The nature of the problems we are facing in the world today is not limited to the 21st century but can be seen or witnessed at any time or age in human history. All beings living on this planet or in the whole universe have been evolving in order to survive according to the changes of environment or the surroundings—adaptive evolution. We as human beings on the earth have uniquely demonstrated control over the ecosystems of all other organisms or other living beings, and changed the earth according to the way we want it to be: we have predominately reformed the planet solely for the benefits of human beings.

Because of our highly developed scientific technology, the capacity of humans to influence ecology and the environment has greatly changed and become crucially and critically large. Through the development of scientific technology, human beings have been seeking happiness and peace to be in harmony with nature and the universe. As a result, some of us have been leading a pleasant life of comfort and convenience, but we have not been able to resolve our everlasting problems or troubles among human beings, such as wars, hatreds, prejudices and disputes. The nature of human suffering or duhkha—birth, old age, disease and death, has basically been the same, regardless of the time or age.

Pure Land or jōdo, which has been inherited in the human history of spirituality, particularly in the history of Pure Land Buddhism, has been one of the powerful answers to this quandary. This presentation deals with what Pure Land can be to the followers of Pure Land Buddhism, and elaborates what Pure Land can mean to us, who live in this contemporary world with its highly developed technology and science.

The Location of Pure Land

There are certainly so many different interpretations and understandings of Pure Land that it is almost impossible to describe in a simple way what Pure Land is all about. First of all, is it a land? Can it be found on a map? Or can’t we locate it geographically on the map, since it is too far from or beyond this world of ours? Or, is it a land that we cannot perceive or conceive through our conventional eyes or minds? Is it a sort of realm or phase of some phenomenon? Is it a stage? Or is it some state?
The most popular and traditional interpretation is that the Pure Land is many millions of miles away in the west, from where the Buddha of Infinite Light (Amitâbha) and Infinite Life (Amitâyus), Amida Buddha, is constantly sharing wisdom of enlightenment with all sentient beings, especially those who are suffering. Amida Buddha works on them by transforming into the Name or myôgô, the formula of Namu-amida-butsu. By becoming aware of Amida’s universal compassion and by totally releasing oneself to Amida, one will be born in the Pure Land. Since this whole process is made to come about, in an ultimate sense, through Amida, the nembutsu serves as an expression of one’s gratitude to Amida, and birth or ôjô in the Pure Land is to come after one’s departure from this world (usô uhen).

A second interpretation of Pure Land is highly philosophical: There is no such thing or substance called Pure Land, since everything is śûnya (empty) in its essential nature. This interpretation, however, does not deny the concept of Pure Land (musô muhen). The Pure Land that one conceptualizes does not exist, but is only a symbol, or upâya (skillful means), that leads to profound realization of śûnyatâ (emptiness).

A third interpretation is that Pure Land exists anywhere and everywhere: One has only to realize it. Pure Land is not a place where one goes, but comes into being instantaneously when one becomes aware of it. Amida Buddha is not presiding over an ethereal realm, but the “Pure Land is this dirty earth itself.”¹ The Pure Land is in the world—but not of the world (usô muhen).

The Sanskrit expression of the Pure Land is sukhâvatî, meaning “ultimate bliss,” or “that which has pleasure and comfort.” The Japanese rendering for sukhâvatî or the Pure Land is gokuraku (“ultimate bliss”), jôdo (the “Pure Land”), or gokuraku-jôdo (“the Pure Land of Ultimate Bliss”). The Pure Land in the tradition of Pure Land Buddhism, including Shin Buddhism, is the land of Amida Buddha. The land of Amida Buddha is also called anraku-koku or anraku-kokudo (“the Land of Happiness”) or anraku-jôdo (“the Pure Land of Happiness”). The Pure Land of Amida can also be rendered as anyô-jôdo (“the Pure Land of Peace”).

Shinran, in his major work, The True Teaching, Practice and Realization of the Pure Land Way, explains the origins and characteristics of the Pure Land, and that we must first and foremost aspire to be born in the Pure Land in order to become enlightened:

“Immeasurable Life” is a name of the Tathagata of the Pure Land of happiness. Śâkyamuni Buddha, while residing at Râjagrha and Šrâvâti,

taught the assembly about the virtues that adorn the Buddha of Immeasurable Life…  

Thus, the person who aspires to be born in the Pure Land of happiness must unfailingly awaken the mind aspiring for supreme enlightenment… The Pure Land of happiness is sustained by the power of Amida Tathagata’s Primal Vow, and that the enjoyment of bliss is without interruption…. At the beginning, Dharmakāra Bodhisattva, in the presence of Lokeśvararāja Buddha, realized insight into nonorigination. The stage attained at that time is termed “the seed-lineage of sages.” While abiding in this “nature,” he established the Forty-eight great Vows and gave rise to this land through performing practices. It is called the Pure Land of happiness…. Great compassion is none other than the supramundane good. The Pure Land of happiness arises from this great compassion; therefore this great compassion is said to be the root of the Pure Land.

In Notes on Once-Calling and Many-Calling, Shinran says we don’t have to understand the qualities of the Pure Land; indeed, we cannot understand them. We don’t even look for the Pure Land; but, giving ourselves up to the compassion of the Primal Vow, the qualities or virtues of the Pure Land will be bestowed on us:

Know, then, that although they neither seek nor know the indescribable, inexplicable, and inconceivable virtues of the Pure Land of happiness, those who entrust themselves to the Primal Vow are made to acquire them.

In Notes on ‘Essentials of Faith Alone,’ Shinran explains the Pure Land simply:

*The land of bliss* is that Pure Land of happiness, where there are always countless joys and never any suffering mingled with them. It is known as the land of peace.

Shinran in *Hymns of the Pure Land Masters* further describes the Pure Land, and again

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urges us to take shelter in the Vow to end our suffering:

Śākyamuni’s teachings are numerous,  
But Bodhisattava Vasubandhu compassionately urges us,  
Who are possessed of blind passions,  
To take refuge in Amida’s universal Vow.

The adornments of the Pure Land of peace  
Are perceived only through the wisdom shared by Buddhas.  
That land is infinite, like space,  
Vast and without bound.\(^8\)

In *Lamp for the Latter Ages*, Shinran assures us that our suffering of delusion will end as we are possessed of ignorance and blind passions:

And so, as Śākyamuni has taught, at the very moment that we, possessed of ignorance and blind passions, are born into the Pure Land of peace, we attain the supreme fruit of Buddhahood.\(^9\)

The location of Pure Land is, after all, a means or metaphor. Those who see it in the west are actually seeing and experiencing it in the here and now. And those who see it here also see it around them. What matters is whether one is awakened or not, or, rather, it even doesn’t matter if one is awakened or not in a conscious sense, for, as one fails to become enlightened by one’s own practices and efforts—and we mostly do fail—one tries or desires to get to that state and thus allows Amida’s compassion to take effect. Even though one suffers as a result of attachments to what is impermanent, Amida’s universal compassion is constantly working upon everyone. By trying to improve and better one’s daily life with the realization of one’s limited and self-centered mode of being, one permits the seed of enlightenment to blossom, which finally comes about through the spontaneous working of Amida. It is like a lotus flower blossoming, beautifully rising up through the mud.

**Pure Land as Stage**

According to the teachings in early Buddhism or Theravāda, the four stages of sainthood or the four grades to Nirvana are expounded as: 1) *srotta-āpatti-phala* (J. *yoruka*) or the fruit of the stream-enterer, 2) *sakṛd-āgāmi-phala* (J. *ichiraika*) or the fruit of the once-returner, 3) *anāgāmi-phala* (J. *fugenka*) or the fruit of never-returner, and 4) *arhat-phala* (J. *arakanka*) or the fruit of the worthy.

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**Srotta-āpatti-phala** is the stage of the one who has entered the stream in order to cross this birth-and-death realm to the other shore of Nirvana. **Sakṛd-āgāmi-phala** is the stage of the one who has reached a higher stage than the previous one, but will return to this course of cycles of birth-and-death or rebirth only once more. **Anāgāmi-phala** is the stage of the one who has passed the previous stages and will never return to the cycle of rebirth. **Arhat-phala** is the state in which one has reached the final goal of attaining emancipation from repeated cycles of birth-and-death.

The third stage of **anāgāmin** or never-returner can be said, in a way, to be a kind of archetype of Pure Land in Mahayana Buddhism. The Chinese versions of the **Larger Sutra** do not talk about these four stages, probably because they wanted to emphasize a bodisattva ideal. But, the closing section of *The Larger Sukhavatī-vyūha, Description of Sukhavatī, the Land of Bliss*, the Sanskrit version of the **Larger Sutra**, as translated by Max Müller in 1894, says:

45. And while this treatise of the Law was being delivered, twelve koṭis of niyutas of beings obtained the pure and spotless eye of the Law with regard to Laws. Twenty-four hundred thousand niyutas of koṭis of beings obtained the Anāgāmin reward. Eight hundred Bhikshus had their thoughts delivered from faults so as to cling no more to anything. Twenty-five koṭis of Bodhisattvas obtained resignation to things to come. And by forty hundred thousand niyutas of koṭis of the human and divine race, thoughts such as had never risen before were turned toward the highest perfect knowledge, and their stocks of merit were made to grow toward their being born in the world Sukhavatī, from a desire to see the Tathāgata, the blessed Amitābha. And all of them having been born there, will in proper order be born in other worlds, as Tathāgatas, called Mañgusvara (sweet-voiced). And eighty koṭis of niyutas having acquired resignation under the Tathāgata Dīpiṇkara, never turning back again from the highest perfect knowledge, rendered perfect by the Tathāgata Amitāyus, practising the duties of former Bodhisattvas, will carry out, after they are born in the world Sukhavatī, the duties enjoined in the former Praṇidhānas (prayers).

46. At that time this universe (the three millions of worlds) trembled in six ways. And various miracles were seen. On earth everything was perfect, and human and divine instruments were played, and the shout of joy was heard as far as the world of the Akanishṭhas.
Thus spoke the Bhagavat enraptured, and the noble-minded Boshidatta Agita, and the blessed Ānanda, the whole Assembly, and the world, with gods, men, spirits, mighty birds, and fairies, applauded the speech of the Bhagavat.

The praise of the beauty of the excellences of Sukhavatī, the country of the blessed Amitābha, the Tathāgata, the entry of the Bodhisattva on the stage of ‘never returning,’ the story of Amitābha, the Mahāyānasūtra of the Description of Sukhavatī is finished.10

It is interesting and challenging to note here that the Pure Land of Amida connotes the stage of anāgāmin, the stage of ‘never returning.’ Anāgāmin, according to early Buddhism, is in the third stage as cited before, one stage before the fourth or final one of Arhat who has totally overcome all of his or her evil passions, attaining emancipation from repeated cycles of birth-and-death, and is worthy of offerings. Arhat, attaining the highest stage of śrāvaka, has thus gone into Nirvana. Once one is gone into Nirvana, one will never come back again to this Sahā world of birth-and-death or this world of suffering or duhkha—samsāra. Having attained this stage, Anāgāmin will never repeat cycles in the realm of desire or kāma-dhātu, not being subject to its rebirth—therefore, ‘never returning’ in this sense.

Anāgāmin has not yet become free, however, from the bond of existence, this very existence itself; therefore, Anāgāmin has not become Arhat yet. This attachment to existence, though, seems to hold a clue in understanding the nature of beings and a bodhisattva ideal in Mahayana Buddhism in an ontological sense. Anāgāmin will then never return back to the realm of desire, but what is more important is that Anāgāmin will never get into Nirvana in the context of Mahayana Buddhism, if returning to this Sahā world of duhkha is not possible. Anāgāmin will never leave or enter into Nirvana. Anāgāmin still has more things to do in this world.

In the teachings of Mahayana Buddhism, a bodhisattva still remains in the world of birth-and-death or the world of suffering in order to help others. A bodhisattva makes vows to attain enlightenment for him/herself and to save suffering beings. The

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10 E. B. Cowell, ed. Buddhist Mahāyāna Texts (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1968), Part II, pp. 71-2. While the Chinese translations of the Larger Sutra by Samghavarman and Bodhiruci have 48 vows, the Sanskrit version has 46. The two vows, the 18th and 21st, in the Chinese translations are missing in the Sanskrit text. The latter part of the 19th vow in the text is the latter part of the lost 18th vow according to the Chinese translations. The 18th vow, however, is the most important vow called the Primal Vow, according to Shinran. Ibid., p. 73.
bodhisattva cannot and does not attain the final goal of enlightenment all for him/herself; rather, stays in the here and now with the rest of beings. The stage of anāgāmin or ‘never returning’ is the third stage in pursuing arhatship or śrāvaka; however, this stage or state of having left many things unachieved, as he or she does not become free from the bond of existence, in order to help others, is quite important and significant in understating a bodhisattva ideal and Shin Buddhism.

Once one becomes awakened, one becomes clearer as to one’s being embraced or assured by the working of Amida Buddha’s universal compassion, and one comes to see and realize more of sorrow and grief of other beings, so that one cannot leave them. The Pure Land can thus be likened, in a sense that one does not attain the final goal yet, to the stage of the anāgāmin, a stage where our suffering has ended and yet has not ended as long as we are still concerned with ending the suffering of other beings.

**Pure Land as State**

The Pure Land is, literally speaking, adorned with purity, and adornment of purity is itself the Pure Land. Shinran says, “Those born in the Pure Land of happiness have no impure form, no impure mind, and in the end they all acquire the uncreated dharma-body of purity and equality, for the pure nature of the land of happiness has been fulfilled.”  

It is an ideal “state” where one is liberated from the cycle of birth-and-death or from the six realms of samsāra. That is where one’s aspiration for perfect enlightenment is fulfilled and where that aspiration coincides with Amida’s Primal Vow.

We are all living yet in this mundane world of suffering and pain, and even if we are able to escape from this world of duhkha, of samsāra, it is only momentary. Dukkha is inevitable to us all. Buddha-Dharma says the cause of dukkha is our attachment or ignorance. We are attached to what is impermanent, but nothing is permanent and everything is changing; therefore, dukkha cannot be avoided. If we become existentially and totally unattached to things, this means that we are no longer living here in this world—Anāgāmin is still attached to the bond of existence.

We are also ignorant in terms of not being able to see things as they are. We are essentially self-centered and are fundamentally deluded and lost, in a deep sense. Delusion means one’s not being able to become aware of the state of one’s being deluded. It is like our right hand trying to grasp itself. We can know this as information, but it is extremely difficult to realize this state of our being deluded. Such is the nature of our ego. Dukkha is thus inevitable and takes place at any time of one’s life.

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11 CWS 1, p. 192.
Buddha-Dharma then talks about the cessation of *duhkha*, which is Nirvana, by our getting rid of the cause of *duhkha*. The Eightfold Noble Path is the way which leads us to the goal.

In learning the fundamentals of Buddha-Dharma, we come to face a question, the question of whether or not we are really able to liberate ourselves from being attached or ignorant. Being born in the Pure Land then enables us to become free from the cause of *duhkha* and to dwell in the state of happiness or peace. Through becoming aware of the Pure Land in the here and now, which is shinjin, we become free and liberated for the time being. In *Notes on the Inscriptions on Sacred Scrolls*, Shinran says:

> This passage means that one transcends, becomes free of, and departs from transmigration in birth-and-death, cutting off and abandoning this Sahā world; it means that one shall definitely attain birth in the Pure Land of peace. Peace expresses praise of Amida and indicates the Pure Land of happiness.¹²

This is religious experience in life. Religious experience does not last for a long time,¹³ but it succors us in our despair and brings us out from its agony and misery. Shinjin sustains our life, though we always live in *samsāra*, the repeating six realms of hell, hungry ghosts, animals, fighting spirits, human beings and heavenly beings. Attachment and ignorance are the cause of *duhkha* and we suffer from it after all; yet, our being attached and ignorant is the very proof or reality that we are living and being lived. We will not get out from the six realms, but we live with them and in them;¹⁴ and through

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¹³ William James in *Varieties of Religious Experience* says that there are four characteristics regarding religious experience, such as ineffability, noetic quality, transiency and passivity.


Hideo Kishimoto in *Shūkyō shinpi shugi: yōga no shisō to shinri* [*Religious Mysticism: Yogic Thought and Psychology*] says mystic (or religious) experience involves four special features, such as particular intuitiveness, sense of noumenon, feeling of ecstatic uplift and unexplainability. (Tokyo: Daimedō, 1988), pp. 48-9. First publication, 1958.

¹⁴ Shinran says in *Notes on Once-Calling and Many-Calling*, “Foolish beings: as expressed in the parable of the two rivers of water and fire, we are full of ignorance and blind passion. Our desires are countless, and anger, wrath, jealousy, and envy are overwhelming, arising without pause;
realization of Amida’s Primal Vow, we come to lead a life of gratitude. The nembutsu serves as an expression of gratitude.

To our disappointment, we still fall back to the agony of the six realms. We then feel as if we were fallen into hell; we become hungry; we are animals; we fight against each other in order to survive; we love and hate each other, and yet we sometimes feel as if we were up in heaven. Depending on the situations or conditions, the way we experience our life differs greatly. We are filled with evil passions such as greed, anger and folly.\(^{15}\) As we live in the world of highly developed technology and science, we have destroyed many other species on the earth—we are leading a modern life of comfort and convenience at the sacrifice of those species. We have created and shaped our planet solely for the benefits of human beings. Among human beings, what’s worse, we are fighting against and killing each other, as we see it on TV almost every day, under many different names or with various reasons such as “our god,” “our nation,” justice, killing for a deluded idea of happiness and ideology. As an individual is self-centered and ignorant, so are the family, the community, the race, the country and so on—a gene itself is selfish in the first place.

The way technology has recently developed is tremendously fast and dangerous—transplant operations, computers, cell-phones, cloning, weapons, etc.—and we are not certain about how we are able to control the progress of scientific technology. While science is indwelled in civilization and needed for the welfare of human beings, technology is like a knife, which can be useful or dangerous depending on how we use it. Living in such a highly developed technological era, we are seeking the meaning of religion and talking about life of gratitude, hoping that we will be able to find any solution. When we live in or try to live in the Pure Land as a state of being or consciousness, we understand the sufferings of the world, and work or make efforts to overcome them, not for our individual sakes but for the benefits of all beings.

**Pure Land in the World**

Gratitude, which is one’s appreciation and expression of being embraced by the

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\(^{15}\) Shinran compares the Buddhas and bodhisattvas to great physicians calling them “true teachers” or *zenchishiki* and says, “The Buddhas and bodhisattvas are like this. They know all the sicknesses of foolish beings, which fall into three types: greed, anger, and folly. In the case of the sickness of greed, they make the person observe a skeleton. In the case of the sickness of anger, they made the person observe the features of compassion. In the case of the sickness of folly, they make the person observe the features of twelfe-fold causation. Because of this, the Buddhas and bodhisattvas are called true teachers.” *CWS* 1, p. 237.
compassion of Amida Buddha, is a “static or passive” aspect of shinjin, shinjin being religious experience. On the other hand, a “dynamic or active” aspect of shinjin is one’s action in or working on the six realms in this Sahâ world of dukkha, trying to do something for the sake of society or others. This outreaching action is not a forced one but does come in accord with one’s appreciation or gratitude. It may seem that a deep sense of gratitude or realization comes about beyond or outside the six realms, or that it is the matter that takes place in the extraordinary realm. The seventh step the baby Buddha took at the time of his birth was not out of the six realms, but it was the next step within the previous six steps—the realm of awakening or realization in the world.

As D.T. Suzuki puts it, “Pure Land is this dirty earth itself.” Knowing this depends on a matter of one’s awakening, enlightenment or realization, as the word buddha means in noun form an “awakened” one, an “enlightened” one or a “realized” one. We have sorrow and joy in the six realms. When there is a war breaking up somewhere in the world, we sing a song of peace sharing that sorrow with others, even though there is not much else we can do. When we witness things like misery or death by starvation somewhere in the world, we often sigh and feel helpless and hopeless as if there is nothing we can do about it. An individual is so small or weak that we feel that there is nothing we can do about anything.

This realization, though one feels that one cannot do much, is maybe more valuable and precious than a mere feeling of one’s own happiness. In the middle of war, prejudice, hatred, devastation, calamity and so on, Pure Land does not reveal as Pure Land to us. It should be understood that the vows Dharmâkara established in the Larger Sutra refer to the current occurrences of this world.16

Shinran says in Notes on Essentials of Faith Alone that the true and real shinjin is the aspiration to become a Buddha. He says, “This is the great thought of enlightenment of the Pure Land. This aspiration for Buddhahood is none other than the wish to save all beings.” “The wish to save all beings” (do shujô shin) is “to carry all beings across the great ocean of birth-and-death. This shinjin is the aspiration to bring all beings to the attainment of supreme nirvana; it is the heart of great love and great

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16 The First and Second Vows of Dharmâkara read:
“(1) If, when I attain Buddhahood, there should be in my land a hell, a realm of hungry spirits or a realm of animals, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.”
“(2) If, when I attain Buddhahood, humans and devas in my land should after death fall again into the three evil realms, may I not attain perfect enlightenment.”

Hisao Inagaki, The Three Pure Land Sutras: A Study and Translation (Kyoto: Nagata Bunshôdô, 1994), p. 241. The six realms of rebirth are our day-to-day experiences in our present world.
“The wish to save all beings” means to help others to attain enlightenment beyond the mundane value and also to help others with their secular needs.

The attainment of enlightenment beyond the mundane value involves our realization of the compassion of Amida Buddha, indwelling or partaking in us as the true and real shinjin, which is our own awakening simultaneously coinciding with the working of the universal intent of Dharmâkara’s Primal Vow—shinjin as a static aspect of religious experience in the form of gratitude. On the other hand, helping others with their secular needs shares another aspect of shinjin, a dynamic aspect in terms of one’s action in the six realms. One lives a life of returning whatever one has been given in life back to society or others, even in a very limited mode or even with a very small amount.

In *Hymns of the Pure Land*, Shinran says:

Those who reach the Pure Land of happiness
Return to this evil world of the five defilements,
Where, like the Buddha Śâkyamuni,
They benefit sentient beings without limit.

Thus while we as individuals may have come to the Pure Land as a stage or as a state, we do not remain there, but return to this world of suffering. The amount an individual can do could be very limited, yet it seems that what matters is whether or not one is aware of that realized or awakened action of return or *kangen*.

D.T. Suzuki again says:

Attaining supreme enlightenment is an individual experience. The individual experience, however, must be then the experience for society. One should not be satisfied with one’s individual experience; one’s individual experience must be immediately transformed into social experience. If one only cares about individual experience without regard to social experience, then it can be said that one is still only partially enlightened.

There must be as many ways of returning back to others or serving for society as there are ways in which we are engaged in any work or vocation in society.

**Concluding Perspectives**

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17 *CWS* 1, p. 463.
19 *CWS* 1, p. 329.
Living in the 21st century of highly developed technological science, we must face many problems in the world, environmental disruption, advanced secularization, and never-ending disputes and wars among races and countries, apart from natural calamities and disasters. We all seek for peace and happiness; yet, due to different ideologies and value judgments, we are not able to sit down together to try to solve the problems we have. Deep-rooted grudges and hatreds, individual and collective, unfortunately overshadow our hope and wish for the peace and happiness of all mankind. Even killing oneself has been sometimes chosen in order to satisfy one’s desire of destroying others, and the scale of its devastation has been getting greater and graver. Witnessing this, we feel hopeless and helpless.

The Pure Land of Amida is then something that we long for, an ideal place or utopia where there is no sorrow or grief. Understanding the Pure Land in such a way, however, does not bring about our real life of sorrow and joy. The Pure Land outside the realm of our Sahâ world of samsâra may serve as a means of “escape” from reality of suffering and it may sometimes work well even in a religious sense, but we cannot evade the reality of what we have—the six realms. The six realms is our real world and is the place where we need to live beyond and within simultaneously all the time. We cannot change the world; the world that has been changed or revolutionized cannot be a perfect one, since it is still the world of six realms. Revolution or change is a matter of personal experience and we cannot force it upon others.

Anâgâmin or the never-returner will never repeat cycles in the realm of desire or kâma-dhâtu and is not subject to its rebirth, but has not yet become free from the bond of existence, this very existence itself. If anâgâmin becomes Arhat and goes into Nirvana, then he or she will never and/or can never come back to this world of samsâra to help others. This action of helping others or sharing one’s compassion, which is an immediate outcome from wisdom or prajñâ, is the source or foundation of the bodhisattva ideal in Mahayana Buddhism, that is, the Vow of Amida Buddha through the Pure Land. Shinran says, “The Pure Land of happiness is sustained by the power of Amida Tathagata’s Primal Vow.” The Pure Land is not a place to which one goes,

21 Shinran toward the end of Notes on ‘Essentials of Faith Alone’ says:
“If you cannot think on Amida
This is the teaching which urges the person guilty of the five grave offenses and ten transgressions and of engaging in defiled expositions of the dharma. ‘If you are tormented by suffering due to illness and cannot think on Amida, then simply say Namu-amida-butsu with your lips.’ This demonstrates that Amida made verbal utterance the essence of the Primal Vow. The expression say the Name of the Buddha of immeasurable life refers to this fact, and say instructs us to utter the Name.” CWS 1, p. 468.

22 Ibid., p. 168.
but one goes through, beyond and back from it; it is not a hierarchical stage or state, but it comes into being as one becomes aware of it in the six realms and as one lives out, acts out, practices its qualities and virtues in the here and now.