

The Bodhi Seal of the Patriarchs



The Twenty-fifth Patriarch

Venerable Basiasita

The Venerable One was a native of the country of Kubha. To begin with, his mother dreamed she obtained a magic sword, and then became pregnant. When the Master was born, he held his left hand in a tight fist. His father took him to see the Patriarch Lion to find out why. The Patriarch took the child by the hand and said, "You can return my pearl now." The Venerable One compliantly opened his fist and held up a pearl. The father, realizing his son had deep affinities with the Patriarch, consented to his leaving the home-life. The Patriarch shaved the child's head, crossed him over, and said, "I, your teacher, secretly have the Proper Dharma Eye Treasury handed down from the Arhat, which I now transmit to you."

After he obtained the Dharma he hid away in the mountains. The King Heavenly Virtue invited him to receive offerings. Afterwards, the Prince Supreme Virtue, who then firmly believed in the dharmas of an externalist way, caused the Master difficulties. The Venerable One took out the robe and showed it to the Prince by way of verification. But he ordered the robe burned. While the firewood consumed itself, the robe remained untouched and glowed with a luminescence of five colors. The Royal Son Supreme Virtue felt deep remorse and bowed to the Master.

Later the Patriarch transmitted the Dharma robe to Punyamitra and then, displaying spiritually transformed fire, he cremated himself. He left sharira that piled a foot high.

A verse in praise of him says:

Not yet out the door of home,
He already grasped the mysterious pearl.
The transmission of this robe of faith,
Transformed, when worn, the clan of fools.
Calamities did not encroach; fire forged a golden hue.
King Supreme then felt remorse; the Dharma banner waved aloft.

Another verse in his praise says:

His mother dreamed of a magic sword and gave birth to an exceptional son.
He kept his left fist tightly clenched; the Patriarchs' Intent hangs by a thread.
"Give me back my pearl. The Buddhas welcome you!
Go quickly! You have to shoulder the Way's transmission.
Predicting difficulty for the Dharma, it was essential to uphold it.
Fire was set to the robe of faith; he did not shrink from adversity.
Always roaming in thousands of samadhis,
He left sharira piled a foot high, having tallied with the true source.

CALENDAR OF BUDDHIST HOLIDAYS 1982

Aug.4 Great Master Ch'ang Jen's Enlightenment; full moon.

Aug.5 Celebration honoring Venerable Master Hua

Aug.6 Great Master Ch'ang Chih's Birthday.

Aug.8 Kuan Yin Bodhisattva's Attainment of the Way

Aug.19 new moon

Aug.31 Birthday of Great Strength Bodhisattva

Sept.2 Ullumbana--end of summer retreat for Sangha; full moon.

Sept.11 Birthday of Nagarjuna Bodhisattva.

Sept.16 Earth Store Bodhisattva's Birthday and the Birth of Venerable Master Hsu Yun

Sept.17 new moon

Sept.19 Birthday of Great Master Hui Neng, the Sixth Patriarch

Oct.1 full moon

Oct.8 Birthday of Burning Lamp Buddha.

Oct.17 new moon

UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS

Oct.24 TRANSMISSION OF COMPLETE PRECEPTS

Oct.31 OPENING OF GATE AND HALL OF TEN THOUSAND BUDDHAS AT CITY OF TEN THOUSAND BUDDHAS; BEGINNING OF ONE-WEEK INTENSIVE KUAN YIN RECITATION SESSION

Nov.7th/8th BEGIN TEN-WEEK CH'AN SESSION