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| **Comparison Table of a Selection of Celestial Buddhas and Bodhisattvas** | | |
| ***Celestial Buddhas*** | | |
| **Name** | **Location** | **Description (Character)** |
| Aksobhya Buddha  (Imperturbable) | East – Abhirati | Pure land modeled on a heavenly realm – an ideal realm, a world without Mara, illness, lying, and ugliness. Joy derived from the Dharma. |
| Bhaisajyarāja  (Master of Healing) | East – description of Pure Land is similar to Sukhāvatī | A Pure Land – Bhaisajyaguru is accompanied by two Bodhisattvas (Sūryaprabha and Candraprabha) |
| Amitābha  (Immeasurable Light) | West – Sukhāvatī | A Pure Land – *not* a heavenly realm or a sensual paradise. |
| ***Celestial Bodhisattvas*** | | |
| **Name** | **Character** | **Role** |
| Maitreya  (The Kindly One) | ▪ Is a 10th-stage Bodhisattva.  ▪ Is in Tusita heaven – not in a Pure Land. | ▪ Is to become next Buddha on earth. |
| Avalokiteśvara    (Regarder of the Cries of the World) | ▪ Is a 10th-stage Bodhisattva.  ▪ Embodies compassion.  ▪ Manifests in many worlds; can take on multiplicity of forms. ▪ Is the focus of devout worship, contemplation, and prayers for help. | ▪ Is one of two helpers of Amitābha.  ▪ Enacts Amitābha's compassionate concern for the world. ▪ Is always ready to succor and help out suffering sentient beings. ▪ Is guardian deity of Tibet. |
| Tārā  (Saviouress) | ▪ Has vowed to remain in female form as a Bodhisattva, and then as a Buddha. ▪ Can manifest in a variety of forms. | ▪ Is sometimes referred to as the 'Mother of all the Buddhas'. ▪ Is tireless in assisting the oppressed and downtrodden. ▪ Specializes in saving sentient beings from enemies. |
| Mañjuśrī  (Sweet Glory) | ▪ Is a 10th-stage Bodhisattva.  ▪ Can manifest as a Buddha or in many other forms. ▪ Has a particular association with mount Wutai Shan in China. | ▪ Is one of two helpers of the heavenly Buddha Śākyamuni.  ▪ Is the greatest embodiment of wisdom.  ▪ Has task of destroying ignorance and awakening spiritual knowledge. ▪ Is a patron of scholars. |
| Ksitigarbha  (Earth-matrix) | ▪ Is an advanced Bodhisattva.  ▪ Is also associated with Śākyamuni's Buddha-field, our world. | ▪ Helps humankind until the next Buddha appears on earth. ▪ Acts as a guardian of travelers, those in trouble, and women and children. ▪ Works for the alleviation of those reborn in hells. ▪ Is concerned about the destiny of dead children. |
| **Celestial Buddhas** – ▪ Are savior beings and focuses of cults. ▪ Have fulfilled all their bodhisattva vows. ▪ Are spread out in world systems (a multiplicity of infinitely long-lived Buddhas exist in space).  **Celestial Bodhisattvas** – ▪ Are wise and inspiring examples. ▪ Also function as transcendent, celestial savior beings. ▪ Are more in contact with the world and more actively engaged in helping beings. ▪ Are guides on the path to enlightenment and helpers in difficulties. ▪ Remain dedicated to saving all sentient beings as part of their bodhisattva practice. | | |
| **Sources**:  1. Harvey, P. (2013). *An introduction to Buddhism: teachings, history and practices*. 2nd edn. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.  2. Strong, John S. (2008) *The experience of Buddhism: sources and interpretations.* 3rd edn. Boston, MA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.  3. Williams, P. (2009) *Mahāyāna Buddhism: the doctrinal foundations*. London: Routledge.  4. Williams, P., Tribe, A., Wynne, A. (2012) *Buddhist thought: a complete introduction to the Indian tradition* 2nd edn. London: Routledge. | | |