

# Records of the High Sanghans

*Dharma Master Tan Jye as told by Tripitaka Master Hua*

*continued from issue #181*

Dharma Master Tan Jye, whose family name was Jou, lived during the Chin dynasty. He was from Nanyang, the present day Honan. His father was an official, but the family remained poor. Yet poverty did not preclude Tan Jye from studying when he was still a youth at home. However, he didn't boast or publicize his efforts and so no one knew that he was studying so much.

One day Dharma Master Fa Dau was lecturing the *Emitting Light Prajna Sutra*. Although Tan Jye wanted to go listen, he had to borrow some clothes from a friend, since his own were tattered, due to his family's poverty. When he got there and heard the Sutra lecture, he was suddenly enlightened. "Ah! The Buddhadharma is so wonderful!" Therefore, not wanting to remain a lay person any longer, he immediately left the home-life, bowing to Dharma Master Dau An as his teacher.

From that time on, his cultivation consisted of reciting Sutras--more than 500,000 words regularly. The *Dharma Flower Sutra* has about 60,000 words. He recited half a million regularly. He used so much effort in his cultivation that he got sick. Cultivators have the ability to keep themselves well by cultivating, but he got sick instead! His illness was extremely serious. It was very dangerous, yet the more dangerous it became, the more he would recite. He recited: "Namo Homage to the Honored Buddha Maitreya, next to be born in the world." His disciples asked why he chose to recite Maitreya Bodhisattva's name.

Master Tan Jye replied, "A group of eight cultivators, including myself, have made a vow together to be reborn in the Tushita Heaven Inner Court in order to see Maitreya Bodhisattva. My teacher, Master Dau Ywan, and the other five have already been reborn there. I am the only one still remaining here. That's why I am diligently seeking rebirth in the Tushita Heaven Inner Court."

After saying that, he was even more humble and sincere in reciting the name of Maitreya Bodhisattva. Then his disciples saw a light come. Master Tan Jye also saw the auspicious light and felt very happy. He recited, sound following sound without interruption. Afterwards, while reciting "Namo Maitreya Buddha, next to be born in the world," he completed the stillness and his face was filled with joy. He was a disciple of Dharma Master Dau An and he had virtue in the Way.

*by Venerable Master Hua*

*translated by Bhikshu Heng Chang*

*reviewed by Upasaka Ronald B. Epstein, Ph.D.*

*edited by Bhikshu Heng Jau*

