

A Pictorial Biography of the Venerable Master HsüYün

183. A Camphor Spirit Seeks the Precepts

by Venerable Master Hua

During the Spring Precept Period of 1942, the Master's one-hundred-and-third year, a man who called himself the Son of Jang, who was a native of Chu Jyang and thirty-four years old, came to seek transmission of the Precepts. When asked under whom he had shaved his head, he said that he did not have a Master. When asked if he had the requisite three robes and bowl, he answered that he did not. The Master then supplied him with all of the requisite items and gave him the Dharma name Chang Ru (Tolerating Insult). He was quiet, diligent, and attentive.

After the Three Platforms of Precepts had been transmitted, he disappeared without a trace. The following year, the Master had a vision of him asking for his Precept Certificate and immediately knew that he was in reality the spirit of the camphor tree.

The gatha says:

*The old camphor spirit sought the
Precepts by a strange affinity,
But since he had no bowl or
robes, no Teacher would
accept him.
The Master opened the door of
expedients and gave him a
Dharma name.
All three groups of Precepts once
transmitted, he was gone mysteriously.*

