

Across the Sea of Suffering in a Boat of Vows

THE SIXTEEN VOWS OF SHRAMANERIKA HENG TSAI

1. I vow in life after life to leave the home-life under the Venerable Master Hua.
2. I vow in life after life to transform limitless, boundless bodies to protect the Way-place of Venerable Master Hua.
3. I vow in life after life to enter the Way as a Virgin Youth, to leave home with proper faith, and to protect and uphold the Orthodox Dharma without sparing my body or life.
4. I vow in life after life to be born as a man and not undergo the karmic retribution of having a woman's body, unless it would be for the sake of teaching living beings.
5. I vow in life after life to translate the Sutras into all languages.
6. I vow in life after life to transform limitless bodies to protect the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas in each and every world, to make pilgrimages to each City of Ten Thousand Buddhas in every world, and to propagate the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas in each and every world.
7. I vow in life after life to uphold the precepts that cross one over to the other shore and not to transgress them, to always bring forth a mind of shame and remorse and admonish myself, and to be patient and subdue my anger.
8. I vow to exhaustively pull out all the afflictions and bad habits of all living beings. I vow to adorn all worlds and the Way places of all Buddhas without exception,
9. I vow in life after life to cultivate the Ten Great Conducts and Vows of Universal Worthy Bodhisattva and to always bring forth the 141 pure Vows of the Pure Conduct Chapter of the Avatamsaka Sutra.
10. I vow in life after life to cultivate and uphold the Dharani Dharma-door of Great Compassion, the Forty-two Hands and Eyes, and the Shurangama Mantra.
11. I vow in life after life to read, recite, and uphold the Avatamsaka Sutra, the Dharma Flower Sutra, the Shurangama Sutra, the Vajra Sutra, and all kinds of Great Vehicle Sutras, and also to protect, uphold, proclaim, and propagate the Shurangama Sutra during the Dharma-ending Age in every world, and not allow it to disappear from those worlds.

12. I vow in life after life to propagate, protect, and uphold the Forty-eight Great Vows of Amita Buddha, and pervasively proclaim the Western Land of Ultimate Bliss for all living beings.

13. I vow to take the Eighteen Great Vows of the Venerable Master Hua as my own vows.

14. I vow in this very life to dwell in the Perfect Enlightenment of the Buddha, to always seek Good Knowing Advisors and not encounter outside ways or the Two Vehicles, to rely upon vow power to cultivate and to gradually cut off the obstacle of afflictions and the obstacle of what is known. Once those obstacles are exhausted and my vows are completed, I will ascend to the Pure Dharma Hall of Liberation and certify to the Wonderful Adorned Region of Great Perfect Enlightenment.

15. I vow to attain the three bodies, the four wisdoms, the five eyes, the six spiritual penetrations, and to perfect and fulfill the fruition of Buddhahood. And then, not renouncing the Dharma Realm, I vow to pervasively enter the dust in order to teach and transform living beings with the expedient Dharma-door of unobstructed eloquence.

16. As long as a single living being hasn't become a Buddha, I too will not become a Buddha, but will wait until all living beings have been crossed over before attaining the fruition of Buddhahood.