
SUTRA OF THE LAST TEACHING BEQUEATHED BY THE BUDDHA

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MODERATION IN EATING

All of you Bhikshus, you should receive various kinds of food and drink as if you were taking medicine. Whether they be good or bad, do not take more or less of them, but use them to cure hunger and thirst and to maintain the body. Bhikshus should be the same way as bees gathering from flowers, only taking the pollen without harming the form or scent of the blossoms. Receive people's offerings to put an end to distress, but do not seek to obtain too much and thereby spoil donors' good hearts. Be like a wise man, who, having estimated the load that suits the power of his ox, does not exceed that amount so as not to exhaust its strength.

AVOIDING SLEEP

All of you Bhikshus, during the day, with a vigorous mind, cultivate the Dharma and don't allow the opportunity to be lost. In the first and last periods of the night also do not be lax, and during the middle period of the night, chant Sutras to make yourself well-informed. Do not let the causes and conditions of sleep cause your entire life to pass in vain, so that you don't obtain anything at all. You should be mindful of the fire of impermanence which burns up all the world. Seek to cross yourself over and do not sleep. The robber-afflictions are always about to kill you even more than your enemies. How can you sleep? How can you not rouse yourself to awaken? With the hook of the precepts you should quickly remove the poisonous snake of affliction that is sleeping in your heart. When the sleeping snake is gone, then you can sleep at ease. Those who sleep even though it hasn't yet gone, are without shame. The clothing of shame, among all adornments, is the very best. Shame can be compared to an iron barb which can restrain people from doing evil. Therefore you should always have a sense of shame, and not be without it even for a moment, for if you have no sense of shame, you will lose all of your merit and virtue. Those who have shame have good dharmas; one without it is no different from the birds and beasts, *-to be continued*