

SHURANGAMA MANTRA

Verses and Commentary by Tripitaka Master Hua

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Explanation of this Month's Cover Verse

MANTRA: 22 NA MWO SYI TWO YE

VERSE:

*WAITING TO FILL THE VACANT PLACE IN THE KNOWING
CONTENTMENT HEAVEN, THEY LIVE IN RELAXED LEISURE,
WITH NO THOUGHT, NO WORRIES, AND NO HANG-UPS.
WHEN CONDITIONS RIPEN, THEY DESCEND TO BE BORN IN THE
SAHA REALM,
AND UNIVERSALLY TRANSFORM THE MULTITUDES, CROSSING
OVER MEN AND WOMEN.*

COMMENTARY:

SYI TWO YE means Tushita Heaven. There are many ways to pronounce this word "Tushita" For example, "dou shai tang," "dau syi two," "tu syi ta," or "syi two ye"--all of these are terms which refer to "Tushita." They sound very similar. Probably when the ancients translated the Sutras, one wrote the sound with one character, another used a different character for the same sound. Therefore, the characters are pronounced slightly differently. But, they refer to the same sounds.

Waiting to fill the vacant place in the Knowing Contentment Heaven, they live in relaxed leisure/, The word Tushita is Sanskrit and is translated as the "Knowing Contentment Heaven." There is a saying,

Being content, you're always happy;
Able to be patient, you're at peace.

Because they are able to be content and patient when they're there, they have no afflictions at all. They're extremely happy, peaceful, and quiet in the Tushita Heaven. This refers to the inner courtyard of the Tushita Heaven, where they "Live in relaxed leisure." They're having a good time there.

With no thought, no worries, and no hang-ups./ They don't reflect on this, and they don't think about that. Past thought cannot be got at, present thought cannot be got at, and future thought cannot be got at. The three kinds of thought ultimately cannot be got at. Wouldn't you say this is a restful and

blissful state of being? How is it that you have so many afflictions and you are not happy? It's because if you're not greedy for this, you're greedy for something else. For example, you run after fame, but you can't get it, so then you have afflictions. You run after profit and benefit, but you can't get them, and then you have afflictions. You crave beautiful form, but you can't get it, and then you have afflictions. All of your afflictions come from your greedy seeking and not knowing how to be content. If you knew how to be content, you would not have any afflictions. So it says, "With no thought, no worries, and no hang-ups." Isn't this a better state of affairs?

When conditions ripen, they descend to be born in the Saha realm./ The first line of verse said, "Waiting to fill the vacant place," which means to take the place of the previous Buddha. It means waiting to become a Buddha. So, this line says, "When conditions ripen," when the time arrives, then they will descend and be born in the Saha world, the realm "able to be endured."

And universally transform the multitudes, crossing over men and women./ They can cross over all the multitudes of living beings--old ones, young ones--all manner of living beings. When the Buddha is waiting in the courtyard of the Tushita Heaven, he is as if taking a rest. When he's well rested, he comes into the world and becomes a Buddha. When he becomes a Buddha, he will have lots of work to do. He has to teach and transform beings without resting! So, the Tushita Heaven is a pretty good place to be. Whoever is reborn there can be relaxed and do whatever is pleasing to them. They don't have to do any work, and have all the food they want to eat, all the clothing they wish for, and many people make offerings to them.

-continued next issue.