**The Shurangama Sutra**

**VOLUME 7**

**CHAPTER 3**

**The Names of the Sutra**

E2 He explains the name of the entire sutra.  
F1 Manjushri asks the sutra's name.  
 **Sutra:  
  
Then Dharma prince Manjushri arose from his seat, and in the midst of the assembly he bowed at the Buddha's feet and said to the Buddha, "What is the name of this sutra and how should we and all living beings uphold it?"**  
**Commentary:**  
  
At this point in the discussion, dharma prince Manjushri arose from his seat, and in the midst of the assembly he bowed at the Buddha's feet and said to the Buddha, Bodhisattva Manjushri now has a question to ask: "What is the name of this sutra and how should we and all living beings uphold it? World Honored One, what name do you give to this sutra? How should we in this assembly and living beings of the future uphold it? How should we cultivate it? How should we offer up our conduct with regard to this sutra?"  
  
F2 The Thus Come One answers with five names.  
G1 Wisdom of the realm.  
 **Sutra:  
  
The Buddha told Manjushri, "This sutra is called 'The Summit, Syi Dan Dwo Bwo Da La, and Unsurpassed Precious Seal of the Seal of the Great Buddha, and the Pure, Clear, Ocean-Like Eye of the Thus Comes Ones of the Ten Directions.' "   
  
Commentary:**  
  
The Buddha told Manjushri, "This sutra is called 'The Summit, Syi Dan Dwo Bwo Da La, and Unsurpassed Precious Seal of the Seal of the Great Buddha.' " This refers to the invisible summit, the crown of the Buddha's head, which poured forth splendorous light. Syi Dan Dwo Bwo Da La is the great white canopy. There is nothing more revered or honored than the Unsurpassed Precious Seal. The "precious seal" is that of the Dharma King, the Buddha. This first name indicates how supreme the Shurangama Mantra is. If people recite the Shurangama Mantra, they are worthy of receiving the precious seal of the Dharma King. This sutra is also the Pure, Clear, Ocean-Like Eye of the Thus Comes Ones of the Ten Directions. This refers to pure wisdom. The "eye" represents wisdom.  
  
G2 Benefit to the opportune.  
 **Sutra:  
  
It is also called 'The Cause for Saving a Relative': to rescue Ananda and the bhikshuni Nature, who is now in this assembly, so that they obtain the Bodhi mind and enter the sea of pervasive knowledge.  
  
Commentary:**  
  
It is also called "The Cause for Saving a Relative": to rescue Ananda. The Buddha was related to Ananda; they were cousins. He wanted to save Ananda from the difficulty he got into with Matangi's daughter. He also rescued the bhikshuni Nature, who is now in this assembly. The bhikshuni Nature was Matangi's daughter. She was, by now, a fourth-stage Arhat in the assembly. They obtain the Bodhi mind and enter the sea of pervasive knowledge. These two people have attained levels of enlightenment. "Pervasive knowledge" is as in "One of Proper and Pervasive Knowledge," one of the titles of the Buddhas. "Proper knowledge" is knowing that the mind gives rise to the myriad dharmas. "Pervasive knowledge" is knowing that the myriad dharmas are only from the mind.  
  
G3 Cultivation of the nature.  
 **Sutra:  
  
It is also called 'The Tathagata's Secret Cause of Cultivation, His Certification to the Complete Meaning.'  
  
Commentary:**  
It is also called "The Tathagata's Secret Cause." It has another name, which indicates that it is the most secret dharma door of the Thus Come One. It is the cause of his Cultivation, His Certification to the Complete Meaning. Through cultivation of it, one certifies to the fruition and fathoms the most fundamental principle. This is another name for this sutra.  
  
G4 Wonderfully important.  
 **Sutra:  
  
It is also called 'The Great Pervasive Method, the Wonderful Lotus Flower King, the Dharani Mantra which is the Mother of all Buddhas of the Ten Directions.'  
  
Commentary:**  
  
It is also called "The Great Pervasive Method." This is a dharma. It is the greatest dharma; it pervades the ten directions and is boundlessly vast. The Wonderful Lotus Flower King is an analogy for the Shurangama Sutra. The Dharani Mantra which is the Mother of all Buddhas of the Ten Directions refers to the Shurangama Mantra. All the Buddhas of the ten directions are born from the Shurangama Mantra. "Dharani" is a Sanskrit word which means to "encompass and hold." It encompasses all dharmas; it holds limitless meanings. Another meaning is that it encompasses the three karmas of body, mouth, and mind so that no violations are made by them. With your body you do not kill, steal, or lust. With your mind you are not greedy, angry, or stupid. With your mouth you do not indulge in loose speech, harsh speech, lying, or gossip. You do not commit any of these ten evil deeds. And it holds the limitless dharma doors of all the Buddhas. That's another way to explain "dharani."  
  
G5 Cause and effect.  
 **Sutra:  
  
It is also called 'The Foremost Shurangama, Sections and Phrases for Anointing the Crown of the Head, and All Bodhisattvas' Myriad Practices.'  
  
Commentary:**  
The Foremost Shurangama. This is the first and foremost of durable dharmas. It is a strong and firm dharma. Sections and Phrases for Anointing the Crown of the Head refers to the Shurangama Mantra. If you recite it, your karmic obstacles will very quickly be eradicated. Very soon you will obtain wisdom. Earlier, in his verse, Ananda said of it:  
  
The wonderfully deep dharani, the unmoving honored one,  
The foremost Shurangama King is seldom found in the world.  
It melts away my upside-down thoughts gathered in a million kalpas.  
So I needn't endure asamkhyeya aeons to obtain the dharma body.  
  
The Shurangama Mantra can invisibly anoint you on the crown of the head and thereby eradicate your upside-down thoughts that have gone on for limitless aeons. There is no need to have to pass through three great asamkhyeya aeons before you obtain the dharma body.  
  
And All Bodhisattvas' Myriad Practices are contained within this sutra.  
  
G6 General answer.  
 **Sutra:  
  
Thus should you respectfully uphold it.  
  
Commentary:**  
  
Ananda, you should rely on this dharma in your cultivation. Thus should you respectfully uphold it.  
  
D3 Those whose conditions are opportune obtain benefit.  
E1 A description of those who hear.  
 **Sutra:  
  
After this was said, Ananda and all in the great assembly immediately received the Thus Come One's instruction in the secret seal, the meaning of Bwo Da La, and heard these names for the complete meaning of this sutra.  
  
Commentary:**  
  
After this was said, after the Buddha finished explaining the names of this sutra, Ananda and all in the great assembly immediately received the Thus Come One's instruction in the secret seal. Everyone simultaneously took in the Thus Come One's teaching about the secret seal, the meaning of Bwo Da La. "Bwo Da La," again, is the great white canopy. They fathomed its wonderful meaning. And they heard these names for the complete meaning of this sutra. These names were the most comprehensive, the most ultimate, the most thoroughly meaningful titles.  
  
E2 Their sudden enlightenment to dhyana.  
 **Sutra:  
  
They were suddenly enlightened to dhyana, advanced in their cultivation to the sagely position, and increased their understanding of the wonderful principle. Their minds were focused and serene.  
  
Commentary:**  
They were suddenly enlightened to dhyana. "Dhyana" is a Sanskrit word which means "cultivation of thought." "Suddenly enlightened" means that their awakening was immediate and swift. They advanced in their cultivation to the sagely position. The "sagely position" refers to the ultimate one, Buddhahood. They increased their understanding of the wonderful principle. This means that their wisdom increased. Each person's wisdom became further developed. Their minds were focused and serene. There was nothing cluttering their minds. They were clear and open. They were about to reach the fundamental substance of the nature of the treasury of the Thus Come One.  
  
E3 Gradual certification to the second fruition.  
 **Sutra:  
  
Ananda cut off and cast aside six sections of subtle afflictions in his cultivation of the mind in the triple realm.  
  
Commentary:**  
At this point, Ananda is certified to the second fruition of arhatship. Ananda cut off and cast aside six sections of subtle afflictions in his cultivation of the mind in the triple realm. He has already cut off the view-delusions, and now he severs the first six sections of the desire realm's thought-delusions. There are eightyone thought-delusions in all, nine divisions with nine sections each. These afflictions are called "subtle" because it is not at all easy to detect them. It's hard to perceive them within one's self-nature, but now Ananda has been able to cut away some of this affliction.