

The Cover Verse

The Shurangama Mantra: An Explanation

*Verses and Prose Commentary
by Tripitaka Master Hua*

Mantra: 75. NA MWO PE CHYE PE DI

Verse:

Replete with all-wisdom and perfect
enlightenment,
Extending their vast, long tongues
to break through confusion and
distortion,
They speak sincere and actual words
to awaken the deaf and blind.
But, how many can offer up their
conduct in accord with their
teachings?

Commentary:

NA MWO PE CHYE PE DI once again refers to the Bhagavan, the World Honored One. This is a title given to all Buddhas. *Replete with all-wisdom and perfect enlightenment./* The Buddhas are endowed with all-wisdom and have attained the great, perfect enlightenment. They have reached perfection in their cultivation: their wisdom is perfect and their reward of blessings is perfect. In all aspects, they are perfect.

Extending their vast, long tongues to break through confusion and distortion,/ the Buddhas' vast and long tongues break up the confusion and attachments in which living beings are enmeshed. Breaking through this massive confusion and distortion is not easy. However, with the might of their great spiritual powers, the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas try to smash through living beings' coverings, even though it is sometimes very difficult to do.

They speak sincere and actual words to awaken the deaf and blind. / The Buddhas speak true and sincere words and startle the deaf and blind. We people are muddled and in a daze, as if deaf and blind. Not understanding anything, we are as if asleep and dreaming. *But, how many can offer up their conduct in accord with the teachings?/* The Buddhas try in every way they can to teach and transform living beings. But, how many can really offer up their conduct

in accord with the teachings? Do you know how many can? Are there more living beings who hear the Dharma than practice it? There are many people who hear the Buddhadharma, but there are precious few who can put it into practice. Just take those of you here who study the Buddhadharma. You study year in and year out, but you are still just as upside down and just as stupid as before. You are still busy gossiping and backbiting, and holding to deviant knowledge and views. You don't change at all. It should be obvious how difficult it is for the Buddha to teach and transform living beings. Those who can really rely on the teachings and offer up their conduct accordingly are exceedingly few. From this you should all understand that people are not easy to teach. You instruct them to go down some side road, and they are delighted. But, if you tell them to go down the right road, they start having doubts about this and that. "Is this for real?" they wonder. If you tell them something false, they will believe it, but if you tell them something true, no matter how you try, they won't believe you. People are just that strange--strange creatures! They don't listen, and then they regret it and know that they were wrong. It's really, really pitiful. It's really a pitiful situation—a sad situation! Poor living beings! We who hear the Buddhadharma must actually practice it. The Buddhadharma must be actually practiced for it to be of use. However, those who can truly cultivate are very rare. Even if one is able to sever one's coarse doubts, the fine doubts and delusions still remain. The delusions like dust and sand are even harder to get rid of. Cultivation can't be accomplished if you are sloppy. If you cultivate sloppily, you won't accomplish anything. You must really cultivate in order to succeed.

