

The Bodhi Mirror

Dharma Master Myau Yin



A dauntless warrior in the battle-front looks upon death as going home,
So why should a great hero retreat from the Way?
Entering into the Way is hard in the beginning, and it is never easy;
But if you were to withdraw, when would you ever come to any success?
The great hero who wishes to become lord over the three realms
Should brandish his wisdom-sword and scatter the demon hosts.
I vow to remain fearless amidst the sea of suffering,
To adorn with the Precept-dharmas, and to gather in those of the different
directions.

-verse by Great Master Tai Syan of the Tang dynasty

Dharma Master Myau Yin ("Wonderful Cause"), a native of Manchuria, had the greatest admiration for Vinaya Master Hung I (1889-1944), the most highly revered contemporary Vinaya Master who lived during the years of the Republic. When Master Yin was still a layman, he read the works of Vinaya Master Hung I and was determined to leave the home-life. What he most wanted to do was to personally draw near to this good and wise teacher. However, he did not get to fulfill his vow. Only four years after Vinaya Master Hung I's quiescence did Master Yin have his head shaved. He was ordained by Vinaya Master Tz Jou ("Compassionate Boat"). When his precept-transmitter went to Fukien Province to lecture on the Vinaya, Master Yin followed him. Vinaya Master Tz Jou was the lecturer on Precepts at Drum Mountain Monastery, Fukien, where Venerable Master Hsú Yün ("Empty Cloud") presided as Abbot.

In Fukien, Master Yin stayed six years in the former residence of Vinaya Master Hung I. There, he delved into the Five Main Treatises which were written by Great Master Dau Sywan of the Tang, founder of the Southern Mountain Vinaya tradition, on which the Vinaya School of China came to be largely based. During this time, Master Yin also investigated the Exegesis on the Bodhisattva Precepts. He copied out by hand the manuscript drafted by Vinaya Master Hung I, and compiled and translated treatises written by ancient Japanese masters on the Vinaya. From those years of hard work, he built for himself a solid foundation for the understanding and propagation of the Vinaya.

Because of internal war and revolution within China, Master Yin as well as many other Sangha members experienced many vicissitudes and trials that came to test their resolve for the Way. After teaching at the Buddhist Institute at Beijing and Fukien, the Master went to Hong Kong in the sixties. Several years ago, Master Yin came quietly to America, where he lived in San Francisco, waiting for causes and conditions within the Dharma to ripen.

Master Yin is author of several commentaries on the Vinaya. Among his works are: *An Explanation of the Karmavachana Procedures According to Various Circumstances*, *A General Explanation of the Newly Compiled Precept Manual of the Four Divisions (Dharmagupta) Vinaya*, and *The Study of the Vinaya*.

In 1984, Dharma Realm Buddhist Association assisted Master Yin in establishing the Dharma Realm Buddhist Institute in San Francisco. Elder Master Yin responded to sincere requests for lectures on the Vinaya and began an introductory course on the Study of the Vinaya, which is held weekly. The entire Sangha of the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas as well as many members of the Sangha in San Francisco attend the current lecture series.

When the Vinaya is lectured, studied, venerated, and guarded in daily practice, then the Sangha will grow and remain strong and harmonious. As the Proper Dharma comes to the West, the Vinaya is at its foundation. Elder Masters steeped in the knowledge and application of the Vinaya give the gift of Dharma to the young Sangha in order to help preserve the orthodox transmission. Their sacrifice in diligently teaching and training those newly studying is in itself exemplary of the Bodhisattva conduct and the Great Vehicle Precepts. Those who receive the teaching will strive to perfect their own precepts and deportment according to the discipline. In the same spirit, they will perpetuate the Dharma by teaching others in order to repay the kindness of their teachers and elders.

compiled by Vajra Bodhi Sea Editorial Staff