



# SHURANGAMA MANTRA

*Commentary and Verses by Tripitaka Master Hua*

*Translation:*

*Verses: Bhikshuni Heng Tao*

*Commentary: Bhikshus Heng Kuan, H. Tso, H. Deng, H. Gung, H. Wu, Bhikshunis H. Yin, H. Ch'ih, H. Hsien, H. Tao; Upasakas Kuo Jung Epstein & Kuo Chou Rounds; Upasika Kuo Ts'an Nicholson.*

Note: VAJRA BODHI SEA has presented the greater portion of introductory material on the Shurangama Mantra. For a complete version of the text see SHURANGAMA MANTRA, VOLUME 1, (BTTS).

## *Explanation of this Issue's Cover Verse*

### 1. NA MWO SA DAN TWO

*RETURNING OUR LIVES, BOWING IN REVERENCE, IS THE  
MEANING OF "NA MWO."  
ALL THREE KARMAS MADE PURE IS "SA DAN TWO."  
AFFLICTIONS AND BODHI APPEAR ONLY FROM THE MIND.  
CONFUSED, ONE IS A COMMON PERSON, ENLIGHTENED, ONE IS  
A BUDHA.*

Commentary:

The first line of the Shurangama Mantra is NA MWO SA DAN TWO. NA MWO means to be most respectful, most reverent, and most believing. It means to be without the slightest bit of doubt. It means we return and rely, respectfully offer up ourselves--our own bodies, minds, natures, and lives. We return in reliance on the Buddhas and take refuge with them, giving our very lives to the Buddha. There is no reservation, no retreat, but rather a total belief in and reliance on the Buddha--belief that he will take us across.

*RETURNING OUR LIVES, BOWING IN REVERENCE, IS THE MEANING OF "NA MWO."* NA MWO means "returning one's life and respectfully offering oneself up." It means "returning one's life and respectfully submitting." It also means "following in faith," and "being reverent and relying upon." It also means "take me across." It has many, many different meanings.

*ALL THREE KARMAS MADE PURE IS "SA DAN TWO."* SA DAN TWO means "all." Here the "all" can include the karmas of body, mouth, and mind. It refers to the purification of each of the three karmas. With the body, one does not violate the precepts of killing, stealing, or sexual misconduct. With the mind, one does not transgress into greed, hatred, and stupidity. With the mouth, one does not lie, slander, gossip, or use harsh speech. When the three karmas of body, mouth, and mind are purified, that is called "all" is "made pure."

*AFFLICTIONS AND BODHI APPEAR ONLY FROM THE MIND.* You can give rise to afflictions or you can give rise to the Bodhi mind. It's just like a flip of your hand: the back of your hand is affliction; the palm is Bodhi. Flip it one way and it's affliction; flip it the other and it's Bodhi. All you have to do is turn it over. If you walk down the bright road, that's just the road of Bodhi. If you walk into darkness, that's just affliction. Afflictions and Bodhi, then, are only states of mind. What happens in a single thought of your mind is what determines its state.

Afflictions and Bodhi are also like ice and water. Ice is just water; water is just ice. But you can also say that water is not ice and ice is not water. You can also say that ice is just water transformed and that water forms into ice. They are interconnected; they pertain to each other. When it's cold, the water becomes ice; when it's hot, the ice melts and becomes water. It is just the same as when you go down a bright road, then all the afflictions will become Bodhi. If you walk down a road that leads into darkness, then all your Bodhi will become afflictions. It is the same principle. It just remains to be seen what you will do.

*CONFUSED, ONE IS A COMMON PERSON; ENLIGHTENED, ONE IS A BUDHA.* A Buddha becomes accomplished from a living being. Buddhas were not forever and always Buddhas; they didn't start out being Buddhas. Buddhahood is accomplished by an ordinary living being. All living beings have a Buddha nature, and all living beings can become Buddhas. But because they are confused, they're just ordinary people. If you can become enlightened, then you are just a Buddha. It is said:

The heavenly halls and the realms of the hells  
Are just a matter of a single thought.

If you are enlightened, then in a single thought the hells can become the heavenly halls. If you are confused, then in a single thought the halls of heaven can become the hells. Enlightenment lies in the space of a single thought. Confusion happens just in the space of a single thought as well. In one enlightened thought living beings are just Buddhas; in one thought which is confused, even with the potential to be Buddhas, all of a sudden, they are just ordinary living beings. What is enlightenment? Enlightenment is the embodiment of great wisdom. It refers to one who is not confused. What is confusion? Confusion is a lack of wisdom. It refers to one who does not have any wisdom. It is to just this point that one should pay special attention.

-end NA MWO SA DAN TWO -