

The Bodhi Mirror



Elder Dharma Master Jyau Gwang

Dharma Master Jyau Gwang (Light of Enlightenment) leads a busy life that takes him to various centers of Buddhism in the Far East and Southeast Asia. A native of Manchuria, he went to Hong Kong in the late forties. He has also lived in Vietnam. As President of the Hong Kong Buddhist Association, he has a demanding schedule of greeting delegates and visitors from all over the world, as well as administrating on different school boards and other charitable Buddhist organizations. The Dharma Master is dedicated to establishing schools, hospitals, orphanages, homes for the aged, and other humanitarian endeavors.

While attending an executive committee meeting of the World Buddhist Sangha Council in December 1987 in New York, the Dharma Master spoke with Vajra Bodhi Sea reporters. On Buddhism's expansion in the West, he observed, "This is obviously no small causal condition. It has come about through the Buddha's aid. During the Tang dynasty, Tripitika Master Sywan Tsang went to India and brought the Sutras back to China (A.D. 8th Century). As a result, Buddhism flourished in China. Likewise, Buddhism's coming to the West has monumental implications for the future of the entire world. Those of you who are personally involved in bringing the Dharma to the West should take this mission seriously and do your best. Always bear in mind this attitude: 'This body and mind I dedicate to lands as many as dust motes--this is called repaying the Buddha's kindness.'"

During that same meeting, a Theravada Dharma Master from the United Kingdom stressed the need for a clearer definition of the rules and modes of conduct for Sangha members as they encounter Westerners, who have their own set of customs and social etiquette. He suggested that such a code be compiled, accepted, and recommended by the World Buddhist Sangha Council. Dharma Master Jyau Gwang was heartily in agreement with the suggestion. He said, "I think that was a very useful suggestion. We should review both the Mahayana and Theravada traditions, cull the essence of both, and compile a common moral code. This will facilitate the communication between Sangha members of the various countries, and also give the monks and nuns disciplinary guidelines when they go to other countries to propagate Buddhism."

In recent years, the Dharma Master has been active in fund-raising for the colossal bronze Buddha image (23 meters) that will grace the mountainside of Lantau Island, off the shore of Hong Kong. That structure, when completed, will help bring Buddhism into the public eye. The Dharma Master sees this as part of a rigorous endeavor to make Buddhism known internationally.