

The Shurangama Mantra:

An Explanation in Verse and Prose

by Trpitaka Master Hua

(Following is the verse and commentary for the line. of Shurangama Mantra on the cover of the April 1988 issue. It was not published in that issue due to a printing error.)

MANTRA: *Line 76. SAN BU SHR BI DWO.*

VERSE:

*Supreme light pervades everywhere,
From the summit of existence to the pits of nowhere.
The itty-bitty creatures all get saved,
And bring forth the Bodhi heart to build the Bodhimanda.*

COMMENTARY

SAN BU means pervading everywhere. SHR BI DWO means supreme light. *Supreme light pervades everywhere* / means the Buddha's light is supreme over all other light. Throughout the Dharma Realm, there is no place not illumined by it. *From the summit of existence*—the Akanishtha Heaven, the ultimate form heaven—to *the pits of nowhere*. "Nowhere" just means the unspaced hells.

"Where did you get that term for it?" you ask. I made up this name for it, too. "Nowhere." You should remember it is another name for the Avichi Hell. You won't find it in the dictionary, however.

"How could you make up a name for it?" you ask.

"Well, why not?" If you draw a picture, you can call it anything you want. It's entirely subjective. If you had called cats tigers from the beginning, they would be called tigers now. Switching the names around is really no problem.

Thus, the Buddha's light shines from the Ultimate From Heaven to the pits of the Unspaced Hells. *The itty-bitty creatures all get saved.* / Itty-bitty creatures are the ones without intelligence. All they can do is crawl around. They are totally dumb, really stupid! Some of the creatures have just the slightest bit of latent life in them, like yeast or culture in the bacterial world. For example, rice might look very clean—lifeless—but, if you let it sit too long or it gets moist, worms will start growing in it. Those are itty-bitty creatures. They were just latent life before. After you cook the rice, it would seem that nothing alive would be left in it, but if you let it

sit, mould or some such organism will grow in it. The *jyun* tea grows that way. Just put a piece of *jyun* in vinegar, and it will grow real big. If you aren't careful, bugs will grow in it, too. Yeast in bread works the same way.

When the Buddha's light shines on all these kinds of life, their karmic obstacles are eradicated and their good roots grow. Then they can gradually move from life to life into larger bodies, until, finally, they can cultivate and become Buddhas. All of them get saved, *And bring forth the Bodhi heart to build the Bodhimanda!* / We who understand the Buddhadharmas should exhaust our efforts in doing the Buddha's work, just like "the moon in water." The moon in the water is only a reflection, it is not real. In making the Bodhimanda, you do not want to hold on to the idea, "I am building a Bodhimanda!" Just bring forth the Bodhi mind, and build it because it's your job. Don't make a big thing out of it. Don't be attached to the appearance of doing it.