

# *Flower Adornment Sutra*

## *the second ground*

*with commentary of Tripitaka Master Hua*

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SUTRA:

HIS NATURE DOES NOT ENGAGE IN SEXUAL MISCONDUCT. THE BODHISATTVA IS CONTENT WITH HIS OWN WIFE AND DOES NOT SEEK THE WIVES OF OTHERS. TOWARDS THE WIVES AND CONCUBINES OF OTHERS, THE WOMEN PROTECTED BY OTHERS, BY RELATIVES OR THOSE BETROTHED, AND THOSE PROTECTED BY THE LAW, HE DOES NOT GIVE RISE TO A THOUGHT OF GREEDY DEFILEMENT, MUCH THE LESS FOLLOW IT INTO ACTION, AND MUCH THE LESS GIVE HIMSELF OVER TO WHAT IS NOT THE WAY.

COMMENTARY:

We have talked about the precepts against killing and stealing, and how the Bodhisattva in the most subtle aspects holds and protects the precepts, without violating them a hair's breadth. He looks upon the precept against sexual misconduct as even more important. HIS NATURE DOES NOT ENGAGE IN SEXUAL MISCONDUCT. Within his self nature, although he has the karma of sexual desire, it still is not sexual misconduct. Sexual misconduct is sexual conduct not sanctioned by the Dharma, or law--behavior not in accord with the Way. How does sexual desire arise? It comes from greed. Greed for wealth is one kind of greed, and greed for sex is another. If you weren't greedy, you wouldn't have sexual desire. Therefore, thoughts of sexual desire come from greed. As soon as you are greedy, you don't distinguish between right and wrong, and you don't know black from white. You don't know what are black dharmas and what are white dharmas. This is what is known as ignorance in the Twelve Links of Conditioned Co-production. I'm always telling you that the love men and women have for one another is basic ignorance. For example, when a boy and girl are in love with each other, you can ask the boy, "How come you're so much in love with that girl? How come you can't see through it all and put it all down?" His answer will be, "I don't know." Why did he fall in love? He doesn't know. Not knowing is ignorance. If you ask the girl, "How come you can't give that boy up? Why are you so attached to him?" she'll say that it's because she loves him. "Ultimately, why do you love him?" When asked to search for the basis of it, she doesn't know. She hasn't any idea why. That's just ignorance.

It's due to ignorance that there is activity, sexual behavior; and so it says that ignorance conditions activity, specifically sexual activity. Why do people engage in it? They don't know. It comes from ignorance. They don't know the reason for it. I'll tell you: it's just wanting to go along the road to death, because people:

Are born from sexual desire, and die from sexual desire.

They run out of that filthy cave, and then afterwards they still want to run back into that filthy cave, and so it says they are born from sexual desire and die from sexual desire. Sexual desire is just defiled dharmas. They are born from defiled dharmas, and they still want to die from those defiled dharmas. So there is sexual activity, sexual intercourse, and after that there is consciousness. Discriminating consciousness is produced. After there is consciousness, there is name and form--name and form and outline. Once there is name and form, the six entrances are produced. Once the shapes and characteristics of the six entrances--eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mind--are produced, after that there is contact, the sensation of contact. Once there is contact, there comes to be reception, the reception of feelings. One feels very comfortable from these feelings and gives rise to love. Having love and desire, one then wants to seek, seek to have for oneself. Once there is having (being), there is rebirth, and with birth comes old age and death. The Twelve Conditioned Links follow upon one another, and one turns in the six paths of rebirth, unable to break them. But, if you can destroy ignorance, the rest are all extinguished. Therefore, the most fundamental is ignorance.

Ignorance is just the lack of wisdom, the lack of light. If you had the light of wisdom, then you wouldn't be turned by defiled dharmas. You would turn the defiled dharmas so they became pure dharmas. If you can right in the midst of defiled dharmas turn them around, then that is purity. If you don't turn them, then that is defilement. This is just as easy as turning over your palm. You can turn your hand over as you please. Bodhi and afflictions follow the same principle. Sexual misconduct includes all kinds of afflictions within it. Why is it we people have afflictions? It's just because we are greedy and are selfish and out for self-benefit. So, if something has no benefit for "me" in it, "I" become afflicted, and if it is harmful to "me," "I" get afflicted, too. This is all due to one's view of self being too deep, from having deviant views, and especially from thoughts of desire. If you cut off desire, with no desire you won't have any afflictions. It's because you have desire that you have afflictions. That's sexual misconduct.

"His nature does not engage in sexual misconduct." He doesn't even have those kinds of thoughts. There are no thoughts of sexual desire within his own nature. THE BODHISATTVA IS CONTENT WITH HIS OWN WIFE. The Bodhisattva does not engage in sexual activity with his own wife. He is content, because he knows how to cultivate, and so he's constantly able to get rid of desire and cast out love. Although he is within that kind of state, he isn't turned by that defiled state. He is content, AND DOES NOT SEEK THE WIVES OF OTHERS. He doesn't even have sexual relations with his own wives and concubines, much the less with the wives and concubines of other people. So, TOWARDS THE WIVES AND CONCUBINES OF OTHERS, other people's wives and consorts, THE WOMEN PROTECTED BY OTHERS, the women protected by other people, who might be handmaidens or else mistresses or concubines, BY RELATIVES, OR THOSE BETROTHED--perhaps women relatives or women of the same family, or women for whom a match-maker has already arranged a marriage--AND THOSE PROTECTED BY THE LAW--or women under the protection of the laws of the family--HE DOES NOT EVEN GIVE RISE TO A THOUGHT OF GREEDY DEFILEMENT. The Bodhisattva, towards all women relatives and all female friends, as well as all categories of women, does not have thoughts of greedy defilement. He doesn't even have defiled thinking about them at all, MUCH THE LESS FOLLOW IT INTO ACTION--much the less go and practice sexual misconduct; he would even less go and practice sexual misconduct; he would even less do that--AND MUCH THE LESS GIVE HIMSELF OVER TO WHAT IS NOT THE WAY. Moreover, if it is behavior that is not in accord with virtue in the Way, the Bodhisattva would even less do something like that.

SUTRA:

HIS NATURE DOES NOT LIE. THE BODHISATTVA ALWAYS UTTERS TRUE SPEECH, ACTUAL SPEECH, AND TIMELY SPEECH, TO THE POINT THAT EVEN IN A DREAM, HE WOULD NOT CONSENT TO UTTER COVERING, HIDING SPEECH. HE WOULD NEVER THINK OF WANTING TO DO SO, MUCH THE LESS DELIBERATELY COMMIT VIOLATIONS.

HIS NATURE DOES NOT ENGAGE IN DOUBLE-TONGUED SPEECH. THE BODHISATTVA, TOWARDS ALL LIVING BEINGS, HAS NO THOUGHT OF DIVIDING THEM AGAINST EACH OTHER. HE HAS NO THOUGHT OF TROUBLING OR HARMING. HE DOES NOT REPORT THE SPEECH OF ONE PERSON, TO BREAK HIM OFF FROM A SECOND PERSON, TO THAT SECOND PERSON, NOR DOES HE REPORT THE SPEECH OF THE SECOND PERSON, TO BREAK HIM OFF FROM THE FIRST PERSON, TO THE FIRST PERSON. IF PEOPLE HAVE NOT ALREADY BROKEN WITH EACH OTHER, HE DOES NOT BREAK THEM UP. IF THEY HAVE ALREADY BROKEN WITH EACH OTHER, HE DOES NOT INCREASE THE BREAK. HE DOES NOT ENJOY DIVIDING PEOPLE AGAINST EACH OTHER, NOR IS HE HAPPY WHEN PEOPLE ARE DIVIDED AGAINST EACH OTHER. HE DOES NOT UTTER SPEECH THAT WOULD DIVIDE PEOPLE AGAINST EACH OTHER, NOR DOES HE REPORT SPEECH THAT WOULD DIVIDE PEOPLE AGAINST EACH OTHER-REGARDLESS OF WHETHER IT IS TRUE OR FALSE.

COMMENTARY:

How does the Bodhisattva manage not to engage in sexual misconduct? It's because the Bodhisattva has true and actual samadhi power. He can be such that:

The eyes see forms and shapes, but inside there is nothing.  
The ears hear defiling matters, but the mind does not know.

He is:

Thus, thus unmoving, in a state of unmoving suchness;  
Understanding and constantly clear.

Therefore, he is endowed with the power of samadhi so that no kind of beautiful form could shake his samadhi power.

HIS NATURE DOES NOT LIE. As it is said:

When one thing is good, everything is good.  
When one thing is true, everything is true.

Since he does not kill, steal, or engage in sexual misconduct, he also is not going to lie. Why do people tell lies? The only time one lies is to gain some advantage for oneself--to cheat people; or, if something is going to harm oneself or destroy one's own advantages one lies. People clearly know it's not right to tell lies, yet still go ahead and tell them. But, the Bodhisattva doesn't have that kind of selfish attitude and is not out for self-benefit, not out for himself. The Bodhisattva gives all good

things to other people and takes all the bad things for himself, and so he basically has no need to lie. In his own nature he has no causes for lying or any conditions of lying, and he doesn't have any karma of lying, either. He doesn't create that kind of karma.

Therefore, it says: THE BODHISATTVA ALWAYS UTTERS TRUE SPEECH. When other people see the Bodhisattva not telling lies, they look on him as being a great fool. "How can he be so stupid, so straight?" they wonder. It's not just the average person who considers the Bodhisattva an idiot, but even people who cultivate the Way consider all the Bodhisattva says and does really stupid, that he's not as smart as most people, because he always talks straight and doesn't lie. Other people feel he's being an idiot, but this idiot is someone with great wisdom. Common people see the Bodhisattva as very doltish and stupid, but from the Buddha's point of view, the Bodhisattva is an extremely fine Buddhist disciple. That's why the Buddha is always calling him, "Good man," and considers him to have great wisdom. So, stupidity and wisdom just depend on who's doing the looking. If the Buddha sees you as having wisdom, naturally you are someone intelligent. If common people feel you have wisdom, then you are just the same as they are. So, when common people see the Bodhisattva, they take him to be very doltish, a fool. Maitreya Bodhisattva, who only knows about others and not about himself, called himself an old fool, a really stupid person getting on in years. He admitted it of himself and didn't call himself an old hand, or someone old and smart. He called himself an old fool--the more foolish the older he got.

There's also what Confucius had to say:

I can talk to Hui all day,  
And he does not object, like a fool.  
But, I have observed that when he is by himself,  
He really puts into practice what I have said:  
Hui is no fool.

He said, "I can talk to Hui all day long, and he never has any objections. No matter what I say, he just says, 'Yes, yes. No problem.' From morning to night, he never opposed me, like a fool, a dolt, or a dummy. But, when he goes back to his room, he really understands what I have said to him. He completely understands what I have said to him. He completely grasps all the principles I have spoken for him, without exception. He is unusually receptive to the principles underlying what I say. Hui is no fool! It's just that on the outside he looks like a fool. He doesn't talk too much or look too much. That's not his style. That's why he looks like a stupid person." Any of you who talk or look too much are not like Yen Hui. What was Yen Hui like all the time? His eyes always contemplated his nose, his nose contemplated his mouth, and his mouth questioned his heart and didn't look at things or talk, so Confucius said he was like a fool.

The Bodhisattva always utters true speech. ACTUAL SPEECH, that is, he doesn't lie, AND TIMELY SPEECH, that is, when it's time to speak, he speaks. But, he would never speak when it was not the right time to speak. If you go outside and answer questions that you shouldn't answer, that is not timely speech. When you speak about what you shouldn't, and when you don't talk about what you should, that's not timely, appropriate speech--TO THE POINT THAT EVEN IN A DREAM HE WOULD NOT CONSENT TO UTTER COVERING, HIDING SPEECH. Even while asleep, in dreaming he would not say things to cover up his own mistakes. He never covers up his faults, even while asleep. He is very frank in admitting them, but even then does not talk too much. HE WOULD

NEVER THINK OF WANTING TO DO SO. It would never even occur to him to lie, MUCH THE LESS DELIBERATELY COMMIT VIOLATIONS. He would even less lie on purpose.

HIS NATURE DOES NOT ENGAGE IN DOUBLE-TONGUED SPEECH. In his own nature, he does not act like the two-headed snake.\* Have you ever seen a two-headed snake? If you see one, don't act like one, or you'll end up being one. If you don't act like a two-headed snake, you will cross over the two-headed snake. THE BODHISATTVA, TOWARDS ALL LIVING BEINGS, HAS NO THOUGHT OF DIVIDING THEM AGAINST EACH OTHER. He doesn't like to hurt living beings or make trouble for them. He benefits living beings. HE DOES NOT REPORT THE SPEECH OF ONE PERSON, TO BREAK HIM OFF FROM A SECOND PERSON, TO THAT SECOND PERSON. Some of my disciples should pay close attention to this sentence in the Sutra. It would help them very much. He does not report the speech of one person. He doesn't talk about what person A said to break him off from a second person, to make trouble between person A and person B. An example of this is: telling one person, "Do you know what so-and-so said about you? It was really rotten. That person is really out to get you. He is always talking about what's wrong with you, saying this and that. I can't remember it all there was so much of it. I'm just telling you a little bit." Then, if you ask him, "What else did he say?" the person tells you, "Oh, I just can't tell you. If I told you everything, you would just get upset." Then, hearing that, the person really blows up and says, "*What did they say?!!!*" This is just making someone get upset, to break him off from a second person.

NOR DOES HE REPORT THE SPEECH OF THE SECOND PERSON, TO BREAK HIM OFF FROM THE FIRST PERSON, TO THE FIRST PERSON. He also doesn't tell the first person what the second person said about him, in order to alienate person A from person B, for example, saying to him, "I'll tell you something you ought to know, but it's really secret. So-and-so says you have got one-doesn't-know-how-many boyfriends. They also say you do this and that--really rotten stuff! Nothing could be worse! And, when I heard it, I felt just *horrible*." They start that kind of rumor, stirring up gossip to the first person.

IF PEOPLE HAVE NOT ALREADY BROKEN WITH EACH OTHER, HE DOES NOT BREAK THEM UP. If people are not at odds with each other, don't set them against each other. IF PEOPLE HAVE ALREADY BROKEN off WITH EACH OTHER, HE DOES NOT INCREASE THE BREAK. If you have already practiced setting people against each other, you'd better change, hadn't you? You shouldn't keep on increasing those kinds of offenses, should you? HE DOES NOT ENJOY DIVIDING PEOPLE AGAINST EACH OTHER. The Bodhisattva does not like to turn people against each other--breaking up friendships. NOR IS HE HAPPY WHEN PEOPLE ARE DIVIDED AGAINST EACH OTHER. He doesn't think this is a lot of fun. He would never say, "I'll get them so they can't stand each other, that would be a better state of affairs."

If you have already done this kind of thing, you should change fast. If you change, then there won't be any trouble. You don't have to say, "Oh no, I'm really done for! I am going to fall into the hells; and, what will I ever do when I fall into the hell of pulling tongues!" All you have to do is change. Bodhisattvas won't hold it against you:

People are not Sages,  
Who has not made mistakes?

It's said:

If you have made mistakes but can change, then the mistakes will disappear.

But, if you cover up your mistakes, then you increase the offense.

If you try to cover up what you've done wrong, then you have added an offense to the offense you already had. So, at Gold Mountain Monastery, anybody who has done something wrong should repent of it fast and reform. Once you have repented and reformed, you return to purity.

HE DOES NOT UTTER SPEECH THAT WOULD DIVIDE PEOPLE AGAINST EACH OTHER. So, don't keep on saying things that set people against each other. NOR DOES HE REPORT SPEECH THAT WOULD DIVIDE PEOPLE AGAINST EACH OTHER--REGARDLESS OF WHETHER IT IS TRUE OR FALSE. Whether it is true or not, don't say it. He doesn't spread that kind of gossip or rumor.

*-to be continued*

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\*In Chinese, the words for tongue and snake sound alike.