



*THREE MASTERS AND TEN CERTIFIERS WITH NEW PRECEPTES
BEFORE THE NEW DINING HALL*

News From The Dharma Realm

INSTRUCTIONS TO NEW PRECEPTES

*(Spoken by the Ven. Abbot at lunch during
the transmission of the Complete Precepts)*

This is the second time the transmission of the Complete Precepts has taken place at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas and the fourth time there has been a transmission in America. Of those who have already taken the Precepts, some were extremely lazy and some really cultivated.

Now that you have a chance to leave the home-life and become Disciples of the Buddha, you should realize that the causes and conditions for this are hard to meet with in hundreds of millions of aeons. Therefore, you should uphold the precepts as you would your very life. For if you don't, then although you may still be in the world, you are like walking corpses and you will be of no benefit to the world. If you do not uphold the Precepts as you would your very life, then even if the Buddha himself were in the world, he could not help you. It is my hope that every single Bhikshu and Bhikshuni will do the deeds of ten thousand Bhikshus and Bhikshunis. This is because in the West it is difficult to find real left-home people. They are as rare as feathers on a phoenix and horns on a unicorn. Why? It's because Buddhism has just begun in America.

So once you leave the home-life, you should be prepared to sacrifice your life in dedication to the Buddha Dharma. There is a matched couplet that describes the motto of Gold Mountain Monastery and the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas.

Freezing to death, we don't climb on conditions.

Even if we are in such dire straits that we are about to die of the cold, we still do not become opportunists. We don't seek for anything. We should have bones, have virtuous conduct, have courage and good characters. Whatever you do, don't just go along with the crowd and end up a thief within the teaching.

Starving to death we don't beg for money.

We don't beg even if we have to go hungry to the point of starvation. We should not cause others to look down on Buddhism. Originally the Buddha instructed Bhikshus to beg for their food, so why do we say that "starving to death" we won't beg? It's because Buddhism has just come to this country and people don't recognize it yet. Since people don't have a solid impression of Buddhism yet, we must simply go forward by putting our feet on solid ground and taking solid steps. Then when a solid foundation is established and people come to recognize the Dharma, we can take our bowls out and go begging. But for the time being we will wait.

Dying of poverty we don't seek conditions.

We don't seek anything from others, even if we don't have any money ourselves. Instead we seek within ourselves. We return the light to illumine within and seek the fullness of self. We establish merit, establish virtue and establish words. We become useful vessels within Buddhism, propagate the Dharma, and don't just waste our time.

*According with conditions we do not change;
Not changing, we accord with conditions.*

We adhere resolutely to our principles, but accord with situations that arise. We're flexible without being compromising.

These comprise our Three Great Guidelines.

The second line of the couplet says:

We renounce our lives to do the Buddha's work.

We should emulate Shakyamuni Buddha, who in seeking the Dharma was willing to give up his very life. We should reflect on his vigor. For the sake of seeking the Dharma we should forget ourselves. If we don't sacrifice and dedicate our lives to the Dharma then how can we ever expect to repay the Buddha's kindness?

We change our lives to alter our destiny.

We should have fallen into the hells, but now we have met this opportunity to renew ourselves. So, we will aim to go to the Pure Land of Eternal Stillness and Light and enter Nirvana without residue.

We rectify our lives to do the work of the Sangha.

We recast our lives. Before we were greedy, but from now on we will not be greedy any more. Before we were hateful, but after we leave home we will not get angry any more. Before we were stupid, but once we leave the home life we will not be stupid any more. We chase out all our bad habits and remodel our lives.

*Within specifics we understand principles,
And within principles, specifics are made clean..*

In the realm of either specific events or principle, we obtain a clear understanding so that both realms are mutually penetrating. We come to understand what is true and actual.

And transmit the Patriarchs' pulse of the One Mind.

Today we have requested the Worthy and Sagely Sangha to arrive here to transmit the Bhikshu and Bhikshuni Precepts. All these greatly virtuous high masters have gathered here as well. We should be ever-present and attentive to what we are doing at every moment. We should not half leave home and half not. To do that is of no help to the Dharma but in fact is a great detriment and harm to the Dharma. So try your best.

THE VAJRA BRILLIANT JEWELLED PRECEPTS

*Instructions on the Platform
by Venerable Upadhaya Hua*

Today you gain a new life and it is also time to create a new world. You should each become new disciples and bring about a new Buddhism. Each of you should completely get rid of all contention and all greed. You should renounce any seeking, selfishness and pursuit of self-benefit. You must not have the least bit of selfishness or thoughts of self-benefit if you are to truly leave home. You should not have any false thinking about seeking anything. You should put an end to all fighting. Don't have any greed. Then you can be genuine and true left-home people.

In this country Buddhism is just beginning. All of you should start afresh and smelt true gold from within the fire. You should sacrifice yourselves and give your all. Take the propagation of Buddhism as your personal responsibility. Don't have a hair's worth of falseness. If you do, you'll only end up cheating yourself and cheating others. When you leave the home-life the name and the actuality of it have to tally. Don't just go through the motions and let the time go by in vain.

Now as you go forth from the home life, you have a chance to change your face and renew yourself. You can change all your past conduct and never resort to it again. You should resolve to be mighty and powerful for the sake of Buddhism. Don't be little yourself. You have to count yourself as a real cultivator and sternly uphold the precepts and rules. Don't violate them in the slightest. Then you will be genuine Buddhist disciples.

MAY THE VIRTUOUS ONES TRANSMIT TO US THE PRECEPTS

The Transmission of the Complete Precepts is a time-honored ceremony with decisive requisites. There must be Three Masters and at least Seven Certifiers to administer and witness the proceedings of the Precept Transmission.

On October 24th, thirteen High Masters consented to gather together for the Transmis-sion of the Jeweled Precepts of the Thousand Buddhas at the Sagely City of Ten Thousand Buddhas. This occasion marked the culmination of an intensive 108-day Precept Training Program which in its entirety spanned three years of hard work and devotion.

The novices, deeply grateful for the pre-sence of these Masters whereby they would be able to be imparted the Vajra Brilliant Precious Precepts, showed their sincere veneration and gratitude by lining the streets of the City as the Masters passed during the course of the day's proceedings. Bowing as their transmitters drew near and passed by, each Preceptee listened to the whisper of Samghatis, red and golden, worn by Masters of both the Theravada and Mahayana traditions.

Good indeed, this liberating cloth,
The sash of the supreme field of blessings.
I now respectfully receive the Thus Come One's orders,
To save the extensive masses of living beings.

UPADHAYA ABBOT HSUAN HUA, City of Ten Thousand Buddhas.
KARMADANA MASTER HENG SURE, City of Ten Thousand Buddhas,(from U.S.A.)
TEACHING ACHARYA HENG CH'AU, City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, (from U.S.A.)

CERTIFYING ACHARYA PHRA TEPSONPHON, MAHA THERA, Wat Thai of Los Angeles, (from Thailand).

CERTIFYING ACHARYA U. SOBHANA, Dhammananda Vihara in Daly City,(from Burma).

CERTIFYING ACHARYA KHUU THANH THUYEN, Buddhist Association of America in San Francisco, (from Vietnam).

CERTIFYING ACHARYA U. NARADA, Dhammananda Vihara in Daly City, (from Burma).

CERTIFYING ACHARYA LING CHEN, San Jose, (from Republic of China).

CERTIFYING ACHARYA MING TU, Buddha Light Temple in Oakland, (from Republic of China).

CERTIFYING ACHARYA SEELAVIMILA, Institute of Buddhist Studies in Berkeley, (from Shri Lanka)

CERTIFYING ACHARYA DR. MEDHI SUANGATE, MAHA THERA, Wat Thai of Los Angeles, (from Thailand).

CERTIFYING ACHARYA TSE MING, City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, (from Malaysia).

CERTIFYING ACHARYA DIEP TRIEU, Buddhist Association of America in San Francisco, (from Vietnam).

Masters of Ceremonies for the Precept Platform were Dharma Masters Heng Kuan and Heng Tso. Instructors in Department were Dharma Masters Heng Deng, Heng Gung, Heng Wu and Heng Ch'i.

Thus, setting aside mundane differences to join in transcendental accord, the thirteen Masters of the various traditions performed the rites and rituals of the Fourfold Karmavaca and bestowed the Bhikshu and Bhikshuni Precepts upon the Preceptees.

"YES, WE ARE GREAT HEROES."

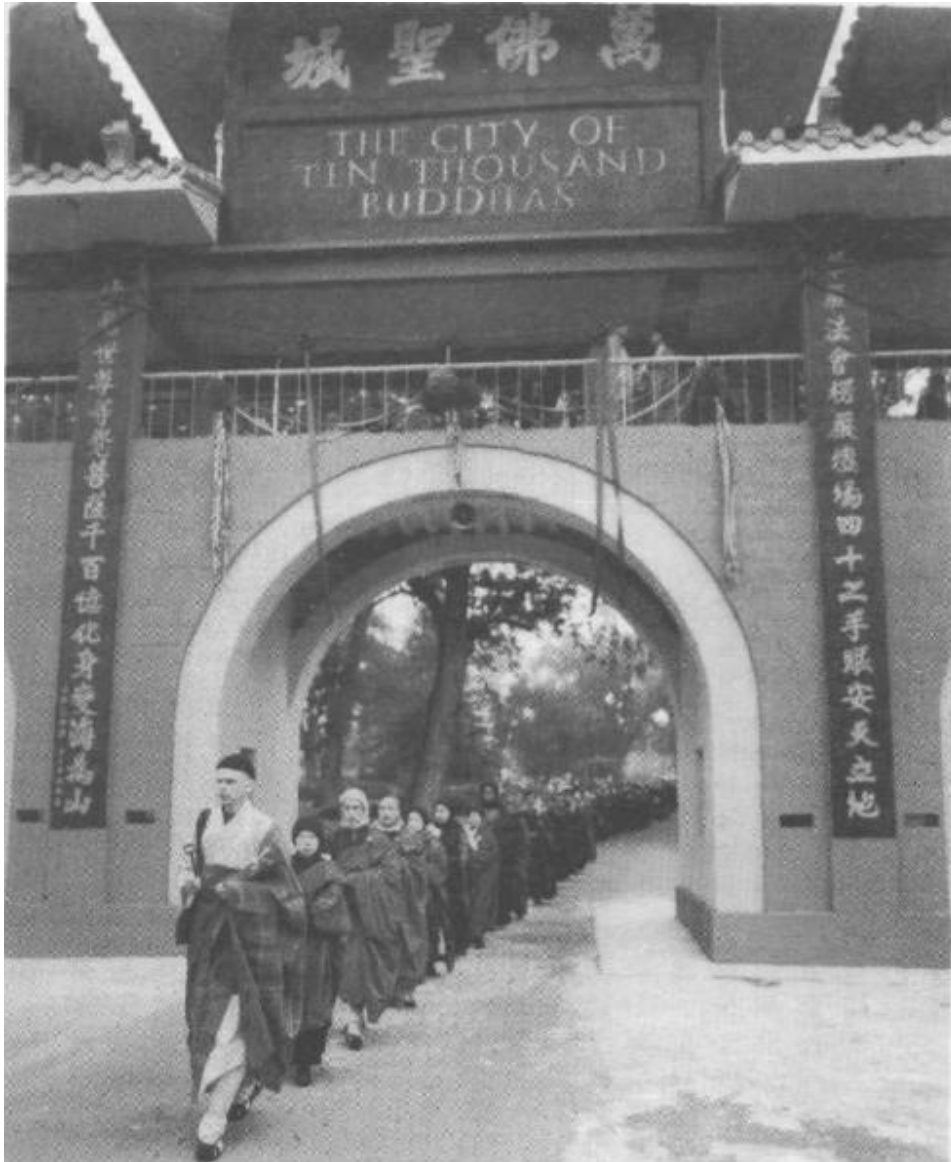
As the day of the transmission of the Complete Precepts drew near, the atmosphere of the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas became charged with a buzzing electric energy. Preceptees felt this wholesome strength permeate their bodies and bolster their spirits. Those Preceptees who had received the complete training, who bowed in anticipation of the final transmission, knew full well how fortunate they were. Each one had grown over the several years of the noviciate to understand the essential function of the Sangha community within Buddhism and aspired to offer the purity of their three karmas of body, mouth, and mind to share in the perpetuation of that primary aspect of the Triple Jewel. Each one realized that although the Dharma hangs by a thread, the appearance of the Orthodox Way is revealed in its full glory at the Sagely City of Ten Thousand Buddhas and therefore vowed to work in harmony to enable the Proper Teaching to long abide in this ever-darkening world as a light to attract all those in search of truth.

As the Preceptees ascended the adorned Platform, itself a permanently-dwelling structure symbolizing the fundamental Precept substance which remains ever-intact in those who uphold the Precepts purely, their solid determination and compliant acceptance was reflected in the interreflecting shining mirrors that lines the entire hall. The interpenetrating lights were bright physical manifestations of the subtle transcendental Dharmas of the pure Platform.

During the various queries of the Three Masters and Ten Certifiers, the Preceptees voices rang out in harmonious unison, their hearts united in joyful vows expressing within and without their unwavering resolve to do their utmost to be pure vessels of the Dharma and to bring themselves and all beings to accomplishment.

"Yes, we are great heroes," they sang, and rocked the palaces of the heavenly demons. And as great heroes, they descended the Platform to begin their quiet and selfless work for the Dharma, happy in heart, united in spirit, and firm in vows and practice.

A week later, on October 31st, they once again ascended the Jeweled Platform to receive the transmission of the Bodhisattva Precepts, the perpetual guidelines set forth by all Buddhas and continually spoken and recited by all Buddhas and Bodhisattvas of the three periods of time. Perfectly embodying the means to the paramitas of giving, patience, morality, vigor, samadhi, and wisdom, the substance of these Precepts becomes an undying seed, forever planted in the Eighth Consciousness, which will one day bear fruit in the nature of the Treasury of the Thus Come One. On the day when one becomes perfectly true, one will mesh with the same truth known to all Buddhas and will reveal the flawless Great Perfect Mirror Wisdom. Equipped with the mark, substance, and dharma of these Precepts, the new Bhikshus and Bhikshunis began to take firm strides along the eternal path walked by all who seek the fullness of self--the epitome of compassion--following in the footsteps of all Taming Masters and Regulating Heroes of the three periods of time.



The fourfold assembly chants Kuan Yin Bodhisattva's name as they dedicate the Mountain Gate and the Hall of Ten Thousand Buddhas.

A NEW MOUNTAIN GATE

Sunday, October 31, was an auspicious day for Buddhism and for the cause of peace and harmony in the world, as some 2000 people took part in opening ceremonies at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas at Talmage, California. At the world Buddhist center, 110 miles north of San Francisco, a new Mountain Gate, the Hall of Ten Thousand Buddhas adorned with 10,000 statues of Shakyamuni Buddha, and the just-completed Vegetarian Hall of the Five Contemplations were all dedicated before a crowd of Buddhists and well-

wishers who had gathered for the event from around the world. Historically, these events will go down as a milestone in the transmission of Buddhism to the West.

Special delegations of 150 dedicated Buddhist disciples from Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong and Taiwan had come to the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas especially to attend the opening ceremonies. In addition, over 1,000 participants came from the San Francisco Bay Area for the day's events, together with a delegation from Los Angeles and others from several American states and Canada.

The day began with the dedication and ribbon-cutting of the Mountain Gate, which marks the entrance to the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas. The massive three-arched structure is built in the traditional Asian style of monastery gates and is roofed with golden-colored clay tiles made to order in Taiwan. Dedication speeches were given by American government officials who were special guests for the day, by members of the Asian and Los Angeles delegations, and by the Venerable Abbot Hsuan Hua, Chairperson of the Sino-American Buddhist Association and Chancellor of Dharma Realm Buddhist University.

The assembly then proceeded up Bodhi Way, main thoroughfare of the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, to the site of the planned Jeweled Hall of Great Heroes. When completed, this Great Hall will measure 270 feet long by 170 feet wide and 100 feet high, capable of holding 10,000 worshippers. It will be the largest Buddhist Hall in the world. As the assembly recited the Great Compassion Mantra, the Venerable Abbot sprinkled water on the ground with a willow branch to purify the site and seal its boundaries. Construction of the Jeweled Hall will begin early next year.

The Jeweled Hall of Great Heroes' great size and importance will match the great size and importance of the United States of America, which is the leader of the world's countries. Now that the Proper Buddha Dharma has come to America, all sincere Buddhists take it as their first responsibility to make the Buddha's teachings of compassion and non-violence known to all people of the West. Influenced by Buddhist's example, it can be hoped that America will make use of its position of leadership to bring peace to the community of nations.

After the Purification of the site of the Jeweled Hall, the new Hall of Ten Thousand Buddhas was opened. There were dedication speeches and a ribbon-cutting, and then the assembly entered the hall for the ceremony of opening the light on the 10,000 statues of the Buddha.

Finally, the assembly proceeded to the Vegetarian Hall of the Five Contemplations for a last ribbon-cutting and for the noon meal. This new main dining hall of Dharma Realm Buddhist University seats 1500 people. The auxiliary dining hall adjacent to it was opened to accommodate the day's crowd.

On completion of the meal, Dharma Masters Heng Sure and Heng Ch'au, the two American Bhikshus who since May, 1977, have cultivated the practice of Three Steps,

One Bow, spoke Dharma for the assembly. The two Bhikshus are now in residence at Gold Wheel Temple in Los Angeles where they lecture every day on the *Avatamsaka Sutra*. Following their talks, the Venerable Abbot again addressed the assembly. He stressed the prime importance of pure eating--of not eating the flesh of any living creature. It is just the karma of so much killing involved in the slaughter of animals, he said, that causes all the wars and the strange diseases--especially cancer--that afflict the world today.

After the meal, the assembly participated in a ceremony for liberating the living. Animals destined for slaughter had been purchased by compassionate disciples of the Buddha, and during the ceremony, the animals were let free to roam the ample grounds of the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas. This ceremony for liberating the living, which helps to counteract the karma of killing which has accumulated for so many centuries, is celebrated once a month at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas.

In the afternoon, participants had the opportunity to take refuge with the Triple Jewel--the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sanaha--and to receive the five precepts of the Buddhist lay disciple--not to kill, not to steal, not to commit sexual misconduct, not to lie, and not to take intoxicants. In the evening, the Ten Major and Forty-eight Minor Bodhisattva Precepts were transmitted. The precept ceremonies were held in the new Ordination Hall at the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas, where the 250 Bhikshu and 348 Bhikshuni Precepts were transmitted a week earlier, on October 24.

Many of the participants, including the delegations from Asia, remained at the City to join in a seven-day session for recitation of the name of Kuan Yin Bodhisattva. The recitation session is being followed by a ten-week Ch'an meditation session. During the Ch'an session, periods of silent seated and walking meditation alternate from 3 A.M. to 12 midnight daily.