

# FLOWER ADORNMENT SUTRA

*Commentary by Tripitaka Master Hsuan Hua*

## WONDROUS ADORNMENTS OF WORLD RULERS CHAPTER ONE

*-translated by Bhikshuni Heng Tao*

*-reviewed by Bhikshuni Heng Ch'ih*

*-edited by Bhikshuni Heng Hsien*

After the ordination, Hsiu Yuan stayed on at Red Conch Monastery and studied the Dharma door of reciting the Buddha's name.

After he had been away from home for over one year, his mother started to get very worried about him. Having had no news from her son and being unsure about his whereabouts, she became so distraught from pining for her son that her eyes went blind. One day she called out to him from her home. The distance from her village in Manchuria to Red Conch Monastery was over two thousand *li* (about seven hundred miles), but Hsiu Yuan heard his mother call him! So he asked for a leave of absence from the monastery and set out for his hometown.

On his return home he found that his mother had gone blind. He started to lick his mother's eyes with his own tongue. Having done this for a week, he received a response for his sincerity. His mother regained her sight. From this miraculous event we can see that if people are sincere to the extreme point, they can obtain a response from the Bodhisattvas.

Upon seeing with her own eyes that her son was well and healthy, the old mother's heart was put at ease, and she made him return to Red Conch Monastery to resume his practice. This Hsiu Yuan did, and upon his return to the monastery, he started to work in the kitchen. The rest of his time he followed the schedule at the temple. As was the custom in all Way Places, Ch'an was investigated in the winter, and the Sutras were studied in summer. Hsiu Yuan listened attentively to the Sutra lectures, and studied Zhung wen characters one by one, since he was illiterate to begin with. Keeping up this course of study he soon had committed the *AMITABHA SUTRA* to memory, and could recite by heart all the chants and praises of morning and evening recitation.

It happened that all the monks in the temple were trained to give Dharma lectures and took turns in ascending the platform to speak the Sutras. After a while, it came to be Hsiu Yuan's turn. On the day that he spoke, all the Dharma Masters were astounded. Hsiu Yuan spoke extremely well and explained the Sutras with exceptional clarity.

Hsiu Yuan kept up with his practice. Originally he was illiterate, yet he learned to speak the Sutras. He kept on reciting the Buddha's name, and after nine years became

enlightened. This shows that cultivation requires a persevering mind and a willingness to follow the rules. If you can be that way, you too can have some accomplishment. You can't expect to have any success in just 2½days.

All of you should take this story to heart. Some of my disciples try to take the easy way out. They want to go off on their own and visit other monasteries by themselves. Before they have learned to walk they already want to fly. If you go by yourself and trek around to different Way Places, setting out on adventures before your practice in the Way is solid, you will certainly fall.

SUTRA:

*IT WAS DUE TO THE THUS COME ONE'S SOVEREIGN SPIRITUAL POWER THAT ALL OF THESE STATES ISSUED FORTH FROM WITHIN. THE IMAGES OF ALL LIVING BEINGS' DWELLING PLACES AND ABODES ALSO APPEARED THEREIN. MOREOVER, BECAUSE OF THE AID OF ALL BUDDHAS' SPIRITUAL POWERS, WITHIN A SINGLE THOUGHT, THE ENTIRE DHARMA REALM WAS ENCOMPASSED.*

COMMENTARY:

IT WAS DUE TO THE THUS COME ONE'S SOVEREIGN SPIRITUAL POWER THAT ALL OF THESE STATES ISSUED FORTH FROM WITHIN. The inconceivable sounds, the various jeweled nets and the different rays of light all appeared because of the Buddha's spiritual power. Furthermore, THE IMAGES OF ALL LIVING BEINGS' DWELLING PLACES AND ABODES ALSO APPEARED THEREIN. The state of the Buddha was clear like crystal, like empty space. Within empty space, the reflections of the dwelling places of all living beings,--both their external houses and habitats as well as their various physical bodies--were clearly visible.

In the *VAJRA SUTRA* it says, "The Thus Come One can completely know and see all the various thoughts in the minds of all living beings." No matter how many different thoughts and mental activities there are in living being's hearts, the Buddha is able to thoroughly know and fathom them. They are all encompassed within the Thus Come One's Four Wisdoms: The Wisdom of Accomplishing What is Done, the Wisdom of the Wonderful Contemplation, the Wisdom of What is Level and Equal, and the Great Perfect Mirror Wisdom. Ordinary people have eight types of consciousness. When these consciousnesses are purified, they can be transformed into the Four Wisdoms.

Now, with this kind of wisdom that is like empty space itself, all the images of the dwelling places of all living beings are manifested.

MOREOVER, BECAUSE OF THE AID OF ALL BUDDHAS' SPIRITUAL POWERS, WITHIN A SINGLE THOUGHT, THE ENTIRE DHARMA REALM WAS ENCOMPASSED. Due to the combined strength and aid of the Buddhas of the ten

directions, within a single instant of thought, all states within the Dharma Realm were included and made visible.

SUTRA:

*THE LION THRONE WAS TALL, VAST AND EXQUISITELY FINE. MANI MADE UP THE DAIS AND LOTUS FLOWER ITS LATTICE WORK. WONDROUS PURIFYING JEWELS FORMED THE WHEELS, AND MULTI-COLORED FLOWERS WERE FASHIONED INTO STRANDS. HALLS AND PAVILIONS, MULTI-STORIED TOWERS AND ALCOVES, STAIRS AND RAILINGS, DOOR AND WINDOWS, AS WELL AS ALL OBJECTS AND IMAGES WERE COMPLETE ORNAMENTS. THE BRANCHES AND FRUIT OF THE JEWELED TREES SPREAD OUT SYMMETRICALLY. CLOUDS OF MANI LIGHT SHONE UPON ONE ANOTHER.*

COMMENTARY:

THE LION THRONE on which the Buddha sat was TALL, VAST AND EXQUISITELY FINE. MANI MADE UP THE DAIS, the platform. Mani is the "as-you-will" gem. AND LOTUS FLOWERS composed ITS LATTICE WORK. There were lotus blooms of various colors and shades—red, purple, magenta, blue, yellow, pink, just to name a few. WONDROUS PURIFYING JEWELS FORMED THE WHEELS. Those jewels are capable of casting out all filth. If we were to have one of them in our lecture hall, then in a wink all trace of dust would be wiped away. We would have no need for a janitor or anyone else to sweep the floor! How do these wondrous purifying jewels come about? They are a response from holding the precepts extremely purely. AND THERE WERE MULTI-COLORED FLOWERS which WERE FASHIONED INTO STRANDS.

HALLS--big buildings, PAVILIONS--sometimes built right by the water's edge, with trees all around providing shade and vista--MULTI-STORIED TOWERS AND ALCOVES, STAIRS AND RAILINGS, DOORS AND WINDOWS, AS WELL AS ALL OBJECTS AND IMAGES WERE COMPLETE ORNAMENTS. All the artifacts and embellishments were extremely ornate. Beholders would immediately bring forth a resolve for Bodhi and a mind of purity when they saw those exquisite adornments. Why is it that people of our world are filled with defiled thoughts? It's because our karmic offenses are very entangled and impure. If we had pure karma, our worlds would be pure, too. Worlds are simply a product of our thoughts and actions.

In addition to the above adornments, THE BRANCHES AND FRUIT OF THE JEWELED TREES profusely SPREAD OUT SYMMETRICALLY. CLOUDS OF MANI LIGHT SHONE UPON ONE ANOTHER! All of the mani gems sent forth cloud-like radiance which emanated from their different colored auras. This cloud-aura would shine on that cloud-aura; they would interreflect and give off intense brilliance.

SUTRA:

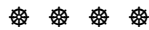
*ALL BUDDHAS OF THE TEN DIRECTIONS MADE KINGS OF PEARLS TRANSFORMATIONALLY APPEAR. ALL BODHISATTVAS GAVE OFF A DAZZLING GLOW FROM THE WONDERFUL GEMS IN THE COWLS. MOREOVER, AIDED BY THE AWESOME SPIRITUAL POWER OF ALL BUDDHAS, THEY PROCLAIMED THE THUS COME ONE'S VAST, GREAT STATE, THEIR WONDERFUL SOUNDS FAR-REACHING AND ELOQUENT, PENETRATING EVERYWHERE.*

COMMENTARY:

ALL BUDDHAS OF THE TEN DIRECTIONS MADE KINGS OF PEARLS TRANSFORMATIONALLY APPEAR. This pearl is symbolic of the utmost perfection of the Buddha's state where principle is fulfilled and understanding is full. Whenever a Buddha first accomplishes Buddhahood, all the Buddhas of the different directions come to anoint the crown of his head, the summit of wisdom and the perfection of the ten thousand virtues. All Bodhisattvas from the different worlds also drew near to this new Buddha to pay their respects. Therefore, ALL BODHISATTVAS GAVE OFF A DAZZLING GLOW FROM THE WONDERFUL GEMS IN THE COWLS. Countlessly many Bodhisattvas from the ten directions assembled. Each Bodhisattva had a precious pearl set into his jeweled cowl, his headdress. That pearl represents the epitome of each one's luminous wisdom and purity. They all came to the Way Place and emitted light, further enhancing that adorned state.

MOREOVER, AIDED BY THE AWESOME SPIRITUAL POWER OF ALL BUDDHAS, THEY PROCLAIMED THE THUS COME ONE'S VAST, GREAT STATE. Relying on the spiritual power of the Buddhas of the ten directions, the Bodhisattvas could speak the wonderful Dharma. THEIR WONDERFUL SOUNDS were FAR-REACHING AND ELOQUENT, PENETRATING EVERYWHERE. There wasn't a single place, not even a single dust mote where the wonderful sound of Dharma wasn't heard and where the Dharma wheel wasn't turned.

-to be continued



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