

Records of the Life of Tripitaka Master Hua
*compiled, translated, edited, and reviewed by the Committee
for the Publication of the Life of the Venerable Master Hua*

PART VIII: THE DHARMA TRANSMISSION

Arriving in Canton after three thousand miles of travel, the Master went to Nan Hua Monastery and bowed before the Venerable Master Syü Yün who was then 109 years old. The two masters chatted and the Venerable Syü Yün recognized the Master to be a vessel worthy of the propagation of the Dharma, sealed and certified his spiritual skill, and transmitted the wonderful mind-to-mind seal of all the Buddhas to the Master. Thus the Master became the Forty-fifth Patriarch from Shakyamuni Buddha, the Eighteenth Patriarch in China from Bodhidharma, and the Ninth Patriarch of the Wei Yang Lineage. Of their meeting, the Master has written:

The Noble Yün saw me and said, "Thus it is."
I saw the Noble Yün and verified, "Thus it is."
The Noble Yün and I, both Thus,
Hoped that every living being
In the Universe would be Thus too.

The Venerable Master Syü Yün then asked the Master to be an instructor in the Nan Hwa Vinaya Academy. The Master refused. "Your student has come ten thousand miles to meet the Good Knowing One," said the Master. "If the Venerable Master can guarantee that I will be able to end birth and death, then I'll gladly walk on fire, give up my body and bones, accept the position you offer and not resign."

The Master Syü Yün replied, "One eats one's own food to fill oneself; one ends one's own birth and death. If I were to say that I guaranteed that you will end birth and death, I'd be cheating you. I don't do that sort of thing. In cultivation, one should concentrate on inner skill and outer accomplishment. One should not be an independent Arhat, looking only after his own good. One should practice the Bodhisattva Way for the good of all, support the Triple Jewel, and be of service to everyone. In that way, one may perfect blessings and virtue and quite naturally end birth and death."

The Master again refused to take the position. Master Syü Yün continued his exhortations. "You came all the way from northeast China to meet me. If you are not going to obey my instructions, why did you bother to come at all?"

The Master accepted.

The Master observed the words and actions of the Venerable Master Syü Yün and found them to be of extraordinarily pure virtue. The Venerable Master constantly acted as a model and guide, willingly taking upon himself the bitterness of the hard work of propagating the Dharma.

TEACHING THE DHARMA TO BENEFIT ALL

During the spring precept transmission in 1948 the Master one day heard the loud roar of a tiger not far away. His Dharma friends told him, "The tiger is the Venerable Master's disciple. It lives in a cave behind the mountain and always comes out to protect the precept ceremonies. When the ceremonies are over it returns to its cave."

In the fifth month, after the transmission of the precepts, the Master was serving as verger in the altar room of the Fifth Patriarch at Nan Hwa Monastery. At that time, a layman named Hwang Ju Dsai came

to visit. Upon first seeing the Master, Layman Hwang felt a strong affinity with him and invited him to Jiang Syi (Kiangsi) in the district of Nan Cheng to lecture on the AMITABHA SUTRA. They fixed the date for the tenth day of the sixth month, but the Master was detained on the road.

Meanwhile, the assembly had gathered at the temple in Jiang Syi and was on the one hand bowing to the Buddha and on the other, watching hopefully for the Master. Layman Hwang consulted the Gwan Yin divination stalks daily, asking Gwan Yin Bodhisattva when the Master would arrive.

Suddenly, while reciting the Buddha's name, the wisdom of a laywoman named Syang unfolded and she said, "The Master won't come during this recitation week. We should arrange for another recitation week during which we should be mindful of Earth Store Bodhisattva." Then she named the day of the Master's arrival.

The Master arrived on the designated day during the Earth Store Bodhisattva Recitation Session, and everyone thought the laywoman had become enlightened.

In the first week of the seventh month, the Master began lecturing to a group of more than a hundred people. Among them was a layman named Gwo Le, who had been plagued by a demonic illness for over ten years. Since something prevented him from being able to worship, he knew his illness was caused by a demon. He had sought the aid of Buddhist and Taoist masters who cultivated such dharmas as the Great Compassion Repentance, the Liang Hwang Bao Repentance and the ceremony for releasing dead souls. He also recited Sutras, but nothing was effective. When the old man heard the Master speak the AMITABHA SUTRA, however, his demon fled in terror. The man recovered his normal senses and was never bothered by it again.

Another member of the assembly, a young girl name Syu whose body was half-paralyzed, was completely healed after hearing the Sutra. The Master's following increased greatly as many, many people took refuge with the Master.