

Three Steps, One Bow

*Excerpts from the Journal of Bhikshus Heng Sure and
Heng Chau*

*Written During Their Bowing Pilgrimage to the City of Ten
Thousand Buddhas*

Continued from issue #173.

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Bhikshu Heng Chau.

*He gives rise to the superior thought for enlightenment.
Amid all mundane things, he relies on nothing.*

FLOWER ADORNMENT SUTRA

Morning vision: Life is short. Each thought and each choice is a step down a road. Be careful and extremely true. Go alone. Seek no one to lean on and nothing to rely on. Bring an indestructible heart of faith to your purest visions and Bodhi resolve.

Your friends and companions are the irreversible assembly of Bodhisattvas and all the good people in the world. Conduct yourself as if always in their presence, and soon you will be!

*I vow always to meet the Thus Come Ones face to face,
And the hosts of disciples that circulate around them.
I'll raise offerings that are vast and great,
Untiringly, to the end of future aeons.*

FLOWER ADORNMENT SUTRA, Chapter 40.

Bhikshu Heng Sure

December 13, 1978

MANIFESTING A BODY TO SPEAK THE DHARMA

Larry punched off the CB, checked the air brake, and swung down from the cab. Red neon reflected in the parking lot puddles, "Emeryville Shortstop --Your Oasis in the Night."

"I can use an oasis; throat's dry as Nevada." Opening the door, Larry scanned the brightly-lit aisles. He thought, "Where's Harold? Who's the new guy behind the register? Must be a change in the graveyard shift. Tough job, alone at this hour. Maybe he's a talker."

"Morning," from the clerk. "What do you need?"

"Six-pack of ale, some beef jerkey, and a box of Nodoz."

"Taking a full load of poisons, eh?"

"Oh, he's a wise guy," Larry thought.

"What do you mean, poisons?"

"What you eat is your business, don't get me wrong. But I used to drive freight, too, and I know those foggy states you can get into. I tried changing my fuel and looking into my mind. Funny thing. I found that cutting out the beer and meat and pills made a whale of a difference. Just by making myself a promise to avoid alcohol and dope and meat, my ratings and on-times improved, I had more energy than ever, and my life seemed to calm down and smooth out. A little thing made a big change!"

"Oh, yeah? You a health-food nut?"

"No. I just got off that high and low seesaw. It ran me up and down and left me nowhere but tired and dizzy, always feeling one step behind myself, that's all. No, I don't beat the drum for any cause. I just thought to tell you what happened after I stopped polluting my body with poisons like meat and beer and speed. My mind changed; that's the important part. I found it easy to stop doing so many stupid things: no fights, no temper. My whole attitude towards life changed."

"You don't say. Health food, huh."

"Look at it this way. If you're not eating health food, what are you eating? Unhealth food? Meat full of Poisons!"

"Ha,ha,ha, yeah, you got a point. Okay, give me something else. What do you suggest?"

"Try this fruit juice and these nuts. It will make your insides say 'thanks a lot.' Still want the Nodoz?"

"No way I can let the speed go. I've got to make Coos Bay by noon and that means straight through--no shut-eye."

"Suit yourself, but you watch and see if you don't feel stronger and more in control without poisons in your system. When you don't go high on pills, you don't crash, either. It works out that way. That'll be five bucks."

"Catch you next time. Name's Larry."

"So long, Larry, keep 'em flying."

Rolling his Kenworth 16-wheeler up the on-ramp to 101, Larry reached for the Nodoz. Then on impulse, he tossed them out into the night with a laugh.

"Better not tell that guy I chucked the speed or I'll probably get a lecture on not littering, too.

"Been looking for a reason to quit that stuff for years. Funny how one time you hear it just right and it clicks inside. Let's see what's on the wire." He punched on the CB and settled back for the long run up the coast to Coos Bay.

*The Guiding Master for living beings
Takes each opportunity to speak the Dharma.
Whenever he can transform someone,
There he appears in his victorious form.
FLOWER ADORNMENT SUTRA
Praises in the Tushita Palace Chapter.*

Bhikshu Heng Chau:

December 14, 1979

Health and sickness come from the mind. When the mind goes wrong, the body follows. Greed is the cause of sickness. Greed wants to overcome and tamper with nature. Living outside without heat and the "conveniences," we must tune in and harmonize with nature or we don't survive. We've learned to read subtle changes in temperature and moisture in the air. Clouds and fog advise us and the wind is yielded to. If we don't listen and accord, we get sick.

Air conditioning, jet travel, air-heated homes, and luxury campers immunize our bodies to the elements. Our spirit loses touch with the natural world. In fast, forceful dislocations we jerk and shift and plough through all the natural rhythms and changes Greed dulls the senses. Sickness and disharmony are often a price of progress. The more we tamper with nature, the more we harm. The more we grab, the more we lose.

Those that would gain what is under heaven by tampering with it--I have seen they do not succeed. For that which is under heaven is like a holy vessel: dangerous to tamper with. Those that tamper with it, harm it. Those that grab it, lose it.

Lau Dz