). The perception of the above three is called the meditation of the inferior class of beings, and is the Sixteenth Meditation.'

## Section 4

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31.

When Buddha had finished this speech, Vaidehî, together with her five hundred female attendants, could see, as guided by the Buddha's words, the scene of the far–stretching World of the Highest Happiness, and could also see the body of Buddha and the bodies of the two Bodhisattvas. With her mind filled with joy she praised them, saying: 'Never have I seen such a wonder!' Instantaneously she became wholly and fully enlightened, and attained a spirit of resignation, prepared to endure whatever consequences might yet arise. Her five hundred female attendants too cherished the thought of obtaining the highest perfect knowledge, and sought to be born in that Buddha country.

32.

The World–Honoured One predicted that they would all be born in that Buddha country, and be able to obtain the Samâdhi (the supernatural calm) of the presence of many Buddhas. All the innumerable Devas (gods) also directed their thought toward the attainment of the highest Bodhi. Thereupon Ânanda rose from his seat, approached Buddha, and spoke thus: 'O World–Honoured One, what should we call this Sûtra? And how should we receive and remember it (in the future)?'

Buddha said in his reply to Ânanda: 'O Ânanda, this Sûtra should be called the meditation on the Land of Sukhâvatî, on Buddha Amitâyus, Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, Bodhisattva Mahâsthâma, or otherwise be called "(the Sûtra on) the entire removal of the obstacle of Karma, (the means of) being born in the realm of the Buddhas." Thou shouldst take and hold it, not forgetting nor losing it. Those who practise the Samâdhi (the supernatural calm) in accordance with this Sûtra will be able to see, in the present life, Buddha Amitâyus and the two great Bodhisattvas.

'In case of a son or a daughter of a noble family, the mere hearing of the names of the Buddha and the two Bodhisattvas will expiate the sins which would involve them in births and deaths during innumerable kalpas. How much more will the remembrance (of Buddha and the Bodhisattvas)!

'Know that he who remembers that Buddha is the white lotus (*pundarîka*) among men, it is he whom the Bodhisattvas Avalokitesvara and Mahâsthâma consider an excellent friend. He will, sitting in the Bodhi–*mandala*, be born in the abode of Buddhas.'

Buddha further spoke to Ânanda: 'Thou shouldst carefully remember these words. To remember these words is to remember the name of Buddha Amitâyus.'

When Buddha concluded these words, the worthy disciples Mahâyâna, and Ânanda, Vaidehî, and the others were all enraptured with excessive Joy.

33.

Thereupon the World–Honoured One came back, walking through the open sky; to the Mount *Gridhrakûta*. Ânanda soon after spoke before a great assembly of all the occurrences as stated above. On hearing this, all the innumerable Devas (gods), Nâgas

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(snakes), and Yakshas (demi-gods) were inspired with great joy; and having worshipped the Buddha they went their way.

Here ends the Sûtra of the Meditation on Buddha Amitâyus, spoken by Buddha (Sâkyamuni).

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