



Bhikshus Heng Sure and Heng Ch'au

HENG SURE: 12/17/77:

Why would Buddhas praise anyone? Aren't Buddhas at the top? Don't they just receive praise? On the contrary, Buddhas know how to give. They do it all the time. On the way to Buddhahood each Buddha perfects giving. Buddhas can give up what is hardest to give:

"there is not a mote of dust in the world where a Buddha in the past has not given up his life for the sake of living beings,"

is a well-known fact in Buddhism. In the *FLOWER GARLAND SUTRA* whenever a Bodhisattva prepares to speak he first gets a gift of light and energy from the Buddha. In fact, the Buddha's giving is basic to all that we know and cherish. It is said:

"If Buddhas did not appear in the world not a single living being would ever attain peace and happiness."

As soon as we begin cultivating the Way, we step into line to receive a gift of the Buddha's boundless infinite light. How does this work? The Buddhas want us to be Buddhas too, the sooner the better. That's the Buddhas' job, and their ways and means of bringing us along are infinite. It's all part of the Dharma. By cultivating, practicing, investigating the Dharma, you keep the Buddhas in work, you keep them in the world; you win their praise. There's nothing that makes the world a better place for everyone like having the Buddhas present among us. There is no better, happier place to be in than in a Buddhaland.

Turning point today. Light, flexible, forceless concentration on the method. The Sutra, the *FLOWER GARLAND SUTRA* (or FLOWER ADORNMENT SUTRA) and the Flower Adornment Assembly and the Triple Jewel came closer today, allowing me to stand among the Bodhisattva-assembly. Infinite, infinite clouds of reverent beings listening to

the Dharma in all directions, all dimensions, simple unity. Harmony, clean and silent worship. The state passed quickly--just another false thought, but briefly--how wonderful.

New unity of bowing, Ch'an sitting, 42 Hands and eyes, eating, and working times. All based on the wisdom sword, the "who," and returning the light to the center: conscious of holding the head up and standing straight, drooping the energy to the middle. Eating less! Less fuel means slightly cold and hungry at night. Small discomfort compared to clarity and calm during the day. States and non-states pass like the weather. Thoughts like highway traffic--now still and clear, now roaring. Hard work and concentration needed here!

HENG CH'AU: 12/17/77:

Where is happiness? Happiness is nowhere. Happiness is our own original natural resource. It doesn't come or go, it can't be pursued or bought. Happiness appears within, when the mind is pure and quiet.

When the mind is pure, the moon appears in the water.

This kind of happiness is like returning home after a long, hard journey. It never leaves us, we just forget it's there and turn our backs on it in pursuit of happiness. As it says in the *AVATAMSAKA SUTRA*,

"Of all the happiness in the world, there is none which is not suffering."

This is the trick: it is just in the pursuing of happiness that we miss it. Thinking peace and security are in things outside, we leave the true and grasp the false. With each move we go further away from it and get all stuck and glued down with attachments. It's like the clown with glue on his hands; everything he touches, he sticks to. Every move brings more problems. Pursuing happiness is like that. When all seeking and pursuing stops, happiness naturally appears.

Suffering has become bliss; what was bliss is now suffering. Someone offered us a small pastry cake--guaranteed bliss with every bite. We ate half of it. It was just like being drunk. Our mind filled with desire-thoughts, and our bodies turned dull and lazy. Bliss turned to suffering.

After bowing out in the wind, rain, and mud, we found our spirits again. The longer we bowed, and the harder it rained, the happier we became. Why?

Bitter practice, sweet mind.

What was once suffering is now bliss.

Sex is fear of death. Fear of death is being afraid of losing self. Fear of losing self is just confusion about dharmas (things-methods). It's hard to put down sex. That's why we die.

Ending confusion is easier than ending sexual desire. In the end, they are identical, Studying the Buddhadharma clears things up. It makes you so happy and delighted that you forget about desire, and then suddenly you become enlightened, no more confusion; no more fear.