

The Bodhi Seal of the Patriarchs

by the Venerable Master Yun and the Venerable Master Hua

*43rd Generational Patriarch Master De Shau
(Excellent Virtue) of Tyan Tai(Heavenly Altar)Mountain*



ESSAY:

THE MASTER WAS A SON OF THE CHAN (陳)FAMILY, OF LUNG CHYWAN(龍泉, "DRAGON SPRINGS"), IN CHUJOU(處州). AFTER HE HAD VISITED FIFTY-FOUR GOOD AND WISE ADVISORS, HE WENT TO JINLING (金陵), WHERE HE BOWED TO MASTER FA YEN (法眼, DHARMA EYE). AT FIRST SIGHT, MASTER YEN THOUGHT HIGHLY OF HIM.

WHEN MASTER YEN ASCENDED THE DHARMA SEAT IN THE HALL, A MONK ASKED HIM, "WHAT IS A DROP OF WATER FROM THE SOURCE OF TSAU CREEK(曹溪)?"

MASTER YEN REPLIED, "IT IS SIMPLY A DROP OF WATER FROM THE SOURCE OF TSAU CREEK."

THE MONK WAS PERPLEXED. HOWEVER, THE MASTER ACHIEVED A GREAT ENLIGHTENMENT IN THAT INSTANT, AND THE DOUBTS AND OBSTRUCTIONS OF HIS ENTIRE LIFE MELTED AWAY LIKE ICE. THEN HE WENT BEFORE MASTER YEN AND PRESENTED THAT WHICH HE HAD UNDERSTOOD MASTER YEN TOLD HIM, "IN THE FUTURE, YOU WILL BECOME THE KING'S TEACHER, AND CAUSE THE WAY OF THE PATRIARCHS TO GREATLY FLOURISH. MY ACHIEVEMENTS ARE REALLY NOT UP TO YOURS."

SOON THE MASTER WENT TO TYAN TAI MOUNTAIN(天臺山). AS HE BEHELD THE VESTIGES OF GREAT MASTER JR JE ("WISE ONE"). HE FELT AS IF HE WAS COMING HOME. THEREUPON THE MASTER TOOK UP RESIDENCE AT TYAN TAI. HE COMPOSED A VERSE THAT SAYS:

THE SUMMIT OF PENETRATING MYSTERIES PEAK
IS NOT A PLACE AMONG MORTALS.
OUTSIDE THE MIND, THERE ARE NO DHARMAS.
ALL AROUND ME, I BEHOLD GREEN MOUNTAINS.

WHEN MASTER FA YEN HEARD THIS VERSE HE REMARKED, "JUST THIS VERSE ALONE IS ABLE TO MAKE OUR SCHOOL RISE UP!"

DURING THE FIFTH YEAR(CYCLICAL YEAR REN SHEN), OF THE KAI BAU REIGN (972 A.D.), DURING THE SUNG DYNASTY, THE MASTER GATHERED THE MEMBERS OF HIS ASSEMBLY TOGETHER, AND BADE THEM FAREWELL. THEN HE SAT IN FULL LOTUS AND WENT OFF TO REBIRTH. HIS STUPA IS AT TYAN TAI MOUNTAIN.

A VERSE IN PRAISE OF HIM SAYS:

"YOU WILL BE TEACHER OF THE KING,"
SUCH WAS THE PREDICTION HE RECEIVED FROM MASTER
CHING LYANG SHAN.
A DROP FROM THE SOURCE OF TSAU CREEK
INUNDATES THE GREAT EARTH.
ON THE SUMMIT OF FLOWER PEAK,
THE WISDOM-SUN SHINES ON HIGH AND MAGNIFICENT.
HIS LINEAGE WAS PASSED ON TO MASTER YUNG MING,
AND THE *CHAN SCHOOL'S MIRROR* ("*DZUNG JING LU*" 宗鏡
錄) WAS TRULY REVEALED.

ANOTHER VERSE SAYS:

HE WENT EVERYWHERE AND VISITED FIFTY-FOUR GOOD
TEACHERS.
MASTER FA YEN REGARDED HIM HIGHLY AND REGRETTED
THAT HE HAD COME SO LATE.
"THIS IS JUST A SINGLE DROP FROM THE SOURCE OF TSAU
CREEK."
INSTANTLY THE LAYERS OF DOUBT WERE SEVERED AT
THE SUMMIT.
AS THE KING'S INSTRUCTOR, HE ENHANCED THE SAGELY
TEACHINGS.
ACTING AS A GUIDE FOR PEOPLE AND GODS, HE CROSSED
OVER THE CONFUSED MASSES.
THE *CHAN SCHOOL'S MIRROR* WAS SUSPENDED ON HIGH,
DISPELLING THE DARKNESS.
PROPER WISDOM MANIFESTS, AS ONE SEPARATES FROM
EMOTIONAL LOVE.

COMMENTARY:

THE MASTER WAS A SON OF THE CHAN (陳) FAMILY, OF LUNG CHYWAN(龍泉, "DRAGON SPRINGS"), IN CHUJOU (處州). AFTER HE HAD VISITED FIFTY-FOUR GOOD AND WISE ADVISORS, HE WENT TO JINLING(金陵), present-day Nanjing (南京) WHERE HE BOWED TO MASTER FA YEN (法眼, "DHARMA EYE"). AT FIRST SIGHT, MASTER YEN THOUGHT HIGHLY OF HIM. He recognized him as being different from the common lot, and had a high opinion of him.

WHEN MASTER YEN ASCENDED THE DHARMA SEAT IN THE HALL, A MONK ASKED HIM, "WHAT IS A DROP OF WATER FROM THE SOURCE OF TSAU CREEK?"

MASTER YEN REPLIED, "IT IS SIMPLY A DROP OF WATER FROM THE SOURCE OF TSAU CREEK. It's just that same drop of water."

THE MONK WAS PERPLEXED. HOWEVER, THE MASTER ACHIEVED A GREAT ENLIGHTENMENT IN THAT INSTANT. When he heard Master Yen's remark about the drop of water from the source of Tsau Creek, he became enlightened, AND THE DOUBTS AND OBSTRUCTIONS OF HIS ENTIRE LIFE MELTED AWAY LIKE ICE when the sun comes out. THEN HE WENT BEFORE MASTER YEN AND PRESENTED THAT WHICH HE HAD UNDERSTOOD. He discussed the principles he had understood with Master Fa Yen, MASTER YEN TOLD HIM, "IN THE FUTURE, YOU WILL BECOME THE KING'S TEACHER AND CAUSE THE WAY OF THE PATRIARCHS TO GREATLY FLOURISH. MY ACHIEVEMENTS ARE REALLY NOT UP TO YOURS." You excel me.

SOON THE MASTER WENT TO TYAN TAI MOUNTAIN (天臺山). As he looked at the remnants of Great Master Jr Je, he had a deep sense that he had lived there before. THEREUPON THE MASTER TOOK UP RESIDENCE AT TYAN TAI. HE COMPOSED A VERSE THAT SAYS:

THE SUMMIT OF PENETRATING MYSTERIES PEAK/ IS NOT A PLACE AMONG MORTALS./ The state of this high summit does not belong to the realm of ordinary people. OUTSIDE THE MIND, THERE ARE NO DHARMAS./ ALL AROUND ME, I BEHOLD GREEN MOUNTAINS./

The verse was flowing with the flavor of Chan. WHEN MASTER FA YEN HEARD THIS VERSE, HE REMARKED, "JUST THIS VERSE ALONE IS ABLE TO MAKE OUR SCHOOL RISE UP! Based on the strength of this verse alone, our Chan School can stand up."

DURING THE FIFTH YEAR (CYCLICAL YEAR REN SHEN), OF THE KAI BAU REIGN (972 A.D.), DURING THE SUNG DYNASTY, THE MASTER GATHERED THE MEMBERS OF HIS ASSEMBLY TOGETHER, AND BADE THEM FAREWELL. He called together the fourfold assembly to say goodbye to them. THEN HE SAT IN FULL LOTUS AND WENT OFF TO REBIRTH. HIS STUPA IS AT TYAN TAI MOUNTAIN.

A VERSE IN PRAISE OF HIM SAYS: "YOU WILL BE TEACHER OF THE KING."/ SUCH WAS THE PREDICTION HE RECEIVED FROM CHING LYANG SHAN ("Clear and Cool Mountain")./ A DROP FROM THE SOURCE OF TSAU CREEK/ INUNDATES THE GREAT EARTH./ ON THE SUMMIT OF FLOWER PEAK,/ at Tyan Tai Mountain, THE WISDOM-SUN SHINES ON HIGH AND MAGNIFICENT./ The Buddha's sun shines on the great earth. HIS LINEAGE WAS PASSED TO MASTER YUNG MING,/ AND THE "*CHAN SCHOOL'S MIRROR*" ("*DZUNG JING LU*" 宗鏡錄) WAS TRULY REVEALED./ The Dharma was transmitted to Master Yung Ming, who composed this work, and the principles were clearly revealed.

ANOTHER VERSE SAYS: HE WENT EVERYWHERE AND VISITED FIFTY-FOUR GOOD TEACHERS./ Whereas the Youth Good Wealth visited fifty-three good and wise advisors, the Master went to fifty-four. MASTER FA YEN REGARDED HIM HIGHLY AND REGRETTED THAT HE HAD COME SO LATE./ When Master Fa Yen saw him, he immediately recognized the Master as a worthy carrier of the Way, who could widely spread the Dharma. Therefore, Fa Yen regarded the Master highly and said, "Why did you arrive so late? You should have come earlier."

Right at that time, a monk asked about the drop of water from the source of Tsau Creek. Master Fa Yen answered him with, "THIS IS JUST A SINGLE DROP FROM THE SOURCE OF TSAU CREEK."/ The monk was perplexed, and did not understand the answer. However, the Master immediately understood. How did he become enlightened? INSTANTLY THE LAYERS OF DOUBT WERE SEVERED AT THE SUMMIT./ All the doubts and questions he had completely cleared up. At the highest summit, all of his doubts were vanquished. AS THE KING'S INSTRUCTOR, HE ENHANCED THE

SAGELY TEACHINGS./ This had a great effect on the Buddhadharmā, and he was able to glorify the Sagely Teachings. ACTING AS A GUIDE FOR PEOPLE AND GODS, HE CROSSED OVER THE CONFUSED MASSES./ He took across confused and unawakened living beings of the Saha world. THE *CHAN SCHOOL'S MIRROR* WAS SUSPENDED ON HIGH, DISPELLING THE DARKNESS./ It was like a bright mirror suspended above. He taught stupid, ignorant people, so that they could understand what they did not understand before, and so their wisdom appeared. PROPER WISDOM MANIFESTS, AS ONE SEPARATES FROM EMOTIONAL LOVE./ Having developed proper wisdom, one is able to see through and put down emotion and love and obtain a direct response with the Way.