

Bodhi Seal of the Patriarchs



The Thirty-eighth Generational Dhyana Master Tao Chin (Respect for the Way) of Ching Shan

-by Venerable Master Hua

-translated by Bhikshunis Heng Ch'ih & Tao

The Master was from K'un Mountain in Su Chou. His family name was Chu. He first undertook Confucianism. At age twenty-eight he bowed to Ch'an Master Su and left the home-life. After understanding the teaching's purport, he stationed himself at Ching Mountain, and subsequently the profound teaching experienced at great flourishing.

A Sangha member once asked, "What is the Way?"

The Master answered, "In the mountain there are carp; in the oceans there are brambles and dust."

Question: "What is the Patriarch's mind from the West?"

Answer: "You have asked an inappropriate question."

Question: "What is the Proper Way?"

Answer: "Wait until after my extinction and I'll tell you."

In the third year of the Da Li reign period of the T'ang Dynasty the Emperor Da Tsung summoned him to the palace and personally gazed upon and make obeisance to him. The Emperor was pleased, pronounced him a teacher loyal to the country and said, "We wish to confer upon the Master the name, 'number one.'" The National Master graciously accepted the title. From this he became known as "Number one in the Country."

Later he returned to his native mountains and in the twelfth month of the eighth year of the Chen Yuan reign, he manifested stillness while speaking Dharma. His posthumous title is Ch'an Master Great Enlightenment.

A verse in praise says:

He was a true Dharma jewel,
And performed the deeds of a great hero.
He understood both tracks of the Patriarch's minds,
And the Dragon King made a gift of land to him.
Patriarch Ma tried to confound him;
And the Emperor honored him.
The renown of this native of the country T'ang,
Resounds for a hundred generations.

Another verse says:

In Su Chou Province, on K'un Mountain, an unusual personage
appeared.
At first he studied the Confucian teachings, but later altered his course.
At Ching Mountain he stayed, and propagated the mysterious teachings.
In the palace he received offerings, and expanded his vast ambitions.
Honored with title of "Number One in the Country," he emblazoned his
deeds of virtue.
To express his sorrow, the Emperor bequeathed on him the posthumous
title of "Great Enlightenment."
We, as Buddhist disciples, should longingly think of this Master.
Upon seeing those who are worthy, we should aspire to be like them--
our way is not lonely.

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